

Minutes

Cabinet

Tuesday, 24 September 2024



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Date of publication: 30 September 2024

Call in expiry: 7 October 2024,
decisions can be implemented 8
October 2024 (provided no call-in)

The Leader: Councillor Ashley Baxter, Leader of the Council (Chairman)

The Deputy Leader: Councillor Paul Stokes, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Rhys Baker, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Councillor Richard Cleaver, Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement

Councillor Phil Dilks, Cabinet Member for Planning

Councillor Philip Knowles, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing

Councillor Rhea Rayside, Cabinet Member for People and Communities

Non-Cabinet Members present

Councillor Matt Bailey

Councillor Tim Harrison

Councillor Charmaine Morgan

Councillor Ian Selby

Officers

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and
Monitoring Officer

Emma Whittaker, Assistant Director of Planning

James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Patrick Astill, Communications Officer

Shaza Brannon, Planning Policy Manager

Niall Jackson, Data and Information Governance Officer

Chris Prime, Communications Manager

37. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Virginia Moran.

38. Disclosure of Interests

There were no disclosures of interests.

39. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

40. Proposals for Car Parking Charges - Grantham and Stamford

Purpose of report

A set of updated proposals in relation to off-street parking in the district.

Decision

Cabinet:

- 1. Reconsidered its draft parking charging tariff proposals for Grantham and Stamford in response to the informal and initial feedback from the public, community groups and other stakeholders and approved the revised proposals set out in Appendix B (as amended).**
- 2. Agreed the following amendments to Appendix B:**
 - the charging period for Grantham and Stamford would be 8am-6pm Monday to Saturday
 - the application date of new charges was 'to be advised' rather than from April 2025
 - Long stay season tickets for the period Monday to Saturday in Grantham and Stamford would cost £21.50 per week, £75 per month or £200 per quarter and there will be no Monday to Sunday season tickets
- 3. Withdrew the proposal to introduce evening charging at Grantham and Stamford car parks.**
- 4. Withdrew the proposal to introduce Sunday and Bank Holiday charging at Grantham and Stamford car parks.**
- 5. Approved the introduction of 2 hours free parking in short stay car parks and 3 hours free parking in long stay car parks on Mondays to Wednesdays between 2nd and 24th December 2024 in both Grantham & Stamford.**
- 6. Noted that the recommendations of the Capacity Study were supported unanimously by the Finance & Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 February 2024 and therefore agreed to:**

- **commission a further car parking study six months after the implementation of the new car parking tariffs to assess their impact**
 - **request officers undertake further work in relation to the future car parking arrangements in Bourne and the Deepings, the parking arrangements for Blue Badge holders, and the future capacity requirements for Grantham and Stamford**
- 7. Request Officers consider proposals to enable enforcement against unauthorised parking in designated play parks and green spaces.**
 - 8. Request Officers prepare a policy on the provision of free parking permits and discounted season tickets to nominated persons or organisations.**
 - 9. Approved the drafting of the variation to the South Kesteven District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Civil Enforcement Order) 2023, with or without amendments, for consultation in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.**
 - 10. Delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement to review any feedback received following the publication of the intention to vary the car parking tariffs in Grantham and Stamford.**

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet considered other options at their meeting on 18 January 2024 and this report updated the proposals that had been considered since that time.

Reasons for decisions

The proposals for introducing updated parking charges had been considered and this decision demonstrated the need to ensure that any changes to tariffs met the needs of users and the objectives that had been identified by the Capacity Study whilst ensuring each town's economic activity continued to thrive.

Parking charges had not increased in the last 2 and a half years during which there had been considerable inflation. Not amending parking charges was not an option, particularly due to the amount of backlog maintenance required to be addressed for the Council's car parking assets.

Members wanted to ensure that Grantham and Stamford had adequate car parking capacity, and that existing capacity was fully utilised. In response, in Stamford there would be an extra 143 spaces made available at the Cattlemarket car park, (including 8 electric vehicle charging points) to address its capacity needs and in Grantham there would be an hour's free parking to attract higher utilisation and attract more footfall.

CCTV was being upgraded in the Council's car parks to increase safety for the users of these facilities. Alongside this was a desire to include car parks in the rollout of public Wi-Fi.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- A variation of the existing Civil Enforcement Order would be appropriate, and therefore the changes approved to parking charges could be fast-tracked. A 21-day notice period would be required to implement any new charges. Notice to users of the car parks would usually be given via a printed notice within the relevant car parks.
- The decision to grant 2 hours (short stay) and 3 hours (long stay) free parking in Grantham in the lead up to Christmas would lead to an under-achievement of the parking income budget. However, it was argued that this was a price worth paying to stimulate additional footfall in the town centres.
- Parking in open and green spaces was an enforcement, rather than a parking issue, and would be followed up using different powers. Wyndham Park in Grantham was highlighted as an open space that contained a car park and therefore formed part of the parking order. Misuse of open spaces occurred where there was no parking provision provided.
- Parking arrangements in Bourne and the Deepings had been previously reviewed – whilst it was important to look again at these areas it might be more appropriate to undertake a 'light-touch' review. For example, the Council car park in Market Deeping was not ideal for parking charges as the infrastructure was not there, with similar issues being experienced in Bourne.
- The intention was to permit one hour of free parking at Guildhall Street, Welham Street, Watergate and Conduit Lane car parks (all Grantham), and two hours' free parking in the Wharf Rd car park in Grantham. Stamford had no requirement for such an initiative as there was already a very high take up on the car parking offer.
- A councillor in attendance at the meeting stated that changing the free parking offer to two hours within Grantham on market days would lead to increased footfall for the market and would allow more time for drivers to return to their cars. In response it was pointed out that the market footfall was already increasing even before the introduction of the one-hour free parking and so this could be more appropriately revisited as part of the six-month review of the new charges.
- Other ways of exploring and shopping within Stamford, such as walking and cycling were being encouraged.
- A councillor in attendance at the meeting expressed concern that the current works at Watergate car park in Grantham which have meant a reduction in the number of parking spaces might distort the figures used in the six-month review.
- The tariffs applied for using of EV charging points would be part of the six-month review. Effectively two services (charging and parking) were being utilised; therefore, users should pay accordingly. Commuters charging their vehicles and then parking the rest of the day free of charge was one issue to be picked up as part of any review.

