

# Staff Connections Ceanglaichean Luchd-obrach

Staff Bulletin | September 2019 | Issue 32

## Highland-wide pupils achieve excellent results

Academic achievement and pupil success was celebrated across the Highlands.



- Highland S4 & S5 pupils recorded strong improvement.
- 45% of pupils in S5 achieved 5 National 5s – an increase of 6% since 2015 and an increase of 2.5 % compared to last year.
- 94% of pupils passed Higher English this year compared to 86% last year (an 8% increase).
- 87% of pupils passed Higher Maths this year compared to 82% last year (a 5% increase).
- A dramatic decrease in the number of no awards at Higher (440 less no awards compared to last year).
- 20% increase in 2019 of pupils attaining 5 A-grades at Higher compared to 2018.
- Improved attainment for our most vulnerable pupils.

Ambitious

Sustainable

Connected

# Message from the Chief Executive



Dear colleagues,

Following recent discussions with staff across the Highlands, your feedback has told us that you would like to see better access to information for staff. As a result of the feedback, we have rebranded our staff newsletter from In Brief to “**Staff Connections**” and we have created a new staff webpage which is accessible to all staff from their own devices. [www.highland.gov.uk/staffconnections](http://www.highland.gov.uk/staffconnections)

Feedback from new staff forums has provided clear themes which have helped to inform a new Communication and Engagement Strategy, which focuses on internal communication and a number of actions are already being implemented. Further staff forums are being planned and the new structure of the Council will enable improved staff engagement in all locations across Highland.

We will be launching our next round of staff engagement in mid September and I look forward to getting out to meet you with our new senior team. Next year we anticipate another very challenging year for our budget, with a further reduction in revenue we have available to spend on services. Our engagement will focus on some key themes, including increasing our income and identifying further opportunities for efficiencies, such as reducing our vast property estate footprint and associated costs. We will also describe how we have responded to previous public and staff engagement with “You said We did”. A continuing commitment will remain that we will avoid redundancies, wherever possible, developing a flexible and agile workforce fit for the future.

There has been tremendous work over the past year, working on difficult areas of performance. Our great exam results have shown Highland can buck the national trend and we can make a real difference for our most vulnerable children. The shift to keeping our children in Highland is an important part of this and you can see on page 13 that our Placement Services Change Programme is achieving results here.

I continue to be impressed by the talented and dedicated staff we have in Highland Council. By working together, we will transform the council and embed the values we need, to be ambitious, sustainable and connected.

Kind regards

*Donna Manson*  
Chief Executive

[www.highland.gov.uk/staffconnections](http://www.highland.gov.uk/staffconnections)



# Culture change is a key theme

A focus on leadership, culture and performance will be central to the transformation of the Council.

Reputation - how we are viewed externally - is closely linked to communication and organisational culture. Organisational culture is about setting the right tone at the top and it also has to operate right through the organisation.

Culture is the values, beliefs and behaviours – the symbols and stories, which describe an organisation. Culture has a direct impact on the performance of an organisation, and is intrinsic in:

- How we manage change
- Our respect for others
- How we listen and respond to what we hear
- Our inclusiveness
- How we describe ourselves and our values
- How we demonstrate our values
- How we value people
- Our openness to ideas and opportunities

Research tells us how cultural issues impact on organisational health, wellbeing and performance. Leadership is fundamental to the productivity, wellbeing and culture of an organisation. "If leadership can be inspiring, visionary, energetic and attractive, people will deliver more".

It is important that the Council considers:

- The importance of understanding our culture – how it affects us, our wellbeing, our success and our productivity; what our culture is and what we want and need it to be
- The importance of internal communications and the style of our communications, including the ability to listen, communicate with kindness and challenge with respect
- An organisation has a responsibility to its staff - staff need to feel safe & cared for and to create space for listening, allowing challenge and support for managers dealing with poor performance effectively and appropriately
- The importance of leadership which carries the vision and values of the organisation

We also need to consider:

- how to establish a shared vision;
- effective communication, engagement and openness;
- how to embed cooperation and respect;
- have we got the right attitudes and behaviours;
- where do we need to develop skills and capacities;
- how to encourage constructive challenge where problem solving is honest, inclusive and collaborative.

A Culture and Leadership Strategy will be developed in the coming weeks. This will be informed by staff and member input.

