

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Wednesday, 11 October 2023 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House,
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Members: Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)
Councillor Steven Cunningham (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Pam Byrd, Councillor Penny Milnes, Councillor Virginia Moran,
Councillor Habibur Rahman, Councillor Vanessa Smith and Councillor Sarah Trotter
and 1 Vacancy

Agenda

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

- 1. Public Speaking**
The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public.
To speak at this meeting please register no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Disclosure of Interest**
Members are asked to disclose any interest in matters for consideration at the meeting.
- 4. Minutes from the meeting held on 5 July 2023** (Pages 3 - 14)
- 5. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**

Published and dispatched by democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk on Tuesday, 3 October 2023.

01476 406080

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive
www.southkesteven.gov.uk

6. Police and Crime Panel Feedback
Verbal update from Councillor Sarah Trotter.

7. Disabled Facility Grants (Pages 15 - 21)
To provide an overview of the current end to end time for the delivery of disabled facility grants (DFG) to residents of the district, in comparison to the previous year. In addition to provide the current arrangements and future proposed changes to continually improve the delivery of DFGs and decrease end to end times of the process.

8. Changing Places Update (Pages 23 - 28)
To provide the Committee an update regarding the Changing Places Toilets facilities project across the district.

9. Update report on Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Project (Pages 29 - 48)
This report provides an update on the progress of the High Street Heritage Action Zone shopfront regeneration programme, aimed at helping unlock the heritage potential of the town and assist in economic recovery within Grantham Town Centre.

10. Equality Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement (Pages 49 - 66)
The purpose of this report is to outline the requirements placed upon the Council in relation to the publication of equality information and to offer Members the opportunity to consider the draft 2023 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement.

11. Prevent Update (Pages 67 - 76)
The purpose of this report is threefold to provide information and assurance on:

- South Kesteven District Council's delivery of the Prevent duty and responsibilities hosted within the Community Engagement Team
- Activity delivered across Lincolnshire through the Prevent Steering Group
- Notable local events and national highlights.

12. SK Community Fund Update (Pages 77 - 87)
The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the SK Community Fund which supports the development of community amenities, community events and provides funding to groups that provide support to local communities. The report outlines the requirements applicants must follow to be, and remain, eligible for funding through the scheme.

13. Work Programme 2023-2024 (Pages 89 - 93)
To receive the Work Programme for 2023-2024.

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

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Minutes

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
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COUNCIL

Wednesday, 5 July 2023, 2.00 pm

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

Committee Members present

Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)
Councillor Steven Cunningham (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Pam Byrd
Councillor Penny Milnes
Councillor Vanessa Smith
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Ray Wootten

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Ashley Baxter (Deputy Leader of the Council)
Councillor Rhea Rayside (Cabinet Member for People and Communities)

Other Members present

Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Ian Selby

Officers

Richard Wyles (Chief Finance Officer, S151 Officer)
Nicola McCoy-Brown (Director of Growth and Culture)
Craig Spence (Acting Director of Housing)
Anne-Marie Coulthard (Assistant Director of Operations and Public Protection)
Adrian Ash (Interim Assistant Director of Operations and Public Protection)
Debbie Roberts (Head of Policy, Performance and Corporate Projects)
Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service)
Carol Drury (Community Engagement Manager)
James Welbourn (Democratic Services Manager)
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

1. Public Speaking

Question received from a member of the public in relation to agenda item 7:

“According to Government guidance, the Council must consult with the Police and Crime Commissioner of the area before making a PSPO. It was queried as to whether this had been done.”

The Public Protection Manager confirmed via email that the purpose of the report within the agenda pack was to seek consultation on this matter.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Virginia Moran and Councillor Habib Rahman.

Councillor Charmaine Morgan substituted Councillor Virginia Moran.

3. Disclosure of Interest

There were none.

4. Minutes from the meeting held on 16 March 2023

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2023 were a correct and accurate record.

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

There were no announcements or updates.

6. End of year Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

The Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance presented the report that built on historical reports to provide an update on performance to the end of the 2022/2023 financial year. It incorporated the changes recommended by the last KPI review to outline areas of the council's performance which were successful and to advise where challenges may lay.

Appendix A within the report outlined the overall performance against the original actions, as well as specific performance against the sub measures contained within those. Specific commentary was provided for each action, and summarised as follows:

- Four of the actions are rated Green. These are actions which are on or above target as planned.

- One action was rated as Amber, these are those off target by less than 10% or where milestone achievement is delayed but with resolution in place to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe.
- One action was rated as Red, this is falling significantly below target.

One Member raised a query on extending the provision of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras within certain areas of the District using the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The Assistant Director of Operations and Public Protection confirmed that the current proposal for CCTV was to upgrade the existing cameras rather than adding any additional cameras at this time.

The Police and Crime Commissioner was preparing a report in relation to CCTV across Lincolnshire regarding location and provision, however this report would not include any provision or funding for additional cameras. It would seek to identify existing and potential opportunities.

It was suggested that the Committee receive a report in the future on CCTV.

Members congratulated Officers on securing funding of £284,000 to change the historic analogue CCTV system to digital.

Another Member raised concern on the significant increase in anti-social behaviour at the parks in Grantham.

An explanation was requested as to why priority number 10, protecting our most vulnerable residents with robust, safeguarding processes, was rated red.

The Acting Director of Housing confirmed there had been a high staff turnover, over the last 12-18 months. All new starters had been issued with online training packages. It was emphasised that Line Managers should be ensuring their team complete the safeguarding training in a timely manner.

Safeguarding sessions had also been undertaken for elected Members through the induction process, where 57% of Members attended.

Concern was raised on the data sharing of information between the Council's Housing Department and the Local Policing Team regarding protection orders.

The Council had liaised with the Police around reinforcing partnership working with the use of the case management system, E-Cins. Monthly meetings also took place where all ongoing anti-social behaviour cases were discussed and logged onto the system.

A Member queried whether all existing staff employed by the Council had received relevant training, particularly Officers that visit properties and possible vulnerable residents.

The Acting Director of Housing clarified that all Housing Officers, Assistants and Trade workers had received their Prevent and Safeguarding training to ensure full awareness of their responsibilities. Over 85% of the current safeguarding referrals made by the Council had come from the Housing department in the past 24 months. A Domestic Abuse Officer had recently been employed to identify and tackle any potential safeguarding issues.

It was questioned whether staff were expected to complete training annually or whether it was enrolling training only.

It was highlighted that every new starter completed their training within the first six months of their employment. Staff are then required to complete further refresher training every 24 months.

A Member queried as to why the induction training had a timescale of six months, rather than the first few days of employment. It was suggested that an induction programme before commencing a new role would seem sensible.

There was a more urgent dispatch of training for front line Officers of the Council. The current training offering was a best-practice online course and not all employees were working online, which allowed them the caveat of six months to complete the training. New employees were reminded of the completion of training at induction.

Clarification was sought around the safeguarding of residents in the District living in private rented accommodation. For which it was confirmed the same principles applied to the safeguarding of residents living in private rented accommodation.

The current percentage of trained staff (37%) was discussed. It was queried as to whether the target of 100% could be reached and if so, the timescale of this.

It was confirmed that the completion target was 100% for all staff. The percentage had increased at the end of 2022 to approximately 70% completion. The aim was to have 100% of staff trained on a rolling basis, however staff turn around may affect the completion percentage. Further reporting frequency had been requested to ensure that staff can be reminded of completion.

A Member queried whether staff were given time out of their working day to complete the training and whether there had been any issues surrounding access.

The Acting Director of Housing clarified that those Officers who did not utilise a laptop during their day-to-day duties, would be given time within their first two weeks of employment to complete the training within the office.

It was hoped that all staff would be trained by the end of the calendar year.

The Chairman reiterated the importance of elected Members completing their safeguarding training.

A Member queried the 'not-reported' KPI's set out in the report.

The Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance clarified that the KPI's 'not-reported' were those completed, amended during the Corporate Plan period or incorporated to other KPI's. Other KPI's within the report were the responsibility of other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

AGREED:

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

7. Review of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)

The Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities presented the report. The purpose of the report was to consider the existing Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) within South Kesteven with a recommendation to extend them by a further period of three years.

The Committee were also requested to consider amending the Dog Exclusion PSPO to further include other enclosed play areas in the Recreation Ground, Stamford.

The report requested consideration for a new PSPO for vehicle nuisance and anti-social behaviour to cover the area of Bath Row, Station Road car park and the Meadows area of Stamford. This PSPO would be for the duration of three years.

There was one alcohol control PSPO which covered all of the towns within the District and a dog exclusion PSPO which included all enclosed play areas in the District. There was a dog fouling PSPO which covered the whole District and a dog on lead by order PSPO which covered the whole District and included a requirement for dogs to be kept on a lead within The Spinney, Market Deeping.

One Member raised a query on how many Enforcement Officers were able to enforce dog fouling and provide a sanction.

The Assistant Director for Operations and Public Protection noted that there was not a designated Officer that dealt with dog fouling. There were 5 Officers that worked within the neighbourhoods team, who would actively patrol areas where complaints of dog fouling were received and engage with dog walkers. Any breaches of the PSPO's would result in a fixed penalty notice of £100.

A Member sought clarification on whether funding was put towards dog bins by Parish Council's. It was suggested that more dog bins be provided in the rural areas, due to a lack of Enforcement Officer presence in the rural parts of the District.

It was confirmed the Council does not provide specific dog waste bins. Instead, people may put their dog waste into any litter bin. Some parishes had chosen to provide specific dog waste bins, which they fund and service entirely at their own cost, and were responsible for emptying those dog bins.

In 2022, Cabinet adopted the Litter Bin Policy, which was available to view on the Council's website. Officer's urged Parish Council's to review the requirements for a bin to be provided.

It was suggested that current Council employees could become trained to issue fixed penalty notices, however, training was complicated and required a lot of knowledge on the law.

A Member highlighted that there were popular, public/pedestrian routes in Grantham that had no dog or litter bins available.

The Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities stated that adding more bins would add further cost to the Council. It was emphasised that dog owners should be more responsible.

A query was raised on why the water area of Wyndham Park, Grantham was not covered by the PSPO. It was noted that at Dysart Park, Grantham, one of the play areas was covered by a PSPO, however, the other was not.

It was further queried as to how many fixed penalty notices had been issued in the last year.

The Assistant Director of Operations and Public Protection encouraged all Ward Members to take part in the consultation to provide feedback.

There had been no fixed penalty notices issued for offences in relation to the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) in the last three years.

A Ward Member asked the Committee to consider adding the following enclosed play areas within the consultation process:

- Harrier Way (North of Towngate West) in Market Deeping

- Charter Avenue in Market Deeping

The Assistant Director of Operations and Public Protection requested that the Parish Council responded to the consultation and the Council would look into adding the play areas into the PSPO area.

It was clarified that a PSPO could be considered for any public space, however, if not owned by the Council, permission would need to be given by the landowner for the PSPO to be granted. The Council can still enforce on a PSPO providing the landowner agreed, in accordance with a clause within the order.

Further clarification was sought as to why the bowling green and tennis courts and other play areas in Grantham had not been included under PSPO's.

It was noted that when the PSPO's were originally put into place, it included traditional children's play area with play equipment. It was predominantly enclosed play areas with play equipment, unless other open spaces had been requested to be added by other parties.

The Committee could request to include other open spaces within the consultation, otherwise any areas picked up throughout the consultation process would be considered as part of the adoption process by Cabinet.

The Public Speaker arrived at the meeting late, the Chairman agreed for their statement to be heard. The Public Speaker's concern was around the tennis courts in Stamford being included within a PSPO and it was felt this had been driven by Stamford Town Council.

The Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities confirmed that the PSPO on the tennis courts in Stamford had been proposed due to a resident allowing their dog to walk on the tennis courts and occasionally not picking up dog waste. There was a 'no dog walking measure' on the tennis courts, therefore, Stamford Town Council had requested the PSPO to further protect the area.

The Assistant Director for Operations and Public Protection informed the Committee that dependent on the acceptance of the recommendation, that a 4-week public consultation would take place in respect of the PSPO's.

A Member raised concern that a PSPO was possibly being put into place for one individual.

It was proposed, seconded and AGREED that the Committee:

1. **Considers the continuation of the existing Spaces Protection Orders.**
2. **Considers the proposed amendment to the existing Public Space Protection Order (Dog Exclusion) to include additional areas at the Recreation Ground, Stamford.**

3. **Considers the request for a new Public Space Protection Order for vehicle related nuisance and anti-social behaviour covering the following areas within Stamford: the Station Road car park (also known as Cattle Market), The Meadows and Bath Row car park.**
4. **Recommends the Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities Commercial and Operations that statutory consultation be undertaken in respect of the above.**

8. Customer Service Update

The Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service presented the report. It provided the Committee with the outturn position for 2022/2023 regarding customer interactions and call handling as at 31 March 2023.

The report also provided an update regarding the review of the Customer Experience Strategy and various projects undertaken by the service. The Customer Service Team handled customer interactions in various ways for 15 service areas, as well as public enquiries.

During 2022/2023 there were 211,292 interactions which included telephone calls, emails and in-person. The interactions were due to be analysed further, with specific focus on the 'apply for it', 'pay for it' and 'report it' web pages to determine which areas channel shift had been successful.

The level of call handling by the Customer Service Team was monitored on a weekly basis with the percentage of calls handled as at the 31 March 2023 being 87%. This had further increased to 89% as at the end of June 2023.

The Customer Service Team had seen a reduction in staffing levels due to a number of resignations over recent months. The reason for the resignations were varied, with five being due to progression into other service areas within the Council and external career progression.

All vacancies had been recruited to and the training of new staff would take between six-nine months to complete.

To support the improvement of call handling, the team had implemented the introduction of the new telephony solution, enabling all staff to set-up voicemail and call forwarding.

In October 2023, a virtual operator solution would be introduced, replacing the current 'press 1, press 2' process. The system would work via voice activation and speech recognition, asking the caller to state which service or Officer they require by name. The call would then be transferred immediately in the call queue or directly to the Officer. If the virtual operator was unable to successfully understand the caller on two occasions, the call would then be transferred immediately to a switchboard operator.

A further update would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

Members thanked the Customer Service team for their continuous work.

A Member raised concern in the reduction of overall amenity space at the customer service centre. It was queried how long the customer service staff would continue to operate from the Guildhall, Grantham, as this was understood to be a temporary measure.

Further concern was raised on possible disturbance of colleagues when members of the public were visiting the desk and the privacy of residents visiting, was discussed.

The Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service highlighted that the time frame of the temporary measure was unknown. The provision of service was continuously under review. Minimal feedback had been received from customers and staff on the temporary accommodation measures.

