



<b>Report To:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
<b>Subject:</b>	Pride in Place Impact Fund
<b>Purpose:</b>	For Cabinet to approve the use of the Pride in Place Impact Fund for Boston and delegate authority to the Executive Director – Economic Development to authorise all associated delivery and contractual matters, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and the Council’s Section 151 Officer
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Mike Gilbert, Deputy Leader of the Council
<b>Report Of:</b>	Maria Cotton, Service Director – Culture & Regeneration
<b>Report Author:</b>	Maria Cotton, Service Director – Culture & Regeneration
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	Coastal; Fenside; Fishtoft; Five Villages; Kirton and Frampton; Old Leake and Wrangle; Skirbeck; St Thomas’; Staniland; Station; Swineshead and Holland Fen; Trinity; West; Witham
<b>Exempt Report:</b>	No

## Summary

Boston Borough Council has received a funding allocation of £1.5 million from Central Government under the Pride in Place Impact Fund with a requirement from Government that the funding is prioritised by the local authority to support quick, practical enhancements that will boost local community pride, wellbeing, and identity. Local authorities are not required to submit a proposal or plan setting out how they intend to use their Pride in Place Impact Fund allocation for MHCLG approval and all spend must be committed by the local authority by the end of March 2027. This report sets out a proposed funding model which prioritises investment of the funding into the three priority project themes set-out in the guidance for this funding.

The Pride in Place Impact Fund is a separate external funding scheme to the Pride in Place programme for Boston which the Council has supported the Boston Town Board to submit a ten-year regeneration vision and four year investment plan in November 2025 and will commence delivery in April 2026. The Council will seek to ensure close

alignment of the two funding programmes to maximise impact and benefit for our local communities.

## **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Agrees the funding allocations and priority themes for the Pride in Place Impact Fund for Boston, as set out in Section 2 of the report; and
2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director – Economic Development to approve all of the necessary delivery arrangements and the award of funding allocations to individual projects in consultation with the Council's Leader, Deputy Leader, and Section 151 Officer.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

To enable the Council to proceed with the process of agreeing and commencing the delivery of the funding programme and ensure to fully commit the spending by March 2027.

## **Other Options Considered**

- To not allocate the funding to any priorities (do nothing)
- To allocate the funding to different priorities which are less closely aligned to the Council's priorities and evidence of local community's priorities as evidenced through recent engagement activities.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In the 2025 Spending Review, the Government announced funding of £1.5 million under the Pride in Place Impact Fund for Boston. The funding allocation is in response to an identified need for immediate support to ensure that the local authority is able to deliver tangible visible improvements to high streets, local assets and improve spaces of community value. Boston Borough Council is the lead contracting authority and accountable body for the funding programme and responsible for agreeing and managing how the funding is used. The funding is in addition to and separate from the ten-year Pride in Place Programme for Boston which will commence delivery in April 2026 and does not require Town Board approval of the expenditure.
- 1.2 The Council's Capital Programme as approved by Full Council on March 2<sup>nd</sup> includes the £1.5 million Pride in Place Impact Fund. This paper recommends that Cabinet subsequently approve a funding model for delivery of a local programme which prioritises investment into projects which support the continued revitalisation of Boston town centre and the creation of new or enhanced creative spaces and parks

and gardens across the Borough. Subsequent delivery arrangements are expected to be via a mixture of direct Council commissioned activities and the passporting of grant funding to local organisations to deliver approved investments. All funding under the Pride in Place Impact Fund must be contractually committed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027. The Pride in Place Impact Fund allocation is 100% capital funding.

- 1.3 To maximise the impact of the Pride in Place Impact Fund and broaden its reach, local authorities are encouraged to explore opportunities to leverage funding and/or seek match funding for initiatives to unlock additional support and accelerate progress on shared priorities for local pride.

