

Agenda Item	9
Report No	RES/21/26

The Highland Council

Committee: Corporate Resources

Date: 04 June 2026

Report Title: Learning and Development Strategy

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Learning and Development Strategy sets out how Learning and Development (L&D) will enable a skilled, capable, confident workforce aligned to Council priorities. It also outlines key improvement programmes including mandatory training, leadership development, modern apprenticeships, improved Employee Review and Development (ERD) processes, and strengthened oversight of the Council-wide L&D budget.
- 1.2 Our Learning & Development Strategy is designed to support the Council's wider plans for the future, particularly the [Our Future Highland Corporate Plan \(2022–2027\)](#) and its focus on growing and keeping our own talent. It links closely with workforce planning across services, making sure our people have the skills and development they need. It also connects with the wider partnerships we're part of, such as [Work.Life.Highlands](#). Overall, the strategy and its action plan help turn the Council's key priorities into action, supporting delivery of the [Highland Outcome Improvement Plan \(2024–2027\)](#).
- 1.3 The L&D Action Plan details the implementation of the Learning and Development Strategy from 2026 - 2029.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. **Approve** the Learning & Development Strategy and Action Plan.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – the L&D Action Plan will be implemented using existing internal resources primarily with support from external partners for programmes like the Mandatory Training Improvement Plan and Leadership and Management development.
- 3.2 Legal – there are no legal implications.

- 3.3 Risk – keeping a stable and sustainable workforce is a recognised risk for the Council, especially alongside ongoing budget pressures. The L&D Strategy and Action Plan help manage this by building and maintaining the workforce we need, both now and in the future.
- 3.4 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – staff wellbeing is a key focus within the People Strategy and local service plans, and this is carried through into the L&D Strategy and its action plan.
- 3.5 Gaelic – there are no Gaelic implications.

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 **Integrated Impact Assessment – Summary**
 - 4.3.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken on 5 May 2026. The conclusions have been subject to the relevant Manager Review and Approval.
 - 4.3.2 The Screening process has concluded that there are no proposed negative impacts and anticipated positive impacts on age and disability due to the support the My Future Highland project will have to increase the numbers of MAs with training reflecting learner preferences better supporting learners with a disability. There will also be a positive impact on poverty, socio-economic and financial due to increase in MA opportunities. Supporting learner preferences by offering online and face to face training will also provide a positive impact on climate change due to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and lower carbon footprint by reducing travel.
 - 4.3.3 Members are asked to consider the summary in **Appendix 1** to support the decision-making process.

Impact Assessment Area	Conclusion of Screening/Full Assessment
Equality	Age – positive Disability – positive
Socio-economic	Financial – positive Prospects & Opportunities – positive
Human Rights	no impact
Children’s Rights and Wellbeing	no impact
Island and Mainland Rural	no impact
Climate Change	Impact on greenhouse gas emissions - positive
Data Rights	no impact

5. L&D Strategy

- 5.1 The L&D Strategy highlights the Council's need to take a more planned and consistent approach to developing its people. It supports the [People Strategy](#) by strengthening how we build skills, grow talent, and deliver learning that helps achieve the Council's [Delivery Plan](#).
- 5.2 As one of the largest employers in the Highlands, the Council plays an important role in developing skills, creating learning opportunities, and supporting clear pathways into employment for the wider community.

6. Key Principles

- 6.1 **Our culture** - Our people are at the heart of everything we do. Through *Our Future Highland*, we're taking a more flexible approach to learning and development and making better use of our skills and resources. By working as one Council, services will focus on building the skills and behaviours needed to meet priorities, supporting learning, innovation, and confidence at every level.
- 6.2 **Raising the bar** - We want to create a learning environment where people feel supported to grow, try new digital approaches, and adapt to change. We will promote a strong learning culture across the organisation, using development to continually improve how we deliver services. Data will help us identify skills gaps and development needs, both now and in the future. We'll use this insight to shape targeted learning and development and support knowledge sharing so that skills and experience are retained and passed on effectively.
- 6.3 **Compliance isn't just a tick in the box** - We want to create a simpler, more meaningful approach to mandatory learning that supports both our people and our services. By focusing on what really matters, we'll build a stronger culture of compliance where staff understand the purpose behind their learning, not just the requirement to complete it. Our approach will prioritise clear, accessible learning that is easy to understand and apply in practice. By making learning more straightforward and relevant, we can improve engagement, increase compliance, and support consistent standards across the organisation.

