

MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 12 JUNE 2025

11.00 AM



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

PRESENT

Councillor Ian Selby Chairman

Councillor Matthew Bailey
Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Pam Byrd
Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Patsy Ellis
Councillor Paul Fellows
Councillor Phil Gadd
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Jane Kingman
Councillor Gareth Knight
Councillor Philip Knowles

Councillor Robert Leadenham
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Penny Milnes
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Chris Noon
Councillor Habib Rahman
Councillor Rhea Rayside
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Max Sawyer
Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Paul Stokes
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Murray Turner
Councillor Mark Whittington
Councillor Paul Wood

OFFICERS

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive
Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects
David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Chris Prime, Communications Manager
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Gary Andrew, IT Services Manager
Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer

18. Apologies for absence

The Chairman of the Council welcomed everyone to the Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

Emma Baker
David Bellamy
Steven Cunnington
James Denniston
Ben Green
Graham Jeal
Gloria Johnson
Anna Kelly
Zoe Lane
Bridget Ley
Nikki Manterfield
Nick Robins
Penny Robins
Rob Shorrocks
Vanessa Smith
Elvis Stooke
Jane Wood
Sue Woolley

19. Disclosure of Interests

No interests were disclosed.

20. Appointment of Interim Monitoring Officer

Members considered a report on the appointment of an Interim Monitoring Officer.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report. All political Group Leaders had been consulted about the interim appointment of Angela Wakefield, the Monitoring Officer at Rutland County Council.

It was outlined that the absence of a Monitoring Officer at the authority would cause problems, including (but not limited to) the following:

- one of the roles of the Monitoring Officer was to ensure the Council remained within the law when taking decision, and without anyone in post this would of course be difficult.
- Councillors would also lack crucial Constitutional guidance that a Monitoring Officer would give.
- The continued absence of a Monitoring Officer would lead to other staff being overburdened with emails and correspondence.

- The Monitoring Officer investigated any potential breaches of the Code of Conduct. There would be no-one to respond to any potential breaches in their absence.

The following points were highlighted during debate between members and by officers in response to member questions:

- Thanks were given to Graham Watts, the outgoing Monitoring Officer for his supportive advice and guidance during his time at South Kesteven District Council. Councillors wished him well for his future career.
- A point of order was raised about Mandatory Standing Orders and whether they had been followed in putting the recommendation within the report before Councillors. Rutland County Council had been subjected to a similar situation (the lack of a Monitoring Officer) in a previous year and had amended their Constitution to reflect that Council could take a decision on an 'interim' Monitoring Officer without the recruitment and selection process taking place through another Committee. However, it was clear that Full Council was the decision-making body for the appointment of Statutory Officers.
- Legal advice on the route to appointment of the Monitoring Officer had been sought, and whilst it would have been ideal for Employment Committee to scrutinise the appointment, there was a bigger risk that the Council would be left with no Monitoring Officer.
- An interim appointment had no definitive timescale, though the Chief Executive was hopeful that the position of Director of Legal and Governance would be subjected to Employment Committee's scrutiny by September at the earliest as the recruitment process for the position had already started.

Having been moved and seconded, and following a vote, it was **AGREED:**

DECISION

That Full Council:

- 1. Approve the appointment of Ms Angela Wakefield as the Interim Monitoring Officer with immediate effect.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development to use the Local Priorities Reserve to fund any necessary costs associated with the interim staffing arrangements as well as the recruitment of a Director for Law and Governance.**

21. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 11:29am.