Agenda Item	12
Report No	EDU/37/26

The Highland Council

Committee: **Education**

Date: **18 November 2026**

Report Title: **Education Workforce Planning Update**

Report By: **Assistant Chief Executive – People**

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 In August 2025, Members noted the Education Workforce Planning update report.

1.2 This Annual Progress Report provides an update on a number of workforce planning priorities and progress made during 2025/26 against the Education and Learning (People Cluster) Workforce Plan. It highlights key achievements, emerging challenges, and workforce trends.

1.3 Over the reporting period, positive progress has been made across a number of workforce priorities including leadership development, structural alignment following completion of the senior management restructure, workforce adaptation to meet service delivery pressures, strengthened succession planning and recruitment pathways and continued focus on staff wellbeing, attendance management and retention.

1.4 Following the implementation of the new management structure and completion of the 2025/26 Workforce Action Plan, a new one-year Workforce Action Plan has been developed for 2026/27. This provides a strong foundation for our longer-term approach to workforce planning, with a three-year plan to follow for 2027–2030 and a five-year plan for 2030–2035.

The 2026/27 plan has been informed by current workforce information and a planned approach to engagement:

- An initial session with Area Quality Improvement Managers (AQIMs) providing Highland-wide coverage, identified key workforce issues, challenges, and priorities.
- The feedback and themes identified were then used to inform a subsequent session with Senior Leaders.
- The outcomes from these sessions have helped shape the priorities and actions within the 2026/27 Workforce Action Plan. (**Appendix 1**)

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

i. note the progress made in workforce planning and the development of the new Workforce Action Plan for 2026/27.

3. Implications

3.1 **Resource**
A failure to manage workforce planning and change puts at risk the Council's capacity to make the most effective use of resources. The impact of failure of statutory service delivery will have a reputational impact, as well as financial implications from any relevant regulatory body.

3.2 **Legal**
Care is required that large scale and complex workforce change be managed in line with current employment legislation and Highland Council policy.

3.3 **Risk**
Having a sustainable workforce is included as a risk in the Corporate Risk Register. There are also staffing resource challenges associated with budget constraints. The delivery of core and statutory functions will be impacted if the Service is inadequately resourced, and staff do not have the necessary skills to deliver core functions. This report mitigates the risk of an insufficient current and future workforce.

3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)**
Staff wellbeing is a priority in the People Strategy, and the Cluster action plans.

3.5 **Gaelic**
There are no Gaelic implications, other than the reference to difficult to recruit Gaelic medium and language teaching posts.

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

5. Introduction

5.1 Workforce planning is critical to support the Council in sustaining a skilled and resilient workforce to deliver statutory and non-statutory services both now and in the longer term. The Education and Learning Workforce Action Plan is integral to service transformation, supports financial sustainability, and enables the Council to respond effectively to demographic changes, labour market challenges, and evolving service demands.

5.2 The Education and Learning Workforce Action Plan supports delivery of Our Future Highland Delivery Plan 2024–2027 and the Council's People Strategy. It provides a structured approach to identifying and addressing workforce challenges across the Service, including an ageing workforce, recruitment and retention pressures, skills shortages, service redesign requirements, workforce sustainability, and increasing demand for services.

5.3 This report provides an overview of workforce planning activity undertaken during 2025/26. It also sets out the next phase of workforce planning for Education and Learning through a refreshed Education and Learning Workforce Action Plan for 2026/27. (**Appendix 1**) It has been developed with feedback and input from workforce planning with the Senior Leadership team to identify service priorities and emerging challenges. The plan establishes a platform for longer-term workforce planning and will inform the development of a three-year plan for 2027–2030 and a five-year plan for 2030–2035.

6. Workforce Planning Updates

6.1 Kirsty MacPherson joined the Highland Council on 17th August 2026 as Chief Officer Education Secondary, succeeding Fiona Grant providing leadership stability for the service.

6.2 Following consultation with recognised Trade Unions and affected staff, two Strategic Lead posts were established as part of the service's leadership structure. Derek Martin was appointed as Strategic Lead, Operations and Fiona Shearer as Strategic Lead, GIRFEC, with both taking up post in November 2025. These appointments provide leadership stability across the service.

