

Cabinet



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Tuesday, 29 March 2022 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's
Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Cabinet Members: Councillor Kelham Cooke, The Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Councillor Adam Stokes, The Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Barry Dobson, Cabinet Member for Leisure
Councillor Annie Mason, Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities
Councillor Robert Reid, Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
Councillor Nick Robins, Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Policy
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew, Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy
Councillor Mark Whittington, Cabinet Member for Waste and Climate Change
Councillor Linda Wootten, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing

Agenda

This meeting can be watched as a live stream, or at a later date, via the

[SKDC YouTube Channel](#)

1. **Register of attendance and apologies for absence**
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 12)
Minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2022.
3. **Disclosure of Interests**

Items for Cabinet Decision: Key

- 4. Outcomes of 2021/22 Corporate Plan Review** (Pages 13 - 41)
- 5. Integrated Housing Management System** (Pages 43 - 61)
Appendix 1 of this report contains exempt information under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972. The press and public may be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this Appendix, on the grounds that if they were to be present, exempt information could be disclosed to them as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act.
- 6. Empty Homes Strategy** (Pages 63 - 84)

Items for Cabinet Decision: Non-Key

- 7. Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge** (Pages 85 - 115)

Matters Referred to Cabinet by the Council or Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Items for information

- 8. Key and Non-Key Decisions taken under Delegated Powers** (Pages 117 - 124)
- 9. Cabinet's Forward Plan** (Pages 125 - 130)

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public may be excluded from the meeting during any listed items of business, on the grounds that if they were to be present, exempt information could be disclosed to them as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

- 10. Future ways of working and making the best use of Corporate Assets** (To Follow)

Minutes

Cabinet

Tuesday, 8 February 2022



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

The Leader: Councillor Kelham Cooke, The Leader of the Council (Chairman)

The Deputy Leader: Councillor Adam Stokes, The Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Annie Mason, Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities

Councillor Nick Robins, Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Policy

Councillor Linda Wootten, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing

Non-Cabinet Members present

Councillor Jacky Smith

Officers

Karen Bradford (Chief Executive)

Alan Robinson (Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)

Andrew Cotton (Director of Housing and Property)

Nicola McCoy-Brown (Director of Growth and Culture)

Gary Smith (Director of Commercial and Operations)

Richard Wyles (Assistant Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer)

Emma Whittaker (Assistant Director of Planning)

Alison Hall-Wright (Head of Finance and ICT)

Graham Watts (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Debbie Roberts (Interim Organisational Development and Change Manager)

Chris Prime (Interim Communications Manager)

Shaza Brannon (Principal Planning Officer)

Jake Horton (Planning Policy Officer)

Amy Bonfield (Trainee Planning Officer)

81. Register of attendance and apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barry Dobson, Robert Reid, Rosemary Trollope-Bellew and Mark Whittington.

82. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 January 2022 were confirmed as a correct, subject to the amendment of a typographical error in relation to minute number 78.

83. Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Kelham Cooke (Leader of the Council), Councillor Adam Stokes (Deputy Leader of the Council) and Karen Bradford (Chief Executive) declared that they were Directors of InvestSK Ltd and would therefore leave the meeting prior to consideration of the item entitled 'Future Ways of Working for InvestSK Ltd' and not participate in the debate or vote.

84. Budget Proposals for 2022/23

Purpose of report

The Council was required to set a balanced budget and agree the level of Council Tax for 2022/23 and this report contained a summary of the proposals that had been considered for inclusion.

Decision

That Full Council be recommended to:

- Set a General Fund budget requirement of £14.407m for 2022/23 detailed at section 2 of this report and shown in detail at Appendix A of the report (inclusive of special expenses).
- Propose a Council Tax level of £173.59 for 2022/23 (Band D property) after taking into consideration the consultation findings.
- Note the indicative base estimates for 2023/24 and 2024/25 as detailed in the summary at Appendix A of the report.
- Approve Housing Revenue Account dwelling rent increases of 4.1% (CPI + 1%) in accordance with Government guideline rent providing an average rent of £84.06 (an average rental increase of £3.28 per week).
- Approve an increase in Housing Revenue Account garage rents of 3%.
- Approve an average increase of 3% in Housing Revenue Account service charges for communal facilities and communal rooms.
- Approve an increase in shared ownership rents by 4.1% (CPI + 1%).
- Approve the Housing Revenue Account Revenue Summary for the year 2022/23 and to note the indicative budgets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 shown in Appendix A of the report.
- Approve the fees and charges detailed at section 4 of the report and shown in Appendix B.

- Approve the General Fund Capital Programme for 2022/23 to 2024/25 detailed in section 5 of the report and shown at Appendix C.
- Approve the General Fund Capital Financing Statement detailed at Appendix C of the report.
- Approve General Fund Capital Programme budget carry forward of £1.296m from 2021/22 shown at Appendix G of the report.
- Approve the Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2022/23 to 2023/24 detailed at section 5 of the report and as shown at Appendix C.
- Approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Financing Statement detailed at Appendix C of the report.
- Approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Investment Programme budget carry forward of £2.173m from 2021/22 shown at Appendix C of the report.
- Approve the movements in the General Fund Revenue and Capital reserves and balanced detailed at section 7 of the report and shown at Appendix D.
- Approve the movements in Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital reserves and balances detailed at section 7 of the report and shown at Appendix D.
- Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement detailed at section 9 of the report and shown at Appendix G.
- Include the acceptance of the Sustainable Warmth Competition (Homes Upgrade Grant phase 1 and Local Authority Delivery phase 3) Grant within these budget proposals for 2022/23.
- Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Waste Services, to undertake procurement, award contracts and to ensure compliance with the grant conditions.

Alternative options considered and rejected

A number of options were presented for consideration in the body of the report.

Reason for decision

The Council had approved a Corporate Plan that set out a clear vision and key actions over the period of the Plan 2000-2003. The budget proposals have been formulated within the context of the Corporate Plan's ambitions and alignment to the five priorities comprising it. This was underpinned by the Council vision 'to be the best place in which to live, work and visit'.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance presented the report and explained the context in relation to the following aspects:

- The General Fund budget estimates and Council Tax proposals
- The Housing Revenue Account position
- Fees and Charges
- The Capital proposals 2021/22 to 2023/24 including financing
- Reserves and balances
- Treasury Management Strategy
- Collection Fund
- Statement of Financial Robustness

The proposals contained within the report had been considered and scrutinised robustly by the Budget Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 January 2022 where the budget proposals were supported without any amendment.

Two additions were proposed as part of the budget proposals in relation to the East Midlands Energy Hub which had confirmed that South Kesteven District Council had been allocated up to a maximum of £396,500 to deliver a scheme of energy upgrades as part of the next phase of the national Sustainable Warmth Competition. These were noted as follows:

- To include the acceptance of the Sustainable Warmth Competition (Homes Upgrade Grant phase 1 and Local Authority Delivery phase 3) Grant within these budget proposals for 2022/23.
- To delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Waste Services, to undertake procurement, award contracts and to ensure compliance with the grant conditions.

A number of points were made during discussion of the budget proposals, which included:

- Local Authorities across the country were beginning to feel the financial strain following the difficulties of the previous two years, with the whole Local Government sector experiencing significant financial challenge
- The budget proposals reflected the Council's commitment to meet the funding challenge in a way that maximised its existing revenue but would also limit the burden on taxpayers, with a commitment to protecting the services it provided
- South Kesteven was still one of the lowest charging Councils in the country

The extremely hard work of the Council's Finance Team and Cabinet Member for Finance in presenting the report, the process for which had commenced in September, was commended.

85. Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Statement

Purpose of report

The report provided Cabinet with an opportunity to consider a statement of consultation responses received to the Local Plan Review and Issues and Options Consultation which ran from October to November 2020 and sought approval to publish the Consultation Statement.

Decision

That the Issues and Options Consultation Statement be published onto South Kesteven District Council's website.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None. It was important to provide the public with an opportunity to suggest any issues they felt should be addressed, comment on which options they thought were the most appropriate and suggest other options. Such an approach could only be achieved through public consultation.

Reason for decision

The adopted Local Plan included an obligation to undertake an early review of the Local Plan with submission to the Secretary of State by the end of December 2023. Cabinet, at its meeting on 18 August 2020, approved the publication of the Issues and Options document for consultation, which set out the scope and identified policies which were intended for review. This was attached to the report at Appendix A. The review of the Local Plan would assist in the Council achieving its vision of being the best place in which to live, work and visit.

The Issues and Options document was published for public consultation on 12 October 2020 with a closing date for representations of 23 November 2020. This consultation took place with the public as well as a wide range of stakeholders including developers, landowners, statutory consultees, internal departments within the Council and elected Members.

In total, over 1,700 individuals or key stakeholders had been consulted, with over 1,600 responses received from 124 respondents. The main summary set out at Appendix A to the report provided a description of the responses received to each question raised in the consultation statement, with an officer response provided for each comment received. A summary of the headline responses was set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

The importance of having Local Plans adopted was emphasised. An informative design guide had been produced for developers in South Kesteven and the Local Plan was entrenching the values and needs of the Council in relation to quality homes and housing across the district.

The Planning Policy Team and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Policy were thanked for the hard work they had undertaken.

86. Authority Monitoring Report

Purpose of report

This report provided Cabinet to consider publication of the Authority's Monitoring Report, which was a statutory requirement for all Local Authorities, and covered the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Decision

That Cabinet:

1. Endorses the 2020-21 Authority Monitoring Report and approve its publication via the Council's website.
2. Agrees that future Authority Monitoring Reports will be reported to the Planning Committee for information prior to publication.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Publication of the monitoring reports was a statutory requirement which must be published online as soon as they become available to enable the public to be informed of the monitoring information collated. No other options were therefore considered.

Reason for decision

It was a statutory requirement for the Council to publish up-to-date information which had been collected for monitoring purposes and report on the progress against the Local Development Scheme. These requirements were set out in Regulation 34 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Headline monitoring results were set out in paragraph 1.12 of the report and the following in particular were highlighted by the Cabinet Member in presentation of the report:

- The Council was reviewing its current Local Plan for 2011-2036 as adopted in January 2020 in line with the Local Development Scheme
- A total of 466 new homes were completed in the monitoring period, which accounted for 12.56% of total completions
- 56 of these completed new homes were affordable
- All affordable completions were within the four market towns and 100% on qualifying sites, set to deliver 30%, or 20% in the urban area of Grantham
- The Council continued to fulfil the Duty to Co-operate with neighbouring authorities and other stakeholders

A number of points were made during discussion of the report, which included:

- The annual Authority Monitoring Report was a useful mechanism with which to monitor progress and performance against the Local Plan and represented an open and transparent process outlining details of housing across the district
- It was important to recognise that whilst there were four market towns within the district, 35% of the district's residents lived in rural areas
- It was confirmed that the study into the accommodation needs of gypsy, traveller and travelling show people was being led by external consultants who had committed to provide a full report by September 2022

The Cabinet Member thanked the Planning Policy Team for their comprehensive report and the useful information contained within.

87. Corporate Peer Review

Purpose of report

This report provided Cabinet with an opportunity to formally receive the outcomes of the recent Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken with the Council by the Local Government Association.

Decision

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the Corporate Peer Challenge report, accepts the findings of the Corporate Peer Challenge and agrees to receive an action plan to implement the findings.
2. Formally thanks the Local Government Association, the Peer Challenge team and their respective Councils for undertaking the review.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None.

Reason for decision

The Local Government Association ran a sector-led improvement programme, the flagship of which was the Corporate Peer Challenge. This involved a team of political and officer leaders with Local Government spending time on site and meeting with internal and external stakeholders to highlight key strengths and areas for improvement for a Council. In addition, the process included Remote Peer Support which involved a short period of online meetings between peers and internal stakeholders, together with a review a key documentation.

The final report and findings of the Corporate Peer Challenge were set out in Appendix 2 of the report and represented a largely positive report, highlighting in particular the following strengths of the Council:

- The response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which was seen as exemplary by a range of partners
- The strength of leadership from both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive in identifying long-standing organisational issues and tackling them
- The development of the Corporate Plan, key performance indicators and action plan.

The report also highlighted some areas for focus and improvement across the Council, particularly:

- The need to continue to develop robust financial plans for future financial challenges and ensure that robust financial management was in place
- A focus on developing effective Member and Officer relationships, with a real clarity needed on roles and responsibilities and a positive working culture as part of #TeamSK
- The need to be prepared to invest in #TeamSK at an individual level in both Members and Officers to ensure maximisation of the skills and abilities in achieving the goals set out in the Corporate Plan

It was proposed that the development and publication of an action plan would take place in March 2022, together with a six-month check-in process which would take place later in the year.

The Leader of the Council, in presenting the report, put on record his personal thanks to the Corporate Peer Challenge Team which included Stephen Baker (Chief Executive, East Suffolk Council), Councillor Abi Brown (Leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council), Kirsten Burnett (Head of Policy and Organisational Development, Hyndburn Borough Council), Paul Ellis (Director of Services and Deputy Chief Executive, Craven District Council), Stephen Cooper (Senior Workforce Advisor, Local Government Association) and Frances Marshall (Programme Manager, Local Government Association) for the work that they put into the challenge. He also thanked everyone who engaged and participated in the Corporate Peer Challenge process.

A number of points were raised during discussion of the report, which included the following:

- The report stated that the Council could be proud, recognise and celebrate what it had achieved over the last 18 months and look ahead to achieve its full potential
- The firm and solid leadership that had been shown since the Chief Executive's appointment had been exemplary
- The clarity of roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers, together with enhancing communication and teamwork was hugely important

The Leader of the Council added his personal thanks to Ken Lyon, Assistant Chief Executive, for all the work he had put into the Corporate Peer Challenge process, his contribution to South Kesteven District Council and the support he had provided to Cabinet. This was Mr Lyon's last meeting of Cabinet prior to him leaving the Authority and the Leader wished him the best of wishes for his future endeavours.

88. Key and Non-Key Decisions taken under Delegated Powers

No key or non-key decisions taken under delegated powers were reported.

89. Cabinet's Forward Plan

It was confirmed that the meeting of Cabinet scheduled to be held on 1 March 2022 would be cancelled due to a lack of business.

Cabinet noted its Forward Plan, subject to the inclusion of the following items scheduled for considered at the meeting on 29 March 2022:

- Integrated Housing Management System
- Empty Home Strategy

90. Future Ways of Working for InvestSK Ltd

Further to their declarations of interest, Councillor Kelham Cooke (Leader of the Council), Councillor Adam Stokes (Deputy Leader of the Council) and Karen Bradford (Chief Executive) as Directors of InvestSK Ltd left the meeting at this stage of proceedings.

Councillor Linda Wootten, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing, chaired the meeting for this item.

Purpose of report

To provide Cabinet with an opportunity to consider options and recommendations relating to the efficiencies and financial considerations of insourcing InvestSK Ltd.

Decision

That Cabinet approves:

1. InvestSK Ltd be dissolved as a company as at 31 March 2022 and the activity be transferred to the Council's Growth and Culture Directorate for implementation at the earliest opportunity.
2. The successful InvestSK brand be retained.
3. The annual funding allocated to InvestSK Ltd be included in the Council's Growth and Culture Directorate and the remaining InvestSK Ltd financial reserve be utilised to fund the additional pension costs that will be incurred by the Council.
4. The development of a communication plan for both external and internal announcements by the outgoing InvestSK Ltd Board of Directors.

Alternative options considered and rejected

In terms of the delivery model for 2022 onwards, based on the evaluation work undertaken, three options were considered as follows:

- Retain the existing InvestSK model
- Bring InvestSK Ltd in-house
- Cease delivery

Reason for decision

In recognition of the economic landscape resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Business Plan for InvestSK Ltd presented to the Companies Committee on 22 September 2020 refined the focus to the priorities of business support, regeneration, place making and the visitor economy. Following a series of further restructures, the functions of the team had returned to those originally identified and the staffing numbers had reduced accordingly. For the current financial year, the number of budgeted posts was seven, with the budget for the year being £370,000. Of that budget, 84% had been allocated towards staffing costs.

InvestSK had achieved several objectives and outcomes since it was first formed and more recently had been working extremely closely with the Council to support the administration of over £51 million of Covid grant support to 3,000 businesses across the district. Further recent successes included securing £5.56m for the Grantham Future High Street Fund and additional funding to support delivery of the Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone. Externally and amongst the business community, InvestSK had an excellent reputation and a strong track record of delivery.

A review by the InvestSK Board undertaken in November 2021 considered an in-house alternative for both practical reason and as a means of achieving the Council's economic development and regeneration leadership responsibilities. Having gone through a consultation process and in considering all of the options available, the following advantages of insourcing the services associated with InvestSK were noted:

- The role and responsibility would embed alongside Planning, Planning Policy, Leisure and Cultural Services, under the leadership of the Director of Growth and Culture
- Terms and conditions for staff would improve which should aid morale and retention
- Potential to explore closer working with other Council team, as well as for partnerships with neighbouring local authorities to deliver efficiencies

At the meeting of the Council's Companies Committee held on 25 January 2022, unanimous support was given for the recommendations contained within the report.



**SOUTH
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Cabinet

29 March 2022

Report of: Councillor Kelham Cooke

The Leader of the Council

Outcomes of 2021/22 Corporate Plan Review

This report outlines proposed changes to the list of Corporate Plan actions following a review undertaken alongside the relevant overview and scrutiny committees. This includes removal of actions where they have been completed or deemed no longer fit for purpose, along with the creation of new actions for the coming year.

Report Author

Ben Russell, Performance Lead



01476 406394



Ben.Russell@southkesteven.gov.uk

Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
A High Performing Council	Administrative	All Wards

Reviewed by:	Debbie Roberts (Organisation Development and Business Support Manager)	2 March 2022
Approved by:	Alan Robinson (Deputy Chief Executive)	10 March 2022
Signed off by:	Councillor Kelham Cooke (Leader of the Council)	17 March 2022

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

1. Endorses the feedback received through the consultation process and approves the revised list of Corporate Plan Actions for ongoing performance management
2. Approves that the relevant overview and scrutiny committees monitor and review the new Actions.

