

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Tuesday, 18 February 2025 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-1 Channel](#)

1. Public Speaking

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

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Disclosure of Interests

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

4. **Minutes from the meeting held on 26 November 2024** (Pages 3 - 15)
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024.
5. **Minutes from the Extraordinary meeting held on 16 January 2025** (Pages 17 - 26)
To confirm the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 16 January 2025.
6. **Updates from the meeting held on 26 November 2024** (Page 27)
7. **Updates from the meeting held on 16 January 2025** (Page 29)
8. **Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
9. **Turnpike Depot Update - February 2025** (Pages 31 - 36)
To provide the committee with a progress update on the ongoing Turnpike Waste Depot project
10. **Budget Monitoring Report Q3** (To Follow)
Provide update on the budget monitoring position for the 2024-25 as at end of December 2024
11. **Maintenance Strategy Action Plan Update** (Pages 37 - 45)
Provide FEOSC update on progression of Maintenance Strategy Action Plan
12. **UKSPF Programme Update** (Pages 47 - 53)
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.
13. **Grantham Future High Streets Fund – Programme Update** (Pages 55 - 64)
To update the Committee on the Grantham Future High Streets Fund programme
14. **Update on St Martin's Park, Stamford** (Pages 65 - 68)
To provide the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update regarding the St Martin's Park re-development project in Stamford.
15. **Work Programme 2024-25** (Pages 69 - 70)
15. **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

Tuesday, 26 November 2024, 2.00 pm

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

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
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Rhea Rayside

Other Members present

Councillor Steven Cunningham

Officers

Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer)
Graham Watts (Assistant Director of Governance and Public Protection, Monitoring Officer)
Emma Whittaker (Assistant Director of Planning and Growth)
Paul Sutton (Interim Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer)
Gyles Teasdale (Head of Property Service and ICT)
Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Performance and Climate Change)
Claire Moses (Head of Service - Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community)
Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment)
Melanie Brown (Grantham Engagement Manager)
Charles James (Policy Officer)
Claire Saunders (High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager)
Joshua Mann (Democratic Services Officer)

44. Public Speaking

There were none.

45. Apologies for Absence

There were none.

46. Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

47. Minutes from the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2024

The minutes from the meeting held on 17 September 2024 were proposed, seconded and **AGREED** as an accurate record.

48. Updates from previous meeting

An action from the previous meeting was for a briefing note to be circulated to all Members to provide information of the UKSPF scheme, money available and how to apply for the funding. The Chairman requested an update on this.

The Assistant Director of Planning and Growth stated confirmation was still being sought that SKDC's position was in line with the relevant funding. Once this confirmation had been obtained then Members would be updated via email at the earliest opportunity and an update would be provided at the following meeting.

Another action agreed at the previous meeting was for the Grantham Town Centre Footfall Report to be added to the Work Programme for the 26 November meeting. It was noted that whilst this was on the agenda for the meeting, Members had only received the report the day before the meeting. Members stated their frustration that they had insufficient time to study the report prior to the meeting and requested future reports were published in a timelier manner.

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

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing confirmed that there was to be another UKSPF meeting in December and whilst there was a small amount of funds yet to be allocated, this would be kept under review over the rest of the financial year.

The Vice-Chairman voiced their belief that Councillors should have access to see the exact figure of remaining funds within the UKSPF.

The Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement confirmed that the amendment to the Parking Order resulting in updated parking charges would be

initiated from 20 January 2025. The Cabinet Member also confirmed there to be a press release planned regarding a festive period of free parking on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, from the week commencing 2 December 2024.

It was also confirmed that a new tenant had been secured for Unit Two at The Picture House, Grantham. Further details of this would be discussed at the Cabinet meeting of 3 December.

50. Grantham Future High Streets Fund - Mid-Year Update

The Grantham Future High Streets Fund - Mid-Year Update was presented by the Leader of the Council.

The Leader confirmed the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to have paid the entirety of the capital funding allocation for the Future High Street Fund to the council, totaling £5,556,042.

Following this monetary confirmation, the report outlined details of the following five subsections -

- **Subset One: Public Realm Projects** (This included raising the Grantham Market Place carriageway to the same level as the existing York stone paved areas and resurfacing of the carriageway and upgraded traffic signals at the Station Road/A607 Junction. Works started on 19 August 2024 and were anticipated to last a duration of 16 weeks, concluding in December 2024. The works were completed under the forecasted budget which allowed for the release of circa £426,000 remaining funding. Confirmation of the final value of this was awaited from LCC Highways, following their negotiation of compensation events with Taylor Woodrow. In anticipation, Officers were developing a programme of additional works, including street furniture and improving power supplies to the marketplace.)
- **Subset Two: Conduit Lane Toilet Refurbishment** (Renovations to male, female and disabled public toilets within the block, as well as the staff toilets available to the Markets team. Works started on 11 November 2024 and were anticipated to take between 8 to 10 weeks)
- **Subset Three: Upper Floor Grants Programme** (Allowing owners of retail properties within the town centre to convert vacant and underutilised upper floor space into high-quality residential units. All 22 grants have now been allocated to applicants to the full programme value of £550,000.)
- **Subset Four: Grantham Town Team** (The newly appointed Grantham Engagement Manager joined the Council on 22 July 2024 and work begun to re-establish the Grantham Town Team.)
- **Subset Five: A summary of engagement with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.** (Monthly Officer meetings continued to take place with MHCLG Funding Delivery Managers to provide updates on progress and discuss issues. Council Officers were discussing any potential underspend with MHCLG on the programme and, as reported in previous updates to elected Members, the Council was not the only grant recipient experiencing difficulties with programme delivery, particularly around costs. MHCLG confirmed over 50% of

programmes have submitted project change requests and were anticipating this percentage to rise.)

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- The reliability of the financial data in Subset One was queried. The Leader confirmed the data for finances spent to be bulletproof and the data for finances yet to be spent to be subject to standard building industry variation.
- Members queried the composition of the Town Team. It was confirmed that the Town Team consisted of four members: namely, John Manterfield, Nigel Rivers, Roy Redmond, and Susan Swinburn. These were joined by The Leader, The Chairman of Grantham Town Council, and the Cabinet Members for both Corporate Governance and Licensing, and Property and Public Engagement. They were then supported by SKDC Officers, who were not entitled to vote.
- It was queried how the above appointments had been made to the Town Team. The Leader confirmed recruitment to be their responsibility and that they had made the appointments in consultation with Officers and the Leader of the Town Council. A Member suggested that appointments had been made due to patronage. The Leader rebuked this, citing that there had been no financial or other incentive to himself for the appointments to be made. Albeit the Leader did concede there was not a codified application process.
- It was noted whilst there was representation on the Town Team from individuals involved in local business, transport, and the Civic Society, there were no individuals on the Town Team actively involved in the retail sector. It was queried how proactively retailers had been sought for their involvement.
- A Member suggested there may have been individuals rejected from joining the Town Team due to their political views. This was rebuked by the Grantham Engagement Manager.
- A Member questioned the political independence of the four individuals appointed to the Town Team citing that Sue Swinburn had ran as an independent candidate against Cllr M. Bailey in May 2023. The Member's view was that it was more appropriate for the Town Team to comprise of elected Members to increase transparency. The Leader expressed concern that politicizing the Town Team could deter members of the public from engaging.
- The Chairman reminded the Committee that it was not the role of the Committee to determine the personnel and appointment process of the Town Team.
- It was queried and confirmed the Station Road roadworks were on target to finish by the documented completion date.
- A Member suggested an impact assessment should be undertaken to gage the disruption caused to road users by the roadworks.

The report was noted by the Committee.

51. Turnpike Close Waste Depot Update

The Update in respect of the Construction of the Waste Depot, Turnpike Close Grantham was presented by the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement.

Budget approval of £8.8 Million had been granted for the project by the Finance OSC's of September 2023 and February 2024.

Since the last meeting, significant project milestones had been achieved – specifically the conclusion of the value engineering, the signing of the construction contract and the mobilisation of the contractor onto the site. The mobilisation of the contractor had commenced approximately two weeks earlier than initially anticipated and Lindum had also reduced the construction period to 50 weeks. The target completion date was therefore scheduled to be 7 October 2025, meaning an operational go-live date of mid-November 2025, allowing a four-week relocation and mobilisation period. This relocation period would require one-off funding to be sought to the value of £500,000.

The timeframes for the updated proposed programme were outlined within the report.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Why the £500,000 one-off funding being sought was not factored into the initial estimations, especially given the further 10% increase secured in February 2024. It was confirmed by the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer that the initial budgeting had been done by consultants who had presented their methodology to the Committee at the time. The necessity for one-off additional funding had not become clear until March 2024 when the figures from the sector identified this shortfall due to changes in the market.
- It was queried how the consultants had reached the original £8 Million budget figure. It was confirmed the figure had been determined by Gleeds Consultants and had been negotiated down by SKDC officers. The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer stated their belief that even with an additional £500,000 of funds, this was still value for money given the quality of the product.
- A Member expressed their concern citing the contingency fund prior to the additional funding secured in February 2024 was 15%, following the securing of the funding the contingency fund dropped to 5.2%. It was the Member's belief that the one-off funding request of £500,000 would not have been required had the contingency fund remained at 15%. The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer confirmed the 5.2% contingency figure had been determined by Gleeds rather than Officers.
- Another Member speculated that the significant time left on the project may manifest into further requests for additional funds. The Member expressed their concern about this happening and this sentiment was echoed by other Members.
- The Vice-Chairman expressed their view the project was lacking political leadership from the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement. The Cabinet Member recognised the view but expressed their belief that political project leadership was not in the best interests of the public. They stated that their leadership was embodied by the direction the project had taken by having open dialogue with the Committee and choosing to seek the one-off additional payment rather than 'scrimp & save' which had historically been detrimental.

