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| Agenda Item | 6 |
| Report No | HC/27/24 |

The Highland Council

Committee: The Highland Council

Date: 19 September 2024

Report Title: Community Wealth Building Strategy

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 Community Wealth Building provides an alternative approach to economic development and a practical response that aims to keep wealth within a local area. It is often described as a people centred approach to economic development and aims to ensure every area and community can participate in, and benefit from, economic activity.
- 1.2 At the Council meeting in March 2024, a draft Community Wealth Building Strategy was agreed that would then be circulated for a period of public consultation. The consultation was launched in May and ran for a period of 12 weeks. The feedback received has assisted in refining the Strategy and developing an action plan that will assist in progressing our approach to Community Wealth Building.
- 1.3 The proposed Strategy can be found at **Appendix 2**.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - Consider and agree the Community Wealth Building Strategy found at **Appendix 2** and note that updates on progress against the action plan will be reported annually to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – The strategy will be delivered within existing budgets. It therefore aims to embed Community Wealth Building as an approach into our activity and adapting our approaches in order to maximise the opportunities this approach brings to our communities and the local economy. The action plan has been aligned to the Council's Operational Delivery Plan and the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan.

- 3.2 Legal – no immediate implications but the Scottish Government’s programme for 2024-25 indicates that a Community Wealth Building Bill will be introduced to parliament in the coming year.
- 3.3 Risk - Community Wealth Building encompasses a considerable range of activity. A core consideration is about embedding community wealth building approaches in our business as usual activity. It is also important to note that whilst elements of community wealth building are directly at the hands of the Council, partnership working will be fundamental to realising other benefits.
- 3.4 Health and Safety – there are no implications.
- 3.5 Gaelic – there are opportunities to be realised through the development of skills and employment pathways related to Gaelic language and culture and wider economic benefits through the promotion of Gaelic culture.

4. Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children’s Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment - Summary**
- 4.3.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken on the proposed Community Wealth Building Strategy. The conclusions have been subject to the relevant Manager Review and Approval.
- 4.3.2 The Screening process has concluded that there are no negative impacts as a result of the proposed strategy and it is anticipated that there will be positive impacts achieved particularly in relation to socio-economic impact. Members are asked to consider the summary in **Appendix 1** to support the decision-making process.

4.3.3

| Impact Assessment Area | Conclusion of Screening |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Equality | <i>No impact</i> |
| Socio-economic | <i>Positive</i> |
| Human Rights | <i>No impact</i> |
| Children’s Rights and Well-being | <i>Positive</i> |
| Island and Mainland Rural | <i>No impact</i> |
| Climate Change | <i>Potential Positive and Negative</i> |
| Data Rights | <i>No impact</i> |

5. Background

- 5.1 Community Wealth Building provides an alternative approach to economic development and a practical response that aims to keep wealth within a local area. It is often described as a people centred approach to economic development and aims to ensure every area and community can participate in, and benefit from, economic activity.
- 5.2 The Council's programme includes a commitment to developing a Community Wealth Building Strategy and a paper agreeing this, was considered at the Council meeting in June 2023. Since that time, officers have reviewed the approaches taken elsewhere in the country to consider best practice and have been supported in considering what work is already underway in Highland and the opportunities to progress Community Wealth Building, through the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). A series of thematic workshops supported by CLES have also been held.
- 5.3 This led to the development of a draft Community Wealth Building Strategy which was considered by Council in March 2024. The strategy has since been subject to a period of public consultation, which included an online survey and specific engagement with a number of partner organisations and local forums. Two Member workshops were also held, in March and September. In addition, during this period, the Council's Operational Delivery Plan, the Social Value Charter for Renewables Development, the Community Benefits from Procurement Policy and a revised Highland Outcome Improvement Plan have all been agreed. These have all assisted in refining the strategy and developing the action plan, which is outlined at **Appendix 2**.

