

# Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL



Tuesday, 26 March 2024 at 2.00 pm  
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House,  
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

**Committee** Councillor Paul Fellows (Chairman)  
**Members:** Councillor James Denniston (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Matthew Bailey, Councillor Emma Baker, Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing,  
Councillor Gareth Knight, 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-1 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](mailto:democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk).
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Disclosure of Interests**  
Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.
- 4. Minutes from the meeting held on 9 January 2024** (Pages 3 - 13)

Published and dispatched by [democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk) on Monday, 18 March 2024

01476 406080

**Karen Bradford, Chief Executive**  
[www.southkesteven.gov.uk](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk)

5. **Updates from previous meeting** (Pages 15 - 16)
6. **Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
7. **Verbal Update on LeisureSK Ltd**
8. **Cultural Strategy Update** (Pages 17 - 26)  
To provide an update on the Cultural Strategy and accompanying Action Plan
9. **Draft KPIs** (Pages 27 - 57)  
To present the proposed key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Corporate Plan 2024-27, to be monitored by this Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and to recommend the approval and adoption of the KPI suite from 1 April 2024.
10. **An update on the Hello SK app** (Pages 59 - 64)  
Provide an update regarding the Hello SK app and future options.
11. **Discover South Kesteven and the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy** (Pages 65 - 69)  
To provide an update on the Discover South Kesteven website and future options regarding a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for the District.
12. **LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report** (Pages 71 - 106)  
To provide an update to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd against the leisure management contract objectives.
13. **Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan six-monthly update** (Pages 107 - 122)  
To provide an update on the progress and delivery of the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021 to 2026).
14. **Work Programme 2023-24** (Pages 123 - 125)  
To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2023-24.
15. **Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

## Meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

**Tuesday, 9 January 2024, 10.00 am**

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Committee Members present	Other Members present
Councillor Paul Fellows (Chairman)	Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Emma Baker	Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing	Councillor Patsy Ellis
Councillor Gareth Knight	Councillor Phil Gadd
Councillor Paul Martin	Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Chris Noon	Councillor Rhea Rayside
Councillor Susan Sandall	Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Ashley Baxter	Councillor Paul Stokes
Councillor Graham Jeal	
Councillor Virginia Moran	

**Cabinet Members**

Councillor Richard Cleaver, Leader of the Council  
Councillor Ashley Baxter, Deputy Leader of the Council  
Councillor Rhea Rayside, Cabinet Member for People and Communities  
Councillor Paul Stokes, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture

**Officers**

Nicola McCoy-Brown, Chairman of LeisureSK Ltd  
Debbie Roberts, Director of LeisureSK Ltd  
Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer  
Alison Hall-Wright, Assistant Director Finance and IT and Deputy Section 151 Officer  
Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) Monitoring Officer  
Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place  
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Services Officer

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### 42. Public Speaking

No requests for public speaking had been received.

The Chairman notified the Committee that he had changed the Order of the agenda and that agenda item 9 – LeisureSK Ltd Management Fee Request and Business Plan would be considered after agenda item 6.

#### **43. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Denniston and Councillor Matthew Bailey. Councillor Denniston was substituted by Councillor Virginia Moran and Councillor Bailey was substituted by Councillor Graham Jeal.

#### **44. Disclosure of Interests**

None disclosed.

#### **45. Minutes from the meeting held on 30 November 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November were proposed, seconded and **AGREED**.

The Chairman advised the Committee that the next set of KPI's would be coming to a future meeting of the Committee as the Corporate Plan was still being compiled.

#### **46. Updates from previous meeting**

A question was asked in respect of the update on the HelloSK App. It was stated that discussions were taking place with the provider of the HelloSK App and a full response would come to the next meeting of the Committee. Another Member stated that he had found some issues with the App and he would send them over to the Officer.

##### **➤ Action Note**

**An update on HelloSK App to the next meeting of the Committee.**

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

The Leader of the Council stated that he had a statement to read out when the Committee dealt with agenda item 9.

#### **48. LeisureSK Ltd Management Fee Request & Business Plan**

The Chairman reminded Members that if they wished to discuss information on the pink papers appended to the report then the meeting would need to go into closed session.

A question was asked about keeping the debate in the public domain. The Chairman replied that the meeting would be kept in the public domain, however, information contained within the pink papers was commercially sensitive and the meeting would need to go into private session if Members wished to discuss that information.

Before the report was presented, the Leader of the Council read out the following statement after receiving the urgent request for £273k from LeisureSK Ltd.

*"In the short term and at the earliest opportunity, the Deputy Leader and the Leader would ask Cabinet;*

- *To request officers, write to LeisureSK Ltd to request a mitigation and recovery plan for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 in response to the management fee request with a view to seeking the level of management fee being requested reducing further for 2024/25.*
- *To request that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Cabinet Member for Leisure receive regular detailed budget forecast reports from LeisureSK Ltd between now and the end of the financial year 2023/24.*
- *To request an urgent independent assessment of the business plan and profit and loss account for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 and propose any corrective action or mitigations that can be undertaken.*
- *To initiate an independent assessment of the existing governance model and operational financial management controls to ensure they are fit for purpose and effective.*
- *To note that an independent review of the VAT and taxation implications is underway.*
- *To ask the Council's S151 Officer to undertake a review of the financial information, a review of the Board minutes and level of financial support being provided to LeisureSK Ltd and to recommend to Cabinet any corrective actions that may be required.*

*In the Medium Term to;*

- *Accelerate the options appraisal for the future delivery model of SKDC's Leisure Services including insourcing and full market testing by tender with leisure providers. This to be undertaken within the shortest of timelines."*

The Chairman of LeisureSK Ltd presented the report. At the November 2023 meeting of the Committee a request had been made for more information. The report had been updated with more explanations under the mitigating items. The Board of LeisureSK Ltd had also sent additional, commercially sensitive information via email to Members which was also contained within the exempt pink papers appended to the report.

The leisure market had been struggling for a number of years and this had been reported over the years to various Committees. As well as dealing with the impact of the pandemic, the leisure market was also having to face the volatility of utility costs and increased staffing costs due to the increase in the minimum wage.

The Chairman of the Board of LeisureSK Ltd reminded Members that the company had been set up due to the struggling leisure market and in January 2021 it had not been the right time to go out to market for an external leisure provider. The Council had decided to set up LeisureSK Ltd as a short to medium opportunity, to not bring the service in house and to look again at the service once the sector had stabilised.

The Chairman of the Board assured Members that work was being carried out to mitigate and explore a range of initiatives to increase income and reduce energy consumption. Reference was made to the Leaders statement and that the impact of utility costs, unrecoverable VAT, software, professional fees and minimum wage increases had meant that LeisureSK Ltd urgently needed £150,000 to meet short-term cash flow issues and that was going before Cabinet on 18 January 2024.

Since the last meeting of the Committee, the audited accounts had been published for LeisureSK Ltd on 22 December 2023 and a link to these was provided within the report. The Business Plan was approved annually in January and was appended to the report at Appendix 4.

Members were reminded of how LeisureSK Ltd worked. The company was contracted by the Council to deliver the leisure services that the Council wished to provide. The contract worked in a way that the Council funded any deficit. The Chairman of the Board stated that she and the Board had faith in the Team at LeisureSK Ltd and introduced Matt Chamberlain, the contract Manager for LeisureSK Ltd to the Committee. The recommendations before the Committee were as shown within the report.

A discussion followed with the following questions/comments being made:

- Concern that the Council was using tax payers' money to bring the company up to operating standards, reference was made to subsidies, grants and loans – it was confirmed that the company was a subsidiary of the Council and was 100% owned by the Council.
- The Board had tried to mitigate costs as outlined within the report including restructures and reviewing all expenditure to reduce asking for a higher management fee.

Clarity was sought by the Chairman following the statement that the Leader had made and which had been circulated to Members of the Committee, were the Committee still to debate the recommendations before them.

The Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer stated that the report made reference at 1.10 to the Leaders statement, however, that was separate to the LeisureSK Ltd report before the Committee and was for the Cabinet to consider a budget amendment at their January 2024 meeting and was not part of formal scrutiny meeting.

Debate continued.

- One Member expressed devastation at the statement made by the Leader and its contents which he had not expected and still queried if the Committee should debate the Business Plan if this was to be reviewed by Cabinet. The Member also questioned the extension to the contract with LeisureSK Ltd and its length to which the Assistant Director Leisure, Culture and Place responded.
- The initial contract had been for a two year period, with a possible 3 year extension period. The contract had been extended for 15 months to bring it in

line with the financial year to 31 March 2024. The extension was done under an Officer Delegated Decision (ODD). If the contract was to be extended until 31 December 2025, this would need to be done at the end of March 2024.

The Leader apologised for any confusion his statement had caused but the Committee was asked to continue to scrutinise the documents before them and any views and information given would be carried forward into the review.

- The utility costs shown were queried in light of the what had been said about their increase as they were shown at only £25,050 especially as a government grant of £344,000 had just been received.
- It was stated that the grant from the government was for the current financial year and had been given due to evidence backed up by analysis costings showing an increase in costs from the previous year this also included chemicals as well as utility costs. There was no requirement to pay the funding back and it would be used to off set the management fee from the Council for 2023/24. It was noted that the figures in front of the Committee were for 2024/25 and the Swimming Support Fund was for the 2023/24 year.
- Further discussion on the utility costs followed whereby the Member felt that it was more administration costs rather than utility costs that had offset the costs. It was acknowledged that there hadn't been a significant overspend of utility costs against the budget, however, there had been an increase between 2021/22 and 2022/23 in utilities which had contributed to the £500,000 management fee requested, the budget had been amended to reflect these costs when set in 2022/23.
- A question was asked in respect of the lease for Grantham Football Club which had expired on 31 December 2021. It was stated in the report that negotiations were ongoing in respect of a 30 year lease, but the club was accruing a significant amount of debt in the hiring of the Meres Leisure Centre and the Member wanted to know what was being done to rectify the situation.
- It was stated that it was a complex situation. In the past the Council had provided a subsidy to a private organisation, however, in the current challenging times this was no longer appropriate. The right balance was required to enable the continuation of a long established football club and negotiations were on going.
- Clarity was sought in respect of the explanation given for the irrecoverable VAT charge.
- The Assistant Director of Finance and IT explained the three different categories of VAT that related to LeisureSK Ltd.
  - Normal rate – standard VAT at 20%
  - Zero rate – 0%
  - Exempt
- LeisureSK Ltd primarily provided activities that were exempt rated not zero rated. When exempt activities were provided, they were classed as partially exempt from reclaiming VAT.
- When the VAT return was produced on a quarterly basis, all purchases that related to exempt activities had to be excluded as VAT could not be claimed

back. Purchases could be claimed back but the income had to be worked out from the percentage of income from exempt activities, percentage of zero rated activities and the percentage of standard rated activities. LeisureSK Ltd primarily provided exempt activities which meant that the percentage of income received from standard activities was very low. VAT had been recorded correctly but it was a very complex.

- Further discussion on the irrecoverable VAT followed to which the Assistant Director of Finance and IT replied.
- A question was asked about the EPC certification, the Government website showed that this had expired. It was confirmed that these had been carried out in August 2022 and were up to date.
- Concern was expressed at how the VAT could be underestimated. Reference was also made to the vacancies in respect of General Managers and whether these were a necessary staffing cost.
- It was noted that dealing with partial exemptions was a complex and lengthy process, unfortunately the VAT increased forecast was established after the budget for 2023/24 had been set.

More debate followed in respect of VAT to which the Assistant Director of Finance and IT replied.

As references were being made in respect of the pink papers it was proposed that the meeting go into closed session. Clarity was sought in respect of whether the Board members of LeisureSK Ltd remained and it was felt that it would be helpful if the Board remained to answer the Committee's questions. It was also noted that the pink papers within the report did contain commercially sensitive information which was not for public circulation.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** to exclude the press and public at this stage of the meeting as it was anticipated that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the likelihood that otherwise exempt information, as described in paragraph 3 of the Act would be disclosed to them.

*(10:54 the meeting went into closed session excluding press and public)*

*(11:19 back in public session)*

The Officers who were also on the Board of LeisureSK Ltd left the meeting at this point.

Concern was expressed about the leadership of LeisureSK Ltd and the continuing requests for money. The services provided by the leisure centres were also queried and how these could be improved.

Members were pleased that the Cabinet would be reviewing LeisureSK Ltd but felt that a timescale was needed.

Other Members felt that the Committee were not in a position to be able to approve the budget or Business Plan for LeisureSK Ltd as outlined in the report.

Recognition was made to those members of LeisureSK Ltd who were also Officers of the Council but the Committee had no confidence in the Board of LeisureSK Ltd and a proposal of a vote of no confidence in the Board of LeisureSK Ltd was proposed.

The Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer clarified that any decision made by the Committee would be a recommendation to Cabinet.

The proposal received a seconder and on being put to the vote the proposal of no confidence in the Board of LeisureSK Ltd was **AGREED**.

### **Recommendation**

***That the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet “A vote of no confidence in the Board of LeisureSK Ltd”.***

Following the vote of no confidence, the recommendations as contained within the report were considered separately.

Recommendation 1 – that the budget allocation of £446,672 is included in the Budget proposals for the financial year 2024/2025 to support the trading operation of LeisureSK Limited. This recommendation was proposed and seconded but on being put to the vote **FELL**.

Recommendation 2 to endorse the Business Plan for LeisureSK Ltd for the financial year 2024/25 failed to receive a proposer therefore, this also **FELL**.

*(A short adjournment took place between 11:36 -11:46)*

## **49. Wyndham Park Tennis Courts**

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture presented the report which updated Members on the refurbishment of the Wyndham Park Tennis Courts. The refurbishment works were 100% grant funded by the Lawn Tennis Association. Grantham Tennis Club had taken on the management and operation of the courts under a leasehold arrangement. It was hoped that the refurbishment would encourage more players to take up tennis. It was noted that there had been a delay due to the complex nature of the lease but this had now been addressed and the lease had been signed in November 2023.

A soft launch of the tennis courts had taken place at the beginning of December 2023 and a larger launch was planned for later in 2024.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture stated that this had been a cross council piece of work with a positive outcome.

Members unanimously agreed with the positive update in relation to the refurbishment of the Wyndham Park tennis courts and congratulated those who had made it happen.

## 50. Update on Street Markets

The Deputy Leader of the Council stated that the item followed on from the last meeting of the Committee when markets were discussed. It was suggested at the last meeting, that a Task and Finish Group was assembled to organise a consultation in respect of markets. The Deputy Leader stated that his intention was for a Task and Finish Group to oversee the development of a market strategy. There were Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group appended to the report and he welcomed the Committee's comments on the document.

The Chairman was thanked for sending a letter out as requested following the last meeting of the Committee to the Grantham Charter Trustees and also Bourne and Stamford Town Councils.

The Deputy Leader thanked Councillor Charmaine Morgan for the work that she had undertaken in respect of circulating and collating a questionnaire in respect of Grantham market and the questions posed by the letter circulated. It was disappointing that only one response to date, had been received from one Stamford Town Councillor.

Craig Rudd, the new Markets Supervisor was introduced to the Committee.

The Committee were asked to look at the Terms of Reference for the proposed Task and Finish Group which would co-ordinate the Market Strategy separate to the Committee.

The Chairman supported the recommendation contained within the report and highlighted the quick responses from Bourne Town Council and the work undertaken by the Grantham Charter Trustees to move the issue forward and come to a meaningful outcome.

In respect of the membership of the Task and Finish Group, the Deputy Leader asked that the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture be included.

Comments were made about past market reviews of which there had been many over the years, but it was highlighted that Councillor Tim Harrison had been instrumental in bringing the issue forward, attending the Grantham market and speaking to stall holders and he was thanked for the work that he had undertaken. Reference was also made to the email that Councillor Harrison had circulated to Members with ideas for the markets that could be pursued instantly rather than having yet another Task and Finish Group whose proposed membership was far too big.

It was felt that each market should have its own individual Task and Finish Group with a stripped back membership, such as the Ward Councillors where the markets were held, the relevant Cabinet Member and an Officer.

Further discussion followed on how each market was different and had distinctive needs. Councillor Harrison's work on markets was acknowledged by the Committee. The Deputy Leader stated that his proposal was a genuine attempt to get the right people in a room to look at aspirations to get the markets flourishing, to look at budgets and issues which

affected the individual markets and other factors such as whether the Council were the right people to manage the markets or could others manage them, look at better engagement with stall holders and promotion of the markets. The Deputy Leader was clear that this did not include privatising the markets or shutting them down.

More comments were made about reducing the membership of the Task and Finish Groups to Ward Members, an Officer and the Cabinet Member and that they should be three “micro” groups that meet as soon as possible to discuss specific proposals and due to the work done already by Grantham Members it was felt that Grantham should be the first to meet to push through ideas.

It was stated that not all Members who were interested in the markets were the specific Ward Member where the markets were held and it was felt that rather than Ward Members it should be those who had a fundamental interest in markets.

Concern was expressed that the issue would get dragged out and it was stated that the markets needed to be nurtured and they would improve. Each should have a specific group which contained local intelligence which could liaise with the right people to find solutions and this should be undertaken quickly.

The Deputy Leader took onboard what had been said and indicated that he would bring something back to the next meeting based on three individual small groups for each Town who would look at each individual market and put proposals forward.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that three small Task and Finish Groups would be established for each Town (Bourne, Grantham and Stamford) to look at proposals for improving each of the three markets.

Membership of each group to include the Ward Councillors, an Officer and the relevant Cabinet Member.

#### ➤ Action

**That three small Task and Finish Groups be established for each Town (Bourne, Grantham and Stamford) to look at proposals for improving each of the three markets. Membership of each group to include the Ward Councillors, an Officer and the relevant Cabinet Member. A report to come back to the next Committee meeting based on this.**

#### 51. Work Programme 2023-24

The Chairman indicated that a report would come back to the Committee following Cabinets deliberations in respect of LeisureSK Ltd and the statement made by the Leader and also that an update on the markets would be added to the work programme for the meeting in March 2024.

One Member asked that a full report in respect of the HelloSK App and also a review of Discover SK be included on the work programme.

A further comment was made in respect of the issue of school holiday clubs. The Chairman stated that there were issues around this topic in respect of what South Kesteven was capable of delivering within the timeframe that they had and he suggested that he and the Member meet to discuss the issue. The Assistant Director for Leisure, Culture and Place stated that she was happy to attend the meeting.

➤ **Action**

**That the following items be included on the Work Programme:**

- **An update following Cabinet in respect of Leisure SK Ltd**
- **A full report in respect of the HelloSK App and also a review of Discover SK**
- **School Holiday Clubs – subject to discussion meeting between Cllr Fellows and Cllr Knight and the Assistant Director of Leisure, Culture and Place.**

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

There was no urgent business.

**53. Close of meeting**

The meeting closed at 12:30pm.

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

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# Action Sheet

Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Actions from meeting of 9 January 2024

Min no	Agenda item	Action	Assigned to	Comments/Status	Deadline
46	Updates from previous meeting	An update on HelloSK App to the next meeting of the Committee.	Democratic Services	On the agenda for meeting on 26 March 2024	Complete
50	Update on Street Markets	That three small Task and Finish Groups be established for each Town (Bourne, Grantham and Stamford) to look at proposals for improving each of the three markets. Membership of each group to include the Ward Councillors, an Officer and the relevant Cabinet Member. A report to come back to the next Committee meeting based on this.		Status unknown	
51	Work Programme 2023-24	That the following items be included on the Work Programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An update following Cabinet in respect of Leisure SK Ltd.</li></ul>	Democratic Services	Added to Work Programme	Complete

Min no	Agenda item	Action	Assigned to	Comments/Status	Deadline
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full report in respect of the HelloSK App and also a review of Discover SK.</li> <li>• School Holiday Clubs – subject to discussion between Cllr Fellows and Cllr Knight and the Assistant Director of Leisure, Culture and Place.</li> </ul>			



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## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 26 March 2024

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

## Cultural Strategy Update – March 2024

### Report Author

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place

[karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the Cultural Strategy for South Kesteven, including progress with the accompanying Action Plan and the achievement of Key Performance Indicators previously agreed.