It was noted that customer services staff working in the Guildhall, Grantham supported and provided a service to the customer, where the customer was a priority. Staff had the opportunity to undertake 'back-office work' when a colleague was dealing with a customer to prevent being disturbed. Staff may also book a desk at the Picture House from 1pm onwards, due to the 'walk-in' hours of Customer Services, where they could undertake their day-to-day work.

The 'walk-in' customer service centre had another room to protect the privacy of customers that could be utilised at request.

Concern was raised on the 20% reduction in total interactions with the general public from 2019/2020 to 2022/2023, which was almost all driven by in-person interactions. It was questioned as to how confident Officers were that the 20% reduction had not led to vulnerable people in the community not receiving the information they required.

It was confirmed that the question would be answered in further detail at the next Committee meeting, as an analysis of the website to understand whether that 20% reduction in in-person interactions had seen an increase of interactions by 20% on the website.

That the Committee:

1. Notes the report and were invited to ask questions relating to the report.

9. SK Community Awards

The Community Engagement Manager provided a verbal update to the Committee.

For the last three years, South Kesteven District Council had celebrated those in the community that make a difference by asking the residents of South Kesteven to nominate their community champions.

This year, the Council was incorporating what had previously been the Best Kept Village competition. This category had changed to an opportunity for community nomination and given a new title – Community in Bloom. This provided the opportunity for nominations from all villages within South Kesteven.

There had also been a new award created for Urban Space. This award was open to nominations relating to any of the four towns within the District.

The other categories were:

- Inspirational Young Person (nominations for young people up to the age of 25)
- Lifetime Community Achievement (people who had given a lifetime to supporting their local community)
- Health and Wellbeing
- Business and the Community (nominations for companies showing high levels of Corporate Social Responsibility)
- Neil Smith – Beyond the Call of Duty (nominations for blue light services and individuals who have helped in an emergency)

The Council launched the awards during Volunteers Week (1-7 June 2023) and nominations were open until 24th August 2023.

The PR for the Awards had gone out in SKToday, social media and some targeted marketing relating to the Neil Smith Award (Police, Fire and Rescue, LIVES, Red Cross, St John Ambulance for example).

Information regarding categories had been sent out to all the Parish and Town Council's, with specific mention of the Community in Bloom and Urban Space awards.

At the time of the meeting, 43 nominations had been received across the categories. Unfortunately, no nominations for Community in Bloom or Urban Space had been received.

Members were urged to advertise the SK Community Awards when attending Parish or Town Council meetings.

Judging for the Awards was due to take place on Monday 11 September 2023. The judging panel was made up of Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities. This meant Member representation from Bourne, Deepings, Grantham, and Stamford. A further elected Member from a rural Ward would also be invited to participate.

Alongside Members, a previous winner and young person from the District would also be invited to be part of the judging panel.

Each finalist and a guest would be invited to a celebration event in Bourne on 27 October 2023 where the winners will be announced. The winner of each category will be presented with a crystal trophy or, in the case of the Community in Bloom and Urban Space categories, a plaque. Photographs from the evening of the winners and runners up would be published in SK Today.

A query was raised on whether the winner of the 'Best Kept Village' would receive a plaque. For which it was clarified the Community in Bloom and Urban Space categories would both receive a plaque to locate in an area of their choice.

Clarification was sought on whether the Urban Space category would include certain Council estates.

The Community Engagement Manager confirmed that estates within the town that had open spaces worthy of nomination, were eligible.

A Member questioned whether any funding support was offered to support low-income communities to assist in setting up projects to be nominated for an award.

It was confirmed there was no funding support provided by the Council in order to assist in being nominated for an award. Constituted community groups would be eligible for certain funding opportunities, however, this was not related to the Community Awards. The Community Engagement Team was always happy to assist if Members knew of groups requiring support.

10. Work Programme 2023-2024

The Committee noted the Work Programme 2023-2024.

The Chairman requested the Cost-of-living agenda item be moved to the meeting being held on 14 December 2023.

The Chairman requested the Community drop-in sessions agenda item be moved to the meeting being held on 1 February 2024.

One Member noted that minutes would be available from the September meeting of Police and Crime Panel. It was suggested whether they could be brought to the next Committee meeting for comments, feedback and noting.

The Director of Growth and Culture reminded the Committee they had discussed CCTV as a future agenda item for the December or February Committee meeting.

One Member queried whether consultations and feedback on the Acute Service Review, services for maternity at Boston Pilgrim Hospital and review of GP services could be discussed within the remit of the Committee.

It was further queried whether car parking fell into the remit of the Committee.

It was queried whether an analysis and explanation of the 20% reduction in customer service interactions would be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service clarified that the consultation was with regards to the outcome of the Community Engagement Strategy Action Plan, which was agreed at the Committee meeting on 16 March 2023. A further Customer Service Update would be brought back to Committee in November or December.

The Chairman informed the Committee that car parking fell under the remit of both Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee jointly.

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

There were none.

12. Close of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 15:40.



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Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 October 2023

Report of Councillor Phil Dilks
Cabinet Member for Housing and
Planning

Overview of Disabled Facility Grants (DFG) Case End to End Times

Report Author

Ayeisha Kirkham, Public Protection Manager

✉ ayeisha.kirkham@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide an overview of the current end to end time for the delivery of disabled facility grants (DFG) to residents of the district, in comparison to the previous year. In addition to provide the current arrangements and future proposed changes to continually improve the delivery of DFGs and decrease end to end times of the process.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes the current end to end times for delivery of the disabled facility grants.
2. Notes the current and proposed improvements to continue to enable the quicker delivery of disabled facility grants.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Housing that meets the needs of all residents
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 direct financial implications arising from this report. The Council received £975k in 2022/23 and £1.060m in 2023/24 to fund disabled facilities grants. The unspent grant in 2022/23 of £308k was transferred to the Housing Delivery Reserve and can be used to fund future demand if costs were to exceed the in-year grant allocation.

Reviewed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications associated with this report, which is to note delivery of the scheme in comparison to previous years.

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

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The report sets out a review of disabled facility grants end to end times and service provision for 2022/23 and from April to end of August this financial

year. It compares the end to end times for key stages of a disabled facility grants application through to completion along with the current changes and proposed changes to reduce end to end times and improve delivery for customers.

2.2 There are two broad types of DFGs, mandatory and discretionary. Mandatory grants are up to £30,000 and are a statutory function set by legislation. However an additional piece of legislation allows Local Authorities to provide discretionary grants on the condition that it has a policy for the types of assistance it will offer under this category and that the policy is published. At South Kesteven District Council both mandatory and discretionary grants are offered.

Financial Year 2022/2023

2.3 At the start of the financial year 2022/23 the team consisted of the following roles:

Table 1

Role	Number of roles	Full/part time
Housing Grants Officer	2	Full time
Disabled facility grants Surveyor*	1	Part time

(* surveyor role was based within the Council Adaptations Team and assisted the DFG team)

2.4 At the beginning of the financial year 22/23 the team had an open caseload of 239, this is made up of ongoing cases at varying stages of the DFG process.

2.5 During the financial year 22/23 217 referrals were received by the team. It should also be noted that 74 of those referrals were closed without progressing to a grant being undertaken. Reasons for this could include:

- after an initial test of financial means they would not qualify for a grant (as the contribution required would exceed the amount of the adaptation needed);
- the applicant sadly passes away;
- the applicant does not wish to proceed.

2.6 Table 2 below provides, for the financial year of 22/23, the stages involved (from end to end) in the DFG process and includes a breakdown of average days between each stage:

Table 2

Stage	Stage Description	Days between (Average)
1	Enquiry received to application being sent to client	117
2	Application sent to application returned by client	23
3	Application received to grant approval	33

4	Grant approval to completion of works	59
6	Enquiry to completion (all of above)	211

2.7 In the financial year of 22/23, 101 grants were completed, which consisted of 62 mandatory grants and 39 discretionary grants.

2.8 In the financial year of 22/23, the total spend (actual and committed) for DFG's per quarter are shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3

Quarter	Total spend
Q1	£185,284
Q2	£175,472
Q3	£175,867
Q4*	£130,176
Total	£666,799

(* Q4 is usually a higher value as the year end is completed during this period)

2.9 At the beginning of the 22/23 financial year the average waiting time for surveys to be completed from date of referral was 4 months, however at the end of the financial year this increased to 8 months. This was partly due to the increase in referrals received from Lincolnshire County Council from November onwards as they worked to reduce their Occupational Therapist assessment waiting lists. This placed an increased pressure on the service, and on average for the 22/23 year 3 surveys a month were being completed.

2.10 From November 2022 onwards additional staffing had been secured with the DFG surveyor joining from the Council Adaptations Team on a permanent basis. Thereby ensuring that the team had a designated surveyor provision is in place. In addition the Private Sector Housing Team Leader role was recruited to at this time, which provided support, consistency, stability and a designated service oversight to the team.

2.11 In January 2023 a Business Administration Apprentice joined the team on an 18 month fixed term basis. The Apprentice provides administrative support to the team, allowing grants officers more time to process applications and means tests, once new members of the team had been trained.

2.12 By the end of the financial year the team consisted of the following roles:

Table 4

Role	Number of roles	Full/part time
Housing Grants Officer	2	Full time
Disabled facility grants Surveyor*	1	Part time
Business Administration Apprentice**	1	Full time (18 month fixed term)

Private Sector Housing Team Leader	1	Full time***
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(* joined the team permanently from November 2022, **joined January 2023, ***this role oversees additional areas of Private Sector Housing)

Financial Year 2023/2024

- 2.13 At the beginning of the 23/24 financial year the team had an open caseload of 262.
- 2.14 The number of referrals received from the 1 April 2023 to the 31 August 2023 during this year to the end of August is 74 referrals, however 16 of these have been closed without progressing to a grant being undertaken.
- 2.15 Table 5 below provides, for this financial year so far, the stages involved (from end to end) in the DFG process and includes a breakdown of average days between each stage:

Table 5

Stage	Stage Description	Days between (Average)
1	Enquiry received to application being sent to client	44
2	Application sent to application returned by client	11
3	Application received to grant approval	35
4	Grant approval to completion of works	No Data Yet
5	Enquiry to completion (all of above)	No Data Yet

- 2.16 Number of grants completed so far this year is 32 consisting of 19 mandatory grants and 13 discretionary grants.
- 2.17 The total spend (actual and committed) for DFG's for quarter 1 and up to 29 September in quarter 2 of this year are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6

Quarter	Total spend
Q1	£312,130
Q2	£278,463
Total	£590,593

- 2.18 At the beginning of this financial year the average waiting time for surveys to be completed from date of referral was 8 to 9 months and this upward trend continued to June/July 2023 where this peaked at 10/11 months average waiting time. As the waiting list for surveys increased this put pressure on the process.
- 2.19 As a result of the pressures within the end to end process, an additional surveyor has been recruited on a temporary basis from June to present. As

a result of this the average number of surveys now being undertaken a month is 9.

2.20 The team as to the end of August now consists of the following roles:

Table 7

Role	Number of roles	Full/part time
Housing Grants Officer	2	Full time
Disabled facility grants Surveyor	2	1xPart time 1xFulltime temporary contractor
Business Administration Apprentice	1	Full time (18 month fixed term)
Private Sector Housing Team Leader	1	Full Time

2.21 Summary of the steps already taken to reduce end to end times and increased spend on DFGs is additional staffing, some of which are temporary and some permanent, and a redistribution of activities which allowed smarter and more efficient ways of working.

2.22 The temporary roles have been used as pilots to see if there is a need for these types of roles on a permanent basis, and if the anticipated benefits would be realised. It is now clear that there is a benefit to these roles, and it is hoped that they will become permanent.

2.23 The performance can be compared in the following areas:

2.24 Staffing

The team has increased by 3 officers with a redistribution of tasks within roles.

2.25 End to End times

Whilst at this time it is too early in the year to obtain like for like comparisons. With the current changes, in stage 1 and 2-there has been a 63% and 52% reduction respectively in the number of days these stages take. At present the time take in stage 3 remains around the same within the 30-35 days rage.

2.26 Survey waiting times

As of the end of August 2023 the survey waiting times are reducing to 4 or 5 months, compared to 10 or 11 months in June/ July 2023. The number of completed surveys a month on average has increased from 3 to 9.

2.27 DFG spend

As this financial year has not been completed it is to early to say what this years final spend will be, however it is hoped that it will exceed last years spend. For the first 6 months of this financial year (23/24) the spend is £590,593 compared to £360,756 at the same time last year.

2.28 In conclusion it is noted that current improvements have seen an initial positive impact that is improving key areas in the process for the delivery of DFGs. The team will continue to review these changes and deliver further improvements.

2.29 It is proposed that the current temporary roles are changed to permanent with recruitment undertaken to fill the roles.

3. Key Considerations

3.1 The current changes have improved the delivery of the service against comparable benchmarks and are a positive step towards continued improved delivery.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 None – as this is for information only

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 To demonstrate the improvements made to the service and the result of the improvements on the end to end times of the delivery of DFGs

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Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11th October 2023

Report of Councillor
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Update on Changing Places Toilet Facilities Project

Report Author

Gyles Teasdale – Property Services Manager

✉ Gyles.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee an update regarding the Changing Places Toilets facilities project across the district.

Recommendations

The Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked:

- 1. To review the progress being made to deliver the Changing Places Toilets facilities project.**

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Growth and our economy Healthy and strong communities
Which wards are impacted?	Bourne East, Grantham St Vincents, Grantham Earlesfield, Stamford St Marys

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 Based on the feasibility exercise undertaken the project will require £267,156 to complete the works at all four identified locations.

The latest costing estimates are:

Grantham Meres Leisure Centre	£63,656
Grantham Wyndham Park	£68,500
Cattlemarket Stamford	£70,000
Bourne South Street	£65,000
Total	£267,156

SKDC currently has the following funding allocated:

Government grant funding	£160,000
Stamford SEA	£20,000
Grantham SEA	£28,500
SKDC budgets	£58,656
Total:	£267,156

1.2 Once works are completed, advice from the Changing Places support team has confirmed an expected increase in the annual running costs associated with the

maintenance and servicing of any lifting and specialist equipment. This is anticipated to be in the region of an additional amount of £1,000 per annum per location. In respect of the Bourne facility, this cost will be met by the Town Council. In respect of the Meres Leisure Centre, this cost will be met by Leisure SK Ltd. The other two facilities will be maintained by the District Council.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 The project funding is awarded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and SKDC must provide quarterly updates upon progress to retain grant funding.
- 1.4 No works contract is yet in place, but this will be reviewed on a monthly basis, there are no current legal implications.

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

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.5 Risks identified include not being able to bring the project in within the required timescale due to having multiple locations and initial design works showing the selected options as being economically non-viable, relative to available budget.
- 1.6 Construction risks will be reviewed monthly as part of the project and mitigation identified where possible.
- 1.7 Further risk is provided due to the demand of specialist contractor availability, with funding being lost on the 31st March 2024 and authorities pressing to deliver these projects.