## What you told us

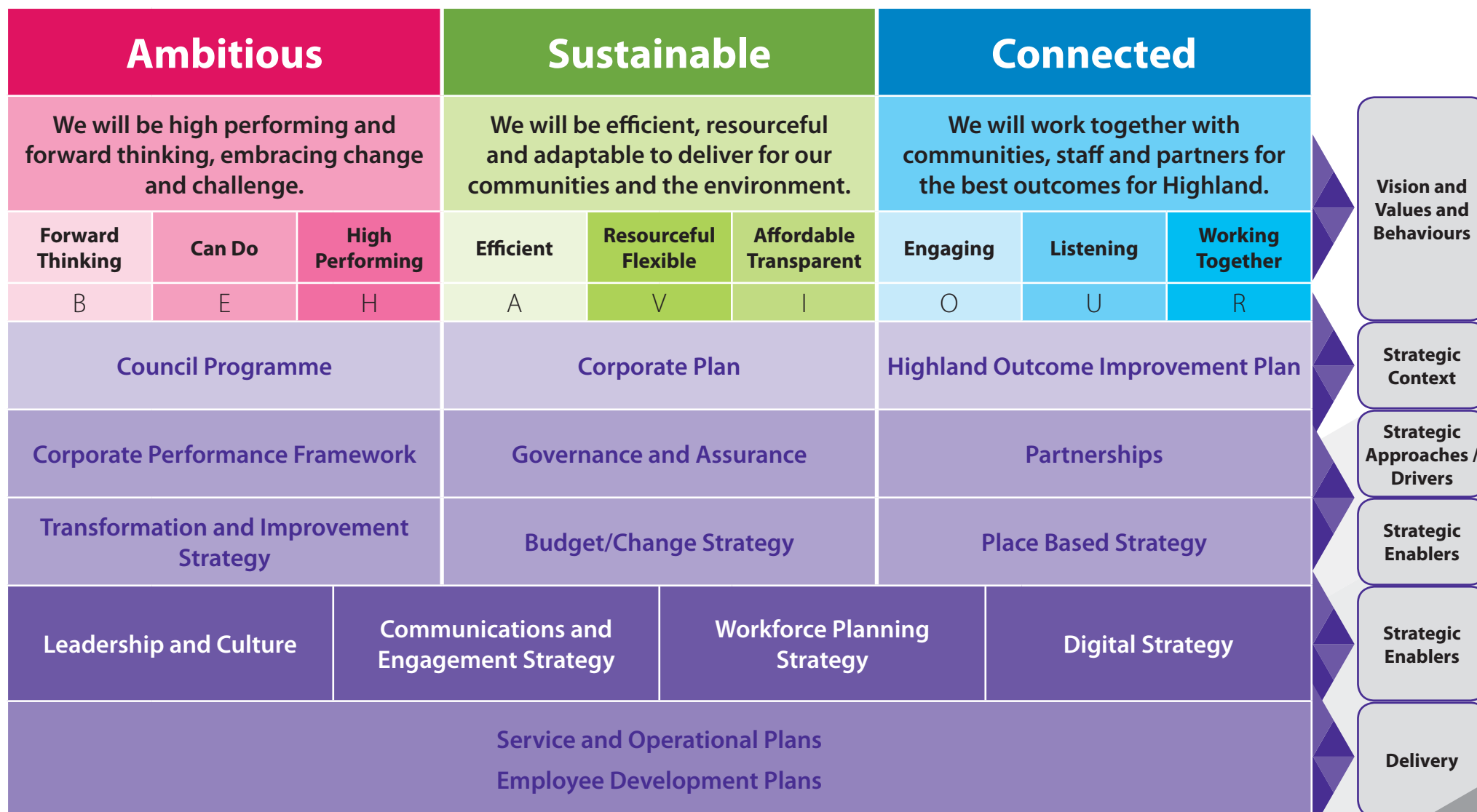
### Staff forum feedback:

Staff forum engagement has been very much welcomed by staff and there are plans to action and respond to the key themes highlighted from staff forums which have taken place to date. The themes are:

1. Access and barriers to information – currently manual roles, IT access and line management can be barriers to information access.
2. More face to face communication and more staff forums would be welcomed by staff.
3. Line manager support/training is needed to improve performance management and internal communication.
4. Senior manager visibility is needed across the whole Council.
5. Culture – a feeling that the culture needs to change to enable improved communication.
6. Employee Review and Development (ERD) process – there is a clear need for this to change to support both staff transformation, and performance.
7. Social activities - staff would like to see more opportunities to connect and network across services.
8. Physical environment – often not conducive to connectivity. Dated buildings, closed office doors and segregated canteen facilities are barriers to staff and member contact.