7. L&D Action Plan

- 7.1 The L&D Action Plan outlines the key actions that help us deliver the Strategy in practice. We review it each year to build on what's working, update our focus, and make sure our approach continues to support our people and organisational priorities.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate

Date: 07 May 2026

Author: Al Forsyth, L&D Manager

Background Papers: People Strategy (Highland Council, 27 October 2022)
Our Future Highland Delivery Plan 22-27 (Highland Council, 9 May 2024)

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Integrated Impact Assessment Summary
Appendix 2 - L&D Strategy
Appendix 3 – L&D Action Plan

Appendix 1: Integrated Impact Screening Summary

Protected characteristics impact details:

Age: **Positive**

Disability: **Positive**

Modern Apprenticeships will positively impact young people and support the My Future Highland project to increase MA numbers between 2026 and 2029. Training will reflect learner preferences, giving disabled learners the choice of online or in-person options. eLearning accessibility will be improved to better support assistive software

Poverty and socio-economic impact details:

Prospects and opportunities: **Positive**

Financial: **Positive**

Further provisions of Modern Apprenticeship (MA) opportunities will have a positive impact on people across local communities.

Human rights impact details: No impact.

Children's rights impact details: No impact.

Data protection impact details: No impact.

Island and mainland rural communities impact details: No impact.

Climate change impact details:

Impact on greenhouse gas emissions: **Positive**

Supporting learner preferences by offering online and face to face training and giving them the choice of attendance. This will have the impact to lower our carbon footprint by reducing travel.

Learning and Development Strategy

2026 – 2029

"Raising the bar"

Version History

Version	Date	Author	Change
1.0	02/2026	Al Forsyth, L&D	Strategy created.

1. Introduction

The Highland Council faces a period of significant transformation driven by financial pressures, evolving community needs, technological change, and a renewed emphasis on organisational improvement. To support this, a modernised and strategically aligned Learning & Development (L&D) approach – previously referred to internally as *People Development* - is essential.

This strategy sets out how Learning & Development will enable a skilled, capable, confident workforce aligned to Council priorities. It also outlines key improvement programmes including mandatory training, leadership development, modern apprenticeships, improved Employee Review and Development (ERD) processes, and strengthened oversight of the Council-wide L&D budget.

Spanning 2026 to the end of 2029, this strategy provides a roadmap for capability building that supports organisational transformation, improves performance, and delivers better outcomes for Highland communities.

Strategic Drivers and Influences, aligned to L&D Strategy

- The overall objectives set out in the Council's Programme for 2022 - 2027: [The Administration Programme](#) – 54 commitments
- The Council's [Delivery Plan](#) – our deliverables – 6 Portfolios
- The Council's [Performance Plan](#) – our measures
- The [Highland Outcome Improvement Plan](#) – our community partnerships
- The future direction, ambition and organisational development of the organisation as part of People Service Strategy and aligned to other key strategies including Digital – Business Solutions
- Regulated and statutory training standards Qualifications Scotland, SSSC
- Best practice: [Charter Institute of Personnel Development](#), [Charter Management Institute](#) and [Institute of Leadership and Management](#)

Alignment with People and Talent Strategies

- Supports workforce planning commitments by ensuring skills, competencies, and capacity match future service needs.
- Modernises learning pathways and digital learning tools in line with the Council's commitment to a flexible, agile workforce.
- Builds leadership capability at all levels to support culture change, empower decision making, and improved staff engagement.

- Directly supports delivery of the Corporate Cluster Investors in People (IiP) Action Plan, strengthening consistent people management practice, leadership behaviours and employee experience across the organisation.

Alignment with the Administration Programme

- Prioritises skills development that supports financial sustainability, service redesign, digital transformation, and improved customer experience.
- Ensures staff have the knowledge and confidence required to implement new ways of working.

Alignment with the Council Delivery Plan

- Provides the learning infrastructure required to deliver change projects, continuous improvement, and technology adoption.
- Embeds learning that supports key service delivery objectives such as safer communities, thriving local economies, and improved education outcomes.

Alignment with the Performance Plan

- Strengthens the connection between ERDs, performance management, and skills development.
- Introduces better data capture, analytics, and monitoring to track mandatory training compliance, learning outcomes, and capability gaps.
- Supports a more evidence-driven approach to performance improvement.

