

# Employment Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

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Tuesday, 16 September 2025 at 10.00 am  
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,  
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

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**Committee** Councillor Anna Kelly, Vice-Chairman of the Council (Chairman)  
**Members:** Councillor Gloria Johnson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Rhys Baker, Councillor Ashley Baxter, Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing,  
Councillor Gareth Knight, Councillor Susan Sandall, Councillor Ian Stokes and  
Councillor Paul Stokes

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## Agenda

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

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Disclosure of interests**  
Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2025** (Pages 3 - 10)
- 4. Updates from the previous meeting** (Page 11)  
To consider updates on the Actions agreed at the previous meeting.
- 5. SKDC v National Green Book Terms and Conditions of Employment** (Pages 13 - 16)  
To advise the Employment Committee on the differences between SKDC and National Green Book Terms and Conditions of Employment
- 6. Updates on Speeding and Alcohol & Drug Testing** (Pages 17 - 36)  
To provide an update to the Employment Committee on incidences of speeding and the outcome of alcohol and drug testing
- 7. Work Programme 2025 - 2026** (Pages 37 - 38)

8. **Any other business, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**
9. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**  
It is likely that the press and public will be excluded during discussion of the following agenda item because of the likelihood that information that is exempt under paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed to them.
10. **Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer** (Pages 39 - 67)  
This report sets out the recommendation that the Employment Committee appoint a suitable candidate to the role of Director of Law & Governance and the statutory position of Monitoring Officer

## Meeting of the Employment Committee

Wednesday, 9 July 2025, 2.00 pm



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## MINUTES

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### Committee Members present

Councillor Anna Kelly (Chairman)  
Councillor Gloria Johnson (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing  
Councillor Gareth Knight  
Councillor Susan Sandall  
Councillor Ian Stokes  
Councillor Ashley Baxter, Leader of the Council  
Councillor Paul Stokes, Deputy Leader of the Council

### Other Members present

Councillor Tim Harrison

#### Officers

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive  
Fran Beckitt, Head of Service – Human Resources and Organisational Development  
Jane Jenkinson, Senior HR Officer  
Joshua Mann, Democratic Services Officer

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### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rhys Baker.

### 2. Disclosure of interests

There were none.

### 3. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2025

Both the public and private minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2025 were AGREED as an accurate record.

### 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2025

Both the public and private minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2025 were AGREED as an accurate record.

## 5. People Strategy (2025 - 2028)

The People Strategy 2025-28 was introduced by the Leader of the Council.

The Leader outlined the following six key priorities encapsulated by the strategy:

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

The implementation of these priorities was supported with a strategic action plan including responsible lead officers and timeframes.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) were also established and would be reported to the Employment Committee via the HR Dashboard.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Members praised the positive steps taken to support officers and create a positive working environment. Particular praise was given to the Wellbeing Team for the extensive and regular initiatives that they facilitated.
- The reduction in employees leaving the organisation was identified and commended.
- A Member urged for changes across the authority to be communicated more effectively to seek to improve the result of 49% of respondents believing that the Council introduces change effectively.

Following discussions, it was proposed, seconded, and AGREED to recommend the approval of the People Strategy 2025-28 to Cabinet.

## 6. HR Policy Review

The Human Resources (HR) Policy Review was introduced by the Leader of the Council.

The Leader outlined that, as part of an ongoing review, the HR team had undertaken a refresh of key people management policies. This was intended

to make the policies more accessible, aligned with best practice and Employment legislation. Following this review, a breakdown of the proposed changes were outlined within the cover report relating to the following policies:

- Supporting Performance Improvement Policy
- Zero Tolerance Policy
- Ill Health Capability Policy
- Leave Policy
- Maternity Policy

Approved policies and supporting documents would be added to the newly launched HR Hub, accessible to all employees.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Members welcomed the proposed introduction of a Safe Leave Policy, supporting victims of domestic abuse. It was noted by officers that the policy was not industry standard and cases would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- It was clarified that maternity/ paternity leave was still covered by the policy previously brought before the Employment Committee. The policy provided two weeks paid paternity leave and enshrined enhanced maternity leave.
- A Member commented that only five days compassionate leave seemed short. The HR team clarified this figure had been reached after discussions with trade unions but matters would still be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Should five days be insufficient in a particular case then this could be covered by the sick leave provisions.
- It was identified that the Parental Bereavement Leave policy had been duplicated on page 4 of the Employee Leave Policy booklet (appendix 4). It was proposed that the HR policies presented to the Committee were accepted with a delegation to the Head of Paid Service and HR Manager to make this necessary amendment.

Following this proposal, it was seconded and AGREED to accept the following HR Policies with a delegation to the Head of Paid Service and HR Manager to amend the Parental Bereavement Leave duplication within the Leave Policy:

- Supporting Performance Improvement Policy
- Zero Tolerance Policy
- Ill Health Capability Policy
- Leave Policy
- Maternity Policy

## **7. Biannual HR Dashboard and Key Performance Indicator Update**

The Biannual HR Dashboard and Key Performance Indicator update was introduced by the Leader of the Council.

