

Agenda Item	4.
Report No	CCC/19/24

The Highland Council

Committee: Climate Change Committee

Date: 7 November 2024

Report Title: Net Zero Programme Update

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Delivery Plan 2024-27 consists of 64 projects/programmes, managed through 6 Portfolio Boards. Each project is reported to a relevant committee for consideration and scrutiny in terms of the Portfolio Reporting Cycle agreed at Council on 9 May 2024. As outlined in the Delivery Plan, the Net Zero Programme is reported to the Climate Change Committee on a quarterly basis.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Net Zero Programme and to present the second tranche of projects for inclusion in the Programme.
- 1.3 The content and structure of the report is intended to:-
 - assist Member scrutiny and performance management;
 - inform decision making and aid continuous improvement; and
 - provide transparency and accessibility

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-
 - i. **Consider and scrutinise** progress to date as outlined in this report and Appendix 1; and
 - ii. **Recommend to Council** the approval of the project brief templates in Appendix 2 for inclusion in the Council's Net Zero Action Plan.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - A [revised approach](#) for the future delivery of the Net Zero Strategy was approved by the Climate Change Committee in May 2024. The Committee agreed that to streamline efforts and maximise impact, a more focused approach should be taken to enable the Climate Change & Energy Team (CCET) to work closely with services to develop and deliver projects that will accelerate the Council's transition to Net Zero and becoming a climate-ready organisation.

The Council's Route Map to Net Zero requires a cross-service collaborative approach. As highlighted in the Net Zero Programme [report](#) presented to the Climate Change Committee in August, a governance model now sits with the Net Zero, Energy, Investment and Innovation Board. The Strategy Group and Thematic groups approved on 9 December 2021 remain an integral part of the approach with the Strategy Group responsible for the operational development and delivery of the Net Zero Strategy and Net Zero Programme.

- 3.2 **Legal** - the Council has several requirements in respect of reporting against its climate change obligations, in addition to being required to directly support Scotland's target to end its contribution to climate change no later than 2045.
- 3.3 **Risk** - failure to proactively address the climate and ecological emergency across all service delivery areas carries significant reputational risk, particularly considering the political ambition at both local and national levels around the climate change agenda. In addition, failure to take a proactive approach to climate change action will limit opportunities to secure external funding.

As outlined in Audit Scotland's [briefing](#) 'Scotland's councils' approach to addressing climate change', action is needed now to make sure that Scotland is resilient enough to deal with the impacts of the changes to the climate that are already happening. If we do not respond quickly enough to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase our resilience, severe widespread impacts are expected. This includes extreme disruption to the systems we depend on for food, water, and shelter.

Key risks at a Programme level are outlined in section 5.3. As projects within the programme develop, project specific risks and issues will be captured and managed according to project management best practice and in compliance with the Risk Management Policy.

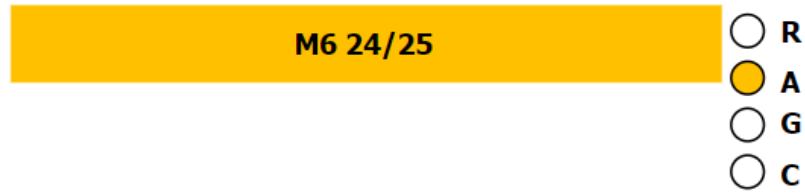
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - there are no implications arising from this report. However, health and safety will be addressed in the Council's Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan which is being developed as part of the Net Zero Programme.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** - there are no implications arising from this report.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is a monitoring and update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 Delivery Plan monitoring and progress update

5.1 RAG Status



The Net Zero Programme has been ragged as Amber due to limited progress in respect of several key milestones:-

- Service carbon budgets/emissions targets approved (Completes December 2024); and
- Net Zero embedded in Capital Programme (Completes September 2024)

These project elements are critical to the successful delivery of the programme and have been identified as mitigating actions to address a number of key risks.

At the August Net Zero, Energy Investment & Innovation Board (NZEII), the Board agreed to approve the integration of Net Zero considerations into the Capital Spend Policy and Governance Framework. However, there has been no further progress to date.

A change request has been approved to extend the timeline for the milestone relating to service carbon budgets/emissions targets.

5.2 Key Milestones & Requests for Change

Progress regarding milestones is outlined in the table below:-

Timeline	Milestone	Current status	Comments
Completes November 2024	Develop proposed projects for inclusion in Net Zero Programme	Some slippage	<p>The following milestone has been set for the Net Zero Strategy Group:</p> <p>Develop five proposed projects for inclusion in the Net Zero Programme to be brought to each meeting of the Climate Change Committee for consideration.</p> <p>Three project templates have been submitted for consideration by the Climate Change Committee in November 2024.</p>