6.3 To strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of each area, 8 Inclusion Support Officers, 5 FTE Pedagogy Teachers and 5.6 FTE Education Support Assistants were appointed to complement and enhance the existing Area Teams, the intention is to complete the recruitment of a total 8 of each post during the current session This builds on the recruitment of Area Quality Improvement Managers and Education Support Officers in 2025. These appointments have further enhanced the service's capacity to deliver consistent support across all areas, foster effective practice, and contribute to improved educational outcomes.

6.4 Following the transfer of the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Team back into the Council in December 2024 from High Life Highland, and the subsequent incorporation of the Employability Team from the Place Cluster, work is now underway to review and redesign the service structure.

The redesign process is being undertaken in partnership with employees and trade unions through a programme of engagement and consultation. The aim is to bring together the Community Learning and Development and Employability functions into a single, integrated service, enabling a more co-ordinated approach to service delivery, improving outcomes for communities, and ensuring resources are utilised effectively.

6.5 Following agreement between COSLA and the Scottish Government, planning is underway to implement the first phase of the Reduction of Class Contact Time (RCCT) for primary and special school teachers from August 2027, with implementation in secondary schools from August 2029.

A survey has been issued to all schools to establish current approaches to teacher contact time and identify existing practice that may support future delivery models. Scottish Government funding has been provided to support the planning phase; however, careful workforce planning and the development of sustainable delivery models will be essential to ensure successful implementation and equitable provision across all Highland schools.

For Highland, key risks include the authority's scale and geographical complexity, ongoing challenges in teacher recruitment and retention, particularly in rural and remote communities, the availability of appropriately qualified staff to facilitate reductions in contact time, and the potential for significant recurring financial pressures. These factors may impact the pace and consistency of implementation and will require ongoing consideration.

6.6 Performance Management

As part of the Service commitment to raising attainment across all schools, a continued focus will be placed on supporting and reviewing teacher competence through effective performance management arrangements in line with LNCT (Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers) 39 – the local Highland Council agreement that sets out how the GTCS (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Framework on Teacher Competence is implemented to support and manage teacher performance effectively.

During 2025/26, Education & Learning has continued to strengthen performance management arrangements across its eight area teams. This has supported a more consistent approach to managing performance and addressing issues at an early stage. Managers continue to receive guidance, training and support to help ensure procedures are applied fairly, consistently and in line with Council policy.

7 Recruitment and Retention

7.1 Recruitment to secondary teaching posts has improved during 2025/26, with a reduction in vacancies and an increase in appointments across a number of subject areas. However, recruitment challenges remain in relation to Gaelic provision, certain

secondary subject specialisms, Primary Head Teacher posts and some geographic locations. The Education and Learning Workforce Action Plan 2026/27 (**Appendix 1**) includes a range of actions to support recruitment and retention, workforce development, and longer-term workforce sustainability. Progress will continue to be monitored to inform future workforce planning activity and address areas of ongoing challenge.

7.2 To support recruitment and retention in key shortage subjects, the targeted pathway enabling secondary teachers to gain an additional qualification in English or Mathematics has continued during 2025/26. This initiative supports the professional development and career progression of existing staff while increasing capacity in areas where recruitment remains challenging. This further strengthens the Council's ability to meet curriculum requirements and provide greater resilience within the secondary teaching workforce.

7.3 Education & Learning continues to make progress in reducing reliance on fixed-term contracts by moving staff into permanent roles wherever possible. During the 2026/27 session 82 PSAs (Pupil Support Assistants) and 19 EYPs (Early Years Practitioners) moved from fixed term to permanent contracts. This ongoing approach supports greater employment security for employees and contributes to a more stable and sustainable workforce. Increasing the number of permanent posts helps ensure continuity of service delivery, strengthens workforce planning, and supports the delivery of high-quality services for children, young people, and families.

7.4 Modern Apprenticeship activity continues, with 16 new starts so far in 2025/26. Future growth is constrained by assessor capacity. Most apprenticeships are currently supporting existing employees to achieve professional registration requirements rather than attracting new entrants into Education**.**

7.5 The turnover data for the Education and Learning service area shows a positive downward trend in staff departures across both teaching and non-teaching roles between 2024/25 and 2025/26.

