

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Full Council** held in the Council Chamber - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Monday 21st July 2025 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

The Mayor Councillor Barrie Pierpoint, in the Chair.

Councillors Patricia Marson (Deputy Mayor), Alison Austin, Richard Austin BEM, John Baxter, Peter Bedford, David Brown, Dale Broughton, Callum Butler, James Cantwell, Emma Cresswell, Anton Dani, Anne Dorrian, Stuart Evans, Sandeep Ghosh, Mike Gilbert, Paul Gleeson, Andy Izard, David Middleton, Chris Mountain, Jonathan Noble, Ralph Pryke, Claire Rylott, Lina Savickiene, David Scoot, Helen Staples, Suzanne Welberry and Stephen Woodliffe.

Officers:

Deputy Chief Executive (Programme Delivery) and Assistant Director - General Fund Assets, Assistant Director - Governance and Monitoring Officer, Assistant Director – Corporate, Legal Advisor, Head of Finance Delivery - BBC (PSPSL), Head of HR & OD, HR Manager - Operations, Democratic Services Team Leader and Democratic Services Officer.

17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Neil Drayton and Sarah Sharpe.

18 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

19 Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual meeting of Full Council meeting on 19th May 2025 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

20 Communications

The Deputy Chief Executive gave notice that under delegated powers the following changes had been made to the membership of the Chief Officer Employment Panel: That Councillor Stephen Woodliffe was now an appointed member of the Chief Officer Employment Panel, replacing Councillor Paul Gleeson.

21 Deputations and Petitions

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that no deputations or petitions had been received.

22 Questions from Elected Members

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the following questions had been received:

1. Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Anne Dorrian

Please give a summary of the portfolio work you've undertaken during the last two years and comment on the areas which you are most proud of.

Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Thank you Councillor Dorrian for your question.

As I reflect on the past two years, I'm incredibly proud of what we have achieved together—grounded in partnership, led by community need, and always with the ambition of making Boston a better place for everyone.

One of the first things I set out to do was improve communication and connection across our borough.

To support this, I established a Parish Council Liaison Meeting—bringing all areas of our borough to the table.

This group ensures that every corner of Boston has a voice in the decisions we make, and that parishes are kept fully informed about the developments, challenges, and opportunities happening across the borough.

Community recognition has also remained a priority.

Through our Boston Heroes Awards, we continue to shine a spotlight on the amazing individuals and groups who go above and beyond for others.

Our most recent celebration, held at St. Botolph's Church on the 16th of July, was another powerful reminder of the compassion, dedication, and spirit that make Boston so special. Hosted by Scott Dalton of BBC Radio Lincolnshire, it was an evening full of pride and gratitude.

I'm equally proud of the work we've done to support and grow volunteering in Boston.

With support from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we developed and launched the Boston Volunteer Scheme, signing up to the national Volunteer Charter and recognising the enormous contribution volunteers make—not only to our services but to their own health and wellbeing.

Roles now range from CCTV spotters and event marshals to litter picking teams and Good Home Alliance ambassadors.

Thanks to this work, Boston now sees over 100 active volunteers each month—a figure that continues to grow.

Another area of real impact is our Crowdfunding Programme.

We've now supported 10 community projects, with another 6 currently live.

Altogether, these projects have attracted over £105,000 in pledges—with £49,320 pledged by the South and East Lincolnshire Crowd and £56,000 coming directly from residents and community supporters.

Projects have ranged from cultural events to the refurbishment of Fydell House, and even a touring theatre production—each one helping to make Boston a vibrant, creative, and proud place to live.

And finally, I want to reflect on our local delivery of the Household Support Fund. This discretionary welfare scheme has been a lifeline for so many—especially through the most challenging periods of the cost-of-living crisis. Over the past two years, I've overseen and helped shape the delivery of four separate rounds of funding, ensuring that Boston's £1.2 million allocation has been used efficiently, compassionately, and with maximum local impact. Under the Healthy Living strand of my portfolio, this work has resulted in the delivery of over 12,000 grants, food parcels, and other emergency support—helping the households most in need to get through periods of real difficulty.

Reducing hardship, strengthening communities, and supporting people to thrive—these have been our shared goals. And I'm proud to say that, through collaboration and care, we are delivering.

Thank you.

There was no supplementary question.

2. Question to Councillor Barrie Pierpoint from Councillor Anne Dorrian

As Chair of the A&G committee during the last two years there has been no need to hold any Standards Committee hearings which is a good indication of the way in which councillors have conducted themselves. With regard to Governance in particular, please give Council your view on the importance of councillors honouring the Nolan Principles, with particular emphasis on honesty and integrity.

