



# Public Document Pack

## Boston Borough Council

Chief Executive  
Rob Barlow

Municipal Buildings  
Boston  
Lincolnshire PE21 8QR  
Tel: 01205 314200

Wednesday 7 January 2026

### Notice of meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
on **Thursday 15th January 2026 at 6.30 pm**  
in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR

**Rob Barlow**  
Chief Executive

#### Membership:

Chairman:	Councillor Paul Gleeson
Vice-Chairman:	Councillor Suzanne Welberry
Councillors:	Richard Austin BEM, David Brown, Emma Cresswell, Anton Dani, Anne Dorrian, Neil Drayton, Stuart Evans, Andy Izard, Patricia Marson, Barrie Pierpoint, Ralph Pryke, Lina Savickiene and David Scoot

Quorum 5

**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 and notification of substitutes (*if any*).

#### B Declarations of Interest

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

## **C Minutes**

(Pages 1 - 12)

To sign and confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

## **D Public Questions**

To answer any written questions received from members of the public no later than 5 p.m. two clear working days prior to the meeting – for this meeting the deadline is 5 p.m. on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

## **Part II - Agenda Items**

### **1 Budget Overview 2026/27 - 2030/31**

(To Follow)

(A report by Russell Stone, Director of Finance (S151 Officer))

### **2 Work Programme and Forward Plan**

(Pages 13 - 26)

(For Members to note/discuss the Committee's current Work Programme and the Council's Forward Plan)

## **Notes:**

Please contact Democratic Services ([demservices@boston.gov.uk](mailto: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 314502.

## Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Tuesday 9th December 2025 at 6.30 pm.

### **Present:**

Councillor Paul Gleeson, in the Chair.

Councillors , Richard Austin BEM, Anton Dani, Neil Drayton, Andy Izard, Ralph Pryke, David Scoot and Suzanne Welberry.

In attendance: Councillor John Baxter, Portfolio Holder for Housing.

### **Officers:**

Assistant Director - Regulatory, Assistant Director - Communities and Housing Services, Safer Communities Service Manager, Housing, Homelessness and Wellbeing Service Manager, Housing Standards Team Leader, Communications Manager, Group Manager – Insights & Transformation and Democratic Services Officer.

## **61 Election of Vice-Chairman**

The Chairman requested nominations for the role of Vice-Chairman.

### **Resolved:**

**That Councillor Suzanne Welberry be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.**

## **62 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors David Brown, Anne Dorrian, Stuart Evans, Patsie Marson and Barrie Pierpoint.

## **63 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **64 Minutes**

The minutes and the exempt minutes of the previous meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

## **65 Public Questions**

No questions were received from the public.

## 66 Housing Standards Policies

The Committee received a report introduced by the Housing Standards Team Leader, supported by the Group Manager – Safer Communities, and the Assistant Director – Communities and Housing Services. The Portfolio Holder for Housing was also in attendance.

Members were reminded that the Council was responsible for ensuring robust policies were in place for dealing with Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), Empty Homes, and Housing Standards Enforcement matters. The three draft policies had been fully reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, including the Housing Act 2004, and to promote consistency across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

The Officer outlined:

- The draft Empty Homes Policy, HMO Licensing Policy, and Housing Standards Enforcement Policy, attached as Appendices 1 (Draft Empty Homes Policy), 2 (Draft HMO Licensing Policy) and 3 (Draft Housing Standards Enforcement Policy) within the report, set out clear processes for officers and stakeholders, supporting safeguarding and health and wellbeing responsibilities.
- Alignment of fees and charges would provide a transparent and proportionate approach to enforcement and licensing across the Partnership.
- The policies aimed to improve housing standards, bring empty properties back into use, and ensure enforcement practices were fair, open, and legally compliant.
- Civil penalties of up to £30,000 per offence could be issued as an alternative to prosecution, ensuring flexibility and proportionality in enforcement.
- The review also considered climate and energy efficiency implications, recognising that bringing empty homes back into use and improving housing standards could reduce environmental impact.

Members welcomed the clarity and alignment of the policies but raised concerns about enforcement challenges, particularly regarding empty homes and HMOs. Key points included:

- Consistency Across Councils: Members supported the move to a single set of policies across the Partnership to ensure fairness and clarity for residents and landlords.
- Empty Homes – Complexity and Impact: The complexity of addressing long-term empty properties and the need for proactive engagement with owners was highlighted. Members noted the impact of empty homes on housing supply and supported enforcement measures where properties cause environmental or social harm.
- Council Tax Surcharges: Officers confirmed that Council Tax surcharges applied to long-term empty properties, escalating up to 400% of the standard rate after extended periods. Owners were legally required to notify the Council Tax team when a property became vacant; failure to do so may lead to enforcement action.
- Monitoring Processes: Members requested sight of the Council Tax team's processes for monitoring empty properties and applying surcharges, noting that a briefing would assist understanding of current practice.
- HMO Licensing and Standards: Members queried the fee structure and whether it reflected property size and layout. Officers confirmed that fees had been revised to

ensure proportionality and transparency, with calculations based on dwelling size and complexity. Waste management and amenity standards in HMOs were discussed, with calls for stronger cross-departmental working and periodic inspections.

