

# Staff Connections Ceanglaichean Luchd-obrach



Staff Bulletin | January 2020 | Issue 36



**Ambitious**



**Sustainable**



**Connected**



# Message from the Chief Executive

Dear Colleagues,

We are now forecasting an underspend in our budget for 2019-20. This has been a result of your hard work and perseverance. I am very pleased that there is an increased focus on performance coming through.

Our Best Value Audit points to improvements being made and stresses the importance of performance and also of staff feeling engaged and connected to the performance and outcomes of the Council through their roles. We have challenges and risks ahead of us in the coming months and we have to rebuild our reserves to ensure we have the capacity to manage risks into the future.

Council will set the budget on 5<sup>th</sup> March. The Scottish Government budget will be announced today, on 6 February and this will give us a clearer picture of our funding settlement and the extent of savings required.

This issue of Staff Connections provides an update on our senior management structure and how we intend to work closer together. Last week I visited the Housing Team in Skye. Housing issues in Skye are different to other areas and it was good to meet with staff and hear about local services face to face. It is important that we tailor our services to local areas and listen to our staff. We have also been listening to our roads teams and are responding to the matters raised, and taking actions to make real improvements.

The Executive Chief Officers (ECOs) have been allocated interim responsibility for areas and in being connected to these areas should help with improving staff engagement and getting a real feel for the differences throughout the Highlands. It is vital that we understand the issues, opportunities and talent across the council.

Kind regards,

*Donna Manson* **Chief Executive**



# Developing the Structure

Work continues on developing the Council's new structure with permanent appointments to 6 of the 8 Executive Chief Officer posts.

The remaining 2 ECO vacancies are currently being covered on a temporary basis:

- **Education and Learning** – Allan Gunn (Interim Chief Officer Resources & Transformation) taking a lead role for the Council's Education and Health & Social Care Resources).

Chief Executive  
Donna Manson

- **Transformation & Economy** – Interim arrangements have been put in place to cover this post, effective from Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February. The remit has been split with Allan Gunn (Interim Chief Officer Resources and Transformation) who will assume responsibility for Transformation; and Malcolm MacLeod assuming responsibility for Economy.



# Heads of Service

Heads of Service have now been allocated within the new ECO remit as shown on the diagram below. As the Council's service delivery model continues to evolve there is an ongoing need for flexibility across ECO remit and further updates will be issued when any changes take place.

Allan Maguire (Head of Development and Regeneration) along with the teams he currently manages will report to Malcolm MacLeod.

The interim arrangements for Transformation and Economy will provide stability and continuity on a range of key projects such as the Inverness City Region Deal (including the redevelopment of Inverness Castle), Lochaber 2040, the Tourist Visitor Levy, as well as the critical work which is being undertaken on redesigning service delivery in the Council.

Communications and Resilience will continue to report directly to the Chief Executive.



