

Agenda Item	4
Report No	RB/01/21

Committee: Recovery Board

Date: 25 January 2021

Report Title: Recovery Action Plan: Phase 3

Report By: Executive Chief Officer - Transformation

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Highland Council Recovery Action Plan Progress Report – Phase 3 is presented to the Board for consideration.
- 1.2 A summary of progress to the end of phase 3 (to end Dec 2020) is provided at table 6.1 and further detail on each Key Priority (KP) is at appendix 1. Of the 79 individual tasks, 13 tasks show slippage at the following Key Priorities: two at Financial Recovery, one at Community Empowerment, eight at IT Transformation, one at Leadership, Culture and Performance and one at Asset Management, as at 31 December 2020 and these are further explained at table 6.4.
- 1.3 Work on ‘critical enablers’ for the Council to continue to move forward in Recovery specifically Key Priority four, the Council’s Financial Recovery, was prioritised prior to the Festive break and emphasis on budget work will continue in the coming weeks. Further progress has been made with Service Redesign and Workforce Planning and under Key Priority 2 – Lockdown Agility, the Chief Executive and ECOs undertook staff engagement sessions during December 2020. Following those, fresh [homeworking guidance](#) (appendix 2) was issued to managers and staff which instructed, amongst other matters, that: Managers should ensure that staff working from home complete the Homeworking Risk Assessment and share results with their manager; and that Managers should enquire regularly about their employees’ wellbeing and seek to recognise early signs of stress. Prior to Lockdown Staff have been permitted to arrange transfer of their Council office workplace tools (e.g. computing equipment, chairs, desks) to home settings. Further staff communications have followed and will be updated regularly in the fluid context of Covid.
- 1.4 **PPE.** Staff are able to request, order and receive the necessary Covid-19 PPE items as required and defined by risk assessments. There are currently no marketplace notifications of supply constraints. For the main Covid-related PPE items (e.g. nitrile gloves, face masks, sanitiser, and Oxivir Plus) we have the 3-month buffer stocks ECO Property & Housing has sought to ensure resilience. There are no current notifications from suppliers regarding supply chain difficulties. For noting, Oxivir Plus is the Council-approved spray product for use by pupils and/or teachers in-class for cleaning desks etc.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to consider:

- i. the latest summary of progress against the Council's Recovery Action Plan for phase 3 to end December 2020.
- ii. the associated implications and pressures on resources in the delivery of increased response and resilience activity in light of the latest Covid-19 measures.
- iii. Any recommendation or observations to Council in respect of progress on the Recovery Plan and associated actions.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Resource:** The staffing resources required to deliver these 11 key priorities are being deployed from within the Council's existing resources. This approach ensures that the powerful matrix of skills and knowledge across the organisation are being utilised effectively while also managing ongoing operational delivery and compliance with statutory requirements and changing national guidance. The new lockdown measures are expected to impact on Recovery Action Plan delivery, and progress reports will continue to detail any such impacts.
- 3.2 **Legal:** While there are no presenting legal implications at this stage in the Programme, Sponsors will seek legal advice and take appropriate actions as required.
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural):** All the Recovery Workstreams will embed our equalities and Fairer Scotland duties. Equality impact assessments are currently being compiled led by the respective sponsors/leads and supported by the Transformation Service and Principal Policy Officer (Equalities).
- 3.4 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever:** There are no immediate Climate Change implications associated with this report. An update on Climate Change work is provided later in today's agenda.
- 3.5 **Risk:** The Recovery process has many risk elements across the 11 key priorities. Significantly, risks relate to reduced capacity to focus on recovery while we:
 - move into a heightened period of resilience;
 - undertake new joint work with NHSH to sustain the delivery of adult social care services and support the roll out of the vaccination programme;
 - respond to new work arising from Brexit;
 - support staff through another period of lockdown and resilience, paying attention to health and wellbeing impacts; and
 - financial challenges as a result of this pandemic.
- 3.6 There are no specific Gaelic implications arising from this report. Opportunities to promote and enhance Gaelic will be picked up across a number of the workstreams and as part of the culture/tourism theme within Economic Recovery in particular.

4. Background and Operating Context

- 4.1 Members are asked to consider the progress that has been made up to the end of phase 3 (31 December 2020). Coincident with the end of the phase 3 reporting period,

there was an increase for Highland to level 4 of the Scottish Government's (SG) Tier based Covid-19 local protection levels on 18 December 2020 and introduction of further restrictions announced on 4 and 13 January 2021. This means that the Council, staff, partners and communities are once again in a heightened response posture with a significant priority given to resilience activity. In this context of emergency response and execution of contingency plans in response to lockdown measures, the activity associated with the Recovery Plan over the coming weeks and months will be impacted as resource becomes stretched in responding to the lockdown and pressing resilience work. With the latest lockdown, cognisance of additional front-line service delivery contingency measures, requirements for all staff on the shielding list to work from home, care of the sick and protection of vulnerable citizens will also be at the forefront of efforts in the coming weeks and months

