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Agenda item	3
Report no	LA/19/26

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Lochaber Area Committee

Date: 11/05/2026

Report Title: Police – Area Performance Report

Report By: Chief Inspector Donna Allan

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 To provide an update to Committee Board on the progress with reference to the objectives outlined in the Highland Policing Plan 2023–2026.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are invited to note:

- i. Progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023–2026 Year 1 attached as Annex A to this report, for the period covering 01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

3. Report Format – Police Area Performance Summary Report

3.1 This document will now cover all priorities featured in the Local Policing Plan and evidence Prevention and Intervention work corresponding to each of the Policing Priorities, provide local narrative in relation to Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism.

4. Implications

4.1 Resource – There are no immediate resource applications arising from this noting report.

4.2 Legal – There are no immediate legal implications arising from this noting report.

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Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – There are no immediate community implications arising from this noting report.

Climate Change/Carbon Clever – There are no immediate implications arising from this noting report.

Risk – There are no immediate implications arising from this noting report.

Gaelic – There are no immediate implications arising from this noting report.

Designation: Chief Inspector

Date:

Author: Chief Inspector Donna Allan

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**Performance Against
Local Policing Plan 2023-2026**



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**Lochaber Area Committee Report
Monday 11th May 2026
Reporting Period - 01 April 2025 – 31st March 2026**



**Report by Inspector Alistair MacKenzie on behalf of
Chief Inspector Donna Allan
Area Commander –South Highland**

**Communities, People and Partnerships... at the Heart of the
Highlands**



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Introduction by Area Commander

Inspector Alistair MacKenzie on behalf of Chief Inspector Donna Allan

I present to you the Lochaber Area Committee Scrutiny Report covering the reporting period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

The statistics being reported are now at South Highland Area Command level which incorporates the following Area Committees:-

Badenoch & Strathspey, Nairnshire, Lochaber and Skye & Raasay.

A verbal update will be provided by the Police Scotland representative in relation to the local context of this Area Committee.

The interpretation of statistics continues to be a key part of what we do, identifying potential crime trends and ensuring I have the right officers in the right place to keep our communities safe. We do compare data on previous years, however we are not yet at a point where we can accurately compare year on year data as a result of the COVID pandemic which does impact our 5 year data. I am always happy to discuss the data and provide some context around the statistics provided within the report.

We continue to see real challenges within our communities in terms of cost of living, rural living may seem the ideal to some but for others there is significant impact, including those who have not felt such hardship before. My team are continuing to work, wherever we can, with Partners to protect the vulnerable people within our communities.

Along with our colleagues in Roads Policing, we maintain our presence on our Highland roads, enforcing road traffic legislation, improving road safety and investigating road traffic collisions. I know this has been a particular area of concern, especially with the notable increase in visitors to the Highlands. My team continue to engage with the Visitor Management Plan, working with various Partners to ensure the Highlands continues to be a safe and enjoyable place to visit.

Our focus on road safety is reflected in the increase in drink/drug driving offences detected by officers. We will continue to highlight the harm this creates and target our resources accordingly.

There has been a slight rise in housebreakings and a reduction in shoplifting offences.

We have experienced an increase in fraud, which includes various fraudulent schemes. There is continuing effort to highlight how these crimes are being perpetrated to allow everyone to best protect themselves against this. The international nature of many of these crimes presents unique challenges to bringing perpetrators to justice.

We have seen an increase in missing person reports, a proportion of missing person reports include mountain rescue calls which places significant demands on our resources.

Our work tackling Serious and Organised Crime continues, we continue to disrupt these individuals and working effectively with Partners is key. We use these relationships to identify individuals that are vulnerable to exploitation, making early interventions and making the Highlands inhospitable to Serious and Organised Crime Groups.

I also appreciate local concern around ASB and Drugs misuse and can report we have ongoing operations to target those causing harm to our communities and we will always seek to prioritise making this a safe place to live, work and visit.

Local Policing Priorities

The Local Policing Priorities for the N Division area are decided by data from our Strategic Assessment which details Threats and Risks, and also feedback from Local Authorities, Partners and public in the Your Police survey.



ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD CRIME

Collaborate to reduce casualties and crime on our roads



ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, VIOLENCE AND DISORDER

Engage with the public and communities to reduce and prevent crime



ACQUISITIVE CRIME

Reduce crime through preventing offending and reducing re-offending



PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Support people considered vulnerable through working with partners



SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME

Reduce the harm caused by serious organised crime including cyber related crime



TERRORISM AND PUBLIC ORDER

Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare through collaborative preparedness

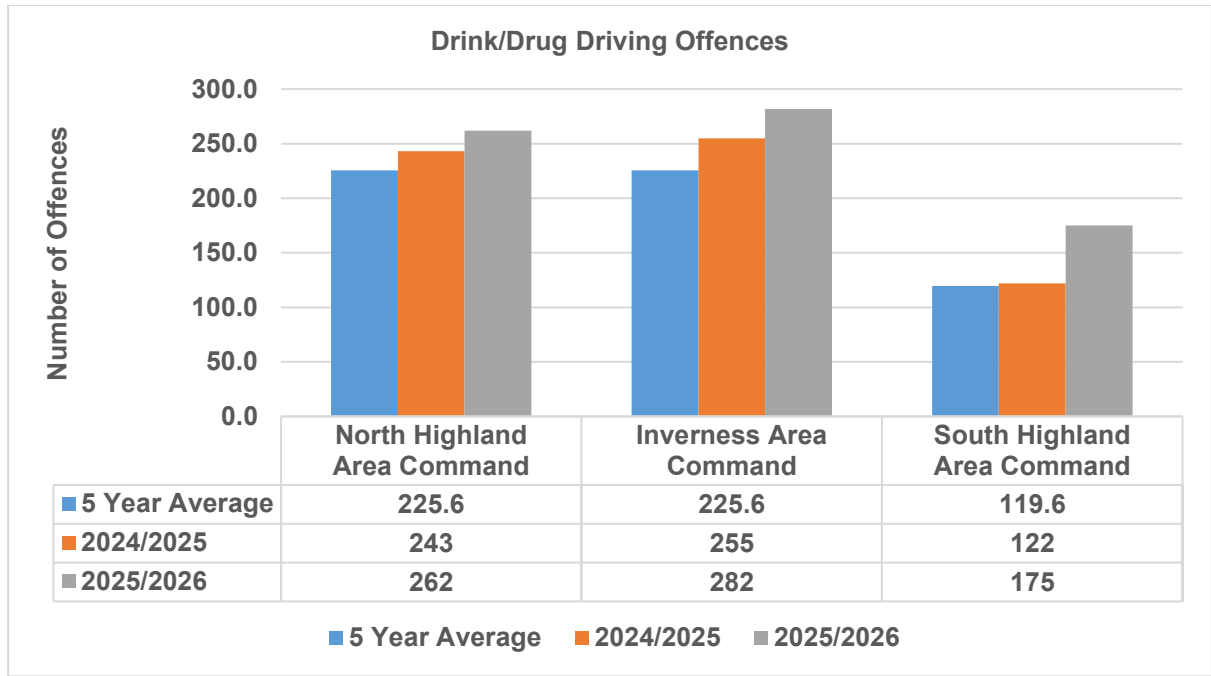
Road Safety and Road Crime

Intention - With Partners, enhance Road Safety across the Highland Area.

Objective – With Partners, deliver a Road Safety Strategy focusing on: Challenging driver behaviour; Education at the road side and elsewhere; Detection of offences linked to contributing factors of Fatal and Serious Road Traffic Collisions and collectively reducing potential harm.

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Number of Fatalities - Road Traffic Collisions	8.2	7	10	6	-4	
Drink/Drug Driving Offences	119.6	113.7	122	175	53	101.4%
Speeding Offences	464.2	200.7	256	434	178	100.3%

2025/2026 Drink/Drug Driving Offences -



Anti-Social Behaviour, Disorder and Violence (including Alcohol and Drug misuse)

Intention – With Partners, better understand the causes to prevent and reduce instances of Anti-Social Behaviour, Disorder and Violence to enhance community safety across the Highland Area.

Objective – Work with Partners to share information, support Education, Prevention, Diversionary and Enforcement Measures linked to harmful alcohol consumption; maintain robust procedures around licensed premises; support victims of violent crime by working with partners to improve service provision and prevent repeat victimisation.

