Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Wednesday, 26th June, 2024 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Anne Dorrian (Leader), in the Chair.
Councillors Councillor Dale Broughton (Deputy Leader), John Baxter, Callum Butler, Emma Cresswell, Sandeep Ghosh and Sarah Sharpe.

Officers:
Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive - Communities, Assistant Director – Organisation and Corporate Services, Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development, Assistant Director - Culture and Leisure, Interim Cultural Services Manager and Democratic Services Team Leader.

4 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

5 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

6 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2024 and the Special meeting held on 4th June 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

7 Questions from Members of the Public

No questions were received.

8 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny (Standing Item)*

There were no recommendations.

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

There were no recommendations.

10 South East Lincolnshire Council Partnership Growth and Prosperity Plan

The Leader presented the report which sought support for the Growth and Prosperity Plan for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

The Leader advised that the growth and prosperity plan reflected the vision and priorities of the sub regional strategy for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership. It was the first plan which sought to capture the common objectives and priorities of a partnership in respect of economic growth. To date, there had been three separate sets of corporate strategies to refer to when doing one of three things, either seeking to influence

partners, speaking to businesses, or seeking investment and funding. The purpose of the strategy was to capture the priorities around economic growth within a single unifying document.

Members noted that the document had been shaped through regular briefings with members across the partnership, and it set out five strategic priorities and eight core principles that the partnership would follow to deliver economic growth. A single growth and prosperity plan for the partnership would demonstrate to external partners the alignment and collective focus of the three Councils on a prosperous, productive and creative economy. It would also be useful when liaising with the Government and other stakeholders as it would be used as a means of helping to communicate the priorities of the partnership. It would also be exceptionally helpful when seeking funding and seeking to attract inward investment to the partnership. It also directly responded to the issues and challenges in each of the localities.

Councillor Callum Butler referred to paragraph 2.6 within the report in respect of the list of proposed strategic priorities identified. He queried whether the parishes and the rural community were also going to be included as part of the Strategy as there was a lot of focus on the towns. The Leader advised that the authorities were seeking to expand their work into the more rural communities.

Councillor Sandeep Ghosh queried when the project would start. The Leader advised that the growth directorate had been very busy in the background, seeking to attract inward investment, working with local businesses, developing a business forum and attending events like UK REiiF. She added that the plan brought all of that work into one document that could be used to inform the authority.

The Assistant Director – Strategic Growth & Development reported on his recent attendance at UK REiiF which was a national events, lasting three days, in Leeds which was around promoting the area for investment and building connections with new investors. Officers attended on behalf of the partnership and came back with around 300 leads in terms of further conversations with the whole range of investors looking at Town Centre investments and cultural investments in infrastructure.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Anne Dorrian and seconded by Councillor Dale Broughton.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Growth and Prosperity Plan in Appendix A within the report be supported and adopted, subject to any final consultation feedback as agreed with the relevant portfolio holders; and**

2. **That the Growth and Prosperity Plan become a line of inquiry within the Partnership's Annual Scrutiny, complementing the sub-regional strategy process.**

11 Street Art Policy

Councillor Sarah Sharpe presented the report which sought adoption of the Street Art Policy in order to establish street art in Boston to provide safe and welcoming public spaces for the community.

Councillor Sharpe reported that the street art policy had been developed and piloted by South Holland District Council in 2023 with good results. It was now the intention to work towards adopting the policy across the South and East Lincolnshire Council sub region. The development of the policy was also listed as an action within the Boston Town Centre Strategy for the purpose of this policy.

Members noted that street art was defined as any work of art on building facades or infrastructure, with permission that complemented the public space in which it was situated. Such work would not detract, defame or depreciate the area. It could be a painting, land, art, sculpture, etc. Whereas graffiti was defined as defacement of building facades or infrastructure without permission by use of paint or any form of marker. This was always a form of criminal damage.

Councillor Sharpe advised that the policy set out how graffiti was currently dealt with and how it would continue to be dealt with as an act of anti-social behaviour in terms of enforcement and removal. It provided a procedure for giving permission for legal street art, ensuring any street art on Council property would meet the required standard in terms of subject and content, with a clear process if those standards were not adhered to. It was the intention to work with the community to ensure any proposed street art was suitable and representative of the place, creating a sense of ownership, and enhancement to the space.