6. Consultation Feedback

- 6.1 The consultation on the draft strategy was launched in May and ran for a period of 12 weeks. In total, 166 responses were received to the online survey but further engagement took place within partnership forums including the Highlands and Islands Community Wealth Building Group, Highland Employability Partnership and two specifically convened Community Council forums.
- 6.2 The majority of respondents to the survey were responding as individuals. Responses were received from individuals from across the Highland area and across the different age groups. 22 groups responded to the survey, including a number of community councils and development trusts.
- 6.3 Overall, feedback to the proposed strategy was positive. Over 80% of respondents, indicated they agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed vision for the strategy and a similar level of support was expressed for each of the identified areas for development against each of the five objectives. Feedback against each of the pillars included:

- 6.4 *Spending* - There was strong support for the enhancing community benefit from procurement and maximising local spend from procurement. Comments included the importance of supporting the third sector, commissioning the sector and closer collaboration with third sector groups.
- 6.5 *Fair employment* – respondents were supportive of both developing transport and childcare solutions as a way in which to support fair employment. Respondents identified training and volunteering as important areas for development and collaboration between agencies on these areas of work, along with Talent Attraction and getting people into employment.
- 6.6 *Land and property* - Additional areas of development for consideration included food growing, tourism taxes and initiatives as well as housing development and increasing the supply of long-term rental solutions. Responses included those both supportive of maximising benefit from renewables as well as those against the principle of renewables developments.
- 6.7 *Financial power* – overall people were supportive of the areas for development identified but comments received included the needs to have greater employee ownership or share schemes in local businesses to promote community wealth.
- 6.8 *Inclusive ownership* – respondents were overall supportive of creating greater local ownership. Comments included the creation of stronger partnerships with local community bodies and support them to take on land and assets.
- 6.9 A number of general comments highlighted the importance of community led activity and supporting local people to be empowered and enabled to maximise opportunities within their local communities and suggested a greater people focus was needed within the vision.

7. Revised Strategy and Action Plan

- 7.1 The proposed Strategy is set out at **Appendix 2**. It sets out a three-year vision for taking forward and embedding the Council's approach to Community Wealth Building. This has been updated to reflect the comments and feedback received. The areas for development in the draft strategy have been progressed into an action plan that set out both the intended objective, outcome and actions to deliver against these.
- 7.2 The proposed vision for the strategy has been updated to better reflect the comments received about the importance of people and community in progressing the approach to Community Wealth Building. Community Wealth Building is about both the power and actions of anchor organisations, such as the Council, but it is also crucially about how communities and individuals can be empowered and enabled.

Revised vision:

Create an inclusive economy by retaining greater wealth and maximising spending within and for the communities of the Highlands,

through harnessing organisational power and enabling community led activity.

7.3 In addition to the vision, two overarching commitments have been added to support embedding this approach. These are:

We commit to:

- **Embedding Community Wealth Building as a guiding principle for all economic thinking and strategy.**
- **Working with our partners, through the Community Planning Partnership, Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership and key private sector anchor organisations, to embed community wealth building approaches into partnership practice.**

7.4 The action plan sets out the intended outcomes and proposed actions for each of the five objectives. Where appropriate, the actions align with those identified within the Council's Operational Delivery Plan and the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan and reflects the commitments already made to creating a Social Value Charter for Renewables investment and the recently agreed Community Benefits from Procurement Policy.

7.5 It is proposed that progress on the delivery of the action plan is reported to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee on an annual basis.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 30 August 2024

Author: Alison Clark, Chief Officer – Housing and Communities
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Appendix 1: Integrated Impact Assessment – Screening Summary

Appendix 2: Community Wealth Building Strategy and Action Plan

Background Papers:

[Developing a Community Wealth Building Strategy – March 2024](#)

Highland Community Wealth Building Strategy

Equality, Poverty and Human Rights

The aim of the strategy is to retain greater wealth and maximise spending to the benefit of Highland Communities. As such, any activity created or executed in association with the strategy will have a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics.

Equalities and Human Rights– Adopting Community Wealth Building approaches and fostering environmental, social, and economic value will benefit all residents, therefore not impacting disproportionately on any person or protected characteristic

Poverty - The screen specifically notes the positive socio-economic impact on opportunities and prospects. The policy aims to improve opportunities for residents across Highland in relation to:

- Objective 1: Spending – using public spend to deliver community benefit, fair work and build local supply chains.
- Objective 2: Fair Employment – ensuring the workforce are in well paid jobs that benefit from an effective voice, security and flexibility.
- Objective 3: Land and Property – ensuring that communities maximise benefit and generate wealth from local land and property.
- Objective 4: Financial Power – ensuring that the flows of wealth generated within the local economy works for the wellbeing of communities and businesses.
- Objective 5: Inclusive Ownership – stimulating the development and growth of locally owned enterprises that generate community wealth

The result of our approach will help the Council meet National outcome in relation to us:

- tackling poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equitably.

