

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Tuesday, 3 March 2026 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Members: Councillor Elvis Stooke (Chairman)
Councillor Emma Baker (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Barry Dobson, Councillor Ben Green, Councillor Gloria Johnson,
Councillor Bridget Ley, Councillor Paul Martin, Councillor Max Sawyer and
Councillor Sarah Trotter

Agenda

This meeting can be watched as a live stream, or at a later date, [via the SKDC Public-I Channel](#)

- 1. Public Speaking**
The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Disclosure of Interests**
Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.
- 4. Minutes from the meeting held 13 January 2026** (Pages 3 - 10)
- 5. Updates from the previous meeting** (Pages 11 - 12)

Published and dispatched by democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk on Monday, 23 February 2026.

† 01476 406080

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive

www.southkesteven.gov.uk

- 6. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
- 7. Strategy for allocation of Tree Planting Resources** (Pages 13 - 25)
To set out the Council's current approach to allocating resources for tree planting.
- 8. Progress update on upgrade of District Council Streetlights to LED** (Pages 27 - 33)
To update the committee on the £1m programme to upgrade SKDC owned streetlights to energy efficient LED lamps
- 9. Update on Climate Change Reserve Fund** (Pages 35 - 40)
To provide the Committee with an update on the commitments from the climate change reserve fund for the 2025/26 financial year.
- 10. Food Waste Collection Update** (Pages 41 - 45)
To update the Committee on the progress of the roll out of weekly food waste collections.
- 11. Work Programme 2025 - 2026** (Pages 47 - 49)
To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2025 – 2026.
- 12. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 13 January 2026, 2.00 pm



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Committee Members present

Councillor Elvis Stooke (Chairman)
Councillor Emma Baker (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Ben Green
Councillor Bridget Ley
Councillor Nikki Manterfield
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Sarah Trotter

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Philip Knowles

Other Members present

Councillor Ian Selby

Officers

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)
Tom Amblin-Lightowler, Environmental Health Manager – Environmental Protection
& Private Sector Housing
Patrick Astill, Communications Officer
Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services
Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager
Ayeisha Kirkham, Head of Public Protection
Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT
Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

38. Public Speaking

There were none

39. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gloria Johnson,
substituted by Councillor Nikki Manterfield.

40. Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Robert Leadenham noted that he was the Chairman of the
Grantham Canal Partnership, prior to their presentation.

41. Updates from the previous meeting

The Sustainability and Climate Change Officer noted that there were changes to the Private Sector Retrofit Scheme, and updates would be shared with the committee in due course.

42. Minutes of the meeting held 10 November 2025

The minutes of the meeting held 10 November 2025 were proposed, seconded, and carried AGREED as an accurate record.

43. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service

The Leader of the Council noted that he had been engaging with the local MP, Gareth Davies, and Anglian Water about delayed water infrastructure across the district.

44. Annual Air Quality Update

It was AGREED to move the Annual Air Quality Update to item seven of the agenda.

The Annual Air Quality Update was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Planning.

Local air quality in South Kesteven was managed via an extensive diffusion tube monitoring network comprising fifty-eight passive NO₂ diffusion tubes at thirty-five separate locations (some have triplicate/duplicate tubes at one location). The diffusion tube network was used to monitor NO₂ concentrations across the District, identify potential new areas of concern and monitor at known hotspot areas.

The 2025 Annual Status Report (ASR) was appended to the report, outlining monitoring data and identified trends.

The 2025 ASR identified that during 2024 there were no exceedances of the 1 hour mean objective when using annual mean as a proxy for hourly mean. This was positive and supported the overall improvement in air quality.

The ASR reports that there was compliance with the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide NO₂ at all fifty-eight passive monitoring tubes across the thirty-five monitoring locations. This was a continuing trend since 2019.

Within the 'conclusions and priorities' section of the 2025 ASR report it

recommended that the Council continue to use the passive monitoring network to monitor air quality levels, and to ensure that compliance was maintained throughout the district. The report recommended:

- Continue passive monitoring within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) to ensure the NO₂ concentration remains below 40 µg/m³.
- Continue to consider amending AQMA No.6 to remove the pollution declaration of 1- hour NO₂ mean exceedances and potential revocation of the AQMA'.

During discussions, comments were made on the following:

- A Member queried the necessity to keep monitoring air quality levels. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed the authority had a duty to comply with management data.
- It was confirmed that there hadn't been exceedances for twelve years, however, it was too soon to consider revocation of the AQMA.
- A visiting Member queried the annual cost of air quality management. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed there was no cost to the area and the authority was obliged to make the declaration. The ongoing cost was the production of the action plan every five years, including a traffic monitoring exercise. However, this was done in house to minimise costs. It was agreed that any annual costs of air quality monitoring could be provided to committee Members. **ACTION**

The Annual Air Quality Update was noted by the Committee.

The committee adjourned at 14.17 due to a technical issue.

45. Grantham Canal Partnership Presentation

The meeting resumed at 14.27.

The Grantham Canal Partnership Presentation was presented by the representatives from the Grantham Canal Society.

The presentation is appended to the minutes, and encapsulated the following:

- An update and insight into the work of the Grantham Canal Society (GCS)
- Description of the short-term plans and longer-term ambitions of the GCS.
- Discussion of how the GCS could take a more focussed and active role in the management and development of the canal east of the A1.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Members praised the work of the society.

- A Member identified that some members of the public were resorting to parking on grass verges to access the canal footpath. It was suggested this could reflect a broader accessibility issue.
- In response, it was acknowledged that greater advertising was needed to also highlight which parts of the canal/towpath were public rights of way as sections of the canal/towpath were owned by a third party farmer. Many of the rights of way were under Canal and River Trust who owned much of the canal.
- It was noted that SKDC had worked with the Grantham Canal Society over the previous year for dredging work and both parties wanted to continue that partnership.
- It was confirmed that the sources of the water were Denton and Knipton reservoirs and Smite Feeder.
- It was queried whether the Grantham Canal Partnership held a species list. It was agreed that this would be circulated. ACTION
- There were no heavy metals or pesticides detected within the canal.
- It was confirmed that the partnership had volunteers from a range of backgrounds and was engaging with Grantham College.

The Grantham Canal Partnership presentation was noted by the committee.

46. Grantham Canal Maintenance Works

The Grantham Canal Maintenance Works was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement.

South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) became responsible for approximately a 1km stretch of the Grantham Canal located in the south-western area of Grantham between the A1 / A607 slip roads (Swingbridge Road) and Earlesfield Lane in 1983.

In 2024, reports were received of water seepage through the banks of the canal by a business based just off Trent Road. This was causing some damage to the access road which had a detrimental impact on their trading.

In response to the issue which arose in 2024 and a lack of updated survey information, a comprehensive condition survey was commissioned from external consultants in order to assess the current condition of the canal and its banks, the cause of the seepage, and options for a full improvement scheme.

