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Tuesday, 4 March 2025 at 2.00 pm  
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House,  
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

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**Committee** Councillor Ashley Baxter, Leader of the Council (Chairman)

**Members:** Councillor Paul Stokes, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Rhys Baker, Councillor Richard Cleaver, Councillor Phil Dilks, Councillor Philip Knowles and Councillor Virginia Moran

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## Agenda Supplement

### 7. **Future High Streets Fund** (Pages 3 - 10)

Additional schemes have been agreed with the grant distributor (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) but all contracts need to be in place by 31 March 2025.

The Chairman of the Council agreed to waive the call-in period for this item due to the time critical nature of the decision

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**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## **Cabinet**

Tuesday, 4 March 2025

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter  
Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member  
for Finance, HR and Economic  
Development

## **Future High Streets Fund**

### **Report Author**

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### **Purpose of Report**

To seek approval to enter into contracts to deliver projects as part of the Future High Street Fund. The grant distributor (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) has agreed an extension to the delivery timescales for the projects, however all contracts need to be in place by 31 March 2025. The Chairman of the Council agreed to waive the call-in period for this item due to the time critical nature of the decision.

### **Recommendations**

**The Cabinet is recommended to:**

- 1) Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council to enter into contracts to secure the works necessary to deliver the following projects as part of the Future High Street Fund:**
  - i. Authority to enter into contract with National Grid in relation to the installation of power in Grantham Market Place and Westgate.**
  - ii. Authority to enter into contract with Lindum Construction in relation to works to Grantham Museum.**
  - iii. Authority to enter into relevant contracts following the completion of necessary procurement for all other projects within the Future High Street Fund extended programme as outlined in this report.**

### Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Housing 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 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have paid the entirety of the capital funding allocation for Grantham's Future High Street Programme which is a total of £5,556,042 funding received.
- 1.2 Engagement continues with MHCLG to report actual, and forecast spend for the remainder of the Programme. The capital budget is set out below in Table 1, which shows actual spend for 2021-2024, 2024-2025, committed spend for 2024-2025 and the remaining budget for 2024-2025.

<b>Table 1: FHSF Capital</b>					
	<b>2021-2024</b>	<b>2024-2025 (Actual Spend)</b>	<b>2024-2025 (Committed Spend)</b>	<b>2024-2025 (Remaining Budget)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Capital	£481,131	£2,028,067	£2,164,149	£882,695	£5,556,042

- 1.3 The remaining capital budget identified in the table above comprises of released risk and contingency from the public realm projects totalling of £882,695.
- 1.4 There is also a revenue budget to the Programme that forms the Council's obligatory match funding to the Future High Streets Fund Programme, which aims to develop and deliver a model for self-financing of the Town Team beyond the lifespan of the Council's funding contribution. This revenue budget is illustrated below in Table 2, which shows actual spend for 2021-2024 and the committed spend for 2024-2025 and the budget for 2025-26

<b>Table 2: FHSF Revenue</b>				
	<b>2021-2024</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>Total</b>
Revenue	£122,000	£102,456	£154,636	£379,092

- 1.5 MHCLG has agreed an extension to the project to allow the delivery of capital works to continue through the 2025-2026 financial year for works which are

contractually committed by 31st March 2025. This is to allow funding released from contingency and risk budgets to be utilised within the project.

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

### **Legal and Governance**

- 1.6 There are no significant legal and governance implications arising from the report which are not already reflected elsewhere in the report, particularly in relation to procurement and compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 1.7 Any decision is also exempt from call-in due to its urgency. The notice is available at:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD460&ID=460&RPID=13479319>

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. In 2020 the Council was successful in securing £5.2 million in grant funding from the Future High Streets Fund for regeneration work in Grantham town centre. In the subsequent years the programme has successfully delivered a programme of public realm improvement in Grantham Market Place, and improvements to the five-arm junction at Station Approach; as well as awarding grants to support the conversion of vacant upper floor retail space into high quality residential accommodation.
- 2.2. In an update to the Future High Street Fund board (9<sup>th</sup> January 2025) Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Highways Officers confirmed that there was an underspend on the project of £882,000. The £882,000 had been allocated in risk and contingency budgets for the two public realm projects delivered through the scheme (Grantham Market Place and Station Approach/ five arm junction improvements). It was confirmed by LCC that following completion of those works, this portion of the funding was not required and would be released as underspend within the scheme.
- 2.3. Officers, supported by the project board, have negotiated with the funding body, MHCLG, to secure agreement for the funding to be used to deliver additional works to support and increase the outputs of the existing scheme.