### Recommendation-

**That the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

1. **Provides suggestions on any additional information required for future updates in relation to the implementation of the Council's Cultural Strategy.**

## Decision Information

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

## 1. Implications

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

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report as the activity being undertaken is within the Council's agreed budget for financial year 2024/2025.
- 1.2 Should a bid to Arts Council England be successful then the grant terms and conditions will need to be assessed and the receipt of funding formally approved in line with the Council's Constitution and governance arrangements.

Completed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Deputy Director (Finance & ICT) and Deputy S151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.3 The Committee agreed back in September 2023 to receive a 6 monthly review on the Cultural Strategy.
- 1.4 There are no further significant legal or governance implications arising from this report.

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

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

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan 2024 to 2027 sets out the Council's ambition of being "a thriving district in which to live, work and visit. The key priority of Connecting Communities identifies the key objectives of delivering and facilitating a sustainable leisure and cultural offer and celebrating and promoting the strong heritage and rich culture of South Kesteven.
- 2.2 The Council's Cultural Strategy 2023 to 2026 was developed during 2023. The draft Cultural Strategy was considered at a meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 June 2023 prior to it being formally adopted at a meeting of Cabinet held on 11 July 2023.
- 2.3 The Cultural Strategy 2023 to 2026 is the guiding document for the Council's Arts and Culture team and underpins cultural activity within the Council's three artistic venues, outreach activity across the district and how the team engage with the wider cultural sector.
- 2.4 At a further meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 September 2023, a suite of key performance indicators was agreed against the key themes in the Cultural Strategy. It was proposed these Key Performance Indicators could be used to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the Cultural Strategy.
- 2.5 Since the adoption of the Cultural Strategy there has been a significant amount of progress made. For ease of reading, an update of work undertaken has been split into sub sections and summarised below alongside the corresponding themes from the Cultural Strategy:
- A) Pay It Forward Scheme
  - B) Outreach Activity
  - C) Marketing
  - D) Venues – Use of Space
  - E) Venues – Coordinated Approach
  - F) Bid to Arts Council England
  - G) Update on Key Performance Indicators
- A) Pay It Forward Scheme**  
**Cultural Strategy Themes: Health and Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion.**
- 2.6 Since the introduction of the Pay it Forward Scheme in September 2023, over 600 contributions have been received from customers of the arts service. As of 1 March 2024, the contributions totalled £3,081.
- 2.7 The Pay it Forward Scheme has funded pupils from Harrowby Infants School in Grantham to attend the pantomime at Guildhall Arts Centre in Grantham and pupils

from St Augustine's School in Stamford to attend a children's performance at Stamford Arts Centre. Feedback has been received from both schools confirming the children enjoyed the performances, and more importantly, the initiative has allowed children to visit the theatres who would otherwise be unable to access such activity.

- 2.8 The Arts and Cultural Services team are very keen to widen the impact of the Pay it Forward Scheme to activity outside of the two traditional theatres in Grantham and Stamford. Discussions are currently ongoing with the Bourne charity Don't Lose Hope, who offer free professional counselling services to the local community for individuals receiving certain state benefits. Free tickets to an event at Bourne Corn Exchange, which is taking place in March 2024, are being offered to some of their clients.
- 2.9 In addition, investigations are being made as to how the fund can be utilised to hold a free to access event in Deepings for the local community.
- 2.10 Links have been established with the Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service to understand how free attendance to performances and activity can be offered via social prescribing organisations. The aim of this initiative will be to help patients and residents access arts and cultural activity to enhance their wellbeing, reduce social isolation, or alleviate the symptoms of health conditions.

## **B) Outreach Activity**

### **Cultural Strategy Themes: Equality and Inclusion, Placemaking, Partnership and Collaboration**

- 2.11 The Rural Touring Scheme, which is funded by Arts Council England, takes high quality live performances to rural spaces. Being operated by Live and Local, the Scheme continues to be extremely well supported in South Kesteven and the programme for 2024/2025 has recently been confirmed. The Council contributes just over £3,500 to the Scheme annually which has secured fourteen performances across the district in the coming financial year. The events planned include indoor ticketed events, outdoor events and performances in libraries.
- 2.12 The Music in Quiet Places programme is set to continue in 2024. The programme provides classical music events by international and local artists which are hosted by churches in rural areas. Historically these performances have been very well supported. Across the four performances during Summer 2023, a total of 355 tickets were sold which was an improvement on the previous year which yielded 297 ticket sales.

2.13 The Music in Quiet Places performances scheduled for 2024 are as follows:

30 May 2024	St Martin's Church, Barholm, North Stamford
13 June 2024	St Swithun's Church, Long Bennington, North of Grantham
11 July 2024	St James' Church, Aslackby, North of Bourne
25 July 2024	St Firmin's Church, Thurlby, near The Deepings

- 2.14 An outreach project is being planned and will be delivered by the Arts Team around Easter. This will see large wooden eggs being delivered to schools and community groups around the district. The schools and groups will be responsible for decorating the eggs which will then form part of a free Easter trail in each market town. In the Deepings, the trail will be delivered in association with Deepings Library to coincide with their Family Fun Day at the end of March. In the other towns, local businesses will host eggs to form part of a trail.
- 2.15 Discussions are ongoing with an artistic company Lumo, who specialise in community-led immersive arts experiences, with a view to developing an outreach project in Bourne and The Deepings. Further information will be provided once concepts and ideas have been developed.

### **C) Marketing**

#### **Cultural Strategy Themes: Equality and Inclusion, Placemaking, Partnership and Collaboration, Cultural Venues and Programmes and Value for Money**

- 2.16 Ticket sales for the Guildhall Arts Centre and Stamford Arts Centre are supported by the software provider Spektrix. In addition to providing the centres with a face to face and online booking system, Spektrix is a highly functional customer relationship management system which provides data led insights and enables the Arts Team to undertake targeted marketing activity. This includes the ability to send marketing emails to customers who have subscribed to receive information on upcoming performances, and the ability to send targeted information to customers promoting performances which are similar to those they have previously attended.
- 2.17 There are two Marketing Officers employed within the service who work closely with the Council's Communications Team to ensure the buildings, events and services are effectively promoted. Recently the Marketing Officers have been assessing the effectiveness of various marketing activity to establish whether this provides value for money and is effective in terms of reach and attracting new customers.
- 2.18 In line with national best practice, and since the return of live performances post the COVID-19 pandemic, the What's On guides for Grantham and Stamford arts centres are no longer posted directly to customers. These are published online and emailed to subscribers, with hard copies being available in the arts centres. Utilising the Spektrix system, the team are identifying those customers who have not returned to the arts centres since the pandemic and encouraging them to sign up for the regular email alerts.

- 2.19 The What's On brochures are refreshed three times a year. To support the brochure launches, celebration events are being planned for the two arts centres in Grantham and Stamford. It is hoped these will encourage footfall into the venues and facilitate the early booking of tickets for events. If customers can be encouraged to book earlier for events, then marketing activity can be more focused on those events which may be harder to sell and require a more targeted approach.
- 2.20 The artistic venues make good use of social media to promote their services and events. Grantham Guildhall Arts Centre and Stamford Arts Centre utilise Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram, and Bourne Corn Exchange currently uses Facebook.
- 2.21 The team are assessing which media marketing opportunities provide the best results in terms of reach and ticket sales. Advertising in the Village Link and Grantham Link magazines has proved to be particularly effective, and links are being made with Rutland and Stamford Sound for regular advertising opportunities to widen the reach of the service.
- 2.22 For Bourne Corn Exchange regular advertising was previously taking place with Bourne Local however, as the paper is due to stop printing, the team are liaising with the organisation around online campaigns.
- 2.23 The Marketing Officers have also secured other opportunities to promote events, including the use of bus shelters at Grantham Bus Station.

#### **D) Venues – Use of Space**

##### **Themes: Cultural Venues and Programmes, Value for Money, Equality, and Inclusion**

- 2.24 As well as providing artistic activity and events, the Council's three arts venues play an important part in hosting wider community activity and performances via room hire bookings. These events widen the footfall of the centres and the income generated, supplements the wider upkeep and maintenance of the facilities. Regular users and hires include:
- Ongoing participation by youth theatre groups at Stamford and Guildhall Arts Centres
  - Resident artist studios at Stamford Arts Centre
  - Dance, fitness and meditation classes across all three venues
  - Dementia support group at Bourne Corn Exchange
- 2.25 As part of the work undertaken to set the fees and charges for room hires for the financial year 2024/2025, a review of alternative facilities and prices was carried out to ensure the Council's arts facilities can remain attractive to hirers and community groups. If there is community benefit, and the activity aligns with the Council's

Cultural Strategy, then it is possible to offer small discounts for room hire bookings on an individual basis.

#### **E) Venues – Coordinated Approach**

**Themes: Cultural Venues and Programmes, Value for Money, Equality, and Inclusion**

- 2.26 Grantham Guildhall and Stamford Arts Centre share a Programming Officer whose role it is to attract professional touring productions including theatre, music, dance, poetry and workshops to the venues. Although there remains a distinct individual offer at each of the venues in Grantham and Stamford, this has enabled a co-ordinated approach to programming which is kept under constant review to identify trends, the effectiveness of the programme and assess value for money.
- 2.27 Ticket sales for Stamford and Grantham have increased year on year. Looking at January 2024, the number of tickets sold across the two venues increased by 1,290 which represents an increase of 35%.
- 2.28 Events and performances at Bourne Corn Exchange are arranged by the Bourne Corn Exchange Manager. The venue hosts a significant number of hires for events, celebrations and meetings. In addition, a smaller number of professional shows are hosted, where possible the team are ensuring tickets for these events are sold via the Spektrix system which ensures wider publicity and marketing for the events, as well as enabling data capture on attendance.

#### **F) Bid to Arts Council England**

**Themes: Value for Money, Placemaking, Equality and Inclusion**

- 2.29 The Arts Team are working on project bid to Arts Council England with the intention of establishing and improving the approach to artistic engagement in Bourne and The Deepings.
- 2.30 To support the development of the bid, consultation will be undertaken with residents and artistic practitioners with South Kesteven and further afield to establish what activity already exists, what activity residents currently travel to participate in, and what residents want to see more of in their local community. Artistic practitioners will be asked what they currently do, where they are based and what are the barriers to them undertaking cultural activity in Bourne or the Deepings.
- 2.31 The results of the consultation will be used to form the basis of a bid which will focus on mentoring for artistic practitioners to establish or develop their work in the identified areas, ensuring that this will continue beyond the scope of the project and funding period. It is envisaged the resulting activity will include workshops, regular sessions, and one-off events.

## G) Update on Key Performance Indicators

- 2.32 An update on activity undertaken to support the Key Performance Indicators agreed at a meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 September 2023 is provided in **Table One** below:

<b>Table One – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>		
<b>Key Theme</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>
<b>Partnership and Collaboration</b>	Numbers of providers engaged with a Council established cultural network	This will be progressed in the coming months. There has been a slight delay due to team vacancies. The team is now fully resourced
<b>Placemaking</b>	Number of outreach events held or supported by the Arts and Cultural Services team	Outreach activity has taken place in Grantham and Stamford as part of Lincolnshire One Venues. The Evolve event saw schools working with a music practitioner which resulted in a performance. The pupils were then invited to a show and had a Q & A session with technical staff about backstage roles.
	Attendance numbers at venues	Tickets sold for performances April 2023 to March 2024:  Guildhall Arts Centre – 29,459 Stamford Arts Centre – 34,650  There are additional attendances at each venue in relation to parties, weekly classes, lectures, private hires and rehearsals
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	Social prescribing service established and residents engaged	Work is being undertaken with Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service to establish social prescribing routes  21 service users from Don't Lose Hope in Bourne are being engaged through the Pay it Forward Scheme

<b>Equality and Inclusion</b>	Numbers of participants engaged with the arts service from target groups	21 service users engaged from Don't Lose Hope 40 students allocated tickets for children's show from St Augustine's School, Stamford 35 students allocated tickets for children's show from Harrowby Infants School, Grantham Programming continues to deliver diverse pieces across the venues including the re-introduction of subtitled and relaxed cinema screenings at Stamford Arts Centre
	Take up of Rural Touring programme across the district	A total of 17 events across 9 different communities and venues took place in 2023/2024 in South Kesteven via the Live and Local Scheme
<b>Value for Money</b>	Amount of external funding secured to support the service	Arts Council Transition funding has now ended. A project grant bid is being developed
	Amount of subsidy required to support the service	To be confirmed following financial year end
<b>Cultural Venues and Programmes</b>	Number of volunteering hours engaged in the delivery of Arts and Cultural events	Since August 2023 the total number of hours undertaken by volunteers is 1358

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 The report provides an update on work being undertaken since the adoption of the Cultural Strategy and Key Performance Indicators.
- 3.2 The Council, as the largest public funder of culture in South Kesteven, is largely unconstrained by national regulations and requirements. This provides considerable scope to bid to organisations such as the Arts Council England and also work with cultural partners, community groups and residents to shape the local offer which truly meets local needs and aspirations.

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

- 4.1 It has previously been agreed by the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, six monthly updates would be provided, therefore the 'do nothing' option was discounted.

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

- 5.1 As the Council strives to deliver best value and the widest engagement with culture, Members are requested to provide suggestions on any additional information required for future updates in relation to the implementation of the Council's Cultural Strategy.

## **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1 *Cultural Strategy (2023-2026)* – Report to Cabinet, published 11 July 2023, available online at:  
[http://moderngovsvr/documents/s38228/Cultural%20Strategy%202023%20to%202026.pdf?LO\\$=1](http://moderngovsvr/documents/s38228/Cultural%20Strategy%202023%20to%202026.pdf?LO$=1)
- 6.2 *Cultural Strategy Key Performance Indicators* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 5 September 2023, available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s38848/Cultural%20Strategy%20KPIs.pdf>



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL



## Culture & Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 March 2024

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles,  
Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Governance and Licensing

## Corporate Plan 2024-27: Key Performance Indicators

### Report Author

Charles James, Corporate Policy Officer

Charles.James@southkesteven.gov.uk

### Purpose of Report

To present the proposed key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Corporate Plan 2024-27, to be monitored by this Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and to recommend the approval and adoption of the KPI suite from 1 April 2024.

### Recommendations

#### That the Committee:

1. Approves the key performance indicators it wishes to review associated with the actions in the Corporate Plan 2024-27.
2. Notes that key performance indicators will be monitored throughout the year as determined by the Committee in agreeing its work programme.
3. Notes that the KPI suite will be reviewed and if necessary revised as part of the annual review process.

<b>Decision Information</b>	
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 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Completed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Deputy Director (Finance & ICT) and Deputy S151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications associated with this report which are not already highlighted in the body of the report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance & Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan (the Plan) sets out the strategic vision and key priorities of the Council. The Plan underpins the delivery of all of the Council's strategic activity and provides the performance framework for managing the delivery of the actions and priorities in the Plan. It is good practice for a public sector organisation seeking to deliver a wide set of aims and objectives to produce a Corporate Plan and regularly review the activity and achievements against it.
- 2.2 The Corporate Plan 2024-2027 was adopted by Council on 25 January 2024 (see Appendix 1). It was proposed actions, key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets would be developed by the relevant overview and scrutiny committees (OSCs), which would retain oversight of the performance management arrangements at a strategic level. Cabinet will receive performance reports on a quarterly basis. Scrutiny committees will also be able to take a deeper dive into any areas of concern.

## 3. Key Considerations

### Performance Management Framework

- 3.1 Effective performance management is essential to the success of the Plan. It establishes how delivery will be monitored, improvements driven, and open and transparent accountability upheld.
- 3.2 There are two suites of performance indicators to support the Plan.
  - a) The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will monitor the **delivery of the Corporate Plan Actions and the overall performance of the Council**. This report proposes the KPI suite for the 10 actions that fall within the scope of the Culture & Leisure OSC. Accountability for delivery of these actions rests with the Senior Management Team. A table of the proposed KPIs is available in Appendix 2.
  - b) The Strategic Socio-Economic Indicators (SSEIs) will monitor the progress towards the fulfilment of the Council's vision, 2034 outcomes, and the **overall performance of the district**. Each SSEI is benchmarkable against other local authorities, aligned to the Office for Local Government (OFLOG) suite, and will be reported in the annual State of the District report (SOTD). The SSEIs will be kept under constant revision, enabling immediate incorporation of new OFLOG metrics etc. The Council has limited influence over the SSEIs. Reporting will evidence whether the district is on the right trajectory and provide insight into the Council's operating environment, enable the

identification of challenges and shape the service response. The current SSEI suite is available in Appendix 3.

- 3.3 Accompanying the KPI report will be a performance indicator (PI) dashboard. This will present information regarding the performance of the relevant Service, which are out of the KPI measures scope. The intention is to present the 'story' of the Service to Committee, providing as meaningful and robust performance data as possible. These measures are not KPIs and will be kept under constant review by Officers to ensure the most useful data is being captured for the Committee.
- 3.4 Once approved, reporting on the KPIs will be a regular part of the OSC workplans. Mid-year (quarter 2) and end-of-year (quarter 4) reports will be presented to the OSCs. Quarterly reports will be presented to Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team (CMT).
- 3.5 An annual performance report that considers all aspects of the Corporate Plan will be presented to Cabinet. This report will have been to relevant scrutiny committees, to consider any changes required to the KPI suite and the actions of the Corporate Plan. Changes may be required in response to the external operating environment or policy context. As an agile organisation it is crucial for the Council to retain this flexibility.
- 3.6 Work is underway to strengthen the Performance Management page of the Council's website. To improve openness and transparency it is intended this page will host the KPI reports, link to the relevant Committee meetings and publish data pertaining to the performance of the Council, but not directly captured by the measures of the KPI suite. The PI dashboards will all be hosted on the page.

## **Development and Design**

- 3.7 An effective KPI suite must be able to perform three functions:
  - Measure activity and performance.
  - Understand experiences and outcomes.
  - Use evidence to inform and drive improvement.
- 3.8 Meeting these functions has underpinned the approach to developing the KPI suite. To do this, two basic foundational principles have been observed:
  - The selected metrics must be wholly within the Council's control, so offering accountability and stimulating continuous improvement.
  - The selected metrics must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & Timely).
- 3.9 Each KPI has quantitative (i.e. numerical or measurable data telling us how many, how much or how often) and qualitative (i.e. non-numerical data to understand underlying reasons, opinions and motivations) measures. The quantitative measures enable progress over time to be monitored and are

benchmarkable where appropriate. The qualitative enable the quantitative measures to be contextualised and the experience of service delivery to be understood. This latter function will be provided by the commentary on each KPI produced by the responsible Officer.

- 3.10 The draft KPIs have been developed in close consultation with the relevant Officers for each service. It is expected that the KPI suite will experience a degree of evolution over the next four years. This improvement will be prompted by the needs of decision makers and the scrutiny committees, and further consideration of how to best meet those needs by Officers.

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

- 4.1 As Council has agreed the OSCs will lead on this invaluable work of agreeing KPIs they wish to keep under review, there are no viable alternatives. An absence of success criteria would mean the delivery of the Corporate Plan is unmonitored and prevent continuous improvement. Having a purely internal KPI suite would prevent effective and transparent scrutiny and accountability.
- 4.2 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) published draft statutory guidance on compliance with the Best Value Duty for local authorities in July 2023. The Best Value Duty relates to the statutory requirement for local authorities and other public bodies defined as best value authorities in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999 ("the 1999 Act") to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness".
- 4.3 The guidance provides greater clarity to Local Government on how to fulfil the Best Value Duty by describing what constitutes best value, the standards expected by the department and the models of intervention at the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' disposal in the event of failure to uphold these standards. DLUHC is currently analysing consultation responses to the draft guidance. The final document is expected in 2024.
- 4.4 The draft guidance is clear that '*Making arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance and outcomes is a core requirement for achieving best value.*' This will require robust and effective performance management and scrutiny. The presence and practice of these arrangements are characteristics of a well-functioning authority. The absence or poor functioning of said arrangements are indicators of potential failure.