Turnover in Non-Teaching has improved, decreasing from 13.1% in 2024/25 to 10% in 2025/26, a positive reduction of 3.1%.

In Teaching roles, turnover also reduced from 10.6% in 2024/25 to 9% in 2025/26, a positive reduction 1.6%.

7.6 A total of 46 primary and 36 secondary probationers were allocated to Highland schools through the Teacher Induction Scheme in 2025/26. Allocation levels are determined through a national process which takes account of a range of factors, including projected vacancies, local workforce requirements, subject demand, and probationer preferences. Probationers continue to make an important contribution to the future teaching workforce, and the position will continue to be monitored as part of ongoing workforce planning.

Status	Year 23/24	Year 24/25	Year 25/26	Year 26/27
Probationers	48	42	65	46

(Primary)				
Probationers (Secondary)	30	31	35	36

In August 2025, a total of 28 teachers successfully secured roles after completing their probationary year. In August 2026 this number rose to 59, this increase is encouraging and reflects the positive experience that probationer teachers are having which encourages them to remain living and working in Highland schools.

8 Leadership Development

8.1 Professional Update continues to be a significant workforce development activity across Education & Learning. The Professional Update process used by the service was re-validated by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) in June this year as an acceptable process to be used for the next 5 years. As a requirement of GTCS registration, all fully registered teachers must engage in Professional Update and confirm their professional learning every five years.

During the 2025/26 session, 594 teachers were due to complete Professional Update. Of these, 536 were successfully signed off and 58 were deferred, representing a 90.2% completion rate. For the 2026/27 session, 618 teachers are due to complete Professional Update by July 2027, with 13 deferrals currently recorded. This process supports professional learning, maintains professional standards, and contributes to improved outcomes for learners. This high level of engagement helps to maintain a professionally competent workforce and supports teacher development and retention.

8.2 ‘Into Headship’ is Scotland's national professional learning programme for teachers who aspire to become Headteachers within the next two to three years. Successful completion of the programme awards the GTCS Standard for Headship which is a mandatory requirement for all newly appointed permanent Headteachers. For the 2026/27 session, 17 members of staff are currently enrolled on the programme. ‘In Headship’ is a postgraduate programme designed for newly appointed Headteachers. The programme supports Headteachers to further develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required of effective school leaders. There are currently 6 Headteachers enrolled on the programme.

‘Leading the How of Change’ is a professional learning programme for Headteachers and those who have achieved the GTCS Standard for Headship. The programme focuses on developing the knowledge and skills required to lead and implement change effectively within educational settings. To date, 34 members of staff have completed the programme.

The ‘New and Acting Headteacher Network’ has been reintroduced to complement the Into Headship programme and to support new and aspiring leaders. The network provides regular opportunities for collaboration, professional learning, and engagement with corporate priorities alongside Council officers. The first twilight session, focused on Complaints and Investigations, attracted 38 participants. 16 New and Acting Headteachers attended the Induction Day in Dingwall. The induction programme included contributions from Chief Officers, HR Officers, Gaelic Officers and Area Quality Improvement Managers.

47 Depute Headteachers have registered to attend the first twilight session of the 'Depute Headteacher Network'. The session, which focuses on Learning, Teaching and Assessment forms part of the network's programme to support leadership development and professional collaboration. Furthermore, Education Scotland will deliver a twilight session in November to support the next cohort of 'Into Headship' applicants.

Together, these leadership development programmes and networks are helping to build leadership capacity across Highland, supporting succession planning, and ensuring a strong pipeline of current and future educational leaders.

8.3 Leadership was one of the four key themes identified within the 2026/27 Education & Learning Improvement Plan. Throughout the year, a range of initiatives were delivered to strengthen leadership capacity, support school improvement and develop current and future leaders across Highland schools and settings.

Leadership Development – Professional Learning opportunities for Early Years practitioners, aspiring leaders and Headteachers have continued to strengthen leadership capacity and confidence across schools and settings. Four strategic Headteacher meetings further supported leadership development, with 'Spotlight on Practice' sessions offering valuable opportunities for peer learning and the sharing of successful approaches from across Highland.

Collaborative Leadership - The Raising Attainment Board, strategic Headteacher meetings and improvement workstreams have supported collective leadership, professional collaboration, and the sharing of effective practice across Highland.

