

The NK Plan 2022-25



Our Plan for North Kesteven
A vision for 2022 & beyond



Housing pioneers

Honouring heritage

Business expansion

Outdoor activity

Future-proofing

Historic preservation

Aviation heritage

Carbon cutting

Active arts

Leisure facilities

Carbon capturing

North Kesteven District Council Plan 2022 - 2025

OVERVIEW



It is our great pleasure to share with you the NK Plan, our strategic vision for the realisation of our priorities, purpose and services in the coming years, as we seek to develop and enrich our District of Flourishing Communities.

The NK Plan is a confident statement of purpose, vision, values and priorities. It maps out the next steps to be taken in pursuance of the aims and aspirations set out in the Council's new longer-term Community Strategy – shaping life through to 2030.

Together, the NK Plan and the overarching Community Strategy drive forward our priorities for Our Economy, Our Homes, Our Environment, Our Communities and Our Council.

The NK Plan builds on:

- A big ambition and clarity of purpose, supported by inclusive, positive values
- A balanced general fund
- A viable housing revenue account
- A £230m ten-year capital programme, £91m of it within the three-year lifetime of this plan
- A great track record of performance

and it sets out our vision for the shape of our services and strategic commitments for the years ahead, progressing the outcomes desired within the Community Strategy by 2030.

In its ongoing development, we have received positive engagement from partners, colleagues and Council Members as well as resident input to shape it and make it Your Plan as much as Our Plan.

It also sets the scene for a broader ten-year vision, where our aspirations are fully-funded and built on an intelligence and needs-based approach, for the realisation of a £230m capital investment across our priorities over the decade.

Late in 2021, a Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge identified many strengths within North Kesteven District Council, not least in

its 'complete jigsaw' of corporate plans and strategies and the clarity of purpose, vision and direction mapped out by them; this NK Plan among them. Additionally there was praise of the priority focus and the momentum of delivery and fulfilment of our projects.

Although bold in scale, the ambition expressed within the NK Plan is costed, entirely within our capacity and capabilities and consistent with our vision to ensure our communities are resilient, safe and flourishing.

This level of investment builds on the recent realisation of:

£100m of capital investment;
230 new council homes built;
a new **£4.2m** depot to future-proof waste services;
an arms-length housing company delivering **115** homes to date;
a **£7m** investment in leisure infrastructure and **£1.2m** in arts;
£4m invested into business units;
and the re-procurement of leisure services with social enterprise partners to achieve savings in support of wider service provision.

In the execution of our aims, aspirations ambitions and initiatives, we value the strong partnerships we form with residents, businesses, agencies, organisations, enterprises and individuals who share our progressive, pragmatic, pioneering and principled approach.

Many of the strengths and successes we enjoy within North Kesteven are founded on such alliances and together we can commit to bringing forward and fulfilling the NK Plan.



Cllr Richard Wright

Leader of the Council



Ian Fytche

Chief Executive
of the Council



NORTH KESTEVEN

A SENSE OF PLACE

Further to the aims and ambitions you would expect to see in a corporate strategic plan – for homes, jobs, communities, open and accountable governance and the like – we are keen to ensure that this Council extends its role as a ‘leader of place’

What North Kesteven District Council aspires to do, in all that it does, is to promote the area as a distinct location; a great place to live, work, visit and invest, with excellent services that meet the needs of its residents and businesses.

Also to advocate on behalf of the District and public service provision generally, which the 2021 Corporate Peer Challenge said we do very well, using our influence for the broader good of North Kesteven, its residents and communities.

Where it has statutory functions to fulfil – to run elections, provide housing, collect waste and recycling, determine planning applications, licence operations and establishments, ensure compliance and enforce against food hygiene, environmental health and living conditions and the like – it does this intelligently and with consideration in a manner that goes above and beyond.

And in areas subject to local discretion – the provision of arts, culture and sporting facilities, quality of customer engagement, leadership on climate action, level of

business advice and support, response to enquiries and provision of information, etc – this too is done in a manner which develops an exemplary level of service provision and satisfaction.

The Council's vision is focused on A District of Flourishing Communities, where communities are healthier, more productive, entrepreneurial, creative and engaged. And now through its enhanced commitment to climate action, where communities are carbon-net-zero by 2030.

