

Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 23 September 2025, 2.00
pm



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Committee Members present

Councillor Elvis Stooke (Chairman)
Councillor Emma Baker (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Nikki Manterfield

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Rhys Baker

Officers

Debbie Roberts, Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager
Tom Amblin-Lightowler, Environmental Health Manager – Environmental Protection & Private Sector Housing
Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services
Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager
Louise Case, Sustainability Project Support Officer
Andrew Igoea, Tree Project Officer
Ayeisha Kirkham, Head of Public Protection
Joshua Mann, Democratic Services Officer

12. Public Speaking

There were none.

13. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sarah Trotter, substituted by Councillor Nikki Manterfield.

Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Ben Green.

14. Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

15. Minutes of the meeting held 10 June 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2025 were proposed, seconded, and AGREED as an accurate record.

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

The Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste, and the Vice-Chairman expressed their congratulations following the Waste Team's award for 'Best Service Team for Waste, Recycling and Street Scene' at the Association for Public Service Excellence Conference.

The Leader of the Council also drew attention to the Local Government Reorganisation engagement survey which had commenced.

17. Update on South Kesteven District Council carbon emissions for 2024/25

The Update on South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) carbon emissions for 2024/25 was presented by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste.

The report provided an overview of SKDC's carbon emissions for the period covering April 2024 – March 2025 to monitor the progress made against SKDC's targets of a 30% reduction in operational carbon emissions by 2030 and net zero carbon as soon as viable by 2050.

The overall reduction in carbon emissions for the 2024/25 financial year was 29.24%. Since the baseline year (2018/19), there had been reductions in the following areas:

Overall electricity usage – 55.09% reduction
Overall gas usage – 15.43% reduction
Leisure Centre emissions (leased assets) – 46.75% reduction
Waste emissions – 74.57% reduction
Business travel emissions – 35.8% reduction.

Since the baseline year, there had been increases in the following areas:

Overall water usage – 33.74% increase (SKDC acknowledged a low confidence in the data supplied for water consumption of its buildings).
Vehicle fleet emissions – 2.04% increase
Refrigerants emissions – 3806.5% increase (attributed to several refrigerant gas leaks from equipment over the course of the current reporting period).

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- How data was collected; it was confirmed data was collected via breakdown of utility charges, solar generation, fleet fuel usage, and further analysis of all operational assets. A carbon emission factor was then applied to convert activity data, such as energy consumption, into a measure of greenhouse gas emissions.
- The request was made for financial data to be applied, indicating the financial cost or saving of each carbon saving. The Sustainability Project Support Officer agreed to provide this analysis to the Member following the meeting. **ACTION**
- The carbon impact of the recently updated bin collection routes was queried, incorporating the mandated food waste collections that were shortly due to commence. Acknowledging that the 12 additional vehicles introduced for food waste collections would have a carbon impact, the Cabinet Member addressed that the route restructures had been an imperfect solution as this meant that food waste that was previously collected every other week would now be collected weekly. This would minimise the duration that rotting food waste would release methane pollution, and could subsequently utilize this energy when incinerated in the plant.

The Update on South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) carbon emissions for 2024/25 was noted by the Committee.

18. Food Waste Update

The Food Waste Update was presented by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste.

Following reforms to the Environment Act 2021, new recycling requirements were to be introduced from 31st March 2026.

The new default requirements included four containers for:

1. Residual (non-recyclable) waste,
2. Food waste,
3. Paper and card,
4. All other dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal and glass).

It was confirmed that SKDC would introduce the service from Monday 13th April 2026, a date selected as part of a staggered rollout across Lincolnshire to ensure disposal facilities were not overwhelmed. The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership (LWP) wrote to DEFRA in September 2025 to confirm this arrangement.

The capital purchases were split into two forms – vehicles and caddies. The Council received £ 1,371,150 in capital funding from central Government to establish the food waste collections. The total cost of capital purchases (vehicles + caddies) was £1,543,000; this was around £171,850 more than the

£1,371,150 payment from DEFRA. The shortfall was covered by an agreement at Full Council on 18 September 2025.

The total estimated revenue costs were £542,195 for year 1 (2025/26). Although the service didn't start until April 2026, there were costs associated with introducing the service (vehicle costs, staff recruitment, communications, caddy delivery etc). The transitional revenue funding provided by Government covered £400,125.45 of these costs, meaning a further £142,069.55 of funding was required to establish the service. The shortfall was covered by an agreement at Full Council on 18 September 2025.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste apologized that Full Council had sight of the report prior to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- Attention was drawn to the additional staff revenue costs in Table 1 of the report. The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste confirmed the majority of these costs were funded by a ringfenced grant.
- It was queried whether it was necessary for the additional staff to be recruited in November 2025 if the 'go live' date was not until April 2026. The Cabinet Member confirmed this was necessary to ensure full training and preparations.
- The costs in Table 1 of the report were calculated on a pro-rata basis.
- It was queried whether new staff were limited to food waste rounds. It was confirmed that this would depend if the individuals had a HGV licence which was not necessarily required for the 7.5 ton lorries used for the food waste collection.
- The suggestion was made for education of residents to prevent unnecessary food waste. It was suggested collaboration with supermarkets would be vital for this. The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste confirmed SKDC had been engaging with a third-party company called 'WRAP' which had been lobbying central government and offering resources on this matter.

Councillor Selby entered the Chamber.

