

Cabinet



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Tuesday, 7 October 2025 at 4.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Councillor Ashley Baxter, Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Members: Councillor Paul Stokes, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Rhys Baker, Councillor Richard Cleaver, Councillor Phil Dilks, Councillor Philip Knowles and Councillor Virginia Moran

Agenda

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

- 1. Public Open Forum**
The Cabinet welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than one working day prior to the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Disclosure of Interests**
- 4. Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 19)
Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2025.
- Items for Cabinet Decision: Key**
- 5. Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2029** (Pages 21 - 39)
To present the Customer Experience Strategy to Cabinet for approval.
- 6. Contract Award for Mixed Vehicle Procurement** (Pages 41 - 79)
This report seeks approval to award contracts for the procurement of various vehicles including caged vehicles and sweepers.

Items for Cabinet Decision: Non-Key

7. **ICT and Cyber Security Strategies** (Pages 81 - 120)
To approve the updated ICT Strategy and the new Cyber Security Strategy.

8. **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Findings Report** (Pages 121 - 135)
This report provides details of a complaint raised about the Council which was upheld and fault and injustice was found.

Matters Referred to Cabinet by the Council or Overview and Scrutiny Committees

9. **Corporate Asset Management Strategy Review** (Pages 137 - 157)
To review and update the Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2022-2027, ensuring the strategy is in accordance with SKDC current priorities and objectives.

Items for information

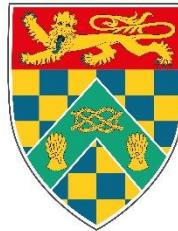
10. **Cabinet Forward Plan** (Pages 159 - 168)
This report highlights matters on the Cabinet's Forward Plan.

11. **Open Questions from Councillors**

Minutes

Cabinet

Tuesday, 9 September 2025



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Date of publication: 24 September 2025

**Call in expiry: 1 October 2025. Decisions can
be implemented (if no call-in, where applicable)
on 2 October 2025.**

The Leader: **Councillor Ashley Baxter** (Chairman)

The Deputy Leader: **Councillor Paul Stokes** (Vice Chairman)

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Rhys Baker, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Councillor Richard Cleaver, Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement

Councillor Phil Dilks, Cabinet Member for Planning

Councillor Philip Knowles, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing

Councillor Virginia Moran, Cabinet Member for Housing

Non-Cabinet Members present

Councillor Tim Harrison

Councillor Ian Selby, Chairman of the Council

Councillor Elvis Stooke

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)

Emma Whittaker, Assistant Director (Planning & Growth)

Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services

Chris Prime, Communications Manager

Debbie Roberts, Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance

James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Patrick Astill, Communications Officer

Charles James, Policy Officer

26. Public Open Forum

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

Cabinet agreed to vary the order of the agenda to allow the financial reports to be taken first.

A minute's silence was taken to remember former Council Chairman Councillor George Chivers, who had recently passed away.

27. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

28. Disclosure of Interests

There were no disclosures of interests.

29. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

30. Housing Revenue Account Provisional

Purpose of report

This report provided details of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) outturn position for the financial year 2024/25, and covered the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Reserves.

Decision

Cabinet noted the provisional HRA Revenue and Capital Outturn position and the supporting appendices for the financial year 2024/25.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The option of not producing a provisional outturn report was discounted as Cabinet should have oversight of the Council's budgets.

Reasons for the decision

During the course of the financial year, the HRA budgets had continued to focus on meeting the housing needs of tenants, facilitating the delivery of new housing across a range of tenures, and meeting compliance requirements and ensuring resources were allocated appropriately.

The budget set by Council on 29 February 2024 showed a budgeted operating surplus of £7.004m. This surplus was used to provide funding for the external loan and to enable reserve levels to be maintained that subsequently funded the capital programme and service improvements. For the purposes of the outturn variance analysis the budget carry forwards had been removed and the actual surplus for the year was provisionally £5.674m. This surplus reduction was a consequence of an overspend of £1.314m due to investment in addressing the backlog of repairs and ensuring statutory compliance.

During the financial year, there had been significant expenditure in repairs and maintenance which had led to an overspend of £2.3m. This expenditure enabled the Council to reduce the backlog of repairs and to remedy damp and mould cases. Material costs had also increased above standard inflation, in some cases as high as 15%; together with the increase in productivity this had also contributed towards this overspend. There had also been an increased focus to decrease void turnaround times which had contributed towards this overspend but this had led to increased rent receipts of £458k and reduced void times which reduced from 136 days to 79 days.

The budget set by Council on 29 February 2024 for the 2024/25 HRA Capital programme was £21.315m. Budgets have been amended as projects have commenced, and these changes increased the 2024/25 budget to £27.207m.

It was important that members were aware of the financial position of the HRA to ensure they made informed decisions that were affordable and financially sustainable for the Council. Effective budget management was critical to ensuring financial resources were spent in line with the budget and were targeted towards the Council's priorities.

This report had been considered by the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), and the Governance and Audit Committee prior to the summer recess.

31. General Fund Provisional Outturn 2024/2025

Purpose of report

To provide details of the General Fund provisional outturn position for the Financial Year 2024/25, covering the Revenue Budget, Capital Programmes and a Reserves Overview.

Decision

Cabinet noted the provisional General Fund Revenue and Capital Outturn position and the supporting appendices for the financial year 2024/25.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet should have oversight of the Council's budgets and therefore, the option of not producing a provisional outturn report was discounted.

Reasons for the decision

It was important that members were aware of the financial position of the General Fund to ensure they could make informed decisions that were affordable and financially sustainable. Effective budget management was critical to ensuring financial resources were spent in line with the budget and were targeted towards the Council's priorities.

During the financial year, the Council had managed budgets prudently and had been able to redirect funding where necessary to support the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan. A combination of savings and the generation of additional income had enabled the Council to boost its financial resilience.

The Council had delivered a number of key projects in recent months. Alongside this, Governance and Audit Committee, in considering this report agreed to create a Leisure Investment Reserve for leisure centres in Bourne and Grantham, as well as the SK Stadium in Grantham.

This report had also been considered by Finance and Economic OSC prior to the summer recess.

32. Finance Update Report – April to July 2025

Purpose of report

To present the Council's forecasted 2025/26 financial position as at the end of July 2025. The report covered the General Fund Revenue Budget, Housing Revenue Account Budget, and the Capital Programmes for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

Decision

Cabinet noted the forecasted 2025/26 outturn position for the General Fund, HRA Revenue and Capital budgets as at the end of July 2025.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None.

Reasons for the decision

A similar report would be presented to the Finance and Economic OSC on 23 September 2025, and that Committee were urged to take note of the Cabinet proceedings in advance of their meeting.

There were several variances at Table 2 of the report, which would be monitored through the year. Emerging concerns on level of spend on repairs and maintenance would be managed by members and officers. Expenditure needed to be within approved budgets; maintenance was a significant cost to both the General Fund and HRA. There was a backlog of maintenance, which had been added to the Finance Risk Register.

One significant variance to the HRA was new builds, which was below budget for a number of reasons. Work continued to find potential housing development sites.

Staff salaries were the biggest single biggest cost to the Council, so it paid for the Council to make savings here where it was possible to do so. Spend levels within service areas would be monitored, and where there was natural turnover of staff, the

Finance department would work to explore other ways in which that vacancy could be filled. Recruitment of that vacancy may be held back for a period of time to allow savings to be made if this was a viable option. Agency staffing was an area that the Council looked to minimise spending. The vacancy factor within the budget had always been achieved in previous years, and there was confidence that this would be the case again this year.

Members should be kept updated on the financial position of the Authority, as effective budget management was critical to ensuring financial resources were targeted towards the Council's priorities. Monitoring enabled early identification of variations against the plan and timely corrective action.

33. People Strategy (2025 - 2028)

Purpose of report

To present the Employment Committee's recommendation to Cabinet for the approval of the People Strategy 2025 - 2028.

Decision

That Cabinet:

- 1. Approves the People Strategy 2025 – 2028.**
- 2. Delegates minor amendments (including grammar or typographical errors) to the People Strategy 2025-2028 to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council (Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development).**

Alternative options considered and rejected

The Council could have maintained the existing People Strategy without substantial revision, however this would not have reflected the evolving workforce needs or the significant changes in organisational context, therefore this option was rejected.

Reasons for the decision

The refreshed People Strategy ensured the Council had a skilled, engaged and resilient workforce to deliver high quality services now and into the future. It provided a clear framework for how the Council would attract, develop, support and retain great people, equipping them to deliver excellent services for residents and communities.

The previous People Strategy covered 2022-2025. Progress had been made over the previous three years meaning there was a need for a refreshed Strategy.

The six key priorities were:

- Workforce Planning - Building a resilient, agile workforce aligned to future service needs
- Learning and Development – Fostering a culture of continuous learning and development
- Employee Experience – Creating an inclusive, engaging and supportive workplace
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) – Embedding inclusive practices and celebrating diversity
- Wellbeing – Promoting mental and physical wellbeing through proactive support
- Reward and Recognition – Ensuring staff feel valued and motivated through fair and meaningful recognition

The refreshed Strategy had been discussed with the People Panel, Senior Leadership Team, the Trade Union and Councillors.

34. Weekly Food Waste Collection Service Update

Purpose of report

An update on the progress of the mandatory weekly kerbside food waste collection service rollout. The report asked Cabinet to recommend to Council an additional revenue budget allocation for service provision within the current financial year. The report also asked Cabinet to recommend to Council acceptance of the additional £953,377.03 Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) payment for the financial year 2025/26.

Decision

That Cabinet recommend to Council:

- 1. The formation of a revenue budget of £542,195 for the 2025/26 financial year to facilitate the rollout of the weekly food waste collection service.**
- 2. The use of £400,125.45 from the allocated revenue transitional funding and an additional £142,069.55 from the Waste Service Reserve to create the revenue budget.**
- 3. An increase to the vehicle replacement capital budget of £171,850 from the Waste Service Reserve to contribute towards funding the food waste collection vehicles and caddies.**
- 4. Acceptance of the additional pEPR payment of £935,377.03 for the financial year 2025/26 and to allocate this funding to the established Waste Services Reserve.**

Alternative options considered and rejected

Do nothing until the ongoing revenue funding is released by DEFRA – this option was not feasible as it would have resulted in missing the mandated rollout deadline by a significant amount of time.

Do not introduce the weekly food waste collection service – this option was not feasible as the change had been mandated through the Environment Act 2021.

Reasons for the decision

These recommendations enabled the Council to meet the requirements to provide a weekly food waste collection service to the residents of South Kesteven within the mandated timescale. It would ensure the Council did not face penalties from DEFRA or reputational damage for non-delivery of the service.

Members of the public would receive more information on the mandated service as part of a rolling programme of communications. Full Council would consider these recommendations at their meeting on 18 September 2025, and if carried, Environment OSC would further scrutinise the policy as the Council worked towards implementing mandatory food waste collection.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- Weekly food waste collections were mandated by DEFRA and the Council could not opt in or out.
- The Council was not using ratepayer funds for this service.
- As South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) did not currently offer food waste collections (although had run a trial in previous years), there was a proportion of 'new burden' funding allocated to the Council by the government.
- In reality, the government calculation of the cost of the service to SKDC was not adequate. In 2026/2027 there may not be enough funding for the deployment of the food waste collection service; however the government have assured SKDC that spending would be replaced through the 'funding formula'.
- The level of ongoing funding from the government was not yet known. SKDC would have to keep delivering the service whether or not the budget sent from government was ample or sufficient. This information was requested in good time from government to allow for SKDC to financially plan for the service.
- SKDC were purchasing twelve vehicles rather than nine. In calculating what resources SKDC would require, DEFRA had used an incorrect number of households for the district. The correct number was ten vehicles; the additional two vehicles were spares that could be used when others were being maintained or repaired.
- The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste and officers were confident of recruiting the 30-35 operatives required for the service. Recruitment was likely to start in November 2025, for a service that commenced in April 2026.

35. Aslackby Conservation Area Appraisal

Purpose of report

In accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council was required to review its Conservation Areas from time to time and to prepare and publish any proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of the District that were designated as a Conservation Area. This report considered whether the Council should designate the Aslackby Conservation Area and adopt the Aslackby Conservation Area Appraisal.

Decision

That Cabinet:

- 1. Recommends to Full Council the formal designation of the Aslackby Conservation Area boundary as shown in Appendix A to this report.**
- 2. Recommends to Full Council the adoption of the Aslackby Conservation Area Appraisal, as part of the Development Plan evidence base and as a material planning consideration.**
- 3. Recommends that Full Council delegates the decision making to the Assistant Director of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning to make minor changes, typographical corrections or non-material amendments to the Aslackby Conservation Area Appraisal and associated documents prior to formal publication and to undertake the necessary statutory actions to implement agreed recommendations.**

Alternative options considered and rejected

An alternative option was not to expand the Conservation Area; however this may have resulted in a failure to preserve or enhance the historic interest and character of the village and the conservation area as identified in the appraisal. Conservation Areas were defined as “designated” heritage assets in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for the purposes of local plan making and development management. Designated heritage assets were afforded considerably more protection both in planning policy but also in legislation than non-designated heritage assets.

Reasons for the decision

Section 69(2) of the 1990 Act required Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to determine which parts of their area possess special architectural or historic interest and to designate them Conservation Areas. As the designation of a Conservation Area Appraisal was a requirement as noted in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it was recommended to approve the updated documents to provide an up-to-date assessment and strategies for the preservation of the Conservation Area. The adoption of the Appraisal and Management Plan

would allow for the positive management of development whilst safeguarding historic character and appearance.

It was acknowledged that historically, Conservation Area boundaries have often been drawn too tightly, omitting areas now considered of special interest, especially green spaces and open space, boundary treatment or smaller outbuildings. The appraisal and proposed extension have taken this into account, considering not just the built heritage, but also the wider streetscape and the impact open space has on the appreciation of the village.

If adopted by Full Council, the Conservation Area would become an additional planning consideration for planning applications. There was a guidance document designed to help with planning matters within Conservation areas, and this document would be updated. There was often confusion about the measures that residents could take within such an area; e.g. would they have to replace uPVC windows with a wooden window. In this example, residents might be encouraged to do this, but it was not mandated.

The Aslackby Conservation Area was originally designated in 1991.

36. Ropsley Conservation Area Appraisal

Purpose of report

In accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council was required to review its Conservation Areas from time to time and to prepare and publish any proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of the District that were designated as a Conservation Area. This report considered whether the Council should designate the Ropsley Conservation Area and adopt the Ropsley Conservation Area Appraisal.

Decision

That Cabinet:

- 1. Recommend to Full Council the formal designation of the Ropsley Conservation Area boundary as shown in Appendix A to this report.**
- 2. Recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Ropsley Conservation Area Appraisal, as part of the Development Plan evidence base and as a material planning consideration.**
- 3. Recommend that Full Council delegates the decision making to the Assistant Director of Planning to make minor changes, typographical corrections or non-material amendments to the Ropsley Conservation Area Appraisal and associated documents prior to formal publication and to undertake the necessary statutory actions to implement agreed recommendations.**

Alternative options considered and rejected

An alternative option was not to expand the Conservation Area; however this may have resulted in a failure to preserve or enhance the historic interest and character of the village and the conservation area as identified in the appraisal. Conservation Areas were defined as “designated” heritage assets in the NPPF for the purposes of local plan making and development management. Designated heritage assets were afforded considerably more protection both in planning policy but also in legislation than non-designated heritage assets.

Reasons for the decision

Section 69(2) of the 1990 Act required local planning authorities (LPAs) to determine which parts of their area possessed special architectural or historic interest and to designate them conservation areas. As the provision of a Conservation Area Appraisal was a requirement as noted in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it was recommended to approve the updated documents to provide an up-to-date assessment and strategies for the preservation of the conservation area. The adoption of the Appraisal and Management Plan would allow for the positive management of development whilst safeguarding historic character and appearance.

It was acknowledged that historically, conservation area boundaries have often been drawn too tightly, omitting areas now considered of special interests, especially green spaces and open space, boundary treatment or smaller outbuildings. The appraisal and proposed extension have taken this into account, considering not just the built heritage, but also the wider streetscape and the impact open space has on the appreciation of the village.

If adopted by Full Council, the Conservation Area would become an additional planning consideration for planning applications. There was a guidance document designed to help with planning matters within Conservation areas, and this document would be updated. There was often confusion about the measures that residents could take within such an area; e.g. would they have to replace uPVC windows with a wooden window. In this example, residents might be encouraged to do this, but it was not mandated.

The Ropsley Conservation Area was originally designated in 1981.

37. Contract Award Report for Reactive Repairs Works to Council Properties

Purpose of report

To seek approval to enter into a contract with two contractors, for the provision of reactive repairs to properties owned by SKDC.

Decision

That Cabinet approve the award of contracts to Foster Property Maintenance Limited and Lukeman Electrical Services Limited to carry out reactive repairs

to dwellings that are owned by South Kesteven District Council with an annual value of up to £2.2M, split between both contractors for a period of 3 years with the option to extend for up to 2 years.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet could have chosen not to procure new contractors to deliver reactive repairs or procure just one contractor instead of two as outlined in this report. If Cabinet did not procure new contractors, it would have risked using incumbent contractors who were out of contract and have not been appointed in accordance with an approved procurement route.

The option of procuring just one contractor was considered but was discounted to ensure there was adequate resilience to meet the fluctuating demand of a reactive repairs service and ensure that Cabinet did not risk placing all works with one contractor.

Reasons for the decision

There was a need for improvement to the Council's repairs service and procuring new compliant contractors with increased capacity would ensure that improvements could be made to the service provided to residents.

The preferred bidders and all unsuccessful bidders would be notified of the outcome simultaneously. Subject to the satisfactory return of due diligence, and no legal challenge being received, the contract would be executed at the conclusion of any standstill period.

The overall score for Fosters was 80.55%; Lukeman scored 75%.

There had been an aspiration for some time to create a framework whereby the Council could contact local suppliers. Where there was a need to sub-contract, Cabinet asked that local suppliers be considered.

Tenant satisfaction for repairs would be managed through a system called 'Rant and Rave'. A survey was sent to residents on completion of repairs to ensure they were satisfied. Satisfaction rates were reported back to Committees through the Key Performance Indicators reports.

38. Contract Award for Wellington Way New Build Scheme (11 units)

Purpose of report

Proposals for a new build social housing development of eleven units at Wellington Way, Market Deeping with a recommendation that the construction contract be awarded to Lindum Group Limited.

Decision

That Cabinet:

- 1. Approve the outcome of the tender process and appoint Lindum Group Limited as the preferred contractor for the construction of the housing development at Wellington Way, Market Deeping.**
- 2. Delegates to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to enter a contract with Lindum Group Limited to build eleven units at a cost of £1,926,000.**

Alternative options considered and rejected

Waiting to commence the scheme or not building the development were discounted as options due to the high levels of housing needs in the area.

