

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Thursday, 27 June 2024 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Councillor Bridget Ley (Chairman)

Members: Councillor Gareth Knight (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ben Green, Councillor Tim Harrison, Councillor Gloria Johnson,
Councillor Max Sawyer, Councillor Lee Steptoe, Councillor Murray Turner and
Councillor Mark Whittington

Agenda

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

1. Public Speaking

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

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Disclosure of Interests

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

4. Minutes from the previous meeting

To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 8 May 2024.

(Pages 3 - 15)

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01476 406080

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

5. **Updates from previous meeting** (Page 17)
Held on 8 May 2024.

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

7. **Council Tax Support Scheme - Veterans** (To Follow)
An update on the proposed Council Tax Support for Veterans.

8. **Corporate Plan 2020-23 Key Performance Indicators End-of-Plan and 2023/24 End-Year (Q4) Report** (Pages 19 - 49)
This report outlines South Kesteven District Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2020-23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from January-March 2024, and presents a summary of overall performance over the lifecycle of the Corporate Plan 2020-23.

9. **Progress Update in respect of the construction of the Waste Depot, Turnpike Close Grantham** (Pages 51 - 55)
This report provides a progress update on the new Waste Depot project.

10. **Progress update on the Economic Development Strategy for South Kesteven 2024 - 2028** (Pages 57 - 61)
To inform members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) on progress made toward the development of an Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.

11. **Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Completion Report** (Pages 63 - 111)
This report provides a final update on the completion of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, which came to an end on 31st March 2024. The programme was aimed at helping unlock the heritage potential of the town and assist in economic recovery within Grantham Town Centre.

12. **Grantham Future High Streets Fund: Market Place Footfall Activity** (To Follow)
To discuss activities to support footfall in the vicinity of the Grantham Market Place works and wider town centre for the duration of the Future High Street Fund programme, and the policy of deployment for additional funding as agreed at the Council Annual General Meeting on 23rd May 2024

13. **Work Programme** (Pages 113 - 115)

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

Minutes

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Wednesday, 8 May 2024, 2.00 pm

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

Committee Members present

Councillor Bridget Ley (Chairman)
Councillor Ben Green
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Robert Leadenhamb
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Murray Turner
Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Mark Whittington

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Ashley Baxter (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Phil Dilks (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning)
Councillor Phillip Knowles (Cabinet Member for Governance and Licensing)
Councillor Rhea Rayside (Cabinet Member for People and Communities)
Councillor Paul Stokes (Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture)

Other Members present

Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing

Officers

Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer)
Graham Watts (Assistant Director for Governance and Public Protection, Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Emma Whittaker (Assistant Director for Planning)
Jeremy Barlow (Building Control Manager)
Gyles Teasdale (Head of Property Services and ICT)
Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)
Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)
Megan White (Project Support Officer)
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for 15 minutes

83. Public Speaking

There were none.

84. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lee Steptoe, Gloria Johnson and Nick Robins.

Councillor Virginia Moran substituted for Councillor Lee Steptoe.

Councillor Mark Whittington substituted for Councillor Gloria Johnson.

Councillor Graham Jeal substituted for Councillor Nick Robins.

85. Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

86. Minutes from previous meetings

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** that the minutes stated below were a true and accurate record:

15 January 2024 (Extraordinary – restricted)
20 February 2024

87. Updates from previous meeting

All actions were completed.

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

The Leader of the Council confirmed that the feasibility review on the Council Tax Scheme for Veterans had been delayed due to staff absence. The review would be brought to a forthcoming meeting of this Committee in the future.

It was highlighted that the Economic Development Strategy consultation was live, and all feedback was welcomed.

89. Maintenance Strategy (Corporate Property Assets)

The Leader of the Council presented the report which outlined a new strategy for corporate assets.

The absence of a maintenance strategy for corporate assets and a lack of investment in the past had meant that some of the Council owned buildings (car parks, leisure centres) were in a bad state of repair.

A condition survey of all corporate assets was being undertaken to enable a current position and baseline to be established.

The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Committee that the 2024-25 budget included £1m to support investment into the Council's assets. The condition survey and the framework set out in the Maintenance Strategy would drive forward how the Council prioritise repairs of assets.

The strategy would also provide a framework in order to target the finite resource in the best way against the Corporate Plan and service delivery.

It was noted that leisure assets were one of the most prominent asset bases where significant investment was required. These assets were heavily used by the public and any service interruption would cause a detrimental impact on the service offers.

The Maintenance Strategy linked to the Asset Management Strategy and the Disposal Strategy and all three strategy needed to complement each other.

Members may be requested to consider similar requests for funding in future budget years.

The Head of Property and ICT confirmed that the Council had invested in a new asset management system for the Corporate Property Team which would keep a record of the condition surveys and enable the Council to forecast accurate budgets going forward.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning confirmed that Lincolnshire County Council Executive, had approved funding of £850,000 for Deepings Leisure Centre. This figure would be given to Deepings Community Interest Group to assist with costs of refurbishment and operating the Deepings Leisure Centre building, subject to certain caveats.

One Member noted that some of the Council's assets included leasehold properties. It was queried whether the Council would maintain the leasehold properties in the future or would consider the disposal of the leasehold assets and rebuild elsewhere.

As a leaseholder, the Council had an obligation to keep certain buildings in a state of repair. Each lease agreement would be specific around the maintenance responsibilities of the Council.

(Councillor Max Sawyer joined the meeting at 14:25)

One Member queried whether there was any financial information available on the Cecil Family Trust.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that he would have a discussion with the Member on Cecil Family Trust, following the meeting.

It was suggested that the document be made clearer that it related to freehold assets only.

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that the appendices provided a fairer representation of the asset base through the General Fund. The HRA had its own maintenance responsibilities, therefore, the maintenance strategy only related to any corporate property estate. Within those leasehold classifications, there were significant sums of money that were needed from the Council to prevent dilapidation issues arising when a lease was over.

It was queried whether Lincolnshire County Council had responsibility of Grantham library.

One Member suggested that some Grantham assets could be handed over to the newly established Grantham Town Council. Concern was raised that backlog of maintenance may complicate the process of handing over the assets.

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that asset transfers had to be mutually agreed between the two parties involved. It was expected that any potential purchases would have their own condition survey and be fully sighted on the obligations they were taking on and be reflected in any financial transaction that takes place.

The Head of Property Services and ICT highlighted that historically, the Council had entered into a lease with the Issac Newton Centre owners and had sub-let Grantham library to Lincolnshire County Council. The Council were in the process of removing this clause enabling the Issac Newton Centre owners and Lincolnshire County Council to implement a lease directly between themselves.

Clarification was sought around the type of lease agreement Lincolnshire County Council had with Bourne Leisure Centre.

The lease agreement for Bourne Leisure Centre was a 99 year lease, signed in 1990. It was nominal rent, however, the lease included a full repair and insurance arrangement.

It was queried as to which out of the 10 leasehold properties listed, were non-repairing or repairing.

ACTION: For Members to receive clarification on which leases were non-repairing and repairing out of the 10 leasehold properties listed.

The report would be put forward for Cabinet approval at the earliest opportunity.

It was queried whether leasehold property owners carried out yearly or 5-yearly inspections.

Inspections were to the obligation of the owner of the building, not the Council. The Council had an obligation to keep assets in good repair.

That the Committee:

Recommend that the Maintenance Strategy be presented to Cabinet for approval at the earliest opportunity.

90. Update report in respect of the construction of the Waste Depot, Turnpike Close Grantham

The Leader of the Council presented the report.

Following budget approval, planning permission approval and the conclusion of a procurement process, the report set out the next steps required to enable the project to reach construction and delivery phase.

As the bid currently exceeded the budget allocation, successful bidders were asked to review their costings, source alternative third-party suppliers and revisit their proposals in order for the price to be reduced.

Subject to the completion of the value engineering process, it was expected that the contractor would begin mobilisation during October 2024.

One Member queried whether details of the outcome of the value engineering be brought back to the Committee in the future.

It was confirmed that the Cabinet delegated approval to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement to develop the submitted design.

Following the conclusion of the value engineering, delegation would be granted to enter into the construction contract. A further progress report would be brought back to the Committee in June 2024.

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that an overview of the value engineering process would be brought back to the Committee, alongside a project dashboard would be brought to the Committee to provide an oversight of the key milestones, risks, unforeseen events etc.

One Member queried the figure of the costs that the Council would not exceed. A further breakdown of the estimation of costs was requested in relation to each part of the depot (office accommodation, surfacing etc).

The Deputy Chief Executive noted that the Council had set a budget on the project of £8.8m, which included the construction, project management and external consultants.

It was queried as to what the progress report in June 2024 would include and what milestones would have been met.

One Member noted that a project management software could be utilised for this project and whether this would be in place.

A project board for this project had been created, which consisted of consultants, key members of staff and Cabinet representation.

The Deputy Chief Executive provided the Committee with reassurance that weekly and monthly meetings were held for this project. An external project management support company had been appointed to support the project.

One Member queried that if the Council had not reduced the contingency fund by 9.8%, would the Council have had the money in place, if value engineering had not taken place.

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that the contingency fund had not been reduced. The contingency fund was debated on whether the cost put forward by consultants was fit for purpose.

Concern was raised that the value engineering process had been delayed and whether further milestones would not be met on time as a result of this.

It was confirmed that the Council was not over budget, as no contracts had been signed as of yet. Some milestones were running in parallel, meaning no delays had been incurred at this stage. Certain milestones were out of the Council's control and were of the responsibility of third-party consultants and contractors.

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the progress made and the next steps on the delivery of the new Depot at Turnpike Close Grantham.**
- 2. Requests that regular reports on the construction of the new Waste depot Turnpike Close Grantham are presented at each meeting.**

91. St Martin's Park Re-development Project, Stamford

The Leader of the Council presented the report that provided the Committee with an update on the re-development project at St Martin's Park, Stamford.

The Council had made a request to the Government for a Brownfield Land Release Fund application for a sum of £2.8m.

A report would be brought to a future Full Council meeting to ask for delegated authority to accept the funding, if made available.

It was queried as to how critical the possible funding could be to the Council and what level of risk this may have if the funding was not awarded.

The Leader of the Council clarified that the development may still go ahead in the future, regardless of whether the Council receives revenue for the entire project or not.

The Deputy Chief Executive reminded the Committee that at a recent Full Council meeting, the application for the Brownfield Land Release Fund application was one of the mitigations to offset the overall projected deficit on the project.

Concerns were raised on the monthly electricity standing charge and around the disconnection and reconnection of the site. It was queried what the disconnection and reconnection costs would be.

If the site was disconnected from the grid by the Council, a risk of another site utilising the capacity could occur meaning when the developers asked for reconnection that there was not enough capacity and costs higher. It was noted that building a sub-station was very high in cost. The exact cost of a disconnection/reconnection were unknown.

The Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance confirmed that the Council were retaining the Cummins side of the site which would generate enough electricity for half of the future development. If this was disconnected, the site would be classed as unserviced and costs to the Council could be higher at the point of selling the site.

It was confirmed that all options previously discussed were still relevant, however, some of the Council's assets that could be sold, hadn't yet been sold. The report outlined updated on the points that Full Council had agreed to consider.

It was clarified that all legal issues outlined within the report had been resolved.

One Member questioned whether the site contamination had been resolved and if the contractors were fulfilling their contract.

The Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance highlighted that two of the three stockpiles were in the process of being removed as they were certified clean. Legal discussions were taking place with the contractor around the other stockpile that was not certified and needed to be removed, as part of their contract.

It was further queried whether there were any penalties as part of the contract, if the works were not carried out.

If the works were not carried out, the Council would have to take a form of adjudication route with external parties.

One Member queried when the forecast start date of works would begin to take place on the development.

It was noted that before development can commence, reserved matters applications would need to be considered by the Local Planning Authority.

A condition of the sale of the site was the removal of all three stock piles, power lines diversions and gas pipe removal.

One Member queried whether a possible buyer of the site had been found to purchase it.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that the site was split into two halves (half owned by Burghley and half owned by the Council). The Council had received interest from potential buyers of the land, which would be subject to conditions being met.

Members requested the worst- and best-case scenarios for the project, in terms of profits or loss.

All financial information had previously been considered by Full Council on the 29 February 2024.

It was queried whether the employment land was still within the development.

It was confirmed that the outline consented scheme was for employment land, retirement village and residential homes.

That the Committee:

Notes the progress made regarding the delivery of the St Martin's Park re-development project in Stamford.

92. Update on Financial Position of East Midlands Building Consultancy

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning provided an update report on the East Midlands Building Consultancy, which was a partnership between the Council, Newark and Sherwood District Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Building Control was a statutory service which aimed to ensure the safety of buildings and the individuals who use them and sets standards for construction and refurbishment works in England.

The workload split between fee earning and non-fee earning activity was approximately 74/26 and was typical of a local authority building control service.

The non-fee earning work was a cost that must be borne by the Council and is charged to the general fund.

Whilst fee earning work was paid for by the customer, the Council was still required to have regard to the overriding objective of ensuring that as far as possible, charges are set at a level which equate to the cost of providing the service. This means the Council was not permitted to make a profit from the charges and cannot subsidise the statutory services from fee income.

East Midlands Building Consultancy competed with approved inspectors for fee earning work and currently wins an average of half of the market share. The economic climate had resulted in few applications and consequently the income was below the predicted budget. This was offset by vacancies within the team.

Members queried the understanding of success and how successful the income was.

The Assistant Director of Planning clarified that the partnership was set up in 2014 and was a stable and positive working relationship. Over the years, costs would have been reduced to each Local Authority in terms of the General Fund contributions. The previous year had been challenging in construction sectors, which impacted levels of applications across planning and building control.

The market share had remained fairly stable, which had affected approved inspectors. This had a negative impact on the predicted budget, however, it has been offset by salary savings and the Council having a number of vacancies and recruiting gradually, to control workload and staffing levels.

A surplus was being carried across the partnership via 'bumper' income in previous years. EMBC were not meant to make profit on the trading account and have a 3-5 year rolling average of no-profit.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the Committee:

1. Notes the update regarding East Midlands Building Consultancy (EMBC) and agrees to receive an update in 12 months.

93. Grantham Future High Streets Fund - May 2024 Update

The Leader of the Council presented the report. A brief overview was provided on each of the five subsets:

- Subset One: Public Realm Projects (Market Place and Station Approach)
- Subset Two: Conduit Lane Toilet Refurbishment
- Subset Three: Upper Floor Grants Programme
- Subset Four: Grantham Town Team
- Subset Five: A summary of engagement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Concerns were raised around opposition to the marketplace development in Grantham.

The Council had robust conversations with Lincolnshire County Council. It was noted that the Highways Cabinet Member for Lincolnshire County Council was also opposed to the scheme.

The options considered by the Council were either to pursue the scheme, which was agreed in 2019 and consulted on in 2020 or hand back £1.5m to the Government.

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the report.**
- 2. Offers feedback to the Future High Street Fund Programme Board.**

94. Update on the development of the Economic Development Strategy 2024 - 2028

The Leader of the Council presented the report.

At the Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 November 2022, the Committee considered and provided feedback on the first draft framework of the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy (2023-2028).

Since that meeting, the draft Strategy had significantly evolved taking into account the newly adopted Corporate Plan. It was scheduled to be reported to this committee on 20 February 2024, however it was withdrawn allowing time for the newly appointed Head of Economic Development to reflect upon the document and to conduct a stakeholder consultation exercise.

At the 20 February FEOSC Committee meeting, Members debated a 'Flightpath', which detailed key milestones for the Strategy's completion and eventual approval by Cabinet in summer 2024. This document was circulated to committee members following the meeting.

The 'Flightpath' included the Leader's proposal to host a Members Workshop to broaden participation and to encourage consensus around the strategy. This meeting took place on 21 March 2024, following an invitation to all FEOSC Members.

Following this meeting Officers produced an updated draft Economic Development Strategy and accompanying Action Plan (Appendix A). Cabinet, at its meeting on 16 April 2024 approved a four-week consultation with Stakeholders on the draft Strategy.

Indicative key milestones were provided.

One Member outlined key themes identified within the strategy. Emphasis was given on the economic goals in regard to the Council's Corporate Plan.

It was noted that other bodies had their own economic strategy and development plans. It was queried how the Council's strategy would align with other strategies and what level of crossover or duplication there would be. It was suggested that the collaboration of one strategy for several authorities may produce more leverage.

The appendices to the report included a review of the strategic context where many of the regional, national and local had been reviewed and summarised. This has been taken into account and construction of the strategy document. The Council met with partners on a regular basis with Members of different partnerships across the region.

Part of the consultation exercise was to consult with stakeholders to inform the document in its next stages.

It was suggested that high attention be given to employment levels in Lincolnshire and local companies.

It was noted that the five-year plan had become a four-year plan. Members were pleased to see Devolution included within the strategy.

Members made observations of the information and wording included within the strategy in relation to St Martins Park and Stamford North development.

It was queried when details would be produced on how aspirations would be achieved within the strategy.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that outline approval for St Martins Park was granted in 2020. Stamford North was yet to receive outline planning permission.

Members were urged to respond to the strategy consultation or liaise with the relevant Officer, if they had any concerns.

The Head of Economic Development confirmed that the report included several areas of focus which was reflected within the Corporate Plan. Each member of the team would be allocated a different task which would be worked upon and delivered over the four-year timeframe.

One Member queried the ongoing timescale.

It was clarified that the timescale stated within the report related to 1-3 years.

Members welcomed the document. Further detailed information was requested to be included on aspirations, smart deliverables and Grantham Market.

A query was made on how the document would be publicised.

Member requested that corporate words be made clearer for easy-reading for members of the public.

It was highlighted that the aspiration for economic growth be included within the document.

The Leader of the Council emphasised that a Member workshop had taken place on feedback on the strategy.

It was confirmed that press releases, promotion on social media channels, promotion to business clubs in each town and people interested in the general economy.

One Member raised typographical/grammatical errors of the document. It was suggested that an amended copy of the document be published and provided on the consultation as soon as possible.

The Head of Economic Development confirmed that the document had been amended as a result of the Member workshop and had been approved by Officers and signed off by the relevant Cabinet Member.

One Member queried whether the consultation could be paused whilst the relevant amendments be made.

The strategy had previously been discussed at the previous meeting of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Following this, a Member workshop had taken place.

The Leader of the Council welcomed any input from members of the public, whether it be grammatical or the content of the strategy.

Assurance was provided to the Committee that proof-reading and corrections would be completed as a matter of urgency. Checks would be undertaken with the software provider in terms of how the consultation documents could be updated.

That the Committee:

Notes the content of this report on the development of the Economic Development Strategy.

95. Work Programme 2024 - 2025

The Committee noted the Work Programme 2024-25.

A query was raised on the unscheduled items on the Work Programme.

Suggestions had been made on the items on which Committee meeting they may be heard at, however, they had not yet been confirmed.

It was requested that the End of year KPI'S be moved to the June 2024 meeting of Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

96. Any other business, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstance decides is urgent

There were none.

97. Close of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 16:28.

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ACTION SHEET

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

To provide members with an update on actions agreed at the meeting held on 8 May 2024.