The works specified by the condition survey report included stop logs located at The Swingbridge Road, Trent Road and Earlesfield Lane culverts. In addition to these stop logs, safe means of access to place and lift out these sections would be required, including railings, steps, working platforms and fencing. An electronic water level gauge and stop log store would also be installed.

It was anticipated that these works would cost in the region of £250k (subject to tender evaluation). The works would have enabled the water levels to be stabilised and facilitate safe water management. However, there would be a need for further works in order to stabilise the canal banks for the future long-term condition. These works were estimated at £750k, to be spent in the following 5 years.

During discussions, comments were made on the following:

- The Head of Service (Property and IT) noted that, following the issues identified in 2024, the canal low levels were resulting in ground surface flooding after heavy rain.
- The scope of SKDC's responsibilities for the organisation's section of the canal was queried. It was confirmed that SKDC were responsible for the canal and maintenance of the towpath.

The Grantham Canal Maintenance Works was noted by the committee.

47. Section 19 flooding Recommendations and Corresponding Actions

The Section 19 Flooding Recommendations and Corresponding Actions was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement.

Following a major flooding event, it was the responsibility of the Lead Flood Authority to undertake an investigation and produce Section 19 reports. The reports sought to establish a background to the flooding event and identify causes and recommendations to reduce the chances of flooding in the future. It should be noted that Section 19 reports contained recommendations only and there was not a statutory obligation to comply with these.

Appended to the report were details of the outstanding recommendations from Section 19 reports in South Kesteven.

During discussions, comments were made on the following:

- A Member praised the detailed level of the Section 19 reports but did note a disparity in one report between it being a one-in-thirty-year event and a one-in-a-thousand-year event.
- It was noted that Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) were installing their own gages to monitor specific areas, known as Project Groundwater.
- A Member noted that district Councillors had a responsibility to engage with LCC to share local knowledge in these instances.

The Section 19 Flooding Recommendations and Corresponding Actions were noted by the committee.

48. Waste Policy Update

The Waste Policy Update was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste.

The Waste Policy document provided the residents of SKDC with an outline of the services provided and helped to manage their expectations regarding service delivery. Furthermore, it acted as a guide to Members on how to handle issues and ensures that any problems were dealt with fairly and transparently.

The key areas of change within the policy document were:

Section 3.5 - The addition of orange lidded black caddies to the collection material description list. This was added in anticipation of the rollout of food waste collections from April 2026.

Section 7.5 / 7.6 - The removal of the January and February winter collections, taking effect from January 2027. Residents, who had paid for the garden waste service, would still receive a Christmas tree collection in January.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- A Member queried whether a reduction in service would result in a reduction in cost. Adding that SKDC needed to be extremely clear in what they were doing. If the cost savings were going towards the service, SKDC needed to be clear with the messaging. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste responded that the original proposal was to increase by £2 and £1. By reducing this to £1.50 and 50p there is was a shortfall, which was matched by the reduction in service. The current cost fell below the cost recovery metric.
- The Cabinet Member also that that HGV duty excise was increasing, median repair costs had increased by 12%, MOT service charges had increased 27% per vehicle, and there were salary increases of 3.2%.
- A Member suggested consideration of a flat fee per bin. The Cabinet Member noted that this would reduce income by £13,000 which was not the point of reducing collections. The point of reduction was to respond to a genuine concern about keeping costs down for residents.
- A Member noted concern that whilst the removal of the January and February service would reduce SKDC's carbon footprint, it would increase that of the user who would alternatively have to drive to a disposal centre. Another Member noted concern that this could led to the unintended consequence of increased fly-tipping. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the proportion of fly tipping from garden waste was low and was mostly committed by professionals. The Cabinet Member endorsed composting as a solution, stating that there was advice and guidance on the SKDC website.

- The Cabinet Member confirmed there were 36,000 green bin subscribers and 5,000 secondary bin subscribers.
- The Cabinet Member agreed to send a spreadsheet out to committee containing further cost analysis. ACTION

Following discussions, it was proposed, seconded, and AGREED to recommend the updated Waste Policy to Cabinet.

The meeting adjourned at 16.08.

49. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy- Feedback and Review

The meeting resumed at 16.18.

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy- Feedback and Review was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance & Licensing.

The Cabinet Member outlined the motives of the policy review to be public safety and transparency. Over previous years, SKDC had received feedback from drivers, operators, and Councillors indicating that the economic environment was disproportionately affecting the taxi industry.

Following this, a 12-week enforcement operation occurred in 2025 and two workshop sessions were also held for taxi and private hire drivers, one in Grantham and one in Stamford.

In addition to concerns about out of area drivers and council fees and charges, feedback had been received on the necessity of undertaking knowledge and English tests. Feedback was also received that the requirements to get an SKDC taxi were more difficult than other authorities.

Proposed policy changes, included the following:

Knowledge Test – Removal of the knowledge test requirement, removing a cost for new applicants.

English Test – This was to remain in the updated policy; however, the cost would be free of charge for all first tests. If a first test was failed, then further tests would be chargeable.

New drivers entering the profession - The provision of a 1-year licence for drivers entering the profession which supported feedback relating to difficulty in recruiting new drivers.

Delegated Authority- It was proposed that delegated authority was given to the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder to make minor changes to the updated policy as required.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- A Member noted that they had worked with the policy for many years and believed it made common sense. They didn't believe the knowledge test was needed given the technology available. They requested clarity about the level of changes that would be delegated. It was confirmed this would be minor amendments, usually grammar or the insertion of links.
- It was confirmed that qualifications would be accepted if they demonstrated an understanding of the English language.
- The English test would be facilitated externally.
- A Member drew attention to the use of the word 'dial' in Appendix E – 2.3(ii). The Head of Service (Public Protection) agreed to review this and, if necessary, amend under the delegation.

It was proposed, seconded, and AGREED to recommend to Council that the updated Hackney and Private Hire Licensing Policy was adopted.

50. Work Programme 2025 - 2026

It was AGREED for the Food Waste item to be added to the Work Programme for March.

51. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent

The Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture & Place) reminded members of the member briefing on 14 February 2026 and Joint-Environment and Rural & Communities OSC on 24 February 2026.

The meeting concluded at 16.39.

