

Agenda Item	15
Report No	ECI/12/26

The Highland Council

Committee: **Economy and Infrastructure**

Date: **12 February 2026**

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

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

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides performance information for Quarter 3 2025/26 regarding:-

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

1.2 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 The Committee is asked to:-

- i. **Scrutinise and agree** the Service's performance information;
- ii. **Note** the changes to presentation of the Economy and Infrastructure Service data in sections 6 in order to more clearly show alignment with Performance Plan commitments; and
- iii. **Note** the inclusion of SPI's out with the Performance Plan to further support transparency and scrutiny of performance reporting.

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

Absence data for Q3 2025/26 was not available within the timeline for drafting this report. Q3 2025/26 Absence data will be provided in the next Service Performance report at Q4 2025/26.

- 5.2.1 Staff absence is a nationally benchmarked indicator. Effective absence management supports staff, maintains productivity, and contributes to the Council's benchmarked performance.
- 5.2.2 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 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.
- 5.2.3 Mental health related absences continue to appear within the top three long term absence reasons for all Clusters. Stress related absences, including non-work-related stress is the most common reason for absence within the service and some managers requested additional support and training on how to support staff dealing with stress. This additional support is being explored and will be rolled out across the services. The mental health and wellbeing helpline is available to employees which provides easy access to the following mental health support services: EAP; NHS 24; Samaritans and mental health representatives.

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. 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.

5.2.4 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

Complaints data for Q3 2025/26 was not available within the timeline for drafting this report. Q3 2025/26 complaints data will be provided in the next Service Performance report at Q4 2025/26.

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

FOI data for Q3 2025/26 was not available within the timeline for drafting this report. Q3 2025/26 FOI data will be provided in the next Service Performance report at Q4 2025/26.

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

Service Invoice Payment Times - Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

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
Infrastructure, Environment and Economy	95.1 %	90.3 %	93.5 %	95.9 %	94.8 %	93.3 %	95.5 %	97.0 %
Highland Council	93.6 %	87.7 %	91.4 %	92.9 %	92.9 %	93.0 %	94.8 %	94.3 %

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
Infrastructure, Environment and Economy	82.5 %	70.7 %	77.0 %	81.2 %	78.9 %	78.1 %	84.8 %	86.1 %
Highland Council	69.7 %	57.0 %	68.5 %	63.8 %	63.3 %	64.7 %	72.5 %	72.3 %

6 Service Contribution to Performance Plan

6.1

Economy & Infrastructure: Contribution to the Performance Plan						
Strategic Priority 2 Resilient and Sustainable Communities	Period Q2 25/26	Data Completed	Period Q3 25/26	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Implement new bus contract management software tool CP2.01	Q2 25/26	Completed	Q3 25/26			Completed Q2 25/26
Implement Raigmore Bus Gate CP2.01	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
No. of community transport projects supported CP2.01	FY 23/24	28	FY 24/25	29		
Income from hire of council buses - start reporting FY23/24 CP2.01	FY 23/24	£ 54,000	FY 24/25	£ 60,047		
No. low carbon buses in Council fleet - start reporting 26/27 CP2.01	FY 23/24		FY 24/25			
Early Adoption of 20mph speed limits - start reporting 23/24 CP2.02	FY 23/24	125	FY 24/25	127		
Ensure annual delivery of SG Safer Routes to School programme CP2.02	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			schools apply for annually
Deliver Permanent Road Traffic Regulation Orders for 20 mph speed limits CP2.02	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q1 25/26
Ensure percentage of wind production remains within the region as a local investment CP2.10	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Establish an up to date inward investment proposition CP2.10	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Refresh Invest Highland website and establish baseline for "Number of enquiries through refreshed website p.a." CP2.10	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Develop a community wealth building strategy CP2.11	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Develop a strategy to map funding opportunities aimed at community energy projects CP2.11	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
Road network to be considered for maintenance CP2.03	FY 23/24	38.6 %	FY 24/25	39.1 %		annual update June
Delivery of 22 Tier 1 priority projects in Highland Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan - start reporting Q1 24/25 CP2.06/CP5.07	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q4 26/27
Delivery of City/Region deal digital project - start reporting Q1 24/25 CP2.08	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Not progressing marked as completed Q1 24/25
Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband CP2.08 ECON08	FY 23/24	87 %	FY 24/25	87 %		annual update December
Complete next stages of Corran Ferry replacement project CP2.09	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Deliver Uig Ferry Terminal Project CP2.09	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q1 25/26
Progression of Inverness Railway Station Master Plan to detailed design CP2.09	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q1 24/25
Complete Inverness Levelling-Up Fund project CP2.10	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	Completed		Due to complete Q1 25/26

6.2

Economy & Infrastructure: Contribution to the Performance Plan						
Strategic Priority 3 Accessible and Sustainable Highland Homes	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Deliver Affordable Housing: No. council houses built/ purchased per year 2022-27 CP3.01	FY 23/24	192	FY 24/25	189		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		Target: 170/year
Complete project to convert part of HQ building into flats CP3.06	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
Avg time [wks] per planning application - all Local Developments CP3.07	FY 23/24	14.6	FY 24/25	17.1		annual update September
Avg time [wks] per planning application - all Majors CP3.07	FY 23/24	38.6	FY 24/25	52.2		annual update September
Avg time [wks] per planning application - Other Consents CP3.07	FY 23/24	11.8	FY 24/25	10.4		annual update September
Deliver Affordable Housing: No. key worker homes made available avg p.a. 2022-27 CP3.08	FY 23/24	10	FY 24/25	10		Target: 10/year
BSIP submitted to Economy and Infrastructure Committee CP3.09	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q3 24/25 [revised]

