

Mansfield District Council **Productivity Plan**

July 2024



Mansfield
District Council

Contents

Page 3	-	Foreword
Page 4	-	Productivity Plan
		Purpose
		Supporting documents
Page 5	-	Our council
		Towards 2030: A Strategy for Mansfield
		What we do
Page 12	-	Transforming our council
		Transformation Strategy
		Transformation Roadmap
		Transformation Governance
		Performance Management
Page 16	-	Making our council more productive
		Transforming the design and delivery of services
		Taking advantage of technology and making better use of data
		Plans to reduce wasteful spend
		Barriers preventing progress

Foreword

Mansfield has a lot to be proud of and to celebrate in terms of both the place and people and we are proud to be leading the members and staff of this great organisation.

For us and all the elected members and staff, it is a time of real opportunity for Mansfield. Over a £150m have been earmarked for local projects, and there's a renewed determination, commitment and enthusiasm to make our district a fantastic place for everyone, through partnership working, community leadership and empowerment and through ensuring we are an active member in the new Mayoral combined authority, STEP fusion and East Midlands Engine, ensuring Mansfield has the best opportunities for its residents, businesses and visitors.

Our plans for the future are guided by our strategic plan - 'Towards 2030: A Strategy for Mansfield' - which has recently been reviewed and updated in 2024 and sets out the following ambitious vision for the district:

“To be an ambitious, caring and confident district where everyone can prosper”

Achieving our vision will mean building on the excellent partnership working which is already in place across the district. It is only through working in partnership that we can create a district that is both now and in the future "a great place to live, learn, work and invest".

To do this we must challenge ourselves, continue to seek out great practice and develop both as an organisation and in how we deliver on our community leadership role, empowering our communities and having the voice at the heart of all we do.

We acknowledge the journey won't be easy but we will look to turn every challenge into an opportunity. This will require a team effort and a can do attitude that does everything necessary to ensure that our resident, business, partner and employee voice is heard and acted upon in everything we do.



Adam Hill
Mansfield District Council
Chief Executive Officer



Andy Abrahams
Executive Mayor
of Mansfield



Productivity Plan

Purpose

The council recognises that in order to maximise productivity, a whole organisation and system approach is required to address the following:

- Budget Efficiency – Inputs – how much? How cheaply are we able to procure the inputs?
- Technical Efficiency – Outputs – how? How much output do we get for each unit of input?
- Effectiveness – Outcomes – why? Are our outputs delivering the desired outcomes?

The purpose of the Productivity Plan is to set out how the council tackles the challenge of achieving budget efficiency, technical efficiency and effectiveness; identify what has been delivered in recent years to transform the organisation and its services; and highlight plans for the future.

In doing so, the plan clarifies the context for our approach to tackling the transformation agenda and being more productive. It also seeks to address the following four areas of focus as set out by the Government:

- Transforming the Design and Delivery of Services
- Taking Advantage of Technology and Making Better Use of Data
- Reducing Wasteful Spend
- Barriers Preventing Progress.

Supporting documents

The council's Productivity Plan and Performance Management Framework are underpinned by a wide range of supporting documents. Each document combines to present the detail of what we are aiming to achieve as well as data and metrics to inform the analysis of our activities in terms of the quantum for outputs and outcomes.

- Corporate Plan - 'Towards 2030: A Strategy for Mansfield'
- Theme Plans – currently in development. Providing detail of how each Corporate Plan theme will be addressed (our communities; our organisation; our district; our environment; our economy)
- Service Plan – providing the 'golden thread' from an operational level through to theme plans and the Corporate Plan
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Mansfield Place Strategy
- Organisational Development Plan
- Transformation Strategy and Roadmap
- Performance Roadmap
- Quarterly performance reports - corporate performance indicators; corporate actions; strategic risk; corporate compliance; information governance; finance – revenue and capital monitoring
- Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Climate Change Strategy & Delivery Plan
- Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents
- Communication & Engagement Strategy.

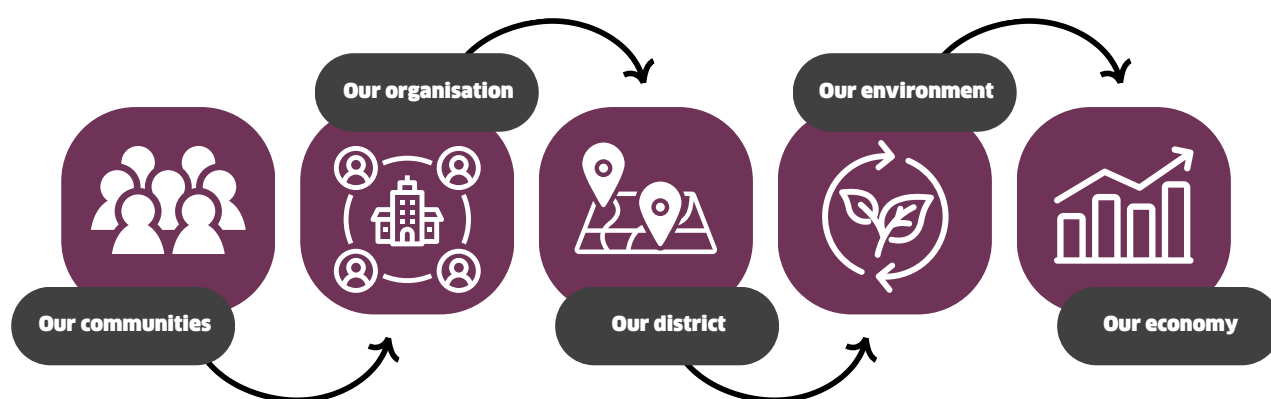


Our council

Towards 2030: A Strategy for Mansfield

The vision, ambitions and priorities that set our strategic direction and inform our plans for the future are outlined within the council's Corporate Plan - 'Towards 2030: A Strategy for Mansfield'.

