

MINUTES OF THE SPALDING TOWN BOARD MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 25 MARCH 2024 AT 5PM
AT BOSTON COLLEGE CAMPUS, RED LION QUARTER, SPALDING

Present: Robin Hancox (Chair) - Lincolnshire Field Products, Matthew Hogan - SHDC, Lydia Rusling - S&ELCP, Michelle Gant - The Engaging People Company, Louis Humphries - SHDC, Councillor Nick Worth - SHDC, Councillor Gary Taylor - SHDC, Councillor Rob Gibson - SHDC, John Mullen - SHDC, Inspector Matt Dickinson - Lincolnshire Police, Catherine Duce - Spalding Business Board, Craig Delaney - Spalding Business Board, Alistair Main - Lighthouse Church, Petronella Keeling - Spalding Gentlemen's Society, Marc Jones - Lincolnshire Police Crime Commissioner (*arrived at 5.30pm*), David Jones - Pedals, Stuart Elderkin - Pedals, Sarah Barrowby - Destination Lincolnshire (*arrived at 5.45pm*) and Luisa Stanney - (S&ELCP)

Apologies for Absence: Sir John Hayes, MP, Claire Foster - Boston College, Emma Tatlow - Active Lincolnshire, Charlotte Goy - Destination Lincolnshire, Lizzi Van Egmond - Business Representative, David Ball - Bridge Farm and Tracey Stringfellow - Heritage Lincolnshire

1 Welcome & Introductions

RH welcomed everyone to the meeting. After introductions RH explained that the Long Term Plan for Towns Guidance outlined that a business person should be appointed as Chair and he was looking forward to seeing what impact the funding would have on Spalding and thanked officers for putting the bid together.

2 Role of Town Board Member

The Terms of Reference for the Board had been circulated which referenced the responsibilities of the members of the Board and the premise of the new funding. LR explained that it was the Board's responsibility to oversee the production of the Long Term Plan for Spalding. The Board consisted of representatives from the local community, businesses and public sector representation. In addition to the Terms of Reference there was also a Code of Conduct that reflected the principles of public life. Both documents would be submitted to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The Guidance received from DLUHC (circulated to members) highlighted that members of the Board were expected to play a proactive role in the production of the Long Term Plan and encouraging projects to come forward from businesses and local community groups, etc.

Members of the Board would be asked to sign Declarations of Interest, to adhere to the principles of public life and to the Code of Conduct. There would be a team of officers in place to support the Board.

Should any member of the Board submit a bid for funding, it would be considered fairly, but that member would not be able to take part in any decision making.

DLUHC had requested that South Holland Council complete a Long Term Plan for Towns Governance form which had been designed to capture information regarding the geographical boundary for the funding, activity undertaken to date in each town, a copy of the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct and a list of Board members. This form would have to be submitted by 1 April and signed by the Chair and SHDC's S151 Officer. This would enable capacity funding to be released.

RH thanked members for attending the meeting with little notice - but as LR had explained information had to be submitted to DLUHC within a short timescale.

3 Terms of Reference

RH referred to the Terms of Reference and the DLUHC Governance form.

The Governance form included a map of the geographical boundary that defined where the investment could be spent. Members had the right to amend the map.

Following a discussion on the geographical area it was agreed that a boundary change request would be submitted to incorporate the following:-

- Commenced and planned residential housing development at Holland Park.
- Commenced and planned commercial and industrial development at the Gateway and Clay Lakes.
- Other areas of existing residential and commercial parts of the town, in the land between the A16 and the town itself (e.g. Barrier Bank and Little London).
- To remove an outlying area of land which appears to cover a single business premise.

The Board also agreed to adopt the Terms of Reference.

4 Presentation on the Long Term Plan for Towns - Process and Key Dates

LR gave an overview of the plan was for Spalding. The funding was a 10 year endowment style fund amounting to £20m and there was a real push to ensure it was spent on local people's priorities. The 10 year plan would see funding over 7 years, with the initial investment over the first 3 years, with the ability to roll-over underspends. There would be a range of other initiatives and support in place, with a Toolkit of regeneration powers and a Towns Taskforce.

There were 3 themes to the funding and projects would need to be assigned to one of the themes – safety and security; high street, heritage and regeneration and transport and connectivity.

The funding required the establishment of a Town Board, set up within the guidance from Government and chaired by a business representative. The Board had to consist of representatives from a number of sectors. The Board would work with South Holland District Council (SHDC) to develop the Plan and identify opportunities to spend the funding and utilise specific powers.

Financial responsibility for the funding sat with SHDC, with all documents being signed off by the S151 Officer (Finance Director). SHDC were also responsible for the secretariate of the Board, managing community engagement, monitoring and reporting back to the DLUCH, whilst ensuring all projects were supported.

