

South Kesteven District Council

Corporate Asset Management Strategy

2025 - 2030



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Executive Summary

South Kesteven District Council has responsibility for a large and diverse General Fund property portfolio valued at £75.86 million (April 2024) which are held for a variety of reasons including the delivery of operational services, investment assets and assets of cultural importance to our heritage-rich district.

The nature and extent of the portfolio is kept under review, to ensure it remains suited to its strategic and operational purpose and delivers value for money. As such, all decisions affecting property assets are considered within the context of the Council’s Corporate Plan and the portfolio is reviewed on an ongoing basis supported by external professional advice.

The Asset Management Strategy supports the Council’s Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan to ensure that its assets are used in an effective and efficient manner. The scope of this Asset Management Strategy is in relation to General Fund assets only and therefore the Housing Revenue Account assets are not included.

The Council’s vision for its property portfolio is:

“Utilising the Council’s assets to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan in a sustainable and socially responsible way.”

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Strategic Property Asset Management is the process which aligns business and property asset strategies, ensuring the optimisation of an organisation's property assets in a way which best supports its key business goals and objectives.

Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors: Public Sector Asset Management

1. Purpose

1.1 It is recognised good practice for local authorities to produce an Asset Management Strategy (AMS) setting out their broad objectives for the management, development, and rationalisation of their built and land asset base over a three to five-year period.

1.2 Asset management provides a structured process to ensure value for money in serving the needs of the organisation. Property assets are a resource commitment both in terms of the capital value and annual maintenance and running costs. They need to be carefully managed over their lives to ensure best value through their use, maintenance, and generation of income.

1.3 There are a range of benefits that can be derived from effective asset management including:

- a) Release of capital for re-investment;
- b) Efficient running costs;
- c) Delivery of carbon reduction;
- d) Income generation;
- e) Better public service provision by improved property and co-location of services;
- f) Property in good condition;
- g) Improved property utilisation and bringing together similar uses into the same property through rationalisation;
- h) Improved productivity, changes in corporate culture and facilitation of corporate change;
- i) Improved delivery of community objectives through the more effective use of property; and
- j) Effective strategic procurement.

1.4 The purpose of this Strategy is to set out the Council's approach to corporate asset management. It will:

- a) Provide all stakeholders with a Strategy that can support informed, transparent, and consistent decisions on property assets, acquisitions and disposals.
- b) Provide a clear and integrated strategic approach to the management and review of operational assets from which to deliver services
- c) Create a strategic framework for the delivery of the asset management function, including prioritisation of key

aims, outputs and outcomes.

- d) Support the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan by integrating capital planning with financial planning and achieving best value to maximise the use of assets.
- e) Demonstrate how the Council will deploy its assets to ensure that plans and programmes involving land and property complement and assist in the delivery of other corporate strategies and policies.

2. Scope

2.1 This Corporate AMS sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its corporate land and buildings, outlining how the assets support the Council's priorities. It also identifies the action required to develop these priorities further and contains proposals for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council's property portfolio.

2.2 This AMS does not include land, houses, buildings, and fixed assets associated with the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which is subject to a HRA Business Plan.

3. Strategic Context

The AMS can only be effective in the context of the Council's Corporate Plan, the current asset base and the financial operating environment.

3.1 South Kesteven District Council's Corporate Plan

The key to ensuring property assets deliver what is required for the Council, its residents and its partners is by ensuring the use and management of assets is linked to the Council's priorities and key strategies. The Asset Management Strategy was last reviewed in 2022 and since that time the Council has approved a new Corporate Plan so it is timely to update the Strategy to reflect the changes in the Council ambitions.

The new Corporate Plan has been developed to set out the Council's ambitions from 2024-27. This is the key document for providing the framework for the delivery of services to residents and businesses with the vision:

'to make South Kesteven A thriving District to live in, work and visit'.

The Corporate Plan is based on a golden thread. This is the thread that connects all work, at all levels of the organisation, directly to our overarching vision, priorities and ambitions.

Five priorities are highlighted in the Corporate Plan, based on an analysis of the current performance of South Kesteven both as a district and as a council, and emerging opportunities and challenges, these priorities are as follows:

Connecting Communities - To enhance the strength, wellbeing, security and capacity of all our communities for a thriving and cohesive society that all our residents are proud to belong to.

Sustainable South Kesteven - To meet the challenge of climate change and ensure a clean, green and healthy natural and built environment for present and future generations.