6.3

Economy & Infrastructure: Contribution to the Performance Plan						
Strategic Priority 4 A Sustainable Highland Environment and Global Centre for Renewable Energy	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Academy Street CP4.01	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Project will not proceed marked as completed Q2 24/25
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Culbokie CP4.01	Q2 25/26	On Target	Q3 25/26	On Target		Due to complete Q3 24/25
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Kingussie CP4.01	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Deliver Active Travel Infrastructure project: Wick CP4.01	Q2 25/26	On Target	Q3 25/26	On Target		Design due to complete Q2 23/24
Deliver Inverness Active Travel Network schemes CP4.01	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
No. Funding Opportunities aimed at Community Energy Projects - due to start reporting FY23/24 CP4.03	FY 23/24	19	FY 24/25	6		
% of Nature Restoration Fund Allocated CP4.04	FY 23/24	93 %	FY 24/25	0 %		
Consideration of the Flow Country as a UNESCO world heritage site - start reporting Q1 24/25 CP4.04	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Deliver Ecological Strategy CP4.05	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q3 24/25
Map council land available for biodiversity enhancement CP4.05	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Taken forward in Delivery Plan marked as completed Q2 24/25
Map Highland carbon resources CP4.05	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Not proceeding marked as completed Q2 24/25
Street lighting energy consumption CP4.07	FY 23/24	8,375,106	FY 24/25	7,975,464		annual update June

6.4

Economy & Infrastructure: Contribution to the Performance Plan						
Strategic Priority 5 A Resilient and Sustainable Council	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
ERDs being completed - IEE CP5.01	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q4 24/25
Carry out full review of Employability Services offered by the Council CP5.02	Q2 25/26		Q3 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			annual update October
No. new Modern Apprenticeships/Paid Placements and Youth Traineeships CP5.02	FY 23/24	177	FY 24/25	146		
No. new Youth Traineeships CP5.02	FY 23/24	44	FY 24/25	27		Update due July
No. of new Paid Placements CP5.02	FY 23/24	33	FY 24/25	38		Update due July
Guidance to communities to develop their own Local Place Plans CP5.05	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q2 23/24
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			annual update October
Introduce tourism levy - start reporting Q1 25/26 CP5.11	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Transferred to Delivery Plan

7

Statutory Performance Indicators

7.1

Economy & Infrastructure: SPIs						
SPIs not monitored in Performance Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
KPI 3 % of BS Warrants determined within 6 days	FY 23/24	100.00 %	FY 24/25	100.00 %	90.00 %	annual update May
KPI 6 % of Completion Certificates issued within 3 days	FY 23/24	99.57 %	FY 24/25	99.69 %	90.00	annual update May
School Transport - cost per pupil transported	FY 23/24	£ 2,541.00	FY 24/25		£ 2,642.64	annual update June
% of traffic light failures completed in 3 hours	FY 23/24	100.00 %	FY 24/25		94.33 %	annual update June
% of street light failures completed in 7 days	FY 23/24	60.00 %	FY 24/25		60.67 %	annual update June
Average Bridge Stock Condition Index [BSCI Average]	FY 23/24	78.7	FY 24/25		80.0	annual update June
Cost of electricity/street lighting unit	FY 23/24	£ 36.70	FY 24/25		£ 32.62	annual update June
Cost of maintenance/street lighting unit	FY 23/24	£ 16.85	FY 24/25		£ 14.63	annual update June

8 Service Plan Progress

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

8.2

Economic Development Q3 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	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Incorporate Child Poverty funding in Employability Team/Partnership delivery workplan	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
Incorporate Child Poverty work in Employability Review to take forward recommendations/actions	Q2 25/26		Q3 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	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			To be included in Net Zero Programme

8.3

Planning, Environment and Low-Carbon Transport Q3 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	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Completion of Examination stage and adoption of Inner Moray Firth Plan	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
Develop biodiversity policy/guidance to support NPF4 requirements	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 23/24
Develop overarching Transport Strategy and secure Member Approval	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q4 24/25
Identify potential project pipeline for Active Travel	Q2 25/26		Q3 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	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24
National Customer Satisfaction Survey for Building Standards	FY 23/24	8.2	FY 24/25	8.4	8.5	
PPF indicators submitted on time to the Scottish Govt	Q2 25/26		Q3 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	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26			Completed Q3 23/24

8.4

Roads and Infrastructure Q3 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	Q2 25/26			Q3 25/26			Completed Q2 24/25
Develop the Health and Safety system structure for Roads Service activities	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage		Q3 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q2 24/25
Develop the Roads Redesign Action Plan and associated programme of works	Q2 25/26			Q3 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	Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 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	Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26				Transferred to My Council Project

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 8 January 2025

Author: Debbie Sutton, Chief Officer Operations & Maintenance
Sophie Stuart, Portfolio Manager

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None