### Recruitment and Workforce Planning:

- The establishment as of 31 March 2025 was 582 employees (316 males and 266 females).
- During the year, the Council had 79 new starters and 100 leavers.
- More than half (55%) of our workforce had been working for SKDC for less than 5 years.
- The total combined service of Officers at the Council was 4927 years.

### Reward and Recognition

- The Council's recognition strategy included Long Service Awards, Employee Awards and #TeamSK Thank You which had received over 436 nominations during the year April 2024 to March 2025.
- National Employers had made a full and final offer of a 3.2% pay increase for 2025/26. Nationally, the Trade Unions were currently consulting with their members. SKDC were not part of national negotiations but normally followed the agreed pay award and were seeking approval via a separate report to the Employment Committee to pay this % increase as soon as possible as an interim pay increase, pending the outcome of the final pay award agreement for 2025/26.
- A staff awards evening was held on 19th June 2025. More than 230 nominations for the awards were received prior to the event and 19 awards given on the evening, 9 of which were chosen by staff and 10 chosen by CMT.

### Engagement

- The Employee Engagement Survey for 2025 was due to take place between 7 July 2025 and 31 July 2025.
- Analysis of the survey results were due to take place during August. These would be presented at a future Employment Committee.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- A focus on being an inclusive place to work had continued in 2025 and had included holding Menopause Café sessions on Women's Health Physiotherapy, Reflexology and Nutrition.
- The Carers Forum held information sessions for employees and managers to raise awareness, and introduced a Carers Guide and Carers Passport to support.
- Nearly 70% of the workforce were aged over 40, with the largest numbers in the age range of 50-59. In Q2 of 2024, South Kesteven was an accredited 'AgeFriendly Employer'.
- The Council had a minimal gender pay gap, as reported to the Employment Committee in March 2025. Women earn £0.99 for every £1 men earn when comparing median hourly pay.

### Development

- There were 669 places filled in learning events during the year.

- 100% of appraisals had been completed and the outputs would be built into the Workforce Development Plan.
- There were 33 colleagues on apprenticeship programmes in topics ranging from Senior Leadership and Joinery to Facilities Management and IT.
- Development opportunities since April 2024 included excel training, mentoring, internal work experience, IT skills specifically aimed at Operatives, presentation skills and various bitesize learning sessions.

### Wellbeing

- Sickness absence increased during year with an average 12.15 days lost per FTE compared to 10.33 days for the same period last year and 13.53 for the previous year.
- Sickness absence increased significantly in December 2024 and January 2025 due to an increase in cold and flu related absences which accounted for almost 30% of all absence during those months.
- 50% of cold and flu related absences in December 2024 and January 2025 occurred in Street Scene and Waste and Recycling. To try and avoid a repeat of this free level of absence flu vaccinations were to be promoted to all eligible staff and onsite provision arranged for Street Scene and Waste and Recycling with the aim of improving the take up of vaccinations.
- The top reasons for absence (days lost) remained as stress and mental health related illness, as well as other musculoskeletal issues.
- The Council's wellbeing programme continued to offer a diverse agenda. The 'learn a new skill' introduced knitting and SK Choir to the programme, with photography and painting to also take place over the summer.
- Activities such as stress awareness, sleep health workshop, Mental Health Awareness Week, finance workshops, and working parents' webinars have supported Mental and Social Wellbeing.
- Physical wellbeing had also been supported and encouraged by a football tournament, step challenge, and health checks.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- It was confirmed that veterans, care leavers and disabled candidates were guaranteed interviews with SKDC if they met the job requirements.
- Clarification was sought about long-term illness. It was confirmed that long-term illness was any illness for which an employee had been off work for 20 days or more.
- Given that Musculo-skeletal related absences were high, it was queried whether any additional support was offered for this. It was confirmed that external health insurance was not provided by SKDC.
- It was queried why stress and mental health related absences were not reflected as being a common reason for days lost due to absence given that stress and mental health was identified as the most common

reason for long term absence. The Senior HR Officer agreed to look into this and feedback to the Member following the meeting. **ACTION**

- Many respondents had not completed the demographical questions about disability, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Clarification was given that these questions were only posed as an opportunity for employees to inform their employer of anything they wish the employer to be aware of. It was not compulsory to answer the questions, consequently, why there was a high level of employees that had not answered the questions.
- Clarification was sought about SKDC's approach to apprenticeships, especially regarding the retention of apprentices. It was confirmed that there were 33 current apprenticeships and SKDC were keen to keep the apprentice's following the completion of their apprenticeships. These apprenticeships had helped to fill recruitment gaps and there were training contracts in place to cover the costs should any apprentices decide to leave. Apprentices were chosen by engagement with colleges, universities and public advertisements.

The biannual HR Dashboard and Key Performance Indicator Update was noted by the Committee.

## 8. Pay Award 2025/26

The Pay Award 2025/26 report was introduced by the Leader of the Council.

