

# The Highland Council

Agenda Item	<b>15</b>
Report No	<b>HP/12/25</b>

**Committee:** Housing and Property

**Date:** 29 January 2025

**Report Title:** Service Performance Monitoring Report – Q3 2024/25

**Report By:** Assistant Chief Executive - Place

## 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report details relevant performance monitoring information for the Housing and Property Service as follows:
- Corporate Indicators
  - Contribution to the Performance Plan
  - Service Plan for FY 23/24 Progress.
- 1.2 The content and structure is intended to:
- assist Member scrutiny and performance management
  - inform decision making to aid continuous improvement, and
  - provide transparency and accessibility.
- 1.3 It should also be noted that the Service Revenue Budget Monitoring Report would ideally be combined with the Performance Monitoring Report. However, the nature of the service means there are two legally separate revenue accounts, HRA and Property which are reported quarterly to Committee.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- SCRUTINISE and NOTE** the Service's performance information.

## 3. Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - There are no implications arising as a direct result of this report.
- 3.2 **Legal** - This report contributes to the Council's statutory duties to report performance and secure best value in terms of; Section 1(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1992, and Section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, respectively.
- 3.3 **Risk** - There are no implications arising as a direct result of this report.

3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - There are no implications arising as a direct result of this report.

3.5 **Gaelic** - There are no implications arising as a direct result of this report.

#### 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 This is a monitoring report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

#### 5. **Service Performance - Corporate Indicators**

5.1 Service performance in relation to Absence, Complaints, FOIs, and Invoice Payments are set out in the following sub-sections.

##### 5.2 **Service Attendance Management**

Staff absence is a nationally benchmarked indicator. Effective absence management supports staff, maintains productivity, and contributes to the Council's benchmarked performance.

Staff absence across the service had increased over the course of the last couple of years although it is positive to see a reduction in absences compared to Q1 24/25. Stress/debility (not work related), anxiety, depression and musculoskeletal' remain to be the top reasons for long-term absences. Whereas viral, gastric upset, headache/migraine and non work-related stress are the top reasons for short-term absences.

Reducing absence rates through a strong a consistent approach to attendance management is a particular focus for the service. Mandatory online and face-to-face training is available for managers and Attendance Support Officers continue to play a vital role in assisting both managers and employees. Managers are undertaking employee review and development (ERD) meetings with staff to identify any training and wellbeing requirements. The Employee Assistance Programme also provides staff and their families with access to a confidential counselling service and many other wellbeing services including legal and financial information, life coaching and health information.

#### **Housing & Property**

##### **Average number working days per employee lost through sickness absence**

Average days lost	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24	Q2 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25
Housing and Property	3.48	2.93	2.43	4.6	4.39	4.49	3.27
Highland Council	2.88	2.48	2.08	3.35	3.48	3.24	2.54

Note: Q3 attendance management figures were not available at the time of writing this report.

### 5.3 **Service Complaints Response Times**

Monitoring complaints provides important feedback which can facilitate decision making and service design. Services are responsible for responding to complaints which are issued on their behalf by the Customer and Resolution Improvement Team ('CRIT').

Performance for complaints during Q3 24/25 against a corporate target of 80% was as follows:

#### Complaints - Housing and Property

#### **Number of closed complaints and the % compliant with the legislative timescale**

##### **Frontline Resolution within 5 days**

	Q4 22/23		Q1 23/24		Q2 23/24		Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25	
<b>Housing and Property</b>	19	89 %	30	90 %	37	68 %	43	63 %	38	66 %	37	65 %	33	76 %	32	84 %
<b>Highland Council</b>	101	90 %	159	92 %	132	78 %	150	80 %	189	76 %	219	84 %	196	78 %	155	88 %

##### **Investigation Resolution within 20 days**

	Q4 22/23		Q1 23/24		Q2 23/24		Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25	
<b>Housing and Property</b>	13	62 %	24	67 %	30	53 %	4	50 %	23	57 %	15	53 %	11	55 %	25	28 %
<b>Highland Council</b>	63	41 %	97	63 %	85	49 %	67	48 %	98	46 %	86	47 %	101	57 %	90	42 %

