Minutes of the Boston Neighbourhood Board Meeting held on Monday 30 March 2026 at 2.00 pm at Mayflower Building, Boston College & via Teams

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Board Members: Claire Foster, Chair - Boston College, Cllr Mike Gilbert - BBC, Alison Fairman BEM - Community Representative, Emma Tatlow - Active Lincolnshire, Councillor Sam French - LCC, Andy Lawrence - Port of Boston, Tracy Stringfellow - Heritage Lincs, Jacqui Bunce - NHS, Michael Morris - Tonic Health, David Fannin - LVET, Abdul Hamid Qureshi - UKIM Mosque and Jurate Matulioniene - Boston Lithuanian Group

Support Team: Pranali Parikh, Maria Cotton, Ivan Annibal, George Gustard, Luisa Stanney and Michelle Gant

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1 Welcome

CF opened the meeting and welcomed attendees in person and online.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jon Burgess, Michael Dow, Inspector Ian Cotton, Marc Jones and Neil Kempster.

3 Declarations of Interest

No new declarations of interest were made.

4 (a) Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 26 February 2026

The minutes of the meeting held were reviewed and approved as a true and accurate record.

5 Pride in Place Programme

(a) Skills Audit - Update

The Board noted the Skills Audit update report.

It was reported that early results demonstrated a strong overall level of self-assessed capability across the board in areas including governance, advocacy, programme and project management, partnerships and local connections.

Relatively lower but still positive scores were identified in respect of digital capability, arts and culture and aspects of risk management and financial leverage. Members were advised that the number of responses had increased since the initial circulation of the audit, improving the robustness of the findings.

Members discussed the purpose of the audit, noting that it was intended both to provide assurance on current capability and to inform future development and succession planning. Discussion focused on Board refresh, diversity of lived experience and whether future development might be supported through structured development sessions, co-option or sub-group working rather than changes to core membership at this stage. CF stated that as she was currently Interim Chair of the Board, the next steps and arrangements for the Chair role, including timescales and process, would be brought back to the Board for discussion at the next meeting.

It was confirmed that the Board continued to meet the requirement for at least 51% of members to live or work in Boston.

CF and officers would review the Board's Terms of Reference, including membership arrangements, use of co-opted members, sub-groups, term lengths and diversity considerations and bring proposals to the April meeting.

(b) Workshops and Engagement Programme - Update

The Board received an update on the completed programme of the Pride in Place community workshops. It was reported that safety and security and town centre functionality were prioritised strongly by participants, with further significant ideas emerging around skills and enterprise, heritage and culture, tourism and community wellbeing.

Members noted that workshop discussions highlighted several cross-cutting themes, in particular cultural cohesion, confidence in place, accessibility and identity. It was also noted that issues raised were often interconnected rather than confined to single thematic areas.

The importance of capturing the views of young people was emphasised, with officers providing an update on alternative and targeted engagement routes with schools, colleges and youth groups to supplement the workshop programme and avoid consultation fatigue. DF reported that CVS Lincolnshire were due to give a presentation to the Board which had been delayed until the April meeting and they had been undertaking a lot of work with schools and young people.

Members discussed how feedback from the engagement programme should be communicated back to communities and agreed that visual, accessible formats would be preferable to lengthy written reports.

Officers would prepare visual summaries of engagement outputs and report back to the Board on youth engagement findings at a future meeting.

The Board agreed the next steps as outlined in the report.

(c) Commissioning and Open Call - Process and Principles

The Board considered proposals relating to the open call and commissioning process for Pride in Place funding, including governance arrangements, assessment principles and indicative timescales.

It was agreed that the open call would launch following the meeting, with guidance and support made available to applicants and that two Board sub-group meetings would be held in May to review submissions and formulate recommendations.

Members agreed that not all funding should necessarily be allocated in the first round, allowing flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and high-quality proposals at a later stage. The importance of collaboration, sustainability, legacy, governance capacity and the identification of early "quick wins" was emphasised.

The proposed use of an AI-supported system to assist with summarising and structuring applications was noted, subject to Council approval and data protection requirements, with all decisions remaining the responsibility of officers and the Board.

The Board agreed a simplified project ideas form, endorsed the commissioning principles and proposed timescales and the updated list of key organisations, including Active Lincolnshire.

The Board noted comments received from Neil Kempster who unfortunately could not be at the meeting. The comments broadly supported the direction of travel set out in the commissioning and engagement proposals, acknowledged the recent endorsement of the Pride in Place Plan by Government and raised points relating to clarity of sub-group remit and transparency of stakeholder engagement. The comments were noted.

CF thanked the support team involved in securing validation of the plan by MHCLG and the Board for their work and commitment.

6 CVS Lincolnshire Board Presentation - Community Masterplan

The Board noted that the planned presentation from CVS Lincolnshire on the Community Masterplan had been deferred due to illness. Members acknowledged the relevance of the Masterplan to the Pride in Place programme and agreed that the item should be rescheduled when the appropriate representatives were available.

7 Communications Update

The Board considered the Communications Report for March 2026. An update was provided on recent activity, including promotion of the Pride in Place workshops, Towns Fund communications and media coverage relating to the Town of Culture Expression of Interest.

Members noted continued growth in engagement across digital channels, particularly strong interaction with heritage-related content and good engagement with Chair's Updates. The importance of maintaining clear, consistent Pride in Place branding across all communications was emphasised.

8 Any Other Business

Levelling up Partnership Funding - Digital & Media Hub - Members noted that the Gliderdrome building would not be utilised for the hub. Boston College would repurpose a building on their campus using the funding.

Community Safety Officers - Members discussed the position regarding Community Safety Officer funding and requested that officers bring forward an evaluation of impact and options for future sustainability to a subsequent meeting.

Sport England Bid - ET provided an update on Active Lincolnshire's Sport England bid which aligned with Pride in Place priorities, which was welcomed by the Board.

Town of Culture Expression of Interest - Members noted that the Expression of Interest had been submitted and could not be shared at this stage due to the competitive nature of the process.

Programme Management and Consultancy Support - The Board received an update on programme management capacity and resolved to extend consultancy support for a short, defined period with clarified milestones and outputs to support the transition into commissioning.

It was noted that the positions of Pride in Place Programme Manager and Co-Ordinator were currently being advertised.

9 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 27 April at 2pm at the Len Medlock Centre.

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LED BY YOU – BACKED BY UK GOVERNMENT