

Highland Council: 19 September 2024: Questions and Responses

Public Questions

i. Mr E Hall

To the Leader

The caravan sites and control of development act includes motorhomes and campervans within the legal definition of "caravan", and the same act defines a caravan site as "any land upon which a caravan is stationed for human habitation". So how can anyone provide overnight parking for occupied motorhomes without such a place being legally a caravan site?

Response

Council car parks are in public use and form part of the public road. Members of the public may park vehicles, including motorhomes upon the road including at night to rest, subject to the terms of roads legislation.

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 that is referred to in the question provides that 'a site licence shall not be required for the use as a caravan site of land occupied by the local authority in whose area the land is situated.' - section 2 and Paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 to the 1960 Act. If the Council was to establish such sites, no licence would be needed.

ii. Ms L Redfern

To the Leader

The Highland council are currently operating overnight motorhome parking in several council car parks around the Highland region. These car parks are unlicensed and unregulated but were allowed in 2021 due to a temporary relaxation of planning controls due to the covid pandemic. This temporary relaxation of rules was in place until September 2022 only. Planning permission was to be obtained after this date in order to keep operating overnight parking in these car parks. Could the Highland council please confirm that planning permission and relevant licenses have been obtain in order to continue running their establishments after 2022?

Response

Council car parks are in public use and form part of the public road. It follows that members of the public may park vehicles, including motorhomes upon the road including at night to rest, subject to the terms of roads legislation. The use of Council car parks is considered to be incidental or ancillary to use to which the car parks would ordinarily be put as a part of the public road.

At no time have we sought planning permission relating to operational matters regarding the parking of vehicles in Car Parks as the amendment to the terms and conditions at these Car Parks to allow motorhomes to stay beyond 10.00 p.m. was unrelated to the Covid19 Planning alterations.

If the Council was to establish caravan sites no licence would be needed.

iii. **Mr R Thompson**

To the Leader

In the midst of a funding crisis, will individual councillors take responsibility for their decision to use taxpayers' money to appeal the Judicial Review of the unfair and unlawful Academy Street redevelopment plans, instead of using those funds for supplying essential services cut from the most recent budget?

Response

The Council will consider a confidential report on Academy Street at the Council meeting on 19 September 2024.

iv. **Mr D Redfern**

To the Chair of Economy and Infrastructure

The Northern Times Quoted Cllr Gowans on 4th September as saying "**It wasn't all the campsites in the north present, so we don't really know a true representation of feelings.**" (<https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/we-are-asking-the-highland-council-to-scrap-their-scheme-s-360189/>)

In 2022 Campsites across the Highlands met with the Highland council and voiced their concerns about the opening of several car parks to "overnight motorhome parking."

At the beginning of July this year the Highland Council Received an open letter (now signed by 32 different campsite owners) demonstrating our anger at the new motorhome scheme for £40 per week.

There was a meeting on 29th August where 8 different campsite owners attended (some had travelled over 2 hours to attend) along with a representative from Nairn BID and the Director of the BH&HPA for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The campsites that attended were of all different sizes and the East Coast, North Coast, West coast along with a campsite south of Inverness and one from Nairn represented.

Assuming The Highland Council carried out a robust and thorough consultation prior to implementing the scheme, Can Cllr Gowans justify this statement?

Response

At the meeting on 29 August 2024, there were 17 attendees plus two officers from The Highland Council present. Representatives from 8 camping and caravan sites attended. Of these, 6 were from the north of the Highlands, including Caithness, Sutherland, and Ross & Cromarty, while the remaining 2 attendees were from Inverness and Nairn. Our Non-Domestic Rates records indicate that there are 52 registered camping and caravan sites in the North, out of a total of 153 in the Highland Council area.

v. Mr E Doorley

To the Leader

Given that the planning system does not favour one applicant over another, how should the planning authority balance current Development Plan policies, such as those in the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) supporting rural housing and addressing ongoing depopulation in the Highlands, with potential future infrastructure projects that have not yet reached the public consultation or formal application stage, to ensure a fair and unbiased decision for all applicants?