The Leader outlined that on 24 April 2025, the National Employers announced a full and final offer for Council employees, a pay increase of at least 3.2% across all National Joint Council pay spines and all payments above the maximum pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer. A 3.2% pay increase was also proposed for Chief Officers and Chief Executives.

South Kesteven District Council was not part of the national consultation process and the Council's pay scales were not on the National Joint Council (NJC) scales. Instead, SKDC consulted with local Trade Union Representatives and aligned local agreements. However, in recent years, the pay award mirrored the outcomes of national negotiations.

Aligning the national pay offer to the Council's own pay scales, the offer amounted to an increase of 3.2% on all pay points. This enabled the council to recognise the hard work and dedication of its employees.

It was noted that delaying the final pay offer could negatively impact some colleagues financially because receiving a larger lump sum back payment could affect benefit entitlements and payments.

The 2025-26 budget process predicted a pay award of 2%. Therefore an offer of 3.2% would leave a shortfall of 1.2%. This shortfall would equate to a

budgetary impact of £244k on the General Fund and £76k on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

There would also be a potential impact of £9k on the budget for Members allowances which currently increased in line with staff pay awards. However, it was anticipated that the impact would be contained within the existing budget.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- It was queried why only a 2% increase had been budgeted for. Clarification was given that some previous years had not seen any increase, some only a 1% increase, and some a lump sum rather than percentage increase. Advice given nationally was to budget for a 2% increase. A Member commented that he would urge the Council to overestimate within future budgets.
- In response to a Member, the Head of Paid Service confirmed that SKDC had not been compensated for all of the increase to employer national insurance and therefore this had to be accounted for within the existing budget.

Following discussions, Members AGREED to:

1. Note the National Employers' for Local Government Services final pay award offer of 3.2% for the financial year 2025/26.
2. Note the current budget allocation for the pay award is only 2%.
3. Recommend to Council additional budgets to fund the proposed pay award of 3.2% from 1 April 2025:
  - £244k in order to fund the additional General Fund. This was to be funded from the Local Priorities Reserve.
  - £76k in order to fund the additional Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This was to be funded from the HRA Priorities Reserve.

## **9. Work Programme 2025 - 2026**

It was AGREED for the following to be added to the Work Programme:

- Speeding Policy and the Substance Misuse Policy update (date tbc)
- Practicality of the provision of Employee Health Insurance (date tbc)
- Interview for the Recruitment of a Director of Law & Governance (September)
- Local Government Reorganisation update (November)
- Shared Parental Leave – HR Policy (November)

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

There was none.

*The Chairman concluded the meeting at 15.23.*

<b>Employment Committee Action Sheet</b>			
<b>Minute Number</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<b>Status</b>
7 - Biannual HR Dashboard and Key Performance Indicator Update	<p>It was queried why stress and mental health related absences were not reflected as being a common reason for days lost due to absence given that stress and mental health was identified as the most common reason for long term absence. The Senior HR Officer agreed to look into this and feedback to the Member following the meeting.</p>	Senior HR Officer	<b>COMPLETED</b> – email sent to all committee members on 17/07/25.

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# Agenda Item 5

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

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# Agenda Item 6

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

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# Appendix A – Driving at a Safe Speed (Operational Driving and Vehicle Policy)

This policy focuses on the safety of our staff while operating company vehicles. To achieve this, all staff members are required to adhere to the speed limits and driving regulations. This policy outlines the guidelines and consequences related to speeding while driving company vehicles that are equipped with GPS tracking devices.

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### Related Policies:

- [Operational Driving and Vehicle Policy](#)
- [Disciplinary Procedure](#)

### Related Guidance:

- [Manager Conversation Guide – Speeding](#)

If you have any questions about this policy or require any further support, please contact the HR team by emailing [hr@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:hr@southkesteven.gov.uk)

For independent support, our Employee Assistant Support service offer a completely confidential helpline for employees. Call 0800 716 017 to receive support for mental health, legal signposting, practical help, manager coaching and much more.

## 1.0 Introduction

The Council is committed to protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, contractors and members of the public who could be affected by our work. To do this, we will take all reasonable steps to ensure our drivers are able to:

- Drive safely and are fully competent and capable of doing their job in a safe way,
- Understand the importance of appropriate behaviour when driving,
- Understand that vehicle tracking information will be used to make journeys safer for drivers.

Vehicle tracking technology has been fitted to all our work vehicles and this policy sets out specifically how the tracking information will be used.

## 2.0 Guiding principles

- The Council has a responsibility to take action where there are breaches of safety. SKDC wants to keep the driver, their colleagues and the public safe.
- Staff members must comply with all applicable speed limits as defined by local traffic laws and regulations.
- Speeding is breaking the law, a serious breach of safety and harmful to the Council's reputation.
- Tracking devices are in place on all Council vehicles to enhance safety and ensure compliance with speed limits.
- It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that they obey speed limits and must not drive faster than the road or driving conditions allow.

## 3.0 Vehicle Tracking

There are many purposes of vehicle tracking technology being used in all company vehicles, including locating employees in the event of an emergency and tracking stolen vehicles. However, this policy is in sole reference to speeding.

