

<b>Report To:</b>	Overview Committee
<b>Date:</b>	25 March 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	South and East Lincolnshire Council's crowdfunding scheme - two year progress
<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide an overview of the first two years of the South and East Lincolnshire crowd funding scheme
<b>Key Decision:</b>	N/a
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Sarah Devereux, Portfolio Holder for Partnerships
<b>Report Of:</b>	Emily Spicer, Assistant Director - Housing and Communities
<b>Report Author:</b>	Nichola Holderness, Community Leadership Manger
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	ALL
<b>Exempt Report:</b>	NO

### **Summary**

The South and East Lincolnshire Crowdfund launched in Spring 2023 with the first funding window, there has since been a further three funding windows. In its first two years the scheme has supported ten projects totalling £105,509 across the sub-region.

The following report provides an overview of activity in the first two years and how it is delivering much needed financial support to community groups in line with the intentions of the three councils within South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership who jointly committed to establishing an innovative Crowdfunding scheme in 2022.

### **Recommendations**

1. That the progress of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Crowdfunding scheme is noted and that Members support its continuation.
2. That Members note the allocation of further funds to the Crowdfunding scheme via East Lindsey Investment Fund, as agreed at Executive Board 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

## Reasons for Recommendations

To continue to raise funds for local voluntary and community groups across South and East Lincolnshire via the South and East Lincolnshire Crowdfunding scheme for local projects.

To further support Voluntary and Community groups within East Lindsey to raise fund for local projects.

## Other Options Considered

Draw the current scheme to a close (not recommended) and not offer financial support to local community and voluntary groups raising funds for projects.

### 1. Background

- 1.1 In Autumn 2022 the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (S&ELCP) contracted with Spacehive Ltd (Spacehive) to launch an innovative approach to supporting community groups raising funds for local projects.
- 1.2 The scheme was named the South and East Lincolnshire Crowd. An initial contract entered via 'G-Cloud' was signed for two years plus two 'roll forward years'.

### 2. Report

- 2.1 On behalf of the three sovereign councils Boston Borough Council entered a contract with Spacehive starting in Autumn 2022 to set up and operate a crowdfunding scheme. The scheme went live in Spring 2023.
- 2.2 So far 11 projects have been supported and a total of 10 have reached their target. 1 project was unsuccessful as it was unable to reach its final target.
- 2.3 The overall project total value is £105,509 the total crowd contribution being £56,189.
- 2.4 A review document is set out in appendix A. Headlines include:
  - **10 projects - The number of projects being supported or have been supported**
  - **381 backers**
  - **90% success rate**

It should be noted the appended report covers activity up to Spring 2025 and does not include the activity of the current project funding campaign, which opened 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2025.

- 2.5 South East Lincolnshire Crowd is currently operated and maintained through an annual contract with Spacehive of £34,000, split equally between each sovereign council.
- 2.6 To date the leverage on the Council's investment from the funding pot is 1.42. This means for every £1 the council pledges to a crowdfunding project the crowd are contributing and additional £4.42.
- 2.7 East Lindsey District Council has £19,500 remaining in the funding pledge pot to allocate to Spring and Autumn round projects that come forward.
- 2.8 Through the East Lindsey Investment Fund it was agreed to allocate a further £45,000 towards the East Lindsey Crowdfunding pot from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. Funds will be administered in line with the existing scheme.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1. Although investing in local community projects is a discretionary activity, it underpins the Partnership priorities in supporting our communities, particular Safe and Resilient – *work with the local community to promote community confidence and pride in place.*
- 3.2. The East Lindsey Investment Fund provides an opportunity to further support community projects via the Crowdfunding Scheme.
- 3.3. The Crowdfunding scheme is a modest investment but levers a good return and more importantly offers the community an innovative, alternative platform to support their projects, that may not be eligible for traditional funding routes.

### **Implications**

#### **South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership**

Managing the South and East Lincolnshire Crowd as a Partnership ensures resources are aligned for efficiencies, that local knowledge identifies local beneficiaries within the Voluntary and Community Sector and promotion of the scheme is maximised

#### **Corporate Priorities**

The following Sub-Regional Priorities are supported through the operation of the Community Lottery Scheme:

- 1) Growth and Prosperity
- 2) Healthy Lives
- 3) Safe and Resilient Communities
- 4) Environment

## **Staffing**

There are no additional staffing requirements, all monitoring and promotion of the scheme is undertaken by the Community Leadership Team.

## **Workforce Capacity Implications**

There are no additional workforce capacity implications, all work is undertaken by the Community Leadership Team

## **Constitutional and Legal Implications**

None

## **Data Protection**

None

## **Financial**

Annual Cost of the Space scheme for each Sovereign Council is £11,333.

## **Risk Management**

None

## **Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales**

The South and East Lincolnshire Council Partnership (SELCP) determined the eligibility criteria of projects from the Voluntary and Community Sector. Each project is verified via the Spacehive platform and then each pledge is evaluated by the Community Leadership Manager and then signed off by the relevant delegated officer and Portfolio Holder.

## **Reputation**

The South and East Lincolnshire Crowd has a positive impact on the reputation of the SELCP as it offers a financial support opportunity to voluntary and community sector organisations wishing to raise funds for projects.

## **Contracts**

Contract monitoring takes place once per year with relevant delegated staff.

The contract with Spacehive is due to expire October 2026.

## **Crime and Disorder**

None

## **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding**

The South East Lincolnshire Crowd does not have any identified disproportionate impacts on groups with protected characteristics. The following has been considered:-

- i) Online platform – may not be suitable for all. The Community Leadership Team will work to ensure the scheme is accessible to all. Face to Face promotion and will take place at community venues and funding events.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

The additional funding for the Voluntary and Community sector via the South and East Lincolnshire Crowd scheme continue to benefit our local communities.

## **Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment**

An impact assessment has been undertaken but as this is an overarching report it is difficult to quantify the impact of what may come forward under future projects. The assessment has been based on the experience to date and the key areas where there is likely to have been an impact however this is only indicative and can't be a comprehensive assessment. Ways to better capture the impact of individual schemes, without potentially overburdening community projects are being explored with Climate Change Group Manager.

Infographic from the Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment Tool attached as Appendix B.

## **Acronyms**

S&ELCP - South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Appendix A	Two-year check in report – Crowdfund
Appendix B	Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment Tool

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Chronological History of this Report**

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Crowdfunding Scheme

<b>Name of Body</b>	<b>Date</b>
Executive Board	6 July 2022

## **Report Approval**

Report author:	Nichola Holderness, Community Leadership Manager <a href="mailto:Nichola.holderness@boston.gov.uk">Nichola.holderness@boston.gov.uk</a>
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Approved for publication: Councillor Sarah Devereux