

## NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

### SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER BOARD

12 June 2026

A meeting of the Simplification Pathfinder Board was held on Friday 12 June 2026. The meeting was held in Committee Room A, Town Hall, Coton Road, Nuneaton, CV11 5AA.

**Present:** Sean Farnell (Chair) Marion Plant (NWSLC) – Vice Chair, Garry Palmer (WCC), Councillor Jake Groves, Jodie Gosling (MP)

**Officers in attendance:** Tom Shardlow (NBBC), Jonathan White (NBBC), Salewa A-Ogunleye (NBBC) - Mins

**Apologies:** Alison Thompson (WCAVA), Rachel Taylor, Nicky King, Les Ratcliffe, Dawn Dawson

SPB21 Chair's welcome and announcements

The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting and introductions took place.

SPB22 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2026, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

SPB23 Declarations of Interests

Board members' interests for the meeting were as set out in the Schedule of Declarations of Interests, attached to the agenda.

SPB24 Highlight Report

NBBC submitted a Highlight Report (which had been circulated prior to the meeting) to update Board members on the status of the Simplification Pathfinder programme and individual projects. The report detailed the overall Simplification Pathfinder programme financial status, the key risks and upcoming activities.

- Grayson Place – Phase 1 (hotel) is operational and performance is improving. A strengthened commercial team is in place; weekday corporate business is supporting the hotel and weekend occupancy strategies are being developed. Coventry's Premier League status may support commercial performance.  
Phase 2 – Construction contract with BAM is complete; retention/defects period to continue. Design and costing work is underway for amendments including:

- i. Reconfiguration/extension of car parking to retain 120 spaces while accommodating outdoor paddle courts.
  - ii. Division of the food court area to meet anchor tenant specifications and allow a second tenant to occupy the remaining space.
- Digital Skills & Innovation Centre – College contractors are on site for kitchen fit-out; lease drafting is with legal teams. Officers are following up to expedite completion ahead of the academic year.
- George Eliot Visitors Centre – Delivery delayed due to power supply issues arising from ownership changes of adjacent licensed premises. The Visitor Centre may need to bring a new power supply at added cost; funding to secure this is under consideration.  
The board requested a meeting with the George Eliot group, funders and National Grid to map timelines and clarify funding options.
- Saints – JJ to update on the Saint project, follow up with JJ was suggested. Lease close to completion.
- Parks Revival – Parks Revival team finalising evaluations; decisions and timings are pending, with a July commencement window referenced for some activity. Funding considerations remain important.
- E-mobility – Concession model supplier selected via procurement; mobilisation is underway. Site visits from contractors were positive. Existing ducting is in place; confirmation awaited on exact installation timelines and any additional provision above the currently planned capacity. Contract includes KPIs and downtime/repair response requirements (e.g. 24-hour repair target).  
Board requested timeline confirmation and marketing plans for first charge.
- Bedworth Physical Activity Hub – Main building complete and operational. Old site demolition progressing after asbestos and bat surveys confirmed manageable conditions. Early usage figures are strong, exceeding forecasts.  
Board requested formal usage numbers to be presented.
- Bridge to Living – Planning required splitting due to conservation area constraints. Detailed planning submission made; environmental surveys completed where required. Contractors likely to return to site subject to planning; anticipated contractor mobilisation and construction timeline aimed at end of July (subject to approvals).  
Coordination with other town centre construction (Debenhams site, Devolution Group work) is ongoing to reduce traffic disruption.

SPB25

### **Communication Updates**

JW provided some general communication updates;

- Constraints and approach  
Formal announcements of operators (food & beverage, college lease, etc.) are restricted until leases are signed; need to balance publicity with contractual confidentiality.

- Board emphasised the importance of continuous positive messaging to residents about progress, even where announcements are embargoed.
- Proposed communications activity
    - Use visuals, updated brochures, on-site hoardings and social media (including non-corporate, creative content for platforms such as TikTok) to share progress and keep the public informed.
    - Identify a communications coordinator: an officer in the regeneration team was proposed to lead a creative, non-corporate campaign; internal comms and partners (college multimedia, student voices) to be engaged.
  - Revisit original marketing budget and assess reinstatement or use of internal comms resources.

Board agreed that communications activity must be more visible and continuous.

Board requested a coordinated communications plan with key milestones and actions, dates where possible, and suggested creative content and channel plan.

SPB26

### **Any Other Business**

- Transparency and business case
  - The board requested officers to prepare a transparent report for Cabinet/Council revisiting the original 2019 business case versus current delivery and costs, showing what was promised, what has been delivered and the financial position. This is intended to address community questions and build confidence.
  - The report should redact commercially sensitive pricing where appropriate but provide clear program-level transparency.
- Site appearance / temporary mitigation
  - Concerns raised about empty spaces around Grayson Place impacting perceptions, safeguarding and attractiveness to users and students. Suggestions included temporary soft landscaping, screening or tidying to reduce negative impact until permanent works are funded and delivered. Officers to prepare options costed for temporary and medium-term treatments (e.g. seeding, screening, soft landscaping, lighting/CCTV implications) to present to the board and to Cabinet as required.
- Positive progress
  - Board noted significant delivery progress (hotel, college, leisure, food hall, business centre) compared with earlier years and recommended focusing comms on these positives while being open about challenges.

SPB26

### **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 9172, the public and press were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items, it being likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information on the description specified in paragraph (iii) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

SPB28      Risk register

NBBC submitted an updated Programme Risk Register. The Board considered the specific risks raised by the updated register.

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Chair of the Board