Reasons for the decision

There was a housing need for the Council to develop the site therefore the decision was for the contract to be awarded so that works could commence in Autumn 2025.

The procurement process was in accordance with the Council's Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules, the Procurement Act 2023 and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. It was an incredibly competitive tender with nine bids received.

The eleven units would be made up of a mix of property types; 2 x 1-bedroom apartments, 4 x 2-bedroom apartments and 5 x 2-bedroom houses. The Scheme was due to be 'handed over' in September 2026. There would be adequate car parking, and the Scout Hut on the former RAF Langtoft base would be protected.

39. Local Government Outcomes Framework

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the government's draft Local Government Outcomes Framework (LGOF) and ask them to approve Council's proposed response to the consultation.

Decision

That Cabinet approve the LGOF consultation response for submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Alternative options considered and rejected

The Council were not required to respond to the LGOF consultation. However, in not doing so, the Council would miss an opportunity to influence the development of a key MHCLG workstream.

Reasons for the decision

The LGOF was a key part of MHCLG's programme to rewire the relationship between central and local government. The consultation was an opportunity for the Council to influence the development of this workstream.

On 3 July 2025 the MCHLG announced a LGOF, a new approach to outcome based accountability. It included 15 outcomes that government expected to work on with local authorities, underpinned by outcome measures drawing from existing data sources. 86 draft metrics were published for sector feedback.

The consultation response welcomed the positioning of the LGOF as a steering mechanism. Assurances had been given from government that the LGOF would not set targets or create league tables.

It had been highlighted that SKDC's current Corporate Plan already demonstrated high alignment with policy areas. Service planning would be adjusted to encourage service leaders to approach policy management in a holistic manner.

Post Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), it was suggested that MHCLG the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and other bodies continue to capture data on old district footprints.

Sector feedback will be reviewed and the final LGOF would be published alongside the Local Government Funding Settlement in December 2025. LGOF would go live in April 2026.

The Appendix to the report contained metrics where we SKDC had disagreed with MHCLG on measures used for local government activity. These areas of disagreement included:

- Percentage of planning application decided on time (dwellings – priority outcome 2)
- whether people feel that they can influence local decisions (priority outcome 11)
- fly tipping enforcement actions (priority outcome 11)

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- Disagreement arose on the fly tipping metric as enforcement of fly tipping depended on evidence. If the Council did not have evidence, it could not take action; it was a difficult area to take action on as gaining evidence was tough. However, where there was the opportunity to go to court, it was taken by SKDC.
- A completely new ministerial team had very recently been appointed at MHCLG. It would be interesting to see what their views on the LGOF were.
- The NHS had very recently published its oversight framework for 2025/2026 in the form of league tables. The government does not intend to use LGOF statistics to compile league tables.

40. Contract Award for Radon Remedial Works

Purpose of report

To seek approval to enter into a contract with The Radon Consultants Ltd for the provision of carrying out Radon remediation and maintenance works to council owned dwellings for South Kesteven District Council.

Decision

That Cabinet approve the award of a contract to The Radon Consultants Ltd for the provision of Radon remediation and maintenance works at Council owned dwellings with an annual value of up to £500k for a period of 2 years with an option to extend annually for up to 2 years.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Consideration had been given to the option of carrying out the works "in-house", but due to the specialist nature of the installation work and subsequent re-testing to ensure Radon levels have been reduced, this was not a viable option.

It was not advisable to avoid carrying out the work as this could lead to further issues.

Reasons for the decision

Radon remediation and maintenance work was an essential part of ensuring the safety of residents. Radon was a naturally occurring radioactive gas that could affect properties of all types if suitable measures were not put in place. Although South Lincolnshire was classed as a low-risk area in comparison to other areas of the country action still needed to be taken to mitigate the risks that Radon gas may pose to residents.

This contract ensured that a variety of appropriate measures, where required, would be installed and maintained to reduce the risks that Radon posed within the Council's housing stock, following an initial Radon survey which would ascertain the level of Radon in properties.

The procurement opportunity was tendered via the National Housing Consortium (NHC) Residential Property and Asset Management Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) under Category 1: Radon Gas (Testing, Remediation, Servicing). Following publication of the opportunity four Expressions of Interest were received which resulted in two Tender Submissions. It should be noted The Radon Consultants Ltd joined the DPS after the initial Expressions of Interest was conducted; they were fully vetted by the North Housing Consortium so were eligible to submit a tender for the contract.

The Radon Consultants Ltd. had given the best tender submission for the price and quality of the contract. This decision ensured that the Council had a compliant contract in place.

41. Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25

Purpose of report

To present Cabinet with the 2024/25 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report and self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code which the Council was required to publish and submit to the Housing Ombudsman.

Decision

Cabinet noted the report and were encouraged to provide any further feedback prior to the submission deadline of 30 September 2025.

Alternative options considered and rejected

To not present the report and self-assessment to Cabinet for their feedback but the Council would then not meet the Housing Ombudsman's requirement that the information was considered by the governing body.

Reasons for the decision

To provide Cabinet with the opportunity to provide feedback on the 2024/25 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report and self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code prior to submission to the Housing Ombudsman.

It was difficult to obtain historical data about complaints. There were no 'root causes' going beyond the previous 2 years.

The report also included summary information from the Housing Ombudsman Landlord Performance report, including a reduced number of housing complaints, and a reduction in time taken to respond to housing complaints.

Since September 2024 all stage 1 housing complaints had been responded to on time, as had all stage 2 complaints.

All recommendations from ombudsman have been actioned, which included amendments to the Council's Feedback Policy. The Cabinet Member for Housing held monthly meetings with officers in housing to see where further improvements could be made in responding to complaints.

42. Cabinet Forward Plan

There would be an additional meeting held in November to consider a recommendation from Full Council on LGR.

Members were reminded that the start time for Cabinet from October onwards would be 4pm.

The Forward Plan was noted.

43. Open Questions from Councillors

Question One – Councillor Ian Selby to the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture

Councillor Selby asked for an update on potential accessibility issues at the SK Stadium that he had raised at Cabinet in July.

Councillor Paul Stokes and the Deputy Chief Executive were undertaking an update on equality access on council buildings; it was anticipated this would identify and address any shortcomings at the stadium.

Question Two – Councillor Elvis Stooke to the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development

Councillor Stooke asked whether footfall from the proposed designer outlet in Grantham (due in 2026) would be directed into Grantham town centre. Could the outlet have a detrimental impact on local businesses in Grantham?

The Leader of the Council extended a warm welcome to the new Economic Development manager Simon Jackson, as he would be involved with issues related to the outlet.

The brands which were likely to be sold in the outlet shops would not ordinarily be found in the town centre, which had a different retail offering. It was possible that shuttle buses could be provided to and from the town centre for shopping, retail, food and culture.

The Section 106 agreement for the development contained further information.

Question Three – Councillor Tim Harrison to the Cabinet Member for Housing

Councillor Harrison asked for an update on the apartments on St. Peter's Hill.

The Director: Housing and Project outlined the compartmentation works currently taking place on the flats. Once completed, the voids team would have to make good any damage found through these compartmentation works, which may require remediation such as painting. The letting process would take place following the completion of these works. More accurate timescales could be provided outside of the meeting.

Question Four – Councillor Ian Selby to the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development

Councillor Selby asked whether it was possible to create a 'South Kesteven Day'.

Councillor Baxter noted the idea and would mention it to the Chairman of the Culture and Leisure OSC.

The meeting closed at 3:33pm.

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 7 October 2025

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

Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2029

Report Author

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

claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To approve the Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2029 and to commit to supporting the delivery of the customer charter, priorities, and approach to customer experience across all Council services.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve the Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029 to complement the Council's priority "Effective Council".

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
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 currently no direct budget implications associated in adopting this Strategy. Any future initiatives resulting in budgeting implications will be, in the first instance, be managed within existing service area budgets. Where additional funding is required, this will be requested formally, taking the appropriate action.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 The implementation of the strategy complies with all relevant regulations. Data protection measures will align with UK GDPR and Information Governance standards.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.3 The risk of the strategy not driving change at a pace that matches the ambition of South Kesteven District Council will be mitigated through managed delivery and oversight of the Customer Experience Working Group, Senior Management and the Cabinet Member.
- 1.4 Digital inclusion – Digital literacy training via FAQs and help pages, accessible technology, and face to face support using self-serve desks in our Customer Service Centres.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.5 The Customer Experience Strategy has been developed to ensure equal opportunities are provided for everyone and our customers diversity is recognised, respected and valued.
- 1.6 The action plan will take a data driven approach to understand the needs of the Council's customers and equip employees with relevant training. The plan also sets out to better understand the various channels different groups need to access our

services and where the Council can automate in some areas to spend more time on complex matters that require face to face or phone calls, so no one is digitally excluded.

- 1.7 In providing these comments, the Head of Service has consulted with one of the Councils Equality Champions (Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager). Ongoing consultation will take place as the action plan is developed.

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

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The report presents the refreshed Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029. The Council has made good progress over the last four years, since the implementation of the first strategy, during which the Council faced challenges to customer contact as a result of Covid. The Council have invested significantly in a number of areas to improve its approach to customer service, such as with the development of the new website, the new Customer Service Centre in Grantham and online forms and portals.
- 2.2. The new Strategy provides a framework for the continued development of the Councils customer focus in the coming years. The Strategy sets out the Council's plans to achieve its vision to improve the customer experience as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of our services by providing excellent customer service, to all our customers (residents, businesses, partners, visitors and community groups), working with them to ensure that its services meet their needs and are inclusive and accessible for all.
- 2.3. The strategy aligns with the Council commitment in its Corporate Plan 2024-2027 to being an Effective Council. This report, and the adoption of the Customer Experience Strategy strives to deliver this priority. The Council ensures our services are digitally enabled and efficient to meet the expectations of our changing communities whilst not those excluding who are not yet digitally enabled. The strategy will also ensure that our staff have the skills needed to drive the organisation forward and meeting the changing expectations of our customers.
- 2.4. For the purpose of this Strategy, our "customers" are residents, businesses, people who work in or visit the area, community groups, charities and partners working with the Council.

Customer Experience Steering Group

- 2.5. The Strategy has been developed with insight and support from all front facing service areas, including IT (Digital Strategy) and HR (People Strategy). In Spring

2024, a Customer Experience Steering Group was established. The steering group consisted of a staff representative from each of the service areas.

- 2.6. The group was formed to ensure collaborative working on the Grantham Customer Service Centre, as well as the development of the Customer Experience consultation and subsequent Strategy.
- 2.7. The individuals in the group have now become Customer Experience champions for their service area. They will embed the Strategy within their teams, supporting the launch during National Customer Service Week (6 to 10 October 2025). They will ensure team members understand their responsibilities in delivering the actions within the customer charter, achieving the service standards and fulfilling the priorities – with the ultimate aim of ensuring the customer is at the heart of everything we do.

Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029

- 2.8. The Council believe our customers should be at the heart of all we do. Knowing our customers, getting feedback, taking this on board to improve services and moving forward with technology is vital in building a forward looking Customer Experience Strategy.
- 2.9. The Strategy is attached at Appendix A and provides a single corporate document that outlines the Council's vision and ensures point of reference, accountability and governance to a Council wide approach to Customer Experience.
- 2.10. The Strategy sets out the vision, priorities and approach for delivering an efficient and effective Customer Experience across the Council, working together to ensure there is a consistent experience.
- 2.11. In implementing this Strategy, **our core priorities** are as follows (these are expanded on within the document):
 - Priority 1: Our commitment to a customer first ethos
 - Priority 2: Access to multiple service channels
 - Priority 3: Accessibility and Inclusion
 - Priority 4: Regular staff training
 - Priority 5: Technology
- 2.12. The Strategy also sets out the **Customer Charter** which defines our responsibility to our customers, as well as what we would like from our customers. These responsibilities are linked to the priorities. The charters have been developed as a direct result of the consultation and they set out our promise as to how we will deliver high quality services whilst enabling us to meet our customers' expectations.
- 2.13. **Service Standards** featured within the feedback to the consultation, with customers asking the Council to introduce these – for the corporate contact centre and each of

its service areas. The strategy includes both operation standards and performance indicators.

- 2.14. This Strategy enables the Council to move away from 'customer services' being seen as the responsibility of a single team or department. Instead, it recognises the importance of 'Customer Service' as a culture for the whole organisation to implement, embed and achieve our overall goal to connect all objectives with the five priorities to improve customer experience and operational efficiency.
- 2.15. The Strategy ensures all services and staff provide an effective and positive customer experience who are aware of and understand their responsibilities in fulfilling the Customer Charter, Service Standards, Priorities and Vision to a high level.
- 2.16. An action plan is being developed and will support the strategy and its priorities. The plan will be presented to Rural & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee every six months, with the initial presentation taking place on 16 October 2025.
- 2.17. The Customer Service Management Team will be responsible for the strategic direction of the action plan, collaborating with the Customer Experience Steering Group who will have oversight of the strategy to enable effective co-ordination of delivery of the actions.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Improving our customers experience is a key area of focus for South Kesteven District Council. A significant amount of work has taken place across all front-facing services who interact with customers within our District.
- 3.2. The aim of the Strategy is to ensure interactions with customers are of a consistently high standard and placing our customers at the heart of everything we do.
- 3.3. The Strategy also sets the direction for how Council employees will interact with customers, as well as emphasising the importance of the Council's values and behaviours and ensuring the authority achieves its aim to put the customer at the heart of everything we do.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council has the option of not refreshing the existing Customer Experience Strategy and continuing to operate without a strategic focus on the needs of customers. However, as one of the organisation's priorities is to be an effective Council, this is not recommended.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The Strategy is an overarching document, developed by the Customer Service Management team, with the support of the Customer Experience Steering Group and engagement with customers and local stakeholders. It provides a framework, objectives and standards to further develop a consistent approach across Council services.
- 5.2. The Strategy demonstrates a clear commitment to shared objectives across teams to improving the service and engagement with our 'customers'.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. Public consultation of the Customer Experience Strategy consultation took place from 10 March 2025 and closed on 7 April 2025 and was open to a variety of stakeholders – those identified were:
 - Customers who contact the Council via the Customer Services Team
 - Other organisations that contact SKDC
 - Those who do not contact the Council (via SKToday – circa 3,700 and the Youth Council)
 - Local businesses
 - Community and Voluntary Groups
 - Staff working group
- 6.2. A total of 561 responses were received. This was made up of 540 public stakeholder responses and 21 Staff & Youth Council responses.
- 6.3. The purpose of the consultation was to:
 - Consult with a variety of stakeholders on how they interact or would choose to interact with the Council;
 - Inform a refresh of SKDC's Customer Experience Strategy;
 - Ensure SKDC's processes are fit for the 21st Century; and
 - To understand the technological advances that have taken place in customer interaction over the last 5 years.
- 6.4. A Members' workshop took place on 26 June 2025 where the outcomes of the recent stakeholder consultation were presented and discussed. During the workshop, Members and Officers discussed the actions to be taken forward which included the development of the Strategy, Customer Charter and Service Standards.
- 6.5. Customer Access trends show customers over time choosing to use online services for transactional service requests, with a consistent decline in the proportion of

contact away from telephone and face to face contact. For the year 2024/25 there were:

- Over 1.8 million contacts via online services
- Over 147,700 contacts via telephone to our customer service centre
- Over 133,000 contacts via telephone to our switchboard
- Over 112,0000 contacts via telephone using our virtual operator
- Over 56,500 contacts in person

7. Appendices

7.1. Appendix 1: Customer Experience Strategy – 2025 to 2028

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Customer Experience Strategy

2025-
2029



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Foreword

"Here at South Kesteven District Council, our customers are at the heart of what we do. This might be face-to-face assistance at our dedicated customer service points, when people get in touch directly by phone or email, if our tenants need guidance at their council property or sheltered accommodation – or simply how we relate to businesses, customers and community groups during the normal course of our work.

A great customer experience doesn't just happen though.

Everyone in our organisation must understand their role, responsibility and accountability. This results in a culture that takes customers' needs and satisfaction into account during all of our decision making, strategy development and action across all departments.

We therefore have training and guidance – and now this overarching strategy, a document created after consulting with you, the public.

It sets out our ambitions, as well as our priorities to develop and improve as we move forward.

We always welcome feedback on all of your interactions with the SKDC, and our contact details are on the back page."



Councillor Philip Knowles
Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing



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Introduction

The strategy supports Priority 5 in our Corporate Plan: Effective Council. The mission for this priority in the corporate plan is:

"to deliver trusted high quality and value-for-money services that fulfil the needs and expectations of all our residents"

The ambitions within this priority, which will be incorporated into our strategy are to:

- **Provide excellent, value-for-money and financially sustainable services**
- **Actively and effectively engage with and listen to our residents, placing their needs and concerns at the heart of everything we do**
- **Through #TEAMSK retain a highly skilled, empowered, motivated and professional workforce**

Where we are now

We know that to improve our customers experience, we need to be honest and look at the way the service is currently provided, and how we can move forward to make positive changes for the Council and its customers.

In doing this, we have looked at the culture of the organisation, the way in which we use data and the technology currently available across multiple service areas.

We want to be able to positively move forward and make improvements in these three key areas, as well as making sure we understand our customers and their needs.

What this means for our strategy

We understand customers expect a more seamless, transparent, and responsive service.

By reviewing and refreshing our Customer Experience Strategy, the Council has an opportunity and responsibility to transform how we engage with

our customers. This is the first step in ensuring we adopt a customer focused approach for our front facing service areas, which will evolve to meet the needs of the people we serve.

Our Customer Experience Strategy is designed to place the customer at the heart of everything we do, aligning people, processes and technology to deliver consistent, personalised, and meaningful interactions across all channels.

This strategy reflects our commitment to improving every interaction between the Council and our customers – whether it is accessing services online, visiting our customer service centres, paying a bill, or requesting support. It recognises that customers are not just service users but valued businesses and residents in our district whose feedback, satisfaction, and trust are essential to building positive relationships.

Finally, this strategy provides a clear roadmap for understanding and anticipating customer needs and improving satisfaction.

Key objectives of this strategy:

- Customers are at the heart of our service: Embedding a mindset of empathy, respect and accountability throughout our organisation, ensuring every staff member understands their role in delivering excellent service.
- Service Accessibility & Inclusion: Ensuring equitable access to government services for all customers, regardless of language, ability or digital literacy.
- Improved Service Design: Using customer feedback, data and journey mapping to streamline services and design experiences that are simple, timely and intuitive.
- Multi-channel access: Providing consistent and high-quality service across in-person, phone, digital and community channels—meeting customers needs wherever they are.
- Continuous Improvement: Measuring satisfaction, identifying service gaps and using these insights to continually refine our approach and respond proactively to community needs.

