

REPORT FROM: Director of Resources
TO: Neighbourhoods Board
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Report Author: Sandra Farnell
Tel. No: 01282 661053
E-mail: sandra.farnell@pendle.gov.uk

REVIEW OF PLAN FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS GUIDANCE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide a comparison of the Long Term Plan (LTPT) with the Plan for Neighbourhoods (PfN) and propose next steps.

Recommendations

That the Board:

1. Note the changed emphasis of the PfN to a more holistic approach with a broader set of strategic objectives.
2. Agree the next steps to identify areas of change to facilitate plan development.

Reasons

1. To enable us to identify gaps in the work already conducted for the LTPT and carry out further targeted research.
2. To ensure that the deadline date of the 22 April for governance and boundary guidance is submitted and work can continue on the 4 year Investment Plan and 10 year Regeneration Plan.

ISSUE

1. The Plan for Neighbourhoods (PfN), launched in March 2025, replaces the Long Term Plan for Towns (LTPT) with a £1.5bn fund, providing up to £20m over 10 years for selected areas, including Nelson.
2. The PfN expands on the LTPT approach, offering broader strategic objectives beyond high streets, heritage, and transport, focusing on:
 - Building thriving places
 - Strengthening communities and
 - Empowering communities to take back control.
3. While the LTPT required an investment plan, the PfN prospectus introduces a more flexible Regeneration Plan, allowing for ongoing engagement and evolving community priorities.
4. The guidance also sets out the following timeframe:
 - By 22nd April 2025 Neighbourhood Boards need to finalise their membership and any proposals to alter their place boundaries
 - Spring 2025 – winter 2025 – Neighbourhood Boards submit their regeneration proposals (including 4 year investment plan) for assessment and approval.
 - April 2026 – programme delivery funding released to local authorities and the delivery phase begins.
5. Whilst there are some changes to the prospectus for PfN the work conducted already by the Board for the Nelson's LTPT is not lost.
6. PfN encourages local areas to build on existing engagement and plans, refining them to fit broader policy areas with an increased list of interventions (see Appendix One).
7. There is the opportunity to review the place boundary of the built up area for Nelson which was originally identified for the LTPT and this is discussed in a further report to this Board.
8. Once the Neighbourhood Board has confirmed the Board membership and reviewed any proposed place boundary changes, confirmation must be submitted by the 22nd April 2025.
9. An additional £200k capacity funding will then be released to support the board. Uses for this money could include:
 - Tailored community engagement
 - Developing Regeneration Plans
 - Securing advice and expertise for Neighbourhood Boards for technical elements of plan development and
 - Procuring technical support for capital and infrastructure interventions i.e. architectural plans, planning application fees, legal advice etc.
10. The guidance advises that support is available from the department, currently this consists of weekly drop in session and we await further guidance on any additional support.

NEXT STEPS

11. Whilst we await further guidance on the technical support available, and the tailored data pack that government have also said will soon be made available, the Board must consider how we refine the work already carried out to reflect the changed emphasis.
12. The Programme Manager and Community Development Officer posts are being advertised and the successful candidates, following any required notice period, will be in post by late summer at the latest. The Board have previously approved the funding of these two posts from the Plan for Neighbourhoods capacity fund and future grant.
13. In the interim the Board should consider using some of the Capacity funding available, to identify areas of external technical support needed for investment planning and project scoping in order to facilitate plan development. This could be through an external consultant working with local Community organisations to build on the engagement already carried out.
14. This approach ensures Nelson's long-term regeneration is inclusive, community-driven, and strategically aligned with PfN objectives.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None arising directly from this report.

Financial: PBC will be the accountable body for the fund

Legal: Subsidy Control regulations will need to be adhered to. External advice can be sought and funded through the capacity support being made available.

Risk Management: The Programme Risk Register forms part of the PID.

Health and Safety: None arising directly from this report.

Sustainability: The Nelson Plan for Neighbourhoods provides an opportunity to consider sustainability within any investments selected.

Community Safety: The Nelson Plan for Neighbourhoods provides an opportunity to consider the improvement of community safety within.

Equality and Diversity: None arising directly from this report.

APPENDIX ONE

Pre-Approved list of Interventions