

**The Highland Council**  
**Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee**

**11 May 2016**

Agenda Item	9
Report No	PDI 26/16

**Local and National Statutory Performance Indicators 2014/15**

**Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure**

**Summary**

Following the report presented at Highland Council on 10 March 2016 detailing the Local Statutory Performance Indicators 2014/15, this report provides specific information on Development and Infrastructure performance indicators.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council is required to report on our Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) within 12 months of the end of the financial year they refer to. This replaces the requirement to submit data to Audit Scotland and publish by 30 September each year. **Appendix 1** gives the value for each SPI and, where possible, compares it to the value in the previous financial year.
- 1.2 The principles that underpin the Council's values include that we will be fair, open and accountable. This means we will measure our performance, report on it publicly and listen to our communities, to ensure we are delivering services that provide best value for Council Taxpayers.' This performance report contributes to achieving the Council's values, particularly those of being open and listening. This report is also scrutinised by Audit Scotland.

**2. Statutory Performance Indicators 2014/15**

- 2.1 To take account of national work on benchmarking Audit Scotland reviewed their audit direction and guidance on SPIs and public performance reporting (PPR) for 2014/15. There are currently three strands to statutory performance reporting within this guidance and these are:
- SPi1- Corporate Management including: responsiveness to communities, employees, costs, assets, sustainability and equalities
  - SPi2 - Provision of Council Services
  - SPi3 - all Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators
- 2.2 Audit Scotland also reviewed and fed back to Scottish Local Authorities on their approach to public performance reporting (PPR) in July 2015. This provided helpful information to assist the Council improve its approach to PPR. An improvement plan was agreed at Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 30 September 2015, and this included developing further our SPIs and Service level performance pages on our website.

- 2.3 This report covers all indicators locally determined (SPi1 & 2) and LGBF (SPi3), and a summary of the audit direction for these indicators is provided as **Appendix 3**. All LGBF (SPi3) indicators are also used as evidence for areas of activity identified under SPi 1 and 2.

### 3. Analysis of Performance

- 3.1 In line with Audit Scotland reporting, only those indicators moving by more than 5% are highlighted at **Appendix 1**. This is a recognised statistical technique used to ensure that any difference between the variables is real and not due to natural variation which is inevitable but not significant. A summary is provided below of areas which have shown significant change of +/-10%.
- 3.2 Areas which show improvement by 10% or more between 2013/14 and 2014/15 are:
- Access team - the cost per kilometre of core paths reduced from £88.80 to £78.69;
  - the cost per archaeological consultation reduced from £16.53 to £14.42;
  - the cost per business supported reduced from £986.54 to £817.77;
  - the cost per historic environment record (HER) consultation reduced from £0.21 to £0.17;
  - CAST 1 asset management - the percentage of property suitable for its use increased from 58.1% to 64.3%; and
  - CAST 2 asset management - the percentage of property in acceptable condition increased from 58% to 79.3%.
- 3.3 Areas where performance has declined by 10% or more between 2013/14 and 2014/15 are:
- the average time taken (weeks) to deal with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) applications increased from 22 to 25;
  - the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work reduced from 7.4% to 6.56%; and
  - the cost per participant for Ranger guided walks increased from £7.39 to £13.84.
- 3.4 Analysis of areas where performance has declined are detailed below:
- time on TPOs is the result of increasing demand for TPO work coupled with long term illness within the team and corresponding absence. In addition there was considerable time spent on FOI and challenges to TPO;
  - unemployed people assisted into work - this is linked to the economy at the time and the fact that there were fewer opportunities for the placement of unemployed people;
  - unemployed people assisted into work - participants are generally quite some distance from the labour market and finding suitable placements has been increasingly difficult; and
  - this result arises because the number of participants on Ranger guided walks declined during the period due in part to the inclement weather conditions but also partly as a result of increased charges for activities.
- 3.5 In addition to the analysis of SPIs above the Council is also benchmarked against other local authorities in Scotland for some of these indicators. **Appendix 2** of this report summarises the results and benchmark positions for 2014/15.

- 3.6 For the benchmark indicators (LGBF) Development and Infrastructure is in the top quartile (ranked 1-8) for 1 indicator and in the bottom quartile (ranked 25-32) for 3 indicators. It should be noted that there are a wide range of factors that influence these indicators including geography, service delivery models and budget priorities.
- 3.7 Indictors in the top quartile are:
- cost of trading standards per 1,000 population – ENV5a.
- 3.8 Indictors in the bottom quartile:
- Asset Management - current use - CAST1;
  - Asset Management - satisfactory condition - CAST2; and
  - percentage of unemployed people assisted into work – ECON1.
- 3.9 Quarterly reporting of SPIs is also provided to Strategic and Area Committees where this is possible. The Improvement Service has developed an on-line tool to support Council's with public performance reporting. The tool is available at the following location: <http://scotland.mylocalcouncil.info/>
- 3.10 In addition to this annual report on SPIs, indicators are also monitored through Service quarterly performance reviews (QPR) undertaken by the Chief Executive.

