

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL,
AND VIA TEAMS
ON 14th November 2025**

PRESENT

S. Barnes (SB) – (Chair)

Members of the Board

<i>Councillor F. Ahmad (FA)</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>K. Arciniega (KA)</i>	<i>Nuestra Familia Restaurants</i>
<i>C. Bennett (CB)</i>	<i>Positive Action in the Community</i>
<i>P. Hartley (PH)</i>	<i>Founder of In-situ</i>
<i>J. Hinder (JH)</i>	<i>Member of Parliament</i>
<i>Councillor M. Iqbal (MI)</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>Councillor A. Mahmood (AM)</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>A. Patel (AP)</i>	<i>Health Sector Representative</i>
<i>N. Rockett (NR)</i>	<i>Owner of Phoenix Health</i>
<i>D. Rothwell (DR)</i>	<i>East Lancashire Learning Group</i>

Consultants/Advisors

<i>H. Warren (HW)</i>	<i>Department for Work and Pensions</i>
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Officers in attendance

<i>I. Bokhari (IB)</i>	<i>Head of Economic Growth, Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>D. Dixon (DD)</i>	<i>Group Operations Manager, RAISE Partnership</i>
<i>R. Ferguson (RF)</i>	<i>Committee Administrator</i>
<i>D. Gamble (DG)</i>	<i>Projects and Programmes Officer</i>
<i>D. Langton (DL)</i>	<i>Chief Executive</i>
<i>P. Preston (PP)</i>	<i>Democratic Services Manager</i>
<i>R. Savory (RS)</i>	<i>Project Manager, RAISE Partnership</i>
<i>K. Spencer (KS)</i>	<i>Director of Resources, Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>P. Spurr (PS)</i>	<i>Director of Place, Pendle Borough Council</i>

Also, in attendance

<i>M. Nuttall (MN)</i>	<i>Property Director, Brookhouse Group</i>
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(Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D. Whipp, Councillor N. Ahmed and Inspector Rob Gray.)

1.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

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Councillor A. Mahmood declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 4 (Revitalised Nelson), on account of his role as Director of Penbrook Developments Ltd and PEARL.

P. Hartley, founder of In-situ, declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 4 (Revitalised Nelson), on account of his role YES Hub, This is Nelson and Advanced Digital Skills projects, respectively.

D. Rothwell, Director of East Lancashire Learning Group declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 4 (Revitalised Nelson), on account of his role at Nelson & Colne College.

C. Bennett, CEO of Positive Action in the Community declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to Item 6 (Nelson Town Deal Progress Update), on account of her role at the YES Hub.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2025 were submitted for approval.

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2025 be approved as a correct record by the Chair.

4. REVITALISED NELSON – PROGRAMME UPDATE

A written report was received on particular elements of the Revitalised Nelson Project.

RS provided a verbal summary of the report and advised that the General Vesting Declaration date of 11th November 2025 had now occurred, which means that Pendle Borough Council (PBC) is in full possession of Pendle Rise. The process in which to achieve vacant possession was assisted by the PBC Legal and Property Services teams and they were thanked for all their hard work. RS advised that a meeting was held on the 12th of November 2025 to discuss the demolition process. This had been endorsed by the Executive, and a contract has been agreed and was due to be issued today. Previous tenants would now require to be escorted into the building by security to remove any items left behind. RS confirmed that the hard strip out would start in the new year, and the demolition of buildings was due to complete in April 2026. Once the demolition process has completed, the project would be passed over to Brookhouse Group for development.

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DL put forward concerns raised about the retention of memorabilia from Pendle Rise that the Council following a petition by a constituent had asked to be saved and salvaged. RS confirmed that the contract with the demolition team dictated that the compass feature on the floor, and other named artefacts would be removed safely and preserved.

A revised estimate of the current budget profile for the PRSC Town Deal funding shows a budget surplus of £130,000,

Pendle Rise Shopping Centre	Current Budget	Proposed Revised Budget	Variance to Current Budget
	£	£	(-) Fav / + Adv
			£
PRSC: Acquisition	4,288,729	4,288,729	0
PRSC: Compensation Payments	2,500,000	2,705,667	205,667
PRSC: Compensation Payments provision for section 10 & Part 1 disruption claims	0	170,000	170,000
PRSC: Fees (Feasibility, Planning, other Professional fees)	450,000	465,000	15,000
PRSC: CPO	750,000	400,000	(350,000)
PRSC: Asbestos	500,000	0	(500,000)
PRSC: Demolition/remediation/site preparation	1,000,000	1,169,000	169,000
PRSC: Demolition QS & Other fees/Surveys 10%	0	116,900	116,900
PRSC: Demolition Property Services Management Fee 6%	0	70,140	70,140
PRSC: Site Management (Beddows)	60,000	76,000	16,000
PRSC: Contingency	441,271	398,564	(42,707)
Total	9,990,000	9,860,000	(130,000)

RS highlighted that the project had been able to retain the budget and that savings had been made due to no objections to the CPO process.

