



Public Document Pack
Boston Borough Council

**Chief Executive
Rob Barlow**

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Lincolnshire PE21 8QR
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Monday 28 April 2025

Notice of meeting of the Cabinet

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Cabinet
on **Wednesday 7th May 2025 at 6.30 pm**
in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR

**Rob Barlow
Chief Executive**

Membership:

Leader of the Council:	Councillor Anne Dorrian
Deputy Leader:	Councillor Dale Broughton
Councillors:	John Baxter, Callum Butler, Emma Cresswell, Sandeep Ghosh and Sarah Sharpe

Members of the public are welcome to attend the committee meeting as observers except during the consideration of exempt or confidential items.

This meeting may be subject to being recorded.

Agenda

Part I - Preliminaries

A Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

B Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

C Minutes

To sign and confirm the minutes of the last meeting.

(Pages 1 - 6)

D Questions from Members of the Public

To answer any written questions received from members of the public no later than 5 p.m. two clear working days prior to the meeting – for this meeting the deadline is 5 p.m. on Thursday 1st May 2025.

Part II - Agenda Items

- 1 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny (Standing Item)***
- 2 Recommendations from the Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) (Standing Item)**
- 3 Boston Market Development Plan Report** (Pages 7 - 28)
(A report by Phil Perry, Assistant Director - Culture and Leisure)
- 4 Waste Services Delivery Model** (To Follow)
(A report by Victoria Burgess, Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods)
- 5 Sponsorship Generation in Boston** (To Follow)
(A report by Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development)

* In accordance with the Constitution, recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committees referred to Cabinet (if any) shall be included at this point in the agenda (unless they have been considered in the context of the Cabinet deliberations on a substantive item on the agenda) within six weeks of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee completing its report / recommendations.

Call-In – any decision taken by the Cabinet concerning an item on this agenda can be ‘called in’ in accordance with the Constitution, within 5 working days of the decision notice being published. It is expected that any decision notices will be published on Friday 9 May 2025. Subject to this publication, the deadline for calling in a decision is **5 p.m. on Friday 16th May 2025**.

Notes:

Please contact Democratic Services (demservices@boston.gov.uk) if you have any queries about the agenda and documents for this meeting.

Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Democratic Services as soon as possible.

Alternative Versions

Should you wish to have the agenda or report in an alternative format such as larger text, Braille or a specific language, please telephone 01205 314591.

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Wednesday 26th March 2025 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Anne Dorrian (Leader), in the Chair.

Councillors Councillor Dale Broughton (Deputy Leader), Callum Butler, Emma Cresswell, Sandeep Ghosh and Sarah Sharpe.

In attendance:

Councillor Stephen Woodliffe.

Officers:

Chief Executive, Interim Finance Director, Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development, Head of Finance (Client), Group Manager – Insights & Transformation and Democratic Services Team Leader.

72 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Baxter.

73 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

74 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

75 Questions from Members of the Public

No questions were received.

76 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny (Standing Item)*

There were no recommendations.

77 Recommendations from the Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) (Standing Item)

There were no recommendations.

Prior to moving on to the main agenda items, the Leader welcomed Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer to the meeting.

78 2024/25 Quarter Three Finance Update

The Portfolio Holder – Finance, Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, presented the Quarter 3 Finance report that set out a summary of the current financial position for the Council at

the end of the third quarter of 2024/25 forecasting to the year end for members consideration.

The report provided information on the forecast full year financial performance as at 31st December 2024 and as detailed within Appendix A for the following areas:

- The General Fund Revenue Budget;
- The General Fund Reserves Position;
- The Capital Programme for 2024/25; and
- The Treasury Management Performance for the year.

Councillor Ghosh highlighted the following key points:

