

Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Tuesday, 13 June 2023 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House,
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Members: Councillor Paul Fellows (Chairman)
Councillor James Denniston (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Emma Baker, Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing, Councillor Gareth Knight,
Councillor Robert Leadenham, Councillor Paul Martin, Councillor Chris Noon and
Councillor Susan Sandall

Agenda

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

1. Public Speaking

The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk

2. Apologies for absence

3. Disclosure of Interests

Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.

4. Minutes from the meeting of Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 February 2023 (Pages 3 - 14)

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Karen Bradford, Chief Executive

www.southkesteven.gov.uk

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

6. End of year KPI's (Pages 15 - 34)

This year-end update report outlines South Kesteven District Councils performance against the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the year of 2022/2023. The end of year data represents information up to 31 March 2023.

7. Grantham Christmas Lights (Pages 35 - 62)

To consider an improved lighting display for Grantham Town Centre following a compliant procurement exercise.

8. Cultural Strategy (Pages 63 - 96)

To update the Committee on the work undertaken to develop a refreshed Cultural Strategy for the district.

9. Work Programme 2023-24 (Pages 97 - 100)

To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2023-24.

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

Minutes Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Tuesday, 28 February 2023, 10.00 am

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

Committee Members present

Councillor Judy Stevens (Chairman)
Councillor Penny Robins (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Paul Fellows
Councillor Jill Thomas
Councillor Mary Whittington

Cabinet Members

Councillor Kelham Cooke (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Adam Stokes (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Members present

Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew

Officers

Nicola M^cCoy-Brown (Director of Growth and Culture)
Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director of Culture and Leisure)
Jon Hinde (Head of Economic Development)
Debbie Roberts (Head of Policy, Performance and Corporate Projects)
Michael Chester (Team Leader, Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces)
Claire Saunders (Heritage Action Zone Project Manager)
Beth Goodman (Leisure Officer)
Sarah Downs (Democratic Services Officer)

Charlotte Goy (Chief Executive, Destination Lincolnshire)

39. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

There was no representative on the Committee from Alliance SK.

40. Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

41. Public Speaking

There were no public speakers.

42. Minutes from the meeting held on 6 December 2022

A Member asked for confirmation that Markets were on the Work Programme for scrutiny within a future meeting.

The Director for Growth and Culture confirmed that Markets had been added as a future item.

A Member asked what fee was required by Red Quadrant and whether funds were readily available.

The Assistant Director of Culture and Leisure confirmed that a fee of £16,000 was allocated from an agreed budget.

The contract for the draft Visitor Economy Strategy was expected to be tendered by April 2023.

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022 were a correct and accurate record.

43. Updates from the previous meeting

The action sheet agreed at the 6 December 2022 meeting was noted.

The Director of Growth and Culture confirmed that a draft invitation to tender for the Visitor Economy Strategy had been issued to the Committee's Chairman and Vice Chairman for their review and comment, before being shared electronically with this Committee where feedback by Members would be welcomed.

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

There were no announcements by the Leader. However, it was acknowledged the second Board meeting of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund (UKSPF and REPF) in the afternoon. The Leader of the Council agreed the work was receiving positive results.

45. Verbal presentation from the Chief Executive of Destination Lincolnshire

The Chief Executive of Destination Lincolnshire gave a presentation.

Members were informed the Government expected to route funding for tourism through Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs). The Government would operate a formal accreditation process and Destination Lincolnshire were able to facilitate the private and public sector to achieve this.

Destination Lincolnshire recommended that a governance structure could be established and every participating local authority could co-fund a Destination Management Plan as part of the process to achieving LVEP accreditation.

It became apparent during the pandemic the destination management structure in England was fragmented, fragile and not fully effective. The tourism sector recovery depended on having the right structures and partnerships in place.

The review into Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) recommended a network of destination professionals would work with Visit England to deliver local and national economy growth priorities.

The accredited network would be:

- A top tier of Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs)
- A second tier of Local Visitor Economy Partnerships
- A third tier of all other tourism partnerships

The LVEP started in 2023 and DDPs were to be developed in 2024/2025.

The Government agreed that DMOs had an important role to play in recovery and Levelling Up and were positive about the tiering system.

Destination Lincolnshire aimed to support Lincolnshire Local Authorities to achieve LVEP status by May 2023 and co-fund a new Destination Management Plan for Greater Lincolnshire. A LVEP application was to be submitted no later than September 2023.

During discussion, Members raised the following points:

- Disappointment accreditation had to be applied for.
- Lincolnshire was a wonderful county that deserved more recognition.
- The decision to abandon Lincoln Christmas Market was unfortunate and would have a negative impact on the County.

The Chief Executive of Destination Lincolnshire informed Members their organisation, like similar companies was previously funded by Development Agencies. It was frustrating that evidence submitted at a recent review did not

result in automatic funding. Funds were also received from businesses who paid subscription fees. Ultimately, Lincolnshire proving it's worth would be a worthwhile exercise. Greater Lincolnshire was under-marketed and as a large county, efforts to sell it were sometimes fragmented (although at a strategic level there was some positive, collaborative work underway). The county also needed to acknowledge its considerable strengths.

46. Update on Heritage Action Zone shop front improvements in Grantham

The report was presented by the Leader of the Council.

The Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone programme was in its third year of delivery and was to run until 31 March 2024. It was split into two main areas of delivery as follows:

- a capital grants programme
- a revenue funding stream which facilitates staffing, engagement activity, resource building, interpretation projects and cultural activity.

Properties had to be located on High Street, Westgate, the Market Place or Watergate (with a priority on Westgate and Marketplace) and must have been built prior to 1939. Applicants were required to have the legal ability to accept the grant funding, typically the property owner or their written permission. There were two projects under delivery through the 'Key Building' scheme and six currently being delivered through the 'Shopfront Regeneration Scheme'.

The single most significant capital project within the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme was the regeneration of Westgate Hall, a grade II listed former corn exchange. Built in 1852, last used as a night club, vacant for five years and currently in very poor condition. On 12 July 2022, Cabinet approved a grant award of up to £300,000 for the regeneration of Westgate Hall with a view to bringing the building back into use as a restaurant and the potential to create approximately 30 jobs. The funding had made it viable for the property owner to carry out works to the building by addressing the conservation deficit on the property – that was the cost required to complete works more than what the property would be worth when the works were completed.

The impact of rapidly increasing prices resulted in the need to scale down the scope of the schedule of works to ensure the project remained deliverable. The grant funded elements of work would focus on structural repairs to the building, the reinstatement of historically appropriate glazing, works to the roof and masonry repairs.

The timeline for delivery also provided challenges to the project. The Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager would continue to work closely with the appointed project architect - and the contractors - to ensure the programme ran to time and coordinated with Historic England as necessary. Encouragingly, works to

the property had now commenced, with the erection of scaffolding having taken place on 30 January 2023.

71 High Street had experienced delays in delivery due to both material and contractor availability. This resulted in the programme significantly over-running its original completion date of March 2022. The Programme Manager was working closely with the property owners and the appointed project architect to monitor the contractors progress to ensure the programme of works was completed within this financial year.

There were currently six shopfront regeneration grant schemes underway, and interest was received with regards to a further four properties. As with the larger key buildings programme, the significant increase in cost of projects resulted in the need to negotiate a change to the original grant programme with Historic England. Inflation had resulted in tenders for shopfront regeneration projects being returned at two to three times the cost seen in previous years. Historic England agreed the maximum cap of £25,000 per project could be waived for new projects as long as the grant intervention rates of 60% of the cost of repairs and 80% of the costs of reinstatement were maintained and the budget was not exceeded. As a result, five shopfront schemes (in addition to 68 Westgate which was an existing project) had been brought forward.

Although this alteration to the grant scheme would result in the delivery of fewer schemes than proposed in the original High Street Heritage Action Zone bid, it had insured deliverable schemes have been brought forward and there had been a significant increase in the level of private sector investment leveraged. The shopfront projects would generate £185,997 in private sector contributions. In addition, private sector contributions to 71 High Street (Key Building) would generate £19,923, and Westgate Hall would contribute £100,000 from the property owner and an additional £200,000 – 250,000 in investment for fitout of the property. This gave an estimate of the private sector investment leveraged by scheme as £505,000.

In November 2022, Heritage Lincolnshire was commissioned to produce an updated Conservation Area Management Plan for Grantham to consider changes in national planning policy and look forward at how opportunities generated through the High Street Heritage Action Zone, Future High Street Fund and other regeneration programmes could be developed upon in the future, should additional funding become available. A draft document was to be completed by the end of March 2023 for consultation with Members and the public as necessary.

Kevin Murray Associates were commissioned to undertake a Community Charette (consultation) in Spring 2022 which asked local residents and stakeholders to participate in the development of a vision for Grantham in 2045. Over three days, participants joined discussions and activity to highlight their priorities for the town. Following on from this work, initial discussions were held with the Woodland Trust to build stronger links and encourage their involvement in potential future street greening projects within Grantham.

Over the previous 12 months Grantham Dramatic Society ran a programme of costumed tours which would continue for the remainder of the programme. The regeneration efforts in Grantham were beginning to garner significant recognition within the industry. This had included Grantham being nominated for the Academy of Urbanism's 'Great Town' Award 2022 and after a competitive assessment process Grantham reached the final of the awards alongside Inverness and Dun Laoghaire (the eventual winners).

Alongside the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, engagement was underway to support Grantham Museum with their development aims including assisting the Museum Board in developing an application to The Arts Fund 'Reimagine' Grants programme. The Museum were successful in securing £18,600 which would provide for support in building their operational capacity, volunteer development and training, and curatorial support. The funding would be supplemented by £1,500 from the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme to support public consultation into how Grantham residents and visitors would like to see the museum explore, highlight and present the town's history.

Members raised the following points during discussion:

- The schemes encouraged a more harmonious feel. The Council needed to consider the 'feel' of the town.
- There was concern about rising costs of labour and materials.
- Were property owners coming forward as expected and was there the need for a waiting list?
- Were the Chamber of Commerce involved in the process?

The Heritage Action Zone Project Manager confirmed the schemes had been very positive in supporting the town centre and engaging the local community. There was currently no need for a waiting list as the majority of eligible properties were owned by one organisation. Each applicant can submit an expression of interest. Monies were not able to roll from one year to the next and the team were keeping to target. £60,000 was, as yet not allocated and the Council had to consider the increase in costs of commitments already made.

The Head of Economic Development clarified the property owner had to apply and not the occupier. People were seeing the value of their property lift.

The Leader of the Council confirmed their attendance at a meeting to discuss collaborative working with the Chamber of Commerce.

It was proposed, seconded and AGREED that Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- a) **Agreed to receive a copy of the Conservation Area Management Plan for Grantham at a future meeting to consider recommendations made within it.**

47. Arts Service Transitional Funding (Verbal Update)

The Assistant Director of Culture and Leisure gave an update on the Arts Service Transitional Funding.

The Officer confirmed the Arts Council National Portfolio funding was due to end in March 2023. Following a meeting with representatives from the Arts Council it was confirmed their ethos on funding had changed and a fresh application had not been successful.

The Council had been encouraged to submit a funding application for transition funding to support the future of the Arts Programme and identify opportunities to attract funding in the future. If the bid for transition funding was successful the equivalent of six months of funding would be received.

For future opportunities South Kesteven District Council had the option of proceeding alone or continuing to work as part of a consortium.

A Member asked if the Council shared a good collaborative relationship with neighbouring local authorities.

The Assistant Director of Culture and Leisure confirmed there were advantages to a consortium as this approach was well supported by the Arts Council, however there were complications if the Council continued to be the accountable body for funding and the other authorities did not deliver the grant conditions.

48. Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan six-monthly update

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report.

A review of the Council's website and social media activity had been undertaken with a view to continuing to support a variety of stakeholders and organisations with their events and to provide residents with physical activity opportunities across South Kesteven. This included a link to the Slow Ways initiative which was discussed at the previous Committee meeting in June 2022.

Physical Activity initiatives for Council employees were implemented in January 2023, starting with the #TeamSK step challenge in which 120 participants enrolled. A range of other activities also commenced such as the Wednesday Walk, which averages eight walkers per week and weekly 'Let's Get Physical' information packs which were distributed to all staff and included diet and wellbeing advice. A week of free fitness classes at Bourne and Grantham took place during January 2023 where 11 Council employees trialled fitness classes to kickstart a new habit. Positive feedback was obtained about the wellbeing initiatives and a total of 288 views were recorded on the digital information packs.

Officers continued to develop strong collaboration with our partner organisations, stakeholders and communities, without them achieving the Council's corporate ambition of Healthy and Strong Communities would not have been possible.

Officers from the Council's Leisure Team had actively been attending:

- Monthly leisure leads meetings with Active Lincolnshire
- Monthly UKActive webinars
- Workshops with Sport England and the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA)
- The Ageing and Physical Activity network meetings, led by The University of Lincoln to stay up to date with the latest trends and remain up to date with the regional and national picture.

In November 2022, Officers attended the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Sports and Leisure Seminar which looked at a range of leisure specific challenges including decarbonisation, ageing facilities and the rise in local authority trading companies managing leisure facilities. The 'Activity Finder' developed by Active Lincolnshire, now boasted an impressive 260 activities or clubs on the website, providing residents in South Kesteven with an online tool to find activities in their local area. In collaboration with Active Lincolnshire and the Council's Housing Team, work began to identify opportunities for physical activity and wellbeing for residents living in sheltered housing and council houses within South Kesteven. As part of a workshop, emphasis was placed on gaining a better understanding of the lives of the residents, the places they live and the connection points for residents within various council services.

Council Officers had been working in partnership with 'We are Undefeatable', which was a campaign consisting of fifteen leading health and social care charities, funded by the National Lottery in conjunction with Sport England. The aim is to support people living with a range of long-term health conditions to move more in a way that works for them. One You Lincolnshire was the county's free health and wellbeing programme designed to help residents to become healthier with a variety of free activities. Support was provided to help individuals make small, sustainable changes to improve their health and wellbeing and live a longer, happier life. In January 2023, the Council supported One You Lincolnshire with the launch of their new programme 'Heart & Sole', using Wyndham Park Visitor Centre as the hub for the launch. A total of 57 residents registered for the 12-week programme targeted to get residents moving who were not completing the desired 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

LeisureSK Ltd benefitted from an increase on registrations for their Exercise on Prescription programme, a 12-week structured physical activity programme following referral by a health care professional and was aimed at those doing less than 150 mins of physical activity a week. There are currently 50 participants on the programme across South Kesteven, with a further 51 on the waiting list.