Consultation

The Council and Customer Service Team believe our customers should be at the heart of all we do. Knowing our customers, getting feedback, taking this on board to improve services and moving forward with technology is vital in building a forward looking Customer Experience Strategy.

A consultation took place between 10 March 2025 and 7 April 2025, with a variety of stakeholders.

Who we consulted with

- ✓ Customers who contacted the Council via Customer Services
- ✓ Customers who contacted service areas within the Council directly i.e. not via Customer Services
- ✓ Other organisations that contacted SKDC
- ✓ Those who do not contact the Council
- ✓ Local businesses
- ✓ Community and Voluntary Groups
- ✓ #TeamSK (SKDC staff)
- ✓ Other service areas in the Council

The purpose of the consultation – To inform the Customer Experience Strategy. To:

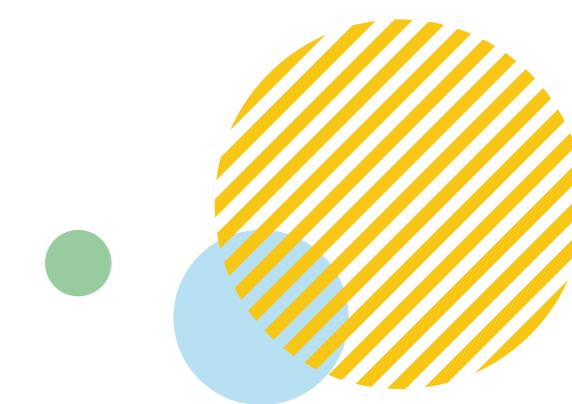
- ✓ Find out how people contact SKDC, why they contact us and how often
- ✓ Establish what is important to people when contacting us
- ✓ Understand what is most in need of improvement
- ✓ Use this information to draw up SKDC's Customer Charter/Commitments and also what the Council expects from customers (SKDC's Expectations of its Customers)
- ✓ Measure the degree of support for the strategy's potential vision, ambitions and outcomes

The results of the consultation

- Feedback received from those contacting Customer Services and service areas directly
- Efficiency, availability, knowledge and being kept informed identified as key concepts
- 80.2% of respondents agreed with the ambitions of the strategy
- 90.8% of respondents agreed with the outcomes in the strategy
- Automation and use of AI embraced by some respondents. Others keen that Council continue to interact directly with its customers - particularly those from vulnerable communities

Outcomes of the consultation

- ✓ Development of a Customer Charter – for both Council staff and customers
- ✓ Development of Service Standards across all public facing service areas
- ✓ Identification of areas for improvement, with subsequent action plan
- ✓ Embed Customer Experience Vision 2025 to 2029



How we currently operate

We currently have two customer service centres located across the district. Our staff are multi-skilled, so are able to respond to a range of service requests through any access channel. However, the experience the customer gets will vary depending on the channel chosen.

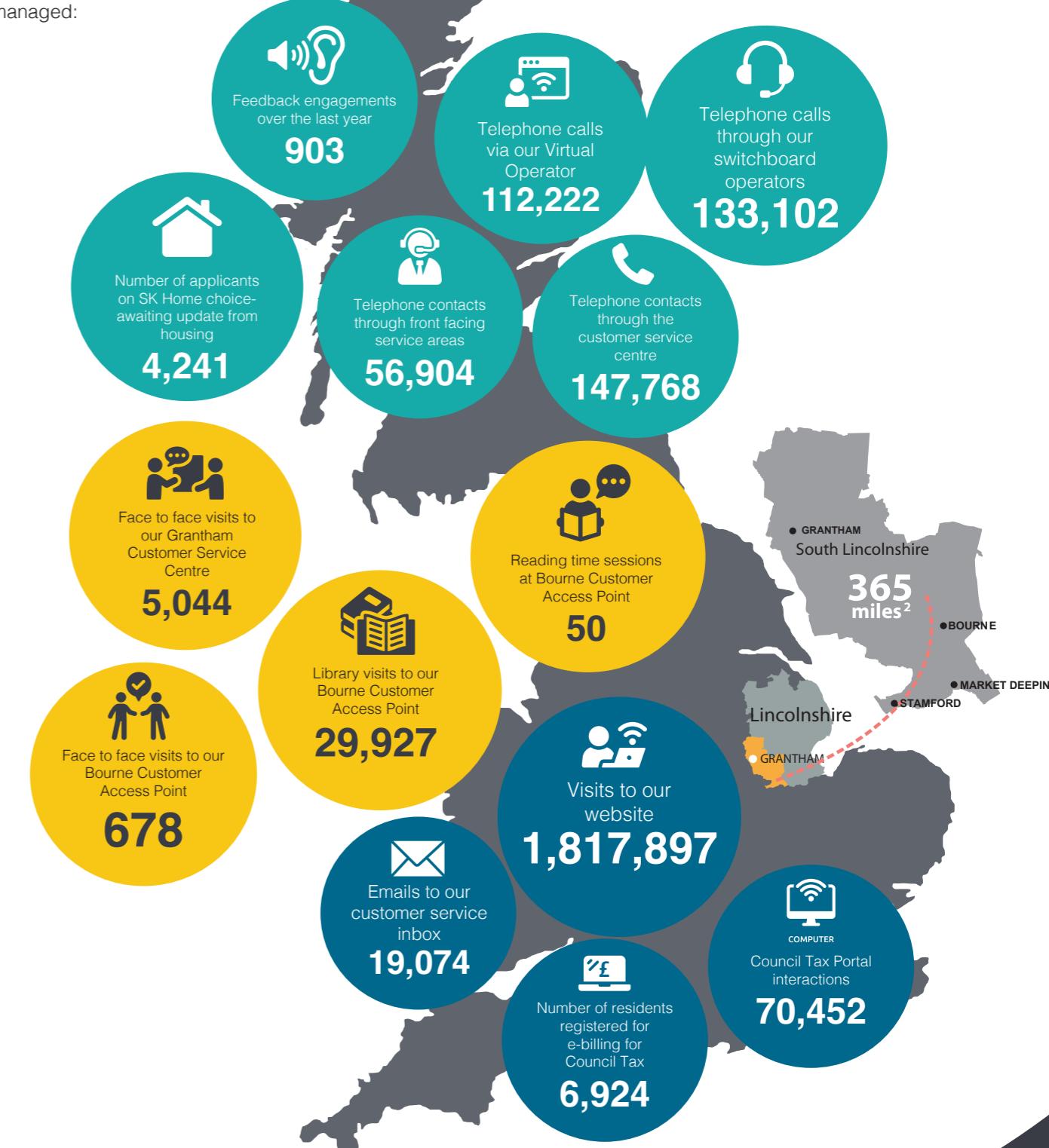
Both Bourne and Grantham Customer Service Centres provide face to face support. In addition, both centres also have self-service kiosks where customers can be supported by our experienced Customer Service Advisors. The kiosks enable access to a range of online services – all of which are detailed at the end of this strategy.

We use a wide range of IT systems to deliver our services. This means that our staff interpret information in a range of formats and often only get a partial view of the customers circumstances. This limits the customer's overall experience. Not all of our systems can facilitate the type of interactions that we now see as commonplace, such as sending a text message



Our Service in Numbers

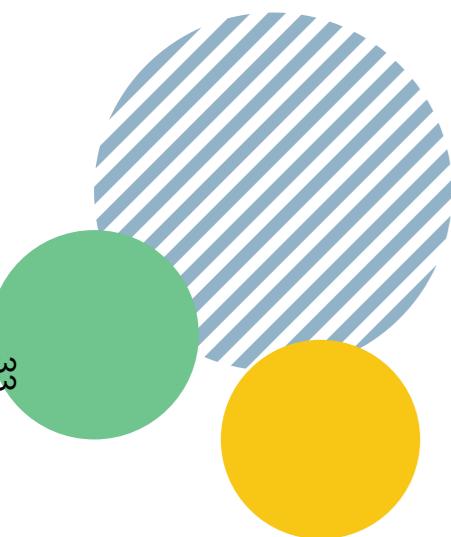
It is important to appreciate just how many customer contacts the council handles each year. During 2024/25 we managed:



Alignment across the organisation

We believe that when we put customers at the heart of every decision, we create a lasting impact. That's why we're committed to working together across teams and departments — breaking down silos, sharing ideas, and aligning our efforts — to bring our corporate priorities to life in a way that truly serves the people who matter most: our customers.

Together, we're building a future shaped by empathy, innovation, and a relentless focus on delivering exceptional experiences.



Communities Strategy	ICT Strategy	Information Governance & Compliance	People Strategy
Working together to ensure community and customer initiatives effectively address the needs of both individuals and groups	Making information and services more accessible to all customers	Ensure customer initiatives comply with governance standards and legislation to safeguard customer data	Support empowerment by developing skills, evolving training programs and supporting continuous learning so people are empowered to excel in their roles
Ensuring our most vulnerable customers can access the services they need	Improving our services to make better use of time for both our customers and staff	Respecting customer trust by ensuring data is used ethically and responsibly across all our services	Develop the aims and objectives of the Customer Experience Working group

South Kesteven District Council Customer Experience Strategy

Crucial to achieving this is showing we understand the powerful links between our customer experience ambitions and our wider corporate strategies.

By clearly connecting the dots between what we want to achieve for our customers and what we want to achieve as an organisation, we create momentum, focus, and purpose. This alignment ensures every action we take contributes to a stronger, more connected experience — for our customers and our people. Those strategies which are linked are:

Vision 2025 to 2029

Our vision is split into key themes which, combined, will improve customer experience as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of our services. The Customer Experience Strategy will be implemented by each service area within the council to achieve our overall goal to connect all objectives within the five priorities as they are designed to work together to achieve the improvement of customer experience and operational efficiency.

Our Vision Statement

“To offer great customer experiences for residents, businesses and the wider community by putting them at the heart of everything we do”

In implementing this strategy, our core priorities will be:

- Priority 1: Our commitment to a customer first ethos**
- Priority 2: Access to multiple service channels**
- Priority 3: Accessibility and Inclusion**
- Priority 4: Regular staff training**
- Priority 5: Technology**

An action plan will be developed for each priority, which will be endorsed by Senior Management and Members. The action plan will be monitored by our Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis and will form part of future service planning.



Customer Charter: Our responsibilities to our customers

The Council is committed to ensuring that our customers are at the heart of everything we do. We have developed a Customer Charter as a result of the public consultation feedback, SKDC Service Area and Member workshops. This sets our promise to how we will deliver high quality services for our customers and the service standards we will provide which enable us to meet their expectations.

Our responsibilities are to:



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Customer Charter: What we would like from our customers

To help us provide a good service, we ask our customers to:

- 01 **Treat our staff with respect and courtesy:** We are committed to treating customers with professionalism and courtesy, in return we ask that our customers treat the staff member handling their enquiry with respect and courtesy at all times.
- 02 **Provide requested information promptly and accurately:** Ensure all information is delivered to us on time and in the correct format as requested. For efficiency, we rely on our customers to provide complete and accurate information.
- 03 **Notify the Council of changes promptly:** Let the Council know as soon as possible if personal circumstances or service requirements change.
- 04 **Understand the impact of a delay:** If information is not provided as requested, this could hinder or delay our decision making.
- 05 **Use digital services where possible:** Make use of the Council's website and online portals to access services and information, especially during peak periods or outside of standard hours
- 06 **Engage positively and give honest and constructive feedback:** Provide honest and constructive feedback to help the Council understand how services can be improved. Communication should be in a constructive and respectful manner, especially when raising concerns or giving feedback.

Service Standards

To ensure that the customer experience is consistent across SKDC, it would like to introduce service standards for the corporate contact centre and each of its service areas.

Operational Standards

By implementing operational service standards, we will be able to

- Ensure ways of working which are focussed on delivering a positive experience for our customers
- Improve customer satisfaction levels, reduce complaints and create a trusted customer contact process
- Ensure our staff have the tools available to them to achieve the best level of customer service as possible

Performance Indicators

We will monitor and report on the following:

Indicator	What we will do with this information
Number of calls offered	<p>We will monitor peaks and troughs in call volumes throughout the day / week</p> <p>Where possible, staffing levels will be reviewed to complement peak activities</p>
Number of calls answered	<p>A service level of 80% of calls to be answered will be set for all initial calls being handled by the customer service team</p> <p>Where this is not reached, we will review the available data to understand whether the call was re-routed to a different channel – such as email, online or in person</p>
Number and type of actions undertaken in response to website feedback	<p>To understand how technology is being used by customers to engage with the Council</p> <p>To provide assurance that feedback is important, and where possible, actions are taken to improve the customers online journey</p>
Number of days to respond to feedback and understand resolutions times	To provide assurance that feedback is important, and that lessons are learnt and implemented from all feedback
Undertake regular customer satisfaction surveys	Results will be analysed, and the Council will consider appropriate actions to make improvements
Continue staff working group meetings	To ensure all service areas are aware of their responsibilities within this strategy.

Priority 1: Our commitment to a customer first ethos

Our commitment:

- To ensure customers are advised when their enquiry is passed on to another member of the team or service area for resolution

Purpose:

- We will ensure that the customer voice is central to our decision making when we look at how our services are designed in the future. We'll also share learning and best practice across the organisation.
- To be transparent and keep residents informed throughout their customer journey. Being clear, respectful and responding in a timely manner.

2029 Outcomes:

The Customer Service management team will:

- Work with service areas to continually review the customer journey, measuring, monitoring and providing feedback regarding performance against service standards
- Embed existing customer champions across service areas, which will be linked to the launch of the strategy
- Produce a clear handover of communication between teams when transferring enquiries and expectations on response times.
- Set a standard of communication within teams.
- Ensure consistency of messaging via phone, email, online form or in person.
- Implement Training and development plans to respond to feedback and improve our offer
- Embed the customer voice into our performance appraisals across the authority



Priority 1: Our commitment to a customer first ethos



Priority 2: Access to multiple service channels



Priority 3: Accessibility and Inclusion



Priority 4: Regular Training



Priority 5: Technology

Priority 2: Access to multiple service channels

Our commitment:

- Ensure customers have access to multiple service channels to support their needs and type of enquiry

Purpose:

- To enable customers to choose their preferred communication channel at every touchpoint.

2029 Outcomes:

- Each of our processes will continue to be reviewed in detail, and where necessary, remodelled to support digital interactions in the future.
- Focus on the core channels our customers prefer
- The customer will get an improved outcome and will have greater choice in how to access a service
- The council will see lower operating costs through greater levels of automation and a reduction in repeat contacts from customers.



Priority 3: Accessibility and Inclusion

Our commitment:

- We will ensure our services are accessible and inclusive for everyone regardless of ability, background, or circumstance

Purpose:

- To comply with legal requirements and a commitment to supporting all customers equitably.



Priority 4: Regular staff training

Our commitment:

- We will ensure our staff receive regular training to enable them to respond to enquiries with accurate information

Purpose:

- To ensure all staff have knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver excellent customer service across all service areas.
- To stay current with changes in policy and procedure and service area updates.
- Our aim is to support all residents effectively across all contact channels.

2029 Outcomes:

- Development of staff learning plans to increase staff confidence through training
- Develop our knowledge-base for use by customers, staff and virtual assistants
- Training to better improve staff understanding and response to feedback
- Embedding a learning culture about customer service across our teams



Priority 5: Technology

Our commitment:

- To review the provision of technology to improve services – such as customer contact, keeping customers up to date with progress of enquiries, website information

Purpose:

- To provide user friendly technology that enhances the customer experience and improves efficiency to access services. We want to ensure our customers can easily access information and services when and how they need to via our website, online portals, telephones and offices.
- Technological advancements are moving faster than ever and have a significant impact on customer expectations. There is no such thing as standing still. If we don't invest then in reality our services will be going backwards and won't be moving at the pace our customers expect. We need to fundamentally review the type and configuration of technologies used to deliver services across each channel



Welcome to my SK

Online Processes include

Waste

- Assisted collection
- Bins & Bags
- Bulky waste collection
- Clinical waste (sharps box)
- Garden waste scheme
- Missed bin

Streetscene

- Dead animals
- Dog fouling
- Litter
- Overflowing / damaged litter bin

Housing

- Apply to carry out alterations and improvements
- Apply to rent a garage
- Assisted Garden Maintenance scheme
- Housing update form
- Mutual Exchange application
- Request a repair
- SK Homechoice

Licensing

- Animal boarding licence
- Charity house to house collection
- Charity street collection
- Dangerous wild animal licence
- Dog breeding licence
- Gambling licence
- Lottery licence
- Personal licence
- Pet shop licence
- Premise licence
- Private hire operator's licence
- Riding establishment licence
- Street trading licence
- Taxi vehicle licence
- Temporary events notice
- Transfer a premise licence
- Vary a designated premise supervisor

Neighbourhoods

- Abandoned vehicles
- Flytipping
- Fly posting
- Garden bonfires
- Graffiti Noise
- Untidy garden or land

Look for it
Apply for it
Pay for it
Report it

Welcome to my SK

Online Processes

Revenues & Benefits

- Benefits & Council Tax Support
- Discretionary Housing payment
- Move in
- Move out
- Move within
- Residential care
- Single occupancy
- Student discount
- Unoccupied & unfurnished

Environmental Health

- Food, Health & Safety enquiries & complaints
- Registering a food business
- Report a stray dog

Planning

- Apply for planning permission
- Apply for street naming and numbering
- Building regulation approval
- Local land charges search

Other Services

- Other Services
- Freedom of Information requests
- Pay for a parking fine
- Register to Vote
- Report a broken streetlight
- Stamford residents permit scheme

Look for it
Apply for it
Pay for it
Report it





SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Contact Details

South Kesteven District Council

01476 40 60 80

 www.southkesteven.gov.uk

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

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Tuesday, 7 October 2025

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Contract Award Report for Mixed Vehicle Procurement

Report Author

Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services

kayleigh.boasman@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval to purchase vehicles including road sweepers, caged tippers, pickup vehicles, a hook lift, and panel vans. The procurement of these vehicles has been completed through a compliant process and as the vehicles will be purchased outright there is no contract length to consider. The procurement is for 54 vehicles at a combined cost of £2.6m.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Approve the award of the following 14 contracts for the direct purchase of vehicles at a combined cost of £2.6m:**
 - **Volvo – 1 x 26t Hook Lift**
 - **Harris Maxus – 3 x 3.5t Caged Tippers, 6 x 3.5t Caged Tippers with Tail Lifts and 1 x 3.5t Arb Tipper**
 - **Motus (Isuzu) – 2 x 3.5t Caged Tippers**
 - **Motus (Fiat) – 16 x Medium Panel Vans**
 - **Toyota – 7 x Small Panel Vans and 7 x Large Panel Vans**
 - **Lookers Ford – 2 x 4x4 Pickups**
 - **Thompson – 2 x 7.5t Tippers with Tail Lift and Removable Mesh Infilled Side Panels and 3 x 7.5t Caged Tippers**
 - **Aebi Schmidt – 1 x 6t Compact Road Sweeper**
 - **Karcher – 1 x 6t electric Compact Road Sweeper**
 - **Bucher – 2 x 12t Truck Mounted Road Sweepers**

Decision Information	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	Yes – Appendices 1 and 2 are exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – commercially sensitive information related to the Council and 3 rd parties.
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Sustainable South Kesteven 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 Replacement vehicles are required to ensure the Council can meet its statutory duties. The Vehicle Replacement Programme Budget is set annually, and the budget includes provision for the vehicles included within this procurement exercise.
- 1.2 The costs associated with this procurement exercise initially exceeded the budget, however, the option to replace the proposed electric sweeper with a different electric vehicle will ensure the budget is not exceeded and the fleet still increases the use of electric vehicles.
- 1.3 This procurement covers 54 vehicles, which will be purchased over three years in line with the agreed Vehicle Replacement Programme. The total estimated cost of all vehicles within this procurement exercise is £2.6m. Of the 54 vehicles, 27 are funded from the HRA for the Council's Housing Services and these vehicles are estimated to cost £812,414. The remaining cost is to be funded from the Council's General Fund.