## **2. Report**

- 2.1 The Pride in Place Impact Fund has three objectives. There is no requirement within the funding guidance to undertake projects under all of the objectives:
- i) Community Spaces - creating, extending, improving or refurbishing existing community facilities and enabling community organisations to take control or ownership of underused but valued local assets
  - ii) Public Spaces - enhancing the physical environment in public spaces - examples of initiatives include new or improved green spaces or public squares, improved outdoor play, sports and leisure spaces, installing street furniture, public art or wayfinding.
  - iii) High Street and Town Centre Revitalisation - making the local high street and town centres more attractive and welcoming places where people congregate and which encourage economic activity.
- 2.2 In developing a bespoke investment programme for Boston, it is recommended that the following funding allocations are prioritised as the basis for supporting and delivering new project activities.
- 2.3 **Pride in Place Impact Grants - £750,000**
- 2.4 Boston is a borough rich in heritage, culture and community spirit. Our villages and neighbourhoods deserve investment that strengthens local pride, enhances public spaces, and ensures our community facilities can serve residents for generations to come.
- 2.5 Improving public spaces is one of the core objectives of the Pride in Place Impact Fund. Good quality public realm together with well-maintained parks and gardens are considered vital assets to local communities because they provide open and accessible places for leisure, recreation and community connection. They support healthier lifestyles, reduce stress, and encourage local biodiversity. The Borough Council currently manages 16 parks or play areas across the Borough with additional green spaces and nature reserves under separate ownership and maintenance.
- 2.6 To support this ambition it is proposed to offer targeted grants to: -
- Enhance Boston's public realm and green spaces
  - Strengthen community facilities
  - Support environmental improvements
  - Enable high-impact projects across multiple communities
  - Encourage collaborative, community-driven regeneration

- 2.7 Examples of supported projects may include upgraded landscaping, new arts or heritage trails, enhanced street furniture, accessibility improvements, new play equipment or installations for live performance, music or other events.
- 2.8 The Impact Grants will split into two levels of support:
- Small Grants: £5,000–£25,000 suitable for minor capital works and smaller-scale or localised improvements to facilities, green spaces or neighbourhood amenities.
  - Large Grants: £25,000–£75,000 for more strategic, multi-settlement or high-impact projects requiring significant capital or revenue investment.
- 2.9 All funded projects must demonstrate:
- Public Value - Clear benefits to Boston residents, businesses or visitors.
  - Impact - Long-lasting improvements to local quality of life, perception and pride in place.
  - Inclusivity - Facilities and spaces should be accessible, welcoming and usable for all.
  - Sustainability - Projects must have a plan for maintenance and long-term operation beyond the grant period.
  - Local Leadership - Strong community involvement, partnership working and local ownership.
- 2.10 The Impact Grants will be accessed through an open call for projects in May with the first project awards expected by July following assessment. Each application submitted will be checked for eligibility and risk. They will then be fully assessed and due diligence carried out. A member panel will then moderate the applications and make the decision on the projects selected for grant funding. This follows the model of similar successful project grant schemes delivered across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.
- 2.11 Eligible organisations to apply for the funding are:
- Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations
  - Registered Charities
  - CICs and Social Enterprises
  - Private Sector Organisations (where community benefit is clear)
  - Higher/Further Education Institutions
  - Parish Councils
  - Boston Borough Council departments
- 2.12 **Borough High Streets and Town Centre Revitalisation - £700,000**
- 2.13 Funding will be prioritised towards enhancements to the natural and built environment within Boston town centre and borough-wide local high streets that support the Council's objectives to increase trade and footfall for local businesses, to enhance community pride and improve perceptions of community safety by reducing incidences of anti-social behaviour. Examples of initiatives that could be funded include building frontage improvements, adaptations that bring premises back into use, streetscape improvements, and creating or improving the infrastructure.