This vision provides the framework through which services are shaped and delivered in pursuit of a happier, more vibrant District where people are actively engaged in their communities.

All of this contributes towards the sense of place which makes North Kesteven distinct and gives people the confidence to say the Council provides good quality services, offers value for money and that they are satisfied with the way we run things.

In championing North Kesteven as a great place to live, work, visit and invest, recent Council decisions to invest in Passivhauses and carbon neutral homes, Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park, more business units, the Hub arts centre and a more environmentally-resilient future, really build on this theme.



OUR GREEN THREAD



VISION

- ▶ A District of Flourishing Communities

PURPOSE

- ▶ A prosperous, sustainable District, delivered through effective & efficient public services that meet local priorities, the challenges of climate change and recovery from the economic and social impacts of Covid-19

PRIORITIES

Our COMMUNITIES

- ▶ To enhance the wellbeing, safety and health of all our communities; inspiring and supporting a sustainable and flourishing future

Our COUNCIL

- ▶ To aspire to be a high performing, value-for-money, Council that is agile and embraces the challenges and opportunities of the future

Our ECONOMY

- ▶ To enable all of our communities to flourish as part of the economic recovery from Covid-19, as well as the opportunities from the Green Economy

Our ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ To meet the challenge of climate change, ensuring integration and delivery of the Climate Action Plan across all NK Plan priorities

Our HOMES

- ▶ To deliver sustainable housing growth and pursue energy efficient development to meet the current and emerging needs of all our communities

AMBITIONS

- ▶ The strategic sense underlying our ambitions and the desired outcomes they point towards are outlined in the 2030 Community Strategy. In response to the challenges we face, our ambitions seek to achieve our aspirations within each priority – as detailed here in the NK Plan.

VALUES

- ▶ The manner in which we work to deliver our services:
High performing, honesty, people-focused, professionalism, teamwork

TEAM PLAN

INDIVIDUAL PLANS

The Green Thread is the link that connects a colleague's individual actions, at any level throughout the organisation, directly to our overarching vision and purpose and illustrates too how they contribute to fulfilment of our climate aspirations. Strong and apparent, this link is inherent within our culture and values, helping everyone to remain focused on their purpose and potential for delivering excellence – and meaningful climate action.

OUR COMMUNITIES

To enhance the wellbeing, safety and health of all our communities; inspiring and supporting a sustainable and flourishing future

KEY AMBITION

- **Promoting participation and engagement within our communities as well as recovery from the impacts of Covid-19**

Responsive delivery of quality services which are relevant to our communities and can be relied upon by residents runs to the heart of the Council's function.

In scoping our ambitions to enhance the wellbeing, safety and health of all our communities where we can inspire and support a sustainable and flourishing future for all, we have developed an insightful understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges faced by North Kesteven.

The District performs well in respect of low levels of deprivation, crime and re-offending – having held the status of safest place in the UK for five consecutive years with lowest levels of crime per 1,000 population – and on indices measuring life satisfaction, happiness and sense of worth.

Although comparatively low in incidence, as the nature and type of crimes changes the Council's response to this evolves too.

Community spirit and levels of

community resilience and support is inherently strong, as evidenced by the range, quality and breadth of nominations made annually to the NK Community Champion Awards.

Our growing population is ageing with some health indices causing concern in respect of diabetes, obesity and other measures. With this in mind, we intelligently shape support services and engagement best-suited to our communities.

And as a consequence of the District's geographic and spatial position there are needs to respond to in respect of rurality, social isolation and population ageing. These impact on 'brain-drain', loneliness, health outcomes and digital exclusion where access, confidence and knowledge around computers is low.

In response to these pressures and opportunities, the Council has mapped out bold and proactive aims and ambitions which seek to maintain and advance the area's strengths and bring positive change.

SUPPORTING AMBITIONS

- **Promote healthy lifestyles by providing a range of leisure and cultural opportunities**
- **Support partnership health strategies, including the Homes for Independence Blueprint, as part of our provision of effective and efficient support services for residents**
- **Work with our communities towards a clean, safe and inclusive District**



60% – funding gain for community groups from new Community Lottery

Launched in December 2021, the North Kesteven Lottery gives community groups the opportunity to net additional funding, with 60% of ticket sales going to local good causes.

Set up by NKDC, this responds to the widescale reduction and narrowing in the availability of other funding streams.

