

Agenda Item	5
Report No	HCW/08/25

The Highland Council

Committee: Health, Social Care and Wellbeing

Date: 28 May 2025

Report Title: Delivery Plan Update

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - People

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The Delivery Plan 2024-27 consists of 64 projects/programmes, managed through six Portfolio Boards. Each project is reported to a relevant committee for consideration and scrutiny in terms of the Portfolio Reporting Cycle agreed at Council on 9 May 2024. Exceptions to this general rule may apply when for example circumstances merit a standalone project/programme report to either committee or Council. If exceptions apply this report will signpost to where the relevant reporting can be found.

1.2 This report provides financial, performance, risk and general information on the following Delivery Plan projects under the Person Centred Solutions Portfolio:

- Families First – Kinship and Foster Carers
- Families First – Developing the Workforce
- Adult Social Care – Improving Transition Outcomes
- Digital Solutions – Information Management Systems
- Digital Solutions – Digital Options & Commissioning

1.3 The content and structure of the report is intended to:

- assist Member scrutiny and performance management
- inform decision making and aid continuous improvement
- provide transparency and accessibility.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the updates provided for the Projects/Programmes in this report.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no specific resource implications arising from this report. The element of the Portfolio which deals with Adult Social Care – in this case transitions – is part of the programme of work being delivered in partnership with NHS Highland and is

funded by reserves agreed by the Council in terms of the Delivery Plan which seeks to give effect to the delivery of the Strategic Plan and is linked to savings. Other elements of the portfolio have more limited resource implications and where relevant are detailed within this report.

3.2 Legal

3.2.1 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. The content of this report is to seek to ensure the Partnership's compliance with The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 and consequently the Strategic Plan which has been agreed as a result of those requirements.

3.2.2 The aims set out in the Delivery Plan, insofar as those relate to the delivery of Adult Social Care, form part of the necessary work to implement the Strategic Plan for the Highland Health & Social Care Partnership.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)

There are no specific implications arising from this report although it is recognised that the content of the Strategic Plan and hence the Delivery Plan will have an impact on service delivery across Highland's communities.

3.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

There are no climate change implications arising as a result of this report.

3.5 Risk

3.5.1 There are no risk implications arising as a direct result of this report. Project/ Programme risks are identified via the council risk management process and monitored through the Portfolio Boards.

3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)

There are no Health and Safety implications arising as a result of this report.

3.7 Gaelic

There are no Gaelic implications arising as a 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 and update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5. Developing the Workforce

5.1 Overall RAG

Reason for Project RAG Rating and Corrective Action:

M12 24/25

Project board has met, term of reference in place. Project Manager started on 24th March. Leadership identified for delivery groups.

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5.2 Key Milestones & Requests for Change

The Project will have three workstreams reporting to the overall Project Board. Milestones, measures, risks and impacts will be further developed with project plans.

MILESTONES

CURRENT STATUS

<i>Project commences Jan25</i>	Developing the Workforce: Project Commences	M10 24/25 Completed
<i>Starts Dec24 / Completes Jan25</i>	Developing the Workforce: Strategic Steering Group in place	M12 24/25 Completed
<i>Starts Feb25 / Completes Jun25</i>	Developing the Workforce: Support Worker review & implementation of findings	M12 24/25 Some Slippage
<i>Starts Jul25 / Completes Dec25</i>	Developing the Workforce: Agree succession planning approach across HSC	
<i>Starts Jan26 / Completes Dec26</i>	Developing the Workforce: Implement succession planning approach across HSC	
<i>Starts Jan27 / Completes Jun27</i>	Developing the Workforce: Project Completion, move to BAU	

5.3 Financial Summary

There are no Delivery Plan Financial Indicators applicable to this project.

5.4 Key Risks

KEY RISKS ASSESSED / RESPONSE	CURRENT RISK RATING	RESPONSE
Developing the Workforce: Legislative Requirements	9	Tolerate

5.5 Forward Plan

The Highland Council Families First Developing the Workforce (DTW) Project sits within a wider context of strategically developing a workforce which meets needs in the present and is fit for the future.

The DTW Project closely links with the Highland Council Workforce for the Future Project, ensuring the flow of a skilled workforce across Highland, creating education and opportunities for all.