Tracey Elliott – Governance and Risk Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 In July 2021 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced the opening for Expressions of Interest bids for a share of a £30M pot to provide Changing Places toilets in existing, publicly accessible buildings.
- 2.2 The funding itself had been announced some months previously and consultation with relevant groups across the district was carried out to determine the preferred locations of the people who would use a Changing Places facility and their carers.

2.3 Changing Places toilets are larger accessible toileting facilities for severely disabled people, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, adult-sized changing benches and space for carers.

2.4 In March 2022 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) informed the Council that its bid had been successful and that it had been awarded the maximum £160,000. This was reported at Cabinet on 29 March 2022
(<http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/q4155/Printed%20minutes%2029th-Mar-2022%2014.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=1>)

2.5 The funding is awarded to cover a two-year period for completion of the project. DLUHC has confirmed that the funding will need to be incurred by 31 March 2024 to avoid any of the funding being returned.

2.6 Following a number of location changes amendments due to construction and financing challenges, the following is the final location listing for the four facilities:

- South Street public toilets, Bourne (In partnership with Bourne Town Council)
- Meres Leisure Centre, Grantham (project delivered)
- Wyndham Park, Grantham
- Cattlemarket Stamford

2.7 Initial scheme designs have been provided to the Changing Places support team to review the proposals and provide feedback on the designs prior to procurement of the works. From the sites, identified, South Street and Wyndham Park will require construction modifications to existing buildings whilst the Cattlemarket location will consist of a specific modular solution that will be installed directly on site.

2.8 Feasibility works have been undertaken over a period of time to ensure the operational and logistic elements of each site can be achieved. The ongoing challenge has been the rising costs in the construction and materials sector whilst the funding from Government remains fixed at a capped figure of £40,000 per location irrespective of the actual delivery costs. To meet this funding gap and to try to ensure all four sites can be delivered discussions have taken place with Town Councils to contribute towards the gap. Bourne Town Council has agreed to take full responsibility of the Changing Places facility once the equipment has been installed.

2.9 Discussions with Stamford Town Council have been positive and a financial contribution of £20,000 has been agreed which will contribute towards the installation of the facility. Thereafter the ongoing responsibility will remain to the District Council. It is proposed that the £20,000 contribution will be deducted from the Stamford Special Expense Reserve (which is currently being held by the District Council).

Updated Position for each identified location

South Street Bourne

At their meeting on 7th February 2023 Cabinet approved the freehold transfer of the former public conveniences site at South Street Bourne and since that time the legal process has been taking place to ensure a smooth freehold handover. Following the transfer, works will then take place for the installation of the Changing Places facility prior to formal handover to Bourne Town Council who will then assume responsibility for ongoing maintenance of the facility. However at the time of compiling this report, the legal transfer has still not taken place which is putting pressure on the time now available to undertake the adaptation works before 31 March 2024.

Wyndham Park Grantham

Following a feasibility study a preferred location has been confirmed at Wyndham Park that fulfils the needs of the grant conditions and will ensure a facility can be provided. Preliminary works are now underway and it is anticipated that the facility will be operational by February 2024. The funding shortfall will be met from Grantham's Special Expense Reserve.

Cattlemarket Stamford

Following months of feasibility studies, the preferred location for the facility has been identified adjacent to the Cattlemarket pay and display car park. The proposal is for a modular facility that will be sited adjacent to the pedestrian walkway heading to the Meadows. The proposed funding of this facility will be sourced from external grant, Council funding and Stamford SEA contribution.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 This report is to provide Members with an update on progress and provide assurance that there are substantial governance arrangements in place.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 None – funding availability is for Changing Places toilet facilities specifically and is therefore ring fenced accordingly.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 To provide an update, there are no recommendations for the Committee.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Consultation was carried out with disabled groups (physical, learning and multiple disabilities), carers groups, sports and leisure groups for the disabled, older persons care organisations, community groups and town councils. Locations have

been amended to meet the needs of the individuals for whom these facilities will be provided following feedback received.

7. **Background Papers**

- 7.1 Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services Committee Changing Places Reports

moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=664&MId=4263&Ver=4

[Update on Changing Places Toilet Facilities Project.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)



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Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 October 2023

Report of Councillor Richard Cleaver,
Leader of South Kesteven District Council

Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme Update – as at September 2023

Report Author

Claire Saunders, High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager

 claire.saunders@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on the progress of the High Street Heritage Action Zone storefront regeneration programme, aimed at helping unlock the heritage potential of the town and assist in economic recovery within Grantham Town Centre.

Recommendation

It is recommended, Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. **Reviews and endorses the report first presented to the Finance and Economy Overview and Scrutiny committee on the 19 September 2023.**
2. **Agrees to receive a report on the closure of the programme in six months.**
3. **Is invited to share any comments they may have on this report with the programme board.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Growth and our economy
Which wards are impacted?	Grantham St Wulfram's Ward

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The full financial implications are set out in **Appendix A**.

Completed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 To avoid unnecessary duplication please see the information provided in **Appendix A**.

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.3 To avoid unnecessary duplication please see the information provided in **Appendix A**.
- 1.4 A risk register has been produced for the programme and can be found at **Appendix B**.

Health and Safety

- 1.5 To avoid unnecessary duplication please see the information provided in **Appendix A**.

Diversity and Inclusion

1.6 To avoid unnecessary duplication please see the information provided in **Appendix A**.

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required?

No

Climate Change

1.7 To avoid unnecessary duplication please see the information provided in **Appendix A**.

2. Background to the Report

2.1 The delivery of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme formally falls within the Economic Development function of the Council, and therefore under the remit of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC).

2.2 Regular reports are submitted to FEOSC for consideration. The last report to be presented to the committee was in September 2023. This was the first report to be submitted to the committee since the Local Government Elections in May 2023.

2.3 Subsequent changes to the Committee resulted in shopfronts and funding being included within the remit of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was therefore a recommendation of the FEOSC, the report be shared with the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report is attached to this precis at **Appendix A**.

2.4 The programme risk register is included as **Appendix B**.

3. Key Considerations

3.1 To avoid unnecessary duplication, please see the information provided in **Appendix A**.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 To avoid unnecessary duplication please see the information provided in **Appendix A**.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has shop front designs and funding as part of their remit. Sharing this update report will allow that Committee to carry out its overall function.
- 5.2 Closure reports serve an important procedural function by presenting findings to all invested parties. Closure reports make it easy to revisit findings and project details should the need arise. The report typically includes vital records of phase information, sign-off documentation, client and management approvals and any changes to the original plan. It is for this reason agreement is being sought from the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive a further update in six months' time on the progress associated with the closure of the Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix A - '*Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone – programme update 2023*' – Report to the Finance and Economy Overview and Scrutiny committee, 19th September 2023.
- 6.2 Appendix B – Programme Risk Register

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 *Update on Heritage Action Zone shop front improvements in Grantham* – Report to Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 28 February 2023 and available online at:
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37009/Update%20on%20Heritage%20Action%20Zone%20shop%20front%20improvements%20in%20Grantham.pdf>
- 7.2 *Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Scheme* – Report to Cabinet, published 12 July 2022 and available online at:
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=28342>

South Kesteven District Council Report to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 11th October 2023

Appendix A – Report as originally presented to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee



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Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

19 September 2023

Report of Councillor Richard Cleaver,
Leader of South Kesteven District Council

Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme Update - September 2023

Report Author

Claire Saunders, High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager

claire.saunders@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on the progress of the High Street Heritage Action Zone shopfront regeneration programme, aimed at helping unlock the heritage potential of the town and assist in economic recovery within Grantham Town Centre.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Recommends this update report is shared with the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee who have shop front designs and funding as part of their remit.

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2. Agrees to receive a further update in six months' time on the progress associated with the closure of the Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme.
3. Is invited to share any comments they may have on this report with the programme board.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any No
exempt or confidential
information not for publication?

What are the relevant corporate Growth and our economy
priorities?

Which wards are impacted? Grantham St Wulfram's Ward

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The total allocation for the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme in the 2023/24 financial year is £280,106 of which £213,093 is allocated to capital projects, and £67,013 is allocated to revenue.
- 1.2 The allocation comprises of £125,475 in grant funding from Historic England and £154,711 in match funding from South Kesteven District Council.
- 1.3 Within this financial year, South Kesteven District Council's match contribution will exceed the grant value received from Historic England. This is due to permitted underpayments in previous years which Historic England have agreed in previous years to maximise grant drawdown.
- 1.4 Services and materials relating to capital projects are procured and commissioned directly by the grant recipient. They must follow Historic England's procurement requirements and provide evidence of this.

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- 1.5 A grant clawback clause applies if a property which has received a grant is sold, otherwise disposed of, or significantly changed within three years of the final grant payment.

Richard Wyles s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.6 The programme is overseen by the combined Future High Street Fund and High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Board (the Board), which includes Councillors, Senior Officers and Historic England.
- 1.7 Programme spend up to £200,000 is assessed by the Board which provides a recommendation for approval or otherwise by the relevant senior officer through their existing delegated powers.
- 1.8 Programme spend of more than £200,000 is assessed by the Board and referred to Cabinet for recommendation to Historic England for approval.
- 1.9 Any project grant which results in a contribution from Historic England of £50,000 or more is referred to Historic England for formal approval.

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

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.10 A risk register has been produced for the programme and can be found at **Appendix B**.
- 1.11 Under the grant conditions imposed by the Treasury, it is not possible for grant funding to be rolled forwards into future financial years. As such, any underspend is lost.
- 1.12 The most significant risk to the programme is the timescales for project delivery, as projects must complete prior 31 March 2024 to receive funding. This is exacerbated by the requirement, in most instances, to use specialist contractors; and the number of other similar regeneration projects taking place nationally.

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- 1.13 Materials shortages, particularly steel and hardwoods usually sourced from eastern Europe, also impact the delivery timetable for projects. As mitigation projects must be fully tendered before applicants are able to submit a full application.
- 1.14 As with any works on a historic building, timescales may also be impacted by unexpected discoveries, such as structural issues identified during the course of works.

Health and Safety

Contractors are responsible for maintaining appropriate health and safety on site and must comply with all the relevant legislation. South Kesteven District Council is responsible for ensuring that appointed contractors provide evidence of Health and Safety competencies and supporting documents, including risk assessments safe systems of work and other relevant documents, as well as implementing contractor monitoring to provide assurance that works are undertaken in a safe and responsible manner.

Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.15 Eligibility for the grant schemes is limited by the terms of the funding agreement with Historic England.
- 1.16 Properties must be located on High Street, Westgate, the Market Place or Watergate, (with a priority on Westgate and Marketplace) and must have been built prior to 1939.
- 1.17 Applicants must have the legal ability to accept the grant funding, typically the property owner. Tenants with full maintaining leases may apply but must do so with the written permission of the property owner.

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required?

No

Climate Change

- 1.18 The programme encourages the retention of as much original material as possible. While this is primarily to maintain the historic fabric of buildings, it also prevents unnecessary use of new resources.

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- 1.19 Traditional building methods are often lower carbon options than their modern counterparts, for example the use of lime-based mortars and renders generates less CO₂ than the equivalent volumes of cement-based products.
- 1.20 The scheme acknowledges the amount of embodied carbon within historic buildings, and ultimately supports bring vacant or underutilised properties back in to use, reducing the requirement for new build properties.

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 Grantham's High Street Heritage Action Zone programme's approach contributes directly to South Kesteven District Council's Corporate Plan (2020-2023) vision which aims to establish South Kesteven as the best district in which to live, work and visit. Local heritage assets help build a sense of local identity and distinctiveness, a sense of history, place and belonging.
- 2.2 As previously reported to both the (then) Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme is an England-wide funding programme which, alongside the Future High Street Fund, is the result of the Governments' 2018 commitment to support the regeneration of town centres. The £1.25 million Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone programme is made up of £886,540 from Historic England and £375,660 contribution from the Council.
- 2.3 The four-year programme began in April 2020 and will run until 31 March 2024 and includes capital work projects (shopfront scheme and 'Key Building 'regeneration scheme), as well as funding for community engagement, consultation and legacy planning.
- 2.4 The capital programme supports private owners of properties to complete works to reinstate, restore and maintain historic properties within the targeted areas of Westgate, Market Place and High Street. None of the properties in receipt of grant funding are owned or leased by the Council.
- 2.5 Members have received regular updates on progress. Accordingly, the remainder of this report builds upon the 28 February 2023 report and provides an update on the following five items: (A) Westgate Hall, (B) shopfront regeneration, (C) conservation area management plan (D), trail tale app, and (E) cultural programme.

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Programme Updates

(A) Westgate Hall

- 2.6 The Westgate Hall regeneration project is progressing well, however, there have been some slight delays in the initial delivery schedule as a result of a need to discharge a number of planning conditions with regards to roof treatments before the materials could be ordered.
- 2.7 It is now anticipated the grant aided works will complete in October 2023, following which the property owner and tenant will continue to deliver fit out works.
- 2.8 Following negotiations with Historic England in March 2023, the Council were able to draw down the full value of their grant prior to the end of the 2022/2023 financial year, which ensured no grant funding was lost. To enable this, Historic England agreed the property owner's contribution, along with £63,294 of the Council's contribution could be expended in 2023/2024 financial year.
- 2.9 As a result of the current high construction costs, it is possible the tenant will look to phase the fit out works to enable his operation of the site to begin as soon as possible. The schedule for fit out has not yet been determined.

(B) Shopfront Regeneration

- 2.10 The programme will deliver nine shopfront regeneration projects, which are outlined in the *Table one*.
- 2.11 Should all projects outlined below progress to completion, all funding allocated to the shopfront regeneration element of the High Street Heritage Action Zone will be expended.

Table one: Progress update on the nine shopfront regeneration projects

Project	Total Grant	Percentage of eligible costs grant aided	Status
74 Westgate Kays of Grantham	£32,500	66%	Completed
1 Market Place Prime Comfort	£32,500	45%	Completed
21-22 Market Place	£50,000	57%	Ongoing - Programme running to schedule Project progressing well, works

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			to first floor shopfront are completed and scaffolding and hoarding has been removed. Works to ground floor are ongoing.
17-18 High Street Grantham Pharmacy	£75,000	49%	Ongoing - Programme running to schedule. A grant has been offered to the property for upper floor conversion works through the Future High Street Fund. Both projects are due to complete by March 2024
5 Market Place Lindpet House	£14,463	71%	Completed
68 Westgate Delight Pizza	£25,000	76%	Ongoing - Works to shopfront are completed. Works to first floor oriel window remain. This is currently on hold as the upper floor residential tenant is due to leave the property. Works will commence when property is vacant.
71 High Street AddAction	£79,710	80%	Ongoing, at risk – please see paragraph 2.11. Total costs subject to potential increase.
80/81 Highstreet JP Carpets/ Buckley and Wand	£70,000 (£35,000 per unit)	62%	Pending – Property owners have formally accepted the grant offer, and contractors have been appointed. Start date to be confirmed.