- **Unlicensed HMOs:** The importance of collaboration with residents and partners to identify unlicensed or poorly managed HMOs was stressed.
- **Future Legislation:** Members noted the potential implications of the forthcoming Renters Rights Act, including opportunities for improved investigatory powers and landlord registration.
- **Safeguarding and Health:** Members welcomed the inclusion of safeguarding and health considerations within the policies and stressed the importance of robust enforcement to protect vulnerable residents.
- **Communication and Compliance:** Members asked how landlords and tenants would be informed of the new policies. Officers confirmed that guidance would be published online and shared through landlord forums and stakeholder networks.
- **Climate and Energy Efficiency:** Members noted that improving housing standards and bringing empty homes back into use could contribute to energy efficiency and reduce environmental impact, supporting wider climate objectives.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Members requested that future reports included data on enforcement activity, including the number of civil penalties issued and outcomes achieved.

The Committee agreed that the updated policies provide a clear framework for enforcement and recommended them to Cabinet for approval.

**The recommendation was moved by Councillor Anton Dani and seconded by Councillor Neil Drayton.**

**Resolved:**

**That the Empty Homes Policy (attached as Appendix 1), HMO Licensing Policy (attached as Appendix 2) and Housing Standards Enforcement Policy (attached as Appendix 3) be recommended to Cabinet for approval.**

## **67 Revised Housing Allocations Policy BBC/ELDC**

The Committee received a report presented by the Group Manager – Housing Services, supported by the Assistant Director – Communities and Housing Services. The Portfolio Holder for Housing was also in attendance.

Members were advised that recent changes in national guidance and legislation, including the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Care Leavers) (England) Regulations 2025, required updates to ensure compliance. The review had taken a comprehensive approach to improve fairness, transparency, and operational efficiency while aligning with statutory requirements. The Housing Allocation Policy 2021 was attached as Appendix 1 and the Housing Allocation Policy 2025 was attached as Appendix 2 within the report.

The Officer outlined:

- Removal of local connection requirements for victims of domestic abuse and care leavers up to age 25.
- Introduction of clearer banding criteria, including time-based progression for Band 1 after 120 days of homelessness duty, additional preference for Armed Forces members, terminally ill applicants, and exceptional risk cases.
- Financial resource limit of £60,000 and a £500 housing-related debt threshold, with nuanced consideration for domestic abuse-related debt.
- Strengthened provisions for sensitive lettings, medical evidence requirements (including acceptance of GP patient summaries), and non-cooperation rules.
- Structured penalties for refusal of offers to reduce delays and void periods.
- Integration of equality commitments, including the Armed Forces Covenant and monitoring of demographic impacts. The policy had undergone an Equality Impact Assessment to safeguard protected characteristics.
- Consultation undertaken with housing providers, Lincolnshire County Council, housing consultants, and specialist agencies to ensure the policy is legally robust and operationally effective.

Members welcomed the clarity of the revised policy and raised the following points:

- **Fairness and Transparency:** Members supported the removal of local connection requirements for vulnerable groups and noted the importance of clear communication to applicants.
- **Operational Impact:** Questions were raised about how the new banding criteria would affect waiting times and whether additional resources were needed to manage assessments. Officers confirmed that streamlined processes would reduce assessment times and improve customer experience.
- **Financial Thresholds:** Members queried the £60,000 financial resource limit and £500 debt threshold, asking how exceptions would be applied. Officers confirmed that discretion would be exercised for applicants with disabilities or older persons housing needs.
- **Domestic Abuse and Care Leavers:** Members welcomed the strengthened protections for these groups and asked about engagement with support agencies. Officers confirmed ongoing collaboration with specialist services.
- **Sensitive Lettings and Local Lettings Policies:** Members emphasized the need for ongoing collaboration with housing associations to address tenancy management and neighbourhood issues, and supported the use of local lettings policies and sensitive lettings where appropriate.
- **Avoiding Clustering:** Members discussed the importance of engagement with housing providers and support services to prevent clustering of vulnerable households on new developments. Officers confirmed that registered providers had been consulted extensively.
- **Future Monitoring:** Members requested that performance data on allocations, banding decisions, and appeals be included in future reports to ensure transparency.
- **Legislative Compliance:** Members noted the importance of keeping the policy under review to reflect any further changes in national legislation.

The Committee agreed that the revised policy provided a robust framework for allocations and supported its recommendation to Cabinet.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Anton Dani and seconded by Councillor Andy Izard.