Enabling Economic Opportunities - To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities.

Housing - To ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations.

Effective Council - To deliver trusted, high quality and value-for-money services that fulfil the needs and expectations of all our residents.

Actions that will help the Council achieve its goals from a property perspective include:

- Invest in a sustainable leisure and cultural offer.
- Provide quality customer contact centres that enable residents to access Council services
- Ensure that our leisure facilities and arts venues are sustainable and meet future needs.
- Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities across the corporate estate, such as solar panels and EV chargers.
- Improve the energy efficiency of the corporate property estate and review further renewable energy opportunities
- Manage the construction of new strategic assets that ensures the property

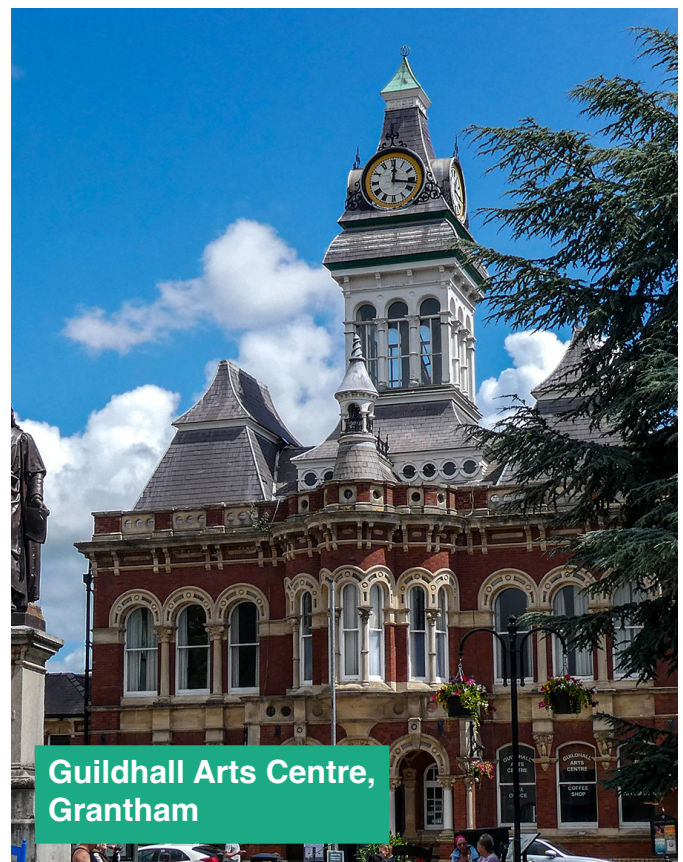
infrastructure can meet the needs of the growing District.

- Review and rationalise the Council's assets portfolio to ensure an optimal return for the Council.
- Develop and deliver Planned Maintenance Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

3.2 Overview of the current asset base

South Kesteven District Councils Assets range from Civic offices, operational sites (such as car parks, a depot, and leisure centres), retail and industrial units held as investments, and a mix of smaller land holdings (such as sub stations).

They are held on a mixture of tenures, freehold and leasehold. As such, the Council's responsibilities for maintenance and statutory compliance varies, dependent upon the terms of the lease.



3.3 Compliance

Good asset management ensures safe and compliant buildings. This involves:

- a) technical advice, coordination and management of activities;
- b) procurement, prioritisation, and management of budgets;
- c) centralised coordination of documentation,
- d) training, certificates and records; managing performance.

The basis of British health and safety law is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated supplementary Regulations and Codes of Practice. Section 3 of the Act imposes a clear duty on local authorities to conduct their undertakings in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of the public using premises.

The primary statutory instruments driving statutory compliance for property assets are:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Managing Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1999
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Building Regulations 2000 (as amended)
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health COSHH Regulations 2002
- and Amendment 2003
- The Control of Asbestos Regulation 2012
- The Health and Safety Executive Approved Code of Practice (ACoP)

- Guidance on Legionnaires Disease, the Control of Bacteria in Water Systems L8.

3.4 Equalities

On 5 April 2011, the public sector Equality Duty (the equality duty) came into force. The Equality Duty was created by the Equality Act 2010. The broad purpose of the Equality Duty is to integrate consideration of equality into the day-to-day business of public authorities.

The Council promotes equality of opportunity across all its functions and is committed to long-term, continuous improvement. It is the responsibility of all officers and elected Members to implement the principles of equality and diversity.

