

**Present:** Liam Scully (*in the Chair*), Edward Chambers, Neil Corner, Kevin Kendall, Will Mason, Matthew Russell, Crispin Vitoria and Councillor Joshua Wells

**Also in Attendance:** Kirsty Cheetham (Senior Communications Officer), Kate Ellis (Major Development Director), Jaclyn Gibson (Chief Finance Officer), Simon Kirk, (Assistant Director - Growth & Development), Victoria Poulson (Democratic Services Officer), Michelle Smith (Development Officer) and Gill Wilson (Growth Strategy and Funding Manager)

#### **41. Recorded Actions from Meeting**

RESOLVED that:

- 1) An extra column be added to the output table to demonstrate what outputs were expected to have been achieved by a specific point within the programme to enable tracking.
- 2) The results of the recent audit review be circulated to Board members after presentation to Audit Committee.
- 3) The Secretariate be tasked with the circulation of an email to Members for volunteers to create an entrepreneurial and strategy-based focus group.
- 4) The next meeting of the Board, scheduled for 6 June 2025, would take place at the Barbican, if open and operational. Officers be tasked with making the necessary arrangements.

#### **42. Welcome**

Liam Scully, Chair of the Lincoln Town Deal Board, opened the meeting and warmly welcomed members before a brief round of introductions.

#### **43. Apologies for Absence**

Victoria Poulson, Democratic Services Officer, confirmed that apologies for absence had been received from:

- Angela Andrews
- Jacqui Bunce
- Tom Dannatt
- Ibrahim Elias
- Hamish Falconer MP
- James Foster
- Julian Free
- Laura Freer
- Nicole Hilton
- Chris Kirkwood
- Ursula Lidbetter
- Edward Strange
- Councillor Naomi Tweddle

- Nick Worboys

Will Mason and Councillor Joshua Wells were in attendance as substitutes.

The Democratic Services Officer confirmed the quorum of 6 members.

#### **44. Declarations of Interest**

Liam Scully declared a Personal Interest with regard to the agenda items titled 'Investment Sub-Committee Update' and 'Towns Deal Programme Update'.

**Reason:** He was a trustee of Lincoln City Foundation and Chief Executive Officer of Lincoln City Football Club.

Simon Kirk, Assistant Director - Growth & Development, declared a Personal Interest with regard to the agenda item titled 'Towns Deal Programme Update'.

**Reason:** He was a trustee of Lincoln City Foundation.

#### **45. Minutes of the Meeting on 18 October 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Lincoln Town Deal Board, held on 18 October 2024, be approved as a true record.

#### **46. Matters Arising**

Gill Wilson, Growth Strategy Funding Manager confirmed that:

- 1) Projects continued to be reviewed on a quarterly basis and the recent audit offered assurance further to confirmation of satisfaction with the processes that were in place
- 2) The website had recently been reviewed, and some changes were made. Issues had been identified with links to documents which would be changed
- 3) The invitation to Members for expressions of interest for a working group to be formed had not yet been actioned. The secretariate had looked into the youth leadership proposal which would be covered later in the meeting

RESOLVED that there were no outstanding actions or resolutions.

#### **47. Investment Sub-Committee Update**

Liam Scully, Chair of the Lincoln Town Deal Board:

- a) provided the Board with a brief update following the most recent meeting of the Investment Sub-Committee, held on 18 February 2025. During consideration of the update, the following points were noted: -
  - Members had received a progress update on the allocation of uncommitted funding, a programme risk update and a progress update on UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF)
  - The contents of discussions held during the most recent meeting of the Investment Sub-Committee would be further discussed during the course of proceedings for consideration by all Board members.

b) welcomed comments and questions from Members of the Board.

RESOLVED that the content of the update be noted with thanks.

