

KING'S LYNN NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

MEETING NOTES



Date:	Friday, 22 May 2026	Location:	The Beacon / MS Teams
Time:	1:00pm	Chair:	Vicky Etheridge

Attendees	
Board Members:	Vicky Etheridge, Cllr Simon Ring, Kerry Heathcote, Kate Blakemore Adam Taylor, Bishop Jane Steen, Carly West-Burnham, Andrew Stevenson, Nova Fairbank, Graham Slater, Hannah Edge, Chris Starkie,
Support Members:	Duncan Hall, Jemma Curtis, Nicola Cooper, Sarah Parker Michelle McLean, Emma Kavanagh, Abigail Rawlings, Robin Lewis, Jon Price, Vicki Price,

Minutes	Actions
<p>1. Apologies Board Meeting</p> <p>Board Members: James Wild MP, Cllr Alistair Beales, Rik Martin, Zach Stanford, Kirsty Macleod,</p> <p>Support Members: Michelle Drewery, David Wiles</p>	
<p>2. Declarations of interest</p> <p>Declarations of interest were recorded for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerry Heathcote (School of Nursing project and signed up to the Active Travel Plan. The college is now working in heritage construction and, therefore, an interest has been declared in the Guildhall and Riverfront projects) • James Wild MP (Riverfront project) • Carly West-Burnham (Active Travel Plan) • Bishop Jane Steen (Capacity Building Proposal) • Rik Martin (Capacity Building Proposal) 	
<p>3. Introduction</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the Board to the meeting.</p> <p>Attendees present introduced themselves to Emma Kavanagh who has recently joined the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and was attending as a guest observer.</p>	
<p>4. Minutes of previous meeting on 24 April 2026</p> <p>Minutes from the previous meeting were noted and AGREED.</p>	
<p>5. Items to note – any queries from the Board</p> <p>a. Action log - noted.</p> <p>b. Forward Work Programme – noted.</p>	

<p>6. Governance Workshop Reflections Board members discussed reflections from the recent governance workshop, focusing on the need for improved understanding of community development principles, planning for asset-based community development (ABCD) training, and establishing a task and finish group to drive transition and shared learning.</p> <p>Workshop Reflections and Next Steps: The importance of articulating the board's direction in the new governance space was highlighted, referencing the need to understand and move forward with tangible actions as well as the necessity to put workshop learnings into practice.</p> <p>ABCD Training and Shared Learning: A training session on asset-based community development for Board members is due to be delivered, aiming to ensure there is a consistent level of understanding across the group. This will take place at the June KLNB meeting. The training is also being scheduled outside of the board meeting for key Council officers with a date waiting to be secured. Additionally, MHCLG have suggested a number of places to connect with who have been through the journey and could help support and share insight.</p> <p>Task and Finish Group Formation: The Board discussed forming a task and finish group which includes Board members to mediate the transition process, address disparate levels of understanding, and drive change. A review of the Terms of Reference, Board membership, and resource needs will also be planned, reporting with options and actions to be shared to the full Board for consideration.</p> <p>ACTION – Set up a task and finish group to drive the governance transition process, review Terms of Reference and bring options to the Board. Any Board member interested is to submit their interest to the PMO.</p> <p>Resource Mapping and Capacity Building: The need to map existing projects and resources to avoid duplication and identify gaps was emphasised. The capacity building projects team will be integrated into this work, and Board members interested in participating were asked to submit their names to the PMO for inclusion.</p> <p>ACTION – Begin mapping existing projects and resources to identify gaps and avoid duplication as part of the transition work</p> <p>Community Voice and Representation: The transition phase will focus on bringing more community voice into governance, with new representation from individuals experienced in community-led approaches. The Board acknowledged the challenge of moving forward collectively and the need for shared learning and stronger grassroots engagement.</p>	<p>JC/NC/ PMO</p> <p>JC/NC</p>
<p>7. Community Capacity Building Progress Update A comprehensive update was provided on the capacity building programme, detailing its aims to strengthen community voice, build collaborative infrastructure, and practical progress, including recruitment, partnership working, and measurement frameworks.</p>	

Programme Aims and Approach: It was stated that whilst the programme is led by the clergy, they are merely the anchors with the assets that will help host and make this approach possible. It aims to create joined-up infrastructure for local residents to become more connected and influential. The approach emphasises collaboration, inclusivity, and hosting rather than ownership by any single organisation.

Partnerships and Emerging Initiatives: The alignment with other initiatives, such as the West Norfolk Community Research Hub, Active Norfolk's community builder role Create King's Lynn (Creative Arts East) and the Marmot approach was highlighted. These partnerships are intended to foster active participation, creative opportunities, and sustain community development to build the wider ecosystem.

Recruitment and Operational Foundations: Job descriptions are being finalised collaboratively, with recruitment planned for July/August. Delivery partners will convene to establish shared expectations, induction plans, and evaluation methods, ensuring robust structures support the new roles to help build success.

