

**REPORT OF:** HOUSING, HEALTH AND ENGINEERING SERVICES  
MANAGER

**TO:** POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2019

**Report Author:** Julie Whittaker  
**Tel. No:** (01282) 661038  
**E-mail:** julie.whittaker@pendle.gov.uk

**NELSON  
TOWN DEAL, MASTERPLAN AND FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide an update on the development of a masterplan and the bid to the Future High Streets Fund. To inform Members of the requirements of the Towns Fund to work towards a Town Deal.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To note the progress on the Nelson Town Centre masterplan and Future High Streets Fund.
2. To note the waiver of Contract Procedure Rules to allow the extension of the contract with Cushman & Wakefield to allow for a wider masterplan to be developed and to provide additional support in the development of the Future High Streets Fund bid.
3. To give delegated authority to the Chief Executive to agree the scope of the additional work and the contract sums.
4. To note the requirements of the Towns Fund and agree to receive a further report with proposals for a governance structure to support progress towards agreeing a Town Deal.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To keep the Committee informed of progress.
2. To provide additional capacity.

## ISSUE

1. This report updates members regarding the preparation of a masterplan for Nelson Town Centre, the development and submission of a Future High Streets Fund bid and the recent announcement of funding for a potential Town Deal for Nelson.

### **Nelson Town Centre Masterplan**

2. A consultancy team lead by Cushman and Wakefield has been appointed to prepare a masterplan for Nelson Town Centre. Their appointment was agreed by P&R Committee on 22nd Aug 2019. The masterplan will be developed using funding from the Pendle Brownfield Sites Fund (£20k) and funding secured from the Government's One Public Estate programme (£30k).
3. An Advisory Group has been established to oversee the development of the masterplan and the first meeting of that group took place on 16<sup>th</sup> October. It should be noted that final approval of the masterplan rests with full Council following consideration by the Policy & Resources Committee.
4. The Membership of the Advisory Group Includes:
  - Pendle Councillors and Officers
  - Liberata Property Services
  - Pendle Leisure Trust
  - Nelson Town Team
  - Nelson Town Council
  - Lancashire County Council
  - Nelson and Colne College
  - East Lancs CCG
5. The consultants have been gathering data and reviewing documents and the first public consultation was held on 29<sup>th</sup> October and attended by nearly 80 people. People were also able to feed in comments by our website and through social media and over 30 additional comments were received. The consultants will now be drawing up options for further consultation in the New Year with the aim of having a draft masterplan produced by Spring 2020. This will support the submission of our Stage 2 application for the Future High Streets Fund.

### **Future High Streets Fund**

6. The Future High Street Fund was launched at the end of 2018 with the objective of renewing and reshaping town centres and high streets in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability. The fund has a two-phase application process.
7. An Expression of Interest was submitted by the Council for Nelson Town Centre in March 2019 and, in spite of very strong competition, Nelson was one of 50 towns invited to submit a Phase 2 application. To assist with this, the Council has been awarded £70k of revenue funding to support the development of a detailed business case for our proposed projects/interventions. Subsequently we were given the opportunity to bid for further funding upto a total of £150k of capacity funding. This bid for a further £80k has been submitted and we are awaiting the outcome. If this is successful it would support more detailed feasibility work and additional support in developing the business case.

8. It is worth noting, however, that Phase 2 is still a competitive process and applicants are not guaranteed to be successful with securing capital funding. The timetable for the submission of our Phase 2 application is:
  - Submission of a draft business case – 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020
  - Submission of the final business case – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020
  - Funding announcements - Summer/Autumn 2020
9. Initial guidance suggested the Fund could contribute up to £25m to individual town centres, but the Government have now said that funding is expected to be in the £5m-£10m range with additional funding provided from other public and private sector sources.
10. MHCLG have stressed that they are seeking to fund projects of a transformational nature which will make a fundamental difference to a town centre/high street. Simple 'beautification' projects are not something they will support.
11. The preparation of the business case will require specialist skills and knowledge. Given that there is a strong correlation between the Nelson masterplan and the Future High Streets Fund business case we have asked Cushman and Wakefield provide some additional capacity and expertise to assist with our application.

### **Towns Fund / Town Deal**

12. On 6<sup>th</sup> September it was announced that Nelson was one of 100 towns being invited to develop proposals for new multi-million pound 'Town Deals'. This would provide additional funding of upto £25m over and above the Future High Streets Fund and is not limited to the Town Centre.
13. A Towns Fund prospectus was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> November. The Towns Fund will provide the core public investment in Town Deals and additional funding may come from other sources or parts of government. The objective of the Fund is to drive the economic regeneration of towns to deliver long term economic and productivity growth through:
  - **Urban regeneration, planning and land use:** ensuring towns are thriving places for people to live and work, including by: increasing density in town centres; strengthening local economic assets including local cultural assets; site acquisition, remediation, preparation, regeneration; and making full use of planning tools to bring strategic direction and change.
  - **Skills and enterprise infrastructure:** driving private sector investment and ensuring towns have the space to support skills and small business development.
  - **Connectivity:** developing local transport schemes that complement regional and national networks, as well as supporting the delivery of improved digital connectivity
14. It is expected that initial plans for Town Deals will be led by a lead Council who will be required to establish a **Town Deal Board** which will develop a Town Investment Plan. These will be locally owned documents and will not require sign off by government. It will then be a requirement that business cases are submitted to seek investment from the Towns Fund to implement elements of the Investment Plan. In some cases the Government will also consider proposals beyond the scope of the Fund to leverage additional public investment within the wider Town Deal, working with other departments

