

CORPORATE STRATEGY CONSULTATION RESULTS SEPTEMBER 2020



Corporate Strategy Results 2020

Introduction

The Council's Corporate Strategy guides everything that Boston Borough Council does, identifying where the Council will focus its efforts and resources to improve the Borough for our community.

This Strategy has been produced at a time when the Council and community are beginning the long process of recovering from Covid-19. However, we now have an opportunity to secure up to £25m of Government funding for regeneration in our Borough. In addition, we have entered into a strategic alliance with East Lindsey District Council that will enable us to save £5m over the next ten years, whilst also improving services to those we represent.

Our Strategy focuses on four priorities:

1. People
2. Future prosperity and growth
3. Environmental awareness and accountability
4. Delivering high quality services and maximising the use of technology to support residents.

Public consultation took place during September 2020.

Methodology

Consultation took place from September 10, 2020, to September 30, 2020. The survey was placed on the Council's website and on the Council's social media pages where it was also shared into other locally relevant social media pages/groups. The survey was distributed to a number of local community groups, partner agencies and local businesses and was also advertised in the Boston Bulletin. In addition to this, it was actively promoted via the local media.

The Staff Forum also took place during September where the draft Corporate Strategy was discussed. Comments from this Forum are included in this report.

A paper copy of the survey could also be requested by calling the Transformation Officer.

57 completed surveys were received.

Headline Results

- 79% of respondents who completed the survey lived within the Borough of Boston.
- 71% of respondents agreed with the 4 priorities.

*all comments appear as received.

Results

Q1. Are you completing this consultation as...

- A Resident
- A business
- An organisation or community group
- A Parish Council
- Other

The majority of respondents - 79% - completed the questionnaire as a resident of Boston.

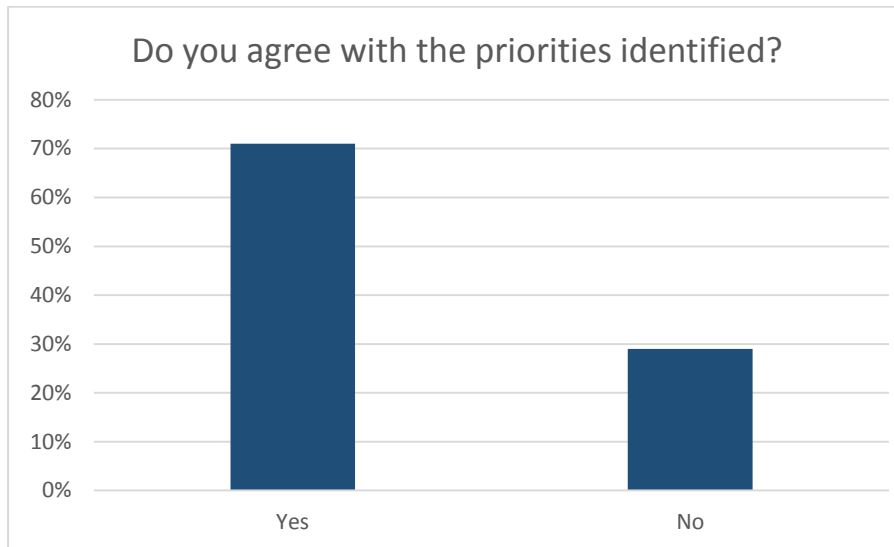


Those who responded as 'an Organisation or community group'; 'a Parish Council' or 'Other' had the opportunity to provide more information:

- I work in Boston
- Lincolnshire CVS
- Boston born and bred, but no longer live in the town
- Resident and employee of Boston Borough Council
- On behalf of the Lincolnshire and Norfolk Area, RSPB England
- Employee of the Council
- Private citizen and independent member of Audit and Governance committee
- A near resident, I now live in Antons Gowt.

*all comments appear as received.

Q2. Do you agree with the priorities identified in the draft corporate strategy?



	n*	%
Yes	40	71%
No	16	29%

16 respondents commented. A breakdown of themes is given below alongside the detailed responses received: -

- Climate Change x 2
 - Improve town centre x 2
 - Priorities not specific enough x 2
 - Priorities not in right order x 2
 - Need more career opportunities x 1
 - Housing x 1
 - Tourism x 1
 - Promote healthy lifestyles x 1
 - Traffic/Parking x 1
 - Community safety x 1
 - Disagree with priorities x 1
 - Miscellaneous x 1
- Overwhelming need to become "carbon neutral" could well affect the Council's ability to deliver it's stated aims. It could be a convenient excuse at times.
 - They're in the wrong order. A net zero carbon footprint is a lofty and worthy goal, but least important to ordinary people. It should be the lowest priority.
 - The town centre and Market Place is dying and yet doesn't get a mention?

*all comments appear as received.

