



## Local Development Scheme

### Report Author

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### Purpose of Report

The report covers a general Local Plan update and a revision to the Council's Local Development Strategy. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Planning Act 2008 and Localism Act 2011) requires a Local Planning Authority to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme setting out the Development Plan Documents to be produced, including the Local Plan. The report is seeking approval of the updated 2026 - 2029 Local Development Scheme for publication.

### Recommendations

**Cabinet is asked to approve the Local Development Scheme (2026 – 2029) for publication**

### Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 Housing Effective council
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 financial implications arising directly from this report. There is budget in place to support the delivery of the local plan.

*Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 All planning authorities are required to provide Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG) with an updated Local Development Scheme by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025, this requirement was published alongside a number of announcements made by Housing Minister Matthew Pennycook on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – the January meeting of Cabinet is the first opportunity to consider the Scheme.
- 1.3 Relevant legislation is referred to throughout the report.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

### ***Risk and Mitigation***

- 1.4 Publishing a Local Development Scheme, and keeping it up to date, is a regulatory requirement. The Council's Local Development Scheme is required to be updated at the request by both the Planning Inspectorate and MHCLG for Local Planning Authorities to keep timetables up to date. Failure to do this would mean that the Council is not complying with its legislative requirements.  
Consult with Tracey Elliott (Delete if not applicable)

*Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer*

### ***Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion***

- 1.5 The planning process seeks to meet the needs of our diverse community. The emerging Local Plan should be supported by evidence-based reports such as a

the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Local Housing Needs Assessment; Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment; and Employment Land Review which will identify the accommodation, employment and infrastructure needs of our community up to 2043. The emerging Local Plan seeks to meet the need by identifying suitable land allocations for all needs within the District. The planning process requires developers to meet all housing needs, providing appropriate type and sized dwellings to meet the needs of current and future households.

- 1.6 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was published in 2021 and explains how the Council will involve and consult with the public and wider stakeholders when planning for the future of South Kesteven District. The SCI seeks to ensure that consultation will be inclusive to ensure our diverse community are made aware of, and given the opportunity to comment on, development plan documents and planning applications. This includes ensuring that the planning process is transparent and accessible.
- 1.7 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will need to be carried out at each key stage of Local Plan preparation to ensure that the Local Plan is inclusive and implemented in an equitable manner.

*Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager*

### ***Climate Change***

- 1.8 The production of a Local Development Scheme has no direct impact on climate change as it is a timetable for development plan production. The Local Plan and planning system is a mechanism to support delivery on the climate change agenda and the Council's commitment to reduce the organisations' carbon footprint and support the district on a pathway to net zero carbon. The emerging Local Plan will introduce new climate change policy evidenced by a Climate Change Study; and will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.

Consult with Serena Brown (Delete if not applicable)

## **2 Background to the Report**

- 2.1 South Kesteven District Council's vision, as set out in the 2024 – 2027 Corporate Plan is to be: "A thriving District to live in, work and visit". The Local Plan and Planning Service have a key role to play in realising this vision by recognising that every locality has different constraints and opportunities.

2.2 The Council is committed to ensuring that the planning service does everything that it can to support our communities and to sustainable growth. This will be achieved by working proactively with our communities to ensure that development meets the needs of our business and local economy as well as recognising the importance of housing and growth to meet the needs of our residents. Having an up-to-date Local Plan means that the Council can ensure that the best development is delivered in the right places to meet the needs of our residents and to deliver the Council's ambitious growth plan.

### The Local Plan

2.3 The Local Plan is key to promoting sustainable growth within the District over a twenty-year period. Local Plans must be succinct and up-to-date providing a positive vision for the future of the area and a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental priorities. The preparation of the Local Plan will usually follow the stages outlined below:

1. Evidence gathering and early consultation
2. Call for Sites whereby sites are submitted for consideration as future potential development sites
3. Public Consultation – key Issues and Options for the Local Plan Review Regulation 18
4. Public consultation on Draft Consultative Local Plan Regulation 18
5. Public Consultation on the Pre-Submission Local Plan
6. Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Examination
7. Examination of Local Plan by Planning Inspectorate
8. Adoption of Local Plan

### Local Development Scheme

2.4 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) places a statutory duty on South Kesteven District Council to outline which documents will form part of the Council's Local Plan within a document known as the Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme informs developers, landowners, agents, and members of the public of the Council's programme for the preparation of documents and the key stages to get involved in the planning making process.

2.5 The Local Development Scheme should be kept up to date to reflect the Council's progress and to inform residents and stakeholders of each stage of the Local Plan Review and opportunities to participate.

### *Progress against the February 2025 Local Development Scheme*

2.6 The Local Development scheme published in February 2025 indicated that a Draft Local Plan Focussing on Additional Sites Regulation 18 would be published in June – July 2025 for a consultation in addition to the stages outlined above in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Draft Local Plan consultation commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 for 8 weeks until 28<sup>th</sup> August 2025 in conformity with the Local Development Scheme. Since the publication of the December 2024 NPPF, reviews of Local Development Schemes nationwide have been mandated by the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government and the requests for progress are anticipated to continue throughout 2026.