Children, Young People, and Families Role: A new role focused on children, young people, and families has been committed to, acting as a connector across neighbourhoods. The role will strengthen relationships, support volunteer development, and ensure alignment with statutory services and existing provision.

Measurement and Evaluation Framework: The programme will use a framework measuring neighbourhood structures, participation, community voice, and cross-neighbourhood learning. Quantitative data, stories, and baseline evidence will be collected to demonstrate meaningful change, with asset-based principles guiding evaluation.

Requests and Practical Support: The Chair asked Board members to champion the vision, open doors to relevant networks, share engagement opportunities, and support the potential siting of the team to St James's House, which would enhance collaboration and visibility.

It was stated that the future vision in 2027 should see neighbourhood hubs in development, stronger relationships between organisations and more joined up activity and shared learning to help shape priorities. It was recognised that some things will happen quickly and be visible early on whilst participation will take time to build trust and engagement and be part of a longer-term plan. The success of this community led approach will build stronger neighbourhoods that are shaping their own future.

Thanks was given for the project idea and excitement was expressed regarding its implementation.

ACTION - Discuss the potential creation of a project steering group or operational group for the capacity building programme and determine the support needed.

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<p>ACTION - Set a date and plan for the formal launch and publicity of the capacity building programme, ensuring transparency and communication of the board's decision.</p>	
<p>8. Guildhall Update</p> <p>Updates on the Guildhall project, covering delivery progress, budget management, stakeholder engagement, fundraising, and alignment with Pride and Place funding was given highlighting the importance of community learning and participation.</p> <p>Programme Structure and Delivery: The five work streams driving the Guildhall project were outlined, noting the transition to a heavy delivery phase and the importance of aligning activities for successful outcomes. Officers and assistant directors are responsible for specific strands, with overall coordination from the project lead.</p> <p>Budget and Value Engineering: The project remains on budget despite challenges, with scrutiny and rapid decision-making to address risks. Value engineering has delivered quality improvements and cost savings, supported by experienced consultants managing fundraising efforts.</p> <p>Stakeholder Engagement and Communications: Active stakeholder engagement is maintained, with plans to enhance messaging and media stories. Community touchpoints, including schools and colleges, are being developed to ensure broad participation and interest in the project is achieved. A newsletter is being launched and will be shared with the Board in due course.</p> <p>Learning and Engagement Programme: The learning and engagement officer has explored community-level activities, ensuring the Guildhall project aligns with Pride and Place principles. The focus is on measuring community asset-based outputs and fostering shared learning.</p> <p>Site Operations and Business Plan: The Interim Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture leads the development of the business plan, embedding detailed assumptions and preparing for public demands. Physical progress includes scaffolding, roof repairs, and demolition, with opportunities for Board members to visit the site at a future date.</p> <p>The Board expressed excitement to see the Guildhall's updates and champion its progress.</p> <p>ACTION - Invite the Board to a site visit of the Guildhall project and confirm the date for the visit.</p> <p>ACTION - Start mapping and tracking community asset-based outputs for the Guildhall project, aligning with Pride and Place programme principles.</p>	<p>RL/PMO</p> <p>NC/SC</p>

<p>9. Rail to River Post Project Evaluation Board members reviewed and discussed the Post Project Evaluation report for the Rail to River project, including the engagement with artists, pop-up business challenges, and options for the archway installation, including a final push with Boots and potential redesigns.</p> <p>Project Evaluation and Artist Engagement: Upon review of the report Board members suggested more detail on the artist engagement and installation sculptures be highlighted. This was agreed and additional information will be shared to ensure the journey is fully documented and allows lessons to be learned for future projects.</p> <p>Pop-Up Launch and Business Engagement: Pop-up spaces are open, with plans for proactive launch and ongoing promotion. Seven businesses have used the spaces, exceeding the original target, but operational challenges and engagement issues persist, prompting continued monitoring. Progress to make them agile to work for business start-ups is key to getting longevity and consistency within that model.</p> <p>Collaboration and Startup Support: Suggestions were made to collaborate with county growth hubs and leverage High Street Matters funding to support startups and innovative businesses. Lessons from other container parks and redevelopment projects will be considered.</p> <p>Archway Installation Options: Five options for the archway were discussed, with the Board favouring a final push to secure Boots' agreement, potentially involving James Wild MP, a member of the Board. If unsuccessful, options include redesigning the archway, relocating it, or reallocating funds.</p> <p>Community Sentiment and Next Steps: Board members emphasised the importance of the archway to the community, suggesting a letter from the board, including children's involvement, to appeal to Boots. If no response is received within a set timeframe, alternative options will be reassessed.</p> <p>ACTION – The Board are to send a letter to Boots with images and feedback from the schools involved in the design.</p> <p>The chair thanked the project lead for their efforts and the project.</p>	<p>VE/ALL</p>
<p>10. DRAFT Final Version LRF Monitoring Return No additional comments from the Board regarding the return therefore was noted.</p>	
<p>11. Quarterly Risk Register The Risk Register was reviewed and noted.</p>	
<p>12. Project Highlight Reports - Covering January 2026</p> <p>a) <u>Programme Overview</u> Noted</p>	

b) **Guildhall**

No additional comments following the earlier presentation in agenda item 8.

