

Agenda Item	3
Report No	HC/11/26

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: The Highland Council

Date: 14 May 2026

Report Title: Operational Delivery Plan Annual Progress Report 2025/26

Report By: Chief Executive

1. Executive Summary

1.1 As set out in the Annual Progress Report May 2025, Highland Council's Operational Delivery Plan is designed to enact the principles established in the My Future Highland Programme and to enable the improvement in the measures selected for focus in its Performance Plan. Taken together, all three plans are a seamless transformation programme, incorporating the key elements of:

- What we want to do and **why**
- **How** we will make change happen
- **What** we are trying to improve.

The Delivery Plan is the **how** element of this and this report provides a strategic overview of progress for year 2, this being 25/26.

1.2 The Delivery Plan sets out how Highland Council will transform over time, structured around six thematic portfolios, with further detail provided in this report.

1.3 This report sets out the positive progress made in delivering the Operational Delivery Plan during the reporting period April 2025 – March 2026, in line with the agreed plan for scrutiny.

It also recognises the significant challenges inherent in managing and delivering a complex transformation programme of this scale and scope. An overview of progress for each Portfolio is reported at section 9 with Portfolio dashboards presented in **Appendix 4**.

1.4 The table below summarises 25/26 performance relating to savings targets, savings forecasts and investment. Further information is detailed in section 8 and **Appendix 1**.

Description	Target (£'m)	Forecasted savings		Additional investment to deliver savings (£'m)
		£'m	% against target	
Projects under direct control by THC	13.401	9.673	72%	5.318
All projects (including Adult Social Care)	20.401	12.273	60%	7.641

With an additional investment of £5.318m, savings of £9.673 are forecasted for projects under the direct control of The Highland Council. This represents a savings return of £1.82 for every pound of additional investment.

For all projects (including Adult Social Care), the additional investment is £7.641 with forecasted savings of £12.273. This represents a savings return of £1.61 for every pound of additional investment.

In addition to the report “Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29, Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2026/27” considered by The Highland Council on 5 March 26, the “Annual Accounts for the Year to 31 March 2026 and Revenue and Capital Outturn for the year” report to The Highland Council in June 26 will also include further information on savings and slippages. Strategic Committees will also receive more detailed reports at Cluster/Service level on 25/26 budgets and performance.

- 1.5 A high number of the additional posts to support the delivery of the projects have been filled; 49 posts (92%). Of the 66 projects, 67% have been completed or are on target. Of the 532 milestones that have begun reporting, 86% have been completed or are on target.
- 1.6 The Delivery Plan is much more than the delivery of savings. It is also designed to bring change to the way in which Highland Council operates and the ways in which services will look in future.

Highlights of progress across the six Portfolios are set out in section 9. The key headlines include:

- **Person Centred Solutions (PCS) – Sponsor: ACE – People**
 - The Handyperson Scheme has been successfully re-tendered with 637 more people being supported when compared to the same quarter last year.
 - Short Breaks in Caithness and Inverness were re-established and now support up to 8 families within each of the local areas.
 - Contractual arrangements are now in place for the replacement case management system, supporting future service delivery.

- A bespoke kinship team has now been established within Children's Services. A Highland wide service undertaking family finding and assessment has been introduced supporting children and their carers across Highland.
 - £1.2M investment in Neurodevelopmental assessment and support.
 - Development of Children's Service Budget Recovery Plan linked to Families First workstream.
- **My Highland Future (MHF) – Sponsor: ACE – People**
 - Accelerated Degree Pathway developed in conjunction with UHI with 29 young people now studying across 10 HNC courses.
 - Pilot of 7 paid summer placements for 2025, leading to 80 placements for 2026.
 - The Council's Modern Apprenticeship programme remaining strong with 138 placements for 25/26.
 - Employer Charter established and dedicated website launched. 17 Highland businesses signed up between October 2025 and March 2026.
 - Establishment of the Workforce North Co-investment Fund.
- **Reconfiguring Our Asset Base (ROAB) – Sponsor: ACE – Place**
 - The Highland Housing Challenge Action Plan was agreed at Council in June 2025.
 - The Council's core affordable housing programme is on track to deliver for 2025/26.
 - Work commenced on developing a Mid-Market Rent Model for the Council, with a separate update on progress on the Council agenda today.
 - Through the Social Value Charter, SSEN have committed to delivering 500 permanent homes, with 60% of these affordable/social housing.
- **Net Zero Energy & Investment (NZEI&I) – Sponsor: ACE – Place**
 - Successfully leveraged £7.2M in external funding towards energy efficiency works for Council properties.
 - Introduction of fully Managed Electric Vehicle charging contract which is inclusive of a growth plan.
 - Climate Adaptation and Mitigation report agreed at Council in March 2026.
 - Delivery of £250k efficiency savings in relation to Fleet and Staff Travel.
 - Establishment of a Solar PV scheme generating £344k of revenue in FY 25/26 to Q3 with new installs being identified.
 - Phase 1 of the Regional Zero Emission Heavy Duty Vehicle Development project successfully completed in March 2026.
- **Corporate Solutions (CS) – Sponsor: ACE – Corporate**
 - The Council's redesigned website went live as planned on 17 February 2026.
 - Formal project closure and handover to live service for the CiA Finance and Altair Pensions systems.
 - Contract awarded and work started to transform the HR & Payroll system, processes and data.

- Investors in People roll out commenced with the Corporate Cluster fully accredited.
 - Programme manager in place for the Future Operating Model, 5 new appointments made with recruitment to the remaining posts and projects underway.
 - For Food in Schools, an extensive stakeholder consultation survey was undertaken with responses from a broad range of stakeholders amounting to more than 5,000 responses. Led by the Redesign Board, a 10-point action plan has been agreed and is now in the process of implementation.
- **Income Generation (IG) – Sponsor: Chief Officer, Revenues & Commercialisation**
 - Review of Fees & Charges undertaken and target delivered.
 - The Old Man of Storr project continued to perform well, delivering growth, local employments, and supporting local businesses and is on target to deliver Phase 2 funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund on time (summer 2026).
 - Final business cases for Unique Visitor Experiences at Torvean and Smoo Cave (Sutherland) to be considered by the Redesign Board in June 2026.
 - Roll out of new black waste and freshwater replenishment services to commence in summer 2026.

2. Background

- 2.1 The 2025 Annual Delivery Plan Report highlighted that the 2020 Audit Scotland Best Value Audit had raised serious concerns about Highland Council's progress, financial sustainability and delivery of Best Value, setting a clear challenge to strengthen collaboration and accelerate the pace of change. The 2025 Best Value Report recognises the significant progress made since then, noting that plans, policies and a culture of transformation are now in place, while highlighting the ongoing need to maintain momentum and continue identifying further transformation opportunities.
- 2.2 Following the 2020 Best Value findings, the Council implemented improvement actions and approved Our Future Highland 2022–27 in December 2022, with a progress update provided in December 2023. In February 2024, the Council agreed to bring forward a delivery plan to support the three-year budget approach.
- 2.3 The Operational Delivery Plan was approved in draft in March 2024 and finalised in May 2024. The Plan was supported by £35M of initial investment, including £20M for Adult Social Care transformation, alongside agreed savings of £54M over the 2024/25 to 2026/27 period. The Delivery Plan savings and investments were updated in line with the 3-year Budget Strategy approved in March 2025, and subsequent budget decisions of March 2026.
- 2.4 The Operational Delivery Plan brings together the commitments set out in the Council's Programme and the three-year budget agreed in February 2024. It explains how the Council will deliver My Future Highland, drive improvement through the Performance Plan, improve outcomes for people and communities, and achieve long-term financial sustainability.

- 2.5 Collectively, the portfolios will modernise and devolve Council operations, supporting more integrated local teams as part of a future operating model, a more responsive and person-centred approach, a strengthened regional workforce, and a systematic approach to asset rationalisation and Net Zero delivery. They will drive recurring savings and increased income generation to support long-term financial sustainability.
- 2.6 The Delivery Plan was developed in conjunction with a three-year budget plan, which was initially agreed in February 2024 and is being updated following the March 2026 budget. This report reflects the current sums set aside for investment to support the Delivery Plan, based on previous Council decisions, and has been updated to take account of the most recent March 2026 budget.
- 2.7 Members will also be aware that a range of Budget Recovery Plans were approved as part of the 2026 Budget Strategy. Elements of the Budget Recovery Plans are currently scheduled to run beyond May 2028.
- 2.8 It is critical that momentum is maintained, and it would be prudent for this alignment with the 3-year Budget Strategy and associated Budget Recovery Plans to continue, noting the Delivery Plan will be subject to review post the Local Government Elections in May 2027 in accordance with assessment of the Council's strategic priorities.

As such, the new saving and investment proposals, including the Budget Recovery Plans approved as part of the Budget agreed on 5 March 2026, are being reviewed and incorporated into the Delivery Plan where appropriate. An initial assessment of these is set out in **Appendix 2**, noting that a range of proposals will operate under business-as-usual service delivery arrangements.

In addition, Chief Officers have been working to reframe the workstreams and projects incorporated within the Delivery Plan to reflect the decisions made on March 5th, 2026. Whilst much of this is already incorporated within the Plan, some adjustments may be required as has been the case previously. Any change will be subject to detailed planning, ensuring it is defined, tracked and reported in line with the robust governance arrangements that support the Delivery Plan.

Proposed changes to the Delivery Plan Portfolios beyond those set out in this report will come forward, as has been the case previously, to the respective Strategic Committees for approval.

- 2.9 As previously agreed by Members, a standard Portfolio Management approach has been applied across the Delivery Plan to ensure consistency of reporting, transparency of progress and effective delivery of projects. Section 6 sets out the continued reporting and governance arrangements through the Corporate Portfolio Management Office (CPMO), with **Appendix 5** detailing the proposed reporting schedule.
- 2.10 Section 8 sets out the forecast financial position for year 2, reflecting data sourced from the Council's Corporate Performance and Risk Management System (PRMS), where tracking and forecasts for all key Delivery Plan measures is recorded. The Council's Annual Accounts will not be concluded until the statutory deadline of 30 June, and as such there may be changes or adjustments following consideration of this report and reflected within those Annual Accounts.

2.11 Section 10, supported by **Appendices 6 & 7**, details the broad staff engagement undertaken and feedback.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Scrutinise the report and **approve** the progress of the Operational Delivery Plan.
- ii. **Approve** the adjustments to the Operational Delivery Plan which are provided through section 9 and **Appendix 4**.
- iii. **Approve** the reporting schedule for 26/27 at **Appendix 5**.
- iv. **Note** that project reports will continue to be submitted to strategic committees for scrutiny.

4. Implications

4.1 Resource

In the budget setting process for 2024 – 2027, and decisions made by the Council on 29 February and 14 March 2024, Council agreed a planned programme of investment from earmarked reserves of £35.7M in a range of change programmes including £20M for Adult Social Care transformation which were designed to support the realisation of £54.6M in recurring budget savings over the three-year period.

The Council's core budget, existing staff resource and other earmarked reserves also play a key part in resourcing the Operational Delivery Plan. In line with the 3-year Budget Strategy approved in March 2025, also taking account of, where relevant, budget decisions made in March 2026, the Delivery Plan savings and investments have been updated accordingly. The target level savings for 2025/26 totalled £20.401M which included £3.933M of Budget Proposals as set out in the 2025 Budget Strategy. As set out within this report, the level of investment to support the delivery plan for 2025/26 onwards totals £28.6M.

4.2 Legal

This report contributes to the Council's statutory duties to secure best value and report performance in terms of Section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and Section 1(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1992, respectively. There are several features of this plan which require to be progressed in line with relevant legislation and statutory guidance. Where this is relevant, it will be mentioned in relation to the specific programme or project in the plan.

4.3 Risk:

Identification and active management of risk forms a core part of project and programme delivery across the Delivery Plan. Initial risks were captured at the inception of the Plan and have subsequently been reviewed, refined and developed. As part of the ongoing work to protect the Delivery Plan, assessment of risk is carried out at each Portfolio Board in accordance with the Risk Management Policy.

