

Agenda Item	8
Report No	HP/17/26

The Highland Council

Committee: Housing and Property

Date: 20 May 2026

Report Title: Service Performance Reporting for Q4 January 2026 to March 2026

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The report details relevant performance monitoring information for the Housing and Property Service as follows:-

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

1.2 The content and structure are intended to: -

- assist Member scrutiny and performance management;
- inform decision making to aid continuous improvement; and
- provide transparency and accessibility.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

- i. **Scrutinise** and **note** the performance information for the Housing & Property Service; and
- ii. **Note** the change to Absence and Freedom of Information reporting to align with Chief Officer structure.

3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** - Any resource implications are detailed in the report.

3.2 **Legal** - This report contributes to the Council's statutory duties to report performance and secure best value in terms of; Section 1(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1992, and Section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, respectively.

- 3.3 **Risk** - There are no implications arising as a direct result of this report.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - There are no immediate health and safety implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** - There are no implications for Gaelic arising from this report.

4 **Impacts**

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children’s Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is a monitoring and update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 **Service Performance – Corporate Indicators**

- 5.1 Service performance in relation to Absence, Complaints, FOIs, and Invoice Payments are set out in the following sub-sections.

5.2 **Service Attendance Management**

- 5.2.1 Staff absence is a nationally benchmarked indicator. Effective absence management supports staff, maintains productivity, and contributes to the Council’s benchmarked performance.
- 5.2.2 Absence data is now reported by Chief Officer service area. This is available from quarter 2 2025/26 and detailed in the table below. Quarter 1 data, and previous data trends are provided for comparator purposes in the second table.

Average number working days per employee lost through sickness absence

Average Days Lost	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26	Q1 26/27	Q2 26/27	Q3 26/27	Q4 26/27	Q1 27/28
Enterprise and Investment			0.82					
Facilities and Fleet Management	3.32	4.36	4.77					
Housing and Communities	3.06	4.83	4.48					
Operations and Maintenance	5.50	5.32	5.35					
Property and Assets	1.53	1.29	1.86					
Highland Council	3.02	4.09	3.97					

Service Sickness Absence - Housing and Property

Average number working days per employee lost through sickness absence

Average Days Lost	Q2 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26
Housing and Property	2.43	4.60	4.39	4.49	3.27	3.85	4.63	4.45
Highland Council	2.08	3.35	3.48	3.24	2.54	3.42	3.95	3.55

5.2.3 For both Housing and Communities and Property and Assets, absence levels have varied over the last year. The pattern of absence is higher amongst Housing and Communities, which will in part be related to the manual workforce in this service area. Short term absence amongst housing and property services increased between quarters 3 and 4 during 2025/26. For housing, long-term absence also increased over this period. Long-term absence represents a disproportionate level of FTE days lost compared to the number of employees affected. The top three reasons for absence amongst housing staff were vial, broken bones and stress (not work related) and amongst property and assets staff this related to vial, blood clot/thrombosis and neurological conditions.

5.2.4 Reducing absence rates through a strong and consistent approach to attendance management is a particular focus for the service. Mandatory online and face-to-face training is available for managers. Attendance Support Officers continue to play a vital role in assisting both managers and employees.

Managers are undertaking employee review and development (ERD) meetings with staff to identify any training and wellbeing requirements. The Employee Assistance Programme also provides staff and their families with access to a confidential counselling service and many other wellbeing services including legal and financial information, life coaching and health information.

5.2.5 The causes of absence are being proactively addressed through a coordinated and preventative approach including the effective use of return-to-work interviews, enhanced Occupational Health input and the recruitment of additional Attendance Support Officers enables timely intervention and supports informed decision-making to promote attendance and reduce avoidable absence.

5.2.6 This approach is further strengthened through employee access to an internal physiotherapy service, the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), mentally healthy workplace training, attendance management training and Employee Review and Development (ERD) meetings. Stress risk assessments covering both work and non-work-related factors together with a focus on courageous conversations and positive workplace culture support managers to have regular, meaningful discussions about health, safety and wellbeing with their teams.