Since the adoption of the Strategy in December 2021, the latest Active Lives Survey data had been published including data on both adults and young people. The survey results for adults (16 years+) showed that during this period, 54.7% of

adults in South Kesteven were considered active, completing at least 150 minutes of activity a week. 15% were considered fairly active, completing 30-149 minutes of activity per week. However, 30.2% adults were considered inactive, completing less than 30 minutes activity a week. The results demonstrate a 6.8% decline in those considered active from the data available November 2019 – November 2020. The data showed across England 47.2% of children and young people (3.4 million) were meeting the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines of taking part in sport and physical activity for an average of 60 minutes or more every day. Meanwhile, 30.1% (2.2 million) do less than an average of 30 minutes a day. In comparison, the results for South Kesteven for the same period demonstrated 46.4% of children and young people were considered to be active, which is up by 0.9% on the previous year. 25% of children and young people were considered to be fairly active, which is up by 4.8% on the previous year, whilst 28.9% of children and young people were considered to be less active, which represented a reduction of 5.4% compared to the previous year.

Members welcomed the report.

It was proposed, seconded, and AGREED that the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- a) **Considered the results of the latest Active Lives data available for South Kesteven and agreed to consider the results of future Active Lives survey data as part of the regular six-monthly updates provided.**
- b) **No enhancements were suggested at this time to the extent and clarity of the information produced for the next six-monthly update report.**

49. Performance of LeisureSK Ltd

LeisureSK Ltd had continued to face operational challenges over recent months especially relating to the increase in costs of materials from suppliers and the significant rise in energy costs. This all aligned with the national picture and challenges facing other leisure providers nationally. The recruitment of suitably qualified staff also continued to be challenging. However, the Board of Directors appointed a new Contract Manager who joined the company in April 2022.

Since joining the company, the Contract Manager, with the support of the Board, had reviewed the company staffing structure to try and mitigate the cost increases without impacting upon the levels of service delivery and customer experience. A comprehensive job evaluation of all roles within the company was finalised in April 2022 with job roles being scored and aligned to a pay grading scale which provided consistency across the company and ensured that pay was competitive with other leisure providers.

The Board of Directors have been keen to ensure the employees of LeisureSK Ltd are being invested in and developed. As part of this, Managers have been enrolled

onto a Management Development Course which has been developed and delivered by The HR Branch over a period of six months. In addition to this, LeisureSK Ltd were working with a national apprenticeship provider, Lifetime Training.

LeisureSK Ltd had upskilled two senior Managers onto the Royal Lifesaving Society's (RLSS) National Pool Supervisor Qualification (NPSQ) tutor programme. This training was planned to be delivered to Duty Manager's and Senior Leisure Assistant's during 2023. LeisureSK Ltd continued to develop their programme of community and outreach activities promoting and increasing their health and wellbeing offering.

Other initiatives introduced within the centres by LeisureSK Ltd included 'Exercise on Prescription' in partnership with One You Lincolnshire across all facilities. This was a 12-week structured physical activity programme following referral by a health care professional aimed at those doing less than 150 mins of physical activity a week.

Partnerships continued to be developed between the Council, LeisureSK Ltd and organisations within the county such as One You Lincolnshire, Active Lincolnshire and Inspire+, local GP surgeries and social prescribers and Shine Lincolnshire.

Following approval at Cabinet in September 2022, Bourne Leisure Centre underwent a £137,000 gym refurbishment programme in November 2022. This included brand new equipment, creation of a dedicated studio space, a separate free weights area, and new gym flooring throughout. This resulted in a small uplift in the monthly membership cost and has contributed to an increase in membership sales within the centre.

In November 2022, the decision was made at Full Council to permanently close the Deepings Leisure Centre and not to proceed with the previously agreed refurbishment plans, to hand the asset back to Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and to also transfer the management of the Linchfield Road Playing Fields back to LCC.

The Table Tennis Centre (TTC) at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre continued to be used by the National Health Service (NHS) as a COVID-19 mass vaccination centre until they announced its closure in December 2022. During the operation of the vaccination centre, sports hall bookings were successfully relocated into other parts of the centre.

LeisureSK Ltd successfully launched Meres Lives events, securing the acts directly, and with the Council's Arts Team providing ticketing services. Additional gym equipment was installed at Stamford following on from the refurbishment project at Bourne Leisure Centre, utilising some of the outgoing equipment as a result of member feedback.

Following on from customer feedback a programme review was undertaken in October 2022 which resulted in an increase in opening hours at the start of each

weekday. This allowed for additional public swimming, club swimming sessions and Aquafit classes. Further programming reviews were underway to explore the possibility of extending the hours in the evening to allow for additional group exercise classes and lane swimming.

Overall, there had been a marked improvement in cleanliness at Leisure facilities with a reduced number of customer complaints being received by LeisureSK Ltd or made directly to the Council.

The full building condition surveys, carried out across all the Leisure Centres and Sports Stadium between March 2022 and May 2022, were reviewed by the Council's Leisure and Property Teams and presented to an Internal Property Management Group, with works being prioritised for completion based on the severity and risk identified. Major works have been completed across all centres.

The availability of contractors to carry out maintenance tasks and repairs continued to be an issue, resulting in a small back log. However, the site teams were continuing to work with reliable contractors to resolve this. Additionally, the team at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre recruited an in-house part-time Maintenance Assistant for three days per week which had resulted in a noticeable improvement to maintenance issues at both the Leisure Centre and Sports Stadium.

Members raised the following points during discussion:

- Had attendance figures increased at all remaining swimming pools since the closure of Deepings Leisure Centre?
- It was disappointing that as South Holland had received funding, it was expected that some residents of the Deepings would use their facilities.
- The Hydro and aqua exercise classes were welcomed as different and original and would draw in new custom.
- Bourne Leisure Centre gym had recently been upgraded. Had this had a positive effect on attendance?
- Number of accidents logged at The Meres, Grantham was still high. Why was this?

The Assistant Director of Culture and Leisure informed Members that the closure of Deepings Leisure Centre had caused an upturn in attendance at Bourne and Stamford but not at Grantham due to the travelling distance.

The Officer confirmed that attendance at Bourne Leisure Centre Gym had fallen slightly, however, this was expected in December and January which are generally quieter in attendance. Access was also restricted during the refurbishment of the Gym but had been really well received since opened.

The Meres had a higher amount in footfall compared to the other Leisure Centres so it had been expected that accident numbers would be higher.

ACTION:

Latest attendance figures for the swimming pools across the District were to be circulated to Members of the Committee.

It was proposed, seconded, and AGREED that the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Noted the contents of this report and suggested any enhancements to the level of information provided for inclusion in the next six-monthly update.**

50. Work Programme 2022-2023

Members noted the Work Programme.

It was confirmed an update on Markets was to be heard at the next Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting and the Sport and Physical Strategy Action Plan was to be heard every six months.

A Member requested an update on the Grantham Museum be scheduled for the meeting in June 2023. This was agreed.

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

There was none.

52. Close of Meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11:57.



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Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 June 2023

Report of Debbie Roberts, Head of
Corporate Projects, Policy and
Performance

Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators 2022/2023 Year-End Report

This year-end update report outlines South Kesteven District Councils performance against the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the year of 2022/2023. The end of year data represents information up to 31 March 2023.

Report Author

Debbie Roberts, Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance

✉ Debbie.roberts@southkesteven.gov.uk

Recommendations

It is recommended Members of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1. Review and scrutinise the performance against the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators in relation to the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities and outcomes.**
- 2. Use this report to inform and support their ongoing work programme.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

High Performing Council

Which wards are impacted?

All

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The financial considerations where appropriate are referenced throughout this report.

Completed by Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 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.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.3 No significant risks have been identified.

Climate Change

- 1.4 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. More detailed information on carbon impact of individual projects or activities are outlined within the relevant project documentation or service plans.

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The South Kesteven Corporate Plan 2020-23 was approved by Council on 1 October 2020. It was agreed by Council 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. These actions and indicators were then presented to this Committee and agreed on 17 November 2020.
- 2.2 The Mid-Year report for 2022/2023 was presented to the Committee on 22 December 2022 and outlined the performance against the Corporate Plan for the financial year to date and included the annual review of all Corporate KPIs and contained recommendations for changes, additions, and removals.
- 2.3 This report builds on these historical reports to provide an update on performance to the end of the 2022/2023 financial year. It incorporates the changes recommended by the last KPI review to outline areas of the council's performance which are successful and to advise where challenges may lay.
- 2.4 Given the changes to the scrutiny committee structure and new Members on them, it is worth noting that questions to senior officers during the agenda item or more detailed investigations can be added to the committee work programme as agreed.
- 2.5 A further review of actions is due to be carried out to coincide with the Quarter 2 report. It should be noted 2023/2024 is the final year of monitoring these existing KPIs and all Members will have the opportunity to engage in the new Corporate Plan.
- 2.6 **Appendix A** outlines the overall performance against the original actions, as well as specific performance against the sub measures contained within those. Specific commentary is provided for each action, which is summarised as follows:
- 4 of the actions are rated Green. These are actions which are on or above target as planned.
 - 1 action is rated as Amber, these are those off target by less than 10% or where milestone achievement is delayed but with resolution in place to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe.
- 2.7 There have been no areas of significant under performance identified in this report.
- 2.8 As part of the final KPI report for the financial year of 2022/2023, it is beneficial to review the work carried out against those actions being reported over the year in its entirety, as opposed to just the most recent quarter. With that in mind, the following actions, grouped by corporate priority, have had a brief summary provided:

2.9 **Healthy and Strong Communities 11 - Improve and invest in the local arts & cultural venues across the District**

- Approved capital works for the Centres are ongoing
- The specialist work to repair the Collyweston slate roof at Stamford Arts Centre is fully underway and due for completion by September 2023. Whilst the work is ongoing, the arts centre remains operational, with disruption being kept to a minimum
- Specialist repairs on the Grantham Guildhall roof have now concluded
- Digby's Café opened on 5 May 2022 within the Guildhall Arts Centre. Coffee and cake is served all day, with breakfast available until 11.30am and lunch served afterwards <https://www.facebook.com/digbyscafe/>
- The Café located within the Stamford Arts Centres has been marketed. The Café is of good size providing ample space for food preparation and the immediate sales area provides seating for 18 covers. There is also further seating to the rear of the Café
- The toilet refurbishments works were completed at both the Guildhall Arts Centre and Stamford Arts Centre

2.10 **Healthy and Strong Communities 13 - Review Arts services within the district with ambition to provide improved, efficient and accessible arts within the district**

- The short and medium-term actions in relation to the Arts, Culture and Events Services Review (see Background Papers) have been completed, including the agreed restructure of the team
- All vacant posts have been filled, including the role of Arts and Cultural Services Manager, which has been filled by an internal promotion
- The longer-term actions identified in the Arts, Culture and Events Services Review included an assessment of alternative operating models, some early work has been undertaken to assess options and this will form the basis of future work during 2023/2024
- The opening hours and programming have been kept under constant review to ensure the offer remains attractive relevant and represents value for money
- Having undergone a successful trial, the Bourne Corn Exchange now serves up Sunday lunches. The Exchange 1870 Carvery offers a four-meat carvery, with vegetarian options and a minimum of eight hot or cold desserts as part of a family-friendly menu, together with complimentary soup and a fully-licensed bar. The Exchange 1870 Carvery takes its name from the date the Corn Exchange was built. To book, call 07486 454372
- There is now a varied programme across the three Council venues (The Guildhall in Grantham, Stamford Arts Centre in Stamford and Bourne Corn Exchange in Bourne), enhanced by the recent addition of Arts Council Transitional Funding, is aiming to widen participation (including outreach and other venues) which is benefitting the local economy and the community. Programmes typically include, music, theatre dance and comedy
 - What's on page for the Guildhall, available online by visiting: <https://www.guildhallartscentre.com/whats-on/>

- What's on page for Stamford Arts Centre, available online by visiting: <https://www.stamfordartscentre.com/whats-on/>
- The Guildhall Arts Centre and Stamford Arts Centre continued being part of the Lincolnshire One Venues (LOV). LOV connects eight network members (The Guildhall, The Drill – Lincoln, Lincoln Arts Centre, Louth Riverhead Theatre, Hub – Sleaford, Terry O'Toole Theatre – North Hykeham, South Holland Centre – Spalding and Stamford Arts Centre) to enable them to work strategically to develop the cultural and creative landscape across Lincolnshire. This strengthens the participatory programmes the venues deliver, adding value to existing work, developing exciting new work and sharing understanding. LOV works to support, sustain and develop creativity across the whole county of Lincolnshire. In March, The Guildhall and Stamford Arts Centre each hosted a special community event to celebrate the LOV network which included outdoor performances for local and professional groups, a virtual reality (VR) performance experience, children's theatre, illuminating artwork and Samba Drumming act.
 - More details on the Lincolnshire One Venues (LOV) network and projects are available on YouTube (published 2023): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SahGljjeV8k>
- The Council also promotes larger LeisureSK Ltd events as part of Meres Live, details available online by visiting: <https://www.guildhallartscentre.com/whats-on/meres-live/>

2.11 **Healthy and Strong Communities 14 - Develop and adopt a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy**

- Since the recruitment of the Leisure Officer in October 2022, the actions arising from the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan has moved at pace. Collaborative working arrangements have been developed with stakeholders, other leisure providers and LeisureSK Ltd
- The Council identified an opportunity to attract grant funding from the Lawn Tennis Association to fully fund a refurbishment of the two public tennis courts in Wyndham Park, Grantham. The funding arrangements required a collaborative approach with Grantham Tennis Club. In November 2022, to support a new generation of tennis players at grass roots level and revive public use, Cabinet agreed to utilise Grantham's Special Expense Area Reserve to set aside money to cover gate maintenance and a three-year sinking fund to ensure tennis court provision was made available at Wyndham Park. The Grantham Tennis Club will take on the management and operation of the courts under a leasehold arrangement (effectively ensuring the Tennis Club will continue to operate the tennis courses in accordance with the grant terms and conditions). A review is planned after twelve months from completion of the refurbishment at Wyndham Park, before proceeding into an agreement to refurbish the one tennis court in Dysart Park Grantham should match funding be made available

- The Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) received their regular six-monthly updates on progress in February 2023, including the result of Active Lives information
- Following receipt of funding from Sport England, which was distributed by Active Lincolnshire, a pilot health and wellbeing class has been established in the Deepings and the walks programme has been extended
- LeisureSK Ltd has employed a Health and Wellbeing Manager who has begun implementing a physical activity and wellness network across the South Kesteven community, promoting healthy lifestyles, supporting wellbeing and inspiring everyone to live a more active lifestyle
- In March 2023, following a recommendation made by the Rural and Communities OSC, Cabinet approved the adoption of the Lincolnshire District Councils' Health and Wellbeing Strategy to provide a framework for improving health and wellbeing outcomes across Lincolnshire. This supports the Council's ongoing work with district partners to deliver the high-level action plan which has been developed to accompany the Strategy. Work has commenced on the development of a bespoke action plan, specific to South Kesteven district to maximise the impact of the Strategy on health and wellbeing outcomes at a local level

2.12 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

- In line with its commitment to supporting the local economy, South Kesteven District Council teamed up with award-winning technology company bubltown to deliver an app to provide businesses with an easy-to-use tool to attract more customers. In August 2022, the app was launched. Businesses across South Kesteven have since been encouraged to sign up to this free app to promote their discounts, products and services direct to local residents. The HelloSK app has been paid for with money from SKDC's £250,000 allocation from the Government's Welcome Back Fund. By using in-built location services, the app is designed to show residents the shops, restaurants, gyms and other services available in their area. Businesses can then offer exclusive discounts and offers to the app's users. Members of the public were (and continue to be) encouraged to sign up to the HelloSK app, to take advantage of the goods and services on offer, which include listings of local events held across the District. To date there are 200 businesses and over 1,000 residents signed up
- In September 2022, the Culture and Visitor Economy OSC agreed there was merit in complementing the existing and valued efforts of Civic Societies by exploring the introduction of a district-wide Blue Plaque Guide and Information Trials. Once the review has been undertaken, necessary recommendations will be made to Cabinet
- In December 2022, the Culture and Visitor Economy OSC agreed the need to develop a Strategy to grow South Kesteven's visitor economy and endorsed a procurement exercise to appoint a suitably qualified consultant to work with Officers and Members to develop the Council's Visitor Economy Strategy.