All key risks are monitored through the Performance and Risk Management System (PRMS) with governance and ownership through the Portfolio Boards and respective Strategic Committees. Further detail on governance and assurance, including the management of risk, is provided in Section 6.

4.4 Health & Safety:

The Asset Reconfiguration Portfolio is designed to enable a more health and safety informed approach to be built into our asset management strategy in future.

4.5 Gaelic:

The Delivery Plan has various points of overlap with the Strategic Priorities of the Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan (GLP4). For example, projects dealing with tourism will have natural synergies with Theme 2 GLP4 – Media, Arts, Culture & Heritage. It is vital that where priorities overlap, services work together to make best use of resource which will positively impact the progress of the Gaelic Language Plan.

5. Impacts

5.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies, projects 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

6. Governance & Assurance

6.1 As previously agreed by Members, a standard Portfolio Management approach has been applied across the Delivery Plan to ensure consistent reporting, transparency of progress and effective delivery.

Coordination and assurance are provided through the Corporate Portfolio Management Office (CPMO), supported by six-weekly Portfolio Boards that scrutinise progress, manage risk, and oversee delivery against timescales, resources and financial targets, with reporting enabled through the Council's Performance & Risk Management System (PRMS).

Together, these arrangements provide a mature, robust and flexible governance framework, which can accommodate the development of our strategic aims, and is proportionate to the scale and complexity of the transformation programme as well as its contribution to financial sustainability.

6.2 As set out under 4.3, effective management of risk forms a core part of project and programme delivery across the Delivery Plan. Initial risks were captured at the inception of the Plan and continue to be reviewed, refined and developed.

6.3 As advised in the 24/25 Annual Report, the risk assessment identified a need to provide project management training to support the delivery of projects. As such a course was developed which was offered both online and in person across various locations with 154 staff having attended or booked to attend to date.

To further enhance capability to deliver and to protect the Delivery Plan a foundations course to support the realisation of project benefits and effective change management has also been created. It was available as of Feb 26 and 47 staff have attended or are booked to attend to date.

- 6.4 Ongoing progress and scrutiny by Members are supported by regular reports to Strategic Committees. Members also of course have direct access to real-time progress of projects on PRMS.

Project updates to the Strategic Committees include project status, any deviation in progress towards milestones and targets as well as the reason for the deviation and associated corrective action.

The detailed reporting schedule for 25/26 was set out in **Appendix 5** of the 24/25 Annual Report. A total of 86 project updates contained within the Delivery Plan Progress Reports have been presented to the respective Strategic Committees, representing a significant commitment to governance, transparency and scrutiny.

- 6.5 The recommended revised Delivery Plan reporting schedule for 26/27 is set out in **Appendix 5** of this report. This will be updated in the light of changes to the Portfolio workstreams and projects set out in Section 9, pending Council approval of those changes.

7. Summary Delivery Progress Updates

- 7.1 The Operational Delivery Plan is a complex transformational package of work structured under six portfolio themes. These are:

- Person Centred Solutions (PCS) – Sponsor: ACE – People
- My Highland Future (MHF) – Sponsor: ACE – People
- Reconfiguring Our Asset Base (ROAB) – Sponsor: ACE – Place
- Net Zero Energy & Investment (NZEI&I) – Sponsor: ACE – Place
- Corporate Solutions (CS) – Sponsor: ACE – Corporate
- Income Generation (IG) – Sponsor: CO Revenues & Commercialisation

The Portfolios are organised into workstreams, which are divided into programmes and projects. Each of these has a critical relationship with the aspirations built into the Programme and with the Council's budget strategy to support the delivery of financial sustainability.

- 7.2 There are currently 56 live projects across the six Portfolios and 10 that are closed, with 4 of the closed projects in Corporate Solutions, 5 in Income Generation and 1 in Net Zero. This brings the total projects in the Delivery Plan to 66. A further 11 projects are due to close by the end of quarter 2 - 26/27. As set out in the 2024 report the total number of projects in the Delivery Plan will fluctuate as projects close, the Plan flexes to accommodate new work, or is adjusted to structure the work in different ways.

The health of projects in the Delivery Plan is determined through a balanced assessment of progress towards milestones, the achievement of benefits and any associated risks which drives a Red, Amber or Green status, known as a RAG

Rating. Red and Amber mean there are risks or warning signs that need attention and is a standard approach in ensuring there is effective project management.

To ensure good governance the RAG status of each project is reviewed at the respective Portfolio Board with Red and Amber projects getting specific attention to ensure the required actions are understood to return the project back to a Green status.

The status for each project across the Portfolios is as follows:

Portfolio	Green	Amber	Red	Completed	Total
PCS	4	5	3	0	12
MHF	9	0	0	0	9
ROAB	6	3	2	0	11
NZ	5	5	1	1	12
CS	9	1	1	4	15
IG	1	0	1	5	7
Total	34	14	8	10	66
%	51.52%	21.21%	12.12%	15.15%	100.00%

Appendix 4 provides a Portfolio Dashboard for each of the six Portfolios, which shows the workstreams, the respective alignment of the projects and their current RAG status. Section 9 of the report provides an overview of progress for each portfolio setting out the highlights, barriers and challenges as well as any changes to the Portfolios requiring approval.

There is a total of 630 milestones being tracked across the projects. Again, to drive good governance and ultimately ensure projects deliver to the required outcomes on time, to scope and the required quality, these are also subject to a RAG Rating.

There are 98 milestones that are not yet due to start tracking. The status of the remaining 532 milestones is as follows:

Portfolio	Green	Amber	Red	Completed	Total
PCS	16	10	2	49	77
MHF	26	11	0	34	71
ROAB	43	14	4	53	114
NZ	22	22	9	44	97
CS	40	5	0	73	118
IG	6	0	0	49	55
Total	153	62	15	302	532
%	28.76%	11.65%	2.82%	56.77%	100.00%

- 7.3 As part of the approved investment for the Delivery Plan a range of posts were to be created to support its delivery. As of February 2026, a total of 53 posts were identified as being required with contracts up to a maximum period of 24 months. 49 (92%) are filled, with the breakdown by Portfolio as per the table below. A detailed breakdown of posts by project is set out in **Appendix 3**.

Portfolio	No. Posts
Corporate Solutions	19
Post Filled	16
Post Re-Advertised	2
Vacant	1
Income Generation	3
Post Filled	3
My Highland Future	4
Post Filled	4
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	3
Post Filled	3
Person Centred Solutions	7
Post Filled	7
PMO - Across All Portfolios	3
Post Filled	3
Reconfiguring Our Asset Base	14
Post Filled	13
Post Re-Advertised	1
Grand Total	53

8. Financial overview

- 8.1 As noted earlier, the Council's Corporate Performance and Risk Management System (PRMS) is used to track the progress of the Council's Operational Delivery Plan (ODP). PRMS records target savings, actuals to date, forecasts and a RAG (Red/Amber/Green) status of all savings linked to the ODP, alongside other relevant project delivery information.
- 8.2 The information set out within this report is drawn from PRMS and given the timing of this report reflects a forecast rather than a final or actual position. As has been the case in prior years of the ODP, given the nature of the range of savings within that Plan, not all savings are of a nature that allow actual figures to be reported. For example, some savings are so cross-cutting, being allocated across a broad range of activities (often hundreds of cost centres), that it is simply not practical to track 'actual' saving delivery or to separate the saving from other business as usual activity. Hence the reliance on project level reporting, supplemented by the financial ledger or other financial data where relevant and possible to do so. The Council's Annual Accounts will be concluded by 30 June, and the Management Commentary of those Accounts will include a commentary on savings delivery and will be adjusted should there be any changes between the timing of this report and the point of Accounts Closure.
- 8.3 The forecast savings and income position for year 2 of the Operational Delivery Plan is set out below, contrasting targets with tracked or forecast delivery. A detailed view by project is set out in **Appendix 1a**.

Portfolio	Annual Target	Year end Forecast	Percentage
Person Centered Solutions	£7,900,000	£3,000,000	38%
My Highland Future	£1,300,000	£1,300,000	100%
Reconfiguring Our Asset Base	£1,130,000	£633,929	56%
Net Zero Energy, Investments & Innovation	£2,678,000	£1,050,240	39%
Corporate Solutions	£3,817,000	£2,954,000	77%
Income Generation	£3,576,000	£3,334,760	93%
Delivery Plan Total Including ASC	£20,401,000	£12,272,929	60%
Delivery Plan Total Excluding ASC	£13,401,000	£9,672,929	72%

The table above reflects some slippage in certain programmes and projects. Some of these have been recognised and action taken by the Council in its budget decisions of March 2026, relating to current or future years saving targets.

- 8.4 The table below details the forecasted expenditure for each Portfolio in 25/26. It also includes the investment balance at April 25 and the remaining balance to 26/27. Members are reminded that the Delivery Plan is a multi-year programme that commenced in 24/25. A detailed view by project is set out in **Appendix 1b**.

Portfolio	Investment Balance (April25)	Forecast Expenditure (25/26)	Remaining Investment Balance
Person Centered Solutions	£15,478,324	£3,771,719	£11,706,605
My Highland Future	£579,243	£261,388	£317,855
Reconfiguring Our Asset Base	£1,775,909	£681,000	£1,094,909
Net Zero Energy, Investments & Innovation	£5,728,219	£1,010,891	£4,717,328
Corporate Solutions	£2,771,519	£1,662,270	£1,109,249
Income Generation	£2,239,911	£253,743	£1,986,168
Delivery Plan Total Including ASC	£28,573,125	£7,641,011	£20,932,114
Delivery Plan Total Excluding ASC	£15,247,942	£5,318,433	£9,929,509

- 8.5 Further to the tables shown at 8.3 and 8.4, the table below presents per Portfolio the forecasted expenditure and savings, and the resulting savings per pound of investment in 25/26.

Portfolio	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Savings	Savings per pound of expenditure
Person Centred Solutions	£3,771,719	£3,000,000	£0.80
My Highland Future	£261,388	£1,300,000	£4.97
Reconfiguring our Asset Base	£681,000	£633,929	£0.93
Net Zero Energy, Investments and Innovation	£1,010,891	£1,050,240	£1.04
Corporate Solutions	£1,662,270	£2,954,000	£1.78
Income Generation	£253,743	£3,334,760	£13.14
TOTALS	£7,641,011	£12,272,929	£1.61

9. Portfolio Overviews

9.1 Person-Centred Solutions

Portfolio Summary and Key Changes

The Person-Centred Solutions Portfolio is currently delivered through 5 workstreams: Families First, Adult Social Care, Digital Solutions & Commissioning, and Capacity Building, all of which contain a range of programmes/projects. The fifth workstream which was added last year as a standalone piece of work is the Learning without Boundaries project which includes a Virtual Headteacher provision with a specific remit for the education of care experienced young people and a wider piece of work focussing on educational outcomes for all interrupted learners including, but not limited to, care experienced young people where appropriate. That piece of work has an interface with the projects held within the Workforce for the Future Portfolio and includes work to develop a Future Highland Academy. Cross portfolio work is in place.

As previously indicated, as work in terms of the Portfolio progresses approaches and projects will develop and change. Such flexibility in approach can be a key factor to deliver successful projects and will be a key part of the work required to develop the Future Highland Academy referenced above. Partnership working is also key in terms of the adult social care projects.

A new project will to be added to the Portfolio, as approved by the Highland Council at its meeting on 26 March 2026. This relates to the inclusion of work to invest £1.2M in addressing the NDAS waiting list in Highland and work with Glasgow University to develop a new assessment model to deliver long term improvement. It was agreed that the necessary work to build up a more detailed proposal be taken forward by officers and staff from NHS Highland and that this work ought to be added to the Portfolio with the Chief Officer for Secondary Education as the Responsible Officer.

Members will recall that it was proposed last year that the two Adult Social Care projects identified in the initial delivery plan known as “Shifting the Balance of Care” and “Accommodation Solutions” be combined into one project.

