

# Productivity Plan 2024

Report of the Leader

## Recommended:

**That the Productivity Plan annexed to the report be approved for publication and submission to Central Government.**

### SUMMARY:

- The UK Government requested as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement that all local authorities prepare a Productivity Plan.
- The Plan sets out the approach being taken by the council to drive productivity with regard to organisational and place leadership and the delivery of services.
- This report presents the proposed Productivity Plan and if approved by Cabinet will then be submitted to government and published on the Council's website.

## 1 Introduction

1.1 This report presents the Council's proposed Productivity Plan.

## 2 Background

2.1 In April this year as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced that all local authorities will be required to develop and share productivity plans.

2.2 There is no formal guidance on the structure of productivity plans, however, subsequent information set out an expectation that plans should cover four main themes:

- Transformation of services and place leadership to make better use of resources.
- Opportunities to take advantage of advances in technology and make better use of data to inform decision making and service design.
- Ways to reduce wasteful spend within the system.
- Barriers preventing activity that government can help to reduce or remove.

2.3 The Council is required to submit its productivity plan to DLUHC and publish on our website by 19 July 2024. Subject to Cabinet approval, officers will then submit the plan on behalf of the council.

- 2.4 To ensure appropriate member oversight and endorsement of the productivity plan, officers have engaged with members from both the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to seek feedback and comment ahead of the plan being finalised and submitted to Cabinet for approval.
- 2.5 DLUHC have confirmed that individual plans will not be rated or scored. The primary focus is on the plans providing government with a greater understanding of the common themes and issues that local government is facing to help inform future national policy.
- 2.6 The government has recognised that productivity is not one-dimensional and has encouraged local authorities to consider the different facets that drive productivity not just in regard to the organisation, but also in respect to the place leadership role that local councils provide for their communities.

### **3 Overview of the Productivity Plan**

- 3.1 The proposed Productivity Plan is attached in the Annex.
- 3.2 The plan reflects the Council's corporate priorities and our overall strategic focus of delivering for our communities which drives our transformation. It outlines how we work as an organisation, focusing on the foundations of our financial and organisational stability and the outcomes we have delivered as a result of our direct work with communities all of which are key components of our productivity.
- 3.3 It also draws upon the importance of partnership working as being key to productivity as a result of having clear alignment around shared objectives. This often helps to unlock challenging yet ambitious outcomes for our communities. The council's place-based partnerships such as Andover Vision, Romsey Future and the Test Valley Partnership have been the catalysts for this, resulting in new investment into integrated healthcare pilots, a successful Levelling Up bid for Andover and a nationally recognised approach to strengthening community resilience.
- 3.4 The plan also sets out several barriers that government could help to reduce or remove. This includes the need for greater certainty regarding local government finance to enable local authorities to be able to better plan over the medium term, addressing the issues of stalled planning permissions that can frustrate delivery of new homes; and simplifying the funding streams that are often made available in silo particularly when working with our most vulnerable residents who are at risk of experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping.

### **4 Corporate Objectives and Priorities**

- 4.1 The Productivity Plan reflects the approach the Council is taking to deliver on its corporate priorities with an overall strategic focus on enabling our communities to thrive.

## **5 Options**

- 5.1 For Cabinet to consider the Productivity Plan as presented in this report and agree to either:
- a. Approve the Productivity Plan (as set out in the annex).
  - b. Approve some other iteration of the Productivity Plan.
  - c. Not approve the Productivity Plan.

## **6 Option Appraisal**

- 6.1 The Productivity Plan is a document that has been produced following a requirement by government as part of the Local Government Funding Settlement. The Plan reflects the main areas requested in the guidance and describes the approach the council is taking to ensure productivity.
- 6.2 Not approving the productivity plan as contemplated in Option C is therefore not recommended. Cabinet could approve a Productivity Plan in some other form than the attached in the annex.

## **7 Risk Management**

- 7.1 An evaluation of the risks indicate that the existing controls in place mean that no significant risks have been identified at this time.

## **8 Resource Implications**

- 8.1 There are no resource implications beyond officer time arising from this report.

## **9 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **10 Equality Issues**

- 10.1 The Productivity Plan sets out that the council ensures that all staff have access to necessary training and guidance to ensure that our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 are met.

## **11 Conclusion**

- 11.1 The report presents the Council's proposed Productivity Plan which, if approved, will be submitted to DLUHC as required by the government by the 19 July 2024. The Plan sets out the approach being taken by the council to drive productivity with regard to organisational and place leadership and the delivery of services.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

None

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:	1	File Ref:	N/A
----------------	---	-----------	-----

(Portfolio: Leader) Councillor P North

Officer:	James Moody	Ext:	8130
----------	-------------	------	------

Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	10 July 2024
------------	---------	-------	--------------