across Government. Further details on the scope of the interventions that will be supported by the Towns Fund will be provided at a later date.

15. Agreeing a Town Deal will be a 2 stage process:

**Stage 1** – providing capacity support to places to put the structures and vision in place in order to move to the next stage of agreeing a deal

**Stage 2** – places to use their locally-owned Town Investment Plan to put together a business case to apply for funding for interventions

16. The capacity support includes funding to support the Town Deal Board, for community engagement, research and the development of proposals. This funding is based on population size of the town so for Nelson we will be getting £162,019.

17. The timescales for progressing a Town Deal are:

- Town Deal Boards convened (including publication of town boundary) – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020
- Further guidance published – early 2020
- Town Investment Plans produced – Summer 2020
- Town Deals Agreed – 2020/21

### **Town Boundary**

18. MHCLG have used the Office for National Statistics to define the boundaries of each town. These are based on built urban areas (BUA) and do not include adjoining rural areas. The Nelson BUA boundary is shown in Appendix 1. The boundary approximately follows the built up boundaries of the Nelson Wards of Bradley, Clover Hill, Marsden, Southfield, Walverden and Whitefield but, by its nature, does not include the rural parts of these Wards. There are some small anomalies on the boundaries with adjoining Wards.

19. If we wished to define an alternative boundary we would need to seek government approval.

20. The masterplan that is currently being produced only covers the Town Centre of Nelson. A wider masterplan will be needed to cover the wider town boundary and form the basis of the Investment Plan, with the Town Centre being an element of this wider masterplan.

21. In order to develop the Town Centre masterplan Cushman & Wakefield have been looking at how the town centre sits within the wider Nelson context. It would make sense for the remit of their work to be extended to cover the whole of Nelson rather than have a different consultancy looking at this wider area. This would provide economies in time and cost but also enable one set of consultations to take place with residents and other stakeholders in the town. As the town centre masterplan is still at an early stage Cushman & Wakefield have indicated that they could take on this extra work without it significantly delaying their current commission.

22. This extension to the contract, along with the additional support on the Future High Streets Fund business case, will require an exemption from Contract Procedure Rules as competitive tenders have not been sought. The Corporate Director and Chief Financial Officer who are responsible for approving exemptions are satisfied that it is justified as it would be in the Council's best interest to negotiate a fee with the consultant due to their previous involvement in a project.

### **Town Deal Board**

23. It is a requirement of the Government that Town Deal Boards include the following:

- Other tiers of Local Government - *in Pendle's case this would be Lancashire County Council and Nelson Town Council*
- Members of Parliament
- Local businesses and investors (both large employers and SMEs)
- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)
- Communities

24. The following should be included either in the governance structure or as part of the engagement activity:

- Business Improvement Districts where they exist – *Not relevant for Nelson at this stage*
- Jobcentre Plus
- Anchor Institutions e.g. wider business community, colleges, schools, hospitals, cultural institutions, housing sector
- Arms-length bodies and other non-departmental government agencies e.g. Homes England
- Other private investors and developers

25. As set out above, there is an Advisory Group in place to oversee the Town Centre masterplan. Consideration is being given as to how this would relate to any governance structure that is put in place to meet the requirements of the Towns Fund, not least to avoid duplication and to ensure that they are complementary. It is proposed that a further report be submitted to propose the governance arrangements

26. Even with the use of consultants there will be significant officer input required over the coming months to progress the masterplan, produce a business plan for the Future High Streets Fund, establish and support a Town Deal Board, produce a Town Investment Plan and bid into the Towns Fund. Consideration is being given as to how to adequately resource this whilst continuing with other regeneration and economic development work. The availability of the capacity building funding from the two Funds will allow for some additional capacity to be secured.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** None directly arising from this report

**Financial:** The additional consultancy work and any additional officer capacity will be funded from the capacity building funding provided from the Future High Streets and Towns Fund.

**Legal:** None directly arising from this report

**Risk Management:** None directly arising from this report

**Health and Safety:** None directly arising from this report

**Sustainability:** None directly arising from this report

**Community Safety:** None directly arising from this report

**Equality and Diversity:** None directly arising from this report

## **APPENDIX**

1 – Nelson Boundary

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Towns Fund Prospectus

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-prospectus>

APPENDIX 1  
NELSON BUA BOUNDARY

