



Housing and Property Service Plan  
Plana Seirbheis Taigheadais agus Seilbh  
The Highland Council  
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd  
2007-2012

Update for 2011/12  
Ùrachadh airson 2011/12

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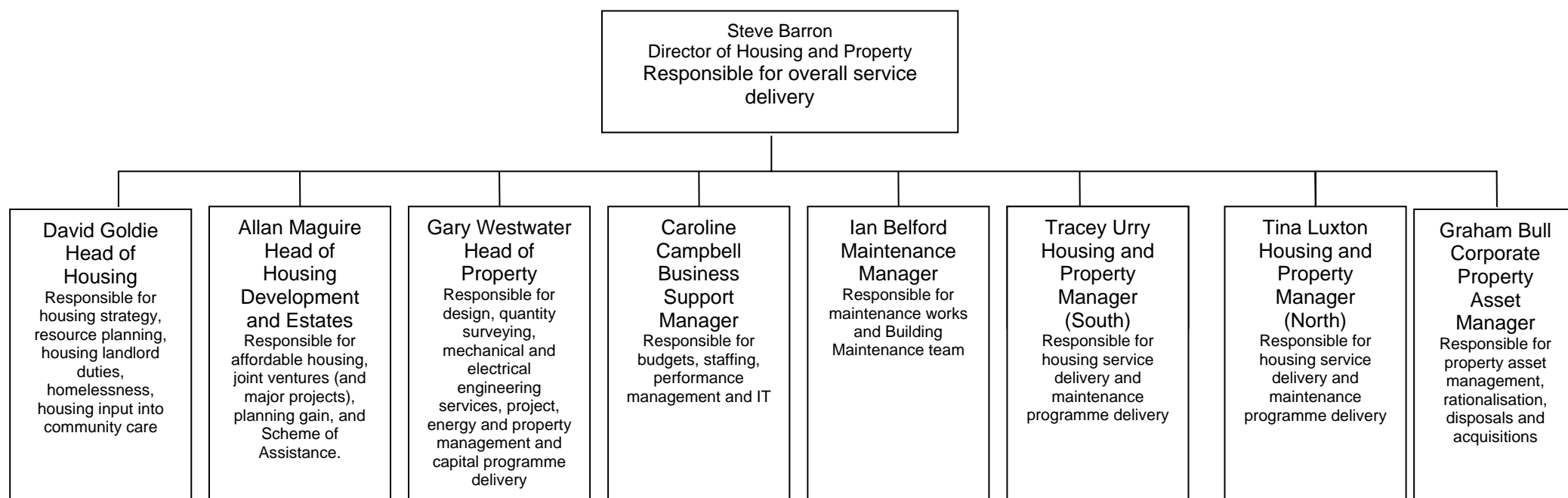
**Section 1 – Background and Context**  
**Earrann 1 – Eachdraidh agus Co-theacsa**

**Section 1 – Part 1: Plan Purpose, Timeframe and Monitoring**  
**Earrann 1 – Pàirt 1: Adhbhar a' Phlana, Raon-ama agus Sgrùdadh**

- 1.1. This Service Plan is a strategic document which outlines how we will contribute to the delivery of the commitments of the Programme of the Highland Council for which the Housing and Property Service has either a lead or supporting role. In addition the plan details key actions required for the delivery and improvement of the statutory and core functions of the Service and corporate governance priorities. The plan covers the period 2009/12 and is supported by a series of specific operational and project plans, where appropriate.
- 1.2 It presents an overview of the Service's aims, objectives and resources, how the Service intends to contribute to Corporate objectives, current Service issues and priorities, and the main risk factors identified in relation to these matters.
- 1.3 The plan is an active document and will be subject to review on an annual basis with reports being submitted to the Housing and Social Work Committee and the Resources Committee for consideration. In addition the plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis through the Chief Executive's Quarterly Performance Review of the Service with the Service Director and Senior Managers.
- 1.4 The Service Plan will be formally updated annually taking into account internal and external influences and actions arising from monitoring activity throughout the year including the development of the Scottish Government's requirements surrounding the Single Outcome Agreement.
- 1.5 The plan will be useful to many people including:
  - Staff
  - Customers
  - Elected members
  - Other Council Services
  - All partners or potential partners

**Section 1 – Part 2: Structure and Main Functions and Associated Revenue and Capital Budgets**  
**Structair is Prìomh Dhreuchdan agus Teachd-a-steach Buntainneach is Buidseat Calpa**

**2.1 Service Structure and Main Functions**  
**Structair Seirbheis agus Prìomh Dhreuchdan**



**Section 1 – Part 3: Resources**  
**Earrann 1 – Pàirt 3: Stòrasan**

**3.1 Financial Resources**  
**Stòrasan Ionmhasail**

3.1.1. The Service manages a number of different budgets as follows:

**Revenue Budget**

Financial Year	Net Revenue Budget (£m)
2011/12	<b>9.951</b>

**Breakdown of 2011/12 Budget**

**By Section**

2011/12	
Section	Net Budget (£m)
Property Revenue Maintenance	6.19
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	0.001
General Fund Revenue Account (non HRA)	4.093
Building Maintenance Surplus	(0.333)
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.951</b>

**By Staff and Other Costs**

2011/12	
Section	Net Budget (£m)
Staff costs	17.799
Other costs	68.433
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>86.232</b>
Income	(76.281)
<b>Net budget</b>	<b>9.951</b>

## Capital Budget

Year	Net Budget (£m)
2011/12	33.763
2012/13	27.692
Further information on the capital programme can be obtained from Gary Westwater, Head of Construction. <a href="mailto:Gary.westwater@highland.gov.uk">Gary.westwater@highland.gov.uk</a>	

### 3.2 Budget Savings Sàbhalaidhean Buidseit

- 3.2.1 The Service had an objective to deliver £535,000 general fund efficiency savings during 2010/11. In line with other Council Services, the Service is experiencing continuing financial pressure but has identified savings of £803,000 in 2011/12 and £313,000 in 2012/13. The 2011/12 figure includes savings brought forward from 2012/13. This is a major commitment by the Service to reduce costs, streamline processes and increase efficiencies.
- 3.2.2 We adopted a similar discipline in relation to our Housing Revenue budgets and were able to implement a below inflation rent increase for 2011/12.

### 3.3 Budget Pressures Cuideaman Buidseit

The current maintenance budget for non-housing properties is insufficient to maintain properties in a satisfactory condition and there is a growing maintenance backlog. In addition, pressures have also been identified in relation to asbestos management, asset management and carbon allowance.

### 3.4 Staffing Resources Stòrasan Luchd-obrach

- 3.4.1 There are around 520 employees in the Service team covering a wide range of disciplines.
- 3.4.2 The Service restructured during March 2011 going from three operational areas to two. This has resulted in a management saving and will help achieve greater consistency in approach. A Corporate Property Asset Manager has recently been appointed to take forward the Asset Management Strategy. Further realignment and reorganisation of staff will take place during the summer of 2011.
- 3.4.3 The Service has implemented changes to staff arrangements and policy in relation to prevention of homelessness from within current resources to implement approaches aimed at helping the council to achieve the national target on homelessness by 2012.
- 3.4.4 The Service hosts a successful building trade apprenticeship scheme with 24 apprentices currently learning a trade. As part of our succession planning we will continue to offer permanent trades positions to as many apprentices as possible on

completion of their training. This will enhance the current Building Maintenance team and contributes to the continuing drive to support apprentices in the Highland construction sector.