- Fantastic Place to Work We want people to THINK BOSTON, think business. We will:
 - Promote growth and infrastructure including waterways....whats waterways got to do with 'think Boston, think business'? There's been too much spent already on leisure aspects of waterways that are not facilitating business, unless your taking a day trip along the river...hardly 'think Boston think Business'!!! Maintain waterways, yes, promote growth and increase infrastructure NO. Also, where within the strategy is there a clear pathway for the younger generation accessing employment, such as apprenticeships - there must be more in this strategy to align career seekers with business via apprenticeships and other direct ways into businesses and careers.
 - Just words. Not a strategy. What are you going to do? Be specific. What are your targets?
 - I would prioritise the points as below 2 - Future Prosperity - I feel this is important due to the current situation with Covid-19 4 - Delivering high quality services 1 - People Focused 2 - Environmental Awareness
 - They are very vague and would prefer to see something more specific and specifically which actions are linked to recovery from Covid as this isn't clear.
 - Nothing really about removing more of the Easton European shops ,clubs, and more check's on letting houses were the conditions are below standard. You will never make Boston a visitors centre because of the crowds of people in small groups standing around watching people passing.
 - Housing as at the moment new housing is being created on 'green' land. More needs to be done to utilise existing 'brown' land.
 - I no longer feel safe in the town. I feel with the influx of people, the long term prosperity of the town will decline faster than it has in recent years. The local increase in demands on our medical services make it difficult to get treatment. It seems as if a majority of monies available, is spent on minority groups. Public transport is not cost effective. To encourage more tourist, it should be lead by a new look, not just putting more money into a tried old system.
 - You can't promote Boston as an attractive tourism destination
 - I think we need to make the town more visually appealing and safe and welcoming before promoting it. I have known people say they have visited the town and are horrified and the gang street drinking and intimidating culture. Driving down say London road is quite an experience, there needs to be far more double yellow lines from London Road to High Street. Speeding is an understatement. Main Ridge is atrocious too. The people sat in offices saying to promote the town should walk the streets and they would realise the town is not ready to be promoted. Maybe start building the 'affordable housing' in villages with more space as the town is over run with crowded houses. Promotion of healthy lifestyles.
 - The whole essence of the Corporate Strategy seems to be full of whimsical ideals of how the town used to be rather than what we now find ourself with. The quality of living within the town has degraded over the years from a place that I wanted to live to one that i'm rapidly becoming ashamed of. It used to be a safe place at any time of the day or night to walk through. the thoroughfares were clean and tidy and there was a good selection of retail establishments and food outlets. Sadly this is no longer the case it is difficult to feel safe when walking through the town especially after dark, the increase in rubbish plus the smell from human waste, the number of empty retail premises slowly decaying. The pedestrian areas with buses and cyclists running through what is there to attract investment and visitors? There is only so much attraction in a faded history. I suggest that it is time to take off the rose tinted glasses
 - A half hearted cut and paste
 - The proposed strategy is completely silent on waste management and recycling, the

significant problems we have with the growing amount of waste in our community including littering and fly tipping. It is silent on dealing with poor behaviour in respect to environmental crime. It is silent on keeping our streets clean and tidy ensuring our streetscene is attractive and fit for purpose to encourage inward investment and make it a clean and attractive place to do business. Waste Management and recycling has to be a priority for the Council, we need to reduce the amount of waste our growing community is producing, how can you have missed this off the strategy. Please add waste, recycling, environmental

- Waste recycling, keeping streets clean is not included.

Q3 Priority 1: People Focused - Are there any comments you wish to make on the priority and what it is aiming to achieve?.

38 respondents commented. A breakdown of themes throughout the comments is given below alongside the detailed responses received: -

- Town Centre x 7
 - Miscellaneous x 6
 - Focus more on History Boston x 5
 - Traffic Management x 4
 - Priority not specific enough x 3
 - Agree with priority x 3
 - Increase in population x 3
 - Housing x 2
 - Clean Street issues x 1
 - Schools/Colleges x 1
 - Encourage new business x 1
 - Strategic Alliance x 1
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- The policy in it's current form is far too broad and impersonal. It seems to take no account of how it feels to live in Boston
 - The council in my view has not sufficiently focused on attracting tourists from America, as this is essentially the birthplace of that country I'm surprised the town is not heaving with people from the USA. Maybe a bigger commitment financially to shout our message across the big pond?
 - I agree that People Focused need to be involved as part of what is needed in Bostons achievements
 - It really positive that we are proposing to co-funding affordable housing delivery as this has proved extremely beneficial previously. However what about other areas of housing such as housing standards, to ensure existing stock is well maintained and managed, and homelessness and rough sleepers provision which contributes to the feel of the town as well as peoples lives?
 - I agree with the priorities and cannot see anything missing under this heading
 - We must embrace things as they are now (ie multi-cultural) and modern, as opposed to harking back to how things were 10,20, 30years ago. Times have changed. We must embrace a need for market housing - if you build it, they will come - this attracts business, and further investment.

*all comments appear as received.

- Focus needs to be on the centre of the town to help with reducing commuting, pollution and aid making the central area vibrant and busy.
- Also, lots of rhetoric but no 'strategy for delivery' - impossible to comment without the detail, as its the detail that determines whether or not any of the ambitions are deliverable, incl. adequate investment in the right prioritises, who, when, how, etc etc.
- I am in total agreement
- Just words. I should hope you are 'people focused'

Q4. Priority 2: Future prosperity, Regeneration and Inclusive Growth - Are there any comments you wish to make on the priority and what it is aiming to achieve?

41 respondents commented. A breakdown of themes throughout the comments is given below alongside the detailed responses received: -

- Investment in town centre x 10
 - Support local business x 8
 - Economic growth x 6
 - Improve reputation of the town x 5
 - Agree with priority x 4
 - Priorities unlikely to be achievable x 4
 - Young people x 4
 - Clean Street issues x 2
 - Affordable housing delivery x 1
 - Develop port x 1
 - Do not agree with priority x 1
- It seems to want to race ahead before current problems (lack of infrastructure, huge inter cultural voids and expectations) are even acknowledged and addressed
 - Could include a 'We will' point such as 'Endorse the "Bristol Accord" eight characteristics of a sustainable community and support the growth of social capital through focus on young people, skills and community'. This would tie in with the town deal priority and ambition for Inclusive Growth.
 - The council has invested some £20m or more into Investment Property trusts, why doesn't the council invest in commercial bricks and mortar to help restore trading in the town that has suffered so badly?
 - While this may be only the second priority, it will require an awful lot of thought and innovation to achieve. The atmosphere around town on recent visit home was gloomy and oppressive. I have strong ties to the town, but felt most unwelcome.
 - The image of the town needs to improve. People feel Boston isnt safe and is run down. Investment is needed in trying to change the reputation of the town more needs to be made of the waterways and historic parts of town, ie Wormgate. Narrow and wide bargate need serious investment as both look tired, unloved and rundown.
 - I am in agreement of what the aiming of achievements are.
 - I agree with the priorities and cannot see anything missing under this heading.

*all comments appear as received.

