

AGENDA



MEETING VENUE:

**Council Chamber Council Offices,
Priory Road, Spalding**

Contact: Democratic Services
Direct Dial: 07557 821124
e-mail: demservices@sholland.gov.uk
Date: 15 July 2025

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the **Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding** on **Wednesday, 23 July 2025**, commencing at **6.30 pm** at which your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Barlow".

Rob Barlow
Chief Executive

(Quorum:13)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 16)
To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2025 (copy enclosed).
3. Declaration of Interests.
(Where a Councillor has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest the Councillor must declare the interest to the meeting and leave the room without participating in any discussion or making a statement on the item, except where a Councillor is permitted to remain as a result of a grant of dispensation.)
4. Chairman's Announcements.
5. Portfolio Holder updates (Pages 17 - 28)
To note Portfolio Holder updates on work being undertaken within each of their Portfolios (report of the Leader enclosed).

6. Announcements by Leader and Members of the Cabinet.
7. Questions asked on notice under Standing Order 6
8. Questions asked without notice under Standing Order 7
9. Committee Minutes
To receive the minutes of the following Committees and Panels:-
 - a) [Policy Development Panel - 22 April 2025](#)
 - b) [Planning Committee - 7 May 2025](#)
 - c) [Performance Monitoring Panel - 20 May 2025](#)
 - d) [Committee of the Licensing Authority - 22 May 2025](#)
10. Key Decision Plan (Pages 29 - 34)
To receive the current Key Decision Plan (copy enclosed).
11. Report from Cabinet meeting on 26 June 2025 (Pages 35 - 64)
To consider recommendations of the Cabinet in respect of:
 - Waste Services Delivery Model
 (report of the Cabinet enclosed).
12. Report from Cabinet meeting on 8 July 2025 (Pages 65 - 100)
To consider recommendations of the Cabinet in respect of:
 - 2024/25 Draft Outturn Finance Update
 (report of the Interim Director – Finance (S151) enclosed)
13. Annual Treasury Report 2024/25 (Pages 101 - 118)
To provide Members with the Annual Treasury Report 2024/25 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s Code of Practice on Treasury Management to ensure best practice is maintained (report of the Interim Director – Finance (S151) enclosed).
14. Implementation of HR Policies (Pages 119 - 218)
To seek Council’s approval for revised and new HR Policies (report of the Assistant Director – Corporate enclosed).
15. Allocation of Seats Review (Pages 219 - 224)
To review committee seat allocations and make appointments in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (report of the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) enclosed).

Note: App A will be sent 'to follow'

16. Nominations for Committees and other Seats and Proposed Changes to the Constitution.
To receive, from political groups, nominations for any changes to Committees and other seats and to consider any proposed changes to the Constitution.
17. Health Scrutiny for Lincolnshire Report (Pages 225 - 228)
To provide South Holland District Council with an update following the latest meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire (report of Councillor Glynis Scalese enclosed).
18. Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

NOTE: No other business is permitted unless by reason of special circumstances, which shall be specified in the minutes, the Chairman is of the opinion that the items(s) should be considered as a matter of urgency.

19. To consider resolving that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.
20. Report from Special Cabinet meeting held on 21 July 2025 (Pages 229 - 286)
To consider recommendations of the Cabinet in respect of:
 - Delivery of the South Holland Health and Wellbeing Hub Project(report of the Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and the Interim Director – Finance (S151)).

Please note that, given the timing of the special Cabinet meeting, which is being held on 21 July 2025, members can view the appendices to the above report (these are the report and appendices being considered at the special Cabinet meeting) and these are included within this agenda pack.

The covering report, which will include any recommendations from the Cabinet meeting and include the minute to the meeting will be published and sent 'to follow' to members on 22 July 2025.

Please note that both the covering report and all appendices are exempt under paragraph (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

21. To implement a pay structure and associated Job Evaluation Scheme for Officers in shared Partnership roles within the South & East (Pages 287 -

Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

324)

To seek approval for a Partnership shared officer pay structure, Job Evaluation scheme and associated policy (report of the Assistant Director – Corporate enclosed).

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 14 May 2025 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

A R Woolf (Chairman)
J Whitbourn (Vice-Chairman)

B Alcock	S Chauhan	G P Scalese
D Ashby	L J Eldridge	I Sheard
J R Astill	M Geaney	S-A Slade
J Avery	R A Gibson	E J Sneath
P Barnes	A Harrison	T Sneath
A C Beal	M Hasan	G J Taylor
H J W Bingham	S Hutchinson	A C Tennant
M D Booth	J L King	J Tyrrell
C J T H Brewis	J Le Sage	D J Wilkinson
T A Carter	M Le Sage	C N Worth
A Casson	P A Redgate	
N Chapman	J L Reynolds	

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors A Spencer

In Attendance: The Chief Executive, the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer, the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Team.

1. **ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN**

Prior to the election of Chairman, the outgoing Chairman thanked Councillors for their support during his two year Chairmanship. He announced that over the two year period, a total of £21,065.94 has been raised for his Chairman's charities – Blood Cancer UK and Mencap.

The outgoing Chairman invited nominations for the election of Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor J Whitbourn and Councillor M Le Sage were both nominated and seconded and following a vote, Councillor Whitbourn was appointed as Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

DECISION:

That Councillor J Whitbourn be elected as Chairman for the ensuing year.

(Councillor J Whitbourn thereupon took the Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.)

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2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman invited nominations for the appointment of a Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor A Harrison and Councillor M Le Sage were both nominated and seconded and following a vote, Councillor Harrison was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

DECISION:

That Councillor A Harrison be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

(Councillor Harrison thereupon signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office).

3. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Full Council held on 27 February 2025.

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 27 February 2025 be signed as a correct record.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman thanked the past Chairman for all his hard work during his two year tenure, and also congratulated him on the monies raised towards his charities.

She stated that it was an honour to be elected to the role of Chairman, that she would work hard for the District over the next year and was determined to continue raising the profile of the Authority.

The Chairman announced that she intended to support the following charities – Spalding Lions Club, Spalding Round Table; and Spalding United Youth Football Team.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

The Leader made the following announcements:

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- He wished to congratulate those recently elected as County Councillors to Lincolnshire County Council in the recent LCC elections. He hoped that all councillors could work together to support the South Holland area, and the Local Government Reorganisation proposals.
- He advised that Councillor Carter would be standing down as the PSPS Shareholder representative. She would be replaced in this role by Councillor Redgate.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services made the following announcements:

- He reminded members of the forthcoming Member Briefing on Waste Services Proposals – this would be held in person to support an effective discussion.
- Garden waste – In response to a question raised at the last Council meeting around waiting lists for garden waste bins, he advised that residents on the list had been contacted and offered the service, that there was no longer a waiting list, and that the service was currently at capacity.
- The Portfolio Holder congratulated the Democratic Services Team on running the recent LCC elections for the local area, and also the Assistant Director – Corporate in his first outing in the role of Returning Officer.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Development provided an update on the Castle Sports Centre. He advised that early works were underway on site, such as surveying and trenching, with minimal disruption to users. The dry side work at the site was scheduled to start in September with a move to the site at Red Lion Street while work was underway. An opening of the new facilities in 2027 was anticipated. He also advised that a Briefing would be provided to Councillors to ask questions of the Project Team – its officers were drawing together all details so that full answers could be provided to questions.

7. QUESTIONS ASKED ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

8. QUESTIONS ASKED WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Barnes

Subject: Portfolio Holder updates

Councillor Barnes understood that the Leader had advised that a short update report was to be provided by each Portfolio Holder to Council meetings. When would these be available? Councillor Worth responded that these reports would be forthcoming to each Council meeting and that this would start from the next Council meeting on 23 July 2025.

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Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor Booth

Subject: Fly tipping

Councillor Booth raised the potential dangers of fly tipping in rural areas, stating that glass bottles left near dry grass in fields was a potential fire risk. Was the Authority undertaking a campaign to stop fly tipping and raising these issues, and could the Recycling Centre in Spalding be open for longer to assist in the fight against fly tipping? Councillor Casson responded that the Recycling Centre was run by Lincolnshire County Council and that longer opening hours would help - he fully supported longer opening hours. With regard to awareness campaigns, there was already good coverage but he would request more media output in this area. With regard to fines, those that were caught fly tipping would be fined. Following some work undertaken on environmental crime and the Kingdom Contract by a joint scrutiny task group, consideration was being given to proposals with a view to increasing fines and bringing them in line across all three authorities.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor M Le Sage

Subject: Use of outdoor space at Castle Sports Complex

Councillor M Le Sage asked why, in light of no building work commencing until September, the outdoor space at the Castle Sports Complex could not have been used for the local Beer Festival and Flower Festival. Councillor Taylor explained that although work on the site had first been announced two years ago, it would not have been known when planning permission would be considered and granted. Some work had already started on the site which made it unviable to hold events there, and there were other sites in Spalding that could be used and should be developed going forward.

Question to: Councillor Bingham

Question from: Councillor Eldridge

Subject: Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) under second stage of consultation process – response

Councillor Eldridge commented that there were currently four NSIPs at the second stage of their consultation processes. Could a combined statement be sent to the Secretary of State to reflect the Authority's views? Councillor Bingham responded that the Council had sought outside assistance to deal with these hugely complex projects in order to ensure that the best and most detailed responses could be given in the interests of residents. This was being paid for, in most cases, by an extra charge to the developer. The Portfolio Holder had attended the online consultation the previous evening for two of these projects and had not been impressed – all questions had to be in writing, no conversation on points was allowed and questions were screened. Councillors attended to put forward the views of their residents and better engagement to this end was required. The Council, through decisions made at Planning Committee, had made it clear that it did not support the mass industrialisation of large swathes of BMV land, but did support the right project in the

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right place. Although any response from the Planning department would be solely based on planning issues, for the major projects, a further response from the Council was being drawn together and this would be circulated and sent by the Leader. The Authority was only a consultee on these projects and engagement from all political levels, both nationally and locally, was required.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Brewis

Subject: Local Government Reorganisation

Councillor Brewis asked whether it was likely that proposals for Local Government Reorganisation would go forward or be withdrawn in the future. The Leader responded that feedback to initial proposals that was due to be received in mid-May was now more likely to be received at the end of the month. It was his view that the process was likely to slip.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Barnes

Subject: Spalding Heritage Strategy

Councillor Barnes asked for further information on progress with the Spalding Heritage Strategy and whether there was a timeframe. Councillor Taylor advised that some work around the riverside had already taken place. The Spalding Heritage Strategy was on the forward plan to be considered within the next couple of meetings – he would advise when there was further information.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Alcock

Subject: Utilisation of Kingdom contract to address early presentation of refuse

Councillor Alcock asked whether consideration could be given to publicity regarding the early presentation of waste to alert the public to the rules and regulations surrounding the issue? He also asked whether the contract with Kingdom could be utilised to investigate and potentially prosecute individuals? Councillor Astill responded that he would support these proposals. Councillor Casson reported that he went out with Kingdom a few times each month and advised that they looked at certain streets where there were problems, and that there had been some prosecutions around early presentation.

Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor J Le Sage

Subject: Early presentation of refuse

Councillor J Le Sage stated that there continued to be issues in the St Johns ward around early presentation of refuse, and also asked if Kingdom could visit daily and check for early presentation. He also asked whether a letter had gone out to residents at Lucknow Lane regarding early presentation. Councillor Casson advised that he would check the situation with regard to a letter to Lucknow Lane residents.

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He also stated that there were only three officers dealing with the South Holland area and it would not be possible for them to visit all areas. They were however doing a good job and prosecutions were being achieved.

Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor Hasan

Subject: Anti-Social Behaviour in Spalding Town Centre

Councillor Hasan commented that the recent improvements to Spalding town centre (public toilets and sculptures) were appreciated however, how would anti-social behaviour around the toilets be handled? The Leader responded that with regard to anti-social behaviour, hot-spot policing was due to start at any time, and a contract was in the process of being signed. The area around the public toilets in the Sheep Market would be picked up as part of this initiative.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor M Le Sage

Subject: Rough sleeping in Abbey Passage, Spalding

Councillor M Le Sage asked for an update on the state of the Abbey Passage in Spalding which had been occupied by rough sleepers for some time. The state of the passageway was so poor as a result that many people were now no longer using it. The Leader advised that the area that the homeless people were in was private property, owned by Hills Furniture Store. Anti-Social Behaviour officers had visited on numerous occasions when there had been promises to clear the area up but this had not happened. The Council could not enforce on this issue as it was on private property.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Eldridge

Subject: Customer Services – call waiting times

Councillor Eldridge commented that there were reports that call waiting times to Customer Services had increased – was this the case, and how would this be resolved? Councillor Astill responded that waiting times were 12% higher than last year however, 'Call Back' and 'Web Chat' facilities had since been introduced. He commented that demand across Revenues and Benefits was particularly high. He advised that a briefing note on how this worked would be sent to members. He also stated that the three Portfolio Holders across the Partnership whose responsibility covered Customer Services met regularly to consider how a technical response could be provided for those that wanted it, thus freeing up time to take telephone calls.

9. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the following Committees and Panels were noted:

- Governance and Audit Committee – 30 January 2025
- Planning Committee – 5 February 2025

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- Policy Development Panel – 11 February 2025
- Planning Committee – 4 March 2025
- Performance Monitoring Panel – 12 March 2025
- Governance and Audit Committee – 20 March 2025
- Planning Committee – 2 April 2025

10. **REPORT FROM CABINET MEETING ON 1 APRIL 2025**

Consideration was given to the report of the Cabinet which sought approval for the Cabinet's recommendations.

2024/25 Quarter Three Finance update

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report which had been presented and discussed fully at Cabinet.

DECISION:

- 1) That the Capital Programme at Appendix A (to the Cabinet report) – Table 4b be amended to take into account the changes set out in the Cabinet report;
- 2) That the Capital Programme at Appendix A (to the Cabinet report) – Table 5A be amended to take into account the changes set out in the Cabinet report.

11. **KEY DECISION PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan.

DECISION:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

12. **SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Corporate which provided a six monthly update on Partnership performance.

The Leader of the Council presented the report.

DECISION:

- That progress of the Alignment and Delivery Plan (section 2) be noted;
- That the Performance Framework 2025/26 (section 3) be noted;
- That the updates from the Priority Partnerships (section 4) be noted;
- That the Partnership Scrutiny update (section 5) be noted.

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13. SPECIAL URGENCY - NON-KEY DECISIONS - APPLICATION OF CALL-IN

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) which reported to Council the reason for urgency relating to a Non-Key Decision, as required by the Council’s Constitution.

DECISION:

That the information contained within the report be noted.

14. POLITICAL GROUP REGULATIONS, COMMITTEE/OUTSIDE BODY MEMBERSHIP REVIEW, 2025/26 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND APPOINTMENT OF SECOND INDEPENDENT PERSON

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer), the purpose of which was: a) To confirm in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the allocation of committee seats to political groups and to agree a reduction in the number of Committee seats subject to a further report to Council; b) To confirm in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, appointments to committees and outside bodies and to review membership; c) To agree the 2025/26 Schedule of Meetings; and d) To appoint a second Independent Person.

The Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) presented the report.

In an amendment to Appendix B, it was clarified that Councillor D Wilkinson would not be proposed as a member of the Policy Development Panel.

Members considered the report and the following issues were raised:

- Concerns was raised by a number of members regarding the proposal to reduce the number of seats on the Performance Monitoring Panel, Policy Development Panel, Planning; and Licensing Committee/Committee of the Licensing Authority. Particular concern was raised regarding the reduction in numbers on the Planning Committee and members asked for the reasons behind the proposal.
 - The Leader responded that a reduction in numbers would result in greater flexibility for members as they would not need to be appointed to as many committees, and it would also allow for greater flexibility in appointing members with particular skills to specific committees. With regard to Planning in particular, ward member could always attend to raise specific issues in their ward.

In accordance with Standing Order 16 (paragraph 16.3) of Part 4A of the Constitution (Procedural Standing Orders), a recorded vote on recommendation 5 was agreed and undertaken. The vote was as follows:

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For	Against	Abstain	Apologies
Councillor Astill	Councillor Alcock	Councillor Chauhan	Councillor Spencer
Councillor Avery	Councillor Ashby		
Councillor Beal	Councillor Barnes		
Councillor Bingham	Councillor Booth		
Councillor Carter	Councillor Brewis		
Councillor Casson	Councillor Gibson		
Councillor Chapman	Councillor Hasan		
Councillor Eldridge	Councillor Hutchinson		
Councillor Geaney	Councillor King		
Councillor Harrison	Councillor J Le Sage		
Councillor Redgate	Councillor M Le Sage		
Councillor Reynolds	Councillor Sheard		
Councillor Scalese	Councillor T Sneath		
Councillor Slade	Councillor Tenant		
Councillor E Sneath	Councillor Wilkinson		
Councillor Taylor			
Councillor Tyrrell			
Councillor Whitbourn			
Councillor Woolf			
Councillor Worth			

DECISIONS:

- 1) That the Council approves that the following Committees be appointed to in accordance with political proportionality legislation and approves the committee sizes and allocation of seats as detailed in Appendix A:
 - Performance Monitoring Panel;
 - Policy Development Panel;
 - Licensing Committee;
 - Chief Officer Employment Panel
 - Chief Officer Employment Appeals Panel

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- Standards Panel;
- 2) That the Council approves that the following Committees be appointed to without being politically balanced and approves the committee sizes and allocation of seats as detailed in Appendix A:
 - Planning Committee;
 - Governance and Audit Committee;
 - Committee of the Licensing Authority;
 - Appeals Panel;
 - Settlements Agreements Sub-Committee;
 - Independent Panel
 - 3) That the Councillor Development Working Group be re-appointed to, reflecting cross party membership.
 - 4) That the Council approves the appointments to Committees and Working Groups as nominated by Group Leaders and detailed in Appendix B, with the exception that Councillor D Wilkinson not be appointed as a member of the Policy Development Panel;
 - 5) That the Council approves a proposal to revise the number of seats to specific committees as detailed at Section 1.12 of this report to take effect from the Full Council Meeting in July 2025 and that it be noted that a further report will be presented to the next meeting of Full Council to approve the committee seat allocations and appointments.
 - 6) That the Council notes the current appointments to Outside Bodies as detailed in Appendix C and receives nominations for any vacancies.
 - 7) That the Council approves the Council meeting dates and its' Committee meeting dates and notes the proposed dates for Cabinet meetings for the Council Municipal Year 2025/26 (Appendix D).
 - 8) That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Chairman to amend or cancel meeting dates as necessary, subject to compliance with any constitutional requirements where an agenda has already been published.
 - 9) That Mr David Simpson be appointed as the second Independent Person, for the period 14 May 2025 for an initial three year term until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2028.

15. **NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEES AND OTHER SEATS AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION.**

There were none. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies had been dealt with during the previous item.

16. **HEALTH SCRUTINY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report of Councillor Scalese in respect of Health Scrutiny for Lincolnshire.

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DECISION:

That the report be noted.

17. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.10 pm)

(End of minutes)

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Report To: South Holland District Council

Date: Wednesday, 23 July 2025

Subject: Portfolio Holder updates

Purpose: To note Portfolio Holder updates on work being undertaken within each of their Portfolios

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: All Portfolio Holders

Report Of: Councillor Nick Worth - Leader

Report Author: Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Exempt Report: No

Summary

This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by each Portfolio Holder within their individual Portfolios.

The report is for noting only and will appear as an item at each ordinary Council meeting going forward.

Recommendations

That the report be noted.

Reasons for Recommendations

To inform and keep all Councillors up to date with work undertaken in each Portfolio area.

Other Options Considered

Not to provide a report – not considered.

1. Portfolio Holder updates

Update from the Leader – Councillor Nick Worth

Mayoral Combined County Authority

We have now had the first meeting where we appointed members to boards and committees and elected chairs of those boards (upper tier Councils), noted the appointment of the Deputy Mayor and allocated funding for projects under the UKSPF programme, where I noted that all the projects were either in Lincoln or further north. The mayor confirmed she wanted future funding to be spread more equitably around the whole County. The initial meeting of the Business and Infrastructure Board has been held and the Education & Skills Board will be held shortly. Both are very much in their infancy.

Local Government Re-organisation

The launch of our detailed bid for two unitary councils (North / South split) took place at The Assembly Rooms in Lincoln on July 10th and there will now be an intense round of consultations and workshops across the county to support our bid over the next 2 / 3 months. This will include regular updates to our members, LALC and two virtual sessions with Parish Councils. We hope you can all be heavily involved in feeding information to and from Parish Councils in particular.

Markets

Market occupancy across Spalding, Holbeach, Long Sutton and Crowland as a whole has increased compared to last year. In May 2024 we had 242 stalls compared to 339 this year and in June 2024 we had 261 stalls compared to 274 this year, so we are seeing a gradual upturn. We have 16 new traders in the last 3 months. We have a new Facebook page that the traders are finding very useful for marketing and promotion. We are also having our first 'Makers' market in Spalding in August, where we already have a number of stands booked.

BID

There has been some noise around the BID, so I wanted to clarify that The Business Improvement District ballot and levy collection was carried out alongside national guidelines to ensure a fair and transparent process which was clearly communicated throughout.

We have every confidence that the BID ballot and levy collection have been carried out in the correct and proper manner with clear and documented communication throughout. The ballot took place in 2024, with plans to explore a BID first made public in 2022.

The ballot was managed to the same high level as any other election, with verified data being provided to a recognised electoral services provider, and the council's returning officer overseeing the process with the usual checks, proofing and sign-off taking place.

The collection of the levy on behalf of the BID has been carried out in the same manner as it would be with council tax and all other council managed collection processes, and all recovery actions undertaken have been done in line with the relevant national regulations.

We need to make a clear distinction between SHDC's role and that of the BID: South Holland District Council collects the money, the BID is controlled by local businesses who spend the money. It is worth noting also that all businesses who fund the BID have the opportunity to influence how the funds collected through the levy are spent.

Spalding Town Board

The Board is currently drawing together a detailed master plan for the town so that we are ready to use the funding on projects that will make a difference to the town when the main funding finally comes in 2026. Included in that will be a report on the health of retail, leisure and hospitality in the town and how we might use some of the funding to support struggling and new businesses. We are also expecting a report on the Hot Spot Policing project in Spalding to see how it is reducing anti-social behaviour, reducing drinking and making people feel safe when in and around the town, before we consider whether to extend the funding for a further 3 months.

Update from the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance – Councillor Paul Redgate

Finance

The Finance Team at South Holland District Council has worked diligently to prepare and publish the 2024/25 unaudited draft Statement of Accounts by the statutory deadline of 30 June. Their professionalism and commitment are commendable, especially in light of the national challenges around delayed accounts. The external audit will commence on Monday 7 July. This timely achievement supports the wider effort to clear the national backlog, with 28% of District Councils having missed the deadline.

UKSPF

The Programme is progressing as expected. The two delegated Schemes (LCF GRASSroots and Grants4Growth) are up and running, with Grants4Growth agreeing its first four grants in South Holland and LCF closing its first Round on 30th June. On the latter, demand has been so substantial that it is my expectation that the entire allocation will be committed in a single Round and it is likely that the standard for approval will be very high. On the other projects, we are proceeding through the contracting process, with the vast majority targeted to be under contract by 11th July (leading to us being just shy of 90% under contract by the end of this month). 'On the ground' delivery has started again for a couple of the continuation projects now under contract (e.g. LCVS Community Transport, Pride in Place).

IDBs

We received the confirmation of the distribution of the £5m settlement from the Government. We have seen a sum of £578,000 allocated to SHDC. This is welcomed and we are thankful for this sum of money. We continue to campaign for a long term funding solution for authorities and this remains paramount to the safeguard in both the short term for council while we go through LGR. We are pushing the Government through numerous channels in order to keep our narrative ongoing and want to ensure that this is factored into any dialogue taking place.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services – Councillor Jim Astill

Governance:

- Annual Canvass commenced on 4th July, more information can be found in the email sent to all Councillors by the Communications Team on 3rd July.
- Risk Reports now have oversight from Cabinet in addition to Governance and Audit Committee.

Corporate:

- Since the formation of the Partnership in 2021, work has been ongoing to identify a mechanism for job evaluation and a suitable scheme for remuneration for those officers who are shared.

Following extensive work by the team which involved consultation with staff and associated unions, we have reached a point where this is now ready for Full Council approval and reports for this are featured on this agenda.

- Work has been ongoing to create an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the Partnership. A draft policy went to the last meeting of the Policy Development Panel and is expected to be approved at the September Cabinet meeting.

Environmental Services:

- Work is ongoing within the service on the expansion of the garden waste scheme, it is anticipated that I will be able to update Councillors on the progress around the end of July.
- Cabinet approved the model for the delivery of waste collections at a Special Meeting in June. Approval of the associated elements of the Capital Programme are featured on tonight's agenda.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Strategic Planning – Councillor Henry Bingham

Planning

- Performance of the Development Management Team remains strong, with both minor and major applications being determined over 90% in time.

- The National Grid Grimsby to Walpole NSIP Stage 2 consultation is currently open and runs until 6th August - a response is being compiled
- A further early-stage consultation on electricity transmission infrastructure from Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire also runs until 6th August - a response is being compiled.
- Nationally, the Government continues to move forward with planning reform and is consulting on several matters, including the future of Planning Committees. The Planning & Infrastructure Bill continues its path through Parliament.
- The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor Alcock, Councillor Hutchinson and myself met with officers to discuss and compile comments regarding the above bill.
- Comments have been submitted regarding meridian solar, egl3 and 4 nsip projects, putting forward concerns and objections.

Building Control

- Building Control has seen huge changes in the last 12/18 months. Building Control Inspectors must now be registered to operate and Building Control bodies must demonstrate that they comply with Operational standards rules as set by the Building Safety Regulator. This has resulted in significant changes to the way Building Control operates as well as the industry. SHDC Building Control have a full team of registered Inspectors.
- Building Control also operate a 24/7 365 day a year dangerous structure service, ensuring that any building that poses an immediate danger to the public is made safe.
- SHDC is still retaining the major share of work in the area.

Cultural Facilities

South Holland Centre

- Attendance across Q1 is up from last year: Q1 24/25 6811 attended a show or film compared to Q1 25/26 7425 attended a show or a film;
- Ticket sales for panto are also up on this time last year – by 2nd July 2024 we had sold 2968 tickets and by 2nd July 2025 we have sold 3498 tickets which is very encouraging. There is limited capacity to improve on the overall number of tickets sold in terms of number of performances;
- July is a busy month for community hires with Spalding School of Dance, Bourne to Dance, Polka Dance and Act II all hiring the venue for their end of year shows.
- Further funding has been secured from Storytellers NPO to enable the continuation of the successful AV Club. The group will be working with Spalding Gentlemans Society and Act II on two projects over summer and autumn using some of the skills they have learnt over the last six months;
- The South Holland Centre also hosted the Storytellers NPO Cultural Conference in June, where spaces across the whole building were utilised for breakout sessions and keynote speeches. It was fantastic to see the whole building buzzing with activity;
- A Function Hall Open Day is planned for later in the year, with a date to be confirmed in partnership with an outside company. A room decorator will come and “stage” the room for a function. The aim is for this to be a relaunch to

promote this as a space for functions and the intention to link in with Ayscoughfee to promote and increase use;

- A round of auditorium seat refurbishments took place in June, with further seat repairs planned for August along with other planned maintenance.

Ayscoughfee Hall Museum & Gardens

- Ayscoughfee welcomed 5069 visitors during Q1, an increase of nearly 2000 on the same period last year;
- Working with the Communications team, promotion of Ayscoughfest has started with a full plan in place for promotion activity over the coming month.
- The Lutyens interpretation boards are with the Graphics team and will be shared in the next week.
- Following a review of incidents and discussions with the Community Safety team, the asset protection hours have been changed to increase presence in the afternoons over the summer and increased patrols before locking up. There has been a drop in incidents so far this year which suggests the security presence is acting as a deterrent. A longer-term solution is being costed.
- Savings have been made internally allowing for extra manned hours during the summer months in the gardens.
- Gardens are in full bloom and looking spectacular and further work planned over the coming year
- The opening of the infinite museum at Ayscoughfee Hall went well and is definitely worth a look - the VR experience is not only interesting but informative

Assets

Lutyens memorial

- The project is progressing well and remains on schedule for a September finish with a bit of leeway allowed in case of any hidden issues that weren't apparent from the surveys. The rendering is going well and the roof has been stripped where it was discovered a structural beam had rotted away and that is now being replaced with the roofing tiles numbered ready for installation once all beams have been cleaned and treated for woodworm. This extensive expert restoration will allow the memorial to last for many years to come. A full picture and explanation log of the works will be retained and made available in the museum once the project is complete.
- We are currently in the process of transferring public open space to Sutton Bridge Parish Council as we have with Fleet and Quadring. Although these sites have little to no financial value they have massive community value and as such we believe are best suited in the control of the local parish councils so as to allow for a tailored approach to maintenance and upkeep. This will be expanded further in the near future.
- We continue with the disposals of a small number of sites (not open space) that are deemed surplus to requirements, not economic to repair etc such as derelict garage sites so as to invest back in to the assets.
- We continue to be in conversations with groups and organisations and businesses looking at uses for unused or under-utilised assets to create community value where economically possible and in a lot of cases commercial return

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing – Councillor Tracey Carter

Housing Standards (Private Sector Housing)

Since the start of the year the Housing Standards Team has welcomed in 2 new members of staff, replacing 2 long serving officers who have retired. The 2 new officers are embracing their training and I am delighted to report that both have recently passed their Housing Health and Safety Rating System qualification and putting this into practice in their duties. In terms of workload, the team is currently dealing with a number of properties within the private sector with serious hazards presenting serious risks to the occupying tenants, resulting in the service of 4 Improvement Notices, 2 Emergency Prohibition Orders, 1 Prohibition Order and 5 Civil Penalty Notices. This reactive enforcement work is being carried out in conjunction with programmed inspection work of Licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation, of which there are 89 in the district. The service is operating within the parameters of the budget, with any additional income looking to be reinvested within the service. Over the coming months the team will be bringing forward a number of policies for consideration, including; Housing Standards Enforcement (within the private sector), Empty Homes and Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation.

Homelessness

The Homelessness Service is pleased to report significant progress in both the financial management of temporary accommodation and initiatives to house Rough Sleepers. Through disciplined budget control and strategic resource allocation, we have maintained financial stability while delivering impactful services. Notably, our efforts to support vulnerable populations have led to the successful placement of a substantial number of rough sleepers into interim accommodation and away from key town centre locations. This achievement reflects our commitment to inclusivity and demonstrates the effectiveness of our collaborative approach with local agencies and community partners. We are now striving to ensure we can find these individuals the correct housing placements to stop this cycle.

Developments across the Housing Landlord Services

Since the last Council meeting, the following key developments have taken place across Housing Landlord Services:

- A programmed inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing has been concluded. While the grading outcome is still pending at the time of writing, it is expected to be published by the end of July. Once received, the findings will be shared with Members and tenants.
- Cabinet has adopted a new Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Framework aimed at improving case management through early intervention, enhanced support for victims, and appropriate enforcement measures.
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) have been scrutinised by the Performance Monitoring Panel and submitted to the Regulator of Social Housing. These will be published online and included in the annual report later this summer for tenant review.

- A consultation on disabled aids and adaptations is underway, involving both tenants and Members to ensure inclusive feedback. An All-Member briefing on the outcome of consultation is planned for 28 July.
- Preparations are underway to meet the requirements of new legislation related to repairs and the response to damp, condensation, and mould—commonly referred to as Awaab’s Law—which comes into effect in October 2025.
- The Tenant Engagement and Influence Strategy 2025–2027 has been adopted, and a new Tenant Forum has been launched. A series of events are planned across the district to encourage tenant involvement in shaping and improving housing services.
- A draft of the 2025/26 Housing Transformation Programme has been prepared for adoption by the Transformation Board, under the sponsorship of the Director of Communities. (Note adoption was postponed due to the regulatory inspection).
- Finally, ongoing financial modelling of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is supporting the development of a new HRA Business Plan and Asset Management Strategy. All Member briefings are scheduled for September.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection – Councillor Anthony Casson

Within the South Holland District, we currently have 19 CCTV locations within Spalding, 3 in Crowland and 4 in Holbeach. They are monitored by a control room at Boston Borough Council. Earlier this year a visit was offered to all Members to visit the monitoring suite to see how the CCTV is monitored and to ask any questions. Members were briefed on the work of the operators and the range of work that CCTV is involved with from crimes to assisting with missing persons. The quality of the images was seen by Members which assist with evidence packs provided to Lincolnshire Police. Within Spalding centre, we continue to have a Safer Streets zone which can be seen by the public through green signs within the area. The streets that are included are the main routes to and from pubs/bars and transport facilities, enabling both visitors and residents to feel safe as they travel around the town centre.

The Community Safety Team worked closely with the Homelessness Team following reports of anti-social behaviour incidents in Abbey Passage involving a group of homeless males. The area where the homeless individuals were sleeping, was in fact private and the Community Safety Team worked with the owner of Hills to discuss the steps required to move the homeless individuals from the land. Warnings were issued by the Community Safety team to those individuals identified as causing anti-social behaviour, including those that had been seen urinating or defecating in the area.

Air Quality Management – Annual Status Report

The Council has a duty to provide an Annual Status Report (ASR) each year to DEFRA, in connection with its local air quality management duty. This year’s report, covering the year 2024/5, has been submitted to DEFRA within the deadline and with sign-off from the Director of Public Health at Lincs County Council. The ASR follows a standard format and includes details of monitoring undertaken including results, compliance with national air quality objectives, details of large developments that might adversely affect local air quality, schemes that might positively affect local air

quality and plans to improve air quality. DEFRA will review the ASR and will normally approve it within a few weeks, with or without comments.

Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy

The Council, as Licensing Authority, has a legal duty to maintain a Statement of Licensing Policy and review it every five years. The current Statement runs until the end of December 2025 and the review process is underway in respect of the draft Statement for 2026 – 2030. A draft revised Statement was considered by the Committee of the Licensing Authority (CoLA) on 22nd May 2025 and was further considered by Policy Development Panel on 24th June 2025. A public consultation process was started on 27th May 2025 which runs to 27th July. Once the consultation is completed, the draft Statement will be amended as necessary before going back to the CoLA in September and then to full Council as the approval body in October. Whilst the bulk of the draft Statement remains broadly the same as the current version, the main revisions include new sections relating to Adult Safeguarding, Child Safeguarding, Counterterrorism, and the Public Space Protection Order, all of which support the licensing objectives set out in the Act.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, Conservation and Heritage – Councillor Elizabeth Sneath

Age Friendly Communities

Last year I supported SHDC becoming a member of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities to ensure we are an 'Age Friendly Community' where people of all ages can live healthy and active later lives. We want to support residents to stay living in their own homes, participate in the activities they value and contribute to their communities for as long as possible. An Age Friendly Community is a place where people can age well and live a fulfilling later life.

On the 11th June SHDC hosted three well supported 'Age Friendly' events in various locations around the District. People attending these events were able to discuss their issues and needs with professionals and get advice and support to enable them to live as well as they can as they age. Support was offered by Age Uk Digital Champions, Home Energy Advisors, Citizens Advice, Lincs Fire and Rescue, neighbourhood nurses, Age Uk, Bro Pro, YMCA and other groups.

Household Support Fund

We have been offered nearly £400,000 by the Government to deliver the Household Support fund to residents in need in South Holland. This will run from April 2024 to 31st March 2026. The primary objective is the provision of crisis support for the cost of household essentials (food and utilities). This year's funding also includes a 'prevention' strand to provide support which can have a longer term, sustainable impact. There will be digital inclusion drop-ins and help for people to maximise and manage household budgets. The Fund is intended to support a wide range of low-income households. It is not limited to those in receipt of benefits or intended to be focused on one specific vulnerable group.

Heritage

It is good to see the damaged wall of Spalding Cemetery being repaired and rebuilt using a mix of the original bricks and some carefully sourced reclaimed bricks.

The Lutyens Memorial renovation in Ayscoughfee Gardens is coming on well with some very experienced and talented heritage craftsmen and our dedicated officers all working hard to restore it to its former glory.

One of our Council officers opens a recent report to me by describing it as 'Our beloved Lutyens' and he is right to do so. We are perhaps all a little too used to seeing it sitting looking serenely beautiful at the top of the canal as it has done for so long without fully appreciating its deep national and international significance. In recent years repairs were done as and when the Council could afford to do so but now, we can undertake this major and thorough restoration which will ensure it stands for many more years as a proud memorial to those from Spalding who fell in the Great War 1914 - 1918.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Community Development – Councillor Gary Taylor

Volunteer Scheme

The Communities Team continues to work with a number of departments to develop Volunteering opportunities, these include:

- Good Homes Lincs volunteers (a partnership between Lincolnshire Councils to support people to stay safe, warm and well at home) – handyperson within the Spalding area, the Communities Team is currently following up on a number of expressions of interest.
- Supporting the South Holland Centre with advice on volunteering issues and recruitment, and have been in attendance at Long Sutton Community Market Event in recent weeks.
- Expanding the Ageing Well Ambassador scheme into South Holland.
- Recruitment and support continues for those who wish to pick litter within the community.

The Communities Team continues to have a presence at Spalding Market once a month to advertise opportunities, although take up has been slow, there have been some useful connections made, the Communities Team Leader will be in the market on the 22nd July. Attendance at various other open days including plans to attend Love Parks event at Deeping St Nicholas and Pinchbeck in July and InspireU Careers Day in Spalding.

Crowdfunding Scheme

The scheme has now supported 10 projects totalling £105,000 of which £59,000 was raised via the 'Crowd'. The Spring window is now open and we currently have 6 crowdfunding projects, 3 of which are in the South Holland Area.

Community Lottery

The scheme continues to raise funds for local good causes within the area. With 97 live causes and over 1600 tickets sold weekly. The total to good causes is over £83,000 since the start of the scheme.

Communities Team Update

Spring into Spalding was another successful event for the town centre, along with Easter Bunny hunts in the towns of Crowland and Holbeach for the Half term school holidays.

Mental Health Awareness week saw over 30 participants take part in a free Tai Chi class in the grounds of Ayscoughfee Gardens, promoting the site along with increasing social connectedness and physical activity. The team also ran a weeklong social media campaign to highlight mental health provision in the district.

The team supported on the launch of the South Holland Age Friendly pledge with 2 events taking place at Sheltered Housing settings in Fleet Hargate and St Matthews in Sutton Bridge. The Age without Limits events brought laughter and fun to the residents, learning new skills and connecting with other residents.

Tydd St Mary community enjoyed an activity day in the May half term including climbing wall, cookery, arts and crafts and lots of sports and garden games. Live and Local is continuing to bring Theatre, dance and music to some of our rural areas of the district. A yearly report will be available in September to highlight the impact these opportunities are having on our communities.

The team have been planning and delivering Veteran events including Armed Forces Day Parade and VJ Day celebrations taking place in August.

The team are collaborating with Ayscoughfee to bring Ayscoughfest this summer on Saturday 26th July. Communications have begun this week. More details can be found on the Council website.

The team have been working hard to collate information on local activities taking place over the school holidays. The online Summer Fun listings will launch next week, with all South Holland primary schools receiving a leaflet or digital leaflet to promote the website page. www.sholland.gov.uk/summerfun

Communities Team have a fun packed programme of activities over the Summer Holidays including Love Parks Week, taking place over the last week of July in Cowbit, Deeping St Nicholas, Pinchbeck and Sutton Bridge. These events promote our local green spaces and outdoor activities.

Give it a GO returns to Holbeach on Sunday 10th August with an array of local sports and community groups promoting healthy living in the district.

The team have been working with Lawn Tennis Association and On 2 Court to get the Park Tennis free sessions set up at Ayscoughfee. Park Activators are in place with training due to take place at the end of July. Ayscoughfee Park Tennis will launch in August with details and promotion to follow shortly.

Lastly, Socialise and Mobilise seated exercise sessions have been extended after an initial 6-week course at Trinity Court Sheltered housing in Crowland. A further 6 weeks have been part funded by the council to continue increasing our resident's mobility and general health and wellbeing.

Acronyms

IDB – Internal Drainage Board
UKSPF – UK Shared Prosperity Fund
LCF – Lincolnshire Community Foundation
LALC – Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils
BID – Business Improvement District
SHDC – South Holland District Council
LCVS – Lincolnshire Community Voluntary Service
LGR – Local Government Re-Organisation
NSIP – National Infrastructure Planning
EGL3 – Eastern Green Link 3
AV - Audiovisual
NPO – National Portfolio Organisation
VR – Virtual Reality
ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour
TSM – Tenant Satisfaction Measure
HRA – Housing Revenue Account
CCTV – Closed-Circuit Television
ASR – Annual Status Report
DEFRA – Department for Environment, Food & Cultural Affairs
CoLA – Committee of the Licensing Authority

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

None.

