Minutes of the Skegness Neighbourhood Board Meeting

Held on Friday, 03 July 2026 at 2.00pm

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Board Members:
Paul McCooey, Duncan & Toplis (Chair)
Cllr Steve Kirk – East Lindsey District Council (Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy)
Jacqui Bunce – NHS Integrated Care Board (Theme Lead: Health & Wellbeing)
Dr. Batul Dungarwalla – CVS Lincolnshire (Theme Lead: Community/Voluntary Sector)
Chris Baron – Former Director of Butlins (Theme Lead: Visitor Economy)
Tracy Stringfellow – Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire (Theme Lead: Heritage)
Claire Foster – Boston College (Theme Lead: Education & Skills)
Cllr. Adrian Findley – Skegness Town Council (Theme Lead: Town Centre)
Cllr. Danny Brookes – Lincolnshire County Council (Theme Lead: Physical Infrastructure)
Brad Johnson – East Coast Pride (Theme Lead: Community)
Sophie Harris – Micronclean (Theme Lead: Work & Productivity)

Advisors & Programme Support:
Maria Cotton – ELDC
Jon Burgess – ELDC
Bonnie Mitchell – ELDC
Saskia Zablockyj – ELDC

Observers:
Steve Larner – Skegness Town Council
Katie Chapman – Active Lincolnshire
Michelle Gant – The Engaging People Company

Apologies:
James Brindle – Magna Vitae (Theme Lead: Culture)
Richard Tice MP – Boston and Skegness
Emma Tatlow – Active Lincolnshire
Pranali Parikh – ELDC

Summary of Minutes:

The Board welcomed Brad Johnson and Sophie Harris as voting members and Katie Chapman as an observer pending completion of board membership paperwork.

Members reviewed the outcomes of the first Call for Projects and the Board agreed to award funding to five projects in principle, including both Tower Gardens projects, Beach Ability Skegness Hub, Digital Support for Everyday Living and East Coast Pride. Members also recognised the need for stronger community engagement ahead of an agreed future funding round(s). The development of a Community Grant Scheme was agreed to encourage greater grassroots participation and raise awareness of the Pride in Place Programme.

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1 Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and thanked attendees for their attendance. It was noted that agenda papers had been circulated in advance.

2 Apologies for Absence

James Brindle – Magna Vitae (Theme Lead: Culture), Richard Tice MP – Boston and Skegness, Emma Tatlow – Active Lincolnshire, Pranali Parikh – ELDC.

3 Declarations of Interest

Brad Johnson declared an interest as an applicant for Pride in Place funding through East Coast Pride. Steve Larner, Cllr. Danny Brookes, Cllr Adrian Findley, and Cllr Steve Kirk declared interests relating to applications submitted by Skegness Town Council. Dr Batul Dungarwalla declared an interest due to Lincolnshire CVS's relationships with several applicants. Chris Baron declared a role on the Advisory Council for Skegness Academy. Members with declared interests withdrew from discussion and voting on the relevant projects.

4 Minutes of the Skegness Neighbourhood Board Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 02 June 2026 were approved as an accurate record. There were no further matters arising.

5 Board Membership Update

Brad Johnson from East Coast Pride had formally joined the Board as a voting member under the Community theme. Sophie Harris from Micronclean had also joined the Board as a voting member under the Work and Productivity theme. Katie Chapman from Active Lincolnshire attended as an observer and subject to completion of the onboarding process would replace Emma Tatlow who had resigned and is now Chair of Boston Neighbourhood Board.

6 Call for Projects – Technical Evaluation and Project Selection

Members received a presentation and update from Jon Burgess summarising the Call for Projects evaluation, independent assessment and advising total grant funding available over the first four years is £6,658,000 excluding the provision of separate capacity funding to support programme development. A correction was noted for inclusion within the minutes to amend and confirm the Year One Capital funding grant allocation as £360,000 (not £382,000 as included within the paper)

Members noted that twenty-eight (28) Expressions of Interest had been received, of which nineteen (19) organisations were invited to submit a full business case. Fifteen (15) completed business cases were subsequently received for independent assessment, while three (3) organisations did not proceed to submission, and one (1) application was deemed incomplete and therefore not ready for consideration.

Following the independent technical evaluation undertaken by Focus, five (5) projects (Tower Garden Path Renewal, Tower Gardens Phase 2 Improvements, Beach Ability Skegness, Digital Support for Everyday Living and East Coast Pride) were identified as worthwhile and eligible with strong alignment for funding consideration.

Eight (8) projects (Skegness Mosque and Community Hub, Skegness Academy Sports Area Redevelopment, Lincs-Links Skegness, People Make Skegness (Community Capacity Building), YMCA - Traditional Housing for the Homeless, JB's Training Opportunities, Skegness Enrichment Programme and Skegness Swim at School) showed partial alignment with the criteria.

