

The NK Plan 2024-27



North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Our Plan for North Kesteven
A vision for 2024 & beyond

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THE NK PLAN OVERVIEW

The NK Plan is our strategic vision for the realisation of our aims and ambitions for the coming years, as we seek to develop and enrich our District of Flourishing Communities.

It is a confident statement of purpose, vision, values and priorities. It explains our purpose in sustaining effective and efficient public services and partnerships that deliver local priorities, meet the challenges of climate change and economic uncertainty, and advance a prosperous, sustainable and equitable District.

It also maps out the next steps to be taken in advancing the Council's longer-term aims which, through our Community Strategy, are confidently aligned to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in seeking to shape life through to 2030.

The NK Plan drives forward our priorities and ambitions for Our Economy, Our Homes, Our Environment, Our Communities and Our Council. It shapes the high-quality, sustainable and resilient day to day services that meet the needs of our communities, the many ambitious and often sector-leading projects and initiatives that further improve our District and the partnerships through which we do things.

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 £278m ten-year capital programme, £135m of it within the three-year lifetime of this plan; and
- A great track record of performance.

And it sets out our vision for the shape of services and strategic commitments for the years ahead, progressing the aspirations of the Community Strategy and working towards fulfilment of our Climate Emergency Action Plan for carbon net-zero by 2030.

It also responds to dynamic circumstances, challenges and opportunities and the evolving scope for partnership working and sharing excellence.

In its ongoing development, it is informed by positive engagement with 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 of investments and opportunity, which is fully funded and built on an intelligence and needs-based approach for the realisation of a record £278m in capital investment across our priorities over the coming decade.

During the three-year scope of this plan alone, investment opportunities will see:

- **£58m** directed into private rental housing delivered through the Council-owned Lafford Homes, increasing housing choice locally;
- **£17.7m** more targeted at economic growth opportunities at the Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park;
- **£22m** invested into council property upgrades, including £12m to decarbonise energy-inefficient homes;
- **£29m** for new homes;
- **£5m** into town-centre regeneration opportunities within Sleaford.

Although bold in scale, the ambition is costed and consistent with our vision to ensure our communities can thrive and flourish.

In achieving all of this,, we value the strong partnerships we form with residents, businesses, and organisations 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

OUR COMMUNITIES

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



KEY AMBITION

Promote participation and engagement within all our communities, ensuring the voices of younger people are heard

OTHER AMBITIONS

- › Ensure a clean, safe and inclusive District
- › Promote healthy lifestyles by providing a range of leisure and cultural opportunities and supporting partnership health strategies
- › Provide effective and efficient support services for our residents, recognising and being responsive to the ongoing cost of living challenges

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- › Work with partners to ensure North Kesteven remains one of the happiest and safest local authority areas in England.
- › 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, promoting equality and diversity and being responsive to cost of living pressures.
- › Continue to work successfully with partners to promote better health and wellbeing outcomes and tackle both childhood and adult obesity.
- › Strengthen and promote further initiatives in recognition of the specific circumstances of veterans and the contributions made to our flourishing communities.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- › Facilitated a unique Cycle Hub provision at ONE NK in North Hykeham to refurbish old bikes for those in greatest need and promote more, safe and confident cycling; the first in the East Midlands unifying three distinct projects.
- › Actively participated in aspects of a financial inclusion programme and led on a range of winter warmth initiatives in response to cost-of-living pressures.
- › Initiated a new community arts festival within Sleaford, drawing 100s of volunteers and creatives into a collaborative programme for RiverLight.
- › Part-funded an expansion and upgrade of Sleaford town centre's CCTV system, using government levelling up funds.
- › Invested further through own and government-funded schemes in measures to maintain access to sports and leisure facilities at a time of escalated operating costs.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- › Continue to engage in a multi-agency response to promote greater levels of community resilience and preparedness in anticipated of greater weather extremes and increased flooding.
- › Work with a range of agencies to develop new initiatives for crime prevention and ensure continuation of low crime levels.
- › Focus on developing new partnerships to coordinate health prevention services to narrow the gap in health inequalities.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- › Flourishing communities are at the heart of all we strive to achieve – places where people feel connected, safe, happy, in good health, and able to participate, contribute and thrive as best they can.
- › Sustaining a strong sense of wellbeing for individuals and entire communities, in both the narrowest and broadest sense inspires a range of services and initiatives that promote safe, resilient communities with access to sports, leisure and culture; assist with financial, supportive and life-enhancing measures; and cultivate collaborative partnerships.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

