

Agenda Item	8.
Report No	EDU/32/25

# The Highland Council

**Committee:** Education

**Date:** 19 November 2025

**Report Title:** Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report Q2 2025/26

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

## 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The report details relevant performance data and contextual information as outlined in the Service Plan and Performance Plan.

1.3 This report also provides performance information on:

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

1.4 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.

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- Scrutinise** and **note** the Service's performance information.
- Note** the last quarterly report combined both Performance and Delivery Plan reporting, these will now be reported separately.

## 3. Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no implications arising as a direct result of this report other than those set out.

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 risk 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 direct health and safety implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 Gaelic  
There are no implications for Gaelic 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 and update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

**5. Service Performance - Corporate Indicators**

- 5.1 Service performance in relation to Absence, Complaints, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests 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. In Q2 2025/2026, the Service lost an average of 2.90 days per Non-Teaching employee and 1.73 days per Teacher compared to an average of 3.02 for the Council as a whole.

**Service Sickness Absence - Education and Learning**

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

Average Days Lost	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26
EDL Non-Teaching	4.21	4.82	3.88	2.67	4.00	4.55	4.00	2.90
EDL - Teachers	2.65	2.80	2.38	1.47	2.70	3.40	2.62	1.73
Highland Council	3.35	3.48	3.24	2.54	3.42	3.95	3.55	3.02

Attendance management training is being provided to the newly appointed Area Quality Improvement Managers and Education Support Officers who line manage Head Teachers and support schools. There is also a monthly focussed meeting with the Strategic Lead who holds responsibility for workforce and the Education

Attendance Support Officer to understand and progress longer term absences within the service.

### 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 Quarter 2 against a corporate target of 80% is shown below. This is broadly in line with Council performance standards.

#### Service Complaints - Education and Learning

#### 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	
Education and Learning	14	93 %	22	95 %	52	96 %	14	93 %	12	92 %	12	92 %	21	90 %	7	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	
Education and Learning	28	61 %	44	48 %	30	57 %	23	65 %	24	83 %	29	69 %	25	56 %	35	40 %
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	
Education and Learning	2	50 %	0		3	33 %	2	50 %	2	50 %	2	50 %	1	0 %	1	0 %
Highland Council	28	57 %	34	35 %	47	32 %	28	50 %	26	46 %	34	44 %	30	33 %	15	47 %

### 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% is below. The Service is continuing to work to meet the corporate target. It is of note that the service receives a high number of FOIs that are complex and often require significant amounts of data to be collated. Timescales are also not adjusted for school holiday periods and Quarter 2 relates to the period July-September. This impacts on the team's ability to respond within the timescales, especially when requests relate to information that is held at school level.

## Service Freedom of Information Requests - Education and Learning

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

% FOIs Compliant - Education and Learning	Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
		35	91 %	57	65 %	46	87 %	41	56 %	90	70 %	74	57 %	65	83 %	70

% 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

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 shown below.

### Service Invoice Payment Times - Education & Learning

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
Education and Learning	92.3 %	92.1 %	89.2 %	82.7 %	90.0 %	90.7 %	91.2 %	86.6 %
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
Education and Learning	77.3 %	76.3 %	68.7 %	63.7 %	71.8 %	72.7 %	71.2 %	68.6 %
Highland Council	75.3 %	69.7 %	57.0 %	68.5 %	63.8 %	63.3 %	64.7 %	72.4 %

## 7. **Service Contribution to the Performance Plan (previously Corporate Plan)**

7.1 This is a high-level overview report for the Service's performance.

The performance information below is for the Academic Year 23/24 and so is the same as reported to the previous committee meeting. Information for the most recent Academic Year is not available until the national Insights data is published.