- There was a forecasted surplus of £607,000 for the year-end, which was an improvement of £425,000 from Quarter two.
- Planning fee income was forecasted to underperform by £94,000, representing a 37% reduction in service income. This underperformance was attributed to the current condition of the housing market.
- The Council's investment income was forecasted to overachieve by £703,000, with a full-year outturn of £2.289 million against the budgeted £1.587 million. This overachievement was driven by higher than anticipated interest rate levels and increased cash balances.
- Car parking income was forecasted to increase by £94,000 for the whole year, representing a 10% increase over the budgeted income for 2024/25.
- The Council had achieved 78% of its savings efficiency target, with £656,000 saved out of the £846,000 target for 2024/25. That included both general and IDB savings requirements.
- The proposed revised capital budget for the general fund was £20 million. Significant progress had been made on various projects, including Rosegarth Square and Mayflower, with a total spend of £9 million as of 31st December 2024.
- The Council's cash continued to perform well, with a forecasted achievement of £703,000 in excess of the budget.
- The recommendation to Full Council in respect of the Capital Programme was amended to refer to Table 5a within Appendix A and not 4b.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- A question was asked regarding the increased external audit charges and whether the government grant of £45,000 to offset those charges would be an annual provision. Members noted that the charges were annual and governed by the public sector audit authority. The grant had been offered under the previous government, and it was uncertain if it would continue annually.
- In respect of the financial impact of handing back the Redstone Caravan site management to Lincolnshire County Council, noting a loss of £13,000, it was noted that the decision had been based on an overall evaluation, considering occasional capital costs that the Council would incur if it retained the site.
- A query was raised regarding the specific budget movement related to staffing costs attributed to the ad finance. The specific details were not currently available, but it was clarified that the item referred to a budget movement, not actual spend.

- The underperformance in cremation income by £92,000 was queried in respect of whether people were opting for services elsewhere. The underperformance was attributed to the rise of direct cremations, which were less costly than traditional services. The trend was expected to continue.
- Councillor Callum Butler highlighted the importance of addressing the issues raised and ensuring that the financial performance continues to improve.
- Councillor Ghosh suggested that the Council might be over-budgeting in certain areas, such as cremation income, and recommended a review to align the budget more closely with actual performance.
- Councillor Dale Broughton praised the success in increasing car parking income, which had helped offset other areas of underperformance.
- Councillor Anne Dorrian highlighted the positive impact of the volunteer scheme and the increasing number of volunteers, emphasizing the social value it brought to the community.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the forecast revenue position of a £627k underspend for 2024/25, as detailed within Table 1, and the need for continued focus on the savings and efficiency programme be noted; and**
- 2. That Full Council be recommended to amend the Capital Programme, at Appendix A – Table 5a, to take into account the changes set out within the report.**

[Councillor Stephen Woodliffe entered the meeting at 6.33p.m., during consideration of the above item.]

79 Quarter 3 24/25 Performance and Risk Report

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Anne Dorrian, presented the Quarter 3 24/25 Performance and Risks report which covered Boston Borough Council's information for Quarter 3 of 2024/25 (as at the end of December 2024). A joint performance management framework was agreed across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership for 2024/25 to support the delivery of services. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had been agreed to capture performance against the strategic priorities of the Partnership and the individual Councils. A breakdown of the performance and risk information was detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 within the report.

Councillor Dorrian highlighted the following key points:

- The majority of KPIs were on target (green), with some areas needing improvement (amber) and a few off target (red).
- The amber indicators included:
 - The Occupancy Rate at Industrial Units were at 92.86%, against a target of 95%, which was expected to improve by the end of the financial year.

- Food Business Ratings where 96.9% of businesses were rated three or above against a target of 98% and officers were working closely with low-scoring businesses to improve standards.
- The Occupancy Rate for Other Investment Property were at 96.55%, against a target of 97%, which was expected to improve with ongoing negotiations.
- The red indicators included:
 - Household Waste Recycling was at 32.68%, against a target of 45%, with improvement from Q2 but still off target. Efforts were ongoing to address the issue.
 - The Corporate Complaints Response showed that 88% had responded within the deadline against a target of 95%. It was noted that a low number of complaints could disproportionately affect the performance reporting.
 - Housing Benefit Processing was over 13 days against a target of 12 days. This remained within DWP performance expectations of 15 days.
 - Call Answering Rates in Revenues and Benefits were at 72.56% against a target of 87%. Increased call volumes and lengths were impacting performance. Extended hours in the evenings and weekends were being implemented to meet demand.
- The strategic and partnership risks have been thoroughly reviewed in Quarter 3.
- A new strategic risk has been added regarding local government reorganisation.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- It was highlighted that that the recycling contamination percentage only related to blue bins and a suggestion was made to include purple-lidded bins for a more accurate figure.
- Positive developments in market occupancy rates had been reported, with new initiatives and successful farmers and makers markets.
- Members noted the increase in digital services uptake, indicating successful customer contact through web chat and online services.
- The growing number of volunteers and the positive impact on the community, reflecting pride in the borough, was emphasised, as well as the social value of the volunteer scheme, estimating significant community benefits.
- Members discussed the calculation of budget risk and the parameters used to determine risk levels.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Anne Dorrian and seconded by Councillor Dale Broughton.

RESOLVED:

That the quarterly performance and risk monitoring information for Q3 of 2024/25 be noted.