<p>Completes December 2024</p>	<p>Service carbon budgets/emissions targets approved</p>	<p>Some slippage</p>	<p>Change request form approved by the NZEII Board on 02/10/24 to extend end date to 01/04/25.</p> <p>Awaiting evaluation of carbon management tools which are being piloted and led by the Shared Procurement Service. Additionally, there is currently no reporting facility from the new CIA Financials system – this will be essential to establish carbon budgeting.</p> <p>The Board also agreed the following additional milestone should be added to PRMS: Shared Procurement Service to evaluate and propose alternative carbon budgeting tools by 31/12/24.</p>
<p>Completes September 2024</p>	<p>Net Zero embedded in Capital Programme</p>	<p>No significant progress</p>	<p>At the August NZEII Board, it was agreed to approve the integration of Net Zero considerations into the Capital Spend Policy and Governance framework and mandate early involvement of key representatives in capital projects. This was to be added to the next Capital Programme Board Agenda (2 September). There has been no further progress on business case reporting and metrics for capital projects.</p>
<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>KPIs linked to Service Plans</p>	<p>Some slippage</p>	<p>On 28 August 2024, the Climate Change Committee approved the first tranche of projects for inclusion in the Net Zero Programme. KPIs to be input onto PRMS for each of the 14 projects with the relevant responsible officer updating progress – this is in progress.</p>

			Scorecard to be built for projects approved for inclusion in the Programme. Project RAG elements will be referenced into the Net Zero Programme in the Delivery Plan.
Ongoing	Policies/practice reviewed for carbon impact	Some slippage	<p>A number of strategies and policies to be refreshed to align with the Net Zero Strategy have been identified within the first tranche of projects approved by the Climate Change Committee in August.</p> <p>Plans, policies, strategies, and procedures to be reviewed/updated to align with the Net Zero Strategy will be a standing agenda item for the Net Zero Strategy Group going forward.</p>

5.3 Key Risks

The following key risks have been identified for the Net Zero Programme:-

- emissions targets not met;
- Services fail to engage with the Net Zero agenda; and
- failure to align our budget expenditure with our Net Zero ambitions

Risk Analysis templates are currently in development in respect of the above risks.

6 Net Zero Programme – quarterly projects update

6.1 On 28 August 2024, the Climate Change Committee considered and agreed the first tranche of projects for inclusion in the Net Zero Programme.

6.2 **Appendix 1** outlines progress to date for the 14 projects approved within tranche 1. It should be noted that there has been limited time to progress a number of these projects due to Committee reporting cycles and timeframes.