Two (2) projects (Skegness Active Futures and Skegness Sports Association Facility/3G Area Maintenance) were not a suitable programme fit.

Members discussed the overall spread of applications and noted that several community priorities identified through the Regeneration Plan remained underrepresented, including safer and cleaner streets, jobs and skills, transport, and town centre improvements.

The Board discussed the importance of balancing early delivery and visible outcomes with long-term investment. It was highlighted that the Street Scene Operative pilot scheme should be considered when allocating funding as the continuation of the scheme in future years is subject to appraisal of its impact in year one. Concerns were raised regarding the relatively low number of applications received from external community groups and the need to provide greater support and capacity-building to encourage future applicants.

Members agreed that future funding rounds should involve enhanced community engagement and bid-writing support to encourage broader participation. Dr Batul Dungarwalla extended an offer of support from LCVS to run workshops for applicants needing assistance with bid-writing and to help identify and support community groups.

It was highlighted that support had previously been offered by LCVS to the Board for the initial Call for Projects.

The Board considered the first call for projects and agreed to provisionally support the five projects assessed as ready for consideration, subject to applicants accepting and meeting the conditions set out in the technical assessment summary, and further conditions requested by the Board, prior to any grant award.

Members agreed to provisionally fund the following projects: 1) Tower Garden Path Renewal, 2) Tower Gardens Phase 2 Improvements, 3) Beach Ability Skegness, 4) Digital Support for Everyday Living and 5) East Coast Pride.

The Tower Garden Path Renewal, Tower Gardens Phase 2 Improvements and the East Coast Pride applicants would be invited to present to the Board their response regarding the conditions attached to their provisional grant awards and provide any further information required before grant award. It was agreed that the remaining ten (10) projects were not approved.

The Board noted the award and contracting procedures to be undertaken by the Accountable Body before any funding is formally contracted.

Members further requested that unsuccessful applicants receive clear communication on the outcome of their bids, including appropriate feedback from the independent technical appraisal where relevant. Prior to communicating outcomes to applicants, Board members requested officers seek clarification that all applicants had been contacted by Focus where further detail were required prior to assessing applications.

It was requested that funded projects should be strongly publicised.

Tower Gardens Path Renewal Project

The Board supported the provisional award of £775,000 capital grant subject to further conditions such as evidence of need for the works to the paths, scrutiny of costs, reasoning as to why the project could not be funded by the applicant and requires external funding, further examination of procurement routes and value for money especially should local contractors would be used, confirmation of future maintenance costs being covered by the Town Council, funding profile and drawdown against certified expenditure and completion of all necessary due diligence requirements.

Tower Gardens Phase 2 Improvements

The Board considered the proposal for CCTV improvements, enhanced lighting, sensory and heritage trails, additional play equipment and heritage planting within Tower

Gardens. Members agreed that the project aligned strongly with community priorities and would complement wider investment already planned within the site.

Members questioned why delivery of the project was dependent upon completion of the Path Renewal Project and requested that this be explored further, noting that elements such as CCTV, lighting and play equipment could potentially be delivered independently.

The Board provisionally supported the award of £300,000 capital grant, subject to clarification of the dependency between Phase 2 works and the Path Renewal Project, completion of the Tower Gardens Path Renewal Project, confirmation of match funding (including Heritage Lottery and Town Council contribution), procurement and value-for-money checks, clarification of future maintenance responsibilities and completion of due diligence requirements.

Beach Ability Skegness

Members welcomed the proposal to provide accessible beach mobility equipment within Skegness and recognised the project as a quick-win opportunity capable of delivering an immediate and visible benefit to residents and visitors. The Board provisionally supported the award of £6,000 capital grant subject to the completion of standard grant due diligence requirements.

Digital Support for Everyday Living

The Board considered the proposal from Lincs Digital to continue and expand digital inclusion services within Skegness. Members acknowledged the significant community benefits associated with the project and the organisation’s proven track record of delivery.

The Board provisionally supported the award of £97,760 revenue grant, subject to clarity on additionality given the projects existing funding to March 2027, confirmation of suitable delivery venues, completion of subsidy control checks and submission of a delivery plan demonstrating engagement with target communities. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring the service is delivered where it is most needed and requested evidence that sessions are accessible to residents across the Pride in Place area, including consideration of venues beyond Tower Gardens where appropriate.

East Coast Pride Event

The Board recognised the event’s positive contribution to inclusion, community cohesion and the visitor economy. Members discussed the importance of ensuring the event's long-term sustainability and reducing reliance on programme funding over time.