Only nominated supervisory staff will be provided with speeding reports from the vehicle tracking system and it will always be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Tampering with the tracking devices, including attempts to disable or remove the device from a vehicle will likely result in disciplinary measures.

## 4.0 Cases of speeding

When driving a work vehicle, staff members must comply with all applicable speed limits as defined by local traffic laws and regulations. Speed limits may vary depending on the road type, area or prevailing conditions.

Any driving related fines or penalties for whatever reason, but including speeding, are the driver's responsibility and will not be reimbursed.

All Council vehicles are fitted with tracking devices. Where the reports from this system highlight an instance, or instances, of speeding, it is important we address this. Whilst each occurrence is dealt with on a case-by-case basis, to support in correcting unacceptable behaviour, the steps in the table below would usually be taken.

There may be occasions when cases of speeding enter the disciplinary process and these will be dealt with in line with the approved policy. This includes giving employees the opportunity to be accompanied to meetings by a colleague or Union Representative. Penalties are based on the severity and frequency of the violation, but no outcome is pre-determined.

Potential Action	<u>Examples of where this may be the appropriate course of action</u>	Description
Informal Conversation	First instance of speeding where there is only one instance within a month.	An informal conversation takes place between the manager and employee. This is not part of the disciplinary process.  The 'Conversation Guide for Managers – Speeding' document will help guide this conversation that should include a two-way discussion about the occurrence, emphasis of the risks/expectations and advising that repeat occurrences are likely to be dealt with under the disciplinary process.
Investigation in line with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure	Multiple instances of speeding within a month.  One instance of exceeding the speed limit by a high percentage.	Cases of speeding may be investigated under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure. Due consideration for individual circumstances will be taken into account as part of the process.  Possible outcomes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First Written Warning (12 months)</li><li>• Final Written Warning (18 months)</li></ul>

	A further occurrence of speeding after an Informal Conversation has taken place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very serious cases would be investigated for Gross Misconduct and could result in Dismissal.</li> <li>Other measures may be considered under the Disciplinary process including a suspension from work related driving.</li> </ul>
Further Investigations under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure	Further occurrence(s) of speeding after an employee has already had a penalty awarded under the Disciplinary Procedure.	Where an employee has a live warning on their file, a further speeding offence may result in a further Disciplinary Investigation. As above, the outcomes could fall under any stage of the Disciplinary procedure depending on the investigation and severity of the offence.

## 5.0 Driver Awareness Training

To raise awareness of driving safely, individuals who drive for work may be required to attend training which could be face to face or online.

## 6.0 Data Protection Implications

Under the provisions of Data Protection legislation, and the Council's Data Protection Policies, the Council and its employees have a responsibility to make sure that any personal data collected from the vehicle tracking system is done so in line with the requirements of the Act.

Only relevant supervisory staff shall have access to the vehicle tracking system. These relevant supervisory staff are responsible for complying with any security and control procedures covering access and use or protection of data.

For further information about this policy, please contact the HR Team at [hr@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:hr@southkesteven.gov.uk).

- This policy applies to all employees within South Kesteven District Council unless stated otherwise within the policy.
- This policy does not form part of contracts of employment.
- The Council reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time.



# Drugs and Alcohol Policy

This policy is intended as practical guidance for management and employees concerning managing alcohol and drug issues in the workplace.

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If you have any questions about this policy or require any further support, please contact the HR team by emailing [hr@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:hr@southkesteven.gov.uk)

For independent support, our Employee Assistant Support service offer a completely confidential helpline for employees. Call 0800 716 017 to receive support for mental health, legal signposting, practical help, manager coaching and much more.

## 1.0 Introduction

South Kesteven District Council (“SKDC”) is aware of its specific statutory responsibilities towards its employees, the public and the employees of other organisations working on SKDC’s premises or properties. It is also conscious of its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

SKDC considers the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours or attending work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs to be gross misconduct offences.

SKDC when made aware of an employee's dependency on alcohol or drugs will consider this as a treatable illness or disorder and will encourage individuals with a problem to seek voluntary advice and assistance. SKDC is concerned with the general welfare and health of its employees and is committed to ensuring the highest possible safety standards in all of its businesses. This policy is intended as practical guidance for management and employees concerning managing alcohol and drug issues in the workplace.

The policy also applies to contractors, agency staff and consultants.

