



# Public Document Pack

## Boston Borough Council

Chief Executive  
Rob Barlow

Municipal Buildings  
Boston  
Lincolnshire PE21 8QR  
Tel: 01205 314200

Tuesday 20 May 2025

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

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
on **Thursday 29th May 2025 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 Neil Drayton
Councillors:	Alison Austin, Anton Dani, Stuart Evans, Mike Gilbert, Andy Izard, Patricia Marson, David Middleton, Ralph Pryke, Claire Rylott, Lina Savickiene, David Scoot, Helen Staples and Suzanne Welberry

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 - 24)

To sign and confirm the minutes of the previous meetings:

- Environment and Performance – 22 February 2025.
- Corporate and Community – 6 March 2025.
- Special Corporate and Community – 8 May 2025.

## **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 Friday 23 May 2025.

## **Part II - Agenda Items**

### **1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan** (Pages 25 - 54)

(A report by James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate)

### **2 Joint Scrutiny of the Partnership Enviro Crime Enforcement Contract** (Pages 55 - 68)

(A report by the Partnership Scrutiny Task Group)

### **3 Work Programme** (Pages 69 - 70)

(For Members to note/discuss the Committee's current work programme)

## **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 - Environment & Performance Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Tuesday 11th February 2025 at 6.30 pm.

### **Present:**

Councillor Claire Rylott, in the Chair.

Councillors Councillor Lina Savickiene, Alison Austin, Neil Drayton, Stuart Evans, Mike Gilbert, Andy Izard, Patricia Marson, Ralph Pryke, David Scoot, Suzanne Welberry and Sarah Sharpe.

.

In attendance:

Councillor Richard Austin BEM.

Officers:

Assistant Director - Regulatory, Assistant Director - Culture and Leisure, Group Manager – Insights & Transformation, Community Development Manager, Markets Manager, Museums, Arts & Heritage Manager, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer and Democratic Services Officer.

### **81 Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **82 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **83 Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

### **84 Public Questions**

No questions were received.

### **85 Quarter 2 Performance**

The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation presented a report by the Assistant Director – Corporate which provided the 2024/25 Quarter 2 performance update, as up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. A joint performance management framework had been agreed across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership for 2024/25 to support the delivery of services. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had been agreed to capture performance against the strategic priorities of the Partnership and the individual Councils. In total 101 KPIs for Boston Borough Council were set out by priority within Appendix 1, following the adoption of the Sub-regional Strategy.

The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation highlighted the following key points:

Key Performance Indicators:

- Green (On or above target): Majority of indicators
- Amber (Just off target):
  - Occupancy rate at industrial units: 92.86% (target: 95%)
  - Occupancy rate for other investment property: 92.55% (target: 95%)
- Red (Below target):
  - Household waste recycling rates
  - Percentage of calls answered in customer contact
  - Revenues and benefits customer contact

Members' comments included the following:

The team was commended for not having any children in Bed & Breakfast accommodation for any length of time.

Clarity was sought on the reasons behind the difficulties of obtaining data for commercial rent. The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation advised that the difficulty lay in reporting from the financial system, and noted that the information was being managed operationally.

A question was asked as to why there had been a reduction in swimming lessons and swimming. The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation advised that an update would be provided, noting the change in operation at the Geoff Moulder Leisure Centre.

Clarification was sought on a new measurement against estimated annual expenditure from PSPSL. The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation advised that it was a result of the local authority error rate and that further details would be gathered to provide further clarity on the matter. Additionally, clarification was sought in regards to the adjusted or real figures relating to council tax banded dwellings. The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation advised that she would check the information and provide an update.

A query was raised about whether the callback system had reduced or extended the length of time that customers were on hold. The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation advised that she would gather more information and provide an answer.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the performance information be noted**

**86 Update on Guildhall Action Plan**

The Portfolio Holder – Culture, Councillor Sarah Sharpe, presented a report which provided an update on the work programme of activity designed to support service delivery at the Guildhall, Boston.

The Leisure and Culture Division within the Communities Directorate was responsible for developing and delivering the museum service that was offered through the Guildhall.

Noting the importance of the building to the borough of Boston and the need to deliver an efficient service, an action plan had been developed around four themes, which had been approved by Cabinet in February 2024:

- Sustainability and Improving Financial Resilience;
- Historic Site and Collection;
- Exhibition and Event Programming; and
- Promotion and Marketing.

The thematic areas within the plan were supported by key strategic objectives that were linked to 21 actions: 14 were on target, 2 had been completed or were no longer required, 5 required mitigations to stay on plan and 0 were off target.

Councillor Sharpe highlighted the following key points:

- **Progress:** 14 actions on target, 1 completed, 5 with mitigations, and 1 no longer required.
- **Achievements:**
  - Successful recruitment of the Museum Events and Venue Officer.
  - 61% increase in visitors in November compared to the previous year.
  - Installation of a card machine for merchandise and donations.
  - Relaunch of social media accounts.
  - Submission and progress of grant applications.
  - Development of the exhibition program, including notable exhibitions like the Pilgrim Woman and the De Gaulle Exhibition.
  - Upcoming exhibitions and events, including the 900th anniversary of the Mayfair.
  - Benefits from the National Portfolio Organisation Fund for museum display cases and cultural programs.
  - Successful hire events and collaborations with local organizations.
- **Future Plans:** Continued work on grant applications, promotion of the venue for weddings, and development of new exhibitions.

Members' comments included the following:

A question was asked about how closely the Guildhall was linked with local schools, and how many weddings were held at the venue. Councillor Sharpe advised that schools did visit regularly, with one visit scheduled at the end of February 2025. Additionally, it was noted that six weddings had been held last year.

The approach taken to track the sales and profit margins of branded merchandise was queried. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that the profit margin was approximately 120%. An audit process was in place to ensure sales were tracked and profitable.

A question was asked about ways that the booking situation could be improved and how limitations like the single toilet and parking could be addressed. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that promoting the venue was key and that temporary toilets could be considered for larger events, as considering any permanent changes

would be challenging due to the building's listed Grade I status. A further query was raised on whether connections had been made with Boston, Massachusetts for potential shared exhibitions. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that there was a link with the Massachusetts State Library, and that further connections were being explored, particularly with Rhode Island.

The Chairman emphasised the importance of understanding the financial resilience of the Guildhall and requested further detailed financial figures. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer presented the financial report for the last two years, which reflected a total overall income increase by 2% compared to the previous year.

A question was asked about the possibility of the Guildhall being opened for more days, including Sundays. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that more opening days would require additional resources. It was noted that a growth bid could support this, and that aligning with town-wide initiatives could be beneficial.

The potential collaboration with Fydell House for facilities and joint bookings, particularly for weddings, was queried. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that collaboration with Fydell House was ongoing, and that their facilities had been used for events. Further strategic collaboration was an aspiration.

A question was asked about the possibility of the Guildhall being promoted to schools within a 50-mile radius, with leaflets being placed in hotels for tourists. The Portfolio Holder – Culture and the Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that promotion to schools, for trips, was limited by funding however wider promotion was possible. Leafleting in hotels was not currently being carried out, but online promotion was being enhanced.

Clarification was sought about whether the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Boston, Massachusetts was being addressed by the Corporate & Community Committee. Councillor Sharpe advised that a six-month consultation period was taking place in which different stakeholders were taking part, and that information was being gathered prior to presenting it to scrutiny.

The possibility of improving signage for the Guildhall and the use of banners for events was suggested. Councillor Sharpe advised that signage improvements had been planned as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund bid. The idea of a banner across the road was well-received.

A question was asked regarding ways in which financial resilience for the Guildhall could be ensured. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that external investments and novel ways to increase resilience without Council investment were being explored. Visitor analysis was needed to target strategies effectively.

The Chairman invited Councillor Richard Austin, attending as a public speaker, to address the meeting. Councillor Austin queried the possibility of making the Guildhall the centre of the visitor economy. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that the Guildhall was to play a core role in the visitor economy, especially leading up to Boston 400 in 2030. Exhibitions and collaborations were being planned. Councillor Austin suggested the possibility of capitalising on national stories like those about Thomas

Cromwell. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that the Team was working closely with the Communications Team for such stories to be promoted as a priority. Councillor Austin also queried the possibility of local industries like agriculture and food packing to be featured in exhibitions. The Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer advised that exhibitions on those topics were being planned, supported by the National Portfolio Organisation Storytellers.

The Chairman noted the excitement of the Boston 400 event in 2030 and the prospect of all the work being done. She emphasised that further work needed to be carried out by officers in respect of the financial figures.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

**87 Boston Markets Policy Report**

The Markets Manager presented a report which provided an updated on the Markets & Severe Weather Policies, in line with the review and development of the Markets Service. He advised that he was new to the role, as having started in October 2024. Following the implementation of the Boston Markets Development Plan, agreed by Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024, the Markets Service had undergone a full-service review in line with the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership's (SELCP) Annual Delivery Plan. The review had highlighted the need to evaluate the Market and Severe Weather Policies as a priority, as the service evolved, in order to ensure that the market was operated efficiently, consistently, and safely.

The report detailed the draft revised and new policies for the service. The current Market Policy was attached as Appendix 1, the draft Market Policy was attached as Appendix 2, and the draft Severe Weather Policy was attached as Appendix 3 within the report.

The Markets Manager indicated that the market policies were reviewed annually in order to update fees/charges and minor changes to wording but, following the review of the service, it was determined that a wider review of the policy was also required. The review had been undertaken with extensive research and drew on best practice. It also gave consideration to the increased number of traders in which English was not necessarily their first language, and therefore aimed to make the policy terms clearer, using uncomplicated wording and less jargon, where possible.

The following principal changes to the draft Market policy were highlighted:

- A new requirement for new traders to provide risk assessments if using their own stalls and equipment.
- New incentives had been added to the casual traders and traders that had not traded at Boston for over 12 months.
- Charity stores would be allowed a stand for free once a quarter instead of once a year.
- A debt repayment warning would be added to the policy to remind traders of timely invoice payments, with late payments strictly monitored and with disciplinary procedures for those who breached the policy.

- Holiday entitlement would increase by one day and had been made clearer with inclement weather day entitlement doubled.
- Changes had been made to disciplinary procedures and the conduct section.
- Information on selling second hand goods had been added to the policy.
- Erection and dismantling times for the new gazebos would be added, with trading hours reduced by 30 minutes. A strict compliance to not pack away until 30 minutes prior to the core trading hours had ended would be introduced in response to feedback from the traders due to customer behaviour having changed over the years, with most customers attending the market earlier.
- Emergency procedures had now been added to the policy along with a health and safety inspection form for the market officer, dismantling instructions for Council staff had been added and trader application forms would be removed from the main body of the policy to make it clearer.
- The severe weather policy would be removed from the main body of the policy and would become its own document, as advised by the health and safety manager.

The following principal changes to the draft Severe Weather Policy were highlighted:

- Setting out how the markets team would determine when and how a decision to restrict or close the market was taken.
- Acknowledging the disruption, financial and logistical impacts for all concerned, a decision-making matrix would be shown within the policy for traders to view.
- A new, more formalised severe weather policy had been drafted in collaboration with the health and safety manager.
- The policy would set out clear conditions for traders using equipment during a restricted market.
- The policy would provide a stated time and date when decisions for the market would be made.
- Only the Met Office weather app would be used to ensure a fair and consistent approach to decision making.
- It maintained the principle that the key priority was to protect the safety of the public, traders and staff as well as the reputation of the Council in the event of severe weather.

Members comments included the following:

In relation to the extent of the feedback sought from traders, the Markets Manager indicated that he had visited the market himself, liaised with the market officer and had spoken with all the traders directly regarding their concerns, which were focussed mainly on the severe weather policy.