Min No	Agenda Item	Action	Assigned to	Comment/Status	Deadline
89	Maintenance strategy (corporate property assets)	For Members to receive clarification on which leases were non-repairing and repairing out of the 10 leasehold properties listed.	Head of Property and ICT	The report is scheduled to be heard at Cabinet in September; this clarity will be included as part of the Cabinet report.	COMPLETED

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SOUTH
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COUNCIL



Finance & Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 27 June 2024

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

Corporate Plan 2020-23 Key Performance Indicators End-of-Plan and 2023/24 End-Year (Q4) Report

Report Author

Charles James, Policy Officer

Charles.james@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report outlines South Kesteven District Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2020-23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from January-March 2024, and presents a summary of overall performance over the lifecycle of the Corporate Plan 2020-23.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Review and scrutinise the performance against the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators in relation to the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2020-23 priorities and outcomes.**
2. **Use this report to inform and support the ongoing work programme of the Committee.**

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Effective Council, Enabling Economic Opportunity, Connecting Communities
Which wards are impacted?	All

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Completed by: Paul Sutton Interim Head of Finance (Deputy 151)

Legal and Governance

1.2 Regular reporting on agreed actions and measures is to be welcomed from a governance point of view, as it provides a transparent mechanism for reporting on performance. The report highlights that a new KPI suite has been adopted and this will be reflected in future reports.

Completed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive

2. Background to the Report

2.1 The South Kesteven Corporate Plan 2020-2023 was approved by Council on the 1st of October 2020. It was agreed by Council that actions, key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets would be developed by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee, which would retain oversight of the performance management arrangements at a strategic level. These actions and indicators were then presented to the Finance, Economic Development & Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and agreed on the 23 February 2021.

- 2.2 Regular mid-year (Q2) and end-of-year (Q4) KPI reports were presented to the responsible Committee for scrutiny over the previous four years.
- 2.3 The last prior was the Mid-Year report for 2023/24, which was presented to the Committee on 28 November 2023 and outlined the performance against the Corporate Plan 2020-23 for Quarter 2 2023/24.
- 2.4 2023/24 was the final year of reporting on the Corporate Plan 2020-23 KPI suite. The Corporate Plan 2024-27 was adopted by Council in January 2024.
- 2.5 This report is the last on the Corporate Plan 2020-23, providing an update on performance for the 2023/24 financial year, and a summary overview of the Council's performance over the period 2020/21 to 2023/24.

Corporate Plan 2020-23 End-of-Plan Action Review

- 2.6 The Corporate Plan 2020-23 listed twenty-two actions across the priorities Healthy & Strong Communities, Growth & Our Economy, and High Performing Council, which fell within the remit of this Committee. These actions set the Council's agenda for the life of that Plan.
- 2.7 The first round of performance reporting in 2020/21 introduced a series of criteria for what successful delivery would look like. This criterion has been used as the standard to judge the Council's overall performance against the stated actions.
- 2.8 It should be recognised that the Council is not a static organisation. Over the course of the Plan's lifecycle there were significant changes to the senior political and officer leadership. There also were challenging external conditions, from the pandemic – the longer-term impacts and legacy of which were not clear at the start of the Plan, the onset of the Ukraine conflict in February 2022 and cost of living crisis. Each development will have influenced the Council's priorities and resource allocations.
- 2.9 Furthermore, the stated actions had varying levels of Council control. Most were wholly within the Council's control e.g. undertaking a review of the Constitution and implementing the resultant action plan. Others were substantially outside the Council's control with outside actors involved in partnership with the Council e.g. the establishment of a university centre in Grantham with the University of Lincoln. Finally, some actions were significantly outside the Council's control e.g. supporting the rollout improved broadband and other key infrastructure projects.
- 2.10 For these reasons, the Council's stated success conditions with the context of degree of control, rather than the individual metrics which evolved over the reporting cycle, are preferred as the simplest and most direct form of accountability.
- 2.11 Of the twenty-two stated actions:
 - Seventeen were wholly within the Council's control and successfully achieved.
 - One was wholly within the Council's control and was not successfully achieved.

- Two were substantially outside the Council's control and were not successfully achieved.
- Two were significantly outside the Council's control. One was successfully achieved, and One was not.

2.12 A summary is set in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Summary Review of Corporate Plan 2020-23 Finance & Economic Actions

Action	Success Criteria	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status
Invest in sustainable, high quality leisure facilities across the district	Agreement of a programme of new-build and refurbished leisure centres meeting the needs of the district.	Within SKDC control	Unachieved
Delivery of the St Martins Park development scheme in Stamford.	Secure the redevelopment of the Cummins site to develop new employment opportunities and much needed for homes for Stamford in a high-quality setting.	Substantially outside (partnership with the Burghley House Preservation Trust)	Unachieved
Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).	Delivery of approved HAZ scheme in partnership with Historic England; secure Future High Streets Funding	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Identify funding & other opportunities to support the development of the town centres of Bourne, The Deepings and Stamford, and apply lessons learnt from the Future High Street Fund & other initiatives.	Historic and Regeneration funding secured for locally supported, targeted, schemes in The Deepings, Bourne and Stamford.	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.	One Team approach across the Council, InvestSK and other public and private sector agencies to provide South Kesteven's businesses with accessible and relevant support.	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Review the scope and focus of InvestSK to maximise the support to local businesses and attract inward investment.	Restructure of InvestSK to focus on economic support. Revised business plan	Within SKDC control	Achieved

Action	Success Criteria	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status
Continue to attract investment and encourage diverse businesses to the District and ensure appropriate land and property is available	New businesses attracted to the district utilising existing building stock and bringing allocated employment land to market	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Work with the education providers to increase opportunities for local learning and apprenticeships in the District.	Opening of University Centre in Grantham with strong through-put of learners. Supporting an increase in new learners and apprenticeships in the Council and across the district.	Substantially outside control	Not Achieved
In partnership with LCC bring forward housing and employment opportunities linked to the delivery of the Grantham Southern Relief Road.	Opening of Grantham Southern Relief Road and considered and comprehensive development of residential and commercial opportunities unlocked by the relief road.	Significantly outside control	Not Achieved
Support the roll out of improved broadband and other key infrastructure to support local businesses and rural areas.	Increased broadband coverage across the district	Significantly outside control	Achieved
Implement the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.	Agree Covid recovery plan once 'response' phase is finished	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.	Development of a medium term balanced financial plan	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Undertake a Constitution review and implement outcomes.	Constitution fully reviewed and adopted by Council	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Implement the findings of the Governance review across the Councils assets (including companies).	Governance Review action plan and milestones in place and complete	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Develop a People Strategy (including a pay review) to support the retention and attraction of high quality staff.	To have adopted a People Strategy, with an agreed action plan, SMART targets and progress being made against them..	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Develop and implement commercial and transformation strategies to deliver additional net revenue benefit.	Agreed strategies and action plans for Commercial and Transformation activities, delivering a net revenue benefit.	Within SKDC control	Achieved

Action	Success Criteria	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status
Undertake a fundamental review of the organisation to meet current and future needs.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Support the implementation of an IT investment roadmap to align future solutions with the Councils ambitions.	Agreed roadmap in place, outlining the process for achieving modern, sustainable and reliable IT provision.	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Embed an agile approach to working by building on the cultural and technological changes.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Maximise the value of the Councils own spend by using local suppliers wherever practical.	Procurement activity incorporating the Council's approved contract procedure rules requirement of utilising local supply chains where possible	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Undertake an Asset Management Review.	Review of all the Council's non-HRA assets in order to assist on a considered programme of disposal, investment & acquisition	Within SKDC control	Achieved
Ensure that support packages are in place for ensuring the welfare of the districts most vulnerable residents and to enable small businesses to flourish in the district	SKDC taking proactive action to support our most vulnerable residents.	Within SKDC control	Achieved

2.13 Appendix A presents a review of the Council's performance against the actions within the remit of this Committee for the Corporate Plan 2020-23.

End-of-Year 2023/24 Update

2.14 Appendix B presents the overall performance against the eleven actions being presented for Q4 2023/24, as well as specific performance against the sub measures contained within those. Specific commentary is provided for each action, which is summarised as follows:

- Nine of the actions are rated Green. These are actions which are on, or above target as planned.
- Two of the actions are rated Amber. This is an action which is currently below the planned target.
- Zero actions are rated Red. This is an action, which is currently significantly below the planned target.

- Eleven actions of the original twenty-two are no longer reported.

Future Reporting

- 2.15 To accompany the Corporate Plan 2024-27, a new suite of KPIs was developed to reflect the priorities, ambitions, and actions of the new Plan. All the new measures are wholly within the Council's control.
- 2.16 The new KPI suite with proposed targets for 2024-27 was presented to, considered, and approved by the Committee on 20 February 2024.
- 2.17 The new KPI suite is included for the Committee's reference, incorporating the alterations and recommendations stipulated by the Committee in the March session.
- 2.18 The Committee will receive the first report on the new KPIs (mid-year 2024/25) in Quarter 3 2024/25.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 This is the last presentation of the KPIs for the Corporate Plan 2020-23. A general overview of the Council's performance displays that SKDC achieved eighteen of the twenty-two actions reported to this Committee.
- 3.2 This is also a presentation of the end year (Q4) data for 2023/24.
- 3.3 There is commentary for each of the KPIs with an appropriate update from each area.
- 3.4 The Corporate Plan 2024-27 was adopted in January 2024. A new KPI suite to reflect the new Corporate Plan was approved by Committee in February 2024. The first report using the new KPIs will be presented in Quarter 3 2024/25.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

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

5. Appendices

- 5.1 Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2020-23: Finance & Economic OSC – End of Plan Action Review
- 5.2 Appendix B - KPI Report: Finance & Economic OSC End-of-Year (Q4) 2023/24
- 5.3 Appendix C - Approved KPI Suite 2024-27

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Corporate Plan 2020-23: Finance & Economic OSC – End of Plan Action Review								
Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Priority	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Action	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Success Criteria	KPI	Target	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status	Summary Commentary
Healthy & Strong Communities	Finance & Economic	Invest in sustainable, high quality leisure facilities across the district	Agreement of a programme of new-build and refurbished leisure centres meeting the needs of the district.	Decision on Leisure Programme.	Assess the leisure facilities within the district and identify programme of improvement	Within SKDC control	Not Achieved	<p>The Council's leisure contract came to an end in December 2020. Due to the impact of Covid and resulting leisure market shrinkage the Council established a Teckal company, LeisureSK Ltd, to manage its leisure facilities on a five year contract. Full building condition surveys were carried out across all the Leisure Centres and Sports Stadium between March 2022 and May 2022. Works are being undertaken to deliver actions identified in the condition surveys.</p> <p>The leisure sector has experienced significant challenges due to the escalation in the cost of utilities. In November 2023, the Council successfully bid for £344,659 from Swimming Pool Support Fund Phase 1 administered by Sport England. This funding was used to offset the increased cost of utilities and pool chemicals during the current financial year (2023/24). In March 2024, the Council received a further £445,725 from the Swimming Pool Support Fund Phase 2. The money will be spent on pool covers and installing solar panels to the Grantham Meres. Pool covers have been installed in Bourne and Stamford, funded by the Council's climate change reserve. In May 2024 the Council was successful in securing a grant of £3,587,500 from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3, administered by SALIX for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. The Grantham Meres Leisure Centre has the highest energy consumption. Therefore, the focus of the bid is on complete removal of the existing series of gas boilers and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) units, and installation of a new Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) system with supporting design, infrastructure and project management.</p>
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Delivery of the St Martins Park development scheme in Stamford.	Secure the redevelopment of the Cummins site to develop new employment opportunities and much needed for homes for Stamford in a high-quality setting.	Outline Planning Consent granted S106 Agreements in place Budget Approval for demolition costs approved Demolition complete Sale contracts exchanged and completed	Q3 2021/22 Q4 2021/22 Q3 2021/22 Q2 2022/23 End of 2022/23	Substantially outside (partnership with the Burghley House Preservation Trust)	Not Achieved	<p>The Council acquired in March 2019 land and buildings of the former 'Cummins' factory site on Barnack Rd, Stamford. The Council acquired the site for growth and regeneration benefits for the District. Land adjacent to the site is owned by the Burghley House Preservation Trust (BHPT). The Council and BHPT agreed a collaboration agreement for the redevelopment of the St Martin's Park site in 2020.</p> <p>The Council has received the best and final bids from the potential developers in November 2023. An independent options appraisal was undertaken by Cushman & Wakefield. The appraisal recommendations were presented to Finance & Economic OSC on 15 January 2024. A way forward for the site was agreed by an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council on 8 February 2024.</p>
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).	Delivery of approved HAZ scheme in partnership with Historic England; secure Future High Streets Funding	HAZ: amount of public sector grant spent HAZ: amount of private sector investment leveraged HAZ: number of 'key' buildings improved HAZ: number of buildings improved FHSF secured from the Department for Levelling up, Housing & Communities FHSF: amount of FHSF co-funding secured	£372,000 £45,000 2 'Key building projects' 5 'Shopfront' Grant projects £1.16m £929,000 (2023/24)	Within SKDC control	Achieved	<p>The High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSAZ) is a national scheme managed by Historic England. The scheme offers funding to local authorities to regenerate and revitalise historic town centres. The Council successfully bid for a HSAZ scheme for Grantham in December 2019. Activities include capital improvements to historic buildings within Grantham town centre, public realm enhancements, community engagement activities and cultural events. The scheme has delivered the regeneration of Westgate Hall and improvements to seven shopfronts. The significant increase in capital costs for shopfront projects did limit the number of projects it was possible to progress.</p> <p>In 2021, South Kesteven District Council was awarded £5.56 million funding through the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF). The FHSF supports the delivery of five key projects: improvements to the Grantham station approach public realm, refurbishment of the toilets on Conduit Lane Grantham, Marketplace public realm improvements, conversion of underused upper floor retail space into residential</p>

Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2020-23: Finance & Economic OSC – End of Plan Action Review

				FHSF: amount of vacant space converted - Upper Floor Conversions	8			accommodation, creation of a Town team. Work on the £4.19m improvement project to the Market Place commenced in May 2024.
Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Priority	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Action	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Success Criteria	KPI	Target	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status	Summary Commentary
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Identify funding & other opportunities to support the development of the town centres of Bourne, The Deepings, Bourne and Stamford, and apply lessons learnt from the Future High Street Fund & other initiatives.	Historic and Regeneration funding secured for locally supported, targeted, schemes in The Deepings, Bourne and Stamford.	Deliver an economic development plan	April 2023	Within SKDC control	Achieved	In December 2022, the Council was awarded a total of £3.9 million via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). This is for projects which will be delivered between 2023 and March 2025. Of this funding, approximately £1,000,000 will be allocated to town and parish councils, parish meetings, chartered trustees, and community groups within South Kesteven. As of March 2024, £2,192,066 has been committed to over 70 projects. Major projects include the SK Business Growth hub and grants, the Cost of Living Coordinator post funding, Art Up Stamford, the Grantham Christmas Lights and CCTV upgrades. Work on a new Economic Development Strategy was undertaken in 2023/24. The draft document was presented to Committee in May 2024.
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.	One Team approach across the Council, InvestSK and other public and private sector agencies to provide South Kesteven's businesses with accessible and relevant support.	Number of businesses supported Safeguard Jobs in South Kesteven through retention of businesses Inward investors directly supported to relocate into the district	60 businesses 100 jobs 2	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council allocated over £53 million in COVID support grants to 3000 businesses. The Council was shortlisted for the East Midlands 'Best COVID Response Award' in 2022. In 2023 the Council appointed a dedicated Business and Skills Officer who forms part of the Economic Development team. There is now increased attendance at local business clubs and business and skills related networking events. The team continues to support and promote new initiatives - particularly those developed by further and higher education and industry specialists.
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Review the scope and focus of InvestSK to maximise the support to local businesses and attract inward investment.	Restructure of InvestSK to focus on economic support. Revised business plan	Proportion of InvestSK funding allocation focused on business support Amount of inward investment attracted into the district	Minimum of 50% of funding To have an offer fully supported by local land owners and developers.	Within SKDC control	Achieved	InvestSK Ltd was established in 2017 and November 2021 a review was undertaken of the InvestSK Ltd operating model, concluding that the model was no longer fit for purpose and the company was subsequently insourced in January 2022.
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Continue to attract investment and encourage diverse businesses to the District and ensure appropriate land and property is available	New businesses attracted to the district utilising existing building stock and bringing allocated employment land to market	Local Plan Policy E1: Grantham Southern Gateway (118.9ha) Local Plan Policy E2: Strategic Emp. Sites (40.81ha across 4 sites) Local Plan Policy E3: Emp. Allocations (20.2ha across 5 sites)	No Target No Target No Target	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council has allocated land for employment through the Local Plan which was adopted in 2020. The allocated employment sites are to be delivered by the end of the Local Plan period 2035/2036. Currently, 148,558.6sqm has been given planning permission for employment generating uses across these allocated sites. There continues to be greater joined up working between planning policy (as the primary drivers of the Local Plan) and the economic development team as the main promoters of Place across the District. Opportunities are being sought in liaison with inward investors, developers and opportunities looking to secure land within the new Local Plan to create employment opportunities, particularly along the A1 corridor.

Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2020-23: Finance & Economic OSC – End of Plan Action Review

Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Priority	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Action	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Success Criteria	KPI	Target	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status	Summary Commentary
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Work with the education providers to increase opportunities for local learning and apprenticeships in the District.	Opening of University Centre in Grantham with strong through-put of learners. Supporting an increase in new learners and apprenticeships in the Council and across the district.	Number of training courses (Higher Education (HE), Further Education (FE) and vocational) offered in the district	Work with FE/HE providers to establish targets	Substantially outside control	Not Achieved	The Council had worked with the Greater Lincolnshire Local Economic Partnership (GLLEP) and the University of Lincoln to develop a university centre for Grantham. The aim of the project was to enable the delivery of a new local University Technology and Innovation Centre within Grantham Town Centre. However the University later withdrew from this opportunity and in January 2023, the Council moved into the first floor space as the new primary office.
				Number of residents taking new training courses (within and outside the district)	Additional 5% per annum increase in learner numbers at L2 and above			
				Number of courses (and students) at new University Centre	60 learners accessing skills provision			
				Number of apprenticeships provided by the Council	10 new apprenticeships provided by the Council per annum			
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	In partnership with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) bring forward housing and employment opportunities linked to the delivery of the Grantham Southern Relief Road.	Opening of Grantham Southern Relief Road and considered and comprehensive development of residential and commercial opportunities unlocked by the relief road.	Opening of relief road	Relief Road in progress	Significantly outside control	Not Achieved	The Grantham Southern Relief Road is a major infrastructure project led by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC). The project is intended to reduce congestion, disruption, and delays, creating a safer, more attractive, and accessible town centre, provide opportunities for growth, and reduce carbon emissions and noise pollution. The road is due to open in 2025.
				Amount of housing and employment land developed	Relief Road in progress			
Growth & Our Economy	Finance & Economic	Support the roll out of improved broadband and other key infrastructure to support local businesses and rural areas.	Increased broadband coverage across the district	Broadband coverage across the district	97%	Significantly outside control	Achieved	Improvements to broadband infrastructure are led and delivered by the broadband operators. The Council has no direct role or responsibility. 97.72% of premises (residential & business) have access to Superfast broadband. Ultrafast coverage has increased from 34% (June 2020) to 78.9% (June 2024). Gigabit has increased from 3% to 77.88%. The average download speed in the district has increased from 32Mbps (megabits per second) to 128.7 Mbps over the last four years.
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Implement the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.	Agree Covid recovery plan once 'response' phase is finished	Implement actions from recovery plan	Interim recovery plan in place June 2020			
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.	Development of a medium term balanced financial plan	1. Collection Rate (Council Tax)	98.64%	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council has continued to successfully set balanced budgets in an increasingly challenging financial landscape. A balanced budget was set for 2024/25 without recourse to reserves. This was achieved through careful planning, projected reductions in utility and fuel forecasts and elevated investment interest rates. The 2022/23 accounts received an unqualified audit opinion in January 2024.
				2. Collection Rate (Business Rates)	98.32%			
				3. Savings Achieved	£704,000			
				4. Additional Revenue Generated	£20,000			
				General Fund Balance	£1,986,000			
				Outstanding Debt Balance	£86,200,000			
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Undertake a Constitution review and implement outcomes.	Constitution fully reviewed and adopted by Council	Constitution reviewed and adopted	Q1 2022/23	Within SKDC control	Achieved	A revised Constitution was adopted by the Council on 26 May 2022 following a comprehensive review of the document. The Constitution is a living document and will continue to be reviewed, at least annually, and amended as necessary.

Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2020-23: Finance & Economic OSC – End of Plan Action Review

Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Priority	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Action	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Success Criteria	KPI	Target	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status	Summary Commentary
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Implement the findings of the Governance review across the Councils assets (including companies).	Governance Review action plan and milestones in place and complete	Governance Review Action Plan completion	2021/22	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny undertook a mini-review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function, Cabinet-Scrutiny Protocol and annual reporting of Scrutiny Committee activities. An action plan was subsequently developed, with improvements made in line with the majority of the recommendations put forward as part of the review. The action plan was fully implemented by April 2022.
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Develop a People Strategy (including a pay review) to support the retention and attraction of high quality staff.	To have adopted a People Strategy, with an agreed action plan, SMART targets and progress being made against them, ensuring the right skills are available to support the ambitions of the Council.	Number of apprenticeships provided by the Council Deliver a new People Strategy	10 2021/22	Within SKDC control	Achieved	A new People Strategy 2022-25 was adopted in January 2022. Apprenticeships are now embedded as part of the appraisal process as of April as a cost-effective method of upskilling and providing qualifications. Managers are encouraged to include Apprenticeship options as part of these development conversations. The Council currently has 19 apprentices. 10 started their apprenticeships in 2023/24. The Council was awarded Apprenticeship Employer of the Year 2023 by Grantham College.
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Develop and implement commercial and transformation strategies to deliver additional net revenue benefit.	Agreed strategies and action plans for Commercial and Transformation activities, delivering a net revenue benefit.	% shift in net position	Service plans to identify and develop targets for future years	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council is committed to continuous improvement. Service planning has been embedded as an annual exercise. In these plans, services detail key activities for the coming financial year, including transformative projects.
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Undertake a fundamental review of the organisation to meet current and future needs.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	Within SKDC control	Achieved	Two restructures of the corporate management structure have been undertaken (2020 & 2023). The 2020 restructure delivered £1.1m total savings. The 2023 restructure delivered a net £75k saving after resource investment was allocated in specific teams to boost resilience. Reviews of the Planning and Arts Services have also been undertaken in order to deliver efficiencies.
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Support the implementation of an IT investment roadmap to align future solutions with the Councils ambitions.	Agreed roadmap in place, outlining the process for achieving modern, sustainable and reliable IT provision.	Road map in place	2021/22	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council participated in a LGA Corporate Peer Challenge in November 2021 which outlined a number of recommendations in relation to local priorities and outcomes, organisational and place leadership, governance and culture, financial planning and management, and capacity for improvement. An action plan was developed to address those areas of improvement identified as part of the Corporate Peer Challenge. In September 2022 the LGA Peer Challenge Panel returned to the Council to review progress. The feedback received as part of the review was extremely positive, with the Panel commending the work that had been done since the review against those recommendations identified.
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Embed an agile approach to working by building on the cultural and technological changes.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	N/A – formal & reported KPIs were not assigned to this action.	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council has undertaken a programme of cultural transformation under the heading #TEAMSK. The organisation has embedded hybrid working based on business need. Key was the January 2023 relocation of the primary administrative offices to the modern open plan office space at St. Catherine's Road, Grantham.

Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2020-23: Finance & Economic OSC – End of Plan Action Review

Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Priority	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Action	Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Success Criteria	KPI	Target	SKDC Control	End of Plan Status	Summary Commentary
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Maximise the value of the Council's own spend by using local suppliers wherever practical.	Procurement activity incorporating the Council's approved contract procedure rules requirement of utilising local supply chains where possible	% number of contracts awarded to local providers	No Target	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council approved Contract Procedure Rules state that local suppliers should be invited to bid for works between the value of £10,000 and £49,999. Local supplier is defined as operating from a business address within the boundary of South Kesteven. The outturn analysis shows that 15% of procurement spend is with local suppliers as per the current definition of 'local'.
				% total annual spend awarded to local providers	No Target			
				% number of contracts <£10,000 awarded to local providers	No Target			
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Undertake an Asset Management Review.	Review of all the Council's non-HRA assets in order to assist on a considered programme of disposal, investment & acquisition	Adopt a new asset management strategy	Q1 2022/23	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2022-2027 was adopted by Cabinet in September 2022. This followed preparatory work over 2021/22, including a review of the Council's asset base and the adoption of an Asset Disposal Strategy in December 2021. Note the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets are not included in the AMS. The strategic management of assets associated with the Council's social landlord function are provided for by the HRA Business Plan.
High Performing Council	Finance & Economic	Ensure that support packages are in place for ensuring the welfare of the districts most vulnerable residents and to enable small businesses to flourish in the district	SKDC taking proactive action to support our most vulnerable residents.	Discretionary payments awarded	Baseline set in 2021/22	Within SKDC control	Achieved	The Council established a dedicated Cost of Living team, comprising of two Cost of Living Coordinators in the Revenue & Benefits service in June 2023. The Council was the first authority in Lincolnshire to introduce a dedicated officer to oversee cost of living workstreams. The team has distributed £170,342 from the Household Support fund. Support provided in the form of warm packs, food bank, supermarket and energy vouchers. A further £496,200 has been distributed to housing benefit-only recipients. The Cost of Living team is currently funded until 31 March 2025.
				Discretionary Housing payments awarded	Baseline set in 2021/22			
				Business Rates Retail Relief awarded	Baseline set in 2021/22			
				Household Support Fund	Baseline set in 2021/22			
				Test & Trace (self isolation payment)	Baseline set in 2021/22			

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Priority	Measured Biannually	Responsible Director Growth & Culture
<h1>Healthy And Strong Communities 1</h1>	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member Leisure

Action

Invest in sustainable, high quality leisure facilities across the district.

Measure	Target	Achieved
1. Decision on Leisure Programme.	No Set Target	See Commentary

Measure History	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. Decision on Leisure Programme.	See Commentary	See Commentary	Not Reported

Commentary

Work is being undertaken in collaboration with Property colleagues to take forward the works identified in the condition surveys undertaken on the leisure facilities. A significant amount of works have been undertaken and priority has been given to health and safety items and those at end of life. Works have included replacement fire doors, repairs to plant and equipment and boiler upgrades. In addition, following the successful award of funding from the Swimming Pool Support Fund pool covers and additional solar panels are being installed at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, pool covers have also been installed at Stamford and Bourne which have been funded by the Council's climate reserve. Following a protracted bidding process over the course of Q4, the Council was successfully awarded £3,587,500 from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3 in May 2024 for decarbonisation works including the installation of air source heat pumps for the Grantham Meres.

Delivery of Growth of Our Economy

Priority Number	Action	Priority Status	Action Status
1	Delivery of the St Martins Park development scheme in Stamford.	Reported Q2 2023-24	Below Target
2	Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).	Reported Q2 2023-24	On Target
3	Identify funding & other opportunities to support the development of the town centres of Bourne, The Deepings and Stamford, and apply lessons learnt from the Future High Street Fund & other initiatives.	Reported Q2 2023-24	Below Target
4	Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.	Reported Q2 2023-24	On Target
5	Review the scope and focus of InvestSK to maximise the support to local businesses and attract inward investment.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
6	Continue to attract investment and encourage diverse businesses to the District and ensure appropriate land and property is available	Reported Q2 2023-24	On Target
7	Work with the education providers to increase opportunities for local learning and apprenticeships in the District.	No Longer Reported	Not Reported
8	In partnership with LCC bring forward housing and employment opportunities linked to the delivery of the Grantham Southern Relief Road.	No Longer Reported	Not Reported
9	Work with partners and attractions, to promote visitor economy and increase visitor spend in the District, including the adoption of a Tourism Strategic Framework.	Reported Q2 2023-24	On Target
10	Support the roll out of improved broadband and other key infrastructure to support local businesses and rural areas.	No Longer Reported	Not Reported
11	Work closely with markets across South Kesteven and seek to maintain their viability.	Reported Q4 2022-23	Below Target

Priority ▲	Measured Quarterly	Responsible Director ▲ Growth & Culture
Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 1	Below Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member ▲ Economic Development & Growth

Action

Delivery of the St Martins Park development scheme in Stamford.

Measure ▲	Target	Achieved
1. Outline Planning Consent granted	Q3 2021/22	Completed
2. S106 Agreements in place	Q4 2021/22	Completed
3. Budget Approval for demolition costs approved	Q3 2021/22	Completed
4. Demolition complete	Q2 2022/23	Completed
5. Sale contracts exchanged and completed	End of 2022/23	Q3/Q4 2023

Measure History	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. Outline Planning Consent granted	COMPLETE	Completed	Not Reported
2. S106 Agreements in place	COMPLETE	Completed	Not Reported
3. Budget Approval for demolition costs approved	COMPLETE	Completed	Not Reported
4. Demolition complete	COMPLETE	Completed	Not Reported
5. Sale contracts exchanged and completed	Q3/Q4 2023	Q3/Q4 2023	Not Reported

Commentary ▼

The Council has received the best and final bids from the potential developers in November 2023. An independent options appraisal was undertaken by Cushman & Wakefield. The appraisal recommendations were presented to Finance & Economic OSC on 15 January 2024. A way forward for the site was agreed by an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council on 8 February 2024. To date (February 2024) the Council has committed £10.5m into the development: £8m for the site acquisition, £1.5m demolition costs, £500,000 master planning costs and £500,000 on premises maintenance.

Priority	Measured Quarterly	Responsible Director Growth & Culture
<h1>Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 2A</h1>	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member Economic Development & Growth

Action

Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).

Measure	Target	Achieved
1. HAZ: amount of public sector grant spent	372000	£27,589 (Q4 spend) £68,133 (2023/24)
2. HAZ: amount of private sector investment leveraged	£45,000	£86,779 (Q4), £182,542 (2023/24), £306,000 (project life)
3. HAZ: number of buildings improved	2 'Key building projects	1 project (Westgate Hall) Completed
4. HAZ: number of buildings improved	5 'Shopfront' Grant projects	3 projects achieved final completion this quarter. Total 5 completed 2023/24.

3

Measure History	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. HAZ: amount of public sector grant spent	£16,422	£11,428 Q2 spend (£27,850 total spend 23/24 to end of q2)	Not Reported
2. HAZ: amount of private sector investment leveraged	£0	43,000 * Pending delivery of two remaining storefront schemes	Not Reported
3. HAZ: number of buildings improved	1 project ongoing (westgate Hall)	1 project ongoing (Westgate Hall)	Not Reported
4. HAZ: number of buildings improved	3 completed, four ongoing, 2 pending offer acceptance	2 further storefronts completed quarter 2 and Final 2 grants awarded	Not Reported

Commentary

The final year of the High Street Heritage Action zone was reasonably sucessful, with a number of ongoing projects reaching final completion - including the Westgate Hall regeneration project. Unfortunately, there was an underspend in the grant award, as the result of one of the storefront projects failing to complete in time for the final claim deadline. This resulted in the final number of storefronts being regenerated across the four year scheme being 7 rather than the anticipated 9 projects. While the significant increase in capital costs for storefront projects did limit the number of projects it was possible to progress, it was also the main factor in the scheme achieving a significantly higher private sector investment than originally profiled. Across the four year scheme, the level of private sector investment reached over £306,000 which is more than twice the targeted figure for the scheme. In addition over £370,000 of additional investment into the town centre has been indirectly leveraged by the scheme .

Priority ▲	Measured Quarterly	Responsible Director ▲ Growth & Culture
	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member ▲ Economic Development & Growth

Action

Regeneration of Grantham town centre, supported by the Future High Street (FHSF) bid and delivery of the Heritage Action Zone programme (HAZ).

Measure ▲	Target	Achieved
1. FHSF secured from the Department for Levelling up, Housing & Communities	£1.16m	See Commentary
2. FHSF: amount of FHSF co-funding secured	£929,000 (2023/24)	See Commentary
3. FHSF: amount of vacant space converted - Upper Floor Conversions	8	See Commentary

Measure History ▲	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. FHSF secured from the Department for Levelling up, Housing & Communities	£571,523	£571,523	Not Reported
2. FHSF: amount of FHSF co-funding secured	£0	£0	Not Reported
3. FHSF: amount of vacant space converted - Upper Floor Conversions	0	0	Not Reported

Commentary ▲

At the beginning of the year, Lincolnshire County Council completed detailed designs for both the Market Place and Station Approach schemes. The schemes were approved in April 2024. Work commenced in Grantham Market Place on 7 May 2024. Works are anticipated to take 22 weeks. As the project budget has changed significantly from the original bid for funding, this has been subject to both the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC's) 'Project Adjustment Request (PAR)' process and their agreement to extend the programme period. The submitted PAR has now been approved by DLUHC, as well as a programme extension request. This has extended the programme spend period by six months from 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024 and the delivery period by twelve months from 1 April 2024 to 1 April 2025. Work on the Grantham Town team has paused due to significant gaps in staffing levels. A recruitment process for a new Grantham Engagement Manager is currently underway.

Priority	Measured Biannually	Responsible Director Growth & Culture
Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 3	Below Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member Economic Development & Growth

Action

Identify funding & other opportunities to support the development of the town centres of Bourne, The Deepings and Stamford, and apply lessons learnt from the Future High Street Fund & other initiatives.

Measure	Target	Achieved
1. Deliver an economic development plan	01/04/2023	See Commentary

Measure History	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. Deliver an economic development plan	See Commentary	See Commentary	Not Reported

Commentary

The redrafting of the Economic Development Strategy is underway to align with the new Corporate Plan. Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a draft in May 2024. As reported previously, the new strategy will align with the current and known future funding opportunities associated with the Levelling Up agenda. The draft strategy has undergone consultation and expected to return to the Committee in the Summer 2024.

Priority	Measured Quarterly	Responsible Director Growth & Culture
<h1>Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 4</h1>	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member Economic Development & Growth

Action

Develop a package of measures to support the recovery of the local economy to safeguard local jobs wherever possible.

Measure	Target	Achieved
1. Number of businesses supported	60 businesses receiving direct support	156
2. Safeguard Jobs in South Kesteven through retention of businesses	100 jobs	Achieved
3. Inward investors directly supported to relocate into the district	2	6

Measure History	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. Number of businesses supported	121	156	Not Reported
2. Safeguard Jobs in South Kesteven through retention of businesses	Achieved	Achieved	Not Reported
3. Inward investors directly supported to relocate into the district	6	6	Not Reported

Commentary

The Council has appointed a dedicated Business and Skills Officer who forms part of the Economic Development team. There is now increased attendance at local business clubs and business and skills related networking events. The team continues to support and promote new initiatives - particularly those developed by further and higher education and industry specialists. Preparations are underway to champion the Good Student Employer Charter, a collaborative project between the University of Lincoln, Destination Lincolnshire and the Institute of Hospitality.

Priority ▲	Measured Biannually	Responsible Director ▲ Growth & Culture
<h1>Delivery of Growth of Our Economy 6</h1>	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member ▲ Economic Development & Growth

Action

Continue to attract investment and encourage diverse businesses to the District and ensure appropriate land and property is available

Measure ▲	Target	Achieved
1. Local Plan Policy E1: Grantham Southern Gateway (118.9ha)	No Target	12.12ha
2. Local Plan Policy E2: Strategic Emp. Sites (40.81ha across 4 sites)	No Target	2.73ha
3. Local Plan Policy E3: Emp. Allocations (20.2ha across 5 sites)	No Target	0.0ha

04

Measure History ▲	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. Local Plan Policy E1: Grantham Southern Gateway (118.9ha)	Reported Biannually	12.47ha	Not Reported
2. Local Plan Policy E2: Strategic Emp. Sites (40.81ha across 4 sites)	Reported Biannually	2.73ha	Not Reported
3. Local Plan Policy E3: Emp. Allocations (20.2ha across 5 sites)	Reported Biannually	0.0ha	Not Reported

Commentary

E1 Committed land - 88,193sqm (Class E(g), B2, B8) Other employment generating uses = 33,029sqm

E2 Committed land - 27,336.6sqm (E(g),B2,B8 use)

E2 Committed land - 0

The Local Plan includes allocated employment sites (Local Plan policies E1-E3) totalling 179.91ha. There is no Local Plan target for annual completion of employment land. The allocated employment sites are to be delivered by the end of the Local Plan period 2035/2036.

There continues to be greater joined up working between planning policy (as the primary drivers of the Local Plan) and the economic development team as the main promoters of Place across the District. Meetings have been held between Planning Policy, Economic Development and prospective new inward investors, developers and operators looking to secure land within the new Local Plan in order to create employment opportunities, particularly along the A1 corridor.

A High Performing Council

Priority Number	Action	Priority Status	Action Status
1	Implement the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
2	Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
3	Undertake a Constitution review and implement outcomes.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
4	Implement the findings of the Governance review across the Councils assets (including companies).	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
5	Develop a People Strategy (including a pay review) to support the retention and attraction of high quality staff.	Reported Q2 2023-24	On Target
6	Develop and implement commercial and transformation strategies to deliver additional net revenue benefit.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
7	Undertake a fundamental review of the organisation to meet current and future needs.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
8	Support the implementation of an IT investment roadmap to align future solutions with the Councils ambitions.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
9	Embed an agile approach to working by building on the cultural and technological changes.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
10	Deliver the ambitions of the Customer Experience Strategy.	No Longer Reported	Not Reported
11	Maximise the value of the Councils own spend by using local suppliers wherever practical.	Reported Q4 2022-23	On Target
12	Undertake an Asset Management Review.	Removed as Complete	Not Reported
13	Ensure that support packages are in place for ensuring the welfare of the districts most vulnerable residents and to enable small businesses to flourish in the district	Reported Q2 2023-24	On Target

Priority ▲	Measured Annually	Responsible Director Chief Finance Officer
A High Performing Council 2	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member Finance

Action

Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.

Measure ▲	Target	Achieved
1. Collection Rate (Council Tax)	98.64%	98.37%
2. Collection Rate (Business Rates)	98.32%	99.06%
3. Savings Achieved	£704,000.00	To be confirmed following completion of 23/24 outturn
4. Additional Revenue Generated	£20,000.00	To be confirmed following completion of 23/24 outturn
5. General Fund Balance	£1,986,000.00	To be confirmed following completion of 23/24 outturn
6. Outstanding Debt Balance	£86,200,000.00	To be confirmed following completion of 23/24 outturn

Measure History ▲	Q4 2021-22	Q4 2022-23
1. Collection Rate (Council Tax)	98.64%	98.48%
2. Collection Rate (Business Rates)	98.32%	97.95%
3. Savings Achieved	£142,000	£704,000.00
4. Additional Revenue Generated	£0	£31,000.00
5. General Fund Balance	£1,900,000	£1,962,000.00
6. Outstanding Debt Balance	£86,200,000	£86,200,000.00

Commentary

Council Tax is below the target of 98.64% by 0.27%. Business Rate collection is above the target of 98.32% by 0.74%. A balanced budget was set for 2024/25 without recourse to reserves. This was achieved through careful planning, projected reductions in utility and fuel forecasts and elevated investment interest rates. The 2022/23 accounts received an unqualified audit opinion in January 2024. To set a balanced budget for 2027/28 (without reserve use), savings of £1.15m (based on current budget forecasts and government funding assumptions) are required.

