

# The Highland Council

Agenda Item	8.
Report No	EDU/5/26

**Committee:** Education

**Date:** 25 February 2026

**Report Title:** Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report – Q3 2025/26

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

## 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Members with the Q3 2025/26 performance monitoring position for the Education Service.
- 1.2 This report provides the following performance information:
  - Corporate Indicators.
  - Contribution to the Performance Plan.
  - Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) out with the Performance Plan.
  - Service Plan progress.

Additional performance information such as longer term trend analysis and comparisons against Highland Council's family group average as well as the national picture is available via the [Local Government Benchmarking Data](#) if required.

- 1.3 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 note:

- i. The performance information for the Education Service.
- ii. The change to Freedom of Information (FOI) reporting to align with Chief Officer structure.
- iii. The changes to presentation of the Education Service data in sections 6-8 in order to more clearly show alignment between Performance Indicators and Performance Plan commitments.

- iv. The inclusion of Statutory Performance Indicators outwith the Performance Plan to further support transparency and scrutiny of performance reporting.

### **3. Implications**

- 3.1 **Resource:** There are no resource implications arising as a direct consequence 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:** Risk implications will be kept under regular review and any risks identified reported to future Committees.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people):** There are no immediate health and safety implications arising from 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 Sickness Absence**

Q3 2025/26 Staff Absence data was not available at the time of writing the report but will be reported along with Q4 2025/26 at the next committee.

Attendance management training has been provided to the 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 consider actions required to resolve longer term cases.

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

5.3.1 Monitoring complaints provides important feedback which can facilitate decision making and service design. Each Service is responsible for responding to complaints which are issued on their behalf by the Complaints and Information Team (CIT).

5.3.2

### Service Complaints - Education and Learning

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

##### Frontline Resolution within 5 days

	Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26	
Education and Learning	22	95 %	52	96 %	14	93 %	12	92 %	12	92 %	21	90 %	7	86 %	9	78 %
Highland Council	189	76 %	219	84 %	196	78 %	155	88 %	183	87 %	177	92 %	223	90 %	200	85 %

##### Investigation Resolution within 20 days

	Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26	
Education and Learning	44	48 %	30	57 %	23	65 %	24	83 %	29	69 %	25	56 %	35	40 %	52	71 %
Highland Council	98	46 %	86	47 %	101	57 %	90	42 %	71	51 %	68	47 %	86	40 %	94	55 %

##### Escalated Resolution within 20 days

	Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26	
Education and Learning	0		3	33 %	2	50 %	2	50 %	2	50 %	1	0 %	1	0 %	2	0 %
Highland Council	34	35 %	47	32 %	28	50 %	26	46 %	34	44 %	30	33 %	27	26 %	22	27 %

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

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

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

### Service Freedom of Information Requests - Education and Learning

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

% FOIs Compliant - Education and Learning	Q4 23/24		Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26	
	57	65 %	46	87 %	41	56 %	90	70 %	74	57 %	65	83 %	70	67 %	55	67 %
% FOIs Compliant - Highland Council	549	77 %	512	81 %	481	76 %	570	73 %	617	71 %	577	81 %	601	77 %	581	73 %

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%.

5.4.3 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. This impacts on the team's ability to respond within the timescales, especially when requests relate to information that is held at school level.

## 5.5 Service Invoice Payment Times

5.5.1 These indicators measure the Council's efficiency at paying invoices within 30 days and 10 days of receipt as a percentage of all invoices paid. While 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 targets for performance are 95% and 77% respectively for 30- and 10-days.

### 5.5.2

#### Service Invoice Payment Times - Education & Learning

Invoice Payment within 30 days	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26
<b>Education and Learning</b>	<b>92.1 %</b>	<b>89.2 %</b>	<b>82.7 %</b>	<b>90.0 %</b>	<b>90.7 %</b>	<b>91.2 %</b>	<b>86.6 %</b>	<b>91.3 %</b>
<b>Highland Council</b>	<b>93.6 %</b>	<b>87.7 %</b>	<b>91.4 %</b>	<b>92.9 %</b>	<b>92.9 %</b>	<b>93.0 %</b>	<b>94.8 %</b>	<b>94.3 %</b>

Invoice Payment less than 10 days	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26
<b>Education and Learning</b>	<b>76.3 %</b>	<b>68.7 %</b>	<b>63.7 %</b>	<b>71.8 %</b>	<b>72.7 %</b>	<b>71.2 %</b>	<b>68.6 %</b>	<b>74.1 %</b>
<b>Highland Council</b>	<b>69.7 %</b>	<b>57.0 %</b>	<b>68.5 %</b>	<b>63.8 %</b>	<b>63.3 %</b>	<b>64.7 %</b>	<b>72.5 %</b>	<b>72.3 %</b>

## 6. Contribution to the Performance Plan

6.1 All Performance Plan elements, including relevant Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs), under the Education Service have been included in the Strategic Outcomes below.

