

**NOTE OF A MEETING OF THE
NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD
HELD AT NELSON AND COLNE
COLLEGE AND VIA TEAMS
ON 10TH NOVEMBER, 2023**

PRESENT

S. Barnes (Chair)

Members of the Board

<i>Councillor N. Ahmed</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council (PBC)</i>
<i>Councillor A. Mahmood</i>	<i>PBC</i>
<i>Councillor D. Whipp</i>	<i>PBC</i>
<i>Councillor Z. Ali</i>	<i>Nelson Town Council</i>
<i>R. Bashir</i>	<i>Building Bridges</i>
<i>C. Bennett</i>	<i>Positive Action in the Community</i>
<i>J. Cooper</i>	<i>Lancashire Constabulary</i>
<i>D. Gordon</i>	<i>Lancashire County Council</i>
<i>P. Hartley</i>	<i>In-Situ</i>
<i>D. Rothwell</i>	<i>Nelson & Colne College</i>

Consultants/Advisors

<i>C. Schofield</i>	<i>Cities and Local Growth Unit (CLGU)</i>
<i>H. Warren</i>	<i>Department for Work and Pensions</i>

Officers in attendance

<i>R. Gibson</i>	<i>Director of Resources, PBC</i>
<i>P. Spurr</i>	<i>Director of Place, PBC</i>
<i>I. Bokhari</i>	<i>Head of Economic Growth, PBC</i>
<i>R. Savory</i>	<i>Project Manager, RAISE Partnership</i>
<i>D. Dixon</i>	<i>Group Operations Manager, RAISE Partnership</i>
<i>S. Farnell</i>	<i>Programme Manager, PBC</i>
<i>K. Wood</i>	<i>Project and Programmes Officer, PBC</i>
<i>J. Robinson</i>	<i>Committee Administrator, PBC</i>

Also in attendance

<i>M. Nuttall</i>	<i>Property Director, Brookhouse Group</i>
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(Apologies for absence were received from Dennis Mendoros, Lara Oddie, Lisa O'Loughlin, Christine Parker, Arif Patel, Rose Rouse and Andrew Stephenson MP).

1. NELSON AND COLNE COLLEGE

The Chair gave thanks to Nelson and Colne College for accommodating this Board meeting in their excellent facilities.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st September, 2023 were submitted for approval.

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st September, 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. THIS IS NELSON

The Project Manager for the This is Nelson project requested that this item be deferred to the next meeting.

AGREED

That this item be deferred to the next meeting.

5. PROJECT UPDATES AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Project and Programmes Officer gave a verbal update on project progress, outputs and outcomes and project risks of six of the seven Nelson Town Deal projects. The seventh project, Revitalised Nelson, would be discussed as part of a separate update for this meeting.

a. Advanced Digital Skills

It was reported that the Advanced Digitalised Skills project was now expected to be completed in March, 2024.

The reasons for the circa 12 months delay to the delivery of this project were enquired about. It was explained that there were issues with the Ace Centre which had resulted directly from a prolonged period of under use to resolve prior to Nelson and Colne College (NCC) entering into a lease agreement. Negotiations between NCC, Liberata and Business First Ltd were ongoing and it was expected that the issues would be resolved in the next few weeks.

b. Healthy Towns

The Healthy Towns (HT) Wavelengths project was still on hold pending the outcome of Pendle Borough Council's (PBC's) Strategic Leisure Review which would be discussed in further detail as part of a separate update for this meeting.

The playground at Marsden Park had been completed in September. Plans for the

tennis court were being finalised and a tendering exercise was due to commence in the next few weeks.

The Boggart Wood path works had started but were currently on hold, it was expected that the works would re-commence at the end of November.

Initial discussions regarding the potential provision of a Community Diagnostic Hub (CDH) in Nelson had taken place and further conversations were being scheduled which was welcomed by Board Members. The Department for Work and Pensions could seek to be represented at such a facility by a Disability Employment Advisor just as they were at the CDH in Darwen Health Centre.