Action Sheet

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Actions from meeting of 13 January 2026

Min no	Agenda item	Action	Assigned to	Comments/Status	Deadline
44	Annual Air Quality Update	<p>A visiting Member queried the annual cost of air quality management. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed there was no cost to the area and the authority was obliged to make the declaration. The ongoing cost was the production of the action plan every five years, including a traffic monitoring exercise. However, this was done in house to minimise costs. It was agreed that any annual costs of air quality monitoring could be provided to committee Members.</p>	The Environmental Health Manager		
45	Grantham Canal Partnership Presentation	<p>It was queried whether the Grantham Canal Partnership held a species list. It was agreed that this would be circulated.</p>			

Min no	Agenda item	Action	Assigned to	Comments/Status	Deadline
48	Waste Policy Update	The Cabinet Member agreed to send a spreadsheet out to committee containing further cost analysis.	Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste		



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 3 March 2026

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker,
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Strategy for Allocation of Tree Planting Resources

Report Author

Andrew Igoea, Tree Project Officer

✉ andrew.igoea@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To set out, in line with the objectives of the South Kesteven Tree and Woodland Strategy, the Council's current approach to allocating resources for tree planting, explaining the principles that will guide delivery, the financial constraints that shape annual planting programmes, and the method used to assess whether the distribution of planting activity aligns with areas of greatest need.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1. Note the considerations determining how resources are managed for the Council's internal tree planting schemes.**
- 2. Endorse the strategic approach to tree planting outlined in this paper.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Sustainable South Kesteven
Which wards are impacted?	(All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report, but it does contain the methodology for how the existing budget provision will be spent. Included within the 2026/27 budget proposal, recurring growth items for both tree planting and tree maintenance are being considered for approval to ensure sufficient budget provision is in place to support the ongoing activities of the Tree and Woodland Strategy.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Resources and Deputy s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal and governance implications. If specific planting projects met certain financial thresholds, they would need to be approved in line with the Scheme of Delegation, Contract Procedure Rules or Financial Regulations at Part 3 of the Constitution.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Climate Change

- 1.3 By prioritising areas with low baseline tree canopy cover, this strategy supports climate resilience. The emphasis on tree establishment and post-planting maintenance is particularly welcomed, as this maximises long-term carbon sequestration, urban cooling and biodiversity benefits, rather than focusing solely on planting numbers.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The South Kesteven Tree and Woodland Strategy (The 'T&W') sets the overarching framework for how trees and woodlands should be protected, enhanced and expanded across the district. A core objective of the T&W is to increase overall tree canopy cover, of which tree planting is a key delivery mechanism. The T&W also emphasises the importance of environmental justice and equity, recognising that access to the benefits of trees should be improved in areas where canopy cover is lowest and community need is greatest. In addition, the T&W makes clear that successful tree establishment, rather than planting numbers alone, is essential if long-term canopy gains are to be achieved. While the T&W provides strategic direction, it does not set out in detail how annual planting budgets should be allocated or prioritised between locations. A planting strategy, sitting beneath the T&W, is therefore required to provide a practical, transparent framework for deciding how limited planting resources are deployed in a way that supports its objectives.
- 2.2. This paper has been submitted for consideration by the Committee prior to the confirmation of the planting budget by Full Council on 26th February 2026. However, the Strategy does not seek to commit the Council to a specific level of expenditure; rather, it establishes a clear, evidence-based framework for prioritising locations, communities and types of intervention once resources are allocated. Regardless of the eventual scale of funding approved, the same prioritisation principles would apply. Agreeing the Strategy at this stage ensures that, following budget approval, any investment can be deployed efficiently, transparently and in alignment with the Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy, without delay.

Scope and Term of the Planting Strategy

- 2.3. The strategy applies to amenity tree planting delivered or funded directly by the Council using its own budgets, including the costs of planting, establishment and early maintenance. It does not prescribe how external funding sources are to be allocated.
- 2.4. Opportunities to deliver additional tree planting through grant funding, public-private partnerships, third-sector collaboration or in-kind contributions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and are not governed by this allocation framework. Such opportunities are often site-specific or funding-led and may not align precisely with the prioritisation method set out in this strategy.
- 2.5. This strategy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if circumstances change significantly. The review will consider planting site availability, costs of planting and maintenance, and the effectiveness of delivery against the Tree Planting Priority Index (TPPI), rather than relying on new canopy cover data, which is not expected to be available frequently.

General principles

2.6. *Priority use of council-owned land*

SKDC currently has significant capacity to deliver tree planting on land that it owns and manages. As a general rule, internal resources will be used to plant trees on Council-owned land first, as this offers the greatest level of control over site selection, planting standards and long-term management.

Alternative delivery models, such as direct funding of planting on parish council land or partnership working with third parties, will only be considered once opportunities on Council-owned land become limited or overly restrictive.

2.7. *Focus on tree establishment rather than tree planting*

The Tree and Woodland Strategy emphasises that planting a tree is only the first step; the long-term benefits of trees depend on successful establishment.

It is considered good practice for newly planted trees to be placed on a young tree maintenance programme for at least two to three years, including watering, weeding and corrective maintenance. For this reason, SKDC planting schemes should also cover the projected full cost of post-planting maintenance for a minimum of three years. This ensures that planting activity leads to lasting canopy cover rather than short-term planting numbers.

2.8. *Replacement planting as a first priority*

In each financial year, the highest priority for planting will be the replacement of high-value trees that have been felled for safety reasons. These trees often provide significant amenity, landscape or community value, and their loss represents a direct reduction in local canopy cover.

Replacement planting will therefore be prioritised ahead of new discretionary planting. The primary aim of replacement planting is to restore amenity value to the area(s) affected by tree removal. The precise location and species used for replacement planting will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of site constraints and operational considerations, and will be guided by the priorities of the Tree and Woodland Strategy, including species diversity, species suitability, climate resilience, biosecurity and biodiversity.

2.9. *Supporting public sector development*

SKDC will plant trees within and adjacent to sites of public sector development where this supports the successful delivery of development or helps mitigate its environmental impacts. This may include improving local amenity, enhancing the quality of the public realm, or contributing to the mitigation of adverse impacts on biodiversity and landscape character arising from development.

2.10. *Maximising site potential and operational efficiency*

Tree planting and establishment costs are strongly influenced by the number of sites involved. It is more efficient to concentrate planting on as few sites as

possible, as this reduces travel time and labour costs associated with planting, watering and maintenance.

Where a single replacement tree is required but the site can accommodate additional trees, it is operationally sensible to maximise the site's planting potential before moving to new locations. As a result, if a large number of trees are removed in a single year—particularly across many sites—the majority of the planting budget may be allocated to replacement planting.

2.11. *Targeting areas of greatest benefit*

A key objective of the Tree and Woodland Strategy is to ensure that tree planting delivers the greatest benefit to local people, particularly by increasing canopy cover in areas where it is currently lowest.

To support this objective, the distribution of tree planting activity will be assessed against a theoretical “ideal” distribution, based on a Tree Planting Priority Index (TPPI). This does not dictate where individual trees must be planted but provides a transparent benchmark against which locations outlined for delivery can be reviewed.

2.12. *Use of Tree Equity Scores within towns*

Where planting resources are allocated to towns, priority will generally be given to locations within those towns that score most highly on the Woodland Trust's Tree Equity Score.

The Tree Equity Score is a composite measure that identifies neighbourhoods where people are least well served by trees, taking account of existing canopy cover alongside social and environmental factors such as deprivation, health vulnerability and exposure to environmental pressures. Higher scores indicate areas where increased tree cover is likely to deliver the greatest benefit to local communities.

