

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Wednesday 25th March 2026 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, Sarah Sharpe and Helen Staples.

Officers:

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

61 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

62 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

63 Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18th February 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

64 Questions from Members of the Public

No questions were received.

65 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny (Standing Item)*

There were no recommendations.

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

There were no recommendations.

67 Quarter 3 2025/26 Performance and Risk Report

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dale Broughton, presented a report by the Assistant Director – Corporate and the Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer, which set out the Council's performance and risk position as at the end of December 2025 (Quarter 3). The report was accompanied by four appendices: Appendix A – Q3 Performance, Appendix B – Q3 BBC Risk Registers, Appendix C – Q3 Partnership Risks, and Appendix D – Q3 Fraud Risks, each providing detailed monitoring information across the relevant areas.

The Leader explained that performance across the majority of targeted indicators remained generally stable, with many measures either achieving target or staying within acceptable tolerance levels. The report incorporated 27 targeted indicators and 65 trend indicators, offering broader context for service pressures and operational activity. The strategic risk register had also been fully reviewed for the quarter, supported by enhancements recommended through a recent Internal Audit review, including clearer target status commentary and improved tracking of mitigation actions.

During discussion, the Cabinet examined the information in detail. Attention was drawn to the position of the industrial units, where it was queried whether the remaining vacant units had been filled. Members were advised that although leases had not yet been completed, there continued to be active interest, with ongoing enquiries from prospective tenants. The units remained continually advertised and several applications had been progressed, though none had yet reached completion.

Members also reflected on wider performance trends, including planning activity, waste and environmental measures, and homelessness prevention indicators. They noted the contextual pressures set out within the report, recognising that some indicators were influenced by external market conditions and operational demand. Consideration was also given to the updated risk registers, with Members welcoming the clearer presentation of target status and the additional transparency around mitigation actions, particularly in relation to information governance, technological resilience, and the requirements of the Environment Act.

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

Resolved:

That the quarterly performance and risk monitoring information for Q3 of 2025/26 be noted.

68 Quarter 3 2025/26 Forecast Outturn

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Growth, Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, presented a report by the Director of Finance (S151 Officer), who was in attendance, which set out the Council's financial position as at the end of December 2025 (Quarter 3) and the forecast outturn for the 2025/26 financial year. The report was accompanied by two detailed appendices: Appendix A – BBC Q3 Finance Revenue Report 2025-26, and Appendix B – BBC Q3 Finance Capital Report 2025-26, providing comprehensive analysis of revenue performance, reserves, treasury activity and capital programme monitoring.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the forecast for the full year showed a net revenue deficit of £0.457m, representing an improvement on the Quarter 2 position. Income shortfalls remained the primary pressure, particularly within planning (£250k), cremation services (£178k) and markets (£19k), although these had been partially offset by several favourable variances including recovery of housing benefit overpayments, reduced computer costs, vacancy savings within the Senior Leadership Team, and increased car parking income.

Members were advised that 54% of the annual efficiency target (£1.429m) had been identified by Quarter 3, supported significantly by the £0.654m Internal Drainage Board (IDB) funding allocated by Government. Work continued with service managers to secure the remaining efficiencies required to reduce the deficit and support the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

During discussion, the Cabinet reviewed the revenue and capital monitoring information in detail. Members commented on the volatility of planning income and the difficulty in predicting major applications, noting that fluctuations of this type were common and influenced by national and local factors. The report also highlighted the ongoing pressures on bereavement income due to lower cremation numbers and increased local market competition.

Clarification was sought on the additional legal expenditure identified within the Governance and Monitoring budget. Members were informed that although the historic matter was not ideal, the expenditure had been authorised appropriately in line with the Council's financial procedures. The importance of strengthened oversight and safeguarding of financial decision-making was emphasised.

Members noted progress within the capital programme, as detailed in Appendix B, with expenditure of £14.023m against a revised full-year budget of £37.422m, and acknowledged the impact of re-profiling on several major projects.

The Cabinet Members expressed their thanks to the Portfolio Holder and the Finance Team for their continued hard work in a challenging financial climate.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh and seconded by Councillor John Baxter.

Resolved:

- 1. That the forecast revenue position of £0.457m deficit for 2025/26, as detailed in Appendix A – Table 1 within the report, and the need for continuous focus on the savings and efficiency programme be noted; and**
- 2. That the amendments to the Capital Programme at Appendix B – Table 3 within the report be noted.**

69 Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Growth, Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, presented a report by the Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer, which sought approval for the revised Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy, attached respectively as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 within the report. The Portfolio Holder explained that the policies had been updated to ensure continued compliance with statutory requirements, including the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Data Use and Access Act 2025, and to align practice across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

In presenting the report, it was highlighted that the Records Management Policy provided a clear framework to ensure that the Council's records were accurate, accessible, secure and retained in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. The Data Protection Policy set out the responsibilities of officers, Members, contractors and partners in relation to personal data, supporting organisational resilience, lawful processing, and the safeguarding of information assets. Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny had been incorporated into both documents.

During discussion, the Cabinet noted the importance of all Members understanding their responsibilities when handling personal data, particularly when acting in their distinct roles as ward councillors, political representatives and Members of the Council. Attention was drawn to the section within the appendices outlining the treatment of councillors' personal data, and Members were encouraged to familiarise themselves with these distinctions.

Members further acknowledged that information governance was an evolving area, particularly in relation to artificial intelligence and emerging data-handling technologies. It was recognised that the policies would be subject to ongoing review as national guidance and regulatory expectations developed, and that the delegations proposed within the report would enable timely updates to be made.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Sandeep Ghosh and seconded by Councillor Sarah Sharpe.

Resolved:

- 1. That the draft Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy, attached at Appendices 1 and 2 within the report, be approved;**
- 2. That amendments to the records management policy be delegated to the Assistant Director – Governance in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder to reflect changes in ICO guidance when issued; and**
- 3. That amendments to the data protection policy be delegated to the Data Protection Officer in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder to reflect changes in ICO guidance when issued.**

The Meeting ended at 6.17 pm.