The council's vision is 'to be an ambitious, caring and confident district where everyone can prosper'. Our vision is ambitious – it is designed to underpin everything we do as a council and to ensure that it is delivered, we will focus on the achievement of ambitions and priorities by addressing the following themes:



Our communities



Our ambition: Our communities are supported to live safe, healthy and happy lives

Priorities

We will:

- Create opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and be physically active.
- Give communities a voice.
- Protect and safeguard our most vulnerable members of the community.
- Work in collaboration with our Community safety partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Value the diversity of our communities.
- Support people to live independently in suitable, safe and warm homes.

Our organisation



Our ambition: Our communities benefit from a resilient, financially sound and well run council working in partnership

Priorities

We will:

- Deliver robust financial planning.
- Maintain sound governance practices and informed and transparent decision making.
- Deliver value for money services that meet the needs of our communities.
- Provide a positive working environment where staff are proud to work for the council and have opportunities to progress.

Our district



Our ambition: Our communities are proud of the district and promote it as a great place to live, work and visit

Priorities

We will:

- Champion and promote the district and communicate a positive image.
- Manage and make best use of our public spaces.
- Create welcoming town centres and neighbourhoods.
- Deliver a diverse cultural and leisure experience.
- Deliver affordable housing that meets current and future needs.

Our environment



Our ambition: Our communities are protected and benefit from measures to tackle the impact of climate change

Priorities

We will:

- Encourage a net zero infrastructure and green skills.
- Contribute to a net zero infrastructure by minimising our organisational carbon emissions and be ambassadors for change.
- Support and encourage sustainable development with biodiversity.
- Support and encourage sustainable waste management.
- People are supported to have sustainable homes.

Our economy



Our ambition: Our communities benefit from employment opportunities, skills development and investment

Priorities

We will:

- Support the development of infrastructure, embracing technology and technological advances.
- Support employment, training and education.
- Enabling housing growth.
- Support local businesses and encourage national and regional businesses to invest in the district.
- Lead regeneration and renewal to revive key sites.

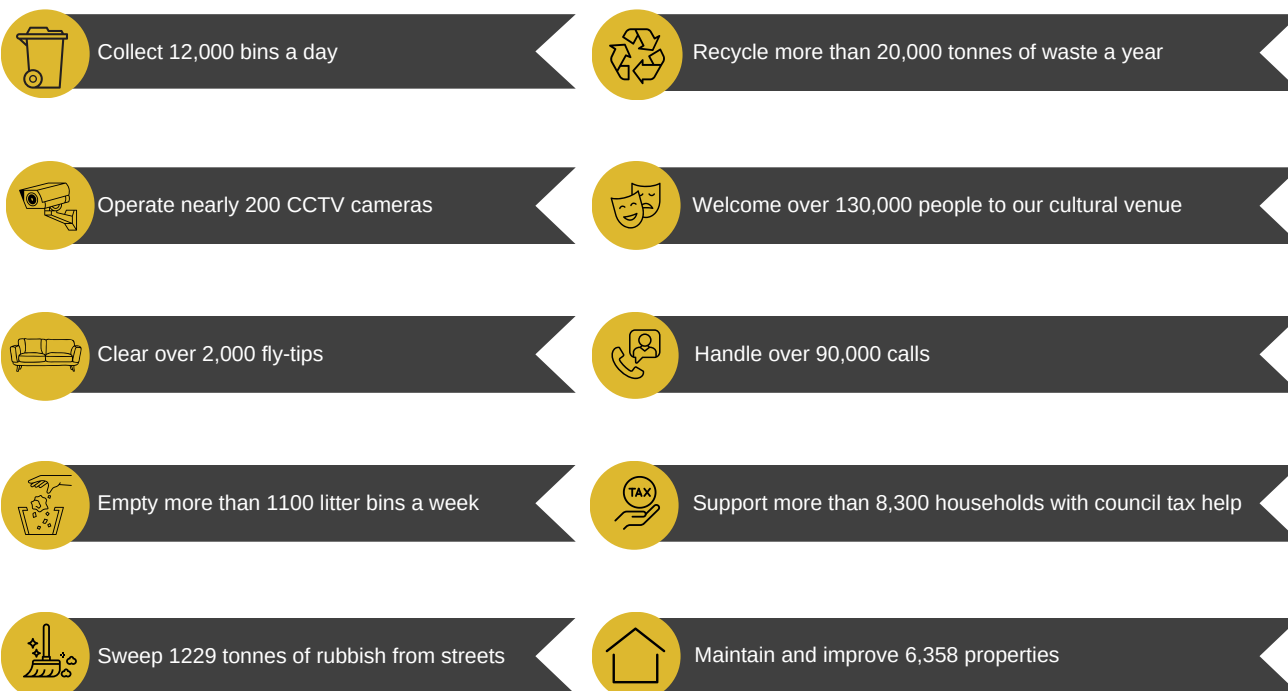
What we do

The council has a varied role in its capacity as a service provider; partner; civic leader; and community champion. This includes responsibilities for fulfilling statutory duties, which are obligations mandated by legislation. These duties include essential services that impact on the everyday lives of our residents and businesses including housing, planning and development, waste management, environmental protection, and democracy. We are responsible for ensuring that services are accessible to those that need it the most and that housing and environmental standards are maintained across the district. The council is also responsible for public health initiatives and keeping our streets clean.

Beyond our statutory duties, the council plays a vital community leadership role which involves community engagement, representation and developing policies and initiatives that foster a sense of community cohesion. We play a key role in planning and development decisions and ensuring that growth and change are managed in ways that benefit our community. We are also a champion for local people and work with partners to build stronger, more resilient communities.