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

Procurement

- 1.4 This requirement had been procured compliantly and in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

1.5 Vehicles were procured via further competition under The Procurement Partnerships Fleet Framework

Completed by: Helen Baldwin, Procurement Lead

Legal and Governance

1.6 The necessary processes have been followed in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules – this decision is above the Key Decision threshold. There are no further significant legal, or governance implications not already highlighted within the body of the report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

2.1. The Council has a statutory duty to deliver multiple services including waste collection, housing repairs and maintenance and street scene services. To facilitate the delivery of these services, the Council owns and maintains a fleet of over 150 vehicles.

2.2. Vehicles are purchased regularly in line with service requirements and vehicle life cycles. This procurement exercise sought to procure multiple vehicles in 4 separate lots. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the lots, vehicle types and recommended providers.

Table 1: Vehicle List for Procurement

Lot	Vehicle Type	Estimated Number of Vehicles*	Recommended Providers
1	Lot 1 - 1 x 26t Hook Lift	1	Volvo
2	Lot 2 Spec 1 – 6 x 3.5t Caged Tipper	3	Harris Maxus
	Lot 2 Spec 2 – 2 x 3.5t Caged Tipper & Tail lift	6	Harris Maxus
	Lot 2 Spec 3 - 2x 3.5t Caged Tipper, Tail lift & Side lift	2	Motus (Isuzu)
	Lot 2 Spec 4 - 1 x 3.5t Arb Tipper	1	Harris Maxus
	Lot 2 Spec 1 – 7 x Small Panel Van	7	Toyota
	Lot 2 Spec 2 – 16 x Medium L2H2 Panel Van	16	Motus (Fiat)
	Lot 2 Spec 3 – 7 x Large L3H3 Panel Van	7	Toyota
	Lot 2 2x 4x4 Pickup	2	Lookers Ford

3	Lot 3 Spec 1 – 2 x 7.5t Tipper with Tail Lift and Removable Mesh Infilled Side Panels	2	Thompson
	Lot 3 Spec 2 – 3 x 7.5t Caged Tipper cw Tail Lift		Thomson
4	Lot 4 – 1 x 6t Compact Road Sweeper (Diesel)	1	Aebi Schmidt
	Lot 4 – 1 x 6t Compact Road Sweeper (Electric)	1	Karcher
	Lot 4 – 2 x 12t Truck Mounted Road Sweeper	2	Bucher

**number of vehicles required may vary depending on service need.*

- 2.3. Working with Welland Procurement the Council conducted a procurement exercise to select a supplier for each vehicle type. The award criteria was based on 60% for the quality assessment, and the remaining 40% was for the price assessment.
- 2.4. The priced submissions were assessed by Welland Procurement and quality submissions assessed by three Council officers within the Technical Services team. Comments and scores of the evaluation were populated into a spreadsheet and returned to Welland Procurement.
- 2.5. After the quality evaluation was completed, a moderation meeting was facilitated by Welland Procurement to review the scores and to ensure that the scoring had been consistent and the key points in each question had been accounted for.
- 2.6. The evaluation scoring process was devised based upon a maximum score of 100% being available to each supplier as stated in the Tender documentation and outlined above.
- 2.7. Following the completion of the evaluation and moderation process the final scores awarded to the suppliers are shown in the Procurement Summary Reports in Appendix 1 and 2. Table 1 shows the recommended providers for each vehicle type based on the completion of the procurement process.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The Council is mandated to deliver specific services and to deliver these services, vehicles are required. An example of this is the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which sets out the responsibility of Waste Collection Authorities to collect household waste. To ensure the Council remains legally compliant, vehicles must be purchased to facilitate service delivery.
- 3.2. The procurement process has been conducted in accordance with best practice and the relevant UK procurement regulations, ensuring the principles of transparency, equity and fairness have been adhered to.

3.3. It should be noted that the vehicles within this procurement are funded from both the General Fund and the HRA. The total cost of the procurement is £2.6m over the three-year agreed Vehicle Replacement Programme, around £812,414 of this total will be purchased using the HRA for the Council's Housing Service.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1. Other options considered were:

- Do not procure new vehicles – this would result in an increased risk of service failure, reputational damage and breach of statutory duties.
- Run current vehicles beyond the recommended usage period – risk of service failure due to maintenance requirements, alongside increasing repair costs.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1. The Council requires vehicles for the delivery of statutory services. The recommended vehicle purchases will support service delivery and ensure reliability and efficiency.

6. Appendices

6.1. **Confidential** Appendix 1 – Welland Procurement Report (April Tenders)

6.2. **Confidential** Appendix 2 – Welland Procurement Report (June Tenders)

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Appendix 1

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

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Appendix 2

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

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 7 October 2025

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

ICT and Cyber Security Strategies

Report Author

Gary Andrew, IT Services Manager

gary.andrew@Southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To approve the updated ICT Strategy and the new Cyber Security Strategy.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Approve the adoption of the updated ICT Strategy 2025 - 2028
2. Approve the new Cyber Security Strategy 2025 - 2028.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision? No

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 implications of delivering the actions arising from the ICT Strategy will be included in the budget proposals once the Strategy has been approved.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no governance comments additional to those already referred to within the report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's ICT Strategy covers the period 2022 - 2025 and has been reviewed in order to ensure it remains up to date and reflects changes in technology.

- 2.2 The vision for the new Strategy is made up of 2 key principles which are:

ICT platform – end to end interactions are simple and streamlined as possible.
A Digital workforce – enabling our staff to have access to the right tools to do their job and be confident in maximising the use and benefits of technology in daily work

The Strategy also introduces technology principles which set corporate technology standards. These will be built into future technological designs and replacement of corporate ICT systems.

- 2.3 The updated ICT strategy ensures that digital infrastructure aligns with the Council's evolving business priorities. SKDC's draft ICT Strategy 2025 -2028 emphasises the role of ICT in enabling agile working, modern service delivery, and digital transformation across services.

- 2.4. By embedding innovation and collaboration into the strategy, SKDC can empower services to exploit digital tools, create process efficiencies and improve customer experience.
- 2.5. The growing threat posed by cyber activists and other malicious activists also highlights the need for a robust ICT Cyber Strategy. This Strategy addresses not only technological advancements but also the increasingly sophisticated nature of cyber threats, ensuring the organisation's digital assets, services, and stakeholder data remain protected. Proactive investment in cybersecurity measures, ranging from staff training and awareness to advanced detection and response tools, will be critical to maintaining trust, operational continuity, and compliance with regulatory requirements.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The recommendation is to seek approval of the updated ICT Strategy and Cyber Security Strategy 2025-2028. The current ICT Strategy is coming to an end in 2025 and needs review and update to provide the Council clear strategic direction going forwards.
- 3.2. The increased threat of cyber-attack or breach necessitates the need for a cyber strategy to ensure the Council is prepared and protected. The Cyber Security Strategy 2025–2028 outlines the critical need for robust defences to protect sensitive data and maintain public trust.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. The Council could choose not to have an ICT or Cyber Security Strategy, but this would not provide a robust framework in which to manage and develop ICT platforms.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The refreshed ICT Strategy ensures the Council continues to provide modern services to residents and employees of the authority.
- 5.2 The ICT Strategy enables the Council to review emerging technologies and adapt systems to ensure they are fit for purpose and future proof.

The Cyber Security Strategy is a crucial part of the Council's duty to ensure that all systems are secure and sensitive data held is safe and secure. Councils must adopt proactive measures to ensure the integrity of the Councils systems such as:

- Two-factor authentication (2FA)
- Antivirus and endpoint protection

- Staff training on cyber hygiene (Cyber hygiene refers to the regular practices, habits, and precautions individuals and organisations take to protect their digital systems, devices, and data from cyber threats like malware, phishing and theft).
- Regular security audits aligned with the National Cyber Security Centre's Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF)

5.3 As Councils increasingly deliver services online, they must ensure digital platforms are secure, accessible, and inclusive. A strong cyber security Strategy reassures residents and businesses that their data is protected, fostering trust in digital services.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. The Cyber Strategy has been developed around the Cyber Assessment Framework which was created by the National Cyber Security Centre.
- 6.2. SKDC's ICT team has worked closely with the National Cyber Security Centre to review the Council's Cyber Security and developed and implemented improvements to the Council's systems in based on their recommendations.

7. Appendices

- 7.1. Appendix 1 – ICT Strategy 2025 – 2028
- 7.2. Appendix 2 – Cyber Security Strategy

ICT Strategy

2025-
2028





1. Introduction

1.1. PURPOSE

This document provides an overview of the ICT strategy for South Kesteven District Council.

1.2. SCOPE

The objective of this document is to:

- › Set out the ICT vision for South Kesteven District Council.
- › Demonstrate the close link between the ICT strategy and the Corporate Priorities.
- › Describe the key strategic areas required to realise the vision and align ICT with the business.

The scope and ambition of this strategy is based on innovation, strengthened governance and working together across all services and partners to achieve its objectives.



2. Executive Summary

The implementation of recent technology initiatives enables us to work in a more agile and flexible way. Building on the foundations of the current ICT Strategy we are now looking to further strengthen our approach by empowering services to really explore the transformational opportunities that digital tools and technologies offer, ensuring that we can offer the very best service to our customers. Whilst we have bold ambitions for our digital tools and technologies, we will continue to have a robust and proactive approach to our cyber-security measures. Protecting our technology estate, data and our users from cyber-threats.

We remain engaged regionally and nationally in cyber security activity. We align closely to the work of the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) with regards to our approach to cyber-security and use the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) to ensure our defences are matching best practices.

This Strategy looks to underpin the Council's continued drive for efficiency and transformation through digitalisation. This will be supported by working with services to optimise the delivery of our technology services.

2.1. BUSINESS CONTEXT

The ICT Strategy is formulated to meet the business needs based on the requirements stemming from:

Medium Term Financial Plan.

This sets the financial context for the organisation and describes the budget challenges we face.

The ICT strategy is designed to support the organisational wide transformation and digitalisation agenda contributing towards addressing the financial challenges.

Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan sets out our vision and priorities for the District. The ICT Strategy and associated ICT service plan has been designed against the key themes of:

- Connecting Communities
- Sustainable South Kesteven
- Enabling Economic Opportunity
- Effective Council

The NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) - The NCSC is committed to working constructively with regulators, Lead Government Departments for critical national infrastructure sectors, industry and other stakeholders to help ensure that the most nationally important networks and information systems are subject to effective cyber risk management regimes. This commitment has shaped the NCSC approach to developing the CAF collection.

It should be noted that technology is only one component of change: it can only deliver expected organisational benefits and savings in conjunction with:

- Business processes that are efficient and take a “digital-by-design” approach.

This means that our processes are fundamentally transformed to take full advantage of the tools, techniques and technologies that the internet-era has to offer.

- Adoption of new ways of working by the end user be that employee, customer or partner organisation



3. Strategic principles

3.1. Our vision

The vision for our ICT Strategy is made up of two key principles, both of which focus on building on the technology foundation created by previous versions of this strategy.

These are :

ICT platform – end to end interactions are simple and streamlined as possible. Any process complexity is hidden from our customers.

A Digital Workforce – enabling our staff to have access to the right tools to do their job and be confident in maximising the use and benefits of technology in daily work.

ICT Platform

The principles enable us to:

- redesign our services around the needs of the people using them
- break our dependence on inflexible and expensive technology that doesn't join up effectively, in favour of modular common components and open data standards
- design safe, secure and useful ways of sharing information to build trust among our partners and citizens
- demonstrate digital leadership, creating the conditions for genuine organisational transformation
- embed an open culture that values, incentivises and expects working in the open wherever we can, sharing our plans and experience, working collaboratively with other organisations, and reusing good practice

We should aspire for all our services to be redesigned to take full advantage of the latest and greatest digital tools and technology available. In doing so we should look to learn from the very best, most useable digital services that people use in their day-to-day lives, bringing those principles to our services.

The ICT platform principle for end-to-end interactions should be as simple and streamlined as possible. Any process complexity should be hidden from our customers.

We will do this by:

- Using shared and common components such as a standard payment or booking platform as an example. Where components already exist nationally or regionally these will be considered first for adoption.
- Providing the platforms to enable streamlining of business processes. Allowing them to be redesigned as digital by design making the best use of technology, automating as much as we can.
- Maximising the use of the data we hold ensuring it is accurate, secure and can enrich the end user experience.

A Digital Workforce We need to continue a rapid change in culture and mind-set to demonstrate a clear commitment to embracing IT innovation and to provide a clear vision for a more digital future; one that offers a vibrant and exciting environment for not only for our current workforce, but the up-and-coming generation of digital talent.

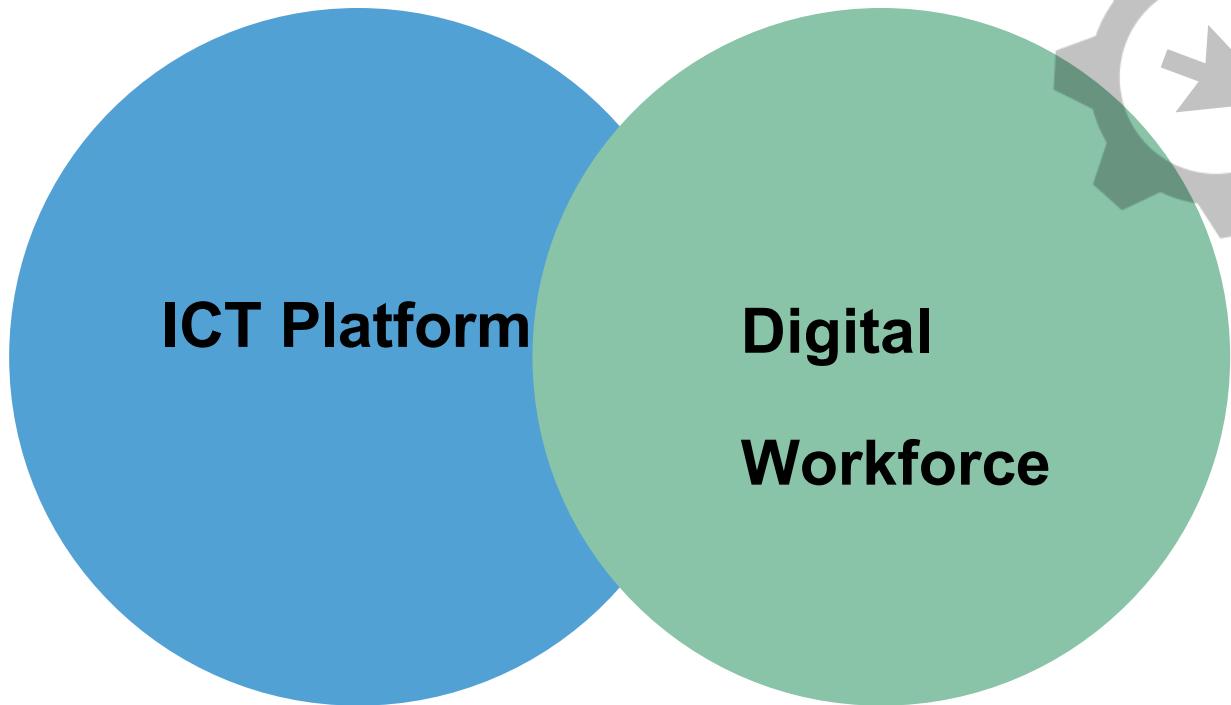
We will do this by:

- Providing the right technology and devices so that teams can work in different places and can access the systems they need, when they need to.
- Simplifying processes and systems for the benefit of customers and teams.
- Supporting our employees at every level of the organisation to gain or maintain the digital skills, confidence and commitment to adopt a digital by design approach.
- Encouraging and enabling collaborative working across boundaries to deliver services and meet customer needs.

These two strategic principles complement each other in the delivery of a successful, transformational ICT service.

The ICT platform seeks to streamline and modernise our processes and systems with our Digital workforce principle ensuring staff have the relevant skills and tools to make the best use of the technologies available.





3.2. ICT strategy themes

Based on our vision, this is what we need to do to achieve our objectives. This has been split into themes, each of which, has an evolving programme of activity supporting it. The themes will not only address organisational pressures but also be driven and updated by wider technology industry demands and trends. It is important to note that across all our themes the focus is to directly support the Corporate Plan by delivering the very best, easiest to use, efficient and innovative services to our residents and customers.

OUR THEMES ARE:**Engage**

Keeping our finger on the pulse of the organisation

We are re-establishing ICT business relationship management with services to ensure ICT & Digital empowers and enables individual service business plans. We look to work closer with our partners, peers and likeminded organisations to share learning, platforms and solutions.

Optimise

Technology services will work when we need them and how they are needed to work. The stability and security of our technology estate and data will continue to be a priority

We will ensure that the day-to-day operation and use of ICT is optimised in terms of availability, resilience, security and performance.

We will do this through consolidating and modernising our technology estate. Reviewing service level agreements and our key performance indicators. We will optimise the systems we use in line with the local digital declaration to ensure that they work across the most popular, commonly used platforms. This will help ensure that integration with partners, peers, stakeholders and like-minded organisation is possible.

Empower

Helping the organisation make the best use of our technology services. Enabling wider, whole system issues to be addressed through greater collaboration and connectivity with partners

We will ensure that our workforce, including our employees and elected member cohorts, have access to the right digital tools and skills to do their jobs in the most efficient way. This will directly support, benefit and enhance the services we provide to our customers and residents.

