

# Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL



Tuesday, 17 September 2024 at 10.00 am  
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](mailto:democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### 2. Apologies for Absence

### 3. Disclosure of Interests

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

### 4. Minutes from the previous meeting

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2024

(Pages 3 - 11)

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01476 406080

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

5. **Updates from previous meeting** (Page 13)
6. **Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
7. **South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 / 2028** (Pages 15 - 82)  
- Final Draft  
To update members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) on progress made toward the final version of the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.
8. **Progress Update in respect of the construction of the Waste Depot, Turnpike Close Grantham** (Pages 83 - 87)  
This report provides a progress update on the construction of the new Waste Depot at Turnpike Close, Grantham.
9. **Finance Update Report - April to July** (Pages 89 - 104)  
To present the Council's forecast for the 2024/25 financial position. The report covers the following areas:
  - General Fund Revenue Budget
  - Housing Revenue Account Budget
  - Capital Programmes – General Fund and Housing Revenue Account
  - Reserves overview – General Fund and Housing Revenue Account
10. **UKSPF Programme Update** (Pages 105 - 112)  
The report provides an update on the UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity Fund Programme(s). It outlines the investment into South Kesteven's communities and highlights the approach for the rest of 2024/25 until the programme's closure on 31 March 2025.
11. **Update on St. Martin's Park, Stamford** (Pages 113 - 117)  
To provide the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update regarding the St. Martin's Park re-development project in Stamford.
12. **Grantham Town Centre Footfall Report** (Pages 119 - 127)  
To update Members on progress on the action plan to increase footfall to Grantham Market place in relation to the Future High Street Fund programme.
13. **Work Programme** (Pages 129 - 131)
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, 17 July 2024, 10.00 am**

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

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#### **Committee Members present**

Councillor Bridget Ley (Chairman)  
Councillor Gareth Knight (Vice-Chairman)

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

#### **Cabinet Members present**

Councillor Ashley Baxter (Leader of the Council)  
Councillor Philip Knowles (Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing)

#### **Other Members present**

Councillor Graham Jeal

#### **Officers**

Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer))  
Graham Watts (Assistant Director of Governance and Public Protection, Monitoring Officer)  
Emma Whittaker (Assistant Director of Planning and Growth0  
Claire Moses (Head of Service - Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community)  
Gyles Teasdale (Head of Property Services and ICT)  
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

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#### **17. Public Speaking**

Mr Clark made a statement to the Committee on agenda item 8, Local Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals 2025/26 in relation to Veterans.

All Members thanked the public speaker for his statement and his service as a Veteran.

The Leader of the Council informed the public speaker that he would arrange a meeting to discuss and explain the issues surrounding the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Veterans.

**18. Apologies for Absence**

All Committee Members were present.

**19. Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

**20. Minutes from the previous meeting**

One Member queried the delay in minutes being published and being provided as a Supplement.

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified there had been 14 working days since the last meeting of the Committee, during this time a General Election had taken place whereby the Democratic Services team were involved.

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2024 were proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** as a correct record.

**21. Updates from previous meeting**

The Committee had received an email on costings from the work undertaken by Officers on the Veterans Scheme.

Clarification was sought around how some of the figures had been calculated

The Deputy Chief Executive noted the costings were not unbudgeted costs or overtime of Officers. The table was a demonstration of Officer time which was diverted away from other work to focus on the development of the proposed Veteran Scheme.

Each heading of the table was a summary of the particular task, for example, to construct an e-mail and present the information within the e-mail and send off may take 30 minutes. The figures were calculated by taking the salaries together with overheads for those Officers involved in the scheme development.

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

There were none.

**23. Provisional Outturn Position Report 2023/2024**

The Leader of the Council presented the report.

The report provided the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee with detail of the Council's provisional outturn position for the financial year 2023/24. Throughout the financial year the Committee had been provided with regular and comprehensive budget monitoring reports which enabled members to be kept updated on what had been a particularly financially volatile year.

The financial year 2023/24 had been projected to be supported by use of the Budget Stabilisation Reserve (BSR) of £1.534m which was in response to an unprecedented increase in budgets relating to utilities, inflation, material and fuel costs. These budget heading increases were as a result of external events outside of the Council's control and were considered to be temporary in their duration. In order to ensure a balanced budget was presented to Council it was recommended that the BSR was used. As this proposal was in accordance with the reserve policy, Council approved the one-off use to avoid the need to significantly reduce operating expenditure.

During the financial year, the situation gradually improved and the prudent budget increase assumptions did not materialise which had resulted in there no longer being a need for a reserve movement. This coupled with ever improving investment interest rates and therefore increasing investment income (an additional £832k General Fund during 2023/24) had resulted in an opportunity to review Budget Stabilisation Reserve and put some of the reserve balance to other uses. This is necessary due to a number of earmarked reserves being required to continue to invest in specific activities, particularly ongoing investment in the backlog maintenance of corporate assets, investment in ICT and the formation of a Flood Reserve.

One Member raised the timing of the meeting and that the report would usually be considered by the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the first instance, then to Governance and Audit and Cabinet. It was requested that this timeline be adhered to in future years.

The importance on the need of a 3-year funding settlement figure with Local Government was emphasised to allow future planning.

It was noted the report stated that financial situations had improved in 2023/24, following pressures from previous years.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that assumptions had been put into the budget in November 2022 including prudent levels of interest rate forecasts, and that assumptions were a reflection of that period.

The Stabilisation Reserve remained in place due to continued uncertainty in future funding settlements.

One Member clarified the 3-year funding was included within the new Government's manifesto and they had ambitions for security and stability. It was likely that a 12-month settlement would be provided in November 2024 from Government, however, from 2025 it was hoped that 3-year settlements be implemented.

One Member suggested any interest rates income received be diverted over to Budget Stabilisation Reserve in the event of any unknown expenditures which may occur, for example, increased energy prices.

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified the Business Rate Volatility Reserve acted as a buffer in the same way as the Budget Stabilisation Reserve. The Business Rate Volatility Reserve would be utilised in the event of any business rate forecast receipts not being in line with projection which would be useful in the event of any threat of service delivery risk.

Members welcomed the balanced budget presented at the AGM in May 2024 which did not solely rely on reserves.

**That the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn report and associated appendices for the financial year 2023/24.**

## **24. Local Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals 2025/26**

The Leader of the Council presented the report which outlined the Council's proposed Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025/26 ahead of public consultation.

The Council Tax Benefit system was abolished on 31 March 2013 and replaced by the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS). This scheme could be determined locally by the Billing Authority having had due consultation with precepting authorities, key stakeholders, and residents.

There were currently 7,172 residents claiming LCTSS in the South Kesteven District. Of these, 3,076 are pensioners who are protected under the legislation and receive LCTSS as prescribed by the Government (broadly similar to the level of Council Tax Benefit). It is the 4,096 claimants of working age who will be affected by changes to the level of support determined by a local scheme.

The Council agreed to a LCTSS which came into effect on 1 April 2013. The core scheme currently provided:

- 80% support for working age claimants
- 100% support for pension age claimants

In determining changes for the 2025/26 scheme, the Council was required to consider the cost of the scheme, along with the administrative and legislative need to consider any changes.

During 2024, there had been a small increase in claim numbers for working age customers, which was detailed within the report. This indicated a downturn in economic activity and financial support for residents.

It was difficult to accurately determine the reasons for the increase in cost, however, Officers had noticed an increase in contact with the Cost of Living Team and an increase in applications for Discretionary Council Tax Payments and Discretionary Housing Payments.

The Council's local scheme has been updated with amendments since the introduction in April 2013 to maintain the link with Housing Benefit and the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme, alongside technical changes to Council Tax.

In conclusion, there were no proposed changes to the current scheme for 2025/26.

One Member was pleased to see that care leavers would continue to receive Council Tax exemption.

It was queried as to how many care leavers were benefitting from the scheme at present.

**ACTION: For the Head of Service - Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community to provide the Committee with a figure on how many care leavers were benefitting from the scheme at present.**

It was proposed and seconded:

'For the following questions in the upcoming consultation about the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025-26:

- a) Do you support providing targeted council tax relief for employed veterans in Band A properties? Yes or no?
- b) If yes, should the relief for employed veterans in Band A properties be 5% or 10% off their annual council tax bill?

Further work would then be expected.'

The Deputy Chief Executive clarified the topic of Council Tax for Veterans had previously been discussed where information available in that document enabled the Committee to make the proposal and recommendation. On 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the Committee requested that no further work be undertaken on the development of a Council Tax Support Scheme for Veterans.

Part 4 – Rules of Procedure (Paragraph 14.28) of the Constitution stated that:

*'No motion or amendment will be proposed which has the effect or intention of rescinding any resolution passed within the preceding six months, or has the same*

*effect as one which has been defeated within the preceding six months, unless significant new information has been received.'*

One Member highlighted that the Health Cash Plan, which was discussed at another meeting had not followed Part 4 – Rules of Procedure (Paragraph 14.28). However, this concern was not raised at the time of said meeting.

*(The Committee adjourned for 5 minutes)*

The Monitoring Officer clarified that the motion proposed was similar to a previous motion voted on at the previous meeting and no new information had been received in relation to the proposal put forward at the meeting.

Part 4 – Rules of Procedure (Paragraph 14.28) of the Constitution applied to this Committee and all meetings of the Council.

Clarification was sought around Part 4 – Rules of Procedure (Paragraph 14.29) of the Constitution.

Part 4 – Rules of Procedure (Paragraph 14.29) of the Constitution related to Full Council meetings, where a recommendation from a Committee or Cabinet had been submitted to Full Council for consideration.

**It was proposed, seconded and AGREED that the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- 1. Note the content of the report.**
- 2. Offers comment and feedback on the proposal of a 'no change' Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26 for stakeholder consultation.**
- 3. Approves the areas for stakeholder consultation as detailed in the report.**

*(Councillors Ben Green, Mark Whittington and Gloria Johnson abstained from the vote, and requested their votes to be recorded).*

*(Councillors Lee Steptoe, Tim Harrison and Max Sawyer voted in favour of the recommendation, and requested their votes to be recorded).*

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

The Leader of the Council presented the report on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement. The report provided Members with a progress update in respect of the construction of the Waste Depot, Turnpike Close, Grantham.

The Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee was provided with an update on the new Waste Depot project at the last meeting on 27 June 2024 following the decision the Committee would be provided regular updates at each of their meetings during the project delivery phase.

The report provided an updated dashboard and further information with the current projected allocation of £8.8m budget and further details within the £7.9m construction budget.

The activity timetable was presented and provided current projected timeline of key events up to October 2024.

The Head of Property Services and ICT highlighted the further breakdown in terms of the overall spend of the £7.9m construction budget and the £8.8m budget. New milestones had been allocated on the programme as requested.

The project was in value-engineering stage 4 design which remained as low risk. The elongation of the project was at further risk during construction phase, where further costs may be incurred.

It was questioned whether Officers would be able to quantify a risk with a financial aspect and include it within the risk register.

One Member queried whether any contractors had expressed interest of completing the construction work.

It was noted the construction contract award was 27 September 2024, and the contractors were expected to mobilise by 30 September 2024, which didn't seem enough time.

A procurement exercise had been undertaken within a framework whereby a tender was produced, and 5 contractors expressed interest in the works. During the procurement process and tender period, various contractors had withdrawn from the tender process.

It was noted that professional fees for the project were currently running at about 4%, whereas normal guidance for professional fees was 7-11%. Members congratulated Officers on keeping professional fees to a low percentage.

A query was raised on value engineering proposed by Lindum was unacceptable. Members requested an explanation as to why their proposal was not acceptable.

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed certain financial risks on different components of the scheme that would be out of the Council's control. The pie chart provided within the dashboard would potentially change in line with certain milestones of the project.

A potential risk of prolonged period of construction may mean further fees would be incurred. Contractors were being pushed to deliver within a small timescale, in order to eliminate the material risk of delay in construction.

It was clarified that Lindum had presented a list of areas of the design which could be removed in order to reduce costs. The Team analysed the suggestions of removing certain areas of the design, however, some of the areas would compromise the quality of the building, create energy inefficiency and possibly require another planning permission with amendments.

**That the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

**Note the current position with respect to the delivery of the new Waste Depot Turnpike Close Grantham for the period up to 5 July 2024.**

**26. Work Programme 2024-25**

The Committee noted the Work Programme 2024-25.

An update was requested on the outcome of a decision made at a previous meeting, where the Committee had voted in favour of Option 3, in regard to marketplace footfall.

*Option 3: In addition to the activities outlined in option two, to complete feasibility works and costed proposals for long term/ permanent suggestions to support the town centre, including the removal of parking charges, implementing a rental support or financial incentive scheme for new businesses and/ or market traders, providing additional bus services on Market days, and funding grants to town centre businesses to deliver additional marketing/branding/promotional activity. Subsequently to bring these fully costed proposals to a future meeting of the committee for allocation of additional budget.*

**ACTION: For marketplace footfall to be added to the Work Programme, for a future meeting of the committee for allocation of additional budget.**

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

The Leader of the Council reminded the Committee of the Economic Development Strategy Workshop taking place, following the meeting.

Members were informed that the former Landis & Gyr factory in Deepings had been purchased by a company called Press Glass.

The Leader of the Council was pleased to observe a newly opened Westgate Bakery in Grantham Marketplace.

**28. Close of meeting**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11:50.

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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 17 July 2024.

Min No	Agenda Item	Action	Assigned to	Comment/Status	Deadline
24	Local Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals 2025/26	For the Head of Service - Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community to provide the Committee with a figure on how many care leavers were benefitting from the scheme at present.	Head of Service - Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community	Email sent from Democracy on 7 August 2024	Complete
26	Work Programme 2024-25	For marketplace footfall to be added to the Work Programme, for a future meeting of the committee for allocation of additional budget.	Democratic Services	Added to Work Programme 2024-25	Complete

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SOUTH  
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## Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17 September 2024

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

## South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 / 2028 – Final Draft

### Report Author

Nick Hibberd, Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment

nick.hibberd@southkesteven.gov.uk

### Purpose of Report

To update members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) on progress made toward the final version of the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.

### Recommendations

**It is recommended that the Committee:**

1. **Reviews the draft Economic Development Strategy 2024-2025 following amendments as a result of the public consultation and further workshop with the Committee.**
2. **Recommends the draft South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 to Cabinet for approval.**

## Decision Information

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

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Enabling economic opportunities

Which wards are impacted? All Wards

## 1. Implications

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

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

1.1 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: Paul Sutton, Interim Head of Finance and Deputy 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 On June the 26<sup>th</sup> 2024 Officers updated the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) on comments received during a period of consultation with stakeholders in respect to a draft South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.

2.2 The consultation period between May and June 2024 resulted in over fifty responses, which are provided in Appendix 1. Whilst extensive, they could broadly be categorised into four main themes:

- **'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 of internal connectivity between settlements across South Kesteven and the areas of employment, tourism, and leisure.

- **Commercial Premises:** 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.
- **Key Sectors:** 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.
- **Productivity:** 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.

- 2.3 At the June 27<sup>th</sup> FEOSC meeting, the Committee noted the contents of an update report and agreed to hold a workshop to provide further input into the final Strategy.
- 2.4 During the Workshop a presentation was given by the Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment that identified the main points received through the consultation period. This is set out at Appendix 2.
- 2.5 Each point was debated and the meeting concluded with further recommendations from FEOSC Members to strengthen the 'Vision'; to include reference to retaining, growing and attracting businesses and to include the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives as Key Performance Indicators (KPI) within the strategy; ensuring a clear relationship between the documents.
- 2.6 Appendix 3 identifies the necessary changes that were made to the final strategy following stakeholder consultation and the additional FEOSC Member Workshop.
- 2.7 Appendix 4 identifies the final draft of the Strategy, which will be taken to Cabinet on the 8<sup>th</sup> October seeking approval for its adoption as the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.

### **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 has been 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 Not to recommend approval of the Strategy.
- 4.2 To recommend any further amendments to the Strategy further to the results of the public consultation.

#### **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.
- 5.2 The revised South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 represents an opportunity to strategically manage economic development activity across South Kesteven, providing a ‘Golden Thread’ between the work of the Economic Development Service and the ambition of the Council, through its Corporate Plan, ‘To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all communities’.

#### **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 Report 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:  
[http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41688/Cabinet%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy.pdf?LO\\$=1](http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41688/Cabinet%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy.pdf?LO$=1)
- 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:

[http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41885/Update%20on%20the%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202024%20-%202028%20FEOSC.pdf?LO\\$=1](http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41885/Update%20on%20the%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202024%20-%202028%20FEOSC.pdf?LO$=1)

6.4 Report to Cabinet on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 to inform members on the progress made toward the development of an Economic Development Strategy for South Kesteven 2024 – 2028.

[Update on the development of the Economic Development Strategy.pdf](#)

## 7. Appendices

- 7.1. **Appendix 1**, List of comments from Stakeholder Engagement.
- 7.2. **Appendix 2**, Presentation from July 17<sup>th</sup> FEOSC Workshop
- 7.3. **Appendix 3**, Changes post consultation
- 7.4. **Appendix 4**, Final Draft of the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.

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## Executive Summary

1825

Support

### Summary:

The five points are very useful and to the point - they are the five priorities I would call out if I was drafting this report. Paragraph 6 is a bit of a challenge for me - it feels like a loose statement without much substance an aspiration rather than a strategy.

Attachments: None

2018

Support

### Summary:

We have no additional comments to make on the executive summary

Attachments: None

2160

Object

### Summary:

The strategy does not set out a vision. It is not ambitious. A vision is where we want the area to be in the future and what we need do to achieve it. The current vision is a statement of the current local economic situation. The vision needs to state the economic development improvement sought at the end of the term of the strategy, such as "we want South Kesteven to be a prosperous area, where productivity is high, people have opportunities for employment and improved skills, opening new pathways to qualifications, careers and individual's progression. An area where starting and building a business is nurtured, increased investment is achieved, infrastructure is developed for growth and our community has a bright future"

Attachments: None

2161

Object

### Summary:

There are no key performance indicators to measure success, for instance how do we know the strategy, action plan and programmes and projects have been successful. Further for reflection should a review of the 2016-2021 be undertaken as part of the strategy? Is the strategy rehashing the same projects? Has an evaluation and appraisal been undertaken on the 2016 version?

Attachments: None

2170

Object

### Summary:

3) There is nothing stated on key issues such as;  
F) Nothing on social mobility.

Attachments: None

2176

Object

**Summary:**

How will the Council know the strategy has been successful in 2028? Was the 2016 one successful? Will members receive annual updates on the action plan? Or the portfolio holder monthly?

**Attachments:** None

2178

Object

**Summary:**

Finally is the consultation meaningful? Can this strategy be changed for the better through consultation or is it approved, and this is simply seeking validation from the community?

**Attachments:** None

## 02 The Local Economy

1619

Object

**Summary:**

Skills profile is not a strength in the manufacturing industry. We have a severe lack of skilled workers certainly within Grantham and also an aging work force.

I disagree connectivity is a strength... yes if you are talking about commuting to London but inter village and town connectivity barely exists. Ask a 16 year old how they might get to and from a work placement or apprenticeship without being able to drive and in most cases they couldn't rely on public transport.

Business base... what does this mean? buzz word?

**Attachments:** None

1826

Support

**Summary:**

SWOT analysis is good, but please try to be more specific on the productivity challenge. Is it skills or is it the lack of major manufacturers in the District. The ONS data on productivity by sector could be matched against sectors in SK to see if it is skills build or attraction of other industry sectors (or a combination of the two) should be the strategy.

**Attachments:** None

2017

Support

**Summary:**

Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce are fully committed to collaborating with SKDC to support the businesses of the district

**Attachments:** None

2019

Support

**Summary:**

There is no reference to cross border working with neighbouring local authorities. LCC have recently convened senior officer discussions on future ways of working across the Greater Lincolnshire authorities and it would be good to understand if this is something SKDC will be looking to do during the lifetime of this strategy?

**Attachments:** None

### 03 South Kesteven

1827

Support

**Summary:**

No comments on this section

**Attachments:** None

2020

Support

**Summary:**

Comments provided against each area of strategic focus

**Attachments:** None

### What we will do

1828

Support

**Summary:**

Capability build with newsletters, webinars etc are great. Please leverage local organisations that have the appropriate reach (Chamber of Commerce, FSB etc) as they have the necessary networks already to reach the target audience.

Clean growth is vital to the prosperity of the region so great to see that on the agenda - How can SKDC make it easy for local organisations to tap into sustainable solutions without long application processes or mining unsustainable debt.

**Attachments:** None

1980

Support

**Summary:**

Identify skills gaps in local area and work with organisations/businesses to provide skills training to help promote skills development, employment, self employed and new businesses as well as creating sustainable local economic opportunities.

**Attachments:** None

**2021****Support****Summary:**

It would be helpful to reference the respective roles of the SK towns and countryside put forward in the SK Local Plan

No clear indication that SK will continue to support the Growth Hub in order to deliver the front end revenue/advisory capacity to businesses and therefore this potentially leaves a gap within the strategy.

A strong reliance on UKSPF as a mechanism for engagement and delivery of business support. With SPF funding ending in March 2025 it would be good to see what other levers are in place for the remainder of the strategy's lifespan.

**Attachments:** None

**2032****Support****Summary:**

Supportive of the Local Economic Forum Approach.

It would be useful to see future planning and an acknowledgement that UKSPF will likely change in 2025 and how the council might approach those changes.

More broadly, there is minimal recognition of wider programmes or strategy. It would be good to see more recognition of alignment with existing programmes that are led by other organisations such as GLLEP, Lincolnshire CC, Midlands Engine or other district councils (Eg the GLDSN is a GLLEP product)

**Attachments:** None

**2171****Object****Summary:**

3) There is nothing stated on key issues such as;

G) Minimal info on working with the Chamber, FSB, LCC, Enterprise Agencies to create a one stop shop for business advice and support

**Attachments:** None

**What we will do****1620****Object****Summary:**

Skills development is al well and good and i should know as for the last 5 years i have been at the coal face of this. yes we need more skilled workers but we also need the businesses to grow and attract new start ups into the area. this requires investment in infrastructure... like industrial units, incubation hubs etc.

