

# Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

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Wednesday, 9 July 2025 at 10.00 am  
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,  
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

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**Committee Members:** Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)  
Councillor Rhea Rayside (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Pam Byrd, Councillor Steven Cunnington, Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren, Councillor Tim Harrison, Councillor Robert Leadenham, Councillor Habib Rahman and Councillor Mark Whittington

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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. **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 Interest**  
Members are asked to disclose any interest in matters for consideration at the meeting.
4. **Minutes of the meeting held 12 March 2025** (Pages 3 - 9)

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☎ 01476 406080

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

5. **Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
6. **Corporate Plan 2024-27: Key Performance Indicators Report - End-Year (Q4) 2024/25** (Pages 11 - 19)

To present the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for quarter 4 2024/25.
7. **South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan & Age Friendly Communities Update** (Pages 21 - 62)

To provide an update on the progress and delivery of the South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.  
To provide an update on the progress of South Kesteven District Council becoming part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.
8. **Customer Service Update - Outturn 2024/25** (Pages 63 - 68)

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update regarding customer interactions within the Customer Service team and high contact service areas for 2024/25.
9. **Welfare and Financial Advice Team Update** (Pages 69 - 97)

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update regarding the Household Support Fund (2025/26), and the wrap around support provided by the Welfare and Financial Advice team. This will detail the activity undertaken by the team, number of residents supported, value of support provided and an update regarding District, County and National activities.
10. **Armed Forces Update** (Pages 99 - 118)

To provide an update on the work of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer by means of a presentation to Members of Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
11. **Work Programme 2025 - 2026** (Pages 119 - 122)

To receive the Work Programme for 2025 – 2026.
12. **Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

## Meeting of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**Wednesday, 12 March 2025, 10.00  
am**

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### **Committee Members present**

Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)  
Councillor Pam Byrd  
Councillor James Denniston  
Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren  
Councillor Robert Leadenham  
Councillor Habibur Rahman  
Councillor Phil Dilks  
Councillor Virginia Moran  
Councillor Tim Harrison  
Councillor Bridget Ley

### **Cabinet Members**

Councillor Phil Dilks  
Councillor Virginia Moran

### **Officers**

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive  
and Section 151 Officer  
Graham Watts, Assistant Director  
(Governance and Public Protection) and  
Monitoring Officer  
Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director –  
Leisure, Culture and Place  
Ayeisha Kirkham, Head of Public  
Protection  
Claire Moses, Head of Service  
(Revenues, Benefits Customer and  
Community)  
Peter Harrison, Safer Streets Co-  
Ordinator  
James Welbourn, Democratic Services  
Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Beaver,  
Sarah McQueen, Head of Service  
(Housing)  
Mark Hillson, Police Inspector  
Patrick Astill, Senior Communications  
Officer  
Stella Darker, Cost of Living Co-  
Ordinator  
Funmi Reilly, Cost of Living Co-Ordinator  
Joshua Mann, Democratic Services  
Officer

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### **123. Public Speaking**

There were no public speakers.

### **124. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Vanessa Smith and Steven Cunnington, substituted by Councillors Bridget Ley and Tim Harrison respectively.

Apologies were also received from Councillor Philip Knowles in his capacity as Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licencing.

### **125. Disclosure of Interest**

There were none.

### **126. Minutes of the meeting held 13 February 2025**

Councillor Tim Harrison noted that he was a substitute at the 13 February 2025 meeting, rather than a visiting Member.

With this amendment incorporated, the minutes of the meeting held 13 February 2025 were proposed, seconded, and AGREED as an accurate record.

### **127. Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 9 December 2024**

The minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 9 December 2024 were proposed, seconded, and AGREED as an accurate record.

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

The Chairman noted that all outstanding tasks had been completed prior to the meeting and she had received a letter from the Lincolnshire Police acknowledging the Committees previous support.

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

The Leader of the Council notified attendees that the new CCTV site was now operational, as was the 'Fix My Street' feature, allowing residents to report static issues within the district such as deceased animals or graffiti.



The Leader also explained that the Street Scene team had assisted in collecting over two tons of litter from the A1.

### **130. Crime Disorder, Local Partnership Working and CCTV Update (Presentation)**

Following an introduction by the joint-portfolio holders, the Cabinet Members for Planning and Housing, the Crime Disorder, Local Partnership Working and CCTV Update presentation was presented by the following individuals:

- Head of Service (Housing),
- Head of Service (Public Protection),
- Police Inspector Hillson,
- Safer Streets Co-Ordinator.

The presentation comprised of the following information:

- Multi-agency work being undertaken in forums such as the Vulnerable Adults Panel (VAP), Joint Agency Meetings (JAM), and Missing And Child Exploitation (MACE) meetings.
- Enforcement action undertaken and the process for doing so. This outlined the number of enforcement actions undertaken with 45 unacceptable behaviour warning letters and 6 full closure orders issued.
- Tools and powers afforded to local services by the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- Case studies of local instances of crime that required enforcement action.
- An overview of Crime Data in South Kesteven, differentiating the figures for different types of crime.
- Youth Crime and the Young Person Protocol (effectively the approach for dealing with underage anti-social behaviour (ASB)).
- The role of the Joint Diversionary Panel and the resolutions available.
- The role and achievements of the Safer Streets team.
- The Head Of Service (Public Protection) noted that she would arrange an invite for Members to view the new CCTV Centre.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Police Inspector Hillson confirmed that the crime data statistics showed a 50% increase in rape cases as a result of increased numbers of domestic abuse victims reporting instances.
- Police Inspector Hillson also confirmed that theft from the person cases has increased in Stamford from 7 cases in the year to January 2024 to 20 in the year to January 2025. This was therefore not as drastic as the 185.7% increase initially appears and could be the result of a single prolific offender.

- It was queried what the usual outcome was of the offenses outlined within the crime rate statistics. It was confirmed that being charged was the most likely outcome.
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on crime rates was queried. It was confirmed that crime rates dipped, but ASB increased significantly due to disagreements between individuals about following Covid restrictions.
- It was confirmed that there was a Performance Officer employed within the Police force to analyze crime and identify trends.
- Some Members voiced concerns about the impact of Lincolnshire Police being placed in special measures by the Home Office, particularly on the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). With this in mind, it was queried and confirmed that there were no longer any PCSOs based in the south of the South Kesteven district.
- It was confirmed that there was no indication from central Government that funding for Safer Streets would continue following the end of March 2025. As a result, alternative funding was being pursued but was yet to be secured.
- A Member confirmed that the feedback from their residents had been overwhelmingly positive about the Safer Streets Team.
- The new CCTV Centre was confirmed to have 161 cameras across the district with 38 in Grantham.
- Members encouraged raising awareness of the Joint Diversionary Panel.

Members noted the Crime Disorder, Local Partnership Working and CCTV Update.

### **131. Cost of Living Team update**

The Cost of Living Team update was presented by the Cabinet Member for Housing.

The aim of the Cost of Living Team was to enable the Council's most vulnerable residents get access to varying financial support that was provided by the Government and other organisations.

Following a temporary initial period funding was secured to allow the Cost of Living Team to become a permanent feature as of 1 April 2025. The two existing officers were both successful in their expressions of interest and secured the roles permanently. The Cost of Living Team was to be renamed the Welfare and Financial Advice Team in its new incarnation.

During the initial period, the funding was broken into two cohorts, £223,371 during HSF5 (1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024) and £259,754.87 during HSF6 (1 October 2024 – 31 March 2025).

Of the £223,371 funding available during HSF5, £220,471 was utilized. The remaining funds were used for individuals who would have been eligible retrospectively.

Of the £259,754.87 funding available during HSF6, £127,181.80 was utilized up to 21 February 2025.

Of the residents who were supported via the referral and HSF process, a total of £118,791 of additional wrap-around financial support was identified by the team. As a result, the residents received additional financial support through a variety of avenues such as Discretionary Housing Payment, Foodbank vouchers, reduction in council tax, funding towards the purchasing of goods (through referral to third party), or a reduction in utility bills.

The Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community) advised the 'TBC' figures in paragraph 2.12 had been provided and would be issued within the minutes as follows:

District Area	% allocation of funding		Allocation (£)	
	HSF5	HSF6	HSF5	HSF6
<b>Boston</b>	10%	10%	£157,720.60	£185,539.13
<b>City of Lincoln</b>	16%	16%	£252,352.96	£296,862.61
<b>East Lindsey</b>	24%	24%	£378,529.45	£445,293.91
<b>North Kesteven</b>	11%	11%	£173,492.66	£204,093.04
<b>South Holland</b>	12%	12%	£189,264.72	£222,646.96
<b>South Kesteven</b>	14%	14%	£223,371	£259,754.78
<b>West Lindsey</b>	13%	13%	£205,036.78	£241,200.87
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£1,579,768.17</b>	<b>£1,855,391.30</b>

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Members praised the work of the Cost of Living Team and the positive impact that it had on vulnerable residents.
- As of the date of the meeting, it was confirmed that £166,244 worth of vouchers had been issued by the Cost of Living Team.
- It was queried what level of funding would be available following 1 April 2025. It was only known that nationally there was £1 billion allocated to be shared between the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments.
- It was confirmed that this funding was guaranteed.

The Cost of Living Team update was noted by the Committee.

### **132. Customer Service Update Q3 2024/25**

The Customer Service Update Q3 2024/25 was presented by the Leader of the Council.

The Leader outlined that SKDC had received the equivalent of one enquiry per resident in Quarter Three, with 1.3 Million contacts via digital channels from Quarter One to Quarter Three.

From April 2024 - December 2024, 83% of calls were handled (answered) with 17% of calls being abandoned. This was a slight reduction from December 2023 of 84% handled and 16% abandoned. It was noted that abandoned calls was not necessarily negative as this could be individuals choosing to make contact via the website after hearing the automated advice.

The Leader advised that the Fix My Street feature was now available and would be incorporated onto the website. This feature enabled residents to report issues in the district such as fly tipping or graffiti.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- The Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service and Community) confirmed their satisfaction with the call handling rate given that they would normally aim for 80% and they had received few complaints regarding abandoned calls. However, they did note that there was no specified optimal level and that this would be an outcome of the Customer Experience Strategy consultation.
- The Leader outlined that benchmarking data was currently being gathered, with the Council issuing a Freedom Of Information (FOI) requests to forty Councils to inquire about Customer Service performance.

The Customer Service Update Q3 2024/25 was noted by the Committee.

### **133. Customer Experience Strategy - Review and Consultation**

The Customer Experience Strategy - Review and Consultation was presented by the Leader of the Council.

During 2024, the Customer Service Management team undertook a series of workshops with officers from all service areas, to review the existing strategy and discuss what they knew about their customer. The workshops have helped to form the scope of the consultation to refresh the existing strategy for 2025 to 2029.

The public consultation was undertaken for the period 10 March to 7 April 2025 and was undertaken with a variety of stakeholders to understand how they interact or would choose to interact with the Council.

The purpose of the consultation was to:

- Find out how people contact South Kesteven District Council (SKDC), why they contact the Council and how often.
- Establish what was important to people when contacting the Council.
- Understand what was most in need of improvement.
- Use this information to draw up SKDC's Service Standards, Customer Charter & Commitments and also what the Council expected from customers.
- Measure degree of support for strategy's potential vision, ambitions and outcomes.

It was confirmed that 379 responses had been received prior to the meeting.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Why only 39,133 calls had been handled by the switchboard when 95,547 calls had been received via the Customer Service Centre. It was confirmed that this disparity accounted for direct calls that had not gone via the switchboard.

The Customer Experience Strategy - Review and Consultation was noted by the Committee.

#### **134. Work Programme 2024 - 2025**

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

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

There was no other business.

*The Chairman concluded the meeting at 11.43 am.*

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SOUTH  
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## Rural & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 9 July 2025

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

### Corporate Plan 2024-27: Key Performance Indicators Report - End-Year (Q4) 2024/25

#### Report Author

Charles James, Policy Officer

✉ 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 purview of this Committee for Quarter Four 2024/25.

#### 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 Housing Effective Council
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, which is for noting.

*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 28 March 2024.



### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 This report is the second of the new reporting cycle and covers the period January to March 2025 (Quarter 4 2024/25).
- 3.2 Appendix A presents the overall performance against the nine 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 Seven of the actions are rated Green. These are actions which are on or above target as planned.
- 3.4 One action is rated Amber, these are actions 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 One action is rated as Completed. This is the delivery of COM9 the Home Office funded Safer Streets programme.
- 3.8 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**

- Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2024-27 KPI Report: Rural & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee End-Year (Q4) 2024/25

<b>Corporate Plan 2024-27: KPI Summary Report 2024/25 – Rural &amp; Communities Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>							
Index	Priority	Action	Owner	2024/25 Quarterly Overall Status			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
COM1	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Local Health and Wellbeing Action Plan	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COM7	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Community Engagement and Development Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service & Community) / Community Engagement Manager	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COM8	Connecting Communities	Continue to deliver an accredited, effective and legislatively compliant CCTV service in partnership with Lincolnshire Police.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COM9	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Safer Streets programme and seek opportunities to develop a legacy applied districtwide once the funding period ends	Head of Service (Public Protection)	On Target	Below Target	Below Target	Completed
COM11	Connecting Communities	Continue to support our Armed Forces Community and, as a Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) Gold Award holder, advocate for the Armed Forces Community Covenant.	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service & Community) / Armed Forces Covenant	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COUN1	Effective Council	Continue to work in partnership with relevant partners to deliver and support targeted initiatives across the district to help communities.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
COUN2	Effective Council	Ensure the administration of licenses and approvals relating to both national legislation and discretionary, are effective, efficient, timely and consistent.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	N/A	On Target	Below Target	Below Target
COUN5	Effective Council	Deliver the refreshed Customer Experience Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service & Community)	Below Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
HOUS2	Housing	Ensure services to support residents to remain living in their community with as much independence as possible, ideally within their own home, with the right support.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	Below Target	Below Target	On Target	On Target

Corporate Plan 2024-27: KPI Summary Report Q4 2024/25 – Rural & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee							
Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
COM1	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Local Health and Wellbeing Action Plan	Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)	Deliver 100% of the Local Health and Wellbeing action plan actions.	41%	On Target	Officers continue to work on the actions within the Action Plan, as many are considered as 'ongoing'. Officers also continue to take an active role in the Countywide Health and Wellbeing Officer Working Group and Healthy Weight Operational Partnership Group. In April 2025, the steering group of the UK Network of Age Friendly Committees, approved the application for South Kesteven District Council to become part of the Network.
COM7	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Community Engagement and Development Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service & Community) / Community Engagement Manager	% of total actions on target/complete	96%	On Target	The effectiveness of Community Engagement relies on interventions, support and projects that are ongoing. The Action Plan covers a four year period and all but 1 of the actions within it have already commenced and will remain ongoing. The nature of Community Engagement work means that very few actions reach a cut-off point as the support and activity offered is needed on an on-going basis by the voluntary and community sector with whom the team works. The Team has achieved its target to successfully deliver against the agreed number of events during this year.
				Number of Community Engagement events held across the district (15 cumulative)	4 (cumulative total 16)	On Target	
				£ levered by the SK Community Fund (£37,000 cumulative)	£1,480 (cumulative total £71,934)	On Target	A cumulative total of £71,934 was levered by the SK Community Fund in 2024/25, exceeding the £37,000 target. The full year value of funding levered into the District through support of the SK Community Fund remains dependent on the uptake of grants and project value, but has been boosted by the direct support being offered to groups across the District by the work of the Community Grants and Funding Officer.