- Blue Badge holders currently can park for free for an unlimited amount of time within Council car parks.

41. South Kesteven Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan

Purpose of report

To explain the implications of the emerging National Planning Policy Framework on the South Kesteven Local Plan review.

Decision

Cabinet endorsed the preparation of the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan in accordance with the approved Local Development Scheme (Contained as Option 1 within the report).

Alternative options considered and rejected

Other Options considered, and discounted, included:

Option 2: Pause Local Plan preparation

Option 2 assumed that the consultation National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) would be finalised 'as is' requiring the Council to revise the Local Plan to take into account the new NPPF, as such the following steps would have been undertaken:

- Pause preparation of the Regulation 19 Local Plan
- Commence work on revising the Local Plan to take into account the revised NPPF, with the view of publishing a Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan, including additional sites to meet the increased housing need, as soon as possible after the NPPF was published, to meet the December 2026 Submission deadline.
- Since the publication of the consultation version of the NPPF, work on evidence had temporarily paused until a decision was made as to how to proceed. As Option 2 paused plan preparation, evidence work would also continue to be paused until the NPPF was published. However, to take into account a revised NPPF with increased housing numbers and new national policy, it was anticipated that approximately five evidence-based documents would require review with unknown cost implications.
- Officers had carried out a high-level assessment of the potential housing sites that had been submitted through the 'call for sites' process and believed that, in the event of a higher housing requirement as proposed in the consultation NPPF, the Council would not need to reopen the call for sites.
- If, when the 'new' NPPF was published, it transpired that the Council could have proceeded using the current housing requirements and the deadline for submission to the Secretary of State was not extended beyond the June 2025 deadline, this option would have meant that the Council would not be able to submit its Local Plan for examination. The risks associated with this option are set out in the risk assessment contained within the report.

Reasons for decision

It was resolved to proceed with Regulation 19 Pre-Submission, pushing consultation to January 2025. It was important to note, that amending the consultation date to January remained in accordance with the Council's published Local Development Scheme which scheduled consultation of the Pre-Submission Local Plan to commence in Winter 2024.

Whilst this option was at risk, it was deemed that the Council would be in the best position to switch to either Option 1 Scenario a or b depending on the outcome of the NPPF, once published.

Whilst Option 1 Scenario a would inevitably require review of a raft of evidence documents, the government had indicated that:

“We recognise that these arrangements would require some local planning authorities to undertake unforeseen additional work and reopen engagement with communities. Therefore, the Government will provide direct funding support to help these authorities progress their plans to examination quickly.”

There could be some abortive costs associated with this option if the 'new' NPPF was published 'as is'.

The Local Plan was at an advanced stage with the aim of submitting the draft Plan to the inspectorate by June 2025, in order to meet the existing transitional deadline. Final adoption of the Local Plan was due to take place in summer 2026.

The Council consulted on the draft Local Plan earlier in 2024 and a response to this consultation was being prepared. The existing Local Plan worked on a requirement of 687 new homes to be delivered across South Kesteven per year, up to 2041. The new government made a manifesto promise of upping housing delivery, with a suggested increase to 912 homes per year.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- The new government had not yet provided certainty to officers over housebuilding numbers.
- In order to achieve the delivery of further housing, government needed to consider public investment in the infrastructure supporting new housing provision. Further investment was needed for affordable housing. Currently, the Council was reliant on the private sector to deliver housing targets.

42. Data Protection Policy Review

Purpose of report

An opportunity to review the Council's latest version of its Data Protection Policy.

Decision

Cabinet approved the draft Data Protection Policy as set out in Appendix A of the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Not to make any changes to the existing Policy.

To recommend any further amendments to the Policy.

Reasons for decision

It was a legal requirement to create and maintain a Data Protection Policy and formally set out the arrangements for the management of the Council's responsibilities. The decision reflected the outcome of a review of the Council's current Policy which had been undertaken.

The Policy was last updated in 2021 and therefore had been due for a review in 2024 as part of good practice. There were only minor changes to the existing Policy. These changes provided greater clarity to the document, and included information related to definitions, roles, data breaches, data handling and appeals and complaints.

43. Cabinet's Forward Plan

The Fleet Strategy item originally proposed for October's meeting of Cabinet was now due to be considered in February 2025.

The Forward Plan was noted.

The meeting closed at 10:59pm.