

# Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

Thursday, 11 December 2025 at 10.00 am  
Council Chamber - Council Offices,  
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

**Committee** Councillor Murray Turner (Chairman)  
**Members:** Councillor Barry Dobson (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Matthew Bailey, Councillor Emma Baker, Councillor James Denniston,  
Councillor Gareth Knight, Councillor Robert Leadenhams, Councillor Chris Noon and  
Councillor Rhea Raysia

## Agenda

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

- 1. Public Speaking**  
The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting via [democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk)
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Disclosure of Interests**  
Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.
- 4. Minutes from the meeting held on 14 October 2025** (Pages 3 - 14)
- 5. Updates from the previous meeting** (Page 15)

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

6. **Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
7. **Corporate Plan 2024-27: Key Performance Indicators Report - Mid-Year (Q2) 2025/26** (Pages 17 - 28)  
To present the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within the purview of this Committee for Quarter Two 2025/26.
8. **LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report - Quarter 2 2025/26** (Pages 29 - 37)  
To provide an update to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd during quarter 2 in financial year 2025/26 against the leisure management contract objectives.
9. **LeisureSK Ltd Finance and Operational Performance Update - Quarter 2 2025/26** (Pages 39 - 45)
10. **LeisureSK Ltd Annual Budget and Business Plan 2026/27** (To Follow)
11. **Overview and Effectivness of the approach and outcomes of Thatcher Fest, celebrating Thatcher's 100th birthday** (Pages 47 - 54)  
To consider the effectiveness of the collaborative approach to 'Thatcher Fest' and the opportunities this presents for future events.
12. **Work Programme 2025/26** (Pages 55 - 57)
13. **Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

## Minutes

### Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
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COUNCIL

Tuesday, 14 October 2025, 10.00 am

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

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#### Committee Members present

Councillor Murray Turner (Chairman)  
Councillor Barry Dobson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Matthew Bailey  
Councillor Emma Baker  
Councillor Gareth Knight  
Councillor Robert Leadenhams  
Councillor Chris Noon  
Councillor Rhea Raysia  
Councillor Tim Harrison

#### Cabinet Members present

Councillor Ashley Baxter (Leader of the Council)  
Councillor Paul Stokes (Deputy Leader of the Council)

#### Officers

David Scott (Assistant Director of Finance, Deputy S151 Officer)  
Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director of Culture, Leisure and Place)  
James Welbourn (Democratic Services Manager)  
Michael Chester (Team Leader – Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces)  
Beth Goodman (Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead)  
Luke Ingham (Senior Parks and Cemetery Officer)  
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

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#### 17. Public Speaking

##### **Sam Roddan, Founder & CEO of Art Pop-Up statement in relation to Cultural Strategy (6 monthly update)**

*'Chair, councillors, officers, and members of the public, thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm Sam Roddan, representing Art Pop-Up, a South Kesteven-based non-profit community arts organisation'*

*that has been delivering high-quality, inclusive cultural programmes across the district for more than 14 years.*

*With regard to the update on the cultural strategy delivery submitted for today's meeting, we strongly welcome the Council's ambition to strengthen arts and culture through increased community engagement.*

*The objectives outlined - expanding access, supporting underserved communities and building partnerships - align closely with the work Art Pop-Up has been leading since 2011.*

*Before and through the pandemic we enjoyed a really positive working relationship with the SKDC arts team, collaborating on several projects. We would very much like to rebuild that partnership. There is clear potential for shared learning, joint delivery and strategic collaboration so that resources can reach further, particularly in communities experiencing barriers or with limited access to cultural activity.*

*Art Pop-Up is the only publicly funded non-profit community arts organisation in the district. Our work is multi-award-winning, including amongst others two SKDC awards, and despite our micro size we have been selected by the renowned international Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation as one of the UK's top ten arts organisations for civic impact.*

*Since 2011, we have delivered over 50 major community engagement projects, valued at nearly £1m in total, involving over 150,000 local participants, commissioning more than 200 freelance creative practitioners, and collaborating with 40+ local partners and organisations. Each year we deliver over 230 sessions and 5 major events, all free to access. Our work has spanned festivals, outdoor arts, exhibitions, community and public art, families, children and youth engagement, radically inclusive outreach and wellbeing programmes.*

*Our reach is strongest in Stamford and surrounding villages, but also extends to Bourne and the Deepings with some previous projects in Grantham, always shaped by local needs. For example, we lead the NHS ICB-funded Creativity for Wellbeing programme and the Cheer Club outreach programme, improving mental health, reducing isolation and building community connections in partnership with MindSpace, health colleagues, local care homes, schools, churches foodbanks and other VCFSE partners. These relationships ensure our work is inclusive, strategically co-created and reaches those who are least represented in cultural life.*

*This winter, Art Pop-Up is transitioning to charity status, a key step in our long-term sustainability plan to grow, expand delivery and deepen partnerships. However, this is happening in a tightening funding landscape alongside local government reorganisation, which makes collaboration and shared planning all the more important.*

*The Council's own Corporate Plan highlights the value of partnership working. We met previously with Paul Stokes and Jade Porter in June 2024 as an introduction and whilst we appreciate capacity is limited, that's exactly where collaboration can help. Art Pop-Up has the expertise, local trust, and framework to complement SKDC's focus on venues. In fact, the goals of the proposed Events Officer role closely mirror the work we already deliver in the district—inclusive, community-focused, partnership-based cultural engagement. By working together, we could achieve these outcomes more effectively and sustainably, directing budget to delivery on the ground and making best use of existing expertise. In the past we even co-hosted the cultural working group with SKDC and the Town Council, we would welcome the opportunity to re-establish an embedded partnership that supports shared cultural aims.*

*In short, Art Pop-Up already delivers many of the outcomes the Council seeks—high-quality, inclusive, community-focused engagement in line with the Cultural Strategy and Corporate Plan. We would welcome the chance to collaborate with the Council in shaping and strengthening cultural delivery across the district, drawing on our proven expertise, networks and trusted relationships within local communities.*

*Thank you.'*

## **18. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Phillip Knowles and James Denniston.

Councillor Tim Harrison substituted for Councillor James Denniston.

## **19. Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

## **20. Minutes from the meeting held on 15 July 2025**

Minutes from the meeting held on 15 July 2025 were proposed, seconded and **AGREED** as an accurate record.

## **21. Minutes from the Extraordinary meeting held on 28 August 2025**

Minutes from the Extraordinary meeting held on 28 August 2025 were proposed, seconded and **AGREED** as an accurate record.

## **22. Updates from the previous meeting**

All actions were completed.

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

The Leader of the Council provided an update on 'Thatcher Fest', which included news coverage, school engagement, theatre productions, music events and art exhibitions.

The Deputy Leader of the Council acknowledged a Diwali event that had taken place in Grantham marketplace and was very successful. Alongside 47 stalls from the ordinary market with the inclusion of craft stalls. Staff, groups involved, and Ward Members were thanked for their efforts and hard work for the event.

**24. Play Area Strategy Update**

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report on the play area strategy action plan, which had previously been endorsed by the Committee in September 2024.

The provision of high quality play areas supports the Council's corporate ambitions and provides opportunities for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities, particularly in relation to children and young people.

Over the past year, significant work had been undertaken by Officers to ensure that the actions within the plan have been completed through available budgets and additional grant funding.

A total of 15 actions were completed in full, with 3 actions in progress or ongoing. Some of the completed improvements were presented within appendix 2 of the report.

Further work had since been undertaken to review the findings of the play equipment inspections and these had aided a revised action plan in appendix 3 of the report.

One Member commended the work completed on a play area in Bourne and thanked all Officers involved.

It was queried whether accessible equipment and paths would be explored for particular play areas.

The Team Leader – Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces confirmed accessibility and inclusive equipment was explored prior to play area refurbishments

In relation to Bourne play area, the Council had a lease for the play area part, however, the surrounding grassed area was the responsibility of Bourne United Charities. The accessibility of the path would be discussed with them.

One Member highlighted that Denton play area was due to open on 8 December 2025 and was fully funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

**The Committee:**

- 1. Noted the significant work undertaken over the past 12 months in delivering the Action Plan and the improvements made to the Council's play areas.**
- 2. Agreed to receive a further update detailing the progress made against the actions identified in 12 months' time.**

**25. Grantham Parks Update**

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report that provided members with information relating to each of the three main parks, Wyndham, Queen Elizabeth and Dysart.

Each park offered something different to communities and visitors to the town whilst championing the District in being clean, green and a healthy environment for future generations, as well as providing multiple benefits for residents' health and wellbeing.

In July 2025, the Council was notified that each of the three parks successfully retained their accredited Green Flag Awards, which recognised well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for publicly accessible parks and green spaces in the United Kingdom and around the world.