Response

Each planning application is considered on its own merits taking account of the unique circumstances and relevant national and local development plan policies that apply. A site's status in relation to the development plan, whether allocated or not, is one of those considerations. A note that clarifies the Council's latest position on rural housing is due to be considered at the November Economy & Infrastructure Committee.

Member Questions

i. Mr A Christie

To the Leader

At Council on the 9th May and 27th June 2024 respectively I asked what processes and briefings you could put in place to ensure that all Councillors were up to date with what is happening at Cosla and what the Cosla position was on key service areas and policies. I appreciate that you sent a letter on the 17th June to the President. However, to date little to no progress has been made on ensuring that Councillors are informed of the Cosla view on matters like Teacher Numbers, National Care Service, Fiscal Framework and Verity House Agreement. Please could the Leader detail on these four topics the current Cosla policy including the process whereby the Cosla views will be discussed at our strategic committees?

Response

As you acknowledged, I wrote to the President of COSLA, and she replied indicating that they would circulate a summary of all recommendations agreed by Leaders to all Chief Executives within 3 working days of the conclusion of the meeting. The first summary was issued to all members on 6 September and in this case provides an update on COSLA's position in relation to the resolution procedure for the Verity House Agreement, teacher numbers, National Care Service and a number of other public policy areas. My correspondence with the President of COSLA was made available as an agenda item on last week's Corporate Resources Committee agenda.

ii. Mr A Christie

To the Leader

At Council on the 9th May and the 27th June I asked you to detail the vacancies across two of our service areas Education and Learning and Health and Social Care. Below is a list of the vacancies at that time.

Please could the Leader detail the individual posts that are currently vacant across the two departments identifying which of the posts listed below are still vacant including the length of time they have been vacant?

Job Title	Location	Contract Type	Position Type	Job Closing Date
Teacher (Secondary), Drama, 14 hours per week Start date 19/08/2024	Culloden Academy	Permanent	Part Time	24/06/2024
Principal Teacher (Secondary), Guidance,	Culloden Academy	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Primary), (ASN), 21 hours per week, Fixed Term from 19/08/2024 until 03/07/2025	Glenurquhart Primary School	Fixed Term	Part Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary) English and ASN, Maternity Cover	Golspie High School	Fixed Term	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Mathematics	Grantown Grammar School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Maths, Inverness High School, Start date 19/08/2024	Inverness High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (ASN), Fixed Term from 19/08/24 until June 2025	Kingussie High School	Fixed Term	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), History	Kinlochleven High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), English	Kinlochleven High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Mathematics,	Kinlochleven High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Gaelic	Lochaber High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary) History or History/Modern Studies,	Mallaig High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary) ASN, Fixed Term from 19/08/2024 to 03/07/2025	Millburn Academy	Fixed Term	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Pupil Equity Outreach Teacher, Fixed Term until June 2025	Nairn Academy	Fixed Term	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Gaelic Medium, 17.5 hours per week, Fixed	Nairn Academy	Fixed Term	Part Time	24/06/2024

Term from 19/08/2024 until 02/06/2025				
Teacher (Secondary), Chemistry	Plockton High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary) Physical Education, 21 hours per week,	Plockton High School	Permanent	Part Time	24/06/2024
Principal Teacher (Secondary) Mathematics & Numeracy	Portree High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (ASN), Additional Support Needs, Fixed Term from 19/08/2024 until 03/07/2025	Portree High School	Fixed Term	Full Time	24/06/2024
Principal Teacher (Secondary), English,	Tain Royal Academy	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary) Maths	Tain Royal Academy	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Gaelic Medium, 21 hours per week	Tain Royal Academy	Permanent	Part Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary) Business Studies, Maternity Cover from 02/09/2024 until 30/05/2025	Thurso High School	Fixed Term	Full Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary), Modern Studies	Thurso High School	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024
Principal Teacher (Secondary), English, Modern Languages and Gaelic, 11.9 Hours per week, maternity cover for 1 year	Thurso High School	Fixed Term	Part Time	24/06/2024
Teacher (Secondary) English	Wick High School,	Permanent	Full Time	24/06/2024