**Resolved:**

**That the revised Housing Allocations Policy, attached as Appendix 2 within the report, be recommended to Cabinet for adoption.**

**68 Social Media Policy**

The Committee received a report by the Group Communications and Engagement Manager on the draft Social Media Policy, which had been developed as an addendum to the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Communications Strategy. The policy, attached as Appendix 1 within the report, set out a consistent approach to the use of social media across the three councils and aimed to strengthen engagement with residents while ensuring clarity, security, and accountability.

Members were advised that the policy:

- Established house rules for public interaction on council social media channels, including standards of behaviour and moderation protocols.
- Defined response protocols for service-related and non-service-related queries, ensuring timely and consistent communication.
- Provided guidance on content strategy, underpinned by audience insights and analytics, to improve reach and engagement.
- Included security and housekeeping measures, such as password management and access controls, to safeguard corporate accounts.
- Confirmed that while AI may be used for research purposes, AI-generated images or artwork would not be used in council posts.

The Group Communications and Engagement Manager also highlighted the scale of social media activity across the Partnership, recent engagement trends, and the need for a unified approach to comment moderation and crisis communication.

Members welcomed the draft policy and raised several points for consideration:

- **House Rules and Moderation:** Members stressed the importance of clear and accessible house rules for residents, ensuring that expectations around respectful engagement were well communicated. It was agreed that these should be prominently displayed on all platforms.
- **Response Protocols:** Questions were raised about how quickly service-related queries would be addressed and whether the proposed three-day response time was sufficient. Officers confirmed that the Communications Team would work closely with PSPS Customer Contact colleagues to maintain consistency and escalate complex queries promptly.
- **Emerging Platforms and Flexibility:** Members queried how the policy would adapt to changes in the social media landscape, such as the decline in X (formerly Twitter) and the rise of new platforms like Threads and Bluesky. Officers confirmed that the policy included flexibility for periodic review and adjustment.
- **Use of AI and Content Standards:** Concerns were expressed about the use of AI in content creation. Officers clarified that while AI may be used for research and analytics,

AI-generated images or artwork would not be used in Council posts, and any third-party AI content shared would be clearly acknowledged.

- **Security and Access Controls:** Members emphasised the need for robust password management and account security to prevent unauthorised access. Officers confirmed that the Communications Team maintained a secure, password-protected register of all corporate accounts and that passwords were changed quarterly.
- **Resource and Training:** Members asked whether staff training would accompany the policy to ensure consistent application across departments. Officers confirmed that training sessions would be delivered to relevant teams and that guidance would be available for officers managing sub-group pages.
- **Managing Negative or Misinformed Posts:** Members discussed the importance of protocols for handling misinformation and inflammatory comments. Officers outlined the approach of responding promptly, moving detailed conversations offline, and escalating safeguarding or legal concerns immediately.

The Committee agreed that the policy provided a strong framework for managing social media activity and supported its adoption, subject to the inclusion of clear review mechanisms and ongoing staff training.

**The recommendation was moved by Councillor Anton Dani and seconded by Councillor Neil Drayton.**

**Resolved:**

**That the Social Media Policy, attached as Appendix 1 within the report, be recommended to Cabinet for approval.**

## **69 Tree & Hedgerows Strategy Action Plan**

The Committee received a report from the Environment and Sustainability Officer on the draft Action Plan to support delivery of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Tree and Hedgerow Strategy. A copy of the Action Plan was attached as Appendix 1 and the Strategy was attached as Appendix 2 within the report.

Members were reminded that the Strategy, adopted in 2022, set out the vision to Protect, Plant and Participate, aiming to enhance green infrastructure, improve biodiversity, and contribute to climate resilience across the sub-region.

The Officer outlined:

- Baseline data showing tree canopy cover in South and East Lincolnshire at approximately 6.5%, compared to an England average of 12.8%, and hedgerow cover at 1.5%.
- Woodland opportunity mapping indicating significant potential in East Lindsey (908 hectares), with more limited opportunities in Boston (11 hectares) and South Holland (less than 1 hectare) due to fenland landscape character.
- Proposed actions including robust biosecurity measures, sourcing native species, developing long-term management plans, and engaging communities through initiatives such as Tree Warden networks and community orchards.



- The importance of aligning the Action Plan with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and national targets for hedgerow creation (30,000 miles by 2037).
- Officers confirmed that the plan set out short, medium, and long-term targets for managing, protecting, and enhancing trees and hedgerows across the sub-region, with tree planting targets to be agreed as part of short-term actions.
- Emphasis was placed on the principle of “right tree in the right place” and the need for ongoing maintenance to ensure longevity. Boston’s fenland landscape was noted as an important characteristic to maintain. Delivery would align with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Lincolnshire, expected in late 2026, with a review to ensure complementarity.

