



Minutes of Spalding Town Board held on Thursday 6 February 2025 at 5pm at Boston College Campus, Red Lion Quarter, Spalding

Present: Robin Hancox (Chair) - Lincolnshire Field Products, Laura Freer - Destination Lincolnshire, Councillor Nick Worth - SHDC, John Bland - Spalding Civic Society, Petronella Keeling - Spalding Gentlemen's Society, Simon Wright - LCC, Dustin Frazier Wood - Spalding Gentlemen's Society, Stewart Elderkin - Pedals, David Jones - Pedals, Michael Morris - Tonic Health, Councillor Gary Taylor - LCC, Joanne Davison - Lincolnshire Police & Crime Commissioner's Office, Inspector Matt Dickinson - Lincolnshire Police, David Ball - Bridge Farm, Claire Foster - Boston College, Alistair Main - Lighthouse Church; Craig Delaney - Spalding Business Board, Cllr Ingrid Shepard - SHDC, Cllr Robert Gibson - SHDC, Catherine Duce - Spalding Business Board, Jonathan Fray - Active Lincolnshire and Sir John Hayes - MP

Spalding Town Board Officer Team - Pranali Parikh, Debbie McLatch, Jon Burgess, John Mullen, Michelle Gant & Luisa Stanney

Apologies for Absence: Lizzi Van Edgmond - Business Representative, Tracey Stringfellow - Heritage Lincolnshire & Mark Jones - Lincs PCC.

1 Welcome

RH welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the opportunity to inform members that Lydia Rusling had left the Partnership. RH asked for his thanks to be put on record for all the hard work Lydia had undertaken in supporting the Board and wished her well in her new post. RH welcomed Debbie McLatch to the Board who was Lydia's interim replacement.

2 Declarations of Interest - None declared.

3 To agree the Minutes of the last meeting - 7 October 2024 - The minutes were agreed as a true record.

4 Long Term Plan for Towns

RH had written to Angela Raynor about Spalding Town Board who had handed the letter to another minister who had committed to visit Spalding. RH would share the date with Board members when notified.

PP gave a presentation to the Board on the LTPFT funding and referred them to the report that was circulated prior to the meeting.

PP outlined the 2025-26 work proposals:-

- Undertake an audit of information and identify gaps in knowledge. Three key works to be undertaken - retail, hospitality and leisure study, capacity, demand and need analysis for a range of sectors and skills studies.
- Conclude the heritage strategy and prepare design guidance.
- Develop a 10-20 year vision and plan within which the LTPFT programme (and other funded investment programmes would sit).
- Prepare a Plan which identified opportunities for capital investment and support the development of priority projects through design, feasibility and business cases.
- Appointment of community rangers to engage with the users and businesses in the town and provide assurance of safety and security. Investment in CCTV enhancement where required.
- Improvements to signage and street furniture.
- Support events and activities that help enhance "pride in place" (link with consultation and engagement).

The Board were being asked to approve the allocation of the £280k capacity funding as outlined and consider and provide guidance on the utilisation of the remaining £63k capacity funding. Both the public and the Board were getting frustrated with the delays but it was noted that some capacity funding had been spent on the Christmas lights for Spalding.

The Board took the opportunity to discuss the proposals and had a long debate on what the funding should cover. In relation to safety and security, RH was disappointed that a detailed report with costings had not been received from the office of the Lincolnshire PCC or a Spalding Hot Spot Policing Pilot. JD offered her apologies for the delay and would ensure a report outlining costs was prepared as soon as possible.

Turning the design guide for the town centre, work was already underway and there had been a business task force group working at SHDC who had put forward a proposal to develop a business frontage guide, so there should be communication between the Council and the Board so as not to developing two matching guides. Spalding Reconnected had also been working on signage which was being funded by the Heritage Lottery. PP explained that in relation to shop fronts and a general design guide for the town centre - both pieces of work were required. The general design guide had been partly funded by UKSPF funding and the shop front guide would dovetail into that.

Turning to the use of the £63k, it was suggested that proposals were submitted to the next Board meeting for discussion. The money should be used as an additionality, rather than duplicating what had already been done.

The Plan for Spalding was essential to bring everything together under one umbrella, rather than ad hoc projects being undertaken by different entities. The £280k was the budget to pull the plan together, along with some public interventions.