80 Boston Plan 2040

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Anne Dorrian, presented the report which sought consideration of the Boston Plan for 2040 which had been revised and updated following consultation and scrutiny. Members noted that the Boston Plan for 2040 provided a vision for the entire Borough and set out key themes and priorities. A summary of the feedback

received during consultation was attached at Appendix 2 and the revised Boston Plan for 2040 was attached at Appendix 1 within the report.

Members noted that delivery oversight would sit in the Economic Development Directorate, with the establishment of multi-agency working groups to deliver agreed key actions. The plan would be kept up to date as new actions and initiatives developed and circumstances changed and evolved.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members expressed satisfaction with the increased emphasis on the rural areas of the borough, noting that the plan now included a dedicated section for rural areas.
- Concerns were raised regarding the public perception that Boston Borough Council was only focused on the town centre. The need for clear communication about the Council's responsibilities and the distinction between borough and county council duties was emphasised.
- The focus on economic growth was praised, particularly the priorities of supporting economic sectors, developing skills and employment opportunities, and attracting inward investment.
- The positive impact of the volunteer scheme and the importance of continuing to drive improvements for the borough was highlighted.
- Members noted the benefits that parish councils had received from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, emphasizing the Council's commitment to supporting rural areas.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Anne Dorrian and seconded by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Boston Plan for 2040 be approved; and**
- 2. That authority be delegated to the Director of Economic Growth, in consultation with the Leader, to keep the Plan up to date as new work emerges and circumstances change.**

81 Exclusion of Public and Press

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Emma Cresswell and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(iv) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

82 Commercial Food Waste Collection

The Portfolio Holder – Environmental Services, Councillor Callum Butler, presented the report which sought approval of the delivery of a food waste collection service to businesses within the Borough.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Emma Cresswell and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Option 1, to support the delivery of a commercial food waste collection from 1 April 2025 to protect the viability of the commercial waste service, to support the local economy, safeguard the current client base and income and enable continued service growth, be approved; and**
- 2. That the 2025/26 budget is amended to support additional resources required to deliver the service in the first year, to be approved.**

83 Supporting the local delivery of new affordable homes on Wainfleet Road, Boston

The Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development, presented the report which sought approval of a grant to secure the delivery of new affordable homes at Wainfleet Road, Boston, in pursuit of meeting housing need arising from the local community, and for the grant payment to be financed through the council's 'affordable housing commuted sums' budget, which was funding specifically ringfenced towards supporting the delivery of new affordable homes in the local area.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Anne Dorrian and seconded by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh.

RESOLVED:

To agree the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

The Meeting ended at 7.39 pm.



Report To:	Cabinet
Date:	7 th May 2025
Subject:	Boston Markets Update and Development / Action Plan Report
Purpose:	To provide a report on progress against the Boston Market Development Plan
Key Decision:	No
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Dale Broughton, Deputy Leader
Report Of:	Phil Perry – Assistant Director, Culture & Leisure
Report Author:	David Smith – Markets Manager
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report provides an update on the Boston Markets Development plan that was initially considered at the 13 February 2024 Environment and Performance Scrutiny Committee, before being agreed at the 27 March 2024 Cabinet meeting. The Plan subsequently went back before the 11 February 2025 Environment and Performance Scrutiny Committee, to provide an update on its progress over its first year of delivery.

This report provides an update on the four key objectives within the Boston Markets Development/Action plan (**Appendix 1**) and an overview on how Boston's regular Wednesday and Saturday markets have been performing and provides.

The Markets Development Plan has 4 key objectives:

- Objective 1 – To deliver a sustainable Markets Service and become financially resilient.
- Objective 2 – To deliver Modern Markets, improving both Infrastructure & Delivery.

- Objective 3 – The Boston Markets Service becoming known for its Specialist Markets and Events.
- Objective 4 – The Markets Service is successfully Promoted and Well Marketed.

Markets were one of many industries that suffered during the COVID pandemic with only essential stalls allowed to stand. A cost-of-living crisis has subsequently added to the impact on the traditional town centre retail offer, and markets across the country have had to adapt as they work towards recovery.

The Council has an aim to move the Markets Service to a break-even position and find savings year on year, and the Partnership Annual Delivery Plan includes two projects for the Boston Markets Service to undertake during the 2024/25 financial year. These were to review the Markets Policy and to undertake a review of the Markets Service with an aim to deliver savings, whilst also growing the Markets Service.