**Attachments:** None

1829

Support

**Summary:**

Fully support this plan

**Attachments:** None

1986

Object

**Summary:**

Stamford employment opportunities need to be developed in order to enhance the local employment opportunities for residents as well as increase the apprenticeship / training routes for younger residents. Exeter Fields site is currently designated for employment/ industry development. This site should be targeted for employment/ industry use in this economic development strategy

skills development amongst the residents of Stamford should be targeted and supported. local employment opportunities is an essential aspect of this development of Human Resources.

**Attachments:** None

2022

Support

**Summary:**

The skills section of the strategy looks good – great that SK have a skills profile in place as well as plans to upskill residents so they are able to take advantage of future jobs growth.

We welcome the fact LCC is included in the action plan and look forward to assisting with the alignment of skills provision to meet local need.

A point on the strategy as a whole - It would be helpful to understand what SKDC considers its key sectors to be.

**Attachments:** None

2034

Support

**Summary:**

Point of clarity: Careers and Enterprise Company are mentioned as stakeholders; this should be Careers Hub. The CEC is a national organisation with no local reps. It would be better to say Greater Lincolnshire LEP, including the Careers Hub - which is where the function is delivered locally.

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (national policy delivered locally by FSB to connect employers) could be referenced as a source, as could the Local Skills Report, a skills analysis and report produced by the LEP under mandate from the DfE which shows the broader skills need.

Otherwise approve.

**Attachments:** None

2164

Object

**Summary:**

There is nothing stated on key issues such as;  
A) The street markets as an economic driver.

**Attachments:** None

2174

Object

**Summary:**

There is nothing stated on the use of powers for devolution from a new mayoral combined authority. The devolution of the adult education budget (AEB) will give new opportunities to reinvest grant into local skills needs. I.e. if you need more "engineers" in Grantham the current national budget can be repurposed locally to encourage the local college to provide this with additional and extra grant rather than the curriculum set out in London at the DfE. The Council are recommended to push for this as Grantham College will get more investment and it will yield improved economic growth. Imagine being able to set the courses for the local industry needs rather than having it subscribed in London!

**Attachments:** None

## What we will do

1621

Object

**Summary:**

Unlock land and stalled development sites....

i have been bangining on about this for around 5 years. i dont see any new industrial spaces going up anywhere?

**Attachments:** None

1830

Support

**Summary:**

All great plans, I would like to see that all initiatives called out are assessed as having a positive environmental impact. For example - shovel ready projects could be encouraged to take into consideration whole life carbon impact (ie PAS 2080).

I would like to see how travel planning could be applied to the plan so that those in rural areas do not feel isolated and also how alternative travel methods (ie cycling) could be encouraged without causing bottlenecks that could negatively impact local retailers.

**Attachments:** None

**1987****Object****Summary:**

increased housing in and around the curtilage of Stamford will not on its own increase economic development. Exeter fields site and St Martin's Park both need to be developed to increase employment opportunities with Stamford. Monarch Park/QuarryFarm and Stamford North developments will create an unsustainable increase in car movements across the town as well as movements onto the strategic road network. this is not conducive to economic sustainability and the "green agenda"

**Attachments:** None

**2023****Support****Summary:**

From a planning policy perspective there is nothing in the strategy which is contentious or is contrary to other SKDC and LCC Policy.

The strategy doesn't however reference the Local Transport Plan, which isn't an issue in itself but there may be some benefit in referencing the Transport strategies specifically developed for the SKDC area. There are currently strategies for Grantham and Stamford in draft form awaiting adoption. They promote economic growth and list specific interventions to aide eco growth.

**Attachments:** None

**2035****Support****Summary:**

Support the actions. However the strategy could reference wider documents such as the Local Transport Plan and Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Framework

**Attachments:** None

**2165****Object****Summary:**

3) There is nothing stated on key issues such as;

B) Public property, estates and corporate property. Will the Council utilise its assets for economic growth? Or go into any joint Ventures for property development?

**Attachments:** None

**2166****Object****Summary:**

3) There is nothing stated on key issues such as;

C) The changing nature of the high street and variances in our towns. I.e. Stamford is more economically prosperous with higher incomes and GVA. This means more independents retailers and hospitality, with more disposable income. This makes it a more resilient town.

**Attachments:** None

**2168****Object****Summary:**

3) There is nothing stated on key issues such as;

E) Nothing stated on land interventions... i.e. would the Council (who can borrow cheaper) undertake commercial development as done in market Deeping in 2009? i.e. build units secure rent, create business and jobs and increase the business rates pool for the area generating additional income for the Council? Or build new incubators or managed workspace?

**Attachments:** None

**What we will do****1988****Support****Summary:**

Support economic development and business expansion is only going to be achieved by the use of Exeter Fields site in Stamford for industrial use. Stamford needs employment opportunities within the town Exeter Fields is the designated site and needs SKDC support

I should on NO account be used for housing. there is an over development of housing in Stamford already planned

**Attachments:** None

**2024****Support****Summary:**

We would wish to highlight the LCC comments on the 2024 Draft Local Plan where a major topic of ours was the need for infrastructure, particularly highways and transport infrastructure, for major site allocations.

Clearly there are some key opportunities in the green transition, business base , regeneration opportunities, skills development, digital economy, and Agriculture/Food production amongst a number of others. LCC believe to capitalise on these will require supportive and engaged stakeholder support and collaboration.

Sector based focus is key and aligns with Government and DBT strategies. The LCC II team can support in regard to Large scale business engagement.

**Attachments:** None

**2031****Object****Summary:**

I live in Stamford and on numerous occasions in the past there have been calls to encourage more employment opportunities for the town especially with its transportation links, ie proximity to the A1, near the A14, the train service to Cambridge.

Why then does SKDC agree to change of use for land from employment to houses (yet more houses), ie the old Blackstones site behind Morrisons, the land by the A1 on Exeter Fields?

What is happening at St Martin's Park? This was to include employment units, but it is just sitting there and an eye-sore.

**Attachments:** None

2036

Support

**Summary:**

It would be useful here to understand the sectoral mix of businesses that the council identifies as potentially land here - or steer towards those that SK has a competitive advantage in. This could help shape the support offer - and would also align with the current approach favoured by the government.

**Attachments:** None

2167

Object

**Summary:**

3) There is nothing stated on key issues such as;  
  
D) Nothing on business rates and the tool that the 151 officer can undertake with discretionary rate relief to support economic development since the 2011 localism act gave the powers. Further nothing stated on the fact that between 40-50% of all retail units will be under the rateable value and therefore receive 100% rate relief.

**Attachments:** None

2172

Object

**Summary:**

3) There is nothing stated on key issues such as;  
  
H) The use of SPF in 2025 onward for business support  
There is minimal on Inward Investment, and working with government on attracting investment or working with the EU, China British Business Council or India Business Council on joint working

**Attachments:** None

2173

Object

**Summary:**

There is nothing stated on working with developers on land within the boundary of the new bypass.... i.e. new commercial development?

**Attachments:** None

## What we will do

1981

Support

**Summary:**

Introduce a green travel plan that would enable tourists and residents in the area to visit the many cultural heritage sites without having to use a car - providing opportunity for local economy growth, access to art and heritage that many don't currently have and reducing carbon footprint.

**Attachments:** None

2025

Support

**Summary:**

Importance of digital skills for Visitor Economy businesses – not everyone in the Visitor Economy has realised this and there is a need for more training.

Nature Tourism is a strength and has previously been under-sold. This includes walking, cycling, nature reserves, bird watching etc

Reference needed to safe, off-road cycle paths – where these have been provided, particularly when they allow access to the countryside or connect visitor attractions, they have proved very popular and brought considerable economic benefits.

The Lincolnshire Green Tourism Toolkit and associated training is important for helping visitor economy businesses to green their offer

**Attachments:** None

2037

Support

**Summary:**

Pleased to see support for the STEAM model locally.

Some support required within the sector to raise digital skills relating to the visitor economy and for businesses to be aware of the benefits of this. It is critical for the survival of the sector in coming years.

Fully support the sustainable tourism approach - is there more that can be said about the high quality green space within South Kesteven and how these can be linked. There are some world class examples within the area that link heritage to green space.

**Attachments:** None

## **Area of focus 1: Business and Job Creation and Employment Safeguarding**

2026

Support

**Summary:**

A general comment on all action plans within the strategy: LCC recognise these are all very operational plans and would welcome the opportunity to provide officer support in the delivery of the identified actions.

**Attachments:** None

2038

Support

**Summary:**

Actions could align to strategic fit and identify more partner organisations who may be operating within that space.

**Attachments:** None

2177

Object

**Summary:**

The action plan is not SMART. It does not state what the intended impacts will be. I.e. the "so what?" question. By example, if the Council sets up a forum and has officers attend it, what are we buying through attendance? Would it not be better to use officer time to undertake a project that a forum suggests? The action plan needs to show the resource ask, I.e. how much will it cost or need? AND what attending and facilitating all the forums, workshops and groups will achieve.

**Attachments:** None

**Area of focus 2: Skills Development**

2027

Support

**Summary:**

A general comment on all action plans within the strategy: LCC recognise these are all very operational plans and would welcome the opportunity to provide officer support in the delivery of the identified actions.

**Attachments:** None

**Area of focus 3: Inclusive Growth and Regeneration**

1989

Support

**Summary:**

3.1. 3.5. 3.8. this can be achieved by the development of Exeter Fields site in Stamford

the Exeter Fields site must be used in order to create employment within Stamford

**Attachments:** None

2028

Support

**Summary:**

A general comment on all action plans within the strategy: LCC recognise these are all very operational plans and would welcome the opportunity to provide officer support in the delivery of the identified actions.

**Attachments:** None

2039

Support

**Summary:**

As previous comment - some of the strategy into action into outcomes here are slightly unclear or are highly operational responses to a wider challenge. Which is where wider partners may have parts of the solution to sit alongside the specific actions identified.

**Attachments:** None

**Area of focus 4: Inward Investment****2029** **Support****Summary:**

A general comment on all action plans within the strategy: LCC recognise these are all very operational plans and would welcome the opportunity to provide officer support in the delivery of the identified actions.

**Attachments:** None

**2040** **Support****Summary:**

Similar again.

In 4.2 for example, it would be helpful for the team to liaise with the LCC Inward Investment team as key stakeholders - particularly with the strategic sector orientated prospectus' that have been produced. It would just help alignment.

**Attachments:** None

**Area of focus 5 Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer****1990** **Support****Summary:**

5.4. 5.9 Stamford needs the support of SKDC to enhance its heritage offer to tourists and visitors and needs support to develop sustainable tourism within the town.

**Attachments:** None

**2030** **Support****Summary:**

A general comment on all action plans within the strategy: LCC recognise these are all very operational plans and would welcome the opportunity to provide officer support in the delivery of the identified actions.

**Attachments:** None

**2175** **Object****Summary:**

There is a focus on STEAM data for tourism. However, if you read this and cross reference with ONS data and take out "all retail" from the data set the value of tourism as a percentage is less than 2% of the economy. Manufacturing, real estate, logistics, health services, finance are all sectors with 10% or higher values EACH for the economy. The tourism sector is valuable as a number and perception i.e. £250m to the economy etc BUT if manufacturing and logistics is 4 times this... then where is the focus on sectoral growth or agglomeration economy growth that is the pure economic development and will have greater economic benefit to the area? i.e. tourism is important, but the numbers are far, FAR higher for the other sectors stated? Interventions and support in those sectors will yield a higher crop and better local economic development. Tourism jobs are notoriously difficult to increase productivity in.

**Attachments:** None

**Economic Development Strategy**  
*Member Workshop*

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July

Nick Hibberd, Head of Economic Development





SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

1

### About the Strategy – Key Areas

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***The District's economy is growing strongly, increasingly based upon knowledge-intensive services, generating high quality jobs, with productivity levels well above the regional median and wages above the national average.***

Five Key Areas:

1. Business, job creation and employment safeguarding
2. Skills development
3. Inclusive growth and regeneration
4. Inward investment
5. Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer



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## The Consultation – Key Themes

Key themes arising from the Consultation:

1) Connectivity, 2) Commercial Land and Buildings, 3) Identification and Development of Key Sectors, 4) Productivity Drivers, 5) Visitor Economy and Tourism, 6) Monitoring and Evaluation

*“The strategy does not set out a vision. It is not ambitious.”*

*“There is nothing stated on key issues such as; social mobility”*

*“It would be good to see more recognition of alignment with existing programmes that are led by other organisations such as GLLEP, Lincolnshire CC, Midlands Engine or other district councils (e.g. the GLDSN is a GLLEP product)”*



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## Theme 1: Connectivity

*“I disagree connectivity is a strength... inter village and town connectivity barely exists”*

*“I would like to see how travel planning could be applied to the plan so that those in rural areas do not feel isolated”*

*“The strategy doesn't however reference the Local Transport Plan”*

*“The need for infrastructure, particularly highways and transport infrastructure, for major site allocations”*

*“Introduce a green travel plan”*

*“Safe off-road cycle paths”*



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## Theme 2: Commercial Land & Buildings

*“Exeter Fields site...should be targeted for employment/industry use.”*

*“I don’t see any new industrial spaces going up anywhere”*

*“Exeter fields site and St Martin’s Park both need to be developed to increase employment opportunities”*

*“Monarch Park/Quarry Farm and Stamford North developments will create an unsustainable increase in car movements”*

*“Nothing stated on public property, estates and corporate property, and the changing nature of the high street and variances in our towns.”*



## Theme 2: Commercial Land & Buildings

*“Would the Council undertake commercial development as done in market Deeping in 2009”*

*“Support economic development and business expansion is only going to be achieved by the use of Exeter Fields site for Industrial use”*

*“Why [did SKDC agree to change use of Exeter Fields land] from employment to houses”*

*“Nothing stated on working with developers on land within the boundary of the new bypass”*

*“We need the businesses to grow and attract new start ups into the area. this requires investment in infrastructure.”*



### Theme 3: Identification and Development of Key Sectors

*“It would be helpful to understand what SKDC considers its key sectors to be”*

*“The ONS data on productivity by sector could be matched against sectors in SK to see if it is skills build or attraction of other industry sectors should be the strategy”*

*“Sector based focus is key and aligns with Government and DBT strategies”*

*“It would be useful here to understand the sectoral mix of businesses that the council identifies as potentially land here”*



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### Theme 4: Productivity Drivers

*“We have a severe lack of skilled workers certainly within Grantham and also an aging work force.”*

*“SWOT analysis is good, but please try to be more specific on the productivity challenge. Is it skills or is it the lack of major manufacturers in the District”*

*“Identify skills gaps in local area”*

*“We need more skilled workers”*

*“Great that SK have a skills profile in place as well as plans to upskill residents”*

*“The Local Skills Improvement Plan...could be referenced as a source, as could the Local Skills Report... produced from the DfE which shows the broader skills need”*

*“The devolution of the adult education budget (AEB) will give new opportunities to reinvest grant into local skills needs”*

*“There is nothing stated on the changing nature of the high street and variances in our towns.”*



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## Theme 5: Visitor Economy and Tourism

*“Importance of digital skills for Visitor Economy businesses... there is need for more training”*

*“Pleased to see support for the STEAM model locally...fully support the sustainable tourism approach”*

*“Stamford needs the support of SKDC to enhance its heritage offer to tourists and visitors and needs support to develop sustainable tourism within the town.”*

*“There is a focus on STEAM data for tourism. However, if you read this and cross reference with ONS data and take out “all retail” from the data set the value of tourism as a percentage is less than 2% of the economy”*



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## Theme 6: Monitoring and Evaluation

*“There are no key performance indicators to measure success... Has an evaluation and appraisal been undertaken on the 2016 version?”*

*“How will the Council know the strategy has been successful in 2028?”*

*“Can this strategy be changed for the better through consultation or is it approved, and this is simply seeking validation from the community?”*

*“The action plan is not SMART. It does not state what the intended impacts will be. I.e., the “so what?” question”*

*“A general comment on all action plans within the strategy [we] recognise these are all very operational plans”*

*“Actions could align to strategic fit and identify more partner organisations who may be operating within that space.”*



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*Thoughts, questions, suggestions?*



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**Next Steps**

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



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Appendix 3 – Details of the amendments made to the Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan 2024 – 2028, formed from the consultation responses and members workshop.

#### Area of Strategy: **Executive Summary**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
This strategy is best seen as a living, dynamic document which requires the Council to build a comprehensive system ensuring everyone in the organisation is making good decisions that support it.		This strategy is best seen as a living, dynamic document which requires the Council to build a comprehensive system ensuring all partners and stakeholders across the district are making decisions that support it.

#### Area of Strategy: **The Local Economy**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
There is a need to upskill the local resident base to more effectively capture high value growth opportunities and job growth in the future.	Respondents would like the strategy to be more specific on what the local issues are i.e. economic activity rates, skills, company profiles or other.	There is a need to tackle all drivers of Productivity Land, Labour, Capital and Enterprise to effectively grow, retain capture high value growth opportunities and growth in the future.

#### Area of Strategy: **Summary SWOT Analysis**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
There is a need to upskill the local resident base to more effectively capture high value growth opportunities and job growth in the future.		There is a need to tackle all drivers of Productivity Land, Labour, Capital and Enterprise to effectively grow, retain capture high value growth opportunities and job growth in the future.
Strength: Connectivity	<i>'I disagree connectivity is a strength... inter village and town connectivity barely exists'</i>	Strength: Regional connectivity  Weakness: Local transport connectivity

**Area of Strategy: An Economic Vision**

Original text	Feedback from the members workshop	Amended text
<p>South Kesteven has a thriving, innovative and diverse economy and is recognised as a great place to live, visit, invest and do business.</p> <p>The District's economy is growing strongly, increasingly based upon knowledge-intensive services, generating high quality jobs, with productivity levels well above the regional median and wages above the national average</p>	<p>Members commented that the vision as currently stated within the document was too generic and could apply to any district.</p> <p>Requirement to edit the vision statement to include the ambition to retain, grow and attract employment.</p>	<p>South Kesteven has a thriving, innovative and diverse economy and is recognised as a great place to live, visit, invest and do business.</p> <p>The District's economy is growing strongly, through the retention, growth and attraction of increasingly based upon knowledge-intensive services, generating high quality jobs, with productivity levels above the regional median and wages above the national average.</p>

**Area of Strategy: Area of strategic focus 2: Skills Development. What we will do**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
	<p><i>'We have a severe lack of skilled workers certainly within Grantham and also an aging work force.'</i></p>	<p>Provide opportunities to retain the District's young talent and to attract young professionals into the local economy.</p>
	<p><i>'Identify skills gaps in local area and work with organisations/businesses to provide skills training to help promote skills development.'</i></p>	<p>Work with education providers and local businesses to highlight the range of career options available in the district.</p>

**Area of Strategy: Area of strategic focus 3: Inclusive Growth and Regeneration – What we have achieved**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
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The adopted Local Plan provides the vision and framework for how long-term housing, commercial and infrastructure growth will be delivered in South Kesteven.		The adopted Local Plan provides the vision and framework for how long-term housing, commercial and infrastructure growth will be delivered in South Kesteven, supporting Grantham's ambitions as a 'sub-regional' centre for investment.
The Council was successful in securing £5.56m from Government to deliver the Grantham Future High Streets Fund programme aimed at improving access to, and the appearance in and around, the Grantham Station Approach area, enhancements to and widen participation opportunities in Grantham Market Place and increase the amount of town centre residential units by converting empty upper floor retail space.		The Council was successful in securing £5.56m from Government to deliver the Grantham Future High Streets Fund programme aimed at improving access to, and the appearance in and around, the Grantham Station Approach area, enhancements to Grantham Market Place and creating opportunities to widen participation in the town's markets and events, and increase the amount of good quality town centre residential units by converting empty upper floor retail space.
Grantham was a 2022 finalist for the Academy of Urbanism Great Town award.	Requirement to add in the Talk of the Town – Rising Star award.	In 2022 Grantham was a finalist for both the Academy of Urbanism Great Town Award, and the Visa 'Talk of the Town – Rising Star' award.

Area of Strategy: **Area of strategic focus 3: Inclusive Growth and Regeneration – What we will do**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
Produce a Conservation and Heritage Strategy.	Addition of ways to we preserve and enhance heritage assets of the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Produce a Conservation and Heritage Strategy.</li> <li>- Explore opportunities for securing further funding to support the conservation and regeneration of the</li> </ul>

		district's-built heritage.
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Area of Strategy: **Area of strategic focus 4: Inward Investment – What we have achieved**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
Prince William of Gloucester Barracks – Due for decommissioning as a British Army installation in 2028, after which the site is expected to commence with 1,245 dwellings anticipated to be delivered between 2026/2027 and 2035/2036, with a further 2,755 beyond 2036.	Correction of figures	Prince William of Gloucester Barracks – Due for decommissioning as a British Army installation in 2028, after which the site is expected to deliver 3,500 – 4,000 units with approx. 1,745 anticipated to be constructed by 2041 with the rest beyond.
Stamford North – A development led by Burghley House Preservation Trust with GummerLeathes, as master developer. The aspiration is to establish a beautiful, thriving, and sustainable new community.	Inclusion of working relationship with Rutland County Council	Stamford North – A cross boundary strategic development with Rutland County Council led by Burghley House Preservation Trust with GummerLeathes, as master developer. The aspiration is to establish a beautiful, thriving, and sustainable new community.
The Deepings – Whilst two strategic development sites – the expansion of an industrial estate and employment generating land have been allocated in the current Local Plan period, neither have planning permission.	Further detail required on the strategic development sites	The Deepings currently has two large strategic allocations within the local plan. This consists of 680 unit residential scheme off Linchfield Road and 14ha employment generating expansion to the currently operating Northfields Industrial Estate. At present neither of these sites have planning permission.

