

# **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **DRAFT BOSTON TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2023-2027**



#### **1.0 Overview**

- 1.1 Boston Borough Council is committed to working in partnership with businesses, residents and partners to revitalise the high street and the surrounding public realm, making the town centre a place to be proud of, a place recognised for its great heritage and a place that is cherished by its diverse communities to work, live and enjoy leisure time in.
- 1.2 The Council sees the importance of the town centre as a key economic hub that supports the vibrancy of this great borough and that is also a key focal point for those who reside within the area's local neighbourhoods.
- 1.3 This draft Town Centre Strategy sets a clear vision and action plan for Boston Town Centre. It seeks to better align council service delivery with partners, community representatives and the voluntary and community sector in order to lead a programme of work which ensures that Boston Town Centre is clean and safe, open for business, a great place for culture, heritage and events and a place that is on a very real transformation journey that will ensure present and future generations enjoy the very best that Boston's town centre can provide.
- 1.4 The draft Strategy has been prepared from views and information supplied corporately across the Council with officers continuing to reach out to partners, businesses and the community to further inform this important document. It covers the plan period of 2023-2027.
- 1.5 The draft Strategy is supported by evidenced based work, connecting organisational strategies and action plans and investment secured. These include: The Boston Town Deal, The Historic England Place Panel visit and report, The Government's High Street Task Force Report, Levelling Up funding and partnership, Cultural Framework for Renewal and subsequent National Portfolio Organisation funding with priority status from Arts Council England, Empowering Healthy Communities and SELCP Community Safety Plan.
- 1.6 Community and Business consultation will be undertaken between 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in order to further develop and inform the Strategy and its associated action plan, ensuring the views of local stakeholders, businesses, and residents are an integral part of its creation.

## 2.0 Vision, strategic objectives and themes

### 2.1 The proposed vision of the Strategy is: -



**Boston town centre will be known to be a place that brings communities together to enjoy quality public realm and open spaces that magnify the national heritage of the town whilst supporting a vibrant retail and hospitality experience.**

### 2.2 The Strategy identifies seven draft key strategic objectives. These are:-

- a) To ensure residents and other visitors to the town centre experience a clean and tidy public realm.
- b) To ensure residents and visitors feel safe whether that is during the day or when they visit the town centre at night. Supporting a vibrant day time and night time economy.
- c) To ensure businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre.
- d) To ensure residents and visitors experience the town centre as a place for heritage, culture, events, and entertainment.
- e) To ensure residents and visitors can access and leave the town centre easily and by utilizing sustainable forms of transport where available.
- f) To support and build a cohesive community, utilizing all the benefits and opportunities a town centre can bring to achieve this.
- g) To work effectively with all public sector partners, businesses, and the voluntary and community sector to achieve the above.

### 2.3 The draft strategy itself is divided into the following four sections, covering a number of actions. These are:-

- **Clean and Safe:** Covering matters such as street cleansing, community safety and regulatory services. To date 27 proposed actions are covered in the Strategy that relate to the “Clean and Safe” theme and they range from regularly deep cleaning the town centre, removing black bags and fly tips and introducing annual floral displays to driving up food hygiene standards in restaurants and standards in the taxi trade, along with supporting safer streets initiatives with the police and the voluntary and community sector. This section in particular includes the role of the Boston Town Area Committee.

**The work streams in this section are: Keeping Our Town Clean, Protecting the Public from Harm through Regulatory Services, Community Safety in Our Town Centre and Building Resilient Communities.**

- **Open for Business:** Covering support to businesses and seeking a thriving local economy. There are currently 17 actions in this section which includes things like the aspiration to work with Destination Lincolnshire, developing specific promotional material for the town, promoting Boston and in particular work towards Boston 400. This section also includes actions to declutter the high street in order to ensure clear signage to the key sites within the town centre and deliver a Market Development Plan for the town.



**The work streams in this section are: Town Centre Management and Boston's Famous Market.**

- **Culture, Heritage and Events:** Linking the importance of people to place. There are currently 15 actions in the Culture, Heritage and Events Section which includes actions such as delivering a four day Christmas festival along with a range of events such as Halloween to a car show, continental market and vintage festival and a beach in the park summer events programme. Further to this, this section covers work on the National Portfolio Organisation Guildhall Hub and work with Transported Arts on a rich programme of arts and culture.

**The work streams in this section are: Building Community Cohesion and Economic Development through Events, Arts and Cultural Development and Boston Guildhall.**

- **Transformation:** Recognising the opportunity to re-invent and transform the town centre in the wake of COVID-19 and the change in the retail environment. Transformation work currently aligns to 11 actions that include supporting important Town Deal projects such as Healing the High Street, rejuvenation of Dolphin Lane, establishing a business group to work together on town centre initiatives and work with the private sector to develop residential accommodation in the town centre along with delivering the PE21 regeneration initiative.

**The work streams in this section are: Investment and Growth which includes Businesses Have the Opportunity to Thrive and Working Effectively with All Public Sector Partners and the Business and Community Sector.**

- 2.4 All 70 draft actions have been summarised in the appendix attached to this Executive Summary.

### **3.0 Consultation on this Strategy and Action Plan**

- 3.1 Consultation regarding the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan will take place from 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023 to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023. This will take a number of forms including use of the Council's website including an online survey, and engagement sessions with the community and local businesses. Promotion will be via social media, press releases etc. This work will also be considered by Boston Borough Council's Corporate and Community Scrutiny Committee and the Boston Town Area Committee. It is intended that an ongoing dialogue will take place with all relevant parties in order to keep the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan a "live document".

#### **4.0 How Delivery Against this Strategy will be Monitored and Reviewed**



- 4.1 A Town Centre Management Steering Group consisting of lead councillors and officers has been established at Boston Borough Council. The role of this group is to develop the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan and provide the governance required to support its implementation. This group is to meet quarterly once the strategy is adopted/agreed. At each meeting actions will be reported on as appropriate alongside information relating to key performance indicators, such as the number of void retail properties, footfall data etc.
- 4.2 Monitoring and reporting will also be undertaken as appropriate through the Council's Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee/s.
- 4.3 The public and businesses will be kept updated and engaged through a range of mechanisms such as press releases, contact with specific groups, social media, the Council's website etc.

#### **5.0 When will a Decision Regarding the Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan be made?**

- 5.1 It is intended that Boston Borough Council's Cabinet considers a final version of the strategy and action plan during the autumn following the close of the consultation which ends on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The final strategy will reflect feedback from the consultation. A decision whether to agree the strategy and its associated action plan will be made at this meeting.

#### **6.0 Contact Details for Correspondence**

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