

Divisions Affected - ALL

CABINET

18 JUNE 2024

Oxfordshire County Council Productivity Plan

Report by Executive Director of Resources

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - (a) Approve the productivity plan for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
 - (b) Approve the additional barriers to efficiency document for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Executive Summary

2. As part of the 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement, it was announced that councils would be asked to produce a productivity plan.
3. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) wrote to all councils in April 2024 to outline the process for productivity plans which has a submission deadline of 19 July 2024.
4. Working with colleagues across the council, and with external peers for consistency in approach, a productivity plan for Oxfordshire County Council has been drafted in line with the flexible scope set out by DLUHC. This can be found in Annex A.
5. There is no formal template for the productivity plan, only guidance that it focuses on four suggested themes around transformation, better use of technology and data, reduction in spend and barriers to efficiency.

Key Issues

6. The high-level directive from DLUHC is to think broadly and to share current plans to transform services, therefore we have proactively focused on the positive transformation happening across the council, including Delivering the Future Together and our new People and Culture Strategy.

7. Where applicable, financial information and governance arrangements are included to provide transparency and assurance of oversight of delivery and effectiveness.
8. In addition to providing information on delivery, there is an opportunity to highlight areas where barriers to efficiency can be unlocked through central government intervention. We have set out our recommendations in response to this ask in a separate document to be submitted to DLUHC alongside the productivity plan. This can be found in Annex B.
9. Councils must ensure that there is member oversight and endorsement of the plan, and we have actively engaged Political Group Leaders in its development.
10. Following submission, DLUHC have stated they will review the plans to identify common themes and issues across the sector and will not rate or score individual plans nor create any kind of league tables.

Financial Implications

11. There are no budgetary implications or financial risks arising directly from this report, however there are opportunities to inform government of barriers to efficiency which they have the powers to unlock, including inconsistent and short-term funding.

Comments checked by:

Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance, Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

12. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Paul Grant, Head of Legal, paul.grant@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

13. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

14. There are no equalities implications directly arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications

15. There are no sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

Risk Management

16. There are no risk management implications directly arising from this report.

Consultations

17. There is no requirement to publicly consult on the productivity plan however it will be published on our website following submission.

Lorna Baxter
Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

Annex: Annex A – Oxfordshire County Council Productivity Plan 2024-2025

Annex B – Annex to Productivity Plan, Barriers to Efficiency

Background papers: NIL

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