#### **48. Towns Deal Programme Update**

Gill Wilson, Growth Strategy Funding Manager:

a) provided the Board with a presentation on the programme/progress status and risk as of 30 September 2024. During consideration of the report, the following points were noted: -

- The construction phase had been completed across five projects by September 2024; the Drill, HEAT, Store of Stories, Lincoln Central Market and LCFC Community Hub which represented an estimated cost of £15M, of which £9.113M was Town Fund supported
- The Barbican, Sincil Bank Environmental improvements and Greyfriars were reported on site, with a total investment value of £9.829M and Town Deal Grant of £5.238M. Completion was expected in 2025
- The Lincoln Connected Project and Lincoln Be Smarter Project were continuing with delivery and reported as continuing to the end of the programme. The projects had a total value of £4.23M and Town Deal support to the value of £2.77M
- It was reported that Town Board had agreed the delivery and completion of Tentercroft and Wigford Way feasibility studies be aligned with the City Centre Masterplan programme and that Town Board were informed by the Project Lead in March of the formal withdrawal of the LSIP project from the programme
- The expenditure as reported was within the acceptable tolerances against original approved financial profiles
- Key outputs/outcomes highlighted included:
  - The programme had delivered 107 temporary full-time jobs, 31 full time permanent jobs and safeguarded 2 permanent jobs
  - Supported 87 enterprises with both non-financial and grant support
  - Delivered 4 new community/public facilities, two of which involved the restoration of 2 heritage buildings, one of which was derelict and one that included green retrofitting
  - Increased capacity for training purposes, improved the amount and quality of office space provision and repurposed over 300m2 of floorspace
  - Over 30,000 visitors per quarter to the new community food supermarket, which was estimated to support over 1800 children at risk of food poverty per annum
- Risk assessments were reported to DHCLG as part of the return for both programme and individual projects. Risks were rated using a scoring matrix of between 1-24, on a pre-mitigated and mitigated basis
- The top three programme risks reported were:
  - The risk of underspend as a result of LSIP being withdrawn from the programme. The risk was mitigated through reallocation of funds across the programme to projects with deliverability strength
  - The ability for projects to properly resource project reporting/monitoring and evaluation risk. The risk was mitigated through quarterly monitoring reporting and meetings with projects as required

- The risk of programme slippage risk was mitigated through quarterly project monitoring & increased review meetings with projects as needed
- A full description of the current status of all projects was included within the restricted progress report however key progress highlights since September 2024 included:
  - The Barbican construction phase was practically complete. A new Director was appointed in December 2024 and tenancies were currently being secured. An opening event was being planned for May/June 2025
  - Greyfriars continued to progress with the refurbishment and consideration of the Management Business case. All conditions identified at due diligence stage had been signed off
  - Threshold Studios who lead the cultural programme part of the Lincoln Connected Project, held a 'Lincoln Lights' event on the 20<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> February 2025 which was positively received and successful in generating footfall numbers. The event evaluation would be fed into the project outputs/outcomes reporting
  - Sincil Bank Highways works had been progressing and would be completed in mid-March. Progress with the gateway and green elements had progressed slowly; proposals had to be scaled back due to risks identified by the Local Highway Authority and feasibility restrictions in respect of existing services. All designs were now with the highway authority for checking, with a view that works could be priced and instructed by the end of March 2025
- All projects were expected to be completed and Towns Fund allocation spent by the 31 March 2026, with the exception of projects at potential risk as reported within paragraph 2.3.2 of the report
- A recent internal audit review had been completed. No risks were identified regarding management, financing and monitoring of the programme. Some recommendations were received in regard to the presentation of the Town Deal through the website. The recommendations were minor, and the audit review was positive.

b) welcomed comments and questions from Members of the Board.

The Chair offered thanks to Gill Wilson for the update and welcomed comments and questions. Members of the Board discussed the content of the update in further detail and the following questions and comments emerged:

**Question:** How many full-time jobs were in the pipeline over the next two years?

**Response:** The standard of evidencing was set by Government. To claim a full-time equivalent job, there was a requirement that the employee had to be employed for two years. There was a natural lag on when that could be reported. The forecast would be contained within the spreadsheet and the target was 68.4 full time equivalent jobs, across the programme.

**Comment:** All projects were on target.

**Comment:** Projects had been left, through their reporting mechanisms, to inform the secretariate if there were any issues. Projects had reported that they would hit targets. Future employment outputs were expected from the Barbican, Lincoln City Football Community Hub and Greyfriars. There was a period of three years post programme to be able to report outputs.

**Comment:** Risk management was important to ensure targets continued to be met. The position was comfortable however it was important to for a pipeline view to be maintained and shared with Members in order that if there were any issues in the future, it did not become too late to rectify. It would be positive to create a template to demonstrate to the Board what was tracked, to ensure positive trending, carried out a macro level.

**Response:** An extra column could be added to the output table to demonstrate what outputs were expected to have been achieved by a specific point within the programme to enable tracking. The results of the audit would be circulated to Board members after it was presented to Audit Committee.

