

# Minutes

## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 23 November 2022, 10:00am

**Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ**



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

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### Committee Members present

Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)  
Councillor Gloria Johnson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ben Green  
Councillor Penny Milnes  
Councillor Phil Dilks

### Cabinet Members

Councillor Adam Stokes (Deputy Leader of the Council)  
Councillor Mark Whittington (Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change)

### Other Members present

Councillor Mary Whittington

### Officers

Alan Robinson (Deputy Chief Executive)  
Richard Wyles (Chief Finance Officer)  
Nicola McCoy-Brown (Director for Growth and Culture)  
Ayeisha Kirkham (Public Protection Manager)  
Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)  
Serena Brown (Sustainability and Climate Change Officer)  
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

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## 25. Public Speaking

Anne Gayfer: In view of the forthcoming COP15 (Committee of the Parties) on Biodiversity, in view of the continuing decline in biodiversity worldwide, in view of the UK being one of the world's most nature depleted countries (having on 50% of its wildlife remaining compared with an average of 75% worldwide), will SKDC declare a biodiversity emergency in order to help redress this UK decline?

Caroline Boorn: Given that the Council has declared a Climate emergency and given that we have a cost of living crisis, can the Council agree to write to the Prime Minister as well as our MP, to ask for a fully funded package to enable people to

insulate their homes, in order to improve energy efficiency, reduce costs and improve health and living standards.

Patsy Ellis: How does SKDC planning take into account the climate change and biodiversity impacts, including the potential for it being necessary to release raw sewerage into rivers, of planning decisions?

Vanessa Smith: It is great that CO2 output from the leisure industry has been reduced, but can you tell me how this has been achieved and how much of this can be accounted for by pool closures such as Deepings?

Furthermore, the report states a 25% reduction in CO2 from leisure compared to the baseline but your leisure specific table shows a fall of only 11%.Can this be explained?

## **26. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ashley Baxter and Councillor Hannah Westropp.

Councillor Phil Dilks was filling the Alliance SK vacancy for this meeting.

## **27. Disclosure of Interests**

Councillor Ben Green declared an interest that he was a full time employee of the Woodland Trust.

## **28. Minutes from the meeting held on 11 October 2022**

Members **AGREED** the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2022, as a correct record.

## **29. Updates from the previous meeting**

One Member highlighted that the Parish Council were hoping to go through with the asset transfer in relation to Jubilee Park in Deepings St James.

## **30. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**

There were none.

## **31. Mid-year performance indicators**

The Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance presented the report that outlined the mid-year KPIs for the Committee, relevant from information gathered at the end of September 2022.

It was confirmed that 3 actions were rated green, and 3 actions were rated amber.

One Member noted that the fourth KPI was predicated on a public satisfaction survey, it was queried as to how many people were involved in the survey to provide an overall satisfaction.

One Member sought clarification around the fifth KPI. The KPI target was to be confirmed, however, was rated amber.

**ACTION: For the Deputy Chief Executive to provide the number of responses of the public satisfaction survey to the Committee, in relation to Green Flag Status of parks within the District.**

The Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance confirmed that as the KPI target was under review, the action would be changed to grey colouring.

The KPI relating to Green Flag Status was mentioned as the two parks outlined in the report had already achieved Green Flag Status. It was suggested that the action be re-worded.

It was clarified that new KPI actions could be reviewed as part of the refresh of the Corporate Plan. All KPI potential measures had previously been agreed by each Committee as part of the Corporate Plan 2020-23 document.

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that the timescale for the refresh of the Corporate Plan. Work would commence in the new civic year, taking into consideration emerging priorities.

One Member raised a query on what further steps and improvements could be made in relation to the sixth KPI. The effectiveness of the promotion of 'Right Thing, Right Bin' was questioned and whether other methods of promotion were being explored for the future.

The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Committee that the 'Right Thing, Right Bin' campaign had been consistent across the County. Other Council's had introduced a 'card and paper' scheme which may be implemented by South Kesteven in Autumn 2023, which would provide an education campaign and engaging with people.

One member expressed concern that contamination of recycling was a big problem. Further education to residents may not be successful and whether other means of campaigning could be explored.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change highlighted that Districts who had implemented the paper and card collection had seen an increase of their recycling rates by 7-9%.

It was noted that the implementation of the paper and card collection would mean residents would be provided with another bin. Concern had previously been raised around ground space for another bin. Other Districts had put mitigations in place in terms of overcoming barriers faced by people living in flats/terraced houses.

It was confirmed that the Council would communicate with neighbouring Districts who had rolled out paper and card collection and the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership before implementation.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change informed the Committee that the Council have a sanction on the ability to fine residents who continuously contaminate their bins, however, the Council attempt to engage and educate these residents at first instance.

A query was raised on whether the Council were monitoring how effective the education process was with residents who were contaminating bins.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that the percentage for recycling had not increased, which suggested that further education or other means of engagement should be explored.