- 2.14 A cohort of students from Boston College are undertaking a structured audit of the town centre to identify:
- Areas that appear unloved, neglected or underinvested
  - Things that could be repaired, improved or refreshed
  - Opportunities that could make the town centre more welcoming, safe and enjoyable
- 2.15 The audit will gather fresh, independent perspectives on the condition and experience of Boston town centre through on-site student observation and evaluation. This will result in a presentation and report back to the Council which will help to articulate young people's experience of the town centre and provide their insights into how specific areas could be made to look and feel more vibrant, welcoming and secure for the local community through future investment ideas and opportunities.
- 2.16 A similar assessment will be carried out for local high streets across the borough. All issues identified through the reports will be costed and prioritised to shape an improvement programme for our high streets and town centre to be delivered during 2026/27 as a commissioned project.
- 2.17 The headline allocations above of £1.45m, allow a **contingency fund of £50K** within the overall funding envelope that will be made available to support the implementation and delivery of the programme. This will be used to procure additional legal, promotional or programme delivery support including assessing and approving any onward grant disbursement, processing payments and day-to-day monitoring which will be undertaken by the Council's Economic Growth directorate. It can also be used to undertake and encourage further community engagement, support and participation. The contingency provision would also enable the Council to consider increased funding for approved projects which experience any unforeseen increases in risk or delivery costs during the investment period.
- 2.18 Local authorities will be asked to provide financial reporting in May 2026, October 2026 and June 2027. These reports will collect actual spend, commitment levels and forecasts under the Pride in Place Impact Fund objectives.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1. The proposed funding themes and financial allocations for the Boston Pride in Place Impact Fund provide a model for the Council to deliver new investments across the Borough which are aligned with local community priorities and respond proactively to the Government's requirement to deliver visible, tangible improvements in community spaces, high streets, and local assets by March 2027.
- 3.2. Funding will be managed within the finance governance framework adopted by the local authority and the existing accountability and assurance regime, under the oversight of the Council's Section 151 officer. Delivery of the funding will be aligned with other externally funded grant programmes for Boston to maximise impact and avoid duplication of resources.

3.3. It is recommended that delegated authority is agreed by Cabinet to enable the Executive Director – Economic Development to approve and enter the Council into all of the necessary delivery arrangements to implement the programme and allocate funding to individual projects under each theme in consultation with the Council's Leader, Deputy Leader, and Section 151 Officer.

## **Implications**

### **South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership**

The Pride in Place Impact Fund supports the following strategic priorities of the South and East Lincolnshire Council Partnership

- Supporting economic growth,
- Improving health and wellbeing, enabling communities to live healthier, more active lives,
- Strengthening community cohesion, resilience, and supporting inclusive, thriving neighbourhoods
- Protecting and improving the natural and built environment, and
- Enhancing green spaces

### **Corporate Priorities**

The Pride in Place Impact Fund supports the Council's corporate focus on ensuring Boston is a place where people want to live, work and visit, and where communities feel supported and valued.

### **Staffing**

The programme will be managed by the Council's Economic Growth Directorate using existing staffing resources. It is proposed that the contingency fund allocation of £50K is available to buy in additional time limited expertise to help the Council manage individual elements of the programme if required and subject to agreement of the Council's Section 151 Officer.

### **Workforce Capacity Implications**

None

### **Constitutional and Legal Implications**

The Pride in Place Impact Fund will operate under the financial assistance power in the UK Internal Market Act 2020.

Funding may be spent anywhere in the local authority area, whilst being mindful of the importance of supporting communities most in need. There is no requirement for local authorities to meet all of the objectives set or spend a specific percentage of funding on any objective. All of the funding may be spent under one objective or a mixture of objectives.

### **Data Protection**

None

## **Financial**

As outlined in Section 2 of the Report.

## **Risk Management**

The Council's delivery team will maintain a live risk register and a programme level to ensure that key strategic and cross-cutting risks are captured, prioritised, monitored, and managed in a structured, transparent, and proactive way supporting effective governance, decision-making, and successful delivery. Individual projects will be responsible for managing their own project level risk registers.

## **Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales**

The Council has managed a programme of detailed consultation with the local community as part of developing a ten year vision for Boston under the Pride in Place programme. This has helped to inform the priorities for future investment under the Pride in Place Impact Fund and ensure that the funding priorities and financial allocations are aligned to areas and activities which support local community pride in their town and Borough.

## **Reputation**

None

## **Contracts**

None

## **Crime and Disorder**

None

## **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding**

None

## **Health and Wellbeing**

None

## **Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment**

None

## **Acronyms**

MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

## **Appendices**

None

## Background Papers

None

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

<b>Document title</b>	<b>Where the document can be viewed</b>
Pride in Place Impact Fund: Prospectus	<a href="#">link</a>

## Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body

## Report Approval

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