In order to ensure ongoing compliance with the legislation, there will be a comprehensive DDA Survey and Accessibility Audit in respect of all buildings and correction action will be undertaken where necessary.

3.5 Asset Disposal

An Asset Disposal Methodology has been developed in order to ensure that assets are regularly reviewed and surplus assets are identified for disposal. This process ensures that the Council can generate capital receipts and can then be used for reinvesting in new capital schemes that support the Council's priorities.

The methodology for the disposal of Council property assets supports a range of purposes including direct delivery of services, revenue generation and supporting corporate plan objectives.

It is noted that the Council is required to be innovative in how its property assets will be utilised to stimulate economic growth activity, attract investment, and create income to support service delivery in keeping with the ambitions of the Corporate Plan 2024-2027.

The methodology for disposal sets out principles and processes that will ensure good governance and best value is achieved with regard to a programme of General Fund land and property disposals over the timescale of the Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. This includes:

- Identifying assets for disposal
- Asset valuation
- Disposal and methods of disposal
- Officer delegation
- Asset and land acquisition

This AMS is entirely consistent with the adopted methodology and in terms of asset disposals, the approved process will be followed.

For asset disposal, other than land and property, then the disposal of assets procedure as set out in the Council's Financial Regulations must be followed.



3.6 Financial context

The Council's General Fund property asset base has an estimated asset value for accounting purposes as at 31 March 2024 of £75.86 million overall; the Council's operational land and buildings were valued at £65.57m, assets under construction £5.09mm, surplus assets £0.19m and investment properties at £5.02m. These assets are held at current market value and are reviewed annually with the values reported in the latest statement of accounts.

The Council sets a three yearly capital programme that is reviewed and approved by Full Council on an annual basis. The programme is underpinned by the Capital Strategy which is also approved by Council each year. This includes details of both acquisitions and improvement works as well as any other expenditure that is accounted for as capital under legislation.

In addition, the capital programme is monitored and reviewed throughout the financial year to monitor delivery against the approved programme.

4. Key Asset Management Priorities

4.1 Data

Effective asset management requires clear and accessible data on the running costs, market value, condition, backlog maintenance, suitability assessments and future service needs in relation to the corporate property portfolio.

The Council accepts more detailed information is required in relation to a number of its assets. The AMS takes a strategic approach to resolve this which is set out with the Councils Corporate Property Maintenance Strategy.

The Council continues to ensure it holds all data on its assets providing assurance on the reporting and management of its assets.

4.2 Compliance

Ensuring the health and safety of residents, staff and others using the Council's assets is the main priority and therefore effective systems are in place to ensure this priority is met.

As part of the recently adopted Corporate Property Maintenance Strategy an electronic database has been introduced which acts as a central log for recording information in order to ensure accurate classification of assets and ensuring appropriate leases are in place will all contribute to reducing this exposure to risk.

It is also important that management of the asset portfolio ensures compliance with legal agreements and therefore minimises the council's exposure to risk because of environmental, social and economic factors.

To meet this challenge the aim is to ensure that all council-operated properties have comprehensive risk assessments for any necessary areas of statutory compliance, and where relevant an identified programme of recommended remedial works is agreed, this is then resourced.

The Council's portfolio of assets includes sites that are directly managed by a third party. Where an external organisation has operational control of premises it is essential that the Council understands and addresses the residual financial, legal and reputational risks that remain.

4.3 Property Maintenance Planning

Required Maintenance (also known as back-log maintenance) is the cost of bringing a building from its current state up to a condition that fully meets statutory and regulatory compliance obligations. Required Maintenance liabilities can only be established by regular costed building condition surveys.

Government approved rating system identifies the degree of urgency and level of importance attached to identified defects.

Urgent – Immediate work required to prevent immediate closure. Addresses a [potentially] serious failure of structure; breach of legislation and/or poses a general risk to health & safety.

Essential - work required [within 2 years] to prevent serious deterioration of fabric or building services or remedy minor breach of legislation or H&S and which can be managed until full maintenance effected.

Desirable - work required within 3 to 5 years which will prevent the deterioration of fabric or service and/or address low risk minor breaches (legislation and/or H&S).

Long term - work required beyond a five-year window.

The total of priority 1 to 3 works for each operational building provides a total required maintenance programme over the life of the Strategy. This prioritised assessment of required maintenance should inform both the revenue and capital budget setting process.