It is now proposed that what are now the Accommodation Solutions/Shifting the Balance of Care and Improving Transition Outcomes projects are replaced by four new project themes which mirror the direction of travel and terminology outlined in the NHS Financial Plan 2025-2026. These themes are:

- Service Rebalancing
- Community Led Local Care Models
- Care Pathway Re-design
- Technology and Workforce Transformation.

These projects are partnership work and as such there is increased reporting to the Joint Monitoring Committee in terms of linked savings requirements. Members will be aware that additional monies have been allocated by way of a £7M investment into the ASC Transformation Reserve in this financial year. Members are thus asked to note the change in how the workstream is being taken forward in terms of the projects set out above.

Going forward the Children's Service Budget Recovery Plan and the Families First Delivery Plan workstream will be aligned within the Delivery Plan as follows:

- The "Families First" Workstream will be renamed "Improving Children's Care & Support".
- "Home in Highland" project renamed "Residential Care" focussing on Children's Houses and Placements.
- "Kinship & Foster Carers" project renamed "Family Based Care" focussing on Fostering, Adoption & Kinship Care.
- A new project created named "Children's Disability Support" focussing on Self Directed Support (SDS) and Resource Allocation System (RAS) Model.

Highlights

Workstream: Adult Social Care

Work has been on-going throughout the year in terms of the development of Local Care Models and in particular the funding mechanisms for supporting communities develop and deliver local care initiatives within their areas. The Handyperson Scheme was successfully re-tendered, the service enables people to remain safely and independently at home, contributing to reduced hospital admissions, prevention of residential care and improved hospital discharge. Following the new contract, 637 more people have been supported compared to the same quarter last year, demonstrating improved service reach and partnership working. A proof-of-concept technology pilot for adults with learning disabilities has recently been launched using their Alexa App, which builds functional communities around technology in the home using data from conversation, prompts, reminders and personalised applications. Procurement for a new Shared Lives Service for Adults is underway with plans for the service to be up-and-running later in 2026. The delivery of the NHS Financial Plan (outlined above) will provide an exciting opportunity to facilitate significant transformation in the way Adult Social Care services are delivered across Highland in the future. The additional investment into the Transformation Reserve will provide the resources needed to deliver this transformation.

Workstream: Families First

Key to highlight in terms of this workstream is the development of the Children's Service Budget Recovery Plan. This builds on the approach taken by the Families First workstream in terms of supporting children and young people to stay within their (extended) families and communities thereby reducing reliance on residential placements particularly those out with Highland. That work has been ongoing for some time but there has been recent work in terms of the expansion of kinship and fostering placements. Not only does such work have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people but it also has a positive impact on what has historically been – and remains – a net overspend position. Linked to the plan is the need to collaborate with colleagues in the Place Cluster to increase local residential children's houses.

Key actions being:

- Kinship Care – Increase the number of approved Kinship Carers to 280 by 2030. This will mean that 48% of all Looked After Children will be cared for by such carers (the previous target was 220 by 2028). The revised target is comparable with best performing Local Authorities.
- Highland Council residential and foster provision is better value than commissioned residential and foster placements and allows children to remain close to their local communities. As such the work referenced above with Estates colleagues is vital in terms of new housing and existing housing stock.

Workstream: Digital Solutions and Commissioning

A key highlight has been that the contract for the replacement case management system 'Mosaic' has been signed which will replace the current Carefirst system, with an anticipated go live summer 2028. The implementation phase is underway, workshops planned and data cleansing is progressing. This will have a positive impact on case management and covers all social work services in Highland and hence extends to NHS Highland. It too is a positive example of partnership working.

Barriers / Challenges

Workstream: Adult Social Care

The transformation needed to achieve the £28M of savings required to deliver a balanced budget within Adult Social Care (ASC) is significant and will require a fundamental change in processes and the way services are delivered in the future. The transformation will need to be delivered at pace and will require organisation-wide change in culture within NHS ASC services. As ASC services are delivered through our partners NHS this adds a level of complexity and challenge. Demographic changes also add a level of complexity to the challenge with increasing levels of demand for Adult Social Care services.

Workstream: Families First

Kinship Care – A cultural shift is required across the workforce in terms of having more realistic expectations from prospective kinship carers and not setting the 'bar' for approval at that set for foster carers. What we are asking staff to do is when they identify barriers to someone becoming an approved kinship carer, for staff to be creative, resourceful and slightly less risk averse. We are asking staff to overcome barriers where at all possible.

Foster Care – In terms of how the service responds to foster care recruitment, it is not responding consistently and quickly enough, resulting in prospective foster carers 'dropping out' of the assessment process. This has been the situation over a number of years and is extremely concerning given we are about to commission CAN Digital Solutions to support the service with a marketing recruitment campaign, where all the evidence would suggest the number of applications to foster will increase. The service needs to be in a place where it can respond timeously to fostering assessments. The service needs to identify social workers who can undertake specific pieces of work on an ad hoc basis. Efforts are underway to do so.

Residential Care – Whilst the open market is offering some reasonable options in terms of potential domestic properties that can be repurposed as Children’s Houses, recruitment and training of staff will take time as it is dependent on employment market forces. The Children’s Houses will take cognisance of this with the service looking at locations that give the greatest chance of having an available workforce.

Workstream: Digital Solutions and Commissioning

In summary, current implementation activity is progressing, though several challenges continue to shape the pace and clarity of delivery. The planning phase has required several iterations, reflecting both the complexity of the programme and the detailed work needed to align planning assumptions, contractual commitments and delivery expectations. Supplier resourcing pressures, including limited availability of the allocated project manager across multiple projects, have at times affected the level of detail and consistency in planning documentation and contributed to shorter notification periods for some activities. Nonetheless, constructive engagement continues, and iterative improvements are being made as both teams work to refine the implementation plan to the required standard. In parallel, Highland’s responsibilities – particularly around validating system configuration, completing business process mapping, ensuring staff availability for workshops and future UAT, and progressing data cleansing – remain significant and require ongoing coordination across services. These combined factors highlight the importance of sustained joint planning, clear communication, and proactive risk management to support a smooth transition into the next phase of implementation.

9.2 **My Highland Future**

Portfolio Summary and Key Changes

My Highland Future Portfolio is a region-wide skills and workforce programme designed to prepare the Highlands for future economic growth. It creates a coordinated lifelong learning system that supports children, young people, families and adults to understand local opportunities and access clear pathways into work. Through universal, targeted and intensive programmes – backed by strong employer partnerships, data-driven planning and aligned resources – the plan aims to grow local talent, attract new skills to the region, and build a sustainable, inclusive and future-ready workforce.

Going forward, the work undertaken by the portfolio will become part of the wider Workforce North Co-Investment Fund agreed at Full Council in March 2026. The Co-investment Fund is endorsed by Scottish Ministers to bring industry and public partners together to expand and upskill the workforce across the region ahead of major investment, particularly in renewable energy. The Council has committed £1.6M to Workforce North, comprising £1.2M in match funding to stimulate employer-led workforce development and £402,000 to establish and resource the dedicated posts required to manage and deliver the programme effectively. The fund also has £2M of seed funding from Skills Development Scotland, creating a platform to leverage further local authority and private-sector investment across the region, aimed at expanding, upskilling, and strengthening the regional workforce.

The My Highland Future portfolio is broken down into 3 workstreams – Universal, Targeted and Intensive support – containing 9 programmes/projects.

Project: Employer Engagement & Job Opportunities

Highlights

The Highland Employer Charter was launched in June 2025. There are now over 20 organisations enrolled in across Caithness, Cromarty Firth, Inverness, Strathspey and Badenoch, representing over 5000 Highland residents in employment, across 7 skill sectors. The charter has also developed an online digital platform to support knowledge exchange and highland-based vacancies from local 'Employers of Choice'. Work is also ongoing to establish sector skills boards across Construction, Care, Engineering and Hospitality/Tourism to support industry input into current skill shortages and training opportunities in the region.

Barriers / Challenges

The rate of expansion and interest in the Charter due to its success has highlighted capacity issues in the current team which would require expansion as the Highland Employer Charter becomes 'business as usual'. This has been addressed through the provision of recurring revenue funding approved through the Council's budget in March 2026.

Project: School Curriculum and Business Links

Highlights

A Call-to-Action event in November 2026 brought together around one hundred employers, secondary headteachers and partners to explore workforce needs and opportunities. Secondary subject teachers are now reflecting on how industry relevance can be strengthened within subject delivery. Employers have attended follow up events for Care and Hospitality to help shape priorities for the establishment of sector skills boards.

A Highland Foundation Apprenticeship Steering Group has been established to provide strategic leadership, support implementation, promote parity of esteem across pathways, and report into the Workforce North Partnership forum. We currently have analysis of school leadership surveys that has strengthened understanding of curriculum gaps and informed planning for potential future Foundation Apprenticeship expansion, including exploring in-school delivery models.

Strong progress has been made in developing improvements to curricular pathways and support for young people focusing on post-school destinations. An Accelerated Degree Pathway developed in conjunction with UHI Inverness has allowed 26 sixth year pupils to complete an HNC, which is equivalent to Year 1 undergraduate degree course, with half progressing directly into further HNC or Year 2-degree study post school. Uptake has increased significantly for 2025/26, with 43 young people applying, 37 being accepted, and 29 now studying across ten HNC courses. Joint planning with UHI Inverness is helping to ensure these pathways are promoted consistently across Highland schools.

The School-Based Targeted Interventions workstream has established a strong foundation this year. A one-year pilot study funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund enabled Youth Support Officers to be deployed in 4 secondary schools who have been using informal learning opportunities to support improved engagement for a cohort of young people who have low levels of attendance. This project continues until September 2026, and learning from it will be used to consider how this approach can be used across Highland.

Barriers / Challenges

Within Accelerated Degree Pathways, awareness and promotion of the pathway remain uneven across Highland schools, though this is gradually improving through strengthened partnership working with UHI Inverness.

For Foundation Apprenticeships, curriculum gaps and inequitable access across schools remain ongoing challenges. There is also continued uncertainty around future national funding models for Foundation Apprenticeships delivery. This risk is being managed through proactive engagement with training providers and college partners via a Highland Foundation Apprenticeships Steering Group.

Project: Council Future Workforce

Highlights

Following the successful 2025 pilot of 7 paid summer placements, 2026 will deliver 80 placements across Highland Council, NHS Highland and partner organisations. A quarterly survey of new starts now provides insight to improve recruitment and induction. Succession planning tools and guidance are available to all managers. The Council's Modern Apprenticeship programme remains strong with 138 placements in 2025–26, and the aim is to expand the offering in the coming year. New guidance on qualified pathways and a revised secondment policy strengthen career development and workforce flexibility. Recruitment data reporting has also improved, identifying hard-to-fill posts by area.

Barriers / Challenges

Despite implementing varied recruitment approaches, the Highland Council still faces challenges in filling certain posts, either because of specialised skill requirements or location-based difficulties. We remain committed to identifying and implementing creative strategies to develop staff to address succession planning as well as to attract new employees to Highland Council.

9.3 **Reconfiguring our Asset Base**

Workstream: Single Property Service

Project: New Trades Framework

- Property and Housing teams have been working with Procurement to develop a tender for Inner Moray Firth which will focus on value for money, customer service, good contractor performance, and providing opportunities for local contractors to join the framework. The tender documents are being finalised with Procurement and are scheduled to be issued within the next few weeks.
- Provisional work and analysis have commenced on the second phase of the project which will involve widening the framework to rural areas. As with the tender for Inner Moray Firth, there will be a focus on ensuring that the specification is geared towards attracting local contractors best placed to deliver efficiently and to best value within the rural communities.

Project: Strategic Asset Management

- Approval of the Strategic Asset Management Plan to standardise the approach to managing and consolidating assets for the provision of services across the Council and with partner organisations.
- Re-establishment of the Highland Property Partnership with a renewed focus on opportunities to improve and consolidate public service provision across Highland communities.
- Progression of the Depot Transformation Project including the assessment of options for future provision in the Dingwall area linked to the wider asset review work that has been carried out and the Council's Future Operating Model.
- Close alignment with the Council's Future Operating Model to help shape and modernise the design of Council workplaces and public service provision.