- increased emphasis required on housing delivery - if you build it, they will come - this attracts business, and further investment. Council can be a catalyst and should take more of an injection, leadership role, particularly around the town centre. Delivering improvements that deliver value - social or economic - such as investment in place.
- Regeneration maintains the character of Boston ,rather than demolition and replacing with Hideous carbuncles . This again needs to be central rather than continuing into the green belt.
- • Support existing business.' I would have thought given the state of the town centre and lack of central businesses (and rates paid) it would be far more ambitious to encourage MORE businesses to the market centre...that however is not mentioned in this priority?! '• Further develop our relationship with the port and increase international trade links.' great idea, but without improvements to what is poor road infrastructure, putting the cart before the horse. Also, as the town and surrounding areas are so 'produce' and 'food' orientated, one would think an ambition and priority of the strategy would be to better facilitate the movement of export and import of produce/food....rather than leave it for other main ports much much further away (that 'will' attract extra funding to cope with the increase in bureaucracy/paperwork relating to the import/export of produce/food) that will follow post EU Exit. NB much of the produce that comes through those other ports ends up in Boston/Spalding for processing / packing and then further distributions by road to the rest of the Country... surely Boston should be focusing the port of facilitating a more efficient movement of produce/food directly to the area of destination, than it currently does... !!???
- We need to grow Boston's economy any way we can to keep the town alive
- The town needs significant investment but also residents need to be realistic about what the council can achieve alone and that the economics cannot be changed by a district council
- There is no future for the town until we get big changes, and that includes the council ideas.
- As previously stated. Encourage the right type of new shops and businesses to open in the town by giving incentives. Zero or reduced business rates for the first year or rates calculated on turnover. Boston has too many vape shops, charity shops and low end retail outlets. We need to draw big names into the town which will then bring shoppers from extended areas around the town thus increasing the prosperity of all.
- Make sure affordable housing does not become the slums of the future. Abandoned run down empty properties should be dealt with preventing eyesores.
- Supporting existing businesses must be a priority and then build on inward investment. New businesses are vital to the future prosperity of Boston creating new jobs and careers. Most of our educated achieving youngsters leave Boston after school and never return; this must change. PE21 development is unlikely to be viable in its present form. Improving the quality of what we've got already should come first. Boston has been in decline since the mid-1970's. We have an amazing history and heritage which many towns would die for. Creating a town where people actually want to work and live is essential. The town centre is not a "comfortable place" and very little to attract locals or visitors in its present state.

- The town centre needs to be improved by encouraging independently run shops. There are too many empty shops that are being left to decay. Why would anybody want to come to Boston for a days shopping when the current town centre is dead.
- Boston has been in decline since mid-1970's. It is no longer a regional sub-centre. Regeneration starts with supporting existing businesses which must include making it easier and more convenient for customers to use their facilities including reducing traffic congestion, free car parking, clean streets and general environment. Inward investment with new businesses is essential to creation of new job opportunities. Most of our educated and achieving younger generation leave Boston at the end of school life and never return because there are no worthwhile jobs for them. PE21 development is most likely not viable. Concentration should be on improving what we've got first and recreate a happy, comfortable inviting environment with opportunity for everyone. Town centre must be revived before its too late. Boston must return to being a place where people actually want to work and live. We have a great history and heritage which some towns would die for. Let's make Boston great again!
- No – fine
- Regeneration and encouragement for industry to relocate will make the more prosperous. Support growth and the high street.
- It would be nice to see local schools actively engaged with the development projects as they will be the ones who continue to help Boston thrive in the coming years. If you can instil a love of Boston in the younger generation now, they will naturally pass that enthusiasm to their peers and generations after them.

Q5. Priority 3: Environmental awareness and accountability - Are there any comments you wish to make on the priority and what it is aiming to achieve?

39 respondents commented. A breakdown of themes throughout the comments is given below alongside the detailed responses received: -

- Clean Street Issues x 9
 - Environmental Awareness x 8
 - Agree with priority x 5
 - Are priorities realistic x 4
 - Traffic Management x 4
 - Wind/Solar energy x 2
 - Should focus on other issues (general comment) x 2
 - Enforcing housing standards x 1
 - Miscellaneous x 1
 - Reduce pollution x 1
 - Water management x 1
 - Regenerate town centre x 1
- Over emphasis on environmental issues diverts attention and resources away from current more pressing issues.
 - Serious efforts need to be made to rid the town of flytipping and seek to proactively catch and prosecute those responsible for trashing our town environment.

*all comments appear as received.

- Recycle bins in town. More litter pickers and deep clean of town centre. Cycle routes that actually lead somewhere and working with LCC to configure a better road system around liquorpond street and Lister way.
- We need to aim achievements for our Environment.
- As well as the actions we can take we could also mention that we have a part to play e.g. by promoting / enforcing housing standards - Energy Performance Certificates, especially in the private rented sector, and by ensuring that new housing is constructed to high energy efficiency standards. However this may be covered generally by the second bullet point.
- I agree with the priorities and cannot see anything missing under this heading.
- Laudible aims, but come at a cost. Are they realistic, can they be delivered?
- Ongoing project that requires additional resources to nurture others to work for not against our town. Accountability needs to be for all not the few. Money, privilege or nepotism are never an excuse for flouting the law.
- No mention of alignment to future enviro opportunities, i.e. via ELMs and working with local farmers.growers and land managers to facilitate a coordinated and collaborative ELMs Tier 3 investment in the area. No mention of alignment via ELMs to the 25 Year Enviro Plan and opportunities therein. In terms of the 'We will' - just looks like rhetoric to me, needs detail and more alignment and planning, otherwise merely a sop and potential for small easy wins, rather than a broad and all inclusive long term delivery? Why are you not recommending supporting the businesses, incl. food and farming industry whereby their net zero ambition will require holistic structural support? WHY IS THIS PRIORITY JUST ABOUT WHAT THE COUNCIL IS GOING TO DO FOR THE COUNCIL AND NOT INCLUSIVE OF LOCAL BUSINESSES AND SUPPORTING THEM TO DELIVER AGAINST THE AREAS WITHIN THIS PRIORITY?????
- I am in total agreement
- What about pollution? You had a document out last year on how you want to reduce vehicle pollution and where is this ?
- The only thing that really spring to mind is the river, which would improve with the water level management.
- We support the Council's climate change emergency declaration, but the emphasis on sustainability and the natural environment doesn't come across as very strong in the strategy. How will the Council's actions translate in business, in communities, and in planning and development, for example? The Wash and Boston's waterways provide resources, business and livelihoods for many, so what will the Council do to safeguard these assets?
- mention that Boston and the Lincolnshire coast is at the forefront of renewable (wind turbine) generation
- The town and area needs to be forward thinking in environmental issues, encouraging the youth of the town to learn to love this their home and be forward thinking in issues regarding their and the towns future. Their views and ideas need to be listened to and discussed with them rather than token acknowledgement and no further action.
- I think there are other shorter term priorities the council could focus on to make a difference for their residents
- Sewage left on the streets , rubbish on the streets,
- You should aim to be as "green" as possible. Again, offer businesses incentives to become greener.
- More need to be done to protect the environment.

