MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NELSON TOWN DEAL BOARD HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL, AND VIA TEAMS ON 15th MAY 2026

PRESENT

S. Barnes (SB) – (Chair)

Members of the Board

Councillor F. Ahmad (FA)	*Pendle Borough Council (PBC)*
County Councillor A. Ali (AA)	*Lancashire County Council (LCC)*
C. McCoy (CM)	*Lancashire Constabulary*
P. Hartley (PA)	*In-Situ*
J. Hinder (JH)	*LCC*
Councillor M. Iqbal (MI)	*PBC*
Councillor A. Mahmood (AM)	*PBC*
N. Rockett (NR)	*Manager of Phoenix Health*

Officers in attendance

I. Bokhari (IB)	*Head of Economic Growth, (PBC)*
R. Ferguson (RF)	*Committee Administrator, (PBC)*
D. Gamble (DG)	*Projects and Programmes Officer, (PBC)*
Z. Iqbal (ZI)	*Project Support Assistant, RAISE Partnership*
D. Langton (DL)	*Chief Executive, (PBC)*
R. Savory (RS)	*Project Manager, RAISE Partnership*
P. Spurr (PS)	*Director of Place, (PBC)*

Also, in attendance

D. Marshall (DM)	*Pendle Yes Hub Lead*
M. Nuttall (MN)	*Property Director, Brookhouse Group*

(Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor N. Ahmed, K. Arciniega, C. Bennett, A. Patel, H. Warren, D. Rothwell and K. Spencer)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor A. Mahmood declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to his role as a Director of Penbrook Developments Ltd.

P. Hartley declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to his role at In-Situ.

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 13th February 2026 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2026 be approved as a correct record by the Chair.

4 (a). NELSON TOWN DEAL PROGRESS UPDATE

RS submitted a report and a verbal update was provided by PS on the following Nelson Town Deal projects:

a) Accessible Nelson

It was said that the Accessible Nelson Project was progressing on schedule. The Board was reminded that project remains on target to deliver all outputs and outcomes and that the budget would be maximised with no overspend or underspend. It was asked if PBC had negotiated terms regarding the additional costs required by LCC. DL reported that LCC had no flexibility resulting in PBC becoming responsible for the additional costs.

b) Advanced Digital Skills

The new Digital Skills Spoke in the Ace Centre opened on schedule at the end of February, with delivery of courses underway. It was reported that East Lancashire Learning Group (ELLG) were keen supporters of improving car parking provision to make it easier for students and delegates to attend courses which are longer than 2.5 hours. FA questioned the use of the café and communal area. It was confirmed that this area would not be used by ELLG. Members agreed that the Board should consider supporting the use of the café and communal area, along with public toilet facilities.

c) Business Resilience and Growth

The Business Resilience and Growth Project had successfully committed all funds with only one applicant payment still to be made pending their evidenced claim. The budget would be maximised with no overspend or underspend. The project remains on target to deliver all outputs and outcomes.

d) Healthy Towns – Parks

It was reported that the completion of the bridge improvement scheme at Victoria Park marked the successful conclusion of the Healthy Town Parks scheme. The project remained on target to deliver all outputs and outcomes. The budget would be maximised with no overspend or underspend.

e) Healthy Towns – Wavelengths

It was said that the Wavelengths Project would be completed by the end of May 2026, with the final work being the resurfacing of the car park. The Board expressed interest in touring the facilities once all work had been completed and attendance at the official opening weekend scheduled for early June.

Members requested that the Chair, S. Barnes, be thanked for his efforts and commitment to the above Nelson Town Deal Projects.

RESOLVED

(1) That the report be noted.

(2) That PBC officers prepare estimates for additional parking at the Ace Centre to support students using the digital hub before the next meeting of the Board.

4 (b). PRESENTATION FROM DAVID MARSHALL, YES HUB

A verbal presentation was given by D. Marshall, Pendle YES Hub Lead, on recent projects.

The presentation covered the following objectives:-

1. Who we are

Members were informed that the YES Hub supports young people aged 16-24 who are not in education, employment or training. The Yes Hub had supported youth employment since its opening in 2021. It was said that the Hub was ran by charity Active Lancashire, on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Positive Action in the Community and PBC.

2. What we do

D. Marshall emphasised the importance of physical activity and well-being services. The Hub had collaborated with organizations such as Lancashire MIND and Burnley FC in the Community who had provided mental health and employment support. It was said that DWP operated from the Hub, allowing referrals to be made directly. A weekly timetable was presented which showed many sessions available such as guitar lessons, 1-1 mental health wellbeing support, and national careers service employment support.

3. Elecia & Max's Story

The presentation provided recent success stories of Elecia and Max. Both young people had received 1-1 support from YES Hub mentors and engaged in many activities available such as gym access, pool sessions and walking groups which had led to Elecia starting college in September 2025 and Max securing a job at SpudBros in Blackburn.