Quality Improvement - The refreshed Collaborative Improvement Framework and enhanced programme of Quality Improvement Visits have strengthened self-evaluation, accountability, and continuous improvement across schools.

Leadership Pathways - Leadership pathways for aspiring, new, and experienced leaders continue to be strengthened through induction, professional learning, and national leadership programmes, supporting succession planning and future leadership capacity.

9 Absence Management and Staff Wellbeing

9.1 Across 2025/26, absence data within Education & Learning demonstrated a clear seasonal pattern, with short term absence reducing during Quarter 2 due to the summer break. Absence then peaked during Quarter 3 and reduced again in Quarter 4. During the final two quarters short term absence was largely driven by seasonal illnesses, particularly viral infections.

9.2 Long-term absence followed a different pattern, reducing during Quarter 2 before increasing through the second half of the year and reaching its highest level in Quarter 4. This reflects the cumulative nature of long-term absence, where cases often continue over an extended period.

9.3 Teaching staff continued to record lower average absence levels than the Highland Council average across all four quarters, while absence levels amongst non-teaching staff remained slightly above the Council average.

9.4 Education and Learning continue to maintain lower than average absence levels, with 13.22 days lost per employee compared to the Council average of 14.63 days in 2025/26.

9.5 Analysis of absence trends highlights the importance of continued proactive attendance management, early intervention, and wellbeing support, particularly in relation to long-term absence cases. Targeted management action and staff wellbeing initiatives will remain key priorities in supporting attendance, employee wellbeing, and service resilience across Education & Learning.

9.6 Key proactive intervention measures include: -

- Recruitment of three additional Attendance Support Officers (ASOs) to increase capacity and provide targeted support to Head Teachers and managers in managing attendance. This includes proactively reviewing absence data to identify employees who have reached persistent short-term or long-term absence triggers under the Attendance Management Policy, enabling timely intervention and appropriate case management.
- All Head Teachers were invited to attend face-to-face Attendance Management training during 2025/26. With over 85% attendance, this has enhanced knowledge and confidence in managing attendance issues, supporting the consistent application of the Attendance Management Policy, and strengthening attendance management practices across Education & Learning.
- Mandatory and earlier referrals to Occupational Health for stress-related absence to ensure timely medical advice and appropriate intervention and support.
- 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.
- Completion and regular review of stress risk assessments to identify and mitigate workplace factors contributing to 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.

9.7 In conclusion, proactive absence management remains a key priority. Supporting employee wellbeing, promoting early intervention, and ensuring consistent application

of the Attendance Management Policy are essential to maintaining service resilience, minimising disruption to learning and teaching, and supporting the effective delivery of education services. The additional support provided through Attendance Support Officers will strengthen the capacity of Head Teachers and managers to manage attendance issues promptly and consistently, contributing to improved attendance outcomes across the service.

10 Investors in People

10.1 The Highland Council is using the Investors in People (IIP) framework to benchmark, review and strengthen staff experience and engagement across the organisation. The programme has been designed in line with the IIP framework and informed by guidance from the assigned IIP practitioners supporting its delivery.

10.2 The programme is being delivered in two phases across the Education and Learning Service. Phase One involves the employee survey and accreditation activity and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year**.** Phase Two will focus on the implementation of action plans to deliver improvements to workplace practices and organisational culture, as recommended through the IIP assessment process.

10.3 Once the Investors in People (IIP) Survey feedback has been received, it will be shared with the Education and Learning Senior Management Team. An IIP improvement plan will then be developed, incorporating the key findings and identifying actions to address priority themes and support continuous improvement in employee engagement. Arrangements for sharing the survey findings and associated improvement actions with staff will be agreed once the findings have been reviewed. Once developed this will be reported to a future committee. The IIP Improvement plan will also be used to inform the Education & Learning Workforce Plan for 2027-2030.

11 Conclusion

11.1 During 2025/26, Education & Learning has continued to strengthen its approach to workforce planning through the implementation of workforce priorities focused on leadership capacity, service redesign, recruitment and retention, attendance management, and workforce sustainability. Progress has been made in embedding the revised leadership structure, enhancing support across area teams, and developing a refreshed Workforce Action Plan for 2026/27 (**Appendix 1**) to support future workforce priorities.