- 2.4. MHCLG required that any additional works had clear links to the previously delivered elements of the programme and were not considered as 'new projects'. Furthermore, they require that the Council contractually commit to all additional works prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- 2.5. A project adjustment request was submitted to Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025, seeking their permission to utilise the programme underspend on seven defined projects, plus funding to support a project officer staff position.
- 2.6. Formal approval of the project adjustment request was received on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025.
- 2.7. The approved projects are as follows:

#### Project 1: Installation of power to Market Place and Westgate

- 2.8. This project will install power cabinets in four locations around Grantham Market Place, and four locations along Westgate (Narrow Westgate). These power cabinets in the Market Place will support both three phase and single-phase supplies which will provide power facilities for both market stalls and for use during events. Power cabinets on Westgate will provide single phase supplies to provide facilities for market stalls.
- 2.9. The location of the cabinets has been designed to minimise any necessary cable runs and minimise disruption to the area during installation.
- 2.10. The installation and connection of the power cabinets will be carried out by National Grid. The full quotation for the installation of the supply is expected by end of February 2025.
- 2.11. The total budget allocated for both the required groundworks and connection fees is up to £275,000

#### Project 2: Market Place Street Furniture

- 2.12. Through this project bespoke street furniture will be created for the Market Place which will include planters, benches and cycle parking loops. This will enliven the Market place when it is not otherwise being used to host events and provide places where pedestrians and cyclists can rest and enjoy the space.

- 2.13. Following reflection on lessons learned from previous planter schemes, the landscaping has been designed in such a way that the planters will not need to be moved to facilitate the majority of events or market activity in the space.
- 2.14. Officers are pursuing procurement of the street furniture through the ESPO Street Furniture framework.
- 2.15. The total budget allocated for street furniture is £134,000

#### Project 3: Grantham Museum Improvements

- 2.16. The project will provide for improvements to the museum building which will support the ongoing development and sustainability of the museum's offer.
- 2.17. Most notably, works will be completed within the museum basement to improve mitigate damp and improve environmental conditions to create a space which is suitable for collections storage, to support the museum's long-term goal of regaining its original collection.
- 2.18. Further improvements will include upgrading the museum's boiler, installing an improved kitchen area, and necessary repairs to failing plastering.
- 2.19. Lindum Constructions was procured through the SCAPE framework are carrying out pre contract works with a view to entering into contract for the works prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- 2.20. The total allocated budget for the project is up to £140,000

#### Project 4: Cultural Quarter public realm improvements.

- 2.21. St Peter's Hill Green is a highly valued area of green space within the cultural quarter, and the wider Grantham Conservation Area. The grass in this area is poor condition and is being impacted erosion caused by pedestrian footfall.
- 2.22. This has a negative impact on the perception of the quality of the public space and the conservation area around the main cultural and civic heart of the town centre.
- 2.23. This project will complete works to reinforce the grassed areas of St Peter's Hill Green, focusing on those areas most impacted by pedestrian desire lines through the installation of suitable protective measures.



- 2.24. Final specifications for the works are being determined, with consideration to tree protection requirements in the area.
- 2.25. The total allocated budget for the project is up to £50,000.

#### Project 5: Wayfinding

- 2.26. This project will identify and implement interventions to support pedestrian wayfinding within the town centre, focusing on clarifying preferred routes from pedestrian landing points, including Grantham Railway Station, Bus Station, bus stands and car parks to and from the town centre and key points of interest.
- 2.27. Total allocated budget for the project is up to £40,000.

#### Project 6: Conduit Lane Carpark Bollards

- 2.28. This work will reinstate removable bollards surrounding Conduit Lane Carpark. Current bollards are fixed which restricts access to the carpark for large vehicles and equipment and restricts its use as an ancillary parking area in support of events such as the mid lent fair and Christmas market, as well as other large-scale activity in the Market Place.
- 2.29. Installing removable bollards will allow this space to be used more flexibly in support of activities in the town centre, and in particular in the Market Place.
- 2.30. Total allocated budget for the project is up to £15,000.

#### Project 7: Grantham Market Enhancements

- 2.31. A £60,000 allocation has been made for the purchase of equipment to support the development and growth of Grantham Market. This includes a £40,000 allocation for purchase of new market stall covers to support the growth of the market, and additional funding for equipment such as seating which will support the delivery of events in the Market Place.
- 2.32. Procurement for these items is currently being undertaken.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. Whilst the physical works to the Market Place and Station Approach have been completed, there has been an identified underspend which can be used to

maximise the impact of these works on the Town Centre. The projects that have been identified and agreed with MHCLG will enhance the benefits of the Fund.

- 3.2. However, the terms of the agreement with MHCLG means that the Council has limited time to enter into contract to secure the completion of these projects.
- 3.3. All contracts entered into will comply with the Council's procurement rules. However, due to the contract values and for transparency purposes it is necessary to seek authority to enter into those contracts.

#### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 The Council could do nothing and chose not to enter into these contracts to deliver the remaining elements of the programme. However, in this instance the remaining funds would need to be returned to Government.
- 4.2 This option has therefore been discounted.

#### **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 5.1. Due to the short timescale for entering into contract for these projects imposed by MHCLG, expediency is required to ensure that remaining funds within the budget can be spent for the benefit of South Kesteven rather than returned to central government.
- 5.2. Delegating authority to the Chief Executive to enter relevant contracts will allow officers to operate efficiently to prevent the return of funding.

#### **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1 Update to FEOSC February 2025 - [Grantham Future High Streets Fund Programme Update.pdf](#)