- 3.4.5. The creation of a Council wide Shared Business Support Service will result in the majority of clerical and administrative staff transferring to the new Service. This will result in efficiencies through streamlining processes and greater consistency in the way generic tasks are undertaken. Business Support staff providing Service specific support will continue to be managed within the Service.
- 3.4.6 The Director will hold sessions to roll out the Service Plan thus ensuring staff within the Service are aware of the links between the Programme of the Highland Council, the Single Outcome Agreement, Service Priorities and their own objectives agreed through the Personal Development Plan process. An interactive session focusing on Service successes, challenges and ideas for improvements was successful in generating discussion and involvement and will be repeated as part of the roll out session in future years.

### **3.5 Changes to financial arrangements and major investments**

#### **Atharrachaidhean do rèiteachaidhean ionmhasail agus seilbhean mòra**

- 3.5.1 We have made considerable progress in modernising our repairs service. This has involved investment in new IT systems to enable mobile working and improved stores management. Work is well underway in rolling out the next phase of the repairs improvement programme including offering repairs by appointment. These changes will offer significant improvement in customer experience of our repairs service, as well as delivering efficiency savings.
- 3.5.2 The system will be piloted in late summer 2011 with full implementation by December 2011. Around 100 building maintenance operatives will have hand held devices and will receive their work instructions electronically. This project involves a significant investment but will, once fully rolled out, result in an integrated housing and property repairs system with streamlined processes, appointments for tenants and building occupiers, and mobile working for repairs teams and potentially other staff, for example, surveyors. It will involve significant changes to the way we work and will reduce the manual processes required of back office staff.
- 3.5.3 A procurement exercise is underway to purchase and implement an Asset Management IT solution to replace the current out dated Property Database. The new system will enable us to better manage the life cycle and costs of our assets. It is aimed to have phase 1 of the project in place by December 2011. Further phases will enable Council wide access and reporting.
- 3.5.4 The Service is planning for a major upgrade to the Housing Information System (HIS) in late 2011/12 and early 2012/13. This will update us to the current version of the system. The HIS is the most integrated system in the Council and the upgrade will require re-training for all users.

### **3.6 Changing use of property**

#### **Atharrachadh ann an cleachdadh seilbhe**

- 3.6.1 A review of the Council's approach to property asset management was carried out

by CIPFA Property, a subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA), during 2010 that has led to the production of a Target Operating Model for Asset Management that was approved by Resources Committee in August 2010 together with an Asset Management Action Plan to deliver the Target Operating Model. The Service has created a new post of a Corporate Property Asset Manager who will be responsible for delivery of the Action Plan and the management of an enlarged Asset Management Team. The action plan contains a number of actions stemming from the review, which will change the Council's future approach to the delivery of asset management. This will lead to better targeted use of Capital and Revenue budgets and improve records relating to performance and effectiveness of property assets. These benefits will be demonstrated over the coming years.

3.6.2 The action plan will also seek to change the Council's current approach to "ownership" and management of property assets by Services to a "corporate property ownership" approach that will enable the Council's to reshape its property portfolio towards meeting its corporate and service delivery objectives, This will be an ongoing activity which will help improve condition, compliance and suitability of the buildings that we occupy and deliver our services from.

### **3.7 Significant Efficiency Projects** **Pròiseactan Èifeachdais Cudromach**

3.7.1 The Service is participating in all aspects of the Corporate Improvement Programme. This is focusing on seven areas of opportunities with the aim of increasing customer and stakeholder satisfaction and introducing and improving efficiency in the following areas of business:

- Asset Management
- Business Support
- Customer Engagement and Assessment
- Income Generation
- Mobile and Flexible Working
- Procurement
- Transport

A focus of the Service's involvement is the Asset Management project, which is led by the Director.

3.7.2 A major review of the Council's office accommodation in Inverness and Dingwall Areas was progressed during 2010/11 under the Asset Management project. This review has led to the development of a Strategic Outline Case for office accommodation in Inverness and Dingwall. It is anticipated this will lead to a rationalisation of the Council's office estate that, combined with the Shared Services Agenda, will lead to significant reductions in the Council's overall office space requirements. It will also contribute to reductions in future operating and running costs, carbon emissions and energy consumption.

**Section 1 – Part 4: The Programme of the Highland Council, Single Outcome Agreement, Statutory and Corporate Governance Priorities**  
**Earrann 1 – Pàirt 4: Prògram Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd, Aonta na Buile Singilte, Prìomhachasan Riaghlaidh Reachdail agus Corporra**

4.1 Housing and Property has both lead responsibilities and supporting actions to deliver outcomes under the following Programme themes:

- What we will do for Communities and older people
- What we will do for The Economy
- What we will do for Our Environment
- What we will do to be More Effective and Efficient

4.2 The Community Planning Partnership Performance Board has agreed a set of local outcomes for Highland which are contained within Single Outcome Agreement 2. The focus for Housing and Property will include the following:

- People across the Highlands have access to the services they need
- People are, and feel, safe from crime, disorder and danger
- Public services are delivered effectively, efficiently and jointly
- Carbon emissions are reduced and communities are protected from changing weather patterns
- To support the economy access is improved to housing, transport and high speed broadband
- More people are supported into employment
- Healthy life expectancy is improved especially for the most disadvantaged
- The health and independence of older people is maximised
- The impact of poverty and disadvantage is reduced

4.3 Housing and Property's Service Plan is also informed by the six strategic housing outcomes agreed as part of Highland's Local Housing Strategy 2010/15. The Local Housing Strategy helps us to deliver corporate, regional, and national priorities, outcomes and policies relating to the Highland Single Outcome Agreement (SOA).

The Council drew up its Local Housing Strategy in line with fresh guidance from the Scottish Government. We are the first Council in Scotland to complete and submit our Strategy on this basis. Our strategy has received a positive peer review and feedback from the Scottish Government. The Strategy sets out the housing issues facing the Highlands and how we will respond to them. It sets out corporate and partners commitments to achieving six strategic housing outcomes.

Highland's Housing Strategy is available on the Council's website via this link.  
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/livinghere/housing/housingstrategiesandinitiatives/>

4.4 Additional functions not included in the programme will deliver a number of actions, details of which are included in section 2. These include:

- Maximising income from the Council's industrial and investment portfolio

- Working with developers on planning gain contributions

## **4.5 Corporate Governance Priorities** **Prìomhachasan Riaghlaidh Corporra**

### **4.5.1 Equalities**

The Service has screened a number of the Service Plan actions to ensure we meet our Equalities obligations. Several actions within the Housing Section required a full Impact Assessment to be carried out and the outcomes have been published in accordance with Highland Council policy.

### **4.5.2 Efficiencies**

The Service adopts a systematic approach to developing, delivering and monitoring the Service Plan. Performance is reported to strategic committees and presented to the Chief Executive on a quarterly basis.

The Service continually looks for ways to operate more cost effectively. One example of this is the Repairs System which will deliver efficiencies in the way repairs requests are managed and maintenance work delivered. This initiative has been used as an opportunity to review our procedures and will result in a more cost effective service delivery.

Housing Revenue Account efficiencies have helped to keep rent increases below inflation.

Revised project management arrangements have improved governance.

The introduction of a new IT system to replace the Property Database is fundamental to managing assets and information relating to them. Whole life costing and better targeting of investment will mean more effective use of investment.

### **4.5.3 Customer Contact**

The Service engages with customers in a variety of ways including public meetings and Ward Forums, the Highland Council website and surveys following repairs requests. The Service is exploring ways of enabling clients in more remote areas to video conference with Housing staff.