Clarification was sought regarding the advance notice given to traders in the event of operating the Severe Weather Policy, including the accuracy of weather warnings. It was confirmed that a decision would be made by 2pm the day before the market and an explanation was provided to the Committee. The issue of whether there was a contingency if the forecast was incorrect was considered. At present, there was no contingency if the weather forecast changed after 2pm on the day before a market as stalls were set out the day before. However, that would change when the new gazebos were introduced, as set up would be between 6am and 8am on the morning of the market. Additionally, in the new policy, at the present time for traders that used their own equipment, stalls or gazebos, if



the weather did change overnight, it would be reassessed at 7am on the morning of the market for those traders. The Markets Manager indicated that this was a disadvantage to those that used the Council stalls. However, he added that traders who brought their own equipment should not be penalised.

Information was provided regarding the difference between the current stalls and the new blue and white gazebos which were to be introduced. Steel framed stalls were used at present, with a sheet on top. The stalls were coming to the end of their life, which explained the introduction of the gazebos, that were now in the Council's possession. Erection of the gazebos would be carried out by two people, and public feedback on the appearance of the gazebos had been positive. There had been some negative feedback from the current traders and as a result the new gazebo stand which had been erected recently for the traders to see. Other traders were prepared to trial them to consider the logistics of their stall layout and a plan was in place to mitigate any concerns.

The current stalls measured 10 feet, and the gazebos measured 3 x 3 metres, so they would have the same footprint but there would be discretion to extend the site depending on safety issues. There would also be a change whereby hanging items from the gazebos would not be permitted, which was being considered with traders in advance of implementation.

Health and safety issues were considered, including the risk of slips and trips and cables at head height which, in response to questioning, the Markets Manager indicated would be investigated.

It was clarified that charities with a stall must also have public liability insurance; and that car boot sales were not within the remit of the markets team.

**The recommendation was moved by Councillor David Scoot and seconded by Councillor Stuart Evans.**

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That report be noted; and**
- 2. That feedback be provided to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and Full Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025 as part of the Annual Budget report.**

**88 Boston Market Development Plan Report**

The Markets Manager presented a report which provided progress against the Boston Market Development Plan, as agreed by Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024. He indicated that the report provided an overview on how Boston's regular Wednesday and Saturday markets had been performing and proposed actions for the further development of the service in order to deliver a sustainable market service and to become financially resilient.

The partnership annual delivery plan included two projects for the Boston Market Service to undertake during the 24/25 financial year which were to review the market's policy and

to undertake a review of the market service with an aim to deliver savings, whilst also growing the service.

By way of an update, since the Environment and Performance Committee meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024, a dedicated Markets Manager was now in place, across the partnership.

A successful capital funding bid of £47,750 had been made for the replacement van, gazebos and equipment. There had been a reduction in the store erector team and hours of operation in Quarter 3 and savings had been built into the 25/26 budget. Road closures had been introduced for Saturday markets following a consultation in Quarter 2. Final consultations were currently ongoing to apply for a road closure on Wednesday market days in Quarter 4. Markets had been integrated into events such as the Christmas Festival and the Boston College Food Festival.

Members noted that the teenage market events had continued to develop and had now been focused into eight months of the year instead of twelve, taking best practice from East Lindsey District Council, which ran a very successful teenage market programme. It had also recently been confirmed with the Portfolio Holder that there would also be charity stalls with the teenage market, as a pairing to bring more visitors for that day.

A new makers and farmers market would be held monthly between March and October, which had been created with the assistance of Councillor Suzanne Welberry and would begin in March 2025. Development of the social media presence, particularly on Facebook, had continued and was being expanded to other platforms such as Instagram and Google. The Boston Market Facebook page had been revamped with new content and an extensive number of local groups had now joined. Year on year from January 2024/25, there were 1410 views with an increase of 64.1%. New professional photos of the market had been taken, that had been posted on the Boston Market Facebook page, which had received fantastic feedback from followers and traders.

The new branded gazebos had been bought in readiness for a move to their introduction for the 2025/26 financial year, with new guttering having been ordered to enable traders to join the gazebos without their stock being damaged. The Markets Manager indicated that although Boston's pitch fees were similar to some of the markets in the area, they were considered high when local demographics were factored in. The proposal within the budget programme for 2024/25 was for the Council to freeze the fees to keep the rates competitive. An increase of 50p had been introduced for the market traders' vehicles. Market occupancy rates had increased by 1% year on year for Quarter 1 and 2 with an 8% decrease for Q3 due to several markets being restricted due to the Met Office yellow warnings.

The Markets Manager advised that the markets team was in the early stages of working towards a Process Data Quickly (PDQ) machine/payment system to enable traders to pay their pitch fees on the day of the market. This would prevent any traders developing debt moving forward. Positive action was being taken regarding the traders' current debt and new debt collectors instructed for traders no longer engaging.

New barrier covers were being used for the road closures, advertising the market and how to become a trader, and new banners to advertise the market opening time times around

Boston had been introduced. Additionally, new banners for the makers and farmers market had been introduced, including artwork for notice boards around the town centre. Bunting would also be introduced over the next few weeks and the market's logo had changed to represent the colours of Boston Council.

Traders' meetings had been introduced with the aim to hold them every six months to seek their feedback and to ensure constant consultation. There would also be initiatives such as a selfie square and "trader of the week".

A good relationship had been forged with Father David Stephenson at St Botolph's Church and consideration was being given to how best to encourage and utilise the footfall from the 90,000+ visitors a year. International markets to celebrate Boston's diverse community were also being considered.

Members' comments included the following:

Information had been provided about how many stall holders there were currently. It was confirmed that there were 10-15 at present and in the summer, there would be 20-30 stall holders in place. Consideration had been given to how far traders were travelling, with confirmation that the majority lived in or near Boston. Information was provided, advising that there were 54 market pitches available, with space to extend for particularly niche events.

Consideration was given to the trader charges which had been applied, including whether they could be reduced, and comparisons to other local areas was discussed. The Markets Manager confirmed that he had been advised by accounts colleagues that a price reduction was not possible and instead a price freeze had been implemented. Discussions about the future charging policy were ongoing which was a "live" issue, with a business plan being prepared. In response to questioning, it was confirmed that although stall charges in some neighbouring areas were lower, the evidence showed that many traders choose Boston to trade as it suited their business needs.

Questions were asked in relation to car parking charges for traders (set at £2) in comparison to other areas, with confirmation being provided about how this compared. Market traders had indicated that one advantage which Boston offered was the ability to take vehicles up to the market stall when setting/packing up.

Questioning also took place regarding the willingness of traders to travel across wide geographical areas which meant that consideration should also be given to the charges in other parts of the region and whether they were comparable to Boston. The Markets Manager confirmed that this was part of the work being undertaken by, for example, joining social media groups for markets which were in a wider geographical area in order to promote the availability of Boston's market. Questions were asked about whether past traders might be invited to return as part of the efforts to enhance the market's offering.

Issues of supply and demand were considered, with a focus on the changing nature of demand and the demographics of the area. Retail analysis was suggested to obtain a sense of how much money there was in the local economy, how it was being spent and how it impacted on the markets. The Assistant Director – Culture and Leisure confirmed

that he would talk to economic growth colleagues about this but that it was known, via licence information, what traders were selling to meet local demand and that the issue was the extent to which the Council could increase and diversify its traders to meet demand.

Questions were asked about the demographic profile of market shoppers and whether any information could be obtained in this respect in a way which was helpful to the future success of the markets.

Consideration was also given to importance of coach tours from the Lincolnshire coast to Boston which had in the past brought shoppers into the town. The Markets Manager indicated that this was something which he wished to see expanded on, including consideration of discounts if coach companies were running tours to Boston.

Consideration was given to whether or not market shoppers were aware of the availability of toilets at St Botolph's Church. The Assistant Director confirmed that shoppers were aware. He also confirmed that profile-raising work was being undertaken by the Communications Team within Boston and across the two other local authority partners. This included better use of social media. The Markets Manager confirmed that the improved social media presence of the markets both for shoppers and traders was an important way in which communication was helping to address many of the issues which had been raised by the Committee.

It was confirmed that the return of the auction at the market was under consideration but that it was a challenging environment in view of the development of online sales such as Vinted, Facebook Marketplace and eBay.

Consideration was given to whether road closures on a Wednesday (in the way they occur on a Saturday) might be a way in which to improve the number of shoppers using the market as it was felt that the road closure had contributed to a more vibrant experience. It was confirmed that there were a number of logistical challenges and that the views of Father David Stephenson at St Botolph's Church were important, given the proximity of the Church and the way in which road closures might impact on its work. Discussions with Father David Stephenson and Lincolnshire County Council would continue to be held.

**The recommendation was moved by Councillor Mike Gilbert and seconded by Councillor Andy Izard.**

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the report be noted;**
- 2. That feedback be provided to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and Full Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025 as part of the Annual Budget report.**

**89 Work Programme and Forward Plan**

The Assistant Director – Regulatory presented the work programme.

It was noted that the Enviro Crime report was to be presented to the Committee and a request was made for attention to be given to it, as it demonstrated that Boston performed well compared to other Councils, particularly in handling fly-tipping and littering.

The Chairman mentioned that a suggestion had been made for the Committee to conduct scrutiny on the flooding issue. However, advice had been given not to proceed at present, as Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) was currently conducting its own review, with a report expected in June. Additionally, it was noted that interesting information had been received during the Black Sluice Drainage Board meeting, indicating that numerous questions were likely to arise.

The Meeting ended at 8.31 pm.

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Boston Borough Council**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny - Corporate & Community Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Thursday 6th March 2025 at 6.30 pm.

### **Present:**

Councillor Paul Gleeson, in the Chair.

Councillors Councillor Suzanne Welberry, Richard Austin BEM, Anton Dani, Andy Izard and Barrie Pierpoint.

### **Officers:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Programme Delivery) and Assistant Director - General Fund Assets, Assistant Director – Corporate, Assistant Director - Wellbeing and Community Leadership, Healthy Living Strategic Lead, Group Manager – Insights & Transformation, Democratic Services Officer and Democratic Services Officer.

### **128 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jyothi Arayambath and Chris Mountain.

Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Anne Dorrian in her capacity as Leader of the Council and Councillor Emma Cresswell in her capacity as Portfolio Holder - Communities (People).

### **129 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **130 Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

### **131 Public Questions**

No public questions were received.

### **132 LGA Peer Review - update on action plan**

The Assistant Director – Corporate presented the report which provided an update on the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge which took place in May 2024. The Chairman indicated that the Committee had agreed to receive a report twice yearly in order to monitor progress.

The Peer Challenge Action Plan had been received in August/September 2024 and had then gone before Cabinet for approval. Since then, the Council had been working to deliver the actions within it. The follow up peer review was scheduled to take place on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

The Assistant Director – Corporate indicated that one of the key pieces of evidence the peers would look at when they returned was the Action Plan and what the Council had done to deliver against it.

The Assistant Director – Corporate confirmed that the Action Plan contained a number of strands of governance. He advised the process was that the report had been considered by the Senior Leadership Team in terms of its delivery. The report was also presented quarterly to the Leader of the Council and the Assistant Director – Corporate who meets with the Leader to consider the Action Plan page by page. He indicated that the other key line of governance was for the Corporate and Community Committee to receive an update every six months which provided members with the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge it.

The Assistant Director – Corporate indicated that the action plan contained 29 actions of which 10 had been completed. 14 actions were on track and 5 actions, where the original target dates had slipped slightly, had delivery dates. Members noted that there were no “red” items, which was positive. The Assistant Director – Corporate confirmed that an additional action had been added to the plan where it was felt necessary that further consideration should be given, which was the development of a Borough-wide plan that would be presented to the Committee during the meeting.

The Chairman congratulated the Assistant Director – Corporate on the clarity of the report.

Members discussed the reports and commented as follows:

Clarification was sought in relation to the meaning of the word “ongoing” within the report and whether there might be better terminology which would more accurately capture the nature of the work required or would indicate that a review or progress date might be required. The Assistant Director - Corporate advised that for a number of the actions it was appropriate to have the word “ongoing” because, for example, on issues like updating the intelligence hub this would be an ongoing piece of work. He confirmed that any specific dates which were required for progress updates could be included in the future. He added that the evidence column was always “live” and subject to regular review to ensure it was reflective of the action to date. He agreed to review the word “ongoing” and see how it might be tightened. He also provided confirmation that every action in the plan was in any event reviewed at least quarterly.