- 4.2 The Recovery Action Plan reached a third milestone – the end of Phase 3 at the end of December 2020. Of the 79 tasks 13 showed slippage. The Council has continued to deliver against the extensive Recovery Action Plan while supporting resilience requirements and dealing with the effects of pandemic in parallel. The move from SG Tier 1 to Tier 4 in December and then further into Lockdown measures on 4 January 2021 presents a significant challenge to the timely deliverability of the Recovery Plan, reinforcing the importance of such progress reports and innovative use of existing technology, in this case PRMS. These changes also present further challenge with regard to service delivery, for all staff on the shielding list to work from home, providing assistance to vulnerable citizens and supporting the NHS. The rapidly changing situation with regard to the national pandemic also underscores the need for the Recovery Programme to be agile in its approach, not just with regard to timescales and resourcing but also in terms of content – as reflected in the new actions agreed by the Council on 7 January 2021 and set out at paragraph 4.5.
- 4.3 In line with Programme Management Office (PMO) principles, exception reporting continues to enable staff and Members to understand the work that has been achieved since June 2020 and to focus on those tasks that are under pressure against timelines and milestones.
- 4.4 Real-time' reporting via PRMS (Performance and Risk Management System) is now available and has been used in the compilation of this report.
- 4.5 At the Highland Council meeting on 7 January 2020, Members agreed a motion as detailed below. It is intended that updates are reported through the Recovery Board. The Recovery Action Plan (Appendix 1) will also be formally updated to help support progress monitoring. ECO Communities & Place has been identified as the lead sponsor for this motion, and more detail will also be reported to the appropriate Strategic Committees. Motion detail as follows:
1. Prepare a Resilience Group Support Programme to provide practical support for local resilience groups as we identify funding support that can be provided or diverted.
 2. Introduce a weekly virtual briefing for Resilience Groups and Community Councils convened by the Chief Executive (or appropriate ECO) and the Leader of the Council (or senior administration councillor).
 3. Identify resources to train appropriate staff in the provision of Mental Health First Aid to provide additional support for school staff in dealing with the mental health issues experienced by young people during the lockdown and beyond.
 4. Discuss with the Scottish Government (and other appropriate partners) the current operation of travel advice and identified loopholes in regulations that

expose areas of the Highland Council to higher risk and seek changes to these regulations where appropriate.









5. Prepare a Town Centre Recovery Plan, identifying what resources are available and what practical action the Council can take to support town centre and high street businesses.
6. Prepare a “Highland Opening-Up Plan” to identify risks and action required by the council as pandemic restrictions are eased in the future.

5. Board activity- updates


- 5.1 At the Recovery Board on 23 November 2020, the Board received a progress report on the exceptions to the Recovery Action Plan for phase 2, and Workforce Planning. Verbal updates were also provided on the economic recovery strategy, Brexit and readiness of buildings
- 5.2 Further discussion on Brexit took place at the 7 January Council meeting where a number of issues arising from the UK’s exit from the EU were discussed and the complexity of the situation was recognised particularly since there are a number of other concurrent issues such as COVID. The Brexit Working Group met 14 January 2021 where it was agreed that there would be a Member seminar on 1 February 2021.
- 5.3 The Tourism Committee met on 3 December 2020, where they discussed and agreed their Terms of Reference. Following approval of these minutes at the Highland Council on 7 January 2021 Members also agreed that the Tourism Committee would report to The Highland Council.
- 5.4 At the Recovery Board meeting in November it was agreed that nominations for Vice Chairs be submitted to Council for agreement. Leader of the Council, Councillor Margaret Davidson and Councillor Ian Cockburn were approved at Full Council on 7 January 2021

6. Route Map to Recovery – 11 Key Priorities Progress Summary as at 30 December 2020

- 6.1 The table below presents a high-level status summary of the actions for each key Priority.

Recovery Action Plan Summary - Status of actions month: M9 20/21					
 No. Completed in Phase	 No. On Target	 No. Some Slippage	 No. No Significant Progress		
Key Priority	Planned Tasks this Phase				
RAP01: Restoring Political Governance	1	1	0	0	0
RAP02: Lockdown Agility incl. Schools Reopening	9	0	9	0	0
RAP03: Supporting the Recovery of the Highland Economy	2	0	2	0	0
RAP04: Financial Recovery Strategy	8	2	4	2	0
RAP05: Community Empowerment	8	2	5	1	0
RAP06: Workforce Planning and Development	10	0	10	0	0
RAP07: Service Re-design	17	0	17	0	0
RAP08: IT Transformation	11	3	0	8	0
RAP09: Digital Transformation	6	0	6	0	0
RAP10: Leadership, Culture and Performance	4	2	1	1	0
RAP11: Asset Management	3	0	2	1	0
Summary Total - M9 20/21	79	10	56	13	0

- 6.2 The current position is; of the 79 actions due, 10 are complete, 56 are on track/on-going and 13 show some slippage. Table 6.4 provides further details on these exceptions. Updates can also be viewed at appendix 1.
- 6.3 Where actions are shown as complete or on-track/on-going, using the PMO approach, these will be monitored periodically as part of the Recovery Board's programme assurance function and reporting by exception.
- 6.4 **Progress Update – Exceptions – Tasks show slippage.**
The table below lists the 13 action points where some slippage is reported against phase 3 due end Dec 2020.

Item	Key Priority	Action Point	Status	Remarks
1	Financial Recovery Strategy	CIPFA Implement CIPFA review findings - develop Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)		Given the hugely uncertain financial climate the development of a MTFP is particularly challenging. Work to develop MTFP will continue into 2021

				taking account of the evolving circumstances with regular updates provided to Corporate Resources Committee.
2	Financial Recovery Strategy	Capital Plan - Develop Capital Strategy	●	The strategic focus of capital work has been on the review and revision of the current capital programme (as reported to Council on 7 January 2021). Work to further develop the capital strategy will continue in Q1 2021 taking cognisance of the significant financial uncertainty as a direct result of Covid and the current lockdown.
3	Community Empowerment	Programme of community development and skills training	●	CPP led and not currently prioritised due to ongoing Covid resilience response. Opportunity to inform development through new resilience networks.
4	IT Transformation	Implementation of Phase 2 MS Teams training	●	Slippage due to operational priorities but training now in progress for Teams Stage 2 using the Council's IT Change Network
5	IT Transformation	Physical Refresh - Programme completion and closure	●	Still working through remaining corporate refresh. Further delays due to COVID. Expected completion by March 2021
6	IT Transformation	Commence fixed telephony review linked to MS strategic engagement	●	Dependencies on Microsoft engagement delayed due to COVID. This action will commence during Q1 2021
7	IT Transformation	CRM Stage 1 – Improve & Deliver as is current capability	●	Some slippage due to <i>Helping Hands</i> implementation which has had to be

