



Thursday, 15 May 2025

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

Support for Sports Clubs across South Kesteven

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To provide an update of the work undertaken in supporting sports clubs across South Kesteven

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report and recognise the work being undertaken across South Kesteven.

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Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 The Council provides an annual contribution of £6,000 towards the work undertaken by Active Lincolnshire as detailed within the main body of the report.
- 1.2 The funding awards detailed in paragraph 2.6. administered by the Council through one of its funding schemes were subject to an appropriate application and approval process.
- 1.3 There are no other financial implications for the Council in relation to this report. Should any support initiatives be identified which require a budget, then an appropriate business case will be developed to identify the costs associated and the benefits to the club and community it serves.

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

Legal and Governance

- 1.4 There are no legal and governance implications arising from this report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The Council's Corporate Plan (2024-27) sets out the ambition to be 'A thriving District to live in, work and visit' with the aim of encouraging physical activity to support healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities. This is underpinned by the key priority for the Council of 'Connecting Communities'.
- 2.2. At a meeting of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 November 2024 [Printed minutes 28th-Nov-2024 10.00 Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.pdf](#), Members of the committee requested a paper be brought to a future meeting about the support given to sports clubs across South Kesteven.

- 2.3. The Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021/26) (**See Background Papers**) outlines the Council's role on a district level with progress reports being presented to this Committee on a six-monthly basis.
- 2.4. As a Council there is no statutory requirement to provide support to sports clubs within the district, however, should the Council's Leisure Team be approached for support then they are more than willing to offer guidance, support and signposting where appropriate.
- 2.5. Often requests are received for funding from clubs, and in these instances they are signposted to either the Council's Communities Team who administer the SK Community Fund, or asked to make an application to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, or Active Lincolnshire who have a dedicated funding page on their website with details of various funding opportunities [Get Involved: Access Sports & Activity Funding - Active Lincolnshire](#).
- 2.6. The Council has provided financial support to the following sports clubs through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to improve their club facilities:
 - Barkston and Syston Cricket Club - £4,000
 - Barkston and Syston Playing Field - £6,000
 - Fulbeck Sport and Social Club - £4,910
 - Grantham Squash and Fitness Club - £35,000
 - Uffington Cricket Club - £8,000
 - Harrowby United FC - £65,000
 - The Rippingale Jubilee Playing Field Trust - £20,000
- 2.7. Through the Council's leisure provider, LeisureSK Limited, there are currently 50 affiliated clubs which have regular bookings at the centres covering the following activities:
 - Competitive Swimming
 - Water Polo
 - Lifesaving
 - Martial Arts
 - Football
 - Badminton
 - Basketball
 - Netball
 - Table Tennis
 - Athletics
 - Triathlon
- 2.8. Grantham Meres Leisure Centre has the most clubs at 42, followed by Bourne Leisure Centre with 6, and Stamford Leisure Pool with 2.

- 2.9. Whilst not an affiliated sports club, the Council and LeisureSK Limited work closely with Positive Futures who use sport and physical activity to engage with young people in deprived communities, by allowing them use of the facilities to provide these programmes. A copy of the current Grantham sports programme can be found on their website [Grantham sports programme - Positive Futures events – Lincolnshire County Council](#).
- 2.10. The Council also support the work of Inspire+, a sports and education charity dedicated to positively impacting young people's lives ensuring they are 'Healthy, Happy and Active' through educational and community initiatives. This includes the annual summer Mini Olympics three day event at the South Kesteven Sports Stadium.
- 2.11. The Council is aligned to the work of Active Lincolnshire, who are an Active Partnership funded by Sport England whose purpose is to deliver Sport England's strategy 'Uniting the Movement'. On a local level Active Lincolnshire aim to improve physical activity levels through the 'Let's Move Lincolnshire' initiative. To support this work each of the seven district councils within Lincolnshire provide an annual contribution of £6,000 to Active Lincolnshire.
- 2.12. 'Uniting the Movement' is a 10-year vision which aims to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity (**Appendix 1**).
- 2.13. 'Let's Move Lincolnshire' is the countywide movement with a shared vision for creating a more active Lincolnshire, providing a framework for partners to support people in becoming more active and understanding local needs, aligning resources and learning from each other (**Appendix 2**).
- 2.14. As part of the work undertaken by Active Lincolnshire to make it easier for people to find sport and activity opportunities, sports clubs can advertise their activities on Activity Finder [Activity Finder | South Kesteven District Council](#). This is a free tool available to all clubs boasting more than 300 listings with South Kesteven alone.
- 2.15. The Council have also embedded this function onto its own website within the Sports and Leisure section, making it easier for residents to find local activities in South Kesteven, and this is regularly promoted through social media.
- 2.16. Over the past couple of years, the Council's Leisure Team have promoted the Activity Finder through various events including:
 - Get SK Moving – market events across each town in partnership with LeisureSK Limited, One You Lincolnshire, and Inspire+.
 - Health and Wellbeing Event at Bourne Corn Exchange in September 2023 – in partnership with the Patient Participation Groups at Bourne GP practices focussing on local opportunities to support mental and physical health and wellbeing.