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
COM8	Connecting Communities	Continue to deliver an accredited, effective and legislatively compliant CCTV service in partnership with Lincolnshire Police.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	% Public Realm CCTV cameras working at all times (Monthly)	N/A	N/A	During Q4 the CCTV upgrade and relocation project was in full progression therefore certain cameras were off for a period of time to allow for the upgrade work and this ranged from 2 hours to 24 hours, therefore accurate data is difficult to obtain over this time period. Operators are confident that the 90% target was maintained during this disruption. An average of 99% was achieved in 2024/25. An audit by the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) was undertaken in December 2024 and SKDC were found to be in compliance and received a certificate of registration. On 11 March 2025, the planned relocation of the Council operated CCTV control centre to Grantham Police station was completed.
				Achievement of successful annual review by Surveillance Camera Commissioner	Achieved	On Target	
COM9	Connecting Communities	Deliver the Safer Streets programme and seek opportunities to develop a legacy applied districtwide once the funding period ends	Head of Service (Public Protection)	% of funding spent (cumulative)	95.8%	Completed	<p>The Home Office funded Safer Streets programme has been successfully delivered. Officers are exploring funding options to continue the safe street patrols and additional CCTV operatives at peak times for a further year.</p> <p>Total spend at the programme conclusion was £96,051.27. 95.8% of the £100,203 funding from the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner has been spent. The £4k underspend relates to a small underspend on the Safer Streets Coordinator salary, increased night time and weekend patrols, CCTV operative cover. The Home Safe Tokens element of the project (£1000) was not spent due to limitations regarding the availability of taxis in the night time economy and the practical distribution of the tokens.</p>

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
COM11	Connecting Communities	Continue to support our Armed Forces Community and, as a Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) Gold Award holder, advocate for the Armed Forces Community Covenant.	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service & Community) / Armed Forces Covenant	% of total actions on target/complete (Armed Forces Covenant Action of Community Engagement and Development Strategy	87%	On Target	The Action Plan remains on target to meet requirements. The actions are contained within the Community Engagement and Development Strategy's Action Plan which runs from 2024-2027. The number of events coordinated and delivered by the Armed Forces Officer has achieved the target set. The number of commemorative events delivered across the district have exceeded the set target.
				Number of engagement events delivered annually that raise awareness of the Armed Forces community and bring together business, community and the defence sector to explore opportunities for collaboration (7)	7 (cumulative)	On Target	
				Number of events delivered within the district that mark national commemorations relating to the Armed Forces community (1)	3 (cumulative)	On Target	
COUN1	Effective Council	Continue to work in partnership with relevant partners to deliver and support targeted initiatives across the district to help communities.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	Attendance at partnership meetings (75%)	94%	On Target	Partnership working is prioritised by the Public Protection Service. This is essential to maintaining strong relationships with partners. There were 17 partnership meetings in Q4 and a representative from the South Kesteven DC Public Protection service attended 16 of those meetings.

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
COUN2	Effective Council	Ensure the administration of licenses and approvals relating to both national legislation and discretionary, are effective, efficient, timely and consistent.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	% of Regulatory Services service requests with an initial response within a defined timescale (5 working days) 95%	Service Average: 93%	Below Target	Performance is assessed by the percentage of services requests with an initial response within five working days. The target is 95%.  Overall the Public Protection Service operated at an average of 93% in Q4 2024/25. There were operational factors (including staff sickness) that affected meeting the target and these are being reviewed to ensure that this target % increases in 2025/26.
					Neighbourhoods Team: 88%	Below Target	
					Commercial Team: 99%	On Target	
					Licensing Team: 99%	Below Target	
					Environmental Health, Environmental Protection, Private Sector Housing:85%	Below Target	
COUN5	Effective Council	Deliver the refreshed Customer Experience Strategy and accompanying action plan.	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service & Community)	Approval of refreshed Customer Experience Strategy	Post-Consultation	On Target	Public consultation started on 10 March 2025 for 4 weeks to 7 April 2025. A total of 540 responses were received. Responses have been analysed. A Member workshop is taking place on 21 May 2025, and the new strategy & action plan will be presented to Cabinet on 1 July 2025.
				Volume of calls offered (% handled) 80%	53,935 calls offered (43,148 handled – 80%)	On Target	Total calls offered to 31 March 2025 for Q4 were 53,935 (205,558 cumulative for 2024/25), of which 84% were handled (43,148). The cumulative handling rate for 2024/25 was 79%.
HOUS2	Housing	Ensure services to support residents to remain living in their community with as much independence as possible, ideally within their own home, with the right support.	Head of Service (Public Protection)	100 completed per year	151 (cumulative) 32 were completed in Q4.	On Target	Final paperwork for 2024/25 identified that a total of 151 adaption grants were completed in 2024/25.

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**SOUTH  
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COUNCIL**

## **Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Wednesday, 9 July 2025

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

## **South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan**

### **Report Author**

Bethany Goodman, Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead

✉ [bethany.goodman@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:bethany.goodman@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### **Purpose of Report**

To provide an update on the progress and delivery of the South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, and the progress of South Kesteven District Council becoming part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.

### **Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. Note the information provided within this report and suggest any enhancements to the extent and clarity of the information produced for the next six-monthly update.**

### **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 Wards

## 1. Implications

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

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

- 1.1 There are no financial implications for the Council in relation to this report. The work completed to date has been undertaken within identified budgets. If any initiatives are identified which require budget or investment, then an appropriate business case will be developed which identifies the cost and the associated benefit to the community.

*Completed by: David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer*

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

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

### ***Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion***

- 1.3 The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination based on a range of characteristics, one of which is age. The Health and Wellbeing Action Plan covers activity for people of all ages and abilities regardless of any additional protected characteristic and every effort is made to meet the needs of participants in, and beneficiaries of, the work which is undertaken to meet our health and wellbeing commitments.
- 1.4 In addition to the legal duty, there are many advantages to providing an environment in which people can grow old well and feel supported. Feeling disconnected from society can have an adverse effect on people's mental and physical health, which in turn can lead to increased support being required from the Council and community health services.

- 1.5 The ability to grow old well and live an independent life does not only rely on an individual's personal capability but also on the social and physical environments in which they live. Ensuring the district provides a supportive environment can play an important role in assisting older residents to maintain activity levels and their independence for longer.

*Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. This report is broken down into two key areas as follows for ease of reading:

- A. An overview of South Kesteven's Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and progress made to date.
- B. An update on the progress of Age Friendly Communities work in South Kesteven.

**A. An overview of South Kesteven's Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and progress made to date.**

- 2.2. The Council's Corporate Plan (2024-2027) identifies Connecting Communities as a key priority. This includes an ambition to work effectively with partners in the voluntary, private and public sectors to tackle inequalities including those relating to health and unemployment, especially in areas of highest need.
- 2.3. The Action Plan is aimed at achieving improved health and wellbeing outcomes for the residents of South Kesteven, and supports the Lincolnshire District Councils' Health and Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) (see **Background Papers**), which is structured around five lever areas:
- Housing and Homelessness
  - Activity and Wellbeing
  - Environment and Climate
  - Economic Inclusion
  - Working with Communities
- 2.4. Officers continue to work collaboratively across service areas to deliver the actions identified, with the Lead Officers for each of the five lever areas providing an update on progress.
- 2.5. Over the last 12 months, Officers have been working to deliver the actions on the Action Plan which has now come to an end of the current delivery period. The updated and final Action Plan up to May 2025 is provided at **Appendix One** of this report.

- 2.6. It is worth noting that many of the actions within the Action Plan are considered as 'ongoing' as some of these are continuous or span several years. The commentary provides a clearer picture of the great work that is being delivered across the district.
- 2.7. As the delivery period for the existing actions has now come to an end, Officers have been working on refreshing the actions for the next 12 months. These can be found at **Appendix Two** of this report.
- 2.8. The actions in Lever Four, Economic Inclusion, will be reviewed in further depth upon the appointment of a Head of Economic Development later in the year.
- 2.9. The seven Lincolnshire districts continue to work together, with representatives from each district meeting regularly to provide updates and share ideas. The working group continues to work alongside partners and stakeholders via representation on the Health and Wellbeing Board, to develop and deliver plans to improve health and wellbeing outcomes

**B. An update on the progress of Age Friendly Communities work in South Kesteven**

- 2.10. Within the Council's Corporate Plan (2024 - 2027) the Council has identified its mission to be 'A thriving District to live in, work and visit'. This is under-pinned by the priority of Connecting Communities which aims to enhance the strength, wellbeing and capacity of communities across the district, and work towards providing a cohesive society that all our residents can be proud to belong to. Particularly pertinent to this report, the Corporate Plan recognises that South Kesteven has an ageing population.
- 2.11. At a meeting of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 February 2025, the Committee agreed to receive six-monthly progress reports as part of the Action Plan update. The report can be accessed in **Background Papers**.
- 2.12. In April 2025, South Kesteven District Council were accepted into the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities. The below feedback was received from The Centre for Ageing Better. The feedback has now been acted upon, and the working group now has better representation across all eight domains.
- *'The group were impressed with your application, in particular how you laid out your staff resources, approached looking at data and the community fund you identified for potentially funding age-friendly work.'*
  - *'They felt having both physical wellbeing and community engagement involved in leadership of your work was strong.'*
  - *'The steering group reflected that some domains felt less represented in the departments/ stakeholders you had involved.'*

- *The other main point of feedback was the steering group wanted to hear more about the diversity within your older community, in particular how you would reach diverse voices with your survey.'*

- 2.13. The Council will need to follow the four-step programme as set out by the World Health Organisation (WHO), with the first step being 'Engage and Understand'. As political commitment has already been obtained, the next steps are to form a committee of stakeholders and gather findings.
- 2.14. At this initial stage we will engage with organisations that work directly with or support older adults. These results will form part of the baseline assessment which will be fully analysed. A copy of the proposed survey can be found at **Appendix Three** and is due to go out later in July 2025.
- 2.15. Once this survey has been analysed, a further survey will be circulated to residents within the district to understand what it is like to live, work and age within South Kesteven. It is anticipated that this will go live towards the end of 2025.
- 2.16. The baseline profile for South Kesteven will be finalised by March 2026 and this will lead the direction of future work that will be undertaken.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. The adoption of a bespoke local action plan for South Kesteven has allowed the Council to tackle health inequalities across the district in line with the Council's Corporate ambitions, and has ensured actions are targeted to drive improvements at a local level
- 3.2. Continuing to work collaboratively with the other six Lincolnshire district authorities provides the opportunity to identify synergies across Lincolnshire and allows district colleagues to share best practice and learn from each other.
- 3.3. Becoming an Age Friendly Community allows the Council and its residents to access tools, support and guidance from the Centre for Ageing Better and other networks across the UK. It also supports the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board's strategic ambition to coordinate a county-wide response to the opportunities and challenges presented by ageing.

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

- 4.1. South Kesteven District Council is committed to developing an ambitious agenda for improving health and wellbeing across the district. Continuing to work on and deliver the actions identified will drive forward these results. In addition, Members of the Cabinet have approved the Council working towards becoming an Age Friendly Community. Therefore, the 'do nothing' option was discounted.

## 5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The local action plan has been developed to ensure the identified activity to improve health and wellbeing outcomes across South Kesteven aligns with the Council's corporate vision and will deliver benefits for district residents.
- 5.2. Members are requested to monitor progress on the delivery of the identified actions to ensure the positive outcomes the Council is seeking, are delivered.

## 6. Background Papers

- 6.1. *Executive Summary – Lincolnshire District Councils' Health and Wellbeing Strategy*, available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37130/Appendix%201%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20-%20Lincolnshire%20District%20Councils%20Health%20Wellbeing%20Strategy.pdf>
- 6.2. *Age Friendly Communities – Report to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee*, Published 05 February 2025, available online at:  
<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s45355/Age%20Friendly%20Communities.pdf>

## 7. Appendices

- 7.1. **Appendix One** – South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan – Update as of May 2025
- 7.2. **Appendix Two** – Proposed South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan – New Action Plan June 2025
- 7.3. **Appendix Three** – Proposed Age Friendly Communities Survey

Overall objective: Improve the supply, quality and coordination of services to meet housing needs and demands.

<b>Housing and Homelessness: Identified Action</b>	<b>South Kestevens Action Plan</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Completion Status</b>
Coordinate the effective delivery of homelessness services through a partnership driven and evidence-based homelessness strategy.	TBC		Sarah McQueen	
Establish future investment strategies to meet current and emerging needs for care and support.	TBC		Sarah McQueen	
Bring more empty homes into use in order to improve the supply of properties available within the county.	Work collaboratively with colleagues in council tax to identify available empty properties	Ongoing	Tom Amblin-Lightowler	
	Build stronger relationships with landlords to offer support and advice to enable properties to be brought back into use	Ongoing	Tom Amblin-Lightowler	
	Explore options around bringing those properties back into use,	Ongoing	Tom Amblin-Lightowler	
Deliver new housing to meet housing needs and demands, meeting zero carbon targets and recognising all levels of affordability.	Ensure a responsive and robust approach to any reports of properties in poor repair in private sector.	Ongoing	Tom Amblin-Lightowler	
Improve the quality of existing properties across all tenures and reduce the cost of poor housing to health, care and society.	TBC		Sarah McQueen	
Reduce levels of overcrowding as a means of reducing health risks.	TBC		Sarah McQueen	
Improve services to extend people's housing choices in preparation for later life	TBC		Sarah McQueen	
Ensure services to support people to remain living in their current home complement each other as a system-wide approach.	Effective management of the DFG application service	Ongoing	Tom Amblin-Lightowler	

	Work collaboratively with partner agencies to support and enable people to continue to live in their current home	Ongoing	Tom Amblin-Lightowler	
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Overall objective: To address inactivity across the county - improving access and opportunity for all residents to be active and participate.

