

Council



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Thursday, 29 January 2026 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's
Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Members: Councillor Ian Selby, Chairman of the Council
Councillor Anna Kelly, Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillor Kyle Abel
Councillor Matthew Bailey
Councillor Emma Baker
Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor David Bellamy
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Pam Byrd
Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor Steven Cunnington
Councillor James Denniston
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Patsy Ellis
Councillor Paul Fellows
Councillor Ben Green

Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Jane Kingman
Councillor Gareth Knight
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Zoe Lane
Councillor Robert Leadenham
Councillor Bridget Ley
Councillor Richard Litchfield
Councillor Nikki Manterfield
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Penny Milnes
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Chris Noon
Councillor Habib Rahman
Councillor Rhea Rayside

Councillor Nick Robins
Councillor Penny Robins
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Rob Shorrocks
Councillor Vanessa Smith
Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Paul Stokes
Councillor Elvis Stooke
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Murray Turner
Councillor Mark Whittington
Councillor Jane Wood
Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor Sue Woolley

Agenda

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

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

1. Public Open Forum

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

2. Apologies for absence

3. Disclosure of Interests

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

4. Minutes of previous meetings

(Pages 7 - 64)

To confirm the minutes of the following meetings:

- 20 November 1030am (Extraordinary)
- 20 November 11am (Extraordinary)
- 20 November 1pm

5. Communications (including Chairman's Announcements)

(Page 65)

6. Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme

(Pages 67 - 95)

This report provides Full Council with an opportunity to consider the recommendations of a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme following a review undertaken by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

7. Appointments to Committees and Panels of the Council

(Pages 97 - 101)

All Political Group Leaders are responsible for nominating Members from within their respective Groups to each of the Council's Committees/Panels, in accordance with the political proportionality of the Authority as appropriate.

8. Fees and Charges Proposals 2026/2027

(Pages 103 - 169)

To set out the Fees and Charges to be introduced for the financial year 2026/2027.

9. Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/276

(Pages 171 - 203)

This report reviews responses to the public consultation of the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27, along with recommendations from the meetings of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 18 November 2025 and the Cabinet meeting of 15 January 2026.

10. Council Tax Base 2026/2027

(Pages 205 - 210)

To explain the Council Tax Base for 2026/2027 in accordance with relevant statutory requirements.

11. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy Review

(Pages 211 - 320)

To consider the proposed updates to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, following feedback and a full review by Senior Management. This report was recommended by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 13 January 2026.

12. Pay Policy Statement 2026/2027

(Pages 321 - 334)

The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to produce an Annual Pay Policy Statement to summarise current policies and arrangements relating to pay. The Pay Policy Statement is part of the budget setting and approval process. The Pay Policy Statement 2026/2027 was recommended by the Employment Committee meeting held on 21 January 2026.

13. Review of Financial Regulations

(Pages 335 - 477)

This report sets out the proposed changes to the Council's Financial Regulations which have been reviewed and updated to reflect current working practices and operating financial thresholds. The updated Financial Regulations document was recommended by the Governance and Audit meeting held on 21 January 2026.

14. Members' Open Questions

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

15. Notices of Motion

a) Councillor Graham Jeal

Council notes:

That Councillor Ray Wootten served the residents of Grantham St Wulfram's Ward and South Kesteven with great distinction for many years, representing his community in a cross-party manner with dedication, compassion, and good humour.

That during his time in public service, Cllr Ray Wootten played a significant role in supporting local causes, mentoring colleagues, improving community facilities, serving as Mayor of Grantham, Chairman of South Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire County Councillor, and promoting civic pride across the district.

That Wyndham Park holds a special place in the life of Grantham as a much-loved public space which continues to attract visitors from near and far. Wyndham Park is shared between the wards of Grantham St Vincent's and Grantham St Wulfram's, and would therefore be an appropriate place for South Kesteven District Council to recognise the contribution made by Cllr Wootten to the people of Grantham.

Council further notes:

That there is currently no formal public recognition of Cllr Wootten's long service and contribution to the life of our community following his passing in 2023.

Council therefore resolves:

1. That a public consultation be launched to seek views on renaming the Wyndham Park Visitor Centre as the "Ray Wootten

Visitor Centre”, in recognition of his many years of service to the people of Grantham and South Kesteven.

2. That the consultation be publicised through the Council’s website, social media channels, and local media outlets, ensuring that residents, park users, and the Friends of Wyndham Park volunteer group have the opportunity to share their views.

3. That following the consultation, a report be presented by the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee outlining the findings and recommendations for consideration.

b) Councillor Ben Green

Motion: Recognition of the 300th Anniversary of the Death of Sir Isaac Newton (1727 – 2027)

This Council notes that:

- 2027 will mark the 300th anniversary of the death of Sir Isaac Newton, one of the most significant figures in the history of science, whose life and work are deeply connected to South Kesteven and the surrounding area.
- Sir Isaac Newton was born in Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth and educated at The King’s School, Grantham, and his legacy forms an important part of the District’s historical, cultural, and educational heritage.
- The tercentenary represents a significant opportunity to celebrate South Kesteven’s contribution to world history, to engage local communities, schools, and visitors, and to promote learning, heritage, and place-based pride.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Commit in principle to recognising the 300th anniversary of Sir Isaac Newton’s death in 2027, including on or around the anniversary date of 31 March 2027.

2. Request that officers fully mobilise and work collaboratively with relevant partners and stakeholders to explore appropriate commemorative activity, including but not limited to:

- Colsterworth and District Parish Council
- The National Trust, including at Woolsthorpe Manor and other relevant sites
- St Wulfram’s Church, Grantham
- The King’s School, Grantham
- Local schools, heritage organisations, academic institutions, and community groups
- local councillors

3. Encourage a coordinated, district-wide approach that is proportionate, inclusive, and reflective of South Kesteven’s historical connection to Sir Isaac Newton, with a focus on education, heritage, and community engagement.

4. Request that a brief update be brought to the appropriate committee or Council in due course outlining potential options for recognition and partnership working.

c) Councillor Kyle Abel

South Kesteven District Council Defends Local Democracy and the Right to Vote

Council notes that:

- Local democracy is founded on the regular, lawful, and timely election of councillors by the communities they serve;*
- The right of citizens to choose their representatives through free and fair elections is a cornerstone of British democracy;*
- The cancellation or postponement of scheduled future local elections whenever they may be scheduled, undermines public trust in democratic institutions, weakens local accountability;*
- It has been suggested that local elections may be cancelled or postponed in up to 60 local authority areas.*

Council believes that:

- Whilst South Kesteven are not part of those councils presently considering cancellation scheduled elections. The general principle of cancelling local elections for reasons of political convenience rather than genuine necessity represents a serious democratic failure;*
- Elections should never be suspended or avoided simply because legacy political parties fear electoral defeat or voter dissatisfaction;*
- The current unpopularity of both Labour and Conservative parties reflects years of policy failure, mismanagement, and a perceived managed decline in national governance. Fourteen years of Conservative government have coincided with rising taxes, strained public services, weakened border control, and declining living standards;*
- Since the last General Election, the Labour Party has demonstrated poor governance, broken promises, rising taxes on working people and an increasing disconnect from the priorities of the British people;*
- Voters must not be denied their democratic voice simply because the electorate wishes to hold political parties to account for years of failure.*

Council resolves to:

- Publicly reaffirm its commitment to the principle that local elections should not be cancelled or delayed except in the most extreme and unavoidable circumstances;*
- Request that this Council will not support, request, or*

acquiesce in the cancellation or postponement of its own scheduled local elections at some date in the future;

- *Call on all political parties to respect the electorate and allow voters to pass judgment at the ballot box rather than avoiding democratic accountability;*
- *Request the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to express this Council's opposition to the cancellation of local elections and to request the protection of local democratic rights;*
- *Request the Chief Executive to circulate this resolution to the Local Government Association and neighbouring authorities for information.*

16. Close of meeting

MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2025

10.30 AM



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

PRESENT

Councillor Ian Selby Chairman
Councillor Anna Kelly Vice Chairman

Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Paul Fellows
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Anna Kelly
Councillor Gareth Knight
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Zoe Lane
Councillor Robert Leadenhams
Councillor Bridget Ley

Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Chris Noon
Councillor Habib Rahman
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Rob Shorrock
Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Paul Stokes
Councillor Elvis Stooke
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Jane Wood
Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor Sue Woolley

OFFICERS

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive
Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer
Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)
Emma Whittaker, Assistant Director (Planning & Growth)
Chris Prime, Communications Manager
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager
Tom Amblin-Lightowler, Environmental Health Manager – Environmental Protection
& Private Sector Housing
Gary Andrew, IT Services Manager
Patrick Astill, Communications Officer
Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer
Joshua Mann, Democratic Services Officer

62. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

Emma Baker
David Bellamy
Harrish Bisnauthsing
Steven Cunnington
Patsy Ellis
Ben Green
Graham Jeal
Nikki Manterfield
Penny Milnes
Rhea Rayside
Nick Robins
Penny Robins
Vanessa Smith
Peter Stephens
Mark Whittington

63. Disclosure of Interests

No interests were disclosed.

64. Public Open Forum

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

65. Notices of Motion

66. Councillor Sue Woolley

Prior to the introduction of the printed motion, the Chief Executive apologised to Full Council for the identified procedural error when previously considering this motion at the meeting held on 13 October. Motions on notice are required to be tabled in order to become formal motions, through the moving and seconding of the motion. Legal advice had been received, and this meeting has been called to rectify the error.

Councillor Sue Woolley proposed the following motion:

This Council notes:

- 1. Currently small HMOs (Houses of Multiple Occupancy) (3-4 occupants) can be established without planning permission under permitted development rights, meaning no community consultation.*
- 2. There is a widespread perception that HMOs cause over-intensive use, noise disturbance, traffic problems, and negative impacts on property values.*

3. *Many councils have successfully introduced comprehensive HMO regulation through Article 4 directions and additional licensing schemes. Rushcliffe has recently passed a resolution to commence a consultation around an Article 4 direction for all HMOs.*
4. *Whilst HMOs can often be a valuable addition to an area's housing stock the government's strategy of moving asylum seekers from hotels to HMOs has tarnished this type of accommodation in the eyes of many residents.*
5. *There have been 16 new HMO licences issued across Grantham in 2025 so far, totalling 100 permitted occupants. Serco are the licence holders of 5 of these properties.*

This Council believes:

1. *All residents deserve to know about and have input on HMO developments that could affect their neighbourhood.*
2. *Comprehensive regulation through both licensing and planning control provides the best protection for communities while ensuring legitimate housing needs are met.*
3. *Current gaps in regulation allow problematic HMOs to operate without proper oversight or community input.*

This Council resolves:

1. *To commence a public consultation as required by law to determine if an Article 4 Direction should be introduced across South Kesteven to:*
 - a. *Removing permitted development rights so that all HMOs (small and large) require planning permission and to*
 - b. *establish mandatory HMO licensing covering all HMOs regardless of size, with robust standards including fire safety, room sizes, parking, noise management, and waste arrangements.*
2. *To bring a report as an Item to the Full Council on the results of the Consultation on 28th February 2026 in order for Full Council to make a determination on if an Article 4 Direction should be made.*
3. *To immediately revoke the Officer Delegation to issue any HMO licences and assign this responsibility to the appropriate Committee, thereby protecting officers from having to make politically sensitive decisions and ensuring proper democratic accountability.*
4. *To immediately add the current list of HMOs properties and licence holders onto the SKDC website for transparency with our residents.*

In introducing the motion, Councillor Woolley identified what she believed was a gap – in the past HMOs with less than 6 occupants were allowed to be converted through permitted development rights without being subjected to the same procedure as larger HMOs.

She asked colleagues to agree to the same process for smaller HMOs, with a wish that members considered putting this issue to various committees, making sure the issue of smaller HMOs was covered.

The motion was seconded.

An amendment to the motion was proposed and seconded – this version had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting for information. There were no amendments to the ‘This Council notes’ or ‘This Council Believes’ sections, but there were amendments to the section ‘This Council Resolves’:

This Council resolves:

1. *To establish a cross-party working group to review the evidence and data relating to all HMOs in Grantham. The working group scope can look at any measure to support greater transparency and public engagement for all small HMOs including but not limited to:*
 - a. *Remove permitted development rights so that small HMOs require planning permission (Article 4 direction)*
 - b. *mandatory HMO licensing for all HMOs regardless of size*
2. *Report the evidence gathered by the working group to the relevant OSC's within 4 months to determine whether there is enough evidence to recommend to the relevant decision body that an Article 4 direction and /or Mandatory licensing is served following the statutory process.*
3. *To request that the Governance & Audit Committee, at its next meeting, reviews the policy framework for HMO licensing decisions and makes a recommendation to Full Council.*
4. *To request that Officers ensure the statutory register of licensed HMOs is published on the SKDC website at the earliest opportunity, ensuring full compliance with data protection requirements, and to explore options for publishing additional non-personal HMO information to enhance public transparency.*

This amendment was accepted and became part of the substantive motion. The following points were highlighted during debate on the substantive motion:

- It was possible to ‘call-in’ a planning application, but this mechanism was not available for smaller HMOs as they fell under permitted development. Officers had confirmed there is no accurate way to know where all HMOs are.
- Companies could buy family properties and convert them into HMOs.
- According to Building Control records, 18 small HMO conversions had been reported over the past 3 months, with 14 of these being within Grantham.
- A number of HMOs across the district were being used by government to house asylum seekers. HMOs of all sizes needed proper oversight.
- Planning Committee had a defined role with regard to HMOs.
- Approval of the motion could impact on officer time and the time of Planning Committee members.
- Nottingham City Council had a targeted ‘Article 4’ direction which also required an annual review of all HMOs. Landlords had to pay a significant fee.
- Increased HMOs could lead to the loss of family homes and quality care for buildings. In order that HMOs could be looked after their number needed to be limited.

- It was important for the district to maintain an environment to attract visitors, whereas HMOs in general led to increased noise, and issues with parking.
- Stamford had Article 4 directions in place already.
- An HMO was a property that had at least 3 tenants living there, forming more than 1 household. Given the simplicity of forming a small HMO, it would be difficult to regulate them. are we going to regulate this and enforce it.
- In larger towns and cities there were concerns in specific areas around HMOs taking over whole streets.

A procedural motion that the question be now put was proposed and seconded, and following a vote this was **AGREED**.

In summing up, Councillor Sue Woolley responded to points that had been made in the Council Chamber:

- There was a legal definition of an HMO.
- If passed, this motion would be the start of a process. There were a number of other authorities across England that were raising HMOs as an issue, across different political parties.
- The issue was not party political.
- Further evidence was required that HMOs were an issue for residents in Grantham.

A recorded vote was requested – the results of the recorded vote were as follows:

For: Councillors Matt Bailey, Pam Bosworth, Helen Crawford, Gloria Johnson, Gareth Knight, Zoe Lane, Robert Leadenham, Paul Martin, Susan Sandall, Sarah Trotter, Sue Woolley (11)

Against: Councillors Rhys Baker, Ashley Baxter, Richard Cleaver, Phil Dilks, Paul Fellows, Anna Kelly, Philip Knowles, Virginia Moran, Charmaine Morgan, Chris Noon, Habib Rahman, Max Sawyer, Rob Shorrocks, Lee Steptoe, Paul Stokes, Elvis Stooke, Jane Wood, Paul Wood (18)

Abstentions: Councillors Tim Harrison, Bridget Ley, Ian Selby (3)

Therefore, the motion **FELL**.

67. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 11:25am.

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MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2025

11.00 AM



SOUTH
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PRESENT

Councillor Ian Selby Chairman

Councillor Anna Kelly Vice Chairman

Councillor Matthew Bailey
Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Pam Byrd
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Councillor Helen Crawford
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Emma Whittaker, Assistant Director (Planning & Growth)
Chris Prime, Communications Manager
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager
Tom Amblin-Lightowler, Environmental Health Manager – Environmental Protection
& Private Sector Housing
Gary Andrew, IT Services Manager
Patrick Astill, Communications Officer
Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer

68. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

Emma Baker
David Bellamy
Harrish Bisnauthsing
Steven Cunnington
Patsy Ellis
Ben Green
Graham Jeal
Nikki Manterfield
Penny Milnes
Rhea Rayside
Nick Robins
Penny Robins
Vanessa Smith
Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Mark Whittington

69. Disclosure of Interests

No interests were disclosed.

70. Public Open Forum

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

71. Notices of Motion

72. Councillor Gareth Knight

Prior to the introduction of the printed motion, the Chief Executive apologised to Full Council for the identified procedural error when previously considering this motion at the meeting held on 13 October. Motions on notice are required to be tabled in order to become formal motions, through the moving and seconding of the motion. Legal advice had been received, and this meeting had been called to rectify the error.

Councillor Gareth Knight proposed the following motion:

This Council notes:

- 1. The ongoing public concern about the housing of asylum seekers by the Labour government;*
- 2. That the closure of asylum hotels is increasingly raising the question of where the government will go next to house asylum seekers;*
- 3. That the private rented sector is a logical area for the government to exploit;*

4. *The use of Section 21 “no fault eviction” notices and fears from charities and tenants that they are being used to free up accommodation for government contractors to use for asylum seekers before the Renters Rights Bill abolishes Section 21 notices;*
5. *The Renters Rights Bill scheduled for Royal Assent in July 2025 with implementation scheduled from October 2025 to January 2026 (at time of writing the Bill had still not received Royal Assent);*
6. *That a wide range of councils have established mandatory registration for private sector landlords, primarily as a means of addressing concerns about “slum landlords” and substandard housing.*

This Council believes:

1. *In transparency for the sake of community cohesion;*
2. *In supporting our residents in private sector rental accommodation who fear eviction for no stated reason;*
3. *That the private rented sector is a valuable part of our housing mix and that landlords should always be supported in removing tenants who break the terms of their rental agreements.*

This Council resolves:

1. *To immediately introduce a voluntary register of all privately rented accommodation in South Kesteven, the landlords and managing agents of each property and a voluntary declaration as to whether or not the property is being used for a government contract or if Section 21 notices have been served by that landlord at any time in the last 12 months.*
2. *To ensure our housing officers receive full support in the fast and full introduction of the mandatory register as prescribed in the Renters Rights Bill.*
3. *To conduct a capacity review of our Private Sector Housing team to ensure they are adequately resourced to give proactive support to ensure our residents in private sector rental properties have safe and high quality accommodation.*

In introducing the motion, Councillor Knight ran through a history of Section 21 notices. These notices were due to be banned from 1 May 2026. There was no register for Section 21 notices; however, 18 councils in England had introduced registers to address issues with landlords.

The motion was seconded.

An amendment to the motion was proposed and seconded:

This Council notes:

1. *The Government’s announcement that Section 21 “no fault” eviction notices will be banned from 1st May 2026;*
2. *Fears from charities and tenants that the forthcoming Section 21 ban is leading to a rush of landlords “cashing in” to free up accommodation that can*

be converted into HMOs for government contractors to pay significantly higher guaranteed rents;

- 3. The anecdotal surge in Section 21 notices being issued, particularly in Grantham, over the last year as landlords seek to evict tenants before the ban comes into force;*
- 4. Widespread public concern, fuelled by a combination of secrecy and deliberate misinformation, about the use of HMOs to house asylum seekers;*
- 5. That a wide range of councils have got ahead of the Renters Rights Act by established mandatory registration for private sector landlords, primarily as a means of addressing concerns about “slum landlords” and substandard housing.*

This Council believes:

- 1. In transparency for the sake of community cohesion;*
- 2. In doing what we can to address matters of public concern rather than preventing discussion out of fear of not being seen to be politically correct;*
- 3. In supporting our residents in private sector rental accommodation who fear eviction for no stated reason;*
- 4. That the private rented sector is a valuable part of our housing mix and that landlords should always be supported in removing tenants who break the terms of their rental agreements.*

This Council resolves:

- 1. To immediately introduce a voluntary register of all privately rented accommodation in South Kesteven, the landlords and managing agents of each property and a voluntary declaration as to whether or not the property is being used for a government contract or if Section 21 notices have been served by that landlord at any time in the last 18 months.*
- 2. To provide updates to the Housing Committee at every meeting on the status of the voluntary register and the implementation of the Renters Rights Act including the introduction of the mandatory register.*
- 3. To conduct a capacity review of our Private Sector Housing team to ensure they are adequately resourced to give proactive support to ensure our residents in private sector rental properties have safe and high-quality accommodation. This review is to report to the Housing Committee with recommended actions for consideration at the meeting scheduled for Thursday 5th February 2026.*

This amendment was accepted and became part of the substantive motion. The following points were highlighted during debate on the substantive motion:

- Section 21 notices were introduced in the 1980's.
- Rogue landlords were unlikely to participate in a voluntary register.
- Section 21 'no fault' evictions would be used to free up housing. Around 25% of councils in England have selective licensing schemes; these did not stop the serving of Section 21 evictions.
- It was legal from now until 1 May 2026 for any landlord to issue a Section 21 notice. In 2026 the private rented database would come into effect with a

requirement that properties and landlords were registered. A voluntary register did not address concerns and would be an uncoded burden on officers.

- Private sector housing teams worked hard to support landlords in the district by enforcing housing standards.
- In one member's view, the cause of instability in the market was due to their being no coherent plan to address house building.
- One unintended consequence would be that good landlords would bear the cost of registration and compliance, and bad landlords would ignore the scheme, leading to higher rent and less properties. The worst landlords would remain invisible.

An amendment to remove resolution 1 and references to the 'voluntary register' in resolution 2 was proposed and seconded, and accepted by the mover and seconder of the substantive motion. The substantive motion therefore read:

This Council notes:

1. *The Government's announcement that Section 21 "no fault" eviction notices will be banned from 1st May 2026;*
2. *Fears from charities and tenants that the forthcoming Section 21 ban is leading to a rush of landlords "cashing in" to free up accommodation that can be converted into HMOs for government contractors to pay significantly higher guaranteed rents;*
3. *The anecdotal surge in Section 21 notices being issued, particularly in Grantham, over the last year as landlords seek to evict tenants before the ban comes into force;*
4. *Widespread public concern, fuelled by a combination of secrecy and deliberate misinformation, about the use of HMOs to house asylum seekers;*
5. *That a wide range of councils have got ahead of the Renters Rights Act by established mandatory registration for private sector landlords, primarily as a means of addressing concerns about "slum landlords" and substandard housing.*

This Council believes:

1. *In transparency for the sake of community cohesion;*
2. *In doing what we can to address matters of public concern rather than preventing discussion out of fear of not being seen to be politically correct;*
3. *In supporting our residents in private sector rental accommodation who fear eviction for no stated reason;*
4. *That the private rented sector is a valuable part of our housing mix and that landlords should always be supported in removing tenants who break the terms of their rental agreements.*

This Council resolves:

1. *To provide updates to the Housing Committee at every meeting on the status of the implementation of the Renters Rights Act including the introduction of the mandatory register.*
2. *To conduct a capacity review of our Private Sector Housing team to ensure they are adequately resourced to give proactive support to ensure our*

residents in private sector rental properties have safe and high-quality accommodation. This review is to report to the Housing Committee with recommended actions for consideration at the meeting scheduled for Thursday 5th February 2026.

Debate resumed on the substantive motion:

- A capacity review had been completed on staffing within the Private Sector Housing team; an additional officer would be starting in 2026 to deal with this legislation. It would be good for this review to be shared with all Councillors.
- It was disappointing that the voluntary register had been dismissed as an idea; if the good landlords were 'on board' there was more capacity to chase the rogue ones.

In summing up, Councillor Gareth Knight thanked all members for their contributions prior to, and during this meeting.

He acknowledged the limitations of the motion – however a 'halfway house' based on good practice and certificates that were voluntary in other areas of the country had been proposed.

Opposition members didn't know what officer capacity was, but it was appreciated that this knowledge would lay with the Cabinet Member(s).

Councillor Knight felt there was concern in the public realm about Section 21 notices. Whether or not concerns were valid was beside the point – it was hoped that this motion addressed these concerns.

A recorded vote was requested – the results of the recorded vote were as follows:

For: Councillors Matt Bailey, Pam Bosworth, Helen Crawford, Tim Harrison, Gloria Johnson, Gareth Knight, Zoe Lane, Robert Leadenham, Paul Martin, Susan Sandall, Elvis Stooke, Sarah Trotter, Sue Woolley (13)

Against: Councillors Ashley Baxter, Pam Byrd, Richard Cleaver, Phil Dilks, Paul Fellows, Philip Knowles, Bridget Ley, Virginia Moran, Charmaine Morgan, Habib Rahman, Max Sawyer, Rob Shorrocks, Lee Steptoe, Paul Stokes, Jane Wood, Paul Wood (16)

Abstentions: Councillors Rhys Baker, Barry Dobson, Anna Kelly, Ian Selby, Murray Turner (5)

Therefore, the motion **FELL**.

73. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 12:33pm.

MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2025

1.00 PM



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

PRESENT

Councillor Ian Selby Chairman
Councillor Anna Kelly Vice Chairman

Councillor Matthew Bailey
Councillor Emma Baker
Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Pam Byrd
Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor James Denniston
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Patsy Ellis
Councillor Paul Fellows
Councillor Ben Green
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Anna Kelly
Councillor Gareth Knight
Councillor Philip Knowles

Councillor Zoe Lane
Councillor Robert Leadenham
Councillor Bridget Ley
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Chris Noon
Councillor Habib Rahman
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Vanessa Smith
Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Paul Stokes
Councillor Elvis Stooke
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Murray Turner
Councillor Jane Wood
Councillor Paul Wood

OFFICERS

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive
Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer
Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)
Emma Whittaker, Assistant Director (Planning & Growth)
Chris Prime, Communications Manager
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager
Gary Andrew, IT Services Manager
Patrick Astill, Communications Officer
Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer
Charles James, Policy Officer

74. Public Open Forum

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

75. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

David Bellamy
Harrish Bisnauthsing
Penny Milnes
Nick Robins
Penny Robins
Mark Whittington

76. Disclosure of Interests

No interests were disclosed.

77. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2025 on were proposed, seconded and agreed as a correct record.

The minutes of the two extraordinary meetings held on 13 October 2025 were also agreed as correct records, with the caveat that the decisions had been reached after a procedural error. The two motions discussed in these meetings were reconsidered at meetings held on the morning of 20 November 2025.

78. Communications (including Chairman's Announcements)

The Council noted the Chairman's engagements. Further announcements were made by Cabinet Members:

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

Grantham Rivercare had received the King's Award for Voluntary Service in 2025, which was the highest honour a local group could receive.

Cabinet Member for Housing

All Member were reminded about an 'All Member briefing' on Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), which would include an overview of the subject, the relevant regulations, how the Council responded to complaints, enforcement action the Council could take and an overview of private sector housing. This session would take place on 2 December 2025 at 1pm.

Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing

The Customer Services team had reached the national final of the Customer Satisfaction Awards for 2026.

79. Appointment of Interim Monitoring Officer

Members considered the recommendation to appoint an interim Monitoring Officer from the Employment Committee meeting held on 12 November 2025.

At this meeting Employment Committee conducted interviews for a Monitoring Officer to be in post from 20 November 2025 until the permanent Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) started on 26 January 2026. The recommendation was that Rachel McKoy be appointed to the position of Interim Monitoring Officer until 25 January 2026.

Having been proposed and seconded, and following a vote it was **AGREED**:

DECISION

That Full Council:

- 1. Approve the appointment of Rachel McKoy as the Interim Monitoring Officer with immediate effect.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development to use the Local Priorities Reserve to fund any necessary costs associated with the interim staffing arrangements.**

80. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Framework Amendment 2025/26

Members considered a budget framework amendment to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) within the 2025/2026 financial year, a recommendation from the Cabinet meeting held on 4 November 2025.

This had been considered at both Cabinet and Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The budget framework needing amending due to the forecasted overspend of £2.781 million. It was proposed that this would be funded from HRA reserves and revenue budgets.

It was required due to the clearance of the housing maintenance backlog and the turnaround of voids (the void turnaround time was now at 54 days).

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- Updates seen at Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee were positive, and targets were being met, and in the case of void turnaround times, exceeded. Therefore, it was a surprise to see a request for an additional £2.781 million from reserves. It would be useful to see the housing accounts at a future meeting of Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Money spent on housing stock was welcomed.
- In year budget adjustments were not welcomed. It would be good to have assurance that the money being spent was demonstrating stability and planning, rather than being a course correction.
- Accountability for large spends should remain with Councillors.
- The breakdown of part of the overspend of £1.7 million mentioned in the report was £800,000 for the maintenance backlog, £300,000 for improving performance and £600,000 for voids.
- Any monies raised by the sale of housing at Lumby's Terrace in Stamford would be reinvested straight back into the town. As a result of the sale of Lumby's Terrace the Council was in consultation to buy 20 properties on Kesteven Drive in Stamford.
- SKDC's void turnaround time had improved and was now consistent with many other authorities across England.

Having been proposed and seconded, and following a vote it was **AGREED:**

DECISION

That Full Council:

- 1. Amend the 2025/26 Budget Framework to increase the HRA revenue budget by £2.781m to fund the forecast overspend relating to repairs and maintenance costs. This increase to be funded from HRA reserves:**
 - **£1.000m from the Reactive Repairs Reserve**
 - **£1.781m from the HRA Priorities Reserve**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development, to allocate up to £250k additional funding from the HRA Priorities Reserve to meet any additional financial pressures that may arise during this financial year.**

81. Appointments to Committees and Panels of the Council

Members considered the requirements placed on Full Council for the appointment of Members to its Committees and Panels.

Since the previous meeting in September there had been further amendments to political balance with the resignation of two Councillors, in addition to group makeup changes. Group leaders had met on 11 November 2025 and had endorsed amendments to the makeup of the Council's committees and panels.

Having been moved and seconded, and following a vote it was **AGREED:**

DECISION

That Full Council:

1. Note the changes in political proportionality of the Council and the consequent allocation of seats on committees (Appendix A of the report).
2. Appoint Members to its Committees and Panels, in accordance with political balance:

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Councillor Bridget Ley to replace Councillor James Denniston as the representative for the Independent Group.

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Councillor Matt Bailey to fill the Conservative vacancy.

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Conservative Group lose one seat to be taken by Councillor David Bellamy (Reform UK).
- Councillor Pam Bosworth to fill the Conservative vacancy.
- Grantham Independent Group lose one seat (currently a gift to Councillor Habib Rahman), to be taken by the Liberal Democrat Group (Councillor Habib Rahman)

Employment Committee

- Conservative Group lose one seat to be taken by the South Kesteven Independent Group (Councillor Paul Wood).

Governance and Audit Committee

- Councillor Mark Whittington to be gifted the Conservative vacancy.
- Democratic Independent Group to gift their seat to allow Councillor Paul Stokes to continue as a member of the Committee.
- Councillor Habib Rahman to be gifted the Labour and Co-operative Group vacancy left by Councillor Rob Shorrock.

Planning Committee

- Councillor Mark Whittington to be gifted the Reform UK vacancy.
- Councillor Helen Crawford to fill the Conservative vacancy.

Standards Committee

- Councillors Nikki Manterfield and Peter Stephens to fill the Conservative vacancies.

82. Local Government Reorganisation

Members considered the final proposal for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Prior to debate, the Deputy Monitoring Officer provided further detail regarding why the Council was being asked to consider the proposal for Local Government Reorganisation in Greater Lincolnshire and make recommendations to Cabinet.

The submission of LGR proposals were an executive function under the [Local Government Act 2000 Section 9D\(2\)](#). This was in accordance with Part 3(b) paragraph 3.2.1 of the constitution which detailed that all functions other than those listed in Part 3(a) (Council Functions) would be the responsibility of the Cabinet.

LGR was not part of the Council's Policy Framework, or one of the specific functions of Council. However, due to the importance of LGR it had been considered appropriate for Full Council to scrutinise the proposals, to express a view, and make a recommendation to the Cabinet to be considered at its extraordinary meeting to be held on Monday 24th November.

Note: Council Procedure Rule 14.4 was suspended to allow the Leader of the Council and a seconder for the recommendations to speak for up to ten minutes.

The Leader of the Council gave a presentation on LGR, which was appended to these minutes. Further information was highlighted as part of this presentation:

- Briefings on the ramifications of LGR had been given on several occasions to councillors, officers and parish and town councils. Around 30 different parishes had sent representatives along to these briefings, demonstrating positive engagement with the LGR process.
- It was not possible to merge two unitary authorities (North Lincolnshire Council and North-East Lincolnshire Council) against their will. It was not their current will to merge, so government would have to move further legislation to allow this to happen.
- The 'Kesteven Proposed Submission' contained Unitary 1 (including North Kesteven District Council (NKDC), South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) and South Holland District Council (SHDC)), and Unitary 2 (including East Lindsey District Council (ELDC), West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) Boston Borough Council (BBC) and the City of Lincoln Council (CoLC)). North and North-East Lincolnshire Councils would remain as separate unitary authorities.
- Rutland County had not been included in the final proposal. The reasons for this were:
 - Rutland was outside the Greater Lincolnshire Invitation area. It was in the Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Invitation Area. Proposals which cross over different invitation areas were possible but would require a very strong rationale. The inclusion of Rutland into Unitary 1 would involve a very significant risk of being regarded as non-compliant with the statutory requirements.

- A cross-invitation area proposal ought to have the clear commitment of all parties and, thus far, there had been no clear indication of support from Rutland CC.
 - There was further risk from uncertainty on the degree of modelling required by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on impacts to the neighbouring Invitation Area.
 - The inclusion of Rutland within a proposal for Lincolnshire would require clear proposals for the remainder of the Leicestershire and Rutland invitation area.
 - Rutland currently had separate provision of several key services including Fire and Rescue. Clear arrangements for the delivery of these services would have needed to be included within the proposals.
 - Rutland was not part of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority and therefore the inclusion would arguably not meet Criterion 5 which required that proposals supported devolution.
 - Compliance would be a matter of MHCLG discretion. MHCLG had communicated that if Rutland CC were to be included, it would have to be as part of the core proposal, not as an additional variation. It was considered that the risk of non-compliance was too high for a proposal that included Rutland CC to be submitted.
 - The Leader of the Council personally felt that the best outcome for residents in Rutland would be for them to be included in this proposal; however, it was of higher importance that SKDC did not get subsumed by a distant decision-making authority.
 - Therefore, the Rutland option was not taken forward.
- The government had indicated a target population for new unitary authorities of 500,000 people; however, they had also said there was a 'floor' of 300,000.
 - The SKDC bid had utilised external consultancy support and advice on the areas that the Council was not currently responsible for, such as fire and rescue, and adults and children services. However, government grant monies had been available for this consultancy in addition to a sum of money that had been approved by Cabinet. Of the sum approved by Cabinet, £55,000 of the £75,000 had been spent to date.
 - Funds had been spent on engaging with residents. A good response had been achieved. An impressive response had also been seen at NKDC. SKDC residents spoke of the issues important to them (at the attached slide 'Key Messages')
 - Other proposals from around the county included:
 - A continuing authority model at Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) (existing footprint of the Council).
 - Lincoln City – expanded city with an authority they have called 'rural Lincolnshire' outside of the city boundaries.
 - 'Greater Lincolnshire for all' – ELDC, BBC, SHDC together proposing BBC, ELDC, SHDC, NKDC, CoLC and SKDC as a second authority.
 - The government required bid submissions to explain how different workstreams fitted together, including fire and rescue. Until very recently it had

been possible to move the whole of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC); however, a message from government conveyed that in the medium term the PCC may become the responsibility of the Combined Mayoral Authority.

- Part of this process would look at reconciling the fire service in Lincolnshire with the different service in North and North-East Lincolnshire.
- External support had looked at various models for Adult and Children's Social Care to keep those services financially viable, but also local.
- Disaggregation of services had been considered within the submission.
- There would be an enormous cost to all authorities regardless of which submission was successful. This would be due to establishing a shadow authority, creating a staffing structure, and the basic administration involved in re-organising a sizeable area.
- At years 3 and 4 of LGR residents would start to see a financial benefit of reducing to a single tier of governance.
- A benefit to being within a unitary authority was simplification for residents. Within a two-tier system of governance (with the addition of parish and town councils) it could sometimes be a struggle to discover who was responsible for which service.
- The proposed LCC model would reduce the number of councillors from well over 200 to 70. This would give Lincolnshire one of the highest number of electors per councillor in the country.
- SKDC's U1 proposal would see a worse ratio of electors to councillors than the current setup; however, the ratio was more positive than that seen under the LCC model.

Following this introduction, councillors debated the proposals before them. The following information was highlighted during debate:

- Very few members of the public wanted LGR. However, it was a reality that SKDC had to face. This was the best possible compromise keeping councils as local as possible, broadly within a new South Lincolnshire. The main alternative seemed to be coming from County Hall, requesting a whole county unitary model. If government agreed to this Lincolnshire would be a huge, remote authority.
- The SKDC proposal was the best option. Councillors needed to move forward and concentrate on what they had been elected to do.
- Rutland was outside Lincolnshire's jurisdiction, and only ever added up to higher taxes for SKDC residents. SHDC wished to remain with BBC and ELDC. The obvious route was to follow LCC's continuous authority model with no need to bring in consultants.

An amendment was proposed as follows:

1. *That this council issues a formal apology on behalf of the Leader for the mishandling of the local government reorganisation negotiations, including the*

expenditure of tens of thousands of pounds, and the conduct criticised publicly by the Leader of Rutland County Council.

2. *That the council's submission on local government reorganisation shall align with, and mirror, the decision taken by Lincolnshire County Council at its meeting tomorrow.*

This proposal was seconded.

Recommendation 2 was ruled out of order as it proposed an unknown course of action; the decision of Lincolnshire County Council was not known at this stage and therefore SKDC Councillors could not follow a decision that hadn't been taken.

On being put to the vote, the remainder of amendment was not agreed and therefore the amendment was **LOST**.

Debate ensued on the substantive recommendations:

- The Conservative group had encouraged a free vote, and in general were relieved that Rutland had been removed from the submission.
- In addition to LGR, the government had enforced a complete reorganisation of the NHS. The Integrated Care Boards (ICB) had now expanded to group Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire together.
- In Grantham St. Vincent's ward reorganisation could see the area moving from one County Councillor and 3 District Councillors down to 2 councillors. This was a massive ask for campaigning in the future.
- No proposal for children's services was perfect, each had risks and some offered opportunities.
- The LCC continuous authority option had important strengths. However, the LCC option represented a missed opportunity – part of the purpose of LGR was to shape services for the next 30-50 years. Their model would create an even larger council with a larger set of pressures, whilst not reflecting the diversity of the county.
- The LCC suggestion to reduce the number of councillors to 70 widened the democratic deficit.
- This was the best compromise to ensure value for money services. LGR would do nothing to fix a crisis in local democracy. Residents were increasingly disengaged, and this would be worsened by making local government distant from the people it represented.
- The best compromise would be returning to pre-1974 boundaries, restoring Lindsey, Kesteven and Holland.
- There should be caution around projected savings attached to LGR.
- There had been no meaningful cooperation from Rutland to date. However, it was pleasing to see that the door was still open for Rutland should RCC and the government agree that it was the optimal solution for them to join Lincolnshire's reorganisation bid.

- The existing administrative borders around Stamford were not sufficient for residents of the town and the surrounding villages. There was also a short section of the A1 in a separate mayoral authority to Lincolnshire. One member wished to petition the Secretary of State to receive relevant boundary changes for Stamford and the A1.
- In terms of geography and history BBC sat nicely within the South Holland block. It had a lot in common with fenland areas, and its population would not take it over the government's suggested population target.
- LGR had been spoken about many times in recent years. The government were aiming to save money through scale. It was not a surprise to see councillors opposing lower numbers of councillors.
- There were very clear arguments on paper why unitary councils were more beneficial to residents than a two-tier system of governance. In the past, every single time this had been looked at the promised cost savings attached to creating a unitary authority never appeared. Local democracy was lost – whilst gaining more spending power.
- Lincolnshire was not resorting to a single tier of governance as it had recently gained the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority.
- One member suggested that if a good argument was made then the government would listen, as had been seen in Cheshire.

The Leader of the Council was permitted to respond to questions that had been raised during debate:

- No representations from Boston Borough Council towards SKDC had been made to join the SKDC bid. It had not been suggested by any members of officers from within SK. In informal meetings there had been mention of including Peterborough or Boston; however there had been no momentum behind these suggestions. Boston also came with a price tag attached to flood defence areas. SKDC paid around £1 million to Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), Boston paid £5 million. Boston's inclusion would also skew the population figures between SKDC's UA1 and UA2 options.
- The Leader of SHDC had said that if their proposal of 'A Greater Lincolnshire for all' failed then joining within SKDC would be their 'Plan B'. However, this statement was not binding.
- Merging across the invitation areas was problematic – there was no power to merge existing unitary authorities. Within Lincolnshire there was no consensus behind one option, so all local authorities were putting forward submissions they considered to be best.

In summing up, Councillor Lee Steptoe emphasised that most political groups on the council had come together to back the LGR recommendation to Cabinet.

A recorded vote was requested – the results of the recorded vote on the printed recommendations were as follows:

For: Councillors Matt Bailey, Emma Baker, Rhys Baker, Ashley Baxter, Pam Bosworth, Pam Byrd, Richard Cleaver, Helen Crawford, James Denniston, Phil Dilks, Barry Dobson, Paul Fellows, Tim Harrison, Gloria Johnson, Anna Kelly, Gareth Knight, Philip Knowles, Zoe Lane, Robert Leadenham, Bridget Ley, Virginia Moran, Charmaine Morgan, Chris Noon, Habib Rahman, Susan Sandall, Max Sawyer, Ian Selby, Vanessa Smith, Lee Steptoe, Paul Stokes, Elvis Stooke, Rosemary Trollope-Bellew, Sarah Trotter, Murray Turner, Jane Wood, Paul Wood (36)

Against: Councillors Ben Green, Graham Jeal, Peter Stephens (3)

Abstention: Councillor Paul Martin (1)

Having been proposed and seconded, and following the recorded vote it was **AGREED:**

DECISION:

That Full Council recommend to Cabinet the proposal to reorganise Lincolnshire into two new unitary authorities in the south alongside the two existing unitary authorities to the north:

- **Unitary Authority 1 being comprised of the geographies of: North Kesteven; South Holland; and South Kesteven.**
- **Unitary Authority 2 being comprised of the geographies of: Boston Borough; City of Lincoln; East Lindsey and West Lindsey.**
- **The existing unitaries of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire would remain unchanged, with optionality for a future merger.**

The Chairman wished to thank the following for the huge amount of work on LGR: Kath Marriott (Chief Executive of NKDC), Cllr Richard Wright (Leader of NKDC), Councillor Ashley Baxter, Richard Wyles and his team, Charles James for his sterling work compiling the proposal, and the strategic leadership from Chief Executive Karen Bradford.

Note: The meeting adjourned at 3:20pm and reconvened at 3:38pm.

83. Members' Open Questions

Note: Councillors Rosemary Trollope-Bellew, Paul Wood and Jane Wood left the Council Chamber prior to Open Questions to Councillors and did not return.

Question One – Councillor Max Sawyer to the Leader of the Council

Councillor Sawyer asked what steps SKDC was taking to ensure SKDC money was being spent within the district on initiatives that benefitted its residents, before the money was lost to LGR.

Councillor Baxter informed members of the Section 24 notice that would be issued prior to the implementation of LGR to ask for the cessation of spending. In the end, any money left over ends up in same pot; SKDC could not put terms and conditions on its existing reserves. Councillors and officers should continue to spend money wisely and in the public interest.

Question Two – Councillor Matt Bailey to the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture

Councillor Bailey praised the fantastic events that had been seen in Grantham Market Place over the past year and asked for reassurance that these events would continue next year in Grantham and across the district.

Councillor Paul Stokes agreed that there had been some wonderful events. There was the opportunity for further events next year and Cabinet wished to look at events in all major towns, with some connect in rural areas.

Question Three – Councillor Sarah Trotter to the Leader of the Labour and Co-operative group

Councillor Trotter asked whether Councillor Steptoe felt it was acceptable for one of his group members to post inappropriate comments against another political group on social media, and whether he would apologise on the councillor's behalf.

Councillor Steptoe had some sympathy as it was not something he would have posted; however, within reason Councillors could post what they wanted on social media. He felt he could not apologise on someone else's behalf.

Question Four – Councillor Charmaine Morgan to the Cabinet Member for Housing

Councillor Morgan asked what provision was currently in place to support homeless people.

Councillor Moran highlighted that the night shelter had been opened this week, in partnership with the Grantham Ark. Anyone who was a rough sleeper and engaging with Housing Options was entitled to be there. This service was not publicly advertised; referrals were made through the SKDC team.

On 19 November a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) was activated. When SWEP was in place anybody was accepted into the night shelter. Councillors, officers and those present were urged to let Councillor Moran and the Housing team know where those that were struggling were. There were also night patrols in place.

Question Five – Councillor Ben Green to the Vice-Chairman of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Green asked Councillor Emma Baker whether she agreed with leaving NATO, nuclear disarmament and the legalisation of all drugs, which in his opinion were views expressed by the leader of the national Green Party.

Councillor Emma Baker stated that she agreed with Zach Polanski.

Question Six – Councillor Elvis Stooke to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Councillor Stooke asked whether LCC should have followed the example of SKDC and considered the thickness of waste and recycling bins.

Councillor Rhys Baker referred to a decision at South Kesteven on thickness of bins – the rollout of that service was a positive for the council and had improved recycling rates.

Question Seven – Councillor Susan Sandall to the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement

Councillor Sandall asked why nothing was happening to St. Martin's Park in Stamford – when would the site be cleared and works start?

Councillor Cleaver announced that the council had exchanged contracts with would-be purchasers, and the conditions for completion were underway. The main issue with the contract of sale was the undergrounding of overhead lines across the site, which was dependent on the timescales of the National Grid.

Question Eight – Councillor Vanessa Smith to the Leader of the Council

The southbound A15 lay-by at Baston had been identified as a fly tipping hotspot. Aside from a warning sticker, had the council taken any action?

Councillor Baxter was aware of ongoing conversations between Councillor Smith and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste. In addition, the affordability of mobile CCTV was being investigated to reduce instances of fly-tipping. When fly tipping can be proven the council would enforce, as it just had with a Bourne based fly tipper (80 hours community service).

Question Nine – Councillor Graham Jeal to the Chairman of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Jeal referred to the earlier LGR discussion, and the deal being described as 'hollowing out local government' and 'a distraction to what we're trying to achieve' amongst other terms – Councillor Turner had voted for it. How bad would the deal have needed to be before he voted against?

Councillor Turner felt that of the available potential deals the one presented was the best option, and highlighted that only 3 members within the Council Chamber had voted against the proposal.

Question Ten – Councillor Robert Leadenham to the Leader of the Council

Councillor Leadenham asked whether anything was in place for vulnerable residents this winter, and would there be a helpline.

Councillor Baxter highlighted the presence of the Housing team, Homelessness team, the announcement of a SWEP, and the Cost-of-Living team. Councillors could not control when winter arrived, but if there was someone in need then there were many ready to help.

Question Eleven – Councillor Lee Steptoe to the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement

Councillor Steptoe asked for a progress update on the new Depot.

Councillor Cleaver announced that the new Depot was handed over by Lindum Group on 19 November. Mobilisation of the new site was progressing rapidly, and the workforce would be operating fully from the new Depot from 15 December. The project remained on budget.

Question Twelve – Councillor Gareth Knight to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Councillor Knight was aware that the council was pursuing fly tipping cases on Huntingtower Road Grantham, that had been thrown out by the courts. The Cabinet Member was to be congratulated; however, how frustrated was he about people getting around the issue of fly-tipping?

Councillor Rhys Baker agreed that the court judgment was a difficult moment. Justice had been close for residents; every single fly tip was money stolen from their pockets. There was a legal system within which we all needed to operate. However, officers would be equally as frustrated as those councillors involved at the recent decision.

Note: Councillor Helen Crawford left the Council Chamber during open questions.

84. Notices of Motion

85. Councillor Ben Green

Councillor Ben Green proposed the following motion:

Council Motion: 10 Per Cent Reduction in Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)

This Council notes that residents across our district continue to face significant financial pressures under the ongoing cost of living crisis. Household budgets are being squeezed by Chancellor Rachel Reeves's high-tax, low-growth policies and Energy Secretary Ed Miliband's costly, ideological approach to energy. Ordinary working families are paying the price for the economic mismanagement of the legacy parties, which have prioritised political convenience over competence for too long.

Reform UK believes that elected representatives must lead by example. While residents are forced to tighten their belts, too many in public life have insulated themselves from the same financial realities. Public service is a duty – not an entitlement – and it is time that principle was reflected here.

Accordingly, this Council is minded to:

- 1. Implement a 10 per cent reduction in all Special Responsibility Allowances, including but not limited to those paid to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs, and Political Group Leaders.*
- 2. Allocate the savings generated to a **Taxpayers' Fairness Reserve**, to help offset future council tax increases and relieve financial pressure on residents.*

At a time when local families are being asked to do more with less, this Council should demonstrate leadership and integrity – proving that fiscal discipline begins with those entrusted to spend the public's money.

In introducing the motion, Councillor Green stressed that it was not the point of the motion to punish the hardest working people in the Council Chamber; it was asking those with the broadest shoulders to make a modest contribution.

The motion was seconded.

Note: Councillor Ashley Baxter left the Council Chamber. Councillor Helen Crawford returned to the Council Chamber.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- There were no figures to accompany the motion. This cut would not make a noticeable difference and saves very little overall.

Note: Councillors Helen Crawford and Vanessa Smith left the Council Chamber and did not return.

- Since 2018 councillor allowances had been subject to a 11% fall against inflation.
- There are many councillors that were in a similarly poor financial situation as some of their residents.

Note: Councillor Phil Dilks declared an interest as he received an SRA as a Cabinet Member.

- There were councillors who relied heavily on their allowance for being a councillor. When adding up the number of hours than many in receipt of an SRA completed, it was less than the minimum/national living wage.
- The proposal was disrespectful to several councillors who worked extremely hard for their remuneration.

Note: Councillor Bridget Ley left the Council Chamber and did not return. Councillors agreed to an extension of time to 4:30pm.

Having been previously proposed and seconded, the motion was put to the vote. Following the vote the motion was **LOST**.

86. Councillor Graham Jeal

Councillor Graham Jeal's motion was not heard due to time constraints.

87. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 4:31pm.

Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Greater Lincolnshire

20th November, 2025



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Minute Item 82

NOVEMBER 2025

DRAFT

BEST4GreaterLincolnshire



PREPARED BY:



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

**Proposal for Local Government
Reorganisation in Greater
Lincolnshire**

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Briefings

Staff

Members

Parishes

28

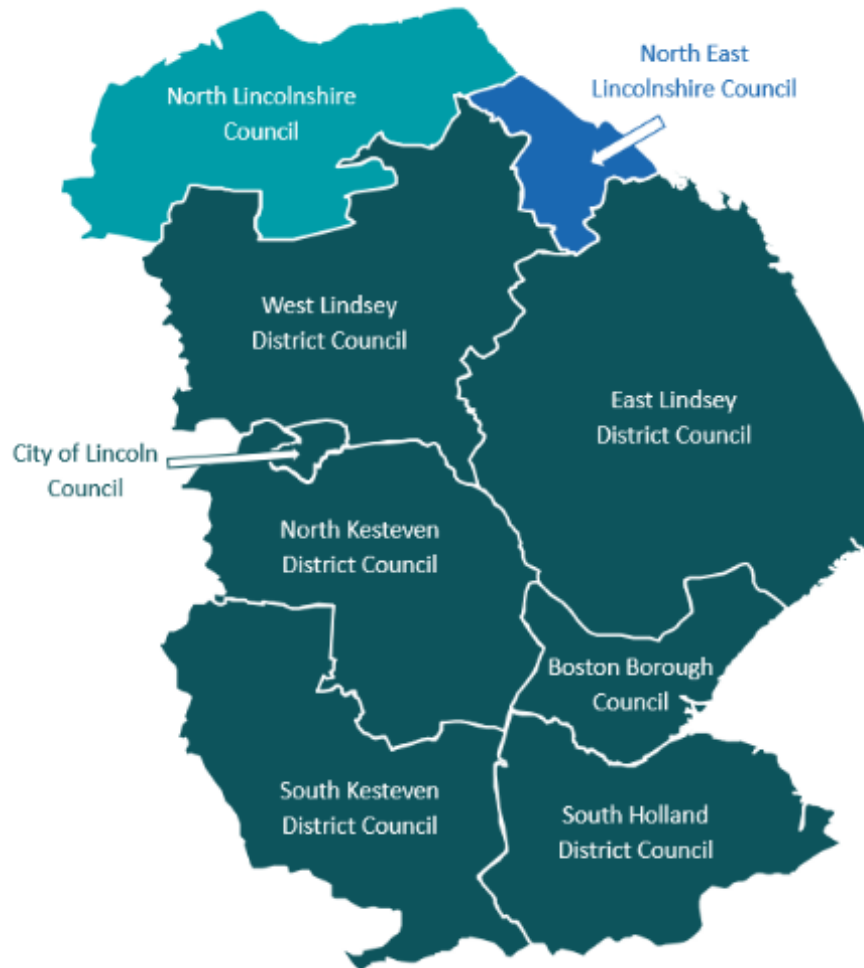


The Six Criteria

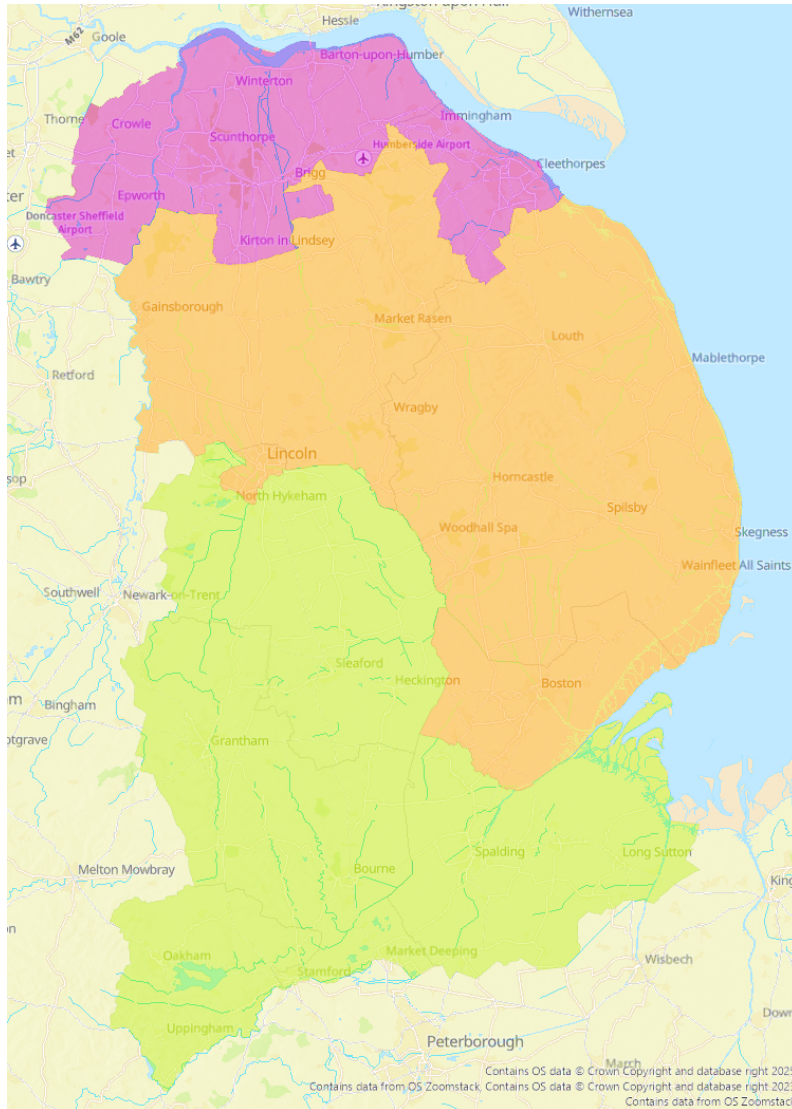
1. *A proposal should seek to achieve for **the whole of the area** concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.*
2. *Unitary local government must be **the right size** to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and **withstand financial shocks**.*
3. *Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of **high quality and sustainable public services** to citizens.*
4. *Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to **work together** in coming to a view that meets local needs and is **informed by local views**.*
5. *New unitary structures must **support devolution** arrangements.*
6. *New unitary structures should enable **stronger community engagement** and deliver **genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment**.*



The existing shape of Lincolnshire



Reminder of Kesteven Interim Submission March 2025

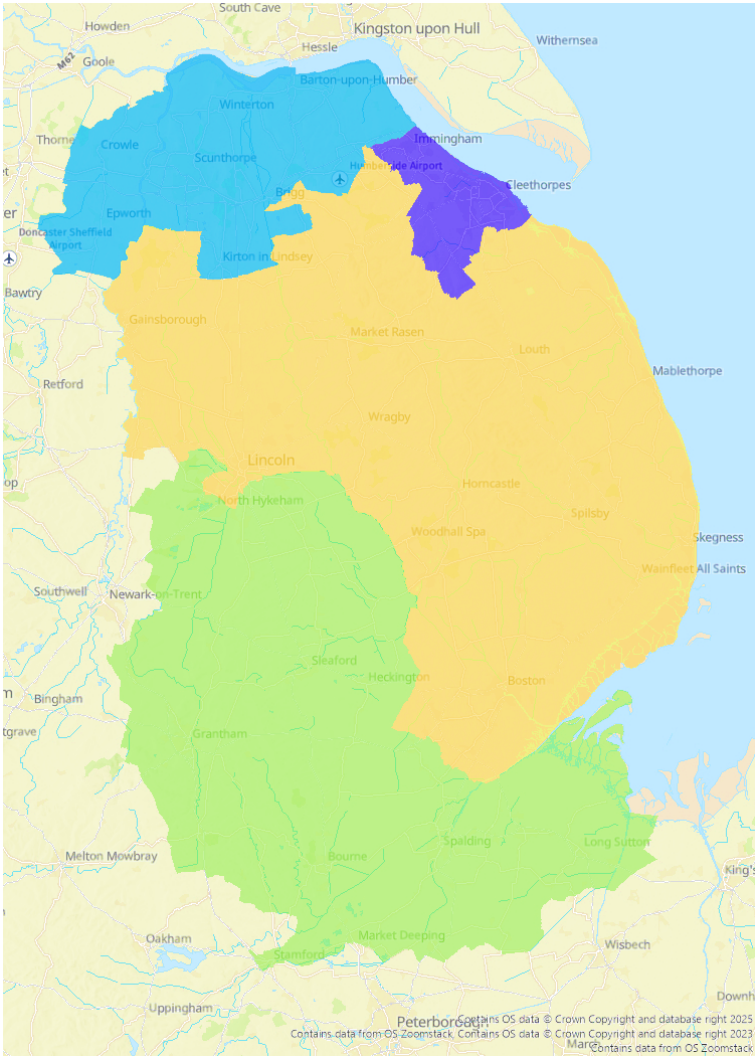


Unitary 1: North Kesteven, South Kesteven, South Holland, Rutland	410,360
Unitary 2: East and West Lindsey, Boston and Lincoln	420,585
Unitary 3: North Lincolnshire North-East Lincolnshire	331,247



Kesteven Proposed Submission November 2025

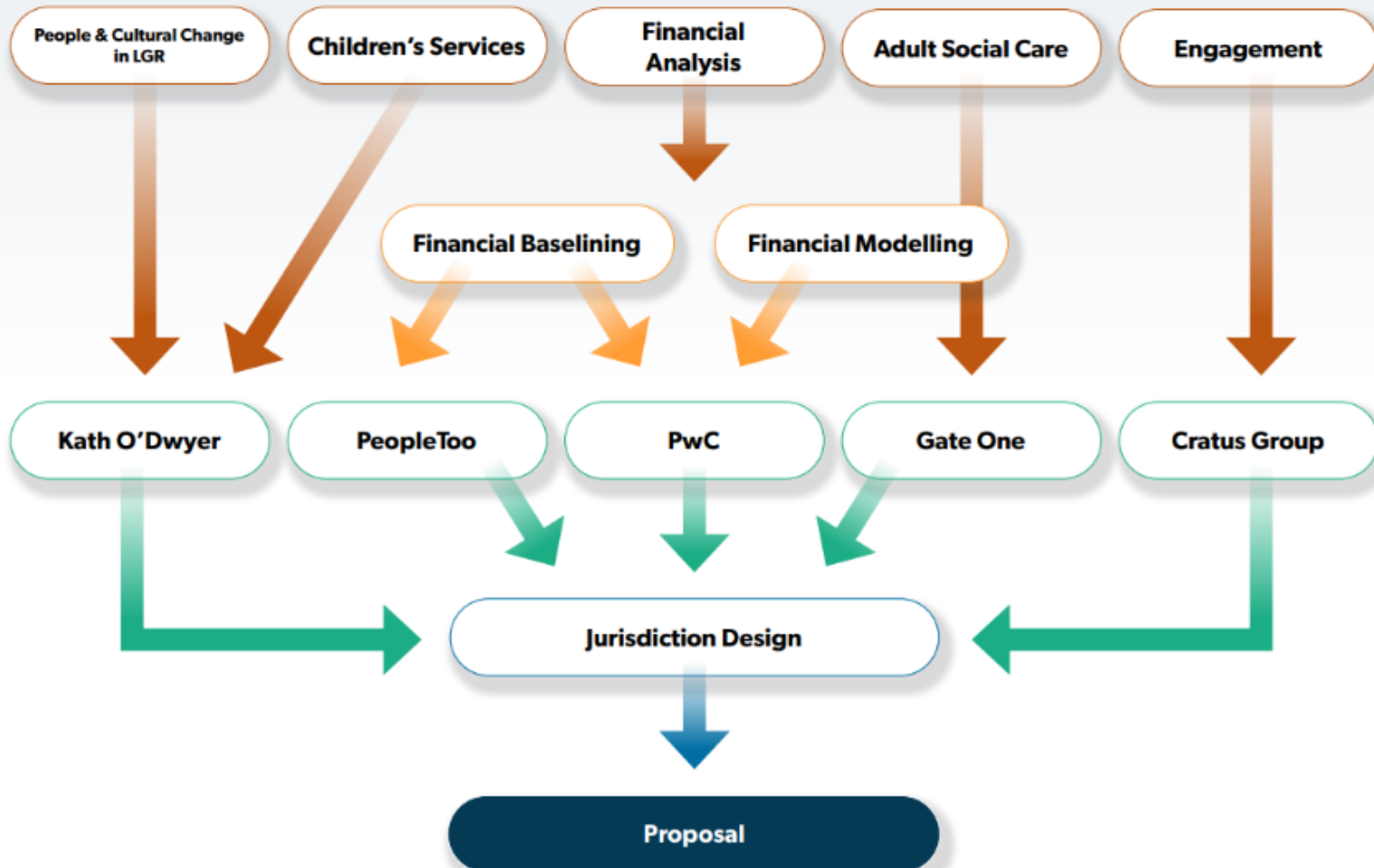
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Unitary 1: North Kesteven, South Kesteven, South Holland,	368,917
Unitary 2: East & West Lindsey, Boston and Lincoln	420,585
Unitary 3: North Lincolnshire	171,336
Unitary 4: North-East Lincolnshire	159,911

Workstreams: All completed

Use of External Support



Engagement Survey Results

- 5,556 responses

(15th September to 15th October)

26

- North Kesteven – 3,012
- South Kesteven – 816
- Rutland – 446



Survey findings report



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Key Messages

Important:

83/100

- Road and
- Econ
- Env
- A
-
-
-

83 out 100 – Attachment of Place
“Keep Councils Local”



Recap – Other Proposals for Lincolnshire



A. *Continuing Authority*
(LCC & WLDC)

B. *Lincoln*
(Lincoln City)

C. *“A Greater Lincolnshire for All”*
(ELDC, BBC & SHDC)

Fire & Rescue

LCC → PCC → GLCCA

No disaggregation



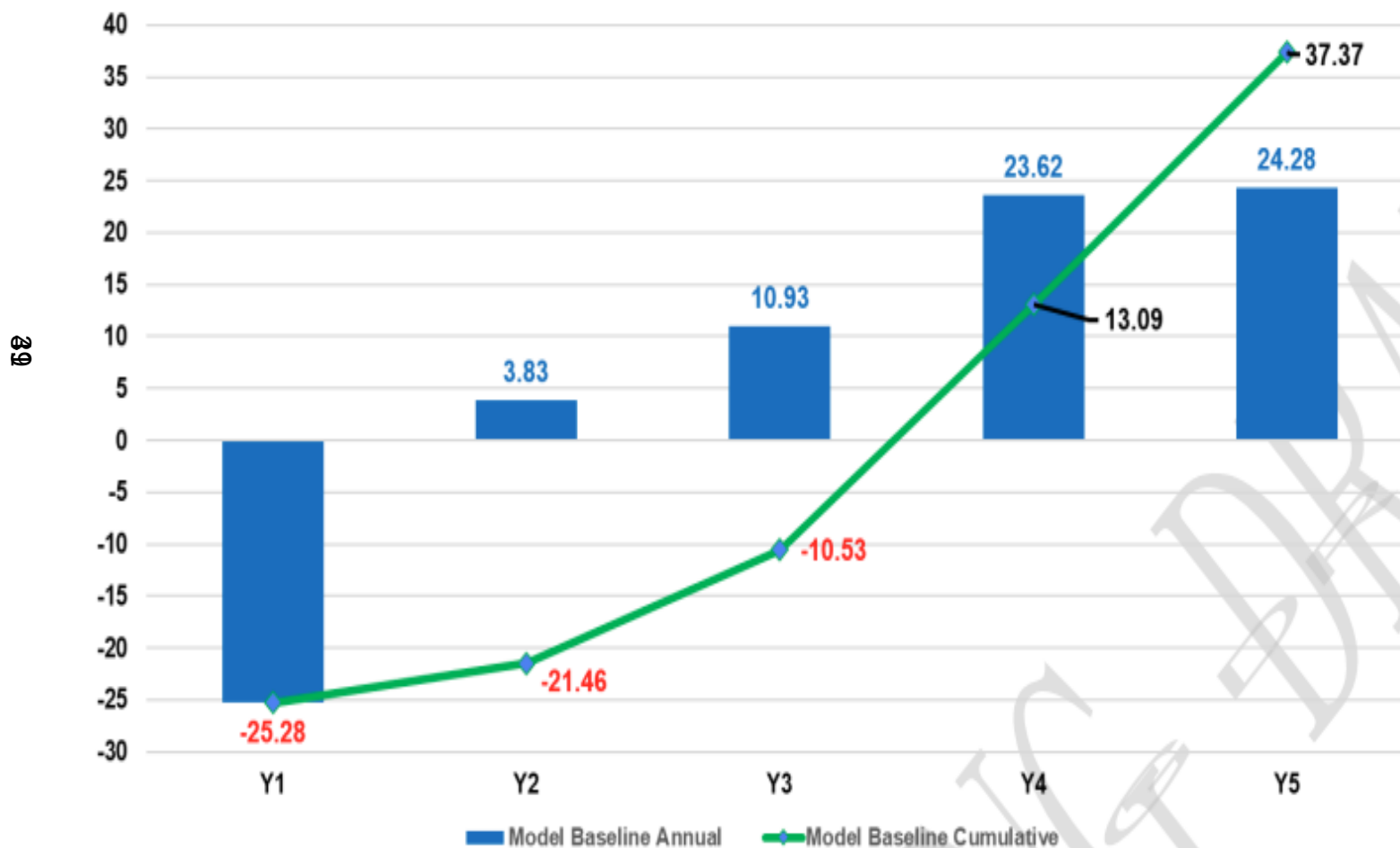
Children's & Adult Social Care

- External Expert Support been engaged
- Solutions built on demand hotspots/deprivation clusters and meets **local** demand
- Exploits opportunities & safely disaggregates
- Independent structures for each UA

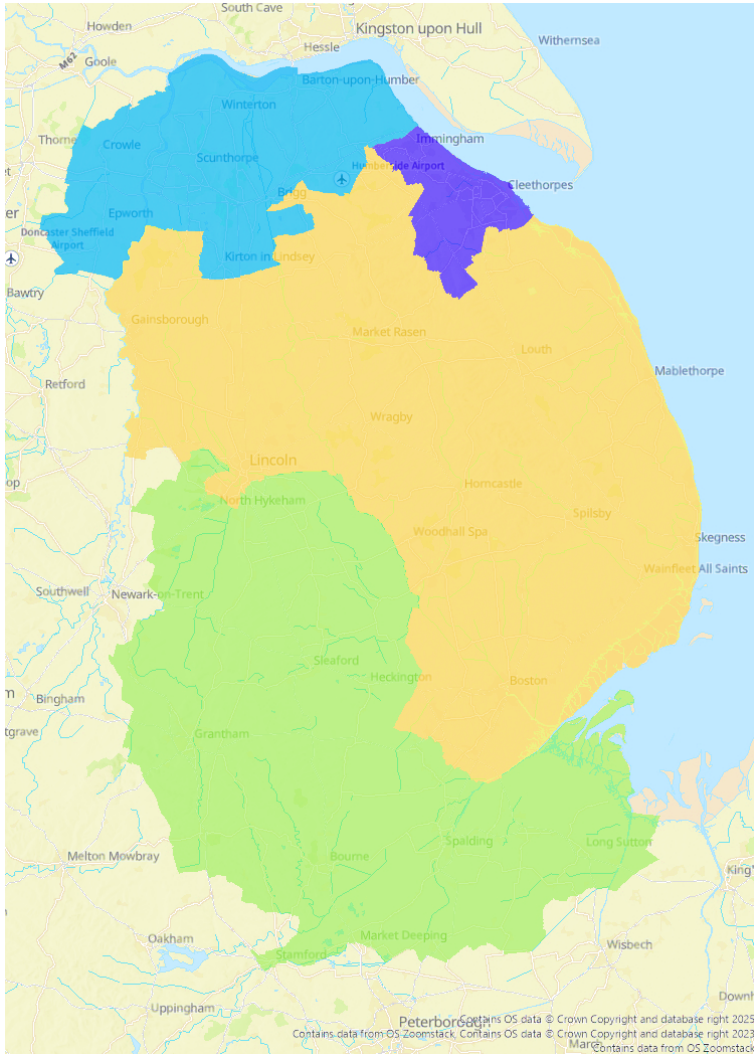


Summary of Financial Case - Lincolnshire

Pre-Sensitivity Analysis Impacts - Baseline Model Cumulative & Annual Benefit £m



Kesteven Proposed Submission November 2025



Unitary 1: North Kesteven, South Kesteven, South Holland,	368,917
Unitary 2: East & West Lindsey, Boston and Lincoln	420,585
Unitary 3: North Lincolnshire	171,336
Unitary 4: North-East Lincolnshire	159,911



NOVEMBER 2025

DRAFT

BEST4GreaterLincolnshire



PREPARED BY:



SOUTH
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**Proposal for Local Government
Reorganisation in Greater
Lincolnshire**

Recap – Lincolnshire Proposals



City of Lincoln Proposal

Expanded city to approx. 208k
Rural Lincolnshire – 573,000
North/North East - Unchanged

South-East Lincolnshire Partnership Proposal

Northern Unitary – 531,000
Southern Unitary – 574,000



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Workstreams: All completed

- **Financial Modelling:**
Efficiencies, savings, costs, council tax harmonisation
- **Children's Services Modelling:**
Disaggregated Service Model, Demand Modelling
- **Adult Services Modelling:**
Commissioning Role, Service Delivery, Demand Modelling
- ⌘ **Engagement Plan:**
Survey – Online & Paper, Focus Groups, Face to Face
- **Contracts:**
Modelling local, Lincolnshire wide revenue, capital and HRA
- **Economic Footprints:**
Travel to Work and structural analysis
to demonstrate functional economic areas
- **Democratic Structure**
- **Staffing Structure**
- **Organisational Culture**



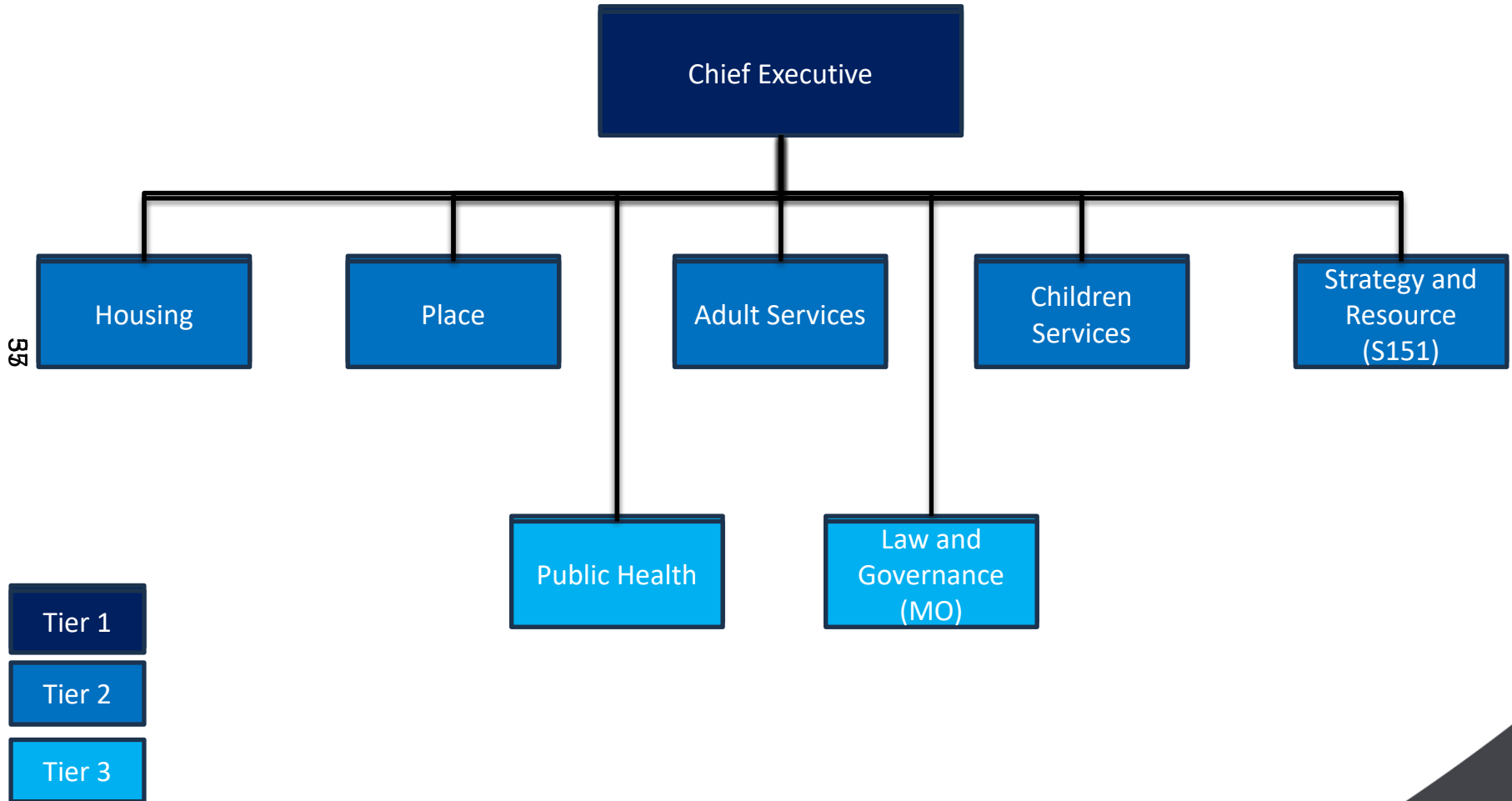
Economy

“Everything we hope to achieve as a Government is only possible if we get Britain building”

- No single dominant Urban Centre
- Low population density
- Place based economic developments
- Economic clusters/Aligned economic geography



Staffing Structure



“Culture isn’t a phase of the project, it’s the foundation”

- Positive organisational culture
- Teams stay engaged
- Fells coherent, not just combined
- Sense of identity and belonging
- Employees engaged
- Recruitment and retention

Locality Model

- Tailored service delivery = local need
- Supports population projections
- Resilience = workforce flexibility and deployment
- Partnership to continue: NHS

OUR LOCAL AREA



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Financial Approach

- North K and South K have worked with PWC to prepare the business case for the submission.
- The modelling has included the following:
 - An estimated Year 1 Position
 - Analysis of structural change
 - Profiling of estimated costs and savings for reorganisation and transformation over a 5 year period
 - Reorganisation benefits – savings, economies of scale
 - Reorganisation costs – transition costs, disaggregation costs
 - Transformation benefits – long term potential



Approach Taken: Finance

EIGHT specific modules have been compiled to assess financial case

- Income
- Expenditure
- Council Tax
- Assets
- Liabilities
- Members and Elections
- Third Party Spend
- Workforce salary alignment

Data and information from the 3 Councils (and LCC) has been used to populate each module



Financial Case Summary

- Net in Year benefit/cost
 - the financial impact realised in a specific year of the financial case
- Cumulative benefit/cost
 - the running total of all benefits and costs from the start of the financial case
- Net benefit period
 - length of time for the cumulative benefits of the financial case to equal or exceed its initial costs

(After taking into consideration aggregation benefits, transition costs, one off transformation costs and benefits and any recurring disbenefit costs)



Summary of Financial Case - Lincolnshire

£m

<i>All figures in £m</i>	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total 5 year Benefit / Costs
Total Benefits of Aggregation	10.83	14.44	16.25	18.05	18.05	77.62
Financial Disbenefit Total Costs	-12.94	-12.94	-12.94	-12.94	-12.94	-64.70
One-Off Transition Total Costs	-22.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-22.52
Total Transformation Benefits	0.00	3.96	9.91	19.82	19.82	53.51
One-Off Transformation Total Costs	-0.65	-1.64	-2.29	-1.31	-0.65	-6.54
In-year Net Benefit / Cost	-25.28	3.83	10.93	23.62	24.28	37.38

Financial Case Summary – UA1 only

<i>All figures in £m</i>	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	<i>Total 5 year Benefit / Costs</i>
Total Benefits of Aggregation	4.40	5.86	6.60	7.33	7.33	31.52
Financial Disbenefit	-6.05	-6.05	-6.05	-6.05	-6.05	-30.25
Total Costs						
One-Off Transition	-10.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-10.52
Total Costs						
Total Transformation Benefits	0.00	1.64	4.11	8.21	8.21	22.17
One-Off						
Transformation Total	-0.27	-0.68	-0.95	-0.54	-0.27	-2.71
Costs						
In-year	-12.44	0.77	3.71	8.95	9.22	10.21
Net Benefit / Cost						



Summary

- A number of assumptions have been included including the amount of the projected deficit for each Council, assumptions about contract savings and reductions in operational costs
- Sensitivity analysis has been undertaken to 'stress test' the assumptions to ensure it is still a sustainable and positive business case
- Subject to assumptions and limitations of the modelling, the summary confirms a positive return after 4 – 5 years following initial upfront costs
- An **annual c£10m** saving can be achieved



Next Key Stages

- Publication for Council – 12th November
- Council Meeting – 20th November
- Cabinet Meeting – 24th November
- Submit Final Proposal – 28th November

Chairman's Engagements

13th November 2025 to 20th January 2026

Event Date	SKDC Ref	Organisation and Event	Location
Friday 21st November 2025	SKDC05-2025	Soldiers in the Sky Exhibition Preview	Grantham
Friday 21st November 2025	IS0016	Grantham Journal Business Awards	Allington, Grantham
Sun 30th November 2025	SKDC04-2025	Grantham Christmas Market & Light Switch On	Grantham
Thursday 11th December 2025	IS0021	Christmas Remembrance Service	Grantham Crematorium
Friday 12th December 2025	n/a	Chairman's Christmas Lunch	Baston, Lincolnshire
Sunday 14th December	IS0017	Grantham Disabled Children's Society Panto Visit	Guildhall, Grantham
Monday 15th December 2025	IS0020	Red Court Nursing Home, to celebrate a residents' 101st birthday	Grantham
Tuesday 16th December 2025	IS0018	Mencap Cree Christmas Fair	Grantham
Thursday 18th December 2025	IS0019	Santa at Cinco Lounge Event	Grantham
Tuesday 23rd December	SKDC06-2025	Reopening of the refurbished Meres Leisure Centre Gym	Grantham

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**SOUTH
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COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday, 29 January 2026

Report by the Council's Independent
Remuneration Panel

Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme

Report Author

James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

✉ james.welbourn@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide Full Council with an opportunity to consider the recommendations of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on the current Members' Allowances Scheme.