Alignment with the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP)

- Enhances workforce capability to support community partnership work, prevention approaches, and reducing inequalities.
- Builds specialist skills in community engagement, place-based working, and partnership collaboration.
- Supports the Council's ambition to help communities become more resilient, sustainable, and empowered.

2. The role of Learning and Development (formerly People Development)

Learning and Development's role is to enable a high performing organisation by:

- Providing accessible, high-quality learning that helps staff do their jobs effectively and safely.
- Supporting culture change, continuous improvement, and organisational transformation.
- Ensuring legislative and regulatory compliance through a robust mandatory training framework.
- Developing leaders and managers who can support empowered teams, good governance, and high staff engagement.
- Offering structured routes into employment, including Modern Apprenticeships, internships, and supported employment pathways.
- Enhancing workforce planning by using learning data, skills intelligence, and performance insights.
- Ensuring learning is cost-effective, proportionate, evidence-based, and aligned to Council priorities.

Learning and Development acts both as a strategic partner and a delivery function - helping the organisation modernise its workforce capabilities while also providing essential training services.

What our Learning & Development team do

L&D Manager

The L&D Manager provides leadership, oversight, and strategic direction for learning across the Council. Their responsibilities include:

- Leading key improvement programmes such as mandatory training transformation, leadership development, and apprenticeship enhancement.
- Providing strategic advice to senior management team regarding skills needs, workforce capability, and development planning.
- Managing the central L&D budget and ensuring financial oversight, value for money, and alignment of spend with Council priorities.
- Monitoring compliance, analysing trends, and reporting on learning outcomes and organisational capability.

- Overseeing the transition to new systems (e.g., MS Forms for ERDs and data capture).

L&D Seniors (Team Leaders)

L&D Seniors provide oversight for learning across the Council. Their responsibilities include:

- Implementing key programmes such as mandatory training transformation, leadership development, benchmarking with other councils, and apprenticeship enhancement.
- Accountable for the central L&D budget and ensuring financial oversight, value for money, and alignment of spend with Council priorities.
- Ensuring quality and consistency of learning delivery, including digital learning platforms, e-learning content, and commissioned training.
- Monitoring compliance, analysing trends, and reporting on learning outcomes and organisational capability.
- Overseeing the transition to new systems (e.g., MS Forms for ERDs and data capture).

L&D Advisors

L&D Advisors deliver operational and specialist learning support across services, including:

- Designing, commissioning, and delivering training that meets statutory, service-specific, and corporate needs.
- Supporting managers and staff through the ERD process, coaching them on development planning and identifying learning needs.
- Coordinating Modern Apprenticeships, including onboarding, mentoring support and continuous programme improvement.
- Supporting digital learning adoption and assisting staff with access, guidance, and modern learning tools.
- Handling queries related to learning pathways, compliance requirements, and skills development requests.
- Working collaboratively with services to ensure learning solutions are accessible and proportionate to workforce needs.

3. Mandatory Training Improvement Programme (2025-2027)

Having the right mandatory training in place is essential to keep people safe, manage risk, meet legal requirements, and maintain reliable services. The Council's transformation programme highlights the need for simpler, more consistent ways to track and measure training compliance. Between 2025 and 2027, Learning & Development will deliver a programme to improve mandatory training, focused on:

3.1 Establishing a clear, organisation-wide Mandatory Training Matrix

- Simplify and standardise mandatory training content and requirements for all roles. Provide a central reference point for employees and managers.
- Reduce duplication and outdated requirements and ensure statutory training (e.g., Health & Safety, Information Governance for relevant roles) is clear, current, and accessible.

3.2 Improving content accessibility and delivery

- Migrate content to modern learning solutions harnessing pre-assessment techniques. Aim to consolidate and reduce number of mandatory training courses leading to saving in annual training hours.
- Expand use of e-learning, micro-learning, and video-based modules to improve accessibility for geographically dispersed staff.
- Increase uptake for hard-to-reach groups by ensuring offline and mobile-accessible options.

3.3 Strengthening compliance monitoring

- Improve real-time compliance reporting using digital dashboards.
- Provide managers with easy-to-read compliance insights for their teams via Traineasy.
- Report compliance at service and corporate levels with greater accuracy and transparency, reporting monthly instead of quarterly.
- Strengthen assignment rules and ensure mandatory training reminders are switched on.

