



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Cabinet

Tuesday 10th March 2026

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker,
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Climate Action Plan for South Kesteven

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To present to Cabinet the finalised Climate Action Plan for South Kesteven.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. Approve the adoption of the Climate Action Plan for South Kesteven.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Director for Housing and Projects in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste to approve minor amendments to the South Kesteven Climate Action Plan.**

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 The draft Climate Action Plan includes a column on the estimated cost for South Kesteven District Council of implementing the action, in order to provide a reference guide for the cost of actions. This level of detail does not consider factors such as grant funding contributions or expected payback periods on investment.
- 1.2 The Council has an existing climate change reserve of £500k for the 2025/26 financial year, which was established to help respond to the budgetary pressures driven by the increasing cost of energy, and the Council's stated ambition of carbon reduction across the Council's property portfolio. It is expected that the Committee will continue to receive annual reports on utilisation of the climate change reserve, including detail on projects funded and expected cost, energy and carbon savings.
- 1.3 Multiple projects referred to within the draft Climate Action Plan have their own budgetary remit outside of the climate change reserve. Where a project included in the draft Climate Action Plan is in the feasibility stage, each project will need to make a budget bid on a case-by-case basis in order to progress.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.4 It is good practice for a local authority to present a strategy on the issues and impacts of climate change within the district. South Kesteven District Council is one of the local authorities to have formally declared a climate emergency, which set carbon reduction targets for Council operations. The climate emergency declaration also noted the wider leadership potential of the Council to help fulfil the UK government's national target to reach net zero by 2050, and this activity helps to clarify that role.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Climate Change

- 1.5 The South Kesteven Climate Action Strategy, approved by Cabinet in 2023, sets out the Council's role in facilitating the transition to net zero carbon for the whole district of South Kesteven. The Climate Action Plan provides a workplan for the goals of the Climate Action Strategy to ensure continued progress against local and national net-zero carbon goals and associated co-benefits.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. There is a clear role for local government to shape, drive, and deliver local action on climate change. South Kesteven District Council made a formal declaration of climate emergency on 26 September 2019 with cross party support. Alongside this, the Council confirmed the political ambition to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030, and to endeavour to become net-zero as soon as viable before 2050. Over three-quarters of local authorities in the UK have now taken the step of declaring a climate emergency
- 2.2. Following this declaration of climate emergency, the Council's updated carbon footprint was established, using baseline data from 2018/19, which was presented to [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21st July 2020](#). This signalled some of the major categories of carbon emissions arising from council operations and highlighted projects to pursue to reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.3. South Kesteven District Council has continued to publish updates on progress towards the outlined carbon emissions target from the 2018/19 year onwards. The latest report covering the 2024/25 period reported a total carbon emissions reduction of 29.24%, discussed in detail at a meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on [23rd September 2025](#).
- 2.4. The Council has also developed and delivered several key projects which contribute to either energy and carbon reduction for council operations, contributing to a reduction in operational carbon emissions, or energy and carbon reduction for the wider district. These initiatives include:
- Upgrading all SKDC-owned streetlights to energy efficient LEDs
 - Grantham Meres leisure centre decarbonisation, including installing a modern, upgraded heat pump heating system and additional solar PV panels to reduce running costs
 - Establishment of a climate change reserve fund for both General Fund and Housing Revenue Accounts
 - Publication of a Green Fleet Strategy for South Kesteven, to drive forward efficiency and decarbonisation targets for Council owned vehicles

- Energy efficiency and decarbonisation upgrades for Council owned tenanted properties, with matched support from government *Warm Homes Plan* funding since 2021
 - Energy efficiency and decarbonisation upgrades for eligible private properties in South Kesteven, via support from government *Warm Homes Plan* funding since 2022
- 2.5. The South Kesteven Climate Action Plan as presented sets out how South Kesteven District Council, within its remit, will address and influence carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of extreme and challenging weather conditions. It is important that these duties are taken into account and the Climate Action Plan provides a framework for the Council to deliver on its ambitions.
- 2.6. The actions included in the Plan both address carbon emissions from Council operations (direct and indirect emissions principally from the operation of buildings and vehicles), as well as reviewing where services delivered by the Council can contribute to the goals of the Climate Action Strategy.
- 2.7. South Kesteven District Council’s direct emissions are a small fraction arising from the district of South Kesteven, but our wider work in the district, as well as ongoing work to support energy efficiency improvements in homes across South Kesteven, has the potential to drive much larger reductions.
- 2.8. The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee were presented with the draft Climate Action Plan at their meeting on [10th November 2025](#). Minor amendments to the final Climate Action Plan, presented at Appendix A, have been made to adjust one of the co-benefits from “Reducing Fuel Poverty” to “Reducing utility bills” to better reflect the benefits within different contexts.
- 2.9. It is proposed that twice yearly reporting will be completed on the Action Plan, with updates provided by the officer lead. An annual report will also be presented to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to update on actions. Any amendments to the plan, following formal adoption of the finalised draft by Cabinet, are proposed to be made by the Director for Housing and Projects in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The purpose of the draft Climate Action Plan is not only to track progress in implementing projects to drive down carbon emissions arising from direct Council operations (energy used in Council buildings, fuel used in Council vehicles), but also to set out actions for the Council’s wider service delivery and external-facing work with partners to address climate change for the region. Effective monitoring and reporting of all actions will be fundamental to the success of the Action Plan.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council could choose not to publish a climate action plan as there is no statutory expectation for public authorities to develop or publish carbon reduction strategies. However, this would not be in line with the Council's stated ambition for carbon reduction ahead of the government target of 2050.
- 4.2 The Council could choose not to publish or report on the projects highlighted within the draft Climate Action Plan. However, publication and regular reporting on the Climate Action Plan will increase the visibility of various projects addressing carbon mitigation and adaptation from across the Council

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. Publishing a Climate Action Plan helps to clarify the specific projects the Council intends to implement and continue towards its ambitions both to meet its own interim net-zero carbon target, but also to contribute to national carbon reduction targets and adaptation strategies.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee were presented with the draft Climate Action Plan at their meeting on [10th November 2025](#). Following discussion the Committee agreed to recommend the adoption of the final Climate Action Plan, without any recommended amendments, to Cabinet.
- 6.2. A public consultation was conducted to shape the Climate Action Strategy which provides the framework for the Climate Action Plan.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21st July 2020 - [CarbonFootprintReportEnvOSC_Final.pdf](#)
- 7.2 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23rd September 2025 - [23rd September 2025](#)
- 7.3 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 10th November 2025 - [10th November 2025](#)

8. Appendices

- 8.1. Appendix A: Final Climate Action Plan for South Kesteven