Members welcomed the comprehensive nature of the Action Plan and raised the following points:

- **Local Landscape and Character:** Members emphasised the need to balance tree planting with the preservation of fenland character and avoid the loss of valuable grassland habitats.
- **Community Engagement:** Strong support was expressed for reinvigorating the Tree Warden network and expanding community orchard schemes, recognising their health and wellbeing benefits.
- **Funding and Delivery:** Members asked about external funding streams and carbon offsetting opportunities. Officers confirmed that grant funding options and partnerships would be explored to support delivery.
- **Biosecurity and Provenance:** Members stressed the importance of sourcing UK-grown stock and implementing strict biosecurity measures. Officers confirmed that procurement would prioritise native species and consider establishing community tree nurseries.
- **Climate Resilience:** Questions were raised about species diversity and resilience to future climate conditions. Officers advised that guidance would be sought from national bodies to ensure appropriate species selection.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Members requested measurable targets for tree and hedgerow planting and annual progress updates in future reports.
- **Engagement with Partners:** Members supported engagement with Boston Woods Trust and other partners to assist delivery and secure funding opportunities.
- **Site Selection:** Clarification was sought on the 11 hectares identified by Friends of the Earth, with confirmation that site selection would be informed by biodiversity mapping in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- **Tree Management Policy:** Calls were made for a tree management policy and regular inspection regime for Council-owned trees. Officers confirmed this was being developed and was an objective within the proposed annual delivery plan 2026/27.
- **Long-Term Strategies:** Members stressed the importance of including thinning and felling plans in long-term planting strategies.
- **Planning and Biodiversity:** Concerns were raised about bright security lighting on new developments harming biodiversity, urging integration of ecological considerations across planning policies.
- **Maintenance Responsibilities:** Questions were asked about trees owned by Lincolnshire County Council and the Environment Agency. Officers confirmed engagement would be needed but responsibility remained with those bodies.
- **Support for Local Planting:** Members expressed strong support for community engagement and grant schemes to encourage local tree planting and stewardship.

**The recommendation was moved by Councillor David Scoot and seconded by Councillor Anton Dani.**

**Resolved:**

**That the Tree & Hedgerows Strategy Action Plan, attached as Appendices 1 and 2 within the report, be recommended to Cabinet for adoption.**

## **70 Annual Scrutiny Report 2024/2025**

The Committee received a report presented by the Democratic Services Team Leader on the Annual Scrutiny Report for 2024/2025, a copy of which was attached as Appendix 1 within the report.

Members were reminded that the Council's previous scrutiny committees, the Environment & Performance Committee and the Corporate & Community Committee, were required by their Terms of Reference to report annually to Full Council on their work programme activities undertaken during the previous municipal year.

The Officer outlined:

- The Annual Report provided an overview of the work completed by both committees during 2024/2025, including policy reviews, performance monitoring, and task and finish group activity.
- The report served as a record of scrutiny contributions to policy development and accountability prior to the establishment of the new Overview & Scrutiny Committee in May 2025.
- Following consideration by this Committee, the Annual Report would be presented to Full Council on 12 January 2026.

The Committee agreed that the report accurately reflects the work undertaken and supported its submission to Full Council.

**The recommendation was moved by Councillor David Scoot and seconded by Councillor Anton Dani.**

**Resolved:**

**That the Annual Scrutiny Report 2024/2025, attached as Appendix 1 within the report, be presented to Full Council.**

## **71 Quarter 2 25/26 Performance Report**

The Committee received a report by the Group Manager – Insight and Transformation on Quarter 2 Performance, covering the period to the end of September 2025. Details of the performance indicators were listed in Appendix A within the report.

Members were reminded that the performance framework included 92 indicators for Boston Borough Council, aligned to the Sub-regional Strategy. Of these, 27 were targeted

measures using a red, amber, and green rating system, and 65 were trend indicators providing contextual insight.

The report highlighted that overall performance was broadly on track, with remedial actions in place for off-target indicators. Commentary was provided for red-rated measures, including:

- Industrial Unit Occupancy – Two units were vacant at the end of Q2, with new tenants expected in Q3.
- Homelessness Decisions – Timeliness of decisions had improved following recruitment and restructuring, with performance now above target.
- Recycling – The annual recycling rate remained below the 45% stretch target; seasonal trends and contamination rates were noted, and Members requested updates on food waste initiatives and compliance with the Environment Act.

Members emphasised the importance of using quarterly data to identify emerging issues early. Several Members expressed concern about the continued gap in recycling performance and questioned whether the 45% target was realistic given current infrastructure. Officers advised that the target aligned with regional benchmarks and was intended to drive improvement rather than reflect current capacity.

Questions were raised about homelessness prevention outcomes, particularly the proportion of cases resolved through sustaining existing tenancies versus securing alternative accommodation. Officers confirmed that while overall prevention rates were high, more work was needed to increase in-situ prevention to reduce costs and pressure on temporary accommodation.

The Committee also discussed the value of trend indicators, noting that while they did not have targets, they provided useful context for policy decisions. Members agreed that homelessness, recycling, and industrial unit occupancy should remain priority areas for potential scrutiny and requested that future reports include commentary on workforce capacity and any financial implications linked to underperformance.