# Service Functions

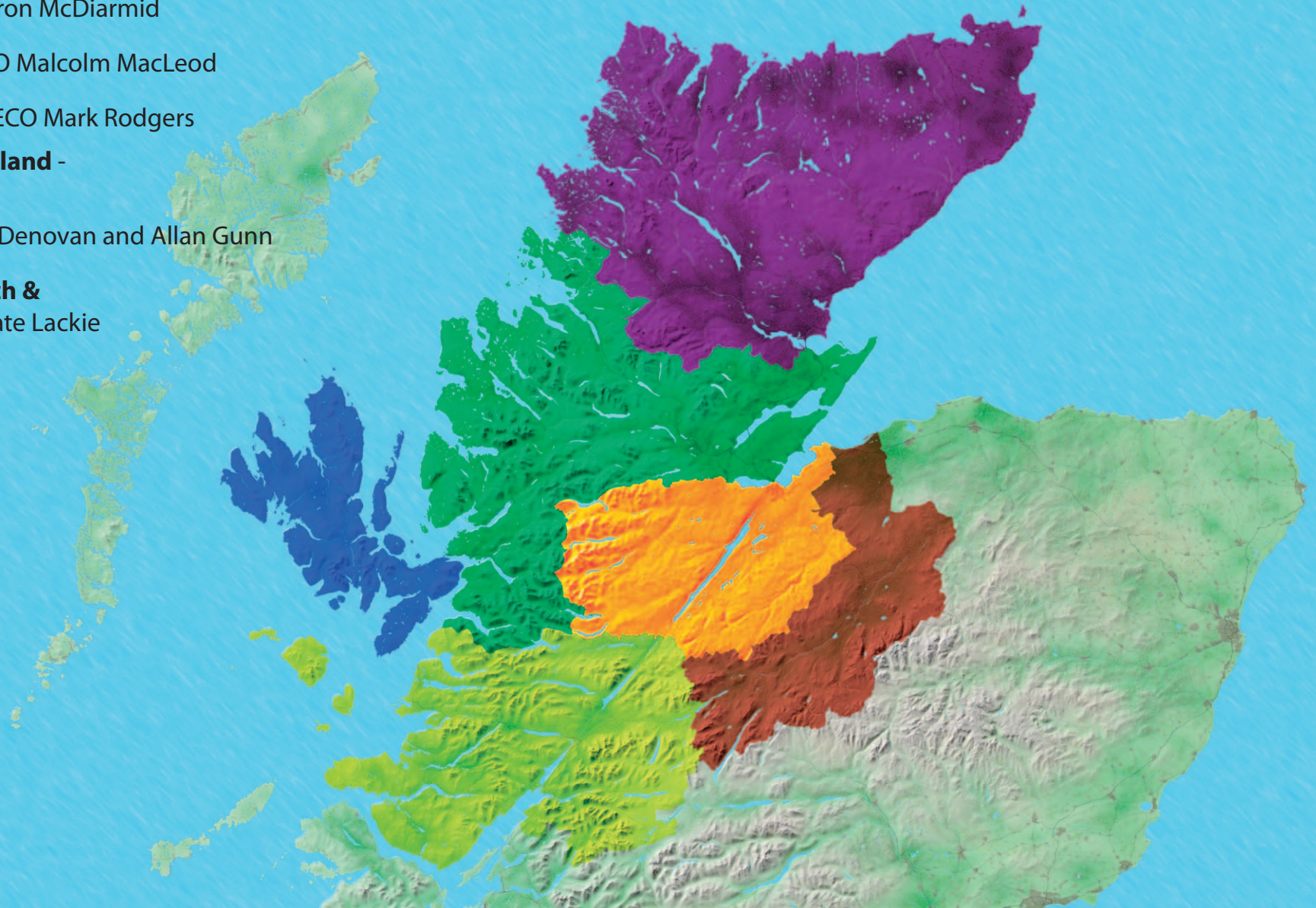
Communities and Place	Education and Learning	Health and Social Care	Infrastructure and Environment	Performance and Governance	Property and Housing	Resources and Finance	Transformation and Economy
Anti-Poverty Strategy	Additional Support for Learning	Adult Social Care NHS Partnership Lead Agency	Business Development & Systems Support	Best Value	Affordable Warmth	Annual Accounts and Quarterly Financial Performance Reporting	<b>Transformation</b>
Burials & Cremations	Additional Support Services	Adult Protection	Business Gateway	Business Intelligence	Catering, Cleaning and Facilities Management	Benefits	Commercial & Efficiency Team
Community Asset Transfer	Allowance / Bursaries	Allied Health Professionals	Building Standards	Corporate Fraud	Corporate Asset Management	Corporate Business Support	Cultural Strategy
Community Engagement	Curriculum 3-18	Chief Social Work Officer	Capital Schemes - Infrastructure	Corporate Leadership Support - Councillors	Corporate Property Client	Financial management support to Council Services	Eden Court and 3rd sector commissioned services/grant funding
Community Learning and Development (with adult literacy & youth work)	Developing Scotland's Young Workforce	Child Protection	Car Parking	Corporate Performance Management	Depots	Health & Safety	Future Resources
Community Planning	Early Years	Child Protection Advisers (Health)	Climate Strategy & Sustainability	Corporate Risk Management	Estates Planning and Capital Investment - C&L	HR (Human Resources)	High Life Highland (HLH)
Customer Services	Education improvement	Children's Services: Social Care	Energy	Democratic Services - Corporate Governance	FM Client	ICT & Digital Services	Transformation, Change & Redesign
Environmental Health	Education maintenance	Corporate Parenting	Environment	Elections - Corporate Governance	H&CS and Property Housing input into Care Services	Insurance	<b>Economy</b>
Fleet	Gaelic Education	Criminal Justice	Ferries	Freedom of Information and Data Protection policy	Homelessness	Learning and Development	City Region Deal
Grounds Maintenance	Gateway	Edge of care	Flood Act Duties	Internal Audit	HRA (Management of Council Housing)	Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing	Commercial Property Development
Participatory Budgeting	Home education and Partnership with parents	Family Nursing	Harbours and Marine Facilities	Legal - Corporate Governance	In-house Building Maintenance Team	Payroll and Pensions	Economy
Place Based Strategy	Improving Outcomes	Fostering and Adoption	Laboratory and Quarry	Licensing	Office Accommodation Mgt	Procurement	Development & Regeneration
Public Conveniences	Learning and Teaching	Health Improvement	Planning	Ombudsman	Project & Cost Management	Revenues	Gaelic Economy
Registrar Services	Looked After Children and corporate parenting-educational outcomes	Health Visiting	Public and School Transport	Parliamentary and political liaison	Property Capital Projects - Budget & Delivery	Taxation	Housing Development
Single Grant	Mental Health Workers	Looked After Children	Roads	Police & Fire scrutiny	Property Design	Trade Union Partnership	Inward Investment
Stores	Mental Health Workers	Mental Health Officers	Safety Inspections: bridges, structures, drainage & restraint systems	Policy	Property Engineering Design Services	Treasury Management	IT Infrastructure (Fibre, 5G mobile) external
Street Cleansing	Primary Mental Health Workers	NHS Commissioned Services	Street Lighting	Public Performance Reporting	Property Maintenance	Valuation Joint Board Support	Tourism
Third Sector Interface	Primary Schools	Out of Hours Social Work	Transport Planning	Trading Standards	Property Support Team	Welfare (Benefit take up)	
Travel Desk	Psychological services	Prevention Strategy	Winter Maintenance	Transitions Programme	Schools Catering & Cleaning (client)		
Ward Management	Schools - other	Residential Care			Property Maintenance		
War Memorials	Secondary schools	School Nursing			Schools Catering & Cleaning (client)		
Waste Management/ Waste Strategy	Staff Development including professional learning and update	Self Directed Support			Tenant Participation		
		Throughcare/Aftercare					
		Transitions					
		Young Carers					