The three workstreams are

1. **Delivery of the Health and Care Staffing (Scotland) Act 2019** [Health and Care \(Staffing\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019: overview - gov.scot](#) this includes health, aspects of social care and early learning and childcare. Implementation of the Act will inform recruitment, retention, establishment setting and deployment of safe staffing numbers across Highland. A strategic steering group within Highland Council has been established with a link through senior officers to the

NHS Highland Staffing Programme Board. The Project Manager will support the steering group in the development of a full project plan across the next 6 months, identifying future milestones, measures and risks.

- 2. **Development of a coordinated workforce strategy for Health and Social Care.** A full coordinated approach will be developed to ensuring the workforce is skilled, capable and confident to address inequalities and poverty across Highland, ensuring families are supported in their own communities, enabling them to stay together wherever possible. The strategy will ensure Health and Social Care maximize opportunities, flexibility and efficiencies and sits as part of the Highland Council workforce strategy. A Strategic Delivery group has been established. The Project Manager will support the steering group in the development of a full project plan across the next 6 months identifying future milestones, measures and risks.
- 3. **Developing a Health and Social Care community led whole family early support model.** Integral to this is working across the partnership and agencies with a number of key initiatives including Whole Family Wellbeing Programme, [Whole Family Wellbeing - Highland Community Planning Partnership](#) Planet Youth, [Planet Youth](#) and 3rd sector bodies. There has been some slippage as a result of leadership change. Delivery Group leadership and a project plan to be in place by Oct 2025.

6. Kinship and Foster Carers

6.1 Overall RAG

Reason for Project RAG Rating and Corrective Action:

M12 24/25

Kinship Manager appointed and starting in March 2025. Activity to develop support roles with partners within the Whole Family Wellbeing underway. Plan to use Family First funds for Social Work roles. For the recruitment of Foster Carers other initiatives are being explored which have been successful for other councils prior to final approval of TVI initiative.

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6.2 Key Milestones & Requests for Change

MILESTONES		CURRENT STATUS
Starts Apr24 / Completes Jan25	Kinship & Foster Carers: Establish Kinship team	M12 24/25 Completed
Starts Mar26 / Completes May26	Kinship & Foster Carers: Review progress 2026	
Starts Mar27 / Completes May27	Kinship & Foster Carers: Review progress 2027	

6.3 Financial Summary

i) Savings

MEASURES OF SUCCESS		CURRENT STATUS
£ Family First Approach: Savings		£ 600,000
£ Family First Approach: Investment		£ 0

ii) Investment

Kinship

Costings have been undertaken for the development of the kinship team for a 23-month period using Families First budget monies, Whole Family Wellbeing Funding, and one post already in establishment.

SW Kinship Team Manager (funded through Transformation fund) - 23 months	£67,709
2 social worker posts (funded via Families First budget) – 23 months	£123,494
3 support worker roles in partnership with Home Start through WFWB – 23 months	£106,788
0.5 FTE Business support role – 23 months	£17,343
TOTAL	£315,334

Projections have been based on a 30% increase in the use of kinship as an alternative to other forms of care over the span of the project. This would in real terms amount to 25 additional kinship carers as opposed to other forms of placements. This would at a minimum result in cost avoidance of £264,843 if kinship was available as an alternative to provided foster care. However, given approximately 20% of all new admissions currently are into provided or purchased residential care, the cost avoidance is likely to be significantly higher than this.

Fostering TVI

Costings for TVI have been projected over a four-year period and the total figures amounts to **£375,349**. However, it should be noted that at this stage only Phase 1 – Business process analysis has been committed as further work is being undertaken to consider the best approach.

FY24-25	FY25-26	FY26-27	FY27-28	FY28-29	TOTAL
£ -	£ 93,580	£ 128,723	£ 93,923	£ 59,123	£ 375,349

iii) Mitigations –

A spend of £375,349 means we need to recruit a minimum of 13 foster carers to deliver equivalent COST AVOIDANCE using this method.