Project: Terra Tracker

The Terra Tracker project will move to closure in line with the two-year pilot ending March 2026. The Project Team has continued to make significant progress in producing its outputs and continued to assist various services and Projects such as Pathfinder and Housing. Project closure activity will look to ensure the data and processes defined through the project will transition to business as usual.

Project: Learning Estate Strategy

An update on the Learning Estate Strategy that was approved in February 2025 will be reported to the Education Committee meeting in June 2026. This will report on the annual updates of the school roll forecasts, core facts information on the extent, condition, suitability and sufficiency of our learning estate, along with progress on a range of strategic initiatives that have been developed since February 2025.

Workstream: Highland Investment Plan

Project: Community Pods

- Appointment of Tier 1 Contractors and design team consultants and commencement of design and planning work on each of the 7 projects to be delivered in partnership with Hub North Scotland Ltd (at Beauly, Charleston, Dingwall, Fortrose, Inverness High, Thurso and Tornagrain), along with continued progress on the new build at Dunvegan.
- Progress on the new build projects that will receive revenue funding totalling over £73M over 25 years from the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Programme, including completion of the new Tain Campus, continued progress on the new Nairn Academy that is due to be operational in August 2026, and construction work due to start on the new Broadford Primary in April 2026.
- Approval of HIP funding totalling £3.8M for several community, leisure and sports facilities projects in Invergordon, Inverness and Tain.
- The development of a Community Benefits Plan and consideration of the potential development of a Construction Skills Academy, all to maximise the outcomes from the major investment in the Highlands through the HIP and create a legacy that helps to transform the regional economy.

- Progression of the place-based asset review to develop a masterplan for Thurso, including community and public engagement events and the establishment of the Thurso Transformation Delivery Group comprising a range of private and public sector partners.
- Commencement of the place-based asset reviews in South-East Sutherland.
- Preparation of Area Asset Reviews and an Asset Status Tracker for each of Highland's sub-regions, summarising and simplifying the options for improving and consolidating assets.

Project: Void-Plus Policy

- The Void-Plus Policy has been working well and has targeted hard-to-let properties in Caithness. The rate of refusals has reduced from 10% to 3%.
- The allocation of properties brought up to Void-Plus standard has attracted applicants in greater housing need, successfully ensuring that we are making the best use of available stock. It has also reduced the number of refusals of housing which previously delayed re-letting and created additional administrative work for the local housing officers.

Project: Affordable Housing / Housing Challenge

- The Highland Housing Challenge Partnership Action Plan was agreed by Council in June 2025 focusing on three key themes – increasing finance, increasing land and increasing developer capacity.
- Delivery of the core affordable housing programme is on track to deliver against targets. This was 499 units as of 31 March 2026.
- Work to develop a revised Housing Need and Demand Assessment commenced and is on target to complete by June 2026 which will inform future housing need.
- A Financial Strategy for the Housing Revenue Account was agreed, setting out the approach to both maintain and improve existing properties, address the HRA debt and grow the number of Council properties for those needing social housing.
- Discussions have been ongoing with Scottish National Investment Bank and other financial providers to seek to develop new joint venture investment models for housing delivery.
- The Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Non-Domestic Rates Investment Plan has been developed, with housing proposed as one of the key early investment areas.
- A new Integrated Housing Delivery Service was launched, providing one-to-one support to developers to overcome any challenges or issues to ensure timely consideration and delivery of planning permissions.
- Work has progressed on developing three masterplan consent areas with the governance and process for progressing masterplan consent areas agreed at E&I in May 2025 and three preferred sites – at Essich Road, Embo and Ardersier – agreed to progress to next stage in November 2025. A fourth site is to be identified for the west coast. Public consultation is now complete with

feedback received being assessed and a report due to E&I committee in May.

- As part of the Social Value Charter, work is progressing with SSEN to delivery legacy housing as part of the transmission update process. SSEN have agreed to deliver 500 additional properties, of which 60% will be for affordable housing. In addition, SSEN has agreed the funding arrangements around refurbishment of 18 hard-to-let properties in Caithness which will be leased to SSEN workers and then returned to mainstream housing supply at the end of the lease period.
- Work to develop the Council's mid-market rent model commenced and is on course for being operational by 1st April 2027. An update on progress is included within the Highland Housing Challenge update elsewhere on this agenda, with the target for a Council decision on implementation being considered at December Council.

Project: In-house Bus Service

- The In-House Bus team was established in January 2023 with 12 drivers and 12 vehicles to support cost containment within our School and Public Transport contracts.
- Since 2023 the team has grown and supported Highland Communities being connected with Public Transport due to services being ceased by a commercial operator.
- As of April 2026, the In-House Bus team deploys 28 drivers and operates a fleet of 28 with further growth noted for August 2026 to a fleet size of 30.
- Comparison of tender prices from external providers vs. the in-house bus operation indicated that a saving from cost avoidance, operating costs, and overheads of c.£2.0M was achieved by bringing those routes in-house.

Project: Roads and Infrastructure Improvements Programme

- Asset management system: a review of requirements across the Operations service (Roads, Amenities and Street Lighting) has been carried out and demonstrations from software providers for asset management systems are arranged for June 2026.
- Digitalisation of the manual job card process is progressing with a full analysis of the current job card process completed. Proposals for short- and longer-term digitalisation are being progressed.
- Route optimisation winter gritting forms a central element of The Highland Council's Operations Redesign Programme (a component of the council's wider Delivery Plan) and aims to modernise winter service operations through the introduction of route-optimisation software and in-cab tablet devices. The business case has been finalised, and it is awaiting final approval to progress.
- The redesign activity includes a project to install AI-enabled camera systems, offering a modern, efficient way to capture supplementary road and asset data internally, using vehicle-mounted cameras. The business case has been finalised, and it is awaiting final approval to progress.

9.4 Net Zero Energy, Investment & Innovation

Workstream: Net Zero Delivery

Project: Net Zero Programme

Highlights

The Net Zero Programme represents a growing and increasingly mature portfolio of projects being delivered across the organisation to reduce corporate emissions, enhance operational efficiency and resilience, and deliver long-term financial savings and cost avoidance. The Programme also plays a critical role in identifying and managing material corporate risks associated with energy, climate impacts, and regulatory change.

During 2025/2026, 18 projects were approved for inclusion within the Net Zero Programme, demonstrating continued momentum and expansion of a coordinated, cross-service delivery approach.

Two examples of approved projects include:

- Collaborative Staff Survey – Shared Evidence Base: The survey, completed by 1,380 staff, establishes a single, organisation wide dataset to inform planning, prioritisation and strategic decision-making across services & Delivery Plan workstreams.
- Kingussie High School Pilot – A cross-service project team is piloting targeted interventions to reduce waste and carbon emissions at the school, including:
 - A trial of reusable lunch containers to replace single-use packaging. Research suggests this may be one of the first school-based reuse trials of its kind in Scotland.
 - Piloting of internal recycling infrastructure to understand operational requirements, feasibility, and cost implications.
 - Initial findings indicate that, if enhanced recycling infrastructure were deployed across all Highland schools, an estimated 37 tCO₂e could be avoided annually by diverting recyclable materials from general waste. The outcomes of the pilot will directly inform a business case for wider implementation across the school estate.

Financial Efficiencies:

The Programme has delivered £250k of efficiency savings relating to fleet and staff travel, enabled through a data-driven approach to understanding demand, usage patterns and optimisation opportunities. This demonstrates the Programmes' ability to translate carbon reduction activity into tangible financial benefits.

Climate Adaptation:

The development and approval of Highland Council's Adaptation Strategy have established a long-term framework for improving organisational and regional resilience to climate impacts.

Highland Council has also contributed to the development of the Highland Climate Change Risk & Opportunity Assessment, providing a robust region-wide evidence base to inform decision-making, support adaptation planning, and strengthen the case for future investment and resourcing.

In parallel, a strategic paper on climate resilience and adaptation has been brought to Council (March) positioning adaptation as a core corporate priority, essential to managing future financial risks, protecting critical infrastructure and safeguarding frontline service delivery.

Funding opportunities:

The team works to identify and match funding opportunities to services where funding is aligned to the region's Net zero ambition. The table below highlights the funding identified and opportunities taken forward with the team leading on bid writing. It should be noted the funding listed here is in addition to funding secured under Energy Efficient Homes detailed later in the report.

Total Funding Identified:	Total Uptake from Services:	Total Unsuccessful bids:	Total Funding secured:
£20,299,165	£9,299,158	£2,484,784	£6,814,37

This represents a 73% success rate in bids submitted.

Barriers / Challenges

Cross-service engagement and delivery alignment: While the programme continues to expand, consistent engagement across all services remains a challenge.

A key focus of the strategic paper presented to Council in March is to address this through strengthened cross-service governance and the development of a sustainable, long-term delivery model, moving beyond short-term project-based approaches.

Further work is now underway to develop these proposals, with the intention of bringing forward a structured delivery model that supports sustained programme coordination, resource alignment and long-term impact. Any resulting proposals will be presented to Council for future consideration.

Project: Heat Networks

Based on the work completed to date with the Scottish Heat Network Unit, an outline business case for the West Bank heat network is being developed for consideration in the next funding round.

Zero Waste Scotland, the Scottish Futures Trust and the Scottish Government have presented summary findings from the West Bank heat network study to Council officers. This included consideration of the integration of solar photovoltaic (PV) generation and a wider options appraisal.

The inclusion of renewable generation has demonstrated the potential to deliver cost savings. Modelling carried out by the team has demonstrated the ability to achieve the lowest unit cost heat produced on any network operational or in development in Scotland today. Initial analysis indicates solar generation and storage, alongside existing renewable sources, could make a significant contribution to the network and reduce demand on the energy centre.

Workstream: Energy Estate

Project: Energy Efficient Council

Highlights

The programme continues to identify and evidence significant investable opportunities across the Council estate.

To date, 203 Energy & Net Zero surveys have been completed, generating 195 detailed reports and identifying over 2,000 recommendations. Early delivery has already secured £179k annual savings and 181 tCO₂e reduction through low-cost interventions including heating optimisation, behaviour change, and lighting upgrades.

Key Achievements:

- Solar PV Programme:
 - £344k revenue (FY25/26 to Q3) and £173k FIT income (recovered as a one off)
 - New systems delivered; 1MW pipeline identified for 2026/27
- Behaviour & Operational Change:
 - Council-wide engagement re-established (schools, FM, BMS optimisation)
- Strategic Integration:
 - Net Zero alignment embedded within HIP and Community Hub programmes
 - Development of a Net Zero Design Specification

Project: Energy Efficient Homes

The Programme, delivered through the Climate Change and Energy Team, is targeted at households most at risk of fuel poverty, with a particular focus on those living in remote, rural and off-gas areas across Highland.

A fabric-first approach was adopted to maximise benefits and impacts, deliver measurable energy efficiency improvements, and improve Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings, often working towards EPC Band C.

In 2025/26 the Energy Efficient Homes Programme leveraged circa £16.4 million of external funding to deliver retrofit energy efficiency improvements to 722 domestic properties (mixed tenure) across the Highland region. This included significant Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding, alongside Scottish Government Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme (EES:ABS) grant funding and SSE Renewables funding for private households.

Tenure	External Funding	Number of Properties Improved	Number of Energy Efficiency Improvements	% of properties with EPC rating of C or above
Council Properties	£7,218,171.38	374	746	87%
Owner Occupier & Private Rented	£9,223,426.29	348	1,024	88%

ECO funding has enabled the Council to significantly increase the scale of energy efficiency improvements across the region and tackle some of the most energy inefficient homes, providing significant benefits to householders including warmer homes which improves living conditions. Without the external funding it is unlikely that these works would have been undertaken.

Where possible, a place-based approach was adopted to maximise benefits and value across communities. This involved cross-service working, particularly with Housing, alongside external engagement.

