

Council



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Thursday, 18 July 2024 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's
Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Members: Councillor Paul Fellows, Chairman of the Council
Councillor Ian Selby, Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillor Matthew Bailey	Councillor Tim Harrison	Councillor Nick Robins
Councillor Emma Baker	Councillor Graham Jeal	Councillor Penny Robins
Councillor Rhys Baker	Councillor Gloria Johnson	Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Ashley Baxter	Councillor Anna Kelly	Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor David Bellamy	Councillor Jane Kingman	Councillor Rob Shorrocks
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing	Councillor Gareth Knight	Councillor Vanessa Smith
Councillor Pam Bosworth	Councillor Philip Knowles	Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Pam Byrd	Councillor Zoe Lane	Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Richard Cleaver	Councillor Robert Leadenham	Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Helen Crawford	Councillor Bridget Ley	Councillor Paul Stokes
Councillor Steven Cunnington	Councillor Nikki Manterfield	Councillor Elvis Stooke
Councillor James Denniston	Councillor Paul Martin	Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Councillor Phil Dilks	Councillor Penny Milnes	Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren	Councillor Virginia Moran	Councillor Murray Turner
Councillor Barry Dobson	Councillor Charmaine Morgan	Councillor Mark Whittington
Councillor Patsy Ellis	Councillor Chris Noon	Councillor Jane Wood
Councillor Phil Gadd	Councillor Habibur Rahman	Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor Ben Green	Councillor Rhea Rayside	Councillor Sue Woolley

Agenda

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

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☎ 01476 406080

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive

www.southkesteven.gov.uk

For those Councillors who wish to attend, prayers will be held at 1:55pm before the commencement of the meeting. Please be seated by 1:50pm.

1. Public Open Forum

The public open forum will commence at **2.00 p.m.** and the following formal business of the Council will commence at **2.30 p.m.** or whenever the public open forum ends, if earlier.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Disclosure of Interests

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

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2024

(Pages 7 - 26)

5. Communications (including Chairman's Announcements)

(To Follow)

6. Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report

This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by all Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2023/2024.

(Pages 27 - 46)

7. To amend Administration and Monitoring Fees set out in the adopted Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2012)

To agree the proposed amendments to the adopted Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document in relation to administration and monitoring fees for Section 106 (S106) planning obligations.

(Pages 47 - 54)

8. Community Governance Review for Little Ponton and Stroxton

To update the Council on the outcome of the consultation undertaken as part of the Community Governance Review for Little Ponton and Stroxton and consider the recommendations of the Community Governance Review Working Group.

(Pages 55 - 74)

9. Members' Open Questions

A 45-minute period in which members may ask questions of the Leader, Cabinet Members, the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and opposition group leaders excluding the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee, Licensing and Alcohol, Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment Licensing Committees and Governance and Audit Committee.

10. Notices of Motion

a) Councillor Vanessa Smith (voting system)

The UK's current voting system (known as First Past the Post, FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.

Currently in Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect the parliaments of more than 80 countries. These countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener.

PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect

the age, gender and protected characteristics of both local communities and of the nation.

MPs better reflecting the communities they represent in turn leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.

PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. Fair, proportional votes also prevent 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.

The current FPTP system leads to some of the electorate questioning the point of voting since they do not feel their views are represented. This contributes to apathy and subsequent low turnout in elections. Engaging with the electorate is vital for a functioning democracy.

PR is the national policy of the Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, Green Party, SNP, Plaid Cymru, Reform UK and Women's Equality Party along with a host of Trade Unions and pro-democracy organisations. 31 District, Borough, City and County Councils have already passed motions asking for Proportional Representation to be used in General Elections.

PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. So why not Westminster?

South Kesteven District Council therefore resolves to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws and to enable Proportional Representation to be used for UK general elections.

b) Councillor Vanessa Smith (divestment)

Motion to Divest Pension Funds from Fossil Fuels

SKDC notes that:

- that across the UK, local authority pension schemes invest over £16 billion into fossil fuel companies¹ - driving the climate crisis and risking workers' retirement pots in the process.*
- Lincolnshire County Council who manage SKDC pensions via the West Yorkshire Pension Fund invest £94.7m out of a total fund of £3.1bn in fossil fuel production, expansion and exploration. This places them just in the upper quartile as regards amount invested in fossil fuels.*
- SKDC has declared a climate emergency and that investing pension funds in fossil fuels is inconsistent with the council's climate ambition*
- the United Nations Paris Agreement commits our governments to keep the global temperature increase to under 2 degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, United Nations and the International Energy Agency show that preventing two degrees of warming relies on not burning the vast majority of all proven*

fossil fuels reserves.