# Area remits

The Executive Chief Officers (ECOs) have been assigned interim geographical remits in order to develop place based strategies, in addition to their service portfolios. These will be reviewed in the coming weeks.

The remits for now are as follows:

- **Lochaber** - ECO Carron McDiarmid
- **Skye & Raasay** - ECO Malcolm MacLeod
- **Ross & Cromarty** - ECO Mark Rodgers
- **Caithness & Sutherland** -  
ECO Lesley Weber
- **Inverness** - ECO Liz Denovan and Allan Gunn
- **Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey** - ECO Kate Lackie



# Farewell to Stuart Black

Stuart Black, Executive Chief Officer (ECO) for Economy and Transformation, left the Council on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to take up post with Highlands and Islands Area Manager Moray.



Over his 12 year career with The Highland Council Stuart has been responsible for driving forward many of the major infrastructure projects in the Highlands which have brought significant improvements and will leave a lasting legacy to the Highlands such as the delivery of Inverness West Link. He has real passion for promoting business growth and economic development across the region. In 2016 Stuart receive the SCDI Heathrow Airport Award for Outstanding Business Ambassador in recognition of the key role he played in renewing the Heathrow link and developing the area's connectivity which is fundamental to a thriving economy. Most recently Stuart was instrumental in bringing in the City-Region Deal which will bring lasting benefits to the Highlands and Islands.

**Good luck to Stuart in his new role!**

# Improved security arrangements

In order to improve security and access arrangements within Headquarters, a **new card/fob entry system** for the HQ Building will be implemented in February with a "go live" date of Monday 10<sup>th</sup> Feb.

During the week commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> February, Business Support will hold '**Drop In Sessions**' in the area behind reception for staff to come and pick up their Access Card or Fob ready for **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February**.

The '**Drop In Sessions**' will run from: **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb to Friday 7<sup>th</sup> Feb**.

Morning Session from **10-11am**; and Afternoon Session from **2-3pm** (8 Sessions in total).

After that (w/c 17<sup>th</sup> Feb onwards) any Access Cards/Fobs required by staff can be obtained from Reception.

The doors affected are:

Access Doors: Staff Entrance by Main Reception; Chamber; Block B; Block A; Old Building by HR.

Internal Doors: All doors leading from the Reception area/stairwell to the rest of the building.

# Two years on – what is the direction of staff travel?

Our key achievements to date have been:

- 69 car club vehicles at 25 locations are currently used by Highland Council staff and Members.
- £400k savings were achieved during 2018/19 with another £175k savings expected this year.
- A reduction of 377 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) emissions during 2018/19.
- The staff travel project won the Convener's Award at the Quality Awards in November and was highly commended at the national Energy Saving Trust Fleet Heroes awards.



## Travel & Subsistence Policy and Travel Hierarchy / Decision Making Process

The Travel and Subsistence Policy was updated in early 2019 to include more information on the travel hierarchy / decision making policy.