In particular it covers:

- The objectives/key principles of this policy
- SKDC's rules relating to alcohol and drugs
- A description of the symptoms of alcohol and drug related conditions
- An outline of SKDC's responsibilities
- An outline of manager and employee responsibilities
- Practical advice for managers and employees
- Alcohol and drug testing
- Dealing with alcohol and drug related issues
- Resources available to support employees with alcohol or drug dependency

## 2.0 Objectives/Key Principles

This policy aims to:

- Make clear that the misuse of alcohol and drugs is considered incompatible with acceptable employment performance and behaviour within SKDC
- Help managers identify alcohol or drug related problems and associated risks
- Encourage staff to inform SKDC if they believe a colleague may be misusing alcohol and/or drugs and to support their colleague in receiving help
- Improve the health of the workforce
- Encourage employees with alcohol or drug problems to seek help
- Decrease the risk of accidents and associated adverse damage caused by misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Support employees with genuine dependency issues, but to distinguish between alcohol or drug related incidents where there is no underlying medical dependency (which would be treated under

SKDC's disciplinary procedure) and genuine medical dependency issues (which will be treated under the capability procedure)

- Where an employee is being supported because of a medically determined dependency issue and the employee fails to cooperate with SKDC's requirements/ or assistance provided, SKDC may revert to treating the matter as a disciplinary issue
- Protect SKDC's reputation and its relationship with other organisations and local communities
- Protect all employees, SKDC guests and members of the public

### **3.0 General Rules**

All SKDC employees should know and adhere to these basic rules concerning the use of alcohol and/or drugs during working hours, off-duty and on SKDC property.

Any breach of the rules may be treated as gross misconduct under SKDC's Disciplinary Procedure and this may result in the termination of employment.

- No employee may carry out their duties or enter SKDC premises, while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- No alcohol or illegal drugs should be consumed during the working day
- No employee should drive or operate vehicles if they have taken alcohol or illegal drugs or have reason to believe that they may be under the effect of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, supply or production of illegal drugs is forbidden on SKDC premises
- Tampering or attempted tampering of any sample, or screening process will be considered as a disciplinary offence
- A non-negative or positive sample taken during working hours may lead to disciplinary action regardless of when alcohol or drugs were consumed

This list is illustrative only and should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

### **4.0 Drugs prescribed by a medical practitioner or over the counter:**

The policy does not apply to the taking of drugs prescribed to the employee by a registered medical practitioner or where over-the-counter medicines are being used for the intended purpose and the safety of the employee or others with whom they come into contact is not compromised.

However, drugs prescribed by a medical practitioner, or purchased over the counter can also be a cause for concern because they may impair mental or physical performance whilst driving or at work. Employees who have been prescribed drugs should keep them in the original container where reasonably practicable, which identifies drug dosage, date of prescription and dispensing medical practitioner, chemist or hospital.

Any employee taking medication, which may adversely affect work performance, must notify their line manager prior to starting work. Any restrictions regarding work will be discussed with their line manager. Where appropriate a referral may be made to Occupational Health for assessment.

If an employee does not feel able to discuss prescribed medication usage with their line manager, they can request to speak to a member of the HR team. For safety purposes the HR team may be required to inform the employee's line manager of the use of medication and any potential impact on the employee's ability to carry out their role.

## 5.0 Symptoms of Alcohol and Drug Related Conditions

- Periods of unexplained absence, including failure to return to work during afternoons
- Lateness
- Behavioural changes
- Sudden mood changes
- Deterioration of relationships with colleagues or clients
- Reduced job performance/productivity
- Dishonesty/theft in order to fund habit
- Smelling of alcohol
- Slurring of words
- Confusion
- Blurred vision
- Vomiting

## 6.0 SKDC Responsibilities

It is SKDC's responsibility to provide information, guidance and support to line managers and employees on handling such issues, through:

- Communication of its alcohol and drug policy
- Raising awareness in the workplace
- Ensuring managers are aware of their responsibilities
- Providing adequate support for the rehabilitation of employees, where medically, an employee is diagnosed with an alcohol or drug dependency issue

## 7.0 Director/Manager Responsibility

**Directors/Managers must:**

- Lead by example and ensure that the SKDC image and reputation are upheld at all times
- Maintain confidentiality in dealing with alcohol and drug issues
- Identify any work practices that could lead to alcohol or drug problems and seek to improve them
- Identify any alcohol or drug misuse at work and seek immediate guidance from the HR team
- Ensure that other employees and those in their charge are not put at risk or adversely affected as a result of the use of alcohol or drugs by SKDC employees

- Be aware of the difference between a medically diagnosed dependency issue and a non-dependency issue and the different approaches to be adopted, i.e. capability v disciplinary
- Discuss the issue with the relevant employee in line with guidance offered by the HR team
- Ensure staff are aware of the policy

## 8.0 Employee Responsibilities

Employees must:

- Communicate immediately to the HR team and their line manager if they feel they are suffering from an alcohol or drug dependency issue
- Familiarise themselves with the policy, its aims and their responsibilities in relation to alcohol and/or drug misuse at work
- Encourage colleagues who may have an alcohol or drug problem to proactively seek help - if this approach is not effective, the matter should be raised in confidence with the line manager
- Avoid covering up or colluding with colleagues where an alcohol or drug problem is affecting work - if employees are found to be covering up an alcohol or drug problem this may result in disciplinary action up to and including gross misconduct
- Proactively report any concerns to their line manager or the HR team.