The policy would be tested with a pilot project working with the community and artists, potentially through the NPO programme. Central Park had been identified as a potential location for this as part of the work to gain green flag status. The policy also enabled the potential for using street art to engage with young people and provide the opportunity to work with artists to develop their creativity in dedicated spaces rather than going down the route of illegal graffiti.

The report included examples of where the policy had worked well to successfully deliver a street art project and also where it was used to remove street art which did not meet the guidelines.

Councillor Emma Cresswell was enthusiastic about the report and looked forward to seeing the work within the community. Councillor Dale Broughton supported the proposal. He suggested that an emphasis could also be made on sculptures within the Borough. Councillor Sandeep Ghosh also supported the proposals and was encouraged by the potential improvements around the area.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Sarah Sharpe and seconded by Councillor Emma Cresswell.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Policy be approved;**

2. **That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Leisure & Culture, in consultation with the Culture Portfolio Holder, to make any minor amendments to the Policy;**

3. **That the outcome of the Piloting phase which took place in South Holland be noted; and**

4. That the Policy be reviewed after one year (April 2025).

12 Partnership Engagement Charter

The Leader presented the report which sought approval of the Partnership's Engagement Pledge, which was detailed in Appendix A within the report. The Leader advised that the engagement charter report followed South Holland District Council's peer review in July 2023 from which they had a recommendation to strengthen how the voice of residents and communities informed future service delivery. As a result it had been recommended that Boston Borough Council also adopt this Charter as part of the partnership's corporate approach to engagement.

Members noted that the engagement charter set out the broad principles of how each Council would approach its engagement work, and it made clear each Council's commitment to providing a clear and consistent approach when engaging with the residents, businesses and stakeholders. The report also made clear the difference between engagement and consultation, engagement being a long term relationship building function and consultation being more short term and subject specific.

Both East Lindsey and South Holland District Council had adopted the Charter, the Charter also having been consulted on via Scrutiny at all three Councils. If approved, it would be published alongside the partnership's communication strategy and would be made public on the partnership website.

Councillor Callum Butler announced his support of the proposal. He felt it was vital to engage in a succinct way with residents, to keep them fully informed and to help them understand the role of the Council better.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Anne Dorrian and seconded by Councillor Dale Broughton.

RESOLVED:

That the Engagement Pledge in Appendix A within the report be approved.

13 Productivity Plan 24/25

The Leader presented the report which sought agreement of the Productivity Plan, which was detailed in Appendix A within the report. She advised that following the local government finance settlement, in late 2023, a requirement had been placed on Councils to publish a productivity plan each year.

The report brought forward the proposed approach for the Council's productivity plan for 2024/25. The advice from the Government had been that the plan should be brief and cover four key areas:

- transformation of services to make better use of resources;
- opportunities to take advantage of advances in technology and make better use of data to inform decision making and service design;
- ways to reduce wasteful spend within systems;
- barriers preventing activity that Government can help to reduce or remove.

The productivity plan mirrored the plans being considered by both Cabinets at East Lindsey and South Holland District Councils. The plan drew upon the existing efficiency road map set out in the partnership's business case and the various strategic documents set out in paragraph 2.4 within the report.

The Leader advised that upon publication, to demonstrate the commitment to efficiency, both financial and operational efficiencies, the Leaders of each Council would write together to the Secretary of State with details of the plans.

Councillor John Baxter highlighted where the report mentioned areas for government support, within page 118, which was something the authority had been lobbying the government on. He also referred to the internal drainage board levies, as it mentioned the work being done to set up a board to protect the communities and also, with regard to the budget, but also highlighting the business rates, renewables, etc.

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

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Productivity Plan in Appendix A within the report, underpinned by the items listed at 2.4 in the report, be approved; and**

2. **That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director – Corporate to update the Plan from time to time, in consultation with the Leader.**

The Meeting ended at 6.55 pm.