There had been a variety of events held across each of the parks during the current calendar year by the Council, charities and voluntary groups.

In addition, there are a range of regular activities taking place, free of charge at the Wyndham Park Visitor Centre, overseen by the Council's own group of volunteers.

Following consultation with local residents and stakeholders for each of the parks, there had been several improvements made to both Wyndham and Dysart parks, which could be seen in part D of the report.

Since the opening of the dog exercise paddock and wildflower meadow in July 2025, an application had been made to the 'Green Flag Best of the Best' award 2025 in recognition of the project.

The Council recognised the outstanding work of volunteers that provide their time and expertise within the parks. On 19 August 2025, the Council hosted a celebratory afternoon tea in Wyndham Park which recognised all the hard work and efforts of volunteers and Officers involved in maintaining the parks.

It was noted that the report stated Dysart Park being the 'forgotten' park out of the three. It was argued that Queen Elizabeth Park was forgotten and over the last five years had received very little funding and events. It was requested whether enhancements and funding opportunities could be explored for Queen Elizabeth Park.

The Team Leader – Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces confirmed the team would explore event options for Queen Elizabeth Park.

One Member noted that Dysart Park had lost a lot of amenities over the years (swimming pool, cricket fields and bowling greens).

Members recognised the hard work and efforts ongoing in the parks, particularly in keeping them well maintained and more welcoming for the community.

A query was raised on whether a long term strategy vision for the parks had been produced.

Officers had produced a park management and maintenance plan that covered a five-year period and was updated and reviewed on an annual basis.

**ACTION: For the park management and maintenance plan to be shared with the Committee.**

**The Committee noted the contents of the report**

## **26. Cultural Strategy 6 monthly Update**

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report that provided a six-monthly update on the implementation of South Kesteven's Cultural Strategy 2023-25.

Since its adoption in July 2023, the strategy continued to guide the Council's work in delivering high quality cultural opportunities and strengthening community engagement across the District.

The update highlighted progress which included the continued success of the 'Pay it Forward' scheme, which had raised over £13,000 to expand access to arts and cultural experiences for those who may otherwise face barriers.

It also reflected the breadth of outreach activity delivered during 2025 from rural touring, free family fun days and music in quiet places.

The report further outlined developments in marketing, the growing reach of the venues and innovative partnership approaches, such as the collaborative approach towards 'Thatcher Fest'.

The report provided updates on major cultural programming improvements, facilities and a new event officer role. It demonstrated the Council's ongoing commitment in

supporting inclusive, accessible and sustainable cultural services that enrich local communities.

One Member noted the 'Into Film Festival' was free for schools to access. A query was raised on how this information was being passed onto schools.

**ACTION: For the Arts and Cultural Services Manager to provide the Committee with information on how information on the 'Into Film Festival' is passed onto schools.**

It was discussed how the Council could promote the strategy within smaller rural areas.

The Assistant Director of Culture, Leisure and Place outlined the rural touring scheme which provided high quality events in rural areas. A budget bid was being put forward for resources to deliver events across the District.

The Committee thanked all Officers involved in improving arts and cultural services.

It was noted that Stamford Arts Centre had an increase of 20% per year on ticket sales. However, the Guildhall Arts Centre had dropped 4% on ticket sales over the year, Members queried the reasoning behind the decrease.

The Council provide an artistic programme for the Guildhall Arts Centre and were also reliant on community hires. The programming officer employed at the Council that focused on Stamford and Grantham arts centres. The decrease in ticket sales was due to the number of events being held having been reduced.

**The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- 1. Noted the information provided and offered suggestions on any additional information required for future updates in relation to the implementation of the Council's Cultural Strategy.**
  - 2. Agreed to receive a report at the next meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 'Thatcher Fest' including the costs incurred.**
- 27. Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021 - 2026) – October 2025 Update**

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report that provided an update on the progress of the strategy.

To underpin one of its Corporate priorities, the Council was delivering on the sport and physical activity and the action plan which was adopted in 2021.

The Leisure team was responsible for targeting key areas and working with partners to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to live healthily and have active lifestyles.

The information within the report detailed the activities that had taken place since April 2025, including physical activity initiatives for Council employees.

The current strategy was dated 2021-26 and was therefore due to be reviewed.

The report detailed the steps being taken to refresh the strategy. Additionally, planning, preparations and promotion was well underway for Health and Wellness Day being held on Saturday 1 November 2025 at Grantham Meres leisure centre.

The event would give residents the opportunity to discover local organisations that support health, movement and wellbeing.

The events poster would be circulated to all Members.

Clarification was sought around the graph within the report showing that residents were active for 150 minutes a week, however, this had reduced by 5%. There had been a 5% increase in people that were inactive less than 30 minutes a week.

The Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead clarified the 5% decrease in the active levels (150 minutes a week), but an increase in 'fairly active' (hitting 30-49 minutes a week). There was no suggested evidence to support the graph, however, this would be monitored in liaison with Active Lincolnshire.

A query was raised on whether the data included further context, such as disabled residents, rural communities and older demographic.

In 2024, the format of the survey was refreshed to incorporate disabled adults for reporting. Going forward, information on disabled adults could be pulled together from Active Lincolnshire and be included within the graph, alongside information on age friendly communities.

At present, Active Lincolnshire had a universal place offer through Sport England. £500,000 worth of funding would be shared between 4 districts and further information was being sought.

**ACTION: For the Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead to provide the Committee with information on disabled adults within the strategy.**

One Member suggested whether the Council could encourage more volunteers for clubs by incorporating the need for volunteers. The importance of having volunteers was discussed.

Clarification was sought around the definition of activity and how it was measured, alongside how the activity of children and young people was measured.

A query was raised how the Council could engage and interact with the least active groups.

Activity levels were classed as 'vigorous exercise'. 75 minutes of vigorous activity equated to 150 minutes of moderate activity. Moderate meant when heart rate was slightly increased and elevated.

Information provided by Active Lives on children and young people was commissioned from Sport England and was informative and accurate.

It was confirmed that the 'least active' would be targeted through the universal place offer from Active Lincolnshire and Sport England when the funding became available.

The Council also work with Lincolnshire County Council who undertake work around targeting deprived areas through Positive Futures.

It was hoped an event being held on 1 November 2025 would encourage sporting groups and stakeholders to become involved.

The Deputy Leader of the Council commended all the hard work and commitment received from volunteers across the District, who do not get paid for their work.

Members requested letters be sent to all volunteers in order to recognise and thank them for their work.

#### **The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- 1. Noted the progress and delivery of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for South Kesteven.**
- 2. Considered the results of the latest Active Lives data available for South Kesteven.**
- 3. Noted the progress and steps to refresh the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.**
- 4. Suggested enhancements to the extent and clarity of the information produced for the next six-monthly report.**

#### **28. LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report**

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report which provided an update on the contractual performance of Leisure SK Ltd during Q1 of the current financial year.

The performance requirements against the leisure management contract objectives were set out in the new agency agreement which commenced in April 2025.

In developing the suite of key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Council's leisure contract, Officers undertook research with other local authorities across the Country and through the Association of Public Service Excellence to ensure they reflected current trends in the market as well as being fit for purpose for the Council.

Some of the KPIs had changed from the previous leisure management contract, which ended in March 2025. Therefore the data for Q1 shown in the appendix would form baseline data from which the future performance of the company would be measured against. It was not a measure of how the company was performing against each individual KPI currently.

Officers would continue to undertake regular monitoring visits to each of the centres and the sports stadium, raising any issues requiring rectification with the centre management team.

However, should the Council be responsible for the rectification, as per terms of the contract, this would be reported internally to the appropriate service area.

One Member raised a health and safety concern at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre where fire escape doors had been secured with chairs.

It was confirmed the fire doors were not faulty and the chairs had been placed there to stop a rattling noise from the wind.

It was queried how maintenance and cleanliness problems were logged on an immediate basis. The Leisure, Parks, and Open Spaces Team Leader confirmed that timescales had been agreed with staff for rectification of any maintenance issues and any issues that would exceed these timescale are monitored between the Leisure, Parks, and Open Spaces Team and the LeisureSK Ltd Board. This is done in conjunction with SKDC's internal processes for logging and rectifying maintenance issues.

The request was also made for overshoes to be provided to prevent mud from being paddled into the changing rooms. It was confirmed that a discussion could be had with LeisureSK Ltd on this matter, but the Leisure, Parks, and Open Spaces Team Leader did note the poor quality and detrimental environmental impact of the overshoes. The suggestion was made to remove excess mud from outdoor areas around the building.

It was agreed for a report on the findings of the maintenance surveys which was due to be considered by the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee and would be shared with the Committee at a future meeting.

Within appendix one of the report, it was noted that throughout the leisure centres, Grantham had the highest figures as this included footfall from events facilitated by the centre, in addition to gym users.