6.4

Key Risks

KEY RISKS ASSESSED / RESPONSE	CURRENT RISK RATING	RESPONSE
Kinship and Foster Carers: National foster carer recruitment challenges	12	Tolerate
Kinship and Foster Carers: First adopter risk	12	Tolerate
Kinship and Foster Carers: Processes not ready to handle more enquiries and assessments	12	Tolerate
Kinship and Foster Carers: Insufficient budget	12	Tolerate

6.5

Forward Plan

Kinship

A kinship manager is now in place and is in early stages of benchmarking with other authorities re service delivery model. Work is ongoing to develop support roles with partners in the Third sector under monies from the Whole Family Wellbeing and

funding agreed for two social work roles for a period of 23 months. Recruitment is beginning around this.

Fostering

There are currently discussions around whether the TVI proposal meets service requirements at this time and a review is being developed by Mark Hutchinson with support from service. The Scottish Government are developing a National Fostering Campaign due to be launched during fostering fortnight on 12 to 25 May. A Scottish Government paper has set out what is required of local authorities to be ready to respond to enquiries and work has begun in the service to prepare for this.

Agreement has been reached for a change management analysis to be undertaken as a critical risk for this project is the service capacity to meet the demand should a recruitment campaign result in significant interest.

Currently there are 6 fostering assessments underway that may result in new fostering registrations. It is recognised timescales for completing assessments are on average 18 months and this needs further exploration to understand the challenges around this and what can be put in place to bolster service readiness.

The service currently being inspected and this has meant a pause on other development/improvement activity.

7. Improving Transition Outcomes

7.1 Overall RAG

Reason for Project RAG Rating and Corrective Action:

M12 24/25

Progress is now being made with the target Operating Model now in place. Work is on-going in relation to the Shared Lives Project with final approvals due imminently. Resources are now in place for the Lochaber Project and also for the Self-Directed Support Project. A draft Business Case has also been prepared by TVI which will support this work and is currently being evaluated.

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7.2 Key Milestones

The vision outlined in the Partnership's Strategic Plan is vital for the successful delivery of the Adult Social Care Workstreams. The vision is: 'Working together to support our communities in Highland to live healthy lives, achieve their potential, and live independently where possible.' This requires transforming service delivery, with a focus on shifting the balance of care to support people in their homes and communities for as long as possible. We also need to address accommodation solutions to meet the diverse needs of all age groups, which will involve elements across both workstreams. This update focuses on the elements that will deliver improvements for younger adults in transition.

Transitions represent a particular cohort of service users moving from children's services to adult services and it should be noted that the broader work envisaged by the Adult Social Care Programme also has application to that group. The particular workstream aimed at improving transitions outcomes recognises that whilst also acknowledging the specific challenges which exist in terms of delivering service to that group of young people.

As Members will be aware, a key aspect of these changes is the development of a Target Operating Model (TOM), which outlines how care services will be delivered, with an emphasis on reducing reliance on residential care. The TOM has been approved by the Joint Monitoring Committee and shared with Members at the recent

Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee. It now serves as the foundation for all projects in the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme.

A Principal Project Manager was appointed on 10 March 2025, who will lead on the Lochaber Care Project, further details of which are provided below.

As part of the governance review, an Adult Social Care Programme Board has been established. The first meeting took place on 11 March 2025, and future meetings will take place approximately every six weeks, scheduled three weeks before each Portfolio Board meeting.

7.3 **Financial Summary**

Savings

Adult Social Care: Savings [NHS]	M12 24/25	
	Current Forecast	Actual to Date
	£ 2,519,000	£ 2,519,000

It should be noted that responsibility for these savings targets sit with NHS as the Lead Agency.

Investment

At the time of writing the following investments have been agreed over the 3-year lifetime of the programme:

Resource/Item	Amount
Programme Resource	£204,000
Project Management Resource (including pilot work in Lochaber and associated work linked to the TOM)	£482,454
Local Care Model Project	£1.15m
Invernevis Support (to support care delivery in Lochaber pending agreement on the new care model)	£726,000
Contractual Support (pending new contract for handyperson and associated telecare services)	£91,238

There are also ongoing conversations with NHS Highland about digital, and associated opportunities which are likely to be brought forward which will attract funding from the resource identified.

In addition, the Partnership has, in principle, also agreed to commissioning a Shared Lives Service as described above. At the time of writing that has been agreed and figures in the pipeline amount to a likely ask of the fund of in the region of £750K to support the set-up of a service including associated project and commissioning costs as well as service delivery for a 3-year period.