Activity and Wellbeing: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan 2025-2026	By When	By Whom	Completion Status
<b>Active Place:</b> Develop a plan to be able to positively influence the planning system/external decision making in the area	Openly share the SKDC Sport and Physical Activity Strategy with partners to achieve common goals.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
	Work with the partners in the Playing Pitch Strategy to access funding opportunities for the identified requirements.	Ongoing	Leisure	
	Work with partners to review and refresh the current Sport and Physical Activity Strategy ahead of 2026.	Mar-26	Beth Goodman	
<b>Active Place:</b> Make better use of green spaces across Lincolnshire and maximise opportunities for residents and visitors to be active in Lincolnshire	Upskill volunteers to deliver Our Parks sessions to deliver free outdoor fitness classes in SKDC open spaces	Dec-25	Beth Goodman/Parks	
	Promote outdoor gym use working with Active Lincolnshire ensuring the maps in the district are displayed on the outdoor gym finder/Lets Move Lincolnshire.	Ongoing	Alison Lewis	
	Promote open spaces and outdoor leisure provision.	Ongoing	Leisure/Planning	
	Retain Green Flag status in the parks.	July, 2025	Sharon Haythorn	
	Work closely with local organisations to promote cycling opportunities in the district	Summer 2025	Beth Goodman	
	Continue to promote green spaces as a positive place to promote mental and physical wellbeing, working with partners	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
	Regularly connect with Lincolnshire County Council/Active Travel England to positively influence Active Travel, encouraging the planning team to apply for funding provision and developments of public footpaths and cycleways.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	

<b>Active Place:</b> Widen the focus from commercial leisure offer and asset-based physical activity to activity outside, in the home and in the workplace	Look at costings and accessibility of leisure centres to break down barriers of accessing health facilities.	Ongoing	Michael Chester	
	Work with Lincolnshire County Council to create maps of community assets with the benefits of being active linking the green spaces, community foot and cycle paths alongside displaying the benefits of active travel on climate change.	Mar-26	Beth Goodman/Serena Brown	
	Continue to work on the actions identified in the condition surveys and undertake feasibility studies with the UKSPF to ensure facilities remain attractive, accessible, and available to residents.	Ongoing	Leisure/Property	
<b>Active People:</b> Provide Opportunities and programmes across communities to enable residents to take part in regular activity	Increase awareness and benefits of physical activity in South Kesteven through networking and marketing, including the use of the Activity Finder on the Let's Move Lincolnshire platform.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
	Work with stakeholders to provide ample opportunities and programmes within South Kesteven, targeting all ages/abilities by hosting 'Give it a Go' days.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
	Continue to develop Lincolnshire Co-op Wellbeing Walks to ensure there are opportunities in each market town	Ongoing	Lincs Coop	
	Work with the Centre for Ageing Better and the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities to create a baseline profile	Mar-26	Age Friendly Working Group	
	Use the Workforce Wellbeing Plan to deliver a range of initiatives for council employees.	Ongoing	Wellbeing Team	

<b>Active System:</b> Creating leadership, governance and partnerships, and workforce capabilities across sectors to use resources in a more coordinated way to reduce inactivity.	Work with local leisure providers to deliver rehabilitation programmes for those living with long term health conditions and older adults.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
<b>Active System:</b> Each district council to develop opportunities to positively influence internal/corporate decision making in their local area and embed in governance processes	Regularly meet with the First Aiders for Mental Health	Ongoing	Wellbeing Team	
<b>Active System:</b> Proactive and inclusive approach to sharing learning, best practice and opportunities for collaboration.	Join the wellbeing network groups with local connectors to cover the district.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
<b>Active System:</b> Proactivity engage across the NHS to encourage innovation and creativity to enable health, wellbeing and physical activity within planning consultations.	Work with PCNs, Neighborhood leads and social prescribers to create successful partnerships to share best practice and opportunities.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
	Research and develop a plan for place-based partnerships and opportunities with partners.	Mar-26	Beth Goodman/Active Lincolnshire	
	All activities planned through all organisations should deliver on the five ways to wellbeing; be active, connect, take notice, keep learning, and give.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman/All	

Overall objective: Improve understanding of the links between environment and health and maximise opportunities to deliver on both.

Environment and Climate: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan	By When	By Whom	Completion Status
Improve air quality, particularly in designated management areas.	To regularly review the annual air quality statement and track progress on South Kesteven monitoring sites.	Ongoing	Ayeisha Kirkham	
Accelerate transition towards active travel	Continue to work with LCC. This action also links in with the Activity and Wellbeing Lever	Ongoing	Serena Brown	
Promote and increase uptake of electric vehicles	New EVCPs to be installed in reinstated Cattlemarket car park in Stamford	Aug-25	Serena Brown	
Mobility: provision and uptake of public transport services	Continue to work with local transport boards	Ongoing	Planning	
Improve domestic energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions	40 properties upgraded in South Kesteven under Home Upgrade Grant phase 2 (HUG2) funding. 318 SKDC owned properties upgraded using Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. New scheme to be launched in 2025	Ongoing		
Joint work to reduce carbon emissions from all Councils (Lincolnshire County Council and districts)	Carbon emissions report for 2023/24 reported a 25% reduction against baseline, target is 30% by 2030.	Mar-26	Climate Team	
Reduce Carbon Emissions across all services to meet national carbon reduction targets	Climate Action Strategy published and Climate Action Plan underway which is due to be presented in November 2025	Ongoing	Climate Team	
Understand the local impacts of a changing climate to improve community resilience.	TBC		Climate Team	

Reduce waste output across the county and tackle key issues	To roll out new food waste caddies	Mar-26	Waste Services	
Improve open space provision that recognises the role of improved biodiversity, carbon storage and wellbeing benefits	Biodiversity Action Plan under development and due to be presented in Nov 2025	Nov-25	Serena Brown	
Influence provision of healthy and sustainable food options	Continue to work with the Healthy Weight Partnership Board	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	
Maximise opportunity of Local Plan Reviews	Regulation 19 for next Local Plan targeted for late 2025 and submitted for examination for Winter 2026	Mar-26	Emma Whittaker	

Overall objective: Reducing economic inequality and alleviating poverty as a fundamental driver for improving mental and physical health and wellbeing

<b>Economic Inclusion: Identified Action</b>	<b>South Kestevens Action Plan 2025-2026</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Completion Status</b>
Embed strong strategic narrative/understanding to promote economic inclusion and health inequality linkages that deliver better outcomes	Ensure projects/interventions to test whether appropriate health/economic inequality outcome and outputs have/can be captured or weaved into the initiative.	Ongoing	Economic Development	
<b>People in Employment:</b> Work with Lincolnshire employers to improve working conditions/environment particularly within low paid and insecure employment to improve their health and wellbeing and prevent health issues developing – whilst improving business productivity.	Lead by example, through partnership working - set out how organisations can improve working conditions	Ongoing	Economic Development/HR	
<b>People in Employment:</b> Improve skills for those currently in work, enabling career progression, greater wage levels, better job security, greater productivity development – good for people and business – part of tackling in-work poverty.	Support the Federation of Small Business in its implementation of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.	Ongoing	Economic Development	
<b>People in Employment:</b> Increase volunteering to support the community and increase well-being for the volunteers themselves.				
<b>Supporting those most susceptible to economic change and transition:</b> Increase core sector resilience in Lincolnshire by supporting employers to adapt and respond to economic transitions caused by the pandemic, through addressing skills gaps with employees.	Support the Federation of Small Business in its implementation of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.	Ongoing	Economic Development	
<b>Supporting those most susceptible to economic change and transition:</b> Employee upskilling and retaining programmes for those in industries exposed to long-term change and decline.	Working with LEP, partners, review Lincolnshire and national landscape ahead of developing an approach to key industries	Ongoing	Economic Development	
<b>Digital skills programme:</b> Residents have the digital skills to access health services, everyday services and employment opportunities.	Support stakeholders to build on the successfully delivered Skills Bootcamp (part of the Government's Lifetime Skill Guarantee), helping people gain skills for life.	Mar-26	Economic Development	

<b>Digital skills programme:</b> Fully enabled digital FFTP (fixed fibre premises) infrastructure across the county using place appropriate technologies.	Support the telecommunications industry with an 'open for business' approach to rolling out fibre broadband across the district	Ongoing	Economic Development/Planning	
<b>Eliminate poor health from being a barrier to employment:</b> Create an intervention programme that supports residents with ill-health into employment.	Support DWP in the endeavours to help residents with ill-health towards employment	Ongoing	Economic Development & Community Engagement	
Creating an environment to support development of the health and care sector to improve health related service provision (wide scale health attraction interventions).	Develop interventions with partners (including FE and college providers) to support recruitment/retention of employees within the health and care sector	Ongoing	Economic Development & Community Engagement	

Overall objectives: Leverage unique links at place level to engage with communities

Working with Communities: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan	By When	By Whom	Completion Status
<b>Capture and build on district community engagement knowledge and expertise:</b> Combine and codify the District's knowledge and approach to community engagement and empowerment, building on success and experience gained during the pandemic.	Series of funding and bid writing workshops to support project development and delivery by VCS across the district	Ongoing	Carol Drury	
	Work with Harlaxton Manor on the Impact Booster programme which supports V&C sector organisations, charities and CICs to realise their goals	Feb-26	Carol Drury	
	Council in the Community initiative to engage with residents face-to-face	Ongoing	Carol Drury	
	Work with Armed Forces Families to help identify and provide support where needed to serving and veteran members of the military and their families	Oct-25	Paul Drury	
Expand district participation in current sector discussions across the wider system.	Ring-fenced financial support for Foodbanks and other food support agencies across the district	Mar-26	Carol Drury	
	Attendance at mental health groups, district health and wellbeing groups, food support groups	Ongoing	Carol Drury	
	Attendance at meetings and information sessions relating to Armed Forces Veterans	Ongoing	Debbie Nicholls/Paul Drury	
<b>Strengthen sector oversight and assurance:</b> Work with partners (Sector representative groups and County) to develop an agreed approach to sector oversight and assurance, harnessing community potential in a safe, effective way.	Work in collaboration with LCVS and other agencies to provide health checks and assurance relating to VCS	Ongoing	Carol Drury	



<b>Enhance and sustain voluntary sector engagement and contribution:</b> Building on success during the pandemic, develop and formalize mechanisms to draw on volunteer capacity quickly and efficiently in response to emerging community needs e.g., flooding, pandemic.	Improve links with Parish and Town Councils	Ongoing	Carol Drury	
<b>A strategic Commissioning approach in Lincolnshire:</b> To maximise impact and reach of commissioned services across the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing System.	TBC			
<b>Wellbeing Lincs:</b> Review opportunities to further develop districts preventative approach, using Wellbeing Lincs as a proven and trusted mechanism for collaboration and innovation (harness Wellbeing Lincs as a powerful vehicle for co-production, collaboration, innovation).	TBC			

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## Age Friendly Communities - Survey

South Kesteven District Council has recently been accepted into the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities with The Centre for Ageing Better.

We are looking to hear from local organisations that support older adults in South Kesteven to form a baseline profile of the demographics, support and challenges this part of our community faces.

We want to ensure our district is a place which enables people to age well and live a good later life. Somewhere that people can stay living in their homes, participate in the activities they value, and contribute to their communities, for as long as possible.

South Kesteven District Council appreciates you taking the time to complete this survey on behalf of your organisation.

\* Required

1

Which geographical area(s) in South Kesteven does your service cover? \*

2

What service do you provide to older adults in South Kesteven? \*

3

How age friendly do you think the outdoor environment (spaces and public buildings) is in South Kesteven for older people? The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on mobility, independence and quality of life of older people. \*



- ☐ EXCELLENT and requires little change
- ☐ GOOD but some improvement is required
- ☐ GENERALLY OK but requires quite a lot of improvement
- ☐ POOR and extensive change is required

4

Relating to question 3, please provide further details on how you think improvements could be made?

5

How age friendly do you think the transport options are in South Kesteven? Transportation is a key issue for people in later life. This includes accessible public transport, community transport and private hire. \*

- ☐ EXCELLENT and requires little change
- ☐ GENERALLY GOOD - some minor improvements would make them excellent
- ☐ VARIES across the district - some areas good but others need considerable improvement
- ☐ DISAPPOINTING - extensive changes are required

6

Relating to question 5, please provide further details relating to your answer: \*

7

Does your organisation contribute to, or interact with, transport services suitable for older people in South Kesteven? If so, in what capacity? If no, please comment N/A. \*

8

Thinking about housing (the buildings) - Is there enough suitable private rented housing in South Kesteven? \*

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes, for most
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Not for most
- ☐ Definitely not

9

Thinking about housing (the buildings) Is there enough suitable social housing in South Kesteven? \*

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes, for most
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Not for most
- ☐ Definitely not

10

Thinking about housing - Is there enough suitable housing available to purchase in South Kesteven? \*

- ☐ Yes definitely
- ☐ Yes for most
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Not for most
- ☐ Definitely not

11

In your experience, would you say older residents can secure necessary adaptations to live well in their home easily? \*

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes for most
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Not for most
- ☐ Definitely not

12

Thinking about housing - Is housing support for older residents easily available and to a high standard? \*

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes, for more
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Not for most
- ☐ Definitely not

13

How does your organisation contribute to housing provision/support services for older people in South Kesteven? If this doesn't apply, please comment N/A. \*

14

Would you say that there are sufficient opportunities for older people to socialise in South Kesteven? Tick all that apply. Social connection is important to residents to remain active and engaged, fostering well-being and creating a sense of belonging. \*

- ☐ Yes, there are sufficient opportunities for 50-65 year olds
- ☐ Yes, there are sufficient opportunities for 65-75 year olds
- ☐ Yes, there are sufficient opportunities for 75+ year olds
- ☐ No, there are not sufficient opportunities for older people to socialise in South Kesteven

15

If you selected no to question 14, please add details about which ages you feel are most affected and what improvements could be made.

16

How does your organisation contribute to social participation opportunities for older people in South Kesteven? If this doesn't apply, please comment N/A. \*

17

What steps, if any, are you taking in your organisation to ensure that older people feel respected and included? \*

18

Thinking about contributions in later life - do you think there are enough opportunities to become involved in volunteering? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ No

19

Thinking about contributions in later life - do you think there are enough opportunities to become involved in local politics? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ No

20

Thinking about contributions in later life - do you think there are enough employment and training opportunities for people over 50? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ No

21

Does your organisation provide opportunities and support for older workers and if so, how? \*

22

Thinking of staying connected - is there an assumption that everyone will access your service information through the internet? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ No

23

Would you say most the below age groups stay connected and access information through the internet? Select all that apply. \*

- ☐ Yes, 50-65 year olds stay connected through the internet
- ☐ Yes, 65-75 year olds stay connected through the internet
- ☐ Yes, 75+ year olds stay connected through the internet
- ☐ No, generally older adults do not stay connected and up to date through the internet

24

Relating to question 23, please provide any further details in relation to your answer: \*



25

Thinking of staying connected - Are there enough opportunities to access information in other ways (e.g. leaflets/post) in South Kesteven? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ No

26

How does your organisation ensure that older people receive information in a way that they prefer to receive it? \*

27

Thinking about community support and health services - are they available and easily accessible in South Kesteven? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ No

28

In relation to question 27, please provide any further comments you may have.

29

Thinking about hospital appointments - are they available and easily accessible? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ No

30

In relation to question 29, please provide any further comments you may have.

31

Thinking about other services to support health and wellbeing - are they available and easily accessible? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ No

32

In relation to question 31, please provide any further comments you may have.

33

Where a person lives do not disadvantage them from accessing health and community support services? \*

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Disagree

34

If you have answered 'disagree' to the above question, please provide a postcode to allow us to explore this further.

35

Would you be happy for us to contact you about Age Friendly Communities in South Kesteven moving forwards? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

36

If yes to to the above question - please leave your name and contact details (email and/or telephone).

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Overall objective: Improve the supply, quality and coordination of services to meet housing needs and demands.