Children's Rights - The screening notes the overall potential positive but indirect impact on children's rights and the overall ambition is to provide children with a future where they can live their lives to the fullest potential and maximise the opportunities put before them.

Climate Change –The strategy aims to deliver greater community wealth across Highland and any activity created or executed in association with this policy, aims to secure, meaningful, environmental value across the Highlands. Net Zero commitments should be embedded across all the council's activity. However, the screening notes that, as with all infrastructure development, there could be unintended negative impacts. These would require to be assessed as part of the development process and subject to the appropriate assessments as that time.

Islands and Mainland Rural Communities - The aim of this policy is to meet the Council's commitment to Community Wealth Building. The approach will aim to ensure geographical distinctions will apply. The approach will have no direct impact on the islands and rural communities, although we anticipate the overall outcomes on islands and rural communities will be positive.

Community Wealth Building Strategy 2024-2027

Introduction

Communities across the Highlands face a range of social, economic and environmental challenges. These will not be solved by traditional approaches to economic development which are based on the presumption that as the economy grows, wealth is generated for all.

Community Wealth Building provides an alternative approach and a practical response that aims to keep wealth within a local area. It is often described as a people centred approach to economic development and aims to ensure every area and community can participate in, and benefit from, economic activity.

There are 5 pillars of Community Wealth Building.

By delivering against these pillars, the aim is to increase the flow and retention of wealth within a local area.



Organisations like the Council - as employers, purchasers of goods and services and owners of land and property - have a central role to play in ensuring that wealth generated through local economic activity is retained within the local area and benefits the majority and not a minority.

The purpose of our Community Wealth Building Strategy is to provide a framework that sets out how we will utilise our different activity to maximise the impact of investment in local areas and support more local ownership of assets and wealth. Seeing what we do through a Community Wealth Building lens is critical to retaining greater wealth and maximising spending to benefit Highland communities.

A Vision for Community Wealth Building in Highland

This strategy sets out a three year vision for taking forward and embedding our approach to Community Wealth Building in what we do.

Our vision is that we will:

Create an inclusive economy by retaining greater wealth and maximising spending within and for the communities of the Highlands, through harnessing organisational power and enabling community led activity.

We commit to:

- Embedding Community Wealth Building as a guiding principle for all economic thinking and strategy.
- Working with our partners, through the Community Planning Partnership, Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership and key private sector anchor organisations, to embed community wealth building approaches into partnership practice.

We will deliver our Vision through the following objectives that align with the five pillars of community wealth building:

- £ Objective 1: Spending
- £ Objective 2: Fair Employment
- £ Objective 3: Land and Property
- £ Objective 4: Financial Power
- £ Objective 5: Inclusive Ownership

What we are doing - Objective 1: Spending

This objective aims to maximise economic, social and environmental benefit for the community through development of local supply chains comprising local SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, cooperatives and other community owned enterprises. We commit to using our spend to support a diverse local business base.

As an organisation we are already undertaking work that will contribute to delivery community wealth building. This includes:

Local spending

The Council continues to engage with local and wider business communities on our procurement activity and aims to increase capacity and capability in local businesses of all sizes and across all business sectors (including third sector) to bid successfully for public contracts by way of providing or providing access to:

- training events (including signposting to Supplier Development Programme and the Scottish Government Supplier Journey)
- tender specific market engagement events
- supplier bulletins
- raise awareness of opportunities by publication of forward procurement plan within the annual procurement report

Supplier development activity is reported on annually in the Annual Procurement Report for the Council as is the figure for % local spend. The Council's spend with local suppliers for financial year 2022/23 was £216,684,870 representing 48% of total spend, the Scottish average* was 29.6% local spend.

Fair Work and Community Benefits

The approach to community benefits and fair work within procurement activity has been guided by the commitments expressed in the Joint Procurement Strategy which are centred around delivery of "ethical and sustainable value for money solutions that support the operational needs and wider strategic aims of the councils and the communities they serve."

