



Public Document Pack
Boston Borough Council

**Chief Executive
Rob Barlow**

Municipal Buildings
Boston
Lincolnshire PE21 8QR
Tel: 01205 314200

Friday 19 September 2025

Notice of meeting of the Full Council

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Full Council
on **Monday 29th September 2025 at 6.30 pm**
in the Council Chamber - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR

**Rob Barlow
Chief Executive**

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

C. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 26)

D. Communications

E. Deputations and Petitions

F. Questions from Elected Members

G. Questions from Members of the Public

Part II - Agenda Items

- 1 Audit & Governance Committee Minutes** (Pages 27 - 38)
To receive the Minutes from the meeting held on 7th July 2025.
- 2 2024/25 Outturn Report** (Pages 39 - 46)
(A report by Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer))
- 3 Democratic Arrangements - Appointments to Committee Vice-Chairmen and to Outside Bodies 2025/26** (Pages 47 - 56)
(A report by John Medler, Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer)
- 4 Designation of Section 151 Officer** (Pages 57 - 62)
(A report by James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate)
- 5 South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Performance Report** (Pages 63 - 72)
(A report by James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate)

Part III - Motions on Notice

To consider the following motions in accordance with procedure rule 14:

1 Planning Committee Chairman

Under the previous administration Councillor David Middleton was appointed as Chairman of the Planning Committee of Boston Borough Council on Monday 19/5/2025.

It is proposed that he is replaced by Councillor Peter Bedford.

Councillor Bedford has had 8 years' experience as Chairman of Planning Committee as well as 7 years as Portfolio Holder of Planning and Development, after first being elected as Coastal Ward councillor in 1991.

He has experience of steering through complex planning applications, whilst maintaining both the integrity of the Boston Borough Council planning process as well as retaining the public confidence in this Council.

We therefore move that:-

The Council resolves to remove Councillor David Middleton as Chairman of the Planning Committee of Boston Borough Council, and appoint Councillor Peter Bedford as the new Chairman of the Planning Committee with immediate effect.

Proposer: Helen Staples

Seconder: Sarah Sharpe

Questions from Members of the Council and the public must be received by 5 p.m. two clear working days prior to the day of the meeting – the deadline for this meeting is 5 p.m. on Wednesday 24th September 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.

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Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Full Council** held in the Council Chamber - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Monday 21st July 2025 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

The Mayor Councillor Barrie Pierpoint, in the Chair.

Councillors Patricia Marson (Deputy Mayor), Alison Austin, Richard Austin BEM, John Baxter, Peter Bedford, David Brown, Dale Broughton, Callum Butler, James Cantwell, Emma Cresswell, Anton Dani, Anne Dorrian, Stuart Evans, Sandeep Ghosh, Mike Gilbert, Paul Gleeson, Andy Izard, David Middleton, Chris Mountain, Jonathan Noble, Ralph Pryke, Claire Rylott, Lina Savickiene, David Scoot, Helen Staples, Suzanne Welberry and Stephen Woodliffe.

Officers:

Deputy Chief Executive (Programme Delivery) and Assistant Director - General Fund Assets, Assistant Director - Governance and Monitoring Officer, Assistant Director – Corporate, Legal Advisor, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL), Head of HR & OD, HR Manager - Operations, Democratic Services Team Leader and Democratic Services Officer.

17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Neil Drayton and Sarah Sharpe.

18 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

19 Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual meeting of Full Council meeting on 19th May 2025 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

20 Communications

The Deputy Chief Executive gave notice that under delegated powers the following changes had been made to the membership of the Chief Officer Employment Panel: That Councillor Stephen Woodliffe was now an appointed member of the Chief Officer Employment Panel, replacing Councillor Paul Gleeson.

21 Deputations and Petitions

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that no deputations or petitions had been received.

22 Questions from Elected Members

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the following questions had been received:

1. Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Anne Dorrian

Please give a summary of the portfolio work you've undertaken during the last two years and comment on the areas which you are most proud of.

Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Thank you Councillor Dorrian for your question.

As I reflect on the past two years, I'm incredibly proud of what we have achieved together—grounded in partnership, led by community need, and always with the ambition of making Boston a better place for everyone.

One of the first things I set out to do was improve communication and connection across our borough.

To support this, I established a Parish Council Liaison Meeting—bringing all areas of our borough to the table.

This group ensures that every corner of Boston has a voice in the decisions we make, and that parishes are kept fully informed about the developments, challenges, and opportunities happening across the borough.

Community recognition has also remained a priority.

Through our Boston Heroes Awards, we continue to shine a spotlight on the amazing individuals and groups who go above and beyond for others.

Our most recent celebration, held at St. Botolph's Church on the 16th of July, was another powerful reminder of the compassion, dedication, and spirit that make Boston so special. Hosted by Scott Dalton of BBC Radio Lincolnshire, it was an evening full of pride and gratitude.

I'm equally proud of the work we've done to support and grow volunteering in Boston.

With support from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we developed and launched the Boston Volunteer Scheme, signing up to the national Volunteer Charter and recognising the enormous contribution volunteers make—not only to our services but to their own health and wellbeing.

Roles now range from CCTV spotters and event marshals to litter picking teams and Good Home Alliance ambassadors.

Thanks to this work, Boston now sees over 100 active volunteers each month—a figure that continues to grow.

Another area of real impact is our Crowdfunding Programme.

We've now supported 10 community projects, with another 6 currently live.

Altogether, these projects have attracted over £105,000 in pledges—with £49,320 pledged by the South and East Lincolnshire Crowd and £56,000 coming directly from residents and community supporters.

Projects have ranged from cultural events to the refurbishment of Fydell House, and even a touring theatre production—each one helping to make Boston a vibrant, creative, and proud place to live.

And finally, I want to reflect on our local delivery of the Household Support Fund. This discretionary welfare scheme has been a lifeline for so many—especially through the most challenging periods of the cost-of-living crisis. Over the past two years, I've overseen and helped shape the delivery of four separate rounds of funding, ensuring that Boston's £1.2 million allocation has been used efficiently, compassionately, and with maximum local impact. Under the Healthy Living strand of my portfolio, this work has resulted in the delivery of over 12,000 grants, food parcels, and other emergency support—helping the households most in need to get through periods of real difficulty.

Reducing hardship, strengthening communities, and supporting people to thrive—these have been our shared goals. And I'm proud to say that, through collaboration and care, we are delivering.

Thank you.

There was no supplementary question.

2. Question to Councillor Barrie Pierpoint from Councillor Anne Dorrian

As Chair of the A&G committee during the last two years there has been no need to hold any Standards Committee hearings which is a good indication of the way in which councillors have conducted themselves. With regard to Governance in particular, please give Council your view on the importance of councillors honouring the Nolan Principles, with particular emphasis on honesty and integrity.

Response from Councillor Barrie Pierpoint

I would like to thank Councillor Dorrian for notice of her question.

As Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, I welcome the observation that no Standards Committee hearings have been required over the past two years.

The seven Nolan Principles of Public Life—selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership—are the foundation to good ethical conduct in public life and in my view are all essential.

Supplementary question to Councillor Barrie Pierpoint from Councillor Anne Dorrian

When you were chair of Audit and Governance, you negotiated the use of a car for yourself while you were in the role of Mayor and you assured myself as Leader, and you assured the Monitoring Officer, that this vehicle will not cost the Council any money whatsoever. Subsequently, you then came to the Council and asked Council to pay your insurance costs for the year. I don't believe that that showed you in a good light in terms of honesty or integrity. What say you?

Response from Councillor Pierpoint

I would like to respond to that question by saying I have paid the insurance of that car myself and there's been no cost to the Council whatsoever.

3. Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Anne Dorrian

As Chair of the working group which is considering the Community Governance Review please inform Council about this work and the importance of it for our residents as we look to the future and in particular, Local Government Reorganisation.

Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell

I would like to thank Councillor Dorrian for notice of her question.

As Chair of the Community Governance Review Working Group, I welcome the opportunity to provide an update on this important initiative which, I believe, marks a significant moment in shaping the future of local democracy in our town.

On the 3rd of March this year, Full Council unanimously agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review of the unparished area of Boston. This decision recognised the need to explore whether our current arrangements are still fit for purpose—and whether the creation of a Town or Parish Council could offer more effective, representative, and accountable local governance.

We have now entered Stage One of the consultation, which began on Monday 14th July and runs until Tuesday 26th August. This is a key opportunity for residents, community organisations, and local stakeholders to share their views on whether Boston should have its own Town or Parish Council.

This consultation is being conducted in line with statutory guidance and is supported by a detailed information document. That document explains how things currently operate under the Boston Town Area Committee—or BTAC—and outlines the powers, responsibilities, and implications of establishing a Parish or Town Council, including how it might affect local services and Council Tax.

Colleagues, it is worth remembering that Boston is one of the few towns in Lincolnshire without a Town Council. At present, services specific to our town are overseen by BTAC—a sub-committee of this Council. While BTAC has done, and continues to do, valuable work, it functions under delegated authority and lacks the statutory independence and direct democratic accountability that a Town or Parish Council would provide.

This review gives us the chance to ask: would a more localised and representative model strengthen civic engagement? Could it deliver services more responsively? And most importantly—would it give residents a stronger voice in shaping the town they live in and love?

The timing is also significant. As we look ahead to the possibility of Local Government Reorganisation across Lincolnshire, establishing robust and representative local structures now will be vital. It will ensure that Boston's identity, priorities, and voice are not only protected—but promoted—in any future arrangements.

I want to stress that the Working Group is fully committed to a process that is open, transparent, and inclusive. Every consultation response will be reviewed carefully. Draft recommendations will follow later this year, and further consultation will take place before any final decisions are made by Full Council.

So, to all Members—and to the wider public—I encourage you to get involved. Promote the consultation. Take part in the conversation. And help us shape the governance of Boston for the future.

Further details, including the survey and supporting information, can be found on the Council website.

There was no supplementary question.

4. Question to Councillor David Middleton from Councillor Emma Cresswell

You have been Chair of Planning for the last two years and I have heard many compliments from members about your skills. Please share with council a summary of your work to date.

Response from Councillor David Middleton

Since taking on the role of Chairman, I have been committed to ensuring that the Planning Committee operates in a fair, transparent, and efficient manner. My focus has been on upholding the integrity of the planning process, supporting members in making well-informed decisions, and ensuring that the committee remains responsive to the needs of our residents and local communities.

Key highlights of our work during this period include:

- **Improved Decision-Making Processes:** Working with officers we have strengthened the quality of reports and presentations brought before the committee, enabling members to engage in more robust and informed debate. I have also worked to maintain the committee as a robust, balanced and inclusive forum where planning applications are openly debated, ensuring all views are heard impartially and carefully considered before decisions are made.
- **Member Training and Support:** I have worked closely with officers to deliver regular, tailored, training sessions for committee members, ensuring we remain up to date with changes in planning legislation and policy. These sessions have also focused on emerging and complex issues – both nationally and locally - such as flood risk, rural development and housing delivery—and have included contributions from external speakers, including experts on topics like development viability, to further enhance members' understanding, comprehension and decision-making in relation to planning.