- One of the ward Councillors expressed their support for the project citing the existing site was not fit for purpose. The Member expressed disappointment at the extra costs requested but noted the transparency of the project.
- Cllr Cunningham entered the Chamber.*
- The Chairman requested an update at the following Committee meeting by a representative from Lindum. – **ACTION.** The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer replied in their capacity as the Project Officer stating their understanding that Lundum would engage at a future meeting and could provide drone footage of the site.
 - It was noted the final decision would be made by Cabinet.

The Committee noted the report.

52. Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26

The Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26 was introduced by the Leader of the Council.

In place since 1 April 2013, SKDC's Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) had been determined locally after consultation with precepting authorities, key stakeholders, and residents.

As of October 2024, there were 7077 residents in receipt of Council Tax Support in South Kesteven. Of these, 3996 were of working age whilst 3081 were of pension age. Of these, 6,062 receive statutory protection.

Due to this statutory protection, any reduction in cost to the proposed scheme could only be applied to the working age customers. This meant the Council's share of the October cost of £687,536 – only £98,593 (14.34%) could be influenced by any change made to the existing scheme.

The groundwork for determining the 2025/26 scheme had been laid previously when a report was presented to the Finance and Economic OSC on 17 July 2024 to consider a 'no change scheme' for public consultation. Following the report, the recommendation by the Committee was to undertake consultation for the 2025/26 Localised Council Tax support scheme and to consider the outcome of the consultation findings prior to making a recommendation to Cabinet, for the final scheme to be presented to Council in January 2025.

Letters were issued to all those in receipt of Council Tax Support at the start of the consultation. This totalled 7108 recipients. A total of 336 responses were received, a rate of 4.73% - a decrease from the 5.2% the previous year.

A key finding from the consultation was that 89.6% of respondents agreed with the principles of the current scheme.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- A Member queried the stance of the Leader, had the Labour Government decided to remove the scheme, as had been previous speculated according to the Member. The Leader declined to respond stating they did not wish to pass comment on a rumour that never happened or came to fruition.

Following a proposal, it was seconded and AGREED to recommend that Cabinet support a 'no change' Local Council Support Scheme for 2025/26.

53. Marketplace footfall report

It was suggested deferring the Marketplace footfall report item to allow for more time to consider the report given as it was only published the afternoon before. This would also allow for the attendance of a Member who was unable to make the meeting. A vote was held on this with three votes in favour of deferring, three against, and two abstaining. The Chairman cast their deciding vote in favour of proceeding with the item on the agreement that the absent Member was given the opportunity to provide comment after the meeting. The Leader placed on record that they were happy to meet with the Member and discuss the report away from the meeting.

The report was presented by the Leader of the Council.

The development of the plan to promote footfall in the Market Place had been discussed by FEOSC on several occasions, most recently in September 2024. At that meeting Officers committed to bring an 'Action Plan' to the 5 November meeting, which would be developed in conjunction with the Grantham Town Team. The Action Plan included a fully costed feasibility study which had considered the following potential interventions recommended by FEOSC at the June meeting:

- Parking - Free parking on market days/midweek to encourage shoppers.
- Marketing - implement a grant scheme to enable better promotions.
- New Traders – offer financial incentives to new market traders taking up stalls.
- Rent – offer financial support for rent costs for new town centre businesses.
- Transport – provision of free buses to Grantham on market days.

A draft Grantham Town Centre Action Plan (Appendix 2) was prepared to support an overall strategy for Grantham Town Centre, both through the delivery of the scheme and the initial period up to December 2025. The Action Plan was developed in collaboration with the Grantham Town Team and was fully funded from existing budgets.

During the continuation of the works, up to December 2024, the Action Plan concentrated on maintaining town centre footfall, supporting established businesses, and providing incentives to new market traders during the period of the disruptive highway works. The data showed footfall was not only maintained during this period but generally shows a year-on-year increase.

Since the start of the works in the Marketplace there was continuous support to businesses affected by the roadworks. This was continuing throughout the Station Approach works. This had included regular engagement with businesses and the hosting of two events on the newly completed Market Place. The most recent being the 'Grantham Community Event' on 19 October. This was well attended by a cross-section of the Grantham public and was the culmination of weeks of community engagement involving over 500 residents who participated in workshop activity. All initial feedback was positive.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- It was confirmed that individuals passing through Grantham by train or car were not included within the footfall figures.
- The Assistant Director of Planning confirmed the geofences for the marketplace footfall data to be from Westgate to Guildhall Street, including the marketplace. The Chairman requested a map of this for Committee Members. **ACTION**
- It was suggested the 2023 footfall figures were comparatively low due to rail strikes effecting the transport into the area. Some Members were concerned the 2023 data was not a reliable source from which to make spending decisions given that the data had been distorted due to the rail strikes. Given the concerns the Assistant Director for Planning confirmed the overall footfall data from 2022-24 had showed an 11.4% increase per year.
- It was noted by a Member that the peaks and troughs of the 2024 footfall data encapsulated in Appendix One had coincided with attendance levels of Grantham Market.
- It was queried why some activities within Appendix Two of the report were recorded as having no costs to them. The Member was concerned this failed to recognise the cost of the Officer time involved. The Assistant Director of Planning confirmed the costs recorded in Appendix Two were additional costs and initial costs such as Officer time had already been accounted for.
- The Chairman noted that a Member had previously provided a list of costing requests which had not been fully responded to by the report, such as purchasing the George Centre. The Chairman requested if Officers could revisit this. – **ACTION**
- Further details regarding the Loyalty Scheme within the proposed Action Plan were requested. The Head of Economic Development confirmed they were waiting for the response to the consultation with Retail Club Grantham.
- A Member noted that the report had incorrectly suggested that Lincolnshire Day was held between January-July. The Assistant Director of Planning confirmed this day had merely been used as an example of a local event.
- It was queried and confirmed that an option considered within the report was for SKDC to offer an initial rent-free four-week period for stall holders at Grantham market as an attempt to secure more stallholders at the market and subsequently increase footfall.
- It was suggested the empty retail unit on St. Catherine's Road could be used for a pop-up restaurant.
- It was noted that the bus timetable provided in the Appendix was too infrequent in the rural areas.

A Member expressed their concern that the level of scrutiny during this agenda item was insufficient and that it would benefit from additional time for consideration. The Member proposed holding an extraordinary meeting before the end of 2024, this motion was seconded, and a vote was held in which three Members voted in favour, two against, and two abstained. On the advice of the Democratic Services Officer, the Chairman noted that three Members of the Committee voting in favour of an extraordinary meeting was sufficient to trigger the extraordinary meeting in line with the Section 3.2, Part 4 of the Constitution. The Monitoring Officer advised that a vote on the initial Short Term-Christmas 2024 section of the Action Plan (Appendix Two) could be held at the current meeting. The extraordinary meeting could then scrutinize and vote on the aspects of the Action Plan from January 2025 onwards.

Following being proposed and seconded, it was AGREED to endorse Section One of the Action Plan for Grantham Town Centre – the Short Term to Christmas 2024.

54. Finance Update Report: April - September 2024

Councillor Ben Green left the Chamber and Councillor Murray Turner entered the Chamber at 16.25.

The Finance Update Report: April – September 2024 was presented by the Leader of the Council.

The Leader noted the General Fund Revenue Forecast Outturn Position had amounted to a £725,000 surplus from variants. This had been due to the following:

- A reduction in predicated inflationary price increases had resulted in a forecast underspend 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 had been up to 39% below this.
- An interim pay award in line with the proposed national award for 2024/25 of:
 - £1,290 uplift for pay scales up to and including SK20
 - 2.5% uplift for pay scales from SK20A and abovewas endorsed by the Employment Committee and paid in July 2024. This had been funded by the approved budgets which were increased by an assumed 5% pay award. SKDC since received confirmation that this was the final approved national award for 2024/25 and as such, no further pay award is due resulting in a forecast underspend.
- Higher forecast levels of investment income were based on a combination of: more investments being held; and higher average interest achieved on those investments (currently 5.3% compared to 4.75% included in the budget).

The Leader confirmed that Collection Rates had also been positive and highlighted the following:

Council Tax – As of 30 September 2024 collection of £58.772m was on target against an annual debt of £105.848m. South Kesteven had the highest net

collectable debt in the county (£105.848m), with the next Councils debt being £102.909m.

Business Rates – As of 30 September 2024, £24.157m had been collected against an annual debt of £43.188m. The collection rate was 0.05% above target. South Kesteven had the highest net collectable debt in the county (£43.188m), with the next Councils debt being £41.611m.