3.4 Quality assurance and content sustainability

- Review all content for accuracy, relevance, and accessibility.
- Align all modules with Council policy updates, legislative changes, and good practice.

- Introduce bi-annual review cycles to maintain high standards with subject matter experts and risk owners.
- Introduce design windows (one or two per year) where mandatory training content is updated rather than operating reactively.

4. Leadership and Management Development Framework (late 2026 – 2029)

Leadership capability is a critical enabler for organisational transformation, cultural change, and improved outcomes. Between 2026 and 2029, Learning and Development will partner with external providers and deliver a refreshed **Leadership Development Framework** with programmes for:

4.1 Senior Leadership (ACE, Chief Officers, Strategic and Service Leads)

- A scalable programme with emphasis on strategic thinking, transformation leadership, and financial sustainability.
- Strengthening collaborative leadership across services with focus on practical workshops rather than theory, aligned to our Highland Council priorities.
- Rolling out 360-degree feedback as a mechanism to inform development needs.

4.2 People Managers (Team Leaders, Managers)

- Underpinned by the Senior Leadership Programme to drive culture change and ensure consistent people management practice across the organisation, aligned to the Corporate **Investors in People (IiP) Action Plan**.
- Core people management skills, including ERDs, performance management, attendance management, and career development conversations.
- People policies and safe decision making, supporting confident, fair and consistent people management.
- Coaching and communication skills, enabling managers to engage, support and develop their teams effectively.
- Leading empowered teams through change, uncertainty and remote or hybrid working within a modernised, financially challenged environment.

4.3 Aspiring Leaders

- Talent pipeline development to support succession planning.
- A structured programme including job shadowing, learning modules, and practical projects.
- Focus on equality of opportunity and enabling young talent and underrepresented groups to progress.

4.4 Leadership Behaviours Framework

- A refreshed behaviour framework that aligns to Council values and transformation ambitions.
- Used in recruitment, performance, and development pathways.

5. Modern Apprenticeships – Benchmarking, Expansion & Improvement (2026 – 2027)

Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) are essential for attracting young people, developing local talent, and supporting organisational renewal.

5.1 Benchmarking and performance improvement

- Compare MA participation, completion rates, and post-qualification employment against other Scottish councils.
- Use Skills Development Scotland (SDS) data to identify improvement areas.
- Align MA frameworks more closely to future workforce needs and hard-to-fill roles.

5.2 Increasing retention and progression

- Improve pastoral and professional support throughout the MA journey.
- Strengthen mentoring and supervisor training.
- Introduce clearer pathways into permanent roles wherever possible.

5.3 Expanding opportunities

- Target services with predicted workforce shortages working in collaboration with the **My Highland Future portfolio board**.
- Explore new frameworks in digital, business administration, early years, trades, and community services.
- Promote MAs more widely across schools, job centres, and the community.

5.4 Improving experience and administration

- Streamline MA onboarding, tracking, and reporting processes.
- Enhance links between HR, services, and training providers.
- Use feedback from apprentices to inform continuous improvement.

6. ERD Improvement Programme (2026)

A high-quality Employee Review & Development (ERD) process is central to performance management, talent development, and workforce planning.

6.1 Transition to MS Forms

From early 2026, ERDs will be migrated to Microsoft Forms to:

- Capture verbatim comments from employees and managers.
- Improve consistency and ease of submission.
- Enable digital data extraction and analysis.
- Provide a more accessible, user-friendly interface.

6.2 Stronger linkage with skill development & performance

- ERDs will directly feed learning needs analyses and team/Service development plans.
- Use ERD data to map skills gaps and support workforce planning.
- Introduce structured prompts to encourage meaningful, future-focused discussions.

6.3 Quality improvement and manager capability

- Provide training for managers on effective ERDs, coaching conversations, and goal-setting.
- Sample ERDs for quality assurance and feedback.
- Reduce variability across Services to promote fairness and staff engagement.

7. Oversight Model for L&D (2026)

To improve consistency, transparency and alignment across the organisation, Learning and Development will introduce a strengthened oversight model. This will be supported by the creation of a **Training Oversight Working Group**, bringing greater visibility and coordination to training activity across Services, while also supporting long-term financial sustainability.