The suggestion was made for health and safety monitoring and maintenance monitoring to be included in subsequent KPI reports. The Leisure, Parks, and Open Spaces Team Leader agreed to take this forward and provide context within the report but these would form part of the monitoring KPI's which had been agreed between the Council and LeisureSK Ltd. .

### **The Committee noted the contents of the report**

The Assistant Director of Leisure, Culture & Place commended the Leisure, Parks, and Open Spaces and Arts and Cultural Services Teams for their work and the quality of the reports produced.

## **29. Grantham Town Football Club Lease (Verbal Update)**

The Assistant Director of Culture, Leisure, and Place provided a verbal update, outlining that there had been an increase in tickets sold for matches and other activities. Also, SKDC were in the final stages of agreeing heads of terms with Grantham Town FC and hoped to shortly instruct solicitors. The Assistant Director also noted their confidence in the financial footing of Grantham Town FC prior to entering a new lease agreement.

It was also noted that Grantham Town FC had been attempting to extend their community reach by engaging with local schools, care homes and the Armed Forces community.

Confirmation was given that work was being done towards the establishment of a women's team for Grantham Town FC.

From an SKDC perspective, it was confirmed that final agreement of the lease was a delegated power to the Section 151 Officer.

The Assistant Director of Culture, Leisure, and Place informed Members that they were working on the basis that there would be an agreement negotiated into the proposed lease for an SKDC representative to sit on the Grantham Town FC board. Whilst the individual may not have any voting rights, it would give SKDC greater oversight.

## **30. Work Programme 2025/26**

It was agreed for a ThatcherFest evaluation report to be added to the Work Programme.

The suggestion was made for a joint site visit between the Culture and Leisure and the Finance Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) to visit the district's leisure centres to scope potential improvements. The Assistant Director of Culture, Leisure, and Place agreed to discuss this with colleagues.

The suggestion was made for Grantham Town FC representatives to attend a Culture and Leisure OSC following the signing of the lease agreement.

The Assistant Director of Culture, Leisure and Place agreed to identify whether it was possible for both the Culture and Leisure OSC and the Finance and Economic OSC to review the scope for leisure centre improvements from the Maintenance Reserve Budget.

Members noted the Work Programme.

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

Members were urged to utilise the upcoming community awards to recognise hard working volunteers across the district. It was also noted that an outdoor Volunteer celebration was being planned.

**32. Close of meeting**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11:40am.

# Action Sheet

Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Actions from meeting of 14 October 2025

<b>Min no</b>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<b>Comments/Status</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
25	Grantham Parks Update	For the park management and maintenance plan to be shared with the Committee.	Michael Chester (The Team Leader – Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces)	Email sent to Committee Members on 28 October 2025	Complete
26	Cultural Strategy 6 monthly Update	For the Arts and Cultural Services Manager to provide the Committee with information on how information on the 'Into Film Festival' is passed onto schools.	Jade Porter (Arts and Cultural Services Manager)	Email sent to Committee Members on 17 November 2025	Complete
27	Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021 - 2026) – October 2025 Update	For the Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead to provide the Committee with information on disabled adults within the strategy.	Beth Goodman (Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead)	Email sent to Committee Members on 18 November 2025	Complete

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SOUTH  
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## Culture & Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 11 December 2025

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

## Corporate Plan 2024-27: Key Performance Indicators Report - Mid-Year (Q2) 2025/26

### Report Author

Charles James, Policy Officer

 [Charles.James@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Charles.James@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To present the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within the remit of this Committee for Quarter Two 2025/26.

### Recommendations

#### That the Committee:

1. Notes and scrutinises the performance against the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators in relation to the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-27.

## Decision Information

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

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Connecting communities

Which wards are impacted? All

## 1. Implications

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

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

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

*Completed by: David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance (Deputy s151 officer)*

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

1.2 Regular monitoring of service area performance is to be welcomed and represents good governance. This report is for noting and there are no significant governance implications arising from the report.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan 2024-2027 was adopted by Council on 25 January 2024. It was proposed actions, key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets would be developed by the relevant Member led Committees, which would retain oversight of the performance management arrangements at a strategic level.
- 2.2 The actions within the purview of this Committee with accompanying measures were presented to and agreed by the Committee on 26 March 2024.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 This report is the third of the reporting cycle and covers the period July to September 2025 (Quarter 2 2025/26).
- 3.2 Appendix A presents the overall performance against the eight actions being presented in this session. Commentary by the responsible officer is provided for each action. Performance is summarised using a RAG system as follows:
- 3.3 Six of the actions are rated Green. These are actions which are on or above target as planned.
- 3.4 Two actions are rated as Amber, these are those off target by less than 10% or where milestone achievement is delayed but with resolution in place to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe.
- 3.5 Zero actions are rated as Red. These are actions that are significantly below target.
- 3.6 Zero actions are rated as N/A. These are actions for which work has not yet meaningfully commenced e.g. being sequenced on the completion of other items, or where data is unavailable.
- 3.7 The KPIs have been developed in close consultation with the relevant Officers for each service. It is expected that the KPI suite will experience a degree of evolution over the next four years. This improvement will be prompted by the needs of decision makers and the Committees, and further consideration of how to best meet those needs by Officers.

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

- 4.1 As Council has agreed the Committees will lead monitoring performance, there are no viable alternatives. An absence of performance arrangements would mean the delivery of the Corporate Plan is unmonitored and prevent continuous improvement. A purely internal KPI suite would prevent effective and transparent scrutiny and accountability.

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

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

### **6. Appendices**

- 6.1 Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2024-27 KPI Report: Culture & Leisure Overview & Scrutiny Committee Mid-Year (Q2) 2025/26

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Corporate Plan 2024-27: KPI Summary Report 2025/26 – Culture & Leisure Overview & Scrutiny Committee							
Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Quarterly Overall Status			
				2024/25		2025/26	
				Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
COM2	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COM3	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Cultural Strategy and accompanying action plan	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COM4	Connecting Communities	Invest in a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	On Target	On Target	On Target	Below Target
COM5	Connecting Communities	Ensure that our leisure facilities and arts venues are sustainable and meet future needs.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COM6	Connecting Communities	Enable and support a flourishing and vibrant artistic and cultural scene	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Arts and Cultural Services Manager	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COM10	Connecting Communities	Maintain and enhance our green areas across the District.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)/ Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
ECON10	Enabling Economic Opportunity	Continue to promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on our cultural and heritage strengths	Economic Development Inward Investment Manager	On Target	Below Target	Below Target	Below Target
ENVIRO4	Sustainable South Kesteven	Improve the energy efficiency of the leisure estate and review further renewable energy opportunities.	Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target

Corporate Plan 2024-27: KPI Summary Report Q2 2025/26 – Culture & Leisure Overview & Scrutiny Committee							
Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q2 Value	Q2 Status	Manager Commentary
COM2	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)	Deliver 100% of the Sport and Physical Strategy action plan actions.	See Commentary	On Target	<p>The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the last six-monthly progress update in October 2025. 'Our Parks' chair based fitness sessions commenced within Wyndham Park in November 2025, following the successful course completion by park volunteers in Q2. This will enable free opportunities to be active, specifically for older adults.</p> <p>The districts first Health and Wellness Day took place in Grantham in November 2025. This enabled residents to find out more information and try a range of activities in and around Grantham for free. Promotion of the Lets Move Lincolnshire Activity Finder was a large focus at the event.</p> <p>Officers continue to gather data and collect information ahead of the planned refresh of the Sport and Physical Strategy in 2026 to ensure the actions are in line with Corporate Strategy and wider government strategies.</p>
COM3	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Cultural Strategy and accompanying action plan	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)	Deliver 100% of the Cultural Strategy action plan actions completed.	See Commentary	On Target	<p>Significant work was undertaken during Q2 with local organisations and businesses to deliver the Thatcher Fest events in Q3. Culture and Leisure OSC will receive a report providing an overview of Thatcher Fest.</p> <p>The expression of interest for the Arts Council Creative Fund was unfortunately unsuccessful and has therefore not progressed to application stage.</p> <p>The new Events Officer has commenced employment and is beginning to look into events that SKDC can offer moving forwards, working closely with the current team.</p> <p>A report detailing progress against the Cultural Strategy and its action plan was considered by Culture and Leisure OSC in October 2025.</p>