The Council has also agreed a Boston Town Centre Strategy, and the Development / Action Plan aims to support the strategy's aim to regenerate the town centre. There are currently 13 actions within the Boston Market Action Plan, and to date 9 have been completed, 2 are on target and 2 amber that require further work to ensure they can continue to aim to meet the timeline set.

Recommendations

That Cabinet notes the progress made to date against the commitments set out in the Boston Market Development/Action Plan.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Boston Market Development/Action Plan is a live document which was agreed at the Council's Cabinet on 27 March 2024. Now that it has been in place for a year, it is important to review and report on progress against the commitments that were made.

Other Options Considered

To not review progress against the Boston Market Development/Action Plan. This has been discounted to ensure through a review the commitments made by the Council's Cabinet are delivered against, whilst enabling consideration of any additional actions and challenges with mitigating action/s as appropriate.

1. Background

- 1.1 Boston Borough Council has responsibility for a market that takes place twice a week (on a Wednesday and Saturday) in the Market Place. Markets are an important and historic part of Boston as a market town, but across the country, markets have faced many challenges over recent years, including the rise of online and out of town shopping retailers, competition from unregulated car boot sales, the COVID pandemic as well as the cost-of-living crisis.
- 1.2 A dedicated Market Manager in a shared post across the Partnership, has been in place since 28th October 2024, and this post is supported by a Boston based Markets Officer and a small team of part time stall erectors.
- 1.3 The Markets Service initially reported on a new Development plan, to the 13 February 2024 Environment and Performance Committee, before it went to the 27 March 2024 Cabinet meeting for agreement. Following the implementation of the Development Plan, a full review of the service has also been undertaken in line with the Partnership's Annual Delivery Plan, including its policies and practices, to ensure the market is operated efficiently, consistently, and safely. The Development Plan subsequently went back before the 11 February 2025 Environment and Performance Scrutiny Committee, to provide an update on its progress over its first year of delivery, and the Markets policies were determined under a separate report Cabinet, at its 19 February meeting.
- 1.4 This report details the progress made against the Markets Development Plan, since it was agreed at Cabinet on 27 March 2024. This report provides an update on the four key objectives within the Boston Markets Development plan, including progress made since reporting to the 11 February 2025 Environment and Performance Scrutiny Committee, in order to provide a complete update on its progress over its first year of delivery. This report also provides an overview on how Boston's regular Wednesday and Saturday markets have been performing and proposes actions for the further development of the service.

2. Report

2.1 The Boston Market Development/Action Plan

- 2.1.1 The purpose behind the Boston Market Development/Action Plan was to develop closer relations with traders through involving them more in its future development, to support the ongoing need to increase footfall within the Town Centre, whilst also working towards ensuring the Markets Service is sustainable. The Action Plan therefore has a focus on:

- Delivering modern traditional markets that are cost efficient delivering the best value for money.
- Delivering vibrant attractive markets that appeal to visitors and residents alike.
- Attracting new young traders.
- Increasing marketing activity.
- Working with the Council's Events Team and local partners to add value to markets with entertainment and events.

2.2 Plan Strategic Objectives

2.2.1 The Plan, as detailed in appendix 1, was developed around 4 key objectives, and 13 key strategic actions, all with target timescales for delivery.

2.2.2 **Objective 1** – To deliver a sustainable Markets Service and become financially resilient.

2.2.2.1 Objective 1 has 4 actions (2 grey/completed, 2 green/on target)

2.2.2.2 Actions completed over the past year include:

- New Markets Policy and Severe Weather Policy in place since April 2025.
- Efficiency savings identified through restructuring the Markets service. Consultation with staff was undertaken in line with BBC HR Policy and procedures. Old Stall Erector Team have now left and a new team on smaller contracts now employed.
- A successful capital, invest to save, funding bid for £47,750, for a replacement van, gazebos, and equipment to support the delivery of the evolving markets service.
- Additional 30 gazebos and equipment now on order, current 30 mostly in use already. These are funded from the Covid Reserve.
- Market fees have been reduced from April 2025 to bring in line with other markets in and around Lincolnshire with the aim to attract new traders.

2.2.3 **Objective 2** – To deliver Modern Markets, improving both Infrastructure & Delivery.