The aim is to ensure that the most urgent works are identified, with the highest priority being given to those elements in the worst condition in the most strategically important buildings. The Council faces a backlog with regard to its assets and in a fiscally constrained environment it needs to ensure the best use of resources, provide value for money and ensure that funding is properly prioritised.

Comprehensive building condition surveys have been carried out to inform decisions on capital and revenue expenditure on assets, their classification and their disposal.

Building condition can be characterised as:

- A (Good)
- B (Satisfactory)
- C (Poor)
- D (Bad)

The strategy target will be to achieve a **B3** (i.e. satisfactory condition / desirable works required within years 3 to 5) as the required status for all strategic properties, with investment being targeted accordingly.

In principle, properties assessed as either C (poor) or D (Bad) should have only essential work undertaken on them in order to maintain their operational capability, this effectively being critical health and safety works and work that would continue to keep the property 'wind and watertight', until the future of the

property has been reviewed. This is to avoid non-essential expenditure.

In addition to condition and maintenance data, other factors need to be considered such as location, utilisation, operating costs, fitness for purpose, accessibility, capacity, contribution to current service delivery and the property's ability to support future service delivery.

A building in poor condition may still represent a suitable building, so a decision made based on either condition or suitability in isolation may not sufficient information. It may sometimes be beneficial to undertake a more in-depth condition survey before any key estate rationalisation decisions are taken.

4.4 Risk Management

Risk identification and mitigation are embedded in the Council's approach to operational and strategic management and is integrated into formal reports and decisions considered by Cabinet and Council. In this context, risk arises out of uncertainties about future events and their associated consequences, and in the likelihood of an event occurring that will have an impact on the ability to deliver operational and strategic objectives incorporated within the AMS.

It is important that risk is identified and managed as part of the asset management process. There are different risks associated with the various stages of a project and property lifecycle. Individual risks will be identified, monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.



New depot at Turnpike Close, Grantham

The Asset Maintenance Strategy identifies risk associated with maintenance and how it will be managed in the following order of priority;

- Assets that require immediate maintenance to prevent injury and/or financial loss.
- Maintenance in respect of H&S issues.
- Statutory maintenance requirements; security, fire, gas, electrical and water.
- Structural maintenance and structural integrity including building fabric.
- Elements within the curtilage of any facility for which the Authority has responsibility.
- Maintenance of unoccupied assets identified for disposal; demolition or other purpose.

4.5 Corporate Property Team

The Corporate Property Team has overall responsibility to centrally manage all corporate land and building assets, with service departments making use of them for operational purposes as internal tenants.

In accordance with the aims of the Asset Management Strategy, the Corporate Property Team will:

- Manage the Council's Corporate property portfolio.
- Project manage planned and responsive maintenance works across the property portfolio.
- Provide a stable, fully integrated property service, with high levels of customer care and clear roles and responsibilities around the landlord/tenant relationship.
- Provide, manage and maintain good quality facilities for the district's residents and staff, improving customer confidence and satisfaction.
- Take the lead role on safety and statutory compliance within buildings. Effectively manage all property related risks.
- Optimise available resources, including personnel, spatial management and innovation through value for money projects.
- Provide accurate and relevant data around buildings and business performance to inform stakeholders.

- Ensure best value through prioritisation of maintenance spend, backed by effective procurement arrangements.

The adoption of this approach will ensure that buildings are viewed as a corporate resource. It will contribute to the optimisation of occupancy levels, improve suitability and condition, identify future investment needs, improve efficiency, reduce carbon emissions/generate energy savings, ensure compliance with leases and ensure internal and external occupational agreements are in place.

4. Achieving the Vision

Overview

The Council has gained considerable momentum in its drive to make South Kesteven the best district in which to live, work and to visit.

The AMS documents the way in which the Council will achieve its corporate asset vision of using Corporate Assets to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan in a socially responsible and sustainable way.

Strengthening the management of assets is an important priority for the Council, providing greater assurance that they are safe and comply with statutory requirements as well as creating the opportunity to improve the quality and value for money of the service they can deliver.

The foundations of this process will require robust data and process, increased capacity and strong governance and decision-making. The Council continues to face budget pressures and therefore must consider a range of options to reduce the cost of maintaining, repairing and operating its property portfolio.

This will include a more commercial approach to asset management, increasing income generation and new types of income including energy generation, requiring a more focused and strategic approach across the council's assets.