Housing and Homelessness: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan	By When	By Whom	Completion Status	Progress as of May 2025
Coordinate the effective delivery of homelessness services through a partnership driven and evidence-based homelessness strategy.	Continue to work collaboratively with the Lincs Housing Partnership Manager to ensure that homelessness services are delivered in line with the Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy	Ongoing	Homelessness team	Ongoing	Ongoing regular meetings with Lincs Housing Partner Manager. SKDC are in attendance at these meetings and contribute to updates in relation to the Lincs Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy
	Lead on the quarterly Homelessness Forum partnership meetings to inform and shape a homelessness service based on recognised local demands	Ongoing		Ongoing	Homelessness forum is still ongoing. TOR is to be reviewed this year
	Ensure new burdens funding is utilised to enable an effective response to increased service pressures.	Summer 2024		Completed	Domestic abuse officer post is now a permanent role within the team.
	Continue to lead on the Rough Sleeper initiative on behalf of South Kesteven, South Holland, North Kesteven and West Lindsey	Ongoing		Ongoing	Funding has been extended for a further 12 months, therefore SKDC continue to host this team, although through much closer working relationships, other district are more involved in the management of the team
Establish future investment strategies to meet current and emerging needs for care and support.	Continue with the sheltered housing review to identify possible investment opportunities	Ongoing	Beth Randall/Sheltered Housing Team	Ongoing	Options appraisal undertaken, report has been produced with recommendations in terms of which scheme we could perhaps converted to another type of housing. This is a huge project that is likely to last a for a few years
	Ensure applications are submitted whenever government funding is available	Ongoing	Victoria Herbert	Ongoing	Work continues
Bring more empty homes into use in order to improve the supply of properties available within the county.	Work collaboratively with colleagues in council tax to identify available empty properties	Ongoing	Ayeisha Kirkham	Ongoing	This is ongoing as part of the Empty homes project. The Strategy has been updated and approved in July 2024. There have been 3 officer working group meetings, we have finalised the RAG rating to prioritise the empty properties. The oldest properties are scheduled to be sent educational letters by November.
	Explore options around bringing those properties back into use	Ongoing	Ayeisha Kirkham	Ongoing	
	Build stronger relationships with landlords to offer support and advice to enable properties to be brought back into use	Ongoing	Ayeisha Kirkham	Ongoing	

Deliver new housing to meet housing needs and demands, meeting zero carbon targets and recognising all levels of affordability.	Continue to explore acquisition opportunities to increase council housing stock	Ongoing	Debbie Roberts	Ongoing	The Councils hybrid approach with building and acquiring properties is still successful. Construction of the 20 units at Swinegate, Grantham are nearing completion (Sept 25) after 12 months on site. Construction works will commence on 21 new homes at Larch Close in August 25 after amendments to the scheme were needed with planning. The construction programme is 12 months with works being undertaken by Mercer Building Solutions. The Council have secured 36 affordable units in Corby Glen with the first 4 homes in phase 1 handed over in Dec 24, the next phase is due to be handed over in 2026. The Council also acquire former Right to Buy properties back and seek to buy homes off the market for specific needs which will be adapted using s106 monies. The Council set a target to build and acquire 100
	Ensure that any properties acquired has satisfactory EPCs in place and rents are set at an affordable rate	Ongoing		Completed	Properties that are purchased require an EPC certificate to be shared with solicitors and all are inspected to ensure they meet the Councils void standards. The affordable rents are set in line with Local Housing Allowance and are 80% of the open market rent.
Improve the quality of existing properties across all tenures and reduce the cost of poor housing to health, care and society.	Ensure a responsive and robust approach to any reports of properties in poor repair in private sector	Ongoing	Sarah McQueen/Tom Amblin-Lightowler	Ongoing	This is undertaken as part of business as usual as a statutory function.
	Ensure a responsive and robust approach to any reports of properties in poor repair in SKDC stock.	Ongoing		Ongoing	This is now undertaken as business as usual
	Effective monitoring of improvement notices.	Summer 2024		Ongoing	This is undertaken as it is a legal requirement under the housing Act 2004.
Reduce levels of overcrowding as a means of reducing health risks.	Ensure that any affected tenants are able to access effective housing and homelessness advice	Ongoing	Sarah McQueen/Ayeisha Kirkham	Ongoing	Homeless service is inclusive and accessible by anyone, we continue to monitor feedback from customers and aim to improve services based on this.
Improve services to extend people's housing choices in preparation for later life	Continue with the sheltered housing review to identify possible investment opportunities	Ongoing	Beth Randall/Sarah McQueen	Ongoing	Options appraisal undertaken, report has been produced with recommendations in terms of which scheme we could perhaps convert to another type of housing. This is a huge project that is likely to last a few years

Ensure services to support people to remain living in their current home complement each other as a system-wide approach.	Effective management of the DFG application service	Ongoing	Ayeisha Kirkham	Ongoing	This is undertaken as part of business as usual.
	Work collaboratively with partner agencies to support and enable people to continue to live in their current home	Ongoing		Ongoing	This is undertaken as part of business as usual.

Overall objective: To address inactivity across the county - improving access and opportunity for all residents to be active and participate.

Activity and Wellbeing: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan 2024-2025	By When	By Whom	Completion Status	Progress as of May 2025
<b>Active Place:</b> Develop a plan to be able to positively influence the planning system/external decision making in the area	Openly share the SKDC Sport and Physical Activity Strategy with partners to achieve common goals.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Completed	Discussing findings from the Moving Communities Community Survey as part of the review of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for 2026. Continue to promote and share the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy with partners.
	Be involved with the development, progress and actions of the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Facilities Strategy that is being developed in the district. This will help SKDC understand the requirements in the district.	Spring 2024	Michael Chester	Completed	The Playing Pitch Strategy has been signed off and can be found online at <a href="https://localplans.footballfoundation.org.uk/">https://localplans.footballfoundation.org.uk/</a> . There is a requirement for 5 new 3G pitches in the district with 11 priority projects identified for asset refurbishment/replacement.
	Complete equality impact assessments on all projects involving people to ensure fairness is considered for all.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Completed	Continue to complete for events organised by SKDC
<b>Active Place:</b> Make better use of green spaces across Lincolnshire and maximise opportunities for residents and visitors to be active in Lincolnshire	Develop partnership with a provider through funding to deliver fitness sessions to residents in parks/open spaces, or alternatively implement a volunteer led scheme.	Summer 2024	Beth Goodman	Ongoing	The Sport England Movement Fund application was rejected, however progress has been made through a volunteer led programme called 'Our Parks' and volunteers are currently undertaking training.
	Promote outdoor gym use working with Active Lincolnshire ensuring the maps in the district are displayed on the outdoor gym finder/Lets Move Lincolnshire.	Ongoing	Alison Lewis	Completed	Continuing to promote the outdoor gyms through social media. When investing in play areas, exploring options to install play fitness equipment will be completed.
	Review how we publicise open spaces and outdoor leisure provision as part of the open space study.	Spring 2024	Leisure/Planning	Completed	Visit Lincolnshire website has dedicated space for nature and landscape which includes several walks and trails across the county. The open space study has been completed.
	Retain Green Flag status in the parks.	July, 2024	Sharon Haythorn	Completed	This was achieved and celebrated in July 2024
	Work closely with local organisations to develop cycling routes through the district.	Summer 2024	Beth Goodman	Completed	New partnerships have been formed with local cycling clubs around the district to continue to promote cycling opportunities to residents.
	Develop Grantham Transport Strategy focusing on Active Travel through walking and cycling.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman/LCC	Ongoing	Lincolnshire County Council have identified Grantham's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan will be updated within the next 12 months.
	Influence social prescribers to include green spaces as a positive place to promote mental and physical wellbeing	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Completed	Social Prescribers continue to work closely with Wyndham Park Visitor Centre to use parks and open spaces as a positive place for mental and physical wellbeing



<b>Active Place:</b> Widen the focus from commercial leisure offer and asset-based physical activity to activity outside, in the home and in the workplace	Regularly connect with Lincolnshire County Council/Active Travel England to positively influence Active Travel, encouraging the planning team to apply for funding provision and developments of public footpaths and cycleways.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Completed	The Leisure Team meet quarterly with the Sustainable Travel Officers at Lincolnshire County Council to understand the counties priorities and direction. SKDC were also successful in their bid for 635 bike marking kits which will improve the perception of bike safety and deter thieves.
	Explore digital inclusion opportunities for users to be able to work out from home and in the workplace.	September, 2024	Beth Goodman	Completed	The Council continues to promote the 'We are Undefeatable campaign' and have created Move More Workout Cards that residents can complete from home.
	Look at costings and accessibility of leisure centres to break down barriers of accessing health facilities. Look at opportunities for future delivery via the leisure provider.	Ongoing	Michael Chester/Karen Whitfield	Completed	The Council's have entered a new 10 year agency agreement with LeisureSK, which commenced in April 2025
	Create maps of community assets with the benefits of being active linking the green spaces, community foot and cycle paths alongside displaying the benefits of active travel on climate change.	Summer 2024	Beth Goodman/Serena Brown	Ongoing	Lincolnshire County Council are doing a similar piece of work which SKDC will support on for the district.
	Continue to work on the actions identified in the condition surveys and undertake feasibility studies with the UKSPF to ensure facilities remain attractive, accessible, and available to residents.	Ongoing	Leisure/Property	Ongoing	Property services team continue to work on the actions identified in the stock condition surveys based on the priority rating. No funding was awarded from the UKSPF to undertake feasibility studies.
<b>Active People:</b> Provide Opportunities and programmes across communities to enable residents to take part in regular activity	Increase awareness and benefits of physical activity in South Kesteven through networking and marketing, including the use of the Activity Finder on the Let's Move Lincolnshire platform.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Completed	The council continue to promote the Lets Move Lincolnshire Activity Finder to both clubs and residents in the district. There are new filters to find 'free and low cost' activities.
	Work with stakeholders to provide ample opportunities and programmes within South Kesteven, targeting all ages/abilities.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Ongoing	Give it a go' days are being planned in each town in the district for residents to try local sports activities.
	Continue to develop Lincolnshire Co-op Wellbeing Walks to ensure there are two in each market town.	Summer 2024	Beth Goodman/Lincs Coop	Completed	Two new walks have launched in April 2025, one in Stamford and one starting from Wyndham Park Visitor Centre.
	Work with Active Lincolnshire and Ageing Better to make South Kesteven an Age Friendly District	November, 2024	Equality, Diversity Internal Group	Completed	In December 2024 it was approved by Cabinet that SKDC applies to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities. In April 2025, the UK Network accepted SKDC and lots of work is being undertaken to ensure South Kesteven is an Age Friendly District.

	Implement an annual workforce wellbeing plan to ensure physical and mental wellbeing is at the forefront of the work we do.	Apr-24	Wellbeing Team	Completed	The Internal Wellbeing Plan was signed off by the Leader of the Council in April 2025 and can be found online here: <a href="https://southkesteven.pagetiger.com/crfbjbg/1">https://southkesteven.pagetiger.com/crfbjbg/1</a> . The Council won the 'Excellence in Employee Engagement' award in March at The Great British Workplace Wellbeing Awards and has now been announced as a finalist in 'Workforce Optimisation' for the MJ Awards.
<b>Active System:</b> Creating leadership, governance and partnerships, and workforce capabilities across sectors to use resources in a more coordinated way to reduce inactivity.	Work with local leisure providers to deliver rehabilitation programmes for those living with long term health conditions and older adults.	Ongoing to meet changing demands	Beth Goodman	Ongoing	Working with the Lincoln City Foundation and LeisureSK to launch a new Fighting Fit: living with cancer physical activity session in Stamford at the end of 2025.
<b>Active System:</b> Each district council to develop opportunities to positively influence internal/corporate decision making in their local area and embed in governance processes	Create a mental health working group	June, 2024	Wellbeing Team	Completed	The Mental Health Working Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis to share ideas and support to collaborate as First Aiders for Mental Health.
<b>Active System:</b> Proactive and inclusive approach to sharing learning, best practice and opportunities for collaboration.	Join the wellbeing network groups with local connectors to cover the district.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Completed	Ongoing attendance at the Grantham Partnership Board.
	Celebrate and raise awareness through our communications and social media channels	Ongoing	Marketing	Completed	Continue to share with partners and discuss interventions with local organisations that will help meet joined objectives
<b>Active System:</b> Proactivity engage across the NHS to encourage innovation and creativity to enable health, wellbeing and physical activity within planning consultations.	Work with PCNs, Neighborhood leads and social prescribers to create successful partnerships to share best practice and opportunities.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman	Completed	The Young Adults Social Group continues at Wyndham Park Visitor Centre on a monthly basis. The 'Our Parks' scheme as mentioned above, will be delivered to this group to increase physical activity levels.
	Research and develop a plan for place-based partnerships and opportunities.	May, 2024	Beth Goodman	Completed	Working with partners such as positive futures to identify the lowest deprivation levels to ensure physical activity opportunities are available. Active Lincolnshire are leading on place-based work but South Kesteven is not currently entitled to funding
	All activities planned through all organisations should deliver on the five ways to wellbeing; be active, connect, take notice, keep learning, and give.	Ongoing	Beth Goodman/All	Completed	All external activities delivered will focus on at least one of the five ways to wellbeing strands.

Overall objective: Improve understanding of the links between environment and health and maximise opportunities to deliver on both.

Environment and Climate: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan	By When	By Whom	Completion Status	Progress as of May 2025
Improve air quality, particularly in designated management areas.	<a href="#">South Kesteven's air quality annual status report for 2023 is published on the Council's webpages</a>	Dec-24	Ayeisha Kirkham	Ongoing	The Air Quality Action Plan for the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA- Grantham) was updated and approved by Cabinet in January 2025. The annual Air Quality Report for the previous year is being drafted and will be sent to DEFRA for approval before being published on SK website.
	The Air Quality Action Plan is to be updated in the next 12 months	Nov-24	Ayeisha Kirkham	Completed	The AQAP was updates, approved and published in Jan 2025.
	Clean Air Lincolnshire project to launch in 2023 and include monitoring of particulate matter at specific school locations in the county as part of an education initiative. <a href="#">Clean Air Lincolnshire encouraging action for cleaner air across the county (cleanairlincs.org.uk)</a>	Ongoing	Ayeisha Kirkham	Ongoing	Clean Air Lincolnshire encouraging action for cleaner air across the county. Still ongoing.
Accelerate transition towards active travel	This links with the Activity and Wellbeing area. Districts are collaboratively working with Lincolnshire County Council on plans and have prepared area wide cycling and walking plans. (LCWIP)	Ongoing	Planning/Leisure	Ongoing	Lincolnshire County Council are in the process of revising Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. Deeping is currently in draft phase through Deeping Town Council and Sustrans. Grantham will be completed during the next 12 months. SKDC officers are now regularly meeting with LCC to discuss how SKDC can accelerate transition towards active travel.
Promote and increase uptake of electric vehicles	South Kesteven District Council have installed 4 electric vehicle charge points within Council Car Parks within the district. The council continues to explore opportunities for additional EVCP installation at other Council car park locations.	Ongoing	Louise Case	Ongoing	Electric Vehicle Charge Point strategy for SKDC assets in development
	Local Plan policy also addresses the expectation that provision for electric vehicle charging is made for new developments.	Ongoing	Planning	Ongoing	Every new residential development expected to install EVCP's in 2020 Local Plan, with no plans to remove this in the ongoing review.
Mobility: provision and uptake of public transport services	Local Transport Strategies include support for walking, cycling and public transport.	Ongoing	Planning	Ongoing	Grantham and Stamford Transport Boards discuss improving support for walking, cycling and public transport