In addition to our statutory requirements, the council offers a range of discretionary services that enhance the quality of life and help to make Mansfield a place where everyone can succeed in life. We maintain parks and green spaces to award winning standards; work hard to ensure that people have good living and welfare standards; support local businesses; and lead major regeneration projects. We also provide life changing support for the most vulnerable people in our community and deliver a diverse range of leisure experiences, cultural activities and events to enrich the lives of residents and visitors to contribute positively to the vibrancy and attractiveness of Mansfield, making it a better place to live, work and visit.

Together, we deliver critical services to over 110,000 residents and many more visitors to the district. To emphasise the scale of what we do, a few key headlines are provided below:



Transforming our council

Transformation Strategy

Our approach to transformation is set out in the council's Transformation Strategy which focuses on four specific themes – Improvement and Change, Commercialism, Finance and Resources, and People:



Improvement and change

The purpose of the Improvement and Change theme is to deliver whole council change. It is focused on five strands of work:

- Digital Transformation
- Agile Working
- Core Service Review
- Continuous Improvement
- Customer Insight.



Commercialism

The purpose of the Commercialism theme is to maximise efficiencies and income, and improve outcomes for customers. It is focused on four work strands:

- Commercialisation of Services
- Asset Investment Growth
- Physical Resources.



Finance and Resources

The purpose of the Finance and Resources theme is to ensure that there are appropriate plans in place to support the development and management of the council's revenue and capital financial strategies and budgets. The theme focuses on the following:

- Financial challenges and the actions required to meet them
- Effective asset management
- Service efficiency through a corporate approach to continuous improvement and service review
- Effective procurement of goods and services
- External funding opportunities to support capital and revenue projects
- Accountability for budget monitoring and management
- Prioritised funding to ensure statutory service provisions.



People

The purpose of the People theme is to recognise and acknowledge the importance of our employees and the critical role that a motivated, skilled and capable workforce plays in every aspect of the council's business. Our approach to this theme is outlined in the council's Organisational Development Plan which was implemented in 2023 and is based on the following broad people related themes:

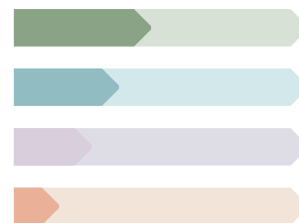
- Valuing Our People
- Developing Our People
- Transforming Our Organisation.

Transforming our council

Transformation Roadmap

The council's Transformation Strategy is delivered through a roadmap of activity that is developed on the basis of the following eight work streams:

- Core Service Review – service redesign and desktop reviews
- Contract Review
- Customer Access
- Website & Digital Platform Development
- Online Forms & Service Development
- Corporate Technology Capabilities
- ICT Infrastructure
- System Procurement and Implementation.



The existing Transformation Roadmap covers the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025.

Transformation Governance

The Assistant Director – People and Transformation acts as the strategic lead responsible for our Transformation Strategy but is supported by the following governance groups:



Transformation Group

The Transformation Group exists to challenge and monitor the development of all transformation projects and acts to scrutinise the purchase, renewal and development of all software and hardware acquisitions and contracts. The group meets every six weeks



Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)

Our Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) acts as the council's Transformation Board and provides the strategic vehicle through which progress in the delivery of the Transformation Strategy is monitored. CLT provides leadership and strategic direction for the work programme and is also responsible for taking decisions on the approval of transformation budget funds, escalated from the Transformation Group.



Transforming our council

Performance Management

Effective performance management is essential in helping us to achieve strategic goals, increase productivity, deliver transformational change, support decision making and inform our financial and resource based planning. Our approach to performance management. And the monitoring and assessment of our plans, is set out in the council's Performance Management and Continuous Improvement Framework.



The Performance Management Framework is supported by a performance management system and provides the mechanism for quarterly reporting of the following:

- Corporate performance indicators
- Corporate actions
- Strategic risk
- Corporate compliance
- Information governance
- Finance – revenue and capital monitoring.