- former bank of England governor, Mark Carney, has warned that fossil fuel investments risk becoming “enormous, stranded assets”, i.e. worthless, unsellable shareholdings². Pension funds have a

fiduciary duty to consider the material risks of continued investment in fossil fuels. Fiduciary duty is defined by the Law

Commission as “ensuring the pensions can be paid, ensuring that this is undertaken at the best possible value”. The long-term sustainability of the SKDC should not be put at risk by investing in companies which are in terminal decline resulting in ‘stranded assets’. Nor should the Pension Fund fail to take responsibility for the credibility and financial support it currently provides to fossil fuel companies by continuing to invest in them even as they open up new fossil fuel reserves which the world can no longer afford to burn.

- the UN International Energy Agency (IEA) has called on financial bodies to stop investing in fossil fuel production³ and predicts that global oil demand will significantly fall by 2030. Expected action by governments to limit carbon emissions will ultimately leave fossil fuel reserves unsellable.

- pension funds have a legal duty to treat members “fairly as between them”. That means taking seriously the longer-term interests of younger members who will be most affected by the climate crisis.

- the current generation owes it to future generations to ensure we do not exceed the internationally agreed temperature increase threshold of 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial global heating levels, by removing support for the continued production of new fossil fuels. Climate change is the greatest challenge humanity has encountered. Warming in excess of 2°C will have catastrophic consequences. In order to have a chance of staying below this maximum upper limit of warming 80% of known fossil fuel reserves must not be burnt.

- public divestment from fossil fuel producers supports the introduction of effective climate legislation that would ensure the world achieves the level of carbon reduction required to avoid catastrophic climate breakdown.

The Council therefore commits to

1. Call on Lincolnshire County Council Pension Scheme to urgently put in place and act on:

a) A public commitment to immediately freeze any new investment in the top 200 publicly-traded fossil fuel companies with largest known carbon reserves (oil, coal and gas)

b) Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds in the top 200 list and shift these funds to lower risk, ethical investments within 5 years

c) Advocate to other pension funds, including members of the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum and Local Government Pension Scheme to do the same

d) To do the above in a timely manner - by setting up a working group to report back on a strategy to bring about divestment within three months

2. To put in place a transparent process by which they will carry out this divestment.

3. Work with other local District and County

Councils and councillors in Lincolnshire and other relevant employers in the pension scheme, to call on our shared Pension Fund to urgently and publicly end their investment in fossil fuel producing companies.

Sources:

1. <https://divest.platformlondon.org>.

2. <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/10/21/climate-stranded-assets-show-the-need-for-rapid-energy-transition-carney-says.html>

3. <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/05/18/stop-investing-in-fossil-fuels-to-meet-net-zero-target>

c) Councillor Sue Woolley

This Council restates and reaffirms its profound concerns regarding the unsustainable proliferation of solar farm developments in South Kesteven.

South Kesteven District Council hereby resolves to:

1. *Acknowledge the adverse impact of clustering solar farm developments around substations, leading to catastrophic consequences for the landscape, biodiversity and local amenities. Solar farms classed as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), numbering 15 in the Greater Lincolnshire area alone, will contribute to the industrialisation and transformation of open countryside, negatively affecting current and potential residents alike.*

2. *Affirm that land classified as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) should not repurposed for the development of solar farms. Considering the limited efficiency of solar energy (10-12%), due to the UK's limited sunlight, the Council regards it as a poor investment compromising food security and escalating food imports and costs, resulting in questionable net carbon savings.*

3. *Promote superior alternatives to solar development on farmland, endorsing the principles set out by the Solar Campaign Alliance. The Council supports the smarter deployment of solar on domestic and industrial buildings and recommend this be added to the local plan.*

4. *Express concern about international labour practices, union rights and use of forced labour, as well as the adverse environmental impact in the supply chain of solar panels, particularly in NSIP developments.*

This motion underscores our steadfast commitment to safeguarding food supply, preserving the landscape, our heritage and environment, while advocating for responsible and sustainable development within South Kesteven, aligning with our shared goal

of achieving net zero carbon reduction targets.

In support of Lincolnshire County Council and North Kesteven District Council, this council resolves to send a copy of this motion to the Minister of Energy Security and Net Zero.

d) Councillor Murray Turner

Free School meals for Primary School children in South Kesteven

It has been proven that well fed children eating nutritious meals achieve a higher standard of educational results. Children growing up in the District of South Kesteven could expect to be more competitive in a nationwide economy having been given a better start in life through the introduction of the simple and effective policy of free school meals.

During the current financial crisis local parents would benefit from not having to fund school meals for their children. This Council notes the approximate £2,000,000 budget underspend by Lincolnshire County Council in the last financial year.

South Kesteven District Council therefore resolves to:

Write to Lincolnshire County Council to ask them to review their policy and funding for free school meals and request that the free school meals scheme be extended to all primary school age children within the South Kesteven District Council area.

11. Close of meeting