

Productivity Plan

Approved by	Leader, Cllr Phil Munday – Havant Borough Council
Approval date	July 2024
Review date	July 2025

This document was produced in response to a request from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) (now MHCLG) for all councils to submit a 'productivity plan' in July 2024 and to publish that plan on our website.



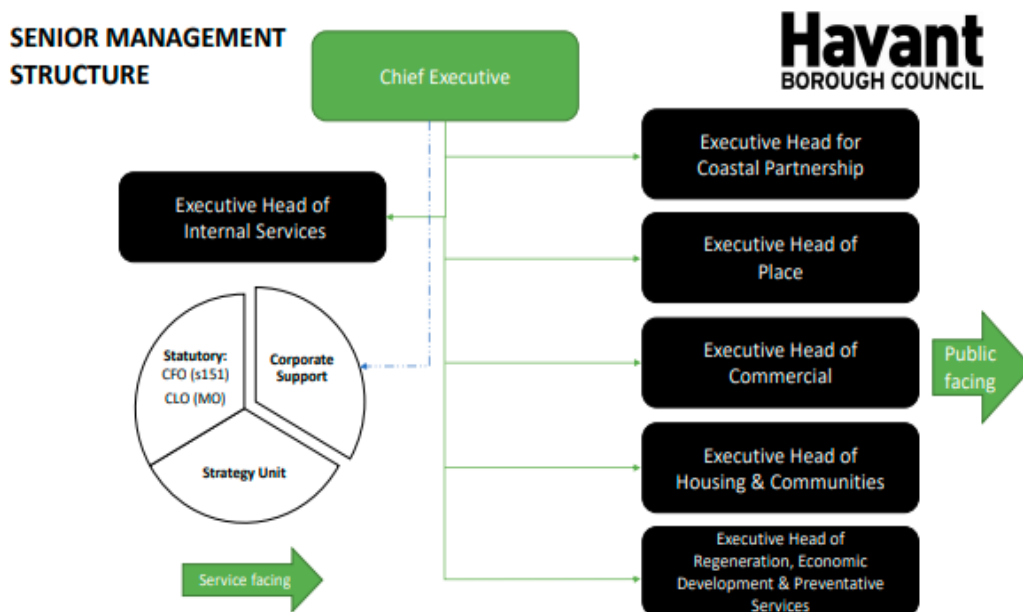
Productivity Plan

1. How have we transformed the way we design and deliver services, to make better use of resources?

Change to organisational and staffing structures/operating models

As a result of the ending of a partnership with another authority the council recently underwent significant organisational change, taking the opportunity to conduct a complete review of the structure of the council. Under the stewardship of an interim management team during 2022-23, a new organisational structure was implemented taking account of the Local Government Association's [Decision Making Accountability \(DMA\) model](#). DMA provided the council with the key fundamentals required for a brand new organisational structure including consideration of:

- The numbers of spans of management layers needed for an organisation to be as effective as possible and the types of roles within those layers.
- The decision rights in different layers that managers require to be truly empowered and effective.
- Arrangements necessary to ensure a strong focus on front line service delivery.



Following the implementation of this new structure, an extensive recruitment process took place to recruit a permanent Executive Leadership Team which not only possessed the skills and expertise for the role, but displayed the values and behaviours that the council had identified as essential for it to continue to develop and improve into the future.

As part of this work, the council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation was also reviewed and refreshed to ensure streamlined decision making and clear accountability

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How do we measure productivity?

As part of the split with our previous local authority partner, CIPFA were commissioned to do a financial review of the council. The report stated at the time that 'the council has the financial resources available to enable delivery of the proposed separation'. In addition to this a budget working group was established to review the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) which resulted in a refreshed and more balanced MTFS being reviewed and approved.

The council has a comprehensive performance management framework which aims to use quantitative and qualitative data to provide a holistic picture of how well our services are performing and whether we are achieving the ambitions set out in our [Corporate Strategy](#).

Our interactive [corporate performance scorecard](#) published on our website includes a set of key performance indicators from across different service areas as well as an update on our corporate priorities/strategic projects. Service performance is reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee with accompanying analysis and commentary which allows for a collaborative approach to problem solving and helps drive continuous improvement in services.

By linking our priorities to the benefits we expect to see, we ensure a golden thread from strategy to performance to outcomes.

In addition the council undertakes regular benchmarking on national performance indicators. The proposed Office for Local Government (Oflog) measures are highlighted on the performance scorecard and we regularly review our performance on the [LGInform benchmarking tool](#).

An annual representative sample Residents Survey was launched in 2024 to provide additional evidence on council performance and priorities from the perspective of residents.

Service improvements completed

Under the new organisational structure, and building on themes from the DMA model, and our values and behaviours, the Authority has:

- Streamlined governance, whilst ensuring due diligence of key decisions is maintained.
- Considerably reduced the number of instances and levels of Committee and Board meetings, allowing for more agility in our business and reducing administrative burdens.
- Implemented a brand new model for Prevention and Enforcement Services.
- Approved a programme of work to introduce new systems such as an ERP system within Finance to improve efficiency, collaborative working and data integration.



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Transformation over the next 2 years

The council is currently preparing a transformation programme 'Good to Great' which will ensure that services deliver clear value for money, place the customer at the centre of what we do and make the most of innovations and best practice. This programme of work will be alongside an existing Strategic Commissioning programme which is reviewing several large contracts coming to an end in September 2025 and options for future service delivery. These workstreams will see delivery of service models, designed to ensure a strong customer focus, and clear value for money, in some of the largest services the council delivers.

The council has also committed to a Peer Review (through the Local Government Association's [Corporate Peer Challenge](#) scheme) in the next year, with an initial date of summer 2025.