In relation to page 16 of the report, further information was requested regarding legal advice which had been taken and whether it was confidential. The Assistant Director – Corporate indicated that some advice had been circulated to members previously. He agreed that he would review the action taken but confirmed that some advice had been received in relation to company governance which was being acted upon at present. The Assistant Director – Corporate agreed to provide the information to Councillor Barrie Pierpoint in response to his request for clarification.

Discussion occurred in relation to the PSPS transformation programme and confirmation was provided by the Assistant Director – Corporate that it had been through scrutiny, including a Joint Scrutiny Committee. It had not yet been received by Boston’s Cabinet but because it was a joint plan, it had been through the East Lindsey’s and South Holland’s Cabinets. He confirmed that when the business cases came forward from PSPS for the



projects that were in the plan, they would present opportunities to the Council to consider, including potential efficiency savings within the company and project ideas coming forward for consideration that could benefit customers.

Members noted that PSPS had their own transformation programme, which was about delivering reductions in the contract price the Council paid to the company. The Assistant Director – Corporate advised that they were instrumental to the transformation of services through their services such as Human Resources, IT and Finance.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director – Corporate confirmed that the recent departure of two Senior Directors would not have an effect on the Action Plan.

Consideration was given to the length of time which was allowed for delivery of an item in the Action Plan, for example, training for councillors/officers had a timescale of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024, and the Committee considered the time allowed to achieve an outcome. The Assistant Director – Corporate confirmed that in this respect, the Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer had indicated that a schedule of training had been agreed, with dates for training being confirmed in March.

**Resolved:**

**That the Action Plan be noted.**

**133 Healthy Living Board**

The Healthy Living Strategic Lead presented the report, supported by the Assistant Director – Wellbeing & Community Leadership. The report provided an update on the work of South and East Lincolnshire Partnership Healthy Living Board, including local opportunities the Partnership had provided in Boston in the last year in response to joint scrutiny recommendations.

In March 2024, the Committee received a report from Joint Scrutiny Panel around the establishment of the Healthy Living Board. The scrutiny was an opportunity for Members to help inform the Board's remit. Membership of the Panel included Councillors Suzanne Welberry, Neil Drayton and Jyothi Arayambath. The scrutiny recommendation had rightly concluded that its role in health and well-being was not statutory or clinical but as a District Council it had a huge understanding of the needs of the community and opportunities to influence better health outcomes.

Recognising the broad scope of healthy living, including all the social and economic determinants of health, the Panel had recommended that the Healthy Living Board prioritise two areas locally and they were outlined in section 2.2 of the report. They were (i) activity and well-being, which included addressing inactivity to help improve opportunities for residents to be active; and (ii) working with communities to leverage unique links at place and engage with communities.

The Healthy Living Board had provided a platform for NHS colleagues, local charities and community groups to come and work with the Board, and it had given partners a way to work with the South & East Lincolnshire Partnership.

The report outlined the nine recommendations made by the Joint Scrutiny Panel from Section 3 within the report and provided an example of local delivery in response to each of those.

The Healthy Living Strategic Lead drew attention to a couple of the recommendations, particularly at section 3.6 around increasing place expansion and activity. She indicated that Sport England had announced place expansion last week and she highlighted this as a good example of an opportunity the Healthy Living Board had given Boston which fulfilled both priorities of strengthening communities and helping people to become physically active.

The Healthy Living Strategic Lead drew attention to section 3.7 of the report and the focus on providing a shift to prevention which was what most organisations were striving for as it would reduce poor health, reduce the risk of exclusion and reduce pressure on local services. This included examples of some of the prevention work, for example, a Lincolnshire based digital inclusion charity which helped people access and navigate support and give them confidence online. In Boston over 100 people had been engaged in those projects by coming to community-based drop-ins which had helped them access digital services and improve their skills and confidence, including data and devices.

The Healthy Living Strategic Lead highlighted the success of the Household Support Fund, which included a large amount of discretionary welfare funding in Boston and the Healthy Living Board had overseen local delivery. She indicated that this had been delivered successfully by working with organisations on the Board to get the funding into the hands of the people in most need of support or help with household essentials.

Since its launch, the Healthy Living Board had administered over £1.6million in small grants for Boston residents directly for help with utilities, food and school uniforms. It had also supported projects with bed poverty, furniture and a huge range of other welfare needs. By the end of the financial year, it was estimated that the fund would have helped in the delivery of around 12,000 small grants and emergency support.

Members discussed the reports and commented as follows:

Clarification was sought regarding the duration of the Household Support Fund. It had been announced in October 2021 as part of the post-COVID response and in response to some of the changes in Universal Credit and welfare gaps. The Household Support Fund had been a local discretionary scheme with funding allocated to Lincolnshire County Council but locally accepted and delivered by the Healthy Living Board.

The Healthy Living Strategic Lead was asked for more information about how projects, such as these, were monitored and asked to highlight some of the major successes. She confirmed that each project had its own delivery plan and that the partnership with Active Lincolnshire and the delivery of funding had been a great success. The Board had been able to demonstrate that they had the ability to deliver, had the governance and the role in the wider community.

The benefit of the local delivery of the Household Support Fund was also highlighted, with strong engagement with the third sector and other partners and the ability to get the funds out quickly.

Deliberation included the importance of green spaces, their promotion and the need to make better use of green spaces to maximise health benefits. Councillor Richard Austin pointed out the need for more active promotion of the eight large country parks within four miles of the centre of Boston as well as Central Park in the centre of Boston. The deliberation also included the need to provide better and more prominent signposting of green spaces on the Borough Council website. The Healthy Living Strategic Lead agreed to review the availability of this information on the Council website with IT and to consider what increased promotion with partners could be achieved, for example, with some of the local primary care networks and GPs who had started thinking about walking maps around their areas. Councillor Austin agreed to provide details of the information that he thought should be included in enhanced promotion of green spaces.

Members discussed housing conditions, including Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and homelessness. The relationship between poor housing and homelessness on health outcomes was considered.

Adopting healthier eating habits and increased child poverty was also considered. The Healthy Living Strategic Lead confirmed that the issue of housing standards and poverty was in the remit of social and economic determinants. Economic inclusion and reducing poverty were other strands which were specifically being updated on the recommendations made by the Joint Scrutiny Panel. She confirmed that the Healthy Living Board had a rolling agenda to consider a range of issues, including those raised during the meeting. Each time that the Panel met it picked a different theme to bring partners to together and agreed to consider the feedback of the Committee, particularly around food insecurity and the pressures on healthy eating.

Confirmation was provided by the Chairman that the Committee would be receiving a briefing on HMOs in due course.

In relation to the role of parish councils, it was confirmed that Parish Councils had not historically been involved in the work of the Healthy Living Board but the Healthy Living Strategic Lead confirmed that under Councillor Cresswell's Portfolio, she had now established a regular meeting with them, which occurred three times a year.

The position with local government reorganisation was considered and the importance of local communities leading the way in determining the needs of their communities. This had been taking place in the form of the creation of a volunteer team, supporting events, which included direct interaction with communities and strong relationships with Parish Councils.

The need for communities to come together was considered, including where communities may be harder to reach. The Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Community Leadership confirmed that there were a variety of mechanisms to do this through small focus groups and bringing smaller communities together. This also occurred through larger events as well, for example, through the Boston Christmas celebration. The services of the Communications Team at Boston Borough Council were highlighted as an important strand of this work and included their networks in terms of the social media groups that were set up with a vast variety of different community groups. Relationships with key and well-established community leaders were also identified as an important part of communicating with communities as was the work of Portfolio Holders. Doctor's surgeries, supermarkets and school networks were also used.

The Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Community Leadership indicated that Councillors were well-placed in their wards to reach out to communities and she agreed to accept any new information from them whereby the Panel might be able to engage with in the future, including employment agencies.

The position with mental health needs was considered. The Healthy Living Strategic Lead confirmed that the Panel was part of the Boston Mental Health Partnership, which was led by NHS Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust. Their work also included prevention work to reduce mental anxiety, particularly around money and cost of living pressures.

The Chairman requested an update in the summer on the work being done to improve the website with information about green spaces and work to improve the profile of the Panel's work.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be noted.**

**134 Boston Plan 2040**

The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation presented the report including the draft consultation document for the Boston Plan 2040. She explained that it included a shared vision for the entire borough, all 19 parishes and the town. It also linked to the LGA Peer Review updates which had been discussed earlier.

The Group Manager – Insights and Transformation confirmed that the Plan expanded on the town centre strategy to cover the whole borough. The Plan had been out for public consultation, in January and February, which included with residents, local businesses, schools and Parish Councils. There had also been public interaction at events, including Celebrate Boston and Boston Brilliance. Members were invited to consider the draft plan and feedback their views so that they could be added to the consultation, which would then be reported to Cabinet on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

High-level priorities included a thriving economy, community cohesion and resilience, and a healthy and sustainable borough. If the plan was approved, an action plan would be put together at the next stage, which would include the response to the consultation and the Committee's views which would feed into the action plan that would be delivered by multi-agency working groups for each of the priorities. The Committee would also receive reports on progress, as would the Cabinet, and reports would be provided to the Parish Council liaison meeting to ensure their involvement.

The Group Manager – Insights and Transformation indicated that there were two key areas that had already been identified from the consultation, which would be included in the next draft submitted to Cabinet. The first area was around the potential impact of local government reorganisation. The report will indicate that it was a "living document." The second area was regarding conversations with individual councillors about the potential for a rural strategy. She confirmed that rather than proceed in that way and have a separate one, the aim was to pull that together into the Plan, so that all areas were covered.

The Group Manager – Insights and Transformation advised that requests from by the Committee in respect of the Healthy Living Board report would be included in the Boston Plan 2040 so that it could incorporate the links with health and in particular reaching out to communities. Confirmation was provided that there would be more in-depth consultation and engagement on those actions themselves to include the Committee's suggestions.

Members discussed the reports and commented as follows:

Consideration was given to information in the report about the potential disparity between lower rates of unemployment locally as against the national average and the higher number of people on out of work benefits. The Committee discussed how a probable explanation was that the disparity may have arisen as a result of the number of people who were economically inactive and not claiming out of work benefits. Another explanation may also have been that some claimants of Universal Credit were in work and on low wages. The Group Manager – Insights & Transformation agreed to provide clarification.

Strategic aim 1.5 within the report was considered in terms of whether “attracting inward investment” could be more clearly expressed with positive examples of how it was working. The Group Manager – Insights and Transformation confirmed that additional information would be added, with examples. Deliberation included the need for strong promotion of all that Boston Borough had to offer in terms of growth and investment and the need for businesses to be approached to see what their expansion programmes might be and whether businesses could be encouraged to locate in the area. The benefits of having a more pro-active approach from the Council on this issue was considered as well as more “user-friendly” Council services.

The attractiveness of the Borough's green spaces as a reason to locate in the area was considered.

Strategic aim 1.4 within the report was considered, including the role of the Local Plan as one of the key drivers for housing and economic growth within the borough. Particular consideration was given to the need for infrastructure to support housing growth and whether there could be a more detailed explanation of the types and extent of infrastructure. The Group Manager – Insights and Transformation confirmed that the references to infrastructure could refer to any kind of infrastructure, depending on the development, and might include roads, shops and broadband. She advised that more details about the types of infrastructure would be added into the Action Plan.

Deliberation occurred on the timescale for delivery of the Plan and whether many of the ambitions in the plan were longer term and whether many of the objectives were achievable in the nearer term. The role of local government reorganisation was also considered and the need to ensure that the work done on the Plan could be carried forward and implemented whatever the outcome of any reorganisation. The Group Manager – Insights and Transformation advised that the Plan was a “living document” which would develop over time. The reference to 2040 was to give a longer vision to be able to look ahead, including on net zero plans and not only what was in the near term. She confirmed that the action plan was very detailed, with specific actions in the forthcoming year to be included in the annual delivery plan each year. She added that there would be very clear deliverables with dates, review dates which would be reported back to Committee.

Consideration was given to the potential benefits to the Borough of Boston from the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Boston, Lincolnshire giving birth to Boston, Massachusetts and the need for a stronger priority for this issue in future plans.