The Board provisionally supported the award of £20,000 revenue grant in year-one (2026/2027). Additional funding would be supported subject to East Coast pride proposing a revised tapered funding profile in Year Two through to Year Four (rather than an inflationary increase each year) for the Board to agree, annual monitoring and evaluation arrangements, and continued efforts to increase sponsorship and other sources of self-generated income to sustain the event.

Future Funding Call

The Board agreed there should be a future call for projects and discussed whether round two should wait until further community engagement had taken place, rather than opening immediately. Members reflected on learnings from the first Call for Projects and agreed that future funding round(s) should be informed by further community engagement first.

The Board requested that additional support should be provided to small community organisations to help strengthen applications and remove barriers to participation. To encourage collaboration between organisations Theme leads should speak with communities and organisations to identify needs, barriers and possible collaborations to deepen community engagement before future call for projects take place.

It was agreed that the next call should be shaped differently from the first one, with simpler language, clearer support, and greater community outreach to address under-represented Plan priorities.

7 Community Grant Scheme

The Board received a proposal presented by Bonnie Mitchell in relation to delivery options for a community grant scheme to support community-led efforts and create the foundations for growth at a neighbourhood level within the Skegness Pride and Place Programme boundary.

Members discussed the proposed approach to establishing a community grant scheme to support delivery of local priorities within the Skegness Pride in Place Programme. Members were generally supportive of the principle of using capacity funding to enable smaller, community-led initiatives and recognised the potential for the scheme to strengthen local connections and provide practical support to grassroots organisations.

The Board noted the options considered for delivery and agreed the Accountable Body undertake a competitive process to commission an appropriately experienced independent grant-making organisation to deliver an initial £100,000 community grant fund with grant funding awards of up to £10,000.

Requests were made to keep management costs as low as possible and that duplication with other schemes, such as East Lindsey Investment Fund, be avoided.

Board members approved the allocation of an initial £100,000 of capacity revenue funding to support delivery across 2026/27 and 2027/28 with any additional management fees to come out of the remaining capacity fund balance. Furthermore, the community grant application and award process was approved subject to development of appropriate grant funding guidelines.

8 Any Other Business

Members also received a brief update on the Street Scene Operative pilot from Cllr Findley noting that a meeting was scheduled for the following day to review the work of the operatives with Carl Beacock from East Lindsey District Council. The Board would receive a report of the meeting at the next Board which would also include an update on branded uniforms, which improvement areas had been targeted thus far, and which areas were planned for future improvements.

It was noted that the Board would like to continue to monitor the scheme's impact during its first year to inform any future funding decisions regarding continuation of the project. Officers advised that a media release and social media posts had been released on behalf of the Skegness Neighbourhood Board and a separate communication had been issued by East Lindsey District Council to promote the good work of the scheme.

Members discussed the importance of communicating funding decisions publicly to raise awareness of the Pride in Place Programme and demonstrate progress against community priorities.

The Board also considered opportunities for quick-win projects that could deliver visible early benefits, alongside potential future initiatives to improve beach safety. Members highlighted the need for stronger promotion of the programme and wider public engagement activity to encourage participation and increase understanding of available funding opportunities.

An update was also provided regarding the recruitment of a dedicated coastal officer, with Members welcoming future observer attendance at Board meetings.

9 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 04 August 2026 at 2.00pm via Microsoft Teams.

The meeting concluded at 4.38pm.

ACTIONS TRACKER

BOARD MEETING	ACTION	STATUS	RESPONSIBLE
02.06.2026	Develop and deliver PR activity and communications plan	In Progress	MG & BM
02.06.2026	Communicate an update to EOI applicants	Complete	BM
02.06.2026	Prepare submission pack for Call for Project EOIs technical evaluation for Board review	Complete	BM
02.06.2026	Prepare an options paper on a future funding call and/or commissioning process	Complete	BM
02.06.2026	Develop clear monthly work plan for Street Scene operatives	In Progress	JB / CB / AF
02.06.2026	Street Scene operatives branded uniforms	In Progress	BM/AF
02.06.2026	Circulate new MHCLG branding guidance to Board members	Complete	SZ
02.06.2026	Arrange Board meetings up to May 2027	Complete	SZ
03.07.2026	Complete onboarding process for new member	To do	SZ / BM
03.07.2026	Communicate funding bid outcomes to grant applicants subject to additional Focus checks	To do	BM
03.07.2026	Develop community grant scheme specification and initiate procurement	To do	BM
03.07.2026	Circulate Destination Management Plan to Board	To do	BM
03.07.2026	Circulate Destination Coastal Tourism Officer vacancy to Board	To do	BM