It was reported that Sport England had recently announced that it would be investing £250m over the next five years to help boost activity in around 100 of the most socially deprived areas in England. It was asked if this funding could be accessed in order to further support the HT project. This possibility would be explored.

c. YES Hub

It was reported that 170 young people had accessed the YES Hub's (YH's) services in the first two quarters of this financial year.

Additional funding from the Department of Education, Sport England and the National Citizen Service had been secured in the last 6 months to further support the YH's work.

YH were continuing to work with the Department for Work and Pensions and were offering drop-in clinics run by with its partners. Furthermore, they were delivering a number of short courses with a focus on practical skills and had engaged with local training providers to facilitate more creative and media related activities.

Mind had recently agreed to continue to provide youth mental health support until February, 2025.

Detached Youth Outreach Work to tackle youth anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Nelson was being undertaken but statistical evidence suggested that there wasn't really an issue to tackle when compared to other areas in the Borough. Board Members did not agree with this as they were aware of issues in the Town Centre. Underreporting could explain this. A piece of work was currently being undertaken by Lancashire Constabulary which had identified a lack of confidence in reporting incidents of all levels of crime including ASB to the Police particularly amongst residents of Bradley and Whitefield. The Board's position in relation to achieving this element of the project's outcomes and outputs was enquired about. This would now need to be reviewed to ascertain whether the revision of that particular element of the project would be required.

d. Business Resilience and Growth

PBC's Executive Committee had considered the recommendation Board Members made at the last meeting and had resolved on 21st September, 2023 that the eligibility criteria of the Business Resilience and Growth Grants scheme be amended to include all sectors of the business community but they did not agree to the expansion of the buffer zone. Expansion of the scope to all businesses had had a positive impact on expressions of interest in the scheme but to date no further applications had been submitted. Work, however, was underway to further engage with local businesses outside of the manufacturing sector to promote the scheme and increase the number of applications.

All but £2k of the £500k Year 1 funding for 2022/23 had now been allocated and almost £308k of the £700k Year 2 funding had been allocated in the first two quarters of 2023/24.

Young Apprenticeship Grant Funds that were available as part of Lancashire County Council's Economic Recovery and Growth Fund were mentioned as something businesses in the scheme could potentially benefit from. It was felt that they could provide businesses with a more affordable route to achieving the scheme's job creation target.

e. This is Nelson

The This is Nelson project was producing good results and was on track for achieving its outcomes and outputs.

A Textile Biennial exhibition had recently been hosted and had been attended by 500 people.

A lease for some space at the 3b Systems premises had been secured and would be used as a community space.

Additional funding from Arts Council England had been secured to further support the project.

f. Project Risk Report

Key programme risks continued to relate to rising costs due to inflation and match funding but mitigations were in place to manage these risks.

Key project level risks continued to relate to the acquisition of Pendle Rise in the Revitalised Nelson project, the outcome of the Strategic Leisure Review and how it might impact on the proposed investment in Wavelengths in the Healthy Towns project, and securing a lease for the ACE Centre to commence works on the parts of the Advanced Digital Skills project. These risks, however, continued to be managed through the project risk registers, Project Officer meetings and quarterly monitoring.

A further risk which had now been fully mitigated was mentioned that being the change in management of the Nelson Town Deal programme. Both S. Farnell and

K. Wood had worked hard to ensure that there had been no disruption to programme management following J. Whittaker's retirement which was commendable and deserved of formal recognition.

Board Members were advised that the submission date for the next monitoring return to DLUHC as part of the Bi-Annual return had been postponed to 4th December, 2023. A draft return was being prepared and would be shared with the Chair for him, subject to Board Members' approval, to sign it off on behalf of the Board.