This will gain traction once linkages with the developing opportunities resulting from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund are identified

- In January 2023, a compliant procurement process was initiated to commission an appropriately qualified company to develop a contemporary website design and build for Discover South Kesteven (including website hosting) <https://www.discoversouthkesteven.com/>. Nettl of Newark & Grantham were selected. The first draft of the new site will be available by July 2023
- It became apparent during the pandemic the destination management structure in England was fragmented, fragile and not fully effective. The tourism sector recovery depended on having the right structures and partnerships in place. Accordingly, it is expected Government will route funding for tourism through Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs)
- In February 2023, Members of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Destination Lincolnshire, who explained the Government will operate a formal accreditation process and Destination Lincolnshire aim to facilitate the private and public sector to achieve this. Destination Lincolnshire recommended a governance structure could be established and every participating local authority could co-fund a Destination Management Plan (DMP) as part of the process to achieving LVEP accreditation. South Kesteven District Council have agreed to provide £1,100 towards the costs of developing the plan. The Council are represented on the DMP / LVEP Working Group by the Head of Economic Development
- For the Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer the emphasis has been very much around place promotion and how South Kesteven's many visitor attractions can support this. Time has been spent working with attractions to greater promote their offer to the visitor market
- The Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer role has placed a greater emphasis on facilitating introductions between attractions, with this work culminating in a highly successful tourism providers network event held in February 2023. The event brought together tourism attractions from across the District to share ideas, best practise and improve future collaborative working

2.13 Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 11 - Work closely with markets across South Kesteven and seek to maintain their viability.

- In September 2022, the Culture and Visitor Economy OSC received an update on the current operation of the Council's markets
- The total net operating cost of the markets for the year is £52,308.24. The operating costs of the markets continues to be higher than the level of income being received from the trader activity and it is expected that the markets will continue to operate at a net cost due to the fixed cost element of the expenditure.
- As part of a review of the Council's markets 'offer' the Economic Development Team have the responsibility for reviewing the current market offer and bringing forward a strategy to improve and enhance the current offering

- Early interventions by the Economic Development Team have been the use of increased and targeted social media in support of the national ‘Love your Market’ campaign in May 2023. The Council’s markets offer has also been promoted through the Discover South Kesteven social media channels and traders have been encouraged to ‘sign up’ the HelloSK app
- The review to date has involved detailed on-site assessments by the team of the markets in Bourne, Stamford and Grantham and the identification of current trends in product offer, stall occupancy levels, visitor numbers and dwell time and impact on the wider town infrastructure
- A report detailing the findings and proposals for delivery of Council run markets going forward, will be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee for review, challenge and scrutiny, prior to wider consultation. The report will identify and highlight the opportunities afforded to the Council through the availability of UK Shared Prosperity Funding under the interventions E1: Improvement to Town Centres and High Streets, and E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The KPIs are produced and presented to each relevant scrutiny committee twice a year. These are the mid-year Q2 data and Q4 year end data.
- 3.2 The new Corporate Plan is due to be adopted in Autumn 2023. At that point, new KPIs will be approved by each Committee and collection of outcomes will commence from 1 April 2024.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 4.1 This is a regular report where Members are invited to scrutinise and comment on performance.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 *Arts, Culture and Events Services Review* - Report commissioned by South Kesteven District Council and completed by SLC, published July 2021 and available online at:
<http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s30546/Appendix%201%20Arts%20Culture%20and%20Events%20Service%20Review.pdf>
- 5.2 Update on Markets – Report to Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 6 September 2022 and available online at:
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s35411/Update%20on%20Markets.pdf>

- 5.3 *Inspirational Women of South Kesteven* – Report to Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 6 September 2022 and available online at:
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s35413/Inspirational%20Women%20of%20South%20Kesteven.pdf>
- 5.4 *Grantham Parks – Tennis Courts* – Report to Cabinet, published 8 November 2022, available online at:
<http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=35990>
- 5.5 *Development of South Kesteven District Council's Visitor Economy Strategy* – Report to Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 6 December 2022, available online at:
<http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s36312/Development%20of%20Visitor%20Economy%20Strategy.pdf>
- 5.6 *Lincolnshire District Councils' Health and Wellbeing Strategy Executive Strategy* – Executive summary, published December 2022 and available online at:
<http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37130/Appendix%201%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20-%20Lincolnshire%20District%20Councils%20Health%20Wellbeing%20Strategy.pdf>
- 5.7 *Lincolnshire District Councils' Health and Wellbeing Strategy* – Report to Cabinet, published 7 March 2023, available online at:
<http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37072/District%20H%20WB%20Strategy%20Report.pdf>
- 5.8 *Action Plan – Lincolnshire District Councils' Health and Wellbeing Strategy*, available online at:
<http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37131/Appendix%202%20-%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix A: End of year KPIs

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Healthy & Strong Communities

Priority Number	Action	Responsible Scrutiny Committee	Priority Status	Action Status
1	Invest in sustainable, high quality leisure facilities across the district.	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target
2	Embed the work of the SK Community Hub to support volunteering and the Voluntary & Community Sector.	Rural & Communities	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
3	Work with partners from all sectors to tackle health, employment, and other inequalities in areas of highest need.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
4	Continue to work in partnership with the police and the community in tackling crime, investing in the CCTV service	Rural & Communities	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target
5	Celebrate and enhance the rich history of the District.		Replaced with 13	Not Reported
6	Adopt a new Cultural Strategy for the District, including the local Arts, Events and Festivals programme.		Replaced with 13	Not Reported
7	Develop and adopt a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.		Replaced with 14	Not Reported
8	Meet the Mental Health Challenge	Rural & Communities	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
9	Make best use of different funding sources to support the voluntary and cultural sector within the District.	Rural & Communities	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
10	Protect our most vulnerable residents with robust safeguarding processes.	Rural & Communities	Reported Q4 2022-23	Significantly Below Target
11	Improve and invest in the local arts & cultural venues across the District.	Culture & Leisure	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
12	Promote and make progress against the Council's Equality Objectives	Rural & Communities	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
13	Review Arts services within the district with ambition to provide improved, efficient and accessible arts within the district.	Culture & Leisure	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
14	Develop and adopt a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.	Culture & Leisure	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target

Priority

Healthy And Strong Communities 11

Measured

Biannually

Responsible Director

Growth & Culture

On Target

Current Status

Responsible Cabinet Member

Culture & Visitor Economy

Action

Improve and invest in the local arts & cultural venues across the District.

Measure

1. Value of capital works carried out

2. Maintaining properties to required standards

Target

Baseline + 10%

60% of action plan completed.

Achieved

See Commentary

See Commentary

Measure History

1. Value of capital works carried out

2. Maintaining properties to required standards

Q4 2021-22

-

Q2 2022-23

-

Q4 2022-23

See Commentary

See Commentary

Commentary

Approved capital improvement works for the arts centre are ongoing. The approved capital works to Stamford Arts Centre roof have commenced. The works are being undertaken by a specialist roofing contractor experienced in Collyweston slates and the work is scheduled to be completed by September 2023. As previously reported further repairs to the Guildhall Arts Centre roof have been included in the budget and are to be undertaken in the current financial year (2023-24).

Priority



Healthy And Strong Communities 13

Measured

Biannually

Responsible Director

Growth & Culture

On Target

Current Status

Responsible Cabinet Member

Culture & Visitor Economy

Action

Review Arts services within the district with ambition to provide improved, efficient and accessible arts within the district.

Measure



	Target	Achieved
1. Staff review and restructure	2021/22	See Commentary
2. Review the programming and opening hours of the three centres in Grantham, Bourne and Stamford	2021/22	See Commentary
3. Identify potential future delivery models	2022/23	See Commentary
4. Develop new Cultural Strategy with clear action plan	2022/23	See Commentary

Measure History



	Q4 2021-22	Q2 2022-23	Q4 2022-23
1. Staff review and restructure	Report to Scrutiny 05/04/2022	-	See Commentary
2. Review the programming and opening hours of the three centres in Grantham, Bourne and Stamford	Report to Scrutiny 05/04/2023	-	See Commentary
3. Identify potential future delivery models	Report to Scrutiny 05/04/2024	-	See Commentary
4. Develop new Cultural Strategy with clear action plan	Report to Scrutiny 05/04/2025	-	See Commentary

Commentary



The staffing restructure is now complete and delivered £300k savings. The role of Arts and Cultural Services Manager has been successfully recruited to via an internal promotion. Opening hours of the arts venues have been reviewed and changes made, the programming at the centres is kept under constant review to ensure the offer is attractive to customers and offers value for money. Some initial work has been undertaken to identify and assess any future potential delivery models for the arts service, this work will be built upon during 2023/24. The development of a refreshed Cultural Strategy for the district was slightly delayed due to extended periods of purdah resulting in a delay to stakeholder consultation events and survey. A draft Strategy is in development ready to be presented to Members early in the new civic year.

Priority

Healthy And Strong Communities 14

Measured

Biannually

Responsible Director

Growth & Culture

On Target

Current Status

Responsible Cabinet Member

Leisure

Action

Develop and adopt a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

Measure

Measure	Target	Achieved
1. Embed the sport and physical activity strategy	Ongoing	See Commentary
2. Develop a programme of outreach activities with the Council's leisure provider and other partners	Ongoing	See Commentary
3. Work with local partners to access funding available for projects	Ongoing	See Commentary

Measure History

Measure History	Q2 2022-23	Q4 2022-23
1. Embed the sport and physical activity strategy	New Measure	See Commentary
2. Develop a programme of outreach activities with the Council's leisure provider and other partners	New Measure	See Commentary
3. Work with local partners to access funding available for projects	New Measure	See Commentary

Commentary

The Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy was adopted in December 2021. Since that time a significant amount of progress has been made on the action plan, this progress being reported to Culture and Visitor Economy OSC on a six monthly basis. Excellent working relationships have been developed with partners including LeisureSK Ltd, Active Lincolnshire and Lincs Inspire. Officers are working closely with LeisureSK Ltd to identify alternative ways to engage with residents outside of a traditional leisure centre setting. Recent successes have been the expansion of the healthy walks programme and the introduction of a fitness class in Deepings which was funded by Active Lincolnshire.

A Clean & Sustainable Environment

Priority Number	Action	Responsible Scrutiny Committee	Priority Status	Action Status
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.		Reported Mid-Year	Not Reported
2	Deliver the 'Big Clean' programme and maintain higher street standards.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
3	Continue to innovate our approach to waste management to build on our strengths and maximise commercial and other opportunities.	Environment	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target
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.		Reported Mid-Year	Not Reported
5	Work proactively with Environment SK to deliver high quality services and maximise commercial opportunities.	Environment	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
6	Work with the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership to reduce waste and further improve recycling.	Environment	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target
7	Recognise the changes in environmentally friendly modes of transport and seek to work with others to adapt required infrastructure	Environment	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
8	Explore opportunities to build on the success of the food waste pilot and ensure the service is sustainable.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
9	Build a new, modern depot which is fit for the future.	Environment	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target

Delivery of Growth of Our Economy

Priority Number	Action	Responsible Scrutiny Committee	Priority Status	Action Status
1	Delivery of the St Martins Park development scheme in Stamford.	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
2	Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target
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.	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
4	Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
5	Review the scope and focus of InvestSK to maximise the support to local businesses and attract inward investment.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
6	Continue to attract investment and encourage diverse businesses to the District and ensure appropriate land and property is available	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
7	Work with the education providers to increase opportunities for local learning and apprenticeships in the District.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
8	In partnership with LCC bring forward housing and employment opportunities linked to the delivery of the Grantham Southern Relief Road.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
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 & Leisure	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
10	Support the roll out of improved broadband and other key infrastructure to support local businesses and rural areas.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
11	Work closely with markets across South Kesteven and seek to maintain their viability.	Culture & Leisure	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target

Priority

Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 9

Measured

Quarterly

Responsible Director

Growth & Culture

On Target

Current Status

Responsible Cabinet Member

Culture & Visitor Economy

Action

Work with partners and attractions, to promote visitor economy and increase visitor spend in the District, including the adoption of a Tourism Strategic Framework.