Improve domestic energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions	The Home Energy Upgrade Scheme offers support to residents of the 4 districts of Lincolnshire to improve the energy efficiency of their property, helping to reduce carbon emissions associated with energy use.	Mar-25	Serena Brown	Ongoing	40 properties in South Kesteven upgraded through HUG2 funding
	South Kesteven District Council have also received funding via the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to upgrade over 300 council properties to improve energy efficiency.	Mar-25	Peter Park	Ongoing	Funding awarded for an £83m total project from April 2025 to upgrade over 250 SKDC properties
Joint work to reduce carbon emissions from all Councils (Lincolnshire County Council and districts)	South Kesteven District Council have developed a draft Climate Action Strategy setting out how we can address climate change and reduce carbon emissions in the district.	Ongoing	Serena Brown	Completed	<a href="#">Climate Action Strategy.pdf</a> ( <a href="https://southkesteven.gov.uk">southkesteven.gov.uk</a> )
Reduce Carbon Emissions across all services to meet national carbon reduction targets	South Kesteven District Council have developed a draft Climate Action Strategy setting out how we can address climate change and reduce carbon emissions in the district.	Ongoing	Serena Brown	Ongoing	Projects to reduce carbon emissions across council estate underway. 25.77% reduction reported for 2023/24
Understand the local impacts of a changing climate to improve community resilience.	The Council's draft Climate Action Strategy includes objectives on adaptation to climate change for the council and for the district.	Ongoing	Serena Brown	Completed	The Climate Action Strategy includes objectives on this
Reduce waste output across the county and tackle key issues	Lincolnshire County Council and all districts are part of the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership	Ongoing	Waste Team	Ongoing	Continue to attend
	Plans to roll out separate paper and card collection in South Kesteven to improve amount of material recycled.	Feb-24	Waste/Comms	Completed	All households within South Kesteven now have purple lidded bins. New food waste caddies are due to go live in April 2026.
Improve open space provision that recognises the role of improved biodiversity, carbon storage and wellbeing benefits	The council is developing a Tree & Woodland Strategy which will provide an analysis of tree canopy cover across the District and incorporate trees into existing and new policy. The Strategy will set out a management plan to increase canopy cover and enable existing trees to thrive; enhancing wildlife and biodiversity and the benefits trees provide. The Strategy and accompanying Action Plan will be finalised by March 2024.	Mar-24	Serena Brown	Completed	Tree & Woodland Strategy and Action Plan completed. New tree officer now in place and to complete the identified actions

	The Council successfully delivered the £1.2m Blue Green project to restore biodiversity in and around the districts river corridors, and continue to explore future biodiversity improvement funding options.	Ongoing	Louise Case	Ongoing	9 projects funded across the district to improve public open space and support biodiversity. A Biodiversity Consultation is to take place throughout June 2025.
Influence provision of healthy and sustainable food options	Meet with sustainable partners surrounding the promote of healthy and sustainable food options	Nov-24	Leisure/Partners	Ongoing	Now part of the Healthy Weight Partnership Board. To explore options with Fairshare and local food providers.
Maximise opportunity of Local Plan Reviews	South Kesteven District Council are conducting a review of the current Local Plan and will address issues linked to the environment.	Mar-24	Shaza Brannon	Ongoing	The 2024 Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation was completed and all comments processed and considered through a Consultation Statement which was published in early 2025. An additional Regulation 18 Local Plan focussing on housing and mixed-use site allocations will be published for consultation for eight weeks in July 2025. A Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment will be published alongside the Local Plan. The Local Plan is progressing as per the agreed Local Development Scheme's timetable.

Overall objective: Reducing economic inequality and alleviating poverty as a fundamental driver for improving mental and physical health and wellbeing

Economic Inclusion: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan	By When	By Whom	Completion Status	Progress as of May 2025
Embed strong strategic narrative/understanding to promote economic inclusion and health inequality linkages that deliver better outcomes	Review current strategies/policies to ensure there are, where appropriate, meaningful and deliberate/positive outcomes that address health inequality.	Mar-24	Economic Development	Completed	The Economic Development Strategy 2024-2028 has now been adopted, with action plans and service plans regularly reviewed to ensure targets are deliverable and strategies/policies achieve positive outcomes for the district.
	Assess baseline to determine success threshold and achievement	Mar-24	Economic Development	Completed	The State of the District Report was completed in 2023 which concludes the baseline and findings of the economy. <a href="https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-09/State%20of%20the%20District%202023.pdf">https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-09/State%20of%20the%20District%202023.pdf</a>
	Review current projects/interventions to test whether appropriate health/economic inequality outcome and outputs have/can be captured or weaved into the initiative.	Mar-24	Economic Development	Ongoing	All projects/interventions include equality impact consideration during the planning stage, with support from relevant colleagues or external stakeholders where needed.
	Ensure within the new 'Economic Development' strategy inclusion is a golden thread throughout	Mar-24	Economic Development	Completed	Taken the lead from the corporate plan, direct link into the Economic Development Strategy
<b>People in Employment:</b> Work with Lincolnshire employers to improve working conditions/environment particularly within low paid and insecure employment to improve their health and wellbeing and prevent health issues developing – whilst improving business productivity.	Lead by example, through partnership working - set out how organisations can improve working conditions	Summer 2024	Eco Dev, HR, Key Partners (FSB, Lincs Chamber etc.)	Ongoing	Meet the Buyer events were delivered early 2025, pushed due to delayed Procurement regulations. Both events were well attended with positive feedback. SKDC is preparing to draft a Social Value policy for Procurement helping contractors to understand what is important to SKDC, including living wage paid to employees, utilising local supply chains and opening up work experience and apprenticeship opportunities, where appropriate.
<b>People in Employment:</b> Improve skills for those currently in work, enabling career progression, greater wage levels, better job security, greater productivity development – good for people and business – part of tackling in-work poverty.	Support the Federation of Small Business in its implementation of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.	Ongoing	Economic Development	Ongoing	FSB maintain hold of the LSIP until Oct 2025, when GLCCA and FSB will have joint responsibility. SKDC maintain regular contact with FSB, and who supported the Skills Summits delivered Feb 2025. Facilitating connections between local education providers and FSB to ensure all stakeholders are galvanised in delivering against the LSIP action plan.
<b>People in Employment:</b> Increase volunteering to support the community and increase well-being for the volunteers themselves.	Adopt the Council's volunteering policy and increase the amount of volunteers across the council.	Autumn 2023	Karen Whitfield	Completed	The volunteering policy is now live and in place, which continues to implement standards for volunteering for the council.
<b>Supporting those most susceptible to economic change and transition:</b> Increase core sector resilience in Lincolnshire by supporting employers to adapt and respond to economic transitions caused by the pandemic, through addressing skills gaps with employees.	Support the Federation of Small Business in its implementation of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.	Ongoing	Economic Development	Ongoing	SKDC support connections between local employers and education providers to tap into key programmes and address skills gaps, such as Skills Bootcamps. Regular connection between local education providers and FSB is maintained to ensure all stakeholders are galvanised in delivering against the LSIP action plan.

<p><b>Supporting those most susceptible to economic change and transition:</b> Employee upskilling and retaining programmes for those in industries exposed to long-term change and decline.</p>	<p>Working with LEP, partners, review Lincolnshire and national landscape ahead of developing an approach to key industries</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Economic Development</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Close working with partners (DWP, Careers Hub, LCC and education providers) to ensure those at risk can access support, whether this is start-up business guidance and funding, or options for re-training, including apprenticeships.</p> <p>Supporting sectors in decline (eg engineering and manufacturing) to identify ways to adapt through business support and funding opportunities, as well as providing support for connections to younger workforces, e.g. Skills Summits, supporting National Manufacturer's Day.</p>
<p><b>Digital skills programme:</b> Residents have the digital skills to access health services, everyday services and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Support Grantham College in the delivery of the Skills Bootcamp as part of the Government's Lifetime Skills Guarantee, helping everyone gain skills for life</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Economic Development</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>UKSPF 24/25 successfully funded Grantham College (north of SK) and Steadfast (south of SK) with programmes to provide digital training. Review of proposals received taking place as to whether UKSPF 25/26 can build on this programme to offer similar, enhanced support.</p>
<p><b>Digital skills programme:</b> Fully enabled digital FFTP (fixed fibre premises) infrastructure across the county using place appropriate technologies.</p>	<p>Support the telecommunications industry with an 'open for business' approach to rolling out fibre broadband across the district</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Economic Development and Planning</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Inward Investment team within SKDC remain open to support telecommunications industry with rolling out fibre broadband.</p>
<p><b>Eliminate poor health from being a barrier to employment:</b> Create an intervention programme that supports residents with ill-health into employment.</p>	<p>Support DWP in the endeavours to help residents with ill-health towards employment</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Economic Development &amp; Community Engagement</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>SKDC meets regularly with DWP and education providers to support residents with ill-health back into employment through programmes such as UKSPF 24/25 funded Employability programme from Grantham College and Connect2Grow from Steadfast. Review of proposals received taking place as to whether UKSPF 25/26 can build on this programme to offer similar, enhanced support.</p> <p>SKDC leads by example, with flexible working and reasonable adjustments to support health conditions, as well as phased returns to work where appropriate.</p>
<p>Creating an environment to support development of the health and care sector to improve health related service provision (wide scale health attraction interventions).</p>	<p>Develop interventions with partners (including FE and college providers) to support recruitment/retention of employees within the health and care sector</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Economic Development &amp; Community Engagement</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>NHS Talent Academy, Lincs Pharmacy Careers and Lincolnshire Care Services all featured at the district wide Skills Summits, including delivering a careers talk at the South event. Plans are in motion to build on this success with further career talks around the district and a returning presence at the next Skills Summit.</p>

Overall objectives: Leverage unique links at place level to engage with communities

Working with Communities: Identified Action	South Kestevens Action Plan	By When	By Whom	Completion Status	Progress as of May 2025
<b>Capture and build on district community engagement knowledge and expertise:</b> Combine and codify the District's knowledge and approach to community engagement and empowerment, building on success and experience gained during the pandemic.	District-wide consultation exercise with voluntary and community sector and residents relating to provision of voluntary services, opportunities for volunteering etc.	Summer 2024	Carol Drury	Completed	Completed with residents and voluntary and community groups.
	Development of a Community and Engagement and Development Strategy with input from the VCS through the consultation exercise	Summer 2024	Carol Drury	Completed	Action Plan which covers 2024 to 2027 and accompanies the Community Engagement and Development Strategy is being delivered. 94% of the actions are either in progress (on going activities) or completed
	Council in the Community initiative to engage with residents face-to-face	Summer 2024	Carol Drury	Completed	Community Engagement Team continues to have a presence at a variety of events and has also supported more than 20 voluntary and community sector organisations with governance and funding advice. 11.10.24 156 Para Reunion 12.10.24 Celebrate the Nations - Grantham 25.10.24 Arnhem 80 Concert 30.10.24 Veteran Support Lincolnshire CIC Event 12.11.24 CAB Event - Bourne 15.11.24 SK Community Awards - Bourne
	Series of funding workshops to support project development and delivery by VCS across the district	Summer 2024	Carol Drury	Completed	Funding workshops delivered: Deepings 11.7.24 Bourne 19.9.24 Grantham 17.10.24 Stamford 23.1.25
	Engagement of two cost of living coordinators to support local communities	Ongoing	Cost of Living Team	Completed	Ongoing engagement – Cost of Living Team are still in position.
	Ring-fenced financial support for Foodbanks and other food support agencies across the district	Ongoing	Cost of Living Team	Ongoing	The £15,000 ring-fenced pot of funding for food support agencies continues to be offered to foodbanks and community larders across the district. Currently £13,000 of this pot has been distributed and a further application is awaited
	Attendance at mental health groups, district health and wellbeing groups, food support groups	Ongoing	Collaborative officer working	Ongoing	Community Engagement Officers continue to attend meetings organised by health colleagues covering Grantham, Bourne and Stamford on a monthly basis



Expand district participation in current sector discussions across the wider system.	Wellbeing fairs in collaboration with health and wellbeing partners, food outlets and small business sector	Ongoing	Collaborative officer working	Ongoing	Officers from within the Community Engagement Team have attended 3 such events during this reporting period and have also supported nine voluntary and community sector groups who deliver wellbeing support in neighbourhoods across South Kesteven
	Attendance at meetings and information sessions relating to Armed Forces Veterans	Ongoing	Debbie Nicholls	Ongoing	SKDC Armed Forces Officer and the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Covenant Officer (whose post SKDC contributes to) lead on and/or attend: Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership Local Authority Armed Forces Leads meeting LGA Armed Forces Covenant Network Airborne Heritage Trail meeting Community Engagement meetings with Prince William of Gloucester Barracks Everyone Veterans Support meetings Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire
<b>Strengthen sector oversight and assurance:</b> Work with partners (Sector representative groups and County) to develop an agreed approach to sector oversight and assurance, harnessing community potential in a safe, effective way.	Work in collaboration with LCVS and other agencies to provide health checks and assurance relating to VCS	Ongoing	Carol Drury	Ongoing	This service is provided on request from voluntary and community groups within the district.
<b>Enhance and sustain voluntary sector engagement and contribution:</b> Building on success during the pandemic, develop and formalize mechanisms to draw on volunteer capacity quickly and efficiently in response to emerging community needs e.g., flooding, pandemic.	Worked with 55 groups (1500 volunteers) during the pandemic. Database now increased to include more than 300 groups across the district.	Ongoing	Carol Drury	Ongoing	The database is an ever-growing ecosystem of contacts amongst voluntary, community, faith, wellbeing and armed forces groups. It provides a platform to share information on available funding, guidance and support to those working at grassroot level to support our communities
	Formal links with Parish and Town Councils	Ongoing	Carol Drury	Ongoing	The full conference is currently on hold due to other, smaller events taking place specifically for Parish and Town Councils. Parish forums were delivered by CMT in the Autumn of 2024 and an event linked to information sharing and lessons learned from recent flooding events was organised and delivered for a wide audience by the Council's Emergency Planning and H&S Lead. Further forums are being delivered by CMT in relation to LGR

	Public Protection and Community Engagement of officers working with other agencies and stakeholders to ensure an effective and timely response in an emergency situation	Ongoing	Carol Drury	Ongoing	The Community Engagement Team continues to work with SK Officers who have the lead for emergency planning and with contacts from the Local Resilience Forum to ensure community engagement is at the heart of any emergency response when appropriate.
	Specific inclusion within Community Engagement Business Continuity Plan relating to the importance of community engagement during emergency situations.	Summer 2024	Carol Drury	Completed	New Business Impact Assessment and Business Continuity Plan developed August 2024
<b>A strategic Commissioning approach in Lincolnshire:</b> To maximise impact and reach of commissioned services across the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing System.	Move towards a strategy commissioning approach across the health and wellbeing system. Investigate the current system of community connectors (SHINE) and social prescribing (LCVS). Work alongside Active Lincolnshire with this approach.	Spring 2024	Carol Drury (for community engagement. Commissioning of health and wellbeing led by other services of the Council).	Ongoing	From a community perspective: The CE Team works in collaboration with Shine Lincolnshire, has developed strong links with the Community Connectors that work across SK. Our Community Grants and Funding Officer has been an active participant in the determination of grants through Shine's Mental Health & Wellbeing Investment Fund. The CE Team also takes opportunities to work collaboratively with LCVS who manage the Social Prescribing Link Workers across the district.
<b>Wellbeing Lincs:</b> Review opportunities to further develop districts preventative approach, using Wellbeing Lincs as a proven and trusted mechanism for collaboration and innovation (harness Wellbeing Lincs as a powerful vehicle for co-production, collaboration, innovation).	Attend partnership meetings	Ongoing	Sarah McQueen	Completed	Continue to attend.



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## **Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Wednesday, 9 July 2025

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

## **Customer Service Update - Outturn 2024/25**

### **Report Author**

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

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### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update regarding customer interactions within the Customer Service team and high contact service areas for 2024/25.

### **Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. Note the report and provide feedback on the information contained in 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 Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

## 1. Implications

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

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

1.1 There are no specific financial comments arising from this report.

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

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

1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implication arising from this report.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

## 2. Background to the Report

2.1. The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2024-2027 to Connecting Communities and being an Effective Council. This report, and the service provided through the Council's Customer Service Team and high contact service areas strives to deliver these priorities.

2.2. A telephony and call handling report was presented to the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 March 2025. The report focused on the position regarding call handling.

2.3. The Customer Service Team handle customer interactions in various ways for 17 high contact service areas, as well as general public enquiries. This report provides an update regarding customer interactions for these service areas for 2024/25.