Rent - Collection was £14.969m as of 30 September 2024 against an annual debt of £29.958m. The collection rate was 0.42% above target equating to an increase in the collection of £125k.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- The proportion of expenditure spent on discretionary rather than mandatory services was queried. This was confirmed to be approximately 60% of overall spending with the largest discretionary spending being spent on leisure and arts.

The item was noted by the Committee.

55. Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators: 2024/25 Mid-Year (Q2) Report

The Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators: 2024/25 Mid-Year (Q2) Report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing. The report covered Quarter 2 for 2024/25, July-September 2024.

Appendix A presented the overall performance against the fourteen actions being presented in the session. Nine of the actions were rated Green (on or above target) and two were rated as Amber (off target by less than 10% or where milestone achievement was delayed but with resolution in place to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe). There were zero actions rated as Red (significantly below target). Three actions were rated as N/A where work had not yet meaningfully commenced.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Guidance was sought on accessing the online dashboard of which KPI's were published at the end of each quarter. It was confirmed that there was training planned for all Councillors to demonstrate how to access this.

The report was noted by the Committee.

56. Leisure Maintenance Update

Taking the report as read due to time constraints, the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement invited any questions regarding the Leisure Maintenance Update Report.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Details were requested regarding the £105,000 upgrades to Grantham Stadium and the lease agreement with Grantham Town Football Club. This was because the Member saw the upgrades as being an indirect subsidy for the club which had not been matched for other football clubs across the district. The Leader confirmed the Stadium was also used by other organisations such as Inspire+ and the Athletics club and remained an asset to SKDC regardless of the football club. The Leader also confirmed that negotiations were continuing regarding the lease agreement with Grantham Town FC.
- It was queried whether St. Leonard's Priory, Stamford was owned by SKDC. The Cabinet Member confirmed it was leased to SKDC under a long-term lease agreement dating back to the 1960s.

The Leisure Centres Maintenance Update was noted by the Committee.

57. Work Programme 2024-25

Following a proposer and a seconder, the Committee voted to extend the meeting beyond 17:00.

During discussions, it was requested the following matters were added to the Work Programme:

- A UKSPF update,
- A Future Highstreets Fund update,
- A Waste Depot update from Lindum, including drone footage of the Turnpike Close site,
- An update regarding the costings of Grantham Town FC.

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

None was raised.

59. Verbal Update on St Martin's Park, Stamford

It was proposed, seconded and AGREED to go into private session.

Under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public may be excluded from the meeting during any listed items of business, on the grounds that if they were to be present, exempt information could be disclosed to them as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act.

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

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Minutes

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

(Extraordinary)

Thursday, 16 January 2025, 10.30am

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



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Committee Members present

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

Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Murray Turner

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Ashley Baxter (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Richard Cleaver (Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement)
Councillor Paul Stokes (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure)

Officers

Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer)
Graham Watts (Assistant Director of Governance and Public Protection, Monitoring Officer)
Emma Whittaker (Assistant Director of Planning and Growth)
James Welbourn (Democratic Services Manager, Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment)
Melanie Brown (Grantham Engagement Manager)
Claire Saunders (High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager)
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

Thomas Rossington (Visitor Insights, Virtual)
Kelly Navon (Visitor Insights, Virtual)

60. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gloria Johnson, Mark Whittington and Ben Green.

Councillors Graham Jeal and Paul Martin acted as substitutes for this meeting.

61. Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

62. Visitor Insights Presentation

Thomas Rossington and Kelly Navon from Visitor Insights provided a presentation in order to explain the data to the Committee.

Visitor Insights had been working with the Council for the last 2-3 years to assist in analysing the footfall data through their platform.

The presentation provided:

- Data source and how data is collected.
- Data processing and extrapolation.
- Terain platform.
- Key features (Historic Trends, GDPR Compliant, Granular Outputs and Varying Scales).
- How the Terain platform worked on location-based analytics.
- Data pipeline refreshes.
- Terain's product enhancement cycles.
- Terain's three geofences.
- Additional visitor insights products.
- Customer access strategy.

One Member queried how data would account for visitors without a mobile phone.

Visitor Insights clarified that representative samples by extrapolating the data to provide a real-world context. The modelling and attribution of visits based on the devices picked up and switched were based on visitors that do not have a mobile phone or do not have their device switched on.

Visit attribution algorithm which would take a representative sample of the UK, ensure from data aggregations that provided enough of a cross section of the market and factor in elements such as, the population size of the area in which the device was coming from and the weight applied to that visit attribution when looking at allocating visits to a certain area. Taking into consideration the weighting according to a population size, to allocate for a certain area. There were instances where the sample size may be relatively low in population where the device usage was low. A weight was still applied to that, however, it was difficult to allocate visits from a low population size.

Clarification was sought around how figures may be inflated or deflated as a result of trains travelling through Grantham.

Visitor Insights clarified that a device or visitor would need to spend a minimum of five minutes within a geofence, to ensure they were a legitimate visitor. Any trains passing through a geofence at 50/60mph would not be counted as a visit, which would ensure data set was not corrupt.

A consideration in terms of allocating locations to geofences was the velocity and time devices may ping. The system tracked pedestrians rather than vehicular data, which was calculated by velocity of the device.

A query was raised on what percentage of the figures provided was made up of non-device footfall.

Visitor Insights would look into a sample representation of the market to extrapolate the data cross. In some instances, 25% of the population count in a specific area to extrapolate against which would provide enough context for a sample size. They would not require 100% to 80% view of the entire population from a device count perspective to be able to extrapolate and get the real-world context.

The footfall figures being produced were not 100% certain of being accurate. It was ensured that real-world context was being used to ensure trends largely align with alternative data sets available within the market.

It was highlighted that a percentage of the figures of non-device footfall was unknown.

The data set from August-September 2023 was broken down by day and then into four sections (morning, afternoon, evening and night). It was queried why within the 2023 data, there were 17 sections (equated to 5 days) which collected 0 data.

The specific time period of August-September 2023, Visitor Insights saw a drop in the original data supply. The algorithm and extrapolation factors depended on original device coverage and the quality of geolocation data received from their supplier, in the timeframe from August-September 2023, there had been a drop-in service with their supplier which was rare.

If the August-September 2023 data was filled in with estimations, this would equate to around 20,000 visitors.

It was stated that data peaked in evenings when national sporting events and local events were taking place, it was queried whether this had been taken into consideration.

It was confirmed that a number of functions within the algorithm that take into consideration the average number for specific geofences. The system did not take into consideration specific events within geofences, however, it would flag up if an abnormal dramatic increase in the data.

One Member queried if a visitor sat in the same location for 3 hours, would their data be included hourly or as one visit.

Each classification of a smaller geofence such as, shops and pubs. As part of the algorithm, devices that were in a location for a longer period of time were factored out and equated normally. A device would be allocated as one visitor for 3 hours in the same place, however, if the period of time was longer, it may be a staff member.

It was questioned as to why outliers were discounted alongside the percentage of total data that anomalies and outliers represent.

The GPS data received for anomalies and outliers needed to be refined due to duplicate signals stacked upon each other. Duplicates were removed via necessary measures by looking at reference data. Another form of excluding anomalies and outliers would be to remove vehicular data.

The percentage of total data that were anomalies or outliers were unknown, due to the output seen on Terain at the end was post refinement and processing of the data.

It was highlighted that an individual may have more than one mobile device, it was queried as to how this would be accounted for within the data.

Concern was raised on an individual parking their car in a train station car park (within the geofence) and walked to the train station (which was outside the geofence), it was queried whether this person would count as a visitor to the town within the data, when in fact they would be leaving the town.

The algorithm was able to identify when one individual had two mobile devices as they would be in the same 'home-zone' where the devices were stationary between 7pm and 7am. At this stage, one device would be deleted within the data to avoid duplicates. Within the raw mobility data, a hashed advertise ID was unique per device, but not to an individual.

In terms of the train station car park, a person within the geofence of a car park for 5 at least 5 minutes would count as a visitor.

One Member outlined an indisputable strong correlation between days where train strikes took place and the visitor figures. It was highlighted that the entrance to the train station was within the geofence, meaning the data would be impacted by people that commute to work.

It was confirmed there may be an impact on train station data on particular days due to train strikes, in conjunction with the use of other modes of transport being used as an alternative.

A query was raised on what the margin of error was on the boundary of a geofence.

There were several types of geofence. Cluster geofences were defined by a geofence line. For location geofences, as they were smaller, a slight buffer would be implemented by a few meters radius for a GPS signal to ping an estimated area.

Clarification was sought on the fact that the data was designed to reveal trends, rather than be exact figures. A wider list of assumptions was requested, it was felt that 5 minutes was too little time to assume somebody was visiting Grantham, a 20-minute timeframe would be preferred alongside moving the geofence away from the trainline.

Further information was requested on certain modules that the Council currently did not have access to.

Visitor Insights confirmed that data allowed to unveil trends and analysis. It would not be 100% accurate and was based on assumptions.

In terms of a delayed train, the velocity of speed seen on the GPS data would examine whether the train was passing or had stopped or delayed.

Visitor Insights provided a visual to the Committee on the area that had been defined since the beginning of the contract. The geofence did not cover the train station tracks, therefore, any data in terms of actual trains would not be included. The geofences could be amended at any time.