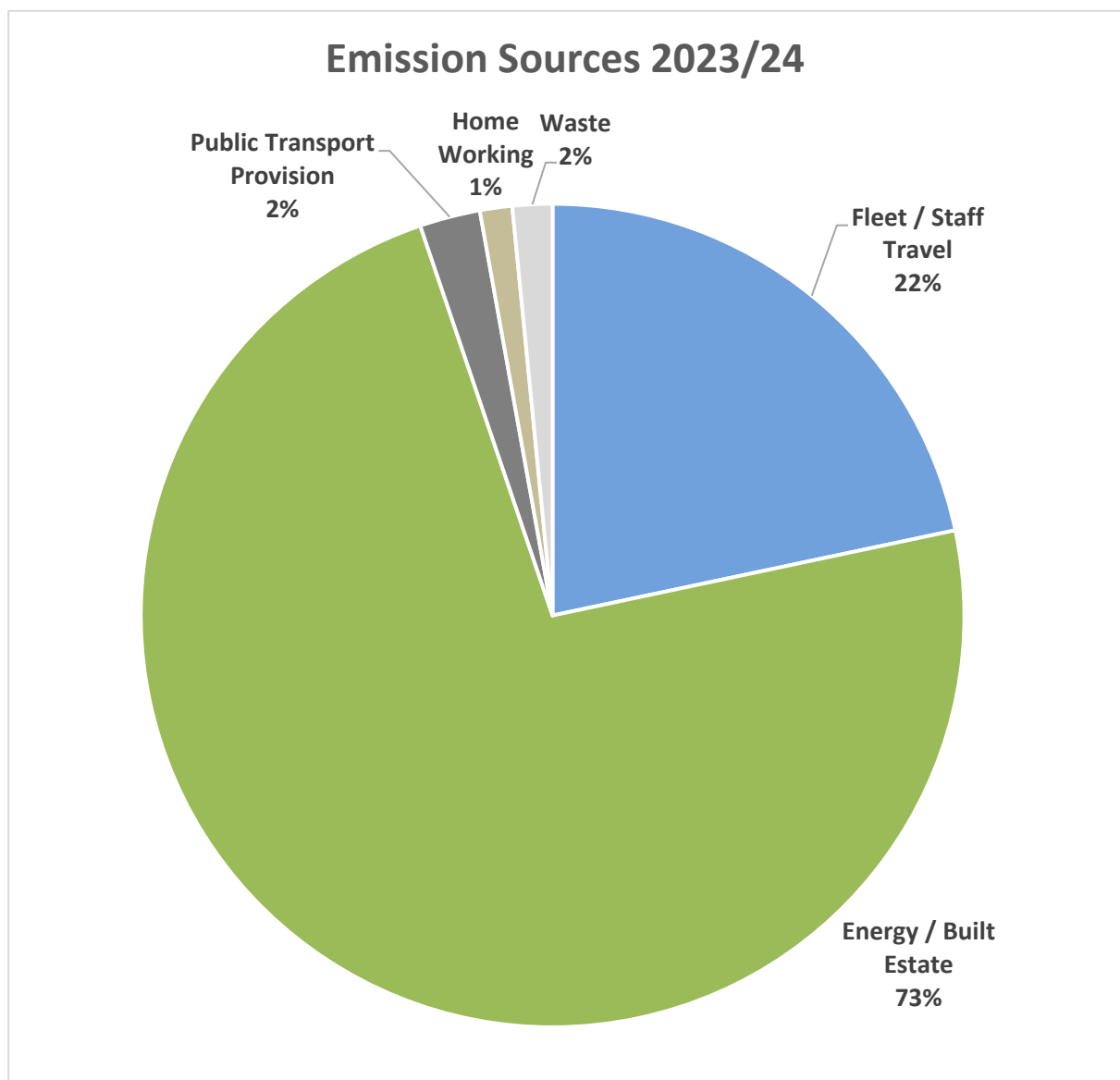
7 Thematic Group – annual update

7.1 On 23 May 2024, the Climate Change Committee agreed a revised approach for the reporting of the Net Zero Programme.

- 7.2 This includes a responsible officer from each thematic group reporting to the Climate Change Committee on at least an annual basis, providing an update on progress/achievements, challenges, and proposed actions.
- 7.3 Updates from the following thematic groups will be presented at the November Climate Change Committee for Members to consider and scrutinise:-
- Built Estate & Energy
 - Sustainable Business Travel
- 7.4 The progress of these thematic groups is significant to the Council achieving its Net Zero ambitions with energy use across the Council's estate (consumption of electricity, gas, oil, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), biomass and water) accounting for 73% of corporate emissions

The Council's fleet and staff travel emissions represent 22% of corporate carbon emissions.

Further information regarding emissions is outlined in the Council's Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report for 2023/24.



8 Net Zero Programme – second tranche of projects

- 8.1 As highlighted in section 3.1, a [revised approach](#) for the future delivery of the Net Zero Strategy was approved by the Climate Change Committee in May 2024. The Committee agreed that the CCET should work with each of the Thematic Groups to adopt a strategic approach by aligning key actions and workstreams into key objective delivery plans following the same format of project brief templates utilised within the Council's Operational Delivery Plan.
- 8.2 This iterative process will start with projects delivering short-term carbon reductions and operational efficiencies.
- 8.3 The following milestone has been set for the Net Zero Strategy Group:-
- Develop five proposed projects for inclusion in Net Zero Programme to be brought to each meeting of the Climate Change Committee for consideration.
- 8.4 Three project templates within **Appendix 2** have been developed for consideration by the Committee detailing the planned activity, milestones and measures of success for each project.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 7 October 2024

Authors: Fiona Daschofsky, Project Manager, Climate Change & Energy Team

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Net Zero Programme – Project Updates
Appendix 2 – Project Brief Templates