Two Tenant Participation Officers are employed to encourage tenant involvement in all aspects of service delivery and to develop positive relationships between tenants, residents and the Council. Tenant conferences are run annually and a tenant newsletter is produced quarterly.

The Service will be introducing a set of Service Standards and delivering customer care training for all for all front line staff during 2011/12.

#### 4.5.4 **Civil Contingencies**

The Housing and Property Service plays a role in planning for civil contingencies. One example of our role is to provide temporary or longer stay accommodation for persons rendered homeless by an incident. We are also called upon to provide labour and transport to respond to any incident.

#### 4.5.5 **Health and Safety**

The Service is committed to providing a safe working environment for staff and service users. Health and Safety structures and forums are developed in line with Highland Council policies and encourage best practice. Performance monitoring of staff absence and accidents/incidents is included in the Chief Executive's Quarterly Service Review.

In conjunction with colleagues in Education, Culture and Sport (ECS) and Corporate Health, Safety and Well-being section, the Service has developed and implemented exemplar procedures relating to the management of asbestos in schools. A specialist company was appointed to assist with the survey programme and to work with ECS to create Asbestos Management Plans for each school. Regular dialogue with the HSE during the processes ensured that the procedures are fit for purpose.

The next phase of improvements to asbestos management arrangements which relate to other Council properties will be completed during 2012. Training on asbestos awareness will also continue to be delivered during 2011/2.

The Council was recently served with an Improvement Notice by the Health and Safety Executive relating to compliance with elements of the Construction, Design and Management (CDM) Regulations 2007. Compliance with this Notice is required by the end of July 2012. A project team has been set up to ensure that this Notice is complied with and it is expected that the arrangements to be developed will ensure that the Council manages its health and safety information in the most efficient manner possible.

An innovative new on-line training programme has been introduced to ensure that Housing and Property Service staff are fully conversant with their responsibilities under the CDM Regulations 2007. This allows staff to work through modules at times best suited to them. This model of training is also being used to train staff within other Services who are commissioning or are otherwise involved in construction work, to help them understand their obligations under the regulations

The Service is also participating in a Council wide review of the Health and Safety team structure.

#### 4.5.6 **Sustainability**

As well as supporting the achievement of the Council's aim of reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions by 12% by 2012, where appropriate the Service will adopt sustainable standards in operation and projects. The Service will aim to lead on low carbon design and construction utilising natural and sustainable materials along with energy efficient layouts with high thermal performance, maximising natural energy opportunities. The service will put high environmental

measures at the forefront of project delivery, raising the values of the contractors involved by bringing reductions in waste and energy from construction through adopting responsible standards.

There will be continued development of the Sustainability specialists within the Service, delivering reductions in energy consumption and carbon emissions, increasing the knowledge and support across the Council and making savings in energy costs and carbon tax. The team will assist in the delivery of assessing sustainable performance indicators in projects and report on progress against Government aspirations.

The Service will support the Council in the establishment and delivery of Environmental Management Systems and obtain continued Carbon standard that will contribute to the Climate Change Declaration.

#### **4.5.7 Best Value 2 Improvement Plan**

Audit Scotland carried out an audit of Highland Council in 2009 and reported that good progress was being made right across the Council. It highlighted some areas of uncertainty within the Housing function and progress was made during 2010/11 to address these areas. A number of self assessment groups have been set up and are working through the Scottish Housing Regulator question set. Action plans have been developed and improvements are being seen in our performance figures.

The Service is continuing to focus on improving SPI performance, reducing the number of Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) in the bottom quartile of Council performance, with particular attention to rent arrears performance.

#### **4.5.8 Scottish Housing Regulator Inspection**

Following on from the BV2 Audit Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) is carrying out inspection activity in October in 2011 which is likely to focus on housing management performance and progress towards Scottish Housing Quality Standard in 2015, and progress towards the homelessness targets for 2012.

#### **4.5.9 Employee Survey**

The fifth Employee Survey was conducted in March 2010. Staff responded positively to questions in relation to Council wide communication, change management, training and career development and job satisfaction. Respondents were concerned about support from managers and managers appreciating the pressures job holders were experiencing.

The Employee Survey Action Plan was updated to reflect the results and is monitored by the Service Management Team and included in the Quarterly Service Review.

Results were reported to the Housing and Social Work Committee in September 2010.

#### **4.5.10 Gaelic Language Plan**

The Service is delivering its commitments to the Gaelic Language Plan. Brochures, booklets and leaflets designed to promote, publicise or explain services include Gaelic headings and subheadings. Where the Service is responsible for signage, bilingual signs will be erected in line with Council guidance.

#### **4.5.11 Recession Action Plan**

The Service has a number of actions included in the paper submitted to the full Council by the Director of Planning and Development in March 2009, titled Council Response to the Economic Downturn. These include short term measures such as land purchase for low cost housing and forward funding affordable elements of mixed tenure developments ahead of Scottish Government funding. During 2010/11 377 new affordable homes were started, including 107 new Council houses. In 2011 the Council has bid to the Scottish Government for funding for a further 101 new Council houses.

#### **4.5.12 Environmental Assessment**

The Council has a legal duty to consider for all plans, programmes and strategies, the relevance of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Following the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Corporate Plan the Environmental Impacts of the Service Plan have been considered through pre-screening and no further significant likely environmental impacts were identified.

**Section 1 – Part 5: Review of Performance and Progress**  
**Earrann 1 – Pàirt 5: Sgrùdadh de Choileanadh agus Adhartas**

This section updates on performance for each commitment. For ease of reference the following symbols have been used to provide an assessment of performance:

✓	Commitment progressing well or is on target	9
-	Too early to assess impact or no change is recorded yet	3
M	Mixed performance - positive and negative movement in indicators	
X	Commitment not met	

**5.1 What we will do for Communities and Older People (Programme theme 2)**  
**Na nì sinn airson Choimhearsnachdan agus Daoine nas Sine (Cuspair prògram 2)**

**5.1.1 We will secure an increase of 600 houses suitable for older people and people with disabilities** **Achieved** ✓

The Council and housing agency partners had a target to build 600 homes which are suitable for the elderly and people with disabilities either as part of integrated housing developments or where it has been identified as separate small clusters adjacent to care or health facilities.

By March 2011 643 units were completed or on site.

**5.1.2 We will increase the number of older people (and others in care) who can be supported in their own homes by providing an additional £1m in each year from 2008/09 to 2010/12 and by investing £4.7m annually in equipment, adaptations and telecare** ✓

Investment will assist older and disabled people in the adaptation of their homes. The total invested in Council housing adaptations during the year 2010/11 was £2.109m. In addition, a total of £2.824m was invested in private sector adaptations. A total of 871 adaptations were made in Council housing. 500 care and repair adaptation cases within the private sector were approved for grant assistance.

**5.1.3 We will improve Council houses by investing £28m to improve energy efficiency in 4000 houses and £9m to replace 1200 kitchens and 600 bathrooms over the next 4 years from 2008/09. We will set out a plan to ensure that all Council owned houses meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).** ✓

A Standard Delivery Plan has been developed, setting out the investment required to achieve SHQS by 2015 and how that investment can be funded within Housing Revenue Account resources. Receipts from Council house sales are falling which means additional borrowing will be required to fund the capital programme through to 2015.

The Standard Delivery Plan is subject to annual review and we are working to update various capital and revenue assumptions at present.