SCHOOL	VACANCY FTE / HOURS	PERM / FIXED TERM	FIXED TERM END DATE
Ballachulish Primary	0.5FTE / 17.5 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Beaully Primary	0.4FTE / 14 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Bridgend Primary	0.5FTE / 17.5 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Caol Primary	1.5 FTE	Fixed Term	Until return of teachers
Cradlehall Primary	0.5fte / 17.5 hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher
Culbokie Primary	0.2 / 7 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Duror Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Glencoe Primary	0.8FTE/ 28 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Golspie Primary	0.4 fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Grantown Primary	2.5 FTE	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Inshes Primary	0.4fte / 14 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Inver Primary	1.1 FTE	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Inverlochry Primary	1 / 35 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Kinmylies Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Lundavra Primary	1 FTE / 35 hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher
North Kessock	0.5fte / 17.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Noss Primary	0.5fte / 17.5hrs	Fixed Term	13/10/2024
Obsdale Primary	0.7 FTE / 24.5 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Raigmore Primary	0.4 fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
South Lodge	1fte / 35 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Spean Bridge Primary	0.3fte / 10.5hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher
St Brides	0.4 fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Staffin Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Tarradale Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025
Tore Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	11/10/2024

Family Teams and Health

Teams	Post Desc	FTE	Grade
FT - Caithness	Practice Lead	1.00	HC10
FT - Caithness	Social Worker	2.00	HC9
FT - Caithness	Childrens Servcies Worker (Schools)	0.50	HC5
FT - Caithness	School Nurse	0.13	6
FT - Caithness	Health Visitor	0.20	7
FT - East Ross	Practice Lead	1.00	HC10
FT - East Ross	Social Worker (35)	1.80	HC9
FT - East Ross	Childrens Servcies Worker (Schools)	1.00	HC5
FT - Health & Disability	Social Worker	0.08	HC9
FT - Health & Disability	Family Key Worker	1.00	HC8
FT - Health & Disability	Childrens Servcies Worker (Schools)	0.50	HC5
FT - Inv Central, B&S	Social Worker (35)	4.00	HC9
FT - Inv Central, B&S	Childrens Servcies Worker (Schools)	0.87	HC5

FT - Inv Central, B&S	Health Visitor	0.64	7
FT - Inv Central, B&S	School Nurse	1.96	6
FT - Inv Central, B&S	CEY Practitioner	0.59	HC6
FT - Inv East & Nairnshire	Social Worker	2.68	HC9
FT - Inv East & Nairnshire	CEY Practitioner	1.00	HC6
FT - Inv West	Social Worker	2.37	HC9
FT - Inv West	Childrens Servcies Worker (Schools)	0.45	HC5
FT - Inv West	Health Visitor	1.66	7
FT - Inv West	School Nurse	1.55	6
FT - Lochaber	Practice Lead	2.00	HC10
FT - Lochaber	Social Worker	5.79	HC9
FT - Lochaber	Childrens Servcies Worker (Schools)	2.63	HC5
FT - Lochaber	CEY Practitioner	0.80	HC6
FT - Lochaber	Support Worker - Disability	0.95	HC3
FT - Lochaber	Community Children's Worker	1.00	HC6
FT - Mid Ross	Social Worker	1.75	HC9
FT - Mid Ross	Staff Nurse	0.80	5
FT - Mid Ross	Childrens Servcies Worker (Schools)	0.60	HC5
FT - Skye & West Ross	Social Worker	1.00	HC9
FT - Skye & West Ross	Health Visitor	0.20	7
FT - Skye & West Ross	Community Children's Worker	1.00	HC6
FT - Sutherland	Autism Practitioner	1.00	HC9
FT - Sutherland	Social Worker	1.46	HC9
FT - Sutherland	School Nurse	1.00	6
FT - Sutherland	Health Visitor	2.00	7
INBS C&F Support Workers	Support Worker C&P	1.04	HC3
Nursing Management Team	Associate Lead Nurse	0.20	8A
Nursing Management Team	Team Lead (Health)	0.04	7
CPA Highland Wide	Child Protection Adviser	1.00	7
LAC Nurse	Clinical Nurse Specialist	1.00	6
LAC Nurse	School Nursing Services 6	1.00	6
LAC Nurse	School Nurse Trainee Band 5	3.00	6
Family Nurse Partnership	FNP Supervisor Band 8A	0.60	8A
Family Nurse Partnership	FNP Nurse	1.00	7