				prioritised as part of the Council's Covid - 19 response. CRM implementation now in progress and going live by March 21.
8	IT Transformation	ICT Business Transformation - development of business case & implementation plan	●	Microsoft engagement delayed due to COVID but has now recommenced with engagement at ECO level. New plan to be worked up with Microsoft Q1 2021
9	IT Transformation	ICT Delivery Model – Project Dochas – programme implementation	●	Dochas Project Board met on 18 December 2020 and regular meetings now scheduled. Discussions under way with Wipro about a phase transition. Recruitment to key new posts in ICT under way but overall delayed due to COVID and COVID related critical priorities. Progress reports on Project Dochas will continue to be presented at the Corporate Resources Committee.
10	IT Transformation	Microsoft engagement to inform ICT Delivery Model and ICT Business Transformation	●	Microsoft engagement delayed due to COVID but has now recommenced with engagement at ECO level. New plan to be worked up with Microsoft Q1 2021.
11	IT Transformation	Strategic review of Line of business applications (ICT applications & systems)	●	New CRM delivery underway as above, Cloud migration and contracts in place for Housing systems, Revenues and Benefits and Care-first. Q1 focus now on Resource-link and Integra contracts & systems.

12	Leadership, Culture & Performance	Deliver a public engagement programme	●	Covid restrictions have required an adjusted approach, with the focus switching to online/virtual/media. This will be reviewed as soon as practicable.
13	Asset Management	Returning to Work - Offices and Schools implement affordable, flexible, prompt solutions	●	All schools remain sustainably and safely open in line with Scottish Government requirements. Notwithstanding delays due to Covid, progress on return to the workplace theme remains ongoing.

6.5 For phase 1 (end June 2020) and phase 2 (end Sep 2020), Members were advised at 23 November 2020 Recovery Board that 3 actions were outstanding under ICT Transformation and these are being taken forward with an aim to complete in Q1 2021.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Transformation

Date: 15 January 2021

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Appendix 1







The Highland Council Recovery Action Plan – Key Priorities Phase 3








1. Restoring Political Governance		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Kate Lackie		Completed ● On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●	
RAP01: Restoring Political Governance	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Committees	Maintain emphasis on virtual meetings as Business as Usual	●	Complete

2. Lockdown Agility including Schools Reopening		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Mark Rodgers		Completed ● On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●	
Schools Re-opening: Nicky Grant (ECO – Education and Learning)			
RAP02: Lockdown Agility including Schools Reopening	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Schools Re-opening	Inspection & testing programme to recommissioning premises & remedial works needed	●	All schools were re-opened at the start of the 2020/21 academic year in line with Scottish Government target dates. There are on-going remedial works as and when issues occur (e.g. a heating system problem, a window opening difficulty).
Return of Services	Amend working arrangements for RTW to national advice from UK & SG	●	Highland Council follows current Covid-related working practices. Scottish Government has freshly considered the nature of Covid measures necessary to significantly reduce virus transmission at its cabinet meeting of 4th January – the outcome is that “Public services will be delivered online where possible. Face-to-face services can continue where this is essential.” (from Scottish Government, 4th January 2021, https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/) and from https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-monday-4-january-2021/ “...anyone who is able to work from home must do so.” For personnel who were previously shielding and who cannot work from home, the Scottish Government’s clear advice is that such personnel “...should not go into work at all.” Highland Council’s Services will now need to assess the resourcing implications and implement the Scottish Government instruction.

2. Lockdown Agility including Schools Reopening		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Mark Rodgers			
Schools Re-opening: Nicky Grant (ECO – Education and Learning)		Completed ● On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●	
Return of Services	Implement solutions for staff returning to workplace	●	It has been necessary for some Services to operate from Council premises to deliver services (e.g. health and social care, registrar services, waste collection). Appropriate working practices are in place to enable this. Where individual staff have suffered unfavourably from the prolonged experience of working from home, their circumstances have been evaluated and controlled provision made for them at a Council office.
Return of Services	Schools post 11th August - provision 'readiness' and health and safety monitoring	●	All schools were opened with appropriate readiness in August 2020. In addition to the Education and Learning Service, the broader-based forum of the Officers' Tactical Group monitors school Covid matters and deals with issues, including liaison with all appropriate stakeholders internal and external to Highland Council. The deliberations of Scottish Government in January 2021 concerning the nature of schooling in the immediate future will be closely monitored and implemented as required.
Return of Services	Schools post 11th August continued test of assurance/ continued risk assessment and community engagement	●	The Schools Reopening Project and the Officers' Tactical Group have ensured that the situation within schools has been kept under constant review. Liaison with key stakeholders such as Trade Unions, Occupational Health Safety and Wellbeing Team, Environmental Health Team and with NHS Highland's Health Protection Team have enabled informed communications with local communities.
Return of Services	Implement solutions for staff returning to workplace	●	It has been necessary for some Services to operate from Council premises to deliver services (e.g. health and social care, registrar services, waste collection). Appropriate working practices are in place to enable this. Where individual staff have suffered unfavourably from the prolonged experience of working from home, their circumstances have been evaluated and controlled provision made for them at a Council office.
PPE	Ongoing feedback from staff & challenge/ review all policies so they remain fit for purpose	●	Feedback from staff can be made via established health and safety forums, through Occupational Health Safety Wellbeing Team, and can also be routed through line management.