We will do this by supporting digital skills. Continuing to modernise our technology estate and making greater use of our data warehouse and the organisational insight that this enables.

Transform

Partnering to help transform our processes and culture in the context of the opportunities of the internet era

We will support a digital process development plan across the organisation making the best, most innovative use of new technology. How we best serve our customers will be at the heart of our transformation and everything we do.

We will do this by proactively assessing, incorporating and developing the latest technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Automation, Internet of Things (IOT) etc.

4. Technology Principles

Our Corporate Technology Standards shows details of the specific technical standards for the technology of the organisation. These directly support the following overarching technology principles

- Most appropriate technology provision

Technology services be that systems, infrastructure or platforms will be provided in the most appropriate way. A cost, benefit and risk analysis will be undertaken for provision decisions including our resilience and availability requirements, alongside reviewing the environmental impact of how the technology is provided. Cloud services are a preference but must pass the cost, benefit and risk test.

- Digital innovation

We will adopt a healthy risk management approach with regards to Digital innovation actively seeking out new approaches to our technology. All innovations must be able to demonstrate that they will increase efficiency or offer new business models.

- Ready for a modern digital world

Services that are customer facing will be digitally enabled with an ICT & Digital service that can support the 24/7 nature of digital self-service. Customers need to view and amend information and apply for services when it is convenient to them.

- Technology Modernisation

Technology and services should be fit for purpose and up to date. Systems, solutions and infrastructures should be standardised where possible.

- Data to allow us to always improve our outcomes

Duplication and inefficiency will be removed by streamlining, standardising and cleansing our datasets, making sure that data can be presented accurately, clearly and that it can flow between systems where required. Data will only be retained when required and relevant and in line with our GDPR policy.

- Security by design

Data and information security will be at the heart of everything we do, provided by our ever evolving and advancing strategies and activities to protect us from cyber threats.

5. How and what will we deliver on this strategy?

Due to the amount of change required and the pace at which technology evolves, the ICT Service Plan needs to be continually updated, managed and monitored. The Service Plan will be reviewed quarterly and updated annually, linking through to associated project and programme documentation.

IT Strategy Work Programme Plan.docx

Technology is one of the foundations to digital transformation. However, transformation, business change or service redesign cannot be delivered through technology alone. The benefits of digital technologies stem from how they are integrated with people and processes, leading to business change and innovation.



Contact Details

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South Kesteven District Council

CYBER SECURITY STRATEGY



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FOREWORD

Cllr Richard Cleaver



Information and data are vital to every part of South Kesteven District Council's business. As we continue to deliver a digital programme that is transforming the way we work and how local people access information and services, we need increasingly robust security measures to protect against cyber threats.

Across the globe, cyber-attacks are growing in frequency and becoming more sophisticated. The increased use of the internet caused by Covid 19 pandemic means that cyber criminals have become more active, and our exposure has increased. When cyber- attacks succeed the damage can be significant; with personal, economic and social consequences.



This **CYBER SECURITY STRATEGY 2025** sets out our approach for protecting our information systems and the data we hold to ensure the services we provide are secure and our residents, businesses and stakeholders can safely transact with us. This includes achieving a balance of embracing digital opportunities, including making information more widely available and accessible, whilst ensuring that right levels of protection are in place .

This strategy demonstrates our commitment and the key actions we will take to further establish a trusted digital environment for SKDC. We will strengthen and secure SKDC from cyber threats by increasing security awareness throughout our workforce, investing in our systems and infrastructure, deterring our adversaries, and developing a wide range of responses, from basic cyber protection to the most sophisticated defences.

Cyber-attacks will continue to evolve, which is why we will continue to work at pace to stay ahead of all threats. The Cyber Security Strategy underpins and enables the ICT Strategy, which continues to ensure we will place the customer at the heart of everything we do in a changing technological landscape. The measures outlined in this strategy will safeguard trust and confidence in the way we operate and deliver our services.

INTRODUCTION



The South Kesteven priorities are:

- Connecting Communities
- Sustainable South Kesteven
- Enabling Economic Opportunity
- Housing
- Effective Council

This vision is set out in our Corporate Plan and our ICT strategy builds on that plan.

The Council's ICT Strategy sets out how technology is used to support the delivery of services to the residents, businesses and visitors to South Kesteven. Our digital ambitions are fundamental to delivering quality services to our communities.

The Covid 19 pandemic impacted on all areas of public and private life. It led to more routine professional and personal interactions to move on-line and many of us now work from home.

This has presented new and lucrative opportunities to cyber criminals. The extent to which we exploit cyberspace and many of our working practice will not return to the pre-pandemic levels. Cyber security has become, and will remain, a key responsibility for all of us – collectively and as individuals.

The prevalence of digital services and the dependence on their availability and integrity means that a robust and comprehensive cyber security strategy and framework are vital to ensure that appropriate measures are in place.

Staff training is also a crucial factor in combating cyber threats and reducing risk in a constantly changing online environment. Ongoing training and education programmes seek to raise awareness of digital security whilst improving and reinforcing the important of the human element of cyber defence.

This strategy is our cyber security commitment, both to the people we represent. It supports delivery of the ICT Strategy and the Council Corporate Plan by providing a framework for SKDC to securely harness the benefits of digital technology for the benefit of all .

DRAFT

PURPOSE AND SCOPE



The Cyber Security Strategy is a new strategy, introduced in response to the increasing threat from cyber criminals and several successful and high-profile cyber-attacks on public and private organisations.

The purpose of the strategy is to give assurance to residents and other stakeholders of the council's commitment in delivering robust information security measures to protect resident and stakeholder data from misuse and cyber threats, and to safeguard their privacy through increasingly secure and modern information governance and data sharing arrangements – both internally and with partners .

Through delivery of this strategy, we will seek to meet the requirements of the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) which is a framework provided by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to assess our resilience capability using 4 high-level objectives and 14 principles. Further detail can be found here [Cyber Assessment Framework - NCSC.GOV.UK](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyber-assessment-framework)

The scope of this strategy includes all SKDC's information systems, the data held on them, and the services they help provide. It aims to increase cyber security for the benefit of all residents, businesses, partners and stakeholders, helping to protect them from cyber threats and crime.

CYBER SECURITY – WHAT IS IT?



Cyber security refers to the body of technologies, processes, and practices designed to protect networks, devices, programs and data from attack, damage, or unauthorized access.

Cyber security is the practice of ensuring the confidentiality, integrity and availability (CIA) of information.



Attacks on Confidentiality

- stealing or copying personal information.



Attacks on Integrity

- seeks to corrupt, damage or destroy information or systems and the people who rely on them.



Attacks on Availability

- denial of services.

WHY IS CYBER SECURITY IMPORTANT?



To deliver services, South Kesteven District Council collects, processes, transports and stores large amounts of personal and sensitive data. This data is transmitted internally and externally and is stored on both in-house and cloud-base servers.

A successful cyber-attack would disrupt the ability of the Council to deliver services, many of which are vital and support the most vulnerable residents within the district. The cost of a cyber incident can be significantly high as well as the cost to data integrity and damage to reputation.

A strong approach to cyber security enables us to protect information, the systems that are used to process and store it and ensure our services are kept secure and running. It is also vital in ensuring the public can trust the council with their information.

We have seen over the last couple of years that organisations like Councils, Academic and Health authorities that have suffered from a Cyber-attack had weeks of disruption and costs running into the hundreds of thousands of pounds to put system back into operation.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE AS A COUNCIL



-  The Council needs to keep pace with the ever-changing face of technology. New innovations such as AI, Process Automation and the Internet of Things mean we need to be ready to embrace these technologies but be assured we can do so safely and securely.
-  Much of our business is done online, such as corresponding with residents and local businesses, carrying out case work, and reviewing reports and papers for council meetings. As well as providing a secure environment for these transactions we also need to ensure officers are educated in best-practices and be aware of indicators of a potential cyber-attack.
-  This direction of travel is expected to continue and accelerate, making effective cyber security ever more crucial in protecting against new types of threats, risks and vulnerabilities.

THREATS



A threat left unchecked could disrupt the day-to-day operations of the council and the delivery of local public services and ultimately has the potential to compromise national security.

Cyber criminals and cyber crime

Cyber criminals are generally working for financial gain. Most commonly, for the purposes of fraud: either selling illegally gained information to a third party or using it directly for criminal means.

Key tools and methods used by cyber criminals include.

Malware – malicious software that includes viruses, Trojans, worms or any code or content that could have an adverse impact on organisations or individuals.

Ransomware – a kind of malware that locks victims out of their data or systems and only allows access once money is paid.

Phishing – emails purporting to come from a public agency to extract sensitive information from members of the public.

Hacktivism

Hacktivists will generally take over public websites or social media accounts to raise the profile of a particular cause. When targeted against local government websites and networks, these attacks can cause reputational damage locally. If online services are regularly disrupted by cyber-attacks this could lead to the erosion of public confidence in using such services. Hacktivist groups have successfully used distributed denial of service (DDoS – when a system, service or network is overwhelmed by an electronic attack, and it becomes unavailable) attacks to disrupt the websites of several councils already.

Insiders

Staff may intentionally or unintentionally release sensitive information or data into the public domain. This may be for the purpose of sabotage or to sell to another party, but often is due to simple human error or a lack of awareness about the particular risks involved .

THREATS



Zero-day threats

A zero-day exploit is a cyber-attack that occurs on the same day a weakness is discovered in software. At that point, it's exploited before a fix becomes available from its creator. It is an attack that exploits a previously unknown security vulnerability. This poses a risk to any computer or system that has not had the relevant patch applied or updated its antivirus software.

Terrorists

Some terrorist groups demonstrate intent to conduct cyber-attacks. Terrorist groups could obtain improved capability in several ways, namely through the sharing of expertise in online forums providing a significant opportunity for terrorists to escalate their capability.

Espionage

Several of the most sophisticated and hostile foreign intelligence agencies target UK government and public sector networks to steal sensitive information. This could ultimately disadvantage the UK in diplomatic or trade negotiations, or militarily.

VULNERABILITIES AND RISK



Vulnerabilities are weaknesses or other conditions in an organisation that a threat actor such as a hacker, nation-state, disgruntled employee, or other attacker, can exploit to adversely affect data security. Cyber vulnerabilities typically include a subset of those weaknesses and focus on issues in the IT software, hardware, and systems an organisation uses.



System Maintenance. Mistakes are constantly discovered and fixed in all deployed systems. If systems are not quickly patched, then anyone who wishes to attack a system has a much better chance of success.



Legacy Software. Software that is in use but out of support, or unsupportable, cannot be patched. Therefore, the likelihood of it being successfully compromised grows over time and cannot be addressed.



People. 'Social engineering' seeks to trick people into allowing access to systems or handing over their passwords. Training and support are the only solution to this challenge.

Cyber Risk Management is a fundamental part of broader risk management to ensure cyber security challenges are fully identified across the council and appropriate action is carried out to mitigate the risk. The management of cyber security is, in large part, the management of risk.

OUR APPROACH, PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES



To mitigate the multiple threats, we face and safeguard our interests in cyberspace, we need a strategic approach that underpins our collective and individual actions in the digital domain.

This will include:

- ✓ **A council wide risk management framework** to help build a risk aware culture within the council, ensuring staff understand how to identify and manage risks.
- ✓ **Cyber Awareness user training** to help mitigate insider threats, understand supply chain risks and ensure all staff understand the issues and their responsibilities.
- ✓ **Cyber response planning and testing** to ensure we have clear plans to deal with an incident or suspected incident. These plans should be tested regularly within the IT team so that officers are familiar with the plans and that they are fit for purpose.
- ✓ **The Cyber Assessment Framework** is a collection of cyber security guidance created by the NCSC for organisations that play a vital role in the day-to-day life of the UK, with a focus on essential functions. This framework will be used to measure and monitor the effectiveness and validity of our strategy

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY



Deter and Detect

The council should be a hard target for all forms of aggression in cyberspace. This will involve detecting, understanding, investigating and disrupting any hostile action against us.

Actions

- ✓ **Support enhanced governance** through the application of government's Cyber Awareness Framework .
- ✓ **Maintain secure configuration**, by following security baseline guidance and best practice from industry
- ✓ **Continue to strengthen identity security**, adopting modern authentication standards such as FIDO2
- ✓ **Maintain Defences at all Levels** by :
 - » Keeping Anti-Virus and Malware prevention software is up to date.
 - » Ensuring hardware and software version are kept up to date with latest firmware and patches
- ✓ **Removable media/device controls** .
- ✓ **Deliver agreed plans and guidance** .
- ✓ **Training and educating users** to help detect, deter and defend against the Cyber threats.
- ✓ In line with the **Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015**, the council has a duty to ensure that those vulnerable to radicalisation have appropriate safeguards and support . Measures are in place to block access to online resources where recruitment, radicalisation and dissemination can take place.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY



Defend and Develop

The council will continually develop our innovative cyber security strategy to address the risks faced by our residents, businesses, and community and voluntary sector. This includes developing a coordinated and tailored approach to risks and threats that we may encounter and mitigation of potential vulnerabilities.

Actions

- ✓ **Develop and maintain risk management framework**, internal control and governance for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud.
- ✓ **Implement process, procedures and controls** to manage changes in cyber threat level and vulnerabilities.
- ✓ **Manage vulnerabilities** that may allow an attacker to gain access to critical systems .
- ✓ **Operate the council's penetration testing programme and cyber-incident response** .
- ✓ **Provide training** for staff and elected members .
- ✓ **Continued development an incident response and management plan**, with clearly defined actions, roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ **Develop and maintain communication plan** in the event of an incident which includes notifying (for example) the relevant supervisory body, senior accountable individuals, the Departmental press office, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), Government Security Group (Cabinet Office), the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or law enforcement as applicable (not exhaustive) .

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS



In continuing to provide assurance, SKDC have:

- 🔒 A cyber-specific response plan which is regularly reviewed
- 🔒 Set up playbooks to support test exercises on a regular basis; to ensure effective reaction to incidents when they occur.
- 🔒 Setup monitoring tools provided by the NCSC to continually monitor the Council's systems.
- 🔒 Engaged with NCSC to complete the Cyber Assessment Framework.
- 🔒 Provide relevant cyber security training for staff and elected members.
- 🔒 Complied with the applicable standards (PSN, PCI-DSS, etc).

CYBER SECURITY GOVERNANCE

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Effective cyber security governance at South Kesteven is delivered through the following roles and functions

Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)

The Council's Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) will be a member of the Councils Senior Management Team. The SIRO is responsible for the governance of cyber security and information risk within the Council . This includes ensuring that information governance risk is managed in accordance with GDPR. However, whilst the SIRO is the nominated officer, responsibility for safeguarding information and information systems is shared across the organisation with all staff having a role to play.

The Cabinet

The Cabinet is made up of the Leader of the Council and other senior councillors (Cabinet members) . Cabinet will agree and receive updates on implementation of the Cyber Security Strategy.

Corporate Management Team (CMT)

CMT sponsor the Cyber Security Strategy and oversee the strategic framework through which the council governs its information resources.

Corporate Information Governance Group (CIGG)

This group is made up of SKDC officers from multiple services and meets monthly. It aims to:

- Introduce new cyber information to analyse risk and inform on policy changes.
- Review any incidents or near misses to ensure lessons learnt are acted upon.

CYBER SECURITY GOVERNANCE

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



ICT Services

ICT services oversee the delivery of all IT systems for South Kesteven District Council.

Infrastructure Team

The infrastructure team is part of ICT services and manages the councils firewall and networking equipment as well as ensuring patch management is carried out to all South Kesteven equipment.

Information Asset Owners (IAO)

Information Asset Owners are responsible for all processing of personal data within their business area.

All South Kesteven Officers and Councillors

It is the responsibility of all officers to comply with the standards set out in this Cyber Security Strategy.

APPENDIX 1

STANDARDS



Currently SKDC must comply with the following standards:

- ✓ Bankers' Automated Clearing Services (BACS)
- ✓ Criminal Justice Secure Mail (CJSM)
- ✓ Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS)
- ✓ Public Services Network (PSN)

In addition, SKDC should follow all relevant National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidance

CONTACTS



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DRAFT



Cabinet

Tuesday, 7 October 2025

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

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Findings Report

Report Author

Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

 Alison.Hall-Wright@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To consider the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) Findings Report which provides details of a complaint raised about the Council which was upheld and fault and injustice found.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to discuss the findings and recommendations of the report of the Local Government Ombudsman and direct officers regarding the actions to be taken

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	

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 Should Cabinet instruct officers to pay the compensation recommended by the LGO this will lead to the Council incurring costs of £1,175 which will be met from the General Fund budget.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Cabinet reviewing the findings and recommendations of the final report issued by the LGO meets the requirements of section 30 of the Local Government Act 1974.

Completed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Deputy Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. On 18 August 2025 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) issued a report upholding a homelessness complaint which had been escalated to them, the report found fault and injustice.
- 2.2. The Council has not currently agreed to the LGO recommendations which state to remedy the injustice within three months of the date of the final report it should:
 1. Apologise to Mr B for the lack of accommodation and the distress this caused him in early 2024;
 2. Pay Mr B £875 to recognise the lack of that accommodation; and
 3. Pay Mr B a further £300 to recognise the added distress caused by him being avoidable street homeless during that time.
- 2.3. To prevent similar fault and injustice in future, the Council should also, within three months of the date of this report:
 4. Remind its homelessness staff of the correct test and threshold for the interim accommodation duty, in particular that the threshold for this is a low one;
 5. Review its standard homelessness letters to ensure these comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 1996, in particular about explanations of review and appeal rights; and

6. Remind its homelessness staff of the requirements for homelessness decision including when these should be made and what such decisions must contain.
- 2.4. The Council has actioned recommendations 5 and 6 but has not actioned recommendations 1- 4 as it believes the correct test was applied, the team understands the threshold for interim duty accommodation is low but following a review of the information provided as part of the homelessness application the criteria for the provision of temporary accommodation was not met.
- 2.5. The Homelessness Code of Guidance requires housing authorities to provide temporary accommodation if they have reason to believe the applicant may:
 - a. Be homelessness
 - b. Be eligible for assistance; and,
 - c. Have a priority need
- 2.6. The Council had reason to believe the applicant met criteria a and b. However, the vulnerability questionnaire completed with Mr B at the start of their homelessness application meant the Council had no reason to believe they would be significantly more vulnerable if homeless than an ordinary person would be if homeless so the priority need criteria was not met.
- 2.7. When making this decision the Council took into consideration the medical conditions of Mr B, one of which was managed through diet and the other through medication which required no additional support. In addition to this Mr B was working full-time and was able to sustain this employment throughout his homelessness application.
- 2.8. The LGO state in paragraph 36 of their report that following a stay in hospital, Mr B had been told that some of his health conditions were related to or made worse by their homelessness which should have led the Council to believe they may have a priority need.
- 2.9. The Council reviewed the evidence provided and established that a visit to hospital had taken place and Mr B was discharged on the same day with no follow appointments required. There was no mention in the hospital report that the symptoms the applicant was experiencing was linked to their homelessness. The priority need criteria was again not met as the Council had no reason to believe the applicant would be significantly more vulnerable if homeless than an ordinary person would be if homeless.
- 2.10. The Council provided additional information to the LGO following the issuing of their draft report, but no amendments were made to their recommendations.