At the time of writing, a number of Energy Performance Certificates for Council-owned properties remained outstanding and the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme (EES:ABS) programme had not yet been completed. As a result, full performance and output information was not available.

Workstream: Investment and Innovation

Highlights

A commercial partner, EZO, was appointed in October 2025 to deliver the North of Scotland EV Infrastructure project. Migration of existing charge points from ChargePlace Scotland to the EZO platform is underway, alongside development of Pathfinder 1 sites. The project has generated £150,000 income in FY 2025/26 and establishes a scalable delivery model that is projected to unlock over £300 million of external economic development over the lifetime of the programme.

Phase 1 of the Regional Zero Emissions Heavy Duty Vehicle (HDV) Development Project was successfully completed in March 2026, funded through Transport Scotland's ZE HDV Skills Challenge Fund. The project delivered 11 engagement workshops across Highland communities, improving awareness of zero-emission HDV career pathways and identifying key barriers to fleet decarbonisation. Findings have been captured to inform Council planning and national policy development.

A planning application has been submitted (February 2026) for a 9.9MW utility-scale solar development at Longman, representing a key step in progressing the Council's renewable energy pipeline and future income-generating assets. Community engagement has been completed for the Tain North and Tain South utility-scale solar PV projects, with the Common Good consultation closing in March 2026. Responses are currently under review, with a report scheduled for Committee consideration in May 2026.

Phase 1 of the Investment Pipeline project has been completed, establishing the foundations of the Highland Clean Energy Investment Fund. The Fund is designed to aggregate capital from public, private and community investors, enabling investment in regional renewable energy projects and ensuring that long-term financial returns are retained and reinvested within Highland communities.

Barriers / Challenges

While the majority of energy efficiency measures have been accepted, alignment with capital and maintenance programmes has not yet been fully realised to date. This is reflected in the relatively low proportion of works delivered against the savings identified. Work is ongoing to accelerate delivery.

9.5 Corporate Solutions

Portfolio Summary and Key Changes

The Corporate Solutions Portfolio comprises 15 projects delivering cross-Council transformation, 4 of which have now completed. 3 new projects, as detailed below, have been added since the last annual Delivery Plan report. The projects are organised into 3 workstreams – Systems & Process Innovation, Organisational Development and People & Finance Systems.

Highlights

3 projects were completed in 2025/26:

- Service Improvement Solutions – digital transformation business cases completed with external consultants TVI and now sitting with relevant senior officers across the Council for delivery.
- One Council Financials – TechnologyOne CiA corporate finance system and Altair pension system live with projects formally closed. Budget dashboards have now been delivered which provide budget holders with real time access to the information they need.
- HR, Payroll & Pensions – new pensions, payroll and user portal fully live. An options appraisal, extensive preparation and procurement for corporate HR & Payroll system have been completed. This work was completed on time and under budget. The project team are now working with the system supplier to transform HR & Payroll processes and a new project has been added to manage this work.
- The Integrated Impact Assessments project completed in 2024/25..

3 projects added to the portfolio:

- Investors in People – the Corporate Cluster received IIP Standard Accreditation, and the creation of an action plan is progressing well. Rollout is in progress and on target to other Service Clusters. To date, 1,674 staff have completed the IIP survey (66% of all staff surveyed). 189 have taken part in qualitative discussions with assessors. Implementation of action plans will support continuous improvement in staff experience, encouraging innovation and positioning the Council as an employer of choice.
- Talentlink Recruitment System Improvements – changes underway to reduce admin in the recruitment process and make better use of functionality within the system.

- HR & Payroll Transformation – delivery of the major transformation of the HR and Payroll system, following completion of preparation and procurement activities. This will deliver process efficiencies, with agreed savings of £0.3M over 3 years and ensure that managers have easy access to accurate HR data.

The updates on the remaining projects are as follows:

- My Council Programme – highly successful launch of new Council website in February 2026, with an updated design, revised content and significantly enhanced navigation and search function. The website also now meets the latest accessibility guidelines. Independent assessment of the accessibility of the website has shown a substantial and measurable improvement with a move from the 224th ranked council website for accessibility to 24th place, and 3rd place in Scotland. This project was delivered on time and under budget. Work is now underway with the next phase to deliver an online Council Tax portal.
- Data Foundations – corporate data platform configured and property-based data being incorporated from line of business systems. Exemplar dashboard due to go live in August 2026.
- Digital Foundations – Digital Champions network launched. Digital Strategy being refreshed in line with the revised national strategy. Pilot underway to extend digital access to frontline workers.
- Future Operating Model – Programme Manager in place, recruitment to area-based teams has started, and demonstrator projects are in progress. Additional funding agreed for this project in March has supported the acceleration of delivery, including maximising commercial opportunities, and a mobile service unit due to pilot this financial year. The FOM is laying the foundations for more accessible, joined up and local services and decentralisation of jobs.
- Hybrid Working – a new policy and supporting guidance have been approved to support consistent application of hybrid practices, and a baseline established for current levels of hybrid working, allowing for the evaluation of progress. This will inform the development of new workspaces and allow ongoing evaluation as the Council moves to a more agile, less centralised model.
- Food in Schools – the Food in Schools project aims to increase the uptake of school meals and reduce waste. The four areas of work for consideration in this are:
 - Take-up rates of free school meals
 - Income generation
 - Operating model
 - Food provision
- An extensive stakeholder consultation survey was undertaken in May/June 2025 resulting in more than 5,000 responses.
- Informed by the consultation responses, and led by the Redesign Board, a 10-point action plan was agreed in November 2025 and is now in the process of implementation. Highlights are as follows:

- 5009 survey responses received from parents, pupils and school staff to stakeholder consultation survey in May and June 2025.
- 10-point Action Plan developed, based on survey responses and elected Members' insights. Implementation of the plan started in November 2025.
- Redesign Board Working Group established to progress the Action Plan.
- Locally procured venison trials started in some primary schools.
- Waste measurement process established and trials planned.
- Parental Engagement Strategy developed and initial communication with parents started in January 2026.
- A pupil-centric menu review pilot has been developed and will be piloted with S1-S3 pupils at Inverness High School in May 2026.

Barriers / Challenges

All the Corporate Solutions projects aim to transform how the Council operates and therefore face common risks relating to:

- The balance between change vs maintaining service operations
- Cultural resistance to change and lack of stakeholder buy-in
- Maintaining benefits delivery after projects have completed
- Attracting and retaining the required skilled resources to deliver change
- Managing significant transformation within a set budget

All risks are being managed effectively through project governance with oversight at the Portfolio Board, with none needing to be highlighted in this report.

To date, the projects have delivered on budget or under budget, and to expected quality. Any changes in milestone dates have been scrutinised and agreed at the Portfolio Board.

Savings Delivery: There has been slippage in relation to savings delivery on the Procurement project. Several factors have impacted this position, including:

- The relatively higher level of target for 2025/26 (being c£1.7m contrasted with annual targets ranging from £0.5M-£1.0M in prior years).
- Several one-off savings in prior years which increase the target for delivery in this year.
- The need to avoid overlap or double count with other savings plans, which has been a particular factor in 2025/26 given budget recovery activity in fleet with c£0.3M of savings to support the fleet recovery plan rather than attributed to the procurement project.
- Slippage in savings delivery with several significant savings being realised but providing only partial financial benefit in 2025/26, with it being 2026/27 before more significant financial impact will arise.

On a positive note, against the savings target for 2026/27 there is a pipeline of savings proposals and activity which exceed that target.

9.6 Income Generation

Highlights

- Review of Fees & Charges undertaken in accordance with the Charging Strategy (as approved by Corporate Resources Committee December 2024).
- As reported by Audit Scotland in January 2026, Highland Council performed positively in relation to income generation compared to all other Scottish Councils. The target for 2025/26 being achieved is further evidence of the positive impacts that the reviews and supporting Charging policy can deliver.
- Unique Visitor Experiences:
 - The project at the Old Man of Storr site continues to perform positively and further growth is forecasted when Phase 2 is complete (summer 2026). Funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (£550k), the extension will see retail space double and an impressive multi-purpose to support a range of local events, including weddings. This project currently supports 6 fulltime posts and a range of local suppliers and local products. This project also enables a range of environmental works to be undertaken to support the site, including £40,000 per annum for path maintenance and investment. Annual reports will continue to be taken to the Isle of Skye and Raasay Area Committee. The first full year of trading reported in September 2025.
 - Building on the success of The Storr and led by the Redesign Board further projects are being investigated with final Business Cases due to be considered by the Redesign Board in June 2026.
 - Significant work has been undertaken to progress the delivery of black waste disposal at a range of sites across Highland. Early sites for roll out are at Kingussie, Dunvegan, and North Kessock, which are expected to go live in summer 2026.

In addition to the 14 waste bins (1100 litre) provided at sites across Highland, 7 sites will also see enclosures provided during 2026, with the aim of continuing to provide infrastructure to encourage and support sustainable tourism and for the benefit of local communities.

Barriers / Challenges

Procurement activities are ongoing to identify suitable suppliers for the provision of Black Waste facilities. Unfortunately, the initial procurement process did not result in any appropriate suppliers being identified. The second procurement process has been completed with a supplier recently appointed meaning that work can progress as quickly as possible given that a plan is already established for each site to identify construction dates and final Scottish Water inspections, which are necessary before each site can become operational.

10. Engagement

10.1 *Our Future Highland* Roadshows

Delivered by the Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executives, and supported by Chief Officers, 48 staff roadshows have been delivered during 2025/26 across Highland, engaging 2,601 employees.

- 10.2 The majority of sessions were delivered in person, with 22 delivered virtually. This includes 19 virtual sessions delivered to 1,298 school staff during the September 2025 in-service (INSET) day.
- 10.3 As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to staff engagement, staff roadshows and virtual sessions are now embedded as a business-as-usual approach to communication and engagement across the organisation. Feedback continues to be very positive, with further detail provided in **Appendix 6**.
- 10.4 A refreshed My Future Highland slide deck has been developed for Phase 2 of the staff roadshows, which commenced in March 2026. This phase focuses on the next stage of the Council's delivery and transformation journey, supporting staff understanding of priorities and how these translate into action.
- 10.5 The updated deck covers key themes including the Highland Investment Plan, housing and infrastructure investment, workforce and skills, net zero and renewables, and place-based socio-economic transformation. The material is also being used at community engagement events, supporting greater alignment between internal and external messaging.
- 10.6 A Member briefing on the Phase 2 slides took place on 2 April 2026. Members found the content informative and helpful, welcomed the stronger focus on delivery, and highlighted the importance of joined-up planning for housing and infrastructure, community wellbeing in rural areas, and clear Member–Officer communication. This feedback will inform ongoing work and future engagement activity.