- I fail to see how the local council can control these matters when much of the administration is taken out of its control
- Niche environmental concern , but it's full of rubbish everywhere, bugged emissions and stuff when this is much more visible ,crack down and clean up as it gives an impression of a town and it's authority that doesn't care and who wants partnerships with those
- Are we eligible for the proposed grants to regenerate town centres that are of historic interest? Surely as the home of the pilgrim fathers we should be top of the list!
- More should be done in regards of littering across the town - perhaps an increase in fines or introduction of community service if found to be littering - making people collect rubbish and clean the town as a penalty. Providing the homeless with work as street cleaners could be beneficial to the town and to the homeless people, providing the vulnerable with opportunities to get their life on track. Article:
<https://www.globalcitizen.org/fr/content/homeless-people-clean-streets-texas/> The temporary bike lane suggestion also goes in hand here with the need to drastically improve the carbon emissions. Perhaps cycle to work schemes can be introduced - with certain benefits to employees (or businesses) that cycle rather than drive to work?
- Yes incentives to bike or walk. Making it safer for children too. Free brown bins as it is difficult to access the recycling centre as it has to be pre booked. It should be subsidised at least for those who are elderly or with disabilities.
- My daughter is a director of a commercial company that is heavily involved in climate change ! Make plastic wrapping easy to 'recycle, encourage cycling, loft insulation etc
- You MUST include waste management, waste minimisation, recycling, dealing with environmental crime, littering, dog fouling, fly tipping. The Borough is growing and more and more people are living in it. The Council must prioritise managing waste activity. there is no mention of this at all in the proposed strategy.
- waste minimisation, waste crime, recycling, street cleanliness
- No mention of Solar, Wind or Wave energy, all of which are at our fingertips! Sustainable and a revenue source !!! (plus employment possibilities) The strategy should consider working with the generating boards to explore all forms of revenue for the benefit of the people.
- Anything to reduce carbon emissions and improve/save the environment is welcome.
- The improvement of the road networks around Boston would reduce traffic build up thereby reducing vehicle emissions from static vehicles.
- Anything to reduce carbon emissions is welcome. The general environment must be improved by having a clean and tidy town in every road and street.
- Statements are being made but nothing of how it will be achieved
- There's a lot of untapped support and enthusiasm with the younger generations for raising environmental awareness and reducing impacts. As above, actively engaging young people in this through school and council collaborations will help embed priorities into their daily lives
- We need to protect our environment and improve it where possible
- United Nations recently declared that a million species were in danger of extinction. Natural England said last week that the UK was one of the least biodiverse countries in the world. Today Plant Life said we were in danger of losing one third of our plants. So the situation is very serious. Much of what I am about to say is not the responsibility of BBC. Its more the direct responsibility of NE and The Environment Agency for example. The Wash for instance is being neglected and that's because NE do not have funds to do the work. Boston however

have a powerful voice and can help in many cases. The Wash. The Wash is the 2nd most important estuary for birds in Europe and has more designations than any other site in the UK. It is not in the best of health. Run-off from the former waste disposal site on the banks of the Haven and residue from agricultural inputs reaching the River Witham must be looked at. Disturbance of wading birds and passerines whilst roosting or feeding by people and their dogs can only shorten bird lives. Other activities like irresponsible use of boat craft or low flying aircraft or models or drones have the same effect. These problems must be addressed. Grass Cutting Most local authorities cut roadside grass responsibly but many farmers and landowners go too far. Often grass and wild flowers are cut too early much to the detriment of ground nesting birds pollen and nectar feeders and seed eaters. Often grass is cut unnecessarily because it looks nice. There are occasions where grass need only be cut once every 2 or 3 years. IDB's are also guilty of unnecessary maintenance especially whilst ground nesting and other birds are still nesting. Climate change has seen the bird nesting season extended in both directions. Plastic Waste Boston and its residents are well organised in the collection of waste plastic. What a pity we cant stop producing the waste in the first instant. Market stall holders, despite many requests still hand out plastic bags even for the smallest items. Often purchasers are presented with their goods in a plastic bag without asking for one. Seventy percent of all plastic waste still ends up in our seas. Its irresponsible to use plastic the way we do and there will be far reaching consequences for all forms of life. The 2 gull species that inhabit our town centre would leave if the fast food outlets and their customers were more responsible. Swifts Swifts and many other bird species in our town are in danger of extinction. Swifts have declined in Boston (once a stronghold) hugely and almost entirely because buildings have been removed or their roofs renovated. Other species like house martins and swallows have suffered in a similar way. The South East Lincolnshire Plan 2011-36 explains the way forward. In the case of swifts action needs to be urgent in Boston because of the rapid decline in the last 20 years towards extinction. Farming Its clear now that our methods of farming especially arable and especially in our area need to change if we are to meet our climate change commitments. Less inputs, the encouragement of environmental schemes and most of all we need to adopt methods that allow crops to act as carbon sinks. Water Saving Many people are confused when it comes to water saving. Tap water is used irresponsibly by residents watering their gardens and lawns and topping up the garden pond. Saving the run-off from house or garage roofs in a water butt is a great saver. Go into collusion with a DIY store to encourage participation. Household Batteries We know that the heavy metals in our domestic batteries cause damage to our environment. We also know that we need those heavy metals in vast quantities for electric car batteries etc. We could create even more damage to our environment by digging more mines or we could encourage people to recycle their old batteries. Conclusion Awareness and accountability are in my view appropriate words regarding Boston's environment corporate strategy.

Q6. Priority 4: Delivering high quality services and maximising the use of technology to support residents - Are there any comments you wish to make on the priority and what it is aiming to achieve?

33 respondents commented. A breakdown of themes throughout the comments is given below alongside the detailed responses received: -

- Access to technology x 6
- Agree with priority x 5

*all comments appear as received.