**Comment:** Proactive key performance indicators were useful.

**Comment:** It was good to know we were trending in the right direction and early intervention could take place if needed.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) An extra column be added to the output table to demonstrate what outputs were expected to have been achieved by a specific point within the programme to enable tracking.
- 2) The results of the recent audit review be circulated to Board members after presentation to Audit Committee.
- 3) The LSIP funding reallocation across the existing programme, be approved as reported.
- 4) The Town Board delegate to Investment Sub-Committee, consideration and decision, subject to due diligence checks and approval from DHCLG, that the priority 1 works identified for Greyfriars be funded from any confirmed underspend from the Sincil Bank Project.
- 5) That the programme extension and project options proposed, be noted and approved.
- 6) That the November 2024 DHCLG submission, as circulated and reported, be noted with thanks.

#### **49. Lincoln Central Market Project**

Simon Kirk, Assistant Director - Growth & Development:

- a) provided the Board with a verbal update on the Lincoln Central Market Project. During consideration of the report, the following points were noted: -
  - It was approximately ten months since the Cornhill Market opened
  - It was positive to look back on what was in place before as there was a need for the market to be brought up to a standard of regeneration in keeping with the history of the area
  - The outlook and view of what the market looked and felt like came primarily from residents and what they wanted to see
  - The presence of a Fishmongers and Butchers was common within a Market however there had been struggles in securing both. The Market

was not on its own with those struggles and the old idea around a market had changed

- Residents' view of a market was not in keeping with the modern view of a market. The data that was available demonstrated the decline of traditional markets which were now approached more as a food and beverage outlook.
- Occupancy of the market had been the subject of press. Two traders moved out during October 2024. One trader moved into their own shop which was positive as the market was a hub for growth. Occupancy remained the same during November and December 2024.
- During January and February 2025, three traders moved out with one of these opening a larger shop, which was expected, given the harsh trading conditions; many of which were experienced by businesses on the High Street.
- There was a decline in High Street footfall and in the level of occupancy since the Market opened. A number of business support workshops had taken place with traders and the City of Lincoln Council (CoLC) had helped with small business rates relief, a marketing workshop, paid advertisement on social media, professional photography, and inclusion in the national small business Saturday campaign, along with rent-free periods in order that traders be supported to succeed
- There would be an intense period of intervention over the coming six months. The business plan was worked on in 2019 and approved in 2021. The world was now a very different place due to macro factors and consideration was being given to how it could be made to fit over the next 3-5 years.

The Chair offered thanks to Simon Kirk for the presentation and welcomed comments and questions. Members of the Board discussed the content of the update in further detail and the following questions and comments emerged:

**Comment:** The building was fantastic and collaborative work with traders within the building had taken place. The Market had a community feel to it. Business support and some business approaches needed to be altered. There was a programme of activity, over the coming years that demonstrated the commitment to the Market's success.

**Comment:** Thanks were given to Simon Kirk for the presentation. What lessons had been learnt? Was the footfall local people or tourists? The businesses inside the Market needed to align to the type of people that visited. Food stalls were dotted about as opposed to being concentrated around the seating area. Having a plan was good and Members looked forward to the progression of the plan.

**Question:** Was STACK Lincoln a competitor? STACK was an app-based experience which felt cohesive.

**Comment:** Businesses were leaving as they were not making enough money. The branding and advertising were not there. The work carried out by officers for issues to be turned around was brilliant, however the position was critical. The closure of the Market on Monday and Tuesdays was sensible and for valid reasons. There was a programme in place to try and make these things come together. It was important that traders were kept onboard and communicated with effectively.

**Question:** Everyone wanted the Market to be a success. There were other Markets in other areas that operated a cycle of shutdowns. If occupancy rates reached

nearly 100% some stalled would open Monday or Tuesday but the market would generally be open for the public. Was there a market for special events and seasonable pop-up stalls?

**Response:** There was an option for pop-up stalls and some had already taken place. Organisers had tried to ensure there were pop ups around event activity and had looked to make some slight adaptations to the market in terms of layout.

**Question:** Occupancy at 68% was good however, they opened at different times so the Market felt emptier. Was there an opportunity to work alongside neighbouring retailers?