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 30 April 26

Authors: Allan Gunn – Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate
Kate Lackie – Assistant Chief Executive – People
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APPENDICES

- 1 – Financial Forecasts
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Appendix 1a – Financial Forecasts

Portfolio	Project	Income/Saving	Annual Target	Year-end Forecast Deliver
CS	Project: 1% Efficiency Target	1% Efficiency Target: Savings - FY 24-27	£985,000	£985,000
CS	Project: Efficiencies from Procurement	Efficiencies from Procurement: New SWAN contract - FY 25-27	£162,000	£162,000
CS	Project: Efficiencies from Procurement	Efficiency from Procurement: saving opportunities - FY 24-28	£1,771,000	£908,000
CS	Project: Food in Schools: Delivering Sustainability	Food in Schools : Savings - FY 24-27	£262,000	£262,000
CS	Future Operating Model: Total Project Savings	Future Operating Model: Savings - FY 24-27	£415,000	£415,000
CS	Project: Service Improvement Solutions	Service Improvement Solutions: Savings - FY 25-28	£222,000	£222,000
IG	Project: Campervans/Motorhomes	Campervans/ Motorhomes: Income Forecast 25/26	£250,000	£8,760
IG	Project: Fair Charging and Commercialisation Strategy	Fees & Charges: Income Forecast FY 25-28	£3,176,000	£3,176,000
IG	Project: Unique Highland Visitor Experiences	Unique Highland Visitor Exp: Income Forecast - FY 25-26	£150,000	£150,000
MHF	Project: Digital School	Efficiency Savings: DSM adjustments and digital learning - FY 24-27	£1,300,000	£1,300,000
NZ	Project: Utility Scale Solar PV Programme	Income Generation: Commercial Scale Solar PV - FY 26-27	£0	
NZ	Project: Energy Efficient Council Programme	Asset Review: Energy Efficient Council Programme: Savings - FY 24-27	£300,000	£194,957
NZ	Net Zero Programme - total project savings	Efficiency Savings: Efficiencies within fleet and cross service savings across Car Club, Grey Fleet and private hire - FY 25-28	£150,000	£150,000
NZ	Net Zero Programme - total project savings	Efficiency Savings: Staff travel utilisation, grey fleet and car club - FY 25-28	£100,000	£100,000
NZ	Project: Battery Storage System - former Torvean Quarry	Income Generation: Battery Storage - FY 24-27	£230,000	£0
NZ	Project: EV Infrastructure	Income Generation: EV Infrastructure: Income - FY 25-27	£100,000	£100,000
NZ	Project: Solar PV Commercial Estate	Income Generation: Solar Panels – Commercial Estate - FY 25-27	£200,000	£0
NZ	Project: Solar PV Council Estate Programme	Income Generation: Solar PV Council Estate Programme: Income - FY 24-27	£1,598,000	£505,283
PCS	Project: Home in Highland	Children's Services: Family First Approach: Savings FY 24-28	£700,000	£200,000
PCS	Project: Efficiencies from Social Work Procurement	Efficiencies from Social Work Procurement: Savings FY 24-27	£200,000	£200,000
PCS	Project: Shifting the Balance of Care & Accommodation Solutions	Operating Model:Adult Social Care: Savings FY 24-27	£7,000,000	£2,600,000
ROAB	Project: In-house Bus Service	In-house Bus Service: Cost Avoidance and Future Savings FY 24-27	£0	£130,000
ROAB	Strategic Asset Management: Total Project Savings	Accelerated Rationalisation of Offices & Depots - FY 24-27	£450,000	£148,929
ROAB	Single Public Estate - Total project savings	Asset Review: Demonstrator Projects - FY 24-27	£75,000	£0
ROAB	Project: Terra Tracker	Asset Review: Terra Tracker - FY 24-26	£205,000	£205,000
ROAB	Single Public Estate - Total project savings	Implement Network of Community Facilities for Services - FY 25-27	£250,000	£0
ROAB	Project: New Trades Framework	New Trades Framework - FY 25-27	£150,000	£150,000
Total	All Projects	All Income /Savings	£20,401,000	£12,272,929

Appendix 1b – Investment Forecasts

Portfolio	Project	Investment	Investment Balance (April 25)	Forecast Expenditure (25/26)
CS	Project: HR Payroll & Pensions	People & Finance Systems Programme: Investment: EMR	£775,945	£610,171
CS	Project: Data Foundations	Data Foundations: Investment : EMR	£577,678	£266,463
CS	Project: Digital Foundations	Digital Foundations: Investment FY 24-27 : EMR	£270,256	£200,000
CS	Project: Future Operating Model	Future Operating Model: Investment FY 24-26: EMR	£50,500	£0
CS	Project: Future Operating Model	Future Operating Model: Investment FY 25 : Recurring Budget	£500,000	£143,633
CS	Project: Investors in People	Investors In People (IIP): Investment FY 25-26: EMR	£154,500	£55,400
CS	Project: Investors in People	Investors in People: Investment FY 25 : Recurring Budget	£90,000	£57,459
CS	Project: My Council Programme	My Council Programme: Investment: EMR	£274,089	£256,389
CS	Project: Service Improvement Solutions	Service Improvement Solutions: Investment : EMR	£78,551	£72,755
IG	Project: Campervans/Motorhomes	Campervans/ Motorhomes: Investment Forecast : EMR	£750,000	£5,010
IG	Project: Unique Highland Visitor Experiences	Unique Highland Visitor Exp: Investment Forecast : EMR	£1,489,911	£248,733
MHF	Project: Digital School	Digital School: Investment: EMR	£291,860	£68,767
MHF	Project: School Curriculum & Business Links	Future Highland Workforce: Investment: EMR	£287,383	£192,621
NZ	Project: Heat Networks	Heat Networks: Investment: EMR	£47,075	£17,479
NZ	Project: Utility Scale Solar PV Programme	Utility Scale Solar PV: Investment: EGF	£99,245	£47,307
NZ	Project: Battery Storage System - former Torvean Quarry	Battery Storage: Investment: Capital	£1,000,000	£41,712
NZ	Project: Energy Efficient Council Programme	Energy Efficient Council Programme: Investment: EMR	£409,220	£90,000
NZ	Project: EV Infrastructure	EV Infrastructure: Investment: EGF	£104,397	£31,567
NZ	Project: Investment Pipeline	Investment Pipeline: INV/5 Renewable Energy 25-26: EMR	£2,000,000	£0
NZ	Project: Investment Pipeline	Investment Pipeline: Investment: EMR	£274,040	£107,160
NZ	Project: Net Zero Programme	Net Zero Programme Investment: EMR	£630,000	£238,000
NZ	Project: Solar PV Commercial Estate	Solar PV Commercial Estate: Investment: EMR	£164,242	£31,567
NZ	Project: Solar PV Council Estate Programme	Solar PV Council Estate Programme: Investment: EMR	£1,000,000	£406,099
PCS	Project: Shifting the Balance of Care & Accommodation Solutions	Adult Social Care: Investment: EMR	£12,125,183	£2,010,709
PCS	Project: Community Led Service Delivery	Community Led Service Delivery: Investment: EMR	£1,200,000	£311,869
PCS	Project: Home in Highland	Families First: Investment: EMR	£1,903,141	£1,199,141
PCS	Project: Home in Highland	Families First: Investment: Revenue	£250,000	£250,000
ROAB	Project: Terra Tracker	Terra Tracker: Investment: EMR & Capital Receipts	£205,000	£205,000
ROAB	Project: Strategic Asset Management	SAM - Increase Assets for Lease: Investment in new assets for lease: Capital	£200,000	£106,000
ROAB	Roads & Amenities Redesign	Investment: Budget 2025-26 - Pressures - Grounds Maintenance - Project Delivery: EMR	£100,000	£100,000
ROAB	Project: In-house Bus Service	In-house Bus Service: INV4 Investment: EMR	£1,000,000	£0
ROAB	Project: Roads and Infrastructure Improvements Programme	Road and Transport Programme: Investment: Capital	Investment is from within HIP Capital Plan	
ROAB	Project: Single Public Estate - New Area Community Pods	Single Public Estate: Investment: EMR	£270,909	£270,000
		TOTALS	£28,573,125	£7,641,011

**Appendix 2 – Alignment of Budget Savings & Investments to the Delivery Plan
Approved on March 5th 2026.**

Budget Ref	Investment Name	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	3 Year Total	Portfolio Alignment
INV/01	Poverty and Equality	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.500	CS
INV/02	Future Operating Model	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.500	CS - Future Operating Model
INV/03	Roads Revenue Maintenance	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.500	ROAB - Roads & Infrastructure Improvement Programme
INV4	Housing Challenge Fund	1.000	1.000	1.000	3.000	ROAB - Affordable Housing
INV9	My Highland Future	1.562	0.040	0.000	1.602	MHF
INV10	ASC cost recovery and transformation	7.000	0.000	0.000	7.000	PCS - Adult Social Care (Includes £1.2m from NDAS)
NDAS	Nuero Development Assessment (NDAS) Transformation	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	PCS - NDAS
Annex2 (c) - HRP	HRP (Human Resources & Payroll) Project implementation costs	0.926	0.000	0.000	0.926	Corporate Solutions - HRP Project
Annex2 (c) - Recovery Plan Support - Children's Services	Recovery Plan Support - Children's Services. Tapering down budget support as part of recovery plan actions to bring expenditure back into alignment with budget on a multi-year basis.	3.500	0.400	0.000	3.900	PCS
Total		15.488	1.440	1.000	17.928	

Budget Ref	Savings Name	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	3 Year Total	Portfolio Alignment
Strategic/5	Income Generation : Fees & charges set by THC	0.003	-0.169	0.79	0.624	IG - Fees & Charges
Corporate/6	Introduction of online billing; reduction in postages & related-overheads	0	0.02	0.02	0.04	CS - My Council Programme
Place/3	In House Bus Service - Route Optimisation	0.2	0.05	0.035	0.285	ROAB - In-house Bus Service Project
Place/8	Corran Ferry Fare Increase	0.135	0	0	0.135	ROAB - Roads & Infrastructure Improvement Programme (Corran Ferry)
Place/22	Restructure of Roads and Amenities	0	0.06	0	0.06	ROAB - Roads & Infrastructure Improvement Programme (Roads & Amenities)
Place/35	Commercial Leases Renegotiation	0.025	0.2	0.2	0.425	ROAB - Strategic Asset Management (Assets for Lease)
Place/34	Busco - Management Fee/Dividend	0.2	0	0	0.2	ROAB - In-house Bus Service Project
Total		0.563	0.161	1.045	1.769	

Appendix 3 – Breakdown of Filled Posts by Project

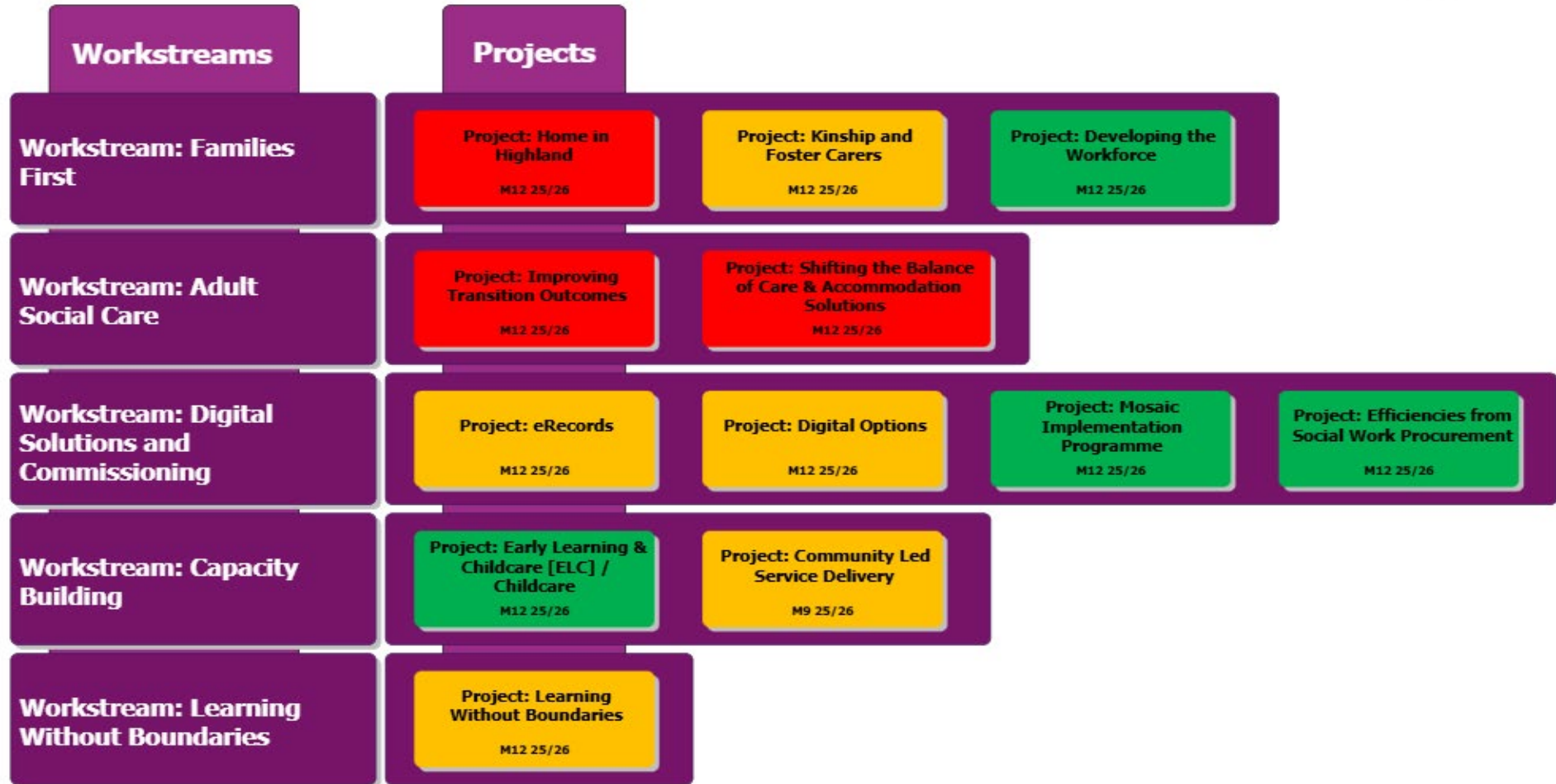
Portfolio	No. Posts
Corporate Solutions	16
Data Foundations	5
Digital Foundations	4
Future Operating Model	1
Talentlink Recruitment System Improvements/HR & Payroll Transformation	6
Income Generation	3
Whole Portfolio	3
My Highland Future	4
Cross Portfolio	4
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	3
All Projects	1
Utility Scale Solar PV, Battery Storage & Longman Green Energy Hub: JV	2
Person Centred Solutions	7
Accommodation Solutions; Shifting the Balance of Care & Improving Transition Outcomes	1
Adult Social Care	2
Developing the Workforce	1
Digital Options (& E Records)	1
Family First	1
Information Management Systems	1
Reconfiguring Our Asset Base	13
Terra Tracker	4
Whole Portfolio	9
PMO - Across All Portfolios	3
Whole Delivery Plan	3
Grand Total	49