<p>Commenced partial review of the Local Plan –</p> <p>The current Local Plan was adopted in January 2020. The Council is now focusing its ambitions on building more affordable homes and planning for major growth. To address these priorities, a partial review of the adopted Local Plan is underway.</p>	<p>Inclusion of a timeline for the adoption of the Local Plan</p>	<p>Commenced partial review of the Local Plan –</p> <p>The current Local Plan was adopted in January 2020. The Council is now focusing its ambitions on building more affordable homes and planning for major growth. To address these priorities, a partial review of the adopted Local Plan is underway and is expected to be adopted in 2026.</p>
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**Area of Strategy: Area of strategic focus 4: Inward Investment – What we will do**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
<p>Increase partnership working with developers and investors –</p> <p>Work in partnership with developers that meet the needs of investors and provide high-quality employment opportunities, especially but not limited, to target growth sectors such as manufacturing, and engineering, construction, professional, technical and scientific services, the health sector and the recreation and arts sectors.</p>	<p>Respondents noted the sectoral approach to supporting new and emerging sectors that will be important in providing new and higher value employment opportunities across SK, however, they felt the strategy should go further and identify which sectors should be supported.</p>	<p>Increase partnership working with developers and investors –</p> <p>Work in partnership with developers that meet the needs of investors and provide high-quality employment opportunities, especially but not limited, to target key growth sectors such as advanced manufacturing, logistics, engineering, health and care, the visitor economy, construction, and the recreation and arts sectors.</p>

**Area of Strategy: Area of strategic focus 3: Inclusive Growth and Regeneration – Action Plan**

Original text	Feedback from the consultation	Amended text
	<p><i>'Unlock land and stalled development sites.... I have been banging on about this for around 5 years. I don't see any new industrial spaces going up anywhere?'</i></p>	<p>Addition of 3.2 -</p> <p>Ensure a supply of commercial premises that meet the needs of local businesses</p>

<p>3.19 – Reimagine the role of town centres. Review of best practice and successful case studies nationally.</p>	<p><i>'There is nothing stated on key issues such as ..'The changing nature of the high street and variances in our towns. I.e. Stamford is more economically prosperous with higher incomes and GVA. This means more independents retailers and hospitality, with more disposable income. This makes it a more resilient town.'</i></p>	<p>3.19 – Reimagine the role of town centres, concentrating on the unique advantages of each settlement across the district. Review of best practice and successful case studies nationally.</p>
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#### Area of Strategy: **Addition of Performance Indicators as a final page in the strategy**

Feedback from the consultation - *'There are no key performance indicators to measure success, for instance how do we know the strategy, action plan and programmes and projects have been successful?'* This was discussed with Members at the Workshop, who requested that links to the KPIs, as outlined in the corporate plan, are made utilised within the Strategy.

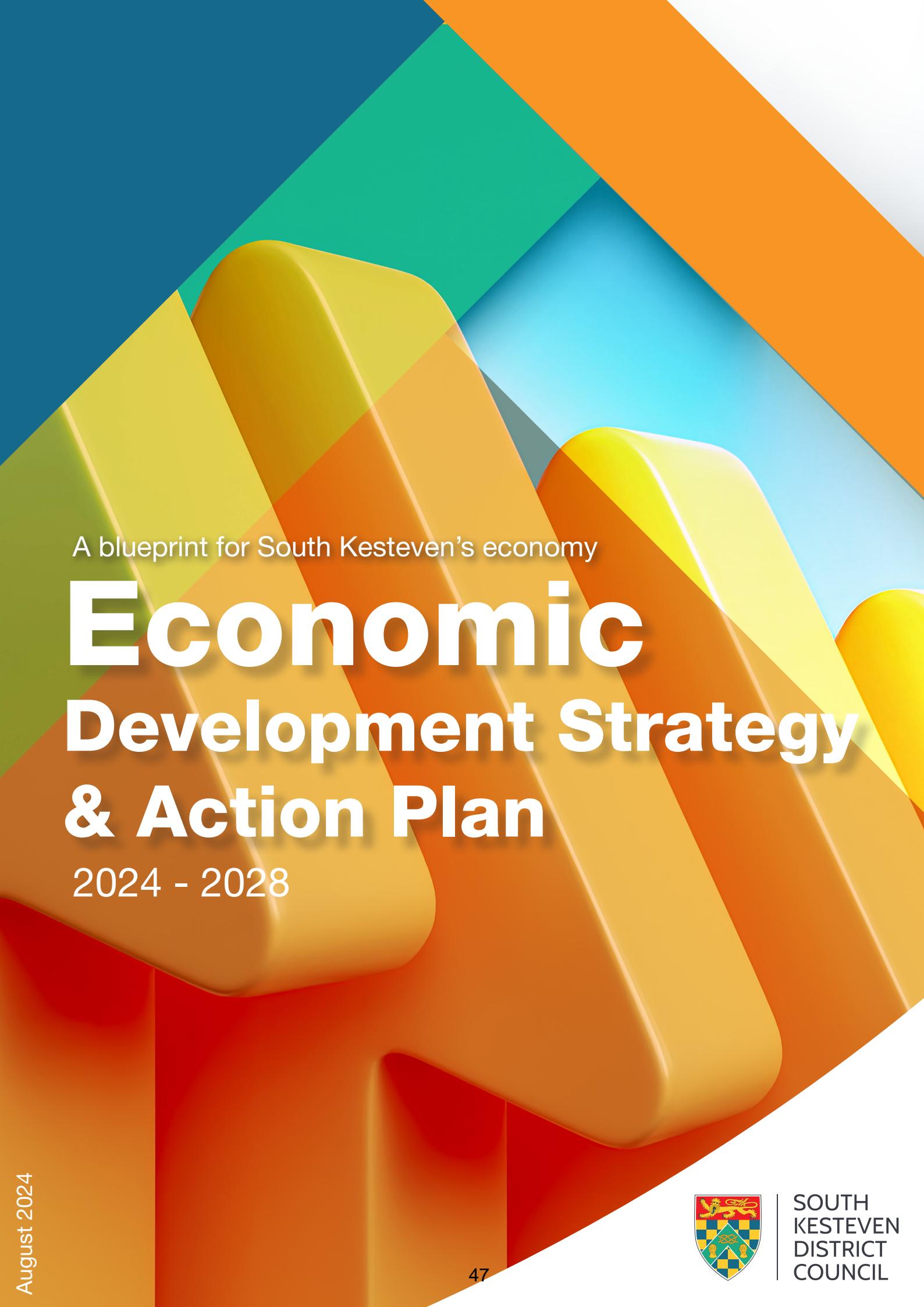
Performance Indicators
<p>The South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 will directly supports the Council's Corporate Plan aims support 'A thriving District to live in, work and visit'</p> <p>Specifically, Priority 3: Enabling Economic Opportunity Mission: To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities.</p> <p>To support this approach the Council has adopted several Targets which this Strategy will seek to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Economic Development Strategy and accompanying action plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 100% of annual actions on target/complete</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Deliver initiatives to expand and deepen engagement with business. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Following the introduction of a customer relationship management system (CRM), introduce a 'call and care programme' to support the top 20 businesses in SK</li> <li>○ Increase business participation in LEF X12 with Town Councils and Business Clubs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 100% of funding distributed</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work closely with Town Councils and Business Clubs across the District</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Work with the Lincolnshire Growth Hub to support businesses start, succeed and grow. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No of businesses supported x 60</li> <li>○ Jobs created x 100</li> <li>○ Inward Investment projects attracted x 2 per year</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Strategically leverage the Council's procurement spend to maximise social value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduce SKDC Procurement Charter to exploit local employment and supply chain opportunities</li> <li>○ Introduction of a statement of principles and publish guidance for suppliers on how to do business with Council and details of forthcoming bidding opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Provide the opportunity for contracts framework and supply chain opportunities through X2 Events
- Consider targeted interventions – planning powers and schemes, to achieve high-quality regeneration across the district and explore options to unlock stalled sites.
  - Develop an investment prospectus to promote the District regionally and nationally
- Develop a long-term approach to regeneration and be prepared for investment and funding opportunities.
  - Prepare a Pipeline of ‘oven ready’ projects x 1 per annum
  - Work with landowners and stakeholders to identify development constraints for identified sites for regeneration x 5 annual visits per annum
  - Linked to point above, evidence demand for electricity and infrastructure network upgrades through the production of a report.
- Continue to promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on our cultural and heritage strengths
  - Adoption of the Tourism Strategic Framework
  - Increase annual visitor numbers to South Kesteven by 3% from 2023
  - Increase annual spend by visitor to South Kesteven by 3% from 2023

With additional targets identified to:

- Strengthen the knowledge and expertise of the ‘People and Skills’ sub-group of the LEF through expanded recruitment of the board, with greater representation from local schools in the district.
  - Adopted new Terms of Reference for the LEF People and Skills Sub-Group
- Foster business and education connections through attendance and facilitation of networking events.
  - Network events attended X5
- Proactively seek and support interventions to grow and expand the skill base for businesses, such as SWAP’s, apprenticeships and work placements.
  - Companies supported X3

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A blueprint for South Kesteven's economy

# Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan

2024 - 2028



# Foreword

South Kesteven needs to decide which path it takes regarding economic sustainability to impact not only the present generation but also those that follow. This requires a strategic approach in which present policy and economic activity are made more resilient to future uncertainty.

Residents, businesses, community groups, Government, Town and Parish Councils, and education and skills providers have a vital role to play in shaping tomorrow's world, creating the platform for a sustainable future.

Growing public concern has resulted in a tightening of regulations in areas such as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, closed-loop recycling and gender inequality. Whilst no one can predict the future, it is possible to picture what South Kesteven will look like in the next four years.

For South Kesteven District Council, sustainability is gaining a place high on the Corporate Plan agenda. It is all about thinking ahead. Anticipating change and preparing for it well in advance, to ensure South Kesteven keeps its well-preserved architecture, heritage, accessibility of open spaces and sense of community. Shaping a future that is liveable, equitable and environmentally secure.

The next four years will bring new opportunities, yet there will be challenges. In navigating the uncertain terrain that lies ahead it is essential the ambitions for the South Kesteven economy are followed through.

The Corporate Plan (2024 to 2028) details the core focus of the work of the Council, setting out what the authority wants to achieve. In recognising the importance of 'enabling economic opportunity', the Council will work to enable and support a dynamic, resilient, and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities.

This means supporting towns to be places of pride, ensuring residents have the skills needed to secure quality job opportunities in businesses of all sizes and sectors, and helping young people to access career pathways across a diverse range of industries. In practice, this will see the Council collaborating with a variety of organisations to provide a structured approach to investment, supporting business growth and unlocking development opportunities.

The Council takes its role as a key enabler seriously. However, the Council cannot shape the future of South Kesteven alone. Listening better, sharing and harnessing the knowledge, expertise and passion of individuals, communities and academia will be at the heart of a new transparent and open relationship between the Council, residents and businesses.

This means taking time to engage the local voluntary and community sector, coupled with extensive community, business, industry and academia engagement to learn from and engage in everything - from policy development to service delivery.

External resources will be harnessed to ensure the Council is making use of national programmes, research, grant funding and sharing learning with neighbouring areas.

This strategy sets out a series of commitments being made by the Council about how it will work differently in the future. The best is yet to come. Please read on to find out how the Council is going to help South Kesteven build, renew and reinvent our great District.



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

# Executive Summary

This Economic Development Strategy sets out the Council's vision and ambition for the future growth and development of South Kesteven's economy.

Embracing a strategic approach to enabling local growth represents the golden thread running through the Council's Corporate Plan, Local Plan and relevant service areas.

A great deal has changed since the Council adopted its previous Economic Development Strategy in 2016. The Council now needs to reposition its approach to growth to take advantage of changing economic circumstances. This will ensure the District is in the best possible position to capture and realise economic growth, prosperity and productivity improvements over the course of the coming months and years to 2028.

Whilst things used to evolve more slowly, now how people live, work and access places is changing at speed. Communities (people and businesses) must constantly look forward and evolve or run the risk of getting left behind. All the indicators are that the pace of change is only going to increase.

The economy of South Kesteven will be dynamic, providing economic growth, wealth creation and employment opportunities for a growing population from 2024 to 2028. This growing population will have the opportunity to upskill to meet the changing economic circumstances throughout this period and experience a quality of life in excess of that which is available in most of the UK.

South Kesteven will have a reputation as an area which embraces development and investment and is seen as a destination of choice for businesses across many sectors.

As a strategic leader, influencer and procurer of goods, South Kesteven District Council must set the tone for employees, residents and businesses to embrace change, instead of fearing it.

This is why this strategy has been created to articulate the future and how the ambitions are going to be delivered.

This strategy focuses on five areas where it is believed the Council is likely to have greatest influence to overcome key challenges to economic prosperity and set a path to achieving the vision for South Kesteven in 2028, as follows:

- 1) Business, job creation and employment safeguarding**
- 2) Skills development**
- 3) Inclusive growth and regeneration**
- 4) Inward investment**
- 5) Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer**

This strategy is best seen as a living, dynamic document which requires the Council to build a comprehensive system ensuring all partners and stakeholders across the District are making decisions that support it.

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<b>01</b> Location	5
<b>02</b> The Local Economy	6
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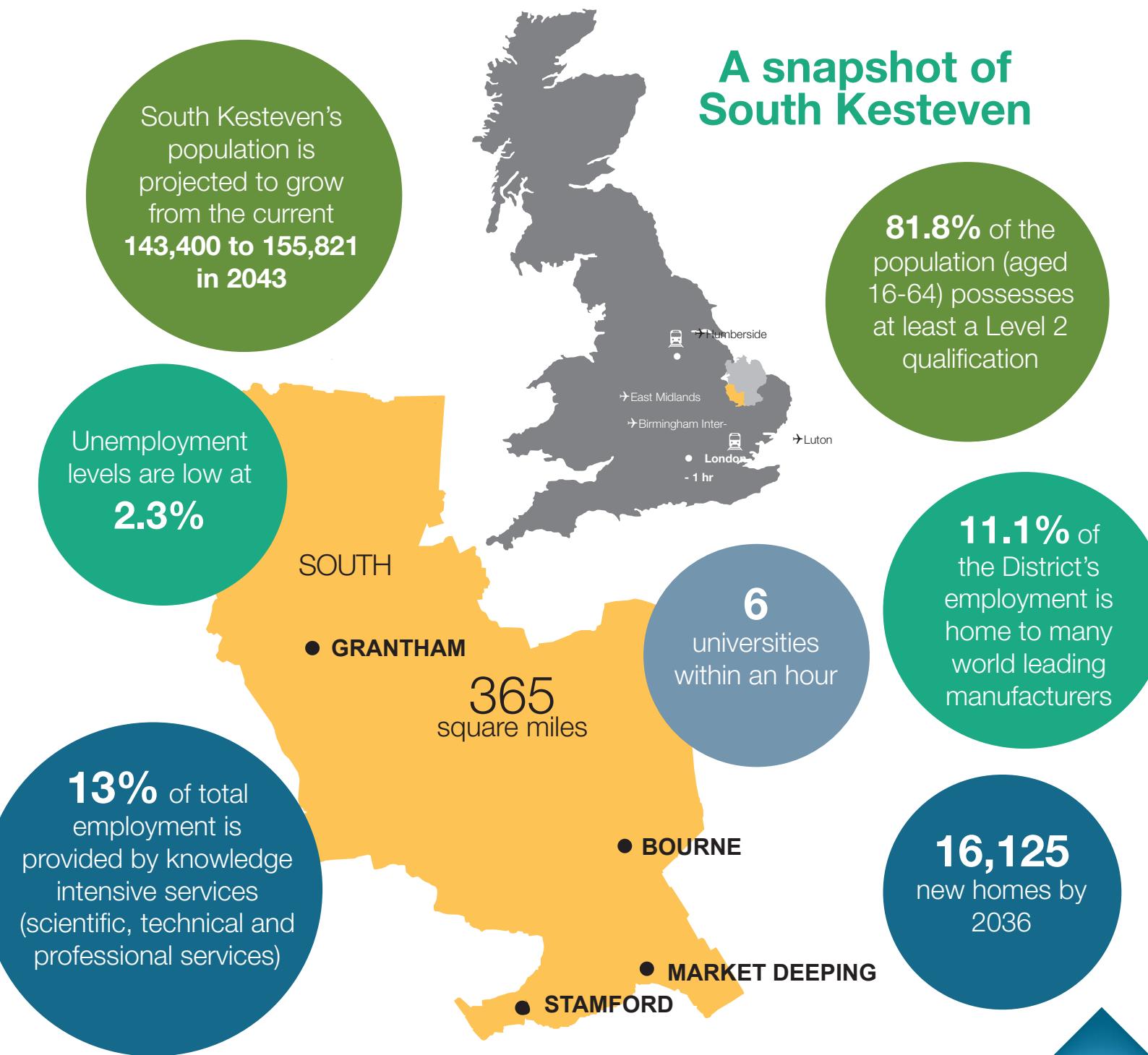
# Appendices

<b>01</b> South Kesteven Economic Profile
<b>02</b> Strategy and Policy Context
<b>03</b> State of the District

# 01 Location

South Kesteven is strategically well-placed between London and York on the Great North Road (now better known as the A1), with excellent links to other arterial routes. The multi-million pound investment in the Grantham Southern Relief Road is due for completion in 2025.

South Kesteven rivals many areas with a comfortable commuting time of just over a one-hour train ride to London, giving commuters access to a well-managed and efficient East Coast train line.



# 02 The Local Economy

South Kesteven benefits from inherent economic strengths, whilst also facing some key constraints to growth.

## Summary SWOT analysis

The analysis of recent economic trends within South Kesteven identifies a patchwork of varied economic characteristics and performance, with significant scope to boost the District's contribution to Lincolnshire's wider growth over the coming years.

The population is projected to reach 152,458 by 2036. This growth is driven by newcomers moving into the District from other parts of the country.

The value of South Kesteven's economy in 2021 was £2.835 billion, Gross Value Added (GVA), this is the highest in Lincolnshire. Despite this, in 2020, South Kesteven's productivity was £43,825.77 per job. This is £14,228 less output per role than the national figures.

South Kesteven's productivity was 22.9% lower than the UK average in 2020. All seven Lincolnshire authorities have below average productivity with South Kesteven ranking fifth.

There is a need to tackle all drivers of Productivity Land, Labour, Capital and Enterprise to effectively grow, retain capture high value growth opportunities and job growth in the future.

This Economic Development Strategy has been informed by a refreshed evidence base which establishes the economic baseline for South Kesteven in terms of current economic performance and recent trends.

**Key findings from this are summarised in the 'South Kesteven District Council State of the District report 2023' (See Appendices).**

### Strengths

- High living standards
- Skills profile
- Local economy
- Resilient visitor economy
- Regional Connectivity

### Weaknesses

- Productivity
- Economic inactivity
- Resident vs workplace earnings disparity
- Local transport connectivity

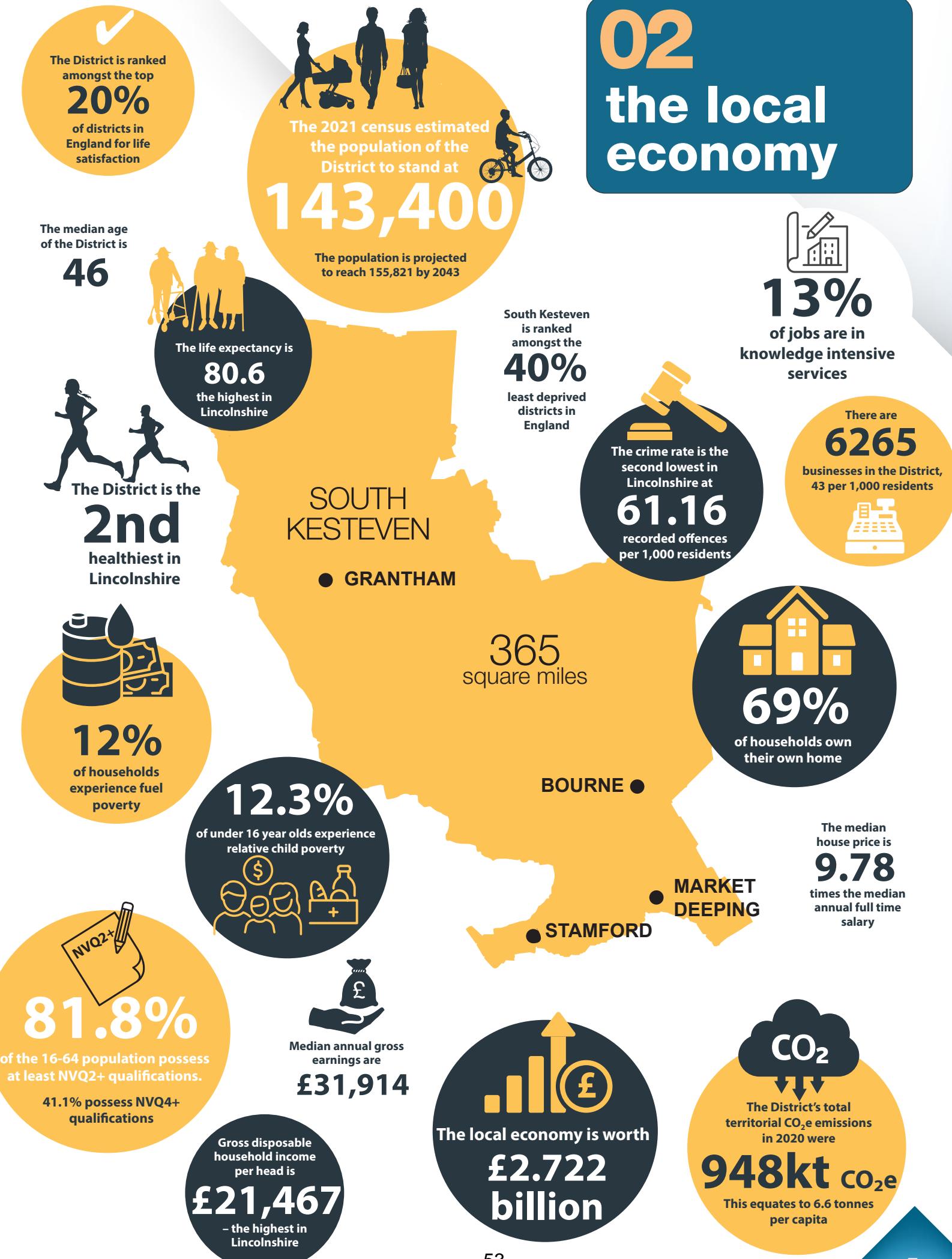
### Opportunities

- The green transition – economic opportunities
- Business base
- Regeneration opportunities
- Pace of population growth

### Threats

- Challenging economic outlook
- Economic underperformance and deepening inequality
- National energy security and supply resilience
- Outmigration of young people

## 02 the local economy



# 03 South Kesteven An Economic Vision

This Economic Development Strategy is guided by an overarching vision for South Kesteven's economy in 2028 to articulate its economic potential and growth opportunities. Our vision for the area is that:

**South Kesteven has a thriving, innovative and diverse economy and is recognised as a great place to live, visit, invest and do business.**

**The District's economy is growing strongly, through the retention, growth and attraction of increasingly based upon knowledge-intensive services, generating high quality jobs, with productivity levels above the regional median and wages above the national average.**

This new economic vision responds to identified weaknesses and challenges to growth such as relatively low workforce productivity, pockets of economic inactivity and earning disparity amongst some communities in South Kesteven.