One Member queried the likely timescale that the paper and card scheme would be implemented.

It was questioned as to whether the Council had explored putting stickers onto bins to educate residents and by passers. The effectiveness of this approach was discussed.

It was suggested that the effects on recycling rates and collection rates of food waste be added to the Work Programme for future discussion.

Further clarification was sought on whether the Council utilised the sanction to fine residents who contaminate their bins and whether it was successful.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change clarified that other Councils had agreed to implement paper and card bins via Full Council meeting. It was confirmed that South Kesteven would take a similar approach due to an impact on the whole District. If authorised by Full Council, the implementation plan would then be completed, and a target date would be set.

Members expressed their disappointment that no target date had been set for the implementation of paper and card bins. It was suggested that prior to a decision being made by Full Council, that the Committee scrutinise and provide a recommendation to Full Council on the paper and card scheme.

A query was raised regarding the refuse vehicles and whether the paper and card bin would be collected at the same time as general waste or recycling. It was confirmed that the proposed 4-week cycle following the implementation of a paper

and card bin would be: black bin, grey bin, black bin, grey bin, black bin with purple lid (paper and card). It was confirmed that other Districts who had rolled out a paper and card scheme had been transporting their waste to a depot in Kings Lynn where it would be recycled into newsprint.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change notified the Committee that a draft outline of a timescale would be brought to the first possible meeting of Full Council after May. The suggestion to bring the item to Committee for scrutiny was welcomed. An estimated timescale of implementation was Spring 2024.

Clarification was sought as to whether any information had been retrieved from other areas regarding the collection cycle and whether other bins were overflowing due to not being collected as frequently.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change confirmed that communication would take place with other Council Officer's on issues experienced in the process of implementing paper and card roll out.

**ACTION: For the Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change to bring back a report on issues experienced by other Council's in implementing the card and paper bins and how these were overcome.**

**That the Committee:**

- 1. Note the contents of the 2022/23 Mid-Year performance reports.**
- 2. Members to consider if any concerns highlighted by the report require additional investigation to be added to the Work Programme.**

## **32. Air Quality Report**

The Public Protection Manager presented the report on behalf of the Cabinet Member for People & Safer Communities. The report outlined information from 2021, which had demonstrated compliance with the air quality strategy objectives that were pertinent to South Kesteven's air quality management area.

The air quality management area encompasses main roads and the Town Centre of Grantham. The main pollutant of concern had been identified as Nitrogen Dioxide, which was largely attributable to road transport emission.

Local air quality in South Kesteven was managed via an extensive tube monitoring network comprising of 58 passive Nitrogen Dioxide at tubes at 35 separate locations; some sites had triplicate or duplicate tubes.

One Member queried whether the Council had any input in the decreased number of emissions during the Covid-19 pandemic, or whether this was merely due to the reduction in traffic due to restrictions. Further clarification was sought around the main pollutant being emissions from cars.

It was confirmed that there had been a slight increase of emissions when people returned to work, when restrictions were lifted. The Council used education as part of the action plan to reduce the air quality issue, the action plan would be further reviewed to explore further measures to encourage changes in behaviour.

Further clarification was sought around how people could implement change in their behaviours.

The Public Protection Manager clarified that further information would need to be gathered in terms of behaviours of how people travel to work in order to identify the reasoning behind the 5 years drop in the hourly mean.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that Council colleagues followed a hybrid working, as well as other organisations nationally. This identified a blended approach of commuting to work or working from home, the reduction in the number of journeys to work may have coincided with the drop in the hourly mean.

The Council were required to undertake an annual status report yearly. Bureau Veritas had gathered the information for 2021, however, the overall report was based on reduction over 5 years.

One Member raised concern that the report was merely focused on Nitrogen Dioxide. It was suggested that a more holistic approach be taken in regard to types of pollution such as ammonia, which had a detrimental impact on biodiversity and directly led to loss of species and habitat degradation. It was queried as to what the Council could do to further reduce harm of other particulates.

It was confirmed that the annual status report was a legal requirement of the Council to complete and was based around monitoring Nitrogen Dioxide. The monitoring of particulates would require particular testing equipment which would need to be purchased, however, further monitoring could be explored through the air quality action plan. Education campaigns in schools could also assist in the particulate monitoring and demonstrating behaviour changes. It was confirmed that the motoring of ammonia would be a planning matter during key consideration stage of an application.

Members welcomed the report.

One Member queried as to what the Council were doing to remove the pollution declaration by 1 hour means and the impact this may have regarding parameters.

Disappointment was expressed regarding electric cars no longer being exempt from road tax which would be a barrier in attempt to reduce emissions. It was noted that the people tend to upgrade to a bigger and higher emission car rather than a smaller car or electric car.