Response from Councillor Barrie Pierpoint

I would like to thank Councillor Dorrian for notice of her question.

As Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, I welcome the observation that no Standards Committee hearings have been required over the past two years.

The seven Nolan Principles of Public Life—selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership—are the foundation to good ethical conduct in public life and in my view are all essential.

Supplementary question to Councillor Barrie Pierpoint from Councillor Anne Dorrian

When you were chair of Audit and Governance, you negotiated the use of a car for yourself while you were in the role of Mayor and you assured myself as Leader, and you assured the Monitoring Officer, that this vehicle will not cost the Council any money whatsoever. Subsequently, you then came to the Council and asked Council to pay your insurance costs for the year. I don't believe that that showed you in a good light in terms of honesty or integrity. What say you?

Response from Councillor Pierpoint

I would like to respond to that question by saying I have paid the insurance of that car myself and there's been no cost to the Council whatsoever.

3. Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Anne Dorrian

As Chair of the working group which is considering the Community Governance Review please inform Council about this work and the importance of it for our residents as we look to the future and in particular, Local Government Reorganisation.

Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell

I would like to thank Councillor Dorrian for notice of her question.

As Chair of the Community Governance Review Working Group, I welcome the opportunity to provide an update on this important initiative which, I believe, marks a significant moment in shaping the future of local democracy in our town.

On the 3rd of March this year, Full Council unanimously agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review of the unparished area of Boston. This decision recognised the need to explore whether our current arrangements are still fit for purpose—and whether the creation of a Town or Parish Council could offer more effective, representative, and accountable local governance.

We have now entered Stage One of the consultation, which began on Monday 14th July and runs until Tuesday 26th August. This is a key opportunity for residents, community organisations, and local stakeholders to share their views on whether Boston should have its own Town or Parish Council.

This consultation is being conducted in line with statutory guidance and is supported by a detailed information document. That document explains how things currently operate under the Boston Town Area Committee—or BTAC—and outlines the powers, responsibilities, and implications of establishing a Parish or Town Council, including how it might affect local services and Council Tax.

Colleagues, it is worth remembering that Boston is one of the few towns in Lincolnshire without a Town Council. At present, services specific to our town are overseen by BTAC—a sub-committee of this Council. While BTAC has done, and continues to do, valuable work, it functions under delegated authority and lacks the statutory independence and direct democratic accountability that a Town or Parish Council would provide.

This review gives us the chance to ask: would a more localised and representative model strengthen civic engagement? Could it deliver services more responsively? And most importantly—would it give residents a stronger voice in shaping the town they live in and love?

The timing is also significant. As we look ahead to the possibility of Local Government Reorganisation across Lincolnshire, establishing robust and representative local structures now will be vital. It will ensure that Boston's identity, priorities, and voice are not only protected—but promoted—in any future arrangements.

I want to stress that the Working Group is fully committed to a process that is open, transparent, and inclusive. Every consultation response will be reviewed carefully. Draft recommendations will follow later this year, and further consultation will take place before any final decisions are made by Full Council.

So, to all Members—and to the wider public—I encourage you to get involved. Promote the consultation. Take part in the conversation. And help us shape the governance of Boston for the future.

Further details, including the survey and supporting information, can be found on the Council website.

There was no supplementary question.

4. Question to Councillor David Middleton from Councillor Emma Cresswell

You have been Chair of Planning for the last two years and I have heard many compliments from members about your skills. Please share with council a summary of your work to date.

Response from Councillor David Middleton

Since taking on the role of Chairman, I have been committed to ensuring that the Planning Committee operates in a fair, transparent, and efficient manner. My focus has been on upholding the integrity of the planning process, supporting members in making well-informed decisions, and ensuring that the committee remains responsive to the needs of our residents and local communities.

Key highlights of our work during this period include:

- **Improved Decision-Making Processes:** Working with officers we have strengthened the quality of reports and presentations brought before the committee, enabling members to engage in more robust and informed debate. I have also worked to maintain the committee as a robust, balanced and inclusive forum where planning applications are openly debated, ensuring all views are heard impartially and carefully considered before decisions are made.
- **Member Training and Support:** I have worked closely with officers to deliver regular, tailored, training sessions for committee members, ensuring we remain up to date with changes in planning legislation and policy. These sessions have also focused on emerging and complex issues – both nationally and locally - such as flood risk, rural development and housing delivery—and have included contributions from external speakers, including experts on topics like development viability, to further enhance members' understanding, comprehension and decision-making in relation to planning.

