

Item: 22.3

General Meeting of the Council: 9 December 2025.

Performance Monitoring – Council Delivery Plan.

Report by Director of Education, Communities and Housing

1. Overview

- 1.1. The Council Plan 2023-28, approved in March 2023, outlines the Council's priorities for this five-year period, what needs to be done to address these priorities, and how success will be measured.
- 1.2. The Delivery Plan to support the Council Plan contains priority actions indicating the work which will be undertaken to achieve the identified outcomes.
- 1.3. As outlined in the Council's Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework, performance in respect of the Council Delivery Plan actions and performance measures are reported to the Policy and Resources Committee on a six-monthly basis, in June and November.
- 1.4. Annex 1 provides updates in respect of the Council Delivery Plan actions and the relevant performance measures.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Note progress made in respect of the Council's priorities and performance measures detailed within the Council Plan and Delivery Plan 2023 to 2028, for the reporting period 1 April to 30 September 2025, as set out in Annex 1 to this report.

3. Council Delivery Plan Performance Monitoring

- 3.1. The Council Plan progress report, attached as Annex 1 to this report, provides the detail of the agreed priorities, as expressed in the Council Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028.

3.2. A summary of progress is as follows:

- Actions at Blue (Closed) – 1.
- Actions at Blue (Complete) – 5.
- Actions at Red – 1.
- Actions at Amber – 0.
- Actions at Green – 25.
- Total – 32.

3.3. The following delivery plan projects were progressed to completion during this reporting period:

- E1(iii) Net zero and decarbonisation – Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy,
- I11 Capital strategy – review and prioritisation,
- C1 Social care/community-led support.

4. Council Plan Performance Measures

4.1. Council Plan performance measures provide the mechanism through which the performance of aspects of the services provided year on year are monitored. The monitoring report is shown as part of the Council Plan Progress Report attached as Annex 1.

4.2. Table 1 below sets out the status of each indicator broken down by the Council plan themes.

Council Plan Themes	Red	Amber	Green	Total
Growing our Economy	2	3	2	7
Strengthening our Communities	2	7	3	12
Developing our Infrastructure	5	1	2	8
Transforming our Council	3	3	4	10
	12	14	11	37

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Implications of Report

1. **Financial:** none arising directly from this report.
2. **Legal:** none arising directly from this report.
3. **Corporate Governance:** not applicable.
4. **Human Resources:** not applicable.
5. **Equalities:** An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for performance monitoring.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** An Island Communities Impact Assessment is not required for performance monitoring.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** the proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - ☒ Growing our Economy.
 - ☒ Strengthening our communities.
 - ☒ Developing our Infrastructure.
 - ☒ Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** the proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - ☒ Cost of Living.
 - ☒ Sustainable Development.
 - ☒ Local Equality.
 - ☒ Improving Population Health.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** not applicable.
10. **Risk:** not applicable.
11. **Procurement:** not applicable.
12. **Health and Safety:** not applicable.
13. **Property and Assets:** not applicable.
14. **Information Technology:** not applicable.
15. **Cost of Living:** not applicable.

List of Background Papers

Council Plan 2023-28.

Council Delivery Plan 2023-28.

Annexes

Annex 1 –Council Plan Progress Report to 30 September 2025.



Council Plan 2023 – 2028
Progress Report to 30 September
2025



Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction.....	2
2.0 Growing our Economy.....	3
2.1 Council Plan Performance Measures.....	3
2.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects	4
3.0. Strengthening our Communities.....	8
3.1 Council Plan Performance Measures.....	8
3.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects	9
4.0 Developing our Infrastructure.....	13
4.1 Council Plan Performance Measures.....	13
4.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects	14
5.0. Transforming our Council	20
5.1 Council Plan Performance Measures.....	20
5.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects	21

1.0 Introduction

The Council adopted an ambitious plan in 2023 to outline what our priorities were for the five-year period ahead, what we would do to address these priorities, and how we would measure our achievements.

