

Agenda Item	10
Report No	EDU/26/21

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Education Committee

Date: 17 November 2021

Report Title: **High Life Highland Progress Report**

Report By: Chief Executive High Life Highland

1. **Purpose/Executive Summary**

1.1 This report is in three parts:

Part one –presents information on the performance of High Life Highland (HLH) during the operating period 1 April to 30 September 2021, including information on HLH’s contributions to the Council Corporate Plan 2019-22.

Part two - provides general updates since the last report to the Council’s Education Committee in May 2021.

Part three - provides information on one aspect of the work of HLH, this time, the focus is on partnership working with **sportscotland**.

2. **Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to note:

- i. the information on the performance of High Life Highland (HLH) during the operating period 1 April to 30 September 2021;
- ii. the general updates provided in section two of this report;
- iii. that in the light of the above and the restrictions which have been imposed by the coronavirus pandemic, HLH is on target to meet the revised outcomes expected in the Service Delivery Contract with The Highland Council for the operating period to March 2022;
- iv. the positive partnership working between HLH and **sportscotland** in section 3; and
- v. the new approach to sports facilities investment being taken by **sportscotland** and its willingness to support the Highland Council’s strategic priorities for sports facility development as the Council develops its capital programme.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – The in-year revenue position of HLH has improved by £740k at the end of Q2. HLH officers continue to provide regular information throughout the year to monitor the position.
- 3.2 Legal – there are no legal implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - there are no community implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever - there are no climate change/carbon clever implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 3.5 Risk - there are no risk implications requiring an addition or amendment to the Council's risk register arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 3.6 Gaelic - there are no Gaelic implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.

4. Background

- 4.1 HLH was established by the Highland Council (THC) in October 2011 as a charity, developing, promoting and inspiring opportunities in culture, learning, sport, leisure, health and wellbeing and to grow the business in a sustainable and innovative way by enabling and facilitating services that the public value and by being valued as a trusted and effective partner. THC has contracted with HLH to deliver its Public Services Obligations (PSO) through a Service Delivery Contract (SDC) to deliver the following areas of work: Adult Learning; Archives; Arts; Countryside Rangers; Leisure Facilities; Libraries; Museums; Music Tuition; Outdoor Activities; Sports Development; and Youth Work.
- 4.2 HLH was set up to deliver services for THC while at the same time protect them. Each year, its existence saves the Council c. £2m p.a. through non-domestic rates relief. As well as these savings, annually:
 - there is a reduction in its operating budget (the same percentage reduction as the Scottish Government requires of THC); and
 - HLH meets the cost of inflationary increases for staff salaries, pensions, living wage and pension increases.
- 4.3 This arrangement has consistently returned revenue savings, reducing dependency on public funding from 80% to 50%, with recent revenue savings averaging between 3% and 5% of gross turnover. Savings have been achieved through income and efficiencies, whilst minimising service reductions. Notably, HLH has continued to take on additional services at the request of THC. Except for music tuition, this has mainly been due to volunteer group fatigue. 44 new services and facilities have been added to HLH since it was established in 2011. During the first 10 years of operation, annual customer engagement numbers with HLH services have increased from 2.3 million to in excess of 8 million.

5. HLH Governance

- 5.1 HLH Directors are appointed by the Council (8 independent Directors and 4 Councillor Directors). There have been no changes since the last HLH update report in May 2021 and the HLH Directors can be seen on the HLH web site: <https://www.highlifehighland.com/about/board-directors/>.
- 5.2 The HLH Trading Board Directors are appointed by the HLH Board (5 independent directors and 4 HLH Board Directors). The trading company Directors can be seen on the HLH web site: <https://www.highlifehighland.com/about/trading-company-directors/>
- 5.3 During the pandemic, HLH developed a Recovery Action Plan to respond to the evolving and complex operating environment. Now that the recovery work is well underway, a new business plan to guide the organisation as it further recovers from the pandemic is being developed. The HLH Board and HLH Trading CIC will hold a joint workshop to consider the new business plan in October, thereafter, the draft business plan will formally be considered by the HLH Board at its December 2021 meeting.