During 2010/11 we invested over £6.9m improving nearly 1200 properties with energy efficient measures. A range of measures will continue to be undertaken, based on the current assessment of home energy efficiency within the housing stock. In some cases, this will involve new or improved heating, in other cases, improved insulation or other energy savings measures. This investment will improve energy efficiency in the Council's housing stock.

In 2010/11 £3.6m was invested in improving more than 600 kitchens and nearly 200 bathrooms. The Council will continue to prioritise capital investment in its own housing stock to install new kitchens and bathrooms where needed.

The following table demonstrates progress towards achieving SHQS standards by 2015.

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Number of dwellings compliant 2007 as % of stock</b>	<b>Number of dwellings compliant 2010 as % of stock</b>	<b>Number of dwellings compliant 2011 as % of stock</b>
<b>Tolerable standard</b>	100%	100%	100%
<b>Serious disrepair</b>	99.6%	100%	100%
<b>Energy efficiency</b>	17.4%	31.3%	37.5%
<b>Modern facilities and services</b>	69.2%	81.2%	84.5%
<b>Healthy, safe and secure</b>	34.6%	100%	100%
<b>Overall totals:</b>			
<b>Total dwellings SHQS compliant =</b>	473	3514	4344
<b>Total dwellings SHQS compliant as % of stock</b>	3.3%	25.8%	32.1%

**5.1.4 We will work with the Scottish Government and partners to prevent and reduce homelessness and provide responsive services to homeless people ✓**

The Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 introduced a target that all unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation by 2012.

There are high levels of homelessness in the Highlands, largely associated with housing pressure and the lack of affordable housing supply. The level of homeless presentations has levelled off at just over 2,000 per year.

Nearly two thirds of people applying as homeless are single person households. Although around 25% are between 25 and 65 years old many are far younger. Nearly 40% of homeless applicants are under 25.

The changes to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels is making it more difficult for people to access private rented sector tenancies. This is affecting the ability to access this type of accommodation and also has the potential to affect the number of homeless presentations. There are concerns in relation to changes in LHA rates for the under 35 age group which will be implemented in April 2012. This has the potential to increase the number of homeless applications received.

We are very clearly focused on achieving the 2012 target and have developed a number of innovative approaches to help us. In the last year we have:

- Reviewed our Homeless Policy
- Set up a dedicated homeless prevention team
- Become active participants and chair of the Scottish Government "North and Highland Homelessness Hub"
- Developed an assessment tool and multi-agency arrangements to ensure better support for people with multiple/complex needs

We are also working with housing support providers in order to remodel our approach to commissioning services to support the outcomes we want to achieve for our homeless clients.

We also want to develop our engagement with private landlords to enable improved access to good quality, well managed private rented housing.

We expect these changes to have a significant positive impact on homelessness over the next year.

At the same time changes to the UK welfare benefits system are likely to place additional financial pressures on many households and make it more difficult to access the private rented sector.

## **5.2 What we will do for the Economy (Programme theme 3)** **Na nì sinn airson an Eaconamaidh (Cuspair prògram 3)**

### **5.2.1 We will work with the Scottish Government, local partners and the private sector to enable 6000 new houses, with appropriate amenities to be built in the Highlands between 2007/08 and 2011/12, with 2,100 of these affordable houses for rent and low cost home ownership of which 600 will be for older people and people with disabilities.** ✓

Increasing housing supply remains one of the Council's key objectives. During 2010/11 the number of affordable new homes approved was 377 units, 532 units were completed (some approved in the previous year) bringing the total completed or started on site over the period of the plan to 2,195.

The Council is working with its partner agencies to secure funding for the development of the sites and use its affordable housing planning policy to deliver affordable housing in high demand areas as integrated parts of private housing developments. The Council will use its land bank fund to finance the purchase of

strategic sites and unlock development constraints and the Council will prioritise all surplus Council assets for the provision of housing in stressed areas. The Council will continue to lobby the Scottish Government to ensure that high levels of investment are targeted towards tackling the affordable housing shortfall.

**5.2.2 We will complete the business case for committing to a new programme of building over 700 Council Houses. Achieved ✓**

We are aware that there is less public subsidy available to support new housing supply and that our housing association partners are likely to have reduced new build programmes in future.

The Council has recently completed its first new build Council houses as part of a programme of 107 new build Council houses. This was partly funded by Scottish Government grant from round 2 and 3 of the Council House Building fund. The remainder of these will be completed this year. We have submitted a bid under the Scottish Government Innovation and Investment Fund to allow us to build a further 101 houses which would be completed next year.

We have undertaken detailed financial modelling to assess the potential HRA implications of a longer term Council house building programme, including the impact on outstanding debt and rent levels.

The Council has approved in principle a further forward programme of 650 houses over the following 4 years (from 2012/13), to achieve a total programme of 750 houses, subject to an assessment of future subsidy levels available from the Scottish Government and further assessment of rent implications in future years.

This will involve an annual review of HRA costs and assumptions, including identification of annual efficiency savings aimed at reducing unit management maintenance costs and mitigating annual inflationary rent increases.

**5.2.3 We will press for the UK Government to write off the Council's housing debt and seek the support of the Scottish Government to make the case for debt write off. No change recorded yet \_\_\_**

The Council has one of the highest levels of outstanding housing debt in Scotland. This acts as a constraint on housing investment and has an adverse impact on Council house rents. We have consistently lobbied to have the issue of Housing Debt addressed by the UK Government. In December 2010 the Council reaffirmed this commitment to press for the UK Government to write off, or give financial support, to ease the very high levels of housing debt affecting the Council and its tenants.

**5.3 What we will do for our Environment (Programme theme 4)  
[Na nì sinn airson na h-Àrainneachd \(Cuspair prògram 4\)](#)**

**5.3.1 Improving the energy efficiency of our housing stock and addressing fuel poverty No change recorded yet \_\_\_**

We have committed the major proportion of our HRA Capital Programme to addressing energy efficiency.

An affordable warmth plan is helping to deliver our fuel poverty strategic outcome. We will report progress to Housing and Social Work Committee in November 2011.

We will establish ways to improve the advice and information we give to tenants with new heating systems. We will also build effective referral networks to improve energy efficiency, home safety and money advice.

We will help to establish a social housing energy forum with other housing providers to share information and identify opportunities for working together.

- 5.3.2 **We will increase the use of renewable micro generation technology sources to provide energy in the Council estate, with appropriate integration of Wind Turbines, Biomass fuel boilers, combined heat and power (CHP) and solar energy, increasing the overall output from 1800kW in 2008 to 8000kW by 2012.** ✓

Strategic planning will be undertaken in association with the asset management team and clients to ensure that the overall best investment is made in improvements to buildings.

- 5.4 **What we will do to make Highland Council more effective and efficient (Programme theme 5)**  
**Na nì sinn gus Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd a dhèanamh nas èifeachdaiche agus nas buadhaiche (Cuspair prògram 5)**

- 5.4.1 **We will continue to pursue best value for our residents and service users, seeking efficiencies in the way we work and continually review the Council's spending programme. We will modernise our services to achieve an annual 2% efficiency savings target .** ✓

The Service has exceeded the savings targets set for 2010/11.

We achieved a below inflation Council house rent increase this year as a result of efficiencies and have a commitment to examining annual savings as part of our HRA revenue budgeting process.

We have made improvements to our performance on empty homes and rent arrears management as well as the housing repairs service, all of which provide better tenant services at lower cost.

We will continue to monitor our average unit housing management and repairs costs and benchmarking these with social landlords.