By registering as an active partner in the NK Lottery, community organisations can become nominated 'good causes'. In the first six weeks, 6,215 tickets were sold, netting £3,700-plus across the 48 good causes at the time. And there were 124 prize winners with that period too.





WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- ▶ Increase cycling infrastructure to support safe, confident and enhanced active travel and sport-riding provision
- ▶ Deliver identified actions and projects to build further on our engagement within the District and promote equality and diversity
- ▶ Continue to work successfully with partners to tackle both childhood and adult obesity
- ▶ Work with partners to ensure North Kesteven remains one of the safest local authority areas in England.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- ▶ Delivered the £1.2m re-invigoration of the Hub in Sleaford, facilitating easier and broader community access to the arts
- ▶ Set up a Community Lottery to support community groups and beneficiaries
- ▶ Fully rolled-out enhanced recycling provision with the separate collection of paper and card to maximise potential for effective, repeated, high-value re-purposing of resources
- ▶ Established a new Community Development Partnership and a Covid-recovery partnership of voluntary and community groups, with funding of £40,000 allocated to build community resilience initiatives
- ▶ Championed community volunteers through our annual awards.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- ▶ Inspire everyone to be more active and creative more often
- ▶ Implement the Lincolnshire Joint Waste Strategy
- ▶ Structure regular engagement with community-focused partners and representatives of community groups in order to develop 'flourishing' initiatives for our communities.



BIG NUMBERS



96% user satisfaction across our leisure facilities scoring above national ranking on all measures



£387,000 paid in support payments to help 774 people required to self-isolate through hardship



£30,000 administered and paid through Household Support Fund to help 241 claimants with costs of food, energy & essentials



218,000 people accessed leisure cultural and arts programmes in first quarter of 2021/22



£256K invested in NK leisure provision through the Leisure Recovery Fund and £56K in the arts through Cultural Recovery Fund

OUR ENVIRONMENT

To meet the challenge of climate change, ensuring integration and delivery of the Climate Action Plan across all NK Plan priorities

KEY AMBITION

► Champion greenhouse gas reduction, both within the Council and across the District

Environmental awareness and a commitment for clear climate action is driving change, delivering ambitions and creating opportunity across the full breadth of Council priorities – as well as inspiring and informing leadership and action on heritage and biodiversity enhancement and within environmental health.

Leading from the front, the Council not only secured the Sleaford Renewable Energy Plant as a significant producer of renewable energy – one of many renewable energy generation projects granted planning permission in recent years as the Council takes a far-sighted view on resource demand – but brokered a pioneering deal through which five public buildings receive free heat and hot water over a 25 year period. This has a significant impact on reduced carbon emissions across the public estate.

Through this and many other initiatives, the Council cut its own carbon outputs by 67.2% over ten years – way ahead of a 40% aim by 2020 – and contributed through direct action and ambassadorial

influence to a 25% cut in carbon and greenhouse gases District-wide. Wider public engagement and leadership play a major role in inspiring others to take action.

Given the extent of the target for net-zero by 2030, the 2021 Corporate Peer Challenge identified the Council's 'excellent ambitions for tackling climate change'.

Embracing the many opportunities presented through a more climate-conscious agenda, the Council has pledged to arrest biodiversity loss through better management of its open spaces and increased canopy cover from trees; harness technological developments and the development of renewables; consider the place of electric-powered vehicles within its operations and cut carbon emissions through staff travel.

On the built environment, a range of measures seek to enhance and protect heritage assets whilst teasing out the potential for greater efficiency in respect of insulation, energy use and life-long carbon implications for buildings.

SUPPORTING AMBITIONS

- Research and promote adaptations needed to increase resilience to climate change
- Promote and protect environmental health and deliver services to reduce the transmission of Covid-19
- Conserve and enhance North Kesteven's heritage assets
- Develop biodiversity across the District and support natural carbon capture



2030 – pledge to push carbon neutrality within decade

Building on a position of being among the first councils nationally, and the first in Lincolnshire, to declare a Climate Emergency, Council Leader Cllr Richard Wright was a pioneer in signing up to the UK 100 pledge.

The UK 100 pledge is a promise of council leaders to do everything within their power to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – including bringing their own council's emissions to net zero by 2030.