Employees who drive for work must:

- Never drive while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medicines that state the medication affects their driving
- Be aware that they may still be over the legal limits, or affected by alcohol and/or drugs the morning after they have been drinking or taking drugs
- Be aware that prescription drugs or over-the-counter medicines can affect driving and can cause sleepiness
- Report alcohol and/or drug problems, including cautions, summons or convictions for alcohol or drug related offences, to their line manager, immediately

**Failure to comply with any of the above may result in disciplinary action up to and including gross misconduct.**

## 9.0 Legal Background

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 protects the health, safety and welfare of employees at work.

The Road Traffic Act 1988 states that any person whom, when driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle is unfit to drive through drink or drugs will be guilty of an offence. Specific driving limits apply for both alcohol and drugs.

[Changes to drug driving law - GOV.UK](#)

[The drink drive limit - GOV.UK](#)

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 is the principal legislation in the UK for controlling the misuse of drugs. The Act makes the production, supply and possession of controlled drugs unlawful.

## 10.0 Alcohol Guidance

The Government has provided guidelines on sensible drinking and the following information dispels some of the myths associated with alcohol as well as highlighting some of the long-term effects of alcohol consumption.

- Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream within a few minutes of being drunk and is carried to all parts of the body, including the brain
- The concentration of alcohol in the body depends on many factors, but principally how much has been eaten, body size and weight, and the length of time an individual has been drinking
- It takes a healthy liver about one hour to break down and remove one unit of alcohol - a unit is equivalent to 10 ml of pure alcohol
- If an individual drinks two pints of ordinary strength beer at lunchtime or half a bottle of wine, they will still have alcohol in their blood stream three hours later - if an individual drinks heavily in the evening, they may still be over the legal limit the following morning
- Black coffee, cold showers and fresh air won't sober you up - only time can remove alcohol from the bloodstream
- Alcohol reduces physical co-ordination and reaction speeds - it affects thinking, judgement and mood
- Large amounts of alcohol put strain on the liver and other major organs - regular drinking raises blood pressure and increases the risk of liver damage, cirrhosis of the liver, coronary heart disease, strokes and cancers of the mouth and throat - it can also lead to psychological and emotional problems
- The UK Chief Medical Officers' guideline for both men and women is that to keep health risks from alcohol to a low level it is safest not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis

Types of drink	Number of units
One pint of <b>ordinary</b> strength beer e.g. Carling or John Smiths	Around 2.5 units
One pint of <b>strong</b> beer e.g. Stella or Youngs Special	Around 3 units
Red or White wine (175ml) glass	Around 2.5 units
1 pub measure of spirit	1 unit
Alcopops e.g. Smirnoff Ice or Bacardi Breezer	Around 1.5 units

## 11.0 Drug Guidance

Drugs can affect the brain and body in a number of ways. They can alter the way a person thinks, perceives and feels and this can lead to impaired judgement or concentration. Drug misuse can also

affect an individual's general health and wellbeing. This can adversely influence performance at work even when the misuse takes place outside the workplace.

According to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 there are three categories of drugs that have been identified. They range from prescription drugs to illegal drugs as follows:

- **Class A** includes ecstasy, cocaine, heroin, LSD, mescaline, methadone, morphine, opium
- **Class B** includes barbiturates, amphetamines, cannabis, cannabis resin and codeine
- **Class C** includes other less harmful drugs of the amphetamine group and anabolic steroids - it includes benzodiazepines (e.g. temazepam and Valium)

Prescription drugs if taken to excess can also cause adverse problems for individuals. Managers have the right to ask if employees are taking medication for certain conditions and what the effects of the medication could have on the employee within the working environment.

## **12.0 Screening For Alcohol and/or Drugs**

Alcohol and/or drug screening is the process whereby employees would undergo an alcohol or drug test for analysis, this might include but is not restricted to hair/saliva/observed urine sample/breath tests for analysis with the specific aim of determining whether any alcohol and/or drug is present in their body.

Alcohol and/or drug screening may occur on the following occasions:

- Random and unannounced occasions
- Post Accident or incident at work
- For cause
- Pre-employment
- Assurance as part of re-introduction to workplace plan

### **Random and unannounced screening**

SKDC retains the right to carry out random and unannounced screening tests across the organisation, including roles that are considered safety critical. Safety critical roles may include but are not restricted to, working with machinery, working in potentially hazardous environments and driving. Employees to be screened will be chosen at random. Employees who are suspected of abusing alcohol or drugs may be sent for random screening.

New starters in safety critical roles will be required to take part in alcohol and drug screening either prior to or within three months of their start date.

The line manager or a representative of the HR team will inform the chosen employee that they are required to undertake the alcohol and/or drug screening procedure and will have explained to them the process taken for selection for the random test (selection will generally be made by random selection of employee payroll numbers). The employee has the right to be accompanied during the testing process by a union representative or work colleague.

In the case of a positive or non-negative initial result for alcohol and/or drugs the employee may be suspended on full pay pending possible disciplinary action. In the case of agency staff or contractors producing a positive test they will be removed from site and their employer informed of the result. The use of random and unannounced screening tests will be reviewed periodically by SKDC.