The resident analysis module allowed the user to create postcode grid zones up to 200 postcodes in total. Using current cluster and location geofences, data could be produced on people living in that postcode and where they travel to and from, which can be filtered for a period of time over days/nights/weekdays and weekends.

A query was raised on how far back data could be tracked to.

Historic data could be viewed from January 2018 onwards.

Clarification was sought around the train station and whether these were in the same geofence as Grantham Town Centre, Westgate and the Marketplace.

Grantham Train Station slightly overlapped the geofence for Grantham Town Centre.

During debate, Members commented on:

- Concern was raised on the lack of information provided on days where no data had been provided.
- That GPS signals on devices could be tracked back to home addresses.
- Whether other competitive providers who could provide more informative data.

The HSHAZ Project Manager confirmed the data was commissioned in 2020 as a requirement of the Future High Street Fund reporting. The data provider went through a competitive process, however, following liaison with other users of the product, Terain seemed to be the most reliable. This contract would come to an end in March 2025, whereby alternative providers could be explored.

- Whether the best indicator for footfall would be to engage with local businesses to see whether they had seen an increased turnover.
- Concern was raised on the reliance on the data provided and it being misinterpreted. It was felt the data undermined work being undertaken for the growth of Grantham Town Centre.
- It was suggested whether Members could go into businesses in Grantham and ask anonymously whether the road works within the Market Place had affected their business turnover.

The Grantham Engagement Manager continuously liaised with Grantham businesses throughout the process of the road works in the Market Place.

- Whether Officers felt that the same contract should be renewed in March 2025, a new supplier be sought or whether the whole scheme be abolished.

The Assistant Director of Planning & Growth highlighted that procurement processes would need to be followed lawfully and via financial regulations.

Although the data may or may not be used in the future, the team would explore other measures in terms of the health, vitality and viability of Grantham Town Centre.

63. Grantham Town Centre Action Plan

The Chairman informed the Committee of the following amendment to Section 2.11 of the report:

'Across 2024 Grantham Market has shown significant growth and there are now more than 40 stalls let on a regular basis to traders at Grantham Market'.

The Leader of the Council presented the report which outlined the development of the Action Plan for Grantham Town Centre.

The Committee had previously debated the Action plan on the 26 November 2024, but, requested further opportunity to scrutinise the medium and long-term elements of the Action Plan, through an Extraordinary Meeting. The Committee did, however, endorse the short-term elements of the Action Plan. The aim of the plan was to provide a strategic framework to ensure activities are targeted.

The Head of Economic Development provided a presentation to the Committee, which included:

- Engagement – encourage positivity within the town and the continuation of relationship building with local retailers, stakeholders etc.
- Marketing – A marketing strategy had been developed that will include a website, external marketing via local and regional publications and social media promotion.
- Markets – plans to implement the following:
 - Initiatives to encourage new traders.
 - Promotion and delivery of additional markets, including antique markets, makers market and youth markets.
- Street theatre/performers.
- Business support initiatives.
- Events (April-December 2025), indicative events include:
 - Summer Festival
 - Luna Cinema
 - Mountain Bike Skills
 - Children's show
 - French market/Brocante/Vide Grenier and French Jazz evening
 - Twilight market
 - Street theatre
- Product Development – regeneration pipeline of projects, introduce public realm improvements and work with landlords to set up Pop-up shops in empty retail unit/s.

Councillor Matt Bailey submitted the following statement:

'I firstly want to thank all the Officers involved in the evaluation of ideas submitted in Appendix 5 and I am delighted that some of those ideas have filtered into the Action Plan. I look forward to seeing these come to fruition and see continued growth and development in Grantham Marketplace. A strong collaboration between Officers, Ward Councillors, local businesses and member of the public will ensure that we responsibly deliver the best value for money when deploying the remaining resources of the Future High Street Fund.

Secondly I would like to thank the leader Cllr Baxter for suggesting and arranging a meeting between Officers, Cllr Ley and myself to discuss this in advance of this meeting.

Todays focus should be the Action Plan itself Appendix 2, I do believe in previous meetings we have been distracted by the accuracy of the data. I myself am still very sceptical of the data in its accuracy and further analysis I have seen and shared with Officers and other Councillors does show gaps which are difficult to explain. It is important that we both measure our success but can also identify any weakness or concerns. Footfall volumes sounded like a logical way to do this. However without foundations of accuracy, the data becomes meaningless and I fear is now just a distraction to this Committee.

As for the Action plan, I would like to Committee to explore a few changes and corrections:

Correction- *The spending of the £114,000 on Events is currently allocated as a Medium term Jan-July 2025, but I believe the actual spending is planned to be spend across all of 2025.*

Events- Appendix 3 has a proposed list of events:

1. *£114,000 is a vast sum to spend in 1 year. Its a short burst of funding, I do think that this money could be spread across multiple years for a more sustained events strategy.*
2. *It would have been lovely to seen more Cultural and Diversity events in the calendar. Grantham has a rich community and I have suggested we put on an event to celebration Diwali for example.*

Marketing Plan- *The £7,000 Marketing plan was outlined as Short Term up to Christmas 2024, could this be shared with the Committee?.*

The Head of Economic Development highlighted that the events plan was from April - December 2025. Appendix 3 provided an indicative plan on types of activities that could be delivered within the Town Centre. The team would explore further activities and were open to receiving suggestions.

The £7,000 marketing plan was outlined as short term up to December 2024. It was requested whether the plan could be shared with the Committee.

ACTION: For the £7,000 marketing plan to be shared with the Committee.

It was clarified that £5,000 was for the development of the marketing plan and £7,000 for the delivery of it. It was decided to not spend money on developing the plan via a consultant, this had been done internally. The £12,000 related to expenditure over the coming months around website development and advertising.

One Member raised a point that the main focus of the plan was for people living from around the area of Grantham. Concern was raised that an elderly couple from Billingborough would not be able to access the activities due to the lack of public transport.

It was queried whether funding could be utilised to set up a small business grant scheme for local businesses in the District, however, all funds were short-term or had to meet certain criteria.

A suggestion was made for the Council to have its own grant scheme that wasn't reliant on a bid for funding each year to produce funding to encourage local business.

In terms of public transport, bus timetables had been included within the appendices to the report. There was reasonable coverage of public transport across the District, however, certain areas did suffer more than others. There was limiting

funding for the short term period, therefore, subsidising and planning bus routes was not within the action plan at present but would be considered in the future.

UKSPF had been the main funding for Councils to fund business support activity. The Council also encouraged different providers to come forward with solutions to meet specialist provision. There was a new allocation of funding coming forward for the County, however, it was not subject to come directly to local authorities.

A query was raised on whether the Council had undertaken a survey on local residents on whether they believe car parking in Grantham was underutilised as part of a study on car parking utilisation. The study had suggested that most of Grantham's major car parks were only 20-25% occupied on a Friday and Saturday.

It was suggested whether signage could be included around car parks in Grantham in order to encourage utilisation of the car parks on a Friday and Saturday.

The Assistant Director of Planning & Growth highlighted that separate pieces of work were being undertaken on car parking.

The Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement confirmed the Council was committed to undertaking a review of car parking in six months' time after the new charges in Grantham and Stamford were due to come into effect on the 20 January 2025.

A Member raised the concern on the perception of the Town Centre in relation to car parking due to traffic and/or roadworks.

It was felt there could be a danger of overthinking the activities as part of the Action Plan and possible issues that could occur beyond the circumstances out of anyone's control e.g. weather.

One Member queried how many void retail premises were within the Town Centre. Of those, how many were going to be tenanted long-term or in line to become a pop-up shop.

The Head of Economic Development noted that the Council did not currently hold the amount of void retail units in the Town Centre. Several units had been addressed in the report which had previously been vacant: the bookshop, cafes and other businesses which were seeking to bring business to Grantham.

The Chairman informed the Committee that a UKSPF Monitoring Report was being brought to the Committee at the next meeting on 18 February 2025.

One Member commended the work being undertaken by Officers, however, it was noted that these works had been ongoing for several years. It was queried what lessons had been learnt and what would be done differently.

The Leader of the Council highlighted that the funding had assisted in refurbishing the Town Centre. Evidence had shown that progress had been made.

Members thanked the Grantham Engagement Manager for her work.

A Grantham Member stated they had monitored void retail units. In and around the centre of Grantham, 3 shops had been lost in over a year and a half, however, 12 shops had been occupied.

It was confirmed that conversations were taking place for a Local Gallery to fill the empty shops and make them more attractive for visitors and residents.

The Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement emphasised the need for the work to be a cross-party unity alongside involvement from the community.

It was confirmed that works would be undertaken in signposting Wharf Road car park and upgrade the car park site. As of the 20 January 2025, there would be 2 hours free parking at Wharf Road car park which may encourage people to utilise it.

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

1. Notes the content of the report in respect to the Grantham Town Centre Action Plan.
2. Endorses the Grantham Town Centre Action Plan.
3. Agrees to receive a further report on progress made against the action plan in six months.

64. Close of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 12:24.

ACTION SHEET

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

To provide members with an update on actions agreed at the meeting held on 26 November 2024.