Built Estate & Energy								
Programme (if applicable)	Project	Responsible Officer	Activity	Project Elements	Measures of Success	Milestones	Key Risks	Update
Energy Efficient Council	Net Zero Transition Surveys	Energy Manager	Undertake surveys of 300 non-domestic Council properties to evaluate and identify measures required to transition to Net Zero carbon emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out physical surveys and associated analysis to prepare site-specific reports detailing measures required to transition to Net Zero Compile database of costed opportunities Identify, and where deemed cost-effective, to progress implementation of cost reduction opportunities and projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 – 35% of properties surveyed Year 2 – 65% of properties surveyed Year 1 – £0.20m of opportunities implemented Year 2 – £0.45m of opportunities implemented Year 3 – £0.45m of opportunities implemented 	<p>M1 - 08/24: 1st tranche of properties commenced</p> <p>M2 - 03/25: 1st tranche of properties completed</p> <p>M3 - 04/25: 2nd tranche of projects commenced</p> <p>M4 - 10/25: 2nd tranche of projects completed</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to recruit staff to undertake workstream Failure to secure funding Cross service buy-in 	<p>M1 - Programme now initiated.</p> <p>Change control form submitted requesting delay to milestones with reference to delay in recruiting staff resource to deliver. Additionally milestone descriptions will be revised to align with other projects.</p>
Solar PV Council Estate	Solar PV Council Estate	Energy Manager	Optimisation and expansion of solar PV across the Council's non-domestic, non-commercial estate to supply green energy by direct wire; delivering a financial and carbon saving and protecting against future carbon tax liability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and rank council-owned/occupied sites Undertake any remedial works required Design and install Maintenance regimes, compliance and certification built into management of the sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% existing sites operational and generating energy Income: £1.3m by year 3 rising to £2m p/a Increase in installed generation capacity Reduced electricity costs for service users Reduction in Council CO2 emissions 	<p>M1 - 04/24: >50% of total generation re-activated</p> <p>M2 - 04/24: Financial model signed off</p> <p>M3 - 05/24: 2024/26 Project and Programme in place</p> <p>M4 - 03/25: 60% of 1MW of new installation completed</p> <p>M5 - 09/25: 1MW of additional new installation completed</p> <p>M6 - 03/26: 1MW additional generation p/a up to 5 years</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of legal/regulatory exposure Identifying sufficient skilled contractors to inspect, certify, install and maintain assets 	<p>M1 - Complete</p> <p>M2 - Modelling and evaluation software purchased and operational. Pilot studies underway which will be distributed internally for review and feedback.</p> <p>M3 - ongoing, awaiting feedback from other services with respect to prioritisation of sites.</p> <p>M4 - Change control form submitted requesting delay to milestone with reference to loss of ket staff resource leading this project.</p>
	Conversion of Fossil Fuel Systems	Energy Manager	Undertake detailed heating system options appraisals for properties with aged and poor condition fossil-fuel based heating systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out options appraisals to determine how the heating systems can be converted to non-fossil fuel alternatives that support the transition to Net Zero carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake 6 options appraisals on heating systems which have less than 5 years life expectancy Define and consult upon report format and content to ensure fitness for purpose Complete by end of December 2025 	<p>M1 - 08/24 - Agree selected properties</p> <p>M2 - 12/24 - Complete options appraisals and associated reports for internal issue for review</p> <p>M3 - 02/25 - Incorporation into planned maintenance works for approved projects</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Resource availability internally Cross service buy-in 	<p>M1 - Properties have been selected and are being integrated into planned audit and survey work over the next 2 months.</p>
	Net Zero Design Standards	Head of Property & FM	Determine and agree net zero design standards applicable for non-domestic new builds and refurbishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current guidance and legislation to determine the appropriate design standard for all categories Update and publish technical specifications and associated guidance documentation Information and knowledge through workshops for dissemination to relevant parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of technical standards and guidance Production of compliant life cycle analysis reports for new buildings Post occupancy evaluation demonstration of meeting operational energy targets Compliant building carbon strategy documentation 	<p>M1 - 08/24: Solar PV technical specification adopted for all new domestic and non-domestic applications</p> <p>M2 - 01/25: Interim technical specification and guidance</p> <p>M3 - 01/26: Update of interim technical specification and guidance</p> <p>M4 - 08/26: Finalised technical specification and guidance published</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Resource availability internally Change in further Policy or Regulation updates 	<p>Work is progressing to update technical briefing documents. Internal workshops have been held within the Property Team to raise awareness and responses are being prepared to the Scottish Government's consultation on 'Building Regulations: Determining the principles for a Scottish equivalent to the Passivhaus standard'</p>
Net Zero Delivery								
Programme (if applicable)	Project	Responsible Officer	Activity	Project Elements	Measures of Success	Milestones	Key Risks	Update

	Capital Projects - Net Zero	CCET Manager	The Highland Council is committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions, in line with national targets. Capital projects represent the Council's largest source of carbon emissions, making it crucial to adopt a rigorous approach to reducing these emissions. An assessment process for capital projects will be developed to ensure statutory climate and ecological targets are met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group established. Develop clear guidance for incorporating Net Zero into Capital Project planning and design. Develop pilot projects to validate and refine the approach. Establish a framework to track and report on metrics and weighting as outlined in Capital Programme Bid Evaluation and Prioritisation Matrix approved by Council on 14/03/24. Revise policy documents reflecting the integration of Net Zero considerations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish business case model to ensure consistency of assessment of projects Approval of guidelines and implementation of process Successful delivery of two pilot projects that demonstrate whole life cost approach Approval of standardised business case documentation and reporting frameworks for all new Capital Projects 100% compliance with new guidelines adopted after policy change 		1. Services fail to align with policy intention	No progress to date.
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Planning, Land Use & Environment