Measure

Measure	Target	Achieved
1. Number of newly engaged visitor economy attractions engaged	40	73
2. Increase in visitor economy spend	£113,344,000	£168,630,000
3. Adoption of Tourism Strategic Framework (Gross Value Added)	Adopted the Tourism Strategic Framework	On Target

Measure History

Measure History	Q1 2022-23	Q2 2022-23	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23
1. Number of newly engaged visitor economy attractions engaged	38	55	61	73
2. Increase in visitor economy spend	£168,630,000	£168,630,000	£168,630,000	£168,630,000
3. Adoption of Tourism Strategic Framework (Gross Value Added)	Not Complete	On Target	On Target	Ongoing

Commentary

Activity in the final quarter concentrated on the delivery of a Tourism Networking Event bringing together tourism attractions from across the District to share ideas and best practise and to better work together going forward. Furthermore the team have focused efforts on increasing uptake of the HelloSK App. By the end of Q4 this had 200 businesses and over 1000 residents signed up. The production of the tourism strategy has been delayed slightly in order to identify linkages with the developing opportunities resulting from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. An update on this will be provided the relevant OSC in June 2023

Priority

Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 11

Measured

Annually

Responsible Director

Growth & Culture

Below Target

Current Status

Responsible Cabinet Member

Culture & Visitor Economy

Action

Work closely with markets across South Kesteven and seek to maintain their viability.

Measure

1. Markets becoming cost neutral to SKDC

Target

20%+ reduction of markets deficit from baseline: £54,983.96

Achieved

4.87%

Measure History

1. Markets becoming cost neutral to SKDC

Q4 2021-22

47.48%

Q4 2022-23

4.87%

Commentary

- In September 2022, the Culture and Visitor Economy OSC received an update on the current operation of the Council's markets
- The total net operating cost of the markets for the year is £52,308.24. The operating costs of the markets continues to be higher than the level of income being received from the trader activity and it is expected that the markets will continue to operate at a net cost due to the fixed cost element of the expenditure.
- As part of a review of the Council's markets 'offer' the Economic Development Team have the responsibility for reviewing the current market offer and bringing forward a strategy to improve and enhance the current offering
- Early interventions by the Economic Development Team have been the use of increased and targeted social media in support of the national 'Love your Market' campaign in May 2023. The Council's markets offer has also been promoted through the Discover South Kesteven social media channels and traders have been encouraged to 'sign up' the HelloSK app
- The review to date has involved detailed on-site assessments by the team of the markets in Bourne, Stamford and Grantham and the identification of current trends in product offer, stall occupancy levels, visitor numbers and dwell time and impact on the wider town infrastructure
- A report detailing the findings and proposals for delivery of Council run markets going forward, will be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee for review, challenge and scrutiny, prior to wider consultation. The report will identify and highlight the opportunities afforded to the Council through the availability of UK Shared Prosperity Funding under the interventions E1: Improvement to Town Centres and High Streets, and E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area

Housing That Meets The Needs Of All Residents

Priority Number	Action	Responsible Scrutiny Committee	Priority Status	Action Status
1	Work in partnership with the housing market to stimulate housing growth.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target
2	Work to reduce and prevent homelessness in our District.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	Significantly Below Target
3	Increase the supply of high quality, sustainable Council houses.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	Significantly Below Target
4	Undertake a Planning Review to improve performance and support local sustainable, high quality growth.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
5	Undertake a Housing Review to provide the highest quality service possible to our tenants	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target
6	Work with housing associations and developers to ensure quality affordable housing is delivered.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
7	Ensure the ambitions of the adopted Local Plan are met and a review framework is developed to deliver sustainable growth in the District.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
8	Work with Homes England, the Ministry of Defence and other partners to develop holistic masterplans for the delivery of Grantham's Southern Urban Extension.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
9	Ensure that major developments in South Kesteven are high quality, with sustainable, good design.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
10	Prioritise bringing private sector empty properties back in to use.	Housing	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target

A High Performing Council

Priority Number	Action	Responsible Scrutiny Committee	Priority Status	Action Status
1	Implement the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
2	Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	Not Reported
3	Undertake a Constitution review and implement outcomes.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
4	Implement the findings of the Governance review across the Councils assets (including companies).		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
5	Develop a People Strategy (including a pay review) to support the retention and attraction of high quality staff.	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
6	Develop and implement commercial and transformation strategies to deliver additional net revenue benefit.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
7	Undertake a fundamental review of the organisation to meet current and future needs.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
8	Support the implementation of an IT investment roadmap to align future solutions with the Councils ambitions.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
9	Embed an agile approach to working by building on the cultural and technological changes.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
10	Deliver the ambitions of the Customer Experience Strategy.		No Longer Reported	Not Reported
11	Maximise the value of the Councils own spend by using local suppliers wherever practical.	Finance & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	Not Reported
12	Undertake an Asset Management Review.		Removed as Complete	Not Reported
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 & Economic	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 June 2023

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes,
Cabinet Member for Culture and
Leisure

Grantham Christmas Lights

To consider an improved lighting display for Grantham Town Centre following a compliant procurement exercise.

Report Author

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Culture and Leisure

 Karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk

Recommendations

In consideration of this report, the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Recommends £30,800 of the District's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation is utilised to fund the one-off infrastructure costs in 2023/2024 to enhance the festive light offer for Grantham, in accordance with the delegation approved by Council on 26 January 2023.
2. Recommends that a three-year hire agreement with Gala Lights is implemented in order to provide an enhanced festive light display in Grantham Town Centre in readiness for the Christmas 2023 period.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?

Appendix 2 is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – financial information.

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

Growth and our economy

Which wards are impacted?

All Grantham Wards

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Council has followed a compliant procurement exercise to identify a preferred supplier in accordance with its Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations.
- 1.2 As a Special Expense Area (SEA), Grantham taxpayers directly pay for services delivered to the parish by the District Council. This income is used to fund specific services which includes the provision of Christmas lights in Grantham town centre.
- 1.3 As the proposal aligns to the interventions and outputs agreed by central government, it is proposed that the £30,800 one off costs in relation to the infrastructure costs and installation of uplighters on St Peter's Hill, be met from the district's allocation from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).
- 1.4 The existing budget allocation for Christmas lights is currently set at £17.5k per year. The proposals set out in this report in relation to the three year hire agreement exceed this current budget level. As the increased investment is not budgeted for, then either funding will be reallocated from other SEA budget headings, or in the event that this is not achievable then the Grantham SEA reserve will be used for the current year only to fund the difference. For the subsequent two years the budget requirement will be increased accordingly.

Completed by Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.5 The Council has followed a compliant procurement exercise to identify a preferred supplier in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules and the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 1.6 At a meeting of the Council held on 26 January 2023, ([Budget Framework Proposals.pdf](#) (southkesteven.gov.uk)) delegation was provided to the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Director of Growth and Culture and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development to take all actions necessary to deliver projects aligned to the district's UKSPF allocation. Should the proposals within this report be supported, formal sign off will be required in line with this delegation.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer.

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.6 There is a risk of reputational damage should the Council decide not to invest in a new lighting scheme for Grantham for Christmas 2023. This follows the negative feedback received last year via various sources.

Completed by: Tracey Elliot, Governance and Risk Officer

Health and Safety

- 1.7 Should the proposals within this report be supported and a subsequent order placed, the Council will be required to work with the contractor to ensure that the installation of the lights is carried out safely and in accordance with health and safety regulations and guidance.
- 1.8 The Council has commissioned an independent contractor to inspect the lighting columns in Grantham town centre to ensure that motifs can be safely installed. Any columns which failed the safety audit have been discounted.

Completed by Phil Swinton. Emergency Planning and Health and Safety Lead

Climate Change

- 1.9 The preferred supplier, Gala Lighting, has committed to becoming a carbon neutral company by 2025. An independent third party has assessed that in the last twenty-five years the energy consumption of the lights produced by Gala has reduced by 93% which has contributed to a 95% reduction in greenhouse gasses.

- 1.10 The lights supplied are made from low carbon aluminium which is comprised of 60% recycled materials with a lower carbon footprint. At end of their life cycle 100% of the aluminium frames are either refurbished or the material recycled to create new products.
- 1.11 The recommended lighting scheme utilises LED lights which use up to 90% less energy than the previously installed conventional halogen bulbs. As well as producing a financial saving for the Council, this will also reduce the amount of electricity used, contributing to the Council's carbon efficiency targets.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2020 – 2023) identifies Growth and Our Economy as a Corporate Priority, this includes an ambition to develop the centres and high streets of our four towns.
- 2.2 Following a governance review for Grantham, approval has been granted to progress the establishment of a Town Council. The anticipated timeline for this to be in place is May 2024. In the absence of a Town Council, South Kesteven District Council is currently responsible for decorating the town centre during the festive season.
- 2.3 To date the provision of Christmas lights in Grantham has been supported with a modest budget of £17,500 per year being charged to the Grantham Special Expense Area (SEA).
- 2.4 The Christmas lights currently used are owned by the Council and are over ten years old. Historically the budget for Christmas lights has been modest and the Council have received no investment proposals or requests to increase the budget. As a result, the number of serviceable lights has reduced significantly which has meant the festive light display has been reduced and limited to an area which has decreased year on year. During the Christmas period 2022 the lighting display within Grantham was the source of multiple complaints on social media and negative media interest.
- 2.5 Options have been explored to provide an improved offer for Christmas 2023 and a procurement exercise has been undertaken. If supported, this proposal will provide a significantly enhanced light display for Grantham during the 2023 Christmas period and beyond, supporting the retail and hospitality sector during this important trading period.
- 2.6 Three reputable companies have been approached and requested to provide a proposal to provide a high-quality visual offer across the following areas:

- St Peter's Hill/High Street/Watergate
- Westgate
- Market Place
- Guildhall Street
- Edith Smith Way
- Welby Street
- Butchers Row

2.7 The proposals received all quoted for a wide range of interventions including:

- Street lighting motifs
- Across street banners
- Wall decoration for the Boots store
- Hanging tree motifs for St Peter's Hill
- Uplighters for 14 trees on St Peter's Hill
- Lighting the Council offices
- String lights in various locations
- Artificial lit Christmas trees to be mounted on buildings.

2.8 It is proposed the lighting installations will be complemented by the usual traditional tree being installed in the marketplace, which would also be decorated by the preferred supplier.

2.9 If this proposal is supported the switch-on of the lights will be complemented by wraparound activity to generate footfall to the town centre. Planned activities include a Christmas market, family fun day, street entertainment and food stalls.

2.10 The HelloSK App will also be utilised to support and promote all events and activities over the Christmas trading period. This will include the lights switch-on and associated activity, and individual retail offers from traders.

2.11 Three companies submitted their proposals and costs based on a three-year hire agreement to include the installation and storage of lights each year. During April and May 2023, the tenders received were evaluated in terms of cost/best value, company experience, energy efficiency and attractiveness of offer.

2.12 Following evaluation, Gala Lights (Leblanc Illuminations UK) were selected as the preferred supplier. **Appendix One** to this report is a presentation which provides a visual representation of the proposal submitted by Gala Lights.

2.13 **Appendix Two** details a breakdown of the annual costs associated with the proposal from Gala Lights for a three-year hire agreement, the additional infrastructure costs for year one, and the cost of installing the uplighters on St Peter's Hill.

- 2.14 The mounting of light motifs on lighting columns requires the permission of Lincolnshire County Council. This has been granted subject to each streetlight being inspected to ensure it can withstand the additional weight, and safety will not be compromised. Due to the time constraints, detailed within paragraph 3.2, the inspection of the streetlights has already been undertaken at a cost of £1,750.
- 2.15 In addition to the costs identified for a three-year hire agreement, as detailed in **Appendix Two**, upfront investment of £30,800 will be required in year one to provide the necessary infrastructure and to install the uplighters on St Peter's Hill. It is proposed that this element is funded by an allocation from the district's UKSPF.
- 2.16 The use of the district's UKSPF allocation to fund the one-off costs associated with the provision of an enhanced Christmas lighting display will achieve the following three interventions, outputs and outcomes as required by the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC):

Intervention E1 – Improvement to town centres and high streets

The installation of Christmas lights will deliver the following community and place outcomes:

- Increased footfall
 - Increased visitor numbers
 - Increased perception of facilities and amenities
-

Intervention E8 – Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of the local area:

- An improved lighting scheme will form part of a wider campaign to encourage visitors to the town centre and wider area
-

Intervention E17 – Development and promotion of visitor economy:

The proposals will deliver:

- Increased visitor spend
 - Increased perception of attractions
-

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The result of the independent assessment of lighting columns has dictated the final number of hanging lights which can be installed across the identified areas.

- 3.2 In order for the lights to be installed for Christmas 2023, the order will need to be placed by the first week in July 2023. Members are therefore requested to consider the proposals in order this deadline can be achieved.
- 3.3 Once established, should Grantham Town Council take responsibility for the Christmas lights, then the contractual agreement will be novated to them, and they would become responsible for honouring the remaining term of the agreement.
- 3.4 The uplighters on St Peter's Hill can be utilised throughout the year to support events and activities which are ongoing and be lit in different colours to celebrate commemorative events such as World Holocaust Day and World Alzheimer's Day.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 There are options for the Council to purchase lights rather than hire them. However, the cost of this is considered prohibitive, and additional costs would also be incurred in relation to installation and ongoing repair and maintenance.
- 4.2 The existing lights could be re-inspected and installed as they were in December 2022. However, the lights had limited impact and were the result of numerous complaints from residents, retailers and market traders.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 An improved festive lighting display for Grantham will satisfy and contribute to the achievement of the interventions, outputs and outcomes the Council has agreed to deliver with central government as part of its UKSPF allocation.
- 5.2 In addition, the proposals contained within this report support the Council's corporate objective to develop the centres and high streets of the towns within the District, supporting the retail and hospitality sector during an important trading period.

6. Appendices

- 8.1 **Appendix One** - Gala Lights Christmas in Grantham presentation.
- 8.2 **Exempt Appendix Two** – Identified costs.

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South Kesteven District Council

Christmas in Grantham 2023



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Gala Lights

Leblanc illuminations UK

St Peters Hill | Grantham 2023



St Peters Hill | Grantham 2023



St Peters Hill | Grantham 2023



High Street | Grantham 2023



Watergate | Grantham 2023



Guildhall Street | Grantham 2023



49

THE OLD BANK

THE OLD BANK

Travel



Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

Market Place Entrance | Grantham 2023



50

BLUE CAT
MUSIC SCHOOL
01532 336622
email: contact@bluecatmusicschool.com



Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

Market Place | Grantham 2023



Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

Market Place | Grantham 2023



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Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

Butchers Row | Grantham 2023



Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

Westgate | Grantham 2023



Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

Welby Street | Grantham 2023



Westgate | Grantham 2023



Edith Smith Way | Grantham 2023



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Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

New Council Building | Grantham 2023



58

SAVOY

Disabled vehicles only
between 9am and 5pm

GRANTHAM IS GROWING...
BE PART OF IT



Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK

Council Building | Grantham 2023



69



Gala Lights
Leblanc Illuminations UK



Gala Lights

Leblanc illuminations UK

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



Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 June 2023

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes,
Cabinet Member for Culture and
Leisure

Refreshed Cultural Strategy

To update the Committee on the work undertaken to develop a refreshed Cultural Strategy for the district.