7.1 Central oversight and transparency

- Create a clear, shared view of **what training is taking place across the Council**, by whom, and for what purpose.
- Improve visibility of L&D activity and spend to support better planning, coordination and informed decision-making.
- Reduce duplication by identifying opportunities for shared, cross-service-learning solutions.
- Ensure training activity supports transformation priorities and the People Strategy in a consistent and joined-up way.

7.2 Commissioning control & value for money

- Introduce proportionate approval gateways for external training to improve consistency and oversight.
- Support Services to select learning solutions that are effective, scalable and appropriate to need.
- Promote the use of corporate frameworks, shared provision and existing internal capability where possible.
- Use corporate contracts where appropriate to support value for money and a consistent learner experience.

7.3 Reporting and monitoring

- Provide regular corporate reporting on L&D activity, coverage and outcomes, alongside high-level spend information.
- Improve transparency around the use of delegated training budgets and the learning being delivered locally.
- Link training activity to clear outcomes such as compliance, capability development and workforce confidence.
- Build a clearer evidence base to support future planning, assurance and continuous improvement.

8. Digital Learning Modernisation (2026-2028)

To better support a geographically dispersed and hybrid workforce, Learning and Development will modernise the Council's digital learning ecosystem. This will focus on making learning **shorter, accessible, consistent and responsive**, regardless of location, role or working pattern.

Together, these changes will create a more **connected, learner-centred digital learning environment**, enabling L&D to respond quickly to organisational change while ensuring staff across the Council have equitable access to learning and development opportunities.

8.2 Investing in internal capability first

- L&D will strengthen its own capacity to design and deliver high-quality digital learning.
- The team have already adopted **Agile ways of working**, allowing content to be developed iteratively, tested quickly with users, and updated in response to feedback or changing priorities.
- This approach will help ensure learning is timely, relevant and designed around learner needs rather than fixed programmes.

8.3 Expanding digital, video and interactive learning

The Council will build a broader and more coherent library of digital learning resources, including short videos, interactive modules and scenario-based content. This will allow staff to access learning when and where it suits them, reduce reliance on face-to-face delivery, and support consistent messages across Services.

- **Using MS Teams as a core learning and collaboration platform**
MS Teams will be used more systematically for live virtual learning, action learning sets, peer learning and knowledge sharing. This will enable staff in different locations to learn together, support collaboration across Services, and reduce travel time while maintaining meaningful interaction and connection.
- **Introducing micro-learning for accessibility and retention**
Learning content will increasingly be broken down into short, focused modules that can be completed in minutes rather than hours. This will support flexible working patterns, improve accessibility for frontline and time-limited roles, and help learners retain and apply knowledge more effectively.

9. Strengthening planning, coordination and organisational impact (2026)

To improve how Learning and Development supports the organisation, Learning and Development will introduce a clearer **Front Door and planning approach** for all L&D requests and projects. This will strengthen transparency, prioritisation and assurance, while giving a much clearer picture of how the team is supporting organisational growth and change.

9.1 Introducing a single L&D Front Door

A single, visible entry point for training and development requests will be established. This will help Services understand what support is available, reduce ad-hoc requests, and ensure learning needs are captured consistently. It will also enable earlier conversations about need, scope, timescales and the most appropriate learning solution.

9.2 Improved planning and forecasting of demand

Information gathered through the Front Door will be used to plan and forecast L&D activity. This will support smarter prioritisation, reduce reactive working, and help balance corporate priorities, service needs and team capacity more effectively.

9.3 Tracking projects and learning activity end-to-end

L&D will strengthen how projects and interventions are tracked, from initial request through design, delivery and evaluation. This will provide better visibility of workload, progress and outcomes, and ensure learning activity is aligned to agreed priorities.

9.4 Clearer insight into impact and contribution

By improving tracking and reporting, L&D will be able to show more clearly how learning activity supports organisational objectives such as service improvement, workforce capability, compliance and transformation. This will also provide stronger evidence of value and impact to senior leaders.

9.5 Supporting sustainable growth within the team

Better insight into demand, complexity and delivery effort will support informed decisions about skills, capacity and future investment within L&D by knowing and demonstrating our impact. This will help ensure the team can grow in a sustainable way, building the right capability to meet increasing and changing organisational needs.