This report details the Council's progress towards meeting the targets in the Council Plan 2023 – 2028, and progress towards completing the actions set out in the Council Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028, which will help us to meet those targets.



The Council Plan 2023 – 2028 was drafted at a time where there was a huge amount of uncertainty due to ongoing events such as the cost-of-living crisis. The priorities in our plan reflect some of that context.

We recognise the need to review the plan and remain flexible so we can adapt it to the changing circumstances over the life of the plan, and we will make changes to the plan where needed.

The strategic priorities in our plan have three key themes:

- **Growing our economy**
- **Strengthening our communities**
- **Developing our infrastructure**








The aims and outcomes under those themes are supported by a number of priorities under an overall theme – **Transforming our council** – to provide the foundations for staff to deliver outstanding customer service and performance.

Our Progress Report shows the most recent data available for the Performance Measures listed under each strategic priority in the Council Plan, and our progress towards achieving the projects under each priority in the Delivery Plan.

The detailed Delivery Milestones under each project are shown in the 2023 – 2028 Delivery Plan.

2.0 Growing our Economy.

2.1 Council Plan Performance Measures

ID	Description	Baseline 2020/21	Current Status		Target 2027/28
101	Claimant count as a percentage of Working Age Population	3%	1.5%		2.5%
102	Employment (16 – 24 Years)	82%	88.3%		90%
103	Percentage of dwellings in Orkney in fuel poverty	31%	31%*		19%
104	Percentage of children living in poverty (after housing costs)	18%	18.6%%		9%
105	Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprise	38%	40.4%		45%
106	CO ₂ emissions area wide per capita (in tonnes)	5.64	5.43		9
107	CO ₂ emissions area wide: emissions within scope of local authority area per capita (in tonnes)	4.47	4.24		4

** Percentage of dwellings in fuel poverty – the most recent data for this indicator relates to the 2019 year. The most recent Scotland-wide data shows an increase from 31% to 34% during the 2023 year.*

2.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects

E1i_Net-zero and de-carbonisation

Lead: Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth



Progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations through:

- Working with partners in the renewable research and innovation community.
- Finalisation, approval and implementation of relevant actions in the Orkney Sustainable Energy Strategy and Action Plan.
- Supporting uptake of renewable energy, smart energy, or energy efficient solutions for homes and businesses.

Progress

The Islands Centre for Net Zero, funded through the Islands Deal and situated within the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC), has had its full business case approved and is operational.

This is the key group where partners in the renewable research and innovation community can work together to progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations. Additionally, the Council is participating in the UK Government's Net-Zero Living project which is providing additional resource towards de-carbonisation activities.

The Orkney Sustainable Energy Strategy Action Plan was approved by the Stakeholder Group in March 2024, and a working group between public sector and industry is established.

E1ii_Net-zero and de-carbonisation

Lead: Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness



Progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations through:

- Progressing delivery plan to meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 by 2032 in line with Scottish Government priorities and availability of funding.
- Supporting uptake of renewable energy, smart energy, or energy efficient solutions for homes and businesses.

Progress

The Scottish Government has recalled their Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 (ESSH2) guidance and consulted on a new Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS). The consultation closed in March 2024, and revised guidance is awaited.

In the meantime, the Council continues to report on progress against ESSH1. As at 31 March 2025, out of our stock of 1,025 properties, 957 achieved the standard. Of the remaining 68 properties, 34 were exempt and out-of-scope, leaving only properties not achieving compliance – a compliance rate of 97%.

With respect to Council Housing properties, the service operates a fabric first approach to reduce the demand for heating housing. However, in preparation for

the new guidance, a range of property types have benefited from insulation works to test solutions to improve energy performance.

E1iii_Net-zero and de-carbonisation

Lead: Head of Property and Asset Management



Progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations through:

- Decarbonisation of Council buildings and properties with reference to the Scottish Government Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy.
 - a) Write the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy for Orkney and the Delivery Plan.

Progress

This action is now completed.