1 The Background to the Report

- 1.1 The South Kesteven Corporate Plan 2020-23 was approved by Council on 1 October 2020. It was agreed by Council that actions, key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets would be developed by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee, which would retain oversight of the performance management arrangements at a strategic level.
- 1.2 The Corporate Plan reached its first anniversary in October 2021. To ensure the actions and performance indicators remain fit for purpose, they have been reviewed. This review incorporates the lessons learned from management and collection of performance information in 2020/21 and the first half of 2021/22, along with any changes to the Council's priorities and the circumstances of service delivery within the district.
- 1.3 Consultation included communication with Members, Corporate Management Team and other relevant service managers to improve the quality of the measures and report format, as well as the relevance of the measures to the Council's objectives.
- 1.4 Three strands were identified in the review:
- 1.5 Actions which had been completed and were no longer relevant for continued performance reporting.
- 1.6 Actions recommended for removal, those were duplication or changes of priorities mean the measures were no longer appropriate to monitor.
- 1.7 Finally, New actions were original ones have been streamlined or where gaps in the councils priorities were identified.
- 1.8 These are outlined in sections two, three, and four respectively.
- 1.9 Appendix 1 contains a revised version of the Corporate Plan document with the actions updated. Appendix 2 contains a list of all remaining actions and their relevant Cabinet Member and the scrutiny committee to which they will be reported. The responsible Directors list will be subject to change through the corporate restructure process. This is due to take effect from 04 April 2022.

2 Completed Actions

- 2.1 The following actions are recommended to be removed from the Corporate Plan actions list as they have been completed.
- 2.2 "Review the scope and focus of InvestSK to maximise the support to local businesses and attract inward investment". (Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 5). The original objectives of this action were focused on redesigning the InvestSK service and budget. This was achieved last year (2020/21) with greater focus being placed on economic development and support for businesses. Tracking the inward investment into the district was also a part of this action and that has been moved to form part of the 'Delivery of Growth' action 4 measures.
- 2.3 "Implement the Covid-19 Recovery Plan." (A High Performing Council 1). Covid-19 Recovery has now become part of the Councils business as usual activity.
- 2.4 "Undertake a fundamental review of the organisation to meet current and future needs" (A High Performing Council 7). The restructure to which the action refers took place alongside the design of the original Corporate Plan document and was completed in October 2020.

3 Actions proposed to be removed

- 3.1 The following actions are proposed for removal from the current corporate plan.
- 3.2 *'Improve performance in IMD data for areas in most deprived 20% nationally- Earlsfield and Harrowby.'* (Healthy And Strong Communities 3). This action is not achievable within the lifespan of the current Corporate Plan as the next Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) report will not be published until 2024. Additionally, the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) boundaries used by the IMD are likely to change following the 2021 census.
- 3.3 *'Celebrate and enhance the rich history of the District'* (Healthy and Strong Communities Action 5). This action was created prior to the Arts review which also includes cultural services. This proposal is that this action will be integrated into a new action covering the delivery of the Arts review, outlined further in section 5.1 of this report.
- 3.4 *'Adopt a new Cultural Strategy for the District, including the local Arts, Events and Festivals programme'* (Healthy And Strong Communities Action 6). Like action 5, this is proposed to be integrated into a specific Arts review action.
- 3.5 *'Deliver the 'Big Clean' programme and maintain higher street standards.'* (A Clean and Sustainable Environment Action 2). Changes to the structure of the Big Clean team mean this service will now be deployed in a responsive manner rather than as a routine program of clean ups across the whole district. This is recommended for removal in line with the change in focus for the project.
- 3.6 *'Explore opportunities to build on the success of the food waste pilot and ensure the service is sustainable.'* (A Clean and Sustainable Environment Action 8). This service has been suspended while we await the results of a DEFRA consultation on the national roll out the scheme. This was confirmed as part of the budget proposals approved at Council on 3 March 2022. It is recommended that this action is removed from the current Corporate Plan until such a time as further details are received from Central Government.
- 3.7 *'Work with Homes England, the Ministry of Defence and other partners to develop holistic masterplans for the delivery of Grantham's Southern Urban Extension',* (Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents Action 8). Feedback from the Corporate Plan review consultation was that this action measured the success of the Council's partner organisations rather than the Council itself. Housing delivery in the district is covered by other actions and so there was no functional need for this to continue to be included.
- 3.8 "Develop and implement commercial and transformation strategies to deliver additional net revenue benefit," (High Performing Council Action 6). This action is suggested to be removed and its measures combined with High Performing Council Action 2, *'Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.'*, so that this provides a single financial health measure for the Council.
- 3.9 *'Work with the education providers to increase opportunities for local learning and apprenticeships in the District',* (Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 7). The original measures for this action were focused on the delivery of the University Centre in partnership with the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership. This project has since ended. The apprenticeships provision element of the action related to the Council itself will be tracked elsewhere along with performance of the People Strategy.
- 3.10 *'In partnership with LCC bring forward housing and employment opportunities linked to the delivery of the Grantham Southern Relief Road',* (Delivery of Growth of Our Economy

Action 8. As with Housing action 8, this action is recommended for removal as it duplicates other house build and employment land monitoring actions and focuses on the Councils partners rather than actions delivered directly by the Authority.

- 3.11 “Support the roll out of improved broadband and other key infrastructure to support local businesses and rural areas”. (Delivery of Growth of Our Economy Actions 10). Scrutiny members recommended that this measure be removed as the Council has no direct responsibility for delivering broadband infrastructure.

4 New actions

- 4.1 *‘Review the Arts services within the district with an ambition to provide improved, efficient and accessible arts within South Kesteven’*, (Healthy And Strong Communities Action 13). This measure combines the actions Healthy Communities 5 and 6 with elements of Healthy Communities action 9 into one action covering the outcomes of the arts review and the Council’s intention to redesign the service in line with the relevant review outcomes.
- 4.2 ‘Ensure that support packages are in place for ensuring the welfare of the districts most vulnerable residents and to enable small businesses to flourish in the district.’ (High Performing Council Action 13). This new measure is recommended to represent the Council’s role in supporting small businesses and vulnerable members of the community through grants, support payments, reliefs and other financial mechanisms such as Covid recovery support.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no immediate financial implications by approving the Corporate Action list, should there be any future financial implications then these be considered within each of the projects and then included in the budget setting process.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Richard Wyles, Interim Chief Finance Officer

6 Legal and Governance Implications

- 6.1 Regular reporting on agreed actions and measures is to be welcomed from a governance point of view, as it provides a transparent mechanism for reporting on performance.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Graham Watts, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer

7 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 7.1 There are no issues relating to equality and diversity or safeguarding resulting from this report. Any issues that do arise relating to individual items will be addressed as required.

8 Risk and Mitigation

- 8.1 No significant risks have been identified through these changes. Having a robust performance management process with clear actions and objectives to assess against will help to mitigate the risks of non-delivery and inefficiency within the organisation.

9 Community Safety Implications

- 9.1 No significant implications have been identified.

10 How will the recommendations support South Kesteven District Council's declaration of a climate emergency?

- 10.1 The contents of this report do not have a direct impact on the council's carbon emissions or the carbon emissions of the wider district. However, the Council's carbon emissions and performance against targeted reductions are included in the Corporate Plan actions.
- 10.2 More detailed information on carbon impact of individual projects or activities are outlined within the relevant project documentation or service plans.

11 Background Papers

- 11.1 Minutes of the Rural And Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held Tuesday 30th November 2021
(moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=630&MId=4100&Ver=4)
- 11.2 Minutes of the Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held Friday 3th December 2021
(moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=664&MId=4222&Ver=4)
- 11.3 Minutes of the Rural And Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held Wednesday 8th December 2021
(moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=665&MId=4163&Ver=4)
- 11.4 Minutes of the Culture And Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held Tuesday 1st February 2022
(moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=629&MId=4144&Ver=4)

12 Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan Amended – Draft
- 12.2 Appendix 2 – Action responsibilities list.

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Please note this is an interactive document.

Please use the arrow buttons to click backwards and forwards through the pages. Hover and click over the bar of graphics at the top of the pages to navigate through the corporate priorities.

Corporate Plan 2020-2023

Be the best district in which to
live, work and visit



Easton Walled Gardens



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Our vision for South Kesteven

The events of the past few months have turned our world upside down and left us with a legacy we could not have predicted. But South Kesteven is a district full of promise and potential. It is home to innovative entrepreneurs and savvy start-ups; a base for global enterprise; and an inviting landscape perfectly situated in the heart of England. We have much to be proud of, and much to offer.

Our Corporate Plan clearly sets out how South Kesteven District Council intends to meet that promise and potential. Our vision is to **“be the best district in which to live, work, and visit.”**

We will continue to support businesses and work with partners in all sectors to create the right conditions for sustainable and dynamic growth so that our local economy not only recovers from the Coronavirus pandemic, but recovers stronger than ever.

We will continue to develop a clean and green future, working with others to ensure that how we live and how we work respects and protects our environment and reduces our carbon footprint.

We will develop the immense goodwill and community spirit that already exists so that our communities thrive, are strong and healthy, and we commit to building and maintaining housing that meets the needs of all residents.

Underpinning all of this is how we work as a council. Our Corporate Plan is our promise to you, the residents and businesses of South Kesteven, but it is also our blueprint for ensuring we are the high performing council you deserve; one that attracts and retains the best staff to deliver high-quality services.

Our values and our commitment to diversity and inclusion will help shape how we deliver our services and how we meet our priorities. Within our council and our communities we want everyone to feel welcome and valued.

As a district council, we work hand-in-hand with other public sector partners across Lincolnshire and the wider region so that individually and collectively we deliver for our residents and businesses.

Working in partnership with others is a journey we are on, and it is a road we continue to follow to realise our ambition for South Kesteven.

So as we deliver our priorities over the next three years, you should expect to see continued growth that respects our countryside and our heritage; a reduction in our carbon footprint to protect our environment for present and future generations; a focus on harnessing the community spirit so prevalent in recent months; housing to meet all needs; and an efficient, high performing council that puts local residents and local businesses first, always.




Cllr Kelham Cooke

Leader of the Council
South Kesteven District Council

Karen Bradford

Chief Executive
South Kesteven District Council

 @southkesteven

 @southkdc

 [linkedin.com/company/south-kesteven-council](https://www.linkedin.com/company/south-kesteven-council)

Snapshot

Of South Kesteven

Population figures 2020

143,347

Forecast to grow by around
4.5% over the next ten years,
and by 7.7% between now
and 2040

Just over

1,400

households (1,422)
were on the council's
housing register in 2019

Proportion of those aged
65 or over in South Kesteven is

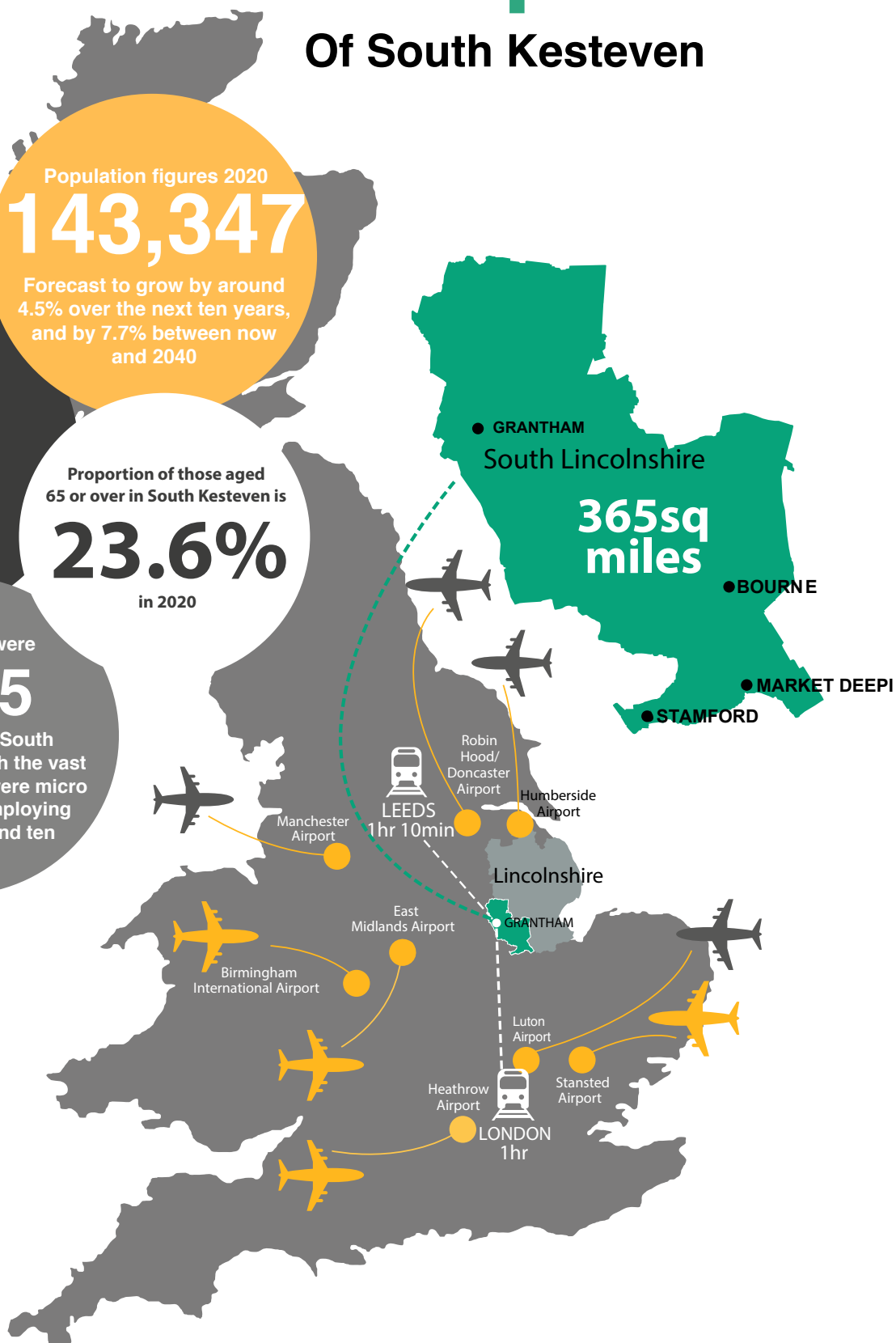
23.6%

in 2020

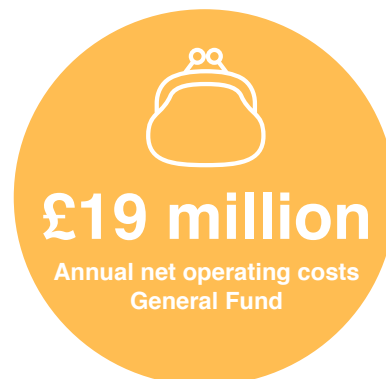
In 2019, there were

5,935

businesses in South
Kesteven, of which the vast
majority (89.9%) were micro
businesses – employing
between one and ten
people.



Finance



As an organisation, South Kesteven District Council continues to work hard to generate new income channels and deliver savings and efficiencies. There is a clear focus on becoming financially self-sufficient by 2025 by being more efficient in how services are delivered and identifying new income streams by using assets and reserves with a commercial focus. This approach has already delivered savings of over £1.1 million in the last two years. This change in approach has been vital given the reduction in funding from central Government.

However, this is not the time to be complacent. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic – the costs of which are estimated to be just over £4 million for the council – combined with a reduction in government grant of £1.8 million over the next three years and net operating costs for the General Fund of around £19 million a year, means that there is still much to be achieved.

The latest estimates forecast that SKDC needs to save £2.3 million over the next three years, to be in a position where we will still have a balanced budget. The council is fully committed to achieving this target and is leaving no stone unturned in its approach to ensure this goal is reached. Measures adopted include streamlining the organisation so that it is ready for the challenges ahead, modernising processes and procedures, making the most of commercial opportunities and rationalising assets and operating costs where possible.

The delivery of the council's priorities set out in the Corporate Plan remains its key focus. Underpinning this is a pledge to provide quality services, a strong commitment to investing in sustainable growth, improving leisure facilities and delivery of an ambitious housing programme that meets the needs of the social housing sector.

Financed from a combination of reserves and grants, the council has committed over £52 million to fund the delivery of new build social and affordable housing and stock acquisition programmes over the next three years. Over the same time period it will also continue to maintain its existing housing stock, by investing over £17 million in a range of programmes including re-roofing, external wall insulation and the replacement of kitchens and bathrooms.

The environment in which the council set out its medium term financial plan remains challenging and uncertain given the financial impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the wider funding review of local government. However, the council remains committed to providing quality services to its residents and delivering the actions set out in the Corporate Plan.





➤ Growth and our Economy

Delivering growth of the economy is fundamental to the success of the district, its businesses and residents. We are, therefore, prioritising:

- Protecting and creating jobs within the district.
- Developing the centres and high streets of our four towns.
- Securing investment for infrastructure to support ongoing and sustainable growth.



Market Deeping town centre



Stamford Georgian Costume Ball



Grantham Southern Relief Road



Grantham town centre



French Market, Grantham

Key Achievements

- Securing £900k of Heritage Action Zone funding to restore the culture heritage of buildings in Grantham town centre. ✓
- Securing Single Local Growth funding to support the partnership with Lincolnshire County Council to deliver the Grantham Southern Relief Road. ✓
- Gravity Fields and Stamford Georgian festivals provide more than £700,000 in economic benefit to the district each year. ✓

Key Actions

- Delivery of the St Martins Park development scheme in Stamford.
- Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).
- Identify funding & other opportunities to support the development of the town centres of Bourne, The Deepings and Stamford, and apply lessons learnt from the Future High Street Fund & other initiatives.
- Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.
- Continue to attract investment and encourage diverse businesses to the District and ensure appropriate land and property is available.
- Work with partners and attractions, to promote visitor economy and increase visitor spend in the District, including the adoption of a Tourism Strategic Framework.
- Work closely with markets across South Kesteven and seek to maintain their viability.



➤ Housing that Meets the Needs of all Residents

High quality housing is essential for all and the council is committed to working with partners to provide this by:

- Offering the new homes that people need, at a price they can afford.
- Ensuring new developments are in keeping with the character of South Kesteven and benefit the people who already live here.
- Providing high quality homes and services to those who rent property from the council.