9.6 Future insights and reporting

Learning and Development will adopt a consistent evaluation framework using the following pillars:

- **Input:** participation, attendance, completion rates.
- **Output:** learning outcomes and behaviour change.
- **Impact:** contribution to service performance and corporate priorities.
- **Value:** cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

Insights will be drawn from:

- Mandatory training dashboard
- Modern Apprenticeships dashboard
- ERD data
- Manager feedback
- Post-learning evaluations
- Corporate performance reports

Findings will inform continuous improvement, workforce planning, and decision-making. Together, these changes will move Learning and Development away from reactive delivery and towards a more **planned, transparent and strategic approach**, providing clearer assurance to the organisation and a stronger foundation for continuous improvement and growth.

Contact Us and Links

Email:

General enquiries: people.development@highland.gov.uk

Traineasy: learningmanagementsystem@highland.gov.uk

Modern Apprenticeships: THCMA.Centre@highland.gov.uk

Career Hub: career.hub@highland.gov.uk

Intranet:

[People Development](#)

[Traineasy Log-in](#)

Appendix 3: L&D Action Plan

L&D Action Plan, 2026-2029 – Review and Update provided each January

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
Mandatory Training Improvement Programme (MTIP)	Develop mandatory training matrix	Clear, organisation-wide framework	Develop and publish standardised matrix for all employee roles so there is clarity on the mandatory training required; remove duplication and outdated requirements; available via SharePoint.	Improved clarity and consistency	Complete	L&D Manager / Seniors
	Reduce number of mandatory training courses (Part 1 of 2)	Reduce mandatory training assigned to everyone to three courses <i>(excludes manager training)</i>	Review existing mandatory training and group into three topics; HR, Health, Safety & Wellbeing and Information Management. <i>(includes elected member mandatory training)</i>	Reduction to three courses from 12; training hours reduction from 7.5 hours to 2 hours; increased compliance rates.	31 January 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors / risk owners for HR, SHEP and Data
	Accessibility and delivery	Ensure equitable access and increase completion rates across all services	Expand provision through e-learning, video and microlearning; ensure mobile compatibility; provide alternative formats for offline* and operational staff such as video delivery. *offline staff include front line workers. Other activities to get these groups access to Traineasy and devices is ongoing as part of FoM model.	Increased completion rates; improved accessibility for dispersed and front-line workforce	31 March 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
	Reduce number of mandatory training courses (Part 2 of 2)	Further reduce mandatory training assigned to everyone to one course <i>(includes manager specific training)</i>	Creation of one, single annual training course applicable to all employees and elected members. Introduction of pre-assessment capability to test knowledge up-front and reduce training time by completing only the topics that weren't known.	Reduction to one course; training hours reduction from 2 hours to 45-60 mins; increased compliance rates.	31 March 2028	L&D Manager / Seniors / risk owners for HR, SHEP and Data
	Compliance monitoring	Introduce robust, timely compliance oversight	Develop and implement compliance dashboards; provide regular (monthly) reporting to managers and senior leaders	Improved managerial accountability and oversight	Complete	L&D Manager
	Quality assurance	Deliver high quality, current and relevant learning content	Introduce a structured review cycle; schedule regular design and refresh windows; co-produce content with SMEs and risk leads	Content remains current, compliant and aligned to organisational risk	28 February 2027	L&D Manager

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
Leadership & Management Development	Develop and launch leadership framework <i>(senior management)</i>	Strengthened and structured strategic leadership capability	Develop and deliver a structured programme aligned to Council priorities; incorporate 360 feedback, coaching and peer learning; utilise external expertise where appropriate; focus on outcome of liP feedback to build	Improved strategic leadership capability; visible culture and behaviour shift	Develop: 31 March 2027 Launch: 30 June 2027	L&D Manager / HR
	Develop and launch management framework <i>(all other management)</i>	Strengthened and structured strategic management capability	Internal delivery based on senior leadership framework focussed on action learning; outcomes of liP feedback to build	Improved engagement and management capability; faster culture change	Develop: 31 August 2027 Launch: 30 Nov 2027	L&D Manager / HR
	Leadership and Management Behaviours Framework	Embed a consistent set of leadership behaviours	Develop and implement a corporate leadership framework; integrate into recruitment, ERDs and development activity	Greater consistency in leadership and management approach and behaviours across services	31 March 2027	L&D Manager / HR