- **Building Relationships:** I have also prioritised building strong, constructive working relationships with the Officers and the Portfolio Holders for Planning. This collaborative approach has helped ensure alignment between the Officers of the Council, Members and decision-making by the Committee, supporting the smooth running of the committee, and enabled early discussion of upcoming challenges and opportunities within the planning system ensure quality of service to residents and communities.
- **Community Engagement:** We have encouraged greater public participation in the planning process, including clearer communication of how decisions are made and how residents can have their say.
- **Performance and Efficiency:** The committee has consistently met statutory deadlines for decision-making, and notably we have seen a reduction in the number of appeals upheld against our decisions, reflecting the robustness and soundness of our approach to planning matters.
- **Key Council Development:** The smooth and effective running of the committee underpinned by a collaborative and proactive working relationship with officers, has been instrumental in enabling the timely determination of key Levelling Up projects. Major schemes such as the Rosegarth Square public realm improvements, the redevelopment of Crown House, and the transformation of the former B&M site have progressed through the planning process efficiently and within tight timescales. This approach has ensured that these vital projects can move forward without delay, delivering significant benefits for the town and its residents.
- **Leadership:** As Chairman, I have brought strong leadership to the committee, leading by example and maintaining a fair but firm approach when required to ensure meetings are conducted effectively, professionally and respectfully. I have demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement by attending specialist training for committee chairs at Warwick University, further strengthening my ability to guide the committee with confidence, and professionalism. It is a privilege and a source of real pride to chair the committee and support its important role in shaping the future of our Borough.

I am proud of the collaborative spirit that has mostly characterised the committee's work and grateful to all members and officers for their dedication and professionalism. It has been a privilege to serve as Chairman, and I remain committed to ensuring that the Planning Committee continues to serve the best interests of Boston Borough.

Supplementary question to Councillor David Middleton from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Is there anything you think could have worked out better?

Response from Councillor Middleton

Thank you, Councillor, for the question. What would have been better? It would have been much better if we'd have got local ward councillors along with their local friends and associates not to make decisions on planning applications based on emotional feelings. They need to follow the planning legislation and advice from experience planning officers.

Some councillors have been so emotional to the point of giving false information to the committee, saying the public house was closing when the landlord was actually retiring. Another comment was the school is full, when in fact there was capacity for new pupils. Despicable behaviour, I believe. If the future of Boston planning is to make decisions on emotional feelings, then this will encourage national governments to take away the powers of local committees and use strengthened legislation to get the correct result that they want, and that responsibility will fall on the people who've been making their decisions purely on emotional feelings.

5. Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Please give a summary of the achievements of this council under your leadership during the last two years.

Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

I thank Councillor Cresswell for notice of her question.

I am immensely proud of the progress which my administration has made during the last two years, not least because I had a cabinet full of neophytes and they required a lot of nurturing and teaching in order for them to get up to speed reasonably quickly.

The way in which I encouraged them was through regular one-to-one catch up sessions, which allowed us to have the opportunity to work through issues, solve problems and steer a better course ahead, if one were needed.

I am most proud of the fact that I steadied the ship in short order, and the ever-looming threat of government intervention, or special measures, which had been hanging over this council throughout the tenure of several leaders – and which actually occurred under the previous leadership of Councillor Austin and when Councillor Staples was on cabinet – was quickly dissolved. So much so, that only five months after Boston Independents took control under my leadership, this council was awarded £20m of funding through the long-term plan for towns. The significance of this was captured by our previous MP Matt Warman who wrote to me, “it is great news and was in part thanks to some very senior people in No10 so it is a real vote of confidence.”

But that wasn't the only funding we received under my leadership.

The town benefitted from an additional £17m through the Levelling Up Partnership funding. This funding is being used to support affordable homes in our borough, the new stadium at Boston United football club, an additional wing at Boston Leisure Centre to support volunteering, and well-being refurbishment works at the Len Medlock centre, and improvements to our beautiful Centenary Chapel. For our community safety team we secured nearly £600k in external funding from the Serious Violence fund and Boston Town Board.

I could mention a plethora of projects and initiatives that have been planned and delivered under my leadership which have enhanced the lives of residents, such as the council tax support scheme which has helped to lift children out of poverty, to the development of town centre events which has encouraged our residents to once again feel a real sense of

pride in their town. But I'd like to focus on two incidents in particular which I think demonstrates what kind of leader I am.

I am proud of the fact that I was able to respond quickly and sympathetically to the needs of residents when faced with a crisis.

When the town suffered with the arrival of unruly travellers in the summer of 2023, my leadership was swift, decisive and unwavering. I worked immediately with our Community Safety Team to ensure that a Section 77 notice was issued within 3 hours, however, we then would have had to wait for 24 hours before issuing a s78 notice and applying for a court date. All the while havoc was being wreaked upon our businesses and it was through my negotiation with Lincolnshire Police that for the first time ever, they used their powers to issue a s60 notice – county-wide, thus moving them on immediately and preventing other towns from suffering what we had.

As I said this had never been done before and my officers reported that this was the quickest they had ever known travellers be evicted.

The second incident I would like to mention is that of the flooding in Wyberton West Road in January of this year. Upon learning of the catastrophe, I immediately went over there to meet with the residents and offer support. I was horrified at the sights before me and I made sure that our response officers had all the resources they needed at their disposal. I spoke with the leader of Lincolnshire County Council and met with the Police to make sure that all statutory agencies were doing their bit – which of course they were.

I wanted to turn my words into action and that afternoon, I immediately sought the support of cabinet colleagues to provide a relief fund in the form of a cash grant of £1000 for every household which had water ingress to their habitable spaces.

I ensured that the application for this grant was as simplistic as possible and I was delighted that the first £1000 went out the door within 24 hours of making the decision.

This had never been done in this town before but I was insistent that our residents and business would not have to suffer a minute longer than necessary.

All in all, my record stands for itself and whilst I have learned lessons along the way, and there are instances where I would've done things differently, overall I am proud of the achievements which have been accomplished under my leadership.

Supplementary question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Thank you, Councillor Dorrian, for summing up all of that over the last two years. I think you're clear, concise leadership is evident. Is there anything you regret?

Response from Councillor Dorrian

Thank you, Councillor Cresswell for that supplementary question. I guess tonight I've got 14 big regrets and most of them are sat in this room.

6. Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Claire Rylott

What has been the cost to the Council and the people of Boston for legal advice commissioned by your administration in relation to PSPS which is a council owned company, since January 2025?

Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

I would like to thank Cllr Rylott for notice of her question. The answer is £31,320.36.

Supplementary question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Claire Rylott

Thank you. Why did you recommend at the beginning of the year to Full Council, that a colleague of yours be appointed to the Board of PSPS, a paid role. At the time the proposal was put forward, it was questioned by Councillor Cantwell.

Your colleague was not eligible to become a member of the Board. The two members places allocated to Boston have to either be councillors or officers. You have recently been challenged regarding this appointment and you took it upon yourself to seek legal advice costing the Borough Council a massive figure in legal expenses.

You were illegally advised to go no further and your colleague has now resigned from the board of PSPS.

May I hasten to add, your ex deputy and cabinet were not aware of this challenge and the cost being incurred instigated by yourself. Perhaps an apology to Full Council and to your colleague on this matter, when it has always been an incorrect appointment.

Response from Councillor Dorrian

I need to be very careful how I respond because this is a live legal case and I'm very sad and disappointed that you've been so badly misled and badly misinformed and quite clearly my ex-deputy's got very loose lips and he has betrayed what is very confidential and legally privileged information, so yet again shame on you man.

7. Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Is Boston Borough Council content with the quality of services currently provided by Public Sector Services Limited?

Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

I would like to thank Cllr Noble for notice of his question.

As an organisation, we are always striving for improvements in performance and the same goes for all our services – we should always want to see improvements to services that result in better outcomes for our communities.

In respect of PSPS, there have been some performance challenges of late (customer services and revenues and benefits, as examples) and, as Leader, I raise these issues with PSPS directly and with our Client Liaison Officer. Both Cabinet and our Overview & Scrutiny Committee do regularly scrutinise PSPS performance as part of our Performance Monitoring. Whilst PSPS do deliver complex services on our behalf, many of which have increasing customer demand, we do challenge the company to deliver to the standards we set in our Service Level Agreements.

Supplementary question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, in your response, Councillor Dorrian, you referred to some performance challenges of late with regard to customer services and revenue and benefits. Now customer contact and customer services were something I raised at the last Council. And then I did face an inordinate delay trying to get through.

I just did two test calls this morning to see if things were any better and I can report actually that in both cases the call was answered in in 2 to 3 minutes, so that was very pleasing. Now you refer to revenues and benefits. Obviously a very, very important sector. Can you tell us what are the specific problems that have affected revenues and benefits because you talked about challenges and potential problems. So, could you amplify and explain what those are please? Thank you.

Reply from Councillor Dorrian

Thank you for your supplementary question, Councillor Noble. I will give you a written answer.

[A copy of the written response is appended to the Minutes.]

8. Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Why did the Council decide to stage a Boston Pride Event when a Music Festival event could have been staged in Central Park for less than half the cost of the Pride Event?

Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Thank you Councillor Noble for your question.

While events are not in my portfolio, communities are so I will do my best to answer the question you have posed.

As part of Boston's ongoing commitment to inclusivity, community cohesion, and the celebration of diversity, I'm pleased to announce that the town will be hosting its first-ever Pride Event this summer.

Now, while we considered other types of events—such as a music festival, which may have come at a lower cost—we firmly believe that Pride offers something unique.

It's more than an event.
It's an opportunity.

An opportunity to engage with a wider cross-section of our community—especially those who may not have previously felt represented in our Council's events programme.

On Saturday 26th July 2025, Central Park will come alive with live performances, community stalls, outreach activities, and family-friendly entertainment. But more than that—it will be a space to foster understanding, visibility, and celebration of the LGBTQ+ community.

It will send a clear and powerful message:
That Boston is a welcoming place for all.

Now to funding.

The total projected cost of the event is £36,000.
The majority of this will be covered by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which will fund the core infrastructure and much of the entertainment.

The remaining balance will be met from the existing BTAC Events budget, which was already approved as part of the 2025/26 events programme.

Councillors,
This is a landmark event for Boston.

It's a chance to bring people together—to celebrate who we are as a town—and to enhance our reputation as a progressive, inclusive, and forward-looking community.

It has the potential to attract visitors,
To foster civic pride,
And to showcase Boston at its best—
United in diversity.

Thank you.

Supplementary question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, because in your answer, Councillor Cresswell, you referred to the BTAC budget. Now I'm just going to this – in the minutes from the BTAC meeting on Thursday 27th of March and it says there's an existing allocation of £17,000 for a music event in the 2025 events programme which was proposed to be re-allocated to the Pride event. So, there we are. The music festival, which I think would have appealed to a wider demographic, was £17,000 and the Pride festival is double that but my point is this. The Council seems to have put its foot into the political arena.

Because I have to ask the question, why are we promoting the agenda of a particular loud minority pressure group who have full legal protection? Surely we shouldn't be pandering and promoting the concept of identity politics. We're all Boston citizens and the emphasis should be on community cohesion.

So my question again to you is why are we promoting the concept of identity politics? Why is that the business of this Council?

Reply from Councillor Cresswell

I'll respond in the most simplest of terms. It's about community and it's about cohesion, and actually it's about everything. It's a music event with community stalls and it's so much wider than just a music festival. This is a real opportunity for our town.