Cradle to Grave Nurses	Staff Nurse	0.20	7
AHP - Dietetics	Dietetics Services Band 6	0.10	6
AHP - Occupational Therapists	Occupational Therapist (Children)	0.25	HC9
AHP - Occupational Therapists	AHP Support Practitioner	0.47	4
AHP - Physiotherapists	Physiotherapy Services Band 6	1.00	6
AHP - Physiotherapists	Physiotherapy Services 5	1.00	5
Speech Language Therapy	AHP Support Practitioner	0.10	4
PMHW Highland	Primary Mental Health Worker Trainee	0.05	6
QARO team	Quality & Reviewing Officer	1.00	HC9
Staffing - Training Section	Social Worker (35)	0.40	HC9
Youth Action Services	Forensic Psychologist in Training	1.00	HC9
Youth Action Services North	Social Worker (35)	3.00	HC9
Youth Action Services North	Youth Justice Practitioner	2.00	HC5
Youth Action Services South	Social Worker (35)	1.00	HC9
Principal Officer Social Work	Principal Officer (Social Care)	1.00	HC12
Family Centre Merkinch	Community Early Years Practitioner	0.54	HC6

H&SC Business Support	Office Services Band 3	0.07	3
H&SC Business Support	Administrative Assistant 2	0.80	HC5
H&SC Business Support	Administrative Assistant 2	0.10	HC5
H&SC Business Support	Administrative Assistant 1	0.80	HC4
H&SC Business Support	Clerical Assistant 2	0.50	HC3

Looked After Children

Code Desc	Post Desc	FTE	Grade
F & A Team - HQ	Social Worker (35)	0.50	HC9
Staffin Children Respite Centre	Social Care Worker	0.57	HC6
The Orchard Child Special Need	Depute Unit Manager	0.14	HC8
The Orchard Child Special Need	Social Care Worker	0.72	HC6
The Orchard Child Special Need	Learning Disabilities Nursing Serv Band5	0.76	5
Child Residential 122 Ashton Rd	Social Care Worker	1.50	HC6
Linked House Broom Drive, Inv	Social Care Worker 2	1.85	HC6
Linked House Killen Old School, Bl	Social Care Worker 2	0.50	HC6
Arach NWD Hub	Depute Unit Manager	1.00	HC8
Arach NWD Hub	Social Worker (35)	6.62	HC9
Culbokie Residential Unit	Clerical Assistant 2	1.50	HC3

Criminal Justice and Mental Health

Teams	Post Desc	FTE	Grade
Justice Services			
CJS SBS	Clerical Assistant 2	2.50	HC3
MFMC	Social Worker (35)	1.00	HC9
Drug & Alcohol Action Team	Social Worker	1.00	HC9
North CJS	Social Worker (35)	1.00	HC9
UWO - Inverness	team manager	0.85	HC10
UWO - Inverness	Community Payback Supervisor	1.00	HC5
UWO - West	Community Payback Supervisor	0.40	HC5
MAPPA	Clerical Assistant 2	0.50	HC3
CommSent Persistent Offenders	Social Worker (35)	1.00	HC9
Caledonian System Women	Criminal Justice Officer	0.50	HC5
Porterfield Prison Social Work	Social Work Team Manager	0.15	HC10
Porterfield Prison Social Work	Social Worker (35)	1.00	HC9
Sec. 27 Justice SW Recovery	Criminal Justice Officer	1.00	HC5
HADP Non-Fatal OD IRP	Social Worker	1.00	HC9

MHO			
Mental Health Officer - HQ	Mental Health Officer	0.80	HC9

Response

An updated list of education vacancies is provided below.