2.2.3.1 Objective 2 has 3 actions (2 grey/completed, 1 amber)

2.2.3.2 Actions completed over the past year include:

- The Wednesday market was consolidated into the Market Place, to increase parking income for the Council.
- A Saturday Market, road closure was introduced following consultation in Q2, final consultations are currently ongoing to apply for a road closure on Wednesday market days which will be applied for in April 2025.
- Reduction in the Stall erector team and hours of operation in Q3, with savings built into the 25/26 budget.
- Specification for a shared bookings and payment platform across the partnership completed. The proposal is currently being evaluated by ICT colleagues and an external supplier. An alternative option to introduce a Process data quickly (PDQ) machine/payment system is also being investigated.
- A new markets plan is now being created to maximise the use of the space within the market for events and markets.

2.2.4 **Objective 3** – The Boston Markets Service becoming known for its Specialist Markets and Events.

2.2.4.1 Objective 3 has 3 actions (2 Grey/completed, 1 amber).

2.2.4.2 Actions completed over the past year include:

- Niche Markets trialled, with a Flea Market, Street Art and Buskers events added to the Teen Markets during 2024.

- Markets integrated into events such as the Christmas Festival and Boston College Food festival.
- Other integrated events include annual Hanseatic celebration and street performance artists.
- The Teenage Market events have continued to develop.
- A new Makers and Farmers Market introduced in March 2025 which has been a great success, selling at least 19 additional pitches per month alongside our regular market. On Saturday, 26th April the market saw 61 pitches in total occupied out of the 64 available. The market hasn't seen this for several years.

2.2.5 **Objective 4** – The Markets Service is successfully Promoted and Well Marketed.

2.2.5.1 Objective 4 has 3 actions (3 Completed).

2.2.5.2 Actions completed over the past year include:

- Development of the social media presence particularly on Facebook, and this is due to be expanded to other platforms, such as Instagram and Google.
- The Markets Facebook page has now reached its previous target of 3000 followers in April 2025.
- During March, the Market Facebook received over 120,000 page views, a record since being created.
- Over 30 local Facebook groups have now been joined where all promotions are shared, reaching residents in and around the Boston area.
- Consultation with both traders and the general public undertaken Q1, with further Trader consultation exercised on a new Market layout due Spring 2025.
- New branded gazebos now in use from April 2025.
- New banners, advertisement boards, market bunting, barrier covers now being used from April 2025.
- A new 'Featured trader of the week' now in place, promoting one trader per week providing a summary of their history and their business.

2.2.6 To further promote the markets and seek new traders, the new Market Manager has recently commissioned new photographic content of the Market Place, and its trader's stalls, to be provided for rejuvenation of the existing Boston Market Facebook page. A new Boston Market Instagram account will be created to engage with a younger audience. And Boston Market Google account will be updated and promoted to ensure its precedence online.

2.2.7 The Markets Team have worked with Boston College students to create a new promotional video for both the regular market and the new Makers and Farmers Market, due to be finalised in May 2025.

2.3 **Monitoring and Governance Arrangements**

2.3.1 Monitoring and governance arrangements for this plan and its actions are in place, through regular reporting to Portfolio Holder Briefings, as well as to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee meetings as appropriate.

2.3.2 The current lead officers to ensure delivery against the plan are:

- Markets Manager
- Assistant Director for Leisure and Local Services

2.4 Performance of the Markets

2.4.1 The delivery of the Action Plan aims to increase the occupancy rates of both Boston Market days, with the recent occupancy rates being as follows:

2.4.2 In the opinion of the Markets Manager there is a risk to safety due to adverse weather conditions.

2023/24

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wednesday & Saturday	68%	58%	60%	54%

2024/25

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wednesday & Saturday	69%	59%	52% Decrease from 23/24 due to Severe Weather Policy being implemented properly and those markets being restricted without stalls, leading to a decrease of approx. 75% occupancy for those days.	54%

2.5 Fees and Charges Benchmarking

2.5.1 To remain competitive, annual benchmarking exercises are undertaken to assess the Council's fees and charges against markets in neighbouring authorities. This benchmarking helps to inform proposed fees and charges for future years, during budget setting each financial year.

The Environment and Performance Scrutiny Committee at its 11 February 2025 meeting discussed the trader charges which had been applied and the comparisons to other local areas, and consideration was given to whether they could be reduced. The Portfolio Holder subsequently reviewed this position, and as from 1 April 2025, the Boston Markets reduced their fees to keep the rates competitive. The table below details fees and charges for Markets within the current financial year.