c) **Active & Clean Connectivity**

A light update highlighting that the Active Travel Hub is going to committee in June.

d) **Riverfront Regeneration**

The dryside element of the project is progressing and due to complete in July. The Custom House tender process is going well, and selection will be made in next few days. The phase two element of the project around Devil's Alley, including stakeholder workshops and options for community-led capital projects is underway.

e) **Rail to River**

No additional comments following the earlier presentation in agenda item 9.

f) **King's Lynn Library (Multiuser Community Hub)**

The library is now settled into its Business-as-Usual delivery model and work is ongoing to track outcomes and outputs for the library. Quarterly meetings and case studies will be used to share progress, with Board members. It was requested to provide comparative statistics on library visitors and membership, to enable ongoing celebration and promotion of the library's success.

Project Update Reports

g) **Town Centre repurposing**

It was explained that options for town centre repurposing include direct intervention or grant-funded support for property owners. Recruitment for an empty property officer is underway to help develop the project, using both regulatory powers and incentive schemes. The south end of the high street remains a topic of discussion with concern around the old Debenhams and post office buildings not being owned by the Council therefore in conflict with the KL Masterplan. They remain a key focus of the KL Masterplan and Historic England are engaged.

h) **Riverfront Phase II**

A workshop was held earlier in May regarding Devils Alley and a couple of options for a live capital project being community led has been proposed.

i) **Sommerfeld and Thomas**

Historic England's Heritage at Risk funding is being pursued for key sites, with expressions of interest being prepared. The Sommerfeld and Thomas building featured in Historic England's prospectus last year and as the core fit out is a barrier to progress and the need to de risk the project to get someone to take on the building, this will remain a priority.

Collaboration with Major Contractors and Social Value At the recently attended UK's Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREIIF) officers engaged major contractors involved in the new Queen Elizabeth Hospital and various road infrastructure

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<p>projects with a view to developing a collaborative social value plan, aiming to maximise local workforce and skills development for the town. This could bring around a significant amount of match funding with the hospital being a key draw. The chair asked that the Board is kept up to date with social value as it is a key benefit for the town.</p>		
<p>12. Finance Overview</p> <p>The financial overview was reported to the Board on project budgets, overspend issues, staff capitalisation, contingency planning, and the receipt of final towns fund payments, with actions to cover overspend using reserves.</p> <p>Budget Status and Overspend: Michelle reported that £27 million has been spent against a £58 million budget, with a forecast of £59.2 million. Overspend is noted on several projects, including Rail to River, due to archway costs and unexpected expenses in ACC.</p> <p>Staff Capitalisation and Contingency: It was clarified that staff capitalisation costs were retrofitted into project budgets, and not part of the original business cases which have caused overspend. Contingency funds and reserves will be used to cover these costs, with ongoing discussions to clear the overspend for next month.</p> <p>Towns Fund Payment and Allocation: The final towns fund payment was received, bringing the total close to £25 million, with only £100,000 left to come in. The allocation supports ongoing project delivery and financial stability. The archway is forecast but if it goes ahead will go over budget.</p>		
<p>14. AOB No additional discussion items were brought forward.</p>		
<p>15. Meeting Closed at 3:00pm</p>		
<p>Date and time of next Board meeting</p>	<p>Friday 26 June 2026 1:00pm – 3:00pm</p>	<p>Council Chambers Town Hall King's Lynn PE30 5DQ</p>

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After the meeting the Chair agreed to the publication of the following papers:

- 04. Minutes of Previous Meeting – AGREED
- 05. a. Action log – AGREED
 - b. Forward Work Plan – AGREED
- 06. Governance Workshop Reflections - AGREED
- 07. Community Capacity Building Progress Update - AGREED
- 08. Guildhall Update – **EXEMPT**
- 09. Rail to River Post Project Evaluation - **EXEMPT**
- 10. DRAFT Final Version LRF Monitoring Return - **EXEMPT**
- 11. Quarterly Risk Register - AGREED
- 12. Highlight Reports
 - a. Programme overview - AGREED
 - b. Guildhall & Creative Hub - AGREED
 - c. Active Clean Connectivity - AGREED
 - d. Riverfront Regeneration - AGREED
 - e. Rail to River - AGREED
- King's Lynn Library **Update Project Reports**
 - g. Town Centre Repurposing - AGREED
 - h. Riverfront Phase II – AGREED
 - i. Sommerfeld & Thomas – AGREED
- 12. Finance Overview - AGREED