Bathroom fitting



Wherry's Lane, Bourne

Key Achievements

- Adoption of the South Kesteven Local Plan to enable delivery of sustainable housing and business growth in the district. ✓
- Beginning our programme of building high quality new homes of different tenures, including the completion of Wherry's Lane Phase 2 and modular housing in Grantham. ✓
- Developing a leading approach, with Government, to improve the repairs process for rented properties (private and council housing). ✓

Key Actions

- Work in partnership with the housing market to stimulate housing growth.
- Work to reduce and prevent homelessness in our District.
- Increase the supply of high quality, sustainable Council houses.
- Undertake a Planning Review to improve performance and support local sustainable, high quality growth.
- Undertake a Housing Review to provide the highest quality service possible to our tenants.
- Work with housing associations and developers to ensure quality affordable housing is delivered.
- Ensure the ambitions of the adopted Local Plan are met and a review framework is developed to deliver sustainable growth in the District.
- Ensure that major developments in South Kesteven are high quality, with sustainable, good design.
- Prioritise bringing private sector empty properties back in to use.



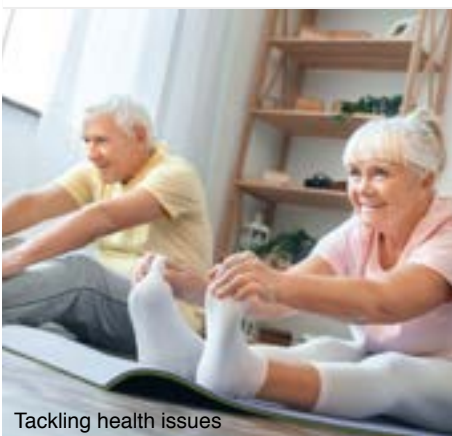
➤ Healthy and Strong Communities

Supporting communities to be healthy is particularly important, especially in light of the Covid-19 crisis, which is why SKDC is:

- Investing in the health of our district by improving leisure provision.
- Working effectively with partners in the voluntary, private and public sectors for the benefit of communities.
- Building on, and celebrating, the rich heritage and culture of the district.



LotterySK supports
Three Counties Dog Rescue



Tackling health issues



Grimsthorpe Castle



Guildhall Arts Centre, Grantham



Stamford Georgian Festival

Key Achievements

- Creation of the SK Community Hub, working with the community sector to meet the essential needs of over 2,000 vulnerable people as part of the Covid-19 response.
- Development of LotterySK, directing over £120,000 of funding into 110 good causes in our local communities.
- Helped attract over £2.5 million of additional funds for community and voluntary groups in South Kesteven via the SK Community Fund (representing a 750% return on the council's investment).



Key Actions

- Invest in sustainable, high quality leisure facilities across the district.
- Embed the work of the SK Community Hub to support volunteering and the Voluntary & Community Sector.
- Continue to work in partnership with the police and the community in tackling crime, investing in the CCTV service.
- Develop and adopt a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.
- Meet the Mental Health Challenge
- Make best use of different funding sources to support the voluntary and cultural sector within the District.
- Protect our most vulnerable residents with robust safeguarding processes.
- Improve and invest in the local arts & cultural venues across the District.
- Promote and make progress against the Council's Equality Objectives.
- Review Arts services within the district with ambition to provide improved, efficient and accessible arts within the district.



➤ Clean and Sustainable Environment

Protecting and improving the environment is vitally important both now and for generations to come. Our work includes:

- Tackling climate change by reducing the council's carbon footprint.
- Ensuring that the district is a clean and pleasant place to live.
- Improving our parks and open spaces.



Garden waste collection



Electric vehicle charging



Wyndham Park, Grantham



Queen Elizabeth Park, Grantham



Wyndham Park Visitor Centre

Key Achievements

- Declaration of climate emergency, with the establishment and publication of the council's carbon footprint for the first time and creation of an action plan to improve.
- Big Clean team established to achieve and maintain a higher street standard.
- Wyndham Park project to refurbish the site completed during 2018 and Green Flag secured for the 8th successive year. Queen Elizabeth Park project to refurbish the site completed during 2019 and Management Plan developed to support application for Green Flag status during 2021.



Key Actions

- Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030 and endeavour to become net-zero carbon as soon as viable before 2050.
- Build a new, modern depot which is fit for the future.
- Continue to innovate our approach to waste management to build on our strengths and maximise commercial and other opportunities.
- Maintain and enhance our green areas across the District, aiming to secure Green Flag status for Queen Elizabeth Park, Dysart Park and other relevant areas.
- Work proactively with Environment SK to deliver high quality services and maximise commercial opportunities.
- Work with the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership to reduce waste and further improve recycling.
- Recognise the changes in environmentally friendly modes of transport and seek to work with others to adapt required infrastructure.



➤ High Performing Council

Local residents in South Kesteven are entitled to have high expectations and, therefore, we will prioritise:

- Supporting the district in recovering from Covid-19.
- Managing our finances and assets effectively.
- Embedding an approach that seeks to continuously improve our service delivery, including good governance and staff and customer experience.



Customer Services



Savoy multiplex cinema, Grantham



Garden waste



IT solutions supporting working from home

Key Achievements

- Opening of a new multiplex cinema in the centre of Grantham.
- Growth of the council's high quality collection services, with an increase of 4% for garden waste and 51% for commercial waste since March 2019.
- Development of a more agile approach, with over 400 staff enabled to work from home during Covid-19 crisis.



Key Actions

- Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.
- Constitution fully reviewed and adopted by Council.
- Implement the findings of the Governance review across the Council's assets (including companies).
- Develop a People Strategy to support the retention and attraction of high quality staff.
- Support the implementation of an IT investment roadmap to align future solutions with the Council's ambitions.
- Embed an agile approach to working by building on the cultural and technological changes.
- Deliver the ambitions of the Customer Experience Strategy.
- Maximise the value of the Council's own spend by using local suppliers wherever practical.
- Undertake an Asset Management Review.
- Ensure that support packages are in place for ensuring the welfare of the districts most vulnerable residents and to enable small businesses to flourish in the district.

Managing performance

SKDC will be taking a ‘golden thread’ approach to managing performance and delivering priorities – meaning that every colleague should be able to understand the impact they are having on SKDC achieving our vision, delivering our priorities and realising the key actions.

Vision

“Be the best district in which to live, work and visit”

Council performance

- Council Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) agreed by Scrutiny Committee.
- Three-monthly reports to Corporate Management Team, scrutiny committees and Cabinet.
- Yearly review as part of annual performance report to Cabinet.

Service performance

- Service Plans, actions and KPIs approved by Director and Corporate Management Team.
- Monitored by Director and Corporate Management Team.

Individual performance

- Individual objectives agreed and linked to Corporate Plan.
- Monitored as part of performance appraisal by line manager.

A key part of managing performance is to develop an agreed set of Key Performance Indicators, these will be agreed via scrutiny committees and reviewed on an annual basis. The table below sets out some examples of Actions and KPIs for each priority

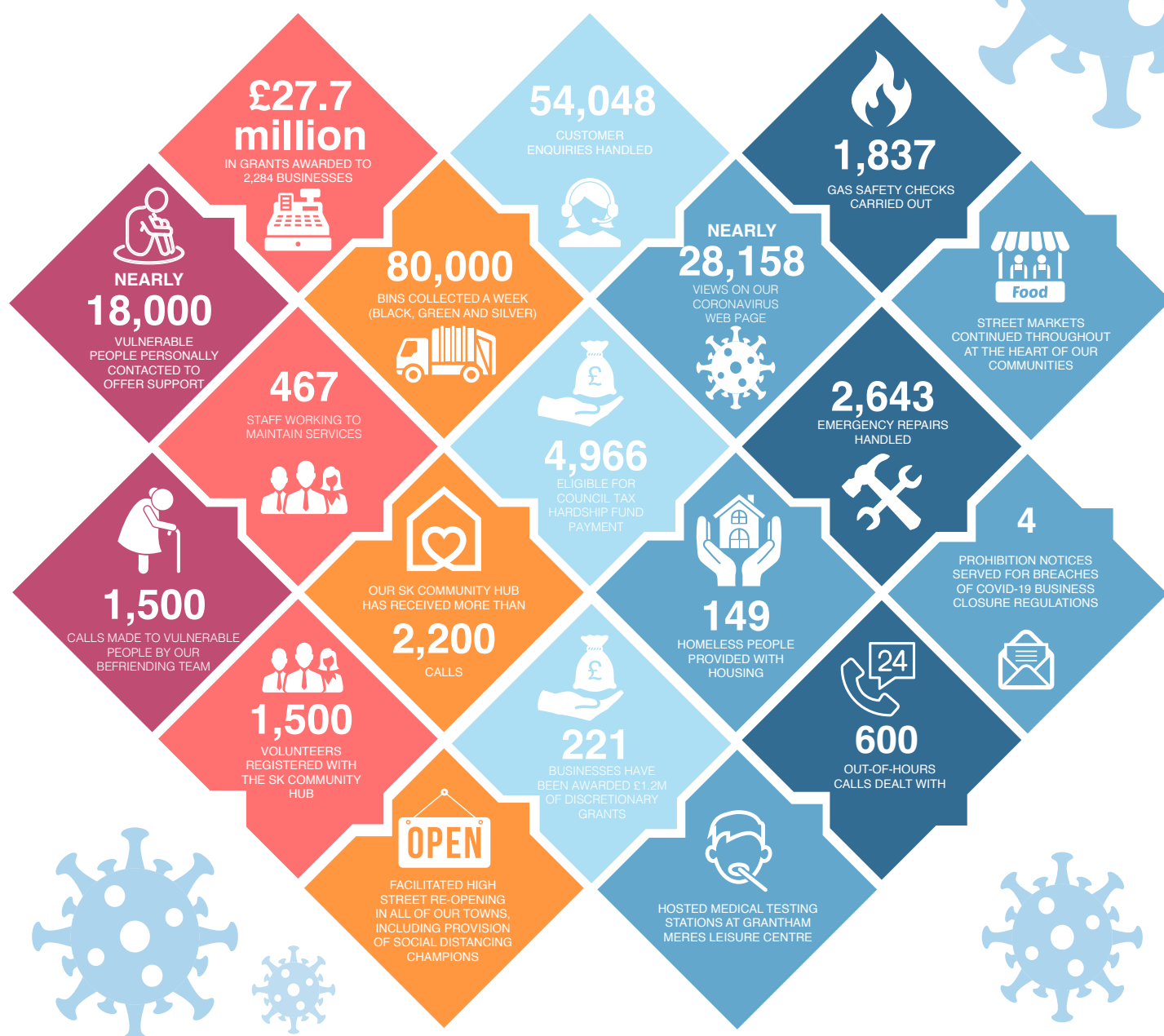
Priority Area	Example Action	Example KPI
Growth and our economy	Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.	Number of businesses supported by SKDC
		Number of jobs safeguarded/created via SKDC support
Housing that meets the needs of all residents	Undertake a housing review to provide the highest quality service possible to our tenants.	Percentage of responsive repairs completed within target time
		Number of properties fitted with new kitchens and bathrooms
Healthy and strong communities	Make best use of different funding sources to support the voluntary and cultural sectors.	Amount of external funding brought into the district levered with support from SKDC funding streams
Clean and sustainable environment	Deliver the Big Clean programme and maintain a higher street standard.	Percentage of streets that meet Clean Streets Standard
High performing council	Develop and implement commercial and transformation strategies to deliver additional net revenue benefit.	Percentage increase in net income from commercial funding streams
		Amount saved through efficiency improvements

Covid-19 response

In March 2020 the world faced a global pandemic which has had a huge impact on South Kesteven. The council set out three key priorities:

- To protect the health of staff, members and residents.
- To maintain critical services.
- To support local businesses.

Here are some of the ways in which SKDC delivered against those priorities:



Equalities

Our commitment to equalities is about long-term, continuous improvement. It is the responsibility of all officers and elected members to implement the principles of equality and diversity. We aim to ensure that these principles inform decision-making at every level within the council reflecting our ongoing commitment to the elimination of discrimination, the advancement of equality of opportunity for all, and to foster good relations between different communities.

Objective	How will we achieve this?
Strengthen our knowledge and understanding of our communities.	Ensure that the council's services are responsive to different needs and treat service users equitably, with dignity and respect. Listen, involve and respond to our communities effectively. Build a database of voluntary and community groups that serve our communities at grass roots level and work with them to ensure sustainability of provision and service.
Build a culture of equality and inclusion into all the services, functions and projects we deliver.	Incorporate the need to assess and address equality issues into the council's project methodology and democratic processes to ensure consideration of the needs of our customers is at the heart of what we do, from the earliest stage of development through to decision-making and implementation.
Prove our ongoing commitment to equal opportunity by developing a diverse and empowered workforce and by reducing our gender pay gap.	Utilise workforce data to help identify areas for improvement in the diversity and skills of our workforce to seek equality of representation at all levels across the organisation. Develop and deliver against an action plan to specifically address the council's gender pay gap to form part of the work programme of the Employment Committee. Demonstrate a positive culture with strong leadership and organisational commitment to improving equality outcomes.



Cooking in the Community



English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) class

Core values at heart of SKDC

The values of the council determine how we behave and deliver services to our residents and businesses and how we interact with each other.

They focus attention on seven areas:

- **Accountability**, which means ensuring that everyone at every level is responsible of what they do and takes ownership for their actions and decisions.
- **Flexibility**, which means working in different ways, at different times and in different places to meet the needs of our residents and businesses.
- **Agility**, which means working together to get the job done, using our skills to get the best outcome for our residents and businesses.
- **Equity**, which means ensuring that we treat each other with respect, irrespective of rank, position or status. This echoes our commitment to provide consistently good services to both our internal and external customers.
- **Networking**, which means that as a council we recognise that ours is not the only voice or opinion. We embrace the views of others and use formal and informal networks to improve performance and ensure the solutions we deliver meet the needs of our customers.
- **Always learning** means sharing knowledge, skills and expertise to enable the council to go from strength to strength and learn from everything we do.
- **Talent** means harnessing the incredible ability that is within the council and valuing the contribution that everyone can make.

Links to key documents

The South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=14904>

South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=12187>

South Kesteven Housing Strategy 2020-2024:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=12186>

South Kesteven Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/2017 – 2020/2021:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=20056>

South Kesteven Budget 2020-2023:

<http://moderngovsvr:8080/documents/s25022/Council%20Budget%20Report.pdf>

South Kesteven Carbon Footprint and Reduction Opportunities June 2020:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=26489>

Growth and our
Economy

Housing that Meets the
Needs of our Residents

Healthy and
Strong Communities

Clean and Sustainable
Environment

High Performing
Council

Stamford

Alternative formats are available on request:
audio, large print and Braille

**South Kesteven
District Council**

You can contact the council about benefits, rent or other issues

☎ **01476 406080**

Out of hours 01476 590044

✉ **customerservices@southkesteven.gov.uk**

🌐 **www.southkesteven.gov.uk**



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Priority	#	Action	Responsible Cabinet Member	Committee
A Clean & Sustainable Environment	1	Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030 and endeavour to become net-zero carbon as soon as viable before 2050.	Waste & Climate Change	Environment OSC
A Clean & Sustainable Environment	3	Continue to innovate our approach to waste management to build on our strengths and maximise commercial and other opportunities.	Waste & Climate Change	Environment OSC
A Clean & Sustainable Environment	4	Maintain and enhance our green areas across the District, aiming to secure Green Flag status for Queen Elizabeth Park, Dysart Park and other relevant areas.	Housing & Property	Environment OSC
A Clean & Sustainable Environment	5	Work proactively with Environment SK to deliver high quality services and maximise commercial opportunities.	Housing & Property	Environment OSC
A Clean & Sustainable Environment	6	Work with the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership to reduce waste and further improve recycling.	Waste & Climate Change	Environment OSC
A Clean & Sustainable Environment	7	Recognise the changes in environmentally friendly modes of transport and seek to work with others to adapt required infrastructure.	Waste & Climate Change	Environment OSC
A Clean & Sustainable Environment	9	Build a new, modern depot which is fit for the future.	Housing & Property	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	2	Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.	Finance	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	3	Constitution fully reviewed and adopted by Council.	Corporate Governance and Licensing	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	4	Implement the findings of the Governance review across the Councils assets (including companies).	Corporate Governance and Licensing	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	5	Develop a People Strategy to support the retention and attraction of high quality staff.	People and Safer Communities	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	8	Support the implementation of an IT investment roadmap to align future solutions with the Councils ambitions.	Economic Development and Growth	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	9	Embed an agile approach to working by building on the cultural and technological changes.	People and Safer Communities	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	10	Deliver the ambitions of the Customer Experience Strategy.	People and Safer Communities	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	11	Maximise the value of the Councils own spend by using local suppliers wherever practical.	Finance	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	12	Undertake an Asset Management Review.	Housing & Property	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
A High Performing Council	13	Ensure that support packages are in place for ensuring the welfare of the districts most vulnerable residents and to enable small businesses to flourish in the district.	Finance	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
Delivery Of Growth Of Our Economy	1	Delivery of the St Martins Park development scheme in Stamford.	Economic Development and Growth	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC

Priority	#	Action	Responsible Cabinet Member	Committee
Delivery Of Growth Of Our Economy	2	Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).	Economic Development and Growth	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
Delivery Of Growth Of Our Economy	3	Identify funding & other opportunities to support the development of the town centres of Bourne, The Deepings and Stamford, and apply lessons learnt from the Future High Street Fund & other initiatives.	Economic Development and Growth	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
Delivery Of Growth Of Our Economy	4	Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.	Economic Development and Growth	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
Delivery Of Growth Of Our Economy	6	Continue to attract investment and encourage diverse businesses to the District and ensure appropriate land and property is available.	Economic Development and Growth	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
Delivery Of Growth Of Our Economy	9	Work with partners and attractions, to promote visitor economy and increase visitor spend in the District, including the adoption of a Tourism Strategic Framework.	Culture & Visitor Economy	Culture and Visitor Economy OSC
Delivery Of Growth Of Our Economy	11	Work closely with markets across South Kesteven and seek to maintain their viability.	Culture & Visitor Economy	Culture and Visitor Economy OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	1	Invest in sustainable, high quality leisure facilities across the district.	Leisure	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	2	Embed the work of the SK Community Hub to support volunteering and the Voluntary & Community Sector.	People and Safer Communities	Rural and Communities OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	4	Continue to work in partnership with the police and the community in tackling crime, investing in the CCTV service.	People and Safer Communities	Rural and Communities OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	7	Develop and adopt a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.	Leisure	Culture and Visitor Economy OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	8	Meet the Mental Health Challenge.	People and Safer Communities	Rural and Communities OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	9	Make best use of different funding sources to support the voluntary and community sector within the District.	People and Safer Communities	Rural and Communities OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	10	Protect our most vulnerable residents with robust safeguarding processes.	People and Safer Communities	Rural and Communities OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	11	Improve and invest in the local arts & cultural venues across the District.	Culture & Visitor Economy	Culture and Visitor Economy OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	12	Promote and make progress against the Council's Equality Objectives.	People and Safer Communities	Rural and Communities OSC
Healthy And Strong Communities	13	Review Arts services within the district with ambition to provide improved, efficient and accessible arts within the district.	Culture & Visitor Economy	Culture and Visitor Economy OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	1	Work in partnership with the housing market to stimulate housing growth.	Planning and Planning Policy	Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	2	Work to reduce and prevent homelessness in our District.	Housing & Property	Rural and Communities OSC

Priority	#	Action	Responsible Cabinet Member	Committee
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	3	Increase the supply of high quality, sustainable Council houses.	Housing & Property	Rural and Communities OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	4	Undertake a Planning Review to improve performance and support local sustainable, high quality growth.	Planning and Planning Policy	Rural and Communities OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	5	Undertake a Housing Review to provide the highest quality service possible to our tenants.	Housing & Property	Rural and Communities OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	6	Work with housing associations and developers to ensure quality affordable housing is delivered.	Planning and Planning Policy	Rural and Communities OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	7	Ensure the ambitions of the adopted Local Plan are met and a review framework is developed to deliver sustainable growth in the District.	Planning and Planning Policy	Rural and Communities OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	9	Ensure that major developments in South Kesteven are high quality, with sustainable, good design.	Planning and Planning Policy	Rural and Communities OSC
Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents	10	Prioritise bringing private sector empty properties back in to use.	Housing & Property	Rural and Communities OSC

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Cabinet

29 March 2022

Report of: Councillor Robert Reid

Cabinet Member for Housing and
Property

Award of contract for an Integrated Housing Management System

To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, the Council is undertaking a significant and wide-ranging programme of improvements to its social landlord activities. All improvements to the services offered to the Council's tenants, leaseholders, and housing applicants are underpinned by the use of technology: both the offer of improved digital access to services, and the improved business efficiencies that come from modern IT systems. This report seeks Cabinet approval for the award of a contract to meet the Council's ambition for an Integrated Housing Management System that meets its current and future business requirements.