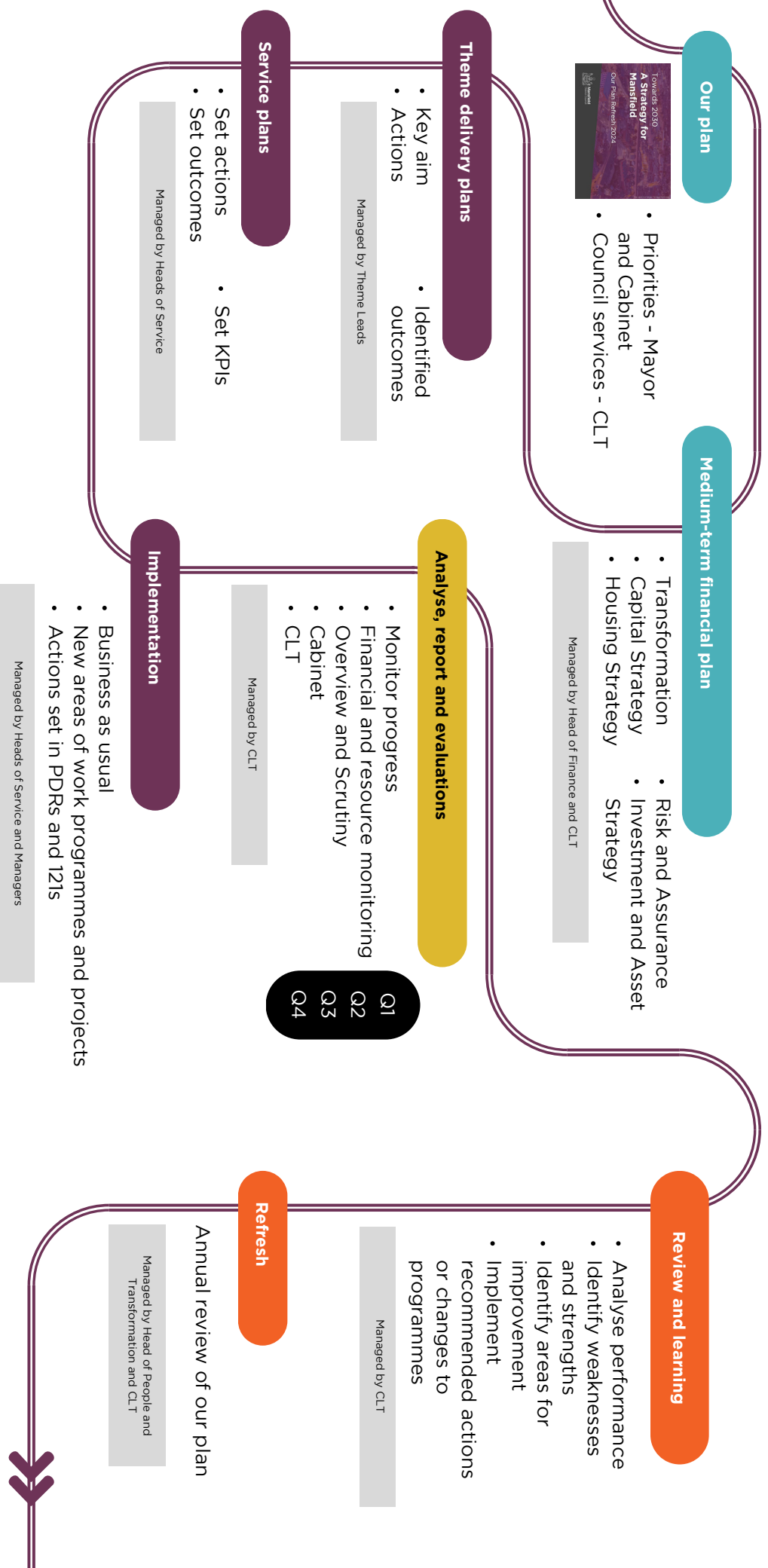
Performance reports are monitored and scrutinised through quarterly CLT Performance Clinics and Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Corporate, alongside any intervention plans produced to develop and present proposals for addressing underperformance.

The council's Performance Management Framework arrangements are represented pictorially through our Performance Roadmap, on the next page.



Performance roadmap

PLAN
DO
MONITOR
RESPOND



Making our council more productive

Transforming the design and delivery of services

The Council recognises that the future for local government is one of significant change. We must continue to react to this quickly and positively and to do so successfully requires a real shift in focus. In the past our response to changes in funding and service demand has been delivered year-on-year. This incremental approach has resulted in a great deal of success but, in the fast changing world in which we now operate, is no longer considered to be sustainable. A transformational approach that delivers whole council change based on future demand and self-sufficiency is therefore now in operation. This requires us to better understand our customers; improve our use of technology; operate more commercially; and make better use of resources. To achieve this we must think more strategically and have greater clarity and focus on our core business and on what our customers expect us to deliver.

The council's transformational journey is well underway and a great deal has already been achieved. Outlined below are a wide range of examples of how the council has transformed the way it designs and delivers services to make better use of resources:



Corporate - impacting the whole organisation

- Development and implementation of a refreshed Corporate Plan - 'Towards 2030: A Strategy for Mansfield'.
- Development and implementation of new Organisational Development Plan.
- Development of a revised Medium Term Financial Plan and annual budget setting process including a public consultation exercise.
- Development and implementation of the Transformation Strategy and associated governance arrangements including the Transformation Group and Digital Transformation Group – this also includes the Digital Transformation roadmap for delivery.
- Development and implementation of a new Corporate Performance Management Framework.
- Development and implementation of a new Communication & Engagement Strategy.
- Procurement of a new corporate digital platform which includes a website content management system; customer experience management system; forms package; and integrations with service specific software and systems.
- New website developed to comply with current accessibility legislation.
- Corporate review of uniform provision to standardise allocation across service areas, and source from same supplier to achieve better price.
- Introduced hybrid working and the technology to facilitate virtual and hybrid meetings and reduce the demand on office space which increases the opportunity for generating income through lettable space – led by ICT.
- Implementation of ModernGov to improve the efficiency of decision making, report writing and the distribution of meeting agendas and papers – led by Democratic Services.
- Maximising external funding from a range of sources be it directly from Government or via its related bodies and agencies for the benefit of residents, businesses and communities right across the district.
- Achieved Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation which included training for the entire workforce to become more aware of the signs of domestic abuse and how to support survivors e.g. Housing Repairs operatives better equipped to spot damage at properties that could indicate abuse; Customer Services agents able to look out for a visitor displaying a fearfulness or visible signs potential abuse.

Making our council more productive



Partnerships

The council benefits from a wide range of successful strategic and operational working arrangements and collaboration with a large number of partner organisations and partnerships. These include – Nottinghamshire County Council; Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust; Nottinghamshire Police; Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue; Mansfield BID; Mansfield CVS; Serco; More Leisure Trust; Active Notts; Arts Council England; Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner; Mid-Notts Place Based Partnership; Making It In Mansfield Place Board.



As referenced in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken in October 2023, the council is well regarded by partners and is considered to be a strong partner that provides effective leadership and meaningful contributions.

The partnerships that the council has developed contribute significantly to increased productivity through the sharing and pooling of resources; reduced duplication of effort; and by providing a stronger voice when standing up for the best interests of the district.