Recommendations

That Full Council considers the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, as set out at Appendix A.

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?	(All Wards);

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The draft budget for 2026/27 has a total of £608k provided for in respect of members allowances broken down as follows:
 - Basic Allowance – £389k
 - Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) – £219k
- 1.2 Should there be any modifications to the current scheme there will be a budgetary impact which would need to be funded through either a virement from another budget or one-off reserve movement. Should Council approve the recommendations and implement from the date of the meeting, the 2025/26 impact would be £1,466.
- 1.3 If all the recommendations from the IRP are adopted the required increase in the members allowance budget for 2026/27 would be £8,800 based on a full year impact. This increase would then be included in the 2026/27 budget proposals.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.4 In accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, before any authority makes or amends a scheme of remuneration, the authority shall have regard to the recommendations made in relation to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Welland Remuneration Panel provided their first report to Council in May 2002, with a further report in 2006.

- 2.2 For 2011/2012, the Council agreed to refer to the South Holland Independent Remuneration Panel for advice on the Allowances Scheme (link in 'Useful links' below). The South Holland Panel subsequently disbanded.
- 2.3 The Welland Partnership Members' Remuneration Panel was reconstituted in June 2012, and SKDC in partnership with Melton and Harborough Councils, re-appointed the Welland Panel to conduct a review of allowances for 2014/2015 (link to January 2014 Council below).
- 2.4 The last full review of the Members' Allowances Scheme by the Welland Panel was considered by Full Council on 26 May 2022. The report produced by the IRP at that time is attached as Appendix B for information.
- 2.5 During the 2022 review of the Members' Allowances Scheme, the following recommendations were made by the IRP:
- *That the Basic Allowance be increased to £6,004.00pa and that consideration be given to the timing of its introduction.*
 - *That any uplift in Special Responsibility Allowances be effective from your 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Council.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader should be a factor of 3.5 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the special Responsibility allowance for the Deputy Leader should be a factor of 2.75 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for Cabinet Members should be a factor of 2.00 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Planning Committee Chairman should be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Governance and the Audit Committee Chairmen should be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Licensing Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.8 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Employment Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.8 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman should be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Opposition Allowance be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance and be paid on a pro-rata basis according to Group size.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Constitution Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.45 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Companies Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.67 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for Vice Chairmen should be a factor of 0.33 of the Special Responsibility Allowance of their respective Chairman.*

- ***That the Allowance paid to the Independent Person (Standards) should be £1,500.00 p.a.***
 - ***That the Childcare and Carers' Allowance should be £9.50 per hour with an annual cap of 200 hours.***
 - ***That until the next Independent Remuneration Panel's report or for a period of 4 years, whichever is the sooner, the hourly allowance for childcare and carers be increased in line with the increase in the national minimum wage.***
 - ***That no change be made to your Travel and Subsistence Scheme.***
 - ***That allowances continue to be linked to any annual salary increase awarded to South Kesteven District Officers and that such index-linking continue until the next Independent Remuneration Panel's report or for a period of 4 years, whichever is the sooner.***
 - ***That the broadband allowance be removed.***
- 2.6 Six of the recommendations were accepted by Full Council and implemented; these are highlighted in **bold** above.
- 2.7 The Members' Allowances Scheme sets out the rate of remuneration South Kesteven District Council's elected members can receive during their term of office.
- 2.8 The Welland IRP undertook a review of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme in November 2025.
- 2.9 The Panel invited all Members of the Council to attend meetings either in person or virtually, or provide comments in writing, as part of evidence gathering to inform the review.
- 2.10 Comparative information from all District Councils in Lincolnshire and authorities considered as statistical neighbours in respect of basic allowances and special responsibility allowances was also used by the Panel when undertaking its review.
- 2.11 The Chairman of the IRP will attend the meeting to present the Panel's report, including key outcomes and recommendations.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The full report and findings of the IRP is attached as Appendix A. The recommendations from the Panel are (also contained within Appendix A)

1.1. That the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances for the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Members, Overview and Scrutiny Chairs, together with the Opposition Allowance, remain the same.

- 1.2. *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Planning Committee Chairman be increased to a factor of 1.20 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - 1.3. *That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Governance and Audit Committee Chairman be increased to a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - 1.4. *That the Special Responsibility allowance for the Licensing Committee Chairman be increase to a factor of 0.80 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - 1.5. *That the Special Responsibility allowance for the Employment Committee Chairman be increased to a factor of 0.80 of the Basic Allowance.*
 - 1.6. *That a new Special Responsibility Allowance be provided for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council in recognition of their responsibility around chairing the Council meeting. This should be set as a factor of 1.20 of the Basic Allowance for the Chairman with the Vice-Chairman receiving 0.33 of that allowance.*
 - 1.7. *That the Vice-Chairman of a Committee continues to receive 0.33 of the Special Responsibility Allowance for the respective Chairman.*
 - 1.8. *That any revised or introduced allowance be backdated to the start of the municipal year.*
 - 1.9. *That allowances continue to be index-linked to any pay award to your Council employees.*
 - 1.10. *That the payment to the Independent Person (Standards) be index-linked.*
 - 1.11. *That the childcare and careers' allowances be the national living wage per hour with no cap.*
 - 1.12. *That the travel and allowances scheme be amended to provide for an additional 5p per mile, per passenger when the driver is carrying fellow Councillors on a business journey.*
 - 1.13. *That motorcycle allowance of 24p per mile and a bicycle allowance of 20p per mile be introduced.*
- 3.2. The re-procurement of a Remuneration Panel will take place during 2026.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 Full Council can decide to accept all, some, or none of the recommendations of the IRP.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. On 18 November 2025 the IRP met with several Councillors, and the Chief Executive to seek their views on potential changes to the Member Allowances Scheme.

6. Appendices

- 6.1. Appendix A – Independent Remuneration Panel report.
- 6.2. Appendix B – Independent Remuneration Panel report from 2022.

7. Useful Links

- 7.1 [IRP report \(South Holland\) – September 2010](#)
- 7.2 [IRP report \(Welland Panel\) – January 2014](#)

The Welland Partnership Members Remuneration Panel

Report to South Kesteven District Council Meeting

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. This Report has been prepared by the Independent Panel set up to make recommendations and provide guidance to the Council in respect of its scheme for Members' allowances.

1.2. The Report sets out the Panel's recommendations for the Council's consideration.

2. Framework

2.1. The Local Government (Members' Allowances) 2003 Regulations put in place a consolidated and simplified framework for allowances that covers Principal Councils and Parish and Town Councils.

2.2. Part 4 of the Regulations makes provision for the establishment of an Independent Panel to make recommendations concerning allowances, travel and subsistence provision. The Welland Remuneration Panel, comprising John Cade (Chair), Ian Davis and Gordon Wells is compliant with the necessary arrangements.

2.3. A Council is unable to revoke or amend its scheme of allowances without first considering the recommendations of an Independent Panel. Whilst the Council is not bound by the recommendations of the Panel, there is a duty placed upon it to consider the recommendations, publish the Panel's recommendations and publish its Scheme.

2.4. Essentially, legislation provides that Local Authorities' Schemes of Allowances:

- Must make provision for a Basic Allowance, payable to all Members
- May make provision for Special Responsibility Allowances
- May include provision for payment of travel and subsistence expenses
- May include provision for Co-optee Allowances
- May make provision for Carers' Allowances

2.5. Government guidance on the scheme has generally become more relaxed. There are, however, three constraints on the Panel's work which it is important to highlight.

- Attendance Allowances are prohibited.
- The Basic Allowance must be paid equally to all Members.
- Where one or more Groups on a Council form an Administration, a Special Responsibility Allowance must be paid to a Member of the Opposition – usually paid to the Leader of the Opposition.

2.6. Allowances can be backdated to the beginning of the financial year.

2.7. For the avoidance of doubt the Council has also adopted the good practice that only one Special Responsibility Allowance can be claimed.

3. Our way of working

3.1. As with our previous reviews for your Council, we are always keen to hear from as many Councillors as possible on the

scope of the allowances scheme. There is rarely a consensus of view – some Councillors emphasising the voluntary nature of the role with others believing there is a need for better remuneration. We need to be aware of these opinions in conjunction with the comparative information we look at from neighbouring and similar sized Councils.

- 3.2. Our Panel comprising John Cade (Chair), Ian Davis and Gordon Wells met to take evidence on Monday 17th November 2025.
- 3.3. Over the course of the day we met, in person, with Councillors Ashley Baxter, Virginia Moran, Nikki Manterfield and Ian Selby together with your Chief Executive, Karen Bradford.
- 3.4. We also received email contributions from twenty other Councillors.
- 3.5. We were also made aware that the Reform UK Group had submitted a motion to the Council on a reduction in Special Responsibility Allowances but we received no evidence to support this proposition.
- 3.6. We are very grateful to all those who gave us evidence. This is vital for us to gain an understanding of the context for our review.
- 3.7. The other key component to our work is to examine how South Kesteven's allowances compare with neighbouring and similar sized Authorities.

- 3.8. We are very grateful here for the comparative information provided to us by James Welbourn (Democratic Services Manager). The comparator Councils were: North Kesteven, Boston, City of Lincoln, East Lindsey, South Holland, Braintree, East Hampshire, Tonbridge and Malling, Waverley and West Lancashire.
- 3.9. James also provided us with excellent support throughout the process. Lucy also ably assisted us with some note taking.
4. Context
- 4.1. As a Panel we have been involved in reviewing your allowances for many years.
- 4.2. In our review of 2017, we acknowledged that Members were taking a more prominent role in the performance and promotion of the Council. This resulted in us recommending (and you agreeing at your Council meeting) increases in your allowances.
- 4.3. This meant that, in comparative terms with Councils of similar demographics and budgets, your allowances were nearly always in the top quartile.
- 4.4. Following our last review of March 2022 you agreed, at your Council meeting in May 2022, for reasons that we fully understand, “in the current economic climate, not to accept any increase in the Basic Allowance or Special Responsibility Allowances received by Councillors”.

- 4.5. In so far as the Special Responsibility Allowances were concerned this affected the Chairmen of Planning, Governance and Audit, Licensing and Employment Committees.

5. Findings

5.1. BASIC ALLOWANCE

- 5.1.1. The basic allowance is a particularly important allowance for two reasons. The first is that it is received by all Councillors. The second, that it is the building block for your Special Responsibility Allowances which are determined as a multiple of it.

- 5.1.2. Your current Basic Allowance is £6,735 and we believe this is appropriate.

5.2. SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

5.2.1. Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members

We believe the current factors of 3.5, 2.75 and 2.00 of Basic Allowance respectively remain appropriate.

5.2.2. Planning Committee Chairman

We received good evidence that the current Special Responsibility Allowance is out of kilter with other allowances given the responsibility placed on this post. The Planning Committee is a quasi-judicial body. There are also a number of significant planning applications in the pipeline that will be very complex and contentious over the next few years.

Consequently, we believe the factor of the Basic Allowance should increase from 0.90 to 1.20.

5.2.3. Governance and Audit Committee Chairman

We again received evidence that the allowance for this post should be increased. The Committee plays a pivotal role in the good governance arrangements for the Council and is also the key link with both District Audit and Internal Audit.

Consequently, we believe the factor of the Basic Allowance should increase from 0.67 to 1.00.

5.2.4. Licensing Committee Chairman

Once again, we believe that, looking across the Council's comparative allowances, there is a case for an increase in this allowance.

We believe the factor of the Basic Allowance should increase from 0.55 to 0.80.

5.2.5. Employment Committee Chairman

You have given to your Employment Committee a wider range of responsibilities than is usually the case in other Authorities.

We believe the factor of the Basic allowance should increase from 0.55 to 0.80.

5.2.6. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman

For good governance under a "Strong Leader" model it is important to have an effective scrutiny function.

We understand that since our last review you have increased the number of Scrutiny Committees from four to five. Whilst this seems a comparatively large number of Committees for

your size of Authority, the evidence we received was that they were working effectively and productively.

We believe the Special Responsibility Allowance is appropriately set as a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.

5.2.7. Opposition Allowances

And, as for scrutiny, so for Opposition Allowances. Opposition Members need to provide effective challenge.

We believe that the current Special Responsibility Allowance as a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance, shared on a pro-rata basis according to the numerical size of the Groups should remain.

5.2.8. Standards Committee

At your request, in July 2023, we undertook a “mini review” to look at two issues, one of which was an allowance for your newly established Standards Committee.

We believe that the allowance we recommended of a factor of 0.40 of the Basic Allowance for the Chairman should, in the light of the evidence we received, be increased to a factor of 0.60 of the Basic allowance. Whilst activity had been restricted by flux around the position of Monitoring Officer, the responsibility of this role needs to be reflected in the allowance.

5.2.9. Chairman of Council

We were asked to consider a Special Responsibility Allowance for the role of Chairman of the Council. Hither to the

Chairman (and Vice-Chairman) have received expenses from Council funding to meet costs associated with the ceremonial role of the post.

It has been our practice to recognise that the role of chairing the Council meeting with its associated preparation and follow-up deserves to be recognised by a Special Responsibility Allowance.

Chairing a Council meeting is a demanding task, crucial to the conducting of business and the reputation of the Council.

We will therefore recommend that the post attracts a Special Responsibility Allowance of a factor of 1.20 of Basic Allowance.

In making this recommendation we also expect the Council to continue to make separate provision for the expenses connected with the Chairman's ceremonial duties.

5.2.10. Vice Chairman

We believe that the Special Responsibility allowance for Vice Chairmen should remain at 0.33 of the Special Responsibility Allowance for their respective Chairman.

5.3. Independent Person (Standards) Allowance

We will recommend that the current payment of £1,500pa should now be index-linked in the same way as Councillor allowances.

5.4. Childcare and Carers' Allowance

This is a very important allowance if Councils are to ensure that people with caring responsibilities are able to fully participate in meetings of the Council. It needs also to be stressed that it is not just for childcare but also for care of independent adults.

5.5. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

Like most councils you currently have a car allowance rate of 45p per mile which is based on the HMRC rate to avoid the paying of tax or national insurance contributions.

We were also asked if it was possible to claim more if, to save overall costs, a lift was given to a fellow councillor attending a Council meeting.

We can advise that drivers carrying fellow employees on a business journey can receive an additional 5p per mile, per passenger, tax free.

We also believe that there should be a motorcycle allowance of 24p per mile and a bicycle allowance of 20p per mile, both of which would be tax free.

5.6. Index-Linking

We believe you should continue to index link allowances to any pay awards made to your District Council employees. This not only makes some attempt to match inflation but also avoids the need for periodic "catch-up" lump sum proposals which are much more difficult for the public to relate to their own circumstances.

5.7. Financial Implications

These will be affected by your decisions as to the timings of any of our recommendations.

The financial implications of our proposals are shown in the Appendix to our report.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. That the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances for the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Members, Overview and Scrutiny Chairs, together with the Opposition Allowance, remain the same.
- 6.2. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Planning Committee Chairman be increased to a factor of 1.20 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.3. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Governance and Audit Committee Chairman be increased to a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.4. That the Special Responsibility allowance for the Licensing Committee Chairman be increase to a factor of 0.80 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.5. That the Special Responsibility allowance for the Employment Committee Chairman be increased to a factor of 0.80 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.6. That a new Special Responsibility Allowance be provided for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council in recognition

of their responsibility around chairing the Council meeting.
This should be set as a factor of 1.20 of the Basic Allowance for the Chairman with the Vice-Chairman receiving 0.33 of that allowance.

- 6.7. That the Vice-Chairman of a Committee continues to receive 0.33 of the Special Responsibility Allowance for the respective Chairman.
- 6.8. That any revised or introduced allowance be backdated to the start of the municipal year.
- 6.9. That allowances continue to be index-linked to any pay award to your Council employees.
- 6.10. That the payment to the Independent Person (Standards) be index-linked.
- 6.11. That the childcare and careers' allowances be the national living wage per hour with no cap.
- 6.12. That the travel and allowances scheme be amended to provide for an additional 5p per mile, per passenger when the driver is carrying fellow Councillors on a business journey.
- 6.13. That motorcycle allowance of 24p per mile and a bicycle allowance of 20p per mile be introduced.

J. Cade

Chair, Welland Partnership Members Remuneration Panel

1/12/2025

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The Welland Partnership Members Remuneration Panel

Report to South Kesteven District Council Meeting

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This Report has been prepared by the Independent Panel set up to make recommendations and provide guidance to the Council in respect of its scheme for Members' allowances
- 1.2 The Report sets out the Panel's recommendations for the Council's consideration.

2. Framework

- 2.1 The Local Government (Members' Allowances) 2003 Regulations put in place a consolidated and simplified framework for allowances that covers Principal Councils and Parish and Town Councils.
- 2.2 Part 4 of the Regulations makes provision for the establishment of an Independent Panel to make recommendations concerning allowances, travel and subsistence and carers' provision. The Welland Remuneration Panel, comprising John Cade (Chairman), John Greenwood, Ian Davis and Gordon Wells, is compliant with the necessary arrangements. John Cade, John Greenwood and Gordon Wells undertook this review.
- 2.3 A Council is unable to revoke or amend its scheme of allowances without first considering the recommendations of an Independent Panel. Whilst the Council is not bound by the recommendations of the Panel, there is a duty placed upon it to consider the recommendations, publish the Panel's recommendations and publish its Scheme.

2.4 Essentially, legislation provides that Local Authorities' Schemes of Allowances:

- Must make provision for a Basic Allowance, payable to all Members.
- May make provision for Special Responsibility Allowances.
- May include provision for payment of travel and subsistence expenses.
- May include provision for Co-optee Allowances
- May make provision for Carers' Allowances

2.5 Government guidance on the scheme has generally become more relaxed. There are, however, three constraints on the Panel's work which it is important to highlight:

- Attendance Allowances are prohibited.
- The Basic Allowance must be paid equally to all Members.
- Where one or more Groups on a Council form an Administration, a Special Responsibility Allowance must be paid to a Member of the Opposition – usually paid to the Leader of the Opposition.

2.6 Allowances can be backdated to the beginning of the financial year.

2.7 For the avoidance of doubt the Council has also adopted the good practice that only one Special Responsibility Allowance can be claimed.

3. Our way of working

- 3.1. As with our previous reviews for your Council, we are always keen to hear from as many Councillors as possible on the scope of the allowances scheme. There is rarely a consensus of view – some Councillors emphasising the voluntary nature of the role while others believe there is a need for better remuneration. We need to be aware of these opinions in conjunction with the comparative information we look at from neighbouring and similar sized Councils.
- 3.2 Our Panel met to take evidence on Wednesday 9th March 2022. John Cade and Gordon Wells attended in person, John Greenwood by Zoom video link.
- 3.3 Over the course of the day we met, in person, with Councillors Kelham Cooke, Helen Crawford, Paul Wood, Sarah Trotter, Robert Reid and Barry Dobson. We met, via Zoom, with Councillors Amanda Wheeler, Nick Robins and Penny Robins. We also saw your Chief Executive, Karen Bradford. In addition, we received a written submission from Councillor Nicola Manterfield.
- 3.4 We are very grateful to all those who gave us evidence. This is vital for us to gain an understanding of the context for our review.
- 3.5 The other key component to our work is to examine how South Kesteven's allowances compare with neighbouring and similar sized Authorities.
- 3.6 We are very grateful here for the comparative information provided to us by Graham Watts (Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer).
The comparator Councils were: North Kesteven, Boston, City of Lincoln, East Lindsey, South Holland, Braintree, East Hampshire, Tonbridge and Malling, Waverley and West Lancashire.
- 3.7 Graham also provided us with excellent support throughout the process.

4. Context

- 4.1 An important component of our study is the last review we undertook for you. This was in November 2017. This inevitably provides the platform for any subsequent changes.
- 4.2 A hallmark of that review was the evidence we received that Members were taking a more prominent role in the performance and promotion of the Council. That led us to recommend some significant increases in allowances.
- 4.3 This means that, in comparative terms with Councils of similar demographics and budgets, your allowances are nearly always in the top quartile.
- 4.4 We wanted to understand if this pro-active, “Member-led” approach was still in evidence. A recent independent Peer Review (overseen by the Local Government Association), whilst identifying issues still to addressed, essentially confirmed this to be the case.
- 4.5 We also recognise that South Kesteven is a large area with a population of 156,000 and with considerable housing growth in the pipeline. It is also one of only a few Authorities in the country with a positive five-year land supply in respect of housing allocation, with employment growth projected to be significant as well.
- 4.6 We understand your wish both to attract and retain motivated and able Councillors.

5. Findings

5.1 Basic Allowance

- 5.1.1. The Basic Allowance is a particularly important allowance for two reasons. The first is that it is received by all Councillors. The second is that it is the building block for your Special Responsibility Allowances which are determined as multiples of it.

5.1.2. Your current Basic Allowance is £5,886.00 p.a. This places you well into the top quartile of comparator allowances yet is less than an Authority with fewer Members and of smaller size.

5.1.3. In looking at whether there was a case for any increase in the Basic Allowance our attention was drawn to the fact that Councillors are currently eligible for a “broadband allowance”. With the advent of different and competitive broadband packages this seemed to us an antediluvian payment. We thought that incorporating an element of this into the basic allowance was more appropriate.

5.1.4. We decided that an uplift of 2% of the Basic Allowance could be justified. This would also mean a corresponding uplift of all Special Responsibility Allowances by 2%

5.1.5. We think you might want to consider the timing for the introduction of this increase. There is a case for delaying it until after the next all-out elections in 2023.

5.2. Special Responsibility Allowances

5.2.1. Leader

5.2.1.1. Many Members spoke of the energetic and skilful leadership of the post-holder. There is no doubting that the role requires a full-time commitment.

5.2.1.2. We believe, in actual and comparative terms, that the current factor of 3.5 of the Basic Allowance remains appropriate.

5.2.2. Deputy Leader

5.2.2.1. We believe the current factor of 2.75 of the Basic Allowance remains appropriate.

5.2.3. Cabinet Members

5.2.3.1. We believe the current factor of 2.00 of the Basic Allowance remains appropriate.

5.2.4. Planning Committee Chairman

5.2.4.1. We received good evidence that the current Special Responsibility Allowance is out of kilter with other allowances given the responsibility placed on this post. The Planning Committee is a quasi-judicial body. There are also a number of significant planning applications in the pipeline that will be very complex and contentious over the next few years.

5.2.4.2. Consequently, we believe the factor of the Basic Allowance should increase from 0.9 to 1.00.

5.2.5. Governance and Audit Committee Chairman

5.2.5.1. We also received compelling evidence that the allowance for this post should be increased. The Committee plays a pivotal role in the good governance arrangements for the Council and is also the key link with both District Audit and Internal Audit.

5.2.5.2. Consequently, we believe the factor of the Basic Allowance should increase from 0.67 to 1.00.

5.2.6. Licensing Committee Chairman

5.2.6.1. We believe that looking across the Council's comparative allowances there is a case for an increase in this allowance.

5.2.6.2. We believe the factor of the Basic Allowance should increase from 0.55 to 0.8.

5.2.7. Employment Committee Chairman

5.2.7.1. You have given to your Employment Committee a wider range of responsibilities than is usually the case in other Authorities. However, all witnesses spoke very positively about the way in which this cross-party Committee is working.

5.2.7.2. We believe the factor of the Basic Allowance should increase from 0.67 to 0.8.

5.2.8. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman

5.2.8.1. For good governance under a “Strong Leader” model it is important to have an effective scrutiny function.

5.2.8.2. We understand that you have just had a review of the overview and scrutiny structure by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

5.2.8.3. We believe the Special Responsibility Allowance should remain as a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.

5.2.9. Opposition Allowances

5.2.9.1. And, as for scrutiny, so for Opposition Allowances. Opposition Members need to provide effective challenge.

5.2.9.2. We believe that the current Special Responsibility Allowance as a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance, shared on a pro-rata basis according to the numerical size of the Groups, should remain.

5.2.10. Constitution Committee Chairman

5.2.10.1. We believe that the current Special Responsibility allowance as a factor of 0.45 of the Basic allowance should remain.

5.2.11. Companies Committee Chairman

5.2.11.1. We believe that the current Special Responsibility allowance as a factor of 0.67 of the Basic Allowance should remain.

5.2.12. Vice Chairmen

5.2.12.1. We believe that the Special Responsibility allowance for Vice Chairmen should remain at 0.33 of the Special Responsibility Allowance for their respective Chairman.

5.3. Independent Person (Standards) Allowance

5.3.1. It is important that this allowance is seen as reflecting the responsibility attached to the role and can attract candidates with appropriate skills.

5.3.2. We believe that the allowance for this role should increase from its current level to £1,092.00 p.a. to £1,500.00 p.a.

5.4. Childcare and Carers' Allowance

5.4.1. This is a very important allowance if Councils are to ensure that people from a broad demographic are able to fully participate in meetings of the Council. It needs also to be stressed that it is not just for childcare but also for care of dependent adults.

5.4.2. We would also ask again that your Audit section look at what flexibility they could give in meeting costs. The example was given to us of when a child might need to stay in the afterschool club where the parent only gets a term-to-term bill but no invoice with dates.

5.4.3. The current allowances are £5.89 per hour with an annual cap of £1,100.

5.4.4. We believe that the hourly rate should be the same as the national minimum wage – currently £9.50 per hour with an annual cap of 200 hours.

5.4.5. Hereafter, until the next Independent Remuneration Panel's report or for a period of 4 years, whichever is the sooner, the hourly rate should increase in line with the national minimum wage.

5.5. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

5.5.1. We make no proposal for changes.

5.6. Index-Linking

We believe you should continue to index link allowances to any pay awards to District Council employees. This not only makes some attempt to match inflation but also avoids the need for periodic “catch-up” lump sum proposals which are much more difficult for the public to relate to their own circumstances.

5.7 Financial Implications

5.7.1. These will be affected by your decisions as to the timings of any of our recommendations.

5.7.2. The financial implications of our proposals are shown in the Appendix to our report.

6. Recommendations

We recommend to full Council:

- 6.1. That the Basic Allowance be increased to £6,004.00pa and that consideration be given to the timing of its introduction.
- 6.2. That any uplift in Special Responsibility Allowances be effective from your 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Council.
- 6.3. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader should be a factor of 3.5 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.4. That the special Responsibility allowance for the Deputy Leader should be a factor of 2.75 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.5. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for Cabinet Members should be a factor of 2.00 of the Basic Allowance.

- 6.6. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Planning Committee Chairman should be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.7. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Governance and the Audit Committee Chairmen should be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.8. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Licensing Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.8 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.9. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Employment Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.8 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.10. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman should be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.11. That the Opposition Allowance be a factor of 1.00 of the Basic Allowance and be paid on a pro-rata basis according to Group size.
- 6.12. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Constitution Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.45 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.13. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Companies Committee Chairman should be a factor of 0.67 of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.14. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for Vice Chairmen should be a factor of 0.33 of the Special Responsibility Allowance of their respective Chairman.
- 6.15. That the Allowance paid to the Independent Person (Standards) should be £1,500.00 p.a.
- 6.16. That the Childcare and Carers' Allowance should be £9.50 per hour with an annual cap of 200 hours.

- 6.17. That until the next Independent Remuneration Panel's report or for a period of 4 years, whichever is the sooner, the hourly allowance for childcare and carers be increased in line with the increase in the national minimum wage.
- 6.18. That no change be made to your Travel and Subsistence Scheme.
- 6.19. That allowances continue to be linked to any annual salary increase awarded to South Kesteven District Officers and that such index-linking continue until the next Independent Remuneration Panel's report or for a period of 4 years, whichever is the sooner.
- 6.20. That the broadband allowance be removed.

John Cade,
Chairman, Welland Partnership Members Remuneration Panel

March 2022

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday, 29 January 2026

Report of Chief Executive

Appointments to Committees and Panels of the Council

Report Author

James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

✉ james.welbourn@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

All Political Group Leaders are responsible for nominating Members from within their respective Groups to each of the Committees/Panels, in accordance with the political proportionality of the Authority as appropriate.

Recommendations

Full Council is asked to:

- 1. Note the changes in political proportionality of the Council and the consequent allocation of seats on committees (Appendix A).**
- 2. Appoint Members to its Committees and Panels, in accordance with political balance.**

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?

(All Wards);

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

1.1 There are no significant financial implications associated with this report.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

1.2 Appointments to the Council's Committees and Panels must comply with the relevant legislation, as set out in this report, and provisions within the Council's Constitution.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 introduced statutory requirements that, where a relevant authority has a membership divided into different political groups, it must ensure that appointments reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole.
- 2.2. At the annual meeting of Full Council, and then subsequently at meetings in July and September 2025 Members decided the allocation of seats to political groups, in accordance with the Regulations. Members are asked to do this again in light of a political group change.
- 2.3. Those appointments to which the rules of political balance apply are:
- Ordinary Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council.
 - Advisory Committees and any Sub-Committees appointed by an Advisory Committee.
 - Specified prescribed bodies where at least three seats have to be filled by the relevant Authority
- 2.4 The legislation also requires that in appointing members on a politically proportional basis, it should give effect, so far as reasonably practicable, to the following principles:

- a) That not all seats are appointed to the same political groups.
 - b) That a political group with an overall Council majority gets a majority of seats allocated.
 - c) Subject to a) and b) that the total number of seats each political group has on all ordinary Committees is in proportion to that group's share of seats on the whole Council.
 - d) Subject to a) and c) that each political group has the same proportion of seats as it holds on the Council as a whole.
- 2.5 The Regulations mean that Members who are not aligned to a political group are not considered as part of the calculation. They do not have a right to be appointed to any Council Committee or Panel.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. When making appointments, the following factors must be taken into consideration:
- In order to demonstrate a robust and effective scrutiny process, no member of Cabinet may sit on an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - Membership of the Chief Executive's Appeal Panel must include at least one member of Cabinet.
 - Members of the Chief Executive's Appeal Panel should not be Members of the Employment Committee. This is to ensure that any appeal lodged is considered by Members who have not previously been involved with any matters being challenged.
- 3.2 Political groups can 'gift' any of their allocated seats to another political group, or to a designated individual Member of the Council.
- 3.3 Under a political balance calculation across all seats on ordinary committees, groups are allocated a proportion of committee seats which closely matches their percentage of seats on Full Council.

4. Committee Changes

- 4.1 On 22 October 2025 Phil Gadd resigned as a Councillor leaving a vacancy for Belmont ward. On 11 December 2025 a by-election was held, and Councillor Richard Litchfield was elected.
- 4.2 On 29 October 2025 Richard Dixon-Warren resigned as a Councillor leaving a vacancy for Aveland ward. On 11 December 2025 a by-election was held, and Councillor Kyle Abel was elected.

- 4.3 Under a political balance calculation across all seats on ordinary committees, groups are allocated a proportion of committee seats which closely matches their percentage of seats on Full Council. These calculations are attached at Appendix A.
- 4.4 Group Leaders met on 20 January 2026 and discussed the proposed political balance. The list below contains the proposed changes to committees:
- **Culture and Leisure OSC** - Conservative group lose one seat, gained by Reform UK group.
 - **Environment OSC** – Democratic Independent Group lose one seat, gained by the South Kesteven Independent Group. However, the South Kesteven Independent Group have gifted it back to the Democratic Independent Group.
 - **Employment Committee** – Conservative group lose one seat, gained by Reform UK group.
 - **Licensing Committee** – South Kesteven Independent Group lose one seat (currently a gift to the Conservative Group) and Reform UK group gain.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 Full Council must make appointments as prescribed by legislation and the Council's Constitution. The report facilitates this requirement.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The latest political balance calculation for the Council has been shared and discussed with Political Group Leaders in advance of the publication of this report.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/42/contents>
- 7.2 Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1990/1553/contents/made>

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – political balance.

SKDC Political Balance

Political balance on the Council					
Group			No.	%	
A	Conservative	Con	17	32.0755%	
B	Democratic Independent	DIG	9	16.9811%	
C	Grantham Independent	GIG	7	13.2075%	
D	Independent	TIG	5	9.4340%	
E	Reform UK	Ref	5	9.4340%	
F	SK Independent	SKI	3	5.6604%	
G	Lib Dem	L-D	3	5.6604%	
H	Green	Grn	2	3.7736%	
I	Labour	Lab	2	3.7736%	

Council of	53	100%

INCLUDING LICENSING

Councillors		Con	DIG	GIG	TIG	REF	SKI	L-D	Grn	Lab
	53	17	9	7	5	5	3	3	2	2
	100%	32.08%	16.98%	13.21%	9.43%	9.43%	5.66%	5.66%	3.77%	3.77%
		32%	16%	13%	9%	9%	6%	6%	4%	4%

	Places	Con	Dem Ind	GI	Ind	Reform	SK Ind	L-D	Green	Lab	
Culture	9	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	Con lose 1, Reform gain
FEOSC	9	3	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	
Housing	9	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	
Rural	9	3	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	
Environment	9	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	Dem Ind lose 1, SK Ind gain
Planning	13	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	
G and A	9	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	
Employment	9	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	Con Lose 1, Reform gain
Standards	11	4	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	
Licensing	11	4	2	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	SK Ind lose one (gift to Con), Reform gain
Total	98.00	31	16	13	9	9	6	6	4	4	

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday 29 January 2026

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

Fees and Charges Proposals 2026/27

Report Author

David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

✉ david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To set out the proposed fees and charges for the financial year 2026/27.

Recommendations

Council is asked to:

- 1. Approve the discretionary Fees and Charges for 2026/27 set out at Appendix A (Part A).**
- 2. Approve the discretionary Fees and Charges for 2026/27 set out at Appendix A (Part B)**
- 3. Note the statutory Fees and Charges for 2026/27 set out at Appendix B.**
- 4. Approve the Charging Policy set out in Appendix C.**
- 5. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer in consultation with Leader of the Council, Cabinet member for Finance, HR and Economic Development to set the commercial charges for Building Control.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	All
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The financial implications of the proposals are incorporated into the draft budget for 2026/27. Any changes to the proposed fees and charges as set out in the report will have an impact on the proposed Budget Framework which is scheduled to be presented to Council for approval on 26 February 2026.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Any legal implications associated with this report are referenced in the body of the report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. Fees and charges are a key element of the Council's funding. They generate approximately £8.5m towards the delivery costs for specific services. In order to ensure a consistent and transparent approach to fee setting, the principles and criteria set out in the Charging Policy have been applied.
- 2.2. The Council makes charges for a wide range of services. These charges are either discretionary (set by the Council) or under statutory powers (set by the Government). The two categories are defined as follows:
 - **Discretionary** – These are charges local authorities can set independently. When setting discretionary fees and charges, the Council's approach should be clear and in line with the principles set out in the Charging Policy.
 - **Statutory** – These charges are set by central government; therefore it cannot be assumed that they will change annually in line with other fees and charges set by the Council. Nevertheless, the income received from statutory charges contributes to the overall financial position of the Council.

Discretionary Charges

- 2.3 The proposed discretionary charges were discussed at the Budget – Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) on 13 January 2026. Feedback from that meeting was considered by Cabinet on 15 January 2026.

Two specific areas have been reviewed and amended:

HMO (Houses in Multiple Occupation) – Licensing Charges

- 2.4 In response to feedback from Members, a further review of HMO Licence Fees has been undertaken to ensure: a) full cost recovery; and b) the fee structure accurately reflects the variation in the sizes of HMO premises.
- 2.5 This review has included analysis of:
- benchmarking data to compare South Kesteven's fees and charges with those of our statistical and geographical neighbours.
 - and a review of the time incurred by the Council in undertaking the necessary application, inspection and determination process for the issuing of a licence. Analysis was undertaken to determine the variation in application categories specifically the number of bedrooms in any application.
- 2.6 As a result of the review, it is proposed to introduce a sliding scale of fees linked to the number of bedrooms within each HMO. Furthermore, proposed fees for licence renewals have been increased, also with a sliding scale.

Green Waste Charges

- 2.7 The proposal included in the report that was debated at the Budget – Joint OSC was to support a £1.50 increase for the first bin and a 50p increase for all subsequent bins.
- 2.8 This proposed increase was set within the context of potential changes to the frequency of collection, specifically the cessation of collections during January and February. This suggestion was prompted by data showing very low tonnages of green waste are collected in the winter.
- 2.9 The proposed changes to the green waste service were presented to the Environment OSC on 13 January 2026 as part of a revised Waste Policy. The Committee did vote narrowly in favour of the revised policy, but Members expressed a range of concerns.

- 2.10 On 15 January 2026, Cabinet considered feedback from the OSC and decided not to proceed with changes to the collection arrangements at this time. Instead, in order to move towards cost recovery, it is proposed to increase charges by **£2.00** per household for the first bin and **£1.50** for all additional bins.
- 2.11 The overall approach to fee setting for 2026/27 is to ensure increases in charges contribute towards the costs of delivering services. A summary of the proposed increases is outlined in **Table 1** below with a detailed breakdown shown at **Appendix A (Parts A and B)**.

Table 1 – Summary Fees and Charges Proposals

HEADING	PROPOSAL FOR 2026/27	INCORPORATION OF POLICY PRINCIPLES
Arts Centres	Changes to charges are based on competitive pricing against alternative local options	Cost recovery or market comparisons
Bus Stations	0%	Subsidised – no increase is proposed to encourage bus operators to make se of the bus stations for passengers
Car parking charges	0%	Tariff changes were introduced in January 2025 and will be subject to a post implementation review in February 2026.
Markets	0% Charges waived for Bourne during 26/27 while Town Hall works are underway	Subsidised
Waste Services	£2 increase for first green waste bin and £1 increase for subsequent bins	Cost Recovery
Pre-planning advice and street naming and numbering charges	Increase by 4%	Cost Recovery
Environmental Health	Full cost recovery analysis has resulted in some charges being reduced	Cost Recovery
Grantham Cemetery	Increase by 5%	Cost Recovery

Leisure Centres	LeisureSK Ltd may increase charges to an upper limit of 3%.	Market analysis to be undertaken with other competitors will be used to set fee levels.
Licencing	Full cost recovery analysis undertaken	Cost Recovery
HMO Licences	Introduction of new scale of fees depending upon size of HMO establishment	Cost Recovery
Street Trading	New Charge	Benchmarking undertaken with other local authorities
Community rooms & guest rooms (HRA)	Increase by 3.8%	This is in line with CPI for rent setting as part of the HRA but a review of facilities underway and report recommending options expected during 2026/27 which may alter the charges in year.

Arts Centres

- 2.12 These charges have been benchmarked against alternative local options to ensure costs are recovered wherever possible and competitively set where appropriate.

Bus Stations

- 2.13 It is proposed that there is no increase in the bus operator departure charges for 2026/27. This is to encourage bus operators to use the bus stations for travelling passengers.

Car Parking

- 2.14 Car parking charges for all Council operated pay and display car parks were reviewed during 2024, leading to the introduction of the current charges on 20 January 2025. It was agreed to review the impact of the new tariffs after a 6-month period. The results of this will be considered by the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2026. No changes are therefore proposed at this time.

Street Markets

- 2.15 It is recognised that the weekly markets in Bourne, Grantham and Stamford are an integral element of the economic vibrancy of each town. Recovery and rejuvenation of the markets is well underway following the implementation of the Market Action Plan.
- 2.16 In order to consolidate this recovery (particularly at Grantham), it is recommended that charges are not increased in 2026/27. For Bourne, it is proposed to waive charges during 2026/27 during restoration of Bourne Town Hall takes place because these works are likely to be disruptive. Suspending the charge should encourage traders to continue to operate during this period.

Waste Services

- 2.17 The current charges and proposed increased charges in respect of bulky waste and green waste charges are shown in **Table 2 below**: These have been increased in order to maintain the principle of cost recovery for delivery of this service.

Table 2 – Proposed Bulky Waste and Green Waste Charges

	2025/26 Current	2026/27 Proposed
Bulk household items – first item	£21	£22
-each additional item	£11	£12
Provision of Green Bin (all new or additional bins)	£29	£30
Delivery of bins	£14	£15
Annual Collection Charge (first bin)	£53	£55
Annual Collection Charge (each subsequent bin)	£44	£45

Licencing

- 2.18 Taxi Licence charges have been reviewed in line with a new proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy. It is proposed to implement these new charges with effect from 1 February 2026.
- 2.19 A new Street Trading Permit charge linked to the refreshed Street Trading Policy is proposed for 2026/27. The refreshed policy is due to be presented to the Cabinet in March 2026 and, subject to the decision, a new charge may be introduced.

Discretionary Planning Charges

- 2.20 In line with the Charging Policy various fees including Pre-Planning Advice and Street Name and Numbering have been increased in line with inflationary service cost pressures. These have been calculated at **4%**, to maintain the principle of cost recovery. However, there are others which, after undertaking a review of current processes have resulted in some charge reductions.

Environmental Health

- 2.21 As part of the budget setting process a review of the Environmental Health fees has been undertaken. The outcome of this has resulted in proposals for some charges to be reduced, and others increased, to ensure they accurately reflect the cost of undertaking each service.

Cemetery

- 2.22 Charges have been increased by **5%** to ensure cost recovery for this service.

Leisure Centres

- 2.23 The Council is able to set an upper limit for leisure centre charges. These proposed to be increased by 3% for 2026/27. LeisureSK Ltd can increase up to that limit. The company will benchmark against competitor organisations when setting fee levels.

Service charges

- 2.24 In line with previous years these charges have been increased by CPI in line with the HRA rent setting process at **3.8%**. However, a review of facilities and usage of service charges in sheltered housing schemes is currently being undertaken and a report recommending options is expected to be presented to Members during 2026/27. This will cover communal rooms, guest rooms and laundry charges. Once the review is finalised an updated schedule of charges maybe proposed accordingly.
- 2.25 Full details of the proposed discretionary fees and charges for 2026/27 are shown at **Appendix A (parts A and B)**.

Building Control

- 2.26 These fees are commercially sensitive and set in conjunction with East Midlands Building Consultancy (EMBC) Board who operate the service for the three authorities. It is proposed to delegate authority for setting fees related to EMBC to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development.

Regulatory Charges

- 2.27 Details of the regulatory fees and charges for 2026/27 are shown at **Appendix B**.
- 2.28 Planning charges are expected to be increased by Government in line with CPI (Consumer Price Index) as at September 2025 (which was **3.8%**). Formal confirmation of any increase is expected by March 2026.
- 2.29 Statutory Licencing charges have remained unchanged for several years and there are currently no announcements with respect to any proposed increases. It is therefore expected these charges will remain as outlined in **Appendix B** for 2026/27.

Charging Policy

- 2.30 The setting of fees and charges is incorporated within the medium-term financial planning and budget setting process. An integral purpose of fee setting is to meet specific objectives and priorities of the Corporate Plan. The Charging Policy sets out an overall policy framework to support and practical guide in the approach to the setting of fees and charges.
- 2.31 Following an internal audit recommendation, the Policy has been reviewed and updated. This is attached at **Appendix C**.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The key considerations are outlined within section 2 of the report.

4. Other options considered

- 4.1 The alternative options are considered as part of the report in section 2.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 Fees and charges are an integral part of the budget setting process and are reviewed on an annual basis.

6 Consultation

- 6.1 The proposed Fees and charges were presented to The Budget – Joint OSC on the 13 January 2026 for consideration and feedback to Cabinet
- 6.2 Taxi licences were also reviewed by the Environment OSC on 13 January 2026.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 **Appendix A (Part A)** – Proposed Discretionary Fees and Charges with a potential Disclosable Pecuniary Interest
- 7.2 **Appendix A (Part B)** – Proposed Discretionary Fees and Charges without a potential Disclosable Pecuniary Interest
- 7.2 **Appendix B** – Statutory Fees and Charges
- 7.3 **Appendix C** – Charging Policy

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Appendix A Part A

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
1	BUS STATION - GRANTHAM				
	Per Departure	01/04/2022	0.87	0.87	Included
	<u>Minimum Charge</u>				
	1-75 departures per annum	01/04/2022	57.40	57.40	Included
2	BUS STATION - STAMFORD				
	Per Departure	01/04/2022	0.87	0.87	Included
	<u>Minimum Charge</u>				
	1-75 departures per annum	01/04/2022	57.40	57.40	Included
3	BUS STATION - BOURNE				
	Per Departure	01/04/2022	0.87	0.87	Included
	<u>Minimum Charge</u>				
	1-75 departures per annum	01/04/2022	57.40	57.40	Included

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	LICENCES				
1	<u>Hackney Carriage and Private Hire *</u>				
	Driver requirements - 3year licence & 1year licence				
	Driver's licence - 3 Year - Standard Licence Period	01/04/2024	310.25	220.00	O/Scope
	Driver's licence - Annual (aged 65yrs or above and/or medical condition)	01/04/2024	125.00	80.00	O/Scope
	Driver's licence - One-off annual badge (up to 65yrs without medical condition)	01/04/2026	N/A	80.00	O/Scope
	English Language Skills Test - Retest (initial test free)	01/04/2024	46.50	47.50	O/Scope
	Enhanced DBS disclosure fee (paid to third party - Care Check)	01/04/2024	38.00	0.00	O/Scope
	Medical (completed and to be paid to Doctor)	01/04/2026	N/A	0.00	O/Scope
	Operator Licences				
	Private Hire Operator Licence - 5 Year	01/04/2024	191.00	202.50	O/Scope
	Changes and Replacements				
	Change to dual licence (mid year)	01/04/2024	48.00	50.00	O/Scope
	Replacement drivers badge (sent by Royal Mail)	01/04/2024	29.00	26.00	O/Scope
	Replacement drivers badge (collected from Customer Services)	01/04/2024	35.75	31.50	O/Scope
	Replacement vehicle plate	01/04/2024	69.30	67.50	Included
	Replacement licence certificate	01/04/2024	23.00	21.00	O/Scope
	Replacement vehicle bracket	01/04/2024	16.80	16.80	Included
	Replacement internal vehicle plate (sent by royal mail)	01/04/2024	30.50	28.00	O/Scope
	Replacement internal vehicle plates (collected from Customer Services)	01/04/2024	37.25	33.00	O/Scope
	Transfer of vehicle ownership	01/04/2024	47.00	43.50	O/Scope
	Change of registration number ie cherished number plates	01/04/2024	106.00	98.00	O/Scope
2	<u>Annual vehicle licence</u>				
	Private Hire	01/04/2024	272.00	231.50	O/Scope
	Hackney Carriage	01/04/2024	298.50	212.00	O/Scope
	20% reduction for LPG/Hybrid/Wheelchair vehicles: Private Hire	01/04/2024	217.50	169.50	O/Scope
	20% reduction for LPG/Hybrid/Wheelchair vehicles: Hackney	01/04/2024	238.75	185.00	O/Scope
	50% reduction for electric/zero emissions vehicles: Private Hire	01/04/2024	136.00	106.00	O/Scope
	50% reduction for electric/zero emissions vehicles: Hackney	01/04/2024	149.25	116.00	O/Scope
	Exemption from displaying Private Hire plate	01/04/2024	102.00	91.50	O/Scope
	Exemption from displaying Private Hire plate (renewal fee)	01/04/2024	64.00	57.00	O/Scope
3	<u>Credit for unexpired days due to change of vehicle</u>				
	Private Hire	01/04/2024	0.75	0.58	O/Scope
	Hackney Carriage	01/04/2024	0.82	0.63	O/Scope

* Subject to approval

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	MARKETS - GRANTHAM				
1	Standard Stall (3.05m x 1.22m)	01/04/2023	24.40	24.40	Exempt
	Standard Casual Stall (3.05m x 1.22m)	01/04/2023	27.10	27.10	Exempt
2	Pitch (3.05m x 3.05m)	01/04/2023	22.70	22.70	Exempt
	Casual Pitch (3.05m x 3.05m)	01/04/2023	23.80	23.80	Exempt
	Hot food & drinks units	01/04/2023	27.10	27.10	Exempt
	There are financial incentives in place to encourage new traders to Grantham Market. These will be discussed upon application.				
3	<u>Vehicles parked for storage</u>				
	Cars and light vans	01/04/2023	7.60	7.60	Included
	Large vehicles	01/04/2023	11.30	11.30	Included
	MARKETS - STAMFORD				
4	Standard Stall (3.05m x 1.22m)	01/04/2023	28.10	28.10	Exempt
	Standard Casual Stall (3.05m x 1.22m)	01/04/2023	31.40	31.40	Exempt
5	Pitch (3.05m x 1.22m)	01/04/2023	24.90	24.90	Exempt
	Casual Pitch (3.05m x 3.05m)	01/04/2023	28.10	28.10	Exempt
	Hot food & drinks units	01/04/2023	31.40	31.40	Exempt
6	Craft fair - Table	01/04/2023	29.20	29.20	Exempt
7	Craft fair - Stall	01/04/2023	35.20	35.20	Exempt
8	<u>Vehicles parked for storage</u>				
	Cars and light vans	01/04/2023	7.60	7.60	Included
	Large vehicles	01/04/2023	11.90	11.90	Included
	MARKETS - BOURNE				
	Charges for Bourne Market are waived for 26/27 during Town Hall works				
9	Standard Stall (3.05m x 1.22m)	01/04/2023	21.60	0.00	Exempt
	Standard Casual Stall (3.05m x 1.22m)	01/04/2023	23.80	0.00	Exempt
10	Pitch (3.05m x 3.05m)	01/04/2023	18.40	0.00	Exempt
	Casual Pitch (3.05m x 3.05m)	01/04/2023	18.90	0.00	Exempt
	Hot food & drinks units	01/04/2023	23.80	0.00	Exempt
11	<u>Vehicles parked for storage</u>				
	Cars and light vans	01/04/2023	8.10	0.00	Included
	Large vehicles	01/04/2023	11.90	0.00	Included
12	Hire of stall for private function (collection only)*	01/04/2023	12.40	12.40	Exempt
	FOR ALL MARKETS				
13	Farmers market - supply of stall cover in addition to standard stall charge	01/04/2023	1.70	1.70	Exempt
	Excessive Waste Surcharge (per stall)	01/04/2023	6.00	6.00	Included

* any associated costs with delivery and set up will be charged accordingly

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	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26	2026/27	VAT
	STAGED PERFORMANCES				
	The theatres and ballrooms are available for hire for theatrical productions, concerts, lectures, demonstrations, films and other performing arts events. Prices are below:				
1	Guildhall Arts Centre, Grantham				
	<u>Theatre Hire</u>				
	Performances - Commercial	01/04/2025	440.00	450.00	Exempt
	Performances - Commercial weekend	01/04/2025	460.00	480.00	Exempt
	Performances - Non Profit making	01/04/2025	410.00	430.00	Exempt
	Run of Performances				
	First Performance	01/04/2025	390.00	400.00	Exempt
	Ongoing performances	01/04/2025	350.00	360.00	Exempt
	Dress or technical rehearsals	01/04/2025	270.00	280.00	Exempt
	Rehearsals/get in	01/04/2024	180.00	190.00	Exempt
	Lecture/demonstrations (Per Lecture, Daytime)	01/04/2025	150.00	160.00	Exempt
	Lecture/demonstrations (Per Lecture, Evening)	01/04/2025	270.00	280.00	Exempt
	Set up charge/technical support (max. 6 hours)	01/04/2025	190.00	200.00	Exempt
2	Stamford Arts Centre				
	<u>Theatre Hire</u>				
	Performances - Commercial	01/04/2025	440.00	450.00	Exempt
	Performances - Commercial weekend	01/04/2025	460.00	480.00	Exempt
	Performances - Non Profit making	01/04/2025	410.00	430.00	Exempt
	Run of Performances				
	First Performance	01/04/2025	390.00	400.00	Exempt
	Ongoing performances	01/04/2025	350.00	360.00	Exempt
	Dress or technical rehearsals	01/04/2025	270.00	280.00	Exempt
	Rehearsals/get in	01/04/2024	180.00	190.00	Exempt
	Lecture/demonstrations (Per Lecture, Daytime)	01/04/2025	150.00	160.00	Exempt
	Lecture/demonstrations (Per Lecture, Evening)	01/04/2025	270.00	280.00	Exempt
	Set up charge/technical support (max. 6 hours)	01/04/2025	190.00	200.00	Exempt
	Film Hire	01/04/2025	290.00	300.00	Exempt
3	Bourne Corn Exchange				
	<u>Theatre Hire - Main Hall</u>				
	Performances - Commercial, if tickets sold by venue*	01/04/2025	250.00	260.00	Exempt
	Performances - Commercial, if selling own tickets	01/04/2025	260.00	270.00	Exempt
	Performances - Non Profit making	01/04/2025	230.00	240.00	Exempt
	Additional performances of same show (access from 5pm)	01/04/2025	220.00	230.00	Exempt
	Dress/Tech Rehearsals (max 8 hours)	01/04/2025	170.00	180.00	Exempt
	Rehearsals (max 8 hours)	01/04/2025	150.00	160.00	Exempt
	Set up charge/technical support (max. 8 hours)	01/04/2025	180.00	190.00	Exempt
	Performers Rights Society charges may be applicable in addition to the above rates				
	Hire conditions are available giving details of equipment and support offered; quotations provided on request.				
	* Commission is applicable				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
4	WEDDING RECEPTIONS, PARTIES AND OTHER ROOM HIRE All three venues are available for wedding parties and similar functions. Packages are available to include provision of bars and catering. Prices are below.				
	Guildhall Arts Centre, Grantham Casually let rooms (per hour)				
	Ballroom Ballroom - hourly day rate up to 6pm 01/04/2025 47.00 50.00 Exempt Ballroom full day 9am - 5pm rate: 01/04/2024 325.00 350.00 Exempt Ballroom Half Day (9-1 / 1-5) 01/04/2024 170.00 180.00 Exempt Ballroom Wake (up to hours hire) 01/04/2025 300.00 310.00 Exempt Ballroom - hourly evening rate 6 to 11pm - meetings & worksh 01/04/2025 50.00 55.00 Exempt Ballroom - whole evening 6 to 11.30pm parties 01/04/2025 410.00 420.00 Exempt Ballroom - whole evening 6 to 11.30pm concerts 01/04/2025 330.00 340.00 Exempt Ballroom - (9am-11.30pm) Wedding rate 01/04/2025 620.00 630.00 Exempt Use of ballroom kitchen per day 01/04/2024 85.00 85.00 Exempt Meeting rooms Newton room hourly rate 01/04/2025 38.00 38.00 Exempt Newton Room Half Day Rate (9am-1pm/1pm-5pm) 01/04/2024 135.00 135.00 Exempt Newton Room Full Day Rate (9am-5pm) 01/04/2024 260.00 260.00 Exempt Newton Room Party 01/04/2025 355.00 355.00 Exempt Studio 4 01/04/2024 25.00 27.00 Exempt Studio 4 - Day offer 9am-5pm 01/04/2024 145.00 160.00 Exempt Studio 4 - Half Day offer 9am-1pm / 1pm-5pm 01/04/2024 75.00 80.00 Exempt Studio 1 01/04/2025 28.00 30.00 Exempt Studio 1 - Day offer 9am-5pm 01/04/2024 190.00 200.00 Exempt Studio 1 - Half Day offer 9am-1pm / 1pm-5pm 01/04/2024 100.00 100.00 Exempt Studio 2 01/04/2025 16.00 18.00 Exempt Studio 2 - Day offer 9am-5pm 01/04/2024 100.00 110.00 Exempt Studio 2 - Half Day offer 9am-1pm / 1pm-5pm 01/04/2024 51.00 55.00 Exempt *new rooms* Studio 6 and 7 perhour 01/04/2025 20.00 22.00 Exempt Studio 6 and 7 full day 9am-5pm 01/04/2025 145.00 155.00 Exempt Studio 6 and 7 half day 9-1 or 1-5 01/04/2025 75.00 77.00 Exempt *access to kitchen up to 4 hours prior to event start time, additional earlier access will incur additional hourly rate of £10 Performers Right Society charges may be applicable in addition to the above rates Room Hire The Fees & charges above are listed as guide prices- Please call your respective arts centre for a specific hire quotation				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	WEDDING RECEPTIONS, PARTIES AND OTHER ROOM HIRE				
	All three venues are available for wedding parties and similar functions. Packages are available to include provision of bars and catering. Prices are below.				
5	Bourne Corn Exchange				
	<u>Casually let rooms</u>				
	Main hall - hourly rate	01/04/2025	47.00	50.00	Exempt
	Main Hall Day Offer (9am-5pm)	01/04/2024	325.00	350.00	Exempt
	Main Hall Half Day (9am-1pm / 1pm-5pm)	01/04/2024	170.00	175.00	Exempt
	Main hall - Evening Event (party/concert/performance) 6pm-1:	01/04/2025	350.00	380.00	Exempt
	Main hall - (all day, wedding receptions etc.) 9am to 12pm	01/04/2025	570.00	600.00	Exempt
	Kitchen hire (use of kitchen area excluding equip)*	01/04/2024	90.00	120.00	Exempt
	Room set up or clear down (as per hourly rate or part thereof)	01/04/2025	60.00	70.00	Exempt
	Room set up or clear down after midnight (as per hourly rate or part thereof)	01/04/2025	80.00	90.00	Exempt
	Bar Area	01/04/2025	22.00	25.00	Exempt
6	Stamford Arts Centre				
	<u>Casually let rooms</u>				
	Ballroom				
	Ballroom - hourly day rate up to 5pm	01/04/2025	47.00	50.00	Exempt
	Ballroom 9am-5pm Day offer	01/04/2025	335.00	350.00	Exempt
	Ballroom half day offer, 9-1 / 1-5	01/04/2025	175.00	180.00	Exempt
	Ballroom - hourly evening rate 5pm to 11pm - meetings & workshops	01/04/2025	50.00	55.00	Exempt
	Ballroom - whole evening 6 to 11pm - parties	01/04/2025	550.00	560.00	Exempt
	Ballroom - whole evening 6 to 11pm - concerts	01/04/2025	430.00	440.00	Exempt
	Function ballroom/Blue room - all day wedding rate (9am-11.3	01/04/2025	1000.00	1100.00	Exempt
	<u>Meeting rooms - per hour</u>				
	Blue Room per hour	01/04/2025	25.00	No longer	Exempt
	Blue Room day offer(9am-5pm)	01/04/2025	185.00	available to	Exempt
	Blue room half day offer (9am-1pm / 1pm-5pm)	01/04/2025	95.00	hire	Exempt
	Rehearsal Room per hour	01/04/2025	25.00	27.00	Exempt
	Rehearsal Room day offer (9am-5pm)	01/04/2024	175.00	185.00	Exempt
	Rehearsal room half day offer (9am-1pm / 1pm-5pm)	01/04/2024	90.00	95.00	Exempt
	Ireson/Exeter Room/Bridge Room	01/04/2025	20.00	22.00	Exempt
	Ireson/Exeter Room day offer (9am-5pm)/Bridge	01/04/2025	140.00	150.00	Exempt
	Ireson/Exeter room half day offer (9am-1pm / 1pm-5pm)/Bridg	01/04/2025	70.00	75.00	Exempt
	*access to kitchen up to 4 hours prior to event start time, additional earlier access will incur additional hourly rate of £10				
	Performers Right Society charges may be applicable in addition to the above rates				
	Room Hire				
	The Fees & charges above are listed as guide prices- Please call your respective arts centre for a specific hire quotation				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	CAR PARKS - GRANTHAM				
1	SHORT STAY (EXCEPT WHARF ROAD & WELHAM STREET)				
	Up to 1 hour	01/04/2025	Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Included
	1-2 hours	01/04/2025	2.00	2.00	Included
	2-4 hours	01/04/2025	2.50	2.50	Included
	Over 4 hours	01/04/2025	7.00	7.00	Included
2	SHORT STAY Wharf Road Grantham				
	Up to 2 hours	01/04/2025	Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Included
	2-4 hours	01/04/2025	2.50	2.50	Included
	Over 4 hours	01/04/2025	5.00	5.00	Included
3	LEISURE TARIFF - Welham Street				
	Up to 1 hour	01/04/2025	Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Included
	1-3 hours	01/04/2025	1.50	1.50	Included
	3-4 hours	01/04/2025	1.90	1.90	Included
	over 4 hours	01/04/2024	5.00	5.00	Included
4	LONG STAY SEASON TICKETS (Monday to Friday)				
	Per Week	01/04/2025	18.00	18.00	Included
	Per Month	01/04/2025	65.00	65.00	Included
	Per quarter	01/04/2025	170.00	170.00	Included
5	LONG STAY SEASON TICKETS (Monday to Saturday)				
	Per Week	01/04/2025	21.50	21.50	Included
	Per Month	01/04/2025	75.00	75.00	Included
	Per quarter	01/04/2025	200.00	200.00	Included
6	PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES				
	Failure to display	01/04/2013	70.00	70.00	O/Scope
	Fine after discount for Payment in 14 days	01/04/2013	35.00	35.00	O/Scope
	Parking for longer etc	01/04/2013	50.00	50.00	O/Scope
	Fine after discount for Payment in 14 days	01/04/2013	25.00	25.00	O/Scope

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	CAR PARKS - STAMFORD				
1	SHORT STAY				
	0-1 hours	01/04/2025	1.50	1.50	Included
	1-2 hours	01/04/2025	2.50	2.50	Included
	2-4 hours	01/04/2025	4.50	4.50	Included
	over 4 hours	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
2	LONG STAY				
	0-2 hours	01/04/2025	3.00	3.00	Included
	2-4 hours	01/04/2025	4.00	4.00	Included
	over 4 hours	01/04/2025	5.00	5.00	Included
3	LONG STAY SEASON TICKETS (Monday to Friday)				
	Per Week	01/04/2025	18.00	18.00	Included
	Per Month	01/04/2025	65.00	65.00	Included
	Per quarter	01/04/2025	170.00	170.00	Included
4	LONG STAY SEASON TICKETS (Monday to Saturday)				
	Per Week	01/04/2025	21.50	21.50	Included
	Per Month	01/04/2025	75.00	75.00	Included
	Per quarter	01/04/2025	200.00	200.00	Included
5	PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES				
	Failure to display	01/04/2013	70.00	70.00	O/Scope
	Fine after discount for Payment in 14 days	01/04/2013	35.00	35.00	O/Scope
	Parking for longer etc	01/04/2013	50.00	50.00	O/Scope
	Fine after discount for Payment in 14 days	01/04/2013	25.00	25.00	O/Scope

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH				
	TATTOOING, PIERCING AND ELECTROLYSIS				
1	<u>Premise/Business registration fees</u>				
	Acupuncture	01/04/2024	199.00	177.93	O/Scope
	Tattooing	01/04/2024	199.00	177.93	O/Scope
	Electrolysis	01/04/2024	199.00	177.93	O/Scope
	Cosmetic piercing	01/04/2024	199.00	177.93	O/Scope
	Semi permanent skin colouring	01/04/2024	199.00	177.93	O/Scope
	Additional activities (eg cosmetic piercing and tattooing) per activity	01/04/2024	108.50	97.08	O/Scope
	Amendment or replacement certificate	01/04/2024	38.00	33.12	O/Scope
2	<u>Personal registration fees (Per activity)</u>				
	Acupuncture	01/04/2024	102.50	90.54	O/Scope
	Tattooing	01/04/2024	102.50	90.54	O/Scope
	Electrolysis	01/04/2024	102.50	90.54	O/Scope
	Cosmetic piercing	01/04/2024	102.50	90.54	O/Scope
	Semi permanent skin colouring	01/04/2024	102.50	90.54	O/Scope
	Amendment or replacement certificate	01/04/2024	38.00	33.12	O/Scope
3	<u>Unsound food</u>				
	Voluntary surrender certificate (excludes disposal)	01/04/2024	127.20	95.63	Included
4	<u>Food Export Health Certification</u>				
	Inspection (first 2 hours) and certification	01/04/2024	268.20	202.18	Included
	Certification only	01/04/2024	86.40	64.33	Included
5	<u>Food Hygiene Rating Scheme</u>				
	Re-inspection/Re-visit	01/04/2024	303.60	231.36	Included
6	<u>Control of dogs</u>				
	Collecting and detaining stray dogs (statutory fine)	01/04/1996	25.00	25.00	O/Scope
	Handling, Kenneling & Administration	01/04/2025	49.00	47.00	O/Scope
	Kennelling per day or part of	01/04/2024	35.00	35.00	O/Scope
7	<u>Scrap Metal Dealers</u>				
	Dealer initial licence - 3 year licence Part A	01/04/2024	298.00	243.00	O/Scope
	Dealer initial licence - 3 year licence Part B	01/04/2024	399.00	339.00	O/Scope
	Dealer licence renewal - Part A	01/04/2024	243.50	209.00	O/Scope
	Dealer licence renewal - Part B	01/04/2024	399.00	339.00	O/Scope
	Collector new - Part A	01/04/2024	167.50	153.00	O/Scope
	Collector new - Part B	01/04/2024	41.50	39.00	O/Scope
	Collector renewal - Part A	01/04/2024	106.00	93.00	O/Scope
	Collector renewal - Part B	01/04/2024	41.50	39.00	O/Scope
	Copy of a licence - Replacement Licence certificate	01/04/2024	31.00	32.00	O/Scope
	Minor variation	01/04/2024	40.50	40.50	O/Scope

NB Relevant fees as per the Provision of Services Regulations 2009 are now broken down into Part A and Part B.
Part A is payable upon application, Part B is payable upon grant of licence

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
8	<u>Caravan Sites & Park Homes</u>				
	Application for site Licence - Part A	01/04/2024	545.00	486.00	O/Scope
	Application for sie licence - Part B	01/04/2024	44.00	42.00	O/Scope
	Transfer/amendments of up to 2 Licence conditions	01/04/2024	219.00	219.00	O/Scope
	Significant amendments involving a site visit	01/04/2024	355.00	355.00	O/Scope
	Annual Fee	01/04/2024	88.00	78.00	O/Scope
	Additional annual fee per plot	01/04/2024	6.00	5.00	O/Scope
	Enforcement - Based on an hourly rate	01/04/2018	Variable	Variable	O/Scope
	Deposit of site rules	01/04/2024	95.00	83.00	O/Scope
	Replacement licence certificate	01/04/2024	44.00	30.00	O/Scope
	Enforcement - Based on an hourly rate	01/04/2018	Variable	Variable	O/Scope
	Residential Site Fit and Proper Person Test	01/04/2024	299.00	299.00	O/Scope

NB Relevant fees as per the Provision of Services Regulations 2009 are now broken down into Part A and Part B.
Part A is payable upon application, Part B is payable upon grant of license

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH				
9	ENQUIRIES IN CONNECTION WITH CONTAMINATED LAND Enquiries	01/04/2023	145.00	145.00	O/Scope
10	PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING CHARGES Improvement Notice, Emergency Remedial Action Notice, Prohibition Order, Emergency prohibition Order or Hazard Awareness Notice	01/04/2024	513.00	483.00	O/Scope
	Review of Suspended Improvement Notice or Suspended Prohibition Order	01/04/2024	197.50	184.00	O/Scope
11	Food Hygiene/Health & Safety Charges	01/04/2018	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate	Included
12	Immigration inspections	01/04/2024	266.50	233.00	O/Scope
13	Private Sector Housing Civil Penalties (Maximum penalty allowed by legislation £30,000 as alternative to prosecution)	01/04/2018	30,000.00	30,000.00	O/Scope
14	SAMPLING OF PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION*				
	Risk Assessment (each assessment)	01/04/2019	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate	O/Scope
	Sampling (each visit)	01/04/2019	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate	O/Scope
	Investigation (each investigation)	01/04/2019	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate	O/Scope
	Grant of authorisation (each authorisation)	01/04/2019	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate	O/Scope
	Analysing a sample:				
	Taken under Reg 10 (domestic)	01/04/2019	Variable	Variable	O/Scope
	Taken during monitoring of group A parameters	01/04/2019	Variable	Variable	O/Scope
	Taken during monitoring of Group B parameters and monitoring under regulation 11	01/04/2019	Variable	Variable	O/Scope
15	SMOKE FREE FIXED PENALTY NOTICES Smoking in smoke free designated premises, place, vehicle	01/04/2016	50.00	50.00	O/Scope
	If paid within 15 days of issue	01/04/2016	30.00	30.00	O/Scope
	Failing to display smoke free signage as per law	01/04/2016	200.00	200.00	O/Scope
	If paid within 15 days of issue	01/04/2016	150.00	150.00	O/Scope
16	SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS FOR RELEVANT LANDLORDS Full cost recovery plus penalty charge for failure to comply (Maximum penalty allowed by legislation £5,000)	01/04/2016	700-4,501	700-4,501	O/Scope
17	LETTING AGENTS REDRESS SCHEME Penalty for failure to comply (Maximum penalty allowed by legislation £5,000 should be considered the norm and a lower fine should only be charged if there are extenuating circumstances considered on a case by case basis)	01/04/2017	5,000.00	5,000.00	O/Scope
18	ELECTRICAL SAFETY REGULATIONS CIVIL PENALTIES Breach of Electrical Safety Regulations (Maximum penalty allowed by legislation £30,000 should be calculated using penalty Matrix)	01/04/2024	30,000.00	30,000.00	O/Scope

	Licence Type	Number of Rooms	Part a £	Part b £	Total £	VAT
	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH					
19	HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION					
	New Licence	Up to 5	570.50	152.75	723.25	O/Scope
		6 - 10	660.50	152.75	813.25	O/Scope
		11 - 15	750.50	152.75	903.25	O/Scope
		16 - 20	840.50	152.75	993.25	O/Scope
		21 - 25	930.50	152.75	1083.25	O/Scope
		Additional rooms beyond 25			18.00 per room	O/Scope
	Renewals	Up to 5	437.25	152.75	590.00	O/Scope
		6 - 10	527.25	152.75	680.00	O/Scope
		11 - 15	617.25	152.75	770.00	O/Scope
		16 - 20	707.25	152.75	860.00	O/Scope
		21 - 25	797.25	152.75	950.00	O/Scope
			Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	Replacement licence certificate		01/04/2024	32.00	36.00	O/Scope

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH				
20	HYGIENE & FOOD SAFETY				
	New Business Advice Consultation	01/04/2024	291.60	N/A	Included
	Food Hygiene Checkup	01/04/2025	N/A	N/A	Included
	Food Safety Organiser	01/04/2024	43.20	43.20	Included
	Food hygiene workshop (1 hour max 8 people)	01/04/2024	291.60	N/A	Included
21	SAFER FOOD BETTER BUSINESS				
	Catering pack	01/04/2025	28.10	28.10	Included
	Retail pack	01/04/2025	26.90	26.90	Included
	Childminder pack	01/04/2025	17.90	17.90	Included
	Residential care home supplement	01/04/2025	10.70	10.70	Included
	6 month diary refill	01/04/2025	15.50	15.50	Included
	12 month diary refill	01/04/2025	17.90	17.90	Included
	MINIMUM ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS (PRIVATE RENTED PROPERTY)				
22	Letting substandard property (less than 3 months)	01/04/2019	2,000.00	2,000.00	O/scope
	Letting substandard property (3 months or more)	01/04/2019	4,000.00	4,000.00	O/scope
	Registering false or misleading information on the PRS Exemptions Register	01/04/2019	1,000.00	1,000.00	O/scope
	Failing to comply with compliance notice	01/04/2019	2,000.00	2,000.00	O/scope

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	LICENCES				
	Activites involving Animals - Additional vets fees may apply to these licences				
1	<u>Animal Licences</u>				
	Pre application/Re-inspections (where applicable)	01/04/2024	230.75	236.00	O/Scope
	Dog Boarding - Part A	01/04/2024	247.50	257.00	O/Scope
	Dog Boarding - Part B	01/04/2024	141.50	150.50	O/Scope
	Cat Boarding - Part A	01/04/2024	247.50	257.00	O/Scope
	Cat Boarding - Part B	01/04/2024	141.50	150.50	O/Scope
	Dual Dog and Cat Boarding - Part A	01/04/2024	297.75	306.50	O/Scope
	Dual Dog and Cat Boarding - Part B	01/04/2024	167.50	174.00	O/Scope
	Dog Day Care - Part A	01/04/2024	247.50	257.00	O/Scope
	Dog Day Care - Part B	01/04/2024	141.50	150.50	O/Scope
	Home Boarding - Part A	01/04/2024	167.50	176.00	O/Scope
	Home Boarding - Part B	01/04/2024	115.25	118.50	O/Scope
	Arrangers/Franchisers	01/04/2024	115.25	137.00	O/Scope
	Dog Breeding Establishments Part A	01/04/2024	286.50	296.50	O/Scope
	Dog Breeding Establishments Part B	01/04/2024	219.50	220.50	O/Scope
	Sale of Animals as Pets- (Pet shops) Part A	01/04/2024	247.50	257.50	O/Scope
	Sale of selling Animals as Pets - (Pet shops) Part B	01/04/2024	141.50	150.50	O/Scope
	Hiring of Horses (Riding Establishments) Part A	01/04/2024	286.50	296.50	O/Scope
	Hiring of Horses (Riding Establishments) Part B	01/04/2024	219.50	220.50	O/Scope
	Dangerous Wild Animals Part A	01/04/2024	234.50	239.00	O/Scope
	Dangerous Wild Animals Part B	01/04/2024	49.75	51.00	O/Scope
	Transfer of licence	01/04/2024	126.50	135.50	O/Scope
	Animals for exhibition (3 year Licence) Part A	01/04/2024	167.50	176.00	O/Scope
	Animals for exhibition (3 year Licence) Part B	01/04/2024	115.25	118.50	O/Scope
	Variation (with inspection)	01/04/2024	230.75	236.50	O/Scope
	Variation (no inspection)	01/04/2024	63.25	66.00	O/Scope
2	<u>Zoo Licences</u>				
	New Application (4 year) Part A	01/04/2024	513.50	520.50	O/Scope
	New Application (4 year) Part B	01/04/2024	230.75	232.00	O/Scope
	Renewal (6 year) Part A	01/04/2024	435.50	452.00	O/Scope
	Renewal (6 year) Part B	01/04/2024	439.00	440.50	O/Scope
	Transfer of Licence	01/04/2024	126.50	126.50	O/Scope
3	<u>Sex Establishments</u>				
	New Application/Renewal/Transfer/Variation- Part A	01/04/2024	1884.00	1721.00	O/Scope
	New Application/Renewal/Transfer/Variation - Part B	01/04/2024	155.50	139.50	O/Scope
4	<u>Street Trading</u>				
	Stamford Pedestrian Precinct Per Day	01/04/2024	26.00	26.00	O/Scope
	Other Locations per day from	01/04/2024	21.00	21.00	O/Scope
	Private land per day	01/04/2024	11.25	11.25	O/Scope
	Mobile Trader Consent (12 months)	01/04/2024	347.00	347.00	O/Scope
NB	Relevant fees as per the Provision of Services Regulations 2009 are now broken down into Part A and Part B. Part A is payable upon application, Part B is payable upon grant of license				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	GAMBLING LICENSING				
1	<u>Bingo Premises Licence</u>				
	Application for Provisional Statement	01/04/2024	833.75	864.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Provisional Statement Premises	01/04/2024	665.00	689.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Other Premises	01/04/2024	879.75	911.50	O/Scope
	Annual Fee	01/04/2024	587.00	608.00	O/Scope
	Variation of Licence	01/04/2024	801.75	830.50	O/Scope
	Transfer Fee	01/04/2024	670.25	694.50	O/Scope
	Application for Reinstatement of Licence	01/04/2024	670.25	694.50	O/Scope
2	<u>Adult Gaming Centre Premises Licence</u>				
	Application for Provisional Statement	01/04/2024	767.50	795.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Provisional Statement Premises	01/04/2024	491.25	509.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Other Premises	01/04/2024	801.75	830.50	O/Scope
	Annual Fee	01/04/2024	516.00	534.50	O/Scope
	Variation of Licence	01/04/2024	742.75	769.50	O/Scope
	Transfer Fee	01/04/2024	599.75	621.50	O/Scope
	Application for Reinstatement of Licence	01/04/2024	599.75	621.50	O/Scope
3	<u>Family Entertainment Centre Premises Licence</u>				
	Application for Provisional Statement	01/04/2024	767.50	795.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Provisional Statement Premises	01/04/2024	491.25	509.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Other Premises	01/04/2024	801.75	830.50	O/Scope
	Annual Fee	01/04/2024	516.00	534.50	O/Scope
	Variation of Licence	01/04/2024	742.75	769.50	O/Scope
	Transfer Fee	01/04/2024	599.75	621.50	O/Scope
	Application for Reinstatement of licence	01/04/2024	599.75	621.50	O/Scope
4	<u>Betting Premises Licence (other e.g. Betting shops)</u>				
	Application for Provisional Statement	01/04/2024	767.50	795.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Provisional Statement Premises	01/04/2024	491.25	509.00	O/Scope
	Non Conversion Fee, Other Premises	01/04/2024	801.75	830.50	O/Scope
	Annual Fee	01/04/2024	516.00	534.50	O/Scope
	Variation of Licence	01/04/2024	742.75	769.50	O/Scope
	Transfer Fee	01/04/2024	599.75	621.50	O/Scope
	Application for Reinstatement of licence	01/04/2024	599.75	621.50	O/Scope
5	<u>Ancillary Fees</u>				
	Change of Circumstances	01/04/2019	50.00	50.00	O/Scope
	Fee for copy of licence	01/04/2019	25.00	25.00	O/Scope
6	<u>Temporary Use Notices</u>				
	Fee for giving a Temporary Use Notice	01/04/2020	50.00	50.00	O/Scope
	Replacement of an endorsed copy of a Temporary Use Notice	01/04/2020	25.00	25.00	O/Scope
	Maximum fees are set in The Gambling (Premises Licence Fees) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	NEIGHBOURHOODS				
	REMOVAL OF VEHICLES				
15	<u>Vehicle on road, upright and not substantially damaged or any two wheeled vehicle whatever its condition or position on or off the road</u>				
	Vehicle equal to or less than 3.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	150.00	150.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 3.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 7.5 tonnes	01/04/2020	200.00	200.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM	01/04/2020	350.00	350.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	350.00	350.00	O/Scope
16	<u>Vehicle, excluding a two wheeled vehicle, on road but either not upright or substantially damaged or both</u>				
	Vehicle equal to or less than 3.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	250.00	250.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 3.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 7.5 tonnes	01/04/2020	650.00	650.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM - Unladen	01/04/2020	2,000.00	2,000.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM - Laden	01/04/2020	3,000.00	3,000.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM - Unladen	01/04/2020	3,000.00	3,000.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM - Laden	01/04/2020	4,500.00	4,500.00	O/Scope
17	<u>Vehicle, excluding a two wheeled vehicle, off road, upright and not substantially damaged</u>				
	Vehicle equal to or less than 3.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	200.00	200.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 3.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 7.5 tonnes	01/04/2020	400.00	400.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM - Unladen	01/04/2020	1,000.00	1,000.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM - Laden	01/04/2020	1,500.00	1,500.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM - Unladen	01/04/2020	1,500.00	1,500.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM - Laden	01/04/2020	2,000.00	2,000.00	O/Scope
18	<u>Vehicle, excluding a two wheeled vehicle, off road, but either not upright or substantially damaged or both</u>				
	Vehicle equal to or less than 3.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	300.00	300.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 3.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 7.5 tonnes	01/04/2020	850.00	850.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM - Unladen	01/04/2020	3,000.00	3,000.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM - Laden	01/04/2020	4,500.00	4,500.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM - Unladen	01/04/2020	4,500.00	4,500.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM - Laden	01/04/2020	6,000.00	6,000.00	O/Scope
19	STORAGE OF VEHICLES PER 24 HOURS OR PART OF				
	Two wheeled vehicle	01/04/2020	10.00	10.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle, not including a two wheeled vehicle, equal to or less than 3.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	20.00	20.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 3.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 7.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	25.00	25.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM	01/04/2020	30.00	30.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	35.00	35.00	O/Scope
20	DISPOSAL OF VEHICLES				
	Two wheeled vehicle	01/04/2020	50.00	50.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle, not including a two wheeled vehicle, equal to or less than 3.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	75.00	75.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 3.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 7.5 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 7.5 tonnes MAM but equal to or less than 18 MAM	01/04/2020	125.00	125.00	O/Scope
	Vehicle exceeding 18 tonnes MAM	01/04/2020	150.00	150.00	O/Scope