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

## 6.2

Education & Learning: Contribution to the Performance Plan								
Strategic Priority 1 Fair & Caring Highland	Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
SCQF Level 5 attainment by all children    CP1.01    CHN04	AY 22/23	64.0 %	AY 23/24	63.5 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
SCQF Level 6 attainment by all children    CP1.01    CHN05	AY 22/23	31.0 %	AY 23/24	32.0 %	AY 24/25			annual update February
% P1/4/7 Pupils Achieving in Literacy    CP1.01    CHN13a	AY 22/23	64.8 %	AY 23/24	68.7 %	AY 24/25	69.0 %	69.0 %	annual update December
% P1/4/7 Pupils Achieving in Numeracy    CP1.01    CHN13b	AY 22/23	72.2 %	AY 23/24	74.4 %	AY 24/25	74.5 %	77.0 %	annual update December
School attendance rates %    CP1.01    CHN19a	AY 22/23	89.80 %	AY 23/24	89.60 %	AY 24/25	90.10 %	91.00 %	annual update December
School attendance rates (Care Experienced) %    CP1.01    CHN19b	AY 22/23	83.30 %	AY 23/24	79.93 %	AY 24/25			Annual Update Febuary
School Leavers - Highest attaining 20% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 22/23	1,251	AY 23/24	1,238	AY 24/25			annual update February
School Leavers - Lowest attaining 20% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 22/23	121	AY 23/24	110	AY 24/25			annual update February
School Leavers - Middle attaining 60% - Complementary Tariff Score    CP1.01	AY 22/23	575	AY 23/24	565	AY 24/25			annual update February
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			annual update February
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			annual update February
Pupils entering positive destinations    CP1.03    CHN11	AY 22/23	95.27 %	AY 23/24	96.50 %	AY 24/25			annual update April
% Highland popn with HLH Card    CP1.05	FY 22/23	29.0 %	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		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
HLH contract review completed    CP1.10 (Completed Q2 24/25)	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
% Gaelic Learner Secondary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	14.60 %	AY 23/24	15.18 %	AY 24/25	16.14 %		annual update January
% GM Nursery Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	8.59 %	AY 23/24	9.25 %	AY 24/25	9.89 %		annual update January
% GM Primary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	6.64 %	AY 23/24	6.71 %	AY 24/25	6.82 %		annual update January
% Gaidhlig Secondary Pupils    CP1.11	AY 22/23	3.14 %	AY 23/24	3.17 %	AY 24/25	3.60 %		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		Q3 25/26			Completed Q1 23/24
Strategic Priority 5 A Resilient and Sustainable Council	Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
ERDs being completed - EDL    CP5.01	Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25

## 7. Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) Outwith the Performance Plan

SPIs outwith the Performance Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data
Net cost per visit to libraries    C&L2a	FY 22/23	£ 1.31	FY 23/24	£ 1.07	FY 24/25	£ 1.94
Net cost per museum visit    C&L3a	FY 22/23	£ 0.24	FY 23/24	£ 0.57	FY 24/25	£ 1.61
Cost per attendance at sports facilities    C&L1a	FY 22/23	£ 3.74	FY 23/24	£ 3.10	FY 24/25	£ 2.55

## 8. Remaining Service Plan Items - Progress

8.1 The dashboards have been updated to remove elements that were previously reported as complete or archived, as well as elements that appear in multiple plans (i.e. in the Performance Plan or as an SPI).

8.2

Education						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Improve quality of ELC provision	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q4 25/26
% 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
All performance data analysed to set targets and determine next steps - PRIMARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25	100 %		Update due following September
All performance data analysed to set targets and determine next steps - SECONDARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25	100 %		Update due following September
Collaborative Improvement Framework embedded consistently across the Authority - PRIMARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25	100 %		Update due September
Collaborative Improvement Framework embedded consistently across the Authority - SECONDARY	AY 23/24	100 %	AY 24/25	100 %		Update due September
Increase in children reporting wellbeing needs are being met	AY 2021 - 2023	72.8 %	AY 2023 - 2025	75.4 %		Survey results every 2 years
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - SAFE	AY 2021 - 2023	78.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	80.00 %		
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - HEALTHY	AY 2021 - 2023	76.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	80.00 %		
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - ACTIVE	AY 2021 - 2023	82.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	83.00 %		
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - NURTURED	AY 2021 - 2023	75.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	80.00 %		
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - ACHIEVING	AY 2021 - 2023	68.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	69.00 %		
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - RESPECTED	AY 2021 - 2023	65.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	67.00 %		
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - RESPONSIBLE	AY 2021 - 2023	69.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	72.00 %		
Wellbeing needs from Highland Lifestyle Survey - INCLUDED	AY 2021 - 2023	69.00 %	AY 2023 - 2025	72.00 %		
New Headteacher feedback from staff survey indicates supported in role	AY 23/24	4.7	AY 24/25	5.0		annual update August

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 8 February 2026

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Background Papers: N/A

Appendices: N/A