The vision builds upon existing strengths and unique assets where the District already has competitive advantage and where there is significant scope to use these assets to drive prosperity amongst South Kesteven's residents and businesses in the future.

The ambition is to optimise the area's economic credentials to lead the way within a competitive environment, secure the infrastructure investment needed to realise South Kesteven's potential and deliver a step change in economic performance and prosperity. The aim is to reach and benefit all parts of the community in a genuinely inclusive and sustainable way, so that no one is left behind.

Reflecting the enabling economic growth golden thread running through all aspects of Council activity and service delivery, the overall economic ambition complements the five priorities set out in the South Kesteven District Council Corporate Plan which are for the authority to:

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

The Economic Development Strategy focuses on five areas where it is believed the Council is likely to have greatest influence to overcome key challenges to economic prosperity and set a path to achieving the vision for South Kesteven in 2028, as follows:

- Business, job creation and employment safeguarding
- Skills development
- Inclusive growth and regeneration
- Inward investment
- Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer

# Area of strategic focus 1: Business and Job Creation and Employment Safeguarding

## What we have achieved

### Created the Local Economic Forum

In July 2023, the Council brought together local stakeholders from across the District to provide advice and guidance on the strategic fit and deliverability of the South Kesteven UKSPF and REPF Investment Plan and to help guide decision-making and act as a key consultative body on future strategies, initiatives and funding programmes delivered by the Council.

### Engaged with the Greater Lincolnshire Defence and Security Network (GLDSN)

The GLDSN brings together national and international defence organisations, manufacturing, research, development and innovation expertise. The Council joined the network that was designed to provide a single forum to overcome sector challenges and identify business opportunities in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland.

### Entrepreneurial, start-up and Business support, advice and guidance

Drawing upon UKSPF funding, Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub was commissioned to provide a range of digitised self-help tools and support delivered online, an engaging workshop and events programme and a specialist start-up support programme. Advisers provide impartial information, diagnostic and brokerage services to businesses of all sizes and sectors, linking to other relevant local and national

support options, including specialist services for developing detailed actions plans for growth.

### Exhibited at conferences and trade shows

Throughout the year, exhibiting at events across the District and Lincolnshire was a good way of raising the Council's profile, generating awareness of the support available to businesses and gain real-time feedback.



# Area of strategic focus 1: Business and Job Creation and Employment Safeguarding

## What we will do

### Introduce a business newsletter, webinars and podcasts

- Produce a business e-newsletter to provide access to information and updates tailored specifically for entrepreneurs and businesspeople. The news will include industry trends, upcoming networking events, marketing strategies and important announcements directly impacting business success.
- Procure a customer relationship management (CRM) system.
- Partner with experts and specialists to create a collection of business support webinars and podcasts. These will be designed to offer advice and tips to business owners on how to expand the reach of their businesses, build personal resilience and provide insights into funding and procurement opportunities.

### Continue to distribute UK Shared Prosperity Fund

- Open further rounds of funding inviting community groups, businesses, voluntary and public sector organisations from anywhere in the District to apply for support covering a broad range of initiatives, for example:
  - Creating and improving green spaces
  - Supporting local arts, cultural heritage and creative activities
  - Boosting local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues
  - Supporting businesses to grow
  - Diversification of farm businesses

### Use the Local Economic Forum effectively

- Actively engage with the Local Economic Forum, share information, build community and allow easy sharing of resources and ideas. Draw upon expertise to shape the work of the Council's approach to economic development beyond current funding streams.
- Evolve the Local Business sub-groups of the Local Economic Forum to optimise UKSPF and other funds and to provide interventions which support local businesses to thrive, innovate and grow. This includes collaborating (where appropriate) with other places and may involve segmenting the South Kesteven business population to focus on specific interventions to best meet local business need.
- Supplement engagement with the Local Economic Forum and sub-groups by continuing to work closely with business representatives, Town/Parish Councils and the Third Sector across the District to ensure a strong and consultative voice on all economic development issues.

### Help to access financial support

- In collaboration with the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub and other business support practitioners, assist organisations to find and apply for growth programmes to help businesses start, succeed and grow.

### Sector support

- Present new programmes of sector support, coordinated and delivered by partners to promote fair access to careers across specific industries and to help identify partners and suppliers for programmes and projects.
- This includes introducing businesses and innovators to networking opportunities, such as (but not limited to) the Greater Lincolnshire Defence and Security Network, with a view to accessing defence-related supply chains, and to draw on Government funding to develop ideas, innovations and new products.

## Invest in clean growth

- Tackle the challenge of protecting South Kesteven's economic and natural assets from climate change. Work in partnership with stakeholders to deliver projects meeting this challenge to mitigate the constraints imposed on the economy by climate change and reduce costs and maximise opportunities in the transition to net zero.

## Social Value in procurement

- Capitalise on local development projects as opportunities for skills development and training and making sure what the Council buys, creates additional benefits for society.

## Develop a small business agreement

- Draw up a statement of principles to encourage effective trade between the District Council and small and medium sized businesses. Publish on our website guidance for suppliers on how to do business with council and details of forthcoming bidding opportunities.

## Host and support Meet the Buyer events

- Provide the opportunity for suppliers to introduce themselves to public sector buyers and private sector primary contractors to learn about new projects, contracts framework and supply chain opportunities.

## Support start-up and step-up businesses

- Identify suitable sites and premises to enable people to start and grow their businesses. Provide good quality advice and access to finance and learning when appropriate. Support the education and skills system in ensuring people recognise starting their own business as a viable career option and equipping them with the skills needed to start and grow a business.

## Profile business innovation

- Support increased levels of innovation activity through innovation institutions in key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, logistics, health and care visitor economy and energy, and within businesses themselves.

## Inspire, transform and sustain cultural change

- Support independent companies to realise the true potential of digital transformation, embrace new business models or implement new ways of working for those that have not yet embarked on transformation journeys.



# Area of strategic focus 2: Skills Development

## What we have achieved

### Supported apprenticeships

The Council has a lengthy tradition of nurturing talent through apprenticeship programmes and is a keen supporter of the 'earn while you learn scheme'. The combination of workplace training and college study provides apprentices with the opportunity to gain valuable skills and knowledge, as well as a nationally-recognised qualification.

Since 2020, the Council has provided 41 apprenticeships up to degree-level and was awarded Apprenticeship Employer of the Year in the Grantham College 2023 Awards.

### Created a grow your own culture of caring

The Council's commitment to investing in the growth and development of its staff has cemented its reputation of having a supportive and engaging workforce culture. However, the Council, in keeping with many authorities, is facing capacity and capability challenges.

To ensure the Council is well equipped and supported to deliver development now, and in readiness for the changes set out in the Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, a programme of support is being progressed.

The Council's 'grow your own' ethos allows employees to progress their careers. This programme aims to provide the direct support needed, delivery of upskilling opportunities for existing employees and further development for the future pipeline into the profession. For example, staff who have recently graduated with an MSc in Town Planning are now working towards chartered membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

### Received the Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award

In 2022, the Council received its Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award for outstanding support to the Armed Forces community – one of only 18 organisations across the East Midlands to hold the status.

### Civic reception

Supported the networking event involving military, community, health, heritage and business leaders. The event was hosted at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks.

### Moved to new offices, with flexible and agile working

Following a prolonged period of remote working, the Council made a significant investment in new offices to create a collaborative and productive atmosphere. The brand new open-plan office stimulates cooperation between diverse teams and improves outcomes for the people, communities and businesses the Council serves.



# Area of strategic focus 2:

## Skills Development

### What we will do

#### Reduce barriers to employment

- Continue to utilise the 'People and Skills' sub-group of the Local Economic Forum to complement, so not duplicate, mainstream provision. Use UKSPF and other funding to help reduce the barriers some people face to employment and support them to move towards employment and education. This includes targeting funding into skills for local areas to support employment and local growth.

#### Develop skills by working in partnership with local educational facilities

- To feed the existing and future pipeline of planned developments throughout the District, it is necessary to have a robust and fit for purpose further and higher education offering. Targeting learning opportunities in areas where future job creation is most prevalent is going to be key to the skills delivery landscape. It will be necessary for key partners to work together on this endeavour.
- Provide opportunities to retain the District's young talent and to attract young professionals into the local economy.
- Work with education providers and local businesses to highlight the range of career options available in the District.

#### Support a higher skilled and higher paid workforce across South Kesteven

- Support opportunities for greater levels of lifelong learning to include upskilling and reskilling people through their working lives, especially in green skills.

#### Foster an understanding of skills and training needs for the existing and future workforce

- Establish a vocational skills forum involving

education and training providers, employers, awarding bodies, Lincolnshire County Council, the greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Careers Hub

- Hold a skills summit aimed at exploring how to improve work experience offerings, supporting businesses in improving their links with educators and promoting apprenticeships at all levels.

#### Support the delivery of Armed Forces Covenant pledges

- Continue to build on the good progress made delivering the Covenant, especially in raising awareness with the local business community of the advantages of tapping into the veterans' labour pool.
- Disseminate information to business groups to increase knowledge and lead to a more inclusive relationship with the military community.
- Link up with existing national and regional networks that support veterans.
- Promote the many skills gained by veterans that can be put to use in the business environment – from leadership to logistics, mechanics to engineering, digital technology to mapping.

#### Plan for jobs

- Continue to build on the good progress made on delivering the Covenant, especially in raising awareness to the local business community of the advantages of tapping into the veterans' labour pool.
- Disseminate information to business groups to increase knowledge and lead to a more inclusive relationship with the military community.
- Link up with existing national and regional networks that support veterans.
- Promote the many skills gained by veterans which can be put to use in the business environment – from leadership to logistics, mechanics to engineering, digital technology to mapping.

## Develop diverse digital talent

- Focus and invest in ensuring residents have the digital skills and confidence to thrive. Create the conditions for digital businesses and entrepreneurs to see the District as an exciting choice to start, locate and scale their business.
- Work with colleges, university centres and partners to connect employers and learners through nationwide Skills Boot camps that give people the digital skills needed to take the first step into upskilling or changing their career path.
- From the perspective of the digital divide that hinders inclusiveness, consideration will be made to improving not only workers but also all members of society
- Support measures to improve inclusivity and break down the digital divide for not only workers, but all members of society.

## Support emerging growth sectors and new employers

- Work with South Kesteven's two Further Education Colleges in Grantham and Stamford, universities and other local institutions to ensure skills are developed to support emerging growth sectors and new employers entering the District.

## Later life learning and re-entry of older adults into the market place

- Work with workers, companies, non-governmental organisations and policy makers to raise awareness among businesses of the strategic and social benefits of an older workforce and prioritise the training of workers aged 50+ for the new world of work.
- Support businesses to redefine and expand roles to accommodate and meet the targeted needs of older workers to include nonlinear educational paths, returnships, internships, apprenticeships and job sharing.



# Area of strategic focus 3: Inclusive Growth and Regeneration

## What we have achieved

### Planned for growth

The adopted Local Plan provides the vision and framework for how long-term housing, commercial and infrastructure growth will be delivered in South Kesteven, supporting Grantham's ambitions as a 'sub-regional' centre for investment.

The policies within the Local Plan cover a range of topics including housing, sustainability, heritage transport, the visitor economy and employment. These policies are used to determine whether new developments, including new housing and employment generating uses, are suitable to go ahead.

The Local Plan sets out a requirement for 16,125 homes to be built over the period 2011-2036, at an average of 650 homes per year.

### Introduced a plan aimed at securing investment funding

The Council endorsed a plan to identify and secure millions of pounds of infrastructure and improvement needed across South Kesteven. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) sets out what is needed, where and when. It includes projects relevant to transport, education, utilities, health, community and leisure facilities, open spaces as developments and the emergency services.

### Infrastructure Funding Statement

Since 2020, the Council has annually published an updated Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) summarising its position in relation to Section 106 funds, what funds have been spent in the reporting period and what has been secured for the future.

The IFS provides information on the monetary (and non-monetary) contributions sought and received from developers for the provision of infrastructure to support development in South Kesteven. The total funds held on 31 March

2023 was £3,575,719.46. Monies agreed in Section 106 Agreements (S106) which were signed in 2022/2023 for the future and were not yet due to be received, totalled £7,225,090.80.

### Advanced Grantham's High Street

The Council was successful in securing £5.56m from Government to deliver the Grantham Future High Streets Fund programme aimed at improving access to, and the appearance in and around the Grantham Station Approach area, enhancements to Grantham Market Place and creating opportunities to widen participation in the town's markets and events, and increase the amount of good quality town centre residential units by converting empty upper floor retail space.

### Supported, regenerated and improved the economic, social and cultural vitality of Grantham

The Grantham Town Team was established to promote the town internally and externally, provide new ideas and concepts of how Grantham can develop in the future and to support the development of a continuous programme of events and promotional activities.

The aim of the Town Team is to provide a sounding board for new policy and strategy to develop and regenerate Grantham and assist with generating funding and sponsorship for events and promotional activities.

### Invested in and maintained heritage

The Council was successful in securing £1.2m to deliver the Grantham High Street Heritage Zone (HSHAZ) programme. This has seen extensive improvements to shop fronts and buildings of historical significance, with many of the shop fronts reinstated to their original design.

## Consulted with the community

In 2022, funded by the HSHAZ specialists were commissioned to undertake a Community Charette (consultation) which allowed local residents and stakeholders to participate in the development of a vision for Grantham to 2045.

## Introduced an exciting range of heritage interpretation activity

As a result of the HSHAZ a range of activities were completed to highlight, share and celebrate Grantham's heritage including the creation of in person and digital guided tours, a 'Grantham Trumps' card game and a colouring book celebrating the Trigge Chained Library.

A dedicated lamppost banner campaign highlighted historic imagery, and a cultural programme included community ceramics and print projects, theater, dance and sculpture installations.

In addition SKDC supported the Trustees of Grantham Museum with their application to the Arts Fund 'Reimagine' grants programme, securing £18,600 to support building the museum's operational capacity, volunteer development and training, and curatorial support.

## Secured external funding

Other initiatives where external funding has been secured are:

- An additional £90k for cultural activities as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme
- £68k secured from National Lottery Heritage Fund and Lincolnshire Community Foundation for Wake House in Bourne and Deeping St James signal box project.
- £250k from Government Welcome Back Fund
- £3.9m of UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- £540k of Rural England Prosperity Fund
- £170k through the Safer Streets Fund to tackle violence against women and girls and make streets safer

## Distributed funding to businesses, community groups, sporting organisations and cultural bodies

The Council received just shy of £4 million from the Government's United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF).

In February 2023, the Council established a UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) Programme Board with a specific remit to set the direction for the programme, support the

Lead Officer in overseeing the overall progress of the programme and make recommendations to decision-makers in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation for executive functions.

## Launched rural business capital grant scheme

This top-up fund was allocated to the Council in addition to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the grant fund was launched to support businesses in South Kesteven (excluding Grantham). The discretionary capital investment-only scheme supports specific categories and seeks to prioritise investments that support green growth in renewables, green power, energy efficient measures that lessen rural reliance on fossil fuels and make a positive contribution to Net Zero. This includes investments aimed at reducing fuel costs.

## Secured funding to tackle violence against women and girls

Grant secured from the Safer Streets Fund for a Grantham-based project dedicated to making a difference to the safety of women and girls at a community level. The funding expands work to change attitudes and behaviours and prevent crime in the first place.

## Exploring how to bring green space into town centre regeneration

The Council worked alongside the Woodland Trust and with University of Sheffield Masters students to identify ways of adding greening elements, such as trees and shrubs, to Westgate and Market Place in Grantham.

The project aims to help to increase visitor time in the town centre, promote Grantham as the home of the Woodland Trust, and reduce the urban-heat island effect in Westgate and the Market Place.

## Supported businesses in times of need

The Council administered and allocated over £53m of Government COVID support grants to close to 3,000 South Kesteven businesses.

## National finalists for awards

The Council was shortlisted for the East Midlands 'Best Covid Response Award' for its exceptional work on support and recovery for the business community at the 2022 Federation of Small Business Local Government Awards.

Grantham was a 2022 finalist for the Academy of Urbanism Great Town Award, and the Visa 'Talk of the Town – Rising Star' Award. .

# Area of strategic focus 3: Inclusive Growth and Regeneration

## What we have achieved

### Provide effective delivery of strategic sites

- Deploy planning powers to achieve high quality regeneration in South Kesteven's four main towns (Bourne, Grantham, Stamford and The Deepings) and build on the master plans already in place for Council owned strategic sites such as, St Martin's Park, Stamford and Turnpike Close, Grantham

### Planning ahead

- Develop appropriate spatial development strategies and planning policies to ensure new high quality housing developments and employment sites meet present and expected future needs.

### Create pride of place

- Work with developers to influence the way they approach new buildings and homes to create places where it is easy for people to lead healthier lifestyles, access good quality local employment and support wellbeing.
- This includes building on the excellent relations with Rutland County Council and collaborating with other neighbouring authorities to identify where cross-boundary growth can help communities. By adopting this approach, it is envisaged funding will be secured for the infrastructure needed to accommodate new housing, employment creation and connectivity.

### Unlock land and stalled development sites

- Create robust policy, a strategic position and auditable backgrounds to implement attractive schemes.
- Work alongside democratically elected bodies, key landowners, Homes England, property, investment and development companies to explore available funding routes and develop master plans.
- In cases where electricity networks are near capacity or where upgrades are stalled and where there is demonstrable demand, engagement will take place with the energy regulator Ofgem to seek the required approvals.

- As part of the planning obligations process, support the Planning Team in maintaining a community and business ideas database containing 'needs' and 'wishes' formally identified by Councillors, Parish and Town Councils, residents' association, business groups and other interested parties.
- There may be the need to explore whether some Section 106 planning agreements negotiated in more buoyant times remain viable. The objective would be to renegotiate agreements where developments have stalled.

### Filling empty high street shops

- Explore schemes for putting empty shops to community or charity use to keep high streets vibrant, including pop-up events, until a permanent store can open.

### Support the path to net zero

- Develop a package of sustainable infrastructure and low carbon capital projects to encourage a District-wide shift to a net zero carbon economy.

### Advance shovel-ready projects, supporting better social outcomes

- Develop a portfolio of shovel ready, infrastructure projects to kick-start investment, unlock and stimulate economic activity within the District.

### Connected towns

- Install free public Wi-Fi service hubs across the District, providing a foundation for smart town technology and digital services while providing high-quality broadband connectivity for businesses.

### Create age-friendly communities

- Develop age-friendly environments enabling all people to: age well in a place that is right for them; continue to develop personally; be included and contribute to their communities while enabling their independence and health.
- Work with partners to apply the Age UK principles of creating age-friendly communities.

## Regenerate and improve town centres and manage parking demand

- Through a series of targeted interventions, underpinned by a combination of inclusive local consultation and successful bids for Government funding, regenerate town centres to be a places people want to live, trade, gather and be entertained.
- Reimagine the role of town centres helping them to ensure diversity among retailers with a healthy mix of independents and chains, facilitate social interaction and provide meeting places, sustain the hospitality and leisure economy and deliver high quality housing.
- This includes developing a parking strategy to manage the future needs of the District.

## Increase urban tree canopy cover

- Build on the work undertaken by students from the University of Sheffield, the Council and the Woodland Trust will explore how to significantly increase tree cover in Grantham's built environment. Take learning across the District as appropriate.

## Refocus Grantham Town Team

- Following the appointment of a Grantham Engagement Manager, refresh the Terms of Reference to include a key qualifying criteria that members of the Town Team must be willing for their involvement to be in the public domain, and relaunch the Town Team.

## Safety and accessibility audits

- To complement the Safer Streets Fund award, and by drawing upon the UKSPF, promote inclusive and sustainable design, safety and access audits of the District's four town centres will be undertaken to benchmark accessibility for disabled people and women and girls' safety in public spaces.

## Create bustling markets

- Bring forward a step change in the way Council-run street markets are presented, operated, marketed and promoted. Aim to make them self-sustaining and complementary to, and supportive of, the existing retail offering.

## Preserve and enhance heritage assets of the District

- Produce a Conservation and Heritage Strategy.
- Explore opportunities for securing further funding to support the conservation and regeneration of the District's built heritage.



# Area of strategic focus 4:

## Inward Investment

### What we have achieved

## Major growth locations

Major Growth locations in South Kesteven were put before and approved the Council's Planning Team as follows:

### Bourne

- Riverside Business Park
  - Located on the east side of Bourne, the site is made up of a three-phase development which was approved in 2016 and 2019.
  - The site has outline consent for 18 small light industrial units and 15 larger varied industrial units with which is hoped to encourage the growth and expansion of local businesses.

### Grantham

- Spitalgate Garden Village
  - Located on the southern fringe of Grantham, covering an area of approximately 224 hectares.
  - 3,700-home garden village that will include shops, schools and a health centre.
  - The site is set to include around 11 hectares of B2, B8 and E(g) employment generating uses.
- Spitalgate Level
  - Located In southern Grantham as part of the wider Grantham Strategic Gateway employment allocation.
  - Recent outline approval for Carta Real Estate Limited
  - Comprises 43,200 sqm of B2-class floorspace and 43,200 sqm of B8-class floorspace.

