

<b>Agenda Item</b>	
<b>Report No</b>	

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Highland Council

**Date:** 29 October 2020

**Report Title:** Annual Corporate Performance Report

**Report By:** The Chief Executive

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an assessment of progress in delivering the Council's Corporate Plan. It is a key report within the Council's framework for measuring and reporting on performance. The framework covers the Council's Programme, Local Voices; Highland Choices, along with the strategic, operational and improvement priorities of the Council which reflect the Council's budget strategy and change programme 'A Sustainable Highland'. It covers the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 and performance is measured against the revised Corporate Plan approved by Council on 5 September 2019.
- 1.2 Progress is reported with 74% of indicators and actions (50 out of the total 68) performing on target or within the performance threshold. For 18 indicators or actions targets have not yet been achieved with a further 7 indicators not yet having data to report. For the Council's 27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 74% are also performing on target or within the performance threshold. Progress is also reflective of our national benchmark position with the majority of Corporate Plan indicators having targets to improve the Council's national benchmark position.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Scrutinise the progress being made with the delivery of the Corporate Plan for the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.
  - ii. Agree that Service Plans are refreshed for 2021/22.
  - iii. Await a further report on Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) and the Local Government Benchmarking Framework no later than March 2021.

- iv. Note that the Annual Performance & Attitudes Survey (APAS) of the Citizens Panel has not been possible this year due to Covid.

### **3. Implications**

- 3.1 Resource – There are no new financial implications as a result of this performance report. However, the progress outlined should be noted in the context of the current financial climate.
- 3.2 Legal – Implications relate to meeting statutory requirements for public performance reporting (PPR).
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – The report identifies progress to achieve several relevant outcomes. This includes working with partners and communities to reduce inequality and tackle poverty and discrimination (outcome 3.1), support economic growth and created and protect jobs across Highland (outcome 4.2), working with partners to ensure fewer people experience transport as a barrier to accessing opportunities (outcome 4.5) and promoting the Highlands as a diverse, safe, and friendly place to live, study, work and live (outcome 5.1).
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – This report identifies the progress made with the Council's commitments on climate change, such as progress to develop a Highland-wide Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and reducing the Council's carbon emissions (outcomes 5.3 & 5.6).
- 3.5 Risk – Reporting progress on delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan is an important strategic assessment of the Council's performance and an important element of external audit's assessment of the Council under Best Value. The ability of the Council to demonstrated Best Value represents a high level reputational risk to the Council with Best Value Assurance Reports (BVAR) reported publicly by Audit Scotland. A BVAR of the Council was completed during 2019/20 and reported to Council in March 2020 which identified a need to drive improved performance; the setting of stretching targets by Members in the revised Corporate Plan is critical to responding to the findings of the report and driving continuous improvement.
- 3.6 Gaelic – The Corporate Plan has a commitment to the delivery of the Gaelic Language Plan (Outcome 2.7).

### **4. Background**

- 4.1 An annual report of Corporate Performance is prepared each autumn, covering performance for the previous financial year. It provides a progress report on the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan, which is the Council's performance framework. The framework covers the Council's Programme, Local Voices; Highland Choices along with the strategic, operational and improvement priorities of the Council which reflect the Council's budget strategy and change programme 'A Sustainable Highland'. This is accomplished by analysing the indicators and actions in the Corporate Plan against their agreed targets and performance thresholds.
- 4.2 The revised Corporate Plan addressed External Audit feedback (paragraph 3.5) with an increased focus on performance measurement against targets and the Council's 27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This will further strengthen the Council's use of data to

support continuous improvement and public performance reporting using an evidence-based approach and demonstrating achievement of the Council's vision to be an Ambitious, Sustainable and Connected Highland.

- 4.3 Reports to Council in March and May 2019 on the Corporate Plan and performance culture identified that a new approach to performance was required. Work by Elected Members and Officers identified an agenda for change which required engagement with Members on better use of data, target setting, and developing Members skills around scrutiny and challenge. Work to finalise the Corporate Plan therefore included Member seminars on target setting for the new Corporate Plan. The Plan was approved by Council in September 2019 and this work by Members on target setting is reflected in this new approach to the annual report.
- 4.4 The principles that underpin the Council are that we will be ambitious, sustainable and connected. This means for public performance reporting (PPR) we will connect with the public by measuring our performance, reporting on it publicly and listening to our communities, to ensure we are delivering services that provide Best Value for Council Taxpayers and demonstrate the Council's ambitions. This report is therefore a key element of the Council's PPR. This report will also be scrutinised by Audit Scotland and our external auditors Grant Thornton and informs the ongoing assessment of the Council under Best Value.
- 4.5 The latest data available to report on the Corporate Plan is for 2018-19 which was reported to Council as part of the Statutory Performance Indicator (SPI) and benchmarking report on 5 March 2020. While this does represent a further year's data against the Corporate Plan agreed in September 2019 (2017/18 baseline) the Council has already considered the outcomes of the 2018-19 data. Discussion in the Chamber in September 2019, when the Corporate Plan was considered by Council, picked up the significant lag in data being verified at a national level and returned to the Council for use. The option of producing data locally ahead of nationally verified data has not been possible due to the impact of Covid on normal work, the redeployment of staff to the Covid response and the delay nationally in the Local Financial Returns (LFRs). While this approach can be revisited to provide information on progress against local trends next year it is unlikely that the national verification of data timescales will change. This means there will continue to be a significant lag in receiving our benchmark position in order to assess progress against corporate targets or drive improvement. A new approach is planned through developing local data dashboards which is outlined in paragraph 4.6 below.
- 4.6 Given the lag in national reporting, which is an issue for the Council every year, Executive Chief Officers are working with their teams to identify ways in which to demonstrate continuous improvement and monitor progress more regularly than the current focus on annual SPIs, benchmark indicators and the Corporate Plan. As part of Service Redesign all Services are building in relevant business intelligence (BI) which provides the Executive Leadership Team and Service Management Teams with a more regular monthly or quarterly view of progress. This approach has also been built into the Service Planning Guidance for 2021/22 and will inform a refreshed approach to Quarterly Performance Reporting (QPR) through data dashboards in the new financial year. This in turn will influence performance reporting to Strategic Committees and will provide members with more up to date information.

## 5. Council Performance 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

- 5.1 As outlined at 4.5 the approach to this year's annual report had been to assess progress using the 2018/19 data across the themes of the Council Programme and Corporate Plan. This not only focuses on the Council's 27 key performance indicators (KPIs) but also provides some qualitative update on progress for 2019/20 with detail of all indicators for 2018/19 also provided in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 For the 27 KPIs, performance is on target for 17, and within the determined performance threshold for 3. There are 7 KPIs are showing no significant progress. 74% (20/27) of the KPIs are performing on target or within the performance threshold. Progress is also reflective of our national benchmark position with the majority of Corporate Plan indicators having targets to improve the Council's national benchmark position. Table 1 below provides a summary.