Market	Regular Trader With gazebo	Casual Trader With gazebo	Regular Without gazebo	Casual Without gazebo
East Lindsey	£15.00	£18.00	£15.00	£18.00
Bourne	£21.60	£23.80	£18.40	£18.90
Grantham	£24.40	£27.70	£22.70	£23.80
Stamford	£28.10	£31.40	£24.90	£28.10
South Holland Spalding	N/A	N/A	£10.00	£10.00
Boston	Was £22.00 Now £17.00	Was £27.00 Now £20.00	Was £1.60 per foot Minimum 10ft (3m) £16 Now £1.50 per ft, £15.00 a pitch	Was £2.20 per foot Minimum 10ft (3m) £22.00. Now 1.80 per ft, £18.00 a pitch.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. The Boston Market Action Plan has been developed as a “live document” to be continually developed to support accountability within the service to deliver strategically and operationally what is required from this important borough asset.
- 3.2. There are currently 13 actions within the Boston Market Action Plan, and to date 9 have been completed, 2 are on target and 2 amber that require further work to ensure they can continue to aim to meet the timeline set.
- 3.3. In conclusion the Boston Market Development/Action Plan Annual Review report on year one activity is presented to Cabinet Briefing for its consideration.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

The Boston Market Development/Action Plan is an integral part of a Partnership approach to delivering a more sustainable markets service. The Plan sits under the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan 2023-27, which recognises the contribution to the economy that Boston Town Centre plays in the South and East Lincolnshire sub-region as a wider strategic economic hub and the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership from a place making perspective.

Corporate Priorities

The proposed Plan aligns to the following Sub-Regional South and East Lincolnshire Council Partnership priorities:

- Priority 1: Growth and Prosperity
- Priority 2: Healthy Lives
- Corporate Priority: Efficiency and Effectiveness

Staffing

The action plan includes an action to seek to improve resilience in the service through a remodelling of staffing arrangements.

Workforce Capacity Implications

The remodelling of staffing arrangements referenced in point the report includes consideration of the capacity for the workforce to deliver the required service.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The Council's Markets are required to conform to the requirements of charters granted in 1308 for weekly Wednesday and Saturday markets, and 1545 through Boston's Charter of Incorporation.

Data Protection

There are no specific data protection implications to report as a consequence of the development of the report.

Financial

There are no direct financial implications to note regarding this report. Financial matters associated with actions are covered where necessary through reports to Cabinet and Council.

Risk Management

There are no key risks to report as a consequence of the development of the action plan.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

The action plan has been developed following engagement work with the Portfolio Holder, Lead Officers and Partners.

Reputation

The action plan supports work to uphold the reputation of the Council by promoting an efficient and effective service that safeguards the appropriate use of the Boston Market for members of the public.

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BOSTON MARKET – DEVELOPMENT/ACTION PLAN



APPENDIX 1

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1.0 Background

- 1.1 Boston Borough Council (BBC) has responsibility for two markets in the borough. Markets run on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the historic Market Place, from 8.30am – 2.30pm between 1st November – 31st March, and 8.30am – 3.30pm between 1st April – 31st October.
- 1.2 Markets are an important and historic part of Boston. Across the country, markets have faced many challenges over the years, including the rise of online and out of town shopping retailers, competition from unregulated car boot sales, as well as the recent COVID pandemic which has changed the way many people shop.
- 1.3 The current stalls are at the end of their life cycle and are in the process of being replaced. The service also needs to make savings to achieve a breakeven position and support corporate savings required by the Council. The service is therefore reviewing its operation.

2.0 The Focus of the Action Plan

This action plan is being developed through engagement with the Portfolio Holder, Cabinet, Scrutiny, Boston Town Area Committee, traders and Lead Officers. The plan seeks to focus on: -

- Delivering modern traditional markets that are cost efficient delivering the best value for money.
- Delivering vibrant attractive markets that appeal to visitors and residents alike.
- Attracting new young traders.
- Increasing marketing activity.
- Working with the Council's Events Team and local partners to add value to markets with entertainment and events.

3.0 Approach to the Action Plan

The following four themes have been developed, each supporting key strategic objectives and actions.

Objective 1 – To deliver a sustainable Markets Service and become financially resilient.

Objective 1 strategic actions under the, Sustainable & Financially Resilient theme, include: -

- To review delivery models
- To achieve efficiency savings through restructuring the service, phase 1 in Q1 and 2, and phase 2 in Q3 2024/25 financial year
- To look for funding opportunities
- To review the markets commissioning mechanism

Objective 2 – To deliver Modern Markets, improving both Infrastructure & Delivery

Objective 2 strategic actions under, A Modern Market – Infrastructure & Delivery theme, include: -

- Saturday market road closure in place Q2, currently in final consultations to apply for a road closure on Wednesday market days in Q4.
- Review market stalls and Workforce requirements – 30 New gazebos purchased, Stall Erector restructuring Phase 1 completed Q3, Phase 2 to be completed Q4.
- Introduce new equipment – Work van for Market Officer, storage container and silent generators purchased.
- Introduce online/card payment systems – Talks in progress to introduce a Process data quickly (PDQ) machine to the market, as well as development ongoing for a new booking and payment system on GOSS.