2.12 71 High Street (AddAction) remains an at-risk scheme and is significantly behind schedule. The property owners are aware they will not receive any grant funds until the project is completed, and that the project must complete by 31 March 2024.

2.13 Within the past month the property owner has taken back control of the project from the contractor and are looking at appointing a new contractor to complete the works.

(C) Conservation Area Management Plan

2.14 The initial draft of the Conservation area appraisal and management plan, completed by Heritage Lincolnshire, has been received and is currently with the planning team for initial review.

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- 2.15 Any feedback will be passed back to the consultants for amendments.
- 2.16 Following its completion arrangements will be made for the revised draft to be presented to the relevant Council Committees for consultation.

(D) Trail Tale App

- 2.17 The 'Grantham's Hidden Histories' trail has been completed and launched on the free Trail Tale App in June 2023. It has received positive feedback from users along with press coverage, including featuring on BBC Radio Lincolnshire.
- 2.18 The Heritage Action Zone Project Manager will continue to work with the Council's Visitor Economy and Tourism Officer, as well as the Council's Communications team and other relevant Council Officers, to promote the trail as appropriate.

(E) Cultural Programme

- 2.19 The High Street Heritage Action Zone Cultural Programme operates separately from the main grant programme. Funding for cultural activities comes from Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with support from Arts Council. There is no financial contribution made by the Council.
- 2.20 The project secured £100,000 in funding which must complete by January 2024. The requirement of the funding is for the programme to be devised and delivered by a Cultural Consortium of six local arts and cultural groups. The Council's role is financial management, guidance and evaluation. The delivery of the Cultural programme is continuing well.
- 2.21 Chantry Dance Company successfully delivered two performances of 'Ghost Dances' in April 2023, contemporary dance performances based on the music of Grantham born composer Nicolas Maw. The free 30-minute performances, held in the Guildhall were attended by approximately 140 people across two nights, and an additional 30 people attended workshop sessions designed specifically to engage groups who would not typically take part in arts activities.
- 2.22 Funding has been released to Grantham Museum to allow for the purchase of a 'community cabinet' which will allow local community groups to stage small exhibitions in the Museum, centred on Grantham's history. There has already been interest from several groups including the Masons and potentially the National Trust.
- 2.23 Likewise, the Museum is close to completing their 'Grantham Timeline' project, supported by the Grantham Civic Society.
- 2.24 Every September thousands of volunteers across England organise events to celebrate history and culture. It provides an opportunity for people to see hidden places and try out new experiences, all of which are free to explore. Heritage Open Days 2023 takes place between 8 and 17 September. Grantham Dramatic Society

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are programming further heritage walks to take place across the National Heritage Open Day's weekend in September, as well as developing a 'stationary tour' to bring the contents of the tour to those who are not able to complete the hour-long walking tour of the town.

2.25 Grantham Arts will shortly complete their 'Community Print' project, which engaged with groups including Earlesfield Positive Futures, refugee groups supported by Jubilee Life Centre and a Grantham Nepalese Community Group, to explore Grantham's architecture through the medium of Linocut prints (a printmaking technique). They will commence a community ceramics project later this year, based out of Grantham Museum.

3. Key Considerations

3.1 The programme is currently within its final year of delivery (completing 31 March 2024). All projects for delivery have been identified. Historic England are no longer able to accept alternative projects.

3.2 The Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone programme has allowed the Council to leverage significant levels of public and private sector funding. £350,000 has been leveraged through the delivery of shopfront regeneration works and the grant aided elements of the Westgate Hall project. If fit out works to Westgate Hall are also considered, it is estimated the value of private sector investment leveraged by the scheme will be in the region of £550,000.

3.3 The scheme has encouraged and permitted property owners in the town centre to invest in their buildings at a time of rapidly rising costs and financial uncertainty.

3.4 Working closely with the Future High Street Fund Programme Manager, and other Officers within the Growth and Culture Directorate, Officers are ensuring the maximum benefit is derived from both the Council's investment and the grant funding.

3.5 The programme has allowed the Council to develop a strong working relationship with town centre property owners and with Historic England as a funder. This has allowed Officers to be somewhat flexible in the identification and development of individual projects (within the context of the programme design), to maximise the benefits of the scheme.

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4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 Grantham conservation area is currently considered 'at risk' by Historic England. The deterioration of the town centre heritage was of particular concern. As such, Historic England were keen to support the High Street Heritage Action Zone in Grantham. Without this intervention it is likely retail properties within the town centre would continue to deteriorate and historic features and character would continue to be lost.
- 4.2 The scheme has encouraged significant investment from property owners, who otherwise may not have committed to expenditure without the benefit of grant funding to support the viability cost gap of the projects. Therefore, the 'do nothing' option was discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has shop front designs and funding as part of their remit. Sharing this update report will allow that Committee to carry out its overall function.
- 5.2 Closure reports serve an important procedural function by presenting findings to all invested parties. Closure reports make it easy to revisit findings and project details should the need arise. The report typically includes vital records of phase information, sign-off documentation, client and management approvals and any changes to the original plan. It is for this reason, agreement is being sought from the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive a further update in six months' time on the progress associated with the closure of the Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix B – Programme Risk Register

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 *Update on Heritage Action Zone shop front improvements in Grantham* – Report to Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 28 February 2023 and available online at:

South Kesteven District Council Report to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 11th October 2023

Appendix A – Report as originally presented to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37009/Update%20on%20Heritage%20Action%20Zone%20shop%20front%20improvements%20in%20Grantham.pdf>

7.2 *Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Scheme* – Report to Cabinet, published 12 July 2022 and available online at:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=28342>

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South Kesteven District Council Report to Finance and Economic Oversight and Scrutiny Committee:
19th September 2023

Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme Update – Appendix A: Programme Risk Register

No.	Date risk recorded	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating L x I	Mitigation	Who is responsible for managing this risk?	Date risk last reviewed	Status and updates
1	01/05/2020	SKDC or Historic England withdraw funding/ support for project resulting in end of scheme	1 Remote	5 Extreme / Catastrophic	5	Regular reporting of performance, targets met and beneficial impact of the scheme to Grantham to the council via Project board and reports to relevant Oversite and Scrutiny Committees	Project officer	28/07/2023	
2	01/05/2020	Staff Changes at SKDC impact project delivery	3 Possible	3 Moderate	9	Regular and early communication about any staff changes to allow contingency to be put in place/ insure comprehensive handover to new staff.	Head of Economic Development/ Project officer	28/07/2023	Some additional capacity to support delivery of the scheme is now in place due to the appointment of a project support officer within the Economic Development team. However, the number of staff within the Economic Development Team on Fixed Term contracts will continue to pose a risk to staff continuity.
3		Covid-19 restrictions increase, or lifting of restrictions is delayed	1 Remote	3 Moderate	3	Plan contingency activity to ensure compliance with regulations, regular monitoring of updates and changes to regulations.	Project officer	28/07/2023	No restrictions are in place or proposed to be introduced, however vulnerable people may still be hesitant to gather with others
4	01/05/2020	Lack of interest/ engagement from property owners re. shopfront regeneration/ buildings grants	1 Remote	4 Major	4	Ensure early and continued engagement with property owners to inform about the scheme and highlight the benefits.	Project Officer	28/07/2023	There are sufficient projects underway to ensure full expenditure of grant funds for capital projects.

South Kesteven District Council Report to Finance and Economic Oversight and Scrutiny Committee:
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No.	Date risk recorded	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating L x I	Mitigation	Who is responsible for managing this risk?	Date risk last reviewed	Status and updates
5	01/05/2020	Lack of interest/ engagement in community engagement and consultation activity	3 Possible	3 Moderate	9	Work with colleagues within Economic Development team and key partners to make use of all existing contacts and routes to community organisations. Create an effective marketing and promotion strategy. Ensure the programme is diverse in its focus to create broad appeal. Community Engagement plan to be reviewed	Project officer	28/07/2023	Project support officer will assist in delivering community engagement activities to bolster that area of project delivery.
6	01/03/2021	Construction costs rising above inflation	4 Probable	3 Moderate	12	Costs to be monitored thorough out programme delivery and grant adjustments made if necessary	Project officer	28/07/2023	Construction costs continue to be much higher than pre-covid levels. Rapidly rising energy costs, the weak pound, and the Ukraine conflict is expected to contribute to this.
7	01/05/2020	Tender returns for main contractors are higher than current budgetary allowances	4 Probable	3 Moderate	12	Early engagement of owners in capital schemes and cost estimate prepared by Quantity Surveyor in advance of full application.	Project Officer	28/07/2023	Tenders returned for work under the shopfront scheme have been significantly higher than in previous years which has resulted in projects being dropped from the programme as the level of grant funding did not make them viable for the applicants to proceed. To mitigate this, we have negotiated with property owners and amended the grant scheme to make it possible to take some projects forward to delivery.

South Kesteven District Council Report to Finance and Economic Oversight and Scrutiny Committee:
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No.	Date risk recorded	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating L x I	Mitigation	Who is responsible for managing this risk?	Date risk last reviewed	Status and updates
8	01/05/2020	Unforeseen site discoveries such as archaeology, fabric in worse condition than expected, ecology, hazardous materials etc. resulting in project delay or increased costs	3 Possible	3 Moderate	9	Private owners encouraged to allow for contingencies for these types of discoveries common with historic buildings and grant levels to be reviewed as necessary	Project officer	28/07/2023	
9	01/05/2020	Slippage in programme leading to delays and increased cost/ or project underspend	5 Highly Probable	3 Moderate	15	Detailed programme to be worked out during full application stage incorporating satisfactory development time for each area of work. Delivery schedules to be regularly monitored and any slippage resolved at an early stage.	Project officer	28/07/2023	Programme slippage continues to be an issue - largely linked to contractor availability and materials shortages. As new projects receive a finalised grant award, they will be encouraged to begin ordering materials as soon as possible. Applicants are requested to include timeframe for delivery as part of their contractor procurement.
10	01/05/2020	Lack of availability of suitably qualified contractors available to tender for/ complete projects	4 Probable	3 Moderate	12	Project officer to work with project architects and other specialists as necessary to identify suitably qualified contractors. If necessary, will work with the communications team to raise awareness of opportunities to tender.	Project officer	28/07/2023	Difficulty in tendering and low availability of contractors is being reported nationally and locally. This is echoed by the higher-than-normal number of planning applications and listed building consents currently being processed by the planning team. Contractor shortage continues to be a significant issue within the scheme. Some contractors are withdrawing from proposed schemes as they are not able to commit to additional work within the timeframes allotted due to staff/ skills shortages.

South Kesteven District Council Report to Finance and Economic Oversight and Scrutiny Committee:
19th September 2023

No.	Date risk recorded	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating L x I	Mitigation	Who is responsible for managing this risk?	Date risk last reviewed	Status and updates
11	01/05/2020	Lack of communication between SKDC and project board	2 Unlikely	4 Major	8	Continue with regular meetings and reporting	Project officer	28/07/2023	<p>The project board membership has been altered to reflect the new council membership following the District Council Elections.</p> <p>A programme of town tours delivered by the Project Officer will give greater context and understanding of the scheme to interested Councillors.</p>
12	25/03/2020	Proposals for 'Grantham Active Travel Zone' impact on the regeneration of the marketplace, by potentially increasing traffic flow through the marketplace and traffic congestion on Wide Westgate	1 Remote	4 Major	4	Senior officers of relevant bodies are in regular discussion about traffic management ambitions in Grantham.	SKDC Chief exec	28/07/2023	Extensive discussions are ongoing with relevant partners to appropriate treatment of key spaces such as the Market Place



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 October 2023

Report of Councillor Rhea Rayside,
Cabinet Member for People and
Communities

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement 2023

Report Author

Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

 carol.drury@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to outline the requirements placed upon the Council in relation to the publication of equality information and to offer Members the opportunity to consider the draft 2023 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the 2023 draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement and offers comment on the content.**
- 2. Recommends to the Cabinet Member for People and Communities that the information is published at the earliest opportunity.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any No
exempt or confidential
information not for publication?

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 direct financial implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Chief Finance Officer

Legal and Governance

1.2 The public sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) came into force in 2011. The Equality Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are accessible to all and which meet different people's needs.

1.3 The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties, set out in regulations. The specific duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

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

Diversity and Inclusion

1.4 The requirement to publish equality information must be met at least annually. This helps to ensure the information published is up-to-date and relevant. The benefits of collecting, using and publishing robust equality information includes:

- helping to identify greatest equality challenges so these inequalities can be addressed
- having relevant data to enable decision-makers to fully understand how their policies and decision impact on people with difference protect characteristics, including outcomes of individuals
- finding ways to mitigate any adverse impact identified
- maximising opportunities for advancing equality and fostering good relations
- enabling the setting of equality objectives based on robust evidence of the key challenges for staff and service users
- having baseline data available for measuring progress in delivering equality objectives, so improving outcomes for individuals with projected characteristics.

1.5 The benefits to employees and services users includes:

- greater transparency about the Council's equality performance regarding employment and service delivery
- Helping them to understand the rationale behind difficult decisions being taken by the Council
- Enabling them to hold the Council to account for its performance on equality.

1.6 Equality impact is identified through the production of this document. In producing this document, the Council is able to identify potential areas of workforce under representation and highlight good practice. The Annual Position Statement aims to improve awareness of equality responsibilities and further embed those responsibilities within the Council's working practices.

Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

2. Background to the Report

2.1 Tackling inequality, challenging discrimination, promoting inclusion and celebrating diversity will help the Council achieve its vision to be the best district in which to live, work and visit. As highlighted in the Corporate Plan (2020-2023) the Council 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. The aim is these principals inform decision-making at every level within the Council, reflecting an ongoing commitment to the elimination of discrimination, the advancement of equality of opportunity for all, and to foster good relations between different communities.

2.2 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes a duty on public sector organisations when exercising public functions to have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance opportunities for people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't share it.

2.3 These are known as the three aims of the Equality Duty.

2.4 Two further specific duties are placed on public sector organisations, which are to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually, and
- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.

2.5 The publication must include information to show that the Council has consciously thought about the three aims of the Equality Duty and it must also include information relating to employees who share protected characteristics (for public bodies with 150 or more employees) and information relating to people who are affected by the public body's policies and practices who share protected characteristics – the residents of South Kesteven.

2.6 The purpose of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement is, therefore, to share this information and provide an overview of how this Council has complied with the three aims of the Duty during 2022/23.

2.7 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement is for publication to the general public for information purposes. It is presented to Committee today in draft form to allow for Members to make comment on the content.

2.8 The law does not prescribe a required format for this document. Organisations can present information in any way they choose. They can also determine content beyond that listed above. Once the Committee's comments have been addressed the document will be put through the design process and published on the Council's website.