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Murder	0.6	1.0	1	0	-1	100%
Assault	334	372.7	388	460	72	66.3%
Serious Assault	21.8	21	17	12	-5	82.1%
Drug (Possession) Offences	167	118.7	116	157	41	85.5%

Harm Prevention Officer – A Harm Prevention Officer (HPO) role has been operating for some time within the N Division. This role is filled by a Police Constable who undertakes daily liaison between internal/external stakeholders with a view to reducing the risk posed to certain members of the public through alcohol and controlled substance misuse.

The HPO works with other partners to target Cuckooing which is a crime whereby crime groups take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to use it as a base for County Lines offences. The HPO works within the nationally recognised Serious and Organised Crime Strategy (Divert, Deter, Disrupt, Detect) targeting the Divert and Deter strands.

The HPO is fully funded by NHS Highland via the Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership (HADP).

Prevention and Intervention Officers - Police Scotland's Prevention and Intervention Officers play a full part in early intervention work throughout South Highland Area Command, supporting colleagues and partners in their efforts to address anti social behaviour.

This is further complemented by the Joint Education and Police Knives in School Protocol which has been progressed.

Acquisitive Crime

Intention – With Partners and Communities, prevent instances of acquisitive crime across the Highland area.

Objective – With Partners, share information, support education, prevention, diversionary and enforcement activity linked to acquisitive crime; develop work with targets – recidivist offenders to reduce reoffending linked to acquisitive crime e.g. Persistent Offenders programme; enhance the use of all media platforms to raise awareness of local and national preventative initiatives.

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Housebreaking (Dwelling)	26.6	30.7	22	26	4	40%
Fraud	110.2	119.7	113	151	38	13.5%
Theft by Shoplifting	133	161.7	160	144	-16	77.3%
Theft of a Motor Vehicle	19.6	19.7	14	18	4	62.5%

Banking Protocol

Following a number of incidents across the N Division area in respect of Frauds and Banking Protocol, work has been ongoing with various Banks within N Division with a view to setting up learning sessions between staff members to talk through Banking Protocol. This has allowed for a better understanding of the Police response, management of vulnerabilities and referrals/support available to victims. This has and will continue to allow Bank staff to be aware as to the point in they feel that they can/should intervene.

Rural Watch - The Highland area is renowned for great natural beauty and the rural communities are safe places in which to live, work and visit. However, the nature of the environment and way of life means there are some crime prevention tips particularly relevant to rural life. Watch Schemes work well as a crime prevention and detection tool but are also extremely valuable in terms of enabling Highland communities to share information, allowing agencies to send out relevant crime alerts, and empower local communities to be more resilient.

Protecting Vulnerable People

Intention – Protect people at risk of harm.

Objective – With Partners and as corporate parents we will deliver the Highland CHAMPS (Highland Champion Board) strategy; with Partners we will focus on safeguarding communities; with Partners we will address emerging issues through Prevention and Intervention.

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Rape	24	27.7	31	33	2	51.9%
Domestic Crime*			305	371	66	66.43%
Hate Crime**			39	32	-7	73.24%
Missing Persons	120.2	123	115	136	21	

*Please note, due to the different sources of data being used, and the different methodology/ counting rules, comparison of recorded domestic crimes from 1st April 2024 with recorded domestic crimes prior to 1st April 2024 would not be advised.

** Please note, due to the different sources of data being used, and the different methodology/ counting rules, comparison of recorded hate crimes from 1st April 2024 with recorded hate crimes prior to 1st April 2024 would not be advised.

Hate Crime – Police Scotland underwent a national inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) in relation to Hate Crime with N Division (Highland and Islands) being identified as one of three focussed Divisions.

Missing Persons – Police Scotland takes every report of a missing person seriously and investigates appropriately with access to local, regional and national specialist resources. Missing persons investigations are a core part of local Policing and it is local officers who undertake all investigations, supported by specialist colleagues where necessary. Further, each Division including, N Division has a dedicated Missing Person Co-ordinator who advises on operational and preventative approaches. This officer also engages with missing people charities and regularly provides support in this regard.