6. Improved Financial Position

- 6.1 For context, despite an audited loss of earned income of £9.1m (28% of gross turnover), HLH managed FY 20/21 without the need for any additional funding support from Highland Council.
- 6.2 At the commencement of FY 21/22, HLH was forecasting a reasonable worst case £5.4m deficit, reduced to £3.4m through the use of HLH reserves. Recovery of income, coupled to comprehensive cost controls, means that HLH has been able to further reduce this in-year by £740k to £2.66m. Recovery remains ahead of projections, however, the risk of a re-introduction of restrictions remains and the effects of the pandemic are likely to continue through to financial year 2022/23.

7. Part One - Service Delivery Contract Monitoring

- 7.1 The Service Delivery Contract with HLH was made up of objectives from THC's Education Service Plan. At its meeting held on 5 December 2019 the Education Committee agreed that HLH reporting be changed to reflect the Council's Corporate Plan 2019-22 which was approved by the Highland Council at its meeting held on 5 September 2019. A summary of HLH's contributions to the Council's Corporate Plan can be found at **Appendix A**.
- 7.2 There are 3 performance indicators which THC has asked HLH to report as an assessment of its overall performance:
1. HLH customer engagements.
 2. HLH reliance of Council funding.
 3. Percentage of population with a High Life Highland card.

The indicators have been chosen as a balanced way of measuring effectiveness, efficiency and HLH's reach into the Highland population, in recognition that it is important that HLH achieves a balance between meeting the social and financial objectives of THC.

- 7.3 Indicators 2 and 3 above are annual indicators and were last reported to the Education Committee at its May 2021 meeting. It is normal in the November report to provide an update on the first performance indicator as an assessment of whether HLH customer numbers are on track.
- 7.4 The table below shows customer numbers for all HLH services during Q1 and 2 for the current and past 2 years to allow comparison with the pre lock down year.

	Q1	Q2	Totals Apr-Sep
2019/20	2,265,568	2,127,852	4,393,420
2020/21	1,155,793	1,336,464	2,492,257
2021/22	1,256,124	1,533,864	2,789,988

Encouragingly, given the restrictions which were in place during these quarters (Scotland only moved beyond level zero on 9 August 2021) customer engagements in Q1 this year, were 55% of the pre-pandemic year and in Q2 were 72%. It is expected that as customer confidence increases that these numbers will continue to increase.

8. Part Two – HLH Recovery and General Updates

- 8.1 The Scottish Government route map out of the pandemic allowed facilities and services to resume almost as normal on 9 August 2021 (there are still some capacity restrictions associated with ventilation guidance and isolation rules in place which impacts service delivery). From that time all HLH services resumed operation, opening hours and activities have been extended in line with customer demand to ensure that operating costs are well managed.
- 8.2 Engagement between HLH and schools has been especially positive. Most shared school and community facilities have re-opened. Music tuition, youth work, active schools and library teams are working collaboratively to deliver services again. *highlife* subscriptions (end September) were ahead of projections at 12,344, (58% of pre-COVID total and ahead of projections).
- 8.3 HLH has accepted the request by the Council to act as the managing agent of the Inverness Events and Festivals programme which is funded by the Inverness Common Good Fund. Guidance and governance is provided via the Events and Festivals Working Group, a sub-group of the City of Inverness Area Committee.
- 8.4 A Memorandum of Understanding between HLH and UHI was first signed in 2016 for a 5-year period and records outline heads of agreement for the purpose of facilitating close collaborative working and academic links across a range of higher education and research activities. It builds on existing informal collaborations including a funded PhD on Badenoch textiles. The MOU sets out a framework of principles and the parties agree that they will work together in a spirit of cooperation with a view to achieving the purposes set out in it. The MOU is non-exclusive in nature, it does not preclude either party entering into any form of agreement with other organisations. With the existing MOU having expired at the end of June 2021 and following a review by both parties a new agreement with UHI was signed for a further five-year period effective from 1 August 2021.