2.9 The 2023 Annual Position Statement includes the Council's current Equality Objectives which cover the period 2020-2024. The document also contains a snapshot of the actions taken against these objectives to provide Members with an overview of achievements.

2.10 Going forward, these objectives will be reviewed by the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group and a new action plan will be developed to ensure continued delivery within this important area of responsibility for the Council.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 If the Council does not publish equality information as required by the specific duty regulations, there is a risk of being subjected to legal challenge, as well as potential reputational damage.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The publication of the 2023 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement is a statutory responsibility therefore, no other options were available for consideration.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 To inform Members of action taken to ensure the Council complies with the law on equality and to assure Members of this Council's commitment to the equitability of its services and their delivery.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix A: Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement 2023.

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SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Annual Position Statement

2023

Introduction

This statement provides an overview of 2022/2023 in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion in South Kesteven. This Council promotes equality of opportunity across all its functions.

South Kesteven District Council is committed to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion in everything it does, whether it is the services provided, the money spent or the people employed. The Council is a community leader, service provider, commissioner and employer. It defines an equal and inclusive district as one where all residents, service users, Council staff, Elected Members and the voluntary, faith and community sectors are supported to fulfil their potential. These individuals and agencies are treated with respect and are actively involved in shaping decisions that will affect the workplace and the wider community.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the decisions the Council makes on how to deliver the best possible outcomes for communities across South Kesteven. High standards of service delivery continues and the workforce is committed to tackling discrimination and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in everything the Council does.

This document provides general information relating to how the Council works across South Kesteven, a retrospective perspective in terms of the make-up of the people who live and work within the District and highlights activity which supports equality of access to the services available.

The Equality Act

South Kesteven District Council has a responsibility to meet the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty which is set by law as part of the Equality Act 2010. The duty gives protection for all persons who might be discriminated against because of their age, race, sex, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. The Council must consider what the impact of policies, procedures and functions have on people in relation to their socio-economic status and on those with formal or informal caring responsibilities.

The duty requires the Council to have **due regard** to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The specific duties placed on public bodies are to:

- **Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty** – including information relating to employees who share protected characteristics and information relating to service users. This is achieved through the production of this document.
- **Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.** The Council's objectives are outlined below. These can be reviewed and revised as required within the published timeline which, for South Kesteven District Council, is currently 2020-2024.

Profile of the District of South Kesteven

The district of South Kesteven is one of seven within the county of Lincolnshire and borders North Kesteven to the north, South Holland in the east, the unitary authorities of Rutland and Peterborough to the south and the counties of Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire to the west.

The District covers 943 square kilometres (365sq miles) with the administrative centre in Grantham and three further market towns of Bourne, Stamford and Market Deeping. Two-thirds of the population lives in one of the four market towns and the remaining third live in one of over 80 villages in the area. According to Census 2021 figures, the approximate number of domestic dwellings in South Kesteven is 62,800, with Grantham being the largest urban settlement. The District is divided into 77 parishes and has 30 Wards, represented by 56 Councillors.

Community make-up

In South Kesteven there are 153 people per square kilometre, this compares with an overall Lincolnshire average of 130 people per square kilometre. Figures released by the Office for National Statistics in its Mid-Year Estimate (published 21 December 2022) state a population of 143,787, which shows an increase in population of 10,099 since the census taken in 2011 and an increase of 19,099 since the 2001 Census. The overall population size is currently projected to increase to 155,821 by the year 2043, through a potential net increase in international and internal migration, in addition to typical population growth.

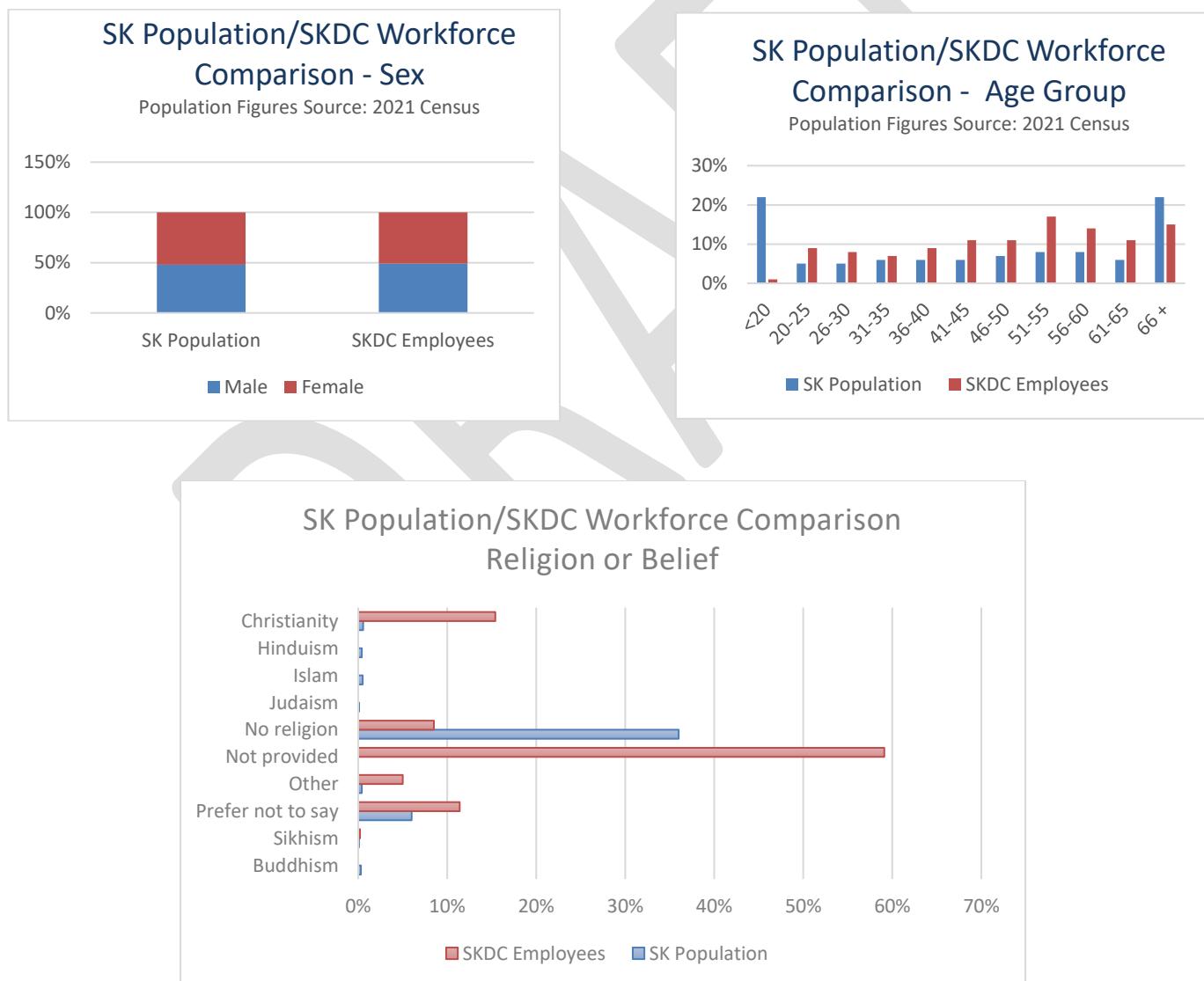
Mapping and local intelligence within the District shows significant increases in minority ethnic communities with the greatest concentration of diversity located in Grantham. This soft intelligence was borne out by the 2021 Census.

The greatest number of people from any one country from outside the United Kingdom (UK) making their home in South Kesteven are from Poland. Additionally there are pockets of small communities, sometimes individual families, who need Council services, help and advice and are unable to speak, read or write in English. Since the start of the Homes for Ukraine programme began, 205 South Kesteven households have hosted families fleeing conflict. Community and faith groups have raised funds for the provision of English lessons and have supported families to settle. Census 2021 data shows the top ten languages (after English) spoken in the District have changed in the ten years since the last Census with Romanian, Tamil, Spanish and Nepalese replacing Cantonese, Slovakian, Tagalog and French. These languages are still present in the District, meaning numbers for the other languages have increased at a higher rate. The Council provides translation and interpreter services on request.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) internal migration figures published in December 2022, as part of its Mid-Year Population Estimate, show the internal migration inflow for South Kesteven was 1,975. This is countered by an outflow of 1,500 individuals leaving the District with a net migration of 475 for the time period. The Mid-Year Estimate states there are 43,040 people aged 60 and above who are resident in South Kesteven. This shows this age group remains at 30% of the total population of the District. The proportion of people aged 75 and over is projected to increase significantly by 2040 according to POPPI (Projecting Older People Population Information). Using figures reported in the ONS Mid-Year Estimate, the current number of people aged over 75 in the District is 15,655. This figure is projected to increase to 26,800 by 2040 (i.e. a 71.19% increase).

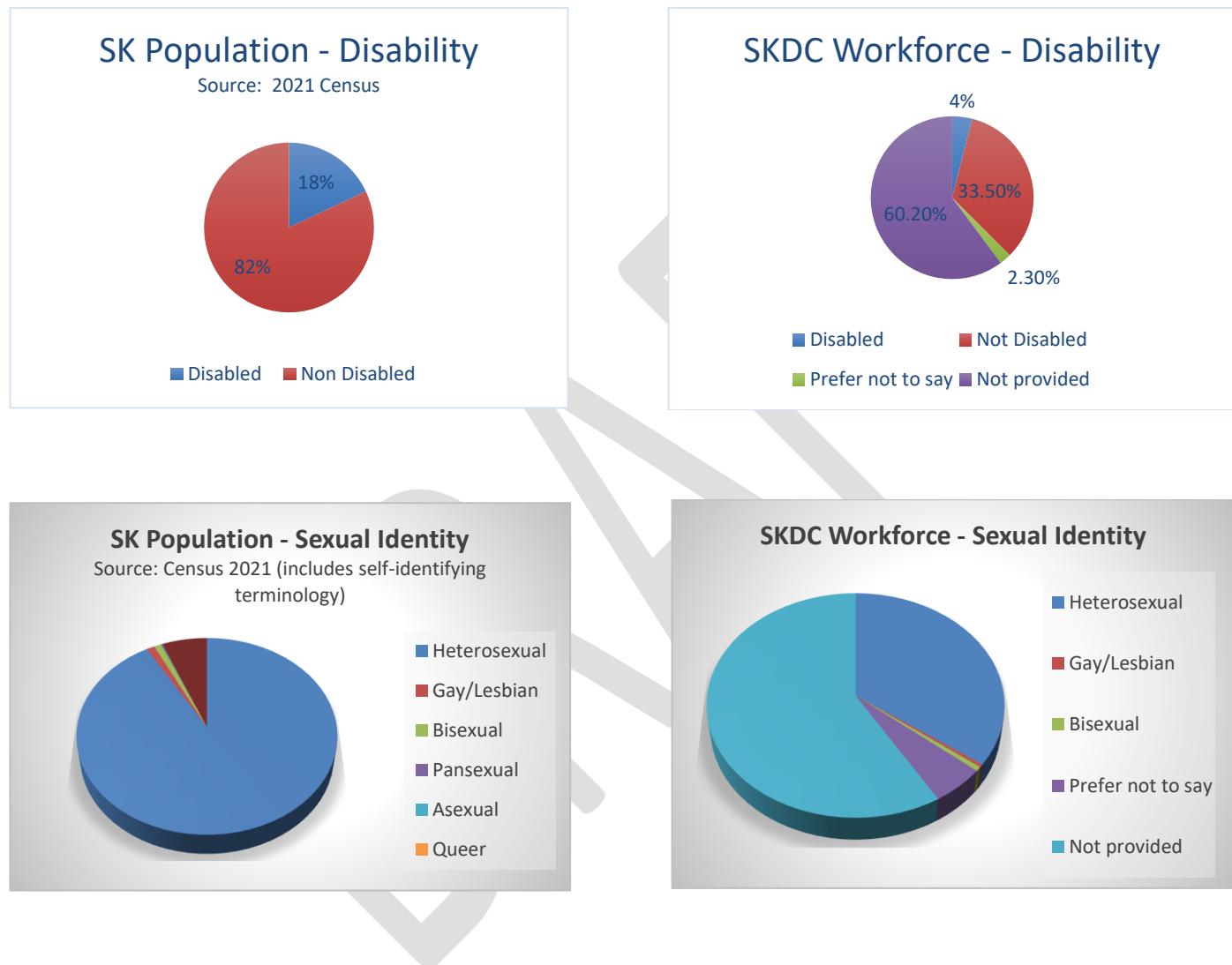
Demographic and Workforce Comparisons

Using data available through the Census and Office for National Statistics Mid-Year Estimates, the Council is able to build a statistical picture of the District's residents. When used as a comparison against the information held in relation to the workforce, this determines how representative South Kesteven District Council is of the population the Authority serves. Carrying out such comparison helps the Council to identify any gaps in the knowledge base relative to the population of South Kesteven and the workforce, as well as providing opportunities for organisational development and change, as necessary, to ensure the Authority remains representative of the District. The following graphics illustrate a direct comparison, based on percentages, between the population of South Kesteven and the workforce of the Council. Information relating to certain protected characteristics is currently not collected by the Council. Where no direct comparison is possible, separate charts have been provided. Mandatory equality information now forms part of the Council's recruitment process, with the option of 'Prefer Not to Say'. This approach should reduce the percentage of information which is not known.



The images above provide an illustration, by age-group and sex, of the population of the District directly compared with the workforce of South Kesteven District Council. These images show the Council is representative of its residents.

The following images provide information relating to other key protected characteristics taken from the 2021 Census alongside the South Kesteven District Council workforce data with supporting narrative where available.



Data provided by the 2021 Census shows the population of South Kesteven as 90.5% white British. Ethnicity identifiers therefore account for the remaining 9.5%. Statistics for some of the protected characteristics are not known for a large proportion of the workforce. For example, ethnicity data held shows the Council's employees as 68.90% white British, with 3.9% representing ethnic minority identifiers. 2% of the workforce responded with "prefer not to say", whilst 25.20% did not provide an answer. It is hoped to increase this for existing employees. The Council are seeking to understand how to encourage greater disclosure of information by applicants in the recruitment process and with the existing workforce via the People Panel and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group.