Champion and deliver a just transition for our climate and environmental commitments and aspirations



KEY AMBITION

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

OTHER AMBITIONS

- › Research and promote adaptations needed to increase resilience to climate change
- › Deliver the requirements of the Environment Act (2021)
- › Conserve and enhance NK's heritage assets
- › Enhance biodiversity across the District and support natural carbon capture

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- › Continue to invest in, and promote, opportunities for homeowners and tenants to access grants to enhance home energy efficiency and carbon-saving measures.
- › Escalate a £20m programme to retro-fit more than 600 of the least energy-efficient of our council homes, to make them more affordable and comfortable to live in.
- › Install solar PV on the ONE NK leisure centre in North Hykeham and progress further opportunities to de-carbonise more of the Council's operations, including leisure assets and waste services
- › Further develop meaningful climate action, and a costed pathway to achieve net-zero by 2030; informed by working groups and local circumstances.
- › Develop climate change information and awareness so that every community can access timely and relevant advice on taking climate action.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- › Partnered in, and promoted to businesses, opportunities for 300 small and medium sized enterprises to assess and adjust their climate impact towards net-zero.
- › Installed 195 more solar panels onto the roof of the Council's Sleaford offices, with potential to reduce the Council's electricity bill by 21% and save 17 tonnes of CO₂ per year.
- › Fulfilled, with partners, a review of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan; adopted as the first of its kind to aim for carbon net-zero.
- › Initiated focussed action with schools and taxi / school bus companies, to reduce vehicle emissions whilst idling and undertook targeted interventions within North Hykeham's smoke control areas, to promote clean air.
- › Put four new electric vehicles - the Council's first - on the road, within the waste fleet. Their effectiveness will inform future fleet replacement plans.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- › Continue advancing plans to achieve carbon net-zero for both the Council and the District by 2030. This includes establishing a pathway to ensure that council buildings maximise net zero opportunities.
- › Progress in partnership biodiversity gain projects on a landscape-scale as well as more localised tree-planting initiatives.
- › Deliver the requirements of the Environment Act (2021) and other waste reforms contributing to the Government's aim of Net Zero by 2050.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- › Environmental awareness and a commitment for clear climate action is driving change, delivering ambitions and creating opportunity across the full scope of Council activity.
- › As well as inspiring and informing its own action towards carbon net-zero for Council activities and operations by 2030, the Council is leading from the front through direct action and ambassadorial influence in order to promote residents, businesses, developers and all stakeholder partners to reduce emissions District-wide to hit the same target.

OUR ECONOMY

To support sustainable and regenerative local economic growth and resilience, transitioning to a Green Economy working within environmental thresholds



SLEAFORD
MOOR
ENTERPRISE PARK

PLOT 1

1.1A

1.1A

1.1B

1.1C

1.1C

1.2A

1.2B

Phase One of the £70m Sleaford Moor Enterprise has delivered 15 new units of flexible space for businesses to grow; all featuring solar panels, EV charging and energy reduction measures.

KEY AMBITION

Supporting employers where possible, alongside the protection of existing jobs, the creation of new jobs, and promotion of the wider skills agenda

OTHER 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 and employment opportunities from tackling climate change

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- › To continue with the delivery of a £3.2m package of UK Shared Prosperity Fund actions and £750,000 in grants through the Rural England Prosperity Fund.
- › Develop plans and funding to further progress the £70m 37-acre Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park.
- › Develop plans to deliver regeneration and public realm improvements for the Heart of Sleaford area and wider town centre, informed by the Sleaford Masterplan.
- › Develop a Tourism Strategy for North Kesteven, working with Destination Lincolnshire and supporting their accretion process for Local Visitor Economy Partnerships in order to grow our local visitor economy.
- › Progress ambitious plans for the Cranwell Aviation Heritage Museum, giving a further boost to the visitor economy.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- › Completed phase 1 of Sleaford Moor Enterprise Park, investing over £12m million into strategic infrastructure and 41,000 sq ft of new high spec, eco-conscious, workspace across 15 new units.
- › Identified and progressed a range of programmes targeting economic and locational renewal, funded by Government under a UKSPF Levelling-Up initiative.
- › Secured planning approval for relocation of Cranwell Aviation Heritage Museum and adopted a revised business plan for facilitating the project.
- › Refreshed the Sleaford Masterplan to ensure the strategic framework for the town's future is reflective, responsive and aligned to local aims and ambitions.
- › Commenced the rollout of £500,000 in grants to support rural and small business growth and investment District-wide; and £150,000 targeted at shop front improvements in Sleaford Town Centre.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- › Continue to support businesses to grow and invest through delivery of grant aid and advice, and to support them adapt to current economic challenges around cost of living, energy bills and aspirations to become carbon neutral.
- › Continue to work in partnership on the development of a Destination Management Plan for North Kesteven and Lincolnshire.
- › To commission background research into our local economy to deliver an updated economic prospectus for the District that will form the basis of a new Economic Development Strategy for North Kesteven.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- › 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 economic growth.
- › Creating and sustaining the conditions in which businesses of every size and nature can flourish and through which residents can engage underpins a range of strategic endeavours that seek to champion job creation and retention; support traders in making the most of every opportunity to prosper; and unlock enterprising potential.