- 8.5 HLH ran its School's Out summer activity programme in July and August 2021. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, it set out to run as normal a programme as possible for the benefit of Highland young people:
- the number of School's Out events across the Highland's was 1,171 compared with 1,237 in the pre-pandemic year, a difference of only 66 events.
 - attendances were 25,604, an excellent performance given that it was run during the pandemic while restrictions were in place.
 - In addition to the School's Out programme the Active Schools team delivered 733 sessions in towns and villages, free of charge using funding from the **sportscotland** funded 'Get Into Summer' Scottish Government initiative.
 - As part of its Summer of Hope (which was also funded by the Scottish Government) the Council provided families on low-incomes with vouchers which could be used in the HLH School's Out programme. 131 children used their vouchers to participate in 626 HLH activities (an average of 4.7 activities per participant).
- 8.6 HLH provided support to the Milton Holiday club which had a focus on food security. The project was funded by the Scottish Government, led by the Council's Welfare team, with HLH as the lead partner. The project provided activities for children, families, and an adult learning programme for parents.
- 8.7 HLH is supporting the University of the Highlands and Islands' (UHI) research study with people which aims to help people with Type 2 Diabetes to become more physically active using a web-based educational tool kit. The study resumed in July 2021 following a pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Widespread delivery of physical activity education through health care practitioners is not always feasible. This is especially prevalent in rural areas, therefore this alternative to delivering education and support lifestyle changes to the growing number of people living with Type 2 diabetes in the region is being tested. HLH has supported participant recruitment to the study and has provided specialist instructors from the leisure facilities team to support people with Type 2 Diabetes to access and use the toolkit.
- 8.8 HLH is supporting the work of the Inverness Community Partnership (ICP) which is currently focussing on young people's mental health and wellbeing. HLH is supporting the implementation of the ICP action plan which includes: testing the delivery of wellbeing packs (pilot in Inverness High School cluster for the cohort of circa 90 new s.1's) – subject to securing necessary funds; delivering at least 1 SQA health and wellbeing course in Inverness (Inverness High School cluster); delivering a virtual event "Support the care giver" for people working with young people in Inverness; and communicating the training and resources available for care givers in Inverness area.
- 8.9 After a closure of three 3 and a programme of extensive capital works and internal refurbishment, the former Caithness Horizons will reopen on the 2nd November as the North Coast Visitor Centre (NCVC). Operated by High Life Highland on behalf of the Highland Council in partnership with Dounreay Site Restoration Limited, the facility will deliver a year-round programme of activities for the Caithness community and for visitors to complement the unique museum experience. Supported by the brand-new **Café North** the programme will include cultural activities, exhibitions, classes, events and learning opportunities. The NCVC will have a month-long series of inaugural events, run in association with the HLH archive team in Nucleus that will bring together former employees of Dounreay to reminisce on their shared experiences as the plant enters the final stages of decommissioning. NCVC will be developed as a model for slow and

responsible tourism to support visitors on the NC500 and for the cruise ships at Scrabster to engage with and support the local community, heritage, and the economy.