Appendix One to this report contains exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006):

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because disclosure to the public would prejudice the position of the authority during the negotiation of the terms of the contract.

Report Author

Craig Spence (Assistant Director of Housing)



01476 406080



craig.spence@southkesteven.gov.uk

Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Housing that meets the needs of all residents	Non-Key	All Wards

Reviewed by:	Andrew Cotton (Director of Housing and Property)	7 March 2022
Approved by:	Alan Robinson (Deputy Chief Executive)	14 March 2022

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

- 1. That Cabinet notes the content of the report and appendix, detailing the procurement process followed in respect of the Integrated Housing Management System, as part of the housing improvement plan.**
- 2. That Cabinet approves the award for a period five years with an option to extend by a further two years to Aareon UK Limited for £776,981.00 in order to procure its housing management system and associated modules.**

1 The Background to the Report

- 1.1 The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2020-2023 to provide “*Housing that meets the needs of all residents*” and to be able to effectively administrate its social landlord function the award of a new Integrated Housing Management System (IHMS) is required.
- 1.2 A good IHMS shall deliver accurate and up to date information to both staff and customers of the Council. Accurate data to a landlord is of the utmost importance, we must understand our customers, properties and compliance responsibilities in real time. This has been reinforced further to the Council through the ongoing interactions with the Regulator of Social Housing. Utilising a single consistent and ever evolving set of data within one database enables a consistent approach to service delivery. An up to date and current IHMS will provide us with this and shall enable us to continuously improve.
- 1.3 South Kesteven District Council has a housing stock of circa 6000 dwellings. In common with most landlords, the Council uses an IHMS to manage its housing stock, including:
 1. Rent billing and collection
 2. Voids Management
 3. Planned Maintenance records
 4. Responsive Repairs

The current IHMS is Northgate’s Anite system, which has been the incumbent supplier for some considerable time. As the contract was due for renewal, a formal procurement exercise has been undertaken to increase contractual control and test value for money.
- 1.4 This procurement process commenced in December 2021 and has now concluded. It presents a clear opportunity for the Housing and Property Directorate to improve its performance through fully engaging with all the advantages of digital working and, as part of the system build, review and improve all associated business processes.
- 1.5 The procurement process and contract requirements were consistent with the Corporate Plan 2020-2023 theme of delivering a ‘High Performing Council’ and, in addition to the technical specification, had the following objectives:
 1. Enable staff to provide improved front line service delivery to service users
 2. Be effective and simple to use
 3. Provide staff with a 360° view of the customer and circumstances
 4. Interface with core internal systems
 5. Enable ‘Continuous Improvement’ to service delivery
 6. Future proof
- 1.6 The procurement process that was undertaken complied with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules and the process was supported by a Housing Service group with the addition of colleagues from IT, Revenues and Benefits and Welland Procurement. Suppliers were invited to tender via a Framework however only one tender was returned which was not from our incumbent supplier. The scoring from the tender submitted is attached to this report as Appendix One, which is exempt due to its commercially sensitive nature.

1.7 The result of this exercise is the proposed award of a seven-year contract to Aareon UK Limited for its housing management system product (called QLNG) and associated modules. The cost is £776,981.00 with an annual cost of £76,922.00. This upfront cost includes all of the specification requirements and the opportunity to introduce a temporary fixed term role to manage the implementation of the new system. The implementation period is expected to take 12 months with a target date of April 2023. The Aareon product can be deployed with several existing sector “best practice” workflows that the service can adopt ‘out of the box’, avoiding the need for bespoke consultancy and enabling the shift from clerical work, double entry, maintaining separate records and other inefficiencies.

1.8 Implications of supplier change

The change of IHMS supplier is a significant step for any landlord and if mishandled, fraught with risk of operational failure in terms of rent collection, responsive repairs, and void management. The Council will need to terminate the current supplier’s contract with effect from April 2023, providing an absolute deadline for the implementation stage.

1.9 Mitigation of operational risk

The Directorate will commit time and significant resource to ensure a smooth transfer of this key operational resource. This will be delivered through a project team, seconded to as needed from existing resources, this shall include a dedicated project manager throughout the life of the project. The Assistant Director for Housing will ensure maximum service improvement is achieved through the use of new workflows.

2 Consultation and Feedback Received, Including Overview and Scrutiny

2.1 All internal key stakeholders were consulted on the system specification. Additionally, all staff to see first hand demonstrations of the system with resulting feedback, showing that 94% see the system as a positive step forward.

3 Available Options Considered

3.1 Given procurement regulations, alternatives to the award of the contract to the successful tenderer are limited. However, as an alternative Cabinet may wish to do nothing, i.e. allow the existing contract to roll forward on its existing terms and conditions.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 That Cabinet approves the award of the contract.

5 Reasons for the Recommendation (s)

5.1 A fully compliant procurement process has resulted in the identification of a supplier that meets the Council’s requirements.

6 Next Steps – Communication and Implementation of the Decision

6.1 The Council will award the contract and commence the roll-out of the project to implement the new system. This will include scheduling in appropriate project board meetings, engaging with team members, and providing updates to Members and other stakeholders.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 There is an allocated budget in the Housing Revenue Account for £1.140m including a carry forward from 2021/22 of £640k and £500k in 2022/23. The projected costs are set out as:

Price Area	Price	Annual Cost year 2-7	
Installation / Implementation Total Costs	£ 21,368.00		
Module Fees Total Costs	£ -	£76,922.00 Total cost (£461,532.00)	
Training Total Costs	£ 37,879.00		
Consultancy Total Costs	£ 196,678.00		
Project Management Total Cost	£ 59,524.00		
Total Year One cost		£ 315,449.00	
Total Seven year cost			£ 776,981.00

The cost of year 1 is less than the allocated budget for this project so the requested carry forward (from the 2021/22 budgets) can be removed as this will no longer be required. The annualised cost is broadly similar to the annual cost being incurred for the current software system so there is no annual increase. The proposal to appoint a fixed term resource and other consultancy support in order to support the implementation of the system will be added to the costs set out in the table above.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Richard Wyles, Chief Finance Officer

8 Legal and Governance Implications

- 8.1 The necessary procurement processes have been followed and there are no other significant implications arising from this report from a legal or governance perspective.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Graham Watts, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer

9 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 9.1 No direct issues; the IHMS systems allows the Council to hold data on and report on equality issues.

10 Risk and Mitigation

- 10.1 A full risk register and risk mitigation framework for the implementation project shall be developed and reported to monthly project board meetings.

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 No direct issues; the IHMS systems allows the Council to improve its management of ASB complaints through better data handling and workflow processes.

12 How will the recommendations support South Kesteven District Council's declaration of a climate emergency?

- 12.1 Through the enabling of smarter working and the enhanced use of mobile technology it is envisaged that we shall reduce officer travel by eliminating the need for the return to office for dual entry of information. Combined with enhanced online self-service functionality for our internal and external customers reducing face to face interactions within our customer facing buildings.

13 Other Implications (where significant)

- 13.1 None.

14 Background Papers

- 14.1 None.

15 Appendices

- 15.1 Appendix One (exempt) - Procurement Summary Report - Integrated Housing Management Solution.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Cabinet

29 March 2022

Report of: Councillor Robert Reid

Cabinet Member for Housing and Property

Empty Homes Strategy

As the strategic housing authority for the district, South Kesteven District Council has confirmed its strategic priority to ensure “housing that meets the needs of all residents”. Long-term empty properties are a wasted housing resource and can provide a blight on communities. The adoption of a Empty Homes Strategy will provide clarity to residents and ensure South Kesteven District Council has a clear framework of the aims, options, and enforcement powers to deal with the issue of empty homes within the District and bring empty homes back into use.

Report Author

Craig Spence, Assistant Director for Housing



01476 406080



craig.spence@southkesteven.gov.uk

Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Housing that meets the needs of all residents	N/A	All Wards

Reviewed by:	Andrew Cotton, Director of Housing and Property	2 March 2022
Approved by:	Alan Robinson, Deputy Chief Executive	4 March 2022
Signed off by:	Councillor Kelham Cooke, Leader of the Council	21 March 2022

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

1. That Cabinet notes the content of the report, and the positive current position in relation to empty homes within South Kesteven;
2. That Cabinet approves the Empty Homes Strategy 2022 - 2025; and
3. That Cabinet delegates to the Director of Housing and Property authority to make minor amendments to the Empty Homes Strategy as needed by changes to regulation or legislation.

1 The Background to the Report

The national context

- 1.1 Empty homes continue to be on the national political agenda: the 2011 Government strategy '*Laying the Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England*' identified long term empty homes as a priority. Within the 2017 Housing White Paper '*Fixing our Broken Housing Market*', there was the commitment to improve neighbourhoods by continuing to crack down on long term empty homes.
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 states that planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings. As part of this approach, plans and decisions should support efforts to identify and bring back into use long term empty homes and other buildings, supported using compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.
- 1.3 Empty homes brought back into use can provide additional housing; empty homes can fall into disrepair and attract vandalism, anti-social behaviour and vermin. They can also affect the appearance of an area, which negatively impacts property prices.
- 1.4 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues to support Homes England, which is responsible for, amongst other matters, bringing long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing. The DLUHC classes problematic empty properties as those that are inactive in the housing market and have been empty for more than 6 months. Homes that have been recorded as empty for more than 6 months are classified as long-term empty by South Kesteven District Council.

The South Kesteven Context

- 1.5 On 23 February 2022, South Kesteven had 374 properties empty for between six months and two years, and 142 empty for two years or more (a total of 516 empty properties for six or more months). This is due to various reasons but, most commonly, it is because the occupant is deceased, and the property is going through probate.
- 1.6 To compare this figure with previous years the total number of empty properties, which have been empty for 6 or more months, as at 31 March 2020 was 609, whereas, as at 31 March 2021, it was 567 properties. This shows an improved situation with a reduction of 51 empty properties.
- 1.7 In comparison to other Lincolnshire areas for 2020, apart from North Kesteven, who have a rate of 0.84% of total dwellings as empty, South Kesteven has the lowest amount at 1.04% of total homes. The rate for South Kesteven in 2020 is below the East Midlands rate, which is 1.45% of total dwellings and similar to the England rate of 1.05%.
- 1.8 Most empty properties are privately owned. Some of the most common barriers that exist for owners of long-term empty properties that are preventing them from returning their property back into use include:
 - issues with inheritance and/or delays with probate;
 - lack of finance to carry out necessary repairs and/or refurbishment;
 - perceived problems associated with letting of properties; and/or
 - owner unwilling to bring the property back into use.

- 1.9 The Council's Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy (2018) has a section on empty properties. This states that owners of long term (6+ months) empty residential properties are encouraged to bring them back into use through a range of informal action including guidance and advice and also that formal enforcement action may be taken.
- 1.10 South Kesteven has an unmet housing need. Although South Kesteven does not have an extensive empty homes problem, the lack of a formally adopted strategy can constrain making decisions on the best course of action to take.

The draft Empty Homes Strategy

- 1.11 The Empty Homes Strategy aims to address one of the challenges identified in the South Kesteven Housing Strategy 2020-2024: *"As well as building more homes, it is important that we maximise the use of existing homes by working with landlords to bring empty homes back into use"*. It also plays a role in delivering the Corporate Plan priority: *"Housing that meets the needs of all residents"* and the Key Action: *"Bring private sector empty properties back in to use"*.
- 1.12 This Empty Homes Strategy identifies how the Council will reduce the number of empty properties within South Kesteven by adopting a proactive approach in bringing them back into use. The proposed priorities for the strategy are:
- Priority 1: The Council will identify and work with owners of long-term empty properties to bring them back into use for re-occupation.
- Priority 2: Develop effective partnerships with key stakeholders to bring empty properties back into use.
- Priority 3: Improve our neighbourhoods by addressing long term empty homes that have become the focus of anti-social behaviour and neglect.
- Priority 4: Provide advice and information to help raise awareness around empty properties.

Delivery of the Strategy

- 1.13 For the implementation and delivery of the strategy, an officer from either the Council Tax; Environmental Health or Housing teams will engage with the owners of any long-term empty properties, offering informal advice and assistance. Given the current low numbers of empty homes, the lack of a dedicated Officer resource is not felt to impede any future delivery, especially given the context that the introduction of a dedicated resource would provide a financial pressure on the Council. The management team will however continue to monitor any workload pressures and ameliorate within existing resources as appropriate.
- 1.14 At the two years empty stage or from 6 months empty, if complaints are received that an empty home is causing problems, the officer will refer the matter to a proposed new Empty Property Working Group, once initial options have been explored. The working group will include officers from different departments across the Council such as Environmental Health, Council Tax and Housing. They will work jointly in identifying problematic empty properties and finding solutions to bring them back into use. The working group will meet quarterly and will determine the most appropriate way forward to bring back to use each long-term empty home. The decision might be enforcement measures such as Compulsory Purchase, Empty Dwelling Management Orders or Enforced Sales.

The number of empty homes brought back into use is a corporate performance measure. Performance will be reported through the usual corporate governance arrangements.

Financial Considerations

- 1.15 In terms of incentives, the issue of grants or loans can be considered, South Kesteven District Council has in past issued grants to the owners of empty homes to bring them back into use however these were considered not to be effective. The grants were originally for £3,000 and this was raised to £5,000 to generate more interest. The availability of these grants was in place for eleven years but came to an end in 2018/19 due to a lack of interest. This was mainly because owners of properties can get bank loans with a low interest and the conditions in place as part of the loan (the property needing to be rented out at the Local Housing Allowance rate and to applicants on the Council housing register) were felt to be restrictive. The grants were administered by Council officers but not a specific Empty Homes Officer
- 1.16 An alternative option is for the Council to buy or long lease properties. However, the purchase and/or long lease of properties pepper potted across the District are unlikely to be commercially viable and would be difficult to manage. Billing authorities in England have the power to increase council tax in respect of dwellings which have been 'unoccupied and substantially unfurnished' for a long period of time. This is known as the 'empty homes premium'. It is for the billing authority to decide whether to levy an empty homes premium. This power is contained in the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018. The legislation made changes to the premium levels for empty properties in the following way:
- 100% premium (i.e. extra) for substantially unfurnished dwellings empty for 2-5 Years introduced from 2019/20
 - 200% premium (i.e. extra) for substantially unfurnished dwellings empty for 5-years introduced from 2020/21
 - 300% premium (i.e. extra) for substantially unfurnished dwellings empty for 10+ years introduced from 2021/22

The Council introduced these premium increases over the legislative approved period with the most recent increase introduced on 1 April 2021. Analysis demonstrates that the introduction of the premium has had a positive impact on the reduction of empty homes across the district. This is shown in the following table:

	100%	200%	300%	Assumption/Comment
May 2019	144			
May 2020	107	50		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 144 properties attracting 100% in May 2019, 50 moved into the next premium – meaning 94 or 65.28% came back into use within 12 months
May 2021	81	27	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 107 properties attracting 100% in May 2020, 27 moved into the next premium – meaning 80 or 74.77% came back in to use within 12 months

February 2022	95	25	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the 50 properties attracting 200% in May 2020, only 24 moved into the next premium – meaning 26 or 52%% came back in to use within 12 months • Of the 81 properties attracting 100% in May 2021, 25 moved into the next premium – meaning 56 or 69.14% came back in to use within 12 months • Of the 27 properties attracting 200% in May 2021, 22 moved into the next premium – meaning 2 or 7.4% came back in to use within 12 months
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- 1.17 This high-level analysis may demonstrate that the premium charge is having a positive impact on reducing the number of empty properties, which is in line with the Government's objective. This reduction has been over the same period that the Council tax base has increased by 996 properties (or 2.1%) thus demonstrating that the reduction in the empty properties is proportionally greater. However, it is important the use of the premium charge is kept under review to ensure it does not create or encourage adverse behaviours from the taxpayers' perspective.

