

**NOTE OF A MEETING OF THE  
NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD  
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT OFFICE TEAMS  
ON 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020**

*PRESENT*

*S. Barnes (Chairman – in the Chair)*

<i>Councillor M. Iqbal</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council (PBC)</i>
<i>Councillor D. M. Whipp</i>	<i>PBC</i>
<i>C. Bennett</i>	<i>Positive Action in the Community</i>
<i>A. Stephenson</i>	<i>Member of Parliament for Pendle</i>
<i>H. Murray</i>	<i>Department for Works and Pensions</i>
<i>A. Melton</i>	<i>Lancashire Enterprise Partnership</i>
<i>A. Parkinson</i>	<i>Lancashire Enterprise Partnership</i>
<i>D. Gordon</i>	<i>Lancashire County Council</i>
<i>R. Bashir</i>	<i>Building Bridges</i>
<i>P. Hartley</i>	<i>In-Situ</i>
<i>L. Newby</i>	<i>Hatch</i>
<i>J. Daldas</i>	<i>Hatch</i>

**Officers in attendance:-**

<i>D. Langton</i>	<i>Chief Executive, PBC</i>
<i>N. Watson</i>	<i>Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager, PBC</i>
<i>J. Stockton</i>	<i>Senior Regeneration Officer, PBC</i>
<i>J. Eccles</i>	<i>Committee Administrator, PBC</i>

*(Apologies for absence were received from T. McDonald, J. Whittaker and C. Smith.)*



**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were reminded of the requirement to declare any interest they had on any item of business on the agenda.

**2. MINUTES**

**AGREED**

That the minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

J. Stockton reported that the Towns Fund Accelerated Funding bid for £750,000 for strategic site acquisition had been accepted.

**4. EVIDENCE OF NEED AND AREAS OF FEEDBACK**

At the last meeting, Hatch had highlighted some of the main socio-economic challenges that were facing Nelson. The more detailed Socio-Economic Narrative report, from which those headline

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messages were drawn had now been circulated to Members for their views. This work would form a key part of the evidence base for the Town Investment Plan. Members had also been given a draft report by Hatch on the Impact of Covid-19 on Pendle. This would be supplemented with qualitative information drawn from discussions with stakeholders and local businesses and would also form part of the evidence base.

L. Newby gave a presentation on the key thematic messages from the reports. She asked if Members felt they addressed the key areas of need and opportunity in the development of other aspects of the Plan elsewhere on the agenda.

Members agreed that the evidence base report was thorough but bleak. They thought it was a good piece of work that made a strong case for the significant investment that was required.

Key areas of need that members felt ought to be brought out/strengthened were the impact of Covid-19 and the recognition that Nelson is not an island – it sits within the wider Pendle economy which was hard hit; cohesion, well-being and social regeneration; the need to diversify and improve the quality of housing (more 2 into 1s, home office space); provision of electrical charging points etc; and addressing digital disadvantage – the ability for people to live, work and study digitally in Nelson.

The total scale of the economic impact of Covid-19 on the Pendle economy was estimated to be 12% and could be as high as 19% in the event of a second lockdown. Members noted they were already seeing large-scale redundancies across Pendle. Business support for existing businesses and entrepreneurs and an investment plan would be vital to the town's recovery.

## **AGREED**

- (1) That the Socio-Economic Narrative report and the Impact of Covid-19 on Pendle reports be noted.
- (2) That Hatch take into account the feedback and comments from the Board.
- (2) That both reports be submitted as supplemental information to support the Future High Streets Fund bid.

## **5. DRAFT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

Members considered a report which sought agreement of the draft strategic framework as the basis for wider consultation. The comments made at the last meeting on the initial draft vision and strategic objectives had been considered and a revised draft strategic framework was set out at Appendix 1 for consideration.

It was suggested that the vision be amended slightly to read *Nelson is a town proud of its historic **community** roots*; that it include the desire for Nelson to become a healthy town with clean growth; also some wording about increasing aspirations for young people, both generally, and building on the Pendle Challenge work in schools. Whilst Ofsted reports in Pendle schools were often good, pre 16 pupils' attainment levels were consistently at the bottom compared to other districts in Lancashire. DL said he would send Hatch the relevant information from LCC.