- Prince William of Gloucester Barracks
  - Due for decommissioning as a British Army installation in 2028, after which the site is expected to deliver 3,500 - 4,000 units with approximately 1,745 anticipated to be constructed by 2041 with the rest beyond.
  - The site is set to include around 8 hectares of employment land for E(g) employment generating uses.
- Rioja Designer Outlet Village
  - With the construction of the new junction south of Grantham on the A1, the Grantham Designer Outlet Village is expected to be one of the few outlets in the UK to have both visibility and direct access from a major highway.
  - The aim is to create a state-of-the-art retail destination, which upon completion is expected to release a total of 137 units.
- Grantham Downtown Designer Outlet centre
  - Sitting alongside the existing Downtown store off Old Great North Road, Great Gonerby.
  - The site is set to feature more than 100 individual designer outlet stores, 1,979 parking spaces, offices, leisure provision, a training academy, multi-storey car park, tourist information and visitor centre.
- Roseland Business Park
  - There has been a recent approval on the disused airfield section of Roseland Business Park for 82,700 sqm of B8-class storage uses.

## Stamford

- St Martin's Park
  - Outline approval granted in 2020
  - This high-quality mixed use development will comprise 10,000m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of B1 Class E(g) (offices and workshops), c190 dwellings, a retirement village including ancillary facilities, residential (30% affordable housing), local foodstore and café, public open space including strategic landscaping at the eastern end of the site, and all associated infrastructure.
- Stamford North
  - A cross boundary strategic development with Rutland County Council led by Burghley House Preservation Trust with GummerLeathes, as master developer. The aspiration is to establish a beautiful, thriving and sustainable new community.
  - Located in a small valley directly to the north of Stamford, it will become home to up to 1,350 households, and will be the largest part of the Stamford Urban Extension.
  - The site is currently at the application stage and is allocated within the Local Plan.

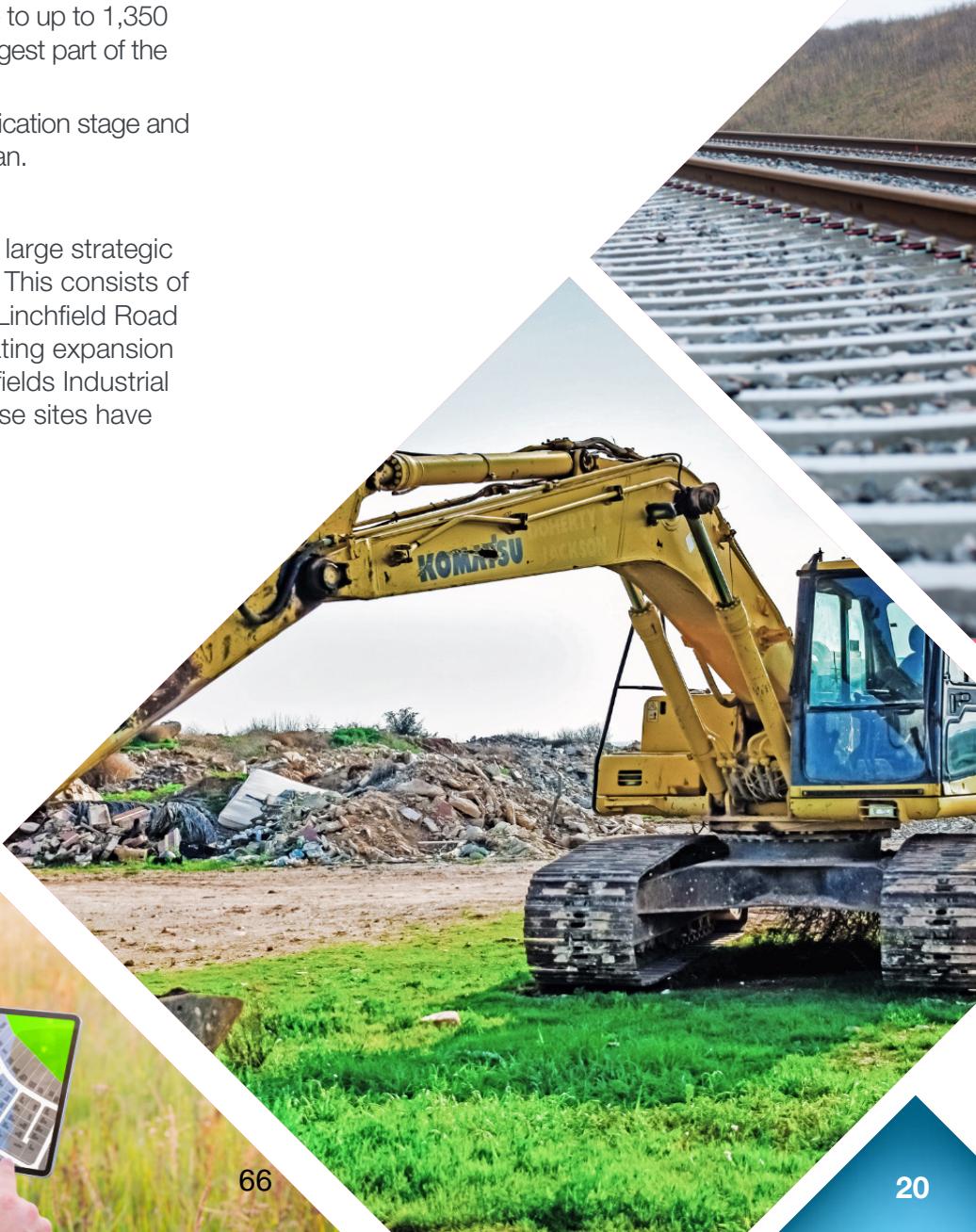
## The Deepings

- The Deepings currently has two large strategic allocations within the local plan. This consists of 680-unit residential scheme off Linchfield Road and a 14ha employment generating expansion to the currently operating Northfields Industrial Estate. At present neither of these sites have planning permission.

## Commenced partial review of the Local Plan

The current Local Plan was adopted in January 2020. The Council is now focusing its ambitions on building more affordable homes and planning for major growth. To address these priorities, a partial review of the adopted Local Plan is underway and is expected to be adopted in 2026.

The new and revised policies will together contribute to the vision of making South Kesteven a fairer and more inclusive District where residents benefit from the opportunities new developments bring, and workers and visitors from all backgrounds feel welcome and safe.



# Area of strategic focus 4: Inward Investment

## What we will do

### Support for foreign-owned businesses

- Work with the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to help all foreign-owned businesses in South Kesteven to grow.

### Produce a pitch book with accompanying aerial filming and motion graphics

- Develop an investment prospectus to promote the District regionally and nationally as an excellent location for inward investment, business expansion and quality of life. As the investment in serviced land and premises comes to fruition, use the Council's key strategic investment sites as a pitch book to attract both indigenous companies to grow and diversify, and inward investment.
- These pitch book projects will be a focal point for the Council's pursuit of Government, and other agency funding, as the District looks to pilot schemes where the potential economic impact is justified, yet may not be fully evidenced.
- This approach will include collaborating with Lincolnshire County Council to capitalise on the benefits of the Team Lincolnshire brand.

### Develop investment-ready projects

- In supporting the delivery of the Local Plan, develop a pipeline of future District Council projects to ensure the substantial level of growth planned within South Kesteven can be accommodated without being detrimental to levels of accessibility, connectivity and services.

### Enhance digital connectivity

- Support investment in the roll-out of gigabit-capable internet across the District.
- Work in partnership with housing, planning and the highways authority to develop digital-friendly local planning and street works policies. Implement good practice from other areas to help breakdown barriers and speed up roll-out of digital infrastructure in South Kesteven.

### Champion a stronger local economy

- Work with key public sector partners such as Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Team Lincolnshire to promote South Kesteven as a prime location for inward investment, including foreign direct investment, new projects, expansions, mergers and acquisitions.

- This includes showcasing investment opportunities and access to talent at appropriate trade shows and national forums such as the UKREiF (the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum).

### Support business expansion and talent attraction

- Create the right conditions and supportive environment to help businesses locate, relocate, rebuild and develop new ventures, especially in emerging sectors. Develop strong relationships between the community, industry and education partners.

### Supply sites and premises for industry

- Ensure a healthy supply of land for businesses and employers across South Kesteven through the Local Plan. This includes, where appropriate, bringing forward Council-owned land and premises that becomes available as public sector services are deployed to alternative sites in the District.

### Increase partnership working with developers and investors

- Work in partnership with developers that meet the needs of investors and provide high-quality employment opportunities, especially but not limited, to target key growth sectors such as advanced manufacturing, logistics, engineering, healthcare, the visitor economy and the recreation and arts sectors.
- With the support of the planning team, design and implement a model for more effective use of planning obligations to support economic development activity.

### Support innovation and enterprise

- Support and deliver sites and premises in locations across South Kesteven that will secure further public and private investment in innovation and enterprise activities.

### Optimise local benefits of nationally significant infrastructure projects

- Support and work to maximise the local economic benefits of nationally significant infrastructure projects that are planned for delivery in South Kesteven over the coming years.

# Area of strategic focus 5: Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer

## What we have achieved

### Free folk festival

- In 2022, the Council organised a one-off festival special, thanks to funding secured from the Government's Welcome Back Fund which featured national and local acts and an extensive variety of entertainment.

### Hosted inaugural Tourism Networking Event

- In 2023, the Council hosted an inaugural networking event where tourism and hospitality businesses heard from guest speakers on the latest industry news and insights.

### Supported Destination Lincolnshire

- In 2023, to demonstrate the Council's commitment to ensuring links to the Destination Management Plan, a letter of support was provided towards Destination Lincolnshire becoming an accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnership for Greater Lincolnshire.

### Promoted the Destination Lincolnshire Tourism Excellence Awards

- Visitor economy businesses across South Kesteven were alerted to the awards and offered help with the application process. Three District businesses were selected as finalists, one of which was the Stamford Arts Centre for the Arts and Culture Award.

### Joined the Tourism Management Institute

- In 2023, the Council signed up to the tourism professionals membership of the Tourism Management Institute to sit alongside professionals from across the industry and access a wide range of experience and expertise.

### Spotlight on women who have shaped South Kesteven

- In 2023, coinciding with International Women's Day, the Council officially launched a film celebrating ten inspirational women from South Kesteven who made their mark in history in

sectors such as military, theatre, politics, nursing, philosophy, and policing.

### Introduced range of place promotion initiatives

- Discover South Kesteven is the tourism and visitor economy brand for South Kesteven District Council. The brand is well-recognised and supported by a bespoke website, publications, social media presence (TikTok, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) and through many in-person meetings, networking events, trade shows and business events.
- An updated Discover South Kesteven website has been created with the visitor in mind. The website shares sufficient information giving a taste of the unrivalled attractions the District has to offer. The website is clean, streamlined, runs smoothly and most importantly is mobile friendly.
- A new blog page enables content to be added to the website without creating more tabs and overloading the site with information.

### Introduced Hidden History app

- Developed through the High Street Heritage Action Zone, funded by Historic England and the Council, an app to guide visitors through Grantham's landmarks and history was launched. The TrailTale app is a guided walk where users can choose what to explore by following a set route or selecting a series of highlights.

### Established a cross-Council events team

- Developed and implemented a cross-Council events team to oversee the design and delivery of events promoting the District and its rich offering.

### Peer networking

- Commenced work with visitor economy officers from bordering local authorities to build a greater relationship and understanding of the various existing and developing cross-border visitor economy offers.

# Area of strategic focus 5: Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer

## What we will do

### Active partner of Destination Lincolnshire

- Develop and support a programme of delivery in conjunction with Destination Lincolnshire and its partner organisations, to unlock the full potential of the sector.
- In collaboration with Destination Lincolnshire, identify, develop and assist tourism businesses and local attractions that have the capacity to combine package deals for visitors across South Kesteven.

### Support accessible tourism

- Building upon Visit England's Accessible and Inclusive Toolkit for Tourism Businesses, promote practical guidance on providing an inclusive welcome, designing accessible buildings, employing disabled people, creating quality accessibility information and accessible tourism training.

### Review heritage plaque and information trails

- Engage in an audit of existing heritage plaques. In collaboration with local Civic Societies, Town Councils and other stakeholders, identify notable figures with connections to buildings across South Kesteven in readiness for an extended national scheme, a Council Blue Plaque Scheme or both.
- Raise the profile of the Grantham TrailTail app and complete the development of trails exploring the District's other towns.

### Support a rich history

- Explore supportive actions the Council can take to promote and upgrade local heritage sites to strengthen the local, national and international audience using economy and build civic identify.
- Support the delivery of the 'Soldiers from the Sky' project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and explore further options to build upon the District's considerable military heritage, which provides opportunity to generate both national and international interest.

### Support and celebrate diversity and inclusion

- Promote diversity and inclusion across the tourism sector. Investigate sponsorship, networking opportunities and a marketplace to promote local women-owned businesses.

### Support sustainable tourism

- Develop a coordinated offer to ensure South Kesteven's attractions are promoted to a national and international audience using latest technologies and platforms. Helping businesses find the best ways visitors to experience South Kesteven sustainably, providing year-round, well-paid jobs while minimising impact on the environment.

### Capitalise on cultural and heritage strength

- Develop a new integrated visitor economy strategy for the District to grow and maximise the visitor economy in a sustainable way which respects our unique environment.

### Continue professional development

- Through membership of the Tourism Management Institute increase learning and adoption of the latest in digital innovation, marketing and tourism trends and data, along with initiatives to promote sustainable tourism strategies and opportunities.

### Networking events

- Following on from the pilot networking event in 2023, plan a larger and more comprehensive event to bring together a wider cohort of South Kesteven visitor economy businesses. Invite high profile speakers from the sector to provide insight and expertise in delivery of the visitor economy offer and will use the opportunity to launch consultation on the new visitor economy strategy.

### Support a film-friendly South Kesteven

- Take learnings from Creative England's Filming Partnership Toolkit. Explore the benefit of signing up to the Film-Friendly Charter which aims to ensure friendly procedures are in place for productions. Work with Filming in England Partnership to create a film-friendly environment and unlock the District's full potential as a world-class destination for film and TV production.

### Create baseline data from which to measure the health of the visitor economy sector

- Continue to invest in footfall and STEAM data (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) evaluation model data.

# 04 Action Plan

The South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy sets a clear vision of how the economy of the District could, and in some cases should develop. The areas of focus set out clearly how all partners can work together to achieve a common objective.

The Action Plan attempts to order all activity into short, medium and long term actions. These are given timescales of ongoing, one and three years. Like the Strategy, the Action Plan is dynamic and is expected to be reviewed and, if needs be, changed on an annual basis. This enables the Action Plan to fully react to changing economic circumstances and to capitalise on new opportunities from new investments to changes in Government policy.



# Area of focus 1

## Business and Job Creation and Employment Safeguarding

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE		BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
			ONGOING	1	3
1.1	Increase Business Engagement	Produce a quarterly business e-newsletter	• Business & Skills Officer to lead supported by portfolio holder, comms and other teams as required	✓	
1.2		Procure a new customer relationship management system (CRM)	• Business & Skills Officer to lead with IT Support Lead, supported by Procurement Lead		✓
1.3		Collate a collection of business support webinars and podcasts	• Business & Skills Officer to investigate options, Wider Team to support		✓
1.4	Continue to distribute the UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Explore opportunities to develop a legacy beyond the funding period	• UKSPF Programme Manager to explore sustainability. Case studies and feedback • Investigate what was missed by the fund and lessons learned workshop for team • Legacy of LEF beyond SPF - how it will function what it will deliver		✓
1.5	Use the Local Economic Forum effectively	Draw upon the expertise of Local Economic Forum members to shape the work of the Council's Economic Development Strategy	• UKSPF Programme Manager and Business & Skills Officer to identify future plans for the Local Economic Forum beyond UKSPF	✓	
1.6		Maintain the 'Local Business' sub-group of the Local Economic Forum	• UKSPF Programme Manager to lead supported by relevant members of the Economic Development Team	✓	
1.7		Work closely with Town Councils and Business Clubs across the District	• Business & Skills Officer to lead	✓	
1.8	Help to access financial support	Assist organisations to find and apply for growth programmes to help businesses start, succeed and grow	• Business & Skills Officer to collaborate with Community Grants & Funding Officer	✓	
1.9	Support emerging growth sectors and new employers	Work with FE, Higher Education and training providers to ensure skills are developed to support emerging growth sectors and new employers entering the District	• Business & Skills Officer to lead - following SK business sector audit to forecast needs of the District in the medium to long term and work towards a skills development strategy	✓	
1.10	Sector support	Identify partners and suppliers for sector specific programmes and projects	• Economic Development Team - Audit of key and developing sectors	✓	
1.11		Introduce businesses and innovators to networking opportunities	• To follow on from 1.10	✓	
1.12	Invest in clean growth	Deliver climate change expos which maximise opportunities of the transition to net zero  Evaluate progress across the District for clean growth with specialist expertise to identify Council-led incentives and programmes to meet net zero targets  Inclusion with carparking strategy (EV charging)	• UKSPF Programme Manager and Business & Skills Officer, supported by relevant LEF sub-group • Delivery to include Sustainability & Climate Change Officer		✓

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE			BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
				ONGOING	1	3
1.13	Social value in procurement	Capitalise on local development projects as opportunities for skills development and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead and engage with other Council teams as necessary</li> </ul>	✓		
1.14	Develop a small business concordat	Develop a statement of principles and publish guidance for suppliers on how to do business with Council and details of forthcoming bidding opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment – working with Procurement</li> </ul>		✓	
1.15	Host and support Meet the Buyer events	Provide the opportunity for contracts framework and supply chain opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead, Business &amp; Skills Officer to support working with Procurement</li> <li>Potential for consultant commission to explore local value spend multipliers etc</li> <li>Explore social value calculator to evaluate grant applications and procurement – and support businesses in understanding how procurement works</li> </ul>	✓		
1.16	Support start-up and step-up businesses	Explore and implement ways which identify sites and premises to enable people to start and grow their businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development Team to highlight relevant support available through Business Lincolnshire's delivery of support including BBC and the Growth Hub, as well as connecting to key partner organisations such as the FSB and the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to work with partners to refer relevant businesses and develop support</li> <li>Identify opportunities to enhance or provide a range of available business premises</li> </ul>	✓		
1.17	Profile business innovation	Support increased levels of innovation activity, through innovation institutions in key sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKSPF funding to be deployed for business innovation</li> <li>Longer term Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead on strategic development of innovation support beyond 2025</li> </ul>		✓	
1.18	Inspire, transform and sustain cultural change	Support independent companies to realise the potential of digital transformation, embrace new business models or implement new ways of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to promote the availability of UKSPF funding for digital innovation to businesses</li> </ul>			

## Area of focus 2

### Skills Development

		ACTION TO TAKE PLACE	BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
				ONGOING	1	3
2.1	Reduce barriers people face to employment	Maintain and enhance the People and Skills subgroup of the Local Economic Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKSPF Programme Manager to highlight the opportunities through UKSPF and work with LEF subgroups, to develop ongoing strategies</li> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to support</li> </ul>	✓		
2.2	Develop skills by working in partnership with local educational facilities	For existing and future pipeline of planned developments target learning opportunities in areas where future job creation is most prevalent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead, supported by Business &amp; Skills Officer. To include working with planning colleagues to identify likely developments and coordinate with local schools, HE and FE providers, DWP</li> </ul>	✓		
2.3	Support a higher skilled and higher paid workforce across South Kesteven	Support businesses in upskilling and reskilling, especially in green skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on lessons learnt from UKSPF projects in greening</li> <li>Economic Development Team to identify other areas of skills gaps in the District</li> </ul>			✓
2.4	Foster an understanding of skills and training needs	Establish a vocational skills forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to lead</li> </ul>			✓
2.5		Hold a skills summit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to lead</li> </ul>			✓
2.6		Raise awareness of the advantages of tapping into the veterans labour pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment and Business &amp; Skills Officer supported by the Armed Forces and Communications Officer and the Lincolnshire-wide Armed Forces Support</li> </ul>			✓
2.7	Support the delivery of Armed Forces Covenant pledges	Disseminate information to business groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment and Business &amp; Skills Officer supported by the Armed Forces and Communications Officer and other external partners</li> </ul>			✓
2.8		Link up with existing national and regional networks which support veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to promote to businesses, UKSPF funding available to assist digital skills development</li> </ul>			✓
2.9	Develop diverse digital talent	Promote nationwide Digital Skills boot camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to promote to businesses, UKSPF funding available to assist digital skills development</li> </ul>			✓
2.10	Future skills for rural businesses	Undertake a comprehensive skills evaluation aimed at formulating recommendations and setting out priorities for the main rural sectors – agriculture, food & drink and horticulture production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business &amp; Skills Officer to commission work to identify particular difficulties and specific needs of rural businesses</li> </ul>			✓

# Area of focus 3

## Inclusive Growth and Regeneration

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE			BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
				ONGOING	1	3
3.1	Provide effective delivery of strategic sites	Deploy planning powers to achieve high-quality regeneration across the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead working with Planning colleagues to identify sites and regeneration opportunities. Supported by High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager and relevant team members as relevant</li> </ul>			✓
3.2	Ensure a supply of commercial premises that meets the need of local businesses	Identify supply side gaps in the quantity and quality of the stock of local commercial property and ensure strategies are in place to deliver this investment through securing private sector investment, partnering with the private sector or through direct delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead working with Property Services</li> </ul>			
3.3	Planning ahead	Develop appropriate spatial development strategies and planning policies to meet present and expected future needs and ensure communities are connected to employment and leisure opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to support Planning Policy Team in developing future strategies and plans through the local planning process. Consultation with stakeholders, Town Councils, and communities</li> </ul>			✓
3.4	Create pride of place	Work with developers to influence the creation of places that help people lead healthier lifestyles, access good quality local employment and support wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council-wide initiatives – Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead strategies, in collaboration and consultation with: Planning, Corporate Projects Officers Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place, Communities Team and Housing team</li> </ul>			✓
3.5		Identify new and maintain existing relationships with neighbouring Councils and organisations to identify and support cross-boundary initiatives and growth to help development of the South Kesteven community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rutland County Council and collaborating with other neighbouring authorities</li> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead</li> </ul>	✓		
3.6	Unlock land and stalled development sites	Create robust policy, a strategic position and auditable backgrounds to implement attractive schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead, working with planning policy, through Local Plan development, and consult with relevant stakeholders to understand issues preventing development</li> </ul>			✓
3.7		Explore available funding routes and develop master plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work alongside democratically elected bodies, key landowners, Homes England, property, investment and development companies</li> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead, supported by Lincolnshire County Council</li> </ul>			✓
3.8		Evidence demand for electricity network upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with the energy regulator Ofgem to seek the required approvals</li> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead, supported by Lincolnshire County Council</li> </ul>			✓
3.9		As part of the planning obligations process, maintain a community and business ideas database containing 'needs' and 'wishes' formally identified by Councillors, Parish and Town Councils, residents' associations, business groups and other interested parties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the Planning Team</li> </ul>			✓