If you want me to, if you want any more detail adding to it, I'm more than happy to speak with Councillor Broughton, who was in charge of events and we can get you a written response, but I hope that most people in this Chamber will agree that this is a fantastic opportunity for Boston. Thank you.

[A copy of the written response is appended to the Minutes.]

23 Questions from Members of the Public

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that no questions had been received from members of the public.

24 Motions on Notice

A proposal to bring forward Part 3 of the Agenda – Motions for consideration which was moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

Upon being put to the vote the proposal was carried.

The following Motion was received:

Leader of Boston Borough Council

The council resolves to remove Councillor Anne Dorrian as leader of Boston Borough Council and resolves to appoint a new leader at the full council meeting to be held on 21st July 2025.

At the full council meeting held on 22nd May 2023, council resolved to appoint Councillor Anne Dorrian as leader of Boston Borough Council for a 4 year period ending at the annual meeting on 2027.

Since that time, we believe Councillor Anne Dorrian has lost significant support from the Boston Independent group, and can no longer, in our view, fulfil this function on behalf of members of this council.

Therefore in the interests of this council, which needs clear concise leadership representing all members of the council,

That council resolves to remove Councillor Anne Dorrian as leader of Boston Borough Council, and appoint a new leader at full council on Monday 21st July 2025, to run until the next borough council elections.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Broughton stated that the proposal was brought forward due to a loss of confidence in the current leadership from within the Boston Independent Group. He emphasised the need for cohesive and representative leadership to guide the Council through a period of significant opportunity and challenge.

The motion was moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

During debate, Members expressed a range of views. Several Members spoke in support of the motion, citing the importance of unity and collective responsibility within the Council. Others raised concerns about the process by which the motion had been brought forward, including the absence of prior consultation with the outgoing Leader and the potential impact on public confidence.

Councillor Dorrian addressed the Chamber, reflecting on her time as Leader and outlining the achievements of the administration over the past two years. She expressed disappointment at the manner in which the motion had been handled and questioned the motivations behind it. Other Members acknowledged her contributions and thanked her for her service.

A recorded vote was requested and supported. The motion was carried by 21 votes in favour, 3 against, and 4 abstentions.

In accordance with the resolution, nominations were then invited for the position of Leader of the Council. Councillor Dale Broughton was nominated and seconded. No further nominations were received. Members spoke in support and against the nomination.

A second recorded vote was held, and the appointment was confirmed by 21 votes in favour, 3 against, and 4 abstentions.

Resolved:

- 1. That Councillor Anne Dorrian be removed as Leader of Boston Borough Council and that a new leader be appointed at full council on Monday 21st July 2025; and**
- 2. That Councillor Dale Broughton be appointed as Leader of Boston Borough Council.**

Recorded Vote on the motion to remove Councillor Anne Dorrian as Leader of Boston Borough Council (Motion)		
For	Councillor Alison Austin, Councillor Richard Austin BEM, Councillor John Baxter, Councillor Dale Broughton, Councillor David Brown, Councillor Callum Butler, Councillor James Cantwell, Councillor Anton Dani, Councillor Stuart Evans, Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, Councillor Mike Gilbert, Councillor Andy Izard, Councillor Chris Mountain, Councillor Jonathan Noble, Councillor Ralph Pryke, Councillor Claire Rylott, Councillor Lina Savickiene, Councillor David Scoot, Councillor Helen Staples, Councillor Suzanne Welberry and Councillor Stephen Woodliffe	21
Against	Councillor Emma Cresswell, Councillor Anne Dorrian and Councillor David Middleton	3
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Councillor Peter Bedford, Councillor Paul Gleeson, Councillor Patricia Marson and Councillor Barrie Pierpoint	4
Carried		

Recorded Vote on the motion to appoint a new Leader of Boston Borough Council (Motion)		
For	Councillor Richard Austin BEM, Councillor John Baxter, Councillor Peter Bedford, Councillor Dale Broughton, Councillor David Brown, Councillor Callum Butler, Councillor James Cantwell, Councillor Anton Dani, Councillor Stuart Evans, Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, Councillor Mike Gilbert, Councillor Paul Gleeson, Councillor Andy Izard, Councillor Chris Mountain, Councillor Ralph Pryke, Councillor Claire Rylott, Councillor Lina Savickiene, Councillor David Scoot, Councillor Helen Staples, Councillor Suzanne Welberry and Councillor Stephen Woodliffe	21
Against	Councillor Emma Cresswell, Councillor Anne Dorrian and Councillor David Middleton	3
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Councillor Alison Austin, Councillor Patricia Marson, Councillor Jonathan Noble and Councillor Barrie Pierpoint	4
Carried		

25 Audit & Governance Committee Minutes

The Mayor, as Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, presented the Audit and Governance minutes from the meeting held on 22nd April 2025 for councillors to note.

26 Boston Borough Council 24.25 Outturn Report

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) introduced the report which sought Council approval for the rephasing of elements of the Capital Programme from the 2024/25 financial year into 2025/26. Members were advised that, due to the recent Cabinet meeting being inquorate, the full outturn position would be brought forward through the appropriate governance channels in due course. However, urgent approval was required in respect of capital rephasing to ensure continuity in the delivery of key projects.

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) explained that the rephasing related to schemes funded through the Towns Fund, Levelling Up Fund, and Boston Partnership Fund, all of which were considered strategically significant for the borough. The total value of the proposed rephasing was £5.380 million, comprising £2.109 million for Towns Fund projects, £0.324 million for Levelling Up Fund schemes, £2.582 million for Boston Partnership Fund initiatives, and £0.365 million for other capital projects. These figures were detailed in Table 5C of Appendix A within the report.

Members discussed the report and clarification was sought regarding the status of funding for the Boston United Football Club stadium development, noting that escalating costs had prompted public interest in the timing of the Council's financial contribution. In response, the Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) confirmed that the project remained under active consideration by officers, with final arrangements being progressed. While a specific date for release of funds could not yet be confirmed, the Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) undertook to keep members updated.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Mike Gilbert and seconded by Councillor Paul Gleeson.

Resolved:

That the capital rephasing from 2024/25 to 2025/26, presented in Table 5C in Appendix A within the report, including £2.109m for Towns Fund, £0.324m for LUF, £2.582m for BPF and £0.365m for other capital projects totalling £5.380m be approved.

27 Annual Treasury Report 2024/25

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) introduced the Annual Treasury Report for the 2024/25 financial year. The report, appended in full at Appendix 1 within the agenda pack, had been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management and had been scrutinised by the Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 7th July 2025.

Members were advised that the report provided a comprehensive review of the Council's treasury management activities during the year, including:

- An economic update for 2024/25;
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio and borrowing strategy;
- An assessment of the Council's debt position;
- Compliance with prudential and treasury indicators; and
- A detailed analysis of property fund performance.

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) highlighted that the Council had achieved a net treasury surplus of £710,516 for the year, with treasury investments delivering an average return of 5.29%. While returns from property funds were lower than forecast, averaging 3.21%, the combined return across all investments was 4.57%. The report also noted that the Council's investment policy remained under regular review to ensure a prudent balance between risk and reward.

Members discussed the report and a number of observations were raised regarding the performance of the Council's property fund investments. It was noted that the actual income received from property funds was below the projected figure by approximately £174,000, and that the net asset value of the property fund portfolio had declined by over £2 million since purchase. While acknowledging the broader economic context and challenges within the commercial property market, a Member expressed disappointment at the underperformance and suggested that the Council reflect on the long-term viability of such investments.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Callum Butler and seconded by Councillor Andy Izard.

Resolved:

That the Annual Treasury Management Review 2024/25, in Appendix 1 within the report, as required by the Local Government Act 2003 following scrutiny by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting on 7th July 2025 be approved.

[Councillor Anton Dani left the meeting at 7.55pm and returned at 7.57pm following consideration of the above item.]

28 Allocation of Seats Review

The Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer introduced the report, which set out a revised allocation of seats on the Council's committees, panels, and working groups following recent changes to the political composition of the authority. Members were advised that the review had been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

The Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer confirmed that the revised seat allocations and associated appointments had been tabled at the meeting as Appendix 1, a copy of which is appended to the Minutes, reflecting the wishes of political group leaders. The report recommended that Council approve the updated allocations for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year.

Councillor Gleeson requested to be removed from the Chief Officer Employment Panel, noting that he had not intended to be reappointed. Councillor Woodliffe, as group leader, confirmed that he would replace Councillor Gleeson on the panel, and the Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer confirmed that this amendment to Appendix 1 was procedurally acceptable.

The Leader, in summing up, thanked Members for their support and reiterated the importance of working collaboratively across the Chamber to meet the challenges ahead. He also expressed his appreciation to Councillor Dorrian for her service as Leader and emphasised that the Council's focus must remain on delivering for residents.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe.

Resolved:

That the revised allocation of seats and appointments to Committees, Panels and Working Groups, in Appendix 1 within the report, be approved for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2025/26.

29 Exclusion of Public and Press

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe and seconded by Councillor Mike Gilbert.

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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

[There was a brief adjournment at 8.06pm and the meeting reconvened at 8.11pm to consider the following item.]

30 To implement a pay structure and associated Job Evaluation Scheme for Officers in shared Partnership roles within the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

The Assistant Director – Corporate introduced the report, which set out proposals to implement a harmonised pay structure and associated job evaluation scheme for officers employed in shared partnership roles across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

Members debated the report and expressed general support for the proposals, recognising the importance of ensuring fairness, consistency, and transparency in pay arrangements across the partnership. The proposals were seen as a positive step in supporting recruitment, retention, and organisational alignment.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe and seconded by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh.

Resolved:

That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved

The Meeting ended at 8.21 pm.

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Boston Borough Council

* Chief Officer Employment Panel (3)

(Meets as required)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Broughton			Woodliffe	
2	Sharpe				

Named Subs					
1	Ghosh			Pryke	
2	Mountain				

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Supplementary Questions and Written Responses Full Council – 21st July 2025

7. Supplementary Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, in your response, Councillor Dorrian, you referred to some performance challenges of late with regard to customer services and revenue and benefits. Now customer contact and customer services were something I raised at the last Council. And then I did face an inordinate delay trying to get through.

I just did two test calls this morning to see if things were any better and I can report actually that in both cases the call was answered in in 2 to 3 minutes, so that was very pleasing. Now you refer to revenues and benefits. Obviously a very, very important sector. Can you tell us what are the specific problems that have affected revenues and benefits because you talked about challenges and potential problems. So, could you amplify and explain what those are please? Thank you.

Written Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

The Revenues and Benefits service faces ongoing unprecedented level of demand, with a key driver being the current economic climate and the effect and impact on individuals, households and businesses. This is national issue, not just confined to Boston. The way in which Customers contact the Council, means it has a secondary impact across PSPS Customer Contact, hence some recent peaks of longer than normal call wait times. The demand is not just confined to phone lines, PSPS are managing increased post, emails, face to face visits and web-chat contacts. It is also important to recognise that alongside the volume of demand, many customers have multiple and more complex needs which take longer to support and resolve. In quarter 4 the volume of contacts to the Council Tax and Benefits telephony service increased by more than 22% compared to the period in the 2024. Increased demands are similarly evident in the volume of incoming work coming into the service, and whilst the service was able to deliver performance within national DWP targets, the internal 'stretch' SLA targets for speed of processing of Housing Benefit claims and changes were slightly outside.