Members welcomed the clarity of the dashboard and raised several points for inclusion in future reports:

- Industrial Unit Data: Members requested that data on industrial unit occupancy and performance be included in the Quarter 3 report to allow comparative analysis.
- Temporary Accommodation Figures: Members asked for a detailed breakdown of families and children in temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast placements.
- Fly-Tipping Trends: While collection rates were high (95%), Members expressed concern about increasing fly-tipping incidents across the borough and requested an update on hotspot areas and enforcement measures. confirmed that monthly fly-tipping figures were published on the Council's website.
- Battery Disposal Incidents: Members highlighted recent national reports of fires caused by batteries in waste streams and asked for confirmation of any local incidents and steps being taken to raise public awareness.

- Target Review: Members queried whether performance targets could be reviewed before the Council's abolition. Officers confirmed that targets were reviewed annually and could also be adjusted quarterly if required.

**Resolved:**

- 1. That the report be noted; and**
- 2. That the requested updates, outlined above, be incorporated into future reports.**

**72 Work Programme and Forward Plan**

The Committee considered its current Work Programme and the Council's Forward Plan.

Members were reminded that the Work Programme was scheduled through to May 2026 but contained flexibility for additional scrutiny items. Officers emphasised the importance of aligning scrutiny activity with performance reporting and encouraged Members to use quarterly performance data proactively to identify topics for deeper investigation.

The Assistant Director – Regulatory outlined:

- The Forward Plan provided visibility of key policy decisions scheduled for Cabinet consideration, including significant matters such as the Destination Management Plan, Housing Standards Policies, and Tree & Hedgerow Strategy Action Plan.
- Members were invited to review the Forward Plan and suggest items for pre-decision scrutiny where appropriate.
- The Committee was updated on pending matters, including the Town Centre Task and Finish Group, which is expected to report early in the new year.

Members noted:

- The value of quarterly performance reports as a strategic tool for identifying emerging issues and shaping future scrutiny topics.
- Areas highlighted for potential scrutiny included homelessness performance, recycling targets, and industrial unit occupancy, reflecting concerns raised during consideration of the Quarter 2 Performance Report.
- The importance of maintaining flexibility to respond to emerging issues, particularly in light of forthcoming legislative changes and partnership priorities.
- Members requested that the Work Programme include updates on the Community Governance Review, Local Government Reorganisation implications, and progress on the Boston Town Centre Strategy.
- Officers confirmed that the Forward Plan would continue to be reviewed regularly, and that Members should notify Democratic Services of any items they believe warrant scrutiny.

The Committee agreed that the Work Programme and Forward Plan provide a clear framework for future scrutiny activity.

**Resolved:**

**That the content of the current Work Programme and Council Forward Plan be noted.**

**73 Exclusion of Public and Press**

Due to the Committee's approval of the exempt minutes under the Minutes item, this item was not required.

**74 Exempt Minutes**

Due to the Committee's approval of the exempt minutes under the Minutes item, this item was not required.

The Meeting ended at 8.24 pm.

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025–26

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Report Author <i>A.D = Assistant Director D.C.X = Deputy Chief Executive</i>	Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Meeting
29 May 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>Joint Scrutiny of the Partnership Enviro Crime Enforcement Contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Manager – Organisational Development</li> <li>Partnership Scrutiny Task Group</li> </ul>	Cllr A Dorrian  Cllr C Butler	17 Sep 25
17 June 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HMO Update</li> <li>Plan for Neighbourhoods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safer Communities Services Manager</li> <li>Director of Economic Development</li> </ul>	Cllr J Baxter  Cllr A Dorrian	17 Sep 25
17 July 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>Review of Crowdfunding Scheme</li> <li>South &amp; East Lincolnshire Council's Partnership Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVC) Policy</li> <li>Quarter 4 24/25 Performance and Risk Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Manager – Organisational Development</li> <li>Community Leadership Manager</li> <li>Community Safety Manager</li> <li>Group Manager Insights and Transformation</li> </ul>	Cllr A Dorrian  Cllr E Cresswell Cllr A Dorrian  Cllr A Dorrian	17 Sep 25  17 Sep 25 17 Sep 25 9 Jul 25
4 Sept 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highways LCC Portfolio Holder</li> <li>Flood Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LCC Portfolio Holder</li> <li>AD Regulatory</li> </ul>	Cllr D Broughton	17 Sep 25