4. Outcomes so far

It was shown that 1949 young people had signed up to the YES Hub since 2021. From this, 313 had gained employment. 429 users had reported an increase in confidence and 1823 had confirmed that barriers that had prevented them from employment or education had been removed. It was reported that while funding provisions had finished from the Nelson Town Deal Programme, DWP's Flexible Support Fund had provided funding that would enable the YES Hub to continue its services for at least another year.

The Board praised the YES Hub's work and thanked the Chair of Active Lancashire, Brian Cookson OBE for his continued efforts. Members raised concerns regarding the viability of the project and its ability to continue to receive funding from DWP's Flexible Support Fund every year. The Chair agreed that a lack of sustained funding created worry that the YES Hub would not be able to continue indefinitely.

RESOLVED

(1) That the Board thank the YES Hub for its work.

(2) That the Board write to the Secretary of State for the Department for Works and Pensions, MP Pat McFadden, to report the challenge of no sustainable funding.

4 (c). UPDATE FROM PAUL HARTLEY, IN-SITU, THIS IS NELSON

A verbal update from Paul Hartley, In-Situ Organisation and Development Lead on recent projects was given.

PH provided an overview of the project as a whole. It was reported that whilst there had only been a small capital allocation, funds had been spread across several projects.

In-Situ agreed a long-term lease with local business 3B-Systems, a technology shop operating out of the ground floor on Carr Road to develop the upstairs of the building for community use as part of the This is Nelson programme. The youth group developed around This is Nelson was invited to re-imagine the space and to create a temporary architectural structure. The young people would now be programming the space and considering its use to meet the needs of the community.

A member advised PH to consider the Pride In Place Funding Scheme to ensure the space would be accessible via a lift.

PH reiterated that promotion of the space would be undertaken through leaflets, events and a project launch.

RESOLVED

That the Board thank In-Situ for its continued work on the This Is Nelson Project.

5. NELSON TOWN DEAL FINANCE REPORT

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

It was advised that the Business Resilience and Growth project had a projected underspend of £18,000 on the supporting revenue line which was not currently committed and that the YES Hub project had a small overspend of £422. It had been forecast that the This Is Nelson project would have an underspend of £20,000. Members were impressed by the level of match funding received. The Nelson Town Deal Programme remained in a healthy position in respect of meeting its programme level target. The outcome would depend on the confirmed Pendle Rise redevelopment costs applied by Penbrook.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

6. NELSON PRIDE IN PLACE UPDATE

DG provided a brief verbal update at the meeting on behalf of the Chair of the Pride In Place Board, Claire Bennett.

It was reported that 11 projects had now been approved and that the allocated Year One budget had not yet been fully utilised. DG reiterated the importance of a structured evidence-based approach to determine how people felt about where they live.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

There was no officer available to provide an update on this item at the time of the meeting.

RESOLVED

That an update be provided at the next meeting of the Board.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair invited any final comments or matters for consideration under Any Other Business. No additional items were raised by Members.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Friday 31st July at 9:30am.

10. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

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

11. REVITALISED NELSON: PRSC, RELOCATION PROPERTIES AND TRAFALGAR HOUSE

A written report was received to update the Board on the particular aspects of this project.

(a) Relocation Properties

It was reported that there had been a small matter raised with one remaining retailer, and that compensation agreements had been fair to retailers. The PBC Estates team would be continuing to negotiate costs with telecom companies. The flow of water into the site had been isolated. Members appreciated the artwork placed on the hoarding.

(b) Pendle Rise

The pre-demolition intrusive asbestos survey had reported an increase in the asbestos level previously found. This would result in the total cost of the demolition rising to £1.5 million. The report asked members to approve the virement of a total of £488,800 from the Relocation Properties and Pendle Rise contingency budgets to meet this cost. Members were informed that due to the increase in the level of asbestos found, the time to remove it would increase, resulting in the redevelopment commencing in January 2027. It was reported that all respective retailers, along with the potential anchor tenant, had not been concerned with the delay. Board members had been lobbied in consideration of the anchor tenant position; discussions would be held but the legal process to confirm another anchor tenant were well underway. Members were informed that 70% of the space had been let.

DL was asked if PBC could assist with the increased cost. This was confirmed to not be an option.

MI asked if there was any possibility that more hidden costs would occur as the project progressed. RS advised that the initial asbestos survey commenced when the property still had members of the public inside with power still running which prevented the demolition team from conducting an intrusive asbestos survey. The demolition team had now had possession of the site for 5 months, putting faith back into members that nothing further would be found. The Chair highlighted that the project was a flagship programme, whilst the Board would face risks in moving forward, the project must be delivered. Members requested that at the next meeting of the Board a Communications and Engagement Plan be presented.

RESOLVED

(1) That the Board approve the virement of a total of £488,800 from the Relocation Properties contingency budget and the Pendle Rise contingency budget to cover the costs incurred removing additional asbestos found prior to demolition of Pendle Rise.

(2) That the Board continue supporting the existing interest expressed by the prospective anchor tenant.

(3) That PBC explore interest received from a potential alternative anchor tenant.

(c) Trafalgar House

Planning permission had since been granted. Members were advised that responses to the tender would be due back in the first week of July and that further information would be provided at the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED

That the progress be noted.

Chair ______________________________