Programme (if applicable)	Project	Responsible Officer	Activity	Project Elements	Measures of Success	Milestones	Key Risks	Update
	Address Ecological Emergency	Service Lead – Environment, Development & Active Travel	Implement priority actions identified in the Council's Ecology Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map and quantify greening opportunities across Council Estate Utilise biodiversity in green space to reduce grass cutting across Council Estate Develop and deliver a suite of greening projects across Council Estate Secure external funding to support Council and community greening projects (Nature Restoration Fund) Strategies and policies developed aligned to the Ecology Strategy Secure funding and further develop management plan for World Heritage site (WHS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Council estate Greening projects delivered annually Pipeline of projects identified, and delivered for biodiversity Management plan for WHS finalised Ash dieback mapped and managed across the estate Identify number of policies to be aligned to the Ecology Strategy Major planning apps assessed in line with NPF4 biodiversity policies Funding secured for WHS (£600k) Recruitment of planning ecologists 	<p>M1 - Q2 24/25: Nature Restoration Fund Community grant scheme launched</p> <p>M2 - Q3 24/25: Complete recruitment of Planning Ecologist</p> <p>M3 - Q4 24/25: Review and agree approach to Ash dieback</p> <p>M4 - Q4 24/25: First tranche WHS funding secured</p> <p>M5 - Q1 25/26: WHS staff recruited</p> <p>M6 - Q1 25/26: Opportunity map completed</p> <p>M7 - Q3 25/26: Adoption of Forestry and Woodland Strategy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of Council/SG resources to implement greening projects Slower than anticipated finance - WHS Competing demand for Council land 	<p>M1 - NRF 2024/25 removed</p> <p>M2 - Complete. 2 new Planning Ecologists recruited.</p> <p>M3 - Senior Arboricultural Officer advertised. Ash Dieback will be responsibility of this post.</p> <p>M4 - Pending</p> <p>M5 - no update</p> <p>M6 - no update</p> <p>M7 - no update</p>
	Nature Networks	Service Lead – Environment, Development & Active Travel	Create Nature Networks by identifying and mapping Nature Networks in Highland and strengthening connections between them to support improved ecological connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and map potential high level Nature Networks across Highland. Carry out workshops with partners and stakeholders to refine existing and potential new local Nature Networks Identify, with partners and stakeholders, and map the first phase of Loch Nature Conservation Sites (LNCSs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature Networks identified and mapped as part of the Local Development Plan. Identify 10 opportunities to strengthen or create new Nature Networks. Establish panel to identify and designate LNCSs. Through the planning process nature networks provide opportunities for developers to focus and deliver biodiversity enhancement obligations. 	<p>M1 - 11/24: Establish baseline GIS dataset to include statutory and non-statutory designations, HABMap and key geographical map data</p> <p>M2 - 11/24: Start mapping potential existing Nature Networks (focusing on Inner Moray Firth area)</p> <p>M3 - 12/24: Carry out first workshops (focusing on Inner Moray Firth area) with stakeholders to refine map-based Nature Networks</p> <p>M4 - 04/25: Identify LNCS (ongoing) and start the designation process (April 2025)</p> <p>M5 - 08/26: Completion of high-level Nature Works</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Access to resources/expertise Unable to fit with LDP delivery programme Possible conflict with landowners/managers 	<p>M1 - underway</p> <p>M2 - no update</p> <p>M3 - workshops likely to start at Q4.</p> <p>M4 - no update</p> <p>M5 - no update [M5 should read 'Completion of Highland Nature Networks']</p>

Social Housing & HRA

Programme	Project	Responsible Officer	Activity	Project Elements	Measures of Success	Milestones	Key Risks	Update
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	Housing Strategy/ Policy	Head of Housing & Building Maintenance	<p>Enhance the Council's approach to achieving the Local Housing Strategy 2023-28 Outcome 4, "Partnership and innovation builds capacity in Highland so that housing condition and energy efficiency improve and all homes to move towards net zero".</p> <p>This will be achieved through reviewing existing housing stock with a focus on energy efficiency status, adopting whole house retrofit approach to support the reduction of fuel poverty and improving the efficiency of Council properties in line with Net Zero Standards.</p> <p>Review of HRA Capital Plan to remove barriers in achieving targets while incorporating the requirement to secure external funding to support delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review stock information to derive a clear understanding of current energy efficiency status and the works required to achieve Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS). Review HRA budget allocations Revise area-based funding allocation to ensure that properties of the greatest need (energy inefficient, off-gas, rural properties in Council tax bands E-G) are prioritised for energy efficiency works. Undertake feasibility studies for energy efficiency projects including costings. Review current process for tenant opt-out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach established for achieving SHNZS and alleviating fuel poverty in the Highlands Establish accurate costing against housing stock types. 5 whole house retrofit feasibilities completed per annum Increased HRA capital budget allocation to energy efficiency works. Pipeline of shovel ready energy efficiency projects Tracking the reduction in carbon emissions (aligned with Highland Council carbon emission targets). 	<p>M1 - 04/25: Report to Housing and Property Committee outlining analysis of stock, understanding of current energy efficiency and requesting approval to change current HRA funding structure.</p> <p>M2 - 09/25: Creation of Policy approach/Amendment of Local Housing Strategy.</p> <p>M3 - Ongoing: Identification of priority projects.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of resource to conduct stock review, data analysis and surveyance. Delivery of HRA capital programme within context of construction industry challenges relating to capacity, flexibility and affordability. 	<p>Stock viability assessment underway with consultant; revenue estimates process ongoing which will identify funding capacity for future investment</p>
Energy Efficient Homes	Energy Efficient Homes - Caol	Domestic Heating Programme Manager	<p>Utilise grant funding to support the delivery of a retrofit project to 32 properties located in Caol.</p> <p>Properties are all Swedish Timber construction, off gas and existing roof contains asbestos. Scope of works includes; external wall insulation, removal of asbestos roof, new roof with in-roof solar, insulation lofts (where required) and installing air source heat pumps (some properties already have a heat pump).</p> <p>Project to achieve a minimum of 50% external funding on eligible works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align delivery of retrofit works to social & private properties in Caol. Maximise and manage external funding, including ECO4 and Scottish Government EES:ABS enabling funds. Improve condition of housing stock and reduce fuel poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of allocated properties improved 50% (min) of external funding leveraged 100% of properties EPC C or above Meeting standards, including EESSH2 Delivery of place-based project including socially and privately owned properties. 	<p>M1 - 07/24: Completion of 2 pilot properties</p> <p>M2 - 08/24: Building Warrants approved</p> <p>M3 - 06/25: Project completion</p> <p>M4 - 09/25: Project close report, including monitoring and evaluation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant opt out Availability and adaptability of funds Weather 	<p>M1 - 2 pilot properties complete.</p> <p>M2 - Building warrants approved.</p> <p>M1 & M2 both completed on time and within budget.</p> <p>6 Council properties complete by end Sep-24.</p> <p>2 tenant opt-outs - these have been communicated with housing.</p> <p>Works to private properties will commence Oct-24 following the award of Scottish Government EES:ASB funding.</p>