OUR HOMES

Through the Local Plan, deliver sustainable housing growth and pursue energy efficient development to meet the current and emerging needs of all



KEY AMBITION

Facilitate the provision of community infrastructure to align with housing growth

OTHER AMBITIONS

- › Provide high quality services for both housing and tackling homelessness, recognising the additional cost of living pressures now faced
- › Maintain, improve and future-proof housing
- › Deliver homes that are affordable and meet the full range of needs and the net zero ambitions of the Local Plan

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- › Work with developers to deliver more homes in the District that are built to higher environmental and energy-conscious specification
- › Continue to invest in line with the Lafford Homes' business plan to deliver more affordable rental choice locally
- › Finalise a £4.2m regeneration of Grinter House in North Hykeham, expanding provision to 32 units for mixed use
- › Begin a £8.9m project in Sleaford to build extra-care apartments for older people and supported living accommodation for people with specific needs, promoting independent living across 52 units
- › Work with owners and relevant agencies to bring back into use at least 20 more empty homes annually.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- › Provided, over 14 years up to April 2024, 563 new or regenerated homes through various programmes, including Council HRA new-build, regeneration, buy-back and Lafford Homes.
- › Begun a £6m programme to retrofit at least 200 of the worst-performing council homes to deliver eco-friendly and energy-saving improvements.
- › Won the housing category in 2023's national LGC Awards in recognition of the Council's broad principles and strategies for building climate-conscious net-zero housing and making homes better and cheaper to live in.
- › Built eight Passivhauses at Potterhanworth, part of the new CO₂sy Homes Standard for comfortable, climate-protecting homes; adding to two existing Passivhauses at Heckington.
- › Increased access to, and availability of, private rental homes through Council investment into its Lafford Homes operation, including 42 in Waddington and 20 in Metheringham and six at Holdingham.

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS

- › Implement a long-term plan to improve the quality of Council housing stock and progress the Council's net zero standards.
- › Undertake a stock condition survey, to assess the condition of social and private properties to better-inform targeted interventions in these areas.
- › Continue to tackle the causes of homelessness whilst increasing the range of temporary accommodation available to ensure that provision meets need.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- › A strong and multi-awarded commitment to increasing the availability, accessibility and sustainability of housing across all tenures has long-informed our approach to housing.
- › A drive to build-up the quality and quantity of homes across all tenures – council, social, affordable, privately-rented and owned – and to respond to housing need, informs a spectrum of approaches which seek to secure sufficient comfortable, cost-effective and climate-protecting homes.

OUR COUNCIL

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



KEY AMBITION

Deliver high quality, value-for-money and sustainable services underpinned by effective workforce planning

OTHER AMBITIONS

- › Ensure our Council is financially resilient
- › Promote and protect good governance and healthy democracy, with accountable, transparent and timely decision-making
- › Ensure a strong and adaptable focus on our customers

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

- › Continue to deliver a bold and ambitious investment programme, currently targeting £278m over 10 years.
- › Ensure sound finances and a balanced budget are maintained.
- › Develop and strengthen strategic partnerships.
- › Consolidate the already-strong alignment of the NK Plan with Greater Lincolnshire's Vision 2050: developed to establish a shared ambition for devolution and public service delivery designed to enable all communities to flourish.
- › Deliver a series of elections, taking into account new legislation for Voter ID to be presented at polling stations and other new electoral integrity measures.
- › Work with partners across Lincolnshire to deliver the waste reforms agenda
- › Undertake a housing stock condition survey, to assess the condition of social and private properties to better-inform targeted interventions in these areas.