2. Lockdown Agility including Schools Reopening Sponsor: Mark Rodgers Schools Re-opening: Nicky Grant (ECO – Education and Learning)		Status Key: Completed ● On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●	
PPE	Support staff working from home settings, incl workspace assessments & welfare/training support	●	The Chief Executive and Chief Executive Officers undertook homeworking staff engagement sessions during December 2020. Following those, fresh homeworking guidance was issued to managers and staff. This instructs, amongst other matters, that: Managers should ensure that staff working from home complete the Homeworking Risk Assessment (link) and share results with their manager; and that Managers should enquire regularly about their employees' wellbeing and seek to recognise early signs of stress. Staff have been permitted to transfer their Council office workplace tools (e.g. computing equipment, chairs, desks) to home settings.
National Guidance	Implement plans for further return to work as required, assess HC operational needs incl rationalisation or disposal	●	Scottish Government guidance, as at 4th January, as outlined in the First Minister's statement to the Scottish Parliament (https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-monday-4-january-2021/) is that "The first measure is that our fundamental advice, for everyone, is to stay at home...We consider that this stay at home message and advice is now so important that, from tomorrow, it will become law...anyone who is able to work from home, must do so. It will only be a reasonable excuse to leave your home to go to work, if that work cannot be done from home. We are asking people and businesses to take this really seriously...We now need every business to look again at their operations, and to make sure that every single function that can be done by people working at home, is being done in that way." In the initial months of 2021, there will be further dialogue with Trade Unions and Council Services to firm up on the requirement to have staff operating from Council offices and where longer-term home working may contribute to future operating practices; this will inform the potential for property rationalisation or disposal. Scottish Government guidance will also be necessary to advise what distancing requirements will be stipulated given the non-mandatory approach to Covid vaccination. There may be an on-going impact on office capacity and therefore on which properties may be required. Ultimately, rationalisation and disposal must fit with Highland Council's strategic operational requirements.
National Guidance	PPE provided to those RTW in accordance with regulations & guidance	●	Staff are able to request, order and receive the necessary Covid-19 PPE items as required and defined by risk assessments. There are currently no marketplace notifications of supply constraints.

















3. Supporting the Highland Economy		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Malcolm Macleod		Completed  On Track/On-going  Some Slippage  No Significant Progress 	
RAP03 Supporting the Highland Economy	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
External Economic Recovery	Continue to deliver support with a focus on place planning to reflect different requirements and investment opportunities across the region.		Place Planning initiatives are being progressed throughout the area. The Fort William 2040 group has continued to meet, and discussions are underway with partners to strengthen implementation. A partnership approach to place planning is being undertaken in Skye and Caithness and discussions underway to ensure that similar models are rolled out in other areas, including working with CNPA in Badenoch & Strathspey. The Inverness City and Area Recovery group is playing an important role in driving forward projects that will contribute to the longer-term vision for the area, complementing the preparation of the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan. It is hope that these, and similar projects throughout the Highland area will form the basis of economic recovery work.
External Economic Recovery	Develop formal partnerships and new models of Service delivery linking Economic Recovery (Highland) economic development in its widest sense		The Economic Recovery Partnership has met for a second time, involving partners from the public and private sectors. A major piece of work relates to the delivery of a joined-up approach to the labour market challenges now being presented and these will be strengthened over the coming months.

4. Financial Recovery Strategy		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Liz Denovan		Completed  On Track/On-going  Some Slippage  No Significant Progress 	
RAP04: Financial Recovery Strategy	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Review of Procurement Services	Review of Procurement Services - Implement project plan		Completed December 2020. Report to be presented to Corporate Resources Committee to consider emerging findings.
Review cost and value of services	Undertake benchmarking performance management info to support financial analysis		Building on the significant analytical work undertaken by Transformation staff on the Local Financial Returns for 18/19, analysis of the recently submitted 19/20 returns (Dec 20) is close to completion. And will be discussed with the CEx and ECOs in Q4. This analysis will provide an update to further enhance understanding of Service costs across the Council and Scotland.
Introduce robust spend controls	Review controls and their effectiveness		Regular budget reporting is being provided to Highland Council and Corporate Resources committee meeting with latest report provided to full Council on - 7th January 2021.

RAP04: Financial Recovery Strategy	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Implement CIPFA Review	Implement CIPFA review findings - develop Medium Term Financial Plan	●	Given the hugely uncertain financial climate the development of a MTFP is particularly challenging. Work to develop MTFP will continue into 2021 taking account of the evolving circumstances with regular updates provided to Corporate Resources Committee.
Financial Recovery Strategy	Finance reports presented to Board /CR Committee	●	Regular reporting being provided to Highland Council and Corporate Resources committee meeting with latest report provided to full Council on -7th January 2021.
Contract Management Review	Continue review of performance of contracts, implementing changes where appropriate	●	Work undertaken by Transformation staff with input from Services and Shared Procurement Service to better understand our spend and identify opportunities for some savings. ICT contracts (many of which currently led by WIPRO on behalf on the Council) are being gathered and will be reported to Corporate Resources committee in Feb 2021, as requested by The Recovery Board in Nov 2020.
Capital Plan	Develop Capital Strategy	●	The strategic focus of capital work has been on the review and revision of the current capital programme (as reported to Council on 7 January 2021). Work to further develop the capital strategy will continue in Q1 2021 taking cognisance of the significant financial uncertainty as a direct result of Covid and the current lockdown
Capital Plan	Develop 5-year Strategic Capital Plan	●	Completed December 2020 - Revised capital programme presented to Council 7-1-21