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author:	Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader cmorgan@sholland.gov.uk
Signed off by:	Councillor Nick Worth, Leader
Approved for publication:	Councillor Nick Worth, Leader

KEY DECISION PLAN

Issued – 11 July 2025

Representations in respect of all the matters shown should be sent in writing, at least one week before the date or period the decision is likely to be made, to:

Democratic Services, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2XE

Telephone: 01775 764451 Email: demservices@sholland.gov.uk

The Key Decision Plan shows all Key decisions that the Council is likely to make over the next **twelve months**

The Key Decision Plan is updated on a rolling basis and shows the decisions that will be considered and the date when the decision is expected to be made. In accordance with the Council's Constitution the DECISIONS detailed within this document, unless otherwise stated, come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of a 5 working day call-in period from the date of publication of any decision.

Key decisions are: "A decision which, in relation to an executive function, has a significant effect on communities in two or more Wards of the Council and / or is likely to result in the Authority incurring expenditure, generating income or making savings in any single financial year above the threshold of £75,000 in respect of revenue expenditure and £180,000 in respect of capital expenditure."

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION	OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><u>Leader (Councillor Charles Nicholas Worth)</u></p> <p>Destination Lincolnshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership Destination Management Plan and SELCP Destination Management Plan</p>	<p>Destination Lincolnshire are the defined Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for the Lincolnshire and Rutland areas. As part of this they have created a Plan to 2033 to promote and co-ordinate the Visitor Economy. This Plan will cover and impact the South Holland District Council area. In addition, a Destination Management Plan has been produced for the Partnership area. These two documents together form a suite to support the visitor economy in the Partnership area from the local to the sub-regional. It is therefore proposed that the LVEP Destination Management Plan should be acknowledged and agreed by the Council and the SELCP Destination Management Plan agreed by the Council.</p>		<p>Report and any relevant appendices</p>	<p>Cabinet 16 Sep 2025</p>	<p>Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development pranali.parikh@boston.gov.uk</p>

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION	OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><u>Portfolio Holder for Partnerships (Councillor Charles Nicholas Worth)</u></p> <p>Land in Holbeach</p>	<p>To consider a decision in respect of land in Holbeach</p>		<p>Report and any relevant appendices</p>	<p>Leader Before 1 Oct 2025</p>	<p>Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director - Strategic Growth and Development Matthew.Hogan@sholland.gov.uk</p>
<p><u>Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing, Conservation & Heritage (Councillor Elizabeth Jane Sneath)</u></p> <p>SELCP Safeguarding Policy</p>	<p>To agree a joint SELCP Safeguarding Policy in order to standardise the Partnership's approach to Safeguarding children and adults in the work we do.</p>		<p>Report and any relevant appendices</p>	<p>Cabinet 11 Nov 2025</p>	<p>David Postle, Wellbeing Service Manager & Deputy Strategic Safeguarding Lead David.Postle@e-lindsey.gov.uk</p>

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION	OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION
<u>Leader (Councillor Charles Nicholas Worth)</u> Local Government Re-organisation - Business Case to Government	To consider approving the Business Case to Government for Local Government Reorganisation in Greater Lincolnshire.		Report and any relevant appendices	Cabinet 11 Nov 2025	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate James.Gilbert@e-lindsey.gov.uk

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION	OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION
<p>Approval of the award and spend of funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund 25/26</p>	<p>Decision to allocate grant funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Rural Prosperity Fund for South Holland District, in line with the Programme's three core themes highlighted in the Prospectus (Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses, People and Skills). This item could cover multiple Key Decisions in relation to the above, for the period until the end date of the entire programme (end of March 2026)</p>	<p>Panel of relevant Officers in Economic Development, Portfolio Holder and where appropriate, Leader of the Council</p>	<p>Report and any relevant appendices</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance Before 31 Mar 2026</p>	<p>Saul Farrell, Senior Programme Manager - Local Growth and Grant Funding Saul.Farrell@sholland.gov.uk</p>

***Cabinet Membership**

Councillor C N Worth (Leader)
Councillor P Redgate (Deputy Leader)
Councillor J Astill (Portfolio Holder)
Councillor H Bingham (Portfolio Holder)
Councillor T Carter (Portfolio Holder)
Councillor A Casson (Portfolio Holder)
Councillor E Sneath (Portfolio Holder)
Councillor G J Taylor (Portfolio Holder)

If you have any comments or queries regarding any of the entries in the Key Decision Plan please contact:

Democratic Services, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2XE
Telephone: 01775 764451 Email: demservices@sholland.gov.uk



Report To:	South Holland District Council
Date:	Wednesday, 23 July 2025
Subject:	Report from Cabinet meeting on 26 June 2025
Purpose:	To consider recommendations of the Cabinet in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waste Services Delivery Model
Key Decision:	N/A
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services
Report Of:	Jason King, Director of Communities
Report Author:	Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report provides Members of the Council with details on issues considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 26 June 2025, which require decisions by Full Council. Relevant extracts from the Cabinet minute are detailed at Section 2 below, and the relevant Cabinet report and appendices are attached as appendices to this report.

Recommendations

That as recommended from Cabinet to Full Council:

1. That Council approves drawing forward £3.150m from the Capital Programme allocation for 2028/29 and 2030/31 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.
2. That Council approves rephasing of £0.735m in the Capital Programme allocations for Food Waste for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles.

3. That Council approves rephasing of £0.225m in the Capital Programme allocations for refuse and recycling vehicles for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing new refuse collection vehicles.
4. That Council approves an addition of £3.771m to the Capital Programme in 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.

Reasons for Recommendations

The reasons for recommendation are detailed within the individual report attached and are summarised in the relevant Cabinet minute below.

Other Options Considered

Other Options considered are detailed within the individual report attached and are summarised in the relevant Cabinet minute below.

1. Background

1.1. Article 4 of the Council's Constitution provides that only the full Council may exercise the functions of approving, adopting or amending the policy framework and budget, adopting or changing the Constitution. Staffing matters are also a Council function. The Cabinet however has responsibility for advising the Council on such matters. At its meeting on 26 June 2025, the Cabinet made recommendations to Council in respect of the above item which may affect budget and policy framework, constitution or compromise staffing issues.

1.2. The remainder of this report details the recommendations of the Cabinet which must be read in conjunction with the individual report to Cabinet, a copy of which is attached as appendices.

2. Waste services delivery model (Report submitted to Cabinet – Agenda item 3 attached)

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Communities which sought approval of changes to the delivery model for waste services across the district.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services presented the report:

- Acknowledged that this would likely be most significant change to this Authority during its 51-year lifetime.
- Addressed the consultation, not a vote or referendum, that took place in 2024, which covered a wide range of issues on the future of waste collection across South Holland:

- 51% stated that they preferred sacks over 49% preferring wheeled bins.
 - 52% agreed with a commitment to collect food waste every week, an alternate weekly rubbish and recycling service and collecting no extra waste while 48% did not agree.
 - 79% agreed that increasing the type and amount of recycling was important to them versus 21% who stated that this was not important to them.
 - 52% agreed that an improved service and food waste collected every week would encourage them to recycle more, versus 48% who did not agree.
- The Environment Act 2021 introduced a waste reform programme across England with simpler recycling a central pillar to this. This required collections to separate paper and card from other recyclables along with a weekly food waste collection. The new Extended Producer Responsibility for producers to improve recyclability of their packages would provide funding to authorities but this would be reduced if recycling performance fell below an as yet undetermined level.
 - Thirteen options had originally been considered but this needed to be reduced. All options that did not meet legislative requirements had been subsequently discounted, along with those that would have created a complex collection regime, leaving three viable options to be considered by Cabinet:
 - Option C – this had been discounted due to the need to run additional vehicles within the fleet.
 - Option A – this had been the original preferred option, with 180l bins. However, following member feedback, the 180l bin was deemed to be insufficient for residents given the current waste collection service allowed for unlimited waste.
 - Option B – this was the preferred option, providing 240l bins. It is projected to deliver an average saving of £514k saving compared to the projected average cost of the current service but required an additional £189.5k capital and £20.5k revenue budget in comparison to option A.
 - Option B provided an invest to save opportunity and would create benefits:
 - Required fewer vehicles and provided capacity for future housing development.
 - Positive impact on the amount and quality of recycling.
 - Positive impact on health and wellbeing of the workforce.
 - More reliable collection regime
 - Positive impact on climate change and environment.
 - Suitability assessments would be required for properties that may not be suitable for wheeled bins and would need to remain on a bagged collection.
 - A project board would have oversight of the delivery of the new wheeled bin collection service, along with policies being considered by Policy Development Panel before formal approval.
 - Assured residents and the Cabinet that all feedback had been considered, including that from the consultation, and believed that the recommendations put forward would enable the Council to deliver a service to residents that was effective, efficient, and meet the legislative requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

Consideration was given to the report and the following issues were raised:

- Concern that the Cabinet were making the decision on the future of the waste collection service rather than Full Council. It appeared that the feedback residents had given as part of the survey and their preference for bags had been ignored. The amount of recycling would not increase as once the 240l bin was full, residents may place their recycling into the general waste bin that would be collected sooner.
 - The Leader explained that under the constitution, this was an executive decision and therefore dictated that Cabinet had to make the decision, while Full Council approved the budget for the changes to the service.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services had provided the member concerned with a written response detailing the legislation for executive decisions. He explained that there would be an alternate weekly rubbish and recycling collection, as outlined within the report. The size of the proposed bins had been increased following member feedback to accommodate more household recycling.
 - The Portfolio Holder accepted that this was a significant change for residents and two engagement officers would be in place to work and assist residents during the transition.
 - He commented that the current co-mingling of recycling contaminated paper and card and therefore this needed to be collected separately to other dry mixed recycling.

- Would there be a policy regarding side waste? There was concern that an increase in fly tipping could occur if no policy was in place.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services explained that no policy was in place under the current waste service and residents could put out unlimited waste for collection.
 - As part of the service reform, there would be a recommendation for no side waste separate to what fitted in the wheeled bin. This policy, when formulated, would be considered by the Policy Development Panel before formal adoption.

- Where wheeled bins were deemed unsuitable for a property and it was appropriate for them to continue with a bagged collection, how many bags of waste would they be allowed to put out? Would bags be left behind if this limit was exceeded?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that the mechanics of how this would work in practice would be included in detail within a policy but commented that it would be very difficult to restrict the number of bags put out and collected, with consideration being needed as to how this would be policed.
 - The Head of Environmental Services explained that the default position would be that a 240l wheeled bin held on average four to five bags, but this detail would be included within a policy that would be considered by Policy Development Panel before formal adoption. He added that engagement with residents on this aspect was important to allow understanding of how many bags could be put out for collection.

- With the movement to a fortnightly collection, where would residents be expected to store bags if they don't have bins.

- The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services accepted that this was a concern but stressed that bagged collections would only apply to a small number of properties.
 - Engagement with ward members was a key part of the planning process to identify properties that may not be suitable for wheeled bins.
- Would changing the collection service to wheeled bins make the service more reliable and would those remaining on bags still receive a reliable service?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that the current waste collection service having an unlimited waste strategy puts pressure on the rounds and can lead to additional crews needing to be put out to cover rounds that couldn't be completed the previous day. The introduction of wheeled bins and a policy of no side waste would make the collection service more reliable as the amount of waste collected on each round could be controlled.
 - Residents remaining on the bagged collection system would remain on the same collection regime which would benefit from the same reliable service as those with wheeled bins.
- While there was a personal preference for bags, there was confidence that the team involved had explored all possible avenues and that a move to a wheeled bin collection service was the best decision. Could reassurance be provided that ward members would be listened to when presenting properties that may not be suitable for wheeled bins.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that ward member views were important, and their knowledge of their ward would be respected.
 - There was also the opportunity for members to input into the mechanics and policies of the new collection service and its implementation through scrutiny.
- It was noted that the food waste collection would not be in place for 1 April 2026, what were the timescales for implementation of the wheeled bin collection?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services confirmed that no dates were in place yet and this was subject to approval at Full Council of the budget. He added that there was a long lead time on vehicles, and this dictated when the new collection system would be implemented.
- Concern for residents with long drives who may be unable to move the wheeled bin to the designated collection place, would this be considered as part of the criteria to remain on a bagged collection?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that the criteria would be considered carefully. He suggested that bins could be left at the edge of a property and bags be put in the back of the car to put in the bin.
 - The Head of Environmental Services said that the current policy was to not enter private drives due to the risk of damage to property from vehicles. Assisted collections could be requested by residents if they were unable to move the wheeled bin independently.
- This was a challenging decision for the authority to make, if no changes were made to the service would there be repercussions for the Council?

- The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that the Environment Act 2021 was quite clear in its expectations and set out separate recycling collections, with a requirement for a separate food waste collection service.
 - If the Council chose to do nothing, there was a risk that the Government would come in to decide what the collection service should be.
 - There was also a risk that non-compliance would cause Extended Producer Responsibility funding provided by the Government to be lost.
- While welcoming some elements of the report, particularly in relation to food waste changes, feedback from residents had shown that the majority did not support wheeled bins and did not have the facility to store these on their property. Concern was raised about the early presentation of bins and the impact of this on the street scene, would the proposed engagement officers be working to encourage residents against early presentation and storing bins at the front of their property.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that the street scene was important and there was a need to have rigorous enforcement against early presentation and taking in of bins. This needed to be clear within the policies and amendments to the Council's enforcement policy may be required to assist with this.
- Would street bins be emptied at the same time as residential bin collections? Would there be a policy for how litter pickers could present their waste?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services clarified that residential waste was collected separately from street bins and litter picker waste in different vehicles.
- What were the timescales for implementation of the wheeled bin collection service and was April 2027 a reasonable target date for this?
 - The Head of Environmental Services explained that a project board would be in place to oversee and decide the mobilisation plan. Typically, the transition period for Councils who have transferred from a bagged collection to a wheeled bin service has been 12 to 18 months. Vehicle delivery was the biggest driver for a mobilisation plan, and this had not yet been established.
 - The Leader commented that the date of implementation was really dependent on vehicle delivery, but 18 months seemed a reasonable timeframe. This time period would be used to carry out public education and inspections of properties requiring a bagged collection.
- There was concern among rural ward members that increased fly tipping could occur with the implementation of wheeled bins. Could some of the additional officer resource identified within the report be dedicated to enforcement, outside of the work already undertaken within the Kingdom contract?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that there was not necessarily a correlation between increased fly tipping and the introduction of wheeled bins.
 - The engagement officers would be funded by a specific resource for the life of the project. If the move to a wheeled bin collection service were approved, there would be a projected £540k saving in current Medium Term Financial

Strategy and it would be for the Cabinet to decide how that saving would be invested elsewhere.

- It was a huge ask of our residents to change to a wheeled bin collection but all policies relating to the new collection system would be heavily scrutinised by Policy Development Panel. The new food waste caddies would remove the issue of ripped bags, but concerns were raised about bins being emptied and becoming hazards in windy conditions, additional waste not in a bin being left behind, communal collection points and identification of which bin belongs to which property.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that these were all points that needed to be considered going forward and suggested that bins could be identified with stickers or by painting numbers on. The Environment Act 2021 did dictate changes that needed to be made but without this Act changes to the service would still need to be made as it was clear the current service was inefficient.
 - The Head of Environmental Services commented that different size containers could be provided in communal collection points that would be shared by residents. In relation to wind speed, where this was high on a collection day, crews would be asked to lay the bin down following collection to prevent them becoming hazards.

- Residents were concerned about the details of the new collection service and how it would impact their lives, therefore communication with residents about the collection changes was paramount. As the cost to purchase the new wheeled bins was very high, why did the Council need to make the change now, could it have waited until we were forced to change?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that changing the collection service at this point provided a saving to the Council and provided an efficient and effective service for residents.

- How would biodegradable bags for food caddies be delivered?
 - The Head of Environmental Services stated that the Lincolnshire model for caddy liners was that Councils would provide liners with the caddies when delivered to the property. After this residents would be required to buy their own bags.

- Did the Environment Act 2021 force the Council to move to a wheeled bin collection service, it appeared only to mandate a food waste collection service. Would there be provision to have smaller bins for residents who didn't require a 240l bin?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded the increase in bin size from 180l to 240l was based on member feedback. There would be operational issues with having different sized bins, but assisted collection was available for those who are unable to manoeuvre the bigger bins.
 - In respect of the Environment Act 2021, our interpretation was that the proposed wheeled bin service would produce the most effective service, as required under the Act.

- What was the timeframe for procurement of the food waste caddies?

- The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services stated that there was a 30 to 40 week lead in time for vehicles which would drive the roll out of food waste caddies.
 - The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that the vehicles were on a Lincolnshire Framework agreement and therefore no procurement exercise was required.
- It was important to highlight that the move to a wheeled bin collection service would lead to improvements in staff wellbeing, given that manual handling and bin bags were a big concern.
 - The Head of Environmental Services explained that work related accidents were high and attributable to the way the bagged collection was carried out, with 4.1m collections a year all done through a physical manual handling process. Under the current service, there was no way to manage manual handling risks and the ability to do this significantly improved when using wheeled bins. The improvement to workplace safety would be significant under the new collection service.
- Members thanked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services and his team for pulling the report together. The biggest concern related to how the process of resident communication about the change to the waste collection system and areas where there would still be a bagged collection due to unsuitability for wheeled bins.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that member feedback was important and had led to a change in the preferred option to be recommended for approval. It was inevitable that a bagged collection would need to remain in place for properties that are unsuitable for wheeled bins, such as terraced properties.

DECISION:

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves Option B as presented within the report as the preferred delivery model for collecting waste and recycling from households.
2. Approves the placing of an order for food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins in 2025/26, subject to the budget being confirmed.

Recommendations to Council from Cabinet:

3. That Council approves drawing forward £3.150m from the Capital Programme allocation for 2028/29 and 2030/31 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.
4. That Council approves rephasing of £0.735m in the Capital Programme allocations for Food Waste for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles.

5. That Council approves rephasing of £0.225m in the Capital Programme allocations for refuse and recycling vehicles for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing new refuse collection vehicles.
6. That Council approves an addition of £3.771m to the Capital Programme in 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.

(Other options considered:

- *Option A – This delivery model follows the same principles as Option B, with the exception of a 180l bin for residual waste. The provision of a smaller residual waste bin was considered too restrictive following Member feedback. Residents will be transitioning from unlimited weekly collections under the current delivery model and it is considered that a 240l bin will provide greater capacity for residents to manage and adjust to the change. Option A would require £189,450 less of capital investment compared to Option B. There would also be a further revenue saving of £20,500pa achievable under Option A.*
- *Option C – This option has been discounted due to the requirement to run additional fleet to enable a full round sack collection to continue. It is also considered that asking households to retain dry mixed recycling for 4 weeks in sacks is unlikely to improve recycling rates.*
- *Wider options analysis – A number of models for service delivery have been reviewed and discounted for not meeting the statutory and legislative requirements and for the financial costs.*
- *Do nothing – this is not an option as the introduction of separate weekly food waste collections is a statutory requirement, and the cost of the current service is financially unsustainable.*

Reasons for decision:

- *Enables the Council to meet the legal obligation placed on local authorities to provide a separate weekly food waste collection.*
- *Enables the Council to meet the legal obligations placed on local authorities to provide an effective and efficient waste management service.*
- *Provides the most cost-effective option based on future annualised modelled costs.*
- *Ensures the Council is in the best position to transition.*

Makes use of capital already allocated in the agreed Capital Programme for waste fleet renewal in 2027/28-2030/31.)

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1	Cabinet Agenda Item 3 – Waste services delivery model (covering report)
Appendix 2	Cabinet Agenda Item 3 – Waste services delivery model (Appendix A to original Cabinet report)
Appendix 3	Cabinet Agenda Item 3 – Waste services delivery model (Appendix B to original Cabinet report)

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

Name of Body

Date

Cabinet

26 June 2025

Report Approval

Report author:

Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader
cmorgan@sholland.gov.uk

Signed off by:

The individual report has previously been signed off by the relevant Director and Portfolio Holder

Approved for publication:

As above



Report To:	Cabinet
Date:	26 June 2025
Subject:	Waste collections delivery model
Purpose:	To approve changes to the delivery model for waste services across the district
Key Decision:	Yes
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Jim Astill – Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services
Report Of:	Jason King, Director of Communities
Report Author:	Victoria Burgess, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

The recent legislative changes for the collection of waste have changed the operating environment nationally, driving a need for the Council to review its approach to the future provision of its waste service.

Agreed key principles have been applied to a number of collection models, resulting in a preferred model for collecting waste and recycling in wheeled bins, supported by the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership councils, and providing a sustainable collection service, producing carbon benefits, and also providing a cost saving to the Council.

The Cabinet is being asked to support the recommendations to introduce this new waste collection delivery model, having considered a number of options, to ensure the service meets its statutory requirements, and future changes to local government.

The Cabinet is also being asked to recommend amendments to the Capital Programme for Council approval in July.

Additional officer resource will be introduced to support residents during the roll out of the service, including where to present receptacles, what to put in the bins, and providing information on food waste, waste minimisation and recycling.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves Option B as presented within this report as the preferred delivery model for collecting waste and recycling from households.
2. Approves the placing of an order for food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins in 2025/26, subject to the budget being confirmed.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL FROM CABINET:

3. That Council approves drawing forward £3.150m from the Capital Programme allocation for 2028/29 and 2030/31 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.
4. That Council approves rephasing of £0.735m in the Capital Programme allocations for Food Waste for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles.
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6. That Council approves an addition of £3.771m to the Capital Programme in 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.

Reasons for Recommendations

Enables the Council to meet the legal obligation placed on local authorities to provide a separate weekly food waste collection.

Enables the Council to meet the legal obligations placed on local authorities to provide an effective and efficient waste management service.

Provides the most cost-effective option based on future annualised modelled costs.

Ensures the Council is in the best position to transition.

Makes use of capital already allocated in the agreed Capital Programme for waste fleet renewal in 2027/28-2030/31.

Other Options Considered

Option A – This delivery model follows the same principles as Option B, with the exception of a 180l bin for residual waste. The provision of a smaller residual waste bin was considered too restrictive following Member feedback. Residents will be transitioning from unlimited weekly collections under the current delivery model and it is considered that a 240l bin will provide greater capacity for residents to manage and adjust to the change. Option A would require £189,450 less of capital investment compared to Option B. There would also be a further revenue saving of £20,500pa achievable under Option A.

Option C- This option has been discounted due to the requirement to run additional fleet to enable a full round sack collection to continue. It is also considered that asking households to retain dry mixed recycling for 4 weeks in sacks is unlikely to improve recycling rates.

Wider options analysis - A number of models for service delivery have been reviewed and discounted for not meeting the statutory and legislative requirements and for the financial costs.

Do nothing – this is not an option as the introduction of separate weekly food waste collections is a statutory requirement, and the cost of the current service is financially unsustainable.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Environment Act 2021 introduced the Waste Reforms Programme for England, which affects councils' waste collection and disposal arrangements. A central pillar of these reforms is 'Simpler Recycling' which provides a default requirement for kerbside collections to collect paper and card separately from other recyclables. Simpler Recycling also requires local authorities to provide a separate weekly food waste collection to all households from April 2026. There is also a requirement for obligated businesses and non-domestic premises to follow the Simpler Recycling requirements from April 2025.
- 1.2 The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024, known as Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (EPR) is intended to incentivise producers to improve the recyclability of their packaging and also to reduce unnecessary packaging. The Regulations require producers to pay the full net cost of managing their packaging waste. Payments will be received by local authorities, based on efficient and effective waste and recycling services.
- 1.3 In February 2025, the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution wrote to all council leaders in two-tier areas and small neighbouring unitary authorities to invite them to develop unitary proposals. Effective management of municipal waste requires close collaboration between the County Council as Waste Disposal Authority and District Councils as Waste Collection Authorities.
- 1.4 These changes to both the statutory demands placed upon the Council, and the local government landscape have necessitated changes to the way the Council currently delivers its waste and recycling collection service.

2. Report

Simpler Recycling

- 2.1 The current collection service of enabling unlimited sacks to be presented does not promote waste reduction or incentivise recycling. SHDC residents present the highest amount of waste per household at the kerbside in the County at 750kgs, compared to a county average of 550kgs in those councils providing separate paper and card and dry recycling collections in wheeled bins.
- 2.2 Paper and card cannot be collected in sacks due to the effect on its moisture content and difficulty in dealing with the single use plastic sacks at the paper mill. The recycling rate in SHDC remains at 31%, having not changed for over 10 years. The current service therefore does not meet the requirements of Simpler Recycling.

EPR

- 2.3 The recent 'Policy Statement on packaging Extended Producer Responsibility' published by Defra on 27 February 2025 sets out key policy measures for EPR packaging policy; the expectation being that an efficient waste management service is one where costs are as low as reasonably possible, and from 2028 the Scheme Administrator will assess how effective a local authority's waste management service is. Payments will be calculated and distributed according to this assessment of an efficient and effective service.
- 2.4 The current service provided does not support the requirements for an efficient or effective service. The service currently costs over £4m per year, against a backdrop of increased running costs and housing development. Allowing unlimited amounts of waste to be presented does not lead to better recycling, both quality and quantity. The recycling rate is low when compared with other authorities, and contamination within the recycling is high (20%) compared to the other districts in Lincolnshire providing a separate paper and card collection of less than 9%.

Position statement following consultation outcome published on 22 Oct 2024

- 2.5 Introducing wheeled bins, even though a slight majority of residents currently prefer sacks (51% to 49%), is a strategic move that aligns with the broader outcomes of the consultation where 52% supported alternate weekly rubbish and recycling collections and no extra waste. 52% of respondents also agreed that an improved service and weekly food waste collections would enable them to recycle more and 79% responded yes to recycling being important to them. Wheeled bins offer numerous advantages, including improved durability, ease of handling, and enhanced hygiene. Which can significantly reduce litter and pest issues. By adopting wheeled bins now, we can streamline the waste collection process, lower operational costs for both this council and Lincolnshire County Council, and provide a cleaner, safer environment for all residents. This forward-thinking approach will ultimately benefit the entire community.

Financial landscape

2.6 New Burdens funding is available in three pots to assist Local Authorities with the implementation of weekly food waste collections:

- *Capital New Burdens.* The Council has received £806,892 from Defra for the capital purchase of the additional vehicles and caddies required to provide a food waste collection.
- *Transitional New Burdens.* The Council has been allocated £286,141 from Defra for costs incurred in 2024/25 and 2025/26, to meet the transitional costs incurred in order to introduce the new food waste collection service such as procurement, project management, communications and engagement, route planning and container delivery.
- *Revenue New Burdens.* There is no further information regarding the amount the council can expect, however this funding will not be available to the Council until April 2026.
- *Capital movements.* There is an existing capital programme for the waste service which enables a replacement fleet programme to be financed. Recommendations within this report realign the capital programme to ensure that planned expenditure is aligned to the financial year where the cost will be incurred. Therefore, monies planned to be spent in future years are required to be brought forward, monies planned to be spent in the current financial year need to be realigned to the next financial year and additional financial expenditure requires budgets to be increased. The financing will be met through the application of grant monies together with planned borrowing which will be funded through adjustments to the revenue budget and MTFs.

Delivery Model

2.7 The Council has completed a thorough review to identify the most efficient and effective way of collecting waste, and to ensure a separate weekly food waste collection is provided.

2.8 Key principles were applied to a number of delivery models being reviewed. That the service should:

- Deliver an affordable solution, meeting statutory requirements.
- Support residents' priorities for increasing the type and amount of recycling.
- Improve quality of recycling through collecting paper and card separately to dry mixed recycling.
- Improve the quantity of recycling by limiting the amount of general waste presented.
- Be an accessible service, meeting the needs of current and future residents.
- Align to neighbouring LGR partner councils for a smooth transition for residents.
- Withstand future legislative changes and assimilate to a new authority model.

2.9 Having applied these principles, the preferred model for achieving an efficient and effective way of delivering the service is Option B, collecting residual waste in 240l wheeled bins on an alternate weekly basis, collecting recycling, and paper and card in separate 240l bins on an alternate fortnightly basis, and collecting food waste in a small 23l caddy on a weekly basis.

2.10 The modelling and assessment undertaken identifies that:

- The annualised cost on average over the current MTFS is £0.514m pa less than the projected cost of the current service on average of £5.217m, meeting the requirement for an efficient total waste management service.
- Fewer HGV vehicles are required compared to not changing the collection method, enabling capacity in the depot to accommodate future growth from new housing development across the district.
- The model supports the improvement in the quality of recycling collected and provides a sustainable solution to meet future legislative requirements such as recycling soft plastics, the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003 requirements.
- There is a positive impact on the health, safety and welfare of our collection crews. Currently sickness levels are the highest amongst similar services across the SELCP, and the council also has a higher number of health and safety incidents within this service area.
- The quality of service to residents is improved as there is less risk of missed collections as capacity on collection rounds increases.
- There will be a positive impact on the council's recycling rate, with an expectation of achieving an additional 10-12% on the current rate.
- There is positive impact on carbon emissions.

Project governance, communication and engagement

2.11 A project board will be established to oversee the implementation plan for South Holland. This will have oversight and involvement from the Portfolio Holder.

2.12 Wider member involvement will be achieved through: PDP having oversight of any policy changes and PMP having oversight of the implementation plan.

2.13 It is important that the service provides support to residents as the new service is introduced. Officers will use the New Burdens allocation to fund Engagement Officers on a temporary basis specifically to support residents during the roll out of the service, and to assess matters such as storage and practical presentation options for households.

3. Conclusion

3.1. Having completed an extensive modelling exercise to identify the best option for delivering the future legislative requirements for waste collection across South Holland, this report makes recommendations to introduce a new wheeled bin service, using capital allocated for fleet replacement in 2027/28, Defra capital grant funding for food waste, and additional capital funds to bring forward the fleet replacement programme to 2026/27. It also recommends capital funding to purchase the wheeled bins required. This model for delivery ensures that every property within the district is visited weekly to collect food waste and receives a separate paper and card collection to increase the quality and quantity of recyclables presented, by the most efficient means.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Introducing the new service recommended within this report, more closely aligns the operation of South Holland with Boston Borough Council and East Lindsey District Council.

Corporate Priorities

Implement the Environment Act 2021 and Extended Producer Responsibility as they come forward. A new wheeled bin service, controlling the amount of waste presented, improving the quality of recycling presented, and introducing a separate food waste collection, to ensure a more efficient and effective waste management service aligns with this priority.

Staffing

All staff will need to be trained on the new operations with wheeled bins, collection of food waste, and associated health, safety and welfare implications. The Employee Relations (ER) team in PSPS attend the Waste Improvement Programme Board and are aware of the staffing implications. The Health and Safety team in PSPS work closely with officers and attend the Lincolnshire-wide waste health and safety group meetings. Attendees of the SELCP Joint Consultative Committee will be regularly updated and informed of implications for Union members.

Workforce Capacity Implications

There are workforce capacity implications from the new service, as the service will need to ensure sufficient resource is in place to reduce the impact on residents as the service is rolled out. The ER team in PSPS attend the Waste Improvement Programme Board and are aware of the workforce capacity implications. Attendees of the SELCP Joint Consultative Committee will be regularly updated and informed of implications for Union members.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The Local Government Act 2000 and Local Authority (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) detail how the responsibility for functions in Councils operating Executive arrangements are to be split between the Executive and Non-Executive. Waste Collection Services are an Executive Function. Accordingly, the Cabinet is responsible for overseeing major policy changes to waste services and ensuring that services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution the proposed amendments to the Capital Programme to implement the changes to the waste collection delivery model are a decision for the Full Council.

The requirement to provide a weekly food waste collection service to every household will come into effect from 1 April 2026, as required under s45A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, introduced by the Environment Act 2021.

Under the principles of consultation members are required to approach consultation responses with a receptive mind and to give conscientious consideration to the outcome of consultations as part of their decision making. Elected officials and council officers are required to consider the

consultation outcomes against other factors, such as legislation, financial implications, and environmental impacts as part of the decision-making process.

Data Protection

None.

Financial

The current model, which allows for unlimited sack-based waste, is financially unsustainable and would require significant additional funding to meet statutory food waste collection requirements from April 2026. By transitioning to wheeled bins and optimising collection rounds, the Council ensures legislative compliance and mitigates future revenue pressures within the MTFS. The proposed changes are expected to achieve significant revenue savings. Savings will be achieved through the implementation of changes and therefore begin to be realised from 2026/27. However, the full benefits of the achievable savings will not be realised until all proposed changes have been fully implemented.

EPR should be considered as payments which will be distributed to local authorities for the efficient collection and disposal of household packaging waste. Therefore, providing a cost-effective total waste management service to residents that supports increased participation in all recycling streams may have a positive impact on future external funding. EPR should be considered as an option for resourcing the increase in revenue costs within the service throughout the MTFS with £1.231m due in 2025/26, and continuing receipts are expected. Currently the EPR funding does not have any commitments against it.

Risk Management

Funding – Notification of New Burdens revenue funding has not been provided by Defra. Once confirmation has been received the financial implications will be identified, discussed with the S151 Officer, and a further report provided for Cabinet should this be required.

Round review – The costs provided within this report are a result of the modelling exercise. Whilst actual financial information and tonnages have been provided for input into the modelling, the actual costs for budget setting purposes will not be known until a detailed round review has been undertaken.

Delivery timeframe – Changing a collection service takes careful planning and mobilisation to ensure residents are engaged with and supported, and vehicle order and delivery times may be extended due to the national requirement to introduce food waste collections by the target date for implementation of April 2026. Delivery dates will be monitored and any delay reported through the Waste Improvement Programme Board.

Defra's Waste Reforms Programme – There is a risk that separate weekly collections of food waste will be regarded by some members of the public as a costly initiative, increasing CO2e with more vehicles being used, resulting in less participation in our recycling collections. Clear communication and information regarding the benefits of the new service will lower this risk.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Cabinet briefings

Councillor briefing

Lincolnshire Waste Partnership (LWP)

As a member of the LWP, the Portfolio Holders have received updates regarding the requirement for Simpler Recycling and its impact on local authorities.

As a member of the LWP, and the countywide Senior Officer Working Group, Lincolnshire County Council as Waste Disposal Authority have had an active role in supporting the Waste Collection Authorities with their arrangements to deliver the food waste collection service. LCC has also invested in the Waste Transfer Station at Boston to ensure it can accommodate food waste.

A public consultation exercise was undertaken in 2024, for which the Council received an exceptional response. The consultation clearly defined resident's concerns and expectations from their waste service which have been taken account of when modelling options for a new service delivery model. Further details of this consultation are outlined in section 2.5 of this report.

Reputation

Failure to provide the service, or inaction, risks the Council's reputation as food waste collections are rolled out nationally.

Contracts

The service is working with the Contracts and Procurement Team to ensure that the necessary compliant contracts are in place to enable the purchase of vehicles and wheeled bins.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

An EQIA has been completed and is attached to this report at Appendix 2.

Health and Wellbeing

Changing the waste service as recommended will have positive impacts on the health, safety and welfare of employees.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

Over ten million tonnes of food is wasted every year in the UK. Separate collections of food waste from every household will prevent contamination of other waste which could be usefully recycled, as well as ensuring that food waste can be sent to anaerobic digestion facilities. Directing food waste

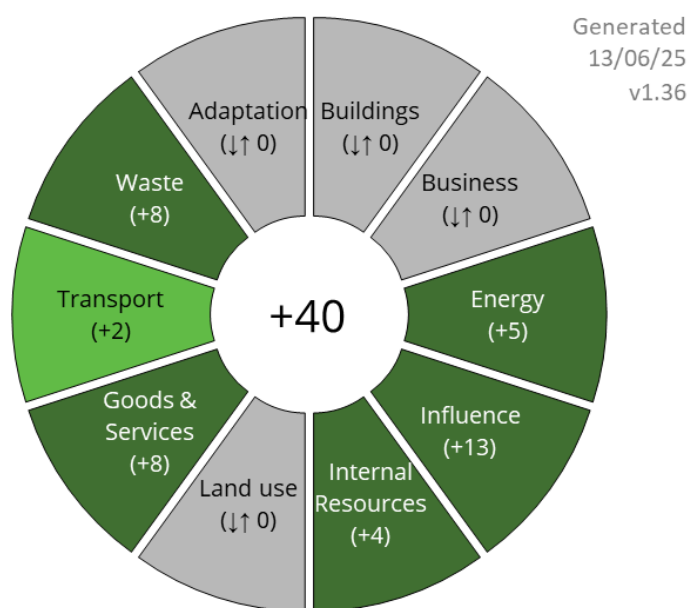
to these plants will generate more sustainable energy to power homes and businesses and cut down the more than 18 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions associated with this waste.

Lincolnshire County Council has secured disposal capacity for food waste collected within Lincolnshire via anaerobic facilities in Hemswell Cliff and March. LCC’s Environment team have used the Greenhouse Gas Emissions model for waste collection and disposal following the introduction of separate food waste collections across Lincolnshire. Results show that with the introduction of separate food waste collection and disposal there is an improvement in the overall CO₂e position with a reduction of 4,412 of CO₂e emissions per annum.

The SELCP’s Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment outcome is shown in Figure 1 below and gives a positive value of 40 This indicates that the estimated benefits of introducing the new service as recommended in this report outweighs the costs of doing so.

The infographic shows the relative costs and benefits of the decision on 10 different categories. With respect to the climate: Buildings, no net effect. Business, no net effect. Energy, plus 5. Influence, plus 13. Internal Resources, plus 4. Land use, no net effect. Goods & Services, plus 8. Transport, plus 2. Waste, plus 8. Adaptation, no net effect.

Figure 1: Assessment outcome



The Partnership has committed to being Net Zero by 2040 (14 years and 6 months away).

Acronyms

- WIPB - Waste Improvement Programme Board
- WRAP – The Waste and Resources Action Programme (a global environmental action NGO delivering programmes that reduce CO₂, waste, restore nature and change people’s behaviour)
- EPR – Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging waste
- Defra – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- LWP – Lincolnshire Waste Partnership

LCC – Lincolnshire County Council
CO₂e - Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
MTFS – Medium Term Financial Strategy
EQIA – Equality Impact Assessment
PDP – Policy Development Panel
PMP – Performance Monitoring Panel

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1- Assessment of delivery model for waste collections
Appendix 2- Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author:	Victoria Burgess, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods victoria.burgess@e-lindsey.gov.uk
Signed off by:	Jason King, Director of Communities jasonking@sholland.gov.uk
Approved for publication:	CLlr Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services jastill@sholland.gov.uk

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Appendix 1 – Assessment of delivery model for weekly food waste collections

Impacts	Option A – 180l bin for residual and 240l bin for mixed recycling and paper/card	Option B – 240l bin for residual, mixed recycling and paper/card	Option C – 180l bin for residual, 240l bin for paper/card and bags for dry mixed recycling
Financial (capital)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.793m capital required in 2026/27 to purchase food waste vehicles. • £2.963m capital required in 2026/27 for waste fleet renewal. • £3.936m allocation in capital programme for 2026/27 for bin purchases. • £0.675m allocation in capital programme between 2028/29 and 2029/30 for waste fleet renewal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.793m capital required in 2026/27 to purchase food waste vehicles. • £2.963m capital required in 2026/27 for waste fleet renewal. • £4.126m allocation in capital programme for 2026/27 for bin purchases. • £0.675m allocation in capital programme between 2028/29 and 2029/30 for waste fleet renewal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.793m capital required in 2026/27 to purchase food waste vehicles. • £2.963m capital required in 2026/27 for waste fleet renewal. • £2.561m allocation in capital programme for 2026/27 for bin purchases. • £0.675m allocation in capital programme between 2028/29 and 2029/30 for waste fleet renewal.
Financial (revenue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelled annualised costs are on average £4.68m pa through the MTFS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelled annualised costs are on average £4.70m pa through the MTFS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelled annualised costs are on average £4.70m pa through the MTFS.
Vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles updated to allow bin lifts, 14 vehicles required for residual, mixed recycling and garden waste. • Additional 7 x 7.5t food waste vehicles to be purchased for 2026/27. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles updated to allow bin lifts, 14 vehicles required for residual, mixed recycling and garden waste. • Additional 7 x 7.5t food waste vehicles to be purchased for 2026/27. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles updated to allow bin lifts, 14 vehicles required for residual, mixed recycling and garden waste. • Retention of open back vehicles. • Additional 7 x 7.5t food waste vehicles to be purchased for 2026/27.

Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caddy presented with waste/recycling bin. • Caddy potentially emptied at different day/times to wheeled bins • New rounds to be developed for all waste collections • Round changes required to waste collections resulting in some changes to current collection days for residents • Storage of new wheeled bins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caddy presented with waste/recycling bin. • Caddy potentially emptied at different day/times to wheeled bins • New rounds to be developed for all waste collections • Round changes required to waste collections resulting in some changes to current collection days for residents • Storage of new wheeled bins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caddy presented with waste/recycling bin. • Caddy potentially emptied at different day/times to wheeled bins • New rounds to be developed for all waste collections • Round changes required to waste collections resulting in some changes to current collection days for residents • Storage of new wheeled bins
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Equality Impact Assessment

Report title	EQIA for Waste Services Delivery Model (SHDC)
Completed by	Victoria Burgess
Approved by	Jason King
Date	13th June 2025/ 17th June 2025 (Review and approval.)

The following statements will help you decide whether an EIA is necessary:	Tick all that apply
Does it affect customers, colleagues or the wider community, and therefore potentially have an effect in terms of equality (for example, removing a service, workforce restructure, employment practices)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Could it result in a decision being made that would significantly affect how functions and services are delivered (for example, reducing a service or introducing a charge for a service)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does it relate to a service that previous engagement has identified as being important to people	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does it, or could it in the future, affect different groups of people differently	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does it relate to a policy or service where there is significant potential for reducing inequalities or improving outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have there been, or are there likely to be, any public concerns about the policy or proposal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does it have an effect on how other organisations operate in terms of equality (i.e. commissioned services)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 3 Equality impacts

Briefly explain what the policy/service/project aims to achieve	The proposal is to change the current waste service at SHDC from a weekly unlimited collection of residual waste in sacks, to one where waste and recycling is required to be presented in wheeled bins.
Have you undertaken consultation or involved people who are most likely to be affected or interested? Please include: data or community feedback, gaps in data, and how you intend to fill these gaps (where possible)	Yes, but not on this specific change. The consultation was on the broader views of residents around preference for wheeled bins, a separate weekly food waste collection, and increasing recycling. Consultees were also asked for information on their housing type and demographic. They were also asked to provide any thoughts they had regarding the waste collection service provided by the Council. 88% of respondents lived in a semi-detached or detached, house or bungalow, and there were some comments showing concern regarding moving a wheeled bin.
Is there any evidence or research that demonstrates why some individuals or groups are, or are not, affected	All Councils that are Waste Collection Authorities have a statutory duty to provide a waste and recycling collection to all households unless the property is inaccessible. In discharging that duty, an assisted collection is offered to those residents that are unable to present their waste due to mobility.
What impacts are there for each of the following characteristics	
Characteristics	Positive and negative impact
Gender	Positive: None noted. Negative: None noted. Any mitigation required: N/A.
Age	Positive: Some residents with restricted mobility through age can cope better with a wheeled bin to contain their waste, and to pull it rather than lifting a sack. Negative: Some residents with restricted mobility through age will find a wheeled bin harder to move than lifting a sack.

	<p>Any mitigation required: All residents will be asked to make the Council aware of any mobility concerns and we will assess their needs accordingly to ensure that their waste and recycling is collected.</p>
Disability	<p>Positive: Some residents with restricted mobility through disability can cope better with a wheeled bin to contain their waste, and to pull it rather than lifting a sack. Communications materials will be provided in braille where requested.</p> <p>Negative: Some residents with restricted mobility through disability will find a wheeled bin harder to move than lifting a sack.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: All residents will be asked to make the Council aware of any mobility concerns, or disabilities, and we will assess their needs accordingly to ensure that their waste and recycling is collected.</p>
Race	<p>Positive:</p> <p>Negative:</p> <p>Any mitigation required: n/a</p>
Religion or belief	<p>Positive: None noted.</p> <p>Negative: None noted.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: N/A.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>Positive: None noted.</p> <p>Negative: None noted.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: N/A.</p>

Gender reassignment	<p>Positive: None noted.</p> <p>Negative: None noted.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: N/A.</p>
Pregnancy, maternity and paternity	<p>Positive: Policies will accommodate those households with greater capacity requirements for larger families or children with nappies.</p> <p>Negative: Households will be required to notify the Council, otherwise standards provisions will apply.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: All residents will be asked to make the council aware of any waste capacity concerns, and we will assess their needs accordingly to ensure that their waste and recycling is collected.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>Positive: None noted.</p> <p>Negative: None noted.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: N/A.</p>
Rural isolation	<p>Positive: None noted.</p> <p>Negative: None noted.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: N/A.</p>
Socio-economic factors	<p>Positive: None noted.</p> <p>Negative: None noted.</p>

	Any mitigation required: N/A.
Other <i>Residents for whom English is not their first language.</i>	<p>Positive: Communications materials will be illustrated wherever possible and will also be translated into the most common languages spoken in the district.</p> <p>Negative: None noted.</p> <p>Any mitigation required: Detailed Communications Plan to be developed to address issues identified.</p>
Overall, if there is a potential adverse impact after the mitigation, please state why and whether this is justifiable.	There may be some adverse impacts on the minority of residents, but the Council will work with these households to ensure they are able to take part in the Council's waste and recycling collection service and deliver its statutory duty.
How will you monitor this to ensure there is no adverse effect in the future?	Residents will be given the opportunity to inform the Council of any changes to their circumstances via the website and customer services.
Outcome of EIA:	There is some adverse impact on residents, however mitigation is in place to ensure that the service is accessible to them.

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Report To:	South Holland District Council
Date:	Wednesday, 23 July 2025
Subject:	Report from Cabinet meeting on 8 July 2025
Purpose:	To consider recommendations of the Cabinet in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2024/25 Draft Outturn Finance Update
Key Decision:	N/A
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Paul Redgate, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Report Of:	Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance (S151)
Report Author:	Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report provides Members of the Council with details on issues considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 8 July 2025, which require decisions by Full Council. Relevant extracts from the Cabinet minute are detailed at Section 2 below, and the relevant Cabinet report and appendices are attached as appendices to this report.

Recommendations

That as recommended from Cabinet to Council, the following be agreed:

- 1) To transfer part of the surplus (£217,000) to the General Fund Reserve.
- 2) The transfer of part of the surplus (£100,000) to be transferred into a Parish Councils Loan Reserve pending the drafting of the loan scheme by officers for Cabinet in due course.
- 3) The transfer of the HRA surplus (£13,000) to the HRA General Reserve.

- 4) The approval of the reserves transactions and balances as set out in Appendix A (to the Cabinet report) - Table 3 for 24/25.
- 5) The approval of the 2024/25 capital outturn position presented in Table 4a (of Appendix A to the Cabinet report).
- 6) The capital rephasing from 2024/25 to 2025/26 presented in Table 4c (of Appendix A to the Cabinet report).
- 7) The amendment to the Capital Programme at Appendix A (to the Cabinet report) – Table 5a to Table 5d considering the changes set out in the report.

Reasons for Recommendations

The reasons for recommendation are detailed within the individual report attached and are summarised in the relevant Cabinet minute below.

Other Options Considered

Other Options considered are detailed within the individual report attached and are summarised in the relevant Cabinet minute below.

1. Background

- 1.1. Article 4 of the Council's Constitution provides that only the full Council may exercise the functions of approving, adopting or amending the policy framework and budget, adopting or changing the Constitution. Staffing matters are also a Council function. The Cabinet however has responsibility for advising the Council on such matters. At its meeting on 8 July 2025, the Cabinet made recommendations to Council in respect of the above item which may affect budget and policy framework, constitution or compromise staffing issues.
- 1.2. The remainder of this report details the recommendations of the Cabinet which must be read in conjunction with the individual report to Cabinet, a copy of which is attached as appendices.

2. 2024/25 Draft Outturn Finance Update (Report submitted to Cabinet – Agenda item 11 attached)

Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Director of Finance (S151 Officer) which reported on the Council's Finances as at 31 March 2025.

The Portfolio Holder – Finance presented the report.

Throughout the year quarterly monitoring reports were completed forecasting the expected year end outturn compared to the approved budget. The report provided information on the draft outturn full year financial performance as at 31 March 2025.

General Fund Revenue

The provisional revenue outturn reported a surplus position of £317,000 at the year-end.

- The General Fund 2024/25 net budget for investment income was £1.033m. The draft outturn for investment income was £1.604m, which would be an overachievement of £571,000.
- For transparency, table 1b provided details of additions to the revenue budget as the year progressed through decision notices and delegated decisions.
- The 2024/25 budget included a savings efficiency target of £831,000, savings which were being tracked and could be found in table 1c. 62% of the target had been identified as at 31 March and the remaining £316,000 was still to be found

General Fund Capital

For General Fund Capital, Table 4a provided details of all capital schemes. The total General Fund Capital Programme for 2024/25 was £6.116m, actual capital expenditure for Q4 2024/25 was £4.829m an underspend of £1.287m. Capital Programme carry forwards to future years, amounting to £0.277m were noted including scheme details and their financing in Table 4c of Appendix A. Despite the delay in project delivery during 24/25, funding was being secured to fully deliver those schemes.

General Fund Reserves

Table 3 of Appendix A provided detail of the balances held in reserves at 31 March 2025 being £7.408m. The overall movement in reserve balances during the 2024/25 financial period was an increase £616,000 taking account of year end adjustments alongside those budgeted or previously approved by way of Proforma B that sought approval from either the S151 Officer or Executive Board.

HRA Revenue

Section 2.3 detailed the HRA revenue outturn which was a surplus of £13,000. This was due mainly to an underspend in Supervision and Management, and Repairs and Maintenance driven by cost efficiencies, delayed pressures and staff savings.

HRA Capital

For HRA Capital, Table 5a provided details of all capital schemes with the programme totalling £21.851m for 2024/25. HRA capital spend at the end of Quarter 4 was £14.816m against a full year budget post slippage of £16.111m. Various project schemes were to continue into 2025/26 when the expenditure would be incurred at project completion.

Treasury

Section 2.6 of Appendix A detailed the Council's treasury investments. The Council's cash continued to perform well with £571,000 achieved in excess of budget.

Consideration was given to the report and the following issues were raised:

- With regard to the General Fund and the disappointing capital underspend of circa 21% and the fact that the HRA compared to the original budget was down by a third – would budgeting have been made easier if there had been more honesty of what could be achieved in the first place?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Finance responded that there was value to this comment and that the Authority was probably now better than it had been for some time in the controlling of its budgets. This had been achieved through closer liaison with Portfolio Holders.
- The money set aside for the Parish Council Loan Reserve was raised and members received an explanation on why these monies had been set aside. Alongside the UKSPF, this should assist Parish Councils going forward.
- Members commented that the report was much easier to understand with the narrative alongside each section.

DECISION:

It is recommended that Cabinet

- 8) That Cabinet notes the General Fund draft outturn position for 2024/25 being an underspend of £317,000 as detailed in Table 1.
- 9) That Cabinet notes the HRA draft outturn position for 2024/25 being an underspend of £13,000 as detailed in Table 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET TO COUNCIL:

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the following recommendations for onward referral to Full Council:

- 10) That Cabinet approves and recommends to Full Council the transfer part of the surplus (£217,000) to the General Fund Reserve.
- 11) The Cabinet approves and recommends to Full Council the transfer of part of the surplus (£100,000) to be transferred into a Parish Councils Loan Reserve pending the drafting of the loan scheme by officers for Cabinet in due course.
- 12) That Cabinet approves and recommends to Full Council the transfer of the HRA surplus (£13,000) to the HRA General Reserve.
- 13) That Cabinet refers to Full Council to approve the reserves transactions and balances as set out in Appendix A - Table 3 for 24/25.

- 14) That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the approval of the 2024/25 capital outturn position presented in Table 4a
- 15) That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the capital rephasing from 2024/25 to 2025/26 presented in Table 4c.
- 16) That Cabinet recommends to Full Council to amend the Capital Programme at Appendix A – Table 5a to Table 5d considering the changes set out in this report.

(Other options considered:

- To not approve the financial movements outlined;*

Reasons for decision:

- To ensure the Council's draft outturn financial position for 2024/25 is considered and related decisions approved. It is important that the Cabinet are aware of the financial position of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account to ensure that they can make informed decisions that are affordable and financially sustainable for the Council.)*

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1	Cabinet Agenda Item 11 – 2024/25 Draft Outturn Finance Update (covering report)
Appendix 2	Cabinet Agenda Item 11 – 2024/25 Draft Outturn Finance Update (Appendix A to original covering report)

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

Name of Body	Date
Cabinet	8 July 2025

Report Approval

Report author:	Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader cmorgan@sholland.gov.uk
Signed off by:	The individual report has previously been signed off by the relevant Director and Portfolio Holder
Approved for publication:	As above.

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REPORT TO:	Cabinet
DATE:	8 th July 2025
SUBJECT:	2024/25 Draft Outturn Finance Update
PURPOSE:	To report on the Councils Finances as at the 31st March 2025
KEY DECISION:	<i>N/A</i>
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Redgate – Portfolio Holder for Finance
REPORT OF:	Brendan Arnold – Interim Director of Finance and S151 Officer
REPORT AUTHOR:	Rashpal Sohal, Interim Strategic Finance Manager, PSPS
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	<i>N/A</i>
EXEMPT REPORT	<i>No</i>

SUMMARY

This report sets out a summary of the current financial position for the Council at the year end of 2024/25 for members consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the General Fund draft outturn position for 2024/25 being an underspend of £317,000 as detailed in Table 1.
- 2) Notes the HRA draft outturn position for 2024/25 being an underspend of £13,000 as detailed in Table 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL FROM CABINET:

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the following recommendations for onward referral to Full Council:

- 3) That Cabinet approves and recommends to Full Council the transfer part of the surplus (£217,000) to the General Fund Reserve.

- 4) The Cabinet approves and recommends to Full Council the transfer of part of the surplus (£100,000) to be transferred into a Parish Councils Loan Reserve pending the drafting of the loan scheme by officers for Cabinet in due course.
- 5) That Cabinet approves and recommends to Full Council the transfer of the HRA surplus (£13,000) to the HRA General Reserve.
- 6) That Cabinet refers to Full Council to approve the reserves transactions and balances as set out in Appendix A - Table 3 for 24/25.
- 7) That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the approval of the 2024/25 capital outturn position presented in Table 4a
- 8) That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the capital rephasing from 2024/25 to 2025/26 presented in Table 4c.
- 9) That Cabinet recommends to Full Council to amend the Capital Programme at Appendix A – Table 5a to Table 5d considering the changes set out in this report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure the Council's draft outturn financial position for 2024/25 is considered and related decisions approved. It is important that the Cabinet are aware of the financial position of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account to ensure that they can make informed decisions that are affordable and financially sustainable for the Council.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

To not approve the financial movements outlined.

REPORT

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Appendix A provides information on the full year financial performance as at 31 March 2025 for the following areas:

- The General Fund Revenue Budget,
- The General Fund Reserves Position,
- The Capital Programme for 2024/25,
- The HRA Revenue Budget,
- The HRA Reserves Position,
- The HRA Capital Programme for 2024/25, and
- The Treasury Management Performance for the year.

General Fund Revenue Provision Outturn

1.2 At the 31 March 2025, the general fund draft outturn position was an underspend of £317,000 and it is recommended that this is transferred to the Investment and Growth Reserve. Budget pressures experienced by the services, largely a result of the inflationary environment and outstanding efficiencies targets, were offset by additional investment income earned due to high interest rates. The outturn position by Assistant Director/Corporate Finance areas is detailed at Appendix A - Table 1 together with an analysis of variations.

Savings Target – General Fund

- 1.3 An efficiency target of £831,000 is included in the 2024/25 General Fund budget. Saving opportunities are being monitored throughout the year, this information is detailed in Appendix A – Table 1c of the report. The position reflects the IDB funding support and savings within IT, savings/income identified as part of the monitoring process and an apportionment of the unallocated balance against the outturn surplus. In year monitoring identified £515,000 (62%) with a net saving requirement of £316,000 not matched against known schemes.

Capital – General Fund

- 1.4 The total General Fund Capital Programme for 2024/25 was £6.116m, actual capital expenditure for Q4 2024/25 is £4.829m as presented in Table 4a.
- 1.5 Table 4c outlines the Capital Programme carry forwards to future years, amounting to £277,000 and includes details of the schemes as well as their corresponding financing, which constitutes one of the recommendations to the Cabinet.

2. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA Revenue Budget

- 2.1 The HRA revenue outturn position as at 31 March 2025 was a net surplus of £13,000 as detailed in Appendix A – Table 2.

Capital – HRA

- 2.2 The total HRA Capital Programme for 2024/25 is £21.851m with actual capital expenditure of £14,816m at 31st March 2025, as detailed in Appendix A – Table 5a.
- 2.3 Alongside the revenue budget reset in Q1, following a review the HRA Capital Programme Q2 budget has also been reset. A stock condition survey programme is ongoing, which alongside the Asset Management Strategy, will inform future investment decisions.

Reserves – General Fund and HRA

- 2.4 General Fund and Specific Reserves at 31 March 2025 had balances totalling £7.408m (31 March 2024 £6.792m). The General Fund Reserve Balance remains at £2.078m. Further specific details are set out in Appendix A – Table 3.

3. Treasury Management

3.1 Section 2.6 of Appendix A provides details of the Council's Treasury Investments as at 31 March 2025. The Council's 2024/25 budget for investment income is £1.544m, the draft outturn position for investment income at Q4 is £1.990m.

3.2 The higher levels of investment income compared to the budget is due to increased balances available for investment resulting from an increased cashflow surplus and increased interest rates.

CONCLUSION

To ensure that the draft outturn position for 2024/25 is scrutinised.

IMPLICATIONS:

None

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP

None

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

None

STAFFING

None

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

DATA PROTECTION

None

FINANCIAL

As contained in this report and Appendix A.

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

None

REPUTATION

None

CONTRACTS

None

CRIME AND DISORDER

None

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

None

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

APPENDICES	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
Appendix A	Q4 Draft Outturn Finance Report 2024/25

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

REPORT APPROVAL	
Report author:	Rashpal Sohal, Interim Strategic Finance Manager, PSPS
Signed off by:	Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance & S151 Officer
Approved for publication:	Councillor Paul Redgate Portfolio Holder for Finance

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APPENDIX A - South Holland District Council – Q4 Finance Report 2024/25

Finance Summary

- The revenue outturn shows an underspend position of £317,000 as at 31 March 2025 which is a favourable movement of £141,000 compared to Q3 reported underspend of £176k.
- The HRA outturn position is £194,000 compared to a budgeted position of £181,000, resulting in a surplus outturn of £13,000 as at 31 March 2025 (£227k surplus at Q3).
- General Fund specific and general reserves of the Council are £7.408m as at 31 March 2025.
- HRA reserves are £15.198m as at 31 March 2025.
- General Fund Capital spend at the end of Quarter 4 was £4.829m against a full year budget of £6.116m.
- HRA capital spend at the end of Quarter 4 was £14.816m against a full year budget post slippage of £16.111m.
- The Council held investments of £25.031m as at 31 March 2025 (£27.911m as at 31 December 2024).

Section 2 – Finance

Section 2.1	Key Financial Issues in Quarter 4 of 2024/25
Section 2.2	Revenue Budget
Section 2.3	Housing Revenue Account Budget
Section 2.4	Reserves
Section 2.5	Capital Budget
Section 2.6	Treasury Management
Section 2.7	Debt Collection
Section 2.8	Business Rates and Council Tax Collection

Section 2.1 – Key Financial Issues in Quarter 4 of 2024/25

- The 2024/25 budget included an efficiency target of £831,000. As at 31 March, £515,000 (62%) of savings have been identified.
- The Government announced it would provide £3m of further funding to support Councils significantly impacted by Internal Drainage Board levies. South Holland was awarded £335,000 for 2024/25, which has been included within the actual outturn position and efficiencies.
- Neighbourhoods is overspent by £240,000 for the year due to staffing pressures within the Recycling and Refuse services, severance payments and vehicle repair costs.
- The Q4 actuals include audit fee accruals based on 2024/25 audits and 23/24 fee variations, resulting in an overspend of £60,000. This was due to a change in accounting treatment for consistency throughout the Partnership.
- The Council's 2024/25 budget for investment income is £1.544m. The outturn for investment income for 2024/25 is £1.990m, split £1.600m GF and £0.390m HRA.

	January (%)	February (%)	March (%)
Inflation			
CPI	3.0	2.8	2.6
RPI	3.6	3.4	3.2

Section 2.2 – Revenue Budget

Table 1 details the outturn position by Assistant Director. This details the 2024/25 Financial Year Outturn as of 31 March 2025 showing a overall net underspend of £317,000.

Table 1 – Projected Net Spend by Assistant Director Area				
Assistant Director	Revised Budget 2024/25 £'000	Actual 2024/25 £'000	Variance (underspend)/overspend £'000	Comments on main variances
Corporate	933	1,085	152	There was an overspend primarily driven by pressures in Business Development, Communications and Marketing, and Employee Expenses and Benefits. In Business Development, the overspend was linked to shared officer allocations and insurance recharges, which are planned to be realigned in the next financial year. Communications and Marketing experienced pressures due to staffing allocations, which are planned to be realigned in the next financial year and the non-achievement of efficiency targets. For Employee Expenses and Benefits, a year-end accrual was required to reflect untaken annual leave in line with IFRS accounting standards for the whole organisation, alongside a historical insurance cost, both contributing to a non-cash pressure on the cost centre
Finance	5,264	5,120	(144)	There was an overall underspend, largely driven by a more favourable outturn on rent rebate benefit subsidy compared to the budget. An accrual was made to cover external audit costs for both the current and forthcoming financial year, following a change in accounting policy to ensure all audit-related costs are accrued in the year to which they relate. This adjustment enhances year-end financial accuracy and compliance. Additionally, insurance premiums and associated fees increased due to economic pressures and rising market rates in the public sector insurance market, though this pressure was partially offset by additional income.
Housing	(137)	(163)	(26)	Favourable variance due to lower voids within year to what was budgeted.
General Fund Assets	444	536	92	Overspend largely due to agency costs in Facilities to cover staff absence, a return of deposit paid in relation to land at Cranmore Lane and overspend on responsive and programmed maintenance offset by underspends on utilities for Footway Lighting.

Table 1 – Projected Net Spend by Assistant Director Area

Assistant Director	Revised Budget 2024/25 £'000	Actual 2024/25 £'000	Variance (underspend)/overspend £'000	Comments on main variances
Governance	1,152	1,074	(78)	Canvasser salaries and postage costs came in lower than budget, resulting in an overall saving. Additionally, a vacant post contributed to staffing underspends, alongside a significant underspend on the designated councillors' budget and associated training and course fees, due to lower in-year demand.
Leisure & Culture	1,138	1,106	(32)	Savings on utilities and trading income at South Holland Centre offsetting higher contractor costs at Ayscoughfee Museum for additional security.
Neighbourhoods	4,775	5,015	240	There was an overspend driven by a range of cost pressures, many of which were beyond the direct control of management. These included costs associated with challenges in meeting salary efficiency targets, and increased expenditure for maintaining vehicles beyond their useful life. Insurance costs also rose, and additional financial pressure was caused by the continued growth in the housing stock and the ongoing operation of an uncontrolled waste collection policy—both identified risks in the strategic risk register. The service also experienced a loss of income following the departure of a shared Head of Service and the shift to a non-shared management model. However, this has been recognised in the approved service review in 2025/26.
Planning & Strategic Infrastructure	404	448	44	Overspend on Agency costs.

Table 1 – Projected Net Spend by Assistant Director Area

Assistant Director	Revised Budget 2024/25 £'000	Actual 2024/25 £'000	Variance (underspend)/overspend £'000	Comments on main variances
Regulatory	835	755	(80)	Significant underspends were recorded in Emergency Planning due to vacancies and a returned payment, Land Charges following delays in the HMLR migration and lower shared management costs. A one-off income variance in Power Station Spalding arose due to an 18-month recharge being recognised in-year. Public Protection Management also delivered a underspend, mainly through staffing and shared income benefits. Conversely, Building Control Fee Earning services experienced an overspend, driven by underperformance against income targets, although the position is still stronger than the previous year.
Strategic Growth & Development	237	311	74	Due to BID and UKSPF overspend.
Strategic Project	16	2	(14)	Favourable variance resulting from salaries recharged to capital projects.
Wellbeing & Community Leadership	1,290	993	(297)	There has been significant work undertaken within the Wellbeing and Community Leadership division to reduce the impact and usage of emergency accommodation. This has created an efficiency of £140k against budget. Further Homelessness Prevention Grant received late in year is being allocated to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in line with grant conditions. Vacancies and s113 agreements have been effectively managed to release further efficiencies within the division.
Spalding Special Expenses	236	236	0	Spalding Special Expenses are reported to the Spalding Town Forum. Actual variances do not impact the General Fund reserves.
Efficiencies Requirement	(316)	0	316	£515k efficiencies identified (see table 1c) reducing the requirement from original budget of £831k. This illustrates the efficiencies that have not been achieved across all service areas.
Sub Total – Assistant Directors – Net Costs	16,271	16,517	246	
Recharges to HRA	(3,344)	(3,376)	(32)	
Internal Drainage Boards and Parish Precepts	4,377	4,377	0	
Investment Income	(1,033)	(1,604)	(571)	Increased income linked to slower reduction in rates than expected, favourable interest rates and cashflow surplus.

Table 1 – Projected Net Spend by Assistant Director Area

Assistant Director	Revised Budget 2024/25 £'000	Actual 2024/25 £'000	Variance (underspend)/overspend £'000	Comments on main variances
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	319	391	72	
Impairment Allowance – Bad debt provision	13	85	72	
Capital Expenditure Charged in Year	1277	411	(866)	
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(893)	(27)	866	
Other Income and Expenditure	716	257	(459)	
General Fund Budget net costs	16,987	16,774	(213)	
Council Tax	(7,696)	(7,696)	-	
Business Rates	(7,247)	(7,247)	-	
Government Grants	(2,044)	(2,148)	(104)	
Total Funding	(16,987)	(17,091)	(104)	
Total Budget - (Surplus)/Deficit	-	(317)	(317)	

Recommendation:

F1 That Cabinet notes the revenue position of £317,000 underspend for 2024/25 as detailed in Table 1.

F2 The Cabinet notes £100,000 of the 2024/25 GF surplus to be transferred into a Parish Councils Loan Reserve pending the drafting of the loan scheme by officers for Cabinet in due course.

General Fund Revenue Budget Movement

Full Council approved the general fund revenue budget of £16.987m in February 2024. Table 1b summarises the in-year budget movements; this is a total of £884,000 additional budgets in the year. As the Council is required to set a balanced budget, each movement has corresponding approval to utilise grant allocations, unbudgeted income, or reserve balances to ensure the net budget position is unchanged.

Table 1b - General Fund Revenue Budget Movement

Qtr	Description	AD	Approval	Funding	£'000
Q1	Good Homes Alliance Contribution	Wellbeing & Community	S151 Proforma B	Disability Fund Grant Reserve	43
	Subtotal: Earmarked Grants Reserve				43
Q2	Household Support Fund	Wellbeing & Community	S151 Proforma B	Earmarked grants Reserve	40
Q4	Household Support Fund	Wellbeing & Community	S151 Proforma B	Earmarked grants Reserve	4
	Subtotal: Earmarked Grants Reserve				44
Q1	Household Support Fund	Wellbeing & Community	Decision Notice	Household Support Fund	223
	Subtotal: Household Support Fund Grant				223

Q1	Technology Forge system	Corporate	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	23
Q1	Tascomi Portal software	Corporate	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	6
Q1	Bin lift safety alterations	Neighbourhoods	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	3
Q2	Spalding BID software	Strategic Growth & Development	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	39
Q2	Leisure Operator Procurement	Leisure & Culture	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	19
Q2	Christmas lights for Spalding Town Centre and the Crescent	Strategic Growth & Development	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	12
Q3	Computer Software Licence Costs	Corporate	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	14
Q3	Purchase of Software	Finance	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	29
Q3	Computer Software Licence Costs	Finance	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	2
Q3	Grants and Contributions to Outside Bodies - No Service Received	Wellbeing & Community	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	9
Q4	Professional and Contractors Fees	Strategic Growth and Development	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	30
Q4	Legal Fees	Leisure and Culture	S151 Proforma B	Invest and Growth Reserve	5
	Subtotal: Invest and Growth Reserve				191
Q2	Overachievement of planning income to be transferred to reserve	Planning & Strategic Infrastructure	Q1 Cabinet recommendation	Planning Reserve	300
	Subtotal: Planning Reserve				300
Q1	Technology Forge implementation support	General Fund Assets	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	15
Q1	Waste interim manager support	Neighbourhoods	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	18
Q2	Planning Service Review	Planning & Strategic Infrastructure	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	11
Q3	Professional and Contractors Fees	Corporate	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	7
Q3	Professional and Contractors Fees	Corporate	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	7
Q3	Staff Training Expenses (Non-Payroll)	Neighbourhoods	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	3
Q3	Professional and Contractors Fees	Finance	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	3
Q4	Professional and Contractors Fees	Corporate	S151 Proforma B	Transformation reserve	10
	Subtotal: Transformation Reserve				74

Q4	Telephones	General Fund Assets	S151 Proforma B	Replacement and Refurbishment Reserve	9
	Subtotal: Replacement and Refurbishment Reserve				9
	Total movement as at 31 March 2025				884

The 2024/25 budget included an efficiency target of £831,000, efficiencies so far:

Table 1c – Efficiency Description	Amount £'000	Comments
IDB funding	(335)	Central government funding in support of drainage board levy increases
Additional S113 income	(80)	Planning resources to be shared with ELDC now revised.
Q1 ICT savings	(57)	Favourable within IT at Q1 due to the benefit of some inflationary assumptions on annual subscriptions and licences contract prior to renewal.
Additional income from boiler claim	(20)	Compensation.
Additional S113 income	(14)	Planning resources to be shared with BBC.
ICT additional income	(4)	Additional recharge income for Boston server room costs expected in Q4.
South Holland in Bloom	(3)	Welland Homes contribution.
Legal subscriptions	(2)	Partnership savings from shared subscriptions.
Total efficiencies found	(515)	
% Achieved	62%	
Target	831	
Efficiencies to be identified	316	
Q4 position (Favourable) / Adverse	(317)	

A new savings and efficiency plan has been developed for 2024/25 and is being monitored by the Leader and Finance Portfolio Holder and by Cabinet Portfolio Holders including scrutiny at Informal Cabinet Meetings.

As detailed in the 2024/25 Budget Setting report on 29 February 2024, based upon current budget assumptions the value of efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget for the next five years are as follows:

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
Annual Savings Requirement (£'000)	185	255	1,320	1,807	1,668
IDB Funding Requirement (£'000)	646	947	1,125	1,313	1,509

Note: These are not cumulative, once an efficiency has been achieved it will reduce the future years' requirement.

General Fund Income

The Council has several demand-led budget areas that are reliant on income to provide services. These are shown in Table 1d below.

Table 1d – Trading Income Budgets				
Income Area	Revised Budget £'000	Actuals £'000	Variance (above)/ below budget £'000	Comments
Car Parking	(377)	(388)	(11)	Small overachievement.
Planning	(1,125)	(825)	300	Overachievement of Planning Performance Agreement income in respect of a large application. This was taken to reserves.
Licensing	(122)	(117)	5	Small underachievement.
Markets	(34)	(31)	3	Small underachievement.
Land Charges	(75)	(90)	(15)	Overachievement on inspection fees profiled on actual income YTD. Income is dependent on the housing market for which there is a high level of uncertainty.
Building Control	(373)	(295)	78	Pressures on income achievement following a slowdown in the housing market.
Commercial Rents	(359)	(346)	12	South Holland Centre tenant runs bar on event nights, not a permanent tenant as budgeted.
Green Waste	(806)	(820)	(14)	Minor variance
TOTAL	(3,270)	(2,910)	360	

Section 2.3 – Housing Revenue Account Budget

Table 2 – Projected Net Spend by Service Area				
Service Area	Revised Budget 2024/25 £'000	Outturn 2024/25 £'000	Variance (underspend)/ overspend £'000	Comments on main variances
Rent Income – Dwellings	(18,308)	(18,447)	(139)	Higher rental income collected than budgeted, driven by improved rent collection performance and lower void losses.
Charges for Services and Facilities	(1,275)	(1,269)	6	Reduction in TV aerial income due to lower take up of this service provision.
Contributions to Expenditure	(5)	-	5	Decline in court income.
Total Income	(19,588)	(19,716)	(128)	
Repairs and Maintenance	4,883	4,580	(303)	Damp proofing budget increased by 777k from previous financial year resulting in savings although anticipate this may be a pressure during 25/26 based on the demand on the service in response stock condition survey findings. Solid fuel servicing, and reactive asbestos works savings used to partially offset pressures on gas servicing, equipment and materials.
Supervision and Management	4,246	4,072	(174)	Savings driven by lower staffing costs, unused hardship reserve drawdown, and lower legal and consultancy spend; offset slightly by some utilities and B&B pressures in response to decanting tenants.
Rents, rates, taxes, and other charges	90	83	(7)	Minor variance
Depreciation	5,040	5,410	370	Depreciation posted higher than budgeted based on Savills year-end asset values and useful lives.
Movement in Allowance for bad debts	50	99	49	Bad debt for housing rent areas.
Statutory recharge to the HRA for support services	3,306	3,321	14	Minor variance
Total Expenditure	17,615	17,564	(51)	
Contribution from Operations	(1,972)	(2,151)	(179)	

Investment Income	(556)	(390)	166	At Q1 budget reset, planned borrowing was removed, the interest receivable budget was increased, when in fact it should have also been reduced, because the funds, had they been borrowed, would have been temporarily invested until used – so removing the borrowing also removed the opportunity to earn interest on those funds.
Interest Payable	2,348	2,348	-	
Net Operating (Surplus)/Deficit	(181)	(194)	(13)	

Recommendation:

F3 That Cabinet notes the outturn revenue position of the HRA for 2024/25 is £194,000 as detailed in Table 2.

Section 2.4 – Reserves

At 31 March 2025, the closing balance for the General Fund reserves are £7.408m, after a net transfer out of reserves of (£0.616m), to cover future revenue and capital expenditure. HRA reserve balances have £15.198m closing balance after net transfer out of (£4.8m). **Table 3** reflects the outturn position.

Table 3 – Specific and General Reserves Balance

Reserve	Balances at 1 April 2024 £'000	Contributions into Reserves £'000	Use of Reserves £'000	Balances at 31 March 2025 £'000
General Fund				
Council Tax	1,193	445	0	1,638
Replacement and Refurbishment	0	0	(32)	(32)
Repayment Reserve	66	0	0	66
Investment and Growth	2,854	121	(235)	2,740
Transformation	207	0	(126)	81
Planning Reserve	394	443	0	837
Specific Reserves Total	4,714	1009	(393)	5,330
General Fund	2,078	0	0	2,078
Total	6,792	1009	(393)	7,408
Housing Revenue Account				
HRA General Reserve	15,395	194	(3093)	12,496
Insurance	200	0	0	200
Major Repairs	4,378	5,410	(7,286)	2,501
Total	19,973	5,604	(10,379)	15,198

Recommendation:

F4 That Cabinet notes the reserves transactions and balances as set out in Table 3.

Section 2.5 – Capital Budget

This section covers:

- Progress against the 2024/25 approved capital programme and the anticipated outturn (General Fund Table 4 and HRA Table 5);
- Financing of the Capital Programme (General Fund Table 4b and HRA Table 5b);
- Revisions to the Capital Programme (HRA Table 5);

General Fund (GF) Capital Programme

The approved Q4 is £6.116m, with £4.829m, outturn £1.287m

Progress against

- **ICT** – unutilised, sufficient therefore required.

Table 4a – 2024/25 Capital Programme and Q4 Outturn			
Scheme	Revised 2024/25	Actual March 2025	Variance (under)/over
	£000	£000	£000
Non UKSPF & LUF Projects			
ICT	133	101	(32)
Footway Lighting	62	62	-
Neighbourhoods	366	54	(312)
Changing Places	-	55	55
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,455	638	(817)
Asset and Property – Moulton Park & New Sheep Market	96	77	(19)
Council Offices Priory Road – UPS	24	23	(1)
Capital Acquisitions re Growth and Commercialisation	100	-	(100)
Welland Homes	1,156	1,131	(25)
Local Authority Housing Fund	157	-	(157)
Spalding Gateway Public Realm Project	283	237	(46)
Lutyens Memorial	10	24	14
Unit 4 Migration	29	29	-
Uniform System	49	49	-
Christmas Lights	55	55	-
Total Non UKSPF & LUF Projects	3,975	2,535	(1,440)
UKSPF & LUF			
UKSPF	521	506	(15)
UKSPF – Rural	322	266	(56)
Total UKSPF	843	772	(71)
South Holland Health and Wellbeing Hub	1,298	1,522	224
Total LUF	1,298	1,522	224
Grand Total – All Projects	6,116	4,829	(1,287)

capital budget as at an outturn of variances is underspend.

approved budgets

Standing budget future year budgets for planned works no slippage

- **Neighbourhoods** – Garden Waste overspent. No vehicles purchased in year – Slippage required.
- **Changing Places** – Scheme finalised. £50,000 grant used alongside a small amount of reserve funding.
- **Disabled Facilities Grants** – Grant received greater than demand for DFGs due to HRA within South Holland.

- **Assets and Property – Moulten Park & New Sheep Market** – Scheme finalised. £19,000 to decommit.
- **Capital Acquisitions re Growth and Commercialisation** – No acquisitions within the year, future year purchases will be subject to new approval.
- **Welland Homes** – Currently a pause on approved schemes that have not yet commenced as option appraisals are carried out.
- **Lutyens Memorial** - £9,500 grant from UKSPF to reduce accelerated spend to £4,500k
- **South Holland Health and Wellbeing Hub** – RIBA Stage 4 underway with coordinated design now in place. Planning approved; targeting early external works to start in the Summer, followed by main works in Autumn. Contract discussions ongoing, stakeholder engagement and communications progressing.

2024/25 Funding

Table 4b Capital Programme Financing			
All Projects	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Actual March 2025 £000	Variance 2024/25 £000
Investment and Growth Reserve	(198)	(136)	62
Replacement and Refurbishment Reserve	(24)	(38)	(14)
S106 Reserve	(237)	(237)	-
Spalding Special Reserve	-	-	-
Grants	(3,642)	(2,992)	650
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	(2,015)	(1,426)	589
Totals	(6,116)	(4,829)	1,287

Capital Slippage

As a result of the variances shown in **Table 4a** and **Table 4b**, changes are required to the 2025/26 Capital Programme. These are reflected in the Capital Programme carry forwards shown in **Table 4c**. The slippage of expenditure into future years will be funded in line with the approval already obtained for the relevant project.