Making our council more productive



Housing Services – Tenancy Services; Housing Repairs; Housing Need and Homelessness; Private Sector Housing, and Housing Strategy

- Housing Repairs operatives have now moved to agile working with the support of remote hand-held devices.
- Use of Green Homes Grants to improve fifty one properties; development of four new properties through the Passivhaus Scheme; and ninety nine homes built to the Future Homes Standard through the Housing Revenue Account.
- Delivering a programme of works and action to improve energy efficiency in thermally poor properties for low income families in the private sector – Private Sector Housing.
- Digitisation of the ASSIST service which exists to help residents live independently in their homes – this has included the provision of ICT hardware to facilitate agile working and the development of employees through digital skills training.
- Development of Mansfield First steps – this is the first scheme of its kind in Nottinghamshire's and is based on the Housing First model.



Health and Communities – Community Safety; Environmental Health; Emergency Planning; Licensing; Leisure & Community Wellbeing; Cultural Services

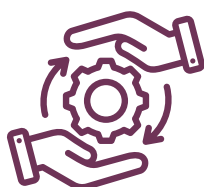
- Procurement of a new 10 year Leisure Management Contract saving the council approximately £7.5m over the lifetime of the contract and introducing a new Active Communities Programme to tackle health inequalities outside the leisure centres within communities and neighbourhoods – Leisure & Community Wellbeing.
- Community Asset Transfer of a leisure centre to sit outside of the Leisure Management Contract and be operated by a Community Interest Company – Leisure & Community Wellbeing – Leisure & Community Wellbeing.
- Invested in energy efficiency measures at the leisure centres to reduce consumption and protect the council against rising energy prices. Investment has been possible through the use of council funding and external funding secured through the Swimming Pool Support Fund – Leisure & Community Wellbeing.
- Secured external funding through Safer Streets 2, 4 and 5 to support new provision and the enhancement of existing services and infrastructure designed to improve feelings of safety. This has included improvements in CCTV and street lighting – Community Safety.
- Secured Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status to support the delivery of a new creative and cultural activity programme through the investment of £1.7m over three years – Cultural Services.
- Review of all supplier contracts resulting in new procurement arrangements and the full procurement of new contracts including the annual pantomime – Cultural Services.
- Implementation of a new Box Office system with wider benefits for the organisation of corporate events – Cultural Services.
- Review of services to bring Environmental Health and Community Safety under a single management structure resulting in a financial saving and improved synergy and working arrangements between different service functions – Environmental Health & Community Safety.
- Service Level Agreement in place with Nottinghamshire County Council for the provision of a shared Emergency Planning Officer – Emergency Planning.
- Procurement of a new Dog Control Service contract saving the council over £50k per annum – Environmental Health.

Making our council more productive



Law and Governance – Legal Services; Democratic Services; Electoral Services; Audit; Procurement; Insurance & Risk Management; Information Governance; Health & Safety.

- Shared service arrangement with Bassetlaw District Council – Health & Safety.
- Provision of specialist procurement services from Nottinghamshire County Council through a Service Level Agreement - Procurement.
- Procurement of a new Elections system.
- Procurement and implementation of a Legal Services case management system.
- Changes to the Legal Services establishment to include a trainee solicitor and career graded lawyer positions to enhance recruitment and encourage retention of employees within the sector.
- Review and restructure of Democratic Services to maximise efficiencies and build resilience across the team.



People and Transformation – HR (includes Talent & Skills; Payroll); ICT; Marketing & Communications; Business Transformation; Customer Service; Facilities Management

- Shared Service Arrangement with Ashfield District Council – HR.
- Review of ICT, Customer Services and the Business Transformation Unit to rationalise resources and combine management functions.
- Implementation of a new system to support case management; employee records management; and the increased efficiency of processes for transactional services and functions including payroll, recruitment, annual leave and sickness absence management - HR.
- Implementation of a new virtual ICT helpdesk service to enable a greater degree of self-service - ICT.
- Investment in new ICT infrastructure including Microsoft Office 360; SharePoint; telephony; End Point Security - ICT.
- Rationalisation of office space to generate opportunities for income generation through letting arrangements – this has resulted a number of organisations moving into the council offices including Department for Work & Pensions; Women's Aid; Mansfield CVS; and Maun Refuge – Facilities Management.
- Delivered essential digital skills training to employees to facilitate the roll out of technology with many going on to achieve digital accreditation and wider learning - HR.
- Use of Power BI to undertake complex data analysis – linked to corporate performance management.
- Implemented a suite of measures to improve energy efficiency across the council's corporate property stock including a new building management system, which is driving improved energy efficiency.
- Investment in a corporate apprenticeship programme aligned to workforce development and planning.
- Tailored training programmes to ensure effective and targeted development takes place across the organisation.