# Organisational Framework

This draft organisational framework provides a visual representation of the strategic context, drivers and enablers that underpin the Council Vision of Ambitious, Sustainable and Connected, and are supported by core values and behaviours. The 3 draft value statements will be discussed further with staff across Highland before bringing back to Members.



# New Council structure

Chief  
Executive  
Donna Manson

Customer  
and  
Communities

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Carron McDiarmid



Education  
and  
Learning

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Vacant



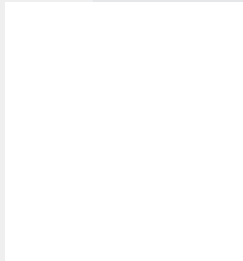
Health  
and  
Social Care

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Lesley Weber



Infrastructure  
and  
Environment

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Vacant



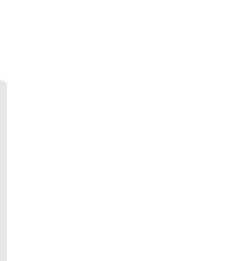
Performance  
and  
Governance

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Kate Lackie



Property  
and  
Housing

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Vacant



Resources  
and  
Finance

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Liz Denovan



Transformation  
and  
Economy

Executive Chief  
Officer  
Stuart Black



# New senior management structure taking shape

As part of The Highland Council's Redesign, the Council has made five appointments to new posts of Executive Chief Officer (ECO).

**Liz Denovan**,  
**ECO – Resources and Finance**  
took up post in August.

**Carron McDiarmid**,  
currently interim Chief Officer  
Community Services, takes up  
post of **ECO – Customer and  
Communities** in September.

**Lesley Weber**, starts on  
25<sup>th</sup> September as **ECO – Health  
and Social Care**.

**Kate Lackie**, previously  
Business Manager for the Chief  
Executive office, has been  
appointed to the post of **ECO –  
Performance and Governance**.

**Stuart Black**, Director  
of Development and  
Infrastructure, will take up the  
post of **ECO – Transformation  
and Economy** at the end of the  
month.

**Liz Denovan** brings nearly  
30 years' experience to  
The Highland Council  
having worked in both  
local government and the  
charity sector, previously  
Director of Finance and  
Operations at a Christian  
international healthcare  
charity, Corporate Finance  
Manager with East Lothian  
Council and Chief Accountant  
at Clackmannanshire Council.  
In her spare time Liz volunteers  
with the Samaritans.

**Carron McDiarmid** was  
a Head of Service in The  
Highland Council for 14 years,  
leading on several areas of  
corporate policy, performance,  
community engagement,  
change and redesign projects,  
and currently interim Chief  
Officer (Resources) for  
Community Services.

She has also worked in other  
public bodies and the Civil  
Service and is a voluntary Board  
member of Inverness College  
UHI.

**Lesley Weber** was Service  
Manager with Hackney  
Council's Children and Families  
Services leading on practice  
and the strategic response to  
domestic abuse and all forms  
of violence towards women  
and girls. She was previously  
a Senior Clinical Social  
Worker and brings 16 years  
professional experience to the  
Highlands.

**Stuart Black** joined the  
Highland Council as Director  
of Planning and Development  
in 2008 and from 2014 was  
Director of Development and  
Infrastructure. Prior to this  
he held senior appointments  
with Highlands and Islands  
Enterprise, and was Lecturer  
in Land Economy at Aberdeen  
University.

**Kate Lackie** has been a  
Member of the Council's Senior  
Management Team for over  
10 years and prior to that held  
a number of senior roles in  
the UK Civil Service including  
Head of the Political Talks Unit  
at the Northern Ireland Office  
and Private Secretary to 2  
Secretaries of State.

The new senior appointments  
will each have responsibility for  
a geographical area which will  
help to enhance local visibility  
and enable the Council to  
become better connected to  
communities at a local level.

