Communities and Place Committee
5 November 2026

Good News Items

Environmental Health

Susan Messem, Trainee Environmental Health Officer has now completed all her Environmental Health training by passing her professional exams in September and being awarded the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Diploma in Environmental Health. Susan has now been appointed to an Environmental Health Officer post in Drummuie and will cover all environmental health duties in Sutherland. Congratulations to Susan on her achievements.

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Bereavement Services – Inverness Crematorium

Significant progress in September with the works at Inverness Crematorium. The second new cremator has been installed, and both chapels have had their refurbishment works completed. Works will continue in October and November to bring the second cremator and the new abatement plant into use.

The large chapel has undergone improvements to upgrade the committal area and provide greater flexibility during funeral services. Key improvements include:

- New electric curtain system with multiple closure options
- Refurbished committal area with new flooring and decor
- Colour changing feature lighting
- New family sofas and increased seating capacity up to 160 mourners
- New larger catafalque and lectern
- One-way exit through the wreath court

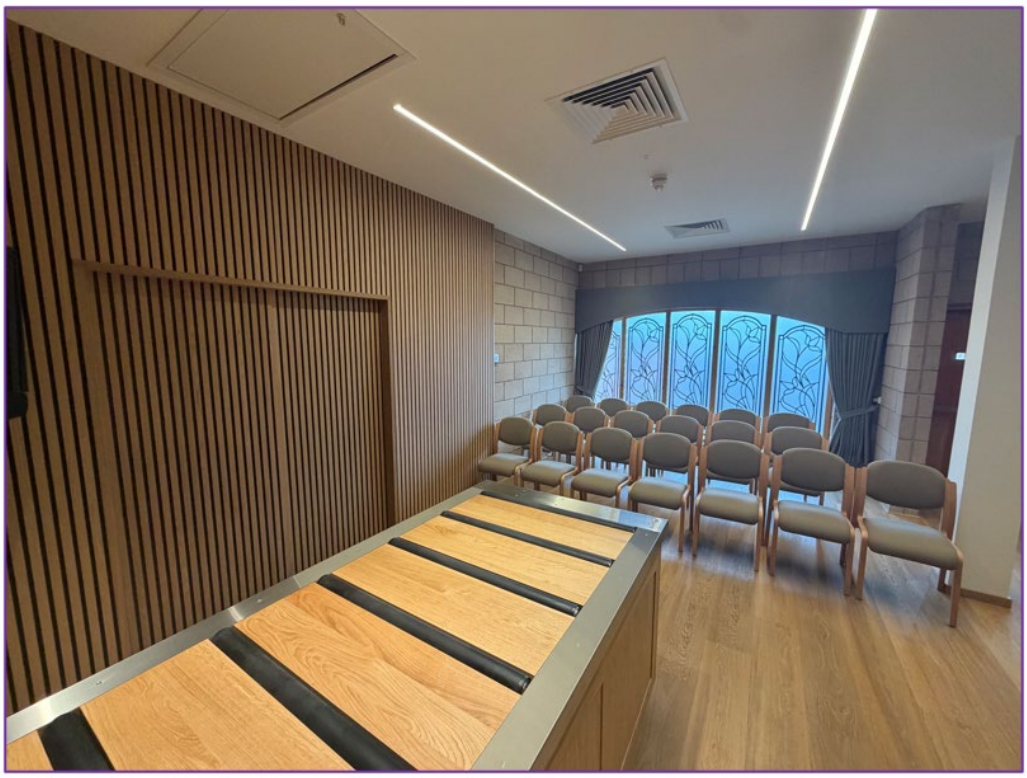
The small chapel has been brought back into service following a full refurbishment, providing a bright and welcoming setting for smaller funerals and direct cremations. Key improvements include:

- New chapel layout with flexible catafalque position
- Seating for up to 24 mourners
- New scenic lighting
- New lectern and audio-visual tribute screen
- New chairs, flooring and window coverings

Small chapel before:



Small chapel after:



Large chapel before:



Large chapel after:





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Highland Business Women Awards

Bereavement Services were honoured to be shortlisted as a finalist for the Highland Social Impact Award at this year's Highland Business Women Awards. The nomination was submitted by local baby loss charity Held In Our Hearts, which praised the crematorium for providing a sensitive and compassionate service for bereaved families who choose to hold services for their baby or infant.

The charity also highlighted recent improvements to the baby memorial garden, including the installation of a beautiful memorial bench, a new memorial stone for quiet reflection, and a post-box that allows families to write messages to their baby.

Being recognised among the finalists is a significant achievement and a welcome endorsement of the positive difference the service continues to make to families across the Highlands during some of the most difficult times in their lives.

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Fourth annual Garden Waste Awards - Garden Waste Champion

Awarded to Imogen Percy-Bell.
Celebrates the person driving great garden waste services forwards. The award recognises an individual who goes above and beyond to deliver outstanding results for their council and community.

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LARAC Conference Celebration Awards 2026, Best Team of the Year

Awarded to Highland Council
The national accolade recognises outstanding performance, innovation and collaboration in local authority waste and recycling services. Winning this award demonstrates that the team is delivering sector-leading services and achieving excellence in serving communities and supporting environmental outcomes across the UK.