The service seeks to mitigate the effects of increased demand through additional resources, overtime and the exploration and implementation of new technologies. We have recruited an additional 8 resources on a short term basis to support us manage the additional work, at a cost of £100k. The Company has not passed this cost back to the Councils, as it explores other options for managing demand longer term.

8. Supplementary Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, because in your answer, Councillor Cresswell, you referred to the BTAC budget. Now I'm just going to this – in the minutes from the BTAC meeting on Thursday 27th of March and it says there's an existing allocation of £17,000 for a music event in the 2025 events programme which was proposed to be re-allocated to the Pride event. So, there we are. The music festival, which I think would have appealed to a wider

demographic, was £17,000 and the Pride festival is double that but my point is this. The Council seems to have put its foot into the political arena.

Because I have to ask the question, why are we promoting the agenda of a particular loud minority pressure group who have full legal protection? Surely we shouldn't be pandering and promoting the concept of identity politics. We're all Boston citizens and the emphasis should be on community cohesion.

So my question again to you is why are we promoting the concept of identity politics? Why is that the business of this Council?

Written Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell (provided in consultation with Councillor Broughton)

The council is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion for all residents, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Supporting and hosting Boston Pride Festival is a powerful way to demonstrate this commitment—creating a welcoming environment for people from all communities and fostering a sense of belonging for LGBTQ+ individuals. This helps to reduce isolation and combat discrimination.

Pride is more than a celebration, it is a unifying event that brings people together across different backgrounds, encouraging understanding, respect, and solidarity. By hosting a Pride event, the council sends a clear and positive message that discrimination has no place in our community.



Boston Borough Council

Allocation of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees / Panels (including Substitutes) 2025/26

* Overview and Scrutiny (15)

	Progressive Ind Boston (7)	Boston Ind (2)	Cons (2)	Ind 20/20 (4)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Drayton	Cresswell	Brown	A Austin	
2	Izard	Dorrian	Evans	R Austin	
3	Marson			Gleeson	
4	Pierpoint			Pryke	
5	Savickiene				
6	Scoot				
7	Welberry				

* Audit & Governance Committee (11)

	Progressive Ind Boston (5)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (1)	Ind 20/20 (3)	Nonaligned (1)
1	Drayton	Dorrian	Cantwell	R Austin	Dani
2	Izard			Pryke	
3	Pierpoint			Woodliffe	
4	Savickiene				
5	Scoot				

Substitutes (Maximum of 1)					
1	Marson	Cresswell	Brown	A Austin	N/A

Non-Voting Co-opted Independent Members: Mr Adam Cartwright and Mr Gideon Hall

*** Standards Sub Committee (5)**

(Meets as required)

Drawn from Membership of the Audit and Governance Committee)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (1)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Pierpoint	Dorrian	Cantwell	Pryke	
2	Scoot				

*** Licensing Committee / Regulatory & Appeals Committee (13)**

	Progressive Ind Boston (6)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (2)	Ind 20/20 (3)	Nonaligned (1)
1	Baxter	Dorrian	Cantwell	R Austin	Noble
2	Drayton		Evans	Gleeson	
3	Izard			Woodliffe	
4	Savickiene				
5	Staples				
6	Welberry				

*** Planning Committee (13)**

	Progressive Ind Boston (6)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (2)	Ind 20/20 (3)	Nonaligned (1)
1	Izard	Middleton	Evans	A Austin	Dani
2	Pierpoint		Rylott	Bedford	
3	Savickiene			Woodliffe	
4	Scoot				
5	Sharpe				
6	Welberry				

**Substitutes
(Maximum of 2)**

1	Broughton	Dorrian	Brown	R Austin	N/A
2	Staples			Gleeson	

*** South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (3)**
(3 and 3 substitutes)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Scoot			Bedford	
2	Pierpoint				

Named Subs					
1	Welberry			A Austin	

*** Chief Officer Employment Panel (3)**

(Meets as required)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Broughton			Woodliffe	
2	Sharpe				

Named Subs					
1	Ghosh			Pryke	
2	Mountain				

*** Chief Officer Employment Appeals Panel (3)**

(Meets as required)

	Progressive Ind Boston (1)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (0)	Nonaligned (2)
1	Baxter				Noble
2					Dani

Named Subs					
1	Butler				N/A
2	Staples				

*** International Links Committee**

(ad hoc Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be appointed at first meeting of Group)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (1)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Marson	Middleton	Brown	Pryke	
2	Savickiene				

* Asterisk indicates that the political balance rules apply

No asterisk indicates political balance not required, numbers stated are suggested allocations

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Audit & Governance Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Monday 7th July 2025 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Barrie Pierpoint, in the Chair.

Councillors Councillor Mike Gilbert, James Cantwell, Anton Dani, David Middleton, Ralph Pryke, Lina Savickiene, Suzanne Welberry and Stephen Woodliffe (substitute for Richard Austin BEM).

Co-opted Independent Members: Adam Cartwright and Gideon Hall.

Officers:

Interim Finance Director and S151 Officer, Assistant Director - Governance and Monitoring Officer, Group Manager – Insights & Transformation, Scrutiny & Policy Officer, Head of Finance Delivery - Technical and Corporate, PSPSL, Treasury and Investment Manager (PSPSL), Head of Internal Audit & Risk, Internal Audit Team Manager, Democratic Services Team Leader and Democratic Services Officer.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Richard Austin, with Councillor Stephen Woodliffe substituting, and from Councillor Andy Izard.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22nd April 2025 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4 Actions

Members considered the actions from the previous meetings held on 22nd April 2025 which had been circulated with the agenda. The Democratic Services Team Leader advised that there were no outstanding actions.

The following matters were raised for follow-up:

- Clarification was requested on the relationship between KPIs and contractual obligations in the Parkwood Leisure contract. Officers undertook to provide a written response.
- A request was made for information regarding street lighting decarbonisation, which had been raised at the previous meeting but had not yet been addressed. Officers confirmed that an update would be provided following the meeting.

5 Public Questions

No questions had been received.

6 Towns Board Capital Projects

The Committee received a verbal presentation from the Director of Economic Development, who had been invited to provide an update on the governance and delivery of the Towns Fund capital projects, following a request from a Member for further assurance on project oversight and expenditure.

The Director of Economic Development explained that the Boston Town Deal Board had been established in accordance with Government guidance to oversee the delivery of the Towns Fund programme, for which Boston had been awarded £21.9 million in August 2021. The Board was chaired by an independent private sector representative and comprised a range of external stakeholders. Boston Borough Council remained the accountable body for the funding and was responsible for ensuring compliance with all financial and governance requirements.

The Committee was advised that the Towns Fund programme comprised seven projects, each of which had been subject to rigorous internal and external monitoring. Oversight was provided through the Council's Major Projects Board, regular reporting to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees, and six-monthly returns to central Government. It was confirmed that all funding had been fully committed and that all projects were either completed or progressing in line with agreed timescales.

The following project-level updates were provided:

- Boston Leisure Project – £3 million Towns Fund contribution; additional funding from the Levelling Up Partnership and Council resources. Estimated completion: September 2026.
- The Mayflower (Boston College Campus) – Estimated completion: July 2025.
- St Botolph's Library and Lighting – Estimated completion: September 2025.
- Centre for Food and Fresh Produce Logistics – Delivered in partnership with the University of Lincoln. Status: Completed.
- Blenkin Memorial Hall Refurbishment – Status: Completed.
- Healing the High Street – Includes refurbishment of Shodfriars Hall and shop front improvements. Estimated completion: March 2026. Currently rated amber due to outstanding grant agreements, but expected to return to green status imminently.
- Boston Railway Station Refurbishment – Towns Fund contribution of £2.475 million. Estimated completion: July 2025.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Clarification was sought on the total funding for the Boston Leisure Project, noting a discrepancy in the figures presented. It was acknowledged that a typographical error had occurred and that the correct total would be circulated following the meeting.
- Further queries were raised regarding the completion status of the Boston Railway Station project and whether the funding allocation had increased. It was confirmed that

the Towns Fund contribution remained at £2.475 million, with additional match funding provided by other partners.

- Concerns were also raised regarding the reported closure of the Geoff Moulder Leisure Centre for a period of 18 months. It was advised that £3 million from the Towns Fund and £7 million from the Levelling Up Partnership had been allocated to the Boston Leisure Project, which included works at Geoff Moulder. Officers undertook to investigate the reported closure and provide a written response.
- A further query was raised regarding the composition of the Town Deal Board. The Chairman advised that the focus of the item was on governance and project delivery, and that a full list of Board members could be provided separately if required.

The Committee thanked the Director of Economic Development for her attendance and noted the update.

Resolved:

That the verbal update be noted.

[The Director of Economic Development left the meeting at 6.48pm, following consideration of the above item.]

7 Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion 2024/25

The Head of Internal Audit & Risk presented a report which provided a summary of internal audit activity undertaken during the 2024/25 financial year and set out the annual audit opinion on the Council's governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements.

It was reported that the overall audit opinion for the year was one of "adequate assurance", meaning that the control framework was generally reliable and that controls to mitigate key risks were operating effectively, although some areas required improvement. The opinion had been informed by a combination of assurance and consultancy work, follow-up reviews, and other governance documentation.

The Head of Internal Audit & Risk highlighted the following key points:

- The audit opinion had been based on a combination of assurance and consultancy work, follow-up reviews, and other governance documentation.
- Two areas had received a limited assurance rating during the year:
 - Insurance: The audit identified concerns regarding the outsourcing of insurance administration by PSPS to a third-party provider (TRF). Issues included a lack of contract management, unclear roles and responsibilities, and incomplete asset records. These deficiencies had resulted in the postponement of the 2024/25 insurance re-tendering exercise and the extension of existing contracts, which was not compliant with the Council's procurement regulations.
 - Bank Reconciliations: The audit found inconsistent processes across different accounts, high levels of manual intervention, and delays in completing reconciliations. The lack of automation and the impact of staff turnover were noted as contributing factors.
- The audit team had experienced delays in accessing data and systems, which had negatively impacted performance indicators. Improvements were planned for 2025/26,

including a change in audit management and closer engagement with the Section 151 Officer to ensure timely access to information and improved delivery.

- The audit service continued to conform to Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, with a 2022 external assessment confirming full compliance.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members expressed concern regarding the two areas of limited assurance and emphasised the importance of ensuring that such findings were not repeated in future audits. It was noted that the insurance function, in particular, required clearer oversight and accountability. Officers confirmed that a service review of the insurance function was underway and that improvements had already been made, including the successful completion of a new insurance tender and updated reconciliations.
- In relation to bank reconciliations, Members noted that processes varied across accounts, with high levels of manual intervention and delays in completion. The lack of automation and the impact of staff turnover were highlighted as contributing factors.
- Members commented on the terminology used in audit reports and requested that future reports include clearer definitions of assurance levels to aid understanding. It was suggested that a summary of assurance categories be included in future reports to assist Members in interpreting audit findings.
- Members also questioned the effectiveness of oversight arrangements and whether there were any mechanisms in place to hold PSPS accountable for underperformance, particularly in relation to the insurance contract. It was acknowledged that, as a Teckal company, PSPS was owned by the Council and its partners, and therefore financial penalties would not be appropriate in the traditional sense.
- Clarification was sought on the contractual arrangements with TRF, and it was confirmed during the meeting that the insurance function had indeed been outsourced. Officers undertook to provide a written response to clarify the governance and oversight arrangements in place.
- The Committee welcomed the assurance that improvements were being implemented and noted the importance of maintaining strong oversight of outsourced services.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

[The Head of Internal Audit & Risk left the meeting at 7.11pm, following consideration of the above item.]