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	LOCAL LAND CHARGE FEES				
1	Registration of a Charge on Part II of Register including Water Industry S30, LCC S106, Highways Act S38	01/04/2023	107.50	107.50	O/Scope
2	Filing a Definitive Certificate of Lands Tribunal	01/04/2023	5.00	5.00	O/Scope
3	Filing adjustment etc. for variation - cancellation of entry in Part II of Register	01/04/2023	11.20	11.20	O/Scope
4	Inspection of documents filed under Rule 10	01/04/2023	5.00	5.00	O/Scope
5	Con 29 Part I enquiries*				
	- one parcel of land, including the revised Con 29 questions	01/04/2023	207.60	207.60	Included
	- each additional parcel of land	01/04/2023	30.60	30.60	Included
	Part II enquiries				
	- each optional enquiry, excluding question 22	01/04/2023	21.30	21.30	Included
	- question 21	01/04/2026		15.00	Included
	- question 22	01/04/2023	27.60	23.00	Included
	- solicitor/client's own enquiry	01/04/2023	27.60	27.60	Included
6	Commercial*				
	- Please contact for a quotation on landcharges@southkesteven.gov.uk	01/04/2020	Variable	Variable	Included
7	Additional charge for expedited official search and Con29 - (3 Day Turnaround)	01/04/2023	43.75	43.75	O/Scope
8	CON 29R UNREFINED DATA CHARGES*				
	Building Regulations Q1.1 (F to H)	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Roads Q2.1	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	PROWS Q2.2	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Land Requisitioned for Public Purposes Q3.1	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Roadworks Q3.2	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Drainage Q3.3	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Road Schemes Q3.4	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Nearby Railway Schemes Q3.5	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Traffic Schemes Q3.6	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Outstanding Notices Q3.7 (A-D & F)	01/04/2025	8.00	N/A	Included
	Notices Q3.7 E & G	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Contravention of Building Regulations Q3.8	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Notices, Orders, Directions and Proceedings under Planning Acts Q3.9 (A-N)	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Community Infrastructure Levy Q3.10	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Conservation Area Q3.11	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Compulsory Purchase Q3.12	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Contaminated Land Q3.13	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Radon Q3.14	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	Assets of Community Value Q3.15	01/04/2025	8.00	8.00	Included
	*The charges quoted will incur a charge based on an hourly rate of £54.90 (incl VAT)				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	PLANNING CHARGES				
1	<u>Charges in connection with land/property transactions</u>				
	Detailed queries on consents involving search for relevant information*	01/04/2024	43.20	45.00	Included
	Check involving site inspection**	01/04/2024	35.10	36.50	Included
2	Self Build Register - Joining fee	01/04/2023	50.00	52.00	Included
	*stated charge plus relevant copying charges				
	**stated charge plus mileage plus officer hourly rates				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	PRE-PLANNING CHARGES				
1	<u>Householders</u>				
	Charge for any pre-planning advice undertaken	01/04/2024	90.00	90.00	Included
	"Do I require planning permission?"/Permitted Development Query	01/04/2024	75.00	75.00	Included
2	<u>Non-residential changes of use including siting of caravans for sites</u>				
	Under 1 ha or buildings under 1,000 sqm (gross)	01/04/2024	282.00	282.00	Included
	of 1 ha or above or buildings under 1,000 sqm (gross)	01/04/2024	564.00	564.00	Included
3	<u>Development of dwellings</u>				
	1-9 dwellings including changes of use to residential, for 1st dwelling	01/04/2024	375.00	375.00	Included
	for each additional dwelling	01/04/2024	201.00	201.00	Included
	10-49 dwellings including changes of use to residential, for the 10th dwelling (includes Design PAD)	01/04/2024	1,965.00	1,965.00	Included
	meeting for each additional dwelling	01/04/2024	111.00	111.00	Included
	50 plus dwellings, including changes of use to residential (includes Design one PAD meeting)	01/04/2024	6,960.00	6,960.00	Included
	Residential development where number of dwellings unknown - per 0.1 hectare (includes one Design PAD meeting)	01/04/2024	300.00	300.00	Included
4	<u>Non-residential development</u>				
	Where no floor space is created	01/04/2024	162.00	162.00	Included
	Up to 499 sqm floor area or 0.5 ha site area	01/04/2024	282.00	282.00	Included
	between 500 and 999 sqm floor area, or between 0.51 ha and 1.0 ha	01/04/2024	480.00	480.00	Included
	between 1,000 and 4,999 sqm floor area or between 1.1 ha and 2.0 ha (includes one Design PAD meeting)	01/04/2024	1,020.00	1,020.00	Included
	between 5,000 sqm or more or 2.1 ha or more* (includes one Design PAD meeting)	01/04/2024	1,965.00	1,965.00	Included
	*minimum fee for specified service and hourly rate thereafter				
5	<u>Others</u>				
	Follow on advice - please contact us for a quotation. Fees will be based on the officer hourly rates.	01/04/2023	Variable	Variable	Included
	History Search	01/04/2025	83.00	83.00	Included
	Variation or modification of a completed planning obligation (as a standalone request)	01/04/2024	162.00	170.00	Included
	(Additional fees will be required to cover the Council's legal costs should your request be acceptable)				
	Confirmation that a planning permission or planning obligation has been complied with (per letter) (desk based)	01/04/2025	83.00	83.00	included
	Confirmation that a planning permission or planning obligation has been complied with (per letter) (site visit required)	01/04/2025	144.00	144.00	included
	Advertising	01/04/2025	144.00	144.00	Included
	Development that would involve relevant demolition works	01/04/2024	96.00	96.00	Included
	Non-householder works or alterations to a listed building	01/04/2024	162.00	162.00	Included
	Hazardous substances	01/04/2024	186.00	186.00	Included
	Changes of use not falling within any of the above categories	01/04/2024	267.00	267.00	Included
	Additional Design PAD Review (meetings and response)	01/04/2024	1,455.00	1,455.00	Included
	Planning Performance Agreement - please contact us for a quotation on planning@southkesteven.gov.uk	01/04/2020	Variable	Variable	Included
	Fees will be based on the officer hourly rates published				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	STREET NAMING & NUMBERING				
1	Individual house re-name or re-number	01/04/2025	51.00	53.00	Exempt
2	Development re-number due to change of layout involving plot numbering or plot positions	01/04/2025	51.00	53.00	Exempt
3	Additional of a house name, where property has an official number	01/04/2025	51.00	53.00	Exempt
4	Removal of a house name from address, where property has an official number	01/04/2025	51.00	53.00	Exempt
5	Renaming/renumbering of street at residents request plus per property	01/04/2025 01/04/2025	277.00 51.00	288.00 53.00	Exempt Exempt
6	Confirmation of historic change of address to solicitors, occupiers or owner	01/04/2025	51.00	53.00	Exempt
7	Numbering of Properties - new developments Per Plot	01/04/2025	51.00	53.00	Exempt
8	Naming of new streets Per Street	01/04/2025	112.00	116.50	Exempt

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	Officer Hourly Rates				
1	Assistant Director	01/04/2025	138.00	138.00	Included
	Development Management and Enforcement Manager	01/04/2025	120.00	120.00	Included
	Planning Policy Manager	01/04/2025	120.00	120.00	Included
	Principal Planning Officer	01/04/2025	107.00	107.00	Included
	Senior Planning Officer	01/04/2025	98.00	98.00	Included
	Planning/Asst Planning Officer	01/04/2025	89.00	89.00	Included
	Urban Design	01/04/2025	98.00	98.00	Included
	Conservation Officer	01/04/2025	98.00	98.00	Included
	Other specialist advice from other areas of the Council	01/04/2025	98.00	98.00	Included
	Project Management/Administration	01/04/2025	83.00	83.00	Included
2	Other Fees and Charges				
	High Hedges complaint	01/04/2025	385.00	385.00	included
	Applications to divert or stop up a public right of way				
	Administration costs	01/04/2025	1,500.00	1,560.00	included
	Minimum initial charge to cover costs of statutory adverts (subject to change depending on actual advert costs involved) <i>The council will also require an undertaking to cover any legal costs associated with the process</i>	01/04/2023	645.00	670.00	included
3	S106 Monitoring Fees				
	Section 106 – Non-Financial				
	Up to 1000 dwellings or 5000 sqm floorspace (one off fee for any S106 obligation)	01/04/2025	1,500.00	1,560.00	included
	Section 106 – Financial				
	Up to 1000 dwellings or 5000 sqm floorspace (Monitoring fee capped at £15,600 per agreement)	01/04/2025	1,500.00	1,560.00	minimum monitoring fees plus 5% of financial obligation included
	Section 106 agreements with over 1000 dwellings or 5000 sqm of non-residential floorspace (Each development over 1,000 dwellings or more than 5,000 sqm floorspace will be worked out on an individual basis based on the amount of monitoring work involved. Any agreed monitoring fee will be subject to indexation.)	01/04/2025	Variable to be agreed on a case by case basis		

	Detail	Previous Change date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	<u>BOURNE LEISURE CENTRE</u>				
1	<u>Swimming Pool</u>				
	Swimming - full rate	01/04/2025	7.30	7.50	Exempt
	Swimming - concession	01/04/2025	5.60	5.75	Exempt
	Under 5's	01/04/2024	1.10	1.10	Exempt
	Parent and toddler session	01/04/2025	7.65	7.85	Exempt
	Exclusive pool hire (per hour)	01/04/2025	207.50	213.50	Exempt
	LCC Schools (per individual)	01/04/2025	1.80	1.85	Exempt
2	<u>Main Hall (per hour)</u>				
	Sporting - full rate	01/04/2025	84.15	86.50	Exempt
	Commercial	01/04/2012	Negotiable	Negotiable	Exempt
	Badminton - full rate	01/04/2025	15.70	16.00	Exempt
	Table tennis - full rate per hour	01/04/2025	10.10	10.40	Exempt
3	<u>Fitness Room (per hour)</u>				
	Individual use - full rate	01/04/2025	10.10	10.40	Exempt
4	<u>Miscellaneous (per hour)</u>				
	Activity room/meeting room - full rate	01/04/2025	44.80	46.10	Exempt
	Spectator (per individual)	01/04/2025	1.75	1.80	Exempt
5	<u>Membership</u>				
	Adult member	01/04/2024	34.99	34.99	Exempt
	Junior (U16)	01/04/2024	29.99	29.99	Exempt
	Concessionary	01/04/2024	29.99	29.99	Exempt
	THE LIST OF CHARGES IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND ARE NON-MEMBER RATES				
	LOWER CHARGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR LEISURE CENTRE MEMBERS				
	MEMBERSHIP RATES MAY VARY ACCORDING TO LOCAL PROMOTIONS				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	<u>THE GRANTHAM MERES LEISURE CENTRE</u>				
1	<u>Swimming pool</u>				
	Swimming - full rate	01/04/2025	7.30	7.50	Exempt
	Swimming - concession	01/04/2025	5.60	5.75	Exempt
	Under 5's	01/04/2024	1.10	1.10	Exempt
	Parent and toddler session	01/04/2025	7.65	7.85	Exempt
	Exclusive pool hire (per hour)	01/04/2025	207.50	213.50	Exempt
	LCC Schools (per individual)	01/04/2025	1.80	1.85	Exempt
2	<u>Main Hall (per hour)</u>				
	Sporting - full rate	01/04/2025	106.50	109.60	Exempt
	Commercial	01/04/2025	145.75	150.00	Exempt
	Badminton - full rate	01/04/2025	15.70	16.00	Exempt
	Table tennis centre hall	01/04/2025	84.15	86.65	Exempt
	Table tennis - full rate per hour	01/04/2025	10.10	10.40	Exempt
3	<u>Second Hall (per hour)</u>				
	Sporting - full rate	01/04/2025	50.50	52.00	Exempt
	Commercial	01/04/2025	50.50	52.00	Exempt
4	<u>Fitness Room (per hour)</u>				
	Individual use - full rate	01/04/2025	11.20	11.20	Exempt
5	<u>Miscellaneous (per hour)</u>				
	Meeting room - full rate	01/04/2025	23.50	24.20	Exempt
	Activity Room - full rate	01/04/2025	23.50	24.20	Exempt
	Spectator (per individual)	01/04/2025	1.75	1.80	Exempt

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	<u>THE GRANTHAM MERES LEISURE CENTRE</u>				
6	<u>Synthetic Pitch Pay and Play (per hour)</u>				
	Full pitch (11v11)	01/04/2025	106.50	109.70	Exempt
	Quarter pitch (5v5)	01/04/2025	35.90	36.95	Exempt
	Half pitch (9v9)	01/04/2025	64.50	66.40	Exempt
7	<u>Outdoor Facilities - (per hour)</u>				
	Tennis court - full rate	01/04/2025	12.50	12.85	Exempt
	Netball - full rate	01/04/2025	26.90	27.70	Exempt
8	<u>Membership</u>				
	Adult member	01/04/2024	37.99	39.99	Exempt
	Junior (U16)	01/04/2024	29.99	29.99	Exempt
	Concessionary	01/04/2024	29.99	29.99	Exempt
	THE LIST OF CHARGES IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND ARE NON-MEMBER RATES				
	LOWER CHARGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR LEISURE CENTRE MEMBERS				
	MEMBERSHIP RATES MAY VARY ACCORDING TO LOCAL PROMOTIONS				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	<u>SOUTH KESTIVEN SPORTS STADIUM</u>				
1	<u>Track Hire</u>				
	Adult	01/04/2025	67.30	69.30	Exempt
	Concession	01/04/2025	42.60	43.85	Exempt
	Floodlights	01/04/2025	61.75	40.00	Exempt
	Commercial	01/04/2025	Negotiable	Negotiable	Exempt
	Non-sporting / Non-commercial	01/04/2025	72.90	75.00	Exempt
2	<u>Individual use (per hour)</u>				
	Adult	01/04/2025	5.60	5.75	Exempt
	Concession	01/04/2025	3.90	4.00	Exempt
	Spectator (per individual)	01/04/2025	1.70	1.75	Exempt
	Hire of equipment (per booking)	01/04/2025	32.50	33.50	Exempt
	Setting up time	01/04/2025	32.50	33.50	Exempt
3	<u>Main football pitch hire</u>				
	Pitch hire (up to 2 hours)				
	Adult	01/04/2025	185.00	190.00	Exempt
	Concession	01/04/2025	123.00	126.60	Exempt
	Floodlights (per match)	01/04/2025	61.70	40.00	Exempt
	Commercial (per hour)	01/04/2012	Negotiable	Negotiable	Exempt
4	<u>Individual room hire (per hour)</u>				
	P.A./Meeting room	01/04/2025	20.00	20.60	Exempt
	THE LIST OF CHARGES IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND ARE NON-MEMBER RATES				
	LOWER CHARGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR LEISURE CENTRE MEMBERS				
	MEMBERSHIP RATES MAY VARY ACCORDING TO LOCAL PROMOTIONS				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	<u>STAMFORD LEISURE CENTRE</u>				
1	<u>Swimming pool</u>				
	Swimming - full rate	01/04/2025	7.30	7.50	Exempt
	Swimming - concession	01/04/2025	5.60	5.75	Exempt
	Under 5's	01/04/2024	1.10	1.10	Exempt
	Parent and toddler session	01/04/2025	7.65	7.85	Exempt
	Parties - exclusive pool hire (per hour)	01/04/2025	207.50	213.50	Exempt
	LCC schools (per individual)	01/04/2025	1.80	1.85	Exempt
	Spectator (per individual)	01/04/2025	1.75	1.80	Exempt
2	<u>Membership</u>				
	Adult member	01/04/2024	34.99	34.99	Exempt
	Junior (U16)	01/04/2024	29.99	29.99	Exempt
	Concessionary	01/04/2024	29.99	29.99	Exempt
	THE LIST OF CHARGES IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND ARE NON-MEMBER RATES				
	LOWER CHARGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR LEISURE CENTRE MEMBERS				
	MEMBERSHIP RATES MAY VARY ACCORDING TO LOCAL PROMOTIONS				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	OUTDOOR RECREATION				
1	<u>Wyndham Park Visitor Centre</u> Room hire per hour* *Guide price - please call the Visitor Centre for a specific hire quotation * Additional staffing cost on top per hour for out of normal hours	01/04/2025	23.50	*SKDC no longer offer this service.	Included

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT	
	GRANTHAM CEMETERY					
	MUSLIM INTERMENTS					
1	<u>Exclusive Right of Burial</u> (Not exceeding 50 years) Standard grave space - Parishioners	01/04/2025	749.00	786.00	Exempt	
2	Monday - Friday 1 April until 30 September 08:00 - 17:00	Interments	01/04/2025	775.00	814.00	Exempt
		Child below 18 years	01/04/2025	331.00	348.00	Exempt
3	Monday - Friday 1 October until 31 March 08:30 - 15:30	Interments	01/04/2025	775.00	814.00	Exempt
		Child below 18 years	01/04/2025	331.00	348.00	Exempt
	* Muslims burials are not available at weekends or on bank holidays					
	Please note there is a 50% additional charge for Non Parishioners (i.e. outside of Grantham boundary) on items 1- Exclusive Right of Burial					

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	GRANTHAM CEMETERY				
	TRADITIONAL BURIAL GROUND				
1	<u>Exclusive Right of Burial</u> (Not exceeding 50 years) Standard grave space - Parishioners	01/04/2025	749.00	786.00	Exempt
2	<u>Interment</u> Person aged 16 years or over - single depth Person aged 16 years or over - double depth Child below 16 years Each additional coffin space	01/04/2025 01/04/2025 01/04/2025 01/04/2025	775.00 863.00 331.00 267.00	814.00 906.00 348.00 280.00	Exempt Exempt Exempt Exempt
3	<u>Licence for the Erection of Memorials</u> Headstone (not exceeding 3 feet in height) Headstone (each additional 6 inches) Metal faced tablet Additional inscription Kerbed memorial	01/04/2025 01/04/2025 01/04/2025 01/04/2025 01/04/2025	191.00 191.00 127.00 77.00 204.00	201.00 201.00 133.00 81.00 214.00	Exempt Exempt Exempt Exempt Exempt
4	<u>Mausoleum *</u> Single vault mausoleum plot	01/04/2025	965.00	1,013.00	Exempt
5	<u>Re-Open Graves</u> Interment Fee - single depth Interment Fee - double depth Interment ashed into grave	01/04/2025 01/04/2025 01/04/2025	660.00 863.00 229.00	693.00 906.00 240.00	Exempt Exempt Exempt
6	<u>Woodland Burial Ground</u> All inclusive charge covering standard grave space, single depth interment, tree and plaque - Parishioners	01/04/2025	1,849.00	1,904.00	Exempt
7	<u>Transfer of Grave Ownership</u> Administration charge	01/04/2025	161.00	169.00	Exempt
	Please note there is a 50% additional charge for Non Parishioners (i.e. outside of Grantham boundary) on items 1- Exclusive Right of Burial, 4- Re-open Graves and 6- Woodland Burial Ground				
	* Muslims burials are not available at weekends or bank holidays				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
1	<u>Green Waste</u>				
	Delivery of Green bin (or bins to same address)	01/04/2025	14.00	15.00	O/Scope
	Provision of green bin (all new or additional bins)	01/04/2025	29.00	30.00	O/Scope
	Annual collection charge (first bin)	01/04/2025	53.00	55.00	O/Scope
	Annual collection charge (each subsequent bin)	01/04/2025	44.00	45.00	O/Scope
2	<u>Other street care charges</u>				
	Delivery of bin (or bins to the same address)	01/04/2025	14.00	15.00	O/Scope
	Additional clear recycling sacks (pack of 15)	01/04/2024	1.95	2.00	O/Scope
	Replacement of damaged 240 ltr wheelie bins*	01/04/2024	28.00	29.00	O/Scope
3	<u>Additional bins for Landlords (subject to qualifying criteria)</u>				
	Delivery of bin (or bins to the same address)	01/04/2025	14.00	15.00	O/Scope
	240 ltr bin	01/04/2024	28.00	29.00	O/Scope
	660 ltr bin	01/04/2016	price on application		O/Scope
	1100 ltr bin	01/04/2016	price on application		O/Scope
4	<u>Replacement (additional capacity) bins for Families (subject to qualifying criteria)</u>				
	Delivery of bin (or bins to the same address)	01/04/2025	14.00	15.00	O/Scope
5	<u>Developers charge for new developments</u>				
	Delivery of bin (or bins to the same address)	01/04/2025	14.00	15.00	O/Scope
	Set of bins (1 black 240 ltr & 1 silver 240 ltr)	01/04/2025	56.00	58.00	O/Scope
6	<u>Domestic refuse collection</u>				
	Bulk household items - first item	01/04/2024	21.00	22.00	O/Scope
	- each additional item	01/04/2024	11.00	12.00	O/Scope
	White Goods Collection	01/04/2024	21.00	22.00	
	Ad Hoc Bulky collections (non standard items) - to be assessed by Supervisor, charged appropriately				
7	<u>Private street cleansing</u>	01/04/2010	Based on cost recovery	Based on cost recovery	Included
8	<u>Private grounds maintenance</u>	01/04/2024	Based on cost recovery	Based on cost recovery	Included
9	Commercial waste collections (including bulky items) - please contact us by email; waste@southkesteven.gov.uk for a quotation	01/04/2016			
	*Where bins have been damaged by the resident				

	Detail	Previous Change Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT DISCRETIONARY CHARGES				
1	<u>Community Rooms</u>				
	Residents weekly charge	01/04/2025	8.60	8.90	O/Scope
	Voluntary agencies & organisations usage				
	- up to 3 hours	01/04/2025	28.30	29.40	Exempt
	- more than 3 hours/all day	01/04/2025	42.70	44.30	Exempt
	Charitable organisations usage				
	- up to 3 hours	01/04/2025	7.30	7.60	Exempt
	- more than 3 hours/all day	01/04/2025	13.80	14.30	Exempt
2	<u>Communal Facilities</u>				
	Residents weekly charge	01/04/2025	9.90	10.30	O/Scope
3	<u>Guest Rooms</u>				
	Double Room - per night *	01/04/2025	28.30	29.40	Included
	Single Room - per night *	01/04/2025	21.00	21.80	Included
	Folding bed - per night *	01/04/2025	7.20	7.50	Included
	* 50% discount for persons over 60.				
	NOTE - Detailed report reviewing these charges to be presented to Housing OSC in 2026/27				

Appendix B

	Detail	Effective Date	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	VAT
	LAPPC Permits for Part B Installations, Mobile Plant and Solvent Emissions Activities						
	Application Fees						
1	Standard Process (includes solvent emission activities)	01/04/2017	1,650.00		1,650.00		O/Scope
	Standard Processes additional fee for operating without a permit	01/04/2017	1,188.00		1,188.00		O/Scope
	PVRI, SWOBs and Dry Cleaners	01/04/2017	155.00		155.00		O/Scope
	PVR I & II combined	01/04/2017	257.00		257.00		O/Scope
	Vehicle refinishers (VRs) and other reduced fees activities	01/04/2017	362.00		362.00		O/Scope
	Reduced fee activities: Additional fee for operating without a permit	01/04/2017	99.00		99.00		O/Scope
	Mobile Plant (not using simplified permits)	01/04/2017	1,650.00		1,650.00		O/Scope
	- for the third to seventh application	01/04/2017	985.00		985.00		O/Scope
	- for the eighth and subsequent applications	01/04/2017	498.00		498.00		O/Scope
	Where an application for any of the above is for a combined Part B and waste application, add an extra £297 to the above amounts						
2	Substantial changes to permits						
	Standard Process	01/04/2017	1,050.00		1,050.00		O/Scope
	Standard Process where the substantial change results in a new PPC activity	01/04/2017	1,650.00		1,650.00		O/Scope
	Reduced Fee Activities	01/04/2017	102.00		102.00		O/Scope
3	Transfer and Surrender						
	Transfer of a permit - Standard Process	01/04/2017	169.00		169.00		O/Scope
	New operator at low risk reduced fee activity (extra one off subsistence charge)	01/04/2017	78.00		78.00		O/Scope
	Partial transfer of a standard permit	01/04/2017	497.00		497.00		O/Scope
	Reduced Fee Activities: Partial Transfer	01/04/2017	47.00		47.00		O/Scope
4	Temporary transfer for mobiles						
	First transfer	01/04/2017	53.00		53.00		O/Scope
	Repeat following enforcement or warning	01/04/2017	53.00		53.00		O/Scope
5	Annual Subsistence Charge						
	Standard Process - LOW	01/04/2017	772.00	(+103)*	772.00	(+103)*	O/Scope
	Standard Process - MEDIUM	01/04/2017	1,161.00	(+156)*	1,161.00	(+156)*	O/Scope
	Standard Process - HIGH	01/04/2017	1,747.00	(+207)*	1,747.00	(+207)*	O/Scope
	* The additional amount in brackets must be charged where a permit is for a combined Part B and waste installation						
			HIGH		HIGH		
	PVRI, SWOBs and Dry Cleaners	01/04/2017	237.00		237.00		O/Scope
	PVR I & II combined	01/04/2017	341.00		341.00		O/Scope
	Vehicle refinishers and other Reduced Fees	01/04/2017	548.00		548.00		O/Scope
	Mobile Plant for the first and second permits	01/04/2017	1,506.00		1,506.00		O/Scope
	for the third to seventh permits	01/04/2017	924.00		924.00		O/Scope
	for the eighth and subsequent permits	01/04/2017	473.00		473.00		O/Scope
	Late Payment Fee (8 weeks from date of invoice)	01/04/2017	52.00		52.00		O/Scope
	* Where a Part B installation is subject to reporting under the L-PRTR Regulation, add an extra £103 to the above annual subsistence amounts						

NOTES

The above fees are those currently imposed by DEFRA, a full copy of which can be viewed on their website

www.gov.uk

	Detail	Effective Date	2025/26 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	2026/27 £	VAT
6	LAPPC mobile plant charges (not using simplified permit)		Application fee	LOW	MED	HIGH	
	number of permits						
	1	01/04/2017	1,650.00	646.00	1,034.00	1,506.00	O/Scope
	2	01/04/2017	1,650.00	646.00	1,034.00	1,506.00	O/Scope
	3	01/04/2017	985.00	385.00	617.00	924.00	O/Scope
	4	01/04/2017	985.00	385.00	617.00	924.00	O/Scope
	5	01/04/2017	985.00	385.00	617.00	924.00	O/Scope
	6	01/04/2017	985.00	385.00	617.00	924.00	O/Scope
	7	01/04/2017	985.00	385.00	617.00	924.00	O/Scope
	8 and over	01/04/2017	498.00	198.00	316.00	473.00	O/Scope
7	LA-IPPC (Local Authority Element)						
	Application	01/04/2017	3,363.00				O/Scope
	Additional fee for operating without a permit	01/04/2017	1,188.00				O/Scope
	Annual subsistence LOW	01/04/2017	1,446.00				O/Scope
	Annual subsistence MEDIUM	01/04/2017	1,610.00				O/Scope
	Annual subsistence HIGH	01/04/2017	2,333.00				O/Scope
	Late Payment Fee	01/04/2017	52.00				O/Scope
	Variation	01/04/2017	1,368.00				O/Scope
	Substantial variation	01/04/2017	3,363.00				O/Scope
	Transfer	01/04/2017	235.00				O/Scope
	Partial transfer	01/04/2017	698.00				O/Scope
	Surrender	01/04/2017	698.00				O/Scope
	*Additional fee for payment of subsistence fees for LAPPC and LAIPPC by quarterly instalments	01/04/2017	38.00				O/Scope
	** where 9(2)(a) or (b) applies under the Local Authority Permits for Part A(2) Installations and small waste incineration plan(Fees and Charges) (England) (Scheme) 2017						

NOTES

The above fees are detailed in the Local Authority Permits for Part A(2) Installations and small waste incineration plan (Fees & Charges) (England) (Scheme) 2017 in the currently imposed by DEFRA, a fully copy of which can be viewed on their website www.defra.gov.uk

- * Subsistence charges can be paid in four equal quarterly instalments paid on 1 April, 1 July, 1 October and 1 January. Where paid quarterly the amount payable to the authority will increase by £38

	Detail	Effective Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	ALCOHOL LICENSING				
1	Licensed Premises				
	Grant of Premises Licence or Club Premises Certificate				
	Band A (Rateable Value £0 - £4,300)	24/11/2005	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
	Band B (Rateable Value £4,301 - £33,000)	24/11/2005	190.00	190.00	O/Scope
	Band C (Rateable Value £33,001 - £87,000)	24/11/2005	315.00	315.00	O/Scope
	Band D (Rateable Value £87,001 - £125,000)	24/11/2005	450.00	450.00	O/Scope
	Band E (Rateable Value £125,001+)	24/11/2005	635.00	635.00	O/Scope
2	Variation of Premises Licence or Club Premises Certificate				
	Band A (Rateable Value £0 - £4,300)	24/11/2005	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
	Band B (Rateable Value £4,301 - £33,000)	24/11/2005	190.00	190.00	O/Scope
	Band C (Rateable Value £33,001 - £87,000)	24/11/2005	315.00	315.00	O/Scope
	Band D (Rateable Value £87,001 - £125,000)	24/11/2005	450.00	450.00	O/Scope
	Band E (Rateable Value £125,001+)	24/11/2005	635.00	635.00	O/Scope
	Minor Variation	30/06/2009	89.00	89.00	O/Scope
3	Annual Fee for Premises Licence or Club Premises Certificate				
	Band A (Rateable Value £0 - £4,300)	24/11/2005	70.00	70.00	O/Scope
	Band B (Rateable Value £4,301 - £33,000)	24/11/2005	180.00	180.00	O/Scope
	Band C (Rateable Value £33,001 - £87,000)	24/11/2005	295.00	295.00	O/Scope
	Band D (Rateable Value £87,001 - £125,000)	24/11/2005	320.00	320.00	O/Scope
	Band E (Rateable Value £125,001+)	24/11/2005	350.00	350.00	O/Scope
4	Grant of Premises Licence where alcohol is primary use				
	Band A (Rateable Value £0 - £4,300)	24/11/2005	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
	Band B (Rateable Value £4,301 - £33,000)	24/11/2005	190.00	190.00	O/Scope
	Band C (Rateable Value £33,001 - £87,000)	24/11/2005	315.00	315.00	O/Scope
	Band D (Rateable Value £87,001 - £125,000)	24/11/2005	900.00	900.00	O/Scope
	Band E (Rateable Value £125,001+)	24/11/2005	1,905.00	1,905.00	O/Scope
5	Annual Fee for Premises Licence where alcohol is primary use				
	Band A (Rateable Value £0 - £4,300)	24/11/2005	70.00	70.00	O/Scope
	Band B (Rateable Value £4,301 - £33,000)	24/11/2005	180.00	180.00	O/Scope
	Band C (Rateable Value £33,001 - £87,000)	24/11/2005	295.00	295.00	O/Scope
	Band D (Rateable Value £87,001 - £125,000)	24/11/2005	640.00	640.00	O/Scope
	Band E (Rateable Value £125,001+)	24/11/2005	1,050.00	1,050.00	O/Scope
Fees set by government					

	Detail	Effective Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	ALCOHOL LICENSING				
6	Grant of Premises Licence or Club Premises Certificate				
	Number of Persons				
	5,000 to 9,999	24/11/2005	1,000.00	1,000.00	O/Scope
	10,000 to 14,999	24/11/2005	2,000.00	2,000.00	O/Scope
	15,000 to 19,999	24/11/2005	4,000.00	4,000.00	O/Scope
	20,000 to 29,999	24/11/2005	8,000.00	8,000.00	O/Scope
	30,000 to 39,999	24/11/2005	16,000.00	16,000.00	O/Scope
	40,000 to 49,999	24/11/2005	24,000.00	24,000.00	O/Scope
	50,000 to 59,999	24/11/2005	32,000.00	32,000.00	O/Scope
	60,000 to 69,999	24/11/2005	40,000.00	40,000.00	O/Scope
	70,000 to 79,999	24/11/2005	48,000.00	48,000.00	O/Scope
	80,000 to 89,999	24/11/2005	56,000.00	56,000.00	O/Scope
	90,000 and over	24/11/2005	64,000.00	64,000.00	O/Scope
7	Annual Fee - Number of Persons				
	5,000 to 9,999	24/11/2005	500.00	500.00	O/Scope
	10,000 to 14,999	24/11/2005	1,000.00	1,000.00	O/Scope
	15,000 to 19,999	24/11/2005	2,000.00	2,000.00	O/Scope
	20,000 to 29,999	24/11/2005	4,000.00	4,000.00	O/Scope
	30,000 to 39,999	24/11/2005	8,000.00	8,000.00	O/Scope
	40,000 to 49,999	24/11/2005	12,000.00	12,000.00	O/Scope
	50,000 to 59,999	24/11/2005	16,000.00	16,000.00	O/Scope
	60,000 to 69,999	24/11/2005	20,000.00	20,000.00	O/Scope
	70,000 to 79,999	24/11/2005	24,000.00	24,000.00	O/Scope
	80,000 to 89,999	24/11/2005	28,000.00	28,000.00	O/Scope
	90,000 and over	24/11/2005	32,000.00	32,000.00	O/Scope
Fees set by government					

	Detail	Effective Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	ALCOHOL LICENSING				
8	Other Charges - Licensing Act 2003				
	Personal Licence (Grant/ renewal)	24/11/2005	37.00	37.00	O/Scope
	Theft, loss etc of a personal licence	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Duty to notify change of name or address	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Temporary Event Notice	24/11/2005	21.00	21.00	O/Scope
	Theft, loss etc of a Temporary Event Notice	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Theft, loss etc of a premises licence or summary	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Application for a provisional statement where premises being built etc	24/11/2005	315.00	315.00	O/Scope
	Notification of change of name or address	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Application to vary licence to specify individual as DPS	24/11/2005	23.00	23.00	O/Scope
	Transfer of premises licence	24/11/2005	23.00	23.00	O/Scope
	Interim authority notice following death etc of licence holder	24/11/2005	23.00	23.00	O/Scope
	Theft, loss etc of certificate of summary	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Notification of change of name or alteration of rules of club	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Change of relevant registered address of club	24/11/2005	10.50	10.50	O/Scope
	Right of freeholder etc to be notified of licensing matters	24/11/2005	21.00	21.00	O/Scope
	Disapplication of premise supervisor for community premises	01/04/2020	23.00	23.00	O/Scope
Fees set by government					

	Detail	Effective Date	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	VAT
	NEIGHBOURHOODS				
1	Fixed Penalty Notice - Community Protection Notice	01/04/2018	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
2	Fixed Penalty Notice - Public Space Protection Order	01/04/2018	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
3	Fixed Penalty Notice - Domestic Waste Offence	01/04/2017	80.00	80.00	O/Scope
4	Fixed Penalty Notice - Commercial Waste Offence	01/04/2017	110.00	110.00	O/Scope
5	Fixed Penalty Notice - Waste Transfer Offence	01/04/2017	300.00	300.00	O/Scope
6	Fixed Penalty Notice - Littering	01/04/2024	500.00	500.00	O/Scope
	Reduced for repayment within 14 days	01/04/2024	250.00	250.00	O/Scope
7	Fixed Penalty Notice - Fly Tipping	01/04/2024	1,000.00	1,000.00	O/Scope
	Reduced for repayment within 14 days	01/04/2024	500.00	500.00	O/Scope
8	Fixed Penalty Notice - Fly Posting*	01/04/2018	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
9	Fixed Penalty Notice - Graffiti	01/04/2024	500.00	500.00	O/Scope
	Reduced for repayment within 14 days	01/04/2024	250.00	250.00	O/Scope
10	Fixed Penalty Notice - Abandoning a Vehicle	01/04/2017	200.00	200.00	O/Scope
11	Fixed Penalty Notice - Nuisance Parking	01/04/2017	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
12	Fixed Penalty Notice - Householder waste duty of care*	01/04/2024	600.00	600.00	O/Scope
	Reduced for repayment within 14 days	01/04/2024	300.00	300.00	O/Scope
13	REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF CCTV IMAGES				
	Legal Representative/Insurance Company	01/04/2025	100.00	100.00	O/Scope
14	Neighbourhood charges	01/04/2019	Hourly rate	Hourly rate	O/Scope
	NB. The above fees are set at the maximum full penalty with the exception of those marked * which are set at the default penalty as determined in the Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (England) Regulations				

A. OUTLINE APPLICATIONS		
£578 per 0.1 hectare for site up to and including 0.5 hectares	Not more than 0.5 hectares	£578 per 0.1 hectare
£624 per 0.1 hectare for sites between 0.5 hectares and 2.5 hectares	Not more than 2.5 hectares	£624 per 0.1 hectare
£15,433 + £1,186 for each 0.1 in excess of 2.5 hectares to a maximum of £202,500	More than 2.5 hectares	£15,433 + £186 for each additional 0.1 hectare in excess of 2.5 hectares (Maximum fee of £202,500)
B. HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATIONS		
Alterations/extensions to a single dwellinghouse , including works within boundary	Single dwellinghouse	£258
C. FULL APPLICATIONS (and First Submissions of Reserved Matters; or Technical Details Consent)		
Alterations/extensions to two or more dwellinghouses , including works within boundaries	Two or more dwellinghouses (or two or more flats)	£509
New dwellinghouses (Not more than 10 dwellinghouses)	New dwellinghouses (not more than 10)	£578 per dwellinghouse
New dwellinghouses (between 10 and 50)	New dwellinghouses (between 10 and 50)	£624 per dwellinghouse
New dwellinghouses (for <i>more</i> than 50) £30,860 + £186 per additional dwellinghouse in excess of 50 up to a maximum fee of £405,500	New dwellinghouses (more than 50)	£30,860 + £186 per additional dwellinghouse
Erection of buildings (not dwellinghouses, agricultural, glasshouses, plant nor machinery):		
Gross floor space to be created by the development	No increase in gross floor space or no more than 40 sq m	£293
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 40 sq m but no more than 1,000 sq m	£578 per each 75 sq. m.
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 1,000 sq m but no more than 3,750 sq m	£578 for each 75sq m or part thereof
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 3,750 sq m	£30,680 + £186 for each additional 75 sq m in excess of 3,750 sq m to a maximum of £405,000
The erection of buildings (on land used for agriculture for agricultural purposes)		
Gross floor space to be created by the development	Not more than 465 sq m	£120
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 465 sq m but not more than 540 sq m	£578
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 540 sq m but not more than 1,000 sq m	£578 for first 540 sq m + £578 for each 75 sq m (or part thereof) in excess of 540 sq m
Gross floor space to be created by the development	Between 1,000 sq. m and 4,215 sq. m.	£624 for first 1,000 sq. m and £624 for each additional 75 sq. metres (or part thereof) in excess of 1,000 sq. m
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 4,215 sq m	£30,860 + £186 for each 75 sq m (or part thereof) in excess of 4,215 sq m up to a maximum of £405,000
Erection of glasshouses (on land used for the purposes of agriculture)		
Gross floor space to be created by the development	Not more than 465 sq m	£120
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 465 sq m but not more than 1,000 sq. m	£3,225
Gross floor space to be created by the development	More than 1,000 sq. m	£3,483
* The fees above are set by Government		

Erection/alterations/replacement of plant and machinery		
Site area	Not more than 1 hectare	£578 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof)
Site area	More than 1 hectare but not more than 5 hectares	£624 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof)
Site area	More than 5 hectares	£30,860 + additional £186 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 5 hectares to a maximum of £405,000
D. APPLICATIONS OTHER THAN BUILDING WORKS		
Car parks, service roads or other accesses	For existing uses	£293
Waste (Use of land for disposal of refuse or waste materials or deposit of material remaining after extraction or storage of minerals)		
Site area	Not more than 15 hectares	£316 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof)
Site area	More than 15 hectares	£47,161 + £186 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares up to a maximum of £105,300
Operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas		
Site area	Not more than 7.5 hectares	£686 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof)
Site area	More than 7.5 hectares	£51,395 + additional £204 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 7.5 hectares up to a maximum of £405,000
Operations (other than exploratory drilling) for the winning and working of oil or natural gas		
Site area	Not more than 15 hectares	£347 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof)
Site area	More than 15 hectares	£47,161 + additional £186 for each 0.1 in excess of 15 hectare up to a maximum of £105,300
Other operations (winning and working of minerals) excluding oil and natural gas		
Site area	Not more than 15 hectares	£316 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof)
Site area	More than 15 hectares	£47,161 + additional £186 for each 0.1 in excess of 15 hectare up to a maximum of £105,300
Other operations (not coming within any of the above categories)		
Site area	Any site area	£293 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) up to a maximum of £2,535
E. LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE		
Existing use or operation		Same as Full
Existing use or operation - lawful not to comply with any condition or limitation		£293
Proposed use or operation		Half the normal planning fee.
* The fees above are set by Government		

F. PRIOR APPROVAL	
Agricultural and Forestry buildings & operations or demolition of buildings	£120
Communications (previously referred to as 'Telecommunications Code Systems Operators')	£578
Proposed Change of Use to State Funded School or Registered Nursery	£120
Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a State-Funded School or Registered Nursery	£120
Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a flexible use within Shops, Financial and Professional services, Restaurants and Cafes, Business, Storage or Distribution, Hotels, or Assembly or Leisure	£120
Proposed Change of Use of a building from Commercial / Business / Service (Use Class E) Use to a use falling within Use Class C3 (Dwellinghouse)	£125 per dwellinghouse
Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3), where there are no Associated Building Operations	£120
Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3), and Associated Building Operations	£258
Notification for Prior Approval for a Change of Use from Amusement Arcades/Centres and Casinos, (Sui Generis Uses) and any land within its curtilage to Dwellinghouses (Class C3)	£120
Notification for Prior Approval for a Change of Use from Amusement Arcades/Centres and Casinos, (Sui Generis Uses) and any land within its curtilage to Dwellinghouses (Class C3), and Associated Building Operations	£258
Notification for Prior Approval for a Development Consisting of the Erection or Construction of a Collection Facility within the Curtilage of a Shop	£120
Notification for Prior Approval for the Temporary Use of Buildings or Land for the Purpose of Commercial Film-Making and the Associated Temporary Structures, Works, Plant or Machinery required in Connection with that Use	£120
Notification for Prior Approval for the Installation, Alteration or Replacement of other Solar Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the Roofs of Non-domestic Buildings, up to a Capacity of 1 Megawatt	£120
<i>* The fees above are set by Government</i>	

G. RESERVED MATTERS		
Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval grant of planning permission		Full fee due or if full fee already paid then £462 due
H. APPROVAL/VARIATION/DISCHARGE OF CONDITION		
Application for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission		£234
Request for confirmation that one or more planning conditions have been complied with		£34 per request for Householder otherwise £116 per request
I. CHANGE OF USE of a building to use as one or more separate dwellinghouses, or other cases		
Number of dwellinghouses	Not more than 50 dwellinghouses	£462 for each
Number of dwellinghouses	More than 50 dwellinghouses	£22,859 + £138 for each in excess of 50 up to a maximum of £300,000
Other Changes of Use of a building or land		£462
J. ADVERTISING		
Relating to the business on the premises		£165
Advance signs which are not situated on or visible from the site, directing the public to a business		£165
Other advertisements		£578
K. APPLICATION FOR NON-MATERIAL AMENDMENT FOLLOWING A GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION		
Applications in respect of householder developments		£43
Applications in respect of other developments		£293
L. APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE (valid from 1 June 2018)		
Site area		£503 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof)
* The fees above are set by Government		

M. CONCESSIONS

Exemptions from payment

For alterations, extensions, etc. to a dwellinghouse for the benefit of a registered disabled person

An application solely for the carrying out of the operations for the purpose of providing a means of access for disabled persons to or within a building or premises to which members of the public are admitted

Listed Building Consent

Planning permission for relevant demolition in a Conservation Area

Works to Trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order or in a Conservation Area

Hedgerow Removal

If the application is the first revision of an application for development of the same character or description on the same site by the same applicant:

* For a withdrawn application: Within 12 months of the date when the application was received

* For a determined application: Within 12 months of the date the application was granted, refused or an appeal dismissed

* For an application where an appeal was made on the grounds of non-determination: Within 12 months of the period when the giving of notice of a decision on the earlier valid application expired

*In all cases where the 12 month period started no later than 5 December 2023

If the application is for a lawful development certificate, for existing use, where an application for planning permission for the same development would be exempt from the need to pay a planning fee under any other planning fee regulation

If the application is for consent to display an advertisement following either a withdrawal of an earlier application (before notice of decision was issued) or where the application is made following refusal of consent for display of an advertisement, and where the application is made by or on behalf of the same person

If the application is for consent to display an advertisement which results from a direction under Regulation 7 of the 2007 Regulations, dis-applying deemed consent under Regulation 6 to the advertisement in question

If the application is for alternative proposals for the same site by the same applicant, in order to benefit from the permitted development right in Schedule 2 Part 3 Class V of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended)

If the application relates to a condition or conditions on an application for Listed Building Consent or planning permission for relevant demolition in a Conservation Area If the application is for a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Works to a listed building

Prior Approval for a Proposed Larger Home Extension

Reductions to payments

If the application is being made on behalf of a non-profit making sports club for works for playing fields not involving buildings then the fee is £578

If the application is being made on behalf of a parish or community council then the fee is 50%

If the application is an alternative proposal being submitted on the same site by the same applicant on the same day, where this application is of lesser cost then the fee is 50%

In respect of reserved matters you must pay a sum equal to or greater than what would be payable at current rates for approval of all the reserved matters. If this amount has already been paid then the fee is £578

If the application is for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed use or development, then the fee is 50%

If two or more applications are submitted for different proposals on the same day and relating to the same site then you must pay the fee for the highest fee plus half sum of the others

Where an application crosses one or more local or district planning authorities, the Planning Portal fee calculator will only calculate a cross boundary application fee as 150% of the fee that would have been payable if there had only been one application to a single authority covering the entire site.

If the fee for this divided site is smaller when the sum of the fees payable for each part of the site are calculated separately, you will need to contact the lead local authority to discuss the fee for this divided site.

The fee should go to the authority that contains the larger part of the application site.

This is only a summary of scales of fees, listing only the most common types of application.

** The fees above are set by Government*

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Fees and Charges

Charging Policy

Contents

- 1. Purpose and Introduction**
- 2. General Principles**
- 3. Determining the Amounts to be Charged**
- 4. Concessions**
- 5. Income Collection**
- 6. Governance**
- 7. Summary**

1. Purpose and Introduction

To ensure that fees and charges are set in a considered and consistent manner for South Kesteven District Council.

The Council is committed to having a sustainable Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) of which income from fees and charges represent an important source of funds to the Council and enable a wide range of services to be delivered. To ensure fees and charges are being used effectively, the Council will ensure its overall charging policy links with its corporate aims and objectives.

The setting of fees and charges is incorporated within the medium-term financial planning and budget setting process which will also link to cross cutting issues and impacts that will need to be considered in the context of wider policy objectives. This document sets out an overall policy framework to support and guide in the practical approach to setting fees and charges that is consistent with the corporate plan 2024-27 and the key priority of Effective Council.

This policy also provides guidance to managers on how to cost services in order to determine the amount to be charged taking into account concessions, exemptions etc. along with the governance arrangements for approval.

By the nature of the document, this Policy seeks to set out general principles. As each service is specific, there may be reasons why a specific service does not align directly with this Policy. The key focus is to ensure that fees and charges have been set in a reasoned manner; sometimes other Council priorities may mean a specific service deviates from these principles.

2. General Principles

Where the Council has the option to levy a charge, and there is no justification why an exception should be made, it is the Council policy a charge should be made on both statutory and discretionary charges in accordance with this charging policy.

Fees and charges are to be structured to support the achievement of the Councils priorities and ideally recover the full cost of service delivery. Optimum use of fees and charges is to be made without having a detrimental effect on:

- Income
- Quality
- Services levels
- Vulnerable people
- Legislation
- Health and Safety
- Creating unintentional outcomes
- Public satisfaction

The following are the key principles of charging within SKDC:

- Full cost recovery as a minimum is the default – the rationale for any subsidised services should be understood and these should be regularly reviewed
- There should be no presumption towards uniformity in charges. Where appropriate charging different prices at different times/different locations should be considered
- Opportunities for premium levels of service should be identified and attract increased charges
- Fees & charges should be taken in advance of service delivery
- For recurring charges, Direct Debit should be the preferred solution
- There should be clear reasons for discounts and these should be regularly reviewed
- Full cost recovery should include an overhead rate for central costs where a different rate has not otherwise been agreed
- The level of fees & charges should be reviewed annually, with the normal default being that inflation is added

3. Determining the amounts to be charged

Where the Council controls the level of the charge to be made for a service, it is the Council policy that the charge should cover the actual costs of providing the service (including overheads). Where a service is not recovering fully the costs, it is being subsidised by the local Council Tax payer from the General Fund or Rent Payer for the Housing Revenue Account. Some key questions to ask therefore are:

‘Do we want the service user to pay for the service or do we want all Council Tax payers / Rent Payer to pay for or contribute to the costs of the service’?

‘Can this be used as loss leader for another added value service which we can market and promote’?

Different services are provided within a Council for different reasons. Some may be focussed upon a financial return (rent for commercial property); whereas others provide wider health or society benefits which would otherwise be under-provided.

It is recognised that this will not be appropriate in all circumstances and the actual amount proposed will need to take into account:

- Relevant Council strategies and policies
- Any subsidy or concessions given
- Market conditions and prices charged by competitors and/or other Local Authorities
- The need to avoid potential distortion of the market which might occur from pricing below the levels charged by the private sector for similar services
- The need to avoid exploitation of customers who have no option but to use Council services
- The impact of increased usage on a particular service
- The need to increase Council income
- Service users’ views where provided

A good starting point is therefore to consider all services against two factors – degree of competition and amount of legislation about a service. This can result plotting services on the matrix overleaf. Examples are provided in each of the quadrants.

Those services in the top-right quadrant – the low regulation, high competition section should seek to fully recover costs and aim to make a return to the Council where possible.

Those in the bottom-left quadrant – high regulation, low / no competition should consider any regularity requirements. If there is no restriction on charging, then full cost recovery as a minimum should be the default.

Level of external competition	Significant	<i>Market Regulation / Specialisation</i> Cost / benefit Analysis Specialise or Regulate <i>Building Control</i>	<i>Profit</i> Recover full costs / Generate profit <i>Off-street car parking</i>
	Minimal	<i>Regulatory or 'core services'</i> Comparative cost and performance <i>Environment Health</i>	<i>Market Regulation / Specialisation</i> Cost / benefit Analysis <i>Theatres</i>
		High	Low
		Level of regulation	

Benchmarking can be a good indicator of the potential impact of changing price and give an indication of the efficiency of the service (whether it can meet its costs charging at a level similar to other organisations). Benchmarking should only inform rather than be the main determination of price – if we cannot cost recover in a competitive environment then we should consider withdrawing from the market in that area.

In addition, there are some other factors where price can be used to influence behaviour:

- A higher price can dissuade people from using a service (e.g. fines for littering or parking violations)
- A lower price for a service can seek to attract people from alternative perhaps more costly public services (pre-planning advice may ease the requirements when a full planning application is submitted)
- Testing the market for a new service may require a time of 'loss-leading' while demand is established, and costs spread more widely
- Charging can increase the perception of value of the service to the user

Appendix A provides some further guidance around the impact of different charging options, understanding costs and income and consideration of what the public think which will be helpful for budget holders when setting their charges.

VAT: Consideration needs to be given in all cases as to whether VAT is applicable.

Approach to Charge Setting

Within the service and budget planning process fees and charges should be identified to one of the categories in the table below and the appropriate charging policy adopted in establishing and reviewing charges rates/levels.

Approach	Policy Objective
Full Commercial – the default position	Aim to maximise revenue within an overall objective of generating a surplus from this service which can then support the delivery of other council services
Full commercial with discounts	As above, but with discounts being given to reflect market conditions and enable trade. Discounted costs are met out of the service budget
Full commercial with concessions	As above, but with discounted concessions being given to enable disadvantaged groups to access the service determined from the Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)
Statutory	Charges are set in line with legal obligations and charges are only made for added value services
Cost recovery	The Council aims to recover the costs of providing the service from those who use it, including all overheads, investments, costs of sales and development.
Cost recovery with concessions	As above, but the Council is prepared to subsidise the service to ensure disadvantaged groups have access to it
Premium Services	It may be possible to provide a differential service for some customers, who may wish to receive a faster service, more support or a different output from the service compared to others. In these circumstances it may be possible to provide different service levels and charge more for the premium level of service
Free	Service fully available at no charge as set by Council policy which we can potentially use as a marketing tool for selling added value services.
Subsidised	The Council wishes users of the service to make a contribution to the costs of providing it. This might be to meet a service objective or allow competition with other providers. This may be applicable for services that contribute to the councils objectives but where full cost recovery would make the service unviable. The Council should enhance its reputation with its customers by promoting this.

Nominal	The Council wishes to make the service available but sets a charge to discourage frivolous usage

If a commercial rate is appropriate budget holders will need to first undertake an analysis of their costs to ensure it is achieving cost recovery but will need to supplement this with relevant benchmarking information to ensure the fee is set appropriate taking into account market prices so that the service remains competitive through maximising the fee earning potential but also being aware of what the market can bear.

Where the income for a service isn't recovering it's cost officers will need to consider:

- Can the service be delivered in a more cost effective and efficient manner to reduce expenditure?
- Use this service as a 'loss leader' to sell added value services which would cover the shortfall
- Challenge whether we still want to deliver the service at a cost and subsidy?

All calculations will need to be updated annually by the service areas and also reviewed by the finance team to sense check the information and methodology being applied. Budget holders should remember that any systems and procedures should be proportionate to the importance and scale of the income involved and any risks of legal challenge arising from regulatory requirements.

Costing the services provided

The charge for services to the users should generally be calculated on the full cost of providing the service which should include items such as:

Direct Costs

- Salary and associated on costs (National Insurance and Pensions) taking into account non productive time
- Travel costs
- Specialised or additional equipment required for the provision of the service
- Cost of sales or recovery of any investments made to provide the service

Indirect Costs

- Overheads such as HR, ICT, Finance as well as any corporate recharge costs
- Taking into account any previous years surplus or deficit

There may be other associated costs which need to be taken into account that are incurred to deliver the service which budget holders will need to quantify when establishing a total cost for the service. The total cost may then need to be allocated out across the estimated number of users (which would need to be evidenced) in order to arrive at a suitable charge.

Budget holders may also need to set fees and charges based on officer time in order to allocate their costs to arrive at a set charge and therefore appropriate systems for time recording will need to be implemented. Further support can be obtained from Financial Services.

Where there is any statutory or legislative guidance on which costs are allowable when calculating a charge these need to be adhered to.

4. Concessions.

There will be some circumstances where it may be appropriate to consider offering discounts or concessions in relation to particular services/activities or customer groups on a basis which is consistent with achieving the Council's objectives.

When reviewing or establishing the level of discount or concession offered for a particular service the following should be considered:

- What is the purpose of any discounts given (e.g. encourage uptake from disadvantaged groups, to encourage certain payment methods)?
- Is there evidence to support that the discounts support the purpose given?
- When was the last time the discounts / exemptions were reviewed?
- Do the discounts lead to an overall subsidy for the service or is the discount recovered from other users?
- If a service is means tested, what test is used? Could (with appropriate permissions granted by the customer), the Council's own systems be used as evidence (for example using Council Tax benefit as the main means test)?
- If payments are settled by invoice, what is the payment profile, are elements written off? Would an early payment settlement or discount for in advance / via direct debit be cost effective for the service / the Council as a whole?
- Does demand change through the day/week/season/year? Have discounts been considered for times of lower demand?
- What will the impact on income for this service be by offering a concession? Is there a business case to support short-term reduction in charges with the aim to increase overall take up and overall income yield for the service in the long term.

Recognising the broader agenda to maximise access to services and to ensure equity and fairness in charging, concessions/discounts should be considered for the following groups:

- Young people aged 16 years or younger
- Full-time students
- Senior Citizens over pensionable age
- Individuals on low incomes in receipt of means tested benefit
- People with a disability in receipt of a means tested benefit
- Individuals receiving a 'carers allowance'

- Ex-members of the Armed Forces

An assessment of the desirability of offering concessions (including the financial implications) should be part of the evaluation of an appropriate charge.

Managers should be able to demonstrate the effect on usage, access and finance of any concessions in calculating the charge and the income that is derived.

5. Income Collection

Chasing debt takes time, costs money and some debts get written off – this can be a particularly large cost for small value fees & charges. ***It is therefore preferable to take payments before a service is provided.***

There are reasons why this might not be possible:

- Legislation may require us to act (especially in an emergency) then seek to recover costs back (for example repairs to homes falling into dangerous disrepair)
- If competitors charge via invoice, then only offering payment in advance may lead to people choosing them
- Larger companies may prefer or require paying via invoice, so that they can process via their standard payment processes (and for recovery of VAT)

Where invoices are required to be issued the following points should be noted:

- Invoices should be raised for all fees/charges where appropriate, authorisation to raise invoices should be processed through the finance system preferably in advance of service delivery
- Where a cancellation of service is required they should be sent to Sundry Debt team promptly with an appropriate explanation (e.g. invoice raised incorrectly, service not provided) using existing documentation.
- Requests for write-offs should be sent to the Sundry Debt team with the appropriate explanation
- Any arrangements or circumstances to stop/suspend recovery action should be promptly notified to Sundry Debt team
- Budget Holders should be prepared to provide sufficient documentary evidence to enable legal action to be taken through the Courts

6. Governance

All fees and charges must be approved by Council as laid out within the constitution. The setting of fees and charges forms part of the annual budget process as summarised below:

- **Budget holders** undertake review of fees and charges in September as part of the preparation of the draft budget – these take into account the principles and approach as outlined in this Corporate Charging Strategy.
- Proposals should be discussed and agreed with the relevant **Portfolio Holder**
- Budget consultation including fees and charges proposals is undertaken with the **Budget – Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee** in order to provide feedback to Cabinet.
- **Cabinet** then formally recommends the draft fees and charges after the budget scrutiny meeting to Council
- **Council** formally approves the fees and charges for the following financial year

Reviewing of Fees and Charges

- Fees and charges **should annually be subject to a detailed review** and, should at least, increase in line with the rate of inflation as part of the budget setting process. The rate of inflation will be set by the Section 151 officer.
- Where fees and charges are set on a full commercial or subsidised basis (where the subsidy is linked to perceived market conditions), annual benchmarking needs to be undertaken. This information together with any other market intelligence will need to be considered as part of the annual review process. Budget holders will also need to explain and demonstrate how market information has influenced pricing decisions.
- As part of the annual review each service should consider if services currently provided free should be subject to a charge to ensure this is still appropriate.
- Where there are any significant changes during the course of a year, such as costs, market forces or service levels which materially affect current charge and revenues, then a report will need to be presented to Cabinet for approval as part of the delegation within the constitution for amending charges outside the annual fee setting process with Council.
- Where there is to be a change or new charge, then the budget holder should ensure that this is carried out in a timely manner, undertaking any consultation and meeting any legal obligations required including undertaking an EIA.

7. Summary

Fees and charges are an important and valuable part of the Councils income. It is vital that all fees and charges are reviewed annually and in accordance with this policy. This enables the Councils policy to be fair, joined up and transparent to all its customers irrespective of which part of the Council provides the service.

The review of fees and charges will be conducted at the same time and will form an integral part of the annual budget cycle, policy, planning and monitoring of the Councils income.

This policy will be reviewed in line with any changes in legislation with any minor approved by the Section 151 officer in consultation with Corporate Management Team and members as appropriate.

Significant changes will be formally reviewed and approved by Council.

INFORMATION THAT WILL HELP TO SET CHARGES

APPENDIX A

Clarity on the objectives		
Why is this an issue?	• A problem within the service area that charging could influence? • A corporate target that charging could help achieve? • A desire to increase take-up or discourage use? • A need to generate income in order to maintain service levels within the service or elsewhere?	
What are we hoping to achieve?	• Reduction in problems in certain service areas? • Generate economic growth? • Encourage access to services by under-represented groups? • Meet costs and raise money for related objectives?	
What are the constraints?	• Wider council strategic issues • One Council Delivery Plan • Agreed charging policy framework • Lack of market intelligence	
The impact of different charging options		
Factors to consider	The data that will help	The analysis that is needed
Who is using the service and when?	Data on service use, as applicable: • By location • By time of day • By day of week • Seasonal information	• Use compared to target • Analysis of customers by age, gender, race, disability, socio-economic group, reasons for service use
The impact of changes to service on service use and other objectives	• Historical data on the impact on service use when the council made changes to other local charging levels • Impact and evaluation data from similar council who have implemented changes	• Forecasts of the likely impact of the charging options on user type and location • Analysis of the impact of changed charges in previous years • Forecast of impact of changes on wider objectives

Understanding costs and income		
Factors to consider	The data that will help	The analysis that is needed
What are your current costs and income?	• Total costs and total income generated • Income data from similar councils	• Analysis of income data to show cost and income by location/type/service level • Analysis of cost and income over time and by location
The impact of changed chargers on income	• Income data from similar councils who have made changes to charging levels	• Forecast of the likely impact of the options on income, using forecasts for changes in car park use
Does the level of income generation/subsidy reflect local priorities?	• The current level of subsidies • Comparison of subsidies with similar councils, with similar community profiles	• Analysis of whether income is making desired contribution to the overall income of the council • Analysis of whether any subsidies can be linked to other council priorities (for example reduced charges to promote economic growth)
Will further cost pressures be faced in the future?	• Data on the efficiencies that the council has planned to make	• Forecast of potential future cost pressures, including changes in service, the impact of regeneration • Analysis of impact of future pressures on income
What do the public think?		
Factors to consider	The data that will help	The analysis that is needed
How acceptable are the proposals to the public?	• A breakdown of public views by customer group, geographical area and type of service user • Historical data on how the public reacted to other changes to charging made in previous years	• Analysis of complaints, enquiries from focus groups to understand the concerns locally • Analysis of what happened after previous changes to charging levels
What impact will the proposals have on the public?	• Comparisons of satisfaction levels in similar councils, with similar community profiles, who made similar changes to charging levels	• Analysis and forecast of the impact that each option may have on the public satisfaction levels • Analysis of the views and the potential impact on other, for example local retailers

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday, 29 January 2026

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

Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/2027

Report Author

Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service)

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Purpose of Report

This report reviews responses to the public consultation of the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27, along with recommendations from the meetings of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 18 November 2025 and the Cabinet meeting of 15 January 2026.

Recommendations

Full Council is asked to approve the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Financial Year 2026/27 based on the same criteria as the existing scheme as detailed in paragraphs 2.13 to 2.44.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Enabling economic opportunities Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The actual cost of the Council Tax Support Scheme for working age and pension age residents will not be known for certain until the end of the financial year and will be dependent on the actual caseload in year as well as the levels of Council Tax set by the District Council and the major precepting authorities.
- 1.2 The estimated cost of the scheme, based on current caseload, is taken into consideration when calculating the Council's tax base for the financial year and will impact on the estimated Council Tax yield for the year.
- 1.3 Any difference in the actual cost of the discount scheme to that estimated in the tax base calculation will be accounted for within the Collection Fund and will be considered when future years surpluses or deficits are declared.
- 1.4 Should the Council wish to approve the continuation of core elements of the current scheme, the financial impact of this would be:
 - Continuation of the Care Leavers Exemption: This will be a cost of circa £27,967 (based on 17 eligible awards for 2025/26). This cost is shared between SKDC and the preceptors; and
 - Continuation of the Council Tax Discount for Police Special Constables, this will be a direct cost to the General Fund of circa £10,000 for awards relating to 2024/25 (if all eligible Special Constables applied for the discount).

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.5 Should the Council wish to approve any proposals which were included within the public consultation, there will be a direct cost to the General Fund and to Preceptors (Lincolnshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner). Some of these costs are currently unknown and this is detailed further within this report and Appendix 1.
- 1.6 The regulations for the scheme proposed to be adopted are to be collated and made available for Council in January 2026.

- 1.7 Section 5 of the report contains further advice on the prescribed stages Councils are required to take by law.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.8 The Council, and other preceptors, bears the risk of the cost of the Council Tax Support scheme if an increase in caseload causes costs to increase beyond predictions.
- 1.9 Any revisions to the scheme must be approved by 31 January 2026.
- 1.10 The scheme cannot be changed mid-year and therefore it is vital the correct scheme is in place.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.11 It is expected that any changes to the current scheme that reduce the current maximum award of support will have an adverse impact on specific household income. Whilst this impact would not be related to any specific protected characteristic identified in law, the Council should be mindful of socio-economic impact and give due regard as part of the equality impact assessment of the Scheme.
- 1.12 The proposed scheme for 2026/27 is a 'no change' proposed scheme and as such, there are no reductions in current maximum award.

Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2024-2027 to enabling economic opportunity and being an effective council. This report, and the support provided through the Council's Localised Council Tax Support Scheme, aims to deliver these priorities.
- 2.2. The Council Tax Benefit system was abolished on 31 March 2013 and replaced by the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS). This scheme can be determined locally by the Billing Authority after due consultation with precepting authorities, key stakeholders, and residents.
- 2.3. The Council agreed to a LCTSS which came into effect on 1 April 2013. The core scheme currently provides:

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

2.4. As of 2 December 2025, there were **7,284** residents claiming LCTSS in the South Kesteven District. Of these, **3,144** are pensioners who are protected under the legislation and receive LCTSS as prescribed by the Government (broadly similar to the level of Council Tax Benefit). This leaves **4,140** claimants of working age. Of those, **3,245** are deemed vulnerable. This leaves **895** people who will be affected by changes to the level of support determined by a local scheme.

2.5. A breakdown of caseload is shown in the table below:

1st of month	Working age	Pension age	Total
March 2023	4,094	3,141	7,235
June 2023	4,113	3,133	7,246
September 2023	4,001	3,115	7,116
December 2023	4,014	3,090	7,104
March 2024	4,046	3,082	7,128
June 2024	4,096	3,076	7,172
September 2024	4,038	3,076	7,114
December 2024	3,982	3,088	7,124
March 2025	4,097	3,118	7,215
July 2025	4,157	3,122	7,279
October 2025	4,110	3,133	7,243
December 2025*	4,140	3,144	7,284

*As of 2 December 2025

2.6. The proposed scheme must follow prescribed stages as stated in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 before it can be adopted by this Council as a Billing Authority.

Financial cost of the current Council Tax Support Scheme - 2025/26

2.7. Despite the scheme being a 'local' CTS scheme, due to the nature of protection provided to pensioners and vulnerable working age customers, the Council will always incur some costs over which it has no influence.

2.8. The transfer of the remaining legacy benefit claimants to Universal Credit continues and is due to conclude by the end of 2026. Claimants are contacted by DWP and asked to move to Universal Credit. The rollout is managed by the DWP and started in April 2024. The current number of legacy customers awaiting transfer is minimal.

2.9. The cost of the scheme has increased because the rate of transfer has increased.

2.10. Current caseload can be broken down in the following table which shows any changes implemented will only apply to **12.29%** of the caseload (working age), as

pensioners and those who are vulnerable and of working age are protected. This is a reduction from the previous year of 2.05% (working age caseload was 14.34%).

Caseload breakdown	Caseload	% of caseload	Cost of scheme (£)
Total caseload	7,284	100%	£8,214,212
Pensioner (protected)	3,144	43.16%	£3,570,815
Working age vulnerable (protected)	3,245	44.55%	£3,946,167
Working age (local discretion)	895	12.29%	£697,230

- 2.11. Based on caseload as of 2 December 2025, the current cost of the scheme is **£8,214,212** (increased by **£574,926** from **£7,644,265** at the same point in 2024). South Kesteven's share of the total cost of the 2025/26 scheme is **£739,279 (9%)** and has increased by **£51,295** at the same point in 2024.
- 2.12. Due to the protections from changes to pensioners and vulnerable, working age, customers any reduction in cost to the proposed scheme can only be applied to the **895** working age customers, or **12.29%** of the caseload. This means out of the Council's current share of the cost of **£739,279** – only **£90,857 (12.29%)** can be influenced by any change made to the current scheme. This is a reduction from **14.34%** at the same point in 2024.

Current Local Council Tax Support Scheme – 2025/26

- 2.13. The Council's local scheme has been updated with amendments since the introduction in April 2013 to maintain the link with Housing Benefit and the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme.
- 2.14. The current scheme has the following restrictions for working age customers: -
- Maximum entitlement capped to **80%**.
- 2.15. The current scheme also has the following amendments to Council Tax technical restrictions for all Council Tax payers: -
- Introduction of changes to the properties which are unoccupied and unfurnished: -
 - **100%** discount for one month
 - **25%** discount for the following 5 months
 - **100%** charge thereafter.
 - Introduction of additional premiums to properties empty over 2 years, plus the original charge: -
 - **100%** premium – this results in a **200%** charge – empty between 2 and 5 years;
 - **200%** premium – this results in a **300%** charge – empty between 5 and 10 years, and

- **300%** premium – this results in a **400%** charge – empty over 10 years.
- Unoccupied discount of **100%** for the first month
- Care leavers' Council Tax exemption – **100%** for those aged between 18 and 25
- Reduction for Special Constables who live in the district – **25%** for each special constable resident in the household (up to 2 resident, equalling **50%** reduction), and
- Second home premium of **100%**.

Council Tax Exemption for care leavers – effective from 1 April 2019

2.16. The scheme was first approved for 2019/20, for a local discretionary Council Tax exemption of up to **100%** for care leavers aged 18 to 21 years, with the exemption ending on the individual's 22nd birthday.

2.17. The scheme was amended for 2021/22 and the age limit criteria was increased to 24 years of age, with the discount ending on the individual's 25th birthday.

Special Constabulary Council Tax Discount Scheme – effective from 1 April 2022:

2.18. The scheme was first approved and introduced on 1 April 2022. The award of the discount is retrospective and therefore, the discount was awarded for the financial year 2021/22.

2.19. The retrospective discount has been awarded to one Special Constable for 2024/25 totalling **£832.51**. The scheme for 2025/26 will open on 1 April 2026, with applications to be received by 30 May 2026.

2.20. If continuation of the scheme is approved by Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will write to all Special Constables who live within South Kesteven by 30 April 2026 to confirm they have met the hours worked criteria and will provide a link to the Council's website.

2.21. Each Special Constable will be required to complete the online application form and upload the letter from the PCC.

2.22. The award of the discount will be referenced to service during 2025/26. As a result, the eligibility for the discount will be considered, and an award made no later than the 31 May 2025 which will be applied to the Council Tax account for 2025/26.

2.23. In the response to the public consultation (Appendix 3), the PCC supports the continuation of support for Special Constables.

Discretionary Council Tax Payment Fund - £30,000

2.24. A Discretionary Council Tax Payment (DCTP) is available to anyone in receipt of Council Tax Support who has a shortfall between the weekly amount awarded and their Council Tax liability.

- 2.25. The total amount of funding allocated for each year is **£30,000**. For 2025/26, the decision was taken to move any unspent funding from 2024/25 into the new year. As a result, in 2025/26 there was a total of **£30,082** funding available.
- 2.26. As of 2 December 2025, **£8,912** has been awarded, meaning there is **£21,170** remaining, to be issued up to 31 March 2026.
- 2.27. Discretionary Payments can be applied for independently but are often considered as part of the application process for Discretionary Housing Payments (support for shortfall between Housing Benefit / Universal Credit award and eligible rent). Officers are aware of the DCTP and actively encourage customers to apply where eligibility criteria are met.
- 2.28. A separate report, 'Discretionary Payment Policies 2026-27' was considered by Cabinet on 2 December 2025 where the Discretionary Council Tax Payment Policy 2026/27 was approved.

Continuation of the War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Disregard for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support – effective from 1 April 2024:

- 2.29. Section 134 8(a) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992, allows local authorities to modify any part of the Housing Benefit scheme to provide for the disregarding of prescribed war disablement pensions or war widows' pensions.
- 2.30. South Kesteven District Council has applied a disregard of **100%** through Officer Delegated decision. However, a result of the 2021/22 Housing Benefit audit, a recommendation was taken forward for the Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Disregard to be included as part of this consultation and decision making process and was first brought to this Committee for inclusion in consultation in July 2023, for the 2024/25 scheme.

The alignment of the value of the capital tariff limit and disregard for working age claimants to the pension age claimant values

- 2.31. This was first brought to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee for inclusion in consultation in July 2023, for the 2024/25 scheme and was approved by Council in January 2024, to be included within the scheme from 1 April 2024.
- 2.32. The capital tariff limit and disregard for working age claimants has been aligned to that of the pension age claimant values with effect from 1 April 2024 – these being a capital tariff of **£1** for every **£500**, and a disregard of the first **£10,000** of capital.

Introduction of the Second Home premium (100%) – effective from 1 April 2025:

- 2.33. Council approved the introduction of the premium from 1 April 2025 at its meeting on 25 January 2024.
- 2.34. Councils were required to give 1 year's notice of the decision to introduce the premium. Letters were issued to second home owners on 22 March 2024 informing

them of the decision. Information was also included as part of the consultation and approval process for the 2025/26 LCTS scheme.

- 2.35. Regulations were laid before parliament on 8 October 2024 which included the mandatory exceptions to council tax premiums on second homes. These regulations came into force on 1 November 2024 and, for South Kesteven, came into effect from 1 April 2025.
- 2.36. In November 2024, letters were issued to all second home owners (**359** at the time) to advise of the change and requested completion of the exception form – asking the home owner to state why the property should be excepted from the premium.
- 2.37. The outcome of the contact to homeowners for the introduction of the premium from 1 April 2025 was included in the Cabinet report, which was discussed on 16 January 2025 and approved by Council on 30 January 2025.
- 2.38. In February 2025, letters were issued to all **359** responders advising of the outcome of the review and decision to apply the exception or premium from 1 April 2025. Annual Council Tax bills were issued for 2025/26 which included the premium (where applicable).

Consultation and communication – proposed ‘no change’ scheme for 2026/27

- 2.39. A report was presented to this Committee on 24 July 2025 to consider a ‘no change scheme’ for 2026/27 for public consultation. The recommendation by this Committee was to undertake consultation for the 2026/27 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 2026.
- 2.40. Public consultation began on 1 September 2025 and ran to 30 September 2025. Consultation has been undertaken with major precepting authorities, stakeholders, and residents through a variety of methods, as detailed below: -
 - An online survey (support provided by the Benefits Team where the resident was unable to complete the survey themselves)
 - All South Kesteven District Council Members and Parish Clerks were issued with an email advising them of the consultation
 - Partner organisations were also advised of the proposed scheme – include Citizens Advice, and
 - Major preceptors – Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC).
- 2.41. Letters were issued to all those in receipt of Council Tax Support at the start of the consultation. This was a total of **7,243** recipients. A total of **440** individuals

responded to the consultation – this is a rate of **6.07%** (compared to **336** responses of **7,133** – **4.73%** for the previous year). The responses to questions were not mandatory and so, some questions were unanswered.

2.42. Overall, **83%** of respondents agreed with the principles of the current scheme, and **84%** of respondents agreed the Council had worked hard to ensure that its Council Tax Support Scheme is fair, protects pensioners and those in vulnerable groups, and responds to local concerns.

2.43. The key findings of the consultation are detailed within **Appendix 1** and a summary of the responses is detailed below:

	Agreed		Disagreed		Didn't Know		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Agreed with the principles of the current scheme	364	83.1%	34	7.8%	40	9.1%	438
The level of discounts and premiums for unoccupied, unfurnished and second home properties should continue	336	80.2%	22	5.2%	61	14.6%	419
The exemption for young people leaving the care system should continue	349	83.5%	32	7.7%	37	8.8%	418
The Special Constable Discount scheme should continue	277	66.6%	68	16.3%	71	17.1%	416
The War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Disregard for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support should continue	321	79.8%	16	4.0%	65	16.2%	402
The Capital tariff limit and disregard for working age claimants to be aligned to pension age claimant values should continue	297	74.4%	8	2.0%	94	23.6%	399
The second home premium should continue in 2026/27	319	80.2%	16	4.0%	63	15.8%	398
The Discretionary Payment schemes should continue for 2026/27	358	90.2%	23	5.8%	16	4.0%	397
The Council had worked hard to ensure that its Council Tax Support Scheme is fair, protects pensioners and those in vulnerable groups, and responds to local concerns	333	84.1%	20	5.0%	43	10.9%	396

2.44. The consultation responses from Lincolnshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner are detailed in **Appendices 2** and **3**.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Consideration needs to be given to all the options proposed and consulted on which are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.2. It is proposed there are no changes made to the scheme and the current core elements of the 2025/26 scheme, as detailed in paragraphs 2.13 to 2.44 of this report, are retained and continue for 2026/27.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 All options for consultation are detailed in Appendix 1 of this report.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The proposed scheme must follow prescribed stages as stated in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 before it can be adopted by this Council as a Billing Authority – this is detailed as follows:

Before making a scheme, the authority must (in the following order): -

- (a) consult any major precepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it*
- (b) publish a draft scheme in such a manner as it thinks fit, and*
- (c) consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.*

6. Consultation

- 6.1. Full Council, as Billing Authority, needs to approve the scheme after consultation as referenced in paragraph 2.6 and 5.1. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 requires a full review of the scheme by the Billing Authority. South Kesteven District Council will need to approve a new scheme after consultation by 31 January 2026.

7. Appendices

- 7.1. There are four appendices to this report.
 - Appendix 1: Analysis of public consultation and Council Tax Support Scheme Options for public consultation
 - Appendix 2: Lincolnshire County Council consultation response
 - Appendix 3: Police and Crime Commissioner consultation response
 - Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment

Council Tax Support Consultation – 2026/27 Scheme

Results

October 2025

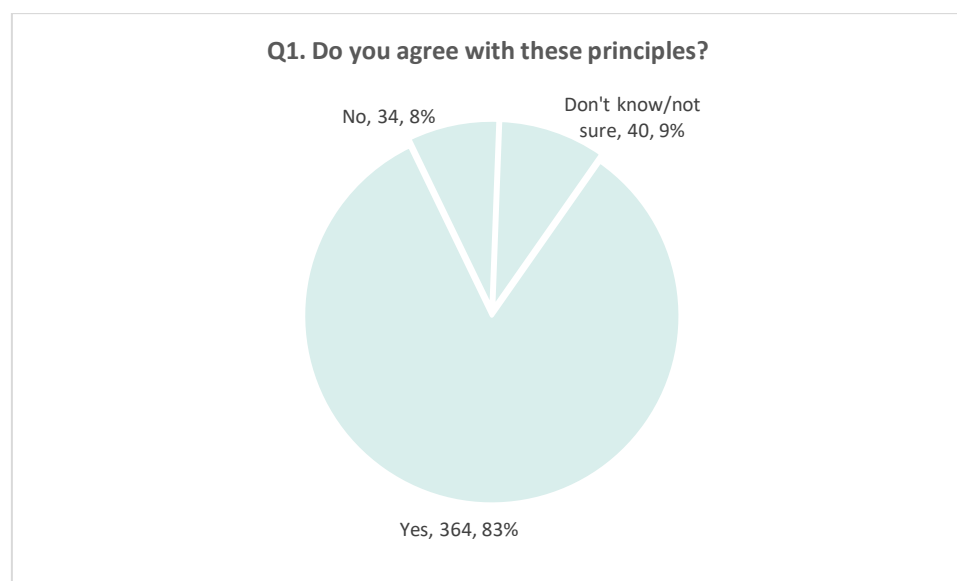
Introduction

1. South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) is required by law to provide a Local Council Tax Support Scheme. The purpose of this scheme is to help low-income households with the costs of their council tax bill.
2. The scheme is administered by the Council using rules which have been set locally. Underpinned by national legislation, support is focused on those facing financial hardship, with costs being met by SKDC and central government.
3. Introduced after the abolition of Council Tax Benefit in 2013, the scheme sets out the rules and principles that guide how discounts will be calculated and is reviewed annually. The amount of discount received is dependent on income, savings, council tax band and household circumstances, and is applied as a reduction to Council Tax bills.
4. To help the Council determine how best to allocate/distribute its Council Tax support from April 2026, respondents were asked what they thought of the key elements of the scheme. These included:
 - the principles of the Council Tax Support Scheme
 - Council Tax technical restrictions (discounts and premiums)
 - an exemption for young people leaving the care system
 - a special constable discount
 - disregards of war pension and armed forces compensation payments
 - the alignment of the value of the capital tariff limit and disregard for working age claimants to the pension age claimant values
 - a Council Tax second home premium
 - discretionary Council Tax payment schemes
5. 440 individuals responded to the annual Council Tax Support consultation, which took place from 1 to 30 September 2025.