Table 4c – Capital Programme Revised 2025/26	
Scheme	Budget c/f 2024/25 £'000
Neighbourhoods	312
Local Authority Housing Fund	157
Spalding Gateway Public Realm Project	46
Lutyens Memorial	(14)
Total Projects (Excl. Towns Funds & LUF)	501
LUF – South Holland Health and Wellbeing Hub	(224)
Total LUF	(224)
Total	277
Investment and Growth Reserve	(312)
Replacement & Refurbishment Reserve	14
S106 Reserve	(46)
Spalding Special Reserve	-

Grants	224
Internal Borrowing	(157)
Total Financing	(277)

Recommendation:

- F5** That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the approval of the 2024/25 capital outturn position presented in Table 4a
- F6** That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the capital rephasing from 2024/25 to 2025/26 presented in Table 4c.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme

Table 5a - HRA Programme	Approved Budget 24/25 £'000	Changes to approved budget £'000	Slippage to future year £'000	Revised Budget 24/25 £'000	Outturn 2024/25 £'000	Variance (under)/over £'000
Central Heating	975			975	766	(209)
Kitchen/Bathroom ((£24k) approved by Council 27/11/2024)	1,360			1,360	1,492	132
Renewable Energy (£0.956m approved by Council 27/11/2024)	7,007		(2,309)	4,698	4,698	-
Smoke Alarms	190			190	292	102
Electrical Upgrades	130			130	99	(31)
Roofs and Gutters	930	(60)		870	632	(238)
Doors and Windows	1,510		(502)	1,008	1,008	-
Flat Entrance Doors Sheltered Schemes	449		(90)	359	360	1
Fire Remedial Works	125		(122)	3	3	-
Damp and Mold remedial works				-	101	101
Chimneys	200	(40)		160	35	(125)
Paths and Drives	37			37	9	(28)
Boundary Walls	42			42	8	(34)
TV Aerials - Sheltered Schemes	111		(106)	5	5	-
Fees	214		(214)	-	-	-
Sewerage Treatment Plant ((£300k) approved by council 01/04/2025)	317		(205)	112	113	1
The Square				-	15	15
Car Parks	94		(94)	-	-	-
Community Centre Refurbishment	132			132	134	2
Structural Works	100		(100)	-	-	-
ICT Strategy / Infrastructure	36			36	22	(14)
Replacement Laptops	28			28	19	(9)
Major Adaptions (£300k approved by council 01/04/2025)	1,427			1,427	1,740	313
Sheltered Alarm Upgrade	991	100	(329)	762	761	(1)
Housing Repairs Vehicles	450		(450)	-	-	-
Grounds Maintenance Equipment	71			71	-	(71)
Wignal's Gate S106	4			4	-	(4)
Northon's Lane Holbeach	1,583		(775)	808	808	-
Jubilee Way Gosberton	56		(56)	-	-	-

Pheasant Street Holbeach	22		(22)	-		-
Primus Close Moulton Chapel	387		(13)	374	374	-
Biehler Avenue Weston	79		(79)	-		-
Cobgate Whaplode	47		(46)	1	2	1
Coalbeach Lane Surfleet	63		(61)	2	2	-
LAHF2 Frogmore Lane Holbeach	234	335	(111)	458	457	(1)
LAHF2 Tulip Fields Holbeach	335	(335)		-		-
River Close Surfleet	917		(56)	861	861	-
Scheme Subject to detailed approval	1,198			1,198		(1,198)
Total	21,851	-	(5,740)	16,111	14,816	(1,295)

Table 5b – HRA Capital Financing	Approved Budget 2024/25 £'000	Changes to approved budget 2024/25 £'000	Slippage to Future years £'000	Revised Budget 2024/25 £'000	Outturn 2024/25 £'000	Variance (under)/over £'000
Capital Receipts	(948)		1,108	160	(1,301)	(1,461)
Grants and Contributions	(3,010)		661	(2,349)	(2,569)	(220)
Major Repairs Reserve	(8,416)		3,081	(5,335)	(7,286)	(1,951)
Reserve Financing				-		-
S106 Reserves				-	(983)	(983)
External Borrowing			111	111		(111)
Direct Revenue Financing	(9,477)		779	(8,698)	(2,677)	6,021
Total	(21,851)	-	5,740	(16,111)	(14,816)	1,295

Progress against approved budgets

- Northon's Lane Holbeach - The project is continuing into 2025/26 when the final homes will complete.
- LAHF2 – The project continuing into 2025/26 when final homes will complete.
- Various Affordable housing project schemes are to continue into 2025/26 when the expenditure will be incurred at project completion.

Changes to approved capital budget

There has been a review of the HRA capital programme 2024/25 budget for Quarter 4 outturn. The overall HRA capital budget has remained the same at £21.851m but approval for budget changes to two schemes is requested. These changes are highlighted in table 5 and reasons listed below.

- Roofs and Gutters £930,000 and Chimney £200,000– Current budgets. The budgets are to be reduced by (£100,000) in total by means of a virement to Sheltered Alarm Upgrade to £1.091m which reflects expected capital expenditure.
- LAHF2 Tulip Fields £335,000 – A virement has been requested by £335,000 to LAHF 2 Frogmore Lane to realign LAHF2 budget with project expenditure.

2025/26 HRA Capital Programme

Table 5c shows the impact of the residual budget for projects now needing to be carried forward from 2024/25 and to amend the 2025/26 budget to reflect these figures.

On 27th February 2025, Full Council approved the HRA capital programme of £13.401m for 2025/26 and here we are amending it to take account of slippage from 2024/25 and further proposed changes to 2025/26 budget.

Table 5c - HRA Programme	Current Budget 2025/26 £'000	Budget c/f 2024/25	Revised Budget post Slippage 2025/26	Proposed Changes 2025/26	Revised Budget 2025/26
Central Heating	770	-	770	-	770
Kitchen/Bathroom	1,648	-	1,648	-	1,648
Renewable Energy	6,000	2,309	8,309	-	8,309
Smoke Alarms	279	-	279	-	279
Electrical Upgrades	5	-	5	-	5
Roofs and Gutters	970	-	970	-	970
Doors and Windows	914	502	1,416	187	1,603
Flat Entrance Doors Sheltered Schemes	-	90	90	-	90
Fire Remedial Works	79	122	201	-	201
Chimneys	8	-	8	-	8
Paths and Drives	38	-	38	-	38
Boundary Walls	3	-	3	-	3
TV Aerials - Sheltered Schemes	-	106	106	-	106
Fees	218	214	432	-	432
Sewerage Treatment Plant	235	205	440	-	440
Car Parks	30	94	124	-	124
Community Centre Refurbishment	100	-	100	-	100
Structural Works	-	100	100	-	100
ICT Strategy / Infrastructure	49	-	49	-	49
Replacement Laptops	28	-	28	-	28
Major Adaptions	955	-	955	-	955
Sheltered Alarm Upgrade	-	329	329	-	329
Housing Repairs Vehicles	-	450	450	-	450
Northon's Lane Holbeach	48	775	823	(109)	714
Jubilee Way Gosberton		56	56	(56)	-
Pheasant Street Holbeach		22	22	(7)	15
Primus Close Moulton Chapel		13	13	(5)	8
Biehler Avenue Weston	1	79	80	(57)	23
Cobgate Whaplode	4	46	50	(40)	10
Coalbeach Lane Surfleet	10	61	71	(53)	18
LAHF2 Frogmore Lane Holbeach	-	111	111	(101)	10
LAHF2 Tulip Fields Holbeach	9	-	9	(1)	8
River Close Surfleet		56	56	(43)	13
Purchase of Homes South Holland	700	-	700	-	700
Purchase Homes - Holbeach	300	-	300	-	300
LAHF 3				1,500	1,500
Total	13,401	5,740	19,141	1,215	20,356
Funded By					
Capital Receipts	(21)	(443)	(464)	143	(321)
Major Repairs Reserve	(5,032)	(3,081)	(8,113)		(8,113)
Grants and Contributions	(3,004)	(661)	(3,665)	192	(3,479)
Reserve Financing		-	-		-
External Borrowing	(4,272)	(776)	(5,048)	(1,560)	(6,602)
Direct Revenue Financing	(1,072)	(779)	(1,851)	10	(1,841)
Total	(13,401)	(5,740)	(19,141)	(1,215)	(20,356)

MTF's Impact post proposed changes.

Table 5d – HRA MTF's Variance Underspend/ (Overspend)	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	MTFS
HRA General Reserve	3,424	(769)	-	-	-	-	2,655
Major Repairs Reserve	(992)	(3,081)	-	-	-	-	(4,073)
Reserve Total	2,432	(3,850)	-	-	-	-	(1,418)
1-4-1 Receipts	1,268	(300)	-	-	-	-	968
S106 Reserves	10	-	-	-	-	-	10
Capital Receipts Total	1,278	(300)	-	-	-	-	978
Grants	135	(475)	1,000	1,265	-	-	1,925
External Borrowing	2,001	(2,330)	1,323	1,590	(675)	(675)	1,234
Total Capital Funding	5,846	(6,955)	2,323	2,855	(675)	(675)	2,719

Proposed changes to 2025/26 budget

- The Green Homes Grant (GHG) capital budget for 2025/26 has been realigned following confirmation of a reduced funding award. The original bid was based on a total programme of £18m, however the confirmed award totals £11.4m (£5.7m grant and £5.7m match funding). As a result, the programme has been scaled back, and the budget profile adjusted accordingly. This has released capacity within the HRA capital programme, which has allowed 300 additional window replacements to be reinstated, previously removed when assumed to be grant-funded. These have now been accommodated using savings generated from the GHG budget reduction and a corresponding reduction in borrowing.
- A new £1.5m project under the Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3 (LAHF3) was approved in November 2024 for inclusion in the affordable housing delivery pipeline. This scheme is supported by £818,000 of confirmed grant funding from which £5,500 already received. The remaining balance will be met through reallocation of resources from the existing Affordable Housing Programme, following a review of current scheme phasing and underspends further shortfall funded from Green Homes Efficiency programme savings post scaling back the project.
- The HRA capital programme has been reviewed to reflect changes in scheme readiness, cost estimates and delivery timelines. Savings identified have been reallocated to support the LAHF3 project. Any residual funding requirements have been offset by savings within the revised GHG allocation, ensuring the capital programme remains affordable and balanced across the five-year MTFS period.
- The 2025/26 capital programme revisions result in a £6.96m funding pressure due to GHG realignment and inclusion of the LAHF3 scheme, funded through reserves and borrowing; however, the overall five-year MTFS remains balanced and financially sustainable, with pressures in the short term offset by reductions in borrowing and prudent use of resources in later years.

Recommendation:

F7 That Cabinet recommends to Full Council to amend the Capital Programme at Appendix A – Table 5a to Table 5d considering the changes set out in this report.

Right To Buy Receipts

During Quarter 4 there were three further Right to Buy sales (compared to five in Q3 and two in Q2 2024/25) which makes a total of eleven RTB sales up to Quarter 4. Receipts from Right to Buy (RTB) sales can be used for funding new

house purchases within the HRA, but there is a time limit for these receipts to be used on new builds or acquisitions, or the money is payable to DLUHC. This limit was increased from 3 to 5 years in March 2021 and is calculated on an annual basis. Three further changes were introduced on 31 July 2024. The maximum permitted contribution from RTB receipts to be used on affordable homes new builds or acquisitions for 2024/25 and 2025/26 has increased from 50% to 100%. Right to buy receipts are permitted to be used with section 106 contributions. The cap on the percentage of replacement affordable homes delivered as acquisitions each year (currently 50%) to be taken off.

There was no payback risk for SHDC at 31 March 2025. The table below shows the RTB 1-4-1 receipts liability as at 31 March 2025 for the next five years, assuming no further capital financing applied, this shows the next payback risk is March 2030 when £1.143m spend is required to avoid repaying RTB receipts.

	31-Mar-26 £'000	31-Mar-27 £'000	31-Mar-28 £'000	31-Mar-29 £'000	31-Mar-30 £'000
Payback liability	-	-	-	-	1,143

The table below shows the RTB 1-4-1 receipts liability after taking into account the HRA capital programme and receipts falling due at the 5-year period, showing a payback risk at March 2030.

	31-Mar-26 £'000	31-Mar-27 £'000	31-Mar-28 £'000	31-Mar-29 £'000	31-Mar-30 £'000
Opening Balance – (Advance use) / Liability	(4,691)	(5,318)	(4,387)	(2,879)	(2,271)
1-4-1 Sales becoming due	175	931	1,508	608	2,612
Capital Programme Funding	(801)	-	-	-	-
Closing Balance – (Advance use) / Liability	(5,318)	(4,387)	(2,879)	(2,271)	342

Section 2.6 – Treasury Management

Investments at 31 March 2025

During the financial year, the Council has made investments in line with the agreed Treasury Management Strategy.

Detailed below are the investments held by the Council as at 31 March 2025 excluding accrued interest. Note this represents the position at this one point in time. The peaks and troughs in cash flow are managed on a daily basis. Because the Council collects money on behalf of other organisations which are paid out at future dates (e.g. Council

Tax and Business Rates) the value of investments held at any point in time does not represent the value of SHDC's own resources.

Table 6 – Cash Investments as at 31 March 2025						
Financial Institution	Country	Amount (£)	Fixed/ Variable	Start Date	Maturity Date	Yield
Lloyds Current Account	UK	1,521,448	Variable	Call	N/A	4.40%
Handelsbanken Plc	Sweden	9,910	Variable	Call	N/A	3.70%
CCLA Money Market Fund	Invested Globally	3,500,000	Variable	Call	N/A	4.50%
Surrey County Council	UK	2,000,000	Fixed	28/02/25	29/04/25	5.80%
Harlow District Council	UK	2,000,000	Fixed	28/02/25	30/04/25	5.70%
Cheshire East Council	UK	2,000,000	Fixed	25/03/25	23/05/25	5.90%
CIC Bank	France	2,000,000	Fixed	03/06/24	02/06/25	5.36%
Blackpool Borough Council	UK	2,000,000	Fixed	19/02/25	19/06/25	5.70%
UBS	Switzerland	3,000,000	Fixed	12/07/24	11/07/25	5.18%
Lancashire County Council	UK	2,000,000	Fixed	29/11/24	29/09/25	5.15%
The Moray Council	UK	1,000,000	Fixed	28/11/24	27/11/25	5.35%
North Lanarkshire Council	UK	2,000,000	Fixed	02/12/24	01/12/25	5.20%
Monmouthshire County Council	UK	2,000,000	Fixed	03/03/25	03/12/25	5.80%
TOTAL		25,031,358				

At Quarter 3 the level of investments was £27.9m.

Welland Homes

In addition to the above loans the Council has made loans to Welland Homes, a Housing Company wholly owned by the Council, as follows:

Table 7 – Welland Homes Loans as at 31 March 2025				
Loan	Amount (£)	Start Date	Maturity Date	Yield
Green Lane & Walters Close, Spalding	408,851.00	20/03/17	17/03/47	3.50%
	389,768.37	10/05/17		
	<u>543,023.43</u>	17/05/17		
	1,341,642.80			
Parkside Crescent, Spalding (<i>initially a development loan at 5.50% until completed, now 3.5%</i>)	187,675.67	29/03/18		
	18,944.78	23/05/18		
	36,844.08	19/06/18		
	28,930.75	17/07/18		
	98,247.92	24/08/18		
	114,596.66	19/09/18		
	100,010.41	23/10/18		
	98,160.13	22/11/18		
	103,037.06	21/12/18		
	50,833.29	11/01/19		
	154,096.72	20/02/19		
	80,245.80	22/03/19		
	50,178.89	12/04/19		
	62,346.40	22/05/19		
	142,858.40	07/06/19		
<u>21,723.09</u>	25/02/21			
1,348,730.05				

Table 7 – Welland Homes Loans as at 31 March 2025				
Loan	Amount (£)	Start Date	Maturity Date	Yield
Transferred to Equity	<u>(464,452.00)</u> 884,278.05	07/05/19	07/05/49	3.50%
London Road, Long Sutton	466,771.00	12/02/19	12/02/49	3.50%
Bentley Court, Spalding	523,107.55 <u>32,440.72</u> 555,548.27	20/08/19 20/01/20	20/08/49	3.50%
Northon's Lane, Holbeach	461,791.15 <u>28,286.40</u> 490,077.55	29/03/21 18/11/21	29/03/51	3.50%
Homefields, Crowland	1,045,130.10 <u>59,207.06</u> 1,104,337.16	30/03/23 11/08/23	29/03/53	5.25%
Walnut Close, Sutton St James	560,227.00 <u>49,385.14</u> 609,612.14	18/10/23 27/09/24	25/04/53	5.25%
Homefields, Crowland (Phase 2)	391,915.00	30/10/23	19/10/53	5.84%
Primus Close, Moulton Chapel (initially a development loan at 7.25% until completed, now 5.25%)	621,997.93 81,698.68 89,574.61 <u>13,497.25</u> 806,768.47	09/08/24 20/09/24 14/10/24 08/11/24		
Transferred to Equity	<u>(379,773)</u> 426,995.47 <u>274,917.86</u> 701,913.33	13/12/24	05/12/54	5.25%
TOTAL	6,546,095.30			

Interest earned on these loans in the current financial year to 31 March 2025 is £270,745.

Maturity Structure of Loans

The maturity structure of loans is as follows:

Table 8 - Maturity Structure as at 31 March 2025 (incl. Welland Homes)		
Duration	Amount (£)	Percentage of Total
Instant Access	5,031,358	16%
Less than one month	4,000,000	13%
One to three months	6,000,000	19%
Three to six months	5,000,000	16%
Six to nine months	5,000,000	16%
Nine to twelve months	0	0%
More than twelve months	6,546,095	20%
TOTAL	31,577,453	100%

Long Term Equity Investments

The following table provides details relating to the Council's equity investments which are valued at "fair value" in accordance with proper accounting practice.

Table 9 – Long Term Equity Investments as at 31 March 2025		
Entity	Equity at Cost (£)	Equity at Fair Value 31/03/25 (£)
Welland Homes at 31/03/25	3,718,694	4,828,602
South Holland Local Housing Community Interest Company	100	1,249,643
UK Municipal Bond Agency	50,000	0
TOTAL	3,768,794	6,078,245

Return on Investments

The table below provides a comparison of investment income received compared to the profiled budget.

Category	2024/25 Original Budget £	2024/25 Outturn £	2024/25 Variance £
Interest Received GF	(1,032,700)	(1,600,170)	(567,470)
Interest Received HRA	(511,400)	(389,713)	121,687
TOTAL	(1,544,100) <i>(4.771%)</i>	(1,989,883)	(445,783)

At outturn there was a favourable variance of £445,783 compared with the forecast outturn at Q3 of £422,749.

When calculating the split of investment income between the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account consideration has been given to the fact that the £10m HRA borrowing was not taken so cash balances were £10m lower than anticipated when the budgets were originally set.

Investments during Quarter 4 continued to be above budgeted rates as interest rate cuts haven't materialised as quickly as the market expected and actual capital expenditure is lower than anticipated compared with when the original budget was set.

The average level of funds available for investment purposes to the end of March 2025 was £38.0m (Quarter 3 was £39.1m) including the loans to Welland Homes which are classified as long-term debtors.

Treasury investments achieved an average rate of 5.414% (Q3 5.493%) and interest on Welland Homes loans achieved an average rate of 4.318% (Q3 4.328%). The combined rate achieved on all investments was estimated to be 5.233% (Q3 5.309%) compared with the Average 3 Month SONIA Rate of 4.818% (Q3 4.934%).

External Borrowing

The Council has borrowings of £67.456m at a fixed rate of 3.48% in respect of the Housing Revenue Account self-financing settlement. Additional HRA borrowing of £10m was included in the 2024/25 budget for the full year at 5% but as at the 31 March 2025 this external borrowing has not been drawn.

The following table provides an analysis of the outturn for borrowing costs:

Category	2024/25 Original Budget £	2024/25 Outturn £	2024/25 Variance £
Interest Payable HRA	2,847,469	2,347,469	(500,000)

Net Treasury Position

The following table provides an analysis of the outturn for the net treasury position:

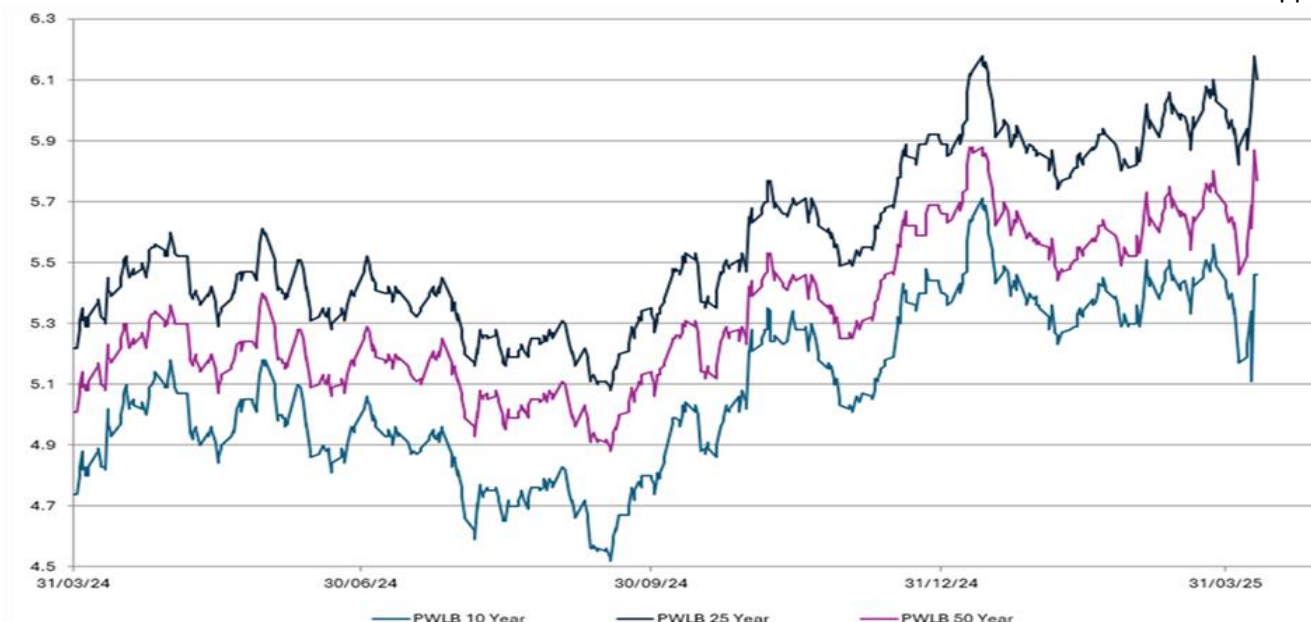
Category	2024/25 Original Budget £	2024/25 Outturn £	2024/25 Variance £
GF Interest Received	(1,032,700)	(1,600,170)	(567,470)
HRA Interest Received	(511,400)	(389,713)	121,687
HRA Interest Paid	<u>2,847,469</u>	<u>2,347,469</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>
HRA Net Position	2,336,069	1,957,756	(378,313)
Total Net Position	1,303,369	357,586	(945,783)

At 31 March 2025 there was a combined favourable variance of £945,783 compared with the Q3 forecast outturn of a favourable variance of £922,749.

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) Borrowing Rates

During the first six months of the financial year PWLB rates had generally been on a slow downward trajectory reflecting the expectation that interest rates would fall during the remainder of the financial year. During the second half of the financial year PWLB rates increased following the budget and the global threat of US tariffs.

The 50 year PWLB certainty rate was 5.67% on 31 March 2025 compared with 5.66% at the end of Quarter 3.



Treasury Management Summary

During the financial year the Bank of England Base Rate has reduced from by 5.25% to 4.50%.

Risks prevail in the financial markets and are subject to a continued high level of scrutiny with any significant issues arising being reported to the Council's Audit and Governance Committee. Changes to credit ratings of financial institutions are monitored daily and where required reported to the Section 151 Officer for an agreed course of action to be taken.

Section 2.7 – Debt Collection

A review of debts is undertaken every month, and monitoring is reported against targets. In line with the financial procedure limits debts below £1,050 require sign off by the Chief Finance Officer with all debts for this amount or over requiring Cabinet approval. New arrangements are in place for regular reporting and review of sundry debts and proactive management is taking place which is also resulting in debt levels and age of debt reducing.

An analysis of the sundry debts the Council held as at 31 March 2025 is show in **Table 15**.

Table 10 – Sundry Debt Analysis							
0-30 days £	31-60 days £	61-90 days £	91-120 days £	121-183 days £	184-365 days £	Over 365 days £	Total £
408,772	91,940	74,773	25,874	8,973	27,766	183,751	821,849

Note: This does not include details of invoice amounts £123,372 that are not yet due.

Section 2.8 – Council Tax and Business Rates

2024/25 remained challenging with the long-term effect on collection and recovery as a result of the ongoing impact of the pandemic, and the cost-of-living challenges. In recognition, we continue to remain prudent in setting the bad debt provision in this area.

A programme of statutory recovery activity took place throughout the year.

Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS)

Following the annual review during 2023/24, the 2024/25 scheme remained unchanged from the previous year, allowing for national up-ratings.

A fundamental review of the scheme was carried out in 2024/25, with changes being introduced from April 2025.

Council Tax – Quarter 3 In-Year Collection

The collectable debit for the year at 31 March 2025 was £65.9m with a net collection rate of 96.32% achieved (96.20% at 31 March 2024).

Business Rates – Quarter 3 In-Year Collection

The collectable debit for the year at 31 March 2025 was £26m with a net collection rate of 97.30% achieved (95.15% at 31 March 2024).

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Report To:	South Holland District Council
Date:	Wednesday, 23 July 2025
Subject:	Treasury Annual Report 2024/25
Purpose:	To provide Members with the Annual Treasury Report 2024/25 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management to ensure best practice is maintained.
Key Decision:	No
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Finance.
Report Of:	Brendan Arnold, Interim Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer.
Report Author:	Sean Howsam, Interim Treasury Manager (PSPSL).
Ward(s) Affected:	None directly.
Exempt Report:	No.

Summary

Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Treasury Annual Report detailing the Council's activities and actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2024/25. It covers the following areas;

- An economic update for the 2024/25 financial year;
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2024/25;
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2024/25;
- Debt position;
- Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Indicators.

This Report refers to a key element of the Council's Governance Framework and represents an important contribution to the evidence trail in support of the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.

Recommendations

That Council receives and approves the Treasury Annual Report 2024/25 at **Appendix 1** as required by the Local Government Act 2003 following scrutiny by the Governance and Audit Committee at their meeting on 10 July 2025.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Council is required to produce a Treasury Annual Report after the end of each financial year in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

Other Options Considered

As this is an update report there are no other further options for consideration.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council approved its Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 on 29 February 2024. This report now provides the Treasury Annual Report 2024/25 (**Appendix 1**) for approval following review and scrutiny by the Governance and Audit Committee at their meeting on 10 July 2025.

2. Report

- 2.1 General Fund capital expenditure for 2024/25 was £4.830m which was financed from grants and contributions, capital reserves and direct revenue financing. £1.427m of the expenditure was unfinanced and increased the Councils Capital Financing Requirement (underlying need to borrow). Housing Revenue Account capital expenditure for 2024/25 was £14.816m which was fully financed from capital receipts, the major repairs reserve, grants and contributions and direct revenue financing.
- 2.2 As at 31 March 2025, treasury investment balances were £25.609m compared with £28.611m the previous year and non-treasury investment balances were £12.624m compared with £11.103m the previous year. All treasury investments will mature in less than one year. The non treasury investments are long term equity investments in South Holland Local Housing Community Interest Company and Welland Homes and loans to Welland Homes which are classified in the financial statements as long term debtors.
- 2.3 The following table provides an analysis of the net treasury position for 2024/25:

Category	2024/25 Original Budget £	2024/25 Outturn £	2024/25 Variance £
GF Interest Received	(1,032,700)	(1,600,170)	(567,470)
HRA Interest Received	(511,400)	(389,713)	121,687
HRA Interest Paid	<u>2,847,469</u>	<u>2,347,469</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>
HRA Net Position	2,336,069	1,957,756	(378,313)
Total Net Position	1,303,369	357,586	(945,783)

At 31 March 2025 there was a combined favourable variance of £945,783.

- 2.4** The rate of return on the Council's treasury investments averaged 5.41% for the 2024/25 financial year and Welland Homes loans achieved an average rate of 4.32%. This gave a combined rate for all investments of 5.23%.
- 2.5** A full review of the economy and interest rates is detailed in Section 8 of **Appendix '1'**.
- 2.6** The Council's Investment Policy and Strategy is kept under constant review with the aim of balancing risk and reward. The investment criteria agreed for 2024/25 permitted investments with banks whose parent bank originates from a country with a sovereign rating of A+ or higher and meets MUFG's counterparty investment criteria.
- 2.7** The Council's 2024/25 accounts are subject to external audit which may result in some amendments to the figures being reported in this Annual Report.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1** This report provides a review of treasury management performance for the financial year 2024/25 to Members to ensure best practice is maintained as required by the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

None

Corporate Priorities

None

Staffing

None

Workforce Capacity Implications

None

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The General Power of Competence in the Localism Act 2011 allows Councils a broad freedom in their operations.

Councils have the general power to borrow under Section 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The power to invest is set out in the Local Government Act 2003, Section 12, which gives the Council the power to invest for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment, or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs.

The power that allows councils to spend for capital purposes is included in the Local Government Act 2003.

Data Protection

None

Financial

The financial implications are covered in detail in **Appendix 1** to this report and in section 2 above.

By making the investment criteria relating to financial institutions stringent, the Council receives lower rates of return. The Council therefore aims to strike a balance between risk and reward when considering its portfolio of investments. Treasury Management is a key financial consideration for the Authority especially in respect of its investment returns and Capital Programme.

Risk Management

The Code of Practice sets out the framework for controlling the risks associated with treasury management decisions for borrowing and investing. Ultimately investment and borrowing decisions are made in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. The overriding priority is that the security of a deposit takes precedence over a return on investment.

The Prudential and Treasury Indicators control the limits for investing and borrowing, to ensure that any borrowing is affordable and sustainable and long term borrowing is for capital purposes only.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

The Portfolio Holder for Finance is briefed on treasury performance on a regular basis.

Reputation

The security of investments is the Council's main priority when investing surplus cash.

Contracts

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None

Health and Wellbeing

None

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

None

Acronyms

CFR – Capital Financing Requirement

CIPFA - Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

CPI - Consumer Price Index

DLUHC - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

EZ - Eurozone

FOMC – Federal Open Market Committee

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

MRP – Minimum Revenue Provision

MUFG – External Treasury Advisors (previously Link)

PWLB - Public Works Loan Board

SONIA – Sterling Overnight Index Average

VRP – Voluntary Revenue Provision

y/y – year on year

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1 – Treasury Annual Report 2024/25

Background Papers

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title.

Where the document can be viewed.

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management.	CIPFA Website
SHDC Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2024/25	<u>(Public Pack)Agenda Document for South Holland District Council, 29/02/2024 18:30</u>

Chronological History of this Report

This report was considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on 10 July 2025 prior to its submission to Council.

Report Approval

Report author: Sean Howsam – Interim Treasury Manager (PSPSL)
Sean.Howsam@pspsl.co.uk

Signed off by: Brendan Arnold – Interim Director of Finance / Section 151
Officer Brendan.Arnold@sholland.gov.uk

Approved for publication: Portfolio Holder for Finance.



Annual Treasury Management Review 2024/25

For approval by Council on 23 July 2025 following scrutiny by
Governance and Audit Committee
On 10 July 2025

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2024/25**1. INTRODUCTION**

This Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2024/25. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, (the Code), and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, (the Prudential Code).

During 2024/25 the following reports have been submitted:

- an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (Council 29 February 2024)
- a mid year treasury update report (Governance and Audit 19 November 2024 and Council 29 January 2025)
- an annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report)

In addition, this Council has received quarterly treasury management update reports on 12 September 2024 and 20 March 2025 which were received by the Governance and Audit Committee.

The regulatory environment places responsibility on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is therefore important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members.

This Council also confirms that it has complied with the requirement under the Code to give prior scrutiny to all of the above treasury management reports by the Governance and Audit Committee. Member training on treasury management has been undertaken during the financial year and further external training will be provided in the 2025/26 financial year.

2. THE COUNCIL'S CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND FINANCING 2024/25

The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:

- financed immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc.), which has no resultant impact on the Council's borrowing need; or
- if insufficient financing is available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.

The actual capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators.

The following table summarises actual capital expenditure and how this was financed.

£'000 General Fund	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Approved Budget	2024/25 Actual
Capital expenditure	7,007	6,116	4,830
Financed in year	(4,574)	(4,101)	(3,403)
Unfinanced capital expenditure	2,433	2,015	1,427

£'000 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Approved Budget	2024/25 Actual
Capital expenditure	16,547	16,111	14,816
Financed in year	(16,547)	(16,111)	(14,816)
Unfinanced capital expenditure	-	-	-

3. THE COUNCIL'S OVERALL BORROWING NEED

The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This figure is a gauge of the Council's indebtedness. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and resources used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the 2024/25 unfinanced capital expenditure (see above table), and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.

Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies (such as the Government, through the Public Works Loan Board (PWL) or the money markets), or utilising temporary cash resources within the Council.

Reducing the CFR – the Council's (non HRA) underlying borrowing need (CFR) is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision – MRP, to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need (there is no statutory requirement to reduce the HRA CFR). This differs from the treasury management arrangements which ensure that cash is available to meet capital commitments. External debt can also be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.

The total CFR can also be reduced by:

- the application of additional capital financing resources, (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
- charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).

The Council's 2024/25 MRP Policy, (as required by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Guidance), was approved as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2024/25 on 29 February 2024.

The Council's CFR is shown below, and represents a key prudential indicator.

CFR (£'000): General Fund	31 March 2024 Actual	31 March 2025 Budget	31 March 2025 Actual
Opening Balance	13,165	15,289	15,289
Adjustment to Opening Balances: IFRS 16 leases	-	-	26
Add unfinanced capital expenditure (as above)	2,433	2,015	1,427
Less Minimum Revenue Provision	(309)	(319)	(391)
Closing Balance	15,289	16,985	16,351

CFR (£'000): HRA	31 March 2024 Actual	31 March 2025 Budget	31 March 2025 Actual
Opening Balance	68,427	68,427	68,427
Add unfinanced capital expenditure (as above)	-	-	-
Closing Balance	68,427	68,427	68,427

Borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for gross borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.

Gross borrowing and the CFR - in order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and only for a capital purpose, the Council should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year (2023/24) plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current (2024/25) and next two financial years. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. This indicator allows the Council some flexibility to borrow in advance of its immediate capital needs in 2024/25. The table below highlights the Council's gross borrowing position against the CFR. The Council has complied with this prudential indicator.

	31 March 2024 Actual £000's	31 March 2025 Estimate £000's	31 March 2025 Actual £000's
Gross Borrowing Position	67,456	67,456	67,456
CFR	83,716	85,412	84,778

The authorised limit - is the “affordable borrowing limit” required by S3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that during 2024/25 the Council has maintained gross borrowing within its authorised limit.

The operational boundary –is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary is acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

Actual financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream - this indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

	2024/25
Authorised limit	£115m
Maximum gross borrowing position	£67.456m
Operational boundary	£111m
Average gross borrowing position	£67.456m
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream – Non HRA	-7.12%
HRA	39.93%

4. TREASURY POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

The Council's debt and investment position is organised by the treasury management service in order to ensure adequate liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security for investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities. Procedures and controls to achieve these objectives are well established both through member reporting and through officer activity detailed in the Council's Treasury Management Practices. At the beginning and the end of 2024/25 the Council's treasury position including accrued interest was as follows:

	31/3/24 Amount £'000	Rate/ Return %	Average Life	31/3/25 Amount £'000	Rate/ Return %	Average Life
Fixed rate funding						
PWLB	67,456	3.48	38 years	67,456	3.48	37 years
Total debt	67,456	3.48	38 years	67,456	3.48	37 years
CFR	83,716			84,778		
Over/(under) borrowing	(16,260)			(17,322)		
Cash and investments:						
long term equity and service loans	(11,103)	n/a	n/a	(12,624)	n/a	n/a
short term	(25,849)	6.26	126 days	(20,332)	5.50	126 days
instant access deposits	(2,762)	5.23	1 day	(5,277)	4.47	1 day
Total cash and investments	(39,714)	6.16	110 days	(38,233)	5.29	95 days
Net debt	27,742			29,223		

Investments and Cash and Cash Equivalents held as at 31 March 2025 including accrued interest were as follows:

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO	Actual 31/03/24 £000's	Actual 31/03/24 %	Actual 31/03/25 £000's	Actual 31/03/25 %
Treasury Investments				
Banks	22,570	79	6,961	27
Building Societies	0	0	0	0
Local Authorities	4,010	14	15,132	59
Total managed in house	26,580	93	22,093	86
Money Market Funds	2,031	7	3,516	14
Total managed externally	2,031	7	3,516	14
Total Treasury Investments	28,611	100	25,609	100
Non-Treasury Investments				
Equity (at fair value)	5,308	48	6,078	48
Service Loans (long term debtors)	5,795	52	6,546	52
Total Non-Treasury Investments	11,103	100	12,624	100

SUMMARY	Actual 31/03/24 £000's	Actual 31/03/24 %	Actual 31/03/25 £000's	Actual 31/03/25 %
Total Treasury Investments	28,611	72	25,609	67
Total Non-Treasury Investments	11,103	28	12,624	33
Total of all Investments	39,714	100	38,233	100

The maturity structure of the investment portfolio was as follows:

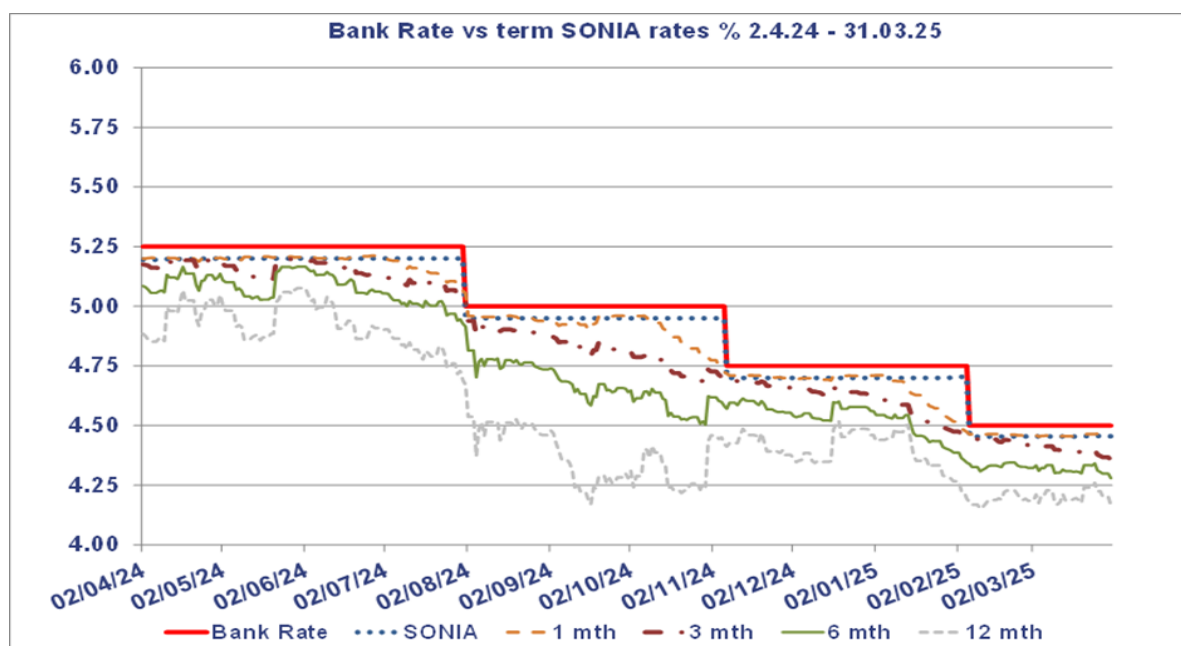
	2023/24 Actual £'000	2024/25 Actual £'000
Investments		
Longer than 1 year	11,103	12,624
Under 1 year	<u>28,611</u>	<u>25,609</u>
Total	39,714	38,233

The exposure to fixed and variable rates on investments was as follows:

	31/3/24 Actual £'000	31/3/25 Actual £'000
Fixed rate	30,795 (78%)	26,878 (70%)
Variable rate	8,919 (22%)	11,355 (30%)

5. THE STRATEGY FOR 2024/25

5.1 Investment strategy and control of interest rate risk (commentary provided by MUGF)



Investment returns remained robust throughout 2024/25 with Bank Rate reducing steadily through the course of the financial year (three 0.25% rate cuts in total), and even at the end of March the yield curve was still relatively flat, which might be considered unusual as further Bank Rate cuts were expected in 2025/26.

Bank Rate reductions of 0.25% occurred in August, November and February, bringing the headline rate down from 5.25% to 4.5%. Each of the Bank Rate cuts occurred in the same month as the Bank of England publishes its Quarterly Monetary Policy Report, therein providing a clarity over the timing of potential future rate cuts.

Looking back to 2024/25, investors were able to achieve returns in excess of 5% for all periods ranging from 1 month to 12 months in the spring of 2024 but by March 2025 deposit rates were some 0.75% - 1% lower. Where liquidity requirements were not a drain on day-to-day investment choices, extending duration through the use of “laddered investments” paid off.

