

**NOTE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD  
HELD AT IN-SITU, THE GARAGE,  
NORTHLIGHT AND VIA TEAMS  
ON 16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2024**

*PRESENT*

***Members of the Board***

<i>Councillor N. Ahmed</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council (PBC)</i>
<i>Councillor M. Iqbal</i>	<i>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>S. Barnes</i>	<i>Chairman, Nelson and Colne College</i>
<i>C. Bayne</i>	<i>In-Situ</i>
<i>C. Bennett</i>	<i>Positive Action in the Community</i>
<i>K. McClarnan</i>	<i>In-Situ</i>
<i>D. Mendoros</i>	<i>Pendle Vision Board</i>
<i>A. Patel</i>	<i>East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust</i>
<i>D. Rothwell</i>	<i>Nelson and Colne College</i>

***Consultants/Advisors***

<i>S. Blenkinsopp</i>	<i>Department for Work and Pensions</i>
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***Officers in attendance***

<i>R. Rouse</i>	<i>Chief Executive, PBC</i>
<i>D. Lawrenson</i>	<i>Interim 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>Councillor M. Aslam</i>	<i>PBC</i>
<i>M. Nuttall</i>	<i>Property Director, Brookhouse Group</i>
<i>R. Macdonald</i>	<i>Local Democracy Reporting Service</i>

*(Apologies for absence were received from Rauf Bashir, Steve Burns, David Gordon, Lara Oddie, Lisa O'Loughlin, Christine Parker, Claire Pearson, Andrew Stephenson MP and Neil Watson).*

**1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

**AGREED**

That S. Barnes be appointed Chair of the Board.

*S. Barnes – (Chair)*

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

C. Bennett declared an interest in Item 7 in respect to the YES Hub.

Councillor D. Whipp declared a non-prejudicial interest owing to being a Director of PenBrook Developments Ltd. but was not required to.

**3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 were submitted for approval.

**AGREED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4. APPOINTMENT OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

It was reported that J. Rosenblatt, the Executive Chairman of Buoyant Upholstery Ltd. had applied to be a Member of the Nelson Town Deal Board. Following interview by the Chair and the Project and Programmes Officer it was recommended that J. Rosenblatt be appointed a Business representative for small to medium enterprises as it was felt he would add real value to the Board.

It was asked if the appointment of a Business representative who operated a business in the town centre or the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre had been considered given the value and strength they could add to the Board and to the Revitalised Nelson project in particular. There was a commitment to diversify the Board's membership and potential new members from the suggested areas were actively being sought.

**AGREED**

- (1) That J. Rosenblatt, the Executive Chairman of Buoyant Upholstery Ltd. be appointed a Member of the Board as a Business representative for small to medium enterprises as per the Chair's and the Project and Programmes Officer's recommendation.

- (2) That the search for a new Member for the Board who operates a business in the town centre or the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre be continued.

## **5. REVIEW OF BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

The Project and Programmes Officer submitted a report for the annual review of the membership of the Town Deal Board and its Operating Principles and also its Terms of Reference which were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

A number of minor updates and changes were proposed relating to the Board's functions and responsibilities, its Chairmanship, membership and the appointment of Officers. The changes reflected the current position of the board in the Town Deal process and the support provided by the Council.

An error in paragraph 3.1 of the Terms of Reference was identified. Lisa O'Loughlin was a representative of Nelson and Colne College and not the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership as stated. The Terms of Reference would be amended accordingly.

### **AGREED**

- (1) That the updates to the functions and responsibilities of the Board be approved.
- (2) That the Board membership and representation be approved.
- (3) That the appointment of Officers be confirmed.
- (4) That the Chairmanship and membership of the Board be reviewed in 2 years.
- (5) That the Terms of Reference be amended to show Lisa O'Loughlin as a representative of Nelson and Colne College and not Lancashire Enterprise Partnership as currently stated.

## **6. DEEP DIVE REVIEW**

Board Members were advised that an external audit had recently been undertaken by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

A draft report had been expected by 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 but the Auditors were still reviewing the evidence they had been provided with. It was now expected that their report would be received by 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 and it was hoped that the outcome of the audit could be reported at the next Board meeting.

### **AGREED**

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) That the outcome, if known, of the external audit undertaken by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) be reported at the next Board meeting.

## **7. TOWN DEAL BOARD - PROJECT APPRAISALS**

The Director of Place submitted a report which asked Board Members to consider a proposal for the independent appraisal of future Nelson Town Deal projects.

The report proposed that any future projects brought to the Board for approval be considered by independent consultants as they had been at the outset of the Town Deal programme.

Suitable consultants would be identified by the Programme Management Team following Pendle Borough Council procurement rules on a project-by-project basis to ensure that suitable expertise would be applied to different project scenarios. Consultant appointments would be funded through Town Deal resources and their reports would be brought to the Board for consideration on a project-by-project basis. This would dispense with the need to establish a Sub-Group.