The principles of the Council Tax Support Scheme:

6. SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme has two main principles. These are:
 - A cap of 80% on entitlement for all applicants of working age. This means anyone of working age eligible for help paying their Council Tax will be entitled to claim for help with **up to but no more than 80%** of their bill.
 - Pensioners and vulnerable persons eligible for help paying their Council Tax are protected by legislation.
7. Respondents were informed that the Council is proposing to continue to focus on these principles.
8. When asked if they agreed with these principles, eight out of ten respondents (364 or 83.1%) said that they did, as illustrated in the pie chart and table below:

	No	%
Yes, I agree with these principles	364	83.1
No, I don't agree with these principles	34	7.8
I don't know if I agree or disagree with these principles	40	9.1
	438	100



9. The second question on the survey asked respondents to detail why they didn't agree with these principles. Analysing their comments revealed that they had strong opinions about who should receive council tax support and under what circumstances. Some suggested that only pensioners, disabled individuals, or those on means-tested benefits should receive support. Respondents also commented on the percentage of council tax reduction offered, with some feeling that the proposed 80% cap is too high, or unfair. Examples of the comments made are included below and overleaf:

"No reason for those of working age to receive support."

“It's too high. 25% would be fairer.”

““The help given should depend on people's individual situations and should be up to 100% support where necessary.”

Council Tax technical restrictions (discounts and premiums) - introduced from 1 April 2013 (and onwards)

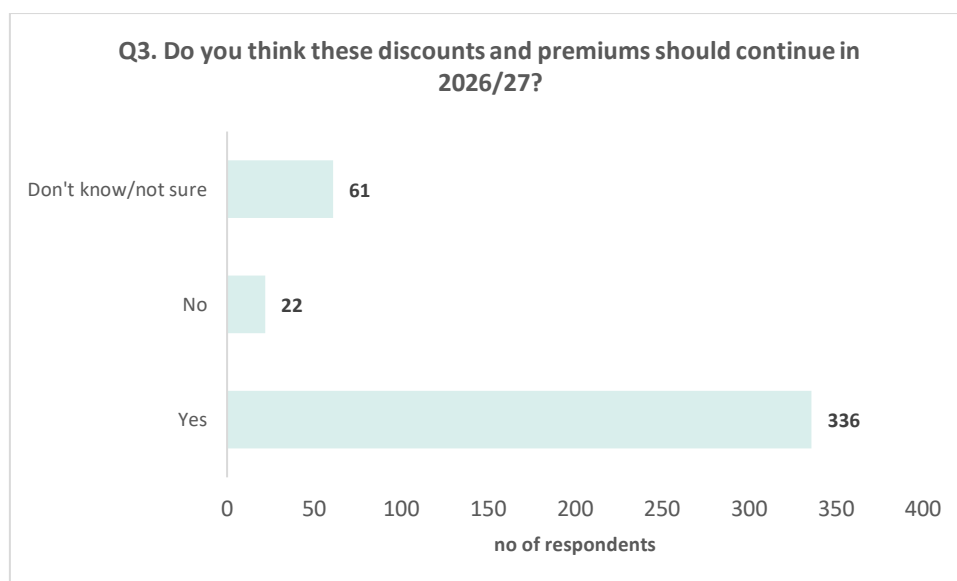
10. SKDC's scheme also has the following amendments to Council Tax technical restrictions for all Council Taxpayers. These have been made as a result of changes to legislation. They are: -

- Introduction of changes to the properties which are unoccupied and unfurnished: -
 - 100% discount for one month;
 - 25% discount for the following 5 months;
 - 100% charge thereafter.
- Introduction of additional premiums to properties empty over 2 years, plus the original charge: -
 - 200% premium – empty between 2 and 5 years.
 - 300% premium – empty between 5 and 10 years.
 - 400% premium – empty over 10 years.
- Unoccupied discount of 100% for the first month.
- Council Tax premium of 100% for a property classed as a second home (i.e. any dwelling that is furnished and is no-one's sole or main residence).

The Council is proposing to continue with these levels of discounts and premiums.

11. When asked if they thought these discounts and premiums should continue in 2026/27, eight out of ten respondents (336 or 80.2%) thought that they should, as illustrated below:

	No	%
Yes, I think the discounts and premiums should continue	336	80.2
No, I don't think the discounts and premiums should continue	22	5.2
I don't know if the discounts and premiums should continue	61	14.6
	419	100.0



12. When asked to describe why they didn't agree with the discounts and premiums, the responses tended to fall into one of two viewpoints. Some believed that the Council should not levy a charge for unoccupied property, as no services are being used. Others thought it was wrong to leave properties empty, particularly given the current housing crisis. This is illustrated in the quotes below:

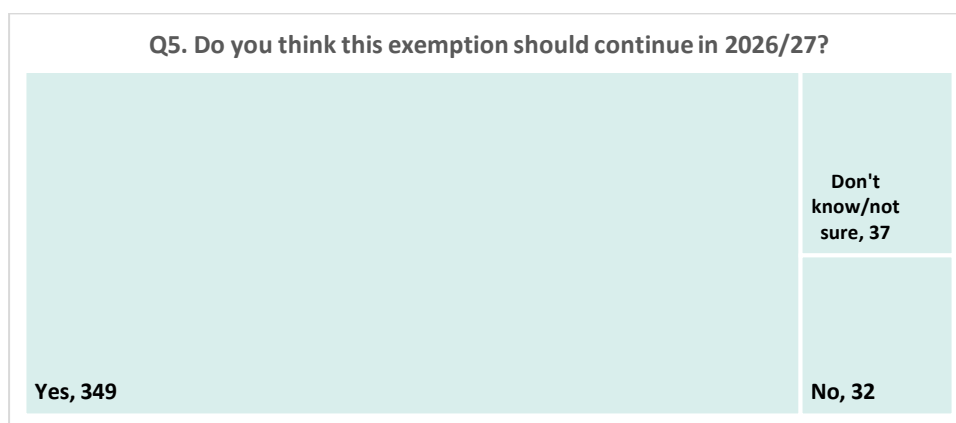
“Empty houses do not use council services.”

“Premiums of 200%+ should be applied given the housing crisis as it would encourage people to rent or sell the house so it can be used.”

An exemption for young people leaving the care system - introduced from 1 April 2019:

13. In South Kesteven all young people leaving the care system are currently exempt from paying Council Tax in properties they rent or own, until they are 25.
14. The Council is proposing to continue to apply this exemption.
15. Just over eight out of ten respondents (349 or 83.5%) thought all young people leaving the care system should continue to be exempt from paying Council Tax for owned or rented properties, until they are 25. This is illustrated below and overleaf:

	No	%
Yes, I think the exemption should continue	349	83.5
No, I don't think the exemption should continue	32	7.7
I don't know if the exemption should continue	37	8.8
	418	100.0



16. When asked why they didn't support this exemption, most comments were centred on eligibility and whether the scheme is fair. There was debate about whether care leavers should be treated differently from other young people, and whether support should be means-tested or based on individual circumstances. The age at which support finishes was also mentioned, as illustrated here:

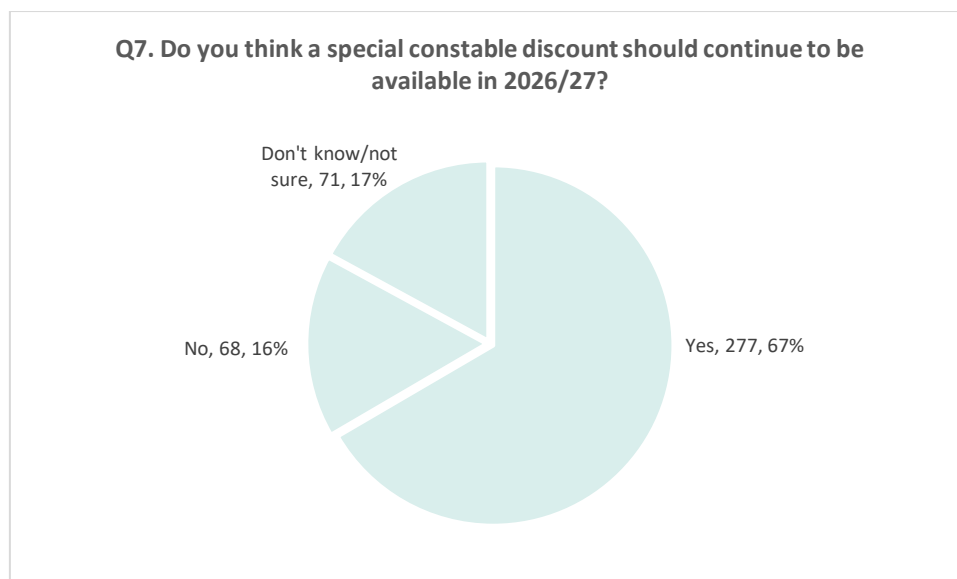
"Why should a young person leaving the care system be treated any differently from a young person from a low-income home....?"

"The age limit of 25 is far too high and doesn't encourage them to find a job...."

Special Constable Discount Scheme - introduced from 1 April 2022

17. In South Kesteven, Special Constables can make an application for a 25% Council Tax discount for each eligible Special Constable in the household (up to 50%).
18. The Council is proposing to continue with this discount.
19. Two thirds of respondents (277 or 66.6%) thought the Special Constable Discount Scheme should continue to operate in 2026/27, as illustrated below and overleaf:

	No	%
Yes, I think the scheme should continue to be available	277	66.6
No, I don't think the scheme should continue to be available	68	16.3
I don't know if the scheme should continue	71	17.1
	416	100.0



20. When asked why they didn't support special constables being awarded a discount on their council tax, the reasons respondents gave were varied. Some asked why Special Constables receive a council tax discount when other volunteers or key workers (such as NHS staff, military personnel, teachers, and other emergency service volunteers) do not. Others said that it was their choice to volunteer and that maybe the amounts incurred could be better used elsewhere. There appears to be a strong sentiment that the scheme is unfair and creates inequality among those who contribute to society. This is illustrated in the quotes below:

"Why should Special Constables be treated differently to any other volunteer emergency service workers (retained fire fighters, first responders etc)?"

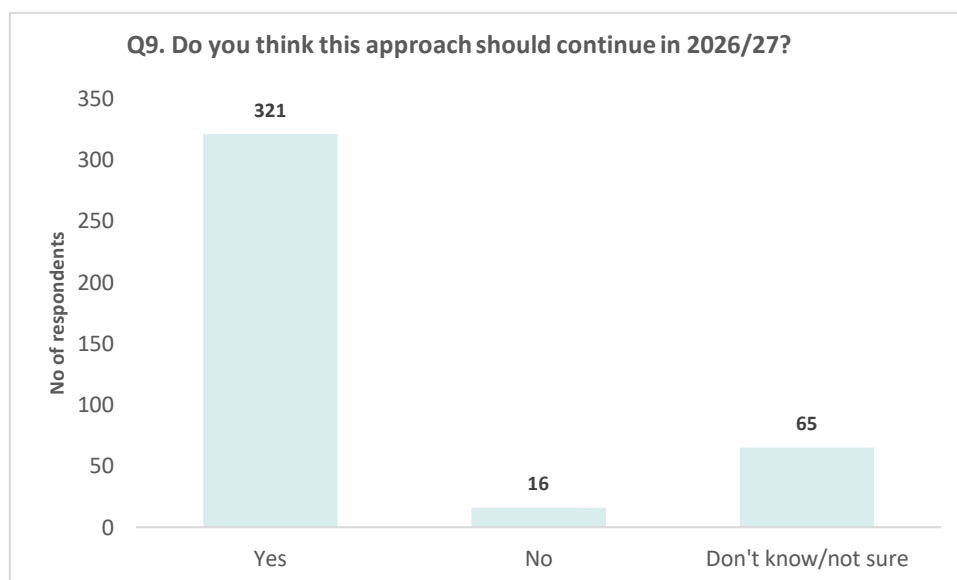
"Rather than offering selective discounts, the funds saved by discontinuing this scheme should be redistributed to other vital local services that benefit the wider community."

"It is their choice to volunteer."

Disregards of War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation payments:

21. South Kesteven District Council does not currently include War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation within the calculation of income for Council Tax Support. It disregards these amounts in the calculations it undertakes.
22. The Council is proposing to continue to disregard this income.
23. Respondents were asked if they thought the Council should continue to disregard War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation for both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support calculations. Eight out of ten respondents thought that they should, as illustrated overleaf:

	No	%
Yes, I think the Council should continue to apply this disregard	321	79.8
No, I don't think the Council should continue to apply this disregard	16	4.0
I don't know if the Council should continue to apply the disregard or not	65	16.2
	402	100.0



24. When asked why they felt they were unable to support this approach, the comments made were similar to comments made about other elements of SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme, citing fairness and consistency. For other respondents, it was an opportunity to state why they supported this approach. Examples of each are detailed below:

"They served our country, ergo they should be supported above all else."

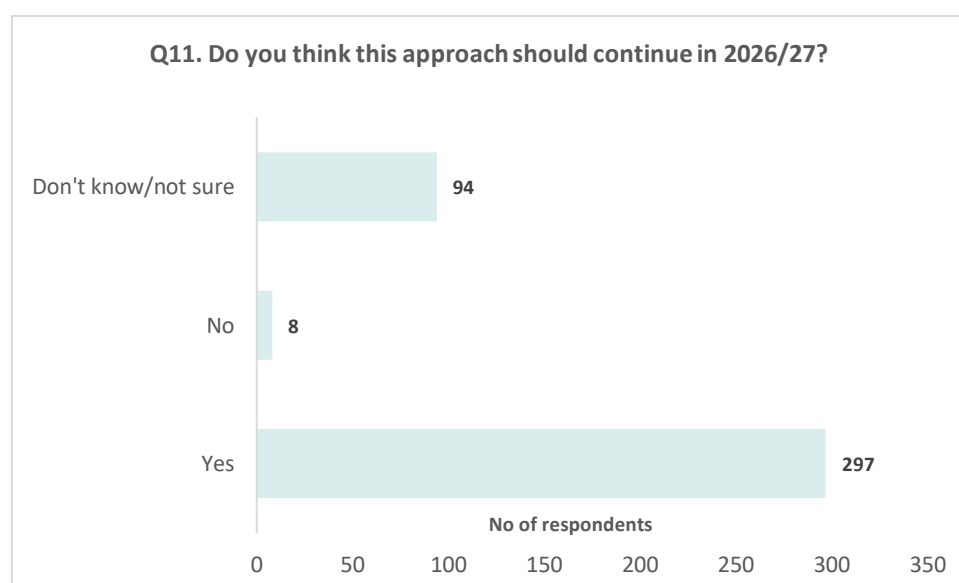
"It is still an income like a pension or savings so should be included as all other monies are."

The alignment of the value of the capital tariff limit and disregard for working age claimants to the pension age claimant values - introduced from 1 April 2024:

25. South Kesteven District Council aligned the capital tariff limit and disregard of working age claimants to that of the pension age claimant values from 1 April 2024 – these being a capital tariff of £1 for every £500, and a disregard of £10,000.
26. The Council is proposing to continue to align working age capital tariffs to pension age.

27. When asked for their opinion on the alignment of the capital tariff limit and disregard for working age claimants to the pension age claimant values, and if this approach should continue in 2026/27, three quarters of respondents (297 or 74.4%) agreed. This is illustrated in the table below:

	No	%
Yes, I think this approach should continue	297	74.4
No, I don't think this approach should continue	8	2.0
I don't know if this approach should continue or not	94	23.6
	399	100.0



28. When asked to comment on this element of the scheme, and why they might not support this approach in 2026/27, there was little consistency. Some respondents thought the scheme might be too generous, others that it wasn't generous enough, others argued that working-age individuals should not be treated the same as pensioners. Some just didn't understand what it meant. Examples of each of these are shown below:

“Might this unreasonably discriminate or penalize those individuals who might have invested wisely and/or carefully planned for their retirement?”

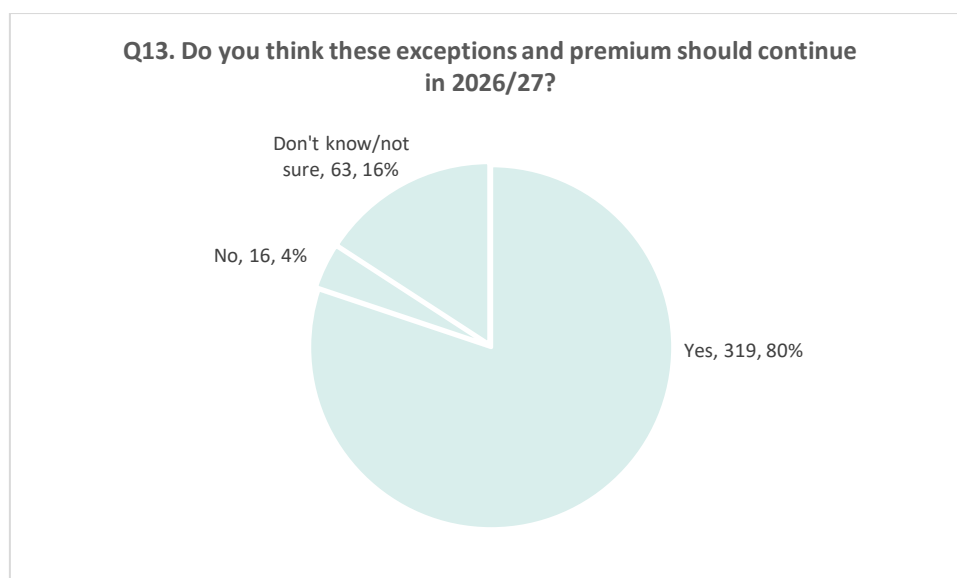
“Pensioners already profit from the triple lock; the above provision was brought in when pensioner poverty was a real problem. It is no longer. These days, hard pressed families are worse off than pensioners.”

“I do not understand what this means.”

A Council Tax second home premium – introduced from 1 April 2025

29. Respondents were then asked about the Council Tax second home premium of 100%. This applies to home owners who have a second property in South Kesteven, where the home is not classed as their main and sole residence and does not meet the mandatory exception criteria set out by central government.
30. Introduced on 1 April 2025 as a result of legislative changes, a premium of 100% is applied where a property does not meet one of the following exceptions:
- A dwelling which is or would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in job-related armed forces accommodation; or
 - Annexes forming part of or being treated as part of the main dwelling; or
 - Dwellings being actively marketed for sale (12-month limit); or
 - Dwellings being actively marketed for let (12-month limit); or
 - Unoccupied dwellings which fell within exempt Class F and where probate has recently been granted (12 months from grant of probate/ letters of administration); or
 - Job-related dwellings; or
 - Occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings; or
 - Seasonal homes where year-round permanent occupation is prohibited, specific for use as holiday accommodation or planning condition preventing occupancy for more than 28 days continuously
31. Respondents were informed that the Council is proposing to continue with these exceptions and award the 100% premium where a property does not meet the exception. When asked if the exceptions and premium should continue in 2026/27, four fifths of respondents (319 or 80.2%) supported this proposal, as illustrated in the table below and pie chart overleaf:

	No	%
Yes, I think these exceptions and premium should continue	319	80.2
No, I don't think these exceptions and premium should continue	16	4.0
I don't know if these exceptions and premium should continue or not	63	15.8
	398	100.0



32. Respondents who weren't in favour of this approach could be categorised into one of two viewpoints. Those who thought this approach was too lenient for anyone with a second home, and those who thought it was unfair. Examples of each of these points of view are illustrated here:

"Far too generous when these people can afford to have the second dwelling."

"There should be no second homes premium...."

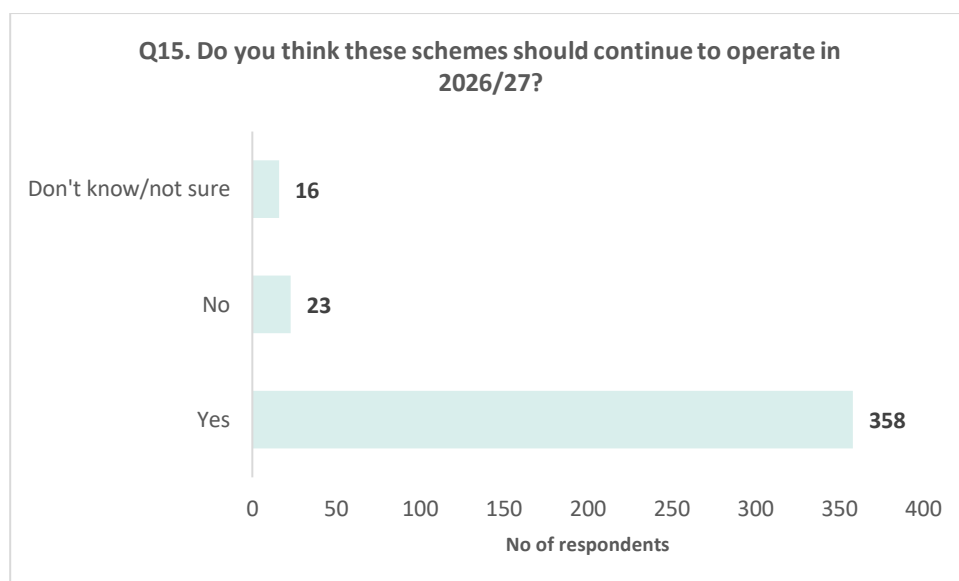
Discretionary Council Tax Payment Schemes:

33. South Kesteven District Council also operates a Discretionary Council Tax Payment Scheme and a Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme. The schemes have been designed to offer additional support to those struggling to pay their Council Tax and rent, and offer limited, short-term assistance to those in receipt of Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit and/or Universal Credit (Housing Costs) who need further help.

34. The Council is proposing that these schemes should continue to operate.

35. There was strong support for these initiatives, with 90% of those responding to the survey stating that they think the Discretionary Payment Schemes should continue to operate. This level of support is illustrated below:

	No	%
Yes, I think the Discretionary Payment Schemes should continue to operate	358	90.2
No, I don't think the Discretionary Payment Schemes should continue to operate	23	5.8
I don't know if these schemes should continue to operate or not	16	4.0
	397	100.0



36. When asked why they thought the schemes shouldn't continue, some respondents questioned whether additional council tax support is necessary, arguing that recipients already receive sufficient government benefits. Others argued that it should only be available to those in need, for a very short time as illustrated in the quotes below:

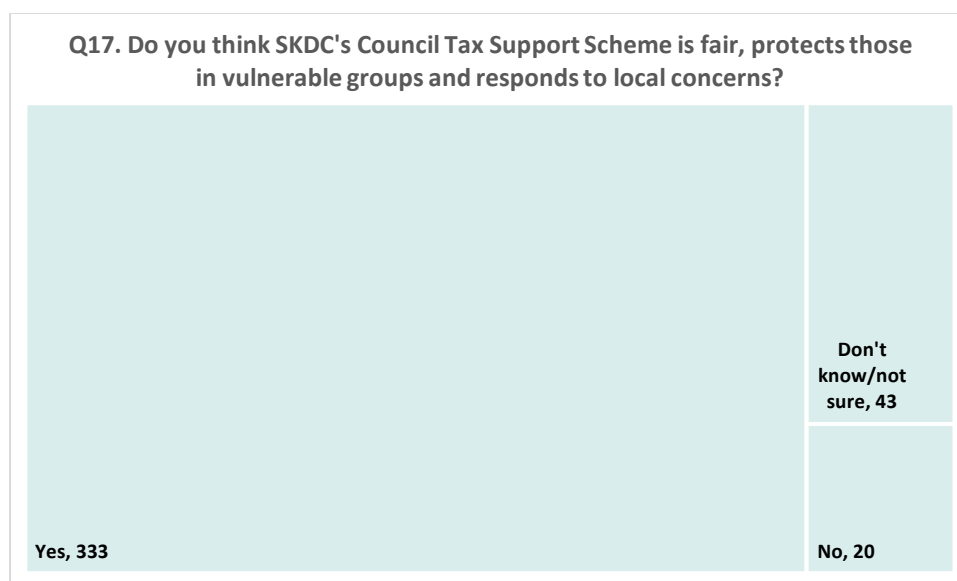
"They already receive benefits and support; they should not receive more funds because they cannot manage their finances."

"I agree as long as it's definitely short term and not a way of life!"

37. The next question respondents were asked was if they thought that SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme is fair, protects pensioners and those in vulnerable groups, and responds to local concerns.

38. When asked if they thought SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme is fair, protects those in vulnerable groups and responds to local concerns, 84.1% of respondents said yes, they thought it was. The distribution of responses is detailed in the table below:

	No	%
Yes, I think SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme is fair	333	84.1
No, I think SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme is unfair	20	5.0
I don't know if SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme is fair or unfair	43	10.9
	396	100.0



39. When asked why they thought SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme was unfair, some respondents said that they didn't know enough about it to answer the question. Others thought that certain elements of the scheme led to unfairness. A few raised objections on behalf of Council Taxpayers across the district. This is illustrated in the quotes below:

"I don't know enough about it to make a judgement."

"No, I do not believe the scheme is entirely fair or fully responds to local concerns. While I appreciate that the Council Tax Support Scheme aims to protect pensioners and vulnerable groups, the inclusion of selective discounts—such as the Special Constable discount—undermines fairness. It prioritizes one volunteer group over others..."

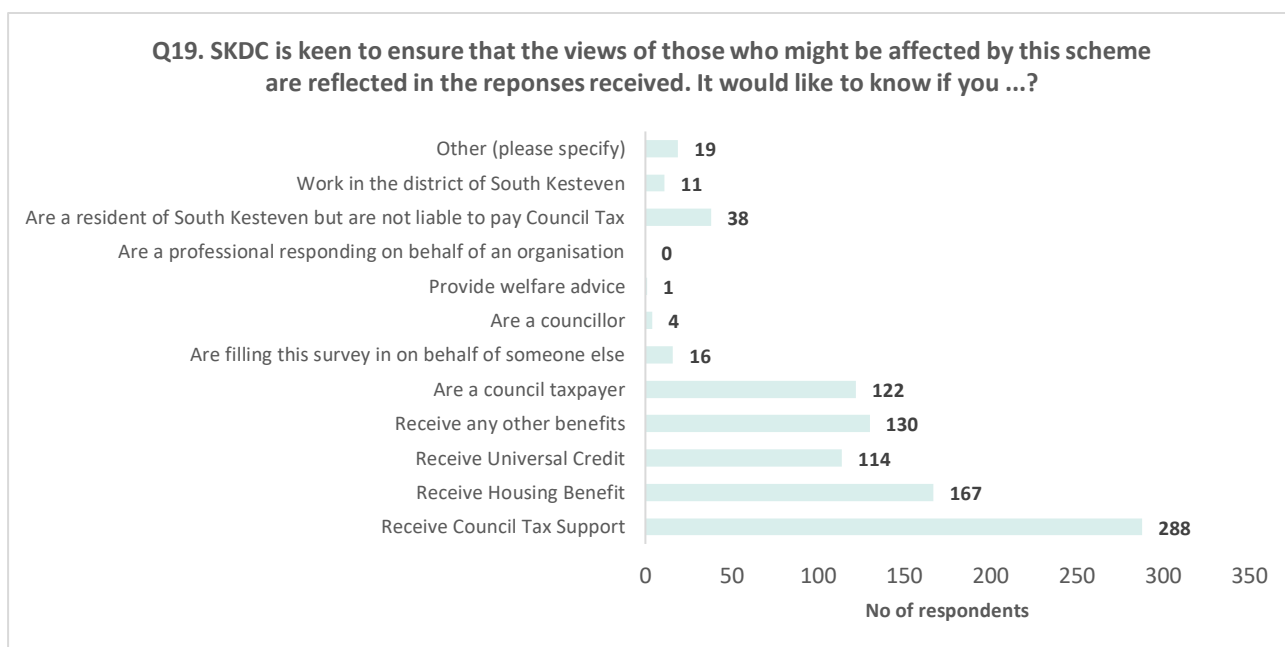
"Not fair to hard working tax payers"

40. The penultimate question on the survey asked people to identify if they:

- Received Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit or Universal Credit or any other benefits
- Are a Council Taxpayer
- Are filling in the survey on behalf of someone else
- Are a councillor, provide welfare advice or are a professional filling it in on behalf of an organisation
- Are a resident of South Kesteven but are not liable to pay Council tax
- Work in the district

41. The purpose of this was to establish that the views of those who might be subject to this scheme are reflected in the responses received. The table below shows the number of respondents who ticked each of these choices. Respondents could choose more than one option if they so wished:

	No	%
Receive Council Tax Support	288	74.4
Receive Housing Benefit	167	43.2
Receive Universal Credit	114	29.5
Receive any other benefits	130	33.6
Are a Council Taxpayer	122	31.5
Are filling in the survey on behalf of someone else	16	4.1
Are a councillor	4	1.0
Provide welfare advice	1	0.3
Are a professional on behalf of an organisation	0	0
Are a resident of South Kesteven but not liable to pay Council Tax	38	9.8
Work in the district	11	2.8
Other, please specify	19	4.9



42. The final question asked people to state if they had responded on behalf of an organisation. Sixteen responses were received from individuals, the majority of whom were representatives from SKDC. Two responses were received from parish councils and one from a housing association.

43. The consultation closed on 30 September 2025.

Conclusion

44. This consultation illustrates support for each of the parameters of SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme. The number and percentage of respondents agreeing with each of the constructs of the scheme ranged from two thirds of respondents (277 or 66.6%) for the Special Constable Discount Scheme to nine out of ten respondents (358 or 90.2%) in favour of the Discretionary Payment Schemes.
45. Support for the scheme overall was also strong. 333 respondents (84.1%) thought that SKDC's Council Tax Support Scheme was fair, protects those in vulnerable groups and responds to local concerns.
46. The survey was completed by individuals who are in receipt of some kind of benefit to help them pay their Council Tax or rent. Three quarters of those (288 or 74.4%) who took part in the survey were in receipt of Council Tax Support. Four out of ten respondents (167 or 43.2%) were claiming housing benefit. A third (130 or 33.6%) were in receipt of other benefits.
47. Cabinet, Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee and CMT are asked to note the contents of this report.

Report prepared by Deb Wyles

Communications

22 October 2025

Hi Claire

Thanks as ever for sharing and happy for you to attribute that the County Council is content with the "no change" proposal.

Thanks

Andrew

Andrew Crookham

Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Resources

Lincolnshire County Council

County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

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**Lincolnshire
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER**
SAFER TOGETHER

Deepdale Lane, Nettleham, Lincoln LN2 2LT
Telephone (01522) 212351

E-Mail: lincolnshire-pcc@lincs.police.uk Website: www.lincolnshire-pcc.gov.uk

Date: 30th September 2025
Our Ref: JF/ch/2025-0760

Mr Richard Wyles
Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer
South Kesteven District Council
Council Offices
The Picture House
St Catherine's Road
GRANTHAM
Lincolnshire
NG31 6TT

By email only to: richard.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk

Dear Richard

Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27

Thank you for your letter of 1st September 2025 in which you invite comment on South Kesteven District Council's proposed Council Tax Support Scheme for 2026/27.

I note the proposal to adopt a "no change" scheme for 2026/27, including the continuation of the Special Constable Discount of 25%, of which the Police & Crime Commissioner is fully supportive.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely

Julie Flint
Chief Finance Officer

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Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	In January 2025, the meeting of Council approved South Kesteven District Councils Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme for 2025/26 The Council must review and approve its CTS scheme by January each year as part of its budget setting process and make any necessary changes from 1 April of the following year.
3. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	All residents in receipt of Council Tax Support (circa 7,243)
4. Has there been any consultation with, or input from, customers/service users or other stakeholders? If so, with whom, how were they consulted and what did they say? If you haven't consulted yet and are intending to do so, please complete the consultation table below.	Consultation regarding the proposal of a 'no change' Localised Council Tax Support Scheme took place during the period 1 September to 30 September 2025. Recipients of Council Tax Support were invited to provide their views on the current Localised Council Tax Support scheme 2025/26. Major Preceptors were invited to comment on the proposed no change scheme, this included Lincolnshire County Council and Police and Crime Commissioner. Consultation responses have been reviewed and analysed, with the majority of respondents supporting all areas of the scheme. Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) will consider the outcome of the public consultation at its meeting on 18 November 2025. Cabinet will consider feedback from the consultation and recommendations from FEOSC in their meeting on 15 January 2026.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual	The cost of the Council Tax Support scheme is monitored in year on a monthly



impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	basis, along with claim numbers (broken down into pensionable, vulnerable, working age – employed / other). The Council also has a Discretionary Council Tax Payment Policy which provides additional support for those Council Tax Support recipients who have a shortfall between their CTS award and Council tax liability. Funding available for this policy is currently £30,000. The award of this fund is monitored in year, each month. CTS modelling is undertaken for any proposed change to the scheme. The 2026/27 scheme proposes ‘no change’ and as a result, modelling was not required.

Protected Characteristic	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact e.g. adjustment to the policy <i>(The Action Log below should be completed to provide further detail)</i>
Age	Yes	Yes – working age. There could be a risk to those of working age (and not deemed as vulnerable as defined by the Secretary of State or by South Kesteven District Councils scheme). Pensioners are a protected group for the purposes of the Council Tax Support scheme, so will not be financially affected. Therefore the reduction in support will be borne by the remainder of those in receipt of Council Tax Support.	Currently, there are no proposed changes to the scheme and as a result, there would be no negative impact to this group.
Disability	No	There is no impact as the group is deemed as ‘vulnerable’ and are protected from any changes to the scheme.	
Gender Reassignment	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	



Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	
Race	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	
Religion or Belief	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	
Sex	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	
Sexual Orientation	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	
Other Factors requiring consideration			
Socio-Economic Impacts	No	People with a mental health condition or a learning disability may be particularly vulnerable to changes in council tax support. National evidence shows that these two groups are less likely to be employed and may not see help for financial difficulties. The scheme recognises these difficulties and protects them from any changes.	There is no impact as the group is deemed as 'vulnerable' and are protected from any changes to the scheme.
Carers (those who provide unpaid care to a family member, friend or partner)	No	This does not have any effect on the decisions made under this policy	



Consultation

Negative impacts identified will require the responsible officer to consult with the affected group/s to determine all practicable and proportionate mitigations. Add more rows as required.		
Group/Organisation	Date	Response

Proposed Mitigation: Action Log

To be completed when barriers, negative impact or discrimination are found as part of this process – to show actions taken to remove or mitigate. Any mitigations identified throughout the EIA process should be meaningful and timely. Add more rows as required.				
Negative Impact	Action	Timeline	Outcome	Status

Evaluation Decision

Once consultation and practicable and proportionate mitigation has been put in place, the responsible officer should evaluate whether any negative impact remains and, if so, provide justification for any decision to proceed.		
Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?		
Final Decision	Tick	Include any explanation/justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed	X	Evidence confirms that the possibility of negative impact has been mitigated and all opportunities to promote equality BY South Kesteven District Council have been taken
2. Stop the policy or practice because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. Adapt or change the policy in a way that will eliminate the bias		
4. Barriers and impact identified , however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people		



less than others, providing justification for this decision		

Did you consult with an Equality Ally prior to carrying out this assessment? Yes

Sign off

Name and job title of person completing this EIA	Claire Moses – Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service)
Officer Responsible for implementing the policy/function etc	Claire Moses – Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service)
Date Completed	21 October 2025
Line Manager	Richard Wyles
Date Agreed <i>(by line manager)</i>	28 October 2025
Date of Review <i>(if required)</i>	Completed Annually

Completed EIAs should be included as an appendix to the relevant report going to a Cabinet, Committee or Council meeting and a copy sent to equalities@southkesteven.gov.uk.

Completed EIAs will be published along with the relevant report through Modern.Gov before any decision is made and also on the Council's website.

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday, 29 January 2026

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

Council Tax Base 2026/27

Report Author

Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service)

✉ claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To set the Council Tax Base for the Financial Year 2026/27.

Recommendations

Council is asked to approve the Council Tax Base for 2026/27 of 50,762.3 (Band D equivalents) in accordance with relevant legislation.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
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?	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 Setting the tax base is an important milestone in the annual budget setting process and allows the Council to calculate the anticipated Council Tax income that will be collected for 2026/27 financial year.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 The approval of the Council Tax Base detailed in this report is required in accordance with the legislation referred to in Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, which sets out the requirements for council tax setting which can be discharged by Full Council. The Council is required to inform relevant preceptors of the Council Tax Base by 31 January each financial year.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 amended by s84 of the Local Government Act 2003 set out the requirements allowing each local authority to make its own arrangements for adopting the Council Tax base. The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914) provides amended statutory guidance to incorporate changes resulting from the introduction of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS)
- 2.2. The Tax Base forms part of the calculation for the Council Tax for the local area – therefore the Council must agree the number of properties which form the Council Tax Base.
- 2.3. Cabinet recommended the proposed Council Tax Base 2026/27 to Council at the meeting on December 2025 (item 74) [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 2nd December, 2025, 4.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)
- 2.4. Statute requires the Council to calculate the Council Tax Base as well as the timeframe by which this must be completed. The Council is required to inform relevant preceptors of the Council Tax Base by 31 January 2026.

- 2.5. The Council Tax varies between different bands according to proportions laid down in legislation. These proportions are based around Band D and are fixed so that the bill for a dwelling in Band A will be one third of the bill for a dwelling in Band H. Applying the relevant proportion to each band's net property base produces the number of 'Band D' equivalent properties for the area.
- 2.6. In determining the Council Tax Base for 2026/27 the following factors have been taken into consideration:
- (a) The tax base for parishes is based on the number of properties as at 10 September 2025 and the discounts and exemptions applicable on 6 October 2025, as prescribed by legislation.
 - (b) An adjustment for the impact of the local Council Tax Support Scheme adopted by South Kesteven District Council (SKDC);
 - (c) An adjustment for the Empty Property Premium, which allows SKDC to charge a premium of between 100% and 300% depending upon how long the property has remained empty;
 - (d) An adjustment for the Second Home Premium, which allows SKDC to charge a premium of 100%.
- 2.7. Table 1 summarises the position showing the proposed tax base for South Kesteven for 2026/27 is 50,762.3 Band D equivalents. This is an increase of 1.24% on the previous financial year 2024/25. Appendix A analyses these figures at Parish level.

Table 1: Band D Equivalent Properties

	2026/27	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Total Band D equivalents	54,521.9	53,780.3	53,404.5	53,017.6	52,663.2
Impact of LCTSS Discounts and Work Incentive	(3,759.6)	(3,639.8)	(3,694.5)	(3,688.6)	(3,956.5)
Total Band D Equivalent properties	50,762.3	50,140.5	49,710.0	49,329.0	48,706.7
Tax Base Growth	1.24%	0.86%	0.77%	1.28%	1.21%

Adjustment for the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS)

- 2.8 The localisation of Council Tax Support introduced from 1 April 2013 has a direct impact on the setting of the Council Tax base. Consequently, the Council Tax base must be adjusted to include the impact of the LCTSS approved by the Council.
- 2.9 As set out in **Table 1**, the LCTSS reduces the tax base and therefore the Council Tax income collected by individual precepting bodies.

Adjustment for Empty Property Premiums

- 2.10 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 introduced the power for Local Authorities to charge a premium of up to 300% where a property was left unoccupied and unfurnished.
- 2.11 The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allowed Councils to increase these premiums in line with legislation from 1 April 2019 and each year thereafter for a further two years.
- 2.12 The Council Tax Base is increased as a result of the empty premium which allows a billing authority to charge a premium on properties left unoccupied and unfurnished. These premiums are as follows: -
- (a) Up to 100% premium for properties empty between two and five years – resulting in a full charge of 200%
 - (b) Up to 200% premium for properties empty between five and ten years – resulting in a full charge of 300%
 - (c) Up to 300% premium for properties empty for at least ten years – resulting in a full charge of 400%
- 2.13 As set out in Table 1, the empty property premium increases the tax base and therefore the Council tax income collected by individual precepting bodies.

3. Other Options Considered

- 3.1. No other options have been considered, as the Council is required by legislation to set a Council Tax Base.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 4.1. If the recommendation is supported, it will be used in the calculation and budget preparations for 2026/27.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. None – this report contains technical calculations for the Council's tax base for 2026/27 as prescribed by legislation.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix A – 2026/27 Council Tax Base by Parish.

Appendix A

2026/27 Council Tax Base by Parish

Parish / Town Council	2026/27 Band D Equivalents	2025/26 Band D Equivalents	Variance (2025/26 to 2026/27)
Grantham combined	11471.4	11452.3	19.1
Stamford combined	7547.7	7465.7	82.0
Bourne combined	6648.2	6372.9	275.3
Allington	355.7	354.8	0.9
Ancaster	625.9	596.8	29.1
Aslackby	127.3	116.3	11.0
Barholm & Stowe	42.6	43.8	-1.2
Barkston and Syston combined	255.7	256.0	-0.3
Barrowby	946.7	888.9	57.8
Baston	618.9	616.1	2.8
Belton & Manthorpe	204.8	205.5	-0.7
Billingborough	492.2	495.2	-3.0
Bitchfield	57.5	55.7	1.8
Boothby Pagnell	66.7	66.1	0.6
Braceborough & Wilsthorpe	137.7	141.1	-3.4
Braceby, Humby, Ropsley, Sapperton combined	341.1	337.3	3.8
Burton Coggles	41.1	41.0	0.1
Careby	77.3	76.2	1.1
Carlby	209.7	210.9	-1.2
Carlton Scroop and Normanton combined	127.5	126.2	1.3
Castle Bytham	336.5	329.2	7.3
Caythorpe & Frieston	536.3	530.2	6.1
Claypole	531.5	522.5	9.0
Colsterworth, Gunby & Stainby, North Witham combined	775.3	755.3	20.0
Corby Glen & Birkholme	508.4	451.8	56.6
Counthorpe & Creeton	26.7	27.2	-0.5
Deeping St James	2631.4	2640.4	-9.0
Denton	119.0	120.5	-1.5
Dowsby	58.2	54.4	3.8
Dunsby	53.3	54.0	-0.7
Easton and Stoke Rochford combined	77.3	78.6	-1.3
Edenham	122.2	119.0	3.2
Fenton	60.8	60.3	0.5
Folkingham	286.8	286.8	0.0
Foston	220.6	225.2	-4.6
Fulbeck	223.4	221.4	2.0
Greatford	131.8	131.5	0.3
Great Gonerby	792.3	788.0	4.3
Great Ponton	129.6	128.8	0.8

Haconby & Stainfield	200.6	199.1	1.5
Harlaxton	347.7	349.3	-1.6
Heydour	157.6	158.0	-0.4
Honington	64.0	63.4	0.6
Horbling	164.1	162.7	1.4
Hougham	82.9	83.9	-1.0
Hough-on-the-Hill	177.8	177.1	0.7
Ingoltsby	121.2	122.0	-0.8
Irnham	110.3	107.4	2.9
Kirkby Underwood	80.6	81.8	-1.2
Langtoft	801.7	786.3	15.4
Lenton	66.6	68.6	-2.0
Little Bytham	122.2	122.7	-0.5
Little Ponton & Stroxton	68.5	68.1	0.4
Londonthorpe & Harrowby without combined	1705.5	1717.5	-12.0
Long Bennington	1030.8	1004.5	26.3
Market Deeping	2358.8	2348.3	10.5
Marston	167.0	161.8	5.2
Morton & Hanthorpe	854.3	863.1	-8.8
Old Somerby	94.7	91.2	3.5
Pickworth	82.7	81.4	1.3
Pointon	196.0	197.6	-1.6
Rippingale	350.6	349.8	0.8
Sedgebrook	150.7	151.1	-0.4
Skillington	137.2	141.0	-3.8
South Witham	470.5	471.5	-1.0
Stubton	79.1	79.1	0.0
Swayfield	153.1	150.9	2.2
Swinstead	81.4	81.4	0.0
Tallington	393.4	367.6	25.8
Thurlby	819.3	822.1	-2.8
Toft Lound & Manthorpe	143.9	142.9	1.0
Uffington	316.5	312.4	4.1
Welby	78.6	79.7	-1.1
Westborough & Dry Doddington	145.0	144.1	0.9
West Deeping	115.8	118.4	-2.6
Witham-on-the-Hill	97.1	98.6	-1.5
Woolsthorpe	136.6	149.9	-13.3
Wyville cum Hungerton	20.8	20.3	0.5
Total by Billing Area	50,762.3	50,140.5	621.8



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday, 29 January 2026

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

Update of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

Report Author

Ayeisha Kirkham, Head of Public Protection

✉ ayeisha.kirkham@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To approve and adopt the refreshed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Recommendations

Council is asked to:

- 1. Approve and adopt the refreshed Hackney and Private Hire Licensing Policy.**
- 2. Agree that the Constitution is amended to provide delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing, to make minor amendments to this Policy.**

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?	All wards

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no specific financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report. Subject to the policy being approved an updated list of fees and charges has been prepared for the 2026/27 financial year. These are based on a time and motion study to ensure the proposed charges are accurately set and that the costs associated with delivering the Licensing service are recovered through licensing fees.
- 1.2 The updated fees and charges for 2026/27 are included in Appendix 4 and are also being presented at this meeting within the Fees and Charges agenda item. If approved, they will be implemented from the 1 February 2026. This will ensure that any applicants who apply or renew a licence prior to the commencement of the new financial year are not disadvantaged.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 Whilst each individual licensing application or enforcement decision will be judged on its own merits, a Policy ensures a transparent and consistent approach to licensing that will reduce the opportunity for challenge through the Courts. Any departure from the Policy should be based on material evidence and documented giving clear and compelling reasons.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.4 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken for the proposed updated Policy. No significant negative impacts have been identified. See Appendix 1.

Completed by: Heather Green, Licensing Manager

Community Safety

- 1.5 Whilst each individual licensing application or enforcement decision will be judged on its own merits, a Policy ensures a transparent and consistent approach to licensing that will reduce the opportunity for challenge through the Courts. The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy is fundamental to public safety as the policy ensures that robust checks are made on our licensed drivers, to safeguard the safety and wellbeing of passengers.

Completed by: *Ayeisha Kirkham, Head of Service- Public Protection*

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy was adopted and became operational in June 2024 following updated Guidance issued by The Department for Transport (“DfT”) in November 2023. The current Policy is fundamental to protecting public safety and keeping people from harm and provides the framework upon which the Authority delivers its statutory functions relating to hackney carriage and private hire licensing.
- 2.2 The November 2023 DfT guidance is non-statutory and complements the statutory standards.
- 2.3 Over the past few years, the Council has received an increasing level of feedback from drivers, operators and Councillors indicating that the economic climate and out of area licensed drivers/vehicles were disproportionately affecting the South Kesteven taxi industry. The fees charged by the Council in relation to our near neighbours and Wolverhampton were cited as not assisting the recruitment of new drivers to the industry and discouraging existing drivers from continuing to licence through SKDC.
- 2.4 Feedback was also received, that the requirements to obtain an SKDC taxi licence are disproportionately excessive when considered against neighbouring authorities and those wider afield. It was suggested that to attract new drivers, it would be helpful if they were able to undertake a trial period of trading before committing to the cost of a 3-year licence. In addition, the ability to spread the cost of the licence fee would be financially beneficial. Whilst reviewing the fees and charges, it has been agreed that an option to spread the cost of the licence and pay quarterly will be implemented from 2026/2027. This is in addition to the introduction of a one-year licence for new drivers.
- 2.5 A considerable amount of work has been undertaken during the last six months to support this review. This has included a benchmarking exercise being undertaken

to compare the Council's fees and charges for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles with those of near and neighbouring authorities.

- 2.6. Two workshop sessions have been held for taxi and private hire drivers, one in Grantham and one in Stamford. In addition a twelve-week intensive enforcement operation was carried out across the district. This has enabled taxi drivers, operators and private vehicle drivers to provide feedback to the Council around the challenges they face. In addition to the concerns raised around out of area drivers and the Council's fees and charges, significant feedback has also been received around the necessity to undertake a knowledge test and English test if a qualification cannot be produced to evidence competency.
- 2.7 The Licensing Team has undertaken increased proactive licensing enforcement patrols within 2025, and this included a 12-week period of evening/ weekend patrols. During this time Officers undertook an incremental approach to enforcement to SKDC licensed taxi drivers and also raised any concerns that were found relating to out of area taxis to the relevant licensing authority. Overall, the patrols were well received by the drivers, and any feedback received, particularly in relation to the current policy, was recorded and incorporated into this review.
- 2.8 The Council through the Leader's Officer has engaged in correspondence with the Department for Transport around the issues faced by taxi drivers and the challenges posed by drivers operating in South Kesteven who are licensed elsewhere. A further letter is being prepared to include the feedback from the workshops and the 12-week intensive enforcement operation.
- 2.9 Given the feedback received it is clear that there are significant challenges facing the taxi trade. The work undertaken to date has provided assurance to the taxi trade that the Council are listening and taking appropriate steps to support the recruitment and retention of licensed drivers and operators within the district. In order to make any changes, and to introduce a proposed fee structure, it is necessary to refresh the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Proposed Policy Changes

- 2.10 The changes proposed within the refreshed Policy include the following:

- **Knowledge Test**– Removal of the knowledge test requirement, removing a cost for new applicants. (Part 3 – Drivers (3.4), Page 20/21).

This would remove a cost for new drivers. The feedback received from those operating in the trade is that the use of navigational aids has rendered the need to undertake a knowledge test unnecessary.

The need to undertake a knowledge test is a requirement of the Guidance rather than a statutory requirement. However, it should be noted that the current knowledge test also contains questions on the Highway Code.

- **English Test** – This is to remain in the policy; however, the cost will be free of charge for all first tests. If a first test is failed, then further tests will be chargeable. (changing Appendix C – Application Procedures, 3 – Driver Qualification (3.1 and 3.2), Pages 53 & 54).

The current policy provides that if a driver cannot produce a qualification which proves their competency in speaking and writing in English, then they must undertake an English test. This is applicable for new drivers and those who are due to renew their licence but have not taken the test or produced a qualification. In the current financial year, the cost for this is £46.50.

The rationale behind retaining the English test within the policy, is based upon the DfT guidance outlining that language proficiency assists drivers in their work and passenger understanding.

- **New drivers entering the profession** - The provision of a 1-year licence for drivers entering the profession which supports feedback relating to difficulty in recruiting new drivers. The Statutory Taxi Standards (3.2 Duration of Licences) outlines what a shorter than 3-year duration can be considered:

“Any shorter duration licence should only be issued when the licensing authority thinks it is appropriate in the specific circumstances of the case. If a licensee has requested one, or where required (for example, when the licence holder’s leave to remain in the UK is time-limited) or when the licence is only required to meet a short-term demand.”

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Licensing Authorities are responsible for deciding their own policy and making decisions on individual licensing matters, applying the relevant law and any other relevant considerations. Licensing authorities must give due regard to the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards 2020 (updated 25 November 2022) and Updated Guidance (November 2023), the latter being guidance as opposed to statutory.
- 3.2. Any amendments to update the existing Policy requires approval by Full Council.
- 3.3. There have been minor numbering and wording updates, where previous errors have been found as well as an update to the use of a third party to complete Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced checks, as the Council is no longer a Responsible Authority (the number of DBS 14 check numbers per year were below the DBS threshold following the introduction of the online DBS Update Service). A list of all updates is detailed in Appendix 2.
- 3.4. A copy of the updated and refreshed Policy is attached as Appendix 3.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 To retain the Council's existing Policy, unamended. However, this option has been discounted as it would fail to respond to the issues facing the taxi trade and the current barriers being faced by the applicants, drivers and operators. Therefore, the option to do nothing has been discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The refreshed Policy supports the Council in fulfilling its statutory duties associated with the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire trades. It also reflects the feedback received and supports the local taxi trade during this difficult economic time.
- 5.2. The changes compliment the review of fees and charges undertaken as part of the Council's annual fee setting process.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. The Licensing Committee were consulted on the proposed changes at their meeting held on the 15 December 2025. The Committee did not raise any concerns regarding the proposed changes.
- 6.2. The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee were consulted on the proposed changes at their meeting held on the 13 January 2026. The Committee did not raise any concerns regarding the proposed changes; however, the Committee did ask query whether Appendix F, Section 5 (c) should be updated as makes reference to a dial. The wording within the Hackney Carriage Byelaws in Appendix F requires approval from the Secretary of State, as was gained in 2001. There is specific guidance which outlines how new byelaws can be adopted and requires submission to the Department of Transport for prior approval before Secretary of State approval. As the word dial does not affect the meaning of the 5(c) in the Appendix it is recommended that this is not amended at this time.
- 6.3. Two workshop sessions have been held for taxi and private hire drivers, one in Grantham and one in Stamford.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1. [Licensing Committee Report- Feedback Update June 2024](#)
- 7.2. [Licensing Committee- Update re. new Policy impacts- November 2024](#)

7.3. [Taxi Policy June 2024.pdf](#)

8. Appendices

8.1. Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

8.2. Appendix 2 - Proposed Policy changes - List of all areas updated

8.3. Appendix 3 - Refreshed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

8.4. Appendix 4- Proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fees and Charges

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Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	To update the existing policy following feedback regarding the current policy and a review by Senior Management. The policy was assessed for equality impact when it was updated in 2024 following the proposed changes based on Department for Transport Guidance document and local consultation.
3. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle owners, drivers, operators, users of these vehicles and members of public.
4. Has there been any consultation with, or input from, customers/service users or other stakeholders? If so, with whom, how were they consulted and what did they say? If you haven't consulted yet and are intending to do so, please complete the consultation table below.	Not on the changes currently proposed.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	The policy can be reviewed in light of any operational issues found and will be reviewed if there is any guidance or legislative change.

Protected Characteristic	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact e.g. adjustment to the policy <i>(The Action Log below should be completed to provide further detail)</i>
Age	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole.	The Policy ensures the protection of children and vulnerable adults (regardless of age) and contains measures throughout to ensure all licencees are fit and proper persons to hold such a license.
Disability	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole.	The policy ensures that drivers and operators are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by undertaking Disability Awareness Training as part of the application and Renewal requirements. All drivers are required to carry assistance dogs unless an exemption is held.



			All drivers are to provide reasonable assistance with luggage, wheelchairs etc this will ensure the full nature of assistance is clearly understood (as outlined in the Policy, an example of this is at Part 2 – Vehicles (2.3 – Accessibility)).
Gender Reassignment	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	Neither the policy nor requirements within it are determined by this protected characteristic. The policy and its operating requirements are in place to ensure public safety and that all licencees are fit and proper persons to hold the license issued.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	Neither the policy or requirements within it are determined by this protected characteristic. The policy and its operating requirements are in place to ensure public safety and that all licencees are fit and proper persons to hold the license issued.
Pregnancy and Maternity	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	Neither the policy or requirements within it are determined by this protected characteristic. The policy and its operating requirements are in place to ensure public safety and that all licencees are fit and proper persons to hold the license issued.
Race	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	This policy has general protection levels and terms of operating. The policy, whilst not being determined by this individual protected characteristic, has been put in place to ensure standards are met and consents are issued on an equitable basis.
Religion or Belief	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	Neither the policy or requirements within it are determined by this protected characteristic. The policy and its operating requirements are in place to ensure public safety and that all licencees are fit and



			proper persons to hold the license issued.
Sex	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	Neither the policy or requirements within it are determined by this protected characteristic. The policy and its operating requirements are in place to ensure public safety and that all licencees are fit and proper persons to hold the license issued.
Sexual Orientation	No impact	This protected characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	Neither the policy or requirements within it are determined by this protected characteristic. The policy and its operating requirements are in place to ensure public safety and that all licencees are fit and proper persons to hold the license issued.
Other Factors requiring consideration			
Socio-Economic Impacts	Positive	Having a thriving taxi and private hire trade within the area enables mobility for all members of the community for work, social, domestic and pleasure purposes.	This policy has general protection levels and terms of operating. This policy, whilst not being determined by an individual's socio-economic status, has been put in place to ensure standards are met and consents are issued on an equitable basis.
Carers (those who provide unpaid care to a family member, friend or partner)	No impact	This characteristic is not affected by any of the changes recommended or the policy as a whole	Neither the policy nor requirements within it are determined by this protected characteristic. The policy and its operating requirements are in place to ensure public safety and that all licencees are fit and proper persons to hold the license issued.

Consultation

Negative impacts identified will require the responsible officer to consult with the affected group/s to determine all practicable and proportionate mitigations. Add more rows as required.		
Group/Organisation	Date	Response



Proposed Mitigation: Action Log

To be completed when barriers, negative impact or discrimination are found as part of this process – to show actions taken to remove or mitigate. Any mitigations identified throughout the EIA process should be meaningful and timely. Add more rows as required.				
Negative Impact	Action	Timeline	Outcome	Status
None identified				

Evaluation Decision

Once consultation and practicable and proportionate mitigation has been put in place, the responsible officer should evaluate whether any negative impact remains and, if so, provide justification for any decision to proceed.		
Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	None identified	
Final Decision	Tick	Include any explanation/justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed	x	The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy seeks to promote the objectives of public safety and provide the right environment for a business to thrive, whilst ensuring customer protection. None of the current changes proposed impact equality and diversity considerations.
2. Stop the policy or practice because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. Adapt or change the policy in a way that will eliminate the bias		
4. Barriers and impact identified , however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision		



Did you consult with an Equality Ally prior to carrying out this assessment? Yes

Sign off

Name and job title of person completing this EIA	Heather Green Licensing Manager
Officer Responsible for implementing the policy/function etc	Heather Green
Date Completed	01 December 2025
Line Manager	Ayeisha Kirkham
Date Agreed <i>(by line manager)</i>	04 December 2025
Date of Review <i>(if required)</i>	

Completed EIAs should be included as an appendix to the relevant report going to a Cabinet, Committee or Council meeting and a copy sent to equalities@southkesteven.gov.uk.

Completed EIAs will be published along with the relevant report through Modern.Gov before any decision is made and also on the Council's website.

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Appendix 2 – Proposed amendments to the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy

Contents	Updated
	Page numbers for Contents and Appendices
Part 1 – Introduction	Updated
	Para. 1.1.4 Corrected a wording error
	Para. 1.5.1 Revised the date the policy changes effective
	Para. 1.5.4 Corrected the number
	Para. 1.6.2 Updated the vehicle licensing profile
	Para. 1.6.3 Updated the driver licensing profile
	Para. 1.7.1 Amended consultation stakeholder holder wording, as no consultation undertaken
	Para. 1.10.1 Amended the Whistleblowing Policy link
	Added:
	Para. 1.5.3 Added the delegated authority for minor changes and updated re who the Licensing Authority will consult with and when.
Part 2 – Vehicles	Removed:
	Para. 2.2.9 Remove the word 'are' to read correctly
Part 3 – Drivers	Added:
	Para. 3.2.1 Added the provision of a 1 year licence for a new driver into the profession
	Updated:
	Para. 3.3 to 3.4 Amended numbering now Topographical Knowledge Tests removed
	Para. 3.4.1 Clarified wording that drivers at 1 st renewal after 1/8/2024 required to take the driver proficiency test and corrected numbering
	Para. 3.4.2 to 3.8.5 Updated the numbering
	Para. 3.8.6 Corrected the DBS process as a Third Party is now used, as SK is no longer a DBS Registered Body. Also clarified the two DBS Barred Lists that must be checked
	Removed:
	Para. 3.4 Topographical Knowledge (Driver Knowledge Tests) removed
	Para. 3.5.2 Removed as incorporated into the new 3.4.1 Para. 3.8.7 to 3.16.1 Updated the numbering

Part 7 – Delegated Powers	Added:
	Para. 7.1.3 Added the delegated authority for minor changes
Appendix C – Application Procedures	Updated:
	Para. 3.1.1 Amended the wording and amalgamated in 3.1.2 this paragraph, so it applies to new and existing drivers at renewal.
	Para. 3.1.2 Updated the numbering
	Para. 3.2.1 Updated the numbering and wording in relation to the English proficiency test requirement
	Para. 3.2.2 to 3.2.6 Updated the numbering
	Para. 3.2.7 Clarified first English language skills test is free, but further tests are subject to a fee. Also updated the numbering
	Para. 3.2.8 Took out reference to the knowledge test, but left in that a test is available if a complaint or investigation found a driver had inadequate knowledge
	Para. 4.1.5 Updated to clarify there is a fee payable for a DBS re-application if an Update Service subscription lapses
	Para. 5.2 Updated to clarify the two DBS Barred Lists that must be checked
	Added:
	Para. 3.1.3 Amalgamated a paragraph in 3.2 – Driver Competency Test, to clarify reasonable grounds for additional Driver Proficiency & English Language test
	Removed:
	Para. 3.1.2 As amalgamated into Para. 3.1.1
	Para. 3.2.1 to 3.2.4 Removed the entire section relating to Driver Competency Tests (part of the Knowledge test)
	Para. 3.2.5 Removed as relates to the knowledge testing
	Para. 3.2.10 – 3.2.11 Removed as relate to knowledge test



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

1 February 2026

Version control:

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V1	27 March 2015	Approved
V1.1	30 September 2015	Update to licence periods following Deregulation Act 2015
V1.2	8 June 2017	Inclusion of requirement for Safeguarding training
V2	8 June 2020	Draft - full policy review
V2.1	19 September 2020	Draft for consultation–incorporating Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards issued 21 July 2020
V2.2	12 January 2021	Final version for approval
V2.3	13 January 2022	Update to English Test score and Certificate of Good Conduct.
V2.4	23 May 2024	Updated following guidance from the Department for Transport Consultation November 2023
V3	29 January 2026	Removed Knowledge Test requirement, updated English Test provision and add Delegated Authority for minor changes

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PART 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Powers and Duties

- 1.1.1 The licensing of hackney carriages dates back to 1847 and for private hire vehicles (outside London) to 1976.
- 1.1.2 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (“the 1976 Act”), as amended, places on South Kesteven District Council, as the Licensing Authority (“the Authority”), a duty to carry out its licensing functions in respect of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.
- 1.1.3 This document sets out the policy that the Authority will apply when making decisions about new applications and licences currently in force.
- 1.1.4 Regulation makes our society more secure. It protects customers and employees, it protects businesses and the environment. Better regulation means maintaining and improving customer protection and at the same time providing the right environment for business to thrive. It shall be undertaken in a way that is effective, does not create unnecessary burdens, and is consistent, transparent, proportionate, accountable and fair.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles play a vital and integral part in an integrated transport system. They also provide services in situations where other forms of transport are either not available (rural areas and late evenings) or for persons with mobility difficulties.

The Authority shall seek to promote the following objectives:

- the protection of the public;
 - the establishment of professional and respected hackney carriage and private hire trades;
 - access to an efficient and effective public transport service;
 - the protection of the environment;
 - the safety of the drivers
- 1.2.2 The Authority aims to regulate the service in order to promote the above objectives. It is the Authority’s wish to facilitate well-run and responsible businesses, which display sensitivity to the wishes and needs of the general public.
- 1.2.3 When considering each of the policies detailed in this document, regard has been given to the Regulators’ Code <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code> in order to ensure that each requirement is properly justified by the risk it seeks to address, balancing the cost of the requirement against the benefit to the public.

1.3 Best Practice Guidance

1.3.1 In formulating this policy, the Authority has had regard to the following documents:

- Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance, Department for Transport (DfT) (March 2010)
- Best Practice Guidance to Inspection of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles, Freight Standards Association (August 2012)
- Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in the Hackney and Private Hire Trades, Institute of Licensing (April 2018)
- Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards, Department for Transport, July 2020 (updated November 2023)
- Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance for Licensing Authorities in England (17 November 2023)

1.4 Status

1.4.1 In exercising its discretion in carrying out its regulatory functions, the Authority shall have regard to this policy document and the objectives set out above in 1.2.

1.4.2 Notwithstanding the existence of this policy, each application or enforcement measure will be considered on its own merits. Where it is necessary for the Authority to depart substantially from its policy - clear and compelling reasons shall be given for doing so.

1.5 Implementation

1.5.1 This revised policy shall take effect from 1 February 2026 and the Authority expects new and existing applicants for licences to comply with its terms immediately unless specifically detailed otherwise within this policy. Any amendments to driver licensing requirements will apply to existing applicants at renewal.

1.5.2 The Authority will keep this policy under review and will consult where appropriate on proposed revisions. Minor amendments to ensure content is up to date but that do not affect the intent of the policy such as contacts, web addresses etc. will be delegated to Officers.

1.5.3 Under delegated authority, minor amendments such as legislative updates, which may become necessary from time to time to ensure its continued accuracy, but do not affect its direction or intent may be authorised by the Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing, without the need for reference to Licensing Committee or Full Council.

1.5.4 From the effective date, this policy will override and supersede all existing policies in relation to hackney carriage and private hire licensing.

1.6 Licensing Profile

- 1.6.1 A hackney carriage is a public transport vehicle with no more than 8 passenger seats, which is licensed to ply for hire. This means that it may stand at ranks or be hailed in the street by members of the public. A private hire vehicle can only be licensed if it is constructed or adapted to seat up to 8 passengers. Private hire vehicles must be booked in advance by customers through an operator and may not ply for hire in the street.
- 1.6.2 The Authority, as of November 2025, currently licences approximately 246 hackney carriages, 44 private hire vehicles and 37 private hire operators.
- 1.6.3 There are approximately 147 drivers licensed to drive hackney carriages, 38 licensed to drive private hire vehicles and 140 licensed to drive both (dual licensed).

1.7 Consultation

- 1.7.1 When consultation is undertaken, the following stakeholders will be contacted:
- Licence holders;
 - Lincolnshire Police;
 - General public;
 - Other Authority services inc. Community Engagement (for disabled and community groups)

1.8 Partnership Working

- 1.8.1 The Authority will work in partnership with other agencies to promote the policy objectives.

1.9 Information Sharing and Data Protection

- 1.9.1 The Authority works in partnership with other enforcement agencies such as the Police, Defra, HM Revenue and Customs, Home Office, DVSA, Department of Work and Pensions, Benefit Fraud etc. and will share information with other Council departments or regulatory bodies where appropriate.
- 1.9.2 The Authority is legally required to provide information if requested, pursuant to a criminal offence, or to detect fraud, or immigration offences.
- 1.9.3 The Authority has a duty to provide hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licence information to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This is submitted under the Air Quality (taxi and private hire vehicles database) (England and Wales) Regulations 2019 as part of the government's national plan to tackle roadside pollution. The data is held in a database for 7 years and allows licensing authorities to clearly identify and charge (where appropriate) a taxi/PHV licensed by another authority which has entered or is moving around their Clean Air Zone (CAZ). The data provided is

- vehicle registration number
- vehicle licence plate number
- date the licence is valid from
- date the licence expires
- type of vehicle licence
- whether the vehicle is wheelchair accessible vehicle

1.9.4 The legislation requires local authorities to maintain a public register.

1.9.5 The Authority will work with neighbouring authorities and report to them any relevant matters that relate to their licence holders.

1.9.6 The Authority will utilise the Local Government Association (LGA) register of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Refusals and Revocations called NR3, which has been introduced within the National Anti-Fraud Network. The register allows Authorities to record and share details of where a hackney carriage or private hire drivers' licence has been refused or revoked and allow Authorities to check new applicants against the register.

1.9.7 The Authority complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

1.9.8 The Authority complies in full with the Data Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice for Disclosure and Barring Service Registered Persons. See section 3.7 of this policy.

1.9.9 In some circumstances it may be appropriate under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 for the Authority to make a "barring" referral to the DBS. A decision to refuse or revoke a licence as the individual is thought to present a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, may be referred to the DBS. The power for the licensing authority to make a referral in this context arises from the undertaking of a safeguarding role.

1.10 Whistleblowing

1.10.1 The Authority takes wrong-doing very seriously. Hotlines have been established to allow staff, councillors and the public to raise concerns. Though reports can be raised anonymously, individuals are encouraged to leave as much information as possible to assist with the investigation. The Authority's Whistleblowing policy is available at [Whistleblowing Policy.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](https://southkesteven.gov.uk/Whistleblowing%20Policy.pdf)

PART 2 VEHICLES

2.1 Limitation of Numbers

- 2.1.1 No powers exist for licensing authorities to limit the number of private hire vehicles that they licence.
- 2.1.2 The current legal provision on quantity restrictions for hackney carriages is set out in section 16 of the Transport Act 1985. This provides “that the grant of a (hackney carriage) licence may be refused, for the purpose of limiting the number of hackney carriages in respect of which licences are granted, if, but only if, the person authorised to grant licences is satisfied that there is no significant demand for the services of hackney carriages (within the area to which the licence would apply) which is unmet.”
- 2.1.3 In line with the DfT *Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance*, and Competition and Markets Authority Guidance on the Regulation of Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles: understanding the impact on competition the Authority does not impose a quantity restriction on the licences that are issued in respect of hackney carriages.

2.2 Specifications and Conditions

- 2.2.1 Local Licensing Authorities have a wide range of discretion over the types of vehicle that they can licence as hackney carriage or private hire vehicles.
- 2.2.2 Government guidance suggests that they should adopt the principle of specifying as many different types of vehicle as possible and are encouraged to make use of the “type approval” rules within any vehicle specifications they adopt.
- 2.2.3 The Authority accepts that there are a wide range of vehicles available that are suitable for use as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicles. In accordance with central Government’s guidance, all vehicles therefore shall have an appropriate ‘type approval’ which is either a:
 - European Whole Vehicle Type approval;
 - British National Type approval; or
 - British Single Vehicle Approval (SVA) or subsequently an Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA).
- 2.2.4 As a guide, most large volume production vehicles produced in the UK and EU States after 1987 will satisfy British and/or European Whole Type Approval. Specialist vehicles or any vehicle that has been structurally modified, converted or imported from a non-EU State since its original manufacture will require separate IVA (SVA) and/or Department for Transport approval and such documentation must be submitted with an application.
- 2.2.5 The Authority shall impose such conditions as it considers reasonably necessary on hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences. These vehicles provide a service to the

public, so it is appropriate to set criteria for the standard of the external and internal conditions of the vehicle, provided that these are not unreasonably onerous.

- 2.2.6 **Appendix A** sets out the specification and minimum standards in respect of hackney carriages and for private hire vehicles.
- 2.2.7 Vehicles shall be licensed for the carriage of not more than 8 passengers. All applications for a licence in relation to vehicles that have a maximum capacity of 3 passengers shall be referred to the Licensing Committee.
- 2.2.8 The driver is always legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle they are using. A driver should undertake a walkaround check before a vehicle is used and retain proof for 12 months as proof the check has been undertaken. Where more than one driver will use the vehicle during the day's running, driver taking charge of the vehicle should make sure it is roadworthy and safe to drive by carrying out their own walkaround check. Failure to retain the evidence that a check has been undertaken will result in penalty points (Appendix J).
- 2.2.9 Drivers are required to retain the vehicle checklist as proof that they have undertaken the required vehicle check. A model checklist can be accessed here: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/654b99c9e2e16a001242abcb/taxi-driver-vehicle-checklist.pdf>

2.3 Accessibility

- 2.3.1 Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles are an essential mode of transport for many disabled and older people. The combination of the personal service they offer, their wide availability and door to door operations enable them to respond particularly well to the travelling needs of people with disabilities.
- 2.3.2 The Authority is committed to social inclusion and ensuring a wide variety of opportunities is available to those with mobility difficulties in order to enjoy a high quality of life. Encouraging the installation of hearing loops where internal screens are fitted and alternative payment methods making the process more accessible for visually impaired passengers.
- 2.3.3 In addition to the general conditions, accessibility for people with disabilities (including, but not only people, who need to travel in a wheelchair) is, therefore, an important consideration in respect of vehicles licensed as hackney carriages/private hire vehicles.
- 2.3.4 The Authority encourages the provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles. There will be a 20% reduction from the application fee for such vehicles. Current fees are published in the Council's Fees and Charges.
- 2.3.5 The Equality Act 2010 brings together in one Act a number of different pieces of legislation about discrimination, - including disability discrimination. The Authority considers it

important that people with disabilities have access to all forms of public transportation, including how they are assisted to access or leave vehicles.

- 2.3.6 The Equality Act 2010 places certain duties on licensed drivers to provide assistance to people in wheelchairs in relation to accessing/leaving the vehicle and to carry them safely. There are similar requirements on drivers in relation to the treatment of passengers with an assistance dog. Neither drivers nor operators of licensed vehicles can make any extra charge or refuse to carry such passengers. It is a criminal offence to breach any of these requirements.
- 2.3.7 Licensed drivers who are unable to carry out the duties imposed upon them under the Equality Act 2010 may apply to the Authority for an exemption certificate from those duties. This Authority must issue an exemption certificate to that licensed driver if they are satisfied that it is appropriate to do so on medical or physical grounds. The application must be supported by a declaration from a medical practitioner who has full knowledge of the applicant's medical history. The cost of obtaining this declaration must be met by the applicant. Even if a medical ground or other physical condition exists, a driver has no defence against the offence of failing to provide assistance to people in wheelchairs contrary to s165 Equality Act, if he has not been issued an exemption certificate.
- 2.3.8 To mitigate communication related barriers in relation to the exemption certificate the Licensing Authority will provide the statutory exemption notice in large print and braille.
- 2.3.9 The Authority publishes a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles designated for the purposes of section 165 of the Equality Act 2010.

2.4 Maximum Age of Vehicles

- 2.4.1 An application for a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence (other than a limousine or a prestige vehicle), renewal and change of vehicle will not be accepted if the vehicle does not meet Euro 6 standards at first registration (Registered after 01 September 2015).

2.5 Vehicle Testing

- 2.5.1 The Authority needs to be satisfied that licensed vehicles operating within its area are safe to do so.
- 2.5.2 Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles are granted licences for a maximum period of 12 months. Prior to being granted a licence each vehicle shall be examined and tested at a vehicle testing station approved by the Authority. The compliance test comprises a mechanical examination to current MOT standard and an additional check of items not covered by the MOT test. Once licensed, the vehicle must undergo a further full examination and test at a vehicle testing station approved by the Authority at 6 monthly intervals.

- 2.5.3 In line with MOT changes from May 2018, where a licenced vehicle is presented for testing and fails an authorised examination and test, being considered “dangerous” in accordance with the MOT testing defect categories, it must not be driven from the date of that test regardless of whether or not the previous certificate has expired. A suspension notice will be issued and will not be lifted until the vehicle has undergone a further test at the proprietors expense, and been passed fit for use by the Authority. If the Authorised Officer is not satisfied that the defect has been repaired within 2 months from the service of the suspension notice, by virtue of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the licence will be deemed to have been revoked.
- 2.5.4. Where a licensed vehicle is presented for testing and fails an authorised examination test and the defect is considered “major” **and** it is deemed unsafe as a passenger vehicle by the vehicle examiner, regardless of whether or not the previous certificate has expired, this may result in the vehicle proprietor being issued with a suspension notice in order to prevent the vehicle being used to carry passengers until the defect(s) is/are remedied. The suspension will not be lifted until the vehicle has undergone a further test, at the proprietor’s expense, and been passed as fit for use by the Authority. If the Authorised Officer is not satisfied that the defect has been repaired within 2 months from the service of the suspension notice, by virtue of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the licence will be deemed to have been revoked.
- 2.5.5 A compliance test must be completed before the expiry date of the current test. The certificate must be received by the Licensing Team within 2 working days of the test taking place. Failure to produce the compliance certificate will result in the issuing of penalty points under the South Kesteven Scheme and may result in other actions, including suspending the licence.
- 2.5.6 A proprietor/driver shall comply with any request by an Authorised Officer or Police Officer inspecting the vehicle who is not satisfied as to the fitness of the vehicle or the accuracy of any fitted meter. Either Officer may give a written notice to the proprietor/driver of the vehicle to make the hackney carriage and/or taxi meter available for further inspection and testing at such reasonable time and place as may be specified, and the vehicle licence may be suspended until the Officer is satisfied as to the vehicle’s fitness or as to the accuracy of the meter.

2.6 Accident Reporting and Insurance Write Offs

- 2.6.1 Under Section 50(3) of the 1976 Act, Proprietors of licensed vehicles are required to inform the Authority’s Licensing Team “as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any case within 72 hours of the occurrence of “any accident to such hackney carriage or private hire vehicle causing damage materially affecting the safety, performance or appearance of the hackney carriage or private hire vehicle or the comfort or convenience of persons carried therein”. Failure to inform the authority of an accident within 72 hours will result in penalty points been issued

- 2.6.2 A driver involved in an accident must provide details of the accident to the Authority's Licensing Team before further use as the damage to the vehicle may be required to be assessed by an officer or vehicle testing station approved by the Authority at the vehicle proprietors' expense. If necessary, the vehicle proprietor will be issued with a suspension notice in order to prevent the vehicle being used to carry passengers until the defect(s) is/are remedied. The suspension will not be lifted until the vehicle has been passed as fit for use by the Authority.
- 2.6.3 Drivers, proprietors and operators are advised that this Authority may be contacted by insurance companies to verify an accident damage report and details provided.
- 2.6.4 Where a vehicle has been "written off" by an insurance company the Authority will deal with these vehicles as follows:

Category (from October 2017)	Action
A (scrap only)	Will not be licensed or re-licensed
B (break for parts)	Will not be licensed or re-licensed
S (structurally damaged but repairable)	the Authority will consider licensing, or re-licensing only if it has passed an 'AutoLIGN' inspection (at the cost of the proprietor), and a satisfactory report / certificate produced
N (not structurally damaged, repairable)	the Authority will consider licensing, or re-licensing. However, dependant on the information contained within the report by the insurance assessor, a vehicle may have to pass an 'AutoLIGN' inspection (at the cost of the proprietor), and a satisfactory report / certificate produced.

2.7 Signage and Advertising

- 2.7.1 It is important that the public should be able to identify and understand the difference between a hackney carriage and a private hire vehicle. Appendix A details the requirements for vehicle identification plates and signage.
- 2.7.2 Private hire vehicles shall not be permitted to display roof-mounted signs and any signs that include the words "Taxi" or "Cab" or "For Hire" anywhere on the vehicle.
- 2.7.3 Roof signs fitted to hackney carriage vehicles shall be illuminated at all times when the vehicle is available for hire.
- 2.7.4 Vehicle identification plates are a key feature in helping to identify vehicles that are properly licensed.

- 2.7.5 All licensed vehicles, except those private hire vehicles deemed Prestige/Executive Vehicles by the Authority shall display plates externally on the rear of the vehicle. Appendix K.
- 2.7.6 Vehicles shall not be allowed to display written or other material on any window with the exception of those permitted by the conditions of the licence and those required by law or manufacturer's mark.
- 2.7.7 Licensed vehicle proprietors will be permitted, subject to prior written approval of the Authority, to display signs, advertisements, notices or other markings on the outside of their vehicle. However, they shall be subject to the following conditions:
- All advertisements shall comply with the Committees of Advertising Practice Codes <https://www.gov.uk/marketing-advertising-law/advertising-codes-of-practice> and shall be in a form acceptable to the Authority.
 - No advertisement shall relate to or advertise alcohol, smoking materials or be of a political or religious nature, organization or campaign;
 - Advertising will be 2 dimensional in design and limited to the front and rear door panels;
 - Any damaged or disfigured advertisement signs shall be immediately removed.

2.8 Driver Safety and CCTV

- 2.8.1 The hackney carriage and private hire trades provide a valuable service, particularly late at night when other forms of public transport are not available. Security for drivers and passengers is of paramount importance. Licensed drivers deal with strangers, often in isolated places and carry cash and may be at risk of violence and other offences such as non-payment of fares, verbal and racist abuse.
- 2.8.2 There are a number of ways to reduce the risks such as pre-payment of fares, driver screens, CCTV surveillance systems and radio link schemes.
- 2.8.3 Measures such as CCTV are not required as part of the licensing regime, as it is considered that they are best left to the judgment of the owners and drivers themselves. The hackney carriage and private hire trades are, however, encouraged to consider the installation of CCTV systems in their vehicles on a voluntary basis.
- 2.8.4 CCTV security systems for the purpose of assisting driver safety are permitted in vehicles. If such devices are fitted, adequate signage shall be displayed in the passenger compartment advising passengers that they are being monitored/recorded. Any such equipment shall be fitted overtly and in such a way as not to present any danger or hazard to any passenger. It will be the driver/proprietor's responsibility to comply with all aspects of the law regarding such surveillance equipment. A minimum of two warning signs should be displayed prominently inside vehicles so as to be easily seen by passengers. Further information can be found on the following link <https://ico.org.uk/>.