The Council routinely seeks opportunities beyond mandatory thresholds for inclusion of Community Benefits (£4M) to leverage opportunities (including social, economic and environmental value) aligned to the needs and priorities of communities. The themed approach to community benefits is aligned with local and national priorities, and the Scottish Model of Procurement.

In the last reporting period (2022-23) 439 community benefit outcomes were included, are in process or were delivered.

What we are doing - Objective 2: Fair Employment

This objective aims to create fair and meaningful employment opportunities by recruiting from priority groups, paying the living wage and building progression routes for workers. We commit to being a fair employer.

As an organisation we are already undertaking work that will contribute to delivery community wealth building. This includes:

Living Wage

In December 2019, the Highland Council achieved Living Wage accreditation. The Council employs just over 10,270 staff across the Highland area and also applies the living wage rate to apprentices. The accreditation includes an ongoing commitment to encourage contractors to also pay their workers the real Living Wage rate through our procurement processes.

The accreditation provides social and economic benefits to workers in the Highlands where wages in remote and rural areas in particular are below the national average.

Highland Employability Partnership

The Highland Employability Partnership (HEP) is a Council led multi-agency approach to ensure that partners work collaboratively to deliver employability services across the area served by Highland Council. Representatives on the partnership are from both local and national public sector organisations, business representatives and third sector representatives.

The aim of the HEP is to work with individuals and employers to raise as many Highland residents as possible out of poverty through sustainable and fair work; supporting those who face multiple barriers into employment and enabling progression out of poverty for those who are already in work. Whilst the HEP provides strategic Highland-wide direction, three Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) drive operational delivery in the North Highland, Inner Moray Firth and West Highland areas.

My Future My Success (MFMS)

MFMS is a bespoke Highland initiative supporting and developing some of our most vulnerable learners who have barriers to attending, engaging, and achieving positive destinations post school. Through collaborative approaches MFMS empowers young people taking person-centred approaches to their future careers and aspirations, connecting them with a network of genuine support, employability, and enterprise learning, mentoring and personal skills development ensuring their future is determined by potential not by background or postcode.

Modern Apprenticeship Programme / Graduate Apprenticeship Programme

The Council has a strong and developed Modern and Graduate Apprenticeship Programme. 89 employees are currently undertaking MA/GA Apprenticeship qualifications across 13 MA/GA frameworks and are attending training both local and national. Through the Skills Development Scotland Training Contract, 107 employees from the Council and external partners are undertaking qualifications across seven MA frameworks. Work is ongoing to support services to consider MA/ GA frameworks as part in their workforce planning strategies and exploring inhouse training/ SVQ assessment options for services (e.g. Roads) if training provision is hard/costly to procure.

What we are doing - Objective 3: Land and Property

The aim of this objective is that we will commit to the productive use of our land and assets to support communities and enterprises. As a major land holders we will seek to support equitable land development and ownership models, including the imaginative use of assets for community and wider social and economic use.

As an organisation we are already undertaking work that will contribute to delivery community wealth building. This includes:

Housing strategy and building

The Council has agreed both a Local Housing Strategy and a Strategic Housing Investment Plan for 2023-2028. This sets out the Council's commitment and approach to developing affordable housing for communities across the Highland area and will assist in delivering the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Investment Programme. The Council is committed to delivering an average of 660 new affordable homes per

annum of which approximately 70% will be for affordable rent and 30% for intermediate affordable housing (e.g., low-cost home ownership or mid-market rent). The number of units receiving tender approval during 2022/23 was 520 and the number of completions 525. There were 404 site starts by the end of March 2023.

Community asset transfer

The Council has a well-developed Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process to support communities to lease or take ownership of Council owned land or buildings. Since the introduction of the Community Empowerment Act in 2017, the Council has agreed to 48 transfers across Highland. The approach has been reviewed twice since its introduction in order to improve the experience and process for communities and encourage greater community ownership. The introduction of a community loans fund supports the CAT approach.

Community loan fund

The Community Loan Fund, managed by the Council's loan company - Highland Opportunity (Investment) Limited, offers competitive loan support for community companies, enterprises and community bodies within the Highland Council who require investment in their business linked to transferred assets.

Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4 – adopted in early 2023 – encourages a more coordinated approach to community wealth building and for economic development to be better understood in terms of its community and place benefits.

The Council's new Local Development Plan, prepared in line with NPF4, is expected to align with the community wealth strategy, and build upon the priorities, community assets and opportunities for addressing inequalities and provide benefits to communities. The new LDP will also work in tandem with the HOIP and Area Place Plans which represent local expressions of community priorities, outcomes and actions across partners.

The national policy combined with the new LDP will therefore equip partners with tools to better ensure that future development and investment makes a demonstrable and tangible commitment to community wealth building.

What we are doing - Objective 4: Financial Power

The aim of this objective is to commit to harnessing and growing local wealth. By increasing flows of investment within local economies we will harness the wealth that exists locally.

As an organisation we are already undertaking work that will contribute to delivery community wealth building. This includes:

Highland Opportunity

Highland Opportunity (Investments) Limited (HOIL) is a provider of business loan finance and is part of the Highland Council's business development service. HOIL Loan Fund is self-financing, thereby investing in Highland businesses in perpetuity.

The overarching purpose of HOIL is to provide accessible business finance and advice to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that are based in the Highlands. The aim is to support Highland based businesses to start up and grow and contribute to a thriving and sustainable Highland and Scottish economy.

Inverness & Highland City Region Deal

We are now into year seven of the ten-year Inverness and Highlands City-Region Deal, and including the Scottish and UK Government investments, the value of the Deal is now over £336.9m. The Deal aims to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth by:

- creating new well-paid jobs in the private sector;
- encouraging young people to remain within the region and attract young people to move to the region;
- boosting the region's growing sectors such as tourism and life sciences;
- building affordable homes;
- promoting innovation, internationalisation and new partnerships between the Region's many small businesses; and
- improving connectivity through investments in transport.

Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a three year £2.6bn UK-wide fund launched in April 2022. The Highland Council has been allocated £9.44m to invest in local projects until March 2025, supporting communities, businesses, employment and tourism, with the overarching objective of the UKSPF being to build pride in place and to increase life chances. The UKSPF Delivery Plan targets the investment to deliver positive outcomes and impacts across the region in line with the following priorities:

- Community and Places;
- Supporting Local Businesses;
- People and Skills; and
- Multiply (Numeracy Skills)

Community Regeneration Fund

The Highland Council has the responsibility of delivering various external funding programmes to enable community-led local action. This allows community groups and organisations to apply for funding to deliver projects that respond to the needs of their local area and support positive change.

Community Regeneration Funding is an umbrella term being used to cover multiple community-led external funding programmes, administered by the Highland Council. We understand that applying to multiple funding programmes can be time consuming, and often confusing, with each fund having a separate application process and deadlines. We have therefore, developed a streamlined process where applicants can apply under a single call for expressions of interest to distribute several funds.

Community Regeneration Funding is currently made up of:

- Highland Coastal Communities Fund
- Place-Based Investment Programme
- Community-Led Local Development Fund

What we are doing - Objective 5: Inclusive Ownership

This objective aims to advance inclusive economic ownership models such as local SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises and mutually owned companies and thus enable more wealth generated locally to stay within the community. We commit to supporting inclusive ownership of the local economy.

As an organisation we are already undertaking work that will contribute to delivery community wealth building. This includes:

Community Transport - From 1 April we will support 28 voluntary sector Community Transport organisations through grants and operational advice. These provide invaluable local transport in their areas, largely where conventional bus services would not be practicable, or to cater for people with mobility difficulties which make it hard for them to use bus services. Although some employ staff, these projects all depend on the interests and willingness of volunteers and are designed to meet the perceived needs and priorities in each area. Thus, there is a high level of community "ownership". In return for a modest cost, there is a very high level of social benefit.

In-house bus service - In 2023, its first year of operations, the in-house bus operations pilot has successfully delivered the initial group of services at a significantly lower cost than the best tendered prices received from commercial operators. We continually monitor our services to ensure reliability, making minor timing and route changes to various timetables accordingly. Fare revenue income has exceeded initial expectations for the first 12 months of operations and figures show an average increase of 40% compared to the same period in 2022, when the same services were delivered by a commercial operator. Since August 2023 the service has operated internal private hires for schools and other users, it is intended to continue to build on these hires during 2024.