We will engage with other social landlords in the Highlands to build on previous successes in joint working and develop approaches to shared services that will provide better values services to customers.

Changes to the management structure and benefits from new IT systems will further contribute to savings in 2011/12.

**5.4.2 We will fulfill all of the Council's duties to promote equalities and to tackle discrimination and disadvantage, as an employer, in providing public services, in community leadership and partnership working.** ✓

We are working towards ensuring that 100% of our designated buildings are accessible to people with disabilities by 2013. At the end of 2010/11 we were 91.1% compliant.

Designated buildings reported within this programme are those where the Council delivers a service direct to the public relative to part III of the Disability Discrimination Act and are reportable against the national performance indicator for Public Access.

We have made significant progress in undertaking Equality Impact Assessments on our main housing strategies and policies.

**5.4.3 We will develop our Asset Management Plan to ensure that the Council owns or occupies only the appropriate number of buildings and that these are fit for purpose.** Too early to assess impact —

The Service is responsible for leadership of the Council's property asset management strategy in relation to housing and non housing property assets.

This is a priority development area for the Council which will involve all services working together to rationalise the Council's extensive asset base and improve its capital planning processes.

CIPFA Property, a subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA), carried out a review (January 2010) of the Council's approach to property asset management. The review made a number of key recommendations that form the basis of the Asset Management Action Plan which sets out the Council's future approach to the delivery of improved corporate asset management.

The Service is currently procuring an asset management IT system to record asset information, such as costing and history, to make investment decisions and appraisals in a consistent way.

## **5.5 Property Risk Management**

The Service has a regular management meeting dedicated to improving Health and Safety including property risk, incident reviews and other related matters.

The following has been achieved during 2010/11:

- A comprehensive review of fire risk assessments carried out
- Asbestos surveys of boiler and plant rooms, and all schools build before 2000
- Statutory monitoring inspections carried out
- CDM training widely embedded and facilitated asbestos awareness training of ECS staff
- Asbestos Management Plans introduced to schools
- Contractor Health and Safety Scheme (CHAS) integrated as a requirement of Contractors Framework (under £25,000)

- Continuing to develop and review strategy and policy, e.g. Property Change Management and Legionella /Water Management system
- Gas safety management reviewed and new servicing contract prepared

## **5.6 In addition to the update given the performance of the Service is monitored in a number of ways:**

**A bharrachd air an ùrachadh a tha air a thoirt seachad, thathar a' cumail sùil air an t-Seirbheis ann an grunn dhòighean:**

### **5.6.1 The Public Performance Survey**

Each year the Council commissions an independent performance survey which gives a year on year comparison on performance as perceived by the public. Tenants consider housing repairs as the most important service we offer and through our surveys we know we deliver a consistent and high quality service.

An action plan was developed to address the main findings.

The lack of housing supply remains a concern for respondents. The Strategic Housing Investment Programme details affordable housing investment from 2010/2015, and along with the new Council house building programme and the 2000 affordable houses, the pressure for housing may be lifted in some areas.

We have identified that the previous structure of the Annual Performance Survey did not make it easy to gather information on the views of Council house tenants and people using housing services. We introduced specific questions for Council tenants in the 2011/12 Annual Performance Survey which will provide better information and allow us to track changes on opinion from previous tenant surveys.

### **5.6.2 Self Assessment and Review of Previous Actions**

We have completed self assessments against current Scottish Housing Regulator Performance Standards on repairs, rent arrears, homelessness, and empty homes management. Self assessments have been used to provide action plans aimed at addressing any weaknesses identified and to improve on key performance indicators. We will continue to undertake further self assessments during 2011/12.

The Service aims to improve its performance throughout the year and carries out comparison exercises using performance statistics from previous periods. Where a decline in performance is predicted management actions are put in place to mitigate the risks. Improvement groups have been set up to deliver better performance on rent arrears and voids and repairs.

The Service is a member of the Scottish Housing Best Value Network which includes most Local Authorities in Scotland. The Property section uses benchmark forums such as the Energy and Sustainability Forum and the Construction Forum. These groups provide useful benchmark information for the Service to measure performance against.

The Service will be carrying out a Self Assessment using the Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) in November 2011. This is part of a programme that will see all parts of the Service assessed over the next 2 years. Work already done using the Scottish Housing Regulator framework will be mapped on to the PSIF model to create a comprehensive overview of performance and areas for improvement.

### 5.6.3 Quarterly Performance Reports

The performance of the Service is monitored by the Chief Executive each quarter. Updates are provided on all aspects of Service delivery:

- Service and Corporate Plan progress\*
- Statutory Performance Indicators\*
- Finance\*
- Staffing Issues\*
- Freedom of Information Requests
- Data Protection
- Complaints
- In-house Building Maintenance team performance\*
- Absence and accidents statistics \*

Items marked \* are also reported to strategic committees.

### 5.6.4 Statutory Performance Indicators (SPI)

SPIs have been set to measure performance in relation to:

- Housing Repairs Response
- Managing Tenancy Changes
- Rent Management
- Homelessness
- Asset Management

These are reported annually to the Accounts Commission and quarterly to the Housing and Social Work Committee.

### 5.6.5 External Scrutiny **Sgrùdadh bhon taobh a-muigh**

The Service is monitored by:

- Scottish Housing Regulator who inspect and report on our Housing section
- Audit Scotland who report on our statutory performance
- Care Commission who report on our support services

**Section 1 – Part 6: Risks for the Service**  
**Earrann 1 – Pàirt 6: Cunnartan airson na Seirbheis**

- 6.1. Management of risk is essential to ensure the correct prioritisation of the Service objectives and to ensure that, as far as is possible, the likelihood of any predictable risk occurring is taken into consideration when planning the actions to be taken to deliver that objective.
- 6.2 The risks currently identified for the Service are detailed in the table below. The risks recorded in the white boxes are above the tolerance line and need to be managed. All other risks identified are below the tolerance line (the shadowed boxes) considered to have a low risk and/or impact.

**Likelihood**

A – Very High

B – High

C – Significant

D – Low

E – Very Low

F – Almost Impossible

**Impact**

I – Catastrophic

II – Critical

III – Marginal

IV – Negligible

<b>Likelihood</b>	A				
	B				HP1
	C			CCC4*	HP5
	D				
	E				
	F				
		IV	III	II	I
		<b>Impact</b>			

\*Council cross cutting risk assigned to Housing and Property Service

<b>Risk Number</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Short Name</b>
HP1	B1	Property related health and safety systems must be developed further, particularly relating to control of work and compliance with policies / [p]rocedures. A culture of Health and Safety must continue to be developed.
HP5	C2	To support effective delivery of services and performance information the Service is reviewing and replacing IT systems and managing associated change.
CCC4	C2	The Council needs to rationalise its property assets effectively such that it can afford to maintain them in good condition and suitable for their required purpose.

## Section 2: Actions and Objectives

### Earrann 2: Gnìomhan agus Amasan

## Section 2 – Part 1 : Statutory Performance Indicators

### Earrann 2 – Pàirt 1: Comharran Coileanaidh Reachdail

The following table provides details on the Statutory Performance Indicators the Service is required to report on during 2011/12.