Missing Person Category	2024/2025	2025/2026	Variation
Adult	62	67	5
Cared for Adult	3	4	1
Care Experienced Young People	20	8	-12
Child	30	57	27
Absconder/Wanted	0	0	0
Total	115	136	21

Each Area Command has appointed a local Police liaison officer who maintains contact and liaison with the residential units in their respective area. This role has developed and regular contact has built a good relationship with residential unit(s). Where required, this officer also works in conjunction with the Missing Person Co-ordinator who similarly enjoys a good working relationship with residential units.

Serious and Organised Crime

Intention – With Partners, reduce the threat, risk and harm caused by Serious Organised Crime.

Objective – With Partners work to safeguard the Highland area by taking all opportunities to prevent crime and make the Highland area a hostile environment for Serious & Organised Crime Groups; to improve outcomes for individuals and communities and reduce offending through prevention, early intervention and diversion; in support of our Partners in the Local Authority and NHS via the Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership Strategy we will direct those who are substance dependant towards recovery through prevention, treatment and support services; with Partners work to reduce the instances of substance misuse in our communities.

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Drug (Supply) Offences	14.2	8.3	10	16	6	107%

County Lines - When Organised Crime Groups from major cities such as Birmingham, Derby, Liverpool and London are expanding their drug networks to other areas, bringing with it serious criminal behaviour such as violence, exploitation and abuse. The term County Lines refers to the use of a single telephone number to order drugs, operated from outside the local area. They often set up a base in a rural town for a short time, taking over the home of a vulnerable person by 'cuckooing' and use adults and children to act as drug runners. Preventions and Interventions delivered advisory presentations to Partner agencies including Highland Council (Housing/Social Work) and NHS Highland.

Police Scotland has relaunched an awareness-raising initiative aimed at preventing young people from falling into a life of crime. Working in partnership with the Scottish Government, Police have devised an educational pack for young people that shows the devastating effects of Serious Organised Crime.

N Division has also recently expanded its team of dedicated officers with the sole purpose of targeting County Line offenders, working in partnership with partner agencies and protecting vulnerable persons.

Counter Terrorism

Intention – Support the delivery of the CONTEST strategy to reduce the threat posed by terrorism and domestic extremism.

Objective – Strengthen PREVENT work with Partners and institutions; with Partners, support individuals who are vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism; strengthen PREVENT work in relation to the internet and Social Media; Effective Multi-agency planning in respect of Counter Terrorism is taking place; Develop our ability to response effectively to any terrorist attack (with a specific focus on emerging high-risk threats, and specialist capabilities).

WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) - The workshop covers issues such as crime, normal social processes that are used to influence and manipulate, case studies that cut across the spectrum of extremism, terrorist ideologies and factors which may contribute to an individual's susceptibility to a terrorist ideology.

In particular, it seeks to support participants to recognise that using their existing expertise and professional judgement, they may be able to recognise potentially vulnerable individuals who may be susceptible to being persuaded by an extremist or terrorist ideology. Workshops delivered to partners across the Highland area.

ACT Early is a program delivered to schools across the Highland area. The ACT Early session is a vehicle for debate around the sensitive issue of violent extremism within communities. As such it is an enabler for community participants to air grievances, debate matters of interest to them and work through a group problem solving experience.