Making our council more productive



Planning and Regeneration – Planning Services; Regeneration; Design Services

- Delivered the Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) realising a programme of activity across three themes of community investment, supporting local business and supporting people and skills, aiming to maximise spend of £2.95m over the years to March 2025. This includes a new working relationship with Mansfield CVS as a valued partner in delivering funding for grassroots communities across Mansfield.
- Adopted a Town Centre Master Plan (TCMP) and Design Code that sets a framework for encouraging high quality development that will enhance the attractiveness of the town centre creating a positive image of the district and improving the town centre experience for residents, visitors and businesses. The TCMP and Design Code also set a framework for a cultural quarter to help create a positive cultural and leisure experience.
- Secured external funding of £1m towards greenspace and pocket parks in Mansfield town centre - five sites Include trees and pollution absorbing plants. A regeneration project led by Neighbourhood Services.
- Delivered the Town Investment Plan, bringing over £12.3M of Towns Fund (TF) resources to the district, seeing projects delivering greenspace and pocket parks in Mansfield town centre; the provision of a new Health Hub at Warsop; the establishment of a business and student focused Skills Exchange with Vision West Notts College; SMART parking solutions for the car parks in the town centre; proposed investment in new LoRaWAN technologies across the district; improved facilities and investment in play and park infrastructure at Berry Hill; investment in a new Place Strategy adopted by the Place Board, an associated events programme and a rebranding of Mansfield.
- Secured the maximum award for the Mansfield Connect project through a successful Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid. This will result in the creation of a new community and civic hub in the heart of Mansfield town centre. The first design phase is now well underway, and subject to progression to budget and an approved business case, this will be the Council's new headquarters alongside other partners, maximising the positive impact on service delivery across the district and re-energising this long-neglected part of the town.
- Negotiated a Levelling Up Partnership (LUP) award of over £20m, seeing the development of estate re-modelling and youth facilities on the Bellamy Estate; the development of Family Hubs at Oak Tree and Ravensdale; junction improvements on the A60; street-scaping improvements in and around the town centre; the roll out of a pilot scheme across the district seeing improvement to children and young people's performance in school; and the development of a wider economic masterplan and explore opportunities to secure further resources for cultural and arts development across the district.
- Developed first stage approval of the Long Term Plan for Towns (LTP4T) and working with the Place Board partners and its Town Board to develop a 10 year vision and 3 year investment plan bringing a further £19.5m to Mansfield. This will support initiatives and projects supporting safety and security; our high streets and regeneration ambitions and support local transport and connectivity.
- Supported local business to secure quality advice in establishing and growing their businesses and offering advice on premises, licensing and financial support, be it start-up or growth purposes or to support businesses to take on a vacant shop or develop the shop front.

Making our council more productive



Finance – Financial Services; Revenues & Benefits; Property Services

- Benefits Assessors now working permanently from home providing an improved work life balance; increased productivity; reduced sickness levels; reduced accommodation costs; and an opportunity to release office space to generate income – Revenues & Benefits.
 - Implementation of a new Financial Management System.
 - Upgrade of Capita Pay 360, GovTech, NEC – improving the efficiency of processes and encouraging channel shift for service users to do more on-line.
 - Restructure of the Revenues & Benefits service and establishment reductions across Financial Services.
 - Successfully completed the process of signing-off final accounts on an annual basis and securing an unqualified opinion on accounts.
 - Introduced new arrangements and processes to support capital and revenue monitoring.
-



Neighbourhood Services – Waste & Recycling; Street Cleansing; Parks & Open Spaces; Town Centre Services; Fleet Services; Bereavement Services

- Implementation of in-cab/handheld mobile devices and Whitespace software to better manage deployment of resources, record issues and monitor performance. This included the delivery of essential digital skills training to frontline employees to facilitate the roll out of technology – Waste & Recycling, Street Cleansing, Parks & Open Spaces.
- Online reporting of service requests integrated with service management system to reduce delay in response e.g. missed bins, bulky waste collections, garden waste, assisted waste collections, dead animals, fly tipping etc. – Waste & Recycling, Street Cleansing; Parks & Open Spaces.
- Review of operational rounds to utilise reduced resources to best effect by re-prioritising routes and areas – Street Cleansing.
- Development of a Waste Strategy including campaigns and programmes to support businesses and communities to reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling – Waste & Recycling.
- Roll out of recycling collections to all communal domestic sites where there have been historical issues with contamination, in advance of Simpler Recycling requirements for additional separation of waste – Waste & Recycling.
- Delivering plant maintenance works in-house to reduce downtime and improve accountability for equipment – Fleet Services; Parks & Open Spaces.
- Online parking permit software to reduce the draw on officer time and administration from producing paper permits and manually process requests – Town Centre Services.
- Online music selection and booking system for Funeral Directors to reduce officer time sourcing the correct track for crematorium services – Bereavement Services.
- Hand-held devices for mechanics to more accurately record time and parts utilised in vehicle maintenance and repairs to better inform whole life costings and vehicle replacement programme – Fleet Services.
- Developing a green fleet vehicle replacement programme and the purchase of electric vehicles (where purchase prices are not prohibitive) to reduce the cost of fuel and carbon emissions – Fleet Services.
- Review of vehicle use across the council to better align vehicles with service requirements, and reduce the corporate fleet requirement overall – Fleet Services.
- Joint operating arrangement at Mansfield Crematorium with Ashfield District Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council – Bereavement Services.

Making our council more productive

Taking advantage of technology and making better use of data

To further improve productivity the council also recognises the need for improved use of data and the ever increasing importance of identifying opportunities to take advantage of technology. Details of the plans currently in place are outlined below:



Taking advantage of technology

- Full implementation of the new Financial Management System which will enable tighter controls on budgets and spending and the more efficient processing of orders and invoices etc.
- Full implementation of ModernGov which will improve the efficiency of decision making, report writing and the distribution of meeting agendas and papers.
- Full implementation of IDOX to support more efficient case management in Environmental Health, Licensing, Community Safety and Private Sector Housing, and help to rationalise the number of systems currently in use across the council. In the future, it is intended to develop the service further through the provision of modules that support mobile use allowing the back office system to be updated whilst on site.
- Complete a review of the organisational requirements for mobile phones.
- Complete phase two of the implementation of the new HR system which will enable more self-service functions for council employees.
- Develop a corporate policy/procedure on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The organisation is looking to support enhanced decision making, improved public service efficiency, and enable data-driven policy development.
- Colleagues in Cultural Services and Marketing & Communications are now making use of AI to support report writing, data analysis and the production of press releases and marketing material. As a learning organisation, plans are now in place to share the experiences and benefits of using AI to improve productivity across the wider Extended Leadership Team.
- Use of AI to support corporate roll out of translation services – already piloted in Marketing & Communications.
- Implement an API-based solution between Jadu, the council's digital platform, and Spektrix, the council's Box Office system, to streamline operations by automating data synchronisation, enhancing data accuracy, and improving user experience through dynamic event listings and improved site navigation. This shift will also align with accessibility, browser compatibility, and security standards, offering long-term cost savings and scalability to meet future demands.
- Introduce body worn cameras for Community Safety Officers – this will act as a deterrent but also capture evidence that will enable more efficient and effective enforcement action to be taken.
- Develop the use of the ECINS system in Community Safety to act as a multi-agency tool for more effectively and efficiently dealing with and resolving complex cases.
- Provide public registers used across Licensing and Environment & Community Protection on-line to improve access and reduce Freedom of Information requests and request processing times.
- Introduce on-line payments for all Licensing functions.
- Explore how the development of the SMART Mansfield project and specifically Long Range Wide-Area Network (LoRaWAN) technology can allow for greater intelligence on effective service delivery, impact and efficiency gains.