##### **Escalated Resolution within 20 days**

	Q4 22/23		Q1 23/24		Q2 23/24		Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25	
<b>Housing and Property</b>	4	50 %	8	50 %	12	33 %	8	50 %	13	31 %	16	19 %	7	29 %	9	22 %
<b>Highland Council</b>	15	33 %	32	50 %	32	41 %	28	57 %	34	35 %	47	32 %	28	50 %	26	46 %

Front line complaint handling has improved during Q3, meeting the corporate target of over 80%. Investigation complaint performance has fallen, and targeted action is being taken by service management teams to improve this during quarter four.

At the November committee, Members asked for an update on the type of complaints and Freedom of Information Requests received by the service. The majority of the complaints received are for the housing part of the service and relate to complaints about housing repairs and housing management.

For housing repairs, complaints generally relate to discontent with the repair being undertaken, that a repair/works have not been completed that the tenant feels should have been or communication in relation to the repair/works being undertaken. Wherever possible, attempts are made to resolve any complaint received to the satisfaction of the client. Across all stages of complaint during the last quarter, 20 were resolved, 11 were upheld or partially upheld and 4 were not upheld.

For housing management, complaints related to a range of issues but in the main were either about lack of communication or unhappiness regarding a response or action being undertaken. During the last quarter, 12 complaints were resolved, 8 not upheld and 7 either full or partially upheld.

#### 5.4 Service Freedom of Information ('FOI') Response Times

FOI requests are co-ordinated by the Customer Resolution Team in collaboration with the Service teams which may hold information relevant to the request.

The performance for FOI response times during Q3 24/25 against a corporate target of 90% was as follows:

#### Freedom of Information Requests - Housing and Property

#### % of FOIs closed compliant with the legislative timescale

% FOIs Compliant - Housing and Property	Q4 22/23		Q1 23/24		Q2 23/24		Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25	
		56	80 %	41	88 %	40	90 %	44	91 %	60	63 %	53	70 %	42	71 %	50

% FOIs Compliant - Highland Council	Q4 22/23		Q1 23/24		Q2 23/24		Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25	
		536	75 %	399	84 %	333	88 %	338	89 %	548	77 %	511	81 %	479	76 %	568

Tables display the number of FOIs closed within the quarter and % of those that were compliant with the legislative timescale (20 working days) for the service and the Highland Council overall. The Scottish Information Commissioner requires the Council to achieve a minimum compliance rate of 90%.

FOI performance across Housing and Property has improved between quarters 2 and 3. Work continues to ensure delivery against the 90% corporate target.

The majority of the FOIs received for Housing and Property during quarter 3 fall within the housing side of the service – 40 out of the 50 received. Most of the FOIs received relate to either homelessness, in the main different variations on the number and type of homelessness applications, or housing management related activity. For housing management, a range of queries were received examples including anti-social behaviour, social housing conditions, allocations and waiting lists. A number of FOIs did relate to the property side of the service and examples of requests included information about school meals, including meal costs, suppliers and fair trade and about Council property assets.

#### 5.5 Service Invoice Payment Times

Payment of invoices within 30 days of receipt is a Council Statutory Performance Indicator. The Council also monitors the number of invoices paid within 10 days of receipt.

The performance for invoice payment times within 10 and 30 days during Q3 24/25 against a target of 77% and 95%, respectively, was as follows:

#### Housing and Property - Invoice Payments

Invoice Payment within 30 days	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24	Q2 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25
Housing and Property	95.6 %	93.0 %	97.5 %	94.8 %	91.2 %	85.8 %	94.4 %	93.9 %
Highland Council	94.9 %	95.1 %	96.7 %	95.6 %	93.6 %	87.7 %	91.4 %	92.9 %

Invoice Payment less than 10 days	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24	Q2 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25
Housing and Property	55.9 %	55.4 %	72.3 %	56.0 %	49.0 %	31.0 %	64.0 %	52.5 %
Highland Council	71.6 %	72.8 %	80.9 %	75.3 %	69.7 %	57.0 %	68.5 %	63.8 %

The service performs in line with the corporate average for payments within 30 days but continues to track below the average for payments within 10 days. Action is being taken within service management teams to focus on improving the pace of invoice processing and payment.