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

- 5.1 The adoption of the KPIs and targets set out in Appendix 2 of this report (and encompassing any changes agreed by the scrutiny committee) will provide a basis for effective performance management of the Corporate Plan 2024-2027 and enables the overview and scrutiny committee to input on the development of the targets.

5.2 The annual review process will ensure Cabinet is provided with a clear overview of progress against targets for the previous financial year, along with the opportunity of ensuring the Council's activities are focussed on the highest priority areas (i.e. a refocussing based upon any changes to the external environment or policy context).

## **6. Consultation**

6.1 The draft KPIs and targets set out in Appendix 2 have been developed in consultation with relevant officers. This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Committee members with the opportunity to input on the development (and ongoing management) of relevant KPIs and targets.

## **7. Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2024-27
- Appendix 2 – Proposed KPI Suite 2024-27: Culture & Leisure OSC
- Appendix 3 – Strategic Socio-Economic Indicator (SSEI) Suite: Culture & Leisure OSC (February 2024)



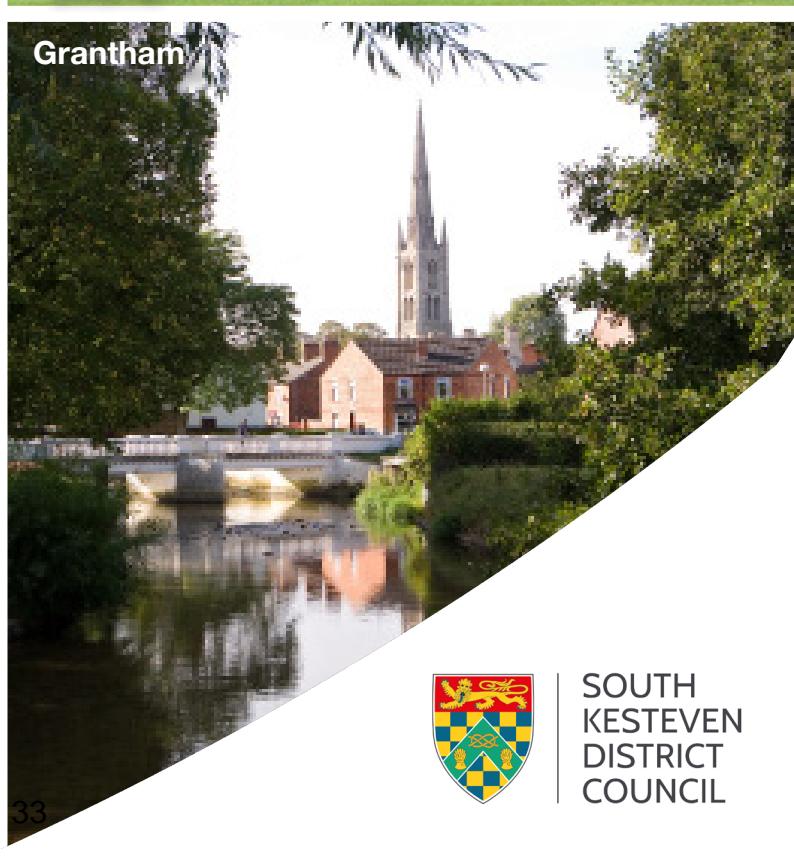
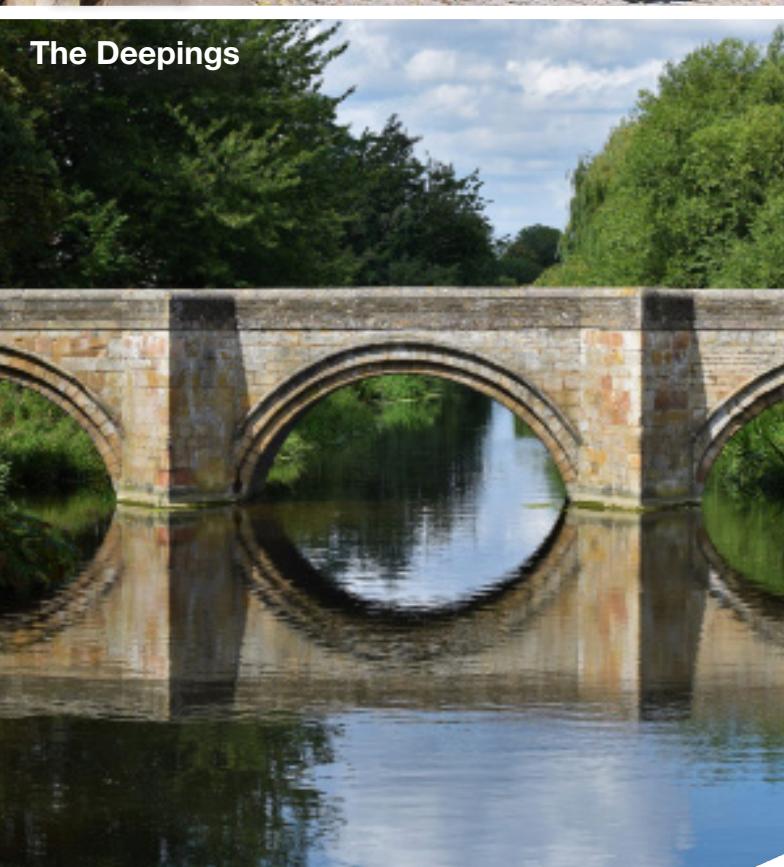
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# Corporate Plan

## 2024-27



# Foreword by the Leader and Chief Executive

South Kesteven is a District full of promise and potential. It is marked by the resilience, strength, resourcefulness and kindness of our communities. It is the mission of the Council to kickstart that potential, driving forward for a sustainable future.

Our Corporate Plan clearly sets out how we intend to realise that mission. It is a statement of who we are as an organisation.

This is a plan grounded in a comprehensive evidence base, informing the Council's strategic direction and priorities.

It is designed to be ambitious, realistic, dynamic and adaptable, with a long-term focus of where we want our District to be in the medium term. We have received excellent engagement from Elected Members, businesses, partners, community groups and residents.

We are confident this Corporate Plan will guide the work of the Council towards our vision to be 'A thriving District to live in, work and visit', underpinned by five priorities:

- We will continue to engage with all communities to support a thriving society that all our residents are proud to be a part of.
- We will meet the challenge of climate change with a renewed energy, championing our District to be a clean, green and healthy environment for future generations.
- We will support business and work with partners across all sectors to create the right conditions to support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which fulfils the potential of the District and benefits all our communities.
- We will ensure all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations.
- We will deliver the trusted, high quality and value-for-money services our residents expect and deserve.

Underpinning the priorities are three fundamental principles:

- *Listening and being responsive to the needs of all our communities.*
- *Building public trust and confidence by promoting a culture of openness, transparency and accountability.*
- *Providing value-for-money for residents and businesses through responsible and prudent use of resources.*

The Corporate Plan is our blueprint for the next four years, built upon the foundations of prudent financial management, the values of #TEAMSK, robust performance management and collaboration with partners who share our ambition for South Kesteven.

As the Council delivers the priorities over the next four years, residents and businesses can expect to see a continued focus on our communities, the Council leading the way to achieve Net Zero, sustainable economic growth, housing that meets the needs of the District and an effective Council always delivering for local residents.



**Cllr Ashley Baxter**  
Leader of the Council



**Karen Bradford**  
Chief Executive of the Council



Belton House



Grimsthorpe Castle

# A New Vision for South Kesteven

**The Corporate Plan is based on a golden thread. This is the thread that connects all work, at all levels of the organisation, directly to our overarching vision, priorities and ambitions.**

The vision sets out what the Council wants the District to be like:

**'A thriving District to live in, work and visit'.**

This phrase encapsulates our aspirations for the District, a place of dynamic, prosperous, and connected communities. Above all, a place residents are proud to call home.

Our mission is to provide excellent public services and robust governance to support South Kesteven. A mission statement defining the approach the Council will adopt has been developed:

**'South Kesteven aims to be a modern and forward-looking Council that delivers effective, efficient and equitable public services to enhance the well-being of our residents, enable prosperity, protect the environment and empower communities for a sustainable future'.**

The statement sets out who we aspire to be as an organisation: committed, creative, caring. Grounded in the principles of transparency, accessibility, and accountability.

The vision and mission statement underpin our priorities and approach to service delivery. Where we have statutory services to deliver: providing housing, collecting waste, running elections, planning, licensing and environmental health, these will be delivered with the high quality, consistency and timeliness expected by our residents and businesses.

Where we deliver discretionary services: a sustainable leisure and cultural offer, supporting local enterprise and reinvigorating our towns and leading on climate action, these will be delivered with energy and creativity to achieve an exemplary level of service provision.

We recognise our vision cannot be achieved in isolation. We will champion community participation and collaborative partnerships with businesses and other public sector organisations.

We will continue to build on South Kesteven's success as a thriving place to live, work and visit. We will cement our reputation as a Council trusted by our residents to deliver value for money.

# South Kesteven: A place to call home

South Kesteven is the southern gateway to Lincolnshire. A District where heritage meets innovation, proud of our past, whilst focused on the future.

The 2021 census revealed South Kesteven is home to 143,400 residents. The majority of the population reside in the four historic market towns of Bourne, Grantham, Stamford, and The Deepings. The remainder live in the network of villages and rural dwellings. Rates of life expectancy and satisfaction are above national averages and are the highest in Lincolnshire. There is a proud military and aviation heritage reflected in the District being home to a substantially higher population of veterans than the national average, 7.4% of South Kesteven's adult population have served in either the regular or reserve Armed Forces.

The District is generally affluent with low levels of deprivation, gross disposable household income per head is the highest in Lincolnshire, whilst median earnings for residents are amongst the highest in Lincolnshire. The elegant Georgian town of Stamford has frequently been voted one of the best places to live in England. Nevertheless, there remain small pockets of severe deprivation, primarily in Grantham. The economy of the District is diverse with 6,265 registered enterprises in the District, the largest business base in Lincolnshire.

The District boasts enviable north-south connectivity and is strategically located alongside the A1 and the East Coast mainline, with arrival in London Kings Cross in less than 70 minutes by train. Combined with superb schools, attractive surroundings, a relatively lower cost of living compared to elsewhere in Britain and a low crime rate – South Kesteven is one of the safest areas in Lincolnshire. This makes the District an attractive destination for those seeking to settle and raise a family.

The high quality of life is the District's key strategic asset. Indeed, the population increased by 7.2% over the 2010s and is projected to reach 152,458 by 2036. This growth is driven by newcomers from other parts of the country, which is a strong signal of confidence in the future of South Kesteven.

As we look to the future, along with the numerous advantages set out above, we must have clear understanding of the challenges facing South Kesteven. The four key long term strategic challenges are summarised as:

- A Changing Society - The population of the District is ageing, with growth driven by internal migration.
- Opportunity for all – The District is home to some of the least deprived areas in the country, yet also has persistent pockets of severe deprivation.
- Tackling the Climate Emergency - Lead and champion the local response to climate change with the ambition of a Net Zero District by 2041.
- Sustainable and Inclusive Growth - The District's economic performance in terms of productivity, earnings and wage growth has been slow over the past decade.

The Corporate Plan has been developed in this context. These challenges will require imagination, transformation and collaboration to address. Our priorities contain fifteen outcomes for 2034. Each articulate what successful delivery of our vision for South Kesteven would look like. We cannot deliver our vision alone. The outcomes provide long-term focal points to bring together residents, businesses, skills providers, partners and community groups to develop and deliver action – united by the common goal of a thriving South Kesteven.



**Bridge over the River Welland, Deeping St James**

# A District in Numbers



The population is projected to reach 155,821 by 2043

The median age of the District is

**46**

There are **6265** businesses in the District, 43 per 1000 residents



The District is the **2nd** healthiest in Lincolnshire



The crime rate is the second lowest in Lincolnshire at **61.16** recorded offences per 1000 residents



**12%** of households experience fuel poverty

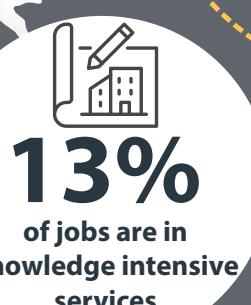


**81.8%** of the 16-64 population possess at least NVQ2+ qualifications.

41.1% possess NVQ4+ qualifications

Gross disposable household income per head is **£21,467** - the highest in Lincolnshire

Median annual gross earnings are **£31,914**

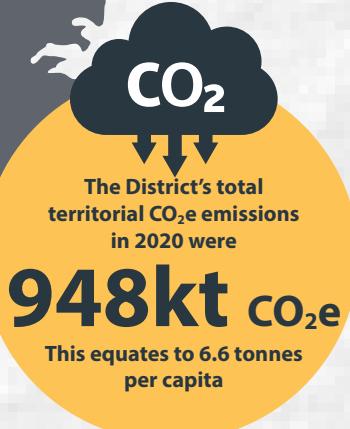


The local economy is worth **£2.722 billion**

## South Kesteven



The median house price is **9.78** times the median annual full time salary



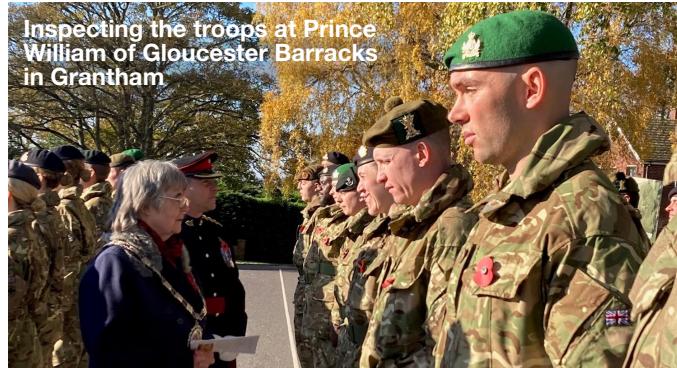
# Priority 1: Connecting Communities

**Mission:** To enhance the strength, wellbeing, security and capacity of all our communities for a thriving and cohesive society that all our residents are proud to belong to.

## Ambitions

We will:

- Enable opportunities for increased public engagement to empower and connect our communities.
- Deliver and facilitate a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.
- Work in partnership with the voluntary, private and public sectors to enable the delivery of community projects and responsive support services to meet the needs of all our communities.
- Encourage sport and physical activity to support healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities.
- Celebrate and promote the strong heritage and rich culture of South Kesteven.



## Why?

Strong communities are the foundation of strong societies and economies. We are fortunate that our District is largely prosperous. Most residents live in good and safe neighbourhoods, with energised community involvement, networks and facilities.

It is our task to nurture communities through support, empowerment and investment. This means working with our communities to understand their priorities and needs, to develop and deliver solutions to the issues which matter most. This means proactively improving the health and wellbeing of residents through a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.

This means building and maintaining relationships with key partners: community groups, the Police, the NHS and other tiers of government. This means supporting young people and the most vulnerable, and targeting funding towards communities who feel disconnected or left behind.

A thriving South Kesteven is one where all residents have the opportunities to lead healthy and fulfilling lives, in safe neighbourhoods and realise their full potential.

To ensure strategic focus and momentum towards the completion of our ambitions is maintained, we have described what we want our District to look like in 2034:

## 2034 Outcomes

- South Kesteven is a fair and vibrant society, which residents actively shape and are proud to belong to. ✓
- Inequalities within the District are reduced with pockets of severe deprivation eliminated. No part of the District will rank in the bottom decile for relative deprivation. ✓



## What we have delivered:

- Received an Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award for outstanding support to the Armed Forces community – one of only 18 organisations across the East Midlands to hold the status.
- Established the £1 million South Kesteven Prosperity Fund (SKPF), which has funded 70 projects undertaken by towns, parishes and community groups across the District.
- Upgraded 40 CCTV cameras to further improve our accredited and highly commended CCTV service.
- Granted £219,000 to local projects through the Community Fund.
- Secured an award of £344,659 from Phase 1 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund to support the operation of LeisureSK Ltd with the increased costs in relation to utilities and pool chemicals. Further bids submitted to Phase 2 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund for energy saving initiatives and a bid submitted to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
- Secured Arts Council Transition Funding for the consortium of venues which includes Stamford Arts Centre, Guildhall Arts Centre, Louth Riverhead Theatre and the South Holland Centre.
- Adopted the Lincolnshire Districts Health and Wellbeing Strategy and developed a bespoke local Action Plan to drive health and wellbeing improvements at a local level.

## What we will do:

- Deliver the Local Health and Wellbeing Action Plan
- Deliver the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.
- Deliver the Cultural Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.
- Invest in a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.
- Ensure that our leisure facilities and arts venues are sustainable and meet future needs.
- Enable and support a flourishing and vibrant artistic and cultural scene.
- Deliver the Community Engagement and

- Development Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.
- Continue to deliver an accredited, effective and legislatively compliant CCTV service in partnership with Lincolnshire Police.
- Deliver the Safer Streets programme and seek opportunities to develop a legacy applied District wide once the funding period ends.
- Continue to support our Armed Forces Community, and as a Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) Gold Award holder, advocate for the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

# Priority 2: Sustainable South Kesteven

**Mission:** To meet the challenge of climate change and ensure a clean, green and healthy natural and built environment for present and future generations.

## Ambitions

We will:

- Lead by example in reducing our operational carbon footprint by 30% between 2019 and 2030.
- Lead and champion the local response to climate change with the ambition of a net zero District by 2041.
- Significantly increase tree planting across the District and manage, care and protect existing tree cover.
- Ensure the District is always a safe, clean and pleasant place to live, work and visit.
- Protect and enhance the natural environment and wildlife habitats, working to actively restore and rehabilitate damaged eco-systems.
- Provide an excellent and value for money waste and recycling collection service.

## Why?

Addressing climate change and nature loss is the challenge of this generation. We have the ambition to take this challenge on, both by reducing our own carbon footprint and through sustainable management of our resources, corporate estate and housing stock.

We will champion and influence the District to do the same. We have produced the Climate Action Strategy 2023 with an accompanying Action Plan, to clearly set out how we will do this.

Responsible stewardship, an outstanding natural environment and a beautiful built environment are important for health, wellbeing, and pride of place. The District benefits from a unique countryside, extensive parks and open spaces and historic townscapes. It is our role to work to conserve, promote and enhance this inheritance for the benefit of current and future generations.

This means ensuring through planning, developments are sustainable and fit the character of the District. This means actively improving and restoring the biodiversity of South Kesteven, respecting the rural nature and promoting green and open spaces as places where nature and wildlife can flourish.