- **Building Relationships:** I have also prioritised building strong, constructive working relationships with the Officers and the Portfolio Holders for Planning. This collaborative approach has helped ensure alignment between the Officers of the Council, Members and decision-making by the Committee, supporting the smooth running of the committee, and enabled early discussion of upcoming challenges and opportunities within the planning system ensure quality of service to residents and communities.
- **Community Engagement:** We have encouraged greater public participation in the planning process, including clearer communication of how decisions are made and how residents can have their say.
- **Performance and Efficiency:** The committee has consistently met statutory deadlines for decision-making, and notably we have seen a reduction in the number of appeals upheld against our decisions, reflecting the robustness and soundness of our approach to planning matters.
- **Key Council Development:** The smooth and effective running of the committee underpinned by a collaborative and proactive working relationship with officers, has been instrumental in enabling the timely determination of key Levelling Up projects. Major schemes such as the Rosegarth Square public realm improvements, the redevelopment of Crown House, and the transformation of the former B&M site have progressed through the planning process efficiently and within tight timescales. This approach has ensured that these vital projects can move forward without delay, delivering significant benefits for the town and its residents.
- **Leadership:** As Chairman, I have brought strong leadership to the committee, leading by example and maintaining a fair but firm approach when required to ensure meetings are conducted effectively, professionally and respectfully. I have demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement by attending specialist training for committee chairs at Warwick University, further strengthening my ability to guide the committee with confidence, and professionalism. It is a privilege and a source of real pride to chair the committee and support its important role in shaping the future of our Borough.

I am proud of the collaborative spirit that has mostly characterised the committee's work and grateful to all members and officers for their dedication and professionalism. It has been a privilege to serve as Chairman, and I remain committed to ensuring that the Planning Committee continues to serve the best interests of Boston Borough.

Supplementary question to Councillor David Middleton from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Is there anything you think could have worked out better?

Response from Councillor Middleton

Thank you, Councillor, for the question. What would have been better? It would have been much better if we'd have got local ward councillors along with their local friends and associates not to make decisions on planning applications based on emotional feelings. They need to follow the planning legislation and advice from experience planning officers.

Some councillors have been so emotional to the point of giving false information to the committee, saying the public house was closing when the landlord was actually retiring. Another comment was the school is full, when in fact there was capacity for new pupils. Despicable behaviour, I believe. If the future of Boston planning is to make decisions on emotional feelings, then this will encourage national governments to take away the powers of local committees and use strengthened legislation to get the correct result that they want, and that responsibility will fall on the people who've been making their decisions purely on emotional feelings.

5. Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Please give a summary of the achievements of this council under your leadership during the last two years.

Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

I thank Councillor Cresswell for notice of her question.

I am immensely proud of the progress which my administration has made during the last two years, not least because I had a cabinet full of neophytes and they required a lot of nurturing and teaching in order for them to get up to speed reasonably quickly.

The way in which I encouraged them was through regular one-to-one catch up sessions, which allowed us to have the opportunity to work through issues, solve problems and steer a better course ahead, if one were needed.

I am most proud of the fact that I steadied the ship in short order, and the ever-looming threat of government intervention, or special measures, which had been hanging over this council throughout the tenure of several leaders – and which actually occurred under the previous leadership of Councillor Austin and when Councillor Staples was on cabinet – was quickly dissolved. So much so, that only five months after Boston Independents took control under my leadership, this council was awarded £20m of funding through the long-term plan for towns. The significance of this was captured by our previous MP Matt Warman who wrote to me, “it is great news and was in part thanks to some very senior people in No10 so it is a real vote of confidence.”

But that wasn't the only funding we received under my leadership.

The town benefitted from an additional £17m through the Levelling Up Partnership funding. This funding is being used to support affordable homes in our borough, the new stadium at Boston United football club, an additional wing at Boston Leisure Centre to support volunteering, and well-being refurbishment works at the Len Medlock centre, and improvements to our beautiful Centenary Chapel. For our community safety team we secured nearly £600k in external funding from the Serious Violence fund and Boston Town Board.

I could mention a plethora of projects and initiatives that have been planned and delivered under my leadership which have enhanced the lives of residents, such as the council tax support scheme which has helped to lift children out of poverty, to the development of town centre events which has encouraged our residents to once again feel a real sense of

pride in their town. But I'd like to focus on two incidents in particular which I think demonstrates what kind of leader I am.

I am proud of the fact that I was able to respond quickly and sympathetically to the needs of residents when faced with a crisis.

When the town suffered with the arrival of unruly travellers in the summer of 2023, my leadership was swift, decisive and unwavering. I worked immediately with our Community Safety Team to ensure that a Section 77 notice was issued within 3 hours, however, we then would have had to wait for 24 hours before issuing a s78 notice and applying for a court date. All the while havoc was being wreaked upon our businesses and it was through my negotiation with Lincolnshire Police that for the first time ever, they used their powers to issue a s60 notice – county-wide, thus moving them on immediately and preventing other towns from suffering what we had.