Tree Equity Score data is currently only available for towns and urban areas. For this reason, it will be used as a secondary prioritisation tool within towns, rather than as a district-wide allocation mechanism. It will not override the wider principles set out in this strategy but will help ensure that planting within towns is targeted to the areas of greatest need.

Measurement of Tree Canopy Cover

- 2.13. Tree canopy cover for each town and village was assessed using the i-Tree Canopy tool. i-Tree Canopy is a nationally recognised, evidence-based method that estimates canopy cover by randomly sampling points across a defined area. Each sample point was classified as either ‘tree’ or ‘non-tree’. The proportion of points classified as ‘tree’ was then used to calculate the overall canopy cover percentage for each settlement.

- 2.14. Assessment boundaries were defined using a practical, common-sense approach. In most cases there is a clear and identifiable boundary where built development ends and open countryside begins. These boundaries were used to ensure canopy cover reflects the areas where people live and experience trees in their daily environment.
- 2.15. Land that is currently undeveloped but allocated for development in the Local Plan was included within the assessment boundaries, even where it presently appears as open countryside. This ensures that canopy cover figures better reflect the future urban extent of settlements and provide a more appropriate baseline for long-term planning.
- 2.16. The results of the tree canopy cover assessments are available in Appendix 1.

Tree Planting Priority Index (TPPI)

- 2.17. The TPPI is a composite indicator used to assess the relative priority for tree planting between towns and villages across the district. It combines information on existing tree canopy cover and population size to identify where additional trees are likely to deliver the greatest overall benefit to local people, while also addressing the most significant canopy deficits. Settlements with very low canopy cover receive greater weighting, ensuring that severe canopy shortfalls are prioritised, while population weighting ensures that planting effort remains broadly proportionate to the number of people who stand to benefit. TPPI does not determine where individual trees must be planted but provides a transparent, evidence-based benchmark against which the overall distribution of planting activity and expenditure can be assessed.
- 2.18. Full details of how the TPPI is calculated for each settlement are provided in Appendix 2.
- 2.19. The top 40 TPPI values are provided in Appendix 3.

Financial framework for annual planting programme

2.20. Post-planting maintenance costs

Based on historic data, the average cost of watering an amenity tree for one growing season is approximately £100 per tree. This figure will be reviewed annually based on actual expenditure.

Because budgets operate on an April–March basis, the estimated cost of summer watering must be deducted from the current year’s planting budget.

In addition:

- £2,000 is allocated annually for other maintenance tasks (weeding, restaking, minor repairs)
- £3,000 is set aside as a contingency fund

2.21. *Planting costs*

Review of the previous two years of planting indicates an average planting cost of £225 per amenity tree. This figure will also be reviewed annually using real expenditure data.

2.22. *Budget balancing and prioritisation*

Once post-planting maintenance and contingency costs have been deducted from the annual budget:

- The cost of replacement planting and planting required to support public sector development will be calculated
- If replacement and public-sector-development planting exceeds the available budget, proposals will be rationalised and prioritised based on expected amenity value
- If budget remains, additional planting will be allocated to move delivery as close as possible to the TPPI 'ideal' distribution

External funding and partnership delivery

2.23. Additional planting may take place using external resources, including grant funding, third-sector partnerships or corporate sponsorship.

2.24. The allocation of sites for externally funded planting may not always align with TPPI priorities, as funding opportunities can be highly site-specific. However, where possible, these opportunities will still seek to support the wider objectives of the Tree and Woodland Strategy.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

3.1. This strategy provides a transparent, evidence-based and financially realistic approach to allocating tree planting resources. It balances operational efficiency, long-term tree establishment, and strategic equity, while remaining flexible enough to respond to changing budgets, planting opportunities and external funding.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Tree Canopy Cover Data

Appendix 2 – TPPI methodology

Appendix 3 – TPPI data

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1 – Table showing results of the i-tree canopy cover assessments

Small Village	Large Village	Town
*as defined by SP2 (Settlement Hierarchy) in the SKDC Local Plan Link to SKDC Local Plan		

Location	TCC (%)
Denton	34.5
Pickworth	34.2
Greatford	31.8
West Deeping	28.4
Welby	27.7
Fulbeck	27.5
Westborough	26.7
Carlton Scroop	26.3
Woolsthorpe by Belvoir	25.8
Uffington	25.6
Hougham	25.6
Hough on the Hill	24.8
Syston	24.7
Ingoldsby	24.4
Irnham	24.2
Kirkby Underwood	23.4
Toft	22.4
Witham on the Hill	22.2
Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth	22.0
Haconby	21.8
Lenton	21.1
Pointon	21.1
Horbling	21.0
Boothby Pagnell	21.0
Stubton	21.0
Hanthorpe	20.8
Carlby	20.7
Ropsley	20.4
Barholm	20.2
Frognall	19.8
Edenham	19.8
Tallington	19.7
Dyke	19.1
Castle Bytham	18.6
Rippingale	18.3
Sudbrook	18.1
Folkingham	18.0
Aslackby	17.5
North Witham	17.3

Foston	17.3
Braceborough	16.5
Belton	16.0
Sedgebrook	15.8
Grantham	15.3
Bourne	15.3
Allington	14.9
Barrowby	14.8
Great Ponton	14.8
Dunsby	14.8
Dowsby	14.5
Caythorpe and Frieston	14.0
Manthorpe (Bourne)	14.0
Morton	13.4
Thurlby	13.4
Deepings	13.3
Barkston	13.0
Baston	12.6
Little Bytham	12.6
Marston	12.3
South Witham	12.0
Dry Doddington	11.7
Oasby	11.7
Stamford	11.4
Swinstead	11.0
Langtoft	10.6
Old Somerby	10.3
Ancaster	10.0
Swayfield	10.0
Burton Coggles	10.0
Aisby	9.6
Skillington	9.3
Claypole	8.7
Twenty	8.7
Harlaxton	8.0
Corby Glen	7.3
Billingham	6.8
Great Gonerby	6.5
Colsterworth	6.0
Long Bennington	5.6

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2 – Methodology for calculating the Tree Planting Priority Index (TPPI)

Step 1: Use canopy cover data to assign a Canopy Deficit Score.

The Canopy Deficit Score measures how far each settlement's current tree canopy cover falls below a benchmark of 20%.

The Canopy Deficit Score is calculated as:

$$CDS = \max \left(0, 1 - \frac{TCC}{20} \right)$$

Where TCC = Tree Canopy Cover percentage for the settlement

The Canopy Deficit Score produces a value between 0 and 1:

- A score of **0** indicates canopy cover at or above 20%
- A score of **0.5** indicates canopy cover of 10%
- A score close to **1** indicates very low canopy cover

This provides a consistent, evidence-based measure of relative canopy need across all settlements.

Step 2: Population percentage.

To ensure resources are distributed proportionately, each settlement is also assigned a population percentage. Where data was available, population estimates based on census data were used (source: [South Kesteven \(District, United Kingdom\) - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location](#)). For villages, where population figures were not available, the population was estimated based on the number of residential addresses.

