

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

**TO:** NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD

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## NELSON TOWN

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide background information on the Nelson masterplan, Future High Streets Fund and Nelson Towns Fund.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

To note the current progress on the regeneration initiatives within Nelson.

### REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To ensure that the Board have the relevant background information.

### ISSUE

1. This report provides information on the current regeneration initiatives and opportunities for Nelson.

#### **Nelson Masterplan**

2. Prior to the announcement of the Future High Streets Fund and the Towns Fund Pendle Council had agreed to progress a masterplan for Nelson Town Centre. A consultancy team, led by Cushman and Wakefield, were appointed to prepare a masterplan to guide future development and regeneration. This commission has now been extended to include the wider Nelson area covered by the Towns Fund. Cushman & Wakefield will do a presentation to the Board on progress with the masterplan later on the Agenda.
3. An Advisory Group was established to oversee the development of the masterplan, but following the inclusion of Nelson within the Towns Fund programme this role will now be undertaken by the Town Deal Board. It should be noted that final approval of the masterplan rests with Pendle Council.

4. The masterplan will support the production of the Town Investment Plan by providing the strategic land use framework.

### **Future High Streets Fund**

5. 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.
6. An Expression of Interest was submitted by the Council for Nelson Town Centre in March 2019 and Nelson was one of the first 50 towns invited in July 2019 to submit a Phase 2 application.
7. 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
8. 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.
9. The preparation of the business case requires specialist skills and knowledge. Given that there is a strong correlation between the Nelson masterplan and the Future High Streets Fund business case Cushman & Wakefield have been commissioned to provide some additional capacity and expertise to assist with our application.
10. The Government have stated that where towns are preparing to agree a Town Deal and are already involved in the Future High Streets Fund they expect plans to be aligned, whilst still meeting the separate objectives of both funds. It is therefore important for the Board to consider proposals for the Future High Streets Fund and initial thoughts around the business case will be included in the presentation from Cushman & Wakefield.

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

11. On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019 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.
12. A Towns Fund prospectus was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019. 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

13. 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. Any proposals for an alternative boundary would need to seek government approval. Pendle Council's Policy & Resources Committee have been advised of this boundary and have not proposed any changes.

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 is awaited.

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 (see report later on the Agenda in relation to the capacity funding)

**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 Government has set out timescales for progressing a Town Deal and these are set out below:

- Town Deal Boards convened (including publication of town boundary) – Frist meeting 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020
- Further guidance published – early 2020
- Town Investment Plans produced – Summer 2020
- Town Deals Agreed – 2020/21

17. Further guidance is due to be published shortly on the types of intervention eligible for support; timelines for submitting and agreeing Town Investment Plans; and guidelines on match funding.

## **Conclusion**

18. The establishment of the Town Deal Board will ensure that all the current initiatives and funding opportunities are aligned and help to identify other sources of funding to support regeneration of the town.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

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

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

**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