Making our council more productive



Better use of data

- Public budget consultation – enabling the council to making spending decisions more closely aligned to the priorities of residents and service users.
- Improved budget monitoring – embedding Revenue Monitoring Group; Capital Board; and approach to quarterly budget forecasting.
- More efficient and streamlined approach to Overview & Scrutiny input to the annual budget setting process.
- Review litter bin fill levels to align collection frequency with demand, rather than a standard schedule.
- Waste round redesign underway to reduce glass collection frequencies and improve the efficiency of trade rounds to mitigate the need for additional resources to service new build properties across the district.
- Analysis of audience data at the Palace Theatre and across Cultural Services to better inform the development of programming and events to maximise attendance, participation and income. A Development Officer for data is now in post and will use a number of platforms such as Illuminate, Audience Finder, Dot Digital, and Insights Toolkit to systematically collect, analyse, and utilise data on audience behaviours, preferences, and trends.
- Gather and analyse data on the energy efficiency of the council's leisure centres to inform decisions on future investment opportunities and better manage consumption.
- Implement use of the 'Julie's Bicycle' platform to measure and reduce environmental impact within Cultural Services – Creative Green Tools and the Environmental Reporting Platform will track energy use, waste management, and travel emissions, helping to set sustainability goals and demonstrate accountability to stakeholders.
- Leverage a combination of Legitimate Interest and soft opt-in to enhance commerciality in Cultural Services. By using Legitimate Interest (as opposed to explicit consent), the service will be able to deliver more relevant and effective campaigns. Soft opt-in will allow the service to send marketing communications to those who have purchased tickets or engaged previously with the service, provided they can easily opt-out. This dual approach will increase engagement, optimise marketing spend, and foster stronger customer relationships, ultimately boosting ticket sales and revenue.
- Use of data to understand our communication footprint and inform the targeting, format and platform for messaging with our residents and service users.
- Develop the Spektrix system to enhance marketing and development strategies in Cultural Services. The current approach has relied heavily on traditional advertising and broad physical mailings. Recognising the benefits of segmentation, automation, dynamic pricing, and data-led strategies, will modernise the marketing approach to be more commercial and efficient. Spektrix also provides an integrated CRM solution, which will allow us to effectively target, report on, and measure audience growth.
- Through the delivery of the Communication & Engagement Strategy, increase community participation in decision making and the development of council initiatives by encouraging our communities to engage in consultation and co-production; use insight to support targeted work particularly aimed at 'hard to reach' groups; extend the range of channels and resources through which communities are able to engage with the council and access information; raise concerns, complaints and feedback opinions.
- Utilise economic, demographic, social and related published data and trends to demonstrate and understand the performance of the district overall as well as by theme and local area geographies.

Making our council more productive

Barriers preventing progress

Whilst the council is working hard to increase productivity, there are numerous barriers to progress that would benefit from Government intervention and support. Some of the key issues requiring attention are outlined below:

Barrier / issue	Potential impact
Lack of stimulus funding to support the implementation of new technologies and improvements to customer service and service delivery e.g. implementation of AI solutions; full transition to electric vehicles and associated infrastructure; energy efficiency measures etc.	This would result in reduced risk and an increased likelihood of successfully implementing measures that will ultimately reduce the ongoing revenue burden for local government and improve the customer experience. At present, councils are often unable to take the short term financial risk to implement technological advancements etc. in order to realise medium to long term gains.
Length of existing Government funding settlements and a lack of certainty regarding the rents formula.	<p>This would allow greater stability and certainty, and enable better financial planning and decision making. Ideally, settlements would be over a three year period in order to align with Medium Term Financial Plans</p> <p>Maintaining safe, decent homes and the ability to build new is a far greater challenge without rent certainty.</p>
Lack of flexibility in allowing councils to raise and spend money locally.	Central prescription and ring-fencing constrains the ability of councils to allocate resources effectively.
Iterative release of short term capacity funding associated with regeneration-related grant regimes (e.g. LUP; LUF) that are often ring-fenced for particular activities and purposes.	<p>This would reduce short termism and help to support longer term planning and prevent a silo-mentality from prevailing against more strategic and ambitious thinking – this requires a single focused regeneration budget</p> <p>A greater flexibility in how funding can be used would also enable local government to more directly address the specific needs of their neighbourhoods and communities.</p>
Lack of incentive to develop on public land due to high market values.	Incentives through fiscal intervention or policy change would make development more viable and benefit the Treasury in the long term.