#### **Accident or incident at work**

SKDC may require a sample test to be taken where an employee is connected to any accident at work that results in physical injury to themselves or to other persons or damage to property.

A sample may be required where a near miss incident has occurred which may potentially have resulted in a physical injury or damage to property.

#### **For cause**

SKDC will require a screening test to be taken where a manager has reasonable grounds to believe that the use of alcohol and/or drugs may be affecting an employee's behaviour or ability to carry out their work. Reasonable grounds for such a belief will be deemed to exist but are not limited to the following examples where:

- The employee is observed using alcohol or illegal drugs
- The employee, during working hours, is observed to be mentally or physically impaired and is deemed to be unable to perform work in a safe or productive manner
- The employee displays aggressive or unusual behaviour (that could on the balance of probability be alcohol or drug related), uses threatening language or is asleep at work
- An employee's line manager has reason to believe alcohol and/or drug misuse may be responsible for unsatisfactory work performance, including time keeping and attendance
- The evidence of alcohol and/or drugs is detected on SKDC premises - this may include substances, or the equipment associated with them, i.e. syringes, silver foil, and is either found on the employee or can be linked to a specific employee
- An employee is suspected of dealing or selling drugs

Reasonable cause cannot be established on the basis of unsatisfactory performance or attendance alone.

### **13.0 Screening Procedures**

The line manager or a representative of the HR team will inform the chosen employee that they are required to undertake the alcohol and/or drug screening procedure and will explain the reason for the test. The employee has the right to be accompanied during the testing process by a union representative or work colleague.

The screening procedures will follow recognised testing protocol and will be undertaken by a trained person who is fully conversant with this protocol. In order to provide a timely specimen/result a third-party organisation with accredited facilities may be used to carry out screening and testing.

The employee will be informed of the screening and testing process at the time of the testing.

Where an employee is reluctant to undertake an alcohol and/or drug test, they will be advised by their line manager as to the consequences of refusing to undertake the test. The employee will be given a

short period of time to consider their position before being formally warned about their continued refusal.

Where, following a warning, the employee withholds their consent to undertake an alcohol and/or drug test deemed necessary under this policy, such refusal will lead to action under the Disciplinary Procedures, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Modern laboratories and up-to-date technology provide a screening process known as the 'Chain of Custody'. The 'Chain of Custody' ensures that the positive sample travels in an intact and secure manner from the employee to the laboratory and all the way through the analytical process up to, and including, the reporting of laboratory results and medical review. The collection will be carried out sensitively and properly so that the donor is fully aware of what is going on. Only suitably trained personnel from a third-party organisation will undertake the collection. In order to provide a timely specimen/result the facilities of other organisations may be used that can provide testing facilities which are accredited.

The trained personnel will prepare the collection area for the saliva, hair, urine and/or breath sample taking all precautions to minimise the risks of sample adulteration, contamination or substitution of samples, and to supervise the sample collection ensuring that the formal process and/or 'Chain of Custody' procedures are strictly adhered to.

All paperwork is to be completed in the donor's presence.

The results of the test are passed to the HR team and the sample retained should the donor wish to challenge the result. These stages may be subject to change.

In the case of a non-negative or positive initial result for alcohol and/or drugs the employee may be suspended on full pay pending possible disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. In the case of agency staff or contractors producing a positive test they will be removed from site.

### **13.1 Reporting of results**

The results of a screening test will be reported confidentially by the testing organisation to employee and the HR team. If appropriate the matter will be dealt with under SKDC's Disciplinary Policy and may result in the termination of employment on grounds of gross misconduct.

## **14.0 Summary of Penalties**

Consumption of alcohol during working hours and working under the influence of alcohol.

Working under the influence of alcohol is completely unacceptable and is considered a gross misconduct offence. Subject to the outcome of the disciplinary process, this may result in the termination of employment on grounds of gross misconduct.

The consumption of alcohol whilst actually at work is prohibited; with the exception of officially sanctioned work events where alcohol is provided or is available. Employees must appreciate that if alcohol is consumed during sanctioned events and results in an unacceptable effect on behaviour or work performance, this may lead to disciplinary action. Subject to the outcome of a disciplinary investigation, this may result in the termination of employment on grounds of gross misconduct.

## **15.0 Positive test results for alcohol and illegal drugs**

For the purposes of this policy a ‘positive’ or ‘non-negative’ result will be:

- Where the sample shows a level above the current statutory drink drive limit.

Positive test results above the statutory drink drive limit are considered a gross misconduct offence.

- The sample showing use of a drug i.e. the presence of a drug not explained by the use of legitimate medication. Where an initial sample indicates a non-negative drugs result, a sample will be sent for laboratory testing. Any laboratory test results reported to be above the cut off concentration levels for the relevant specimen type e.g. saliva, blood or urine will be considered a gross misconduct offence.

Subject to the outcome of a disciplinary investigation, these may result in the termination of employment on grounds of gross misconduct.