- Stamford Health Education and Awareness Charity (SHEAC) promoting local activity providers within Stamford.

2.17. Planning is currently underway by the Council's Leisure Team to deliver a range of health and wellbeing events across Bourne, Stamford, Grantham and The Deepings in the next 12 months to promote and signpost services which can improve the health and wellbeing of its residents. Updates on each of these events will continue to be provided as part of the six-monthly Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Updates, to Members of this Committee.

2.18. During the year 2024/25 some of the key highlights of the work delivered by Active Lincolnshire to support a relevant and resilient physical activity sector include:

- Hosting the 20th Lincolnshire Sport and Physical Activity Awards with nominations from each district, of which South Kesteven District Council were a finalist for the second year running.
- Setting up Active Skills Hub [Active Skills Hub for Lincolnshire](#) partnering with UK Coaching, to deliver training and resources to help support people to become more active.
- Supporting 3 schools across South Kesteven to open their facilities for community use through the Department for Education's Opening Schools Facilities funding, totalling £143,195. These schools are Welland Academy – Stamford, The Priory Ruskin Academy – Grantham, Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School – Grantham.
- Supporting the development of Playing Pitch Strategies, South Kesteven's strategy is in the process of being finalised.
- Employing a Welfare and Safeguarding Officer to develop and enhance knowledge, skills and compliance around safeguarding for clubs and activity providers. This also supports those clubs which are unaffiliated and not supported by National Governing Bodies (NGB).
- Convening an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) group bringing together representatives from local authorities, leisure operators and NGBs to share best practice, learning and opportunities.
- Launching an Inclusive Language guide that has been nationally recognised to share with partners for using inclusive language [Active-Lincolnshire-Inclusive-Language-Guide.pdf](#).

2.19. In 2023 Active Lincolnshire provided support to Bourne Rugby Club with a grant award of £4,500 to support the club's mini and junior sections by upskilling coaches and providing equipment. This funding enabled the club to train 10 volunteer coaches, provide rugby equipment, training kits, first aid kits, as well as engaging with local school and organisations to promote rugby.

2.20. Within Lincolnshire there are only 2 NGB's directly covering the county, with many clubs being supported by NGB's from outside the county. The role of a NGB is to ensure the development and regulation of their respective sports, overseeing the

rules, standards, and growth of their respective sports, supporting athletes, clubs, and communities at all levels. From grassroots participation to elite competition, NGB's provide resources, training, and guidance to ensure the sport is accessible, safe, and inclusive for all.

2.21. An example of some of the NGB's which the Council's Leisure Team and LeisureSK Limited have worked with over recent years to support clubs and facilities includes:

- Swim England
- England Athletics
- England Netball
- Lawn Tennis Association
- Football Association (Lincolnshire's Regional Body)
- Sport England

2.22. The Council's Leisure Team have been promoting Active Lincolnshire's 'Your Active Voice' sport and physical activity sector survey, which seeks to understand the views of groups, organisations, clubs and individuals across Lincolnshire, and the challenges which they are facing [Your Active Voice Survey - Active Lincolnshire](#).

2.23. The responses to this survey will inform how Active Lincolnshire prioritise their work to support the sector to grow and thrive, and to share with other stakeholder partners so that existing resource, funding, skills and support can be effectively directed to support the physical activity sector. The Council will in turn work with Active Lincolnshire on localised projects in South Kesteven.

2.24. Looking ahead to the future, Active Lincolnshire will play an important role in the delivery of the 'Universal Offer' as part of Sport England's national place expansion programme, for those areas which aren't classed as a 'Priority Place' by Sport England, as is the case in South Kesteven.

3. Key Considerations

3.1. Members of the Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a report on the Support for Sports Clubs in the District at the committee meeting held on 28 November 2024.

3.2. This report has been produced following Member's requests and is provided for information only.

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 ensures Members are aware of the support provided for sports clubs in the district and the work undertaken with the Council's partners to achieve this.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1. South Kesteven District Council – Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2021/26)
<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s43219/Refreshed%20Sport%20Physical%20Activity%20Strategy%202020126.pdf>

7. Appendices

- 7.1. **Appendix 1** - Sport England – Uniting the Movement – *available online at* <https://www.sportengland.org/about-us/uniting-movement>
- 7.2. **Appendix 2** - Active Lincolnshire – Let's Move Lincolnshire – *available online at* <https://www.activelincolnshire.com/get-involved/lets-move-lincolnshire/lets-move-lincolnshire-strategy>