Priority
▲

A High Performing Council 5

Measured

Quarterly

Responsible Director

Deputy Chief Executive

On Target

Current Status

Responsible Cabinet Member

People & Safer Communities

Action

Develop a People Strategy (including a pay review) to support the retention and attraction of high quality staff.

Measure
▲

1. Number of apprenticeships provided by the Council

Target

Achieved

10

19

Measure History
▲

1. Number of apprenticeships provided by the Council

Q1 2023-24

Q2 2023-24

Q3 2023-24

9

14

Not Reported

Commentary
▲

Apprenticeships are now embedded as part of the appraisal process as of April as a cost effective method of upskilling and providing qualifications. Managers are encouraged to include Apprenticeship options as part of these development conversations. The Council currently has 19 apprentices. 10 started their apprenticeships in 2023/24. 0 commenced their apprenticeships in Q4 2023/24. Note the annual appraisal process takes place in Q4. Colleagues identified to undertake apprenticeships to upskill by that process will be taken forward in 2024/25.

Priority ▲	Measured Annually	Responsible Director Chief Finance Officer
A High Performing Council 11	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member Finance

Action

Maximise the value of the Councils own spend by using local suppliers wherever practical.

44

Measure ▲	Target	Achieved
1. % number of contracts awarded to local providers	No Target	8.10%
2. % total annual spend awarded to local providers	No Target	15%
3. % PO spend under 10K with local suppliers	No Target	8.45%

Measure History ▲	Q4 2021-22	Q4 2022-23
1. % number of contracts awarded to local providers	-	Information Not Available
2. % total annual spend awarded to local providers	55%	23%
3. % PO spend under 10K with local suppliers	-	Information Not Available

Commentary

The Council approved Contract Procedure Rules state that local suppliers should be invited to bid for works between the value of £10,000 and £49,999. Local supplier is defined as operating from a business address within the boundary of South Kesteven. The outturn analysis shows that 15% of procurement spend is with local suppliers as per the current definition of 'local'.

Priority ▲	Measured Quarterly	Responsible Director Chief Finance Officer
A High Performing Council 13	On Target Current Status	Responsible Cabinet Member Finance

Action

Ensure that support packages are in place for ensuring the welfare of the districts most vulnerable residents and to enable small businesses to flourish in the district

Measure ▲	Target	Achieved
1. Discretionary payments awarded	£47,610	£35,610
2. Discretionary Housing Payments awarded	£155,861	£153,872.58
3. Business Rates Retail Relief awarded	£3,312,340	£3,625,161
4. Household Support Fund	£177,342	£177,342

Measure History ▲	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Q3 2023-24
1. Discretionary payments awarded	£9,545	£9,825	Not Reported
2. Discretionary Housing Payments awarded	£35,761	£66,738	Not Reported
3. Business Rates Retail Relief awarded	£3,038,021	£3,312,340	Not Reported
4. Household Support Fund	£0	£9,633	Not Reported

Commentary

Discretionary Payments: Underspend of £12,000 transferred to Discretionary Housing Payment Fund to top-up rent shortage

Discretionary Housing Payments: Slight underspend of £1958.22

Business Rates Relief Award: This is fully funded via Government, therefore any increase in award from the projected amount will be reimbursed.

Household Support Fund: Support provided in the form of warm packs, food bank, supermarket and energy vouchers. On 6 March 2024, the Government announced that the Household Support Fund would be extended for a further six months from 1 April.

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Code	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Action	Action Summary	Service Area	Owner/s	KPI Measure/s	Targets	Notes
ECON1	Finance & Economic	Deliver the Economic Development Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Delivery of document and document contents.	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	% of total actions on target/complete	100% complete by end of the Plan (actions delivered in accordance with the timelines set out in the action plan.)	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
ECON2	Finance & Economic	Deliver initiatives to expand and deepen engagement with business.	Business Engagement	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	Following the introduction of a customer relationship management system (CRM), introduce a 'call and care programme' to support the top 20 businesses in SK	20 businesses identified and 20 visits per annum conducted	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
					Head of Economic Development	Increase business participation in LEF	3 private sector businesses established as part of LEF governance.	
ECON3	Finance & Economic	Continue to distribute the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and explore opportunities to develop a legacy beyond the funding period.	Delivery of UKSPF & REPF	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	% of funding distributed	100% funding distributed by March 2025	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
ECON4	Finance & Economic	Embed and strengthen the Local Economic Forum as a key institution for local stakeholders to shape the district's approach to skills, business support and investment.	Local Economic Forum	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	Work closely with Town Councils and Business Clubs across the District	Attendance at 12 events per annum	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
ECON5	Finance & Economic	Work with the Lincolnshire Growth Hub to support businesses start, succeed and grow.	Business Support	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	No of businesses supported	60	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
					Head of Economic Development	Jobs created	100	
					Head of Economic Development	Inward Investment projects attracted	2 per year	
ECON6	Finance & Economic	Strategically leverage the Council's procurement spend to maximise social value.	Procurement Social Value & Support	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	Introduce SKDC Procurement Charter to exploit local employment and supply chain opportunities	Procurement Charter adopted	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
					Head of Economic Development	Introduction of a statement of principles and publish guidance for suppliers on how to do business with Council and details of forthcoming bidding opportunities.	Statement published	
					Head of Economic Development	Provide the opportunity for contracts framework and supply chain opportunities.	2 procurement events promoted per annum	
ECON7	Finance & Economic	Consider targeted interventions – planning powers and schemes, to achieve high-quality regeneration across the district and explore options to unlock stalled sites.	Regeneration – short term	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	Develop an investment prospectus to promote the District regionally and nationally	Prospectus produced and annually refreshed	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.

Code	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Action	Action Summary	Service Area	Owner/s	KPI Measure/s	Targets	Notes
ECON9	Finance & Economic	Develop a long-term approach to regeneration and be prepared for investment and funding opportunities.	Regeneration – long term investment	Economic Development	Head of Economic Development	Prepare a Pipeline of 'oven ready' projects.	1 per annum	Economic data and impacts: GVA, productivity, business base, employment, wages etc reported by SSEIs.
					Head of Economic Development	Linked to ECON7, work with landowners and stakeholders to identify development constraints for identified sites for regeneration.	5 annual visits per annum	
					Head of Economic Development	Linked to the point above, evidence demand for electricity and infrastructure network upgrades	Infrastructure Strategy produced and refreshed annually.	
COUN7	Finance & Economic	Deliver a balanced, sustainable financial plan over the medium term.	Financial Sustainability	Finance	Interim Head of Finance/Deputy S151 Officer	In-year savings/additional income identified to contribute towards projected future deficits	Yr 1 - £291k	N/A
					Interim Head of Finance/Deputy S151 Officer	Successful management of approved budget	Forecast surplus/deficit to be within 1% of net cost of service	
					Interim Head of Finance/Deputy S151 Officer	% of working balance to net cost of service	10%	
COUN8	Finance & Economic	Implement and embed the new finance system.	New Finance System	Finance	Interim Head of Finance/Deputy S151 Officer	% of users accessing the system	TBC	N/A
					Interim Head of Finance/Deputy S151 Officer	% reports generated from the system within 5 working days of month end	TBC	
COUN9	Finance & Economic	Deliver the IT Roadmap, ensuring all systems meet the needs of internal and external customers, and explore opportunities for new technologies and innovation.	Performance of IT. Focusing on three key areas: internal service desk, system availability and cyber security.	IT	IT Manager	% of service desk tickets resolved within 1 working day	80% Standard SLA is 5 working days	N/A
					IT Manager	Availability of main corporate systems (council tax, housing, planning) during primary working hours	99%	
					IT Manager	% of security alerts identified at user level are resolved with no data breach\loss.	100%	
COUN11	Finance & Economic	Deliver the Internal Audit Plan and drive continuous organisational improvement.	Internal Audit – progress of Plan and implementation of agreed actions.	Finance – Corporate Governance & Risk	Governance & Risk Officer	Progress on internal audit plan	100% completion of the audit plan by 1st March	Individual audits will be reported to and discussed by Governance & Audit.
					Governance & Risk Officer	% of audit actions implemented by the agreed date.	100%	
COUN12	Finance & Economic	Ensure procurement is always compliant, fair and delivers value for money.	Procurement compliance, value for money and support for small business.	Finance - Procurement	Procurement Lead	% of compliant contracts awarded with a value >£25k	100%	To encourage open competition rather than direct awards.
					Procurement Lead	% of spend with registered SMEs	For information only.	

Code	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Action	Action Summary	Service Area	Owner/s	KPI Measure/s	Targets	Notes
COUN14	Finance & Economic	Develop and deliver Planned Maintenance Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Performance of planned maintenance for corporate estate.	Property Services	Head of Service (Property and ICT) Head of Service (Property and ICT) Head of Service (Property and ICT) Head of Service (Property and ICT)	Develop and adopt the strategy and action plan % of total actions in action plan on target/complete Ratio of planned to reactive repair works	Jul-24 100% complete by end of the Plan (actions delivered in accordance with the timelines set out in the action plan.) Yr 1 – 30:70 Yr 2 – 40:60 Yr 3 – 50:50	N/A

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SOUTH
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COUNCIL



Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

27 June 2024

Report of Councillor Richard Cleaver,
Cabinet Member for Property and
Public Engagement

Progress Update in respect of the construction of the Waste Depot, Turnpike Close Grantham

Report Author

Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT

Gyles.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides a progress update on the new Waste Depot project.

Recommendations

The Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the current position with respect to the delivery of the new Waste Depot Turnpike Close Grantham.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	N/a
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	N/a
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Effective Council
Which wards are impacted?	Earlesfield Ward

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

- 1.1 Budget approval of £8.8m has been given for this project by Council 28th September 2023 and 29th February 2024 and the ongoing financial updates are being presented to the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal and governance implications associated with this proposal.

Completed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee was provided with an update on the new Waste Depot project at their last meeting on 8 May 2024 where it was agreed that the Committee would be provided with regular updates at each of their meetings during the project delivery phase. This report is the first in the project updates the Committee will receive.

Updated Timetable

The following provisional programme was presented at the last meeting and an updated timeline is shown alongside the dates previously shown:

	Programme Summary	Updated Programme Summary
Cabinet Approval	16 th April 2024	16 th April 2024
Value Engineering Period	16 th April – 3 rd May 2024	16 th April – 24 th May 2024
Enter into NEC4 Professional Services Contract	14 th May 2024	14 th June 2024
Progression of Stage 4 Design	3 rd May – 2 nd July 2024	17 th June – 9 th August 2024
Design Evaluation, Completion and legal preparation.	23 rd July – 7 th September 2024	9 th August – 20 th September 2024
Construction Contract Award	18 th September 2024	27 th September 2024
Contractor mobilisation period	19 th September – 9 th October 2024	30 th September - 11 th October 2024
Construction Period commences	9 th October 2024	11 th October 2024
Targeted completion date	22 nd October 2025	22 nd October 2025
Mobilisation Period	23 rd October 2025 – 22 nd November 25	23 rd October 2025 – 22 nd November 25
Operational Go-live	25 th November 2025	25 th November 2025

2.2 The above table shows that there has been some movement on the original provisional dates due to the additional time it has taken to secure the value engineering savings necessary to reduce the project costs. This has taken additional time to ensure the scheme quality and operational practicality is not compromised and also to ensure any design changes do not conflict with the approved planning permission. Only when the value engineering review has been completed can the project move to the next stage (stage 4 design) so any slippage on the value engineering phase will have a direct impact on the subsequent project phase. The summary timetable does show, however, that the current expectation is that the operational go live date can still be achieved and there will be opportunities to claw back the time that has currently been slipped.

2.3 Value Engineering Summary

This element of the scheme development has taken a significant amount of time due to the requirement to ensure that the scheme quality is not compromised

and to avoid any approved planning conflicts. The approved contractor has also needed to revisit the supply chain and sub-contractor pricing in order to be able to quantify in financial terms any variations to the original submitted pricing. However significant progress has been made and over £350k of construction savings has been identified and these will reduce the construction cost down to £7.9m.

- 2.4 In order to enable members to receive a summary of the latest project position, a project summary dashboard has been created and is shown at Appendix A. This has been developed to bring together a summary of key information relating to the project status enables a snapshot to be provided. Members are invited to comment on the dashboard and make any suggestions or additional information they would like to see provided.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 This report sets out the latest position with this important project and the next stages in order to deliver the overall scheme. It is important the Committee is kept updated as the scheme progresses.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 No other options are considered.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 These are set out in the report.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 The previous update report can be accessed here:

[Agenda for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 8th May, 2024, 2.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

7. Appendix

- 7.1 Appendix A – Project Dashboard

TURNPIKE CLOSE PROJECT DASHBOARD

Project Name: New Depot
Current Status: In Progress

Date: 6th June 2024
Budget £ 8,800,000.00

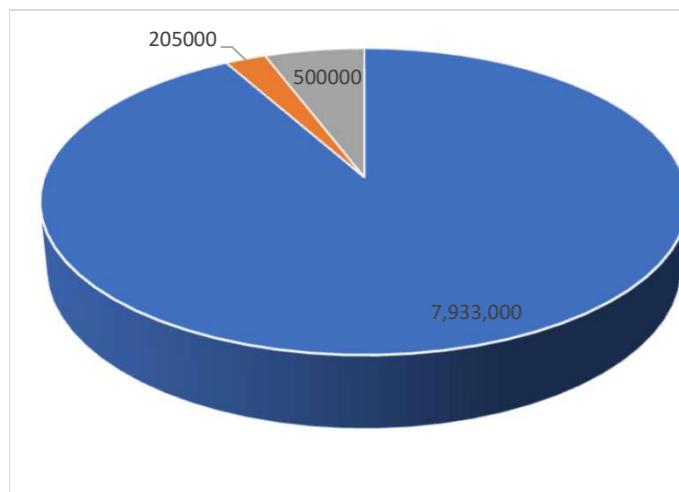
Risk Status

Medium

Project Planner

Select a period to highlight at right. A legend describing the charting follows.

Budget Allocation



- 1 Construction Cost
- 2 Other Project Cost
- 3 Professional Fees

KEY RISKS AND ISSUES

Risk	Action/Overview	Level
Value Engineering not Achieved	V/E proposed from Lindum does not achieve target due to some items not palatable for SKDC - Recommendation that SKDC to agree V/E schedule with a degree of contingency should the forecast V/E figure not being achieved	Medium
Additional fees due to elongated stage 5 construction period	Multi D fees are based on 36 weeks construction period, there is a risk that additional fees will be needed if this period extends. Lindum are forecasting a 51 week construction period.	Medium
New Planning Application	New Planning app would be required should more significant changes be required.	Medium
Planning Conditions	Discharging of pre commencement activities to be progressed	Low
Programme slippage	Current slippage will look to be reduced via identification of efficiencies in subsequent phases.	Medium

Summary

The value engineering is being undertaken in conjunction with Lindums directly but within the parameters of the already approved planning permission of the development. NEC4 has been drafted and is with both legal teams for completion.

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SOUTH
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COUNCIL



Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 27 June 2024

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

Progress update on the Economic Development Strategy for South Kesteven 2024 – 2028

Report Author

Nick Hibberd, Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment

nick.hibberd@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To inform members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) on progress made toward the development of an Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes the content of this report including the revised timetable for the Economic Development Strategy set out in Table 1 of the report.
2. Agrees a Workshop be held for FEOSC Committee Members on 15th July 2024 to consider feedback from the consultation and its impact on the development of the strategy.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	(All Wards);

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The development of the Economic Development Strategy is an important part of the work programme of the Committee as it has significant implications for the economic vibrancy of the District. The development of the supporting Action Plan may have financial implications and these will be considered at that time.

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

Legal and Governance

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

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 At the 8th May Finance Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) meeting, officers presented progress against indicative milestones, which would see the adoption of an Economic Development Strategy in the Summer of 2024. The update included notification that Cabinet had approved a month-long period of consultation, which commenced on the 7th May.
- 2.2 Between the 7th May and the 8th June Officers wrote directly to Stakeholders introducing the consultation process for the Economic Development Strategy and asking them to visit the Council's website to make representation on the online consultation software. This Stakeholder group included over 250 public sector partners, Town and Parish Councils, business club representatives and citizens

who had expressed an interest in Planning, Economic or similar consultation exercises.

2.3 Officers also attended several business club or business exhibitions across the district, where a presentation was given or ‘flyers’ handed out to interested parties. In addition, the SKDC Communication Team broadcast details of the consultation period across the Council’s social media channels throughout the four-week period.

2.4 This resulted in fifty responses. Whilst this exercise only closed on the 8th June an early review has identified a number of themes that have emerged. This non-exclusive list includes:

- ‘Connectivity’ within the district to maximise economic and social benefit. Respondents recognised the excellent infrastructure links provided by the A1, A52 and East Coast Mainline, however, noted the rural dimension to the district and the lack on internal connectivity between settlements across South Kesteven and the areas of employment, tourism, and leisure.
- Consideration to facilitating a supply of available commercial business premises. Comments identified that whilst issues around the supply of employment land were considered in the strategy there was limited references to ensuring a supply of commercial premises that will meet the needs of local business, a ‘supply side’ issue considered to be consistent across the district.
- Identification and development of key sectors. Respondents noted the sectoral approach to supporting new and emerging sectors that will be important in providing new and higher value employment opportunities across South Kesteven, however, they felt the strategy should go further and identify which sectors should be supported.
- Further consideration to understand local productivity drivers and inclusion of plans to address them. The strategy recognises the need to increase productivity locally and the challenges in the relative performance of the district in comparison to the regional and national economies, however, respondents would like the strategy to be more specific on local issues including economic activity rates, skills and company profiles.

2.5 These results will require further exploration before the Strategy can be revised to take account of the consultation responses. As part of this process, it is recommended that a second Member Workshop is organised for FEOSC Members in July to allow further discussion and input.