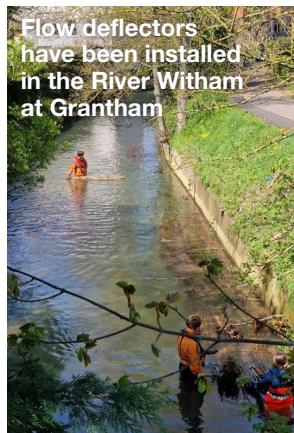
We will proactively challenge and enforce against environmental crimes, such as littering and fly tipping, and will promote responsible behaviours aimed at reducing waste and encouraging recycling. We will run an exemplary and value-for-money waste and recycling service. To ensure strategic focus and momentum towards realisation of our ambitions, we have described what we want our District to look like in 2034 as:

## 2034 Outcomes

- Greenhouse gas emissions have been greatly reduced. The District is on target to achieve net zero by 2041. The Council has met or exceeded the interim operational emissions target. ✓
- Adaptation and resilience to a changing climate is embedded across the organisation. ✓
- The Climate Action Plan has been delivered. ✓
- The Council's waste & recycling collection and environmental services are nationally regarded as exemplary models of delivery. ✓



Riverside Walk in Wyndham Park



Flow deflectors have been installed in the River Witham at Grantham



Green Flag status awarded to Grantham's Wyndham Park, Queen Elizabeth Park and Dysart Park

## What we have delivered:

- Published our first Climate Change Action Strategy 2023, establishing how the Council will continue to reduce its carbon footprint and adapt to a changing climate, whilst leading, influencing and championing the District to do the same.
- 152 properties received upgrades to low-carbon heating systems, making homes warmer and reducing energy costs for tenants through the Green Homes Grant.
- A further 300 social housing properties will be upgraded via the £7.26m Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
- Secured Green Flag status for the three parks in Grantham: Wyndham Park, Queen Elizabeth Park and Dysart Park.
- Rejuvenated riverside areas along the River Witham in Grantham, including the creation of a wetland area in Queen Elizabeth Park, through the successful delivery of the £1.29m Blue-Green Corridor scheme, improving access to wildlife for 13,700 residents.
- Successfully insourced the grounds maintenance team from EnvironmentSK Ltd.

## What we will do:

- Deliver the Climate Change Action Strategy programme.
- Continue to reduce operational emissions to achieve the target of a 30% reduction on 2019 by 2030 and develop modelling to set a target of achieving Net Zero operations as soon as viable.
- Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities across the corporate estate, such as solar panels and EV chargers.
- Improve the energy efficiency of the leisure estate and review further renewable energy opportunities.
- Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities across the sheltered and social housing properties.
- Adopt a Tree and Woodland Strategy and deliver an accompanying Action Plan.
- Ensure biodiversity net gain is delivered through planning and corporate projects.
- Continue to tackle waste related crimes, including fly tipping with support from the Lincolnshire Environmental Crime Partnership.
- Manage the smooth implementation of twin stream recycling to improve the recycling rate and reduce contamination.
- Develop and implement an effective process for the collection of food waste.
- Deliver a range of schemes to improve the recycling rate.
- Manage the construction and transition to a new purpose-built depot, which is fit for purpose, and explore options for the old depot.
- Develop and deliver the Fleet Management Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

# Priority 3: Enabling Economic Opportunity

**Mission:** To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities.

## Ambitions

We will:

- Work to support businesses to protect existing jobs and create new opportunities for all.
- Promote the District as an attractive place to visit, work, invest, study and do business.
- Attract investment to improve infrastructure, support regeneration and drive economic growth.
- Ensure an adequate supply of suitable land is allocated for commercial use and facilitated through the Local Plan.
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with the business community to understand and support their needs and aspirations.
- Develop links with educational institutions to upskill residents to meet the needs of the current and future economy.

## Why?

Economic success is closely linked to cultural success and a sense of pride in the community.

A vibrant economy will attract new businesses, which in turn provides more jobs and opportunities for residents.

The District boasts excellent north south transport connectivity, a large business base, a skilled population, superb schools and colleges, and an attractive quality of life offer.

Capitalising on this potential entails continuing to build on the links with business forged during the pandemic, working with educational institutions to upskill residents, the operation of an effective planning system and attracting investment and funding to revitalise our towns.

By providing local opportunities, supporting businesses and employers and investing in town centres, we will enable conditions which attract and retain people who want to invest, live, work and visit the area.

We will lead by example as an employer of choice, offering excellent staff development and apprenticeship opportunities.

To ensure strategic focus and momentum towards realisation of our ambitions, we have described what we want our District to look like in 2034 as:

## 2034 Outcomes

- South Kesteven has a thriving, innovative and diverse economy and is recognised as a great place to live, visit, invest and do business. ✓
- The District's economy is growing strongly, increasingly based upon knowledge-intensive services, generating high quality jobs, with productivity levels well above the regional median and wages above the national average. ✓



## What we have delivered:

- Created the Local Economic Forum (LEF) made up of key stakeholders which help guide decision-making and act as a key consultative body on future strategies, initiatives and funding programmes regarding local economic development.
- Distributing £3.9 million of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) monies.
- Through the £1.263 million High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, restored the iconic

Grade II listed Westgate Hall, Grantham and nine shopfront regeneration projects, generating over £350,000 in private sector investment.

- Accelerated the £5.56 million Grantham Future High Streets Fund to the delivery phase with public realm and residential accommodation projects scheduled for completion in 2024.
- Allocated over £53 million in COVID support grants to 3000 businesses. The Council was shortlisted for the East Midlands 'Best COVID Response Award' in 2022.

## What we will do:

- Deliver the Economic Development Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.
- Deliver initiatives to expand and deepen engagement with business.
- Continue to distribute the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and explore opportunities to develop a legacy beyond the funding period.
- Embed and strengthen the Local Economic Forum as a key institution for local stakeholders to shape the District's approach to skills, business support and investment.
- Work with the Lincolnshire Growth Hub to support businesses to start-up, succeed and grow.
- Strategically leverage the Council's procurement spend to maximise social value.
- Consider targeted interventions – planning powers and schemes, to achieve high-quality regeneration across the District and explore options to unlock stalled sites.
- Bring forward a step change in the way Council-run street markets are presented, operated and promoted.
- Develop a long-term approach to regeneration and be prepared for investment and funding opportunities.
- Continue to promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on our cultural and heritage strengths.

# Priority 4: Housing

**Mission:** To ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations.

## Ambitions

We will:

- Through the Local Plan facilitate a range of appropriate and sustainable housing and community facilities for future generations and the emerging needs of all our communities.
- Deliver exemplary and high-quality services for housing and homelessness.
- Engage effectively with our tenants to shape the services we deliver.
- Increase the supply of sustainable and high-quality Council-provided housing.
- Work with developers and private landlords to ensure sustainable, affordable and high-quality housing is facilitated.

Under international law, to be adequately housed means having secure tenure. It means living somewhere which is in keeping with your culture and having access to appropriate service, schools and employment. Rates of home ownership are high in South Kesteven. Prices are relatively affordable compared to elsewhere in England. The Council owns and is the social landlord to nearly 6000 properties.

As a planning authority, the system will be operated efficiently as a driver to sustainable growth.

Planning policy will maintain a strong focus on good design to ensure developments are sustainable and in line with the unique characters of the District. We will look to ensure housing across a range of prices and tenures, with appropriate community facilities, are available to meet demand and help residents to remain in the District.

We will continue to drive improvements in our housing services, to deliver exceptional provision which meets the needs of our tenants and the residents of South Kesteven.

To ensure strategic focus and momentum towards realisation of our ambitions, we have described what we want our District to look like in 2034 as:

## 2034 Outcomes

- Housing delivery matches the needs of communities, homes are affordable, private rentals are high quality and homelessness is reduced. ✓
- The Council's housing and planning services are nationally regarded as exemplary models of delivery. ✓
- Housing services are fully compliant with all regulations and best practice. Repairs and complaints are actioned promptly and to a high standard. The Council's tenants feel their concerns and priorities are recognised and are satisfied with the service provided. ✓
- Successful delivery of the ongoing new build pipeline continues to contribute towards meeting the housing need in the District. ✓



## What we have delivered:

- Ground broken on the construction of 20 properties at Swinegate, Grantham. This is part of a pipeline of the Council building 65 affordable properties over the next two to three years.
- Successfully delivered the Housing Improvement Plan after self-referring to the Regulator of Social Housing. The Regulatory Notice has been lifted.
- Delivering a £3.2 million programme of renovation works to 143 properties in the Earlesfield Estate, Grantham.

- Acquired 21 properties through the first tranche of Local Authority Housing Fund money allocated to the Council. These will house Ukrainian and Afghan refugees and will ultimately be added to Council's social housing stock.
- Introduced new housing management and choice-based letting systems.
- Commenced an early review of the Local Plan with a confirmed five year housing land supply.
- Completed 336 adaptions through the Disabled Facility Grants scheme worth a total of £2.9 million.

## What we will do:

- Review the quality of existing properties across all tenures and seek to reduce the impacts of poor housing on residents and communities.
- Ensure services to support residents to remain living in their community with as much independence as possible, ideally within their own home, with the right support.
- Review and rationalise the Council's assets portfolio to ensure an optimal return for the Council.
- Deliver the £3.3 million decarbonisation programme.
- Ensure the Council's housing stock is high quality and suitable for the needs of tenants now and into the future. Seek to dispose of properties which are economically unviable.
- Continue to improve the turnaround period and standard of properties.
- Deliver a high-quality, planned and responsive repairs service.
- Deliver a pipeline of new build housing following a hybrid approach of construction and acquisition when appropriate to maximise funding streams.
- Seek opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's own housing stock and continue to support private retrofit projects to reduce energy costs, lower carbon emissions and create a more sustainable future.
- Develop a joint approach to bringing empty homes back into use.
- Ensure the Local Plan continues to facilitate sustainable growth across the District and the Local Plan Review is successfully completed in 2026.
- Ensure the planning process is effective, efficient, high quality and timely.

# Priority 5: Effective Council

**Mission:** To deliver trusted, high quality and value-for-money services that fulfil the needs and expectations of all our residents.

## Ambitions

We will:

- Provide excellent, value-for-money and financially sustainable services.
- Manage our resources and assets effectively with open, transparent, and accountable decision making.
- Actively and effectively engage with and listen to our residents, placing their needs and concerns at the heart of everything we do.
- Embrace and maximise opportunities for innovation, improvement and securing external funding.
- Through #TEAMSK retain a highly skilled, empowered, motivated and professional workforce.
- Uphold a healthy and robust local democracy, where Elected Members champion their wards, communities and the District as a whole.

## Why?

The key to delivering local growth, thriving communities and a healthy local democracy is effective political and administrative leadership. This requires a clear vision and set of priorities, and the will and ability to champion the area.

Effective leadership is open and accountable, this is the foundation of a positive relationship between the Council and residents and businesses.

Trust should never be taken for granted. Our residents and businesses rightly have high expectations of us. We must and will demonstrate that we are worthy of trust through action. In a period where there have been high profile national failures across local government it is more important than ever that the Council delivers on its duty to provide best value for its residents. This means a Council that is responsible in its handling of public money and makes prudent use of its resources to achieve financial sustainability. This means delivering the excellent services that are expected, in partnership and collaboration with other organisations where possible. This means having robust governance and management structures in place.

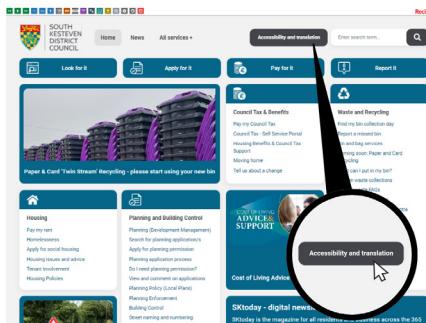
This means having an energetic organisational culture committed to high performance and continuous improvement. Above all, this means a confident and outward looking Council that is always open to honest scrutiny and challenge and listens to our residents. It is in this spirit that we have produced this Plan and will approach all our priorities and ambitions. To ensure that strategic focus and momentum towards the realisation of our ambitions is maintained, we have described what we want our Council to look like in 2034:

## 2034 Outcomes

- The Council's service delivery provides exceptional quality and value for money and is nationally regarded as exemplary in its approach when compared to peer authorities. 
- The Council's governance offers exceptional quality and assurance and is nationally regarded as an exemplary model in its approach when compared to peer authorities. 
- The Council's financial management offers exceptional quality and value for money and nationally regarded as an exemplary model in its approach when compared to peer authorities. 



Waste freighter raising awareness of breast cancer



Providing inclusive and accessible services for residents



Enhancing the environment

## What we have delivered:

- A successful Corporate Peer Challenge resulted in a review of governance structures and rationalised the amount of Council-owned companies to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Adopted a People Strategy, vastly improving staff engagement, retention, training and satisfaction.
- Completed a full review of the Health & Safety policy and plans to strengthen risk control and accident awareness across the Council.
- Pursued a policy of 'grow your own' employing

23 apprentices and awarded Apprenticeship Employer of the Year 2023 by Grantham College.

- Saved £300,000 per annum by moving into modern, open plan office accommodation in Grantham.
- Implemented and embedded a new Constitution and Committee structure, including a new Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Standards Committee.
- Completed 2021-22 and 2022-23 Statement of Accounts audit. An unqualified opinion was received for 2021-22. The same is expected for 2022-23.

## What we will do:

- Continue to work in partnership with relevant partners to deliver and support targeted initiatives across the District to help communities to be more self-sufficient.
- Ensure the administration of licenses and approvals relating to both national legislation and discretionary, are effective, efficient, timely and consistent.
- Continue to implement and embed a one team approach to deliver effective services.
- Produce and deliver a Councillor Development Strategy and accompanying programme to achieve accredited Councillor Development Charter status.
- Deliver the refreshed Customer Experience Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.
- Ensure the tax collection process is always effective, efficient, timely and fair.

- Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.
- Implement and embed the new finance system.
- Deliver the IT Roadmap, ensuring all systems meet the needs of internal and external customers, and explore opportunities for new technologies and innovation.
- Seek opportunities to maximise value for money in all services.
- Deliver the Internal Audit Plan and drive continuous organisational improvement.
- Ensure procurement is always compliant, fair and delivers value for money.
- Continue to embed the People Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.
- Develop and deliver Planned Maintenance Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

# The Foundations: Financial Sustainability

South Kesteven District Council continues to work hard to ensure that high quality and cost-effective services are delivered and that savings and efficiencies are achieved which will assist with achieving financial sustainability.

There is a clear focus on identifying how a balanced budget can be achieved over the medium term in order to ensure that services continue to receive the investment required to deliver a quality offer to our residents.

The Council continues to drive forward its plan to achieve financial sustainability against a backdrop of significant uncertainty regarding future funding from government.

This year is the sixth in succession that Councils have received a one-year only funding settlement which makes financial planning extremely challenging and national changes to the way in which Councils will be funded in future further adds to the uncertainty.

The latest budget forecasts show that the Council needs to save £1.15 million over the next three years, based on government funding assumptions, in order to be in a position where a balanced budget will be achieved.

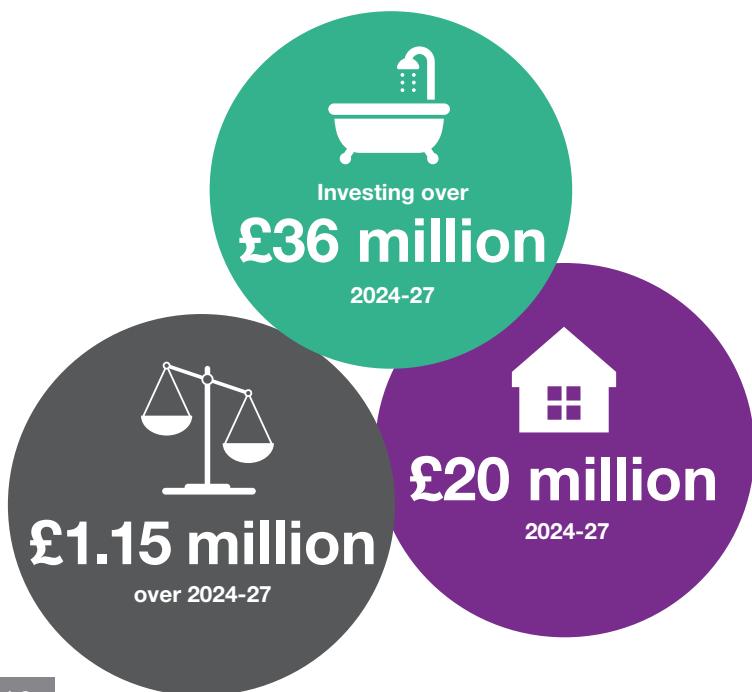
The Council is fully committed to achieving this target and will continue to adopt approaches which include streamlining the organisation, so that it is ready for the challenges ahead, modernising processes and procedures, and rationalising assets and operating costs where possible.

The delivery of the Council's priorities set out in the Corporate Plan remains its key focus.

Underpinning this is a pledge to provide quality services, a strong commitment to investing in sustainable growth, meeting the challenge of climate change, improving leisure facilities and delivery of an ambitious housing programme that meets the needs of the social housing sector.

Financed from a combination of reserves and grants, the Council has committed over £20 million to fund the delivery of new build social and affordable housing and stock acquisition programmes over the next three years. Over the same time period it will also continue to maintain its existing housing stock, by investing over £36 million in a range of programmes including compliance works, re-roofing, external wall insulation, structural refurbishment and the replacement of kitchens and bathrooms.

The environment in which the Council set out its medium-term financial plan remains challenging and there is a great deal of uncertainty regarding future government funding, however the Council remains committed to providing high quality services to all its residents and delivering the actions set out in the Corporate Plan.



# The Foundations: Managing Performance

Effective performance management is essential to progress in delivering the ambitions and actions of the Corporate Plan. This requires monitoring whether initiatives are having the intended positive impacts on the District. There are two suites of performance indicators to support the Corporate Plan – Key performance indicators and strategic socio-economic Indicators.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will monitor the delivery of the Corporate Plan Actions and the overall performance of the Council. Each KPI is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & Timely) and agreed via the scrutiny committees to which quarterly reports will be presented.

The selected metrics will be wholly within the Council's control and will offer accountability and stimulate continuous improvement. The suite will be reviewed annually.

The Strategic Socio-Economic Indicators (SSEIs) will monitor the progress towards the fulfilment of the Council's Vision, 2034 Outcomes, and the overall performance of the District. Each SSEI is benchmarkable against other local authorities, aligned to the Office for Local Government (OFLOG) suite, and will be reported in the annual State of the District (SOTD). The SSEIs provide the evidence base of the Corporate Plan, underpinning the District SWOT analysis which has informed the Council's Priorities and Ambitions.

The Council has only very limited influence over the SSEIs. Reporting will evidence whether the District is on the right trajectory and provide insight into the Council's operating environment, enable the identification of challenges and shape the service response. The table below sets out some examples of SSEIs for each priority:

Priority Area	Example SSEI
Connecting Communities	Crime rate per 1000 residents
	Prevalence of child poverty
	Physically active adults
Sustainable South Kesteven	Household waste recycling rate
	Air quality
	Total territorial CO <sub>2</sub> emissions
Enabling Economic Opportunity	Employment rate
	Productivity
	Median weekly earnings
Housing	Affordability ratio (median earnings/house prices)
	Net additional homes delivered
	Households in temporary accommodation
Effective Council	Council Tax collection rate
	Total core spending power per dwelling
	Level of band D Council Tax rates

# The Foundations: Values and Equalities

The values of the Council determine how we behave and deliver services to residents and businesses and how we interact with each other. They are the 'true north' that underpins the culture of **#TEAMSK**.



## Our values are:

- **Trust** - Trust is the foundation of all positive relationships – between colleagues, management, officers and Elected Members, and our residents trusting us. It is about fostering a culture of honesty and openness.
- **Empowerment** - Colleagues are encouraged and supported to take initiative and contribute to the betterment of our services and our communities.
- **Accountability** - We are transparent in and take ownership of our actions and decisions.
- **Making a Difference** - Recognising that the Council is driven by a purpose to create a positive impact and improve the lives of all our residents and communities.
- **Supportive to All** - Putting the residents at the heart of everything we do.
- **Kindness** - Being emphatic and understanding of others and always going the extra mile.



# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our commitment to equalities is about long-term, continuous improvement.

It is the responsibility of all Officers and elected Members to implement the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our equality objectives will be supported by a

delivery plan as part of the People Strategy, which will include actions from all service areas.

This will ensure consideration of the needs of our staff and our residents is at the heart of what we do – from the earliest stage of development, through to decision-making and implementation.

