



OPEN REPORT
Governance and Resources Committee

Governance and Resources Committee 18 July 2024

Productivity Plan

Report of Director of Corporate and Customer Services

Report Author and Contact Details

Glenn Burton, Digital Transformation Project Manager
01629 731381 or glenn.burton@derbyshireadales.gov.uk

Wards Affected

District Wide

Report Summary

This report outlines the proposed submission of a Productivity Plan for Derbyshire Dales District Council to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Recommendations

1. That the committee approves the Productivity Plan

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: 240416 - DLUHC letter co Chief Execs - Productivity plans in Local Government

Appendix 2: Derbyshire Dales District Council Productivity Plan

Background Papers

N/A

Consideration of report by Council or other committee

N/A

Council Approval Required

Council approval is essential for the endorsement of the productivity plan as outlined in Appendix 1.

Exempt from Press or Public

No

Productivity Plan

1. Background

1.1 The 2024/25 Local Government Financial Settlement mandated local authorities to formulate productivity plans as a prerequisite for accessing additional funding. These plans are designed to showcase how local authorities will enhance service performance and curb wasteful expenditure, serving as a mechanism for the government to assess performance against published plans for future funding decisions. The outlined requirements encompass various key areas:

1. transformation of services to make better use of resources;
2. opportunities to take advantage of advances in technology and make better use of data to inform decision making and service design;
3. ways to reduce wasteful spend within systems, including specific consideration of expenditure on consultants and discredited staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programmes – this does not include programmes designed to promote integration and civic pride, and counter extremism; and
4. barriers preventing activity that Government can help to reduce or remove.

1.2 On 14 April 2024, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities corresponded (Appendix 1) with local authorities to elaborate on the initial mandate and delineate the framework for these productivity plans. The communication confirmed the deadline for plan submission as 19 July 2024, and elucidated the establishment of a panel comprising sector experts, including representatives from Oflog and the LGA. This panel is tasked with reviewing the plans to identify common themes and best practices across the sector, thus informing government policy and supporting further transformation within the local government domain.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The correspondence from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (see Appendix 1) underscores that while there is no prescribed format for the productivity plan, it should be aligned with the overarching objective of enhancing productivity and efficiency. However, it does offer a suggested structure, emphasising brevity with plans limited to three to four pages and prompting consideration of key questions to aid plan development.

2.2 Drawing from the expanded themes outlined in the correspondence and internal consultation with the Corporate Leadership team, the attached proposal for a Productivity Plan (Appendix 2) has been developed.

2.3 The proposed Productivity Plan highlights a range of key improvement initiatives the Council has delivered on in recent years, and incorporates ongoing and planned future activities that are partly or wholly intended to

achieve improved productivity whilst being align with Corporate Plan objectives and the Councils current transformation programme.

- 2.4 It was agreed by the Derbyshire Chief Executives Group that all authorities in the Council would look to provide a single response regarding “Barriers preventing progress that the government can help to reduce or remove”. Due to the truncated timeline for this work and the deadline for reports submission we are; at the time of writing this report, still waiting on the agreed text. Similarly, we are still waiting on the foreword from the leader of the Council and the Chair of the G&R Committee.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 3.1 As this is a requirement mandated by Central Government no other options have been considered. As such it is recommended that the attached Productivity Plan.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 In line with the Consultation Strategy there has been no formal consultation on this, as it relates to internal policy. Despite this the Corporate Leadership Team have been consulted throughout the development of the plan.

5. Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 Productivity plans are required to be submitted and published online by 19 July 2024. Approval of the draft was sought from the Corporate Leadership Team on 11 June 2024 with final member approval sought at the 18 July 2024 G&R Committee.

6. Policy Implications

- 6.1 The productivity plan is a mandated initiative by central government, yet it inherently aligns with the Councils’ corporate plan objective of ensuring a ‘Financially sound, fair and responsive Council’.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific resource implications relating to the development of the plan, but all initiatives that require additional spending will be subject to separate business cases before being progressed.

8. Procurement Implications

- 8.1 Delegating authority for signing off on the productivity plan does not entail specific procurement implications. However, it’s important to recognise that the outcomes of the productivity plan may necessitate procurement activities. Consequently, any such procurement needs arising from the transformation initiatives outlined in the plan must be duly considered as part of the requisite business cases.

9. Legal Advice and Implications

- 9.1 This report relates to the Council's Productivity Plan. There is one decision recommended to be taken which is to approve the Plan.
- 9.2 The legal risk of challenge when taking the decision as per the recommendation has been assessed as low.

10. Equalities Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific equality implications relating to the development of the plan as it is an internally-focused policy, but where appropriate equality impact assessments would be conducted on significant changes to externally-focused policies and procedures.

11. Climate Change Implications

- 11.1 Delegating authority for signing off on the productivity plan does not entail specific Climate Change implications. However, it's important to recognise that the outcomes of the productivity plan may carry implications for Climate Change. Consequently, any such transformational activity arising from the from the productivity plan should consider the implications on Climate Change as part of their requisite business cases.

11. Risk Management

- 11.1 Failure to approve the proposed Productivity Plan will mean that we will be unable to submit and publish the plan inline with the deadline set by Central Government. This may remove the opportunity to influence future national policy design and the role of government in supporting further change within the sector.

Report Authorisation

Approvals obtained from:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Paul Wilson	10/07/2024
Director of Resources/ S.151 Officer (or Financial Services Manager)	Karen Henriksen	10/07/2024
Monitoring Officer (or Legal Services Manager)	Helen Mitchell	09/07/2024