The Chairman thanked the Group Manager – Insights and Transformation for the clarity of the report, and those who had prepared and presented the earlier reports.

### **135 Work Programme**

The Assistant Director – General Fund Assets presented the Work Programme.

The Chairman confirmed that there would be an additional meeting of the Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 in respect of a review of the current scrutiny arrangements, particularly as over the next two years there would be changes in terms of local government reorganisation which provided the Committee with an important role in both scrutinising the changes and enabling members to bring forward ideas.

The Assistant Director – General Fund Assets reminded members that a briefing would take place, either prior to or at one of the Committees forthcoming meetings in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). This would provide an opportunity to gain a shared understanding of what an HMO was, what a licensable HMO was and what licences did and did not do. The presentation would enable the Committee to consider the issues presented by HMOs and to consider what particular issues relating to that area of the Council's work that the Committee wanted to scrutinise in more detail in the next municipal year. The Chairman confirmed that he would be inviting all non-executive members to the briefing.

The Meeting ended at 7.48 pm.

## **Boston Borough Council**

Minutes of a Special meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny - Corporate & Community Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Thursday 8th May 2025 at 6.30 pm.

### **Present:**

Councillor Paul Gleeson, in the Chair.

Councillors Suzanne Welberry (Vice-Chairman), Neil Drayton, Andy Izard, Chris Mountain and Barrie Pierpoint.

### **Officers:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Programme Delivery) and Assistant Director - General Fund Assets, Assistant Director - Governance and Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer and Democratic Services Officer.

### **136 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Brown, Anton Dani and Helen Staples.

### **137 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **138 Scrutiny Arrangements Review**

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Gleeson, thanked members for their attendance. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review the existing scrutiny arrangements with a view to making recommendations to the next Full Council meeting.

The Chairman began by expressing concerns about the current scrutiny process within the Council. He highlighted the need for more pre-scrutiny (reviewing policies before they became reports) and developing policies. The Chairman mentioned that the current scrutiny committees had been established in 2011 and reflected outdated corporate objectives. He added that there had been issues with overlapping responsibilities between the two scrutiny committees, leading to inefficiencies.

As a result, the Chairman had requested a report to explore the scrutiny arrangements in Boston Borough Council. The Chairman stated that all councillors had been invited to attend the meeting and share their views. He explained that the next two years were particularly important for scrutiny in light of the Local Government Reorganisation and the forthcoming changes.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

Councillor Barrie Pierpoint was supportive of the idea of a single scrutiny committee. He referred to the duplication of work and the need to make better use of councillors' time. He had experienced duplication of work when he had previously sat on both Scrutiny Committees and added that he felt councillors were being spread too thinly as a result.

Councillor Pierpoint stated that a single scrutiny committee would need to meet more regularly, perhaps monthly, and would need to be focussed and comprise of members who were dedicated to undertaking the scrutiny function.

Councillor Andy Izard thanked the Chairman for making the Committee aware that an invite had gone out to all Councillors. He raised concerns with moving to a single scrutiny committee, emphasising the importance of scrutiny especially with devolution. He expressed the need for pre-reports and questioned if a single committee would have enough time to handle all the work effectively. Councillor Izard also mentioned the importance of the Task and Finish Groups having the necessary support to function properly. He agreed that a new format would be needed should the Council decide to continue with two Scrutiny Committees. The Chairman advised that the membership of a Task and Finish Group was not limited to Scrutiny members.

Councillor Pierpoint advocated for a single, focused committee with strong leadership. He explained that it was important for Task and Finish Groups to also have strong Chairs in place.

Councillor Chris Mountain expressed his support for a single committee. He suggested that a new single structure would provide an opportunity to streamline processes and to make savings. He also suggested increasing the membership of a single committee to ensure that more members were involved in the scrutiny process.

Councillor Suzanne Welberry referred to her experience of sitting on both Committees and the duplication of work. She agreed with the need to modernise the scrutiny function, to increase the membership and meet more regularly.

Councillor Mountain expressed the need for more concise reports and referred to the report which officers had presented to the Committee as a good example.

The Chairman asked officers for their views regarding the size of the committee, should a single committee be the preferred option. The Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer advised that the current numbers across both committees were not unreasonable. He explained that the maximum size of a scrutiny committee would be all members excluding the Cabinet. However, that would be particularly unusual. He recommended that the Committee would have an odd number of members for voting reasons. In respect of Task and Finish Groups he suggested that they were useful in supporting the Scrutiny process and were not limited to committee members but would exclude executive members.

Councillor Andy Izzard queried what arrangements the other Partnership Councils (East Lindsey and South Holland) had in place. The Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer advised that East Lindsey District Council had one Overview Committee which commissioned Scrutiny Policy Panels to carry out work; and that South Holland District Council had two Scrutiny Committees: The Performance Monitoring Panel and the Policy Development Panel. He added that there was also a Joint Scrutiny Committee which worked across the Partnership.

The consensus was for a single Scrutiny Committee comprising 15 members which meet on a monthly basis, with a review to be carried out six months following its establishment.



The recommendations were moved by Councillor Chris Mountain and seconded by Councillor Barrie Pierpoint.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Corporate and Community Committee recommends to Full Council to:**

- 1. Establish a single, standalone Overview and Scrutiny Committee to replace the current Scrutiny Committee arrangements; and**
- 2. Constitute the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee with 15 members, ensuring it convenes regularly, with a review to take place in six months.**

In response to a query the Monitoring Officer advised that a delegation would be sought in the report to Full Council to enable the Terms of Reference to be updated to reflect the proposed changes.

The Meeting ended at 7.01 pm.

This page is intentionally left blank



<b>Report To:</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy
<b>Purpose:</b>	To seek views on the Partnership Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Anne Dorrian, Leader of the Council
<b>Report Of:</b>	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
<b>Report Author:</b>	Rachel Robinson, Group Manager – Organisational Development
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	n/a
<b>Exempt Report:</b>	No

## Summary

This report brings forward the proposed Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (Appendix A) for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) for 2025-2028. The strategy, developed following extensive consultation and as a key recommendation from the Local Government Association Peer Challenge process, aims to further develop service provision to ensure services are accessible to all. It includes a high-level action plan (Appendix B) to implement the strategy effectively.

## Recommendations

1. To review and provide views on the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan at Appendices A and B.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

- To ensure Boston Borough Council furthers the development of service provision to ensure services are accessible to all and is committed to promoting inclusion within its workforce and the communities it serves.
- To comply with legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- To enhance the reputation of Boston Borough Council as an inclusive and progressive Council.

## **Other Options Considered**

Do nothing: This option was rejected as it would not result in a plan to enhance equality, diversity and inclusion within the Council, as identified through the Peer Challenge process.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides the legal framework for this strategy. It protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society and places a duty on public bodies to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people.
- 1.2 Boston Borough Council recognises the importance of creating an inclusive environment for both employees and the community. EDI, when implemented correctly, can significantly improve service provision to the needs of local communities.
- 1.3 The proposed EDI Strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with stakeholders, including workforce, councillors, residents and partners such as Lincs Digital, Citizens Advice and Shine Lincolnshire.

## **2. Report**

- 2.1 The strategy is attached at Appendix A and the High-Level Action Plan at Appendix B.
- 2.2 The EDI Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of its operation.
- 2.3 Key Objectives:
  - Understand the needs of our communities and bring local people together.
  - Create a diverse and inclusive leadership team and embed inclusion in decision-making.

- Ensure council services meet the diverse needs of residents and make it easy for local residents to access services.
- Be an inclusive and fair employer with a diverse workforce at all levels.

#### 2.4 High-Level Action Plan:

- Training and Development: Implement training within the workforce so the organisation as a whole can support the delivery of objectives.
- Policy Review: Conduct a comprehensive review of existing policies to ensure they align with EDI principles.
- Community Engagement: Develop initiatives to engage with diverse community groups.
- Monitoring and Evaluating: Establish metrics to measure progress and impact.

2.5 Expertise is required internally to deliver the strategy through the appointment of a 2-year fixed term officer shared post. This will be met by in-year reserves to provide expertise and delivery of the high level action plan.

### 3. Conclusion

3.1. The adoption of the EDI Strategy and the high-level action plan will position the Council as a leader in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and ultimately improve service provision to the local community. The recommendations are designed to ensure effective implementation and continuous improvement.

#### Implications

##### South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Positive impact by fostering an inclusive environment.

##### Corporate Priorities

Supports corporate priorities related to community engagement and workforce development.

##### Staffing

Requires commitment from all staff; Organisational Development to lead training initiatives.

##### Workforce Capacity Implications

The post identified within the report is required in order for the Council to deliver the Strategy and associated Action Plan.

##### Constitutional and Legal Implications

Complies with the Equality Act 2010.

##### Data Protection

No specific implications

### **Financial**

Budget allocation required for the appointment of a part time, 2 year fixed term shared officer role to provide expert advice to services and the implementation of the action plan.

### **Risk Management**

Mitigates risks associated with non-compliance with equality legislation.

### **Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales**

Consultation undertaken with staff, unions and community groups.

### **Reputation**

Enhances the Council's reputation as an inclusive employer and service provider.

### **Contracts**

No specific implications.

### **Crime and Disorder**

No specific implications

### **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding**

Positive impact on equality and diversity; no safeguarding issues.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

Promotes a positive and inclusive environment.

### **Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment**

Not Undertaken.

### **Acronyms**

EDI; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

SELCP: South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

### **Appendices**

Appendix A

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Document

Appendix B

High-level Action Plan

### **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: Rachel Robinson, Group Manager - Organisational Development, [rachel.robinson@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.robinson@e-lindsey.gov.uk)

Signed off by: James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate, [james.gilbert@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:james.gilbert@e-lindsey.gov.uk)

Approved for publication: Councillor Anne Dorrian, Leader of the Council

This page is intentionally left blank



## **Appendix A**

# **`South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028**

## Table of Contents

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion .....	3
Developing this strategy .....	3
Context and Legislation .....	4
Our Equality Objectives .....	5
South and East Lincolnshire and its citizens: some key facts .....	6
Delivering our Objectives.....	9
Governance and Next Steps.....	12
Appendix 1- Census Data .....	13

DRAFT

## **Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Across the three councils who make up South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership, we are committed to delivering our services in a way that is inclusive and fair, with a workforce who reflect our local population in a place to work which treats everyone fairly. To achieve this, we have worked together to produce this new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. It sets out how we will demonstrate our commitment to inclusion, and why we want to do so, accompanied by an action plan to ensure this commitment translates into action.

We are proud of the communities who make up Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland. At South Holland District Council, where we act as the landlord for over 3700 council tenants, we recognise the additional role we play in supporting our tenants and the specific duties placed on us as a registered provider. This includes understanding the needs of our tenants and sharing information with them in a way that is appropriate to their requirements. We want to support local residents across all three council areas to live well, recognising the challenges that individuals might face and doing what we can to help mitigate them. This means acknowledging that not everyone has the same starting point. Some people face additional barriers that they have to overcome to access services or go about their daily lives. This could be due to getting older, having a physical disability or not speaking English as a first language. There are many reasons why it's important for us to consider inclusion in our approach. This strategy refreshes our commitment to do just that.

We set out to be bold and ambitious in our Sub-Regional Strategy, doing more for local communities by working together. This includes recognising the diverse needs of our communities, working together to deliver services in a way that meets local need and taking steps to bring our communities together. The objectives set out in this strategy complement our sub-regional priorities of healthy lives, safe and resilient communities, environment and growth and prosperity. This strategy also supports the objectives set out in our Customer Experience Strategy and our Workforce Strategy.

## **Developing this strategy**

We have consulted widely in developing this strategy. This has included consultation with our workforce at all levels within the Partnership, with experience delivering a range of services for residents across our area. We have consulted with councillors representing communities across Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland, gaining insights into issues affecting local residents. We have also consulted directly with residents through group workshops with council tenants in South Holland and Ageing Well Ambassadors. We have had helpful input from partners working directly with different communities and individuals to address some of the barriers to accessing services, including Lincs Digital, Citizens Advice and Shine Lincolnshire. We are grateful for all those who took the time to feed into this process.