The report further proposed that the Board's decision-making process be refreshed to provide distinct protocols and enable clear and recorded consideration of future project appraisals. Four recommendations for how this could be achieved were set out in the report for Board Members' consideration.

### **AGREED**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That any future Nelson Town Deal projects brought to the Board for approval be considered by suitable independent consultants identified by the Programme Management Team and funded through Town Deal programme resources.
- (3) That all independent consultant reports be brought to the Board to be considered on a project-by-project basis.
- (4) That the Board's decision-making process be refreshed to provide distinct protocols and enable clear and recorded consideration of future project appraisals.
- (5) That (4) be achieved in the following ways:
  - Written reports be reserved for key rolling programme agenda items, such as relocation property expenditure, conditions discharge and also for key decisions such as project appraisals.
  - The identity of formal Board Members, rather than attendees, be clarified and there be clear voting on key decisions and the approval of written reports. These decisions and the votes for / against would then be recorded.
  - Board Members be clearly identified at meetings with other attendees not having any voting rights on items.
  - Board Members to serve for a 'term' after which they would have to seek re-election to ensure their relevance through the period of the Town Deal programme. Length of term to be decided.

- (6) That the Board's Terms of Reference be revised should it be decided that the length of the Board's membership term not be two years.

## **8. THIS IS NELSON**

The representatives of In-Situ gave a presentation on the This is Nelson project during which reference was made to an infographic, based on data collected in September 2023, which had been circulated to Board Members prior to the meeting.

The following highlights in relation to project outputs were identified:

- 154 events hosted and attended by 13,414 people of which 2,491 were young people.
- The Festival of Culture had been the biggest event of 2023 and had been attended by 4,320 people, 50% of which were from IMD1 (area of most deprivation). The event had attracted a wide range of ages and ethnicities and importantly people who self-identified as disabled.
- 1,208 sqm public realm improved including work towards developing the Nelson Food Strategy and community gardens and growing spaces.
- 588 sqm of floorspace repurposed including 3b Systems. It was hoped that the 3b Systems premises could be used on a long-term basis given the success to date. There were also plans for the temporary use of the former Althams premises alongside other uses for exhibitions, workshops and engagement sessions.
- Improved cultural facilities had been provided at Nelson Library, Pavilion Café and the Building Bridges Hub. A programme of activities was being delivered at the Library.
- Weekly meetings and quarterly Community Assemblies were being held as part of the young people's element of the project.
- Full-time equivalent permanent jobs created through both the project's administration / project management and its artist.

Since September 2023 the project had reached an additional 1,064 people of which 333 were children or young people and a further 47 events had been hosted.

The likely cost of improving the access arrangements at the 3b Systems premises if it were to be used more regularly was enquired about. Quotes had been obtained for the installation of a lift and the provision of disabled toilet facilities. A business case would be developed and funding would be sought. It was felt that the new Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund could be accessed to fund such a project due to it having a particular community development focus.

## **AGREED**

That the content of the presentation be noted.

## **9. PROGRESS ON NELSON TOWN DEAL BUSINESS GRANTS**

The Head of Economic Growth submitted a report which updated Board Members on the progress of the Business Resilience and Growth Grants programme.

The progress in 2022/23 and 2023/24 was illustrated in two tables in the report. Both tables indicated that good progress towards expenditure targets had been made in each year. It was expected that the outputs and outcomes the programme was committed to delivering would be achieved and in some cases exceeded. Particular attention was drawn to the target for CO<sub>2</sub> tonnes saved. Based on the current allocation of the grants, there is an expectation for this target to be exceeded by 407.7% once the agreed carbon saving measures were in place.

There was a remaining budget of £49,130.89 in 2023/24 which would carry forward to 2024/25. This amount had previously been allocated to a company but they had since withdrawn their application.

There had been a lot of effort put into pro-actively interacting with businesses to encourage them to participate in the programme. Currently, there were 19 ongoing enquiries, 1 of which had submitted a full application for £100k and 4 of which would soon be submitting full applications for a total £265k. Furthermore, there had been 5 Expressions of Interest worth £154k. It was asked what proportion of the enquiries would result in final spend in 2024/25. It was too soon to tell, the figures at the end of Quarter 2 would give some indication. There was a commitment to ensuring the money would be spent and all outputs would be delivered and this would be kept under review during the year.

There had been a number of news stories about the programme which could be viewed at <https://www.nelsontowndeal.co.uk/portfolio-item/business-resilience-and-growth/>.

The project was commended by Board Members for its achievements to date and its ability to really transform businesses in Nelson.

It was suggested that case studies be included in the next progress report submitted to the Board and this was welcomed.