WHAT WE'VE DONE RECENTLY

- › Engaged positively in the first steps of Devolution for Greater Lincolnshire, welcoming scope for investment in infrastructure, skills and local priorities, enhancing the ability of local communities to make decisions locally, and to secure a greater proportion of resources for use locally.
- › Implement new website technology and content management systems making web pages easier to read and navigate.
- › Engaged in the Lincolnshire multi-agency response in ensuring the safe resettlement of families displaced from Ukraine.
- › 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

- › Collaborate further with partners to address significant challenges of broader concern – including water and flood management, the climate emergency, skills and employment and investment in infrastructure – in realisation of Greater Lincolnshire's Vision 2050.
- › Continue to explore measures to improve services, deliver enhanced customer experiences and maintain financial stability.
- › Explore further opportunities to further engage young people in awareness and engagement of democracy.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- › Principles of good governance, responsive service delivery and clarity of purpose build confidence in the Council doing the right thing by its communities, deserving of their trust and operating responsibly with their money.
- › By openly and collaboratively shaping and sharing its direction, priorities and vision; offering reassurance over its financial resilience and sustainability; and spelling out its emphasis as a high-performing, value-for-money, climate-conscious council focused on the future, the Council embraces customer focus, accountability and integrity.

OUR GREEN THREAD

VISION

- › A District of Flourishing Communities

PURPOSE

- › A prosperous, sustainable and equitable District, supported by effective & efficient public services and partnerships that deliver local priorities, and meet the challenges of both climate change and economic uncertainty.

PRIORITIES

- › **Our COMMUNITIES**
To enhance the health and wellbeing, safety and resilience of all our communities; inspiring and supporting a sustainable and flourishing future
- › **Our ENVIRONMENT**
Champion and deliver a just transition for our climate and environmental commitments and aspirations
- › **Our ECONOMY**
To support sustainable and regenerative local economic growth and resilience, transitioning to a Green Economy working within environmental thresholds
- › **Our HOMES**
Through the Local Plan, deliver sustainable housing growth and pursue energy efficient development to meet the current and emerging needs of all
- › **Our COUNCIL**
To be a high-performing, value for money Council that is agile, resilient and actively embraces the challenges and opportunities of the future

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.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As we target our actions on achieving both carbon net-zero and the aspirations of our Community Strategy in 2030, we have aligned all that we do with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; making this a shared vision where global aims influence local ambition.

The 17 SDGs represent the world's most broad, ambitious and comprehensive agreement on sustainable development to date and North Kesteven fully accepts the challenge they represent – intrinsically aligning 16 of them to our priority focus, as expressed through the NK Plan.

They are consistent with, and contribute to, enabling a District of Flourishing Communities where everyone has a future, a job, a home, a life and a champion; which are principles every resident is entitled to in order to flourish, participate, function and thrive.

This alignment is clearly expressed in the Community Strategy and informs the evolution of the onward NK Plan.



ROBUST FINANCES

In taking account of the challenges and uncertainties which exist in financial planning – rising cost pressure, the impact of local government finance reform, future changes etc – we continue to:

- › be proactive in our long-term strategic view,
- › invest in future opportunities,
- › build on the value we already provide, by being ever more efficient,
- › transform our services to deliver better outcomes,
- › drive sustainable growth and generate more income and opportunity in doing this, and
- › support our communities to flourish.

These are the principles underlying our Finance Strategy.

With a strong emphasis on climate action and a commitment to build more homes to low energy, zero-carbon standards, and bring forward economic, societal and cultural development, such a robust financial position affords certainty to our communities that we will deliver for our residents and achieve what we set out to do.

For 2024, big numbers include:

£55m – spend on General Fund services, covering everything we do in daily delivery, except for housing stock matters;

£12m – income from District Council tax element to support this – 8.7% of the total bill;

£19.3m – sum generated from rents for re-investment into housing stock;

£36m – capital spend planned, within a £278m 10-year programme.

OUR DISTRICT



£278m

Capital investment plan to 2034



119,709

Population of North Kesteven



53,950

homes in North Kesteven



941,693

contacts through Customer Services over a year (2023)



60%

of people positively rate quality of services



#1

North Kesteven is Britain's happiest place (2023)



42%

of household waste recycled or composted - the rest is burned for energy (2022/23)



969,527

visitors used Council leisure, sports and arts facilities and services



65%

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



£174m

the value of tourism to NK in 2022



4,950

number of businesses in the District



72.5%

of surveyed residents say we have to act urgently to address climate change



86.45%

of customers surveyed can access chosen service in preferred way



2030

Target date for moving the Council and the District to carbon net-zero



3,928

council houses owned by NKDC



225

jobs created or safeguarded through Council actions (2022/23)



3,854,032

bins emptied over a year



85%

of tenants satisfied with the landlord services of the Council (2022/23)