2.11. As the Council has not accepted all the LGO recommendations, the Ombudsman has now issued a report under section 30 of the Local Government Act 1974 which requires the Council to:

1. share the draft report with the Council's Chief Executive or equivalent, and relevant members or officers;
2. place two public announcements in local newspapers and/or newspaper websites;
3. make the report available free of charge at one or more of its offices;
4. discuss our findings and recommendations at a high decision-making level, such as full council or cabinet, after we have published the report; and
5. formally report back to the LGO its intended course of action.

2.12. The Council has satisfied points 1 – 3. Presenting this report satisfies point 4 as Cabinet are asked to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Ombudsman and direct officers regarding the actions that should be taken. This will be reported back to the LGO which will satisfy point 5.

3. Key Considerations

3.1. Cabinet should review the findings and recommendations of the LGO and address relevant questions to key officers to enable a decision to be made regarding the actions the Council should take.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 There are no other options available as Cabinet are required to discuss the findings and recommendations of the LGO.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1. To ensure the Council are meeting the requirements of the LGO.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 – Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Investigation into a complaint about South Kesteven District Council

Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

**Investigation into a complaint about
South Kesteven District Council
(reference number: 24 010 719)**

18 August 2025

The Ombudsman's role

We independently and impartially investigate complaints about councils and other organisations in our jurisdiction. If we decide to investigate, we look at whether organisations have made decisions the right way. Where we find fault has caused injustice, we can recommend actions to put things right, which are proportionate, appropriate and reasonable based on all the facts of the complaint. We can also identify service improvements so similar problems don't happen again. Our service is free.

We cannot force organisations to follow our recommendations, but they almost always do. Some of the things we might ask an organisation to do are:

- > apologise
- > pay a financial remedy
- > improve its procedures so similar problems don't happen again.

We publish reports to raise awareness of significant issues, encourage scrutiny of local services and hold organisations to account.

Section 30 of the 1974 Local Government Act says that a report should not normally name or identify any person. The people involved in this complaint are referred to by a letter or job role.

Key to names used

Mrs B The complainant

Report summary

Housing – homelessness

Mr X complained about the lack of support and accommodation the Council provided after he became homeless in 2024. He says this caused him significant stress while he was street homeless and made his health conditions worse.

Finding

Fault found causing injustice and recommendations made.

Recommendations

The Council must consider the report and confirm within three months the action it has taken or proposes to take. The Council should consider the report at its full Council, Cabinet or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members and we will require evidence of this. (Local Government Act 1974, section 31(2), as amended)

To remedy the injustice caused, we recommend the Council:

- apologise to Mr B for the lack of suitable accommodation and the distress this caused to him in early 2024;
- pay Mr B £875 to recognise the lack of that accommodation and distress; and
- pay Mr B a further £300 to recognise the added distress caused by him being avoidably street homeless during that time.

We also recommend the Council:

- remind its homelessness staff of the correct test and threshold for the interim accommodation duty, in particular that the threshold for this is a low one;
- review its standard homelessness letters to ensure these comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 1996, in particular about explanations of review and appeal rights; and
- remind its homelessness staff of the requirements for homelessness decisions, including when these should be made and what such decisions must contain.

The complaint

1. Mr B complained about how the Council supported him after he became homeless in 2024. He says the Council:
 - did not provide him with accommodation while it considered his application;
 - failed to provide him with enough support to find suitable housing;
 - wrongly decided that he did not have a priority need for housing;
 - failed to review its decision when he asked it to; and
 - gave him the wrong priority under its housing allocation scheme.
2. As a result, Mr B says he suffered significant stress while homeless, which made his health problems worse. He wants the Council to provide him with suitable accommodation and higher priority for housing.

Legal and administrative background

The Ombudsman's role and powers

3. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this report, we have used the word 'fault' to refer to these. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint. We refer to this as 'injustice'. If there has been fault which has caused an injustice, we may suggest a remedy. (Local Government Act 1974, sections 26(1) and 26A(1), as amended)
4. We consider whether there was fault in the way an organisation made its decision. If there was no fault in how the organisation made its decision, we cannot question the outcome. (Local Government Act 1974, section 34(3), as amended)
5. The law says we cannot normally investigate a complaint when someone could take the matter to court. However, we may decide to investigate if we consider it would be unreasonable to expect the person to go to court. (Local Government Act 1974, section 26(6)(c), as amended)
6. When considering complaints we make findings based on the balance of probabilities. This means that we look at the available relevant evidence and decide what was more likely to have happened.

Relevant law and guidance

Homelessness

7. Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities set out councils' powers and duties to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
8. Councils must complete an assessment if they are satisfied an applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness. Councils must notify the applicant of the assessment. Councils should work with applicants to identify practical and reasonable steps for the council and the applicant to take to help the applicant keep or secure suitable accommodation. These steps should be tailored to the household, and follow from the findings of the assessment, and must be provided to the applicant in writing as their personalised housing plan. Councils should also keep these plans under review. (Housing Act 1996, section 189A and Homelessness Code of Guidance paragraphs 11.6, 11.18 and 11.33)

9. After completing inquiries, the council must give the applicant a decision in writing. If it is an adverse decision, the letter must fully explain the reasons. All letters must include information about the right to request a review and the timescale for doing so. (Housing Act 1996, section 184, Homelessness Code of Guidance 18.30)
10. Councils must take reasonable steps to help to secure suitable accommodation for any eligible homeless person. This is called the relief duty. When a council decides this duty has come to an end, it must notify the applicant in writing. (Housing Act 1996, section 189B)
11. If a council is satisfied an applicant is homeless, eligible for assistance, and has a priority need the council has a duty to secure that accommodation is available for their occupation (unless it refers the application to another housing authority under section 198). This is called the main housing duty. (Housing Act 1996, section 193 and Homelessness Code of Guidance 15.39)
12. A council must secure interim accommodation for an applicant and their household if it has reason to believe the applicant may be homeless, may be eligible for assistance and may have a priority need. (Housing Act 1996, section 188) Government guidance says that the threshold for triggering the interim accommodation duty is low and highlights the test of “reason to believe” is less than a council “being satisfied”. (Homelessness Code of Guidance 15.5)
13. This interim accommodation duty ends when a council decides, and notifies the person that:
 - they do not have priority need **and** the council does not owe the person certain duties to house them (including the relief duty);
 - the council has a duty to secure accommodation for the person; or
 - the relief duty has ended.
14. Homeless applicants may ask for a review within 21 days of being notified of various decisions a council makes about their homelessness, including the following:
 - what duty (if any) is owed to them if they are found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness (this includes whether they are owed the main housing duty);
 - the steps they are to take in their personalised housing plan at the relief duty stage; and
 - giving notice to bring the relief duty to an end.
15. Councils must provide to anyone in their district information and advice free of charge on:
 - preventing homelessness;
 - securing accommodation when homeless;
 - the rights of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness;
 - the duties of the authority;
 - any help that is available from the authority or anyone else, for people in the council’s district who are homeless or may become homeless (whether or not they are threatened with homelessness); and
 - how to access that help.

Housing allocations

16. Every local housing authority must publish an allocations scheme that sets out how it prioritises applicants, and its procedures for allocating housing. All allocations must be made in strict accordance with the published scheme. (Housing Act 1996, section 166A(1) & (14))
17. The Council's allocation policy assigns applicants to different bands, based on their circumstances. This includes:
 - Band 3 priority for people who are homeless but who do not have priority need;
 - Band 2 priority for people to whom the Council owes the relief duty under homelessness law, or who need to move on medical grounds.
18. Councils must notify applicants in writing of the following decisions and give reasons:
 - that the applicant is not eligible for an allocation;
 - that the applicant is not a qualifying person; and
 - any decision not to award the applicant reasonable preference because of their unacceptable behaviour.
19. The Council must also notify the applicant of the right to request a review of these decisions. (Housing Act 1996, section 166A(9))
20. Housing applicants can ask the council to review a wide range of decisions about their applications, including decisions about their housing priority.

How we considered this complaint

21. We have produced this report following the examination of relevant files and documents and an interview with the complainant.
22. We gave the complainant and the Council a confidential draft of this report and invited their comments. The comments received were taken into account before the report was finalised.

What we found

Background

23. Mr B applied to the Council as homeless at the start of 2024. In his application he told the Council he had difficulties with both his physical and mental health. The Council asked Mr B for information from his doctor about his health conditions. At the time, and through his period of homelessness, Mr B spent most nights sleeping in his car.
24. The Council decided Mr B was homeless and that it owed him the relief duty in mid-January 2024. It interviewed Mr B and agreed a Personal Housing Plan with him around that time. The plan said the Council would do several things to help Mr B try to find accommodation, including sending him information of privately rented properties and directing him to information about possible entitlement to benefits. It also increased his housing register priority to Band 2. However, there is no evidence that the Council considered, at this time, whether Mr B may have a priority need and therefore whether it had a duty to provide him with interim accommodation.

25. Mr B sent the Council information about his medical conditions and both the effect these had on his homelessness, and the effect his homelessness had on his medical conditions. This included, in early February 2024, that Mr B had been in hospital and had been told by doctors that this was related to how he had been sleeping and the weather conditions while homeless.
26. The officer assigned to Mr B's case told him he should provide medical evidence because "at the expiry of your 56-day Relief Duty [the officer would] have to make a decision as to whether [Mr B met] the Priority Need criteria". However, there are no records showing the Council, at this stage, considered whether it might have a duty to provide Mr B with interim accommodation, based on this latest information about his health.
27. The Council decided, in late February 2024 that Mr B did not have priority need. It first told Mr B about its decision by email.
28. In response, Mr B complained to the Council about its decision and asked for a review. A few days later the Council sent Mr B a formal letter about its decision that he did not have priority need. The Council says it spoke to Mr B about his complaint in early March 2024, at which point Mr B told the Council he no longer wanted to continue his complaint.
29. Over the next few weeks, the Council continued to send Mr B details about private rented properties. Mr B said he could not afford the rents and wanted more secure accommodation, preferably not sharing with others.
30. The relief duty ended in mid-March 2024. However, the Council did not send Mr B a formal decision about this. It did, however, tell him the duty had ended. It tried to refer Mr B to an organisation which supported street homeless people, but Mr B did not want to engage with that service.
31. In July 2024, the Council reviewed Mr B's housing priority. It realised he should have been in Band 3, because he did not have priority need and the relief duty had ended earlier in the year.
32. Mr B complained to the Council again about the support it had provided in the summer of 2024. The Council did not uphold Mr B's complaint, though it did invite him to provide more medical evidence of the impact of his homelessness on his health, so it could review his housing priority.
33. After Mr B complained to us in late 2024, he provided further evidence to the Council about his health conditions. This led to the Council increasing his priority back to Band 2.

Interim accommodation

34. The threshold for the interim accommodation duty is a low one. In his homelessness application Mr B told the Council he had physical and mental health conditions. Such conditions could lead to someone having priority need, and the Council then asked Mr B for evidence of these conditions.
35. In its comments about the complaint, the Council said it properly decided that Mr B did not have a priority need. That, however, was not the test which the Council should have been considering. The test for interim accommodation is a much lower threshold than whether someone **does** have a priority need; the test is whether someone **may** have that need.

36. Mr B then told the Council about his stay in hospital and that he had been told some of his health conditions were related to, or made worse by, his homelessness.
37. By telling the Council about his health conditions, especially the stay in hospital, we are satisfied Mr B gave the Council reason to believe that he **may** have a priority need.
38. Based on the evidence we have seen, we consider the Council applied too high a threshold for interim accommodation and, as a result, failed to realise it should have considered this in Mr B's case. The failure to properly consider whether it owed Mr B the interim accommodation duty was fault.
39. Had the Council properly considered the interim accommodation test, it would likely have decided that Mr B met that test taking into account:
 - what Mr B told the Council;
 - that the Council had asked Mr B for more information about his health conditions; and
 - that the threshold for interim accommodation is low.
40. Therefore, the Council should have offered Mr B interim accommodation while it was fully considering his homelessness application.
41. This duty should have started when Mr B first disclosed the details of his health conditions to the Council. It would have ended when the Council decided it no longer owed Mr B further duties at the end of February 2024. Therefore, we are satisfied Mr B missed out on suitable accommodation for around two and a half months. Since Mr B was living in his car for that time and was, essentially, street homeless, we consider that injustice was significant.

Support during the relief period

42. Mr B had the right to appeal the steps the Council was to take to support him in finding accommodation. However, the Council should have told Mr B in its decision accepting the relief duty, how to ask for a review and the time scale for doing so. The Council's letter did not contain that information, just a reference to Mr B having an appeal right.
43. The Council's letter accepting the relief duty did not comply with the requirements for homelessness decision letters. The lack of information in that letter about how to ask for a review was, in our view, good reason that Mr B did not use his review and appeal right. Therefore, we can consider how the Council decided what support to provide Mr B under the relief duty.
44. The Council's assessment and housing plan for Mr B should have taken into account Mr B's concerns about affordability of accommodation. While the Council signposted Mr B to information about benefit entitlement, it did not provide any advice or information about its rent deposit or guarantee schemes. The Council only offered to refer Mr B to an organisation which could help with these services after it decided it no longer owed him the relief duty.
45. We are not satisfied the Council properly assessed Mr B's needs for support, or what it should reasonably do to support him, as required by the law and guidance. That was fault.
46. However, that fault did not cause Mr B an injustice. Under the relief duty, the Council did not have a responsibility to provide Mr B with long-term accommodation. It only had the duty to help him find and access his own

accommodation. Although Mr B wanted more secure accommodation than was available to him privately, this did not mean the Council needed to provide this. When the Council later referred Mr B to the service which supports street homeless people, Mr B did not engage with them. There is no evidence to suggest Mr B would have done so if the Council had referred him during the relief duty period.

Priority need decision

47. The law requires councils to make a clear decision about the duties it owes to a homeless applicant. While the Council told Mr B it had decided he did not have priority need, it did not decide about whether it would owe him further duties after the end of the relief duty.
48. The law also says someone can appeal a decision about the duties a council owes them, but not just about whether they have a priority need. Because the Council failed to notify Mr B about its decision it did not owe him the main housing duty, Mr B did not know about his right to appeal. Therefore, we can consider how the Council made its decision about Mr B's priority need.
49. There was no fault in how the Council made its decision that Mr B did not have priority need. The Council considered all the medical and other evidence Mr B provided, and the correct law and guidance. It also explained those reasons to Mr B.
50. The decision about whether Mr B had a priority need was one for the Council to make. Since there was no fault in how the Council made its decision, we cannot question the outcome.
51. Although there was no fault in how the Council made its decision about priority need, the failure to decide whether it owed Mr B the main housing duty, or properly inform Mr B about its decision, was fault. However, this did not cause Mr B an injustice, since he later withdrew his request for the Council to review its decision.

Ending the relief duty

52. The Council should have sent Mr B a formal decision when the relief duty came to an end. It has provided no evidence it did so. The failure to send Mr B that formal decision was fault.
53. However, that did not cause Mr B an injustice, because:
 - Mr B knew the relief duty had ended; and
 - it is unlikely Mr B would have been successful in any challenge to the end of the relief duty.

Mr B's request for a review of the Council's decision

54. The evidence shows the Council told Mr B, by email, it had decided he did not have a priority need in late February 2024. Shortly afterwards, Mr B complained to the Council about its decision. In his complaint, he asked the Council for a review of its decision.
55. At the end of February 2024, the Council sent Mr B a formal decision that he did not have priority need.
56. In its response to our enquiries, the Council said Mr B did not ask for a review of its formal decision. However, Mr B made it clear in his complaint that he wanted the Council to review its decision. Although it received this before it issued the

formal decision, the Council should have considered Mr B's complaint as a request for a review of its formal decision.

57. However, an officer from the Council spoke to Mr B about his complaint in early March 2024. The officer explained how the Council decides homelessness applications, and noted Mr B said he no longer wished to continue with his complaint. It was not fault for the Council to rely on Mr B's statement that he no longer wished to continue with his complaint. There is also no evidence he told the Council he was expecting a response to his complaint or a review, despite having further contact with the Council about housing options later in 2024.

Housing register priority

58. We are satisfied the Council gave Mr B the correct priority under its housing allocation policy while it owed him the relief duty.
59. Once this duty ended, Mr B's priority should have been reduced to Band 3, as the Council had decided he did not have priority need. However, it did not do this until mid-2024.
60. When Mr B complained to the Council in the summer of 2024, it reviewed his housing priority and decided, at that time, that Mr B did not qualify for Band 2 on medical grounds. The Council invited Mr B to provide further medical evidence of the relationship between his health conditions and his housing situation.
61. However, Mr B did not provide that evidence until March 2025. The Council changed its decision about Mr B's housing priority based on that new evidence.
62. The delay between the Council's decisions in mid-2024 and March 2025 was not due to any fault on the part of the Council.

Conclusions

63. There was fault with how the Council failed to:
 - apply the correct test when deciding whether it needed to arrange interim accommodation for Mr B while it was assessing his homelessness application;
 - properly consider Mr B's barriers to accessing accommodation and what support the Council should provide during the relief period;
 - properly tell Mr B about his rights to ask for a review, or to appeal, the steps the Council was to take in his personalised housing plan;
 - decide, or tell Mr B about its decision, whether it owed Mr B the main housing duty after it decided he did not have a priority need; and
 - send Mr B a formal decision that the relief duty had ended.
64. These faults led to Mr B being without accommodation for around two and a half months during the first part of his homelessness application.

Recommendations

65. To remedy the injustice identified in this report we recommend the Council, within three months of the date of this report:
 - apologise to Mr B for the lack of accommodation and the distress this caused him in early 2024;
 - pay Mr B £875 to recognise the lack of that accommodation; and

- pay Mr B a further £300 to recognise the added distress caused by him being avoidably street homeless during that time.
- 66. To prevent similar fault and injustice in future, the Council should also, within three months of the date of this report:
 - remind its homelessness staff of the correct test and threshold for the interim accommodation duty, in particular that the threshold for this is a low one;
 - review its standard homelessness letters to ensure these comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 1996, in particular about explanations of review and appeal rights; and
 - remind its homelessness staff of the requirements for homelessness decisions, including when these should be made and what such decisions must contain.
- 67. We publish [guidance on remedies](#) which sets out our expectations for how organisations should apologise effectively to remedy injustice. The organisation should consider this guidance in making the apology we have recommended in our findings.
- 68. The Council must consider the report and confirm within three months the action it has taken or proposes to take. The Council should consider the report at its full Council, Cabinet or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members and we will require evidence of this. (Local Government Act 1974, section 31(2), as amended)

Decision

- 69. We have completed our investigation into this complaint. There was fault by the Council which caused injustice to Mr B. The Council should take the action identified in paragraphs 65 to 66 to remedy that injustice.