2.8.5 Proprietors are required to notify the Authority's Licensing Team if their vehicle is fitted with CCTV (or if it is subsequently removed) within 5 days of installation or removal. Failure to do so will result in the issuing of penalty points by an Authorised Officer.

2.8.6 In any licensed vehicle where a CCTV security system is fitted, the proprietor shall ensure that the system does not interfere with other equipment, is properly installed, maintained and serviced to ensure clear images are recorded. Equipment must be available to be inspected and images downloaded by an Authorised Officer or Constable on request.

2.9 Application Procedures

2.9.1 The application procedures for a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence are not prescribed in law, but shall be made on the specified application form produced by South Kesteven District Council and be accompanied by the appropriate fee in accordance with the application procedure set out in **Appendix C**.

2.10 Consideration of Applications

2.10.1 The Authority shall consider all applications on their own merits once it is satisfied that the appropriate criteria have been met and the application form and supporting documents are complete.

2.10.2 The Authority does not allow dual plating of vehicles due to the difficulty in enforcing such practice and the confusion it can cause customers.

2.10.3 Pursuant to section 57 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Authority can ask applicants whether they intend to use the vehicle in the district of South Kesteven or outside of the district.

2.10.4 Applicants will need to be able to show what proportion of their business they propose to carry out in South Kesteven and what business will be carried out elsewhere, including the geographical location.

2.10.5 If there are concerns that the hackney carriage is being used primarily outside of this area then the decision on whether to grant or renew a licence will be made by the Licensing Committee.

2.10.6 The above is in accordance with the decision in R (App Newcastle City Council) v Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council [2008] EWHC 2369.

2.11 Renewal of Licences

2.11.1 Existing vehicle licence holders shall be reminded prior to their expiry date that their licences are due to be renewed. Notwithstanding this, it is the licence holder's responsibility to ensure that licences are renewed prior to their expiry.

- 2.11.2 It is recommended that vehicles should be examined and tested at one of the Authority's approved testing stations at least 7 days prior to submitting the application. This is to allow time for a vehicle to be repaired and then re-tested, should the vehicle examination identify the need, prior to the expiry of the licence.

2.12 Environmental Considerations

- 2.12.1 Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles are an essential form of transport in the South Kesteven area. Many people depend on hackney carriages and private hire vehicles for trips when other forms of transport are unsuitable. However, the Authority is committed to reducing the environmental impacts of vehicles licensed to operate in the district by reducing the emissions of pollutants such as Nitrous Oxides (NO_x), Particulate Matter (PM), Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) and Carbon Monoxide (CO).
- 2.12.2 The Authority has declared an Air Quality Management Area (for Nitrogen Dioxide) in the centre of Grantham. Improving the fuel types of vehicles that are used within the district can form a part of a wider strategy to assist with improving air quality for residents and visitors.
- 2.12.3 To support this, an application for a new hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence, renewal and change of vehicle will not be accepted unless it is Euro 6 compliant. The vehicle licence can continue to be renewed until it reaches the age of 15 years.
- 2.12.4 Liquid petroleum gas (LPG) conversions are acceptable. Any conversion to LPG must be undertaken by an approved converter and the conversion certificate produced to the Authority for inspection.
- 2.12.5 To incentivise investment in zero emission, lower emission vehicles the Authority will discount the annual vehicle licence fees. Reductions will be reviewed annually and published in the Council's Fees and Charges. From 1 April 2021 the reductions are:
- Fully electric vehicles - 50% discount
 - Plug in hybrid, hydrogen fuel cell and LPG vehicles - 20% discount
- 2.12.6 The Authority supports initiatives which would be beneficial to the environment and makes travelling more accessible to those requiring to use hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, such as taxi sharing schemes and taxi and private hire vehicle buses.
- Taxi sharing: The private hire and hackney carriage vehicles can provide a service at separate fares for passengers sharing the vehicle. The operator or person taking the booking, takes the initiative to match up passengers who book in advance and agree to share the vehicle at separate fares (lower than for a single hiring).
 - Taxi and private hire vehicle buses: Owners of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles can apply to the Traffic Commissioner for a 'restricted public service (PSV) operator licence. The vehicle owner can then use it to provide a bus service for up to 8 passengers. The route must be registered with the Traffic Commissioner and

must have at least one stopping place in the area of the authority that licensed the vehicle.

2.13 Engine Idling

2.13.1 Drivers are reminded that the highway code states that ‘you must not leave a parked vehicle unattended with the engine running or leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily while the vehicle is stationary on a public road’.

2.13.2 Drivers must not idle a vehicle’s engine unnecessarily when stationary on a Hackney Carriage Rank or Stand. The following exemptions will apply;

- a) Where the driver cannot prevent a motor vehicle from idling because of a mechanical difficulty over which he/she has no control
- b) Where a passenger is in the act of boarding or alighting from the vehicle
- c) A driver of a vehicle clearing snow or ice from the windscreen of the vehicle
- d) A driver is in the vehicle and operating air conditioning or heating on exceptionally hot/cold days
- e) While there is a passenger on board
- f) Electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles
- g) Anything done with the permission or at the direction of a Police Officer

2.13.3 The Authorised Officer may issue penalty points where a driver has previously been warned about engine idling on a rank and is found to be doing so on a subsequent occasion.

2.14 Stretched Limousines

2.14.1 Stretched limousines are elongated vehicles that have been increasingly used for mainstream private hire work. The number of stretched limousines being imported, particularly from the United States of America, has been increasing. Their use generally includes all private hire work plus special occasions such as days at the races, stag and hen parties and children’s birthday parties.

2.14.2 Licensing authorities have, in the past, considered there to be some problems preventing stretched limousines from being licensed including:

- some of the vehicles are capable of carrying more than eight passengers;
- many of the vehicles are left hand drive;
- many of the vehicles are fitted with all around darkened glass;
- many of the vehicles have been converted or modified after manufacture;
- seating space per passenger is 460mm and could give a greater capacity than eight persons;

- due to their origin - many parts may not be available, making adequate maintenance difficult.

2.14.3 Most limousines are imported for commercial purposes and were historically required to take a Single Vehicle Type Approval (SVA) test - this is now the Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) scheme. The IVA Scheme is an inspection scheme for vehicles that are not approved to British and European Standards, and its purpose is to ensure that these vehicles meet modern safety standards and environmental standards before being used on public roads. When presented for IVA, the vehicle is produced with a declaration that it will never carry more than eight passengers. The importer must inform any person who may use it of this restriction. Any subsequent purchasers must also be informed of the restriction.

2.14.4 Any stretched limousines, which are offered for private hire, require a licence. Before licensing for private hire a full insurance policy for private hire purposes will be required.

2.14.5 Applications to licence stretched limousines as private hire vehicles will be treated on their merits. However, imported stretched limousine type vehicles will be:

- authorised as prestige type private hire vehicles; and
- approved for licensing as private hire vehicles, subject to the additional conditions detailed in **Appendix B**.

2.15 Contract Vehicles

2.15.1 The Road Safety Act 2006 requires vehicles used under a contract with an organisation or company, for carrying passengers for hire or reward be licensed as private hire vehicles. As a general guide this shall include executive hire, chauffeur services including recovery from hot air balloon rides, park and ride for private car parks, airport travel, stretch limousines and novelty vehicles.

2.16 Prestige Type Vehicles - Exemption from displaying plate

2.16.1 The 1976 Act gives a district council the discretion to grant a proprietor a dispensation from displaying the licence plate on their licensed private hire vehicle. Each application for a dispensation will be considered by the Authorised Officer on its own merits. The overriding consideration will be public safety.

2.16.2 The granting of any dispensation by the Authority will be confirmed in writing by the Authorised Officer and a copy of the dispensation shall be carried in the vehicle at all times and shall be produced to an Authorised Officer on request.

2.16.3 Dispensation will not be granted as a matter of course. The case for dispensation will have to be made by the proprietor. In determining an application, it will normally be the status of the passenger and the executive nature of the work that will indicate whether or not the dispensation should be granted. The high quality of the vehicle being used will be

supportive of an application but will not be the sole determining factor. Please see **Appendix K** for full details.

2.17 Exempt Vehicles

2.17.1 Vehicles that are used solely in connection with a funeral or are being wholly or mainly used by a person carrying on the business of a Funeral Director for the purpose of funerals, do not need to be licensed.

2.17.2 Vehicles that are used solely in connection with a wedding do not require a licence.

2.18 Smoking and the Use of Vaping Devices etc.

2.18.1 Drivers are reminded that it is an offence to smoke or allow someone to smoke in a licenced vehicle at any time, including when the vehicle is being used for social, domestic and pleasure purposes. For the avoidance of doubt, the Authority also forbids the use of electronic cigarettes, vaping devices or any other kind of smoking substitute in licensed vehicles at all times whether by drivers or passengers.

2.18.2 All licensed vehicles must comply with the requirements for the Health Act 2006 and display 'No Smoking' signs.

2.18.3 Drivers and Proprietors may be issued with penalty points under the South Kesteven District Council penalty point scheme. See **Appendix J**.

PART 3 DRIVERS

3.1 General

3.1.1 The statutory and practical criteria and qualifications for a private hire driver are similar to those for a hackney carriage driver. The sections below, therefore, apply equally to private hire and hackney carriage drivers unless indicated.

3.1.2 The Authority will not licence anyone to drive a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle unless it is satisfied that they are a "fit and proper" person to hold that licence.

3.1.3 The term "fit and proper" is not legally defined. It is for the Authority to determine the information is necessary to enable it to determine whether a person is fit and proper. This includes a range of documentary evidence, practical criteria and assessments as detailed in this policy.

3.2 Licences

3.2.1 Separate driver's licences shall be held in respect of driving hackney carriage and private hire vehicles. Where a licensed private hire driver wishes to drive a hackney carriage, he

will be required to hold a dual licence. Licences shall be issued for a maximum period of 3 years or for such a lesser period, as the Authority consider appropriate in the circumstances.

(a) This can include a one year licence for a new driver entering the profession but must revert to a 3 year licence upon the 1 year licence expiry.

3.2.2 Applicants shall be over 18 years of age and shall have held a full driving licence issued in the UK, the European Community (EC) or one of the other countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) for at least 12 months.

3.2.3 Holders of EC or EEA driving licences must register their non GB driving licence with the DVLA. Alternatively, they may elect to exchange the licence for a GB licence.

3.2.4 All driving licences will be checked annually with the DVLA. Failure to produce the necessary documents by each anniversary of the licence may result in penalty points under the South Kesteven Penalty Point Scheme, see Appendix J or may be referred to the Licensing Committee.

3.3 Eligibility to Live and Work in the UK

3.3.1 Licensing authorities are under a duty not to issue licences to people who are disqualified by their immigration status from holding them. In determining whether someone is disqualified, the Authority will have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Home Office.

3.3.2 Proof of the right to live and work in the UK must be provided by driver and operator applicants in accordance with the Immigration Act 2016.

3.3.3 Where a person's immigration permission to be in the UK is time-limited to less than the statutory length for a driver or operator licence, the licence will be issued for a duration which does not exceed the applicant's period of permission to be in the UK and work.

3.3.4 In the event that the Home Office cuts short or ends a person's immigration permission (referred to as curtailment or revocation), any licence issued as a consequence of an application which was made on or after 1 December 2016, that the person holds will automatically lapse.

3.4 Driving Proficiency

3.4.1 The Authority requires all new applicants and existing drivers at 1st renewal after 1 August 2024 are required to pass the driving proficiency assessment prior to the granting of the licence. This assessment must be attended by the applicant and be designed to assess applicants' driving skills, follow a managed approach to the safe use of vehicles including a practical drive with a driver trainer assessment. The assessments can be undertaken by Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP), Green Penny or the Blue Lamp Trust.

- 3.4.2 Existing drivers who accrue 8 or more points on their DVLA Driving Licence whilst licenced to hold a hackney carriage or private hire drivers licence are required to re-sit and pass the LRSP test within 3 months from the time of accruing the points or their licence will be suspended until such time as the test has been passed.

3.5 Driver Qualification

- 3.5.1 In addition, the Authority requires all new applicants and existing drivers at renewal (or every 3 years) of a hackney carriage and private hire drivers to undertake disability awareness training and supply a certificate of completion. The training will provide knowledge and understanding of disabilities, their responsibilities and best practice protocols to provide safe and secure transport to all passengers. This can be provided by Disability.co.uk or the Blue Lamp Trust.
- 3.5.2 The requirement for existing drivers at renewal to undertake the disability awareness training will take effect from 1 August 2024.

3.6 Medical Examination

- 3.6.1 The DfT recognises that it is good practice for medical checks to be made on each driver before grant of a licence and thereafter at each renewal. There is general recognition that it is appropriate for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers to have more stringent medical standards than those applied to normal car drivers.
- 3.6.2 The Authority requires Group 2 Standards of Medical Fitness, as applied by the DVLA to the licensing of lorry and bus drivers, as the appropriate standard for licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers.
- 3.6.3 Applicants shall provide the Authority with the prescribed medical examination form completed by their own General Practitioner (GP), or a Doctor who has access to the applicant's medical history, on first application and every 3 years thereafter until aged 65 years. Once the driver has reached the age of 65 years or if they have a relevant medical condition, an annual medical will be required thereafter. The applicant will be responsible for paying the fee for the examination to the relevant surgery and for ensuring all sections are completed in full by their GP. The certification must be less than three months old. Application procedures are detailed in Appendix C.
- 3.6.4 Holders of Public Service Vehicle (PSV) and/or Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) licences, where the holder is able to produce proof of current medical examination less than 3 months old, shall not be required to undergo a medical examination on first application.
- 3.6.5 If, once licensed, the driver's medical circumstances change they must advise the Authority by the next working day.
- 3.6.6 Where there is any doubt as to the medical fitness of an applicant or a licensed driver, the Authority will require them to undergo a further medical examination or review by a GP or

other approved practitioner. They will be expected to give an opinion on the applicant/driver's ability to meet the Group 2 standard.

- 3.6.7 Where there remains any doubt about the fitness of any applicant, the Licensing Committee will review the medical and any other evidence and make any final decision in light of the evidence available.
- 3.6.8 No licence shall be issued until medical fitness has been established. Where a medical is due for an existing driver they will be required to submit the medical certificate before their renewal licence can be granted.

3.7 Safeguarding, Child Exploitation and Disability Awareness Test

- 3.7.1 All new drivers must complete and pass a Child Sexual Exploitation, and Safeguarding and Disability Awareness tests prior to being issued with a Hackney Carriage or Private hire driver's licence.
- 3.7.2 Existing drivers will be required to complete and pass a refresher course in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation, Safeguarding and Disability Awareness every three years as part of the licence renewal process. See **Appendix C**.
- 3.7.3 All drivers must follow the Code of Good Conduct at **Appendix G**.

3.8 Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)

- 3.8.1 As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the Authority complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.
- 3.8.2 The Authority also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.
- 3.8.3 In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. Certificate information is only used for the specific purposes for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.
- 3.8.4 A DBS Certificate is seen as an important safety measure by the Authority to ascertain whether or not an applicant is fit to hold a licence. An Enhanced DBS Certificate is required.

- 3.8.5 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to applicants for both Hackney and private hire drivers licences. They are required to disclose all convictions, including those that would normally be regarded as spent.
- 3.8.6 South Kesteven District Council uses a third party to undertake its DBS checks; the applicant is responsible for paying the appropriate fee (including any administrative fee they may be levied). The Authority will not accept portability of a DBS unless all relevant checks, including the Adult and Child Barred List checks have been obtained. In this case, Certificates must be less than 3 months old.
- 3.8.7 An Enhanced DBS is required with all new applications and every 6 months for existing drivers. At initial application and at renewal for existing licensees (following the implementation of this policy), the applicant will be required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service throughout the currency of their licence.
- 3.8.8 Every 6 months, the Authorised officer, will undertake an online check of the DBS Update Service to check the driver's current status. Depending on what is revealed in the check, the Authority may require an additional DBS check to be undertaken at the applicant's expense.
- 3.8.9 All existing licenced drivers must subscribe to the DBS update service when their next DBS certificate becomes due and will be required to renew their subscription on an annual basis, before their current subscription ends.
- 3.8.10 Where a driver fails to maintain and/or renew their subscription before it ends they will be required to apply for a new Enhanced DBS check and register for the update service again at their own expense.
- 3.8.11 The Authority does not receive the DBS disclosure certificate directly from the DBS. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the Licensing Team has sight of the disclosure before a decision can be made as to whether or not a licence can be renewed/issued. Licences will not be issued without a valid DBS certificate.

3.9 Certificate of Good Conduct (residency outside the UK)

- 3.9.1 A new licence applicant who has, from the age of 10 years, spent 6 continuous months or more living outside the United Kingdom will be required to provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the Embassy of every country where they have lived other than the UK (after the age of 10 years old). This must be no older than 3 months at time of presentation. The Certificate of Good Conduct must be obtained and translated into English at the applicants own expense.
- 3.9.2 Where an individual is aware that they have committed an offence overseas which may be equivalent to those listed in the **Appendix D** to this document, the applicant should seek independent expert or legal advice to ensure that they provide information that is truthful and accurate.

3.9.3 A licence will not be granted in the absence of a current Certificate of Good Conduct.

3.9.4 At renewal, if during the currency of their previous licence the applicant has spent 6 continuous months or more living outside the United Kingdom, they will be required to provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the Embassy of every country where they have lived other than the United Kingdom during this period. This must be no older than 3 months at time of presentation. The Certificate of Good Conduct must be obtained and translated into English at the applicants own expense.

3.10 Relevance of Convictions and Cautions

3.10.1 In relation to the consideration of convictions and police cautions recorded against persons, the Authority has adopted the policy set out in **Appendix D** under Relevance of Convictions.

3.10.2 In assessing whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence, the Authority shall consider each case on its merit. It will take account of cautions and convictions, whether spent or unspent, but only in so far as they are relevant to an application for a licence. Upon receipt of a disclosure from the DBS, an Authorised Officer will assess whether any or all of the convictions, and any additional information received, is capable of having real relevance to the issue of whether or not the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence in line with the policy at **Appendix D**. Where the Authorised Officer's assessment results in any doubt, the application will be referred to the Licensing Committee.

3.11 Application Procedure

3.11.1 An application for a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence shall be made on the specified application form. The application procedure is set out in **Appendix C**.

3.11.2 Any dishonesty by an applicant or other person on the applicant's behalf which is discovered to have occurred in any part of the application process e.g. failure to declare convictions, false names or addresses etc will result in the application being referred to the Licensing Committee. This could result in the licence being refused, or if already granted, revoked and may result in prosecution.

3.12 Renewal of Licences

3.12.1 The Authority aims to send a reminder to licence holders in the month preceding the expiry date of their licence. However, it remains the responsibility of the driver to renew in good time. Completed application forms, appropriate fees, and supporting documentation, as set out in **Appendix C**, must be submitted at the time of application.

3.13 Conditions of Licence

- 3.13.1 The Authority is not permitted to attach conditions to a hackney carriage driver's licence; however, they are subject to the Council's Hackney Carriage Byelaws. See **Appendix F**
- 3.13.2 The Authority considers that the conditions of licence as set out in **Appendix E** are reasonable, necessary and appropriate for all licensed private hire drivers.

3.14 Convictions – Licence Holders

- 3.14.1 Once a licence has been granted, there is a continuing requirement on the licence holder to maintain their safety and suitability. Any conviction or other actions on the part of the licence holder which would have prevented them from being granted a licence on initial application will result in referral of the licensee to the Licensing Committee and may result in the licence being revoked.
- 3.14.2 Where offences, leading to conviction or police caution, are committed by licensed drivers, it is important - in the interests of consistency and transparency - that a procedure is in place to consider what effect this should have on their licence.
- 3.14.3 Licence holders must notify the Authority's Licensing team in writing within 48 hours of an arrest and release, charge or conviction of any sexual offence, any offence involving dishonesty or violence, any motoring offence or fixed penalty.
- 3.14.4 If a licensed driver ceases to have a valid DVLA driving licence then their hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence issued by this Authority shall be deemed invalid.
- 3.14.5 Convictions, police caution and breaches of legislation, licence conditions, byelaws and of this policy, by licence holders, shall be dealt with in accordance with this Authority's enforcement policy as set out at **Appendix I**.

3.15 Driver's Conduct

- 3.15.1 The standards expected of licensed hackney drivers are set out in sections 5 to 13 of the byelaws made under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Public Health Act 1875, which should be read in conjunction with the other statutory and policy requirements set out in this document. The byelaws are attached as **Appendix F**. Failure to comply with the requirements of the byelaws may result in action being taken which may affect the licence.

3.16 Dress Code

- 3.16.1 Drivers are a front line transport service for visitors and residents and as such, all drivers are required to be respectably dressed, clean and tidy in appearance. Drivers are expected to dress in smart/casual clothing. "Unsatisfactory appearance" is part of the South Kesteven District Council Penalty Points Scheme. See **Appendix J**.

PART 4 PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS

4.1 Requirements and Obligations

- 4.1.1 Any person who operates a private hire service (who is not also a hackney carriage proprietor who permits hackney carriages to be used for private hire) must apply to the Authority for a Private Hire Operator's licence. The objective in licensing private hire operators is the safety of the public, who will be using operator's premises, and vehicles and drivers, arranged through them. Best practice, in respect of the controls required over private hire operators, is to ensure that the costs of any licence requirements are commensurate with benefits that they seek to achieve.
- 4.1.2 A private hire vehicle shall only be dispatched to a customer by a private hire operator who holds a Private Hire Operator's licence. Such a licence permits the operator to make provision for the invitation or acceptance of bookings for a private hire vehicle. A private hire operator shall ensure that every private hire vehicle is driven by a person who holds a private hire driver's licence.
- 4.1.3 An application for a Private Hire Operator's licence and renewal shall be made on the prescribed form, together with the appropriate fee and confirmation (by way of certification of completion) that all customer facing roles and people managing service delivery have undertaken Disability Awareness training. The Authority will then decide whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a Private Hire Operator's licence.
- 4.1.4 All three licences (Private Hire Operator's Licence, Private Hire Driver's Licence and Private Hire Vehicle Licence) must be granted by the same Authority.
- 4.1.5 Proof of the right to live and work in the UK must be provided by the applicant in accordance with the Immigration Act 2016.

4.2 Criminal Record Checks

- 4.2.1 Spent convictions can be taken into account when determining the suitability for a licence and the applicant must produce a Basic Disclosure Certificate from the DBS as part of the application (or if they have lived outside of the UK for a period of six months or more in the last 5 years a certificate of good conduct from the relevant embassy).
- 4.2.2 Before an application for a private hire operator's licence will be considered, the applicant shall provide a current (less than 1 month old) Basic Disclosure Certificate.
- 4.2.3 Licensed Operators must submit a Basic Disclosure Certificate to the Licensing Team annually on the anniversary date of their licence. Where the Operator is also a licenced driver and a 6 monthly enhanced DBS check is undertaken it is not necessary to submit a Basic Disclosure Certificate.

4.3 Conditions

- 4.3.1 The Authority has power to impose such conditions on a private hire operator's licence as it considers reasonably necessary and these are set out in **Appendix H**.

4.4 Insurance

- 4.4.1 Before an application for a private hire operator's licence is granted, the applicant shall produce evidence that they have taken out appropriate public liability insurance for the premises to be licensed.
- 4.4.2 The Private Hire Operator Licence Conditions (Appendix H), requires the operator to ensure that a certificate of motor insurance which covers every private hire vehicle operated by him/her under the licence is held. This must be produced to the Authorised officer on request.

4.5 Licence Duration

- 4.5.1 Section 10 of the Deregulation Act 2015 amends the 1976 Act, such that the licence shall remain in force for 5 years or such lesser period as the Authority considers appropriate. In line with DfT Best Practice Guidance. This Authority shall grant private hire operator licences for a period of 5 years from the date of grant, subject to the power to grant a licence for a shorter period should this be appropriate in the circumstances.
- 4.5.2 Holders of existing private hire operator licences shall be reminded, in the month preceding their expiry, when their licences are due to be renewed. Notwithstanding this, the responsibility to apply to renew a licence and produce the necessary documentation rests solely with the licence holder.

4.6 Record Keeping

- 4.6.1 The 1976 Act requires Operators to keep records of each booking. Records must be kept in a suitable form that does not permit backdating. Records must be available for inspection by or be provided to the Authorised Officer in a suitable format, on request, at all reasonable times. See **Appendix H**.
- 4.6.2 The Operator must maintain a register of all staff that will take bookings or dispatch vehicles. This must be available for inspection by or be provided to the Authorised Officer in a suitable format, on request, at all reasonable times. See Appendix H.
- 4.6.3 Operators must evidence that they have had sight of a Basic DBS check on all individuals listed on their register of booking and dispatch staff and to ensure that Basic DBS checks are conducted on any individuals added to the register.
- 4.6.4 Operators must have a policy on employing ex-offenders in roles that would be on the staff register detailed in 4.6.2. As with the threshold to obtaining a private hire vehicle

operators' licence, those with a conviction for offences provided in Appendix D, other than those relating to driving, may not be suitable to decide who is sent to carry a child or vulnerable adult unaccompanied in a car. Operators must provide a copy of the policy to an Authorised Officer/Police Officer on request.

- 4.6.5 Private hire vehicle operators have a duty under data protection legislation to protect the information they record. The Information Commissioner's Office provides comprehensive on-line guidance on registering as a data controller and how to meet their obligations.

4.7 Sub-Contracting

- 4.7.1 The Deregulation Act 2015 amended section 55 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to permit private hire operators licensed by the Authority to sub-contract a private hire booking to another operator licenced by the Authority or any other local authority.
- 4.7.2 Regardless of which operator fulfils the booking, the operator may only dispatch a vehicle licensed by the same Authority that licences the operator and driven by a driver licenced by that same Authority
- 4.7.3 Operators that accept a booking remain legally responsible for that booking even if they subcontract that booking to another operator. They should record that booking as usual, noting the fact that it was sub-contracted.

PART 5 DISCIPLINARY AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

5.1 Enforcement

- 5.1.1 The Government believes that regulators should have access to effective sanctions that are flexible and proportionate and that ensure the protection of workers, consumers, and the environment when tackling non-compliance by businesses.
- 5.1.2 It is recognised that a risk-based approach to enforcement by the Authority benefits not only the public, but also the responsible members of the hackney carriage and private hire trades.
- 5.1.3 In pursuance of its objective to encourage responsible hackney carriage/private hire businesses, the Authority shall operate a firm but fair disciplinary and enforcement regime. With a view to balancing the promotion of public safety with the need to permit individuals to safeguard their livelihood without undue interference, the Authority will only intervene where it is necessary and proportionate to do so, having regard to the objectives outlined in section 1.2 of this document. Where defects are such that vehicles need to be immediately prohibited, livelihood interference is inevitable.

- 5.1.4 The Enforcement Policy as set out at **Appendix I** will ensure that the Authority's enforcement effort is reasonable, transparent and well directed.

5.2 Disciplinary Hearings

- 5.2.1 Disciplinary matters are considered by the Authority's Licensing Committee.

5.3 Penalty Points Scheme and Warnings

- 5.3.1 In respect of minor breaches of licence conditions, Authorised Officers shall issue penalty points and warnings in accordance with the approved scheme. The Penalty points' scheme is included at **Appendix J**.
- 5.3.2 A licence holder issued with penalty points may appeal against such a decision to the Head of Service in the first instance. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, then the appeal will be referred to a manager from an independent business area for review. If the recipient still does not agree the appeal will be heard by the Licensing Committee.

5.4 Suspension of Vehicle Licences

- 5.4.1 Licensed vehicles shall be kept at all times in a safe, tidy and clean condition. Compliance with the vehicle specifications and conditions of licence is essential and will be enforced by periodic, random vehicle inspections by the Authority. Where it is found that any vehicle is not being properly maintained a Vehicle Defect Notice will be served on the vehicle proprietor setting out the defect(s) that need to be rectified, and arrangements for the vehicle to be further inspected to check compliance. This notice will be used by Authorised Officers where the defects are not deemed serious. Failure to comply with the requirements of the notice may result in the vehicle licence being suspended automatically.
- 5.4.2 Where public safety is likely to be put at risk by the defect(s) a Suspension Notice shall be served on the vehicle proprietor who must have the vehicle repaired. The suspension will not be lifted until the vehicle has undergone a further test, at the proprietor's expense, and been passed as fit for use by the Authority. If the defect is not repaired within 2 months from the service of the suspension notice, the vehicle licence shall be revoked by the Authorised Officer.

5.5 Revocation and Suspension of Licences

- 5.5.1 Where a licence holder has been referred to the Licensing Committee, the Committee may order the revocation or suspension of the licence.
- 5.5.2 Where any licence is revoked or suspended it must be returned to the Licensing Team immediately, and in any case within no more than 48 hours of notification of the decision.

5.6 Prosecution

- 5.6.1 The Authority shall prosecute licence holders for relevant offences in accordance with the statutory Regulator’s Code and the Authority’s Enforcement Policy.

5.7 Complaints

- 5.7.1 Complaints regarding licensed drivers, operators and vehicles can be reported to the Authority Licensing Team. All complaints will be investigated by an Authorised Officer in accordance with our service standards and enforcement policy.

PART 6 OFFENCES

- 6.1.1 The Authority has had regard to the Department for Transport Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards (July 2020) and the Institute of Licensing “Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades” in formulating its policy. The Authority’s Convictions Policy is detailed in **Appendix D**.
- 6.1.2 The Convictions Policy will apply to new and renewal applications and where applicable; transfers for drivers and operators, when reviewing an existing licence and decisions to suspend or revoke a licence.

PART 7 DELEGATED POWERS

7.1 Licensing Committee

- 7.1.1 The Licensing Committee of the Authority is responsible for the management of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing regime in the district, along with the formulation and review of its policy in this regard.
- 7.1.2 The Licensing Committee of the Authority has delegated its authority to act as authorised officer and authorise officers to act for the purposes of licensing hackney carriage and private hire vehicles under the provisions of the 1976 Act and the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and exercise the powers of the Authority in respect of specific offences. The full details of the delegated powers can be found in the Authority’s Constitution.
- 7.1.3 Minor amendments to the policy, such as legislative updates, which may become necessary from time to time to ensure its continued accuracy, but do not affect its direction or intent may be authorised by the Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing, without the need for reference to Licensing Committee or Full Council.

PART 8 FARES

8.1 General

- 8.1.1 The Authority has partially deregulated fares, in that proprietors may set their own rates. Prior to charging the deregulated fare, a copy is to be deposited with the Authority.
- 8.1.2 A Hackney Carriage Default Table of Fares (“the tariff”) is set by the Authority for those proprietors that do not wish to set their own fees. A copy of the default table of fares will be provided to each applicant.
- 8.1.3 The Authority is able to review the Default Table of Fares annually. Any changes shall be advertised by the Authority in a paper circulating in the district in accordance with legislation.
- 8.1.4 The Authority is not able to set fares for private hire vehicles.
- 8.1.5 When a journey ends outside the district boundaries of the Authority a fare greater than that that would have been shown on the meter may be charged **but only if an agreement has been made with the hirer in advance.**

8.2 Table of Fares

- 8.2.1 A table of fares that has been registered with the Authority, or the Authority’s Default Table of Fares, must be displayed in each vehicle so that it is easily visible to all hirers.
- 8.2.2 Private Hire Operators that use licensed vehicles fitted with a fare meter shall provide the Authority with a current table of fares. This table must also be displayed in each private hire vehicle so that it is easily visible to all hirers.

8.3 Receipts

- 8.3.1 Drivers shall, if requested by the passenger, provide written receipts for fares paid.

PART 9 FEES

9.1 Fee Structure

- 9.1.1 The legislation provides that fees charged to applicants should be sufficient to cover the costs of inspecting the vehicles, providing hackney carriage stands (taxi ranks) and administering the regulation of the hackney carriages and private hire trades.
- 9.1.2 The Authority shall review the fee structure annually. Any changes shall be advertised by the Authority in a paper circulating in the district in accordance with legislation.

9.1.3 All applications must be accompanied by the appropriate fee.

9.2 Payment Refunds and Transfers

9.2.1 Proprietors who change their vehicle part way through the licensing period will be eligible for a credit towards their new vehicle's licence. This will be at a proportion of the annual fee, based on each full day remaining on the licence.

9.2.2 Except under exceptional circumstances, drivers or vehicle licences surrendered prior to their expiry shall not be eligible for a refund of the unexpired portion of the licence.

PART 10 HACKNEY CARRIAGE STANDS

10.1.1 The purpose of hackney carriage stands is to provide the public with a set location where they can hire a licensed hackney carriage. The stand is the only situation where a hackney carriage may ply for hire in a stationary position and shall be situated in locations where the public most need hackney carriages, for example - adjacent to transport facilities, retail areas and places of employment, entertainment and leisure facilities. Stands are sited so that passengers can board or alight from the vehicle safely. Stands can be for continual or part time use.

10.1.2 The provision of hackney carriage stands is not a legal requirement and may be removed or relocated at the discretion of the Authority.

10.1.3 Please see the council's website for the current location of the taxi ranks in the South Kesteven area.

APPENDIX A

VEHICLE SPECIFICATION AND CONDITIONS OF LICENCE FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

Only those vehicles which comply with the specification detailed below can be granted a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence by South Kesteven District Council.

Vehicle Age

An application for a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence (other than a limousine or a prestige vehicle), renewal and change of vehicle will not be accepted if the vehicle does not meet Euro 6 standards from first registration (Registered after 01 September 2015).

All vehicles will continue to be licensed until it reaches 15 years of age.

THE SPECIFICATION

1 General

- 1.1 Where vehicles have not been manufactured in the UK or imported by the manufacturer, they shall have an appropriate “Type Approval” which is either an EC Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA) or British National Type approval. Vehicles shall not have been altered since that approval was granted. An Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) may be accepted for wheelchair accessible vehicles. Vehicles presented for approval, and while in use, shall comply with the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and any subsequent amendment or re-enactment thereof.
- 1.2 No fittings, other than those approved in this policy or required in the twice yearly examination and test by the authorised testing station, may be attached to or carried on the inside or outside of the vehicle.

2 Dimensions

- 2.1 The vehicle shall be of such a size as to enable easy access to the interior of the vehicle by an adult.

3 Body

- 3.1 The vehicle shall have no signs of previous significant accident damage.
- 3.2 The paintwork shall be of a professional finish and be one consistent colour over the whole of the vehicle’s bodywork.
- 3.3 The bodywork shall have no untreated or unrepaired body defect or significant signs of corrosion. Corrosion includes visible rust and signs of rust by virtue of the paintwork being

blistered. All rust spots and repairs in excess of 100 millimetres diameter are to have been prepared and repainted with matching colour up to insurance finishing standard.

4 Wheels

- 4.1 The vehicle shall have four road wheels unless agreed by the Licensing Committee.
- 4.2 Space-saver spare tyres, where supplied as standard equipment to the vehicle, will be accepted. Provision shall be made for a standard road wheel to be secured in the vehicle should a space saver tyre be used in an emergency. A vehicle presented for examination and test with a space saver spare tyre in use as a road wheel will fail the test.
- 4.3 Any spare wheel shall conform to construction and use regulations.
- 4.4 A wheel brace and jack to enable the effective change of a tyre and wheel shall be carried, except where Paragraph 4.5 applies.
- 4.5 Where an aerosol inflation and sealant device is supplied with the vehicle as standard by the manufacturer, a spare tyre need not be carried.
- 4.6 If a vehicle is fitted with 'run flat' tyres, the vehicle shall be fitted with a tyre pressure sensor / warning device.

5 Steering

- 5.1 It is recommended that all vehicles should be right hand drive but left hand drive vehicles will be considered.

6 Interior

- 6.1 The interior of the vehicle is to be kept in a clean and tidy condition at all times.

7 Doors

- 7.1 The vehicle shall have a minimum of 4 opening doors that are easily accessible to passengers unless agreed by the Licensing Committee.
- 7.2 All vehicles shall have doors that open sufficiently wide to allow easy access and egress from the vehicle.
- 7.3 All doors shall be capable of being readily opened from the inside and outside of the vehicle by one operation of the latch mechanism.
- 7.4 The interior door handle shall be clearly visible and easily accessible to passengers.

8 Seats

- 8.1 Vehicles shall have a passenger seating capacity of not less than 3 persons unless agreed by the Licensing Committee.
- 8.2 Children aged 3 years and over will count towards the licensed capacity of the vehicle.
- 8.3 Each seat shall be fitted with fully operational seat belts, compliant with British Standards, except where the law specifically provides an exemption.
8. Where seat covers are used, they shall be properly affixed to the seat so as not to become loose during use. They shall be clean and devoid of damage of any kind.

9 Windows

- 9.1 Opening windows shall be provided in the rear of the vehicle capable of being opened by the rear seat passengers.
- 9.2 Vehicle windows shall have visual transmission of light of not less than 70% in respect of windscreens and windows to either side of the driver.
- 9.3 No vehicle shall be fitted with any form of additional film to darken or tint the glass on any part of the vehicle.

10 Heating and ventilation

- 10.1 Vehicles shall have an efficient heating and ventilation system.

11 Wheelchair carrying facilities

- 11.1 Any vehicle that has the facility for the carriage of wheelchair(s) and wheelchair passengers shall be fitted with:-
- Approved anchorages that shall be either chassis or floor linked and capable of withstanding approved dynamic or static tests. Restraints for wheelchair and passengers shall be independent of each other. Anchorages shall also be provided for the safe storage of a wheelchair, whether folded or otherwise, if carried within the passenger compartment. All anchorages and restraints shall be so designed that they do not cause any danger to other passengers.
 - A ramp or ramps for the loading of a wheelchair and passenger shall be available at all times. An adequate locking device shall be fitted to ensure that the ramp(s) do not slip or tilt when in use. Provision shall be made for the ramps to be stored safely in the vehicle when not in use.

- 11.2 The vehicle shall be equipped with a manufacturer's user manual/guide on the safe loading and unloading and security of wheelchair passengers.
- 11.3 Any equipment fitted to the vehicle for the purpose of lifting a wheelchair into the vehicle shall have been tested in accordance with the requirements of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) immediately prior to being first licensed and at each subsequent twice yearly test and be so certified and submitted at the time of renewal.
- 11.4 The Authority has published a list of vehicles designated for the purposes of section 165 of the Equality Act 2010.

12 CCTV Systems

- 12.1 CCTV surveillance systems to assist driver safety are permitted in vehicles. If such devices are fitted, adequate signage shall be displayed in the passenger compartment advising passengers that they are being monitored / recorded. Any such equipment shall be fitted overtly and in such a way as not to present any danger or hazard to any passenger. It will be the driver / proprietor's responsibility to comply with all aspects of the law regarding such surveillance equipment.

13 Tyres

- 13.1 All tyres, including the spare tyre, shall comply with the vehicle manufacturer's specification.
- 13.2 Re-cut tyres are not acceptable for vehicles that are internationally classified as M1 passenger vehicles and remould tyres shall only be acceptable if they carry a recognised approval marking (BSAU144e) and display:-
- Nominal size;
 - Construction type (e.g. radial ply);
 - Load capacity; and
 - Speed capability.

14 Electrical Equipment

- 14.1 Any additional electrical installation to the original equipment shall be adequately insulated and be protected by suitable fuses.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE CONDITIONS OF LICENCE

15 Examination and test

- 15.1 Before a licence is granted for the use of a vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, the vehicle shall be examined and tested by an Authority approved testing station. Once licensed, the vehicle undergoes a further full examination and test at a vehicle testing station approved by the Authority at 6 monthly intervals.
- 15.2 All vehicles should be routinely serviced to ensure safety. The Authority expects all vehicle proprietors and drivers to undertake planned, preventative maintenance. The purpose of the 6 monthly compliance test carried out by an Authorised garage is to confirm the safety and quality of the vehicle rather than highlight what maintenance needs to be undertaken. The Authorised Officer may issue penalty points under the South Kesteven District Council Scheme for failure to maintain a vehicle in a satisfactory condition. See Appendix J.
- 15.3 Where a licenced vehicle is presented for testing and fails an authorised examination and test, being considered “dangerous” in accordance with the MOT testing defect categories, it must not be driven from the date of that test regardless of whether or not the previous certificate has expired. A suspension notice will be issued and will not be lifted until the vehicle has undergone a further test at the proprietors expense and been passed fit for use by the Authority. If the defect is not repaired within 2 months from the service of the suspension notice, the vehicle licence maybe revoked by the Licensing Committee.
- 15.4. Where a licensed vehicle is presented for testing and fails an authorised examination test and the defect is considered “major” **and** it is deemed unsafe as a passenger vehicle by the vehicle examiner, regardless of whether or not the previous certificate has expired, this may result in the vehicle proprietor being issued with a suspension notice in order to prevent the vehicle being used to carry passengers until the defect(s) is/are remedied. The suspension will not be lifted until the vehicle has undergone a further test, at the proprietor’s expense, and been passed as fit for use by the Authority. If the defect is not repaired within 2 months from the service of the suspension notice, the vehicle licence maybe revoked by the Licensing Committee.

16 Licence Identification Plates

- 16.1 The proprietor of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle shall fix, to the vehicle, licence identification plates of the size, colour, design and type supplied by the Authority.
- 16.2 The proprietor shall ensure that the licence identification plate is securely fixed to the rear exterior of the hackney carriage or private hire vehicle in such a position as the vehicle registration plate is not obscured, with the particulars thereon facing outwards and in such a manner and place that the licence is clearly visible from the highway and by other road users. The plate must not be placed on or in the rear window of the vehicle.

- 16.3 Prestige/Executive vehicle operators who have applied for and been granted a dispensation by the Authority to display a licence identification plate on the rear of the vehicle, shall carry a copy of the dispensation in the vehicle at all times and this shall be produced to an Authorised Officer/Police Officer on request.
- 16.4 The proprietor shall ensure that an approved holder displaying a hackney carriage or private hire driver badge and a vehicle licence identification card, as supplied by the Authority, is displayed in a position for all passengers to clearly see.
- 16.5 The proprietor shall ensure that no licence identification plate be displayed other than the plates issued by the Authority, and the said plate shall be displayed only on the vehicle to which it relates.
- 16.6 The licence plate(s) shall remain the property of the Authority and shall be returned to them within seven days, following the service on the proprietor of an appropriate notice by the Authority and in the event of the hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence ceasing to be in force in respect of the vehicle.

17 Signs and Notices

- 17.1 Vehicles shall not display roof signs or allow any other signs or advertising below roof height without the prior approval of the Authority.
- 17.2 On the dashboard of the vehicle or on the windscreen, in a position for passengers to clearly see, there shall be displayed an internal licence identifying the vehicle licence details as provided by the Authority.
- 17.3 The vehicle shall display “no smoking” signage which complies with the requirements of the Health Act 2006.

18. Receipts

- 18.1 The proprietor of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle shall ensure that a receipt is given if requested and each receipt shall show as a minimum the following particulars:-
- Date of journey;
 - Details of journey (i.e. where from/to);
 - Badge number of driver; and
 - Amount paid.

19 Luggage

- 19.1 The proprietor shall at all times provide facilities for the conveyance of luggage safely and protected from inclement weather.

19.2 Where luggage is stored other than in a boot (e.g. in an MPV), it shall be properly secured.

20 Property

20.1 Any property left accidentally in the vehicle by passengers, if not claimed by or on behalf of its owner, shall be taken to a local Police station within 48 hours and reported as 'found property'.

21 Furnishing and maintenance of vehicle

21.1 The proprietor shall ensure that the vehicle, all its fittings and equipment at all times when the vehicle is in use or available for hire as a hackney carriage or private hire, is kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition and all relevant statutory requirements (including in particular those contained in the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986) shall be fully complied with. It is not sufficient to wait until a compliance test to find out if the vehicle is still roadworthy.

21.2 Where a separate compartment is provided for passengers, the proprietor shall provide sufficient means by which any person in the compartment may communicate with the driver.

21.3 The proprietor shall at all times provide adequate lighting and heating for the interior of the vehicle.

22 Advertisements

22.1 Licensed vehicle proprietors will be permitted, subject to prior approval of the Authority, to display signs, advertisements, notices or other markings on the outside of their vehicle. However they shall be subject to the following conditions:

- All advertisements shall comply with the Committee of Advertising Practice Codes or successor body;
- No advertisement shall relate to or advertise alcohol, smoking materials or be of a political or religious nature, organization or campaign;
- Advertising will be 2 dimensional in design and limited to the front and rear door panels;
- Any damaged or disfigured advertisement signs shall be immediately removed.

23 Communication Devices

23.1 Where apparatus for the operation of a two-way radio system is fitted to a vehicle, no part of the apparatus shall be fixed in the passenger compartment or in the rear boot compartment if LPG or CNG tanks or equipment are in use.

23.2 Any radio apparatus shall be so positioned and properly secured so as not to interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle.

- 23.3 No other radio equipment, either in the driver or the passenger compartment, is permitted without the prior approval of the Authority.

24 Auxiliary equipment

- 24.1 Any auxiliary equipment that is fitted to a vehicle shall not impede the driver in any way or hinder his/her view, impede or cause hazard to passengers or other road users.

25 Convictions including cautions and fixed penalties

- 25.1 Proprietors shall notify the Authority's Licensing team in writing within 48 hours of an arrest and release, charge or conviction of any sexual offence, any offence involving dishonesty or violence, any motoring offence or fixed penalty.

26 Change of Address

- 26.1 The proprietor and drivers of vehicles shall notify the Authority, in writing, of any change in name and address within seven days of such a change taking place.

Additional requirements for Hackney Carriage Vehicles

27 Taxi Signs

- 27.1 Licensed hackney carriages must carry a roof sign capable of internal illumination with lettering not exceeding 76mm in height on the forward and/or rear faces only. The sign may bear the name of the proprietor and/or the word 'TAXI' and/or the telephone number of the firm and shall be illuminated at all times that the vehicle is available for hire.

28 Taximeters

- 28.1 A licensed hackney carriage vehicle shall be fitted with a taximeter.
- 28.2 The taximeter shall be positioned so that all letters and figures on its face shall be at all times illuminated and plainly visible to any passenger.
- 28.3 The taximeter when standing at a rank or plying for hire shall be kept locked in a position in which no fare is recorded on its face.
- 28.4 When the taximeter is operating there shall be recorded on the face of the meter in clearly legible figures a fare not exceeding the maximum fare that shall be charged for a journey.
- 28.5 If the taximeter has been altered for whatever reason, the proprietor of the vehicle shall forthwith make arrangements for resetting with the approved meter agent.

28.6 The vehicle taximeter shall be brought into operation at the commencement of **all** hires and the fare demanded by the driver shall not be greater than that shown on the meter and agreed by this Authority. In the event of a hire ending outside the Authority's boundary, the fare that may be charged for the journey is such fare or rate of fare, if any, as was agreed before the hiring was effected. If no such agreement was made at the start of the journey, then the fare to be charged should be no greater than that that would have been shown on the taximeter.

28.7 Other than a taximeter, there shall be no other device which displays the fare. This is to avoid confusion with customers. Only the meter is to be used to calculate the fare.

29. Table of fares

29.1 The proprietor shall ensure that the current table of fares for that vehicle is on display inside the vehicle at all times and is not concealed from view or rendered illegible.

Additional requirements for Private Hire Vehicles

30. Meters

30.1 If the vehicle is fitted with a meter for recording the fare it shall display and maintain the statement of fares inside the vehicle in such a position as to be clearly visible at all times to the hirer. The statement of fares shall include the following information:

- The minimum hire charge;
- The rate charged per mile;
- Any additional charges.

30.2 The meter shall:-

- be fitted in a position where it is not easily visible from outside the vehicle;
- be checked by an authorized meter agent before it is used;
- not display a "For Hire" sign at any time;
- be fitted in such a position that its figures are clearly visible to passengers and that it is sufficiently illuminated; and
- be fitted to the vehicle so as not to be practicable for any person to tamper with them.

30.3 If a meter is fitted, the fare charged shall not exceed that stated in the statement of fares as displayed in the vehicle unless a rate has been separately agreed between the hirer and the licensed private hire operator at the time of booking and prior to the journey commencing.

30.4 If a meter is installed, there shall be no other device which displays the fare. This is to avoid confusion with customers. Only the meter is to be used to calculate the fare.

31 Trailers and Roof Carriers

31.1 The vehicle may tow a trailer but shall:

- comply with the towing weights specified by the vehicle's manufacturer;
- provide secure and weatherproof storage for luggage;
- display the licence plate on a platform kit at the rear.

31.2 If a roof carrier is to be used for luggage or goods, in addition to normal luggage, it shall be of a type fitted to the guttering or to the roof rails provided by the vehicle's manufacturer.

32 Taxi Signs

32.1 The proprietor of a private hire vehicle shall not display, or suffer or permit to be displayed on a private hire vehicle, any sign or notice which consists of or includes the word TAXI or CAB whether in the singular or plural or FOR HIRE or any word or words of similar meaning or appearances to any one of those words, whether alone or as part of another word.

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR PRIVATE HIRE LIMOUSINES

1. DEFINITION OF A LIMOUSINE

- 1.1 For the purposes of this policy and licence conditions, a stretched limousine is defined as follows: -
- 1.2 A stretched limousine is a motor vehicle that has undertaken a Ford Motor Company Qualified Vehicle Modifier (QVM) or Cadillac Master Coachbuilder (CMC) or an equivalent conversion programme resulting in its lengthening by an additional body section that is:-
- Capable of carrying up to but not exceeding 8 passengers.

2. PRE-LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND LICENSING CONDITIONS

	Issue	Licence Condition	Justification
1.	Left hand drive vehicles	Permit left hand drive limousines to be licensed.	The majority of stretched limousines are imported from the United States of America and are left hand drive. The Department for Transport has recommended that Authorities should not refuse to licence limousines simply because they have characteristics which contravene their existing policy, i.e. left hand drive.
2.	Sideways Seating	Permit limousines with sideways facing seating to be considered for private hire vehicle licensing, but no seat must be positioned so that it permanently obstructs any door.	A main characteristic of stretched limousines is their sideways facing bench seats. In line with the Department for Transport guidance the Authority will consider the suitability of limousines with sideways seating for licensing.
3.	Signage	Provided that they have received written consent from the Authority - limousines may, in certain circumstances, not be required to display identification signs required by other private hire vehicles.	Signage serves to distinguish private hire vehicles from ordinary saloon cars and to make them clearly identifiable to the public. However, the naturally distinctive appearance of stretched limousines means that they are very unlikely to be confused with a private road user's vehicle or a hackney carriage vehicle.

4.	Tinted Glass	Be no restriction to the level of tint for the glass windows in the passenger compartment. However, tinted glass in the windscreen and front doors shall be restricted to the requirements of the SVA Standards.	It is recognised that the privacy provided by tinted glass in the passenger compartment is a central characteristic of a limousine.
5.	Fare Table/Taximeter	Limousines are not required to display a fare table or contain a taximeter. Any taximeter fitted must be in accordance with the Authority's private hire requirements detailed at item 31 of the policy.	Stretched limousines often do not operate under a fare system as journeys are generally pre-paid in advance based on the length of time they are hired for.
6.	Roadworthiness	Shall hold a valid Single Vehicle Approval (SVA) Certificate or equivalent.	SVA test comprises of a visual examination of a vehicle and certifies its safety and roadworthiness.
7.	Insurance	An appropriate insurance policy must be in place, which covers use of the vehicle for hire and reward.	Some limousines may be operating under insurance policies which do not cover use for hire and reward and take into account that the vehicle has been stretched.
8.	Tyres	The limousine must be fitted with tyres that meet the size, rating and weight specification.	Given the increased weight of the vehicle - tyres of the correct weight and size rating must be used at all times.
9.	Vehicle Testing	The limousine shall be examined twice a year to the appropriate Class MOT standard.	To ensure that limousines licensed by the Authority are maintained to high standards and remain safe.

10.	Maximum Passengers	The limousine's seating capacity must be reduced where necessary to a maximum of 8 passengers.	Authorities can only licence vehicles with a maximum seating capacity of up to 8 passengers.
		Any seats in the driver's compartment, other than the driver's seat, shall not be used to carry passengers.	This is to ensure that passengers are not carried in the front of the vehicle to improve driver and passenger safety.
		The vehicle must not carry more than 8 passengers at any time.	This condition shall be enforced by Authorised Officers performing random inspections of licensed vehicles.
		In any advertisement publicising their limousine service, the operator must state that the vehicle is only licensed to carry 8 passengers.	To inform customers of the maximum carrying capacity of the vehicle.
11.	Seat Belts	Seatbelts must be fitted to all seats and must be worn at all times by passengers whilst the vehicle is in motion.	In accordance with Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986.
12.	Alcohol	Alcoholic drinks provided in the vehicle shall be under the terms of an appropriate licence relating to the retail sale and supply of alcohol.	To comply with alcohol licensing requirements and to safeguard public safety.
		Alcohol shall only be served while the vehicle is stationary. Whilst the vehicle is in motion the receptacle shall be placed in a secure holder.	Public safety

		If the passengers are below the age of 18 years, then no alcohol shall be permitted in the vehicle for consumption in the vehicle.	Protection of children from harm
		Any glassware in the vehicle must be made of strengthened glass. Use of polycarbonate vessels should be considered.	Public safety
13.	Entertainment	The driver shall not play or permit the performance of any media that, given its age classification or content, is unsuitable for the age of any of the passengers in the vehicle.	To safeguard children and vulnerable adult passengers from viewing unsuitable material.
13.	Entertainment (cont.)	The limousine operator shall ensure that a Performing Rights Society licence is held (if appropriate).	Many limousines have the capability of playing recorded media for the entertainment of customers and so the operator must ensure the appropriate royalties are paid.
		If the limousine parks to provide some form of entertainment to its passengers then a Premises Licence must be in place in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003.	Entertainment regulated under the Act includes recorded TV, video, video games, loudspeakers, or any other activity provided for the passenger's enjoyment.
14.	Authority Notices	The proprietor shall when directed by the Authority, display and maintain any notices in a conspicuous position.	To convey information to passengers where appropriate.

15	Advertisements	No other signs, notices or any other marking will be displayed on or in the vehicle without the written consent of the Authority.	To ensure that any material displayed in the limousine is suitable for public viewing.
16.	Luggage	Ensure that loose luggage is not carried within the passenger compartment of the vehicle.	Passenger safety.
17.	Safety Hammer	Vehicles must be supplied with a safety hammer, capable of being used to break the glass windows of the vehicle and shall be securely located in the driver's compartment but in view and accessible to passengers in an emergency.	Passenger safety.
18.	Identification Badges	An approved holder displaying the private hire vehicle licence, as supplied by the Authority, must be displayed on the dashboard of the vehicle or on the windscreen, in a position for all the passengers to clearly see.	To show that both the driver and vehicle are licensed.
		The licence identification plate, as supplied by the Authority, must be securely fixed to the rear exterior boot lid of the vehicle.	To ensure that driver and vehicle is licensed, however the distinctive appearance of the vehicle will ensure that it will not be confused with a private road vehicle.

19.	CCTV	CCTV is not required, as part of the licensing regime, as it is considered that they are best left to the judgment of the owners and drivers themselves. The trades are, however, encouraged to consider the installation of CCTV in their vehicles on a voluntary basis.	Driver and passenger safety.
20.	Sunroof/Ceiling	If fitted - any sunroof switch to be isolated so that it cannot be operated by passengers. Any mirrored or glass ceiling or fixtures shall be made of strengthened glass.	Driver and passenger safety.
21.	Interior	Adequate illumination shall be provided in the passenger compartment.	Passenger safety.
22.	Doors	All doors shall be capable of being opened from inside as well as from outside the vehicle.	To enable access/egress.
23.	Communication	A means of two way communication between the driver and passengers shall be installed to the satisfaction of the Authority.	Passenger and driver safety.

3 DRIVER AND OPERATOR LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 In addition to the limousine being licensed as a private hire vehicle with the Authority, the limousine operator is required to hold a Private Hire Operators' Licence with the Authority.

- 3.2 All bookings for a limousine licensed as a private hire vehicle must be booked through the licensed Private Hire Operator.
- 3.3 Once licensed as a private hire vehicle the limousine can only be driven by a licensed private hire driver (this licence must also be issued by the Authority).

APPENDIX C

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Application Procedures – Vehicles

- 1.1 Vehicle proprietors shall make arrangements directly with the Authority approved vehicle testing stations to have vehicles examined and tested.
- 1.2 Prior to submitting the vehicle for examination, proprietors shall ensure that the vehicle is in good condition, i.e. mechanically sound; bodywork satisfactory.
- 1.3 In respect of renewal applications, vehicles shall not be examined more than 4 weeks before their licence is due to expire. However, it is recommended the examination and test is arranged at least 7 days prior to the application appointment in case the vehicle examination identifies the need for repair work and re-testing which can then be undertaken prior to the expiry of the licence.
- 1.4 Vehicle proprietors may be subject to a recharge fee by the vehicle testing station in respect of vehicles that fail the vehicle test and undergo a second examination and test.
- 1.5 If the 6 monthly compliance test is not carried out on or before the expiry date, the licence will be deemed to have expired. This means that it will be treated as a new application subject to it still meeting the age specification.
- 1.6 When submitting an application the following documents **MUST** accompany the completed application form:-
 - (i) **DVLA Vehicle Registration Certificate** (which must show the applicant is the registered keeper of the vehicle) or a bill of sale identifying the vehicle, seller and purchaser as long as this is accompanied by the part of registration certificate showing the year of registration of the vehicle:
 - (ii) **Valid Certificate of Insurance;**
 - (iii) **Compliance Certificate;**and additionally for stretched limousines:
 - (iv) **Individual Vehicle Approval Certificate (IVA) or Single Vehicle Approval Certificate (SVA).**

2. Application Procedures – Drivers

- 2.1 Applications for hackney carriage or private hire driver licences may be made at any time of the year. Applicants shall hold a full driving licence issued in the UK, the European Community (EC) or one of the other countries in the European Economic Area (EEA).

- 2.2 Applicants shall have held a full UK, EC or EEA driving licence for at least 12 months and be aged 18 years or over.
- 2.3 Holders of EC or EEA driving licences must register their non GB driving licence with the DVLA. Alternatively, they may elect to exchange the licence for a GB licence.
- 2.4 All driving licences will be checked annually with the DVLA. Licenses are required to provide the necessary “check code” to the Licensing Team.
- 2.5 An Enhanced DBS is required with all new applications and a check made by licensing officers every 6 months for existing drivers. Following the implementation of this policy, all existing drivers will be required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service at their next scheduled DBS certificate check and maintain the subscription throughout the currency of their licence.
- 2.6 The applicant will be required to provide a range of original documents to prove their identity for the Enhanced DBS certificate application. Details of acceptable identification are detailed on the Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/documents-the-applicant-must-provide>
- 2.7 Where an applicant who has, from the age of 10 years, spent 6 continuous months or more living outside the United Kingdom, they will be required to provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the Embassy of every country where they have lived other than the UK (after the age of 10 years old). This must be no older than 3 months at time of presentation. The Certificate of Good Conduct must be obtained and translated into English at the applicants own expense.
- 2.8 Applicants shall make a declaration that they have a statutory right to work in the UK and any applicant that has a limited right to work shall not be issued a driver licence for a period longer than that limited period.
- 2.9 Applicants shall provide the Authority with the prescribed medical examination form completed by their own General Practitioner (GP), or a Doctor who has access to the applicant’s medical history, on first application and every 3 years thereafter until aged 65 years. Once the driver has reached the age of 65 years or if they have a relevant medical condition, and annual medical will be required thereafter. The applicant will be responsible for paying the fee for the examination to the relevant surgery and for ensuring all sections are completed in full by their GP. The certification must be less than three months old
- 2.10 Applicants who are required to undertake annual medical examinations will only be issued a licence for a 1 year period.
- 2.11 The application will not be accepted unless it is complete and with all the relevant documentation.

- 2.12 All applications must be submitted **IN PERSON** at one of the Authority's offices. This is to enable the applicants identify to be verified and a photograph to be taken for the driver identification badge.

3. Driver Qualifications

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 All new driver applicants and existing drivers at first renewal after 1 August 2024 must successfully pass all the following elements before a licence can be granted:

- An English language skills test if required (where unable to produce evidence of previous qualifications, see section 3.2)
- Disability Awareness training
- Driver proficiency training

- 3.1.2 All drivers at renewal are required to complete as refresher training

- Safeguarding
- Child Sexual Exploitation training
- Disability Awareness training

- 3.1.3 Driver proficiency and English language skills testing will not usually be required to be completed again. Unless reasonable grounds arise, which could include instances where Authorised Officers have identified through enforcement activity or a substantiated complaint that a driver may have insufficient English language or displayed a lack of driving proficiency. Where an existing licensed driver fails the assessment, they will be referred to the Licensing Committee, this may result in a licence being suspended or revoked

3.2 Driver Competency Tests

- 3.2.1 Applicants who can demonstrate (by producing the original certificate and/or examination transcript) that they have previously passed a relevant qualification taught and examined in English will not be required to undertake the English-language skills test.

- 3.2.2 It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of all the qualifications that will be accepted - however, typical examples may include:

- GCSE or GCE O-level (grade C or higher) or Scottish Intermediate 2
- GCE A-level or Scottish Higher
- NVQ, BTEC, City and Guilds or similar vocational qualification (level 2 or higher)
- Higher education award (for example a degree, HND or HNC)

qualification equivalent to any of the above, issued by a recognised examining body in an English-speaking country other than the UK a TOEFL, IELTS or ESOL qualification at CEFR level B2 or higher

- 3.2.3 The Authority requires qualifications which include a significant amount of verbal or written content in the English language. In all cases, the Authorised Officer's decision as to whether to accept a qualification not listed above will be final. If a candidate does not hold one of these qualifications, or cannot produce acceptable evidence of the qualification, they will be required to undertake the speaking and listening assessment.
- 3.2.4 The assessment involves a speaking and listening assessment provided by a specialist external company which must be undertaken over the telephone at the Council offices. At the end of the test, a report will be produced (a copy of which will be provided to the applicant), with a score indicating overall ability. The applicant will also be graded separately on sentence usage, vocabulary, fluency and pronunciation, all of which will contribute to the overall score.
- 3.2.5 The Authority requires applicants to score at least 47 out of 80. This indicates that the candidate can speak English to an Independent User standard (equivalent to level B1 on The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale). Being able to deal with most situations that are likely to arise whilst travelling, understanding familiar matters regularly encountered.
- 3.2.6 The applicant must have attempted all relevant elements of the competency test within one month of the Authority receiving the Enhanced DBS Disclosure Certificate.
- 3.2.7 There is no limit on the number of times the test can be taken. The first English language skills test is free, however, the applicant must pay the appropriate fee on each occasion (for re-tests) so is advised to consider whether they require any form of training to improve their skills before taking or re-taking the test.
- 3.2.8 Where authorised officers have identified through enforcement activity or a substantiated complaint that an existing licensed driver may not have adequate knowledge of the area, they will be required to take a knowledge test. Where an existing licensed driver fails the assessment, they will be referred to the Licensing Committee, this may result in a licence being suspended or revoked.

4 Existing Drivers

4.1 Driver renewals

- 4.1.1 Drivers who allow their licence to lapse for a period of less than 28 days, will be considered as a returning driver but will not be able to drive until the licence has been issued. They will also accrue penalty points.

- 4.1.2 All previously licensed drivers whose licences have expired for more than 28 days shall be treated as a new driver and may be required to undertake all the tests and other requirements applicable to a new driver.
- 4.1.3 Existing drivers who accrue 8 or more points on their DVLA Driving Licence whilst licensed to hold a hackney carriage or private hire drivers licence will be required to pass the LRSP hackney carriage or private hire vehicle practical driver's test within 3 months of acquiring the points or have their licence automatically suspended. In accordance with the DVLA guidelines and for the purposes of the 'fit and proper' test (sec 51, 1976 Act in respect of private hire drivers and sec 59, 1976 Act in respect of hackney carriage drivers), the points remain accountable for four years.
- 4.1.4 The Authority will carry out an annual check of DVLA licence records. Drivers must provide the relevant check code to enable this.
- 4.1.5 The applicant is required to subscribed to the DBS Update Service throughout the currency of their licence. Where an individual fails to renew their subscription they will be required to apply for a new Enhanced DBS check and register for the update service again, paying the fees appropriate to enable the re-application.

5 The Consideration of Applications

- 5.1 The Authority must receive sight of the Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS. This must be submitted in a sealed envelope, marked private and confidential, for the attention of the Licensing Team. This will be viewed by an Authorised Officer who is a Counter Signatory or Lead Signatory for the DBS.
- 5.2 The Authority will not accept portability of DBS certificates that have been obtained through a different authority unless all relevant checks e.g. the Adult and Child Barred List checks have been obtained.
- 5.3 If satisfied from the information available that the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence, the Authorised Officer has delegated power to grant the application and issue a licence.
- 5.4 A driver badge will be issued which shall remain the property of the Authority and must be surrendered if the driver licence is suspended or revoked by the Authority.
- 5.5 The badge shall be displayed on the driver's person at all times they are acting as a licensed driver.
- 5.6 If the Authority is not satisfied from the information available that the applicant should be granted a licence, the matter will be referred to the Licensing Committee for a hearing.

APPENDIX D

CONVICTIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The key consideration of the Authority and the overriding objective in the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, drivers, and operators is the safety of the travelling public. The Authority therefore considers its robust approach to convictions and motoring convictions to be fully justified.
- 1.2 This policy provides a baseline for consideration of the impact of convictions, cautions or other matters of conduct on whether a person may be considered fit and proper to hold a licence. This policy relates to applications for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver's licenses, Vehicle Proprietors licences and Private Hire Operator licences.
- 1.3 Hackney carriage and private hire drivers are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means there are no "spent" convictions and any and all criminal convictions can be taken into account by the Authority in assessing an applicant as fit and proper. Spent convictions can also be taken into account when determining suitability of vehicle proprietors and private hire operators.
- 1.4 The Authority has had regard to the Department for Transport, Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards, July 2020 in preparing this policy

2. General Policy

- 2.1 Matters that have not resulted in a criminal conviction can be taken into account by the Authority. Within this document, any reference to "conviction" will also include matters that amount to criminal behaviour, but which have not resulted in conviction.
- 2.2 Convictions for attempt or conspiracy will be regarded as convictions for the substantive crime. A caution is regarded in exactly the same way as a conviction (because a caution can only be issued following an admission of guilt and is equivalent to a guilty plea on prosecution).
- 2.3 In the case of any new applicant who has been charged with any offence and is awaiting trial, the determination of the licence will be deferred until the trial has been completed or the charges withdrawn. Where an existing licensee is charged the Authority will decide what action to take on a case by case basis in the light of this document.
- 2.4 In all cases, the Authority will consider the conviction or behaviour in question and what weight should be attached to it, and each and every case will be determined on its own merit, in the light of this document.

- 2.5 For the avoidance of doubt, whether a driver was driving a licensed vehicle or not at the time of an offence is not relevant.
- 2.6 Any offences committed, or unacceptable behaviour reported whilst driving a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, concerning the sue of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, or in connection with an operator of a private hire vehicle will be viewed as aggravating features, and the fact that any other offences were not connected with the hackney carriage and private hire trades will not be seen as mitigating factors.
- 2.7 There is no evidence which can provide precise periods of time which must elapse after a crime before a person can no longer be considered to be at risk of reoffending, but the risk reduces over time. In light of that, the suggested timescales in this document are intended to reduce the risk to the public to an acceptable level. Time periods are relevant and weighty considerations but are not the only determining factor.
- 2.8 Generally, where a person has more than one conviction, this will raise serious questions about their safety and suitability. Patterns of repeated unacceptable or criminal behaviour are likely to give greater concern than isolated occurrences as such patterns can demonstrate a propensity for such behaviour or offending.
- 2.9 Most applicants or licensees will have no convictions and that is clearly the ideal situation. It is accepted that human beings do make mistakes and lapse in their conduct for various reasons, and it is further accepted that many learn from experience and do not go on to commit further offences. Accordingly, in many cases an isolated conviction, especially if committed some time ago, may not prevent the grant or renewal of a licence.
- 2.10 Driving a taxi or private hire vehicle is not, in itself, a regulated activity for the purposes of the barred list. This means that an individual subject to barring would not be legally prevented from being a taxi or private hire vehicle driver but the licensing authority will take an individual's barred status into account alongside other information available. In the interests of public safety, the Authority will not usually issue a licence to any individual that appears on either the children or adult barred list. Should the Authority consider there to be exceptional circumstances which means that, based on the balance of probabilities they consider an individual named on a barred list to be 'fit and proper', the reasons for reaching this conclusion will be recorded.
- 2.11 Once a licence has been granted there is a continuing requirement on the licensee to maintain their fit and proper person status. Any convictions or other actions which would have prevented them from being granted a licence on initial application will led to that licence being revoked by the Licensing Committee.
- 2.12 Where an applicant/licensee is convicted of an offence which is not detailed in this guidance, the Authority will take that conviction into account and use this document as an indication of the approach that should be taken.

- 2.13 This document does not replace the duty of the Authority to refuse to grant a licence where they are not satisfied that the applicant or licensee is a fit and proper person. Where a situation is not covered by these guidelines, the Authority will consider the matter from first principles and determine the fitness and propriety of the individual.
- 2.14 Each case will be determined on its own merits. This document provides the general principles relating to the determination of cases which shall generally be followed where convictions are disclosed.
- 2.15 Where an applicant or existing licensee has declared or committed any other offence not listed in this document or the circumstances of the case justify it, an Authorised Officer may refer it to the Licensing Committee for determination.

3. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers

- 3.1 A driver has direct responsibility for the safety of their passengers and the safety of other road users. They also have significant control over passengers who are in the vehicle. As those passengers may be alone, and may also be vulnerable, any previous convictions or unacceptable behaviour will weigh heavily against a licence being granted or retained.
- 3.2 Where an applicant has more than one conviction showing a pattern or tendency irrespective of time since the convictions, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are fit and proper.
- 3.3 In relation to single convictions, the following minimum time periods should elapse following completion of the sentence (or the date of conviction if a fine was imposed) before a licence will be granted

Type of Offence	Minimum Time Period Since Completion of Sentence
Crimes resulting in death or was intending to cause death or serious injury to another person	A licence will not normally be granted
Crime involving, relating to or having any connection with abuse, exploitation, slavery, child sexual exploitation, grooming, psychological, emotional or financial abuse etc. irrespective of whether the victim was an adult or child	A licence will not normally be granted
Illegal sexual activity or any form of indecency*	A licence will not normally be granted
Violence or any offence connected with violence	10 years
Possession of a weapon or other weapon related offence	7 years
Crimes involving or connected with discrimination in any form	7 years

Dishonesty, or any offence where dishonesty is an element of the offence	7 years
The supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply or connected with intent to supply	10 years
Possession of drugs, or related to the possession of drugs	5 years and may have to undergo testing at own expense to demonstrate not using controlled drugs
Drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs	7 years and may have to undergo testing at own expense to demonstrate not using controlled drugs
Using a hand-held mobile phone or hand-held device while driving	5 years since completion of sentence or driving ban imposed whichever is the later
Minor traffic or vehicle related offences (see 3.4.1 and 3.4.2)	Where an applicant has 7 or more points on their DVLA licence, a licence will not normally be granted until at least 5 years
Major traffic or vehicle related offences (see 3.4.3)	7 years
Convictions concerned or connected to hackney carriage or private hire activity (excluding vehicle use)	7 years
Convictions for any offence which involved the use of a vehicle (including hackney carriages and private hire vehicles)	7 years

*in addition to this, a licence will not normally be granted to any applicant currently on the Sex Offenders Register or any 'barred' list

3.4 Other Motoring Convictions and Offences

3.4.1 Hackney carriage and private hire drivers are professional drivers charged with the responsibility of carrying the public. Any motoring conviction demonstrates a lack of professionalism and will be considered seriously. It is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence would not prohibit the grant of a licence or may not result in action against an existing licence. Subsequent convictions reinforce the fact that the licensee does not take their professional responsibilities seriously and is therefore not a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a licence.

3.4.2 A minor traffic or vehicle related offence is one which does not involve loss of life, driving under the influence of drink or drugs, driving whilst using a mobile phone, and has not resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). Where

an applicant has 7 or more points on their DVLA licence for minor traffic or similar offences, a licence will not normally be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

- 3.4.3 A major traffic or vehicle related offence is one which is not covered above and also any offence which resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). It also includes driving without insurance or any offence connected with motor insurance. Where an applicant has a conviction for a major traffic offence or similar offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

4. Private Hire Operators

- 4.1 A private hire operator (“an operator”) does not have direct responsibility for the safety of passengers, other road users or direct contact with passengers who are in the private hire vehicle (except where they are also licensed as a private hire driver). However, in performing their duties they obtain and hold considerable amounts of personal and private information about their passengers which must be treated in confidence and not revealed to others or used by the operator or their staff for criminal or other unacceptable purposes.
- 4.2 As with drivers, where an applicant has more than one conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person.
- 4.3 As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the private hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to operators as those applied to drivers, which are outlined above.

5 Vehicle Proprietors

- 5.1 Vehicle proprietors (both hackney carriage and private hire) have two principal responsibilities. Firstly, they must ensure that the vehicle is maintained to an acceptable standard at all times and; they must ensure the vehicle is not used for illegal or illicit purposes.
- 5.2 As with drivers, where an applicant has more than one conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a vehicle licence
- 5.3 As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the private hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to proprietors as those applied to drivers, which are outlined above.

APPENDIX E

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE CONDITIONS

1. Conduct of Driver

1.1 The holder of a Private Hire Driver's Licence ("the driver") shall comply with the following conditions:

- a) The driver shall be respectably dressed and clean and tidy in appearance.
- b) The driver shall, at all times when acting in accordance with the driver's Licence granted to them, wear such badge as supplied by the Authority in such position and manner as to be plainly and distinctly visible at all times. The driver shall not allow the badge to be used by any other person or cause or permit any other person to wear it. On termination or surrender of the driver's Licence, the badge must be returned to the Authority immediately.
- c) The driver shall behave in a civil, polite and orderly manner at all times in the course of carrying out their duties as a licensed driver and shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons conveyed in or entering or alighting from the vehicle.
- d) The driver shall not wilfully or negligently cause or permit the vehicle licence plates to be concealed from public view.
- e) The driver who has agreed or has been hired to be in attendance with the vehicle at an appointed time and place shall, unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such vehicle at such appointed time and place.
- f) The driver, when hired to drive to a particular destination shall, subject to any directions given by the hirer, proceed to that destination by the shortest route.
- g) The driver shall not convey, or permit to be conveyed, in such vehicle any number of persons greater than the number of persons specified in the licence and also referred to on the vehicle licence plate.
- h) The driver shall convey a reasonable amount of luggage and provide reasonable assistance in loading and unloading luggage.
- i) The driver shall not solicit, by calling out, or otherwise importune any person to hire or be carried for hire and shall not accept an offer for the hire of the vehicle except where that is first communicated to the driver by the Operator.
- j) The vehicle shall be presented in a clean and tidy condition for each journey.

- k) The private hire vehicle shall only be driven by a licensed private hire driver who has the consent of the proprietor of the vehicle.
- l) The driver shall comply with any hirer's request not to drink or eat in the vehicle or play any radio or sound equipment which is not connected with the operation of the business.
- m) The driver shall not operate the horn as a means of signalling that the vehicle has arrived for a hire.

2. Fares and journeys

- 2.1 The operator of a private hire vehicle may make their own agreement with the hirer as to the fare for a particular journey.
- 2.2 The driver shall, if requested by the hirer, provide a written receipt for the fare paid. Each receipt should show the date of journey, driver badge number and amount paid.
- 2.3 If the private hire vehicle is fitted with a taximeter, then the driver of the vehicle shall, unless the hirer expresses at the commencement of the journey their desire to engage by time, bring the meter into operation at the commencement of the journey:
 - I. Bring the machinery of the taximeter into action by moving the said key, flag or other device, so that the word 'HIRED' is legible on the face of the taximeter before beginning a journey for which a fare is charged for distance and time, and keep the machinery of the taximeter in action until the termination of the hiring;
 - II. cause the dial of the taximeter to be kept properly illuminated throughout any part of a hiring which is during the hours of darkness as defined for the purposes of the Road Traffic Act 1972, and also at any other time at the request of the hirer; and
 - III. not demand from any hirer of a private hire vehicle a fare in excess of any previously agreed for that hiring between the hirer and the operator or, if the vehicle is fitted with a fare meter, the fare shown on the face of the meter.

3. Duties of Licence Holder

- 3.1 The driver's licence must be made available for inspection, on request, by an Authorised Officer/Police Officer.
- 3.2 The Private Hire Driver's Licence or copy thereof must be presented to the proprietor/operator at the beginning of employment.
- 3.3 All licences and badges issued remain the property of the Authority at all times. They must be returned forthwith when employment as a licensed driver ceases, or if the licence expires and is not renewed, or where the licence is suspended or revoked.

- 3.4 The driver must notify the Authority in writing, within 7 days of any change of name or address.
- 3.5 The driver must notify the Authority, in writing, within a period of 48 hours of any conviction for a criminal offence, motoring offence or receipt of a police caution or fixed penalty imposed whilst the licence is in force.
- 3.6 The driver shall report an accident in a private hire vehicle within 72 hours of the occurrence, where damage materially affects the safety, performance and appearance of the licensed vehicle, or the comfort or convenience of persons carried.
- 3.7 The driver shall keep a copy of these driver conditions in the licensed vehicle being used by that driver.
- 3.8 The driver shall inform the Authority, in writing, immediately, of any deterioration in health or injury that would affect their ability to drive a private hire vehicle.

4. Found Property

- 4.1 A driver shall, after the termination of each hiring or as soon as practicable thereafter, carefully search the vehicle for any property which may have been accidentally left therein. Any item(s) found should be handed in as soon as possible, and in any event within 48 hours, to the nearest Police Station and left in the custody of an Authorised Officer on their giving a receipt for it.

5. The Carriage of Animals

- 5.1 A driver shall not carry, in a private hire vehicle whilst being hired, any animal which belongs to or is being looked after by themselves, the proprietor or operator of the vehicle.
- 5.2 Animals in the custody of passengers may be carried, at the driver's discretion, provided they are restrained in a safe manner.
- 5.3 A driver shall, however, carry assistance dogs. Assistance dogs include guide dogs for the blind or partially sighted, hearing dogs for the hard of hearing, and other assistance dogs which assist disabled people with a physical impairment.
- 5.4 Any driver with a medical condition, which may be exacerbated by such dogs, may apply to the Authority for exemption from the condition in paragraph 5.3. A certificate of exemption will be supplied on production of suitable medical evidence.

6. Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

- 6.1 All drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles must:

- Be fully conversant with the correct method to operate ramps, lifts and wheelchair restraints that can be fitted to the vehicle;
- ensure that all wheelchairs are firmly secured to the vehicle using an approved restraining system and that the brakes of the wheelchair have been applied prior to the vehicle setting off; and
- ensure that any wheelchairs, equipment and passengers are carried in such a way that no danger is likely to be caused to any passenger, in accordance with the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986.

APPENDIX F

HACKNEY CARRIAGE BYELAWS

Made under section 68 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, and section 171 of the Public Health Act 1875, by the South Kesteven District Council with respect to hackney carriages in that district.

Interpretation

1. Throughout these byelaws "the Council" means the South Kesteven District Council and "the district" means South Kesteven.

Provisions regulating the manner in which the number of each hackney carriage corresponding with the number of its licence, shall be displayed

2. (a) The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause the number of the licence granted to him in respect of the carriage to be marked on the outside and inside of the carriage, on plates affixed thereto supplied by the Council.
- (b) A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall:-
 - (i) not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer any such number to be concealed from public view while the carriage is standing or plying for hire;
 - (ii) not cause or permit the carriage to stand or ply for hire with any such plate so defaced that any figure or material particular is illegible.

