

REPORT FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLACE

TO: NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD

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NELSON TOWN DEAL PROGRESS UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the 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. Due to unforeseen utilities work, LCC Highways have advised that the start of works on this programme of activity has been slightly delayed.
6. LCC Highways have not yet provided PBC with a firm start date for works. The first area of the overall transportation and public realm improvements for Nelson is Area 5 at Sagar Street / Holme Street. Indications are that work may start here in February 2025, but this has not been confirmed by LCC. The project team are working closely with LCC colleagues to finalise the Grant Funding Agreement between PBC and LCC and get up to date timelines and starting dates for Areas 4&6, which are adjacent to Area 5. Discussions are centring around the payment schedule to LCC Highways as part of the Grant Funding Agreement.

7. Agreement has been reached in respect of the scope of works where Accessible Nelson is co-terminus with Pendle Rise Shopping Centre. This will ensure minimal abortive work and ensure that the Accessible Nelson works integrate with 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. Any works that abut the boundary line that need completing post PRSC redevelopment will be carried out by Penbrook Developments Limited and their Section 78 agreement is being formulated on this basis.

8. ADVANCED DIGITAL SKILLS

9. As stated in the previous update report the Advanced Digital Skills College hub has been completed, and students continue to benefit from the new facilities at Nelson & Colne College's main campus.

10. 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.

11. The lease had been held up by an unexpected cost for a new Air Conditioning facility. The budget for this has now been approved by the council's Executive with works commencing in February and this has enabled the lease terms to be agreed between the College and Pendle Borough Council.

12. BUSINESS RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

13. The Business Resilience and Growth project has continued to gain interest and support local businesses by providing investment in new plant or machinery, investment focused on lowering CO2 emissions or energy consumption (eg through the installation of retrofit measures) and premises improvements or expansion.

14. In January a press release was sent out by PBC - *"Clarkson Coatings Ltd, on Lomeshaye Industrial Estate, has used the funds from the Business Resilience and Growth Project from Pendle Borough Council to buy a new laminator and create nine new full-time jobs."*

15. Gareth Darby, Operations Manager at Clarkson Coatings Ltd, said: *"The company's efforts to diversify, improve sustainability and expand into new markets would have faced significant delays without the funding support from Pendle Borough Council, provided through the grant. Pendle Borough Council has not only assisted us with a substantial financial investment in a new lamination machine, but they have also supported us throughout the entire funding process. This support has helped safeguard jobs and drive new business opportunities."*

16. As stated in the previous report, applicants have been contacted to ensure that they are proceeding with the process. As a result, some of the larger grant recipients have withdrawn as they were unable to provide the correct assurances to meet the funding requirements. This still leaves around £600k paid or committed with a further £200k earmarked against solid potential grant award applications currently being processed.

17. This leaves a project total of c£280k left to allocate.

18. The project team are working hard to continue to market the grant funding available and are confident that the rest of the grant funding will be committed very shortly. The council's Communications team are working hard with the project team to issue monthly

press releases following more visits with businesses that have received grant awards.

19. HEALTHY TOWNS - PARKS

20. The Healthy Towns Parks project is progressing well and is on budget and on track.
21. Works in Walverden Park are currently nearing completion. Any future works carried out to be at the end of the project once budgets have been finalised.
22. Victoria Park has recently had a Learn to Ride Track installed for young people. This has been a great addition to the park and PBC has received the compliment below:
23. *“We are lucky in Pendle to have so many parks which in my view are looked after well and appreciate that you have financial constraints. They are a lovely area for all ages to appreciate. I wish to compliment and thank you for the small road area with signs and road marking for young ones with bikes and scooters that has been created in Victoria Park Nelson. We went there with my 7-year-old granddaughter and her scooter. We all had a lovely time including our little dog, in spite the cold weather and frost. It was safe and I felt that I wanted to thank the council for the initiative. I have told all my family and friends who have young ones. Thank you”.*
24. The tender pack for Victoria Parks Playground is currently being collated.
25. At Marsden Park, contractors are currently on site completing the tennis court refurbishment.
26. Following the public consultation previously reported to the Board, alternative locations have been identified for the Pump Track at Marsden Park and a revised location was agreed at the February meeting of the Nelson, Brierfield and Reedley Area Committee. Officers are now in the process of drawing up detailed plans with specialists in this field.