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025–26

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Report Author <i>A.D = Assistant Director D.C.X = Deputy Chief Executive</i>	Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Meeting
2 Oct 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road Safety Briefing</li> <li>Anglian Water</li> <li>Plan for Neighbourhoods</li> <li>SELCP Safeguarding Policy</li> <li>Crime and Disorder</li> <li>Budget Preparation 2026/27 - Approach &amp; Process</li> <li>Local Council Tax Support</li> <li>Pension and Pensions Discretions Policy</li> <li>SELCP Safeguarding Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Manager LRSP</li> <li>Public Affairs Team</li> <li>Director of Economic Development</li> <li>Safer Communities Manager (Operations)</li> <li>Interim Director of Finance Section 151 Officer</li> <li>Interim Director of Finance Section 151 Officer</li> <li>Group Manager Organisational Development</li> <li>AD Communities and Housing Services</li> </ul>	Cllr S Sharpe Cllr H Staples  Cllr S Ghosh  Cllr S Ghosh  Cllr Broughton Cllr H Staples	22 Oct 25 22 Oct 25   17 Sep 25  10 Nov 25 10 Dec 25
6 Nov 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on Community Lottery</li> <li>Q1 24/25 Performance Report</li> <li>Contracting of Leisure Facilities with an External Agent for Service Delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Leadership Manager</li> <li>Group Manager Insights and Transformation</li> <li>Head of Special Projects</li> </ul>	Cllr H Staples Cllr D Broughton  Cllr S Sharpe	10 Dec 25 10 Dec 25  10 Dec 25
9 Dec 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Standards Policies</li> <li>Housing Allocations Policy</li> <li>Q2 25/26 Performance and Risk Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safer Communities Service Manager</li> <li>Senior Housing Officer</li> <li>Group Manager Insights and Transformation</li> </ul>	Cllr J Baxter  Cllr J Baxter  Cllr D Broughton	27 Jan 26  27 Jan 26  10 Dec 25



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025–26

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Report Author <i>A.D = Assistant Director D.C.X = Deputy Chief Executive</i>	Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees and Hedgerows Strategy Action Plan</li> <li>Social Media Policy</li> <li>Scrutiny Annual Reports 2023/24 2024/25</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AD Regulatory</li> <li>AD Corporate</li> <li>Monitoring Officer</li> </ul>	Cllr C Rylott Cllr Broughton	27 Jan 26 27 Jan 26
15 Jan 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget Draft 2026/2027</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Finance Delivery PSPSL</li> </ul>	Cllr S Ghosh	10 Dec 25
10 Feb 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policing Chief Constable/Chief Superintendent Lee Pache (Area Commander East) (Virtual)</li> <li>Destination Management Plan for SELCP and Associated Action Plan for Boston.</li> <li>Terms and Conditions - Alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AD Regulatory</li> <li>Director for Economic Development</li> <li>AD Corporate</li> </ul>	Cllr S Sharpe Cllr D Broughton	18 Feb 26
17 Mar 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarter 3 25/26 Performance and Risk Report</li> <li>Highways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Manager Insights and Transformation</li> <li>Portfolio Holder LCC</li> </ul>	Cllr D Broughton Cllr S Sharpe	25 Mar 26

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025–26

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Report Author <i>A.D = Assistant Director D.C.X = Deputy Chief Executive</i>	Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Meeting
30 Apr 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 19 Agency Floods Post Report Environment Agency Black Sluice and LLFA/LCC</li> <li>NHS Care After Discharge (<i>Pending</i>)</li> <li>NEPTS Patient Transport (<i>Pending</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– AD Regulatory</li> <li>– AD Regulatory</li> <li>– AD Regulatory</li> </ul>	Cllr D Broughton	

Page 16

## Alternative options for Scrutiny working.

Task and Finish Group	Review of the Town Centre Task and Finish Group (Cllr Pryke, Chairman)
Member Working Group	
Inquiry Session	
All Member Briefings <i>pending at issue of agenda</i>	Child Poverty – requested from November 2024 meeting. Update on PE21 – requested from Environment and Performance December 2024 meeting. Port of Boston Lock Gate Project <b>Update: Briefing Confirmed for 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026</b>

## Pending Confirmation:

- Bus Services. Possible work streams from the SICP report on Social Impact Population Change.
- Visitor Economy (Tourism).
- Local Plan (**Pending Review/Updates**)

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025–26

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Report Author <i>A.D = Assistant Director</i> <i>D.C.X = Deputy Chief Executive</i>	Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Meeting
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Chairman:

Councillor Paul Gleeson

Vice Chairman:

Councillor Suzanne Welberry

**Lead Officer(s):** Deputy Chief Executive (Programme Delivery) and Assistant Director - General Fund Assets / Assistant Director – Regulatory

**Clerk:** Ray Flannery, Democratic Services Officer

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# **BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **FORWARD PLAN**

### **1 DECEMBER TO 30 NOVEMBER 2026**

The Forward Plan is a forecast of decisions which are expected to be taken by the Cabinet in the next twelve months.

This Plan constitutes 28 day notice as required by virtue of Regulations 5(2) and 9(2) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information (England) Regulations 2012.

The Boston Borough Council definition of a key decision is:

- A decision which results in the authority incurring expenditure which is, or involves the making of savings which are significant having regard to the authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- Be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.