5. Community Empowerment		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Carron MacDiarmid		Completed ● On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●	
RAP05: Community Empowerment	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Sustainable Service Delivery - Humanitarian Assistance	Programme of community development and skills training	●	CPP led and not currently prioritised due to ongoing covid resilience response. Opportunity to inform development through new resilience networks
Learning from Community Action	Presentation from community body at Strategic and Area Committees	●	Group presentations at Local Committees completed. Ongoing presentations as part of Communities and Place committee. Ongoing liaison with groups through networking and local engagement to develop learning
Impact of Covid on vulnerable people and places	Annual child poverty action report for C&P Committee	●	To be reported to February or May Committee (Council decision to pare back agendas during lockdown 2)
Impact of Covid on Communities	CPP – strategic and local - to review priorities to reflect impacts and recovery	●	Work ongoing through the CPP to review priorities at Community Partnership and Strategic Level. CPP Board agreed a new focus on economic recovery.
Impact of Covid on Communities	Develop shared local priorities focused on recovery and 'people' resilience	●	Ongoing, current focus on resilience activity and support for local groups
Greater community and business involvement	Community asset transfer approvals to Committee	●	Ongoing action. Asset transfer considerations to each committee.
Greater community and business involvement	Consider mechanisms to involve groups in local networks/ decision making	●	Ongoing work with local groups and support for resilience networks. Further work required with Members on how local areas wish to take forward involvement of groups in local decision making process
Development of CRM System	Options appraisal underway	●	Complete











6. Workforce Planning and Development		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Liz Denovan		Completed 	On Track/On-going  Some Slippage  No Significant Progress 
RAP06: Workforce Planning and Development	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Workforce Data Project	ResourceLink - implement project plan & report progress to Recovery Board		Data cleansing and obtaining of a complete data set is being progressed, draft datasets are being issued to Services for review and the identification of amendments and the Project Team are updating this in MyView. In response to upcoming changes to SharePoint product support, replacement HR Portal (SharePoint) forms are being created and user guides/videos created and will be issued to Service Managers so as to ensure data is maintained. The manager workforce data needs identified from the Workforce Planning Project have been reviewed and mapped against what is currently available. An internal and partner user group is being established. The Project Board will determine the extent of any short-term improvements in the system ahead of the expiry of the current contract (end March 2022) and a market research exercise has been commenced to help inform future functionality needs and a route to market.
Service Workforce Plans	Communities and Place (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		Work progressing with service redesign with service workforce plans concurrently. Workforce planning by its very nature is an iterative process and therefore discussions, engagement with managers/supervisors (and staff) will continue as required
Service Workforce Plans	Education and Learning (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		
Service Workforce Plans	Health & Social Care (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		
Service Workforce Plans	Infrastructure & Environment (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		
Service Workforce Plans	Performance & Governance (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		
Service Workforce Plans	Property and Housing (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		
Service Workforce Plans	Resources and Finance (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		
Service Workforce Plans	Transformation (ECO): Continue Service WFP review & develop Service solutions		
Convene Redesign Board	Continue WFP reviews & develop Corporate Workforce Planning Strategy		

7. Service Re-design		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Allan Gunn/Malcolm MacLeod		Completed 	On Track/On-going  Some Slippage  No Significant Progress 
RAP07: Service Re-design	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Communities & Place		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Education & Learning		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Health & Social Care		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Infrastructure & Environment		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Performance & Governance		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Property & Housing		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Resources & Finance		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
Service Structures	Re-Design Service Structures - Transformation		Work continues with Service Redesign to support the delivery of approved savings, improved service delivery and resilience
ECO Transformation	Continue to progress key projects to transform Council service delivery as part of the "new normal"		Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.
All ECOs	Continue to implement key projects to transform Council service delivery – Resources & Finance		Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.
All ECOs	Continue to Implement key projects to transform Council service delivery - Communities & Place		Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.
All ECOs	Continue to implement key projects to transform Council service delivery - Education & Learning		Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.

RAP07: Service Re-design	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
All ECOs	Continue to implement key projects to transform Council service delivery - Health & Social Care	●	Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.
All ECOs	Continue to implement key projects to transform Council service delivery - Infrastructure & Environment	●	Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.
All ECOs	Continue to implement key projects to transform Council service delivery - Performance & Governance	●	Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.
All ECOs	Continue to implement key projects to transform Council service delivery - Property & Housing	●	Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.
All ECOs	Continue to implement key projects to transform Council service delivery - Transformation	●	Further Transformation projects currently being identified, which will also form basis of bids to the Change Fund for 21/22, to be considered in March 2021 as part of the Revenue budget process for 21/22.

8. IT Transformation		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Liz Denovan		Completed ●	On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●
RAP08: IT Transformation	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Organisational Change Management Programme	Implementation of Phase 2 MS Teams training	●	Slippage due to operational priorities but training now in progress for Teams Stage 2 using the Council's IT Change Network
ICT Transformation - Recovery	Physical Refresh - Programme completion and closure	●	Still working through remaining corporate refresh. Further delays due to COVID. Expected completion by March 2021
ICT Transformation - Covid-19	Helping Hands Shielding CRM solution - Management and action as required	●	In place but being replaced with new solution in CRM
Digital Technology Strategy	Commence fixed telephony review linked to MS strategic engagement	●	Dependencies on Microsoft engagement delayed due to COVID. This action will commence during Q1 2021
RAP08: IT Transformation	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks

Digital Technology Strategy	CRM Stage 1 – Improve & Deliver as is current capability	●	Some slippage due to <i>Helping Hands</i> implementation which has had to be prioritised as part of the Council's Covid -19 response. CRM implementation now in progress and going live by March 21.
Digital Technology Strategy	ICT Business Transformation - development of business case & implementation plan	●	Microsoft engagement delayed due to COVID but has now recommenced with engagement at ECO level. New plan to be worked up with Microsoft Q1 2021
Digital Technology Strategy	ICT Delivery Model – Project Dochas – programme implementation	●	Dochas Project Board met on 18 December 2020 and regular meetings now scheduled. Discussions under way with Wipro about a phase transition. Recruitment to key new posts in ICT under way but overall delayed due to COVID and other critical priorities
Digital Technology Strategy	Microsoft engagement to inform ICT Delivery Model and ICT Business Transformation	●	Microsoft engagement delayed due to COVID but has now recommenced with engagement at ECO level. New plan to be worked up with Microsoft Q1 2021
Digital Technology Strategy	Strategic review of Line of business applications (ICT applications & systems)	●	New CRM delivery underway as above, Cloud migration and contracts in place for Housing systems, Revenues and Benefits and Care-first. Q1 focus now on Resource-link and Integra contracts & systems
Digital Technology Strategy	Complete managed print review and action as required	●	Proposal for savings presented to Finance
Digital Technology Strategy	Strategic Review of ICT Delivery Model - engagement with core ICT supplier	●	New in-house model agreed.