2 Consultation and Feedback Received, Including Overview and Scrutiny

- 2.1 The Strategy was considered and supported by the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 07 October 2022.

Consultation has taken place with relevant officers across the Council Tax, Environmental Health and Housing teams.

3 Options Considered

- 3.1 Option 1 – continue with no adopted strategy.
- 3.2 Option 2 – formally adopt the Empty Homes Strategy.
- Understand the costs/benefits of the financial considerations as detailed above, including benchmarking;
 - Consult with relevant bodies in terms of the approach; and
 - Submit a report for Cabinet's consideration to formally adopt an Empty Homes Strategy.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 Option 2.

5 Reasons for the Recommendation (s)

- 5.1 This is considered to be the most proactive and pragmatic approach to bringing empty homes back into use and to provide a clear framework for Officers and clarity for the residents and homeowners of South Kesteven.

6 Next Steps – Communication and Implementation of the Decision

- 6.1 Members of the relevant Council teams will be made aware of the Strategy, the Empty Homes Working Group will be formalised, and the Strategy will be made available to members of the public on the Council's website.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The financial analysis demonstrates that there has been a positive impact on reducing the number of long-term empty properties following the introduction of the empty homes premium charge from 2019/20. The introduction of the financial charge is therefore fulfilling the objective of bringing empty homes back into use. Members are reminded that the Council receives 9% (or £9) for every £100 Council tax income received.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Richard Wyles, Interim Chief Finance Office

8 Legal and Governance Implications

- 8.1 Whilst there is no requirement to hold an 'empty homes strategy', the Council does retain strategic housing responsibilities and this document helps towards continued delivery of its statutory duties.
- 8.2 The Council's powers and duties in relation to enforcement are contained within various statutes including the Housing Act 1985, the Housing Act 2004, the Law of Property Act 1925 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. In cases where enforcement action is required, advice and input from Legal Services is always sought.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Alan Robinson, Monitoring Officer

9 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 9.1 This strategy will not have any negative implications on the protected characteristics of the Equality Act, 2010. Equality issues will be taken into account prior to any enforcement actions.

10 Risk and Mitigation

- 10.1 Risk to decreased income from the Council Tax premium charge. If this results from a property being brought back into use, this will reduce the amount of long-term empty properties used to calculate the reduction in the New Homes Bonus paid.

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There will be positive community safety implications because empty properties brought back into use will reduce likely associated anti-social behaviour and vandalism at or near the properties.

12 How will the recommendations support South Kesteven District Council's declaration of a climate emergency?

- 12.1 Carbon neutral – no identified issues found.

13 Other Implications (where significant)

- 13.1 None identified.

14 Background Papers

- 14.1 None

15 Appendices

15.1 Appendix 1 – draft Empty Homes Strategy.



Empty Homes Strategy

Draft - Version 1

Foreword

By the Cabinet Member for Housing and Property.

1. Introduction

What is an empty property?

There are broadly two main types of empty residential properties: transactional empty properties and long-term empty properties. Transactional empty properties are generally empty up to six months, usually due to a change in tenant or ownership and are part of the normal cycle of people moving house; though they may be empty longer should they be subject to major renovation works. Although transactional empty properties are less of a priority to the council, they can still present a concern should their condition become a hazard or contribute towards a poor street scene.

In some instances, a property may be empty or appear empty, but is not classed as empty. A property does not have to be used all the time to be classed as occupied. For example, if it is:

- a second home or a holiday home;
- a property which is part of a wider regeneration programme and could be in the process of being developed or marked for demolition;
- a property which has pending planning permission, could be waiting refurbishment or could be waiting for new occupants to move in;
- a property where the owner is living elsewhere to provide or receive personal care.

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) classes problematic empty properties as those that are inactive in the housing market and have been empty for more than 6 months. Homes that have been recorded as empty for more than 6 months are classified as long-term empty by South Kesteven District Council.

Why do properties become empty?

Properties that have been empty for more than six months usually have an underlying problem. When properties have been empty for more than two years, it is likely that they will stay empty and decline without intervention. Long term empty properties can become a hub for crime and attract vandalism and anti-social behaviour. They can become run down, fall into disrepair, have overgrown gardens and blight the surrounding properties and neighbourhood. Neighbouring owners may be particularly dissatisfied and may find their house value has diminished or may be difficult to let or sell. Bringing long term empty properties back into use is a priority for the Council and will contribute to increasing the supply of homes in the district.

Most empty properties are privately owned. There are many reasons for properties being left empty, some are easily categorised, and other circumstances are more complex with owners having their own individual reasons for keeping their property empty. Some of the most common barriers that exist for owners of long term empty

properties that are preventing them from returning their property back into use include:

- issues with inheritance and/or delays with probate;
- lack of finance to carry out necessary repairs and/or refurbishment;
- perceived problems associated with letting of properties;
- owner unwilling to bring the property back into use.

Why have an Empty Property Strategy?

Issues

High levels of empty properties are recognised as having a serious impact on the viability of communities in terms of blight on neighbourhoods and potential for anti-social behaviour to occur. Empty homes are also a wasted resource and when brought back into use contribute to an increase in the supply of housing. Dealing with empty properties can therefore have social, economic and regenerative benefits.

As at the 30 June 2021 (the end of 2021/22 quarter one), South Kesteven had 396 properties empty for six months up to two years and 130 empty for two years or more (a total of 526 empty properties for six or more months). This is due to various reasons but most commonly it is because the occupant has deceased and the property is going through probate. There are only two empty properties in the district which are causing significant problems. One is where a bankruptcy order has been issued due to non-payment of Council Tax and for the other, the landlord is unable to let at the current advertised rent.

Of these total 526 empty properties, 21 of them are Council owned which have been empty for 6 or more months.

To compare this figure with the previous year, the total number of empty properties, which have been empty for 6 or more months, as at 31st March 2020 was 609, whereas, as at 31st March 2021, it was 567 properties. This shows an improved situation with a reduction of 42 empty properties.

Central Government collects data on empty dwellings in October of each year. For South Kesteven, the number of empty dwellings for the last three years were:

2018 – 512 (0.81% of total homes: 63,075)

2019 – 533 (0.84% of total homes: 63,751)

2020 – 672 (1.04% of total homes: 64,480)

In comparison to other Lincolnshire areas for 2020, apart from North Kesteven, who have a rate of 0.84% of total dwellings as empty, South Kesteven has the lowest amount.

For most areas of Lincolnshire there was a decrease in the number of empty dwellings across Lincolnshire in 2013 but there has been a gradual rise each year since. All areas of Lincolnshire saw an increase between 2019 and 2020.

The Coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on the rise in the number of empty dwellings in 2020. There were restrictions in movement, which resulted in restrictions to the letting and sale of properties. Even once restrictions were lifted, the level of property moves was not at the same rate as usual. In addition to this, employment redundancies lead to property repossessions, which meant more properties were left empty.

The rate of 1.04% empty dwellings of total dwellings for South Kesteven in 2020 is below the East Midlands rate, which is 1.45% of total dwellings and similar to the England rate of 1.05%.

This Empty Homes Strategy identifies how the Council, with support from partners, will reduce the number of empty properties within South Kesteven by bringing them back into use.

South Kesteven District Council is committed to tackling empty properties by adopting a proactive approach in supporting owners to help return their property to use. Empty properties constitute a wasted housing resource, both for individual owners and the local community. Long-term empty properties can fall into a state of disrepair and become dangerous as well as having a negative environmental impact. A coordinated and sustainable approach can deliver an increase in housing supply, improve standards and reduce the number of empty homes.

Benefits

New Homes Bonus

The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central government to local authorities for increasing the net level of housing. This bonus is for every additional home and paid each year for six years. The bonus is based on the amount of extra Council Tax revenue raised for new build homes, conversions and long term empty homes brought back into use. There is an additional payment for providing affordable homes.

The scheme is an incentive for local authorities to have an effective Empty Homes Strategy. Grant will only be paid for a net increase in housing, meaning that local authorities could miss out on rewards for new homes built if empty property levels are allowed to increase. At a time when local government grant funding has been significantly reduced, this provides an added incentive to continue our work to bring empty properties back into use.

Shortage of affordable homes

In addition, there is a shortage of affordable homes and increasing the number of occupied dwellings will assist with this shortage. The Peterborough sub-region (Peterborough, Rutland, South Holland and South Kesteven) and Boston Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), 2019 identifies a need of 16,125 dwellings from 2011 to 2036 for South Kesteven, which equates to 650 new homes per year. Of these, 244 are identified as needing to be affordable dwellings per year for the district.

The Government set a target for 300,000 new homes to be built each year across England but a House of Commons Briefing Paper: Tackling the under-supply of housing in England, January 2021, states “estimates have put the number of new homes needed in England at up to 345,000 per year, accounting for new household formation and a backlog of existing need for suitable housing”.

The total number of new homes built for South Kesteven for 2020/21 is 446 and of these, 56 are affordable dwellings.

The House of Commons Briefing Paper: Tackling the under-supply of housing in England states “in 2019/20, the total housing stock in England increased by around 244,000 homes. This is around 1% higher than the year before – and the amount of new homes supplied annually has been growing for several years – but is still lower than estimated need”.

2. Strategic Background

National Context

Empty homes continue to be on the National political agenda:

The 2011 government strategy ‘Laying the Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England’ identified long term empty homes as a priority.

It introduced New Homes Bonus payments for bringing empty homes back into use, provided grant funding from 2012-15 to bring properties back into use mostly as affordable housing through the former Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England), and allowed councils to introduce an empty homes premium on council tax charges.

The 2017 Housing White Paper Fixing our Broken Housing Market set out the government’s plans to boost the supply of new homes in England. It included a commitment from the government to:

- Plan for the right homes in the right places
- Build homes faster
- Diversify the housing market
- Help people now

Within the White Paper there was the commitment to improve neighbourhoods by continuing to crack down on long term empty homes and support areas most affected by second homes. The Government pledged to continue to support local authorities to encourage efficient use of its existing stock, making best use of homes that are long-term empty.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 states that planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively. As part of this approach, plans and decisions should support efforts to identify and bring

back into use long term empty homes and other buildings, supported using compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government continues to support Homes England, which is responsible for:

Increasing the number of new homes that are built in England, including affordable homes and homes for market, sale or rent.

- Improving existing affordable homes
- and bringing long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing.
- Increasing the supply of public land and speeding up the rate that it can be built on.
- Helping to stimulate local economic growth by using their land and investment and attracting private sector investment in local areas.

Homes England provides a number of funding programmes, including funding to bring long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing. South Kesteven District Council will work in partnership with Registered Providers (RPs) to access this funding to bring long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing.

Local Context

This Empty Homes Strategy complements the South Kesteven Housing Strategy 2020-2024. At the heart of the Housing Strategy is “the belief that homes are a fundamental part of our lives. Houses should be 'healthy', good quality, sustainable and secure, providing the environment for people to thrive and achieve.” The Empty Homes Strategy aims to address one of the challenges identified in the Housing Strategy: “As well as building more homes, it is important that we maximise the use of existing homes by working with landlords to bring empty homes back into use”.

It also plays a role in delivering the Corporate Plan priority: “Housing that meets the needs of all residents” and the Key Action: “Bring private sector empty properties back in to use”.

The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy (2018) has a section on empty properties. This states:

“Owners of long term (6+ months) empty residential properties are encouraged to bring them back into use through a range of informal action including guidance and advice. The Council may offer financial assistance to owners to bring properties back into use in certain circumstances. Where the condition of a property is having a severe impact on neighbours, the Council may use a range of appropriate enforcement powers. Where a property is unsecured and unauthorised entry is being made, the Council may use powers to secure the property, including boarding of doors and windows”.

The Policy allows for the use of Enforced Sale, the use of Empty Dwellings Management Orders (EDMOs) and Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs).

Enforcement by SKDC so far has been either boarding or tidying up the property and Enforced Sale. This is only possible where money is owed (minimum £1,000). The Council has not applied for a EDMO or CPO.

SKDC used to issue grants to the owners of empty homes to bring them back into use. The grants were originally for £3,000 and this was raised to £5,000 to create more interest. The availability of these grants was in place for 11 years but came to an end in 2018/19 due to a lack of interest. This was mainly because owners of properties can get bank loans with a low interest and the conditions in place as part of the loan (the property needing to be rented out at the Local Housing Allowance rate and to applicants on the Council housing register) were considered to be onerous. The grants were administered as part of someone's job role, not a specific Empty Homes Officer, and they were funded through monies received from the New Homes Bonus.

Council tax charges at South Kesteven District Council:

EMPTY 100% DISCOUNT	EMPTY 25% DISCOUNT	EMPTY 0% DISCOUNT	LTE +50% premium	LTE+100% Premium	LTE+200% Premium	LTE+300% premium
1 month from date property first becomes empty	2 to 5 months	6+ months	Up to 2 years	Over 2 years	Over 5 years	Over 10 years

Legislation

Particularly useful powers and procedures for the Council include:

- Town and County Planning Act 1990 – section 215
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1991
- Building Act 1984 – section 76-80
- Housing Act 2004 – Parts 1-4
- Local Government Act 2003
- Local Government (Misc Prov) Act 1982
- Local Government Act 2000
- Prevention of Damage by Pest Act 1949 – section 4
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Part 2 and section 80
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 – Part 1

This list is not exhaustive

The Housing Act 2004 introduced Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) which are a legal device which enable local authorities to put an unoccupied property back into use as housing.

The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allows local authorities to increase the percentage by which a billing authority in England may increase the council tax payable in respect of a long-term empty dwelling.

3. Priorities

Priority 1: The Council will identify and work with owners of long term empty properties to bring them back into use for re-occupation

Priority 2: Develop effective partnerships with key stakeholders to bring empty properties back into use.

Priority 3: Improve our neighbourhoods by addressing long term empty homes that have become the focus of anti-social behaviour and neglect.

Priority 4: Provide advice and information to help raise awareness around empty properties.

The Council will focus on those homes empty for two years or longer, to make the best use of limited resources, as these homes are considered to have the greatest impact on the community.

Homes become vacant as part of the natural cycle of the housing market, whether for sale or between lettings. A policy of “no vacant homes” would be both unreasonable and unrealistic, but the Council does not want to tolerate long term empty homes when there is an unmet demand for housing, nor does it want to tolerate the impact that problematic empty homes have on the community.

4. Resources/Finance and Implementation/Delivery

Resources/Finance available to the Council

A report will be presented to the Head of Service/Director for any high resource eventualities such as Compulsory Purchase, Empty Dwelling Management Orders and Enforced Sales - This will ensure proper processes are considered and the risks to the Council mitigated as much as possible.

Any incurred expenditure will be funded from the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and any New Homes Bonus received.

Homes England funding – Shared Ownership Affordable Housing Programme

Implementation/Delivery

An officer from the Council's Environmental Health/Housing teams will attempt to:

Engage with the owner of each empty home from 6 months empty, offering advice, assistance and voluntary options for occupation, and assessing the background, condition and impact of each property.

At the two years empty stage or from 6 months empty, if complaints are received that an empty home is causing problems, the officer will refer the matter to a newly introduced Empty Property Working Group, once initial options have been explored. The working group will include officers from different departments across the Council such as Environmental Health, Council Tax and Housing. They will work jointly in identifying problematic empty properties and finding solutions to bring them back into use. The working group will meet quarterly and will determine the most appropriate way forward and create an action plan to bring back to use each long term empty home.

The impact of each two-year long empty home, on matters such as the extent of anti-social behaviour and vandalism, will be assessed using a scoring matrix. Those properties with the highest scores are those most likely to be identified for enforcement action if the initial options are unsuccessful.

5. Tools and Powers

Initial Options

Advice & Guidance

In the first instance, owners will be given advice and assistance on how to bring their property back into use. These options could be renting out the property, selling the property or advice on becoming a landlord. The aim is to encourage owners to bring the property back into use through voluntary action. This action will commence from six months empty, but the length of time it takes to bring a property back into use will depend on the owner's personal and financial circumstances.

Financial assistance

The Council directs owners to advice on VAT reductions which may be available when renovating an empty property and discounts from local building merchants and estate agents. The Council will look for any funding sources in partnership with other organisations.

Voluntary Arrangement

The Council may facilitate the introduction of the owner to a Registered Provider, Community Land Trust or private individual(s) to sell or lease the empty property. The Council, in this instance, will not be acting as an estate agent or providing advice or recommendation to either party. Any negotiation and sales processes would take place between the owners, interested party and their legal representatives.

It is useful to have the option to offer a voluntary lease and repair agreement to owners prior to an EDMO, and necessary to offer a voluntary acquisition of the property prior to proceeding to Compulsory Purchase, in a staged approach to enforcement. Models for voluntary acquisition need to be developed, whether for Council housing stock, a housing company, or in partnership with a Registered Provider or Community Land Trust. Funding sources need to be identified, and the

barrier of mortgage companies refusing second charges on leased properties remains a national issue.

Statutory enforcement

Where owners show reluctance to engage with the Council officers and continue to ignore their responsibilities in respect of the property, the officers will use relevant enforcement powers to reduce the impact the property is having on the area and abate any statutory nuisance being caused to neighbouring properties. Persistent enforcement of this type can result in the owner bringing the property back into use to prevent further notices being served. Non-compliance with a statutory notice can reduce the compensation costs of compulsory purchase or lead to works in default and an enforced sale.

A co-ordinated approach will be planned by the Empty Property Working Group.

Where these initial options are unsuccessful in bringing the empty home back to use, specific empty home enforcement powers will be considered.

Enforced sale

Purpose:

Many statutes allow the Council to serve a notice requiring the owner of a property to carry out works, for example to deal with the dangerous or untidy condition of the property. Non-compliance of a statutory notice can lead to the council carrying works in default, which create a land charge against the property. Enforced Sale is a procedure to recover such a debt owed to the Council, and a similar procedure can be used to recover unpaid Council Tax.

Enforced Sale is not in itself a procedure to deal with problematic properties, but the enforced sale of empty properties brings two main benefits: a debt owed to the Council is recovered; and a change of ownership is secured with the expectation that the new owner will bring it back to use.

Legal costs are recouped from the sale of the property, and any surplus is paid to the owner or mortgagee.