The Highland Council  
has already significantly  
reduced senior and middle  
management posts in recent  
years saving over £3.5M.

The remaining Executive Chief  
Officer posts will be filled in  
the autumn.

# Staff Wellbeing

Staff wellbeing is the foundation of a successful organisation. High levels of wellbeing lead to improved services; increases our capacity for learning and adapting; and enables the workforce to maintain resilience and engagement through challenges and change.

## Your wellbeing matters

A programme of wellbeing workshops has been developed, which I would encourage all staff to attend. This provides an opportunity to build awareness and understanding of the workplace support and the many tools that are available to enhance staff wellbeing.

[www.bit.ly/StaffWellbeingWorkshops](http://www.bit.ly/StaffWellbeingWorkshops)

## Wellbeing workshops

Each workshop will be in the form of a short face to face session (2 hours), delivered in various locations throughout Highland. Early session dates have been prioritised for staff based in North, West and Badenoch areas.

Toolbox talks will be offered to relevant staff groups and a further communication will be sent out in due course regarding workshops for schools' staff.

Please can I ask managers to make this information available to those staff who are not online and facilitate the attendance of all staff wherever possible.

As part of the wellbeing programme, any staff with responsibility for others should also complete the mandatory Mentally Healthy Workplaces training.

I see these development sessions as a key support to realising the goals of our revised Wellbeing strategy and am delighted to be able to provide this valuable opportunity to all staff.

[www.bit.ly/MentallyHealthyWorkplaces](http://www.bit.ly/MentallyHealthyWorkplaces)

Donna Manson



# Change Programme

In February 2019, the Council approved its budget strategy and Change Programme “A Sustainable Highland” based around 4 themes: Making the Council More Efficient; Commercialism and Income Generation; Redesign and Improvement; and A Flexible and Well Managed Workforce, to deliver £37.456M of savings over the next three years.

A Programme Office was established to oversee the delivery of 16 major transformational projects and a £2.5M Change Fund was established to ensure this ambitious programme was effectively resourced. There are weekly meetings with project sponsors and Executive Leadership Team to report on progress; identify issues and seek resolution, in order to achieve rapid progress for these projects. Two thirds of the budget savings were delivered by the summer.

Queries to: **[CorporateChange.ProgrammeOffice@highland.gov.uk](mailto:CorporateChange.ProgrammeOffice@highland.gov.uk)**

## Trade Services

### Scope and Purpose of Project

Just now 44% of all repairs to Council housing and nearly all repairs to other Council properties are undertaken by contractors. Following a redesign review this is to change with more done by our in-house teams. This will provide better value, help us achieve savings and increase tenant satisfaction even further. A pilot of the new approach is being set up for Lochaber and a part of Inverness (the IRA catchment area). New trades posts are being recruited. Staff ideas on how to improve repairs processes will be used too, identified in two Lean reviews. Lessons will be learned for further rollouts,

with requests to focus on Skye and Sutherland next. Where work is still contracted out we will use better procurement methods. We have explained these to around 300 suppliers in over 10 local briefings. This change project involves staff in housing, property, business support, customer services, HR, finance and catering, cleaning and facilities management and Trade Unions.

## Grey Fleet

### Scope and Purpose of Project

There has been a very successful implementation of car club cars to replace both car hire and staff use of private cars. The car club is being extended across the Highlands.

The next phase is to examine the white fleet of light commercial vehicles for efficiencies.

2018/19 carry forward savings of £575k is to be delivered in 2019/20.

## Transport

### Scope and Purpose of Project

The project will deliver reduced costs of £360k in 3 years, through improved route planning, working with local communities, implementing a more efficient method for contract tendering and addressing the causes of contract price increase.

The Project has completed its first community-led solution to transport needs in Gairloch assisting in the Council’s goal to promote high-quality services, delivered in partnership with sustainable Highland communities.



## Education Transformation

### Scope and Purpose of Project

This project aims to:

- Deliver improved educational outcomes in schools through a rolling 3 year programme of consultation across all Associated School Groups
- Provide improved support to Head Teachers
- Deliver efficiencies to working practices and processes
- Support reduced absence.

Overall target is to deliver savings of £4.3M and improvements (£3.9M year one, £200k in years 2 and 3).