## **AGREED**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That case studies be included in the next progress report submitted to the Board on the Business Resilience and Growth Grants programme.

## **10. PROJECT UPDATES AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Project and Programmes Officer gave a verbal update on project progress, outputs and outcomes and project risks of three of the seven Nelson Town Deal projects. Some of the projects had already been discussed at this meeting and Revitalised Nelson and Accessible Nelson, would be discussed later as part of separate updates.

### **a. Advanced Digital Skills**

It was reported that works on the College Hub element of the Advanced Digital Skills

project were now completed. There were some minor outstanding snagging issues but it was expected that they would be resolved during the half-term break. The feedback from students, staff and visitors on the project had been excellent.

With regards to the Town Centre Spoke element of the project, Heads of Term for Nelson and Colne College to occupy space in the ACE Centre had now been agreed.

## **b. Healthy Towns**

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

With regards to the Parks element of the project, improvement works including the placement of new benches and bins in all of Nelson's parks had now been undertaken.

The specification for a tennis court at Marsden Park was now completed and would be put out to tender imminently. It was expected that works would commence in April 2024.

There had been a small delay in siting the outdoor chess table in the park due to missing parts.

Plans for a BMX / pump track in the park were currently being developed with procurement expected in September 2024.

The development of a community garden in the park in collaboration with UK Shared Prosperity Fund funded Greener Together Pendle was being investigated.

Works to demolish and redevelop the shelter in Victoria Park were expected to commence in March 2024.

Renewal of the park's entrance was now completed. The path had been resurfaced and additional LED lighting had been installed. Furthermore, damaged trees had been replaced and secured to prevent further damage.

Plans for a 'learn to ride' track in the park were currently being developed and procurement was expected in March 2024.

The senior playground introduced in Walverden Park in September 2023 continued to receive good feedback from the local community. A contractor for the replacement of the junior playground had since been appointed and works were due to commence in March 2024.

## **c. YES Hub**

A wide range of engagement activities to support young people into employment continued to be delivered.

Warm drinks, snacks and activities were being offered to 16-24 year olds as part of Lancashire County Council's Warm Space scheme.

There had been collaboration with local Secondary Schools to promote the services of the YES Hub. There had also been collaboration with McDonalds to provide detached youth work and employment opportunities.

Mental health and wellbeing sessions were being delivered. An under 25s Sexual Health Service had been introduced to provide free of charge contraception and information and support.

There was continued provision of Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications in game design, coding and web design / development.

Two case studies / success stories were shared with Board Members in video format.

#### **d. Project Risk Report**

All seven projects were now embedded in the delivery stage and were progressing well.

Overall, the achievement of project outputs and outcomes was on track. The YES Hub's output relating to physical activity had not yet been achieved as young people were going into employment before completing a six-week course, there were, however, mitigations in place to address this. Tracking the outputs and outcomes of the Advanced Digital Skills project would commence in April 2024 and it was not yet known when tracking for the Accessible Nelson and Revitalised Nelson projects could commence.

Key programme level risks continued to relate to the acquisition of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre in the Revitalised Nelson project and the decision around investment in Wavelengths in the Healthy Towns project. These risks, however, continued to be managed through the project risk registers, Project Officer meetings and regular monitoring.

A monitoring return covering project progress, spend, outputs, outcomes and risks was submitted to DLUHC in December 2023 as part of the Bi-Annual return. The next monitoring return was due in June 2024.

#### **AGREED**

- (1) That the progress of the three Nelson Town Deal projects be noted.
- (2) That the key programme risks and mitigating actions be noted.

#### **11. LEISURE REVIEW**

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



A Facility Options Appraisal study had been produced by a team of consultants engaged by Pendle Borough Council (PBC) and submitted to its Executive for consideration on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2023.

The consultants' report made it clear that significant investment would be required over the next ten years to keep the three leisure centres operational and to refurbish / extend them. Members of the Executive acknowledged that PBC did not have sufficient funding to make such an investment and further acknowledged that none of the options proposed in the report were currently viable from a financial point of view.

The Members of the Executive then resolved that investigations be undertaken to identify alternative external funding sources which might be available. They further resolved that a comprehensive consultation exercise be undertaken with representatives from the Town and Parish Councils, facility users and local residents. This exercise was expected to commence at the end of February 2024. A report would then be submitted to a future meeting of the Executive on completion of both pieces of work.

Undoubtedly there would be implications for the Healthy Towns (HT) project. It was asked if the £1.7million of HT project funding allocated to the expansion of Wavelengths could be redirected to ensuring its future financial and environmental sustainability. There would be support from the Board for realigning the project to achieve that aim but it would first need to be understood what that realignment might look like. This was welcomed by the PBC Officers present who would now work on developing a proposal to be brought back to a future Board meeting for consideration.