A further question was raised in relation to the level of resourcing hours the Council commit to monitoring the outputs as set out in the report.

The Public Protection Manager stated that once a month, one Officer would carry out the collection and deployment of new tubes around the District. The tubes were then sent off and the data would be sent back to the Council which correlated figures for the air quality report.

It was highlighted that the figures were only for Grantham, it was suggested that these be undertaken in all busy areas of the District.

In terms of advertising, a billboard was suggested to be put up in key areas of the District where pollution was high as a way of engaging and educating people on the matter.

The Public Protection Manager confirmed that other areas of the District were also monitored. The focus was due to the air quality management areas which was because there were exceedances in 2013. The promotion of pollution would be explored.

**ACTION: For the Public Protection Manager to provide the Committee on specific areas within the District that were monitored.**

**That the Committee:**

- 1. Note the content of the Annual Air Quality Status Report (ASR 2022).**
- 2. Recommends to the Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities, that public consultation be undertaken to consider reviewing the existing Air Quality Management Ares (Order No.6) (AQMA) to remove the pollution declaration of 1-hour NO<sub>2</sub> mean exceedances through an amendment to the AQMA Order.**

### **33. Climate and Carbon Dashboard**

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change presented the report that covered the financial year (April 2021-March 2022).

Following the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in September 2019, the Council were committed to a carbon reduction target of at least 30% by 2030. The scope of the commitment covered operational aspects of the Council's activities around the levels of energy used in buildings and fuel used for Council vehicles.

The comparisons of figures set out in the report were produced against the baseline monitoring year of 2018-2019.

Key findings were discussed as set out within the dashboard.

In response to a question asked by a public speaker, the Cabinet Member highlighted that the energy and waste data from the closed Deepings Leisure Centre were included in the figures. It was responsible for reduction of 502 tonnes of carbon, this was equivalent to 62% of the total carbon reduction recorded across all leisure centres. Of the 25% reduction in leisure centres, 62% of the 25% was the reduction from Deepings Leisure Centre, with the majority of reduction being from fuel oil used for heating systems.

One Member questioned as to whether the three remaining leisure centres had reduced carbon emissions.

Queries in relation to electric charging points were raised:

- Whether electric charging points were being utilised throughout the District or whether the figure provided was an expected figure of use.
- The costings around utilising the Council's electric charging points.
- Whether more electric charging points would be installed in the future.
- Whether the Council's electric charging points were accessible on national Apps for people to establish locations of them.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change informed the Committee that the expansion of electric charging points would be government-led in conjunction with local authorities and the business community. There were currently no firm plans to install any further electric charging points, however, this would be kept under review.

The Sustainability and Climate Change Officer confirmed that the Council continue to monitor the uptake of electric charging points installed in Council car parks. The cost of the Council's electric charging points was 36p per kilowatt hour for customers and they would not be charged for parking where a vehicle is plugged in to charge. The car park that held electric charging points were visible on 'Zap Map', which was a principal way of electric vehicle users accessing the facilities.

One Member noted that urban authorities had implemented electric charging points free of charge for a limited amount of time.

It was queried as to whether the other leisure centres were more energy efficient. It was confirmed that only Deepings Leisure Centre used fuel oil and the other centres had mains gas and electricity. Two of the centres had combined heat and power units which generated electricity using gas and waste heat would be used to heat the facility.

One Member noted the absence of nature-based solutions for reducing carbon emissions in the report. It was suggested that the Council lead on the planting of trees.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change suggested that the Council work in conjunction with the Woodland Trust on more projects. It was



confirmed that the Council had put in a bid for funding with the Woodland Trust and they could provide guidance on other funding streams for the provision of tree planting. South Kesteven did not currently have a tree strategy, which meant the Woodland Trust were reluctant to work with the Council. Work was undergoing to implement a tree strategy.

Members welcomed the need for a tree strategy.

It was highlighted that the Council should consider further work around the protection of trees.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change suggested a possible overlap with Planning Committee and whether the policy could be clarified around tree preservation orders and brought back to this Committee.

Members requested that the relevant Officer liaises with Planning Policy in relation to protection and planting of trees. It was clarified that if a tree isn't in a conservation area or had a tree protection order on it, there is very little that could be done to prevent the tree being felled. It was requested that tree surveys take place when allocated sites and new developments are received to protect trees and hedges.

It was noted that the Council could be more ambitious in terms of increasing the biodiversity net gain.

The Sustainability and Climate Change Officer further clarified that when an electric vehicle was plugged in and charging, the owner would not be expected to pay for parking. They would only be expected to pay for the cost of charging the vehicle.

Members were encouraged to support the need for protecting trees in the District.

**That the Committee:**

- 1. Notes the reported carbon emissions for the 2021/22 period which cover operations from South Kesteven District Council.**
- 2. Continue to support and develop initiatives to reduce carbon emissions from Council operations.**

**34. Climate Matters Annual Report**

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change presented the report which outlined an approach using infographics. The documents were part of the Council's commitment around education in hope to reduce carbon emissions.