## **16.0 Refusal To Submit to Testing**

Refusal to provide a sample for testing is considered a gross misconduct offence. Subject to the outcome of a disciplinary investigation, this may result in the termination of employment on grounds of gross misconduct.

## **17.0 Adulteration Or Tampering with Samples**

Adulteration or attempted adulteration and tampering of any sample will be considered as gross misconduct. Subject to the outcome of a disciplinary investigation, this may result in termination of employment on grounds of gross misconduct.

## **18.0 Possession, Supply or Production of Illegal Drugs**

The possession, supply or production of illegal drugs and the selling of prescription medication unlawfully either on SKDC premises or outside of work will not be tolerated.

Any employee found in possession, found supplying or found producing illegal drugs will be subject to a disciplinary investigation for a gross misconduct offence. Subject to the outcome of the investigation, this may result in termination of employment on grounds of gross misconduct.

The offence will also be reported to the police.

## **19.0 Malicious/Vexatious Allegations**

Making malicious or vexatious allegations that a colleague is misusing intoxicating substances will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

This list is illustrative only and should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

## 20.0 Complaints

If an employee has a complaint about the way in which an alcohol and/or drug test has been conducted, they can raise this informally with their line manager. If an employee exhausts the informal route without satisfactory results they may follow SKDC's grievance procedure.

## 21.0 Support For Individuals

Where an employee proactively, i.e. before an accident, incident or a random test makes SKDC aware of an alcohol and/or drug related problem, support may be given to:

- Assist the employee to access the Employee Assistance Programme
- Allow the employee reasonable unpaid time off for counselling or other sanctioned treatment
- Redeploy the employee if current duties and responsibilities are seen to be an obstacle to their treatment and/or recovery
- Assist the employee to access a rehabilitation programme

The following external resources are also available.

### ALCOHOL:

#### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

0800 917 7650

[www.Alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.Alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

Email: [help@aamail.org](mailto:help@aamail.org)

#### Lincolnshire Recovery Partnership

0800 304 7021

Open 9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday

A free and confidential service for people in Lincolnshire who would like support with their drug and alcohol use.

[www.turning-point.co.uk/services/lincolnshire-recovery-partnership](http://www.turning-point.co.uk/services/lincolnshire-recovery-partnership)

Email: [lincs.info@lincsrecoverypartnership.co.uk](mailto:lincs.info@lincsrecoverypartnership.co.uk)

### DRINKLINE

0300 123 1110

A confidential helpline you can call if you're worried about your drinking

[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

DRUGS:

Talk to Frank

0300 123 6600 / [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

Narcotics Anonymous

0300 999 1212 / [www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

For further information about this policy, please contact the HR Team at [hr@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:hr@southkesteven.gov.uk).

- This policy applies to all employees within South Kesteven District Council unless stated otherwise within the policy.
- This policy does not form part of contracts of employment.
- The Council reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time.

## Employment Committee Work Programme 2025 – 2026

Chairman: Councillor Anna Kelly

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Gloria Johnson

Subject	Purpose	Outcome sought
<b>16<sup>th</sup> September 2025</b>		
<b>SKDC compatibility with the National Green Book Terms &amp; Conditions</b>	To provide the Employment Committee with details of the differences between SKDC and National Green Book Terms & Conditions	To note the differences between SKDC and National Green Book Terms & Conditions
<b>Speeding Policy and the Substance Misuse Policy update</b>	To provide an update on incidents of speeding and the outcome of recent alcohol and drug testing and actions taken	To note the information provided on incidents of speeding and the outcome of recent alcohol and drug testing
<b>Interview for the Recruitment of a Director of Law &amp; Governance</b>	To consider candidates for the position of Director of Law & Governance	To appoint a candidate to the position of Director of Law & Governance.
<b>12<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b>		
<b>Pay Policy Statement</b>	Annual report of the pay policy statement (November 2025)	The Committee to recommend the Pay Policy Statement to Full Council.
<b>Gender Pay Gap</b>	Annual reporting of the Gender pay gap position	The Committee to note the Gender Pay Gap position.
<b>Engagement Survey Results</b>	Report on the findings of the 2025 Engagement Survey	The Committee to note the finds on the 2025 Engagement Survey
<b>Revised HR Policies Update</b>	Adoption Policy Shared Parental Leave Policy	The Committee to approve these policies
<b>HR Dashboard Update</b>	HR Dashboard Half Yearly Report	The Committee to note the HR Dashboard Half Year position
<b>Local Government Reorganisation update</b>		

Items to be allocated in 2025-2026		
Local Government Reorganisation Updates	Updates to be provided to the Committee regularly as new information becomes available.	The Committee to note the update.
Update on the Implementation of the Volunteer Policy	The Committee is to be presented with an update of the Volunteer Policy	To review and approve the policy.
Chief Executive Appraisal	Annual Appraisal	The Committee to note the Chief Executives Annual Appraisal
Director Appraisal	Annual Appraisals	The Committee to note the Director's Annual Appraisal
Practicality of the provision of Employee Health Insurance	(9 July 2025)	

# Agenda Item 10

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

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