



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 4 February 2025

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes
Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet
Member for Leisure and Culture

Review of South Kesteven's Council-led Markets - Update

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on the markets Action Plan which was presented in September 2024. The Action Plan was designed to facilitate the delivery of the recommendations from the High Street Experts review of Bourne, Grantham and Stamford markets. It has been updated to include timelines and financial information.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Review the amended Action Plan and provide feedback on its contents and the resource implications required to deliver the Action Plan.**

Decision Information

| | |
|---|---|
| Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? | No |
| What are the relevant corporate priorities? | Connecting communities Enabling economic opportunities |
| 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 Action Plan outlines which points have secured funding from UKSPF and which actions would require additional funding to go ahead. To complement the Action Plan and to ensure there are resources available to fund specific elements, the budget proposals for 2025/26 include the formation of a new revenue reserve to fund agreed actions as set out in the Plan. This proposed reserve will be set at £50k for the financial year 2025/26.

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

Legal and Governance

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

Completed by: Graham Watts (Monitoring Officer)

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.3 A key theme of this review has been accessibility and therefore, prior to any work progressing an EIA will be required.

Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. In summer 2024, an external consultant-led review of the Council's three markets (Bourne, Grantham and Stamford) was undertaken by the High Street Experts. The High Street Experts (HSE) are a private consultancy company with a specialist knowledge of independent retailers and markets; they specialise in supporting independent retailers and markets to maximise income.
- 2.2. For each market, a list of recommendations was developed; these recommendations were pulled into an Action Plan.
- 2.3. The original Action Plan, which was brought to this Committee in September 2024, was the subject of a bid for funding from the UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) and it was agreed that an updated Action Plan would be presented to the committee once the outcome of the funding bid was known.
- 2.4. In November 2024 it was confirmed that the funding bid was successful and as a result the Action Plan has been updated with anticipated costs and deadlines. The updated Action Plan is available in Appendix 1.
- 2.5. A total of £58,200 has been awarded to improve the markets through the UKSPF. This funding is split across the three markets and does not focus on one market specifically. The key areas covered by the bid were:
 - Lamp banners, fin banners and railing banners,
 - Branded canvas bags,
 - Stall covers,
 - Road closure barriers and signage,
 - String lights and powerpacks,
 - Wheeled cages,
 - Heavy duty cable ramping,
 - A stage,
 - Enhanced marketing,
 - Gazebos, covers and weights,
 - Business support for traders, and
 - Street performance budget.
- 2.6. Although the funding covers most of the actions within the plan, some were not covered by the bid and these actions would need additional funding if they were to be included moving forward. In total the Action Plan would require an additional £30,000 to enable it to be fully completed. As stated in the Finance comments in paragraph 1.1, the budget proposals for 2025/26 include the formation of a new revenue reserve. This reserve could be used to fund the actions which aren't covered by UKSPF funding (as highlighted in the Action Plan). This reserve will be set at £50k for the financial year 2025/26 and could be a source of funding for these additional costs. The actions and associated costs are:

- Wayfinding and signage for each market - £10,000,
 - Specific market management training - £7,000,
 - Markets loyalty card – up to £3,000 per market, and
 - An accessibility assessment – £10,000.
- 2.7. The Action Plan and associated funding covers improvements at all three markets. Although the actions may be tailored to the specifics of each market, the funding has been allocated across all three markets and is not weighted towards one market.
- 2.8. In addition to the Action Plan, the Markets Team is working to improve the market at Bourne, which has suffered from a decline over recent years. Furthermore, the team are looking to liaise with independent markets to learn lessons of what makes a market successful. The team recently undertook a visit to Ely market and will also look to work with the team at the Deepings. This additional work will enable us to understand any best practice which may benefit our markets.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The Action Plan highlights the actions which are funded by the UKSPF bid and the actions which would require additional funding to complete.
- 3.2. To complete all the actions, the £50k reserve proposals for 2025/26 would need to be approved through the budget setting process. If approved, the Action Plan could be delivered in its entirety.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 This report offers two options –
1. Deliver the full Action Plan by utilising the proposed Markets Reserve, or
 2. Only deliver the actions which have been funded by the UKSPF funding bid.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. This report recommends that the Committee review the amended Action Plan and consider the set-up of the reserve fund to fund the actions which are not covered by UKSPF funding.
- 5.2. The full Action Plan is based on the recommendations of the High Street Experts and without fulfilling all the actions there is a chance that the results will not be

significant enough to improve the markets significantly. If the additional funding is not granted, the impacts of the actions may be less impactful.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1. This piece of work was initially discussed at this committee in September 2024, the original report can be found [here](#).
- 6.2. In the previous report, the Action Plan required more details around costs and timescales. Furthermore, it was unknown whether the UKSPF funding bid had been successful at this time. It was agreed that the Action Plan would be brought back to this committee in January 2025 with more details.
- 6.3. The Action Plan now includes information on costs, highlights which actions are funded by the successful UKSPF bid and includes timescales.

7. Appendices

- 7.1. Appendix 1 – Action Plan