- Clean Street Issues x 4
 - Communicate digitally x 2
 - Disagree with priority x 1
 - Community Safety x 1
 - Housing x 1
 - Improve town centre x 1
 - Miscellaneous x 3
 - Are priorities realistic x 1
 - More social media x 1
-
- Technology does not improve the human experience. It can alienate and raise fear, and avoids the issues facing residents every day, an impoverished urban environment is not improved by better broadband!
 - This should be top priority
 - More support is needed for those of us in rural locations around the town that suffer poor internet connections with poor technological facilities.
 - More street cleaners and road sweepers.
 - Our residents need to be able to access technology to find out about the services that are available in our area.
 - I agree with the priorities and cannot see anything missing under this heading.
 - Generations now are more informed than ever before, we should reflect this, and use a digital as the norm approach. Why communicate via the printed press or letters when social media and online works for many.
 - Excellent idea when it works. Not everyone has access to IT especially decent internet connection also elderly people are often wary about putting their trust in technology rather than face to face. This is also the case for many people with complex learning difficulties
 - The lack of action and activity in this area by BBC and LCC to lobby for rural broadband infrastructure and services is shameful. Too little too late for many businesses. Its 2020 now, this has been highlighted yr in yr out for over 15 years now. Better late than never, I suppose. Most of all the pressures from every direction, for all residents and businesses are seriously compounded by the lack of broadband access/speed. BBC and LLC MUST do more, much much faster..the world has moved on, time to seriously catch up.
 - I am in total agreement
 - Produce and deliver a Workforce Development Strategy that supports the delivery of the Corporate Strategy Love this idea.
 - It is important that the town shows it best face to both visitors and its population with greater focus on street cleaning, good sign posting and making as many areas as possible pleasant to be in.
 - Residents want to feel safe and live in a nice place. The police do not have sufficient resources and nor do the council. However there needs to be collective action as despite statistic showing there isn't a problem most residents feel there is.
 - Forget technology go back to basics. More street cleaners, garden operatives for cutting reported problems back. More council officers going to do checks on multi occupancy housing, and houses which have more than one family living there, we seem to have lost the battle on regulations.

- Faster broadband in rural areas. I applaud the council's free parking to encourage people into town but particularly with the loss of M & S and Oldrids there is nowhere to 'browse' which is what makes shopping an enjoyable experience! Lots of products are impossible to find now in town.
- Continue to deliver better online services, minimizing the need for people to visit or call the council.
- No issues with internet etc, you can check the internet before moving to an area. A lot of other areas are far worse than what we have.
- All services must take advantage of technology to improve the information services provide to the community. the Council should prioritise enabling its services through IT solutions.
- What about those people who neither have nor can afford the new technology. What are you going to do to help them.
- High quality local services are essential; it adds to the "wellbeing factor" of local residents. High quality at reduced cost, including the daily reduction of waste in operation and administration thereby creating savings and reduction in financial burden of households and lowering council tax bills. New ways of generating council's income must not be at the expense of local residents by merely robbing Peter to pay Paul.
- The majority of students (I work in a school) comment how they never know what is happening locally because they don't use Facebook as they're the generation to use Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat. Your current Instagram feed is not child / teenager friendly and looks like an extension of your website and Facebook pages. If you want young people to get involved and support local initiatives, they need to be made aware of them on a platform that works for them using content that engages them. Have you considered offering an apprenticeship in social media marketing to address this? You'd get the benefits of the young person's social media experience, their understanding of what their generation will actually engage with and you'll be supporting the development of a career which most young people who want this industry of work will leave Boston for and travel to big cities. Could you also utilise virtual reality to physically show local residents what town developments will look like? If they can physically see improvements and changes before they're completed, you may see a great buy in and support from them- as well as drumming up additional interest. Could you improve the public transport system specifically for young people? A lot of them who live outside of walking distance of town say they'll be more likely to visit the centre if they can access it either free or at a discounted rate as they can't afford standard bus fares. Could you introduce a student bus pass that either provides free travel on a specific day (eg Saturday) or a discounted rate / nominal charge?
- Technology continues to be more closely entwined in our daily lives. However as a retired IT worker I am deeply concerned at the quality of "apps" and the lack of analysis undertaken prior to coding.
- We need to have services that are the best value for money that support our community.

Q7. Do you feel that there is anything not covered by the Strategy that should be factored in, including projects we may wish to consider?

42 respondents commented. A breakdown of themes throughout the comments is given below alongside the detailed responses received: -

- Traffic management x 7
- Miscellaneous x 6
- Encourage visitors to town x 5

*all comments appear as received.

- Engage more with residents x 5
 - Clean Street Issues x 4
 - Disagree with priority x 3
 - Economic Growth x 3
 - Encourage more events x 2
 - Community Safety x 2
 - Invest in Town Centre x 2
 - Priorities not realistic x 2
 - Develop marina x 2
 - No mention of Covid recovery x 1
 - Cross culture initiatives x 1
 - Strategic Alliance x 1
 - Reduces pollution x 1
 - Address flooding issues x 1
 - Focus on history of Boston x 1
-
- It would be nice to see projects with actively engage independent businesses locally to support and work with each other. The make it Monday posts were great during lockdown but a continuation of this and the council actively showcasing what is available on and off the high street would be really beneficial. It would be great to see unused spaces (like the now closed down Oldrids store) turned into community collaboration spaces to hold pop up events, indoor markets, fundraising initiatives etc. Could a charity shop be set up with the sole purpose of raising funds to reinvest back into the town? Different projects / goals for different time periods so residents know exactly what their money is going towards with a visual tracker displayed in the shop window etc? This would be a great example of what to include in a student / child friendly Instagram post. Schools could then get involved by encouraging students to volunteer for work experience / community support hours and also gain valuable experience of the real world of work. A central and interactive hub where residents can search for local businesses based on industry, product needed etc would encourage more people to shop locally as they can check what's available locally before using Google / Amazon and the like. I know there is a directory but it's very hard to navigate, not searchable and so people won't spend time reading through everything. All registered businesses should be included as standard, for free, regardless of whether they are high street or home based with a link to their website or main social media platform.
 - Empty shops, mounds of rubbish, lack of empathy for fellow residents and a conviction that new building will solve every problem is NOT the answer
 - A program to encourage Motorhomes and Campervan stop overs, as owners are usually of more senior age with more disposable income. A group called CAMPRA is calling for Aires and stop overs, this would bring many more visitors to the town and surrounds.
 - There is a huge amount of support for the Town in general and the Council in particular among the residents, both past and present. The strategy needs to highlight engagement and harnessing the resources available. Councillors will be able to save resources and tap in to talent if they engage sensitively and positively with the community.
 - Work with local groups and volunteers to further enhance the town Continue with improvements to central park. Nice pond and stream area like tower gardens in Skegness would be great. Refurb wide bargate and invest in what we have before building more in the

PE21 scheme. Encourage more retailers, locals and visitors to come to the town with more varied events. Concerts in the market place under the shadow of the stump.