The report aimed to provide an update on some of the Council's climate change and carbon reduction projects including two of the Council's domestic energy efficiency and carbon reduction schemes. The report also included tree planting

schemes that were completed during winter 2021/22 via the Council's climate change reserve.

The Council had several ambitions for the upcoming year, one of which being the development of the wider climate action plan. The Council were due to review the impact of increasing energy costs in relation to Council properties and vehicles. The Council were aiming to raise awareness and engage with key groups across the District around climate change.

One Member queried as to whether the report could be expanded to include all environment matters to include a wider scope around biodiversity and nature.

It was suggested that an annual tree planting target by area including canopy cover be explored.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change confirmed communication with the team regarding expansion from climate matters to environment matters.

One Member noted that in line with Covid-19 restrictions, the carbon emissions reduced as expected and reached the 30% reduction target. It was queried as to whether the Council were on target or would overachieve the 2030 achievement.

It was highlighted that planning applications did not consider climate change mitigations across the country. This was due to planning applications being legislation-led. Unless government legislation changed, the Council did not have the authority to override legislation.

The Sustainability and Climate Change Officer confirmed that the Council's operational carbon reduction was included as part of the KPI report. The Council were currently on target for the 2030 carbon reduction achievement, which equated to 190 of 7600 tonnes of carbon per year, which was a linear reduction to the 30% target.

#### **That the Committee:**

- 1. Notes the project updates included within the report which work towards the Council's carbon reduction targets and wider climate change ambitions.**

#### **35. Update on Street Lighting**

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services and Climate Change introduced the report that updated the Committee on the number of lamps that had been upgraded to LED's as at the end of October 2022.

571 lamps out of a total stock of just under 4000 were now energy efficient and had been fit with LED's. The energy savings for the LED's were typically around 70% from each individual lamp upgraded.

As a result of the upgrade, energy savings across the stock of lights was about 6% that had been recorded, which had an associated 14% reduction in carbon emissions.

It was noted that the electricity budget for streetlights for 2022/23 was originally set at £171,000. Due to the increase of utilities, this was forecast to be re-set at £289,000. This was due to the budgeted cost of streetlighting possibly increasing to £688,000 by 2023/24.

Based on the current utility cost projections, the estimated pay back on investment from upgrading all of the Council's streetlights was 2.2 years.

Clarification was sought around the savings and period of time to pay back on investment.

One Member suggested the possibility of the Council exploring lunar resonant streetlighting in order to produce more savings.

Members discussed the physical and financial differences between the orange sodium lights and the white LED lights.

One Member queried as to whether different bulbs could be fitted into the streetlights or whether it is one bulb fits all.

The Sustainability and Climate Change Officer highlighted that the streetlights that had been upgraded to the program, were upgraded with a dimming profile. This meant they were dimmed between the hours of 00:00-5:00 to save energy.

In relation to replacing bulbs, 10% of the lights that the Council were responsible for required a wholesale replacement and the others were able to merely have a lamp replaced. This was dependant on a case-by-case basis.

Members discussed that other types technology could be explored, for example, solar lighting or motion motion-sensor lights.

One Member noted that an area of Grantham was being trialled for motion-sensory lighting. It was queried as to whether the trial was still taking place, whether there were any cost savings involved and if any other areas were being considered for the trial of motion-sensor lights.

It was confirmed that Winchester Road in Grantham trialled motion-sensor lighting a few years ago. It was part of a pilot program that informed development of the tender pack for the wider project. The cost savings had previously been shared at a previous Committee meeting in December 2020.

Motion sensing was not included in the current tender of upgrades, however, dimming was included.

The Sustainability and Climate Change informed the Committee that the small number of motion-sensor lights were still in full working operation.

**That the Committee:**

1. **Notes the progress to date to upgrade the Council's stock of streetlights to LED energy efficiency lighting.**
2. **Agrees for officers to progress modelling options for the street light replacement programme and present this to the Committee at the next meeting.**

**36. Work Programme 2022-2023**

The Committee noted the Work Programme for 2022-2023.

It was requested that the following items be included for the meeting being held on 14 March 2023:

- Climate Action Plan
- Renewal of Animal Welfare Policy
- Draft policy on tree strategy
- Ammonia pollution (mitigation and limit detrimental impact on district)
- Progress update on Street Lighting – assessment on further cost savings.

Members raised concern that the next meeting was scheduled for 4 months away, this was to be discussed and rectified in the new calendar of meetings.

Clarification was sought around the paper/card scheme and whether this could be brought to the meeting in March.

The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that this be brought back to Committee for the next term in May 2023.

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

There were none.

**38. Close of meeting**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 12:16.