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 7 October 2025

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

Corporate Asset Management Strategy

Report Author

Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT

 g.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To review and adopt the Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030, ensuring the strategy is in accordance with SKDC current priorities and objectives.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve the adoption of the updated Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030

Decision Information

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

1. Implications

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

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Council's asset base is the largest value on the Council's balance sheet and is a significant annual cost both in terms of operational cost but also planned and responsive maintenance. It is important the Council has a clear and robust strategy in respect of the asset portfolio to ensure the assets are well maintained and managed in order to provide value for money and to minimise cost exposure. This is particularly important in a climate of rising costs and operational demands.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 It is good governance practice for a Local Authority to have an up to date Corporate Asset Management Strategy. No legal implications are identified in this report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The draft Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030 (AMS) was considered by the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23rd September 2025. The Committee recommended the Strategy to Cabinet without amendments. The AMS will provide update and replace the existing Asset Management Strategy 2022-2027, which previously included HRA assets, which no longer sit within the same directorate.
- 2.2 The AMS is a medium-term plan for optimising the value, performance, and utility of the Council's corporate property assets — whether owned, leased, or managed. It goes beyond day-to-day property management by aligning property decisions with broader corporate strategic aims, financial returns and sustainability targets.
- 2.3 The AMS sets the framework for managing the Council's property portfolio effectively over the next 5 years (2025 to 2030) and will guide future strategic property decisions to make sure the property portfolio is managed sustainably and

efficiently and so it can adapt to remain fit for the future and support frontline delivery.

- 2.4. The strategy is designed to align with the Council's Corporate Plan and strategies, policies, and services to support the residents of South Kesteven. It provides a framework for managing owned, tenanted and leased assets, ensuring they are fit for purpose despite financial constraints. The strategy focuses on optimal and flexible use, sustainable maintenance, and futureproofing to meet short, medium, and long-term needs.
- 2.5. This new Strategy comes at a critical time, as the Council is facing an uncertain financial future due to the expected changes in funding levels across all public authorities. The holding of assets carries a financial responsibility including acquisition, day-to-day running costs, maintenance, and operational expenses. Therefore, it is important to ensure the assets deliver maximum value for residents of the area and all stakeholders, by being strategically well managed and efficiently utilised.
- 2.6. By implementing the AMS, the aim is to optimise resource utilisation, reduce costs and promote sustainability, ensuring all assets support the Council's aims and ambitions whilst supporting the delivery of day-to-day services.
- 2.7. The AMS is structured in the following way:
 - Strategic Context
 - Key Asset Management Priorities
 - Achieving the Vision
 - Key Actions to be achieved over the life of the Strategy
- 2.8. The AMS sets out in further detail the key challenges in the context of the Council's asset base and operating environment, and places emphasis on the ongoing responsibility of the Council to ensure compliance with applicable health and safety responsibilities. It commits to an ongoing programme of regular costed building condition surveys to inform a proactive, planned maintenance programme and reduce the need for more expensive reactive repairs.
- 2.9. The AMS also commits to the Council maintaining its assets in a satisfactory condition, with assets classed as needing significant investment being appraised for such factors as location, utilisation, operating costs, fitness for purpose, accessibility, capacity, contribution to current service delivery and the property's ability to support future service delivery. This appraisal will allow a judgement to be taken to either dispose of the asset or what investment is required to achieve the desired standard.

- 2.10 The AMS is supported by the Asset Maintenance Strategy which has established a framework for allocating the annual maintenance budget to target the backlog maintenance that has built up across the corporate property asset portfolio.
- 2.11 Once approved, an action plan will be developed in order to monitor and track progress of the key actions set out in the AMS.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The adoption of the AMS will continue to strengthen the Council's management of its corporate portfolio, providing greater assurance that assets are safe and comply with statutory requirements, as well as creating the opportunity to improve the quality and value for money of the services they can deliver. The foundations of this process will require robust data and process, increased capacity and strong governance and decision-making.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Consideration has been given to not updating the existing strategy and relying on the existing outdated Asset Management Strategy 2022-2027. This option was considered inappropriate, as the existing Strategy outlined need for a mid-term review and there has been significant change since the strategies initial implementation. This may also result in a missed opportunity to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 4.2. Manage the portfolio on a purely responsive basis – this is not recommended as this tends to be more costly than a strategic approach to management of the portfolio and could impact on the delivery of services.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The reasons for the recommendation are set out in the report.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. The draft Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030 was considered by the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23rd September 2025. The Committee recommended the Strategy to Cabinet without amendments.

7. Appendices

- 7.1. Appendix A – Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030.

South Kesteven District Council

Corporate Asset Management Strategy

2025 - 2030



Executive Summary

South Kesteven District Council has responsibility for a large and diverse General Fund property portfolio valued at £75.86 million (April 2024) which are held for a variety of reasons including the delivery of operational services, investment assets and assets of cultural importance to our heritage-rich district.

The nature and extent of the portfolio is kept under review, to ensure it remains suited to its strategic and operational purpose and delivers value for money. As such, all decisions affecting property assets are considered within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and the portfolio is reviewed on an ongoing basis supported by external professional advice.

The Asset Management Strategy supports the Council's Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan to ensure that its assets are used in an effective and efficient manner. The scope of this Asset Management Strategy is in relation to General Fund assets only and therefore the Housing Revenue Account assets are not included.

The Council's vision for its property portfolio is:

“Utilising the Council’s assets to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan in a sustainable and socially responsible way.”

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Strategic Property Asset Management is the process which aligns business and property asset strategies, ensuring the optimisation of an organisation's property assets in a way which best supports its key business goals and objectives.

Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors: Public Sector Asset Management

1. Purpose

1.1 It is recognised good practice for local authorities to produce an Asset Management Strategy (AMS) setting out their broad objectives for the management, development, and rationalisation of their built and land asset base over a three to five-year period.

1.2 Asset management provides a structured process to ensure value for money in serving the needs of the organisation. Property assets are a resource commitment both in terms of the capital value and annual maintenance and running costs. They need to be carefully managed over their lives to ensure best value through their use, maintenance, and generation of income.

1.3 There are a range of benefits that can be derived from effective asset management including:

- a) Release of capital for re-investment;
- b) Efficient running costs;
- c) Delivery of carbon reduction;
- d) Income generation;
- e) Better public service provision by improved property and co-location of services;
- f) Property in good condition;
- g) Improved property utilisation and bringing together similar uses into the same property through rationalisation;
- h) Improved productivity, changes in corporate culture and facilitation of corporate change;
- i) Improved delivery of community objectives through the more effective use of property; and
- j) Effective strategic procurement.

1.4 The purpose of this Strategy is to set out the Council's approach to corporate asset management. It will:

- a) Provide all stakeholders with a Strategy that can support informed, transparent, and consistent decisions on property assets, acquisitions and disposals.
- b) Provide a clear and integrated strategic approach to the management and review of operational assets from which to deliver services
- c) Create a strategic framework for the delivery of the asset management function, including prioritisation of key

aims, outputs and outcomes.

- d) Support the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan by integrating capital planning with financial planning and achieving best value to maximise the use of assets.
- e) Demonstrate how the Council will deploy its assets to ensure that plans and programmes involving land and property complement and assist in the delivery of other corporate strategies and policies.

2. Scope

- 2.1** This Corporate AMS sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its corporate land and buildings, outlining how the assets support the Council's priorities. It also identifies the action required to develop these priorities further and contains proposals for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council's property portfolio.
- 2.2** This AMS does not include land, houses, buildings, and fixed assets associated with the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which is subject to a HRA Business Plan.

3. Strategic Context

The AMS can only be effective in the context of the Council's Corporate Plan, the current asset base and the financial operating environment.

3.1 South Kesteven District Council's Corporate Plan

The key to ensuring property assets deliver what is required for the Council, its residents and its partners is by ensuring the use and management of assets is linked to the Council's priorities and key strategies. The Asset Management Strategy was last reviewed in 2022 and since that time the Council has approved a new Corporate Plan so it is timely to update the Strategy to reflect the changes in the Council ambitions.

The new Corporate Plan has been developed to set out the Council's ambitions from 2024-27. This is the key document for providing the framework for the delivery of services to residents and businesses with the vision:

'to make South Kesteven A thriving District to live in, work and visit'.

The Corporate Plan is based on a golden thread. This is the thread that connects all work, at all levels of the organisation, directly to our overarching vision, priorities and ambitions.

Five priorities are highlighted in the Corporate Plan, based on an analysis of the current performance of South Kesteven both as a district and as a council, and emerging opportunities and challenges, these priorities are as follows:

Connecting Communities - To enhance the strength, wellbeing, security and capacity of all our communities for a thriving and cohesive society that all our residents are proud to belong to.

Sustainable South Kesteven - To meet the challenge of climate change and ensure a clean, green and healthy natural and built environment for present and future generations.

Enabling Economic Opportunities - To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities.

Housing - To ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations.

Effective Council - To deliver trusted, high quality and value-for-money services that fulfil the needs and expectations of all our residents.

Actions that will help the Council achieve its goals from a property perspective include:

- Invest in a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.
- Provide quality customer contact centres that enable residents to access Council services
- Ensure that our leisure facilities and arts venues are sustainable and meet future needs.
- Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities across the corporate estate, such as solar panels and EV chargers.
- Improve the energy efficiency of the corporate property estate and review further renewable energy opportunities
- Manage the construction of new strategic assets that ensures the property

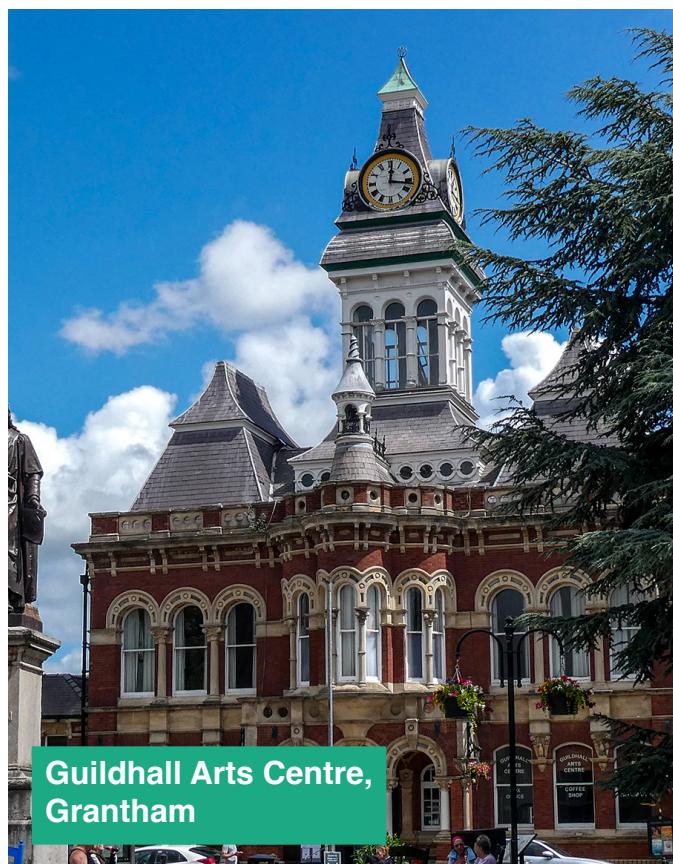
infrastructure can meet the needs of the growing District.

- Review and rationalise the Council's assets portfolio to ensure an optimal return for the Council.
- Develop and deliver Planned Maintenance Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

3.2 Overview of the current asset base

South Kesteven District Councils Assets range from Civic offices, operational sites (such as car parks, a depot, and leisure centres), retail and industrial units held as investments, and a mix of smaller land holdings (such as sub stations).

They are held on a mixture of tenures, freehold and leasehold. As such, the Council's responsibilities for maintenance and statutory compliance varies, dependent upon the terms of the lease.



3.3 Compliance

Good asset management ensures safe and compliant buildings. This involves:

- a) technical advice, coordination and management of activities;
- b) procurement, prioritisation, and management of budgets;
- c) centralised coordination of documentation,
- d) training, certificates and records; managing performance.

The basis of British health and safety law is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated supplementary Regulations and Codes of Practice. Section 3 of the Act imposes a clear duty on local authorities to conduct their undertakings in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of the public using premises.

The primary statutory instruments driving statutory compliance for property assets are:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Managing Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1999
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Building Regulations 2000 (as amended)
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health COSHH Regulations 2002 and Amendment 2003
- The Control of Asbestos Regulation 2012
- The Health and Safety Executive Approved Code of Practice (ACoP)

- Guidance on Legionnaires Disease, the Control of Bacteria in Water Systems L8.

3.4 Equalities

On 5 April 2011, the public sector Equality Duty (the equality duty) came into force. The Equality Duty was created by the Equality Act 2010. The broad purpose of the Equality Duty is to integrate consideration of equality into the day-to-day business of public authorities.

The Council promotes equality of opportunity across all its functions and is committed to long-term, continuous improvement. It is the responsibility of all officers and elected Members to implement the principles of equality and diversity.

In order to ensure ongoing compliance with the legislation, there will be a comprehensive DDA Survey and Accessibility Audit in respect of all buildings and correction action will be undertaken where necessary.

3.5 Asset Disposal

An Asset Disposal Methodology has been developed in order to ensure that assets are regularly reviewed and surplus assets are identified for disposal. This process ensures that the Council can generate capital receipts and can then be used for reinvesting in new capital schemes that support the Council's priorities.

The methodology for the disposal of Council property assets supports a range of purposes including direct delivery of services, revenue generation and supporting corporate plan objectives.

It is noted that the Council is required to be innovative in how its property assets will be utilised to stimulate economic growth activity, attract investment, and create income to support service delivery in keeping with the ambitions of the Corporate Plan 2024-2027.

The methodology for disposal sets out principles and processes that will ensure good governance and best value is achieved with regard to a programme of General Fund land and property disposals over the timescale of the Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. This includes:

- Identifying assets for disposal
- Asset valuation
- Disposal and methods of disposal
- Officer delegation
- Asset and land acquisition

This AMS is entirely consistent with the adopted methodology and in terms of asset disposals, the approved process will be followed.

For asset disposal, other than land and property, then the disposal of assets procedure as set out in the Council's Financial Regulations must be followed.



3.6 Financial context

The Council's General Fund property asset base has an estimated asset value for accounting purposes as at 31 March 2024 of £75.86 million overall; the Council's operational land and buildings were valued at £65.57m, assets under construction £5.09mm, surplus assets £0.19m and investment properties at £5.02m. These assets are held at current market value and are reviewed annually with the values reported in the latest statement of accounts.

The Council sets a three yearly capital programme that is reviewed and approved by Full Council on an annual basis. The programme is underpinned by the Capital Strategy which is also approved by Council each year. This includes details of both acquisitions and improvement works as well as any other expenditure that is accounted for as capital under legislation.

In addition, the capital programme is monitored and reviewed throughout the financial year to monitor delivery against the approved programme.

4. Key Asset Management Priorities

4.1 Data

Effect asset management requires clear and accessible data on the running costs, market value, condition, backlog maintenance, suitability assessments and future service needs in relation to the corporate property portfolio.

The Council accepts more detailed information is required in relation to a number of its assets. The AMS takes a strategic approach to resolve this which is set out with the Council's Corporate Property Maintenance Strategy.

The Council continues to ensure it holds all data on its assets providing assurance on the reporting and management of its assets.

4.2 Compliance

Ensuring the health and safety of residents, staff and others using the Council's assets is the main priority and therefore effective systems are in place to ensure this priority is met.

As part of the recently adopted Corporate Property Maintenance Strategy an electronic database has been introduced which acts as a central log for recording information in order to ensure accurate classification of assets and ensuring appropriate leases are in place will all contribute to reducing this exposure to risk.

It is also important that management of the asset portfolio ensures compliance with legal agreements and therefore minimises the council's exposure to risk because of environmental, social and economic factors.

To meet this challenge the aim is to ensure that all council-operated properties have comprehensive risk assessments for any necessary areas of statutory compliance, and where relevant an identified programme of recommended remedial works is agreed, this is then resourced.

The Council's portfolio of assets includes sites that are directly managed by a third party. Where an external organisation has operational control of premises it is essential that the Council understands and addresses the residual financial, legal and reputational risks that remain.

4.3 Property Maintenance Planning

Required Maintenance (also known as backlog maintenance) is the cost of bringing a building from its current state up to a condition that fully meets statutory and regulatory compliance obligations. Required Maintenance liabilities can only be established by regular costed building condition surveys.

Government approved rating system identifies the degree of urgency and level of importance attached to identified defects.

Urgent – Immediate work required to prevent immediate closure. Addresses a [potentially] serious failure of structure; breach of legislation and/or poses a general risk to health & safety.

Essential - work required [within 2 years] to prevent serious deterioration of fabric or building services or remedy minor breach of legislation or H&S and which can be managed until full maintenance effected.

Desirable - work required within 3 to 5 years which will prevent the deterioration of fabric or service and/or address low risk minor breaches (legislation and/or H&S).

Long term - work required beyond a five-year window.

The total of priority 1 to 3 works for each operational building provides a total required maintenance programme over the life of the Strategy. This prioritised assessment of required maintenance should inform both the revenue and capital budget setting process.

The aim is to ensure that the most urgent works are identified, with the highest priority being given to those elements in the worst condition in the most strategically important buildings. The Council faces a backlog with regard to its assets and in a fiscally constrained environment it needs to ensure the best use of resources, provide value for money and ensure that funding is properly prioritised.

Comprehensive building condition surveys have been carried out to inform decisions on capital and revenue expenditure on assets, their classification and their disposal.

Building condition can be characterised as:

- A (Good)
- B (Satisfactory)
- C (Poor)
- D (Bad)

The strategy target will be to achieve a **B3** (i.e. satisfactory condition / desirable works required within years 3 to 5) as the required status for all strategic properties, with investment being targeted accordingly.

In principle, properties assessed as either C (poor) or D (Bad) should have only essential work undertaken on them in order to maintain their operational capability, this effectively being critical health and safety works and work that would continue to keep the property 'wind and watertight', until the future of the

property has been reviewed. This is to avoid non-essential expenditure.