Making our council more productive

Barrier / issue	Potential impact
Lack of long term funding to support the development of Housing services and provision e.g. Housing First model.	This would allow greater stability and certainty, and enable better financial planning and decision making. It would also result in more sustainable solutions to long-standing housing related problems.
Short timescales to apply for grant funding and unrealistic time periods in which to expend the funding (e.g. Towns Fund; LUF; LUP; Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund).	Increasing timescales and providing more notice of new funding programmes would enable local authorities to adequately prepare and produce plans more likely to achieve success. It would also enable local authorities to respond in a more strategic and pro-active manner and work more collaboratively in the long term with partners.
Regeneration funding has been overwhelmingly capital focused, prevailing against programmes of activity where revenue funding for delivery is key, and often failing to account for the revenue implications of capital schemes post-completion.	This would enable many of the issues and challenges facing Mansfield's businesses and disadvantaged communities to be supported by longer-term and specialist support, integrated with service delivery.
Separate one-off revenue and capital grant pots with onerous, costly and counter-productive bidding processes.	Opportunities to reduce unnecessary spending and waste of officer time that this often incurs. It is not unusual for councils to not have the resource, skills or capacity to appropriately respond resulting in the need to appoint consultancy or other temporary resource. This is often required at very short notice and will usually result in neighbouring local authorities competing for the same pool of limited local resources.
Need for local government to work more collaboratively over larger geographical areas on the procurement of technology; digital solutions; fleet etc.	The implementation of duties at a national or devolved regional level would increase spending power and increase consistency in the provision of services and service solutions across different local authorities. This should also result in improved customer experience.
Money being spent on social housing viewed as a national debt.	Releasing this debt would enable more properties to be built thus easing pressure on high temporary accommodation costs and demand.

Making our council more productive

Barrier / issue	Potential impact
Need for additional capacity and support to deliver major regeneration and infrastructure projects and facilitate associated audit regimes – revenue funding to support capital projects and ensure their viability.	The opportunities to secure external funding for major projects is currently compromised by a lack of in-house expertise which then requires the procurement or specialist external resource and consultants. With reduced revenue funding available to local government, councils are less agile which restricts their ability to respond to opportunities in a timely manner and potentially puts at risk the success of funding bids and the delivery of major capital schemes. Capacity revenue funding to support capital funding programmes would help alleviate this problem.
Removing referendum limits on Council Tax and greater freedom and flexibilities with regards to raising income.	This would provide local authorities with greater freedom and control to increase revenue and determine how it is used across the council to support the delivery of services appropriately in line with local need.
Pay inflation and unfunded pay rises.	Local government has had to accommodate negotiated pay rises through existing budgets without any recognition of the increased burden that this creates. This can often result in decisions to reduce the workforce and other resources, as well as an impact on service standards and the breadth of services on offer. Funded (part or full) pay rises would therefore ease or remove the burden and reduce the risk to public services.
Numerous statutory requirements to place notices in newspapers or issue written copies of routine notices.	This is an incredibly out dated requirement. Not only does this waste money and officer time but it also serves little purpose in meeting the objectives it sets out to achieve i.e. printed media readership is significantly reduced and continues to reduce year-by-year. There are far more suitable and less-costly digital channels available for this purpose that would actually increase accessibility to information.

Making our council more productive

Barrier / issue	Potential impact
National marketing campaign around Simpler Recycling for businesses (in advance of the roll-out in March 2025).	<p>This would raise awareness with the businesses and increase the likelihood of success.</p> <p>It would also ensure that businesses are being provided with the same consistent message and prevent a duplication of effort by all local authorities on a national scale.</p>
Information and certainty over the revenue funding provided to local authorities to deliver Simpler Recycling.	This would allow decision making to take place locally, and planning to commence alongside communications with residents.
Complicated, inconsistent, and misaligned processes for submitting data returns to central government.	A single Government data portal would significantly improve efficiency.
Lack of full and early engagement with the sector to help design and decide policy that affects councils.	Results in initiatives and funds that are more complicated than necessary and that are difficult and, in some cases costly, for councils to implement.
Developing, educating and training people to enter local government in key professional roles that are becoming increasingly challenging to recruit to e.g. Environmental Health Officers; Planners.	Nationally funded schemes that recognise the shortage of key professional roles and encourage qualified people to start a career in local government would increase the level of skills, experience and knowledge within the labour market and reduce the likelihood of local government having to engage agency workers and consultants at increased cost.
Lack of incentives for councils to build more social housing in an era of strained public resources.	Combined with a review of the Right to Buy Scheme, this would help to reduce the significant risks that councils face in developing plans to build more social housing.
Lack of joined-up approach between central government departments on issues including housing, homelessness prevention and asylum dispersal.	Results in competition to access accommodation generally in the private sector. As consequence, councils bear the impact of increased housing pressures including temporary accommodation and the lack of access to the private rental market.

Making our council more productive

Barrier / issue	Potential impact
Short notice and limited or no additional resources provided by Government to support and deliver additional work requests e.g. recent request for Environmental Health Officers to complete funeral home visits and inspections in response to the concerns identified with Legacy Independent Funeral Directors in Hull.	Creates added pressure on services that are often already struggling to meet demand. Local government is committed to being responsive when required to undertake important work, but there has to be a recognition of the need for additional short term resources to support this. In terms of the example provided, there is now increased pressure on Environmental Health services across the country to complete their normal statutory requirements against which they are monitored and assessed e.g. food safety inspections. In a service area that is stretched at a national level due to a shortage of adequately qualified people working within local government, this presents a significant challenge and impacts negatively on productivity.
Lack of long term funding certainty on climate change and a lack of investment in green skills and supply chains – particularly relevant to housing.	Longer term funding would allow councils to plan green investment in their housing stock and other infrastructure. This would provide market certainty which in turn would enable greater confidence in the development of green skills in the contractor market.
Poor supply of trades to support the development of new housing.	Incentives to develop skills and knowledge in key construction trades (e.g. roofers; scaffolders etc.) – this could include easing immigration restrictions. In turn, this would contribute positively to the skills and employment agenda.
Decent Homes Standard version two and Future Homes Standard continue to be under review – currently no indication of implementation dates.	Creates uncertainty about future housing standards and impacts negatively on Housing Revenue Account business planning and capital investment.





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