9. Part Three – Partnership with sportscotland

- 9.1 There is a long history of **sportscotland** investment in the Highland Council area, both revenue and capital. HLH receives approximately two thirds of the funding (£953,872) from **sportscotland** towards the Active Schools programme which allows for the employment of a team of Active Schools Coordinators providing free access to activities and opportunities for young people across Highland to be active.
- 9.2 The HLH sports development team continues to work well with **sportscotland** towards the outcomes of the current partnership agreement which started in 2019 and runs to 2023. As part of this HLH has committed to support the Highland and Islands Regional Leadership Group (which is a grouping of Local Authorities and Arms-Length External Organisations in the Highland and Islands) together with **sportscotland**. Two new areas of work have emerged as a result of this initiative:
- In April 2021, £12K of funding (£2K from HLH and £10K from **sportscotland**) was identified to support talented athletes to travel for training and competition out with the Highland area. There is further information on this below.
 - HLH and **sportscotland** are keen to work together to improve support to Highland based Institute of Sport athletes and those on sports performance pathways. In the past year this has seen an international standard strength and conditioning suite, jointly funded with **sportscotland** installed at Inverness Leisure. There will also be public access to the facilities and the new suite is a core part of the recovery to pre-pandemic membership levels. (This forms part of the phased development of Inverness Leisure).
- 9.3 **sportscotland** supports the development of people through investment into the HLH Leadership programme and by supporting the training and recognition of coaches and volunteers. The Leadership programme is one of only two supported programmes in Scotland. The programme delivered by HLH is unique in that it has developed an in-house qualification rated at levels four and five SCQF called 'Choose to Lead'. This is accredited in partnership with UHI and is assessed by **sportscotland** as a 'sector leading' initiative.
- 9.4 **sportscotland** also invests £100,726 into the delivery of community sport hubs. This funds the employment of two community sport hub officers with the programme aimed at bringing together clubs, community and other organisations to improve access to sport and physical activity opportunities for all ages at local level. HLH now supports 12 community sport hubs across the Highland area.
- 9.5 HLH was able to expand its School's Out summer activity programme through the **sportscotland** 'Get into Summer' initiative which invested £53,136 in the Highland Council area. The programme focused on rural locations where there was limited access to activities and areas of higher deprivation and involved 5,333 participants.
- 9.6 HLH is supported by a designated staff team from **sportscotland** that provides guidance and support to HLH in the areas of school and community sport, facilities development, people development, Scottish Governing Body of sport partnerships and performance

sport. **sportscotland** has also referred to HLH as an exemplar for its work across the Active Schools programme and Community Sports Hub work.

- 9.7 In April 2021, £12K of funding (£2K from HLH and £10K from **sportscotland**) was identified to initiate a pilot programme to support talented athletes to travel for training and competition out with the Highland area. Invitations to apply were advertised in June 2021 for the 2021/22 financial year. Funding of up to £1,500 was awarded to 14 athletes from sports as diverse as surfing, mountain biking, badminton and rugby.

10. Capital Investment

- 10.1 Recently, **sportscotland** has indicated that it would be altering its application-based facility funding model to work strategically with the Highland Council to support it in achieving its objectives, particularly where projects support inclusion and equality. There has been discussion between the Council and **sportscotland** Chief Executives and it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity for a number of community sports projects linked with school estate improvements over the coming years.
- 10.2 It is recommended that the new approach to sports facilities investment being taken by **sportscotland** and its willingness to support the Highland Council's strategic priorities for sports facility development be noted by the Education Committee, and that the potential for **sportscotland** funding to contribute to the Council's capital programme be included in the Council's consideration of its capital programme.

Designation: Chief Executive, High Life Highland

Date: 24 October 2021

Authors: Steve Walsh/ Douglas Wilby

Background Papers: None

A Council that Champions the Highlands	
Our ambition is to make the Highlands the best place to live, work and do business.	
<p>Outcome 1.1: We will engage at all levels of the political process to represent and promote the Highlands to ensure that the full potential and ambition of our people and region are realised.</p>	<p>The High Life Highland Chief Executive represents HLH on the national organisation for Cultural and Leisure ALEOs - Community Leisure UK.</p> <p>HLH's Sports Development section has been recognised as sector leading by sportscotland, Scotland's national sporting agency and is one of the few organisations with a four-year funding agreement because of this. The current funding is approx. 1M p.a. to deliver the active schools and sports hubs programme which includes having an Active Schools Coordinator in each associated school group in Highland.</p> <p>HLH is represented on the following national organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Leisure UK - Youth Work Managers Scotland - CLD Managers Scotland - Music Education Partnership Group - Scottish Libraries and Information Council
<p>Outcome 1.2: We will champion the role our staff play at every level of the organisation in delivering high quality locally responsive services and report annually.</p>	<p>HLH holds an annual volunteer and staff awards ceremony. This was paused during the pandemic with the next one being scheduled for November 2021 with a focus on work done during the pandemic.</p>
A place to live	
Our ambition is to make the Highlands an even better place to live.	
<p>Outcome 2.1: We will attract more people to make the Highlands their home and younger residents to stay here.</p>	<p>HLH provides modern apprenticeships through its leisure facilities which support young people who wish to remain in Highland and develop their careers at home.</p> <p>HLH delivers a programme of Literacy and Numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Classes and 1:1 support.</p>
<p>Outcome 2.2: We will support our older citizens to live longer</p>	<p>HLH provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a falls prevention programme in care homes and leisure facilities to support older people to remain active.