This strategy builds on best practice set out in the LGA Equality Framework, which recognises and supports councils to meet their obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

## Context and Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 provides the legal framework for this strategy. It protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society and places a duty on public bodies to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including:
  - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  - Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
  - Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life, or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies including councils to:

- Consider how people can be affected by different decisions
- Publish relevant, proportionate information showing how we are complying with the duty
  - Including Gender Pay Gap information (for workforces of 250 or more) and workforce profiles
- Set at least one equality objective every four years

The Equality Act identifies nine 'protected characteristics' and makes it illegal to discriminate against anyone on the basis of any of these characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Disability
- Pregnancy/ maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Marriage/ civil partnership

The Equality Act defines a disability as:

*“a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to carry out normal daily activities”.*

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership recognises that there are characteristics beyond the nine legally recognised which can also create barriers to access for individuals. These include, but are not limited to:

- Socioeconomic status
- Care experience/ care leaver
- Literacy or education level
- Digital literacy
- Armed forces service
- Whether you provide care to another person

What is the Gender Pay Gap?

The gender pay gap is a measure of workplace disadvantage, expressed by comparing the average (median) hour rates of pay received by men and women.

It is different to Equal Pay, which is a legal requirement. By law, men and women must receive equal pay for:

- The same or broadly similar work;
- Work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation scheme; or
- Work of equal value.

Organisations with more than 250 employees are legally required to publish data relating to their Gender Pay Gap annually. This duty is placed on each of the three councils within the partnership individually. Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland Councils will continue to publish their Gender Pay Gap reports as sovereign councils.

## **Our Equality Objectives**

As part of the Public Sector Equality Duty, we are publishing our Equality Objectives. These are:

- Our communities: understand the needs of our communities and bring local people together
- Our leadership: create a diverse and inclusive leadership team (both Councillors and Officers) and embed inclusion in our decision making
- Our services: ensure council services meet the diverse needs of our residents and make it easy for local residents to access council services and facilities
- Our workforce: be an inclusive and fair employer with a diverse workforce at all levels

### South and East Lincolnshire and its citizens: some key facts

The three local authority areas of Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland are the regional coast for the East Midlands. They cover 1019 square miles (45% of the administrative county of Lincolnshire) and with 306,000 people represent 40% of its population.

Whilst each council area has its own profile, there are some common themes. Amongst this area is a sparse pattern of settlements and the predominance of two economic sectors: tourism and food manufacturing. Both industries are highly seasonal. This, along with significant distance from markets at the eastern extremity of the area, have led to significant pockets of deprivation in the area. These are particularly prevalent on the East Lindsey coast. The rurality of the area and the lack of public transport connectivity leads some people and communities to be physically disconnected from others.

The average age in the sub-region is significantly higher than the national average, particularly in East Lindsey, where there is also much higher prevalence of physical disability than average. The profile of the area remains predominantly white British, with a significant population from new and established communities, predominantly from Eastern European countries, particularly in the Boston area.

#### Boston

Boston Borough has a population of 70,800, of whom around 46,000 live within Boston town itself. It is the main service centre in Lincolnshire and the second largest settlement in the region, after Lincoln.

Wages in Boston are amongst the lowest in Great Britain, at more than £100 per week lower than the national average (£582 vs £683). This figure is even lower amongst women (£487 vs £629).

Boston Borough has a higher proportion of people claiming out of work benefits than the national average, at 4.3%, compared to 3.7%. Boston has the lowest score in England for educational attainment in the 2019 English Indices of Deprivation. The greatest educational challenge relates to adult rather than school age skills deficits.

Boston has become home to a settled population of successful migrant workers and almost half (44.7%) of live births in the area are to non-UK born mothers. 20.9% of Boston residents do not consider their national identity to be British, and 13.9% households do not speak English.

<b>20.4% Over 65</b>	<b>17.6% Disabled</b>	<b>20.9% Non-UK Identity</b>
<b>19.5% no access to a vehicle</b>	<b>13.4% have no English speakers in the household</b>	<b>59.1% deprived in one of more dimension*</b>

## East Lindsey

East Lindsey is the largest District Council by geographical area in the country. This creates challenges for transport and access to rural towns and villages. It has a population of 142,900, making it the second largest in Lincolnshire. Some communities are at risk of economic and social deprivation or 'un-met needs'. East Lindsey is currently ranked 30<sup>th</sup> most deprived out of 318 of local authority in England in the national for Indices of Multiple Deprivation. East Lindsey has poor health outcomes, with some of the highest levels of disease prevalence on almost every indicator in Lincolnshire.

With an average age of 52, compared to the national average age of 42, the population of East Lindsey is significantly higher than in other areas. Over a third of local residents are retired. It also has a higher than average number of local residents living with a disability.

### Key stats

<b>30.5% Over 65</b>	<b>22.2% Disabled</b>	<b>2% Non-UK identity</b>
<b>17.6% no access to a vehicle</b>	<b>Less than 1% have no English speakers in the household</b>	<b>61.2% deprived in one or more dimension*</b>

## South Holland

South Holland has a population of 98,000 and is of modest geographical size by Lincolnshire standards, but remains rural and remote.

Although it is not in the lowest local authority areas by Indices of Multiple Deprivation, salaries are considerably lower per week than the national average (£636 vs £683), and particularly low for women (£546 vs £628). 56% of local people are deprived in at least one category.

The average age in South Holland is above the national average, at 46 compared to 42 and it has a higher than average percentage of people who are retired.

South Holland District Council is the only one of the three councils in the partnership to also act as a landlord, with over 3700 council properties. Over 50% of South Holland's tenants have a disability, and the average age of a tenant is 63 years old.

<b>23.9% Over 65</b>	<b>17.6% Disabled</b>	<b>11.6% Non-UK identity</b>
<b>12.9% no access to a vehicle</b>	<b>7.1% have no English speakers in the household</b>	<b>56% deprived in one or more dimension*</b>

### \*Note on Deprivation

The 2021 Census classified household deprivation against four possible indicators- education, employment, health and housing. The definitions used are:

**Education:** A household is classified as deprived in the education dimension if no one has at least level 2 education and no one aged 16 to 18 years is a full-time student.

**Employment:** A household is classified as deprived in the employment dimension if any member, not a full-time student, is either unemployed or economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability.

**Health:** A household is classified as deprived in the health dimension if any person in the household has general health that is bad or very bad or is identified as disabled.

**Housing:** A household is classified as deprived in the housing dimension if the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

DRAFT



## Delivering our Objectives

This section sets out the context for each of our Equality Objectives and our priorities in delivering them. Detailed actions to support this can be found in the high-level action plan which accompanies this strategy (appendix 2).

### **1. Our communities: understand the needs of our communities and bring local people together**

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership serves a range of communities and residents across a vast geographical area. Across these communities are individuals with a range of needs, priorities and challenges. We are committed to breaking down barriers that might prevent people from accessing services or engaging in their local community. In order to do that, we have to ensure we understand what these might be.

Across our towns and villages local people get on well with each other. Many give up their time to be part of community groups and initiatives. But there is more we can do to foster good relations across generations, backgrounds and cultures. We are committed to supporting initiatives that promote community cohesion across our sub-region.

Priorities:

- A better understanding of community needs, including:
  - o Community profiles, easily accessible across the council and our partners
  - o Benchmarking data on community cohesion- asking residents “do people from different backgrounds get on well together?” in the residents survey
- A greater sense of community and increased community cohesion
  - o Celebrating the work of volunteers and supporting community initiatives that bring people together
  - o Councils actively participating in local events which celebrate diversity
  - o Initiatives to support people from different backgrounds to come together and understand one another

### **2. Our leadership: create a diverse and inclusive leadership team (Councillors and Officers) and embed inclusion in our decision making**

Having a diverse leadership team, both Councillors and Officers, can help us to improve equality outcomes, as leaders draw on their different perspectives, experiences and backgrounds. It sets the tone for the organisation we want to be, one where diversity and inclusion are everyone’s responsibility and are considered in every decision we make. It helps us lead conversations with our partners as we collectively strive to be more inclusive organisations.

It is our duty under the Equality Act to consider how different people are affected by decisions we make. To do this effectively, we will implement a new Equality Impact Assessment process, drawing on best practice within the sector. We will ensure that Members and Officers across

the Partnership know when and how to produce and evaluate these assessments and take steps to mitigate the impacts they identify.

Priorities:

- A leadership team that sets the tone of a diverse, fair and inclusive organisation
- Talent management programmes which support progression of those from underrepresented groups across the Partnership
- Work with Councillors to increase the diversity of those who stand for council, and consider best practice around increasing diversity amongst the Executive
- Embed a new Equality Impact Assessment tool into decision making, with clear expectations on when EIAs are required, training on completing them and support for decision makers to interpret and consider them

**3. Our services: ensure council services meet the diverse needs of our residents and make it easy for local residents to access council services and facilities**

Our first priority set out our commitment to better understanding local need. Once we understand it better, we must take steps to ensure our services meet the needs identified. This includes making it easy for local people to access what they need, whether that is information online or physical access to council facilities.

For many people accessing services and information online is efficient and straightforward, but for others this is a significant challenge. We want to set the standard for inclusive and accessible services locally, developing and implementing best practice which we will share with partners. We are committed to ensuring that different community groups are able to participate in decision making through meaningful consultation and engagement.

Priorities:

- Ensure all residents are able to access and understand information provided by the council, including writing in plain English and providing translation where needed
- To consider improved physical accessibility across our buildings and whether access to our outdoor spaces, parks and beaches needs improving.
- Increased understanding of digital inclusion and inclusivity in how online services and information are presented
- Ensure that meaningful consultation with a diverse range of people informs decisions made by the council and the services we deliver

**4. Our workforce: be an inclusive and fair employer with a diverse workforce at all levels**

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership has a committed and talented workforce who work hard to deliver local services that matter. But we want to be an even better place to work, where people from all backgrounds and with all protected characteristics feel comfortable, supported and included. We expect those who deliver services on our behalf,

including any contractor or supplier, to meet our standards and expectations with regards to equality, diversity and inclusion.

As a recognised Disability Confident and Age Friendly Employer, we already take steps to make our workplace an inclusive place for those with a disability and for older employees. But we know there is more that we can do to ensure our workplace is truly inclusive and any barriers to employment and participation are removed or mitigated. We want to support and encourage our staff to come together around their shared experiences and ensure that we consult with these groups about decisions which affect our workforce.

Priorities:

- Improve the data available in the workforce profile through increased focus on providing the information requested, helping colleagues to understand why this matters
- Recruitment practices which attract a diverse pool of talent, including diverse recruitment panels
- Encouraging a culture where inclusion is openly discussed, and discrimination is challenged
- Improved training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for both members and officers
- Support staff groups that bring people together around protected characteristics/ shared experiences and involve them in relevant policy development

**Governance and Next Steps**

Alongside this strategy, we have developed a high-level action plan. This will serve as our roadmap to delivering the objectives in this strategy and embedding inclusion across our organisation. South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership recognises that for our commitment to inclusion to be meaningful, it must be embedded within our organisation. It must be at the centre of our policies and decisions, not an add on. This action plan will take steps to embed inclusion into our organisation and to improve the way we address issues of inequality where they occur.

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership's Officer Equalities Board will oversee delivery of these actions. The Lead officer will feedback from the Equalities Board to the Portfolio Holder.

Whilst the lead member, officers and the Board will take a key role in delivering our action plan, the Partnership expects all Councillors and Officers to play their part in achieving our equality objectives. This includes fostering an inclusive place to work, considering inclusion in decision making and challenging inappropriate language or behaviour should it occur.

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership will provide regular updates to Portfolio Holders and Leadership Team.

## Appendix 1- Census Data

### Census data

The table below sets out the profile of residents in Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland against each protected characteristic, according to the 2021 census. It provides a national average for reference (England and Wales).

These figures rely on the accuracy of the data reported, which asked people to self-identify against these criteria. Being in line with the national average does not diminish the need to address barriers faced due to any particular protected characteristic.