11.2 Whilst there have been positive developments in a number of areas, workforce challenges remain. Recruitment pressures continue within certain teaching specialisms, Gaelic Medium and Teachers, Primary Head Teacher posts and some geographic locations. The service also continues to focus on reducing turnover, supporting employee wellbeing, and maintaining attendance levels to ensure continuity of service delivery and minimise disruption to learning and teaching.

11.3 The Education and Learning Workforce Action Plan 2026/27 (**Appendix 1**) provides a framework for progressing key workforce priorities. Ongoing monitoring of workforce information and performance indicators will support the implementation of planned

actions, inform future workforce planning activity, and help ensure the service is well placed to respond to emerging workforce challenges and opportunities.

11.4 The service remains committed to delivering the priorities set out within the Education and Learning Workforce Action Plan 2026/27 (**Appendix 1**) by using workforce data to inform decision-making, manage risk and support the effective and efficient delivery of both statutory and non-statutory services. Continued focus on workforce sustainability, leadership capability, staff wellbeing, and attendance management will be essential to ensuring the Council has the capacity and skills required to meet current demands and future challenges.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive – People

Date: 5 November 2026

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Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Education and Learning Workforce Action Plan 2026/27

Education & Learning Workforce Action Plan 2026/27

Workforce Challenge	Workforce Response / Opportunity	Actions Required	Outcomes	Owner(s)	Target Date	Achieved by September 2027
Recruitment and Retention						
Hard to Fill Posts - Primary Head Teachers & Gaelic Medium Teachers	Continue positive relationship with Sabhal Mor Ostaig in terms of GM probationers. Continue support for Headship qualification. Further develop and support peer networks	Ensure professional learning, training and mentoring is continues and is effective encouraging staff to move into Headship posts.	Increase recruitment of GM posts and Primary Head Teacher roles.	AQIM (Professional Development)Probation Support Officer	Aug-27	
Hard to Fill Posts - Subject Specialisms	Build on current initiatives, Engage nationally in terms of ITE offerings, presence at ITE events and Secondary Schools to promote secondary teaching as a career choice.	Establish short term working groups to develop short, medium and long term plans for Subject Specialisms hard to fill posts.	To have a short, term plan to fill subject specialist posts. Build a profile of probationers, what draws them to HC and what retains them after their probationary year.	AQIM (Secondary) Senior Lead Manager(Performance and Improvement)	Aug-27	
EYPs - Qualification requirement, consideration of more flexible working patterns. Difficult to get people to move into Highlands/area	Consider negotiating more flexible working plans as demand/requirements change. Produce recruitment videos that showcase the experiences of employees who have chosen to relocate to the Highlands, reflecting the benefits of working and living locally.	Market vacancies to UHI students and 5th & 6th year pupils. Further develop apprenticeship pathways. Ensure we engage with strategic approaches already underway - review existing E&L videos and liaise with Corporate Comms Team.	Review of current workforce requirements and 1 year plan to address current needs. Talent attraction What we are doing now & adding to it (my job Scotland) Identify single point of contact in each area for new staff moving into area Recruitment video	Senior Manager Early Years Talent Manager / AQIM (Professional Development)	Aug-27 Aug-27	
General Challenge of recruitment and retention	Analyse IIP Staff Survey Responses	Await IIP Survey data and input to action plan. Investigate Employability Service offering - map for skills gaps & action plan for activity.	Reduce hard to fill vacancies and improve retention.	Chief Officers and Strategic Lead (Resources)	Aug-27	
Skills Gaps	Workforce Response / Opportunity	Actions Required	Outcomes	Owner(s)	Target Date	
Secondary Subject Teachers	Can Secondary Schools work more closely?	Curriculum rationale and mapping for targeted areas	Agreement reached on improved digital offering	AQIM (North 1) & AQIM (North 3)	Aug-27	
Gaelic	Upskill existing staff to take on Gaelic medium roles.	Investigate HC Gaelic Language offering to staff	Increase the number of GM staff within the service.	ESO (Gaelic Language) & AQIM (South 1)	Aug-27	
