



Report To:	Council
Date:	11 th November 2024
Subject:	Boston Partnership Funding
Purpose:	To recommend the acceptance of Levelling Up Partnership (LUP) funding from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to enable the delivery of eight projects.
Key Decision:	Yes
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Sandeep Ghosh, Portfolio Holder - Finance
Report Of:	Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development
Report Author:	Lydia Rusling, Assistant Director – Economic Growth
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government has issued a Memorandum of Understanding as a framework for collaboration and funding to support a Boston Levelling Up Partnership (LUP) and delivery of agreed projects.

The objectives of the funding are to improve community cohesion, support the Boston400 visitor economy and improve skills and address health barriers to employment. MHCLG has identified eight projects to be delivered by Boston Borough Council, three directly and five projects in partnership with external project leads. The Partnership with MHCLG will provide constructive support and challenge to aid delivery of the activities in addition to funding of £16,985,760 (CDEL) and £240,000 (RDEL).

Recommendation for Council:

To formally accept the Levelling Up Partnership funding from MHCLG, with the Council's Capital Programme and Revenue budget being updated accordingly to enable project funds to be allocated and projects to be delivered as set out in the table within section 2.7 of this report.

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable the delivery of an agreed package of projects and activity identified in the Memorandum of Understanding from MHCLG.

Other Options Considered

If the Council should not accept the LUP funding it would jeopardise Boston Borough Council projects – Boston Leisure, Community Organisations funding package and PE21 Rosegarth Square funding – and the further five external partner led projects. This in turn would risk damaging the Council's reputation with HM Government, the local community and the many stakeholders that would be impacted by such a decision.

1. Background

- 1.1 Boston Borough Council (BBC) was invited to work alongside Government (previously the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, MHCLG) to develop a series of capital projects to support Boston's economic resilience and growth. The [Levelling Up] Partnership was developed to bring the collective power of Government to provide bespoke place-based regeneration in areas with the greatest need.
- 1.2 Capacity funding has been received to support the development of projects and administration of £45,000 FY 2023/24 (received) and £45,000 FY 2024/25 (received).
- 1.3 All funding proposals required a business case, which has been developed with civil servants and approved by MHCLG and His Majesty's Treasury (HMT). MHCLG has worked with Boston Borough Council and external project leads to produce business cases. The eight projects are listed at point 2.7 below.

2. Report

- 2.1 MHCLG will provide £16,985,760 capital funding and £240,000 revenue funding to Boston Borough Council via a Section 50 grant in the expectation that satisfactory progress is made to deliver the agreed package of projects and activity. As the accountable body, Boston Borough Council, is responsible for ensuring the delivery of the programmes in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding issued by MHCLG.
- 2.2 The Memorandum of Understanding for the Partnership Funding was received on 11 September 2024. MHCLG confirmed receipt of the signed MOU on 20 September 2024. An inception meeting is scheduled for November 2024.
- 2.3 Boston Borough Council is expected to have the necessary governance and assurance arrangements in place and will adhere to all legal and other statutory obligations in the delivery of the agreed package of projects and activities.
- 2.4 There will be a minimum expectation of a quarterly check point between MHCLG and Boston Borough Council on progress and review of the activities and to address any issues arising. A written summary report will be required by MHCLG.
- 2.5 Boston Borough Council will establish Grant Funding Agreements with the five externally led projects, which will reflect the template between Boston Borough Council and external project leads for the Towns Fund.
- 2.6 A coordination group has been established to support and enable the reporting to MHCLG, compliance with branding and publicity requirements and the statutory obligations of the Council. Project monitoring will reflect the Council's monitoring of major projects, including risk assessments, adherence to public law duties including public sector equality duty, public procurement law, data protection law, the subsidy control regime and relevant guidance set by HM Treasury for spending public money.