		KPIs	All PIs
	Performance is "Complete"	-	2
	Performance is "On Target"	17	36
	Performance is "Within Performance Threshold"	3	12
	Performance is "No Significant Progress"	7	18
	The indicator is new / changed / verified data awaited/ no data available	-	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>75</b>

Table 1: Assessment of corporate performance, 2019/20

It is worth stressing that the term 'no significant progress' does not mean has been no improvement in performance. It only relates to the specific target not having been met. Indeed, as section 5.4 makes clear, there are KPIs listed as  where performance has in fact improved on previous years and is expected to continue to improve. In some cases, it highlights where the targets need to be revisited as they are no longer relevant or appropriate. Lastly, section 5.4 also shows there are improvement actions in place, but their impact has not had time to impact on the KPIs and so improvement is expected in the next reporting period.

When considering the overall picture and the 75 performance indicators (PIs) in the Corporate Plan, performance against target can be assessed for 68 out of the 75 indicators. For these 68 indicators, 2 are complete, 36 are on target, and 12 are within the performance threshold. 18 PIs are showing no significant progress. 74% (50/68) of the indicators are either complete, on target, or within the performance threshold.

- 5.3 As indicated in the table above there are 38 indicators where performance is on target or actions are completed. There are case studies in Appendix 1 which provide further detail on some of these successes which are in summary:

A Council that Champions the Highlands:

- Annual report on progress engaging with and influencing national policy on the Council's agenda and investment priorities.

A Place to Live:

- With partners build on average 500 new affordable homes per year over the next 5 years (2017-2022)
- Average time take to re-let homes (days, SHR35)
- Gross rent arrears as a percentage of rent due (HSN1b; SHR31)

- Adults (65+) receiving personal care at home (SW3a)
- Direct payments spent on adults (18+; SW2)
- Average days taken to complete medical adaptations in Council houses (SHR23)
- Net cost per attendance to leisure facilities (C&L1a)
- Net cost per visit to libraries (C&L2a)
- Net cost per visit to museums (C&L3a)
- Adults supported at home who agree the services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life (SW4b)

#### A Place to Thrive:

- SCQF2 Level 5 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds (CHN6)
- SCQF2 Level 6 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds (CHN7)
- Average total tariff score for pupils in S4-S6 (SIMD1 – children living in areas of most disadvantage; CHN12b)
- Funded early years provision graded good or better (CHN18)
- Financial benefit to the customer from advice given
- School attendance rates (per 100 pupils; CHN19a)
- School attendance rates (per 100 looked after children; CHN19b)

#### A Place to Prosper:

- Road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment
- Total direct spend with Highland small and medium sized enterprises (ECON4)
- The number of businesses supported by Economic Development and Business Gateway.

#### A Welcoming Place:

- Council carbon emissions (CO2e)
- Street Cleanliness Score (ENV3c)
- Street lighting energy consumption (kWh)
- Tourism visitor numbers
- Tourism economic impact
- Consult on the Council's plans for a Transient Visitor Levy by December 2019
- Develop a co-ordinated talent attraction and retention strategy with partners by June 2020
- Complete phase 1 of Inverness Castle development by December 2022
- Develop a Highland-wide Climate Change Adaptation Strategy with partners by 2022
- Maintain the current proportion of EU Council employees

#### Your Highland Council:

- Absence (days, non-teaching staff; CORP6b)
- Council Tax received (CORP7)
- Reducing staff travel costs
- 2 pilots to test in-sourcing non-housing building maintenance by August 2019
- Council reserves restored to 2% minimum by March 2022
- ICT network refresh across 374 sites by September 2019
- Maintain recruitment controls to shape the workforce and align budget and service delivery priorities (annual report)

5.4 As outlined above there are 18 indicators which during 2018/19 which did not progress as planned during 2018/19. However, as outline in the report a significant lag in data makes assessment challenging and circumstances have changed significantly. The following provides analysis and where required the actions to improve performance:

## A Place to Thrive:

### Education

- Pupils entering positive destinations (16-19 year olds participating in education, training and employment; (CHN11) - In 2018/2019 there were 2264 pupils in the cohort; 94.8% went onto a positive destination. The virtual comparator was 95% and the national comparator 95%. Within the Highlands: 33.8% went onto employment compared to 22.92% nationally; 23.14% went onto further education compared to 27.27% nationally; 32.2% went onto further education compared to 40.35% nationally. There were 1.68% with unknown destinations; 4.81% went into training; 1.46% not in training or employment and 2.08% unemployed and seeking employment. Significant work has taken place in 2019/2020 with promoting career standards and pathway planning in all schools with closer links with Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) partners and Skills Development Scotland. This was intended to make a difference with such a focus on localised partnerships and planning around young people, but the Council is already aware that Covid has had a significant impact upon employment and destinations for our young people. Priority work and targeted interventions will be required to address the significant challenges our young people now face; these will be addressed through changes to service plans and priorities and a Council wide approach to supporting our young people in securing and sustaining positive destinations in a post Covid context.
- SCQF Level 5 attainment for all children (CHN4); SCQF Level 6 attainment for all children (CHN5); Overall average total tariff score for pupils (S4-S6; CHN12a); Average total tariff score for pupils in S4-S6 (SIMD2, SIMD3, SIMD4, SIMD5) - The decline identified in Highland is almost mirrored in the national variance. We hypothesise that this is due to changes in SQA arrangements (removal of units) which may have impacted on number of National 5/ Higher entries and the traditional curriculum offered by many Highland secondary schools. Through Head Teacher and Officer attainment reviews engagement targets have been set for all 29 secondary schools across the Highland in line with expectations laid out in the Corporate Plan. We continue to encourage schools to consider their options and curriculum with regard to promoting National Progression Awards (NPA) as well as lateral progressions and link scrutiny and support around tariff point entries. We have also engaged with Education Scotland to provide INSIGHT exam analysis data training for all secondary schools. There was a Continuing Professional Development event in June for Secondary Senior Managers around learner journey and tariff options as well as an Education Scotland event on Refreshed Curriculum Narrative. Continued events and discussion at Secondary Head Teacher meetings are planned. There will be a review of our Broad General Education (BGE) and Senior Phase curricular including our rationale and design. Significant positive improvements and progress in attainment have been reported for 2020 and information provided in Appendix 1.

### Children's Care

- Looked After Children being cared for in the community (CHN9) - Although the average number has reduced to below 34 there needs to be a degree of caution as the figure can fluctuate depending on how many children require to be accommodated immediately due to risk and the availability of current provision on the day. The Placement Services Change Programme established to reduce the number of Out of Authority placements continues to be a success. The aspiration continues to be to both support children and young people returning to Highland from Out of Authority provision and to ensure that fewer children leave Highland. We have recently purchased two new children's houses and will be returning another 5 or 6 children from out of area by the end of this financial year. For the

new three bedded unit we are currently recruiting staff and plans are in place to recruit to the second children's house where there is a requirement to provide more specialist resource as the children will be returning from secure care. Since quarter 1 out of area purchased placements has remained static at 27. This is despite an increase of six young people who were accommodated in high cost placements out with Highland during the pandemic.