Objective 3 – The Boston Markets Service becoming known for its Specialist Markets and Events

Objective 3 strategic objectives within the theme, Known for Specialist Markets and Events, include: -

- To increase the number of specialist markets each year.
- To work with partners to bring new activities and events to the markets.
- To develop and improve the teenage markets.

- To develop and improve the Farmers Markets.

Objective 4 – The Markets Service is successfully Promoted and Well Marketed

Objective 4 strategic objectives within the theme, adept at Promotion and Well Marketed, include: -

- To maximise promotion of the markets by using local groups on Facebook for free advertisement and utilising BBC Communications and Place Teams.
- To continue to increase social media presence, creating a new Instagram account and updating current market Facebook account.
- To develop the Boston Market UK brand.

Actions with timescales have been developed to seek to deliver against the strategic objectives.

3.1 Resources

The Boston Markets team consists of one full time Markets Manager shared across South Holland, Boston and East Lindsey and one Markets Officer dedicated to Boston.

Markets delivery forms part of a full Leisure & Culture Service Review which is scheduled to progress in the first half of 2024.

3.2 Monitoring and Governance

Monitoring of the actions will be reported on at Portfolio Holder Briefings, Cabinet and Scrutiny meetings as appropriate.

The current lead officers are: -

- Markets Manager
- Interim Cultural Services Manager
- Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture

4.0 Objective 1 - Sustainable and Financially Resilient

<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Strategic Actions</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Current / Proposed Action</u>	<u>Detail including comments to support delivery (e.g. resources required etc.)</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Timescale for Delivery</u>	<u>How will success be measured</u>
1	To review delivery options	Leisure & Culture	Short Term Action: Market Policy review along with severe weather policy.	Policy to be reviewed again for 2024 (following a review in 2023), including a consultation exercise for a reduced budget a different Markets delivery model and development of a new payment system (see below actions).	Market Manager	June 2024 New policy Completed. Markets Payment system due October 2025	New policy adopted, consultation completed and new Markets payment system in place.
2	To achieve efficiency savings	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Service review underway for the Leisure and Culture service to seek efficiency savings, across the Partnership.	Work with HR and Finance colleagues on service review implications and benefits.	Market Manager / AD Leisure & Culture	June 2024 Review completed, savings to be built into 2025/26 budget	Service review completed, and long-term budget savings determined.
3	To look for funding opportunities	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Submit a bid to access Department for Levelling up Communities and Housing – £20m	The Markets qualify for this funding stream. Work is ongoing with Growth Team to prepare a bid to this funding stream. This funding would	Market Manager/ Growth Team	Bid Submission April 2024, for	Funding is accessed and the markets service redeveloped.

<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Strategic Actions</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Current / Proposed Action</u>	<u>Detail including comments to support delivery (e.g. resources required etc.)</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Timescale for Delivery</u>	<u>How will success be measured</u>
			<p>Endowment funding. This funding bid is to replace the market stalls and vehicle.</p> <p>Long Term Proposed Action: Potential for UKSPF funding in 2025 as well, to bid for additional equipment needs at that time as necessary.</p>	<p>support the delivery of Actions 2 and No 6.</p> <p>This is to be looked at to help support the market offer.</p>	<p>Project completed.</p> <p>Market Manager/ Program Manager UKSPF</p>	<p>2024/25 delivery</p> <p>July 2025</p>	<p>A successful UKSPF bid.</p>
4	To review the mechanisms for commissioning the Markets Service	Leisure & Culture	Longer Term Proposed Action: To review the current method of commissioning the Boston Markets.	The Markets are currently delivered in house, a review will be undertaken to determine if a more efficient and effective model is feasible.	Assistant Director – Leisure & Culture	December 2024	The most efficient and effective delivery model identified.
4	To review delivery options	Leisure & Culture	Short Term Action: Market Policy review along with severe weather policy.	Policy to be reviewed again for 2025 (following a review in 2024), including proposal to freeze 23/24 fees, restructure several aspects of the policy to enable the Council to be in a stronger position when enforcing its policy.	Market Manager	<p>April 2025</p> <p>Completed April 2025</p>	New policy adopted; consultation completed