Energy Efficient Homes	Energy Efficient Homes – Balintore (mixed tenure)	Domestic Heating Programme Manager	<p>Utilise SHNZF, ECO4 and EES:ABS funding to support the delivery of a retrofit project to 50 properties (38 Council & 12 private) located in Balintore.</p> <p>Properties are all Norwegian Timber construction and off gas.</p> <p>Scope of works includes; external wall insulation, new windows & doors, new roof with in-roof solar, insulation lofts (where required) and installing air source heat pumps (some properties already have a heat pump).</p> <p>Project to achieve a minimum of 50% external funding on eligible works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align delivery of retrofit works to social & private properties in Balintore. Secure external Social Housing Net Zero Funding (SHNZF) and ECO4 funding. Improve condition of housing stock and reduce fuel poverty. Support regeneration of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of allocated properties improved 50% (min) of external funding leveraged 100% of properties EPC C or above Meeting standards, including EESSH2 Delivery of place-based project including socially and privately owned properties. 	<p>M1 - 07/24: Submit revised project plan to SG</p> <p>M2 - 08/24: Procurement complete</p> <p>M3 - 09/24: Building warrants approved</p> <p>M4 - 10/24: Installations commence</p> <p>M5 - 06/25: Project completion</p> <p>M6 - 09/25: Project close report, including monitoring and evaluation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant opt out Availability and adaptability of funds Weather 	<p>Scottish Government Social Housing Net Zero Funding awarded and utilisation of ECO4 funding.</p> <p>M1 & M2 complete.</p> <p>M2 - the Council utilised an existing contract to instruct the Council's EES:ABS contractor.</p> <p>M3 - ongoing - building warrant submitted, building control have issued points for clarification which have been addressed.</p> <p>Update: 31 of the 38 Council properties have been surveyed. Housing TLO have engaged with remaining households. Private properties have also been surveyed.</p> <p>Site set up commencing 7 Oct 24 and material have been ordered.</p> <p>Community engagement event to be held Q3.</p>
	Energy Efficient Homes – Full Retrofit Balintore (Highland Council)	Head of Housing & Building Maintenance	<p>Prioritise economies of scale and full house retrofit approach while delivering Energy Efficiency measures as part of Capital Investment in Highland Council properties.</p> <p>Utilise available capacity to deliver 2 simultaneous projects to one area, 2 project management teams – 2 contractors, same energy efficiency measures. 59.55% properties in area included.</p> <p>Introduce ECO4 funding to our current capital works delivery program to enhance projects scope.</p> <p>Properties are all Timber construction and off gas.</p> <p>Scope of works includes; external wall insulation, new windows & doors, new roof with in-roof solar, insulation lofts (where required) and installing air source heat pumps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steer capital investment towards a retrofit approach. Explore externally funded opportunities and mix tenure project delivery. Improve condition of housing stock and reduce fuel poverty. Support regeneration of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of properties EPC C or above Meeting standards, including EESSH2 and future compliance 80% of allocated properties improved 50% (min) of external funding leveraged 	<p>M1 - 01/24: Initial tenant engagement and opt in exercise</p> <p>M2 - 07/24: Two projects initiated – 2 contractors appointed</p> <p>M3 - 08/24: Second tenant engagement – Housing needs</p> <p>M4 - 09/24: Technical specifications agreed</p> <p>M5 - 10/24: Installations commence</p> <p>M6 - TBC: Project completion</p> <p>M7 - TBC: Project close report, including lessons learnt</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant opt out Timely project delivery Retrofit coordination - schedule of measures Simultaneous collaboration of contractors Budget commitment 	<p>Housing applied for Scottish Government Social Housing Net Zero funding but this was unsuccessful.</p> <p>M1 - tenant engagement ongoing</p> <p>M2 – one contractor appointed</p> <p>M4 - specifications have been agreed</p> <p>M5 – the contractor will be commencing late October</p>