#### **4. Implications**

- 4.1 Resources  
Areas where improvements are required may need additional investment.
- 4.2 Legal  
Implications relate to meeting statutory requirements for public performance reporting.
- 4.3 Equalities and Climate Change/Carbon Clever  
A number of indicators are useful in supporting improvement activity including asset management (premises access/condition).
- 4.4 Risk  
Audit Scotland produces an annual Assurance and Improvement Plan for the Council which assesses, with other scrutiny bodies, our performance including our SPIs. As reported to Council in May 2014 there are no significant scrutiny risks identified for the Council and also highlighted improvement in public performance reporting.
- 4.5 Gaelic  
There are no implications as a result of this report.
- 4.6 Rural  
The rural nature of Highland often means the unit cost of service delivery is often higher and this presents a further challenge to achieving continuous improvement.

#### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to note and comment on the out-turn of SPIs for 2014/15 and where relevant to their national benchmark position.

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Date: 26.04.2016

Appendix 1: Extract Statutory Performance Indicator Report 2014/15

Appendix 2: Extract Local Government Benchmark Report 2014/15

Appendix 3: Audit Direction Summary on SPIs

✓	performance has improved by 5% or more.
X	performance has declined by 5% or more.
=	there is no significant change in performance
	the indicator is new / changed / unreliable/ no comparison is possible / for contextual purposes only.

## Appendix 1

\*See appendix 3 for ID explanations

ID	SPI	FY 13/14	FY 14/15	"+/- 5%"
1b	Cost per archaeological consultation	£16.53	£14.42	✓
1b	Cost per business supported	986.54	817.77	✓
1b	Cost per Historic Environment Record consultation	£0.21	£0.17	✓
1b	Cost/Building Warrant application	£481.89	£470.31	=
1b	Cost/film industry enquiry	£795.00	£244.00	✓
1b	Cost/Planning Application determined	£630.49	£681.53	X
1b/3	Cost of Trading Standards per 1000 population - ENV5a	£3,790.51	£3,822.39	=
1b	Rangers cost per participant for guided walks	£7.39	£13.84	X
1d/3	Asset Management - Suitability - CAST1	58.1%	64.3%	✓
1d/3	Asset Management - Condition - CAST2	58.0%	79.3%	✓
2e	Avg. time taken (weeks) to deal with TPO applications	22	25	X
2e	Number of businesses supported by Council ED and BG	806	788	=
2e/3	Percentage of Unemployed People Assisted into work ECON1	7.40%	6.56%	X
2e	Determination of Local Apps - Ave no of Weeks	10.6	10.7	=
2e	Determination of Major Apps - Ave no of Weeks	33.6	25.6	✓
2e	Businesses supported to Start Up through Business Gateway	250	424	✓
2i	Trading Standards - consumer complaints- 14 days	71.9%	71.9%	=
2i	Trading Standards - business advice - 14 days	87.3%	94.0%	✓

## Appendix 2

\*National Ranks: 1-8 Top Quartile and 25-32 Bottom Quartile

<b>Benchmark Indicators (SPi3)</b>	<b>FY 13/14</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>FY 14/15</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Percentage of Unemployed People Assisted into work ECON1	7.40 %	22	6.56 %	27
Asset Management - Suitability - CAST1	58.1 %	31	64.3 %	30
Asset Management - Condition - CAST2	58.0 %	29	79.3 %	25
Cost of Trading Standards per 1000 population - ENV5a	£ 3,790.51	8	£ 3,822.39	8

**FY** – Financial Year

**CY** – Calendar Year

**AY** – Academic Year

## Appendix 3

### SPI Framework

There are now three sections to SPI returns as follows:

#### Corporate management

**SPI 1:** Each council will report a range of information, sufficient to demonstrate that it is securing Best Value in relation to:

- a) responsiveness to its communities
- b) revenues and service costs
- c) employees
- d) assets
- e) procurement
- f) sustainable development
- g) equalities and diversity.

#### Service performance

**SPI 2:** (previously 25 Prescribed Indicators)<sup>1</sup>. Each council will report a range of information sufficient to demonstrate that it is securing Best Value in providing the following services (in partnership with others where appropriate):

- a) benefits administration
- b) community care
- c) criminal justice social work
- d) cultural & community services covering at least sport & leisure, museums, the arts and libraries
- e) planning (both environmental and development management)
- f) the education of children
- g) child protection and children's social work
- h) housing & homelessness
- i) protective services including environmental health, and trading standards
- j) roads and lighting
- k) waste management services

#### SOLACE benchmarks

**SPI 3:** Each council will report its performance in accordance with the requirements of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executive (SOLACE) benchmark project. This relates to the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)

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<sup>1</sup> While Audit Scotland have removed the requirement of the 25 SPIs (SPi2) as outlined above there is still a requirement under 'Service Performance' to provide performance reporting on the same functions as previously prescribed by the fixed SPIs.