Housing and Property Statutory Performance Indicators					
Indicator	Actual Performance				Target
	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/10	2010/11	2011/21
<b>Council House Response Repairs</b>					
% Emergency Repairs completed within 24 hours	90%	95.5%	95.9%	95.6%	96%
% High Priority Repairs completed within 3 days	82%	87.6%	85.5%	84.8%	88%
% Routine Repairs completed within 20 days	83%	85.1%	84.5%	84.1%	86%
<b>Managing Tenancy Changes</b>					
% of rent loss due to Voids	1.74%	1.88%	1.65%	1.88%	1.6%
Total % of houses relet in less than 2 weeks	9%	24.6%	14.0%	18.78%	20%
Total % of houses relet in 2 - 4 weeks	20%	24.9%	31.1%	34.8%	40%
Total % of houses relet in more than 4 weeks	70%	50.5%			
Total % of houses relet in 5 - 8 weeks			38.75%	37.2%	35%
Total % of houses relet in 9 - 16 weeks			15.07%	8.4%	5%
Total % of houses relet in more than 16 weeks			1.06%	0.82%	0%
Average time to relet houses (weeks)	8.3	5.97	5	4.68	4
<b>Rent Arrears</b>					
Current tenant arrears as % of net rent due in the year	6.9%	7.1%	6.30%	5.9%	6%
% of current tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent at year end, excluding those owing less than £250	5.2%	5.6%	5.35%	4.58%	4.3%
Proportion of tenants giving up their tenancy during the year who were in rent arrears	19.8%	23.10%	24.57%	15.11%	15%
The average debt owed by tenants leaving in arrears as a proportion of the average weekly rent	9.4 weeks	11 weeks	10.85 weeks	9.58 weeks	9 weeks
The proportion of arrears owed by former tenants written off or collected during the year	8.9%	22.1%	34.0%	57.02%	60%

Indicator	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/10	2010/11	Target 2011/12
<b>Homelessness</b>					
Reduce the number of people becoming homeless. The number of households assessed during the year		2278	2229	2150	Reduction
% of decision notifications issued within 28 days of date of initial presentation		57%	57%	61%	70%
Increase the proportion of homeless households treated as priority need					90%
The % who are housed		46%	66%	70%	72%
% of cases reassessed as homeless or potentially homeless within 12 months of previous case being completed		4.30%	4%	4.3%	4%
Eliminate the use of unsuitable accommodation		59	8	5	0
The proportion of those provided with permanent accommodation in council stock who maintained their tenancy for at least 12 months 16 to 24 year olds All other tenancies	Not comparable with previous years	88%	92%	91.4%	94%
<b>Public Access</b>					
Number and % of buildings meeting DDA requirements	70.20%	80%	87.1%	91.1%	94%
Proportion of operational accommodation that is in satisfactory condition	54%	53.5%	59.60%	55%	55%
Proportion of operational accommodation that is suitable for its current use	70%	59.7%	56.10%	59.8%	60%
<b>Local Indicators</b>					
<b>Complaints</b>					
Stage 1	Data not comparable		83%	97%	100%
Stage 2			87%	100%	100%
Stage 3			100%	100%	100%
<b>Data Protection</b>					
No of request answered within 40 days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Freedom Of Information Act</b>					
No of request answered within 40 days	100%	100%	100%	91%	100%
<b>Costs</b>					
Management cost per Council house per annum			£799.05	£787.61	£766
Maintenance cost per Council house per annum			£1240.67	£1182.64	£1,181
Energy cost in operational buildings per square meter			£13.61	£14.58	No target set

**Section 2 – Part 2 : The Programme for The Highland Council**  
**Earrann 2 – Pàirt 2: Prògram Comhaile na Gàidhlealtachd**

The following tables provide more detail on the specific actions and objectives for the Service and how these will be monitored.

**What we will do for Communities and Older People (Programme theme 2)**  
**Na nì sinn airson Choimhearsnachdan is Daoine nas Sine (Cuspair prògraim 2)**

The Service's main contributions to this theme are to facilitate the provision of homes in the community, improve the standard of the Council housing stock and reduce homelessness. The Service is committed to supporting the Gaelic Language Plan.

<b>Id.</b>	1
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will secure an increase of 600 houses suitable for older people and people with disabilities.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	2.05
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing Development and Estates.
<b>Resource</b>	Housing Association Development funding via the Scottish Government.
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	643 houses suitable for older people and those with disabilities developed through the housing association development programme by 2012(CP 2.08)
<b>Risk</b>	
Enabling actions	
	Review Date
Action Complete	

<b>Id.</b>	2
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will increase the number of older people (and others in care) who can be supported in their own homes by providing an additional £1m in each year from 2008/09 to 2010/11 and by investing £4.7m annually in aids, adaptations and telecare.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	2
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing Development and Estates. Head of Housing. Area Housing and Property Managers.
<b>Resource</b>	£2.6m per year – Private Sector Housing Grant £1.4m per year – HRA Capital and Revenue £0.7m – Social Work Revenue.
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Amount invested. Number of equipment installations and houses adapted.
<b>Risk</b>	

Enabling actions		Review Date
2.1	HRA and Non HRA Capital and Revenue monitoring.	Ongoing

<b>Id.</b>	3
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will improve Council houses by investing £28m to improve energy efficiency in 4000 houses and £9m to replace 1200 kitchens and 600 bathrooms over the next 4 years from 2008/09. We will set out a plan to ensure that all Council owned houses meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by 2015.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	2.09
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing. Area Housing and Property Managers.
<b>Resource</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	SHQS standards met by 2015 (CP2.24). £28m investment in energy efficiency measures in 4000 properties by 2012 to achieve a NHER rating of 5 (CP2.25). 1200 kitchens replaced by 2012( CP2.26). 600 bathrooms replaced by 2012 (CP 2.26).
<b>Risk</b>	Reduction in HRA resources available and/or increase in cost.

Enabling actions		Review Date
3.1	On-going surveying of housing stock.	Ongoing
3.2	Measure progress against baseline number of houses.	March 2012
3.3	Annual update of Standard Delivery Plan.	September 2011

<b>Id.</b>	4
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will work with the Scottish Government and partners to prevent and reduce homelessness and provide responsive services to homeless people.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	2.10
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing. Area Housing and Property Managers.
<b>Resource</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	We will implement a homeless prevention approach to reduce the number of homeless applicants We will implement a multi agency approach for dealing with clients who have multiple / complex needs. We will engage with the private sector to increase capacity. We will review Day Centre services in Inverness, including joint working with NHS Highland. We will work with Housing Support Providers to

	review commissioning and delivery of housing support services.
<b>Risk</b>	
<b>Enabling actions</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	
4.1	Interim report to Housing and Social Work Committee
	November 2011

<b>Id.</b>	5
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	Contribute to the Councils strategic aims in relation to community safety and manage the councils Community Warden And Anti-Social Behaviour team.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	2.11
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing. Area Housing and Property Managers.
<b>Resource Changes</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Prepare an ASB strategy by October 2011, and monitor multi agency and cross Service arrangements on an ongoing basis.
<b>Risk</b>	
<b>Enabling actions</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	
5.1	Multi Agency and cross Service arrangements and support.
	On-going

<b>Id.</b>	6
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will implement the Gaelic Language Plan and review it annually. We commit ourselves to the principle of equal respect for Gaelic and English languages and we recognise the diversity of indigenous languages and dialects within the highlands.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	2.17
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Business Support Manager.
<b>Resource</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Raise awareness of Gaelic Language Plan. Implement Gaelic Language Plan. Undertake Service Audit.
<b>Risk</b>	
<b>Enabling actions</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	

**What we will do for the Economy (Programme theme 3)**  
**Na nì sinn airson an Eaconamaidh (Cuspair prògram 3)**

The Service's main contribution to this theme is to facilitate the provision of affordable housing and to meet the requirements for housing in high demand areas.