## Waste Management

### Scope and Purpose of Project

This project consists of implementing the strategy and infrastructure projects to manage the Council's response to legislation banning municipal biodegradable waste entering landfill from January 2021, and ensuring this delivers best value.

The project aims to:

- deliver a new waste management facility in Inverness;
- deliver new waste transfer stations in Lochaber and Badenoch & Strathspey;
- assess the feasibility and viability of developing an energy from waste facility in Inverness.

## Early Learning and Childcare

### Scope and Purpose of Project

The project seeks to deliver savings of £2.5M and improvements and achieve objectives including:

- reconfiguration of the early years workforce
- reduction in non-contact time for staff
- developing a career pathway by promoting the ELCC support worker role
- promotion of purchase of non-funded hours by parents
- enhancing childminding, particularly in rural areas
- developing the ELCC MA programme.

Staffing is in place for 71 settings to move to 1,140 hours in August 2019 with additional settings coming on board in January 2020. The new model will ensure we have capacity to offer 1140 hours offering various options across ASGs in the most cost effective way.

## Additional Support Needs

### Scope and Purpose of Project

This project is transforming ASN services to enable schools to better meet the needs of children, so that resources are allocated equitably. This will be delivered through a classroom-focused and inclusive approach, where teachers are best placed to identify the support needs of children. Savings have been achieved for the current year mainly through deleting vacant posts and the transfer of staff into other posts.

The review of the allocation model and processes will be carried out during 2019/20 for implementation in 2020/21. This will involve visits to all Associated School Groups and consultation with teachers, pupils and parents. Pan Highland training is being rolled out to all Highland schools. This will focus on inclusion focussed education. More information is on:

**[www.highland.gov.uk/asn](http://www.highland.gov.uk/asn)**

## Placement Services Change Programme (Including Fostering & Adoption)

### Scope and Purpose of Project

This project is to transform how the Council cares for its children, through a range of initiatives to provide care including fostering and adoption, development of care facilities and additional support given to carers. The project aims to address an overspend of £4.4M, and deliver savings of £1M in year 3, as well as deliver improvements.

34 children have returned to Highland since June 2018 avoiding costs of over £5M.

See page 13 for more information.

## Energy and Renewables

### Scope and Purpose of Project

The project aims to deliver £500k saving and take urgent action to respond to increasing energy costs (10-14% by 2020/21 which would mean additional £1M+ spend).

We will reduce energy consumption through good practice, compliance and behaviour change. We will reduce energy costs and generate income through the development and implementation of a 5 year Energy Strategy & Action Plan, improving the condition and quality of lighting across the Council estate as part of a long term re-investment programme, and through the implementation of viable renewable schemes, including commercial ventures.

## Transient Visitor Levy/ Tourism Developments

### Scope and Purpose of Project

The project will complete a Highland consultation on tourist visitor Levy (TVL) launched in August, to provide the basis for implementing a Levy (subject to Scottish Government legislation).

The project will also proactively target commercial opportunities for new income from tourist developments such as charging for camper van and parking/facilities.

## Car Club

### Scope and Purpose of Project

We have recently expanded the provision of car club vehicles across Highland, with new vehicles being provided in Bettyhill, Thurso, Alness and Nairn. Additional cars are also now available in Inverness, Golspie, Fort William and Wick, taking the total number of dedicated car club vehicles to 60. Please ensure that where business travel is essential, that you encourage your staff to utilise the car club resource.

A travel calculator is available from the link below, to assess the most cost-effective travel options for specific journeys; and more information about the car club can be found on the Council's intranet.

**[www.bit.ly/travelcostcalculator](http://www.bit.ly/travelcostcalculator)**

**[www.bit.ly/fleethiretravel](http://www.bit.ly/fleethiretravel)**

## Service Income

### Scope and Purpose of Project

Generate additional income of £700k through charging interest on late payments, invoicing and reducing bad debt. £180k has been achieved so far.

## ICT Development/ Digital

### Scope and Purpose of Project

To deliver savings of £2.15M through refresh of network equipment and computers and the introduction of self service tools for staff, thus reducing Wipro support costs.

To provide updated technology allowing more flexible working.

To support ICT in learning requirements for schools.

To support other change projects by delivering digital solutions.