DFW and PK took the opportunity to present a proposal to the Board which if approved would utilise some of the capacity funding. Spalding Gentlemen's Society (SGS) was in the midst of change and were currently refurbishing the 1911 Museum in Broad Street with £1.8m support from Arts Council England. The next step was to redevelop the Broad Street Business Centre site to create a facility for a range of community programmes: education, conservation, research, events, performances, exhibitions and activities.

SGC were invited by National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to submit a development grant application in advance of a larger (approx. £5m) delivery grant application to redevelop the

Business Centre site. SGC submitted an application for project funding of £875,000 in November and it would soon be presented to NLHF's panel for the East Midlands. Of that total, SGS must provide 10% match funding (£87,500). If the Board agreed to use some of the capacity funding it would boost SGC's application.

Following an in depth discussion, the Board agreed that whilst this was an "oven ready" project, further information was required for a decision to be made and a report available. There was also concern that the Board may be seen that they were helping one group over another.

However it was also noted that the capacity funding was intended to support the decision making and planning process for future initiatives, but the Board needed to demonstrate clear progress as the public would not be satisfied if the entire capacity funding was spent solely on reports. Any projects proposed during the capacity funding stage could potentially be included in the first tranche of the funding.

RH had taken on board all comments received on the SGC's proposal. A lot of work had been undertaken to submit an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and it would bring further investment into Spalding. It was agreed that DFW and PK would submit a one page report to outline the request for capacity funding. This would be circulated to the Board with any comments sent to LS and a decision would be made by 14 February.

In relation to the £280k allocation of capacity funding, the Board agreed to the proposals outlined in the report and once all the work had been procured, details would be shared with the Board for full transparency.

5 Communications Update

MG referred to the communications report that was circulated to the Board. There had been significant interest from the press and public on the Board's activities. Several press articles had been released in relation to the Board's activities such as funding for the Christmas lights. MG had also started to create regular Chair's updates from RH to be sent to those who had subscribed to receive news during consultation events. The team would continue to build subscribers through future engagement activities.

Looking ahead MG would be producing an engagement strategy which aligned with the LTPFT prospectus. An annual report would also be drafted - positioning the narrative about the Board being passionate about Spalding and creating engagement with the Love Spalding website. The annual report could be launched at an exhibition event which would give the public a chance to meet Board members. RH thanked MG for the update.

6 Levelling Up Fund Update

The Board read the update on the Castle Sports Complex. It was noted that there was now a dedicated website to show progress of the works (www.southhollandlevellingup.co.uk). Detailed planning consent had been granted for the Health & Wellbeing Hub on 8 January 2025. At the same time the Planning Committee granted outline planning consent for the new extra care housing provision on the site. The works were due to be completed by the end of 2026. Regular updates would continue to be submitted to Board meetings.

7 Local Government Reform

NW reported that he had received a letter from the Minister for Local Government which outlined that the Government were looking for a more sustainable Local Government structure. Leaders were expected to work together collaboratively on unitary proposals. There were 10 Councils within Lincolnshire and ideally one proposal would be submitted, rather than competing proposals. However meetings were scheduled to look at the proposals. Where Councils could not agree and jointly develop proposals, the Government would undertake to look at those areas. Councils should continue to deliver their services until such time as LGR has been completed (possibly 2027/28).

Interim plans had to be submitted to Government by 24 March, with full detailed proposals received by 28 November. Any proposals should be supported by robust evidence and local engagement. The guiding principles outlined by Government were that each Unitary Authority should have a population of 500k or more.

Relevant Mayors, the PCC, Fire & Rescue Authority, further education providers and voluntary sectors should be included in any proposals.

8 Spalding Business Improvement District Update

CD reported that the Spalding BID Board was now constituted and registered at Companies House. There were 7 Directors of the Board and the process for procuring a Bid Manager had commenced. Interviews would be held at the end of February. The first levy bills would be circulated in February. A number of business owners were unhappy with the levy, but once funds were received, further work could commence.

9 UKSPF Update

The Board noted the UKSPF update report.

10 Any Other Business

RH welcomed the arrival of Sir John Hayes, MP, to the meeting and gave a short update of what had been discussed and agreed.

JB informed the Board that the first two installations of the MARK-IT trail would be unveiled on Saturday 15 March at 11am and invited RH to attend in his capacity as Chair.

In addition, Spalding & District Civic Society's AGM would be held on 8 April. Graeme Soult had been secured as guest speaker (who founded the retail consultancy business Canny Insights). Graeme would be giving a talk on "Reinventing Spalding Together."

Details of the events would be included in the Spalding & District Civic Society's next newsletter.