7.4 **Key Risks**

KEY RISKS ASSESSED / RESPONSE	CURRENT RISK RATING	RESPONSE
Improving Transition Outcomes: Insufficient Alternative Providers	9	Tolerate
Improving Transition Outcomes: Not realising the Benefits of the Programme	9	Tolerate

7.5 **Forward Plan**

The key initiatives that make up the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme and have specific deliverables impacting on young adults in transition include:

- Shared Lives Service
- Joint Transitions process improvements
- Lochaber Project
- Technology Enabled Care
- Local Care Models and Self-Directed Support (SDS) Project.

7.5.1 **Shared Lives Service**

A Shared Lives Highland Business Case has been approved by Joint Officers Group and will be presented imminently to the Joint Chief Executives for funding approval. Next steps will be for the Steering Group to formally initiate the project and prepare tender documents for commissioning the service across Highland. This service, alongside the redesign of Self-Directed Support (SDS) options, will increase the flexibility and effectiveness of services available to individuals.

This scheme will prove particularly beneficial for younger adults in need of more comprehensive support and those transitioning from foster care or children's services placements into adulthood. It is likely also to provide respite solutions for those young people who may remain with their families or in a placement provided by Adult Social Care on a longer-term basis.

7.5.2 **Joint Transitions Process Improvements**

Progress on the Transitions Workstream has been made with the development and rollout of a comprehensive transition pathway across Highland. The next steps will include further work to support the ongoing implementation of the model across different communities including, in particular, those young people who are transitioning from an education only placement.

7.5.3 **Lochaber Project**

Resources for the Lochaber Care Model Project are now in place, with a Principal Project Manager recently appointed who will take the lead, ensuring it aligns with the broader transformation goals; the local care model work; SDS realignment; and NHS plans for the new Belford hospital.

A Strategic Outline Business Case for Lochaber's future care model will be developed in accordance with the Green Book Methodology, ensuring a rigorous and transparent approach to the project. This process will begin with the development of strategic objectives and desired outcomes, with the first phase expected to take up to three months. It is anticipated that this will form a blueprint for how the programme will approach the design and development of place-based approaches to care across all highland areas and will include all client groups including young people transitioning from Children's Services.

Aligned to this project is the purchase of Moss Park Care Home in Fort William. The Council is currently in the process of acquiring the care home, which will be operated by NHS Highland. This acquisition is aimed at ensuring continuity of care in Lochaber for the next 2-3 years, while a longer-term care model is developed that will address the care needs of adults across all ages and need. An update on this will be presented at the Highland Council meeting in June 2025.

7.5.4 **Technology Enabled Care**

The consultants Triple Value Impact (TVI) are working with the Programme Team and key stakeholders to explore and identify the potential opportunities from implementing technology enabled care across various cohorts of adults requiring support. Two business cases are currently in development and will be considered by the Adult Social Care Programme Board and then Joint Officers Group and Joint Chief Executives for funding approval. It is anticipated that these business cases will be completed in the next month and are likely to have benefits in supporting younger adults in transition.

7.5.5 **Local Care Models and Self-Directed Support (SDS) Project**

The Local Care Models Project saw the approval of its Business Case by the Joint Officers Group and £1.15M in funding approved by the Joint Chief Executives on 27 February 2025. This project aims to enhance community-based support and care coordination, ultimately reducing overall care costs by shifting to more flexible, community-driven models.

In the initial phase, the project will focus on several key sites, including Strontian and Acharacle, Skye and Lochalsh, Inverness, and East Sutherland. These areas will serve as pilots for testing and refining the model before broader implementation. Additionally, a fifth site is yet to be identified.

The next steps include ongoing support for the initial implementation phase in Strontian and Acharacle, scoping out the project for Skye and Lochalsh, and continuing exploration in Inverness.

There will also be efforts to explore synergies with Capacity Building and Community-Led Support Projects, particularly in Site 4 – East Sutherland. These initiatives will have a positive impact on the transition client group as well as all other service users requiring adult social care services.

8. **Replacement Case Management System**

8.1 **Overall RAG**

Reason for Project RAG Rating and Corrective Action:

M12 24/25

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27/03/2025

The tender documents have been completed and issued on 26th February 2025 as part of the mini competition via the Crown Commercial Services Framework. The competition will remain open to suppliers on the framework until 14th April 2025.