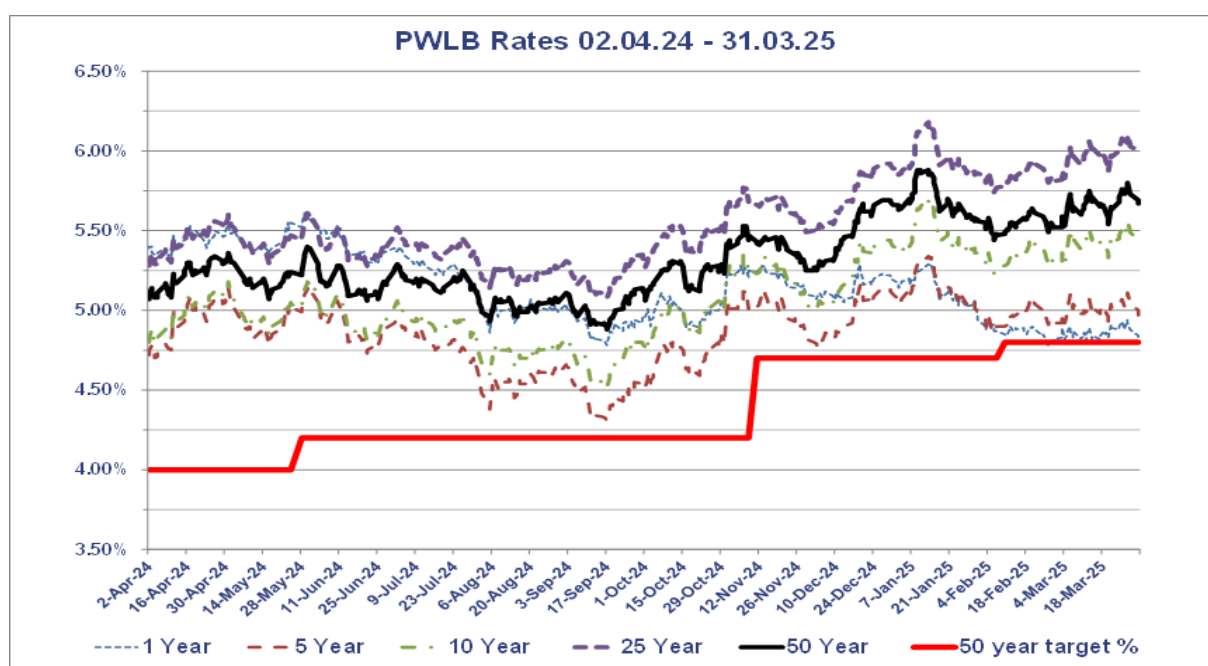
5.2 Borrowing strategy and control of interest rate risk

During 2024/25, the Authority maintained an under-borrowed position. This meant that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), was not fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Authority’s reserves, balances and cash flow was used as an interim measure. This strategy was prudent as although near-term investment rates were equal to, and sometimes higher than, long-term borrowing costs, the latter are expected to fall back through 2025 and 2026 in the light of economic growth concerns and the eventual dampening of inflation. The Authority has sought to minimise the taking on of long-term borrowing at elevated levels (>5%) and has focused on a policy of internal borrowing.

Interest rate forecasts initially suggested gradual reductions in short, medium and longer-term fixed borrowing rates during 2024/25. Bank Rate did peak at 5.25% as anticipated, but the initial expectation of significant rate reductions did not transpire, primarily because inflation concerns remained elevated. Forecasts were too optimistic from a rate reduction perspective, but more recently the forecasts, updated from November 2024 onwards, look more realistic.

Forecasts at the time of approval of the treasury management strategy report for 2024/25 were as follows:

Link Group Interest Rate View 08.01.24													
	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27
BANK RATE	5.25	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	4.80	4.30	3.80	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	5.20	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.70	3.30	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10
12 month ave earnings	5.00	4.90	4.40	3.90	3.60	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.20	3.20
5 yr PWLB	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10 yr PWLB	4.70	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.70	3.70
25 yr PWLB	5.20	5.10	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
50 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.70	4.60	4.40	4.20	4.10	4.00	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90



Gilt yields have been volatile through 2024/25. Indeed, the low point for the financial year for many periods was reached in September 2024. Thereafter, and especially following the Autumn Statement, PWLB Certainty rates have remained elevated at between c5% - 6% with the exception of the slightly cheaper shorter dates.

At the close of 31 March 2025, the 1-year PWLB Certainty rate was 4.82% whilst the 25-year rate was 5.98% and the 50-year rate was 5.67%.

6. Borrowing Outturn

Treasury borrowing – The Council has not undertaken any new Treasury borrowing during the 2024/25 financial year.

The Council’s external borrowing from the PWLB at 31 March 2025 remained at £67.456m at a fixed rate of 3.48% and matures on 28 March 2062.

Borrowing in Advance of Need - The Council has not borrowed more than, or in advance of its needs, purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed.

Rescheduling – No rescheduling was done during the year as the average 1% differential between PWLB new borrowing rates and premature repayment rates made rescheduling unviable.

Interest Payable – The budget for 2024/25 was £2,847,469 for the year and the outturn was £2,347,469 giving a favourable variance of £500k for the year. This was as a result of the £10m budgeted additional HRA borrowing not be taken out.

7. INVESTMENT OUTTURN FOR 2024/25

Investment Policy – the Authority's investment policy is governed by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) investment guidance, which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by the Authority on 29 February 2024. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies, supplemented by additional market data, (such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps, bank share prices etc.).

The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy, and the Council had no liquidity difficulties.

Resources – the Council's cash balances comprise revenue and capital resources and cash flow monies. The Council's core cash resources comprised as follows:

Balance Sheet Resources (£'000)	31 March 2024	31 March 2025
Balances	17,473	14,574
Earmarked Reserves	6,225	8,875
Major Repairs Reserve	4,379	2,502
Capital Grants and Contributions	5,193	6,201
Usable capital receipts	7,498	8,356
Total	40,768	40,508

The Council held average treasury investment balances of £31.75m during 2024/25 which were internally managed, achieving an average rate of return of 5.41% compared with the average 3 Month Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA) rate of 4.82%.

The Council also held average non-treasury investment balances (excluding equity) of £6.55m. The Council has issued nine loans totalling £6.55m to Welland Homes Limited, which is the Council's wholly owned Housing Development Company. These are service loans (classified as long term debtors) and the Council received interest at an average rate of 4.32% for the 2024/25 financial year. Total interest earned on these loans during the year was £271k.

The combined rate of return on all investments averaged 5.23%.

The following table provides an analysis of the outturn for the net treasury position:

Category	2024/25 Original Budget £	2024/25 Outturn £	2024/25 Variance £
GF Interest Received	(1,032,700)	(1,600,170)	(567,470)
HRA Interest Received	(511,400)	(389,713)	121,687
HRA Interest Paid	<u>2,847,469</u>	<u>2,347,469</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>
HRA Net Position	2,336,069	1,957,756	(378,313)
Total Net Position	1,303,369	357,586	(945,783)

At 31 March 2025 there was a combined favourable variance of £945,783.

8. THE ECONOMY AND INTEREST RATES (Commentary provided by MUGF)

UK. Economy.

UK inflation has proved somewhat stubborn throughout 2024/25. Having started the financial year at 2.3% year on year (y/y) (April), the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation briefly dipped to 1.7% y/y in September before picking up pace again in the latter months. The latest data shows CPI rising by 2.8% y/y (February), but there is a strong likelihood that figure will increase to at least 3.5% by the Autumn of 2025.

Bank Rate reductions have been limited. Bank Rate currently stands at 4.5%, despite the Office for Budget Responsibility reducing its 2025 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) forecast for the UK economy to only 1% (previously 2% in October).

Borrowing has become increasingly expensive in 2024/25. Gilt yields rose significantly in the wake of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, and the loosening of fiscal policy, and have remained elevated ever since.

The Bank of England sprung no surprises in their March meeting, leaving Bank Rate unchanged at 4.5% by a vote of 8-1, but suggesting further reductions would be gradual.

USA Economy.

Despite the markets willing the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) to repeat the rate cut medicine of 2024 (100 basis points in total), the Fed Chair, Jay Powell, has suggested that the Fed. Funds Rate will remain anchored at 4.25%-4.5% until inflation is under control, and/or the economy looks like it may head into recession as a consequence of President Trump's tariff policies.

Inflation is close to 3% and annualised growth for Q4 2024 was 2.4%. With unemployment just above 4%, and tax cuts in the pipeline, the FOMC is unlikely to be in a hurry to cut rates, at least for now.

Eurozone (EZ) Economy.

The Eurozone economy has struggled throughout 2024 and is flat lining at present, although there is the promise of substantial expenditure on German defence/infrastructure over the coming years, which would see a fiscal loosening. France has struggled against a difficult political backdrop, but with a large budget deficit it is difficult to see any turn-around in economic hopes in the near-term.

With GDP currently below 1% in the Euro-zone, the ECB is likely to continue to cut rates, although the headline inflation rate is still above 2% (2.3% February 2025). Currently at 2.5%, a further reduction in the Deposit Rate to at least 2% is highly likely.

9. OTHER ISSUES

9.1 IFRS 9 fair value of investments – When producing the 2024/25 financial statements the Council has adhered to this accounting standard. This standard prescribes the way financial instruments are valued in the accounts and also how risk is measured and accounted for.

9.2 Non Treasury Investments - The following table provides details relating to the Council's equity investments which are valued at "fair value" in accordance with proper accounting practice.

Entity	Equity at Cost (£)	Equity at Fair Value 31/03/25 (£)
Welland Homes	3,718,694	4,828,602
South Holland Local Housing Community Interest Company	100	1,249,643
UK Municipal Bond Agency	50,000	0
TOTAL	3,768,794	6,078,245

9.3 Changes in Risk Appetite – There has been no change to the Council's risk appetite during the 2024/25 financial year and investments have been made throughout the year in accordance with the Council's agreed investment criteria approved by Council.



Report To:	Full Council
Date:	23 July 2025
Subject:	Implementation of HR Policies
Purpose:	To seek Council's approval for revised and new HR Policies.
Key Decision:	N/A
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder – Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services.
Report Of:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Report Author:	Rachel Robinson, Group Manager – Organisational Development
Ward(s) Affected:	N/A
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

HR policies require regular review to ensure they are within the legal framework and reflect best practice. This report brings forward HR policies for review. The Policies have been developed by Public Sector Partnership Services, as the Councils' HR provider; with input from a Readers' Panel consisting of Officers and Trade Union Representatives (Local and Regional). The Readers' Panel have confirmed that operationally the policies are practical to implement.

The Policies have been reviewed by Policy Development Panel and the Panel is supportive of the revisions to the policies.

Recommendations

- That Council approves the HR policies appended to this report.

Reasons for Recommendations

HR policies need to be regularly updated to ensure they reflect best practice and are within the legal framework. This review has provided the opportunity to seek consistency in HR policy across the Partnership.

Other Options Considered

None

1. Background

- 1.1 It is important HR Policies are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate, reflect legislation and best practice and enable the Head of Paid Service to effectively manage the workforce.

2. Report

- 2.1 Having a single set of shared HR Policies will ensure consistency in the way the Partnership's workforces are managed. There is also a benefit to Public Sector Partnership Services of a single HR policy set for each of the three Councils as it means rather than HR advisors administering three different policy sets, they only need to administer one.
- 2.2 This report brings forward two new policies; Drugs and Alcohol Policy (Appendix A), a Menopause Policy (Appendix B). A new umbrella policy has been created; Family Leave Policy (Appendix D). Three existing policies; Disciplinary Policy (Appendix E), Adverse Weather Policy (Appendix F) and Volunteer Policy (Appendix G) have been tweaked after a review of their implementation. The existing aligned policies were reviewed and proved by Full Council previously. Approval sought for these policies is on the amendments only as outlined in the 'Existing Policy' table at 2.4.
- 2.3 The policies, as presented in the appendices, have been reviewed by an internal Reader's Panel of officers from across the Partnership, trade unions and Senior Leadership Team. The policies have their support.
- 2.4 The Policies appended to this report are:

New Policy

Appendix	Policy Name	Objective	Rationale	Implementation
Appendix A	Drugs & Alcohol Policy	Establish a comprehensive drugs and alcohol policy to ensure a safe and productive workplace.	Substance misuse can lead to decreased productivity, increased accidents, and compromised decision-making. A clear policy sets boundaries and provides support for employees struggling with substance misuse.	The policy outlines prohibited behaviours, support mechanisms, and disciplinary actions, where appropriate. It also includes guidelines for legal compliance and available employee support.
Appendix B	Menopause Policy	Introduce a menopause policy to support employees experiencing menopausal symptoms.	Menopausal symptoms can significantly impact employees' well-being and productivity. All three Councils are signatories of the Menopause Friendly Pledge. Training has been delivered to support individuals and raise awareness. Guidance is also available to managers to support their employees. The partnership also has an active informal, employee led menopause support group. A supportive policy can improve workplace inclusivity and employee health.	The policy provides guidelines for workplace adjustments, access to medical support, and education on menopause. It also strengthens provision for flexible working arrangements and guidance for managers.
Appendix C	Family Leave Policy	Create an overarching umbrella policy pulling together existing maternity, adoption, paternity, shared parental and parent leave and pay policies into one policy.	Drawing the suite of family friendly policies into one overarching family leave procedure for ease of use for employees and managers and reduces the volume of employment policies to maintain	The new Employment Rights Bill will grant employees various rights from the first day of employment, including paternity, parental, and bereavement leave. Having one central policy will ensure any future legislative changes are swiftly and consistently amended.

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Existing Policy

Appendix	Policy Name	Change	Objective	Rationale	Implementation
Appendix D	Disciplinary Policy	Section 4 – Fast-track	Introduce a fast-track process for disciplinary investigations to expedite resolution and	The fast-track process aims to resolve disciplinary matters swiftly, reducing stress and maintaining productivity. This process is suitable for cases of alleged misconduct that do not constitute gross misconduct. The fast-track approach is incorporated at section 4 of the policy; the	It would be the intention not to commission an investigating officer nor the traditional investigatory report. Instead, a thorough examination of the known facts will be undertaken by the appropriate People Manager prior

			minimise disruption.	remainder of the policy remains as previously approved. The 'Fast Track' process would allow for cases to be addressed effectively and in a timely manner such as to remove unnecessary procedural steps, negate the need for a lengthy investigation, minimise the anxiety of the employee(s) and potential witnesses. It is envisaged that 'Fast Tracking' opportunities would only be considered in the clearest of cases.	to a formal hearing, to be reviewed by the Hearing Officer. Following this, the range of sanctions within the Council's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure may be applied.
Appendix E	Adverse Weather Policy	New shared policy based on SHDC existing policy	Transition from separate policies to a partnership-based adverse weather policy.	Adverse weather events can disrupt operations and pose safety risks. A partnership approach ensures consistency and shared responsibility across the partnership.	The policy will define adverse weather conditions, communication procedures, and guidelines for remote and agile working and pay during such events. It will align with existing time off policies.
Appendix F	Volunteer Policy	Update to Include Volunteer Days – Section 9	Update the existing volunteer policy to include up to 2 volunteer days per year.	Encouraging volunteering enhances employee engagement, morale, and community involvement. Providing dedicated volunteer days supports employees in contributing to causes they care about.	The updated policy will allow employees to take up to 2 paid days per year for volunteer activities. It will outline the types of supported volunteer activities, eligibility criteria, and the process for requesting volunteer days.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. This report presents a suite of HR policies for approval by Council. These policies have been developed to ensure legal compliance, reflect best practice, and support consistent workforce management across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.
- 3.2. The introduction of new policies on Drugs and Alcohol, Menopause, and Family Leave demonstrate a proactive approach to employee wellbeing and inclusivity. The revisions to existing policies – Disciplinary, Adverse Weather, and Volunteer – reflect operational feedback and evolving organisation needs.
- 3.3. The policies have been reviewed and endorsed by a Readers' Panel comprising officers, trade union representative and the Senior Leaders Team. Their feedback confirms the practicality and relevance of the proposed changes.
- 3.4. The Policies have been reviewed by the Policy Development Panel and the panel is supportive of the revisions to the policies.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

The adoption of a unified set of HR policies will enhance consistency in workforce management and streamline HR service delivery across the Partnership.

Corporate Priorities

The policies support the service review process, which aims to make the Partnership more efficient and effective.

Staffing

The Policies will have a direct impact on the management of the workforce. The policies developed are in line with employee legislation and best practice and are designed to support positive workforce management.

Workforce Capacity Implications

None

Constitutional and Legal Implications

Employee Policies are important in protecting the Partnership Councils against any concerns that could arise linked to employment.

Data Protection

There are no direct data protection implications arising from the content of the report, but data relating to staff is protected under data protection laws. The Council has suitable technical and organisational measures in place to protect such data.

Financial

Drugs and Alcohol Policy; implementing random and for-cause testing will incur costs for purchasing testing kits and contracting with testing service providers. The costs will vary based on frequency and scope of testing.

Risk Management

The implementation of updated and new HR policies mitigates several organisational risks by ensuring legal compliance, promoting consistency across the Partnership, and supporting employee wellbeing. Failure to maintain current and legally compliant HR policies could expose the Councils to legal challenges, reputational damage, and operational inefficiencies.

The introduction of a unified policy framework reduces the risk of inconsistent application of HR procedures across the Partnership, which could otherwise lead to employee grievances or disputes. The inclusion of policies such as the Drugs and Alcohol Policy and the Menopause Policy proactively addresses potential health, safety, and inclusivity risks in the workplace.

The fast-track disciplinary process, as outlined in the revised Disciplinary Policy, helps reduce procedural delays and associated risks of prolonged employee relations issues. Similarly, the updated Volunteer and Adverse Weather Policies provide clear guidance that supports operational resilience and employee engagement.

All policies have been reviewed by key stakeholders, including officers, trade union representatives, and the Senior Leadership Team, ensuring that potential risks have been considered and mitigated through collaborative development and consultation.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

The Policies have been reviewed by a Readers' Panel including officers, trade union representatives and the Senior Leadership Team. The policies have also been reviewed by the Member Policy Development Panel. Their feedback has been incorporated into the final drafts.

Reputation

The Council recognises the importance of supporting its workforce and managing the workforce in a positive way. The policies aim to achieve that, thereby enhancing the reputation of the Council as an employer.

Contracts

None.

Crime and Disorder

None

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

The policies support inclusivity and employee wellbeing, particularly through the introduction of the Menopause policy and consolidation of family leave provision.

Health and Wellbeing

The Menopause Policy, Drugs and Alcohol Policy and Volunteer Policy updates contribute positively to employee health and wellbeing.

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

Not Undertaken

Acronyms

PSPS – Public Sector Partnership Services
SHDC – South Holland District Council

Appendices

Appendix A	Drugs & Alcohol Policy
Appendix B	Menopause Policy
Appendix C	Family Leave Policy
Appendix D	Disciplinary Policy
Appendix E	Adverse Weather Policy
Appendix F	Volunteer Policy

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author:	Rachel Robinson, Group Manager – Organisational Development. rachel.robinson@e-lindsey.gov.uk
Signed off by:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Approved for publication:	Councillor Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder – Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services.

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Drugs and Alcohol at Work Policy and Procedure



Policy Title	Drugs and Alcohol at Work Policy
Policy Author	HR Team - PSPS
Policy Issue date	August 2025
Policy Review date	August 2029, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Policy Readers Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service/SHDC Council

Drugs and Alcohol at Work Policy and Procedure

Introduction

This policy sets out the Council's approach to managing alcohol or drug misuse at work.

The Council is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all employees and others affected by our activities. It is crucial that employees conduct themselves in an appropriate, professional, and responsible manner at work, and that alcohol or drug misuse does not pose a health and safety risk.

The Council acknowledges that alcohol or drug dependence is a medical condition. If you disclose, or we suspect, that you have an alcohol or drug problem, we will adopt a non-judgmental and supportive approach to help you get the assistance you need.

The policy does not form part of the contract of employment. The Council reserves the right to conduct alcohol and drug testing of its employees under this policy.

Governing Legislation

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR);
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Employment Rights Act 1996;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971;
- Road traffic Act 1988

Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following HR policies and procedures:

- Code of Conduct for Council Employees
- Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

Aim

This policy aims to:

- Ensure the safety of all employees, contractors, and visitors by establishing clear rules regarding the use and possession of alcohol and drugs.
- Support those who have reported a problem with alcohol or drug dependence.

Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to all employees of the Council, whether they are fixed-term, permanent, full, or part-time.

The Drugs and Alcohol at Work Policy provides a framework for consistent and fair practice in addressing alcohol and drug related issues in the workplace.

Contents

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Drugs and Alcohol at Work Policy and Procedure

1. Objectives of the Policy

- 1.1 To state clearly the Council's standards regarding alcohol consumption and drug use within the workplace.
- 1.2 To prevent accidents and impaired performance at work which may be alcohol or drug related.
- 1.3 To actively promote awareness and understanding of the effects of alcohol and drug related problems within the workplace, emphasising the potential dangers for both individual's health and work performance.
- 1.4 To provide a framework for dealing with alcohol and drug related problems, clarifying the role of People Managers managing these issues, and ensuring access to support for all involved.
- 1.5 To foster an environment where employees with alcohol or drug problems feel encouraged to approach their People Managers/supervisors and receive a positive and sensitive response, balancing their needs with those of the Council, and the requirement to provide a safe, appropriate, and high-quality service.

2. Key responsibilities

People Managers should:

- Ensure compliance with this policy and procedure, applying it effectively and fairly within their area of responsibility
- Seek advice and/or guidance from hr when appropriate
- Take a leading role in informing their employees of the policy
- Monitor changes in work responsibilities under the policy
- Monitor changes in work performance and attendance
- Encourage employees to seek help voluntarily
- Use performance/disciplinary measures appropriately

Employees should:

- Be responsible for reporting concerns to their People Manager.
- Understand the effects of alcohol and drugs on work and health.
- Recognise that covering up or colluding with colleagues with alcohol or drugs problems is counterproductive and can perpetuate the problem.
- Urge work colleagues to seek help if they have a problem, knowing that a positive and supportive approach will be offered.
- If worried about their own drinking or drug use, seek help from their People Managers, The HR Team, Occupational Health Service or outside agencies such as

confidential Counselling Services, Drugs and Alcohol Advisory Service or outside agencies

- Be familiar with the policy and procedures.

The HR Team will:

- Provide advice and assistance on implementation of the policy.
- Refer employees for assistance where appropriate
- Support people managers in managing employees with alcohol or drug problems.
- Advise on suitability of using capability/disciplinary procedures
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

3 Drug use

- 3.1 Drug use refers to the use of illegal drugs and the misuse, whether deliberate or unintentional, of prescribed drugs, non-prescribed drugs, legal highs, and substances such as, but not limited to, solvents.
- 3.2 Drugs can alter the way a person thinks, perceives, and feels and can lead to impaired judgement or concentration. Drug use can also result in the neglect of general health and well-being, which may adversely affect employee performance.
- 3.3 It is recognised that the misuse of legally prescribed and non-prescribed drugs or substances may also impair performance.
- 3.4 Signs of drug use are listed in Appendix A
- 3.5 It is not permitted for employees to be in possession, under the influence, deal in, or take drugs within classes A, B or C in the workplace, on duty or on call, unless prescribed by a doctor. A list of these drugs can be obtained from the [Gov.UK Website](#).
- 3.6 If an employee acts contrary to this policy in the workplace, they may be subject to disciplinary proceedings, which may be considered gross misconduct, following a full investigation by an independent Investigation Officer.
- 3.7 All employees must advise their People Manager if they are charged with or convicted of a drugs offence. If the People Manager is not informed, action may be taken under the Council's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.
- 3.8 Convictions of employees for drug or alcohol offences may damage public confidence in Council services, irrespective of the role performed by employees and whether the offence was committed at work or not. It is the responsibility of the disciplinary panel to determine if there is reputational damage to the Council as a result of the conviction. This ensures a fair and thorough assessment based on the specifics of each case.
- 3.9 Professional employees should also be aware that such convictions will be reported to their professional body. This is a standard practice to maintain professional standards and accountability. However, this should be balanced with the need for fair treatment and due process.

4 Alcohol Consumption in the Workplace

- 4.1 Employees are not permitted to be under the influence of alcohol whilst in the workplace, or on duty, including when on call, and must remain fit to work.
- 4.2 Employees are not permitted to drink alcohol in a public place whilst wearing a Council identification badge or uniform.
- 4.3 For celebrations, events or functions within the working day (e.g. retirements, awards ceremonies etc), permission may be sought in advance from a Chief Officer to allow the consumption of alcohol.
- 4.4 Employees should note that drinking alcohol before work and during meal breaks can impair performance and pose risk to the health and safety of themselves and others. There is a perceived link between the smell of alcohol and incompetence which can damage public confidence in Council services. Under no circumstances must employees be under the influence of alcohol when on duty.
- 4.5 If an employee acts contrary to this policy in the workplace, they may be subject to disciplinary proceedings, which may be considered gross misconduct, following a full investigation by an independent Investigations Officer.
- 4.6 Occupational Health advice may be sought to assess the employee's fitness for duty. Non-compliance with the referral may lead to disciplinary action.
- 4.7 If an employee is intoxicated, under the influence of alcohol, or exhibiting behaviour that indicates they could be placing themselves and others at risk at work, they will be sent home immediately. The People Manager should ensure that the employee will be able to reach home safely and, if required, arrange a lift.
- 4.8 If an employee is suspected to be in breach of this policy, they will be suspended on grounds of potential gross misconduct, on full pay, whilst an investigation is conducted and concluded.
- 4.9 Employees are reminded that alcohol consumption outside of work can also be detrimental to performance at work and may lead to further action.
- 4.10 Employees should be aware that consuming large amounts of alcohol can result in lingering effects the following morning. These effects may include impaired judgment, reduced coordination, and decreased reaction times, which can impact workplace safety and productivity. Employees are expected to ensure they are fit for work and not under the influence of alcohol or substances when reporting for duty. The Council reserves the right to take appropriate action if an employee is found to be under the influence while at work.
- 4.11 Employees who are required to drive as part of their duties should not consume alcohol before coming on duty or while on duty. It is an absolute requirement for a driver to be under the legal limit.
- 4.12 The Road Traffic Act 1988 makes it illegal for any person to drive or attempt to drive a motor vehicle while unfit to drive through the use of a substance, including prescribed and over-the-counter medication, as well as illegal drugs and alcohol. Employees are reminded that driving while over the legal limit may result in police involvement and potential legal action.
- 4.13 Occupational health will see employees who have been referred by their People Manager and will normally liaise with the employee's GP to arrange necessary treatments, involving specialists in the management of alcohol or drug misuse.
- 4.14 The People Manager will monitor the employee's progress whilst they are off sick and liaise with the employee and HR Team to facilitate their return to work.

5 Corporate Hospitality Events

- 5.1 Corporate hospitality events include those where an employee is attending on behalf of the Council or where the Council supports the employee's attendance.
- 5.2 Employees attending corporate hospitality events represent the Council and must remain capable and presentable. These events can be Council functions or may be externally arranged events.
- 5.3 Employees are expected to behave reasonably at such events, avoiding activities that may bring the Council into disrepute, cause embarrassment or create any libellous circumstances.
- 5.4 With prior approval from the appropriate Chief Officer, the consumption of alcohol at Corporate events may be approved. However, employees must not consume alcohol to excess, as they are representing the Council and should remain capable and presentable throughout the event.

6 Operation of the Policy

- 6.1 All Employees are subject to the policy in various ways, such as:
 - 6.1.1 Voluntarily seeking help from a People Manager, or outside agency
 - 6.1.2 Showing signs of an alcohol or drug related problem, which may manifest itself in a variety of ways (see Appendix A).
- 6.2 In certain areas within the Council, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs may constitute a serious hazard or be illegal, such as driving a vehicle. In such instances being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is unacceptable and disciplinary action will be pursued, potentially resulting in summary dismissal.
- 6.3 Any breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence. However, the Council will always consider the circumstances of each case, including whether an employee is receiving support for a drug or alcohol-related problem, before deciding on the appropriate action.
- 6.4 The Council accepts that if an employee has an alcohol or drug related problem affecting work performance, confidential guidance and assistance should be offered. Such guidance and assistance may come from the People Manager/supervisor or any of the departments/agencies listed below. Medical suspension may be appropriate and will be determined by the Assistant Director.
- 6.5 When discussing such problems with employees, managers should prioritise assisting the individual concerned. If time off for treatment is recommended, the HR Team should be advised. Together with the People Manager, they will assure the employee that all benefits and rights granted by the Contract of Employment are safeguarded during the treatment period. Any help, advice, or treatment may be recorded as sick leave or medical appointments.
- 6.6 The confidentiality of employee's records will be preserved, except where individual cases must be reported to a particular professional governing body.

- 6.7 If support and encouragement have been given over a reasonable period and poor performance continues, recourse to the Council's Disciplinary/Improving performance Policies & Procedures may be appropriate.
- 6.8 In all cases where an employee is being investigated under circumstances relating to drugs or alcohol, they are entitled to be supported by a Trade Union representative/officer or workplace colleague.
- 6.9 The most senior person in charge is responsible for being supportive to employees and following appropriate reporting procedures.
- 6.10 It is recognised that any prescribed medication can affect an employee's ability to carry out work safely. Employees must advise their People Manager or the HR Team if work performance is affected.
- 6.11 In the case of volunteers, the Service Manager will be the responsible officer. Employees/People Managers should refer any issues about possible inappropriate consumption of alcohol by volunteers to the service manager.

7 Drug and Alcohol Testing

- 7.1 Drugs and Alcohol testing will only take place with the written consent of the employee concerned.
- 7.2 If an employee is to be tested for drugs, it will be for those listed in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which might include other substances that could pose a risk to safety, such as Novel Psychoactive Substances. A positive result will mean that employee is above the levels in the UK Workplace Drug Testing Guidelines. If the employee tests positive, the Council will consider this as potential gross misconduct, pending further testing. If a medical condition is declared that may produce a false positive, medical guidance will be sought.
- 7.3 If an initial drug test result is positive, the sample will be sent to a certified laboratory for further testing. This additional testing will determine the specific levels and types of drugs present in the sample. The purpose of further testing is to confirm the accuracy of the initial result and provide detailed information about the substances detected. This ensures that any decisions made based on the test results are well-informed and fair
- 7.4 Drug tests may screen for a range of substances, including but not limited to:
 - Cannabis (THC)
 - Cocaine
 - Opiates (e.g., heroin, morphine)
 - Amphetamines (including methamphetamine)
 - Benzodiazepines
 - Barbiturates
 - Methadone
 - Phencyclidine (PCP)
 - Ecstasy (MDMA)

- 7.5 If an employee is to be tested for alcohol consumption, they must be below the legal drink drive limit, which is 0.8‰ BAC. If an employee tests at or above this level, the Council will consider this as potential gross misconduct.
- 7.6 With-cause alcohol and drug testing: An employee may be tested for alcohol and drugs in the following situations;
- Workplace Accident: Any involvement in a workplace accident, road traffic accidents (RTAs), or any incident resulting in physical or mental harm .
 - Near Miss Incident: Any incident that has caused or could have caused a danger to health or safety, including near misses where no harm occurred but there was a potential for injury or damage
- Testing will also be carried out where management has grounds to believe or suspect that the employee is or may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Please refer to **Appendix A** for signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol abuse
- 7.7 The People Manager is responsible for organising the testing with suitable provider.
- 7.8 Random alcohol and drug testing will be carried out on employees who work in safety-critical jobs, including those working with machinery, whose job duties involve driving, inclusive of pool car users and grey fleet users, or whose job involves a significant level of responsibility. This testing is conducted to ensure the safety and well-being of all employees and the public. Assistant Directors will determine the timing, focus, frequency, and sample size of random testing exercises, and sign off on the mechanism for selection.
- 7.9 Any employee who notices obvious signs of alcohol or drug abuse in a colleague should report their observations and/or suspicions in confidence to the HR Team or the People Manager.
- 7.10 Alcohol and drug testing will be carried out by qualified and competent personnel from an external alcohol and drug testing company, who will use accepted and reliable methods and ensure that tests are carried out with the least possible intrusion into employees' privacy.
- 7.11 Employees are advised that a request for an employee to undergo alcohol and drug testing does not indicate that they are under any suspicion of wrongdoing. Random testing is conducted to ensure compliance with the Council's policy and maintain a safe work environment. However, if the request for testing is based on reasonable suspicion, it means there are specific, observable signs or behaviours that suggest the employee may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In such cases, the People Manager will explain the grounds for suspicion and the potential consequences if the test result is positive.
- 7.12 An employee who unreasonably refuses to submit to an alcohol and drug test in accordance with Council Policies' will be subject to disciplinary action. If an employee refuses to comply with testing, they may be asked to leave the premises, and their failure to comply will be taken into account in respect of any formal investigation. Reasonable reasons might include medical conditions that contraindicate testing or religious beliefs. Unreasonable reasons could be a general refusal without valid justification
- 7.13 The outcome of a positive test will depend on the circumstances but may include disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, where:

- 7.13.1 The effects of the employee's alcohol or drug taking are or could be serious, for example if the employee works in a safety-critical job and their use of alcohol or drugs has or could lead to a risk to health and safety; or
- 7.13.2 A previous alcohol and drug test of the employee within the previous two years has produced a positive result.
- 7.14 If an employee has disclosed a problem with drug and/or alcohol misuse or dependency and is receiving medical help and support, the Council might test the employee on an ongoing basis to ensure they are safe to perform their normal job. The Council will determine the duration and frequency of ongoing testing based on individual circumstances, medical advice, and the nature of the employee's role.
- 7.15 People managers have the discretion to decide, based on business needs, whether to conduct drug testing on agency workers. Managers may choose to:
 - Test the agency worker in accordance with the Council's drug testing policy, or
 - Refuse the worker and refer them back to the agency for further action

8 Testing Process

- 8.1 If an employee is asked to take a drugs and/or alcohol test, it will be conducted in private, like a First Aid room or People Manager's office.
- 8.2 The person conducting the test will explain to the employee why they are being tested whether it is for random testing or due to reasonable suspicion, and how it will be done. The People Manager will explain the potential consequences if the test result is positive for alcohol or non-negative for drugs. The employee will be asked to complete a form to give consent to the test.
- 8.3 The employee can be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union representative. If the chosen companion is not within the hour, the Council will proceed with the test.
- 8.4 Alcohol tests will be conducted using an electronic breath test. If the result is zero, the test will conclude. If the result is above zero, the employee will be asked to wait 20 minutes and then provide another breath sample. The result of this second test will be considered final. If the employee chooses to not wait to do the second test, the Council will address this through the disciplinary process.
- 8.5 Tests will be arranged at the time of the accident or incident, or as soon as possible thereafter. Employees will be suspended from work duties until the test is completed.
- 8.6 Employees will be given reasonable notice before testing, except in cases where immediate testing is necessary for safety reasons. This ensures that employees are aware of the testing process and can prepare accordingly
- 8.7 If the result of the second alcohol test is positive and above the legal limit, the Council will typically suspend the employee from work on the grounds of safety. The employee will be invited to a meeting under the disciplinary process.
- 8.8 Drug tests will initially be conducted by a urine test. If the result is negative, the test will conclude, and the sample will be disposed of securely. If the result is non-negative, the remaining sample will be sent to a laboratory for analysis.

8.9 While awaiting the results of the analysis, the employee will typically be suspended from work on the grounds of safety. Depending on the analysis results, the Council may then invite the employee to a meeting under the disciplinary process. Support mechanism will be provided to the employee, and all employees have access to an employee assistance programme (EAP) throughout all stages of the procedure, which provides external, confidential, free-of-charge support, 24/7 all year round, including counselling, which may assist them with the process. Details are available on the Council's' intranet or from HR (HR@pspl.co.uk) and will be highlighted in key correspondence with the employee during the process.

9 Support

Occupational Health

9.1 If the Council suspect that an employee has an alcohol or drug problem, or the employee informs their People Manager of a drug or alcohol problem, the Council may refer to Occupational Health. Occupational Health can advise on the type of support that may be appropriate and may also signpost external sources of help and advice.

Employee Assistance Programme

9.2 Help and support are available through the Council's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). EAP provides access to speak to an independent adviser on a confidential basis. To access the EAP website, go to [[CareFirst Lifestyle - CareFirst Lifestyle](#) with username and password].

External Sources of Help

9.3 Various organisations provide help and support relating to alcohol or drug dependence, including:

- [Alcohol Change](#); A national charity working to reduce problems caused by alcohol;
- [Drinkaware](#); An independent charity that works with others to help reduce alcohol-related harm by helping people make better choices about their drinking;
- [Drinkline](#); A free confidential helpline for people who are concerned about their drinking;
- [FRANK \(Talk to Frank\)](#); Offers confidential help and advice on drugs;
- [The Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#); Provides guidance on managing drug and alcohol abuse at work and signposts available help and support.
- [We are with you](#) – Provides free. Confidential support with drugs, alcohol and mental health

9.4 Managers should engage in supportive conversations when they suspect an employee has a substance use problem. This includes discussing the availability of support and the possibility of time off for treatment.

10 GDPR – Data Protection and Privacy

- 10.1 Alcohol and drug testing will be conducted in accordance with an impact assessment to ensure that testing is necessary and proportionate. Testing is carried out to ensure the health and safety of workers and other.
- 10.2 All possible measures will be put in place to ensure the confidentiality of test results, and checks will be conducted to avoid any false results. This aligns with GDPR's principles of integrity and confidentiality, which require data to be secured against unauthorised access or breaches
- 10.3 Test results are processed in accordance with our data protection policy on processing special categories of personal data.
- 10.4 Access to test results is strictly limited to necessary personnel, such as the employee's People Manager and the HR Team. Unauthorized access to test results will be treated as a disciplinary matter and dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. We have arrangements with an external alcohol and drug testing company that uses accepted and reliable methods to ensure tests are carried out with minimal intrusion into employees' privacy
- 10.5 Test results are retained in accordance with our data protection policy on processing special categories of personal data. Positive alcohol and drug test results are retained only long enough for them to be investigated and dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.
- 10.6 Employees have several rights concerning their data, including the right to make a subject access request and rights to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. Further details of these rights and how to exercise them can be found in our data protection policy.

Appendix A – Indications of alcohol and drug related problems

There is no single characteristic that identifies a person with an alcohol or drug problem. Alcohol or drugs are only two of many possible reasons for deteriorating job efficiency. However, if the following characteristics occur in combination or as a pattern over a period of time, alcohol or drug-related problems may be indicated.

Absenteeism

- Multiple instances of unauthorized leave
- Excessive sick leave (including frequent self-certified or uncertificated sick leave)
- Frequent Monday and/or Friday absences
- Excessive lateness, e.g., returning late from meal breaks
- Leaving work early
- Increasingly improbable excuses for absence

Reporting to Work Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs

- Attending work in an obviously inebriated condition
 - Smelling of alcohol
 - Hand tremors
 - Increasingly unkempt appearance
 - Lack of personal hygiene
- (NB: This is a dismissible offence under the Council's Disciplinary procedure)

Deteriorating Job Efficiency

- Missed deadlines
- Mistakes
- Making bad decisions
- Alternating periods of high and low productivity
- Increasing general unreliability and unpredictability
- Difficulty in Concentrating
- High Accident Rate

Poor Relationships at Work

- Over-reaction to imagined or real criticism
- Irritability
- Complaints from colleagues
- Borrowing money from colleagues
- Avoidance of manager or associates

Dishonesty and Theft

(NB: Theft is a dismissible offence under the Council's Disciplinary procedures)

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Menopause Policy



served by One Team

South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

The Council recognises health and wellbeing as crucial to the successful delivery of our services. We are committed to promoting and supporting healthy living through internal health improvement initiatives, occupational health advice, and collaborative processes with individual employees to meet their physical and mental wellbeing needs at work.

This Menopause Policy provides guidance to the Council's People Managers and employees on the appropriate procedures for managing menopause-related issues in the workplace. The Council ensures this policy is fair, equitable, and transparent, with the needs of employees at its core. It is fully compliant with equality and diversity standards, ensuring care and consideration are given to the needs of our employees while balancing these with the Council's business requirements.

Policy	Menopause Policy
Policy Author	HR Team – PSPS Limited
Policy Issue date	August 2025
Policy Review date	August 2029, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Policy Readers Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service / SHDC Council

Menopause Policy

Introduction

The Council recognises that menopause can affect individuals in different ways. People may experience menopausal symptoms due to hormonal changes, and the impact can vary widely from person to person. The Council is committed to supporting all employees who are affected by menopause in the workplace.

This policy outlines the Council's approach to supporting employees experiencing menopausal symptoms, including peri menopause, menopause, and post menopause.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines for employees and People Managers on supporting menopausal symptoms at work. The policy objectives are:

- Ensure everyone understands menopause, can confidently have conversations, and are clear on the Council's policy and practices, supported by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Educate and inform People Managers about menopausal symptoms, and how they can support employees.
- Ensure employees feel confident to discuss menopause, ask for support and request reasonable adjustments to continue being successful in their roles.
- Reduce absenteeism due to menopausal symptoms.
- Assure employees that the Council is a responsible employer committed to supporting their needs during menopause.

Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees, excluding agency workers and contractors.

Our Commitment to You

The Council is committed to creating an open and supportive culture where employees feel comfortable discussing how menopause-related symptoms affect them at work and can ask for the support they need.

Menopause is a natural process that can often be managed through lifestyle adjustments. However, we recognise that for some, it can be a difficult and stressful time, as well as a sensitive and private matter. We understand that additional support may be needed to improve their experience and continued performance at work.

The Council is dedicated to ensuring all employees experiencing menopause are treated equally, fairly and with respect, whether temporary, part-time, or full-time employees.

Menopause Policy

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1. Responsibilities under this Policy – The Council

- 1.1 Create a culture where employees can talk about their symptoms and challenges of menopause.
- 1.2 Ensure all policies are inclusive and supportive of employees experiencing menopause.
- 1.3 Provide resources to People Managers and employees about menopause.