- Child Protection registrations in a year, which have been registered previously within the past 18 months (CHN22) – There has been significant progress in ensuring that children previously registered on the child protection register are not re registered and there are currently no children on the register who were previously registered. Since Covid-19 restrictions were implemented, child protection registrations have increased by 41% in Highland. There were 90 children on the child protection register on 23rd April 2020, and as of 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020, there were 122 children registered. There were 11 children who were either accommodated or had a change of carer during the last month. There have been 37 de-registrations during the period 1<sup>st</sup> of July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- Number of new foster carers - The number of foster carers is currently 107. The Fostering and adoption service has continued to recruit potential foster carers and adopters during the period of the pandemic. Social workers have also continued to prepare adoption and permanency reports for court to allow children to allow children to find a permanent family. It should be noted that any reduction in foster carers is not always a negative indicator as this may indicate that an adoption has been achieved with the foster family and adoption is the outcome we are striving for. It should also be noted that the mean age of foster carers remains high resulting in foster carer retirements.

#### Housing

- Homelessness – case duration (weeks) - The increase reflects the continuing high pressure of homelessness in Highland which is reflected across Scotland. The Highland Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan was approved by Committee and the Scottish Government in May 2019. It details a number of improvement actions to tackle homelessness in Highland over the 5-year period of the Plan.

#### A Place to Prosper:

- Average time per planning application (weeks; ECON3) - Highland is the largest planning authority in Scotland both in the number of applications determined and its geography. Whilst the figure of 10.6 weeks is disappointing it represent an improvement on 11.4 weeks for the previous year and we have moved from the fourth to the third quartile. Through a review of existing protocols our intention is to target commercial planning applications to improve on this indicator.
- Number of Business Gateway start-ups (per 10,000 population; (ECON5) - Highland already has one of the highest business rates per population. The economic development task is not to increase the number of businesses to start, it is to grow businesses. Efforts are directed to this end – see the indicator on number of businesses supported and also the number of business (exceeding target) on the Council's Local Growth Accelerator Programme. The target associated with this indicator will be reviewed through the service Planning process and its applicability in Highland raised with The Improvement Service. The indicator is part of the Council's Corporate Plan and the suitability of this will also require review.

#### A Welcoming Place

- The number of visits to/usages of Council funded museums that were in person per 1,000 population - There are 19 Museums which are partially funded by the

Council in Highland, of these HLH operates the two regional museums: Inverness Museum and Art Gallery and the Highland Folk Museum. At these sites visits in person increased by 2,925. During 2019 Gairloch Museum was redeveloped, and has very recently won a national award, and it is anticipated that this will lead to an increase in visits in person in future years.

Your Highland Council:

- Asset Management – Suitability (CAST1) - Asset Management – Suitability (CAST1). The Council's Housing and Property Committee approved both the move to a Corporate Landlord delivery model and also a Strategic Asset Management Strategy approach to the assessment of the condition of its assets and future years investment requirements at its meeting of 13th August 2020. That approved, amongst other items, a formal change in responsibility for management, maintenance and investment in relation to the Council's non HRA buildings and assets away from individual service areas and into the Corporate Landlord model, and also approved the transfer of relevant budgets and control from individual service areas to the Corporate Landlord. This reports operationally into the Executive Chief Officer Property and Housing and to the Housing and Property Committee and full Council as required.

Surveys across the entire non HRA estate, including but not limited to, schools, are either ongoing at the point of writing, or are shortly to commence for non-schools' buildings and depots etc. This will be based on a unified agreed standard methodology for assessment of the condition of the building and/or asset. That will over the next 2 years provide a transparent evidence base as to condition of all non HRA built environment assets (buildings, depots in the main) using a shared assessment framework and allow investment decisions to be prioritised by assessed need going forward, which will then feed into a 30 year business plan which will then inform future years 5 year capital programme requirements.

- Citizens' Panel who believe the Council listens (%) - This indicator relies on feedback from the Citizens' Panel Annual Performance survey. It is therefore important to recognise that this will be influenced by how we as an organisation work with the public, our communities and partners both locally and strategically. The Council's new Corporate Plan has key commitments to improve participation and involvement with our communities. This is related to how we work locally at an area level and taking forward and developing our place based approach. This includes developing positive relationships and involvement of partners and communities, understanding our local priorities, understanding our resources, understanding our performance and improving how decisions are made locally. The recently agreed Engagement Framework supporting the Empowerment Recovery theme aims not just to improve our understanding of the experience and impacts of Covid but also to improve the participation and involvement of communities in Council planning, service design and delivery going forward. It is recognised that this will take time to develop and to see a corresponding change in public perception of the organisation however it is not proposed to reduce the existing target but to re-profile in recognition that a change of this nature will be an incremental change and take 2-3 years to see change in results.

## **6. Review of the Corporate Performance Framework**

- 6.1 Following each annual performance report a review of the Council Programme is normally carried out taking account of priorities which have been achieved and make

any amendments required to the Programme. This work is underway led by the Council Leader and the review will reflect the current financial climate, ongoing Covid response and recovery in order to submit the revised Programme to Council on 17 December 2020 for approval. The Corporate Plan will be updated in response in early 2020 to support development of Service Plans in alignment with budget setting for 2021/22.

## **7. Statutory Performance Indicators 2019/20 and Public Opinion Survey**

- 7.1 The Council is required to report on its Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) within 12 months of the end of the financial year they refer to. These SPIs include both Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators and locally defined performance indicators (LPIs). The Council is currently in the process of completing our data returns to the Improvement Service which will enable LGBF performance indicators to be calculated and collecting the data for our LPIs. A report will be presented to a full Council meeting no later than March 2021 provided there is no further Covid impact to the national timetable for publication. In addition, the Annual Performance & Attitudes Survey (APAS) of the Citizens Panel has not been possible this year, the survey results are normally submitted to Council in October annually. This is in large part due to the redeployment of staff onto Covid related duties.

## **8. Service Plans**

- 8.1 Revised guidance on Service Planning has been developed taking account of the new Corporate Plan and feedback from the Council's BVAR. In order to respond to the Covid situation and take account of Service Redesign and budgets agreed for 2020/21, it is proposed that refreshed Service Plans are prepared for 2021/22 and presented to Strategic Committees after the budget is set and in the first quarter of 2021/22. Noting that the plans will be developed and operational in key service areas such as health and social care, education along with a unified Children's Services Plan with community planning partners before the end of this calendar year. These plans will use analysis of Service performance data, identified risks and the key strategic priorities for the Service in order to plan performance improvement. The plans are normally reviewed annually to take account of any agreed changes to the Council Programme and subsequent update to the Corporate Plan. This timeline will also ensure that the implications of the current Service Redesign process are taken into account within refreshed Service Plans.

Designation: The Chief Executive

Date: 13.10.20

Authors: Evelyn Johnston, Corporate Audit & Performance Manager;  
Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance Manager.

Background Papers: Appendix 1 Annual Performance Report 2019/20

Corporate Plan  
Annual Performance Report 2019/20

## Local Voices Highland Choices and The Council's Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan is set out under the six key themes of the Council's Programme, Local Voices, Highland Choices:

1. A Council that champions the Highlands

2. A place to live

3. A place to thrive

4. A place to prosper

5. A welcoming place

6. Your Highland Council

Progress is monitored using a suite of performance measures and actions. Performance in 2019/20 is the key focus of this report. Each performance indicator has an agreed target and performance against this can be assessed. Where available, data for previous years, national data, and data for councils similar to The Highland Council (Family Group) is also presented. The following symbols are used throughout the report to indicate progress against target with a summary of overall performance across the plan also in the table below.

