

**REPORT FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLACE**

**TO: NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD**

**DATE: 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

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## **NELSON TOWN DEAL PROGRESS UPDATE**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the Nelson Town Deal Board on progress with Nelson Town Deal projects.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

To note the progress update.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

For information.

#### **1. PROJECT UPDATES**

#### **2. REVITALISED NELSON**

- See separate report.

#### **3. ACCESSIBLE NELSON**

4. The Accessible Nelson project forms Area 4&6 of a programme of works designed to improve public realm, travel routes, infrastructure and accessibility in an integrated and seamless way throughout Nelson.

5. At the July Town Deal Board, the following virements were agreed to support the funding of the programme:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| • Revitalised Nelson Pendle Rise Shopping Centre (PRSC) | £215,000 |
| • Revitalised Nelson Trafalgar House                    | £25,000  |
| • Revitalised Nelson Relocation Properties              | £65,000  |
| • This is Nelson Public Realm Improvements              | £150,000 |

6. It was subsequently identified that there was £300,000 identified within the original PRSC budgets and this figure was utilised in line with the original business case. This allowed for the reduction in the This is Nelson contribution to £130,000 and covered the

costs of the original design work for the scheme commissioned by PBC at £44,000. So by utilising the £300,000 already allowed for within PRSC the final virements were:

- Revitalised Nelson Trafalgar House £25,000
- Revitalised Nelson Relocation Properties £65,000
- This is Nelson Public Realm Improvements £130,000

7. Lancashire County Council have provided PBC with a start date of the 6<sup>th</sup> of January for the start of works on section 5 of the overall transportation and public realm improvements at Sagar Street / Holme Street. Confirmation of the wider programme is still awaited.

8. Discussions are currently taking place to agree the exact scope of LCC and Accessible Nelson works where these abut the development boundary of PRSC. The intention is to avoid any abortive works and ensure that the funding supports the public realm and highway infrastructure of the re-developed site, rather than any Accessible Nelson works requiring re-modelling post installation as part of the PRSC redevelopment.

## **9. ADVANCED DIGITAL SKILLS**

10. As stated in the previous update report the Advanced Digital Skills College hub has been completed, and students are benefitting from the new facilities. 295 students/trainees have been in new education and training courses due to the facilities.

11. The second phase – ‘the spoke’ – at The Ace Centre has been delayed due to challenges in finalising the lease, which is required to be in place before ‘the spoke’ can be installed.

12. The lease is held up by an unexpected cost for a new Air Conditioning facility at approximately £140k. The college have offered to fund £40k of the costs. A report is being taken to Pendle Borough Council Executive Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> November to consider the balance. Should the report be agreed by the Executive Committee it will then progress to PBC’s Full Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> December for consideration.

## **13. BUSINESS RESILIENCE AND GROWTH**

14. The Business Resilience and Growth project has had lots of interest over the past couple of months, with businesses looking for bigger grant allocations.

15. In November a press release was sent out by PBC - “Furniture manufacturer Buoyant Upholstery Ltd, on Hallam Road in Nelson, has installed 700 solar panels onto its warehouse roof in a bid to cut its energy costs and keep reducing its carbon footprint. The company received a grant of £100,000 under the Business Resilience and Growth Project from Pendle Borough Council, to support the work, generate 17 new full-time jobs and safeguard 35 existing full-time jobs.”

16. Currently, once grant payments or grant offers made have been taken into account there is approximately £233k remaining of which there are pending applications of c£191k which are considered likely to proceed. This leaves the project c£41k left to allocate. Any outstanding current applicants are being contacted to ensure that any that are unlikely to proceed are identified and the funding made available to other applicants.

## **17. HEALTHY TOWNS - PARKS**

18. The Healthy Towns Parks project is progressing well on budget and on track. Please see a breakdown of the three parks below:

### 19. Walverden Park

- Junior and Senior Playgrounds completed
- MUGA completely refurbished
- A new goal end on the grass has been installed
- New benches and bins to be installed
- The main surfacing repairs are currently underway

### 20. Victoria Park

- Learn to Ride track completed
- New bespoke shelter and seating has been installed
- Main surfacing improvements are currently underway
- Tender pack for the new playground to be drawn up and sent out in the new year

### 21. Marsden Park

- Playground completed
- Tennis Court refurbishment to commence in December
- Bowling green alterations and fencing works have been approved by Nelson Town Council
- New MUGA replacing the upper tennis court to be commenced in December.
- Awaiting engineers plans for main surfacing repairs.

22. A separate report has been submitted with relation to the Pump Track at Marsden Park.

## **23. HEALTHY TOWNS - WAVELENGTHS**

24. A draft planning application for the new Wavelengths extension has been prepared by PBC Property Services and will be submitted in the next few weeks. Subject to planning permission being granted works are expected to commence in Summer 2025 for completion by March 2026.