As I said this had never been done before and my officers reported that this was the quickest they had ever known travellers be evicted.

The second incident I would like to mention is that of the flooding in Wyberton West Road in January of this year. Upon learning of the catastrophe, I immediately went over there to meet with the residents and offer support. I was horrified at the sights before me and I made sure that our response officers had all the resources they needed at their disposal. I spoke with the leader of Lincolnshire County Council and met with the Police to make sure that all statutory agencies were doing their bit – which of course they were.

I wanted to turn my words into action and that afternoon, I immediately sought the support of cabinet colleagues to provide a relief fund in the form of a cash grant of £1000 for every household which had water ingress to their habitable spaces.

I ensured that the application for this grant was as simplistic as possible and I was delighted that the first £1000 went out the door within 24 hours of making the decision.

This had never been done in this town before but I was insistent that our residents and business would not have to suffer a minute longer than necessary.

All in all, my record stands for itself and whilst I have learned lessons along the way, and there are instances where I would've done things differently, overall I am proud of the achievements which have been accomplished under my leadership.

Supplementary question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Thank you, Councillor Dorrian, for summing up all of that over the last two years. I think you're clear, concise leadership is evident. Is there anything you regret?

Response from Councillor Dorrian

Thank you, Councillor Cresswell for that supplementary question. I guess tonight I've got 14 big regrets and most of them are sat in this room.

6. Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Claire Rylott

What has been the cost to the Council and the people of Boston for legal advice commissioned by your administration in relation to PSPS which is a council owned company, since January 2025?

Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

I would like to thank Cllr Rylott for notice of her question. The answer is £31,320.36.

Supplementary question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Claire Rylott

Thank you. Why did you recommend at the beginning of the year to Full Council, that a colleague of yours be appointed to the Board of PSPS, a paid role. At the time the proposal was put forward, it was questioned by Councillor Cantwell.

Your colleague was not eligible to become a member of the Board. The two members places allocated to Boston have to either be councillors or officers. You have recently been challenged regarding this appointment and you took it upon yourself to seek legal advice costing the Borough Council a massive figure in legal expenses.

You were illegally advised to go no further and your colleague has now resigned from the board of PSPS.

May I hasten to add, your ex deputy and cabinet were not aware of this challenge and the cost being incurred instigated by yourself. Perhaps an apology to Full Council and to your colleague on this matter, when it has always been an incorrect appointment.

Response from Councillor Dorrian

I need to be very careful how I respond because this is a live legal case and I'm very sad and disappointed that you've been so badly misled and badly misinformed and quite clearly my ex-deputy's got very loose lips and he has betrayed what is very confidential and legally privileged information, so yet again shame on you man.

7. Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Is Boston Borough Council content with the quality of services currently provided by Public Sector Services Limited?

Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

I would like to thank Cllr Noble for notice of his question.

As an organisation, we are always striving for improvements in performance and the same goes for all our services – we should always want to see improvements to services that result in better outcomes for our communities.

In respect of PSPS, there have been some performance challenges of late (customer services and revenues and benefits, as examples) and, as Leader, I raise these issues with PSPS directly and with our Client Liaison Officer. Both Cabinet and our Overview & Scrutiny Committee do regularly scrutinise PSPS performance as part of our Performance Monitoring. Whilst PSPS do deliver complex services on our behalf, many of which have increasing customer demand, we do challenge the company to deliver to the standards we set in our Service Level Agreements.

Supplementary question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, in your response, Councillor Dorrian, you referred to some performance challenges of late with regard to customer services and revenue and benefits. Now customer contact and customer services were something I raised at the last Council. And then I did face an inordinate delay trying to get through.

I just did two test calls this morning to see if things were any better and I can report actually that in both cases the call was answered in in 2 to 3 minutes, so that was very pleasing. Now you refer to revenues and benefits. Obviously a very, very important sector. Can you tell us what are the specific problems that have affected revenues and benefits because you talked about challenges and potential problems. So, could you amplify and explain what those are please? Thank you.

Reply from Councillor Dorrian

Thank you for your supplementary question, Councillor Noble. I will give you a written answer.

[A copy of the written response is appended to the Minutes.]

8. Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Why did the Council decide to stage a Boston Pride Event when a Music Festival event could have been staged in Central Park for less than half the cost of the Pride Event?

Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell

Thank you Councillor Noble for your question.

While events are not in my portfolio, communities are so I will do my best to answer the question you have posed.

As part of Boston's ongoing commitment to inclusivity, community cohesion, and the celebration of diversity, I'm pleased to announce that the town will be hosting its first-ever Pride Event this summer.