Savings potential

The council is maximising use of its cash reserves through an updated [Treasury Management Strategy](#) and has embarked on an accommodation rationalisation programme to reflect new ways of working, releasing office space to let commercially to generate income. In addition, as mentioned above, the Strategic Commissioning programme will see several large contracts let resulting in the opportunity for efficiencies and savings across all service teams and back office functions. As per the CIPFA review, the Council remains in a reasonable financial position with low levels of debt. However, we will continue to explore all options to reduce costs, secure strong returns on investments, and earn income which can be re-invested in services.

2. How do we plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources?

Barriers from legacy systems

A programme of work has been established as a result of the ending of a 10 year IT contract, due to end in September 2025. This programme broadly covers three areas of the council: IT infrastructure including council wide systems such as finance, planning and environmental health, environmental services and other customer facing services. With respect to the IT infrastructure, the council will be moving from a predominately server based infrastructure system towards a Software as a Service (SaaS) approach. This will provide numerous benefits and aligns with our [Digital Strategy](#) which seeks to create a 'digital council' with digitally savvy staff and councillors and services designed to be accessible and convenient for our customers. In addition the council is signed up to the [Local Digital Declaration](#) which is about working with central government and other local authorities to:

- Design services that best meet the needs of our residents
- Challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need
- Protect residents' privacy and security
- Deliver better value for money



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Improving data quality

The council is currently developing a Data and Analytics Strategy which will seek to maximise the best use of data and digital technology and enable it to respond even better to the changing needs and expectations of our residents and businesses. As a first step the council is currently working on completing the Government [Data Maturity Assessment](#) across the whole organisation.

Once the data maturity assessment is completed the Data and Analytics Strategy will be created as well as an action plan to increase data maturity levels across the organisation.

The council has also invested in the use of Microsoft Power BI for corporate and operational reporting, enabling live pro-active reporting on key data and where suitable, making data available across the organisation through the use of APIs and data flows rather than silo data storage. Focusing on developing in-house skills means the council will continue to reap the benefits of increased efficiency and availability of data for decision making in future service improvement.

Other steps being taken forward with respect to improving data maturity include:

- Improving data literacy across the organisation through training
- Improving data storage
- Investing in automation to reduce errors cause by manual data entry
- When manual data entry is still required: implementing best practices when users are entering data into system
- Investing in APIs to keep data always up to date and increase automation
- Investment in primary resident survey data to gain representative satisfaction and perception measures to support decision making

Workflows, apps, predictive analytics and AI

The council has increased its work in this area through training staff in the use of predictive analytics in particular linear models and the R language, using available data to allow for predictions to advise on long term strategy and decision making. Further work has included investigating the suitability of apps within the waste and recycling processes, investigating where AI can be implemented safely within the organisation (being aware of the risks of data security as well as removing a human decision from legislative decisions) and system workflows and customer journey mapping being continually reviewed.

3. Our plans to reduce ‘wasteful spend’ within our organisation and systems

Our budgets are aligned to our Corporate Strategy and priorities which are reviewed each year to ensure our resources are focussed in the right areas to help our residents and businesses. We



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conducted a thorough review of our MTFS in 2022-23 alongside a full structural review as part of the DMA exercise and have identified areas to focus on over the coming years. This includes:

- 'Good to Great' transformation programme
- Strategic Commissioning programme including legacy IT systems, front facing services and our waste management service
- Accommodation rationalisation programme
- New Asset Management Strategy
- Internal Services continuous improvement programme reviewing processes and procedures that support front line services

A review of agency and interim staff took place towards the end of 2023-24 and overall numbers of agency staff and spend has reduced considerably since 1 April 2024. The investment in this area was critical as Havant transitioned to being a standalone Authority. However, under "Business as usual", the aim will be to ensure that we deliver with what we have. However, there will always remain a need to secure relevant expertise, to maintain front line service delivery, or to tap into expertise we do not have. Costs on equality and diversity as well as training are minimal for the size of the authority as is the percentage of time spent on Trade Union which equates to 0.08% of pay bill.

The council continues to explore opportunities to share and/or outsource functions, where cost-effective and appropriate. For example, our Legal Services and Audit functions are provided by partnerships with other local authorities, the council is part of a 5-councils partnership for the Revenue & Benefits and Land Charges services, and the Authority hosts a service which provides coastal management services for a four other Councils.

4. The barriers preventing progress that the government could help remove

Financial context

The council has faced considerable financial pressures in particular as a result of reducing central government funding over the last decade and increasing in demand led statutory services such as housing/homelessness. Whilst the council has responded to the financial challenge through the work described above, issues remain, in particular around:

- one year funding settlements as opposed to multi-year settlements to align with our MTFS
- costly bid exercises for access to government funding which take considerable officer time and provide uncertainty for project planning
- changing requirements imposed by government, for example statutory return requirements and Oflog proposed measures
- Council Tax referendum thresholds; the disparity between Unitary Authorities and 2-tier areas where Unitary Authorities have a 5% referendum limit against all budgets, including those "lower-tier" services provided by District and Borough Councils, whilst stand-alone District and Boroughs only have a 3% limit.



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Legislative changes

There are many proposed legislative changes which may impact service delivery over the coming years for example:

- Environment Act changes regarding waste collection services
- national planning requirements around brownfield and greenfield sites as well as Local Plan requirements

Other significant impacts

As a coastal authority we are particularly impacted by coastal erosion and the considerable costs associated with maintaining coastal defences and/or replacing those defences. This is further compounded by the impact of climate change, and certainty from national government on how best to tackle coastal erosion and climate change - with supporting funding - would be beneficial in the short/medium and long term.



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Version control record

Version number	Date	Author / reviewer	Comments / changes
0.1	07/06/2024	Will Jackson	Initial draft
1.0	03/07/2024	Cllr Phil Munday	FINAL - approved