8 Quarter 4 Risk Report 24/25

The Group Manager - Insights & Transformation presented a report which provided an update on the Council's strategic, partnership, and fraud risk registers as at the end of March 2025. The report formed part of the Committee's regular oversight of the Council's risk management arrangements.

It was reported that the risk registers had undergone a full review during the quarter, with updates made to risk wording, scoring, and planned actions where appropriate. The Committee was advised that a dedicated Member training session had been scheduled for 15th September 2025. The session would serve both as a refresher on the risk

management framework and as an opportunity to undertake a detailed, line-by-line review of the risk registers. Members were encouraged to use the session to explore the rationale behind risk scores and treatments in greater depth than was possible during formal meetings.

The Group Manager - Insights & Transformation confirmed that improvements to the format of the covering report would be introduced in future, following recommendations from a recent internal audit. These improvements would include clearer explanations of changes in risk scores and more consistent presentation of risk treatments and action statuses.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members welcomed the planned training session and supported the proposal to use it for a comprehensive review of the risk registers.
- A number of specific points were raised in relation to individual risks and the presentation of the register:
 - It was suggested that the civil contingency risk (BBC06) be reviewed in light of the increasing number of battery storage developments in the borough. Officers undertook to liaise with the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum to consider whether this emerging risk should be reflected in the register.
 - The potential impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on service delivery and governance was raised as a future consideration. Officers agreed to explore this further as part of the next quarterly review.
 - Clarification was sought on the removal of the staff retention risk (BBC19) from the strategic register. It was explained that the risk had been consolidated into the partnership risk register to avoid duplication.
 - A request was made for clearer explanations of risk treatments and scoring, particularly where actions were marked as “not applicable”. Officers confirmed that this would be addressed in the revised format of the report.
 - It was noted that the depot accommodation risk had reduced from high to medium following the signing of a lease agreement, and that the procurement fraud risk score had also reduced due to improved controls following the procurement card audit.

The Committee thanked the Group Manager - Insights & Transformation for the update.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Annual Treasury Report 2024/25

The Interim Treasury Manager, PSPSL provided a review of the Council's treasury management activities for the financial year 2024/25. The report was presented in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management and formed a key part of the Council's governance framework.

The Committee was advised that the report covered several key areas, including capital expenditure and financing, borrowing and investment activity, and compliance with prudential indicators. It was reported that the Council had maintained a strong financial position throughout the year, with investment income significantly exceeding budget expectations.

It was confirmed that the Council had continued to operate with a low level of external borrowing, maintaining an under-borrowed position by using internal resources to fund capital expenditure. The Council's investment strategy had delivered strong returns, with treasury investments achieving an average rate of 5.29% and property fund investments returning 3.21%, resulting in a combined return of 4.57%. The net treasury income for the year was reported as £2.827 million, representing a surplus of £710,000 against the budget.

The Interim Treasury Manager, PSPSL advised that all treasury and prudential indicators had been met and that the Council remained compliant with its approved Treasury Management Strategy. The report also included a detailed breakdown of the Council's investment portfolio and the performance of its property fund holdings.

The Committee was invited to scrutinise the report and provide any comments for consideration by Full Council at its meeting on 21st July 2025.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members welcomed the strong financial performance reported for the year and noted the significant surplus generated from investment income. The Committee acknowledged that the Council's strategy of maintaining an under-borrowed position had proven effective, with internal resources being used to fund capital expenditure and avoid the need for additional external borrowing.
- Clarification was sought regarding the valuation of the Council's property fund investments, which had decreased in value since purchase. It was noted that while the capital value of the investments remained below the original purchase price, there had been a modest recovery in the most recent year. The long-term nature of these investments was emphasised, and it was confirmed that the Council continued to receive regular income distributions from the funds.
- Further clarification was requested on whether the property funds were limited to UK-based assets or included international holdings. It was confirmed that the Council's investments were restricted to UK property funds, in line with the original investment strategy.
- The Committee also discussed the balance between risk and return in the Council's investment approach. It was noted that while higher returns had been achieved, the Council continued to prioritise security and liquidity in accordance with its Treasury Management Strategy.

The report was well received, and Members expressed satisfaction with the Council's prudent and effective treasury management during the year.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Anton Dani and seconded by Councillor Lina Savickiene.

Resolved:

That the Committees' comments in respect of the Annual Treasury Report 2024/25, in Appendix 1 within the report, be noted for inclusion within the report to Full Council on 21 July 2025.

10 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2024/25

The Group Manager - Insights & Transformation introduced the Annual Governance Statement by outlining its statutory purpose and role in supporting the Council's overall governance framework. It was explained that the statement had been prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the CIPFA/SOLACE framework for delivering good governance in local government.

The Committee was advised that the AGS provided a summary of the Council's governance arrangements, reviewed their effectiveness over the past year, and identified any significant governance issues requiring attention. The statement also set out the actions taken in response to previous governance issues and outlined new actions for the year ahead.

It was confirmed that the AGS had been reviewed and updated to reflect developments during 2024/25, including the completion of several actions from the prior year. Where actions had been deferred, this was due to external factors such as the ongoing uncertainty surrounding local government reorganisation (LGR). The Committee noted that the AGS formed part of the Council's annual financial reporting process and was required to be approved prior to the publication of the Statement of Accounts.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members reviewed the governance arrangements outlined in the report and considered the progress made against the actions identified in the previous year. There was general support for the structure and content of the AGS, and Members welcomed the inclusion of new actions for 2025/26, particularly the focus on strengthening governance arrangements around budget preparation and monitoring developments in legislation relating to remote meetings and standards.
- Clarification was sought on a section of the AGS which referred to the Audit & Governance Committee's role in scrutinising Cabinet decisions. It was felt that the wording could be misinterpreted and should be reviewed to ensure it accurately reflected the Committee's remit, which is to provide assurance on governance, risk management, and internal control, rather than policy scrutiny. Officers undertook to review the wording and make amendments if necessary.

The AGS was approved, subject to the minor clarification noted.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Anton Dani and seconded by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe.

Resolved:

That the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25, in Appendix 1 within the report, be approved.

11 Unaudited Financial Statements 2024/25 including Narrative Report

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Corporate) PSPSL presented a report which provided Members with an opportunity to review the unaudited Financial Statements for 2024/25 prior to the commencement of the external audit. It was confirmed that the statements had been prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice and had been published on the Council's website in line with statutory deadlines. The public inspection period had commenced, and the external audit by KPMG had also begun..

The Committee was advised that the most significant change in the accounts for 2024/25 was the implementation of IFRS 16 – Leases, which required the Council to recognise right-of-use assets and corresponding liabilities on the balance sheet. This had resulted in an increase of £0.822 million in both assets and liabilities, with no impact on the taxpayer.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Corporate) PSPSL highlighted key movements in the Council's financial position, including:

- An increase in the Council's net worth of £17.984 million.
- A rise in short-term investments, largely due to capital grants received but not yet applied.
- Growth in earmarked reserves, reflecting the £1.015 million surplus generated in 2024/25.

The Committee was informed that the surplus had been achieved through a combination of factors, including higher-than-anticipated investment income, as reported in the Annual Treasury Report. The capital programme had also underspent by £5.7 million, with unspent grant funding carried forward for use in future years.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members welcomed the clarity of the report and commended officers for producing the accounts in line with statutory deadlines.
- A number of queries were raised in relation to specific elements of the financial statements:
 - Clarification was sought on the reported funding for Boston Railway Station under the Towns Fund, as the figure presented in the statements differed from that referenced in earlier discussions. Officers undertook to investigate and provide a written response.
 - A question was raised regarding the reported pension asset ceiling of £7.925 million and its implications for the Council's financial position. Officers agreed to provide a written explanation
 - Further clarification was requested on the Council's interests in external companies. It was confirmed that the Council held a shareholding in PSPS Ltd but had no other corporate interests.

- A query was raised regarding the debt impairment rate applied to housing benefit overpayments. Officers confirmed that the provision was based on the age and recoverability of debts and undertook to confirm whether the rate had changed from the previous year.
- Members also noted a section in the narrative report which suggested that the Audit & Governance Committee had scrutinised Cabinet decisions. It was agreed that the wording would be reviewed to ensure it accurately reflected the Committee's remit
- Minor typographical issues were noted in the narrative report and would be corrected prior to publication.

The Committee noted the statements and expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by officers in preparing them.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

12 Budget Preparation 2026/27 - Approach & Process

The Committee received a report from the Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) which outlined the proposed approach to preparing the Council's budget for the 2026/27 financial year. The report set out a revised methodology aimed at strengthening governance, improving transparency, and ensuring earlier and more structured engagement in the budget-setting process.

It was explained that the new approach had been developed following feedback from Members and officers involved in the previous year's budget cycle. A number of concerns had been raised regarding the compressed timescales and the reliance on balancing figures in the form of efficiency targets. In response, the revised process would commence in July 2025 and run through to February 2026, allowing for a more iterative and evidence-based approach.

Key features of the revised methodology included:

- The reintroduction of "Star Chamber" sessions, enabling detailed challenge and review of service budgets by senior officers and Members.
- A focus on aligning budget proposals with the Council's strategic priorities and risk profile.
- Improved integration of financial planning with performance management and transformation activity.
- Earlier identification of savings and pressures to support more informed decision-making.
- Provision for public consultation on budget proposals, in line with best practice.

The Committee was advised that the process would also support the development of a more robust Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), with a view to reducing reliance on in-year adjustments and reactive measures. It was noted that the Government had indicated its intention to publish the local government finance settlement earlier than in previous years, which would further support the revised timetable.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members welcomed the earlier start to the process and the structured methodology outlined in the report. There was broad support for the reintroduction of Star Chamber sessions, which were seen as a valuable mechanism for enabling detailed scrutiny and challenge of service budgets.
- It was noted that the revised approach would help ensure that budget decisions were evidence-based and aligned with the Council's priorities. Members also welcomed the emphasis on early identification of budget pressures and savings opportunities, which would support more strategic financial planning.
- Clarification was sought on whether the revised process would place additional pressure on officers. It was confirmed that the extended timetable would help to alleviate pressure by spreading the workload over a longer period and allowing for more meaningful engagement at each stage.
- A query was raised regarding the potential impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) on the budget process. It was acknowledged that while LGR remained a significant external factor, the Council was required to proceed on a "going concern" basis and to prepare a balanced budget for 2026/27 in accordance with its statutory duties.

The Committee expressed support for the revised approach and noted the importance of Member engagement throughout the process to ensure robust governance and accountability.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

13 Work Programme

The Chairman presented the Audit and Governance Work Programme 2025/26 and invited Members to consider whether any additional items should be included.

The Committee supported the inclusion of a dedicated session to review the strategic risk register in detail, which had been proposed earlier in the meeting. It was agreed that this session would be held separately from the formal committee meetings to allow sufficient time for line-by-line scrutiny of risks and mitigation actions. The session was scheduled to take place on 15th September 2025 and would also serve as a refresher on the Council's risk management framework.