<b>Index</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>Q2 Value</b>	<b>Q2 Status</b>	<b>Manager Commentary</b>
COM4	Connecting Communities	Invest in a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	Amount of Council subsidy required by Leisure Service Amount of Council subsidy required by Arts Service.	£0 Current subsidy: Grantham (GAC) (£) Stamford (SAC): (£) Bourne Corn Ex: £	On Target	<p>The new 10-year agency contract commenced between the Council and LeisureSK in Q1 2025/26 with the aim of providing a sustainable leisure offering. As part of this arrangement there was a £150,000 cashflow stabilisation fee paid to LeisureSK Ltd and there is a monthly reconciliation of accounts with any profit being paid back to the Council. The company continues to benefit from the energy investments made previously, in particular from the electricity savings as a result of the additional solar PV installed at Grantham Meres.</p> <p>The agency model continues to perform well. The Council, no longer provides a subsidy to LeisureSK Ltd, meaning the Council is now benefiting from the positive performance of the company. Additional energy improvements have been made at the SK Stadium with the floodlight LED project being completed and all centres are benefitting from the energy conservation measures introduced over the past 18 months.</p> <p>A leisure investment reserve has been created by the Council to improve the cosmetic appearance of each leisure centre focussing on improving the customer journey. The allocation of funding has been considered by the Finance and Economic OSC and work will shortly be commencing to take forward the agreed works.</p>

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q2 Value	Q2 Status	Manager Commentary
COM4 (continued)	Connecting Communities	Invest in a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	Attendance at Leisure Centres (presented for each centre)	<b>Grantham:</b> Total of 113,865 (15% increase on Q1, and 1.57% increase for the same period 2024/25)  <b>Bourne:</b> Total of 64,956 (-1.15% decrease on Q1, and 8.32% increase for the same period in 2024/25)  <b>Stamford:</b> Total of 35,160 (-2.8% decrease on Q1 and -1.85% decrease for the same period in 2024/25)	Below Target	Overall attendance across all three leisure centres was 213,981. This is 6.29% increase on Q1, and 2.92% increase on Q2 2024/25.  There has been a change in how social value is calculated with several different methodical and presentational differences, so it is not possible to compare the data to previous iterations or the model. This KPI now displays the proportion of social value directly attributable to activities that occur within leisure centres in the last 12 months.  Total Social Value generated over the last 12 months for each centre is as follows: Grantham £2,071,438 Bourne £2,006,179 Stamford £1,427,635

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q2 Value	Q2 Status	Manager Commentary
COM5	Connecting Communities	Ensure that our leisure facilities and arts venues are sustainable and meet future needs.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	*Number of rectifications issued for: cleanliness and maintenance (six monthly) (presented for each centre) (For information)	<b>Bourne:</b> 101 cleanliness/63 maintenance  <b>Stamford:</b> 223 cleanliness/55 maintenance  <b>Grantham Meres:</b> 178 cleanliness/107 maintenance  <b>Grantham Stadium:</b> 110 cleanliness/120 maintenance	Information Only	All centres were audited by Right Directions for Quest Entry (external sector quality assessment) in Q1 2025/26. The results were received in Q2, as follows: Grantham - Very Good, Bourne - Good, Stamford - Good. Grantham has moved up a band compared to the previous year. Bourne and Stamford maintained their bandings. Inspections and resulting rectification actions continue to be undertaken to ensure a high level of customer experience and standards of cleanliness. These include any maintenance items on behalf of the Council and LeisureSK Ltd. Stamford has received an increase in negative customer feedback and during Q2. As a result Officers have undertaken additional monitoring visits.
				Quest Plus accreditation (external sector quality assessment for each centre)	All 3 centres achieved Quest entry level and were rated as 'Good' or 'Very Good'.	On Target	
				Public satisfaction score for leisure centres broken down by overall satisfaction, Net Promotor Score (NPS), in centre activity, Cleanliness (presented for each centre)	See Commentary	N/A	The NPS (Net Promotor Score) Survey was undertaken in Q3 2025/26. The results will be available in Q3.

<b>Index</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>Q2 Value</b>	<b>Q2 Status</b>	<b>Manager Commentary</b>
COM6	Connecting Communities	Enable and support a flourishing and vibrant artistic and cultural scene	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Arts and Cultural Services Manager	Attendance numbers at venues (presented by venue and by whether the attendee is a resident of SKDC)	Grantham 11,667 tickets sold in 2025/26 (cumulative) (annual target 28,000)  Stamford 24,326 tickets sold in 2025/26 (cumulative) (8565 performances, 15,743 film) (annual target 37,000)	On Target	<p>Ticket sales are tracking above target for each venue. Ticket sales in Stamford have substantially increased compared to the same period in 2024/25. Sales in Grantham are slightly down. Ticket sales are expected to increase in the festive period of Q3. Venue Managers are using fees and charges as a basis for hire, with discounts offered for bookings in line with the Cultural Strategy, or those that complement any programming gaps.</p> <p>Total ticket sales so far 2025/26: Stamford Arts Centre (SAC) 24,326 (annual target 37,000) of which Stamford Arts Centre film programme sold 15,743 tickets. In Q2, 6,481 tickets were sold for Stamford Live events (19% increase on Q2 2024/25) and 11,813 tickets were sold for Stamford Film (27% increase on Q2 2024/25).</p> <p>Grantham Guildhall 11,667 (annual target 28,000). In Q2, 9852 tickets were sold (3% decrease on Q2 2024/25).</p> <p>87% of tickets for the Grantham Guildhall were sold to residents of South Kesteven. In Stamford, overall 81% of tickets were sold to South Kesteven residents. 80% of SAC Film tickets were sold to residents.</p> <p>A bid to the Arts Council was submitted, but this was unsuccessful at the expression of interest stage.. No external subsidy has been secured to support the Arts Centres and delivery of activities</p>

<b>Index</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>Q2 Value</b>	<b>Q2 Status</b>	<b>Manager Commentary</b>
COM6 (continued)	Connecting Communities	Enable and support a flourishing and vibrant artistic and cultural scene	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place) / Arts and Cultural Services Manager	Take up of Rural Touring programme across the district.	See Commentary	On Target	An evaluation meeting has taken place in October 2025 with the rural touring promoter 'Live and Local'. This provided an opportunity to review attendance at the programmed events and assess the return on investment for the year. Rural venues continue to programme a rounded programme of events.
				Utilise outreach budget so organise one activity/event with SKDC in the financial year.	See Commentary		The planned outreach activity in Deepings and Bourne will fully utilise the £4,000 budget currently allocated for outreach activities. These activities will be completed by September 2025. Nature Makers took place in Bourne and Deepings. These free family days were very well attended and received extremely positive feedback.
COM10	Connecting Communities	Maintain and enhance our green areas across the District.	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)/ Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	*Public satisfaction score from annual surveys for: Wyndham Park, Queen Elizabeth and Dysart Park	See Commentary	On Target	All park surveys have now been completed with high levels of satisfaction achieved across each park. All three Grantham parks have once again retained their coveted Green Flag status with Queen Elizabeth Park receiving a formal assessment, whilst both Wyndham Park and Dysart Park were mystery visited. A celebration event was held by the Council to recognise the efforts of all those involved in the parks including the various volunteer groups. An application has been made to Keep Britain Tidy's Best of the Best awards for the biodiversity and dog paddock introduced in Wyndham Park. Improvements in the park include additional fitness and older children's play equipment in Dysart Park, drainage work improvements in Dysart Park, a new biodiversity and dog paddock in Wyndham Park. Successful grant awards from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in Q2 for a skate park in Wyndham Park is due to be completed in Q3, and resurfacing of the tennis court in Dysart Park is due to be completed in Q3.

<b>Index</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>Q2 Value</b>	<b>Q2 Status</b>	<b>Manager Commentary</b>
ECON10	Enabling Economic Opportunity	Continue to promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on our cultural and heritage strengths	Economic Development Inward Investment Manager	Adoption of a tourism strategic framework	Research Stage	Below Target	Work has been progressing on the Visitor Economy Strategy although due to staff vacancies work has temporarily halted until the new Economic Development Manager is in post in September. The team has also been engaging with other Council's across the County to build on the work that was started to create a Local Visitor Economy Partnership that Destination Lincolnshire had been developing.
ENVIRO4	Sustainable South Kesteven	Improve the energy efficiency of the leisure estate and review further renewable energy opportunities.	Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces Team Leader	Delivery of Projects	See Commentary	On Target	Decarbonisation works have progressed across Grantham Meres Leisure Centre with Leisure Energy commencing the construction phase in Q2. The decarbonisation project remains on track and is expected to be completed in Q4. Officers are working closely with Leisure Energy and Alliance Leisure and will start to deliver the social value elements of the project across Q3 and Q4. The net zero pod has been delivered to site and all internal modifications are being made including new pool air handling units, heating coil upgrades, CHP removals, calorifier replacements. A new Building Management System (BMS) has been installed which will work alongside the new BMS for the net zero pod.



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 11 December 2025

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes  
Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet  
Member for Leisure and Culture

### LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report - Quarter 2 2025/26

#### Report Author

Michael Chester, Team Leader - Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces

✉ [michael.chester@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:michael.chester@southkesteven.gov.uk)

#### Purpose of Report

To provide an update to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd during quarter 2 in financial year 2025/26 against the leisure management contract objectives.