<b>Id.</b>	7	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will work with the Scottish Government, local partners and the private sector to enable 6000 new houses, with appropriate amenities to be built in the Highlands between 2007/08 and 2011/12, with 2,100 of these affordable houses for rent and low cost home ownership of which 600 will be for older people and people with disabilities.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	3.03	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing Development and Estates.	
<b>Resource</b>	Housing Association Development funding via the Scottish Government.	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	2100 affordable homes completed or on site by 2013(CP3.12b).	
<b>Risk</b>		
<b>Enabling actions</b>		<b>Review Date</b>
7.1	Liaison with the Scottish Government over ongoing programme.	Ongoing

<b>Id.</b>	8	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will complete the business case for committing to a new programme of building over 700 Council houses.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	3.04	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>Deliver 107 new Council houses on site by March 2012.</p> <p>Submit bid for Innovation and Investment funding for Council house building for 101 units by 31 May 2011.</p> <p>Engage fully and actively with COSLA and the Scottish Government in the work being undertaken nationally to explore the options for the sustainable funding of Council house building in the future.</p>	
<b>Risk</b>	Adverse impact on HRA.	
<b>Enabling actions</b>		<b>Review Date</b>
8.1	Review of HRA assumptions.	October 2011
8.2	Identify annual HRA efficiency savings.	November 2011
8.3	Tenant Consultation.	November 2011
8.4	Revenue Estimates report to Committee.	January 2012

<b>Id.</b>	9	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will press for the UK Government to write off the Council's housing debt and seek the support of the Scottish Government to make the case for debt write off.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	3.32	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Changes to the UK Treasury/Scottish Government position in housing finance and subsidy (CP3.66).	
<b>Risk</b>		
<b>Enabling actions</b>		<b>Review Date</b>
9.1	Ongoing at political meetings.	ongoing

**What we will do for the Environment (Programme theme 4)**  
**Na nì sinn airson na h-Àrainneachd (Cuspair prògram 4)**

The Service will encourage best practice in new development and refurbishment projects, improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock and consider sustainability in all it does.

<b>Id.</b>	10	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will ensure that all of our building projects, for both new and refurbished facilities, will comply with best practice in sustainability such that the Council is seen as an exemplar organisation in the field of sustainability design and facilities management.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	4.06	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Construction.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>BREEAM (or equivalent) Excellent rating achieved for major new buildings (CP4.11).</p> <p>BREEAM (or equivalent) Very Good rating achieved for other new buildings (CP4.11).</p> <p>Provide at least one case study on exemplar best practice on sustainability for industry reference, by March 2012.</p> <p>Establish sustainable working practices for delivery of low carbon buildings using systems developed in conjunction with the carbon trust by March 2012.</p>	
<b>Risk</b>		
<b>Enabling actions</b>		<b>Review Date</b>
10.1	Provide annual report on sustainability in design.	August 2012
10.2	Publish case study on sustainable practice.	March 2012
10.3	Seek to share best practice with other public bodies.	March 2012

10.4	Establish low carbon design practices.	March 2012
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<b>Id.</b>	11	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will increase the use of renewable micro generation technology sources to provide energy in the Council estate, with appropriate integration of Wind Turbines, Biomass fuel boilers, combined heat and power (CHP) and solar energy, increasing the overall output from 1800kW in 2008 to a minimum 8000kW by 2012. This is to be combined with a drive to reduce energy consumption through Energy Efficiency measures and behavioral change.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	4.08	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Construction.	
<b>Resource</b>	Energy Capital.	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exceed 4000kW Total kW produced by 2012 and out turn at 8000kW (CP4.15).</li> <li>▪ Monitor and report annually on the performance of renewables.</li> <li>▪ Reduce energy consumption through energy efficiency and behavioral change.</li> <li>▪ Expand our knowledge and expertise by sharing with other public bodies through 4 demonstrations of installation outcomes, and case studies throughout the year.</li> <li>▪ Reduce carbon emission by 12% from buildings.</li> </ul>	
<b>Risk</b>		
<b>Enabling actions</b>		<b>Review Date</b>
11.1	Deliver the Energy Capital Plan.	March 2012
11.2	Deliver Energy Investment Programme (EEIF)..	March 2012
11.3	Provide annual report on the performance of renewables.	March 2012
11.4	Working with Inverness College to increase practical expertise in renewables in the Highlands.	March 2012

<b>Id.</b>	12	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	Improve energy efficiency of our housing stock and reduce fuel poverty.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	4.08	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing. Head of Construction.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>Continue to implement HRA Capital Programme investment.</p> <p>Review capital programme activity for 2012 to 2015 to target energy efficiency work contributing to meeting the SHQS.</p> <p>Installation of low carbon technologies in HRA capital programme.</p> <p>All Council housing rated at NHER 5 or above.</p>	

	Reduction of carbon emissions by 10% from Council houses.	
<b>Risk</b>		
Enabling actions		Review Date
12.1	Deliver actions within the Housing Strategy Affordable Warmth Action Plan.	November 2011
12.2	Install heating systems using renewable technology in 300 Council houses each year.	Annually
12.3	Monitor Housing Capital Plan.	Quarterly
12.4	Deliver actions within the Standard Delivery Plan.	March 2012

**What we will do to make the Highland Council more Effective and Efficient (Programme theme 5)**  
**Na nì sinn gus Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd a dhèanamh nas Èifeachdaiche agus nas Buadhaiche (Cuspair prògram 5)**

The Service's main contribution to this theme relates to ensuring best value from our procurement processes and improving our service delivery in both cost and performance to benefit our service users.

<b>Id.</b>	13	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	We will fulfill all of the Councils duties to promote equalities and to tackle discrimination and disadvantage – as an employer, in providing public services, leadership and partnership working.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	5.08	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Service Management Team.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100% of our SPI buildings are accessible to people with disabilities by 2013 (CP 5.21 SPI CM4).</li> <li>▪ We will continue to undertake Equality Screening and Impact Assessments on our policies and procedures.</li> </ul>	
<b>Risk</b>		
Enabling actions		Review Date
13.1	Continue to deliver the DDA Capital Programme.	March 2013
13.2	Continue to work with Local Access Groups to ensure that local access requirements are being met.	March 2012

<b>Id.</b>	14	
<b>Additional Service Commitment</b>	We will develop our Asset Management Plan to ensure that the Council owns or occupies only the appropriate number of buildings and that these are fit for purpose.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	5.08	

<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Director of Housing and Property.
<b>Resource</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>Implement agreed key findings and recommendations of the CIPFA Property Review within timescales identified in the Council's action plan.</p> <p>Introduce an IT system by March 2012.</p> <p>Work with Services to develop Service Asset Management Plans by March 2012.</p> <p>Align and co-ordinate maintenance expenditure with asset management objectives.</p> <p>Lead on the long term rationalisation of the office portfolio in Inverness and Dingwall.</p> <p>Reduce council's property portfolio during 2011/12 generating capital receipts of £0.5m, revenue savings of £0.34m and reducing the overall required maintenance by £1m. in line with the agreed Corporate Improvement Programme targets.</p> <p>60% Proportion of operational accommodation that is suitable for its current use by 2012 (CP 5.13).</p> <p>55% Proportion of operational accommodation that is in satisfactory condition by 2011 (CP 5.14).</p>
<b>Risk</b>	CCC4

Enabling actions		Review Date
14.1	Completion of property audits.	Ongoing
14.2	Corporate and Service agreement to action plan and key recommendations emanating from CIPFA review.	Ongoing
14.3	Digitally map the Council's Title Deeds.	Ongoing
14.4	Further database development.	March 2013