Sustainable Travel								
Programme	Project	Responsible Officer	Activity	Project Elements	Measures of Success	Milestones	Key Risks	Update

	Sustainable Travel Through Operational Efficiencies	Head of Community Operations & Logistics	The Council currently utilises a range of vehicles for business travel including white fleet (vehicles under 3.5T), grey fleet (employee owned vehicle use for work purposes), car club and car hire. This project aims to conduct a comprehensive review of these travel methods with the aim of optimising costs, reducing carbon emissions and improving efficiency while ensuring compliance with relevant policies and regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather data on white fleet, grey fleet, car club and casual car hire. Review relevant policies, contracts and existing reporting mechanisms Analysis and reporting Develop comprehensive reporting detailing findings and recommendations for potential cost savings and emission reductions Dashboard design Create a user-friendly dashboard that integrates relevant data and established key performance indicators for efficient business travel Implementation and training Pilot dashboard with key services and gather feedback Monitoring and continuous improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved vehicle utilisation in alignment with prescribed travel hierarchy Utilise data to inform demonstratable reductions in travel costs across all Services Utilise data to inform demonstratable reductions in emissions across all Services Improved fleet utilisation through the reduction in use of more expensive travel options Adoption of use of dashboards across Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M1 - (Date TBC): Data collection M2 - (Date TBC): Delivery of analysis report M3 - (Date TBC): Dashboard prototype developed M4 - (Date TBC): Pilot testing of dashboard completed M5 - (Date TBC): Dashboard rollout M6 - (Date TBC): Training/comms around use of dashboards M7 - (Date TBC): Implementation review 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Accuracy of data Lack of resource to fully develop project 	There is currently no reporting facility from the new CIA Financials system – this will be essential to progressing the project.
	Active Travel	Service Lead – Environment, Development & Active Travel	Developing infrastructure to enable and encourage staff to choose active travel is a key area of focus highlighted in the Council's Net Zero Strategy. An employee travel survey will be conducted in Autumn 2024 to provide an updated evidence base to help identify actions to support a shift in travel choices for employee travel for commuting and work-related purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and analyse an employee travel survey Refresh the existing Travel Plan for the Council HQ building in Inverness, considering both health and wellbeing, equalities and sustainability requirements Design and facilitate focus groups with staff to help encourage greater engagement with the Highland Council Travel Plan Provide a summary presentation/briefing of survey findings and subsequent actions/approaches as appropriate Work with key stakeholders such as HITRANS to maximise impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in active travel Removal of barriers to staff using active travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M1 - 09/24: Creation of an online employee travel survey M2 - 10/24: Focus Group sessions held M3 - 12/24: Production of a summary presentation/ briefing with findings and subsequent actions M4 - 01/25: Refreshed Highland Council Travel Plan M5 - 01/25 and ongoing: Delivery of actions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Low number of Council staff participating and feeding into the online survey Insufficient representation in the Focus Groups Incomplete inclusion and consideration of relevant barriers and issues as well as existing and developmental plans. 	M1 - development of questionnaire underway.

Waste

Programme	Project	Responsible Officer	Activity	Project Elements	Measures of Success	Milestones	Key Risks	Update
	Recycling Infrastructure Improvements across the Estate	Strategic Lead for Waste Strategy and Operations	Introduce twin-stream recycling systems across the Council Estate to accelerate progress towards meeting targets, by increasing the amount of waste diverted from landfill to recycling and to reduce carbon emissions associated with landfilling waste. Additionally, as the quality and quantity of recycling improves, this will reduce the costs associated with waste disposal. These changes will also be accompanied by the expansion of food waste collection in specific geographical areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmarking recycling rates in schools to gauge progress. Improve recycling infrastructure across the Council estate through the roll out of twin-stream recycling systems. Expand the food waste collections in schools and other Council premises in specific geographical areas. Targeted communications campaign to support the roll out of new recycling systems. Development of Waste E-learning module as part of Mandatory Net Zero training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15% reduction of total waste by 2025 Reduce food waste by 33% by 2025 Recycle 70% of remaining waste by 2025 Send no more than 5% of remaining waste to landfill by 2030 Cost savings benefits (£0.365m 24/25 and £1.695m 25/26 – total external and internal waste) associated with waste disposal. Net reduction in carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycling infrastructure improvements initiated aligned to the following phased service change timeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> M1 - 05/24: Ross & Cromarty M2 - 07/24: Nairn and Inverness M3 - 09/24: Badenoch & Strathspey M4 - 10/24: Sutherland M5 - 11/24: Caithness M6 - 03/25: Skye & Lochalsh M7 - 04/25: Lochaber 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of building users to adopt twin-stream recycling practices. 	<p>Waste Management Service Update presented to Communities & Place Committee on 5 September 2024: https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/83797/12_waste_management_service_update</p> <p>The Committee Paper reports good progress being made; this includes service change to the Council Estate in completed areas, these are: Ross & Cromarty, Nairn, Inverness and B&S. Work with Schools to establish the level of service remains ongoing.</p> <p>Overall service change is achieving a significant reduction in non-recycling waste being sent for disposal.</p>

Thematic Group

**Social Housing
& HRA**

Project

GBIS – CWI for
Social Properties

Responsible Officer:

Project Officer



Net Zero Programme

Senior Responsible Officer:

Domestic Heat & EE Programme Manager

Project Sponsor:

Climate & Energy Manager

Activity

Utilise Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS) to deliver cavity wall insulation (CWI) to Council owned houses. Eligible properties will be insulated and ventilation upgraded (where required) as part of this project. Align delivery of HRA and private properties to create economies of scale and maximise external funding.