5.2.7 As detailed within the Place Cluster Workforce Plan report at item 8, key proactive intervention measures include:-

- Recruitment of three additional Attendance Support Officers to increase capacity and provide targeted support to managers in managing attendance.
- Mandatory and earlier referrals to Occupational Health for stress-related absence to ensure timely medical advice and appropriate intervention.

- Consistent use of structured return-to-work meetings to identify required support, reasonable adjustments and return arrangements.
- Increased promotion and consistent use of the Occupational Health physiotherapy service to support early intervention for musculoskeletal conditions, reduce the likelihood of absence escalating into long-term cases and support earlier and sustainable returns to work.
- Formal attendance management review meetings undertaken in line with policy to address short-term absence patterns and progress long-term cases.
- Enhanced training and ongoing support for line managers to strengthen confidence, consistency and capability in managing attendance.
- Completion and regular review of stress risk assessments to identify and mitigate workplace factors contributing to absence.
- Targeted management support to address workload pressures and role clarity, reducing the risk of escalation of stress-related absence.
- Continued promotion and utilisation of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), providing confidential access to counselling and mental health and wellbeing support at an early stage.

5.3 Service Complaints Response Times

5.3.1 The Complaints data up to and including Q4 25/26 is shown below: -

Service Complaints - Housing and Property

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

Frontline Resolution within 5 days

	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
Housing and Property	37	65 %	33	76 %	32	84 %	42	83 %	23	83 %	43	86 %	50	88 %	58	69 %
Highland Council	219	84 %	196	78 %	155	88 %	183	87 %	174	91 %	223	90 %	200	85 %	262	82 %

Investigation Resolution within 20 days

	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
Housing and Property	15	53 %	11	55 %	25	28 %	12	42 %	20	40 %	28	39 %	19	26 %	17	35 %
Highland Council	86	47 %	101	57 %	90	42 %	71	51 %	68	47 %	86	40 %	94	55 %	110	51 %

Escalated Resolution within 20 days

	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
Housing and Property	16	19 %	7	29 %	9	22 %	13	46 %	7	14 %	9	56 %	6	17 %	10	30 %
Highland Council	47	32 %	28	50 %	26	46 %	34	44 %	30	33 %	27	26 %	22	27 %	31	23 %

5.3.2 Performance in responding to complaints across the service has generally been in line with over Council performance for the last year however there has been a fall in frontline complaint resolution in Q4. Service Management teams are reviewing to ensure performance returns to previous levels for quarter 1 2026/27.

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

The FOI data up to and including Q4 25/26 is shown below: -

Service Freedom of Information Requests - Housing and Property

% of FOIs closed compliant with the legislative timescale

% FOIs Compliant - Housing and Property	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
		53	70 %	42	71 %	50	78 %	54	70 %	60	73 %	74	62 %	66	76 %	48

% FOIs Compliant - Highland Council	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
		512	81 %	481	76 %	570	73 %	617	71 %	577	81 %	601	77 %	581	73 %	578

5.3.4 Performance in response to FOIs fell across the service in quarter 4 for 2025/26. Service Management teams are reviewing to ensure performance returns to previous levels for quarter 1 2026/27.

5.4 Service Invoice Payment Times

5.4.1 Payment of invoices within 30 days of receipt is a Council Statutory Performance Indicator. The Council also monitors the number of invoices paid within 10 days of receipt.

5.4.2 The performance for invoice payment times within 10- and 30-days during Quarter 4 against a target of 77% and 95%, respectively, was as follows:-

Service Invoice Payment Times - Housing and Property

Invoice Payment within 30 days	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26
Housing and Property	85.8 %	94.4 %	93.9 %	94.4 %	94.3 %	96.8 %	95.9 %	96.3 %
Highland Council	87.7 %	91.4 %	92.9 %	92.9 %	93.0 %	94.8 %	94.3 %	95.2 %

Invoice Payment less than 10 days	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26
Housing and Property	31.0 %	64.0 %	52.5 %	55.0 %	54.0 %	68.8 %	68.1 %	60.2 %
Highland Council	57.0 %	68.5 %	63.8 %	63.3 %	64.7 %	72.5 %	72.3 %	69.6 %

5.4.3 Performance in invoice payment has remained strong over the course of the last year.

6 Service Contribution to the Performance Plan

6.1 The following summarises performance against the Housing and Property performance indicators in the Council's Performance Plan.