Crime Statistics

Crime Bulletin Categories	South Highland Area Command					
	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025/2 026
TOTAL CRIME & OFFENCES	4472	3924	3332	3506	3952	4675
Group 1 - Non Sexual Crimes of Violence	338	378	489	515	567	634
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	0	0	1	1	1	0
Culpable homicide (common law)	0	1	0	0	0	0
Culpable homicide (other)	1	2	2	1	3	2
Attempted murder	0	2	4	5	2	2
Serious Assault (incl. FGM, culpable & reckless conduct - causing injury)	19	27	29	17	17	12
Common Assault (of an emergency worker)	27	31	40	47	75	57
Common Assault	260	292	358	372	388	460
Robbery (including assault with intent to rob)	2	2	0	4	5	10
Stalking	4	2	12	10	8	12
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	1	7	1	1	6	5
Threats and extortion	10	7	23	19	21	19
Other group 1 crimes	0	0	5	21	17	16
Group 2 - Sexual Offences	134	139	190	165	146	149
Rape	19	18	30	22	31	33
Attempted rape	5	0	1	0	0	2
Sexual assault	39	57	68	58	54	50
Crimes associated with Prostitution	0	0	1	0	0	0
Indecent photos of children	6	9	10	13	17	13
Communicating indecently	20	13	29	18	8	12
Causing to view sexual activity or images	22	20	21	22	11	18
Threatening or Disclosure of intimate image*	7	3	10	10	9	6
Other Group 2 crimes	16	19	20	22	16	15
Group 3 - Crimes of Dishonesty	402	452	505	636	526	564
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	25	16	33	37	22	26
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non-dwelling	6	7	7	3	5	4
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	22	19	18	23	11	11
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	6	1	7	4	3	4
Theft of a motor vehicle	20	19	21	24	14	18
Theft from a Motor Vehicle, Insecure etc	16	10	12	15	14	10
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	1	0	0	0	2	2
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	9	8	8	9	6	9
Common theft	105	118	149	134	151	164
Theft by shoplifting	84	96	91	234	160	144

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Fraud	81	111	132	114	113	151
Other Group 3 crimes	27	47	27	39	25	21
Group 4 - Damage and Reckless Behaviour	259	290	252	281	283	281
Fireraising	8	12	15	13	21	17
Vandalism (incl. reckless damage, etc.)	237	267	226	256	251	251
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	1	1	0	1	0	0
Culpable & reckless conduct (not firearms)	13	9	11	8	11	12
Other Group 4 crimes	0	1	0	3	0	1
Group 5 - Crimes Against Society	471	389	301	307	312	413
Possession firearm/offensive weapon/knife in prison (not used in crime)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession offensive weapon/knife in school (not used in crime)	0	0	2	3	3	1
Possession offensive weapon/knife in a private place (not used in crime)	0	0	0	2	1	9
Other possession of offensive weapon/knife (not used in crime)	20	16	17	8	20	24
Possession firearm/offensive weapon/knife in prison (used in criminal activity)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession offensive weapon/knife in school (used in criminal activity)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other possession of offensive weapon/knife NEC (used in criminal activity)	0	0	0	0	1	1
Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs	6	6	2	4	2	0
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	34	12	10	5	10	16
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	5	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of drugs	268	211	129	111	116	157
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	1	0	0	1	0	0
Bail offences (other than absconding)	58	74	62	76	84	101
Other crimes against public justice	69	63	55	78	61	73
Other crimes against society	0	0	0	1	1	10
Group 6 - Anti-Social Offences	221	292	287	255	277	280
Breach of the Peace	28	15	19	7	4	23
Threatening or abusive behaviour	162	245	242	225	254	236
Hate aggravated conduct (incl. stirring up hatred)	4	5	9	7	7	11
Drunk and incapable	2	1	0	0	0	0
Consume alcohol in designated place (local bye-laws)	5	6	1	0	0	1
Other alcohol related offences	8	8	10	6	8	5
Urinating	12	12	6	10	4	4
Group 7 - Miscellaneous Offences	94	73	87	79	93	110
Wildlife offences	14	10	7	4	4	9
Offences involved animals (not wildlife)	21	6	19	8	15	18
Community and public order offences	39	40	45	58	56	65
Environmental offences	2	7	2	4	6	1

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Licensing offences	18	9	13	5	12	17
Other misc. offences	0	1	1	0	0	0
Group 8 - Road Traffic Offences	2553	1911	1221	1268	1748	2244
Dangerous driving offences	52	58	46	53	58	60
Driving Carelessly	110	137	106	98	171	198
Driving under the influence	122	135	114	105	122	175
Speeding offences	1129	590	138	208	256	434
Seat belt offences	23	29	21	24	53	122
Mobile phone offences	14	10	23	20	50	68
Unlawful use of motor vehicle	732	656	466	430	527	621
Vehicle defect offences	198	103	90	128	221	247
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	19	19	18	8	36	34
Road Traffic Offences (involving bicycle/tricycle)	2	1	0	2	0	1
Other Group 8 Offences	152	173	199	192	254	284

For additional detail, published crime data can also be accessed online via the following link:-
[Crime data - Police Scotland](#)