Min No	Agenda Item	Action	Assigned to	Comment/Status	Deadline
51	Turnpike Close Waste Depot Update	The Chairman requested an update at the following Committee meeting by a representative from Lindum.	Richard Wyles (The Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer)	Lindum were due to attend the Committee meeting on 18 February 2024.	Complete
53	Marketplace footfall report	For the Committee to receive a map of the geofences for the marketplace footfall data.	Emma Whitaker (Assistant Director of Planning & Growth)	Action addressed at the Extraordinary FE OSC meeting held on 16 January 2025	Complete
53	Marketplace footfall report	For Officers to revisit and provide an update to the Committee with a list of costing requests which had not been fully responded to by the report, such as purchasing the George Centre.	Melanie Brown (Grantham Engagement Manager)	Action addressed at the Extraordinary FE OSC meeting held on 16 January 2025	Complete

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ACTION SHEET

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

To provide members with an update on actions agreed at the Extraordinary meeting held on 16 January 2025.

Min No	Agenda Item	Action	Assigned to	Comment/Status	Deadline
63	Grantham Town Centre Action Plan	For the £7,000 marketing plan to be shared with the Committee in relation to Grantham Town Centre Action Plan.	Nick Hibberd (The Head of Economic Development)	Action to be completed prior to the meeting	Ongoing

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

18th February 2025 at 10.00 am

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

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

Report Author

Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT



Gyles.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides an 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 of the delivery of the new Waste Depot at Turnpike Close, Grantham.

Decision Information

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

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

Effective Council

Which wards are impacted?

Earlesfield Ward

1. Implications

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

Finance

- 1.1 Budget approval of £8.8m has been given for this project by Council 28th September 2023 (£8m) and 29th 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 governance implications arising from this report, which is a progress update for noting on the Waste Depot project.

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

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) has continually been provided with an update on the new Waste Depot project at Turnpike Close, Grantham following the agreement that the Committee would be provided with regular updates at each of its meetings during the project delivery phase. This report is the fifth of the project updates the Committee will have received following the report to the Committee at its last meeting in November 2024.
- 2.2 Since the last meeting, works have been progressing on schedule following commencement on site in October 2024.
- 2.3 The following programme summary was presented at the 7th February's Officer and Member Project Board meeting. There has been no further change from the previously reported timeline.

The most recent programme is outlined below:

Milestone	Project Programme
Cabinet Approval	16 th April 2024
Value Engineering Period	16 th April – 24 th May 2024
Enter into NEC4 Professional Services Contract	14 th June 2024
Progression of Stage 4 Design	17 th June – 23 rd August 2024
Design Evaluation, Completion and legal preparation.	27 th August – 24 th September 2024
Construction Contract Award	18 th October 2024
Contractor mobilisation period	1 st October 2024 – 28 th October 2024
Construction Period commences	29 th October 2024
Targeted completion date	7 th October 2025
Mobilisation Period	8 th October 2025 – 25 th November 25
Operational Go-live	25 th November 2025

- 2.4 The above table shows that construction period is well underway. Works are now progressing in line with the master construction programme with a target completion date of 7th October 2025.
- 2.5 Works have been ongoing to discharge any pre commencement planning conditions all of which were discharges and confirmed with any statutory consultees.
- 2.6 Prior to the Christmas shutdown a cut and levelling exercise was undertaken to prepare the site, followed by general setting out ahead of drainage works being undertaken. Drainage and main building foundation excavations are now ongoing, with excavation for attenuation crates and drainage runs being undertaken.
- 2.7 Preliminary works to create the new second entrance to the site have also commenced, however, services in the existing footpath have been identified to have insufficient coverage and will need to be diverted to facilitate the entrance works. The contractor is liaising with National Grid regarding the diversion of the services and there is no anticipated delay to the overall scheme proposed. Some minor delays have been incurred due to weather conditions, but again, should not affect the overall programme.

- 2.8 Relocation and mobilisation of the existing depot to the new location will then follow completion of the construction period. This is anticipated to occur over a four-week period allowing for an operational go live date of mid November 2025.
- 2.9 A presentation of construction progress to date will be provided by the Councils appointed contractor for this project at this meeting.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 This report sets out the latest position with regards to this 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. Background Papers

- 4.1 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](#)

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

[Agenda for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 26th November, 2024, 2.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

5. Appendix

- 5.1 Appendix A – Project Dashboard as of 6th February 2025

TURNPIKE CLOSE GRANTHAM PROJECT DASHBOARD

Key Risks and Issues		
Risk	Action/Overview	Level
Additional fees due to elongated stage 5 construction period	Fees have been confirmed to reflect the revised construction period of 50 weeks and this provided for within Professional Fees shown.	Low
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	CLOSED
Programme slippage	Risk of further slippage will be mitigated by identification of efficiencies in subsequent phase. Contractors programme has now been confirmed.	Low
S278 works	Cable found during trail holes works carried out by contractor which were not revealed on survey of site. Compensation Event has been issued, additional fees for disconnection and diversion will be incurred no anticipated delay to works programme	Low

Summary

Works are now progressing in line with the master construction programme with a target completion date of 7th October 2025. Excavation for attenuation crate, drainage works and building foundations have commenced on site. Relocation and mobilisation of the existing depot to the new location will then follow over a four week period allowing for an operational go live date of November 2025.



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 18 February 2025

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

Maintenance Strategy Action Plan Update - Corporate Property

Report Author

Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT

 g.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides a progress update on the implementation of SKDC's Maintenance Strategy Action Plan for Corporate (General Fund) Property Assets.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the update on the implementation of SKDC's Maintenance Strategy Action Plan for General Fund Corporate Property Assets.

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 Council has approved a funding allocation of £1m for the current financial and there is a budget request of a further £1m for 2025/26. This funding is allocated towards urgent works across the property portfolio and follows the criteria as set out in the Maintenance Strategy. The reports sets out the scale of challenge from a financial perspective and the Council will need to continue to review the asset portfolio in order to assess whether there are any assets currently held that are no longer deemed necessary.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 This report is for noting; there are no additional governance comments that aren't already referred to within the report.

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

Health and Safety

- 1.3 Under section 4 (**general duties of persons concerned with premises to persons other than their employees**) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 it clearly states that there is a duty to maintain buildings, including safe access and egress

Where a person has, by virtue of any contract or tenancy, an obligation of any extent in relation to—

- (a)the maintenance or repair of any premises to which this section applies or any means of access thereto or egress therefrom; or
- (b)the safety of or the absence of risks to health arising from plant or substances in any such premises;

Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, along with associated legislation, including the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005 and the Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999 set out the legal responsibility for general & building safety for employees when at work / work premises. Planned

maintenance and active monitoring of stock condition, along with the reporting of faults by responsible building persons are key to improving effective compliance controls are in place

Completed by: Phil Swinton, Health, Safety and Compliance Manager

Climate Change

- 1.4 The report notes some of the targeted investments which have resulted in reductions in energy consumption. While energy costs have been volatile and saw a sharp increase from 2021, they are now starting to stabilise and investments to reduce energy consumption will result in an ongoing utilities saving for the Council.
- 1.5 The Corporate (General Fund) properties addressed in this report are part of the Council's annual carbon reporting regime. Efforts to reduce consumption of gas and electricity, and to switch from gas to electricity consumption for heating, will result in carbon savings for the council.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. On the 10th of September 2024, Cabinet approved proposals for a Maintenance Strategy in respect of SKDC's General Fund Corporate Property Assets. [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 10th September, 2024, 10.00 am | South Kesteven District Council](#). The Strategy establishes the approach the Council will adopt for ongoing investment in its corporate property estate. It establishes a criteria for the allocation of funding to deal with maintenance – both responsive and planned.
- 2.2. The Council owns and leases a high number of key strategic, operational and non-operational assets that are integral to the successful delivery of quality services to residents and visitors to South Kesteven.
- 2.3. It is imperative these assets receive regular investment in order to ensure they operate at optimum performance and meet statutory health and safety standards. However, there is a recognition that the Council has not kept a consistent level of investment across its corporate property estate. Consequently, this lack of investment in previous years will require the annual budgetary allocation for ongoing investment to be targeted based on the proposed criteria as set out in the Maintenance Strategy.
- 2.4. The criteria used within the Maintenance Strategy for properties were summarised as:

- Alignment to Corporate Plan priorities
 - Health and Safety and other statutory responsibilities
 - Condition ratings
- 2.5. The General Fund property portfolio is subject to a continuous review across the short-, medium- and long-term, with condition surveys taking place on a 5-yearly schedule. This is aligned with the Asset Management Strategy and would identify any obsolete or surplus buildings.
- 2.6. The Maintenance Strategy in respect of SKDC's General Fund Corporate Property sets out a Maintenance Action Plan (MAP) which is enclosed within this report in Appendix 1 – Maintenance Action Plan.
- 2.7 MAP 1 - In accordance with the MAP Action 1, Condition Surveys have been undertaken across all General Fund corporate assets to assess the physical condition of the buildings. This provides a physical assessment of the buildings to assess its maintenance and repair status at a specific point in time. The surveys categorise the condition of an identified building by applying a government approved rating system.
- 2.8 The condition rating provides advice of the overall condition of the element expressed as complying with one of four categories:

Grade	Expression	Description
A	Good	As new and performing as intended and with regular maintenance will continue to operate efficiently.
B	Satisfactory	Performing as intended but exhibiting minor deterioration.
C	Poor	Exhibiting major defects and/or not operating as intended and will require attention in the short term, although not immediate.
D	Bad	Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure.