Report Author

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Culture and Leisure

 Karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk

Recommendations

In noting the work undertaken and consultation results, it is recommended the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1. Considers the draft Cultural Strategy produced, making any suggestions of additions or amendments which should be considered.**
- 2. Following the incorporation of any additions or amendments, recommends to Cabinet that the Cultural Strategy is adopted to underpin the corporate priority of Healthy and Strong Communities.**
- 3. Following adoption of the Cultural Strategy by Cabinet, agrees to receive six monthly updates on the progress and delivery of the Action Plan within the Cultural Strategy.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

- Healthy and Strong Communities
- High Performing Council

Which wards are impacted?

All Wards

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 During financial year 2022/23, a decision was made to utilise some of the savings resulting from the Arts and Cultural Services Manager post being vacant to fund external consultancy support to develop a refreshed Cultural Strategy for the district.
- 1.2 Red Quadrant were appointed to undertake this work via a competitive process in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 1.3 Given the Council's challenging financial outlook, it has been important to ensure that the refreshed Cultural Strategy and associated action plan, do not result in an increased budget allocation being required, or represent an ongoing financial burden to the Council.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.4 It is within the remit of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the draft Strategy and make recommendations to Cabinet on its adoption.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer.

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.5 Without the adoption of a clearly defined and articulated Cultural Strategy there remains a risk that the service could remain vulnerable to further reductions in funding.

Completed by: Tracey Elliot, Governance and Risk Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan 2020 to 2023 sets out the Council's ambition to be the best district in which to work, live and visit, with a key objective of building and celebrating the rich heritage and culture of the district. There is a commitment within the Corporate Plan to develop and adopt a refreshed Cultural Strategy, covering the provision of local arts and events across the district of South Kesteven.
- 2.2 The Council's current Cultural Strategy was adopted in 2020 (see background papers).
- 2.3 An independent arts review was carried out in 2021, as a result of which a range of actions were recommended to improve the performance and financial viability of the Council's Arts and Culture service. The review acknowledged the work that had gone into developing the current Cultural Strategy, but identified that it lacked clear objectives and a coherent action plan.
- 2.4 At a meeting of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 September 2022, the Members present considered a report which proposed the development of a refreshed Cultural Strategy for the district, and the key themes to be included. In consideration, the Members present endorsed the commencement of a procurement exercise to appoint a suitably qualified consultant.
- 2.5 Following this decision Officers commenced an open procurement exercise to appoint a consultant. Initially the Council received 30 expressions of interest from interested parties, following the issue of the tender information a total of ten formal responses to tender were received.
- 2.6 The tenders were evaluated, both in terms of the price submitted, and the quality of responses provided to a series of questions which explored:
- Relevant skills, knowledge and experience
 - Examples of previous work undertaken
 - Curriculum Vitae of key personnel
 - An indicative project timeline and methodology
 - Details on what stakeholder engagement would be undertaken.

- 2.7 Following evaluation Red Quadrant were appointed to support the Council in the development of a refreshed Cultural Strategy for the district.

Research and Preparatory Work

- 2.8 Prior to commencing work on the development of the draft Strategy, Red Quadrant undertook a review of existing documentation and evidence. This included the research and consultation which had been undertaken to develop the current Cultural Strategy, and the results of the independent arts review undertaken in 2021.
- 2.9 In addition they undertook a review of recent culture related policy, both locally and nationally, identifying examples of best practice and current thinking in the cultural sector.
- 2.10 Representatives of Red Quadrant also visited the three Council owned artistic venues in Grantham, Stamford and Bourne to gain an understanding of the venues, the artistic offer, and the nature of the district.

Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

- 2.11 At the outset of the work, supported by Officers, Red Quadrant undertook a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify key stakeholders, individuals and groups who had a vested interest in cultural activity within the district. As a result, a wide range of consultation activity was planned to support the development of the refreshed Cultural Strategy.
- 2.12 A publicly available survey was promoted across the District, its launch supported by a media release and regular reminders to fill in the survey on social media. Paper copies of the survey were made available to ensure all residents had the opportunity to participate and put forward their views.
- 2.13 A separate survey was circulated to Members seeking their views and opinions on the strategic direction of the Council's arts and cultural offer and key challenges.
- 2.14 Conversation Cafés were held in Grantham and Stamford. Responders to the surveys were invited to attend these events and provide feedback on a range of round table topics including:
- How the Council could strengthen partnership working and develop a collaborative approach to cultural provision across the district.
 - How the Council's arts and cultural service could recover from the impact of the pandemic and increase participation levels.

- What were the main considerations for the development of the Council’s cultural venues.
- 2.15 Two attempts were made to arrange a conversation café for Bourne. However, due to low take up, interested participants were invited to attend the meetings held in Grantham or Stamford. In consideration of this, and to ensure the Deepings area was also fully represented, conversations were held between Red Quadrant and the lead Members of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Bourne and the Deepings.
- 2.16 A series of one-to-one discussions took place with key stakeholders which included the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder, Chief Executive, Strategic Director for Growth and the Chief Finance Officer.
- 2.17 All staff employed in the Council’s Arts and Cultural Services team were invited to attend an online focus group to share their views.
- 2.18 A workshop was held for Members of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Thursday 19 January 2023. The workshop was hosted by Red Quadrant and supported by the Director for Growth and Culture and the Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure.
- 2.19 **Appendix One** to this report provides a summary of the consultation undertaken and the associated findings.

Draft Strategy

- 2.20 Considering the research and consultation undertaken, Red Quadrant have produced a draft Cultural Strategy for South Kesteven District Council. This is attached as **Appendix Two**.
- 2.21 Identified within the Strategy is the vision ‘South Kesteven is a place that people want to live, work and visit, where culture and creativity are valued, accessible to all and given the chance to flourish’. The Council’s mission being identified as ‘To enable culture to thrive across South Kesteven, to coordinate cultural activity, support a strong cultural network and ensure that all residents benefit’.
- 2.22 The draft Cultural Strategy is built upon the following seven key themes:
- Economy and Growth
 - Partnership and Collaboration
 - Equality and Inclusion
 - Placemaking
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Value for Money
 - Cultural Venues and Programmes

- 2.23 For each key theme, priorities have been identified together with an explanation why these are important for the Council, residents and service users. An Action Plan has also been developed which, if supported, will form the basis of the Council's future work and activities.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 Spend on Arts and Cultural Services is discretionary for the Council and therefore it is important the service demonstrates value for money, and resources invested deliver the outcomes the Council is seeking. The refreshed Cultural Strategy aligns with the corporate vision and takes account of the Council's challenging financial situation. For example, moving away from the Council directly funding events and festivals to supporting communities to do so.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 Within its Corporate Plan, the Council has committed to building on, and celebrating the rich heritage and culture of the District with a key priority to develop a refreshed Cultural Strategy. Therefore the 'do nothing' option was discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 Once adopted the Cultural Strategy will become the guiding principal document for the Council's Arts and Cultural Services Team. Therefore, it is important that Members assess the contents of the refreshed Cultural Strategy to ensure that it meets the Council's vision for the service, making any suggestions for amendments or additions.
- 5.2 A six monthly update on progress relating to the Action Plan will allow Members to assess the impact of the refreshed Cultural Strategy once adopted.

6. Appendices

- 8.1 **Appendix One** – Consultation Report
- 8.2 **Appendix Two** – Draft Cultural Strategy for South Kesteven

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 *South Kesteven District Council Cultural Strategy (2020 Draft)*
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s27348/Appendix%201%20-%20draft%20cultural%20strategy.pdf>

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South Kesteven Cultural Strategy Consultation Report

Introduction

South Kesteven District Council is refreshing its cultural strategy. RedQuadrant were contracted to work with council officers to develop and design a revised strategic direction and priorities.

Following a literature review of cultural provision and best practice, a programme of consultation was undertaken with a range of stakeholders and residents. The feedback and findings from the consultation programme will be directly used to inform the new strategy and accompanying action plan.

Methodology

Following a stakeholder mapping exercise at the project initiation meeting, the following consultation and engagement methodologies were devised:

1. Public survey: available online and in paper copy on request
2. Two conversation cafes in Stamford and Grantham
3. Individual conversations with the councillors for Bourne and Market Deepings, and an offer of conversation cafés
4. A series of one-to-one discussions with 14 key stakeholders
5. An online focus group with staff from the three SKDC cultural venues
6. Online survey to collate member views

Headline summary of key themes

Feedback received via each of the five consultation methodologies is broken down in detail further into this report. Headline themes are summarised as follows:

Cultural offer

- Culture is evidently highly important to residents and stakeholders, with an emphasis on it having a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing
- Cultural offer needs to be broad: recognise that culture means different things to different people and communities and is not just commercial events or highbrow culture
- Historical/old fashioned offer based around assets/venues rather than a real community-based offer

Role of SKDC

- Lots of collaborative working happening in some areas: perception that this is driven by local groups rather than being led by SKDC
- Perceived lack of commitment and cultural leadership from SKDC; improved communication, cooperation and consultation would be beneficial to increasing participation and widening the audience footprint
- Culture is a corporate priority and important to raise the profile of the council in providing cultural activity/offer
- SKDC could develop a convening role to strengthen collaborative working and kickstart cultural projects: not a distinct cultural identity for the district

Accessible to all

- Outreach work is a priority to overcome barriers: everyone should be able to access culture and be involved
- Excellent venues but lots of people don't feel that they are spaces for them: it will be a long term job to alter perceptions
- The cultural strategy must take account of the planned population growth in towns under the SKLP and of the opportunities which new major housing developments can offer

Maximising the potential of the centres

- Importance of delivering a localised and diverse programme at individual centres as part of the wider programme
- The centres could work more cooperatively with local organisations; e.g., this could have prevented the Stamford Shakespeare Company from taking bookings back in house
- Options for setting up an independent trust should be explored; benefits include access to more funding streams
- Business sponsorship is an area to build on: the Stamford International Music Festival should serve as a best practice example

Marketing and promotion

- Marketing and promotion of events is crucial but the current model is not fit for purpose: revised mechanisms need to be put in place
- There is money available from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) to revamp the Discover SK website
- The website is currently clunky: an updated version could be a main vehicle for promoting cultural activity across the district
- The Hello SK app has been launched (£50k from the Welcome Back Fund) to provide notifications on local activities, events and attractions
- Lincolnshire One Venues provides a joined-up approach for venues

Visitor economy

- The relationship with tourism is a key consideration: opportunities to cross pollinate and promote the cultural and tourism offers
- Culture has a hugely significant role in building the visitor economy and making South Kesteven a tourist destination

Building capacity

- Options for localised cultural partnership organisations or Friends groups should be explored, along with an enhanced role for volunteers (e.g., greeting and signposting visitors): this would channel community enthusiasm and provide a turbo boost to cultural provision
- Consideration should be given to the option of a Trust model for the management of the three SKDC venues: community led and self-funded models
- There is a huge potential for maximising the use of volunteers in a wide range of roles, including enhanced roles at the venues

Post pandemic recovery and cost of living crisis

- The impact of the pandemic continues to be a consideration, both in terms of people's participation and cultural preferences
- There has been a significant shift in people's behaviour post Covid: people are still reluctant to go out and there is not much to encourage them
- This behavioural change has been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis and affordability issues

Methodology 1: Public Survey

The survey received 1432 responses across December 2022 and January 2023

78% of respondents were South Kesteven residents. Residents from neighbouring areas and regular visitors to the area also responded.

The greatest proportion of respondents were aged 65-74 – and they are over-represented compared to the South Kesteven population.

Very few (35) respondents were aged 34 and under.

The headline findings are summarised below. The survey report is attached as Appendix 1

1.1 Overall headlines

- Respondents broadly agreed with the proposed strategic themes.
- Culture was evidently important to respondents and many saw it as having a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.

- Many respondents felt that further and continuing investment is required although there was understanding from some respondents that in these times of strained resources, funding to other areas (such as social care) may need to be provided
- The importance of targeted activities was highlighted – especially children, young people and families
- The impact of the pandemic continues to be a consideration, both in terms of people’s participation and cultural preferences
- There are opportunities for collaboration with and across cultural providers
- Specific issues around local venues and provision were identified as high priority
- The number of responses was impressively: the majority of responses were from people who were regular users of the Council venues, especially Stamford Arts Centre.

1.2 Contribution of culture

- The elements around the contribution of culture to South Kesteven and its residents were agreed most strongly agreed with (positive impact on health and wellbeing 92%, strong role 83%, positive impact on business 74%).
- A number of respondents highlighted the importance of culture for people’s wellbeing and particularly many Stamford residents highlighted Stamford Arts Centre as an important venue in the town (albeit some felt it was currently underutilised) in relation to mental health and the visitor economy

" Society is not complete without arts and culture."

"Cultural activities are critical to well being, diversity and inclusiveness in communities, particularly in hard times."

"I agree that culture brings opportunities for all areas of our community and well being. It provides citizens with information, entertainment and education."

Quotes from public survey 2022

1.3 Funding and resources

- 86% of respondents agreed that further investment is required.
- In addition, 70 people suggested that maintaining, or increasing current funding levels would be important for cultural provision and development in the future. Conversely, 24 respondents suggested that in these financially challenged times, council funding should be directed away from cultural spending to ensure that spending can be prioritised elsewhere e.g., social care.
- 47 people commented specifically around the closure/lack of a leisure centre in Deepings; a further 6 mentioned the need to invest in sport and leisure facilities.

1.4 Pandemic recovery

- 75% of people agreed that the pandemic had impacted on participation levels.

- Additionally, 23 people mentioned the pandemic in comments – both the continuing to impact of their own behaviour and/or the slow increase in attendance in this phase of post-pandemic.