5.0 Objective 2 - A Modern Market - Infrastructure & Delivery

<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Strategic Action</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Current / Proposed Action</u>	<u>Detail including comments to support delivery (e.g. resources required etc.)</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Timescale for Delivery</u>	<u>How will success be measured</u>
5	Wednesday Market Restructure	Leisure & Culture	Short Term Proposed Action: Consider and if appropriate seek to relocate traders including the auction, to the main market in the Market Place.	By relocating the small number of traders that remain on Bargate Green, it will open up the car park there on Wednesdays and increase income to the Council. Support from the Council's Assets to facilitate this will be followed up/required.	Market Manager	April 2024 Completed March 2025	A successful relocation of most/all traders from the Green to the Market place.
6	Review Market Stalls & workforce requirements	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: To restructure and update Markets operation and delivery.	This will be integrated into the wider Leisure & Culture service review (Action 2). This approach aims to support the markets teamwork in a more efficient way.	Market Manager/ Assistant Director Leisure & Culture	September 2024 Completed April 25	A modern market offering, with equipment and service structure in place.
7	Introduce Online Payment System	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Consider and report on the viability of alternative online payment options that could possibly be better than the current method.	To deliver a more efficient payment system for both the Council and the Traders. Better options for traders may encourage new traders to the service.	PSPS ICT/ Market Manager	September 2024 Due for completion October 2025	A new payment system in place, that is beneficial to the service and traders alike.

6.0 Objective 3 – Known for Specialist Markets and Events

<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Strategic Actions</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Current / Proposed Action</u>	<u>Detail including comments to support delivery (e.g. resources required etc.)</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Timescale for Delivery</u>	<u>How will success be measured</u>
8	To Increase the Number of Specialist Markets each year	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Explore options and availability of niche/artisan markets to help increase footfall and bring new traders to the markets.	Farmers and Teenage Markets in place, with an aim to start new niche craft and antique markets by June 2024.	Market Manager	June 2025 Completed April 2025 (Capacity reached at current staffing levels)	An artisan/niche market each Saturday to compliment the current Market offer.
9	To work with partners to bring new activities and events to the markets.	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Continue to work with the events team to host events on market days in Boston.	Look to expand events/entertainment to more market days where funding permits from 3 to 6 events. Work with Econ Growth Team on monitoring HUQ data.	Market Manager/Event Team	July 2025	Increase the number of events on market days from 3 to 6 per annum. An increase in footfall verified through HUQ data.
10	To continue to develop & improve the teenage markets	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Continue to promote the teenage market opportunities.	Host 11 teenage markets per annum. Encourage more young people onto Boston markets and events. 2023/24 saw 7 new teenage markets added to the programme from June 23.	Market Manager	Aug 2025 Due to staffing, 3 events booked for 2025.	Add an additional 4 Teenage markets into the programme.

7.0 Objective 4 – Adept at Promotion and well Marketed.

<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Strategic Actions</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Current / Proposed Action</u>	<u>Detail including comments to support delivery (e.g. resources required etc.)</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Timescale for Delivery</u>	<u>How will success be measured</u>
11	To Maximize promotion of the markets	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Continue social media presence and promotion of teenage and niche markets.	The addition of new niche markets and continued growth of the teenage markets should help increase the presence of Boston Markets on social media. 2023/24 saw 2 additional niche markets added to the programme per month.	Markets Manager/ Executive PA	August 24 Completed April 2025	Monitoring of Social Media Impressions and recording trends in activity.
12	To continue to increase the social media presence	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Continue to develop the social media presence for the markets.	Facebook page has been set up and continues to grow.	Markets Manager/ Executive PA/Communications Team	March 25 Completed April 2025 3000 followers reached	The social media presence continues to grow with the existing 2,300 followers growing to 3,000.
13	To develop the Boston Markets UK brand	Leisure & Culture	Current Proposed Action: Work with print and design to create branding (banners and promotional material) to add to the identity of the	There is a small budget within print and design that can be used to print new banners and material. There will also be money within the budget to help support this.	Markets Manager	June 2025 Completed April 2025	Trader feedback and public perception online and within the

<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Strategic Actions</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Current / Proposed Action</u>	<u>Detail including comments to support delivery (e.g. resources required etc.)</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Timescale for Delivery</u>	<u>How will success be measured</u>
			markets and seek feedback from traders and public.	Surveys to be undertaken in order to seek to continually improve the service.		New banners, bunting, Trader of the week feature, barrier covers and A2 advertising foamboards now in place.	market via a 6 monthly survey.

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