Equality Objectives 2020-2024

Objective	How this will be achieved	What has been achieved
1. Strengthen our knowledge and understanding of our communities.	Ensure that the Council's services are responsive to different needs and treat service users equitably, with dignity and respect. Listen, involve and respond to our communities effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a Community Engagement Team working directly with the voluntary and community sector • Delivery of a series of engagement events across the District for residents and community and voluntary groups • Meaningful engagement with faith communities through forums and community events • Delivery of events targeted at women and families, focusing on domestic abuse, cyber safety, modern slavery and human trafficking • Provision of funding for voluntary and community organisations and agencies supporting people in food crisis • Regular consultation with residents, tenants and other stakeholders to seek views on the services delivered by the Council • Delivery of topic based awareness training focusing on individual protected characteristics • Creation of an database relating to 300+ faith, voluntary and community groups and organisations operating within the district • Awareness raising visits to charities within the district offering support to people with mental health concerns – Mindspace, Don't Lose Hope, Bhive • Development and delivery of an Inspirational Women Event celebrating exceptional women with a connection to South Kesteven • Commission of a mental wellbeing project aimed at supporting young people • Provision of 'Knowing Your Community' workshops for elected Members • Attendance at, and delivery of, Wellbeing events across the District

Objective	How this will be achieved	What has been achieved
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a series of funding workshops in support of the voluntary and community sector
2. Build a culture of equality and inclusion into all the services, functions and projects we deliver.	<p>Incorporate the need to assess and address equality issues into the Council's project methodology and democratic processes to ensure consideration of the needs of our customers is at the heart of what we do from the earliest stage of development, through to decision making and implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality considerations have been built into project methodologies used across all council services Introduction of Equalities Allies across service areas Menopause café support group Introduction of First Aiders for Mental Health, with representation from staff and elected Members Resolution to join the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge Development of a Mental Health Working Group comprising Officers and elected Members Themed events delivered by First Aiders for Mental Health including: Mental Health Awareness, Suicide Prevention and Men's Mental Health Introduction of a new Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process which requires consultation to be undertaken as part of the process Equality impact assessment training delivered to the Council's management team Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) e-learning is mandatory for all staff and elected Members EDI considerations built into committee report templates and EIAs are published alongside committee reports to ensure considerations are made at the time decisions are taken Bitesize training sessions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion EDI working group introduced to represent the protected characteristics of the Council's staff to inform policy and practice across the Authority Introduction of a Youth Council

Objective	How this will be achieved	What has been achieved		
		Mean Gender Pay Gap	Median Gender Pay Gap	
3. Prove our ongoing commitment to equal opportunity by developing a diverse and empowered workforce and by reducing our gender pay gap.	<p>Utilise workforce data to help identify areas for improvement in the diversity and skills of our workforce to seek equality of representation at all levels across the organisation.</p> <p>Develop and deliver against an action plan to specifically address the Council's gender pay gap, to form part of the work programme of the Employment Committee.</p> <p>Demonstrate a positive culture with strong leadership and organisational commitment to improving equality outcomes.</p>	2020	0.8%	6.4%
		2021	0.45%	0%
		2022	-3.38%	-11%

Supporting our Staff

During 2022/2023 the Council had 480 employees. During this year, 134 people ended their employment with the Authority, and 73 commenced employment.

The statistics show 9.5% of the workforce are aged 25 and under, this has increased by over 1.5% from the previous year. The Council is continuing to increase the appeal of working for the Authority. Actions have included targeted recruitment advertising via social media channels and promoting career development opportunities through apprenticeships and 'grow our own' initiatives. The Council has recently hosted a large group of students for a work placement programme. Following this, two of the students were recruited as Interns, tasked with developing a Council Instagram account to provide a further route to advertising vacancies. Research shows Instagram is the second most popular social media channel, with 53 minutes per day spent on Instagram (compared to 1 minute per day spent on LinkedIn).

The Council is mindful of its external profile and is in the process of updating its website. This will include information important to employees – social responsibility, opportunities for development and progression, culture, working patterns and benefits.

Working patterns and benefits are of importance in attracting employees. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way in which people work – some preferring home working with the flexibility this can allow, whereas others need an office environment. The Council's agile approach, subject to the role undertaken, means in the main differing workstyles and preferences can be easily accommodated.

Workforce development and succession planning is underway to address the potential loss of knowledge and skills due to the proportion of the workforce aged 55 and over (over 30% of the workforce).

Ensuring Equality and Inclusion for our Workforce

Wellbeing

The Council puts on a varied wellbeing programme for staff. Regular staff surveys help shape the programme which has included a range of educational and awareness initiatives on topics such as mental health, breast cancer and strokes.

First Aiders for Mental Health

It is predicted by 2025, there will be in excess of 15,000 living with a common mental health disorder in South Kesteven. It is therefore, increasingly important for staff to be supported. The Council now has 21 First Aiders for Mental Health amongst staff and elected Members who can listen and signpost colleagues to other support services.

Employee Assistance Programme

The Council recognises the demands placed upon staff in their working and personal lives. To help staff deal with these demands, the Council offers an Employee Assistance Programme. This programme, which is also available to elected Members, is a free confidential service providing year-round support and information on a range of personal and work-related issues

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

This year saw the introduction of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group. This group, made up of Officers from across the Council who represent some of the protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010, explores opportunities to help the Council become more inclusive, promote equality and diversity and share information on a range of topics to help improve the awareness of Officers

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Allies

The Council has a network of Equality Allies across the workforce. There are currently ten Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Allies. These allies provide support to colleagues on issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, acting as critical friends during the equality impact assessment process. The Council has a further three champions who support as described above and are also LGBTQIA+ Allies.

People Panel

Launched in March 2022, the People Panel is made up of 31 colleagues from departments across the Council. The Panel has been set up to be a forum for feedback and involvement on issues of strategic importance that will affect colleagues. The meetings provide an opportunity for employees to raise issues of interest or concern, share their opinions and views and get more involved in how the Council operates.

Recruitment

The Council's People Strategy 2022-2025 looks at ways to increase the diversity of the workforce, to ensure the demographics of the district are reflected. One action taken to achieve this is to remove the potential of unconscious bias through implementing Name Blind Recruitment as part of the recruitment process.

Ensuring Equality and Inclusion for our Customers and our Communities

Equality Impact Assessments

The Council's Equality Impact Assessment process requires consideration is made in the development or review of every policy, function, project or procedure impacting South Kesteven residents. Copies of Assessments are published along with committee reports to ensure due regard is given throughout the decision-making process.

Translations and Interpreters

Any document is provided in an alternative format on request. This includes translating into other languages, documents in large print or Braille and information in audio format. All staff have access to Language Line for instant translation services and in-person interpreter services are provided when required. Staff and customers have access to Text Relay to assist with calls to and from the Council for people with a hearing impairment.

Disabled Facilities Grants

The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide disabled facilities grants to adapt the homes of disabled people. Financial and technical assistance is available to residents who live in their own home, are a private tenant or a housing association tenant to support the needs of disabled children and adults. Eligibility is based on an assessment by an Occupational Therapists (OT). The grant will pay for the essential adaptations the OT identifies as necessary and appropriate in accordance with the Council's standard specification.

Funding to Food Support Agencies

A ring-fenced funding pot is available to support the work of agencies and community groups within the District which provides access to food and essential supplies to those in need. In the past, this support has only been offered to the four Foodbanks within the District and is now also offered to community larders, agencies providing hot meals to vulnerable individuals and community cafés operating on a 'pay what you can' basis.

Assisted Bin Collections

A permanent and temporary assisted collection service is provided. This service is offered to households where no resident at the property is able to put the waste out for collections because of frailty, disability or ill-health.

Cost of Living Support

The Council has two dedicated Cost of Living Support Officers. Their roles are to signpost and directly support South Kesteven residents who may be experiencing financial difficulties.

Conclusion

One of the purposes of producing this document, beyond showing how the Council meets the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, is to determine how representative our workforce is of the district and the communities we serve. Many of the statistics supplied are based on the 2021 Census and the Office for National Statistics Mid-Year Estimate. Based on these statistics, assurance can be taken in terms of gender balance and age ranges, the Council has a representative workforce. Work is underway to improve data collection relating to the Council's workforce to enable percentage comparisons to be made relating to the Protected Characteristics to provide a more thorough view on how representative the Council is of the District it serves. Going forward, this will help determine any further steps the Council may wish to take to redress any imbalances.

DRAFT

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*The languages listed above represent the top ten spoken, after English, in South Kesteven. If you know someone who needs information in any language beyond what is listed please contact us as above.



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 October 2023

Report of Councillor Rhea Rayside,
Cabinet Member for People and
Communities

Prevent Update – October 2023

Report Author

Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

 carol.drury@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is threefold to provide information and assurance on:

- South Kesteven District Council's delivery of the Prevent duty and responsibilities hosted within the Community Engagement Team
- Activity delivered across Lincolnshire through the Prevent Steering Group
- Notable local events and national highlights.

Recommendations

Given the Council must meet statutory responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is:

1. Invited to consider the content of this report and comment if it wishes.
2. Invited to consider if an update relating to Prevent should be added annually to their work programme.

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy and strong communities • 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 specific financial comments arising from this report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Chief Finance Officer

Legal and Governance

1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report which are not already outlined in the body of the report.

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

Health and Safety

1.3 The provision of Prevent training and community engagement is strongly aligned with statutory obligations and responsibilities the Council holds under the Health and Safety at Work 1974 and relevant legislation associated with the Act.

Completed by: Phil Swinton Health and Safety Manager

Diversity and Inclusion

1.5 Since its introduction in 2003, concerns have been raised within some communities that Prevent is sometimes implemented in ways which undermine fundamental rights and freedoms, stifle free speech, lead to discrimination, and stigmatise or alienate sections of the population.

- 1.6 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 1.7 The Prevent Duty, which was introduced in 2015, also places the duty of 'due regard' on public bodies to ensure actions relating to Prevent are delivered in an appropriate, proportionate and fair way.

Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager.

Safeguarding

- 1.8 Prevent sits within the Safeguarding arena. Staff and elected Members need to be aware of the potential for grooming of susceptible people into extremist ideology. They need to be alert to concerns and know who to refer those concerns to. Officers undergo in person Prevent training every three years. This is delivered by an external, Home Office approved trainer. New starters are required to undertake Home Office provided e learning modules via the Council's learning management system if their employment start date falls within the three-year cycle. Elected Members are provided with in person Prevent training as part of their induction following an election.

Officers and Elected Members are also required to undertake safeguarding training which is provided via the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board. This training complements the Prevent-specific training and is provided, for officers, on a six-year pathway. The level of training required is based on the amount of direct contact and involvement staff have in their role with the public. Elected Members are required to complete one module of e learning per year during their term of office.

Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager.

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2020-2023 to healthy and strong communities. This report, and the work undertaken across the County to deliver against the Prevent Duty contributes to the delivery of this priority whilst also ensuring we remain a high performing council.

Legislation

- 2.2 The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 created a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. This duty applies to all public bodies (local authorities, police, the National Health Service (NHS), schools, further and higher education providers, probation, prisons and youth offending services). The duty also applies to private providers supplying public functions for example, in the education sector. Previously, the lead responsibility for Prevent lay with the police, however as of 2016, local authorities now have the lead as Prevent interventions are focused in the 'pre criminal space'.
- 2.3 The National Threat Level for the UK, assessed by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, was reduced to *Substantial* in February 2022 (meaning an attack remains likely). Therefore, awareness of Prevent, the ability to recognise potential concerns and knowing when and to whom those concerns should be raised, are vital in the prevention of radicalisation and terrorism.
- 2.4 Action to tackle terrorism is covered by the Government's CONTEST strategy. Terrorism is defined by the Terrorism Act 2000. In brief, it means action or threat of action, involving violence to the public and/or damage to property. This action must be focused on influencing the Government or intimidating the public, with the purpose of advancing a particular political/ideological cause.

Prevent

- 2.5 This report is primarily concerned with the Council's role in delivering one element of the CONTEST strategy: 'Prevent' – aimed at reducing the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- 2.6 Prevent falls within the safeguarding arena. The grooming of susceptible individuals into radicalisation and extreme ideologies is regarded as a safeguarding concern and must be addressed as such. The referral pathways are different, yet the principles are the same.
- 2.7 Prevent operates in the non-criminal space. This means working with individuals who have not yet committed a crime yet are susceptible to radicalisation in whatever form that takes.
- 2.8 Prevent has three objectives. They are:
 - to respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced from those who promote it
 - to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they receive appropriate advice and support
 - to work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which require addressing

County Prevent Steering Group and the Counter Terrorism Local Profile

2.9 Overall, governance of Prevent in Lincolnshire is undertaken by the Prevent Steering Group (PSG), chaired and administrated by Lincolnshire County Council. Membership includes representatives from:

- The seven District Councils
- Children's Service and Adult Service Directorates
- Counter Terrorism Policing East Midlands (Prevent)
- Lincolnshire Police
- Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue
- Probation and Prison Service
- Ministry of Defence
- Local health partners
- Department of Education
- Lincoln College, Bishop Grosseteste and Lincoln University
- Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service and JUST Lincolnshire.

2.10 These agencies are identified as 'specified authorities' under the Prevent Duty and therefore have an individual and collective responsibility to give due regard to Prevent.

2.11 The Steering Group meets quarterly with high attendance levels from all agencies. South Kesteven District Council's Community Engagement Manager represents the Authority on this group.

2.12 Prevent activity is centred around risks identified in the Counter Terrorism Local Profile and driven by the Prevent Delivery Plan. The Counter Terrorism Local Profile is produced by police colleagues with input from the membership of the County Prevent Steering Group. The Prevent Delivery Plan is a collaborative document produced by the partners within the Prevent Steering Group and is developed to respond to the Counter Terrorism Local Profile. Monitoring of the actions contained within the Prevent Delivery Plan is also carried out by the Prevent Steering Group. These documents, all produced utilising the guidance provided in the Prevent Duty Toolkit for Local Authorities (see **6.4 Background Papers**), are supported by a county risk assessment document produced by County and District colleagues which identifies potential concerns within each district area and offers mitigations against each risk.

2.13 The Lincolnshire Counter Terrorism Local Profile (November 2022) identified three priority areas:

- Self-Initiated Terrorists (S-ITs)
- Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism (ERWT)
- Prison extremists and releases

2.14 This mirrors most of the national threat priorities, apart from Islamist Extremism which does not feature as an identified risk in Lincolnshire. Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism is the recurring dominant established ideology recorded within Lincolnshire Prevent casework, with most relating to individuals under the age of 25.

2.15 The Counter Terrorism Local Profile also identifies, both locally and nationally, the inclusion of neurodiversity and online radicalisation as factors in a significant number of Prevent referrals.

2.16 Lincolnshire continues to be classed as a low risk, low priority area for Prevent, though does not mean there is no risk at all. Convictions in the recent past of Lincoln residents Ben John (2021) and David Parnham (2019), show the continuing need for vigilance.