#### Recommendations

**Members of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the contents of the report.**

#### Decision Information

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

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Connecting communities  
Sustainable South Kesteven  
Effective council

Which wards are impacted? Bourne East; Grantham Earlesfield;  
Stamford St Georges;

## 1. Implications

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

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

- 1.1 There are no financial implications from the Council's perspective in relation to this report. As part of the agency contract arrangement income is collected by LeisureSK Ltd on behalf of the Council and a monthly reconciliation is carried out. Any expenditure incurred in delivering the service is deducted before the surplus income is transferred to the Council.

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

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

- 1.2 The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for assessing the performance of LeisureSK Ltd in line with the Council's agreed performance indicators as set out in the Leisure Services Specification – April 2025. The Committee has previously agreed to receive updates against the performance indicators and were last updated at a meeting of the committee on Tuesday 14 October 2025.

**Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager**

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2024-27 sets out the key priorities for the Council and its leisure service. Providing a high-quality sustainable leisure offer helps support the Council's corporate ambitions and provides opportunities for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities.
- 2.2 The Council entered a new 10-year agency agreement with LeisureSK Ltd on 1 April 2025 which includes a refreshed suite of key performance indicators (KPI's). The Council's leisure contract with LeisureSK Ltd focusses on embedding an approach that seeks to continuously improve service delivery and customer experience.
- 2.3 This report will therefore focus solely on the Company's performance against the KPI's embedded within the Leisure Services Specification, and this Committee previously received an update on the Company's performance during quarter 1 on Tuesday 14 October 2025 (see **Background Papers**).

- 2.4. During year one of the contract with LeisureSK Ltd, baseline data will be collected to measure the performance of the company against across the remainder of the contract period. Therefore, the information provided in **Appendix One** is the baseline contract data collected to date during the current financial year.
- 2.5. Overall, the performance of LeisureSK Ltd has been strong during Q2 with an increase in membership numbers across the contract as well as hosting busy swimming sessions during the summer school holiday period. Although the Swim School programme numbers decreased slightly by 0.2% across Q2, this is consistent with national trends which show an increase in cancellations during July and August. Fitness membership levels have however increased by 5.2% which is primarily as a result of strong sales performance in September, again consistent with national trends, and Stamford Leisure Pool has seen growth for the first time this year.
- 2.6. Council Officers continue to undertake regular monitoring visits across each of the leisure facilities. These focus on the customer experience journey whilst ensuring that the delivery of the service is aligned with the performance requirements set out in the Leisure Services Specification.
- 2.7. During the period July to September 2025 a total of 13 monitoring visits were carried out by the Council's Leisure Team, covering the three leisure facilities and the stadium in Grantham. This included an additional visit undertaken at Stamford Leisure Pool in July 2025 following an influx of complaints received by the Council about the condition of the facility.
- 2.8. **Table One** below shows the findings for cleanliness and maintenance issues raised from the leisure monitoring visits during this period. Also included in brackets is the variance compared to the same reporting period in 2024.

<b>Table One: Findings from the leisure monitoring visits and the items raised for rectification between the period of July 2025 to September 2025</b>		
<b>Facility</b>	<b>Total Cleanliness Items</b>	<b>Total Maintenance and Repair Items</b>
	<b>July- Sept 2025</b>	<b>July - Sept 2025</b>
<b>Bourne Leisure Centre</b>	101 (-49)	63 (-36)
<b>Grantham Meres Leisure Centre</b>	178 (+94)	107 (+45)
<b>South Kesteven Sports Stadium</b>	110 (-20)	120 (+40)
<b>Stamford Leisure Pool</b>	223 (+132)	55 (+15)

- 2.9. It is worth noting that for the same reporting period in 2024 a total of 12 monitoring visits were undertaken, with Bourne receiving an additional visit and Grantham receiving one visit less visit compared to 2025.

- 2.10. Monitoring of the rectification numbers for cleanliness and maintenance issues forms part of the corporate KPI's which are reported to this Committee.
- 2.11. Under the terms of the contract LeisureSK Ltd must inform the Council should there be any closures of the pools. During Q2 there were a total of two pool closures as detailed below:
- Stamford Leisure Pool had one closure because of the centre opening later than the standard opening time.
  - Grantham Meres Leisure Centre had one closure due to vomit in the pool during swimming lessons.
- 2.12. Following a request by Members at a meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 14 October 2025, there was a suggestion for information on health and safety monitoring and maintenance to be included in subsequent update reports.
- 2.13. LeisureSK Ltd are supported by an external company, Right Directions Ltd, who carry out independent health and safety monitoring. Each centre is subject to an annual health and safety operational audit which is undertaken by one of the consultants from Right Directions. The most recent audit results for 2024 are shown in **Table Two** below, with the 2025 audits due to be carried out during Q3.

**Table Two: Health and Safety Operational Audit Scores 2024**

Facility	Audit Score
<b>Bourne Leisure Centre</b>	89%
<b>Grantham Meres Leisure Centre inc</b>	80%
<b>South Kesteven Sports Stadium</b>	
<b>Stamford Leisure Pool</b>	88%

- 2.14. As part of the leisure monitoring visits undertaken by the Council's Leisure Team, should there be any findings during the visit relating to health and safety, these are raised with the centre management team with a timeline agreed for rectification.
- 2.15. LeisureSK Ltd provide the Council with accident statistics on a quarterly basis. There was a 31% reduction in the number of accidents, incidents and near misses reported during Q2 compared to Q1. Positively, there were no accidents or incidents which were required to be reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- 2.16. Bi-monthly property maintenance meetings continue to take place between Council Officers, the Council's Facilities Management Contractor and LeisureSK Ltd, with both the Council's Team Leader – Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces and the Council's Senior Mechanical and Electrical Officer in attendance. Maintenance issues are discussed ensuring they are captured at an early stage, and the necessary maintenance actions can be planned.

- 2.17. Council Officers continue to work through the findings of the building condition surveys which are prioritised for completion based on the severity and risk identified. These works are taking place in addition to the ongoing reactive maintenance works which are identified. Both the Council's Leisure and Property Teams continue to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss these and review the future programme of works.
- 2.18. A Leisure Investment Reserve of £500,000 has been established to enable investment in the facilities by improving the decoration and replacing worn out fixtures and fittings.
- 2.19. Following a meeting of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny held on 18 November 2025, (see **Background Papers**), it was agreed that the allocation of this funding should be targeted at refurbishing the changing room facilities across all the Centres. Both the Leisure and Property Teams will be working together to take this project forwards.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. This report provides information on the leisure contract performance and monitoring arrangements for LeisureSK Ltd and offers an opportunity for Members to raise any concerns around the facilities and the level of service being offered.

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

- 4.1 The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously agreed to receive regular updates on the performance of LeisureSK Ltd against the contract KPIs.

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

- 5.1. The Council has a duty to ensure the leisure contract provides value for money and delivers on its corporate objectives. The information detailed within the report provides Members with an opportunity to assess the performance of LeisureSK Ltd.

### **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1. *LeisureSK Ltd Performance Report – Quarter 1 2025/26* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 06 October 2025, available online at:  
<http://moderngovs.vrm/documents/s48239/LeisureSK%20Ltd%20Performance%20Report%20Quarter%201%20202526.pdf>

- 6.2. *Leisure Investment Reserve – Allocation Criteria* – Report to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 10 November 2025, available online at:  
<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s48572/Leisure%20Investment%20Reserve%20Proposals.pdf>