In addition to condition and maintenance data, other factors need to be considered such as location, utilisation, operating costs, fitness for purpose, accessibility, capacity, contribution to current service delivery and the property's ability to support future service delivery.

A building in poor condition may still represent a suitable building, so a decision made based on either condition or suitability in isolation may not sufficient information. It may sometimes be beneficial to undertake a more in-depth condition survey before any key estate rationalisation decisions are taken.

4.4 Risk Management

Risk identification and mitigation are embedded in the Council's approach to operational and strategic management and is integrated into formal reports and decisions considered by Cabinet and Council. In this context, risk arises out of uncertainties about future events and their associated consequences, and in the likelihood of an event occurring that will have an impact on the ability to deliver operational and strategic objectives incorporated within the AMS.

It is important that risk is identified and managed as part of the asset management process. There are different risks associated with the various stages of a project and property lifecycle. Individual risks will be identified, monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.



New depot at Turnpike Close, Grantham

The Asset Maintenance Strategy identifies risk associated with maintenance and how it will be managed in the following order of priority;

- Assets that require immediate maintenance to prevent injury and/or financial loss.
- Maintenance in respect of H&S issues.
- Statutory maintenance requirements; security, fire, gas, electrical and water.
- Structural maintenance and structural integrity including building fabric.
- Elements within the curtilage of any facility for which the Authority has responsibility.
- Maintenance of unoccupied assets identified for disposal; demolition or other purpose.

4.5 Corporate Property Team

The Corporate Property Team has overall responsibility to centrally manage all corporate land and building assets, with service departments making use of them for operational purposes as internal tenants.

In accordance with the aims of the Asset Management Strategy, the Corporate Property Team will:

- Manage the Council's Corporate property portfolio.
- Project manage planned and responsive maintenance works across the property portfolio.
- Provide a stable, fully integrated property service, with high levels of customer care and clear roles and responsibilities around the landlord/tenant relationship.
- Provide, manage and maintain good quality facilities for the district's residents and staff, improving customer confidence and satisfaction.
- Take the lead role on safety and statutory compliance within buildings. Effectively manage all property related risks.
- Optimise available resources, including personnel, spatial management and innovation through value for money projects.
- Provide accurate and relevant data around buildings and business performance to inform stakeholders.

- Ensure best value through prioritisation of maintenance spend, backed by effective procurement arrangements.

The adoption of this approach will ensure that buildings are viewed as a corporate resource. It will contribute to the optimisation of occupancy levels, improve suitability and condition, identify future investment needs, improve efficiency, reduce carbon emissions/generate energy savings, ensure compliance with leases and ensure internal and external occupational agreements are in place.

4. Achieving the Vision

Overview

The Council has gained considerable momentum in its drive to make South Kesteven the best district in which to live, work and to visit.

The AMS documents the way in which the Council will achieve its corporate asset vision of using Corporate Assets to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan in a socially responsible and sustainable way.

Strengthening the management of assets is an important priority for the Council, providing greater assurance that they are safe and comply with statutory requirements as well as creating the opportunity to improve the quality and value for money of the service they can deliver.

The foundations of this process will require robust data and process, increased capacity and strong governance and decision-making. The Council continues to face budget pressures and therefore must consider a range of options to reduce the cost of maintaining, repairing and operating its property portfolio.

This will include a more commercial approach to asset management, increasing income generation and new types of income including energy generation, requiring a more focused and strategic approach across the council's assets.

This section sets out the key actions for supporting the delivery of the AMS and these cover a wide range of activities. These will be carried out during the period of the AMS to ensure the objectives are met.

5.1 Key Action One - Service Planning and Asset Appraisal

A key purpose of holding operational property is to facilitate and support service delivery; it is intended throughout the course of this AMS to review all corporate property assets in that context.

This will be undertaken on an asset-by-asset basis and challenge the need to retain the current portfolio. Each review will have proper regard to the Corporate Plan - service and financial efficiency will be key considerations, but there will be consideration of property aspects such as running costs, maintenance backlog and potential capital receipts. The principal objective is to ensure the portfolio is fit for purpose and agile in responding to changing service requirements.

The process, however, will include a presumption that where a service property can be declared surplus, it will be released for disposal in order that capital and revenue can be released for reinvestment in other policy priorities. A review process has progressed well to date, but it is envisaged that conducting the review rigorously will take the duration of this AMS to complete.

Although it is too soon to draw conclusions, it is clear that:

- a) Access to appropriate premises is critical for service delivery. The extent, nature and location of service premises must be kept under review, through active service planning.
- b) The current portfolio presents an affordability challenge in the medium to long term.
- c) Potentially, the maintenance backlog will not be eliminated by the level of resources currently.
- d) A managed approach to prioritisation will be required, while the size of the portfolio is reduced.
- e) There is opportunity to release capital and revenue resources by disposing of surplus assets. This resource will become available for reinvestment by the Council, in line with its policy priorities.
- f) A suite of asset specific indicators will be developed and implemented to
- g) focus on asset performance and will consider running costs, building condition, energy efficiency and utilisation. These indicators will help to inform decisions on future use and asset rationalisation.

5.2 Key Action Two – Asset Information

Robust, accurate and up to date information is at the heart of effective decision-making on assets.

The Council has reviewed and implemented a new Asset Management system which holds the Corporate Property information.

This enables the Council to centrally hold and record all the relevant information for each of the assets it has responsibility for. It also enables the Council to:

- a) Maintain a complete and accurate property asset register.
- b) Support the continuous management and maintenance of the property asset base.
- c) Satisfy statutory and other reporting and compliance requirements.
- d) Implement performance reviews across the asset portfolio.
- e) Review property assets, appraisals, decision-making and planning with accuracy and timelines.
- f) Provide a single corporate resource for managing assets.

5.3 Key Action Three – Compliance

As noted above, the Council places upmost importance on the safety of its corporate assets.

It will ensure that the following statutory responsibilities are met, and can be demonstrated through the information held on each asset:

- a) Fire Risk Assessment and action plan
- b) Asbestos policy and management plan
- c) Water Hygiene plan
- d) Radon Risk Assessment and action plan
- e) Gas servicing and certification

- f) Electrical certification and remedial actions
- g) Lift servicing
- h) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- i) Equality Act 2010 access to buildings and services

Additionally, regular compliance inspections are required to be undertaken by service areas who are, in effect, internal tenants. The Corporate Property and Facilities teams has ensured all operational locations that are used by the Council has an assigned and fully trained Property Responsible Persons (PRP) in order to ensure compliance is up to date or where action is required reported to the Corporate Property Team.

The Council will also make clear and take reasonable steps to ensure leaseholders are honouring their health and safety responsibilities, as defined in the terms and conditions of their lease.

5.4 Key Action Four – Maintenance and Investment

Effective day-to-day maintenance, planned in the context of the assets long-term benefit to the Council, is an essential attribute of a good landlord.

Over the period of the AMS, the Council will:

- a) Implement a regular building condition survey regime.
- b) Produce a three-year capital programme.
- c) Identify, prioritise and clear any maintenance backlog.

- d) Rationalise and review maintenance, repair and operating budgets.

Maintenance Strategy Link:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s43308/Appendix%20A%20-%20SKDC%20Corporate%20Property%20Maintenance%20Strategy%202024.pdf>



5.5 Key Action Five – Delivery of Major Projects

The Council undertakes a number of major capital asset related projects in accordance with the approved Capital Programme. These projects are consistent with the aims and vision of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Asset Management Strategy.

All projects that are approved are delivered using the Council adopted project management plans. This includes

a robust governance structure, clear lines of responsibility and decision making. This ensures, wherever possible, projects are delivered on time and on budget.

5.6 Key Action Six – Regeneration

The Council has a strong track-record of promoting investment in the district, including regeneration. We will continue to act in this place-shaping role within the district and region, in the following means:

- a) With existing assets, the potential for future strategic regeneration and/or redevelopment purposes will be considered as part of our Service Planning and Asset Appraisal (Key Action One).
- b) Land and property interests will be considered for acquisition if the acquisition of the interest has potential for future strategic regeneration and/or redevelopment or contributes to wider corporate objectives and appropriate funding has been identified.

5.7 Key Action Seven - Equalities

We will ensure that all actions undertaken through the AMS support the Council's Equality Policy. In the delivery of projects, we will ensure that Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken and support the direction of the project.

5.8 Key Action Eight - Investment Portfolio

The Council's property portfolio not utilised for direct service delivery is owned for two purposes, to provide revenue income, and to influence future development opportunities.

The revenue income of non-operational assets will be monitored by the Section 151 Officer to ensure it provides a satisfactory financial return on the capital invested. Rents will be kept under review, in accordance with provisions of the agreements and the wider property market. Where the revenue return is not satisfactory, assets will be considered for sale to release capital for reinvestment.

In any review of non-operational assets, the potential to facilitate future development opportunities or regeneration will be considered.

5.9 Key Action Nine - Working with Partners

The Council is an active member of the One Public Estate programme, working closely with other Public Sector organisations across the district to explore opportunities to reduce premise related costs and make assets work more efficiently for both communities and customers.

The Council remains committed to this approach, in line with the following principles:

- a) Supporting service integration, joint working and/or co-location
- b) Rationalising public assets
- c) Reducing revenue costs associated with assets that are held base to make it cost effective for the public sector
- d) Release of redundant public assets for future use and investment, including the delivery of new housing.



5.10 Key Action Ten – Energy Efficiency

South Kesteven District Council has declared a Climate Emergency recognising that this is one of the biggest issues affecting the district, the country, and the world.

It is the Council's ambition to continue to go further to tackle the climate emergency, putting the environment at the heart of everything we do.

Investment opportunities that allow us to positively respond to the climate emergency will be welcomed. The Council will not make investments in its assets that do not match its commitment to meeting Carbon Net Zero. This will be measured by identifying whether every investment we make can achieve Net Zero in its operation by 2050.

The Council will seek to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions by

applying infrastructure upgrades during refurbishments, construction projects or building improvements.

This will be measured in the following way:

- a) Improvement in ECP rating
- b) Reduction in utility and energy usage
- c) Reduction in carbon emissions

5.11 Key Action Eleven – Value for Money

All service and utility contracts will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to provide value for money.

All service and utility contracts will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to provide value for money and procured in line with SKDC's Contract Procurement Procedure rules.

Value for money is measured by evaluating the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the resources used in contracting activities. Aspects considered are:

Efficiency: This encompasses assessing how well resources are utilized to achieve the desired outcomes. It includes evaluating the processes and procedures in place to ensure that resources are not wasted and that the best possible results are achieved with the least amount of input.

Effectiveness: This measures the extent to which the contracting activities achieve their intended objectives. It involves evaluating the quality and impact of the good, services, or works delivered, and ensuring that they meet the Council's requirements and standards.

Economy: This focuses on minimizing the cost of resources while maintaining the desired level of quality. It involves comparing costs and ensuring that the Council gets the best possible price for the goods, services, or works procured.

Compliance: Ensuring that all contracting activities adhere to legal, statutory, and Council policy requirements is crucial. This helps in mitigate against any legal issues and ensures that the contracting process is transparent and fair.

Risk Management: Identifying and mitigating risks associated with contracting activities is essential for ensuring value for money. This includes assessing potential risks and implementing measures to minimize their impact on the Council's resources. eg

ensuring lease terms are most beneficial to the Council and mitigate against any potential unforeseen financial exposure.

By considering these aspects, officers can ensure that contracting activities provide value for money and that the Council's resources are used efficiently and effectively. Local authorities are required to consider how economic, social, and environmental wellbeing may be improved by services that are to be procured, and how procurement may secure those improvements under the provisions of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

Social Value and Sustainability refers to approaches which maximise the additional benefits that can be created through the delivery, and procurement of goods and services, above and beyond those directly related to those goods and services themselves.

Measures will be integrated into contracts where necessary to provide Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for suppliers to report and be benchmarked against within their performance.

Contact details

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

South Kesteven District Council



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7 October 2025

Report of the Chief Executive

Cabinet Forward Plan

Report Author

Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer

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Purpose of Report

This report highlights matters on the Cabinet's Forward Plan.

Recommendations

That Cabinet notes the content of this report.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision? No

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

Which wards are impacted? All

1. Cabinet's Forward Plan

- 1.1** The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the minimum requirements for publicity in connection with Key Decisions. The Council meets these legislative requirements through the monthly publication of its Forward Plan.
- 1.2** Cabinet may also receive reports on which it is asked to make recommendations to Council or review the contents and take necessary action. These items are also listed on the Forward Plan.
- 1.3** Non-Key Decisions made by Cabinet are also included within the Forward Plan.

2. Appendices

2.1 Appendix A – Cabinet's Forward Plan



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Notice of decisions to be made by Cabinet **29 September 2025 to 28 September 2026**

At its meetings, the Cabinet may make Key Decisions and Non-Key Decisions. It may also make recommendations to Council on matters relating to the Council's budget or its policy framework.

A Key Decision is a Cabinet decision that is likely:

1. To result in the District Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the District Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (for these purposes, South Kesteven District Council has agreed £200,000 as the threshold at which a decision will be considered significant); or
2. To be significant in terms of its effects on communities that live or work in an area comprising two or more wards.

The Forward Plan

The Cabinet Forward Plan is a rolling, 12-month plan that will be updated on a regular basis. It includes those Key Decisions and Non-Key Decisions that are scheduled to be considered by Cabinet during the plan period.

Notice of future Cabinet decisions and recommendations to Council

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Findings Report – Non Key Decision			
To consider the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Findings Report which provides details of a complaints raised about the Council which was upheld and fault and injustice was found.	7 Oct 2025	To consider the findings.	Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran) Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer) E-mail: A.Hall-Wright@southkesteven.gov.uk
Contract Award for Caged Vehicle Procurement - Key Decision			
This report seeks approval to award contracts for the procurement of various vehicles including caged vehicles and sweepers.	7 Oct 2025	That Council approve the award of the contracts.	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste (Councillor Rhys Baker) Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services E-mail: kayleigh.boasman@southkesteven.gov.uk
Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2028 - Key Decision			
To present the Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2028 to Cabinet for recommendation to Council	7 Oct 2025	Recommendation to Council	Cabinet Member for People & Communities Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community) E-mail: claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Corporate Asset Management Strategy Review - Key Decision			
To review and update the Corporate asset Management Strategy 2022-2027, ensuring the strategy is in accordance with SKDC current priorities and objectives.	7 Oct 2025	To consider adopting the updated Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2022-2027 (as amended Sept 2025)	Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement (Councillor Richard Cleaver) Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT E-mail: g.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk
ICT Strategy and Cyber Security Strategy - Non Key Decision			
To approve the update ICT Strategy and to approve the new Cyber Security Strategy	7 Oct 2025	Approval for publication of new strategies	Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement (Councillor Richard Cleaver) Gary Andrew, IT Services Manager E-mail: g.andrew@Southkesteven.gov.uk
Mobility Vehicle Policy - Non Key Decision			
To present the Mobility Vehicle Policy to Cabinet having been recommended by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on 17 March 2025.	4 Nov 2025	To consider agreeing the Policy.	Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran) Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer) E-mail: A.Hall-Wright@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Housing Strategy - Key Decision			
1. Notes the content of the report, the proposed Housing Strategy, consultation responses and Equality Impact Assessment. 2. To seek approval for the Housing Strategy from Cabinet. 3. Cabinet delegates to the Director of Housing and Property authority to make minor amendments to the Housing Strategy, as needed by changes to regulation or legislation.	4 Nov 2025	To consider approving the Strategy.	Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran) Celia Bown, Senior Housing and Policy Strategy Officer E-mail: c.bown@southkesteven.gov.uk
Repairs and Voids Materials Contract - Key Decision			
To seek approval to enter into a new contract with a supplier of materials for our internal works teams.	4 Nov 2025	To seek approval to enter into a new contract with a supplier of materials for our internal works teams.	Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran) Mark Rogers, Head of Service (Technical Services) E-mail: mark.rogers@southkesteven.gov.uk
Facilities Management Contract - Key Decision			
To obtain authority to enter in to the recently tendered Facilities Management Contract for SKDC's Corporate Assets.	4 Nov 2025	To provide authority to enter in to the recently tendered Facilities Management Contract for SKDC's Corporate Assets.	Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement (Councillor Richard Cleaver) Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT E-mail: g.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Local Government Reorganisation - Key Decision			
To consider the final LGR proposal for submission to government.	24 Nov 2025	To approve the LGR proposal, as appended to this report, for submission to government by 28 November 2025.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) Charles James, Policy Officer E-mail: charles.james@southkesteven.gov.uk
Finance Update Report – April to September 2025 - Key Decision			
To present the Council's year end forecast for the financial year 2024/25 as at the end of September. The report covers the General Fund Revenue Budget, the Housing Revenue Account Budget, and the Capital Programmes for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	2 Dec 2025	Cabinet would be asked to note the update.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer E-mail: david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk
Discretionary Council Tax Payment Policy 2026/27 - Non Key Decision			
To provide an update on Discretionary Council Tax Payment (DCTP) expenditure and requests Cabinet approves the policy for 2026/27.	2 Dec 2025	To consider approving the Policy.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community) E-mail: claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Discretionary Housing Payment Policy 2026/27 - Non Key Decision			
To provide an update on Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) expenditure and requests Cabinet to approve the policy for 2026/27.	2 Dec 2025	To consider approving the Policy.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community) E-mail: claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk
Council Tax Base 2026/27 - Key Decision			
To explain the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 in accordance with relevant statutory requirements	2 Dec 2025	To consider recommending to Council	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community) E-mail: claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk
Lease to Grantham Town Football Club - Non Key Decision			
The granting of a lease and delegation of authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure to enter into it	2 Dec 2025	To consider entering into a lease.	Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture (Councillor Paul Stokes) Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place E-mail: karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Budget Report for 2026/2027 including Indicative Budgets for 2027/2028 and 2028/2029 - Key Decision			
To present the Budget report.	15 Jan 2026 10 Feb 2026	To present the Budget report at a number of committees in the lead up to the Budget Council in February 2026.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer E-mail: r.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk
Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 - Key Decision			
This report reviews the responses to the public consultation of the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27, along with the recommendations from the meeting of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee which took place on 18 November 2025.	15 Jan 2026	To consider recommending to Council.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community) E-mail: claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk
Fees and Charges Proposals 2026/27 - Key Decision			
To set out the Fees and Charges to be introduced for the financial year 2026/27	15 Jan 2026	Cabinet is asked to Recommend to Council the Fees and Charges for 2026/27	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter) David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer E-mail: david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
Finance Update Report – April to December 2025 - Key Decision			
To present the Council's year end forecast for the financial year 2025/26 as at the end of December. The report covers the General Fund Revenue Budget, the Housing Revenue Account Budget, and the Capital Programmes for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	10 Feb 2026	To review and note the report.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer</p> <p>E-mail: david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>