		<b>KPIs</b>	<b>All PIs</b>
	Performance is "Complete"	-	2
	Performance is "On Target"	17	36
	Performance is "Within Performance Threshold"	3	12
	Performance is "No Significant Progress"	7	18
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	<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>75</b>

In reviewing this report, it should be noted that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic began in Scotland in early 2020. This has had an impact both on the ability of the Council to collect and present data on its performance for 2019/20 for this report and will also have affected the performance of some of the indicators.

## 1. A Council that Champions the Highlands

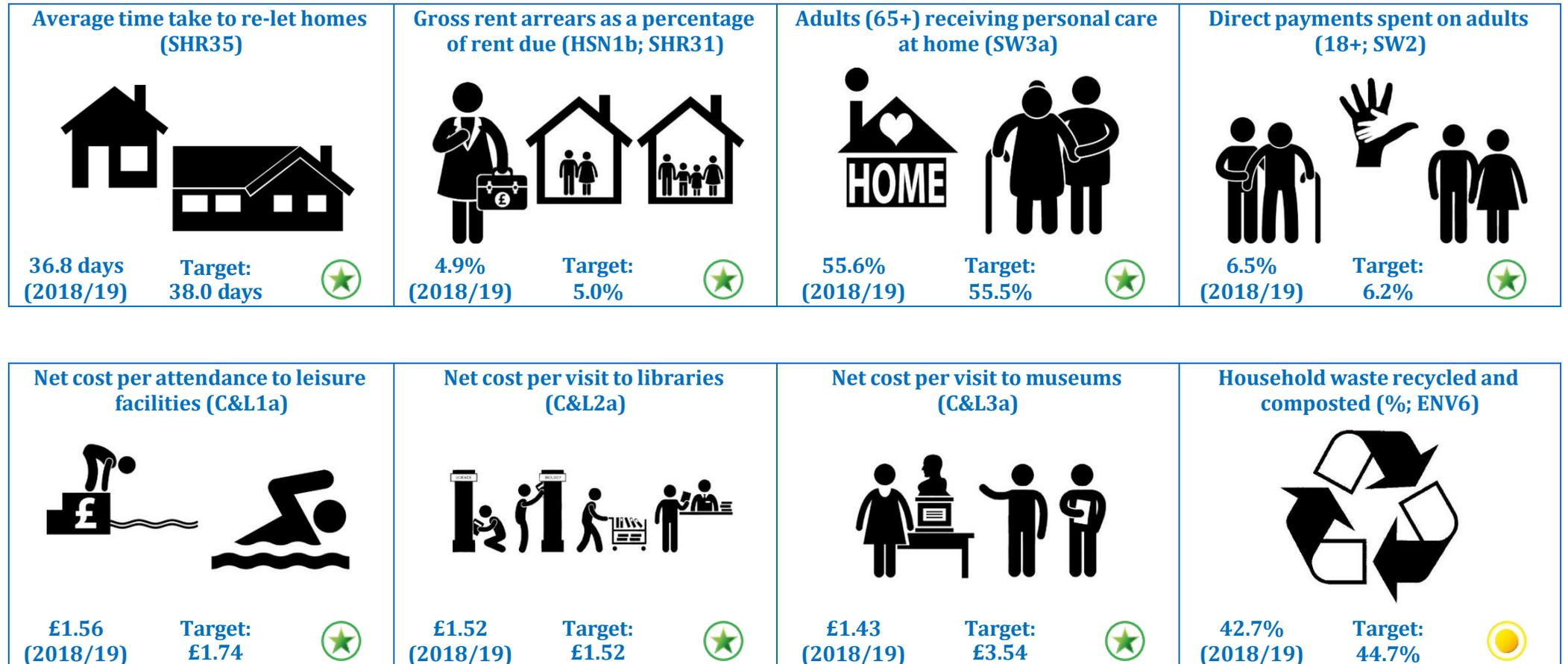
Our ambition is to make the Highlands the best place to live, work and do business.

<p><b>Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund</b> In 2019/20, The Council wrote to the then Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs and subsequently met with the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism on multiple occasions to make the case for continuing to allocate funding to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.</p> <p>This fund has enabled 13 projects to be taken forward across the Highlands which help give visitors a positive experience of the Highlands.</p> <p>Making the case for continuing this fund was successful and a further allocation of £3m was made in the 2020/21 Scottish Government budget.</p>	<p><b>Digital Connectivity</b> The Council has continued to make the case for investment in digital connectivity across the Highlands. In 2019/20 The Council continued to press for the commencement of the R100 programme in Highland which will deliver superfast broadband.</p> <p>The Council also made the case for mobile and WI-FI expansion, meeting with the then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity and also wrote to the Secretary of State for Scotland. The Council has welcomed the expansion of WI-FI through the City Region Deal and the provision of WI-FI along the North Coast 500 route. Active engagement with both the Scottish and UK Governments continues with the aim of realising a step change in approach to delivering critical digital connectivity across the Highlands.</p>
<p><b>Working with MPs and MSPs</b> Elected Members engaged with our Highland MSPs and MPs to brief them on the Council's transformation agenda for reshaping how the Council would deliver vital frontline services to our communities across the Highlands and provided them with an overview of the Council's budget for 2019/20.</p>	<p><b>Crown Estate</b> The Council has been at the forefront of campaigning over many years to ensure that coastal communities benefited from the Crown Estate. Now with the devolution of the Crown Estate, the Council received nearly £1.3m out of a total of £7.5m which was the net revenue from the marine assets in the 0-12 nautical mile zone for the year 2017-2018. These funds will make a real difference to Highland's coastal communities.</p> 

## 2. A Place to Live

Our ambition is to make the Highlands an even better place to live.

### Key Performance Indicators



### Rate your estate

The Rate your Estate initiative is a joint inspection of Council owned housing estates by Housing staff, Tenants and Elected Members where tenants can prioritise improvements to their estates. These are funded from the environmental improvement budget which was created following wide consultation with tenants who said they were happy to pay a little extra on their rent to make their estates a better place to live. In 2019/2020 Rate your Estate inspections occurred in 32 locations across Highland. 126 tenants were involved and improvement works were carried out directly reflecting the priorities of the residents.

### Kilmallie Neighbours project

The first phase of a community led project by residents in amenity housing in Kilmallie Road, Caol, Lochaber, to regenerate the communal area outside their homes. has been successfully completed. They are now working on ambitious plans for ongoing improvement of the area. The work has made a massive difference to the residents' quality of life by making a useable communal space for tenants to connect and socialise.

Fencing was repaired by The Council and the group painted the fences and the old benches. The existing flower planters and slabbed seating area were cleaned up and the group provided compost and flowers to brighten it up.



### High Life Highland

High Life Highland develops and promotes opportunities in culture, learning, sport, leisure, health and wellbeing across nine services throughout the whole of the Highlands, for both residents and visitors. Since High Life Highland was established the number of customer engagements has increased from 2.3 million to 8.1million and reliance on Council funding has reduced from 79% to 51%. During the first six months of 2019/20, customer engagements increased to 4.3million from 3.8 million during the same period in 2018/19. 40% of the Highland population had a High Life Highland card in 2019/20.