The Orkney Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (OLHEES) and the Delivery Plan were presented at Policy and Resources Committee in February 2025 and were approved and subsequently submitted to Scottish Government.

E1iv_Net-zero and de-carbonisation

Lead: Head of Infrastructure Services



Progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations by:

- Working with the Scottish Government and other stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of the Carbon Neutral Islands project are shared across all other Orkney islands.

Progress

The team continues to monitor movement in the market technology and will take advantage of any opportunities that arise to bring in zero carbon vehicles: The Service Manager (Fleet), as part of their work to manage the overall fleet, has picked up the specific action around opportunities to decarbonise the vehicle fleet. The project to trial an electric HGV, through grant funding being managed by teams from Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration is underway.

E1v_Net-zero and de-carbonisation

Lead: Head of Planning and Regulatory Services



Progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations by:

- The development and deployment of the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Progress

A consultant has been appointed to undertake the independent study to identify indicative Council transition pathways with work underway throughout 2025. The first stage outputs from the study will be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in November 2025, with the final phase expected to be concluded early

2026. Development of the Climate Strategy will follow this work. Work on the Climate Strategy and Action Plan will take place.

E1vi_Net-zero and de-carbonisation

Lead: Head of Planning and Regulatory Services



Progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations by:

- The evaluation of baseline data relating to the Council's carbon emissions in order to provide an accurate and consistent approach to the reporting and management of total corporate emissions.

Progress

A consultant has been appointed to undertake the independent study to identify indicative Council transition pathways to Net-Zero with work underway throughout 2025. The first stage outputs from the study will be reported to Policy and Resources Committee in November 2025, with the final phase expected to be concluded early 2026. Work on the Climate Strategy and Action Plan will take place.

E1vii_Net-zero and de-carbonisation

Lead: Head of Planning and Regulatory Services



Progress towards net-zero and the de-carbonisation of operations by:

- Working with the Scottish Government and other stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of the Carbon Neutral Islands project are shared across all other Orkney islands

Progress

An update report was presented to the Climate Change Consultative Group on 6 July 2023. Council Officers visited Hoy on 3 August 2023 to meet with the Carbon Neutral Islands (CNI) Project Officer to discuss projects emerging from the Hoy Climate Change Action Plan.

Scottish Government officials with responsibility for the CNI Project visited Hoy in June 2024 and met with Council Officers. The Hoy project benefits from co-ordination and alignment with wider carbon neutral projects taking place across Scottish islands and to support this. A Local Authority Advisory Group has been established with officer representation from across all relevant local authorities, including OIC. The Scottish Government has also established a 2024/25 Carbon Neutral Islands Capital Fund which is available to the 6 islands making up the CNI project. Whilst it has not been possible to submit any Hoy projects for the current round of funding, work is continuing to develop projects to a position where they are ready to submit for future Scottish Government funding bids, or for submission for alternative sources of funding.

Additional capital funding has been provided from the Scottish Government for delivery of projects during the financial year 2025-26. This will extend the capability of the Council's asset replacement programme to deliver low carbon projects this

year. £50,000 of the total allocation is also to be utilised to enable solar system as part of the Birsay Campsite project and to install EV charging point in Hoy.

Support for local business (E2)



Lead: Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth

Update Supporting and investing in businesses across Orkney and working in partnership with our key industry sectors including:

- Addressing primary producer challenges including farming and fishing.
- Developing the blue / green economies and maximising support for innovation.
- Sustainable development of tourism, hospitality, and destination management.
- Encouraging SME business start-up and development.
- Supporting internationalisation and marketing for our key sectors.
- Develop mechanisms to support business uptake of renewable energy, smart energy, and energy efficiency solutions.
- Enable Orkney to tap into the opportunity presented by renewable energy developments, particularly offshore wind, by supporting development of the local supply chain including research and development and innovation activity.













This includes supporting circular economy and community wealth building principles.

Progress

The Enterprise and Resources directorate continues to support local business through advice provided by Business Gateway and with direct support through Development Grants.