**The staff travel survey highlighted that many of you are not familiar with the updated policy. Please read the updated Policy and use the Decision Making Process before each business journey.**

**The policy can be found at [www.bit.ly/TravelSubsistencePolicy](http://www.bit.ly/TravelSubsistencePolicy)**

## Alternatives to travel

Before making any plans to travel, check if you can use Skype for Business, video conferencing (VC) or teleconferencing (TC) instead. This saves the Council money and reduces our carbon emissions as well as lost productivity through time which would otherwise have been spent travelling.

The staff travel survey highlighted that many staff are not using ICT as an alternative to travel due to issues with the availability of ICT. We hope this will be resolved after the rollout of new equipment (Corporate March/April and Schools by the end of Summer). Please contact ICT helpdesk for any enquiries regarding the roll out.

Feedback also indicates that staff are not confident using Skype and VC and find it difficult participating remotely in a meeting. Please refer to the ICT toolkit for guides and training webinar on Skype for Business.

**ICT Toolkit**

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



## Tools for when travel is essential

If travel is essential, then following the Travel and Subsistence Policy, you should always use the most cost-effective option:

- Check if you have a colleague in a similar role based at a closer location who could be delegated to attend on your behalf?
- Use the travel calculator which helps staff make the most cost-effective choices where travel can't be avoided.

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

## Car Club

Since May 2018 the Car Club has reduced the Council's total carbon footprint by 377 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e). This is the equivalent of:

- two years' electricity consumption at HQ;
- 377 staff taking a return economy flight to New York from Heathrow;
- every Council employee taking a return standard class train trip to London from Inverness.

Further information about Car Club can be found on the Intranet:

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

Car Club queries should be sent to:  
[car.club@highland.gov.uk](mailto:car.club@highland.gov.uk)

## White fleet

We are carrying out a review of the Council's 'white fleet' (vehicles under 3.5t, excluding minibuses) to assess levels of use and business requirements. We are looking for opportunities to: reduce the number of vehicles; downsize or share vehicles; and ensure that all vehicles are fully used to maximise savings (costs and carbon).

Engagement with white fleet users, budget holders and Service Heads will take place from February.

More information about Staff Travel project: [www.bit.ly/StaffTravelProject](http://www.bit.ly/StaffTravelProject)

## Christmas charity drive

The total amount raised from the raffle, staff panto and cake sale on 19<sup>th</sup> December was £1,869.31 however, the total amount raised overall for the Hospice, including donations was £6,868.51

**Well done everyone!**

Suggestions for next year's panto are already being considered!

## Staff Travel Survey

Thanks to everyone who completed the Staff Travel Survey back in August 2019. We received an excellent level of responses from across the organisation and the feedback from staff will be used to identify alternatives that could be put in place to further reduce business travel and costs.

A report highlighting the key findings from the survey can be found, by scrolling to the bottom of the page, at:

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

# Instruction to all Managers responsible for hire of agency workers

As you are aware, the Council is seeking to reduce the costs of hiring agency workers. Therefore, with immediate effect Managers must use Global Highland for Agency Workers hired within the scope of the contract. The Scotland Excel Framework should be used for Social Care Agency Workers to ensure favourable rates.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that there is no service disruption so please discuss with Head of Service any ongoing/ current agency worker hire that is not provided from Global Highland.

This is a mandatory management decision. The Highland Council has an existing contract with Global Highland and this measure will enforce its use and produce savings. Therefore it is imperative that all managers make arrangements to follow this instruction. In any instance where a Manager continues to hire workers from an in-scope agency

other than Global Highland, an explanation will be sought from those responsible. It may be that there are isolated cases where Global cannot supply an agency worker so an alternative agency has to be used but this must have the full approval of the Head of Service.

It is anticipated that there will be significant reductions in agency spend achieved through this measure.

# Time To Talk Day Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February

**You can talk about mental health at work**

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February is Time to Talk Day – a day when everyone is encouraged to have a conversation about mental health. At Highland Council we know that it benefits all of us to talk about mental health.

Time to Talk Day is run by See Me, Scotland's programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

The Council's Mental Health Representatives will circulate cards with tips on how to start your conversation. There is also information about how to support colleagues, and where to go if you need support.

Mental Health Representatives will also invite colleagues to Pass the Badge - wearing a 'See Me' Badge and then pass it on to a colleague while starting a conversation on mental health and wellbeing.

## Office Moves

Executive Chief Officers and their Heads of Service will now be located within the Chief Executive's Office at HQ.

Significant moves have been taking place to allow this to happen and the outcome of the co-location is designed to lead to better communication and collaboration across all services and functions.