2. Responsibilities under this Policy – Employees

- 2.1 Be as open and honest as possible to ensure People Managers can offer the right support.
- 2.2 Take reasonable responsibility and care for your own health and wellbeing.
- 2.3 Uphold a positive working environment treating others with dignity and respect.
- 2.4 Utilise available resources and support systems provided by the Council.

3. Responsibilities under this Policy – People Managers

- 3.1 Be approachable, enabling employees to have open and honest conversations about how they are feeling.
- 3.2 Remember that every employee's issues are unique to them, do not make assumptions.
- 3.3 Provide practical support to employees experiencing menopause, such as implementing reasonable adjustments where practicable.
- 3.4 Maintain regular contact with employees (for example through 121 meetings) to ensure they are able to succeed within their role.
- 3.5 Do not feel you have to be an expert on matters; listen and take advice and guidance where needed.
- 3.6 Take account of the employees' and business' needs when dealing with requests.
- 3.7 Outline the support available, such as the Employee Assistance Programme.
- 3.8 Ensure confidentiality and sensitivity when discussing menopause-related issues.

4. Responsibilities under this Policy – PSPS Human Resources Team.

- 4.1 Provide accurate and informative advice to People Managers to enable them to support employees.
- 4.2 Support, inform and advise employees.
- 4.3 Ensure up to date knowledge of employment law in relation to menopause.
- 4.4 Facilitate guidance from health professionals, such as Occupational Health, where required.

5. Menopause Overview

Menopause is a natural biological stage in a person’s life, marking the end of menstruating and significant hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen.

Menopause typically occurs between the ages of 45 to 55 and lasts between four and eight years. However, symptoms can start earlier due to illness or other factors and vary greatly among individuals.

Menopausal symptoms may not affect everyone in the same way.

Perimenopause: The time leading up to menopause when symptoms may begin, often before menopause starts.

Post-menopause: The period after menopause, starting when a person has not had a period for 12 consecutive months.

6. Menopausal Symptoms

Menopausal symptoms can be both physical and mental, varying in severity and impact. Not everyone will experience every symptom, and the frequency and nature of symptoms can be unpredictable, significantly affecting personal and working life.

Physical Symptoms		Mental Symptoms
Hot Flashes	Irregular Menstrual Cycle	Problems with memory and/or concentration (Brain Fog) Changes to mood such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low mood• Anxiety• Mood Swings• Low Self-Esteem/Confidence• Panic Disorder• Irritability
Fatigue	Breast Soreness	
Palpitations	Changes in Taste	
Headaches / Migraines	Bloating	
Difficulty Sleeping	Thinning Hair	
Night Sweats	Dizzy Spells	
Muscle Aches / Joint Pain	Body Odour	
Weight Gain	Irregular Heartbeat	
Dry / Itchy Skin	Chills	
Urinary Tract Infections	Body Changes	

Please note that this list is not exhaustive, and employees may experience other physical and mental symptoms.

7. Impacts of Menopause

Menopausal symptoms can negatively affect relationships, whether the employee is experiencing symptoms or is close to someone who is. This can lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation and feeling misunderstood, both at home and work.

Employees may face additional pressures such as supporting children or ageing parents which can be overwhelming when combined with hormonal changes. This can result in feelings of sadness, unexplainable irritability, lack of motivation and loss of confidence.

8. Complications

After menopause, the risks of developing certain medical conditions increase, including:

- Cardiovascular disease: Declining estrogen levels increase the risk of heart and blood vessel diseases.
- Osteoporosis: Bones become brittle and weak, increasing risk of fractures. Rapid bone density loss can occur.
- Urinary Incontinence – Loss of elasticity in vaginal and urethral tissues, sudden urges to urinate (urge incontinence), involuntary urine loss (urge incontinence), or involuntary urine loss with coughing, laughing, or lifting (stress incontinence). Urinary tract infections may also become more frequent.

9. Sickness Absence

The Council does not expect employees who are unwell to work, including those unwell due to menopause symptoms.

If employees are sick and unable to work, they should follow the procedure set out in the Council's Absence and Sickness Management Policy and Procedure. Whilst employees do not have to disclose that their absence is related to the menopause, we encourage openness to ensure the Council are able to provide the appropriate support.

10. Requesting Support at Work

Employees struggling at work due to menopausal symptoms are encouraged to speak to their People Manager. If they do not feel comfortable doing so, they can contact a member of the HR Employee Relations team by e-mailing hr@pspsl.co.uk.

To ensure the right support, employees should be as open as possible about their difficulties. Any health-related information shared by employees will be treated sensitively and confidentially and only shared with HR if additional support is required.

11. Guidance for People Managers

11.1 Conversations with Employees

Regular, informal conversations between People Managers and employees can facilitate discussions about menopause-related issues. Listening and responding sympathetically can make a significant difference in how employees cope with work and menopause and helping to identify support that can make a real difference. This support may enable employees to continue working productively and remain at work.

It is important to note that employees experiencing menopausal issues (directly or indirectly)

may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed to approach their People Manager. However, if a People Manager is aware of the symptoms associated with menopause and how this can affect a person, this can greatly assist in promoting an environment where employees feel more confident to seek support. People Managers should encourage employees to discuss any health concerns with their GP.

People Managers will:

- Maintain confidentiality and handle health information sensitively.
- Allow sufficient time for conversation and encourage openness.
- Explore ways to support employees and agree on an action plan (please see Appendix 1 for a discussion template).
- Provide details of available support and external services.

12. Support Available

12.1 Occupational Health

If menopause symptoms adversely affect employees they may be referred to Occupational Health, with their consent.

Occupational Health can advise on the impact of symptoms and recommend appropriate adjustments. Occupational Health may also signpost employees to external sources of help and advice.

12.2 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The Council's EAP offers a free confidential counselling and support service available 24/7.

12.3 Maximus

Maximus provides support for mental health concerns related to menopause, helping employees stay in or return to work.

13. Adjustments During the Menopause

Employees are encouraged to discuss necessary adjustments with their People Manager.

The Council is committed to exploring reasonable adjustments, where practicable, and aims to support employees in succeeding in their roles. Adjustments might include:

13.1 Flexible Working

Temporary flexible working arrangements may include working from home, adjusting start and finish times, or taking more frequent breaks. Employees should discuss and agree on these adjustments with their People Manager

The Council are committed to facilitating, where possible, taking into account service requirements, temporary flexible working arrangements and when implemented they will continue to monitor them to ensure they remain relevant, and the service can accommodate them.

Employees who are considering a permanent change to working arrangements should refer to the Council's Flexible Working Policy for the process to apply.

13.2 Working Environment

Where employees feel their working environment is exacerbating their menopausal symptoms, they are encouraged to discuss this with their People Manager.

Practical adjustments, such as moving the workstations to cooler areas, or closer washroom facilities can be considered to ensure comfort at work.

13.3 Quiet Place to Work

Employees needing a short break to manage symptoms, or take medication, should discuss this with their People Manager who will accommodate it, where practicable. Additionally, the Council recognises that menopause symptoms can make it harder to concentrate in busy environments and may reduce tolerance to day-to-day noise. Employees experiencing such symptoms are encouraged to discuss possible adjustments with their People Manager, including the option to work in quieter offices or designated quiet spaces within the workplace where feasible.

Appendix 1 – Confidential Discussion Template

Employee		Job Title	
People Manager		Service	

Date of Discussion	
Summary of Discussion	

Agreed Actions/Adjustments	
Date of Next Review Meeting	

Employee Signature	
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People Manager Signature	
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Family Leave Policy



Policy Title	Family Leave Policy
Policy Author	HR Team - PSPS Limited
Policy Issue date	August 2025
Policy Review date	August 2029, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Policy Readers Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service / SHDC Council.

Family Leave Policy

Introduction

The Council is fully committed to helping working parents balance the needs of work and family life and appreciates the importance of providing greater choice for parents in how they arrange parental care.

Family leave is available to all employees within the Council whether you have a permanent or temporary contract and irrespective of your work pattern, as long as you meet the requirements for the specific leave you are applying.

This policy sets out the rights, responsibilities, and eligibility for employees who are new parents or who are expecting a child either by birth, adoption, surrogacy and/or foster care.

This policy applies to all Council employees outlines the provisions for:

- [Maternity leave and pay](#)
- [Adoption and surrogacy leave and pay](#)
- [Paternity and nominated carers leave and pay](#)
- [Shared parental leave and pay](#)
- [Parental leave \(unpaid\)](#)

We recognise that, from time to time, employees may have questions or concerns relating to their rights. It is our policy to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. As these provisions are complex, employees should clarify the relevant procedures with their People Manager or the HR Team to ensure that they are followed. This policy ensures compliance with equality, diversity & inclusion, making sure consideration is given to the needs of employees, balancing these with the needs of the Council.

Scope

The Council is committed to ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation. The purpose of this 'Family Leave Policy' is to provide an opportunity for our employees to integrate the development of a career with family responsibilities. In addition to this 'Family Leave Policy' the Council provides a suite of 'Family Friendly' policies aimed at supporting employees to achieve work/life balance.

- [Time off Work Policy](#)
- [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [Agile Working Policy](#)

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1. Pregnancy and Maternity

This section details all employment related matters regarding pregnancy and maternity.

1.1. Health and safety

It is essential that particular attention is paid to the health and safety requirements of employees who are pregnant, have given birth within the previous 6 months, or who are breastfeeding. To ensure this happens, it is important that your People Manager is made aware that you are pregnant as soon as possible. If risks cannot be mitigated sufficiently, the Council may consider medical suspension or redeployment to ensure the safety of the employee and their child. They should then carry out specific risk assessments and review them regularly using the guidance and template available on SharePoint - [Health and Safety](#). Further information is available in the [Health and Safety Executive's guidance on protecting pregnant workers](#). The legal protections also apply to transgender men, non-binary people, and people with variations in sex characteristics, or who are intersex. If you receive medical advice that recommends adaptations to your working environment, or if you have concerns relating to your work, then you should inform your People Manager immediately. Your People Manager can contact HR for support and advice.

1.2. Notification of Pregnancy

As your employer, it helps us to support you throughout your pregnancy if we are aware that you are expecting a baby. As soon as you feel comfortable to do so, you must inform your People Manager that you are pregnant. Managers will keep information regarding an employee's pregnancy confidential. It remains up to the employee if or when they announce their pregnancy to colleagues. This is important as there may be health and safety considerations to make around the role. As soon as you receive your maternity certificate known as MatB1 form, you should complete the 'Notification of Maternity Leave' form on the [HR and Payroll Portal](#) no later than 15 weeks' before the due date. If this is not possible, you should inform us as soon as you are able to. You must confirm:

- that you are pregnant
- the expected week of childbirth
- the date that you want to start maternity leave; this date cannot be any earlier than 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth; and
- Provide a certificate from a registered medical practitioner or a certified midwife, confirming the expected week of childbirth.

1.3. Antenatal Care

You will be granted reasonable paid time off as appropriate for antenatal appointments arranged on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, including scans. You must be able to provide evidence of any such appointments upon request. You should discuss time off with your People Manager and submit the request via the Employee Self Service System

1.4. Sickness

If you are off sick during pregnancy, you are obliged to follow the normal sickness absence procedures. If your sickness is pregnancy-related you should inform your People Manager. Sickness during pregnancy will be recorded; however, pregnancy-related sickness will not be counted towards triggers as set out in the Absence and Sickness Management policy. If you are absent from work partly or wholly due to pregnancy in the 4 weeks before your baby is due, your maternity leave will be automatically triggered the day after your first day off.

1.5. Maternity Provisions

Maternity provisions refer to the leave and pay to which all pregnant employees may be entitled, and their right to resume employment with the Council following the period of leave. All employees have the right not to be subjected to a detriment on the grounds of pregnancy, childbirth, or maternity, irrespective of hours of work or service and have the right to demand a written statement of the reasons for dismissal if dismissed while pregnant. There is no distinction between live and still births in the granting of 'Maternity Leave.

Statutory Maternity Leave (SML) is a minimum level of entitlement of up to 52 weeks leave and is broken into:

- Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) - the first 26-week period of maternity leave entitlement

- Additional Maternity Leave (AML) - the remaining 26-week period of maternity leave entitlement

If you are on a temporary contract your maternity leave will expire on the termination of your contract.

Your maternity leave can start from up to 11 weeks before your baby is due or the day you give birth. You must provide 28 days' notice of your intention to start maternity leave, where reasonably practicable. If your baby arrives earlier, contact your People Manager as soon as possible, and refer to the section on early birth. It is up to you to decide how much of the 52 weeks' 'Maternity Leave' you wish to take; the law requires that a minimum of two weeks' leave must be taken from the date of childbirth. If you are still working and the baby is born prematurely, 'Maternity Leave' will start from the day immediately after the date of the birth of the baby. After the compulsory 2-week 'Maternity Leave' period that follows the birth of the baby, the remaining leave may, subject to the eligible criteria, be transferred or shared under the provision of 'Shared Parental Leave'. If the baby is stillborn after the twenty fourth week of pregnancy, or if the baby is born alive but dies after birth, the birthing parent still qualifies for their right to a 52 week 'Maternity Leave Period'.

Maternity Leave and pay are separate entitlements.

Maternity leave is a "day one" entitlement. Entitlement to 'Maternity Pay' provisions will depend on your length of service, and on whether or not you return to work following the period of Maternity Leave.

1.6. Maternity Pay Entitlements

There are 3 ways in which your maternity pay is calculated depending on your service length. Payments will be subject to deductions for income tax, NI and pension.

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) you must:

- Have average earnings above the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) for the 8 week "relevant" period between weeks 17- 25 of the pregnancy. The LEL is the amount you have to earn before you are treated as paying National Insurance contributions. -

If you satisfy the above criteria, then You will be eligible to:

- 39 weeks statutory paid Maternity Leave
- Followed by 13 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave

If you qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay you will receive:

- 90% of your average weekly earnings (before tax) for the first 6 weeks
- Followed by 33 weeks paid at the Government SMP Rate or 90% of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower)
- Followed by 13 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave

For further details relating to Statutory Maternity pay, please visit [Maternity pay and leave: Pay - GOV.UK](#)

To qualify for **Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP)** you must:

- Be employed by the Council continuously for at least 52 weeks into the 11th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC)
- Have average earnings above the LEL (Lower Earnings Limit) for the 8 week “relevant” period between weeks 17- 25 of the pregnancy. The LEL is the amount you have to earn before you are treated as paying National Insurance contributions.

If you qualify for ‘Occupational Maternity Pay’ you will receive:

- 90% pay for the first 6 weeks of ‘Occupational Maternity Leave
- Followed by 12 weeks paid at 50% of their average weekly earnings (before tax) in addition to the Government SMP Rate
- Followed by 21 weeks paid at the Government SMP Rate or 90% of their average weekly earnings (whichever is lower)
- Followed by 13 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave

****If you satisfy the above criteria, and half pay plus SMP does not exceed your normal weekly pay entitlement, then you will be eligible to ‘Occupational Maternity Pay’ of 12 weeks of half pay in addition to ‘Statutory Maternity Pay’.***

Occupational Maternity Payments made by the Council during ‘Maternity Leave’ shall be made on the understanding that you will return to employment with the Council for a period of at least equivalent to 13 weeks at the number of hours for which half pay was calculated upon following a period of ‘Maternity Leave’. Should you choose not to return to work, then the Council may request that you repay the ‘Occupational Maternity Pay’ Payments made. ‘Statutory Maternity Pay’ is not repayable.

You can choose to hold this payment in abeyance should you be undecided about a return to work at the cessation of your maternity leave. Holding the payment in abeyance simply means not receiving this payment until you return to work after your period of maternity leave. However, if you decide to take Occupational Maternity Pay during maternity leave and do not return to work at the end of a period equivalent to 13 weeks at the number of hours for which half pay was calculated upon, you will be required to repay their Occupational Maternity Pay.

If you do not qualify for ‘Occupational Maternity Pay’ or ‘Statutory Maternity Pay’ you may qualify for ‘Maternity Allowance’. This is based on your earnings and is a state benefit.

‘Maternity Allowance’ can be claimed via your local Jobcentre Plus and further guidance can be found on the Government Website.

1.7. Surrogacy

If you are acting as a surrogate, you are entitled to the same maternity leave and pay. If someone is acting as surrogate for you, you are not entitled to maternity leave or pay, as entitlement is dependent on actual pregnancy and production of a MATB1 certificate.

1.8. Birth

You (or someone on your behalf) should notify your People Manager as soon as possible after the birth.

1.9. Early birth

If your baby is born before the start of your planned maternity leave, your maternity leave and payment of your SMP will commence the day after your baby was born.

1.10. Miscarriage

If a miscarriage happens in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy, there is no entitlement to maternity leave. However, as many see this as a bereavement, you should be supported in the same way. Any sickness absence should be categorised as 'pregnancy related' and not counted towards sickness triggers. Employees should be granted reasonable paid time off for any medical appointments related to the miscarriage. A miscarriage after 24 weeks is classed as a stillbirth.

1.11. Stillbirth/Death of a baby after birth

In the tragic event of giving birth to a stillborn baby, you are still entitled to maternity leave if the birth happens after 24 weeks of pregnancy. As with an early birth, should this happen before the planned start date of the maternity leave, your maternity leave and payment of SMP would commence the day following the stillbirth. If the stillbirth occurs before the end of the 24th week of pregnancy, you should take sick leave or special leave if appropriate. If your baby is born alive but then later dies, you are entitled to maternity leave.

1.12. Keeping in touch (KIT) days

Keeping in Touch (KIT) days are designed to encourage a smooth return to work for you following your maternity leave and allow you to return to work for up to 10 days without bringing your maternity leave to an end. KIT days are not compulsory and must be arranged by mutual agreement between you and your People Manager. Even if you don't have any KIT days, you may find it beneficial to keep in touch more informally during your maternity leave. Any work done, whether it is a one-hour team meeting, a two-hour training session, or a full day, would be classed as one of your KIT days. Your People Manager must record when your KIT days have been taken and the number of hours you worked on Employee Self Service System. You will be paid at your current spine point or rate of pay for the hours you work so your People Manager must enter details of these hours in order for you to be paid correctly. Your SMP will be offset against your earnings on a KIT Day.

1.13. Returning from Maternity Leave

You may return to work at any time during your maternity leave, subject to taking 2 weeks' compulsory maternity leave, which commences from the birth of the baby. No notification is required if you intend to return to work at the end of the maternity leave (52 weeks). However, if you choose to return before the end of the 52 weeks, you must give 21 days' notice in writing to your People Manager and HR. If insufficient notice is given, your department may postpone your return to ensure the required notice.

If you have notified us of your date of return but cannot return to work because of sickness, you are required to produce a doctor's certificate before the notified date of return. If you haven't yet informed us of your date of return, you must produce a Doctor's certificate at the expiry of your maternity leave period. At this stage, normal contractual sick pay arrangements apply.

You will be entitled to return to the post that you now occupy or a suitable alternative post where for some reason, e.g. redundancy or restructure, it is not practicable for you to return to the original post. If you wish to return to work on a job share or part time basis, it is important that you apply for this in line with the [Flexible Working Policy](#) at the earliest opportunity. If your request is agreed, you will be entitled to retain the 12 weeks ½ pay that you received during your maternity leave, as long as you work for at least 13 weeks upon your return.

You must return to work no later than 52 weeks after starting maternity leave, unless one of the following applies:

- You are not well enough to return to work; if this is the case then you should follow the guidance set out in the Council's 'Managing Sickness Absence Policy'. You are not well enough to return to work; if this is the case then you should follow the guidance set out in the Council's 'Absence, Sickness Management Absence Policy & Procedure'.
- Your return is delayed due to a statutory requirement prohibiting you from working in order to protect your health or that of your baby i.e. if there was a risk to you in the workplace that could affect breastfeeding your baby. if there was a risk to you in the workplace that could affect you breastfeeding your baby. Council may consider medical suspension or redeployment to ensure the safety of the employee and their child
- You choose to take time off under the 'Parental Leave Policy', if they are eligible to do so You choose to take time off under the 'Parental Leave Policy', if you are eligible to do so

Should you choose not to return to work at the end of 'Maternity Leave' then you should provide the minimum written notice as specified in your contract of employment.

1.14. Breastfeeding

The Council is required to provide an appropriate area for parents to rest and express milk. Toilets are not considered suitable for this. A risk assessment should be completed in line with health and safety guidelines, as referred to above. A suitable arrangement should be in place for parents to store milk, should they choose to express during the working day.

1.15. Holiday Entitlement

You are allowed to take your full holiday entitlement in the year in which your maternity leave falls on the understanding that you reimburse the Council as appropriate on a pro rata basis should you choose not to return to work. This applies if you are entitled to paid or unpaid maternity leave. You will also be entitled to any fixed holidays such as Bank Holidays

that fall during your paid or unpaid maternity leave. These fixed holidays will be treated as annual leave for this purpose and taking these days as leave, either before or after maternity leave, must be requested in the usual way. Your People Manager will advise HR of any bank holidays not taken. If your maternity leave straddles two leave years you will be permitted to carry over any untaken leave into the next leave year, should the need arise. Your People Manager will need to inform HR so the Employee Self Service System can be updated. Prior to your return to work following maternity leave HR will assess whether or not you are owed any annual leave entitlement. You cannot insist on payment for untaken annual leave unless you are leaving the Council. These arrangements will also apply to employees taking adoption leave and additional paternity leave.

1.16. Pension Contributions

Employees on 'Maternity Leave' who are in receipt of full pay will continue to have 'Employee Pension Contributions' deducted in the usual way. During periods of half pay or 'Statutory Maternity Pay', 'Employee Pension Contributions' will be deducted according to the total amount of pay received. The Council will make up the 'Employee's Pension Contributions' and pay the 'Employers' Pension Contributions' as if the employee were on full pay for the period.

During periods of unpaid leave, i.e. 13 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave, the Council will only pay pension contributions if the employee does.

1.17. Salary Progression

You will continue to receive spinal point increases up to the top of your Grade whilst on 'Maternity Leave'.

1.18. Continuity of Service

The contract of employment continues throughout any period of 'Maternity Leave'.

Continuity of service will not have been broken by a period of unpaid leave under the maternity provision, therefore entitlement to notice periods, holidays and sick leave which were accrued at the beginning of 'Maternity Leave' will not be lost.

1.19. Communications

It is recommended that you and your People Manager make arrangements to maintain reasonable contact during Maternity Leave in order to keep you informed of important developments at work and to discuss plans for returning to work. People Managers should draw particular attention to any changes in structures within the department and ensure that the employee is aware of any possible promotion opportunities. Employees on 'Maternity Leave' should also ensure that they keep themselves informed as appropriate for example by regularly reviewing the Council's current vacancies on the website. Maternity leave does not affect the employee's eligibility for applying for promotions.

2. Time off to Accompany a Pregnant employee to Antenatal Appointments

- 2.1. If you are an expectant parent (biologically) or the partner (including same sex) of a pregnant employee, you are entitled to take unpaid time off work to accompany them to up to 2 of their antenatal appointments. “Partner” includes the spouse or civil partner of the pregnant employee or a person who expects to take a parental role in the child’s life. There is no qualifying period for Council employees – this entitlement begins from the first day of employment.
- 2.2. The right applies whether the child has been conceived naturally or through donor insemination. It also extends to those who will become parents through a surrogacy arrangement if they expect to satisfy the conditions for and intend to apply for a Parental Order for the child born through that arrangement.
- 2.3. If you are accompanying the expectant parent to their ante-natal appointments, you are entitled to unpaid leave up to 2 appointments, with each appointment capped at six and a half hours. The Council cannot request evidence of the antenatal appointments, such as an appointment card, as this is the property of the expectant parent. However, the Council can ask you to provide a declaration stating the date and time of the appointment, confirming your relationship with the expectant parent, or child, and verify that the time off is for the purpose of attending an antenatal appointment with the expectant parent, and verify that the time off is for an antenatal appointment advised by a registered medical practitioner, nurse or midwife.
- 2.4. Time off to accompany a pregnant woman or person for antenatal appointments must be recorded on the Employee Self Service System

3. Stillbirth or Miscarriage

- 3.1. The Council aim to be as flexible as possible to all employees who need to be away from work at such a difficult time. We take each employee’s personal circumstances into consideration to allow them a reasonable amount of time away from work.
- 3.2. The Council may grant up to 2 weeks (pro rata) bereavement leave if you have unfortunately suffered a miscarriage at less than 24 weeks pregnancy. Any time taken off after the initial 2 weeks will normally be processed as unpaid bereavement leave.
- 3.3. In exceptional circumstances, payment may be extended. You are advised to speak with your People Manager to confirm what options may be available for you.
- 3.4. Where a pregnancy ends in loss after 24 weeks the employee is entitled to maternity leave and maternity pay in full. Ten days (pro-rata) parental bereavement leave paid at contractual pay is available to parents and primary carers who lose a child through still birth after the 24th week of pregnancy.

4. Neonatal Care Leave and Pay

This policy outlines the entitlement to Neonatal Care Leave and Pay for employees whose babies require neonatal care, in accordance with the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023.

- 4.1. Employees are eligible for Neonatal Care Leave if they have a parental or other personal relationship with a child receiving neonatal care. This includes parents, those married to the baby's parent, or individuals expected to have responsibility for raising the child.
- 4.2. You are entitled to up to 12 weeks of Neonatal Care Leave if your baby requires neonatal care. This leave is in addition to existing maternity or paternity leave entitlements. During this leave, employees will receive statutory neonatal care pay, provided they meet the eligibility criteria.
- 4.3. Neonatal Care Leave must be taken within the first 68 weeks following the child's birth. The leave can be taken in non-consecutive periods of at least one week.
- 4.4. You must provide notice and evidence of your baby's need for neonatal care. This may include medical documentation similar to a MAT1B certificate.

5. Paternity Leave

This section provides a summary of rights in relation to Paternity provisions. Paternity provisions refer to the leave and pay to which employees are entitled to under the statutory provision, and their right to resume employment with the Council, following the period of Paternity.

5.1. Eligibility

Following the birth of the child/placement of a child for adoption, eligible employees will have the right to request paid paternity leave to care for their new child or support the adopter. To apply for paternity leave and pay you must complete the Notification of Paternity Leave of the [HR and Payroll Portal](#), and complete the declaration that you are the biological parent of the child, or the spouse, partner (including same sex partners) or civil partner of the birthing parent/other adopter and:

- have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing;
- will take time off work to support the parent/other adopter and/or the baby/adopted child will take time off work to support the birthing parent/other adopter and/or the baby/adopted child

Leave is available from the first day of employment but pay is subject to the qualification requirements as detailed below. A partner is defined as someone who is not an immediate relative and lives with their partner in an enduring family relationship. It may include a female partner in a same sex couple.

All employees seeking to take Paternity Leave and receive Paternity Pay must provide the Council with a copy of the MATB1 (Maternity Certificate) as soon as possible during the pregnancy.

5.2. Length of Paternity Leave

You can take either 1- or 2-weeks' leave. If you are taking 2 weeks, they can either be taken consecutively or separately. The amount of time is the same even if you have more than one child (for example twins). Leave cannot start before the birth. The start date must be one of the following:

- the actual date of birth
- a specified number of days after the birth
- a set date which is after the date of birth

Leave must finish within 52 weeks of the birth (or due date, if the baby is early).

If you are taking paternity leave because you are adopting, you can start your leave:

- on the date of placement
- an agreed number of days after the date of placement
- on the date the child arrives in the UK or an agreed number of days after this (overseas adoptions)

Leave must be taken within 52 weeks of the date of the placement or arrival.

5.3. Pay

During paternity leave you will be able to apply for Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) which is the same as the standard rate of Statutory Maternity Pay - the current rate can be found here [Paternity pay and leave: Pay - GOV.UK](#). To qualify for SPP you must continue to work with the Council right up until the baby is born or the child is placed for adoption. Employees who have average weekly earnings below £123 per week (gross) do not qualify for SPP. The Council also provides the option of paying one week's Occupational Paternity Pay, which is the equivalent of one week's full pay, to those employees who have been employed for 1 year at the beginning of the 11th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (this date can be found on the employee's partner's MATB1 form).

5.4. Notice of Intention to take Paternity Leave

You will be required to inform us of your intention to take paternity leave at least 15 weeks before the baby is expected or within seven days of the adopter being notified by their adoption agency that you have been matched with a child unless this is not reasonably practicable. You will need to inform us:

- Of the baby's due date or the date when the child is expected to be placed;
- Whether you wish to take one- or two-weeks' leave;
- When you want your leave to start.

You should give at least 28 days' notice of the date that you expect any payments of Statutory Paternity Pay to start.

You may also be entitled to take Shared Parental Leave in addition to the 2 weeks Paternity Leave. Please see the 'Shared Parental Leave' section within the policy' for more information and for how to apply.

6. Paternity Bereavement Leave

This applies to all employees from their first day of employment. It covers bereaved parents dealing with the loss of their child's parent during childbirth, as well as bereaved parents of adopted children and children born through surrogacy arrangements.

6.1. Leave Entitlement

Bereaved partners are entitled to up to 52 weeks of paternity bereavement leave. This leave can be taken consecutively or intermittently within 18 months of the loss, providing flexibility to manage personal and family needs during this difficult time.

6.2. Notification

You must notify your immediate People Manager and/or the Human Resources team as soon as possible regarding their need for paternity bereavement leave. Documentation, such as a death certificate, may be required to process the leave request.

6.3. Entitlement to Pay

During the first 10 working days of paternity bereavement leave, you will receive your regular rate of pay. For the remaining leave period, compensation will be in accordance with statutory paternity pay regulations.

6.4. Keeping-in-Touch Days

If you are on paternity bereavement leave, you are entitled to up to 10 keeping-in-touch days. These days allow you to work, attend training, or maintain contact with the workplace without affecting your leave entitlement.

6.5. Job Protection

If you take paternity bereavement leave you will be reinstated to your original job or an equivalent position with the same pay, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment upon your return.

6.6. Support Services

The Council offers counselling and support services to employees dealing with the loss of a child's parent. People Managers should reflect the Council's intent and demonstrate compassion and empathy towards staff throughout this difficult time and as far as possible offer any support they might need. The Council has a range of options in place to help support staff at these difficult times including:

- [Employee Assistance Programme](#)
- Occupational Health Service
- [Flexible Working Policy](#) to help staff during significant life events
- [Workforce wellbeing guidance](#) which includes links to local and national organisations who offer emotional wellbeing support

7. Shared Parental Leave (ShPL)

7.1. Shared Parental Leave (ShPL) should not be confused with unpaid Parental Leave, which is unaffected by ShPL. Unpaid parental leave is the entitlement to up to 18 weeks' unpaid leave for parents who have responsibility for a child aged up to 18, detailed within this policy. This section outlines the statutory right to take Shared Parental Leave (ShPL) to care for a child due to be born or placed for adoption, and the arrangements and notification requirements before a period of ShPL and the entitlement to pay during ShPL.

7.2. ShPL gives employees with caring responsibilities for babies or newly adopted children the opportunity to share up to 52 weeks' leave should they wish to do so. Parents taking ShPL can take leave in separate blocks, returning to work in between blocks, and can be on leave at the same time. Eligible employees are entitled to submit up to three 'period of leave' notices. Requests for continuous periods of leave will be granted. Employees and People Managers should, where possible, have an informal discussion prior to employees giving formal notification of intention to take ShPL so that entitlements to other types of leave and pay can be discussed, and to ensure that plans for any discontinuous periods of leave can be considered as early as possible.

7.3. Entitlement to Shared Parental Leave

To be entitled to Shared Parental Leave you must:

- be the biological parent or main adopter of the child, or the partner of the parent or main adopter (each will be referred to in this policy as a parent)
- have (or share with the other parent) the main responsibility for the care of the child;
- still be in continuous employment until the week before any ShPL is taken.
- leave is a "day one" entitlement, pay is subject to the qualification requirements as detailed below.

In addition, the other parent must:

- have average weekly earnings of at least £30 during at least 13 of the 66 weeks prior to the relevant week

If the other parent meets those conditions, but does not qualify for ShPL, you may be entitled to the whole ShPL period – the main advantage being the ability to request leave in different blocks and return to work in between those blocks.

If you want to calculate your entitlement to ShPL and ShPP you can do so at [Plan your Shared Parental Leave and Pay - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-your-shared-parental-leave-and-pay) To access your entitlement, you must also follow the statutory notification and information requirements detailed below.

7.4. Amount and Timing of ShPL

ShPL must be taken in blocks of at least one week and within a one-year period beginning with the date of the baby's birth or the child's placement for adoption. The maximum of 52 weeks' ShPL will be reduced by the number of weeks' maternity or adoption leave that has already been taken by the birthing parent or main adopter (or the number of weeks' statutory maternity/adoption pay, or maternity allowance already taken if the birthing parent or main adopter is not entitled to statutory maternity/adoption leave). After the birth of a child, it is compulsory to take two weeks' maternity leave, so in the majority of cases working parents will have the opportunity to split 50 weeks of ShPL.

ShPL is in addition to the statutory right to two weeks' paternity leave for parents and partners. If you wish to take maternity support leave or paternity leave you must do so before you take any ShPL.

7.5. Entitlement to Shared Parental Pay

In addition to the requirements regarding entitlement to leave outlined above, if you wish to claim shared parental pay (ShPP) within the one-year period following the baby's birth, you must have average weekly earnings equal to or above the Lower Earnings Limit over the eight-week period ending with the relevant week.

A maximum of 39 weeks' ShPP is payable, and this will be reduced by the number of weeks' statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance already taken by the parent or main adopter. The statutory ShPP is a standard weekly rate (or 90% of the employee's normal weekly earnings if this is lower) which is set by government each tax year.

The payment will be enhanced to include 12 weeks at half pay plus ShPP (subject to normal full pay not being exceeded) if the following conditions are met:

- ShPL to be taken as one continuous block;
- the occupational element must be repaid if you do not return to work for 3 months following your ShPL;
- in the event that both parents/adopters are employed by the Council the occupational element of 12 weeks half pay must be shared

To access your entitlement to ShPP you must follow the statutory notification and information requirements detailed below. Please consider carefully before joining any salary sacrifice schemes if you anticipate taking shared parental leave during the period of your agreement. This is because Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) is typically calculated based on average weekly earnings. Participating in a salary sacrifice arrangement will reduce your salary, and consequently, it will lower your ShPP.

7.6. Notification Requirements

The notification requirements for ShPL and ShPP are very specific and detailed.

Notice of entitlement and intention to take ShPL and ShPP

You must notify the Council in writing at least eight weeks before the start date of the first period of ShPL, but preferably sooner. You should do this by completing the form on the [HR and Payroll Portal](#) . The form will require the following information:

- Your name and your partner's name
- Your partners National Insurance number and DOB
- An indication of the start and end dates of the periods of ShPL and ShPP that you intend to take. This indication is not binding and can be amended at a later date.
- A declaration that you meet the conditions for entitlement to ShPL, the information provided is accurate and that you will notify the Council immediately if you cease to meet the conditions for entitlement.

A declaration from the other parent containing name, address and National Insurance number, confirmation that they meet the employment and earnings conditions, consents to the amount of leave the employee intends to take and will immediately inform you if cease to satisfy the employment and earnings conditions. You will receive written confirmation acknowledging the receipt of your notice of entitlement to take Shared Parental Leave (ShPL) and Shared Parental Pay (ShPP). After receiving this confirmation, you must book your leave through Employee Self-Serve.

When giving notice of entitlement this will include a Maternity/Adoption Leave Curtailment Notice which you, as the main adopter must sign to give your employer 8 weeks' notice of the date on which maternity/adoption leave is to end (or the date on which maternity/adoption pay is to end if you are not entitled to maternity/adoption leave).

If you are not entitled to ShPL but want to curtail your maternity/adoption leave and/or pay to free up the entitlement to ShPL for the other parent/adopter, you must also submit a curtailment notice. Your maternity allowance cannot be reinstated, so you are in effect giving consent for your partner to take the whole of any ShPP entitlement.

Notice of curtailment is usually binding, but may be revoked in the following circumstances:

- it becomes apparent that neither parent is entitled to ShPL or ShPP;
- if the curtailment notice was given before the birth and is revoked within six weeks of the birth (in this case another curtailment notice can be submitted);
- if the other parent dies.

In practice, at least the first period of ShPL will usually be identified in the initial notice of entitlement and intention to take ShPL . You are entitled to submit a maximum of a further two 'period of leave' notices – to do this email HR. Each notice must be given at least eight weeks before the start of a period of leave, stating the dates of the leave and the dates on which ShPP will be claimed, if applicable.

If the first 'period of leave' notice is given prior to the birth of a child, the notice may express the start date in relation to the date of birth, for example 'starting two weeks after the baby is born for a period of four weeks.

The Council reserves the right to ask for further information to support this request.

7.7. Confirmation of ShPL and ShPP

If a continuous period of leave is requested in each period of leave notice, you will be entitled to take that period of leave, and this will be confirmed in writing. If more than one period of leave is requested in a period of leave notice, your People Manager will seek to accommodate the request, but this cannot be guaranteed. Your People Manager will discuss the request with you to determine if it can be accommodated. If it cannot be accommodated, there may be an alternative pattern of leave which can be agreed, or the request may be refused. The People Manager's decision will be confirmed in writing.

If no agreement is reached within two weeks of the period of leave notice being submitted, you can:

- take the discontinuous periods of leave requested in one continuous block, beginning on the original start date
- take the continuous block starting on a new date, as long as the new date is later than the original start date, and you notify the Council of the new date within five days of the two-week period referred to above
- withdraw the request at any time up to the 15th day after it was originally made. If the request is withdrawn in these circumstances, it will not count as one of your three requests

7.8. Varying a Period of Leave

You are entitled to submit a request to vary a period of leave in the following ways:

- vary the start or end date as long as the variation is requested at least eight weeks before the original start date and the new start date;
- vary or cancel the amount of leave requested at least eight weeks before the original start date;
- request that a single period of leave become a discontinuous period of leave, or vice versa.

A variation will count as one of your three period of leave notices unless:

- it is made as a result of the child being born earlier or later than the expected week of childbirth;
- the Council has requested the variation
- the Council has agreed to accept more than three period of leave notices.

To cancel or vary a period of ShPL please email HR.

The usual eight-week notice requirement may be modified if your child is born early and the new start date for the period of leave is the same length of time following the birth as in the

original notice. In this case notice to vary the start date should be given as soon as reasonably practicable after the birth of the child.

7.9. Shared Parental Leave in Touch Days (SPLiT)

You may be asked to attend work on occasional days during your ShPL period. These days could be for training, to attend department meetings, or just for keeping in touch (SPLiT). You may work for up to 20 days without bringing the ShPL to an end but work during ShPL will not have the effect of extending your ShPL period. If you do work, you will be paid your normal rate of pay inclusive of any ShPP entitlement. You are under no obligation to work during ShPL, and the Council is under no obligation to offer work.

Any work done, whether it is a one-hour team meeting, a two-hour training session, or a full day, would be classed as one SPLiT day. You must record when SPLiT days have been taken and the number of hours worked. Payment will be at current spine point or rate of pay for the hours worked so your People Manager must enter details of these hours into the Employee Self Service System in order for you to be paid correctly.

The 20 SPLiT days available during ShPL are in addition to the 10 KIT days available during Maternity and Adoption Leave.

7.10. Terms and conditions during ShPL

Contractual benefits (apart from remuneration) will continue to be accrued during periods ShPL period.

Employees taking ShPL will continue to accrue contractual holiday entitlement.

Holiday entitlement accrued before ShPL

Entitlement to accrue holidays is not affected by ShPL and employees are entitled to accrue statutory and contractual holiday during the entire ShPL period.

Employees will be advised, prior to ShPL, of any holiday they are entitled to take before ShPL is due to start.

Holiday entitlement accrued during ShPL

Holiday entitlement continues to accrue during ShPL. Employees on ShPL will also be entitled to any fixed holidays such as Bank Holidays that fall during a period of ShPL. These fixed holidays will be treated as annual leave for this purpose and taking these days as leave must be requested in the usual way.

There may be discussions between People Managers and employees around the various options regarding holiday entitlement before a return to work. Requests to take annual leave should be made in compliance with the Council procedures for requesting annual leave.

7.11. Returning from ShPL

If you wish to return early from ShPL, or extend the period of your ShPL, you must notify the Council at least eight weeks' before both the original end date and the new end date.

If you return to work immediately after a period of ShPL which ,together with any statutory maternity/adoption leave you may have taken to care for the same child, was 26 weeks or less, you will return to work in the same job that you left.

If you return to work from a period of ShPL which, together with any maternity/ adoption leave you may have taken to care for the same child, was greater than 26 weeks, you will be entitled to return to the post that you now occupy or a suitable alternative post if, for some reason, e.g. redundancy or restructure, it is not practicable for you to return to the original post.