### **Customer Interaction type**

2.4. Tables 1 and 2 show the different methods and number of customer interactions received into the Customer Service Team during 2023/24 and 2024/25

**Table 1 – Telephone calls and face to face contact:**

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Virtual operator	N/A	76,001
IVR	N/A	36,221
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>112,222</b>

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Customer Service calls	129,415	133,102
Switchboard calls	30,394	14,666
Other service calls	44,345	56,904
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>204,154</b>	<b>204,672</b>
Grantham walk-in	4,540	4,361
Bourne walk-in	601	453
Bourne Library	26,528	29,927
<b>Total Walk-in</b>	<b>31,669</b>	<b>37,741</b>
Grantham appointment	384	683
Bourne appointment	203	225
<b>Total Appointments</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>908</b>

<b>Total Interactions</b>	<b>236,410</b>	<b>352,543</b>
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In comparison to 2023/24, the number of appointments in Grantham have increased by 299 (from 384 to 683). This is likely to be as a result of the relocation of the Customer Service Centre in October 2024. Customer appointments are available and are supported by an improved space for these appointments to take place consisting of five service desks and a dedicated secure interview room.

**Table 2 – Digital Channels – Emails and Website:**

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Emails	25,302	19,074
Website (unique browser)	975,997	1,817,897
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,001,299</b>	<b>1,836,971</b>

**Table 3 – Total contact:**

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Total contact	1,237,709	2,189,514

- 2.5. In comparison to 2023/24, total contact has increased by 951,802 from 1,237,709 to 2,189,514. The largest proportion of this is website interactions as a result of the introduction of the new website, increased number of online forms and customer portals.
- 2.6. It is important for the Council to provide a variety of methods of contact for its customers. It is appreciated one contact method may not be suitable for all. Therefore, the method for customer contact provided by South Kesteven will continue to include all methods as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Interaction comparisons:**

	2023/24		2024/25	
	Volume	% of total contact (1,237,709)	Volume	% of total contact (2,189,514)
<b>Telephone calls (table 1)</b>	204,154	16.50%	316,894	14.47%
<b>Face to face – walk in (table 1)</b>	31,669	2.56%	37,741	1.72%
<b>Face-to-face – appts (table 1)</b>	587	0.05%	908	0.04%
<b>Digital (table 2)</b>	1,001,299	80.90%	1,836,971	83.90%

### **Call answering – 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025**

- 2.7. Previous reports presented have provided information regarding ‘abandonment’ of calls. Analysis during 2024/25 shows that there is minimal negative feedback received relating to calls being abandoned or not answered. Further analysis also shows the increase in e-channel contact via website, online forms and customer portals, which is a direct result of the promotion of our e-channel access and the numerous information messages for the customer whilst they are in the call queue, advising of other contact methods such as online, and the option to request a call back from the service area.
- 2.8. During 2024/25, 79% of calls were answered, with 21% of calls being re-routed to other service channels. During 2023/24, these figures were 81% and 19% respectively.
- 2.9. This suggests customers are terminating the call before being routed to an officer and re-routing their enquiry to e-channel areas – which is evidenced in the increase in digital contact in table 2 and 3 above. As a result of this, calls which are not classed as ‘answered’ will be classed as ‘re-routed’.

- 2.10. Call handling statistics are produced and issued by the Performance and Change Improvement Lead on a regular basis to the Council's Corporate Management Team and service areas. The information includes number of calls offered, answered, re-routed and average speed of answer.
- 2.11. Performance clinics with service areas are continuing on a monthly basis which enable both the Customer Service Team and service area to be able to advise of changes in service activity and any upcoming changes which may impact on the number or nature of customer interactions.
- 2.12. Customer feedback via the Council's corporate feedback process is monitored, specifically where the customer has indicated an issue regarding the "ability to contact the Council". Between July 2024 and March 2025, 19 feedback requests were received, of these 11 were comments, and the remaining were service requests. None were reported as a complaint. All feedback was reviewed and actioned appropriately.

### **Website – feedback and improvements**

- 2.13. Each page on the Council's website has a 'was this page useful' function. A customer can choose 'yes' or 'no' by clicking on the relevant 'happy or sad face' icon at the bottom of the page. In doing this, the customer is given the option to provide and submit their comments, along with their name and email address.
- 2.14. A report is produced each month by the Performance and Customer Improvement Lead. The period for this report is from the new website Go Live (October 2023) to 31 March 2025.
- 2.15. During this period, there have been a total of 1,082 individual feedback received. Officers meet regularly to review the feedback and agree actions to be taken; amendments to the website, liaison with service areas and feedback to the customer (where contact details have been provided).

### **Customer Experience Strategy - update**

- 2.16. Public consultation of the Customer Experience Strategy consultation took place from 10 March 2025 and closed on 7 April 2025 and was open to a variety of stakeholders – those identified were:
- Customers who contact the Council via the Customer Services Team
  - Other organisations that contact SKDC

- Those who do not contact the Council (via SKToday – circa 3,700 and the Youth Council)
- Local businesses
- Community and Voluntary Groups
- Staff working group

2.17. A total of 561 responses were received. This was made up of 540 public stakeholder responses and 21 Staff & Youth Council responses.

2.18. The the purpose of the consultation was to:

- Consult with a variety of stakeholders on how they interact or would choose to interact with the Council;
- Inform a refresh of SKDC's Customer Experience Strategy;
- Ensure SKDC's processes are fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; and
- To understand the technological advances that have taken place in customer interaction over the last 5 years

2.19. A Members' workshop has taken place on 26 June 2025 and the outcomes of the recent stakeholder consultation were presented and discussed. As a result, the Strategy, Customer Charter and Service Standards will be presented to Cabinet on 9 September 2025.

2.20. It is intended for an action plan to be presented to this committee every 6 months, with the initial presentation taking place at the next committee meeting on 16 October 2025.

### **3. Key Considerations**

3.1. These are included throughout the report and members of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the report and are invited to ask questions regarding its content.

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

4.1 The report is for information only.





**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## **Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran,  
Cabinet Member for Housing

## **Welfare and Financial Advice Team Update**

### **Report Author**

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

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### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update regarding the Household Support Fund (2025/26), and the wrap around support provided by the Welfare and Financial Advice Team. This will detail the activity undertaken by the team, number of residents supported, value of support provided and an update regarding District, County and National activities.

### **Recommendations**

**The Committee is asked to:**

- 1. Note the report and provide feedback on the information contained in the report.**

### **Decision Information**

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?)	Enabling economic opportunities Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

## **1. Implications**

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

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

- 1.1 The report sets out the specific schemes that are being implemented to support residents with the cost of living – both statutory and national initiatives. The Household Support Fund scheme identified in the report is not directly funded by the Council. The Welfare and Financial Advice team was added to the permanent staffing structure from 1 April 2025 and the work priorities will reflect both local and national issues that are facing the community.

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

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

- 1.2 There are no specific governance implications connected with this report. Decision-making associated with financial support schemes should follow an agreed process and should demonstrate strong governance arrangements to support their implementation.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

### ***Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion***

- 1.3 Cost of living information is available in a variety of formats to ensure inclusivity. The Team ensures any engagement activity takes place within fully accessible venues. All reasonable adjustments continue to be made to meet the needs of residents who require support. Further diversity and inclusion considerations will be identified during the preparation of the action plan and complied with as each project/funding stream is accessed.

*Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager*

### ***Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing***

- 1.4 The increasing cost of living is having a big impact on mental health and emotional wellbeing, and support in this area will therefore form a big part of the Welfare and Financial Advice Team workplan. There will be links to the Mental Health Working

Group, and these are being picked up internally as part of the actions for the new Welfare and Financial Advice team.

*Completed by: Sam Fitt, Senior HR Officer*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2020-2023 to ensuring healthy and strong communities and being a high performing council. This report, and the service provided through the Council's Welfare and Financial Advice Team strives to deliver these priorities.
- 2.2. Cost of Living reports have previously been presented to this committee. Following a successful budget bid, it is extremely pleasing to report that the team were funded as a permanent team from 1 April 2025 and were renamed as the Welfare and Financial Advice Team.

### **Household Support Fund – 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**

- 2.3. One of the main responsibilities of the Welfare and Financial Advice Team is to administer and distribute the Household Support Fund (HSF). It was first announced by Government in October 2021 with funding covering the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022. Local Authorities had discretion on exactly how this funding was to be used (the scope set out in the national guidance and the accompanying grant determination). The expectation was that it should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy, and water bills.
- 2.4. It was confirmed the funding would be awarded directly to Tier 1 authorities, this being Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), acting as the LA Single Point of Contact (LA SPOC). It was agreed LCC and Lincolnshire District Councils would form a Lincolnshire Working Group to discuss and agree a way forward for the distribution of the funding across the County. The Lincolnshire Working Group has continued to meet regularly since October 2021.
- 2.5. Since October 2021, there have been further HSF schemes announced and implemented and in the Autumn Budget 2024, government announced a seventh round of the Household Support Fund (HSF7) for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- 2.6. The primary objective of "the Fund" continues to be the provision of support with the cost of essentials, namely energy and water, wider essentials, and food. While this is the priority, local authorities are also now encouraged to consider using the Fund to provide some form of preventative support which can have a longer term, sustainable impact.

- 2.7. HSF is intended to support a wide range of low-income households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, disabled people, larger families, single and couple households and those struggling with one off financial shocks or unforeseen events and is not limited to those in receipt of benefits.
- 2.8. The scheme may be delivered through a variety of routes including proactive support, application-based support or by issuing grants to Third Party Organisations to provide support on their behalf. Every Authority must operate at least part of their scheme on an application basis throughout the duration of the HSF, either consciously over the period or at regular intervals throughout the scheme.
- 2.9. The Council has flexibility and can use discretion to identify and support those most in need. Individual awards can be whatever type and amount is deemed appropriate bearing in mind the overall scheme criteria. There is no requirement to undertake a means test or conduct a benefit check unless this specifically forms part of the Authority local eligibility criteria. However, in relation to Housing costs Authorities must establish whether other forms of support are available to the household such as Discretionary Housing Payments.
- 2.10. There must be a clear rationale or documented policy / framework outlining the approach including eligibility and how households access the HSF. The support must be clearly advertised, inclusive and accessible.

### **Distribution of HSF7 funding across Lincolnshire**

- 2.11. Lincolnshire's allocation for the grant period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 is £9,631,345.40.
- 2.12. Based on the approach taken in previous rounds of the HSF, the funding is held by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and distributed between Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and the District Councils. The scheme is administered locally, by each individual District Council. Each month, South Kesteven District Council will complete a financial return which allows the Council to draw down the funding issued in the previous months. LCC will reimburse the Council accordingly.
- 2.13. It is estimated that approximately 36,000 children and young people will receive support via LCC using the following distribution method.
- Approximately 64% of the total funding will be utilised by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) to proactively target children via schools and early years providers, based on the number of children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM); Early Years Pupil Premium' (EYPP), and families with a 2-

year-old eligible for 'Early Years Entitlement' (EYE). It is anticipated that this will be transferred via two payments during the HSF delivery period. Providers and schools will be able to distribute the funding directly to eligible children, in the most effective way to meet need. In most cases this will be in the form of a voucher. This ensures eligible children will automatically receive support with no application necessary.

- Approximately 1% of the funding will be directed to support care leavers in supported living accommodation.

2.14. District Councils are able to utilise approaches taken in previous HSF funding rounds to support the differing delivery mechanisms. District Councils may also utilise a portion of their allocation to support associated administrative costs. While the guidance recognises that there will be local variation, the DWP expects administration costs to be kept to a reasonable level and reflect the objectives. The DWP will publish administration costs alongside details of all spend and will expect supporting evidence where higher level costs are reported. The distribution method for District Councils is as follows:

- Approximately 34% will be made available to the seven District Councils to distribute under local arrangements, providing broad support across the county. This must include an application-based process, in line with the grant conditions, and may also include support delivered via third sector partners and preventative activities which prevent vulnerable households from falling into, or further into, crisis. Where an individual District Council does not fully utilise its allocation, it is intended that any remainder may be redistributed.

### **District Allocations (indicative)**

2.15. The proportionate level of funding distributed to each District is detailed in the table below. This is currently an indicative level due to the distribution of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Free School Meals not yet being finalised. LCC have the level of funding indicated in the table below will not increase; any changes will result in a reduction. Once final figures are known, District allocations will be announced, and the proposed delivery plan indicated in 2.17 to 2.19 will be adjusted for distribution methods.

2.16. The initial figure provided by LCC for SKDC is £458,452. This could be subject to change as the year progresses if other districts are unable to allocate their funding. If this occurs, there will be a re-distribution to the remaining districts by LCC.

<b>District area</b>	<b>% of District allocation</b>	<b>Approx Allocation (£)</b>
East Lindsey	24%	£785,917

District area	% of District allocation	Approx Allocation (£)
Boston	10%	£327,465
South Holland	12%	£392,958
<b>Lincoln</b>	16%	£204,379
North Kesteven	11%	£360,212
<b>South Kesteven</b>	14%	£458,452
<b>West Lindsey</b>	13%	£425,705
<b>Total</b>	100%	£9,631,345

### Delivery plan for SKDC Residents

2.17. The Council's share of the allocation is approximately £458,452 (to be confirmed by LCC) and this will be distributed using the same method as previous years.

Method	Amount	% of fund	Distributing organisation	Purpose	Period of spend
1	£9,000	2%	Lincolnshire Community Foundation (LCF)	Contribution towards Warm Packs for 2025 – as part of county-wide 'Warm welcome' working group  This will be removed at source with LCC making payment direct to LCF	September 2025
2	£22,922	5%	SKDC Administration + Preventative Measures	Various administration costs of the scheme – such as printing and posting of vouchers + costs towards Preventative measures workshops.	April 2025 to March 2026
3	£45,845	10%	3 <sup>rd</sup> party Referrers	This will be set aside for referrals that have come from 3 <sup>rd</sup> party organisations	June/July 2025 to March 2026

Method	Amount	% of fund	Distributing organisation	Purpose	Period of spend
				distributed throughout the year.	
4	£59,598	13%	Outreach Work/ Pensioners	Vouchers will be distributed as an outcome of outreach visits depending on the needs.  Priority will be given to pensioners.	October to December 2025
5	£91,690	20%	HSF7 Vouchers – Lincolnshire Community Foundation (LCF)	Support for residents not in receipt of an income related Benefit that are struggling financially. The payment will be made in two instalments in July and December.	August to September 2025 (Round 1) - £45,845  January to March 2026 (Round 2) - £45,845
6	£229,236	50%	SKDC HSF7 Vouchers – Welfare & Financial Advice Team	Support for those specifically in receipt of an income related benefit that are struggling. This will be split over 2 intensive periods.	August to September 2025 (Round 1) - £114,618  January to March 2026 (Round 2) - £114,618

### Timeline for voucher distribution

2.18. The timeline for voucher distribution is as follows:

- April to May 2025 – approval process: Emergency Assistance will still be met from the current emergency fund that has been created from uncashed vouchers from previous funds.
- June to July 2025 – open for third party referrals and support agency applications. Assistance will be predominantly by supermarket vouchers. As of 24 June 2025, a total of **102** referrals had been received.

- August to September 2025 – open to public application with both Lincolnshire Community Foundation (LCF) will assist in reaching low-income households not in receipt of an income-related benefit. Assistance will be predominantly by supermarket vouchers
- Oct to December 2025 - open for third party referrals from support agencies and low-income pensioners.
- January to March 2026 - open to public application until funding ends. Assistance will be predominantly by supermarket vouchers and Energy Vouchers.