SCHOOL	VACANCY FTE / HOURS	PERM / FIXED TERM	FIXED TERM END DATE	APPOINTED
Ballachulish Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Ballachulish Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Ballachulish Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Beaully Primary	0.4fte / 14 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Bridgend Primary	0.4fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	NO - RE-ADVERT
Bridgend Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Caol Primary	0.6fte / 21hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
Caol Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Caol Primary	0.4fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Caol Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Caol Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Cradlehall Primary	0.5fte / 17.5 hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
Culbokie Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Culbokie Primary	1.0fte / 35hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Duror Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Glencoe Primary	0.4fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Glencoe Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Glencoe Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Golspie Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Golspie Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Grantown Primary	0.5fte / 17.5 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES

Grantown Primary	1fte / 35 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	WITHDRAWN
Grantown Primary	1fte / 35 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Inshes Primary	0.4fte / 14 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Inver Primary	1.0fte / 35hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Inver Primary	0.1fte/3.5hrs	Fixed Term	01/12/2024	YES
Inver Primary	0.1fte/3.5hrs	Fixed Term	01/12/2024	YES
Inverlochry Primary	0.4fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Inverlochry Primary	0.3fte / 10.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Inverlochry Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Inverlochry Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Kinmylies Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Lundavra Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
Lundavra Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
Lundavra Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
Lundavra Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
Lundavra Primary	0.4fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
North Kessock	0.5fte / 17.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Noss Primary	0.5fte / 17.5hrs	Fixed Term	13/10/2024	YES
Obsdale Primary	0.4fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	RE-ADVERT - CLOSED 03/09 - WITH APPLICANTS
Obsdale Primary	0.1fte/3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	RE-ADVERT - CLOSED 03/09 - WITH APPLICANTS
Obsdale Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	RE-ADVERT - CLOSED 03/09 - WITH APPLICANTS
Raigmore Primary	0.4 fte / 14hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
South Lodge	1fte / 35 hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Spean Bridge Primary	0.3fte / 10.5hrs	Fixed Term	Until return of teacher	YES
St Brides	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
St Brides	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
St Brides	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Staffin Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Staffin Primary	0.1fte / 3.5hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Tarradale Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	03/07/2025	YES
Tore Primary	0.2fte / 7hrs	Fixed Term	11/10/2024	YES

Status	Int/Ext	Re-Ad	Job Title	Closing Date	NOTES
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Drama, 14 hours per week, Culloden Academy, Start date 19/08/2024, HGH16779	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	No	Principal Teacher (Secondary), Guidance, Culloden Academy, HGH16861	24/06/2024	
Filled	Internal	No	Teacher (Primary), (ASN), 21 hours per week, Fixed Term from 19/08/2024 until 03/07/2025, Glen Urquhart ASG, (INTERNAL VACANCY), HGH16759	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	Yes	Teacher (Secondary) English and ASN, Maternity Cover, Golspie High School, HGH16250	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Mathematics, Grantown Grammar School, HGH16125	24/06/2024	
Open	External	Yes	Teacher (Secondary), Maths, Inverness High School, Start date 19/08/2024, HGH16259	24/06/2024	Advertised x 2 Post vacant since August 24
Filled	Internal	No	Teacher (ASN), Fixed Term from 19/08/24 until June 2025, Kingussie High School, HGH16866	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), History, Kinlochleven Joint Campus, HGH16754	24/06/2024	
Open	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), English, Kinlochleven Joint Campus, HGH16760	24/06/2024	Advertised x 1 Post vacant since August 24 – Currently out to advert closing 16/09/24
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Mathematics, Kinlochleven High School, HGH16767	24/06/2024	
Open	External	Yes	Teacher (Secondary), Gaelic, Lochaber High School, HGH16301	24/06/2024	Advertised 5 times since April 24 – most recent closed 03/09/24 – 0 Applicants on all 5 occasions
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary) History or History/Modern Studies, Mallaig High School, HGH16719	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	Yes	Teacher (Secondary), Pupil Equity Outreach Teacher, Fixed Term until June 2025, Nairn Academy, HGH16615	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Gaelic Medium, 17.5 hours per week, Fixed Term from 19/08/2024 until	24/06/2024	