Objective	How this will be achieved
<b>Continue to maintain an inclusive, diverse workforce that feels valued.</b>	<p>In all parts of your work life we will work in a fair and equitable manner.</p>
	<p>Encourage celebration and support our differences.</p>
<b>Continue to build and promote a culture of equality and inclusion into all the services, functions and projects we deliver.</b>	<p>Develop a network of equality allies across the Council who are empowered to support and advise their colleagues on matters of equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Ensure all projects, policies strategies and reports which have a direct impact on people are accompanied by a robust equality impact assessment.</p>
	<p>Consult with residents on all aspects of the Council's work that have a direct impact on them as our customers</p>
	<p>Ensure the Council's services are responsive to different needs and treat service users equitably, with dignity and respect.</p>
	<p>Involve, listen and respond to our communities effectively.</p>
	<p>Engage with communities to promote opportunities for funding and project support.</p>



Bourne

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

**South Kesteven  
District Council**

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

**01476 406080**

**Out of hours 01476 590044**

**customerservices@southkesteven.gov.uk**

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Corporate Plan 2024-27 – Draft Provisional KPI Suite – Leisure & Culture OSC									
Priority	Code	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Provisional Action	Action Summary	Service Area	Provisional Owner/s	Proposed KPI Measure/s	Provisional Targets	Notes
Connecting Communities	COM2	Culture & Leisure	Deliver the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Monitor progress of delivering document	Leisure, Culture & Place	Assistant Director: Culture & Leisure	% of total actions in action plan on target/complete	100% complete by end of the Plan (actions delivered in accordance with the timelines set out in the action plan.)	Impacts reported in SSEIs – physical activity levels, weight etc.
Connecting Communities	COM3	Culture & Leisure	Deliver the Cultural Strategy and accompanying action plan	Monitor progress of delivering document	Leisure, Culture & Place	Assistant Director: Culture & Leisure	% of total actions in action plan on target/complete	100% complete by end of the Plan (actions delivered in accordance with the timelines set out in the action plan.)	Impacts reported in SSEIs – Wellbeing, tourism etc.
Connecting Communities	COM4	Culture & Leisure	Invest in a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.	Financial performance of leisure/arts.	Leisure, Culture & Place	Assistant Director: Culture & Leisure / Leisure, Parks & Open Spaces Team Leader	Amount of Council subsidy required by Leisure Service	Reduce annual subsidy YOY	Impacts reported in SSEIs – swimming etc.
							Amount of Council subsidy required by Arts Service.	Reduce annual subsidy YOY	Social Value calculated using Moving Communities social value calculator tool.
							Amount of external funding secured to support the Arts service.	Increase amount of funding secured YOY	
							Attendance at Leisure Centres (presented for each centre)	YOY growth	
							Total social value attributable to each leisure centre	YOY growth	
Connecting Communities	COM5	Culture & Leisure	Ensure that our leisure facilities and arts venues are sustainable and meet future needs.	Physical condition of facilities & venues.	Leisure, Culture & Place	Assistant Director: Culture & Leisure / Leisure, Parks & Open Spaces Team Leader	Number of rectifications issued for: cleanliness and maintenance (six monthly) (presented for each centre)	6 monthly reduction (reported to C&L OSC as part of 6 monthly update)	Rectifications result of inspections by Leisure, Parks & Open Spaces Team Leader as part of the contract management.
							Quest Plus accreditation (external sector quality assessment for each centre)	Achieve and maintain Sport England's Quest Plus Facility Management accreditation scheme with a minimum 'Good' banding	N/A
							Public satisfaction score for leisure centres broken down by overall satisfaction, Net Promotor Score (NPS), in centre activity, Cleanliness (presented for each centre)	Improvements for all metrics YOY	Through annual Sport England Moving Communities Community Survey

Priority	Code	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Provisional Action	Action Summary	Service Area	Provisional Owner/s	Proposed KPI Measure/s	Provisional Targets	Notes
Connecting Communities	COM6	Culture & Leisure	Enable and support a flourishing and vibrant artistic and cultural scene	Performance of arts service.	Leisure, Culture & Place	Assistant Director: Culture & Leisure / Arts & Cultural Services Manager	Attendance numbers at venues (presented by venue and by whether the attendee is a resident of SKDC)	Stamford Yearly Target: 37,000 tickets (financial year 24-25) Guildhall Yearly Target: 28,000 tickets (financial year 24-25)	N/A
							Take up of Rural Touring programme across the district.	To continue funding for the next 3 years 14 outputs arranged via Live and Local (Financial year, reports received from company October and Feb)	
							Number of outreach events held or supported by the Arts and Cultural Services team	Use the venues as and when appropriate to facilitate events and workshops from community practitioners that align with cultural strategy and venue aims and goals.  Utilise outreach budget so organise one activity/event with SKDC in the financial year.	
							Bourne Corn Exchange Events sold through SKDC box office	5 events to be sold through Spektrix for events at BCE, aim for 500 tickets to be sold (financial year)	To increase income and acquire audience intelligence.
Connecting Communities	COM10	Culture & Leisure	Maintain and enhance our green areas across the District.	Parks & Street Scene	Leisure, Culture & Place	Assistant Director: Culture & Leisure / Leisure, Parks & Open Spaces Team Leader	Public satisfaction score from annual surveys for: Wyndham Park, Queen Elizabeth and Dysart Park	YOY improved satisfaction	N/A
							Number of complaints received relating to street cleansing (monthly)	No More than 10 complaints to be received monthly	
							Number of complaints received relating to grounds maintenance (monthly)	No More than 10 complaints to be received monthly	
							% of non-hazardous fly-tipping removed within 3 days of notification (monthly)	90% of the required items to successfully collected within the designated three-day time frame.	

Priority	Code	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Provisional Action	Action Summary	Service Area	Provisional Owner/s	Proposed KPI Measure/s	Provisional Targets	Notes
Sustainable South Kesteven	ENVIRO4	Culture & Leisure	Improve the energy efficiency of the leisure estate and review further renewable energy opportunities.	Energy efficiency of leisure centres	Leisure, Culture & Place	Leisure, Parks & Open Spaces Team Leader	Energy Consumption per sq m.	For information only	Report amount of funding secured to support energy efficiencies and Display Energy Certificate (Energy Performance Operational Rating) as PIs.
							Review and Implementation of energy conservation measures	Number of actions/options reviewed (cumulative)	
								Number of actions implemented	
Enabling Economic Opportunity	ECON8	Culture & Leisure	Bring forward a step change in the way Council-run Street markets are presented, operated, marketed and promoted.	Performance of Council run Markets	Waste & Markets	Head of Waste & Markets	Develop an Operational Delivery Plan which aligns with the strategic goals of the markets.	100% complete by end of the Plan	N/A
							Increase the number of regular stall holders at Bourne and Grantham Market from 23/24 baseline.	YOY increase	
							Increase dwell time from 23/24 baseline.	YOY increase	
Enabling Economic Opportunity	ECON10	Culture & Leisure	Continue to promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on our cultural and heritage strengths	Tourism	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	Adoption of Tourism Strategic Framework	Adopted the Tourism Strategic Framework	N/A
							Increase annual visitor numbers to South Kesteven	3% annual increase in visitor numbers	
							Increase annual spend by visitors to the district	3% increase in annual visitor spend (economic impact)	
Connecting Communities	COM5	Culture & Leisure	Ensure that our leisure facilities and arts venues are sustainable and meet future needs.	Physical condition of facilities & venues.	Leisure, Culture & Place	Assistant Director: Culture & Leisure / Leisure, Parks & Open Spaces Team Leader	Number of rectifications issued for: cleanliness and maintenance (six monthly) (presented for each centre)	6 monthly reduction (reported to C&L OSC as part of 6 monthly update)	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
							Successful management of approved budget	Forecast surplus/deficit to be within 1% of net cost of service	
							% of working balance to net cost of service	10%	
							% of total actions in action plan on target/complete	100% complete by end of the Plan (actions delivered in accordance with the timelines set out in the action plan.)	
							Ratio of planned to reactive repair works	Yr 1 – 30:70 Yr 2 – 40:60 Yr 3 – 50:50	

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## **Strategic Socio-Economic Indicator (SSEI) Suite: Culture & Leisure OSC (February 2024)**

These metrics will monitor the performance of the district. Each can be benchmarked against all other English district authorities. The latest available data will be presented.

1. Proportion of Adults classified as overweight or obese (18+)
2. Proportion of Children classified as overweight or obese (Year 6)
3. Proportion of Children classified as overweight or obese (Reception)
4. Physically Active Adults (19+)
5. Personal Wellbeing - Life Satisfaction
6. Personal Wellbeing - Happiness
7. Personal Wellbeing - Anxiety
8. Personal Wellbeing – Worthwhile
9. Visitor Economy (STEAM Data)

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SOUTH  
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## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 March 2024

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

### Update on the Hello SK App

#### Report Author

Jade Newby, Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer

 [Jade.newby@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Jade.newby@southkesteven.gov.uk)

#### Purpose of Report

Provide an update regarding the Hello SK app and future options.

#### Recommendations

**The Committee is asked to recommend to Cabinet:**

- 1. The cessation of use of the Hello SK app.**
- 2. Instruct Officers to initiate partnership activities with Destination Lincolnshire to offset the features of the Hello SK app.**

#### Decision Information

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

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

- Enabling economic opportunities
- Effective 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 Any costs associated with the development and continuation of the HelloSK app have not been included in the approved general budget for 2024/2025 so savings would need to be identified if the Council opted to continue to use the app.

Completed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Deputy Director (Finance & ICT) and Deputy S151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 The contract is from 7 March to 31 March 2022 unless terminated earlier or extended and if not extended, the Agreement automatically expires. In the circumstances the Agreement has expired, and no legal implications are identified in cessation of the use of the App.
- 1.3 The other option open to the Council is set out in section 2 of this report and this would require a new contract in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules and financial regulations.

Completed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive

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

- 2.1 A key priority within South Kesteven District Council's Corporate Plan (2024-2027) is enabling economic opportunity. The Council is committed to continuing to promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on the areas cultural and heritage strengths.
- 2.2 This report begins with an update on the Hello SK app, followed by an introduction to the work of the Destination Management Organisations. The latter is explored in more detail in a report entitled 'Update on the Discover South Kesteven and the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy' which features later on the Committee's meeting agenda.

## Hello SK App

- 2.3 The Hello SK app was acquired for a one-off payment of £50,000 via the Government's Welcome Back Fund. This payment included the development, management and maintenance of the app on the basis it would become self-sustaining through revenue derived from e-commerce sales. These sales were based on the developer's forecast usage of the app across South Kesteven, based on their experiences in other locations across the United Kingdom.
- 2.4 The app belongs to a third-party partner, Bubltown, who are responsible for its development, day-to-day management and business and customer engagement.
- 2.5 The Hello SK app was launched in August 2022, via a joint promotion campaign with the Council. This sought to promote the app to local businesses who were encouraged to upload offers for residents and visitors. This campaign was coupled with an increased advertising presence, including banners and engagement at events across South Kesteven. The campaign period saw an uptake in consumer downloads and offers uploaded by businesses. Similar campaigns were replicated for events such as Valentine's Day and Christmas in 2023. These resulted in a further downloads and usage.
- 2.6 On 5 September 2023, the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report which provided information on the progress and future promotional plans for the Hello SK app (see **Background papers**). Members agreed three actions:
- To make any suggestions of additions or amendments which should be reflected in the Hello SK app
  - Endorse the proposal to release a survey over the coming months to encourage feedback from businesses and consumers who use the Hello SK app
  - To receive a quarterly update on the Hello SK app.
- 2.7 In seeking user feedback, one Member had conducted a mini consultation on Facebook and shared the results with the Economic Development Team.
- 2.8 As of January 2024, the Hello SK app has been downloaded by 1,436 consumers and contains 211 business profiles from across South Kesteven.

## Destination Management Organisations

- 2.9 Destination Management Organisations (DMO) contribute to the management and marketing of destinations, maintaining close contacts with tourism businesses. A Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) is the name of a DMO. VisitEngland are the British Tourist Authority (BTA) operating under the brand names VisitBritain and VisitEngland (VE). VE is responsible for marketing England to domestic and established overseas markets and for improving England's tourism product.

- 2.10 Destination Lincolnshire has recently been awarded LVEP accreditation by VE. Destination Lincolnshire are currently writing the Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Lincolnshire to include the planning, development and marketing of Lincolnshire as a destination, as well as how it is managed physically, financially, operationally and in other ways.
- 2.11 The VE website (<https://www.visitbritain.org/resources-destination-partners/developing-destination-management-plan-or-tourism-growth-plan>) confirms the DMP should cover all the fundamental aspects of destination management, including:
- Tourism, performance and impacts
  - Working structures and communication
  - Overall appeal and appearance, access, infrastructure and visitor services
  - Destination image, branding and promotion (marketing)
  - Product mix – development needs and opportunities.

- 2.12 The DMP typically sets a strategic direction for the destination over a period of up to five years and contains prioritised actions within an annual rolling programme and identification of stakeholders responsible for their delivery.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 Whilst the app provided a focus of activity and a boost to the local economy in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, Bubltown have been unable to meet forecast projections made in their initial business case and by consequence have insufficient revenue to maintain their activity. Bubltown are now seeking to end their commitment to the Council, unless further funding is provided.

Bubltown has recently offered two options for future provision and development of the app:

- a) Continuation of the existing business plan, where revenue is generated from e-commerce sales
  - b) A revised approach where the emphasis is shifted away from e-commerce activity towards driving footfall and changing spending habits on the high street
- 3.2 Both of these options would require a similar approach including further financial commitment from South Kesteven District Council and a period of intense marketing. Bubltown would then manage and promote the app for up to six months free of charge, after which the Council would be required to commit to a monthly retainer of between £2,000 and £4,000 (excluding VAT) to continue the services. This would enable:
- Hosting on App and Play Stores
  - A business joining page, hosting and maintenance.

- Technical assistance for businesses and users.
- Rollout of planned upgrades and advancements to the technology.
- Business onboarding and assistance.
- Extra resource allocation for the creation and provision of new promotional templates (and amendments to existing materials).
- Direct communication with businesses and active promotional campaign support for the Council.
- Uncapped businesses licenses.

Bubltown has recently offered two options for future provision and development of the app:

- c) Continuation of the existing business plan, where revenue is generated from e-commerce sales
  - d) A revised approach where the emphasis is shifted away from e-commerce activity towards driving footfall and changing spending habits on the high street
- 3.3 Both of these options would require a similar approach including further financial commitment from South Kesteven District Council and a period of intense marketing. Bubltown would then manage and promote the app for up to six months free of charge, after which the Council would be required to commit to a monthly retainer of between £2,000 and £4,000 (excluding VAT) to continue the services. This would enable:
- Hosting on App and Play Stores
  - A business joining page, hosting and maintenance.
  - Technical assistance for businesses and users.
  - Rollout of planned upgrades and advancements to the technology.
  - Business onboarding and assistance.
  - Extra resource allocation for the creation and provision of new promotional templates (and amendments to existing materials).
  - Direct communication with businesses and active promotional campaign support for the Council.
  - Uncapped businesses licenses.
- 3.4 Officers have considered Bubltown's proposals and concluded there is not a sustainable business case to generate sufficient users, sales and revenue to ensure the app can operate without further subsidy by the Council in the years to come. This conclusion is based upon the relatively low uptake of the app and a lack of tangible demand from businesses and residents across South Kesteven.

## 4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The initial set up of the Hello SK app was fully-funded through the Government's 'Welcome Back Fund' to support the re-opening of the high street in the aftermath

of the pandemic, however has proven to not be self-sustaining. Therefore the 'do nothing' option has been discontinued,

- 4.2 The DMO will have an impact upon the Council's planned Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy. Members may wish to consider supporting Officers in developing areas to replace some of the Hello SK app activity.

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

- 5.1 Despite the initial opportunities offered in the aftermath of the pandemic, it is difficult to justify the continued use of, or further investment in, the Hello SK app because it no longer provides an appropriate Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR).
- 5.2 If the Council ceases the use of Hello SK app, a strategy to replace this activity should be developed through the creation of a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy in the context of the newly formed Destination Lincolnshire LVEP.

As indicated in the second recommendation, such an approach would require Officers to initiate partnership activities with Destination Lincolnshire to offset the features of the Hello SK app.

## **6. Background papers**

- 6.1 *Review of the HelloSK app and draft Discover South Kesteven website* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 5 September 2023 and available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s38879/Report.pdf>



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## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 March 2024

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

## Discover South Kesteven website update

### Report Author

Jade Newby, Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer

[jade.newby@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:jade.newby@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the Discover South Kesteven website and future options regarding a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for the District.

### Recommendations

**It is recommended Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

1. **Considers any further additions or amendments to be reflected on the Discover South Kesteven website.**
2. **Agrees to receive an update, at a future meeting, on the Destination Management Plan for Lincolnshire being prepared by Destination Lincolnshire.**
3. **Agrees to the development of a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for South Kesteven, which will align with the new Corporate Plan and the emerging Destination Management Plan.**
4. **Agrees to the procurement of a specialist consultant for the development of a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for South Kesteven, which will align with the new Corporate Plan and the emerging Destination Management Plan.**

## Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Enabling economic opportunities
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 Any costs associated with amendments to the Discover South Kesteven website and the development of a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy will be met from the approved 2024/25 General Fund Revenue Budget.

Completed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Deputy Director (Finance & ICT) and Deputy S151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 This report is for noting only. There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from the report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan (2024-2027) guides the work of the Council towards the vision to be 'a thriving district to live in, work and visit'. One of the missions is to enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all South Kesteven communities. The Council is therefore committed to promoting the district as an attractive place to visit, work, invest, study and do business.
- 2.2 The latest STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) evaluation model data was reported to the November 2023 meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC). This confirmed South Kesteven had attracted more than three million visitors in 2022, an increase of almost a third on

the previous year, with an economic impact of £218 million and higher than pre-pandemic levels.

- 2.3 At the September 2023 meeting, the OSC: considered the content of the updated Discover South Kesteven website; agreed to its live publication; and to receiving a six-monthly update.
- 2.4 To support the visitor economy sector, the Council (through its Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer), collaborates with partners, stakeholders and businesses at a national, regional and local level to promote the many attractions within South Kesteven to the wider visitor market.
- 2.5 Discover South Kesteven is the tourism brand of South Kesteven District Council. As previously reported to Committee, the website [www.discoversouthkesteven.com](http://www.discoversouthkesteven.com) received an update last year which has been well-received.
- 2.6 The following data relates to website visits during January 2024:
  - a total of 236 users to the site, of which 232 new users.
  - average engagement time on the site was 1 minute and 13 seconds, which is strong as it shows people are staying on the site when they find it.
  - engagement sessions per user were 0.69 illustrating a good return and a low bounce rate, which means more than half the visitors to the site are staying on the page.
  - 94 of the sessions came from organic searches.
  - 82 were direct visits to the URL (uniform resource locator i.e. a web address).
  - 74 came from referral from another website.
  - 54 came through social media.
- 2.7 The blog posts are proving popular, with two new blogs added to the site each month. Discover South Kesteven has four social media accounts:
  - TikTok which has over 9,000 views on its most popular video.
  - Facebook which has 1,300 followers
  - Instagram which has 1,442 followers
  - X (formerly known as Twitter) has 1,115 followers. The brand is also supported at in-person events, such as business-to-business (B2B) networking events, trade shows and within publications.
- 2.8 Visit England (VE) is the national tourist board for England, responsible for marketing England to domestic visitors and established overseas markets and for improving England's tourism product.
- 2.9 Following the recent Government-commissioned independent review by Nick de Bois of the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) landscape in England, VE has begun to create a portfolio of nationally supported, strategic and high-performing Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs). LVEPs will provide strong local leadership and governance in tourism destinations across the country.