<p>independent lives in their communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the “You Time” programme has restarted following the pandemic. It is delivered across Highland and includes activities delivered by archives; leisure facilities; libraries; countryside rangers; and is supporting older people to sustain and improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing and reduces social isolation and loneliness. • HLH created, and working with third sector partners, embedded in communities Highland’s “House of Memories’, an App based resource which benefits people living with dementia and their carers. • HLH offers supported and personally rewarding volunteering opportunities throughout the Highlands.
<p>Outcome 2.3: We will protect and enhance our natural resources, culture and heritage providing opportunities to develop new cultural experiences for all.</p>	<p>HLH provides a range of activities through Archives and Library services that protect and enhance the environment as well as encouraging people to enjoy environmental activities and participate in environmental education projects. Countryside ranger programmes have re-started following the lockdowns. There is further information on HLH’s provision of cultural activities below.</p>
<p>Outcome 2.4: * We will improve our processes for waste management meeting our obligations as a result of the landfill ban by 1st January 2021, delivering a more commercial waste service and improving our recycling performance. * Strategic Improvement Priority</p>	<p>HLH is engaged with the Council’s Salix programme working with Council Officers to reduce energy consumption. A number of locations have already been upgraded within a phased programme to replace lighting.</p> <p>HLH was recently successful in obtaining funding for cycling racks. The new racks were funded by Cycling Scotland’s Cycling Friendly Employer Development Grant scheme allowing HLH to increase the amount of bike parking for people working in or visiting the following HLH sites: Bellfield Park, Ben Nevis Visitor Centre, Brora Library, Canal Park, Inverness, Culloden Library, Highland Folk Museum, Inverness Botanic Gardens, Joss Street Youth Centre, Invergordon, Lochaber Leisure Centre, Nairn Leisure Centre, Sutherland Swimming Pool, and Thurso Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Inverness Botanic Gardens is fully committed to 100% recycling and is a sector leader the sector in terms of carbon reduction and biodiversity.</p>
<p>Outcome 2.7: We will promote and support the Gaelic language and culture</p>	<p>HLH collaborates with THC Gaelic Team to deliver specific targets within GLP3 and supports the promotion of Gaelic language and culture primarily through its Archives, Museums and Music Tuition services.</p>

<p>through the third generation Gaelic Language Plan.</p>	<p>Am Baile, a bi-lingual cultural heritage website managed by the HLH Highland Archive Service has seen increasing customer engagement during the pandemic and beyond: 1.3 Million electronic engagements in 2020/21; 40% increase from 2019/20. The site has bilingual descriptions of content and new Gaelic content is added on a regular basis using skilled Gaelic translators. A third of all social media posts are now bi-lingual and customer feedback illustrates that these posts are proving useful for Gaelic learners to improve their language skills. Community heritage groups are increasingly seeking to use Am Baile as a digital place of deposit for their digital heritage collections and they are supported to create Gaelic content as part of their projects.</p> <p>In addition Active Schools offer Leadership Training in Sport and Dance in the Medium of Gaelic for young leaders who in turn deliver Gaelic medium activity in their schools and communities. The last course was paused during the pandemic but will take place in this academic year.</p> <p>HLH libraries has a Gaelic book collection and delivers Gaelic Bookbug (0-4 age rhyme, song and storytelling sessions with parents/carers).</p>
<p>Outcome 2.8: We will work with High Life Highland, partners and communities to develop and promote opportunities in culture, learning, sport, health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>The formal performance indicators for this area of work are as follows and are reported annually as part of the Council's report on Statutory Performance Indicators: Net cost per attendance to leisure Facilities; Net cost per visit to libraries; and Net cost per visit to museums. Service and sites reopening and customer numbers are reported in paragraph 7.4 of this report above.</p> <p>HLH operates 70 libraries on behalf of THC and fulfils its statutory obligation to provide adequate library services.</p> <p>HLH operates the two regional Museums, the Highland Folk Museum and Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, and their associated engagement programmes and is supporting the ongoing work of the Council to develop the Inverness Castle/Spirit of the Highlands programme.</p> <p>The former Caithness Horizons facility will re-launched as the North Coast Visitor Centre on 2nd November, operated by HLH on behalf of THC.</p> <p>HLH operates four Archive Centres, in Caithness, Skye, Lochaber and Inverness and provides Am Baile, the extensive, web-based heritage resource.</p>