**Response:** From 2 April 2025, every stall would be open between 12:00-16:00, Wednesday-Sunday, without exception.

**Comment:** Since mid-December 2024, there had been 26 enquiries received from 20 food and beverage and 6 retail businesses. Some were not ready and some matched what was already in place in the Market. Organisers tried to protect what businesses already insitu by immediate competitors not being brought in.

**Question:** How constrained were organisers in the challenges experienced compared to things privately owned? Was there anything the Board could do to try and resolve challenges. How was operational excellence ensured?

**Response:** There were constraints as the Market was a listed building. Solving the motability issue was not easy due to the nature of the building. The process required for alterations took months due to the listing element. It was important to be aware of physical issues. It would be helpful for a subgroup to be set up, comprised of Members of the Board, in order that the benefit of business expertise be shared to support the operational side as a critical friend.

**Supplementary Response:** An email would be sent to Members further to the meeting for the creation of an entrepreneurial and strategy-based focus group.

**Question:** Were there funds available within the scope to assist with the triage needed?

**Response:** Potentially. There was still capital funds available that could be added in. Some issues surrounded physical changes. The Market was designed based on feedback received however there was no market for a fishmongers.

**Comment:** It was difficult to request investment without the footfall.

**Comment:** In the current economic climate, a 68% occupancy rate was extraordinarily high; only 4% below the national average. The Market of retail had changed and dropped exponentially in the last 30 years. Markets had an image, people thought of fishmongers/butchers. It was the word 'market' however it did not present as expected. It was trendy and different and trading against a very big challenge.

**Question:** Were there too many stalls? If the stall numbers were reduced, a bigger space would be offered and made more attractive.

**Response:** The subgroup would be a positive environment for ideas to be explored. Consideration of the layout of the Market was important.

**Supplementary Response:** The number of stalls was intrinsically linked to operational costs.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Secretariate be tasked with the circulation of an email to Members for volunteers to create an entrepreneurial and strategy-based focus group.
- 2) The contents of the presentation be noted with thanks.

**50. UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

Kate Ellis, Major Development Director:

- a) provided the Board with a verbal report on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme overview. During consideration of the report, the following points were noted: -
  - In October 2024, Central Government announced a one-year UKSPF programme for 2025/26
  - Lincoln was now part of the Greater Lincolnshire Authority (GLA), and a mayor would be elected in May 2025. As such, the allocation for UKSPF had been tweaked and would be given to the GLA and the devolved authority would distribute
  - GLA had retained funding for business support and for skills and distributed the remaining amount to the remaining local authorities. Lincoln received £880K, a mixture of capital and revenue funding
  - A draft programme submission was required 2 weeks after announcement was made on 14 February 2025
  - Any comments received from Members by Friday 21 March 2025 would be included in the report presented to the Executive.
- b) welcomed comments and questions from Members of the Board.

**Comment:** There appeared to be no opportunities for supporting local businesses.

**Response:** Business allocation had been put into supporting the Greater Lincolnshire wide growth hub. The programme would be coordinated as a wider region.

**Comment:** The process had worked previously. Appreciation offered for the opportunity.

**Response:** Attempts had been made to retain the principles that had previously been established.

RESOLVED that the verbal report on the UKSPF programme overview be noted with thanks.

**51. Change to Order of Business**

RESOLVED that the order of business be amended to allow the agenda item entitled 'Governance - Youth Board Member Proposal' to be considered as the next agenda item.

**52. Governance - Youth Board Member Proposal**

Gill Wilson, Growth Strategy Funding Manager:

- a) provided the Board with a verbal update on the investigation of the appointment of a youth representative on the Board. During consideration of the update, the following points were noted: -



- The scheme had been piloted and run out of Boston and involved a youth member being appointed to the board who would be mentored through a youth leadership programme
- The youth would attend Board meetings and receive papers in which a youth view could be offered to the Board, if necessary
- The Secretariat had engaged in discussions with Lincoln College who confirmed their agreement for their youth Council to be approached should the Board proceed
- The view of the Board was sought, and Members were asked to consider both the value the proposal could bring and if the proposal was achievable

The Chair offered his thanks to Gill Wilson and welcomed comments, views and questions from Members of the Board. As a result of discussions between Members, the following points were made: -

**Comment:** If a youth member was to be appointed at a late stage of the programme, would they be able to feedback on issues? If they shared great ideas, could the Board act upon them?

**Response:** It was likely that should the proposal be agreed, appointment would take place at the time of the new academic year, September 2025.