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE			BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
				ONGOING	1	3
3.10	Unlock land and stalled development sites	Explore whether some Section 106 planning agreements negotiated in more buoyant times, remain viable	• Economic Development Team to support the Planning Team		✓	
3.11	Fill empty high street shops	Explore possibilities and liaise with local stakeholders to support putting empty shops to community or charity use, including pop-up events e.g. dining, art events, pop-up shops etc. To include exploring the potential to develop a South Kesteven pop-up scheme in vacant units by taking short-term leases on vacant spaces	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment to lead, supported by Lincolnshire County Council • Supported by Business & Skills Officer, Heritage Acton Zone Programme Manager and other team members and colleagues as relevant		✓	
3.12	Support the path to net zero	Develop a package of sustainable infrastructure and low carbon capital projects to encourage a District-wide shift to a net zero carbon economy. To include exploring options within carpark review to support the installation of EV charging points in all District car parks	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment and planning policy supported by Sustainability & Climate Change Officer. Working with county to identify opportunities to improve infrastructure etc		✓	
3.13	Advance shovel-ready projects, supporting better social outcomes	Develop a portfolio of shovel ready, infrastructure projects to kick-start investment, unlock and stimulate economic activity within the District. Note the potential links to UKSPF programme	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment to lead, supported by planning and based on community consultation and buy-in		✓	
3.14	Connected towns	Install free public Wi-Fi service hubs across the District, providing a foundation for smart town technology and digital services, whilst providing high-quality broadband connectivity for businesses	• Project led by Deputy Director (Finance and ICT) and Deputy Section 151 Officer		✓	
3.15	Create accessible and age-friendly communities	Make environments accessible for all - supporting age-friendly and accessible spaces and facilities as a first principle, through the creation of a District-wide policy. To include accessibility audits of existing spaces through an externally commissioned consultancy.	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment, Planning and Communities Team		✓	
3.16		Apply the Age UK principles of creating age-friendly communities. To include exploring other accessibility guidance and principles			✓	
3.17		Raise awareness among businesses of the strategic and social benefits of an older workforce and prioritise the training of 50+ workers for the new world of work	• Business & Skills Officer to work with companies, non-governmental organisations and policy makers		✓	
3.18	Later life learning and re-entry of older adults into the market place	Support businesses to redefine and expand roles to accommodate and meet the targeted needs of older workers to include nonlinear educational paths, returnships, internships, apprenticeships and job sharing	• Business & Skills Officer to lead		✓	

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE		BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
			ONGOING	1	3
3.19		Consult and apply for funding to regenerate town centres. To include developing and implementing a community consultation (i.e. akin to Grantham Charrette) to identify long-term vision and needs of communities and obtain buy-in to project plans in all towns and larger rural communities	• Head of Economic Development, Heritage Acton Zone Programme Manager and Consultation and Engagement Officer to lead. Including the appointment of external consultants as necessary		✓
3.20	Regenerate and improve town centres and manage parking demand	Reimagine the role of town centre, concentrating on the unique advantages of each settlement across the District.  Review of best practice and successful case studies nationally	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment to lead with Council-wide involvement, Town Councils, County Council, and neighbouring councils • Inclusion of input from national organisations, universities and government research and reports • Input to and from charrette type events (3.18) • Engagement with LEF		✓
3.21		Develop a parking strategy to manage the future needs of the District	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment to lead		✓
3.22	Refocus the Grantham Town Team	Refresh the Terms of Reference	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment and Grantham Engagement Manager to review with member engagement		
3.23	Increase urban greening (including tree canopy cover where feasible)	Explore how to significantly increase green cover in Grantham's built environment by taking account of the University of Sheffield and the Woodland Trust feasibility study. Look to take learning across the District as appropriate	• Grantham Engagement Manager to lead, coordinating with Sustainability & Climate Change Officer		✓
3.24	Safety and accessibility audits	Undertake safety and access audits of the District's four town centres to benchmark accessibility for disabled people and women and girls' safety in public spaces	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment and Business & Skills Officer to lead, with external consultant support as necessary	✓	
3.25	Create bustling markets	Bring forward a step change in the way Council-run street markets are presented, operated, marketed and promoted	• Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment, Markets Manager, Business & Skills Officer and Communications Team • Consultation with members and current market traders	✓	
3.26	Preserve and enhance the heritage assets of the District	Produce a Conservation and Heritage Strategy	• Planning and conservation to lead with support from Head of Economic Development & Inward Investment • Consultation with community groups, Heritage Lincolnshire, Town Councils and Civic Societies		✓

## Area of focus 4

### Inward Investment

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE			BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
				ONGOING	1	3
4.1	Support for foreign-owned businesses	Help all foreign-owned businesses in South Kesteven to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Department for Business and Trade (DBT)</li> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment supported by Business &amp; Skills Officer in collaboration with Lincolnshire County Council Economic Growth Officers</li> </ul>			✓
4.2	Produce a pitch book with accompanying aerial filming with motion graphics to promote South Kesteven at events for developers	Develop an investment prospectus to promote the District regionally and nationally as an excellent location for inward investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment working with planning policy/ Local Plan and land allocation</li> <li>Work with local landowners/stakeholders</li> </ul>			
4.3		Commission aerial filming with motion graphics of South Kesteven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to determine brief for commissioning and procurement</li> </ul>			
4.4		Pursue Government and other agencies funding to pilot schemes where the potential economic impact is justified, yet may not be fully evidenced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to collaborate with Lincolnshire County Council to capitalise on the benefits of the Team Lincolnshire brand</li> </ul>			
4.5	Developing investment-ready projects	Develop a pipeline of future District Council projects to ensure the substantial level of growth planned within South Kesteven can be accommodated without being detrimental to levels of accessibility, connectivity and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to collaborate with Lincolnshire County Council, stakeholders, Government agencies and funders as relevant</li> </ul>			
4.6	Enhance digital connectivity	Support and unlock investment in the roll-out of gigabit-capable internet across the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development Team to support businesses in accessing benefits of Internet roll-out as appropriate</li> </ul>			✓
4.7		Develop digital-friendly local planning and street works policies and implement good practice from other areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development Team to work in partnership with housing, planning and the highways authority</li> </ul>			✓
4.8	Champion a stronger local economy	Promote South Kesteven as a prime location for inward investment, including foreign direct investment, new projects, expansions, mergers and acquisitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to work with key public sector partners such as Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Team Lincolnshire</li> </ul>			✓
4.9		Showcase investment opportunities and access talent at appropriate trade shows and national forums such as the UKREiiF (the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead</li> </ul>		✓	

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE			BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
				ONGOING	1	3
4.10	Support business expansion and talent attraction	Help businesses locate, relocate, rebuild and develop new ventures, especially in emerging sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead</li> <li>• Engage with community, industry and education partners</li> </ul>			✓
4.11	Supply sites for industry	Ensure a healthy supply of land for businesses and employers across South Kesteven. To include, where appropriate, bringing forward Council-owned land that becomes available as public sector services are deployed to alternative sites in the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead on collaborating with stakeholders and working with planning policy team to identify business land</li> </ul>			✓
4.12	Increase partnership working with developers and investors	Support those developers and investors that provide high-quality employment opportunities, especially but not limited to target growth sectors such as manufacturing and engineering, construction, professional, technical and scientific services, the health sector and the recreation and arts sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead, working with Lincolnshire County Council and all relevant colleagues to highlight, support and promote development opportunities to relevant sectors</li> </ul>			✓
4.13		Design and implement a model for more effective use of S106 (new Infrastructure Levy) and planning fees to support economic development activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to support Assistant Director of Planning &amp; Growth</li> </ul>		✓	
4.14	Support innovation and enterprise activities	Support and deliver sites and premises at locations across South Kesteven that will secure further public and private investment in innovation and enterprise activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead to lead in collaboration with planning and corporate projects (OD and Change) to identify development sites and liaise with stakeholder delivered sites, and leverage the social and commercial benefits of Council-led developments</li> </ul>			✓
4.15	Optimise local benefits of nationally significant infrastructure projects	Support and work to maximise the local economic benefits of nationally significant infrastructure projects that are planned for delivery in South Kesteven over the coming years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Economic Development &amp; Inward Investment to lead a review of projects</li> </ul>	✓		

## Area of focus 5

### Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE	BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE				
		ONGOING	1	3		
5.1	Active partner of Destination Lincolnshire	Develop and support a programme of delivery in conjunction with Destination Lincolnshire and its partner organisations, to unlock the full potential of the sector	• Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead coordination with Destination Lincolnshire as appropriate	✓		
5.2		Identify, develop, promote, and assist tourism businesses and local attractions which have the capacity to combine package deals for visitors across South Kesteven	• Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer in collaboration with Destination Lincolnshire	✓		
5.3	Support accessible tourism	Building on Visit England's Accessible and Inclusive Toolkit for Tourism Businesses, promoting practical guidance on providing an inclusive welcome, designing accessible buildings, employing disabled people, creating quality accessibility information and accessible tourism training	• Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer supported by Communications and Communities Teams.  Note: the potential requirement for external consultant support for team training and the production of resources for businesses			✓
5.4	Review heritage plaque and information trails	Audit existing heritage plaques and identify notable figures with connections to buildings across South Kesteven in readiness for an extended national scheme, a Council Blue Plaque Scheme or both	• Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager and Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead in collaboration with the local Civic Societies, Town Councils and other stakeholders			✓
5.5		Raise the profile of the Grantham TrailTale app and complete development of trails for the District's other towns.	• Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager and Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead on developing TrailTale trails for Bourne, Deepings and Stamford (x2) commissioned with a view to launch for Autumn 2024	✓		
5.6	Support South Kesteven's rich military history	Explore supportive actions the Council can take to promote and upgrade local heritage sites to strengthen the local economy and build civic identity.	• Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer supporting the Armed Forces and Communications Officer and Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire, including supporting an Arnhem anniversary project and other celebratory and commemorative events	✓		
5.7	Support diversity and inclusion	Promote diversity and inclusion across the tourism sector. Investigate sponsorship, networking opportunities and a marketplace to promote local women-owned businesses	• Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer and Business & Skills Officer to lead			✓
5.8	Support sustainable tourism	Develop a coordinated offer to ensure as many of South Kesteven's attractions are promoted to a national and international audience using latest technologies and platforms	• Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead, working with local tourism stakeholders to identify existing and potential international markets support the development attractive offer			✓

ACTION TO TAKE PLACE			BY WHOM? PARTNER ORGANISATION	TIMESCALE		
				ONGOING	1	3
5.9	Capitalise on South Kesteven's cultural and heritage strength	Develop a new integrated visitor economy strategy for the District to grow and maximise South Kesteven's visitor economy in a sustainable way which respects our unique environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead in collaboration with Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place</li> </ul> <p>Note: Potential requirement for external consultant support in developing strategy</p>			✓
5.10	Continue professional development	Through membership of the Tourism Management Institute, increase learning and adoption of the latest in digital innovation, marketing and tourism trends and data, along with initiatives to promote sustainable tourism strategies and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to explore and take up most relevant options and opportunities</li> </ul>	✓		
5.11	Networking events	Following on from a pilot networking event in 2023, plan a larger and more comprehensive event to bring together a wider cohort of South Kesteven visitor economy businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead on a tourism networking event for 2024.</li> </ul>	✓		
5.12	Support a film-friendly South Kesteven	Take learning from Creative England's Filming Partnership Toolkit. Explore the benefit of signing up to the Film-Friendly Charter which aims to ensure friendly procedures are in place for productions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead supported by Economic Development Team, Communications Team and other Council colleagues as required</li> </ul>	✓		
5.13		Create a film-friendly environment and unlock the District's full potential as a world-class destination for film and TV production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead on working with Filming in England Partnership</li> </ul>	✓		
5.14	Create baseline data from which to measure the health of the visitor economy sector	Continue to invest in footfall and STEAM data and look into the acquisition of additional data that will help paint a picture of the District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Visitor Economy Officer to lead, supported by the Policy Officer</li> </ul>	✓		

# Monitoring and evaluation

## Performance indicators

The South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 will directly supports the Council's Corporate Plan aims support **'A thriving District to live in, work and visit'**

Specifically, Priority 3: Enabling Economic Opportunity Mission: To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities.

### **To support this approach the Council has adopted several Targets which this Strategy will seek to deliver:**

- Deliver the Economic Development Strategy and accompanying action plan
  - 100% of annual actions on target/complete
- Deliver initiatives to expand and deepen engagement with business
  - Following the introduction of a customer relationship management system (CRM), introduce a 'call and care programme' to support the top 20 businesses in SK
  - Increase business participation in LEF X12 with Town Councils and Business Clubs
- 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
  - 100% of funding distributed
- Embed and strengthen the Local Economic Forum as a key institution for local stakeholders to shape the District's approach to skills, business support and investment
  - Work closely with Town Councils and Business Clubs across the District
- Work with the Lincolnshire Growth Hub to support businesses start, succeed and grow
  - No of businesses supported x60
  - Jobs created x100
  - Inward Investment projects attracted x2 per year
- Strategically leverage the Council's procurement spend to maximise social value
  - Introduce SKDC Procurement Charter to exploit local employment and supply chain opportunities
  - Introduction of a statement of principles and publish guidance for suppliers on how to do business with Council and details of forthcoming

bidding opportunities.

- Provide the opportunity for contracts framework and supply chain opportunities through X2 Events
- Consider targeted interventions – planning powers and schemes, to achieve high-quality regeneration across the District and explore options to unlock stalled sites.
  - Develop an investment prospectus to promote the District regionally and nationally
- Develop a long-term approach to regeneration and be prepared for investment and funding opportunities.
  - Prepare a Pipeline of 'oven ready' projects x1 per annum
  - Work with landowners and stakeholders to identify development constraints for identified sites for regeneration x5 annual visits per annum
  - Linked to point above, evidence demand for electricity and infrastructure network upgrades through the production of a report
- Continue to promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on our cultural and heritage strengths
  - Adoption of the Tourism Strategic Framework
  - Increase annual visitor numbers to South Kesteven by 3% from 2023
  - Increase annual spend by visitor to South Kesteven by 3% from 2023

### **With additional targets identified to:**

- Strengthen the knowledge and expertise of the 'People and Skills' sub-group of the LEF through expanded recruitment of the board, with greater representation from local schools in the District
  - Adopted new Terms of Reference for the LEF People and Skills Sub-Group
- Foster business and education connections through attendance and facilitation of networking events.
  - Network events attended X5
- Proactively seek and support interventions to grow and expand the skill base for businesses, such as SWAP's, apprenticeships and work placements
  - Companies supported X3

# Contact

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

## **South Kesteven District Council**

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- 🌐 [www.southkesteven.gov.uk](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk)





SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17<sup>th</sup> September 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](mailto:Gyles.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk)

#### Purpose of Report

This report provides a progress update on the construction of the new Waste Depot at Turnpike Close, Grantham.

#### 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 for the period up to 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**

#### 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 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (£8m) and 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (£800k) 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: Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) was provided with an update on the new Waste Depot project at the last meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 following the decision that the Committee would be provided regular updates at each of their meetings during the project delivery phase. This report is the third of the project updates the Committee will receive following report to the Committee at their last meeting.

### **Updated Timetable**

- 2.2 The following provisional programme summary was presented at the July 2024 meeting. There has been some slight change from the original project timeline due to unforeseen circumstances leading to a change in design request from the client, and an updated proposed programme is outlined below:

	Programme Summary	Proposed Programme
<b>Cabinet Approval</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
<b>Value Engineering Period</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> April – 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	16 <sup>th</sup> April – 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
<b>Enter into NEC4 Professional Services Contract</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
<b>Progression of Stage 4 Design</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> June – 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	17 <sup>th</sup> June – 23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2024
<b>Design Evaluation, Completion and legal preparation.</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> August – 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	27 <sup>th</sup> August – 24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>Construction Contract Award</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Early October 2024
<b>Contractor mobilisation period</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> September – 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Mid October 2024
<b>Construction Period commences</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	29 <sup>th</sup> October 2024
<b>Targeted completion date</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2025	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2025
<b>Mobilisation Period</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2025 – 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 25	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2025 – 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 25
<b>Operational Go-live</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2025

2.3 The above table shows that works as relating to the RIBA Stage 4 detailed design of the construction have now been undertaken. A value engineering (VE) exercise has also been completed to identify savings necessary to reduce the project costs, which have been confirmed as part of the stage 4 design phase. This period has taken slightly longer than expected in order to ensure the VE proposals did not compromise the quality or efficiency of the new depot.

#### 2.4 Value Engineering Summary

As part of the RIBA Stage 4 Design construction costs have been complied and works costs have now been rationalised to bring the Revised Tender sum to £7.99m. Officers are now working with the design team and contractor to evaluate the revised submission and progression of legal documentation for completion.

2.5 Following positive feedback from members at the July meeting the format of the supporting dashboard remains unchanged. It has been updated to reflect the updated position in relation to the revised project tender sum and current project risks and is shown at Appendix A.

### **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 reports can be accessed here:

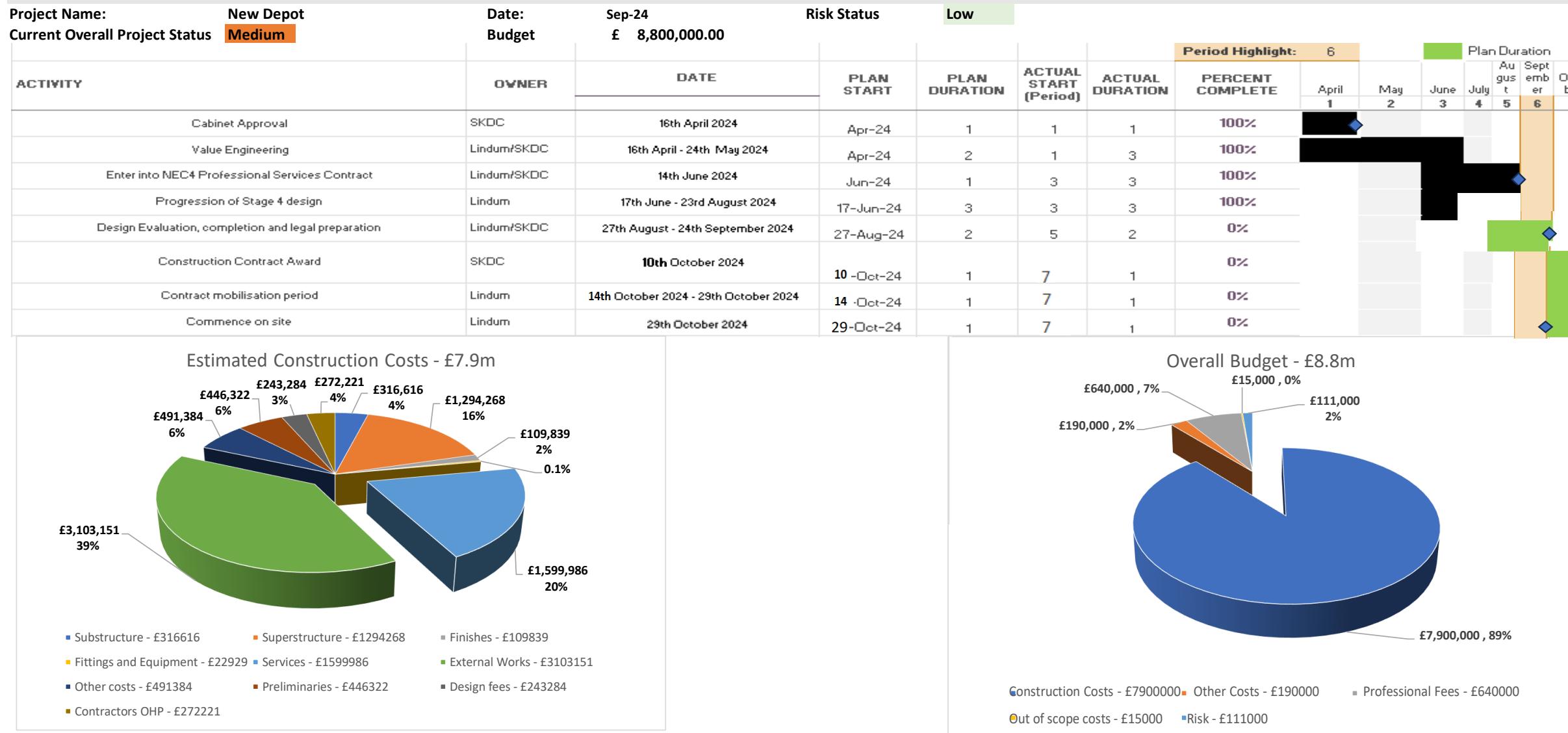
[Agenda for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 27th June, 2024, 2.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

[Agenda for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 17th July, 2024, 10.00 am | South Kesteven District Council](#)

### **7. Appendix**

7.1 Appendix A – Project Dashboard as at 5 September 2024.

# TURNPIKE CLOSE GRANTHAM PROJECT DASHBOARD



KEY RISKS AND ISSUES		
Risk	Action/Overview	Level
Additional fees due to elongated stage 5 construction period	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 application would be required should more significant changes be required.	Low
Planning Conditions	Discharging of pre commencement activities to be progressed	Low
Programme slippage	Risk of further slippage will be mitigated by identification of efficiencies in subsequent phase	Medium

## Summary

The value engineering exercise has been completed. We are currently within the Stage 4 design period. Estimated site Go live October 2025.