- I feel that we need to be aware of what the members of: Build A Better Boston UK are trying to unite to try and improve our town in many different ways. They want to make Boston more inviting for businesses to fill our empty shops, and encourage more visitors. Also, our lovely Heritage needs to be promoted to people that are not aware of what we have. The group want to try and involve all age groups to get involved with arts and crafts to improve our town. We have so much to offer if people get involved to improve our town.
- Perhaps it would be wise to include specific reference to Covid recovery given the timing and long term impact?
- Need to consider the approach to the town (eg John Adams Way) and improve it to make it more attractive. Need to consider improvements to walking and cycling facilities across the town, make routes that people want to go and use. Work with partners to deliver them.
- More cross cultural initiatives. Not only for the migrant population but sharing the history of Lincolnshire eg a celebration of Lincolnshire day. This could help native speakers and other communities share the heritage and love of being a 'yellow belly'
- Already highlighted. There should be some ambition to nationally put Boston on the map in a positive light via national television, i.e. great news stories, in line with the strategy outputs. More ambition, demonstrating and delivering national leadership on a national platform... = more funding from central government. However I would like to recommend that any 'detail' in terms of contracts authorised to deliver on any of these aspects are peer reviewed prior to contract agreement by a sub-group with no or very little conflicts of interest. Also, incl. improving illegal waste dumping i.e. fly tipping, better support for businesses and more proactive deterrent activity. Also, supporting land businesses to help improve public access infrastructure, supporting businesses to better engage with local educational access, AND supporting those businesses who experience trespassing, either by walkers ignoring signage, elevating personal and food health and safety issues and/or damage to businesses by trespassers. Rural Crime such as hair-coursing, theft, arson, trespassing should be linked to environmental awareness and accountability in terms of working with the local policing agency responsible for tackling this activity.
- Although I am in total agreement with the suggested proposals, I fear the short term issues regarding social issues in the town have not been properly addressed. As a result of unsociable behaviour, failure on behalf of the Police and local authorities to maintain the most basic standards result in much of the town becoming a "No-go Area" and subject to stagnation. Boston is known nationwide for it's traffic problems, Guest Workers, Beggars, Lack of Toilets, Empty Shops, Foreign Shops, Charity Shops, terrible transport links (even in the days of steam, we could get to London in 2 hours!); I fear that until these basic issues have been resolved, the proposals are meaningless.
- Keeping our identity as a council and helping to keep employment levels up would be great for the town. The new alliance is threatening that.
- Reduced vehicle use to reduce pollution? Health and well being and fitness levels? We have one of the lowest fitness levels and consequently one of the highest levels of obesity in the country. Where is the strategy to combat this?
- Nothing to add on the strategy. We would just like to say a big thank you, we live near Shelton's Field and found the council very helpful and responsive when we had the traveller encampment. The clean-up crew were straight in the next day, the new barrier went up to prevent the situation happening again and the ditch was given a good clean out, it really

looks lovely now. It is nice to see investment in the town like the new Football Stadium, skate park, the renovation works keeping the Stump looking great and people like Robert Barclay renovating buildings like Shodfriars Hall and helping to keep Boston's history alive.