Step 3: Calculation of the Tree Planting Priority Index

The Tree Planting Priority Index combines canopy deficit and population into a single value using the following formula:

$$TPPI = (CDS^2) \times Pop\%$$

Where:

- CDS = Canopy Deficit Score
- Pop% = Population percentage of the settlement

The Canopy Deficit Score is squared to deliberately increase the influence of severe canopy deficits. Without this adjustment, population size can dominate the calculation, resulting in moderately under-canopied towns ranking above villages with extremely low

canopy cover. Squaring the deficit score ensures that settlements with the greatest canopy shortfalls receive additional strategic emphasis.

Step 4 (optional): TPPI percentage

To enable comparison and practical use in planning and budgeting, each settlement's TPPI value is converted into a TPPI percentage, representing its share of the total TPPI across all assessed settlements.

TPPI percentages provide a clear and transparent benchmark against which the overall distribution of planting activity or expenditure can be assessed.

Appendix 3 – Table showing the top 40 TPPI values

Small Village	Large Village	Town
*as defined by SP2 (Settlement Hierachy) in the SKDC Local Plan Link to SKDC Local Plan		

Location	TCC (%)	C-Def	Pop'n %	TPPI	TPPI%
Stamford	11.4	0.43	0.1457	0.0267	8.82%
Grantham	15.3	0.24	0.2799	0.0158	5.21%
Deepings	13.3	0.34	0.1020	0.0116	3.83%
Long Bennington	5.6	0.72	0.0154	0.0080	2.63%
Bourne	15.3	0.24	0.1357	0.0077	2.52%
Great Gonerby	6.5	0.68	0.0160	0.0073	2.41%
Colsterworth	6.0	0.70	0.0121	0.0059	1.96%
Billingborough	6.8	0.66	0.0098	0.0043	1.41%
Corby Glen	7.3	0.63	0.0079	0.0032	1.05%
Langtoft	10.6	0.47	0.0138	0.0031	1.01%
Claypole	8.7	0.57	0.0095	0.0031	1.01%
Ancaster	10.0	0.50	0.0120	0.0030	0.99%
Harlaxton	8.0	0.60	0.0059	0.0021	0.69%
Morton	13.4	0.33	0.0172	0.0019	0.61%
South Witham	12.0	0.40	0.0110	0.0018	0.58%
Thurlby	13.4	0.33	0.0150	0.0016	0.53%
Baston	12.6	0.37	0.0111	0.0015	0.50%
Barrowby	14.8	0.26	0.0177	0.0012	0.40%
Caythorpe and Frieston	14.0	0.30	0.0088	0.0008	0.26%
Skillington	9.3	0.53	0.0023	0.0007	0.21%
Swayfield	10.0	0.50	0.0022	0.0006	0.18%
Barkston	13.0	0.35	0.0038	0.0005	0.15%
Dry Doddington	11.7	0.42	0.0024	0.0004	0.14%
Marston	12.3	0.38	0.0028	0.0004	0.13%
Little Bytham	12.6	0.37	0.0029	0.0004	0.13%
Allington	14.9	0.26	0.0060	0.0004	0.13%
Aisby	9.6	0.52	0.0013	0.0004	0.12%
Old Somerby	10.3	0.48	0.0014	0.0003	0.11%
Swinstead	11.0	0.45	0.0016	0.0003	0.11%
Burton Coggles	10.0	0.50	0.0012	0.0003	0.10%
Oasby	11.7	0.42	0.0016	0.0003	0.09%
Twenty	8.7	0.57	0.0007	0.0002	0.08%
Great Ponton	14.8	0.26	0.0027	0.0002	0.06%
Belton	16.0	0.20	0.0033	0.0001	0.04%
Manthorpe (Bourne)	14.0	0.30	0.0011	0.0001	0.03%
Sedgebrook	15.8	0.21	0.0022	0.0001	0.03%
Dowsby	14.5	0.28	0.0013	0.0001	0.03%
Foston	17.3	0.14	0.0037	0.0001	0.02%
Braceborough	16.5	0.18	0.0021	0.0001	0.02%
Dunsby	14.8	0.26	0.0008	0.0001	0.02%

This page is intentionally left blank



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3rd March 2026

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Upgrade of District Council Streetlights to LED

Report Author

Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

✉ Serena.brown@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides a progress update on the project to upgrade District Council operated streetlights to energy efficient LED units, following the award of a £1m contract.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes the updates and associated energy, cost and carbon reductions regarding the upgrade programme of LED streetlights.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Sustainable South Kesteven
Which wards are impacted?	All wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 An investment of £1m was made in September 2023 to upgrade the Council's street lighting. At its peak and based on aging infrastructure the overall electricity spend was £301k in 2023/24. Following the investment to upgrade Council owned streetlights to LED, this has led to reduced electricity consumption and associated spend by 66.8%. The payback on investment, based on latest spend, is 4.2 years.
- 1.2 The project to upgrade streetlights to LED has reduced utility spend as well as reducing reactive maintenance costs to repairing ageing infrastructure.

Completed by: *David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance, Deputy S151 Officer*

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 Councils do not have a duty to provide streetlighting, however once provided, the local authority does have a duty to maintain the system in a safe condition.

Completed by: *James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

Climate Change

- 1.4 The additional £1m budget was agreed in order for all Council owned streetlights to be upgraded to energy efficient LEDs and respond to the record high cost for electricity. The programme of upgrades is now almost fully completed, with an electricity reduction of 66.8%, and an annual saving of £122k. These savings

have resulted in 136 tonnes of carbon emissions annually being avoided, directly contributing towards the Council's carbon reduction target.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 Streetlights managed by SKDC are the single largest category of electricity consumption the Council is responsible for. At the peak of energy costs, the overall electricity spend for 2023/24 for streetlighting was £301k, a marked increase to previous years.
- 2.2 An upgrade programme was put into place to begin to upgrade all Council owned streetlights as a rolling programme over a 10 year period, commencing in 2021. The dramatic increase in energy costs and strong contribution towards the Council's carbon reduction target led to the development of an accelerated programme of upgrades.
- 2.3 Following deliberation by [Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd June 2023](#), [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th July 2023](#), and discussion by [Cabinet on 11th September 2023](#), [Council on 28th September 2023](#) agreed to approve an allocation of £1m to accelerate the replacement of Council operated streetlights with LED lamps.
- 2.4 EON Energy Solutions were appointed as the successful contractor for a £1m programme to upgrade the remaining SKDC streetlights to energy efficient LED. The specification for the upgraded lamps included:
 - Replacement dimmable LED luminaires, with dimming profile set from midnight to 6AM
 - Photocell controllers to activate lamp automatically at dusk and switch off at dawn
 - NEMA socket to facilitate future connection to a networked system if required
- 2.5 The contract with EON Energy Solutions mobilised in May 2024, with a target for all Council streetlights to be upgraded within 18 months. The upgrades are also covered by a 10 year warranty which should significantly reduce the ongoing maintenance costs.
- 2.6 Each upgraded streetlight is supplied with a full condition report advising the condition of the column, bracket, lantern, door & paint condition, along with an electrical test report. If required, the light is renumbered/identified.