Legislation:

The power to enforce the sale of a property to recover a local land charge is in the Law of Property Act 1925, section 103. Once an initial notice is served, owners have 3 months to pay the debt before the sale is enforced.

Council tax debts are personal debts and not charged against a property. The process to recover a council tax debt requires an application to court for a charging order followed by an order for sale.

Considerations:

- a) The owner may pay the debt and the property remains vacant and unsold:
 - The threat of an Enforced Sale will usually be sufficient to encourage an owner to dispose of the property or return it to use voluntarily, if not other enforcement options can be explored.
 - The council is unable to recover its costs to date and these need to be offset against the recovered debt. It is recommended that the minimum debt level prior to commencing action is £1000.
- b) There is not sufficient equity in the property to recoup the costs owed to the Council:
 - Where the charge is binding on the “premises and on all estates and interests therein” it is a priority charge. Performing an Enforced Sale, due to non-compliance of a S215 Town and Country Planning Notice, would only be suitable if there is equity after any other registered charge.
- c) The property is sold but the new owner does not return the property to use:
 - This will remain a risk, but in most cases, people purchase as they have an intention to utilise the property for income or occupation. The usual process for sale is through auction, however a preferred purchaser can be used. Other enforcement options can be considered against the new owner.

Costs:

Relative to Compulsory Purchase Orders, Enforced Sales are swift, less complicated, and economical. There is no requirement, as with the compulsory purchase order, to pay market value or any compensation.

When the Council's debt is a priority charge, all costs incurred by the Council in the sale process are recoverable before any third party charges on the property are repaid. As such, the procedure should be cost neutral to the Council.

An initial budget is needed to cover these costs, which should be recycled from the recovered funds.

Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)

Purpose:

The intention of EDMOs is to bridge the gap between voluntary measures and existing compulsory purchase powers to provide better management of a property deliberately left vacant for at least two years that is having a negative impact on the community.

The threat of an EDMO can put pressure on the owner to engage with the authority and agree the best course of action to secure occupation of the dwelling, thereby avoiding the need for an interim or final EDMO, to be made.

A EDMO is intended to operate alongside existing measures, such as voluntary leasing schemes explored above. It will provide an effective back-up to such

arrangements where owners turn down offers of assistance and do not have plans of their own to bring the property back into use. Properties subject to EDMO can be used to meet housing need without the upfront cost of acquisition, subject to risk assessment.

A management scheme sets out in detail how the Council intends to manage the property, to include the works it intends to undertake, Capital and Revenue estimates for the costs of these works, how much rent the Council will seek from tenants, and provisions for paying any surplus to the owner.

Legislation:

Housing Act 2004 Part 4, S132–138 & Schedule 7.

The Council must give the owner at least 3 months' notice of their intention to make an application for an EDMO.

The Council applies to the First Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) for an Interim EDMO, which lasts for one year. During this time the Council can enter the property to determine works required and make arrangements for the property's management. If the property is in reasonable condition occupation can be secured with the consent of the owner.

If voluntary measures fail to bring the property back into use during this interim period, the Council then makes a final EDMO to take control of the property for up to seven years, carrying out improvement works prior to renting the property out.

Costs:

The rental income is used to pay for any works and management costs. Therefore, the condition of the property is a critical consideration when determining whether or not this is a viable financial option. A budget of £10,000 to £15,000 is needed up front for the refurbishment works.

Considerations:

- Property must have been vacant for 2 years, be having a negative impact, and it is useful to show community support for the EDMO.
- The Council may be unable to recover the cost of the initial works from the rental income, if the home is in very poor condition or rent is unpaid.
- The owner or mortgage lender can appeal against the application for an EDMO
- Arrangements for the management of the property need to be made, through the Council's housing directorate or housing company or procurement of a private firm.
- A budget is needed for the initial capital works.
- There are a number of exemptions in the Act which make properties unsuitable for EDMO, including the home being for sale, awaiting or recently granted probate, or the owner being cared for elsewhere.

Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)

Purpose:

Many empty homes are in poor condition and an eyesore. A CPO both secures an improvement in the local environment and brings a wasted housing asset back into use. This power allows the Council to purchase a property from the owners and, depending on the specific power used, retain it as housing stock, dispose of it to a housing partner, or sell it on the open market before or after renovation.

The initial decision to progress with compulsory purchase arises out of exhausting all other voluntary and statutory powers and is agreed by the Empty Property Working Group. The decision in principle is conveyed to the owner and efforts continue to seek a voluntary solution throughout the process.

The end use will be considered for each case, but where the property is sold at auction or to a preferred partner then the funds can be recycled for further empty homes work.

Legislation:

The primary powers to acquire property land compulsorily, where an owner is uncooperative or untraceable, are as follows:

Statute Purpose Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (amended by Planning & Compulsory Act 2004)

- A local authority can CPO any land and buildings if it thinks that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on, or in relation to, the land and buildings.
- The development, redevelopment or improvement must contribute to the promotion or improvement of economic, social or environmental well-being.
- Where the empty home requires improvement, perhaps because of its poor external appearance or because of its poor condition inside, this power is available.

Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985

- A local authority can acquire a house, or houses, for the provision or improvement of housing accommodation (whether by itself or someone else).
- If an empty property is in good condition and not in need of improvement, then only the housing power will be available for the CPO.

Section 47 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- This power is available when the empty home is a listed building in poor condition.
- It is a pre requisite to a listed building CPO that a repairs notice under section 48 of the Act has been served at least two months before the CPO is made.
- Section 93 Local Government & Housing Act 1989
- This power is rarely used

If compulsory purchase is identified as the most satisfactory course of action, then from that point on legal process is followed.

Risks:

The decision to compulsorily purchase an empty property must be shown to be in the public interest, and CPO is a costly and lengthy process. This power is usually limited to where persuasion and statutory notices have failed and the owner refuses to co-operate with the voluntary measures offered by the Council to bring the property back into use; or if the owner is untraceable.

Objections may be heard resulting in a potentially costly public enquiry and the Secretary of State may or may not support the action.

Costs:

The Council is required to pay compensation, comprising of the market value of the property plus, if there are no outstanding legal notices on the property, basic loss value. If the property is sold back to back to a new owner, these costs may be paid from the onward sale, but a considerable budget is needed for legal and other costs.

6. Performance and Evaluation

The number of empty homes brought back into use is a corporate measure.

Performance will be reported through the Directorate of Housing and Property.

There will be an annual report on the impact of empty properties and the successful interventions. The report will include:

- a) The changes in the number of empty properties year on year
- b) The number of complaints received in respect of empty homes
- c) Any local authority expenditure incurred in the management of neglected empty properties
- d) The number of properties brought back to use through council involvement
- e) The amount of New Homes Bonus achieved through empty homes
- f) The amount of debt recovered through interventions such as negotiation and enforced sale
- g) The progress and current circumstances of any homes vacant for over 2 years and any barriers or hold ups to identify where resources are needed.



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Cabinet

29 March 2022

Report by Councillor Kelham Cooke,

Leader of the Council

Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge

To provide Cabinet with an opportunity to review and consider actions undertaken, next steps and timelines associated with the recommendations of the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge held in November 2021.

Report Author

Graham Watts (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer)



(01476) 406224



graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk

Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
A High Performing Council	Governance	All Wards

Reviewed by:	Alan Robinson (Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)	21 March 2022
Approved by:	Karen Bradford (Chief Executive)	21 March 2022
Signed off by:	Councillor Kelham Cooke, Leader of the Council	21 March 2022

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

1. That Cabinet notes the progress undertaken to date and supports the proposed actions scheduled to be undertaken as set out in the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan.

1 The Background to the Report

- 1.1 The Council participated in the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge in November 2021, the findings of which were reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 8 February 2022.
- 1.2 The findings of the Corporate Peer Challenge were largely positive, highlighting a number of strengths for the Council whilst also identifying some areas for focus and improvement across the Council. The feedback report is attached to this report at **Appendix A**.
- 1.3 Cabinet agreed to receive an action plan to implement the findings of the review which has been developed and is attached to this report at **Appendix B**.
- 1.4 The action plan sets out the recommendations made following the findings of the Peer Challenge, the work the Council had already undertaken in response, confirmation as to the next steps and associated timelines for implementation and delivery.
- 1.5 The Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge Panel will be invited back to the Council in September 2022 as part of a six-month progress review against the findings of the Peer Challenge.

2 Consultation and Feedback Received, Including Overview and Scrutiny

- 2.1 No additional consultation has been carried out to date.

3 Available Options Considered

- 3.1 Note progress against the action plan.
- 3.2 Identify any areas where further action is required.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 The preferred option is to note the progress against the action plan and support the next steps and respective timelines and, if necessary, identify any areas where further action is required.

5 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 5.1 To provide Cabinet with an opportunity to review progress against the action plan, as requested at its meeting on 8 February 2022.

6 Next Steps – Communication and Implementation of the Decision

To continue delivery of actions set out in the action plan in accordance with the timescales set out in the document.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Richard Wyles, Interim Chief Finance Officer

8 Legal and Governance Implications

- 8.1 There are no legal and governance implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Graham Watts, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer

9 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 9.1 There are no equality and safeguarding implications arising from this report.

10 Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix A – Feedback Report
- 10.2 Appendix B – Action Plan

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LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

South Kesteven District Council

16 – 18 November 2021

Feedback report





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1. Executive summary

The past 18 months has seen South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) embark on a wide ranging and impactful organisational change agenda to deliver performance improvement, cultural change, and longer-term organisational stability. There is a strong commitment from the political and officer leadership to improvement, with leadership from Leader and Chief Executive integral to the significant progress made to date. Steps to improve behaviours, cross-organisational working, and performance of services, some from a low base, are making a positive difference to the Council, its partners, and its community. These advancements have been achieved against the challenging backdrop of the Covid 19 pandemic. Sustainable improvement will nevertheless take time to embed, and it is important that it is not overly reliant on key individuals. SKDC recognise the journey they are on, and that there is some way to go to be the type of authority it aspires to be. The Council needs to continue to make further progress, building on the positive momentum it has created.

There is much SKDC can nevertheless be proud of and celebrate. Its response to Covid 19 pandemic is well regarded, closer working relationships have been forged with several partners, and the District has enhanced its understanding of place as a consequence. Continuing to deepen and systemise this engagement with communities would further enhance SKDC's understanding of its citizens and strengthen its role as a place and community leader.

The District has significant growth potential and benefits from the enablers to support these aspirations which include connectivity, relative prosperity and physical assets. Whilst recognising the challenge of a multi-centred geography, SKDC should consider if the District's full potential is being realised, in terms of brand and exploiting its assets. Further collaboration with partners on shared priorities - such as local skills and zero carbon – could help unlock this potential.

Positive steps have been taken in recent months to foster closer relationships between Members and officers at a senior level. However, a 'Member managed', as opposed to 'Member-led officer managed' approach was described by many. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of Members and officers will be important to rebalance this situation and create a positive environment for collaborative Member – officer working. Enhancing opportunities for closer teamwork between Members as well as between Members and officers will support this. Doing so will help build greater trust, accountability and shared understanding which are vital components in moving the authority forward.

SKDC's workforce are a huge asset, being committed to delivering for the authority and driving forward improvement. Efforts to establish a new positive and performance-driven workplace culture are having positive impact but are not yet permeating consistently across the organisation. Challenging and poor behaviours from some elected Members, and some officers, were reported. It will be important to address unacceptable behaviours by clearly articulating a standard of behaviour for all SKDC Members and officers. Seeking to learn from elsewhere and investing in individuals' development will also be important in establishing a continuous learning culture to drive forward improvement.

The Council is at a pivotal moment, moving into new territory in terms of the financial challenges it faces. SKDC should prepare for the increased rigours of financial management as difficult decisions, prioritisation, and strong financial discipline will be required. Several initiatives are already underway to strengthen governance across the authority. Prioritising these activities, including an external 'health check' of company governance structures, will aid this need for rigour by strengthening effective decision-making and risk management.


SKDC can be proud in recognising – and celebrating – what it has achieved in the past 18 months and looking ahead to achieving its full potential. Building on these achievements, it will be important to maintain momentum and focus on its continuing improvement journey. Developing a strategy and plans for future ways of working will

reinforce this direction of travel by supporting long-term, joined-up planning, aligned to SKDC's future organisational vision. Looking to the future when sustainable improvement has been achieved, it will also be important for SKDC to transition to a more external facing approach to articulate, and leverage, more clearly its vision and ambitions for place.

2. Recommendations

There are several observations and suggestions within the main section of the report. The following are the peer team's key recommendations to the council:

- 2.1. Prepare the organisation for the increased rigours of financial management to address the challenges ahead.** Developing the discipline and mindset required for strong operational financial management will support effective prioritisation, informed decision-making, and setting and delivery of realistic savings targets.
- 2.2. Clarify roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers to build trust, respect and rebalance to 'Member-led officer managed'.** Clearly defining the bounds of the strategic decision-making role of elected Members, and the operational leadership of officers, will address the current imbalance and support a positive environment for collaborative Member – officer working.
- 2.3. Articulate the standards of behaviour for all #TeamSK (elected Members and officers) to promote respect and address poor behaviours.** Setting clear expectations would enable behaviours that fall below that standard to be held to account and help embed a positive team #TeamSK culture. This could be through a form of Respect Pledge or Strategy.
- 2.4. Consider how to enhance communication and teamwork between Members, and between Members and officers in the context of Covid 19.** Investing in relationships will support the development of greater trust, accountability and shared understanding which is something many councils are doing in response to experiences during the pandemic. This will in turn support decision-making, delivery and morale. Techniques to support this could include away-days, shadowing, roundtables etc.

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- 2.5. Develop a strategy and plans for future ways of working to provide clarity and a sense of purpose.** Bringing together plans around blended working, staff accommodation, asset management and IT investment will support long-term joined-up planning, aligned to SKDC's future organisational vision.
- 2.6. Prioritise plans to strengthen governance to support effective decision-making and mitigate risk.** (E.g. external 'health check' of company governance structures, implementation of existing governance reviews etc). This will be important to drive performance improvements, provide assurance, and ensure there is transparent, accountable, and robust decision-making.
- 2.7. Be prepared to invest in yourselves to engage on a wider footing to learn and make SKDC the best it can be.** Investing in individual development (both elected Member and officer), and seeking to learn from elsewhere, is important to establish a continuous learning culture to drive forward improvement and change.
- 2.8. Continue to deepen understanding of and engagement with communities and other partners to strengthen SKDC's community leadership role.** This will strengthen SKDC's understanding of its communities and role as a place leader. This could include: continuous dialogue; more active community leadership role for councillors; systematic approach to resident and community engagement; promoting equality, diversity and inclusion; collaborating on shared priorities; and co-design.
- 2.9. Recognise and celebrate the significant progress made whilst keeping focus to maintain momentum, looking ahead to achieving SKDC's full potential.** Building on the achievements already made will help reinforce that direction of travel, support staff morale and mitigate change fatigue through positive reinforcement.

3. Summary of the peer challenge approach

3.1. The peer team


Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected the focus of the peer challenge and peers were selected on the basis of their relevant expertise. The peers were:

- Stephen Baker, Chief Executive, East Suffolk Council
- Cllr Abi Brown, Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
- Kirsten Burnett, Head of Policy and Organisational Development, Hyndburn Borough Council
- Paul Ellis, Director of Services and Deputy Chief Executive, Craven District Council
- Stephen Cooper, Senior Workforce Adviser, LGA
- Frances Marshall, Programme Manager, LGA

3.2. Scope and focus

The peer team considered the following five themes which form the core components of all Corporate Peer Challenges. These areas are critical to councils' performance and improvement.

1. **Local priorities and outcomes** - Are the council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is it delivering effectively on its priorities?
2. **Organisational and place leadership** - Does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
3. **Governance and culture** - Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of challenge and scrutiny?
4. **Financial planning and management** - Does the council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a plan to address its financial challenges?
5. **Capacity for improvement** - Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?



Prior to the Corporate Peer Challenges, some [Remote Peer Support](#) (RPS) took place in June 2021 reflecting on SKDC's 'people' focused activity around culture, performance and change. The Corporate Peer Challenge builds on this work.

3.3. The peer challenge process

Peer challenges are improvement focused; it is important to stress that this was not an inspection. The process is not designed to provide an in-depth or technical assessment of plans and proposals. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent three days onsite at South Kesteven DC, during which they:

- Gathered information and views from more than 38 meetings, in addition to further research and reading
- Spoke to more than 113 people including a range of council staff together with Members and external stakeholders

This report provides a summary of the peer team's findings. In presenting feedback, they have done so as fellow local government officers and Members.

4. Feedback

4.1. Local priorities and outcomes

The introduction of the Corporate Plan and underpinning performance management approach have created strong foundations for SKDC's change agenda. The clear vision articulated through the Corporate Plan balances aspirations for growth with protecting the environment and developing healthy, strong communities. However, there could be greater clarity around individual priorities as this was not always clearly understood by partners. Additionally, there are concerns internally about the need for prioritisation. SKDC should now focus on providing clarity and pace to drive forward progress against its key priorities which include health inequalities, climate change and community safety. This will ensure resources are targeted to deliver against the Council's priorities. Appointing Member Champion Roles for certain priorities could galvanise delivery by adding sharper focus and profile.

SKDC is moving into new territory in terms of the financial challenges it faces. With deficits forecast in 2022/23 and 2023/24, the challenges of recovering from Covid 19 whilst also pursuing growth aspirations means difficult decisions will need to be taken. (See Financial Planning and Management paragraph). Effective prioritisation, aligned to requisite resources, will be vitally important to inform these difficult choices and ensure delivery is achievable. The current refresh of the Corporate Plan which is underway provides a great opportunity to achieve this. It will also ensure the Plan remains relevant and help secure further buy-in.

SKDC aspires to be a high performing council with this a clear and measurable objective in its Corporate Plan, however some services are starting from a low base. Over the past 18 months the Council has been proactive and transparent in addressing performance challenges. Its self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) for failing to meet Housing Standards demonstrates this, as does the positive impact of SKDC's subsequent improvement plan which is recognised by the RSH. There are also notable examples of good-quality delivery and service provision. This includes SKDC being in the top quartile of performers in the distribution of Covid 19 business support grants as well as being considered one of

the most proactive councils locally in relation to testing and vaccination communications.