2.7 The agreed package of projects and activities with funding allocations is shown below:

LUP Policy Component Project <i>[Project Lead]</i>	FY24/25		Total
	Revenue	Capital	
Boston Leisure Centre <i>[Boston Borough Council]</i>	£0.1m	£7m	£7.1m
Boston Utd Football Sports Complex & Affordable Homes <i>[Chestnut Homes/Boston Utd FC CIC]</i>	£0	£3.205m	£3.205m
Haven Wharf <i>[Boston College]</i>	£0	£2.8m	£2.8m
PE21 Rosegarth Square (Site purchase & prep) <i>[BBC]</i>	£0	£2.3m	£2.3m
Community organisations package <i>[BBC]</i>	£0.02m	£0.69m	£0.71m
Boston Connected <i>[Destination Lincolnshire]</i>	£0.12m	£0.571m	£0.691m
Boston Community Research Project <i>[LCVS/UoL]</i>	£0	£0.37m	£0.37m
St Botolph's Church Visitor offer <i>[St Botolph's]</i>	£0	£0.05m	£0.05m
Total	£0.24m	£16.986m	£17.226m

2.8 In order to formally accept the funding and progress the LUP projects noted above it is necessary for the Council to agree to receive the funding and to amend the Capital Programme and Revenue budget accordingly.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. The LUP funding has been formally confirmed through a Memorandum of Understanding between MHCLG and Boston Borough Council and an inception meeting established for November 2024. A coordination group has been set up to support Boston Borough Council reporting requirements to MHCLG.
- 3.2. On 31 October, Cabinet agreed to recommend to Council that the LUP funds are formally accepted; and approved the revision to the Boston Leisure Project to incorporate the provision of a Community Volunteering and Wellbeing Hub.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

This report supports the ambitions and objectives outlined in the sub-regional strategy 2024/25-2028/9, specifically to deliver growth and regeneration to the area; to offer residents the best value for money from its existing services and delivery; and to develop the leisure and culture offer for the benefit of residents.

Corporate Priorities

Additionally in terms of the local priorities and deliverables for Boston contained within the Partnership Alignment and Delivery Plan 2024/25, this report directly links to the Leisure Centre delivery project action.

Staffing

None arising from this report.

Workforce Capacity Implications

None arising from this report.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

Constitutionally, it is the Council's decision to formally accept the LUP funding and agree the associated amendments to the Capital Programme and Revenue Budget.

The MoU between BBC and MHCLG in respect of the LUP funding is not legally binding on either party.

Data Protection

None arising from this report.

Financial

In accepting the LUP funding, it will be necessary for the Capital Programme to be amended to reflect the associated allocation of capital funds to the Boston Leisure Project and other LUP projects.

According to the MOU, it is necessary for the LUP funds to be defrayed by 31st March 2026.

Risk Management

None arising from this report.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

The LUP funding and associated Boston Leisure revised project proposals have been discussed with lead stakeholders including the Leader of the Council (who is also the Ward Member), Portfolio Holder for Finance, Portfolio Holder for Culture & Leisure, Boston Town Deal Board, CEO Lincolnshire CVS and Parkwood Leisure Ltd.

A coordination group has been established with all project leads as detailed in 2.5 above.

Reputation

The reputational implications flow from not adopting the report recommendations as outlined in 'Other Options Considered' section above.

Contracts

Delegation of authority to the Director of Economic Development will provide for the necessary Grant Funding Agreements to be entered into and projects to be progressed.

Crime and Disorder

None arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None arising from this report.

Health and Wellbeing

The objectives of the funding are to improve community cohesion, support the Boston 400 visitor economy and improve skills and address health barriers to employment. In addition, the incorporation of the Community Volunteering and Wellbeing Hub within the Boston Leisure project will ensure that additional health, wellbeing and volunteering opportunities are provided to support

the whole Boston community, including those within the community that are most in need of physical and mental health intervention.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

None arising from this report.

Acronyms

BBC	Boston Borough Council,
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
LUP	Levelling Up Partnership

Appendices

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

Appendix 1 Levelling Up Partnership Projects

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

Boston Leisure Project, Full Business Case for Towns Fund – Cabinet, 30th March 2022
[Budget & Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 – Full Council, 6th March 2023]

Boston Leisure Centre and Levelling Up Partnership Funding – Special Cabinet, 31st October 2024

Report Approval

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Signed off by: Pranali Parikh, Director (Economic Development)