This adds impetus to the Climate Change Strategy, backed up with an ambitious action plan to deliver our climate response. Aligning with the United Nations' goals also signals our heightened level of climate concern and enthusiasm to engage partners.





WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- ▶ Fulfil, with partners, a review of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan with an aim to it becoming the first of its kind to aim for carbon neutrality
- ▶ Enhancement of habitat and public access along the River Slea in Sleaford, in partnership and with ERDF grant funding
- ▶ Review the efficiency of our refuse fleet and explore what alternative fuel options are viable
- ▶ Further develop meaningful climate action, and a costed pathway to achieve net-zero by 2030; informed by working groups focused on transport & domestic emissions, land use & carbon capture, adaptation and energy use.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- ▶ Committed to achieving carbon neutrality for both the Council and the District by 2030; an ambition backed by a dynamic action plan
- ▶ Extended engagement opportunities across our communities to maximise carbon reduction within our District
- ▶ Put more resource and emphasis into the officer team charged with delivering aspects of the climate leadership, engagement and commitment for change
- ▶ Begun an expansion of tree cover for carbon capture and broader environmental gain, with 700 saplings planted within Sleaford.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- ▶ Deliver on our goal to be net-zero on carbon by 2030
- ▶ Achieve further significant cuts in corporate and District-wide emissions
- ▶ Partnership in a countywide programme to tackle fly-tipping offences.

BIG NUMBERS



67.2% reduction in Council's carbon emissions since 2008



4.2% cut in domestic energy use per person, adding to a 33.4% cut over 12 years



97% of new homes comply with the highest energy performance ratings



1,500 tonnes of quality paper and card recycled in four months since new bins were rolled out



16 historic shop premises in Sleaford restored through a £300,000 grant scheme

OUR ECONOMY

To enable all of our communities to flourish as part of the economic recovery from Covid-19 as well as opportunities from the 'green economy'

KEY AMBITION

- **Support business recovery in the District, the protection of existing jobs and the creation of new jobs**

Central to the Council's vision for flourishing communities is a clear intent to encourage, enable and enhance economic vitality and vibrancy from high quality employment growth.

In current circumstances a major focus is in responding to the pressures and changes wrought by the coronavirus pandemic; anticipating growth and supporting businesses large and small in their recovery and resilience.

Ever horizon-scanning and with one-foot-ahead, the Council is primed to embrace the opportunities of the 'green economy'. By actively promoting these and exploring the potential for resident and incoming enterprises, NK can create the environment in which business can prosper.

For many years, North Kesteven has enjoyed a high level of economic activity with significant levels of economic resilience, success across all sectors and very low rates for unemployment and benefit claims.

This in itself brings pressures and challenges in terms of skills and supply.

Concentrated within agri-business, food processing and engineering, a limited business mix does lead to a relatively low wage economy, lower productivity levels and outward migration of younger people for educational and employment opportunities – a so-called Brain Drain – and a sparsity of apprentice opportunities.

The Council seeks to arrest these trends through direct lobbying, investing and promoting the need for enhanced physical and digital infrastructure and promoting the benefits of relocating and remaining to live, work and thrive in North Kesteven.

This position informs investment in 37 acres of employment land in Sleaford with the potential to create 500 jobs and its ever-expanding estate of workshops to develop grow-on opportunities for start-ups and growing new businesses.

SUPPORTING AMBITIONS

- **Attract investment to improve physical infrastructure, support regeneration and enhance digital connectivity**
- **Create a clear vision of place; celebrating and marketing all that the District has to offer**
- **Promote the economic opportunities from tackling climate change**



£100k – investment in promotion of local vibrancy

Making best use of Government funds to encourage a safe, confident and sustained return to high streets and open spaces, the Council was able to champion the benefits of Shop Local / Enjoy Local

The Reopening High Streets Safely and Welcome Back funds were mechanisms to help councils support their communities in the wake of the lockdowns and restrictions in response to the coronavirus.

Harnessing skills, local intelligence and the enthusiasm of event organisers, localised suites of bold, bright and impactful signage, banners, bunting and broader assets helped traders to promote their USP, brought vibrancy and vitality to village and town centres and promoted new opportunities for eventful days out.





WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- ▶ Begin construction on the 37-acre Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park with a view to completion in winter 2022.
- ▶ Refresh the Sleaford Masterplan to ensure the strategic framework for the town's future is reflective, responsive and aligned to local aims and ambitions
- ▶ Continue supporting businesses in recovery following the coronavirus pandemic and in their aspirations to grow
- ▶ Review options for the Heart of Sleaford and the town's historic Market Place
- ▶ Explore opportunities for a business forum to offer a further level of business support and engagement.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- ▶ Expanded to 126 our portfolio of business grow-on units at 12 locations District-wide, with completion and letting of 15 new workshops at Discovery Court, North Hykeham
- ▶ Administered £36m-plus of government grants in almost 5,000 payments across eight distinct grant schemes over 18 months from March 2021; a further £720,000 more up to March 2022
- ▶ Contributed to the delivery of highway improvements for Sleaford, opening up new opportunities for investment, jobs and housing growth
- ▶ Embarked on delivering a £56m investment in the Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park, designed to be as climate-conscious as possible within its ambition to support 500 jobs.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- ▶ Explore the potential for nurturing an increased presence of knowledge-economy businesses
- ▶ Work up opportunities to develop the Green Economy, through university linkages and agricultural advancements etc
- ▶ Promote the District's advantages to inward investors and support smaller businesses in Sleaford to develop a sense of the town's distinctive nature in particular.

BIG NUMBERS



£37m paid out across 5,000 business support grants through Covid-19 impact schemes



37 acres of employment land bought in Sleaford to open up 500 jobs



956 businesses visited, advised and guided by Covid ambassadors throughout restrictions



183 jobs created as result of Council input in 2019/20



£1m of Heritage Lottery Fund invested in restoration of Mrs Smith's Cottage

OUR HOMES

To deliver sustainable housing growth and pursue energy efficient development to meet the current and emerging needs of all our communities

KEY AMBITION

► Facilitate the provision of community infrastructure to align with housing growth

Having pioneered a new era of council house building a decade ago, North Kesteven has maintained an ongoing commitment to increasing quantity and quality in order to support growth and improved housing options.

The 2021 Corporate Peer Challenge recognised 'the speed at which NKDC is building, expanding and improving the sustainable design of its social housing stock'.

Both the current and emerging needs of all of District communities are met through responsive planning and insightful action; with continued foresight in delivering sustainable housing growth and energy-efficient development mapping the way forward. All of these aspects are informed by the provisions of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan bringing a holistic cross-council approach to spatial planning.

With high levels of home ownership, relatively low housing costs, a low proportion of single-person households and very little overcrowding, it would seem that North Kesteven has limited housing pressures.

But with a rising housing waiting list, sparse private rental availability

and limited market response, the Council is ever proactive in seeking to increase provision, mix and quality – so that even those limited pressures are responded to and eased. And in pioneering increased energy-efficiency and green energy solutions, it promotes the climate credentials of homes locally.

Mindful that there are always enhancements to strive for in living conditions, insulation and energy-efficiency, the Council is focused on future-proofing its own stock and supporting private landlords to deliver improvements.

As such, the Council actively invests in expanding and enhancing its own social housing stock. It set up an arms-length company – Lafford Homes Ltd – to respond to inertia and the need to unlock more choice within the private rental market and is focused on a range of strategic solutions which include supporting the owners of empty homes to bring their properties back into use.

Through these measures, inroads are being made in respect of an imbalance in housing mix, a lack of sufficient social and affordable housing, loss of homes through Right to Buy and greater sustainability.



Climate-protection as well as comfort are being built into all of North Kesteven's Council homes going forward, with adoption of a new CO₂-sy homes standard driving excellence in energy efficiency and low-cost, low carbon living.

In addition to the eight new Passivhauses at Potterhanworth – designed from the outset to be highly energy efficient, heat-retentive and draught-proofed – all new Council homes are being built as carbon-neutral and existing homes in the stock are being reviewed and in-part retro-fitted to come into line.

As well as being high quality and comfortable homes to live in, they demonstrate leadership in energy-saving standards and positive impacts.