27. HEALTHY TOWNS - WAVELENGTHS

28. The planning application for the new Wavelengths extension has now been formally submitted. Subject to planning permission being granted works are expected to commence at the start of autumn 2025 for completion by March 2026.
29. The procurement for the works is currently being finalised and will be submitted to ‘the chest’ procurement portal early this month. This will be due back by mid-April for evaluation.
30. There are current works going on at the Wavelengths facility around the windows and installing solar panels. These works are due for completion around the end of March. While not directly Town Deal works the value of these works can be used as match for the Town Deal investment in the leisure centre.
31. The project continues to work and align with PBC’s Car Parking Strategy to mitigate the loss of around 15 spaces at Wavelengths on the footprint of the extension.
32. In December, Pendle Leisure Trust held a 12-day challenge across Pendle with Paralympic Gold Medallist Gregg Stevenson. Each day Greg attended one of the four Pendle leisure sites, including Seedhill and Wavelengths. The public were invited to join him in undertaking a new fitness challenge in return for a £2 voluntary charitable. This initiative helped to bring new customers into Wavelengths and experience the new Town Deal- funded equipment in the gymnasium.

33. THIS IS NELSON

34. The 'This Is Nelson' (TIN) project continues to progress well. A successful Peoples Assembly was held on the 1st of February with over 100 in attendance at Pendle Rise Shopping Centre.
35. In-situ are continually working to expand their funding and are currently working on putting together an Arts Council bid for a light-based commission and mural-based works across Nelson.
36. One of the Nelson Reimagined Artists' Commissions is Red Plenty Games. This company have been working closely with the residents of Nelson in developing a long-term vision for various sites under consideration for TIN's remaining public realm budget. Through this developmental period, they are looking at how the spaces in Nelson can be portrayed in a board game that lets players have open-ended conversations regarding their town.
37. 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.

38. Recent Activities:

- **Time is Everything Exhibition (January 2025):** An Exhibition by Diane Muldowney and Andrew Nicholas celebrating the night life of Nelson past and present commissioned by In-situ to reflect the town and its community. This was a very successful event with many of the Lord Nelson staff visiting the exhibition and even hanging some of the exhibition photos on the walls in the Lord Nelson pub.
- **Peoples Assembly (February 2025):** A very successful 'People's Assembly' was held at PRSC at the beginning of February. The event held many different exciting activities such as TALKAOKE, a free herbalism workshop, live music and a new initiative by Red Plenty Games which is part of the Nelson Reimagined artist commissions.

39. Upcoming Plans:

- **Herbalist Sessions & Food Strategy meetings (Ongoing 2025):** A continuation of the popular Food Strategy meetings and herbalist sessions.
- **New Art Installations (February 2025):** 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.
- **Come and Grow! (March 2025):** Free Gardening Sessions beginning in March 2025 at Hodge House Community Centre Garden. These will be free workshops where members of the community are able come and learn how to grow their own food with no experience necessary.

40. YES HUB

41. The YES Hub continues to make great progress, consistently meeting its expenditure and output targets.
42. This quarter has been particularly successful for the Yes Hub with significant progress

in their engagement and support initiatives. One key highlight is the significant increase in referrals of young people into various support pathways. For the last reporting quarter this is up to 149 against a target of 68, reflecting the effectiveness of their outreach efforts and partnerships, particularly of note is the joint work with Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) locally.

43. Activities currently being held at the YES Hub are:

- a. Guitar Sessions with Aaron
- b. Box Champions Non-Contact Mentoring sessions
- c. Badminton, pickleball and football sessions
- d. Youth Club for ages 16 – 24
- e. National Careers Service Employment Support & 1-2-1 Sessions
- f. Lancashire Mind drop in and Wellbeing support
- g. BFC in the Community Employment Support with Claire
- h. Walk Wednesdays
- i. Games room (Table tennis, pool and gaming)
- j. 1-2-1 Mental Health Wellbeing Support
- k. Free Gym sessions
- l. Burnley College Employment and Course Support
- m. Housing support
- n. LCC Youth Futures 16-18 NEET Support

44. Two Case studies have been shared from the YES Hub and are attached as Appendices.

45. GENERAL UPDATES

46. COMMUNICATIONS

47. The Programme Management team continue to meet with PBC's Communications team, Pendle Leisure Trust and In-situ fortnightly to ensure that the website, news releases and social media are up to date with notable stories resulting from the Town Deal Programme. Most recently efforts have concentrated on marketing the Business Resilience and Growth Grants and highlighting new installations in Parks.

48. The PBC Communications Team are working closely with the LCC Communications team in a collaborative process to make sure that the communications regarding Accessible Nelson are ready and both parties are sharing the same messages.

49. RESOURCES

50. Regular monthly meetings continue between the PBC Finance team and the Programme management team. These meetings have continued to provide project leads with support and guidance in relation to financial and contract management processes to ensure close monitoring of progress towards spend targets before March 2026.

51. The programme management team continue to meet monthly with the project leads to get updates on project progress and discuss any issues/guidance the project lead may need.

APPENDICES

1. YES Hub Case Study 1
2. YES Hub Case Study 2