## **AGREED**

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) That a proposal for realigning the Healthy Towns project to achieve Wavelengths' future financial and environmental sustainability rather than its expansion be developed for consideration at a future Board meeting.

## **12. ACQUISITION OF RELOCATION PROPERTIES MONITORING OF MATCH FUNDING**

This issue was the subject of a report elsewhere on the meeting agenda.

## **13. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

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

Two free drop-in workshops were being held at Nelson Library between 10am-12pm on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 and Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2024 as part of the This is Nelson project.

There would be a World Poetry Day event at Nelson Library on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2024 which would be attended by the Mayor of Pendle.

A report following the public consultation on the Accessible Nelson project, which took place in November / December 2023, was expected in the next few weeks. Early feedback had shown that overall the public response was positive.

A plaque for the Advanced Digital Skills project was currently in development.

**AGREED**

That the update be noted.

**14. LONG-TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS PROGRAMME AND BOARD ADAPTATION**

The Head of Economic Growth submitted a report to inform Board Members of the guidance and arrangements for the Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund programme.

It was reported that there had been a fundamental change to the guidance issued by Central Government since the report's publication. It was, therefore, recommended that this item be deferred until further guidance became available.

**AGREED**

That this item be deferred until further guidance from Central Government on the Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund programme becomes available.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

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

**16. 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.

**17. 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.

The CPO's Statement of Reasons had now been reviewed by the appointed External Advisor and their feedback had been positive. They had also provided 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 following this meeting. Again, it was still hoped that the shopping centre could be acquired by negotiated settlement.

Board Members noted the update but emphasised the importance of keeping up the momentum with the parallel processes given the tightening timescales.

As the Board would not meet again until May 2024 it was requested that Board Members be advised of any significant developments in advance of that meeting.

### **AGREED**

- (1) That the current position on Pendle Rise be noted.
- (2) That the clear programme showing the expected timescales and milestones for the acquisition of Pendle Rise by CPO be circulated to Board Members following this meeting.
- (3) That Board Members be advised of any significant developments relating to Pendle Rise in advance of the next Board meeting.

### **(b) Relocation Properties**

A report had been submitted for Board Members' consideration.

At the last Board meeting an approach to financing future acquisitions of relocation properties for the current tenants of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre had been agreed in principle subject to certain assurances regarding transparency and value for money in relation to Pendle Borough Council's costs being provided. To ensure these assurances could be provided and that Board Members would have oversight of how match funding was being applied; it was recommended that six measures be implemented. Following discussion, Board Members determined to implement five of the six proposed measures.

### **AGREED**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the implementation of the following five measures be approved to provide the Board with transparency of expenditure and appropriate control mechanisms for the use of match funding for financing relocation properties for the current tenants of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre:
  - Match funding only be used for the costs associated with the operation and management of the estate as detailed in the report.

- Any expenditure for other costs be brought to the Board for approval prior to commitment.
  - All purchase orders be personally approved by Pendle Borough Council's (PBC's) Director of Place.
  - A weekly finance report showing income (e.g. from rental receipts) and expenditure against relocation properties be produced and shared with PBC's Director of Place and the Board's Chair.
  - A standing item be included on the agendas for all future Board meetings in order for the income and expenditure and revenue and capital against relocation properties to be reported.
- (3) That the proposed weekly Programme Management meetings between Raise Partnership Limited and PBC's Project and Programmes Officer not be convened.

**(c) Trafalgar House**

A briefing note had been submitted for Board Members' information.

The Leisure Review had flagged that there was an opportunity to explore some leisure/community recreation provision at Trafalgar House (TH) which would complement other Town Deal projects. The viability of this was currently being assessed and a detailed business case would be produced for Board Members' consideration at a future meeting.

The proposal was supported by some Board Members but some expressed reservations. Being mindful of a number of issues prior to any decisions on the long-term future of TH being made was suggested including; the extremely poor condition of the building; the availability of existing space in the vicinity that could already accommodate the proposed use; and competition from other leisure facilities. The need for parking in Nelson town centre was also mentioned. Options for additional and electric vehicle charging parking in the vicinity of TH were already being considered as part of the wider scheme.

**AGREED**

- (1) That the briefing note be noted.
- (2) That a detailed business case for some leisure/community recreation provision at Trafalgar House be submitted to a future Board meeting for consideration.

**(d) Accessible Nelson**

A verbal update was given on the Accessible Nelson (AN) project.

Drawings and designs for the project had now gone through consultation and costings had been requested and were awaited.

There was a good working relationship with Lancashire County Council (LCC) Highways who would be procuring and contracting all the works.

Detailed work was now being undertaken to ensure that the proposals for the Pendle Rise element of the Revitalised Nelson scheme integrated fully with the AN project.

**AGREED**

That the update be noted.

Chair \_\_\_\_\_