There was no question relating to gender reassignment or pregnancy/ maternity in the 2021 census.

Protected characteristic	Boston	East Lindsey	South Holland	National Average	Commentary
Age	Median age-42 15 or under 18.3% 16-64 61.2% 65+ 20.4%	Median age-52 15 or under 14.7% 16-64 54.9% 65+ 30.5%	Median age-46 15 or under 17% 16-64 59.2% 65+ 23.9%	Median age-40 15 or under 17.4% 16-64 64.1% 65+ 18.6%	Average age is above the national average
Sex	50.8% Female 49.2% Male	51.1% Female 48.9% Male	50.8% Female 49.2% Male	51% Female 49% Male	In line with national average
Sexual orientation	88.4% Straight 2.17% LGB 9.87% DNA	89.87% Straight 2.22% LGB 7.9% DNA	89.27% Straight 1.98% LGB 8.75% DNA	89.4% Straight 3.2% LGB 7.5% DNA	In line with national average
Race	94.7% White 2% Asian 0.7% Black 1.4% Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group 1.2% Other	97.8% White 0.8% Asian 0.2% Black 1% Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group 0.2% Other	96.3% White 1.2% Asian 0.5% Black 1.3% Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group 0.6% Other	81.7% White 9.3% Asian 2.5% Black 3% Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group 1.6% Other	Population is less ethnically diverse than national average
Religion	31.3% No religion 59.8% Christian 1.4% Muslim All others below 1% 6.5% DNA	38.8% No religion 53.9% Christian All others below 1% 6% DNA	33% No religion 58.9% Christian 1.4% Muslim All others below 1% 6.5% DNA	37.2% No religion 46.2% Christian 6.5% Muslim All others below 1% 6% DNA	Religious v non-religious is roughly in line, but with a lower representation of people who are from other religions
Disability	17.6% disabled	22.2% disabled	17.6% disabled	17.7% disabled	East Lindsey has higher level of disability

Marriage/ Civil Partnership	44.7% married or in a civil partnership	50.4% married or in a civil partnership	49.2% married or in a civil partnership	46.9% married or in a civil partnership	Overall similar to national average
Employment status (not a protected characteristic)	57.2% in employment 23.7% retired	45.8% in employment 35% retired	56.3% in employment 27.4% retired	57.2% in employment 21.6% retired	Higher than average number of retired people
Household deprivation	59.1% deprived in one or more dimensions	61.2% deprived in one or more dimensions	56% deprived in one or more dimensions	51.7% deprived in one or more dimensions	Higher than average deprivation
Health	5.7% in bad or very bad health	6.8% in bad or very bad health	5.2% in bad or very bad health	5.3% in bad or very bad health	Above average bad health in Boston and East Lindsey
Access to a vehicle	19.5% no access to vehicle	16.7% no access to vehicle	12.9% no access to vehicle	12.7% no access to vehicle	Below average access to a vehicle

## South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnerships- EDI Action Plan

This action plan accompanies the SELCP 2025-28 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. It sets out actions against each of the four Equality Objectives. It aims to provide actions that allow the public and our partners to hold us to account for their delivery.

This action plan requires additional capacity, through a shared post, being introduced to the Officer structure to lead its delivery.

### Objective 1: Our communities: understand the needs of our communities and bring local people together

Outcome Number	Outcome (What we want to achieve)	Deliverable (How we will achieve it)	Lead Officer	Due Date	Status (RAG)
1.1	A better understanding of the needs of our community, which can be easily accessed by councillors, officers and our partners	1.1.1 Produce community profiles for each council area which provide demographic details, including any particular barriers to access and languages spoken in each area  1.1.2 Publish these on the council's website and communicate them to officers, members and partners  1.1.3 Produce a profile of South Holland District Council tenants, including needs around access and language			
1.2	A baseline for community cohesion through the residents' survey	1.2.1 Include a question about how well communities get on with each other in future residents' surveys  1.2.2 Ensure that the methodology of this survey produces a robust baseline (ie it is a representative sample)			
1.3	Celebrate and support events which highlight underrepresented groups throughout the year	1.3.1 Publish a calendar of events which support/ promote diversity/inclusion in the local area (ie Pride, International Women's Day, Remembrance Sunday etc)			

		1.3.2 Consider how the Partnership will support local events, including building relationships with partners, considering financial or other support, and encouraging attendance at and promotion of events			
1.4	Encourage and celebrate participation in community initiatives	<p>1.4.1 Celebrate the work of volunteers through an annual awards event</p> <p>1.4.2 Work with voluntary and community groups to identify volunteering opportunities and connect them with volunteers</p>			
1.5	Take a leadership role in promoting EDI in our area	<p>1.5.1 Identify key voluntary and community organisations working with or representing new and emerging communities</p> <p>1.5.2 Develop a positive relationship with these organisations, seeking opportunities to deliver projects together and get involved in the work they doing</p> <p>1.5.3 Explore the possibility of a voluntary and community board to act as a point of reference/ consultation for key policy developments and decisions and to listen to their challenges and experiences</p>			
1.6	Improve community cohesion and reduce hate crime	1.6.1 Establish a task and finish group to review our approach to tackling hate crime			



Objective 2: Our leadership: create a diverse and inclusive leadership team (Councillors and Officers) and embed inclusion in our decision making

Outcome Number	Outcome (What we want to achieve)	Deliverable (How we will achieve it)	Lead Officer	Due Date	Status (RAG)
2.1	Senior leaders take an active role in understanding and monitoring progress towards delivering our equalities objectives	<p>2.1.1 Produce an annual EDI update report to publish on the Council website.</p> <p>2.1.2 Require senior leaders (Service Manager and above) to demonstrate how they have promoted inclusion in their annual reviews.</p>			
2.2	Address the gender pay gap at all levels	<p>2.2.1 Produce an annual gender pay gap report and leadership profile for the top two tiers of management</p> <p>2.2.2 Implement a plan to eliminate the gender pay gap at all levels</p>			
2.3	Increase the diversity of the senior leadership team	<p>2.3.1 Ensure diverse participation in talent management programmes across the partnership</p> <p>2.3.2 Provide opportunities for training and development for underrepresented groups at senior levels, including funding mentoring and external training</p>			
2.4	Encourage councillors to consider best practice around increasing diversity in representation and address equalities issues faced by elected members	<p>2.4.1 Deliver training to councillors around EDI, with a particular focus on the role of elected members in inclusive decision making</p> <p>2.4.2 Encourage discussion around issues such as the LGA's Parental Leave Policy, the timing of council meetings to allow for greater participation from those in work/ with caring responsibilities etc and initiatives to ensure greater diversity amongst executive appointments</p>			

		2.4.3 Consider reasonable adjustments required by councillors with disabilities, including ensuring meeting rooms have hearing loops			
2.5	Encourage more diversity in candidates standing for election	2.5.1 Run a 'become a councillor' campaign, focussing on encouraging those from underrepresented groups to put themselves forward			
2.6	Embed EDI into decision making through a clear and robust Equality Impact Assessment process	<p>2.6.1 Review and update the Equality Impact Assessment template, following best practice from within the sector</p> <p>2.6.2 Publish an approach to EIAs, outlining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ when an EIA is required</li> <li>○ who should complete it</li> <li>○ what guidance they should follow</li> <li>○ how an EIA is 'signed off'</li> <li>○ how it should be considered in the decision-making process</li> </ul> <p>2.6.3 Communicate this approach to Councillors and Officers, and make it publicly available on the council's website</p> <p>2.6.4 Provide training to relevant staff and councillors in the use and evaluation of Equality Impact Assessments</p> <p>2.6.5 Report annually on the use and impact of EIAs on decision making</p>			

**Objective 3: Our services: ensure council services meet the diverse needs of our residents and make it easy for local residents to access council services and facilities**

<b>Outcome Number</b>	<b>Outcome (What we want to achieve)</b>	<b>Deliverable (How we will achieve it)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status (RAG)</b>
3.1	Ensure that meaningful consultation with diverse groups informs decisions made by the council	<p>3.1.1 Ensure that the forward plan considers how local communities will be consulted about council decisions</p> <p>3.1.2 Develop an inclusive consultation process through a task and finish group</p> <p>3.1.3 Create opportunities for partners and service providers to share experiences and input into decisions</p>			
3.2	All residents are able to access and understand information shared by the council	<p>3.2.1 Review all key communications sent by the council to ensure they are easy to read and understand (such as council tax letters, standard responses to enquiries etc)</p> <p>3.2.2 Roll out 'plain English' guidance across the Partnership and training for those most regularly in contact with the public about writing in plain English</p> <p>3.2.3 Streamline the process for accessing translation and interpreting services, ensuring this is applied equally across all departments within the council</p> <p>3.2.4 Produce an 'inclusive information' guide, which gives due regard to how information is presented to ensure it is easily to read (eg fonts, colours, format)</p>			

3.3	Remove barriers to accessing information and services online, promoting digital inclusion	<p>3.3.1 Consider whether the Digital Strategy aligns with the EDI Strategy</p> <p>3.3.2 Ensure the council understands the profile of those who struggle most with digital access, understanding that this is not necessarily about age</p> <p>3.3.3 Review digital processes to ensure they are not unnecessarily complicated through regular focus groups with service users</p> <p>3.3.4 Ensure the 'recite me' accessibility toolbar is easily accessible on each council's website and communicate about it to residents</p> <p>3.3.5 Undertake a website audit to ensure that all links are correct and information is easily accessible</p> <p>3.3.6 Introduce a text relay service to ensure that residents who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired are able to contact the council by telephone</p>			
3.4	Council facilities and outdoor public spaces are easy to access and use for all	<p>3.4.1 Undertake accessibility and age friendly audits of all council buildings/ facilities</p> <p>3.4.2 Implement all appropriate recommendations from accessibility and age friendly audits</p> <p>3.4.3 Review accessibility to outdoor public spaces, including parks and beaches</p>			
3.5	Improve accessibility of community and partner venues	<p>3.5.1 Develop an 'inclusive buildings standard'</p> <p>3.5.2 Encourage community venues and partners to ensure their facilities meet these standards</p>			

3.6	Support local residents to get around better	<p>3.6.1 Encourage public transport providers to provide regular services across our area</p> <p>3.6.2 Pay due regard to availability of public transport when planning community events/ meetings etc</p> <p>3.6.3 Work with the County Council to address the physical condition of roads and pavements, particularly where they create a hazard from those with a disability</p>			
3.7	Ensure that tenants of South Holland District Council are able to report repairs and consider vulnerability in undertaking repairs	<p>3.7.1 Introduce a text relay service to enable those who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired to report repairs over the phone</p> <p>3.7.2 Consider assessing tenant vulnerability (eg age, disability) in the repairs process, reviewing the Housing Repairs Policy if appropriate</p>			

**Objective 4: Our workforce: be an inclusive and fair employer with a diverse workforce at all levels**

<b>Outcome Number</b>	<b>Outcome (What we want to achieve)</b>	<b>Deliverable (How we will achieve it)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status (RAG)</b>
4.1	All those representing the council, both officers and members, have appropriate understanding of EDI through training and development	<p>4.1.1 Review the mandatory training offer on EDI</p> <p>4.1.2 Ensure all staff and councillors undertake agreed EDI training within 6 months</p> <p>4.1.3 Consider how those who are not desk based can best participate (ie offer some training in person)</p> <p>4.1.4 Provide data on those who have not completed the training to SLT each quarter</p> <p>4.1.5 Roll out unconscious bias training to all managers and councillors</p>			
4.2	A better understanding of our workforce	<p>4.2.1 Improved data reporting for our annual workforce profiles</p> <p>4.2.2 Communicate with staff about why this information matters and offer incentives to complete their profiles</p> <p>4.2.3 Improve the workforce profiles in line with sector best practice, including a narrative to contextualise the information and explain why it matters</p> <p>4.2.4 Identify priority areas of focus, either to improve reporting or underrepresentation, and establish necessary task and finish groups to address areas of concern</p>			