Appendix 4 – Portfolio & Project Status for 25/26

Portfolio: Person Centred Solutions

Senior Responsible Officer:
Chief Officer

Portfolio Sponsor:
Assistant Chief Executive



Portfolio: My Highland Future

Senior Responsible Officer:
Chief Officer

Portfolio Sponsor:
Assistant Chief Executive



Workstreams

Projects

Workstream: My Highland Future - Universal

Project: Employer Engagement & Job Opportunities
M12 25/26

Project: School Curriculum & Business Links
M12 25/26

Project: Digital School
M12 25/26

Workstream: My Highland Future - Targeted

Project: Foundation & Modern Apprenticeships
M12 25/26

Project: Entrepreneur Development
M12 25/26

Project: Council Future Workforce
M12 25/26

Workstream: My Highland Future - Intensive

Project: School Based Interventions
M12 25/26

Project: CLD and Employability Support
M12 25/26

Project: Accelerated Degree Pathways
M12 25/26

Portfolio: Reconfiguring our Asset Base

Senior Responsible Officer:
Chief Officer

Portfolio Sponsor:
Assistant Chief Executive



Workstreams

Projects

Workstream: Single Property Service

Project: Migration of Property Assets and Property Resources

M12 25/26

Project: New Trades Framework

M12 25/26

Project: Strategic Asset Management

M12 25/26

Project: Terra Tracker

M12 25/26

Project: Develop a Learning Estate Strategy

M12 25/26

Workstream: Highland Investment Plan

Project: Improve Asset Condition/ Reduce Risk for General Fund Assets

M12 25/26

Project: Single Public Estate - New Area Community Pods

M12 25/26

Project: Affordable Housing Programme

M12 25/26

Project: Housing Void-Plus Policy

M12 25/26

Project: Roads and Infrastructure Improvements Programme

M12 25/26

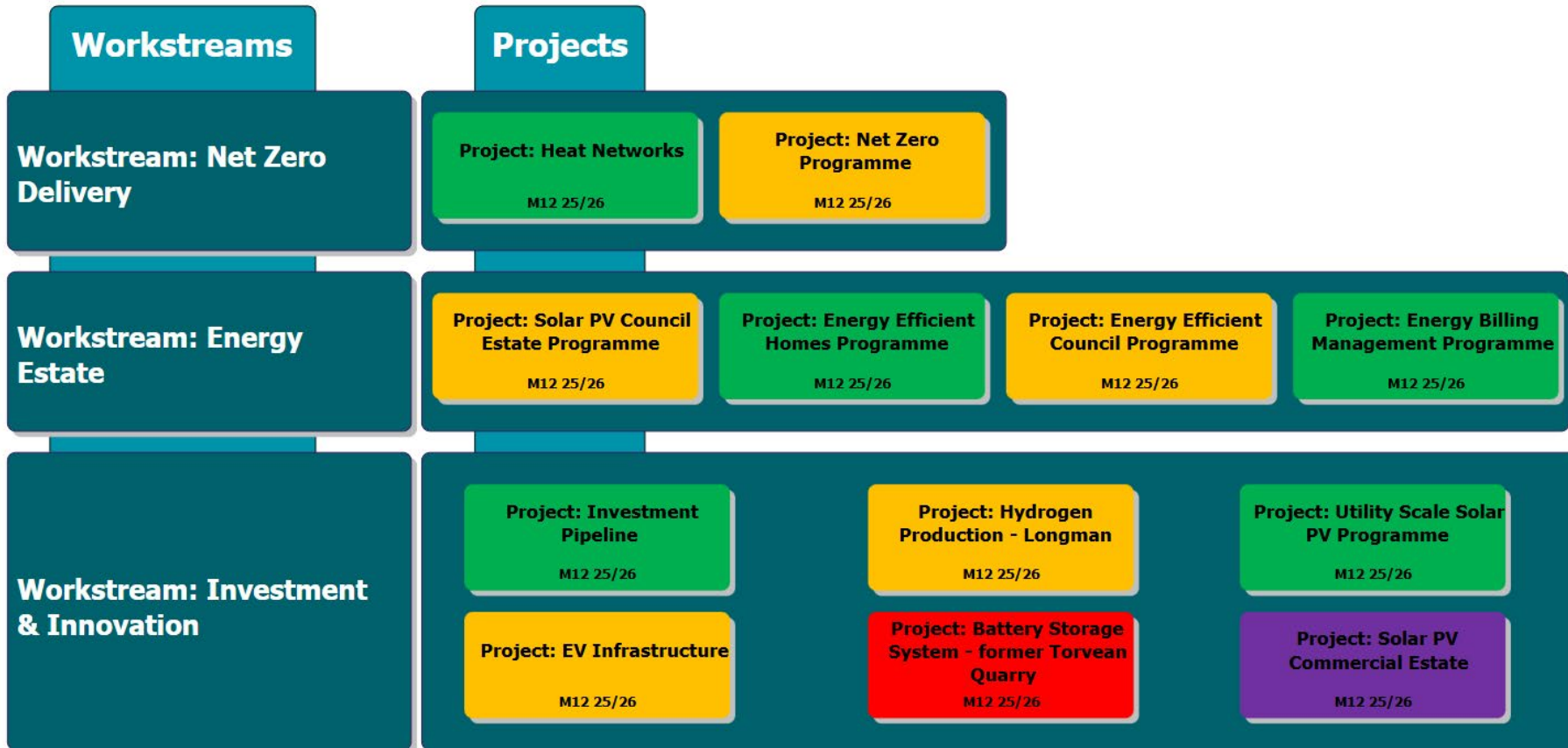
Project: In-house Bus Service

M12 25/26

Portfolio: Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation

Senior Responsible Officer:
Chief Officer

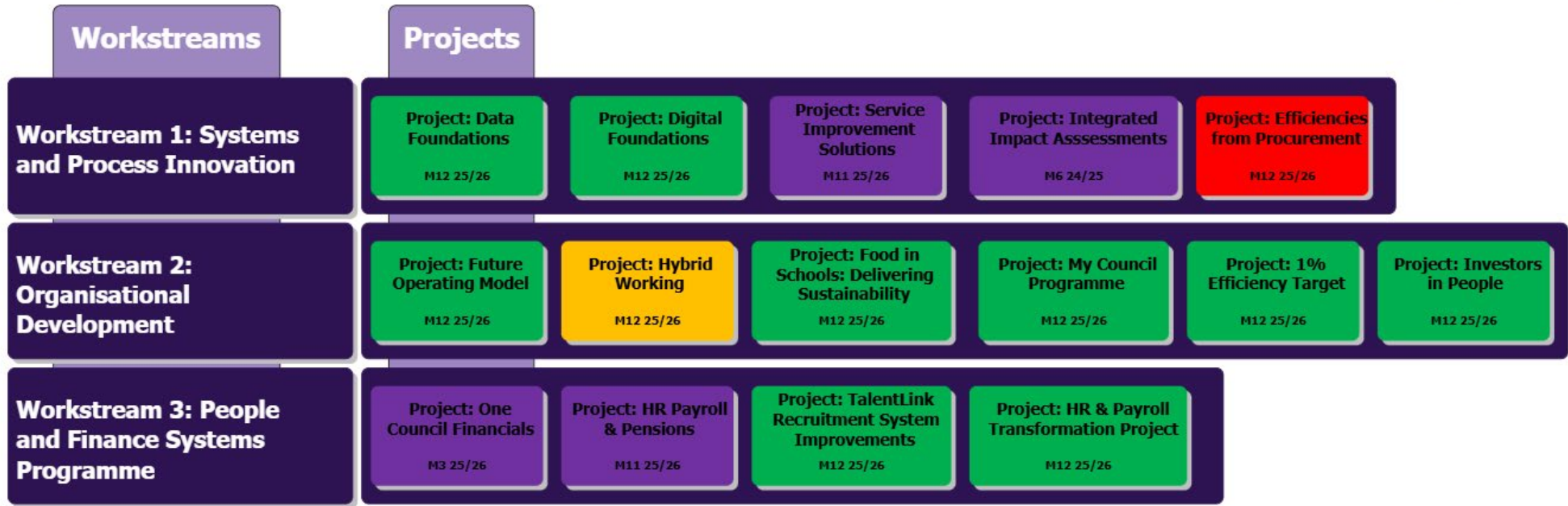
Portfolio Sponsor:
Assistant Chief Executive