- 2.9 The surveys have now been uploaded on to the Corporate Property Asset Management system, which will be used to develop annual programmes of works across the corporate property portfolio going forwards in line with the Maintenance Action Point 3. This process has taken longer than originally anticipated, due to changes in resource levels within the team, but upload has now completed for the latest round of surveys for the final corporate assets and programming of the identified works will be prepared over the coming month following a review of the information upload on the Property Asset Management system.
- 2.10 MAP 3 - the initial review of the Condition surveys has identified a significant backlog in maintenance issues across the corporate portfolio. Based upon the condition surveys there is anticipated backlog maintenance cost of £5,962,698 across the whole portfolio, with £3,290,612 attributable to leisure properties and

£2,672,086 to the remaining corporate property portfolio. The surveys also project a total maintenance cost across the portfolio of approximately £25,000,000 in the next 25-30 years.

- 2.11 The below table categorises the estimated backlog maintenance cost across the portfolio by condition rating C and D, where action is required.

Condition Rating	Corporate Property	Leisure Property	Overall
Cat D	£63,860	£162,270	£226,130
Cat C	£2,356,492	£2,999,505	£5,355,997

- 2.12 Based upon these estimated costs, a revenue budget bid of £1m has been requested to action works associated with the backlog maintenance in the 2025/26 financial year. It is recognised that this bid request is not sufficient to cover the whole of the Category D and C works across the portfolio and so these works will need to be prioritised accordingly.
- 2.13 Based on the estimated cost of Category C and D works identified in the condition surveys a maintenance programme is under development to schedule planned maintenance across the short-, medium- and long-term. Condition surveys will be refreshed on a 5 yearly basis to establish accurate and updated information forecasting predicted works for up to the next 25-30 years of each asset's life. This will then drive future works programmes and will feed into SKDC's asset strategy.
- 2.14 During the 24/25 financial year, allocation of £1m was provided to start to deal with the backlog maintenance works highlighted within the condition surveys. This spend has been allocated across the portfolio to tackle priority works around the portfolio.
- 2.15 The further £1m budget proposal for 2025/26 will seek further funding for tackling the backlog maintenance, the allocation will be targeted at those assets that are in urgent need of work or improvements. The allocation for any available funding will follow the Maintenance Strategy criteria as outlined in the Asset Maintenance Strategy.
- 2.16 MAP 2 & 6 Routine inspections and compliance inspections are now being undertaken across the corporate portfolio by SKDC officers, or third parties acting on behalf of SKDC, to monitor and update on any compliance or maintenance requirements as set out by Maintenance Action Points 2 and 6. The introduction of the new asset management system (Technology Forge) is enabling the Property Services team to schedule and review inspection requirements in order to ensure compliance across the portfolio.
- 2.17 The asset management system is still in the first phase of implementation; however, the inspection module is now live, and the team will continue to build

upon base information to develop a structured and transparent inspection regime for all corporate property requirements.

- 2.18 In addition to the inspection module, the asset management system has the ability to log help calls from relevant stakeholders in order to report and manage reactive maintenance across the portfolio.
- 2.19 While progressing the implementation of the new asset management system, it was identified that in order to implement the inspections module, asset details such as plant must be within the base system data, in order to schedule the routine inspections within the inspection module. This has led to the acceleration of the anticipated date of the asset tagging process.
- 2.20 MAP 4&5 - As detailed in MAP 4&5, works have been ongoing to review the sustainability and energy usage of the corporate property portfolio. Regular monthly meetings have been arranged with SKDC's Sustainability and Climate Change Officer to review those properties with the greatest energy consumption and identify ways for this to be reduced enhancing the sustainability of the corporate assets.
- 2.21 The below table provides an overview of the change in gas consumption levels across the corporate property primary consumers from 2023 to 2024.

Asset	2023 kwh	2024 kwh	% Change
Guildhall	481,514	349,432	-27.4%
Bourne Corn Exchange	270,497	195,864	-27.6%
Mowbeck House	223,005	285,227	27.9%
Stamford Arts Centre	173,056	189,624	9.6%
SK House	154,334	180,086	16.7%
Grantham bus station	58,933	82,429	39.9%
TOTAL	1,361,339.00	1,282,662.00	-5.8%

- 2.22 The General Fund portfolio of buildings for gas consumption comprises a handful of properties. The disposal of the former St. Peter's Hill offices and relocation of the SKDC offices to a new facility made a significant reduction in gas consumption pre-2023. The new offices in the Picture House are electrically heated, which delivers both cost and carbon emissions savings compared to the old facility.
- 2.23 Guildhall Arts Centre and Bourne Corn Exchange have both seen significant reductions in consumption from 2023 to 2024, largely due to boiler upgrades to the properties. Consumption at Mowbeck House and Grantham Bus Station increased in the same period; this is understood to be down to changes in operational arrangements.
- 2.24 Overall, there was a 5.8% decrease in gas consumption across the top consuming sites.

- 2.25 We are currently awaiting data from our energy provider to model the savings that have been produced from electrical sustainability works. The figures do not include leisure property usage as the utilities are in third party control.
- 2.26 MAP 7 - Works have been undertaken to visit and tag all primary plant and apparatus around the Corporate Property portfolio to detail what inspection requirements are needed. External resource was sourced to expedite the asset tagging process and upload this base information on the Corporate Property Asset Management system.
- 2.27 A review is now underway to ensure the accuracy of this base information and ensure the inspections scheduled are accurate to the requirements of the property. This action point has had to be prioritised; it became evident that without this information being inputted into the Asset Management system other Maintenance Action Points would have been delayed beyond their proposed timeline. This has meant that unfortunately there has been a delay to the progression of MAP 4.
- 2.28 MAP 8 - The Property Services team also continues to manage various investment properties which are let to external parties or organisations. Due to resource pressures the management of these properties has been outsourced to a managing agent (Eddisons, incorporating Banks Long & Co.) to act on behalf of SKDC with regards to its duties as a landlord.
- 2.29 As identified in MAP 8, regular inspections are undertaken by the managing agent on SKDC's behalf to monitor and enforce the lease terms with its tenants to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of SKDC's investment portfolio. These properties are regularly reviewed.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. This report provides an update on the implementation of SKDC's Maintenance Strategy Action Plan for General Fund Corporate Property Assets.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 4.1 To note the progress associated with the Council's Maintenance Action Plan for SKDC's corporate properties.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1. [Maintenance Strategy Corporate Property Assets.pdf](#)
- 5.2. [Leisure Maintenance Update.pdf](#)

6. Appendices

6.1. Appendix 1 – Maintenance Action Plan

Appendix 1 - Maintenance Strategy Action Plan

<u>Action Point</u> <u>Ref (MAP)</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Original Timescale</u>	<u>Progress to Date</u>	<u>Revised Time Scale</u>
1	Undertake comprehensive Condition Survey on all Corporate Assets	Full Condition survey to be undertaken on corporate assets	October 2024	Completed	N/A
2	Undertake routine visual inspections to identify urgent and responsive repairs	Develop and maintain inspections in order to monitor ongoing records	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
3	Develop planned maintenance programme over the short, medium, long term based on Condition Survey findings	Based on condition survey findings, allocate budgets between planned and reactive expenditure	March 2025	90% Completed	March 2025
4	Undertake sustainability audit on all corporate assets	Whole life costings v benefit	March 2025	10% due to revised action prioritisation.	October 2025
5	Undertake utility usage audit in order to maximise energy efficiency	Data gathering of utility information in order to invest energy saving solutions	March 2025	Completed	N/A
6	Undertake cyclical compliance audit on all corporate assets	Lift inspections, legionella etc	March 2025	Ongoing	March 2025
7	Undertake asset tagging	Registration of primary mechanical, electrical and plant across corporate assets	October 2025	90% Completed - Action expedited to facilitate progress of other action points.	June 2025
8	Undertake routine inspections to ensure Lessee responsibility is being carried out in accordance with lease requirements	Monitor and enforce lease terms with tenants and lessees to ensure assets are being maintained	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

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SOUTH
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COUNCIL

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 18 February 2025

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

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme Update

Report Author

Emma Whittaker, Assistant Director of Planning

 emma.whittaker@southkesteven.gov.uk

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:

1. Note the contents of this report and the progress being made to ensure that the funding allocation is utilised before the deadline of 31 March 2025.

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

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 s151 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 considered 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) was a central pillar of the previous 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.