4.3	A more inclusive and diverse workforce through inclusive recruitment and onboarding practices	<p>4.3.1 Review the recruitment policy to incorporate a commitment to inclusive recruitment, building on sector best practice</p> <p>4.3.2 Commit to diverse interview panels</p> <p>4.3.3 Review the onboarding process to ensure a focus on EDI is included</p>			
4.4	Bring people together around shared experiences or protected characteristics and involve them in decisions	<p>4.4.1 Encourage and support new and existing staff groups that bring people together around protected characteristics/ shared experiences (such as menopause, neurodiversity, disability)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Support staff to make time to participate in such groups</li> <li>○ Consider how participation can be recognised as CPD/ in appraisals etc</li> </ul> <p>4.4.2 Involve these groups in decision making and policy development</p> <p>4.4.3 Listening to the views of these groups and ensuring access to senior leaders through regular opportunities to feedback views from the workforce</p>			
4.5	Promote a culture where inclusion is discussed and discrimination is challenged	<p>4.5.1 Encourage teams to share their experiences and discuss EDI issues in their work, removing stigma and challenging assumptions</p> <p>4.5.2 Provide clear channels of escalation to raise queries or concerns regarding EDI issues</p>			
4.6	A collective understanding of roles and responsibilities around EDI	<p>4.6.1 A named EDI lead at a strategic level, currently the Assistant Director (Corporate), communicated to staff at all levels</p> <p>4.6.2 Named EDI leads amongst councillors, with clearly defined responsibilities</p>			

		<p>4.6.3 Recruit a person/ persons responsible for EDI at an operational level, able to provide advice and act as a point of escalation for relevant issues</p> <p>4.6.4 Greater visibility to the work of the Equalities Board through regular reporting back to the workforce</p> <p>4.6.5 All Councillors and Officers play their part in creating an inclusive organisation</p>			
--	--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	--

#### Other outcomes

These outcomes are recommended to support the overall delivery of the strategy

<b>Outcome Number</b>	<b>Outcome (What we want to achieve)</b>	<b>Deliverable (How we will achieve it)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status (RAG)</b>
5.1	Appropriate resourcing to deliver the actions included in this action plan	<p>5.1.1 Identify required resourcing to support this strategy</p> <p>5.1.2 Recruit if required</p> <p>5.1.3 Agree the membership of the Equalities Board, as well as terms of reference and meeting dates</p> <p>5.1.4 Designate a named person responsible for delivering each action in this plan</p>			
5.2	Show local leadership in addressing EDI issues	5.2.1 Establish a partnership board to bring partners together to address inclusion issues across the area			
5.3	Ensure those delivering services on behalf of the council meet the councils expectations around respect and inclusion	<p>5.3.1 Review procurement and commissioning processes to ensure the principles of the EDI Strategy translate into contracts</p> <p>5.3.2 Provide a clear route to raise concerns relating to discrimination or behaviour which is not in line with the Partnership's commitment to EDI</p>			





<b>Report To:</b>	Corporate & Community Committee
<b>Date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Joint Scrutiny of the Partnership Enviro Crime Enforcement Contract
<b>Purpose:</b>	To receive the Task Group's report and recommendations following scrutiny of the Partnership Enviro Crime Enforcement Contract
<b>Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Callum Butler, Environmental Portfolio Holder
<b>Report Of:</b>	Partnership Scrutiny Task Group
<b>Report Author:</b>	Rebecca James, Scrutiny & Policy Officer
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All
<b>Exempt Report:</b>	No

## Summary

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees of Boston Borough Council, South Holland District Council, and East Lindsey District Council commissioned a joint Scrutiny Task & Finish Group to undertake a review of the Partnership Enviro Crime Enforcement Contract.

**Note:** All content is contained in the attached report and not summarised in this covering report.

## Recommendations

To note the attached report (**Appendix 1**) and agree the associated recommendations.

## Reasons for Recommendations

To consider the report and recommendations put forward by Scrutiny Task & Finish Groups as part of a scrutiny process.

## Other Options Considered

None.

### 1. Report

- 1.1 This report brings forward a joint scrutiny report, found at **Appendix 1**. The general scope of this work was set out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees at ELDC, SHDC, and BBC, before the details were agreed by members of the Task & Finish Group. The final agreed Project Scoping Document is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 1.2 This report is being presented to each of the Partnership Councils' relevant sovereign scrutiny committees. The scrutiny committees are being asked to make a decision on the recommendations – this was the process agreed by S&ELCP when joint scrutiny Task & Finish Groups were approved.
- 1.3 All content is contained in the attached report at **Appendix 1** and not summarised in this covering report.

### Implications

#### South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Only those considered by the Task Group in the attached report.

#### Corporate Priorities

- Discourage fly tipping and environmental crime through deterrence, education, and enforcement.
- Maintain and seek to improve street cleanliness.

### Staffing

Only those considered by the Task Group in the attached report.

### Workforce Capacity Implications

None

### Constitutional and Legal Implications

None

### Data Protection

None

### Financial

None

## Risk Management

None

## Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Internal and external consultation took place during this piece of work. Details of this can be found in the report at Appendix 1.

## Reputation

Only those considered by the Task Group in the attached report.

## Contracts

This piece of work was a review of a contract. Any agreed recommendations regarding the contract renewal have been carefully considered by relevant officers.

## Crime and Disorder

Only those considered by the Task Group in the attached report.

## Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

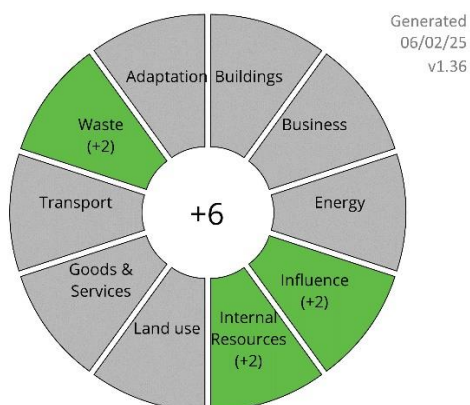
None

## Health and Wellbeing

Only those considered by the Task Group in the report.

## Climate Change and Environmental Implications

A light touch assessment has been undertaken as this report reflects a review of the current contract/service. Whilst some recommendations are put forward, the scope to consider all aspects of the contract is limited from a climate change and environment perspective and so a number of sectors have been left blank.



The Partnership has committed to being Net Zero by 2040  
(14 years and 10 months away).

## Acronyms

FPN – fixed penalty notice

## Appendices

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

Appendix 1	Report of the Task & Finish Group
Appendix 2	Agreed Project Scoping Document

## 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:	Rebecca James, Scrutiny & Policy Officer <a href="mailto:rebecca.james@e-lindsey.gov.uk">rebecca.james@e-lindsey.gov.uk</a>
Signed off by:	Christian Allen, Assistant Director - Regulatory <a href="mailto:christian.allen@boston.gov.uk">christian.allen@boston.gov.uk</a>
Approved for publication:	Councillor Edward Mossop, ELDC (Chair of the Task and Finish Group) <a href="mailto:edward.mossop@e-lindsey.gov.uk">edward.mossop@e-lindsey.gov.uk</a>

# **PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

## **Partnership Enviro Crime Enforcement Contract Final Report**

### **Acknowledgements**

#### **Councillors ELDC:**

- Edward Mossop (Chairman)
- Daniel Simpson
- Robert Watson (Vice Chairman)

#### **Councillors BBC:**

- Stuart Evans
- Ralph Pryke
- David Scoot

#### **Councillors SHDC:**

- Andrew Woolf
- Paul Barnes
- David Wilkinson

#### **Officers:**

- Christian Allen (Assistant Director, Regulatory)
- Donna Hall (Group Manager, Public Protection)
- Rebecca James (Scrutiny & Policy Officer)

#### **Guest Witnesses:**

- John Roberts (Senior Operating Officer, Kingdom LAS)
- Jason Washington (Contract Manager Kingdom LAS)
- Councillor A. Casson (Portfolio Holder Public Protection, SHDC)
- Councillor C. Butler (Portfolio Holder Environmental, BBC)
- Councillor M. Foster (Portfolio Holder Operational Services, ELDC)
- Mindi Read (Operations Manager, Boston Borough Council)
- Matt Fisher (Head of Environmental Services, South Holland District Council)

## Introduction

In February 2022, an Enviro-Crime Enforcement contract for the Partnership was agreed. The contract included provision of foot patrols to proactively detect enviro-crimes and take appropriate action and camera surveillance of fly tipping hotspots. There is also some provision for education and awareness work with the public, with additional educational aspects to be discussed further once KPI's have been implemented. The Partnership Enviro-Crime contract expires on the 28/02/2026. There is a clause in the contract stating that at the Councils discretion an extension of a further 2 years can be applied/negotiated.

The Task & Finish group were asked to review the operation and to look at performance and the benefits being delivered/achieved. The Key Lines of Enquiry were agreed as:

1. Review the key objectives of the enviro crime contract;
2. Review any performance monitoring that has taken place;
3. Review benefits and achievements to date across the Partnership;
4. Consider any areas for improvement;

## Background and context

The sub-regional strategy for the Partnership has the following aims relevant to this piece of work:

- Efficiency and Effectiveness: - Meet the financial challenges facing the sector; To deliver good quality value for money services;
- Safe and Resilient Communities: - Work with the local community to promote cohesion, community confidence and pride of place;
- Environment: - Discourage fly-tipping and environmental crime through deterrence, education, and enforcement; Maintain and seek to improve street cleanliness.

The overarching objective for the Partnership is to reduce fly- tipping and littering. Plans to achieve this include:

- Educating and engaging with the public and businesses to ensure enviro crime is seen as socially unacceptable;
- Ensuring enforcement is used effectively and appropriately.

Methods of achieving this include:

- Collecting data and intelligence to understand problem areas;
- Working in partnership with others, including other agencies and community groups;

- Using effective communications to ensure the public and businesses understand their legal requirements.

## Contract - key facts and information

In securing this contract, there was a competitive procurement process with two Lots tendered – foot patrols and overt surveillance capability. Kingdom LAS won the competition for both Lots. The contract was mobilised on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The contract term was 3 years +1 +1-year extension by mutual agreement.

The contract includes:

- foot patrols – 3x Officers SHDC (487.5 hours), 3x Officers BBC (487.5 hours), 4x Officers ELDC (650 hours)
- 10% return on income for each Council;
- 2x Surveillance installations per authority, free of charge where electrical supply is available.

Offences in scope:

- PSPO offences;
- Dog Fouling;
- Littering;
- Fly-tipping;
- Flyposting;
- Graffiti;
- Abandoned Vehicles;
- Domestic and commercial waste duty of care.

Kingdom Officers are responsible for the quality of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) issued. Kingdom back-office activity includes taking payments, reviewing representations, determining extensions, issuing reminders, writing off FPN's and producing prosecution reports for consideration by each Council.

Income reconciled each month:

- 100% income received by Kingdom transferred to sovereign Council;
- Kingdom issue invoice for 90% of value;
- Council retains 10%.

Where valid FPN's are not paid:

- Kingdom prepares evidence bundle;
- Bundle reviewed by Liaison Officer;
- Decision to issue proceedings assigned to AD Regulatory;
- Legal Services Lincolnshire provide legal advocacy;
- Prosecution through Courts or Single Justice Procedure.

## Research and Evidence Gathering

The Task Group researched how the contract was being managed, how performance was being monitored, including financial performance and key performance indicators. They also gathered evidence on the achievements so far and possible improvements. Key evidence gathered is below.

### Contract Management

- Monthly contract performance meetings
- (Formal) Quarterly Contract Review Meetings, with PSPS Procurement
- Liaison Officer at each Council
- Monthly PFH performance reports
- Regular PFH Meetings with Kingdom
- Engagement with local Police Inspectors and Community Safety Partnership
- Practitioner meetings/Lincolnshire Environmental Crime Partnership
- Partnership Enviro-crime liaison Officer meetings held monthly.