9. Digital Transformation		Status Key:	
Sponsor: Malcolm Macleod		Completed  On Track/On-going  Some Slippage  No Significant Progress 	
RAP09: Digital Transformation	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC) Programme	Identify/apply future phases of programme working with partners		Project underway and additional sites have been agreed for roll-out
Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC) Programme	Manage the delivery of the programme of works		Implementation continues with no major risks reported
R100/Highland City Region Deal	Implement project as soon as practicable		Close liaison with HIE continues on the delivery timescales for the R100 programme. Openreach have yet to confirm the delivery plan, but once this is received, it will allow better targeting of the City region Deal additional funding. Positive discussions were held before Christmas with SG and UKG on how we might work with them to ensure best use of this additional funding within the Deal timescales
Local Full Fibre Network	Identify/apply future phases of programme working with partners		Discussions have been held with DCMS on future phases of work, and the Council is working through the Digital Programme Project to ensure that all partners are involved and contributing to future projects.
Local Full Fibre Network	Inspect and manage the delivery of the programme.		The LFFN Project is progressing, although there have been impacts on the delivery schedule as a result of COVID and delays in being able to access some sites. A submission is being made to DCMS on 8th January setting out a mitigation plan to ensure that the majority of sites will be delivered by the March 2021 deadline. Efforts are being made to accelerate delivery on the ground, and whilst this will lead to some short-term challenges with traffic management, all parties are working together to ensure smooth progress. Clearly this is all dependent on the construction industry being able to continue at the planned rates. The remainder of the work is expected to be agreed with an extension to September 2021 by DCMS
External Collaboration and Partnerships	Digital - work with UK and Scottish Governments on emerging opportunities		Annual conversation held with SG and UK Governments in December 2020 at which digital opportunities was discussed

10. Leadership, Culture and Performance	Status Key:		
Sponsor: Donna Manson (CEO)	Completed ● On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●		
RAP10: Leadership, Culture and Performance	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Re-branding and Communication	Deliver a public engagement programme	●	Covid restrictions have required an adjusted approach, with the focus switching to online/virtual/media. This will be reviewed as soon as practicable.
Quality Improvement and Performance	Develop and relaunch revised performance framework	●	Refresh & launch complete. There were 2 key elements, the review of Service Planning Guidance to reflect a greater emphasis on continuous improvement through data analysis and identifying core BI and post BVAR establishing corporate reporting focused on SPIs and targets and benchmarking - first report in new format provided to Council in October 2020.
Quality Improvement and Performance	Review and update Corporate Plan	●	Corporate Plan reported to Council in October 2020 (1st annual report) no changes were required. A further action may be required to be added to the Recovery Plan after any review of the Council Programme and Service Plans are submitted to Strategic Committee in the 1st cycle of 2021/22
Leadership Development, Support and Performance	Implement new T&D programme	●	Timed with organisational redesign

11. Asset Management	Status Key:		
Sponsor: Mark Rodgers	Completed ● On Track/On-going ● Some Slippage ● No Significant Progress ●		
RAP 11: Asset Management	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks
Returning to Work - Offices and Schools	(Offices and Schools) implement affordable, flexible, prompt solutions	●	All schools remain sustainably and safely open in line with Scottish Government requirements. Notwithstanding delays due to Covid, progress on return to the workplace theme remains ongoing.
Corporate Landlord Strategy	Design Corporate Management Strategy – Report to Council	●	The Housing and Property Committee approved the setting up of the Corporate Landlord model, and the strategic principles underlining it, in its meeting of 13th August 2020. A further update was provided to H&P Committee at its meeting of 10th December, advising that the next steps would involve the transfer of budgets and/or staff to Housing and Property/Corporate Landlord functions and discussions around that process would require to take place, with those proposed to take place once the senior management structure of the Council has been confirmed at Council. Once those discussions and transfer have taken place that will enable the detailed strategy to be developed alongside relevant operational delivery plans.
RAP 11: Asset Management	Action	Q3 End Status	Q3 End Remarks

Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Investment Plan	Continue scoping CAMS and undertaking stock conditions surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1486 344 1516 365">● A report was provided to the H&P committee on 10th December 2020 outlining both the commissioning of property survey data and the methodology to be applied to assessing the performance of our buildings. The report also detailed how this information would be analysed and what criteria would be taken into account in officers putting forward for consideration recommendations on what our core non-housing-built estate should be in the future, and proposals around investment/disinvestment/sale/demolition as may be appropriate. The process of obtaining an up to date accurate position of the stock through condition surveys has commenced and will take approximately two years to complete. Also contained in the report of 10th December was an assessment process to enable some “quick wins” to be identified and modelled in the interim whilst the full condition survey process and analysis/recommendation exercise is complete.
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The purpose of this document is to provide comprehensive guidance to managers and staff about homeworking, to ensure employees can work safely and effectively from home and, achieve the best possible outcomes for themselves and the organisation.