PSA Professional Development	Upskilling the workforce to meet the needs of all learners.	New training to be rolled out Market employee benefits	Increase skill level and professional development opportunities for PSA workforce.	Senior Lead Manager (ASL), AQIM (South 2) and ISOs	Aug-27	
Leadership Roles and Staff Progression Within the Service	Workforce Response / Opportunity	Actions Required	Outcomes	Owner(s)	Target Date	
Senior roles - AQIM, ESO, Strategic Lead	Develop Corporate Leadership -ESOs AQIMs, ELC Managers, Educational Psychologist.	Investigate Corporate leadership approach Progression pathways for all school staff Identify potential mentors in service (include being a mentor in professional learning programmes)	Route for progression at all levels Education mentoring scheme (facilitated by L&D)	AQIM (Leadership, Learning & Development), Chief Officer (Primary and Early Years Education) L&D Team	Aug-27	
CLD Pathways	CLD faces workforce planning challenges due to a declining number of professionally qualified applicants, an ageing workforce and succession planning pressures.	To address this, accredited CLD pathways have been developed to support staff and volunteers to gain qualifications, progress within the service and strengthen the future workforce pipeline.	Improve retention, career progression and long-term workforce resilience across Highland, this work has been recognised nationally as an example of innovative workforce development.	Senior Lead Manager (Performance and Improvement)	Aug-27	
Pathways to middle leadership roles	An embedded route how to support early careers and progression pathways across the service	Talent spotting Increase learning opportunities Grow your own programmes in schools	A sustainable pipeline of employees who are actively developing the skills, knowledge and experience required to progress into middle management leadership roles	Chief Officers	Aug-27	
Staff Absence	Workforce Response / Opportunity	Actions Required	Outcomes	Owner(s)	Target Date	
Teaching Staff & Non-Teaching Staff	Increase confidence in Head Teacher and AQIMs to effectively manage absence.	All managers to undertake Attendance Management training Increase uptake of mental health training Learn from IIP feedback Targeted approach to schools most affected & address accordingly with Attendance Support Officers Work in partnership with LNCT	Reduction in long term and short term absence Increased retention rate	Chief Officers and Strategic Lead (Resources)	Aug-27	
Workforce Sustainability	Workforce Response / Opportunity	Actions Required	Outcomes	Owner(s)	Target Date	
Teaching Staff	LNCT Agreement has a route to address competence and reflects standards of GTCS	Earlier intervention - ensure Head Teachers & managers are aware of LNCT agreement on competence.	Improved teaching staff performance.	Chief Officer (Secondary Education), Chief Officer (Primary & Early Years Education) & Assistant Chief Executive (People)	Aug-27	
Reducing Class Contact Time	Funding has been provided to plan for the delivery of the a further 90 minutes of reduced class contact time for Primary and Special Schools from August 2027.	Survey all Primary and Special Schools, collate and analyse data on current delivery and potential challenges. Model potential future costs based current delivery and increased staffing required.	Recruitment of additional teaching staff as part of the annual staffing exercise as required to implement increased RCCT in Primary and Special Schools.	Chief Officers and Strategic Lead (Resources)	Aug-27	
Non Teaching staff	Ensure appropriate national (ELC) and local induction used so that staff are clear on their role and responsibilities from the outset.	Earlier intervention - ensure Head Teachers and managers are aware of the Council's Corporate policy and guidance around performance management. Review ELC National Induction & competency framework Analyse disciplinary and grievance cases	Improved non-teaching staff performance.	Chief Officers and Strategic Lead (Resources)	Aug-27	
Expansion of School Age Child Care	Engage with partners to deliver activity based school age childcare. This is not currently a statutory requirement, however funding is available to test models in advance of requirement to deliver in August 2029.	Establish a programme around SG plans and use SG funding to resource a team to develop plan.	Deliver pilot programmes for school age childcare and evaluate different models of delivery.	Senior Manager Early Years	Aug-27	
Expansion of Breakfast Clubs	The Highland Breakfast Club Pilot Programme will support preparations for the implementation of the SG commitment to provide a universal breakfast club offer from August 2027.	Establish a programme around SG plans and use SG funding to resource a team to develop plan.	Plan and implement pilot programmes across Highland that can be evaluated to help inform provision going forward.	Senior Manager Early Years	Aug-27	