## 7. Appendices

- 7.1. **Appendix One** – LeisureSK Ltd Performance Data 2025/26

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Table One: An overview of the performance indicators for LeisureSK Ltd against the Council's priority outcomes during each quarter of 2025/26					
Priority Outcome	Performance Indicator	Q1 Result <small>*These are actual results and will form the baseline data for future reporting against</small>	Q2 Result <small>*These are actual results and will form the baseline data for future reporting against</small>	Q3 Result <small>*These are actual results and will form the baseline data for future reporting against</small>	Q4 Result <small>*These are actual results and will form the baseline data for future reporting against</small>
1) Improving the health of residents by encouraging and providing opportunities for people in South Kesteven to be more active, more often.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a 1% YOY increase in the activity levels in the number of adults who undertake 150 minutes of physical activity per week.</li> <li>Achieve a 1% YOY increase in the activity levels in the number of children who undertake 60 minutes of physical activity per day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults 60.1% (Nov 2023/24)</li> <li>Children 50.5% (Academic Year 2022/23)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults 60.1% (Nov 2023/24)</li> <li>Children 50.5% (Academic Year 2022/23)</li> </ul>		
2) Tackling inactivity in priority groups and areas, increasing the numbers of people taking part in physical activity and the frequency this is undertaken to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Authority's priority wards and rural areas</li> <li>Young people (under the age of 16)</li> <li>Women and ethnic groups</li> <li>Older adults (over 55's)</li> <li>People with disabilities and/or long-term health conditions</li> </ul>	Measured annually from the Operator's available data and compared to data from Sport England's Active Lives Survey. See Priority Outcome 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection of baseline data for target groups in year 1</li> <li>Achieve a 1% increase in the number and participation dedicated to each of the key target groups identified from year 2 onwards</li> </ul>	Young people: 3,957 Older adults: 25,875 <small>*Reporting dashboard currently being reviewed by LeisureSK CRM provider to assist with other metrics</small>	Young people: 4,436 Older adults: 27,660 <small>*Reporting dashboard currently being reviewed by LeisureSK CRM provider to assist with other metrics</small>		
3) Provide high quality leisure facilities and activities to deliver positive and affordable opportunities for people to improve their health and wellbeing.	Measured annually from the Operator's available data and compared to data from the Sport England annual Moving Communities Customer Experience Survey.  Achieve a 2% YOY increase in total usage across each Facility	Grantham: 99,426 Bourne: 65,713 Stamford: 36,164  <b>Total: 201,303</b>	Grantham: 113,865 Bourne: 64,956 Stamford: 35,160  <b>Total: 213,981</b>		
4) Nurture robust and meaningful partnerships across sectors to improve activity opportunities and encourage partnership working and improve community cohesion	To be completed through the Operator sharing available information on a quarterly basis with the Authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One You Lincolnshire for Exercise on Prescription</li> <li>Lincoln City Football Foundation to deliver Fighting Fit Cancer Rehabilitation</li> <li>Lincolnshire Co-op for Healthy Wellbeing Walks</li> <li>Bourne Galletly Practice for Seated Exercise</li> <li>The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One You Lincolnshire for Exercise on Prescription</li> <li>Lincoln City Football Foundation to deliver Fighting Fit Cancer Rehabilitation</li> <li>Lincolnshire Co-op for Healthy Wellbeing Walks</li> <li>Bourne Galletly Practice for Seated Exercise</li> <li>The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA)</li> </ul>		

		<p>for development of a Workforce Development Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One You Lincolnshire for delivery of Gloji Energy</li> </ul>	<p>for development of a Workforce Development Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One You Lincolnshire for delivery of Gloji Energy</li> </ul>		
5) Improving knowledge of the benefits of physical activity and deliver a positive customer experience for those who visit the Authority's leisure facilities and engage with services	<p>Measured annually from the Operator's available data and compared to data from the Sport England annual Moving Communities Customer Experience Survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve a 2% YOY increase in the levels of customer satisfaction at each Facility</li> <li>• Achieve a YOY increase in the NPS score for each Facility</li> </ul>	<p><b>Annual customer experience survey 2024 results</b></p> <p><u>Satisfaction</u> Grantham: 80%  Bourne: 82.11%  Stamford: 80.88% <b>SK Contract: 80.99%</b></p> <p><u>NPS</u> Grantham: 9.09  Bourne: 30.85  Stamford: -1.51 <b>SK Contract: 14.29</b></p>	<p><b>Annual customer experience survey 2025 results</b></p> <p><u>Satisfaction</u> Grantham: 70.43%  Bourne: 84.29%  Stamford: 74.75% <b>SK Contract: 77.12%</b></p> <p><u>NPS</u> Grantham: -0.91  Bourne: 16.67  Stamford: -12.12 <b>SK Contract: 2.88</b></p>		
6) Improve the energy efficiency of the leisure estate and review further renewable energy opportunities to support the Authority's aim to reduce its carbon footprint by 30% by 2030, and to achieve net zero by 2041.	<p>To be completed through the Operator sharing available information on a quarterly basis with the Authority on energy consumption and carbon emissions for each Facility.</p> <p>Achieve a 5% reduction in consumption at each Facility each year in the first three years of the contract</p>	<p><u>Gas consumption (kW)</u> Grantham: 519,427  Stadium: 16,551  Bourne: 324,458  Stamford: 181,594</p> <p><u>Electricity consumption (kWh)</u> Grantham: 142,285  Stadium: 15,351  Bourne: 123,384  Stamford: 71,322</p>	<p><u>Gas consumption (kW)</u> Grantham: 440,343  Stadium: 7,431  Bourne: 248,688  Stamford: 245,458</p> <p><u>Electricity consumption (kWh)</u> Grantham: 153,087  Stadium: 15,929  Bourne: 122,046  Stamford: 65,641</p>		

Table Two: An overview of the key performance indicators for LeisureSK Ltd during each quarter of 2025/26					
Key Performance Indicator	How this will be measured	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result
1) Total members – total number of members visiting per centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a 2% YOY increase – last quarter vs same quarter previous year</li> </ul>	Contract Total: 23,407 <i>*Reporting dashboard currently being reviewed by LeisureSK CRM provider to assist with breaking down to a per centre level</i>	Contract Total: 23,775 <i>*Reporting dashboard currently being reviewed by LeisureSK CRM provider to assist with breaking down to a per centre level</i>		
2) Total pay as you go users (PAYG) – PAYG users per centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a 2% YOY increase – last quarter vs same quarter previous year</li> </ul>	Contract Total: 1,960 <i>*Reporting dashboard currently being reviewed by LeisureSK CRM provider to assist with breaking down to a per centre level</i>	Contract Total: 2,006 <i>*Reporting dashboard currently being reviewed by LeisureSK CRM provider to assist with breaking down to a per centre level</i>		
3) Total throughput – total number of visits per centre including members and PAYG users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a 2% YOY increase – last quarter vs same quarter previous year</li> </ul>	Grantham: 99,426 Bourne: 65,713 Stamford: 36,164  <b>Total: 201,303</b>	Grantham: 113,865 Bourne: 64,956 Stamford: 35,160  <b>Total: 213,981</b>		
4) Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses – total number of accidents, incidents and near misses across the portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a YOY reduction – last quarter vs same quarter previous year</li> </ul>	Total: 108	Total: 75		
5) Swim School Occupancy – total percentage of occupancy filled for the Swim School against total capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a recommended lessons occupancy of 85% but no more than 90% - last quarter vs same quarter previous year</li> </ul>	Growth of 1.4% across Q1  Grantham: 94% Bourne: 90% Stamford: 86%	Growth of -0.2% across Q2  Grantham: 96% Bourne: 89% Stamford: 85%		
6) Membership Sales – total number of new membership sales across the portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a YOY increase – last quarter vs same quarter previous year</li> </ul>	Total: 485	Total: 748		
7) Membership Leavers – total number of membership leavers across the portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a YOY reduction – last quarter vs same quarter previous year</li> </ul>	Total: 459	Total: 777		
8) Quest Plus Accreditation – progress Quest scoring over the contract length with all facilities achieving Quest Plus and a minimum rating of very good by the end of year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved scoring YOY with a minimum rating of very good by the end of year 3 – annual vs previous year</li> </ul>	<u>Quest 1 Day Results</u> Grantham: Very Good Bourne: Good Stamford: Good	<u>Quest 1 Day Results</u> Grantham: Very Good Bourne: Good Stamford: Good		

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## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 11 December 2025

Report of David Ruston, Chairman of  
LeisureSK Ltd

### LeisureSK Ltd Finance and Operational Performance Update – Quarter 2 2025/26

#### Report Author

David Rushton, Chairman of LeisureSK Ltd

 [david.rushton@leisuresk.co.uk](mailto:david.rushton@leisuresk.co.uk)

#### Purpose of Report

To provide an update regarding the finance and operational performance of LeisureSK Ltd during quarter 2 of financial year 2025/26.

#### Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.**

#### Decision Information

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

Yes - Exempt Appendix One - Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – financial information.