	<p>HLH operates 22 stand-alone and joint school/ community leisure centres.</p> <p>HLH programmes visual arts exhibitions and related activity programmes in three galleries.</p>
<p>A place to thrive</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>Outcome 3.1: We will work together with partners and within our communities to reduce inequality and tackle poverty and discrimination with a specific focus on mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>All of the services delivered by HLH contribute towards mental health and wellbeing. The links between mental health and wellbeing and physical activity have been well established and it is widely recognised that activities which engage people and reduce social isolation and loneliness make a positive contribution to the mental health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. The High Life membership scheme is premised upon accessibility at an affordable price; the budget membership scheme provides a safety net for hard-pressed families to enjoy access to facilities at an affordable price.</p> <p>Projects which HLH are delivering which contribute to health and wellbeing include: falls prevention; cardiac rehabilitation; cancer rehabilitation; older adults health and wellbeing; type II diabetes and physical activity; physiotherapy in leisure centres; and dementia friendly initiatives including “House of Memories”.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.2: * We will improve educational attainment across all groups and reduce the attainment gap for young people from deprived areas.</p>	<p>HLH provides a targeted youth work service across all 29 Associated School Group areas in Highland.</p> <p>HLH runs a Young Persons’ Leadership Programme and is now developing leadership opportunities across other parts of the programme in addition to sports development.</p> <p>Youth work staff provide opportunities for young people to gain achievement awards (Saltire Awards, DofE etc.) which are of significant benefit for young people in gaining employment or higher and further education places. HLH leisure facilities continue to deliver modern apprenticeships.</p> <p>The active schools and youth work programmes provide a wide range of activities. There is a particular emphasis placed by Active Schools Co-ordinators on encouraging girls to remain active and there is therefore a focus on less traditional activities such as dance and exercise to music and gymnastics. (Activities with rhythm are</p>

	<p>recognised as being of benefit for young people who have experienced trauma).</p> <p>The Active Schools programme is already meeting the Scottish Government and sportscotland target of delivering all extra curricular activity free of cost for participants.</p> <p>HLH library staff deliver an extensive programme of activities to support early years literacy and numeracy, including Bookbug sessions and early years/family STEM activities. Libraries also support learning and teaching through the provision of the school library service.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.4: * We will transform the approach to supporting children with additional needs adopting a whole system approach to wellbeing and inclusion.</p>	<p>HLH has Development Officers for disability sport, coaching/volunteer development and community sports hubs. These posts work in partnership with the national governing bodies of sport to develop sports clubs, support community-based sports clubs and deliver locally based coach and volunteer training.</p> <p>The Active Schools team are working with partners in Highland Council to improve targeting to identify opportunities for extracurricular sport and physical activity opportunities and reduce barriers for participation.</p> <p>HLH works in partnerships with schools to enable pupils with additional support needs to visit libraries during the school day.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.5: * We will improve outcomes for Looked After Children and young people and achieve better value from resources to support them.</p>	<p>HLH participates in the work of the CHAMPS board and delivered outdoor activity experiences with partners to support care experienced young people over between the two lockdowns. CEYP are provided with free memberships to leisure facilities. HLH continues to provide both specific youth work opportunities for looked after children and to encourage engagement in its wider youth work offer.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.11: We will lead the development and implementation of the Community Learning and Development Plan with our Community Learning Partners.</p>	<p>HLH plays a part in the development and implementation of the CLD plan, including supporting inspections.</p> <p>The Council and Community Planning partners recently agreed a new CLD plan: “Highland Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan 2021-2024 – <i>working and learning together to reduce inequalities in Highland</i>”</p> <p>A range of HLH services contribute to CLD including adult learning through the provision of literacy,</p>