25. The project is being aligned with PBC's Car Parking Strategy to mitigate the loss of around 15 spaces at Wavelengths on the footprint of the extension. The role of the Palace Car Park (next to the Billiard Hall) for mitigation is under consideration.

26. New Gym equipment has been installed in the leisure centre and it has received positive feedback. The website for the leisure centre has also been redesigned and is launching soon.

## **27. THIS IS NELSON**

28. The 'This Is Nelson' (TIN) project continues to progress well. The key findings of the 2023/24 end of year independent evaluation report are:

- Significant increase in participation: 24,000 total attendees, including 6,000 children/young people
- Improved demographic data collection shows diverse audience reach (50% global majority)
- Festival of Culture boosting community cohesion: increased neighbour interactions and trust

- Positive shift in perception of Nelson: now described as "multicultural," "diverse," and "improved"

29. The TIN team have appointed a new Project lead – Michael Powell – he started with the project as one of the residency artists and now has a full-time role leading the project alongside Paul Hartley.

30. The project is in the process of commissioning the third of four print commissions, which will be placed on Nelson Library and is currently in the development process working with MIKESIAN studio.

31. The Project Team is currently working with In-Situ to review the shape of budgets following the decision to integrate its budget for public realm works with supporting the Nelson-wide improvements to public realm and transport infrastructure of which Accessible Nelson forms a part. The TIN Team have put forward £130k for public realm works.

### 32. Recent Activities:

- **Food Nelson Manifesto as part of World Food Day (October 2024):** Started the day at Marsden Heights Community College alongside artist Ian Halawi. He worked with students to design posters, t-shirt printing and upcycling workshops. A further workshop was held in Althams in the Town Centre welcoming the community to take part in the discussions around the Nelson Food Manifesto.
- **Peoples Assembly (October 2024):** A very successful 'People's Assembly' was held at their temporary town centre space, Altham's, in October. The event was designed like a speed dating set, with the community having 7 minutes to ask questions to officers/project leads. Lots of positive feedback coming out of this event – especially around Pendle Rise and Accessible Nelson.

### 33. Upcoming Plans:

- **Herbalist Sessions & Food Strategy meetings (December 2024):** A continuation of the popular Food Strategy meetings and herbalist sessions.
- **New Art Installations (December 2024):** These installations, developed in collaboration with local artists, are intended to enhance Nelson's public spaces, further transforming the town into a centre of artistic and cultural significance.
- **Peoples Assembly (February 2025):** In February, This is Nelson is planning on holding a further Peoples Assembly in Pendle Rise Shopping Centre. This event will be help as a young maker's market event with some musical performers from local young musicians and will be a place for the community to come and talk and have a safe space for discussions and to have fun.

### 34. YES HUB

35. The YES Hub continues to make great progress, consistently meeting its expenditure and output targets.

36. They offer a wide range of support for young people, including employability programmes, mental health support, housing assistance, various recreational activities, and DWP Universal Credit work skills reviews and appointments, in total serving an average of 131 young people each week through these programmes.

**37.** The points outline some of the support provided so far:

- a. The total number of referrals: 1289
- b. Young persons who have gained employment: 243
- c. Young persons supported to enrol in education/training establishments: 229
- d. Young persons who have gained a qualification: 127
- e. Young persons who have had barriers removed: 1196
- f. Young persons with increased confidence: 315

### **38. GENERAL UPDATES**

### **39. COMMUNICATIONS**

40. The Programme Management team continue to meet with PBC's Marketing Team, Pendle Leisure Trust and Insitu fortnightly to ensure that the website, news releases and social media are up to date with notable stories resulting from the Town Deal Programme.

41. Most recently efforts have concentrated around Pendle Rise, focusing on the retailers in the centre, with Cllr Asjad Mahmood, Leader of PBC, visiting traders and reading the newsletter to them in Urdu.

42. It was reported to the last Town Deal Board meeting that The Cities and Local Growth Unit from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) was due to come and visit Nelson. This was an extremely successful visit. The MHCLG team were impressed with the progress of the projects and are looking forward to further visits.

### **43. RESOURCES**

44. Working closely with RAISE, Sue Rae has fully stepped into the role of PBC Programme Officer now that Azadeh Bayat Shahbazi and Kate Wood are no longer with the Council. The latest Nelson Town Deal Monitoring return has been submitted.

45. The Finance department are taking a proactive role in support of the Programme Management and have provided project leads with financial and contract management processes to ensure close monitoring of progress towards spend targets before March 2026.