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SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
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COUNCIL

## Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17 September 2024

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

### Finance Update Report – April to July 2024

#### Report Author

Paul Sutton, Assistant Director of Finance/Deputy Section 151 Officer

[Paul.sutton@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.sutton@southkesteven.gov.uk)

#### Purpose of Report

To present the Council's year end forecast for the financial year 2024/25 as at the end of July. The report covers the General Fund Revenue Budget, the Housing Revenue Account Budget, and the Capital Programmes for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

#### Recommendations

**That Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

1. **Reviews and notes the forecast 2024/25 outturn position for the General Fund and HRA Revenue and Capital budgets and identifies any variances that might require action or further investigation.**
2. **Notes the increase of the Homelessness expenditure and income budgets to reflect the receipt of additional grant income totalling £268k.**

#### 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  
Housing  
Effective council

Which wards are impacted?

All

## **1. Implications**

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

### ***Finance***

1.1 The financial implications are included within the report.

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

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

1.2 As part of good governance, it is important members are kept updated in respect of the financial position of Council expenditure during the year.

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

### ***Risk and Mitigation***

1.3 A risk register is attached at Appendix B and shows that all known current risks are recognised and associated mitigating actions are in place.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance and Risk Officer

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

2.1 During the current financial year, Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee is provided with regular finance reports to monitor and forecast the budget against the current economic conditions facing the Council.

## **3. Revenue Budget 2024/25 – General Fund**

3.1 The budget set by Council on 29 February 2024 was £25.575m, (including investment income and excluding HRA recharges to only show those budgets which service areas are able to directly control and monitor during the year). Budgets have been amended to reflect the approved budget carry forwards from 2023/24 and these carry forwards have increased the 2024/25 budget to £27.135m.

3.2 Table 1 shows the forecast outturn position as at 31 July 2024.

**Table 1 – General Fund Forecast Outturn Position**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Current Budget 2024/25</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn 2024/25</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Corporate, Governance & Public Protection	4,053	4,154	101	2.5%
Finance, Property & Waste Services	10,472	10,548	76	0.7%
Growth & Culture	10,960	10,793	(167)	(1.5%)
Housing & Projects	1,618	1,610	(8)	(0.5%)
Drainage Rates	947	976	29	3.1%
Investment Income	(914)	(979)	(65)	(7.1%)
<b>Net Cost of Service</b>	<b>27,136</b>	<b>27,102</b>	<b>(34)</b>	<b>(0.1%)</b>

3.3 Table 2 shows the significant forecast variances which impact across all directorates for General Fund revenue for 2024/25 as at 31 July 2024.

**Table 2 – General Fund Revenue – Significant Variances**

<b>Explanation of Significant Variances</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Fuel</b> A reduction in predicated inflationary price increases has resulted in a forecast under spend based on modelling at 0.9% increase per week for the remainder of 2024/25. The budget was set using a price of 171p but actual prices have been up to 35% below this.	(236)
<b>Salary vacancy factor</b> The Council's salary budgets are prepared with an assumed 3% vacancy factor in order to reflect the turnover of staffing that occurs during a financial year. At the present time, the Council is enjoying a relative stable workforce and where there are vacancies, there has been a need to utilise temporary staffing arrangements. The management and monitoring of the vacancy factor will continue to be reviewed during the course of the financial year	553
<b>Investment Income</b> Base rates are currently remaining at higher levels than the budgeted assumption which are resulting in the ability to invest in higher interest rates.	(65)

3.4 An interim pay award in line with the proposed national award for 2024/25 was endorsed by the Employment Committee and paid in July 2024. This has been funded by the approved budgets which were increased by an assumed 5% pay award. If there are further pay increase proposals, then these proposals would need to be modelled alongside available budgets.

- 3.5 The budget assumptions included for utilities (electricity and gas) are in line with the latest update received from ESPO with regard to future pricing. The total costs budgeted and forecast for energy are £1.1m for electricity and £0.4m for gas.
- 3.6 St Martin's Park continues to incur monthly running costs of around £21k which will be funded by the Regeneration reserve. These relate to monthly utility costs, which will continue to be monitored throughout the year.
- 3.7 The Council has received additional grant funding of £233k for Homelessness and a New Burdens Grant of £34k for funding the costs associated with providing Domestic Abuse support so a recommendation was presented to Cabinet on 10 September that the Homelessness expenditure and income budgets were to increase to recognise this additional funding. As part of the 2024/25 budget setting process Council approved a budget increase of £150k for temporary accommodation to reflect the additional costs the Council is incurring in providing this statutory support, it is therefore recommended that if there is an underspend at year end on the cost of temporary accommodation that it is transferred to a general fund reserve.
- 3.8 Appendix A provides further details of the outturn revenue position for each Directorate along with service specific variance comments other than those detailed in table 2.

#### **4. Capital Budget 2024/25 – General Fund**

- 4.1 The budget set by Council on 29 February 2024 was £20.361m. Budgets have been amended in line with the approved budget carry forwards and these have increased the 2024/25 budget to £25.913m.
- 4.2 Table 3 shows the forecast outturn position as at 31 July 2024.

**Table 3 – General Fund Forecast Outturn Position**

Directorate	Current Budget 2024/25	Forecast Outturn 2024/25	Variance	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Corporate, Governance & Public Protection	1,588	1,588	0	0.0%
Finance, Property & Waste Services	13,692	6,162	(7,530)	(55.0%)
Growth & Culture	6,591	6,591	0	0.0%
Housing & Projects	4,080	1,256	(2,824)	(69.2%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,951</b>	<b>15,597</b>	<b>(10,354)</b>	<b>(39.9%)</b>

4.3 Table 4 shows the significant forecast variances for the General Fund capital schemes for 2024/25 at 31 July 2024.

**Table 4 – General Fund Capital – Significant Variances**

Explanation of Significant Variances	£'000
<b>New Depot</b> Project is currently progressing through RIBA Stage 4 detailed design phase with the view to entering into contract and works commencing on site in November 2024. Based on the project plan, the majority of the expenditure will be incurred during 2025/26.	(7,530)
<b>Decarbonisation Scheme</b> The budget has been re-profiled in line with the Framework Agreement. This is a two-year project with the majority of costs being in 2025/26.	(3,587)

## 5. Revenue Budget 2024/25 – HRA

5.1 The budget set by Council on 29 February 2024 included an operating surplus of £7.409m. Budgets have been amended as projects have commenced and these changes have increased the 2024/25 surplus position to £7.142m.

5.2 Table 5 shows the forecast outturn position at 31 July 2024.

**Table 5 – HRA Forecast Outturn Position**

Directorate	Current Budget 2024/25	Forecast Outturn 2024/25	Variance	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Repairs & Maintenance	10,992	10,987	(5)	0.0%
Supervision & Management – General	2,681	2,757	76	2.8%
Supervision & Management – Special	1,956	1,966	10	0.5%
Depreciation & Impairment	4,062	4,062	0	0.0%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>19,691</b>	<b>19,771</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Income</b>				
Dwelling Rents	(28,916)	(28,916)	0	0.0%
Non-Dwelling Rents	(356)	(356)	0	0.0%
Charge for Services & Facilities	(900)	(900)	0	0.0%
Other Income	(17)	(17)	0	0.0%
Interest & Investment Income	(2,099)	(2,248)	(149)	(7.1%)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(32,289)</b>	<b>(32,438)</b>	<b>(149)</b>	<b>(0.5%)</b>
<b>Net Cost of HRA Services</b>	<b>(12,598)</b>	<b>(12,667)</b>	<b>(69)</b>	<b>(0.6%)</b>

5.3 Table 6 shows the significant forecast variances which impact across all directorates for the HRA revenue for 2024/25 as at 31 July 2024.

**Table 6 – HRA Revenue – Significant Variances**

Explanation of Significant Variances	£'000
<b>Supervision and Management – General</b> As a result of a longer than anticipated implementation of the new housing system, there has been a requirement to continue to retain access to the outgoing housing system in order to maintain service continuity.	40
<b>Salary Vacancy Factor</b> The Council's salary budgets are prepared with an assumed 3% vacancy factor in order to reflect the turnover of staffing that occurs during a financial year. At the present time, the Council is enjoying a relative stable workforce and, where there have been vacancies, there has been a need to employ temporary staff. The vacancy factor will continue to be reviewed regularly.	182
<b>Investment Income</b> Base rates remain at higher levels than budgeted, which is resulting in an improved level of return.	(149)

## 6. Capital Budget 2024/25 – HRA

6.1 The budget set by Council on 29 February 2024 was £21.492m. Budgets have been amended in line with the approved carry forwards and these changes have increased the 2024/25 budget to £27.208m.

6.2 Table 7 shows the forecast outturn position as at 31 July 2024.

**Table 7 – HRA Forecast Outturn Position**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Current Budget 2024/25</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn 2024/25</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Energy Efficiency Initiatives	5,104	5,104	0	0.0%
ICT	355	355	0	0.0%
Replacement Vehicles	342	342	0	0.0%
New Builds	11,865	10,825	(1,040)	(8.8%)
Refurbishment & Improvement Compliance Works	3,914	3,914	0	0.0%
Other Works	150	150	0	0.0%
Refurbishment & Improvement Works	5,478	4,285	(1,193)	(21.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,208</b>	<b>24,975</b>	<b>2,233</b>	<b>(8.2%)</b>

6.3 Table 8 shows the significant forecast variances which impact across all directorates for the HRA Fund capital for 2024/25 as at 31 July 2024.

**Table 8 – HRA Capital – Significant Variances**

<b>Explanation of Significant Variances</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>New Builds</b> An updated development of the Larch Close Grantham project was approved by Cabinet in July 2024 and as a result of the re-design the commencement date has been delayed until November 2024. Works are therefore expected to complete with the majority of the expenditure in 2025/26.	(1,040)
<b>Roofing</b> A new roofing contract is now in place and expected to start in October. Due to the possibility of inclement weather the project might continue into 2025/26. This will be reassessed throughout the year with the contractor to provide a programme of works.	(750)
<b>Kitchens &amp; Bathrooms</b> Starting in September a new contractor is being sought due to the expiry of the current contract. This is likely to result in an underspend.	(443)

## 7. Other Options Considered

7.1 This is a monitoring report, therefore there were no other options considered.

## 8. Collection Rates

8.1 Table 9 details the current collection rates against target for 2024/25.

**Table 9 - Collection Rates**

<b>Target Rates</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>Business Rates</b>	<b>Rents</b>
<b>Target annual collection rate</b>	<b>98.48%</b>	<b>99.06%</b>	<b>97.35%</b>
<b>Target collection rate to end of July 2024</b>	<b>37.45%</b>	<b>38.53%</b>	<b>32.76%</b>
<b>Actual collection rate to end of July 2024</b>	<b>37.45%</b>	<b>39.37%</b>	<b>32.95%</b>

8.2 Council Tax:

- Collection of £39.632m as of 31 July 2024 against an annual debt of £105.835m. As shown in the table above, the collection rate was the same as the expected target of 31 July 2024.
- Collection rates are being maintained despite an increase in arrears due to non-payment, which has resulted in an increase in recovery activity due to non-payment.
- The Enforcement Team continue to maintain recovery activities by issuing reminders (initial, second and final) and summonses. As of 31 July 2024, a total of 6,534 reminders were issued and 3,155 summonses compared to 6,000 and 2,882 in 2023 and 6,319 and 2,318 in 2022.
- Residents continue to face the impacts of Cost of Living, with expects impacts as a result of the changes to eligibility for the Winter Fuel Payment. Government have announced the extension to the Household Support Fund from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, offering vital help to some of the most vulnerable people through the winter.
- All 7 District Councils in Lincolnshire share their collection rates on a monthly basis. South Kesteven have the highest net collectable debt in the County (£105.835m), with the next Councils debt being £102.538m. South Kesteven have also collected the highest amount as of 31 July.

### 8.3 Business Rates:

- Collection of £16.956m as of 31 July 2024 against an annual debt of £43.069m. As shown in the table above, the collection rate was 0.84% above the expected target of 31 July 2024 which equates to an increase in the collection of business rates of £362k
- All 7 District Councils in Lincolnshire share their collection rates on a monthly basis. South Kesteven have the highest net collectable debt in the County (£43.069m), with the next Councils debt being £41.600m

### 8.4 Rent:

- Collection of £10.024m as of 31 July 2024 against an annual debt of £30.423m. As shown in the table above, the collection rate was 0.19% the expected target rate of 31 July 2024 which equates to an increase in the collection of rent of £57,803.
- Our Income Recovery Team continue to provide advice and support for those tenants who are struggling to meet their obligations.

## **9. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 9.1 Members should be kept updated on the financial position of the Authority, because effective budget management is critical to ensuring financial resources are targeted towards the Council's priorities. Monitoring enables early identification of variations against the plan and facilitates timely corrective action.
- 9.2 This report provides an overview of the forecast 2024/25 financial position for the Council and focuses on the position as at the end of July 2024.

## **10. Consultation**

- 10.1 This report will be presented to Cabinet on 10 September 2024 for review and to identify any variance that might require action or investigation.
- 10.2 Reports will be presented at each Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to ensure that members are kept regularly updated regarding the projected financial outturn position.

## **11. Appendices**

- 11.1 Appendix A – 2024/25 – General Fund Significant Variance Analysis
- 11.2 Appendix B – 2024/25 – Finance Risk Register

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## Appendix A

### 2024/25 General Fund Revenue Significant Variance Analysis

<b>Corporate, Governance &amp; Public Protection Service</b>						
Service Area	Current Expenditure Budget	Current Income Budget	2024/25 Current Budget	2024/25 Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Forecast Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Corporate Management	499,600	(1,850)	<b>497,750</b>	513,450	15,700	3.2%
Human Resources & Organisational Development	474,800	(7,350)	<b>467,450</b>	476,450	9,000	1.9%
Legal & Democratic	2,354,200	(687,650)	<b>1,666,550</b>	1,675,550	9,000	0.5%
Public Protection	1,916,300	(495,100)	<b>1,421,200</b>	1,488,800	67,600	4.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,244,900</b>	<b>(1,191,950)</b>	<b>4,052,950</b>	<b>4,154,250</b>	<b>101,300</b>	<b>2.5%</b>

<b>Finance, Property &amp; Waste Services</b>						
Service Area	Current Expenditure Budget	Current Income Budget	2024/25 Current Budget	2024/25 Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Forecast Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Community Engagement	353,900	(19,000)	<b>334,900</b>	339,200	4,300	1.3%
Finance	1,864,645	(237,640)	<b>1,627,005</b>	1,657,705	30,700	1.9%
Finance Management	279,600	(17,700)	<b>261,900</b>	270,500	8,600	3.3%
ICT Services	1,800,250	(43,850)	<b>1,756,400</b>	1,786,500	30,100	1.7%
Property Services	4,255,425	(2,459,740)	<b>1,795,685</b>	1,781,485	(14,200)	(0.8%)
Revenues, Benefits, Customer & Community Services	19,296,200	(18,475,450)	<b>820,750</b>	902,850	82,100	10.0%
Waste Depot	93,000	0	<b>93,000</b>	93,000	0	0.0%

Waste & Markets	6,666,850	(2,884,300)	<b>3,782,550</b>	3,716,550	(66,000)	(1.7%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34,609,870</b>	<b>(24,137,680)</b>	<b>10,472,190</b>	<b>10,547,790</b>	<b>75,600</b>	<b>0.7%</b>

<b>Growth &amp; Culture</b>						
Service Area	Current Expenditure Budget	Current Income Budget	2024/25 Current Budget	2024/25 Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Forecast Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Arts & Culture	2,486,300	(781,600)	<b>1,704,700</b>	1,714,400	9,700	0.6%
Building Control	982,488	(885,298)	<b>97,190</b>	45,183	(52,007)	(53.5%)
Communications	314,000	(4,300)	<b>309,700</b>	318,500	8,800	2.8%
Culture & Leisure Mgmt	168,700	0	<b>168,700</b>	173,500	4,800	2.8%
Development & Policy	2,045,500	(1,343,100)	<b>702,400</b>	550,900	(151,500)	(21.6%)
Economic Development	2,633,000	0	<b>2,633,000</b>	2,648,300	15,300	0.6%
Growth Management	367,500	0	<b>367,500</b>	378,900	11,400	3.1%
Leisure	2,590,200	(95,750)	<b>2,494,450</b>	2,494,450	0	0.0%
Parks & Open Spaces	723,500	(124,400)	<b>599,100</b>	624,300	25,200	4.2%
Street Scene	1,944,150	(61,500)	<b>1,882,650</b>	1,844,350	(38,300)	(2.0%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,255,338</b>	<b>(3,295,948)</b>	<b>10,959,390</b>	<b>10,792,783</b>	<b>(166,607)</b>	<b>(1.5%)</b>

<b>Explanation of Significant Variances</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Development &amp; Policy</b>	<b>(152)</b>
There has been a national decline of 14% in the number of planning applications submitted and this has been reflected in the number of applications received by South Kesteven. We have however received a major application for a solar farm with a significant planning application fee which has bolstered the income above budgeted levels. This has resulted in a forecast increase of income of £200k. The number of applications and fee income are monitored on a monthly basis.	

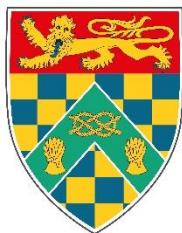
<b>Housing &amp; Projects</b>						
Service Area	Current Expenditure Budget	Current Income Budget	<b>2024/25 Current Budget</b>	2024/25 Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Forecast Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Centralised & Business Support	497,750	(3,200)	<b>494,550</b>	504,450	9,900	2.0%
Corporate Projects & Performance	486,300	(10,000)	<b>476,300</b>	480,852	4,552	1.0%
Health & Safety	146,000		<b>146,000</b>	149,100	3,100	2.1%
Housing Services	1,609,930	(1,108,580)	<b>501,350</b>	475,510	(25,840)	(5.2%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,739,980</b>	<b>(1,121,780)</b>	<b>1,618,200</b>	<b>1,609,912</b>	<b>(8,288)</b>	<b>(0.5%)</b>

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## Appendix B – Finance Risk Register

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Mitigating Action
1. Capital programmes requiring borrowing in the medium term	4	3	12 Very High	Continue to undertake financial modelling to identify consequences of undertaking borrowing and align this with savings that will need to be approved before borrowing is undertaken in order to ensure ongoing affordability and financial sustainability. The capital programme can currently be financed without borrowing although this is kept under review.
2. Lack of clarity for funding levels from 2025/26 and beyond	3	3	9 High	The Government announced a one-year settlement for 2024/25. Any changes to the assumed levels will need to be modelled to assess their impact.
3. Increase in Borrowing Interest Rates	3	3	9 High	Interest rates are continually monitored as they increased to an average of 4 - 5% compared to <1% 12 months earlier. This has a positive impact on the investment income received although should the Council consider external borrowing then there is now an additional resource pressure as borrowing rates have increased significantly.
4. Increase in bad debts as a result of economic circumstances	3	3	6 High	The Council has pro-active debt management procedures in place.
5. Increased maintenance costs of fixed assets	3	2	6 High	The budget proposals for 2024/25 include an approved budget for asset maintenance and the budget carry forward proposals include a further £142k. The medium-term outlook is a continuation of high levels of maintenance that will require financing
6. Inflation increases beyond budgeted levels	2	3	6 High	Budget assumptions kept up to date with most recent projections and monthly sensitivity analysis is produced to monitor the impact of inflationary increases.
7. Fuel and Utility Price Volatility	2	3	6 High	Weekly monitoring of fuel charge and proactive interventions to ensure optimisation of fuel consumption. Utility cost increases will continue to have an adverse impact on the Council finances.

8. Inadequate capital resources to finance future desired plans	3	3	9 High	Asset disposal programme approved and pipeline of asset disposal in progress in order to generate capital receipts
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**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17 September 2024

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles,  
Chairman of the UKSPF Board

## UKSPF Programme Update

### Report Author

Michael Dow, UKSPF Programme Manager  
Nick Hibberd, Head of Economic Development

### Purpose of Report

The report provides an update on the UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity Fund Programme(s). It outlines the investment into South Kesteven's communities and highlights the approach for the rest of 2024/25 until the programmes closure on 31st March 2025.

### Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to note the progress made with the UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity Fund Programme(s) and endorse the opportunities identified to expedite the distribution of the funding.**

### 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  
Housing  
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 allocation of funding is in accordance with the grant criteria and the delegations approved by Council.

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

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

- 1.2 This report highlights the activities undertaken as part of the UKSPF Programme. It should however be noted that the Council has a UKSPF Board that meet quarterly to give a steer from elected members on the use of UKSPF monies – an update from this Board is required to be heard at an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report satisfies this requirement under the UKSPF Board Terms of Reference.

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

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's overarching aspiration as set out in the Corporate Plan 2024-2027 is to ensure that the District is "A thriving District to live in, work and visit". A key priority is to enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities. Continuing to distribute government grants, including the Rural Prosperity Fund will support the Council in meeting these aspirations.
- 2.2 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and has provided £2.6 billion of funding for local investment between April 2022 and March 2025. It aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK by investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. The UKSPF replaces the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation.
- 2.3 The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is a top-up to the UKSPF and succeeds EU funding from LEADER and the Growth Programme which were part of the Rural Development Programme for England. The REPF supports capital

projects for small businesses and community infrastructure. The programme seeks to improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities. It is complementary to funding used to support rural areas under the UKSPF, with the funding period running from April 2023 to March 2025. Lead local authorities, such as South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) have flexibility over how they deliver the UKSPF and REPF.

- 2.4. In respect to the REPF South Kesteven has been awarded a total of £540,460 in funding for projects which are required to be delivered by the end of the programme, March 31st 2025.
  - Year 2: £135,115 was awarded in the financial year 2023 / 2024
  - Year 3: £405,345 was awarded in the financial year 2024/ 2025

- 2.5 The Year 2 allocation within the REPF (1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024) is as follows:

Supporting Rural Business:

- Intervention 1.1 - £60,115 (capital grant funding for small scale investment in micro & small enterprises in rural area.)
- Intervention 1.3 - £25,000 (capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy)

Supporting Rural Communities:

- Intervention 2.4 - £50,000 (capital grant funding for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offers)

- 2.6 The Year 3 allocation within the REPF (1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025) is as follows:

Supporting Rural Business:

- Intervention 1.1 - £180,345 (capital grant funding for small scale investment in micro & small enterprises in rural area.)
- Intervention 1.3 - £75,000 (capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy)

Supporting Rural Communities:

- Intervention 2.1 - £100,000 (capital grant funding for investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities.)

