



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 15 July 2025

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

Markets Action Plan Update

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on the markets Action Plan. The Action Plan was developed 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 progress against the agreed actions and deadlines.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Review the Action Plan and note the progress to date and amended deadlines for actions.**

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Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 There are no new financial implications arising from the amended Action Plan. A new £50,000 revenue reserve was created for 2025/26 which is adequate to fund the actions not covered by the UKSPF funding.

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. Regular update reports are part of good governance.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

Markets Action Plan

- 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 (Appendix 1). The Action Plan highlights the agreed deadlines and funding sources for each action.
- 2.3. To date, there has been excellent progress against the agreed actions and eleven of the sixteen agreed actions have been completed. The Action Plan in Appendix 1 shows which actions have been completed. Four of the actions remain outstanding and one action has been removed from the plan (see paragraph 2.5).
- 2.4. At the time of writing this report, the following actions are outstanding:

Phase 1 Actions

- Optimise market layout - Design the market for easy navigation and a logical flow, making it more shopper-friendly and encouraging longer visits.
- Improve accessibility - Ensure the market is accessible to all, with clear signage, convenient parking, and facilities for individuals with disabilities.

Phase 2 Actions

- Wayfinding and Signage - Analyse the market-specific recommendations within the report to create a bespoke wayfinding and signage plan for each market.

Phase 3 Actions

- Establish a training framework for the markets management team to ensure roles and responsibilities are defined and the team are aware of best practice and new ideas.

- 2.5. Alongside the four outstanding actions highlighted above, there is one action which is no longer required. This action was to introduce a market/high street loyalty card; however, further investigation has indicated that this is not the right scheme for our traders. This was also discussed at the February 2025 Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), and it was agreed that the action be removed. As a result, it has been removed from the Action Plan.

- 2.6. The four outstanding actions require a specific skill set to enable delivery, a recent recruitment exercise was undertaken, and a new Economic Development Manager has been recruited. The new postholder is expected to start in autumn 2025 and to reflect this schedule, the deadline for the four outstanding actions has been deferred until 31st March 2026.

Further Updates

- 2.7. Since the Action Plan was published, an additional £60,000 of Future High Street funding has been allocated to the Markets Service for the purchase of stall covers and chairs at Grantham Market. Grantham market now has sufficient stall covers and therefore it has been agreed that an amended proposal will be taken back to the Future High Street Project Board for approval. The amended proposal will include a stage and bistro chairs.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. This report highlights the progress made against the Markets Action Plan, which was agreed by the Committee in February 2025.
- 3.2. The report highlights that only four actions remain outstanding, and these actions will be completed before the 2025/26 period ends. The actions have been delayed due to staffing changes; however, the recent recruitment exercise was successful, and the newly appointed Economic Development Manager is due to start in autumn.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. As this report is for noting only, no other options were considered

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. Due to some deadline changes, the Committee is being asked to review the Action Plan and note the actions where deadlines have been extended to facilitate the recruitment of the Economic Development Manager.

6. Appendices

- 6.1. Appendix 1 – Updated Action Plan