**Supplementary Response:** The idea was fantastic but potentially too late into the programme.

**Comment:** The challenge the Board faced was that the monitoring and evaluation phase consisted largely of spreadsheets. The Board had a responsibility, and the political landscape was changing. The Board needed to have an understanding of what it wanted to evolve into and as such, the topic of bringing real value to the City of Lincoln was a much broader topic. It was felt that the Board needed something new to focus on, such as the City Centre Masterplan. At that point, it would be critical to have a more diverse mindset.

**Response:** Irrespective of what Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) looked like in the future, there was undoubtedly a role for a Lincoln based, focussed view of what the city required in order to move forward. Given where the Board was in terms of monitoring and evaluation and having the City Centre Masterplan to do, influence was important.

**Comment:** There was scope to work with Members of the team to shape proposals.

RESOLVED that the verbal update on the investigation of the appointment of a youth representative on the Board be noted with thanks.

### 53. Communications Update

Kirsty Cheetham, Senior Communications Officer:

- a) provided the Board with a Communications Update presentation. During consideration of the update, the following points were noted: -

#### Town Deal Board Communications Update

- Barbican Creative Hub's renovation was drawing to a close. The next steps were to release the Creatives in Residence at the hub and organise a launch event for after the pre-election period

- Lincoln Lights event brought joy to the city, as Threshold Studios hosted another vibrant event under the Lincoln Connected project. The event was a big success with a busy city centre on both nights
- Highway improvements to Sincil Bank were on target to finish in March 2025. Additional works to update the area's aesthetic would be carried out once the highways works were complete in March, including the installation of planters, planting trees and shrubs, and improved gateway signage
- Greyfriars construction continued with the appointment of a Visitor and Operations Manager for the project

#### UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Communications Update

- Sudbrooke Drive Community Centre would soft-launch in the spring. A video with Simon Nicoll of Alive Church was created to explain the transformations and how they benefitted the local community
- A series of videos with Moorland Community Centre had launched and focused on the works, the impact on local resident's lives, and the activities that had been produced with UKSPF funding
- City of Lincoln Council commissioned 3 sessions of Climate Literacy training at Mosaic. They were fully accredited CPD courses in Carbon Literacy which supported the city's goal of becoming net zero. A video was created to showcase the importance of the course and what local businesses had learnt
- A video with Ermine Library had been filmed with interviews of members and residents. An Ermine newsletter would also be released ahead of the pre-election period

#### Additional Updates

- **Community Grocery Vouchers** - UKSPF Funding was allocated to the Lincoln Community Grocery Store to supply vouchers supporting tenants in the city, including those in temporary accommodation
- **Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) Training** - UKSPF had supported the fit out and set up of the workshop and training centre for Heating and Plumbing Engineers within the construction sector, to up-skill and get qualified in fitting and supplying ASHPs commercially and residentially
- **EV Training Academy and Workshop** - UKSPF supported the fit out of a new EV Training Academy and workshop

*(The Board were played a video entitled 'Community Film Screening Video' which demonstrated work that had taken place with media students from the University of Lincoln in January 2025. The video was a good opportunity for students to showcase their work).*

The Chair thanked Kirsty Cheetham for the update and welcomed comments and questions.

RESOLVED that the communications update be noted with thanks.

#### **54. Forward Plan**

Liam Scully, Chair of the Lincoln Town Deal Board:

- a) presented Members with a verbal summary of the Boards forward plan which detailed items of business to be considered at future meetings.
- b) welcomed comments and questions from Members of the Board.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The next meeting of the Board, scheduled for 6 June 2025, would take place at the Barbican, if open and operational. Officers be tasked with making the necessary arrangements.
- 2) The contents of the forward plan be noted with thanks.

**55. Any Other Business**

RESOLVED that there were no other items of business to be considered.

**56. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Date of Next Meeting: Friday 6 June 2025 (10:00)

**57. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that if members 11 of the public were present there would be a disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**58. Project Update and Risk Assessment**

The Growth Strategy and Funding Manager updated the Board on the progress of projects and current risks associated with projects identified.

RESOLVED that the content of the update be noted, including those identified as amber RAG ratings.

Liam Scully, Chair of the Lincoln Town Deal Board offered his thanks to the Growth Strategy and Funding Manager for all her hard work and contributions to the Lincoln Town Deal Programme and Members wished her well for her upcoming retirement.