Relocation Properties

RS confirmed that compensation agreements had been made with most tenants, with just a small number of agreements still outstanding. Good progress continued to be made with relocating the telecommunication installations. All telecommunication companies had secured permanent sites. Where temporary relocation to the Broadway car park had been required, licenses were in place. A further verbal update would be provided to the Board at the next meeting.

JH raised the project the timeline and RS advised that it had not been possible to get a demolition contractor on site until now. RS was confident that the timeline for demolition would stay on target.

MI asked that the residents of Nelson and constituents of PBC be kept informed with the demolition timeline. This was noted and agreed by the Board.

AGREED

That the report be noted and the PBC Communications team be asked to provide regular media updates on progress.

5. TRAFALGAR HOUSE UPDATE

A written report was received.

RS discussed the financial implications and presented the current figures for the Trafalgar House project. Along with MN, concern was raised about the integrity of the

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property due to internal structural collapses and exposure to hazardous materials. It was noted that before demolition could take place, all hazardous waste would need to be removed from the building. The quote provided from the contractors did not include the removal of said hazardous waste. The Board was concerned about further deterioration of the property, and a discussion was held on how to proceed. Areas of the building were classed as a heritage site and were in a Conservation Area which could impact on the project when applying for planning permission.

The budget was debated with some members unable to support the current increase in proposed budget. RS reiterated that the proposed budget had been formulated on a worst-case scenario basis. FA advised that he could not support the current proposed plans and asked if the Board had considered all other options such as an indoor market hall. The economic growth and footfall of Nelson Town Centre was highlighted as an important issue. The Chair responded that Trafalgar House was a priority and with its detreating condition, decisions needed to be made before the building becomes dangerous to the public. The Board had investigated other possibilities, but it was decided that due to the condition of the property, there were no other viable options than the current proposed plan.

DR raised concerns about the strategic business plan. He suggested that there were similar spaces available in the town centre and questioned the cost effectiveness of the project and proposed outright demolition. AM put forward that there were not many heritage sites in Nelson, and that the value of a heritage site was immense.

DL mentioned the Masterplan for Nelson, which guided the decision-making process. The Chair advised that demolishing the entire building was not a suitable course of action as it would most likely result in a heritage lobby that would delay the project for months. The Chair reiterated that Nelson Town Deal Board was a 5-year programme with a small investment, with the programme coming to an end, there was no time to procrastinate.

JH asked whether investigating other options was feasible. PS confirmed that over the years there had been many options considered but all had been financially unviable. It was agreed by the Board that with a limited timeline, and the risk of affecting the health and safety of the public, there could not be any more delays than necessary. The Chair reiterated that the Board need to be united and thus put forward an agreement to progressing a tender process to confirm the costs. He also proposed two conditions: the first being to grant any money saved from the project to go into the Plan for Neighbourhoods board (now the Nelson Pride in Place Board) and the second being to preserve any money received from future sale or lease opportunities once the project has completed, to be brought back into the Plan for Neighbourhoods board (Nelson Pride in Place Board). The Chair also confirmed he would request a report to investigate other options for the premises, including a minimum approach to maintain the building's heritage site status.

RS raised further concerns of delays, he advised that a tender would take time as planning permission was needed. The tender would only provide a guide price, and the price may increase with inflation and interest.

AGREED

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To approve the virement of £673,000 from Pendle Rise Shopping Centre (PRSC) and Relocation Budgets across to Trafalgar House project subject to any savings as a result of actual tenders being received being retained by the board.

The Board supports the project as set out in the report, but agreed to consider the following options: -

(1). A planning application be submitted to support the project delivery in order to limit delay given the condition of the building.

(2). As a condition of the grant any monies received by way of future sales or leases be granted back to the plan for Neighbourhoods Board (i.e. Nelson pride in place Board)

(3). A final report be submitted when final tenders are received to review other options (within limited resources) by which the heritage of the property could be preserved with the likelihood of planning permission being obtained.

6. NELSON TOWN DEAL PROGRESS UPDATE

A written report was received on the following Nelson Town Deal projects:

- a) Accessible Nelson
- b) Advanced Digital Skills
- c) Business Resilience and Growth
- d) Healthy Towns
- e) This Is Nelson
- f) YES Hub

PS provided a brief verbal overview of each of the above projects. He commended each project for its positive progress.

(a) In regard to the 'Accessible Nelson' project, strong communications were being upheld between LCC and PBC to ensure that the community is up to date with roadwork timelines. LCC currently anticipates that the Accessible Nelson works would continue until at least December 2026. However, there were indications that the programme might extend to June 2027.

(b) The 'Advanced Digital Skills' project aims to open the ACE Centre 'spoke' in February/March 2026. Two open days had been held for East Lancashire's Learning Group's (ELLG) Nelson campus, taking place on 15 October and 11 November respectively.

(c) It was said that the 'Business Resilience and Growth' project had continued to make strong progress, with nearly all available funding now allocated. The Project Delivery Lead forecasts that all committed funding would be fully spent by the end of the financial year.

(d) The 'Healthy Towns' project has progressed towards completion on all works. Walverden Park, Marsden Park and Victoria Park have had substantial work which

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had greatly improved them. The 'Healthy Towns Wavelengths Project' was well underway, with all enabling works, including diversions and drainage, now fully completed. The main contractor was on site, and site setup activities had been successfully finalised. The pool play area works had been scheduled for December, and the project remains on track for practical completion by the end of March 2026.