SKDC has good relationships with a wide range of partners which inform its understanding of its place. These include Higher Education, Local Enterprise Partnership, businesses, Homes England, voluntary community sector (VCS), Integrated Care System and neighbouring Lincolnshire authorities. Many of these have been strengthened and deepened through the period of the Covid 19 pandemic. For example, there is an enhanced understanding of, and connection to the business community due to support and grants distributed during the pandemic. There is nevertheless scope to do more. Several partners talked about a desire to collaborate further with SKDC to deliver on shared priorities. Local skills and zero carbon were highlighted as areas where SKDC could capitalise on relationships to unlock capacity, create new opportunities, and play a greater place-shaping role across the District.

SKDC is ambitious for its place. However, it may want to reflect on whether its ambitions are understated, clearly articulated and if its true potential is fully recognised, such as its vision for Grantham and wider locality offer. The District's potential for growth was described by some as 'enviable', with the Southern Growth Area (SGA) a particular asset to be exploited. The District's location, transport connectivity, physical assets, and success in leveraging in external funding (e.g. Future High Streets Funding, HAZ Funding) provide the platform to translate this potential into outcomes such as protecting and creating jobs, developing high streets and, securing investment. To realise this, SKDC should reinforce and create links across all partners to restate and secure buy-in to its vision for economic growth. A strong borough-wide place-based identity and brand tied into the Council's vision would help SKDC in realising the District's full potential. Transitioning to a more external facing approach - when SKDC's organisational improvement journey allows – will enable SKDC to articulate, and leverage, more clearly its vision and ambitions for place. (See Organisational and Place Leadership paragraph).

SKDC's relationship with the VCS has been galvanised through collaboration in responding to Covid 19, ranging from increased dialogue through to joint delivery. There is a desire from the VCS for SKDC to go further to deepen partnership working and dialogue. This provides a great opportunity to capitalise on the enhanced community focus achieved through the experience of managing the effects of Covid 19. This could help to enrich SKDC's understanding of its communities and use this insight to influence decisions and service design. To do so, SKDC should systemise its engagement with citizens and communities and support all elected Members to be visible in their community leadership roles.

SKDC produces an Annual Equality and Diversity Position Statement and seeks to promote equality of opportunity across its functions in line with its public sector equality duty. Further work is required to support officers and Members to promote respect, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) through their roles whilst challenging unacceptable behaviours. Introducing mandatory EDI training will help ensure the principles of EDI are understood by all within the organisation and that all sectors of the population are catered for by enhancing the Council's understanding of its local environment and population.

4.2. Organisational and place leadership

SKDC's organisational leadership has undergone a transformation through a raft of changes introduced over the past 18 months including the appointment of a new Chief Executive, restructures, and service reviews. Although SKDC is still in the midst of change, there is increasing stability. There is a clear vision for improvement underpinned by sound foundations provided by the Corporate Plan, performance management framework and commitment from senior leadership. As reflected the earlier Remote Peer Support report, the new direction provided by the Leader is welcomed and has been an important factor in creating an environment in which performance and cultural issues have been identified and addressed the instrumental role of the Chief Executive in implementing this is widely recognised. Together, their strong relationship and joined up leadership is reflected in the broad organisational support for their drive for positive change.

They are supported by a Corporate Management Team (CMT) which is well regarded and working effectively together as a cohesive unit. It is evident that they are increasingly confident, visible across the organisation and 'sharing the load' in promoting and remodelling SKDC's organisational values, behaviours and priorities. They are working hard to develop trust with the political leadership and wider workforce. Investing further in political leadership development would support the Cabinet in forging an approach based on collective endeavour whilst also strengthening cross-organisational working. Similarly, assistance for all elected Members to understand their roles has been highlighted as something that would be welcomed. (See Governance and Culture paragraph).

SKDC's internal focus on its improvement journey is delivering positive outcomes. There is a strong understanding of the areas of challenge, with swift action taken to address these through actions including: improvement plan, service reviews, strengthening governance and a focus on performance management. Significant energies and resources are inevitably focused internally, reflective of SKDC's commitment to deliver against its improvement priorities. It will be important to plan ahead so that SKDC has a route map for how – when the time is right - it will transition to a more proactive external-facing approach to leverage its local leadership position more fully. One element of this could be developing a partnership strategy to prepare for the new landscape of devolution and potential local government reorganisation, defining what SKDC would want within these scenarios. (See Local Priorities and Outcomes)

As part of the RPS, the Peer Team reflected that more consistent and comprehensive communications would be needed to achieve its organisational change agenda. Since then, internal communications appear to be gaining traction and recruitment to new positions has taken place, however there is still scope to do more to continue to strengthen two-way information flows. Similarly, effective external communication of SKDC's corporate messages will be key to delivery of SKDC's place leadership aspirations. Consideration could now be given to reinforcing and developing the SKDC 'brand' which staff, partner and communities can coalesce around. (See Local Priorities and Outcomes paragraph).

The Council was described as a good advocate and partner for their place, with a willingness to share and collaborate. This is evident through the breadth of good relationships SKDC has forged with stakeholders including the County Council, businesses, health, environmental health, supporting neighbouring councils and VCS. Strong partnership working was particularly evident in SKDC's response to Covid 19, with examples ranging from the 'Change 4 Lincs' joint working with neighbouring authorities to tackle rough sleeping, through to working with the VCS to tackle the impact on mental health as a result of the pandemic. Business engagement - at a grassroots and strategic level is something the council are proud of and has been visibly championed by the Leader (e.g. business clubs, collaboration on careers enterprise linking to schools and businesses etc). Staff turnover and vacancies were however cited by some partners as affecting progress and working relations. Several partners reflected on the opportunities for SKDC to step into a greater leadership role to influence future directions of travel across a range of issues. This is something SKDC can look to capitalise on. (See Local Priorities and Outcomes paragraph).

4.3. Governance and culture

There is a recognition of the need to strengthen governance across the organisation, from decision-making, through to its arm's length structures. The multitude of measures taken in recent times to strengthen governance demonstrates SKDC's commitment to this. These include reviews of Good Governance, constitution, scrutiny, assets, and plans to introduce the new model Code of Conduct. It will be important to recognise the value of listening to external challenge and follow through on these reviews to ensure the intended outcomes are achieved.

Cross party elected Member working groups on issues such as climate change and mental health have been welcomed as examples of positive collaborative working. SKDC's political decision-making process can, however, be time consuming, with a demanding committee cycle frequency. This can have a broad impact, such as the officer resources required to service these, the diversion of elected Members' capacity from strategic decision-making, and adverse bearing on service delivery.

Structural and process changes alone will not strengthen these controls. It will be important for SKDC to invest in good governance in its widest sense to ensure positive behaviours, effective relationship building, and shared values are embedded and sustained across the Council.

Positive steps have been taken in recent months to foster closer relationships between Members and officers at a senior level, such as through away days and, ‘speed dating’ sessions ahead of Full Council for example. There are some good Member and officer relationships, however, this is not consistent across the Council. A ‘member-managed’, as opposed to ‘Member-led, officer managed’ approach was described at all levels of the organisation with the legacy and cultural memory of organisational churn and leadership styles still affecting how Members and officers operate and feel. There is a risk of elected Members being left exposed if there is a blurring of Member and officer roles if this results in councillors stepping into the operational service delivery space. Additionally, this can have an adverse impact on operational delivery, unless officers are empowered to operate with appropriate autonomy. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of Members and officers will be important to rebalance this organisational dynamic. This could be achieved through the development of clear Member Role Descriptions underpinned by a robust Behavioural Framework and supported by a development session to help embed this. Enhancing opportunities for closer teamwork between Members and officers will help foster greater trust, accountability, and shared understanding and create capacity for elected Members to invest in other aspect of their roles. Previous initiatives whereby councillors spent time with services to enhance their understanding of the practical demands and barriers encountered in service delivery have been received positively. SKDC may wish to consider similar initiatives which can help create a positive, empowered environment for collaborative Member – officer working.


References to ‘micromanagement’, ‘a blame culture’, and ‘them and us’ mentality were reported in relation to the attitude of some councillors towards staff. Similarly, challenging and poor behaviours between elected Members, and between officers

were reported. Whilst this is not reflective of all Members' or officers' behaviours, it was reported on a sufficient scale, and across backbench and Cabinet Members, to merit further action being taken. Ensuring there is a clear understanding of what is legitimate challenge, what is unacceptable conduct, and addressing behaviours that fall below this standard will be important to promote a respectful, positive #TeamSK culture. This will also help foster a positive external perception of SKDC and those who represent it, as behavioural leadership has an impact externally as well as internally within the organisation.

There is a desire from all elected Members – backbench and Cabinet Members - for greater support for them in their roles to build confidence, skills and knowledge. Examples included induction support for newly elected Members on how the Council works, as well as longer term skill development, including being a Company Director. Investing in individual development (both elected Member and officer), will help establish a continuous learning culture in which individuals feel supported and equipped which will in turn support performance and outcomes for the public.

4.4. Financial planning and management

SKDC is moving into unfamiliar territory in terms of the financial challenges it faces. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is forecasting deficits of £0.899m for 2022/23 (6.6% of net budget), and £1.105m (8%) for 2023/24. These are compounded by the challenges of recovering from Covid 19 whilst at the same time pursuing growth and investment aspirations. Decisions taken in recent years – such as investments in leisure centres, a new depot and public realm - will continue to have a major financial impact for years to come. The Cabinet is increasingly aware of the financial challenges ahead and there is a recognition that tough decisions about services and investments as financial pressure builds will need to be taken. This can be seen through the recognition of inflationary pressures in 2022/23 budget setting process. It will be important to follow through and deliver on SKDC's financial strategy to respond to the challenges ahead. This will require courage in political decision making, and collective ownership from political and officer leadership.



SKDC has demonstrated forward planning capacity in managing the financial challenges associated with Covid 19, with a reserve introduced to soften the impact of financial losses due to the pandemic. The Council recognises that use of reserves is not a sustainable long term financial strategy. It will be important for SKDC to prepare for the increased rigours of financial management as financial discipline will be required for the challenges ahead. Delivery of spend and savings targets currently appear inconsistent and varied, with a mix of underspend, unachieved savings, and underutilisation of grants. Effective budgetary management will be important foundation for reliable financial outcomes upon which to base difficult decisions going forward.

SKDC has a range of assets across the District which could be important tools in mitigating financial challenges and supporting its growth aspirations, such as its civic buildings, cinema for example. It was also reported to the Peer Team that unpredictable planning outcomes are affecting the views of developers and could adversely impact their investment decisions. The Asset Disposal Strategy, due to be considered by Cabinet in December, is a great opportunity to provide clarity around plans for Assets, and associated actions required. This clarity will enable timely, informed, focused decisions to be made, and address uncertainty which can distract focus from delivery.

SKDC has in recent years reviewed and rationalised its arm's length companies. There are currently four remaining - InvestSK, EnviroSK, LeisureSK and Gravitas. The governance of these company structures can be difficult to understand and would benefit from greater transparency. An external 'health check' of current governance structures would help manage risk, promote transparency, and provide assurance these arrangements will withstand the rigours of scrutiny.

4.5. Capacity for improvement

Massive strides have been taken in developing a new, positive, performance-driven workplace culture. The introduction of a Corporate Plan, appraisal system and performance management approach are having a positive impact. It will also be important to ensure that as the performance management approach evolves it remains proportionate and outcome driven. The personal drive of the Chief Executive, leading by example and taking her team with her, should not be underestimated in achieving the current positive direction of travel. This has all been underpinned by a resolute commitment to improvement from political leadership. SKDC recognise there is still a way to go to achieve the culture and performance improvements it aspires to, and that sustainable improvement will take time to embed. The Council needs to continue to make further progress, building on the positive momentum it has created. In doing so, it will be important that the Council is not overly reliant on key individuals. Consideration should be given to how SKDC's change agenda continues in a sustainable model that mitigates against 'single points of failure' given the critical roles of the Leader and Chief Executive in this


The SKDC workforce are a huge asset. The staff the Peer Team spoke to were passionate, dedicated, spoke highly of their immediate teams, and proud of what they do for the Council and its communities. For example, there is a genuine goodwill and commitment from much of the workforce to be part of the solution and actively support SKDC's improvement journey.

Staff morale however - whilst clearly improving after a period of uncertainty and change – could be further strengthened. There is some scepticism and frustration at continued pockets of poor performance, and sense that vacancies are being held for cost savings, and problematic behaviours such as inconsistent management, poor behaviours, change fatigue and lack of accountability from some teams. (See Governance and Culture paragraph). A priority should now be to invest in training for managers to develop their skills and confidence to manage performance, address poor behaviours and lead by example. This will be important to address inconsistencies and make culture change sustainable.

SKDC's commitment to establish a positive organisational culture, and measures taken to drive this, are widely recognised and are showing results. For example, the promotion of new #TeamSK values and behaviours is continuing to positively impact on staff morale. Furthermore, whilst silo working remains a challenge, there has been an emergence of some cross-organisational and multi-disciplinary team working across Directorates, across elected Members as well as on ad hoc initiatives such as resettlement of asylum seekers locally. Where this has occurred, it has been successful and there is a desire for this type of approach to be expanded. Nevertheless, inconsistencies and variation in culture, behaviours and performance remain. #TeamSK, for example, is often felt on a team level, rather than as a 'one organisational culture' corporately. As reflected in the RPS, perseverance, resilience, and constant reinforcement will be required for meaningful change to become embedded throughout the organisation.

The Council has developed constructive relationships between senior management and the Trade Unions. The Trade Unions are a valued and trusted partner, whose views are proactively sought, listened to, and acted upon. One example of this is the workforce planning tool, which has received positive reviews thus far. Bringing together existing workforce planning initiatives would be beneficial to align interventions to have greatest impact (e.g. capacity gaps, people strategy etc). Within this, SKDC may also want to consider conducting a skills audit. Collectively these measures would assist with workforce planning to address resource gaps and improve outcomes for staff and managers.

There is a sense of uncertainty about the future direction of the authority in relation to issues such as the new depot, approach to blended working, and future office accommodation. Whilst the waxing and waning of the pandemic inevitable makes planning challenging, providing clarity - where possible - will be important to mitigate against this distracting focus away from delivery. Bringing together plans around blended working, staff accommodation, asset management and IT investment will help provide this focus, and support long-term, joined-up planning, aligned to SKDC's future organisational vision.



SKDC can be proud in recognising what it has achieved in the past 18 months and celebrate these accomplishments. Doing so will be important to maintain momentum and focus on its continuing improvement journey and support staff morale, mitigate change fatigue, and reinforce the positive direction of travel.

5. Next steps

It is recognised that senior political and managerial leadership will want to consider, discuss, and reflect on these findings.

Both the peer team and LGA are keen to build on the relationships formed through the peer challenge. The CPC process includes a six-month check-in meeting. This will be a short, facilitated session which creates space for the council's senior leadership to update peers on its progress against the action plan and discuss next steps.

In the meantime, Mark Edgell, Principal Adviser for East Midlands is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association. Mark is available to discuss any further support the council requires – mark.edgell@local.gov.uk.

January 2022

6. Annex A: Signposting

Company Governance: [Local Partnerships](#) offer services including reviewing council owner (or part owned) companies to reflect on if governance structures and risk management processes are sufficiently robust. Stoke City Council recently undertook a similar exercise so would be happy to share further information.

Devolution and Local Government Reform: Paul Ellis (pellis@cravendc.gov.uk) would be happy to share learning from experience of Local Government Reform and Devolution from his experiences in Yorkshire.

Future ways of working: Hyndburn Borough Council have given consideration managing the multitude of issues that sit within future ways of working so Kirsten Burnett (Kirsten.Burnett@hyndburnbc.gov.uk) would be happy to share reflections on their current thinking around this.

LGA Peer Support: The LGA offers political support to elected members in leadership roles, and to their wider groupings. This is bespoke and tailored to the context. mark.edgell@local.gov.uk would be happy to discuss if you would like to explore this further.

LGA Member and Officer Development: The LGA offers a range of training and development programmes. These are bespoke and tailored to the context. Outlined below are a number which may be of interest. mark.edgell@local.gov.uk would be happy to discuss if you would like to explore this further.

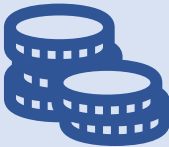

- *[Member and Officer roles and working relationships](#)*
- *[Top Team Facilitated Development sessions](#)*: For senior political and officer leadership teams, aimed at helping to developing cohesive leadership teams and supporting strategic leadership.
- *[Equality Diversity and Inclusion](#)*: The LGA has resources for elected members on equality, diversity and inclusion, including a [workbook](#) and also online or in-person training sessions.
- *[Community leadership](#)*: The LGA has resources for elected members on community leadership, including a [workbook](#) and also online or in-person training sessions.



East Midlands Councils Top Team Development: East Midlands Councils designs and delivers team development support to local authorities tailored to their individual requirements. Further details are on their [website](#).