## Workforce Planning

### Scope and Purpose of Project

The overarching aim of the programme is to sustain the workforce, improve performance and deliver services fit for the future, developing a strategy for the Council around: vision and values, flexible workforce, leadership and management training for all employees, sustainable workforce, transition and a Care & Learning management restructure.

The need for attractive career options focusing on the right values needed for public service for current and future staff has been at the core of the work.

## Asset Management, Property Rationalisation and Investment

### Scope and Purpose of Project

The project will deliver efficiencies and reduce Council Estate to deliver £1.7M savings.

See page 12 for more about this project.

## Redesign

### Scope and Purpose of Project

Savings of £1.38M to be delivered which are not covered elsewhere in the change programme. This will include work around service budget peer review challenge as a separate budget management exercise.

New redesign reviews on catering, cleaning & Facilities Management and Engineering Services are being progressed.

Lean reviews will continue to be identified and benefits realised.

## Income Generation

### Scope and Purpose of Project

Implementation of a new policy approach to income generation at a local level within the context of increasing local decision making and involvement of communities. The delivery of £700k income generation - £300k income target Feb 2019, £400k unmet target 2018/19 (in relation specifically to car parking income). Engagement on potential new car parking opportunities has continued.

## Procurement

### Scope and Purpose of Project

This project will make direct savings to corporate and service budgets through a range of initiatives including: review current procurement policies; more favourable prices for goods and services by working with suppliers; making better use of agreed purchasing frameworks. Savings have already been identified in the existing utilities contracts and will be realised this financial year.



# Asset Management, Property Rationalisation and Investment

The Asset Management, Property Rationalisation and Investment Project is one of the Council's priority Change Programme projects.

At the budget meeting in February, Council agreed an ambitious revenue saving target of £1.5M from its General Fund property portfolio over this and the next 2 financial years. This will help to protect Council jobs and services.

We have a large property estate across the Highlands and reducing our estate will reduce property maintenance costs, risks and liabilities, as well as release property for potential re-use, transfer, or redevelopment.

The project will look at all properties to identify some for closure, and those that are suitable to provide space for additional Council staff and services relocating from buildings targeted for closure.

Key factors that will influence decisions around identifying properties for potential closure include use; capacity; high running costs; high property maintenance and health and safety costs, risks and liabilities; high land value and redevelopment potential; and the availability of suitable alternative premises from which Council services can be delivered.

In order for the project to be successful, we all need to rethink how we regard and use our properties. Managers should already be proactively thinking about what their teams can do to reduce their reliance on property space by implementing new ways of working in discussion with staff.

This will include:

- mobile and flexible working
- desk sharing and clear desk policies
- reducing service need and requirement for (file) storage and space
- application of retention schedules
- alternative service delivery methods that will free up space

As a result of the flexible and proactive approach to property to date the Council is already sharing some of its property with other key public sector partners, for example, the Department of Work and Pensions, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, 'Changeworks', High Life Highland Archive Centre, in our Wick and Fort William offices, as well as elsewhere. This can improve services, reduce costs and generate an income.

You may also have ideas for beneficial co-location opportunities with other Council services, and/or our public sector partners; or even further property rationalisation ideas.

If you have any suggestions or you would like to get involved, perhaps by acting as a Change Champion locally in your area, please get in touch:

[propertyassetmanagement@highland.gov.uk](mailto:propertyassetmanagement@highland.gov.uk)



# Update on Placement Service Change Programme

The Placement Services Change Programme aims to develop services to assist social workers with the difficult challenge of keeping children at home as well as returning children to Highland from Out of Area Placements.

Since the start of the Programme, Children's Service staff, supported by the Programme Team have successfully returned 34 young people from Out of Area Placements and avoided costs of over £5M.

One of the most compelling outcomes of the Placement Services Change Programme is significantly improved outcomes for Highland's Care Experienced Young People who have returned to area which have included:

- A number of young people have been found to be intellectually more able than identified over several years Out of Area.

- Accelerated developmental age as compared with Out of Area.
- Reduction in violence and aggression forms.
- Improved educational attendance and enjoyment.

Our aim is to ensure that all Highland children have a Highland identity and remain connected to their community throughout their lives. The first step in achieving this vision has been the development of the multi-disciplinary outreach hub in Fodderty called Àrach.

The benefits this will bring are a well-resourced outreach response to families, as well as kinship and foster care placements in crisis.