1.5 Audiences and access

- 74% of respondents felt agreed that cultural activities celebrate the diversity of the district and promote equal opportunities.
- Respondents provided a number of comments around the need to focus on audiences and access to cultural opportunities. Children, young people and families were mentioned most regularly in terms of target audiences.
- The need to have these offers locally – so they are accessible without a car – was highlighted as important.
- Some comments also highlighted the fact that only certain groups are accessing the current offer, so more needs to be done to reach out to other communities. Location and the type of offer are particularly important, alongside cost.
- Physical access to buildings was highlighted as an area for improvement

1.6 Collaboration opportunities

- 76% of people agreed that stronger partnership and collaboration would improve the offer.
- In addition, respondents provided around 150 comments around the opportunity to collaborate with other organisations. The most commonly mentioned ideas are for the council to:
 - Work with and encourage local communities/societies/groups to organise events
 - Facilitate cross planning and promotion between groups
 - Consider the use of volunteers
 - Use of meanwhile spaces for activities
 - Seek business or local group sponsorship
 - Agree a way forward with specific 'key partners' of SKDC
 - Liaise with Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund to bring in bigger and more diverse projects that lean less on the council budget.
- Collaboration opportunities were mentioned specifically with the following:
 - Stamford Corn Exchange
 - Live and Local
 - U3A
 - Shoestring Theatre, London theatres/ and venues in Cambridge, Leicester, Northampton, touring companies
 - Schools
 - Town and parish councils
 - Libraries

1.7 Satisfaction with the current offer

- Only 31% of respondents felt there were the right number of opportunities to attend cultural events and festivals.
- 79% of people rated their satisfaction between 3 and 5, where 5 is very satisfied with the current range of events and activities.
- 351 comments around suggestions for programming were provided: these included requests for increased live music events, theatre and opera, children’s activities, online/virtual access, cultural diversity

1.8 Cultural participation, venues and locations

- Cultural participation was high – for example with over 70% having attending an arts exhibition, workshop or cultural event in the last year
- For events/activities inside South Kesteven, visiting a park was the most likely activity for respondents; followed by visiting a historic building, attending the theatre or cinema.
- Playing sport and playing music were activities that people were most likely to do at least once a week.
- 32% of all free text comments were about a specific venue with heavy focus on three issues: Stamford’s (temporary) closure of café and request for Sunday opening; and the need for a leisure centre and cultural venue in Market Deeping

“Cultural centres like Stamford Arts Centre are worth their weight in gold giving the local residents free direct access to a range of high quality cultural activity”

“The cultural centres in South Kesteven are vital for the advancement of the quality of life, diversity, education and wellbeing of those that life here.”

Quotes from public survey 2022

- Stamford was the most mentioned location by respondents with over 400 people saying they attend the Stamford Arts Centre at least once a month.
- This relates, at least in part, to the fact that 46% of the respondents live in postcode PE6 (Stamford).
- Other than PE6, respondent postcodes were: NG31 (Grantham) – 10%; PE6 (includes Deepings)– 10%; LE15– 5%; NG33 3%; Others – 26%

Methodology 2: Conversation Cafes

Two conversation cafes were held, one at Stamford Arts Centre and one at Grantham Guildhall, with a combined attendance of 30 people.

Each session explored three main lines of enquiry as follows:

Partnerships and collaborative working

- Perceptions of the current position and opportunities for development
- How well is the cultural offer communicated?
- Who are the key advocates for culture?

Exploring the three main cultural venues

- Experience of each of the 3 venues
- Current position – fit for purpose?
- Balance of community and commercial use
- Alternative delivery or funding models
- Possibilities for a creative and collaborative approach

Post pandemic recovery and the cost-of-living crisis

- How have these challenges impacted cultural engagement?
- What are the implications?
- Do you have any examples cultural engagement supporting you or others through these challenging times?
- What opportunities are there for reengagement and renewal? How can you/we bring people back and improve engagement with the cultural offer?
- The role of the council in culture/cultural engagement

Feedback received from the two sessions has been collated and summarised as follows:

2.1 Building capacity: partnership and collaborative working

- Lots of collaborative working happening in some areas: perception that this is driven by local groups rather than being led by SKDC
- Exemplar: the development of poetry performance programmes has forged links between Stamford, Grantham, Peterborough, Cambridge and attracted international interest
- Perceived lack of commitment and cultural leadership from SKDC; improved communication, cooperation and consultation would be beneficial to increasing participation and widening the audience footprint
- Work should be undertaken to identify which local partnerships are successful and what makes them work so well: findings can inform future collaborative working
- A strong sense that SKDC needs to engage more effectively with schools and nurseries to develop and promote the cultural offer
- Town councils should be better informed and more involved with developing the cultural offer
- Building a visitor economy should be a strategic priority
- Increased visibility of councillors at venues and events would increase engagement from local people
- Options for localised cultural partnership organisations or Friends groups should be explored, along with an enhanced role for volunteers (e.g., greeting and signposting)

visitors): this would channel community enthusiasm and provide a turbo boost to cultural provision

- Diversity should be identified as a strategic priority for developing and celebrating the cultural offer

2.2 Maximising the potential of the cultural centres

- Importance of reaching new people who may currently think that the cultural centres aren't for them
- Stamford needs to be more heavily used and open for longer hours: huge scope for the centre to offer more activities
- The lack of café facilities at Stamford has impacted on footfall and new arrangements need to be put in place as a priority
- The centres have a tourist information role as part of the cultural economy
- Consideration should be given to reopening Stamford on Sundays, potentially in place of another weekday: it is a tourist town and Sundays specifically are a great opportunity for reaching families
- Accessibility needs to be reviewed to ensure that the centres are available to all
- Options for setting up an independent trust should be explored; benefits include access to more funding streams
- Business sponsorship is an area to build on: the Stamford International Music Festival should serve as a best practice example
- Encourage people to reconnect
- Monitoring of customer demographics and diversity characteristics would enable evidence based and targeted outreach work: potentially to the Ukrainian and Polish communities
- Rumours about the risk of centre closures circulate as there is far from adequate communication from SKDC: reductions in staff levels have made communication harder
- Marketing and promotion of events is crucial but the current model is not fit for purpose: revised mechanisms need to be put in place
- Staff based at the centres and local advocates have no autonomy to generate business
- Importance of delivering a localised and diverse programme at individual centres as part of the wider programme
- The centres could work more cooperatively with local organisations; e.g., this could have prevented the Stamford Shakespeare Company from taking bookings back in house

2.3 Meeting the challenges of post pandemic recovery and the cost-of-living crisis

- There has been a significant shift in people's behaviour post Covid: people are still reluctant to go out and there is not much to encourage them
- This behavioural change has been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis and affordability issues
- Perceptions that Stamford Arts Centre came limping back after Covid
- Budget cuts made by SKDC made cuts have impacted on the capacity of staff to develop the centres to their full potential
- There is a clear connection between poor mental health and a lack of creative activity: culture has a role to play in making people feel safe and connected
- Consideration could be given to concessionary or 'pay it forward' schemes
- U3A meetings and events at Grantham are now attracting large audiences as the impact of the pandemic gradually decreases

Methodology 3: One to one stakeholder discussions

The following lines of enquiry were developed in advance of the discussions

Considering the cultural offer

- Is there a strong cultural identity?
- What are your perceptions of the overall cultural offer?

Partnerships and collaborative working

- Perceptions of the current position and opportunities for development
- How well is the cultural offer communicated?
- Who are the key advocates for culture?

Gauging the impact of culture

- How does culture benefit local communities?
- How is this impact measured and articulated?
- What is culture's role in the future growth of South Kesteven?

Exploring the opportunities and threats for the three main cultural venues

- Current position – fit for purpose?
- Investment required and achievable?
- Possibilities for a creative and collaborative approach

Post pandemic recovery and the cost-of-living crisis

- How have these challenges impacted culture and creativity?
- What are the financial and political implications?
- What opportunities are there for reengagement and renewal?

Funding opportunities

- Internal position and possibilities (history of high spend on culture)
- External funding options
- Opportunities for alternative delivery models

Feedback from the stakeholder discussions has been collated and summarised as follows:

3.1 Role of SKDC

- Culture is a corporate priority and important to raise the profile of council in providing cultural activity/offer
- SKDC could develop a convening role to strengthen collaborative working and kickstart cultural projects: not a distinct cultural identity for the district
- A Cultural Consortium is already forming through the Heritage Action Zones (HAZ) scheme
- Cultural identity/offer by SKDC could be strengthened and synergised: venues are seen as three distinct entities, not joined up and often no recognition that they are council resources.
- SKDC doesn't get much credit for cultural activity for the three venues. Some staff previously didn't identify themselves as being council employees (this was prior to a staffing reorganisation)
- Arts, Culture and Events 2021 review identified lots of opportunities: going forward the aim is to develop an inclusive and financially viable offer
- Disparity in the council administration structure doesn't help to foster a joint approach: Bourne and Stamford have their own separate town councils with ward councillors having more influence and being closer to communities than Grantham which is managed by the district council and not as close to communities.
- Important to counter the rumours circulating around potential closures of any venues (Stamford particularly): however, SKDC also needs to consider how best to manage the centres in the long term

3.2 Accessible to all

- Outreach work is a priority to overcome barriers: everyone should be able to access culture and be involved
- Excellent venues but lots of people don't feel that they are spaces for them: it will be a long term job to alter perceptions
- Role for libraries as neutral spaces should be more integrated in cultural activity across the region, although they are managed independently.
- All three venues have under-used spaces within them and could be better used to realise their potential: e.g., could be used for community/public/business use.
- Consideration could be given to broadening spaces and using other venues: e.g., leisure centres

- Could be a stronger educational/youth cultural offer if SKDC works more closely with schools: there are some high-profile academies but these may only target middle-class families.
- 98% white British population in SK: not much BME diversity, however there are emerging Polish, Ukrainian and Afghan communities
- More promotion of culture for women and LGBT+ groups: the latter have a low cultural profile
- Outreach work could be undertaken with care homes, Adult SEN and disability groups
- More cultural activity needs to take place in villages but requires more community outreach and recognise there are geographical issues for audiences – e.g., transport issues
- Venues tend to have same/similar demographic amongst users: a key hard to reach group would be children and young people to ensure the future development of the venues.
- Cultural offer needs to be broad: recognise that culture means different things to different people and communities and is not just commercial events or highbrow culture
- Historical/old fashioned offer based around assets/venues rather than a real community-based offer.
- Need to ensure culture is shown to be important and relevant – it is often regarded as “discretionary spend” by individuals – need to ensure culture is valued and accessible financially.
- There is work to do around programming to ensure comprehensive and diverse offers at all three venues.

3.3 Marketing and promotion

- There is money available from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) to revamp the Discover SK website
- The website is currently clunky: an updated version could be a main vehicle for promoting cultural activity across the district
- The Hello SK app has been launched (£50k from the Welcome Back Fund) to provide notifications on local activities, events and attractions
- For the less digitally savvy, the SK Today magazine goes to all residents and events can be advertised, this can also be done on the main council website.
- A Tourism Strategy is also in the pipeline and it is crucial that Culture aligns with tourism and SK “as a place to visit” along with established heritage attractions (local high profile NT houses/gardens etc)
- The relationship with tourism is a key consideration: opportunities to cross pollinate and promote the cultural and tourism offers
- Love Deepings Facebook social media – a 'support local' campaign run by Deepings Business Community. <https://www.facebook.com/lovedeepings/> : a social media

platform that provides publicity for various organisations including Peterborough Open Artist Studio & Northborough artists activities and exhibitions

- Future marketing and branding should ensure that SKDC has more recognition for supporting and fostering culture
- Lincolnshire One Venues provide a joined-up approach for venues:
<https://lincolnshireonevenues.com/>
- Consider should be given to hard copy marketing of cultural offer with council tax bills
- Branding of the cultural offer and identity is crucial: clear messages that SKDC manages the venues efficiently and supports culture across the district
- There is a need for an audience development plan

3.4 Funding opportunities

- Pots of funding will become available through the SPF for small grants to cultural organisations
- Invest SK – more for business but could be promoted more for culture
<https://investsk.co.uk/>
- SK community fund – could do more for culture
<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=15537>
- Could S106 funds be allocated for culture?
- Need a blend of commercial events that meet income targets alongside more niche cultural events

3.5 Post pandemic recovery and the cost-of-living crisis

- Outdoor events are very popular since the pandemic: camping and cycling in particular
- Lockdown created a vibrant online “visitor economy” and a place for “creatives” to meet and share ideas. Building on this for future cultural vision there is a need for more online forums for the cultural sector. More people attend online meetings.
- SKDC offered “welcome back” funding for businesses and organisations after pandemic
- Use of SKDC venues is approximately 80% of pre pandemic levels – i.e., recovering well.
- Recognition of the impact of culture in terms of social value, health benefits, community cohesion and tackling loneliness: need to be championed and promoted

3.6 Building capacity

- Volunteers have a key role in making cultural and arts events happen – if we want them to be involved need to empower them and involve them in planning and

delivering festivals and events – much of it is about the “journey” and not just the event itself.

- Volunteers can do a lot to help deliver festivals/cultural activity but need support from the council in terms of admin and setting up events – filling in forms, tech skills & equipment for running events, event management, publicity. Could do a lot more with more council support.
- Some locally arranged events raise significant money and could be replicated more widely across SK district: e.g., Santa Sleigh which goes around the town and raises £9.5k and Raft Race generate a lot of interest and are well attended
- Given budget constraints (currently 7% for culture but could reduce further) there is a need to consider how local communities could play more active roles in supporting or managing venues: particularly relevant to maximising the potential of Stamford Arts Centre in a sustainable way
- Consideration should be given to the option of a Trust model for the management of the three SKDC venues: community led and self-funded models
- There is an emerging “cultural quarter” in Stamford – possibilities for more joined up cultural activity including a new library

Methodology 4: Staff consultation focus group

An online focus group was held with 12 members of staff, with representatives of all three SKDC cultural venues in attendance

4.1 Cultural offer

- Culture is not immediately obvious in the district and the cultural identity differs widely from town to town, but it's very venue based.
- Stamford is seen as a more cultural place than other areas in the district: historical context and an affluent area with a strong cultural identity
- Bourne is more insular – Corn Exchange is a good venue but it is really just a large community hall
- SKDC kept culture going through the challenge of the pandemic
- The word “culture” is “scary” as it is a very broad term – it can put some people off.
- It would be good to look at ways of tying all venues together – recognising strengths of each and the fact that some/different things work better in each venue.
- There is lots of different cultural activity but it needs to be joined up
- Important to factor in both venues in Stamford: The Corn Exchange as well as Stamford Arts centre
- Deepings is poorly served as an area considering its profile – it has the literary festival but no theatre, just a library and community space.