Role descriptions and behavioural frameworks:


- Example of Merton LBC's [Behavioural Framework](#)
- Example of Role Descriptions from [Bath and North East Somerset, Torfaen and Wiltshire](#)
- This [Political Skills Framework](#) toolkit is based on research into what traits and skills define great local political leaders. It aims to provide a foundation for the support and development authorities' offer to elected members.
- [The 21st Century Councillor report](#), developed by Birmingham University alongside the sector, focuses on roles, skills and support for individual Councillors to assist them to play their crucial front-line role in making connections and building strong democratic places where people can thrive. The report focuses on councillors' roles - aligned with skills, knowledge, and behaviours.
- LGA [Model Councillor Code of Conduct](#) and [7 Principles of Public Life](#)


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Recommendation	What we have done	Next Steps	Timeline
 <p>No. 1 Prepare the organisation for the increased rigours of financial management to address the challenges ahead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clear Corporate Plan in place to set priorities and inform decisions ✓ Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is in place to ensure stability ✓ Creation of a clear invest to save strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved scrutiny of financial decisions by the Corporate Management Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees - including six monthly reviews of the Corporate Plan delivery, alongside financial performance • Review and rationalisation of assets, including office accommodation • Developing a clear strategy for hybrid-working to provide efficiencies through new ways of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By October 2022 • By June 2022 • By May 2022
 <p>No. 2 Clarify roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers to build trust, respect and rebalance to 'member-led officer managed'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Team awareness meetings now carried out at Full Councils for Members to support a better understanding of the work carried out by officer teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the review of the Constitution • Review the Member officer protocol • Procure and deliver training on roles and responsibility • Provide training for chairmen including scrutiny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By May 2022 • By May 2022 • By September 2022 • By June 2022

 <p>No. 3 Articulate the standards of behaviour for all #TeamSK (elected members and officers) to promote respect and address poor behaviours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New code of conduct for Councillors adopted in November ✓ Code of conduct training provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder of the values and behaviours provided to officers as part of appraisals • Taking timely action when the standards are fallen below what is expected • Regular meetings with group leaders to review code of conduct complaints and outcomes • Inclusion of the code of conduct and the councils values and behaviours framework in the corporate induction of new staff and Members. • Annual reporting of Code of Conduct complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By May 2022 • By April 2022 • By June 2022 • By September 2022 • By May 2023
 <p>No. 4 Consider how to enhance communication and teamwork between members, and between members and officers in the context of COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use of workshops to jointly develop plans between officers and members is now in place ✓ Regular briefings between Senior Officers and Portfolio holders ✓ Team awareness meetings are now carried out at full councils to support a better understanding of the work carried out by officer teams for members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in a joint away day sessions? between senior officers and Cabinet Members • Establish clear officer leads for each committee to work closely with the chairman and portfolio holders on work planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2022 • By July 2022

 <p>No. 5 Develop a strategy and plans for future ways of working to provide clarity and a sense of purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Council's emergency response apparatus was initiated and tested by the COVID 19 pandemic response ✓ People Strategy approved by Employment Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of a new hybrid working model, with staff working flexibly from home in the long-term, with opportunities to use office spaces where this would be beneficial to individuals and teams • Work with a panel of staff representatives to establish principals for hybrid working • Deliver the People Strategy action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2022 • By September 2022 • By May 2023 • By April 2023
 <p>No. 6 Prioritise plans to strengthen governance to support effective decision-making and mitigate risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strategic risks are reviewed by Governance and Audit ✓ Audit plan for 2022/2023 agreed ✓ Statutory Officer Group meets monthly to discuss Governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution review to be completed to enable how the council works in practice is reflected and improvements built into the process, including contract and financial procedural rules to ensure effective and transparent decision making • Restructure for key services including Democratic Services to be completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By May 2022 • By September 2022
 <p>No. 7 Be prepared to invest in yourselves to engage on a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ As part of the digital and cultural transformation journey, the new Corporate Management Team has begun exploring approaches to improve the way in which the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the appraisal process to ensure that development needs are understood and met • Introduction of a staff engagement panel to support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By September 2022 • By July 2022

<p>wider footing to learn and make SKDC the best it can be</p>	<p>Council works to make staff and processes fit for the 21st century</p>	<p>staff development and retention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member-led inductions for new Members, together with specialist mentors and 'buddy systems' • Prepare development plans for Members • Explore targeted learning and development opportunities which improve outcomes for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2022 • By July 2023 • By September 2022
 <p>No. 8 Continue to deepen understanding of and engagement with communities and other partners to strengthen SKDC's community leadership role</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The pandemic produced a surge in volunteering which in several cases was coordinated through the Community Support Hub ✓ Good communication was vital in disseminating information and ensuring the Council and residents were kept abreast of the ever-changing restrictions and advice at a local level ✓ The Council supported the vaccination programme, encouraging uptake in specific communities and utilising council assets wherever possible ✓ The Council supported the reopening of the economy through the InvestSK Tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase engagement and presence at business events • Work with partners to promote a positive image of the District, linked to the Corporate Plan and put the district's COVID recovery in the context of the organisation's goals for the future and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) • Understand from communities what they consider to be the key challenges and opportunities as South Kesteven recovers from the pandemic, as well as what changes they would like to see for future generations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By October 2022 • By March 2023 • By May 2023 • Summer 2022

	<p>Break events and engagement with business representative groups</p> <p>✓ Over £51m of COVID grants were distributed to over 3,000 businesses. This included a reviewing the requirements of the most impacted businesses, as well as encouraging residents to shop local, making the most of the Welcome Back Fund through the promotion of services, retail, leisure and visitor economy attractions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an engagement exercise with residents and stakeholders to give residents the opportunity to inform the Council of the key impacts of COVID-19 for them, and the priorities they see for South Kesteven as a consequence 	
 <p>No. 9 Recognise and celebrate the significant progress made whilst keeping focus to maintain momentum, looking ahead to achieving SKDC's full potential</p>	<p>✓ The pandemic led to a shift in operating context for the Council. The Council's efforts to adapt services and protect the most vulnerable led to many changes in the way staff worked and services were delivered</p> <p>✓ The Council launched the SK Community Awards initiative to celebrate the work of community champions and the many unsung heroes in the district</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish expectations, establish guidelines which align to corporate values, to clarify what gets celebrated • Establish an annual staff awards event • Establish a new policy on rewards and recognition as part of the people strategy • Review the long service awards system to acknowledge the contribution made by long serving staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By September 2022 • By December 2022 • By March 2023 • By March 2023

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Cabinet

29 March 2022

Report of: Councillor Kelham Cooke
The Leader of the Council

Key and Non-Key Decisions taken under delegated powers

This report provides an overview of decisions taken by individual Cabinet Members since the last meeting of the Cabinet on 8 February 2022.

Report Author

Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer

Tel: 01476 406120

Email: l.bonshor@southkesteven.gov.uk

Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
High Performing Council	Administrative	All Wards

Reviewed by:	Graham Watts, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer	16 March 2022
Approved by:	Alan Robinson, Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer	17 March 2022
Signed off by:	Councillor Kelham Cooke, The Leader of the Council	17 March 2022

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

1. It is recommended that the Cabinet notes the contents of this report.

- 1.1 Since the Cabinet last met on 8 February 2022, the following Key and Non-Key decisions have been taken under delegated authority:
- 1.1.1 **Property Maintenance Reserve – Release of Funds**
- Non-Key decision taken by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Property on 9 February 2022.
- Date decision effective: 18 February 2022
- The Decision Notice attached at Appendix 1 and the accompanying report can be viewed online at:
- <http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1192>
- 1.1.2 **Utilisation of the Street Scene Reserve**
- Non-Key decision taken by the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance on 21 February 2022.
- Date decision effective: 2 March 2022.
- The Decision Notice attached at Appendix 2 and the accompanying report can be viewed online at:
- <http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1193>
- 1.2 Any decision made after the publication of the agenda will be reported at the next meeting of the Cabinet.

CABINET MEMBER DECISION



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Decision:

That approval is granted to release of funds in the sum of £152,700 for the following urgent maintenance work to general fund buildings to comprise: -

- **Bourne Leisure Centre – Urgent repair work to gutters and flashings based on quote of £9,000 and £1,250 in relation to repair trip hazards to road surfaces.**
- **Deepings Community Centre – Urgent repairs to boiler to ensure heating remains available through winter and obviate the risk of temperatures within the building falling to unacceptable levels based on quote in the sum of £2,950.**
- **Meres Sports Centre – Gutter cleaning and replacement of gutters at the Meres Table Tennis Centre, based on quotes in the sum of £12,200**
- **Meres Stadium -Repairs to turnstiles, gates, kiosk and repairs to gutter based on quotes in the sum of £5750.**
- **Sheepmarket – Replacement of broken pavement lighting and totem lighting Red Lion Square and Sheepmarket, Stamford based on quote in the sum of £7,500.**
- **Stamford Leisure Centre – Works to water system including replacement of solenoid valves/shower operating valves, to avoid risk of scalding and reduction in control measures for the prevention of Legionella in the sum of £7700 based on quotes.**
- **Wharf Road Multi-Storey Car Park – Urgent H & S works required for the winter to include supervision estimated at £9,000.**
- **Welham Street Car Park – Carry out survey and cleaning of gutters; repairs to gutters; broken tiles to stairs to be replaced; redecoration to stairs; replace glazing; new doors and replacement of anti-slip surfacing to upper floors in the sum of £94,400 based on a quote from Lindum. Refurbishment of the roller shutter between Levels One & Two based on a quote in the sum of £2,950.**

(1) **Details of Decision**

To seek approval to release £152,700 from the property maintenance reserve to carry out essential maintenance work on the General Fund Estate.

(2) **Considerations/Evidence**

The release of the reserve will provide funding for the urgent works listed above. All other works have been identified as being essential, due to:

- Issues that need to be addressed such as leaking roofs which, if not carried out now, will cost the Council more in the medium term to longer term; and/or
- Mitigation of hazards that, if not addressed, present imminent risks to members of staff or users of facilities.

The works to the Wharf Road Multi Storey car park represent the minimum it is considered the Council can do given its legal obligations under its lease.

(3) **Reasons for Decision:**

This work is fundamental to protecting the Council's position from a risk and management prospective and to ensure that the Council is not exposed to unnecessary additional spend.

Not carrying out the work is not considered an option due to need to both address statutory requirements, lease obligations and to carry out maintenance work that will no longer wait.

Delaying carrying out the work into future financial years will leave the Council at risk of creating additional expense in future years and not meeting its obligations both as a landlord and occupier.

Conflicts of Interest

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded).

NONE

Dispensations

(Any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer in respect of any declared conflict of interest to be noted).

NONE

Decision taken by:

Name: Councillor Robert Reid
Cabinet Member for Housing & Property

Date of Decision: 09 February 2022

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 10 February 2022

Date decision effective (i.e. 5 days after the date of publication of record of decision unless subject to call-in by the Chairman of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or any 5 members of the Council from any political groups):

18 February 2022

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CABINET MEMBER DECISION



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Decision:

That approval is granted for the use of the Street Scene Reserve to fund additional in year costs (2021/22) relating to the repair and maintenance of the Council's vehicle fleet, currently forecast to be up to £160,000 as at 31 March 2022.

(1) **Details of Decision**

To seek approval to utilise the Street Scene Reserve to support the maintenance and repair budgets for 2021/22.

(2) **Considerations/Evidence**

A dedicated Street Scene Reserve was established to provide funding to alleviate in-year budget pressures within the waste service which could not be met from the approved budget. The reserve was set up in recognition of the unpredictable nature of fleet maintenance costs, fuel prices and other operational costs and is intended to accommodate and smooth any peaks in costs. The total funding for the service is intended to include both the base budget and the use of the reserve, as necessary.

Utilisation of up to £160,000 from the Street Scene Reserve is necessary to supplement the approved budgets for workshop consumables/parts (£254,200) and external repairs (£68,300), which provide for the maintenance and repair of the Council's fleet of over 150 vehicles.

Difficulties in recruiting qualified mechanics have led to long term vacancies in the Council's vehicle workshop. In addition, extensive and time-consuming repairs to the two food waste collection vehicles and the need for specialist repairs, such as work to the bin lifting equipment of the refuse collection vehicles (RCVs), have placed pressure on the external repairs budget.

During 2021, the cost of consumables and parts increased above anticipated levels. Inflation, supplier and supply chain increases, and a number of extensive repairs resulted in increased costs. The two food waste collection vehicles which support the pilot scheme are nearing the end of their serviceable life, with parts required for these vehicles alone since April 2021 totalling over £39,000 and the work taking over 400 manhours to complete.

Steps have been taken to mitigate against the costs where possible and the workshop has been fully staffed since mid-December 2021. Since this time all vehicles which would ordinarily be maintained in house have been. Subject to approval by Council, the food waste collection trial will be suspended at the end of March 2022, resulting in the disposal of the two dedicated vehicles which have incurred significant ongoing expenditure.

Any underspends against other approved budgets within the service area will be utilised to offset the additional costs where possible, however, it is anticipated that up to £160,000 from the reserve may be necessary to manage the current pressure to year end based on the current forecast.

It is proposed that the reserve will be replenished in the 2022/23 budget.

(3) Reasons for Decision:

The Council must ensure its vehicle fleet is adequately maintained and available to provide statutory services.

Conflicts of Interest

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded).

NONE

Dispensations

(Any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer in respect of any declared conflict of interest to be noted).

NONE

Decision taken by:

Name: Councillor Adam Stokes
The Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance & Waste Services

Date of Decision: 21 February 2022

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 22 February 2022

Date decision effective (i.e. 5 days after the date of publication of record of decision unless subject to call-in by the Chairman of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or any 5 members of the Council from any political groups):

2 March 2022



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Cabinet

29 March 2022

Report of: Councillor Kelham Cooke

The Leader of the Council

Cabinet Forward Plan for the period 14 March 2022 to 13 March 2023

This report highlights matters on the Cabinet's Forward Plan.

Report Author

Graham Watts, Head of Democratic Services

Tel: 01476 406156

Email: Graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk

Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
High Performing Council	Governance	All Wards
Reviewed by:	Graham Watts (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer)	16 March 2022
Approved by:	Alan Robinson (Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)	17 March 2022
Signed off by:	Councillor Kelham Cooke (The Leader of the Council)	17 March 2022

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

1. It is recommended that the Cabinet notes the contents of this report.

1. Cabinet's Forward Plan

- 1.1** The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the minimum requirements for publicity in connection with Key Decisions. The Council meets these legislative requirements through the monthly publication of its Forward Plan.
- 1.2** Cabinet may also receive reports on which it is asked to make recommendations to Council or review the contents and take necessary action. These items are also listed on the Forward Plan.
- 1.3** To help Cabinet understand what issues will be put before it in the longer-term, items for consideration during the preceding year have been included in the Cabinet's Forward Plan. The Forward Plan also includes details of items scheduled for each of the Council meetings due to be held within the plan period.

2.0 Equality and Safeguarding implications

- 2.1** No implications.

3.0 Appendices

- 3.1** Appendix 1 – Cabinet's Forward Plan



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

CABINET FORWARD PLAN
Notice of decisions to be made by Cabinet
14 March 2022 to 13 March 2023

At its meetings, the Cabinet may make Key Decisions and Non-Key Decisions. It may also make recommendations to Council on matters relating to the Council's budget or its policy framework.

A Key Decision is a Cabinet decision that is likely:

1. To result in the District Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the District Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (for these purposes, South Kesteven District Council has agreed £200,000 as the threshold at which a decision will be considered significant); or
2. To be significant in terms of its effects on communities that live or work in an area comprising two or more wards.

A Non-Key Decision is one that is not a Key Decision.

The Forward Plan

The Cabinet Forward Plan is a rolling, 12-month plan that will be updated on a regular basis. It includes those matters that are scheduled to be considered by Cabinet during the plan period. This plan also includes details of those decisions that are due to be made by the full Council.

Notice of future Cabinet decisions and recommendations to Council

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Integrated Housing Management System - Key Decision			
To review the procurement of the Integrated Housing Management System and award of the contract, as part of the housing improvement plan.	29 Mar 2022	To award the contract.	Cabinet Member for Housing & Property (Councillor Robert Reid) Assistant Director of Housing E-mail: craig.spence@southkesteven.gov.uk
Empty Homes Strategy - Key Decision			
To confirm the council's approach to encourage empty properties in the district back into use.	29 Mar 2022	To approve the approach to be taken.	Cabinet Member for Housing & Property (Councillor Robert Reid) Assistant Director of Housing E-mail: craig.spence@southkesteven.gov.uk
Future ways of working and making the best use of Corporate Assets - Key Decision			
To agree the Council's approach to working arrangements following the Covid19 pandemic, and the associated use of Corporate Assets.	29 Mar 2022	To agree a new approach to working arrangements following the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated use of Corporate Assets.	Cabinet Member for Housing & Property (Councillor Robert Reid) Director of Housing & Property E-mail: andrew.cotton@southkesteven.gov.uk
Corporate Plan - Key Decision			
To consider a revised Corporate Plan.	29 Mar 2022	To make a recommendation to Council.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Growth (Councillor Kelham Cooke) Chief Executive E-mail: karen.bradford@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Deepings Leisure Centre Consultation - Key Decision			
An outline of the results of the independent consultation carried out. The recommendation from C & V Economy will detail the next steps in the project for consideration by Cabinet.	19 Apr 2022	To consider a recommendation from Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the results of the public consultation regarding the proposed refurbishment of Deepings Leisure Centre.	Cabinet Member for Leisure (Councillor Barry Dobson) Head of Leisure E-mail: karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk
Proposed Development brief for Land at Stamford North			
To consider the proposed development brief for land at Stamford North prior to consultation.	19 Apr 2022	To approve the draft Supplementary Planning Document in respect of land at Stamford North for consultation.	Cabinet Member for Planning & Planning Policy (Councillor Nick Robins) Director of Growth & Culture E-mail: nicola.mccoy-brown@southkesteven.gov.uk
Housing Compensation Policy - Key Decision			
The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the adoption of a compensation policy to be used across Housing Technical Services and Housing Services.	24 May 2022	To approve the Policy.	Cabinet Member for Housing & Property (Councillor Robert Reid) Director of Housing & Property E-mail: andrew.cotton@southkesteven.gov.uk
To award contract in relation to Earlesfield project - Key Decision			
To outline the project and the budget required for the proposed works.	24 May 2022	To award contract.	Cabinet Member for Housing & Property (Councillor Robert Reid) Director of Housing & Property E-mail: andrew.cotton@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Housing Recharge Policy - Key Decision			
Cabinet to confirm the Councils approach to the recovery of recharges within its social housing landlord function.	24 May 2022	To approve policy.	Cabinet Member for Housing & Property (Councillor Robert Reid) Assistant Director of Housing E-mail: craig.spence@southkesteven.gov.uk
Review of the Street Trading Policy - Key Decision			
To consider proposed updates to the Street Trading Policy.	Jun 2022	To approve updates to the Policy.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing (Councillor Linda Wootten) Assistant Director Operations and Public Protection E-mail: anne-marie.coulthard@southkesteven.gov.uk
Street Collection and House to House Collection Policy - Key Decision			
To consider the proposed new Street Collection and House to House Collection Policy.	Jun 2022	To approve the Policy.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing (Councillor Linda Wootten) Assistant Director Operations and Public Protection E-mail: anne-marie.coulthard@southkesteven.gov.uk
Housing Asset Management Strategy 2021-2026 - Key Decision			
To consider the strategy	Jun 2022	To adopt a Housing Asset management Strategy	Cabinet Member for Housing & Property (Councillor Robert Reid) Director of Housing & Property E-mail: andrew.cotton@southkesteven.gov.uk