Now, while we considered other types of events—such as a music festival, which may have come at a lower cost—we firmly believe that Pride offers something unique.

It's more than an event.
It's an opportunity.

An opportunity to engage with a wider cross-section of our community—especially those who may not have previously felt represented in our Council's events programme.

On Saturday 26th July 2025, Central Park will come alive with live performances, community stalls, outreach activities, and family-friendly entertainment. But more than that—it will be a space to foster understanding, visibility, and celebration of the LGBTQ+ community.

It will send a clear and powerful message:
That Boston is a welcoming place for all.

Now to funding.

The total projected cost of the event is £36,000.
The majority of this will be covered by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which will fund the core infrastructure and much of the entertainment.

The remaining balance will be met from the existing BTAC Events budget, which was already approved as part of the 2025/26 events programme.

Councillors,
This is a landmark event for Boston.

It's a chance to bring people together—to celebrate who we are as a town—and to enhance our reputation as a progressive, inclusive, and forward-looking community.

It has the potential to attract visitors,
To foster civic pride,
And to showcase Boston at its best—
United in diversity.

Thank you.

Supplementary question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, because in your answer, Councillor Cresswell, you referred to the BTAC budget. Now I'm just going to this – in the minutes from the BTAC meeting on Thursday 27th of March and it says there's an existing allocation of £17,000 for a music event in the 2025 events programme which was proposed to be re-allocated to the Pride event. So, there we are. The music festival, which I think would have appealed to a wider demographic, was £17,000 and the Pride festival is double that but my point is this. The Council seems to have put its foot into the political arena.

Because I have to ask the question, why are we promoting the agenda of a particular loud minority pressure group who have full legal protection? Surely we shouldn't be pandering and promoting the concept of identity politics. We're all Boston citizens and the emphasis should be on community cohesion.

So my question again to you is why are we promoting the concept of identity politics? Why is that the business of this Council?

Reply from Councillor Cresswell

I'll respond in the most simplest of terms. It's about community and it's about cohesion, and actually it's about everything. It's a music event with community stalls and it's so much wider than just a music festival. This is a real opportunity for our town.

If you want me to, if you want any more detail adding to it, I'm more than happy to speak with Councillor Broughton, who was in charge of events and we can get you a written response, but I hope that most people in this Chamber will agree that this is a fantastic opportunity for Boston. Thank you.

[A copy of the written response is appended to the Minutes.]

23 Questions from Members of the Public

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that no questions had been received from members of the public.

24 Motions on Notice

A proposal to bring forward Part 3 of the Agenda – Motions for consideration which was moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

Upon being put to the vote the proposal was carried.

The following Motion was received:

Leader of Boston Borough Council

The council resolves to remove Councillor Anne Dorrian as leader of Boston Borough Council and resolves to appoint a new leader at the full council meeting to be held on 21st July 2025.

At the full council meeting held on 22nd May 2023, council resolved to appoint Councillor Anne Dorrian as leader of Boston Borough Council for a 4 year period ending at the annual meeting on 2027.

Since that time, we believe Councillor Anne Dorrian has lost significant support from the Boston Independent group, and can no longer, in our view, fulfil this function on behalf of members of this council.

Therefore in the interests of this council, which needs clear concise leadership representing all members of the council,

That council resolves to remove Councillor Anne Dorrian as leader of Boston Borough Council, and appoint a new leader at full council on Monday 21st July 2025, to run until the next borough council elections.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Broughton stated that the proposal was brought forward due to a loss of confidence in the current leadership from within the Boston Independent Group. He emphasised the need for cohesive and representative leadership to guide the Council through a period of significant opportunity and challenge.

The motion was moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

During debate, Members expressed a range of views. Several Members spoke in support of the motion, citing the importance of unity and collective responsibility within the Council. Others raised concerns about the process by which the motion had been brought forward, including the absence of prior consultation with the outgoing Leader and the potential impact on public confidence.

Councillor Dorrian addressed the Chamber, reflecting on her time as Leader and outlining the achievements of the administration over the past two years. She expressed disappointment at the manner in which the motion had been handled and questioned the motivations behind it. Other Members acknowledged her contributions and thanked her for her service.

A recorded vote was requested and supported. The motion was carried by 21 votes in favour, 3 against, and 4 abstentions.

In accordance with the resolution, nominations were then invited for the position of Leader of the Council. Councillor Dale Broughton was nominated and seconded. No further nominations were received. Members spoke in support and against the nomination.

A second recorded vote was held, and the appointment was confirmed by 21 votes in favour, 3 against, and 4 abstentions.