<b>Id.</b>	15	
<b>Programme Commitment.</b>	<p>We will continue to pursue best value for our residents and service users, seeking efficiencies in the way we work and continually review the Council's spending programme.</p> <p>We will modernise our services to achieve an annual 2% efficiency savings target.</p>	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	5	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Service Management Team	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>Sustain customer satisfaction levels with services at 80%.</p> <p>Continue to implement Tenant Participation Strategy.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for further shared services with other housing service providers.</p> <p>Performance reporting becomes more effective due to enhanced visibility of targets and progress/status.</p>	
<b>Risk</b>	HP5	
Enabling actions		Review Date

15.1	Mobile working in place.	December 2011
15.2	Annual review of Tenant Participation Strategy.	March 2012
15.3	Continue the implementation of new and upgraded Information Systems and recognise associated change management.	March 2012

<b>Id.</b>	16	
<b>Additional Service Commitment</b>	We will continuously review our performance to improve the way in which the Council services are designed and delivered. We will do this by measuring our progress, reporting on it publicly and listening to our customers and communities.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	5	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing, Building Maintenance Manager, Area Housing and Property Managers.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>We will improve the way we deal with customer contacts, improve response times and reduce the number of complaints which are escalated or not dealt with satisfactorily on first contact.</p> <p>We will manage rent arrears effectively (SPI HS5).</p> <p>We will minimise rent loss due to voids and reduce the time taken to relet empty houses (SPI HS3, SPI HS4).</p> <p>We will provide an efficient and effective housing repairs service (HS1) and non-housing repairs service, including the introduction of appointments for housing repairs.</p>	
<b>Risk</b>		
<b>Enabling actions</b>		
<b>Review Date</b>		
16.1	Continue to carry out SHR and PSIF assessments.	March 2012

**Section 2 – Part 3: Service Action**  
**Earrann 2 – Pàirt 3: Gnìomh Seirbheis**

**Communities and Older People (Programme theme 2)**  
**Coimhearsnachdan agus Daoine nas Sine (Cuspair prògram 2)**

<b>Id.</b>	17
<b>Additional Service Commitment</b>	Highland's Local Housing Strategy 2010/2015 was approved in May 2010. It sets out the approaches that the Council with its partners will take to address Highland's housing issues. It includes strategies for addressing: housing needs: fuel poverty: community care and housing support needs: private sector housing quality and

	homelessness.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	Service Action.	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress against the 6 Housing Strategy outcomes.</li> </ul>	
<b>Risk</b>		
Enabling actions		Review Date
17.1	Review and further develop Private Sector Scheme of Assistance including joint commissioning of Care and Repair and Handyperson Services with Social Work Services and NHS Highland.	December 2011
17.2	Review and commission housing support services.	March 2012
17.3	Work with partners to deliver Highland's Joint Community Care Plan.	August 2012

<b>Id.</b>	18	
<b>Additional Service Commitment.</b>	Housing and Property to take lead role in negotiations with developers on planning gain contributions.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	Service Action	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing Development and Estates.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Maximising funding from developers for community benefit.	
<b>Risk</b>		
Enabling actions		Review Date
18.1	Employment of a development contribution negotiator to deliver service.	August 2011

**What we will do for the Economy (Programme theme 3)**  
**Na nì sinn airson an Eaconamaidh (Cuspair prògram 3)**

<b>Id.</b>	19
<b>Additional Service Commitment</b>	Set up a new framework with preferred partner housing associations for delivery of new affordable housing, by April 2011.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	Service Action
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing Development and Estates.
<b>Resource</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Set up a new framework with preferred partner housing associations for delivery of new affordable housing, by April 2011.

Risk	
Enabling actions	Review Date
Not proceeding due to new funding mechanism from Scot Government.	

**What we will do for the Environment (Programme theme 4)**  
**Na nì sinn airson na h-Àrainneachd (Cuspair prògram 4)**

<b>Id.</b>	20	
<b>Additional Service Commitment.</b>	We aim to reduce water consumption in all Council building.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	Service Action.	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Construction.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Continue monitoring of water consumption in Council buildings (non-housing) with a target to reduce consumption by 10%. Report and monitor quarterly to Climate Change Working Group.	
<b>Risk</b>		
Enabling actions	Review Date	
20.1	Monitor and report on water consumption.	Quarterly
20.2	Set targets for all buildings.	December 2011
20.3	Review capacity at buildings.	Ongoing
20.4	Report on opportunities and strategy for use of grey water.	March 2012

**What we will do to make the Highland Council more Effective and Efficient (Programme theme 5)**  
**Na nì sinn gus Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd a dhèanamh nas Èifeachdaiche agus nas Buadhaiche (Cuspair prògram 5)**

<b>Id.</b>	21
<b>Additional Service Commitment.</b>	We will encourage a safe working culture.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	Service Action
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Director of Housing and Property.
<b>Resource</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	5% reduction year on year in the number of reportable accidents/incidents (H&P employees). On-line CDM training to be undertaken by all H&P staff involved in construction commissioning and designing.

<b>Risk</b>	HP1	
Enabling actions		Review Date
21.1	Review, update and develop policies and procedures.	March 2012
21.2	Review and redesign H&P Service information available on the intranet/internet.	March 2012
21.3	Review arrangements for communicating H&S instructions.	December 2011

<b>Id.</b>	22	
<b>Additional Service Commitment.</b>	We will develop flexible and motivated staff.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	Service Action, CCG	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Director of Housing and Property.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>Provide induction programmes tailored to individual needs, and ongoing opportunity for skills and knowledge development.</p> <p>Employee Survey Action Plan to be delivered.</p> <p>Sheltered Housing Wardens and relevant Housing Management staff will have achieved or be working towards an appropriate Scottish Vocational Qualification, in line with regulator requirements.</p>	
<b>Risk</b>		
Enabling actions		Review Date
22.1	Funding available to support training requirements.	March 2012

<b>Id.</b>	23	
<b>Additional Service Commitment</b>	We will continue to maximise income from the Highland Council's Industrial and Investment property portfolio and achieve the current budgetary targets for general fund (property account) properties: Inverness Common Good Fund properties and Housing Account shops totalling £4.033m.	
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	5	
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Head of Housing Development and Estates.	
<b>Resource</b>		
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	<p>Continue to review the industrial investment portfolio. Monitor and regularly report to senior managers and appropriate Highland Council committees on the budgetary targets.</p> <p>Reduce the percentage of rent voids throughout the year.</p> <p>Increase the number of rent reviews and lease renewals completed during the financial year.</p>	
<b>Risk</b>		

Enabling actions		Review Date
23.1	Regular and continuous review and reporting of performance of rent profiling, rent reviews and rent voids.	Ongoing

<b>Id.</b>	24
<b>Additional Service Commitment</b>	We will carry out an area audits to identify surplus land and property, supported by cross Council Services.
<b>Council Programme Ref.</b>	5
<b>Lead Officer.</b>	Corporate Property Asset Manager.
<b>Resource</b>	
<b>Key Performance Results</b>	Identification of all current surplus and potentially surplus land and/or properties throughout the areas by March 2012.
<b>Risk</b>	

Enabling actions		Review Date
24.1	Set up area based cross service meetings to trawl existing assets, identifying surplus/potential surplus assets.	March 2012

To request this information in an alternative format e.g. large print, Braille, audio tape, or suitable language, please contact:

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