2.7 The next stage of consultation, Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan, was scheduled for January – February 2026. However, following the consultation on the Draft Local Plan focussing on Additional Sites in August 2025 and the analysis of the responses there is an identified need to update some of the evidence base in advance of the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan. A detailed project management approach and support have been sought to consider the interdependencies of the evidence commissions in terms of timetabling and meeting the December 2026 deadline. This project management approach has been recommended by the Planning Advisory Service, and the work has identified a need to move the Regulation 19 Pre – Submission Local Plan consultation date forward to later in the year to commence consultation in September 2026.

2.8 The Local Development Scheme at **Appendix A** covers the period 2026-2029 and updates the previous version published in February 2025. If approved at Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026, the Council will publish the revised Local Development Scheme. In order to meet the deadline set by MHCLG an indicative update has been submitted recognising that the dates for the consultation on the Pre – Submission Local Plan Regulation 19 may change, whilst the submission date for Regulation 22 remains.

#### *The New Local Plan Timetable*

2.9 Taking into account the need to commission further evidence to support the Regulation 19 Pre Submission Local Plan, the expected timetable for key milestones in the preparation of the Local Plan and the detail of each stage is set out below. More information on each stage of plan production can be found at **Appendix B**.

2.10 To ensure the Local Plan proceeds to examination under the current December 2024 NPPF the submission Regulation 22 date is in line with the MHCLG deadline of the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026. The only change to the Local Development Scheme is the date for the Regulation 19 consultation which as moved forward into 2026.

Plan Stage	Regulation	Timetable (2025 Draft Local Development Scheme)	Revised timetable (2026 Draft Local Development Scheme)	Status
Commencement of Document Preparation		-		Completed
Consultation on the scope of the Plan	Regulation 18	-		Completed
Consultation on the Draft Local Plan	Regulation 18	-		Completed
Consultation on Draft Local Plan Focussing on Additional Sites	Regulation 18			Completed
Consultation on the Pre-Submission Local Plan	Regulation 19	January – February 2026	September – October 2026	Started
Submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination.	Regulation 22	December 2026		Not started
Examination in Public	Regulation 24	December 2026 – December 2027		Not started
Inspector's Report	Regulation 25	December 2027		Not started
Adoption	Regulation 26	Late 2027 Early 2028		Not started

2.11 The proposed revised timetable considers the best information currently available and reflects lead in times to obtain consents and approvals to move between the different stages of the Local Plan.

2.12 **It is important to note that the Local Plan is timetabled to be submitted to the Secretary of State by the government-imposed deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026, to ensure that the Local Plan is considered under the existing legal framework.**

#### Next Steps

2.13 The next steps are:

- Update the Local Development Scheme as requested by MHCLG.
- Notify the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate, of the revised Local Development Scheme and timetable for submission to ensure that the Planning Inspectorate can adequately resource the Local Plan examination.
- Continue to implementation of the new Local Plan timetable and project plan.
- Notify key stakeholders including, all District Councillors and the Town and Parish Council.
- In accordance with regulatory requirements, if approved, the Local Development Scheme will be published onto the Council's website;

2.14 The Local Development Scheme will be monitored and considered on an annual basis through the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), which sets out the list of documents included and considers any changes and updates.

### **3. Key Considerations**

3.1 The Council has a legal duty to keep the Local Development Scheme up to date and to publish onto the Council's website. The previously agreed timetable is out of date in terms of the milestones relating to the consultation of the Pre Submission Local Plan and requires amending.

3.2 **Other than the consultation date, no other key changes have been made to the Local Development Scheme.**

### **4. Other Options Considered**

4.1 The alternative of not reviewing the Local Development Scheme has been discounted. Failing to keep the Local Development Scheme up to date would contravene the statutory requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Planning Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 12.

### **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

5.1 The reason for the recommendation is to ensure the Council is providing an up-to-date position and an accurate timeline for the production of development plan documents. This will ensure that the Council is acting in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

5.2 Maintaining an up-to-date Local Development Scheme will ensure a transparent process. This is important because the local community and others with an interest in the district can be kept aware of development plan production and stages of consultation.

5.3 Supporting the continuity of the planning function in South Kesteven will aid the recovery of the local economy and the economic resilience of the district by providing greater certainty and confidence for future investment and development.

## **6. Consultation**

6.1 Consultation on the Local Development Scheme is not a regulatory requirement.

6.2 A key element to the preparation of the Local Plan Review is the Council's approach to consulting and engaging the community on the South Kesteven Local Plan. The Local Plan goes through several stages of preparation. It is important to clearly set out how and when people can become involved in the process, which is the purpose of the Local Development Scheme. Significant consultation will be undertaken throughout all the stages of preparing and producing the Local Plan Review and timescales for consultation are set out in the Local Development Scheme. In undertaking consultation, the Council must comply with its adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

## **7. Background Papers**

7.1 Local Development Scheme (February 2025) [Microsoft Word - Local Development Scheme 2023-2026](#)

7.2 Statement of Community Involvement 2021  
[https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/Final\\_SCI\\_2021.pdf](https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/Final_SCI_2021.pdf)

7.3 National Planning Policy Framework  
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPP-F-December-2024.pdf>

## **8. Appendices**

8.1 Appendix A: Local Development Scheme (January 2026)

8.2 Appendix B: Stages of Local Plan Production