



Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 13 May 2025

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter,
Leader of the Council and Cabinet
Member for Finance, HR and Economic
Development

Future High Street Fund – Grantham Events Programme

Report Author

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place

 karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To update Members about the Future High Street Fund events programme planned for Grantham Market Place during 2025/26.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note 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Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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
Sustainable South Kesteven
Enabling economic opportunities

Which wards are impacted?

Grantham 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. All activities identified within the proposed events programme for Grantham Town Centre, contained in Appendix One, can be delivered from existing budgets.

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 this report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Health and Safety

- 1.3. The Council has a duty to ensure that any events or activities planned are safe and that arrangements conform to health and safety standards. This includes a requirement that all activities are assessed and take account of any mitigating actions identified.
- 1.4. A detailed event management plan is required to accompany any event organised which records the arrangements made. This must include any road closure or traffic management necessary, first aid arrangements, emergency planning and evacuation plans, stewarding arrangements, site layout, noise management, and litter disposal requirements.
- 1.5. Event management plans must be available for consideration by the Safety Advisory Group (SAG), which is hosted by Lincolnshire County Council. This group is made up from representatives from the emergency services and other relevant bodies and provides advice on event management plans with a view to ensuring public safety.

Completed by: Phil Swinton, Emergency Planning and Health and Safety Lead

2. Background

- 2.1. The Council's Corporate Plan (2024 to 2027) contains a key priority of Enabling Economic Opportunity with an ambition to deliver initiatives to expand and deepen engagement with businesses.
- 2.2. In 2021 the Council was awarded £5.56 million via the Future High Street Fund (FHSF). The funding was provided to boost economic activity within Grantham Town Centre and improve the resilience of the High Street.
- 2.3. To deliver this ambition and secure the FHSF grant the Council agreed to provide £379,000 of matched funding. The matched funding contributed towards the employment of a Grantham Engagement Manager responsible for the development and implementation of a Town Centre Action Plan (Action Plan).
- 2.4. On 16 January 2025 the Action Plan was presented to the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC). This included an allocation of £114,000 to support a town centre programme of events. The Cabinet subsequently approved the Action Plan and events programme later the same day.
- 2.5. An update on the Action Plan is scheduled for presentation to the FEOSC meeting on 24 July 2025. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the town centre programme of events.

Grantham Engagement Manager

- 2.6. On 27 January 2025 responsibility for the Grantham Engagement Manager transferred to the Leisure, Culture and Place service area. This has allowed for a corporate overview of events and has presented opportunities for more co-ordination between all officers involved in the delivery of arts and cultural events.
- 2.7. The Council's budget for financial year 2025/26 extended the role of the Grantham Engagement Officer to the end of March 2026. The Officer has retained responsibility for the delivery of the FHSF Action Plan, including the development of the Grantham Town Team and the delivery of wider activity.

Grantham Town Centre Events

- 2.8. **Appendix One** contains an update on the events currently planned for Grantham Market Place. The programme is diverse and has been developed to ensure there are a wide range of events which support the original vision of the FHSF.
- 2.9. The Action Plan and events programme are kept under review by the FHSF Board, with input from the Town Team.

- 2.10. Over time the content and cost of the events programme has developed. For example, some costs have increased to cover safety arrangements including road closures and barrier staff. Additional costs will also be incurred should additional stewards be required as at the Grantham Christmas light switch on and market. The additional cost and resource requirements will be assessed for each event and will depend on the nature of the event and the anticipated number of attendees.
- 2.11. Two main changes have been made to the events programme presented to FEOSC in January.
- 2.12. The Whale Plastic Ocean Project is a free to book art installation and includes a theatre show inside an 18-metre inflatable whale. It highlights the dangerous impact of plastic within the ocean and is funny, entertaining and educational. It has been booked for Grantham Market Place between 16 and 18 May 2025. This follows a successful UKSPF funded tour in Bourne, Stamford and Deeping St James in March 2025.
- 2.13. Friday 16 May 2025 will be for schools only and 17 and 18 May have already sold out. Complementary activities have been arranged including arts workshops, storytelling, and book signing at The Reading Room, which is an independent book shop in the George Centre, Grantham.
- 2.14. The second difference to the programme is the removal of activity relating to the 100th anniversary of Margaret Thatcher's birth. This is because activities to mark this anniversary are already being planned by the Council's Arts and Cultural Services team in collaboration with other providers and organisations within the town.
- 2.15. At a recent meeting of the Grantham Retailers Group information about the events programme was met positively with a commitment to support and add value to the programme where possible. This might include extended opening hours and support to promote the events.
- 2.16. Information on the proposed events has also been shared at the monthly Grantham Business Club meetings which are regularly attended by 50 to 60 local businesses.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. This report provides information on the events programme element of the FHSF activity only. A full update on the wider Action Plan is scheduled for the July meeting of FEOSC.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. The development of an events programme for Grantham town centre has previously been considered and approved. This report is only for noting.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. This report contains a progress update in relation to the development and delivery of the events programme to support footfall and economic activity around Grantham Market Place.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1. Report to Cabinet Grantham Town Centre Action Plan, 16 January 2025 [here](#).

7. Appendices

- 7.1. **Appendix One** – Grantham Town Centre – Proposed Events Programme 2025.