PIs/Actions in the Performance Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data
SCQF Level 5 attainment by all children    CP1.01    CHN04	AY 22/23	64.0 %	AY 23/24	63.5 %	AY 24/25	
SCQF Level 6 attainment by all children    CP1.01    CHN05	AY 22/23	31.0 %	AY 23/24	32.0 %	AY 24/25	
% P1/4/7 Pupils Achieving in Literacy    CP1.01    CHN13a	AY 22/23	64.8 %	AY 23/24	68.7 %	AY 24/25	
% P1/4/7 Pupils Achieving in Numeracy    CP1.01    CHN13b	AY 22/23	72.2 %	AY 23/24	74.4 %	AY 24/25	
School attendance rates %    CP1.01    CHN19a	AY 22/23	89.80 %	AY 23/24	89.60 %	AY 24/25	
School attendance rates (Care Experienced) %    CP1.01    CHN19b	AY 22/23	83.30 %	AY 23/24	79.93 %	AY 24/25	
School Leavers - Highest attaining 20% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 22/23	1,251	AY 23/24	1,238	AY 24/25	
School Leavers - Lowest attaining 20% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 22/23	121	AY 23/24	110	AY 24/25	
School Leavers - Middle attaining 60% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 22/23	575	AY 23/24	565	AY 24/25	
SCQF Level 5 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds    CP1.02    CHN06	AY 22/23	42.0 %	AY 23/24	40.0 %	AY 24/25	
SCQF Level 6 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds    CP1.02    CHN07	AY 22/23	13.0 %	AY 23/24	12.0 %	AY 24/25	
Pupils entering positive destinations    CP1.03    CHN11	AY 22/23	95.27 %	AY 23/24	96.50 %	AY 24/25	
% Highland popn with HLH Card    CP1.05	FY 22/23	29.0 %	FY 23/24	29.0 %	FY 24/25	29.0 %
Develop & implement new SLA with Eden Court Highlands    CP1.10 (Completed Q4 23/24)	Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
HLH contract review completed    CP1.10 (Completed Q2 24/25)	Q4 24/25	Completed	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
ERDs being completed - EDL    CP5.01	Q4 24/25	Completed	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	
% Gaelic Learner Secondary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	14.60 %	AY 23/24	15.18 %	AY 24/25	16.14 %
% GM Nursery Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	8.59 %	AY 23/24	9.25 %	AY 24/25	9.89 %
% GM Primary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	6.64 %	AY 23/24	6.71 %	AY 24/25	6.82 %
% Gaidhlig Secondary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	3.14 %	AY 23/24	3.17 %	AY 24/25	3.60 %
New measures and indicators for Gaelic developed as part of the new GLP    CP1.11 (Completed Q1 23/24)	Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26	

## 8. Service Plan Progress

8.1 The intent within this report is to provide high level dashboard information across a range of performance measures for the whole Service. Through these quarterly reports, officers will highlight key matters for Members to consider, significant variations, or key developments in the quarter.

Separate reports are provided to Committee on a regular basis to provide more in-depth consideration of key priorities and performance. This includes, for example, Attainment, School Improvement and High Life Highland.

8.2 The Service performance indicators illustrated include the whole Service dashboard. This is provided for completeness which means it includes indicators which may not have moved during the quarter, those with only an annual update, and those indicators which have no exceptions to highlight, as well as those that are relevant to the quarter being reported against. The format of presentation aims to balance the need to provide Members with visibility of the complete performance dashboard, while ensuring that there is clarity on which subset of those indicators are more relevant, or with points to note, for the current quarter.

8.3 As the main focus of work is currently establishing the programmes and projects within the Council's Operational Delivery Plan and the development of meaningful measures of success and milestones, work on a Service Plan for 2024/25 is on hold,

as it is across all Services. This report therefore contains progress on Actions within the 2023/24 Service Plan which are ongoing.

8.4

Entitlement, Excellence & Equity - Improved Outcomes Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
3 Year ASL implementation plan delivered	Q1 25/26	On Target	Q2 25/26	Completed		Due to complete Q2 26/27
Activity to achieve stretch aims agreed with Education Scotland	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
All performance data analysed to set targets and determine next steps - PRIMARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25		80 %	Update due following September
All performance data analysed to set targets and determine next steps - SECONDARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25		80 %	Update due following September
Annual monitoring of quality and standards in schools - PRIMARY	Q1 25/26	On Target	Q2 25/26	On Target		Ongoing until Q2 25/26
Annual monitoring of quality and standards in schools - SECONDARY	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 24/25
Collaborative Improvement Framework embedded consistently across the Authority - PRIMARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25		80 %	Update due September
Collaborative Improvement Framework embedded consistently across the Authority - SECONDARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25		80 %	Update due September
Continue to review underpinning of approach to ASL	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Effectiveness and impact of leadership of Learning Training	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 24/25
Establish local collaborative networks	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 23/24
Establish the Performance and Achievement tracking system in Primary	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
Improved Head Teacher and Officer collaboration	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Improvements in admissions procedures for special schools	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Increase in children reporting wellbeing needs are being met	AY 2021 - 2023	72.8 %	AY 2023 - 2025	75.4 %	74.6 %	Survey results every 2 years
LAC considered for a Coordinated Support Plan	FY 23/24		FY 24/25		80 %	Update due Dec 24
Leadership of Learning training completed	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25		80 %	Training completed
Progress and Achievement model used in Primary schools	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25		80 %	Update due following September

