1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 To agree the Council’s financial support for the provision of brown road signs on the A1 to promote Lincoln.

2. **Executive Summary**

2.1 The provision of brown signage on the A1 promoting Lincoln’s tourism offer has been a long held aspiration for both the Council and its partners. Ministerial approval has been obtained by the Lincoln BIG Board so that two signs can now be installed.

2.2 The installation of the two signs will be in the region of £60,000 and 90% of this funding has been obtained.

2.3 The Council has been asked to contribute £5,000 towards the cost of the installation which will enable it to proceed.

3. **Background**

3.1 It has been an aspiration since before the development of the Signage and Visitor Management Strategy in 2003, that tourist signage be installed beyond the outer ring road to Lincoln.

3.2 The Lincoln BIG Board formally approached the Department for Transport and has now received ministerial approval for brown signs to be installed on the A1 incorporating Lincoln Castle and Lincoln Cathedral.

3.3 A positive dialogue with the County Council and Highways Agency has resulted in costings for installation now being provided and key stakeholders from the BIG Board have identified levels of contributions which they are prepared to commit.

4. **Project Costs**

4.1 Lincoln Business Improvement group have been given in principle approval for Brown Tourist signs to be installed on the A1.

4.2 The proposal is for two signs to be installed, one northbound on the A1 at the A4 junction and one southbound on the A1 at the A57 junction near Retford (see
Appendix 1 – Signage Plan).

4.3 As part of their role in delivering this scheme, Lincoln BIG are sourcing the funding for the scheme from partners within the city. £5,000 has been spent by Lincoln BIG to start the design process and also provide full costings for the works.

4.4 It is anticipated that the total project cost will be between £50,000 and £60,000, for the signage design and installation, which will also require partial closure of the A1 whilst the work is undertaken.

4.5 To date the following partner contributions have been confirmed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Grosseteste University</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln BIG</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Cathedral</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincolnshire Coop</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincolnshire County Council</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Lincoln</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong> 90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 Lincoln BIG are requesting a contribution of £5,000 from City of Lincoln Council towards the works.

5. **Strategic Priorities**

5.1 Growing the local economy

Lincoln has aspirations to become a world class small city and an important part of achieving this aim is to enhance awareness of its special assets and qualities. Having the brown signs in a prominent place on the main route into Lincoln, will highlight the importance of 2 of our major attractions, the Castle and Cathedral, and will work as an aid to draw people to the city.

Lincoln will benefit from the growth in the visitor economy likely to be generated by the signs. People will be encouraged to visit or stay in Lincoln, increasing visitor spend within the City and impacting positively on the local economy as a whole. The ‘Economic Impact assessment of Lincoln Castle’ carried out by Ecotec in 2009 identified that the £21 million investment in the ‘Lincoln Castle Revealed’ project alone would be likely to result in visitor numbers doubling by 2030, overnight stays increasing significantly and visitor spend increasing by at least 25%. Managing this increased interest in Lincoln well is essential.

6. **Organisational Impacts**

6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

The contribution from the Council will be a one-off payment of £5,000, towards the cost of the scheme from the Industrial Promotions budget.
7. **Risk Implications**

7.1 (i) Options Explored
Improved signage in and around the City itself is being explored by both County Highways and Lincoln BIG with European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) funding support, particularly in response to the development of the East West Link and Eastern Bypass. However, the level of visitor attraction and awareness of the offer achieved by road new signs within the City boundaries is likely to be substantially less than the reach that can be achieved on a major road artery such as the A1.

7.2 (ii) Key risks associated with the preferred approach
There are no obvious risks associated with the erection of the brown signs; however, the impact of the investment may take time to establish itself.

8. **Recommendation**

8.1 The Executive approve the use of the one-off payment of £5,000 budget allocation for the installation of Brown Signs on the A1 to promote Lincoln.

Key Decision: No

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply?: No

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?: No

How many appendices does the report contain?: 1

List of Background Papers: None

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