This section sets out the key actions for supporting the delivery of the AMS and these cover a wide range of activities. These will be carried out during the period of the AMS to ensure the objectives are met.

5.1 Key Action One - Service Planning and Asset Appraisal

A key purpose of holding operational property is to facilitate and support service delivery; it is intended throughout the course of this AMS to review all corporate property assets in that context.

This will be undertaken on an asset-by-asset basis and challenge the need to retain the current portfolio. Each review will have proper regard to the Corporate Plan - service and financial efficiency will be key considerations, but there will consideration of property aspects such as running costs, maintenance backlog and potential capital receipts. The principal objective is to ensure the portfolio is fit for purpose and agile in responding to changing service requirements.

The process, however, will include a presumption that where a service property can be declared surplus, it will be released for disposal in order that capital and revenue can be released for reinvestment in other policy priorities. A review process has progressed well to date, but it is envisaged that conducting the review rigorously will take the duration of this AMS to complete.

Although it is too soon to draw conclusions, it is clear that:

- a) Access to appropriate premises is critical for service delivery. The extent, nature and location of service premises must be kept under review, through active service planning.
- b) The current portfolio presents an affordability challenge in the medium to long term.
- c) Potentially, the maintenance backlog will not be eliminated by the level of resources currently.
- d) A managed approach to prioritisation will be required, while the size of the portfolio is reduced.
- e) There is opportunity to release capital and revenue resources by disposing of surplus assets. This resource will become available for reinvestment by the Council, in line with its policy priorities.
- f) A suite of asset specific indicators will be developed and implemented to focus on asset performance and will consider running costs, building condition, energy efficiency and utilisation. These indicators will help to inform decisions on future use and asset rationalisation.

5.2 Key Action Two – Asset Information

Robust, accurate and up to date information is at the heart of effective decision- making on assets.

The Council has reviewed and implemented a new Asset Management System which holds the Corporate Property information.

This enables the Council to centrally hold and record all the relevant information for each of the assets it has responsibility for. It also enables the Council to:

- a) Maintain a complete and accurate property asset register.
- b) Support the continuous management and maintenance of the property asset base.
- c) Satisfy statutory and other reporting and compliance requirements.
- d) Implement performance reviews across the asset portfolio.
- e) Review property assets, appraisals, decision-making and planning with accuracy and timelines.
- f) Provide a single corporate resource for managing assets.

5.3 Key Action Three – Compliance

As noted above, the Council places upmost importance on the safety of its corporate assets.

It will ensure that the following statutory responsibilities are met, and can be demonstrated through the information held on each asset:

- a) Fire Risk Assessment and action plan
- b) Asbestos policy and management plan
- c) Water Hygiene plan
- d) Radon Risk Assessment and action plan
- e) Gas servicing and certification

- f) Electrical certification and remedial actions
- g) Lift servicing
- h) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- i) Equality Act 2010 access to buildings and services

Additionally, regular compliance inspections are required to be undertaken by service areas who are, in effect, internal tenants. The Corporate Property and Facilities teams has ensured all operational locations that are used by the Council has an assigned and fully trained Property Responsible Persons (PRP) in order to ensure compliance is up to date or where action is required reported to the Corporate Property Team.

The Council will also make clear and take reasonable steps to ensure leaseholders are honouring their health and safety responsibilities, as defined in the terms and conditions of their lease.

5.4 Key Action Four – Maintenance and Investment

Effective day-to-day maintenance, planned in the context of the assets long-term benefit to the Council, is an essential attribute of a good landlord.

Over the period of the AMS, the Council will:

- a) Implement a regular building condition survey regime.
- b) Produce a three-year capital programme.
- c) Identify, prioritise and clear any maintenance backlog.

- d) Rationalise and review maintenance, repair and operating budgets.

Maintenance Strategy Link:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s43308/Appendix%20A%20-%20SKDC%20Corporate%20Property%20Maintenance%20Strategy%202024.pdf>



5.5 Key Action Five – Delivery of Major Projects

The Council undertakes a number of major capital asset related projects in accordance with the approved Capital Programme. These projects are consistent with the aims and vision of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Asset Management Strategy.

All projects that are approved are delivered using the Council adopted project management plans. This includes

a robust governance structure, clear lines of responsibility and decision making. This ensures, wherever possible, projects are delivered on time and on budget.