8.5

Entitlement, Excellence & Equity - Improved Outcomes Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
% School leavers with 1+ Lvl5 SQA Grade A-C	AY 23/24	87.5 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
% School leavers with 1+ Lvl6 SQA Grade A-C	AY 23/24	61.3 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
% Participation rate for 16-19 year olds (per 100)    CHN21	FY 23/24	93.8 %	FY 24/25		92.7 %	annual update December
SCQF Level 5 attainment by all children    CP1.01    CHN04	AY 23/24	63.5 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
SCQF Level 6 attainment by all children    CP1.01    CHN05	AY 23/24	32.0 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
% P1/4/7 Pupils Achieving in Literacy    CP1.01    CHN13a	AY 23/24	68.7 %	AY 24/25		69.0 %	annual update December
% P1/4/7 Pupils Achieving in Numeracy    CP1.01    CHN13b	AY 23/24	74.4 %	AY 24/25		77.0 %	annual update December
School attendance rates (Care Experienced) %    CP1.01    CHN19b	AY 23/24	79.93 %	AY 24/25			annual update July
School attendance rates %    CP1.01    CHN19a	AY 23/24	89.60 %	AY 24/25			annual update December
School Leavers - Highest attaining 20% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 23/24	1,238	AY 24/25			annual update February
School Leavers - Lowest attaining 20% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 23/24	110	AY 24/25			annual update February
School Leavers - Middle attaining 60% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 23/24	565	AY 24/25			annual update February
SCQF Level 5 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds    CP1.02    CHN06	AY 23/24	40.0 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
SCQF Level 6 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds    CP1.02    CHN07	AY 23/24	12.0 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
Pupils entering positive destinations    CP1.03    CHN11	AY 23/24	96.50 %	AY 24/25			annual update April

8.6

Entitlement, Excellence & Equity - Improve the Consistency and Quality of Provision Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Develop a Learning and Teaching Policy	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Improve quality of ELC provision	Q1 25/26	Some Slippage	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q2 24/25
Improved Leadership of Learning and Teaching	AY 23/24		AY 24/25			Reporting will begin Sept25 (AY24/25)

8.7

Entitlement, Excellence & Equity - Net Zero Carbon Targets Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Develop promotional plan to support Learning for Sustainability - due to start Q2 23/24	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Research funding resource to recruit a development officer - due to start Q2 23/24	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24

8.8

Gaelic: Promote, support and develop Gaelic language and culture Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
% Gaelic Learner Secondary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 23/24	15.18 %	AY 24/25	16.14 %		annual update January
% Gaidhlig Secondary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 23/24	3.17 %	AY 24/25	3.60 %		annual update January
% GM Primary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 23/24	6.71 %	AY 24/25	6.82 %		annual update January
% GM Nursery Pupils    CP1.11	AY 23/24	9.25 %	AY 24/25	9.89 %		annual update January
New measures and indicators for Gaelic developed as part of the new GLP    CP1.11 (Completed Q1 23/24)	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 23/24

8.9

Opportunities - Implement Service-wide MIS Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Cross service asset rationalisation board meets quarterly - due to start Q2 23/24	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Ensure mothballed schools are kept under regular review	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
GME School catchment areas established and any consultations complete	Q1 25/26	On Target	Q2 25/26	Completed		Due to complete Q2 25/26
SEEMIS EYMIS - live and operational by target dates	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
SEEMIS EYMIS - project benefits realised	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
SEEMIS EYMIS - user training and support delivered	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25

8.10

Opportunities - Stakeholder Engagement Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
% Highland popn with HLH Card    CP1.05	FY 23/24	29.0 %	FY 24/25	29.0 %	29.0 %	annual update August
Develop & implement new SLA with Eden Court Highlands    CP1.10 (Completed Q4 23/24)	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
HLH contract review completed    CP1.10 (Completed Q2 24/25)	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
Contribute to the Active Highland Strategy - due to start Q2 23/24	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
New Parental Engagement Strategy and Action Plan created	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Parental Engagement Strategy & Action Plan - Reference Group established	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Review existing SLAs/implement recommendations [exc. HLH & Eden Court]	Q1 25/26	Completed	Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 25/26

8.11

Relationships - Ensure Service Delivery Meets Need Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Support schools undertaking Rights Respecting Schools award - due to start Q2 23/24	Q1 25/26	On Target	Q2 25/26	On Target		Ongoing
Use of Implementation Science to implement local approach to support	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24

8.12

Relationships - Progress Community Initiatives Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Evaluate and review the impact of existing CLD plan - due to start Q2 23/24	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Strategic delivery of CLD Plan 2021-24	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25

8.13

Values-based Leadership - Improved Quality of Leadership Q2 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
ERDs being completed - EDL    CP5.01	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
Design and deliver a Head Teacher induction programme	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
Highland Professional Learning & Leadership Academy Established	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
New Headteacher feedback from staff survey indicates supported in role	AY 23/24	4.7	AY 24/25		4.5	annual update August
Present options for development of a Highland Professional Learning and Leadership Academy	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 6 November 2025

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Background Papers: N/A

Appendices: N/A