### Gaelic

In December 2019, The Council agreed to establish a Gaelic Committee, replacing the Gaelic Implementation Group. This committee will meet four times a year, with the first meeting on August 3rd, 2020.

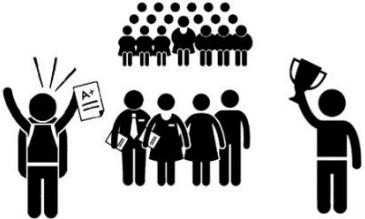
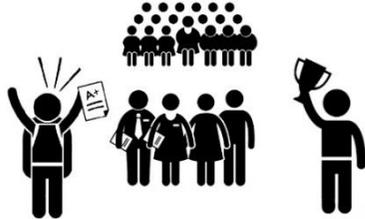
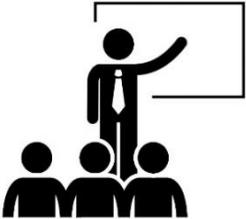
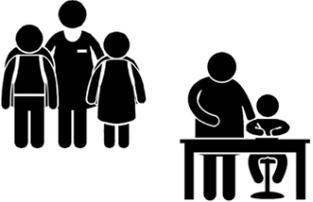
During lockdown, a range of activities were created weekly and made available on the Highland digital schools' hub and Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Activities and resources were interactive and included the use of Vlogging to ensure continuity of immersion support was available to all families. Resources and support materials were created by Highland's education practitioners and the Gaelic Team. Projects delivered include:

- Videos to support non-Gaelic speaking parents and guardians who have young children entering Gaelic medium education
- An online Gaelic creative writing course for P7 and S1 pupils.
- "Spòrs agus Seinn Còmhla ri Ellen", short videos covering the typical themes encountered during the day with small children.

### 3. A Place to Thrive

Our ambition is that no matter where they live or whatever their needs, all of our citizens are supported to be successful and our communities are helped to be safe, healthy, and nurturing places for all.

#### Key Performance Indicators

<p><b>Pupils entering positive destinations (16-19 year olds participating in education, training and employment; CHN11)</b></p>  <p>94.8% (2018/19)    Target: 95.8% </p>	<p><b>SCQF<sup>1</sup> Level 5 attainment for all children (CHN4)</b></p>  <p>59% (2018/19)    Target: 62% </p>	<p><b>SCQF<sup>2</sup> Level 5 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds (CHN6)</b></p>  <p>35% (2018/19)    Target: 35% </p>	<p><b>Overall average total tariff score for pupils (S4-S6; CHN12a)</b></p>  <p>792 (2018/19)    Target: 841 </p>
<p><b>Average number of Looked After Children in accommodation out with Highland</b></p>  <p>39 (2018/19)    Target: 34 </p>	<p><b>Homelessness – case duration</b></p>  <p>48 weeks (2018/19)    Target: 41 weeks </p>	<p><b>School attendance rates (per 100 pupils; CHN19a)</b></p>  <p>92.75% (2018-19)    Target: 92.59% </p>	<p><b>School attendance rates (per 100 looked after children; CHN19b)</b></p>  <p>91.12% (2016-17)    Target: 90.98% </p>

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework

### **SQA attainment**

SQA attainment for 2019/20 was finalised following the Scottish Government's alignment of certified grades with school estimates.

The National 5 A-C pass rate in Highland is 89.7%, up 11.3% and ahead of the national figure of 89.0%.

At Higher, the A-C pass rate in Highland is 90.8%, up 15.8% and ahead of the national figure of 89.3%.

At Advanced Higher, the A-C pass rate in Highland is 91.7%. This is slightly behind the national figure (93.1%), but shows improvement of 13.1% on the 2018/19 figure.

These improvements are very welcome, as is the narrowing of the deprivation linked attainment gap for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher A-C pass rates.

### **Performance review meetings with Head Teachers**

In February and March 2020, members of the Education Improvement Team (EIT) met with Head Teachers to explore attainment patterns and to discuss approaches to learning, teaching, assessment and curriculum.

Each secondary Head Teacher outlined targets for key measures of attainment and discussion focused on how these would be delivered. Primary Head Teachers met EIT members in Associated Schools groupings, focusing on collaborative approaches to raising attainment in Curriculum for Excellence levels. These meetings will resume shortly, now that schools have reopened, to examine progress towards targets and to establish new targets for 2020/21.

### **Fostering and Adoption**

There has been a slight improvement in the timescales for undertaking an assessment of prospective foster carers and prospective adopters during 2019/20. These assessments are thorough and often complex with statutory checks that require to be undertaken as well as comprehensive assessment reports. The number of carers in both categories approved during this period has increased this financial year.

### **Returning young people to Highland**

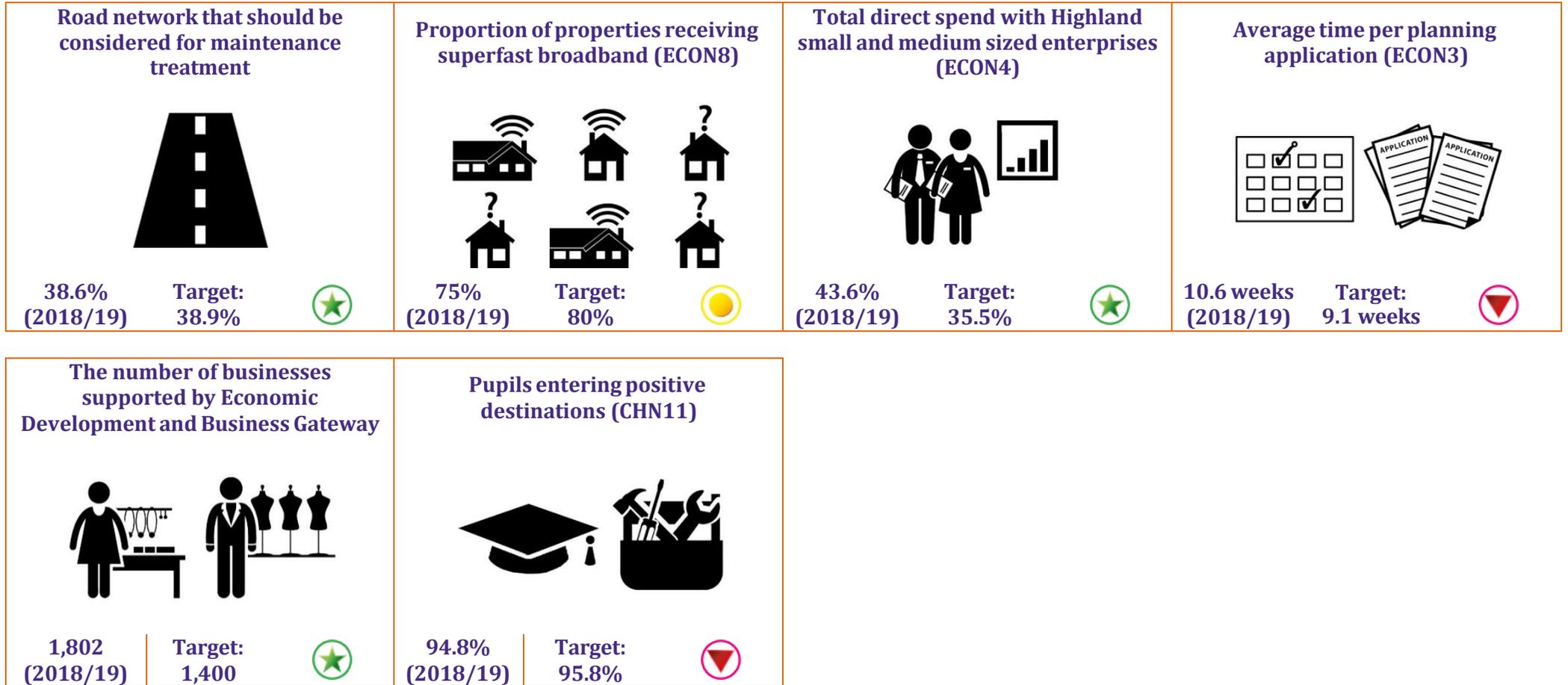
The Placement Services Change Programme in Children's Services was developed to return young people to Highland from costly Out of Area placements. A combination of new services and the creative use of existing provisions enable children to remain in the communities they know.