## 1. Background to the Report

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2024/27 sets out the key priorities for the Council including its leisure service. Encouraging sport and physical activity to support healthy lifestyles by reducing health inequalities and delivering a sustainable leisure offer helps to support the Council's corporate ambition and provides opportunities for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities.
- 1.2 The Council's leisure contract with LeisureSK Ltd focusses on embedding an approach that seeks to continuously improve service delivery and customer experience.
- 1.3 Members of the Committee have previously received an update on the Company's performance during quarter 1 on Tuesday 15 July 2025 (see **Background Papers**).
- 1.4 Overall fitness memberships have decreased by 4.8% over the comparative 12-month period to the end of September, primarily due to a loss of members at Stamford following the opening of PureGym.
- 1.5 Swim School memberships have decreased by 5.3% over the comparative 12-month period to the end of September with the Direct Debit income being 2.1% behind budget. It is anticipated that the above budget price increase in September 2025 will help mitigate most of the financial impact for the remainder of the financial year.
- 1.6 Events have continued to be held regularly at Grantham Meres and generate income supporting the cashflow of the Company.
- 1.7 Utility costs have continued to perform well due to reduced consumption from the favourable weather conditions and increased solar generation at Grantham Meres reducing the electricity usage.
- 1.8 At an extraordinary meeting of this Committee on 28 August 2025 an updated business plan was presented to support the refurbishment of the gym at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre (see **Background Papers**). Following this meeting a full procurement process was launched working with Welland Procurement, to develop a specification and tender opportunity. A total of three tenders were received, and a contract has since been awarded to Pulse Fitness to refurbish the gym. Works are expected to commence on 11 December 2025 with the completed refurbishment being completed and available for members to use from 27 December 2025.
- 1.9 It is worth noting, the continuing improvement in the current financial position of the Company, which is discussed at each Board meeting. At the end of Q2 the current forecast outturn for the end of the current financial year is forecasting an operating profit of £148,500 which is an overachievement of £76,000 against the budget. This provides sufficient headroom to fund the annual loan repayment for

Bourne and the part year for Grantham totalling £38,654 resulting in a overall surplus of £38k which under the agency principles would be returned to the Council. More detailed information is provided in **Appendix One**.

## **2. Key Considerations**

- 2.1. The new 10-year contract between the Council and LeisureSK Ltd commenced on 1st April 2025 under agency principles which based on the current forecast is predicting an operating surplus for 2025/26.
- 2.2. LeisureSK Ltd is committed to supporting the Council achieving its ambitions of having a sustainable leisure and cultural offer as per the Corporate Plan 2024/27.
- 2.3. LeisureSK Ltd continue to report to the Council around the KPI's as agreed in the Leisure Services Contract on a quarterly basis. The Council then report against the KPI's to this committee separately.

## **3. Background Papers**

- 3.1. *LeisureSK Ltd – Provisional Outturn 2024/25 and Finance and Operational Performance Update 2025/26* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 07 July 2025, available online at: <http://moderngovsvr/documents/s47293/LeisureSK%20Financial%20and%20Operational%20Performance.pdf>
- 3.2. *Grantham Meres Leisure Centre Gym Refurbishment* – Report to Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Extraordinary), published 19 August 2025, available online at: <http://moderngovsvr/documents/s47654/Report.pdf>

## **4. Appendices**

- 4.1. Exempt Appendix One – Financial Performance April – March 2026

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

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## Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 11 December 2025

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes,  
Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet  
Member for Leisure and Culture

### Review of 'Thatcher Fest'

#### Report Author

Jade Porter, Arts and Cultural Services Manager

 [jade.porter@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:jade.porter@southkesteven.gov.uk)

#### Purpose of Report

To provide an overview and evaluation of the collaborative approach taken to deliver 'Thatcher Fest', a week-long cultural programme marking the centenary of Margaret Thatcher's birth.

#### Recommendations

##### The Committee is asked to:

1. Note the contents of the report and the success of the partnership approach in alignment with the Council's Cultural Strategy.
2. Consider the potential for this model to be developed for future cultural events and festivals.

#### Decision Information

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

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

Which wards are impacted? Grantham 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 this initiative are set out at section 2.22 of the report. This relates to direct costs only.

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

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

- 1.2 It is within the remit of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor and assess activity delivered by the Council's Arts and Cultural Service.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2024 to 2027) contains a key priority of Connecting Communities. This is underpinned by the ambitions to deliver and facilitate a sustainable cultural offer and to celebrate and promote the strong heritage and rich culture of South Kesteven.
- 2.2 To support the Council's corporate aims a Cultural Strategy (the Strategy) for South Kesteven was developed and adopted by Cabinet on 11 July 2023. The Strategy focusses on a collaborative approach to the delivery of culture across the district and includes the aim that the Council should use its 'convening power to bring organisations together'.
- 2.3 The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Margaret Thatcher was identified as a significant opportunity to raise the profile of Grantham, attracting visitors to the area and securing media interest. Between April and October 2025, the Council facilitated a partnership approach bringing together multiple cultural and community stakeholders with the aim of sharing plans and activity.
- 2.4 Rather than producing standalone Council-funded events, this model aligns with the Strategy's focus on SKDC acting as a facilitator of cultural activity, taking a

partnership approach to opportunities rather than directly delivering the whole event.

This report has been summarised under the following headings:

- A) Delivery Model and Stakeholder Involvement
- B) Programming of Events and Audience Data
- C) Finances
- D) Marketing and Press
- E) Summary

## **A) Delivery Model and Stakeholder Involvement**

### **Cultural Strategy Themes: Partnership and Collaboration, Placemaking, Cultural Venues and Programmes**

- 2.5. The Arts and Cultural Services Team convened and chaired monthly meetings with stakeholders, supporting the creation of event content, marketing timelines, and shared objectives.
- 2.6. Participants attending the stakeholder meetings included: Grantham Civic Society, Grantham Museum, Union Street Gallery, Grantham Library (LCC), Kesteven & Grantham Girls' School (KGGS), Christ Church and The Reading Room.
- 2.7. The Council's role utilised existing infrastructure and budgets (arts centre marketing, box office and venues), while partner organisations independently delivered and staffed their events, creating a "low-risk, high-value" collaboration.

## **B) Programme of Events and Audience Data**

### **Cultural Strategy Themes: Equality and Inclusion, Cultural Venues and Programmes, Health & Wellbeing**

- 2.8. A diverse set of events were curated from the stakeholder meetings, a breakdown of the events is below:-

#### **SKDC Arts Centre Programmed Events:**

- Thatcher Queen of Soho
- Gyles Brandreth, Quite a Centenary
- Edwina Currie Talks
- Dr James Cooper, Reagan and Thatcher and the Cold War
- QR Code Posters around the centre of town linked to Notable Thatcher speeches, videos and articles.
- 'Share Your Story' Video display

### **Future High Street Fund Events:**

- Sounds of the 80s in the Market Place
- The Iron Lady Film Screening

### **Other External Events:**

- The Thatcher Years Walking Tour, Grantham Civic Society
- Living Above the Shop, Grantham Dramatic Society
- Behind the Bronze by Cllr Graham Jeal, Grantham Museum Talk
- From Shop Floors to Shaping Legacies, Grantham Museum Talk
- Alternative Voices, Charmaine Morgan
- We are not For Turning, Grantham Labour Group
- Union Street Gallery Thatcher Exhibition
- Design a Postcard, Union Street Gallery (supported by SKDC)
- Grantham in the 1920s, Grantham Civic Society
- Exhibition of Artifacts and Document, Grantham Library

2.9. The table below shows a breakdown of the data provided by ticket purchasers for arts centre events and those events who elected to sell the tickets through the arts centre box office system.

<b>SKDC Events:</b>			
<b>Event Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>First Time Bookers</b>	<b>% of bookers not from SKDC</b>
<b>Queen of Soho</b>	Guildhall Arts Centre	36%	27%
<b>Edwina Currie</b>	Guildhall Arts Centre	20%	17.9%
<b>Dr James Cooper</b>	Guildhall Arts Centre	31%	22.8%
<b>Gyles Brandreth</b>	Guildhall Arts Centre	12%	12.2%
<b>Iron Lady</b>	KGGS	13%	9.2%

  

<b>Other Events Sold through Arts Centre</b>			
<b>Event Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>First Time Bookers</b>	<b>% of bookers not from SKDC</b>
<b>Walking Tours</b>	Various Town Locations	55%	41%
<b>Alternative Voices</b>	Museum	30%	5.6%
<b>Living over the Shop</b>	Museum and Christ Church	9%	9%

2.10. The data shows that not only did the events attract a high number of audience members that had not attended before, but Thatcher Queen of Soho and the Walking tours were attended by a high number of people living outside of the district.