3.0. Strengthening our Communities.

3.1 Council Plan Performance Measures

ID	Description	Baseline 2020/21	Current Status		Target 2027/28
201	Community Council satisfaction with their involvement in community development and engagement	64%	100%		90%
202	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided	62%	68.1%		93%
203	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life	81%	79.6%		93%
204	Percentage of adult protection referrals made by the public	1%	3.75%		3%
205	Percentage of children being looked after in the community	76%	70%		85%
206	Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5	73%	73%		80%
207	Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence level in literacy	68%	78%		85%
208	Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence level in numeracy	75%	85%		90%
209	Percentage of young people maintaining a positive destination after 6 months	96.5%	96.7%		97%
210	School attendance rate (looked after children)	88%	82.6%		90%
211	Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations	98%	93.9%		98%
212	Percentage of adults participating in some form of sport or exercise including walking, in previous four weeks	86%	79%		90%

3.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects

C1_Social care / community led support.

Lead: Head of Health and Community Care



Working with communities and partners to collaboratively design services with a focus on prevention, early intervention and on enabling people to be as independent as possible. This will strengthen integrated health and social care provision, improve mental health and wellbeing support, bolster partnership working and drive further development of community-led support / care in a co-designed approach.

Progress

This action is now complete.

The Strategic Plan 2025 - 2028 and the Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2025/26 have been approved. The Strategic Planning Group will now commence consideration of the Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2026/27. The group's membership includes carer and service user representatives. Community Engagement meetings are also scheduled.

C2_Living independently.

Lead: Head of Health and Community Care



Redesign services to support people to live in their own homes longer and safely by improving the range of, and access to, supports relating to dementia and frailty and further enhancing support to unpaid carers.

Delivery of a holistic service, in partnership with people and linked partners.

Progress

The Strategic Plan 2025 - 2028 and the Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2025/26 have been approved. Early discussions between the Health and Social Care Partnership and the Council's Housing Service have taken place to address the situation of families who jointly share a Council house which does not meet modern day standards.

C3_Development of learning provision and pathways



Lead: Head of Education

Develop and promote sustainable learning provision and pathways, considering improvement based on local needs and skills gaps. Providing all age holistic, bespoke, and person-centred support and opportunities to increase confidence, skills, and knowledge to ensure individuals progress into positive destinations. Orkney College functions as a core part of this learning provision.

Progress

Our ongoing work with the Local Employability Partnership focuses on delivering all holistic, bespoke and person-centred support and opportunities to increase confidence, skills and knowledge to ensure individuals progress into positive destinations.

We report annually to elected members on progress the Community Learning and Development Service is making, and our 2024-25 annual report details all of the work we are doing

C4_Improve education standards (Scottish attainment challenge)



Lead: Head of Education

Excellence through raising attainment and improving outcomes: ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the knowledge and skills necessary to shape their future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.

Achieving equity: ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Progress

Good progress in relation to the targets set is being made. Tracking in the primary sector allows analysis (and support) at cohort, class and individual level to be activated. Further improvement will likely be achieved by focusing on where marginal gains can be achieved.

The annual attainment report has been presented to elected members. This demonstrates both the significant strengths within the sector, as well as the areas that require continued and sustained focus.

Stretch aims set and agreed continue to provide relevant challenge.

C5_Childcare

Lead: Head of Education



Provide childcare in an affordable way in locations that are convenient including:

- Continuing to develop a new 50-place 0-5 nursery in Kirkwall.
- Continuing to offer free non-eligible 2-year-old places in island settings with capacity (staffing and registered number).
- Supporting individuals to take up child-minding; supporting practising child-minders to develop practice as well as meet and maintain the National Standard; recruiting and supporting child-minders working in partnership with the local authority to provide statutory childcare (including qualifications).
- Establishing a 'grant and subsidy' approach for child-minders in hard to sustain locations (for example where numbers are very small making the business non-viable).
- Extending local authority (statutory) provision in-line with Scottish Government policy directives (as funding and workforce permits).
- Piloting provision for school-aged childcare and childcare for children aged 1 and 2, including childcare for children with additional support needs, in order to test demand, availability of workforce and model.