The Committee also discussed the potential introduction of a skills matrix for Members, to support future self-assessment and training needs analysis. It was suggested that such a matrix could help identify any gaps in knowledge or experience and inform the development of targeted training opportunities. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that this could be incorporated into the Committee's annual effectiveness review and would be considered as part of the forthcoming self-assessment exercise.

No further additions to the work programme were proposed at the meeting.

Resolved:

That the work programme be noted.

14 Exclusion of Public and Press

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Ralph Pryke and seconded by Councillor Anton Dani.

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 item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

15 Review of the Council's Property Fund Investments

The Interim Treasury Manager, PSPSL presented a report which provided a review of the Council's Property Fund Investments. The report considered the performance of the funds, current market conditions, and the implications of recent legislative changes.

Members considered the report and discussed the matters presented. The Committee thanked the Interim Treasury Manager, PSPSL for the report and the information provided.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

The Meeting ended at 8.35 pm.

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Report To:	Full Council
Date:	Monday 29 th September 2025
Subject:	2024/25 Outturn Report
Purpose:	To present the 2024/25 Outturn financial position and seek approval for the transfer of the resulting surplus to Earmarked Reserves.
Key Decision:	N/A
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Growth
Report Of:	Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer)
Report Author:	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery – BBC (PSPSL)
Ward(s) Affected:	N/A
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report sets out a summary of the 2024/25 financial position for the Council and the requirement to transfer the position to Earmarked Reserves.

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That Full Council approve the transfer of the £1,015,000 surplus to the Volatility Reserve.

Reasons for Recommendations

To ensure the Council's financial position for 2024/25 is considered and related decisions approved. It is important that Full Council are aware of the financial position of the General Fund to ensure that they can make informed decisions that are affordable and financially sustainable for the Council.

Other Options Considered

To not approve the transfer to Earmarked reserves.

1. Background

- 1.1 Throughout the year quarterly monitoring reports are completed forecasting the expected year end outturn compared to the approved budget. This report provides information on the General Fund revenue position for 2024/25.
- 1.2 Cabinet reviewed the 2024/25 Q4 Outturn Report on 31 July 2025 and resolved to forward the surplus transfer recommendation to Full Council for further consideration.
- 1.3 The full year outturn delivered a surplus of £1,015,000 as outlined in the below table.
- 1.4 Following the transfer of this surplus to Earmarked Reserves, it will result in a total reserve balance held on the balance sheet of £19.345m.
- 1.5 The full report can be viewed on the Council's website within the Cabinet agenda pack.

Net Spend by Assistant Director Area

Assistant Director Area	Revised Budget 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Outturn 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Variance (underspend)/ overspend at Q4 £'000	Comments on main variances at Q4
Corporate	1,940	1,856	(84)	This is primarily attributed to the significant £100k saving on computer costs and software licenses, along with other minor variances.
Economic Growth	250	192	(58)	With an underspend of £58k Economic Growth's figures reflect a vacancy for an inward investment officer. The unfilled role has led to lower-than-anticipated personnel expenditure.
Finance	3,257	3,193	(64)	An underspend of £64k in Finance is driven by a revision of the rent allowance provision courtesy of an error charge previously related to the HB

Net Spend by Assistant Director Area				
Assistant Director Area	Revised Budget 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Outturn 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Variance (underspend)/ overspend at Q4 £'000	Comments on main variances at Q4
				subsidy. This correction aligns actual expenses with the budget.
Governance and Monitoring	829	934	105	The overspend is primarily explained by a rise of £112k in Members' allowances along with additional minor variances.
General Fund Assets	(876)	(666)	210	This is predominantly due to a notable increase of £222k in repairs and maintenance expenditures, which is partially mitigated by an additional income £16k spent on parking and other minor variances.
Leisure and Culture	1,209	811	(398)	Leisure and Culture achieved a substantial underspend of £398k, because of significant savings across multiple areas. Key factors included a £272k saving from a delayed works programme at the leisure pool, a £40k underspend on events staffing, a £30k underspend on markets staffing, a £12k underspend on shared management and £21k underspend on Museum Service. There are other minor variances. These variances indicate that several projects and contractual agreements were postponed and negotiated to lower costs, reflecting a strong emphasis on cost control and operational efficiency during this period.
Neighbourhoods	2,267	2,116	(151)	The Neighbourhoods Directorate achieved an underspend of £153k attributed to various variances. These include £47k from a new vehicle washing contract, £70k from fuel savings, and £33k from a street cleansing vacancy.
Planning and Strategic Infrastructure	185	176	(9)	This directorate reported a modest underspend of £9k. Planning income fell short of the budget by £91k. However, this shortfall was offset by a staffing underspend of £64k along with other minor variances.
Regulatory	649	547	(102)	The Regulatory Directorate achieved an underspend of £102k, attributed to various streamlined cost areas. This

Net Spend by Assistant Director Area				
Assistant Director Area	Revised Budget 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Outturn 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Variance (underspend)/ overspend at Q4 £'000	Comments on main variances at Q4
				includes Building Control income £60k, Emergency Planning vacancy pending service review £15k, £24k Land charge staffing underspends. Additionally, there were other minor savings contributing to this overall underspend.
Wellbeing and Community Leadership	1,756	1,561	(195)	An underspend of £195k was achieved through several minor efficiencies. These include a £58k saving on CCTV vacancies, a £10k underspend from the CCTV volunteers' budget, a £27k underspend noted in Bed & Breakfast spending, and a £24k underspend on Affordable Homes staffing. Additionally, other minor variances contributed to this overall underspend.
BTAC	769	769	-	Realised a surplus of £86,000 which has been transferred to the BTAC reserve.
Sub Total – Assistant Director – net costs	12,235	11,489	(746)	

Internal Drainage Boards/Parish Precepts	2,973	2,967	(6)	This is broadly in line with budget.
MRP	129	154	25	Mainly due to £18k additional MRP due to reduction in fair value of the M&G Property Fund investment. £7k resulted from a higher outturn for unfinanced capital expenditure than when the budget was set.
Interest Payments Received / Return on Property Funds	(1,587)	(2,245)	(658)	Due to higher than anticipated cash balances (due to slippage of capital programme and additional grant) and better rates than expected.
Borrowing Costs	111	111	-	In line with budget
Borrowing Discount	(642)	(642)	-	In line with budget

Net Spend by Assistant Director Area				
Assistant Director Area	Revised Budget 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Outturn 2024/25 at Q4 £'000	Variance (underspend)/ overspend at Q4 £'000	Comments on main variances at Q4
Allocated to Revenue				
DRF	2,619	195	(2,424)	This mainly due to slippage of capital programme.
Reserves	(2,619)	(195)	2,424	This mainly due to slippage of capital programme.
Efficiencies Required	(190)	(58)	132	Unrealised efficiency savings
Salary Efficiencies	(367)	-	367	Unrealised efficiency savings
Corporate Impairment Allowance	100	-	(100)	Sundry debt corporate impairment allowance not required in 2024/25
Non-Service Expenditure	527	287	(240)	
Total Expenditure	12,762	11,776	(986)	
Council Tax	(5,682)	(5,682)	-	
Business Rates	(5,598)	(5,612)	(14)	Renewable energy gain
Non-Ring-Fenced Government Grant	(1,482)	(1,497)	(15)	
Total Funding	(12,762)	(12,791)	(29)	
Total Budget – (Surplus)/Deficit	-	(1,015)	(1,015)	

2. Conclusion

The 2024/25 General Fund surplus balance is required to be transferred to reserve for future years utilisation.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

None

Corporate Priorities

None

Staffing

None

Workforce Capacity Implications

None

Constitutional and Legal Implications

None

Data Protection

None

Financial

As contained in this report and Appendix.

Risk Management

None

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

None

Reputation

None

Contracts

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None

Health and Wellbeing

None

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

None

Acronyms

None

Appendices

None

Background Paper

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

This report was previously considered by Cabinet on 31 July 2025.

Report Approval

Report author:	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery – BBC (PSPSL) Nicole.Hayes@pspsl.co.uk
Signed off by:	Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) Brendan.Arnold@sholland.gov.uk
Approved by:	Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Growth Sandeep.Ghosh@boston.gov.uk

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Report To:	Full Council
Date:	29 th September 2025
Subject:	Democratic Arrangements – Appointments to Committee Vice-Chairmen and to Outside Bodies 2025/26
Purpose:	To enable the Council to make appointments to Committee Vice Chairmen and outside bodies for the 2025/26 Civic Year, where vacancies have arisen since the Annual Meeting in May 2025. To seek approval from Full Council to nominate a trustee to the John Laughton Educational Foundation, following a formal invitation from the charity
Key Decision:	N/A
Portfolio Holder:	N/A
Report Of:	John Medler, Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer
Report Author:	Amanda Dickinson, Democratic Services Team Leader
Ward(s) Affected:	None
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report asks the Council to make appointments to Committee Vice-Chairmanships and outside bodies where vacancies have arisen. In addition, the Council is invited to consider a new appointment to the John Laughton Educational Foundation, a registered charity which has formally requested that Boston Borough Council nominate a trustee to serve on its board for a five-year term.

Recommendations

- 1. That the Council seeks nominations and makes appointments to the Committee Vice-Chairmanships listed in Appendix 1, where vacancies have arisen, for the remainder of the Council Municipal Year 2025/26;**

2. That the Council seeks nominations and makes appointments to the outside bodies listed in Appendix 2 – Part 1, where vacancies have arisen, such appointments to automatically cease at the end of the Civic Year or if the appointed Member ceases to be a Member of the Council; and
3. That the Council notes the invitation to nominate a trustee to the John Laughton Educational Foundation for a five-year term, listed in Appendix 2 – Part 2, seeks nominations for this role and makes an appointment.

Reasons for Recommendations

To support the work of the committees listed in Appendix 1 and outside bodies listed in Appendix 2.

Other Options Considered

Not to make the appointments.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the annual meeting of the Council appointments were made to Committee Vice-Chairmanships and various outside bodies for the Civic Year 2025/26.

2. Report

2.1 Committee Vice-Chairmanships

- 2.1.1 Since the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2025, the following changes have arisen in respect of Committee Vice-Chairmanships:
 - Licensing Committee: The Vice-Chairman has resigned from the Vice-Chairmanship but will remain a member of the Committee.
 - Audit & Governance Committee: The vacancy arose as a result of the Council agreeing a revised allocation of committee seats at its Meeting on 21st July 2025.
- 2.1.2 Group Leaders have been advised of these changes and invited to submit nominations for Council's consideration where appropriate. These will be tabled at the meeting.
- 2.1.3 A list of the vacant positions of Vice-Chairmen of Committees is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. Nominations received will be tabled at the meeting.

2.2 Vacancies

2.2.1 Since the Annual Meeting vacancies have arisen on the following bodies:

- Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board – 2 vacancies
- Wash and North Norfolk Partnership Members Group – 1 vacancy

2.2.2 Group Leaders have been advised of the vacancies and invited to submit nominations for Council's consideration. These will be tabled at the meeting.

2.2.3 Any appointments made by the Council to these vacancies will take effect immediately following approval and will automatically cease at the end of the Civic Year or if the appointed Member ceases to be a Member of the Council...