- 2.3. The main UKSPF replaced the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation.
- 2.4. The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is a top-up to the UKSPF and succeeds EU funding from LEADER and the Growth Programmes 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.
- 2.5. In relation to the Main UKSP Fund, the financial position following the recent UKSPF Board Meeting (27 January 2025) is set out in the table below:

Total grant allocation	£3,898,582
Total committed	£3,919,843
Total spent (actuals)	£1,033,660
Total uncommitted	-£21,261

- 2.6. Whilst this indicates an overspend on the Main programme, there are some projects that have been allocated funding that will not be able to fully use the allocated funding. Additionally, there are some projects that have been originally allocated against the Main programme that meet the criteria for the Rural Fund. As there is currently an identified underspend in the Rural Fund, any projects that can be funded that way, can be moved across into that programme.
- 2.7. The position in relation to the Rural Fund following the recent UKSPF Board meeting is set out in the table below:

Total grant allocation	£540,460
Total committed	£441,600
Total spent (actuals)	£241,761
Total uncommitted	£98,860

- 2.8. As the deadline for both the Main and Rural elements of the UKSPF approaches, the Economic Development Team is monitoring those projects where grant allocations have been made however the full funding has not yet been drawn down by the recipient. Some of those projects are considered to be “at risk” of not fully using the funding before 31 March 2025. Officers are working with the

applicants to understand if any of the funding allocated can be used. This is being monitored and the figures updated weekly.

- 2.9. Decisions about how the UKSPF funding could be spent would be taken in line with the Council's normal Financial Regulations as set out in the Constitution. It was agreed by Council (20 July 2023 – Background paper 5.2) that the UKSPF Board would review all projects where the spend would exceed £5,000 before a decision would be made. If there is any underspend, the UKSPF Board has agreed to a range of projects that the Council is able to fund from UKSPF that would have been funded by other means including from the Climate Change Reserve. This should mean that the overall fund allocated to SKDC is fully utilised.
- 2.10. The last update to the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee was September 2024 ([UKSPF Programme Update.pdf](#)) following which further information was requested about the projects have been delivered as a result of the UKSPF. A full analysis will be provided once the fund has been closed. However, details of some of the projects that have been supported by UKSPF are provided below:

Play Park Improvements

The following play parks have benefited from replacement or additional play equipment:

- Arnoldfield, Grantham (SKDC) – replacement of zip wire and nest swing, completed December 2024
- Troughton Walk, South Witham (SKDC) – replacement of double swing set and nest swing, completed December 2024
- Empingham Rd, Stamford (SKDC) – 1st phase completed January 2025 which included replacement of embankment slide and double flat seat swing set. The 2nd phase, which includes the replacement of the toddler slide unit, is due to be completed 7th February 2025.
- Dysart Park, Grantham (SKDC) – additional fitness equipment and older children's play equipment has been provided in partnership with the Rotary Club of Grantham. The older children's play equipment comprises a multi play unit including a banister slide, spinning pole, net climber, vertical rope climb, climbing grips, social seating, and multiple level decks. There will also be a wipeout surf balance board. The fitness equipment includes a calisthenics fitness station designed to enable nine simple exercises to increase strength, tone muscles and increase flexibility, near this will be a ladder wall and five-a-day fitness panel, where users turn a wheel to choose different exercises. The installation is due to be completed by the end of February 2025.

A number of Parish Councils and community groups have also benefited from new, or replacement play/sporting equipment funded from UKSPF. This includes:

- Tallington Parish Council
- Heydour Parish Council
- The Bythams Woodland Trust
- Barkston Parish Council
- Uffington Cricket Club

CCTV Upgrade and Relocation Project

In March 2024, Cabinet approved the contract award for the Upgrade of CCTV network and to enable connected towns, including the provision of wireless hubs. The project includes upgrading the existing analogue network across the town centres of Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and Market Deeping. This upgrade will also include free to access public Wi-Fi networks across the IP fibre network which will help position the council as a digital enabler, supporting digital inclusion. The project was part funded by UKSPF.

Audio Description Equipment

Audio Description Equipment at the Stamford Arts Centre has been funded by UKSPF. The headphones allow users to control the volume of the film individually to suit the needs of each user. The equipment has also been used for some live performances. Feedback has been extremely positive.

WatchWord

WatchWord offers a discrete closed-captioning system for users and equipment has been funded by UKSPF. This will allow users to wear augmented reality glasses that allow that user to view closed-captioning specific to the film they are watching. The benefit of this system is that it allows users the freedom of choosing to pick screenings when it is convenient to them rather than having to attend a dedicated captioned screening chosen by the venue.

Community Art Project

A community art project has been secured through UKSPF funding. Local Artists have been confirmed for Grantham, Bourne, Stamford and The Deepings who will work with community groups to create bespoke pieces of art for each location.

Fairman Knight & Sons

Rural England Prosperity funding has helped support the UK's first insect farm for commercial uses. The insect farm produces black soldier fly which feeds on waste and produces larvae which is sold to the onshore fish farm, pet food and

broiler shed industries. The business intends to be initially carbon neutral moving towards being carbon negative in the future.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The UKSPF and REPF funding must be spent by 31 March 2025. All outstanding projects where funds have been committed but not fully drawn down are being closely monitored by Officers. Any unspent money will likely need to be returned to MHCLG so it is important that this process continues and where funds are unable to be fully spent by the grant recipient, it can be reallocated to other projects in accordance with the UKSPF Board's decision (27 January 2025).
- 3.2. The report is for noting and it is expected that the funds allocated to the Council will be fully expended.
- 3.3. Once the programme has closed and the monitoring has been completed, a further update of the projects that have been delivered with UKSPF funding will be provided.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council is required to continue to monitor the progress of the UKSPF programme to ensure that projects have been delivered and the relevant monitoring, reporting and evaluation takes place. This is set out in the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. As this report updates the committee on progress so far, no other options have been considered.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 UKSPF update to FEOSC September 2024 [UKSPF Programme Update.pdf](#)
- 5.2 [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 20th July, 2023, 1.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

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SOUTH
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COUNCIL

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 18 February 2025

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

Grantham Future High Streets Fund – Programme Update

Report Author

Megan White, Project Support Officer

 megan.white@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To update the Committee on the Grantham Future High Streets Fund programme

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the report and offer feedback to the Future High Street Programme Board

Decision Information

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

Appendix A, Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (commercially sensitive information)

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

Enabling economic opportunities

Which wards are impacted?

Grantham St. Vincents; Grantham St. Wulframs;

1 Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, 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 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have paid the entirety of the capital funding allocation for Grantham's Future High Street Programme which is a total of £5,556,042 funding received.
- 1.2 Engagement continues with MHCLG to report actual, and forecast spend for the remainder of the Programme. The capital budget is set out below in **Table 1**, which shows actual spend for 2021-2024, 2024-2025, committed spend for 2024-2025 and the remaining budget for 2024-2025.

Table 1: FHSF Capital					
	2021-2024	2024-2025 (Actual Spend)	2024-2025 (Committed Spend)	2024-2025 (Remaining Budget)	Total
Capital	£481,131	£2,028,067	£2,164,149	£882,695	£5,556,042

- 1.3 The remaining capital budget identified in the table above comprises of released risk and contingency from the public realm projects totalling of £882,695, which is currently uncommitted subject to negotiations with MHCLG.
- 1.4 There is also a revenue budget to the Programme that forms the Council's obligatory match funding to the Future High Streets Fund Programme, which aims to develop and deliver a model for self-financing of the Town Team beyond the lifespan of the Council's funding contribution. This revenue budget is illustrated below in **Table 2**, which shows actual spend for 2021-2024 and the committed spend for 2024-2025 and the budget for 2025-26.

	Table 2: FHSF Revenue			
	2021-2024	2024-2025	2025-26	Total
Revenue	£122,000	£102,456	£154,636	£379,092

- 1.5 The grant agreement with MHCLG will conclude in March 2025, however negotiations are currently ongoing with the department to allow the delivery of capital works to continue through the 2025-2026 financial year for works which are

contractually committed by 31st March 2025. This is to allow funding released from contingency and risk budgets to be utilised within the project.

Completed by: Paul Sutton, Interim Head of Finance (Deputy s151)

Legal and Governance

- 1.6 There are no significant governance implications arising from this report which are not already referenced in the body of the report or appendices.

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

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.7 The risks associated with abnormal inflation are being managed through the usual project management processes as well as with the funding body MHCLG.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer

2 Background to the Report

- 2.1 In 2021, South Kesteven District Council was awarded £5.56 million of funding through the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF). This funding was matched by the Council's £379,092 funding contribution.

- 2.2 To support the delivery of this programme regular reports have been presented to Councillors since the Council was awarded the funding in 2021. This report builds upon the most recent update provided to this Committee at its 26 November 2024 meeting (see **Background Paper A**).

- 2.3 In keeping with previous updates and for ease of reading, the remainder of this background section focuses on programme updates, divided into five subsets:

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

Subset One: Public Realm Projects (Market Place and Station Approach)

- 2.4 With a combined budget of £4.2 million the public realm improvement projects to Grantham Market Place and Station Approach were completed last year with Market

Place completing in August 2024 and Station Approach completing in December 2024.

