



Report To:	Policy Development Panel
Date:	2 June 2026
Subject:	Strategy / Policy Review and Development
Purpose:	To consider an approach to future strategy / policy review and development in the lead up to Local Government Reorganisation
Key Decision:	No
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Nick Worth, Leader of the Council
Report Of:	James Gilbert, Service Director – Corporate Services
Report Author:	Corey Gooch, Business Intelligence and Change Manager
Ward(s) Affected:	N/A
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

Given the anticipated timeline for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), this report proposes a refined and proportionate approach to the management of the Council's strategies and policies during the transition period to 2028.

The proposal only applies to policies outside the Policy Framework (reserved for Council), as identified at Appendix A.

It proposes that minor or non-material amendments, and consequential amendments where there has been a change in legislation requiring an amendment to these policies, are delegated to Service Directors, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Monitoring Officer, removing the need for these changes to progress through the full Scrutiny and Cabinet for approval.

This approach seeks to maintain strong governance while ensuring proportionality and freeing up capacity to focus on LGR.

Recommendations

- That scrutiny committee considers this report and provides feedback to inform a future decision.

Reasons for Recommendations

- Many of the policies are unlikely to require significant change between now and Local Government Re-organisation (assuming a 2028 timeline).
- Local Government Reorganisation will place a significant pressure on the Council's internal capacity and the approach set out in this report will alleviate some of that pressure to focus on Reorganisation.

Other Options Considered

- Not to support the approach set out and to request the current strategy and policy review approach remain.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council currently operates a governance framework in which most strategy and policy reviews and amendments are brought through the formal democratic process. Usually, any proposed changes - even minor changes - to a strategy or policy are first considered through scrutiny before progressing to Cabinet or another decision-making body, as appropriate.
- 1.2 With Local Government Reorganisation on the horizon (outcome likely to be known mid-2026) and the Councils likely to be dissolved on 1 April 2028, this report brings forward proposed changes that seek to free up capacity of council officers to help the Council prepare for Local Government Reorganisation.
- 1.3 Should Reorganisation not take place, or be delayed, existing strategy and policy review/development arrangements would remain in place.

2. Report

- 2.1 The Council maintains a structured and transparent approach to strategy and policy management, in which strategy and policy reviews and amendments progress through scrutiny before being considered by Cabinet or another relevant committee.
- 2.2 Local Government Reorganisation has increased the demands on officer capacity, and this will continue to increase significantly if Reorganisation proceeds. Continuing to deliver the existing volume of routine strategy and policy reviews is questionable where existing strategies and policies are likely to remain fit for purpose for the Councils remaining time or only require minor, non-material or legislative changes.
- 2.3 For clarity, Policies within the Council's constitutional Policy Framework (not in scope of this report) will continue to be reviewed and approved by Full Council.

- 2.4 The Policies within the scope of this proposal are included within Appendix A. The policies, where necessary, would be extended to 31 March 2028 with minor or non-material amendments, and consequential amendments where there has been a change in legislation requiring an amendment, to these policies (in Appendix A) being delegated to the Service Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Monitoring Officer.
- 2.5 If a full policy review and amendment were to take place, this would still come forward for consideration via Scrutiny and Cabinet.
- 2.6 The requirement to consult with the relevant Portfolio Holder provides continued member visibility and oversight. In addition, Scrutiny will retain the ability to request the review of any policy where concerns arise, ensuring that democratic challenge and transparency remain in place. The requirement to consult with the Monitoring Officer provides assurance that decisions are taken in accordance with the delegation.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. The proposed approach provides a balanced and proportionate framework for managing the Council's policies during the transition to Local Government Reorganisation. By retaining full member oversight for Policy Framework matters, while enabling minor, non-material and legislative amendments to non-framework policies (Appendix A) to be managed through delegated authority, the Council can free up capacity without compromising transparency or accountability.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

The proposed approach streamlines workload, maintains alignment, and frees up capacity so the Partnership can focus on preparing for LGR without unnecessary strategy and policy review activity.

Staffing

None

Workforce Capacity Implications

The proposed approach will reduce pressure on officer capacity across the Partnership by limiting routine strategy and policy reviews during Local Government Re-organisation. By focusing only on the strategies and policies requiring substantial revision and enabling minor, non-material and legislative changes to be managed under delegated authority, services can redirect capacity toward Local Government Reorganisation work without compromising governance or compliance.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

There are no direct legal risks arising from the proposed approach. Substantial policy changes will still follow existing democratic and governance processes, ensuring

Background Papers

None

Chronological History of this Report

Report Version

1.1

1.2

Date

19/03/2026

20/05/2026

Report Approval

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Approved for publication:

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