2.6 This will require the previously advertised ‘indicative timetable’ to be amended to include the following revised dates and milestones, which will be kept under review:

Table 1

Activity	Dates: Previous	Revised
Initial consultation feedback presented back to Finance and Economic Overview & Scrutiny Committee.	27 th June 2024	27 th June 2024
Cabinet to receive initial consultation feedback. Cabinet had anticipated to agree the final strategy.	9 th July 2024	9 th July 2024
2 nd FEOSC Members Workshop	N/A	15 th July 2024
Revised Strategy presented back to Finance and Economic Overview & Scrutiny Committee.	N/A	17 th September 2024
Recommendation to Cabinet to approve the final economic development strategy	9 th July 2024	8 th October 2024

3. Key Considerations

3.1 Consultation is an important part of the development of the Strategy. Feedback from stakeholders including local businesses, local representatives and community groups will be invaluable in shaping the Economic Development Strategy and helping us understand the needs and aspirations of local communities and businesses.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 To move straight to a re-draft, without a second FEOSC Members Workshop.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 This report facilitates a request from FEOSC to be regularly updated on progress towards the adoption of an Economic Development Strategy for the District 2024 – 2028 and provided a direct process for Members to fully engage with process which will directly inform the final strategy.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 *Progress update on the new South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028* – Report for Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 22 November 2022, available online at:
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s36141/Progress%20Update%20on%20new%20South%20Kesteven%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202023%20-%202028.pdf>
- 6.2 To seek approval for stakeholder consultation in respect to the draft Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 and accompanying action plan. Report for Cabinet, published April 2024, available online at:
[Cabinet Economic Development Strategy.pdf](#)
- 6.3 Report to update members of Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress made in developing an Economic Development Strategy for South Kesteven 2024 - 2028. Report for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee published May 2024, available online at:
[Update on the Economic Development Strategy 2024 - 2028 FEOSC.pdf](#)

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 27 June 2024

Report of Councillor Richard Cleaver,
Portfolio Holder for Property and Public
Engagement

Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Completion Report

Report Author

Claire Saunders, High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager

 claire.saunders@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides a final update on the completion of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, which came to an end on 31st March 2024. The programme was aimed at helping unlock the heritage potential of the town and assist in economic recovery within Grantham Town Centre.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Reviews and endorses this report.
2. 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?	Enabling economic opportunities
Which wards are impacted?	Grantham St Wulframs;

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 Grant spend and SKDC contribution across the four-year project was as detailed below.
- 1.2 The total public sector funding leveraged through the delivery of the programme was £307,734, and an additional £370,000 of third-party contributions were recorded for associated activity which was either delivered through the duration of the scheme or will be delivered over the next 12 months.
- 1.3 Further detail is given with the Background to the report (Paragraphs 2.35 – 2.48)
- 1.4 Services and materials relating to capital projects were procured and commissioned directly by the grant recipient. Grant recipients were contractually required to follow Historic England's procurement requirements for goods and services and provide evidence of this prior to receiving funding.

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.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.5 The programme was 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.

- 1.6 Programme spend up to £200,000 was assessed by the Board which provides a recommendation for approval or otherwise by the relevant senior officer through their existing delegated powers under the scheme of delegation within the Council's constitution.
- 1.7 Programme spend of more than £200,000 was assessed by the Board and referred to Cabinet for recommendation to Historic England for approval.
- 1.8 Any project grant which resulted in a contribution from Historic England of £50,000 or more was referred to Historic England for formal approval.

Completed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.9 As the programme has completed, there is no further risk associated with its delivery.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer

Health and Safety

- 1.10 Throughout the programme, contractors were responsible for maintaining appropriate health and safety on site and complied with all the relevant legislation. South Kesteven District Council was 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.

Completed by: Phil Swinton, Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Manager

Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.11 Eligibility for the grant schemes was limited by the terms of the funding agreement with Historic England.
- 1.12 To be eligible for funding properties had to be located on High Street, Westgate, Market Place or Watergate, (with a priority on Westgate and Market Place) and must have been built prior to 1939.
- 1.13 Applicants must have had the legal ability to accept the grant funding, typically the property owner. Tenants with full maintaining leases were eligible to apply with the written permission of the property owner.

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required?

No

Climate Change

1.14 The programme encouraged 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.

2. Background to the Report

2.1 The delivery of the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) 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 Prior to the May 2023 the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme fell under the remit of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny committee as a 'Heritage' programme. Given the prior involvement with the programme, updates have remained on the work plan of the Culture and Leisure OSC.

2.3 As a result this report was previously presented to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee 18th June 2024, the Committee agreed to accept the contents of the report for noting.

2.4 The HSHAZ Programme began in May 2020 and ran until March 31st 2024, during which time it delivered capital grant schemes for restoration of historic buildings and community consultation and engagement activity to celebrate and safeguard Grantham's town centre heritage.

2.5 For ease of reading the report has been separated into the following sections:

- Section 1: HSHAZ Successes
- Section 2: HSHAZ Challenges
- Section 3: HSHAZ Lessons Learnt
- Section 4: Financial Overview and Added Value
- Section 5: Cultural Programme

Section 1: High Street Heritage Action Zone Successes

2.6 The most successful element of the programme was the delivery of the capital programme which included the restoration of Westgate Hall, as well as the shop front regeneration scheme.

2.7 This element of the programme was responsible for the majority of the programme spend, and also generated considerable private sector investment in the scheme.

2.8 The works to Westgate Hall included significant repairs to the roof, and other works to prevent further water ingress into the building and rectify previous water

damage in the roof structure. In addition, three of the octagonal rooflights were reinstated, historically appropriate doors and other joinery were reinstated, and repairs were made to windows, including the installation of new glazing to the front arched windows.

- 2.9 The project was responsible for £300,000 of grant spend and generated £120,000 in private sector investment in the duration of the scheme.
- 2.10 As a result of the project works the building, which had been vacant for over five years, has secured a tenant, Mr Ade Adeshina who has confirmed that following fit out works Westgate Hall will open as a restaurant in 2025, which will create at least 15 jobs.
- 2.11 Further repair works and the fit-out works will be funded by the property owner and Mr Adeshina and are anticipated to be in the region of £200,000 – £250,000.
- 2.12 Seven properties benefited from shopfront reinstatement or repair grants across the four-year scheme.
- 2.13 The shopfront regeneration project was responsible for £306,206 of grant spend across the four-year programme and generated £187,734 in private sector investment.
- 2.14 Together the direct public sector investment leveraged through the HSHAZ capital grant scheme totalled £307,734, which was over three times the initial target for the programme and exceeded the Council's financial contribution to the scheme. While the increase in private sector investment was largely seen as the result of price inflation within the construction industry, it is also indicative of the willingness of Grantham town centre property owners to invest in the regeneration of the town centre.
- 2.15 Interpretation and engagement activity created through the scheme has proved popular. Including the development of the Grantham Trumps card game and the Trigge Library colouring book have proved popular and highlighted some of Grantham's lesser-known heritage gems.
- 2.16 During the programme delivery Grantham was nominated for both the Academy of Urbanism 'Great Town and Small City' award, and the Visa 'Talk of the Town – Rising Star' Award. In both instances the work delivered through the High Street Heritage Action Zone (amongst other projects) was cited as one of the reasons that the town became a finalist in both instances. While ultimately, both were awarded to other towns, achieving a place in the finals demonstrates the significance of the regeneration work being delivered in the town centre.

Section 2: High Street Heritage Action Zone Challenges

- 2.17 One of the most significant challenges with the delivery of the programme was the rigidity of delivery timescales and the inflexibility of spend between financial years.
- 2.18 The split of the grant funding across the four-year scheme was determined by Historic England's requirements and fixed when the grant was awarded in 2019. The programme mandated that 80% of the funding was allocated to the second and third years of delivery.
- 2.19 The scheme did not allow funding to be transferred between financial years, and as such any underspend within a financial year was lost.
- 2.20 This was a considerable challenge, particularly with regards to the delivery of capital projects in the second year of delivery, when property owners were hesitant to commit to significant project costs following the combined impacts of Covid-19, and the impact of inflation in the construction industry.
- 2.21 As a result, there was considerable underspend in the capital programme in the second year (2021/22).
- 2.22 While it was possible in some specific circumstances to negotiate exceptions, such as drawing down Historic England spend early against project delivery (such as with the Westgate Hall project) this process was protracted and could be utilised only in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.23 In 2022, Historic England changed their policy with regards to programme alterations, and as a result programmes no longer had the flexibility to reallocate funding from areas which were under performing to new projects. This limited the ability of the programme to utilise funding where projects delivered under budget, or where the delivery was unsuccessful, resulting in underspend.
- 2.24 Historic England recognise that the inability to transfer spend between years, and the reduction in flexibility and adaptability partway through the scheme proved a significant challenge to all projects and asked that this be reflected in the closure reports, so they are able to effectively pass on this feedback to the Treasury.
- 2.25 Another challenge in the programme was achieving the desired levels of community engagement throughout.
- 2.26 As a result, the community engagement strand of the programme delivery underperformed when compared to the capital programme. While those who did take part were very engaged and reported that they enjoyed and benefited from their involvement, despite widespread promotion attendance at community consultation events, or other activities was low, and this limited the effectiveness of consultation.

Section 3: Lessons Learnt

- 2.27 The HSHAZ was a great opportunity for learning, and some of the numerous lessons learned through the delivery of the programme are outlined in the formal Closure Report produced for Historic England, which has been included with this report as Appendix A.
- 2.28 In particular, the Committee's attention is drawn to the lessons learnt with regards to the Shopfront Regeneration Scheme.
- 2.29 A common criticism of the scheme has been that the majority of the funding for shopfront regeneration grants was awarded to one or two larger organisations within the town centre, and it was hard for independent property owners to access funding.
- 2.30 In some instances, this was due to the significant increase in cost of shopfront regeneration projects through the duration of the scheme, which made projects unviable for many independent property owners even with the grant support available.
- 2.31 All potential applicants were offered in person support in understanding the application process and completing the application. However, following a review of the scheme during the closure process, ways that any future scheme could be made more equitable and transparent for applicants were identified.
- 2.32 The HSHAZ Shopfront Regeneration scheme was an open programme, with no fixed deadlines for applications. Applications were accepted for projects up until the point that all grant funding had been allocated, essentially on a first come first served basis for eligible projects. This was in line with the operation of the previous shopfront scheme.
- 2.33 However, it is proposed that should it be possible to run a similar scheme again the grant programme be run in fixed application rounds rather than as an open programme. This would allow all applications to be assessed on merit against the other applications in that round.
- 2.34 This would not only provide a better assessment of value for money and enable more accurate forecasting of spend earlier in the year, but it would also remove the advantage for those organisations more familiar with applying for funding or with resource to develop projects more quickly.

Section 4: Financial Overview and Added Value

- 2.35 The original grant award from Historic England was £886,538. SKDC committed up to £375,660 in match funding to the scheme, with an overall funding ratio of

70% Historic England funding to 30% SKDC Match Funding.

- 2.36 Unfortunately, there was underspend in the delivery of the scheme resulting in the total grant received from Historic England being £672,719, and the total value of the Council's match funding being £284,652.
- 2.37 The majority of the underspend was linked to the capital grants programme. As was discussed previously in this report, there was underspend in the capital programme in the second year of the scheme, as projects which had been allocated funding were not able to complete within that year. This was largely due to unavoidable contractor or materials shortages but did have an ongoing impact on the delivery of the capital scheme.
- 2.38 In addition, there was an underspend of circa £62,000 in the final year of the capital programme as one of the projects (80 Westgate) was not able to complete as the result of unforeseen structural issues.
- 2.39 SKDC were able to continue supporting the delivery of the project by utilising retained underspend from the previous shopfront scheme, however, were not able to make a full claim to Historic England with respect of the HSHAZ programme.
- 2.40 There was also underspend in the community engagement programme as the result of the discontinuation of the Conduit Lane development project.
- 2.41 Historic England's restrictions prevented developing other projects which could utilise that funding within the financial year.
- 2.42 The final grant and match funding spend across the four-year programme was broken down as follows:

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Historic England Grant	£ 117,513	£ 160,505	£ 326,568	£ 68,133	£ 672,719
SKDC Match Funding	£ 3,637	£ 38,301	£ 121,858	£ 120,857	£ 284,652

- 2.43 As has been previously reported in this document, the level of private sector investment leveraged as a result of the scheme was considerably greater than initially forecast.
- 2.44 This was primarily as the result of the increase in the overall cost of construction works and materials which was seen through the duration of the scheme.

2.45 The total value of private sector investment leveraged directly as match funding to the scheme was £307,734 which was broken down as follows:

Project	Total Eligible Costs (excluding VAT and Contingency)	Total Grant Paid	Property Owners Contribution	Intervention Rate
74 Westgate	£ 49,031.50	£ 32,500.00	£ 16,531.50	66%
1 Market Place	£ 71,893.00	£ 32,500.00	£ 39,393.00	45%
21-22 Market Place	£ 87,930.15	£ 50,000.00	£ 37,930.15	57%
17-18 High Street	£ 110,273.00	£ 69,560.00	£ 40,713.00	63%
5 Market Place	£ 20,387.00	£ 14,463.00	£ 5,924.00	71%
68 Westgate	£ 29,700.00	£ 18,880.00	£ 10,820.00	64%
	£ 113,575.00 (incomplete - £25092 delivered through HSHAZ)	£18,631	£ 6461	n/a
80 Westgate	£ 99,633.00	£ 69,672.00	£ 29,961.00	70%
Westgate Hall	£ 420,000.00	£300,000.00	£120,000.00	71%

2.46 In addition to the direct public sector match funding outlined above, Historic England requested that that indirect third-party funding also be recorded for the purposes of identifying strategic added value to the grant investment. This could either be investment made by third parties as a direct result of taking part in the scheme, but not as direct match funding to grant aided projects (for example, additional work which took place in buildings which had received funding, but which was not included in the eligible costs for the project) or other investments as a result of the development of work delivered through the scheme.

2.47 This figure could include both investments made during the scheme, and investments influenced by the scheme to be delivered over the next 12 months (until March 2025).

2.48 The total additional value achieved through the Grantham HSHAZ totals over £370,000 which includes:

- Westgate Hall fit out conservatively estimated at £200,000 – £250,000
- Private sector investment to shopfronts/ commercial properties (additional investment) between 2020-2024: £ 68,000
- Private sector investment to shopfronts/ commercial properties (additional investment) forecast spend for 2024/25: £74,000.
- Arts Fund grant to Grantham Museum Reimagined project: £18,600
- Woodland Trust grant to SKDC for street greening feasibility study: £10,000

Section 5: Cultural Programme

2.49 In addition to the main strand of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, an associated community developed and delivered Cultural Programme was run.

2.50 This programme secured an additional £90,000 in funding from Historic England and National Lottery Heritage Fund. SKDC did not make a financial contribution

to the project.

- 2.51 In line with Historic England's requirements for the funding, the Cultural Consortium members took responsibility for the development and delivery of the scheme, with the Council acting as a conduit for funding and administrative support, but not as lead partner in the delivery of activity.
- 2.52 The 'Cultural Consortium' group made up of Grantham Arts, Grantham Dramatic Society, Grantham Community Heritage Association (Grantham Museum), Chantry Dance, St Wulfram's Church, and supported by the National Trust.
- 2.53 The programme was of mixed success, some of the projects delivered including the 'Festival of Angels' exceeded the expected levels of engagement, whereas other organisations including the Grantham Museum struggled to deliver the programmes as initially planned, and as a result devised alternate projects which were less demanding to their organisational capacity, but which also delivered less.
- 2.54 In total, 723 people took part in events and activity delivered through the programme, over the delivery of nine projects, which included art/ craft workshops, dance performances, guided tours, and the creation of arts facilities in the town centre. Although attendance numbers were not recorded, it is estimated that an additional 2000 people visited the Festival of Angels exhibition.
- 2.55 Many of the groups found that they had a significant decline in their volunteer numbers following the pandemic and reported difficulties in volunteer recruitment throughout. This proved a major challenge to the delivery of the programme and did reduce the capacity of a number of the organisations which took part.
- 2.56 Several of the projects resulted in a legacy which will extend beyond the duration of the scheme, in particular funding from the programme supported Grantham Dramatic Society in making improvements to their Westgate Hub, creating a rehearsal and events space which in the future will be available to both themselves and other community groups.
- 2.57 Grantham Arts were able to utilise funding to purchase equipment, including a kiln, which will become a bookable resource for other artists in Grantham, as well as supporting the ongoing legacy of their professional and community arts activity, based at Grantham Museum.
- 2.58 Grantham Museum's funding purchased a new community cabinet, which will provide a permanent space in the museum for community groups, schools, businesses, local history groups and other local organisations to display the heritage which is important to them.

- 2.59 Discussions with other Heritage Action Zone Project Officers in the Midlands region revealed the delivery of the cultural programmes to be among the weakest elements of delivery for most schemes, but those which operated best utilised the Cultural Consortium as a commissioning body to direct the arts and cultural activities, rather than as the delivery body from the outset.
- 2.60 This was a key lesson learnt through this programme, and should a similar opportunity arise in the future, this would be the recommended method of delivery.
- 2.61 In line with Historic England's requirements for grant closure, a qualitative evaluation report was produced. This has been included as Appendix B of this report.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The High Street Heritage Action Zone programme ran from 2020-2024, and delivery was impacted by major events including the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the national economic downturn, increased inflation and cost of living crisis.
- 3.2 Despite this, the programme succeeded in achieving the majority of its aims and outcomes identified in the original funding bid.
- 3.3 The project highlighted the importance of Grantham's historic environment as a key driver of the town's continued regeneration.
- 3.4 Although this funding stream has come to an end, SKDC officers will continue to pursue any available funding to support the regeneration of South Kesteven's town centres as appropriate. The lessons learnt through the delivery of this scheme will be valuable in influencing how any future programmes are developed and delivered.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 As this report provides an overview of the scheme for the purposes of project closure, there are no other options to consider.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 As a town centre regeneration programme delivered within by the Council's Economic Development team, the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme falls within the remit of The Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The presentation and endorsement of this completion report will allow for both the celebration of the completion of the scheme, but also crucially allow for lessons learnt through the delivery of the scheme to be acknowledged and noted for consideration in the development and delivery of future schemes.

6. Background Papers

6.1 *Update on Heritage Action Zone shop front improvements in Grantham* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 30th November 2023: (<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=727&MId=447>)

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix A: 'Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Closure Report A: Objectives, Lessons Learnt and Feedback'

7.2 Appendix B: 'Grantham HSHAZ Cultural Programme Evaluation Report'



Form Name: HSHAZ Closure Report A
 Submission Time: March 28, 2024 2:35 pm

HSHAZ Closure Report A: Objectives, lessons learned and feedback

Report version	Final Version
Report date	26/3/2024

Scheme details and contacts

Scheme name	Grantham
Scheme ID	HSM53
Name (of person submitting this report)	Claire Saunders
Your organisation name	South Kesteven District Council
Job title / role	High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager
Department	Economic Development
Email	claire.saunders@southkesteven.gov.uk
Organisation address	The Picture House St Catherines Road Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6TT

SECTION A - Your scheme

Question 1: Did any of your objectives change from your original Programme Design to final delivery? (include those that changed and/ or were not met).	Yes
Which objective changed?	<p>Objective 1: Revitalise the Historic Core, specifically : Public Realm Enhancements</p> <p>In the initial programme design public realm enhancements were outlined, which were to be driven by public consultation, but particularly focused within the Market Place.</p>

????How did it change? (i.e. in what way did it change from your original design)

The original project design included funding for limited public realm works which were to be identified and designed via public consultation, but largely focused on Market Place and Conduit lane.

However, in year two of the programme this element of was removed and the funding transferred to the Westgate Hall regeneration project.

Why did it change? (i.e. what circumstances led to the change)

There were three principal circumstances which led to the redesign of this element of the programme:

Firstly, SKDC succeeded in securing funding from the Future High Street Fund to deliver a wider and more substantial public realm programme in the area of the Market Place. As there needed to be clear delineation between the use of funding the HSHAZ and Future High Street Fund, it was no longer deemed appropriate to use the funding in the marketplace. Secondly, the impact of inflation on costs for any scheme meant that the modest amount of funding which had originally been allocated to public realm would not have resulted in an impactful or value for money scheme. Finally, following an options appraisal completed in the first year of delivery, the owner of Westgate Hall secured a tenant for the building who was in the position to contribute financially for fit out costs and support the regeneration of the building. It was therefore considered that utilising the funding to support meeting the conservation deficit on Westgate Hall, and the completion of necessary repair works which would facilitate the long-term use of the building, would have a greater and longer-term beneficial impact on both the historic building itself, and the regeneration of the town centre, than a very limited public realm scheme could achieve in isolation.