Provisions regulating how hackney carriages are to be furnished or provided

3. The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall:
 - (a) provide sufficient means by which any person in the carriage may communicate with the driver;
 - (b) cause the roof or covering to be kept water-tight;
 - (c) provide any necessary windows and a means of opening and closing not less than one window on each side;
 - (d) cause the seats to be properly cushioned or covered;
 - (e) cause the floor to be provided with a proper carpet, mat or other suitable covering;
 - (f) cause the fittings and furniture generally to be kept in a clean condition, well maintained and in every way fit for public service;

- (g) provide means for securing luggage if the carriage is so constructed as to carry luggage;
 - (h) provide an efficient fire extinguisher which shall be carried in such a position as to be readily available for use; and
 - (i) provide at least two doors for the use of persons conveyed in such carriage and a separate means of ingress and egress for the driver.
4. The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause any taximeter with which the carriage is provided to be so constructed, attached, and maintained as to comply with the following requirements, that is to say:-
- (a) the taximeter shall be fitted with a device the operation of which will bring the taximeter into action and cause the word "HIRED" to appear on the face of the taximeter;
 - (b) such device shall be capable of being locked in such a position that the taximeter is not in action and that no fare is recorded on the face of the taximeter;
 - (c) when the taximeter is in action there shall be recorded on the face of the taximeter in clearly legible figures a fare not exceeding the rate of fare which the proprietor or driver is entitled to demand and take for the hire of the carriage by time as well as for distance in pursuance of the tariff fixed by the Council;
 - (d) the word "FARE" shall be printed on the face of the taximeter in plain letters so as clearly to apply to the fare recorded thereon;
 - (e) the taximeter shall be so placed that all letters and figures on the face thereof are at all times plainly visible to any person being conveyed in the carriage, and for that purpose the letters and figures shall be capable of being suitably illuminated during any period of hiring; and
 - (f) the taximeter and all the fittings thereof shall be so affixed to the carriage with seals or other appliances that it shall not be practicable for any person to tamper with them except by breaking, damaging or permanently displacing the seals or other appliances.

Provisions regulating the conduct of the proprietors and drivers of hackney carriages plying within the district in their several employments, and determining whether such drivers shall wear any and what badges

5. The driver of a hackney carriage provided with a taximeter shall:
- (a) when standing or plying for hire, keep the device fitted in pursuance of the byelaw in that behalf locked in the position in which no fare is recorded on the face of the taximeter;

- (b) before beginning a journey for which a fare is charged for distance and time, bring the taximeter into action by operating the device, so that the word "HIRED" is legible on the face of the taximeter and keep the taximeter in action until termination of the hiring; and
 - (c) cause the dial of the taximeter to be kept properly illuminated throughout any part of a hiring which is between half-an-hour after sunset and half-an-hour before sunrise, and also any other time at the request of the hirer.
- 6. A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall not tamper with or permit any person to tamper with any taximeter with which the carriage is provided, with the fittings thereof, or with the seals affixed thereto.
- 7. The driver of a hackney carriage shall, when plying for hire in any street and not actually hired:
 - (a) proceed with reasonable speed to one of the stands appointed by the Council;
 - (b) if a stand, at the time of his arrival, is occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, proceed to another stand;
 - (c) on arriving at a stand not already occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, station the carriage immediately behind the carriage or carriages on the stand and so as to face in the same direction; and
 - (d) from time to time when any other carriage immediately in front is driven off or moved forward cause his carriage to be moved forward so as to fill the place previously occupied by the carriage driven off or moved forward.
- 8. A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage, when standing or plying for hire shall not make use of the services of any other person for the purpose of importuning any person to hire such carriage.
- 9. The driver of a hackney carriage shall behave in a civil and orderly manner and shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons conveyed in or entering or alighting from the vehicle.
- 10. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage who has agreed or has been hired to be in attendance with the carriage at an appointed time and place shall, unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such carriage at such appointed time and place.
- 11. A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall not convey or permit to be conveyed in such carriage any greater number of persons than the number of persons specified on the plate affixed to the outside of the carriage.

12. If a badge has been provided by the Council and delivered to the driver of a hackney carriage he shall, when standing or plying for hire, and when hired, wear that badge in such position and manner as to be plainly visible.
13. The driver of a hackney carriage so constructed as to carry luggage shall, when requested by any person hiring or seeking to hire the carriage:
 - (a) convey a reasonable quantity of luggage;
 - (b) afford reasonable assistance in loading and unloading; and
 - (c) afford reasonable assistance in removing it to or from the entrance of any building, station, or place at which he may take up or set down such person.

Provisions fixing the rates or fares to be paid for hackney carriages within the district, and securing the due publication of such fares

14. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall be entitled to demand and take for the hire of the carriage the rate of fare prescribed by the council, the rate or fare being calculated by distance and time unless the hirer express at the commencement of the hiring his desire to engage by time.
15. Provided always that where a hackney carriage furnished with a taximeter shall be hired by distance and time, the proprietor or driver thereof shall not be entitled to demand and take a fare greater than that recorded on the face of the taximeter, save for any extra charges authorised by the Authority which it may not be possible to record on the face of the taximeter.
 - (a) The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause a statement of the fares fixed by Council resolution to be exhibited inside the carriage, in clearly distinguishable letters and figures
 - (b) The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage bearing a statement of fares in accordance with this byelaw shall not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer the letters or figures in the statement to be concealed or rendered illegible at any time while the carriage is plying or being used for hire.

Provisions securing the safe custody and re-delivery of any property accidentally left in hackney carriages, and fixing the charges to be made in respect thereof

16. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall immediately after the termination of any hiring or as soon as practicable thereafter carefully search the carriage for any property which may have been accidentally left therein.
17. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall, if any property accidentally left therein by any person who may have been conveyed in the carriage be found by or handed to him:

- (a) carry it as soon as possible and in any event within 48 hours, if not sooner claimed by or on behalf of its owner, to a police station in the district and leave it in the custody of the officer in charge on his giving a receipt for it; and
- (b) be entitled to receive from any person to whom the property shall be re-delivered an amount equal to five pence in the pound of its estimated value (or the fare for the distance from the place of finding to the police station, whichever be the greater) but not more than five pounds.

Penalties

18. Every person who shall offend against any of these byelaws shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale and in the case of a continuing offence to a further fine not exceeding two pounds each day during which the offence continues after conviction therefore.

Repeal of Byelaws

19. The byelaws relating to hackney carriages which were made by the Grantham Borough Council on the 1st day of September 1953 and which were confirmed by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State on the 16th day of February 1954 are hereby repealed.

Given under the Common Seal of the South Kesteven District Council this eighth day of June 2000.

The Common Seal of the
SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL
was hereunto affixed in the presence of:-

J G Bishop, Head of Administration (SEAL)

The foregoing byelaws are hereby confirmed by the Secretary of State and shall come into force on the 1st day of January 2001.

E C Neve

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

APPENDIX G

CODE OF GOOD CONDUCT – This code of conduct will be issued as a separate document to all drivers on application or renewal.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the other statutory and policy requirements set out in this document. By accepting their licence, the holder is deemed to have accepted the terms and conditions.

1 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Hackney carriage and private hire drivers (“drivers”) are in a position of trust in respect of the safety and welfare of their passengers. The Authority, through its licensing team and committees, have to ensure that all drivers are ‘fit and proper’ to undertake their work as drivers and they are also ambassadors for the South Kesteven District. It is essential that the council and drivers work together to ensure members of the public are treated with dignity and respect and any concerns are reported.

On occasions, drivers may become aware of or have suspicions that their passengers may be the victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation either sexual or otherwise, or at risk of becoming a victim. In addition, drivers themselves can be accused of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour through the misinterpretation of the driver’s action or conversation.

South Kesteven District Council has introduced this **Code of Conduct** which is aimed at providing the best possible service by protecting both passengers and drivers, ensuring that concerns, suspicions of abuse, neglect or exploitation can be reported and therefore minimise the risk of misunderstandings.

Drivers are expected to comply with this Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in the driver being referred to Committee to explain to Councillors the circumstances surrounding any incident. Where there is a repeated and/or serious failure to comply drivers can expect to have their licence suspended or revoked.

It should be noted that the code does not over-ride any obligations that are enshrined in legislation, licence conditions or contractual obligations, such as County Council contracts under the Green Badge scheme.

Drivers should:

- Place the safety and well-being of passengers before any personal or commercial goals and before loyalty to friends;
- Respect all individuals, regardless of age, developmental stage, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment religion/belief, language spoken, race or ethnicity.

Be aware of:

- The importance of the use of appropriate language;
- Be aware of the vulnerability of children and some adults, and of passengers with additional needs, be they adults or children;
- Any instruction given about the care or first aid requirements of a passenger
- The caution necessary in dealing with passengers in distress;
- Personal beliefs and standards, including dress and religion;
- Passengers misreading situations;
- The use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These are public websites and therefore passengers conveyed may access a driver's site. Ensure you use the appropriate privacy settings to avoid passengers viewing your social media sites.

Should never:

- Become over-friendly in any way with passengers or engage in any form of relationship, infatuation, crush or show favouritism;
- Touch a passenger, unless in an emergency situation, or if required to do so because of the additional needs of the passenger.
- Administer medication unless a specific request has been made by the hirer;
- Photograph or video passengers in your care unless used in compliance with data protection legislation and any relevant codes of practice issued by the Home Office or Information Commissioner's Office;
- Engage with passengers through social networking sites (such as Facebook and Twitter), instant messengers (such as MSN) or any other online communication software such as mobile phone applications or video games;
- Phone or send text messages to passengers other than directly concerning the hiring of your vehicle;
- Swear, make personal or humiliating comments, or tell inappropriate jokes;
- Offer or accept sweets, cigarettes or gifts of any sort;
- Stop anywhere other than the specified pick up/drop off points other than at the request of the hirer;
- Show passengers videos or pictures on your mobile phone or any other electronic device;
- Refuse to carry any passenger without reasonable excuse.

Safeguarding:

If a driver has concerns or suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation of a passenger then these should not be ignored. If there are any doubts or concerns about the way someone is being

treated, it is important to report this. The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is everybody's business. Remember that information could help a vulnerable child or adult.

If a driver is working under a Lincolnshire County Council contract then those procedures set out in the Driver and Passenger Assistant Pack should be followed alongside any training received by the driver.

Otherwise, the following procedures should be complied with in reporting any information or suspicions you may have of anyone being subject to abuse, neglect or exploitation:

Action to be taken if you have concerns

- If your concerns are of an urgent matter or you believe that a crime has been committed and there is an immediate risk of danger, telephone the police on **999 or 112** (from a mobile).
- If you are suspicious or are concerned that a child or an adult is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, including any form of mistreatment, abuse, neglect or exploitation but is not of an urgent matter, please call the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Customer Service Centre on **01522 782111 for children or 01522 782155 for adults**.
- If you would prefer to speak to the police on a non-urgent matter, then call them on **101** and follow directions for the Lincolnshire Police.

2 Responsibility to the Trade

Licence holders shall endeavour to promote the image of the hackney carriage and private hire trades by:

- complying with this Code of Good Conduct;
- complying with all the conditions of their licence, byelaws and the Authority's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy;
- behaving in a civil, orderly and responsible manner at all times.

3 Responsibility to Clients

Licence holders shall:

- maintain their vehicle(s) in a safe and satisfactory condition at all times;
- keep their vehicle(s) clean and suitable for hire to the public at all times;
- attend punctually when undertaking pre-booked hires;
- assist, where necessary, passenger into and out of the vehicle;
- provide reasonable assistance to passengers with their luggage.

4 Responsibility to Residents

To avoid nuisance to residents when picking up or waiting for a fare, a driver shall:

- not sound the vehicle's horn illegally between 11.30pm and 7.00am or from a stationary vehicle, except when another road user poses a danger);
- keep the volume of music media player media systems and VHF radios to a minimum;
- switch off the engine if required to wait; and
- take whatever additional action is necessary to avoid disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood, which might arise from the conduct of their business.

5 Responsibilities at Ranks and Offices

Licence holders shall:

- rank in an orderly manner and proceed along the rank in order and promptly;
- remain in attendance of their vehicle;
- not allow their music media players or VHF radios to cause disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood; and
- take whatever additional action is necessary to avoid disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood which might arise from the conduct of their business.

6 General

Drivers shall:

- pay attention to personal hygiene and dress so as to present a professional image to the public;
- be polite, helpful and fair to passengers;
- drive with care and due consideration for other road users and pedestrians;
- obey all Traffic Regulation Orders and directions at all times;
- not consume alcohol immediately before or at any time whilst driving or being in charge of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle;
- not drive while having misused legal or taken illegal drugs;
- fulfil their responsibility to ensure that adequate rest periods are taken during and after the working day;
- not eat in the vehicle in the presence of customers; and
- respect officers at authority offices and elsewhere during the normal course of their duties.

APPENDIX H

PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR LICENCE CONDITIONS

1 Standards of Service

The Operator shall:

- 1.1 Provide a prompt, efficient and reliable service to members of the public at all reasonable times;
- 1.2 Ensure that, their office staff behave in a civil and orderly manner at all times;
- 1.3 Ensure that, when a vehicle has been hired, it arrives punctually at the appointed place unless delayed by unforeseen circumstances;
- 1.4 Ensure that premises provided for the purpose of hiring or waiting are kept clean, adequately lit, heated and ventilated;
- 1.5 Ensure that any waiting area provided has adequate seating facilities and, if provided, any telephone facilities are in good working order.
- 1.6 Ensure that any sanitary conveniences and washing facilities provided for customers and/or licensed drivers and vehicle proprietors are placed at readily accessible areas in the building. They and the rooms containing them should be kept clean, be adequately ventilated and lit. Washing facilities should have running hot and cold water, soap and clean towels or other means of cleaning or drying. Men and women should have separate facilities unless each facility is in a separate room with a lockable door and is for use by only one person at a time.

2 Records

- 2.1 Records shall be kept by operators in a suitable form that does not permit backdating and in a format easily able to be inspected by an Authorised Officer/Police Officer.
- 2.2 Extracts of the records shall be provided to or made available to be taken away by Authorised Officers/Police Officers.
- 2.3 All booking records maintained by the operator shall be kept for at least 12 months after entry and shall be produced for inspection, on request, by Authorised Officers/Police Officers.
- 2.4 Operators must evidence that they have had sight of a Basic DBS check on all booking and despatch staff. The record must be retained for the duration that the individual remains on the staff register. Should an employee cease to be on the register and later re-entered, a new basic DBS certificate must be requested and sight of this recorded.

3 Bookings

3.1 Prior to each journey, the operator shall enter the following particulars of every booking in the above records (2):

- the date of the booking;
- the name of the hirer;
- the time and date of pick-up;
- the address of the point of pick-up;
- the destination;
- any fare quoted at the time of booking;
- the plate number of the vehicle allocated;
- the badge number (or other identification) of the driver allocated; and
- the details of any booking subcontracted to another South Kesteven District Council licensed operator or hackney carriage in the district.

4 Vehicles

4.1 The operator shall keep a copy of licences issued by the Authority, for private hire vehicles it operates.

5 Drivers

5.1 The operator shall keep a copy of licences issued by the Authority, for drivers it operates.

5.2 The operator shall keep records of the following:-

- driver call signs;
- date of when a new driver begins service; and
- date when a driver ceases service.

5.3 If the operator becomes aware that any driver is suffering from any illness, disability or condition which may affect the driver's ability to drive then they shall inform the Authority immediately.

5.4 The use of a driver who holds a PCV licence and the use of a public service vehicle (PSV) such as a minibus to undertake a private hire vehicle booking is not permitted without the informed consent of the booker.

6 Change of Address

6.1 The operator shall notify the Authority in writing of any change affecting this licence, including change of address (including any address from which they operate or otherwise

conduct their business), which takes place during the currency of the licence. Such notice shall be given within 7 days of the change to the Licensing Team.

7 Disclosure of Convictions

- 7.1 The operator shall, notify the Authority's Licensing Team within 48 hours of an arrest and release, charge or conviction of any sexual offence, any offence involving dishonesty or violence, any motoring offence or fixed penalty notice. imposed on him/her during the currency of his/her operator's licence. If the operator is a company or partnership, this requirement shall apply if any of the directors or partners receives a conviction or fixed penalty notice.
- 7.2 The provisions of the Immigration Act 2016 add immigration offences to the list of grounds on which operator and private hire hackney carriage driver offences may be suspended or revoked by the Authority. Where licences expire or are revoked or suspended on immigration grounds they must be returned to the Authority's Licensing Team of the Authority within 7 days. Failure to return the licence is a criminal offence.

8 Insurance

- 8.1 The operator shall ensure that a certificate of motor insurance covers every private hire vehicle operated by him under the licence, which is compliant with the Road Traffic Act 1988 as regards the carriage of passengers for hire or reward. This must be produced to the Authorised Officer on request.
- 8.2 If the operator has premises to which the public have access, in connection with the hiring of vehicles, he/she shall ensure that there is public liability insurance in force, which indemnifies him/her against any claim for loss, damage or personal injury by any person using those premises.

9 Display of Terms and Conditions

- 9.1 The operator shall keep a copy of these conditions at all premises used for a private hire business and shall make the same available for inspection by customers and on request by Authorised Officers and the Police.

10. Policy on Employing Ex-Offenders

- 10.1 The Operator must have a policy on employing ex-offenders in roles that would be involved in the booking and despatch of vehicles and held on the staff register. As with the threshold to obtaining a private hire vehicle operators' licence, those with a conviction for offences provided in Appendix D, other than those relating to driving, may not be suitable to decide who is sent to carry a child or vulnerable adult unaccompanied in a car.

Note: Planning Consent

To operate a private hire business from a residential dwelling, planning permission for such business use may be required. All applications for an Operator's Licence are forwarded to

the Planning Department for their approval. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any necessary planning permissions are in place.

APPENDIX I

ENFORCEMENT POLICY & PRACTICE

1 Enforcement Policy Statement

- 1.1 It is the statutory duty of the Authority to ensure that licensed drivers and operators are licensed correctly and carry out their trade in accordance with both the relevant law, byelaws, statutory notices, policies and conditions attached to licences.
- 1.2 Each application and enforcement action will be determined on its own merits.
- 1.3 Determination of applications and enforcement decisions will be made in accordance with this policy and this Authority's constitution. Officers have delegated powers to make decisions and may also refer certain matters to the Licensing Committee if appropriate.
- 1.4 Members, when determining applications for a licence, renewals or reviews of a licence, will have regard to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire legislation, this Policy and any other relevant legislation, case law, guidance and other relevant South Kesteven District Council policies.
- 1.5 All enforcement will be undertaken in accordance with the Authority's current enforcement policy.

APPENDIX J

PENALTY POINTS SCHEME

The Scheme

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Hackney carriage and private hire operators, drivers and vehicles are principally governed by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Town Police Clauses Act 1847, Authority's Byelaws and the Rules, Regulations and Conditions set by the Licensing Committee.
- 1.2 Should operators, drivers or proprietors of vehicles commit an offence or breach of those rules, regulations or conditions of licence, notices will be given detailing the offence/breaches and the number of points allocated.
- 1.3 The aim of a penalty point's scheme is to work in conjunction with other enforcement options. It provides a formalised, stepped enforcement plan. The purpose of the scheme is to record misdemeanours and to act as a record of driver's behaviour and conduct, so as to ascertain whether they are a fit and proper person. It does not prejudice the Authority's ability to take other actions.
- 1.4 The primary objective of the penalty point's scheme is to improve the levels of compliance and help improve the standards, safety and protection of the travelling public.
- 1.5 Penalty points remain for a rolling 3 years for drivers and vehicle licence holders and 5 year period for operators so as to allow any older points to be considered as spent and therefore excluded from the running total recorded against any individual licence holder. However, spent points may still be considered if a pattern of misdemeanours emerge ie regularly being late for renewals and submissions of compliance tests.

2. Issue of Penalty Points

- 2.1 The Authorised Officer shall investigate alleged offences or breaches of the rules or conditions. When substantiated this may result in the issue of penalty points as detailed.
- 2.2 Complaints concerning significant breaches of conduct, conditions of licence or policy, or a pattern of poor behaviour/repeated breaches of similar offences, will be subject to investigation by Authorised Officers and may be referred to the Licensing Committee for consideration.
- 2.3 Where a licence holder accumulates 12 or more penalty points in any 12 month period, the matter will be referred to the Licensing Committee for the Committee to decide whether the driver remains a 'fit and proper' person. The Committee may then suspend or revoke a licence, or issue a warning to the licence holder, depending on the

circumstances. Periods of suspension of a licence by the Committee will be dependent on the nature of the breaches of the legislation/conditions and the compliance history of the individual. Suspension periods will normally vary between 7 to 31 days.

- 2.4 Points issued to either the proprietor of a vehicle or a driver will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days from the discovery of the contravention.
- 2.5 The system will operate without prejudice to the Authority's ability to take other action that it is entitled to take under legislation, byelaws and regulations.
- 2.6 A licence holder issued with penalty points may appeal against such a decision to the Head of Service in the first instance within seven days of the receipt of the notice. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found then the appeal will be reviewed by a manager from an independent business area for a decision. If the recipient still does not agree with the decision the appeal will be heard by the Licensing Committee.
- 2.7 If a decision is made to issue points to a proprietor/driver rather than prosecute, for a matter which is also a criminal offence e.g. bald tyres; no badge etc., those person(s) will not then be the subject of a prosecution by the Authority in respect of the same matter for which the points were issued, but is not exempt from action by other authorities e.g. The Police.

**SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL
PENALTY POINT SCHEME**

	Offence/Breach of Condition	Maximum Points Awarded by Authorised Officers	Driver	Vehicle Proprietor or Operator
1	Providing false or misleading information on licence application form / failing to provide relevant information or the relevant fee (including dishonoured cheques).	6	✓	✓
2	Failure to notify, in writing, the Authority of change of address within 7 calendar days.	3	✓	✓
3	Refusal to accept hiring without reasonable cause e.g. drunk or rude customer.	6	✓	
4	Unreasonable prolongation of journeys or any misconduct regarding the charging of fares.	6	✓	
5	Plying for hire by private hire drivers.	9	✓	✓
6	Using a mobile phone whilst driving as witnessed by an officer of the Authority.	6	✓	
7	Using unlicensed vehicle for carrying passengers for hire or reward or vehicle without insurance.	12	✓	✓
8	Failure to produce relevant documents within timescale, when requested by an Authorised Officer/Police Officer.	4	✓	✓
9	Failure to maintain vehicle in a satisfactory condition – including interior or exterior.	4	✓	✓
10	Failure to provide proof of insurance cover when requested.	6	✓	
11	Failure to produce hackney carriage or private hire vehicle for testing when required.	6	✓	✓
12	Using a vehicle whilst subject to a suspension order issued by an Authorised Officer/Police Officer.	12	✓	✓
13	Using a vehicle for which the licence has been revoked.	12	✓	✓
14	Failure to report, in writing, within 72 hours, accident or damage to licensed vehicle, which would cause the vehicle to breach licence condition.	4	✓	✓

	Offence/Breach of Condition	Maximum Points Awarded by Authorised Officers	Driver	Vehicle Proprietor or Operator
15	Carrying more passengers than stated on the vehicle licence.	6	✓	
16	Failure to display external/internal licence plate as required.	4	✓	✓
17	Carrying an offensive weapon in the vehicle.	12	✓	
18	Failure to notify transfer of private hire or hackney carriage vehicle licence.	4		✓
19	Failure to undertake a walkaround vehicle check before a vehicle is used and/or retain proof the check(s) have been undertaken or for the 12 month required timescale.	3	✓	✓
20	Failure to apply for prior approval for advertising signage on the outside of the vehicle.	3	✓	✓
21	Displaying unsuitable or inappropriately sited signs or advertisements in or on the vehicle.	3	✓	✓
22	Failure to use authorised roof light.	4	✓	
23	Displaying unauthorised written or other material on any window.	4	✓	✓
24	Failure to comply with a requirement, provide information or assistance to an Authorised Officer/Police Officer.	6	✓	✓
25	Using a non-approved or non-calibrated taximeter.	6	✓	✓
26	Obstruction of Authorised Officer/Police Officer wishing to examine a licensed vehicle.	12	✓	✓
27	Evidence of smoking/vaping or using e-cigarettes or other similar devices vehicle.	3	✓	✓
28	Evidence of food or drink in vehicle. *see below	3	✓	✓
29	Displaying any feature on a private hire vehicle that may suggest that it is a taxi.	6	✓	✓
30	Using a vehicle the appearance of which suggests that it is a taxi.	6	✓	✓
31	Failure to carry an assistance dog without requisite exemption.	12	✓	
32	Driver not holding a current DVLA Driving licence.	12	✓	✓
33	Failure to wear driver's badge.	4	✓	
34	Failure to notify, in writing, a change in medical circumstances.	6	✓	
35	Unsatisfactory appearance of driver.	3	✓	

36	Failure to observe rank discipline (hackney carriage only).	4	✓	
	Offence/Breach of Condition	Maximum Points Awarded by Authorised Officers	Driver	Vehicle Proprietor or Operator
37	Failure to maintain proper records of private hire vehicle.	3		✓
38	Failure to keep or produce records of private hire bookings or other documents required to be kept or produced.	6		✓
39	Misleading use of the words 'Taxi' or 'Cab' on advertising materials.	3		✓
40	Failure to issue receipt on request.	3	✓	
41	Failure to return vehicle licence plate within 7 days after due notice following expiry, revocation or suspension of such licence.	4	✓	✓
42	Unsatisfactory behaviour or conduct of driver.	4	✓	
43	Failure to notify the Authority, in writing, of any motoring or criminal convictions within 48 hours days of said conviction or cautions during period of current licence.	6	✓	
44	Failure to behave in a civil and orderly manner.	4	✓	
45	Failure to give assistance with loading/unloading luggage to or from any building or place.	3	✓	
46	Failure to display table of fares.	4	✓	✓
47	Failure to carry legal spare wheel or authorised suitable alternative and tools.	4	✓	✓
48	Failure to attend punctually at appointed time and place without sufficient cause.	4	✓	
49	Using a licensed vehicle with defective tyre(s).	4 per tyre	✓	✓
50	Failure to submit Certificate of Compliance to the Authority within 2 working days of the expiry of the certificate following the intermediate 6 monthly inspection.	4	✓	✓
51	Failure to display a current licence plate.	4	✓	✓
52	Waiting or stopping in any area where parking is prohibited unless requested by a paying customer present in the vehicle.	3	✓	
53	Failure to comply with any other licence condition not detailed in the table.	3	✓	✓

	Offence/Breach of Condition	Maximum Points Awarded by Authorised Officers	Driver	Vehicle Proprietor or Operator
54	Failure to renew driver, vehicle or operator licence before expiry.	4	✓	✓
55	Leaving a taxi unattended on a taxi rank	4	✓	✓
56	Idling a vehicle's engine unnecessarily when stationary on a Hackney Carriage Rank or Stand	4	✓	✓
57	Failure to notify of installation or removal of CCTV system	4	✓	✓

* Drivers shall not leave evidence of food or drink in their vehicle whilst working

Ticks indicate potential recipients of penalty points for infringements.

N.B. Certain infringements may result in drivers, proprietors or operators receiving penalty points. Points may be awarded to one or several persons depending upon the nature of the infringement, however each case must be determined on its own merits.

Certain matters are specific to hackney carriages, private hire drivers or private hire operators.

APPENDIX K

EXEMPTION FROM REQUIREMENT TO DISPLAY AN EXTERNAL VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION PLATE

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 The aim of this guidance is to ensure public safety whilst taking a balanced approach to licensing requirements. Its objective is the provision of an exemption to allow “executive type vehicles” to operate without displaying external identification plates.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The displaying of the external identification plate on a licensed vehicle and a driver’s badge is important in terms of public safety and reassurance. They indicate to the travelling public that prior to being licensed both the vehicle and the driver have been subjected to checks to ensure their (the public’s) safety.
- 2.2 However, there are occasions when the requirement to display an external identification plate may have the opposite effect in terms of customer safety and could have commercial implications for the operating business. The display of Local Authority licence plates externally may also deter some corporate customers from using the service; and in some circumstances the identification of the vehicle as a licensed vehicle may allow “high risk” passengers to be more readily targeted putting both them and the driver at risk.
- 2.3 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 requires that private hire vehicles display an identification plate (licence plate) and drivers of those vehicles wear a driver’s badge. The same legislation also allows South Kesteven District Council to exempt vehicles from the need to display an identification plate and, where that exemption applies, the requirement to wear a private hire driver’s badge.
- 2.4 It is not intended that all private hire vehicles licensed by South Kesteven District Council should be exempt from the Authority’s requirement to display an external identification plate, however the Authority recognises that there may be circumstances when it would be appropriate for vehicles operating this type of service, to be considered suitable for such an exemption.
- 2.5 In creating its policy, South Kesteven District Council does not seek to provide a definitive list of vehicles it considers to be suitable (subject to use) for exemption from the requirement to display external identification plates.
- 2.6 This guidance provides information to potential applicants on the standards of vehicle comfort and equipment that the Authority considers should be the minimum standard of comfort and vehicle type before the Authority would consider such an application. This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Authority’s existing policy relating to private

hire vehicles as it establishes additional criteria that the Authority (and its officers) will take into account when determining applications for a private hire vehicle to be exempt from displaying external identification plates.

3 The Policy

- 3.1 Exemptions from displaying external identification plates (vehicle licence plates) may be in respect of individual vehicles only. Applications for exemptions relating to a fleet of vehicles will not be allowed.
- 3.2 Each application will be assessed on its own merit and each vehicle will be inspected by an authorised officer to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- 3.3 Applications for exemption from the requirement to display an external identification plate on the rear of a private hire vehicle may be considered where the following requirements are met;
 - a) Vehicle models must be either four door saloons, or five door estates or five door hatchbacks. Applications will not normally be accepted in respect of people carrier type vehicles.
 - b) Vehicles must be of a high standard of comfort and equipped to a level equal to or above luxury brands of vehicles such as “S” and “E” Class Mercedes Benz, 7 Series BMW, Lexus “GS” or “LS” models, Audi A8 series, Jaguar, Rolls Royce and Bentley saloons. (The highest specification executive type cars from other manufacturers may also be considered).
 - c) The vehicle will be in pristine condition with no visible defects, dents or blemishes to the external bodywork or internal trim and seating.
 - d) The type of work undertaken is “executive” in nature. This means that the vehicle is used specifically to provide transport under a contract to a company or person, or by the type of clients who for security or personal safety reasons would not want the vehicle to be identifiable.
- 3.4 Applications may only be made by a person holding a private hire operator’s licence issued by South Kesteven District Council.
- 3.5 Where a proprietor wishes to make an application for a vehicle to be exempt from displaying an external identification plate they will be required to complete the appropriate application form. The application form will be accompanied by documentation that supports the application and the application fee; which will be non-refundable.
- 3.6 The Council may require applicants to provide any additional documentation as reasonably necessary to allow the Council to make an informed decision. Where such documentation is not provided to the satisfaction of the Council the application will be refused.

- 3.7 South Kesteven District Council is entitled to recover its costs relating to the administration of applications for an exemption notice and the issue of the exemption notice where applications are granted and may charge such fees as it believes are appropriate to recover all or part of those costs.
- 3.8 The fee to accompany an application for an exemption notice is detailed in the Council's fees and charges which is reviewed annually and is non-refundable.
- 3.9 Where an application is granted and a vehicle is exempted from displaying its external identification plate an exemption notice will be issued as soon as practical after the decision is made.
- 3.10 Where a vehicle is exempted from the requirement to display an external identification plate the vehicle will also be exempted from the need to display the internal identification plate.
- 3.11 Irrespective of when an exemption notice is granted the initial exemption notice will expire on the same day as the expiration of the vehicles current private hire licence, unless it is otherwise surrendered or revoked. Thereafter any renewed exemption notice will last for a period of time that is coterminous with that vehicle's private hire licence unless either the licence or notice is otherwise surrendered or revoked.
- 3.12 Exemption notices may be renewed annually subject to the vehicle undergoing a re-inspection by an Authorised Officer to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose. The annual renewal fee for an exemption notice is detailed in the Council's fees and charges which is reviewed annually and is non-refundable.
- 3.13 The Authority to determine any application for an exemption notice is by virtue of this guidance delegated by the Council to Authorised Officers.
- 3.14 In the event of an applicant being dissatisfied with the decision of the officer, the applicant may make a written application for a review of the decision by the Licensing Committee.
- 3.15 Other than where to do so would conflict with the requirements of this guidance, all vehicles granted an exemption notice must, in addition to the requirements of this guidance, comply with the requirements for private hire vehicles contained within the Authority's Information – Taxi and Private Hire Licensing document and the Council's Bye Laws.
- 3.16 **THE BELOW CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES GRANTED AN EXEMPTION BY SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL FROM THE REQUIREMENT TO DISPLAY AN EXTERNAL IDENTIFICATION PLATE AND ARE IN ADDITION TO THE CRITERIA AND CONDITIONS SET OUT IN SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL'S INFORMATION – TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY AND THE COUNCIL'S BYE LAWS.**

The identification plate and exemption notice provided by the Authority pursuant to requirements of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 shall remain the property of the Authority.

- a) Any vehicle granted an exemption from displaying an external identification plate will be required to have the identification plate normally displayed on the rear of the vehicle, affixed to the inside of the boot lid. The plate when so affixed **must** be readily visible when that boot lid is raised.
- b) In the event of loss or damage rendering such plate or notice unserviceable the proprietor shall make immediate application for a replacement for which a fee is payable.
- c) The exemption notice issued by the Authority will be carried in the vehicle at all times and will be produced upon request to an authorised officer of the Authority or any Police Officer.
- d) When issued with an exemption notice, the vehicle will not be required to display any other signs (including the internal identification plate) which the Authority may at any time require private hire vehicles to display.
- e) The proprietor will not display in on or from the vehicle any advertisement, signage, logos or insignia advertising the operating company or the vehicles status as a private hire vehicle.
- f) During the period of the exemption notice, the driver shall not be required to wear the private hire driver's identification badge but will have it available for immediate inspection by the authorised officer of the Authority or any Police Officer on request.
- g) During the period of the exemption notice the driver of the vehicle whilst engaged on private hire work will be smartly dressed in for example, a formal chauffeur or business suit with collar and tie.
- h) The proprietor shall within 1 working day notify the Authority of any change in the use of the vehicle.
- i) The proprietor shall not use the vehicle for private hire purposes other than for executive use (ie normal daily private hire use).
- j) The driver and passenger front side window glass and the front windscreen must be clear. However, tinted windows can be fitted to the side and rear window glass of the vehicle provided that they comply with current legislation.
- k) The exemption will cease to have effect on selling or transferring the vehicle to another party. The person to whom the exemption is granted must inform the Authority of the sale/transfer of ownership immediately and in writing and provide details of the new owner. The exemption notice must be returned to the Authority along with the private hire vehicle identification plate unless being sold to another private hire operator licensed by the Authority; in which case, only the exemption notice has to be returned.
- m) A taximeter will not be installed in the vehicle.

APPENDIX L

PEDICABS AND RICKSHAWS REQUIREMENT TO BE LICENSED

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 The aim of this guidance is to ensure public safety whilst taking a balanced approach to licensing requirements. Pedicabs or rickshaws, provide transport for passengers on short journeys.
- 1.2 Within this policy we are referring to pedicabs and rickshaws as transport propelled by the pedalling of the operator, and capable of carrying passengers with the destination being directed by those passengers. The design can be a hooded or unhooded and multi-wheeled.
- 1.3 Pedicabs and rickshaws are licensed as Hackney Carriages under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (outside of London) as was confirmed by the Court of Appeal in the case of R v Cambridge City Council ex parte Lane (1999). Fares are charged at a flat rate regardless of how many passengers are carried.
- 1.4 This guidance covers the licensing of both drivers and their pedicabs and rickshaws.

2 Requirements

- 2.1 All hackney carriage vehicle and driver licence requirements (as detailed in this policy and most specifically Appendix C – vehicles and drivers) are applicable. In addition Public Liability Insurance of not less than £5million must be in force to ensure that any losses sustained in the event of an accident can be recovered, either by passengers or by the other third parties. Evidence of Public Liability Insurance will be required to be submitted with any application.
- 2.2 Prior to a licence being granted the intended pedicab or rickshaw must be inspected by a suitably qualified technician. Thereafter they must be checked every 6 months to ensure that the pedicab or rickshaw remains in a roadworthy condition throughout the validity of the licence.
- 2.3 All pedicabs or rickshaws shall comply with the following safety standards
 - a) Pedal Cycle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1983 and 2015; and
 - b) Pedal Cycle (Safety) Regulations 2010; and
 - c) the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989; and
 - d) BS EN 14766 Mountain Bicycles – Safety Requirements; and
 - e) any other legislation which affects the construction/lighting or use of a bicycle.
- 2.4 In order to pass inspection, the pedicab or rickshaw must have:

- a) 3 point seatbelts or lap belts for each passenger which will be adequate to retain the passenger in the pedicab or rickshaw and must bear an EC or BSI mark;
- b) Ascertain and pass (as working correctly) the condition of the following:
 - i) Front and rear brakes
 - ii) Front and rear lights
 - iii) Operation of seats belts
 - iv) Condition of tyres and wheels
 - v) Reflectors
 - vi) Tyres must comply with the following requirements:-
 - Tread pattern clearly visible over the whole tread area;
 - Properly inflated;
 - No exposed cords;
 - The load ratings of all tyres must be suitable when fully loaded
- b) The pedicab or rickshaw must be fitted with a minimum of one front position light and a minimum of two rear position lamps and two rear retro reflectors.
- c) The handlebars when turned to full lock will not affect the stability of the pedicab when turning.
- d) There must be at least one mirror fitted to the offside of the pedicab in order to monitor other road users. A nearside mirror is also recommended.
- e) The floor covering of the passenger compartment must be of a non-slip material which can be easily cleaned. Any holds or handles to aid passenger access or egress should be clearly identified with high visibility markings.
- f) Any canopy or roof, when fitted to the pedicab must remain in a fixed position, achieved by means of a locking mechanism to secure the canopy or roof when raised or lowered, when conveying passengers.
- g) The pedicab must be fitted with adequate guards or other fittings so as to prevent loose garments or other material being caught in the pedicabs chain, spokes or other moving parts. If any alterations are made to the pedicab or rickshaw a new test will need to be passed once the alterations are completed.
- h) All pedicabs and rickshaws shall be required to be fitted with an audible warning instrument i.e. bell.
- i) The drivers' controls and the surrounding area of the controls must be designed that the driver has adequate room. The driver must be able to easily reach and quickly operate the controls and give hand signals when required.

- j) The materials used to form the passenger seats should be waterproof so that they will not absorb or retain water and should be constructed of a suitable fire resistant material to BS 5852 Part 1, 1979 or equivalent.
- k) The position of the drivers' seat must not be such that it restricts access or egress to the passenger compartment.
- 2.5 Each pedicab and rickshaw shall be licensed to carry a driver and no more than 3 passengers at any one time. All children must occupy a seat and no person under the age of 16 shall ride in the pedicab or rickshaw unaccompanied without an adult.
- 2.6 Each pedicab and rickshaw shall be fitted at the rear of the vehicle with an identification plate supplied by the Licensing Authority so that it may be easily visible to members of the public.
- 2.7 Advertising material may only be displayed on a licensed pedicab with prior approval by the Licensing Team. Subject to the following criteria:
- Advertisements should not contain political, ethnic, religious, sexual or controversial texts;
 - advertise tobacco products;
 - Display nude or semi-nude figures;
 - Advertisements likely to offend public taste;
 - Depict direct and immediate violence to anyone shown in the advertisement or anyone looking at it;
 - Advertise any racist group or organisation which intends to promote the group/organisation and/or any of its activities.
- 2.8 The presence of a licensed pedicab on the road should not cause an obstruction nor shall it compromise the safety of its passengers or other road users and must comply with Traffic Regulation Orders and the Highway Code.
- 2.9 The licence holder and pedicab shall not stand or loiter in a street or use a bell or any other equipment for the purpose of attracting potential customers. However, as a licensed hackney carriage they are able to use taxi ranks.

3. Fares

- 3.1 The Council can set maximum fares in accordance with section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. A maximum fare scale is not currently in operation for pedicabs or rickshaw and therefore a fare scale should be submitted with the application and/or renewal for approval prior to use.
- 3.2 However, under the aforementioned section of the 1976 Act the Council reserves the right to introduce a formal fare structure for rickshaws at anytime.

Appendix 4

	Detail
	LICENCES
1	<u>Hackney Carriage and Private Hire *</u>
	Driver requirements - 3year licence & 1year licence
	Driver's licence - 3 Year - Standard Licence Period
	Driver's licence - Annual (aged 65yrs or above and/or medical condition)
	Driver's licence - One-off annual badge (up to 65yrs without medical condition)
	English Language Skills Test - Retest (initial test free)
	Enhanced DBS disclosure fee (paid to third party - Care Check)
	Medical (completed and to be paid to Doctor)
	Operator Licences
	Private Hire Operator Licence - 5 Year
	Changes and Replacements
	Change to dual licence (mid year)
	Replacement drivers badge (sent by Royal Mail)
	Replacement drivers badge (collected from Customer Services)
	Replacement vehicle plate
	Replacement licence certificate
	Replacement vehicle bracket
	Replacement internal vehicle plate (sent by royal mail)
	Replacement internal vehicle plates (collected from Customer Services)
	Transfer of vehicle ownership
	Change of registration number ie cherished number plates
2	<u>Annual vehicle licence</u>
	Private Hire
	Hackney Carriage
	20% reduction for LPG/Hybrid/Wheelchair vehicles: Private Hire
	20% reduction for LPG/Hybrid/Wheelchair vehicles: Hackney
	50% reduction for electric/zero emissions vehicles: Private Hire
	50% reduction for electric/zero emissions vehicles: Hackney
	Exemption from displaying Private Hire plate
	Exemption from displaying Private Hire plate (renewal fee)
3	<u>Credit for unexpired days due to change of vehicle</u>
	Private Hire
	Hackney Carriage

* Subject to approval

Effective	2025/26	2026/27	VAT
Date	£	£	
01/04/26	310.25	220.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	125.00	80.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	0.00	80.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	46.50	47.50	O/Scope
01/04/26	38.00	0.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	0.00	0.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	191.00	202.50	O/Scope
01/04/26	48.00	50.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	29.00	26.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	35.75	31.50	O/Scope
01/04/26	69.30	67.50	Included
01/04/26	23.00	21.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	16.80	16.80	Included
01/04/26	30.50	28.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	37.25	33.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	47.00	43.50	O/Scope
01/04/26	106.00	98.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	272.00	231.50	O/Scope
01/04/26	298.50	212.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	217.50	169.50	O/Scope
01/04/26	238.75	185.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	136.00	106.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	149.25	116.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	102.00	91.50	O/Scope
01/04/26	64.00	57.00	O/Scope
01/04/26	0.75	0.58	O/Scope
01/04/26	0.82	0.63	O/Scope



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday, 29 January 2026

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

Pay Policy Statement 2026/2027

Report Author

Sam Fitt, Senior HR Officer

✉ sam.fitt@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

As part of the annual budget setting and approval process, the Council is required to summarise current policies and arrangements relating to pay in the form of a Pay Policy Statement.

Recommendations

Council is asked to consider and approve the Pay Policy Statement 2026/2027.

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?	All Wards;

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The financial considerations of the Pay Policy Statement will be incorporated into the budget setting proposals for 2026/27. Employee costs are the largest financial element of the budget, and it is important that salary budgets and staffing resourcing requirements are kept under regular review.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 The Council is required to produce and publish a Pay Policy Statement each financial year under Sections 38-39 of the Localism Act 2011. The Council must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 40 of the Localism Act 2011.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Pay Policy Statement (PPS) is reviewed annually to ensure:
- a) it accurately reflects the Council's position and aligns with the aspirations of the Corporate Plan; and;
 - b) it is compliant with the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 The proposed PPS can be found at Appendix A.
- 2.3 This year, key changes include the updating of the posts within scope under the definition of officers covered by the Pay Policy Statement (Paragraph 3).
- 2.4 The PPS makes reference to this council's collective agreement relating to local 'cost of living' pay awards. All pay awards are determined locally based on this agreement.
- 2.5 The Council continues to implement, develop and follow previously agreed arrangements regarding pay and reward. These are regularly reviewed to ensure our PPS is accurate and up-to-date, and our reward package is attractive to current employees and future applicants

They include:

- a Career Development Policy, introduced in 2023/24.
- the real living wage for all eligible employees as part of a commitment to fair compensation.
- revised procedures for job evaluation and for market supplements.
- A 'standby and call out policy' introduced in 2023/24.

- 2.6 On 12 November 2025, Employment Committee considered the draft PPS and agreed to recommend it to Full Council.
- 2.7 Since then, there has been one minor amendment to the draft PPS (section 8.6). This relates to Council's position on the 'sale of annual leave' and was made in response to a recommendation from External auditors. After consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Employment Committee as well as the Cabinet Member for HR, the PPS was referred back to Employment Committee on 21 January 2026 where it was agreed to recommend the amended Statement to Full Council.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council has a legal obligation to publish an annual Pay Policy Statement; consequently, no other options have been considered.
- 3.2 Alternative approaches to the content of the Pay Policy Statement have been considered. This version is deemed most suitable because it aligns to the Council's pay structure, local agreements and regulatory standards.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with the Trade Union and with the Employment Committee.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 Pay Policy Statement 2025-26 - [Pay Policy Statement 2025 26.pdf](#)

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix A – Pay Policy Statement 2026-2027.

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PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2026/27



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

1. INTRODUCTION AND POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) aims to ensure that its remuneration packages are fair, equitable and transparent, leading to the employment of professional staff who have appropriate skills and experience to provide high quality services to its residents and visitors.
- 1.2 SKDC recognises that remuneration at all levels needs to enable the Council to attract and retain high quality employees dedicated to the service of the public.
- 1.3 Under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the “power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the authority thinks fit”. This Pay Policy Statement (the ‘statement’) sets out the Council’s approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.4 It is important that local authorities are able to determine their own pay structures in order to address their strategic aims and to compete in the local and national market.
- 1.5 Once approved by Full Council, this policy statement will immediately take effect, superseding the 2025/2026 Pay Policy Statement, and will be subject to review in accordance with the relevant legislation prevailing at that time, currently annually.
- 1.6 The Council may amend the Pay Policy Statement at any point during the year.

2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 In determining the pay and remuneration of all of its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes:
 - Equality Act 2010,
 - Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000,
 - Agency Workers Regulations 2010, and
 - Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.
- 2.2 With regard to the equal pay requirements contained within the Equality Act, the Council ensures there is no pay discrimination in its pay structures and that all pay differentials are objectively justified through the use of a job evaluation mechanism, which directly relates salaries to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

3. SCOPE

3.1. This Pay Policy Statement includes policies regarding:

- The level and elements of remuneration for the Chief Executive
- The remuneration of the lowest paid employee
- The relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers¹ and other officers
- Other specific aspects of Chief Officer remuneration including fees, charges and other discretionary payments.

3.2. Remuneration in this context is defined widely to include not only pay but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments.

3.3 The definition of officers covered by this policy are detailed in Appendix A to the Pay Policy Statement. For SKDC the following posts are covered:

- Head of the Paid Service, which in this authority is the post of *Chief Executive*

Statutory Chief Officers, which in this authority are the posts of:

- *Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer*
- *Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer*

Non-statutory Chief Officers (those who report directly to the Head of the Paid Service) which in this authority are the posts of:

- *Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer)*
- *Assistant Director (Planning and Growth)*
- *Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)*
- *Head of Service (Human Resources and Organisational Development)*

Deputy Chief Officers, (those who report directly to a non-statutory or statutory Chief Officer) which in this authority are the posts of:

- *Assistant Director Finance (Deputy Section 151 Officer)*
- *Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services)*
- *Head of Service (Corporate Projects, Performance and Climate Change)*
- *Head of Service (Public Protection)*
- *Head of Service (Waste Management and Market Services)*
- *Head of Service (Housing)*
- *Head of Service (Housing Technical Services)*
- *Head of Service (Property and IT)*
- *Head of Service (Health, Safety, Compliance and Emergency Planning)*
- *Economic Development and Inward Investment Manager*
- *East Midlands Building Control Manager*
- *Electoral Services Manager*
- *Democratic Services Manager*
- *Development Management & Enforcement Manager*
- *Planning Policy Manager*

- *Communications Manager*
- *Arts and Cultural Services Manager*
- *Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader*
- *Street Scene Manager*
- *Community Engagement Manager*
- *Governance Support Team Leader*

3.4 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require councils to publish the number of employees who are paid over £50,000 by job title using salary bands. Historically at SKDC these bands are published in the Pay Policy Statement using a minimum range bracket of £5,000 which is based on the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

3.5 Pay details for posts graded Service Manager or above are shown in Table 1. These will also be published on the Council's website.

Table 1

Job Title	FTE	Salary Band
Chief Executive	1.0	£150,000 - £160,000
Deputy Chief Executive	1.0	£110,000 - £120,000
Directors	2.0	£100,000 - £110,000
Assistant Directors	3.0	£85,000 - £95,000
Heads of Service	9.0	£65,000 - £75,000
Service Managers	12.0	£44,000 - £58,000

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE PAY

4.1. The SKDC Chief Executive discharges the responsibilities of Head of Paid Service – a statutory role defined by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Council's Employment Committee determines the level of pay for the Chief Executive. The Committee and its remit are detailed in the Council's Constitution.

4.2. The SKDC Chief Executive has been appointed as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer is an officer of the Council appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Whilst appointed by the Council, the role of Returning Officer involves and incurs personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from their duties as an employee of the Council.

- 4.3. Special fees are paid for Returning Officer duties which are not part of the post holder's substantive role. These fees are payable as required and can be made to any senior officer appointed to fulfil the statutory duties of this role. The fees are set by Central Government for General Elections and across Lincolnshire for Local Elections.

5. CHIEF OFFICER PAY DETERMINATION

- 5.1. The Localism Act refers to Chief Officers. The following posts are Chief Officers at SKDC:
- The Chief Executive who is Head of Paid Service }
 - Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer } "Statutory Officers"
 - Monitoring Officer }
 - Directors
- 5.2 The Council does not have a separate pay policy in relation to Chief Officers.
- 5.3 The remuneration package defined in employment contracts for the Chief Executive and Chief Officers is the same as all staff. It includes a spot rate salary or salary band, the same sick pay arrangements and the same pension scheme arrangements.
- 5.4 The Council publishes senior management salary rates and gender pay details on its website in line with the requirements of the Government's transparency agenda.

6. LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES

- 6.1. The lowest paid staff within the Council's pay structure are on Grade 2. Consequently, we have chosen staff employed on Grade 2 as our definition of the 'lowest paid' for the purposes of this policy. Grade 2 for 2025/2026 is £24,453 per annum.
- 6.2. The terms and conditions of employment for Grade 2 staff are in accordance with collective agreements negotiated, from time to time, by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, as set out in the Scheme of Conditions of Service (commonly known as 'Green Book'). These are supplemented by local collective agreements reached with the Trade Union(s) recognised by the council and by the rules of the council.

7. PAY DETERMINATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 7.1. The Council employs all staff on local terms and conditions. It has a collective agreement in place for local cost of living pay awards based upon pay reviews by the National Joint Council and Local Government Services (NJC).
- 7.2. The Council makes its own determination of cost of living pay awards for all staff in accordance with this local agreement, taking account of the rate of inflation (current and Bank of England forecast), labour market conditions, the

level of previous years' cost of living awards and any specific budgetary constraints.

- 7.3. Where salary bands are used, appointment within these will be based on an assessment against the levels of competency required for the role.
- 7.4. The salary for newly appointed staff is determined on appointment in relation to the job evaluation score for the post. The job evaluation score assumes full competence at the job. Where a new appointee for the job has some development needs, the Council may choose to place the employee on a salary progression until full competence has been confirmed or qualifications have been completed.
- 7.5. In April 2021 the Council adopted the Real Living Wage to ensure wage rates relate to what people need to live. It is calculated based on rising actual living costs.
- 7.6. The Real Living Wage for 2025 was £12.60 per hour. The Real Living Wage for 2026 is £13.45 per hour. It is expected that the Real Living Wage increase will be implemented by May 2026.
- 7.7. Pay grades which receive the Real Living Wage increase may not also receive the annual cost of living pay award agreed by the Council, but they will receive the difference in the two amounts if the cost of living payment is higher.
- 7.8. The Council's current pay and reward arrangements have been designed to ensure consistency through the job evaluation process and with reference to the external market.
- 7.9. The Council has an approved job evaluation procedure which provides guidance on its application and also includes the use of job evaluation panels to review and moderate evaluations.
- 7.10. The Council will monitor pay locally and nationally, as required, and will undertake market reviews in relation to specific posts. Where a post is hard to recruit at any level, particularly where there are supply pressures, the Council has a process in place to consider applying market supplements, and/or to offer recruitment incentives. Market supplements will be reviewed annually and may be withdrawn if market conditions change.
- 7.11. Local government elections and neighbourhood planning referendums are a separate statutory responsibility and rates of pay for local elections are set in accordance with a Lincolnshire wide election scale of fees and charges. These rates differ according to the size of the ward contested.

8. ALLOWANCES

- 8.1. The Council will pay job related allowances to staff where it is a requirement of the job to do so. Staff who are required to respond to emergencies outside normal working hours are also currently in receipt of standby and call out allowances, depending on the nature of the work.

- 8.2 A policy on standby and call out arrangements was introduced which details the relevant pay allowances.
- 8.3 Overtime is payable at a flat rate and can only be undertaken with the prior approval of the line manager. There may be circumstances where overtime is paid at enhanced rates. Chief Officers and managers may be required to work evenings and weekends to meet the requirements of the job and this does not attract overtime.
- 8.4 The Council does not pay essential car allowances or provide cars to any individual member of staff but operates a pool car system available to all employees. Where the Chief Executive, Chief Officers or staff use their own cars for Council business they are reimbursed at a flat rate of 45p per mile in line with the HMRC guidelines. This practice will be reviewed as part of the overall review of pay and reward.
- 8.5 Honoraria and acting up payments may be paid to staff who have taken up additional responsibilities for a defined period of time to cover absence, or additional duties. Where possible such payments will be based on the job evaluated rates of pay for those responsibilities. Each case will be considered on its own merits and a fair recompense will be calculated.
- 8.6 The Council does not ordinarily allow employees to 'sell annual leave' however this can be approved by manager discretion where there are exceptional circumstances which has prevented that officer taking their leave allocation (beyond the statutory requirements). These circumstances can include accrued leave due to sickness absence, maternity leave or service pressures preventing leave being taken. In any case regarding the Head of Paid Service, approval will be given following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Employment Committee.
- 8.7 Temporary short-term appointments of staff will be paid in line with the job evaluated rate for the job and the prevailing market rate for such short term appointments.
- 8.8 Remuneration for staff on secondment will be in line with the Council's Secondment Policy

9. APPRENTICES

- 9.1 The Council actively supports the employment of apprentices. The salary paid to all newly recruited apprentices is based on the National Living Wage (for those aged 21 and over) or the National Minimum Wage (for those up to the age of 20) and is increased in line with Government recommendations.
- 9.2 Current National Minimum Wage/National Living Wage rates for employees are as follows:

April 2025		21+	18-20	Under 18
		£12.21	£10.00	£7.55

April 2026		21+	18-20	Under 18
		£12.71	£10.85	£8.00

National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates are reviewed annually by the Government and any increases take effect from 1st April each year.

- 9.3 In accordance with the Apprentice Levy any existing employees can be signed up to an appropriate apprenticeship in line with identified professional development needs. These employees receive the job evaluated salary for the post that they are employed in.

10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

- 10.1 All staff who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme make individual contributions to the scheme depending on their salary. Contribution rates for 2026- 2027 range from 5.5% to 12.5% (employees need to be earning £203,001 or more for the higher rate).
- 10.2 The Council makes employer's contributions into the scheme, which are reviewed by the actuary. The current employer contribution rate is 24.8%

11. PAY MULTIPLIERS

- 11.1 Whilst job evaluation and the market determine the relationship between the highest and lowest paid employees, an analysis of pay multiples has been undertaken in the light of the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.
- 11.2 The Council defines its lowest paid employees in relation to their grade. This definition has been selected to enable fair comparison on a Full Time Equivalent basis.
- 11.3 The Ratio of the highest paid employee to mean salary per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is 1 : 4.2 (based on actual salary paid).
- 11.4 The Council has no policy about the maximum or minimum levels of such ratio statistics.

12. TERMINATION PAYMENTS

- 12.1 The Council recognises that staff leave the Council for a range of reasons including: retirement, redundancy, career move, moving location, voluntary

resignation, or employment termination. Where a termination payment may apply, each case will be treated on its own merit and will comply with Council policies and the law.

- 12.2 The Council reserves the right to make any appropriate payments to protect the reputation of the Council and manage risk of litigation. This will be in line with legislation and with reference to best value.
- 12.3 The Council does not have any specific termination payments built into any employee's employment contract. It reserves the right to do so should such a need arise in the interests of the efficiency of the service.
- 12.4 The Council has a redundancy policy in place in accordance with current legislation which applies equally to all staff. Where redundancy payments are made to any employee the Council reserves the right to recover the redundancy severance payment.
- 12.5 Termination payments should be kept to a minimum and it must be demonstrated that they are in the best interests of the Council. The purpose of this would be to ensure a clear process and to demonstrate that the Council always works to ensure residents receive the best value for money.

13. RE-ENGAGEMENT OF EMPLOYEES

- 13.1 Employees who are offered another post with any organisation covered by the Modification Order Act, prior to their redundancy leaving date and commence within 4 weeks of leaving, are not eligible to receive any redundancy payment.
- 13.2 Employees who have been made redundant are eligible to apply for vacancies which may arise after they have left the Council's employment. Any such applications will be considered together with those from other candidates and the best person will be appointed to the post. Any necessary adjustment to pension would be made in accordance with the scheme regulations.

14. GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

- 14.1 The Government introduced a requirement for mandatory Gender Pay Gap reporting for public sector employers with 250 or more employees. The deadline for publishing the data is 31 March each year. The Council publishes the relevant data in accordance with the regulations and these are reported to Employment Committee with supporting commentary.

43 Interpretation

(2) In this Chapter “chief officer”, in relation to a relevant authority, means each of the following-

- (a) the head of its paid service designated under section 4(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;
- (b) its monitoring officer designated under section 5(1) of that Act;
- (c) a statutory chief officer mentioned in section 2(6) of that Act;
- (d) a non-statutory chief officer mentioned in section 2(7) of that Act; (e) a deputy chief officer mentioned in section 2(8) of that Act.

Local Government and Housing Act 1989 – Section 2

6) In this section “the statutory chief officers” relevant to SKDC means—

(a) the officer having responsibility, for the purposes of [section 151](#) of the Local Government Act 1972, [section 73](#) of the Local Government Act 1985, [section 112](#) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988[, [section 127\(2\)](#) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999] or section 6 below or for the purposes of [section 95](#) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, for the administration of the authority's financial affairs.

(7) In this section “non-statutory chief officer” means, subject to the following provisions of this section—

- (a) a person for whom the head of the authority's paid service is directly responsible;
- (b) a person who, as respects all or most of the duties of his post, is required to report directly or is directly accountable to the head of the authority's paid service; and
- (c) any person who, as respects all or most of the duties of his post, is required to report directly or is directly accountable to the local authority themselves or any committee or sub-committee of the authority.

(8) In this section “deputy chief officer” means, subject to the following provisions of this section, a person who, as respects all or most of the duties of his post, is required to report directly or is directly accountable to one or more of the statutory or non-statutory chief officers.

(9) A person whose duties are solely secretarial or clerical or are otherwise in the nature of support services shall not be regarded as a non-statutory chief officer or a deputy chief officer for the purposes of this Part.



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday 29 January 2026

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

Review of Financial Regulations

Report Author

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

 richardwyles@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the proposed changes to the Council's Financial Regulations which have been reviewed and updated to reflect current working practices and operating financial thresholds.

Recommendations

Council is asked to approve the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	All
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Financial Regulations provide the internal framework for managing the Council's financial arrangements and are designed to protect the finances of the Council by providing a robust set of controls and governance structures.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Governance and Audit Committee are asked to review any significant amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations, in line with the Committee's terms of reference at Part 2 of the Constitution (Articles of the Constitution). If changes to the document are required then Full Council would be required to agree these as a Constitutional change.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Financial Regulations set out the overarching framework of rules for the proper financial administration of the authority and the responsibilities of those carrying out duties with a financial implication. The Financial Regulations have been reviewed to ensure they are in line with best practice and the latest CIPFA guidance.
- 2.2 The Financial Regulations were last reviewed and updated in line with the CIPFA Good Practice Guide and were approved by Full Council on 26th May 2022. Since this review it has become necessary to review and recommend a number of minor amendments in order to ensure that the Financial Regulations support the Council operationally. The current Financial Regulations are shown at Appendix A and these have been updated. A new version of the Regulations is attached at Appendix B and the proposed changes are detailed in section 3 of this report.

2.3 The proposed changes to the Financial Regulations are outlined below;

Revenue Reserves - Discretionary and Governance

2.4 Clarification is provided on the definition of reserves between discretionary and governance reserves. This clarification is provided at 11.2 of the revised Financial Regulations. Discretionary reserves are those that are established by Council to be used predominantly to fund one-off revenue expenditure in accordance with their intended use. They should not be used to fund regular expenditure in order to avoid an on-going dependency. Governance reserves are those established to deal with unforeseen or unpredictable financial stresses and strains that are outside of the Councils control. They can also 'smooth out' significant changes to funding levels announced by Government that can put undue pressure on the Council finances.

Authorised Limits – Appendix A of the Financial Regulations

2.5 This is the area of the review that has received the most focus as operationally these levels have become out of date and in some cases obsolete. In addition some of the levels are operationally unnecessary as the new corporate finance system has a series of internal controls that safeguard the financial transactions with respect to order raising and authorisations. Due to the number of changes including levels and authorisations, the current approved Financial Regulations is provided at Appendix A for comparative purposes.

- **Virements** – this is the process whereby unallocated budgets can be moved between cost centres where additional costs may be incurred during the year. In respect of revenue, it is only permissible to move budgets between staffing costs or other expenditure to avoid salary budgets being adversely affected. In respect of capital, the virement levels have been updated to reflect the levels of budgeted expenditure levels for capital schemes. The authorisation levels have been updated to ensure there is no service disruption whilst virements requests are being considered.
- **Additions to Budget Framework** – this authority allows for in-year budget framework changes where a proposal has arisen outside of the annual budget setting process. Authority for these changes are either a Cabinet or a Council decision subject to the financial amendment levels.
- **Approval to use the Reserves** – this section has been updated to allow for the use of the discretionary reserves in accordance with the criteria of each reserve. The authorisation and financial levels have been updated and includes consultation with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and Chief Executive.

- **Authorised Signatories** – this section is in respect to raising order and approving invoices. This is a key internal control and ensures there are clear segregation of duties between officers.
- **Bad Debt levels** – these levels have been updated to enable Team Leaders to authorise write offs of specific debt levels before the write off request is escalated to the Head of Service.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Members are asked to consider to changes set out in the report and supporting appendices which are designed to enable efficient and effective use of time whilst ensuring the governance of the Council is protected.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The alternative option is not to approve the updated Financial Regulations but this is not deemed an option due to the need to ensure the levels reflect the operating environment.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The reasons for reviewing the Financial Regulations is to ensure they remain up to date and promote efficient and secure use of Council resources.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The proposed updates to the Financial Regulations were presented to the Governance and Audit committee on 21 January 2026. Due to the timing of that committee meeting and publication of this report no feedback has been incorporated into this report from Governance and Audit Committee members. Any updates will be provided to Council when this item is presented and discussed.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A – Financial Regulations May 2022
- 7.2 Appendix B – Financial Regulations January 2026

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Financial Regulations

May 2022



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

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1.5 Introduction

Financial Regulations provide the internal framework for managing the Council's financial affairs. They apply to every Member and officer of South Kesteven District Council and anyone in the public or private sector who acts on behalf of the Authority.

2.

Throughout these Financial Regulations, the title Chief Finance Officer will be used to denote the designated Section 151 Officer of the Council. The responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer are documented within each of the specific areas listed.

2.1

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Regulations and submitting any additions or changes necessary to the Council for approval.

2.2

It is the responsibility of Directors to ensure that all officers in their directorates are aware of the existence and content of the Council's Financial Regulations, as well as other internal regulatory documents, and also confirm that they comply with them.

It is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer to provide advice and guidance to reinforce the Financial Regulations that Members, officers and others acting on behalf of the Council are required to follow.

2.3

The Medium Term Financial Strategy

2.4

What is the Medium Term Financial Strategy?

The **Medium Term Financial Strategy** is the plan which sets out the Authority's commitment to provide services that meet the needs of people locally and that represent good value for money. It sets out what we aim to do over the next three years, having listened to the views of our communities and considers funds available to the Council.

Why is the Medium Term Financial Strategy important?

The Strategy helps us to meet our statutory responsibilities in respect of financial planning and is critical to ensuring that the Council has a clear understanding of the level of available resources, the costs of delivering existing services and plans for new services. Financial planning facilitates strategic choices around service delivery, efficiency and service reductions.

The Strategy is approved by Full Council and includes information on the spending plans of all services and the intended level of Council tax.

Key Controls

The strategy is reviewed every three years in line with the processes for reviewing and updating the Council's Corporate Strategy but updated annually to make sure it reflects:

- the most recent estimate of resources available
- the budget requirement – which may change as a result of updating estimated resources
- updated operational plans for each Council Service

3.1

- any changes in the national Local Government Funding

Revenue Budget Plan

3.2

What is the Budget Plan?

The Council's budget plan is a three-year income and expenditure plan. It details all known expected expenditure and income from the delivering of Council Services and compares these requirements to the funding available. The budget plan focuses on the priorities set by Council.

3.3

Why is the Budget Plan important?

3.4

The budget plan helps us to meet our statutory responsibilities for financial planning. All local authorities are required to prepare a budget annually which is then approved by Full Council. This is supported by a statement by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the robustness of the budget as proposed and the adequacy of general balances and reserves.

3.5

The plan also helps us ensure, at a more detailed level, that resources are allocated towards the delivery of council priorities. The process of developing the budget helps us to assess and balance any gaps between what we estimate it will cost us to deliver plans, and the money available to do this.

3.6

Key Controls

3.7

Budget planning begins in July of the preceding financial year and the following year's budget proposals together with an indicative two-year budget is presented to Members in February/March at full Council.

Detailed estimates of costs and income are developed for each service.

There may be additional in-year changes agreed in line with the approved levels, if so, both these costs and any ongoing costs will need to be built into the ongoing budget plan.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To develop the budget plan on an annual basis and to ensure a balanced budget is approved.
- To present the budget to Members for approval in February/March prior to the start of each financial year.
- To undertake the budget plan in accordance with accounting/statutory guidance.
- To ensure the impact of any additions to budgets in-year are understood and the impact of this change on the overall financial position of the Council
- To ensure any additions to budgets in-year are built into future budget planning processes.

3.8

Responsibilities of Directors

- 4.
 - To provide information that may be requested in relation to the budget plan.
 - To support the budget setting process.
- 4.1
 - To produce an accurate business case to form part of any request for additional in-year increases to budgets (see Appendix A)

Capital Programme

What is the Capital Programme?

- 4.2

The Capital Programme is the budgeted plan of the capital schemes that the Authority is undertaking or planning to undertake. The development of the Capital Programme is in accordance with the Council's Capital Strategy.

Each year, Directors consider Capital schemes to be included in the Capital Programme, which are then scrutinised through an approval process before being included in the Capital Programme for consideration by Cabinet and ultimately Council.

Why is the Capital Programme important?

- 4.4

Capital assets shape the way services are delivered in the long term and create financial commitments for the future in the form of financing costs and revenue running costs. It is important that the 'Whole Life Cost' of any capital schemes are considered before approval is given, to ensure adequate funding has been identified. This is an integral part of the budget setting process.

The Government places strict controls on the financing capacity of the Authority. This means that capital expenditure should form part of an investment strategy and should be carefully prioritised in order to maximise the benefit of scarce resources.

Having a structured approach which reviews all capital scheme proposals helps ensure that the Capital Programme links into the Council's priorities.

- 4.5

The Capital Programme ensures the Authority takes a structured approach to the management of its assets.
- 4.6

There may be additional in-year changes agreed in line with the agreed levels, if so, both these costs and any ongoing costs will need to be built into the ongoing budget plan.

Key Controls

All schemes included in the Capital Programme require a business case completing which would cover:

- project overview;
- objectives and critical success factors;
- capital expenditure;

4.8

- associated revenue expenditure to be completed;
- the source of funding to be identified.
- These are subject to a rigorous review process, culminating in approval by full Council.
- Where appropriate, schedules of individual projects, within large schemes approved by the full Council must be submitted to Cabinet for approval.
- The capital schemes are developed from asset management plans or invest to save schemes.
- Accountability for each proposal is accepted by a named manager.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To develop the capital programme on an annual basis for approval.
- To present the budget to Council for approval prior to the start of each financial year.
- To identify the funding sources of the proposed Capital Programme ensuring any revenue consequences are taken account of in the overall budget setting process.
- To determine the definition of 'capital' having regard to government regulations and accounting requirements.
- To ensure the impact of any additions to budgets in-year are understood and the impact of this change on the overall financial position of the Council.
- To ensure any additions to budgets in-year are built into future budget planning processes.

4.9

Responsibilities of Directors

- Where a capital scheme is required to be included in or added to the Capital Programme, the responsible officer shall submit a capital business case for the scheme, including possible alternatives with up-to-date estimates of capital and revenue costs;
- To comply with guidance concerning capital schemes and controls.
- To ensure that adequate records are maintained for all capital contracts.
- Ensure that no capital expenditure is incurred on any scheme unless:
 - it is within the approved budget for that scheme
 - the nature of the spend is in line with the original purpose approved for the scheme

- government approval to the scheme has, where appropriate, been obtained
 - the source of funding has been identified
 - any revenue consequential expenditure which arises from the proposed capital expenditure has been accepted as a commitment by the Council
- 5.**
- Ensuring that the appropriate approval is obtained to incur additional capital expenditure which is to be financed wholly by additional grants or other income (see Appendix A).
 - To produce an accurate business case to form part of any request for additional in-year increases to budgets (see Appendix A)

5.1

Budget Guidance and the Budget Timetable

What is Budget Guidance and the Budget Timetable?

5.2

Budget Guidance sets out what we need to do in order to prepare the Council's annual budget. The Budget Timetable outlines the timeframe against activities which will take place, including the key deadlines we ask all involved in budget preparation to follow.

Why is Budget Guidance and the Budget Timetable important?

5.3

The guidance ensures that budgets are produced accurately and consistently in line with financial procedures. It also ensures that the level of detail and what is included meets legal requirements.

5.4

The timetable ensures that the budgets are produced and approved by Council within the dates set out in legislation.

Key Controls

The budget guidance and timetable are produced on an annual basis

The guidance and timetable will focus on the following:

- The full year effect of previous year's decisions
- Consequences of the approved capital programme
- Adjustments in relation to specific 'one year only' allocations and other time expired funding
- Other specific Council decisions
- Budget assumptions on:
 - Levels of pay and the price inflation which is to be applied
 - Council Tax increase
 - Funding allocations from Central Government
 - Superannuation contribution rates
 - Levels of Discretionary fees and charges
 - Levels of Levies
- Ensuring approval of budget by full Council

- Ensuring Council Tax is set by statutory dates
- The format complies with legal requirements and reflects the accountabilities of Service Delivery

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To determine the format of the budget that is approved by the Council

5.6

- To set a balanced budget in order to meet the Section 151 Officers responsibilities
- To produce and distribute the guidance and timetable on an annual basis to officers and Members

6.

- To present the timetable to Members for approval prior to the start of the process
- To ensure returns are made to central government in line with their requirements

6.1

Responsibilities of Directors

- To comply with the accounting guidelines and timetable provided.

Budget Control and Monitoring

What is Budget Monitoring and Control?

6.2

A budget is the planned income and expenditure for a service area or cost centre. Budgetary control and monitoring is the process used by budget managers, supported by officers within Financial Services, to review revenue and capital expenditure against their budgets, and project estimated spending to the end of the financial year. Accountability is achieved through formal reporting of the budget position, carried out at agreed times, and in line with the risk ratings referred to as RAG (red, amber, green) ratings.

6.3

Why is Budget Monitoring and Control important?

6.4

Budget monitoring ensures that once the budget has been approved by the Council, resources allocated are used for their intended purposes and are properly accounted for. Budgetary control is the process of monitoring financial activity against the financial plan and, where necessary, taking the appropriate action in a timely manner to address any movement from the plan.

Budget monitoring and control also provides the mechanism that calls to account managers responsible for defined elements of the budget. It is therefore key that effective processes for monitoring of budgets are in place and adhered to.

To assist with the above it is essential that quality information is available to budget managers to ensure that sound financial decisions can be made, especially where spending may differ from planned expenditure.

6.6

To ensure that the Authority in total does not overspend, each Service is required to manage its own expenditure within the budget allocated to it.

Key Controls

- Budget managers should be responsible only for income and expenditure that they can influence.
- There is a nominated budget manager for each cost centre heading.
- Budget managers accept accountability for their budgets, the level of service to be delivered and understand their financial responsibilities.
- Budget managers follow an approved certification process for all expenditure.
- Income and expenditure are properly recorded and accounted for.

6.7

- Performance levels of service are monitored in conjunction with the budget and necessary action is taken to align service outputs and budget.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To establish an appropriate framework of budgetary management and control that ensures that:
 - budget management is exercised within annual cash limits unless the Council agrees otherwise
 - each Director has available timely information on income and expenditure which is sufficiently detailed to enable managers to fulfil their budgetary responsibilities
- To ensure compliance with the agreed virement procedures
- To prepare and submit reports on the Authority's projected income and expenditure compared to budget on a regular basis and to make recommendations to Members regarding changes to the budget
- To submit reports to Overview & Scrutiny, in consultation with the relevant Director, where a Director is unable to balance expenditure and resources within existing approved budgets under their control

6.8

Responsibilities of Directors

- To maintain budgetary control within their service, as outlined above and to ensure that all income and expenditure is properly recorded and accounted for
- To ensure that an accountable budget manager is identified for each item of income and expenditure under the control of the Director, grouped together in a series of cost centres. As a general principle, budget responsibility should be aligned as closely as possible to the decision-making that commits expenditure

- To ensure that budget spending remains within the service's overall budget, and that individual budget heads are not overspent. This may require appropriate corrective action to be taken where significant variations from the approved budget are forecast
- To ensure that a monitoring process is in place to review performance levels of service in conjunction with the budget and that it is operating effectively
- To report and obtain prior approval by Council and Cabinet, where appropriate, before incurring expenditure on schemes of whatever amounts, that:
 - create financial commitments in future years above the budget level (except where if this is wholly offset by external funding or charges for work carried out on behalf of third parties – see sections 33 and 34 respectively)
 - change existing policies, initiate new policies or cease existing policies or
 - materially extend or reduce the Authority's services
- Emergency expenditure – no proposal should be submitted to Cabinet/Council involving expenditure during a financial year where no provision has been made in the current budget. Only in the case of either urgency or on a matter in which the Council is under a legal obligation, any Council director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, shall have power to agree that the expenditure will be met subject to the action being reported to Cabinet (see Appendix A for limits)

7.

- To ensure compliance with the scheme of virement
- To consult with the relevant Director where it appears that a budget proposal, including a virement proposal, may impact materially on another service area

7.1

Scheme of Virement

What is a Virement?

7.2

A virement is the transfer of budget from one specific area to another. This can either be a transfer within revenue budgets or capital budgets but not between revenue and capital. There are different limits depending on the reason for the change and whether or not it is a one-off transfer or a permanent one. The limits are set out in Appendix A.

7.3

Why is the Scheme of Virement important?

The scheme of Virement is intended to enable the Directors and their officers to manage budgets with a degree of flexibility within the overall framework determined by the Council, and therefore optimise the use of resources.

The key controls are:

- **Revenue and Capital**

- Virement into a receiving budget may only occur provided that the donating cost centre will not subsequently become overspent;
- Virements which involve a key decision should be subject to a Cabinet Report and the Council's decision-making process in line with the Council's Constitution; and
- A record of all virements must be kept.

- **Revenue**

- Permanent virements can only be processed if the donating cost centre has permanent budget provision to fund the requested virement;
- Only in year virements can be agreed for Employee budgets unless the virement is linked to a structural change that has received the necessary approvals; and
- All virements must be authorised in line with the delegated authority approvals.
- Additions to any revenue or capital budget can be made in accordance with the limits set out in Appendix A.

- **Capital**

7.4

- Provisional budgets into subsequent projects require Cabinet approval;
- Transfers between schemes require Cabinet approval;
- Capital Schemes must have a matching expenditure and financing budget; and

7.5

- Transfers that are contained within a scheme must be authorised in line with the delegated authority approvals.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To prepare virement procedures for approval by the Council;
- To monitor compliance with the agreed virement procedures; and
- To report approved virements that change an overall budget.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure compliance with the agreed virement procedures;
- No virement relating to a specific financial year should be made after 31 March in that year;

8.

- To ensure that virements are authorised as per the delegated powers approved by Council;

8.1

- A virement that is likely to impact on the level of service activity of another Director, should be progressed only after agreement with the relevant Director; and
- To ensure that requests for virements are not split into a series of smaller virements to circumvent approval requirements.

8.2

Accounting Policies

What are Accounting Policies?

Accounting policies are the accounting principles, rules and procedures selected and consistently followed by the Council, which dictate what and how financial information is accounted for and presented in the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts.

The key accounting policy guidelines adopted by the Council are the *CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting*. These interpret International Financial Reporting Standards for local authorities.

8.3

Why are Accounting Policies important?

They are important as they provide:

- a clear and open view of the financial affairs of the Council;
- a level of disclosure which is considered to be relevant, informative and appropriate;
- a consistent standard in the process of preparation and presentation of financial statements; and
- an ability to compare between local authorities as required.

Key Controls

- Systems of internal control are in place to ensure that financial transactions are lawful.
- Accounting policies are reviewed annually to ensure they comply with the latest developments in the CIPFA code of practice.
- Suitable accounting policies are selected and applied consistently and approved by Governance and Audit Committee.
- Proper accounting records are maintained and to the required standard.
- Financial statements are prepared which present fairly the financial position of the Authority and its expenditure and income.
- Inspection of accounts by External Audit.

8.4 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To select suitable accounting policies and to ensure that they are applied consistently.
- To ensure the accounting policies are reviewed annually and are set out in the Annual Statement of Accounts, which is prepared in line with legislative requirements.
- To present any amendments to the accounting policies to the Governance and Audit Committee.

8.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To comply with the accounting policies and guidelines approved by the Chief Finance Officer and to supply the Chief Finance Officer with the information when required.
- To keep proper accounting records that are in line with accounting policies.

9. **Accounting Records and Returns**

What are Accounting Records and Returns?

- 9.1 All of the Council's transactions, commitments, contracts and other essential accounting information must be recorded fully, accurately and on a timely basis. Accounting Records must also provide an audit trail leading from the source of income or expenditure through to the accounting statements.
- 9.2 The Council's corporate financial information system is considered the prime source of financial information. The Revenue and Capital accounts, balance sheet, and other financial records, are held within the General Ledger, and its sub-systems including Debtors, Creditors and e-Procurement. Together they form the Council's financial records, from which, along with the Council Tax and Business Rates Systems and the Asset register, the financial statements and financial returns are produced.

Why are Accounting Records and Returns important?

- 9.3 During the financial year, the Council completes financial returns relating to the Council either as a whole or for certain individual services. These can be for a variety of reasons and to different audiences, including Central Government Departments, Members, Auditors and the general public. The information is mainly required by legislation. Maintaining proper accounting records is one of the ways in which the Authority discharges its responsibilities for stewardship of public resources. The Authority also has to comply with legislation and statute, International Financial Reporting Standards, grant conditions and discharge its duties in line with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) requirements.

The Authority has a statutory responsibility to prepare its annual accounts to present fairly the results of its operations during the year. These are subject to external audit who provide assurance that the accounts are prepared properly, that proper accounting practices have been followed and that quality arrangements have been made for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of the Authority's resources. The auditors do this by examining the accounting records of the Authority.