4.2 Post pandemic recovery and the cost-of-living crisis

- Venue audiences seem to be more cautious – not booking as many shows at one time, or booking so far in advance
- Live shows: sales have improved but people buying tickets much nearer to event dates
- Family shows are doing well post pandemic
- Venues have been trying different things since pandemic – offering box office split deals in favour of artists/companies – artists/companies needing more money to put on shows.
- Cost of booking tribute acts has increased – reflected in higher ticket prices for these shows
- Cinema – blockbuster films doing well, but niche “art” films having much lower audiences.
- More film streaming (not sure if that is “should do more” or “are doing more”?)
- Pandemic has changed the way people spend their money – everyone is more cautious

4.3 Increasing participation at the three venues

- Diverse offer across the venues – this is a key strength
- Reduction in box office times could be affecting sales, particularly amongst older people and those not using digital
- It would be helpful to measure the impact of venues ceasing hard copy mailouts.
- There are waiting lists for amateur hirers – lack of affordable venues/spaces for groups to use as rehearsal space
- Grantham offers amateur hires and has more scope for “internal hires”.
- Stamford has a varied offer especially in meeting rooms: programming offers something for everyone.
- Consideration should be given to taking programming and publicity functions in-house at Bourne: predicted to increase income due to its strong community offer
- There are often enquiries for smaller meeting room spaces (typically for 15-20 people) at Bourne: smaller rooms are currently staff only spaces so there would be a cost of refurbishment to change these into public spaces.
- There are meeting rooms at the other two venues – consideration should be given to raising hire charges for these, whilst not making them unaffordable.

Methodology 5: Member consultation comments

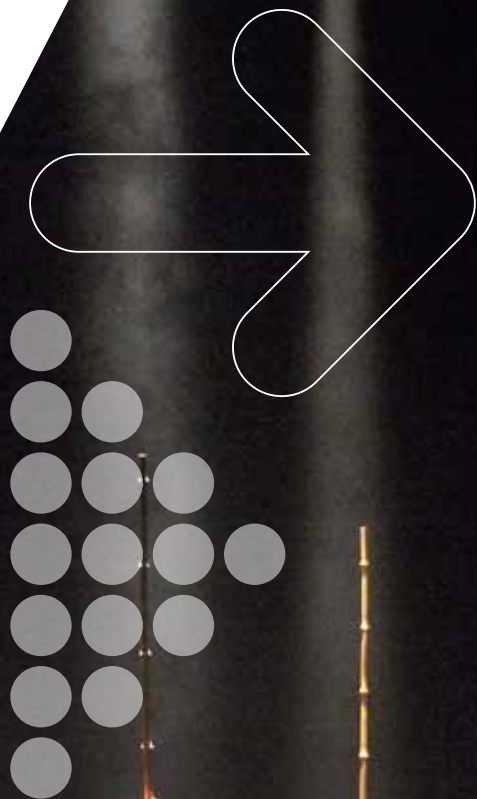
Feedback from survey comments inputted by Members included the following:

- There are no cultural events provided for the Deepings: this is an appalling situation and should be rectified.

- Festivals and cultural offers are key to the success of the district and a boost for the visitor economy
- National advertising would increase participation and increased revenue would then filter through.
- We need to establish robust partnerships to improve co-operation to create more events: high quality events, and well-attended events with artists, theatre companies, musicians, cultural entrepreneurs, indoor and outdoor venue operators, schools and colleges as well as our town councils and neighbouring authorities
- We can't achieve the objective of being the best district in which to live, work, and visit if we adopt a strategy to reduce our cultural offer to be just as poor as that provided in our neighbouring authorities.
- The cultural strategy must take account of the planned population growth in our towns under the SKLP and of the opportunities which new major housing developments can offer. For example, planned green spaces should be designed so that they are suitable for outdoor cultural events as well as leisure activities - and any new schools or school expansions should offer improved facilities for cultural activities which will benefit the entire local community
- We need a strategy to deliver on making our cultural offer more attractive to all those parts of our community who are under-represented in our current audiences - including different age-groups and different socio-economic groups.
- We need a strategy which empowers us to be nimble to react and adapt successfully to changes in media technology.
- We need a strategy to recognise that for Stamford in particular our cultural offer is a vital part of our tourist economy and so must thrive in order to stimulate the economy.
- It seems odd to create a cultural strategy after having just decimated the Arts Centres' budgets - it smacks of shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted."
- I do think we could do much more on the history of all four towns. Our heritage with the Armed Forces, we have BRM in Bourne, which hardly anybody knows about.
- I think we need to encourage outside investors in our three Arts Centres. The council should provide these but we should seek outside investment to run these
- During these times of hardship spending should be reduced for core activities
- I would like more community involvement in use of our buildings: cafe reopened at Stamford Arts Centre and the cellar bar open again; disabled access needs to be improved; more live music; seven day a week programming
- Regular film seasons (retrospectives): events to promote young film-makers; live music - classical, blues, & jazz (not just tribute bands!).
- Fairness across the District, almost 15,000 residents in the Deepings contribute to the arts and culture budget and yet receive nothing.
- A dedicated and ring-fenced budget with the desire to deliver festivals for all the market towns in SKDC and to support the cultural offer
- I don't want my taxpayers' money spent on promoting any more of the Stamford diversity and anti-racism group events held through the Stamford Arts Centre

- is there a way to create an annual national festival that would reflect something from the area, e.g., food, Grantham gingerbread, Lincs pork products, Lincs Red beef Cattle: Hay Book Festival comes to mind, started small and grew.
- More engagement with young people and more outdoor events
- More music: perhaps we could get more bands playing at some of our venues.
- Big name shows at the Meres again.
- Each main town should offer an annual event; but this should be financed from outside sources, with SKDC providing help to seek this financing
- Reach out to community groups and work with them in putting on events
- Have reduced cost/free events for key groups to encourage wider participation across the district
- Work with local bars and restaurants to provide cross events discounts (e.g., Shoestring and Blonde Beet do this already
- Set up a go to Officer or department that has the task of building relationships with these external stakeholders
- Just make more effort to better communicate and cooperate.
- Get sponsorship so less cost to the tax payers.

Cultural Strategy 2023-2026



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

1. Introduction

We aim for South Kesteven to be the best district to visit, live and work in. We invest in culture because we know it plays an important role in improving people's lives. As well as ensuring quality of life for residents and the economic benefits of attracting more visitors, culture is vital for health and wellbeing, employment, learning, and building a sense of place.

What we provide:

- South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) funds extensive programmes of events and activities at Guildhall Arts Centre in Grantham, Stamford Arts Centre, The Bourne Corn Exchange and across the district through outreach work and projects.
- We pay professional companies, touring theatre groups and orchestras, to perform in the venues. We also hire out our spaces to professional groups as well as community organisations to put on public performances. In this way, residents across South Kesteven have access to theatre, films, talks, dance and music across the district all year round.
- The Music in Quiet Places programme brings performances to some of the district's historic churches. We make sure that all of South Kesteven benefits from this.

- We support the Lincolnshire Live & Local Touring Scheme across the district's local community centres.
- Guildhall and Stamford Arts Centre are part of the Lincolnshire One Venues network, which provides collaboration opportunities and aims to reach those who have not previously engaged.
- We programme specifically with schools and education in mind, offering professional performances linked into curriculum subjects. We also fund and facilitate half-term workshops.
- We support up and coming artists and performers with advice and opportunities.

South Kesteven had the biggest economy and strongest growth pre-pandemic of Lincolnshire's seven districts. Our population grew 7% between 2011 and 2021, with an extra 7,000 people living here – by 2036 that could rise by another 18,000.

We want to make sure this continues, even in times of great challenge as we build back from the Covid-19 pandemic and with resources much scarcer thanks to the worldwide economic situation. We will need to make the most of what we already have, seek new resources to develop more, and supercharge our partnership working. Our cultural strategy will help us do that.

The Music in Quiet Places programme brings performances to some of the district's historic churches.



2. Consultation

We think of culture as including the arts, heritage, towns and villages, sport and leisure activities, whether you're a participant, in the audience or make your living from it. And people in South Kesteven think culture is important – our engagement shows a majority of -residents strongly agree that.

Participating in culture has a positive impact on health and well-being

Culture has a strong role in making the district a great place to live, work and visit

Culture has a positive impact on businesses, jobs and services in South Kesteven

From November 2022 to February 2023, a series of consultation events were carried out:

1. Public survey – available online and in paper copy on request (1,432 responses)
2. Two conversation cafes with residents in Stamford and Grantham
3. Individual conversations with the councillors for Bourne and Market Deeping, and an offer of conversation cafés
4. A series of one-to-one discussions with key stakeholders
5. An online focus group with staff from the three SKDC cultural venues
6. Online survey to collate member views



YOU SAID: Culture is highly important to people and has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.
WE WILL: Continue to find ways to invest in culture across the district.



YOU SAID: Culture means different things to different people, and we need to deliver what communities want.
WE WILL: Identify communities that don't use our cultural offer as much and find out what they would like to see.



YOU SAID: Improved communication, cooperation and consultation would be beneficial to increasing participation and widening audiences.
WE WILL: Develop a strong communications plan to make sure everybody knows what is on offer.



YOU SAID: Outreach work is a priority to overcome barriers: everyone should be able to access culture and be involved.
WE WILL: Make sure our programmes and events reach all areas of South Kesteven.



YOU SAID: SKDC could develop a convening role to strengthen collaborative working and kickstart cultural projects.
WE WILL: Develop a network of cultural providers and community groups, convened by the council.



YOU SAID: Culture has a hugely significant role in building the visitor economy and making South Kesteven a tourist destination.
WE WILL: Work closely with tourism to make sure our cultural offer has maximum exposure.



YOU SAID: There is a huge potential for maximising the use of volunteers in a wide range of roles, including enhanced roles at the venues.
WE WILL: Develop a district-wide volunteer programme and increase the number of volunteers.

3. Why we're proud of culture and why we're investing

There is so much to be celebrated in South Kesteven. We have one of the best places to live in Britain – Stamford, according to the Sunday Times. But it's about more than one town. Our wealth of parks and open spaces, our cultural and sporting venues, and our local organisations, all make for a fantastic quality of life. Heritage attractions – Stamford and Grantham town centres, Grantham Canal, Belton House, Woolsthorpe Manor and many others – are among the reasons more than two million people visit the district every year.

It is widely recognised that people who engage in culture enjoy better health and quality of life, and culture brings economic opportunities through employment, self-employment and skills development.

Culture helps place-making and is central to it, giving people reasons to live, work and play in their communities, with benefits to the environment and community cohesion. Culture builds civic pride and a sense of place. Nationally, people value arts, heritage and culture, and want to see more of it.



People who attend cultural events are **60%** more likely to report good health compared to non-attenders, as well as improved mental health and impacts on specific illnesses such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, and physical disabilities - Arts Council.

According to a recent UK research project, people who engage in arts, sport and heritage activities have greater life satisfaction (Understanding Society).

Historic England found that historic buildings were in the top three things people said foster pride in an area.

“Society is not complete without arts and culture.”
Quote from public survey 2022

“Cultural activities are critical to well-being, diversity and inclusiveness in communities, particularly in hard times.”

Quote from public survey 2022



The Department for Culture, Media and Sport costed the well-being benefits of participation in culture and sport at over **£1,000** per person per year.

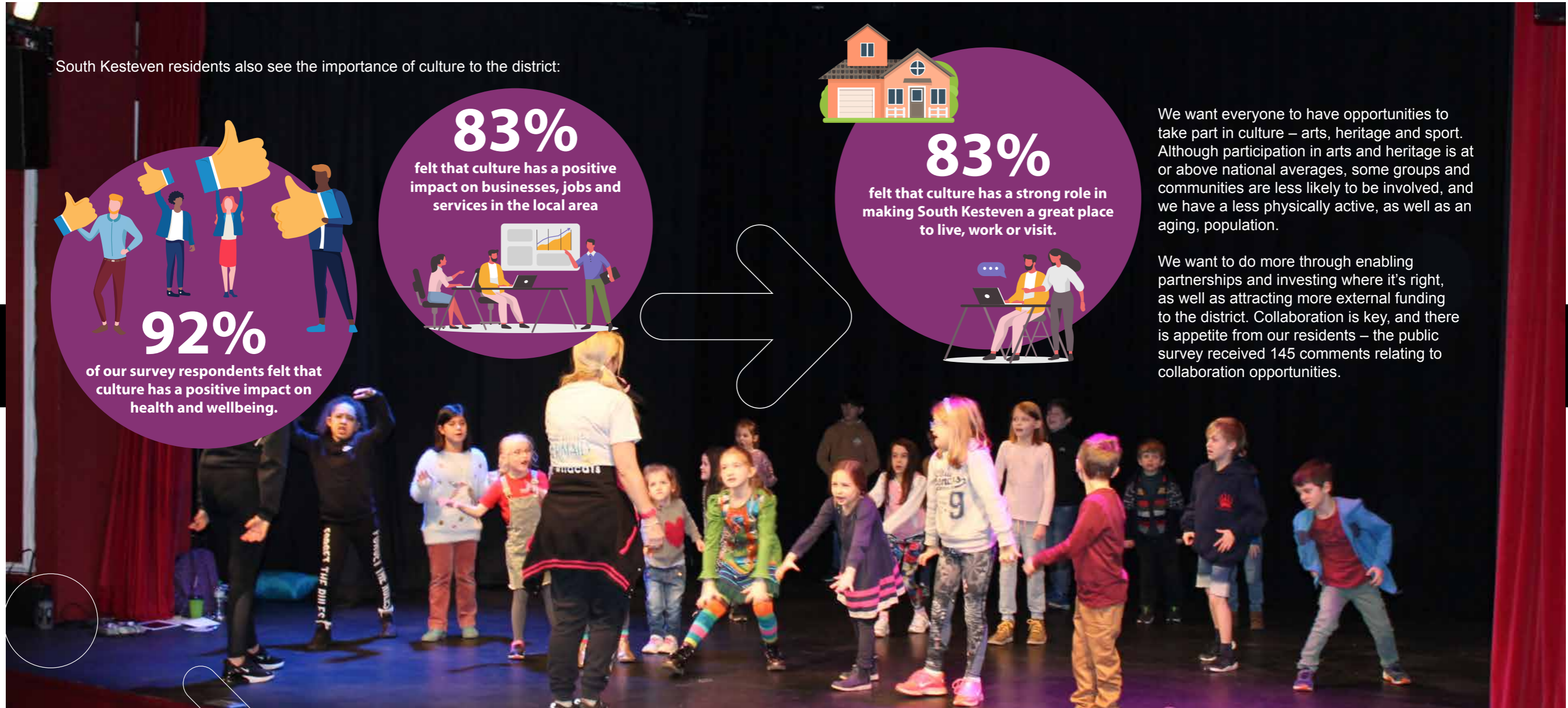
“I agree that culture brings opportunities for all areas of our community and well being. It provides citizens with information, entertainment and education.”
Quote from public survey 2022

South Kesteven residents also see the importance of culture to the district:



We want everyone to have opportunities to take part in culture – arts, heritage and sport. Although participation in arts and heritage is at or above national averages, some groups and communities are less likely to be involved, and we have a less physically active, as well as an aging, population.