AGREED

- (1) That the progress of the six Nelson Town Deal projects be noted.
- (2) That the key project and programme risks and mitigating actions be noted.
- (3) That an update on the potential provision of a Community Diagnostic Hub (CDH) in Nelson be provided at the next meeting.
- (4) That the operating model of the CDH in Darwen Health Centre be reviewed with a view to informing further work on similar provision in Nelson.
- (5) That the possibility of accessing Sport England funding to further support the Healthy Towns project be explored.
- (6) That the Board's position for achieving the Yes Hub's project outcomes and outputs relating to tackling youth anti-social behaviour in Nelson be reviewed ahead of the next meeting.
- (7) That the impact of amending the eligibility criteria for Business Resilience and Growth Grants on the demand for them be quantified and reported at the next meeting.
- (8) That the Project Manager of the Business Resilience and Growth project be made aware of the Young Apprenticeship Grant Funds that were available as part of Lancashire County Council's Economic Recovery and Growth Fund.
- (9) That the hard work of S. Farnell and K. Wood on the Nelson Town Deal programme be formally recognised and commended by the Board.
- (10) That delegated authority be granted to the Chair to sign off, on the behalf of the Board, the next monitoring return to DLUHC prior to submission on 4th December, 2023.

6. LEISURE REVIEW

The Director of Place gave a verbal update on the progress of the Strategic Leisure Review.

PBC had a commitment to the continued operation of the three leisure centres in the

Borough and was seeking to identify environmentally and financially sustainable operating models to achieve this aim. PBC had engaged a team of consultants, led by Alliance Leisure, to undertake this work. Their initial report was expected by the end of November and would be considered by Full Council in mid-December. The steer on the way forward would then be provided by the Council. Board Members would receive a further update at the next meeting.

Board Members were advised that the submission of a project adjustment request to DLUHC for the Healthy Towns project might be required subject to the outcome of the review.

AGREED

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) That a further update on the Strategic Leisure Review be provided at the next meeting.

7. PROJECT CONDITIONS

The Project and Programmes Officer gave a verbal update on Project Conditions.

Most projects continued to have outstanding conditions with the exception of the YES Hub project whose conditions were now fully discharged. Furthermore, two conditions for the Business Resilience and Growth project had been discharged since the last meeting.

Programme Managers would be implementing a monitoring system for individual project conditions which would be reviewed regularly as part of monthly checkpoint meetings to ensure that they can be discharged and evidenced.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

The Project and Programmes Officer gave a verbal update on upcoming events and engagement opportunities.

Three engagement sessions for the Accessible Nelson project had now been arranged. One would take place by invitation only on 17th November, 2023; another would take place between 3pm and 6:30pm on 22nd November, 2023 at Nelson Library; and there would be a Webinar via Microsoft Teams at 5:30pm on 6th December, 2023. The importance of effectively managing communications on this particular project was emphasised by Board Members.

A Community Assembly for the This is Nelson project would take place at Hodge House on 11th November, 2023.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

9. LONG-TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS PROGRAMME

The Director of Place gave a verbal update on the Long-Term Plan for the Towns Programme.

Pendle Borough Council (PBC) would be receiving £20m in 'endowment-style' funding to invest in Nelson over the next 10 years to engender long-term transformation and informally build on the work of the Nelson Town Deal. The funding was being made available to address issues under three key Investment Themes; Safety and Security; High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration; and Transport and Connectivity.

Extensive consultation would be required in order for a long-term investment plan based on the priorities of local people to be developed. Furthermore, the Town Deal Board would need to be repurposed to provide the Governance arrangement required by Central Government.

By April 2024 the Town Deal Board would need to be repurposed and the process of setting out a long-term vision for Nelson based on local priorities commenced. By Spring 2024 capacity funding would be released to support the development of investment plans and community engagement. Nelson's Long-Term Plan would need to be submitted to Government by Summer 2024 and would be followed by the release of Year One funding.

The current lack of business representation on the Town Deal Board was highlighted as something that would need to be addressed as part of the Board's repurposing exercise. It was suggested that existing tenants of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre be represented and also members of the local community.