6.2

Housing & Property: Contribution to the Performance Plan						
Strategic Priority 1 Fair & Caring Highland	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Deliver Portree Public Sector Co-location Project CP1.06	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage	Q4 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q4 24/25
Strategic Priority 2 Resilient and Sustainable Communities	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Homelessness - case duration [weeks] for all applications CP2.05	FY 24/25	35	FY 25/26			annual update August
Strategic Priority 3 Accessible and Sustainable Highland Homes	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Avg. time taken to re-let properties in last yr [days] CP3.02	FY 24/25	53.95	FY 25/26	43.96		annual update June
% of council dwellings that are energy efficient CP3.02 HSN05a	FY 24/25		FY 25/26			annual update June
No. serving and ex-armed forces personnel allocated housing CP3.04	FY 24/25	14	FY 25/26	23		
No. serving and ex-armed forces personnel applying for housing CP3.04	FY 24/25	110	FY 25/26	158		
Avg. days to complete medical adap applications CP3.05	FY 24/25	27.07	FY 25/26	29.71		annual update June
Strategic Priority 5 A Resilient and Sustainable Council	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
ERDs being completed - PRH CP5.01	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage	Q4 25/26	Some Slippage		Due to complete Q4 24/25
Asset Management - % Suitability CP5.08 CORP-ASSET01	FY 24/25	77.9 %	FY 25/26	77.9 %		annual update August
Asset Management - Condition CP5.08 CORP-ASSET02	FY 24/25	82.4 %	FY 25/26	82.2 %		annual update August
Deliver £1.2M savings target from asset rationalisation CP5.08	Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26			Taken forward in Delivery Plan marked as completed Q1 24/25
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due CP5.10 HSN01b	FY 24/25	6.42 %	FY 25/26			annual update June

7 SPI's Not Included in the Performance Plan

7.1 The following outlines Housing and Place Statutory Performance Indicators outwith the Performance Plan.

7.2

Housing & Property: SPIs						
SPIs not monitored in Performance Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
School Meals - gross cost per meal provided	FY 24/25	£ 4.88	FY 25/26			annual update June
Avg. time to complete emergency repairs [hours] Annual	FY 24/25	3.5	FY 25/26	4.7		annual update June

8 Service Plan Progress

8.1 The following outlines service performance against the service plan.

8.2

Housing and Building Maintenance Q4 25/26						
Actions & PIs being monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
% Tenants satisfied with opportunities in decision-making process	FY 24/25	81.9 %	FY 25/26	91.9 %	90.0 %	
Ave time taken to complete non-emergency repairs Highland Wide [days] Qtr	Q3 25/26	7.3	Q4 25/26	8.0	8.9	
Ave time to complete emergency repairs [hours] Highland Wide Qtr	Q3 25/26	4.2	Q4 25/26	4.7		
Gypsy/Traveller sites: Compliance with revised standards	Q3 25/26	100 %	Q4 25/26	100 %	100 %	
Scottish Govt and SHR deadlines for reporting met	FY 24/25	100 %	FY 25/26	100 %	100 %	

8.3

Property and Facilities Management Q4 25/26						
Actions & PIs being monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
% Energy reduction projects completed p.a. as planned	FY 24/25		FY 25/26		90 %	
% of planned GF Capital improvement programmes completed	FY 24/25		FY 25/26		90 %	
% of planned GF Revenue improvement programmes completed	FY 24/25		FY 25/26		90 %	
No. site condition survey completed per annum	FY 24/25	50	FY 25/26	82		
Improve Asset Condition: Progress of condition surveys completed Qtr [reporting starts 23/24]	Q3 25/26	100 %	Q4 25/26	111 %	90 %	
Renewable Energy generated per annum	FY 24/25		FY 25/26			

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 29 April 2026

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Background Papers: None

Appendices: None