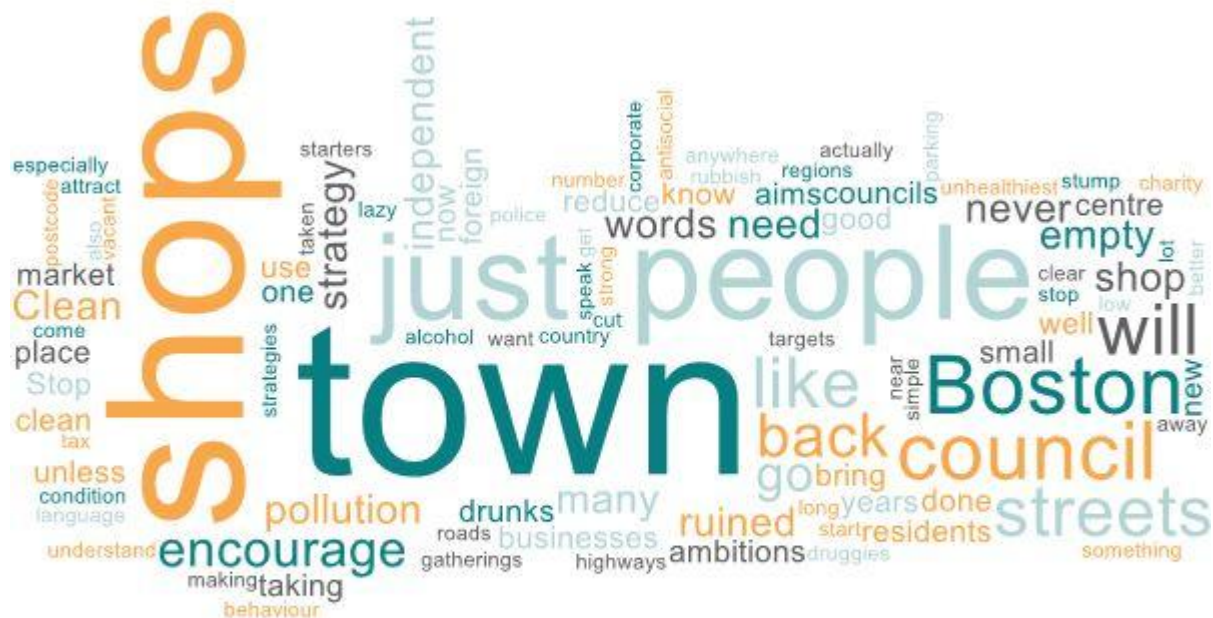
- Could a list of stakeholders be included. We would be happy to be involved and would also suggest other environmental organisations such as Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, and partnerships such as the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership and The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership. More emphasis on the natural environment - the nature crisis as well as the climate crisis, is recommended and we would be happy to provide further advice in this regard.
- Developing the marina and beautifying town centre to encourage visitors
- infrastructure is critical. I see that broadband is correctly mentioned. Road access across town should be improved, as should the A1121 / A17 junction. Promote the rail connection to Grantham and the east coast mainline
- Investment in bringing the town centre back to life whatever the focus is going to be for the town centre
- In the 1980 s I worked at the nite hart hotel and we used to have two coach loads a week of Americans and Chinese tracing the history of Boston for their early relatives. All this money that this put into the town has been lost, there is no tours to take them round the relative points in Lincolnshire . The council then used to advertise Boston in the American Holiday centres , we should be looking at setting up a system of looking after the visitors and giving them a good experience not a town with people having about and the visitors feeling unsafe.
- It is completely pointless spending money on making the town "Look pretty" if there isn't a decent centre and market, a good transportation hub for coaches and trains with up to date efficient services. An improved infrastructure, G.P. surgeries and Dentists, good schools. These are all things that will draw people to the town. We need to go back to the Boston town centre of 40 years ago. These days Boston is sadly dying, there is nothing for people to come into the town for. I certainly don't and I only live 7 miles away.
- Close some of the alcohol outlets.
- We are at the mercy of others to improve our traffic problems, and I do not see any evidence that others are willing to assist. The town has many historic points of interest that have been hidden that would make it more enjoyable to visitors and locals.
- Think of Boston , think of grotty rubbish. Think of drunks and other intimidating itinerants mooching about , a general air of threat and danger , this is what it is
- No point in spending money on anything whilst the area is liable to tidal flooding. All communities around The Wash should combine to get an overall flood protection scheme (eg. Wash Barrage ?). Towns like Boston, Spalding, Kings Lynn are likely to be under water by 2100.
- Look at the progress Blackfriars are hoping to achieve with the renovation of Shofriars Hall. What will replace the Gliderdrome for entertainment on a large scale?
- Safer travel options regarding cycling. Encourage less use of cars. More yellow lines and safer parking to allow for fire engine access during peak times.
- You have sat back and put your heads in the sand through being too afraid to sort out the mess, PC gone mad.
- Market square make over, more welcoming, many people feel intimidated by the euro presence there, tell people that there will be no Primark we don't have the footfall !! Encourage tourism, I live at 36 witham bank west ..remove all concrete plinths on the path to prevent drug issues while people are sitting, or maybe turn them into raised beds I would

be happy to arrange this with backing, this would give a good walk to the woods for tourists, higher police presence, more independent shops, no more euro shops this would encourage people to invest here, no more alcohol licences to said shops, Sunday car boot in the square, Christmas market maybe Victorian through the square and streets,

- Yes, Waste Management, Waste Minimisation, Environmental Crime, fly tipping, littering, keeping the streets clean and tidy and litter free. The strategy must prioritise this or the Council will be able to reduce its services to businesses and residents as it will not be seen as a priority. If you do not do these basic services and improve them, they you WILL NOT attract inward investment, people will not invest in new business opportunities, and communities will be let down by living in a poorly maintained environment. You MUST PLEASE include this as a priority.
- Waste, waste crime, keeping the environment clean and tidy and improving how this is done
- A heritage centre maximising our unique history.
- As Above (ALL) Consider working with the NHS and converting Pilgrim into a teaching hospital - bringing expertise and knowledge of a high calibre into the area with the obvious benefits to the populous.
- The strategy is merely a wish-list of aspirations and needs a detailed Action Plan to ensure delivery within defined time-scales; otherwise the strategy is meaningless. It does not seem to be materially different to previous years. There is no recognition that Boston is a dying town and needs life-support urgently.
- I feel that the biggest waste of money in past expenditure has been the cobbling of the market place. There is no traffic marking therefore it does seem to be a traffic free for all. If you wanted this effect this area should have been made into a traffic free area.
- This strategy is simply a wish-list of aspirations with no specific details. There appears to be nothing much different from previous years. There is no recognition that Boston is a dying town which desperately needs life support to survive. Strategy is meaningless with out a detailed Action Plan providing the delivery plan and time scales to enable performance and achievement. Successful delivery is the only way to achieve these aspirations and must be closely monitored.
- The tidal section of the river through the town, I feel would benefit from having permanent high water. Mornings could be developed, improving the look of the town and make look more like a tourist destination. Marine Investment may follow along with all the support services that go with that. Lime employment.
- Keeping the streets clean in Boston Waste and recycling Tackling the fly tipping issues in the Borough

Social Media Comments

A number of comments were received via social media. A full list of relevant comments can be seen below the word cloud. The word cloud illustrates the prominence of words in comments received by respondents. The bigger the word the more frequently it was mentioned.



- Just words. This is not a strategy. No targets to reduce pollution. One of the unhealthiest regions in the country??
- If you put the postcode PE21 8QR into the BBC's postcode pollution checker it comes out as 1 out of 6, which means there is low air pollution in Boston. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-42566393>
- Clean town, more police, security, stop with license to sell alcohol, more condition for the shop's, condition for holder people and reduce council tax.
- For starters speak in a language that people will understand not corporate strategies. Simple words like what you would like to be done. Clean up the streets. Bring back the town. Where you know where you are parking. Encourage more shops to be taken not vacant. Clear the druggies the drunks from the centre. Especially near the stump the lazy gatherings there.
- Stop letting charity shops in. marks and Spencer's has been used for charity shop. to many old people running the town. all them small shops in oldrids could have gone in markets. i forget this is run by oldies.
- Only if no other choice im afraid.
- Good luck with making Boston better! It has been ruined over the last 15 years. Just with the market place and road away from town. Ruined this lovely town!
- Does anybody go to Boston anymore
- This is not a strategy. A strategy is a plan. This is just a bunch of mission statements
- Cleaning up smashed glass would be a start it's costing me a fortune getting my bike repaired

*all comments appear as received.