Portfolio: Corporate Solutions

Senior Responsible Officer:
Chief Officer

Portfolio Sponsor:
Assistant Chief Executive



Portfolio: Income Generation

Senior Responsible Officer:
Chief Officer

Portfolio Sponsor:
Assistant Chief Executive

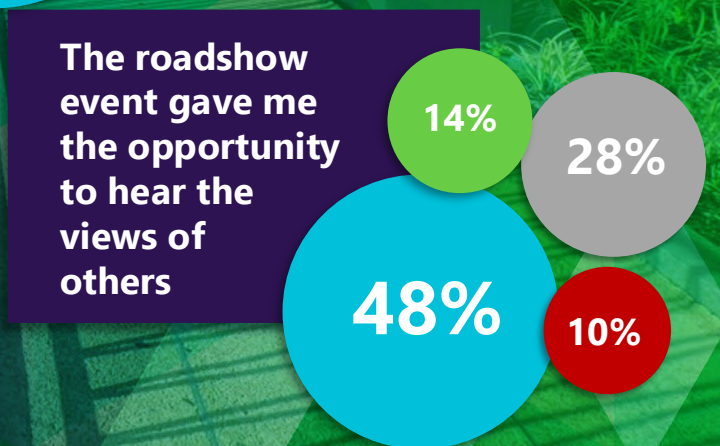
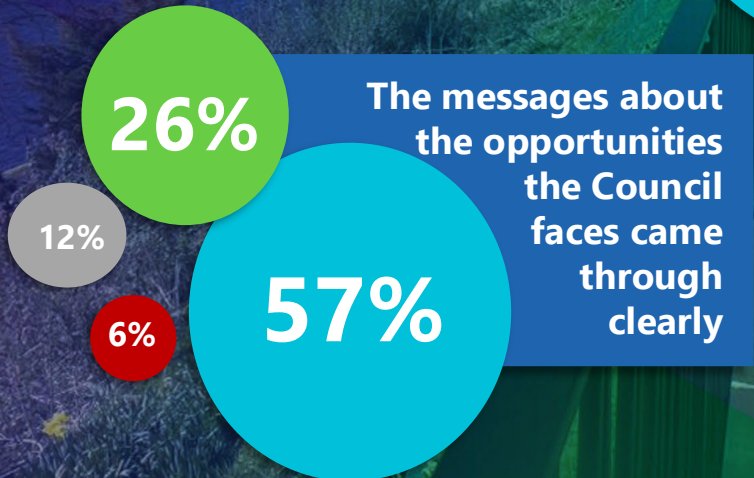
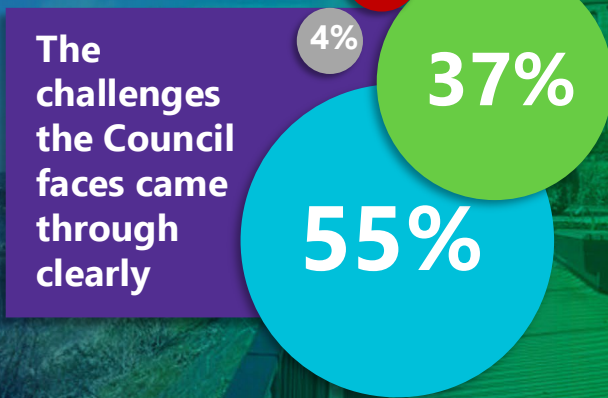
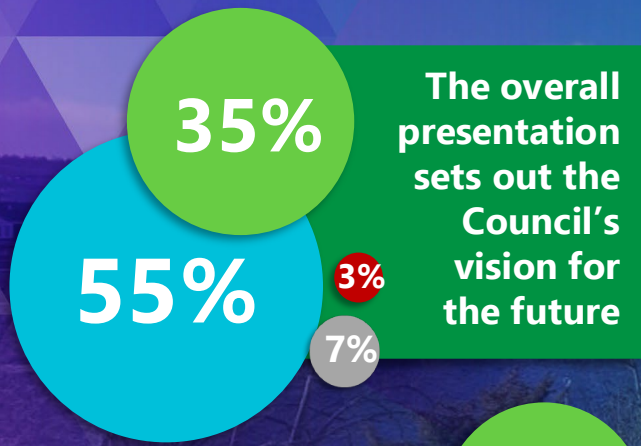
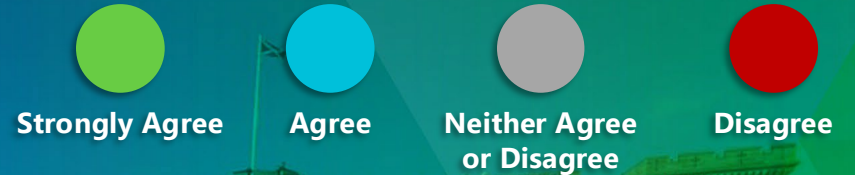


Appendix 5 - Operational Delivery Plan Reporting Schedule 2026-2027

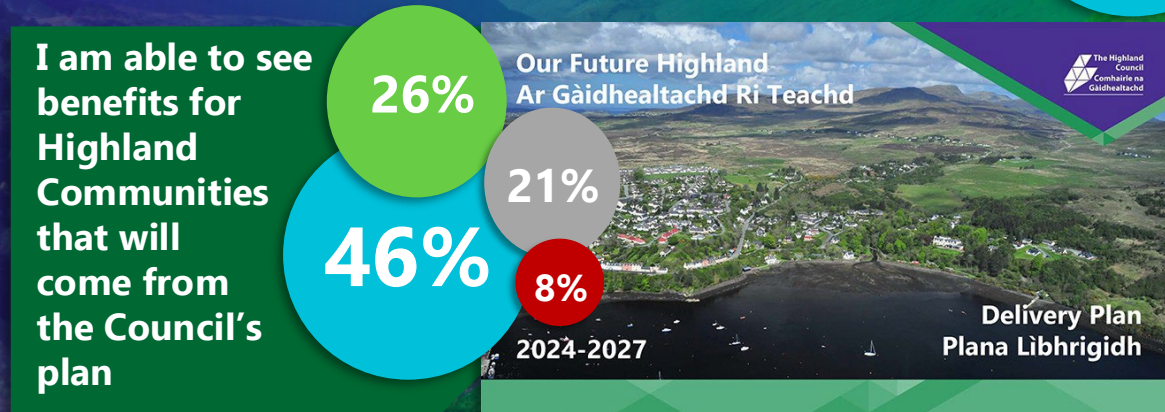
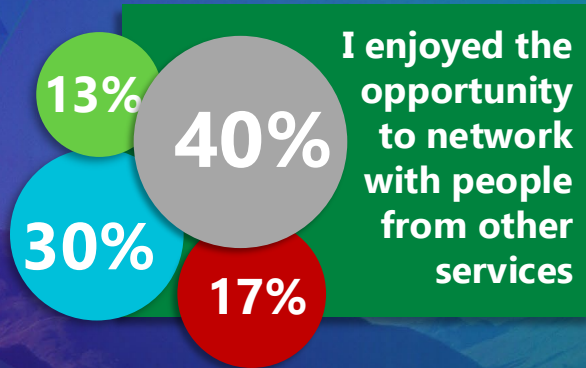
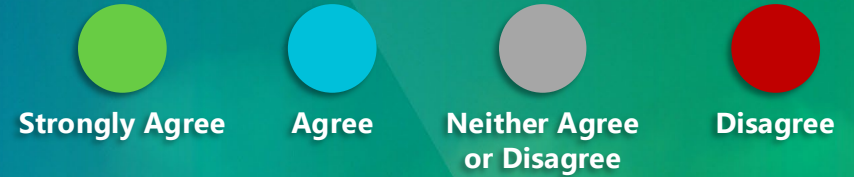
Portfolio	Workstream	Programme/Project	Committee/Board	2026/27			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Person Centred Solutions	Families First	Home in Highland	HCW	✓		✓	
Person Centred Solutions	Families First	Kinship & Foster Carers	HCW		✓		✓
Person Centred Solutions	Families First	Developing the Workforce	HCW		✓		✓
Person Centred Solutions	Adult Social Care	Shifting the Balance of Care & Accommodation Solutions	HCW/JMC	✓		✓	
Person Centred Solutions	Adult Social Care	Improving Transition Outcomes	HCW/JMC		✓		✓
Person Centred Solutions	Digital Solutions & Commissioning	Mosaic Implementation Programme	HCW/JMC		✓		✓
Person Centred Solutions	Digital Solutions & Commissioning	Digital Options	HCW/JMC		✓		✓
Person Centred Solutions	Digital Solutions & Commissioning	Efficiencies from Procurement	HCW/JMC	✓		✓	
Person Centred Solutions	Digital Solutions & Commissioning	eRecords	HCW/JMC	✓		✓	
Person Centred Solutions	Learning without Boundaries	Learning without Boundaries	EDU	✓		✓	
Person Centred Solutions	Capacity Building	Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) and Childcare	EDU	✓		✓	
Person Centred Solutions	Capacity Building	Community Led Service Delivery	C&P		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Universal	Employer Engagement & Job Opportunities	ECI		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Universal	School Curriculum & Business Links	EDU		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Universal	Digital School	EDU		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Targeted	Foundation & Modern Apprenticeships	EDU		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Targeted	Entrepreneur Development	EDU		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Targeted	Council Future Workforce	ECI		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Intensive	School- Based Interventions	EDU		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Intensive	CLD & Employability Support	EDU		✓		✓
My Future Highland	Intensive	Accelerated Degree Pathways	EDU		✓		✓
Reconfiguring our asset base	Single Property Service	Migration of Property Assets and Property Resources	HP				
Reconfiguring our asset base	Single Property Service	New Trades Framework	HP		✓		
Reconfiguring our asset base	Single Property Service	Strategic Asset Management	HP	✓			
Reconfiguring our asset base	Single Property Service	Learning Estate Strategy	HP				
Reconfiguring our asset base	Highland Investment Plan	New Area Community Hubs, Incorporating Schools, Offices, Depots and Partners	HP		✓	✓	
Reconfiguring our asset base	Highland Investment Plan	Improve Asset Condition / Reduce Risk for General Fund Assets	HP		✓		
Reconfiguring our asset base	Highland Investment Plan	Deliver Affordable Housing Programme	HP		✓		✓
Reconfiguring our asset base	Highland Investment Plan	Void Plus Policy	HP			✓	
Reconfiguring our asset base	Highland Investment Plan	Roads & Infrastructure Improvements Programme	ECI/RDB		✓		✓
Reconfiguring our asset base	Highland Investment Plan	In-house Bus Service	ECI			✓	
Reconfiguring our asset base	Single Property Service	Terra Tracker	HP				
Corporate Solutions	Systems & Process Innovation	Data Foundations	RES		✓		✓
Corporate Solutions	Systems & Process Innovation	Digital Foundations	RES		✓		✓
Corporate Solutions	Systems & Process Innovation	Efficiencies from Procurement	RES		✓		✓
Corporate Solutions	Organisational Development	Future operating model	RES		✓		✓
Corporate Solutions	Organisational Development	Hybrid Working	RES		✓		✓
Corporate Solutions	Organisational Development	Food in Schools - Delivering Sustainability	RES	✓		✓	
Corporate Solutions	Organisational Development	My Council Programme	RDB				
Corporate Solutions	Organisational Development	Investors in People	RES	✓		✓	
Corporate Solutions	Organisational Development	1% Efficiency Target	RES		✓		✓
Corporate Solutions	People & Finance Systems Programme	HR & Payroll Transformation Project	RES	✓		✓	
Corporate Solutions	People & Finance Systems Programme	Talentlink Recruitment System Improvements	RES	✓		✓	
Income Generation	Tourism	Unique Highland Visitor Experiences	RES	✓	✓	✓	✓
Income Generation	Tourism	Campervans / Motorhomes	RES	✓	✓	✓	✓
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Net Zero Delivery	Net Zero Programme	CCC	✓	✓	✓	✓
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Net Zero Delivery	Heat Networks	CCC		✓		
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Energy Estate	Energy Efficient Council	HP	✓		✓	
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Energy Estate	Energy Billing Management	HP				✓
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Energy Estate	Energy Efficient Homes	HP		✓		✓
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Investment & Innovation	Battery Storage System – former Torvean Quarry	ECI		✓		✓
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Investment & Innovation	Utility Scale Solar PV – PV Programme	ECI			✓	
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Investment & Innovation	Solar PV Commercial Estate	ECI	✓		✓	
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Investment & Innovation	EV Infrastructure	ECI		✓		✓
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Investment & Innovation	Hydrogen Production - Longman	ECI				✓
Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation	Investment & Innovation	Investment Pipeline	ECI	✓		✓	

Appendix 6 - Staff feedback

Roadshows – Staff Feedback



Roadshows – Staff Feedback



Staff Feedback - Key Messages

"it is good that senior officers are willing to come out face to face and be seen and be accountable, even if the messages are not popular."

"Thought the tone and delivery of the engagement was very good."

"The challenges are great but the opportunities are greater."

"These events are a way of reminding us we are part of a wider team all feeding into the future of the highlands."

"It was positive and informative. I liked the stats and info and updates from other services, and how we all fit in together."

"The roadshow was extremely informative and interesting."

"Felt like we are working together, avoiding silo working a key focus."

"I like that the council wants to hear from its employees about how it is doing, and the scope of activities is huge!"

"The Council is changing the way it operates. The demographics of the Highlands is a challenge that needs to be addressed."

"A very useful and insightful update and the challenges facing the Council were clearly set out."

Appendix 7 - Staff roadshows planner

Roadshow Programme 2025/26

40
Roadshows
in total