5.6 Key Action Six – Regeneration

The Council has a strong track-record of promoting investment in the district, including regeneration. We will continue to act in this place-shaping role within the district and region, in the following means:

- a) With existing assets, the potential for future strategic regeneration and/or redevelopment purposes will be considered as part of our Service Planning and Asset Appraisal (Key Action One).
- b) Land and property interests will be considered for acquisition if the acquisition of the interest has potential for future strategic regeneration and/or redevelopment or contributes to wider corporate objectives and appropriate funding has been identified.

5.7 Key Action Seven - Equalities

We will ensure that all actions undertaken through the AMS support the Council's Equality Policy. In the delivery of projects, we will ensure that Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken and support the direction of the project.

5.8 Key Action Eight - Investment Portfolio

The Council's property portfolio not utilised for direct service delivery is owned for two purposes, to provide revenue income, and to influence future development opportunities.

The revenue income of non-operational assets will be monitored by the Section 151 Officer to ensure it provides a satisfactory financial return on the capital invested. Rents will be kept under review, in accordance with provisions of the agreements and the wider property market. Where the revenue return is not satisfactory, assets will be considered for sale to release capital for reinvestment.

In any review of non-operational assets, the potential to facilitate future development opportunities or regeneration will be considered.

5.9 Key Action Nine - Working with Partners

The Council is an active member of the One Public Estate programme, working closely with other Public Sector organisations across the district to explore opportunities to reduce premise related costs and make assets work more efficiently for both communities and customers.

The Council remains committed to this approach, in line with the following principles:

- a) Supporting service integration, joint working and/or co-location
- b) Rationalising public assets
- c) Reducing revenue costs associated with assets that are held base to make it cost effective for the public sector
- d) Release of redundant public assets for future use and investment, including the delivery of new housing.



5.10 Key Action Ten – Energy Efficiency

South Kesteven District Council has declared a Climate Emergency recognising that this is one of the biggest issues affecting the district, the country, and the world.

It is the Council's ambition to continue to go further to tackle the climate emergency, putting the environment at the heart of everything we do.

Investment opportunities that allow us to positively respond to the climate emergency will be welcomed. The Council will not make investments in its assets that do not match its commitment to meeting Carbon Net Zero. This will be measured by identifying whether every investment we make can achieve Net Zero in its operation by 2050.

The Council will seek to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions by

applying infrastructure upgrades during refurbishments, construction projects or building improvements.

This will be measured in the following way:

- a) Improvement in ECP rating
- b) Reduction in utility and energy usage
- c) Reduction in carbon emissions

5.11 Key Action Eleven – Value for Money

All service and utility contracts will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to provide value for money.

All service and utility contracts will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to provide value for money and procured in line with SKDC's Contract Procurement Procedure rules.

Value for money is measured by evaluating the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the resources used in contracting activities. Aspects considered are:

Efficiency: This encompasses assessing how well resources are utilized to achieve the desired outcomes. It includes evaluating the processes and procedures in place to ensure that resources are not wasted and that the best possible results are achieved with the least amount of input.

Effectiveness: This measures the extent to which the contracting activities achieve their intended objectives. It involves evaluating the quality and impact of the good, services, or works delivered, and ensuring that they meet the Council's requirements and standards.

Economy: This focuses on minimizing the cost of resources while maintaining the desired level of quality. It involves comparing costs and ensuring that the Council gets the best possible price for the goods, services, or works procured.

Compliance: Ensuring that all contracting activities adhere to legal, statutory, and Council policy requirements is crucial. This helps in mitigate against any legal issues and ensures that the contracting process is transparent and fair.

Risk Management: Identifying and mitigating risks associated with contracting activities is essential for ensuring value for money. This includes assessing potential risks and implementing measures to minimize their impact on the Council's resources. eg

ensuring lease terms are most beneficial to the Council and mitigate against any potential unforeseen financial exposure.

By considering these aspects, officers can ensure that contracting activities provide value for money and that the Council's resources are used efficiently and effectively.

Local authorities are required to consider how economic, social, and environmental wellbeing may be improved by services that are to be procured, and how procurement may secure those improvements under the provisions of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

Social Value and Sustainability refers to approaches which maximise the additional benefits that can be created through the delivery, and procurement of goods and services, above and beyond those directly related to those goods and services themselves.

Measures will be integrated into contracts where necessary to provide Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for suppliers to report and be benchmarked against within their performance.

Contact details

Alternative formats are available on request:
audio, large print and Braille

South Kesteven District Council



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