(e) It was agreed that the 'This Is Nelson' project has continued to successfully engage with the local community. In-Situ are collaborating with the demolition team at the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre (PRSC) on a mural project, developed by Building Bridges Pendle, supported through the PBC Community Engagement Programme (CEP) funding. RS advised further details would be provided for the Celebration and Festival of Culture project.

The project would involve local schoolchildren, who would help design artwork for the PRSC development hoardings and explore creative gateway features for the town.

(f) The 'YES Hub' had met all reporting outcomes and performance targets. The YES Hub team remains committed to providing young people with opportunities to build confidence, develop skills, and prepare for future employment. Two case studies showcasing individual success stories from the Hub and were noted.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

7. NELSON TOWN DEAL FINANCE REPORT

A written report was received on Nelson Town Deal's current financial status.

KS provided a brief verbal overview of the report; it was said that all projects were forecasting to meet spend targets.

A revision of the Trafalgar House budget had determined a deficit of £673,000. A revision of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre Budget had determined a surplus of £130,000. A revision of the Relocation Properties Budget had determined a surplus of £543,000. There is a proposal to vire the revised budget surplus to the costs of the Trafalgar House project.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

8. NELSON TOWN DEAL OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES UPDATE

A written report was received on Nelson Town Deal current outputs and outcomes status following revised guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in September 2025.

PS provided a brief verbal overview of the report and advised that the Nelson Town Deal Programme was on course to satisfy almost all of the original Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DHLUC) targets and to meet all targets under the new MHCLG guidelines.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

9. NELSON PRIDE IN PLACE UPDATE

A written report was received on progress with Nelson Pride in Place.

DG advised that the Nelson Pride in Place Board were required, in partnership with PBC, to develop a Regeneration Plan, setting out its vision for the next decade, alongside a more detailed Investment Plan for the first four years of the programme. The Regeneration Plan was due to go to the PBC Executive for approval.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

10. COMPLIANCE AND TRANSPARENCY UPDATE

A verbal update was received on compliance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's requirements.

DG confirmed that the Nelson Town Deal Board website was currently undergoing review and between himself and RF, the website would be updated accordingly.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

11. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

A verbal update was received on the ongoing communications work and engagement opportunities.

It was said that PBC were currently in Purdah, due to a forthcoming by-election, so any communications going forward until the 28th of November would have no political links.

DD advised that a main focus for PBC currently was the LGR bid with Burnley Council.

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Due to the end of the Town Deal programme being imminent, the programme management team would be reaching out to each of the project leads to understand how each of the projects would close and what the communications will be needed to support this.

DD also provided a verbal update on the following projects: -

(a) In regard to the 'Accessible Nelson' Project, the Facebook channels were being kept up to date; however, with the amount of road works in Pendle, these had been kept concise so as not to create too much backlash.

(b) The 'Business Resilience and Growth' Project had nearly all the funds allocated with the remaining funds being allocated to an applicant. The project lead was awaiting their final application. The communications team were preparing a last-minute push if the remaining funding needs to be reallocated with all routes of distribution being considered such as leafleting, utilising businesses such as McDonalds to hold leaflets, and issuing a press release.

(c) The 'Healthy Towns Parks' project had recently had two press releases that had been issued. It was agreed that Nelson had vastly improved its parks and everybody involved in the project was thanked.

(d) The 'Healthy Towns Wavelengths' project had plans to hold a press release to be sent out at the end of Purdah. This would outline the work that were currently going on at the Wavelengths Centre. There were currently two infographics on display outlining the work that had started.

(e) The YES Hub and the communications team continued to work with each other, and the communications team shared the social media they post. Two case studies had been shared as part of the progress update, showcasing some of the brilliant people the YES Hub is working with.

(f) The 'Advanced Digital Skills' project was set to have more communications released in January before courses start in February 2026.

(g) The 'This is Nelson' project had been successful with their events and communications recently. One of the recent events had been their Memory Fibre event on the 4th November. This was part of the British Textile Biennial, with a sci-fi inspired installation based on memories of Nelson and its people.

(h) The 'Revitalised Nelson' project had a press release come out on the 12th November outlining that the shopping centre had now closed and work on the shopping centre would start in December, with the demolition completed by Spring 2026. Posters were put up around the centre before the closing date, outlining when the centre would close, so shoppers and residents were aware of the closure.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Friday 6th of February 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

In addition, it was put forward that an earlier meeting might need to be scheduled at some point in early December to discuss item 5 as a report would need to be commissioned to investigate any feasible way in which the heritage of Trafalgar House could be preserved.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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.

PART II – EXEMPT ITEM

14. REVITALISED NELSON: PRSC AND RELOCATION PROPERTIES

A written report was received on this element of the Revitalised Nelson project.

A verbal update was provided to the Town Deal Board with respect to gaining vacant possession and completing demolition and presenting a level Pendle Rise site ready for development by March 2026.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

Chair _____