- 2.5 The carriageway in the Market Place has been raised to create a visually cohesive, single level space, reinstating it as the heart of the town centre and the junction at Station Approach has seen a full resurfacing of the carriageway with traffic signals upgraded.
- 2.6 Following the completion of the works, Market Place is now a flexible space which will become a destination for community events and activities as well as specialist markets. Station Approach is now an easier junction for pedestrians to cross and has created a more welcoming environment into the town centre for visitors from the railway station.
- 2.7 The total spend for the completion of the works has been confirmed as £3.2 million. Following completion of the projects, budget which had been allocated to risk and contingency within the schemes has been released creating an identified underspend of £882,695.
- 2.8 Following discussions with MHCLG, the Future High Street Board has identified additional activities which are closely aligned to the existing projects and will provide enhanced outcomes and benefit Grantham. The proposed activities will enhance the public realm works completed to date, support place making and the resident and visitor experience in the town centre.
- 2.9 MHCLG have given clear instruction as to what additional works could be considered. While they will not permit the creation of new projects at this stage in the scheme, activities which add to and enhance the outcomes of existing works will be considered. Additionally, if the Council can contractually commit the underspend to relevant activities before March 2025, MHCLG have advised that there would be scope for actual spend and delivery to complete in 2025/2026. However, final approval has not yet been given.
- 2.10 Officers submitted a formal Project Adjustment Request (PAR) for the proposed additional works on 7 February 2025 and await MHCLG approval. MHCLG have acknowledged receipt of the submission and advised that they will respond within 20 days.

Subset Two: Conduit Lane Public Conveniences Refurbishment

- 2.11 MHCLG, through the Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process, approved the use of up to £190,000 of grant funding for delivery of a project to refurbish and reopen the Conduit Lane public conveniences. The project has resulted in the conveniences that had been previously closed to the public for over ten years being

reopened in January 2025. This funding was drawn from unutilised contingency allocations released following the completion of the Market Place project.

- 2.12 The works to renovate the male, female and disabled public toilets within the block, as well as the staff toilets available to the Markets team, started on site with the contractor Lindum on Monday 11 November 2024 and completed on Monday 27 January 2025.

Subset Three: Upper Floor Grants Programme

- 2.13 This grant programme allows owners of retail properties within the town centre to convert vacant and underutilised upper floor space into high-quality residential units. The grants provide 50% of the eligible costs of conversion, up to a maximum of £25,000 per unit created.
- 2.14 The total grant funding available for this project is £550,000. To fulfil the funding, six full applications have been accepted which together will create 22 new units within the town centre. The applications are as follows:
- 9 units at 17-19 High Street.
 - 2 units at 45 High Street.
 - 8 units at 9-10 High Street.
 - 1 unit at Unit 4, 30 Westgate.
 - 1 unit at 77-79 London Road.
 - 1 unit at 81-83 London Road.

- 2.15 An update on individual project progress since the Committee's November 2024 meeting is set out in **Appendix A**.
- 2.16 To comply with Subsidy Control Regulations, to further support their applications and to demonstrate a need for funding, the applicants have supplied a viability appraisal conducted by a third party RICS accredited surveyor and a site visit will take place upon the completion of works.
- 2.17 Council Officers continue to work closely with Legal Services Lincolnshire to arrange signing and sealing of the grant funding agreements between SKDC and the applicants. Currently two out of the six grant funding agreements have been completed.

Subset Four: Grantham Town Team

- 2.18 There have been three formal meetings of the Town Team so far; these are supported by the Grantham Town Engagement Manager. The most recent meeting took place on 16 January 2025 and included a discussion on the proposed events

programme, with a view to testing the suitable event and activity proposals over the next 12 months.

- 2.19 The action plan for the Town Team was presented to the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on 16 January 2025 and was approved (please see **Background Paper B**).
- 2.20 The Grantham Engagement Manager is progressing the events programme, and the Grantham Town Action Plan is in the process of being implemented.

Subset Five: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

- 2.21 Monthly Officer meetings continue to take place with MHCLG Funding Delivery Managers to provide updates on progress and discuss issues.
- 2.22 Officers have been engaging with MHCLG on the current underspend for the Programme, exploring the options for funding additional works from the released risk and contingency. This has resulted in a formal Project Adjustment Request being submitted on 7th February. MHCLG must respond to the Council within 20 days for confirm if the additional works can be funded through the programme underspend identified.

3 Key Considerations

- 3.1 Following completion of the works to the Marketplace and Station Approach, there is approximately £882,695 of risk and contingency budget which has been released. The Future High Street Fund Project Board has finalised a programme of additional works to utilise this funding, including enhancements to power provision and street furniture in the market place. Due to the grant requirements of MHCLG this additional work must relate to the existing project delivery.
- 3.2 In delivering under FHSF, the Council is committed to supporting a programme of six-monthly reporting which includes financial monitoring, footfall reporting and evidencing outputs such as private sector financial contributions. As part of the grant agreement the Council is committed to continue to provide MHCLG with such information as they require beyond the initial project timeframe.

4 Other Options Considered

- 4.1 **An alternative would be to complete the programme as currently scheduled and return any unspent allocation to MHCLG.** This would not allow for any additional works to be completed to public realm areas and will be a missed opportunity to further improve the amenity of the spaces. Therefore, completing

the programme and returning any unspent allocation received to MHCLG has been discounted as an option, although there are programme delivery risks which may necessitate the return of part of the funding.

5 Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 This report provides Members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to feedback comments within their scrutiny remit to the Programme Board and (where appropriate) Cabinet. This includes suggestions for work programmes and items to be considered.

6 Background Papers

- 6.1 **A** - Grantham Future High Streets Fund – November 2024 update - [Grantham Future High Streets Fund - Mid-Year Update.pdf](#)
- 6.2 **B** – Grantham Town Centre Action Plan – January 2025 - [Grantham Town Centre Action Plan Cabinet Report.pdf](#)

7 Appendices

- 7.1 **Appendix A** - An update on individual Upper Floor Grants project progress since Committee's November 2024 update.

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

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SOUTH
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COUNCIL

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 18 February 2025

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

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

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Enabling economic opportunities
Housing
Effective council

Which wards are impacted? Stamford St Marys;

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 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: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant 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: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy 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.
- 2.2 The Committee has received regular updates on the progress of the scheme in the form of public reports and with presentations in exempt sessions due to the commercial and financial information within them.
- 2.3 This report provides a brief update on the areas that Full Council agreed should be progressed to mitigate the costs to the Council.
- 2.4 Developers have been focused on their reserved matter applications which are to be submitted before the end of February 2025.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 Sales contracts were exchanged at the end of October 2024 committing the developers to the scheme at the sale contract prices agreed by Full Council.
- 3.2 The Council submitted a Brownfield Land Release Fund application for the sum of £2.8m towards the remediation costs of the site in February 2024 but was unsuccessful. There is a possibility that there will be another round of the fund and the Council will seek to submit another application when the criteria is announced.
- 3.3 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. The developer delivering the residential element of the scheme has not approached the Council to purchase these but have indicated informally that they will at an appropriate time.
- 3.4 The two large, clean stockpiles of crushed material from the on-site demolition have been removed from the site by Rose Aggregates. These works were completed in December 2024. Regarding the third stockpile, this is not yet certified as 'clean', the Council is still seeking a positive resolution. The removal of all stockpiles is a condition of the completion of the sales contracts.
- 3.5 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 the parties and include all of the mitigations requested by Full Council in the sales contracts.

- 3.6 The draft schedule for the National Grid overhead power line diversions has been shared and National Grid are meeting landowners and developer partners monthly to provide updates. Once these works are finished the sales contracts can be completed.
- 3.7 Developer parties have been working on their reserved matters applications and have been consulting with the planning team since the exchange of contracts took place. The reserved matters applications are to be submitted imminently and require validation prior to 28th February 2025 as this is when the outline planning consent for the scheme expires.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 It was agreed at Full Council to proceed with the sale of the site with the mitigation points included above. This report provides an update on those points.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 Full Council agreed that the Finance and Economic Scrutiny Committee would receive regular updates on the project.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 The Finance and Economic Scrutiny Committee have received updates on the following dates:-

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

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

[Agenda for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 26th November, 2024, 2.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

7. Appendices

- 7.1 None

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

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
18 FEBRUARY 2025			
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Budget Monitoring Q3 Forecast	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Standing item
Maintenance Strategy Action Plan	Lead Officer: Gyles Teasdale (Head of Property Services and ICT)	An updated action plan following the report to Cabinet	New item
Monitoring Report - UKSPF	Lead Officer: Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)	To provide the Committee with a retrospective evaluation of the UKSPF and a projection for the end of March.	
Grantham Future High Streets Fund – Programme Update	Lead Officer: Megan White (Future High Street Fund Project Support Officer)	To provide the committee with an update on the progress of the Programme.	Requested at meeting held on 26 th November 2024
Update on St Martin's Park	Lead Officer: Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)	A report to provide an update on progress	Requested at previous meeting
REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED
13 MAY 2025			
Turnpike Depot Update	Lead Officer: Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive)	To provide the Committee with an update.	Standing item
Update on East Midlands Building Consultancy	Lead Officer: Jeremy Barlow (Building Control Manager)	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Standing item
Update on South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024/28	Lead Officer: Nick Hibberd (Head of Economic Development)	To provide the Committee with the latest update.	Requested at meeting held on 17 September 2024

Unscheduled Items

Marketplace footfall report	Lead Officer: Melanie Brown (Grantham Engagement Manager)	To update Members on footfall of the marketplace and Grantham Town Centre.	Agreed for a 6-month update to be taken to Committee in July 2025.
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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