Add another?

Yes

Which objective changed?

Objective 2: Reinstate the original Architectural form of buildings within the town centre. Specifically: Gap Site Development Appraisal (part of the community design framework).

????How did it change? (i.e. in what way did it change from your original design)

Within the original programme design, budget was allocated to explore the potential for reinstating the original form of Grantham marketplace by the closure of Conduit Lane to traffic and enclosing the market square through the reinstatement of a building in the gap site created by the demolition of the Butter Market and Blue Sheep Inn in the 1950s.

This work included a feasibility study, heritage assessment and development appraisal. Considerable community consultation and engagement work was also planned, which would have included trial road closures.

However, following a change in direction from key stakeholders it was not possible to complete this element of work -although the feasibility study and development appraisal were completed.

Why did it change? (i.e. what circumstances led to the change)

As the authority responsible for highways in the district, Lincolnshire County Council were principal stakeholders for the project. Unfortunately, despite initial support and encouragement to investigate the potential of the future closure of Conduit Lane, they later withdrew their support for the project.

Without the backing of the County Council, it was not possible to pursue the project further.

While delivering community engagement and consultation in order to potentially build a case for the project, however, ultimately was considered community engagement around the project, including trial road closures, would be redundant and would result in residents and businesses being given a false impression of what it would be possible to deliver.

As a result, further work on this project relating specifically to Conduit Lane was removed from the programme.

Add another?

No

Description Area

Question 2: Tell us about your successes and challenges. Our work together set out to make lasting improvements to our historic high streets for the communities who use them. The aims and objectives in your logic model were designed to achieve this and make the high street a more attractive, energising and vibrant place for people to live, work and spend time.

i. Which objective has been successful?

Capital Grants for Repair and Reinstatement.

The delivery of this element of the programme supported Objective 1: Revitalise the Historic Core, and Objective 2: Reinstate the original architectural form of buildings within the town centre.

Why has it been successful?

The shopfront regeneration grant scheme (project 3) and the Westgate Hall regeneration project (project 5) both fell under the umbrella of this objective. Both were successful in delivering change to the High Street, improving the quality of Grantham's built heritage, and preserving that heritage for the future.

Of course, the delivery of the schemes was not without challenges, and these are discussed later in this report, however the benefits of the project have exceeded the physical regeneration of the buildings themselves.

Through the delivery of the scheme, we have improved relationships between property owners and the Local Authority, and now have a regular and active dialogue with those property owners who received funding.

Some of the property owners who received grant funding have continued to invest in their building stock and the historic environment beyond the scope of the grant funding.

Buckminster Estates, who own significant numbers of properties within the HSHAZ, have increased their investments in the town centre. This has included carrying out repair works to other shopfronts which did not receive grant funding, making internal improvements within vacant units, and converting vacant upper floor spaces to residential use or improving the quality of existing upper floor residential spaces, supported street greening efforts, and have become more actively involved in discussions around further regeneration of the town centre.

Within the district of South Kesteven, Grantham's historic environment often gets compared unfavourably to Stamford, which often leads to the perception that Grantham's heritage has been lost or is of low quality. Throughout the projects we have drawn attention to the abundance and quality of Grantham's historic buildings, and highlighted how through appropriate treatment and maintenance it can be utilised to support the town centre, and be a driver for civic and community pride.

Tenants of one of the shopfront regeneration scheme properties, 1 Market Place, reported anecdotally that following the shop front reinstatement on their property customers had highlighted the improved feel of the shop, and a perceived increase in quality in both the business and their merchandise.

The completion of works to Westgate Hall, which will support the ongoing regeneration of the grade II listed former corn exchange, have prevented further deterioration of the building. As part of the project local residents and community stakeholders were encouraged to share their memories of the place, and as a result we gained a greater depth of knowledge about the affection that people had for the building, and its importance to the community.

Although works to bring the building back into use continue beyond the scope of the HSHAZ programme, the funding which was crucial to the successful delivery the initial phases of works, kick started the reimaging of

the building, and reconstructed its links to the community after an extended period of vacancy and increasing dereliction.

Add another?	Yes
i. Which objective has been successful?	Engender a local sense of identity and pride through exploration and celebration of Grantham's rich heritage.
Why has it been successful?	<p>The HSHAZ programme provided the opportunity for us to engage residents and other stakeholders with Grantham's heritage on multiple levels.</p> <p>What proved particularly successful were opportunities which engaged people with the town's heritage for the first time.</p> <p>Projects including the Grantham Trump Cards project which highlighted 62 of Grantham's historic buildings through a familiar card game format, and the Trigge library colouring book which celebrates the towns historic chained library which dates from 1592.</p> <p>Prior to the HSHAZ scheme, there was a belief among residents that the majority of the town's heritage had been lost or fallen victim to post war redevelopment. However, these projects offered an easy access way for residents and visitors to begin to explore the town's history, and feedback received often highlighted that these projects introduced people to aspects of the town's heritage that they were not previously aware of.</p> <p>Likewise, the introduction of a digital trail of the town has provided another mechanism by which people have been able to explore heritage within the town.</p> <p>All of these projects are long lasting and will continue to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to discover Grantham's heritage beyond the lifetime of the HSHAZ programme.</p> <p>While it was unfortunate that participation in consultation activities such as the community charrette was lower than anticipated, those who did take part gave very positive feedback on the events and commented that they were very appreciative of the opportunity to shape thinking about future regeneration works in the town.</p> <p>The events highlighted that there is a lot to be proud about as a Grantham resident, business owner or other stakeholder, but that it is incumbent upon the local authority to be consistent and positive about that messaging to continue overcoming local pessimism about the town.</p>
Add another?	No
ii. Which objective has been challenging?	<p>Capital Grants for Repair and Reinstatement.</p> <p>The delivery of this element of the programme supported Objective 1: Revitalise the Historic Core, and Objective 2: Reinstate the original architectural form of buildings within the town centre.</p>

Why has it been challenging?

In many ways, this objective was successful, however it was not without challenges for delivery.

When the programme design was submitted a target of 12 shopfront regeneration projects was set, however the dramatic increase in costs for materials seen in the early years of the project, and the ongoing high levels of inflation which were experienced throughout the project meant that the originally planned maximum grant of £25,000 per storefront was not sufficient to make the works viable in many cases.

In mitigation SKDC secured agreement to lift the cap on the value of individual grants (while maintaining the maximum intervention rates), and while this did encourage uptake of grants, for some property owners, particularly smaller independent landlords the grants were still not able to meet the viability gap on completing the works.

Navigating the national shortage of suitably qualified contractors was also a challenge. It often took longer than expected for grant applicants to be able to secure the required three quotes, and when a contractor was appointed, there was a high likelihood that they would also be working on other HSHAZ projects elsewhere meaning that project timetables were often extended.

The strict end of financial year deadlines for spend also proved challenging to navigate and were off putting to some potential applicants who were less able to absorb any loss in funding due to an overrun in project timeline, which is not atypical when working on historic buildings.

Had it been possible to carry forward underspend into subsequent financial years, the grant programme would have been more successful and far reaching, and underspend would have been significantly minimised.

The required profiling of the funding across the four years of the project also proved to be a challenge within the delivery of the capital scheme. The requirement for the majority of funding to be spent in years two and three of the programme meant that some property owners felt there was pressure to apply when they were not ready to do so given the wider economic context, and therefore dropped out. Conversely a number of property owners missed out on funding as they enquired about the scheme too late in the programme, even though there had been underspend in previous years which could have been utilised to deliver their schemes if the majority of funds had been profiled in year three and four instead.

Add another?

Yes

ii. Which objective has been challenging?

Objective 5: Engage the community in the development or the town centre.

Why has it been challenging?

At the outset of the scheme a comprehensive community engagement plan was produced by SKDC, however, this ultimately proved challenging to implement and the community engagement strand of the programme became the weakest element of project delivery.

Unsurprisingly, the Covid 19 pandemic had significant impact on the ability to deliver community engagement activity in the first year of the scheme, and there was continued reticence from some demographics of residents to participate at in person events through the second year of delivery.

In general, these were older people who considered themselves to be more vulnerable, but who were also less likely to choose to engage with alternative presentations, such as online talks, workshop sessions and consultations.

One major element of planned public engagement work focused on the development appraisal for Conduit Lane and the potential for closing the road.

Within the original scheme plan comprehensive community consultation was planned, as were trial road closures.

However, following a change in strategy from within Lincolnshire County Council Highways team it was apparent that it would not be possible for this work to be brought to completion, and that public consultation would be abortive and potentially raise expectations which could not be met.

In general, there was a hesitancy among residents to take part in consultation and engagement activities. While those who did take part found them to be beneficial and enjoyable, participation and attendance was lower than anticipated and desired.

Along with external political changes, there was also a significant internal restructure within SKDC. Initially the scheme was being delivered by InvestSK (then SKDC's Economic development Company). Following a formal restructure in 2020/21 the team was downsized which resulted in a loss of capacity from the project team as originally outlined in the programme design. In 2022 InvestSK was folded, and the staff bought back in house as the SKDC Economic Development team.

While it was beneficial that the High Street Heritage Action Zone Project manager remained consistent throughout the project delivery, other staff changes resulted in a reduction in overall capacity and impacted the ability to deliver the community engagement elements of the scheme.

Finally, the introduction of restrictions in delivering 'new' projects, which were not specifically included in the original scheme plan partway through the delivery of the HSAZ reduced our ability to be flexible in our approach to engagement and adapt to make use of the underspend in other areas of the community engagement strand, such as the discontinuation of works supporting the potential closure of Conduit Lane.

CLL

Add another?

No

Description Area

Question 3: Tell us what lessons you have learned through the delivery of your scheme
We want to learn from the valuable insights and experiences you have gained in delivering your scheme.

i. Reflecting on your successes - what lessons have you learned that will inform your ongoing work and the advice you would give to others working in heritage-led high street regeneration?

The HSHAZ programme has provided a wonderful platform for learning, and in particular will shape approaches to local regeneration projects going forward.

In particular, the successful projects highlighted the following key lessons:

- Early and consistent engagement with stakeholders is crucial

Engagement with stakeholders began before the start of the project, as part of the development phase. This allowed us to affectively shape our proposals to respond to local need and desires for the preservation and promotion of Grantham's historic environment.

As the programme worked to tight timelines for delivery of projects, early engagement was critical to give stakeholders time to develop projects and submit funding applications. This was especially important for the capital projects which had a reasonably extensive lead in time before they could begin delivery, encompassing design, planning and procurement.

Continued engagement throughout the process not only gave confidence to grant recipients, particularly applicants who had not previously received grant funding in any form ; but also ensured that any problems or risks to the project could be addressed early and quickly resolved.

Early engagement was also beneficial for the project board, as they were able to fully understand the complexity of projects and build good relationships with partners.

- The project officer should be able to offer in person assistance and remain available throughout.

For several of the participants in the scheme - particularly those applying for capital grants, this was their first experience of applying for funding, and completing an application form was somewhat daunting. By having a project officer who was knowledgeable about the scheme, and about the requirements of historic buildings, available to potential applicants they were able to receive comprehensive support and fully understand the commitment they were making.

While it is not always possible to achieve, it was useful that the same project officer was responsible for delivery throughout, meaning that participants were encouraged and supported by a consistent, trusted point of direct contact.

- A flexible approach is required.

With all projects in the historic environment a degree of flexibility and pragmatism was required from all parties to ensure that projects were delivered effectively. This was particularly crucial within capital projects as works to historic buildings almost always result in unforeseen issues which require solutions.

- Create multiple opportunities to engage at different levels

Throughout the project we were conscious of ensuring opportunities for

people to engage with the town's heritage at various levels. For some the project acted as an introduction to Grantham's historic buildings, places, and social history, and for others who were already well versed in the town it was an opportunity to share and develop their knowledge. This was really beneficial when it came to delivering public engagement and strengthening community buy into the scheme.

- Be an advocate and ambassador for your town/ community

The perception of Grantham among residents is often of a failing town with little to redeem it, however, while this is far from the truth it was often a significant barrier to engagement.

It was crucial that the project officer, and wider project team become effective ambassadors for the town, and while acknowledging that challenges remain, be consistent in highlighting opportunities and celebrating the town to encourage a greater buy in from local stakeholders. It was also important to ensure that the project officer was an advocate for community voices, particularly those who felt that their opinions were not typically included in discussions.

- Demonstrate trust and forward movement

While delivering community engagement activity such as the Community Charrette event, we received feedback that residents of Grantham had seen multiple masterplans and strategies being produced in recent years, with very little being delivered as a result.

This dissuaded some people from taking part as they did not see value for their time.

It was important to demonstrate how the information generated through the community events would be utilised, to build greater trust with the community.

It was also important to highlight that when there have been opportunities for forward movement on issues raised by the community, such as working with the Woodland Trust on options to improving street greening, that these options are being pursued.

However, it is important to be open and transparent around expectation management. By being clear about the potential timeframes involved for the development and delivery of change, and the obstacles that are faced by the community and the local authority in delivering regeneration, participants were more likely to offer up ideas and solutions with the understanding that they may be part of a long-term

ii. Reflecting on your challenges - what lessons have you learned that will inform your ongoing work and the advice you would give to others working in heritage-led high street regeneration?

While the capital grant schemes within the HSHAZ were generally successful, feedback received from local stakeholders indicated that smaller, independent property owners found it more difficult to access the scheme - and this was borne out by the completed applications which were received.

While some of this was due to the economic climate during the delivery period of the HSHAZ scheme, and independent property owners being less confident that they could absorb any additional expense compared to Grantham's larger estate holders; we believe that the the structure of the grant allocation process may inadvertently resulted in greater difficulties for independent property owners to access funding.

When the scheme was developed it was decided that to benefit from continuity, it would be operated in the same manner as the previous Shopfront improvement scheme which was funded through a Historic England PSiCA Scheme, which had run from 2015 -2020.

As a result, we had an open application process with no fixed deadlines, and expressions of interest were accepted and evaluated as they were submitted, until the point that the funding was fully allocated.

While our intent was to deliver a funding programme which was easy access to all, and all applicants were offered one to one support in completing expression of interest and applications; it is apparent that the result was that larger estate holders who had greater organisational capacity were able to submit applications earlier on in the process, while independent property owners tended to submit later when the majority of the funding had been allocated, or missed out entirely.

Having learnt from this experience, should we be able to run a similar project in the future it would be recommended that the grant application process be run in distinct rounds, with all the applications accepted in that round being assessed at the same point.

This would allow all applicants a similar timeframe to develop projects, but also allow for the applications to be assessed on their merits against one another, rather than simply if they did or did not meet the eligibility criteria for available funding.

Community Engagement efforts would have benefitted from a longer lead in time, not just in terms of supporting promotion, but also to allow project officers to deepen relationships with stakeholders prior to requiring their involvement in consultation.

The impact of the pandemic was deeply felt by Grantham's community stakeholders, particularly on smaller community groups and schools which saw a reduction in capacity and a significant increase in demand, limiting

their capacity or interest in engaging with the project.

While it would be hoped that should we have the opportunity to run a similar project in the future, the same pressures would not apply - nonetheless this programme would have benefitted from scheduling the large community engagement activities such as the Charrette, later in the delivery of the programme.

This would also have had the benefit of being able to demonstrate delivery of projects on the ground and build on a sense of momentum for the continued regeneration of the town.

Description Area

Question 4: Tell us how the 3 HSHAZ programme strands have worked together. The 3 strands are: Physical Interventions, Cultural Programme and Community Engagement.

Using the 5 star rating, rate how well the 3 programme strands have worked together in the delivery of your scheme (i.e. Physical Interventions, Cultural Programme and Community Engagement)

Tell us more about how the strands have worked together to explain your rating.

Throughout the programme there were opportunities for the community to become involved in the delivery of physical interventions through consultations and calls for research. This was particularly effective with the Westgate Hall project when community members were asked to share their memories and history of the building to support the options appraisal and feasibility study.

It unfortunate that one of the most closely linked projects in terms of community engagement and physical intervention - that of the Condit Lane development appraisal was not able to be delivered as envisaged due to the change in political support for the project, and this considerably lessened opportunities for the strands to work together.

As has been previously discussed in this report, the community engagement strand was a weaker aspect of delivery within the scheme, and in general participation was lower than anticipated. However, considerable learning has been taken from this, and this will continue to impact and shape consultation and engagement about regeneration within Grantham going forward.

Some aspects of the cultural programme exceeded expectations and effectively reignited conversation of what Grantham's town centre could be. The programme demonstrated both the depth of talent within the town centre, and a desire for heritage, arts and culture to be at the forefront of regeneration within the town.

While there are areas where the delivery of the cultural programme could have been more strongly and clearly linked to the delivery of physical interventions in the town centre, it served to highlight the quality and quantity of heritage which remains in the town and to begin to overcome perceptions that much of Grantham's heritage has been lost.

By being given multiple opportunities to engage with and explore Grantham's heritage, the community have underlined how important they consider the historic environment to be in the continued regeneration of the town, which will be carried forward into future projects.

Question 5: What opportunities and threats do you see to your ongoing work in heritage-led regeneration of your high street in the next 5-10 years? (focusing on the area as defined by your HSHAZ boundary polygon).

There are significant opportunities for heritage-led regeneration within Grantham in the short term with the continued delivery of the Future High Street Fund programme, which has been extended into 2025.

This will include extensive public realm works in Marketplace which will create a more unified space and reestablish the marketplace as the heart of the town. This will be accompanied by a programme of events and activities which will re-enliven the historic core of the town and support the regeneration of the town's historic market.

As well as increasing the footfall and usage of Marketplace, this will allow us to continue public engagement and consultation about the regeneration of these spaces and develop projects which will highlight and preserve the historic environment for the benefit of local communities and the economy. There will be opportunity to capitalise on the reduction in traffic (especially HGV traffic) in the town centre which is expected following the completion and opening of the Grantham Southern Relief Road (anticipated in 2025). Throughout the consultation and engagement which took place as part of the HSHAZ programme, community members and stakeholders highlighted a clear desire for there to be a stronger focus on pedestrian travel and accessibility to the town centre.

While this stopped short of a clear preference for pedestrianisation of town centre areas, it will be important to maximise the potential for improvements to the pedestrian experience before the benefits of reduced traffic are lost to the expected increase in population over the next 10 - 20 years.

The delivery of shopfront regeneration in the town centre has been powerful in highlighting the benefits of a well-maintained historic environment to businesses, and there continues to be strong interest in support for improvements to historic buildings within the HSHAZ, and also along gateway routes.

SKDC will seek to maximise on this opportunity by seeking alternative funding to continue to support these impactful regeneration efforts within the town.

The programme has also highlighted a desire for increased access to arts and culture within the town centre. The cultural programme was beneficial in beginning to create a network and has also left a legacy of enhanced facilities; however, it is apparent that there is a continued interest and a wider cohort of arts and cultural practitioners who are looking to base permanent activity in the town centre.