Resolved:

- 1. That Councillor Anne Dorrian be removed as Leader of Boston Borough Council and that a new leader be appointed at full council on Monday 21st July 2025; and**
- 2. That Councillor Dale Broughton be appointed as Leader of Boston Borough Council.**

Recorded Vote on the motion to remove Councillor Anne Dorrian as Leader of Boston Borough Council (Motion)		
For	Councillor Alison Austin, Councillor Richard Austin BEM, Councillor John Baxter, Councillor Dale Broughton, Councillor David Brown, Councillor Callum Butler, Councillor James Cantwell, Councillor Anton Dani, Councillor Stuart Evans, Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, Councillor Mike Gilbert, Councillor Andy Izard, Councillor Chris Mountain, Councillor Jonathan Noble, Councillor Ralph Pryke, Councillor Claire Rylott, Councillor Lina Savickiene, Councillor David Scoot, Councillor Helen Staples, Councillor Suzanne Welberry and Councillor Stephen Woodliffe	21
Against	Councillor Emma Cresswell, Councillor Anne Dorrian and Councillor David Middleton	3
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Councillor Peter Bedford, Councillor Paul Gleeson, Councillor Patricia Marson and Councillor Barrie Pierpoint	4
Carried		

Recorded Vote on the motion to appoint a new Leader of Boston Borough Council (Motion)		
For	Councillor Richard Austin BEM, Councillor John Baxter, Councillor Peter Bedford, Councillor Dale Broughton, Councillor David Brown, Councillor Callum Butler, Councillor James Cantwell, Councillor Anton Dani, Councillor Stuart Evans, Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, Councillor Mike Gilbert, Councillor Paul Gleeson, Councillor Andy Izard, Councillor Chris Mountain, Councillor Ralph Pryke, Councillor Claire Rylott, Councillor Lina Savickiene, Councillor David Scoot, Councillor Helen Staples, Councillor Suzanne Welberry and Councillor Stephen Woodliffe	21
Against	Councillor Emma Cresswell, Councillor Anne Dorrian and Councillor David Middleton	3
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Councillor Alison Austin, Councillor Patricia Marson, Councillor Jonathan Noble and Councillor Barrie Pierpoint	4
Carried		

25 Audit & Governance Committee Minutes

The Mayor, as Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, presented the Audit and Governance minutes from the meeting held on 22nd April 2025 for councillors to note.

26 Boston Borough Council 24.25 Outturn Report

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) introduced the report which sought Council approval for the rephasing of elements of the Capital Programme from the 2024/25 financial year into 2025/26. Members were advised that, due to the recent Cabinet meeting being inquorate, the full outturn position would be brought forward through the appropriate governance channels in due course. However, urgent approval was required in respect of capital rephasing to ensure continuity in the delivery of key projects.

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) explained that the rephasing related to schemes funded through the Towns Fund, Levelling Up Fund, and Boston Partnership Fund, all of which were considered strategically significant for the borough. The total value of the proposed rephasing was £5.380 million, comprising £2.109 million for Towns Fund projects, £0.324 million for Levelling Up Fund schemes, £2.582 million for Boston Partnership Fund initiatives, and £0.365 million for other capital projects. These figures were detailed in Table 5C of Appendix A within the report.

Members discussed the report and clarification was sought regarding the status of funding for the Boston United Football Club stadium development, noting that escalating costs had prompted public interest in the timing of the Council's financial contribution. In response, the Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) confirmed that the project remained under active consideration by officers, with final arrangements being progressed. While a specific date for release of funds could not yet be confirmed, the Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) undertook to keep members updated.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Mike Gilbert and seconded by Councillor Paul Gleeson.

Resolved:

That the capital rephasing from 2024/25 to 2025/26, presented in Table 5C in Appendix A within the report, including £2.109m for Towns Fund, £0.324m for LUF, £2.582m for BPF and £0.365m for other capital projects totalling £5.380m be approved.

27 Annual Treasury Report 2024/25

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) introduced the Annual Treasury Report for the 2024/25 financial year. The report, appended in full at Appendix 1 within the agenda pack, had been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management and had been scrutinised by the Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 7th July 2025.

Members were advised that the report provided a comprehensive review of the Council's treasury management activities during the year, including:

- An economic update for 2024/25;
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio and borrowing strategy;
- An assessment of the Council's debt position;
- Compliance with prudential and treasury indicators; and
- A detailed analysis of property fund performance.

The Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) highlighted that the Council had achieved a net treasury surplus of £710,516 for the year, with treasury investments delivering an average return of 5.29%. While returns from property funds were lower than forecast, averaging 3.21%, the combined return across all investments was 4.57%. The report also noted that the Council's investment policy remained under regular review to ensure a prudent balance between risk and reward.