- Intervention 2.4 - £50,000 (capital grant funding for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer).

2.7 The key objectives for business projects (Intervention 1.1) are to increase investment in and targeted support for small and medium sized businesses for:

- Innovation activities
- Productivity enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques.
- To create jobs and boost community cohesion. This includes visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities.
- Enhance rural visitor economy and rural leisure opportunities.

2.8 The key objectives for community projects are:

- Strengthen our social fabric and foster a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities. This includes:
  - Community infrastructure and local green space
  - Community-led projects
  - Heritage assets

2.9 In respect of the entire UKSPF programme, South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) was awarded a total of just under £3.9m in funding for projects which must be delivered between 2023 and March 2025. The breakdown for each year of funding is as follows:

*It should be noted that the variance between programme year allocation awarded to SKDC and the intervention theme allocation is less 4% which is the Management and Administration 'top-slice' Government allowed Lead Authorities to spend on programme delivery.*

Programme Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
UKSPF Allocation	£473,129	£946,258	£2,479,196	£3,898,583

2.10 The South Kesteven UKSPF Investment Plan submitted to Government in August 2022 had the following allocations:

Intervention Theme	Communities and Place	Local Business	People & Skills	Total
UKSPF Allocation	£2,755,000	£832,641	£155,000	£3,742,641

2.11 It should be noted UKSPF delivery guidance provides Lead Authorities with sufficient local flexibility to deliver the fund and make in-year changes to allocations

as they see fit so there is an element of change between the original investment plan and the current programme expenditure profile that has been managed at a Programme level led by the UKSPF Board and Chair.

Funding deployed and committed to projects to date is as follows:

Programme Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
UKSPF Spend	£20,000	£717,910.28	£97,037.50	£3,898,583

2.12 Since the beginning of the current financial year (2024/25) The UKSPF Board has reviewed a total of 62 applications of which 28 have been awarded funding of a combined value of £987,878.52. An applicant success rate of 45.16%.

This breaks down as follows:

- 9 applications to the Main Programme
- 18 Applications to the Rural England Prosperity Programme
- 35 applications to the SKDC Prosperity Programme

2.13 Remaining Allocations as of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024

<b>Main programmes fund available:</b>	Capital	Revenue
<b>Communities &amp; Place</b>	<b>£379,231</b>	
E1: Improvements to town centres and high streets	£183,200	£0
E2: Building Improvements	-£115,907	£0
E3: Green Space and Outdoor Improvements	-£88,609	£55,000
E4: Enhancing existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer	£0	-£15,000
E5: Built & landscaped environment to 'design out crime'	£0	-£16,000
E6: Culture and Arts Initiatives	£0	£18,200
E7: Support for active travel enhancements in local area	£170,780	£0
E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups		-£47,433
E14: Relevant feasibility studies	£0	£235,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£149,464</b>	<b>£229,767</b>
<b>Supporting Local Business</b>	<b>£270,054</b>	
E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy	£0	-£15,900
E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption	£0	£20,000
E19: Investment in research and development at the local level to support the diffusion of innovation knowledge and activities	£0	£20,000
E22: Enterprise infrastructure and employment and innovation site development projects.	£0	£80,000

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	£0	£0
E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators & accelerators	£0	£30
E26: Growing the local social economy	£0	£28,874
E31: Support relevant feasibility studies for supporting local business	£0	£137,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£270,054</b>
<b>People &amp; Skills</b>	<b>£43,002</b>	
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people	£0	£7,834
E34: Courses including basic, life and career skills	£0	£3,834
E36: Increase levels of digital inclusion, essential digital skills	£0	£7,834
E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses	£0	£25,000
E41: Funding to support local digital skills	£0	£25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£69,502</b>
	<b>£149,464</b>	<b>£569,323</b>
<b>UK Shared Prosperity Fund Main Programme Summary</b>	<b>£718,787</b>	

2.14 Across the interventions within the Main Programme a total of £718,787 remains unallocated for which applications are still on-going. This is primarily driven by allocations to E14 Community & Place Feasibility Studies and E31 Supporting Local Business Feasibility Studies of which represent 235,000 and 137,050 of the remaining unspent monies, respectively.

<b>Rural Fund available:</b>	Capital	Revenue
<b>Supporting Rural Business</b>	<b>£85,044</b>	£0
1.1 Capital Grant Funding for small scale investment in micro small enterprise in rural area	£10,044	£0
1.3 Capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy	£75,000	£0

<b><i>Supporting Rural Communities</i></b>	<b>£150,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
2.1 Capital grant funding for investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities	£100,000	£0
2.4 Capital grant funding for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local culture	£50,000	£0
<b>Rural Fund Summary</b>	<b>£235,044</b>	<b>£0</b>

### **Rural Programme**

2.15 Across the Rural Programme there is a total of £235,044 remains unallocated. Capital expenditure mobilisation is traditionally difficult in Local Authority settings, however, we are working across council and with Local Economic Forum and other partners to deliver a stronger pipeline of applications in the coming months.

### **3. Key Considerations**

3.1. The UKSPF and REPF funding must be spent by 31 March 2025. We therefore have seven months to commit and spend the remaining funding.

3.2. Any unspent money will likely need to be returned to MHCLG. It is therefore imperative that we attract and process applications at the earliest opportunity. Work is underway to drive up the number of applications.

3.3. Officers therefore plan to undertake a range of activities to address the issue.

- We work closely with our contacts such to identify potential projects
- We accelerate our marketing efforts and promote the programme as effectively through we can through a range of channels.
- We streamline programme bureaucracy which at present is commanding too much officer time compared to supporting application development.
- We are working with Finance colleagues to realign existing allocations to interventions where latent demand is being identified via Local Economic Forum

Sub-Groups. This will allow the Programme Team to be more proactive in developing applications and simplify the allocation and deployment of funding for the remainder of the programme.

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

4.1 Other options considered are greater uptake of UKSPF funds by SKDC teams to deliver existing projects that align with corporate objectives however while there has been some activity of this nature the Board has a strong preference to consider external applications in the first instance. Should, by late autumn, early winter there be significant funds remaining this may require reconsideration.

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

5.1. As set out on the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities all funds must be spent, and projects completed no later than the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. To ensure there is adequate time for delivery, monitoring, reporting and evaluation it is imperative that applications are approved at a pace and volume that has not been delivered to date.



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17 September 2024

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

### Update on St Martin's Park, Stamford

#### Report Author

Debbie Roberts, Head of Corporate Projects, Performance and Climate Change

 [Debbie.Roberts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Debbie.Roberts@southkesteven.gov.uk)

#### Purpose of Report

To provide the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update regarding the St Martin's Park re-development project in Stamford.

#### Recommendations

**That the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the progress made regarding the delivery of the St Martin's Park re-development project in Stamford.**

## Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No – however paragraph 2.5 references a presentation that is commercially sensitive, and therefore it is likely that the press and public will be excluded for this because of the likelihood that information that is exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed to them.
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Enabling economic opportunities Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	Stamford St. Marys

## 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 a number of significant financial implications which were considered by Full Council on 8 February 2024. This report provides an update on progress being made against the approved actions.

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

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

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report, which is for noting. The Council has been engaging with its legal advisors as part of the project who continue to provide legal advice and support as and when necessary.

*Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer*

## 2. Background to the Report

2.1 At the Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council on 8 February 2024 the Council agreed a way forward for the St Martin's Park re-development project in Stamford. This report provides a brief update on the areas that Full Council agreed should be progressed to mitigate the costs to the Council.

2.2 The link to the report, including background papers, from the meeting on 8 February 2024 can be viewed online via the following link:

[Agenda for Council on Thursday, 8th February, 2024, 3.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

2.3 The following recommendations were approved at the meeting on 8 February 2024:

That the Council:

1. Notes the progress made regarding the delivery of the St Martins Park, Stamford redevelopment.
2. Notes that there were a range of options that were available for the next phase of the project discussed at Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 January 2024, at Exempt Appendix 1.
3. Approves the preferred option which has been recommended by the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee, attached as exempt Appendix 2.
4. Delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to enact the recommendations and provide a further update to the Finance and Economic Scrutiny Committee regarding progress at its next meeting.

2.4 An update regarding progress on the above actions was made to this Committee on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the link to that report is available on the link below;

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 08/05/2024 14:00 \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)

2.5 This report provides a further update on progress with a presentation to the Committee to follow in exempt session due to commercial and confidential information that it includes.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 Monthly meetings continue to take place between landowners and agents for both parties. The developers are committed to the scheme and working towards an exchange of contracts but at the time of drafting the report (5<sup>th</sup> September 2024) there are still a very small number of legal points and wording still to be finally agreed.
- 3.2 Officers, on behalf of the Council, confirmed agreement to sell at the price agreed at Full Council on 8 February 2024 to the potential developers and these figures are included in the sales contracts.
- 3.3 The Council has submitted a Brownfield Land Release Fund application for the sum of £2.8m towards the remediation costs of the site. An outcome was expected to be received by summer 2024 but despite several queries about when notification will be received, the Council has not heard if it has been successful to date.
- 3.4 The three remaining Council-owned residential dwellings among the eight that are located together outside the red line have been independently valued and have been appropriated from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund. Only one of the three properties is in use, and this is as temporary accommodation. The Secretary of State approval to do this was not required, the Council has the authority to move them between the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund.
- 3.5 There are two large, clean stockpiles of crushed material from the demolition process that require moving from the site. The Council has approached aggregate companies to remove them, and works are due to commence in September 2024. Regarding the third stockpile, that is not yet certified as 'clean', the demolition contractor has amicably engaged, the Council is still seeking a positive resolution. The removal of all three stockpiles is a condition of the completion of the sales contracts.
- 3.6 There were various legal issues which were included in the exempt appendices to the Full Council report on 8 February 2024 which were mitigation actions to improve the financial position of the Council. Agreement has been reached between all of the parties to include all of the mitigations requested by Full Council in the sales contracts.
- 3.7 The programme for the National Grid overhead power line diversions has been received and all partners are working collaboratively to achieve the works over the next 9 months. These works are a condition of the completion of the sale of the land.

- 3.8 Whilst the intent of delivering the approved masterplan remains unchanged, the developer parties are reviewing the viability of the one planning condition issue within the consented planning approval as agreed by Full Council and will be progressing this with the Local Planning Authority during exchange and completion of contracts.
- 3.9 Developer parties are working to submit their reserved matters planning applications simultaneously at Christmas/New Year as the consented outline planning consent for the whole scheme expires in February 2025.

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

- 4.1 None, it was a delegation to this Committee to receive updates regarding the actions that Council requested. The report is for noting.
- 4.2 The Committee may raise points of clarification, comment or make suggestions as it deems appropriate.

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

- 5.1. To comply with a resolution of Full Council to receive a progress report on the scheme.

#### **6. Consultation**

- 6.1. Members were updated on progress prior to the meeting of Full Council on 8 February 2024.

#### **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 8th February, 2024, 3.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 08/05/2024 14:00 \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)

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## Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 17 September 2024

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

### Grantham Town Centre Footfall Report

#### Report Author

Melanie Brown, Grantham Engagement Manager

 melanie.brown@southkesteven.gov.uk

#### Purpose of Report

To update Members on progress on the action plan to increase footfall to Grantham Market place in relation to the Future High Street Fund programme.

#### Recommendations

**That the Committee notes the update on the action plan to increase footfall to Grantham Market place as part of the Future High Street programme.**

#### 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 There are no financial implications directly arising from the report, which is for noting.

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

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

- 1.2 There are no legal or governance implications arising from this report, which is for noting.

*Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer*

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 In 2021, Cabinet agreed a £5.56m programme of works funded by the Government's Future High Street Fund. This programme of works focuses on improvements to Grantham Town Centre, including public realm improvement schemes to the Market Place and Station Approach, a grant scheme to support the conversion of vacant upper floor retail spaces into quality residential properties in the town centre, and the potential acquisition of a strategic development site in the town centre.
- 2.2 To support this approach, the Council approved £379,000 (16 July 2020) Future High Streets Fund programme, to funds activities to support the delivery of the physical works described in 2.1.
- 2.3 This activity includes funding for: a) the establishment of the Grantham Town Team and; b) a Town Centre Action Plan to include town centre improvements, the delivery of events and activities to support and increase footfall in the town centre, and promotion of Grantham as a destination.
- 2.4 The Market Place improvement scheme aims to deliver a usable and inviting public open space in the heart of Grantham, capable of hosting events and markets and expected to complete by the end of September 2024.
- 2.5 The Market Place works started on the 7 May 2024 and include the reconstruction of the road from a tarmac surface to York stone sett paving, whilst also raising the current road height to deliver a single level structured and interconnected space.
- 2.6 When the contractors mobilised and established the site in May 2024, the Council received a level of negative feedback and concern from businesses in the vicinity of the works, who felt their businesses were being adversely affected. In that context an urgent item was brought to the Annual General Meeting of the Council on the 23 May 2024 which discussed

setting up a hardship fund for any businesses affected. It was proposed that up to £50,000 should be set aside for this.

2.7 During the meeting the Council agreed to: "not set up a Market Place Hardship Reserve, but instead recommended focusing part of the existing FHSF to develop interventions that would further promote footfall to the Market Place in the short and medium term". It was agreed that the level of this increase and the policy on its deployment would be discussed at the next meeting of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC).

2.8 At this meeting on the 27 June 2024, three options were discussed:

Option 1 was to do nothing further.

Option 2 was to continue with the mitigation measures currently in place and some or all of the identified activities: to promote the Market Place through the extended programme of events/activity to run throughout Spring 2025 (January to May), a 12-month loyalty card scheme, and an enhanced long term promotional activity for Grantham town centre attractions and businesses.

Option 3 was, in addition to Option 2, to conduct feasibility works to provide costed proposals for long-term/permanent projects to support the town centre.

2.9 Long term projects to be considered included:

- the removal of parking charges
- implementing a rental support or financial incentive scheme for new businesses and/or market traders
- providing additional bus services to Grantham on market days; and;
- funding grants to town centre businesses to deliver additional marketing/branding/promotional activity.

These would be explored while implementing Option 2.

2.10 The FEOSC on 17 July resolved to accept Option 3.

*Option Three – In addition to the activities outlined in option two, to complete feasibility works and costed proposals for long-term/permanent suggestions to support the town centre, including the removal of parking charges, implementing a rental support or financial incentive scheme for new businesses and/or market traders, providing additional bus services on Market Days, and funding grants to town centre businesses to deliver additional marketing/branding/promotional activity. Subsequently to bring these fully costed proposals to a future meeting of the committee for the allocation of additional budget.*

2.11 Progress made against the elements of Option 2 include:

- Voucher scheme: The Council's Communications Team are currently designing a loyalty card in conjunction with the Grantham Engagement Manager, which will be distributed to those businesses in the vicinity of the Market Place who have operated in the area affected by the roadworks. This will be "rolled out" from 1 October to coincide with the revised dates for the full reopening of the Market Place. Subject to its performance and affordability, this scheme has the potential to be extended further within the town.

- Extended programme of events: is being drawn up to incorporate a monthly event in the Market Place to work in conjunction with the market diary. An example of things under consideration is a Summer Solstice Festival, French Market and Brocante, along with interactive events for school holidays etc.

An indicative programme of events is appended to this report (Appendix 1)

## 2.12 Forecast Budgetary costs for Option 2

The council has committed over £379,000 of match funding towards the Future High Street Fund. This included funding for the establishment and activity of the Grantham Town Team and Action Plan to include town centre beautification and the delivery of events and activities to support and increase footfall in the town centre. £210,000 of the match funding remains.

Proposal	Indicative Budget Required
Extended events programme to deliver events within the town centre between January and May 2025	£25,000 - £35,000
Voucher/loyalty card scheme for businesses within the Marketplace area, to run for 12 months with monthly prize draw.	£2,000
Long-term promotional activity.	£TBC
Incentive schemes including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- free parking on Market days/mid-week to encourage shoppers</li> <li>- grant scheme for businesses to access marketing support</li> <li>- financial incentives for new market traders taking up stalls</li> <li>- financial incentives to support rent costs for new town centre businesses</li> <li>- provision of free buses to Grantham from outlying regions/other towns for market days</li> </ul>	Feasibility study to be conducted prior to 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2024.

2.13 The requested feasibility works to provide detailed proposals for long-term/permanent projects to support the town centre are being developed as part of a wider Action Plan for Grantham town centre in partnership with the Grantham Town Team. Details will not be available until November 2024.

2.14 The Grantham Town Team will be made up of key stakeholders from the town, the first meeting of this group will be 19 September 2024. The Terms of Reference will be agreed at the first meeting of this group.

2.15 The indicative timetable for the development of the Action Plan is as follows:

Activity	Dates	Next Meeting
Town Team Meeting	19.09.24	Frequency of meetings to be decided at initial meeting on 19.09.24

FEOSC Meeting	17.09.24	26.11.24
Cabinet Approval	03.12.24	
Action Plan Completion	Town Team to confirm after initial meeting, but prior to 26.11.24	

2.16 The FEOSC on 27 June 2024 was informed that despite the concerns footfall had increased relative to May 2023. Further data obtained since May, confirms a further increase in footfall in June and July 2024. **Appendix 1** contains detailed information.

### **3. Key Considerations**

3.1 Mitigation measures are already underway including street performance during Saturday markets and the commissioning of a programme of activities to run throughout the Summer Holidays.

3.2 Footfall data monitoring has revealed that there has been no significant decrease in the number of visits to the area during the course of the works to date.

### **4. Other Options considered**

4.1 The alternative options were considered by Members at an earlier meeting. They are listed in the report above.

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

5.1 The report is for noting only. All relevant information needs to be obtained in relation to cost, feasibility and impact on businesses for the proposed business support measures, for the FEOSC Meeting on 26 November.

### **6. Appendices**

Appendix 1 - [Grantham Market Footfall Data Comparison May-July 2023 VS 2024 22](#)

### **7. Background Papers**

A - Report to Finance and Economic OSC 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 [Grantham Future High Streets Fund Market Place Footfall Activity.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)

B – Grantham Future High Street Fund - May 2024 Update [FINAL FHSF FEOSC Report - 8th May 2024.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)

C– Full Council Approval of revenue budget for Future High Street Fund [Full Council Report FHS July 2020.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)

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## **Events 2024 - 2025**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October Lincolnshire Day – small scale this year with more planned for next.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October Festival of Community Event.

## **Proposed Events**

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November Potential to tie in with St Wulfram's Church and the opening of the Christmas tree festival.  
Members of the public also participate in a procession from the marketplace to the church.

125

Potential to make greater use of the marketplace and more community engagement.

Sunday December 1st Christmas Market and light switch on and trail

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December Small Business Saturday

January weather precludes

February weather precludes

March	TBC
April	Savage Skills – 2 days (Mountain Bike show and participation event)
May	The Whale & Projects around it (half term) E.G. Snail and the Whale art/theatre/writing possibilities.
.....	
June	<p>Summer Solstice Event – Mini Festival with covers band.</p> <p>Outdoor theatre – Sunday afternoon (touring theatre company can add to planned touring schedule</p> <p>This event would be delivered over the same weekend to keep costs and disruptions down.</p>
July	<p>French market and Brocante (perhaps to coincide with Bastille Day) with French Music/band (e.g. Maniere des Bohemiens)</p> <p>Bike Night – similar to what happens in Boston, Spilsby etc.</p>
August	<p>Beach Week. Beach with picnic tables, parasols, deck chairs. Ice cream, coffee, etc.</p> <p>Rhubarb Theatre/ Folksy Theatre/ DOT theatre, etc show too at various times throughout the day.</p> <p>With a local band on the Saturday night – not requiring large infrastructure.</p>
September	Flower & Produce Event (local flower clubs?)

Outdoor cinema – Friday eve, Sat afternoon (family) Saturday evening Sunday afternoon

October 1<sup>st</sup>

Lincolnshire Day (or this can happen on the Saturday closest to this date to maximise the potential of the event)

October 31<sup>st</sup>

Halloween Trail/event – linked with local retailers

November ?

As November 2024 – potential to use the Market Place in conjunction with opening of the Christmas Tree Festival.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November(TBC)

Christmas Market and Light Switch on

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December

Small Business Saturday

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

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
17 SEPTEMBER 2024			
Finance Update Report, April-July 2024	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>	Regular update report for April-July	Standing Item
St. Martin's Park Update	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)/Debbie Roberts</b>	Update report for Committee	Update report
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Economic Development Strategy Adoption	Lead Officer: <b>Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)</b>	To update the Committee with the latest position before any recommendation to Cabinet.	Agreed at Committee
UKSPF Update	Lead Officer: <b>Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)</b>	To bring a report to Committee with an update on the Finances attached to the UKSPF programme.	UKSPF Terms of Reference request an update at Scrutiny Committees. This report was also tabled at Rural OSC.
Market Place Footfall Activity	Lead Officer: <b>Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)</b>	To consider the option put forward by FEOSC in July.	Recommended by Committee in July
REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
26 NOVEMBER 2024			
Future High Streets Fund Mid-Year Update	Lead Officer: <b>Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)</b>	Mid-year update for the Committee to consider.	Standing Item
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Budget Monitoring up to 30 September – to include Revs and Bens Q1 and Q2 position	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Standing item

<b>Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/2026</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Claire Moses (Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community))</b>	To further review the Scheme before any recommendation to Cabinet/Council.	Standing item
<b>Corporate Plan KPIs Mid-Year Report</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)</b>	Mid year review of the Committee's agreed KPIs.	Standing item
<b>Leisure Centre Maintenance</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Gyles Teasdale (Head of Property Services and ICT)</b>	Review of the current maintenance plans of our Leisure services with a breakdown planned work per site and possible impact to our residents	Request by Cllr
REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
18 FEBRUARY 2025			
<b>Turnpike Depot Update</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
<b>Budget Monitoring Q3 Forecast</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Standing item
<b>Maintenance Strategy Action Plan</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Gyles Teasdale (Head of Property Services and ICT)</b>	An updated action plan following the report to Cabinet	New item
REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
13 MAY 2025			
<b>Turnpike Depot Update</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
<b>Update on East Midlands Building Consultancy</b>	Lead Officer: <b>Jeremy Barlow (Building Control Manager)</b>	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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