			02/06/2025, Nairn Academy, HGH16710		
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Chemistry, Plockton High School, HGH16697	24/06/2024	
Open	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Physical Education, 21 hours per week, Plockton High School, HGH16803	24/06/2024	Advertised x 1 June – 0 applicants Advertised Sept - 1 Applicant
Open	External	Yes	Principal Teacher (Secondary) Mathematics & Numeracy, Portree High School, HGH16275	24/06/2024	Advertised x 3 1 x Applicant No Appointment made
Open	External	No	Teacher (ASN), Additional Support Needs, Fixed Term from 19/08/2024 until 03/07/2025, Portree High School, HGH16879	24/06/2024	Advertised x 3 3 x Applicants from closing 03/09/24 No confirmation of Appointment yet
Open	External	No	Principal Teacher (Secondary), English, Tain Royal Academy, HGH16510	24/06/2024	Advertised x 2 since June. 1 x Applicant from closing 03/09/24 – no confirmation of appointment yet
Open	External	Yes	Teacher (Secondary) Maths, Tain Royal Academy, HGH16528	24/06/2024	Advertised x 2 since June. 2 x Applicants from closing 03/09/24 – no confirmation of appointment yet
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Gaelic Medium, 21 hours per week, Tain Royal Academy, HGH16742	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	Yes	Teacher (Secondary) Business Studies, Maternity Cover from 02/09/2024 until 30/05/2025, Thurso High School, HGH16550	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	No	Teacher (Secondary), Modern Studies, Thurso High School HGH16802	24/06/2024	
Filled	External	No	Principal Teacher (Secondary), English, Modern Languages and Gaelic, 11.9 Hours per week, maternity cover for 1 year, Thurso High School, HGH16835	24/06/2024	
Open	External	Yes	Teacher (Secondary) English, Wick High School, HGH16519	24/06/2024	Advertised x 3 since June. 0 x Applicants from closing 03/09/24

The most recent collation of vacancies with regard social work vacancies (end of August 24), shows there are 46.647 FTE Social Worker posts currently vacant. Staff cover is used flexibly in order to address service need and demand and as such, vacancies in one team may be covered by moving staff from another team or from using supply staff. Consequently, a vacancy does not necessarily represent an absence of cover.

Until the new HR system is in place, the information on vacancy figures is collated manually and information is not kept on the time posts have been vacant. It has therefore not been possible to gather this information in the time available.

We are currently reviewing the actions stated within the Service Workforce Plan around recruitment as we need to know if our mitigation actions are making an impact. Further, the Council's Delivery Plan has a project focused on addressing Social Work workforce needs as part of the Person-Centred Solutions Portfolio. An update report on both these matters will be brought to the HSC Committee in February 2025.

iii. Ms K Willis

To the Chair of Communities and Place

There has been considerable public perception that there has been less grass cutting in many areas across the Council estate this year. What is the associated cost saving to Council due to the reduction in grass cutting this year?

Response

This year has been particularly challenging for the Amenities team, which was primarily down to the budget reduction from the Housing service impacting on the work carried out in housing estates. As part of the 2024/25 revenue budget review, the Housing and Property Committee agreed that the budget be focussed on delivering essential repairs and statutory health and safety works, and that savings would need to be made elsewhere. In line with budgetary pressures, inflation, and the increasing cost of materials, it was agreed for there to be a lower level of grounds maintenance than in previous years. Which has resulted in less grass-cutting, strimming and weedkilling. The reduction from the Housing budget was £219,400 (from £966,800 to £747,400). There is no other associated cost saving.

iv. Mr C Balance

To the Chair of Economy and Infrastructure

Last month Edinburgh City Council agreed to start a consultation on introducing a Transient Visitor Levy as soon as the Act comes into force, with the intention of implementing the levy by July 2026, in order to maximise income to the Council. Does the Highland Council administration share this aspiration to introduce the levy as soon as possible?