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
Modern Apprenticeships	Benchmarking and improvement	Improve Modern Apprentice outcomes and experiences	Benchmark performance against comparator organisations; utilise SDS data; engage with services to identify improvements	Improved completion, retention and satisfaction rates	30 April 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors
	Expansion of MA opportunities	Increase uptake and alignment to workforce needs	Target services with identified skills shortages; develop new and flexible frameworks; promote opportunities to managers	Increased number of apprentices; contribution to workforce sustainability	30 Sept 2027	L&D Manager / Senior / My Highland Future Portfolio Board
	Retention and progression	Clear pathways to employment	Strengthen mentoring and support arrangements and training; improve transition into permanent roles; align with workforce plans	Higher retention and progression into substantive roles	30 Sept 2027	L&D Manager / Senior / My Highland Future Portfolio Board

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
ERD Improvement	MS Forms implementation	Digital logging of ERD completion by managers	Transition ERDs submission to MS Forms; enable data capture and move accountability to manager.	Improved data quality, accessibility and consistency of approach	30 June 2026	L&D Manager / HR
	Link ERDs to workforce planning	Stronger skills planning	HR / Talent and L&D to analyse ERD outputs to identify skills gaps; inform service workforce plans and L&D priorities	Improved evidence-based workforce planning and targeted development activity	Ongoing until 30 June 2028	L&D Manager / Talent / HR
	Manager capability	Improved quality of ERDs	Provide better guidance to managers on having good career and in the moment conversations	Better quality conversations and engagement; better data captured	31 Jan 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors / HR

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
Governance	Implement Training Oversight Working Group (TOWG)	Strengthen corporate oversight and coordination	Establish a cross-council oversight group; map training provision, spend and priorities; agree standards and principles	Reduced duplication; improved strategic alignment	Complete	L&D Manager / HRBP's
	Training Oversight Working Group (TOWG)	Ensure consistent and cost-effective commissioning of learning	Introduce approval processes and gateways inc. mandatory training; prioritise internal delivery where appropriate; provide commissioning guidance	Reduced external spend; improved consistency and quality assurance	31 July 2027	L&D Manager / HRBP's
	Reporting and monitoring	Provide clear, transparent reporting of activity and impact	Develop and implement corporate reporting covering activity, cost, outputs and outcomes; report through governance structures	Improved visibility; informed decision making and prioritisation	28 Feb 2028	L&D Manager / HRBP's

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
Digital Learning	Digital learning expansion	Increase utilisation and effectiveness of digital learning	Develop engaging digital content including video, interactive modules and microlearning; align to service needs; based on behavioural change and undoing bad habits	Increased engagement and accessibility; reduced reliance on face-to-face delivery where appropriate	Ongoing until 31 Aug 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors / Advisors
	MS Teams learning	Promote collaborative and flexible learning approaches	Utilise MS Teams for virtual delivery, peer learning and communities of practice	Increased participation; reduced travel and time away from role; face to face always still available as option where appropriate	Ongoing until 31 May 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors / Advisors
	Agile content development for L&D Seniors and Advisors	Ensure learning remains responsive and relevant	Adopt iterative, agile design methods in L&D; gather user feedback before, during and after learning; continuously improve content and methodology	Quicker sign-off; faster production; Faster, relevant learning updates	Ongoing until 31 March 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors / Advisors

Strategic Area	Identified area of action	Target	How we will achieve	Measure/Impact	Target Date	Responsible
Planning and Impact	L&D Front Door	Provide a single, consistent access point for learning requests	Implement a structured intake and triage process; align requests to priorities and capacity	Improved prioritisation, transparency and service delivery	30 Sept 2026	L&D Manager / Seniors
	Demand forecasting	Improved planning of resource and identification of gaps in resource vs demand	Analyse Front Door data to identify trends, demand and priorities; align resources accordingly	Reduced reactive activity; improved planning and efficiency	Ongoing until 30 April 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors
	End-to-end tracking of projects	Increase visibility of L&D activity	Introduction of real-time team planner to track all projects and requests from initial enquiry through to delivery and evaluation	Improved accountability and delivery performance	Ongoing until 31 Jan 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors
	Impact reporting	Demonstrate value	Demonstrate the value and impact of learning activity	Implement an evaluation framework covering input, output, outcomes and impact; align to corporate priorities	Ongoing until 30 Nov 2027	L&D Manager / Seniors