- 2.10 A key partner in this approach is Destination Lincolnshire, who are the official DMO for the Lincolnshire. In February 2024, Destination Lincolnshire were awarded LVEP accreditation status. This is seen as a significant positive for the area and will help unlock growth opportunities in the regional visitor economy.
- 2.11 Destination Lincolnshire's mission is to support and grow the visitor economy through robust destination management, strong stakeholder relationships and clear planning. The new LVEPs will support this role through collaboration with partners locally to reflect each district's priorities, such as increasing overnight visitors in South Kesteven. Nationally they will focus on being an advocate for shared priorities and targets and helping realising funding into the county.
- 2.12 A critical outcome of the new LVEP will be to develop and publish a Destination Management Plan for Lincolnshire, for which South Kesteven District Council will be a key partner. Once completed, this regional strategy will offer the context required to begin the process of acquiring a consultant to help develop and write the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for South Kesteven. Further updates will be provided later in 2024.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 A future Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy will need to be considered as a live and dynamic document to take account of both the new Corporate Plan and any emerging policy and legislation.

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

- 4.1 The Council could decide not to produce a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for South Kesteven. However, this may risk loss of focus on achieving the aims of the Council within the quickest practicable timescales and has therefore been discounted.

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

- 5.1 The recommendations are to enable the OSC to understand current changes in the management and organisation of Tourism both nationally and regionally; and to recommend changes; and to consider this impact locally in advance of the development of a Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for South Kesteven.

### **6. Background papers**

- 6.1 *Review of Hello SK app and draft Discover South Kesteven website* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published on 5 September 2024 and available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s38879/Report.pdf>

- 6.2 *The de Bois Review: an independent review of Destination Management Organisations in England* – Published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport in August 2021 and available online at:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/611bbff6d3bf7f63a7b29233/2585-C\\_The\\_de\\_Bois\\_Review\\_ACCESSIBLE\\_for\\_publication\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/611bbff6d3bf7f63a7b29233/2585-C_The_de_Bois_Review_ACCESSIBLE_for_publication_.pdf)

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## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 March 2024

Report of Debbie Roberts,  
Chairman of LeisureSK Ltd

## LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report – August 2023 - February 2024

### Report Author

Debbie Roberts, Chairman of LeisureSK Ltd

 [debbie.roberts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.roberts@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To provide an update to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd against the leisure management contract objectives.

### Recommendations

**It is recommended that the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- 1. Notes the contents of this report and suggests any enhancements to the level of information provided for inclusion in the next six-monthly update.**

<b>Decision Information</b>	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	Exempt Appendix A and B - Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting Communities</li> <li>• Effective Council</li> </ul>
Which wards are impacted?	All

## 1. Background to the Report

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2024 to 2027 sets out the key priorities for the Council and its leisure service. Encouraging sport and physical activity to support healthy lifestyles by reducing health inequalities and delivering a sustainable leisure offer helps to support the Council's corporate ambition and provides opportunities for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities. The Council's leisure contract with LeisureSK Ltd focusses on embedding an approach that seeks to continuously improve service delivery and customer experience.
- 1.2 The Council's Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously received a six monthly update on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd at the meeting held on 05 September 2023. Subsequent reports relating to the LeisureSK Ltd and the request for a management fee for 2024/2025 have also been presented to Members of this Committee on 30 November 2023 and 09 January 2024 (see **Background Papers**).
- 1.3 This report covers activities which have taken place between August 2023 and February 2024. For ease of reading, seven subsets have been created as follows:
  - A. An overview of LeisureSK Ltd Operations/Staffing
  - B. An overview of LeisureSK Ltd Community and Outreach Activities
  - C. An update on the Council's Leisure Centres
  - D. An update on the work of the Council's Leisure Team
  - E. LeisureSK Ltd Performance Monitoring
  - F. Leisure Centre Condition Surveys
  - G. Quality Assurance

### **(A) LeisureSK Ltd Operations/Staffing**

- 1.4 LeisureSK Ltd continues to face operational challenges in relation to increased supplier costs and the significant increase in the cost of utilities. This aligns with the national picture and the challenges being faced by other leisure providers. A management fee of £500,000 for LeisureSK Ltd was budgeted for the current

financial year, however as a result of difficult trading conditions during the current year, an additional management fee of £273,000 was approved at a meeting of the Cabinet on 18 January 2024 (see **Background Papers**).

- 1.5 The current forecasted deficit for the Company is shown in **Exempt Appendix A**. A copy of the January 2024 Budget Monitoring Statements can be found in **Exempt Appendix B**.
- 1.6 As a result of the increase in management fee and given the financial concerns around the management of LeisureSK Ltd which was discussed in the previous Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 09 January 2024, Cabinet have requested the following list of actions to be undertaken:
  - Officers to be tasked to write to Leisure SK Ltd to request a mitigation and recovery plan for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 in response to the management fee request with a view to seeking the level of management fee being requested reducing further for 2024/25 .
  - The Cabinet member for Finance and Cabinet member for Leisure to receive regular detailed budget forecast reports from Leisure SK Ltd between now and end of financial year 2023/24.
  - An urgent independent assessment of the business plan and profit and loss account for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 be undertaken and any corrective action or mitigations proposed be implemented.
  - An independent assessment of the existing governance model and operational financial management controls be undertaken to ensure they are fit for purpose and effective.
  - To continue with an independent review of the VAT and taxation implications which was already underway.
  - The Councils s151 Officer be asked to undertake a review of the financial information, a review of the Board minutes and level of financial support being provided to Leisure SK Ltd and to recommend to Cabinet any corrective actions that may be required Medium Term.
  - To accelerate the options appraisal for the future delivery model of the leisure services including insourcing and full marking testing by tender with leisure providers. This to be undertaken within the shortest of timelines.
- 1.7 The above actions represent a significant amount of work, and a team of Officers are working closely with Members of Cabinet to ensure these can be progressed as quickly and efficiently as possible. Due to the complexity of the work, a further report will be provided to this Committee in June 2024 to provide an update on this work.
- 1.8 In addition to this the Board of Directors for LeisureSK Ltd are working with Senior Officers of the Council to try a mitigate any costs for the remainder of the current financial year. This includes a recruitment freeze across the company which came into effect in January 2024 with all requests to recruit needing to be made by the Chairman of the Board to the Chief Executive of the Council.

- 1.9 The recruitment of suitably qualified staff continues to be a challenge within the leisure industry, this has caused difficulties at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre where there has been a higher turnover of staff. The primary roles which have been difficult to recruit to are Leisure Assistants, Swimming Teachers and Duty Managers.
- 1.10 The General Manager at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre left the company in early December 2023 and this position has been vacant since, being covered by the Contract Manager due to the recruitment freeze and the overspend on staffing this financial year. The post is included in the budget from 01 April 2024.
- 1.11 To try and mitigate the increased staffing costs across the three centres, the Contract Manager for LeisureSK Ltd, with the support of the Board, undertook a senior management staffing restructure which was completed in August 2023. As a result, this removed the Operations Manager positions at Bourne and Grantham, with the position being replaced by a Contract Operations Manager who oversees all three centres. The General Manager position at Stamford was removed, with the General Manager at Bourne now being a dual site role overseeing both Bourne and Stamford. The Contract Health and Wellbeing Manager role was made redundant with the post holder leaving the company in November 2023.
- 1.12 The human resources (HR) consultancy firm, The HR Branch, continue to provide external professional human resources and payroll support to LeisureSK Ltd.
- 1.13 LeisureSK Ltd continue to work with a national apprenticeship provider, Lifetime Training, to deliver the following qualifications for staff:
  - Level 2 Leisure Team Member
  - Level 3 Leisure Duty Manager
  - Level 3 Personal Trainer
- 1.14 There are currently ten team members undertaking apprenticeship qualifications.
- 1.15 LeisureSK Ltd and the Board of Directors remain committed to growing and developing the teams. Since August 2023, the following courses have been hosted across the leisure centres to assist with the recruitment of staff and to upskill the current workforce:
  - National Pool Lifeguard Qualification
  - Level 1 Swim England Assistant Swim Teacher
  - Level 2 Swim England Swim Teacher
- 1.16 In addition, team members have also undertaken the following external training courses to develop their skills and extend the range of activities on offer:
  - Royal Lifesaving Society Internal Quality Assurance

- Level 3 Award in Education and Training
- Aquafit Instructor
- First Aid for Mental Health
- National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches
- Legionella Awareness
- Legionella for Responsible Persons

## **(B) LeisureSK Ltd Community and Outreach Activities**

- 1.17 LeisureSK Ltd continue to develop their programme of community and outreach activities, promoting and increasing their health and wellbeing offering. Events attended include:
- Musculoskeletal Health Village Roadshow in partnership with the NHS
  - Health and Wellbeing Event in partnership with the Bourne and Deepings GP Practices
- 1.18 Other initiatives which continue to be delivered by LeisureSK Ltd include:
- Specialist classes at Bourne Leisure Centre which provide targeted interventions and provide enhanced health and wellbeing outcomes. These include classes for those suffering from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Cardiac Rehabilitation, Weight Management, Mindfulness Meditation, and classes to aid balance and coordination.
  - Good Boost, which is an app based therapeutic water exercise programme for people with musculoskeletal conditions, at Bourne Leisure Centre and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre.
  - Delivery of the Royal Lifesaving Society's Save a Life campaign in the community at various locations.
  - Wellbeing Walks from Bourne Leisure Centre, Stamford Leisure Pool and The Deepings Coronation Hall.
  - Fighting Fit Cancer Rehabilitation classes at Grantham which are delivered in partnership with the Lincoln City Football Foundation. This has also been launched at Bourne Leisure Centre from October 2023.
  - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) swimming lessons and family swim session at Bourne Leisure Centre and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre.
  - Exercise on Prescription continues to be delivered at Bourne Leisure Centre and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre.
- 1.19 Partnerships continue to be developed between the Council, LeisureSK Ltd and wider organisations providing physical activity in the county including One You Lincolnshire, Active Lincolnshire and Inspire+.
- 1.20 Following on from the management restructure with the removal of the Contract Health and Wellbeing Manager role and as a result of the ongoing financial

pressures the company is experiencing, the Board of Directors have agreed to a suspension on some of its community engagement programmes. Alternative options for delivering some of the community programmes (such as volunteers to lead the health walks) have been agreed in the short term. This will be reviewed in the future however it is expected that some of the initiatives mentioned will cease if funding has ended to deliver a specific programme, reducing the operational resource and financial impact.

### **(C) Update on Council Leisure Centres**

- 1.21 Following the announcement from Government of the £60 million Swimming Pool Support Fund, Council Officers submitted a bid to Phase One of the fund in August 2023 which was the revenue support element to help mitigate the increased energy and pool chemical costs.
- 1.22 The Council was subsequently notified in September 2023 that a successful funding allocation had been made in relation to Grantham Meres Leisure Centre and Stamford Leisure Pool, the total amount of support being provided amounting to £344,659. The request to approve receipt of this funding was presented to Cabinet on 07 November 2023 (see **Background Papers**). This funding was used by the Council to reduce the overall management fee to LSK from £773,000 to £428,431.
- 1.23 Phase Two of the fund was launched in October 2023 to provide capital investment improving the energy efficiency of swimming pools in the medium to long term with £40 million of funding available from central government and an additional £20 million of Lottery funding, totalling £60 million capital funding available.
- 1.24 To complete the work previously undertaken by Leisure Energy, Council Officers worked with Leisure Energy in preparing the applications for this phase of the funding due to the technical requirements involved. Applications were prepared and submitted for Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, Stamford Leisure Pool and Bourne Leisure Centre with the same interventions at each centre of additional Solar PV and the introduction of pool covers at each centre. Structural roof surveys were also commissioned for the Solar PV as this was a requirement of the fund.
- 1.25 A total of £647,957 support was applied for as demonstrated in **Table One** below:

<b>Table One: Application to Phase Two of the Swimming Pool Support Fund</b>		
<b>Facility</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Grantham Meres Leisure Centre	Solar PV Pool Cover (Main and Learner)	£399,000 £46,725
Bourne Leisure Centre	Solar PV Pool Cover	£63,300 £36,226

Stamford Leisure Pool	Solar PV Pool Cover	£69,300 £36,226
<b>Total</b>		<b>£647,957</b>

- 1.26 Further information in relation to the Swimming Pool Support Fund Phase Two is shown in **Exempt Appendix A**.
- 1.27 Following the launch of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase3c in Autumn 2023, Officers successfully submitted an application on 07 November 2023 with a total project value of £4,080,000 for Grantham Meres Leisure Centre. Only Grantham Meres Leisure Centre was included in the application as this centre was highlighted to benefit the most from the application and met the application criteria. If successful, this would require a match funding contribution from the Council of £492,500.
- 1.28 The proposed works are to remove the existing gas boilers from the main centre and Combined Heat and Power system, which has been identified as inefficient and operating at a net loss. These would be replaced with a bespoke air source heat pump system, powered by electricity extracting heat from outside of the building, delivering significant carbon savings for the Council.
- 1.29 Unfortunately the Council were notified on 08 March 2024 by Salix Finance that the application had been unsuccessful as it did not reach the requirement of the scheme in its technical assessment. Feedback has been provided and Council Officers are currently working through this. Alternative options for energy savings are going to be explored.
- 1.30 The Council has identified funding from it's Climate Reserve Fund to upgrade the lighting on the 3G pitch and in both the main and small sports halls at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre to LED. The 3G lighting upgrade is due to take place week commencing 18 March 2024. It is envisaged that the sports hall lighting upgrades will be undertaken in May 2024, due to materials and contractor availability.
- 1.31 Further information in relation to the Climate Reserve Fund is shown in **Exempt Appendix A**.

#### Bourne Leisure Centre

- 1.32 Fitness membership numbers have seen growth, with an increase of 5.9% compared to July 2023, when including both monthly direct debit and advanced payment members. Despite only being a small percentage growth, the centre now has the largest fitness membership base in the company.
- 1.33 The Swim School programme continues to perform well however has reduced in size by 2.3% increase in pupils compared to July 2023. This is primarily down to the occupancy sitting at 91% across the whole programme, reducing the ability to move

around between stages. However, in financial terms the centre is ahead on budget for the financial year.

- 1.34 A regular monthly Farmers Market continues to take place on the third Sunday of each month, hosted in the sports hall utilising previously empty space and attracts an average of 800 to 1,000 visitors per month, providing opportunities for local small businesses to come together. There are plans to expand this further in the summer months utilising outdoor space.
- 1.35 Large scale plant maintenance upgrades have been undertaken to include the upgrade of the boilers providing pool heating and domestic hot water services.

#### Grantham Meres Leisure Centre and South Kesteven Sports Stadium

- 1.36 The Table Tennis Centre (TTC) at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre has been used once more by the NHS between October and November 2023 to deliver the COVID-19 Autumn booster vaccinations. During this time, a total of 33,100 vaccinations were administered. Grantham Meres Leisure Centre received a hire fee for the use of the centre.
- 1.37 Following its use as a Covid 19 vaccination centre, the flooring in the TTC has deteriorated and required refurbishing to bring it back to a satisfactory standard. This has been funded by the NHS with the refurbishment of the TTC sports hall floor being completed in February 2024.
- 1.38 To compensate for the rising costs the company are experiencing particularly regarding utilities, the decision was reaffirmed by the Board of Directors that the Table Tennis Centre (TTC) should remain closed whilst all bookings can be accommodated in other parts of the centre. If this changes then LeisureSK and the Board will happily reconsider this and discussions for wider usage of the TTC are being explored.
- 1.39 LeisureSK Ltd have continued to host live performance events, securing the acts directly and utilising the Council's Arts Team to provide ticketing services. Events have included Forbidden Nights, Calling Planet Earth, Robots Live, Fastlove George Michael Tribute, Abba Forever, The Magic of Motown and Lost in Music. The number of tickets sold by the Council's Arts Team across the events was 2,624 however some of the performance companies also sold their own tickets and used alternative ticketing agencies too.
- 1.40 The centre has also continued to host large sporting events including Kickboxing and Mixed Martial Arts, Swim England County Championships and the annual Rotary Club of Grantham Swimarathon which has now raised over £1 million since it started in 1990.

- 1.41 Fitness membership numbers have seen a small growth, with an increase of 0.8% compared to July 2023, when including both monthly direct debit and advanced payment members.
- 1.42 The Swim School programme continues to perform well with a growth of 2% in pupils compared to July 2023.

#### Stamford Leisure Pool

- 1.43 The centre opening hours have been extended further. From October 2023, the facility is now open from 6am until 10pm Monday to Thursday, and 6am until 9pm Friday. This has allowed for extended public lane swimming sessions and increased availability to use the gym.
- 1.44 Fitness membership numbers have decreased by 2.7% in their membership base compared to July 2023, when including both monthly direct debit and advanced payment members. This is primarily because of the annual price increase in January 2024. To try and mitigate further cancellations a swim only membership has now been introduced.
- 1.45 The Swim School programme remains steady with a small growth of 1.9% in pupil numbers compared to July 2023. There continues to be challenges with the enrolment of new swimmers in the lower stages and following the appointment of a new marketing company for LeisureSK Ltd, the team are working with them to promote the learn to swim programme in the coming months. They also continue to face increased competition from the Stamford Endowed School 'learn to swim' programme which has been extended over the past year and have introduced a direct debit option from January 2024.
- 1.46 As a result of a boiler failure in January 2024 which resulted in a small closure of the swimming pool, a new burner unit has now been installed with no further issues encountered since.

#### **(D) Work of the Council's Leisure Team**

- 1.47 The Council's Leisure Team continue to be responsible for regular contract monitoring, the results of which are reported to the Board of Directors monthly to ensure the contract outcomes and the Council's objectives are being delivered.
- 1.48 As part of the regular contract monitoring regime, organised visits and spot checks are undertaken to ensure LeisureSK Ltd are providing a high-quality service which meets the Council's desired levels of cleanliness and presentation, and the leisure centres are offering a positive customer experience. Following the meetings, any actions necessary are recorded, monitored and signed-off once resolved.

- 1.49 Formal contract monitoring meetings, which include representatives of the senior management team at LeisureSK Ltd and Officers from the Council's Leisure and Property Teams, continue to take place quarterly. Outside of this, the Council's Team Leader for Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces meets with the LeisureSK Ltd Contract Manager on a monthly basis. Any areas of concern from the monitoring visits are raised as an emerging trend at the quarterly monitoring meeting for further discussion and resolution.
- 1.50 In January 2024 following the press releases in the media surrounding LeisureSK Ltd there was an increase in complaints relating to cleanliness, specifically at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre. Additional monitoring visits were undertaken by the Council's Leisure Team during this time and actions discussed with the Contract Manager for LeisureSK Ltd. It is worth noting that January 2024 was an exceptionally difficult time for LeisureSK staff, there were questions around the future of the centres, memberships, swim schools which was handled with professionalism and courtesy at a time of uncertainty, which the Board has formally expressed its thanks to the teams in the centres for.
- 1.51 **Table Two** below outlines the findings from the leisure monitoring visits and the items raised for rectification between the period of August 2023 and February 2024.