2.7 Below is an update on the breakdown of streetlights in the Council’s portfolio, as of the end of December 2025. Currently 97% of streetlights are LED, compared to a national average for Councils of 77%.

2.8 As the project has progressed, streetlights have been identified with an unmetered power supply within housing areas which the Council is responsible for so these have been added to the register, resulting in an increase in total lamps within the inventory. Any of the lights that have been identified as a metered supply will remain under the responsibility of the Housing Team.

Year	LED	Low pressure sodium	High pressure sodium	Fluorescent	TOTAL	% LED of total
2022	310	2695	112	479	3596	8.62%
2023	713	2292	112	479	3596	19.83%
2024	2532	776	105	185	3598	70.37%
2025	3700	10	63	26	3799	97.39%

2.9 The majority of the lighting that remains to be upgraded are the ornate type of lanterns that require additional consideration and planning due to the nature of the lights. As some sit within conservation areas, advice needed to be sought and current styles of ornate lanterns are being replaced with “like for like” lanterns that are aesthetically acceptable. The manufacturing lead times are considerably longer than standard off the shelf types (around 12 – 14 weeks) which has delayed the installation. However, they are now in progress and the majority are due for completion by the end of March. Some of the lighting that has been identified as needing new columns, located in parks or on grassed areas around housing, have been delayed due to the current wet weather conditions. These have been deferred until the weather improves.

2.10 There are also approximately 10 lights that are highlighted as needing assistance from residents in cutting back hedges or trees to enable us to gain access. All residents have been written to and these are being progressed.

Energy savings

2.11 Significant reductions in electricity consumption can be seen following the implementation of upgrades to LED. The data below is presented for the calendar year, reflecting the latest available data at time of writing this report. It is important to note the vast fluctuation in electricity tariff cost throughout the period, ranging from £0.37 pence per kilowatt hour at the height of costs, to a current cost of around £0.24 pence per kilowatt hour.

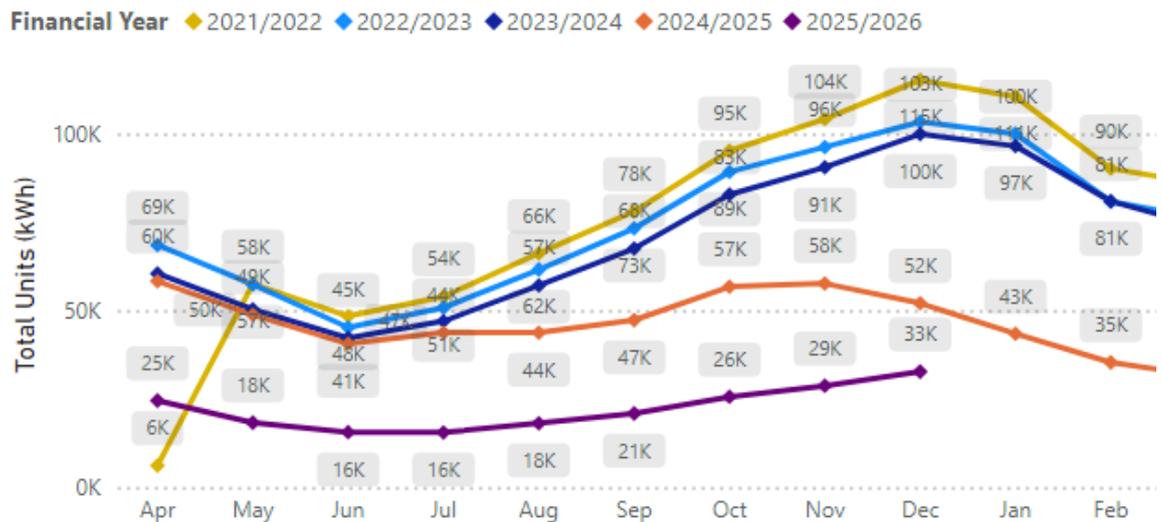
Year	kWh - total streetlights	Carbon emissions total (tonnes)	Annual utility cost for streetlights - £
2022	932,398	197	£197,836
2023	853,636	192	£301,023
2024	697,740	157	£249,430
2025	309,578	61	£74,998

2.12 Comparing the latest data for the 2025 year to 2022, we can report:

- **66.8% reduction** in electricity consumption
- **£122k reduction** in electricity cost, taking into account varying tariff prices
- **136 tonnes of carbon avoided**, equivalent to 1.8% of the Council’s total baseline

2.13 This reduction in annual consumption can be seen in the graph below:

Electricity Consumption



Carbon reduction

2.14 The implementation of upgrades to the end of 2025 has had a significant impact on carbon emissions. Within the Council’s carbon baseline year of 2018/19, electricity consumption from streetlights were responsible for 334 tonnes of carbon, or 4% of the total emissions from the Council. In comparison, in 2025 this has reduced to 61 tonnes of carbon, equivalent to a reduction of 82%, and now responsible for just 0.8% of total emissions.

2.15 Simple payback has also been calculated using actual consumption from 2025 and tariff rates from 2023 versus 2025. As LED upgrades were still underway throughout 2025, the overall annual consumption for the 2025/26 annual year and 2026 calendar year are set to reduce further. Payback is sensitive to changes in the tariff cost for electricity – the latest projections from the Council’s energy provider suggest, an increase of 5-10% is to be expected.

	Cost (£)
Spend (to January 2026) on streetlight upgrades	£972,380
Annual cost saving*	£232,837
Payback (years)	4.2

*Less a deduction for a statutory safety check every 2 years

2.16 The upgrades to remaining lanterns will be completed in early 2026. In order to make any further significant reductions to the electricity consumption of the streetlights the Council is responsible for, a policy to turn off streetlights from an agreed point overnight until early morning would need to be considered. It is estimated this would result in a reduction of a further 10% of electricity consumption.