Homeworking can seem like an attractive option when trying to balance work and home demands, but both employees and managers should be fully aware it does not suit everyone. To be successful, staff working from home need attributes to cope with working on their own. Some full-time homeworkers miss contact with other people and can experience feelings of isolation. Others find domestic demands distract them from doing their job effectively.

Homeworkers need a safe and reasonable space, security and privacy in which to work, and for office-type tasks, an internet connection which efficiently supports work systems.

All arrangements for monitoring, supervision, setting workloads, etc. should be agreed with the employee's line manager in line with normal procedures.

What if employees are unable to work from home?

Where an employee feels that their home does not provide a suitable working environment, they should discuss this with their manager to enable consideration of alternative arrangements.

Implementing Home Working

Following Scottish Government guidance that "all staff who can homework should", all staff should familiarise themselves with the [COVID Resources](#) section of the HR web pages. These pages contain information on a variety of related issues, including a section on Wellbeing. Further links to specific guidance and resources are included in the relevant sections below.

Health and Safety

Managers should ensure that staff working from home complete the [Homeworking Risk Assessment](#) and share results with their manager.

Managers should enquire regularly about their employees' wellbeing and seek to recognise early signs of [stress](#).

Further information and advice on working from home can be found on the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team web page - [Working from home](#).

Workstations – equipment and ICT kit

Line managers must ensure that any risks identified via the Risk Assessment are eliminated or reduced sufficiently. This should be done in consultation with employees to ensure that the home workstation meets the needs of the individual user.

Employees should be enabled to obtain any workplace equipment (e.g. docking station, monitor, chair, etc.) and ICT kit from their office location (where appropriate) which helps with setting up their workstation at home.

Managers are responsible to log any equipment issued to staff to work from home (including desks, chairs).

ICT

In the context of the pandemic ICT is of critical importance and ICT colleagues have provided information and guidance at the following link covering all aspects of ICT for home workers [ICT and Home Working](#)

Managers should request any additional ICT kit on the behalf of staff members via the ICT Service Desk.

Requests should be co-ordinated i.e. if several people in a team need a webcam then the manager should submit one request covering each team members request.

Information Security

Information governance should form part of discussions between the manager and employee to ensure suitable arrangements are in place at home to mitigate risk of breaches of confidentiality or security.

Security arrangements should be adopted and clarified in the homeworking agreement to ensure:

- Security and confidentiality of Highland Council equipment and information.
- No access of family and friends to work information
- Confidentiality of work conversations via phone/Skype/Teams
- Provision of secure containers.
- Protection of home computers and their links.
- Appropriate use of other communication links.
- Disposal of classified waste.

Additional information is available here [Information Security Guidance](#)

Communication

Managers should maintain regular contact with their team members and consider how they will keep in touch in a way that ensures regular contact and appropriate levels of support.

Employees should be involved in decisions about methods and frequency of communications with procedures in place to enable direct contact, including sharing of Outlook calendars. It is critical that employees feel part of the workforce and are involved in work issues and decisions and, have opportunity to initiate ad-hoc meetings where required.

The subject matter for communications in addition to current work should include the headings in this guidance where required. A [Homeworking Agreement](#) should be completed noting the key points of these discussions and any matters arising should be kept by the manager.

Property

There will be no change to Council Tax or Domestic Rates. Domestic rate is only affected if the employee is carrying out a business from their home.

Travel

Journeys made to the employee's administrative base cannot be claimed as travelling expenses, for business journeys where the starting and finishing point is the employees' home, the principles of the travelling expenses and subsistence allowance will apply. Until a change of contract amends the employee's base to be their home, their usual workplace continues to be deemed their work base.

In line with public health guidance, employees should not be asked to undertake non-essential travel or attend face to face meetings, including interviews, where there are reasonable alternative mechanisms. Any decisions to hold face to face meetings should be based on a risk assessment and discussions with the employee and/or their representative

Tax Relief

Council employees who are currently **required** to work at home on a regular basis may be able to claim tax relief for some of the additional expense incurred.

Relief can be claimed for any reasonable expenses relating to the requirement to work from home. Staff should be able to provide records of expenditure.

Expense incurred for things that staff use for both private and business use, e.g. rent or broadband access is not eligible for tax relief.

Employees should check their eligibility to claim tax relief via the form below. Managers can complete this form on an employee's behalf.

[Gov.uk – Check if you can claim work related expenses](#)

If eligible, staff will be directed to a further link where they can make a claim.

A Government Gateway ID is required. This takes approx. 10 mins to set up and the following

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information is required:

- employee's National Insurance number
- a recent pay slip or P60 or a valid UK passport

For further information relating to claiming tax relief for work expenses please see the Govt website below:

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home>

Information about other sources of financial support can be found on the [Mental Health & Wellbeing toolkit > Money](#).

Management Responsibilities

Highland Council will continue to follow public health and health and safety advice for their specific sectors, and, during the current phase of the Government route map, home working should continue where possible, for staff who have not been identified as "essential" to be in the workplace.

Managers should be aware that they will be managing work in new ways and managing different behaviours (their own and their team members). A key aspect for managers to accept is that employees who are agile will require to be managed by **outcomes** and not by the number of tasks completed or 'digital presenteeism'. Managers should therefore focus on planning the team and individual workloads with tangible outcomes.

Currently there are many employees working from home who would normally work in a traditional working environment or, only work at home on an ad-hoc basis. Some managers may never have worked with a remote team before and leading teams in this new setting will be completely new.

Managing employees who work at home or at another location requires a different approach to those in traditional face to face management.

A short module **Working as a Team Online** is available via [My Online Learning](#) within Leadership Management and Change > People Management.

Line managers must ensure that an effective management process is in place to monitor, supervise and evaluate the homeworking agreement.

Ensuring staff Wellbeing

It is important that managers understand how their team members are coping with remote working and that they show empathy and act quickly to address any difficulties team members have.

