

## PRODUCTIVITY PLAN

### Introduction

Our Council is part of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership. The Partnership is Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council.

The award-winning Partnership formed in October 2021 with the specific objective of supporting each Council to become more efficient through the removal of duplication, the sharing of resources and the ability to transform services and reduce overheads. At the same time, we have a collective voice for our sub-region that is helping us to secure additional resources to address the common challenges we face.

The Partnership set an ambitious £42m savings/efficiency target over a 10-year period from its inception and working together the Councils have already identified a large proportion of those savings/efficiencies.

As three Councils working together, we are determined to continue to become more efficient in the way we work and whilst doing so increase the opportunities for the communities we serve through improved service provision and economic regeneration.

### Productivity Plan

Our Council's Productivity Plan is a suite of documents, as explained below.

### Our Partnership Business Case

The Business Case that was produced when our Partnership formed, identifies the common issues our sub-region faces and what internal changes we can make to drive efficiency. A Partnership progress report goes to each Partnership Council every six months.

The document sets out where we need to work with partners, such as Government, to address the strategic issues our sub-region, and our Councils specifically, face. It also sets out the opportunities to share services and where efficiencies can be secured through collaboration across the Partnership.

### [The Business Case link](#)

### Sub-regional Strategy

Our Sub-regional Strategy was approved in 2023 and supports the delivery of the Business Case. The Strategy has a range of external focused priorities, plus an internal looking priority 'Efficient and Effective'.

### [Sub-regional Strategy link](#)

### Our Annual Delivery Plan

The Annual Delivery Plan is agreed by Council each year alongside the budget.

The Plan sets out the key programmes of work we are driving forward over the coming year to deliver the Sub-regional Strategy and progress is tracked and reported to Council. The Plan includes the major schemes we are delivering through the Government's Towns' Fund and Levelling Up Programmes.

As well as progress updates to Council, the Plan is tracked via Joint Strategy Board – this is a twice-yearly meeting when the Cabinets/Executive of each Council come together.

The Plan also includes the timescales for the transformation of services and in some cases what that specific transformation will look like, including how we can better use technology.

[Annual Delivery Plan link](#)

### **Digital Strategy**

The Partnership agreed a Digital Strategy and ICT Roadmap in 2023 to set the future direction of travel to realise cost-reduction, increase efficiency and improve services based on customer need. This includes joined-up, accessible services, plans for channel shift, automation and integration. Key projects include a single collaboration/email tool across the Partnership, technology alignment across services, assisted self-service and a continued focus on cyber security.

[Digital Strategy link](#)

### **Workforce Strategy**

The Partnership has a Workforce Strategy in place that seeks to provide a platform to empower our workforce, invest in professional development and ensure colleagues have access to the support they need. This strategy seeks to make us an employer of choice and is a tool we are using to address wider sector recruitment challenges in key services that are impacting many Councils.

[Workforce Strategy link](#)

### **Asset Strategy**

As a Partnership, we recognise that effective use of our land and property assets form one of the essential ingredients for high quality service delivery and creating and ensuring value for our residents. We have a Partnership Asset Management Strategy in place to support us in managing our portfolio with optimum efficiency and to secure the best return for our community.

[Asset Strategy link](#)

### **Our Performance Framework**

The Performance Framework for the Partnership sets ambitious targets around service delivery. Progress is scrutinised by each Council on a quarterly basis.

[Performance Framework link](#)

### **Our Council's budget**

Whilst we have a suite of documents all agreed on a Partnership-wide basis, each Council agrees its annual budget setting in February/March.

The budget documents for our Council include the Medium Term Financial Strategy that sets out our funding commitments for the forthcoming years and the efficiencies/savings the Council needs to achieve to deliver a balanced budget.

Budgets are monitored via the Executive/Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

[Budget link](#)

## Areas for Government support

### **Internal Drainage Board levies**

A significant financial pressure for the Council is Internal Drainage Board levies. The Partnership has formed a Local Government Association Special Interest Group that is lobbying Government on this issue. The Group now has 29 Councils and fully recognises the important work of Internal Drainage Boards in protecting our communities. The significant and ongoing increases in levies charged to the Council by Drainage Boards – a sum the Council can't control – is a major concern and is having an impact on our ability to invest in front line services. Since 2021, the levies charged to the Council, and our partners, have increased as follows:

<b>Council</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25</b>
Boston Borough Council	£2,150,000	£2,475,000	£2,825,000
East Lindsey District Council	£3,941,000	£4,980,000	£5,311,000
South Holland District Council	£2,767,000	£3,167,000	£3,413,000

We welcome the Government's commitment to implementing a longer-term funding solution for Internal Drainage Boards prior to the 25/26 Local Government Finance Settlement.

### **Business Rates renewables**

Some significant developments have been taking place as part of the recent Triton Knoll Offshore Windfarm development and Denmark-UK Viking Link connection. Both schemes have physically impacted upon this Council's area through the development and accommodation of infrastructure. The Council will not benefit financially from these developments in terms of Business Rates. We are aware there are more developments in the pipeline and that we won't see any financial benefit. The District Valuer is placing all the benefit to one Council list, rather than sharing the benefit where it impacts more than one Council District/Borough. The income lost would be transformational for this Council, if it was to be distributed fairly.