3. Key Considerations

3.1 The additional £1m budget, approved in September 2023, was agreed in order for all Council owned streetlights to be upgraded to energy efficient LEDs and respond to the record high cost for electricity. The programme of upgrades is now almost fully completed, and an electricity reduction of 66.8%, resulting in a cost saving £122k can be reported. These savings have resulted in 136 tonnes of carbon emissions annually being avoided, directly contributing towards the Council’s carbon reduction target.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 The report is provided for information rather than decision. Members are asked to take note of the update on the progress of the project to date.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 The report is provided for information to note of the update on the progress of the project to date.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22nd June 2023 - [Streetlights report.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)
- 6.2 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 11th July 2023 - [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th July 2023](#)
- 6.3 Cabinet 11th September 2023 - [Cabinet on 11th September 2023](#)
- 6.4 Council 28th September 2023 - [Council on 28th September 2023](#)

This page is intentionally left blank



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 3rd March 2026

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker,
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Update on Climate Change Reserve

Report Author

Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

✉ serena.brown@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on the commitments from the Climate Change Reserve for the 2025/26 financial year.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1. Note the update provided on the Climate Change Reserve.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Sustainable South Kesteven Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Climate Change Reserve was established in the 2023/24 financial year in order to help respond to the budgetary pressures driven by the increasing cost of energy and the Council's stated ambition of carbon reduction across the Council's property portfolio. All project proposals are reviewed for value for money in order to ensure a sound investment for the Authority.
- 1.2 As well as the funded projects detailed within this report, further projects have been identified to continue to deliver an energy, carbon or cost saving/income stream to the Council.
- 1.3 The projected balance of the Climate Change Reserve at 2025/26 year end is £455k. A reserve top up of £388k was completed in year to ensure the reserve can continue to fund appropriate projects.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.4 As part of good governance, it is important that Members are updated on the council's projects that focus on reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions, which in turn contribute towards the Council's carbon reduction targets.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Climate Change

- 1.5 The establishment of the climate change reserve has allowed projects to be funded outside of existing budgets in order to reduce energy consumption and associated cost and carbon emissions for the Council. The projects detailed within this report include detail on expected energy, carbon or cost saving/income stream.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. There is a clear role for local government to shape, drive, and deliver local action on climate change. South Kesteven District Council made a formal declaration of climate emergency on 26 September 2019 with cross-party support. Alongside this, the Council confirmed the political ambition to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030, and to endeavour to become net-zero as soon as viable before 2050. Over three-quarters of local authorities in the UK have now taken the step of declaring a climate emergency.
- 2.2. Following this declaration of climate emergency, the Council's updated carbon footprint was established, using baseline data from 2018/19, which was presented to [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21st July 2020](#). This signalled some of the major categories of carbon emissions arising from council operations and highlighted projects to pursue to reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.3. South Kesteven District Council has continued to publish updates on progress towards the outlined carbon emissions target since 2018/19 year. The latest report covering the 2024/25 period reported a total carbon emissions reduction of 29.24%, discussed in detail at a meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on [23rd September 2025](#).
- 2.4. South Kesteven District Council has made significant progress in addressing carbon emissions from its own operations. Some of these major achievements include:
 - Programme of £1m to upgrade all Council streetlights to energy efficient LEDs with dimming
 - Securing over £3.5m of funding via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (phase 3c) to install a new low-carbon heating system at Grantham Meres leisure centre
 - Installation of additional solar PV panels at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre as well as at the Council's main offices at The Picture House
 - Overall reduction in electricity consumption and associated carbon emissions across the Council's portfolio of buildings
 - Development of a new Green Fleet Strategy to agree a way forward to decarbonise the Council's vehicles
- 2.5. A Climate Change Reserve of £300,000 was put in place from 2023/24 in order to both help respond to the budgetary pressures driven by the increasing cost of energy, and the Council's stated ambition of carbon reduction across the Council's property portfolio. The intention of the reserve is to fund standalone initiatives to reduce energy consumption and associated costs. The fund was increased to £500k for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.6. Whilst good progress has been made in reducing the Council's carbon emissions, it is evident that further investment is required across different areas in order to

sustain a continued reduction. There is also a need for the Council to proactively respond to the sharp increase in utility costs, principally electricity and gas. Through making targeted upgrades, the Council both reduce ongoing utility costs and sustain a significant reduction in carbon emissions.

2.7. An update on committed projects for this year are included in the table below. Projects are expected to deliver an energy, carbon or cost saving/income stream to the authority, helping to respond to the increase in utility costs. This includes projects delivered within leisure centres in the district, where LeisureSK is responsible for utilities.

Proposal	Project description	Cost	Indicative payback (years)	Estimated annual savings		
				£	CO2	kWh
Upgrade circulation pumps for pools	Grantham Meres leisure centre pool pumps (main and leisure pool) upgrade	£98,000	1.5	£64,492	58.72	239,674
Installation of electric vehicle charge points in SKDC car parks	Install 4 EVCPs in Stamford Cattlemarket car park	£42,687	0.5	£22,596*	27.6**	n/a
Installation of solar pay and display ticket machines in car parks	Replacement of existing machines with solar ticket machines	£57,302	27.9	£2,052	1.5	6,620
Grantham Meres leisure centre – decarbonisation scheme	Agreed contract sum uplift to supplement existing budget for PSDS project	£23,540	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
TOTAL	-	£221,529	-	£89,140	87.8	246,294

* based on projected income per charger from existing EVCPs operated by the Council

** includes carbon reduction for EVCP users based on reduction in miles travelled in petrol/diesel vehicles. This is not accounted for within the Council's carbon reporting boundary.

2.8. Further projects are being reviewed to be funded from the climate change reserve, as included below. The estimated total of these projects is £234k, however updated costings are being developed for each project:

- Upgrade of pool circulation pumps at Bourne leisure centre
- Additional solar PV at Bourne leisure centre and Stamford leisure pool
- Review of energy efficiency of Grantham bus station building

- Review of Building Management System (BMS) provision for key Council corporate properties
- 2.9. A budget bid for £55k annually has also been submitted from 2026/27 to fund further electric vehicle charging points within Council owned car parks. This is proposed to be funded from the climate change reserve if supported as part of budget proposals.
- 2.10. A separate climate reserve of £100k has also been established for housing projects under the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This has funded an energy efficiency and feasibility survey for £43k to three sheltered properties owned by the Council in Stamford. The outcomes of these surveys are expected in 2026 and the outcomes will inform the investment needs for each of the buildings surveyed.
- 2.11. It is important to note that further energy efficiency upgrades have also been completed using existing Property budgets. These will be reported in detail as part of the Council's annual carbon reporting, but some key upgrades completed within the last year include:
- Upgrade to LED lighting in Bourne Community Access Point shared office area
 - Replacement of the air conditioning units within Stamford Arts Centre
 - Upgrade of the Air Handling Units (AHUs) at Stamford leisure pool
 - Maintenance and upgrade of the AHU system at South Kesteven House
 - Upgrade of pool pumps at Stamford leisure pool, including inverter to reduce use out of hours
 - Welham Street Car Park LED lighting upgrade including PIR sensors
- 2.12. Each of these upgrades will contribute to a reduction in energy consumption and associated cost, as well as carbon emissions reduction.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The report is provided to update Members on projects being considered and funded via the climate change reserve.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 No further options are set out within this report which is provided to update Members on projects being considered and funded via the climate change reserve.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1. This report is provided as an update on the climate change reserve fund.

6. Background papers

6.1 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21st July 2020 - [CarbonFootprintReportEnvOSC_Final.pdf](#)

6.2 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23rd September 2025 - [Update on South Kesteven District Council carbon emissions for 202425.pdf](#)



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 3 March 2026

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Food Waste Collection Update

Report Author

Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services

 kayleigh.boasman@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To update the Committee on the progress of the roll out of weekly food waste collections. The collections are scheduled to begin on Monday 13 April 2026 and this report provides an update on progress against planned activities and deadlines.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1. Note the contents of the report and the progress made to date.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Sustainable South Kesteven
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The funding for the capital and revenue elements of the weekly food waste collection service has been agreed in previous reports. There are no additional financial requirements at this stage of the service roll out.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer.

