

REPORT FROM: HEAD OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

TO: EXECUTIVE

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LONG-TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS: NELSON

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report updates the Executive on progress made on the delivery preparations for the Long-Term Plan for Towns funding which has been allocated to Nelson and to inform the Executive of the priorities for funding which have emerged during the investment planning process, in conjunction with the Long Term Plan Board.

A separate presentation will be given at the meeting from the consultants who are developing the plan, to advise on how this is coming along in its draft form, and the priorities for funding which have been identified for the Investment Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To note progress made on the delivery preparations for the Long-Term Plan for Towns funding which has been allocated to Nelson.
- (2) To request feedback to the consultants on the content of the plan.

BACKGROUND

1. The Long Term Plan for Towns (LTPT) is a new non-competitive fund awarded to a select number of towns across the country, and announced in October 2023. In Pendle, the funding is ring fenced specifically for Nelson. The fund is designed to take an endowment-style approach, with c.£20m of funding being released over a 10-year period.
2. A report was presented to Executive in March 2024 outlining the background to the fund and actions which needed to be taken to unlock the funds from government. The purpose of this current report is to update the Executive on progress since then in developing the Investment Plan, and how this is taking shape. A short presentation from the consultants will form an accompaniment to this report, where they will explain about the draft investment plan and the investment decisions which are forming.

Governance Board

3. The Investment Plan and the decisions on how the fund is to be spent are overseen by a community-led Town Board, whilst the local authority acts as the accountable funding body.
4. The Town Board is made up of 15 individuals and is Chaired by Claire Bennett of Nelson based charity, Positive Action in the Community.
5. Other members are:
 - Rose Rouse, PBC
 - Cllr Asjad Mahmood, PBC
 - Cllr Ashley Sutcliffe, LCC
 - Cllr Zafar Ali, Nelson TC
 - Andrew Stephenson MP
 - Lisa O'Loughlin, N&C College
 - Dr Irfan Chaudhary, Health representative
 - Imam Aftaq, Nelson Community Masjid and Governor Marsden Community Primary
 - Joel Fiengolds - local Nelson Town Centre Businessman
 - A representative from Lancashire Police
 - Christine Blythe, CVS
 - Rauf Bashir, Building Bridges
 - Saj Butt, 3B Systems Ltd
 - Mike Nuttall, PenBrook

Development of the Investment Plan

6. External consultants, funded through the LTPT, have been developing an Investment Plan for submission to government. This must consist of a 10-year vision as well as a 3-year Investment Plan. The deadline for submission is 1st August. This is a very tight timescale and some of the required information from government has still not been released. The Plan is therefore a developing work in progress.
7. The fund guidance makes clear that the independent Town Board is to be responsible for developing the Long-Term Plan, working closely with the local community to co-design the plan.
8. While the Town Board may delegate drafting and/or submission of elements of the Plan to the local authority, the Long-Term Plan must have been ratified by the Town Board. As such, the Council Executive Committee is not being asked to approve the Plan, rather it is being presented to it for information, and with the opportunity to provide feedback to the Board and the consultants drafting the Plan.
9. Based on the work which has been undertaken by the team of consultants, which has included desk research, such as a review of key council policy documents and statistics related to Nelson; and engagement and public consultation with a broad range of stakeholders and the public, and with officers of the council. This has been used to guide the Town Board in identifying the most appropriate areas for investment within the Plan.
10. As already alluded to, the investment planning exercise is not yet complete and continues to take shape. The presentation to be given at the Executive meeting represents a work in progress.

The emerging Investment Plan

11. The LTPT Investment Plan is to focus on three defined intervention themes.
 - Safety and Security
 - High streets, heritage and regeneration

- Transport and connectivity

12. It is an expectation from government that at least one intervention per theme is covered in the Long-Term Plan.

13. The objectives to focus on with the funding, and the proposed interventions to select for the Investment Plan (from the pre-populated list from government), which have emerged, are as follows.

Safety and Security Theme:

Objectives	Proposed Interventions	Selected Long Term Plan Interventions
Make Nelson Town Centre safer and more secure during the day and the evening	Making the town centre safer: Further use of CCTV and increased police presence/street wardens in the town centre, use of measures to address dangerous driving and vehicle nuisance and greater support for homeless people.	S1: Design and management of the built and landscaped environment to 'design out crime'
Encourage and support residents to look after their local area and to promote a greater pride in Nelson	A new social contract to encourage people to look after their area: Increased focus on anti-social behaviour, dangerous driving, fly tipping and vandalism, accompanied by a campaign and street wardens to effect long-term behavioural change, champion a 'civic mindset' and promote more pride in place.	S2: Engage with the Police Force and together consider interventions to focus on visible crime prevention in defined areas places

High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration:

