The Highland Council

Agenda Item	13
Report No	ECI/42/25

Committee:	**Economy and Infrastructure**
Date:	**13 November 2025**
Report Title:	**Performance Monitoring Report Q2 2025/26**
Report By:	**Assistant Chief Executive - Place**

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides performance information for Quarter 2 2025/26 regarding:-

- Corporate Indicators;
- Contribution to the Performance Plan; and
- Service Plan Progress

2 The content and structure are intended to:-

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

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   <u>Service Attendance Management</u>

       Absence data for Q2 2025/26 was not yet available within the timeline for drafting this report. Absence data for Q2 2025/26 will be provided in the next Service Performance report for Q3 2025/26.

5.2.1 Reducing absence rates through a strong and consistent approach to attendance management is a particular focus for the service. Mandatory online and face-to-face training is available for managers. 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.

5.2.2 Mental health related absences continue to appear within the top three long-term absence reasons for all Clusters. It should be noted that employees often require multiple treatments and ongoing support which may extend periods of absence. Additionally, there continues to be long NHS waiting lists to access appropriate mental health services.

5.2.3 As way of supporting stress/debility issues the occupational health, safety and wellbeing team have been hosting drop-in on-line sessions for staff on wellbeing, mental health and stress management. There has also been a focus on recruiting and training an additional 21 mental health representatives, bringing the total in the council to 91 reps.

5.2.4 The mental health and wellbeing helpline provides easy access to the following mental health support services: EAP; NHS 24; Samaritans and mental health representatives.

5.2.5 Musculoskeletal reasons also continue to appear in the top three absence reasons for the service and managers are mindful of the largely manual workforce and the impact of those jobs on employee health and wellbeing. Therefore, occupational

health and physiotherapy referrals are progressed as and when required. This is particularly important based on the aging workforce and the requirement to ensure staff receive the appropriate risk assessments, training and PPE to undertake their roles safely.

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 Complaints and Information Team ('CIT').

Performance for complaints during Quarter 2 against a corporate target of 80% was as follows:-

Service Complaints - Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

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

Frontline Resolution within 5 days

	Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
Infrastructure, Environment & Economy	34	82 %	38	68 %	26	77 %	22	59 %	31	90 %	45	93 %	33	97 %	49	86 %
Highland Council	150	80 %	189	76 %	219	84 %	196	78 %	155	88 %	183	87 %	177	92 %	223	90 %

Investigation Resolution within 20 days

	Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
Infrastructure, Environment & Economy	18	33 %	14	29 %	20	15 %	13	31 %	16	6 %	16	44 %	8	38 %	2	50 %
Highland Council	67	48 %	98	46 %	86	47 %	101	57 %	90	42 %	71	51 %	68	47 %	86	40 %

Escalated Resolution within 20 days

	Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
Infrastructure, Environment & Economy	8	38 %	16	25 %	17	24 %	7	57 %	4	50 %	10	20 %	10	30 %	3	33 %
Highland Council	28	57 %	34	35 %	47	32 %	28	50 %	26	46 %	34	44 %	30	33 %	27	26 %

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

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

The performance for FOI response times during Quarter 2 against a corporate target of 90% was as follows:-

Service Freedom of Information Requests - Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

% of FOIs closed compliant with the legislative timescale

% FOIs Compliant - Infrastructure, Environment and Economy	Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
	106	84 %	158	75 %	154	76 %	140	75 %	168	67 %	198	68 %	159	79 %	174	78 %

% FOIs Compliant - Highland Council	Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
	338	89 %	548	77 %	511	81 %	479	76 %	568	73 %	616	71 %	577	81 %	598	77 %

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%.