- The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste sought to address anxiety about the cleanliness of food waste bins by highlighting that the incoming measures would result in food waste being collected twice as often compared to the current general waste. Furthermore, it was confirmed that the 23litre caddy was complete with a self-locking lid, in which normal liners could not only be used, but were preferable to the so-called biodegradable liners that would not biodegrade in the conditions met at the plant. The Cabinet Member agreed to raise the matter with the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership in order to promote instructions on how to clean the bins.

The Food Waste update was noted by the Committee.

19. Air Quality Annual Update

Given a technical issue, the appendices for the report were not dispatched until the day prior to the meeting. To enable sufficient time for Members to consider and scrutinise these materials, the proposal was made to defer the item to the next meeting, 10 November 2025.

This proposal was seconded and, following a vote, it was AGREED to defer the item to the next meeting on 10 November 2025.

20. Corporate Enforcement Policy

The Corporate Enforcement Policy was presented by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing.

The full revision of the 2017 Policy covered enforcement activities across all the Council's Regulatory Services, setting out what regulated businesses and individuals could expect from the Council in terms of regulation. The Policy was targeted only at cases where action was needed and was based on the guiding principles of consistency, transparency, proportionality, and accountability.

The Policy applied to functions carried out within the following Regulatory Services:

- Public Protection (this includes Environmental Health, Environmental Protection, Private Sector Housing, Community Safety (Neighbourhoods) and Licensing)
- Development Management
- Building Control
- Finance
- Tenancy Services

The updated Corporate Enforcement Policy sought to incorporate the following to create an overarching document covering all enforcement functions undertaken by SKDC:

- Environmental Crime and Antisocial Behaviour – Fixed Penalty Notices
- Environmental Health Approach to Investigation and Enforcement
- Private Sector Housing Approach to Investigation and Enforcement.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- With reference to the fly tipping aspect of the policy, a Member urged the approach of effective deterrents and rapid, but proportional sanctions.

- It was queried why the report suggested that in some instances of fly tipping, the report suggested a reduction in the fine pursued. It was confirmed this was an attempt to prevent low level offences going to court.
- The suggestion was made for SKDC communications to be published demonstrating genuine fly tipping licences to avoid the public falling victim to scams.
- It was confirmed that the relevant links would be inserted to the policy for the Development Management Enforcement Policy (Planning Control) and the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) Enforcement Policy.

The Corporate Enforcement Policy was noted by the Committee.

21. Update on Tree Planting Proposals for Winter 2025 Onwards

The Update on Tree Planting Proposals for Winter 2025 Onwards was presented by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste.

Tree-planting initiatives were strategically focused on land owned or managed by the council. This approach provided a clear and manageable starting point. Alternative delivery methods would be explored, such as partnerships with private landowners or community groups, as the initial planting program matured.

The draft annual planting targets and the projected costs were as follows:

Year	New trees per year	Tree Planting Costs	Aftercare and Maintenance Costs	TOTAL
2025/26	100	£29,870	£8,685	£38,555
2026/27	65	£19,998	£23,387	£43,385
2027/28	65	£20,598	£32,257	£52,855

The three-year projected distribution for amenity trees was as follows:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	TOTAL
Grantham	28	21	21	70
Bourne	12	8	8	29
Stamford	20	8	9	37
The Deepings	9	6	7	22
Villages – North	0	16	8	24
Villages – Central	14	6	4	24
Villages – South	16	0	8	24
Villages (Combined)	30	22	20	72
TOTAL	100	65	65	230

The planting sites for 2025/26 were as follows:

Location	No. of Trees
Princess Drive, Grantham	23
Trent Road Play Area, Earlsfield, Grantham	5
Wingate Way, Bourne	5
Ash Grove, Bourne	8
Kesteven Road, Stamford	8
Stamford Leisure Pool	7
St. Martins Graveyard, Stamford	5
Burnhall Close, Deeping St. James	7
Broadgate Lane, Deeping St. James	2
Langtoft Recreation Ground	16
Throughton Park Play Area, South Witham	14
TOTAL	100

In addition to planting individual amenity trees, the Council also proposed two larger schemes in the Grantham area (Blessed Hugh Moore and Brittain Drive) and a small hedge planting proposal in Witham on the Hill.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- It was queried where responsibility sat for SKDC hedges. It was confirmed that responsibility sat with the Street Scene team. It was acknowledged that there were substantial amounts of tree and hedge work outstanding. The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste noted that he had been pushing for additional staffing and wider resources during the budget setting process. It was agreed that the correct contact details for the Street Scene team would be dispatched to Members. **ACTION**
- The suggestion was made to involve local schools in the planting of SKDC trees. This was supported by the Cabinet Member.
- It was queried whether the proposed planting location on Princess Drive, Grantham, was a suitable distance away from the road. It was confirmed this exact location had been selected due to the restrictions caused by underground utilities.

Following discussions, it was proposed, seconded, and AGREED to endorse the Tree Planting Proposals for Winter 2025 onwards.

22. Work Programme 2025 - 2026

It was AGREED for the deferred Air Quality Annual Update to be presented in the 10 November 2025 meeting.

It was AGREED for the Update on recently published Section 19 reports to be presented at the 10 November 2025 meeting. Following this it could be

determined whether Members felt the Flooding Working Group was necessary.

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

There was none.

The Chairman concluded the meeting at 15.43.