The first governance form outlining the make up of the Board and boundary area for funding had to be signed off by the S151 Officer and submitted to DLUCH by 1 April - £200k capacity funding would then be released to support the development of the Plan. The 10 year Plan, outlining the initial 3 year investment plan, had to be submitted by 1 August.

Following discussions, it was noted that:-

- There should be student representation on the Board. LR had worked with the Lincs Community Voluntary organisation in Boston who had provided support for a young person to be on the Boston Town Deal Board. They paid for the mentoring of that student (cost approximately £5k). MJ also suggested working with Lincolnshire Strong Voices - they were a core priority group that worked with the PCC on a regular basis and could offer support to ensure the Board had regular feedback from the 11-18 age group. This support could also be put in place for the Boston and Skegness Boards and offered a wider consultative option. This would be at no cost.

However, MJ could also offer the Board access to more data around community safety and analytical data - all of which was required to build cases for investment. This would require some of the capacity funding (£15k each from SHDC, Boston Borough Council and East Lindsey District Council). The cost of this support would also be paid from the proceeds from crime budget. This was an opportunity for the Board to have access to analytical evidence as well as the capability to support the Board in the wider sense.

RH thanked MJ for the offer and asked that a report was submitted to the next Board meeting to discuss this and youth representation in further detail.

- Board members could be added at any time, but after discussion and agreement by the Board.

5 Summary of Previous, Current & Planned Activity in Spalding

MH discussed the programme of work and activity that was already happening in Spalding, which had been developed through engagement with partners and Spalding Business Board to improve the town centre. The work aimed to improve town centre access, supporting individual businesses, the public realm and looking at how to diversify the town centre offer.

MH/LS touched upon the following projects - Spalding Reconnected, NPO Scheme to deliver a heritage and culture based programme, Spalding town centre access (results from a recent survey on town centre traffic access provided a rich insight into views of the residents). There had also been targeted public realm investment scheme (new seating, planting, etc.) which now could be an expanded plan due to the Long Term Plan for Towns Funding.

The NPO funding (National Portfolio Organisation) had funded an extension of the cultural strategy. The South Holland health and wellbeing hub was a £26m regeneration scheme of the Castle Sports Complex using Levelling Up Funding.

Other initiatives were discussed such as Grant for Growth, Spalding Flower parade, road improvements to improve traffic flow and UKSPF funding (which had supported the Destination Management Plan).

In summary there was a lot of work already underway prior to the Government announcing the Long Term Plan for Towns Funding which would all help with the evidence base and the formulation of the Plan to drive investment using the new funding.

It was noted that once the Long Term Plan for Spalding has been approved by the Board, it would be submitted to SHDC for approval, along with the risk register. When the Board considered which projects to approve, that is when the evidence base and communications would be even more important.

6 Communications and Engagement

LR outlined that the requirements had been set by Government in terms of transparency and communication and were outlined in the Guidance. The agenda and minutes for each meeting would be published online. Engagement with the public was extremely important and Government wanted to see evidence that the Plan had the support of the community.

MH introduced Michelle Gant to the Board who would be helping in the short term with communications and engagement. There would be a website for Spalding Town Board where updates and press releases would be available. A press release had already been drafted and would be circulated following on from the Board meeting.

MG would work with the Board to formulate a communications plan. Michelle was the Communications Officer for Boston Town Deal Board and Connected Coast.

All communications, social media and engagement would reflect the Board and their aims. Community engagement was important for members of the community to have their say and see that they have contributed to projects, etc.

RH wanted all Board members to feel that they could contribute and have their say in the meetings - all ideas and suggestions were welcomed. It was agreed that the Board had a WhatsApp or email group to keep ideas and discussions flowing.

7 Creating the Vision & Investment Plan

The Vision and Investment Plan should reflect the 3 themes of the funding. It was agreed that a workshop would be organised to discuss ideas and move forward with the preparation of the Plan.

MH informed the Board that whilst there was capability in the Team, there was not capacity and together with LR, would be looking to bring in more expertise and support for the Board.

There was £250k of capacity funding available (this was part of the £20m funding) to bring in support, etc. The Board would receive regular financial reports to approve any spending.

There was other support available that came with the funding. There was a Towns Task force that the Government had put in place to support all 55 towns that had received the funding.

The Board agreed that they were looking forward to working together to formulate a plan and projects that would benefit the residents of Spalding for many years to come.

9 Next Steps & Dates of Future Meetings

Dates would be circulated for the workshop and the future Board meetings. It was noted that Sir John Hayes, MP, had requested that the next meeting took place on a Friday, but RH was mindful that all members of the Board had commitments. LS would circulate dates.

Reports on youth representation, communications and engagement and data (from MJ) would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Members would also be asked to complete their Declarations of Interest and return to MH.