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications which are not already referenced in the body of the report. Key legislation relating to domestic food waste collection is the Environment Act 2021.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Climate Change

- 1.3 Food waste makes up around one third of residual waste bins, it is also a major contributor to carbon emissions via its current disposal route. The new food waste collection service will ensure that food waste is taken out of the residual waste stream (black bins) and disposed of through anaerobic digestion, which is a more environmentally friendly way of disposing of this waste stream.
- 1.4 Introduction of a new way of separating and disposing of food waste will reduce carbon emissions associated with their current disposal route, as well as improving the recycling and reuse opportunities of other materials in the waste stream. Nevertheless, the operation of an additional 12 vehicles has the potential to increase fuel consumption overall for the fleet and therefore carbon emissions associated with the operation of the Council's vehicle fleet.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. On 29 November 2024 the Government announced the new default requirements for business and household waste collections under the Simpler Recycling collection reforms. These reforms form part of the updated Environment Act 2021.
- 2.2. The reforms are designed to simplify the rules and make recycling easier for people in England; they enable consistent, more streamlined collections from all households and businesses. The approach is designed to ensure the same set of materials are collected everywhere in England. The reforms aim to reduce confusion, end the postcode lottery of bin collections and ensure the correct materials are captured for recycling.
- 2.3. The legislation introduces multiple changes with various deadlines. The new default requirements for collection authorities include four separate containers for:
 1. Residual (non-recyclable) waste,
 2. Food waste,
 3. Paper and card,
 4. All other dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal and glass).
- 2.4. The legislation mandates that collection authorities must implement a weekly food waste collection for all households from 31st March 2026. It is because of these mandated changes that the Council will introduce a weekly food waste collection service.
- 2.5. The Council's service will commence on Monday 13th April 2026, although this is slightly later than 31 March deadline, it is in line with the Lincolnshire Waste Partnerships roll out timetable and DEFRA have been made aware of the date. The Council have received no indication from DEFRA that the slight delay to roll out is a concern.
- 2.6. Across Lincolnshire, South Kesteven District Council, West Lindsey District Council, City of Lincoln Council and North Kesteven District Council will start collections in March and April of 2026. East Lindsey District Council and Boston Borough Council are planning to proceed with food waste collections in Autumn – Winter 2026. South Holland District Council are planning to proceed with food waste collections in Spring 2027.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Table 1 outlines key project milestones and progress against them. At the time of publication of this report, the food waste project is progressing as scheduled, within budget and is projected to complete on time.

Table 1: Key Project Milestones and Progress

Programme Summary		
Action	Progress	Comments
Vehicle delivery	All 12 vehicles received	No further action required
Household Starter pack assembly (caddies, liners and leaflet)	Assembly and delivery commenced w/c 2 February	Expected completion by 31 March 2026
Household Starter pack delivery	Assembly and delivery commenced w/c 2 February	Expected completion by 31 March 2026
Recruitment of drivers	6 of 10 driver vacancies filled from external sources. An additional 6 operatives are undertaking their HGV apprenticeships and sit their practical in March 2026.	No further action required
Recruitment of loaders	All 20 vacancies filled	Further recruitment currently being undertaken
Establish new rounds	Establishment of new rounds to be completed by 28 February	Rounds will align with current schedule
Food waste go live	Monday 13 April	No delays expected at the time of report publication.

- 3.2. A key action included a successful recruitment drive at the new Operations Depot in December 2025. This drive enabled the Council to fill around 26 of the 30 service vacancies.
- 3.3. In addition to the six drivers recruited at this event, a further six are currently undertaking an HGV apprenticeship and will sit their practical exam in March. It is the Council's intention to use the apprentices to fill vacancies within the food waste service (alongside driver positions for other waste services e.g. Bulky Waste).
- 3.4. Should unfilled positions remain within the service due to apprenticeship failure, the recruitment team have retained the details of suitable candidates from the recruitment day as reserve candidates. Furthermore, the service can run an additional recruitment exercise if required before service launch.
- 3.5. Recruitment was a key risk in project roll out; however, this is no longer considered a high risk due to the actions highlighted in this report which have

been designed to mitigate service failure through an inability to staff the new service.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. No other options have been considered, the roll out of a weekly food waste collection service has been mandated by the Environment Act 2021 with an implementation deadline of 31 March 2026. The timelines suggested in this report will enable the Council to deliver the service from Monday 13 April 2026.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The recommendation is that the Committee note the contents of the report and the progress made to date in preparation for the domestic food waste collection service. The timeline proposed will allow the Council to deliver the new service in line with the legislative requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

This page is intentionally left blank

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2025/26

WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/ PRIORITY
3 March 2026				
Update on tree planting strategy for Council land	Andrew Igoea (Tree Officer)	To update the committee on assessments of tree canopy cover in settlements within the district (action within the agreed Trees and Woodland Strategy) and agree strategy to inform future tree planting on Council land		Sustainable SK
LED Streetlight Update	Serena Brown (Sustainability & Climate Change Manager)	To update the committee on the £1m programme to upgrade SKDC owned streetlights to energy efficient LED lamps	10 November 2025	Sustainable SK
Climate Change Reserve Fund	Serena Brown (Sustainability & Climate Change Manager)	To provide the committee with an update on the use and remit of the Climate Change Reserve Fund		Sustainable SK
Food Waste Update	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste Management and Market Services)	To provide an update of the Food Waste rollout.		Effective SK Sustainable SK
Unscheduled future items				
Skip Project Scoping	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste Management and Market Services)		10 November 2025	

47

Agenda Item 11

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/ PRIORITY
Feasibility of drinking water stations across SKDC facilities	Serena Brown (Sustainability & Climate Change Manager)		10 November 2025	Effective SK
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure review and strategy for Council assets	Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager	To update the committee on our existing chargers and operating model more generally		Effective Council Sustainable SK
Waste Policy update	Kay Boasman, (Head of Waste Management and Market Services)			
Role of the District's Rivers and Drainage Board				
National Hedge Laying Association				

The Committee's Remit

The remit of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be to work alongside Cabinet Members to assist with the development of policy and to scrutinise decisions in respect of, but not limited to:

- Air quality
- Animal welfare licensing (Policy)

- Commercial, industrial, and clinical waste collection and management
- Dog breeding and control orders
- Domestic waste and recycling management
- Energy efficiency
- Environment SK Ltd
- Environment SK Commercial Services Ltd
- Estate and grounds maintenance
- Flooding
- Food hygiene and safety
- Health and safety
- Noise
- Renewable energy
- Scrap metal dealers
- Green open space management

This page is intentionally left blank