Facility	Total Cleanliness Items	Total Maintenance and Repair Items
	August 2023 – February 2024	August 2023 – February 2024
<b>Bourne Leisure Centre</b>	190	123
<b>Grantham Meres Leisure Centre</b>	719	396
<b>South Kesteven Sports Stadium</b>	341	254
<b>Stamford Leisure Pool</b>	294	116

## **(E) LeisureSK Ltd Performance Monitoring**

### Balanced Scorecard

- 1.52 The balanced scorecard covering the leisure centres for the period August 2023 to February 2024 can be found at **Appendix C**. This provides detailed information on the performance of the leisure centres which is utilised by the Board to assess the performance of the company and progress against the leisure contract Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

## Sport England Moving Communities Community Survey

- 1.53 The annual Sport England Moving Communities Community Survey was last distributed to LeisureSK Ltd's customers in August 2023. The focus of the survey was to help Sport England understand perceptions about physical activity and active leisure in local communities, and to monitor the sector's performance, sustainability and social value contribution.
- 1.54 The survey is broken down into four areas which covers satisfaction, net promotor score (NPS), which is an index ranging from -100 to 100 which measures the willingness of customers to recommend a company's products or services to others, in-centre activity and cleanliness.
- 1.55 The results from the most recent survey are shown in **Table Three** below:

**Table Three: The results from the most recent Sport England Moving Communities Community survey**

	Bourne Leisure Centre	Grantham Meres Leisure Centre	Stamford Leisure Pool	LeisureSK Ltd – Contract Result
<b>Responses Received</b>	107	114	76	297
<b>Satisfaction</b>	84.34%	80.53%	80.28%	81.86%
<b>NPS</b>	20.76	9.82	-4.29	10.41
<b>In-centre Activity</b>	75.79%	81.73%	79.66%	79.07%
<b>Cleanliness</b>	64.95%	59.14%	48.28%	58.87%

- 1.56 The results of the survey also demonstrated that in the previous 12-month period, LeisureSK Ltd generated a total of £5,718,714 of social value through the activities and services provided with an average social value of £98.76 generated by each person meeting the minimum threshold required to generate value (4 active visits a month at least once in a 12 month period).

## **(F) Leisure Centre Condition Surveys**

### Building condition surveys

- 1.57 The building condition surveys undertaken during 2022, continue to be reviewed by the Council's Leisure and Property Teams and the Board of Directors, with works being prioritised for completion based on the severity and risk identified. These works are taking place in addition to ongoing reactive maintenance works which are routinely identified and completed.

1.58 Following the previous report to this Committee, the following major works have been completed across all three centres, with the extent of works completed listed below:

**Bourne Leisure Centre:**

- Fire compartmentation survey
- Boiler replacement for pool heating and domestic hot water system
- Lift repair works
- Car park Aco Drain repairs
- Disabled changing hoist upgrade
- Sump pump replacement
- Heating pump replacement

**Stamford Leisure Pool:**

- Internal fire door replacement programme
- Fire detection upgrades in lower plant room
- Burner unit replacement on pool heating boiler
- Replacement pool chemical dosing controller

**South Kesteven Sports Stadium:**

- Intruder alarm system upgrade
- Internal LED lighting upgrades

**Grantham Meres Leisure Centre:**

- Replacement of valves in pool plant room
- Internal fire door replacement programme
- Intruder alarm system upgrade
- Flooring refurbishment in Table Tennis Centre following use by the NHS as a Covid-19 vaccination centre
- Pool chemical bulk storage tank upgrade and relocation
- Pool moveable floor remedial works – pulley wheels, underwater cables, hydraulic hoses

1.59 The Council's Property Team are currently in the process of finalising the specification and procuring the works to repair the roof at Bourne Leisure Centre.

1.60 Works have also been commissioned to repair and upgrade the wave machine control panel at Stamford Leisure Pool, to bring this much-loved feature of the pool back into working order.

1.61 Further works as a result of the condition surveys are currently being compiled by the Councils' Property Team and added to a maintenance plan for the upcoming financial year.

Mechanical and Electrical meetings

- 1.62 Bi-monthly Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) meetings continue to be undertaken between LeisureSK Ltd, Council Officers and Briggs and Forrester (the Council's maintenance contractor). The meetings aim to ensure maintenance issues are captured at an early stage, and any remedial works can be planned in to prevent operational issues.

## **(G) Quality Assurance**

### Annual Quest Audits

- 1.63 In February 2024 Stamford Leisure Pool had their annual Quest audit which was conducted by independent consultants Right Directions Ltd. Quest is Sport England's Continuous Improvement Tool for leisure facilities and is designed to measure how effective organisations are at providing customer service.
- 1.64 Established for over 20 years Quest, in addition to being supported by Sport England, has the support of wider organisations including CIMSVA (The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity), UKActive (a not-for-profit industry association promoting the interests of commercial fitness gyms and community leisure centres) and the Chief Leisure Officers' Association (CLOA).
- 1.65 As part of the Quest assessment, the centre received a mystery visit and a one day on site assessment. There were six core modules assessed which included: compliance declaration, operational management, environmental management, managing the team, the customer journey and tackling inequalities. Following the overall assessment, leisure centres are given a banding of either: Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Good, Very Good or Excellent.
- 1.66 **The centre achieved a Good banding as a result of the Quest audit.** Any areas for improvement have been captured in a Quest Improvement Plan, with progress being monitored by the Board of Directors.
- 1.67 The annual Quest audit for Grantham Meres Leisure Centre and Bourne Leisure Centre is due to take place in the next financial year. An update on the outcome of the audits will be provided in the next six monthly update to this Committee.

### Annual Health and Safety Audits

- 1.68 In November 2023 LeisureSK Ltd had their annual Health and Safety audits which were conducted by independent consultants Right Directions Ltd. All compliance issues were reviewed across each centre and the results of the audits are shown below in **Table Four**. Overall LeisureSK Ltd demonstrated an improvement compared to the previous year's rounds of audits.

**Table Four: The results from the annual health and safety audits**

Centre	2021 score	2022 score	2023 score	Improvement
Bourne	63%	85%	85%	N/A
Grantham	67%	71%	79%	8%
Stamford	65%	81%	85%	4%
Average	65%	79%	83%	4%

## **2. Key Considerations**

- 2.1 This report seeks to provide Members with key information on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd and to demonstrate the commitment of the Board of LeisureSK Ltd to ensure the company achieves its operational and performance objectives.

## **3. Other Options Considered**

- 3.1 The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously agreed to receive six-monthly updates on performance. Therefore the 'do nothing' option has been discounted.

## **4. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 4.1 The Council has a duty to ensure the leisure contract provides value for money and delivers its corporate objectives. The information detailed within the report provides Members with an opportunity to assess the performance of LeisureSK Ltd and to suggest enhancements to the level of information provided for inclusion in the next six-monthly update.

## **5. Background papers**

- 5.1 *LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report September 2023* - Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 25 August 2023, available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s38853/LeisureSK%20Performance%20Report.pdf>
- 5.2 *Swimming Pool Support Fund (Phase One – Revenue)* – Report to Cabinet, published 30 October 2023, available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s39436/SPSF.pdf>
- 5.3 *LeisureSK Ltd Management Fee 2024/2025* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 22 November 2023, available online at:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s39725/LeisureSK%20Ltd%20Management%20Fee%20Request%202024%202025%20Report.pdf>

- 5.4 *LeisureSK Ltd Management Fee and Business Plan 2024/2025* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 29 December 2023, available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s40148/LeisureSK%20Ltd%20Management%20Fee%20Request%20Business%20Plan.pdf>
- 5.5 *LeisureSK Ltd Urgent Funding Request* – Report to Cabinet, published 10 January 2024, available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s40331/Leisure%20SK%20Ltd%20Funding%20Request.pdf>

## 6. Appendices

- 6.1 **Exempt Appendix A:** Summary of exempt information.
- 6.2 **Exempt Appendix B:** January 2024 Budget Monitoring Statement
- 6.3 **Appendix C:** Balanced Scorecard August 2023 to February 2024

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## Balanced Scorecard Report

### Appendix C – LeisureSK Ltd Performance Monitoring Report

Objective	Measure – Performance Indicator	Bourne Leisure Centre						
		Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024
Provide high-quality, accessible leisure provision for residents and visitors to South Kesteven	Overall attendance	25336	19209	22538	21234	18372	20173	22094
	Total membership numbers:							
	• Swim school	1204	1233	1232	1239	1169	1175	1178
	• Fitness	1365	1379	1411	1392	1345	1354	1428
	Attendance:							
	• Casual swimming	8770	2755	3103	2361	1967	4902	5989
	• Gym sessions	2842	2311	2435	2189	1734	3453	3519
	Facebook activity							
	• Number of posts	11	17	10	13	24	20	20
	• Total followers	3447	3455	3484	3501	3511	3529	3545
	• Engagement	7912	5135	6678	9805	11635	16853	19736
Establish a culture of growth and development	Google rating	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.2
	Contract monitoring visits by the Council's leisure team	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
	Facility closures	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Number of accidents/incidents	9	12	18	21	7	12	18
	Number of high/medium risk actions	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
	Courses completed by team members	7	9	9	1	0	0	0

Create an environment where employees feel valued, empowered, engaged, and satisfied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New starters</li> <li>• Vacancies</li> </ul>	3 0	1 0	1 1	1 2	1 2	0 2	0 3
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## Customer Feedback Summary

	August 2023 – February 2024
<b>Bourne Leisure Centre</b>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team throughout the holidays, Swim instructors in the Crash Courses and Swimschool as well great feedback as always for our GEX team.</li> <li>• Great feedback about our pool parties and team in general.</li> <li>• Nice feedback about benches saying they looked good.</li> <li>• Great feedback for aquafit and the balance and coordination sessions.</li> <li>• EOP instructor was very helpful and informative when on program.</li> <li>• Lifeguard made us feel very safe during a pool party and Swim teachers very encouraging and professional during lessons.</li> <li>• Great friendly helpful staff on reception.</li> <li>• Laura is a great instructor she has so much energy.</li> <li>• Paige is a fantastic Aqua Instructor.</li> <li>• Really happy to see Vibe Cycle back on the group exercise program.</li> <li>• Great feedback about Lynn and Emrys our 2 new swim assistants and how helpful they are.</li> <li>• Sarah's balance and coordination class has been amazing she is a nice instructor and makes you feel welcome.</li> <li>• Crash courses in the half term teachers were great my son really improved in confidence and skill.</li> </ul> <p><b>Negative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Door out of action for too long – these have now been repaired and are fully operational. One shower not working this is also repaired now.</li> <li>• Comments about outside lighting this is now rectified.</li> <li>• New benches being too small.</li> <li>• GEX waiting list not being notified if there is space – the app has now been updated to email those who are waiting so that should help class occupancy.</li> </ul>

- Negative feedback over a Parent and Child instructor, parent has been sorted and is happy with the management team following up with the instructor.
- No waiting list notifications for full classes.
- Pot holes in the car park.
- Heating not working in the sports hall.
- No space to move into Stage 3 (the program is being reviewed weekly).
- Removal of Monday Circuits class due to lack of attendees this class has been changed to a pilates class due to demand and is full. We have however added a body blast session before to accommodate those who did attend circuits and it will hopefully have better attendance.
- Always a waiting list for the GEX classes we have over 50 classes we cannot deliver anymore.
- Showers in the gym not working, one has been put back in action the other needs building work this is with SKDC.
- Ladies showers not working this was due to a TMV that needed stripping down this has now been resolved.
- Feedback about lack of communication for a swim school cancellation this has now been resolved.

## Balanced Scorecard Report

Objective	Measure – Performance Indicator	Grantham Meres Leisure Centre						
		Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024
Provide high-quality, accessible leisure provision for residents and visitors to South Kesteven	Overall attendance	34885	35610	61848	39343	28344	36489	36969
	Total membership numbers: • Swim school • Fitness	1549 1361	1568 1429	1565 1438	1542 1427	1510 1334	1536 1369	1572 1372
	Attendance: • Casual swimming • Gym sessions	9331 8002	8662 7881	8110 7505	4142 2245	3987 1621	5876 3243	6448 3142
	Facebook activity • Number of posts • Total followers • Engagement	26 6129 2397	42 6177 3652	56 6202 4449	13 6261 33081	24 6261 50899	31 6265 64619	32 6313 71342
	Google rating	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.8	4.8	4.2	4.2
	Contract monitoring visits by the Council's leisure team	4	2	2	1	2	3	2
	Facility closures	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Number of accidents/incidents	8	10	9	6	6	7	13
	Number of high/medium risk actions	2	2	3	12	12	12	12
Establish a culture of growth and development	Courses completed by team members	14	7	7	0	0	0	0
Create an environment where employees feel valued, empowered, engaged, and satisfied	• New starters • Vacancies	7 1	1 2	0 2	1 5	1 5	1 4	2 5

## Customer Feedback Summary

	August 2023 – February 2024
<b>Grantham Meres Leisure Centre</b>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Painting and decorating has started throughout the centre.</li><li>• Home Ed PE sessions have started in the centre. Opening exercise to a new part of the community</li><li>• Parties reintroduced as an activity to the centre.</li><li>• Lighting replacements in the sports hall.</li><li>• Refurbishment of poolside walls on the main pool.</li><li>• Kay on reception is great, always friendly.</li><li>• Feedback for Rickys classes.</li></ul> <p><b>Negative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in membership fees so close to the last increase.</li><li>• Cleanliness comments, mainly around wet village during County Champs weekend.</li></ul>

## Balanced Scorecard Report

Objective	Measure – Performance Indicator	Stamford Leisure Pool						
		Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024
Provide high-quality, accessible leisure provision for residents and visitors to South Kesteven	Overall attendance	10567	11235	12710	11254	8746	10206	11748
	Total membership numbers: • Swim school • Fitness	852 751	875 759	880 759	869 780	834 732	866 705	851 754
	Attendance: • Casual swimming • Gym sessions	6998 494	3920 521	4132 564	3398 497	2376 351	4107 258	5102 210
	Facebook activity • Number of posts • Total followers • Engagement	15 2661 457	10 2672 5844	7 2687 17367	9 2701 3455	14 2705 2641	20 2763 7576	12 2770 5445
	Google rating	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.7
	Contract monitoring visits by the Council's leisure team	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Facility closures	0	0	1	2	0	1	0
	Number of accidents/incidents	2	6	4	7	1	7	6
	Number of high/medium risk actions	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
Establish a culture of growth and development	Courses completed by team members	1	2	8	3	0	1	0
Create an environment where employees feel valued, empowered, engaged, and satisfied	• New starters • Vacancies	2 0	3 0	1 2	2 2	1 1	0 1	0 2

## Customer Feedback Summary

	August 2023 – February 2024
<b>Stamford Leisure Pool</b>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We received comments regarding the family splash sessions and that these were much enjoyed and a great atmosphere.</li><li>• Positive comments about our crash courses.</li><li>• Feedback about the team being friendly, welcoming and helpful.</li><li>• The centre seems to be looking cleaner.</li><li>• The team are very friendly and helpful and the members really appreciate the centre.</li><li>• Love the new Aquafit session on Thursdays.</li><li>• Swim teacher feedback for preschool lessons.</li><li>• Nice feedback about Harlee and helpful she has been and general comments about the teams helpfulness and friendliness as well as visible improvement in the standard of cleaning.</li><li>• Lovely feedback about Gina and her parent and child lessons.</li><li>• Great feedback about Jasmine on reception and how helpful and friendly she is.</li><li>• Danis aquafit class was great very motivating.</li><li>• Good feedback over the half term crash courses and the addition of a 2<sup>nd</sup> week of crash courses to cater to the Peterborough pupils who broke up on a different week.</li></ul> <p><b>Negative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some continued comments about our booking system and that this is difficult at times when booking or paying online.</li><li>• Feedback on a teacher from a cancellation this has been taken up with the teacher.</li><li>• No music in the gym.</li><li>• Monday change in pool program, this is being reviewed once the management team speak to the members and amending the program where needed.</li><li>• Shower not working in the disabled this has since been repaired.</li><li>• Hair dryers not working in the ladies this has now been replaced.</li><li>• Not being able to book for the New Years Aqua sessions because we have a 7 day advance booking period and this was 2 weeks away the customer was asked to book online, on the app or call use on Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> and refused to.</li><li>• Disabled shower push button hard to operate.</li></ul>

- Negative feedback about how a swimmer was spoken to when he entered the water doing a seated dive this has now been dealt with.
- Disabled shower – this is still with EES to replace the push button to a more user friendly dial.
- Negative feedback through SKDC about the slide not being opening and changing rooms being dirty – the team have received cleaning training so they know what the standard is its now just about managing it day to day. The slide operates in all family splash sessions which are run in the holidays and weekends this is clearly advertised online.



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL



## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 March 2024

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

## Sport and Physical Activity Strategy – March 2024 Update

### Report Author

Beth Goodman, Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead

 [bethany.goodman@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:bethany.goodman@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the progress and delivery of the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021 to 2026).

### Recommendations

**In noting the progress and delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for South Kesteven, it is recommended the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

1. Suggests any enhancements to the extent and clarity of the information produced for the next six-monthly update report.
2. Considers the results of the latest Active Lives data available for South Kesteven and notes the results of future Active Lives survey data will form part of regular six-monthly updates.
3. Endorses the suggested amendments to be made to the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy following the launch of the Government's 'Get Active' Strategy and agrees to receive a draft of the refreshed Strategy at a future meeting.

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities
Which wards are impacted?	Two or more wards

## 1. Implications

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

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 There are no financial implications for the Council in relation to this report. The work completed to date has been undertaken within identified budgets. If any initiatives are identified which require budget or investment, then an appropriate business case will be developed which identifies the cost and the associated benefit to the community.

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

### ***Legal and Governance***

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

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

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2024-2027) identifies Connecting Communities as a key priority. To underpin this priority, the Council is delivering on the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (the Strategy) which was adopted in 2021. The Council's Leisure Team is responsible for implementing the actions identified in the Strategy, targeting key areas, and working with partners to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to live healthy, active lifestyles.
- 2.2 The Council's Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a six-monthly update on progress with the Action Plan contained within the Strategy, the

most recent update being provided at a meeting of the Committee on 5 September 2023 (see **Background Papers**).

2.3 The remainder of this report provides a further update and is broken into two key areas with subsets as follows:

A. An overview of the work undertaken to support the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

- Physical Activity Initiatives for Council Employees
- Partnership and Collaborative working
- Active Lincolnshire
- Events
- Proposed Amendments to the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021-2026

B. The Active Lives Survey

**A. An overview of the work undertaken to support the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and accompanying action plan.**

Physical Activity Initiatives for Council Employees

2.4 In October 2024, Council Officers took part in a skipping challenge, completing 100 skips a day. As well as encouraging physical activity and boosting morale, a total of £326.71 was raised for Cancer Research UK.

2.5 In November 2023, a total of 37 Council Officers took part in a friendly 5-a-side football tournament for White Ribbon UK. White Ribbon UK is a charity that asks individuals and organisations to better their understanding towards men's violence against women and girls. A total of £504.85 was raised for the charity from the tournament and associated activity.

2.6 In January 2024, Council Officers joined One You Lincolnshire's '21.4' physical activity challenge. The challenge consisted of completing 21.4 minutes of physical activity every day for 28 days, which achieves the 150 minutes of physical activity recommended per week.

2.7 In February 2024, Team SK put forward two teams for the annual Rotary Swimarathon at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre. The teams completed a total of 324 lengths within 50 minutes, raising a total of £235 for local causes.

Partnership and Collaborative Working

2.8 The Council alone cannot achieve its corporate ambition of Connecting Communities, accordingly Officers have continued to collaborate with partner

organisations, stakeholders, and communities. Since the previous update to this Committee, new relationships have been developed and activities attended, these include:

- Monthly attendance at County Leisure Leads meetings coordinated by Active Lincolnshire.
- Monthly UK Active Webinars.
- Attendance at 'We are Undefeatable' webinars.
- Attendance at 'Improving Health and Increasing Activity Conference' in September.
- Attendance at workshops hosted by Sport England and the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA).
- Attendance at the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Sport and Leisure Seminar, which explored the challenges and future of local authority sports and leisure services.
- Regular attendance at the Grantham Partnership Board where initiatives relating to physical activity are discussed and promoted.
- Attendance at Lincolnshire District Wide Health and Wellbeing Working Group.
- Attendance at the Lincolnshire District Wide Healthy Weight Partnership Board.