From June 2018 to March 2020, 60 children returned or were able to remain in Highland, avoiding costs of over £7 million pounds. The money saved has been invested in the development of services in Highland. Additionally, there are much improved educational and emotional wellbeing outcomes for the returning young people. The Programme won the Council's Delivering Efficiency, Earning Income and Improving Services award in 2019.

## 4. A Place to Prosper

Our ambition is to maximise the economic potential of the Highlands

### Key Performance Indicators



### Restoring 96 Academy Street

As lead partner of the Inverness Townscape Heritage Project (ITHP), Highland Council has stimulated private sector investment to restore one of Inverness' most iconic buildings. With ITHP grant funding of over £1m, Rose Street Foundry at 96 Academy Street, the former home to AI Welders, reopened as a bar and restaurant in 2020.

Working with Cairngorm Taverns Ltd triggered significant investment from the company to bring the building back into use. Beautifully restored iconic mosaics signalling the building's past coupled with high-end interior finishes herald Rose Street Foundry's new chapter.



### Restoring a popular destination on Academy Street

A once popular pub that had fallen into dereliction has been given a new lease of life. The £422,606 ITHP grant gave Heineken's Star Pubs & Bars the confidence to invest significantly in the Category B listed 18th-century Blackfriars building. Having been sympathetically restored to reveal original features such as exterior stonework, Blackfriars is a high-quality pub and offers accommodation. Blackfriars is once again a focal point of Academy Street.



### Newton Room - Dingwall

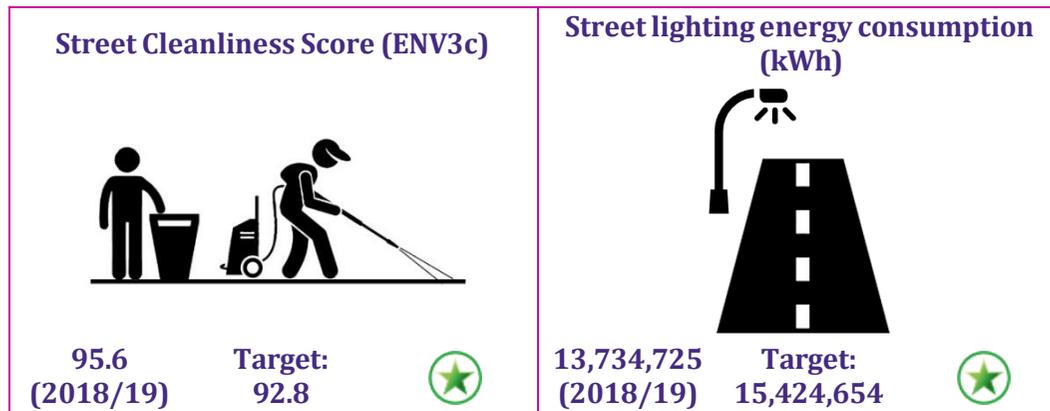
Following the successful completion of Newton rooms in Thurso and Fort William, and third room has now been completed in Dingwall. Funded through the City Region Deal (A £315m funding package from the Scottish Government, UK Government, and local partners), the centres are aimed at encouraging more young people in the area into studies and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The Dingwall Newton Room is located with Dingwall Town Hall and is accessible to schools from across Ross-shire.

## 5. A Welcoming Place

Our ambition is to develop sustainable and connected communities. We have an increasingly diverse population and we welcome people of all faiths, nationalities and backgrounds who wish to live, study, work or visit here.

### Key Performance Indicators



## Tourism Infrastructure Fund

With recent growth in tourism there has been a need for additional investment in tourism infrastructure to both improve the welcome for visitors whilst avoiding undue pressures on communities and the local environment. The Council has worked with many communities across Highland on bids for funding from the Scottish Government's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.



Photo by John Muir Trust

Funding has been awarded for 13 Highland projects covering facilities including parking, improved toilet and motorhome waste facilities and path improvements. The first project has now been completed with improved parking and new composting toilets installed by the John Muir Trust to serve visitors to the Blaven and Strathaird area of Skye.

## Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

To date, Highland Council has attracted over £3m of investment in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure since 2012. Over 30 EV charging points have been installed to date and this expected to rise to over 80 by the end of 2020/21. Combined with other publicly available charging points, there were 72 in Highland in 2019. The number of charging sessions across this public network increased by 66% between 2018 and 2019.

## Climate and Ecological Emergency

In May 2019, Highland Council publicly recognised the serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change and declared a climate and ecological emergency. The Council has established a Climate Change Working Group. This is a consultative forum, that provides advice on the climate, ecological and environmental sustainability agenda across the Council's estate, including its schools, non-domestic properties, services, and other areas within its realm of wider influence, and to support efforts to reduce emissions across the wider Highland area.

## Highland LEADER 2014-20 Programme

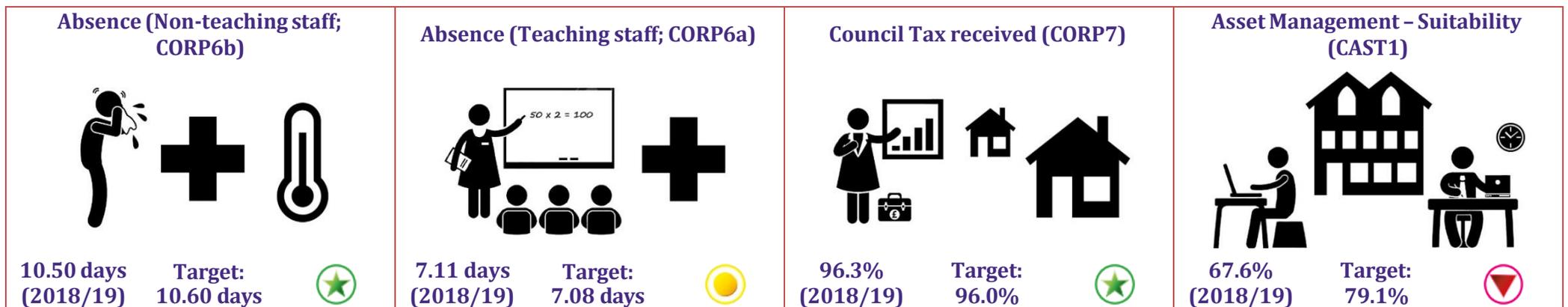
The Highland LEADER Programme supports bottom-up community development and is central to the Council's commitment to empower communities. During this programming period, LEADER has funded a total of 120 projects. Overall this has distributed £7,251,268 LEADER funds to Highland communities with total project costs of over £15M.