Business support in the Highlands - Business Gateway is a business support service delivered by the Council. All local start-up business and growth SMEs, including third sector, can access the Local Authority's business support services to help provide local economic growth. This includes support to community and third sector businesses and social enterprises. Businesses are supported through: One-to-one local business adviser support; Business skills workshops; Business & financial planning, digital & social media training; Specialist adviser support: Procurement, HR, supply chain logistics, efficiency & quality management; Start-up and early-stage start-up growth grants.

What we will do to deliver - Action Plan

| Objective | Outcome | Actions | Lead | Timescales |
|-----------------|--|---|--|------------------|
| Spending | Increase community benefit from procurement activity | Implement the Community Benefit from Procurement Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Highland Project Bank Updated procurement documentation Guidance for staff and suppliers | Community Benefit Manager & Strategic Commercial Manager | By December 2024 |
| | Maximise local spend through procurement practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a targeted supplier development programme which will support Highland SME's, Social Enterprises, Supported Businesses and the Third Sector to develop tendering skills, and gain experience in identifying and bidding for contract opportunities across the public sector. | Strategic Commercial Manager | March 2025 |
| | Build capacity within third sector to support commissioning activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver a thematic approach to capacity building | Person Centred Solutions Portfolio | March 2027 |
| | Supporting small business growth and development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to support Highland based businesses to start up and grow | Economy & Regeneration Team | Ongoing |
| Fair Employment | Developing a workforce for the future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Partner Sector Skills Board and 7 sector reference groups to identify skills needs, gaps and build career pathways Create an Employer Charter that will support fair work and the living wage Develop a joint talent attraction and marketing programme for Highland (internal retention and external attraction) Develop a shared approach to promoting the offering of public sector agencies in Highland – e.g. apprenticeships, housing, skills and training, upskilling = career pathways, benefits | Workforce for the Future Portfolio | March 2025 |
| | | | Workforce for the Future Portfolio | November 2024 |
| | | | Sector Skills Board | December 2025 |
| | | | Sector Skills Board | December 2025 |

| Objective | Outcome | Actions | Lead | Timescales |
|-------------------|--|---|--|-------------------|
| Fair Employment | Maximising skills and innovation opportunities from the Green Freeport | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the 10 point skills plan as part of the Green Freeport Delivery | Green Freeport Partnership | Ongoing |
| | Delivering childcare solutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop multi-generational models for childcare | Person Centred Solutions Portfolio | March 2026 |
| | Improved local transport solutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the evidence base to identify community transport gaps and opportunities across Highland | Transport Partnership | March 2026 |
| Land and property | Supporting community and local ownership | <p>As part of the asset rationalisation process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-actively engage with local communities on potential uses for assets that align with community aspirations and delivery of local priorities | Community Support and Engagement Team | Ongoing |
| | Increasing the supply of affordable housing | <p>As part of the Housing Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop options for increasing finance for housing Develop options for increasing the number and variety of developments Develop options to increase land supply | <p>Chief Officer – Economy and Planning</p> <p>Chief Officer – Housing and Communities</p> | March 2027 |

| Objective | Outcome | Actions | Lead | Timescales |
|---------------------|--|--|--|------------|
| Financial Power | Maximising community benefit from renewables | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Social Value Charter for Highland including creation and delivery of a Strategic Investment Fund Promote the aims and opportunities of the Social Value Charter with stakeholders and communities | Assistant Chief Executive Place | March 2025 |
| | Attracting inward investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with potential investors, landowners, ports and developers to maximise the benefits of inward investment to the local supply chain. | Assistant Chief Executive Place Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership | Ongoing |
| | Supporting business growth and development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to identify and secure funding to encourage and support Highland based businesses to start up and grow | Economy and Regeneration Team - Business Gateway and HOIL | Ongoing |
| Inclusive ownership | Increasing community ownership in Highland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to promote different models of community ownership including social enterprises, co-operatives and community owned enterprises | Economy and Regeneration Team | Ongoing |
| | Delivering local priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local partnership – community, third, public and private sector – to deliver local priorities and aspirations through place planning | Community Support and Engagement Team | Ongoing |