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- The council will do what they want to do. Waste of time discussing with them unless your a prominent member of the community. It's very rare I shop in Boston now so I'm past caring what they do. Besides that town seems to be a hovel of pizza takeaways and other rubbish
- Stop granting licences to eastern Europeans. This will also cut back on the number of drunks in the streets. And actually encourage shops that we need.
- Something needs to be done to attract more shops and businesses and a strong case is needed to highways agency to improve the roads and also rail networks. It takes too long to get anywhere, and when people come in they see fly tipping, antisocial behaviour and empty shops. Not a great impression.
- Unless there is Zero Tolerance of the rubbish and flytipping on our streets, Boston will never recover. Flytipping vehicles need to be seized and crushed, offenders named and shamed. This is the number 1 issue affecting shops and residents in the town in my opinion.
- Buy some brushes
- Unfortunately the councils "aims and ambitions" for the town differ greatly from the majority of the long term local residents , who I would guess , would just love to turn back the clock 15 years or soOr is that just me 😊
- A lot of problems stem from unregulated HMOs - there are obviously lots which are over inhabited, just walk down any of the older terraced streets. Don't just concentrate on the town centre fro antisocial behaviour, because all that does is move it into the outskirts.
- You the council and the police have ruined it. This is your Legacy.
- Clean the town up.
- We shouldn't be having to tell you your job. You have plunged this town into a slum. Now do your job and stop locking your self's away from the public and start seeing them like you use to. Instead of telling people to email you with complaints.
- Fenland will be under sea by end of 2100 unless we think big !
- This town was a beautiful place very wealthy market town that brought bus loads of people in.
- by not enforcing the law. Drinking in the streets, use the streets as a toilet, biking on the pavement, car's parked anywhere, people smoking Whacky back. The list is endless. Fine people, get an income off it
- just out of curiosity how have the Police ruined it?
- Just wasting our breath,i have never in my life known a tin pot council like this,absolutely disgraceful
- can we have more foreign shops more barber shops more foreign people entering our once beautiful small market town.ps i was taking the piss.dont matter what we say the councillors will do what them and their friends want them to do.the whole town as become a mucky filthy hole ...
- Sort out the unsafe trees in the cemetery! Don't wait for an accident to happen before you do something!!
- Stop passing the buck to highways and county council and just take the steps you know need taking. Absolutely fed up of everything being someone else's responsibility and no one taking ownership of making changes

- Reduce shop rents and encourage shops to come to the town. Lets face it there are loads of empty shops many have been empty years. What is there to encourage people to the town. Also deliver better roads . And build more schools Doctors surgeries . ITS all well and good building all these new homes but we need the infrastructure to go with it. Also clean the place up. Some areas are so dirty its unbelievable. CUT the grass more often because many areas look uncared for.
- I think you have nailed a lot of strong points there. 🍌🍌
- Turning the street lights back on would be nice going to work in the morning is hazardous when you have cyclists travelling to work before 6am with no lights on
- Zero rates for new small independent businesses, with a loyalty reward scheme for everyone who uses these shops/businesses (similar to Boots advantage card, but the points go towards reduced council tax). This would help fill the empty shops, and encourage the local population to use independent shops rather than turning straight to the internet, generating jobs, and a nicer feel to the town. Louth has tonnes of independent shops, and Boston is actually a very pretty town- Wormgate could be like the Shambles in York or Steep Hill in Lincoln, independent interesting shops would help, but the rent (not councils doing) and rates make it impossible for a new business to make a profit.
- When have Boston council ever listened to their rate payers. The town has turned into a no-go area for many people. Wasted breath in my opinion
- Better late than never I suppose. Boston has never had a go ahead council and sadly the residents are now paying the price.
- I've read their aims and ambitions. And they are just that! There is absolutely nothing of how they are going to achieve it. Anyone can have aims and ambitions! Give me more BBC!
- Bring in a primark for low paid families there is nothing to attract people to shop not even a decent ladies or mens clothes shops and why ask if you don't do anything
- No more foreign food and alcohol shops would be good
- Louth clean tidy Newark very well presented Horncastle clean tidy Woodhall spa well presented and so on BOSTON what a embarrassing XXX tip

One Voice Forum (Staff forum)

A meeting of the Boston staff forum took place on September 23, 2020. Discussion took place around the strategy and all members of the staff forum were asked to disseminate the document and survey to their teams. The feedback is as follows:-

- Nothing in the priorities that particularly mentioned fly tipping, emptying bins, clean streets etc.
- Really encouraging to see Climate change issues in the strategy
- Add VisitBoston strap line to document.
- I may be misreading it but the only area I cannot see mentioned is that there also needs to be investment in the existing housing stock as well as new affordable housing delivery. Housing standards in the private rented sector should be enforced robustly to ensure that similar standards of housing is available across all tenures. Good standard housing is fundamental to physical health and psychological wellbeing as has been seen during the pandemic, and it will attract people to live and work in the borough.

External partnership investment can be attracted with the potential to increase employment opportunities. As an example, if funding through Energy Company Obligation is used to improve energy efficiency of homes and reduce fuel poverty this could result in lower energy bills and more disposable household income that can be spent in businesses in the borough and reduced carbon emissions overall. In addition, research shows every £1 spent on improving warmth in homes occupied by at risk households can result in £4 of health benefits. Fuel poverty also impacts on academic achievement of our young people.

Otherwise excellent and challenging priorities

- I think we're missing an opportunity with regard to working with community groups who support us with our medium and long term priorities like Boston in Bloom Partnership Group and Christmas in Boston Group we need to show that the Borough Council not only works in partnership and supports business but how we support and are supported by the voluntary sector – Boston Preservation Trust, Lincolnshire Heritage, Transported Arts to name a few more, all of these organisations support the Town's growth as a place to work, live and visit. It may not be a priority in its own right but there needs to be some acknowledgement of this within the various priorities within the plan.