- 2.11. Fifty-three customers across all the events sold (SK and non-SK) opted to receive further mailings from the Arts Centre.
- 2.12. The programmed events at the Guildhall Arts Centre covered a number of genres welcoming a range of audience members. Notably, *Thatcher Queen of Soho* would not ordinarily perform in a venue of the size of the Guildhall and typically is only available for a multi night run. The Thatcher Fest branding allowed the company to recognise the value of participating in Grantham's centenary celebrations.
- 2.13. Dr James Cooper provided a factual and historical talk about Thatcher and her relationship with America - particularly Reagan. Dr Cooper is a senior lecturer, who worked with the Council providing educational outreach activity from York University.
- 2.14. The Dr James Cooper and Edwina Currie talks provided the opportunity to engage students in free academic events. A total of 53 students attended from Priory Ruskin Academy, Kesteven and Grantham Girl's School, and Queen Elizabeth Grammer School in Horncastle.
- 2.15. Edwina Currie offered to host two talks after hearing about Thatcher Fest from an early press release and contacted the Council requesting to get involved.
- 2.16. Gyles Brandreth sold out quickly with his current tour celebrating the centenary of Thatcher, Winnie the Pooh and Queen Elizabeth II. The arts centre worked with local independent book shop *The Reading Room* to provide book sales for the event. Gyles took the time to sign and make dedications in the books and *The Reading Room* successfully made over 70 book sales.
- 2.17. Alongside supporting The Reading Room, local independent company *Cameron's Crafts* were approached to produce Thatcher merchandise for the week's events. These continue to be available for sale from the arts centre as part of the Visitor Information Centre offer.
- 2.18. Sound of the 80s was a free to attend music event featuring three local musicians singing 80s songs popular during the time Thatcher was Prime Minister. This event was also used as a platform to promote breast-cancer awareness, highlighting that her government introduced Britain's first national screening programme. Rachael Bradley (SKDC Officer) engaged directly with the public, utilising the pink refuse vehicle, to encourage self-check awareness. This event was provided as part of the Grantham Marketplace events and was funded by the Council's allocation of Future High Street funding.
- 2.19. The Iron Lady film screenings were a successful joint event between Kesteven and Grantham Girl's School and the Council. The school also displayed a number of photos and documents from Thatcher's time at the school for film ticket holders

to look at prior to the screening. These were also on display for the Civic Society's walking tours.

### C) Finances

#### **Cultural Strategy Themes: Equality and Inclusion | Value for Money | Economy and Growth**

- 2.20. The collaborative approach for Thatcher Fest aligned closely with the Cultural Strategy's ambition around Value for Money and Partnerships, using shared resources to achieve economic impact, community benefit and sustainable cultural delivery.
- 2.21. The arts centres programming budget allowed for high-quality, high-profile events to take place as part of Thatcher Fest. The money spent was within standard budget allocation and no extra funds were spent or allocated to these events.
- 2.22. The table below shows the total expenditure and income for SKDC in relation to Thatcher Fest:

<b>SKDC Expenditure and Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Surplus or Deficit</b>
<b>Arts Centre Programmed Events</b>	£11,430	£12,126.68	<b>+ £696.68</b>
<b>External Events (£1 ticket commissions)</b>	-	£189.00	<b>+£189.00</b>
<b>Merchandise</b>	£161.00	£191.00	<b>+£30.00</b>
<b>Marketing Materials (flyers, posters, banners)</b>	£538		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£12,129.00</b>	<b>£12,506.68</b>	<b>+£377.68</b>
<b>Future High Street Fund Expenditure</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Surplus or Deficit</b>
<b>Iron Lady Film</b>	£190.00	£139.86	- £50.14
<b>Sounds of the 80s</b>	£4,740.00	Free Event	-

### D) Marketing and Press

#### **Cultural Strategy Themes: Placemaking | Cultural Venues and Programmes | Economy and Growth**

- 2.23. There was intensive media coverage of Thatcher Fest including local and international coverage. ITN, BBC East Midlands Today, BBC Look North, ITV Calendar and Bauer Media were among the broadcasters visiting, as well as French and German TV channel ARTE. Reuters and the Guardian sent reporters and photographers, with BBC Online also running news articles about the week's events.
- 2.24. The Council's Communications Team managed media relations, linking press to other event organisers including Grantham Civic Society, The Reading Room, Grantham Library and Union Street Gallery.
- 2.25. Most event organisers utilised these high-profile press opportunities to market their wider activity and work.
- 2.26. The level of media coverage achieved was exceptional and exceeded what could have been secured through paid advertising.
- 2.27. The *Grantham Journal* published a press release and pictures about the Sounds of the 80s event that took place in Grantham Market Place on Saturday 18 October.
- 2.28. Television coverage started on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October with the regional politics shows on *BBC TV* showcasing the festival and events.
- 2.29. *Politics North (Look North)* carried a special report filmed in the Guildhall Ballroom, where a selected panel of guests discussed the legacy of the Iron Lady. Cllrs Ashley Baxter, Lee Steptoe and Gareth Knight were among those participating.
- 2.30. The programme then ran an item from the evening news earlier in the week discussing the Right to Buy council house policy introduced by the Thatcher government of the 1980s. Cllrs Virginia Moran and Charmaine Morgan contributed.
- 2.31. *BBC East Midlands* welcomed former Junior Health Minister Edwina Currie into the studio to talk about the commemorative events being hosted in Grantham. Cllr Steptoe was also invited and took part in an interview about the former PM.
- 2.32. After attending events during the week, a positive travel and tourism article focusing on Grantham was published in *the Telegraph*.
- 2.33. Cllr Baxter supplied an Opinion piece for *Big Issue magazine*, which has subsequently published an edition focusing on the legacy of Margaret Thatcher.

- 2.34. Cllr Baxter and Cllr Sarah Trotter were interviewed on the national *BBC Radio 5 Live* discussion show on Monday night.
- 2.35. *BBC Radio Lincs* featured Cllr Baxter in an interview on the breakfast show and in further bulletins throughout the day.
- 2.36. Officers from the Council's Arts and Cultural Services managed the physical marketing and print, designing the artwork and collating all event information from the various group to produce flyers, banners, bus station adverts and a section within the What's On Guide to cover the activities.

## **E) Summary**

- 2.37. A debrief meeting was held with all participating stakeholders who reported good feedback from their audiences and participants.
- 2.38. Grantham Dramatic Society expressed that they enjoyed the freedom to be in creative control, which in their opinion was an improvement from what they felt was top-down engagement during previous festivals.
- 2.39. The collaborative festival model shows strong potential for upcoming district priorities, including celebrations around the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Isaac Newton in 2027.

## **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. Thatcher Fest successfully fulfilled multiple aims within the Council's Cultural Strategy whilst significantly enhancing and promoting Grantham and the district of South Kesteven.
- 3.2. The collaborative approach reduced the financial and operational risk to the Council and the Arts and Cultural Services budget and associated resources.

## **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. No other options were considered. The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Margaret Thatcher's birth presented a significant opportunity to raise the profile of Grantham and stakeholders agreed to work collaboratively to maximise this.

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

- 5.1. Members are asked to note the positive collaborative work and the benefits this provided. This approach created cultural confidence, ownership and buy in from the other partners and providers.

# Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2025/26

## WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
<b>11 December 2025</b>				
Corporate Plan 2024-27: KPI Report Q2 (Mid-Year) 2025/26	Lead Officer: Charles James (Policy Officer)	To present the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for quarter 2 2025/26.		Effective Council
LeisureSK Ltd – KPI Report (Q2)	Lead Officer: Michael Chester (Team Leader – Leisure, Parks and Open Spaces)	To scrutinise the performance in the second quarter against the agreed key performance indicators.		
LeisureSK Ltd Finance and Operational Performance Update – Quarter 2 2025/26	Lead Officer: David Scott (Assistant Director of Finance)	To provide an update regarding the finance and operational performance of LeisureSK Ltd during quarter 2 of financial year 2025/26		
LeisureSK Ltd Annual Budget and Business Plan 2026/27	Lead Officer: David Scott (Assistant Director of Finance)	To receive the annual budget and accompanying business plan for financial year 2026/27		
ThatcherFest evaluation report	Lead Officer: Jade Porter (Arts & Cultural Services Manager)	To receive a report detailing the Thatcher Fest programme of	Agreed by the Chairman at the meeting of CLOSC held on 14 October 2025	

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
		events to include financial information and wider impact		
<b>3 February 2026</b>				
<b>Draft refreshed Sport &amp; Physical Activity Strategy</b>	<b>Lead Officer: Beth Goodman (Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead)</b>			
<b>Visit from Grantham Town FC</b>	<b>Lead Officer: Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director for Leisure, Culture and Place)</b>	A presentation from Grantham Town Football Club on their aspirations for the club and developing community engagement, (Visit to take place once the lease negotiations have been concluded)	Agreed by the Chairman at the meeting of CLOSC held on 14 October 2025	
<b>13 May 2026</b>				
<b>Sports and Physical Activity Update</b>	<b>Lead Officer: Beth Goodman (Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead)</b>	6 monthly review		
<b>Cultural Strategy Update</b>	<b>Lead Officer: Jade Porter (Arts and Cultural Services Manager)</b>	To scrutinise performance of the Council's Arts and Cultural Service, including the implementation of the Cultural Strategy and achievement of the action plan	This forms part of regular six-monthly updates which are provided to the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Connecting Communities

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/ PRIORITY
<b>FUTURE ITEMS</b>  <b>Play Area Strategy Action Plan – September/October 2026</b>				

## REMIT

The remit of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be to work alongside Cabinet Members to assist with the development of policy and to scrutinise decisions in respect of, yet not limited to:

- Arts and Culture
- Heritage
- Markets and fairs
- Sport and physical activity
- Leisure SK Ltd
- Visitor Economy

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