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 Quarter 2 against a target of 77% and 95%, respectively, was as follows:-

Service Invoice Payment Times - Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

Invoice Payment within 30 days	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26
Infrastructure, Environment and Economy	96.8 %	95.1 %	90.3 %	93.5 %	95.9 %	94.8 %	93.3 %	95.5 %
Highland Council	95.6 %	93.6 %	87.7 %	91.4 %	92.9 %	92.9 %	93.0 %	94.8 %

Invoice Payment less than 10 days	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26
Infrastructure, Environment and Economy	86.1 %	82.5 %	70.7 %	77.0 %	81.2 %	78.9 %	78.1 %	84.8 %
Highland Council	75.3 %	69.7 %	57.0 %	68.5 %	63.8 %	63.3 %	64.7 %	72.4 %

6 Service Contribution to Performance Plan

6.1

Economic Development Indicators from the Performance Plan Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being monitored in Performance Plan	**Period**	**Data**	**Period**	**Data**	**Target Value**	**Completion/ Update Date**
Delivery of 22 Tier 1 priority projects in Highland Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan - start reporting Q1 24/25 || CP2.06/CP5.07	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q4 26/27
Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband || CP2.08 || ECON08	FY 23/24	87 %	FY 24/25		88 %	annual update December
Delivery of City/Region deal digital project - start reporting Q1 24/25 || CP2.08	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Not progressing marked as completed Q1 24/25
Complete Inverness Levelling-Up Fund project || CP2.10	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q1 25/26
Establish an up to date inward investment proposition || CP2.10	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Refresh Invest Highland website and establish baseline for "Number of enquiries through refreshed website p.a." || CP2.10	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
No. visits to Invest Highland website 24/25 onwards || CP2.10	Q1 25/26	1,000	Q2 25/26	519		
Develop a community wealth building strategy || CP2.11	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Develop a strategy to map funding opportunities aimed at community energy projects || CP2.11	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
Deliver Affordable Housing: No. council houses built/ purchased per year 2022-27 || CP3.01	FY 23/24	192	FY 24/25	189	130	annual update August
Deliver Affordable Housing: No. affordable houses built by others per year 2022-27 || CP3.03	FY 23/24	226	FY 24/25	175	170	Target: 170/year
Complete project to convert part of HQ building into flats || CP3.06	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
Deliver Affordable Housing: No. key worker homes made available avg p.a. 2022-27 || CP3.08	FY 23/24	10	FY 24/25	10	10	Target: 10/year
No. Funding Opportunities aimed at Community Energy Projects - due to start reporting FY23/24 || CP4.03	FY 23/24	19	FY 24/25	6		
Opportunity Cromarty Firth Green Freeport - business case || CP4.08	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Carry out full review of Employability Services offered by the Council || CP5.02	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Taken forward in Delivery Plan marked as completed Q1 24/25
Service Re-design: Percentage of Unemployed People Assisted into work || CP5.02 || ECON01	FY 23/24	5.22 %	FY 24/25		12.08 %	annual update October
No. new Modern Apprenticeships/Paid Placements and Youth Traineeships || CP5.02	FY 23/24	177	FY 24/25	146	125	
No. Business Gateway start-ups per 10000 popn || CP5.09 || ECON05	FY 23/24	15.15	FY 24/25	16.22		annual update October
Number of businesses supported by Council ED and BG || CP5.09	FY 23/24	3,496	FY 24/25		2,815	annual update October
Introduce tourism levy - start reporting Q1 25/26 || CP5.11	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Transferred to Delivery Plan

6.2

Planning, Environment and Low-Carbon Transport Indicators from the Performance Plan Q2 25/26

Actions PIs being Monitored in Performance Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Implement new bus contract management software tool || CP2.01	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Completed		Due to complete Q4 23/24 [revised]
Implement Raigmore Bus Gate || CP2.01	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Income from hire of council buses - start reporting FY23/24 || CP2.01	FY 23/24	£ 54,000	FY 24/25	£ 60,047	£ 54,000	
No. low carbon buses in Council fleet - start reporting 26/27 || CP2.01	FY 23/24		FY 24/25			
No. of community transport projects supported || CP2.01	FY 23/24	28	FY 24/25	29	26	
Complete next stages of Corran Ferry replacement project || CP2.09	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Progression of Inverness Railway Station Master Plan to detailed design || CP2.09	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q1 24/25
Avg time [wks] per planning application - all Local Developments || CP3.07	FY 23/24	14.6	FY 24/25			annual update September
Avg time [wks] per planning application - all Majors || CP3.07	FY 23/24	38.6	FY 24/25			annual update September
Avg time [wks] per planning application - Other Consents || CP3.07	FY 23/24	11.8	FY 24/25			annual update September