Decisions set out in this Plan will be taken by the Cabinet unless otherwise specified. All decisions included in this Plan will be taken on the basis of a written report and will be published on the Council's website before the meeting.

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and occasionally subject to change.

The Council invites members of the public to attend any of the meetings at which decisions will be discussed and the papers listed on the Plan can be viewed free of charge at the Customer Services Desk, Municipal Building, West Street, Boston, or on the Council's website, [www.boston.gov.uk](http://www.boston.gov.uk)

If you wish to make comments or representations regarding the decisions outlined in the Plan, please submit them in writing to the contact officer identified against each decision in the Plan, at least 2 working days before the date of the meeting at which the decision is to be taken.

Agendas, decisions and minutes are published on the Council's website [www.boston.gov.uk](http://www.boston.gov.uk)

#### **Cabinet Members:**

Cllr Dale Broughton (Leader)  
Cllr Mike Gilbert (Deputy Leader)

Cllr John Baxter  
Cllr Chris Mountain

Cllr Callum Butler  
Cllr Claire Rylott

Cllr Sandeep Ghosh  
Cllr Sarah Sharpe

Cllr Helen Staples

Report Title and Summary of Content	Key / Non-Key	Date Decision to be taken	Rec to Council?	Open or Exempt	Lead Officer	Portfolio Holder
<b>Amendments/Updates to the Contract Procedure Rules</b> To introduce a new updated version of the Contract Procedure Rules.	Non Key	Cabinet 10 Dec 2025	Full Council 12 Jan 2026	Open	Martin Gibbs, Head of Procurement & Contracts, PSPSL martin.gibbs@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27</b> For Cabinet to agree its recommendation to Full Council for the 2026/27 Council Tax Support Scheme.	Non Key	Cabinet 10 Dec 2025	Full Council 12 Jan 2026	Open	Sharon Hammond, Head of Revenues and Benefits Sharon.hammond@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>Q2 2025/26 Forecast Outturn</b> To set out the current financial position for the Council at the end of the 2nd quarter of 2025/26.	Non Key	Cabinet 10 Dec 2025	Full Council 12 Jan 2026	Open	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL) nicole.hayes@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>2025/26 Mid Term Treasury Report</b> To provide Members with an update on Treasury Management performance and activity to ensure best practice is maintained.	Non Key	Full Council 12 Jan 2026		Open	Sean Howsam, Treasury and Investment Manager (PSPSL) Sean.Howsam@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>Community Governance Review for Boston</b> To update the Council on the outcome of the Phase 1 consultation undertaken and consider the recommendations from the Community Governance Review Working Group to agree the next steps of the review.	Non Key	Full Council 12 Jan 2026		Open	Amanda Dickinson, Democratic Services Team Leader Tel: 01205 314591 amanda.dickinson@boston.gov.uk	Leader (Councillor Dale Broughton)

Report Title	Key / Non-Key	Date Decision to be taken	Rec to Council?	Open or Exempt	Lead Officer	Portfolio Holder
<b>2026/27 Draft Budget - SCRUTINY</b>	Non Key	Overview & Scrutiny Committee 15 Jan 2026		Open	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL) nicole.hayes@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>2026/27 TPS, TMSS &amp; MRP +AIS</b> To provide pre-decision scrutiny to the strategy being proposed.	Non Key	Audit & Governance Committee 19 Jan 2026		Open	Sean Howsam, Treasury and Investment Manager (PSPSL) Sean.Howsam@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>2026/27 Budget Proposal</b> To consider the draft BTAC budget for 2026/27.	Non Key	Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) 22 Jan 2026		Open	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL) nicole.hayes@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>SELCP Safeguarding Policy</b> Following the creation of the SELCP a review of the Safeguarding Policies has been undertaken. To standardise our approach to Safeguarding children and adults in the work we do, a single policy covering all three councils has been developed.	Key	Cabinet 27 Jan 2026		Open	Iris Furst, Safeguarding Officer iris.furst@e-lindsey.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder - Communities (Councillor Helen Staples)