Your right to return means that you return on terms and conditions no less favourable than those that would have been applied if you had not been absent and with the same level of seniority, pension rights and other similar rights.

8. Ordinary Parental Leave (Unpaid)

8.1. An employee who is entitled to apply for parental leave is defined by the regulations as having ‘responsibility for a child’. This includes;

- A parent of the child
- The birthing parent
- Adoptive parent
- A Parent who was married to the other parent at the time of the birth or is registered as the child’s parent
- If not covered by the above, a parent who has acquired parental responsibility under the Children Act 1989
- The other parent if they were married to the birthing parent at the time of the birth or are registered as the child's parent
- If not covered by the above, the other parent if they have acquired parental responsibility under the Children Act 1989
- A legal guardian appointed under Section 5 of the Children Act 1989
- Nominated Carer (as defined in Appendix H of Local Conditions of Service), subject to production of documentary evidence of ‘responsibility for a child’ as defined below.

8.2. Agreements reached under the NJC for Local Government Services state that parental leave should also be extended to employees with parental responsibilities but who do not fall under the legal definition. This might include foster parents; adoptive parents prior to placement; grandparents with a significant parenting role.

8.3. A total of 18 weeks unpaid parental leave is available for eligible employees, per parent, per child, up to their 18th birthday. The aim of the leave is to support their child’s welfare, for example to:

- Spend more time with their children
- Look at new schools
- Settle children into new childcare arrangements
- Spend more time with family, such as visiting grandparent

8.4. A week is normally defined as an employee's contracted working week where this does not vary. Where the working pattern normally varies from week to week or over a longer period, or if the employee is normally required to work in some weeks and not others, a week is the total of all periods in which they work, divided by 52

8.5. Entitlement

To qualify to apply for parental leave you must:

- Have, or expect to have, responsibility for a child

An employee who qualifies to apply for parental leave is entitled to 18 weeks unpaid leave, in addition to leave granted under any other terms or conditions of service (except Maternity Support Leave), to be taken as follows:

- As block of a week or multiples of a week for a maximum of 4 weeks per year (per child), unless the child is disabled in which case it may be taken as individual days.
- The maximum of 4 weeks per year (per child) is the statutory guidance but can be varied with agreement.
- In patterns which provide a part time or reduced hours working arrangement for a period of time equivalent to taking 18 weeks leave.

Parental leave is an individual entitlement for each employee, meaning the statutory entitlement is attached to the employee, not each individual contract of employment. In circumstances where both parents, as defined in this policy, are employees, they may both apply to take parental leave, together or separately, in respect of the same child. You are entitled to apply for parental leave separately for each child for whom they have responsibility that meets the qualifying criteria.

8.6. Application Process

Every attempt should be made by you to give as much notice as possible with a minimum of 21 days' notice in writing required before the day on which you propose to take the leave. Employees should apply to HR specifying when the requested leave is to begin and end. In the case of multiple employments, you will be required to give notice to all relevant parties. You may apply to take parental leave immediately prior to or after annual leave, maternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave or maternity support leave.

If the parental leave is to be taken by a partner immediately after a child is born the notice must specify the expected week of childbirth, the amount of parental leave to be taken and be given at least 21 days before the beginning of the expected week of childbirth.

Parents/partners who wish to apply for paid maternity support leave or paternity leave and pay may continue to do.

If parental leave is to be taken immediately after a child is placed for adoption, the notice must specify the expected week of placement, the amount of parental leave to be taken and be given at least 21 calendar days before the expected week of placement, or as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Parental leave may be granted to you if you have not given the required notice in special circumstances at the discretion of the Head of Service. Such discretion shall not be unreasonably withheld.

It is the responsibility of both employees and relevant Supervisors/People Managers to keep accurate records in order to facilitate the granting of parental leave (to be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998).

8.7. Production of Evidence of Responsibility for a Child

The Council has the right to request to see reasonable evidence of the following:

- the child(ren)'s date of birth e.g. birth certificate
- an employee's responsibility or expected responsibility for the child(ren) e.g. Adoption papers

Evidence must be requested and produced prior to the granting of the initial period of parental leave for each child. Re-production of such evidence in respect of further requests for parental leave in respect of the same child may be necessary where the employing department changes or where an employee may have ceased to satisfy the qualifying criteria set down in the Regulations.

8.8. Postponement of the Timing of Parental Leave

By the Council

If you meet the qualifying conditions and give the required notice you are entitled to take the leave, and the request cannot be refused. In the case of multiple employments, agreement to take the leave will be subject to consultation between all relevant departments. Every attempt will be made to avoid postponement. In any event, leave shall not be postponed for more than three months except in exceptional circumstances.

However, in accordance with the Regulations, the Council may postpone the timing of parental leave if the operation of the business would be unduly disrupted. The Council may not postpone the parental leave in the following circumstances:

- Following maternity support leave
- Following maternity leave
- At the time of adoption, at times prior to adoption where the parent is required to be at home by the adoption process, or following adoption leave

In circumstances where the Council wishes to postpone a period of parental leave an employee must be notified in writing within 7 calendar days of receipt of the request for leave and the reason for the postponement.

The Council must consult with you with a view to coming to agreement over alternatives. These might include:

- A different pattern of leave – e.g. part time rather than full time
- A shorter or longer period of leave

- Alternative dates within a three-month period.

Where there is no agreement, the Council must as a minimum, permit the employee to take a period of leave of the same duration and beginning on a date determined in consultation with the employee no later than three months after the originally notified start date.

You may be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague during consultations with the Council.

By an Employee

You may postpone the timing or cancel a period of agreed parental leave where the Council considers that there are justifiable circumstances, for example:

- they no longer have responsibility for the child(ren) as defined by the regulations;
- if the leave was requested to cover a specific purpose (for example, absence of normal childcare arrangements, hospitalisation of child, absence of partner) and this need or purpose no longer exists.

In such circumstances an employee should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their manager. Where it is then agreed that the cancellation or postponement of an agreed period of parental leave is justifiable, you must request the postponement or cancellation in writing, stating the dates of the agreed period of parental leave they wish to cancel/postpone and their reasons for doing so.

In normal circumstances, you must allow a minimum of 7 calendar days to elapse before rebooking the leave.

In exceptional circumstances, consideration may be given to a request to extend the agreed period of parental leave, where the maximum parental leave has not yet been taken.

Upon receipt of the written notification of postponement/cancellation or extension, the manager must notify HR immediately, to ensure that the appropriate amendment to pay may be made without delay.

8.9. Right to Return

An employee has the right to return to the same job or, if that is not reasonably practicable, to another suitable and appropriate job, unless the leave is for 4 weeks or less and does not immediately follow additional maternity leave, in which case an employee has the right to return to the same job. Upon return to the workplace, an employee's terms and conditions must be no less favourable than they would have been had they not been absent from work. Periods of unpaid parental leave may have some effect on certain employee rights (e.g. pension fund) but will not affect continuous service.

Protection from Detriment/Unfair Dismissal/Redundancy

An employee is protected from detriment (i.e. an act, or failure to act) and dismissal or selection for redundancy on the grounds that they:

- took, or sought to take, parental leave
- declined to sign a workforce agreement, or
- performed functions or activities (or proposed to do so) as a workforce representative, or a candidate for election to representative, under the Regulations.

8.10. Deduction of Pay

Corresponding deductions will be made from an employee's remuneration in the next available pay period after notification. Wherever possible this will be in the same pay period as the leave is taken.

9. Foster Care and Placement Leave

9.1. The Council recognises and values the contribution that foster carers make to society and especially the lives of children in care. We understand that foster carers who do other work in addition to fostering need some flexibility in their working arrangements in order to meet the needs of their fostered child. The Council is committed to supporting employees who are a main or linked foster carer and those who are applying to be a foster carer with a local authority or independent fostering service. We will, wherever possible, create a fostering friendly organisation that offers flexible working arrangements which respond to the needs of employees who are foster carers.

9.2. This section of the policy sets out the additional time off that we will offer foster carers and those going through the approval process. It recognises that the process of seeking approval to become a foster carer can be lengthy and places a number of reasonable but demanding expectations upon prospective carers, particularly in relation to the training, assessment and approval process. It also recognises the circumstances when employees who are foster carers are taking on a placement/child under a short or long-term fostering arrangement.

9.3. Foster Care Leave

Foster care leave is available to you if you:

- are applying to become a foster carer
- are an approved foster carer and have a child in placement (or have had a child in placement for 75% of the previous 12 months)

The Council values and will support you by giving paid time off in any 12-month period as follows:

- assessment and initial training prior to approval as a foster carer - up to three days
- attendance at panel for approval – half a day
- looked after child statutory review meetings, child review meetings, annual foster carer review meeting and training – up to five days.

Your People Manager will approve the leave on a discretionary basis taking into account individual circumstances of each case and operational requirements of the business. The

leave will be considered and approved on a pro rata basis. You will need to provide necessary evidence to support your request for leave if requested. Foster care leave should be requested via the [HR and Payroll Portal](#)

9.4. Foster Placement Leave

To qualify for leave when taking on a placement/child under a short or long-term fostering arrangement, staff members must:

- provide a notice of acceptance for a placement
- have not taken child placement leave in the last 12 months
- be the primary carer of the child

In exceptional circumstances, when the needs of the child requires both carers' full-time involvement, leave may be granted even if you are not the primary carer. You are eligible for up to six weeks paid leave of absence following the placement being made. If the Council employs both foster carers, then you are only entitled to receive a single allocation of leave, however it may be split between both carers with agreement from the appropriate Heads of Service.

Where only one foster carer works for the Council, you will be entitled to leave, provided that your partner is working but not entitled to claim equivalent leave. There will be no entitlement where your partner is not working unless there are exceptional circumstances when the needs of the child require both carers' full-time involvement. There is only one period of leave and/or pay available irrespective of the number of children being fostered.

Where the child placed is under five years of age on the day of placement:

- weeks 1–3 inclusive will be paid at 90 per cent of pay
- weeks 4–6 inclusive will be paid at half pay. Employees not returning to work by the first day of the seventh week shall repay the three weeks at half pay.

Where the child placed is over five years of age on the day of placement, one week's leave with pay will be available to you as the primary carer in consultation with your People Manager. In exceptional circumstances, when the needs of the child require your full-time involvement for a longer period of time, the leave entitlement for a child under five years of age may apply at the discretion of the Head of Service.

10. Adoption Leave

- 10.1. The Work and Families Act 2006 introduced provisions for employees who are adopting a child to have an entitlement to statutory adoption leave and pay. These provisions have been extended by the Children and Families Act 2014, which provides additional rights and entitlements to eligible adopters; to surrogate parents who intend to apply for a parental order and to foster parents where they intend to adopt (known as dual approved prospective adopters/ foster-to-adopt).

10.2. Adoption leave and pay is available to you if you are a sole adopter, or to one member of a couple where a couple jointly adopts (including same sex partners and civil partners) where both qualify and are employed by the Council. A couple who jointly adopt must choose which partner will take adoption leave. The other partner may choose to take paternity leave. If you want to share the equivalent of the adoption leave period, you can end the adoption leave and enter into shared parental leave arrangements.

10.3. Eligibility for Adoption Leave

To qualify for adoption leave, you must:

- be newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency recognised in the UK;
- have notified the adoption agency that you agree the child will be placed with you and have an agreed date of placement;
- given the correct notice to the Council
- produce documentary evidence confirming the adoption is taking place – usually a ‘matching certificate’ from the adoption agency Although adoption leave is a “day one” entitlement, adoption pay is subject to the qualification requirements as detailed below.

10.4. Adoption Pay

Statutory adoption pay is the statutory minimum adoption pay set by the government that employers must pay employees. In order to qualify for statutory adoption pay, the employee must have:

- 26 weeks continuous employment with the same employer at the ‘qualifying week’
- Have earned, on average, at least the lower earnings level for national insurance contributions in the 8 weeks leading up to the date you were notified of a match with a child by the adoption agency. Details of the lower earning level for national insurance contributions can be found at [:https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions)

In order to qualify for occupational adoption pay (OAP), you must have continuous local government service of at least one year or more by the end of the ‘qualifying week’. OAP will only be paid if you make a written declaration that you intend to return to work for a period of at least 3 months following your adoption leave; if you do not return you will have to repay the OAP paid to you.

You will not qualify for adoption leave and statutory pay in the following circumstances:

- Private adoption i.e. not by an approved adoption agency recognised in the UK
- Becoming a special guardian or kinship carer
- Adopting a stepchild
- Adopting a family member

Please consider carefully before joining any salary sacrifice schemes if you anticipate taking adoption leave during the period of your agreement. This is because Occupational Adoption Pay (OAP) is typically calculated based on average weekly earnings. Participating in a salary sacrifice arrangement will reduce your salary, and consequently, it will lower your OAP.

10.5. Surrogate Parents

If you are in a surrogacy arrangement and are entitled to and intend to apply for a Parental Order under section 54 of the Human Embryology and Fertilisation Act 2008, you will be able to take adoption leave and pay, if you meet the qualifying conditions. A parental order transfers the legal rights from the surrogate to the intended parents when a surrogate has been used to have a child.

To apply for a Parental Order, you must be genetically related to the child (i.e. the egg or sperm donor) and in a relationship where you and your partner are either:

- married
- civil partners
- living as partners

To qualify for adoption leave and/or pay, the conditions are that:

- the intended parent gains a parental order in respect of the child; or
- they intend to apply for such an order within 6 months of the child's birth and they expect the order will be made
- Sign form SC6 (available on the gov.uk website) if they are adopting a child from overseas with their partner. This official notification is permission from a UK authority that you can adopt from abroad. Form SC6 confirms you're not taking paternity leave or pay.

If you are in a surrogacy arrangement and are adopting a child through a registered adoption agency, you will be entitled to take adoption leave and pay, providing you meet the normal qualifying conditions set out above.

10.6. Fostering for Adoption

Dual Approved Prospective Adopters are foster parents who foster a child in the expectation that they will adopt that child in accordance with section 22C of the Children's Act 1989.

To be eligible for adoption leave and/or pay, you must:

- be a local authority foster parent who has been approved as suitable to adopt the child that you will initially foster;
- have been notified by the local authority of its decision to place a child with you; and
- have notified the local authority that you have agreed to the placement (initially for fostering) and the date that it will take place.

As a dual approved prospective adopter, you are entitled to take adoption leave and pay from up to 2 weeks before the child is placed with the family in accordance with section 22C

of the Children Act 1989 (i.e. from up to 2 weeks before the child joins your family, initially for fostering).

You will only be eligible for statutory adoption pay if they meet all of the conditions for adoption leave and also have:

- Earned, on average, at least the lower earnings level in the 8 weeks leading up to the date they were notified of a match with a child;
- Notified their employer that they are entitled to statutory adoption pay and when this is to begin;
- Stopped working for the employer;
- Elected to receive statutory adoption pay.

Adoption leave and pay is not available to other types of foster carers.

Notification

You should always aim to have early conversations with your People Manager about your proposed adoption plans, so that forward planning can take place. Formal notice to take adoption leave must be given by you within 7 days of being informed that you have been matched for adoption by the adoption agency (unless there is a reason that makes this impossible). In rare cases you are unable to give 7 days' notice, People Managers do have the discretion to delay the start date of the adoption leave and pay, but not after the start of the placement date.

To give formal notice, you must provide notification via the [HR and Payroll Portal](#) – Family Leave Notification and provide the matching certificate. You will then receive written confirmation, outlining the conditions of your maternity leave and your entitlement.

As a surrogate parent, you will also need to confirm in writing the expected week of child's birth and will also need to confirm the date the child was born (after the child's birth). This should be given as soon as reasonably practicable.

Changing the Start Date

You may bring forward or postpone the adoption leave start date, by providing written notification at least 28 days before the new start date.

10.7. Time off to Attend Adoption Appointments

If you intend to adopt a child, you have the right to paid time off to attend up to five appointments for any purpose connected with the adoption. There is no qualifying period of service, meaning the right can be exercised from the first day of employment.

If you are adopting a child or children on your own (i.e. without a partner), you will be entitled to paid time off to attend up to five appointments. This will also apply to joint adopters where there is only one qualifying employee.

If you are a joint adopter (i.e. adopting with a partner) where both are qualifying employees of the Council, you will need to choose which member of the couple will take paid time off to

attend up to five appointments, while your partner may take unpaid time off to attend up to two appointments. Please note, the adopter employee who takes paid time off for appointments cannot claim paternity leave and pay. This means that the parent who intends to take adoption leave and pay should take the paid time off for pre-adoption leave.

The time off available for each appointment (whether paid or unpaid) is a maximum of six and a half hours. Time off cannot be taken on or after the date of the child's placement. Only those officially adopting the child are entitled to time off to attend adoption appointments.

As an intended parent of a child in a surrogacy arrangement, you will also be eligible for unpaid time off to accompany a pregnant employee with whom they are having a child of up to two antenatal appointments (of up to six and a half hours for each appointment).

If you wish to make a request for time off for pre-adoption leave, you should put your request in writing to your People Manager.

10.8. Adoption Leave

Adoption leave is for a period of up to 52 weeks, consisting of 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave followed by 26 weeks additional adoption leave.

Adoption leave can start on the day the child is placed for adoption, or up to 14 days earlier. For overseas adoptions, the adoption leave may start from the date the child arrives in the UK or within 28 days of this date.

To ensure service delivery is not disrupted, you should discuss the timing of your adoption leave with your People Manager as early as possible.

If you wish to return to work before the end of the 52-week adoption leave period, you will need to give 8 weeks' notice. If the child's placement ends during the adoption leave period, you will be able to continue adoption leave for up to eight weeks after the end of the placement.

Periods of unpaid leave may have implications for members of the pension fund

10.9. Keeping in Touch

Keeping in Touch (KIT) days are optional and intended to help you keep in touch with the workplace and ease an eventual return to work. You may do up to ten KIT days during the adoption leave period. These are paid at your normal pay rate and do not affect your adoption leave/pay.

There is no legal requirement for KIT days and both you and your People Manager must agree to these days. KIT days can be used to attend a conference, undertake training, attend a team meeting or carry out any activity that would be classed as work under the employees' contract.

Working for part of a day will count as one day. For example, if you work for 2 hours, you will receive payment for these hours, but this will count as one full 'KIT' day. Your manager must enter details of these hours into the Employee Self Service System in order for you to be paid correctly.

10.10. Contact During Adoption Leave

The Council reserves the right to maintain reasonable contact with you during adoption leave. This may be to discuss your plans to return to work, discuss any training to ease you back into your return to work, or to provide an update on developments at work during your absence.

10.11. Returning to Work

You will be entitled to return to the post that you now occupy or a suitable alternative post where for some reason, e.g. redundancy or restructure, it is not practicable for you to return to the original post.

10.12. Shared Parental Leave

Shared parental leave is available to the main adopter and their partner, allowing both adoptive parents to share their leave and pay. If you and your partner meet the qualifying requirements and wish to take shared parental leave and/or pay, the main adopter must formally end their adoption leave and pay.

11. Parental Bereavement Leave

The Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Regulations (known as Jack's Law) provides parents who suffer the devastating loss of a child 2 week's statutory leave. This leave gives parents the opportunity to take leave at a time that feels right for them up until the first anniversary of the child's death.

Qualification

To be eligible for this leave, employees will have:

- Lost a child under the age of 18 or
- Suffered a still birth from 24 weeks of pregnancy

The leave entitlement is from 'day one' of the loss therefore no qualifying service is required.

Entitlement

Eligible employees will be able to take 2 weeks statutory leave.

Leave can be taken as either a block of 2 weeks, or as 2 separate blocks of one week each taken at different times up until the first anniversary of the child's death.

This leave is in addition to existing parental leave and special leave entitlements. 1

Payment

The Council has agreed that, regardless of service, employees will be paid full pay for the duration of the 2 weeks Parental Bereavement Leave

Support

Losing a child is every parent's worst fear, but no-one could ever fully understand the utter devastation of such a loss. People Managers should reflect the Council's intent and demonstrate compassion and empathy towards employees throughout this difficult time and as far as possible offer any support they might need.

The Council has a range of options in place to help support employees at these difficult times including:

- [Employee Assistance Programme](#)
- Occupational Health Service
- [Flexible Working Policy](#) to help staff during significant life events
- [Workforce wellbeing guidance](#) which includes links to local and national organisations who offer emotional wellbeing support

People Managers should record the absence on the Employee Self Service System seeking advice on how to do this if needed.

12. Data Protection

The Council processes personal data in accordance with its Data Protection policy. In particular, data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job. Inappropriate access or disclosure of job applicant data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy immediately.

Appendix 1: Pregnancy checklist

1. Notify your manager and complete a Maternity Form on HR Portal
2. Your manager will carry out risk assessment.
3. Upload your MATB1 to the HR Portal upon receipt
4. Human Resources (HR) will notify you in writing of the conditions of your maternity leave.
5. Notify your manager of antenatal appointments
6. Give 28 days' notice of your intention to start your maternity leave. You can choose to start your maternity leave any time 11 weeks before your due date
7. Notify HR when your baby is born
8. Arrange any required KIT days
9. Notify your manager of the date you are returning to work (you must give at least 21 days' notice if you are returning before the end of your maternity leave (52 weeks)

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Disciplinary Policy and Procedure



served by One Team

South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Policy Title	Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Policy Author	HR Team - PSPS Limited
Policy Issue date	August 2025
Policy Review date	August 2029, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Policy Readers Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service / SHDC Council

Introduction

This policy and procedure provides a method for the Council to address concerns regarding an employee's conduct at work. The Council expects professional standards of behaviour, attendance and adherence to regulations, relevant policies, and procedures from all employees. It is part of normal people management duties to remind employees of the required standards when there is a lapse in professional conduct.

This policy ensures compliance with equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), balancing the needs of employees with the needs of the Council. The Council will treat any behaviour which may bring them into disrepute or impede the proper execution of its business very seriously. Such behaviour may be considered either Misconduct or Gross Misconduct.

Any act(s) of Misconduct or Gross Misconduct by an employee, whether listed within this policy or not, will result in appropriate disciplinary action. If it appears that failure to meet standards is due to lack of capability on the part of the employee, this will not be pursued as a disciplinary matter, and the Council's Improving Performance (Capability) Policy and Procedure will be followed.

The Council will not victimise any employee who either represents a colleague or acts as a witness in support of a colleague in a disciplinary case.

Wherever possible, concerns should be resolved informally without recourse to formal procedures. This normal people management practice does not form part of this disciplinary procedure. Where it is not possible to resolve a concern informally, or the severity of an allegation warrants it, the formal procedure detailed below will be followed. The Council reserves the right to start investigating a disciplinary matter without notice in exceptional circumstances.

The Council reserves the right to implement the disciplinary procedure at any stage as set out below, considering the alleged misconduct of an employee.

Where time limits are referred to in the course of this procedure, they may be varied by agreement between the employee and their employing council.

This policy sets out the right of appeal against any level of disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Disciplinary procedures will not be instigated against a workplace trade union representative until the circumstances have been discussed with the full-time official; except for suspending the employee in the case of suspected gross misconduct.

All employees have access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which provides external, confidential, free-of-charge support, 24/7 all year round, including counselling, which may assist them with the process. Details are available on the Council's' intranet or from HR (HR@pspl.co.uk) and will be highlighted in key correspondence with the employee during the process. In addition, an appropriate support person (employee) from within the Council, who understands the importance of confidentiality, will be assigned to support an employee if they are suspended from work.

Governing Legislation

This policy and procedure adhere to UK employment law, the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures, together with the CIPD's best practice guidance in good employee relations.

Scope of the Policy

This policy and procedure apply equally to all employees who work for the Council, including statutory roles and chief officer roles. Where this involves a Statutory Officer, Chief Executive, or Chief Officer, the outcomes may be dealt with under the procedures set out in the Constitution and within the Memorandum of Agreement relating to an integrated Shared Workforce structure, between Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council, known as the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP). Where the Constitutions or Memorandum of Agreement allows, this may include the appointment of external HR Consultants to undertake Disciplinary Investigations, Disciplinary Hearings or Disciplinary Appeals.

This policy and procedure is designed to help the Council's employees to achieve, and maintain, standards of conduct and adherence to regulations and policies consistent with their terms and conditions of service.

The aim of this policy and procedure is to ensure prompt, consistent and fair treatment for all employees and to enable both the individual and the Council to be clear about the expectations of all parties.

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

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1. Key Responsibilities

1.1. Employee's Responsibilities

- All employees of the Council are responsible for conducting themselves in a professional, consistent, and respectful manner and with consideration for others.
- Employees must familiarise themselves with and adhere to the Council's policies, which are provided to them on appointment and are available on SELCP Intranet/SharePoint.

1.2. Manager's Responsibilities

- Managers are responsible for promoting good standards of work, monitoring and reviewing employee performance and conduct, addressing problems without undue delay and taking appropriate action.
- Issues should, wherever possible, be resolved informally by People Managers.
- Service Managers should discuss potential disciplinary matters with their Assistant Director and the HR Team before starting the formal disciplinary procedure.

1.3. Human Resources (HR) Responsibilities

- The HR team – PSPS Ltd is responsible for providing informed advice and guidance to managers and providing professional support during the formal stages of the disciplinary procedure.
- HR responsibilities will include drafting correspondence under this policy and procedure on behalf of the Assistant Director, Disciplinary Hearing Chair and Appeal Chair.

1.4. Investigating Officer (IO) Responsibilities

- The Assistant Director will consider the facts of the situation and appoint a manager or other suitable person as an independent Investigating Officer (IO).
- The IO's role to determine whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- The IO will consider the initial information about the allegation, and, with the Assistant Director, they will determine the level and scope of their investigative actions, depending on the nature, seriousness, and sensitivities of the case, to ensure a fair, proportionate, and efficient manner.
- Training, guidance, and support will be provided to those who are appointed to conduct investigations or chair disciplinary or appeal hearings.
- The Council has an obligation to undertake a fair disciplinary procedure, which includes attempting to obtain reliable, corroborated evidence. Investigating Officers will check the validity of a witness, consider any reports of threatening behaviour against them, as well as the witness's credibility, and if they have any reason not to tell the truth, before agreeing to a request for witness statement anonymity.

1.5. Assistant Director (AD) responsibilities

- Support People Managers in their directorate with any potential misconduct issues, listening carefully to the facts presented and seeking further advice (e.g., from HR), before deciding if an investigation should be commissioned or if the matter is a minor concern which can be dealt with under Informal Resolution
- Appoint a manager or other suitable person who has received investigation training to act as independent Investigating Officer (IO) where an investigation is needed.
- The Assistant Director may appoint an external independent investigator where deemed necessary.
- Consider the initial information about the allegation and with the IO, determine the level and scope of their investigative actions.
- Ensure efficient and effective communication with the employee in line with this policy and procedure, including letters where specified, with HR support.
- Monitor the timescales of the investigation and disciplinary procedure, minimising delays and ensuring a thorough process.
- The Assistant Director is the decision-maker regarding the suspension of any employee

If an allegation or other potential disciplinary matter involves an Assistant Director as a potential subject of the investigation, a more senior Director or Officer will be appointed to take on the above responsibilities.

1.6. Witness Responsibilities

- Reasonable requests made by an IO to attend a Fact-Finding Meeting and/or provide a statement to assist the investigation of a case should be met unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. These reasons must be given to the IO without undue delay.
- Witnesses may also be called to attend or provide statements during a Disciplinary Hearing.
- Witnesses should provide evidence in good faith. If such evidence is found to be malicious or vexatious, disciplinary action may be commenced against the individual.
- Requests for witness anonymity will only be agreed upon in very exceptional circumstances. While there is no legal requirement to disclose the identity of witnesses, failure to do so can undermine the employee's right to properly challenge the evidence.
- This process will be undertaken with HR support.

1.7. Companion Responsibilities, including Trade Union Officials & Representatives

- An employee's companion may be a trade union official, trade union representative or work-place colleague; their role is to support the employee and on occasions, may act as an advocate.
- The role of the companion is to assist and support the employee by acting as a friend and advisor. The companion may put the employee's case forward, summarise it at the end or ask questions to clarify understanding of the situation.

- The employee must notify HR in advance of the meeting who they have chosen as their companion. If there is a conflict of interest with the chosen companion, then the employee will be advised by HR to select a different companion.
- Colleagues who do not wish to accept an invitation to act as a companion are not obliged to do so.
- Companions may attend meetings during working hours without loss of pay and will be given reasonable time to familiarise themselves with the matter and confer with the employee both before and after meetings.
- Employees are responsible for ensuring their companions are willing to support them and are able to attend meetings and/or hearings. Employees may not appoint a legal representative or anyone external to the Council, other than a recognised trade union official or representative, to act as a companion.
- In extenuating circumstances, the Council may, as a reasonable adjustment, agree to allow a companion to attend who is not listed above, to support the employee.
- Companions do not have the right to respond to questions posed to the employee or views expressed at the Disciplinary Hearing.

2. Interaction with Grievance Policy & Procedure

2.1 Disciplinary proceedings following a grievance which has been upheld

Where, after investigation, a grievance against an employee is upheld, it may be necessary to commence disciplinary proceedings under this policy. In such cases it will not be necessary to conduct another investigation.

2.2 A grievance raised during the disciplinary process

If a grievance is raised during the disciplinary process, it may be appropriate to pause the disciplinary process until the grievance has been resolved. If the grievance is linked to the disciplinary hearing, both processes may concurrently.

3. Informal Resolution

Where there is minor concern about an employee's conduct, it should be dealt with informally.

Where appropriate, the People Manager should have a two-way discussion, clearly stating the reasons for the discussion, exploring ways that the employee could improve, and ensuring improvement is sustained.

Both the People Manager and the employee should keep a written record of their discussions and outcomes.

If this fails to resolve the matter or it is serious enough to warrant the formal process from the outset, the following Disciplinary Procedure should be followed.

4. Formal Disciplinary Procedure – Fast Track

- 4.1. The Council seeks to resolve disciplinary matters as soon as possible to minimise the impact on employees and services, reducing the stress and time-consuming nature of such procedures for all involved.
- 4.2. The 'Fast Track' disciplinary process aims to address cases effectively and promptly by removing unnecessary procedural steps, avoiding lengthy investigations, and minimising the anxiety of the employees and potential witnesses.
- 4.3. This Fast Track Disciplinary Procedure is designed for use in cases of alleged misconduct, that do not constitute gross misconduct, where dismissal would not be considered as a potential sanction.
- 4.4. If the employee does not wish to contest the allegations, the employee may opt to have their case dealt with by way of this Fast Track process.
- 4.5. If the employee does not initially admit to the allegation but there is factual evidence that the employee cannot refute, (e.g. indisputable evidence such as CCTV footage), the People Manager can progress the formal disciplinary Fast Track process
- 4.6. The Fast Track process cannot be used in cases of alleged gross misconduct, even if management feel that there is significant mitigation that may mean that the outcome would not be dismissal. People Managers in this instance should refer to Section 5 – Formal Disciplinary Procedure – Investigation. If during the Fast Track process, it becomes apparent that the matter constitutes gross misconduct, the process will change to the more formal procedure outlined in Section 5.
- 4.7. The aim of the Fast Track disciplinary procedure is to expedite resolution of matters that do not constitute gross misconduct and make it less stressful for all those involved
- 4.8. A thorough examination of the known facts will be undertaken by the appropriate People Manager prior to a formal hearing, following which the range of sanctions within the Council's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure may be applied. 'Fast Tracking' may be considered suitable in the following (non-exhaustive list) of circumstances:
 - Incidents regarded as 'misconduct' but not 'gross misconduct,' which may result in dismissal
 - Incidents regarded as misconduct that would not be likely to result in dismissal. Gross misconduct would not be subject to the Fast Track procedure.
 - Unauthorised absence/Absent Without Leave (AWOL)
 - The employee(s) in question has/have admitted the allegations in full and at the earliest opportunity
 - If the employee(s) does/do not initially admit to the allegation but there is factual evidence which the employee(s) cannot refute, for example, indisputable evidence such as CCTV footage.
- 4.9. If the People Manager feels that 'Fast Tracking' is appropriate, they must first discuss this with the HR Team. The information available will then be reviewed by the People Manager and a member of the HR Team. If the employee disputes the allegation and there is no factual evidence, the matter will be handled through the standard disciplinary process, which includes a thorough investigation.

- 4.10. The Fast Track process is in addition to ‘misconduct informal resolution’ (MIR). MIR is used for minor misconduct issues that can be resolved informally without formal disciplinary action.
- 4.11. The ‘appropriate People Manager’ refers to the People Manager within the service. This is considered fair as long as the sanction does not involve dismissal. However, a final written warning is a serious sanction and should be handled with due consideration
- 4.12. The Fast Track process should be completed as quickly as possible, ideally within a few weeks, to minimise stress and disruption.
- 4.13. Employees will be informed of the allegations and the Fast Track process. Union involvement is encouraged to ensure fairness and support for the employee."
- 4.14. The formal hearing process will be conducted with transparency, allowing union involvement and ensuring the employee has the opportunity to present their case
- 4.15. The range of sanctions within the policy may be applied, including final written warnings. These sanctions will be on file for 12 months. If the matter deteriorates within this period, the process may change to the formal procedure, and dismissal could be considered.
- 4.16. Employees can appeal the sanction given by the People Manager, as outlined in section 7. The appeal will be heard by a senior manager or an independent panel, ensuring fairness and impartiality.

5. Formal Disciplinary Procedure – Investigation

5.1. Commencement of the Investigation

If a complaint against an employee has been formally investigated under the Grievance Policy and the outcome is that disciplinary proceedings should commence, it will not be necessary to investigate again. In these circumstances proceed to Stage 2 – Invitation to the Formal Disciplinary Hearing.

In all other cases where an allegation of a disciplinary matter is raised against an employee, a Fact-Finding Investigation will be necessary.

An independent IO will be appointed by the Assistant Director and together they will establish and agree the scope of the investigation. The IO, in consultation with HR, will investigate the facts of the situation. The objective will be to:

- establish the nature of the allegation(s), and determine whether there is a case to answer
- give the employee the opportunity to comment on the issues under investigation.

Investigations will be conducted objectively, fairly, reasonably, and lawfully. They will be conducted as quickly as possible without compromising their completeness.

The nature of the alleged misconduct may result in the employee’s suspension from duty at any stage in the investigation.

The employee who is the subject of an allegation(s) should be verbally informed by their People Manager of the allegation(s) and that an investigation is commencing. In exceptional circumstances where a face-to-face meeting is not possible, this may be done over the phone or in writing. The employee must be informed of the investigation in writing by the Assistant Director. The employee will be sent a copy of this policy along with the letter which will include:

- The nature of the allegation(s) against the employee;
- The name of the IO and their role;
- Notification that the employee will be contacted during the investigation period to be invited to a Fact-Finding meeting with the IO regarding the allegation.

5.2. Invitation to the Fact-Finding Meeting

When the IO is ready to hold the fact-finding meeting with the employee, a further letter will be sent to the employee inviting them to the fact-finding meeting. The letter will include:

- the date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting (which will be held without undue delay whilst also giving the employee sufficient time to prepare);
- the right to be accompanied by a work-place colleague or Trade Union Representative and the need to notify HR of the individual in advance of the meeting
- the name of any other person attending the meeting (e.g., HR support if agreed advisable), and their role

5.3. The Fact-Finding Meeting

The purpose of the Fact-Finding Meeting is for the IO to establish the nature of the allegation, gather the facts of the case, listen to the employee and others, and determine if there is a case to answer.

Any Fact-Finding meeting with the employee will be held by the IO without undue delay.

At the Fact-Finding Meeting, the employee will be given the opportunity to present their response to the allegation in a calm, fair and objective manner.

Factors to be taken into consideration include:

- What occurred;
- Whether there is evidence to substantiate the allegation(s);
- Any precedents;
- Any mitigating circumstances;
- What policies or standards may have been breached and how.

The IO may, at any point during the Fact-Finding process, request an employee attend a further Fact-Finding Meeting or reconvene a meeting if new facts have arisen and further time or information is required to consider the case. This will be done without undue delay.

A record of the witnesses' evidence given at the Fact-Finding Meeting will be kept in the form of a written statement which they have read and signed.

Fact-Finding meetings may be recorded with the permission of all present and their consent will be noted in the written statement as well as in the recording itself.

5.4. After the Fact-Finding Meeting

After the Fact-Finding Meeting, the IO will, without undue delay, compile an Investigation Report setting out the findings of the Investigation. A copy of the confidential Investigation Report will be provided to the Assistant Director and HR.

The Assistant Director will inform the employee in writing of the outcome of the investigation. If it is concluded that there is substance to the allegation(s), the matter will progress to a Formal Disciplinary Hearing.

If it is found that there is no substance to the allegation(s), then the employee will be notified accordingly. This will be confirmed in writing by the Assistant Director.

A copy of the Investigation Report will be provided by HR to the employee's People Manager, unless there is no case to answer and there are no management or employee action(s) to follow-up.

Some examples of what can constitute misconduct or gross misconduct have been provided in this policy. There may also be other reasons why conduct is classed as misconduct or gross misconduct.

Each alleged breach will be carefully considered and judged on individual circumstances before any disciplinary action is decided.

6. Formal Disciplinary Hearing

- 6.1. If there is reasonable evidence from the Investigation Report that there is a case for the employee to answer, then a Formal Disciplinary Hearing will be held without unreasonable delay.
- 6.2. The purpose of the Formal Disciplinary Hearing is for the Chair to listen to the allegation(s), provide the employee with an opportunity to respond and present their case, and to consider what disciplinary action, if any, is appropriate
- 6.3. A letter will be sent to the employee prepared by HR and signed by the AD, without undue delay, informing them of:
 - the nature of the allegation(s) and that the meeting is to be a Formal Disciplinary Hearing;
 - the date, time, location, and purpose of the hearing (to be held without undue delay whilst giving the employee sufficient time to prepare);
 - their right to request reasonable adjustments or inform of accessibility requirements
 - the possible level of seriousness implied by the alleged misconduct along with a copy of either the evidence gathered within the Fast Track Process, or the Investigation Report and all accompanying witness statements and appendices. A copy of this policy & procedure will also be included if not already provided.

- the right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, trade union official or trade union representative, and the need to notify HR of the individual in advance of the hearing;
- the names and roles of the people who will be present at the hearing;
- the need for the employee to provide the names of any new witnesses or new written witness statements, or any other new evidence to HR for circulation at least 3 working days before the scheduled Stage 2 – Formal Disciplinary Hearing.
- details of the Employee Assistance Programme and any other wellbeing resources as appropriate to the individual situation.
- the need for the employee to notify HR of any specific requirements in advance of the Disciplinary Hearing.

6.4. Depending on timescales and the circumstances of the matter, the letter may be combined with confirmation of the outcome of the investigation in writing by the AD. Alternatively, they may be separate letters, as appropriate to the case.

6.5. The Formal Disciplinary Hearing;

The Disciplinary Hearing will be conducted by an appropriate manager, more senior than the employee concerned and not previously involved in the matter, who will act as Chair along with a member of PSPS HR. The Investigating Officer will also attend to present their findings.

All parties present should conduct themselves in a polite and respectful manner as fits a formal meeting. The Chair may make directions to ensure that all parties comply with these requirements.

The Disciplinary Chair will consider the findings from the Investigation Report and will decide if further questions need to be put to the IO.

The employee will be entitled to present their case and respond to the allegation(s). The Disciplinary Chair will question the employee and any new witnesses. The employee and/or their companion will be entitled to put forward any questions or responses to the IO, witnesses or witness statements, or other evidence. The HR support may also ask questions of any parties. The employee will be given the opportunity to summarise their case. If at any time, evidence arises which needs further investigation, the Disciplinary Hearing will be adjourned to a later date.

If the disciplinary hearing is held following the Fast Track Process and new information is disclosed or 'comes to light', changing the potential gravity of the employees conduct and thus requires either a full investigation or potentially leading to dismissal, the 'Fast Track' process will cease to apply, and the hearing will stop. The Chair will explain why the hearing has stopped and that a full investigation will now be carried out. The Chair will discuss with the HR Team whether the employee should be suspended. The disciplinary process will then be applied in accordance with the 'non-Fast Tracking' stages of the Council's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

If further time is required for consideration of the case, the Disciplinary Hearing will reconvene without undue delay, and the employee will be sent a letter by HR advising them of the new date. If the employee is unable to attend, they will be informed of the decision taken at the hearing in writing.

The Disciplinary Chair will, after due reflection and proper consideration of all available evidence, decide, based on the balance of probabilities, whether the employee did or did not act or behave as alleged. They will also determine what level of disciplinary action should be taken (if any).