This provides an opportunity to build on the work completed to date and support these practitioners in creating a strong arts and cultural presence, both to develop professionally, but also as key facilitators of cultural activities which will support footfall, generate civic pride, and celebrate both Grantham's heritage and its future.

Through the community engagement strand of the HSHAZ a clear desire for enhanced greening in the town centre became apparent. This has created an opportunity for SKDC to work with the Woodland Trust, who have their head office in Grantham, to develop a partnership approach to improving greening within the town centre. This has already begun with the

Woodland Trust committing £10,000 of funding to support the development of a feasibility study.

The grade II* George shopping centre which links Westgate to the High Street is both an opportunity and threat to the regeneration of the town centre. The former coaching inn was converted into offices and a shopping centre in the 1990s, however now is almost entirely vacant and is responsible for approximately half of the town centre's retail vacancy. The building has incredible regeneration potential should the property owners be willing to engage with the local authority and invest in the future of the property, however if they are unwilling or unable to do so, and the building continue to deteriorate, it will have a disproportionately negative impact on both the economic regeneration of the town centre, and its historic environment.

The largest threat to the regeneration of the town centre - heritage led or otherwise is the continued reduction in resourcing and funding of Local Authorities and partner organisations which persists in undermining the regeneration which could be achieved. While in some areas it has been possible to leverage additional support through Levelling Up funding, South Kesteven is not a priority area for investment (despite Grantham's high levels of deprivation), and therefore has not been able to access additional funding to continue the positive work undertaken so far.

Should momentum be lost for the regeneration of the town it will prove a far greater challenge to gain community support any buy in for future efforts. Shortage of suitably trained and qualified heritage contractors is also an issue, and currently the pool of available contractors in the region is diminishing, which will continue to make the delivery of heritage led schemes challenging.

Section B – Your feedback to Historic England

Description Area	Guidance on this section: Use the 5 star rating to rate your response as follows: 1 star = Very poor, 2 stars = Poor, 3 stars = OK, 4 stars = Good, 5 stars = Excellent
Description Area	Question 1: How useful have Historic England's staff, templates, website resources and other sources of information been in supporting you in the following activities during delivery of your HSHAZ?
Project management	4
Explain your answer	<p>Throughout the project SKDC's HSHAZ project manager received comprehensive support and guidance from both the Historic England HSHAZ Project officers (Ross McGivern and Rachel Foy) as well as the Principal Advisor (Clive Fletcher).</p> <p>Regular communication with them throughout the project enabled effective delivery and allowed the appropriate and where necessary rapid management of change.</p> <p>However, the uncertainty around governance and delay in receiving Programme guidance in the very beginning of the project did delay an effective start to programme delivery, although it is understood that this was largely due to the impact of Covid-19 on operational capacity.</p>
Technical conservation advice or guidance	5
Explain your answer	<p>The Historic England team were exceptionally knowledgeable and supportive in sharing knowledge and advising on technical conservation matters. This was of particular benefit to the scheme during periods in which the SKDC conservation officer post was vacant.</p> <p>The high-quality published guidance available from Historic England was very useful, especially to be able to share this with grant recipients as clear examples of expectations and best practice.</p>
Financial and grant management	4
Explain your answer	<p>In general the support received around financial and grant management aspects of the scheme were excellent, and the guidance and resources available made grant management straightforward.</p>
Peer to peer learning opportunities and networking	3

Explain your answer	There were great opportunities for online networking across the midlands region, which resulted in our own self directed project officer group meeting regularly, however this could have been improved by more opportunities for networking across all the HSHAZ projects nationally as well as regionally.
Training videos (e.g. how to run an area scheme)	3
Explain your answer	These were very useful as refreshers throughout the project, but the live sessions were more useful for initial learning and development.
Stakeholder engagement and community outreach	4
Explain your answer	Good training was provided as well as opportunities to learn from other schemes in the initiation phase of the programme. It would have been beneficial if there had been more opportunities to share examples of successful outreach approaches throughout.
Marketing and branding advice and assets	3
Explain your answer	Guidance was clear, and templates were easily accessible. The design service was brilliant and added much needed capacity to our inhouse designer to support the HSHAZ programme.
	However, Cultural Consortium members did not always find the cultural programme resources easy to navigate independently.
Description Area	Question 2: How well has the way we have worked supported you in the delivery of your scheme?
Swiftness of providing information and responding to queries	4
Explain your answer	The project officer and lead officers were very responsive to queries and forthcoming with advice, which was of considerable support to the delivery of the project. There were clear lines of communication, and regular support meetings.
	However, written information and guidance was often slow to be developed and delivered
Clarity of information and messaging	3

Explain your answer	In general information was clear and precise, however at times written guidance was slow to be delivered, and frequently changed/ updated after its release which impacted the delivery of certain areas of the programme management, in particular reporting requirements, requests for additional information, and changes in deadlines.
Range of communication channels	4
Explain your answer	<p>The range of communication options was very good, and enabled the HSHAZ project manager and other relevant officers to find information quickly and efficiently.</p> <p>However, the Knowledge Hub site was not particularly useful beyond a repository for information, however as the majority of the information available through the site was also emailed directly to project officers so in most cases it was not necessary to use the site to access the information.</p>
Proactive signposting to wider resources	3
Explain your answer	Historic England project officers and project leads were very useful in sharing and signposting wider resources when needed, and also to support professional development throughout the course of the four-year programme.
Relevant events and training	3
Explain your answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the first year of delivery the training which was offered was very relevant and supported the delivery of the programme, however later on in the project some of the training offered was either less relevant, or related to elements of the project which were either well underway or which had completed, and so were less useful.
Opportunity for professional networking 3 (e.g. events and online communities)	
Explain your answer	Throughout there were good opportunities for professional networking, however the most common elements of this focused on the regional areas, and although this led to the creation of strong local networks, more opportunities to network across the national scheme would have been beneficial
Effective problem solving related to the delivery of your scheme	5

Explain your answer

The support of historic England staff was essential in supporting problem solving within the scheme. They were readily available to discuss any issues and work through potential solutions to find assist in finding a satisfactory solution for all.

Within the Grantham project this was evidenced particularly strongly in relation to the Westgate Hall regeneration project, which regularly experienced difficulties in delivery which benefited from the support and experience of the Historic England team.

**General expertise and experience within 5
the Historic England team****Explain your answer**

The level of expertise shown by the team supporting the Grantham project was considerable and gave great confidence to both the Grantham project manager, and the project board - which included senior officers and Councillors.

The advice given by Historic England staff allowed the Project Manager to feel completely confident in communications with key stakeholders and property owners and was of great benefit to the project overall.

Question 3: Tell us about any other examples where you have felt supported through our work and/ or the information we have provided

The most significant example of support from Historic England staff was in the development phase of the Westgate Hall regeneration project. Initially the support from Historic England staff was invaluable in facilitating a transfer of budget which has originally been allocated to the delivery of a small public realm project, to support a substantial grant for the capital works to the property. Additionally, the support from the Historic England team (principally Clive Fletcher and Ross McGivern), and their external verification of the proposed benefits of the project was beneficial in securing the support of the Council's cabinet to approve the grant.

Although a relatively clear path had been laid out through an options appraisal and feasibility study which was completed in 2020/21, the impact of rapidly inflating costs and of the scope of the required works was very concerning to the property owner, who had a limited and fixed budget to contribute to the project and was understandably cautious of overextending themselves financially.

However, with a future tenant in place who is willing to contribute funding to the fit out of the building for use as a restaurant, the property owner was keen not to miss the opportunity for support.

Following the tender process for the capital works, it became apparent that the scope of the scheme would have to scaled back to be able to achieve a successful result. Technical advice provided by Historic England was invaluable in supporting the decision-making process.

Following the initiation of the project, continued involvement of the Historic England team in site visits and meetings provided additional support to the Grantham HSHAZ Project Manager, and confidence to the property owner that impartial expert advice was available to them.

Similarly, involvement of the Historic England team in supporting the project board and attending meetings as advisors facilitated decision making.

Question 4: Other than what you have shared above, what else could Historic England do to further enhance partner organisations' capacity to deliver effectively?

Thorough the delivery of the programme guidance from Historic England about their requirements for delivery often changed, which made predicting outcomes, and reacting to risk or opportunities within the programme difficult.

This included changing stance on the inclusion of new projects to address underspend or unforeseen circumstances which could have minimised underspend and opened up new opportunities for community engagement.

While it is acknowledged that as this is first round of HSHAZ projects to be delivered by Historic England, there was inevitably learning being implemented throughout on both sides of delivery which would likely not be the case as often in any subsequent repeats of the scheme, an increased consistency in approach would be beneficial to effective delivery.

The turnover of staff at Historic England towards the end of the project reduced the level of support available. While the Historic England officers who took over the roles of departing staff were excellent, they naturally were less familiar with the projects and the complicating factors inhibiting delivery, so support was less effective.

Important information before you submit form

Description Area	By submitting this report, I confirm the information provided has been verified and approved by this scheme's Senior Responsible Officer or equivalent person within this scheme's governance arrangements.?
Name (of person submitting this report form)	Claire Saunders
Name of Senior Responsible Officer or equivalent who has verified and approved this report for submission	Nick Hibberd, Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment
Signature (of person submitting this report form)	

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HSM_53: GRANTHAM 'ARTS AND EXPLORATION': HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE CULTURAL PROGRAMME NARRATIVE EVALUATION REPORT

Introduction

The High Street Heritage Action Zone cultural programme provided a fantastic opportunity to bring together a number of creatives and cultural organisations within Grantham and bring art and culture to the town centre, to celebrate the town's heritage and explore hopes for the future.

Grantham benefits from a vibrant arts community, encompassing many disciplines, and many of our local artists, creatives, and cultural organisations expressed an interest informing the Cultural Consortium during the initial bidding process for the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme in 2019.

These groups formed the basis of the Grantham Cultural Consortium going forward and were responsible for the development and implementation of the cultural programme. The Grantham Cultural Consortium was made up of:

- **Grantham Dramatic Society**
- **Grantham Community Heritage Association (Grantham Museum)**
- **Grantham Arts**
- **Chantry Dance Company**
- **St Wulfram's Church**
- **National Trust**

The 'Grantham: Arts and Exploration' programme was designed to engage residents and visitors to the town centre with arts and heritage in a new way, and to provide opportunities for people to develop skills, and enjoy creative activity both for the duration of the scheme and beyond.

The programme set out six aims, and through this evaluation document the extent to which they were successful will be explored and determined.

The aims and intended outcomes outlined during programme development were as follows:

- **Aim 1: Explore, highlight and celebrate the heritage of Grantham, in support of the main HSHAZ programme**

Intended outcome: The Grantham community will have a greater understanding and appreciation of the town's heritage, and of the economic and social benefits of retaining, restoring, and preserving heritage assets.

- **Aim 2: Deliver an exciting programme of cultural activity within the Heritage Action Zone.**

Intended outcome: Between January 2021 and December 2023 members of the Cultural Consortium will curate and deliver an integrated programme of varied cultural activity, inspired by the built and social heritage of Grantham. The programme will bring vibrancy to the town centre and create memorable experiences.

- **Aim 3: Engage all those who live, visit and work in Grantham thorough opportunities to participate.**

Intended outcome: The Grantham community will have opportunity to participate in the creation and delivery of the cultural programme and will have multiple opportunities to take part. A range of activities will be developed to engage people with different interests and levels of experience.

- **Aim 4: Create dedicated, accessible spaces for cultural activity**

Intended outcome: Dedicated spaces for creative activity in the town centre will be created, allowing groups and individuals within and beyond the cultural consortium access to equipment, rehearsal and performance space etc. These spaces will support the delivery of activity within the programme and provide continuing legacy beyond 2024, supporting the diversification of the town centre.

- **Aim 5: Increase the capacity and sustainability of cultural organisations and community groups**

Intended outcome: Members of the cultural consortium, along with other cultural organisations in the community will benefit from increased capacity through the creation of a cultural network. New delivery and commercial models will have been tested to support long term sustainability. The programme will also provide opportunity for professionals in the cultural and creative industries to benefit from paid commissions.

- **Aim 6: Increase the diversity of volunteers, participants and audiences.**

Intended outcome: A wide and diverse audience will be supported through the range and variation of activity available. Performances and activity will be provided free of charge, reducing barriers to participation. The delivery of cultural activity in town centre spaces will encourage participation from individuals and groups who may not usually engage in creative activity in more traditional settings such as theatres and museums. Opportunities for individuals to translate new or existing interests into volunteering or wider participation will be highlighted throughout, supporting an increase in capacity.

Project Overviews

The programme secured funding for nine projects which were developed and delivered by the members of the consortium. Each organisation (except for the National Trust, who remained a member of the Consortium in an advisory capacity) submitted project proposals as part of the project development process, which would align with one or more of the overarching aims. The

proposals were then assessed by the consortium using a scoring matrix and the highest scoring proposals were selected and put forward as part of the funding bid in December 2020.

Each of the proposals which secured funding through the process was then delivered directly by the relevant group or groups within the consortium.

- **Festival of Angels (St Wulfram's Church)**

The Festival of Angels was the first of the Grantham Cultural projects to be delivered. Local artists worked with the community to create large, dramatic angel sculptures which were displayed in St Wulfram's church.

The project was a reflection of the town through Covid 19, and peoples hopes and aspirations for the future.

It opened in November 2021 and ran through to February.

- **Westgate Hub (Grantham Dramatic Society)**

In 2019 Grantham Dramatic Society (GDS) took a lease on an extensive, long term vacant property to the rear of a café in Grantham town centre (84 Westgate), with the aim of bringing back into use as a community performing arts hub and exhibition space.

Through the cultural programme, GDS were able to complete works to install a kitchen, renovate toilets including the addition of an accessible toilet. In addition, the project supported the digitisation of the GDS archive which will be made available to the public.

- **Heritage Walks (Grantham Dramatic Society)**

Heritage Walks was a programme of guided heritage walks with volunteers portraying historical figures from Grantham's past to explore the town's history.

- **Heritage Touring (Grantham Dramatic Society)**

The heritage touring project was originally included within the project bid. The ambition was for the society to tour a performance linked to Grantham's heritage in local venues other than traditional theatre spaces. The ambition was to be able to connect with audiences who would not normally attend theatre performances.

Unfortunately, due to a significant lack of volunteers following the Covid pandemic, GDS were not able to deliver this element of the project work, and the project was removed from the programme.

- **Community Print (Grantham Arts)**

The Community Print project, delivered by Grantham Arts gave local residents the opportunity to develop new skills and explore Grantham's built heritage through the medium of Lino Cut prints. Participants took part in four sessions, learning lino cut and printing techniques which culminated in them creating artworks featuring Grantham's historic and buildings and landmarks.

The process was adapted to deliver workshops which were accessible to adults with learning disabilities.

The resulting artworks were exhibited at Grantham Museum.

- **Community Ceramics (Grantham Arts)**

Within the original funding bid, the community ceramics project, delivered by Grantham Arts was due to create 12 large vessels which would be decorated by local community groups to depict

Grantham's heritage and their hopes for the town's future.

However, the project suffered from a number of delays, which will be discussed later in this report, and as a result was reshaped to allow works to complete in a shorter timeframe.

Ultimately the group delivered the 'My Grantham Family' project, which encouraged members of the public to create ceramic representations of their families, which were displayed in shop windows within the HSAZ.

Ultimately, this allowed for a greater level of engagement with people who would not ordinarily take part in cultural activities, and attract a wider demographic generally, as people were able to take part in drop-in sessions, rather than being required to commit to multiple sessions over several weeks to create a finished piece.

- **Community Exhibition Program (Grantham Community Heritage Association)**

The original programme plan was for the cultural programme to fund a programme of exhibitions which would be co-curated by the Grantham Community. However, the museum team suffered from a significant loss of capacity following the pandemic as volunteers did not return to the museum following its reopening. Despite best efforts of the museum team, they have not been able as yet to rebuild the number of volunteers and therefore did not have the capacity to deliver the exhibition programme.

With the agreement of Historic England, the project was reconfigured to focus on less people intensive activities – the creation of a Grantham Timeline, which will be on permanent display in the museum, and the creation of a community cabinet, where local individuals, groups and societies will be welcome to create their own exhibitions about elements of Grantham's history which are important to them.

These elements were delivered late in the programme, and have yet to reach their full impact, however as permanent elements of the museum's offer, they will serve as a legacy to the project.

- **Ghost Dances (Chantry Dance)**

Chantry dance is a multi-award-winning dance company based in Grantham. As part of the cultural programme, they were inspired by the music of Grantham born composer Nicholas Maw, and in particular the Ghost Dances suite.

Through the project they created and performed a new piece based on the themes of dreams and memory.

They also delivered workshops exploring the same themes through movement and dance.

- **Capacity Building (All)**

The final element included within the Cultural Programme budget was an annual budget which the consortium members could self-direct to support their development and build organisational resilience, for example, to facilitate training of fund membership to professional organisations.

Unfortunately, this was the area of the project which was least successful. Despite regular prompting and encouragement to take up this opportunity, only one of the groups – Chantry Dance – utilised the training budget. The failure of this element of the project resulted in an underspend across the scheme.

Programme achievements

The Grantham Arts and Exploration Programme delivered some significant achievements, and a programme of activities which encouraged residents and visitors to learn about the town's heritage and look at the place in a new light.

The **Festival of Angels** at St Wulfram's church was the first event delivered through the programme. Three local professional artists were commissioned to create 10 angel sculptures which were then exhibited within the church. 180 volunteers supported their creation over 11 community workshops. Community groups which took part included Positive Futures, a group which supports children from deprived communities in Grantham; South Lincolnshire Blind Society, and the Daybreak Centre, which supports young adults with disabilities. Nine students from Grantham College chose to work on the project as part of their work experience requirements.

For many of the participants, the project was a period of reflection and coming together marking a new beginning following the impacts of the Covid 19 Pandemic. Participants were given the opportunity to record and share their hopes and wishes for the future, which were displayed during the festival.

100 people attended the launch event for the festival, and although the church was not able to record exact visitor numbers over the period that the sculptures were displayed (as the church is open access) St Wulfram's Christmas Tree Festival and winter ice rink took place during the period the angels were displayed, which was visited by over 2000 people.

Visitors feedback was exceptionally positive. While St Wulfram's church has a reputation for hosting art exhibitions, many of these are professional pieces, such as Luke Jerram's 'Museum of the Moon', large scale community projects are much less likely to take place – largely due to the cost implications.

The project was very successful in encouraging residents who might not ordinarily have visited St Wulfram's, and even those who were regular visitors to experience the place in a new way.

Feedback received from visitors included:

- "The angels are breath-taking."
- "The angels are amazing!"
- "The angels are so very moving. It provoked a very emotional response. Well done to those who made this beautiful festival of Angels happen."
- "Festival a delight – thank you."

There was mixed success for the projects led by Grantham Dramatic Society were, overall, they did achieve many of the aims of the project as a whole, but there are areas where they were not able to achieve the full scope of their ambitions for the project.

Across both the **Westgate Hub and Heritage Walks projects**, the Society recorded over 800 volunteer hours. The Westgate Hub project was particularly successful and supported the creation of a permanent base for the GDS in the town centre, as well as creating accessible facilities which will be made available to other groups and organisations.

The project supported the installation of level flooring, refurbished toilets, including the addition of

an accessible toilet and the installation of a kitchen. This has allowed the GDS hub, at the rear of 84 Westgate to host social events and coffee mornings both for members of the society and the wider community.