Project Elements

- Determine eligible properties
- Maximise and manage external funding
- Improve the energy efficiency of properties
- Undertake external drill tests to confirm property suitability
- Review opportunities to scale up the project

Measures of Success

- 100 properties to receive CWI
- 97% external funding leveraged
- Delivery of place-based project including socially and privately owned properties
- EPC improvements, including increase in SAP rating and reduction in carbon emissions

Milestones

09/24: Project approval

03/25: Project completion

05/25: Project close report, including evaluation

Ongoing: Identification of priority areas

Programme Theme 3) Accessible and Sustainable Highland Homes 4) A Sustainable Highland Environment and Global Centre for Renewable Energy

**Links to Performance
Plan targets:**

3.2
(i-ii)

Links to Programme:

Place – Achieve Net Zero targets

People – Provide warm and energy efficient homes

Links to Delivery Plan:

Energy Estate / Energy Efficient Homes

Key Risks

- Tenant opt out
- Availability of skilled contractors

Thematic Group

Planning, Land Use and Environment

Project

Kingussie Flood Protection

Responsible Officer:
Flood Risk Management Team



Net Zero Programme

Senior Responsible Officer:
Principle Engineer

Project Sponsor:
Service Lead-Environment Dev Active Travel

Activity

The Gynack Burn, which flows through Kingussie, overtops during high rainfall events, resulting in flood damage to roads, railway, parks and buildings within the village. Previous modelling work by the Council has established the main cause of the problem being reduced capacity under road and rail bridges due to build up of sediment and gravel beneath the bridges. Flooding leads to costly and energy intensive clear up operations as well as increased watercourse maintenance works to remove the large build up of sediment that has raised the bed of the channel. The works proposed involve the stabilisation of the banks of the Gynack Burn further upstream where erosion is prevalent, The methods proposed are green bank protection providing a natural response, reducing sediment load in the watercourse.

Project Elements

- Identification of environmental constraints
- Design of natural bank protection works
- Establishment of joint working with Network Rail
- Collaboration with Estate
- Procurement of Contractor to undertake works.
- Construction Works
- Monitoring

Measures of Success

- Stabilisation of previously erodible banks
- Reduction in sediment transportation in watercourse and subsequent deposition below road/rail bridges.
- Reduction in future watercourse maintenance works (dredging)
- THC/Network Rail collaboration to deliver project.
- Progression to next section of erodible banks.

Milestones

- 02/24** – Fluvial Audit (complete)
- 04/24** – Bank stabilisation design (complete)
- 09/24** – Return of Tenders for works
- 10/24** – Award construction works
- 12/24** – Complete works on site.

Programme Theme: 4 A Sustainable Highland Environment and Global Centre for Renewable Energy

Links to Performance Plan targets:

4.7
(i)

Links to Programme:

Place – Achieve Net Zero targets

Key Risks

- Works are subject to funding from Network Rail (agreement in principle has been reached).
- Proposed natural restoration methods fail and increase sediment and debris load in the Gynack Burn.

Thematic Group

Planning, Land use and Environment

Project

Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP)

Responsible Officer:
Flood Risk Management Team



Net Zero Programme

Senior Responsible Officer:
Principle Engineer

Project Sponsor:
Service Lead-Environment Dev Active Travel

Activity

Within The Highland Council area, the coastal zone is home to much of the population, and contains significant infrastructure such as roads, railway lines, bridges, harbours etc. These coastal areas help to drive the economy within the Council area and as such a more adaptive approach is required to ensure our communities and infrastructure remain resilient in the future. The CCAP will provide an overview of the risks across The Highland Council coastal area, identifying locations and infrastructure that are least resilient to climate change and rising sea levels, providing a framework and flexible approach to address these risks over time.

Project Elements

- Development of a CCAP
- Case Studies – focus on Relic Defences at 2 locations

Measures of Success

- Develop a plan to address the highest risk areas of coastal flooding.
- Improve community understanding of coastal flooding and erosion risks.

Milestones

10/24 – Finalisation of Regional level Coastal Change Adaptation Plan
04/25 – Case Study Report

Programme Theme: 4 A Sustainable Highland Environment and Global Centre for Renewable Energy

Links to Performance Plan targets:

4.7
(i)

Links to Programme:

Place – Achieve Net Zero targets

Key Risks

- Doing nothing will result in an increase in flood risk implications on coastal communities.
- Lack of future funding to implement actions in the CCAP.