Report Title	Key / Non-Key	Date Decision to be taken	Rec to Council?	Open or Exempt	Lead Officer	Portfolio Holder
<b>BBC/ELDC Housing Allocations Policy 2025</b> An update to the 2021 Allocation Policy jointly adopted by Boston Borough Council and East Lindsey District Council outlines a comprehensive framework for managing access to social housing across both districts.	Key	Cabinet 27 Jan 2026		Open	Kerry James, Senior Housing Officer Kerry.James@e-lindsey.gov.uk, Tom Marsters, Housing and Homelessness Manager tmarsters@sholland.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder - Housing (Councillor John Baxter)
<b>Trees &amp; Hedgerows Strategy Action Plan</b> To gain member input into the draft action plan to underpin delivery of the Trees & Hedgerows Strategy.	Key	Cabinet 27 Jan 2026		Open	Heather Prescott, Climate Change and Environment Officer heather.prescott@boston.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder - Green Spaces and Travel (Councillor Claire Rylott)
<b>South &amp; East Lincolnshire Community Safety Strategy</b> To recommend adoption of the 2025-2028 Community Safety Strategy and associated action plan.	Non Key	Cabinet 27 Jan 2026		Open	Sarah Cocker, Safer Communities Officer sarah.cocker@e-lindsey.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder - Communities (Councillor Helen Staples)
<b>Housing Standards Policies</b> To consider the review and update of Housing Standards Policies prior to alignment of respective Policies across the Partnership.	Non Key	Cabinet 27 Jan 2026		Open	Jonathan Challen, Safer Communities Service Manager jonathan.challen@e-lindsey.gov.uk, Luke Settle, Housing Standards Team Leader luke.settle@boston.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder - Housing (Councillor John Baxter)



Report Title	Key / Non-Key	Date Decision to be taken	Rec to Council?	Open or Exempt	Lead Officer	Portfolio Holder
<b>Social Media Policy</b> To consider and approve the adoption of a consistent approach to the Partnership's social media channels and tactics when using social media to communicate to residents across the sub-region.	Non Key	Cabinet 27 Jan 2026		Open	Shaun Gibbons, Communications Manager shaungibbons@sholland.gov.uk	Leader (Councillor Dale Broughton)
<b>Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) Policy</b> To review and update the Policy across each of the Councils and have a single aligned Policy across the Partnership.	Non Key	Cabinet 27 Jan 2026		Open	Jonathan Challen, Safer Communities Service Manager jonathan.challen@e-lindsey.gov.uk, Luke Settle, Housing Standards Team Leader luke.settle@boston.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder - Housing (Councillor John Baxter)
<b>Destination Management Plan for SELCP and the associated action plan for Boston</b> Destination Lincolnshire are the defined Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for the Lincolnshire and Rutland areas. As part of this they have created a Plan to 2033 to promote and co-ordinate the Visitor Economy.	Key	Cabinet 18 Feb 2026		Open	Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development pranali.parikh@boston.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder - Heritage, Culture and Tourism (Councillor Sarah Sharpe)

Report Title	Key / Non-Key	Date Decision to be taken	Rec to Council?	Open or Exempt	Lead Officer	Portfolio Holder
<b>2026/27 Budget Report</b> To approve: The General Fund Budget for 2026/27, including the use of reserves, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital Programmes and Strategy, Treasury Management Policy/Strategy and the Annual Delivery Plan including the approval of Council Tax levels.	Non Key	Cabinet 18 Feb 2026	Full Council 2 Mar 2026	Open	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL) nicole.hayes@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>Terms and Conditions alignment - next phase</b> To consider the next phase of terms and conditions alignment across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.	Non Key	Full Council 2 Mar 2026		Open	James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate james.gilbert@e-lindsey.gov.uk	Leader (Councillor Dale Broughton)
<b>2026/27 CTAX Setting Report</b> To set the amounts of Council Tax applicable for 2026/27 for each valuation band and in each part of the Borough.	Non Key	Full Council 2 Mar 2026		Open	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL) nicole.hayes@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>Quarter 3 25/26 Performance and Risk Report</b> To provide an update on performance and risk as at the end of each quarter.	Key	Cabinet 25 Mar 2026		Open	Suzanne Rolfe, Group Manager – Insights & Transformation suzanne.rolfe@boston.gov.uk	Leader (Councillor Dale Broughton)
<b>Q3 2025/26 Forecast Outturn</b> To set out the current financial position for the Council at the end of the 2nd quarter of 2025/26.	Non Key	Cabinet 25 Mar 2026		Open	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL) nicole.hayes@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)

Report Title	Key / Non-Key	Date Decision to be taken	Rec to Council?	Open or Exempt	Lead Officer	Portfolio Holder
<b>Q3 2025/26 Forecast Outturn (SEA)</b> To set out the current financial position for BTAC at the end of the 3rd quarter of 2025/26.	Non Key	Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) 26 Mar 2026		Open	Nicole Hayes, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL) nicole.hayes@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>2025/26 Accounting Policies</b> To review and agree the Accounting Policies for inclusion in the Financial Statements 2025/26.	Non Key	Audit & Governance Committee 21 Apr 2026		Open	Ellie Stacey, Head of Finance Delivery - Technical and Corporate, PSPSL Ellie.Stacey@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)
<b>2025/26 Q3 Treasury Update</b> To provide Members with an update on Treasury Management performance and activity to ensure best practice is maintained.	Non Key	Audit & Governance Committee 21 Apr 2026		Open	Sean Howsam, Treasury and Investment Manager (PSPSL) Sean.Howsam@pspsl.co.uk	Portfolio Holder - Finance and Economic Growth (Councillor Sandeep Ghosh)

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