SUPPORTING AMBITIONS

- Provide high quality services for both housing and tackling homelessness
- Maintain, improve and future-proof housing
- Deliver the Local Plan, increasing the supply of sustainable housing



WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- ▶ Work with developers to deliver more homes in the District, including at least 100 more affordable homes and to a higher environmental and energy conscious specification
- ▶ Continue to invest in line with the Lafford Homes' business plan to deliver more affordable rental choice locally
- ▶ Move forward a £3.9m regeneration of Grinter House in North Hykeham, expanding provision to 34 units for mixed use
- ▶ Work with Greater Lincolnshire partners to increase infrastructure delivery, more housing and progress net zero carbon and modern methods of construction initiatives
- ▶ Work with owners to bring back into use at least 20 more empty homes annually.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- ▶ Constructed eight Passivhauses at Potterhanworth, part of the new CO₂-sy Homes Standard for comfortable, climate-protecting homes and adding to two existing at Heckington
- ▶ Despite lockdowns, in 2020/21 we completed 19 homes, started on a further 95 for both Council and Lafford portfolios and had 274 units in total in development across eight sites
- ▶ In partnership with three other district councils launched an initiative to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping
- ▶ Completed a further 42 homes at Waddington for Lafford Homes, bringing forward additional choice to satisfy unmet private rental demand in support of strong communities.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- ▶ Deliver 260 new carbon-neutral Council homes up to 2030 and significantly improve the energy efficiency of existing homes in line with the zero-carbon ambition by then
- ▶ Continued improvement in the quality of homes, built and finished to new standards over and above the demands of national building regulations; not least in contributing massively on the Council's carbon cutting target for 2030
- ▶ With partners move forward the delivery of further Extra Care Housing provision at The Hoplands, Sleaford.

BIG NUMBERS



300+ new council and private rental homes delivered over 10 years



3,846 council houses in our expanding stock



104 new affordable homes built in 2020-21 by Council and registered provider partners



27 private sector empty homes brought back into use in a typical year



£27m value of new council homes and improvements schemes underway in the past year

OUR COUNCIL

To aspire to be a high performing, value-for-money Council that is agile and embraces the challenges and opportunities of the future

KEY AMBITION

► Deliver high quality, value-for-money services

The Council enjoys a high level of confidence among its customers, as partners and stakeholders appreciate its insightful and dynamic leadership.

Residents and businesses systematically give a satisfaction rating in the high 90s.

After many years of taking a lead and making significant advancements in respect of climate change and matters of environmental as well as financial sustainability, North Kesteven District Council has stepped up its response to the climate challenge with ambitions hailed as excellent.

This is reflected in the emphasis within its newly-focused aspiration to be a high performing, value-for-money, carbon conscious Council that embraces the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Ever customer-focused, open and accountable, with high levels of integrity, quality and value at the heart of everything it does, the Council is responsive and responsible in building its service delivery aspirations on a solid foundation of long-term financial stability and resilience.

Highly-efficient in the collection

and application of Council Tax and NNDR, and active in exploring opportunities for income enhancement, North Kesteven continues to move forward with a balanced budget and ambitious capital programme to invest £230m over the coming decade.

Always pragmatic in its approach, with service enhancement, financial resilience, customer responsiveness, foresight and strong governance as key drivers, the Council's new 10-year Community Strategy brings clarity and purpose to all it does; and further stability at a time of ongoing uncertainty within the sphere of public finance.

The 2021 Corporate Peer Challenge team found the Council to be 'strong, stable and financially-secure' with 'robust' governance arrangements, 'positive financial management' and strong strategic direction.

Ever mindful of the dynamic nature of local government finance and policy change, the Council, its officers and Members, aspire to achieve the very best for the District, its residents and businesses within the context of increasing customer expectations, and changing requirements.

SUPPORTING AMBITIONS

- Ensure our Council is financially resilient
- Be open and accountable
- Maintain a strong focus on our customers

INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

At North Kesteven District Council

Excellence in 'investing in its people' has seen the Council join the top 2% of organisations globally with its Gold Investors In People accreditation.

It was recognised for its 'clear focus on people', its 'high level of health and wellbeing provision', 'passion for making things better for the employees and communities' and a 'pride in making North Kesteven a truly great council!'

Further recognition and awards acknowledged the way the Council had kept colleagues safe through Covid-19 with good health & wellbeing provision.

The Democratic Services Team was awarded for its hard work and determination in moving democratic processes online as a pioneer of open and robust decision making within weeks of the 2020 coronavirus lockdown.





WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- ▶ Ensure sound finances and a balanced budget are maintained
- ▶ Begin delivery of the re-focused Transformation Programme to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness
- ▶ Deliver a number of constitutional innovations and a refreshed focus on resident engagement in line with the suggestions of the Corporate Peer Challenge of 2021
- ▶ Undertake a review of waste collection routes to ensure best efficiency and level of service
- ▶ Develop and strengthen strategic partnerships.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- ▶ Adopted an ongoing agile working programme to maintain and enhance service delivery whilst promoting employee welfare and maximising climate gain through reduced travel
- ▶ Lead the Lincolnshire multi-agency response in ensuring the safe resettlement of families evacuated from Afghanistan
- ▶ Supported partners across the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum in responding throughout the duration of the coronavirus pandemic
- ▶ Maintained active dynamic and engaging communications to guide communities through the pandemic, advising on restrictions, safe compliance and vaccination access
- ▶ Developed digital hubs to help build customers' confidence in using computers to access services, work and finances
- ▶ Expanded digital channels and opportunities for residents, businesses and wider stakeholders to hear from us.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- ▶ Explore and develop more mechanisms for residents to be able to access services through their preferred approach
- ▶ Implement, in association with other authorities within the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership, new waste management measures in response to emerging new legislation
- ▶ Introduce electric or alternative-fuel-powered refuse vehicles within the fleet.

BIG NUMBERS



£230m capital investment planned across Council services over next 10 years



950,000 sessions online, with 487,110 users opting to use website as first or preferred point of contact



78% of people satisfied with the quality of Council services



500+ people engaged in running a complex set of Covid-secure elections in May 2021



87% of residents say Council offers value for money

FUTURE FOCUS

Climate challenge

Climate concern is front, right and centre in all that North Kesteven sets out to achieve over the coming years.

Building on an established culture and focus on sustainability within everything the Council has sought to achieve – going back to signing up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in 2006 and endorsement in 2012 of the Local Government Association 'Climate Local' initiative – in July 2019 we were the first Lincolnshire authority to declare a Climate Emergency.

Rather than being a starting point, this declaration was wholly consistent and in line with established practice – climate consideration being an inherent part of the NK Way, subtly encompassed within much of the work we already do.

From there, the Council Leader has now committed to the UK100 Pledge, showing strong leadership and advocacy.



NK PLAN TIMELINE



2022

- ▶ Completion of construction phase at Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park
- ▶ Fulfilment of £4m investment to enhance roads capacity and facilitate housing and jobs growth in Sleaford
- ▶ Improve habitat and public access along the River Slea
- ▶ Start of £8.9m Extra Care Housing scheme for Sleaford



2023

- ▶ Completion of a £4m project to regenerate a former sheltered housing scheme at Grinter House, North Hykeham, expanding provision and broadening availability
- ▶ Relocate Cranwell Aviation Heritage Museum to new building
- ▶ Approval of refreshed Local Plan, shaping a carbon-neutral future for Central Lincolnshire



Over the last decade, we have cut by 67.2% our greenhouse gas emissions from Council operations, smashing our target of 40% by 2020 years ahead of schedule.

We are now charting a course for a net-zero carbon position for the Council by 2030, and a similarly bold ambition for the District as a whole...a much bigger challenge but one we are determined to pursue to reality in the best traditions of North Kesteven. We use and champion renewable energy, build-in energy efficiency within all of our properties, promote greater biodiversity; we're reducing plastics and are driving down consequential carbon outputs.

Following extensive progress by working groups across the Council, recommendations on the way forward for the Council are now consolidated into a holistic action plan for making the Climate Emergency declaration a living reality.

Economic challenge

Whilst Sleaford holds its own as a town centre, with one of the lowest rates of empty shop units – around 5% at any time – and a high ratio of independent retailers – around 80%, which is almost double the regional and national averages – shoppers prefer to take their spending elsewhere. Of every £1 spent on non-food retail, around 80p is spent out of the town, which is a substantial sum the town would benefit from recapturing.

The Council's response to this challenge includes a heritage renewal scheme, better traffic and pedestrian zoning, and initiatives to enliven retail vibrancy, develop a distinct 'Sleaford Brand,' facilitate a shift towards more leisure time being spent in the town and promote longer linger time.

Technology challenge

As customers choose to connect with the Council and receive their services and information in an increasingly digital and immediate way, the Council is continually reviewing its options to ensure it remains responsive and reactive.