Checking in frequently with phone calls, emails, chat and video calls will enable managers to spot any changes in mood or wellbeing. Regular contact will also provide opportunities to ensure team members continue to feel valued and motivated.

Where managers identify that a remote/home worker is not coping, they should know where to

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signpost the person to and ensure they do so as soon as possible. Managers should also ensure follow up contact.

Please also see Wellbeing section below for a list of support resources available and useful tips for ensuring wellbeing while working from home.

Employee Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each employee to take reasonable care to ensure their own health, safety, and wellbeing; security of equipment and to maintain the working environment to the agreed health and safety standards.

Any equipment supplied by the Council should be used in line with the Council's [ICT Acceptable Use Policy \(AUP\)](#). Adherence to the Highland Council Acceptable Use Policy is mandatory.

Employees will be responsible for ensuring any necessary confidentiality.

Employees who work at or from home will be covered by the terms of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Employees will be required to inform their home and contents insurer that extra IT equipment has been provided and that they are homeworking.

As there is a need to balance work and home life, employees should inform their friends and family about their homeworking arrangements to ensure minimal interruptions.

Wellbeing

Positive wellbeing is critical to staff working productively, not least when staff are based at home, away from their usual place of work, line manager and work colleagues.

Managers have a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff, and must ensure staff have sufficient support and access to the range of wellbeing resources listed below.

[Employee Assistance Programme](#) – offers free confidential support 24hrs/365 days. This is available to both employees and their families. Managers can refer staff to support (with staff consent) or staff may wish to self-refer.

[MHW toolkit](#)

[My Online Learning](#) – **Preparing for the new normal**

[MHW/Bullying & Harassment](#)

[Contacts](#) Violence &

Aggression reporting (link tbc)

[Breath Awareness \(audio\)](#)

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[Guided full body relaxation \(audio\) Tips for Working from Home](#)

Some additional tips to help ensure the wellbeing of all staff are included below.

Stay connected – to your manager, team and other colleagues, both formally and informally. Discuss and agree appropriate method(s) and frequency.

Protect your time – make effective use of Outlook calendars and Out of Office function – allocate time to tasks and try to stick to the plan. Let others know if you may not be able to respond straight away as well as preferred methods of contacting you (and when).

Move regularly – try not to sit for too long and take regular breaks away from your screen. Get up and walk about, get a cup of coffee or some water. Remember that you rarely sit for long periods in the workplace so try not to fall into this habit at home. Try standing for your next Teams meeting. Even standing up, stretching your arms and circling your shoulders, then sitting back down can help!

Walking meetings – can you meet up with a colleague (socially distanced) and walk while you talk? You don't need to be together – you could each/all be walking somewhere separate!

Try to make use of daylight hours and get outside for a quick walk if possible. Talk with your manager about how you can work more flexibly allowing you to enjoy some time out during the day (where possible).

Make time for “commuting” to your next meeting – avoid back to back meetings where possible

Make time for breaks. If you are setting up meetings, why not schedule them for 20 or 50 mins instead of a full half hour or hour – your attendees will be grateful of some time to gather their thoughts before their next meeting.

Find a balance – flexibility versus putting pressure on yourself

Staff are also encouraged to **communicate socially** or join support networks

Annual leave

Holidays are essential for our health and wellbeing. Regular breaks help us build resilience and avoid us feeling overwhelmed and “burn-out”.

Managers are asked to approve leave requests wherever possible and ensure adequate cover to facilitate leave.

Manager and Employee Checklists

The following checklists should be used to ensure that all steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff working from home.

STAFF CHECKLIST		
Topic	Link	Comment
A Overview		
Have you completed the mandatory Display Screen Assessment (DSE) online module?	My Online Learning	
Have you completed a DSE self-assessment in relation to your new workstation set up and shared this with your manager?	My Online Learning	
Have you completed the Working from home online module? Preparing for a new normal > Working from home	My Online Learning	
B Health and Safety		
Has a health and safety risk assessment been carried out and discussed with your manager?	Risk Assessment	
Have you considered and/or discussed any wellbeing issues or potential issues with your manager?	Mental Health and wellbeing toolkit	
C Communication		
Have you and your manager agreed the method, frequency and discussion topics for communication? This will form a Homeworking Agreement .	Homeworking Agreement	
D Workstation equipment and ICT		
Do you have the workstation equipment and ICT kit you need to carry out your job effectively?	ICT and Home Working	
E Information Security		
Are arrangements in place to ensure Information Security?	Information Security Guidance	
F Travel		
Have arrangements for travel where required, and the avoidance of travel where possible been discussed with your line manager?		
G Tax Relief		

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Have you checked eligibility to claim tax relief?		
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MANAGER CHECKLIST		
Topic	Link	Comment
A Overview		
Have you completed the Preparing for a new normal (mandatory e-learning module and assessment)?	My Online Learning	
Have you ensured all team members have familiarised themselves with the COVID 19 Resources section?	COVID Resources	
B Health and Safety		
Has a health and safety risk assessment been carried out for each member of staff?	Risk Assessment	
Have all staff completed an individual DSE self - assessment and shared this with you?	My Online Learning	
Have you agreed frequency of checking in and/or discussion about any potential wellbeing issues with individual staff members?	Mental Health and wellbeing toolkit	
C Communication		
Have you agreed the method, frequency and discussion topics for communication with team members? This will form part of the homeworking agreement .	Homeworking Agreement	
D ICT and workstation equipment		
Do all team members have the workstation equipment and ICT kit required to carry out their work safely and effectively?	ICT and Home Working	
E Information Security		
Are arrangements in place for your team to ensure Information Security?	Information Security Guidance	
F Travel		
Have arrangements for travel and the avoidance of travel been discussed with team members?		