Key achievements of the Programme include: 70 new jobs created and 13 jobs safeguarded; 11 new enterprises established; 35 projects contributing to carbon clever agenda; 159 people receiving training; 214 new tourist beds created and 26 projects extending the visitor season; and 24 new community facilities and 36 existing facilities improved.

## 6. Your Highland Council

Our ambition is to improve and strengthen the relationship between the Council and the communities it serves. Communities are happier, healthier and more resilient when they are listened to and can play an active part in the development and delivery of the services that matter them

### Key Performance Indicators



## Absence Management

A change in culture and behaviours in managing and taking ownership for absence is particularly evident in Education. More experienced Headteachers are supporting less experienced colleagues demonstrating the collaborative approach which is taking place.

Attendance Support Officers (ASOs) have supported improvements in absence management, including long term absence, short term persistent absence, ill-health, and redeployment.

Long term absences are all being dealt with across the school estate and ASOs are now moving to support shorter frequent absences.

Developments to improve attendance management include tools for managers include FAQs, updating online resources, a new instructional video, 104 staff trained as Mental Health Representatives, and establishing the Employee Assistance Programme (which provides free 24hr confidential counselling service to employees and their family).

## Budget Savings and Council Reserves

The Highland Council reported a successful year end position for 2019/20 delivering £18 million of savings as part of a 3-year plan and an underspend of £7.526m. The key drivers behind the positive year-end position are improved governance, further reductions in overspend, and robust management of all budgets.

The Council's unearmarked reserves, which act as a general contingency against unforeseen events or to meet unbudgeted costs, were £15.451 million at 31 March 2020. At this level the reserve represents 2.7% of the 2019/20 net revenue budget, compared to 1.4% in 2018/19. The raised levels of reserves are critical to the Council's financial sustainability.

## Fort William Community Action Group

The Council have led on a joint initiative to set up Fort William Community Action Group, formed to address inequalities in the area.

Following community consultation, an action plan is in place which addresses areas such as health and well-being, community participation and dialogue, community safety and resilience and poverty reduction. The Group is driven by the community and has ambitious plans to tackle inequality and make a positive difference to people's lives.

The Group organised a community well-being event which ran activities across 3 sites. Over 150 people participated and it was very well received.

## Bayfield Car Park – Portree

In 2018, the Council in partnership with local stakeholders carried out a Parking Options Appraisal for Portree. Redevelopment of Bayfield Car Park and the adjoining land owned by the Tennis & Squash Club was identified as the preferred option.

In 2019/20, the Council working in partnership secured funding from the Rural Tourism & Infrastructure Fund, the Town Centre Regeneration Fund, the Scottish Land Fund and Council funding.

When complete the project will provide an additional 86 car parking spaces, 8 dedicated motorhome parking spaces, a chemical waste disposal point and 2 road safety crossings to the town centre.

# Performance Data Tables

## 1. A Council that Champions the Highlands

Action	Performance 2018/19	Performance 2019/20
Annual report on progress engaging with and influencing national policy on the Council's agenda and investment priorities		★

## 2. A Place to Live

Indicator	FY 2019/20	FY 2018/19	FY 2017/18	FY 2016/17	National Average 2018/19	Family Average 2018/19	Target 2018/19	Performance 2018/19
With partners build on average 500 new affordable homes per year over the next 5 years (2017-2022) <sup>2</sup>	414	408	290				350	★
<b>Average time take to re-let homes (days, SHR35)</b>	31.9	36.8	36.6	38.8			38.0	★
<b>Gross rent arrears as a percentage of rent due (HSN1b; SHR31)</b>	4.6%	4.9%	5.0%	4.7%	7.3%	7.08%	5.0%	★
<b>Adults (65+) receiving personal care at home (SW3a)</b>		55.5%	53.2%	49.9%	61.0%	60.2%	55.5%	★
<b>Direct payments spent on adults (18+; SW2)</b>		6.5%	6.1%	6.3%	7.3%	5.0%	6.2%	★
Average days taken to complete medical adaptations in Council houses (SHR23)	40.0	34.8	33.2	57.4			40.90	★
<b>Net cost per attendance to leisure facilities (C&amp;L1a)</b>		£1.56	£1.68	£1.62	£2.62	£2.37	£1.74	★
<b>Net cost per visit to libraries (C&amp;L2a)</b>		£1.52	£1.62	£1.91	£2.05	£2.79	£1.52	★
<b>Net cost per visit to museums (C&amp;L3a)</b>		£1.43	£2.19	£1.45	£3.48	£4.46	£3.54	★
<b>Household waste recycled and composted (%; ENV6)</b>		42.7%	43.6%	44.5%	44.7%	30.6%	44.7%	☀

Indicator	2017-18	2015-16	2014-15	National Average 2017-18	Family Average 2017-18	Target 2017-18	Performance 2017-18
Adults supported at home who agree the services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life (SW4b)	85.7%	86.7%	82.8%	80.0%	78.1%	82.5%	★

<sup>2</sup> Data provided is the rolling average of new affordable homes per year

### 3. A Place to Thrive

Indicator	AY 2019/20	AY 2018/19	AY 2017/18	AY 2016/17	National Average 2018/19	Family Average 2018/19	Target 2018/19	Performance 2018/19
<b>Pupils entering positive destinations (16-19 year olds participating in education, training and employment; CHN11)</b>		94.8%	96.0%	95.5%	95.1%	94.8%	95.8%	
<b>SCQF<sup>2</sup> Level 5 attainment for all children (CHN4)</b>		59%	61%	59%	63%	63%	62%	
<b>SCQF<sup>2</sup> Level 5 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds (CHN6)</b>		35%	31%	27%	44%	40%	35%	
SCQF <sup>2</sup> Level 6 attainment for all children (CHN5)		30%	32%	31%	35%	34%	33%	
SCQF <sup>2</sup> Level 6 attainment by children from deprived backgrounds (CHN7)		12%	9%	11%	18%	15%	11%	
Teachers trained in inclusion/ ASN methods	100%						50%	
Number of accommodated Looked After Children		81	86	85			78	
Looked After Children being cared for in the community (CHN9)		83.2%	83.5%	82.6%	89.9%	86.4%	85.7%	
<b>Overall average total tariff score for pupils (S4-S6; CHN12a)</b>		792	852	839	892	852	841	
Average total tariff score for pupils in S4-S6 (SIMD1 – children living in areas of most disadvantage; CHN12b)		492	492	445	625	577	492	
Average total tariff score for pupils in S4-S6 (SIMD2; CHN12c)		575	683	633	740	658	664	
Average total tariff score for pupils in S4-S6 (SIMD3; CHN12d)		789	882	852	872	825	872	
Average total tariff score for pupils in S4-S6 (SIMD4; CHN12e)		907	925	952	1,103	968	952	
Average total tariff score for pupils in S4-S6 (SIMD5 – children living in areas of least disadvantage; CHN12f)		1,006	1,104	1,036	1,193	1,088	1,133	