2.17 The County delivery plan outlines activities and progress broken down into four areas. Actions are ongoing and are broadly delivered by County colleagues. Local input is also listed below:

Area	Activity	Progress
Effective Leadership and Governance	<p>This ensures the Prevent Steering Group has good representation from a wide range of partners, who provide assurance statutory responsibilities are being delivered against all Prevent activity across Lincolnshire. Lincolnshire is also represented at regional and national network meetings by Lincolnshire County Council's Prevent Lead. Information and actions from such meetings are fed back to the Prevent Steering Group to ensure effective overview.</p>	<p>In March 2023 the Home Office undertook its annual Benchmark Assessment of Prevent Delivery in Lincolnshire. Overall Prevent delivery was assessed as “<i>excellent, especially when considered against the local threat and risk profile</i>”. The assessment included some recommendations around continuing to develop our risk assessment process and delivery plan. It also highlighted the continued lack of a Venue Hire Policy as the only area the County was not fully meeting the Duty. As lead Authority for Prevent, Lincolnshire County Council is in the process of developing a Venue Hire Policy which, the partnership agreed would be shared and adopted across Lincolnshire to ensure consistency of approach.</p> <p>Status:  Ongoing. The delivery plan is a living document. Partners await the Venue Hire Policy from LCC to enable its inclusion in local policy and procedure.</p>

Online Resilience	<p>As identified in the Counter Terrorism Local Profile, on-line radicalisation is a significant risk across the county, with extremist and terrorist material easily accessible. The training offer has been adapted to incorporate the risks of radicalisation through social media, gaming and the internet.</p>	<p>Following a successful bid, by the County Council, to the “Home Office Preventing Radicalisation Fund”, several workshops were held throughout February and March 2023. These were specifically aimed at carers and support workers for teenage males with neurodiverse conditions. This was identified as a core at-risk group within the Counter Terrorism Local Profile, particularly around on-line radicalisation.</p> <p>Status:  Complete.</p>
Learning and Development	<p>Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, the Local Authority is required to ensure all relevant staff are appropriately trained in order to be able to recognise radicalisation, extremism and vulnerability, and know how to refer those individuals who may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism, into Channel (see from 2.15 below for more information) . Within South Kesteven District Council, Prevent training also forms part of the core training offer for Elected Members.</p>	<p>In January 2023 the Prevent Steering Group undertook a review of Prevent training arrangements and agreed to adopt a partnership-wide Prevent Training Strategy, providing a standard level of Prevent training across all partners. SKDC complies with this strategy by providing mandatory training for staff every three years. This training is provided in person. Home Office Prevent e-learning focusing on awareness of Prevent, making a referral and the Channel process, is available, between in person sessions to ensure training is available to all. A link to this training can be found at 6.2 Background Papers</p> <p>In June 2023 a total of 229 staff and 39 Elected Members undertook ‘in person’ Prevent training delivered by a Home Office approved trainer. Further sessions took place in September to give Elected Members and officers additional opportunities to participate in this training. This brought the total of Elected Members trained to 48 and staff trained through this in person training to 236.</p> <p>Status:  Ongoing</p> <p>The responsibility to train is ongoing therefore supporting programmes for e learning between in person training session which take place every three years.</p>

Community Engagement and Awareness Raising	<p>The Council's Community Engagement Manager works with third sector organisations across the district to support their awareness of the risks of radicalisation, their resilience to terrorist narratives, and to help them know what to do if they have concerns about someone who may be susceptible to radicalisation. As the Council's representative on the County Prevent Steering Group, involvement in engagement activity extends outside of South Kesteven.</p>	<p>Partnership engagement events took place in 2022 including a Women's Engagement Event in Stamford and a Families Event at RAF Waddington. The Council's Community Engagement Manager was integral to the development and delivery of these events which featured sessions on cyber safety, modern slavery, domestic abuse and Prevent.</p> <p>Status:  Complete Planning is currently underway to develop further sessions to take place in South Kesteven from 2024.</p>
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2.18 Going forward, should the Committee choose to receive future updates on the Council's delivery against the Prevent Duty, the action plan provided will exclusively contain information relating to activities that have taken place within South Kesteven.

2.19 Effective communication of Prevent, its purpose and the support available is vital. A subgroup of the Prevent Steering Group meets regularly to ensure that messaging around Prevent is consistent across all partners. This subgroup has developed a new, quarterly partnership Prevent Newsletter. The first edition of this newsletter has recently been disseminated by the Steering Group and has been shared with community-facing teams within the Council.

Channel Duty Guidance – Channel Panels

2.20 A key element of Prevent delivery is Channel; a multi-agency approach to provide support at an early stage to those identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or supporting terrorist organisations. This process is managed by a statutory 'Channel Panel', a body chaired by the County Council with representation from relevant sectors including: health, safeguarding, education, housing, immigration and border control, prison and probation providers and others.

2.21 Prevent Referrals are initially assessed by the police. Should an ideology and potential national security risk be identified, this is put before a Channel Panel for consideration. The Panel then decides whether to adopt the individual onto Channel, or whether alternative interventions are more appropriate. If adopted to Channel, consent is then sought from the individual before a supportive action plan is put in place. Channel is a voluntary programme and individuals must provide consent. Every case adopted into Channel is kept under review and routinely reassessed for any changes to identified vulnerabilities and their risk to national security.

2.22 Individuals referred to Channel who do not meet the threshold for intervention are referred to other safeguarding agencies for support.

Key National Highlights

2.23 In 2019, the Government committed to carrying out an independent review of the Prevent strategy. This review, carried out by William Shawcross, was concluded in 2022 and published in February 2023. The review made 34 recommendations underpinned by four guiding principles, all of which the Home Secretary has accepted. The four principles are:

- Prevent should go back to first principles and reassert its overall objective of stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- Prevent needs to develop expertise and instil better levels of understanding of extremist ideology and radicalisation across the system.
- Prevent needs to enhance its approach to delivery (e.g. regionalisation).
- Prevent should create processes for responding to disinformation being spread about the scheme. It should encourage public trust by improving transparency and establishing better oversight of how the strategy is implemented.

2.24 A link to the full report has been provided under **6.1 Background Papers**.

2.25 An outcome of the review into Prevent carried out by William Shawcross has been an update of the Prevent Duty. New guidance was published on 7th September concerning forthcoming changes to the Duty. Subject to Parliamentary approval, changes will come into force on 31st December 2023. Any changes relating to the duty placed on the District Council will then be implemented and will form part subsequent updates to this Committee. Updates have also been made to the supplementary Prevent duty toolkit. The toolkit is designed to support the delivery of the Prevent duty by local authorities in England and Wales by providing practical information and suggestions to protect people from radicalisation. Links to the latest guidance and the update toolkit have been provided under **6.3 and 6.4 Background Papers**.

2.26 The UK Home Office has pledged to introduce a new legal requirement for public places to ensure preparedness for and protection from terrorist attacks. This new Protect Duty, also referred to as "Martyn's Law", comes after the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing, in which 22 people were killed.

2.27 The Government is due to pass legislation by early 2024, formalising the Protect Duty, although the extent of this Duty is yet to be ascertained. Progress is being monitored by the Community Engagement Manager. Any developments relevant to the Council will be brought to the attention of this Committee.

3. Key Considerations

3.1 These are set out in the body of the report.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 The Council must meet statutory responsibilities under the Prevent Duty. Therefore, the do nothing option was discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 Prevent activity is delivered across Lincolnshire through the Prevent Steering Group. The recommendations provide Members with the opportunity to have an overview of the Council's involvement and to comment on the content of this report. Any comments requiring the attention of the Prevent Steering Group will be communicated via the Council's representative on the Group.

6. Background Papers

6.1 *Independent Review of Prevent's report and Government response*, published 8 February 2023, updated 22 June 2023 and available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-prevents-report-and-government-response>

6.2 *Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation* – Home Office e-learning, available online at:

<https://www.support-people-vulnerable-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/prevent-duty-training-learn-how-support-people-susceptible-radicalisation>

6.3 *Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales*, updated 7 September 2023, available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

6.4 *Prevent duty toolkit for local authorities*, guidance produced by the Home Office, updated 7 September 2023, available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-toolkit-for-local-authorities-and-partner-agencies>

6.5 *Channel Duty Guidance: protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism*, published 2020, available online at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/964567/6.6271_HO_HMG_Channel_Duty_Guidance_v14_Web.pdf



SOUTH
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COUNCIL



Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 October 2023

Report of Councillor Rhea Rayside,
Cabinet Member for People and
Communities

SK Community Fund – October 2023 Update

Report Author

Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

✉ carol.drury@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the SK Community Fund which supports the development of community amenities, community events and provides funding to groups that provide support to local communities. The report outlines the requirements applicants must follow to be, and remain, eligible for funding through the scheme.

Recommendation

In considering the report, it is recommended Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Notes the contents of this report and is invited to request a further update on an annual basis.

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy and strong communities • Clean and sustainable environment
Which wards are impacted?	All

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

1.1 The financial considerations are referenced throughout the report. As this is a discretionary budget set each year by Council, there is an opportunity for the Committee to express its view on the level of the budget for 2024/25.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Chief Finance Officer

Legal and Governance

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

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

2. Background to the Report

2.1 South Kesteven District Council's Corporate Plan (2020-2023) has creating healthy and strong communities as a priority. The aim being to enable residents, working with partners, to develop strong networks of support and maintain strong communities. This sees a focus on the most vulnerable in South Kesteven communities to improve wellbeing and reduce inequality through collaboration between public service, community leaders, residents and voluntary groups.

2.2 The SK Community Fund was established in 2015 to offer financial assistance to voluntary and community groups for projects and events that benefit the residents of South Kesteven.

2.3 This scheme operates under three specific strands:

- **Small Grants Fund:** Awards of up to £2,000 for eligible groups and projects, where 100% of the required funding can be applied for. Fees for sessional workers (freelance workers, not on the usual staffing cohort of the applying group/agency) could be considered for small community event applications. This Fund is exclusively open to groups with less than £10,000 of financial resource.
- **Community Projects:** Capital funding only. Up to 80% of required funding is available to a maximum of £5,000 for eligible groups and projects. 20% match funding required from the applicant
- **Community Events:** Generally capital funding, however fees for sessional workers (freelance workers, not on the usual staff of the applying group/agency) could be considered for community events. Funding is available for up to 80% of event costs to a maximum of £5,000 for eligible groups and projects. 20% match funding is required from the applicant.

2.4 Grants are available for constituted groups and organisations involved in community projects and events that benefit the residents and communities in the District. Groups and organisations must demonstrate how their project or event will deliver wider benefit, contributing to the sustainability, vitality and wellbeing of South Kesteven's communities and the Fund's priorities.

2.5 Applicants are required to provide a copy of the group's governing documents, proof of a dedicated bank account with two unrelated signatories; relevant policies (e.g. safeguarding, equality and diversity); evidence of need; annual accounts when relevant and the written endorsement of the Ward Councillor in whose ward the project or event will take place.

2.6 At a previous meeting of this Committee, elected Members requested information relating to the additional evidence required when an application is made by a Parish and Town Council. The standard requirements to provide evidence of a governing document, bank account etc are applicable to Parish and Town Councils. In addition, they must provide documentary evidence of account balances and level of reserves held; demonstrate they have both exhausted prudent levels of reserves and will not use the Community Fund to fund the standard functional operations within an organisation (often referred to as business as usual). Furthermore, Parish and Town Councils are restricted in applying for funding through the SK Community Fund for projects or events that could be supported through the precept process (i.e. the amount of money they require from Council Tax payers in their area), and they cannot utilise re-claimed VAT (Value Added Tax) to provide the required match funding to any application.

2.7 When an application from any group is submitted, it must state a start and end date

for the project or event, along with two written quotations for any goods or services costing £50 and above. Grants awarded must be spent on the purpose stated in the application. If for any reason the circumstances change or the group wishes to vary the way in which it spends the grant, they are required to contact the Community Engagement Team to request written permission to do so. Basic changes, such as minor timeline slippage or a change of item to be purchased, would be agreed or declined at the discretion of the Community Engagement Manager. Any significant change to a project would be referred back to the Awarding Panel for consideration.

- 2.8 Grants from the SK Community Fund are paid 75% up front and 25% on completion of the project. In order to release the initial payment, applicants must sign and return their acceptance of the terms under which the grant is offered. Included in the terms is the requirement that within three months of the completion date of the project, applicants must have submitted a completion document and provided copies of invoices and corresponding bank statements as proof of purchase and payment. Only when all this information has been received is the final 25% of the grant released. Paragraph 6.7 of the Fund's criteria states "groups that do not fulfil this obligation will not be considered for future funding (no appeals or discussions will be entered into)".
- 2.9 At the time of preparing this report, 30 funding rounds have taken place since the Fund was introduced. Awards have been granted to 178 capital projects and events. In the successive seven years since the Fund launched a number grants have been either returned or abandoned. The returned grants were the result of projects not being delivered within the allowable timeframe for the funding to be drawn down (one year from the time of the grant being offered). The grants not taken up by the applicant were generally due to the conditions placed on the grant not being met. Conditions are usually placed on an offer when additional funding from other sources is being sought in order to complete a project, licences or other permission are required.
- 2.10 Further adjustments to awards were made when project costings provided at the time of completion were less than stated within the application and when completion documentation was not received within the required three month window. A financial breakdown of awards offered, returned, not taken up and adjusted are listed at **Table One**.

Table One: A financial breakdown of SK Community Fund awards offered, returned, not taken up and adjusted

Total Awards Offered	Total Not Taken Up	Total Returned	Total Adjustments (including underspends and non-payment of final 25%)	Actual Total (funding to voluntary and community groups across SK)
£774,990	£30,693	£20,605	£1,438	£722,254

- 2.11 Information relating to grants made within a financial year are posted on the community funding and volunteering page of the Council's website. A link is provided at 6.2 - Background Papers.

- 2.12 Funding through the SK Community Fund is often used to support or act as match funding for larger funding bids made by the voluntary and community sector to external funders. The ability to use the SK Community Fund for this purpose therefore helps lever in significant, additional funding to benefit the communities.
- 2.13 Across the four main rounds of funding for 2022/2023 grants were awarded totalling £86,678. This funding generated a further £134,416 from national, regional and local funding bodies to support the delivery of projects within South Kesteven. An additional round of funding from the SK Community Fund to support events celebrating the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III provided grants totalling £17,490. Collectively, therefore, the District's wider economy benefitted from grants totalling £238,584, with the SK Community Fund as the foundation for growth at the grassroots level.
- 2.14 Whilst it is a little early to identify a change in pattern with only one round of funding completed to date for 2023/2024, requests for application forms for the SK Community Fund appear to have nominally reduced when compared to previous years. This is likely to be a result of competing community funding currently available through South Kesteven's allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which is being administered by the Council. Increased effort to promote the availability of funding through the SK Community Fund is being made to ensure awareness of opportunities the scheme offers remains across the voluntary and community sector.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The Council places importance on supporting communities with the things that are important to them. To assist communities, the Council, through the SK Community Fund, supports projects and organisations that aim to: reduce loneliness, social and rural isolation and improve mental health and wellbeing.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council could suspend the existing SK Community Fund scheme and rely only on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, however this Fund has been established since 2015 and has consistently provided funding to voluntary, faith and community groups since this time. Longevity is vital when supporting communities. The need to build trust that schemes and projects will be sustainable is key, particularly when working with emerging groups. The relationship built with the local community through this scheme, and the understanding of community needs, are proven through the number of projects supported and any suspension of it to temporarily replace it with a time-limited funding stream would damage the integrity of the SK Community Fund. It is for this reason, the 'do nothing' option was discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendation

5.1 The recommendation inviting the Committee to request a further update is to provide support to Councillors in their local leadership role as they work with communities to make a difference.