2.3 John Laughton Educational Foundation

2.3.1 In addition the Council has received formal notification from the Clerk to the Trustees at the John Laughton Educational Foundation inviting a nomination to serve as a trustee. This follows recent constitutional changes to the charity. The appointment will be for a five-year term and details of the successful nominee will be submitted to the Charity Commission.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

None

Corporate Priorities

None.

Staffing

None.

Workforce Capacity Implications

None.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

Appointments are made in accordance with the provisions set out in the Council's Constitution. The Council has a function to appoint Chairman and Vice-Chairman to Council Bodies.

The powers of the Council (as a charging authority) to appoint an individual as a member of an internal drainage board are set out in the Land Drainage Act 1991. In appointing a person as a Board member the Council shall have regard to the desirability of appointing a person who –

(a) has knowledge or experience (including knowledge of the internal drainage district in question or commercial experience) of some matter relevant to the functions of the board; and

(b) has shown capacity in such a matter.

Data Protection

None.

Financial

None.

Risk Management

None.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Details of vacancies are shared with Political Group Leaders.

Reputation

None.

Contracts

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None.

Health and Wellbeing

None.

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

Not undertaken.

Acronyms

None.

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1	Committee Vice-Chairman vacancies 2025/26
Appendix 2	Council vacancies on Outside Bodies 2025/26

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author:	Amanda Dickinson, Democratic Services Team Leader amanda.dickinson@boston.gov.uk
Signed off by:	John Medler, Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer john.medler@e-lindsey.gov.uk
Approved for publication:	John Medler, Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer john.medler@e-lindsey.gov.uk

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Boston Borough Council

Vice-Chairman of Committees 2025/26

Current Vacancies 2025/26:

Body	Current Vice-Chairman	Proposed Vice-Chairman
Audit & Governance Committee	Gilbert	
Licensing Committee / Regulatory & Appeals Committee	Welberry	

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Boston Borough Council

Council Representation on Outside Bodies

Part 1 – Annual Appointments 2025/26

Organisation	Period of Appointment	Previous Appointees	Appointed
Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board (9 Board Members – Not restricted to Elected Members)	Civic Year	Baxter Bedford Derrian Drayton Evans Middleton Scoot Rylott Pryke	2 x vacancy
Wash and North Norfolk Partnership Members Group (1 Representative - Executive and 1 Substitute)	Civic Year	Derrian Broughton (Substitute member)	1 x vacancy

Part 2 – Long Term Appointments

Organisation	Period of Appointment	Current Appointees	Nominees (where applicable)
John Laughton Educational Foundation (1 Trustees)	5 years from 2025	N/A this is a new Outside Body	1 x vacancy

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Report To:	Full Council
Date:	Monday 29 th September 2025
Subject:	Designation of Section 151 Officer
Purpose:	To designate a Section 151 Officer
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Dale Broughton, Leader of the Council
Report Of:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate
Report Author:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate
Ward(s) Affected:	N/A
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

The Council has an obligation to designate a suitably qualified Section 151 Officer.

The Council's interim Section 151 Officer, Brendan Arnold, leaves the Council at the end of his contract.

The report brings to Council the designation of a Section 151 Officer to ensure the statutory functions associated with the role are fulfilled.

As at present, the role would be undertaken on a shared basis across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

Recommendations

That Russell Stone, the Council's incoming Director of Finance, is designated as the Council's Section 151 Officer with effect from 3rd November, 2025.

Reasons for Recommendations

- To ensure the Council complies with its statutory obligation of having a Section 151 Officer designated.
- The role of the Section 151 Officer is an important element in the Council's structure and processes.

Other Options Considered

- None

1. Report

- 1.1. The Council has a statutory obligation to designate three statutory officers: Head of Paid Service and Monitoring Officer (under sections 4 and 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 respectively) and Section 151 Officer/Chief Finance Officer (under s151 of the Local Government Act 1972). The latter is required to be a suitably qualified individual.
- 1.2. The Section 151 Officer, along with the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer combine to form the Council's Statutory Officer functions. These roles are key to ensuring accountability, lawfulness, fairness, probity and general good governance that support the council in achieving its aims.
- 1.3. With the interim Section 151 Officer leaving the role at the end of his contract, Council needs to re-designate the Section 151 Officer role.
- 1.4. The Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer is contracted to South Holland District Council but shared across the three Partnership Councils via Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2. Report

- 2.1. The search for a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer has been carried out in conjunction with external Executive search agency, Gatenby Sanderson.
- 2.2. The Council's Chief Executive and/or Interim Director of Finance met with three candidates and selected two to meet with the Partnership's Joint Chief Officer Employment Panel.
- 2.3. The Joint Panel, which involves Members from all three Councils, met on 29th July 2025.
- 2.4. The feedback from the Joint Panel was shared with the South Holland District Council's Chief Officer Employment Panel which also met on 29th July 2025. The Panel supported the appointment of Russell Stone as the Director of Finance.
- 2.5. Council now needs to confirm the designation of the Section 151 Officer role to Russell.
- 2.6. Russell has significant experience in Local Government, including 15 years as a Chief Financial Officer. Russell is currently Deputy Chief Executive at North Kesteven District Council with responsibility for finance as the Council's Section 151 Officer.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. Appointing a Section 151 Officer is a statutory requirement placed upon the Council. It is important for a variety of reasons as outlined in this report.
- 3.2. Russell is experienced, suitably qualified, and his appointment has been supported by both the Joint Chief Officer Employment Panel and the South Holland District Council Chief Officer Employment Panel. Council is asked to approve this report to ensure a Section 151 Officer is designated upon the departure of the current interim Section 151 Officer.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

This role will continue to be shared across the Partnership.

Corporate Priorities

The role supports the delivery of all Council services/priorities.

Staffing

None

Workforce Capacity Implications

None

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The appointment of a Section 151 Officer is a statutory requirement under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires that the officer appointed as Section 151 Officer shall be a member of one of the following bodies:

- a) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales,
- b) the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland,
- c) the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants,
- d) the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy,
- e) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland,
- f) the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, and
- g) any other body of accountants established in the United Kingdom and for the time being approved by the Secretary of State for the purposes of this section.

Data Protection

None

Financial

N/a – no cost from the approval of this report.

Risk Management

Not designating would present a legal risk to the Council.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Consultation took place via the Chief Officer Employment Panels.

Reputation

Not designating a Section 151 Officer would present a reputational risk to the Council.

Contracts

The employee will be on a permanent employment contract.

Crime and Disorder

None

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None

Health and Wellbeing

None

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

None

Acronyms

None

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author: James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
James.Gilbert@e-lindsey.gov.uk

Signed off by: Rob Barlow, Chief Executive
Robert.Barlow@e-lindsey.gov.uk

Approved for publication: Dale Broughton, Leader of the Council
Dale.Broughton@boston.gov.uk

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Report To:	Full Council
Date:	29 th September 2025
Subject:	South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Performance Report
Purpose:	Six monthly update on Partnership performance
Key Decision:	No
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Dale Broughton, Leader of the Council
Report Of:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Report Author:	Richard Baldwin, Strategic Performance Analyst
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report sets out the progress of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership since the last update on 19th May 2025.

Recommendations

To note the content of this report

Reasons for Recommendations

To monitor and report on the progress of the Partnership as previously agreed.

Other Options Considered

None as this is the approach previously agreed.

1. Background

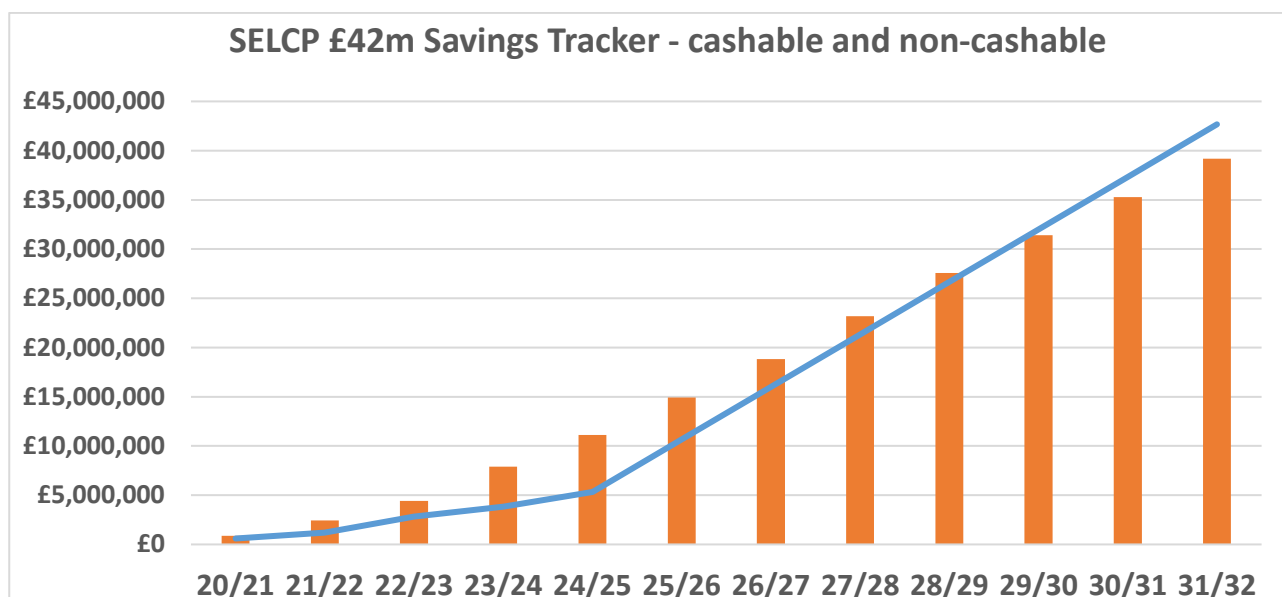
- 1.1 The South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council) launched on 1st October 2021.
- 1.2 This report sets out the progress of the Partnership since the last update in May 2025.

2. Alignment and Delivery Plan (ADP)

- 2.1 Progress of Alignment and Delivery Plan activity is being monitored by Joint Strategy Board to support the Partnership in delivering on its priorities, as well as sovereign Council ambitions.
- 2.2 Of the 102 activities in the ADP for the year, 82% are already complete or on plan. Delivery is being managed and reported by Assistant Directors. Where an action is off-plan in terms of delivery, mitigations are put in place. Work is underway to draft the plan for 2026/27.
- 2.3 A key element of the plan is securing external funding. The table below sets out external funding secured since August 2020 by sovereign Council and in total for the Partnership. It should be noted that the 2025/26 figure only covers the first quarter period, whereas the previous years encompass the entire financial year. The main contributors for ELDC were the Wellbeing Lincs contract, at £3,286,142, and for SHDC was the WSHF Wave 3 Green Homes grant for the HRA department.

Funding secured since August 2020	BBC	ELDC	SHDC	COMBINED
2020/21	£22,200,000	£48,718,578	£8,300,000	£79,218,578
2021/22	£3,395,318	£5,068,169	£2,397,892	£10,861,379
2022/23	£17,704,882	£13,766,960	£22,234,304	£53,706,146
2023/24	£7,386,953	£24,368,636	£13,455,393	£45,210,982
2024/25	£45,911,553	£129,866,883	£34,059,107	£214,449,789
2025/26	£238,000	£3,468,142	£5,938,470	£9,032,612
TOTAL	£70,127,205	£116,853,226	£48,446,697	£247,206,064

- 2.4 The Partnership Business Case identified that £42m in financial efficiencies could be derived from the 3 Councils working together. The graph shows the financial efficiencies - both cashable and non-cashable - that have been identified so far (to the end of 12th September 2025).