Factors to be taken into consideration when making such a decision on disciplinary action are:

- the impact of the misconduct and whether policy or standards have been breached. If so, which policy and/or standard? Which specific section or clause of which particular document?
- the gravity of the case; is disciplinary action warranted? If so, at what level?
- any precedents;
- the employee's disciplinary and service record;
- any relevant mitigating circumstances

A decision reached on the day of the disciplinary hearing will be communicated orally to the employee by the Chair and then followed up in writing.

6.6. After the Disciplinary Hearing

The Chair of the Disciplinary Hearing will notify the employee in writing of the decision, as soon as possible after the disciplinary meeting.

The outcome letter will include:

- the date of the meeting and names/titles of those present;
- details of the allegation(s) that are/are not founded on the balance of probabilities;
- what the breach(es) of policy or expected standards was
- the level of disciplinary action and the supporting reasons, including any mitigation considered;
- the timescale that any warning will remain current;
- the improvement required of the employee, which will be monitored by their People Manager;
- any timescale within which improvement must be achieved
- the right to appeal

The outcome letter will be reviewed by the PSPS HR support present at the disciplinary hearing and then sent to the employee's home address or personal email address.

If appropriate, the employee's People Manager will be notified of the outcome.

Where a disciplinary warning has not been given, the employee will be formally notified in writing as soon as possible after the Disciplinary Hearing.

7. The Appeal Process

- 7.1. An employee has the right to appeal against the decision of the Disciplinary Hearing. An appeal may be submitted in writing by the employee to the Head of HR at HR@pspsl.co.uk
- 7.2. The appeal should be submitted within 10 working days from receipt of the decision letter confirming the disciplinary action.
- 7.3. The appeal procedure will normally be carried out as soon as practicable thereafter, and the employee will be notified of the date of their appeal hearing no later than 28 days from receipt of their appeal.
- 7.4. An appeal will be heard by an Appeal Panel that has not previously been involved in the matter, comprising:
 - a senior manager (equivalent, or more senior than the Disciplinary Hearing manager) who will act as the Chair of the Appeal Hearing.
 - another senior manager:
 - an advisor from HR, who will provide support and advice to the Appeal Panel but will not be a decision-maker in the appeal process.
- 7.5. The purpose of the Appeal Hearing is not to reinvestigate the case but to establish the grounds for appeal and ensure:
 - the original decision was reached in a procedurally correct way
 - the action taken was reasonable
 - the proportionality of any penalty to the allegation
 - ensure consideration of any new relevant evidence
- 7.6. The Appeal Panel will consider the findings from the Disciplinary Hearing and will decide if they need to interview and put further questions to the Chair of the Disciplinary Panel.
- 7.7. HR will write to the employee notifying them of the time and date of the Appeal Hearing. HR will send, without undue delay, copies of any written submissions and documentary evidence to all parties prior to the meeting.
- 7.8. The employee must provide any new evidence to HR for circulation at least three working days before the scheduled Appeal hearing.

7.9. The Appeal Hearing;

The purpose of the Appeal Hearing is to listen to the employee's concerns and determine whether the outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing was procedurally correct and appropriate to the facts of the case. The Appeal Hearing should proceed in a formal, polite, and respectful manner. The employee will have the right to be accompanied by a work-place colleague, trade union official or trade union representative.

Members of the Appeal Panel may put questions to the employee. The employee should present their final submission to the Appeal Panel before the appeal hearing is adjourned to allow the Appeal Panel to consider and make the decision about the appeal.

7.10. Appeal Hearing Decision

The Appeal Panel will consider its decision in private. The Chair of the Panel will notify the outcome to the employee on behalf of the Appeal Panel, as soon as possible after the Appeal Hearing.

If the Appeal Panel has been able to reach its decision within an adjournment on the day, the Chair of the Panel will invite the employee and their representative to join the reconvened meeting and will inform the employee of the outcome, which will then be confirmed in writing.

If a decision is not reached on the day, the Chair of the Panel will notify the employee of the outcome within five working days of the Appeal Hearing. The decision will be communicated in writing, ensuring the employee is kept informed of the process and the final outcome.

7.11. After the Appeal Hearing;

The outcome letter of the Appeal Hearing will be sent to the employee's home address or personal email address. The decision of the Appeal Panel will also be conveyed to the Chair of the Disciplinary Panel and the employee's People Manager.

Where an appeal against disciplinary action is successful and the decision is not to impose any penalty the reference to the disciplinary action concerned will be removed from the employee's file, and the employee will be notified accordingly in writing.

Where the appeal decision is to substitute a lesser penalty than that previously imposed, the employee's file will be updated, and the employee will be notified accordingly in writing.

Where an appeal against disciplinary sanction is not successful, there will be no change in the level of action previously decided upon.

Where an appeal against dismissal is successful, the employee will be reinstated to their substantive role, at a salary point no less favourable and, backdated to the date of the original Disciplinary Hearing. The continuation of the contract of employment remains unaffected. This decision will effectively mean that the decision to dismiss never took place and the employment remained continuous.

If an employee is reinstated and has accessed their pension benefits on termination of their employment and they are later reinstated, it remains their responsibility to inform the pensions service (West Yorkshire Pension Fund), so the appropriate adjustments can be made. Failure to do so could affect the employee's future pension benefits.

If the employee is reinstated and has received contractual notice pay and/or payment for outstanding, accrued annual leave, they will be required to repay this money back to the employing council.

The decision of the Appeal Panel is final.

8. Levels of Disciplinary Action

8.1. Verbal Recorded Warning

In appropriate circumstances the employee may be given a Verbal Recorded Warning if their conduct does not meet the acceptable standards set by the Council.

This warning will be delivered verbally and then confirmed in writing. The employee will be advised:

- of the reason for the warning, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement;
- of the right to appeal;
- that, if there is no satisfactory improvement, further disciplinary action will be considered at the next level.

The verbal warning will be effective for a maximum of 6 months from the date of the letter following the disciplinary meeting. After that time, it will be disregarded subject to satisfactory conduct.

If during the 6-month period matters deteriorate further, then disciplinary action at the next level may be considered.

If the employee has been absent from work for a significant period during the 6 months, the period may be extended, however this will be by no more than the period of absence from work.

8.2. First Written Warning

A First Written Warning may be given where:

- the employee's misconduct is serious enough to warrant it and/or;
- a Verbal Recorded Warning is still current and there has been no significant improvement and/or;
- a further related breach of policies occurs.

The employee will be advised:

- of the reason for the First Written Warning, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement;
- of the right to appeal;
- that, if there is no satisfactory improvement, further disciplinary action will be considered at the next level.

The First Written Warning will be effective for a maximum of 12 months from the date of the letter following the Disciplinary Hearing. After that time, it will be disregarded subject to satisfactory conduct.

If, during the 12 months, matters deteriorate further or there are further issues of misconduct then disciplinary action at the next level may be considered, or the Disciplinary Hearing Chair may extend the warning for up to a further 12 months.

If the employee has been absent from work for a significant period during the 12 months, the period may be extended, however this will be by no more than the period of absence from work.

8.3. Final Written Warning

A Final Written Warning may be given where:

- the employee's misconduct is serious enough to warrant it and/or;
- the First Written Warning is still current and there has been no significant improvement and/or;
- a further related breach of rules occurs.

The employee will be advised:

- of the reason for the Final Written Warning, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement;
- of the right to appeal;
- that, if there is no satisfactory improvement, then there may be a recommendation for dismissal.

The Final Written Warning will normally be effective for a maximum of 12 months from the date of the letter following the Disciplinary Hearing. After that time, it will be disregarded subject to satisfactory conduct.

If during the 12 months matters deteriorate further, then dismissal may be considered.

In exceptional circumstances, where there has been insufficient improvement and the decision is not to dismiss the employee, then the Final Written Warning may be extended for a further period at the discretion of the Chair of the original hearing and in consultation with the Assistant Director and HR. If the Chair of the original hearing is no longer available, the Assistant Director and HR will decide.

If the employee has been absent from work for a significant period during the 12 months, then the period may be extended, however this will be by no more than the period of absence from work.

8.4. Dismissal

If an employee's misconduct, failure of application to role, or non-adherence to regulations and policies is serious enough to warrant it, or if a Final Written Warning is still current and there has

been no significant improvement or a further related breach of the rules occurs, then the employee may be dismissed with notice or payment in lieu of notice.

In cases of Gross misconduct, the employee may be dismissed summarily without notice. Previous warnings need not have been given.

Dismissal on the grounds of Gross misconduct may occur for acts or omissions not mentioned below or in this policy but which are sufficiently grave.

Other substantial acts or omissions may also lead to dismissal. For example, when the contractual relationship between the Council and the employee has broken down or when the relationship between an employee(s) and another employee(s) has become untenable and the cause can be attributed, on the balance of probabilities and all available evidence, to a specific employee(s). In this case, careful consideration should be given to the reason(s) for dismissal as these may include "Some Other Substantial Reason" in addition to misconduct.

The employee will be provided with the written reasons for dismissal, the date on which employment is terminated, and the right of appeal. If the dismissal is 'with notice', the notice period will be as stated in the employee's contract of employment, however in certain circumstances the Council may choose to make a payment in lieu of notice.

In any case of dismissal, the employee has a right to appeal in accordance with Section 11 of this policy.

8.5. Action Short of Dismissal

Where misconduct is sufficiently serious to justify dismissal, the Chair may consider alternatives:

Such sanctions may include:

- Transfer to a role in a different area of the council(s);
- Transfer to a role with different responsibilities (subject to a position being available);
- Demotion;
- Withholding of incremental salary progression within a specified timescale determined by the Chair;
- Extension of current warning on file (maximum of an additional 12 months).

Where a transfer or demotion takes place, an employee will not have their terms of employment protected. In this instance, the Chair may need to defer the outcome of the hearing and adjourn to determine whether an 'action short of dismissal' is feasible. If it is not, it is likely that the sanction will defer to dismissal. The hearing will then be re-convened, and the sanction issued to the employee.

If an employee does not agree to the change to their contract of employment brought into effect by action short of dismissal, the outcome will revert to dismissal.

9. Suspension from Duty

- 9.1. An employee may be suspended from duty by the Assistant Director or other senior manager pending an investigation into cases of alleged gross misconduct or other relevant and urgent cause. Suspension is not disciplinary action nor an indication of guilt but a procedure to ensure an objective investigation of an incident can be carried out or to mitigate potential serious risks to the employee, colleagues, or the public.
- 9.2. The period of suspension will be as brief as possible and with full pay. Alternatives to suspension will first be considered, such as temporary change in work location or duties. Any temporary changes will be discussed with the employee and will be at no detriment in terms of pay.
- 9.3. If an employee is to be suspended, then they will be told so orally, usually by their People Manager, and this will be confirmed in writing. The employee will be advised of the reason for the suspension, that the period of suspension will be as brief as possible, and where necessary it will be reviewed after 28 days, and the employee will be updated.
- 9.4. Suspension from duty is not a pre-determination of disciplinary action. A letter advising of the start date of the suspension (and the associated terms), the reason for it and confirming basic pay will not be affected, will be handed to the employee at this meeting or sent as soon as possible afterwards.
- 9.5. In addition, an appropriate support person from within the Council, who understands the importance of confidentiality and has effective communication skills, will be assigned to the employee where they are suspended from work. This person will normally be a Team Leader, Supervisor or Service Manager not directly involved in the matter. Their role will be to assist in communication with the employee while they are suspended from work and to support them, and to keep the Investigating Officer (IO) updated on any concerns they may have identified. The support person will also keep the HR support allocated to the investigation updated, where requested on specific matters.
- 9.6. Annual leave entitlement continues, as normal, for the duration of the suspension. Any annual leave pre-booked will be honoured. If an employee wishes to make a further request for annual leave during suspension, they may do so in the usual way. The request will be considered but the investigation and any resulting disciplinary hearing will take priority. In exceptional circumstances where it may not be possible to request it in the usual way, the employee should refer to HR

10. Examples of Misconduct

Any act or omission of a kind not mentioned below could be regarded as misconduct, depending on all the facts and circumstances of the matter, including its gravity. Examples include but not exhaustive:

- Unauthorised absence;
- Abuse of sickness leave;
- Failure to follow the Council's policies or procedures
- Non-compliance of a reasonable instruction;
- Misuse of email and internet;

- Breach of the Council's Code of Conduct;
- Breach of Health and Safety

11. Examples of Gross Misconduct

Any act or omission of a kind not mentioned below could be regarded as gross misconduct, depending on all the facts and circumstances of the matter, including its gravity.

- Theft, fraud, or deliberate falsification of records;
- Unlawful discrimination or harassment;
- Physical violence, actual or threatened, against or in the vicinity of another person;
- Incapability whilst on duty brought on by alcohol or illegal/non-prescribed drugs;
- ICT crimes or serious breach of IT security policies;
- Serious breach of trust and confidence, including failure to inform the Council of any allegation or conviction of criminal offences;
- Serious breach of Health and Safety practices;
- Bringing the organisation into serious disrepute;
- Serious insubordination;
- Serious misuse of Council's name or property.
- Serious breach of the employing Council's Code of Conduct

12. Inability to Attend a Formal Fact Finding Meeting or Disciplinary Hearing

The Council is committed to completing the disciplinary process promptly and without undue delay, so that employees are confident that issues will be dealt with in a timely manner. It expects all employees involved in the process to abide by this principle.

The Council therefore accept that attendance at a Fact-Finding Meeting or Disciplinary/Appeal Hearing should normally take precedence over other commitments.

An employee who cannot attend a meeting should inform HR, in advance whenever possible, and another date will be set. Pre-arranged annual leave periods will be respected in this process.

If an employee cannot attend a re-arranged meeting or hearing within a reasonable period of time, then the meeting will be held in the employee's absence.

Employees are responsible for ensuring their companions are willing to support them and attend meetings/hearings. If an employee's companion cannot attend on a proposed date the employee should notify HR, in writing, as soon as possible.

The employee may suggest another date so long as it is not more than 5 working days after the date originally proposed. The Council reserve the right to determine the length of an extension to this time limit in cases where it considers this necessary.

If an employee is unable to attend a meeting under this procedure due to sickness or injury, a medical certificate (fit note) may be requested and the employee's consent may be sought for a referral to Occupational Health to establish their fitness to attend, at the Council's discretion.

13. Criminal Charges & Convictions or Alleged Criminal Activity

Disciplinary procedures will not automatically be applied if an employee is subject to criminal charges or convictions, which occur in an employee's personal life and do not impact nor conflict with the role in which they are undertaking with the Council. The Council will investigate the facts as far as possible and consider whether the conduct is sufficiently serious to warrant instituting the disciplinary procedure.

If an employee is subject to criminal charges or convictions, which relate directly to the duties of their role, impede the ability to discharge the duties of their role or, which were committed during the discharge of their duties, a formal investigation will take place in accordance with this procedure.

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify their Service Manager (or officer more senior) of any criminal charges or convictions so that an immediate risk assessment can be undertaken and consideration of whether any internal investigation is relevant.

An employment investigation may run in parallel with the police, audit, and/or safeguarding investigation, as may be necessary and should not be held up by any such investigations unless it is considered that it will prejudice those investigations to proceed. It is not always necessary to await the outcome of any court hearing before deciding on disciplinary action.

An employee who provides information on criminal acts, breaches of legal obligations, health and safety dangers, environmental risks and related cover ups will have the right not to be dismissed or victimised for speaking out, in good faith on such malpractice. For further information please see the Whistleblowing policy of the employing Council.

14. Safeguarding Allegations

The Council have a legal duty to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where it has removed an individual from working or has concerns in respect of an individual's contact with children or vulnerable adults following an investigation and disciplinary procedure. There may also be a need to refer the circumstances of a particular case to other professional bodies.

15. Fraud & Corruption Allegations

Any suspicion of fraud or corruption will be taken seriously. Any alleged wrongdoing will be dealt with, firstly, in accordance with the Council's Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan and may include criminal investigation, where appropriate.

If an employee is suspected of committing fraudulent activity or corruption, the Section 151 Officer must be informed as a matter of urgency in accordance with the Council's Anti-Fraud Policy and Anti-Fraud Response Plan. This may trigger a workplace investigation in accordance with the Disciplinary policy.

16.Data protection and retention of employee records

The Council will maintain records of the outcome of the investigations and any corrective or disciplinary action taken, in accordance with its data protection policy and data protection law.

Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported to the Council's Data Protection Officer immediately.

The data breach may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

17.Exclusions

The provisions of this policy will not apply to employees who have less than 6 months' service or who are within an extended probationary period.

If difficulties are experienced with the employee's conduct during the probationary period, this will be dealt with under the Council's Probationary Policy.

Adverse Weather Policy



Policy Title	Adverse Weather Policy
Policy Author	HR Team - PSPS
Policy Issue date	August 2025
Policy Review date	August 2029, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Policy Readers Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service/SHDC Council

Adverse Weather Policy and Procedure

Introduction

During periods of adverse weather, the Council aims to continue delivering services and keep offices open, where possible, to safely maintain and support the community and vulnerable individuals. Employees have a responsibility to report for work. In the event of adverse weather, all employees are expected to make every effort to report for work. This includes attempting to travel by alternative means than those used in normal weather conditions or making use of the Council's Agile Working Policy, where relevant to their role.

The Council is committed to protecting the health and safety of its employees. Adverse weather can impact working conditions, especially where employees are required to travel for work. In such circumstances, appropriate measures must be implemented to manage any increased risk to employees.

The Council recognises that adverse weather conditions may occasionally make travel to and from work difficult. However, the priority of all employees should be to maintain services wherever possible, whilst considering their own personal safety. Mutually agreed arrangements and the flexibility and cooperation of People Managers and employees will help achieve this.

This policy provides guidance to managers and employees on the considerations to be taken into account and the options available when adverse weather occurs.

Aim

This policy is intended to assist People Managers in implementing a sensible and caring approach to individual employee circumstances whilst balancing this against the need to maintain the provision of services.

Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and consistent approach is adopted when normal daily travelling arrangements or work locations of employees are disrupted by adverse weather conditions. It will be applied when employees are unable to attend work or have to work a shorter day than normal due to adverse weather conditions. It does not apply to personal emergencies which should be addressed by requesting annual leave or other forms of leave as outlined in Time Off Policy. This policy applies to all Council employees.

Adverse weather is defined as weather conditions that:

- have unusual consequences which affect working conditions
- prevent employees getting to work, or
- cause significant problems for staff getting to and from work

This can include snow, ice, fog, floods, or high winds which render travel extremely hazardous. 'Extremely hazardous' is defined as conditions in which the Police and/or appropriate motoring organisations advise the public not to make unnecessary journeys or not to travel unless necessary.

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1. Responsibilities Under this Policy - Employees

1.1 All employees are responsible for making their own arrangements to get to work on time. In the event of adverse weather conditions causing delays or difficulties in travelling to work, employees should take all reasonable steps to attend their normal place of work as soon as they possibly can, while considering personal safety.

1.2 If an employee is unable to get to work, they should contact their People Manager at the earliest possible opportunity to explain the situation and agree on the next steps. If they are unable to reach their immediate manager, they should contact another senior manager at their place of work.

1.3 Employees should continue to monitor the weather conditions during the day to determine if they can attend work later, such as in the afternoon. Employees who are unable to attend work at their normal work base / site are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work at an alternative work base / site where appropriate for their job role. Arrangements to work elsewhere should be discussed and agreed with their People Manager. Employees should report to the appropriate person on arrival at

the alternative work base / site and inform them of their arrival. If it is agreed to work at home, normal recording arrangements will apply for hours worked.

2. Responsibilities Under this Policy - People Managers

2.1 A People Manager should be nominated for each establishment to take overall responsibility for implementing this policy during adverse weather. The People Manager should activate contingency plans when adverse weather conditions are predicted or occur unexpectedly overnight. The plans should address situations where the People Manager or the employees may be unable to get to work and inform staff who to contact. The contingency plans should also aim to maintain the standard and level of service wherever possible. Options may include:

- Organising minimum cover arrangements with employees who do not have a particularly long or difficult journey home to ensure continuity of service;
- Provision to divert services elsewhere as necessary;
- Arrangements for employees to take work home where possible, considering issues relating to access, security, and confidentiality of data;
- Arrangements for employees to report to work at an alternative workplace;
- Ensuring employees are aware of contact arrangements.

2.2 The People Manager should assess the situation, including the location of individual employees, any health and safety implications, and the impact of staffing levels on service provision.

2.3 The People Manager may choose to apply some provisions of the Agile Working Policy to enable employees to continue working.

3. Weather Deterioration During Working Hours

3.1 The People Manager should monitor adverse weather conditions and the availability of transport throughout the day, ensuring that all employees are kept informed and notified immediately of any up-to-date decisions made.

3.2 Employees facing particular difficulties in getting home may need to leave work early, taking into account their personal safety. The People Manager must follow the service's contingency plan, ensuring that the actions detailed in those plans are met to maintain the standard and level of the service.

3.3 Where employees remain at work, health and safety requirements must continue to be met. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to close an establishment. If this becomes necessary, the People Manager should seek authorisation from the Chief

Executive Officer and inform all affected staff. The People Manager should also ensure that suitable notices are displayed at the entrance of premises to inform the public of the closure and how they may obtain emergency assistance if needed.

4. Weather Alerts

4.1 The [Met Office matrix](#) is a key tool for providing a visual indicator for severity of weather impact. To understand how likely the Met office think the forecast impacts are, always check the matrix to see which box has been ticked and read the supporting forecast information.

4.2 Yellow and Amber warnings

These warnings represent a range of impact levels and likelihoods, as set out in the Met Office matrix. These impacts can include damage to property, travel delays and cancellations, loss of water supplies, power cuts and, in the most severe cases, bring a danger to life.

4.3 Red warning

Dangerous weather is expected. It is very likely that there will be a risk to life, with substantial disruption to travel, energy supplies and possibly widespread damage to property and infrastructure.

5. Communication

5.1 The Council updates information throughout the day during periods of adverse weather by the use of Corporate Communication channels and by updating its web pages.

6. School Closures

6.1 It is recognised that adverse weather situations often impact on educational premises and the availability of extended childcare providers, causing additional difficulties for parents or carers with dependants.

6.2 In the event of unexpected or unforeseen adverse weather and subsequent school closures, employees may use Dependants Leave which covers emergency situations for parents/carers. Any continuance of adverse weather and ongoing closures which are communicated in advance are not unforeseen. Employees should take steps to make alternative suitable arrangements for dependants to enable their attendance at their normal place of work. People Managers will be expected to apply this and other associated policies (Time Off Work Policy) fairly and consistently on a case-by-case basis, ensuring the continued delivery of services are maintained.

6.3 In accordance with the Agile Working Policy, employees may only work from home if they have a suitable environment in which they can perform their work. Employees must not work from home, in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather, if they are providing primary care for their dependants. Employees should use alternative leave as mentioned above.

7. Payment

Employees should be paid normally in the event of absence from work because of adverse weather conditions when:

- Time has been recorded appropriately, and any absence has been covered by the provisions set out in the previous sections (except unpaid leave).
- Absence is due to the workplace being closed to employees due to the weather conditions and no alternative working arrangements are available

8. Other Considerations

8.1 Special care should be taken when applying this policy if it is known that an employee has a medical/health condition which may be exacerbated by adverse weather conditions or impact their mobility.

8.2 Departments which offer a service or operate essential services may have more detailed local arrangements in place to maintain these services during adverse weather . This policy should be read in conjunction with those arrangements. Local arrangements may supersede this policy where reasonable.

8.3 Employees who are already on leave (annual, maternity, sickness etc.) will not be entitled to a day off in lieu if their department is closed.

Volunteer Policy and Procedure



This policy applies to volunteer workers who are involved in work carried out by, or on behalf of the council at all locations and across all sites.

The Council aims to support and encourage volunteer involvement within different service areas of the Authority, including those from underrepresented groups such as young people, those with a disability, older people, and those from minority ethnic communities.

This policy does not apply to people on government programmes such as Community Service or to work placements from schools or other academic institutions.

Policy Title	Volunteer
Policy Author	HR Team - PSPS
Policy Issue date	August 2025
Policy Review date	August 2029, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Policy Readers Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service/SHDC Council

Introduction

People choose to volunteer for a variety of different reasons. For some it offers the chance to give something back to their community and for others it provides an opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge. Regardless of the motivation, volunteering can be both challenging and rewarding.

Volunteers bring an array of knowledge and expertise to an organisation. Their work should complement and add value to the skills of employed members of staff. In many instances, volunteers can provide a range of support to service users that cannot be provided solely by paid staff. Therefore, the Council welcomes volunteers to all service areas. The Council is committed to engaging with volunteers to complement and expand the delivery of services.

Purpose

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with those Council officers who manage volunteers. The Manager recruiting volunteers to work in their service area is responsible for making this policy work in practice.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Acknowledge the value and contribution made by volunteers;
- Outline how the Council is committed to supporting volunteers and adopting best practice in volunteer management;
- Clarify the roles of volunteers, their tasks and manage their expectations;
- Ensure fair and equal treatment of volunteers;
- Add value, support and diversity to the Authority.

Various service areas use volunteers in the delivery of their services to provide opportunities for individuals to contribute to the community and maximise the opportunity to lead fulfilling and independent lives. In return, using volunteers enables the service to take advantage of local knowledge and the enthusiasm some volunteers have for their community. By engaging volunteers from various groups within the community, the Council can help combat social exclusion and increase community engagement.

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1. Employment Status

- 1.1. Volunteers are not paid employees and as such have no employment status. The Council does not enter into any form of legally binding agreement or contract with a volunteer, either in writing or verbally, which suggests the presence of an employment relationship.
- 1.2. It is therefore the intention of this policy to provide a clear structure for volunteer management that reflects the unique nature of the volunteering relationship. Volunteers will not be used to replace paid staff or do work that was done by paid staff in the recent past.
- 1.3. A volunteer is defined as follows: “An individual who undertakes agreed activities on behalf of the Council without financial reward or a contract of employment, for the benefit of the service. Volunteers may be long term (commonly undertaking routine tasks) or undertaking specific time limited tasks”.
- 1.4. Volunteers are used to add value to the service and are never used to replace existing staff or reduce/eliminate the need to recruit to vacant posts. It is appreciated, however, that there may be occasions when the difference between addition and substitution is not clear cut: in those cases, it may be helpful to assess whether the activity under consideration is an essential one that we 'need to do' or one that is non-essential but would be 'nice to do' and is therefore suitable for volunteers. Volunteers will not be asked in this instance to do the work of paid staff. Volunteers may continue with their agreed duties but will not be asked to undertake any additional work in this instance.
- 1.5. Volunteers are not employees. However, under health and safety legislation the Council has a duty to protect volunteers, as well as others who could be affected by our activities.

2. Recruitment of Volunteers

- 2.1. The Council aims to recruit volunteers from all sections of the local community and with a range of skills, life experiences and knowledge. We welcome volunteers of all ages. Where a volunteer is under 18, parental or guardian consent should be obtained, and a risk assessment conducted by the Volunteer Manager.
- 2.2. Volunteering offers an array of benefits to young people and can teach them favourable skills and experience as well as offering numerous benefits to the organisation. However, care must be taken to ensure the volunteer activity is suitable for the age of the volunteer.
- 2.3. All volunteering opportunities will have a volunteer role description appropriate to the area of service and all roles will be risk assessed. All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to discuss their skills, roles and expectations.
- 2.4. Volunteers must provide complete employment history and named referees. Suitability of references taken will determine the placement. All volunteers are required to provide evidence of their identity. Volunteers will agree their working times and actual duties with the Supervisor/manager of the section they will be volunteering in.
- 2.5. All volunteers will be required to disclose any criminal convictions (including spent convictions) when completing an application form.
- 2.6. All volunteers whose work will involve unsupervised access to children, young people and vulnerable adults, or alternatively employees working with volunteers under 18 (defined as a regulated activity) will be subject to the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks. The DBS does not charge a fee for volunteers to undergo these checks

3. Supervision, Support & Training of Volunteers

- 3.1. The general purpose, objectives and tasks involved in each volunteer role should be agreed between the volunteer and the Council prior to the volunteering, and this must be regularly reviewed. Induction, training and development for each volunteer is the responsibility of the volunteer manager and should be appropriate for the role. It is expected that all volunteers receive a basic induction and training around Health and Safety and Safeguarding.
- 3.2 The Council believes in making effective use of all of its resources by developing a culture of continuous improvement. Volunteers will be given training that is relevant and appropriate to their roles by an appropriately experienced person within the Authority.

3.3 All volunteers should have regular reviews with their manager, reviewing their job satisfaction, achievements and areas for further training and improvement.

3.4 Service Users have the right to expect high standards of service delivery and professionalism in their dealings with the authority and its representatives. Volunteers who persistently fail to perform their duties to a satisfactory standard will be asked to meet with a manager to discuss the problem. If the performance of a volunteer does not improve, he or she will be asked to leave or work in a different area of the service.

4. Standards of Conduct

4.1. The public are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from any person who is representing the Authority. These standards are detailed in the Council's Employee Code of Conduct. Once volunteers are recruited, they will be expected to adhere to all of the Council's existing policies and procedures as if they were an employee of the Council. Volunteers are bound by the same requirements as paid staff, for example they will be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement in the same way that a paid employee would be required to do.

4.2. In recruiting a volunteer we expect that they will:

- Work within agreed guidelines, attend at agreed times and undertake agreed duties. It is the responsibility of the volunteers themselves not to take on any 'extra' tasks which are over and above what has been agreed.
- Be punctual and reliable;
- Monitor their working time to ensure compliance with the Working Time Directive;
- Claim any expenses to which they are entitled via webexpenses and submit VAT receipts as required.
- Respect confidentiality: they will be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement as part of the recruitment process
- Attend training where required, for example Induction and Health & Safety training.
- Declare any interests which may be relevant to the role, volunteers should refer to the Employee Code of Conduct for further information.
- Not act in any way which may bring the Authority into disrepute, volunteers should refer to the Employee Code of Conduct

5. Health & Safety

5.1. We will not place volunteers in situations that will put their health and safety, or that of others, at risk. Volunteers must comply with Health and Safety Policy requirements. It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure volunteers receive suitable and sufficient induction with particular attention to Health and Safety

matters. The training will include information about personal safety, first aid and what to do in the event of a fire. It is the responsibility of all staff to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and for others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

- 5.2. All volunteer roles will be risk assessed, covering both the tasks involved and the environment in which they will be conducted. In addition, where a volunteer makes us aware of a pre-existing medical condition or disability, an individual risk assessment may also be necessary.
- 5.3. Volunteers undertaking normal Council business will be covered by our insurance in the same way as a paid employee.
- 5.4. Where volunteers drive as part of their voluntary activity, and use their own vehicle, they must ensure they possess the relevant class of insurance. Further guidance should be sought from the volunteer's own insurance company.

6. Payment of expenses

- 6.1. Volunteers are not paid for their time as a volunteer, but they may be able to get money to cover any expenses incurred while they are carrying out their volunteer role for the Council.
- 6.2. Volunteers will need to agree any expenses in advance such as mileage, with their Line Manager. Where applicable they should complete the appropriate claim form for submission to Payroll. Claims received are paid a month in arrears, i.e. mileage incurred in July will be paid in August.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1. All supervisors must ensure that during induction volunteers are made aware of the Council's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policies. Volunteers are required to treat data and information that they come into contact within the course of their volunteering with confidentiality and in accordance with relevant data protection legislation
- 7.2. Volunteers are required to provide such personal data about themselves as is necessary to maintain contact including name, address and relevant contact details, and other data necessary to meet safeguarding requirements and other reasonable requirements of the Council. Such data will be stored confidentially and in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

8. Equal Opportunities

- 8.1. We are fully committed to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policies and will proactively offer volunteering opportunities to people from different backgrounds as a contribution to developing and maintaining an organisation where differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued and where those with diverse backgrounds and experiences are able to participate and contribute.

9. Volunteering by Council Employees

- 9.1. Employees are encouraged to engage in volunteering activities that contribute to the community and align with the South & East Lincolnshire Partnership's Sub Regional Strategy. Learning and development discussions, particularly as part of the annual review process, should ensure that volunteering is considered as potential learning and development activity.
- 9.2. To support this, employees may be granted up to two days of paid leave per financial year for volunteering purposes, subject to managerial approval. This can be taken in full or as ½ days. This initiative aims to foster community engagement and personal development while ensuring that volunteering efforts are consistent with the strategic goals of the Partnership.
- 9.3. Volunteering activities must take place within the South & East Lincolnshire Partnership area and should not incur additional costs to the council.
- 9.4. Employees are required to submit a formal request for volunteer leave via the First4HR time off request procedure, detailing the nature of the volunteering activity and how it aligns with the Partnership's Sub Regional Strategy. Approval will be granted based on the relevance and impact of the proposed activity, as well as operational requirements.
- 9.5. This policy underscores our commitment to social responsibility and community support, encouraging employees to contribute positively to the local area.
- 9.6. Please note that any voluntary activity must be declared as specified in the Council's Code of Conduct.



Report To:	Full Council
Date:	23 rd July 2025
Subject:	Allocation of Seats Review
Purpose:	To review committee seat allocations and make appointments in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
Key Decision:	N/A
Portfolio Holder:	N/A
Report Of:	John Medler, Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer
Report Author:	Christine Morgan – Democratic Services Team Leader
Ward(s) Affected:	None
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

The purpose of this report is to set out a revised allocation of seats and associated appointments for the Council's committees following a review of political group membership.

Recommendations

That the Council approves the revised allocation of seats and appointments to Committees as detailed in Appendix 1 (to follow).

Reasons for Recommendations

To comply with legal requirements as set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

Other Options Considered

The Council may agree alternative seat allocation arrangements to those proposed In Appendix 1.

1. Background

- 1.1 At its Annual Meeting on 17th May 2025, the Council appointed its Committees, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and associated Regulations.
- 1.2 In addition, it was agreed that the number of seats to the following committees be reduced, and that a further report be presented to the next meeting of Full Council to further amend and approve the committee seat allocations and appointments.

Committee	Original Committee Size	Agreed Committee Size to take effect from Full Council Meeting in July 2025)
PMP	15	11
PDP	16	11
Planning	15	11
Licensing Committee / Committee of the Licensing Authority	15	11

2. Report

- 2.1 Under Regulation 16 of the 1990 Regulations, where some of the members of the relevant authority are members of one or more political groups and the others are not, the Council's obligations are as follows:
 - i) To determine the proportion of the total membership of the Council who are members of one or more political groups and ensure that the same proportion of the total number of seats to be filled is allocated to each of the political groups in the proportion that the number of members of that group bears to the membership of the authority; and
 - ii) To secure that persons appointed to any seats that do not fall to be allocated to a political group under the above requirement are not allocated to a person who is a member of a political group.

- 2.3 Having determined the overall seat allocations, the next step is to allocate the seat allocations to individual bodies. The 1989 Act requires the Council to apply the following principles in sequential order and as far as reasonably practicable when determining seat allocations:
- a) That not all the seats on a body are allocated to the same political group.
 - b) If the number of persons belonging to a political group is a majority of the authority's membership, then the majority of seats on a body are allocated to that political group.
 - c) That subject to (a) and (b) the number of seats allocated to a political group on the ordinary committees of the Council should bear the same proportion to all the seats on such ordinary committees as the membership of that group bears to the membership of the Council as a whole.
 - d) That subject to (a), (b) and (c) the number of seats allocated to a political group on a body should bear the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as the membership of that group bears to the membership of the Council as a whole.
- 2.4 Once the allocation of seats has been determined, there is a duty on the Council to give effect to the allocation by making appointments to seats in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group.
- 2.5 Historically political groups of the Council have 'gifted' seats to other political groups and non-aligned members. Consultation between Group Leaders is ongoing at the time of writing this report and any proposals to gift seats will be documented in Appendix 1 for consideration . Members are therefore advised that the Council may be asked to consider approving such arrangements at its meeting on 23 July 2025. A decision to approve alternative arrangements requires no members to vote against the proposals.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 The Council is required to review the allocation of seats and make appointments in accordance with the law relating to political proportionality. The recommendations within this report meet these requirements.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

None.

Corporate Priorities

None.

Staffing

None.

Workforce Capacity Implications

None.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

Data Protection

None.

Financial

The costs of delivering the Council's Committee structures are factored into the approved Council budget.

Risk Management

None.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Group Leaders are consulted as part of the review process.

Reputation

None.

Contracts

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None.

Health and Wellbeing

None.

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

Not undertaken.

Acronyms

None.

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1 Membership of Committees

Background Papers

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed.
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The Council Constitution	Constitution
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Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author:	Christine Morgan – Democratic Services Team Leader CMorgan@sholland.gov.uk
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Signed off by:	John Medler, Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer john.medler@e-lindsey.gov.uk
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Approved for publication:	John Medler, Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer john.medler@e-lindsey.gov.uk
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Report To:	South Holland District Council
Date:	Wednesday, 23 July 2025
Subject:	Health Scrutiny for Lincolnshire Report
Purpose:	To provide South Holland District Council with an update following the latest meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Key Decision:	N
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing, Conservation & Heritage
Report Of:	Councillor Glynis Scalese
Report Author:	Samantha Bradley, Democratic and Electoral Services Support Officer
Ward(s) Affected:	N/A
Exempt Report:	N

Summary

This report is provided in accordance with Standing Order 5 of Part 4A (Procedural Standing Orders) of the Councils Constitution which states that written reports will be received from Councillors who represent the Council on Outside bodies. Reports will normally be for information only, however, members may recommend that a matter be considered or investigated by officers and that the investigating officers be asked to submit a further detailed report.

Councillor Scalese is SHDC representative to the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire.

This report is provided for information purposes only, and members are requested to note it.

Recommendations

That the report be noted.

Reasons for Recommendations

To provide members with an update following the latest meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire, in line with the requirements of the council's Constitution.

Other Options Considered

- Not to note the report; or
- To note the report and request that a matter be considered or investigated by officers, and that the investigating officer submit a further detailed report.

Health and Scrutiny Report

General Practitioner Practices Provision in Lincolnshire

There are currently 81 General Practices across Lincolnshire. These practices collaborate through Primary Care Networks to offer an extended range of services to their local populations. In total, there are 14 Primary Care Networks in the region.

Improving Access and Services

The Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board is actively working with General Practices to improve access to services. This includes:

- Supporting practices to meet national planning guidance milestones.
- Ensuring consistent availability of online consultation tools from Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.30pm, starting in October 2025.
- Promoting the use of:
 - Advice and Guidance to obtain specialist input from secondary care.
 - Pharmacy First services.
 - Self-referral pathways to streamline patient access.

Strategic Support and Best Practice Sharing

As part of the evolving General Practitioner (GP) Practices strategy, the Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board will:

- Support General Practices and Primary Care Networks in sharing best practices to enhance service delivery and patient care.

Commissioned Services and Workforce

The National Health Service Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board commissions general practice services from:

- 81 General Practices, operating from 114 locations.
- Services are delivered by multidisciplinary teams, typically including:
 - General Practitioners
 - Nursing staff

- Administrative staff

Patient Registration Statistics

- The average number of patients per General Practitioner practice in Lincolnshire is 10,194.
- Practice list sizes vary significantly, ranging from approximately 2,300 to 29,000 patients.

Primary care Access and Recovery Plan

The key aims of the plan are to improve patient access to GP practices by:

- Addressing the 8am rush for appointments.
- Ensuring people understand what happens next when they contact their practice.

The national plan focuses on four key areas:

- Empowering patients to manage their own health.
- Implementing Modern General Practice Access.
- Building capacity.
- Cutting bureaucracy.

Performance Highlights for 2024/25

- General Practitioner practices across the country exceeded annual targets.
- A total of 5.68 million GP appointments were delivered – 2% higher than the target of 5.5 million.
- 87% of appointments not usually booked in advance were delivered within two weeks of being requested, surpassing the national target of 85%.
- 100% of practices offer online appointment booking.
- 100% of practices provide the option to request repeat prescriptions online.
- 100% of General Medical Service practices offer the option to register online.

Empowering Patients

People in Lincolnshire can self-refer into a range of community services without needing a GP referral.

These services include:

- Podiatry
- Weight loss services
- Community equipment services
- Community audiology services

Care Quality Commission

Lincolnshire's Primary Care Quality Team works closely with GP practices to support and drive continuous improvement in local healthcare provision.

The team relies on assessments from the Care Quality Commission to provide independent assurance of the quality of service delivered.

Current Care Quality Commission Ratings for Lincolnshire Practices

The latest Care Quality Commission ratings reflect a strong position across the country:

- 3 practices rated as Outstanding.
- 71 practices rated as Good.
- 6 practices rated as Requires Improvement.
- 1 practice rated as inadequate.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author: Samantha Bradley, Democratic and Electoral Services
Support Officer
Samantha.Bradley@sholland.gov.uk

Signed off by: Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Community Leadership

Approved for publication: Christine Morgan – Democratic Services Team Leader

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