

REPORT OF: HOUSING, HEALTH AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
MANAGER

TO: NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD

DATES: 1st OCTOBER 2021

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DRAFT LOCAL ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek feedback and endorsement from the Board to the draft Local Assurance Framework for the Nelson Town Deal, prior to its consideration for agreement by the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board:

1. Provide feedback on the draft Local Assurance Framework and offer their endorsement to it.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

1. To enable comments from the Board to be reflected in the draft Local Assurance Framework, prior to its consideration by the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.

ISSUE

Background

1. Following the agreement of Heads of Terms, towns have up to one year for businesses cases to be developed, appraised and assured locally, and for a Summary Document to be submitted to MHCLG containing an overview of each case.
2. To set out the local assurance processes for the Nelson Town Deal, a draft Local Assurance Framework has been produced and is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

Draft Local Assurance Framework

3. The Nelson Town Deal Assurance Framework has been based on the Government's National Local Growth Assurance Framework guidance. The document outlines the governance arrangements and value for money processes that will be put in place for managing the delivery of Town Deal funding. It seeks to ensure that there is transparency and openness in the decision-making process and provides details of the roles and responsibilities of the Board, the Accountable Body and Section 151 Officer, and the Programme Management function in ensuring this.
4. The draft assurance framework is split into 3 key areas:

- i. Town Deal Governance

This section details the Governance structures, roles and responsibilities for oversight and delivery of the Town Deal. It outlines the role of the Board, the Accountable Body, the Programme Management function, the Communication and Engagement Sub-Group and the Plan Delivery Group (the governance structure set out in our Town Investment Plan).

It also proposes the establishment of a Project Appraisal sub-group who will be responsible for overseeing the development and appraisal of full business cases for each project, and for making recommendations to the Board.

- ii. Transparent and Accountable Decision Making

Section 2 outlines further details on the role of Pendle Council as the Accountable Body and the management of the public funding it will be responsible for through the Town Deal.

- iii. Programme Management and Assurance

Section 3 outlines the Nelson Town Deal business case development, appraisal and assurance process. It covers the arrangements that will be put in place following the approval of business cases to ensure the delivery of the Town Deal is properly monitored and managed.

Town Deal Board – Updated Terms of Reference and Operating Principles

5. In developing the draft Assurance Framework, the Town Deal Board Terms of Reference and Operating Principles have been reviewed. Given that these were written early in the Town Deal process, a number of updates are proposed to reflect the current position regarding the priorities of the Board. These are highlighted in red text and include:
 - Strengthening responsibilities relating to Stage 2 of the Town Deal as we move into the Business Case development and delivery phase,
 - Amending the Board membership by removing the Pendle Youth Council representatives. They have been unable to join the Board meetings due to timing and access issues. We involved the Youth Council in other ways during the development of the Town Investment Plan and suggest we continue to do this as projects are developed and delivered.

Next steps

The draft Assurance Framework will be updated in light of feedback from the Board. It will then be considered for agreement at the meeting of the Council's Policy and Resources Committee on 14th October.

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: Draft Nelson Town Deal Local Assurance Framework