One response to this is the expansion of digital information and hubs, helping residents to develop online skills and resilience.

As a realistic plan, informed by stakeholder input and intelligence on the dynamics, specifics and emerging pressures faced by the District – and rooted in far-sighted financial resilience – The NK Plan maps out the Council's high level action plan in response to the needs of the area and the furtherance of its goals over a rolling three-year timeframe.



2024

- ▶ Completion of £8.9m Extra Care Housing scheme in Sleaford
- ▶ Aim for Platinum Investors in People standard
- ▶ Delivery of 300+ council homes over 5 years



2025

- ▶ Further expand the Lafford Homes stock holding to unlock more housing choice



2030

- ▶ Achieve carbon net-zero aims for both the Council and the District
- ▶ Deliver against the outcomes of the Community Strategy targeted on 2030



FINANCE

Underpinning the Council's clear commitment to providing quality services which represent value-for-money and work towards A District of Flourishing Communities is the Finance Strategy.

Focused on achieving a balanced General Fund profile for the one year, three year and ten year horizons, it builds on the achievements of the past and sets out a clear direction for the future in conjunction with the Council's corporate plan – the NK Plan.

Alongside the sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy, sits an ambitious Housing Revenue Account that remains viable over a 30-year view and, to support investment in the District and the five Priorities, our Capital Programme provides for a ten-year investment strategy.

The Finance Strategy remains in a positive place, broadly balanced and creating the capacity to invest £230million in capital alone in priorities and services over the next decade to 2032.

Such an ambitious and innovative programme of activity is designed to ensure that the Council maintains its already robust financial position and proactively meets the challenges the Council faces. Coupled with a transformation programme, the ExCITe programme of 'invest to save' opportunities and foresight in taking proactive risk mitigation measures, mean that appropriate

mechanisms are in place to preserve the Council's status and drive it forward.

Nevertheless, the financial environment for local government remains challenging, with uncertainty over the financial framework for local government in England over coming years and the additional challenges presented by decreased income and increased costs as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic.

Achieving our finance strategy targets means achieving our targets for income generation and efficiency gain, whilst addressing cost pressures within the system. However despite the ever-present challenges, this Council's finances remain in a strong position.

Taking all of this into account, the 2021 Corporate Peer Challenge singled out our 'positive financial management and planning' and 'mature and well-considered' approach to risk, saying that it struck the right balance. It also said the 10-year financial plan was visionary and a rarity in local government that could be shared to inform good practice more widely.

Moving forward into the 2022-25 NK Plan period, the Council remains in a strong financial position through good management, planning and its ambitious approach to tackling the financial challenges it has faced.

CONTACT US

At North Kesteven District Council we greatly value the strong and strategic partnerships we have built up over time in support of our District of Flourishing Communities.

By sharing our experiences, intelligence, minds, innovations and resources, we undoubtedly achieve more together and deliver a greater difference for all of our communities and stakeholders.

We are always open to discussion and exploration of ideas and initiatives which have the potential to respond to our priority ambitions and meet our aspirations for North Kesteven. As a valued active partner, working alongside us in developing and enriching these, we welcome an ongoing relationship with you.



Cllr Richard Wright

Leader of the Council



Cllr Ian Carrington

Deputy Leader
of the Council



Ian Fytche

Chief Executive
of the Council



Phil Roberts

Deputy Chief Executive



**Andrew
McDonough**

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OUR DISTRICT



North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL



£230m

Capital investment plan to 2030



118,149

population of North Kesteven



53,061

homes in North Kesteven



410

houses built in NK (2020/21);
20% of them affordable



1.5m

visits to leisure & cultural
services annually (2020)



£88m

to spend on services and
projects in 2022/23



4,120

number of businesses in the
District



8 years

as one of the UK's
safest place to live



43.1%

of household waste recycled or
composted – the rest is burned for energy



3,845

council houses owned by NKDC



89.2%

tenant satisfaction



3,835,520

bins emptied every year



78%

of people positively rate
quality of services



162m

the value of tourism to NK in a
typical (non-Covid) year



332

jobs created or safeguarded
through Council actions



63.1%

reduction in carbon emissions
achieved, ahead of target



64%

of residents take part in sport and
physical activity at least twice a month.



1,015,333

contacts through Customer
Services over a year