Key Controls

9.6

- The key controls for accounting records and returns are:
 - all Directors, Budget Managers and Finance officers operate within the required accounting standards and timetables as outlined within the guidance issued;
 - all the Authority's transactions, material commitments and contracts and other essential accounting information are recorded completely, accurately and on a timely basis;
 - procedures are in place to enable accounting records to be reconstructed in the event of systems failure;
 - reconciliation procedures are carried out to ensure transactions are correctly recorded; and
 - prime documents are retained in accordance with legislative and other requirements.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To issue instructions considered necessary for carrying out the daily financial work of the Council, after consulting with Directors where needed.
- To determine the accounting procedures and records for the Authority.
- To arrange for the compilation of all accounts and accounting records under their direction.
- To ensure the proper retention of financial documents in accordance with the requirements set out in the Authority's document retention schedule.
- To stipulate the date by which all financial records for any financial year shall be completed.
- To prepare and publish the audited Statement of Accounts of the Authority for each financial year, in accordance with the statutory timetable and with the requirement for the Council to approve the Statement of Accounts before the statutory deadline.
- To make proper arrangements for the audit of the Authority's Annual Statement of Accounts in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

9.7

- To administer the Authority's arrangements for under and overspendings to be carried forward to the following financial year,
- To comply with the following principles when allocating accounting duties:
 - separating the duties of providing information about sums due to or from the Authority and calculating, checking and recording these sums from the duty of collecting or disbursing them; and
 - officers with the duty of examining or checking the accounts of cash transactions must not themselves be engaged in these transactions.
- To ensure that all claims for funds, including grants, are made accurately and by the due date.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To comply with the principles outlined above when allocating accounting duties.
- To ensure that all claims for funds including grants are made by the due date.
- To maintain adequate records to provide a management trail leading from the source of income/expenditure through to the accounting statements.
- To be responsible for all receipts and claims in relation to salary expenses and disbursements made by staff in their service.
- To supply information required to enable the Statement of Accounts to be completed in accordance with the guidelines issued.

10. Annual Statement of Accounts

What is the Annual Statement of Accounts?

- 10.1 The Annual Statement of Accounts is a financial summary of the state of the financial affairs of the Council over the course of a year. The Council is required to follow the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The Accounts and Audit Regulations, as amended from time to time, set out the statutory dates for approval and publication of the Annual Statement of Accounts. The Statement of Accounts is made available for inspection by interested parties and is subject to external audit to ensure that it presents a fair view of the financial position of the Council.

Why is the Annual Statement of Accounts important?

- 10.2 By legislation, the Council is required to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts each financial year (1 April – 31 March). The Statement of Accounts shows not only a snapshot

of the financial position as at the 31 March each year, but also provides the reader with an understanding on how the Council has performed financially during that financial year. After audit, the Statement of Accounts give assurance to key stakeholders that the financial affairs of the Council have been conducted properly and appropriately, and that they give what is considered to be a 'true and fair' view of the financial position of the Authority.

Key Controls

The key controls for the Annual Statement of Accounts are:

- 10.4
 - The Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of these affairs. In this Authority, that officer is the Chief Finance Officer;
 - To manage the Authorities affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets; and
 - The Authority's Statement of Accounts must be prepared in accordance with proper practices as set out in the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain: "the code of Practice" (as amended from time to time)*.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- 10.5
 - To comply with the Code of Practice.
 - To comply with statute and regulations.
 - To draw up the timetable and guidance notes for financial accounts preparation and to advise staff and external auditors accordingly.
 - To sign and date the Statement of Accounts, stating that it presents fairly the financial position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the financial year ended 31 March.
- 11.
 - To ensure that the Statement of Accounts are approved by the Governance and Audit Committee.

Responsibilities of Directors

- 11.1
 - To comply with accounting guidance provided by the Chief Finance Officer and to supply the Chief Finance Officer with the information when required.
 - To keep proper accounting records that are up to date.

Maintenance of Reserves

What are Reserves?

Reserves are amounts set aside to fund specific or unexpected expenditure. There are different reserves held by the Authority, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can

be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and unusable reserves for accounting purposes.

Useable reserves are analysed into those that are earmarked for specific purposes and those that are held to ensure that the Council can continue to provide services if an unexpected event occurs. It is the responsibility of Council to review the allocation and levels of reserves and may put in place specific delegations with respect to their use during any financial year in accordance with the specific policy of the reserve.

Why is Maintenance of Reserves important?

By legislation (the Local Government Act 2003), the Chief Finance Officer must report to Council, immediately prior to setting the Budget and Council Tax, on the robustness of the budget as proposed and the adequacy of general balances and earmarked reserves. The Council then agrees on the level of reserves it will maintain before it then decides on the level of Council Tax. Reserves are maintained as a matter of prudence. They enable the Council to provide for unexpected events and thereby protect it from overspending, should such events occur. Reserves for specific purposes are also maintained, such as the insurance reserve, regeneration reserve and local priorities reserve.

Key Controls

- Reserves are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the Local Government Act 2003.
- To maintain reserves in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
- For each reserve clearly establish its purpose, usage and amount to be set aside.
- Authorisation to establish and add to a reserve is by the relevant Committee or Council following advice from the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Finance Officer.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To advise the Council on prudent levels of balances for the Authority.
- To establish guidelines on the setting up of reserves and then to advise Directors accordingly.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To comply with guidance provided by the Chief Finance Officer and ensure that reserves are used only for the purpose for which they were intended.

Internal Controls

What are Internal Controls?

Internal Controls include the policies, processes, tasks, behaviours and other areas of the Council that taken together:

- 12.2 • enable it to react to significant risks in achieving its objectives. This includes protecting anything which is considered valuable to the organisation from misuse or loss and fraud;
- 12.3 • help ensure the quality of internal and external reporting. This requires the maintenance of proper records, and processes which create a flow of timely, relevant and reliable information from both within and outside the organisation; and
- 12.4 • help ensure relevant laws and regulations are followed, as well as internal policies with respect to the conducting of the business.

Why are Internal Controls important?

- 12.5 The Authority is complex and beyond the direct control of individuals. It requires, therefore, internal controls to manage and monitor progress towards strategic objectives.

The Authority has statutory obligations, including those set out within the Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, which require internal controls to be established to ensure compliance with these obligations.

- 12.6 The Authority faces a wide range of financial, administrative and commercial risks, both from internal and external factors, which threaten the achievement of its objectives. Internal controls are necessary to manage these risks.

The system of internal controls is established in order to provide measurable achievement of:

- efficient and effective operations;
- reliable financial information and reporting;
- compliance with laws and regulations; and
- risk management.

Key Controls

- Key controls should be reviewed on a regular basis and the Authority should make a formal statement annually to the effect that the Authority has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Authority's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- Managerial control systems, including defining policies, setting objectives and plans, monitoring financial and other performance, and taking appropriate anticipatory and remedial action. The key objective of these systems is to promote ownership of the control environment by defining roles and responsibilities.
- Financial and operational control systems and procedures, which include physical safeguards for assets, segregation of duties, authorisation and approval procedures and information systems.

- An effective Internal Audit function that is properly resourced. It should operate in accordance with the principles contained in the Auditing Practices Board's auditing guidelines Guidance for Internal Auditors, CIPFA's Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom and with any other statutory obligations and regulations.

12.8 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To direct and assist the Authority to put into place an appropriate control environment and effective internal controls which provide reasonable assurance of effective and efficient operations, financial stewardship, probity and compliance with laws and regulations. This will ensure compliance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 which requires every local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of the officers (the Chief Finance Officer) has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

Responsibilities of Directors

13.

- To establish and maintain controls as well as processes which ensure such controls are being adhered to and evaluated, in order to be confident in the proper use of resources, achievement of objectives and management of risks on an ongoing basis.

13.1

- To review existing controls in the light of changes affecting the Authority and to establish and implement new ones in line with guidance from the Chief Finance Officer.
- Ensure that officers have a clear understanding of the consequences of a lack of control or not adhering to agreed processes.

13.2 Risk Management

What is Risk Management?

All organisations, whether private or public sector, face risks to people, property and the day-to-day running of the business. Risk is the chance of something going wrong, and the possibility of loss, damage, injury or failure to achieve objectives caused by an unwanted action or event, which we have no control over. Risk can impact upon all officers within the Council as well as the Council's partners and citizens.

Risk Management is a planned and methodical way of identifying areas of risk, evaluating them and taking a look at how the risks can be controlled. Risk Management looks at the measures which an organisation already has in place to deal with identified risks, the adequacy of these measures and the actions required to control these risks effectively.

- 13.5 It is the overall responsibility of the Cabinet to approve the Authority's Risk Management Strategy, and to promote a culture of risk management awareness throughout the Authority.

Why is Risk Management important?

- 13.6 The challenges that the Authority faces, and the rate of change, puts the organisation under increasing pressure to improve the quality of management at all levels. This means that the Authority needs to make sure that risk management processes are structured, as well as being instinctive and intuitive. If management are to meet these challenges, high quality risk management needs to be at the core of decision making at all levels of the Council.
- 13.7

There is an ongoing requirement from the Accounts and Audit Regulations to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which is attached to the Annual Accounts, setting out the processes in place for managing the most significant risks to the achievement of objectives. Risk management processes are an integral part of the AGS.

All local authorities are increasingly being held to account by external assessors for the way in which risk management has been implemented. The Council needs to continue to demonstrate that all Services have a structured approach, which is embedded into planning and reporting cycles and decision-making processes at all levels.

Key Controls

The key controls for Risk Management are:

- The Council has adopted a Risk Management Strategy which has been approved by Governance and Audit Committee and is regularly updated.
- The Council maintains and reviews a register of its corporate business risks linking them to strategic business objectives and assigns named individuals to lead on the actions identified to mitigate each risk.
- Procedures are in place to identify, assess, prevent or contain material known risks, and these procedures are operating effectively throughout the Authority.
- The Governance and Audit Committee receive reports on a regular basis and take appropriate action to ensure that corporate business risks are being identified and effectively managed.
- A monitoring process is in place to review regularly the effectiveness of risk reduction strategies and the operation of these controls.
- Managers know that they are responsible for managing relevant risks and are provided with relevant information on risk management initiatives.
- A Risk Register IT system is provided to assist Directors to manage their risks.

13.8

- A Risk Management Group meets regularly to co-ordinate and supports all aspects of strategic business risk management.
- Committee reports to support strategic policy decisions must include reference to the risks associated along with the decisions being taken, in both a positive and negative scenario (i.e. the risks of taking the decision as recommended and the risks of doing nothing).

13.9

- Documents for all major projects include a risk assessment which must be completed.
- The risk management process specifically considers risks in relation to significant partnerships and provides for assurances to be obtained concerning the management of those risks.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To prepare and promote the Authority's Risk Management Strategy.
- To develop risk management controls in conjunction with other Directors.
- To report to Members of the Governance and Audit Committee on the effectiveness of the risk management process and any changes to it in the Annual Governance Statement.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To take responsibility for risk management, having regard to advice from the Chief Finance Officer and other specialist officers.
- The Risk Management Strategy requires Directors to:
 - Identify corporate and operational risks;
 - Maintain a risk register;
 - Assess the risks for likelihood and impact;
 - Prioritise risks;
 - Identify mitigating controls; and
 - Allocate responsibility for the mitigating controls.
- To ensure that there are regular reviews of all risks within Services.
- To appoint a Service based Risk Champion to report to and work with the Risk Management Group in promoting, co-ordinating and developing risk management initiatives.
- Ensure risk management is a key area of consideration when preparing annual Service Plans.
- Complete an annual Risk Management Self-Assessment and report the outcome to the Risk Management Group.

14.

Insurance

14.2

What is Insurance?

Insurance for the Council is, in many ways, similar to the insurance that private individuals take out to protect items that they either:

14.3

- cannot replace easily; or
- are required to insure as a condition of purchase, i.e. a house purchased via a mortgage etc.

The decision to insure an item or not is based on:

- its replacement cost;
- the likelihood of it needing to be replaced; and
- the cost of the insurance.

14.4

The Council has to go through a similar process for the various risks it faces, e.g. the security of physical assets or the work carried out by its officers. Where the Council believes it is not able to manage risks internally, it will take out insurance in the same way a private individual would, e.g. the Council insures its buildings, its officers (employee liability), and cover for members of the public when using Council facilities (public liability) etc.

14.5

Why is Insurance important?

Insurance is a major area within risk management, enabling risks from unfortunate events to have less of a negative effect due to taking out cover policies. However, insurance is not without a cost, and risk prevention is always preferable to paying higher premiums, where this is possible.

Key Controls

14.6

- Adequate insurance is in place to cover assets of the organisation.
- Policies are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they continue to provide adequate cover for the Authority in line with current risk management strategies and to confirm exclusion clauses are being complied with.
- Procedures are in place to investigate claims within required timescales.
- Acceptable levels of risk are determined and insured against where appropriate.
- The Council has an Insurance Strategy which provides details of the Council's insurance cover and procedures for claims.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that the Authority has the appropriate insurance cover in place.

14.7

- To include all appropriate officers of the Authority in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.
- To arrange all insurance cover through external insurance and internal funding and negotiate any claims in consultation with appropriate Directors and outside claims agencies.
- To inform Directors of any conditions affecting insured risks.
- To review all insurances in consultation with appropriate Directors either annually or when necessary.
- To administer any self-funding arrangement set up to run alongside or replace conventional externally provided insurance.

Responsibilities of Directors

15.

15.1

- To ensure that all officers are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the use of insurance policies.
- To identify and report to the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer any amendments which could be required for the insurance of the Authority.
- To notify the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer immediately of any loss, liability or damage that may lead to a claim against the Authority, together with any information or explanation required by the Chief Finance Officer or the Authority's insurers.
- To ensure that any conditions affecting insured risks are met and that their actions do not invalidate any claims.
- To notify the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer promptly of all new risks, properties or vehicles that require insurance and any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- To inform the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer of the terms of any indemnity that the Authority is requested to give.
- Do not admit liability or make any offer to pay compensation that may prejudice the assessment of liability in respect of any insurance claim.

Treasury Management

What is Treasury Management?

CIPFA defines Treasury Management as:

“The management of the Council’s investments, borrowing and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

- 15.4 The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the Treasury Management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council’s low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 15.5 The second main function of the Treasury Management service is the funding of the Council’s capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses. Any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 15.6 On an annual basis the Council approves a Treasury Management Strategy that is compiled to meet CIPFA requirements with respect to Treasury Management. During the course of each financial year, Governance and Audit Committee receive monitoring and outturn reports in order to ensure compliance with the Strategy.

Why is Treasury Management Important?

It is critical that financial resources are properly managed in a way that balances risk with return whilst ensuring the Council can meet its financial obligations. The scale of borrowing, the inter-relationship between capital and revenue cash management and the fact that the Council may have surplus funds for investment require the development of sound borrowing and investment strategies that encompass all of these activities in a safe, efficient and consistent manner.

- 15.7 The main objectives of the Treasury Management function are:
- To effectively manage and control risks;
 - To ensure that sufficient cash is available to enable the Council to discharge its financial obligations when they become due;
 - To undertake all borrowing at or below budgeted rates on the basis of best value, and also seek opportunities to reduce the cost of servicing existing debt;
 - To plan cash flows and minimise the cost of any temporary borrowing (which is required for day to day cash flow reasons);
 - To invest prudently having regard to the security and liquidity of Investments and the predictability of returns; and
 - To aim to achieve the optimum return on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity.

Key Controls

The Council has adopted the recommendations of CIPFA’s Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Prudential Code. The Council has developed its own Treasury

Management Strategy in accordance with these documents. The Strategy outlines the Council's:

- Key Treasury Management Principles;
- Scheme of Delegation and Reporting Requirements;
- Key Prudential Indicators – covering financing requirements, borrowing limits, debt maturity / type, cost of borrowing and investment income; and
- Policy for both borrowing and investments.

Responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer

- To prepare the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities for approval by Cabinet and Full Council at the Annual Budget Meeting.
- To arrange for all Council borrowing and investment in such a manner as to comply with this Strategy.
- To borrow on behalf of the Council under powers contained in the Local Government Act 1972 and subsequent legislation in accordance with the agreed proactive borrowing strategy.
- To arrange for the investment or utilisation for the Council's own purposes of surplus funds in accordance with agreed creditworthiness criteria.
- To ensure that all investments of money are made in the name of the Council or in the name of nominees approved by Cabinet.
- To ensure that all securities that are the property of the Council or its nominees and the title deeds of all property in the Council's ownership are held in the custody of the appropriate officer.
- To undertake all borrowings in the name of the Council.
- To act as the Council's registrar of stocks, bonds and mortgages, and to maintain records of all borrowing of money by the Council.
- To ensure that there is adequate monitoring of Treasury Management activities, involving both Members and senior Finance officers.
- To report to Governance and Audit Committee at regular intervals on Treasury Management activities

15.9

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that loans are not made to third parties and that interests are not acquired in companies, joint ventures or other enterprises without the approval of the Council following consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.

- To inform officers with responsibility for Treasury Management of significant movements and changes in the Council's anticipated cash flows.

16. Internal Audit

What is Internal Audit?

- 16.1 Internal Audit is an assurance function that provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment, by evaluating its effectiveness in achieving the organisation's objectives. It objectively examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of the control environment as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.
- 16.2 The Council is required to have an Internal Audit function in order to comply with section 6 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 which requires the Authority to "undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control". Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 also requires every local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs.
- 16.3 All Internal Audit reviews are reported to and discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee, the latter being the Committee charged with overall responsibility for governance within the Council.

Why is Internal Audit important?

- 16.4 Internal Audit is a key element of the overall governance structure of the Authority which is designed to ensure that appropriate controls are in place throughout the organisation. Through the provision of a high quality independent appraisal of all of the activities of the Council, Internal Audit aims to improve operational efficiency, risk management and internal control systems, and also provide reliable and effective support to management to ensure that their objectives are achieved.

16.5 Key Controls

The key controls for Internal Audit are:

- that it is independent in its planning and operation and determines its own priorities in providing unrestricted coverage of the Council's operations;
- The Head of Internal Audit has direct access to the Chief Executive and all levels of management and Members; and
- The internal auditors comply with CIPFA's Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom.

16.6 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

To ensure that internal auditors have the authority to:

- 16.7
 - Access premises when required;
 - Access all assets, records, documents, correspondence and control systems;
 - Require and receive information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under consideration;
 - Require any employee of the Authority to account for cash, stores and any other Authority asset under the employee's control;
 - Access records belonging to third parties, such as contractors, when required;
 - Directly access the Chief Executive.
 - To approve the strategic and annual audit plans prepared by the Head of Internal Audit, which take account of the current risk profile of all activities undertaken by the Authority.
 - To ensure that effective procedures are in place to investigate promptly any fraud or irregularity.
 - When initial evidence suggests that a criminal offence has been committed, to consult with the appropriate Director about involving the Police, in accordance with the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

Responsibilities of Directors

- 17.
 - To ensure that Internal Audit are provided with any documents, information and explanations they require during the course of their work;
 - To consider and respond to recommendations in audit reports within one month;
- 17.1
 - Any agreed actions arising from audit recommendations are carried out as per the agreed timetable;
 - New systems for maintaining financial records, records of assets, or changes to such systems, are discussed with, and agreed by, the Head of Internal Audit before implementation; and
 - To notify the Head of Internal Audit immediately of any suspected fraud, theft, irregularity, improper use or misappropriation of the Authority's property or resources.

External Audit

What is External Audit?

External Audit provides an important contribution to the stewardship of public resources and corporate governance of public services by:

- Giving an independent opinion on whether the public bodies financial statements fairly present its financial position and its expenditure and income for the year in question; and

- 17.3
- Reviewing and reporting on aspects of the arrangements which are put in place by public bodies to ensure the proper conduct of their financial affairs, and for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

17.4 The basic duties of the external auditor are defined by the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Local Government Act 1999.

Why is External Audit important?

17.5 Independent external audit is a key process of evaluation of governance processes which seek to protect the management of public money. It is, however, the responsibility of management to put arrangements in place to ensure proper governance, and to regularly review the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

17.6 The Authority's financial statements are scrutinised by external auditors, who must be satisfied that the statement of accounts 'presents fairly' the financial position of the Authority and its income and expenditure for the year in question and complies with all relevant legal requirements.

Key Controls

- External auditors must follow the Code of Audit Practice for Local Government when carrying out their audits.
- External auditors are regulated by the Financial Reporting Council.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- 17.7
- To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents and assets that the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.
 - To ensure there is effective liaison between external and Internal Audit.
 - To work with the external auditor and advise the Council, Cabinet and Officers on their responsibilities in relation to external audit.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents and assets that the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.
- To ensure that all records and systems are up to date and available for inspection.

18. Preventing and detecting Fraud and Corruption (including Bribery)

What is Fraud and Corruption?

18.1 The Fraud Act 2006 defines three separate ways of committing fraud:

- 18.3
- Fraud by false representation;
 - Fraud by failing to disclose information; and
 - Fraud by abuse of position.

- 18.4 “Dishonesty” and “intent to make gain or cause loss” are core themes involved in the committing of fraud.

Corruption is ‘the offering, giving, soliciting, or acceptance of an inducement or reward, or showing any favour or disfavour which may influence any person to act improperly.’ It is an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 – 1916, as amended, and Section 117(3) of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 18.5 Bribery can be described as giving someone a financial inducement or other form of advantage to encourage that person to perform their functions or activities improperly, or to reward that person for having already done so, in order to gain a personal, commercial, regulatory or contractual advantage.
- 18.6

Why is Fraud and Corruption important?

- 18.7 There is an expectation and requirement that all Members, officers, consultants, contractors, and service users be fair, honest and act with the utmost of integrity at all times.

- 18.8 The Council is resolute that the culture and tone of the Authority is one of honesty and opposition to fraud and corruption.

- 18.9 There is an expectation and requirement that all individuals, businesses and organisations dealing in any way with the Council will act with high standards of probity, openness and integrity and that Council officers or its agent(s) at all levels will lead by example in these matters.

The Council's Codes of Conduct for Members and officers set out an approach to work that is honest, fair, accountable and, as far as possible, transparent. Members and officers must act in line with the codes at all times.

Key Controls

- The Authority should maintain an effective Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and a culture of zero tolerance to fraud and corruption.
- All Members and officers should act with integrity and lead by example.
- Officers should raise any concerns that they may have about fraud and corruption preferably with their line manager or another senior manager identified in the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.
- Any information reported by officers will be dealt with fairly and confidentially.
- Senior managers are required to deal swiftly and firmly with those who defraud or attempt to defraud the Authority or who are corrupt.

- High standards of conduct should be promoted amongst Members.
- 18.10 • The maintenance of a register of interests to record gifts and hospitality received in accordance with the officers' and Members' Codes of Conduct.
- Whistle blowing procedures should be in place and operating effectively.
- All relevant legislation should be complied with including the Fraud Act 2006, the Bribery Act 2010 and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- The Authority should maintain an adequate internal control framework.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- 18.11 • To develop and maintain an effective Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.
- To develop and maintain an effective Anti-Bribery Policy
- To maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements
- To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Head of Internal Audit without delay.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Head of Internal Audit without delay.
- To instigate the Authority's disciplinary procedures where the outcome of an investigation into suspected fraud or corruption indicates that improper behaviour has taken place.
- 19. • To ensure that where financial impropriety is discovered, the Chief Finance Officer is informed.
- 19.1 • To take advice and support from relevant parts of the Council e.g. Internal Audit, HR before referring matters to the Police for cases where it is apparent that a criminal offence may have been committed.

Anti-Money Laundering

What is Money Laundering?

Money laundering means:

- Concealing disguising, converting or transferring criminal property or removing it from the UK;

- Entering into, or becoming concerned in, an arrangement which you know or suspect facilitates the acquisition, retention, use or control of criminal property by or on behalf of another person;
- Acquiring, using or possessing criminal property; and
- Becoming concerned in an arrangement facilitating concealment, removal from the jurisdiction, transfer of nominees, or any other retention or control of terrorist property.

19.2 These are the primary money laundering offences and prohibited acts under the legislation.

Why is Money Laundering important?

19.3 Although the risk to the Council of contravening the legislation is low, it is extremely important that all officers and Members are familiar with the legislation and their legal responsibility as serious criminal sanctions may be imposed for breaches of the legislation. Potentially any officers could be caught by the money laundering provisions if they suspect money laundering and either become involved with it in some way or do nothing about it.

19.4 The Anti-Money Laundering Policy applies to all employees of the Council and aims to maintain the high standards of conduct which currently exist within the Council by preventing criminal activity through money laundering. The Policy sets out the procedures which must be followed to enable the Council to comply with its legal obligations.

19.5 Key Controls

- A Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) is appointed to receive disclosures from officers concerning money laundering activity.
- Implement a procedure to enable the reporting of suspicions of money laundering.
- Maintain client identification procedures in certain circumstances.
- Maintain record keeping procedures.

19.6 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- Appoint a Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) who is to receive disclosures from officers concerning money laundering activity.
- Implement a procedure to enable the reporting of suspicions of money laundering.
- Maintain client identification procedures in certain circumstances.
- Maintain record-keeping procedures.

19.7 Responsibilities of Directors

- Be aware of their roles and responsibilities in respect of Anti Money Laundering.
- Ensure they and officers within their service are aware of who is the MLRO.

20.1

20.

20.2

Gifts, Hospitality and Register of Interests

What are gifts, hospitality and a register of Interests?

During day to day work, there may be times when officers or Members are offered gifts and/or hospitality; for example, a meal, a 'thank you' gift or a trip to a sporting event.

20.4

A register of interests means that arrangements are in place for officers and Members to declare any interests that they have which may be seen to cause a conflict during the course of their work, or when making decisions in Committee meetings. For example:

- an officer or Member being related to a Director of a company that the Council trades or deals with; or
- a committee where a Member serves is being asked to make a decision that would affect the Member, either personally or in relation to a project he/she is supporting.

Why are the receipt of Gifts and Hospitality and the Register of Interests important?

In order to safeguard officers and Members in terms of independence (and therefore that of the Council) it is necessary for clear rules to be in place and adhered to.

20.5

In relation to Register of Interest, there is the possibility of criminal liability in relation to corrupt practises by officers and Members. Under the Public Bodies Corrupt Practises Act 1889 it is an offence:

20.6

'corruptly to solicit or receive for himself or for any other person any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage whatever as an inducement to, or reward for, or otherwise an account of any member, officer or servant of a public body doing or forbearing to do anything in respect of any matter or transaction whatsoever in which the said public body is concerned.'

Key Controls

- Small items such as chocolates, pens and diaries need not be declared unless they are offered on a regular basis by the same person or organisation.
- Items over £25 should be recorded within 28 days of the receipt of the gift or hospitality. Written notification must be provided to the Monitoring Officer of the existence and nature of that gift or hospitality.
- Officers must refuse all gifts or hospitality in excess of £100 (if received on one occasion) or in excess of a total of £100 (if received on more than one occasion in same financial year from the same individual or organisation) except with approval from the Chief Executive.
- Officers must declare any interests they have in external organisations and/or partnerships who could potentially influence and are in business with the Authority.

Responsibilities of Monitoring Officer

- To produce and maintain a register of gifts and hospitality received by officers.

Responsibilities of Directors

21.

- To comply with the guidance as provided by the Monitoring Officer.
- 21.1
- To maintain an up to date list of gifts, hospitality and interests within their Service in adherence with the principles in the guidance.

21.2

Asset Management

What is Asset Management?

21.3

Asset Management is the system of monitoring and maintaining items of value to the Authority. Asset management is a systematic process of operating, maintaining, upgrading and disposing of assets cost-effectively.

Asset Management relates to land and buildings; furniture, vehicles and equipment; and stocks and stores. It covers their acquisition, disposal, security and recording.

Why is Asset Management important?

21.4

The Authority owns a diverse portfolio of assets in the form of property, vehicles, equipment, furniture and other items. It is important that these assets are safeguarded and used efficiently and effectively in supporting the delivery of services. The development of a comprehensive and effective approach to asset management is key to ensuring that:

- utilisation of assets is maximised
- maintenance expenditure is prioritised
- major capital investment requirements are identified and quantified; and
- surplus property and other assets are identified for rationalisation and/or disposal.

Key Controls

- A corporate asset management strategy is in place.
 - Asset Registers / inventories are in place to record all assets.
- 21.5
- Accounting policies are in place to control asset classification, capitalisation, depreciation and disposal.
 - Assets are disposed of at the most appropriate time and only when it is in the best interests of the Council and that the best price is obtained.
 - Managers are responsible for the care, protection and security of assets within their control.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To maintain an Asset Register which contains details of all assets owned by the Council which exceed the capital de-minimis levels.
- To ensure appropriate accounting entries are made for the addition and depreciation of assets into the Authority's records.

21.7

- To ensure that assets are valued in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom: A Statement of Recommended Practice*.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To maintain proper security, care and protection of all building, equipment, vehicles, stocks, stores and cash under their control.
- To inform the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Internal Audit of any missing equipment or significant shortfalls in stock as soon as possible after discovery, together with explanations for the loss, if known.

21.8

Land & Buildings

21.9

Key Controls

- Land & Buildings are acquired in accordance with the Property Asset Management Strategy.
- Land & Buildings are purchased only following appropriate authorisation and approval.
- A terrier of all land and buildings owned is maintained, with assets recorded when they are acquired and this record is updated as changes occur.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- Ensuring that all acquisitions are properly recorded within accounting records.

21.10

Responsibilities of Directors

- The Director for Growth shall maintain a terrier of all land and buildings owned by the Council. The terrier will record the holding Service, purpose for which each property/site is held, location and purchase details.
- The Director for Growth shall arrange for condition surveys to be carried out
- Arranging for the valuation of land and buildings as necessary to meet the accounting requirements of the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure the proper security of all land & buildings under their control.

Furniture, Equipment & Vehicles

Responsibilities of Directors

- The Head of Street Scene will maintain appropriate records of the vehicles held by the Council.
- The Head of ICT will maintain appropriate records of the ICT equipment held by the Council.

- 21.11
 - Directors will maintain appropriate records of all other furniture and equipment held or deployed by their service. This will include maintaining an up to date inventory of all individual items with a purchase value in excess of **£100**.
 - Directors should arrange for the accuracy of the inventory to be verified periodically at a frequency appropriate to the risk of loss of the individual items recorded.
 - To ensure that Council property (owned or hired) should not be removed other than in the ordinary course of the Council's business except in accordance with directions issued by the Director concerned.
 - To ensure the safe custody of furniture, equipment and vehicles.

Stocks & Stores

Responsibilities of Directors

- 21.12
 - To make arrangements for the maintenance of reasonable levels of stocks and stores in their control.
 - To ensure that appropriate up to date records of the level and value of stocks and stores held are maintained.
- 21.13
 - To ensure periodical physical examinations of stocks and stores held, against the stock records, should be carried out at a frequency based on the value and vulnerability of the stock.
 - To ensure proper security is maintained at all times for all stocks & stores.

Disposal of Assets

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure appropriate accounting entries are made to remove the value of disposed assets from the Authority's records and to include the sale proceeds if appropriate.

Responsibilities of Directors

- Once land and buildings have been declared surplus to requirements, to arrange for the disposal of these assets in accordance with the Council's strategy.
- Details of any vehicles which are deemed surplus to requirements shall be advised to Fleet Services. Where the vehicle is considered no longer suitable for use within the Council, the Fleet Services Manager shall arrange for its suitable disposal.
- Details of any ICT equipment which a Director deems surplus to requirements shall be advised to the Head of ICT. ICT equipment can only be disposed of by ICT Services, and if it is considered redundant in accordance with the ICT Strategy.
- The Head of ICT is responsible for ensuring that the standards, policies and guidelines of decommissioning of ICT equipment are well defined and

communicated to all staff within the Council. The Data Protection Act must be a key consideration in the decommissioning of IT equipment.

- To identify assets which are deemed surplus to requirements.
 - To secure the best price obtainable for the sale of assets.
 - To record all disposals of assets.
 - To ensure that income received for the disposal of an asset is properly banked and coded.
22. • To consult with the Chief Finance Officer to ensure all financial implications, including accounting for Value Added Tax, are fully considered.

Intellectual Property

22.1

What is Intellectual Property?

22.2

Intellectual Property is a generic term that includes inventions and writing. If these are created by the employee during the course of employment, then, as a general rule, they belong to the employer, not the employee. Various acts of Parliament cover different types of intellectual property.

22.3

Certain activities undertaken within the Authority may give rise to items that may be patentable, for example, software development. These items collectively are known as intellectual property.

Why is Intellectual Property important?

22.4

Like any assets, Intellectual Property is an essential factor in ensuring business continuity within the Council, and the effective delivery of Council services. It is critical, therefore that the Council puts in place adequate controls over the ownership, storage and use of all Intellectual Property.

22.5

The Council holds a large quantity of information for a variety of purposes. As such, it is essential that an overall strategy is in place and implemented for the management of such information to ensure consistency, value for money, accuracy and that any relevant laws are followed.

Key Controls

- In the event that the Authority decides to become involved in the commercial exploitation of inventions, the matter should proceed in accordance with the authority's approved intellectual property procedures.
- The Data Protection Act must be considered in relation to the creation, storage and distribution of Intellectual Property.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**23.**

- To develop and disseminate good practice through the Authority's intellectual property procedures.

Responsibilities of Directors

23.1

- To ensure that controls are in place to ensure that officers do not carry out private work in Council time and that officers are aware of an employer's right with regard to intellectual property.

Staffing**What are Staff?**

Council staff are an essential part of providing the highest level of quality services. Staff are the greatest single item on which the Council spends its budget. It therefore carries not only one of the highest degrees of risk but is also one of the most complex areas. It is therefore crucial that procedures and guidance issued by Human Resources are followed precisely. Examples of areas where procedures exist are:

23.2

- recruitment;
- pay and rewards;
- attendance management;
- health and safety;

23.3

- discipline; and
- grievances

Why are Staff important?

In order to provide the highest level of service, it is crucial that the Authority recruits and retains high calibre, knowledgeable staff, qualified to an appropriate level within the resources available.

Key Controls

23.4

- The key controls for staffing are:
- procedures are in place for forecasting staffing requirements and cost
- controls are implemented to ensure that officer's time is used efficiently and to the benefit of the Authority
- checks are undertaken prior to employing new officers to ensure that they are appropriately qualified, experienced and trustworthy
- managers communicate all changes to staff (including starters and leavers) to Human Resources and Payroll as soon as possible to ensure financial and operational records are kept up to date

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that budget provision exists for all existing and new officers.

23.5

Responsibilities of Directors

- To produce an annual staffing budget.
- To ensure that the staffing budget is an accurate forecast of staffing levels and is equated to an appropriate revenue budget provision.
- To monitor officers' activity to ensure adequate control over such costs as sickness, overtime, training and temporary officers.
- To ensure that the staffing budget is not exceeded without due authority and that it is managed to enable the agreed level of service to be provided.
- The Head of Human Resources to act as an advisor to Directors on areas such as national insurance and pension contributions, as appropriate.

24.

- To ensure that the Head of Human Resources and the Chief Finance Officer are informed if the staffing budget is likely to be materially over or under spent.
- To ensure that all changes to staff (including starters and leavers) are communicated to Human Resources and Payroll as soon as possible to ensure financial and operational records are kept up to date and that appropriate check lists are completed.

Financial Systems

What are Financial Systems?

- 24.1 Financial systems are all computerised systems that directly or via interface are responsible for generating payments to or from the Council.

Why are Financial Systems Important?

- 24.2 Financial Systems are where details of all transactions with the Council are held. It is important that these are accurate so that the underlying transactions are correct.

24.3 Key Controls

- Access control and security of the Council's Financial systems should be maintained.
- Systems should be reconciled periodically to ensure consistency of data stored within.

24.4 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- Approve any new financial systems and interfaces to be introduced.

- Ensure appropriate testing of new financial systems and testing of interfaces between systems prior to their introduction.
- Ensure appropriate reconciliation between all financial systems.

24.5

- For all corporate financial systems:
 - Ensure all input is genuine, complete, accurate, timely and not previously processed
 - All processing is carried out in a complete, accurate and timely manner
 - Output from all systems is complete, accurate and timely in an agreed format
 - Effective contingency and disaster recovery arrangements exist for all computerised systems, to include; back-up / rollback and processes to deal with an interruption to the system
 - Ensure systems are documented and staff trained in the operation of them
 - Correct any errors identified during the interfacing or reconciliation processes

Responsibilities of Directors

- Seek approval of the Chief Financial Officer before changing any existing system or introducing any new financial system.

25.

- For all business area specific financial systems:
 - Ensure all input is genuine, complete, accurate, timely and not previously processed
 - All processing is carried out in a complete, accurate and timely manner
 - Output from all systems is complete, accurate and timely in an agreed format
 - Effective contingency and disaster recovery arrangements exist for all computerised systems, to include; back-up / rollback and processes to deal with an interruption to the system
 - Ensure systems are documented and staff trained in the operation of them
 - Correct any errors identified during the interfacing or reconciliation processes

25.1

Income Collection and Management

What is Income Collection and Management?

Some Services have the facility to charge for the services provided as part of their day to day operations. All charges must ensure compliance with the relevant statutes governing local authority activities. Charges may be levied in advance when a service is booked, at the point of sale or by the raising of a debtors invoice after the service has been delivered. Examples of these include:

- **Charges at point of sale:**
 - entrance fees;
 - cultural activities
 - car parking; and
 - professional fees e.g. Local Search fees and Planning Permission Fees.

- **Debtor Invoices**
 - sundry debtors.

The Council also collects income arising from local taxation, namely Council Tax and Business Rates, and income from parking penalty notices.

Why is Income Collection and Management important?

The collection of income is a significant part of the Council's business and is a vulnerable asset. Effective revenue collection systems are necessary to ensure that all revenue due is identified, collected, receipted and banked securely and effectively. It is preferable to obtain revenue in advance of supplying goods or services as this improves the Authority's cash flow and also avoids the time and cost of administering debts.

In order to ensure that cash flow is maximised and costs are minimised, it is essential that income is collected in as complete and timely manner as is possible. This would normally be at the point of sale or service.

Key Controls

- All debtor invoices must be raised via the Corporate Debtors system. Invoices raised need to be appropriate and legitimate and are calculated correctly.
- All income due to the Authority is legitimate, recorded and charged correctly, in accordance with an approved charging policy, which is regularly reviewed.
- Value Added Tax (VAT) at the appropriate rate must be levied and collected in line with VAT guidance.
- All income is collected from the correct person, at the right time, using the correct procedures and the appropriate stationery. Appropriate supporting documentation is retained in the event of debt recovery procedures being invoked.
- All money received by an employee on behalf of the Authority is banked in a timely manner, to the Authority's bank and is properly recorded in the Council's financial system.
- There is adequate separation in duties in identifying amounts due and the responsibility for collection, as far as is practicable.
- All debtor invoices must be raised via the Corporate Debtors system or other authorised debtor systems.
- Effective action is taken to pursue non-payment within defined timescales.
- Formal approval in accordance with the authorised limits (see Appendix A), for debt write-off is obtained.
- Appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write-off action.

25.5

- All appropriate income documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention schedule.
- Money collected and deposited is reconciled to the bank account by a person who is not involved in the collection or banking process.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To agree arrangements for the collection of all income due to the Council and to approve the procedures, systems and documentation for its collection and accounting for VAT.
- To approve the design of controlled stationery and arrangements for its control and security.
- To agree the write-off of bad debts in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation. To develop and maintain a Corporate Debt Management Policy.
- To develop and maintain up to date procedural guidance for the collection of income due to the Council.
- To ensure that appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write off action.

25.6

- To establish and initiate appropriate recovery procedures, including legal action where necessary, for debts that are not paid promptly.
- To seek approval from Council on an annual basis for discretionary fees which will apply to transactions in the following financial year.

Responsibilities of Monitoring Officer

25.7

- To provide guidance on the retention and storage of income related documents.
- To provide guidance to ensure compliance with the relevant statutes governing local authority activities.
- To arrange appropriate insurance for all Council safes, as necessary.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To establish a charging policy for the supply of goods or services, including the appropriate charging of VAT, and to review it annually, in line with corporate policies.
- To determine where charges can be made at point of sale and where there is a need to raise a debtors invoice.
- To establish adequate procedures and controls to ensure that all staff entrusted with Council money are properly accountable.

- To separate the responsibility for identifying amounts due and the responsibility for collection, as far as is practicable and ensure staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities.
- To issue official receipts or to maintain other documentation for income collection. Officers must issue machine printed or official receipt forms or tickets when receiving all monies due to the Council. All official receipt forms (miscellaneous receipt books) shall be pre-printed, and Officers must sign all such receipts when issued.
- To ensure that at least two employees are present when post is opened so that money is received by post is properly identified and recorded under arrangements agreed with the Chief Finance Officer.
- To hold securely receipts, tickets and other records of income for the appropriate period.
- To order and issue all controlled stationery (receipt forms, books or tickets and similar items). The design of controlled stationery and arrangements for its control and security should be approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To lock away all income to safeguard against loss or theft, and to ensure the security of cash handling.
- To ensure that income is paid fully and promptly into the appropriate Authority bank account in the form in which it is received.
- To reconcile monies collected to evidence bankings in accordance with procedures determined by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To keep a record of all overs and shorts so that any necessary adjustments can be made by arrangement with the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure income is not used to cash personal cheques or other payments.
- To supply the Chief Finance Officer with details relating to work done, goods supplied, services rendered or other amounts due, to enable a sundry debtor invoice to be raised in a form approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure that sundry debtor invoices are raised promptly and within seven calendar days of supply and the debt is supported by sufficient documentary evidence.
- To ensure that VAT is appropriately applied and the correct VAT category is used.
- Directors have a responsibility to assist the Chief Finance Officer in collecting debts that they have originated, by providing any further information that may be requested by the debtor or by Legal Services in the event of Court action.

- To ensure that cash held on premises does not exceed approved limits and adequate insurance coverage has been obtained.
- To keep a record of every transfer of money between employees of the Authority. The receiving officer must sign for the transfer and the transferor must retain a copy.

26.

- To recommend to the Chief Finance Officer all debts to be written off and to keep a record of all sums written off up to the approved limits. Once raised, no bona fide debt may be cancelled, except by full payment or by its formal writing off. A credit note can only be issued in relation to a debt in order to correct a factual inaccuracy or administration error in the calculation and/or billing of the original debt.

26.1

- To obtain the approval of the Chief Finance Officer when writing off debts in excess of the approved limit, and the approval of Cabinet where required.

26.2

- To notify the Chief Finance Officer of outstanding revenue relating to the previous financial year as soon as possible after 31 March in line with the timetable determined by the Chief Finance Officer.

26.3

Ordering and Payment of Works, Goods and Services

What is Ordering and Payment for Goods and Services?

26.4

Every day officers within the Council will order and/or authorise payments for goods and services. An order is a formal instruction requesting goods and services for which a payment will be given. An order should be electronic, represent a commitment on behalf of the Council, and form a contract with suppliers.

The Council has Contract Procedure Rules in place which aim to achieve value for money in the purchase of goods and services. These rules set the framework to ensure that procurement delivers value for money across all services and directly contributes to the achievement of our corporate priorities.

Why is ordering and payment important?

Public money should be spent with demonstrable probity and in accordance with the Authority's policies. Authorities have a statutory duty to achieve best value in part through economy and efficiency. The Authority's procedures should help to ensure that services obtain value for money from their purchasing arrangements. These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Contract Procedure Rules.

Key Controls

- All goods and services are ordered only by appropriate persons and are correctly recorded.

- Only authorised officers set up in the E-procurement system can authorise unless in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- Goods and services received are checked to ensure they are in accordance with the order.
- Payments are not made unless a valid purchase order is provided, goods have been received by the Authority to the correct prices, quantity and quality standards unless in exceptional circumstances as agreed by the Chief Finance Officer.
- All payments are made to the correct supplier, for the correct amount and are properly recorded, regardless of payment method.
- Normal method for all payments is via BACS.
- All appropriate evidence of the transaction and payment documents are retained and stored for the defined period, in accordance with the document retention guidelines.
- All expenditure, including VAT is accurately recorded against the right budget and any exceptions are corrected. If VAT is being re-claimed there is a need to ensure that it is appropriate to do so and a VAT invoice is provided.

26.5

- All invoices with Construction Industry Tax liability are accurately processed in accordance with the scheme.
- All invoices are addressed to South Kesteven District Council.
- In addition, the effect of e-business/e-commerce and electronic purchasing requires that processes are in place to maintain the security and integrity of data for transacting business electronically.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that the Authority's main financial systems and procedures are sound and properly administered.
- To approve any changes to existing financial systems and to approve any new systems before they are introduced.
- To make payments from the Authority's funds on the authorisation of officers in line with the Authorised Limits (see Appendix A) that the expenditure has been duly incurred in accordance with financial regulations.
- To ensure the security, safe keeping and maintenance of blank cheques.
- To ensure that payments are authorised in accordance with the bank mandate.
- To ensure payments are processed for the correct amount.

- To make payments, whether or not provision exists within the estimate, where the payment is specifically required by statute or is made under a court order.
- To make payments to contractors based on the certification of the appropriate Director or nominated representative which must include details of the value of work, retention money, amount previously certified and amounts now certified.
- To provide advice and encouragement on making payments by the most economical means.
- To ensure that a budgetary control system is established that enables commitments incurred by placing orders to be shown against the appropriate budget allocation so that they can be taken into account in budget monitoring reports.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that officers use e-procurement for the raising of purchase orders and details of goods/services receipted are recorded in the system unless there are exceptional circumstances as approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure that goods and services are purchased in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- To ensure orders for goods and services are correctly addressed.
- To ensure that orders are only used for goods and service provided to the department or are purchased for recharge to voluntary organisations providing services that complement those provided by the Council.
- To ensure individuals do not use official orders to obtain goods or services for their private use.
- Each order sent to a supplier must include the contract price or quotation obtained as well as the contract/quotation reference.
- All invoices are in the name of South Kesteven District Council and contain accurate information in line with the order.
- To ensure invoices are processed in a timely manner.
- To ensure that where access to the computerised ordering system is available it is used to create a commitment to be shown against the budget head. Any exemption from this requirement to be subject to the approval of the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure that there are sufficient officers authorised to act on the Directors behalf for approving orders and paying invoices without orders. The approval limits should not exceed the Authorised Limits (see Appendix A).

27. Grant Payments

What are Grant Payments?

- 27.1 South Kesteven District Council recognises and values the contribution that community and voluntary organisations make to their communities. Accordingly, grants are given to them to deliver services and activities that are in line with the Council's priorities, aims and objectives. This funding supports a range of activities including grants to the third sector.

Why are Grant Payments important?

- 27.2 Grant payments are important as they are designed to help and support those organisations, often those who may have access to only limited resources, who provide services and organise activities for the local community. As this funding is sourced from public sources, it is important to ensure that it is spent in an appropriate way.

27.3 Key Controls

- Checks are undertaken on the integrity and financial standing of organisations to be funded.
- All applications are facilitated through a standard application form which requires various information including up to date accounts, bank statements, constitution, DBS information and child protection policies (where applicable) and expected outcomes which will arise from the funding provided. The amount of information requested will be proportionate to the amount of funding granted.
- Procedures are in place for the review and approval of grant applications, ensuring that expected outcomes align with Council priorities, aims and objectives.
- Funding agreements are signed off by both parties to confirm the terms and conditions on which the provision of funding is based. This will include the outcomes expected, performance indicators, and reporting requirements.
- Monitoring arrangements are established to ensure that evidence is provided by the organisation on a periodic basis to confirm that outcomes have been achieved in line with the grant funding agreement and that systems, processes and financial controls remain appropriate.

27.4 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that all grant payments are properly recorded in the Council's accounts.

Responsibilities of Directors

- 27.5
- To ensure that grant awards are consistent with Council priorities, aims and objectives.
 - To ensure grants awarded are in line with available budgets.
 - To ensure that appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place, thereby obtaining assurance that funding has been applied for the purposes intended.
 - To ensure that all grant payment are subject to annual consideration and approval

28. Purchase Cards

What are Purchase Cards?

- 28.1 Purchase cards are a form of company charge card that allows goods and services to be procured. Purchase cards are issued directly to employees.

Why are Purchase Cards important?

- 28.2 Purchase cards provide the Council with another method of payment for goods and services and reduces the need for cash within the Authority. Purchase cards also provide the Authority with greater visibility of ad-hoc transactions.

28.3 Key Controls

- All purchase card transactions must be logged on the financial system.
- All purchase card transactions must be matched to the bank transaction and authorised by the authorising manager.
- Cards must be held securely and not shared.
- Purchase cards must not be used for personal transactions.
- Purchase cards must only be used by the individual who it is assigned to.
- Purchase cards will only be issued to individuals who have received appropriate training.
- Individual transaction and monthly limits must be agreed by the authorising manager.
- Purchase cards must only be used in accordance with the prevailing policy.

28.4 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To provide guidance to all officers on the proper use of Purchase Cards within the Council.
- To ensure that appropriate accounting guidelines are in place for transactions where the purchase card is used, including the accounting for VAT.

- To approve purchase cards to be issued to individual individual and monthly transaction limits.

officers and approve

- To arrange cancellation of the Purchase Cards when an officer leaves the Authority.
- To provide guidance on receipt retention.

28.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To comply with the rules and guidance provided by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To set the individual and monthly transaction limits.
- To ensure that officers who are allocated Purchase Cards and their Managers are aware of their responsibilities regarding this (and further detail contained within the Purchase Card User Guide).
- To ensure that the card is returned to the Exchequer team, in person, in the event the cardholder leaves the Authority.
- To ensure that VAT receipts are retained for the appropriate period.

29. **Payments to Employees and Members**

What are Payments to Employees and Members?

- 29.1 As part of main Council business, the Council has to pay officers their salaries. In addition, payments can be made for other expenses which they have occurred on behalf of their duties.
- 29.2 Salaries and wages are paid in accordance with the approved Establishment List for the Council. Salaries are paid on the third Friday of each month, partly in advance and partly in arrears. All payments are made by BACS.
- 29.3 Members' allowances are paid monthly through the payroll system.

Why are Payments to Employees and Members important?

- 29.4 Officer costs are the largest item of expenditure for most Councils. It is, therefore, important that payments are made accurately, timely, made only when they are due and that payments accord with individuals' conditions of services.
- 29.5 It is also important that all payments are made accurately, recorded and accounted for and that Members allowances are authorised in accordance with the scheme adopted.

29.6 **Key Controls**

Key controls are:

- Proper authorisation procedures are in place and that there is adherence to corporate timetables and procedures in relation to the prompt notification of all changes including:
 - Starters;
 - Leavers;
 - Variations; and
 - Enhancements.
- All payments are made in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment, and approved timesheets and claims where appropriate;
- Frequent reconciliation of payroll expenditure against approved budget and bank account;
- All appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention schedule; and
- HMRC regulations are complied with.

29.7 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To arrange and control secure and reliable payment of salaries, wages, compensation or other emoluments to existing and former officers, and to determine and approve the associated procedures.
- To record and make arrangements for the accurate and timely payment of tax, superannuation and other deductions complying with statutory requirements.
- To make arrangements for payment of all travel and subsistence claims or financial loss allowance.
- To make arrangements for paying Members travel or other allowances upon receiving the prescribed form, duly completed and authorised.
- To provide advice to secure payment of salaries and wages by the most economical means.
- To ensure that there are adequate arrangements for administering superannuation matters on a day-to-day basis.

29.8 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure appointments are made in accordance with the regulations of the Authority and approved establishments, grades and scale of pay and that adequate budget provision is available.
- To notify the HR Service of all matters affecting payments as soon as possible and in the required manner. In particular:

30.

30.1

- appointments, resignations, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and transfers;
 - absences for sickness or other reason, apart from approved leave;
 - changes in pay rates, other than pay awards and agreements of general application; and
 - information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax and national insurance.
- To ensure that adequate and effective systems and procedures are operated so that:
 - payments are authorised to bona fide officers only;
 - payments are only made where there is a valid entitlement;
 - conditions and contracts of employments are correctly applied; and
 - officer's names listed on the payroll are checked at regular intervals to verify accuracy and completeness.
- To ensure all officers' expenses are paid via payroll.
- To certify travel and subsistence claims and other allowances. Certification is taken to mean that journeys were authorised and expenses properly and necessarily incurred, and that allowance are properly payable by the Authority, ensuring that cost-effective use of travel arrangements is achieved. Due consideration should be given to tax implications and that the Chief Finance Officer is informed where appropriate.
- Officers' claims submitted more than six months after the expenses were incurred will be assessed and determined, for payment or otherwise, by the Director. The Chief Finance Officer will provide guidance on which the assessments and determination can be made.
- To ensure that the Chief Finance Officer is notified of the detail of any employee benefits in kind, to enable full and complete reporting within the income tax self-assessment system.
- To ensure that all appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention guidelines.

Taxation

What is Taxation?

There are five types of taxation which the Council will be aware of and take account of when it carries out its business. These are:

- Value Added Tax (VAT);
- Income Tax and National Insurance;

- 30.4
- Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) Tax;
 - Insurance Premium Tax; and
 - Corporation Tax (on companies it controls)

Each has its own rules and relates to different areas of the Council's business.

30.5 **Why is Taxation important?**

Like all organisations, the Authority is responsible for ensuring its tax affairs are in order. Tax issues are often very complex and the penalties for incorrectly accounting for tax are severe. It is therefore very important for all Officers to be aware of their role.

- 30.6
- Detailed consideration of future spending is required to ensure that the Council can continue to recover all the VAT it incurs, both on new schemes and on its existing expenditure. It is therefore important for all officers to be aware of their role in ensuring the Council's compliance with and adherence to HMRC's VAT Regulations and the requirements of the Council's VAT guidance.

It is important that the Council does not waste resources through under recovery of VAT, failing to identify taxable transactions and account for VAT due at the correct time, unnecessarily incurring non-UK VAT that is generally unrecoverable, or by making poor decisions due to inadequate information.

Key Controls

- 30.7
- Budget Managers are provided with the relevant information and kept up to date on tax issues.
 - Budget managers are instructed on required record keeping.
 - All taxable transactions are identified, properly carried out and accounted for within stipulated timescales.
 - Records are maintained in accordance with instructions.
 - Returns are made to the appropriate Authorities within the stipulated timescale.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that there are proper arrangements in place for the administration and accounting of the four areas of taxation.
- To ensure that all arrangements comply with the Council's statutory responsibilities.
- To complete a monthly return of VAT input and outputs to HMRC.
- To provide details to HMRC regarding the CIS Tax deduction scheme.
- To maintain up-to-date guidance for officers on taxation issues in the taxation manual on the Intranet with updates on significant changes.

- Complete the Council's annual partial exemption calculation and ensure that, as far as possible, this is not exceeded.
- Provide VAT advice, both strategically and operationally.
- To complete all HMRC returns regarding PAYE, on a timely basis.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that the correct VAT liability is attached to all income due.
- To ensure that all VAT recoverable on purchases complies with HMRC regulations.
- To ensure that all capital work and revenue development is notified to the Council's VAT Officer at the earliest opportunity where any of the following apply:
 - significant VAT is incurred;
 - any VAT-exempt income is generated; or
 - there are non-cash benefits, e.g. Land swap or provision of services at below market price.
- To fund any interest charges or penalties falling upon the Council from HMRC that result from their Directorate's failure to account for the correct VAT at the correct time.
- To retain all VAT-related documents in accordance with the Council's document retention policy.
- To ensure that, as far is possible, tax is accounted for in the correct tax accounting period.
- To ensure that, where construction and maintenance works are undertaken, the contractor fulfils the necessary construction industry tax deduction requirements.
- To ensure that all persons employed by the Authority are added to the Authority's payroll and tax deducted from any payments, except where the individuals are bona fide self-employed or are employed by a recognised agency.
- To ensure officers are aware of and follow the guidance on taxation issued by the Chief Finance Officer in the Authority's Tax manual.
- To ensure that officers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to self-billing (see self-billing regulation).

31.

Document Retention

What is Document Retention?

Laws and best practice provide requirements and guidelines for the retention and maintenance of documents, along with details as to how long they should be kept. A Document Retention Policy provides a systematic way of deciding to keep or destroy documents which have been received or created in the course of business. It gives guidance on how documents should be kept and how they should be destroyed.

Why is Document Retention important?

Document Retention is important as it provides a means of supplying evidence which verifies that income and expenditure recorded in the Council's financial statements is valid, accurate and complete. External organisations also require such confidence. There are strict guidelines and legal requirements in place to satisfy bodies such as HMRC.

A document retention policy will help to simplify the running of a Service by promoting efficiency and freeing up valuable storage space. Also, a document retention policy can protect you, ensuring you have evidence for your practice when required, and help makes sure laws are being followed.

Key Controls

- An understandable and clearly communicated Document Retention Policy is in place.
- All key areas of the Councils operations are covered within the policy.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that a comprehensive Document Retention Policy is in place and this is in line with statutory guidance.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure compliance with the guidance within their services.
- To ensure that any amendments to the guidance are reported to the Records Manager on a timely basis.

Partnerships (including Joint Ventures and Companies)

What are Partnerships?

Partnerships provide alternative arrangements for the Council to ensure services are delivered to the local community. This may be better than providing the services directly or by procuring a service from another agency.

Why are Partnerships, Joint Ventures and Wholly Owned Companies Important?

The distinctive role of the Council is one of leadership to bring together the contributions of the various agencies. We therefore need to deliver a shared vision of services based on user wishes. Partnerships play a key role in delivering community strategies and in

helping to promote and improve the well-being of the area. The Council can work in partnership with others - public agencies, private companies, community groups and voluntary organisations.

32.4

There are many reasons to enter into partnerships including:

- Providing new and better ways of delivering services to our residents
- Creating formal structures to bind partners to work together long-term for shared objectives
- Sharing risk with others
- Accessing new resources, including funding
- Forging new relationships

Key Controls

32.5

- All partnerships should be appropriately constituted, with clear and unambiguous rules for decisions, expenditure, goals and responsibilities.
- All partnerships should file accurate annual returns in a timely manner, in an appropriate form to the nature of the partnership.
- The key aims of the partnership should be agreed and committed to from all partner agencies.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

32.6

- To ensure that the accounting arrangements to be adopted for each partnership are satisfactory.
- To ensure that corporate governance arrangements and legal issues have been considered.
- To ensure that risks are fully appraised and reported before agreements are entered with external agencies.
- To ensure that any specific insurance is considered for any officers or members acting formally as a Director to any formally constituted company.
- To ensure that the Council's share of any financial impact is appropriately fed into the financial statements, medium term financial planning and budget planning processes.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To develop a suitable business case setting out the purpose of each partnership proposed and why the proposed route is the best to meet the Council's objectives.
- To ensure appropriate approvals are obtained before any negotiations are concluded with external agencies.
- To ensure that appropriate processes are put in place to represent the interests of the Council, in line with their stake in any partnership arrangement.

33.

- To monitor the Council's share of any financial impact of the partnership is incorporated into the Council's budget monitoring processes.
- To monitor all other performance aspects of the partnership.

33.1

External Funding including Grant applications

What is External Funding?

33.2

Sources of external funding provide additional resources to enable the Council to deliver services to the local community. This can be provided by the in-house service, or by commissioning partners or other agencies. Care needs to be taken, to ensure that the funding conditions meet the aims and objectives of the Council.

33.3

Smaller organisations may be prohibited from bidding for directly accessing some sources of external funding, relying on the Council to effectively sponsor their business case. If the Council accepts, then it becomes the accountable body for the grant; making it ultimately responsible for its correct use.

33.4

Why is External Funding important?

External funding is a very important source of income, especially at a time when the Council's resources are limited and scarce. However, funding conditions need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the aims and objectives of the Authority.

33.5

Local authorities are increasingly encouraged to provide seamless service delivery through working closely with other organisations and private service providers. Funds from external agencies provide additional resources to ensure that the Council objectives are achieved. By acting as Accountable Body for others, the Council may enable projects to proceed and support the achievement of wider objectives within its area.

Key Controls

The key controls for external funding are:

- to ensure that the key conditions of funding are understood and complied with; including planning and approval for any match funding and revenue costs associated with any capital grant (such as ongoing maintenance costs).
- to ensure that funds are acquired only to meet the priorities approved in the policy framework by the Council;
- to ensure that risks associated with the funding are known and mitigated – particularly around the potential future clawback of external funding
- to ensure any long-term constraints on assets is understood, recorded and adhered to, which arise from conditions attached to accepted grants.

- to assign a service area responsible for oversight of performance of any agency where the Council is acting as Accountable Body for external funding.
- to have a developed exit strategy for when the grant concludes.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that all funding applications are reviewed prior to submission
- To ensure that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Authority's accounts.
- To ensure that any match funding requirements are considered prior to entering into agreements and the future revenue budgets reflect these requirements.
- To ensure that the revenue implications that arise from one off capital grants are understood before the grant is applied for..
- To ensure that any necessary claims or returns are made within the deadlines set.

33.7

- To ensure that audit requirements are met.
- To include the income and expenditure in the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts.
- To advise on requirements for ensuring that the Council's duties as Accountable Body for external funding are met
- To adjust the budgets in line with appropriately approved and awarded grants.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure all applications for funding are consistent with the Council's priorities and have been reviewed by the Chief Finance Officer prior to submission
- To seek appropriate approval to accept any external funding in line with the authorised limits (see Appendix A).
- To ensure risks, constraints and any ongoing funding commitments are documented and fully considered against the benefits of any grants received.
- To ensure that all claims for funds and other returns are made accurately and duly signed by the due date.
- To ensure that the project progresses in accordance with the agreed programme and that all expenditure is properly incurred and recorded.

- To ensure that the appropriate approval is obtained prior to incurring additional expenditure on schemes, projects, programmes etc. which is to be financed wholly by additional grants or other income.
- To ensure that relevant documentation is retained in accordance with the terms of the grant as per the Council's document retention scheme.
- To provide on an annual basis details of external funding which have been agreed.
- To provide a breakdown of projected income and expenditure each year so that these can be properly budgeted for in the Council's financial system.
- To ensure appropriate performance monitoring of any funding where the Council is acting as Accountable Body.

34.

Work for External Parties

34.1

What is Work for External Parties?

Legislation enables the Council to provide a range of goods services to both individuals and organisations. Various pieces of legislation cover whether costs can be recovered, the extent a surplus can be earned and whether there are restrictions on the use of any income received. The requirements may be directly agreed with the Council, or it may choose to bid to provide a service via a tender process.

34.2

Why is Work for External Parties important?

34.3

Work may be chargeable and enable a unit to maintain economies of scale and existing expertise. Depending on the service and the recipient then the income may contribute to the Council's central running costs.

Key Controls

- Ensure that the work falls within the Council's statutory powers.
- Ensure all parties are clear about what services are being provided and the basis of any such provision.
- Ensure risks associated with the work are known, documented and appropriately managed.
- Ensure proposals are costed properly and any charges are within Council's statutory powers.

34.4

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- Ensure that all income and expenditure relating to External parties is contained within the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts.

- Support business areas to calculate costs associated with any service offered.
- Adjust budgets in line with any agreed changes in income and expenditure resulting from any approved works for External Parties.

Responsibilities of Directors

- Ensure that appropriate approval is sought in advance of any formal agreement to proceed in line with the Authorised Limits (see Appendix A).
- Ensure that the business area has the appropriate expertise and capacity to undertake any work before committing the Council into provision.
- Ensure that appropriate documentation is agreed between the parties including what services are being provided, charges, timing and trigger points of payments.
- Ensure risks are identified in advance and a risk management plan put in place; this could include:
 - Appropriate insurance provision
 - Appropriate timing of payments
 - Appropriate contract management
- To provide a breakdown of any projected income and any additional expenditure each year so that these can be properly budgeted for in the Council's financial system and included within the Statement of Accounts.

Authorised Limits

Operationally there are a series of decisions that are required to allow the Council to operate efficiently without seeking approval from Council each time (for example moving budgets, accepting grants or writing off bad debt). This appendix sets out limits and responsibilities for these matters. The amounts provided are the limits per scheme or project. The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for maintaining this document to maintain operational effectiveness (with any changes to limits taken in consultation with the Cabinet Member responsible for Financial matters). Any changes to limits should be included within the next financial monitoring report.

Nothing contained within this Appendix prohibits formal delegation by Full Council or Cabinet to delegate greater limits or a project, scheme or area basis.

Virements - Revenue Budgets (sections 6, 32 and 33 of Financial Regulations)

Virements (adjustments) to revenue budgets can take place under a range of circumstances:

- Revenue (current year only) – can be between employee to employee budgets or non-employee to non-employee budget lines (see section 6 of Financial Regulations) *
- Revenue (grant funded) – note such changes will only be for the period of the grant (see section 32 of Financial Regulations)
- Revenue (external income) – this should only be for the duration of any contract, unless there is an expectation that income will be sustainable (see section 33 of Financial Regulations)

* One-off virements should only be used when moving budgets from one area of responsibility to another. If they are maintained within one service area, consider reporting an underspend in one area, offset by an overspend in the other.

The table below sets out as a minimum the approval required from the business, finance and members depending on the size of the change:

Business Lead	Finance Lead	Member Lead	Consultation	Revenue (in-year and grant funded)	Revenue (external income)
Head of Service	Team Leader	N/A	Assistant Director	Up to £25,000	Up to £25,000
Assistant Director	Chief Finance Officer or deputy	N/A	Director	£25,001 - £50,000	£25,001 - £50,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	N/A	Cabinet Member	£50,001 - £100,000	£50,001 - £100,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Cabinet Member	N/A	£100,001 - £150,000	£100,001 - £250,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Cabinet	N/A	£150,001 - £250,000	£250,001 - £500,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Full Council	N/A	Over £250,000	Over £500,000

Capital Budgets Amendments (Section 3 of Financial Regulations)

Virements to capital budgets can take place under a range of circumstances:

- Capital (grant funding) – if we have successful in securing grant funding
- Capital (external contribution) – if we have received income from another external source (such

as a developer contribution)

- Capital (intra-scheme transfer) – if a scheme is going to overspend and this can be contained by transferring from another scheme in the same financial year without a risk that this will lead to an overspend in that scheme

The table below sets out as a minimum the approval required from the business, finance and members depending on the size of the change:

Business Lead	Finance Lead	Member Lead	Consultation	Capital
Head of Service	Team Leader	N/A	Assistant Director	Up to £25,000
Assistant Director	Chief Finance Officer (or deputy)	N/A	Director	£25,001 - £50,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	N/A	Cabinet Member	£50,001 - £100,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Cabinet Member	N/A	£100,001 - £150,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Cabinet	N/A	£150,001 - £500,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Full Council	N/A	Over £500,000

Additions to Budgets (Sections 2 (Capital) & 3 (Revenue) of Financial Regulations)

Additions to the approved budget framework where no external funding has been secured (including creation of new service areas) can be agreed by Cabinet or Full Council as per the limits in the following table::

Approval Body	Revenue and Capital
Cabinet	Up to £150,000 per addition up to £600,000 cumulative per financial year
Full Council	Over £150,000 per addition and over £600,000 cumulative (per year)

Note that these limits do not apply if being fully funded from an external contribution or grant – see the virements section for approach and limits in these circumstances.

Approval to use discretionary reserves with the exception of the Local Priorities Reserve and Regeneration Reserve

Accessing reserves to fund specific one-off expenditure can be agreed by the Chief Finance Officer or Cabinet Member as per the limits in the following table:

Business Lead	Finance Lead	Member Lead	Consultation	Limit
Director	Chief Finance Officer	N/A	Cabinet Member for Finance	Up to £100k
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Cabinet Member		Over £100k

Authorised Signatories (Section 26 of Financial Regulations)

The following table sets out the limit per transaction for raising orders, approving invoices (without an order), approving expenses to employees and approving lease agreements; noting that no payment should be split into smaller components to circumvent these limits.

Authorised By:	Authorised Limit for Orders & 400	Authorised Limit for Payroll &	Authorised Period for Lease

	Invoices	Expenses	Agreements
Staff below Team Leader Level	Up to £1,000	N/A	N/A
Team Leaders or equivalent	£1,001 - £10,000	Up to £500	Less than 12 months
Heads of Service	£10,001 - £30,000	£501 - £2,000	Less than 12 months
Assistant Directors	£30,001 - £200,000	Over £2,000	Less than 12 months
Director	Over £200,000		
Chief Finance Officer	Over £200,000	Over £2,000	12 months and over

The Chief Finance Officer can, based upon a satisfactory explanation of need, agree an increase for officer(s) within a business area, for any amount up to the Chief Finance Officer's current limit.

Bad Debt Write-Off (Section 25 of Financial Regulations)

Any debit or credit balance under £50 per individual debt can be written-off by a Head of Service (or equivalent) without the need to be counter-signed. In all other cases, each write-off will be countersigned by the Chief Finance Officer or their deputy as appropriate as laid out in the table below.

Proposed by:	Authorised By:	Delegated Limit (per debt)
Heads of Service (or equivalent)	Assistant Director	£50 - £2,000
Assistant Director	Director & Deputy S151	£2,001 – £5,000
Director/ Chief Finance Officer	Chief Finance Officer	£5,001 – £25,000
Chief Finance Officer	Chief Finance Officer & Cabinet for Finance	Over £25,000

Emergency Payments under the Emergency Plan (Section 5 of Financial Regulations)

Director (in consultation with Chief Executive or Chief Finance Officer)	up to £100,000
Leader and Chief Executive	in excess of £100,000

Definition of Roles

Throughout the document references are made to job titles and roles. During the period of the Regulations it is possible that titles will change. Therefore the updated title shall be equivalent (in terms of the management structure) to the title used in this document.

Recommended Periods For The Retention Of Records

Type of Document

Accountancy/Financial

Abstract of accounts

Audited accounts

Budgetary control records

Costing records

Estimate working papers

Financial ledgers

Grant claim records

Investment records

Journals

Leasing records

Loans records

Records re closing ledgers

Telephone call records

VAT claims

VAT records

Voluntary fund accounts

Appendix B

Retention Period (Years)

6

Retain indefinitely

6

6

2

6

6

2

6

2

Retain indefinitely

6

2

6

3

6

Bank paying-in
books/slips

Bank reconciliation	
Bank statements	
Cancelled cheques	
Cheque books and counterfoils	6
Cheque lists (creditors/payrolls)	6
Loan records and correspondence	6
Paid cheques	2
Returned cheque records	6
	2
Contracts	2
Final accounts of contracts executed under hand	4
Final accounts of contracts executed under seal	2
Successful tenders	
Unsuccessful tenders	
Creditor Records	6
Copy orders	12
Credit notes	3 years after final payment
Creditor invoices	Retain until final payment is made
Delivery notes	
Imprest documentation	2
Periodic payment records	6
	6
	2
	2
	6

External Funding

Funding
documentation and

associated invoice/payment details

Income Records

Cash books

Correspondence (income)

Debtor accounts (records non-current)

6 years or in accordance with
the terms of the individual
grant requirements

Income posting slips and tabulations

Periodic income records

6

Receipt books

2

Record of receipt books issued

2

Registrar's quarterly returns

2

Sales records

2

Miscellaneous Records

2

Annual report

2

Bound copies of minutes

2

Capital works tabulations

2

Car leasing and mileage records

Car loans

Retain indefinitely

Computer system documentation

Retain indefinitely

Inland Revenue documentation

2

Inventory records

3

3

2

6

6

Member
allowances

Land searches

Minutes

Postal remittance registers

Stock lists

6

Travel claims

2

Valuation lists

2

Vehicle logs

2

2

Insurance Records

6

Expired insurance contracts

Retain indefinitely

Insurance claims

2

Insurance policy documentation

Insurance register

Retain indefinitely

Payroll

6

BACS amendments and output

Retain indefinitely

Building society tabulations

Retain indefinitely

Copy payslips

Correspondence

Life certificates (pensions)

3

Monthly BACS listing

3

NI file cashbook

6

6

2

3

2

ustment documentation

Part time employees' claim forms

Pensions personal records

2

SSP records

6

Staff transfer records

6

Starters' forms

Retain indefinitely

Superannuation Records

4

Tax and NI records

6

Tax code notifications

2

Timesheets

Retain indefinitely

Union documentation

6

Weekly BACS listings

2

6

Note:

2

3

- The period of years shown, relates to a complete period following the end of the financial year to which the record relates.
- No documents or records should be disposed of until notification has been received from the District Auditor of the completion of the audit of accounts for the year to which the records relate.
- If a suitable period of retention is in doubt, please refer to the Chief Finance Officer.

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Financial Regulations

January 2026



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Financial Regulations provide the internal framework for managing the Council's financial affairs. They apply to every Member and officer of South Kesteven District Council and anyone in the public or private sector who acts on behalf of the Authority.
- 1.2 Throughout these Financial Regulations, the title Chief Finance Officer will be used to denote the designated Section 151 Officer of the Council. The responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer are documented within each of the specific areas listed.
- 1.3 The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Regulations and submitting any additions or changes necessary to the Council for approval.
- 1.4 It is the responsibility of Directors to ensure that all officers in their directorates are aware of the existence and content of the Council's Financial Regulations, as well as other internal regulatory documents, and also confirm that they comply with them.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer to provide advice and guidance to reinforce the Financial Regulations that Members, officers and others acting on behalf of the Council are required to follow.

2. The Medium Term Financial Strategy

What is the Medium Term Financial Strategy?

- 2.1 The **Medium Term Financial Strategy** is the plan which sets out the Authority's commitment to provide services that meet the needs of people locally and that represent good value for money. It sets out what we aim to do over the next three years, having listened to the views of our communities and considers funds available to the Council.

Why is the Medium Term Financial Strategy important?

- 2.2 The Strategy helps us to meet our statutory responsibilities in respect of financial planning and is critical to ensuring that the Council has a clear understanding of the level of available resources, the costs of delivering existing services and plans for new services. Financial planning facilitates strategic choices around service delivery, efficiency and service reductions.
- 2.3 The Strategy is approved by Full Council and includes information on the spending plans of all services and the intended level of Council tax.

Key Controls

- 2.4 The strategy is reviewed every three years in line with the processes for reviewing and updating the Council's Corporate Strategy but updated annually to make sure it reflects:
 - the most recent estimate of resources available
 - the budget requirement – which may change as a result of updating estimated resources
 - updated operational plans for each Council Service

- any changes in the national Local Government Funding

3. Revenue Budget Plan

What is the Budget Plan?

- 3.1 The Council's budget plan is a three-year income and expenditure plan. It details all known expected expenditure and income from the delivering of Council Services and compares these requirements to the funding available. The budget plan focuses on the priorities set by Council.

Why is the Budget Plan important?

- 3.2 The budget plan helps us to meet our statutory responsibilities for financial planning. All local authorities are required to prepare a budget annually which is then approved by Full Council. This is supported by a statement by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the robustness of the budget as proposed and the adequacy of general balances and reserves.
- 3.3 The plan also helps us ensure, at a more detailed level, that resources are allocated towards the delivery of council priorities. The process of developing the budget helps us to assess and balance any gaps between what we estimate it will cost us to deliver plans, and the money available to do this.

Key Controls

- 3.4 Budget planning begins in September of the preceding financial year and the following year's budget proposals together with an indicative two-year budget is presented to Members in February/March at full Council.
- 3.5 Detailed estimates of costs and income are developed for each service.
- 3.6 There may be additional in-year changes agreed in line with the approved levels, if so, both these costs and any ongoing costs will need to be built into the ongoing budget plan.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To develop the budget plan on an annual basis and to ensure a balanced budget is approved.
- To present the budget to Members for approval in February/March prior to the start of each financial year.
- To undertake the budget plan in accordance with accounting/statutory guidance.
- To ensure the impact of any additions to budgets in-year are understood and the impact of this change on the overall financial position of the Council
- To ensure any additions to budgets in-year are built into future budget planning processes.

Responsibilities of Directors

- To provide information that may be requested in relation to the budget plan.
- To support the budget setting process.
- To produce an accurate business case to form part of any request for additional in-year increases to budgets (see Appendix A)

4. Capital Programme

What is the Capital Programme?

- 4.1 The Capital Programme is the budgeted plan of the capital schemes that the Authority is undertaking or planning to undertake. The development of the Capital Programme is in accordance with the Council's Capital Strategy. Each year, Directors consider Capital schemes to be included in the Capital Programme, which are then scrutinised through an approval process before being included in the Capital Programme for consideration by Cabinet and ultimately Council.

Why is the Capital Programme important?

- 4.2 Capital assets shape the way services are delivered in the long term and create financial commitments for the future in the form of financing costs and revenue running costs. It is important that the 'Whole Life Cost' of any capital schemes are considered before approval is given, to ensure adequate funding has been identified. This is an integral part of the budget setting process.
- 4.3 The Government places strict controls on the financing capacity of the Authority. This means that capital expenditure should form part of an investment strategy and should be carefully prioritised in order to maximise the benefit of scarce resources.
- 4.4 Having a structured approach which reviews all capital scheme proposals helps ensure that the Capital Programme links into the Council's priorities.
- 4.5 The Capital Programme ensures the Authority takes a structured approach to the management of its assets.
- 4.6 There may be additional in-year changes agreed in line with the agreed levels, if so, both these costs and any ongoing costs will need to be built into the ongoing budget plan.

Key Controls

- 4.7 All schemes included in the Capital Programme require a business case completing which would cover:
- project overview;
 - objectives and critical success factors;
 - capital expenditure;

- associated revenue expenditure to be completed;
- the source of funding to be identified.
 - These are subject to a rigorous review process, culminating in approval by full Council.
 - Where appropriate, schedules of individual projects within large schemes approved by the full Council must be submitted to Cabinet for approval.
 - The capital schemes are developed from asset management plans or invest to save schemes.
 - Accountability for each proposal is accepted by a named manager.

4.8 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To develop the capital programme on an annual basis for approval.
- To present the budget to Council for approval prior to the start of each financial year.
- To identify the funding sources of the proposed Capital Programme ensuring any revenue consequences are taken account of in the overall budget setting process.
- To determine the definition of 'capital' having regard to government regulations and accounting requirements.
- To ensure the impact of any additions to budgets in-year are understood and the impact of this change on the overall financial position of the Council.
- To ensure any additions to budgets in-year are built into future budget planning processes.

4.9 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- Where a capital scheme is required to be included in or added to the Capital Programme, the responsible officer shall submit a capital business case for the scheme, including possible alternatives with up-to-date estimates of capital and revenue costs;
- To comply with guidance concerning capital schemes and controls.
- To ensure that adequate records are maintained for all capital contracts.
- Ensure that no capital expenditure is incurred on any scheme unless:
 - it is within the approved budget for that scheme
 - the nature of the spend is in line with the original purpose approved for the scheme

- government approval to the scheme has, where appropriate, been obtained
 - the source of funding has been identified
 - any revenue consequential expenditure which arises from the proposed capital expenditure has been accepted as a commitment by the Council
- Ensuring that the appropriate approval is obtained to incur additional capital expenditure which is to be financed wholly by additional grants or other income (see Appendix A).
 - To produce an accurate business case to form part of any request for additional in-year increases to budgets (see Appendix A)

5. Budget Guidance and the Budget Timetable

What is Budget Guidance and the Budget Timetable?

- 5.1 Budget Guidance sets out what we need to do in order to prepare the Council's annual budget. The Budget Timetable outlines the timeframe against activities which will take place, including the key deadlines we ask all involved in budget preparation to follow.

Why is Budget Guidance and the Budget Timetable important?

- 5.2 The guidance ensures that budgets are produced accurately and consistently in line with financial procedures. It also ensures that the level of detail and what is included meets legal requirements.
The timetable ensures that the budgets are produced and approved by Council within the dates set out in legislation.

Key Controls

- 5.3 The budget guidance and timetable are produced on an annual basis
- 5.4 The guidance and timetable will focus on the following:
- The full year effect of previous year's decisions
 - Consequences of the approved capital programme
 - Adjustments in relation to specific 'one year only' allocations and other time expired funding
 - Other specific Council decisions
 - Budget assumptions on:
 - Levels of pay and the price inflation which is to be applied
 - Council Tax increase
 - Funding allocations from Central Government
 - Superannuation contribution rates
 - Levels of Discretionary fees and charges
 - Ensuring approval of budget by full Council

- Ensuring Council Tax is set by statutory dates
- The format complies with legal requirements and reflects the accountabilities of Service Delivery

5.5 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To determine the format of the budget that is approved by the Council
- To set a balanced budget in order to meet the Section 151 Officers responsibilities
- To produce and distribute the guidance and timetable on an annual basis to officers and Members
- To present the timetable to Members for approval prior to the start of the process
- To ensure returns are made to central government in line with their requirements

5.6 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To comply with the accounting guidelines and timetable provided.

6. **Budget Control and Monitoring**

What is Budget Monitoring and Control?