Members discussed the report and a number of observations were raised regarding the performance of the Council's property fund investments. It was noted that the actual income received from property funds was below the projected figure by approximately £174,000, and that the net asset value of the property fund portfolio had declined by over £2 million since purchase. While acknowledging the broader economic context and challenges within the commercial property market, a Member expressed disappointment at the underperformance and suggested that the Council reflect on the long-term viability of such investments.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Callum Butler and seconded by Councillor Andy Izard.

Resolved:

That the Annual Treasury Management Review 2024/25, in Appendix 1 within the report, as required by the Local Government Act 2003 following scrutiny by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting on 7th July 2025 be approved.

[Councillor Anton Dani left the meeting at 7.55pm and returned at 7.57pm following consideration of the above item.]

28 Allocation of Seats Review

The Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer introduced the report, which set out a revised allocation of seats on the Council's committees, panels, and working groups following recent changes to the political composition of the authority. Members were advised that the review had been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

The Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer confirmed that the revised seat allocations and associated appointments had been tabled at the meeting as Appendix 1, a copy of which is appended to the Minutes, reflecting the wishes of political group leaders. The report recommended that Council approve the updated allocations for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year.

Councillor Gleeson requested to be removed from the Chief Officer Employment Panel, noting that he had not intended to be reappointed. Councillor Woodliffe, as group leader, confirmed that he would replace Councillor Gleeson on the panel, and the Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer confirmed that this amendment to Appendix 1 was procedurally acceptable.

The Leader, in summing up, thanked Members for their support and reiterated the importance of working collaboratively across the Chamber to meet the challenges ahead. He also expressed his appreciation to Councillor Dorrian for her service as Leader and emphasised that the Council's focus must remain on delivering for residents.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe.

Resolved:

That the revised allocation of seats and appointments to Committees, Panels and Working Groups, in Appendix 1 within the report, be approved for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2025/26.

29 Exclusion of Public and Press

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe and seconded by Councillor Mike Gilbert.

Resolved:

That under Section 100(A)(iv) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

[There was a brief adjournment at 8.06pm and the meeting reconvened at 8.11pm to consider the following item.]

30 To implement a pay structure and associated Job Evaluation Scheme for Officers in shared Partnership roles within the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

The Assistant Director – Corporate introduced the report, which set out proposals to implement a harmonised pay structure and associated job evaluation scheme for officers employed in shared partnership roles across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

Members debated the report and expressed general support for the proposals, recognising the importance of ensuring fairness, consistency, and transparency in pay arrangements across the partnership. The proposals were seen as a positive step in supporting recruitment, retention, and organisational alignment.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe and seconded by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh.

Resolved:

That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved

The Meeting ended at 8.21 pm.

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Boston Borough Council

* Chief Officer Employment Panel (3)

(Meets as required)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Broughton			Woodliffe	
2	Sharpe				

Named Subs					
1	Ghosh			Pryke	
2	Mountain				

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Supplementary Questions and Written Responses Full Council – 21st July 2025

7. Supplementary Question to Councillor Anne Dorrian from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, in your response, Councillor Dorrian, you referred to some performance challenges of late with regard to customer services and revenue and benefits. Now customer contact and customer services were something I raised at the last Council. And then I did face an inordinate delay trying to get through.

I just did two test calls this morning to see if things were any better and I can report actually that in both cases the call was answered in in 2 to 3 minutes, so that was very pleasing. Now you refer to revenues and benefits. Obviously a very, very important sector. Can you tell us what are the specific problems that have affected revenues and benefits because you talked about challenges and potential problems. So, could you amplify and explain what those are please? Thank you.

Written Response from Councillor Anne Dorrian

The Revenues and Benefits service faces ongoing unprecedented level of demand, with a key driver being the current economic climate and the effect and impact on individuals, households and businesses. This is national issue, not just confined to Boston. The way in which Customers contact the Council, means it has a secondary impact across PSPS Customer Contact, hence some recent peaks of longer than normal call wait times. The demand is not just confined to phone lines, PSPS are managing increased post, emails, face to face visits and web-chat contacts. It is also important to recognise that alongside the volume of demand, many customers have multiple and more complex needs which take longer to support and resolve. In quarter 4 the volume of contacts to the Council Tax and Benefits telephony service increased by more than 22% compared to the period in the 2024. Increased demands are similarly evident in the volume of incoming work coming into the service, and whilst the service was able to deliver performance within national DWP targets, the internal 'stretch' SLA targets for speed of processing of Housing Benefit claims and changes were slightly outside.

The service seeks to mitigate the effects of increased demand through additional resources, overtime and the exploration and implementation of new technologies. We have recruited an additional 8 resources on a short term basis to support us manage the additional work, at a cost of £100k. The Company has not passed this cost back to the Councils, as it explores other options for managing demand longer term.