Future plans for the programme are to replicate the Àrach service and supporting services in other areas of the Highlands with the eventual aim of having all our highland children remain in the area where appropriate.

## Care and Learning

A review of the Education (and Health & Social Care) Service structures, led by the Chief Executive in collaboration with staff, is designed to drive forward performance improvement in schools. and Children's Services.

This will involve recruiting to new senior posts by December 2019. In the meantime, the intention is to appoint a new interim Head of Education following the current post holder (James Vance) returning to his substantive role (at Culloden Academy). Allan Gunn will continue in his current role of Interim Chief Officer Resources – Education and Health & Social Care, until April 2020. Karen Ralston, Interim Head of Children's Services, will continue in her current role to January 2020 including fulfilling the role of Chief Social Work Officer.

Fiona Malcolm, currently working as a Senior Legal Manager in the Council's legal team, has been appointed to the interim post of Head of Health. Her role will be focusing on reviewing the NHS Partnership agreement.

# Talent Manager Role

Koreen MacDougall has been seconded from Care and Learning to HR to take up the new role of Talent Manager. This is a post funded from the Change Fund.

The role is to lead the Council's talent attraction initiative and to develop, implement and oversee a corporate talent attraction strategy.

Since taking up post in early June 2019, Koreen has been identifying problematic posts and locations to recruit to and supporting work on creating a suite of advertising and recruitment strategies. She has also met with a key number of Service Managers and external partners such as HIE to enable collaboration on talent attraction across the Highlands.



# Apprentice of the Year finalist

Gregor Rose has been shortlisted as an Apprentice of the Year finalist through the Highland Business Awards.

Gregor started as a Highland Council apprentice mechanic in Oct 2016 where he was based at the Aviemore depot which services the fleet vehicles for Badenoch & Strathspey. He attended Moray Firth Training Group where he completed his 4 year apprenticeship in just 3 years, impressively completing his portfolio a year ahead of the deadline. Gregor's dedication to his study and post is inspiring and in light of his commitment and achievement he was nominated for Apprentice of the Year.

The winner will be announced at the Highland Business Awards ceremony on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> September at the Drumossie Hotel.

Says Paul Whitam, Modern Apprenticeships Programme Manager:

"We are extremely proud of Gregor, he is a great asset to Community Services and to Highland Council and we wish him all the best as a finalist."

Photo: Budget Leader, Cllr Alister Mackinnon, congratulates Gregor on his achievement.





# Flooding - Roles and Responsibilities

[www.bit.ly/FloodingRolesResponsibilities](http://www.bit.ly/FloodingRolesResponsibilities)

Many organisations work together to manage flood risk in the Highlands. All organisations are placed under a duty to work together to reduce overall flood risk by the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.

The Highland Council's role:

- Preparation of maps of water bodies and SuDS
- Assessing water bodies for conditions likely to pose a flood risk
- Undertake maintenance works in water bodies including the clearance of watercourses where the works will significantly reduce flood risk
- Maintenance of existing flood alleviation schemes
- Maintain road gullies - these are not designed to cope with extreme weather events but it is still important that they operate efficiently to avoid localized flooding
- Planning and development management (with flood risk advice from SEPA)
- Working with the emergency services in response to severe flooding
- Coordinating reception centres for people evacuated from their homes and arrange temporary accommodation if appropriate
- Coordinating the aftermath of a flood
- Dealing with road closures (except on trunk roads)
- Preparation of local Flood Risk Management Plans (from 2012).

# Change to May Day 2020

The May Day public holiday in 2020 will change from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May to coincide with the VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations.

This decision follows both UK and Scottish Government to change the date of the Bank holiday to Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

## What does this mean for staff?

Offices and schools will be open on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May and will be a normal work day. Offices and schools will be closed on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, if staff are required to work on 8<sup>th</sup> May, payment will be made at enhanced rate of pay where applicable.

# Council HQ Festive closure

A decision has been made to close the full Council HQ building over the festive period this year, as an energy and cost saving measure. The building will be fully closed from 5pm on 24<sup>th</sup> December, reopening on Monday morning 6<sup>th</sup> January.

Arrangements are being made for some staff to hot-desk in other buildings such as the Town House and for access to paper files where necessary.

Staff will need to discuss arrangements with their line manager and whether they should take annual leave, use flexible/home working or hot-desk on the four normal working days which the building will be closed.