The review of the procurement stage plan has taken place and these are the key phases:

- April to June 2025: Evaluations and scoring of the supplier responses to the tender will take place.

- July to September 2025: The contract will be drafted and procurement award made. This includes the two week procurement 'standstill period'.

The RAG Status has moved to green. This reflects the progress on securing funding (including for resourcing), having sufficient resourcing in place for the procurement phase and remaining on track to complete the procurement milestones by the agreed dates.

8.2 **Key Milestones & Requests for Change**

MILESTONES

CURRENT STATUS

<i>Starts Jun24 / Completes Dec25</i>	Replacement CMS: Funding secured & tender documentation completed	M11 24/25 Completed
<i>Starts Jul25 / Completes Dec26</i>	Replacement CMS: System implemented	
<i>Starts Feb25 / Completes Apr25</i>	Replacement CMS: Conclusion of tender publishing period	M12 24/25 On Target
<i>Starts May25 / Completes July25</i>	Replacement CMS: Tender evaluation process	
<i>Starts Jul25 / Completes Sep25</i>	Replacement CMS: Contract drafted and Award Notice Issued	

8.3 Financial Summary

There are no Delivery Plan financial indicators associated with this project.

8.4 Key Risks

KEY RISKS ASSESSED / RESPONSE	CURRENT	
	RISK RATING	RESPONSE
Case Management System Replacement Programme Budget V2	12	Treat
Case Management Replacement Resourcing v2	12	Treat

8.5 Forward Plan

During the last period we have completed the design, content and scoring mechanism for the procurement documentation.

We have also completed the replanning of the procurement phase.

The tender documents were issued on 26 February 2025 as part of the mini competition via the Crown Commercial Services framework. This was following the Budget Review Group's (BRG) approval of programme funding permission to proceed to the procurement phase at the beginning of February.

The tender process is ongoing, involving the Service, project management and procurement teams addressing questions from suppliers. The tender publication period will close on 14th April and evaluation of supplier submissions is planned to conclude by July. The contract award is planned to be made by September 2025.

Evaluators (around 24) have been selected to undertake the scoring of supplier submissions from across the relevant teams within the Council (Childrens, MHO, Justice, ICT/Business Solutions etc) and NHS Highland (Adult Social Care). Briefing sessions for these scorers beginning 7 April 2025.

9. Digital Options

9.1 Overall RAG

Reason for Project RAG Rating and Corrective Action:

M12 24/25

. One business case (Ampliforce) awaiting board approval. Second business case (Vocola) still being drafted by TVI. A preliminary workshop re Vocola technology was held on 06/02 with key THC and NHS colleagues - we will now explore viability. There has been some slippage to the Self-service and income maximisation element. Project corrective action - working closely with NHS colleagues to identify the potential and completeness of the TVI ASC business cases, definitively. We will look to set a deadline for achieving this.

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9.2 Key Milestones

MILESTONES		CURRENT STATUS
<i>Starts Dec24 / Completes Jan25</i>	Digital Options: Outline HC business case for self-service and income maximisation digital tool	M12 24/25 Some Slippage
<i>Starts Feb25 / Completes Jun25</i>	Digital Options: Start trial of digital solution #1	M12 24/25 Some Slippage
<i>Starts Jul25 / Completes Mar26</i>	Digital Options: Start rollout of digital solution #1	M11 24/25
<i>Starts Jun25 / Completes Sep25</i>	Digital Options: Start trial of digital solution #2	M11 24/25
<i>Starts Sep25 / Completes Jun26</i>	Digital Options: Start rollout of digital solution #2	M11 24/25

9.3 Financial Summary

There are no Delivery Plan financial indicators associated with this project.

9.4 **Key Risks**

KEY RISKS ASSESSED / RESPONSE	CURRENT RISK RATING
Digital Options: Missing quick wins	12
Digital Options: Not ready to adopt new technologies	4
Digital Options: Not solving our most important challenges	9
Digital Options: Insufficient financial impact	6

9.5 **Forward Plan**

Continue to develop Business Cases and assess potential solutions.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 10 April 2025

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Background Papers: Delivery Plan

Appendices: None