- 6.1 A budget is the planned income and expenditure for a service area or cost centre. Budgetary control and monitoring is the process used by budget managers, supported by officers within Financial Services, to review revenue and capital expenditure against their budgets, and project estimated spending to the end of the financial year. Accountability is achieved through formal reporting of the budget position, carried out at agreed times, and in line with the risk ratings referred to as RAG (red, amber, green) ratings.

Why is Budget Monitoring and Control important?

- 6.2 Budget monitoring ensures that once the budget has been approved by the Council, resources allocated are used for their intended purposes and are properly accounted for. Budgetary control is the process of monitoring financial activity against the financial plan and, where necessary, taking the appropriate action in a timely manner to address any movement from the plan.
- 6.3 Budget monitoring and control also provides the mechanism that calls to account managers responsible for defined elements of the budget. It is therefore key that effective processes for monitoring of budgets are in place and adhered to.
- 6.4 To assist with the above it is essential that quality information is available to budget managers to ensure that sound financial decisions can be made, especially where spending may differ from planned expenditure.

6.5 To ensure that the Authority in total does not overspend, each Service is required to manage its own expenditure within the budget allocated to it.

6.6 **Key Controls**

- Budget managers should be responsible only for income and expenditure that they can influence.
- There is a nominated budget manager for each cost centre heading.
- Budget managers accept accountability for their budgets, the level of service to be delivered and understand their financial responsibilities.
- Budget managers follow an approved certification process for all expenditure.
- Income and expenditure are properly recorded and accounted for.
- Performance levels of service are monitored in conjunction with the budget and necessary action is taken to align service outputs and budget.

6.7 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To establish an appropriate framework of budgetary management and control that ensures that:
 - budget management is exercised within annual cash limits unless the Council agrees otherwise
 - each Director has available timely information on income and expenditure which is sufficiently detailed to enable managers to fulfil their budgetary responsibilities
- To ensure compliance with the agreed virement procedures
- To prepare and submit reports on the Authority's projected income and expenditure compared to budget on a regular basis and to make recommendations to Members regarding any changes to the budget
- To submit reports to Overview & Scrutiny, in consultation with the relevant Director, where a Director is unable to balance expenditure and resources within existing approved budgets under their control

6.8 **Responsibilities of Budget Holders**

- To maintain budgetary control within their service, as outlined above and to ensure that all income and expenditure is properly recorded and accounted for
- To ensure that an accountable budget manager is identified for each item of income and expenditure under their control, grouped together in a series of cost centres. As a general principle, budget responsibility should be aligned as closely as possible to the decision-making that commits expenditure

- To ensure that budget spending remains within the service's overall budget, and that individual budget heads are not overspent. This may require appropriate corrective action to be taken where significant variations from the approved budget are forecast
- To ensure that a monitoring process is in place to review performance levels of service in conjunction with the budget and that it is operating effectively
- To report and obtain prior approval by Council and Cabinet, where appropriate, before incurring expenditure on schemes of whatever amounts, that:
 - create financial commitments in future years above the budget level (except where if this is wholly offset by external funding or charges for work carried out on behalf of third parties – see sections 33 and 34 respectively)
 - change existing policies, initiate new policies or cease existing policies or
 - materially extend or reduce the Authority's services
- Emergency expenditure – no proposal should be submitted to Cabinet/Council involving expenditure during a financial year where no provision has been made in the current budget. Only in the case of either urgency or on a matter in which the Council is under a legal obligation, any Council director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, shall have power to agree that the expenditure will be met subject to the action being reported to Cabinet (see Appendix A for limits)
- To ensure compliance with the scheme of virement
- To consult with the relevant Director where it appears that a budget proposal, including a virement proposal, may impact materially on another service area

7. Scheme of Virement

What is a Virement?

- 7.1 A virement is the transfer of budget from one specific area to another. This can either be a transfer within revenue budgets or capital budgets but not between revenue and capital. There are different limits depending on the reason for the change and whether or not it is a one-off transfer or a permanent one. The limits are set out in Appendix A.

Why is the Scheme of Virement important?

- 7.2 The scheme of Virement is intended to enable the Budget Holders to manage budgets with a degree of flexibility within the overall framework determined by the Council, and therefore optimise the use of resources.
- 7.3 **The key controls are:**

- **Revenue and Capital**
 - Virement into a receiving budget may only occur provided that the donating cost centre will not subsequently become overspent;
 - Virements which involve a key decision should be subject to a Cabinet Report and the Council's decision-making process in line with the Council's Constitution; and
 - A record of all virements must be kept.
- **Revenue**
 - Permanent virements can only be processed if the donating cost centre has permanent budget provision to fund the requested virement;
 - Only in year virements can be agreed for Employee budgets unless the virement is linked to a structural change that has received the necessary approvals; and
 - All virements must be authorised in line with the delegated authority approvals.
 - Additions to any revenue or capital budget can be made in accordance with the limits set out in Appendix A.
- **Capital**
 - Provisional budgets into subsequent projects require Cabinet approval;
 - Transfers between schemes require Cabinet approval;
 - Capital Schemes must have a matching expenditure and financing budget; and
 - Transfers that are contained within a scheme must be authorised in line with the delegated authority approvals.

7.4 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To prepare virement procedures for approval by the Council;
- To monitor compliance with the agreed virement procedures; and
- To report approved virements that change an overall budget.

7.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure compliance with the agreed virement procedures;
- No virement relating to a specific financial year should be made after 31 March in that year;
- To ensure that virements are authorised as per the delegated powers approved by Council;
- A virement that is likely to impact on the level of service activity of another Director, should be progressed only after agreement with the relevant Director; and
- To ensure that requests for virements are not split into a series of smaller virements to circumvent approval requirements.

8. Accounting Policies

What are Accounting Policies?

- 8.1 Accounting policies are the accounting principles, rules and procedures selected and consistently followed by the Council, which dictate what and how financial information is accounted for and presented in the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts. The key accounting policy guidelines adopted by the Council are the *CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting*. These interpret International Financial Reporting Standards for local authorities.

Why are Accounting Policies important?

- 8.2 They are important as they provide:

- a clear and open view of the financial affairs of the Council;
- a level of disclosure which is considered to be relevant, informative and appropriate;
- a consistent standard in the process of preparation and presentation of financial statements; and
- an ability to compare between local authorities as required.

8.3 Key Controls

- Systems of internal control are in place to ensure that financial transactions are lawful.
- Accounting policies are reviewed annually to ensure they comply with the latest developments in the CIPFA code of practice.
- Suitable accounting policies are selected and applied consistently and approved by Governance and Audit Committee.
- Proper accounting records are maintained and to the required standard.
- Financial statements are prepared which present fairly the financial position of the Authority and its expenditure and income.
- Inspection of accounts by External Audit.

8.4 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To select suitable accounting policies and to ensure that they are applied consistently.
- To ensure the accounting policies are reviewed annually and are set out in the Annual Statement of Accounts, which is prepared in line with legislative requirements.
- To present any amendments to the accounting policies to the Governance and Audit Committee.

8.5 Responsibilities of Directors

- To comply with the accounting policies and guidelines approved by the Chief Finance Officer and to supply the Chief Finance Officer with the information when required.
- To keep proper accounting records that are in line with accounting policies.

9. Accounting Records and Returns

What are Accounting Records and Returns?

- 9.1 All of the Council's transactions, commitments, contracts and other essential accounting information must be recorded fully, accurately and on a timely basis. Accounting Records must also provide an audit trail leading from the source of income or expenditure through to the accounting statements.
- 9.2 The Council's corporate financial information system is considered the prime source of financial information. The Revenue and Capital accounts, balance sheet, and other financial records, are held within the General Ledger, and its sub-systems including Debtors, Creditors and e-Procurement. Together they form the Council's financial records, from which, along with the Council Tax and Business Rates Systems and the Asset register, the financial statements and financial returns are produced.

Why are Accounting Records and Returns important?

- 9.3 During the financial year, the Council completes financial returns relating to the Council either as a whole or for certain individual services. These can be for a variety of reasons and to different audiences, including Central Government Departments, Members, Auditors and the general public. The information is mainly required by legislation. Maintaining proper accounting records is one of the ways in which the Authority discharges its responsibilities for stewardship of public resources. The Authority also has to comply with legislation and statute, International Financial Reporting Standards, grant conditions and discharge its duties in line with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) requirements.
- 9.4 The Authority has a statutory responsibility to prepare its annual accounts to present fairly the results of its operations during the year. These are subject to external audit who provide assurance that the accounts are prepared properly, that proper accounting practices have been followed and that quality arrangements have been made for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of the Authority's resources. The auditors do this by examining the accounting records of the Authority.

Key Controls

- The key controls for accounting records and returns are:
 - all Directors, Budget Managers and Finance officers operate within the required accounting standards and timetables as outlined within the guidance issued;
 - all the Authority's transactions, material commitments and contracts and other essential accounting information are recorded completely, accurately and on a timely basis;
 - procedures are in place to enable accounting records to be reconstructed in the event of systems failure;
 - reconciliation procedures are carried out to ensure transactions are correctly recorded; and
 - prime documents are retained in accordance with legislative and other requirements.

Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To issue instructions considered necessary for carrying out the daily financial work of the Council, after consulting with Directors where needed.
- To determine the accounting procedures and records for the Authority.
- To arrange for the compilation of all accounts and accounting records under their direction.
- To ensure the proper retention of financial documents in accordance with the requirements set out in the Authority's document retention schedule.
- To stipulate the date by which all financial records for any financial year shall be completed.
- To prepare and publish the audited Statement of Accounts of the Authority for each financial year, in accordance with the statutory timetable and with the requirement for the Council to approve the Statement of Accounts before the statutory deadline.
- To make proper arrangements for the audit of the Authority's Annual Statement of Accounts in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- To administer the Authority's arrangements for under and overspendings to be carried forward to the following financial year,
- To comply with the following principles when allocating accounting duties:
 - separating the duties of providing information about sums due to or from the Authority and calculating, checking and recording these sums from the duty of collecting or disbursing them; and
 - officers with the duty of examining or checking the accounts of cash transactions must not themselves be engaged in these transactions.
- To ensure that all claims for funds, including grants, are made accurately and by the due date.

9.7 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To comply with the principles outlined above when allocating accounting duties.
- To ensure that all claims for funds including grants are made by the due date.
- To maintain adequate records to provide a management trail leading from the source of income/expenditure through to the accounting statements.
- To be responsible for all receipts and claims in relation to salary expenses and disbursements made by staff in their service.
- To supply information required to enable the Statement of Accounts to be completed in accordance with the guidelines issued.

10. **Annual Statement of Accounts**

What is the Annual Statement of Accounts?

- 10.1 The Annual Statement of Accounts is a financial summary of the state of the financial affairs of the Council over the course of a year. The Council is required to follow the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The Accounts and Audit Regulations, as amended from time to time, set out the statutory dates for approval and publication of the Annual Statement of Accounts. The Statement of Accounts is made available for inspection by interested parties and is subject to external audit to ensure that it presents a fair view of the financial position of the Council.

Why is the Annual Statement of Accounts important?

- 10.2 By legislation, the Council is required to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts each financial year (1 April – 31 March). The Statement of Accounts shows not only a snapshot

of the financial position as at the 31 March each year, but also provides the reader with an understanding on how the Council has performed financially during that financial year. After audit, the Statement of Accounts give assurance to key stakeholders that the financial affairs of the Council have been conducted properly and appropriately, and that they give what is considered to be a 'true and fair' view of the financial position of the Authority.

10.3 **Key Controls**

The key controls for the Annual Statement of Accounts are:

- The Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of these affairs. In this Authority, that officer is the Chief Finance Officer;
- To manage the Authorities affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets; and
- The Authority's Statement of Accounts must be prepared in accordance with proper practices as set out in the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain: "the code of Practice" (as amended from time to time)*.

10.4 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To comply with the Code of Practice.
- To comply with statute and regulations.
- To draw up the timetable and guidance notes for financial accounts preparation and to advise staff and external auditors accordingly.
- To sign and date the Statement of Accounts, stating that it presents fairly the financial position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the financial year ended 31 March.
- To ensure that the Statement of Accounts are approved by the Governance and Audit Committee.

10.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To comply with accounting guidance provided by the Chief Finance Officer and to supply the Chief Finance Officer with the information when required.
- To keep proper accounting records that are up to date.

11. Maintenance of Reserves

What are Reserves?

- 11.1 Reserves are amounts set aside to fund specific or unexpected expenditure. There are different reserves held by the Authority, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can

be applied to fund expenditure usually of a one-off nature) and unusable reserves for accounting purposes.

- 11.2 Useable reserves are analysed into discretionary reserves and governance reserves. Discretionary reserves are those reserves that can be used to fund discretionary expenditure in accordance with the specific reserve. Governance reserves are those reserves created to provide financial protection to the Council for unforeseen events or financial challenges that can arise. It is the responsibility of Council to review the allocation and levels of reserves and may put in place specific delegations with respect to their use during any financial year in accordance with the specific policy of the reserve.

Why is Maintenance of Reserves important?

- 11.3 By legislation (the Local Government Act 2003), the Chief Finance Officer must report to Council, immediately prior to setting the Budget and Council Tax, on the robustness of the budget as proposed and the adequacy of general balances and earmarked reserves. The Council then agrees on the level of reserves it will maintain before it then decides on the level of Council Tax. Reserves are maintained as a matter of prudence. They enable the Council to provide for unexpected events and thereby protect it from overspending, should such events occur. Reserves for specific purposes are also maintained, such as the insurance reserve, regeneration reserve and local priorities reserve.

11.4 Key Controls

- Reserves are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the Local Government Act 2003.
- To maintain reserves in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
- For each reserve clearly establish its purpose, usage and amount to be set aside.
- Authorisation to establish and add to a reserve is by the relevant Committee or Council following advice from the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Finance Officer.

11.5 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To advise the Council on prudent levels of balances for the Authority.
- To establish guidelines on the setting up of reserves and then to advise Directors accordingly.

11.6 Responsibilities of Directors

- To comply with guidance provided by the Chief Finance Officer and ensure that reserves are used only for the purpose for which they were intended.

12. Internal Controls

What are Internal Controls?

12.1 Internal Controls include the policies, processes, tasks, behaviours and other areas of the Council that taken together:

- enable it to react to significant risks in achieving its objectives. This includes protecting anything which is considered valuable to the organisation from misuse or loss and fraud;
- help ensure the quality of internal and external reporting. This requires the maintenance of proper records, and processes which create a flow of timely, relevant and reliable information from both within and outside the organisation; and
- help ensure relevant laws and regulations are followed, as well as internal policies with respect to the conducting of the business.

Why are Internal Controls important?

12.2 The Authority is complex and beyond the direct control of individuals. It requires, therefore, internal controls to manage and monitor progress towards strategic objectives.

12.3 The Authority has statutory obligations, including those set out within the Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, which require internal controls to be established to ensure compliance with these obligations.

12.4 The Authority faces a wide range of financial, administrative and commercial risks, both from internal and external factors, which threaten the achievement of its objectives. Internal controls are necessary to manage these risks.

12.5 The system of internal controls is established in order to provide measurable achievement of:

- efficient and effective operations;
- reliable financial information and reporting;
- compliance with laws and regulations; and
- risk management.

12.6 Key Controls

- Key controls should be reviewed on a regular basis and the Authority should make a formal statement annually to the effect that the Authority has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Authority's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- Managerial control systems, including defining policies, setting objectives and plans, monitoring financial and other performance, and taking appropriate anticipatory and remedial action. The key objective of these systems is to promote ownership of the control environment by defining roles and responsibilities.
- Financial and operational control systems and procedures, which include physical safeguards for assets, segregation of duties, authorisation and approval procedures and information systems.

- An effective Internal Audit function that is properly resourced. It should operate in accordance with the principles contained in the Auditing Practices Board's auditing guidelines Guidance for Internal Auditors, CIPFA's Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom and with any other statutory obligations and regulations.

12.7 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To direct and assist the Authority to put into place an appropriate control environment and effective internal controls which provide reasonable assurance of effective and efficient operations, financial stewardship, probity and compliance with laws and regulations. This will ensure compliance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 which requires every local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of the officers (the Chief Finance Officer) has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

12.8 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To establish and maintain controls as well as processes which ensure such controls are being adhered to and evaluated, in order to be confident in the proper use of resources, achievement of objectives and management of risks on an ongoing basis.
- To review existing controls in the light of changes affecting the Authority and to establish and implement new ones in line with guidance from the Chief Finance Officer.
- Ensure that officers have a clear understanding of the consequences of a lack of control or not adhering to agreed processes.

13. **Risk Management**

What is Risk Management?

- 13.1 All organisations, whether private or public sector, face risks to people, property and the day-to-day running of the business. Risk is the chance of something going wrong, and the possibility of loss, damage, injury or failure to achieve objectives caused by an unwanted action or event, which we have no control over. Risk can impact upon all officers within the Council as well as the Council's partners and citizens.
- 13.2 Risk Management is a planned and methodical way of identifying areas of risk, evaluating them and taking a look at how the risks can be controlled. Risk Management looks at the measures which an organisation already has in place to deal with identified risks, the adequacy of these measures and the actions required to control these risks effectively.

- 13.3 It is the overall responsibility of the Cabinet to approve the Authority's Risk Management Strategy, and to promote a culture of risk management awareness throughout the Authority.

Why is Risk Management important?

- 13.4 The challenges that the Authority faces, and the rate of change, puts the organisation under increasing pressure to improve the quality of management at all levels. This means that the Authority needs to make sure that risk management processes are structured, as well as being instinctive and intuitive. If management are to meet these challenges, high quality risk management needs to be at the core of decision making at all levels of the Council.
- 13.5 There is an ongoing requirement from the Accounts and Audit Regulations to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which is attached to the Annual Accounts, setting out the processes in place for managing the most significant risks to the achievement of objectives. Risk management processes are an integral part of the AGS.
- 13.6 All local authorities are increasingly being held to account by external assessors for the way in which risk management has been implemented. The Council needs to continue to demonstrate that all Services have a structured approach, which is embedded into planning and reporting cycles and decision-making processes at all levels.

13.7 **Key Controls**

The key controls for Risk Management are:

- The Council has adopted a Risk Management Strategy which has been approved by Governance and Audit Committee and is regularly updated.
- The Council maintains and reviews a register of its corporate business risks linking them to strategic business objectives and assigns named individuals to lead on the actions identified to mitigate each risk.
- Procedures are in place to identify, assess, prevent or contain material known risks, and these procedures are operating effectively throughout the Authority.
- The Governance and Audit Committee receive reports on a regular basis and take appropriate action to ensure that corporate business risks are being identified and effectively managed.
- A monitoring process is in place to review regularly the effectiveness of risk reduction strategies and the operation of these controls.
- Managers know that they are responsible for managing relevant risks and are provided with relevant information on risk management initiatives.
- A Risk Register IT system is provided to assist Directors to manage their risks.

- A Risk Management Group meets regularly to co-ordinate and supports all aspects of strategic business risk management.
- Committee reports to support strategic policy decisions must include reference to the risks associated along with the decisions being taken, in both a positive and negative scenario (i.e. the risks of taking the decision as recommended and the risks of doing nothing).
- Documents for all major projects include a risk assessment which must be completed.
- The risk management process specifically considers risks in relation to significant partnerships and provides for assurances to be obtained concerning the management of those risks.

13.8 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To prepare and promote the Authority's Risk Management Strategy.
- To develop risk management controls in conjunction with other Directors.
- To report to Members of the Governance and Audit Committee on the effectiveness of the risk management process and any changes to it in the Annual Governance Statement.

13.9 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To take responsibility for risk management, having regard to advice from the Chief Finance Officer and other specialist officers.
- The Risk Management Strategy requires Directors to:
 - Identify corporate and operational risks;
 - Maintain a risk register;
 - Assess the risks for likelihood and impact;
 - Prioritise risks;
 - Identify mitigating controls; and
 - Allocate responsibility for the mitigating controls.
- To ensure that there are regular reviews of all risks within Services.
- Ensure risk management is a key area of consideration when preparing annual Service Plans.

14. Insurance

What is Insurance?

- 14.1 Insurance for the Council is, in many ways, similar to the insurance that private individuals take out to protect items that they either:
- cannot replace easily; or
 - are required to insure as a condition of purchase, i.e. a house purchased via a mortgage etc.
- 14.2 The decision to insure an item or not is based on:
- its replacement cost;
 - the likelihood of it needing to be replaced; and
 - the cost of the insurance.
- 14.3 The Council has to go through a similar process for the various risks it faces, e.g. the security of physical assets or the work carried out by its officers. Where the Council believes it is not able to manage risks internally, it will take out insurance in the same way a private individual would, e.g. the Council insures its buildings, its officers (employee liability), and cover for members of the public when using Council facilities (public liability) etc.

Why is Insurance important?

- 14.4 Insurance is a major area within risk management, enabling risks from unfortunate events to have less of a negative effect due to taking out cover policies. However, insurance is not without a cost, and risk prevention is always preferable to paying higher premiums, where this is possible.

14.5 Key Controls

- Adequate insurance is in place to cover assets of the organisation.
- Policies are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they continue to provide adequate cover for the Authority in line with current risk management strategies and to confirm exclusion clauses are being complied with.
- Procedures are in place to investigate claims within required timescales.
- Acceptable levels of risk are determined and insured against where appropriate.
- The Council has an Insurance Strategy which provides details of the Council's insurance cover and procedures for claims.

14.6 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that the Authority has the appropriate insurance cover in place.

- To include all appropriate officers of the Authority in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.
- To arrange all insurance cover through external insurance and internal funding and negotiate any claims in consultation with appropriate Directors and outside claims agencies.
- To inform Directors of any conditions affecting insured risks.
- To review all insurances in consultation with appropriate Directors either annually or when necessary.
- To administer any self-funding arrangement set up to run alongside or replace conventional externally provided insurance.

14.7 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure that all officers are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the use of insurance policies.
- To identify and report to the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer any amendments which could be required for the insurance of the Authority.
- To notify the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer immediately of any loss, liability or damage that may lead to a claim against the Authority, together with any information or explanation required by the Chief Finance Officer or the Authority's insurers.
- To ensure that any conditions affecting insured risks are met and that their actions do not invalidate any claims.
- To notify the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer promptly of all new risks, properties or vehicles that require insurance and any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- To inform the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer of the terms of any indemnity that the Authority is requested to give.
- Do not admit liability or make any offer to pay compensation that may prejudice the assessment of liability in respect of any insurance claim.

15. **Treasury Management**

What is Treasury Management?

15.1 Treasury Management is defined as:

“The management of the Council’s investments, borrowing and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

- 15.2 The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the Treasury Management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council’s low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 15.3 The second main function of the Treasury Management service is the funding of the Council’s capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses. Any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 15.4 On an annual basis the Council approves a Treasury Management Strategy that is compiled to meet CIPFA requirements with respect to Treasury Management. During the course of each financial year, Governance and Audit Committee receive monitoring and outturn reports in order to ensure compliance with the Strategy.

Why is Treasury Management Important?

- 15.5 It is critical that financial resources are properly managed in a way that balances risk with return whilst ensuring the Council can meet its financial obligations. The scale of borrowing, the inter-relationship between capital and revenue cash management and the fact that the Council may have surplus funds for investment require the development of sound borrowing and investment strategies that encompass all of these activities in a safe, efficient and consistent manner.
- 15.6 The main objectives of the Treasury Management function are:
- To effectively manage and control risks;
 - To ensure that sufficient cash is available to enable the Council to discharge its financial obligations when they become due;
 - To undertake all borrowing at or below budgeted rates on the basis of best value, and also seek opportunities to reduce the cost of servicing existing debt;
 - To plan cash flows and minimise the cost of any temporary borrowing (which is required for day to day cash flow reasons);
 - To invest prudently having regard to the security and liquidity of Investments and the predictability of returns; and
 - To aim to achieve the optimum return on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity.

15.7 Key Controls

The Council has adopted the recommendations of CIPFA’s Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Prudential Code. The Council has developed its own Treasury

Management Strategy in accordance with these documents. The Strategy outlines the Council's:

- Key Treasury Management Principles;
- Scheme of Delegation and Reporting Requirements;
- Key Prudential Indicators – covering financing requirements, borrowing limits, debt maturity / type, cost of borrowing and investment income; and
- Policy for both borrowing and investments.

15.8 **Responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer**

- To prepare the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities for approval by Cabinet and Full Council at the Annual Budget Meeting.
- To arrange for all Council borrowing and investment in such a manner as to comply with this Strategy.
- To borrow on behalf of the Council under powers contained in the Local Government Act 1972 and subsequent legislation in accordance with the agreed proactive borrowing strategy.
- To arrange for the investment or utilisation for the Council's own purposes of surplus funds in accordance with agreed creditworthiness criteria.
- To ensure that all investments of money are made in the name of the Council or in the name of nominees approved by Cabinet.
- To ensure that all securities that are the property of the Council or its nominees and the title deeds of all property in the Council's ownership are held in the custody of the appropriate officer.
- To undertake all borrowings in the name of the Council.
- To act as the Council's registrar of stocks, bonds and mortgages, and to maintain records of all borrowing of money by the Council.
- To ensure that there is adequate monitoring of Treasury Management activities, involving both Members and senior Finance officers.
- To report to Governance and Audit Committee at regular intervals on Treasury Management activities

15.9 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure that loans are not made to third parties and that interests are not acquired in companies, joint ventures or other enterprises without the approval of the Council following consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.

- To inform officers with responsibility for Treasury Management of significant movements and changes in the Council's anticipated cash flows.

16. Internal Audit

What is Internal Audit?

- 16.1 Internal Audit is an assurance function that provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment, by evaluating its effectiveness in achieving the organisation's objectives. It objectively examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of the control environment as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.
- 16.2 The Council is required to have an Internal Audit function in order to comply with section 6 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 which requires the Authority to "undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control". Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 also requires every local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs.
- 16.3 All Internal Audit reviews are reported to and discussed by the Governance and Audit Committee as this is the Committee charged with overall responsibility for governance within the Council.

Why is Internal Audit important?

- 16.4 Internal Audit is a key element of the overall governance structure of the Authority which is designed to ensure that appropriate controls are in place throughout the organisation. Through the provision of a high quality independent appraisal of all of the activities of the Council, Internal Audit aims to improve operational efficiency, risk management and internal control systems, and also provide reliable and effective support to management to ensure that their objectives are achieved.
- 16.5 **Key Controls**
The key controls for Internal Audit are:
- that it is independent in its planning and operation and determines its own priorities in providing unrestricted coverage of the Council's operations;
 - The Head of Internal Audit has direct access to the Chief Executive and all levels of management and Members; and
 - The internal auditors comply with CIPFA's Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom.

- 16.6 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**
To ensure that internal auditors have the authority to:

- Access premises when required;
 - Access all assets, records, documents, correspondence and control systems;
 - Require and receive information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under consideration;
 - Require any employee of the Authority to account for cash, stores and any other Authority asset under the employee's control;
 - Access records belonging to third parties, such as contractors, when required;
 - Directly access the Chief Executive.
- To approve the strategic and annual audit plans prepared by the Head of Internal Audit, which take account of the current risk profile of all activities undertaken by the Authority.
- To ensure that effective procedures are in place to investigate promptly any fraud or irregularity.
- When initial evidence suggests that a criminal offence has been committed, to consult with the appropriate Director about involving the Police, in accordance with the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

16.7

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that Internal Audit are provided with any documents, information and explanations they require during the course of their work;
- To consider and respond to recommendations in audit reports within one month;
- Any agreed actions arising from audit recommendations are carried out as per the agreed timetable;
- New systems for maintaining financial records, records of assets, or changes to such systems, are discussed with, and agreed by, the Head of Internal Audit before implementation; and
- To notify the Head of Internal Audit immediately of any suspected fraud, theft, irregularity, improper use or misappropriation of the Authority's property or resources.

17. External Audit

What is External Audit?

17.1

External Audit provides an important contribution to the stewardship of public resources and corporate governance of public services by:

- Giving an independent opinion on whether the public bodies financial statements fairly present its financial position and its expenditure and income for the year in question; and

- Reviewing and reporting on aspects of the arrangements which are put in place by public bodies to ensure the proper conduct of their financial affairs, and for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

17.2 The basic duties of the external auditor are defined by the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Local Government Act 1999.

Why is External Audit important?

17.3 Independent external audit is a key process of evaluation of governance processes which seek to protect the management of public money. It is, however, the responsibility of management to put arrangements in place to ensure proper governance, and to regularly review the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

17.4 The Authority's financial statements are scrutinised by external auditors, who must be satisfied that the statement of accounts 'presents fairly' the financial position of the Authority and its income and expenditure for the year in question and complies with all relevant legal requirements.

17.5 Key Controls

- External auditors must follow the Code of Audit Practice for Local Government when carrying out their audits.
- External auditors are regulated by the Financial Reporting Council.

17.6 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents and assets that the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.
- To ensure there is effective liaison between external and Internal Audit.
- To work with the external auditor and advise the Council, Cabinet and Officers on their responsibilities in relation to external audit.

17.7 Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents and assets that the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.
- To ensure that all records and systems are up to date and available for inspection.

18. Preventing and detecting Fraud and Corruption (including Bribery)

What is Fraud and Corruption?

18.1 The Fraud Act 2006 defines three separate ways of committing fraud:

- Fraud by false representation;
- Fraud by failing to disclose information; and
- Fraud by abuse of position.

18.2 “Dishonesty” and “intent to make gain or cause loss” are core themes involved in the committing of fraud.

18.3 Corruption is ‘the offering, giving, soliciting, or acceptance of an inducement or reward, or showing any favour or disfavour which may influence any person to act improperly.’ It is an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 – 1916, as amended, and Section 117(3) of the Local Government Act 1972.

18.4 Bribery can be described as giving someone a financial inducement or other form of advantage to encourage that person to perform their functions or activities improperly, or to reward that person for having already done so, in order to gain a personal, commercial, regulatory or contractual advantage.

Why is Fraud and Corruption important?

18.5 There is an expectation and requirement that all Members, officers, consultants, contractors, and service users be fair, honest and act with the utmost of integrity at all times.

18.6 The Council is resolute that the culture and tone of the Authority is one of honesty and opposition to fraud and corruption.

18.7 There is an expectation and requirement that all individuals, businesses and organisations dealing in any way with the Council will act with high standards of probity, openness and integrity and that Council officers or its agent(s) at all levels will lead by example in these matters.

18.8 The Council's Codes of Conduct for Members and officers set out an approach to work that is honest, fair, accountable and, as far as possible, transparent. Members and officers must act in line with the codes at all times.

18.9 Key Controls

- The Authority should maintain an effective Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and a culture of zero tolerance to fraud and corruption.
- All Members and officers should act with integrity and lead by example.
- Officers should raise any concerns that they may have about fraud and corruption preferably with their line manager or another senior manager identified in the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.
- Any information reported by officers will be dealt with fairly and confidentially.
- Senior managers are required to deal swiftly and firmly with those who defraud or attempt to defraud the Authority or who are corrupt.

- High standards of conduct should be promoted amongst Members.
- The maintenance of a register of interests to record gifts and hospitality received in accordance with the officers' and Members' Codes of Conduct.
- Whistle blowing procedures should be in place and operating effectively.
- All relevant legislation should be complied with including the Fraud Act 2006, the Bribery Act 2010 and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- The Authority should maintain an adequate internal control framework.

18.10 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To develop and maintain an effective Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.
- To develop and maintain an effective Anti-Bribery Policy
- To maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements
- To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Head of Internal Audit without delay.

18.11 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Head of Internal Audit without delay.
- To instigate the Authority's disciplinary procedures where the outcome of an investigation into suspected fraud or corruption indicates that improper behaviour has taken place.
- To ensure that where financial impropriety is discovered, the Chief Finance Officer is informed.
- To take advice and support from relevant parts of the Council e.g. Internal Audit, HR before referring matters to the Police for cases where it is apparent that a criminal offence may have been committed.

19. **Anti-Money Laundering**

What is Money Laundering?

19.1 Money laundering means:

- Concealing disguising, converting or transferring criminal property or removing it from the UK;

- Entering into, or becoming concerned in, an arrangement which you know or suspect facilitates the acquisition, retention, use or control of criminal property by or on behalf of another person;
- Acquiring, using or possessing criminal property; and
- Becoming concerned in an arrangement facilitating concealment, removal from the jurisdiction, transfer of nominees, or any other retention or control of terrorist property.

19.2 These are the primary money laundering offences and prohibited acts under the legislation.

Why is Money Laundering important?

19.3 Although the risk to the Council of contravening the legislation is low, it is extremely important that all officers and Members are familiar with the legislation and their legal responsibility as serious criminal sanctions may be imposed for breaches of the legislation. Potentially any officers could be caught by the money laundering provisions if they suspect money laundering and either become involved with it in some way or do nothing about it.

19.4 The Anti-Money Laundering Policy applies to all employees of the Council and aims to maintain the high standards of conduct which currently exist within the Council by preventing criminal activity through money laundering. The Policy sets out the procedures which must be followed to enable the Council to comply with its legal obligations.

19.5 Key Controls

- A Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) is appointed to receive disclosures from officers concerning money laundering activity.
- Implement a procedure to enable the reporting of suspicions of money laundering.
- Maintain client identification procedures in certain circumstances.
- Maintain record keeping procedures.

19.6 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- Appoint a Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) who is to receive disclosures from officers concerning money laundering activity.
- Implement a procedure to enable the reporting of suspicions of money laundering.
- Maintain client identification procedures in certain circumstances.
- Maintain record-keeping procedures.

19.7 Responsibilities of Directors

- Be aware of their roles and responsibilities in respect of Anti Money Laundering.
- Ensure they and officers within their service are aware of who is the MLRO.

20. Gifts, Hospitality and Register of Interests

What are gifts, hospitality and a register of Interests?

- 20.1 During day to day work, there may be times when officers or Members are offered gifts and/or hospitality; for example, a meal, a 'thank you' gift or a trip to a sporting event.
- 20.2 A register of interests means that arrangements are in place for officers and Members to declare any interests that they have which may be seen to cause a conflict during the course of their work, or when making decisions in Committee meetings. For example:
- an officer or Member being related to a Director of a company that the Council trades or deals with; or
 - a committee where a Member serves is being asked to make a decision that would affect the Member, either personally or in relation to a project he/she is supporting.

Why are the receipt of Gifts and Hospitality and the Register of Interests important?

- 20.3 In order to safeguard officers and Members in terms of independence (and therefore that of the Council) it is necessary for clear rules to be in place and adhered to. In relation to Register of Interest, there is the possibility of criminal liability in relation to corrupt practices by officers and Members. Under the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act 1889 it is an offence:

'corruptly to solicit or receive for himself or for any other person any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage whatever as an inducement to, or reward for, or otherwise an account of any member, officer or servant of a public body doing or forbearing to do anything in respect of any matter or transaction whatsoever in which the said public body is concerned.'

20.4 Key Controls

- Small items such as chocolates, pens and diaries need not be declared unless they are offered on a regular basis by the same person or organisation.
- Items over £25 should be recorded within 14 days of the receipt of the gift or hospitality. Written notification must be provided to the Monitoring Officer of the existence and nature of that gift or hospitality.
- Officers must refuse all gifts or hospitality in excess of £100 (if received on one occasion) or in excess of a total of £100 (if received on more than one occasion in same financial year from the same individual or organisation) except with approval from the Chief Executive.
- Officers must declare any interests they have in external organisations and/or partnerships who could potentially influence and are in business with the Authority.

20.5 Responsibilities of Monitoring Officer

- To produce and maintain a register of gifts and hospitality received by officers.

20.6 Responsibilities of Directors

- To comply with the guidance as provided by the Monitoring Officer.

- To maintain an up to date list of gifts, hospitality and interests within their Service in adherence with the principles in the guidance.

21. Asset Management

What is Asset Management?

- 21.1 Asset Management is the system of monitoring and maintaining items of value to the Authority. Asset management is a systematic process of operating, maintaining, upgrading and disposing of assets cost-effectively.
- 21.2 Asset Management relates to land and buildings; furniture, vehicles and equipment; and stocks and stores. It covers their acquisition, disposal, security and recording.

Why is Asset Management important?

- 21.3 The Authority owns a diverse portfolio of assets in the form of property, vehicles, equipment, furniture and other items. It is important that these assets are safeguarded and used efficiently and effectively in supporting the delivery of services. The development of a comprehensive and effective approach to asset management is key to ensuring that:
- utilisation of assets is maximised
 - maintenance expenditure is prioritised
 - major capital investment requirements are identified and quantified; and
 - surplus property and other assets are identified for rationalisation and/or disposal.

21.4 Key Controls

- A corporate asset management strategy is in place.
- Asset Registers / inventories are in place to record all assets.
- Accounting policies are in place to control asset classification, capitalisation, depreciation and disposal.
- Assets are disposed of at the most appropriate time and only when it is in the best interests of the Council and that the best price is obtained.
- Managers are responsible for the care, protection and security of assets within their control.

21.5 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To maintain an Asset Register which contains details of all assets owned by the Council which exceed the capital de-minimis levels.
- To ensure appropriate accounting entries are made for the addition and depreciation of assets into the Authority's records.

- To ensure that assets are valued in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom: A Statement of Recommended Practice*.

21.6 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To maintain proper security, care and protection of all building, equipment, vehicles, stocks, stores and cash under their control.
- To inform the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Internal Audit of any missing equipment or significant shortfalls in stock as soon as possible after discovery, together with explanations for the loss, if known.

Land & Buildings

21.7 **Key Controls**

- Land & Buildings are acquired in accordance with the Property Asset Management Strategy.
- Land & Buildings are purchased only following appropriate authorisation and approval.
- A terrier of all land and buildings owned is maintained, with assets recorded when they are acquired and this record is updated as changes occur.

21.8 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- Ensuring that all acquisitions are properly recorded within accounting records.

21.9 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- The Director for Growth shall maintain a terrier of all land and buildings owned by the Council. The terrier will record the holding Service, purpose for which each property/site is held, location and purchase details.
- The Director for Growth shall arrange for condition surveys to be carried out
- Arranging for the valuation of land and buildings as necessary to meet the accounting requirements of the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure the proper security of all land & buildings under their control.

Furniture, Equipment & Vehicles

21.10 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- The Head of Street Scene will maintain appropriate records of the vehicles held by the Council.
- The Head of ICT will maintain appropriate records of the ICT equipment held by the Council.

- Directors will maintain appropriate records of all other furniture and equipment held or deployed by their service. This will include maintaining an up to date inventory of all individual items with a purchase value in excess of **£100**.
- Directors should arrange for the accuracy of the inventory to be verified periodically at a frequency appropriate to the risk of loss of the individual items recorded.
- To ensure that Council property (owned or hired) should not be removed other than in the ordinary course of the Council's business except in accordance with directions issued by the Director concerned.
- To ensure the safe custody of furniture, equipment and vehicles.

Stocks & Stores

21.11 Responsibilities of Directors

- To make arrangements for the maintenance of reasonable levels of stocks and stores in their control.
- To ensure that appropriate up to date records of the level and value of stocks and stores held are maintained.
- To ensure periodical physical examinations of stocks and stores held, against the stock records, should be carried out at a frequency based on the value and vulnerability of the stock.
- To ensure proper security is maintained at all times for all stocks & stores.

Disposal of Assets

21.12 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure appropriate accounting entries are made to remove the value of disposed assets from the Authority's records and to include the sale proceeds if appropriate.

21.13 Responsibilities of Directors

- Once land and buildings have been declared surplus to requirements, to arrange for the disposal of these assets in accordance with the Council's strategy.
- Details of any vehicles which are deemed surplus to requirements shall be advised to Fleet Services. Where the vehicle is considered no longer suitable for use within the Council, the Fleet Services Manager shall arrange for its suitable disposal.
- Details of any ICT equipment which a Director deems surplus to requirements shall be advised to the Head of ICT. ICT equipment can only be disposed of by ICT Services, and if it is considered redundant in accordance with the ICT Strategy.
- The Head of ICT is responsible for ensuring that the standards, policies and guidelines of decommissioning of ICT equipment are well defined and

communicated to all staff within the Council. The Data Protection Act must be a key consideration in the decommissioning of IT equipment.

- To identify assets which are deemed surplus to requirements.
- To secure the best price obtainable for the sale of assets.
- To record all disposals of assets.
- To ensure that income received for the disposal of an asset is properly banked and coded.
- To consult with the Chief Finance Officer to ensure all financial implications, including accounting for Value Added Tax, are fully considered.

22. Intellectual Property

What is Intellectual Property?

- 22.1 Intellectual Property is a generic term that includes inventions and writing. If these are created by the employee during the course of employment, then, as a general rule, they belong to the employer, not the employee. Various acts of Parliament cover different types of intellectual property.
- 22.2 Certain activities undertaken within the Authority may give rise to items that may be patentable, for example, software development. These items collectively are known as intellectual property.

Why is Intellectual Property important?

- 22.3 Like any assets, Intellectual Property is an essential factor in ensuring business continuity within the Council, and the effective delivery of Council services. It is critical, therefore that the Council puts in place adequate controls over the ownership, storage and use of all Intellectual Property.
- 22.4 The Council holds a large quantity of information for a variety of purposes. As such, it is essential that an overall strategy is in place and implemented for the management of such information to ensure consistency, value for money, accuracy and that any relevant laws are followed.
- 22.5 **Key Controls**
- In the event that the Authority decides to become involved in the commercial exploitation of inventions, the matter should proceed in accordance with the authority's approved intellectual property procedures.
 - The Data Protection Act must be considered in relation to the creation, storage and distribution of Intellectual Property.

- 22.6 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**
- To develop and disseminate good practice through the Authority's intellectual property procedures.

- 22.7 **Responsibilities of Directors**
- To ensure that controls are in place to ensure that officers do not carry out private work in Council time and that officers are aware of an employer's right with regard to intellectual property.

23. Staffing

What are Staff?

- 23.1 Council staff are an essential part of providing the highest level of quality services. Staff are the greatest single item on which the Council spends its budget. It therefore carries not only one of the highest degrees of risk but is also one of the most complex areas. It is therefore crucial that procedures and guidance issued by Human Resources are followed precisely. Examples of areas where procedures exist are:
- recruitment;
 - pay and rewards;
 - attendance management;
 - health and safety;
 - discipline; and
 - grievances

Why are Staff important?

- 23.2 In order to provide the highest level of service, it is crucial that the Authority recruits and retains high calibre, knowledgeable staff, qualified to an appropriate level within the resources available.

23.3 Key Controls

- The key controls for staffing are:
- procedures are in place for forecasting staffing requirements and cost
- controls are implemented to ensure that officer's time is used efficiently and to the benefit of the Authority
- checks are undertaken prior to employing new officers to ensure that they are appropriately qualified, experienced and trustworthy
- managers communicate all changes to staff (including starters and leavers) to Human Resources and Payroll as soon as possible to ensure financial and operational records are kept up to date

- 23.4 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**
- To ensure that budget provision exists for all existing and new officers.

23.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To produce an annual staffing budget.
- To ensure that the staffing budget is an accurate forecast of staffing levels and is equated to an appropriate revenue budget provision.
- To monitor officers' activity to ensure adequate control over such costs as sickness, overtime, training and temporary officers.
- To ensure that the staffing budget is not exceeded without due authority and that it is managed to enable the agreed level of service to be provided.
- The Head of Human Resources to act as an advisor to Directors on areas such as national insurance and pension contributions, as appropriate.
- To ensure that the Head of Human Resources and the Chief Finance Officer are informed if the staffing budget is likely to be materially over or under spent.
- To ensure that all changes to staff (including starters and leavers) are communicated to Human Resources and Payroll as soon as possible to ensure financial and operational records are kept up to date and that appropriate check lists are completed.

24. **Financial Systems**

What are Financial Systems?

- 24.1 Financial systems are all computerised systems that directly or via interface are responsible for generating payments to or from the Council.

Why are Financial Systems Important?

- 24.2 Financial Systems are where details of all transactions with the Council are held. It is important that these are accurate so that the underlying transactions are correct.

24.3 **Key Controls**

- Access control and security of the Council's Financial systems should be maintained.
- Systems should be reconciled periodically to ensure consistency of data stored within.

24.4 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- Approve any new financial systems and interfaces to be introduced.

- Ensure appropriate testing of new financial systems and testing of interfaces between systems prior to their introduction.
- Ensure appropriate reconciliation between all financial systems.
- For all corporate financial systems:
 - Ensure all input is genuine, complete, accurate, timely and not previously processed
 - All processing is carried out in a complete, accurate and timely manner
 - Output from all systems is complete, accurate and timely in an agreed format
 - Effective contingency and disaster recovery arrangements exist for all computerised systems, to include; back-up / rollback and processes to deal to an interruption to the system
 - Ensure systems are documented and staff trained in the operation of them
 - Correct any errors identified during the interfacing or reconciliation processes

24.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- Seek approval of the Chief Financial Officer before changing any existing system or introducing any new financial system.
- For all business area specific financial systems:
 - Ensure all input is genuine, complete, accurate, timely and not previously processed
 - All processing is carried out in a complete, accurate and timely manner
 - Output from all systems is complete, accurate and timely in an agreed format
 - Effective contingency and disaster recovery arrangements exist for all computerised systems, to include; back-up / rollback and processes to deal to an interruption to the system
 - Ensure systems are documented and staff trained in the operation of them
 - Correct any errors identified during the interfacing or reconciliation processes

25. **Income Collection and Management**

What is Income Collection and Management?

25.1 Some Services have the facility to charge for the services provided as part of their day to day operations. All charges must ensure compliance with the relevant statutes governing local authority activities. Charges may be levied in advance when a service is booked, at the point of sale or by the raising of a debtors invoice after the service has been delivered. Examples of these include:

- **Charges at point of sale:**
 - entrance fees;
 - cultural activities
 - car parking; and
 - professional fees e.g. Local Search fees and Planning Permission Fees.

- **Debtor Invoices**
 - sundry debtors.

25.2 The Council also collects income arising from local taxation, namely Council Tax and Business Rates, and income from parking penalty notices.

Why is Income Collection and Management important?

25.3 The collection of income is a significant part of the Council's business and is a vulnerable asset. Effective revenue collection systems are necessary to ensure that all revenue due is identified, collected, receipted and banked securely and effectively. It is preferable to obtain revenue in advance of supplying goods or services as this improves the Authority's cash flow and also avoids the time and cost of administering debts. In order to ensure that cash flow is maximised and costs are minimised, it is essential that income is collected in as complete and timely manner as is possible. This would normally be at the point of sale or service.

25.4 Key Controls

- All debtor invoices must be raised via the Corporate Debtors system. Invoices raised need to be appropriate and legitimate and are calculated correctly.
- All income due to the Authority is legitimate, recorded and charged correctly, in accordance with an approved charging policy, which is regularly reviewed.
- Value Added Tax (VAT) at the appropriate rate must be levied and collected in line with VAT guidance.
- All income is collected from the correct person, at the right time, using the correct procedures and the appropriate stationery. Appropriate supporting documentation is retained in the event of debt recovery procedures being invoked.
- All money received by an employee on behalf of the Authority is banked in a timely manner, to the Authority's bank and is properly recorded in the Council's financial system.
- There is adequate separation in duties in identifying amounts due and the responsibility for collection, as far as is practicable.
- All debtor invoices must be raised via the Corporate Debtors system or other authorised debtor systems.
- Effective action is taken to pursue non-payment within defined timescales.
- Formal approval in accordance with the authorised limits (see Appendix A), for debt write-off is obtained.
- Appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write-off action.

- All appropriate income documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention schedule.
- Money collected and deposited is reconciled to the bank account by a person who is not involved in the collection or banking process.

25.5 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To agree arrangements for the collection of all income due to the Council and to approve the procedures, systems and documentation for its collection and accounting for VAT.
- To approve the design of controlled stationery and arrangements for its control and security.
- To agree the write-off of bad debts in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation. To develop and maintain a Corporate Debt Management Policy.
- To develop and maintain up to date procedural guidance for the collection of income due to the Council.
- To ensure that appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write off action.
- To establish and initiate appropriate recovery procedures, including legal action where necessary, for debts that are not paid promptly.
- To seek approval from Council on an annual basis for discretionary fees which will apply to transactions in the following financial year.

25.6 **Responsibilities of Monitoring Officer**

- To provide guidance on the retention and storage of income related documents.
- To provide guidance to ensure compliance with the relevant statutes governing local authority activities.
- To arrange appropriate insurance for all Council safes, as necessary.

25.7 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To establish a charging policy for the supply of goods or services, including the appropriate charging of VAT, and to review it annually, in line with corporate policies.
- To determine where charges can be made at point of sale and where there is a need to raise a debtors invoice.
- To establish adequate procedures and controls to ensure that all staff entrusted with Council money are properly accountable.

- To separate the responsibility for identifying amounts due and the responsibility for collection, as far as is practicable and ensure staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities.
- To issue official receipts or to maintain other documentation for income collection. Officers must issue machine printed or official receipt forms or tickets when receiving all monies due to the Council. All official receipt forms (miscellaneous receipt books) shall be pre-printed, and Officers must sign all such receipts when issued.
- To ensure that at least two employees are present when post is opened so that money is received by post is properly identified and recorded under arrangements agreed with the Chief Finance Officer.
- To hold securely receipts, tickets and other records of income for the appropriate period.
- To order and issue all controlled stationery (receipt forms, books or tickets and similar items). The design of controlled stationery and arrangements for its control and security should be approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To lock away all income to safeguard against loss or theft, and to ensure the security of cash handling.
- To ensure that income is paid fully and promptly into the appropriate Authority bank account in the form in which it is received.
- To reconcile monies collected to evidence bankings in accordance with procedures determined by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To keep a record of all overs and shorts so that any necessary adjustments can be made by arrangement with the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure income is not used to cash personal cheques or other payments.
- To supply the Chief Finance Officer with details relating to work done, goods supplied, services rendered or other amounts due, to enable a sundry debtor invoice to be raised in a form approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure that sundry debtor invoices are raised promptly and within seven calendar days of supply and the debt is supported by sufficient documentary evidence.
- To ensure that VAT is appropriately applied and the correct VAT category is used.
- Directors have a responsibility to assist the Chief Finance Officer in collecting debts that they have originated, by providing any further information that may be requested by the debtor or by Legal Services in the event of Court action.

- To ensure that cash held on premises does not exceed approved limits and adequate insurance coverage has been obtained.
- To keep a record of every transfer of money between employees of the Authority. The receiving officer must sign for the transfer and the transferor must retain a copy.
- To recommend to the Chief Finance Officer all debts to be written off and to keep a record of all sums written off up to the approved limits. Once raised, no bona fide debt may be cancelled, except by full payment or by its formal writing off. A credit note can only be issued in relation to a debt in order to correct a factual inaccuracy or administration error in the calculation and/or billing of the original debt.
- To obtain the approval of the Chief Finance Officer when writing off debts in excess of the approved limit, and the approval of Cabinet where required.
- To notify the Chief Finance Officer of outstanding revenue relating to the previous financial year as soon as possible after 31 March in line with the timetable determined by the Chief Finance Officer.

26. Ordering and Payment of Works, Goods and Services

What is Ordering and Payment for Goods and Services?

- 26.1 Every day officers within the Council will order and/or authorise payments for goods and services. An order is a formal instruction requesting goods and services for which a payment will be given. An order should be electronic, represent a commitment on behalf of the Council, and form a contract with suppliers.
- 26.2 The Council has Contract Procedure Rules in place which aim to achieve value for money in the purchase of goods and services. These rules set the framework to ensure that procurement delivers value for money across all services and directly contributes to the achievement of our corporate priorities.

Why is ordering and payment important?

- 26.3 Public money should be spent with demonstrable probity and in accordance with the Authority's policies. Authorities have a statutory duty to achieve best value in part through economy and efficiency. The Authority's procedures should help to ensure that services obtain value for money from their purchasing arrangements. These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Contract Procedure Rules.
- 26.4 **Key Controls**
- All goods and services are ordered only by appropriate persons and are correctly recorded.

- Only authorised officers set up in the corporate finance system can authorise unless in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- Goods and services received are checked to ensure they are in accordance with the order.
- Payments are not made unless a valid purchase order is provided, goods have been received by the Authority to the correct prices, quantity and quality standards unless in exceptional circumstances as agreed by the Chief Finance Officer.
- All payments are made to the correct supplier, for the correct amount and are properly recorded, regardless of payment method.
- Normal method for all payments is via BACS.
- All appropriate evidence of the transaction and payment documents are retained and stored for the defined period, in accordance with the document retention guidelines.
- All expenditure, including VAT is accurately recorded against the right budget and any exceptions are corrected. If VAT is being re-claimed there is a need to ensure that it is appropriate to do so and a VAT invoice is provided.
- All invoices with Construction Industry Tax liability are accurately processed in accordance with the scheme.
- All invoices are addressed to South Kesteven District Council.
- In addition, the effect of e-business/e-commerce and electronic purchasing requires that processes are in place to maintain the security and integrity of data for transacting business electronically.

26.5 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To ensure that the Authority's main financial systems and procedures are sound and properly administered.
- To approve any changes to existing financial systems and to approve any new systems before they are introduced.
- To make payments from the Authority's funds on the authorisation of officers in line with the Authorised Limits (see Appendix A) that the expenditure has been duly incurred in accordance with financial regulations.
- To ensure the security, safe keeping and maintenance of blank cheques.
- To ensure that payments are authorised in accordance with the bank mandate.
- To ensure payments are processed for the correct amount.

- To make payments, whether or not provision exists within the estimate, where the payment is specifically required by statute or is made under a court order.
- To make payments to contractors based on the certification of the appropriate Director or nominated representative which must include details of the value of work, retention money, amount previously certified and amounts now certified.
- To provide advice and encouragement on making payments by the most economical means.
- To ensure that a budgetary control system is established that enables commitments incurred by placing orders to be shown against the appropriate budget allocation so that they can be taken into account in budget monitoring reports.

26.6 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure that officers use e-procurement for the raising of purchase orders and details of goods/services receipted are recorded in the system unless there are exceptional circumstances as approved by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure that goods and services are purchased in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- To ensure orders for goods and services are correctly addressed.
- To ensure that orders are only used for goods and service provided to the department or are purchased for recharge to voluntary organisations providing services that complement those provided by the Council.
- To ensure individuals do not use official orders to obtain goods or services for their private use.
- Each order sent to a supplier must include the contract price or quotation obtained as well as the contract/quotation reference.
- All invoices are in the name of South Kesteven District Council and contain accurate information in line with the order.
- To ensure invoices are processed in a timely manner.
- To ensure that where access to the computerised ordering system is available it is used to create a commitment to be shown against the budget head. Any exemption from this requirement to be subject to the approval of the Chief Finance Officer.
- To ensure that there are sufficient officers authorised to act on the Directors behalf for approving orders and paying invoices without orders. The approval limits should not exceed the Authorised Limits (see Appendix A).

27. Grant Payments

What are Grant Payments?

- 27.1 South Kesteven District Council recognises and values the contribution that community and voluntary organisations make to their communities. Accordingly, grants are given to them to deliver services and activities that are in line with the Council's priorities, aims and objectives. This funding supports a range of activities including grants to the third sector.

Why are Grant Payments important?

- 27.2 Grant payments are important as they are designed to help and support those organisations, often those who may have access to only limited resources, who provide services and organise activities for the local community. As this funding is sourced from public sources, it is important to ensure that it is spent in an appropriate way.

27.3 Key Controls

- Checks are undertaken on the integrity and financial standing of organisations to be funded.
- All applications are facilitated through a standard application form which requires various information including up to date accounts, bank statements, constitution, DBS information and child protection policies (where applicable) and expected outcomes which will arise from the funding provided. The amount of information requested will be proportionate to the amount of funding granted.
- Procedures are in place for the review and approval of grant applications, ensuring that expected outcomes align with Council priorities, aims and objectives.
- Funding agreements are signed off by both parties to confirm the terms and conditions on which the provision of funding is based. This will include the outcomes expected, performance indicators, and reporting requirements.
- Monitoring arrangements are established to ensure that evidence is provided by the organisation on a periodic basis to confirm that outcomes have been achieved in line with the grant funding agreement and that systems, processes and financial controls remain appropriate.

27.4 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that all grant payments are properly recorded in the Council's accounts.

27.5 Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that grant awards are consistent with Council priorities, aims and objectives.
- To ensure grants awarded are in line with available budgets.
- To ensure that appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place, thereby obtaining assurance that funding has been applied for the purposes intended.
- To ensure that all grant payments are subject to annual consideration and approval.

28. Purchase Cards

What are Purchase Cards?

- 28.1 Purchase cards are a form of company charge card that allows goods and services to be procured. Purchase cards are issued directly to employees.

Why are Purchase Cards important?

- 28.2 Purchase cards provide the Council with another method of payment for goods and services and reduces the need for cash within the Authority. Purchase cards also provide the Authority with greater visibility of ad-hoc transactions.

28.3 Key Controls

- All purchase card transactions must be logged on the financial system.
- All purchase card transactions must be matched to the bank transaction and authorised by the authorising manager.
- Cards must be held securely and not shared.
- Purchase cards must not be used for personal transactions.
- Purchase cards must only be used by the individual who it is assigned to.
- Purchase cards will only be issued to individuals who have received appropriate training.
- Individual transaction and monthly limits must be agreed by the authorising manager.
- Purchase cards must only be used in accordance with the prevailing policy.

28.4 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To provide guidance to all officers on the proper use of Purchase Cards within the Council.
- To ensure that appropriate accounting guidelines are in place for transactions where the purchase card is used, including the accounting for VAT.
- To approve purchase cards to be issued to individual officers and approve individual and monthly transaction limits.
- To arrange cancellation of the Purchase Cards when an officer leaves the Authority.
- To provide guidance on receipt retention.

28.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To comply with the rules and guidance provided by the Chief Finance Officer.
- To set the individual and monthly transaction limits.
- To ensure that officers who are allocated Purchase Cards and their Managers are aware of their responsibilities regarding this (and further detail contained within the Purchase Card User Guide).
- To ensure that the card is returned to the Exchequer team, in person, in the event the cardholder leaves the Authority.
- To ensure that VAT receipts are retained for the appropriate period.

29. **Payments to Employees and Members**

What are Payments to Employees and Members?

- 29.1 As part of main Council business, the Council has to pay officers their salaries. In addition, payments can be made for other expenses which they have occurred on behalf of their duties.
- 29.2 Salaries and wages are paid in accordance with the approved Establishment List for the Council. Salaries are paid on the third Friday of each month, partly in advance and partly in arrears. All payments are made by BACS.
- 29.3 Members' allowances are paid monthly through the payroll system.

Why are Payments to Employees and Members important?

- 29.4 Officer costs are the largest item of expenditure for most Councils. It is, therefore, important that payments are made accurately, timely, made only when they are due and that payments accord with individuals' conditions of services.
- 29.5 It is also important that all payments are made accurately, recorded and accounted for and that Members allowances are authorised in accordance with the scheme adopted.

29.6 **Key Controls**

Key controls are:

- Proper authorisation procedures are in place and that there is adherence to corporate timetables and procedures in relation to the prompt notification of all changes including:
 - Starters;
 - Leavers;
 - Variations; and
 - Enhancements.
- All payments are made in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment, and approved timesheets and claims where appropriate;
- Frequent reconciliation of payroll expenditure against approved budget and bank account;
- All appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention schedule; and
- HMRC regulations are complied with.

29.7 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To arrange and control secure and reliable payment of salaries, wages, compensation or other emoluments to existing and former officers, and to determine and approve the associated procedures.
- To record and make arrangements for the accurate and timely payment of tax, superannuation and other deductions complying with statutory requirements.
- To make arrangements for payment of all travel and subsistence claims or financial loss allowance.
- To make arrangements for paying Members travel or other allowances upon receiving the prescribed form, duly completed and authorised.
- To provide advice to secure payment of salaries and wages by the most economical means.

29.8 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure appointments are made in accordance with the regulations of the Authority and approved establishments, grades and scale of pay and that adequate budget provision is available.
- To notify the HR Service of all matters affecting payments as soon as possible and in the required manner. In particular:

- appointments, resignations, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and transfers;
 - absences for sickness or other reason, apart from approved leave;
 - changes in pay rates, other than pay awards and agreements of general application; and
 - information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax and national insurance.
- To ensure that adequate and effective systems and procedures are operated so that:
 - payments are authorised to bona fide officers only;
 - payments are only made where there is a valid entitlement;
 - conditions and contracts of employments are correctly applied; and
 - officer's names listed on the payroll are checked at regular intervals to verify accuracy and completeness.
 - To ensure all officers' expenses are paid via payroll.
 - To certify travel and subsistence claims and other allowances. Certification is taken to mean that journeys were authorised and expenses properly and necessarily incurred, and that allowance are properly payable by the Authority, ensuring that cost-effective use of travel arrangements is achieved. Due consideration should be given to tax implications and that the Chief Finance Officer is informed where appropriate.
 - Officers' claims submitted more than six months after the expenses were incurred will be assessed and determined, for payment or otherwise, by the Director. The Chief Finance Officer will provide guidance on which the assessments and determination can be made.
 - To ensure that the Chief Finance Officer is notified of the detail of any employee benefits in kind, to enable full and complete reporting within the income tax self-assessment system.
 - To ensure that all appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention guidelines.

30. Taxation

What is Taxation?

- 30.1 There are five types of taxation which the Council will be aware of and take account of when it carries out its business. These are:
- Value Added Tax (VAT);
 - Income Tax and National Insurance;

- Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) Tax;
- Insurance Premium Tax; and
- Corporation Tax (on companies it controls)

30.2 Each has its own rules and relates to different areas of the Council's business.

Why is Taxation important?

30.3 Like all organisations, the Authority is responsible for ensuring its tax affairs are in order. Tax issues are often very complex and the penalties for incorrectly accounting for tax are severe. It is therefore very important for all Officers to be aware of their role.

30.4 Detailed consideration of future spending is required to ensure that the Council can continue to recover all the VAT it incurs, both on new schemes and on its existing expenditure. It is therefore important for all officers to be aware of their role in ensuring the Council's compliance with and adherence to HMRC's VAT Regulations and the requirements of the Council's VAT guidance.

30.5 It is important that the Council does not waste resources through under recovery of VAT, failing to identify taxable transactions and account for VAT due at the correct time, unnecessarily incurring non-UK VAT that is generally unrecoverable, or by making poor decisions due to inadequate information.

30.6 Key Controls

- Budget Managers are provided with the relevant information and kept up to date on tax issues.
- Budget managers are instructed on required record keeping.
- All taxable transactions are identified, properly carried out and accounted for within stipulated timescales.
- Records are maintained in accordance with instructions.
- Returns are made to the appropriate Authorities within the stipulated timescale.

30.7 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that there are proper arrangements in place for the administration and accounting of the four areas of taxation.
- To ensure that all arrangements comply with the Council's statutory responsibilities.
- To complete a monthly return of VAT input and outputs to HMRC.
- To provide details to HMRC regarding the CIS Tax deduction scheme.
- To maintain up-to-date guidance for officers on taxation issues in the taxation manual on the Intranet with updates on significant changes.

- Complete the Council's annual partial exemption calculation and ensure that, as far as possible, this is not exceeded.
- Provide VAT advice, both strategically and operationally.
- To complete all HMRC returns regarding PAYE, on a timely basis.

30.8

Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure that the correct VAT liability is attached to all income due.
- To ensure that all VAT recoverable on purchases complies with HMRC regulations.
- To ensure that all capital work and revenue development is notified to the Council's VAT Officer at the earliest opportunity where any of the following apply:
 - significant VAT is incurred;
 - any VAT-exempt income is generated; or
 - there are non-cash benefits, e.g. Land swap or provision of services at below market price.
- To fund any interest charges or penalties falling upon the Council from HMRC that result from their Directorate's failure to account for the correct VAT at the correct time.
- To retain all VAT-related documents in accordance with the Council's document retention policy.
- To ensure that, as far is possible, tax is accounted for in the correct tax accounting period.
- To ensure that, where construction and maintenance works are undertaken, the contractor fulfils the necessary construction industry tax deduction requirements.
- To ensure that all persons employed by the Authority are added to the Authority's payroll and tax deducted from any payments, except where the individuals are bona fide self-employed or are employed by a recognised agency.
- To ensure officers are aware of and follow the guidance on taxation issued by the Chief Finance Officer in the Authority's Tax manual.
- To ensure that officers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to self-billing (see self-billing regulation).

31. Document Retention

What is Document Retention?

- 31.1 Laws and best practice provide requirements and guidelines for the retention and maintenance of documents, along with details as to how long they should be kept. A Document Retention Policy provides a systematic way of deciding to keep or destroy documents which have been received or created in the course of business. It gives guidance on how documents should be kept and how they should be destroyed.

Why is Document Retention important?

- 31.2 Document Retention is important as it provides a means of supplying evidence which verifies that income and expenditure recorded in the Council's financial statements is valid, accurate and complete. External organisations also require such confidence. There are strict guidelines and legal requirements in place to satisfy bodies such as HMRC.

- 31.3 A document retention policy will help to simplify the running of a Service by promoting efficiency and freeing up valuable storage space. Also, a document retention policy can protect you, ensuring you have evidence for your practice when required, and help makes sure laws are being followed.

31.4 Key Controls

- An understandable and clearly communicated Document Retention Policy is in place.
- All key areas of the Councils operations are covered within the policy.

31.5 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- To ensure that a comprehensive Document Retention Policy is in place and this is in line with statutory guidance.

31.6 Responsibilities of Directors

- To ensure compliance with the guidance within their services.
- To ensure that any amendments to the guidance are reported to the Records Manager on a timely basis.

32. Partnerships (including Joint Ventures and Companies)

What are Partnerships?

- 32.1 Partnerships provide alternative arrangements for the Council to ensure services are delivered to the local community. This may be better than providing the services directly or by procuring a service from another agency.

Why are Partnerships, Joint Ventures and Wholly Owned Companies Important?

- 32.2 The distinctive role of the Council is one of leadership to bring together the contributions of the various agencies. We therefore need to deliver a shared vision of services based on user wishes. Partnerships play a key role in delivering community strategies and in

helping to promote and improve the well-being of the area. The Council can work in partnership with others - public agencies, private companies, community groups and voluntary organisations.

- 32.3 There are many reasons to enter into partnerships including:
- Providing new and better ways of delivering services to our residents
 - Creating formal structures to bind partners to work together long-term for shared objectives
 - Sharing risk with others
 - Accessing new resources, including funding
 - Forging new relationships

32.4 **Key Controls**

- All partnerships should be appropriately constituted, with clear and unambiguous rules for decisions, expenditure, goals and responsibilities.
- All partnerships should file accurate annual returns in a timely manner, in an appropriate form to the nature of the partnership.
- The key aims of the partnership should be agreed and committed to from all partner agencies.

32.5 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To ensure that the accounting arrangements to be adopted for each partnership are satisfactory.
- To ensure that corporate governance arrangements and legal issues have been considered.
- To ensure that risks are fully appraised and reported before agreements are entered with external agencies.
- To ensure that any specific insurance is considered for any officers or members acting formally as a Director to any formally constituted company.
- To ensure that the Council's share of any financial impact is appropriately fed into the financial statements, medium term financial planning and budget planning processes.

32.6 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To develop a suitable business case setting out the purpose of each partnership proposed and why the proposed route is the best to meet the Council's objectives.
- To ensure appropriate approvals are obtained before any negotiations are concluded with external agencies.
- To ensure that appropriate processes are put in place to represent the interests of the Council, in line with their stake in any partnership arrangement.

- To monitor the Council's share of any financial impact of the partnership is incorporated into the Council's budget monitoring processes.
- To monitor all other performance aspects of the partnership.

33. External Funding including Grant applications

What is External Funding?

- 33.1 Sources of external funding provide additional resources to enable the Council to deliver services to the local community. This can be provided by the in-house service, or by commissioning partners or other agencies. Care needs to be taken, to ensure that the funding conditions meet the aims and objectives of the Council.
- 33.2 Smaller organisations may be prohibited from bidding for directly accessing some sources of external funding, relying on the Council to effectively sponsor their business case. If the Council accepts, then it becomes the accountable body for the grant; making it ultimately responsible for its correct use.

Why is External Funding important?

- 33.3 External funding is a very important source of income, especially at a time when the Council's resources are limited and scarce. However, funding conditions need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the aims and objectives of the Authority.
- 33.4 Local authorities are increasingly encouraged to provide seamless service delivery through working closely with other organisations and private service providers. Funds from external agencies provide additional resources to ensure that the Council objectives are achieved. By acting as Accountable Body for others, the Council may enable projects to proceed and support the achievement of wider objectives within its area.

33.5 Key Controls

The key controls for external funding are:

- to ensure that the key conditions of funding are understood and complied with; including planning and approval for any match funding and revenue costs associated with any capital grant (such as ongoing maintenance costs).
- to ensure that funds are acquired only to meet the priorities approved in the policy framework by the Council;
- to ensure that risks associated with the funding are known and mitigated – particularly around the potential future clawback of external funding
- to ensure any long-term constraints on assets is understood, recorded and adhered to, which arise from conditions attached to accepted grants.

- to assign a service area responsible for oversight of performance of any agency where the Council is acting as Accountable Body for external funding.
- to have a developed exit strategy for when the grant concludes.

33.6 **Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer**

- To ensure that all funding applications are reviewed prior to submission
- To ensure that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Authority's accounts.
- To ensure that any match funding requirements are considered prior to entering into agreements and the future revenue budgets reflect these requirements.
- To ensure that the revenue implications that arise from one off capital grants are understood before the grant is applied for..
- To ensure that any necessary claims or returns are made within the deadlines set.
- To ensure that audit requirements are met.
- To include the income and expenditure in the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts.
- To advise on requirements for ensuring that the Council's duties as Accountable Body for external funding are met
- To adjust the budgets in line with appropriately approved and awarded grants.

33.7 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- To ensure all applications for funding are consistent with the Council's priorities and have been reviewed by the Chief Finance Officer prior to submission
- To seek appropriate approval to accept any external funding in line with the authorised limits (see Appendix A).
- To ensure risks, constraints and any ongoing funding commitments are documented and fully considered against the benefits of any grants received.
- To ensure that all claims for funds and other returns are made accurately and duly signed by the due date.
- To ensure that the project progresses in accordance with the agreed programme and that all expenditure is properly incurred and recorded.

- To ensure that the appropriate approval is obtained prior to incurring additional expenditure on schemes, projects, programmes etc. which is to be financed wholly by additional grants or other income.
- To ensure that relevant documentation is retained in accordance with the terms of the grant as per the Council's document retention scheme.
- To provide on an annual basis details of external funding which have been agreed.
- To provide a breakdown of projected income and expenditure each year so that these can be properly budgeted for in the Council's financial system.
- To ensure appropriate performance monitoring of any funding where the Council is acting as Accountable Body.

34. Work for External Parties

What is Work for External Parties?

- 34.1 Legislation enables the Council to provide a range of goods services to both individuals and organisations. Various pieces of legislation cover whether costs can be recovered, the extent a surplus can be earned and whether there are restrictions on the use of any income received. The requirements may be directly agreed with the Council, or it may choose to bid to provide a service via a tender process.

Why is Work for External Parties important?

- 34.2 Work may be chargeable and enable a unit to maintain economies of scale and existing expertise. Depending on the service and the recipient then the income may contribute to the Council's central running costs.

34.3 Key Controls

- Ensure that the work falls within the Council's statutory powers.
- Ensure all parties are clear about what services are being provided and the basis of any such provision.
- Ensure risks associated with the work are known, documented and appropriately managed.
- Ensure proposals are costed properly and any charges are within Council's statutory powers.

34.4 Responsibilities of Chief Finance Officer

- Ensure that all income and expenditure relating to External parties is contained within the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts.

- Support business areas to calculate costs associated with any service offered.
- Adjust budgets in line with any agreed changes in income and expenditure resulting from any approved works for External Parties.

34.5 **Responsibilities of Directors**

- Ensure that appropriate approval is sought in advance of any formal agreement to proceed in line with the Authorised Limits (see Appendix A).
- Ensure that the business area has the appropriate expertise and capacity to undertake any work before committing the Council into provision.
- Ensure that appropriate documentation is agreed between the parties including what services are being provided, charges, timing and trigger points of payments.
- Ensure risks are identified in advance and a risk management plan put in place; this could include:
 - Appropriate insurance provision
 - Appropriate timing of payments
 - Appropriate contract management
- To provide a breakdown of any projected income and any additional expenditure each year so that these can be properly budgeted for in the Council's financial system and included within the Statement of Accounts.

Appendix A

Authorised Limits

Operationally there are a series of decisions that are required to allow services to operate efficiently without seeking approval from Council each time (for example moving budgets, accepting grants or writing off bad debt). This Appendix sets out limits and responsibilities for these matters.

Nothing contained within this Appendix prohibits formal delegation by Full Council or Cabinet to delegate greater limits or a project, scheme or area basis.

Virements - Revenue Budgets (sections 6, 32 and 33 of Financial Regulations)

Virements (adjustments) to revenue budgets can take place under a range of circumstances:

- Revenue (current year only) – can be between employee to employee budgets or non-employee to non-employee budget lines (see section 6 of Financial Regulations) *
- Revenue (grant funded) – note such changes will only be for the period of the grant (see section 32 of Financial Regulations)
- Revenue (external income) – this should only be for the duration of any contract, unless there is an expectation that income will be sustainable (see section 33 of Financial Regulations)

The scheme of virements must be administered and maintained by the Council's Chief Finance Officer in accordance with the following thresholds:

Senior Officer Lead	Finance Lead	Revenue Budget expenditure, grant and income
Head of Service	Senior Accountant/Team Leader	Up to £50,000
Assistant Director / Director	Chief Finance Officer	£50,001 -£100,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	£100,001 - £250,000
Chief Executive	Chief Finance Officer	Over £250,000

Capital Budgets Amendments (Section 3 of Financial Regulations)

Virements and amendments to capital budgets can take place under a range of circumstances:

- Capital (grant funding and funding from reserves) – if we have successful in securing grant funding or there is approved use of a reserve to finance capital expenditure
- Capital (external contribution) – if we have received income from another external source (such as a developer contribution)
- Capital (intra-scheme transfer) – if a scheme is going to overspend and this can be contained by transferring from another scheme in the same financial year without a risk that this will lead to an overspend in that scheme

The table below sets out as a minimum the approval required from the business, finance and members depending on the size of the change:

Senior Officer	Finance Lead	Capital
Head of Service	Senior Accountant/Team Leader	Up to £100,000
Assistant Director/Director	Chief Finance Officer	£100,001 - £250,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance)	£250,001 - £500,000
Chief Executive	Chief Finance Officer (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance)	Over £500,000

Additions to Budgets (Sections 2 (Capital) & 3 (Revenue) of Financial Regulations)

Additions to the approved budget framework where no external funding has been secured (including creation of new service areas) can be agreed by Cabinet or Full Council as per the limits in the following table:

Approval Body	Revenue and Capital
Cabinet	Up to £250,000 per addition up to £1,000,000 cumulative per financial year
Full Council	Over £250,000 per addition and over £1,000,000 cumulative (per financial year)

Approval to use General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Reserves with the exception of the relevant Working Balances

Accessing reserves to fund specific one-off expenditure can be agreed by the Chief Finance Officer or Cabinet Member as per the limits in the following table:

Service Area Senior Lead Proposer	Approval by Finance Lead	Consultation	Limit
Director	Chief Finance Officer		Up to £150k
Director	Chief Finance Officer	Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and Chief Executive	Over £150k

Authorised Signatories (Section 26 of Financial Regulations)

The following table sets out the limit per transaction for raising orders, approving invoices (without an order), approving expenses to employees and approving lease agreements; noting that no payment should be split into smaller components to circumvent these limits.

Authorised By	Authorised Limit for Orders & Invoices	Authorised Limit for Payroll & Expenses	Authorised Period for Lease Agreements
Staff below Team Leader Level	Up to £1,000	N/A	N/A
Team Leaders or equivalent	£1,001 - £25,000	Up to £1,000	Less than 12 months
Heads of Service	£25,001 - £100,000	£1,001 - £5,000	Less than 12 months
Assistant Directors/Directors	£100,001 - £250,000	Over £5,000	Less than 12 months
Director	Over £250,000 - £1,000,000		
Chief Finance Officer	Over £1,000,000	Over £5,000	12 months and over

The Chief Finance Officer can, based upon a satisfactory explanation of need, agree an increase for officer(s) within a business area, for any amount up to the Chief Finance Officer's current limit.

Bad Debt Write-Off (Section 25 of Financial Regulations)

Any debit or credit balance under £50 per individual debt can be written-off by a Head of Service (or equivalent) without the need to be counter-signed. In all other cases, each write-off will be countersigned by the Chief Finance Officer or their deputy as appropriate as laid out in the table below.

Proposed by:	Authorised By:	Delegated Limit (per debt)
Team Leader or equivalent)	Head of Service or equivalent	£50 - £5,000
Head of Service or Equivalent	Relevant Director	£5,001 – £10,000
Director	Chief Finance Officer	£10,001 – £50,000
Chief Finance Officer	Chief Finance Officer & Cabinet for Finance	Over £50,000

Emergency Payments under the Emergency Plan (Section 5 of Financial Regulations)

- Director (in consultation with Chief Executive or Chief Finance Officer) up to £100,000
- Leader and Chief Executive in excess of £100,000

Definition of Roles

Throughout the document references are made to job titles and roles. During the period of the Regulations it is possible that titles will change. Therefore the updated title shall be equivalent (in terms of the management structure) to the title used in this document.

Recommended Periods For The Retention Of Records**Appendix B****Type of Document****Retention Period (Years)****Accountancy/Financial**

Abstract of accounts	6
Audited accounts	Retain indefinitely
Budgetary control records	6
Costing records	6
Estimate working papers	2
Financial ledgers	6
Grant claim records	6
Investment records	2
Journals	6
Leasing records	2
Loans records	Retain indefinitely
Records re closing ledgers	6
Telephone call records	2
VAT claims	6
VAT records	3
Voluntary fund accounts	6

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Bank Related Records

Bank paying-in books/slips	6
Bank reconciliation	6
Bank statements	6
Cancelled cheques	2
Cheque books and counterfoils	6
Cheque lists (creditors/payrolls)	2
Loan records and correspondence	2
Paid cheques	4
Returned cheque records	2

Contracts

Final accounts of contracts executed under hand	6
Final accounts of contracts executed under seal	12
Successful tenders	3 years after final payment
Unsuccessful tenders	Retain until final payment is made

Creditor Records

Copy orders	2
Credit notes	6
Creditor invoices	6
Delivery notes	2
Imprest documentation	2
Periodic payment records	6

External Funding

Funding documentation and associated invoice/payment details

6 years or in accordance with the terms of the individual grant requirements

Income Records

Cash books

6

Correspondence (income)

2

Debtor accounts (records non-current)

2

Income posting slips and tabulations

2

Periodic income records

2

Receipt books

2

Record of receipt books issued

2

Registrar's quarterly returns

2

Sales records

2

Miscellaneous Records

Annual report

Retain indefinitely

Bound copies of minutes

Retain indefinitely

Capital works tabulations

2

Car leasing and mileage records

3

Car loans

3

Computer system documentation

2

Inland Revenue documentation

6

Inventory records

6

Land searches	6
Member allowances	2
Minutes	2
Postal remittance registers	2
Stock lists	2
Travel claims	6
Valuation lists	Retain indefinitely
Vehicle logs	2

Insurance Records

Expired insurance contracts	Retain indefinitely
Insurance claims	6
Insurance policy documentation	Retain indefinitely
Insurance register	Retain indefinitely

Payroll

BACS amendments and output	3
Building society tabulations	3
Copy payslips	6
Correspondence	6
Life certificates (pensions)	2
Monthly BACS listing	3
NI file cashbook	2

NI number changes	2
Payroll adjustment documentation	6
Part time employees' claim forms	6
Pensions personal records	Retain indefinitely
SSP records	4
Staff transfer records	6
Starters' forms	2
Superannuation Records	Retain indefinitely
Tax and NI records	6
Tax code notifications	2
Timesheets	6
Union documentation	2
Weekly BACS listings	3

Note:

- The period of years shown, relates to a complete period following the end of the financial year to which the record relates.
- No documents or records should be disposed of until notification has been received from the District Auditor of the completion of the audit of accounts for the year to which the records relate.
- If a suitable period of retention is in doubt or specific records are not listed within the Financial Regulations, please refer to the Chief Finance Officer.

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