Response

It is the intention of this council to introduce the levy as soon as possible following a 3-month statutory consultation period, and subject to a report that will come before members by Spring 2025 to decide whether to implement a Visitor Levy in Highland.

v. Mrs I MacKenzie

To the Leader

Will you work with Nature Scot to allow Inverness Bid to continue next year and return to their previous level of egg removal as in previous years?

Response

The work with Inverness BID continues as it has since 2012 which has produced a robust and clear programme of Gull Management within Inverness City Centre. The work continues to be funded jointly by the Inverness Common Good Fund and Bid levy Payers. Meetings have taken place involving the Senior Community Development Manager for Inverness & South (SCDM), Inverness BID Director (Operations), representatives of Aberdeen Inspired (BID), Nairn Connects (BID) and Elgin BID to form a steering group to strengthen our collective response to the new guidance set out by Nature Scot and only issued a couple of months before the commencement of the Gull Management programme for 2024 (the Programme).

The Programme for the City of Inverness is managed and delivered by Inverness BID with the SCDM working with Bid to progress the joint work with the other BID's across the North of Scotland in working up a Group Licence Agreement which, if accepted by Nature Scot, will provide for Inverness BID to achieve Trusted Partner Status. It will be a requirement for 2025 that the BID partners must undertake significant pre-nesting activity as may be agreed.

Further meetings are being undertaken with Nature Scot to progress and an invitation has been issued to Nature Scot for a senior Licensing officer to attend the next meeting of the City of Inverness Area Committee set for 18th November to explain the new approach being taken by Nature Scot to Licensing and to seek assurance that a balanced approach will be maintained.

vi. Mr P Logue

To the Chair of Economy and Infrastructure

How many Highland Campervan and Motorhome Scheme memberships have been sold to date?

Response

64.

vii. Mr J McGillivray

To the Leader

In view of the very limited uptake of the Motorhome Voluntary Levy Scheme up till now, and in view of the hostility engendered against the Scheme amongst our local licensed Caravan & Camping Parks, as reflected also in the views of their national Trade Association, will the Highland Council suspend the practice of allowing overnight parking in HC carparks and undertake a review of the outcomes of the Scheme thus far in order to establish if there is any substantive purpose to be gained in continuing with it in future seasons?

Response

While caravan and camping parks and their national Trade Association have expressed their concerns, there have also been many positive comments made about the Scheme. We recognise that the majority of tourists to Highland behave responsibly and treat our natural assets and communities with respect. The Council shall therefore continue to operate the Campervan and Motorhome Scheme to help promote and support responsible behaviours by all of our visitors, and to enhance our infrastructure.

viii. Mr M Baird

To the Leader

Since we have had a low uptake of the voluntary £40 for Motorhomes and Campervans. How does the Administration plan to ensure the budgeted Income is achieved?

Response

The Campervan and Motorhome Scheme is in its infancy. As the Scheme develops, further targeted marketing will be undertaken to raise awareness about the Scheme and to promote responsible and sustainable tourism for those who choose Highland as a destination of choice.

ix. Mr R Stewart

To the Leader

What has been the total cost to the Council for repairing and addressing damages related to antisocial behaviour and vandalism over the past year?

Response

This is a wide-reaching question covering a number of areas of Council activity. For 2023/24 the following represents the total recorded costs of repairing and addressing damages related to antisocial behaviour and vandalism across the following service areas:

- £20,217 – public toilet damage.
- £76,637 – vandalism on the property estate. This includes damage to the school buildings out of hours/weekends/holidays.
- £13,500 – damage in cemeteries.

In addition, there were 49 reported incidents of graffiti that were dealt with by the Street cleaning team. The costs of removal are not recorded separately.

It is important to note that this does not cover:

- The majority acts of graffiti which are dealt with as part of street cleaning business as usual activity – the above only relates to reported incidents.
- Damage to play parks – it is not possible to distinguish between accidental damage and vandalism.
- General damage to school buildings – no distinction is made in recording of vandalism and accidental damage.