Options are being explored for other council buildings which could also close over the same period. More details will be circulated in September.



The Highland Council  
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

wipro

Forget the miles,  
just run for the smiles

**SOW Run 2019**  
#FurtherTogether

macron

scotland

Endorsed by Jenny Bannerman,  
Scottish International Runner

Be part of the SOW Run on Sunday 22nd  
September 2019 and help raise money for the  
Calman Trust and Highland Hospice

Calman Trust Highland Hospice

To find out more and Register, please go to:  
<https://bit.ly/31rWnXW>

Closing date for registration is 15th September

The event is free, however we  
would encourage you to donate  
to these noble causes, collection  
tins will be available on the day.

# Not too late to register!

Join us for a joint Council/HLH/Wipro fun run to raise money for Calman Trust and Hospice on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

The fun run is free to enter and Wipro will make a donation to these two worthy causes for every employee and family member who takes part.

It takes place at the Inverness UHI Campus and is sure to be a fun day out!

**Event time: 1pm - 4.30pm**

Register as soon as possible (**before 15<sup>th</sup> September** at latest) and see further details at:

**[www.bit.ly/SOWrun2019](https://www.bit.ly/SOWrun2019)**



**RECOVERY WALK SCOTLAND**

SATURDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2019, 11AM - 4PM

**I N V E R N E S S**

FEATURING: ROSES CEREMONY, LIVE BANDS, CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES, RECOVERY VILLAGE

#CompassionateCommunitiesCreate

# Recovery Walk Scotland

The National Recovery Walk is coming to Inverness on Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup> September.

This is the first time it will take place in the Highlands. The last four walks have taken place in Glasgow, Falkirk, Dundee and last year in Glasgow again. The full walk Programme and route map will be shared by the Recovery Walk Council, here are some links to help keep you informed of progress.

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/RecoveryWalkScotland](https://www.facebook.com/RecoveryWalkScotland)

Twitter - [www.twitter.com/RecWalkScot](https://www.twitter.com/RecWalkScot)

Instagram - [www.instagram.com/recoverywalkscotland](https://www.instagram.com/recoverywalkscotland)

For further information please contact Sharon Holloway from the Walk Ness Planning group who will be happy to help:

**Sharon.holloway1@nhs.net**

**Tel: 07815 694338**

For more information please follow our social media pages

Recovery Walk Scotland



**SRC** SCOTTISH  
RECOVERY  
CONSORTIUM  
Charity No: SC04881

[www.scottishrecoveryconsortium.org](http://www.scottishrecoveryconsortium.org)

# Anti-counterfeiting recognition

Lynn Foster, Enforcement Officer (Trading Standards) has been presented with the Dave Hankinson Memorial Award for Individual Excellence 2019 in recognition of her anti-counterfeiting enforcement work during 2018.

This is a UK award open to nominations from all enforcement agencies such as Trading Standards, the police and customs/border force.



**Look out for a form checking  
who's registered to vote  
at your address**

Make sure you respond  
by the deadline.

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

DON'T LOSE IT



## Have you received your annual Household Enquiry Form?

Don't forget to check it and return it to us as soon as you can so you can have your say on matters that are important to you!

### What is a Household Enquiry Form?

Every year Electoral Registration Officers must issue households in their area with an enquiry form, to know who is eligible to vote at each property. Enquiry forms were issued to properties in your area from the beginning of July 2019.

You can respond by internet, telephone or SMS message – just follow the instructions sent with your

form. This is the cheapest way for you to provide us with the information and saves taxpayers' money. Alternatively, complete the paper form and return to us, postage is free.

In 2018 over £17,000 of taxpayers' money was saved in freepost costs by using online, telephone or text message responses.

## Am I Registered to Vote?

If your name does not appear on your household enquiry form, you will need to register to vote.

The easiest way to register is online at:

**[www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)**

Not being on the electoral register can affect your credit rating.

## Contact

**The Highland & Western Isles,  
Electoral Registration Office,  
Moray House,  
16-18 Bank Street,  
Inverness IV1 1QY**

For further information please visit:

**[www.saa.gov.uk/h-wi-vjb](http://www.saa.gov.uk/h-wi-vjb)**

Email: **[ero@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ero@highland.gov.uk)**

Freephone: **0800 393 783**