The Chair congratulated PBC for securing this funding and recommended that the past submission to the Future High Streets Fund be revisited to provide a 'quick start' into the Long-Term Plan development process given the extensive work that had been undertaken on identifying key issues and challenges for Nelson.

AGREED

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) That the existing Town Deal Board be repurposed and the process of setting out a long-term vision for Nelson based on local priorities be commenced not later than April 2024.
- (3) That there be a particular focus on recruiting Members from the local business community including tenants of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre when expanding the Town Deal Board.

- (4) That the recruitment of people from the local community onto the expanded Town Deal Board be considered.
- (5) That Pendle Borough Council's past submission to the Future High Streets Fund be revisited to provide a 'quick start' into the Long-Term Plan development process.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be held in January, 2024. Date to be confirmed.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED

That in pursuance of the power contained in Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the next item of business on the grounds that if a member of the public and press were present during consideration of the item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information which was of a commercially sensitive nature.

13. REVITALISED NELSON

(a) Pendle Rise

A verbal update was given on the current position on the Pendle Rise CPO and the parallel negotiations to acquire the shopping centre by negotiated settlement.

An External Advisor had now been formally appointed and was in the process of reviewing the CPO's Statement of Reasons and performing a CPO health check. They would also be providing a clear programme showing the expected timescales and milestones for the acquisition of Pendle Rise by CPO and this would be circulated to Board Members once it was available. It was, however, still hoped that the shopping centre could be acquired by negotiated settlement.

AGREED

- (1) That the current position with Pendle Rise be noted.
- (2) That a clear programme showing the expected timescales and milestones for the acquisition of Pendle Rise by CPO be circulated to Board Members once it was available.

(b) Relocation Properties

A report had been submitted for Board Members' consideration. The report proposed an approach for future acquisitions of relocation properties for the existing tenants of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre (PRSC), to the extent that the Town Deal funding held by Pendle Borough Council (PBC) would allow. Approval for the approach's use would be sought from PBC's Executive on 16th November, 2023 as having a clear funded strategy for relocation properties for displaced tenants was a key component of the justification for the use of CPO powers.

Board Members agreed with the use of the proposed approach in principle but would need assurances regarding transparency and value for money in relation to PBC's costs should it be approved by the Executive.

The first property to be acquired would be the former Althams Travel unit at 1-3 Scotland Road, Nelson and a number of other properties in an approximate radius of 500m from PRSC had now been shortlisted for use as relocation properties. Regular updates on the acquisition of relocation properties and progress on the relocation process would be provided at future Board meetings.

AGREED

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the Town Deal Board agree in principle to the grant arrangements for the acquisition of properties outlined in the report subject to; arrangements being put in place for renovation spending incurred within the Joint Venture structure to provide assurance to the Board on value for money; and arrangements being put in place to ensure recycling of any rental income payable to Pendle Borough Council, less any appropriate cost be made to the Town Deal programme budget.
- (3) That regular updates on the acquisition of relocation properties and the financial implications be provided to future Board meetings.

(c) Trafalgar House

In a verbal update Board Members were advised that a number of options for the future use of Trafalgar House (TH) including leisure provision were still being considered. In view of this, TH was being looked at as part of the Strategic Leisure Review. A more substantive update would be provided on completion of that piece of work.

AGREED

That Board Members be provided with a more substantive update on Trafalgar House and the options for its future use upon completion of the Strategic Leisure Review.

(d) Accessible Nelson

A report together with an indicative programme of works had been submitted to provide Board Members with an update on progress with the Accessible Nelson project.

The modelling phase of the project had now been completed and its outcomes were now being used to inform the detailed design phase being led by Lancashire County Council Highways. A report on the progress of the design phase would be submitted to the next Board meeting.

The indicative programme of works showed that all phases of the project could be delivered by March, 2026 in accordance with the timescales required for spending Levelling Up and Town Deal funding.

AGREED

- (1) That the report and the indicative programme of works for the Accessible Nelson project be noted.
- (2) That a report on the design phase of the project be submitted to the next meeting.

Chair _____