Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Tuesday 5th May 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 and Sarah Sharpe.

Officers:
Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Executive Director - Economic Development (attending virtually), Service Director – Culture & Regeneration and Democratic Services Team Leader.

70 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Helen Staples.

71 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

72 Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th March 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

73 Questions from Members of the Public

No questions were received.

74 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny (Standing Item)*

There were no recommendations.

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

There were no recommendations.

76 Pride in Place Programme Delivery

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Gilbert, presented a report by the Service Director – Culture & Regeneration, which sought approval to accept the UK Government's Memorandum of Understanding, attached to the report as Appendix a, to enable delivery of the ten-year Pride in Place Programme for Boston to commence from 2026/27. The report explained that Boston had been allocated up to £20m of funding and that the Council would act as the accountable body for the programme.

During discussion, Members sought reassurance regarding the scale of the funding over a ten-year period and the potential implications of future local government reorganisation. Members were advised that while the programme spanned ten years, the Memorandum of Understanding covered an initial four-year investment period, providing a degree of medium-term certainty. It was also confirmed that the funding was geographically defined and required to be spent within specific Boston town wards.

Attention was drawn to the report's confirmation that the programme boundary had been determined and agreed with the UK Government and that the funding could not be used more widely across the Borough. Members noted that similar place-based restrictions had applied to previous regeneration schemes and that other funding opportunities for non-town areas would be explored separately.

Clarification was provided on governance, compliance and procurement arrangements. Members were advised that the programme would be delivered through the Council's existing financial and assurance frameworks, with expenditure subject to the same processes as other revenue and capital spending. It was confirmed that the Boston Neighbourhood Board would recommend projects for funding, but that the Council would retain control of the funding as the accountable body and ensure appropriate due diligence and oversight.

Members also considered the longer-term funding arrangements set out within the Memorandum of Understanding and noted that the Government retained the ability to review or vary arrangements in later investment periods. While this created some long-term uncertainty, it was recognised as a standard feature of national funding programmes.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Mike Gilbert and seconded by Councillor John Baxter.

Resolved:

1. **That the funding award for Boston be accepted and that authority be delegated to the Council's Executive Director – Finance and Section 151 Officer to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for the Pride in Place Programme in Boston, as set out within Appendix A to the report;**

2. **That authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Finance and Section 151 Officer to vary the Council's Capital and Revenue base budgets, within the limits set out in Section 2 within the report, for projects delivered under the Pride in Place programme for Boston;**

3. **That the Boston Neighbourhood Board be responsible for considering and recommending the allocation of funding to individual projects, with Cabinet be kept informed of the Board's priorities, approved projects, funding allocations, expenditure profile, and the monitoring of risks and benefits on a regular basis;**

4. **That authority be delegated to the Council's Executive Director – Finance and Section 151 Officer to approve expenditure recommended by the Neighbourhood Board, following due diligence and in consultation with the Executive Director – Economic Development and the Deputy Leader of the Council; and**

5. **That authority be delegated to the Council's Executive Director – Economic Development to enter into all associated delivery contracts and grant funding agreements on behalf of the Council, in consultation with the Council's Executive Director – Finance and Section 151 Officer and the Deputy Leader of the Council.**

77 Pride in Place Impact Fund

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Gilbert, presented a report by the Service Director – Culture & Regeneration, which set out proposals for the allocation and delivery of the £1.5 million Pride in Place Impact Fund. The report explained that the fund was separate from the ten-year Pride in Place Programme and was intended to support quick, high-impact improvements across the Borough, with all funding required to be committed by March 2027.

During discussion, Members welcomed the involvement of students from Boston College in undertaking an audit of the town centre and noted that similar assessments would be carried out across borough high streets, supported by local councillors. The Leader expressed appreciation for the contribution of the students and their tutor, and welcomed the opportunity to involve younger people in shaping future priorities.

Members encouraged community groups, charities, social enterprises and parish councils to bid for funding and discussed access to the grants scheme. Clarification was provided on the concept of leverage and match funding, with Members advised that while match funding would be encouraged and could strengthen applications, it would not be a requirement and would not preclude projects from being supported. Due diligence arrangements were also confirmed.

The proposed governance arrangements were discussed, including the role of a Member panel to assess applications. Members were advised that the panel would be chaired by the Leader of the Council, supported by four additional elected Members. It was noted that funding allocations were themed but that flexibility could be considered where appropriate, with Cabinet to be updated if changes were required.

Clarification was provided on the distinction between the Pride in Place Programme and the Impact Fund, including the inclusion of town centre and high street revitalisation as a Government-defined theme rather than a restriction to Boston town alone. Members discussed communications arrangements and were advised that existing grant-delivery models would be used, supported by dedicated communications capacity.

Members noted that organisations would be able to submit more than one bid and that support would be available to applicants throughout the process. It was also confirmed that any uncommitted funding at the end of March 2027 would be returned to Government, although the intention was to commit funding swiftly to a mix of smaller and larger projects.

Members emphasised the importance of maintaining positive communications around the funding and its impact on community ambition, pride and perception.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Mike Gilbert and seconded by Councillor Callum Butler.

Resolved:

1. **That the funding allocations and priority themes for the Pride in Place Impact Fund for Boston, as set out in Section 2 within the report, be agreed; and**

2. **That authority be delegated 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.**

78 Local Government Association Annual Conference

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dale Broughton, presented a report by the Service Director – Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer), which invited Cabinet to review the Council's arrangements for Member attendance at the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Conference. Members were advised that the matter had not been considered by Cabinet for a number of years, that the current arrangements dated from 2012, and that attendance had varied from the agreed position in the previous year. The report also reflected requests regarding whether attendance could be offered to alternative Members where an allocated place could not be taken up.

During discussion, Members considered the reasons the matter had been brought forward, including the need for clarity and consistency in the application of the existing arrangements. Members discussed the balance between managing costs and ensuring appropriate and representative attendance, noting that participation at the Conference was not solely for the administration and that cross-party representation was an important aspect of good governance.

The Cabinet heard advice from the Chief Executive on the purpose and nature of the LGA Annual Conference, including the value of national engagement, policy discussion and networking. Members noted that the Conference included a mix of general sessions and sessions aimed at specific political groups, as well as opportunities for engagement across the local government sector. Clarification was also provided that Members could attend the Conference in another capacity or at their own expense if they wished, and that information arising from the Conference could be shared more widely where Members were unable to attend.

Having considered the options set out in the report, and following the discussion and officer advice, the Cabinet agreed to support Option 1, namely to retain the existing arrangements agreed in 2012. Under this option, attendance at the LGA Annual Conference would remain limited to the Leader of the Council and/or the Deputy Leader(s), together with the Leader or spokesperson of the Council's largest opposition group, with attendance capped at a maximum of three elected Members and no general provision for substitution.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Dale Broughton and seconded by Councillor John Baxter.

Resolved:

1. **That the purpose and strategic value of the LGA Annual Conference be noted; and**

2. **That, having considered the options set out in section 2 of the report, the existing arrangements governing the number of elected Members attending the Local Government Association Annual Conference on behalf of the Borough Council be retained, in accordance with Option 1.**

The Meeting ended at 6.49 pm.