	<p>numeracy and ESOL classes and programmes, archives and museums through projects such as the House of Memories dementia project, leisure facilities through supporting and training young people into employment through modern apprenticeships, libraries through its volunteering programmes and the range of activities that they provide, music tuition through its musician in residence programme, youth work through programmes such as the leadership programme and the informal learning and personal development provided by youth work staff which include supporting young people to achieve positive destinations.</p>
<p>A place to prosper</p>	
<p>Our ambition is to maximise the economic potential of the Highlands.</p>	
<p>Outcome 4.1: We will work with the public, private and third sector stakeholders to strengthen our infrastructure and digital connectivity</p>	<p>Libraries provide free public access computers in sixty locations across the highlands which is a significant contribution to social inclusion. In addition, they provide free Wi-Fi in all of its libraries.</p>
<p>Outcome 4.2: We will support economic growth and create and protect jobs across the Highlands.</p>	<p>HLH delivers a programme of Literacy and Numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Classes and 1:1 support. These were provided over the lockdowns to ensure continued support of some of the Highland's most vulnerable people.</p>
<p>Outcome 4.5: We will work with partners to ensure fewer people experience transport as a barrier to accessing opportunities, including working with communities on community transport schemes.</p>	<p>The provision of local facilities minimises the requirement to travel and HLH provides facilities in communities throughout the Highlands on behalf of the Council. HLH provides mobile libraries which operate throughout the Highland area.</p> <p>Online and virtual developments, many as a result of the need to pivot due to the pandemic, are further opening up opportunities to access services that did not previously exist for all ages pre pandemic e.g. music tuition, online exercise classes, Archives and Libraries sessions. In addition to online Leisure classes for all age groups, cardiac recovery, Macmillan and Parkinson exercise classes are all available online.</p> <p>The Active Schools team aims to offer volunteer led activity in all Highland Schools, this work I focused on equalities and teams are working hard re-establish this now that restrictions have been eased.</p> <p>On behalf of THC, HLH provides five community minibuses which can be hired by local groups.</p>
<p>A welcoming place</p>	

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.

<p>Outcome 5.1: We will promote the Highlands as a diverse, safe, and friendly place to live, study, work and visit.</p>	<p>HLH contributes this outcome through the provision of its services and facilities throughout the Highland Council area. Its approach to low cost access to leisure facilities has achieved and sustained high participation rates as well as an improved financial provision. Archives, museums and visitor attractions also form part of what the Highlands has to offer and they improve the quality of life for residents and improve the visitor experience.</p>
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<p>Outcome 5.3: We will work with communities and partners to raise awareness around sustaining and improving our natural, built and cultural environment.</p>	<p>HLH operates the two regional Museums, the Highland Folk Museum and Inverness Museum and Art Gallery and is supporting the on-going work of the Council to develop the Inverness Castle Spirit of the Highlands project.</p> <p>Countryside ranger programmes and activities also contribute to this outcome.</p>
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Your Highland Council

Our ambition is to improve and strengthen the relationships 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 to them.

<p>Outcome 6.1: * We will deliver meaningful engagement with Highland communities listening and responding to what we hear and encourage more community activity and community run services.</p>	<p>HLH led the development of the Youth Work strategy which was considered by the CLH Committee at its August 2019 meeting. The strategy was co-produced with young people and has been recognised nationally as a model of good practice which is being considered for the national Youth Work Strategy.</p> <p>HLH also contributes to this objective by supporting area youth forums and the Highland Youth Parliament which covers a variety of topics, including specific sessions in schools on behalf of the Care and Learning service and by its targeted youth work.</p> <p>HLH actively promotes volunteering and has a volunteering policy which includes recruitment, induction, training and review for volunteers (Annual volunteer figure approx. 1500).</p> <p>Through the sportscotland funded Active Schools and Community Sports Hubs staff local volunteers are encouraged to establish and run local sport and physical activity groups and sessions.</p>
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