Objectives	Proposed Interventions	Selected Long Term Plan Interventions
<p>Reinforce the town centre's role as a key service centre, creating a vibrant place where people want to spend time and where all communities can gather</p>	<p>Breathing new life into vacant and/or historic buildings and revitalising urban spaces: a pop up shop/meanwhile use programme to repurpose vacant and/or historic buildings with a variety of uses, improve shop frontages/canopies, art in the alleys to beautify, iconic features (such as water fountains) to improve the public realm and promote civic pride; celebrate Nelson's heritage and turn neglected passageways into dynamic focal points of community life.</p> <p>Encouraging a café culture: Developing attractive outside spaces for people to spend time in Nelson to encourage dwell time. This includes street furniture, architectural lighting and improved public squares.</p>	<p>H1: Funding for place-based regeneration and town centre and high street improvements</p>
<p>Animate the high street, revitalise urban spaces, achieve synergy in design and breathe new life into vacant and/or historic buildings</p>	<p>Animating high streets and making the town centre a place where all communities can gather: Provide enhanced community spaces where people can access services and activities, creating a stronger events programme and working with communities to realise the potential of arts, culture, heritage and creative assets and activities. This could include a focus on food and drink as well as supporting skills and community development so young people can take up opportunities that emerge from business-led regeneration</p>	<p>H4: Enhanced support for arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities, projects and facilities and historic institutions</p>
<p>Strengthen community spirit, instilling a pride and strong sense of identity and belonging to create a cohesive,</p>	<p>Strengthening community spirit: Activities to build pride in place and encourage local people to be actively involved in Nelson's programme of change, this could include encouraging volunteering and resources to support local</p>	<p>H7: Funding for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.</p>
<p>inclusive and welcoming community</p>	<p>organisations to start up, create new or expanded projects, or test ideas.</p>	
<p>Increase, diversify and anchor the town centre offer with retail, food and beverage, culture and leisure and encourage footfall and spend</p>	<p>Improving the retail and market offer: developing an expanded and regular outdoor market offer including food and drink; offering business support to small businesses and those looking to start in business, including young entrepreneurs</p>	<p>H11: Investment in open markets and improvements to town centre retail and service sector infrastructure, with wrap around support for small businesses.</p>

Transport and Connectivity:

Objectives	Proposed Interventions	Selected Long Term Plan Interventions
Improve accessibility and support health and wellbeing through local active travel enhancements in Nelson	Support for active travel enhancements in the local area: Build upon planned investment in new/upgraded footpaths and cycle paths including links to the canal as an untapped asset supporting health and wellbeing and increased visitation.	T1: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area.
Improve traffic management and road safety with the town centre	Traffic safety measures: Safety measures to reduce the dominance of the car in select areas within the town centre and address areas identified as having 'boy racer' concerns.	T4: Funding for new, or improvements to road networks to improve access within and to the town

Funding Allocation and Outputs and Outcomes

14. The Long Term Plan for Towns is predominantly Capital in nature. The split between Revenue and Capital changes slightly through the annual life of the programme but averages 78/22 in favour of Capital between Years 2-10
15. The funding allocation announced for Nelson can be seen in Table 1 below. In total it represents £19,259,000 in project costs, plus £250,000 made available in Capacity Payments to support the set up of the fund.

Table 1: Indicative Long Term Plan funding allocation, Nelson.

Programme Year	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Calendar Year	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	TOTAL
Capacity funding £ (000)	50	200										
Revenue £		249	423	449	449	449	449	454	467	467	467	4,323
Capital £		491	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	14,936
Total £		740	2,028	2,054	2,054	2,054	2,054	2,059	2,072	2,072	2,072	19,259
Revenue/Capital												

Programme Year	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Calendar Year	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	TOTAL
Revenue %		34	21	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	
Capital %		66	79	78	78	78	78	78	77	77	77	

16. How much funding is to be allocated to each intervention within the Investment Plan for the first three years is not yet finalised but if a proposed spend profile is complete and agreed with the Board by the time of the Executive meeting this will be shared for information.
17. The programme will require staffing resource to support its development, delivery and administration. The Chief Executive Officer has given approval to recruit a Programme Manager for the Nelson Long Term Plan for Towns. A second position, based in the community is being considered.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The Long-Term Plan for Towns has strong links with the Corporate Plan priorities around the community, good growth and health and well-being.

Financial: The programme will bring in significant revenue and capital funding to the area.

Legal: None arising directly from this report.

Risk Management: A Risk Register has been developed for programme delivery purposes, and will be actively monitored and managed.

Health and Safety: No direct implications.

Sustainability: Sustainability will be brought into the programme where appropriate.

Community Safety: Community safety is a key part of the programme and will provide additional capacity in this area.

Equality and Diversity: The programme will take a strong community development approach and diversity and inclusion will be central to its planning and delivery.

APPENDICES: None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS: None