- 2.5 The blue line on the graph shows the target in the Partnership's Business Case. The orange bars show where the Partnership is against that target. This shows that the Partnership is already on track to achieve the efficiency savings up to £39,174,161. Additional efficiencies for future years will be added as they are identified through matters such as contract reviews and service reviews.

SAVINGS PROFILE – CASHABLE AND NON-CASHABLE			
		TARGET	TOTAL
ALLIANCE	20/21	£600,000	£872,415
SOUTH & EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP	21/22	£1,200,000	£2,440,787
	22/23	£2,838,000	£4,420,112
	23/24	£3,833,000	£7,913,591
	24/25	£5,334,000	£11,105,001
	25/26	£10,668,000	£14,925,731
	26/27	£16,002,000	£18,757,340
	27/28	£21,335,000	£23,184,882
	28/29	£26,669,000	£27,557,038
	29/30	£32,003,000	£31,392,639
	30/31	£37,337,000	£35,283,400
	31/32	£42,671,000	£39,174,161

- 2.6 Council is being asked to note the progress of the Alignment and Delivery Plans as well as the progress in securing external funding and achieving the efficiency target for the Partnership.

3. Priority Partnerships Update

3.1. A number of key Partnerships have been established as mechanisms for delivering the strategic priorities of the Partnership are set out in the table below:

Priority Partnership	Subject areas	Sub-regional partners	Initial priorities	Lead
Growth and Prosperity Priority Partnership	Skills, Training/Education, Business Support Employment, Utilities, Economic Development, Transport Infrastructure, Flood Risk	Director of Economic Development, Education providers, Lincolnshire County Council, Utility companies, Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, Greater Lincolnshire Enterprise Partnership, Department for Work and Pensions, Environment Agency.	Transport infrastructure; Skills Development; Inward investment	Economic Development
Healthy Lives Priority Partnership	Leisure, Culture, Wellbeing, Housing and Homelessness, Access to Health Services, Health Inequalities.	Director of Communities, Lincolnshire CCG, NHS, Mental Health Services, Leisure providers, Housing providers.	Access to health services; Obesity	Communities
Safer Communities Priority Partnership	Crime and Disorder, Anti-Social Behaviour, Licensing	Director of Communities, Lincolnshire Police, Probation Service.	Fear of crime; Anti-social behaviour; Domestic abuse	Communities
Environment Priority Partnership	Climate Change, Biodiversity, Air Quality, Open Spaces, Waste and Recycling, Environmental Crime	Director of Communities, Natural England, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Lincolnshire County Council, Environment Agency.	Environmental Bill; Climate Change Agenda	Communities

3.2. Growth and Prosperity Priority Partnership (Economic Development):

- 3.2.1. The Campus for Future Living opened in Mablethorpe on June 12th 2025, with the Lincoln Institute for Rural and Coastal Health launched from the centre on July 18th 2025.
- 3.2.2. Our UKSPF-funded 'People and Skills' programme has launched, with investment in a number of priority initiatives;
 - 3.2.2.1. Steadfast Connect2Grow - Supporting the continuation of the successful 'Connect2Grow' project offered by Steadfast Training in Boston and South Holland, specifically targeting those in the community who are economically inactive with support in terms of employability skills, an accredited or industry-recognised qualification or a guaranteed interview with an employer.

- 3.2.2.2. Boston College – Restart, Reskill, Upskill. A continuation of Boston College's Restart, Reskill, Upskill project delivered across the SELCP area. Targeted at supporting those who are economically inactive to receive both a qualification and a guaranteed interview with a local employer.
- 3.2.2.3. Heritage Lincolnshire Heritage Skills – Continuing support for Heritage Lincolnshire to hold heritage skills sessions for learners interested in learning shortage 'in demand' historic environment skills and exploring careers in the sector. The is supporting the development of a Sub-Regional Heritage Skills strategy in concert with Historic England.
- 3.2.2.4. University of Lincoln – Higher Level Engineering Skills. Continuing the successful project targeted at supporting learners of all ages to undertake short accredited courses and insight days in the food and agricultural sector, as well as exploring career opportunities in the sector and AI/robotics skills for local residents.
- 3.2.3. The SELCP-led Future Fest was held at Peter Paine Centre in Boston. Attracting young people from schools across the SELCP area, including a large number of businesses from the sub-region, the event showcased local career opportunities to young people.
- 3.2.4. The Mayflower – Boston Town Deal's flagship project – has achieved significant progress on site, with opening planned for September 2025.
- 3.2.5. The Skegness Towns Fund project – the Learning Campus – is also due to open in September 2025.
- 3.3. Healthy Lives Priority Partnership:
- 3.3.1 SELCP Healthy Living Board's last quarterly meeting was around the 'Economic Inclusion' theme with focus on local delivery of the Household Support Fund and Digital Inclusion.
- 3.3.2 New Integrated Care System Digital Inclusion Strategy has been developed in partnership with Lincolnshire Integrated Care System (ICS); supported by SELCP with shared vision:
- 'Everyone in Lincolnshire who wants to be digitally connected to health and care services and the community will have the skills, access, and confidence to do so'.
- 3.3.3 SELCP commitment to develop and lead local initiatives to better support residents across 5 strategic pillars:
- Access to data and devices - led by South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership
 - Accessibility and ease - led by ICB Digital Primary Care team
 - Access to services - led by ICB Digital Primary Care team
 - Skills and capability - led by Lincolnshire Community and Hospitals Group
 - Trust, Awareness and Digital Safety- led by Lincolnshire County Council
 - Leaderships and partnerships: led by ICB Health Inequalities team

- 3.3.4 Following a service review of Communities & Housing Service Directorate, a new SELCP Healthy Communities is team in place from 1st August with remit around prevention, reducing inequality and ageing well.
- 3.3.5 Following service review, a new healthy communities team is being established to expand capacity and support the delivery of SLECP 'healthy lives' strategic priority.
- 3.4. Safer Communities Priority Partnership
- 3.4.1 There has been one meeting of the South and East Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership since the last update which was held in June 2025.
- 3.4.2 An update by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office on the Government's Hot-Spot Policing and Keeping Town Centre's Safe initiative. This has been renamed to Safer Streets Summer Initiative.
- 3.4.3 An overview of the updated Community Safety Strategy for 2025-28 was provided along with an opportunity for final comments before it was formally signed off and made public. The strategy was updated following the strategic review process which resulted in a number of more specific areas of focus being identified.
- 3.4.4 The action plan, which underpins the strategy, was presented. Partners were encouraged to assist in adding further relevant actions to the plan to support delivery against the areas of focus.
- 3.4.5 An update was provided on the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership which is undergoing changes in the way that it will operate, moving away from Core Priority Groups to a more place-based approach. Skegness will be the first area in which the new processes will be implemented.
- 3.4.6 Lincolnshire Police provided an update on the Neighbourhood Policing Team priorities which are set every quarter. In advance of the quarterly priority setting meetings Lincolnshire Police publicise a QR code via their social media channels which links to a survey inviting people (partners and public) to share their views on policing priorities. They can also engage with their local Neighbourhood Policing Team directly if seen out and about or report issues through StreetSafe (via the app or online). They could also report issues through the 101 system if they are unable to complete the online options. Each quarter a newsletter is released to inform the public what action has been taken in relation to the previous quarter's priorities.
- 3.5. Environment Priority Partnership/SELCAN
- 3.5.1 The South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network (SELCAN)/Environment Priority Partnership last met in June 2025, and the network have since been undertaking a review of the Climate Change Strategy, to bring it up to date and to ensure that its strategic action plan is still relevant and achievable.

- 3.5.2 The Nature Based Solutions & Water, Resilience and Adaptation sub-group are working on the development of a Nature Challenge for Schools and have been putting together a matrix of activities and plans for students at Boston College to be involved with the creation of an animation to support this project.
- 3.5.3 The Transport & Energy and Renewables sub-group have taken forward the re:CYCLE project and are now delivering cycle packs to our communities through engagement with our bike hubs, and at other events.
- 3.5.4 The Marketing, Education & Community Engagement sub-group are developing a Carbon Award scheme which comprises a package of support and subsidised training for businesses, as well as an awards event. A marketing plan has now been developed for this project and market research is being undertaken, as well as the development of a repository of case studies and other supporting information.
- 3.5.5 SELCAN was well represented at the Lincolnshire Show with over 100 children engaging with our habitats game and nature tree, and over 180 people taking part in the cycle pack 'guess how many sweets' competition which accompanied the launch of the Re:CYCLE project. The competition also enabled us to engage with lots of members of the public, resulting in 46 signups to receive packs and some really positive feedback about the network and current projects.
- 3.6. Council is being asked to note the updates from the Priority Partnerships.

4. Local Government Reform

- 4.1. The Partnership Councils, via the agreed governance arrangements, are actively working together and engaging with strategic partners across Greater Lincolnshire to develop their proposal for Local Government Re-organisation – a Greater Lincolnshire for All.
- 4.2. Monthly Member engagement sessions have taken place at each Council for members to shape various aspects of the proposal as it develops and the feedback from those members who have attended has been helpful.
- 4.3. As well as the engagement with strategic partners, a number of public engagement sessions are underway across Greater Lincolnshire to seek community feedback to shape the proposal.
- 4.4. The proposal must be with Government for 28th November 2025. Further briefing and engagement sessions with Councillors are being diarised.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Significant progress continues to be made by the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership. This report sets out this progress to date as part of the six-monthly cycle of reporting.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

This report updates on the progress of the Partnership to date.

Corporate Priorities

The formation of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership supports the corporate priorities of the sovereign Councils in the Sub-Regional Strategy. This is reflected in the agreed Delivery Plans and performance measures.

Staffing

No implications specific to staffing in this report.

Workforce Capacity Implications

No implications specific to workforce capacity in this report.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The constitutional and legal arrangements for the successful implementation of Partnership have been approved by all three partner Councils.

Data Protection

No implications specific to data protection in this report.

Financial

No implications specific to finances in this report.

Risk Management

No implications specific to risk management in this report.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

None specific to this report.

Reputation

The South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership has established a positive reputation through the progress it has achieved to date as contained in the main body of the report.

Contracts

No implications specific to contracts in this report.

Crime and Disorder

Section 3 of this report sets out details of the Safer Communities Priority Partnership.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

No implications specific to this report.

Health and Wellbeing

Section 3 of this report sets out details of the Healthy Lives Priority Partnership.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

Section 3 of this report sets out details of the Environment Priority Partnership.

Acronyms

ADP: Alignment and Delivery Plan
CCG: Clinical Commissioning Group
EA: Environment Agency
HLB: Healthy Living Board
LCC: Lincolnshire County Council
LGA: Local Government Association
LGR: Local Government Reorganisation
SELCAN: South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network
SELCP: South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership
SELCSP: South and East Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership
SLP: Safer Lincolnshire Partnership
SLT: Senior Leadership Team
UKSPF: UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Appendices

None

Background Papers

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
S&ELCP Business Case	www.selcp.co.uk/ourpartnership

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body. This is being reported directly to Council to engage all Members.

Report Approval

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