The creation of community spaces for art and culture within the town centre was a key aim on the project overall, and the creation of the Westgate Hub.

The Heritage Walk programme delivered seven walks which were attended by 67 people. Another 50 people were engaged in conversations about the town's heritage but were not formally participating in the tour themselves.

Feedback received was very positive and included:

- I had no idea there were so many historical figures associated with Grantham.”
- “Found the walk really fascinating.”
- “Learned so much on the walk.”
- “The walk was amazing, thank you. I loved seeing you all dressed up.”

This feedback highlights what is often found in Grantham. Members of the public -especially long-term residents - are quick to write the town off as being uninteresting and unimportant, but when provided with accessible and fun opportunities to learn about the town's heritage, begin to see it in a new light.

The heritage walk programme had a considerable underspend as GDS were not able to deliver all of the walk elements as originally planned. As a result the total grant expenditure on this element of the project was only £233. The remainder of the budget for this project – totalling £1603 was transferred to the delivery of the Westgate Hub project to ensure that it remained deliverable following the impact of inflation on project costs.

Ghost Dances provided opportunity to explore the works of Nicholas Maw, a Grantham born composer who, despite being considered among the country's pre-eminent post – war composers, is not well known in his hometown of Grantham.

Maw was born on Finkin Street, which is within the Grantham HSHAZ. Chantry Dance chose to utilise his Ghost Dances suite which deals with the theme of dreams and memories.

Chantry Dance choreographed a new piece based on his music, which was performed at the Guildhall Arts Centre on the 25 -26th April 2023.

As with all of the activities delivered through the cultural programme, performances were free, however there was disappointingly low attendance - in total 139 people saw the performances.

It is recognised that contemporary music, such as that composed by Maw, and contemporary dance, can be challenging to audiences, and is not something which is regularly performed in the town centre, as it is often not commercially viable to do so.

The Cultural programme provide the opportunity to stage a performance that otherwise would not have taken place and introduce residents of the town to new cultural experiences on the High Street.

By bringing a performance like this to the town centre gave people an opportunity to experience it 'risk free' as audience members did not have the barrier of cost to attend – or the risk of expending their entertainment budget on something they might not enjoy.

Those who did attend gave very positive feedback - both of the performance itself, but also expressed surprise at discovering the composer and his links to Grantham.

Alongside the performances, Chantry Dance ran three community workshops, aimed at those with no previous dance experience, to explore memory, music and movement. Two workshops were open to the general public, while the third was delivered for elderly residents at Maple Leaf Care Home in Grantham. These workshops engaged an additional 30 participants.

People attending the workshops expressed their delight at the opportunity to do something different in the town centre, and one participant even hugged the workshop facilitators as they had found the experience liberating. Once again, by removing the cost barrier to participate gave the opportunity to take part to people who would not otherwise have done so.

Grantham Arts delivered two projects within the programme: **Community Print and Community Ceramics**.

Community Print encouraged participants to explore the architecture and landmarks of Grantham and express them through lino cut art.

They ran four workshops, each made up of four once weekly sessions where participants were taught techniques of lino cutting and printing and explored the town's built heritage, eventually producing their own artworks featuring Grantham's buildings which were exhibited in Grantham Museum.

In addition, a further single day session was run which was adapted to be suitable for adults with learning disabilities to take part.

In total 30 people took part in the workshops. The exhibition of works at the Grantham Museum opened in early March 2024, and will continue to run beyond the end of the HSHAZ scheme, to take advantage of the Easter Holiday which begins immediately after the end of the programme.

The Community Ceramics project faced significant challenges (discussed in full later in this report), which resulted in the original planned project not being deliverable. Initially Grantham Arts had planned to create 12 large vessels which would be decorated by community groups.

However, as it became apparent that it would not be possible to deliver this project as originally planned, a simplified project – 'My Grantham Family' was developed.

This project encouraged residents to produce models of their families, which were later displayed in shop windows around the town.

Ultimately the smaller scale of the pieces produced through this project led to a greater level of engagement. Participants were able to attend drop-in sessions, rather than having to commit to multiple sessions, or lengthy workshops. As the items were more portable, it was possible for sessions to be run in schools, and in the George Shopping Centre during Christmas activities.

This approach in particular, allowed people who chanced upon the activities while visiting the town for other reasons to take part - and they were then encouraged back to find their pieces on display.

173 people took part over six sessions, the majority of whom were children. Out of all the activities held, this was by far the most accessible for children, and their parents were also encouraged to take part.

As with the print exhibition, the models will remain on display over the Easter school holiday period to encourage visits to the town centre.

Grantham Community Heritage Association (Grantham Museum) faced the greatest challenges when it came to delivering their programme of activity. Ultimately, they were not able to deliver the programme of exhibitions which had formed the original proposal, and as a result the level of

community engagement with their programme was limited.

With the support and agreement of the Historic England team, the project was scaled back to something which was more achievable.

The Museum team worked with five volunteers over 90 hours (total) to research and produce a timeline of Grantham's history, which will be permanently displayed in the museum.

In addition, they were able to purchase and install a new display unit to be used as a community cabinet – this will also become a permanent feature of the museum, and community groups, businesses or individuals will be able to use this space to produce small exhibitions focused on the elements of Grantham's history which are important to them.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

There were a number of challenges which affected the Consortium as a whole, along with issues which affected individual projects. All of the challenges were opportunities for learning for the consortium and its individual members and overcoming them has supported not only the delivery of this programme, but shaping the future direction and ambition of the project's legacy.

For the majority of the Cultural Consortium members, this was the first time that they had taken part in the development of an externally funded project. It proved a learning experience for all of the members.

Ensuring that the projects put forward as part of the bid would meet the requirements of the HSHAZ cultural programme was a challenge but by developing an initial internal bid process, during which each of the groups submitted their projects, and an internal scoring process, during which all of the Consortium Members had the opportunity to score all of the proposals utilising a scoring matrix, gave the groups some insight into how funding bids need to be developed and presented.

This increased the confidence of those groups in seeking other external funding.

A major challenge which affected all of the projects delivered through the programme was volunteer capacity, particularly following Covid-19.

All of the volunteers run or supported consortium members found that their volunteer numbers had significantly reduced, and despite efforts to promote opportunities and recruit new volunteers, numbers have still not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

This was a particular issue for Grantham Dramatic Society, who found that they were unable to deliver the community touring element of the scheme because of lack of volunteers to do so. It also limited the number of heritage walks that they were able to deliver over timeframe of the programme.

However, by taking part in the scheme they have been able to determine methods of delivery with fewer people, and at the same time raised their profile, and will potentially interest people in taking part as costumed guides for the heritage walks, who might not have been interested in joining the society's more typical programme of Amateur Dramatic productions.

Likewise, loss of volunteers was a significant problem for the Grantham Community Heritage Association (GCHA) in the delivery of their original programme. In this instance the issue was

exacerbated as the Museum's part time manager left in 2020 and was not replaced. Throughout the programme the reduced GCHA board and volunteers struggled to develop and deliver an exhibition programme.

A proposed project between the National Trust and the Museum which would have explored the impact of the use of nearby Belton House during the first world war as a base for the Machine Gun Corps, and specifically the impact the sudden appearance of 20,000 soldiers had on the town centre, was approved by Historic England, but was not able to proceed due to insufficient volunteer capacity.

SKDC underwent several staff restructures in 2020, which resulted in a reduction in the number of staff available to support the delivery of the project, particularly within the Council's Arts team. These restructures resulted in the HSHAZ project officer becoming the only member of staff supporting the cultural consortium programme.

This exacerbated the challenges faced with volunteers, as it was not possible to maintain the level of support originally indicated during the project development and bid process and put more emphasis on the Consortium members to deliver all aspects of the project.

Had the Council's arts team been in a position to be more involved, or even to lead some aspects of the project delivery, it likely would have had a more successful outcome.

This has highlighted the need for a different approach to be taken, and should opportunity be created to carry out a similar project in the future, it would benefit from budget being identified to contract a dedicated programme facilitator to ensure that delivery partners were adequately supported throughout.

Similarly, increased costs driven by inflation and high energy costs proved a challenge across the board for the delivery of projects.

Ghost Dances was originally envisaged to be performed outside of traditional theatre spaces, to encourage engagement from a wider audience, including those who may have been put off by a dance performance at a theatre.

Unfortunately, as the project was scheduled for delivery in 2023, the costs associated with staging, lights, power, PA systems etc, had increased to the extent that made an outdoor performance - or a performance in an alternative venue unfeasible. Therefore, Chantry Dance ultimately delivered their performances within Grantham Arts Centre.

While this resulted in a successful delivery of the Ghost Dances project, it limited the potential of the project to engage with people who would not choose to visit a theatre.

Similarly, higher than anticipated costs also impacted the Festival of Angels project, albeit in a lesser way. The project was able to deliver all of its original objectives but did have to shorten its proposed run, due to the cost of the rigging for the angel sculptures. The decision to hold the festival over the same period as the Christmas Tree festival however, ensured high numbers of visitors got to experience both events and engage with St Wulfram's as a community venue, and as a historic site.

The structure of the programme, which each Cultural Consortium member group taking responsibility for one project or group of projects proved challenging. While each group delivered their own projects, there was a tendency for groups to become less engaged with the programme overall when their project was completed.

This made it difficult to rapidly address any areas of underspend, or to effectively explore alternative delivery methods.

Ultimately, this was a flaw in how the HSHAZ Project Manager established the funding structure for the consortium members. Should a similar project be repeated in the future, a more centralised approach should be taken, with the group taking responsibility for the delivery of all of the projects throughout the programme. More consideration should have been given to the role of the Cultural Consortium as a body to commission works, rather than deliver all of the projects directly.

While we all wished to see a quality outcome in the work that was created, the priority for the project was engagement. Working directly with artists as the Consortium Members did sometimes create a conflict between a desire for high quality artistic output vs this priority for engagement, and it was necessary at times to encourage the artists to step away from their preconceived notion of specific outputs and be guided by the wider community.

Ultimately, this was overcome as the first projects delivered with the community took place and demonstrated the opportunities for both high quality output.

As has previously been mentioned, the most significant area of failure within the programme was within the internal capacity building project.

Within this element of the programme, an annual budget was ringfenced for each of the groups to support each member group in accessing training or professional memberships which would assist in their development.

Despite regular prompting for the Consortium members to make use of this budget, only one of the member groups – Chantry Dance – accessed funding for training.

This resulted in the largest underspend across the project, and it is likely had a programme of training been developed and implemented centrally, it would not only have benefited the consortium members, but could also have been offered to a wider group of participants, strengthening the cultural sector within Grantham as a whole.

At times delays in communication with the Historic England team was barrier to moving projects forward. While the team was generally very responsive, and offered clear guidance and advice, on occasion project change requests took several months to determine and as a result there was a delayed start to projects which impacted the overall timetable of delivery and impacted the ability to be flexible around reallocating underspend.

Grantham Arts faced a specific challenge in the delivery of their two projects, Community Print and Community Ceramics. Initially the intent was to establish an Arts Hub at Grantham House, a National Trust property which is currently leased to St Wulfram's church.

Shortly after the initiation of the project, it became apparent that this would no longer be possible – largely due to the increase in costs needed to bring the space into use, which would have meant that St Wulfram's it was no longer feasible for them to offer the space rent free to Grantham Arts.

This delay had a significant impact on the delivery of the programme and potentially on its planned legacy outputs to create a permanent arts hub.

In order to support the project aims, and the legacy of the programme, it was important that the hub was located as close to the high street as possible, and this gave limited options which were

suitable, without Grantham Arts having to absorb the cost of a lease or operators licence on a vacant unit for the full duration of the project.

Working together with other Consortium Members we were able to resolve the venue problem, and the Grantham Arts projects, which included the installation of a Kiln and other equipment, were able to go ahead utilizing under used space within Grantham Museum.

In many ways this has proved preferable, as the museum site is more central to the high street and closer to parking and public transport links. Grantham Arts have been able to benefit from purpose-built exhibition space within the museum, and the museum has, and will continue to benefit from increased footfall generated by project participants.

Legacy

Creating a long-term legacy which would support ongoing access to creative an cultural activity within Grantham town centre was a key aim for the programme, as well as for the HSHAZ cultural programme as a whole.

Prior to the cultural programme, Grantham's rich heritage and arts sector was often perceived as being hidden and inaccessible, with low levels of community engagement.

There was a clear desire which had been expressed during various consultation processes for dedicated hubs on the town centre, which could both facilitate the development of arts businesses, and also increase community access to arts facilities.

Through the Cultural Programme, Consortium Members were able to create two long term arts hubs in the town centre.

Grantham Dramatic Society's Westgate Hub, created at 84 Westgate, will become a key space for both the Society itself and other performing arts and community organisations.

The Cultural Consortium funding has supported the Society in making the space accessible for all, including providing accessible toilets within the building.

To date, this has supported increased community activity from the site, including workshops and coffee mornings.

Going forward the venue will provide rehearsal and performance space – not only for GDS themselves, but also for other community groups in and around Grantham town centre.

Grantham Arts' hub, now based within the Grantham Museum, will provide facilities for artists. Although the facilities supported by the grant funding were determined by the Cultural Consortium members, they do tie in with desires which were raised by the wider community through previous consultations into arts provision in Grantham.

Alongside delivering the HSHAZ cultural programme, Grantham Arts have committed to delivering regular exhibitions which will take place within the museum going forward.

Through the programme the Grantham Arts team were able to test their business model and have established as a CIC to provide sustainable provision for the delivery of arts activity on the High Street. They have delivered their first commercial venture – a series of 'pottery and prosecco' evenings.

Through their engagement in the programme, and previous community arts activities Grantham Arts have developed experience in community engagement through the arts, and they will continue to develop and facilitate community arts activities.

Aligned to this increased community activity based at the museum, the Grantham Community Heritage Association's ongoing community cabinet project, will allow residents and community organisations to develop and deliver small exhibitions to share the heritage which is important to them.

As previously discussed within this report, many of the Cultural Consortium Members had no previous experience of applying for external funding, through the development, delivery, and evaluation process of the HSHAZ cultural programme, they have been guided through the process, and gained skills which will support them going forward.

Many of the consortium groups were also able to resource themselves through the programme in a way which will allow them to continue to deliver work inspired by the town's heritage beyond the scope of the project. For example, Grantham Dramatic Society have committed to continuing to develop and deliver heritage walks in the town building on the skills and facilities developed during the Cultural Programme.

With support from the HSHAZ Project Manager, the Community Heritage Association was successful in securing £18,600 from the Arts Fund Reimagined programme to support capacity building and museum development. They are currently beginning to deliver that programme of works which will bolster their activity – and the legacy of the HSHAZ cultural projects further.

Through the consortium, the groups had opportunity to network more widely among the cultural and arts providers in and around the town centre. Through building better and lasting links between the consortium members, local businesses, and community organisations has supported a strengthening of the arts and cultural sector within Grantham, which will continue to deliver for residents and visitors alike and bring vibrancy and energy for our town centre in the years to come.

Conclusion

Grantham 'Arts and Exploration' was successful in delivering outcomes across all of the aims set by the project, however the impact of the programme, and level of engagement was less than anticipated during the programme design phase.

Feedback from participants has demonstrated that the programme has encouraged them to explore Grantham's heritage, and that they have discovered things they did not previously know about the town which has improved their perception of the town.

The programme has clearly demonstrated a desire for arts and cultural activity to be a feature of the high street and provided the consortium members with opportunities to test new development and delivery pathways, establishing sustainable models which will continue beyond the closure of the programme.

While the capacity building project within the programme failed to deliver the identified outcomes, the project overall did support the development of a more robust cultural sector, and bolster the

organisational resilience of the consortium members.

Through the development of two hubs for ongoing community activity – one for performing arts through the Grantham Dramatic Society hub at 84 Westgate, and one through Grantham Art's permanent residency at Grantham Museum will continue this ongoing legacy, as well as support continued development of arts and cultural activities, and support the resilience of all three organisations.

Throughout the programme of activities Consortium members have made concerted efforts to engage with a wide demographic of users. They were proactive in ensuring that the activities they delivered were accessible, and able to make suitable adjustments where necessary to deliver activities to groups who may otherwise not have been able to take part fully.

The projects encouraged residents and visitors to enter heritage spaces that they may not otherwise have explored, and crucially feel welcomed and engaged in those spaces. Through activities like the Festival of Angels, and the Grantham Arts project people were able to explore spaces which they had previously identified as being for 'others', like St Wulfram's church.

Ghost Dances introduced unknown music and contemporary dance to new audiences, however it is recognised that had Chantry Dance been able to utilise the alternative spaces originally envisioned for the project, rather than performing in a traditional theatre space, their would have been higher levels of engagement.

As this was the first time that many of the organisations taking part as Consortium members has taken part in a project like this, there was inevitably a learning curve to the delivery of the works for all involved.

Most notably it has been identified that a greater degree of centralised facilitation throughout would have resulted in a more successful scheme. Should the opportunity arise to deliver a similar programme again, having reflected on lessons learned through the HSHAZ Cultural programme, we would encourage a different structure to the consortium. Rather than opting for each of the groups to be responsible for their own area of delivery, we would aim for a more collaborative approach, ideally also identifying budget to employ a cultural programme facilitator to oversee the delivery of all of the projects and increase the capacity of those organisations which struggled to deliver.

However, despite these challenges Grantham Arts and Exploration programme successfully delivered a four-year programme of arts and cultural activity which brought people together in celebration of Grantham's built and social heritage and engendered civic pride, which will leave a lasting legacy of sustainable and community driven arts and creative activity within the town centre.

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Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024-2025

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
17 JULY 2024			
Provisional Outturn Position Report 2024/2025	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	This report provides the Committee with the Council's provisional outturn position for 2024/25.	Agreed at Committee
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Budget Monitoring Report Period 2 (July)	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update for Period 2.	Standing item
Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/2026	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community))	To review the Scheme	Standing item

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REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
17 SEPTEMBER 2024			
Finance Update Report, April-July 2024	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	Regular update report for April-July	Standing Item
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Economic Development Strategy Adoption	Lead Officer: Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)	To update the Committee with the latest position before any recommendation to Cabinet.	Agreed at Committee

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
26 NOVEMBER 2024			
Future High Streets Fund Mid-Year Update	Lead Officer: Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)	Mid-year update for the Committee to consider.	Standing Item
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Budget Monitoring up to 30 September	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Standing item
Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/2026	Lead Officer: Claire Moses (Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community)	To further review the Scheme before any recommendation to Cabinet/Council.	Standing item
Corporate Plan KPIs Mid-Year Report	Lead Officer: Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)	Mid year review of the Committee's agreed KPIs.	Standing item

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REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
18 FEBRUARY 2025			
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Budget Monitoring Q3 Forecast	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Standing item

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
13 MAY 2025			
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Update on East Midlands Building Consultancy	Lead Officer: Jeremy Barlow (Building Control Manager)	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Standing item

The Committee's Remit

The remit of the Finance and Economic 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:

- Budget monitoring
- Budget setting
- Business rate relief
- Business trade and licensing (Policy)
- Business transformation
- Charitable rate relief
- Council-owned property, assets, and maintenance (non-council house)
- Customer access strategy
- Data protection reporting
- Economic development
- Fees and charges
- Large-scale development projects
- Medium term financial planning and national funding proposals
- Procurement
- Review of outturn
- Town centre developments and partnerships

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