Progress

The building is now complete and has been handed over to the service.

Two procurement processes have been undertaken. The most recent process closed with no identified operator. Currently, the temporary provision is in a building that is increasingly prone to water ingress and heating failures. The service will now go back to elected members for a decision on the future operation of the new nursery.

C6_Embed the vision and outcomes of the Promise.

Lead: Head of Health and Community Care



Delivery of The Promise* to support children and young people who are care experienced.

- Establish a Promise Board.
- Develop workforce capacity and support.
- Strengthen Family Support.

**[About the promise - The Promise](#) exists so that children and young people in Scotland can grow up loved, safe, and respected.*

Progress

Children's Services continue to progress and embed Scotland's Promise to all children and young people.

The Promise Board meets on a minimum of a quarterly basis, at present more frequently, as they are actively updating Orkney's Parenting Plan 2020-25 (Corporate Parenting Plan) in preparation for a new plan to be implemented in 2026. The Board have full multi-agency representation across statutory and voluntary sector services. The Chief Social Work Officer chairs the board. The board took the decision that support would be offered to all care experienced individuals if need presents, even if they are beyond the age of 26 (statutory age limit for aftercare support). Young people, who are in our local residential care, are afforded the opportunity to remain in their care placement beyond the age of 18, in line with the Scottish Promise. This provides them with consistency of care and support and continuation of a place of belonging.

The Promise Board also considers Orkney Islands Council's compliance with the United Nations Convention on Rights of a Child (UNCRC) (incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. Notable progress has been made in this area.

Children's advocacy work continues to be a priority area, with advocacy being tracked closely and regular reports submitted to Orkney Public Protection committee to ensure decision making and service delivery is informed by the voice, choice and participation of children and young people. Advocacy update rates in Orkney continue to be excellent (the service is opt out rather than opt in), across child protection and our care and experienced population. For those children who do not wish to engage with advocacy, their attendance at meetings and other forms of feedback i.e. feedback forms are encouraged and utilised.

Over the summer of 2025, a competitive commissioning exercise was undertaken for the Children's Rights and Advocacy Service, with Who Cares? Scotland securing a further three-year contract.









Orkney Health and Care's child friendly complaints protocol has been recently reviewed by key stakeholders and is at the point of ratification. This will ensure children who feel the need to complain understand the process and are supported appropriately with a trauma informed approach.

Children who have required independent legal advice are provided with it, when required.

An in-person multi-agency Promise development session was set up in Spring 2025 which is supported by the Children's Advocate and the Care Experienced Attainment Co-ordinator. The group feeds into the Promise Board.

4.0 Developing our Infrastructure.

4.1 Council Plan Performance Measures

ID	Description	Baseline 2020/21	Current Status		Target 2027/28
301	Percentage of Council homes that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	82% (2021/22)	93.9%		90%
302	Percentage of Council dwellings that are energy efficient	88%	97%		90%
303	Houses built in Orkney (all sectors). Target and geographical breakdown to be identified as part of the housing needs analysis	82	60		2027 – 125
304	Percentage of Orkney residents whose internet connection is fast enough to do what they want online – Orkney Mainland	70%	70%		91%
305	Percentage of Orkney residents whose internet connection is fast enough to do what they want online – Ferry-linked isles	45%	45%		84%
306	Percentage of Orkney residents who agree “When I make journeys to or from my home, it is easy connecting between different forms of transport” – Orkney Mainland	46%	46%		60%
307	Percentage of Orkney residents who agree “When I make journeys to or from my home, it is easy connecting between different forms of transport” – Ferry-linked isles	29%	29%		45%
308	Percentage of Islands Deal Programme Delivered	0%	20%		50%

4.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects

I1i_Improve Isles transport links.

