

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a Special meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Wednesday 26th November 2025 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Dale Broughton (Leader), in the Chair.

Councillors Mike Gilbert (Deputy Leader), John Baxter, Callum Butler, Sandeep Ghosh, Chris Mountain, Claire Rylott and Sarah Sharpe.

Officers:

Deputy Chief Executive (Programme Delivery) and Assistant Director - General Fund Assets, Director of Finance, Assistant Director – Corporate and Democratic Services Team Leader.

23 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

24 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

25 Local Government Re-organisation – proposal to Government

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dale Broughton, presented a report by the Assistant Director – Corporate which set out the Partnership's proposal for Local Government Reorganisation in Greater Lincolnshire, titled *A Greater Lincolnshire for All*. The report explained that the Government had invited councils in Greater Lincolnshire to submit proposals for creating simpler, more sustainable local government structures, with a deadline of 28th November 2025.

The proposal had been developed jointly by Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council, following extensive engagement with residents, businesses, parish and town councils, and strategic partners. It aimed to replace the current two-tier system and existing unitary councils with two new unitary authorities, one for Northern Lincolnshire and one for Southern Lincolnshire, covering the whole Greater Lincolnshire area.

The report highlighted that the proposed model would:

- Meet Government criteria for efficiency, resilience and improved service delivery.
- Deliver significant financial benefits, with estimated savings of £220.982m over ten years and a payback period of four years, based on independently developed financial assumptions.
- Improve services and accountability, creating clearer governance and reducing duplication.
- Support devolution, aligning with the Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral Combined County Authority to unlock additional powers and investment.

- Strengthen local representation, through Neighbourhood Area Committees and enhanced roles for parish and town councils.

The proposal was described as ambitious but achievable, building on the success of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership and the proven shared services model delivered through Public Sector Partnership Services Ltd.

Members held a detailed discussion on the proposal for Local Government Reorganisation. Members acknowledged that the process had involved five months of extensive engagement with residents, parish and town councils, businesses, and strategic partners across Greater Lincolnshire. This engagement was considered more comprehensive than that undertaken for other proposals.

Key points raised during the debate included:

- **Incorporating Residents' Views:** It was confirmed that feedback from residents and stakeholders had shaped the proposal. While not every suggestion could be included, the final document reflected the priorities and concerns raised during the consultation process.
- **Options Appraisal and Scoring Methodology:** Members discussed the options appraisal process and how the scoring was determined. The appraisal compared all known proposals against the Government's published criteria using a weighted scoring system. The Greater Lincolnshire for All proposal achieved the highest score overall, demonstrating its strength in meeting efficiency, sustainability, and service delivery objectives.
- **Transparency and Public Access:** The meeting was live-streamed to ensure openness and allow residents to follow proceedings. Members noted that the full proposal was publicly available and encouraged residents to review the document, which provided clear answers to many of the questions raised during consultation.
- **Strength Compared to Other Proposals:** The Cabinet considered the relative merits of the proposal and agreed that it was the most comprehensive and forward-looking option. It was noted that the consultation undertaken was far superior to that of other councils and that the proposal offered the greatest financial savings and resilience.

Members expressed appreciation for the considerable effort invested by officers and advisors in developing the proposal within challenging timescales. The document was praised for its clarity, evidence base, and alignment with Government criteria. The discussion concluded with unanimous support for the recommendations.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh.

Resolved:

- 1. That the proposal for Local Government Re-organisation, in Appendix A, for submission to Government be approved; and**

2. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Corporate, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any changes/additions that might be required between the Cabinet meeting and submission to Government; and to submit the proposal.

The Meeting ended at 6.19 pm.