

Meeting of the Employment Committee

Wednesday, 25 March 2026, 10.00
am



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Committee Members present

Councillor Anna Kelly (Chairman)
Councillor Gloria Johnson (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Paul Stokes

Officers

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive
Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)
Fran Beckitt, Head of Service – Human Resources and Organisational Development
Sam Fitt, Senior HR Officer
Joshua Mann, Democratic Services Officer

40. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Bellamy.

41. Disclosure of interests

There were none.

42. Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meetings held at 10.00, 12 November 2025 and 11.30, 21 January 2026, were proposed, seconded, and AGREED as an accurate record.

43. Volunteering with South Kesteven District Council Update

The Volunteering with South Kesteven District Council Update was introduced by the Deputy Leader of the Council.

The Volunteering with South Kesteven District Council Policy was introduced in September 2023 following consideration by the Employment Committee. The Policy allowed Council officers to improve relationships with existing volunteer groups and organisations engaged in activity on Council owned land and assets.

At the time of the report's publication, there were 15 individual volunteers engaged in activities at Wyndham Park and the Wyndham Park Visitor Centre. This was overseen by the newly merged Wyndham Park Forum and Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park. During 2025, volunteers from the merged organisation undertook a total of 360 hours of work in Wyndham Park and 363 hours of work in Queen Elizabeth Park.

Grantham Rivercare was a volunteer organisation that also supported the upkeep and maintenance of the parks. The maintenance of the wetland ponds in Queen Elizabeth Park was covered by a Service Level Agreement between the Council and Grantham Rivercare.

A quarterly Park Stakeholder Forum meeting was established which all volunteer organisations and stakeholders involved in the operation of the parks were invited to attend.

The Guildhall Arts Centre in Grantham already had a strong cohort of volunteers who had been in place for some time. Following the introduction of the Policy, existing volunteers were requested to sign up to the principles within it, alongside new volunteers that were since recruited. Subsequently, following the introduction of the Policy, volunteer roles had also now been introduced to support the operation of Stamford Arts Centre.

A total number of 37 volunteers were signed up to support the Guildhall Arts Centre and a total of 15 at Stamford Arts Centre. Additionally, there were a total of 14 volunteer technicians who operated across the two venues.

During discussions, the following comments were made:

- The committee expressed thanks to all volunteers across South Kesteven.
- Members urged Parish Councils to promote voluntary work and suggested implementing their own volunteer policies.
- Attention was drawn to the key role volunteers played in litter picking. Members urged a co-ordinated effort across the district.
- Special thanks was given to the volunteers overseeing the Deepings Library, Community Centre, and football clubs.

The Volunteering with South Kesteven District Council Update was noted by the Committee.

44. Employment Rights Act

The Employment Rights Act was introduced by the Leader of the Council, and a presentation was given by the HR Manager.

The presentation provided an overview of the key provisions of the Act that were relevant to SKDC. It highlighted changes that required amendments to the Council's policies and procedures to ensure continued legal compliance. These changes were encapsulated within the following areas:

- Unfair dismissal & tribunal changes
- Family friendly policies
- Menopause action plans
- Collective consultations
- Fair worker agency
- Flexible working
- Preventing sexual harassment
- Zero-hour contracts
- Trade union rights
- Pay and pay gap reporting
- Statutory sick pay
- Fire and rehire

A full table summarising the new Employment Laws, the implications for the Council, and the legal timeframes was included within the report.

During discussions, the following comments were made:

- It was requested for the presentation slides to be circulated to the committee. **ACTION**
- A Member expressed support for the changes being introduced, particularly the additions to the Paternity Policy, and commended the HR Team for the groundwork they had undertaken prior to implementation.

Following discussions it was proposed, seconded, and AGREED to:

1. Approve the proposed amendments to the Council's Probation Policy and Paternity Policy to ensure alignment with forthcoming legislative changes and best practice.
2. Note the update provided on the Employment Rights Act and the ongoing work to review and update relevant policies, plans, and procedures.

After the conclusion of the item, it was proposed, seconded, and AGREED to address *Any other business* next on the agenda.

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

The Leader of the Council congratulated both the Customer Services and Housing Teams for their recent award nominations.

A Member sought clarity that Waste Team job adverts were open to applications from both genders. This was confirmed to be the case.

46. Chief Executive Appraisal

It was proposed, seconded, and AGREED that under Section 100 (A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item on the grounds that it was likely, that if they were present, there could be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The meeting adjourned at 10.45 and resumed at 11.10.

Following discussions, it was proposed, seconded, and AGREED to

1. Consider the contents of the appraisal report attached in Appendix A compiled by the Director of HR and Councillor Development, for East Midlands Councils.
2. Note the contents of the verbal presentation and Appendix B by the Chief Executive of the achievements over the last 12 months.
3. Notes the achievements of the Chief Executive against the 2025-2026 targets and objectives as detailed in Appendix C.
4. Approve the Chief Executive's targets and objectives set for 2026-2027 as attached as Appendix D.

The meeting concluded at 11.45.