## 6. Service Contribution to the Performance Plan

### 6.1 *Housing and Property - PIs and Actions in Corporate Plan*

PIs/Actions in the Corporate Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data
Deliver Portree Public Sector Co-location Project    CP1.06	Q1 24/25	On Target	Q2 24/25	On Target	Q3 24/25	Not Updated
Homelessness - case duration [weeks] for all applications    CP2.05	FY 21/22	50	FY 22/23	45	FY 23/24	35
Avg. time taken to re-let properties in last yr [days]    CP3.02	FY 21/22	35.49	FY 22/23	32.07	FY 23/24	38.68
% of council dwellings that are energy efficient    CP3.02    HSN5	FY 21/22	76.3 %	FY 22/23	77.3 %	FY 23/24	
No. serving and ex-armed forces personnel allocated housing    CP3.04	FY 21/22	6	FY 22/23	6	FY 23/24	12
No. serving and ex-armed forces personnel applying for housing    CP3.04	FY 21/22	54	FY 22/23	45	FY 23/24	147
Avg. days to complete medical adap applications    CP3.05	FY 21/22	45.61	FY 22/23	38.60	FY 23/24	38.12
ERDs being completed - PRH    CP5.01	Q1 24/25	On Target	Q2 24/25	On Target	Q3 24/25	On Target
Asset Management - % Suitability    CP5.08    CAST1	FY 21/22	75.9 %	FY 22/23	77.7 %	FY 23/24	76.8 %
Asset Management - Condition    CP5.08    CAST2	FY 21/22	84.7 %	FY 22/23	85.9 %	FY 23/24	85.9 %
Deliver £1.2M savings target from asset rationalisation    CP5.08	Q1 24/25	Completed	Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25	
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due    CP5.10    HSN1b	FY 21/22	5.46 %	FY 22/23	7.05 %	FY 23/24	7.16 %

## 7. Service Plan Progress

7.1 Service performance information from the revised 2023/24 Service Plan is shown below.

Housing and Building Maintenance Q3 24/25						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
% Tennants satisfied with opportunities in decision-making process	FY 22/23	93.8 %	FY 23/24	81.9 %	90.0 %	
Ave time taken to complete non-emergency repairs Highland Wide [days] Qtr	Q2 24/25	6.6	Q3 24/25	7.1		
Ave time to complete emergency repairs [hours] Highland Wide Qtr	Q2 24/25	3.4	Q3 24/25	4.8		
Gypsy/Traveller sites: Compliance with revised standards	Q2 24/25	94 %	Q3 24/25	94 %	100 %	
Review of housing support arrangements	Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25			Completed Q4 23/24
Scottish Govt and SHR deadlines for reporting met	FY 22/23	100 %	FY 23/24	100 %	100 %	

Property and Facilities Management Q3 24/25						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
% Energy reduction projects completed p.a. as planned	FY 22/23		FY 23/24	100 %	90 %	
% of planned GF Capital improvement programmes completed	FY 22/23		FY 23/24	95 %	90 %	
% of planned GF Revenue improvement programmes completed	FY 22/23		FY 23/24	111 %	90 %	
Develop corporate property asset management plan	Q3 22/23	On Target	Q4 22/23	On Target		Transferred to Delivery Plan
No. site condition survey completed per annum	FY 22/23	61	FY 23/24	72		
Progress of condition surveys completed Qtr	Q2 24/25	81 %	Q3 24/25	76 %	90 %	
Renewable Energy generated per annum	FY 22/23	35,344,509	FY 23/24		38,054,392	

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

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