Action	Performance 2018/19	Performance 2019/20
All eligible 2, 3, and 4 year old have access to 1140 hours of childcare by 2020		

Indicator	FY 2019/20	FY 2018/19	FY 2017/18	FY 2016/17	National Average 2018/19	Family Average 2018/19	Target 2018/19	Performance 2018/19
<b>Average number of Looked After Children in accommodation out with Highland</b>	30	39	34	27			34	
Funded early years provision graded good or better (CHN18)		93.9%	89.2%	92.7%	90.6%	89.3%	92.0%	
Children meeting developmental milestones (CHN17)			63.7%	68.2%				
Child Protection registrations in a year, which have been registered previously within the past 18 months (CHN22)		6.62%	6.80%	5.07%	7.22%	5.48%	6.34%	
Looked After Children being cared for in kinship care	20.5%	18.4%	19.5%	17.7%			20%	
Number of new foster carers	119	127	144	148			154	
<b>Homelessness – case duration (weeks)</b>	43	48	44	37			41	
Financial benefit to the customer from advice given	£6,651,012	£6,188,835	£6,024,983	£4,651,372			£6,085,233	

Indicator	2018-19	2016-17	2014-15	National Average 2018-19	Family Average 2018-19	Target 2018-19	Performance 2018-19
<b>School attendance rates (per 100 pupils; CHN19a)</b>	92.75%	93.40%	93.20%	92.95%	93.32%	92.59%	
<b>School attendance rates (per 100 looked after children; CHN19b)<sup>3</sup></b>	86.01%	91.12%	91.16%			90.98%	

Indicator	AY 2017-19	AY 2015-17	AY 2013-15	National Average 2017-19	Family Average 2017-19	Target 2017-19	Performance 2017-19
School exclusions (per 1,000 pupils; CHN20a)	20.6	22.7	20.4	21.7	21.9	20.0	
School exclusion rate for Looked After Children (per 1,000 pupils; CHN20b)		108.8	73.2				

<sup>3</sup> Target and performance are measured against data for 2017-18. National data for 2018-19 is not yet available.

## 4. A Place to Prosper

Indicator	FY 2019/20	FY 2018/19	FY 2017/18	FY 2016/17	National Average 2018/19	Family Average 2018/19	Target 2018/19	Performance 2018/19
<b>Road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment</b>	37.8%	38.6%	38.8%	38.7%			38.9%	
<b>Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (ECON8)</b>		75%	76%	72%	92%	76%	80%	
<b>Total direct spend with Highland small and medium sized enterprises (ECON4)</b>		43.6%	40.9%	33.7%	28.7%	38.0%	35.5%	
<b>Average time per planning application (weeks; ECON3)</b>		10.6	11.4	10.2	9.1	9.2	9.1	
300 modern apprentices by 2022	215							
Number of Business Gateway start-ups (per 10,000 population; ECON5)		11.89	11.01	12.14	16.70	19.51	16.70	
<b>The number of businesses supported by Economic Development and Business Gateway</b>	1,643	1,802	1,191	1,061			1,400	

Indicator	AY 2019/20	AY 2018/19	AY 2017/18	AY 2016/17	National Average 2018/19	Family Average 2018/19	Target 2018/19	Performance 2018/19
<b>Pupils entering positive destinations (CHN11)</b>		94.8%	96.0%	95.5%	95.1%	94.8%	95.8%	

Action	Performance 2018/19	Performance 2019/20
Develop a delivery plan for Highland broadband using the City-Region Deal funding by December 2019		
Implement the £6.7m Inverness Community Links Plus cycling project by 2022		

## 5. A Welcoming Place

Indicator	FY 2019/20	FY 2018/19	FY 2017/18	FY 2016/17	National Average 2018/19	Family Average 2018/19	Target 2018/19	Performance 2018/19
The number of visits to/usages of Council funded museums that were in person per 1,000 population <sup>4</sup>	1,360	1,362	1,421	1,524			1,493	
The total number of visits to/ usages of Council funded museums (in person and virtual) per 1,000 population <sup>4</sup>	2,502	2,798	2,667	2,880			2,880	
Council carbon emissions (CO <sub>2</sub> e)		45,076	53,665	57,242			53,773	
<b>Street Cleanliness Score (ENV3c)</b>		95.6	93.9	94.8	92.8	96.2	92.8	
<b>Street lighting energy consumption (kWh)</b>	11,878,227	13,734,725	14,178,050	16,671,257			15,424,654	
Energy consumption across the Council estate (million kWh)		109.507	116.332	113.683			TBC	

Indicator	CY 2019	CY 2018	CY 2017	CY 2016	National Average 2018	Family Average 2018	Target 2018	Performance 2018
Tourism visitor numbers	7,488,000	6,528,000	6,486,000	6,092,000			6,486,000	
Tourism economic impact	£1.399bn	£1.285bn	£1.253bn	£1.191bn			£1.253bn	

Action	Performance 2018/19	Performance 2019/20
Consult on the Council's plans for a Transient Visitor Levy by December 2019		
Develop a co-ordinated talent attraction and retention strategy with partners by June 2020		
Complete phase 1 of Inverness Castle development by December 2022		
Develop a Highland-wide Climate Change Adaptation Strategy with partners by 2022		
Maintain the current proportion of EU Council employees		

<sup>4</sup> Data for 2019/20 is incomplete, with some data for Q4 yet to be returned for a small proportion of museums.

## 6. Your Highland Council

Indicator	FY 2019/20	FY 2018/19	FY 2017/18	FY 2016/17	National Average 2018/19	Family Average 2018/19	Target 2018/19	Performance 2018/19
<b>Absence (days, non-teaching staff; CORP6b)</b>	9.70	10.50	10.75	10.41	11.49	11.52	10.60	
<b>Absence (days, teaching staff; CORP6a)</b>	6.90	7.11	7.17	6.85	6.21	7.06	7.08	
<b>Council Tax received (CORP7)</b>	96.3%	96.3%	96.2%	96.1%	96.0%	96.7%	96.0%	
<b>Asset Management – Suitability (CAST1)</b>	67.5%	67.6%	66.1%	66.0%	82.1%	79.1%	79.1%	
Citizens' Panel who believe the Council listens (%)		26%	29%	34%			37%	
Reducing staff travel costs		£2,179,936	£2,901,280	£2,730,290			£2,401,280	
Number of staff undertaking wellbeing workshops	458							
450 staff transitioned to new roles by 2022	26							

Action	Performance (2018/19)	Performance (2019/20)
2 pilots to test in-sourcing non-housing building maintenance by August 2019		
3 community engagement sessions per local area per year		
£37.456m savings achieved by March 2022		
Council reserves restored to 2% minimum by March 2022		
ICT network refresh across 374 sites by September 2019		
Maintain recruitment controls to shape the workforce and align budget and service delivery priorities (annual report)		