8. Supplementary Question to Councillor Emma Cresswell from Councillor Jonathan Noble

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, because in your answer, Councillor Cresswell, you referred to the BTAC budget. Now I'm just going to this – in the minutes from the BTAC meeting on Thursday 27th of March and it says there's an existing allocation of £17,000 for a music event in the 2025 events programme which was proposed to be re-allocated to the Pride event. So, there we are. The music festival, which I think would have appealed to a wider

demographic, was £17,000 and the Pride festival is double that but my point is this. The Council seems to have put its foot into the political arena.

Because I have to ask the question, why are we promoting the agenda of a particular loud minority pressure group who have full legal protection? Surely we shouldn't be pandering and promoting the concept of identity politics. We're all Boston citizens and the emphasis should be on community cohesion.

So my question again to you is why are we promoting the concept of identity politics? Why is that the business of this Council?

Written Response from Councillor Emma Cresswell (provided in consultation with Councillor Broughton)

The council is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion for all residents, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Supporting and hosting Boston Pride Festival is a powerful way to demonstrate this commitment—creating a welcoming environment for people from all communities and fostering a sense of belonging for LGBTQ+ individuals. This helps to reduce isolation and combat discrimination.

Pride is more than a celebration, it is a unifying event that brings people together across different backgrounds, encouraging understanding, respect, and solidarity. By hosting a Pride event, the council sends a clear and positive message that discrimination has no place in our community.



Boston Borough Council

Allocation of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees / Panels (including Substitutes) 2025/26

* Overview and Scrutiny (15)

	Progressive Ind Boston (7)	Boston Ind (2)	Cons (2)	Ind 20/20 (4)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Drayton	Cresswell	Brown	A Austin	
2	Izard	Dorrian	Evans	R Austin	
3	Marson			Gleeson	
4	Pierpoint			Pryke	
5	Savickiene				
6	Scoot				
7	Welberry				

* Audit & Governance Committee (11)

	Progressive Ind Boston (5)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (1)	Ind 20/20 (3)	Nonaligned (1)
1	Drayton	Dorrian	Cantwell	R Austin	Dani
2	Izard			Pryke	
3	Pierpoint			Woodliffe	
4	Savickiene				
5	Scoot				

Substitutes (Maximum of 1)					
1	Marson	Cresswell	Brown	A Austin	N/A

Non-Voting Co-opted Independent Members: Mr Adam Cartwright and Mr Gideon Hall

*** Standards Sub Committee (5)**

(Meets as required)

Drawn from Membership of the Audit and Governance Committee)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (1)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Pierpoint	Dorrian	Cantwell	Pryke	
2	Scoot				

*** Licensing Committee / Regulatory & Appeals Committee (13)**

	Progressive Ind Boston (6)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (2)	Ind 20/20 (3)	Nonaligned (1)
1	Baxter	Dorrian	Cantwell	R Austin	Noble
2	Drayton		Evans	Gleeson	
3	Izard			Woodliffe	
4	Savickiene				
5	Staples				
6	Welberry				

*** Planning Committee (13)**

	Progressive Ind Boston (6)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (2)	Ind 20/20 (3)	Nonaligned (1)
1	Izard	Middleton	Evans	A Austin	Dani
2	Pierpoint		Rylott	Bedford	
3	Savickiene			Woodliffe	
4	Scoot				
5	Sharpe				
6	Welberry				

**Substitutes
(Maximum of 2)**

1	Broughton	Dorrian	Brown	R Austin	N/A
2	Staples			Gleeson	

*** South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (3)**
(3 and 3 substitutes)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Scoot			Bedford	
2	Pierpoint				

Named Subs					
1	Welberry			A Austin	

*** Chief Officer Employment Panel (3)**

(Meets as required)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Broughton			Woodliffe	
2	Sharpe				

Named Subs					
1	Ghosh			Pryke	
2	Mountain				

*** Chief Officer Employment Appeals Panel (3)**

(Meets as required)

	Progressive Ind Boston (1)	Boston Ind (0)	Cons (0)	Ind 20/20 (0)	Nonaligned (2)
1	Baxter				Noble
2					Dani

Named Subs					
1	Butler				N/A
2	Staples				

*** International Links Committee**

(ad hoc Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be appointed at first meeting of Group)

	Progressive Ind Boston (2)	Boston Ind (1)	Cons (1)	Ind 20/20 (1)	Nonaligned (0)
1	Marson	Middleton	Brown	Pryke	
2	Savickiene				

* Asterisk indicates that the political balance rules apply

No asterisk indicates political balance not required, numbers stated are suggested allocations