## **Distribution Plan for Household Support Fund 7**

2.19. The criteria and distribution method was the same as previous years:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
The allocation of HSF7 will be 100% application based	<p>Residents can contact the Council directly by speaking to the Customer Service Team or being referred by an approved third party (front facing SKDC teams, SKDC Elected Members and Citizens Advice).</p> <p>The team also receive referrals from NHS Teams, Charities, Foodbanks and a number of other organisations they have built relationships with.</p>
Eligibility criteria	<p>Any household that is struggling financially within the district with a household income of less than £50k will be eligible to apply.</p> <p>Priority will be given to residents that are going through a crisis or are on a low income, with support being given to families with children, households with disabilities, single households, couples and pensioners.</p>
70% of the Councils allocated funding will be distributed by in-house applications	<p>These will be for residents in receipt of a benefit. The resident will be able to speak to the Welfare and Financial Advice Team for additional advice and support.</p> <p>Supermarket / Energy /Cash vouchers will be issued to the applicant which will be purchased from Charis Grants.</p>



Criteria	Distribution
	These will be awarded either as a single voucher or as a combination of vouchers up to the allotted value per household.
	HSF is not designed to be an emergency payment – other financial assistance is available for this – such as Foodbank referrals and support from third sector organisations.
	These will be purchased from Charis Grants (trusted administrator for many essential funds and grants) and awarded as either a single voucher or as a combination of vouchers up to the allotted value per household.
Voucher Information and reporting	Awarded at a value of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £100 for single households</li> <li>• £200 for couples and families</li> </ul>
	For reporting purposes to LCC and DWP the vouchers will be split between food, energy and wider household essentials.
20% of SKDC allocated funding will be distributed on behalf of SKDC by Lincolnshire Community Foundation (LCF)	Support will be provided to households that are not in receipt of an income related benefit and are in need due to financial crisis.
	This organisation has assisted in previous schemes as the Welfare and Financial Advice Team have struggled to reach this cohort of residents.  LCF are well placed to undertake financial assessments for these residents and identify other support that would benefit them – this could be a mix of financial support, financial management mentoring, supporting with budgets and supporting with job seeking activities.
	Supermarket vouchers will be issued to the applicant.
	Applicants must be struggling financially due to a crisis to receive an award and have a combined household income of less than £50,000, with support being given to families

Criteria	Distribution
	with children, households with disabilities, single households, couples and pensioners.

### **Welfare and Financial Advice Team (Advice and Referral Process)**

- 2.20. The aim of the Welfare and Financial Advice Team is to enable the Council's most vulnerable residents, who cannot access any other income, to sustain their home, health, family, and security. The team is very aware of how important this support is to residents, and this is why the Council has had such a team in place since June 2023. One of the key activities for the team was to review the existing referral process from previous HSF schemes and to refine this process to ensure the best possible outcomes for the Council's residents.
- 2.21. An internal online form has been produced for SK Officers and Elected Members to complete, to refer a resident into the Welfare and Financial Advice Team for support. This support can take the form of general advice, referral to third sectors and assessment for a HSF voucher.
- 2.22. Each referral requires an initial 20 to 30 minute appointment with the resident to discuss their personal and household financial circumstances, to determine whether they are receiving all support available to them. The officer will discuss Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Foodbank vouchers, top-ups for shortfall in rent / council tax, tenancy support (if SKDC tenant – will be referred in to Tenancy Support Team) and other wider support such as referrals into Citizens Advice. The support provided is in-depth as the team has to make an assessment as to what is needed. The team –cannot offer a blanket response to all residents as their circumstances are on an individual needs basis.
- 2.23. Once the referral has been completed and the triage discussion has been undertaken with the resident, details are then passed to the HSF Officer (within the Welfare and Financial Advice Team) who will process the HSF voucher. The vouchers are processed in bulk and issued on a weekly basis (unless urgent need has been established).

### **Action plan – 2025/26**

- 2.24. The action plan for additional activities to be undertaken by the Welfare and Financial Advice Team during 2025/26 is detailed in **Appendix One**.

- 2.25. The plan will be monitored throughout 2025/26, and a further update as to the progress and outcome of the activities will be provided to this committee at the next meeting in October 2025.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. Members of Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the report and are invited to ask questions regarding its content.
- 3.2. It is recommended to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the Welfare and Financial Advice Team continue to review the financial impacts of cost of living and implement activities within the action plan to support residents of South Kesteven.

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

- 4.1 There are no other options – this report is for information only.

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

- 5.1. The recommendation will ensure residents of South Kesteven will have access to the support they need, with the Welfare and Financial Advice Team being able to monitor progress against the action plan.

### **6. Appendices**

- 6.1. Appendix One – Welfare and Financial Advice Team action plan.

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**Welfare and Financial Advice Team (W&FA Team) – Action Plan**

This action plan shows the activities to be undertaken by the Welfare and Financial Advice Team during 2025/26. It is made up of key areas of activity

Action 1	Administration
Action 2	Awareness
Action 3	Proactive – internal & external
Action 4	Proactive Support
Action 5	Preventative

## Activity 1: Administration

### 1a) Case Management

**Purpose: Ensure Case management is up to date and provides clear outcomes – such as number of residents supported, value of support**

#### Activities to be undertaken

#### Status

- Detailed case management to be available on all financial support provided:
  - Wrap-around support
  - Household Support Fund – administered by SKDC
  - Household Support Fund – administered by Lincolnshire Community Foundation

Ongoing

Activity 2: Awareness		
2a) Website update	<b>Purpose: Ensure the website is up to date, referencing the Welfare and Financial Advice Team</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Update all "Cost of Living pages"	30 June 2025
	Existing pages can be found here: <a href="#">Cost of Living help and support   South Kesteven District Council</a>	
	Remove reference to old schemes	30 June 2025
	Include Food Support leaflets	30 June 2025
2b) Co-Ordinate responses to government support initiatives	<b>Purpose: Ensure awareness of announcements and initiatives, understanding the impact for the Council and residents</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Continue to attend Lincolnshire Working Group to collaborate with County and District colleagues	Ongoing
	Promotion and launch of Household Support Fund (HSF) from April 2025 to March 2026	Complete 30 May 2025
	Use of Emergency Fund	Ongoing
	Winter Fuel Payments threshold reduced to and income of or below £35,000	

Activity 2: Awareness		
	<p>Everyone over the State Pension age in England and Wales with an income of, or below, £35,000 a year will benefit from a Winter Fuel Payment this winter</p> <p><a href="#">Nine million pensioners to receive Winter Fuel Payments this winter - GOV.UK</a></p>	
	<p>Crisis and Resilience Fund - replacing HSF and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Announcement during the <a href="#">Spending Review 2025</a> on 11 June 2025</li> <li>○ <b>Para 3.21:</b> Cost of living: the government is providing direct assistance to families most at risk of poverty through the Healthy Start scheme, and establishing a new Crisis and Resilience Fund supported by £1 billion a year (including Barnett impact) through the SR period to replace the Household Support Fund</li> </ul>	Ongoing
2c) Liaison with internal teams	<b>Purpose: Ensure awareness of support and related</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	<p>Provide updates regarding changes to the team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Arrange attendance at team meetings</li> <li>○ Updating on HSF stages – launch, referral period, award period</li> <li>○ Referral process for HSF and general support</li> <li>○ Presentation of Food Support leaflets</li> <li>○ Overview of outreach activities and areas within the district these are taking place</li> </ul>	Ongoing
	Spotlight session to be organised	September 2025



Activity 3: Proactive – internal and external		
3a) Single Point of Contact	<b>Purpose: Be the Single Point of Contact for Welfare and Financial Advice enquiries via the Welfare and Financial Advice email address</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Welfare email box to be set up: <a href="mailto:welfare@southkesteven.gov.uk">welfare@southkesteven.gov.uk</a>	Complete
	Online referral form for Household Support Fund (for internal referrals from SKDC Officers and Members)	Complete
	Inclusion of W&FA Team in SKToday (Autumn edition)	Autumn 2025
	All SKDC staff are aware of W&FA Team and how to contact	Ongoing (See action 2c)
	External support organisations are aware of W&FA Team and how to contact	Ongoing
3b) Lincolnshire Financial Inclusion Partnership Group	<b>Purpose: Actively contribute to the Lincolnshire Financial Inclusion Partnership Group</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend and contribute to the quarterly meetings.</li> <li>Share any information to appropriate SKDC teams.</li> <li>Assist the organisers with the arrangements for the upcoming Lincolnshire Financial Inclusion Partnership Conference.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

<b>Activity 3: Proactive – internal and external</b>		
<b>3c) Foodbanks</b>	<b>Purpose: Develop and maintain a positive relationship with all foodbanks across SKDC</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Visits to Foodbank Coordinators within the district to share ideas on how best to help clients.	July 2025
	Actively seek referrals for clients that have used foodbanks that may benefit from additional financial advice.	Ongoing
<b>3d) Warm Spaces</b>	<b>Purpose: Actively contribute to the Welcome Warm Spaces Working Group</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Attend and contribute to the meetings for actions relating to the warm spaces for 2025/26	Autumn 2025
	Visit warm spaces to offer Welfare and Financial Advice as part of outreach	Winter 2025
	Actively share ideas with the working group to improve the 2025/26 warm spaces	Autumn/winter 2025
<b>3e) Information sharing</b>	<b>Purpose: Develop and manage information sharing protocol between SKDC and Support Organisations / advice agencies</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Develop and maintain relationships with support organisations by attending events, seminars and providing Welfare and Financial Advice updates / talks.	Ongoing

Activity 3: Proactive – internal and external		
	Sharing information and ideas to improve delivery of service to our residents within the legal guidelines	Ongoing
	Attend community engagement events in the form of Welfare and Financial Advice Clinics in Library's, Jobcentres, children's centres.	Ongoing
3f) Liaison	<b>Purpose: Liaison with partners and external support organisations</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Maintain relationship with those already established: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Neighbourhood and Wellbeing Teams</li> <li>• Grantham Mental Health Partnership</li> <li>• NACRO officers</li> <li>• Foodbanks</li> <li>• Bourne United Charities</li> <li>• Bread &amp; Butter Thing</li> <li>• Grantham College</li> <li>• Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Services</li> </ul>	Ongoing
	Meet with partners during 2025/26 to understand future support and explore opportunities to work together	Ongoing
	Meet regularly with local Job Centre and DWP colleagues to discuss emerging issues and agree a joint up approach for support and potential resolution	Ongoing

Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support			
4a) Warm Spaces	Purpose: Increase the number of warm welcome spaces across the district		
	Activities to be undertaken		Status
	Liaison with Members, Parish Clerks and potential warm welcome spaces venues		Ongoing
4b) Digital Inclusion	Purpose: To increase digital support and inclusion for vulnerable and elderly residents		
	Activities to be undertaken		Status
	Assisting residents with digital forms such as pension credit checks and discretionary housing payments		Ongoing
4c) Community Outreach	Purpose: To ensure support can be provided across all towns within the district and where possible, rural areas		
	Activities to be undertaken		Status
	Arrange events within the community at libraries, warm spaces, Children centres, jobcentres to offer budgeting skills, benefit checks and basic financial education i.e. pension credit checks:		June 2025 – April 2026
	Bourne:		
	Bourne Foodbank	2 North Road, Bourne, PE10 9AP	
	Don't Lose Hope	4 North Street, Bourne, Lincs. PE10 9EB.	One to one / preventative workshop

### Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support

Bourne United Charity (AI Houses)	The Red Hall South Bourne	One to one
Len pick	5 Granby Court, Hereward Street, Bourne PE10 9AD	One to one
Salvation Army	5a Manning Road Bourne, PE01 9ET.	One to one / preventative workshop
Bread and Butter Thing	5a Manning Road Bourne, PE01 9ET.	One to one

#### Deepings:

Foodbank	63 Hereward Way, Deeping St James	One to one
The Green School Community Café	<b>24 Church Street, Market Deeping, Lincolnshire, PE6 8DA,</b>	One to one / preventative workshop
Bread and Butter Thing	Markt Deeping Scout and Guide Hall, Wellington Way, Deeping PE6 8LF.	One to one
Open Door Baptist Church	5 Spalding Rd, Deeping St James, Peterborough PE6 8NJ	One to one / preventative workshop

### Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support

Community Centre	2 Douglas Rd, Peterborough PE6 8PA	One to one / preventative workshop
Deeping United Charity	38 Church Street, Deeping St. James, PE6 8HD	One to one
Age Concern	21 Tyghes Cl, Deeping St James, Peterborough PE6 8NS	One to one
Odd Fellows	57 Church St, Market Deeping, Peterborough PE6 8AN	One to one

#### Grantham:

Jubilee Church	5 London Rd, Grantham NG31 6EY	One to one / preventative workshop
Alive Church	Castlegate, Grantham, NG31 6SQ	One to one / preventative workshop
Church Of Ascension	Harrowby Lane , Grantham	One to one / preventative workshop
The Passage	Grantham Passage Resource Centre	One to one / preventative workshop
Bread and Butter	Harrowby United Football Club, 13 Dickens Road, Grantham, NG31 9QY	One to one

### Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support

Bread and Butter	West Grantham Community Centre, Grantham	One to one
St Johns Church	Station Road East, Grantham	One to one
Job 22	High St Grantham	One to one / preventative workshop
Bhive	11a Finkin St, Grantham	One to one / preventative workshop
Grief Charity	The Malting , Warf Rd , Grantham	One to one

#### Stamford:

2nd Helping	Orion House, 11 Barn Hill, Stamford, PE9 2AE.	One to one / preventative workshop
Georges Hub -	St Augustine's School, Kesteven Road PE9 1SR	One to one / preventative workshop
Georges Hub -	Free church, Kesteven Road, Stamford, PE9 1SU	One to one / preventative workshop
Georges Hub -	Malcolm Sergeants School, Empingham Road, PE9 2SR	One to one / preventative workshop
Georges Hub -	St Georges School, Kesteven Road, Stamford, PE9 1SX	One to one / preventative workshop

Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support					
		Bread and Butter Thing	Christ Church, Green Lane, Stamford, PE9 1HE	One to one	
		SHEP	27-29 St George's Street, Stamford	One to one / preventative workshop	
		Stamford Market	Broad St, Stamford	One to one	
	Support the Housing Roadshow which will be taking place across the District <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>27/08/25</b>- Earlsfield Community Centre roadshow will be 10:00- 2:30</li><li>• <b>04/09/25</b>- Manor Court Community Centre Bourne roadshow will be 10:00- 2:30</li><li>• <b>10/09/25</b> -Edmonds Close Community Centre Stamford roadshow will be 10:00 -2:30</li><li>• <b>25/09/25</b>- Deepings Community Centre Market Deeping roadshow will be 10:00 2:30</li><li>• <b>30/09/25</b> Greyfriars Community Centre Grantham roadshow will be 1:00-6:00</li></ul>				August & September 2025
4d) Furniture Aid	Purpose: Review ways to source assistance from other organisations to help residents in need of furniture				
	Activities to be undertaken				Status



<b>Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support</b>		
	<p>Maintain relationships with charities and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Organisations to continue to source grants to be able to assist help for residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percy Bilton</li> <li>• BBC Children in Need</li> <li>• Bourne United</li> <li>• Lem pic</li> <li>• Family Fund</li> </ul> <p>Identify and build relationships with new organisations.</p>	Ongoing
<b>4e) New tenants</b>	<b>Purpose: To produce a new tenant Welfare and Financial Advice pack</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Liaise with Housing colleagues to ensure this complements the new tenant pack already given at sign up	September 2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgeting Advice / referrals to external organisations for new tenants (appropriate additional support to that being provided by SKDC Tenancy Services Team)</li> <li>• Tick list of key actions for new tenant / budgeting</li> </ul>	March 2026
<b>4f) New residents</b>	<b>Purpose: To produce a new resident information pack (to include Welfare and Financial Advice)</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Include the same information as in the tenant pack	March 2026

Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support		
	Welcome to SKDC information:	March 2026
4g) Leaflet of the support available	<b>Purpose: Production of leaflets for each Town within the District to provide key food support information</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Issue to Cabinet Member, Members and Parish Clerks for distribution	Completed
	Inclusion within Council Tax reminders	July 2025
	Inclusion within Council Tax summonses	July 2025
	Inclusion within rent statements	July 2025
	Inclusion on intranet and staff notice board	July 2025
4h) Credits on rent accounts	<b>Purpose: To be reviewed to maximise tenant income</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Liaise with Income Recovery Team Leader to ascertain those accounts with credit and contact the tenant to arrange refund or transfer	March 2025
4i) Credits on council tax accounts	<b>Purpose: To be reviewed to maximise resident income</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Liaise with Business Rates and Council Tax Enforcement Team Leader to ascertain those accounts with credit and contact the resident to arrange refund or transfer	March 2025

**Activity 4: Proactive – Resident Support**

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Activity 5: Preventative		
5a) Consider the formation of a Welfare and Financial Advice Strategic Working Group	<b>Purpose: To provide a collaborate cross-team approach to the welfare and financial issues facing our residents</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Invitations to be issued to relevant officers: W&FA Team, Communications, Community Engagement, Community Safety, Housing, Revenues & Benefits	December 2025
	To revisit the original key themes which were introduced by the original Cost of Living Strategic Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication</li> <li>○ Food insecurity and poverty</li> <li>○ Fuel &amp; Energy Poverty</li> <li>○ Financial – Benefits, Debt Support and Funding</li> <li>○ Health &amp; Wellbeing (inc Welcome Warm Spaces)</li> <li>○ Prevention of homelessness</li> <li>○ Skills, Employment &amp; Businesses</li> </ul>	December 2025
	Produce a holistic action plan, with the inclusion of all relevant SKDC Teams	March 2026
5b) Consider budgeting workshops for residents	<b>Purpose: Identify the specific financial challenges faced by attendees, such as debt, low income, or lack of financial literacy</b>	
	<b>Activities to be undertaken</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Liaison with relevant external organisations to discuss support in facilitating a budgeting workshop	March 2026

Activity 5: Preventative		
	Increase access to debt advice:	March 2026
	Expand the reach of debt advice services to individuals facing financial difficulties, ensuring timely access to help and support	
	Emergency Assistance programmes:	March 2026
	Provide financial assistance to those facing immediate financial hardship, such as food or housing support.	
	Welfare Benefit Support:	March 2026
	Assist individuals in maximizing their welfare benefits and accessing other available support	

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**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## **Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**


Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Report of Councillor Phil Dilks,  
Cabinet Member for Planning

## **Armed Forces Update**

### **Report Author**

Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

 carol.drury@southkesteven.gov.uk

### **Purpose of Report**

To provide an update on the work of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer by means of a presentation to Members of Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. Note the content of the presentation and provide comment**

### **Decision Information**

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting Communities Housing Effective Council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

## **1. Implications**

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

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

- 1.1 The fixed term post is employed by North Kesteven District Council of which the council contributes £5k towards the cost of this post which is built into existing budgets.

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

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

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. The role of Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer was introduced in 2024 and is a post jointly funded by Lincolnshire's district councils and the NHS.
- 2.2. The Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer works two days per week across the seven districts of Lincolnshire to strengthen the support between the civilian and armed forces communities. This role is key in ensuring veterans, service personnel, and their families are recognised, valued, and well-supported.
- 2.3. Unlike other local authorities in Lincolnshire, South Kesteven has a dedicated Armed Forces Officer. The role of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer complements the current provision in this district adding value to the expanse of work already undertaken in support of Armed Forces personnel – both serving and veterans and, crucially, their families.
- 2.4. The presentation which accompanies this report is brought to Committee to provide an overview of the work of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer to date.

## **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. Funding for this post was initially agreed to cover a two-year period (2024-2026) but agreement has recently been reached that it will be extended for a further two



years, ensuring provision until 2028. Lincolnshire County Council will, at the start of the new contract (April 2026) also contribute to this role.

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

- 4.1 This report and accompanying presentation are brought to Committee for information only therefore no other options are available for consideration.

#### **5. Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 5.1. To ensure Members are aware of the work of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer and its benefits to the district of South Kesteven.

#### **6. Appendices**

- 6.1 Appendix 1 - Armed Forces Update Presentation

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# The Lincolnshire Armed Forces Partnership Update

Paul Drury  
Lincolnshire Armed Forces Covenant Officer



The *Armed Forces Covenant* is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the armed forces, and their families, are treated fairly



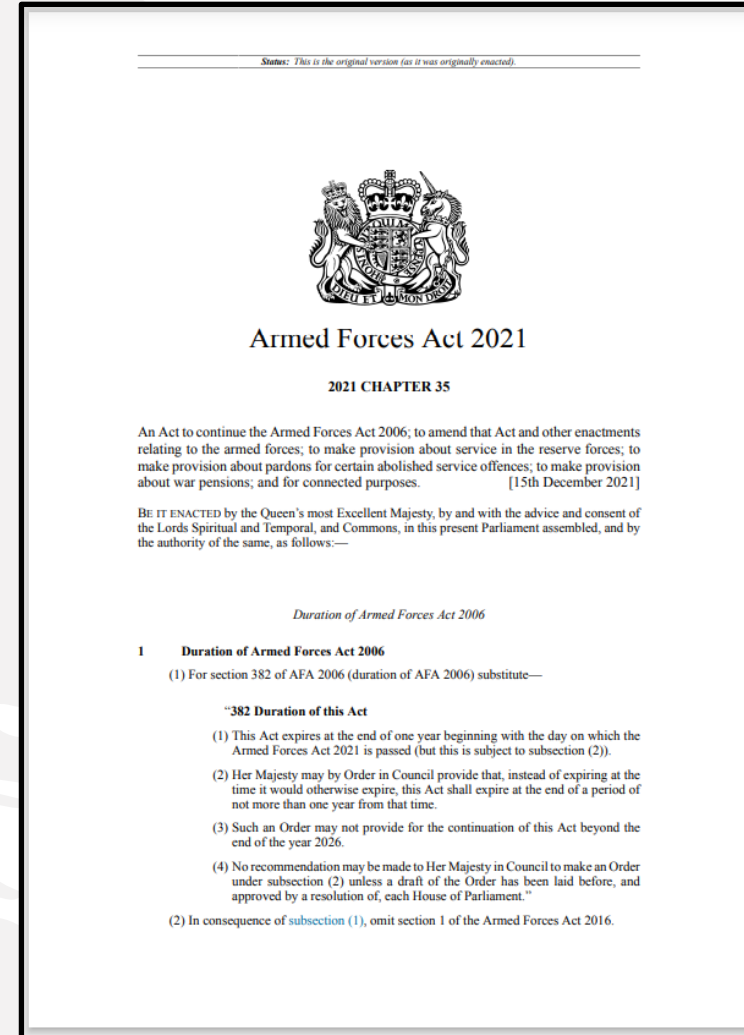
The role of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer is working to strengthen the support between the civilian and armed forces communities across the county.  
Ensuring Service Personnel, Reservists, Veterans and their Families are recognised, valued, and well-supported

# Why do we need it?

To build on the good work and delivery in support of the Armed Forces Community

There remains a disparity in awareness of the Covenant and the issues that the AF Community face around the country

To improve the Armed Forces' lived experience, by increasing awareness of disadvantages they can face and how they can be resolved



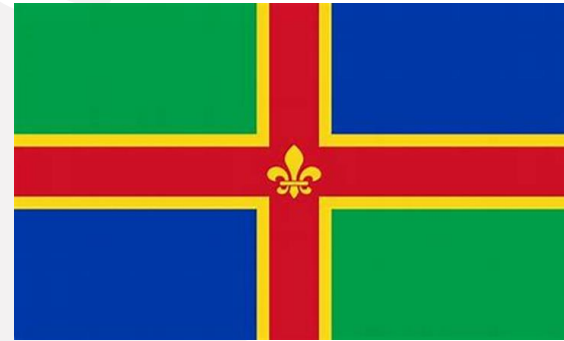


Armed Forces Establishments and Detachments here in Lincolnshire



# Here in Lincolnshire

*Not an exhaustive list*



- Lincolnshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership
- Aims & Objectives for the Lincolnshire Partnership
- Working with both Military and Civilian partners, including military charities and civilian 3<sup>rd</sup> sector
- Produced the Directory of Services for the Armed Forces Communities
- Armed Forces Leads – DWP, Faith, Health, Local Authority
- Established Strategic Groups to look at Education and Housing
- Seeking funding for community projects through The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust



# Here in South Kesteven

- Working with Prince William of Gloucester HIVE to produce an Armed Forces welcome pack for military families (from all services) across Lincolnshire
- Sarah McQueen is our district housing lead for the Strategic Armed Forces Housing meetings
- Working with SSAFA to identify the breakfast clubs (and coffee mornings) in South Kesteven
- Councillor Bridget Ley is the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Partnership Chair
- Working with RAF Wittering to identify 'dispersed service families' in South Kesteven



SOUTH KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Members of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership



# Who are our Armed Forces Community

- Serving personnel
  - And their Families
- Reservists
  - And their Families
- Veterans
  - And their Families



# Supporting Service Families, we work closely with the three Family Federations





# Veterans

Veterans are defined as anyone who has **served for at least one day** in His Majesty's Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations.



# Veterans' information per district as per the Census data 2021

District	Percent	Total Number
NKDC	10.2%	10,009
SKDC	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>8,693</b>
WLDC	7.3%	5,746
ELDC	7%	8,511
SHDC	5.6%	4,433
Lincoln	5.3%	4,642
Boston	4.8%	2,777

This can be broken down further to:

- Previously served in both regular and reserve UK armed forces
- Previously served in regular armed forces
- Previously served in reserve armed forces



# Veterans (those who have served)

- **Lincolnshire has the second highest number of veterans in England**
- Have identified 35+ Armed Forces Breakfast clubs (working with SSAFA)
- Working with the Office of Veterans Affairs
- Working with multiple organisations such as Veterans Support Services CIC, RBL and SSAFA
- **Aim three, Recognition of Service**



## Lincolnshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

#### Foreword

As Chair of the Lincolnshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership I am pleased that our Partnership has identified aims and objectives to guide our activities and future direction in support of Lincolnshire's Armed Forces community.

Cllr Richard Dixon-Warren. Lt Col (Retd).





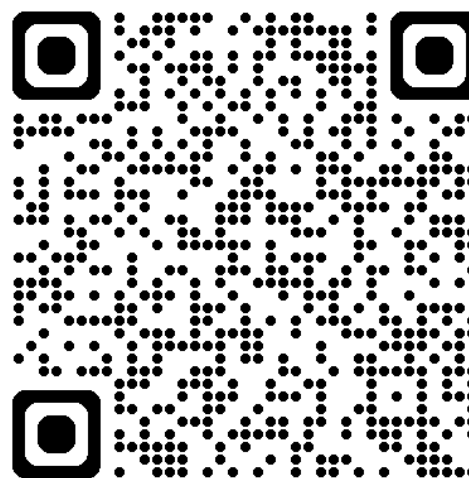
Office for  
Veterans' Affairs

# TEN THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



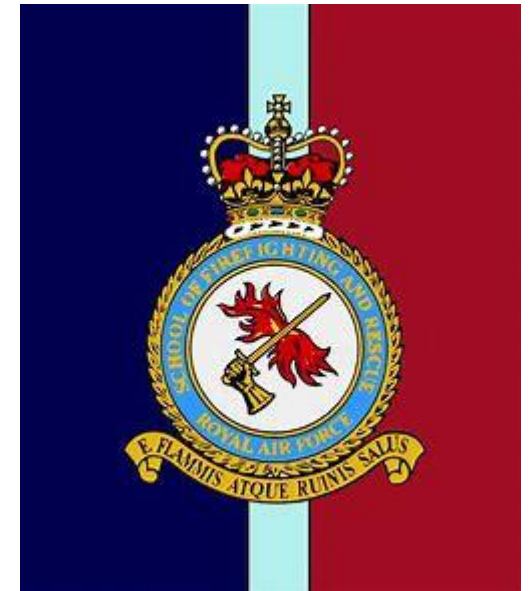
**Connect  
to support**  
Lincolnshire

Looking for support?  
Access our directory of services  
to support our armed  
forces communities



# Questions or Comments

Paul Drury, Lincolnshire Armed Forces Covenant Officer  
[Paul\\_drury@n-Kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Paul_drury@n-Kesteven.gov.uk)



# Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2025/26

## WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMIITEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE PRIORITY
<b>16 OCTOBER 2025</b>				
<b>LCC Health Scrutiny Committee update</b>		Update provided by Cllr Morgan		
<b>Customer Service Update Q1 2025/26</b>	Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service and Community)	To provide the Committee with an update regarding customer interactions within the Customer Service team and high contact service areas for Q1 2024/25		Effective Council
<b>Welfare &amp; Financial Advice Team update - Q1 2025/26</b>	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service and Community)	To provide the Committee with an update regarding the Household Support Fund (Q1 and Q1 2025/26), and the wrap around support provided by the Welfare and Financial Advice team. This will detail the activity undertaken by the team, number of residents supported, value of support provided and an update regarding District, County and National activities		Enabling economic opportunities  Effective council
<b>10 December 2025</b>				
<b>Customer Service Update Q2 2025/26</b>	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service and Community)	To provide the Committee with an update regarding customer interactions within the Customer		Effective Council

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMIITEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE PRIORITY
		Service team and high contact service areas for Q2 2024/25.		
<b>Welfare &amp; Financial Advice Team update – Q2 2025/26</b>	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service and Community)	To provide the Committee with an update regarding the Household Support Fund (Q2 2025/26), and the wrap around support provided by the Welfare and Financial Advice team. This will detail the activity undertaken by the team, number of residents supported, value of support provided and an update regarding District, County and National activities		Enabling economic opportunities  Effective council
<b>27 January 2026</b>				
<b>Customer Service Update Q3 2025/26</b>	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service and Community)	To provide the Committee with an update regarding customer interactions within the Customer Service team and high contact service areas for Q3 2024/25		Effective Council
<b>Welfare &amp; Financial Advice Team update – Q3 2025/26</b>	Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Service and Community)	To provide the Committee with an update regarding the Household Support Fund (Q3 2025/26), and the wrap around support provided by the Welfare and Financial Advice team. This will detail the activity undertaken by the team, number of residents		Enabling economic opportunities  Effective council

REPORT TITLE	OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMIITEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE PRIORITY
		supported, value of support provided and an update regarding District, County and National activities		

Unscheduled Items

Report title	Issue	Originated	Corporate Priority

The Committee’s Remit

The remit of the Rural and Communities 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, but not limited to:

- Allotments
- Anti-social behaviour, community safety and local policing
- Benefit claims
- Community engagement & cohesion
- Community funding and volunteering
- Community right to bid
- Community well-being
- Customer services
- Disabled facilities grant
- Equality and diversity
- Parish and town council liaison
- Public conveniences
- Safeguarding and individual wellbeing
- Shop front designs and funding
- Street furniture