### Performance and Key Performance Indicators

1. Monthly Hours allocated to each council – target of 97% consistent coverage.
  - i. South Holland District Council – Staffed hours 487.5
  - ii. East Lindsey District Council – Staffed hours 650
  - iii. Boston Borough Council – Staffed hours 487.5
2. Fly Tipping Investigation efficiency:
  - a. Response time within 3 working days once the task has been added to the portal. Target 90%.
  - b. Fly tipping investigations to be completed and closed within 30 working days. Target 90%.
3. Timely delivery of KPI and performance reports: To be added to the portal within 10 working days of the end of the month with a copy to be provided by email to Donna Hall – target 100%
4. Prosecution File Production:
  - a. All complete prosecution files to be passed forward to the respective Council for prosecution. Target 100%
  - b. Less than 10% of prosecution files to be returned to Kingdom for further work.
5. PSPO Restricting Consumption of Alcohol Enforcement – all interventions to be added to the monthly KPI and Performance report.
6. Meetings to be held monthly between Kingdom, engineer, and liaison officers to deploy and manage installation of surveillance equipment.



## Task Group Review and Analysis

### Officer Feedback (Regulatory, Public Protection and Waste)

The Task Group spoke to officers from a number of areas across the Partnership to ascertain their views on the Kingdom contract, both in terms of performance and their thoughts for the future. They asked a number of questions to gauge their thoughts and elicit additional information on various aspects of the contract and the work done by Kingdom and the Council.

Officers from regulatory and public protection advised that the Partnership Waste Strategy and associated action plan support the delivery of the contract. The financial model is that Kingdom retains 90% and the Council retain 10% of the revenue. Government stipulates that any income received by the Council must be reinvested back into Enviro Crime work and clarified this does not necessarily need to be with Kingdom.

They acknowledged that FPN rates are not aligned, nor is the way waste and enforcement teams work together. In addition, each Council has identified different priorities and areas of focus.

Officers receive good intelligence but have limited capacity to follow it up. Grant funding received by Boston- has allowed an 'operation clean streets' project to take place.

It was confirmed that officers do feed positive stories to the media, but they are not always taken on and published. The task group were keen to look at ways this could be improved as public awareness and engagement are key criteria for success.

Officers from waste services also indicated that due to Boston's prior contract with Kingdom, the waste and enforcement teams are better at engaging with each other. It was indicated that this is also down to the way their teams are set up. SHDC and ELDC need to clarify responsibilities and look to learn from Boston colleagues.

Waste officers also agreed that better education for the public would assist in tackling enviro crime. Kingdom provides capacity and expertise, although there is a need to be aware of the risk that not enough income is generated to meet the threshold for sustainability of the contract.

### Kingdom Feedback

Kingdom explained that they tackle offences under the anti-social behaviour Crime and Policing Act and the Environmental Protection Act covering a variety of offences including littering and fly-tipping that is part of the contract they have with the Partnership.

Different areas are visited as part of a patrol matrix that is created from the intelligence they are provided with and also through speaking to the community.

They can work on a warning or zero tolerance basis – for this contract they have been asked to deal with everything they see. This is not always reflected in reports as it only sees the outcome in relation to FPNs issued, not every interaction they have with the public such as education / awareness advice.

Sometimes officers are sent to certain areas in pairs as part of their current risk assessment due to a lack of understanding and support from the local police. There was concern expressed

They are confident the balance is right between fly-tipping and littering. It takes more resources to deal with each fly-tip – 4 hours compared with 5 minutes for littering. This is due to the difficulty of proving who has carried out the fly tip.

They indicated that work is being undertaken to harmonise some processes, each Council currently has different priorities and can even provide differing legal advice. If such processes and advice were to be the same across the partnership, this would provide consistency for Kingdom staff and enable to share staff across the areas.

#### Portfolio Holder Feedback

All three portfolio holders attended a meeting and answered a number of questions, as well as providing their views on the contract. Differences between the three areas were highlighted, with Boston being seen to lead the way, both in terms of how it was structured internally, and also how Kingdom worked with the community and with the police on enviro crime enforcement. Both East Lindsey and South Holland Portfolio Holders indicated they would like to see things work in their area in the way they were already working in Boston.

That being said, they all felt it was an improving picture, despite some initial recruitment and retention issues. They receive regular reports and feedback, and this has been refined following their feedback and is now much clearer and easier to understand. They also raised the following points during discussions:

- They are happy this is a cost-effective way of providing enviro crime enforcement across the partnership;
- Key objectives for portfolio holders are around ensuring there is a visible deterrent and supporting more work on education and awareness
- They would like to see more positive promotion of the work being done across various media outlets;
- They would like to see more use of CCTV to help with tackling fly-tipping;
- They also raised the possibility of providing more patrols out of hours – for example in the evening and at weekends.

## Task Group Analysis

The task group reviewed the information received from the witnesses to assist them in coming to conclusions and recommendations. They asked relevant and comprehensive questions to everyone attending, in order to get as much evidence as possible to inform their review of the contract.

They were advised of the initial staffing challenges around recruitment and retention. They were reassured that these issues have improved, and systems are in place to provide resilience.

They investigated the issue of CCTV – both in terms of deployment and management, and also the issues surrounding overt and covert cameras and the challenges around this.

It was clear to the Task Group that BBC are leading the way, ELDC and SHDC could learn from their approach and replicate the way things are done there – both in terms of the way officers interact internally, and also the way Kingdom have built relationships with the community and the Police. It was acknowledged that Boston's early success is partly due to them having legacy contract agreements in place with Kingdom, so have had more time to build those key relationships, and also have more resources dedicated to waste and enviro-crime issues.

There was a lot of discussion around behaviour change – the ideal outcome would be that there is no contract needed or just a minimal presence as a deterrent. To do this is possible, but a number of things need to happen to create this outcome.

It was clear to the Task Group that education, awareness and engagement would be key moving forward to ensure that the public are aware of the law and their responsibilities around different types of Enviro Crime. This would in turn help reduce the need for enforcement action.

The Task Group also heard there were inconsistencies in the way Council staff interacted – both between departments and with Kingdom. There is a need to have good working relationships between everyone involved in deploying and managing the contract to ensure the contract continues to run successfully.

Things under consideration for the remainder of the contract and for any new / renewed contract were also discussed. Amongst these were:

- Collaboration with community groups / town and parish councils;
- Alignment of fine levels to be the same across the Partnership;
- Proactive sharing of how to report enviro crimes;
- Increased promotion of the work being done by Kingdom;
- The need to align ways of working to increase efficiency and effectiveness;
- CCTV and how to use this more effectively.

## Conclusion

Our indicators of success for this scrutiny review were 1) Check results are being achieved, and 2) Improve future performance.

The 'task group review and analysis' section above show how we have gained assurance of the first indicator, while the recommendations in the section below cover indicator two by identifying the key focus and objectives moving forwards.

## Recommendations

1. For each Council's representative on the Police and Crime Panel to push for better support and improved working relationships with Kingdom officers, particularly in South Holland and East Lindsey;
2. To promote better communication and engagement between community groups and town and parish councils, so that these groups are better informed about how to report enviro crimes to the Councils;
3. To add information on the definition of Enviro Crimes and how to report them to each Council's website, so residents are aware of the process for reporting, including how they can provide any valid evidence gathered to support this (for example with a flow chart to explain);
4. Move to shared media releases to showcase the work done in this area across the Partnership and to also encourage residents to help combat the problem by reporting Enviro Crimes to their Councils;
5. Work with Portfolio Holders to better align FPN levels across the Partnership;
6. Work to ensure consistency of legal advice across all 3 Councils;
7. Conduct further work across the Partnership to align processes and ways of working, to ensure Council Officers and Kingdom can work together more efficiently and effectively;
8. SHDC and ELDC to emulate and follow the lead of BBC so all 3 Councils have the same level of service and cooperation between waste teams and enforcement teams, including Kingdom partners;
9. Investigate ways to deploy covert CCTV cameras and how Kingdom can assist the Councils with RIPA applications and the coordination of covert CCTV deployments;
10. Use the intelligence gathered throughout the first part of the contract to make further improvements and create bespoke interventions;
11. As part any contract renewal considerations, a greater emphasis to be placed on education, engagement, and awareness;
12. When it comes to contract renewal, ensure the contract financials are sufficient and the framework for Kingdom to deliver the contract is effective to ensure it continues;
13. As part of regular meetings with Kingdom, discussions to take place on how their officers can undertake individual patrols rather than working in pairs, to ensure maximum coverage of areas.



## JOINT SCRUTINY TASK & FINISH GROUP Project Scoping Template

Scrutiny Topic (Name of review)	Partnership Enviro Crime Enforcement Contract
<b>Rationale</b> (Purpose and objectives of the scrutiny review)	<p>In February 2022, an Enviro-crime Enforcement contract for the Partnership was agreed. The contract included provision of foot patrols to proactively detect enviro-crimes and take appropriate action and camera surveillance of fly tipping hotspots.</p> <p>Boston had legacy contract arrangements with Kingdom which East Lindsey adopted mid 2021 until the permanent contract arrangement with Kingdom came into being. South Holland had no prior external contract arrangement. The Partnership enviro-crime contract expires on the 28/02/2026. There is a clause in the contract stating that at the Councils discretion an extension of a further 2 years can be applied/negotiated.</p> <p>As we are at the mid-point of the contract, there is a need to review the operation and to look at performance and the benefits being delivered/achieved.</p>
<b>Key Lines of Enquiry:</b> (Focus of the review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the key objectives of the enviro crime contract;</li> <li>2. Review any performance monitoring that has taken place;</li> <li>3. Review benefits and achievements to date across the Partnership;</li> <li>4. Consider any areas for improvement;</li> </ol>
<b>Indicators of success</b> (desired outcomes, what should change as a result)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Check results are being achieved</li> <li>➤ Improve future performance</li> </ul>
<b>Approach/methodology</b>	<i>Internal witnesses:</i> Portfolio Holders SHDC – Anthony Casson, BBC – Callum Butler, ELDC – Martin Foster.

	<p>Officers: Christian Allen, Donna Hall, Vick Burgess</p> <p><i>External witnesses:</i> Kingdom LAS Ltd,</p> <p><i>Resources:</i> relevant reports, copy of contract, performance indicators, Litter and Fly-tipping Engagement and Enforcement Strategy</p>
<b>Liaison Officer</b>	Christian Allen (Assistant Director, Regulatory)
<b>Timescales</b>	<p>Start date: October 2024</p> <p>End Date: February 2025</p> <p>Target Overview meeting: 25/03/25</p> <p>Target PMP meeting: 12/03/25</p> <p>Target E&amp;P meeting: 29/04/25</p>

# 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	9 Jul 25
17 June 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HMO Update</li> <li>Annual Anti-Social Behaviour Report</li> <li>Annual CCTV Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safer Communities Services Manager</li> <li>Community Safety Manager</li> <li>Community Safety Manager</li> </ul>	Cllr J Baxter	
17 July 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Crowdfunding Scheme</li> <li>South &amp; East Lincolnshire Council's Partnership Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVC) Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Leadership Manager</li> <li>Community Safety Manager</li> </ul>	Cllr E Cresswell Cllr A Dorrian	17 Sep 25 17 Sep 25
4 Sept 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destination Lincolnshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership Destination Management Plan and SELCP Destination Management Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim Consultant for Culture &amp; Regenerations</li> </ul>	Cllr S Sharpe	17 Sep 25
2 Oct 25				
6 Nov 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on Community Lottery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Leadership Manager</li> </ul>	Cllr E Cresswell	10 Dec 25
9 Dec 25				
15 Jan 26				
10 Feb 26				
17 Mar 26				
30 Apr 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
Alternative options for Scrutiny working.				
Task and Finish Group	Boston Town Centre (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.			

## Pending Confirmation:

- Overview & Scrutiny Joint Annual Report 2023/24 and Overview & Scrutiny Joint Annual Report 2024/25
- Lincolnshire Police – Peel Report (Chief Constable Gibson)
- Bus Services. Possible work streams from the SICP report on Social Impact Population Change.
- LCC Highways state of road repairs. Especially South End traffic lights flooding.

**Chairman:** Councillor Paul Gleeson

**Vice Chairman:** Councillor Neil Drayton

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

**Clerk:** Democratic Services Officer