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## **AGREED**

- (1) That the draft vision and strategic objectives for the Nelson Town Investment Plan be slightly amended in line with Members' comments, and these be subject to wider consultation.
- (2) That the outcome of this consultation be brought back to the next Board meeting for the final strategic framework to be agreed.

## **6. AGREEING THE FINAL PROJECT LONG LIST**

Members were asked to consider the project long list in light of the evidence base reports, the key areas of need/opportunity and the Towns Fund intervention themes; discuss any potential gaps; and agree the final long list. Once agreed, the next step would be for project concept forms to be completed for each project.

There were currently 20 projects on the long list which met the criteria around the following themes connectivity (6), urban regeneration/community facility (10), skills and enterprise (4). The Board was asked to reduce the list to a more manageable size and that the shortlist align strongly with Town Deal funding objectives. Projects had to be capable of being developed between Oct-Dec 2020 and funding spent by March 2026. Deliverability was important as was choosing projects that would lever in other investment.

Hatch proposed a shortlist of 13 projects made up of 8 urban/land use projects, 3 dealing with connectivity and 2 in skills and enterprise and asked for feedback.

Members felt that the projects should reflect that it was a growing and aging population. It was important to invest in the health of the town and connecting that to improved leisure opportunities. There was a need to focus on business growth, innovation and resilience, perhaps through a capital grant support scheme. Linked to Pendle Community Hospital and the potential Extra Care housing scheme, was there scope for the hospital to become a spoke for UCLAN work placements?

## **AGREED**

- (1) That the final long list of projects be agreed, with some further thought given to a health/leisure project and a business support project.
- (2) That project concept forms be completed for each project and returned to Hatch within the week for their assessment.

## **7. PROJECT PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK**

Members were asked to consider a report by Hatch proposing a draft Project Prioritisation Framework against which the long list projects would be assessed to help arrive at a shortlist for inclusion within the Town Investment Plan. Each project needed to use the criteria established by MHCLG which was based on HMT Green Book guidance. Hatch suggested that a set of town specific criteria could also be applied which were specific to Nelson's strategic objectives and listed 7 examples.

The Board asked for the last 2 criteria to be taken out of the town specific criteria, as they were already covered in the mandatory criteria. It was agreed not to introduce weighting to the shortlist

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process. Productivity and quality of place were both very important, but it was felt there should also be a balance of projects, which would be looked at in the final sift.

## **AGREED**

- (1) That Hatch refine the town specific criteria, to form part of the Project Prioritisation Framework, in line with the Board's comments in preparation for the assessment of the project concept forms.
- (2) That Hatch's technical report of the scoring be brought back to the next meeting in order that a shortlist of projects could be agreed.

## **8. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

Members considered a report from Hatch which summarised the recent stakeholder engagement activities that had taken place, along with the activities that were planned over the next few weeks. This included a period of consultation on the draft vision and the long list project ideas/themes.

Around 30 consultations had been carried out so far with a range of community groups, community assets, councillors, youth groups and local businesses seeking views into what stakeholders perceived as the opportunities, threats and distinctive characteristics of Nelson and the effects of Covid-19. InSitu and Building Bridges would be doing some further work in the community, and feeding this back to Hatch. P. Hartley said he would liaise with A. Melton to start discussions with some of the young students at the College.

The Town Deal website would go live the following week. Board members were asked to help promote these activities through their own networks and channels to help bring in a wide range of views. A further report summarising the comments and feedback would be reported to the next meeting.

## **AGREED**

- (1) That the Stakeholder Engagement Update report by Hatch be noted.
- (2) That upcoming opportunities for people to have their say and help shape the plan through their own networks and channels be promoted.

## **9. WORKPLAN UPDATE**

Members were asked to consider progress made against the workplan for developing the Nelson Town Investment Plan and the key activities scheduled to take place in the coming weeks. Progress on these activities would be reported to the next meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

## **AGREED**

That the progress made against the workplan and the key activities in the coming weeks be noted and Hatch thanked for their work.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held at 10a.m. on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2020.