6. Background papers

6.1 *SK Community Fund* – Report to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 16 March 2023 and available online at:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37180/SK%20Community%20Fund.pdf>

6.2 *SK Community Fund* – Published information relating to grants awarded during 2022/23 are available at:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHtpHandler.ashx?id=29273&p=0>

7. Appendices

7.1 **Appendix A** - SK Community Fund – Criteria, Application Process and Conditions of Funding.



SK Community Fund

Criteria, Application Process and Conditions of Funding

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact the Community Engagement Team on Tel: **01476 406080** (extn 6161) or e mail: communityfund@southkesteven.gov.uk

Please read these guidance notes carefully and refer to them when completing the application form.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The South Kesteven Community Fund has been established to support and develop community initiatives within South Kesteven District. South Kesteven District Council's Community Engagement Team administers this fund. The Team will also be able to assist groups with all aspects involved in choosing the correct fund and completing the application forms.
- 1.2 Grants are available for constituted groups and organisations involved in community projects and events that benefit the residents and communities in the district. Groups and organisations must demonstrate how their project or event will deliver wide benefit, contributing to the sustainability, vitality and well-being of South Kesteven's communities and the Fund's priorities.

2. How much money is available and what can be funded?

- 2.1 The fund total of £90,000 is available annually and it is intended that the full amount will be awarded. Funding is allocated for projects that meet with the Fund's priorities to tackle issues of loneliness, social and rural isolation and mental health and wellbeing.
- 2.2 80% of total eligible costs up to a maximum award of £5000 can be applied for towards the cost of community projects or events. The minimum contribution (match funding) required from applicants is 20%. This can be made up of own cash contribution, donations, grants and sponsorship.
- 2.3 Any volunteer in-kind time should be calculated at the average hourly pay rate of £13.70.
- 2.4 The kinds of projects and events that can be supported by the Community Fund are shown in the table below.
- 2.5 Awards towards the maximum figure available will require significant levels of match funding and demonstrable community need and support.

Project Category	Types of Projects Supported
Supporting Communities	Supporting the work of organisations that support communities. Projects that support communities to tackle issues of loneliness, social or rural isolation, mental health and wellbeing.
Community Amenities	Outdoor facilities such as 'Multi-Use Games Areas', community shelters, recreation areas, community orchards etc.
Community Events	Community celebrations, open to all sports events, street festivals, arts and cultural events. Applications for recurring events <u>must</u> have a significantly new or different aspect.

3. What will not be funded?

3.1 The SK Community Fund is not open to applications from clubs, groups or organisations that require people to pay a membership fee in order to participate, closed groups e.g. residents' associations (set up costs for new groups and free, open-access events may be eligible). Other events/projects that will not be supported include:

- Projects or events that are for private gain.
- Projects or events that are deemed to be within the 'business as usual' of groups and organisations or, in the case of Parish and Town Councils, projects or events that could be supported through the Precept process.
- Events primarily intended to pass on surplus income to other organisations, e.g. charity concerts.
- Revenue costs - salaries, project officer or other employee costs, rents, statutory training etc. (Sessional worker fees requested as part of an Events application may be considered. Sessional worker fees do not include fees for existing or regular employees or owners of the commissioning agency).
- Car Parks, footpaths and roadways
- Projects or events that already receive SKDC District Council funding (e.g. Food Support Fund, Section 106, UK Shared Prosperity Funding etc).
- Event costs incurred for catering/refreshments
- General appeals or sponsorship
- Activities of a mainly political or religious nature, monuments, improvements to the fabric of church buildings, and its fixtures and fittings (**non-religious community activities**, held within a place of worship, may be eligible).
- Contingency funds, income deficits, bridging loans or security against a loan.

4. Criteria for funding

4.1 We welcome applications from constituted community and voluntary groups, charities and social enterprises to deliver projects or events that benefit communities in South Kesteven District. **We do not accept applications from individuals.**

4.2 Applications will be assessed on their ability to:

- Deliver wide community benefit, contributing to the sustainability, vitality and well-being of SKDC's communities, such as encouraging volunteering and participation
- Contribute to locally identified community needs and priorities (such as loneliness, social or rural isolation, mental health and wellbeing etc.)
- Contribute to the priorities of the SK Community Fund
- Demonstrate value for money (through obtaining written quotes and estimates)
- Measure the success of a project or event
- Demonstrate equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination.

4.3 To apply to the SK Community Fund your group or organisation must have:

- A written governing document or constitution
- A bank or building society account in the name of your group or organisation with at least two signatories who are unrelated and do not live at the same address
- Relevant policies and procedures
- The written endorsement of the District Councillor in whose Ward the project/event will take place. If the project/event has a district-wide remit, applicants should seek endorsement from the serving Chairman of SKDC.
- Where possible, photographic evidence should be supplied with your application.

4.4 You are required to provide all necessary documentation to support your application including copies of two written quotes for each item of expenditure of £50 - £5,000 (incl VAT). The written quotes and estimates must display the relevant company names and addresses and be less than six months old. Your chosen quotation should be highlighted and should **exactly match the amount on your application form**. We will not accept invoices as a substitute for any required quotation.

4.5 Applications for events at which performers or artists are commissioned must include evidence of performers/artists being at least provisionally booked along with a cost of their participation in the event. This can be in the form of an email confirmation from the performer/artist. No application will be considered without this evidence.

4.6 Grants will not be awarded retrospectively (i.e. for work or equipment already purchased or events which have already taken place).

4.7 We will not make more than one award in a financial year to the same organisation or group.

4.8 Previously funded projects must have been completed, all required completion documents received and closed off by SKDC prior to the submission of any subsequent application. If a project is not completed within the financial year the award was made (1st April - 31st March), no application for further funding can be made until the financial year after the project was completed and closed off.

4.9 It is unlikely that the SK Community Fund will be able to provide grants for all potentially eligible applications. Therefore, we reserve the right to prioritise applications to achieve best value for money. We also reserve the right to decline applications that do not meet the stated criteria.

4.10 Financial information provided along with any application is open to question by the Awarding Panel. The Panel reserves the right to question an applicant's non-commitment of funds if a bank statement shows sufficient funds are available to support a project without a grant being given. The Panel will also question a stated commitment of funds when there is insufficient evidence to show such funds are available to the applicant.

5. How your application is dealt with

5.1 On receipt of your application we will make an initial assessment to check that your group or organisation and project or event are eligible and that all required supporting documentation has been provided. The Community Engagement Team may contact you to obtain missing information, documentation or to seek clarification regarding your application. The responsibility is on the applying organisation to ensure the application is complete and accurate.

5.2 The Community Engagement Team will aim to acknowledge receipt of your application within five working days of receiving it. This will be by email where you have provided an email address but otherwise will be by letter.

- 5.3 Eligible applications that are accompanied by the required supporting documentation will be put before the Awarding Panel for consideration. The Panel is a forum of elected members capable of decision making for community bids. Projects and events must provide wide community benefit and contribute to the sustainability, vitality and well-being of communities in the South Kesteven district.
- 5.4 Failure to provide any of the required documentation and quotations will render the application ineligible.
- 5.5 Applications will not be considered without the endorsement of the relevant District Councillor(s).
- 5.6 We will not accept hand-written applications.
- 5.7 The Panel will meet quarterly to review applications. It is expected Panel meetings will take place approximately 2-3 weeks after the closing date for applications being submitted for consideration.
- 5.8 Applicants will be informed (usually by email) within five working days of the meeting taking place whether or not the Panel has recommended their project or event to receive a grant..
- 5.9 South Kesteven District Council's Awarding Panel's decision is final and cannot be changed (no appeals or discussions will be entered into).
- 5.10 Successful applicants will receive grant payments in two stages, with 75% of the grant being paid prior to commencement of the project or event and 25% after completion.

6. Conditions of funding

- 6.1 Grants awarded must be spent on the purpose stated in the application. If, for any reason, your circumstances change or you wish to vary the way in which you spend your grant, you are required to contact the Community Engagement Team to request written permission to do so.
- 6.2 Groups will only be able to draw down awards from the SK Community Fund when confirmation of the success of any supporting grants from other funders is received and evidenced.
- 6.3 In the event of a group or organisation ceasing to operate or failing to undertake or complete the project or event for which the grant was offered, South Kesteven District Council reserves the right to withhold payment, to reduce an award or seek its recovery.
- 6.4 Your group or organisation must ensure that its project or event operates within the requirements of all legislation.
- 6.5 Your group or organisation should ensure equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination in the delivery of its project or event.
- 6.6 You are required to inform the Council when your project or event has been completed. A Project Completion Form must be completed and submitted by the applicant **within three months** of the project/event completion date (as stated in the application) in order to draw down the final 25% payment.
- 6.7 You will also need to provide relevant invoices and bank statements showing payments made. Groups or organisations that do not complete and return a satisfactory Project Completion Form and provide the required documentation within the agreed timetable will not be eligible to draw-down the final 25% of any grant awarded and may be required to return the funding paid to them

at the outset of the project. **Groups that do not fulfil this obligation will not be considered for future funding** (no appeals or discussions will be entered into).

- 6.8 Grants must be spent within a maximum of one year of an award being made (from the date on the grant offer letter). The Community Engagement Team must be informed of any slippage on the completion date stated within the application and terms agreed for any changes required to the project/event timeline to guarantee final payment of any grant.
- 6.9 Financial support provided by South Kesteven District Council should be acknowledged on all relevant printed publicity, on websites and in information given to the press. Relevant guidance will be provided to applicants at the time of a grant offer being made.

7. Application timetable

Applications will be assessed at regular intervals. Please refer to South Kesteven District Council's website for current timelines and dates. <http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk>

Contact the Community Engagement Team:

The Community Engagement Team
South Kesteven District Council
The Picture House
St Catherine's Road
Grantham
Lincolnshire
NG31 6TT

Tel: 01476 406080 (extn 6161)
Email: communityfund@southkesteven.gov.uk

The SK Community Fund is supported by LotterySK



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Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023/2024

WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TITLE	ISSUE	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE PRIORITY
11 October 2023, 2.00pm				
Police and Crime panel feedback	Verbal update from Councillor Sarah Trotter		Requested at the last Committee meeting	Healthy and Strong Communities
Disabled Facility Grants	To raise Members awareness of DFGs and outline function and eligibility Lead Officer: Ayeisha Kirkham (Public Protection Manager)	To consider the length of time the DFG process takes from enquiry to completion, concentrating on how this can be improved for the client efficiently and effectively.	Summary of activity relating to DFG's during quarters 1 to 3 of 2022/2023 reported to 21 February 2023 Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services OSC	Housing that meets the needs of all residents
Changing Places Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Chief Finance Officer & Deputy Chief Executive)			
Update report on Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Project	Lead Officer: Claire Saunders (Project Management Assistant)	To update Committee members on the Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ).	Agreed at agenda setting meeting	Growth and our Economy
Equality Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service, Interim Management - Community Engagement)	To share the Equalities Annual Position Statement for 2022/23 for comment prior to its publication. The publication of this	Brought to the Rural and Communities OSC annually to allow for comment from Members	High Performing Council

REPORT TITLE	ISSUE	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE PRIORITY
		document is a requirement under the Equality Act 2010.		
Prevent Update	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service, Interim Management - Community Engagement)	To provide an update regarding the Councils duties under Prevent		High performing Council
SK Community Fund Update	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service, Interim Management - Community Engagement)	To provide an update on the SK Community fund	Rural and Communities OSC received a verbal update on 5 July 2023	High performing Council Healthy and Strong Communities
14 December 2023, 2.00pm				
Mid-year KPIs	Lead Officer: Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)			
Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service, Interim Management - Community Engagement)	Annual report – Due December 2023	Last reported to Committee on 8 December 2022	High performing Council Healthy and Strong Communities
Community Engagement	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer	To comment on the Community Engagement	Rural and Communities OSC received a report on 16 March 2023 and	High performing Council

REPORT TITLE	ISSUE	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE PRIORITY
Strategy and Action Plan	Service, Interim Management - Community Engagement)	Strategy and associated action plan	agreed consultation was to take place and then the subsequent development of the strategy	Healthy and Strong Communities
Customer Service Update (Q2 and Q3)	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service, Interim Management - Community Engagement)	To provide an update with the Q2 and Q3 position regarding customer interactions and call handling. To provide an update regarding the review of the customer experience strategy and customer service action plan	Last reported to Committee on 5 July 2023	High performing Council
Update on the bespoke local action plan, specific to South Kesteven, as part of the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy	To consider a local Health and Wellbeing Action plan for SKDC Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director Culture and Leisure)	Following the adoption of the Lincolnshire districts' Health and Wellbeing Plan to consider a local action plan for South Kesteven and agree regular reporting on delivery	Last reported 9 February 2023	Healthy and Strong Communities
Statement on Grantham Hospital	Verbal update from Councillor Charmaine Morgan		Requested at a Committee meeting	

1 February 2024, 2.00pm

REPORT TITLE	ISSUE	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE PRIORITY
Community Drop-in Sessions	Lead Officer: Craig Spence (Acting Director of Housing)			
Cost of Living Team Update	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service, Interim Management - Community Engagement)	To review the impacts of cost of living and scrutinise the performance of the action plan	Last reported to Committee on 16 March 2023	High performing Council Healthy and Strong Communities
Safeguarding Annual Report	Lead Officer: Craig Spence (Acting Director of Housing)			
Change4Lincs Update	Lead Officer: Craig Spence (Acting Director of Housing)		Last reported 9 February 2023	
CCTV	Lead Officer: Alison Hall-Wright (Assistant Director of Finance)			
28 March 2024, 2.00pm				
Crime Disorder and Local Partnership working update			last reported on 16 March 2023	

Unscheduled Items

Report title	Issue	Originated	Corporate Priority
Car Parking			

The Committee's Remit

The remit of the Rural and Communities 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, but not limited to:

- Allotments
- Anti-social behaviour, community safety and local policing
- Benefit claims
- Community engagement & cohesion
- Community funding and volunteering
- Community right to bid
- Community well-being
- Customer services
- Disabled facilities grant
- Equality and diversity
- Parish and town council liaison
- Public conveniences
- Safeguarding and individual wellbeing
- Shop front designs and funding
- Street furniture

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