	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
BSIP submitted to Economy and Infrastructure Committee || CP3.09	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q3 24/25 [revised]
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Academy Street || CP4.01	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Project will not proceed marked as completed Q2 24/25
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Culbokie || CP4.01	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	On Target		Due to complete Q3 24/25
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Kingussie || CP4.01	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Wick || CP4.01	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	On Target		Design due to complete Q2 23/24
Deliver Inverness Active Travel Network schemes || CP4.01	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Deliver Ecological Strategy || CP4.05	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 24/25
Map council land available for biodiversity enhancement || CP4.05	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Taken forward in Delivery Plan marked as completed Q2 24/25
Map Highland carbon resources || CP4.05	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Not proceeding marked as completed Q2 24/25

6.3

Roads and Infrastructure Indicators from the Performance Plan Q2 25/26

Actions PIs being monitored in Performance Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Deliver Permanent Road Traffic Regulation Orders for 20 mph speed limits || CP2.02	Q1 25/26	Completed	Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 25/26
Early Adoption of 20mph speed limits - start reporting 23/24 || CP2.02	FY 23/24	125	FY 24/25	127	114	
Ensure annual delivery of SG Safer Routes to School programme || CP2.02	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			schools apply for annually
Road network to be considered for maintenance || CP2.03	FY 23/24	38.6 %	FY 24/25	39.1 %	37.3 %	annual update June
Street lighting energy consumption || CP4.07	FY 23/24	8,375,106	FY 24/25	7,975,464	8,075,000	annual update June
Deliver Uig Ferry Terminal Project || CP2.09	Q1 25/26	Completed	Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 25/26

7   Service Plan Progress

7.1   Service performance information from the Service Plan 2023/24 is set out below:-

7.2

Economic Development Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Collate community-based energy projects numbers to inform target setting	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Incorporate Child Poverty funding in Employability Team/Partnership delivery workplan	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
Incorporate Child Poverty work in Employability Review to take forward recommendations/actions	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
No. unemployed parents supported - start reporting Q1 23/24	FY 23/24	120	FY 24/25	111		annual update September
No. working parents supported to progress in work - start reporting Q1 23/24	FY 23/24	23	FY 24/25	49		annual update September
Communicate process to capture community-based energy projects cross-council	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			To be included in Net Zero Programme

7.3

Planning, Environment and Low-Carbon Transport Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Access Rangers: secure funding for 2024/25	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Completion of Examination stage and adoption of Inner Moray Firth Plan	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Develop biodiversity policy/guidance to support NPF4 requirements	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Develop overarching Transport Strategy and secure Member Approval	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
Identify potential project pipeline for Active Travel	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Increase length of core path networks across Highland	FY 23/24	2,724	FY 24/25	2,724	2,742	
Local nature conservation sites identified and designated	FY 23/24		FY 24/25			Starts reporting Q1 26/27
Mapping and strengthening Nature Networks	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
National Customer Satisfaction Survey for Building Standards	FY 23/24	8.2	FY 24/25		8.6	
PPF indicators submitted on time to the Scottish Govt	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 23/24
Sustain Archaeology Festival attendee numbers	FY 23/24	10,000	FY 24/25		10,000	
Traffic light prioritisation consultation	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24

Roads and Infrastructure Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Annual reporting of rolling programmes of capital funded roads investment	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Develop the Health and Safety system structure for Roads Service activities	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q2 24/25
Develop the Roads Redesign Action Plan and associated programme of works	Q1 25/26	Completed	Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 25/26
Road network - A Class || ENV4b	FY 23/24	28.8 %	FY 24/25	30.1 %	28.9 %	annual update June
Road network - B Class || ENV4c	FY 23/24	37.6 %	FY 24/25	39.8 %	32.5 %	annual update June
Road network - C Class || ENV4d	FY 23/24	43.4 %	FY 24/25	42.8 %	33.4 %	annual update June
Road Network - U Class || ENV4e	FY 23/24	41.3 %	FY 24/25	41.3 %	36.2 %	annual update June
Initiate reviewing and updating the Road Guidelines for new developments	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q2 24/25
Reduce CO2 emissions for street lighting [tonnes CO2]	FY 23/24	1,865	FY 24/25		5,135	
Review and improve the contents of the roads related Council website pages and develop online forms	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Transferred to My Council Project

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 9 October 2025

Author: Sophie Stuart, Portfolio Manager
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Background Papers: None

Appendices: None