- 2.9 Officers have recently formed a positive relationship with the local Personalised Care Network (PCN), K2 Healthcare. Through this, collaboration is underway to enable GP Practices to sign up to the Active Practice Charter, with the aim of making positive changes in surgeries to boost staff and patient wellbeing by becoming more physically active.
- 2.10 Officers within the Leisure Team have also developed relationships with Positive Futures colleagues to identify place-based opportunities within the district. Positive Futures are an organisation which uses sport and physical activity to engage with young people in deprived communities.
- 2.11 The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) has helped to shape a Local Skills Accountability Board, which South Kesteven District Council now sits on. This Board will bring together employers and education providers to match supply and demand effectively within the sport and physical activity sector.

#### Active Lincolnshire

- 2.12 South Kesteven District Council continues to promote the online Activity Finder to enable residents to source activities in their local area, this can be found online at: <https://www.activelincolnshire.com/get-involved/lets-move-lincolnshire/club-and-activity-finder>
- 2.13 Two events have been hosted by Active Lincolnshire to support physical activity providers to thrive and grow. The events have connected physical activity, sport and

leisure sector businesses, charities, organisations and trusts with local providers of business support and wider services. The Council's team attended the events and developed positive connections and further enhanced their network.

### Events

- 2.14 **Table One** below details events which have been supported or organised by the Council's Leisure Team since August 2023.

<b>Table One: Events supported or organised by the Council's Leisure Team</b>	
<b>Name of event, date and location</b>	<b>Further details on event</b>
<b>Personalisation Event</b>  8 September 2023 at Stamford Arts Centre	The Council's Leisure Team worked in partnership with Stamford Health, Education and Awareness Charity (SHEAC) to deliver a 'Help is out there' event to enable residents to meet local providers supporting those living with long term health conditions.
<b>Health and Wellbeing Event</b>  26 September 2023 at Bourne Corn Exchange	The Councils Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead worked in partnership with the Patient Participation Groups (PPG) at Bourne GP Practices. This event focused on the local physical activity opportunities to support mental and physical health and wellbeing. A range of different physical activity tasters were delivered throughout the day, with 283 visitors coming through the doors.
<b>Guided Cycle Rides</b>  Wyndham Park to Belton House	Following the Gear up Grantham cycle event held in July 2023, monthly family-guided rides - led by British Cycling Leaders, have been introduced. A total of eight rides have taken place, all stopped off at Belton House where a ranger delivered talks about the park and wildlife.
<b>Grantham Aches and Pains Hub</b>  11 January 2024 at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre	It was established there were 250 Musculoskeletal patients on 13 weeks+ waiting list in Grantham. Providers therefore came together to create an Aches and Pains Hub. This event provided advice about pain management, physiotherapy, improving overall health and wellbeing and effective ways to self-manage aches and pains. Patients were invited by their GPs to book an appointment for the day, however the hub is available for all residents to attend.

- 2.15 The information provided in **Appendix A** highlights planned future activity in the coming months.

### Proposed Amendments to the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021-2026

- 2.16 In August 2023, the Government released 'Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity' which can be accessed online at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64ef008f13ae15000d6e302c/11187-DCMS-Sports%20Strategy%20CM%20ACCESSIBLE-02.pdf>
- 2.17 Following the publication of this strategy, a review of the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021 – 2026) has been undertaken to ensure that the Government's objectives can continue to be met locally.
- 2.18 To ensure the Council's Strategy remains fit for purpose and aligns with Central Government's Strategy the following additions are required to the Priority Outcomes for South Kesteven:
- Adults should do a minimum of 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity exercise.
  - Children should take part in sport and physical activity for an average of 60 minutes a day.
  - Disabled children should undertake an average of 20 minutes of sport and physical activity a day.
  - Inclusion of 'Women and Ethnic Groups' as a priority group for tackling inactivity.
  - Highlighting that there are increasing rates of diabetes in young people as well as obesity.
- 2.19 The action plan for the Council is broken down into four areas: Active Society, Active Place, Active People and Active System. The following additions are required to ensure we can achieve our Strategy:
- **Active Society** - understand motivation levels which lead to inactivity.
  - **Active People** - improve and increase place-based work in areas with the highest inactivity levels and other social need indicators.
  - **Active People** – work with health care networks to deliver targeted interventions, using local leisure in a holistic and innovative manner.
  - **Active System** – be part of the conversation with other districts collectively working on a health and wellbeing strategy and action plan.
- 2.20 Should the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorse the changes identified in paragraphs 2.18 and 2.19 above, a full refresh of the Strategy will be presented to this Committee at a future meeting allowing Officers the opportunity to ensure it fully reflects the Council's Corporate Plan (2024 – 2027), the changes in relation to lead Members and alignment with Central Government objectives.

## **B. Active Lives Survey**

- 2.21 The most recent Active Lives Adult Survey data was published in April 2023 and is available online at <https://activelives.sportengland.org/>. This information is

unchanged since the report was provided to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2023. The next set of data will become available in April 2024 covering results for the period November 2022 to November 2023.

- 2.22 The latest set of data for Children and Young People was published in December 2023, which is also accessible through the link provided in paragraph 2.19. The results demonstrate an improvement on the previous data available that 50.5% of children and young people are considered active achieving 60 minutes of activity a day, and 23.3% are considered fairly active achieving 30-59 minutes of activity a day. However, 26.1% were considered less active, achieving less than an average of 30 minutes of activity a day.
- 2.23 Sport England have assessed the results of Active Lives data for Children and Young People and have identified several positives, including more girls playing football since the Lionesses won Euro 2022. There are also one million (11.5%) more children and young people walking, cycling or scootering to get places than there were five years ago, demonstrating an increase in active travel.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 The Councils Leisure Team continue to work on the delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, collaborating with the Council's leisure provider LeisureSK Limited and a range of partners across South Kesteven.

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

- 4.1 The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously agreed to receive six-monthly updates on the delivery of the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. Therefore, the 'do nothing' option has been discounted.

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

- 5.1 The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy provides a basis for the Council to deliver on its ambition to increase health and wellbeing outcomes across South Kesteven. Members are encouraged to suggestion enhancements to the extent and clarity of the information produced for the next six-monthly update report.
- 5.2 Members are also requested to consider and endorse the proposed additions to the Strategy to ensure that the outcomes align with national guidance.

### **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1 *Sport and Physical Activity Strategy – September 2023 Update – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 25 August 2023, available online at:*

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s38849/Sport%20and%20Physical%20Activity%20Strategy%20Report.pdf>

- 6.2 *South Kesteven Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2021-2026*, available online at:  
<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHtpHandler.ashx?id=28041&p=0>

## 7. Appendices

- 7.1 **Appendix A** – Delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Action Plan

## Appendix A – Delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Action Plan

Activity Area	Theme	Action to Date	Future Actions
Active Society	Ensure participation is affordable and accessible to the whole community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with LeisureSK Ltd to develop a calendar of community events to encourage discussion around healthy, active lifestyles.</li> <li>Grantham Meres Leisure Centre continues to host holiday activities partnered with Junior Adventures Group (JAG) to enable opportunities to stay active outside of term time.</li> <li>Goodboost programmes have continued to be delivered at Bourne Leisure Centre and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre.</li> <li>Monthly guided cycle rides through Belton House, with talks from the rangers about the wildlife and the park. These are suitable for families, beginners, and more experienced riders and are led by British Cycling trained volunteers, supported by the National Trust.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working in partnership with the Reconnecting Grantham project to continue the 'Cycle to the Woods' events, following the end of their 3-year funding programme.</li> <li>Implementation of annual cycle events across the district.</li> <li>Develop a 'Wheels for Life' hub at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre with the support of £7041 from Active Lincolnshire's Together Fund. This scheme will support people in transport poverty, with trained volunteers upcycling bikes to remove barriers to participation.</li> <li>Work with Active Lincolnshire to develop a 'We are Undefeatable' campaign, with local people.</li> <li>Develop a widget on the South Kesteven District Council website which links straight through to the Active Lincolnshire Activity Finder, allowing it easier for residents to identify opportunities that are local to them.</li> </ul>

	<p>Encourage physical activity as a holistic approach to wellbeing, including a focus on mental health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with health partners to promote opportunities to be active to help with overall health and wellbeing.</li> <li>The Council team members are continuously offered physical activity opportunities to support their physical and mental health and wellbeing. Colleagues have taken part in skipping challenges, football tournaments, the 21.4-minute challenge and the annual Swimarathon.</li> <li>The Council's Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead worked in partnership with the Patient Participation Groups (PPG) at Bourne GP Practices. This event focused on the local physical activity opportunities to support mental and physical health and wellbeing. A range of different physical activity tasters were delivered throughout the day, with 283 visitors through the doors.</li> <li>Working with the Personalised Care Networks in the district, including social prescribers, to ensure physical activity opportunities are signposted.</li> <li>The Council's Leisure Team worked in partnership with Stamford Health, Education and Awareness Charity (SHEAC) to deliver a 'Help is out there' event for residents to meet local</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support work in the Deepings to establish a mental health organisation to coordinate activity and work with local residents on projects related to health and wellbeing. Produce a wellbeing map for The Deepings.</li> <li>Working with the Deepings Patient Participation Groups (PPG) to create a Health and Wellbeing event in the Deepings, showcasing the physical activity opportunities in the local area.</li> <li>Encourage GP Practices to sign up to the Active Practice charter to make positive changes in their surgeries to boost staff and patient wellbeing by becoming more physically active.</li> <li>To continue to provide physical and wellbeing initiatives within the Council, raising awareness through a range of different challenges and charities.</li> <li>To provide a range of activities through Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2024, with the focus being 'Movement for Mental Health'.</li> <li>To create an annual workforce wellbeing strategy.</li> </ul>
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		<p>providers supporting those living with long term health conditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Young Adults Social Group is launching in April 2024 at Wyndham Park Visitor Centre as a support network for those who might be experiencing isolation.</li> <li>• A new pain café will launch at Wyndham Park Visitor Centre in March 2024 following the success of the Grantham Aches and Pains Hub in January 2024. This café will see hosts deliver presentations and allow like-minded people to come together.</li> </ul>
<b>Active Place</b>	Invest in the Council's leisure facilities to ensure that they meet the needs of customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LeisureSK Ltd Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey was completed in March 2023 to collect feedback from centre users to ensure facilities meet their expectations and needs. The team at LeisureSK Ltd have used these results as part of their programming and planning reviews.</li> <li>• The Sport England Moving Communities survey was undertaken in August 2023, showing overall satisfaction was an average of 81.86% across the LeisureSK Ltd managed facilities. Grantham's results were 80.53%, Bourne's 84.34% and Stamford's 80.28%.</li> <li>• The Council's Property Team successfully gained funding and opened another 'Changing places' toilet in Wyndham Park in February 2024.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor customer satisfaction levels via surveys and other data to ensure that the leisure facilities meet the needs of customers. This includes monitoring feedback included on the monthly leisure monitoring reports.</li> <li>• The next annual Sport England Moving Communities is due to be distributed between mid-June and end of September 2024.</li> <li>• The Council's Property and Leisure Teams have been working through the condition surveys and will continue to work through these prioritising works based on severity and risk.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Kesteven Sports Stadium is due to have the athletics track surface professionally cleaned and treated in April to complement the repairs undertaken in 2023.</li> <li>Use of the Council's climate reserve funding to implement energy efficiency measures across the leisure centres.</li> </ul>	
	<p>Explore opportunities to use parks and open spaces within the district</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of Council social media pages to promote green spaces across the district and activities available in local parks and open spaces.</li> <li>The Parks and Events Community Engagement Officer continues to develop a programme of events and activities to attract visitors to Wyndham Park.</li> <li>Wyndham Park Visitor Centre has offered a range of activities over the last 6 months, including self-defence sessions, funded through the Safer Streets Funding Round 5.</li> <li>Wyndham Park Visitor Centre is a recognised Warm Spaces Hub.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop use of social media, web pages and other promotion of green and open spaces across the district.</li> <li>Active Lincolnshire to film a LeisureSK Limited instructor using Wyndham Park outdoor gym and delivering a workout to promote outdoor spaces.</li> <li>Seek '<a href="#">Our Parks</a>' funding which would see outdoor fitness sessions delivered in open spaces across the district.</li> </ul>
<b>Active People</b>	Support a broad range of sport and physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting the use of the Activity Finder with Active Lincolnshire which now boasts over 300 activities or clubs easily accessible to residents in South Kesteven.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timetable and programming for leisure facilities are being continuously reviewed and new initiatives added to ensure there are a broad range of activities on offer to residents and visitors.</li> </ul>

	<p>activity opportunities that reflect the interests and needs of the community and visitors to the district</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellbeing walks are currently taking place from Bourne Leisure Centre on a Wednesday and Friday morning, from Stamford Leisure Pool on a Thursday afternoon and Grantham Meres Leisure Centre on Wednesdays.</li> <li>Half term swim crash courses are being provided at each of the leisure facilities including Mermaid Fins, Aqua Quidditch and Rookie Lifeguarding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Summer 'We are Undefeatable' campaign starting in August, as part of which the Council will actively promote and inspire people living with long term health conditions to build physical activity into their daily routines or encourage them to try something new.</li> <li>Continue to attend Youth Forum meetings in Stamford to understand how to engage with young people better and ensure Stamford has the correct opportunities available for people to participate in.</li> </ul>
	<p>Work with the Council's leisure provider and partners to run health intervention programmes that result in improved health and wellbeing for residents and deliver outreach activities in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The exercise on Prescription scheme continues to run across all Council owned leisure centres. Since August 2023, there have been 164 starters on the programme, with 114 of those increasing their activity levels and 49 having completed the referral programme. Out of the 164 starters, 70 of these were referred in January and February 2024.</li> <li>Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) swimming lessons, and dedicated family swim sessions continue to run at Bourne Leisure Centre.</li> <li>Pre and Post Natal classes continue to operate at all LeisureSK Ltd centres in the district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More marketing is required to promote opportunities, especially for GPs and hospitals. Develop partnerships with further GP practices around the district, following the success of Bourne initiatives.</li> <li>Funding of £3,500 has been secured to launch Fighting Fit Cancer Rehab classes at Bourne and Stamford in September.</li> </ul>

	our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team members working at the Council's Leisure Provider have completed Active Lincolnshire's online Long Covid training to better support people living with the condition.</li> <li>Fighting Fit Cancer Rehab classes continue to run at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre in partnership with Lincoln City Football Foundation.</li> <li>Funding was secured to launch Fighting Fit Cancer Rehab classes at Bourne Leisure Centre from October 2023.</li> </ul>	
120	<b>Active System</b>	<p>Recognise that physical activity is more than participation in sport and includes activities such as walking, dancing and gardening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media messages, from both the Council and LeisureSK Ltd, have promoted ways that residents can be physically active and provided information relating to general health and wellbeing.</li> <li>A strong partnership has been built with the Council's Leisure Team and Lincolnshire County Council to promote active travel. Council Officers also attended Active Travel England's Roadshow in Nottingham on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023.</li> <li>Street Tag has launched across Primary and Secondary Schools within South Kesteven. The initiative was created by Active Lincolnshire,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The opportunity to deliver virtual 'We are Undefeatable' sessions in village halls will be explored as this provides an opportunity for exercise without a physical instructor.</li> <li>Continue to attend research sessions with The Ageing and Physical Activity (TAPA) network to have an influence in the outcomes within Lincolnshire and South Kesteven.</li> <li>Ensure positive messages are communicated to residents in a variety of ways about how activity can be integrated into everyday life.</li> </ul>

		<p>aimed to increase physical activity by walking or cycling at no cost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council's Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead has been part of the Design Code project, assisting with site assessments to gather feedback. The leisure team had the opportunity to feedback on current cycle schemes and routes and open space provision within the district which will aid in developing a Design Code with an anticipated completion date of May 2025.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support creation of walking sport groups and reintroduce programme of activities at leisure facilities, including wheelchair basketball.</li> <li>Educating social housing residents in the district on the benefits of gardening on both physical and mental well-being.</li> <li>Creation of four market town maps to promote key points of interest, main pathways for walking and cycling and available cycling parking. Working with the Councils Climate Change Officer, these maps will also show the benefits and carbon savings by walking, cycling and wheeling.</li> <li>Street Tag to be promoted and circulated to all residents within South Kesteven to increase physical activity.</li> <li>Continue to work alongside the Design Code Project Team to influence positive changes within the district relating to open spaces and active travel.</li> </ul>
	<p>Facilitate partnerships and collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council Officers have continued to contribute to the districts health and wellbeing strategy and ensure activities are aligned to the county wide strategy - Let's Move Lincolnshire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An officer working group has been created to ensure collaboration across the whole council can be effective to achieve the South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing</li> </ul>

	<p>between authorities, organisations, communities, and groups to empower those who can make change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council's Leisure Team have been part of the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Working Group and Healthy Weight Partnership Board, which enables knowledge sharing and communication across all districts. This ensures Lincolnshire wide districts are working collectively and collaborating efficiently, achieving common goals.</li> <li>Work has taken place in partnership with a wide range of organisations utilising social media and webpages to collectively promote activities.</li> <li>Continue to work with Positive Futures to identify locations within the district to use sport and physical activity to engage with young people in deprived communities.</li> </ul>	<p>Action Plan which was adopted in December 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work with other organisations to promote activities and events taking place across South Kesteven.</li> <li>Increase cycle parking opportunities within South Kesteven, working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council and the Future High Streets Funding/Shaping Streets.</li> <li>Development of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Grantham, as part of the UKSPF Active Travel Budget, along with development of cycle routes across the district.</li> </ul>
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# Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023/24

## WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
<b>26 March 2024, 2:00pm</b>				
<b>Cultural Strategy</b>	Six monthly update on the refreshed Cultural Strategy for the District and accompanying Action Plan  <b>Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure)</b>	To consider performance against the action plan, evaluate effectiveness against agreed targets and performance indicators and decide what further action or data gathering, if any, is needed	Agenda item requested by the Committee Chairman during 13 June 2023 meeting	Healthy and Strong Communities  High Performing Council
<b>Draft KPIs</b>	<b>Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)</b>	To present the proposed key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Corporate Plan 2024-27, to be monitored by this Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and to recommend the approval and adoption of the KPI suite from 1 April 2024.	Delegated by Council 25 January 2024	High Performing Council
<b>An update on the Hello SK app</b>	<b>Lead Officer: Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment)</b>	Provide an update regarding the HelloSK app and the options moving forward		Growth and our economy  High performing Council

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
Update on Tourism and Visitor Economy	Lead Officer: Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment)	To give an update on Discover South Kesteven and options moving forward with the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy.		Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Effective council
Performance of LeisureSK Ltd	Six monthly update on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd  Lead Officer: Debbie Roberts (Chairman of LeisureSK Ltd)	To consider the performance of LeisureSK Ltd	LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report last reviewed by the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 September 2023	Healthy and Strong Communities
Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan six-monthly update	To review and scrutinise progress on the Sports and Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan.  Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure)	To assess performance on how the Council, together with partners, is delivering improvements in the provision and participation levels of sport and physical activity across the District	Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan six-monthly update last reviewed by Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Healthy and Strong Communities
<b>June 2024</b>				
Heritage Action Zone – Closure report	Lead Officer: Claire Saunders (High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager)			
Update on Markets	Lead Officer: Kay Boasman (Head of Waste and Markets)			
Options for delivery of the leisure service	To provide an update on LeisureSK Ltd and the work being undertaken to assess the	To assess progress regarding the actions	Agenda item agreed by the Chairman during Agenda	Connecting Communities

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
	<p>viability of the company and alternative options being considered.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure)</b></p>	agreed by Cabinet in relation to LeisureSK Ltd	setting meeting on 5 March 2024	

### FUTURE ITEMS

#### REMIT

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

- Arts and Culture
- Heritage
- Markets and fairs
- Sport and physical activity
- Leisure SK Ltd
- Visitor Economy

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