We want to do more through enabling partnerships and investing where it's right, as well as attracting more external funding to the district. Collaboration is key, and there is appetite from our residents – the public survey received 145 comments relating to collaboration opportunities.



4. Where we want to make an impact

The Covid-19 pandemic has had long-lasting effects. Income, funding and audiences were all reduced significantly by the pandemic and have taken a long time to build back. We want to make sure that we identify new opportunities for culture to make up lost ground, whether it's new sources of funding from government or the private sector, or improved collaboration between culture and sports organisations in South Kesteven. Culture can make a real impact on the local economy, health and well-being, and in the locality and place, and these are the areas we will focus on through the strategy.

At the same time, projected increases in population, and an aging population, will place additional demands on cultural provision, just as they do in other services. Working with our partners, we want to ensure these needs are identified and addressed so that everyone can access culture. This will also help take-up by under-represented groups, with a special focus on children and young people.

We have already made good progress – our

programming is back at pre-pandemic levels and our audiences are steadily increasing and are approaching pre-pandemic levels. We are now seeking to use our limited resources in more innovative ways: expanding our audience and engaging with people in different and exciting ways.

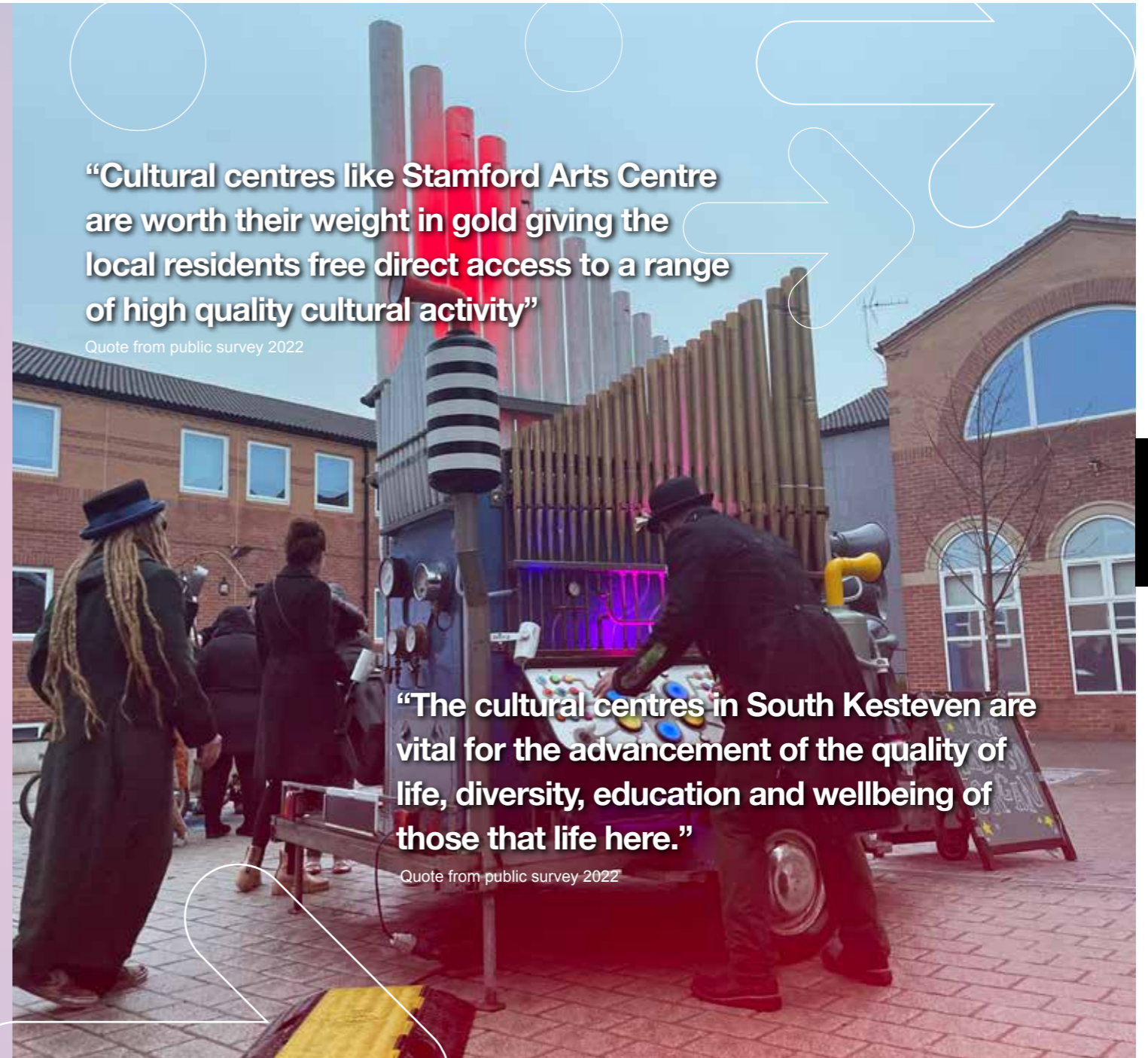
One of these areas is digital engagement. The pandemic brought dramatic changes with increases in streaming of theatre, music, dance, online projects, talks and courses. We want to continue to find innovative ways to bring culture to people. Although the Council has less money to spend than ever, and some other public sources of funding have been reduced, there are good examples, in the district and elsewhere, such as Music in Quiet Places, Lincolnshire Live and the Local Touring Scheme that reach rural areas. These show how innovative ways of thinking and partnership working can make better use of resources or unlock new investment, and the cultural strategy will help guide us in this.

“Cultural centres like Stamford Arts Centre are worth their weight in gold giving the local residents free direct access to a range of high quality cultural activity”

Quote from public survey 2022

“The cultural centres in South Kesteven are vital for the advancement of the quality of life, diversity, education and wellbeing of those that life here.”

Quote from public survey 2022



5. The Strategy

Our Vision

SKDC is a place that people want to live, work and visit - where culture and creativity are valued, accessible to all and given the chance to flourish.

Our Mission

To enable culture to thrive across South Kesteven. To coordinate cultural activity, support a strong cultural network and ensure that all residents benefit.

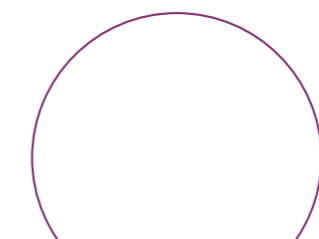


Priorities

Key theme	Priority	Why this is important
Economy and Growth	Increased participation in culture	Culture can help the council achieve its vision of South Kesteven as a place that people want to live, work and visit
Partnership and Collaboration	A strong and joined-up cultural and creative community	<p>There needs to be a central point of contact, a network. This way, events and opportunities can be promoted, planned and funded in partnership with others and people can learn from each other.</p> <p>The Council has previously funded a huge range of cultural activity from the programmes at the venues, outdoor events and festivals. SKDC are now seeking increase their role a facilitator - supporting and promoting community run arts and culture in the towns and villages, sports and physical activity and working with the artists and cultural practitioners who live in the districts.</p> <p>Collaborative working across the district, in attracting external funding, could enable, for example, the sustainability of outdoor festivals.</p> <p>There are many synergies between arts, heritage and sports. This strategy should align with all of the Council's strategy and development work, for example the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and the Heritage Action Zone.</p>

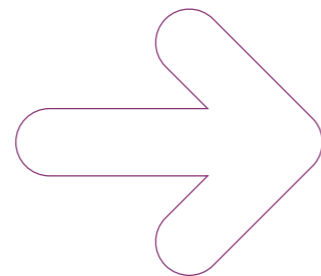
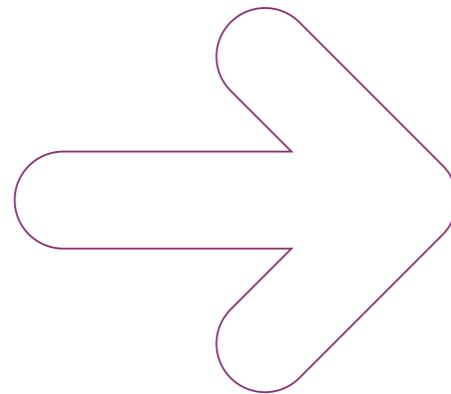
Key theme	Priority	Why this is important
Equality and Inclusion	New and diverse audiences	South Kesteven has a good and varied cultural offer but not everybody uses it. The council needs to look at attracting wider audiences, such as young people and those from areas where there is less involvement.
Placemaking	Improved cultural and visitor economy	Culture can regenerate towns and villages, bringing tourism and economic development. The SKDC population is set to grow significantly over the next decade. Cultural activity plays a key role in bringing communities together. The impact of festivals and outdoor events can be significant and SKDC wants to support communities to build future events and cultural activities.
Health and Wellbeing	Improved health and wellbeing in the district	Culture benefits health and wellbeing of a place and its people. Creativity and physical activity improve the general health of the population
Value for Money	Financial sustainability, value for money and fair access to opportunities	SKDC spends above the average on arts and culture. As finances become tighter, the council needs to ensure both value for money and fairness of opportunity.
Cultural venues and Programmes	Excellent cultural facilities and programmes	The Council runs three primary venues and a range of programmes across the district. It is vital that they are run effectively and deliver programmes to meet the needs of all communities

Key theme	Priority	Why this is important
Partnership and Collaboration	Enable strong links, collaborations and partnerships between cultural organisations in SKDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strong network of cultural providers, practitioners and groups, convened by the council • Build strong links and partnerships with neighbouring districts and regional and national funders. • Work closely with all Council and other services to maximise benefits for residents.
Placemaking	Increase opportunities for people to take part in or experience arts and culture in the towns and villages of South Kesteven Make South Kesteven the best district to work, live and visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support communities to run outreach, event and festival programmes at a range of locations across SKDC – including helping organisers to identify alternative funding streams • Maximise the opportunities at the three key venues with the joined-up management and programming team



Key theme	Priority	Why this is important
Health and Wellbeing	Increase awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of culture in terms of reducing isolation, combatting mental health issues and promoting positive activity and enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to tackle health inequalities in areas with the highest need • Design a promotional campaign on the benefits of culture and its impact on health and wellbeing • Work with sports and health partners to facilitate social prescribing of cultural activity
Economy and Growth	Identify the areas for growth and positive impact on the local economy. Working within the framework of the Local Plan, ensure culture is reflected in development within the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with economic development and tourism services to ensure that the benefits of culture are incorporated and maximised
Equality and Inclusion	Increase audiences from underrepresented groups Increase equality, diversity and inclusion for people participating in arts and cultural activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify target areas and groups. • Focus a percentage of programming at target audiences, especially young people • Ensure that programmes are accessible to rural communities

Key theme	Priority	Why this is important
Value for Money	Enable maximum utilisation of external funding streams for cultural activity Maximise the reach of SKDC funding for culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a central point for information about funding • Provide support for funding applications and signpost to existing funding streams such as SPF and others • Working with the cultural network to identify, promote and support the securing of external funding streams • Explore alternative delivery models for cultural venues and activity
Cultural Venues and Programmes	Ensure that venues are run effectively and that programmes attract and cater for a range of audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop volunteering opportunities to help expand the cultural offer as well as providing opportunities for individuals to gain skills and experience • Explore digital events and activities to supplement the physical and reach people in different ways • Improve promotion and awareness of cultural events and activities across SKDC by developing a cohesive communications strategy using existing platforms and channels • Identify financial investment (or external funding) opportunities to improve customer experience, financial performance, or environmental sustainability of venues • Maximise the impact of cultural venues in SKDC by developing individual asset management plans for each venue. • Establish a coordinated approach to programming and income generation between the SKDC venues



Contact Details

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

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023/24

WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TITLE	ISSUE	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
13 June 2023				
End of year KPI's	To review the end of year Corporate Plan key performance indicators. Lead Officer: Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)	To scrutinise performance against agreed measures		High Performing Council
Grantham Christmas Lights	To update the Committee on the current situation and how this can be improved. Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure)	To consider proposals to improve the festive lighting offer in Grantham for Christmas 2023 to support the high street offer		Growth and our economy
Cultural Strategy	To report on progress made to develop a refreshed Cultural Strategy for the district Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure)	To consider a draft Cultural Strategy for the district		Healthy and Strong Communities High Performing Council
5 September 2023				
Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan six-monthly update	To assess progress on the Sports and Physical Activity Strategy action plan	To scrutinise performance on how the Council, together with partners, is		Healthy and Strong Communities

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Agenda Item 9

REPORT TITLE	ISSUE	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/ PRIORITY
	Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure)	delivering improvements in the provision and participation levels of sport and physical activity across the District		
Performance of LeisureSK Ltd	Six monthly update on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd Lead Officer: Michael Chester (Team Leader – Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces)	To consider the performance of LeisureSK Ltd		Healthy and Strong Communities
30 November 2023				
9 January 2024				
26 March 2024				
FUTURE ITEMS				
Update on Markets	To explore how markets can provide tangible evidence of their valuable direct and indirect economic impact Lead Officer: Jon Hinde (Head of Economic Development)	To provide an update to Members on market development, charges modelling and insight into the economic impact of the markets across the District	Agenda item requested by the Committee Vice-Chairman during 14 June 2022 meeting	Healthy and Strong Communities

REPORT TITLE	ISSUE	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/ PRIORITY
<p>Update on the Inspirational Women of South Kesteven events and review of a district-wide Blue Plaque Guide and Information Trails</p>	<p>To support a key theme of the Corporate Plan to help create 'healthy and strong communities' by celebrating and enhancing the rich history of the District. To ensure alignment with the Inspirational Women of South Kesteven Film and consider if the format could be expanded to cover the District</p> <p>Lead Officers: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director – Culture and Leisure) and Jon Hinde (Head of Economic Development)</p>	<p>To examine the proposed events aligned to Inspirational Women of South Kesteven and the review of a district-wide Blue Plaque Guide and Information Trails</p>	<p>Agenda item requested by the Chairman of the Council during a meeting held on 18 July 2022</p>	<p>Healthy and Strong Communities</p>

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