Lead: Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master



Developing integrated, effective, sustainable, and reliable inter-islands connectivity through the development and maintenance of transport infrastructure and links. This modernisation will be considered through the lens of 'net zero.' Areas to be considered include:

- Review level of service and options.
- Consider options like 'fixed links' and 'Sustainable Aviation Test Environment' (SATE).
- Isles Transport Solutions e.g. Ferry replacement or alternative solutions.
- Lobbying for funding.
- Smaller piers and harbours improvements across Orkney as outlined and agreed in the Harbours Master Plan.
- Aircraft.

Progress

Following agreement at the General Meeting of the Council in July 2025 to proceed with the purchase of an aircraft and landing craft vessel, progress continues to be made in strengthening Orkney's inter-island transport resilience. Procurement of the landing craft is underway and a roller has been acquired to support maintenance of island airfields. While procurement of the third aircraft is slightly behind schedule, work remains ongoing to bring this forward.

The Leader and senior officers continue to engage constructively on the future replacement of the county's ageing ferry fleet, through regular meetings of the Ferries Task Force. Upgrades to Stromness, Hatston and North Isles linkspans and a replacement pontoon for Kirkwall will be reported to the appropriate committees during October and November 2025.

Phase 2 of the Harbours Master Plan is now live, with appointed contactors actively assessing infrastructure requirements.

I1ii_Improve Isles transport links.

Lead: Head of Infrastructure Services



Developing integrated, effective, sustainable, and reliable inter-islands connectivity through the development and maintenance of transport infrastructure and links. Areas to be considered include:

- Carry out reconstruction of pavement surface on Barrier No 1.

Progress

This action is now complete.

I2_Free ferry travel for island young people

Lead: Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master



Introduce free ferry travel for island young people to allow them to access sport and entertainment opportunities already available to mainland young people. The ferry is the equivalent of the bus to islanders. This will involve exploring how this can be funded, including potential lobbying of Government if required.

Progress

Free Ferry travel now approved by the Scottish Government and funded – This action is now complete.

I3_Work towards integrating our transport networks.

Lead: Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master



Integrate our transport networks to improved operational connectivity and reduce vulnerabilities.

Progress

Two new bus services are being trialled for South Ronaldsay and for Kirkwall Airport, filling a gap in the existing timetable allowing connections with inter-island air services during term time. These trials have been supported by funding from the Scottish Government and the Council's Sustainable and Green Transport Fund.

However, technical difficulties with the electric vehicles intended for these routes have significantly limited their deployment. Both vehicles are currently out of service, and as a result, the intended service improvements have not been fully realised and the connectivity gaps remain.

I4_Supporting Economic Growth through Harbours Infrastructure

Lead: Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master



Ensuring major harbours infrastructure is designed and developed to support economic growth and community benefits across Orkney with a focus on projects as set out and agreed in the Harbours Master Plan. This includes the following proposed developments:

- Deep Water Quay within Scapa Flow: New multi-user deep-water pier and quayside facility with laydown area.
- Hatston Pier: New pier and quayside infrastructure, ship lift, fuel facility, and land for harbour operations.
- Kirkwall: New quayside infrastructure, marina expansion, and waterfront development area.
- Stromness: Marina expansion and dedicated cruise tender pontoon.

Progress

The Scapa Deep Water Quay project continues to progress following the award of a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) in April 2025. This phase includes detailed design work, ground and marine investigations and site surveys. Critically, the PCSA will also deliver a firm budget estimate and a clear build-out strategy, both of which are essential to informing the fundraising phase of the project.

In parallel, the planning process is advancing, with Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) submitted to NatureScot as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. Planning consent will be required from the local authority for terrestrial elements of the development, alongside marine licensing from the Scottish Government's Marine Directorate.

I5_Digital connectivity

Lead: Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth



Support and enable the delivery of digital connectivity across Orkney including;

- Implement relevant actions in the Orkney Islands Council Digital Strategy (2022-2026), and input into digital Strategy Delivery Plan as appropriate.
- Facilitate commercial telecoms infrastructure investment and stimulate market demand.
- Raise awareness of available schemes, including the provision of advice and support to individuals, community groups, and telecom providers, to support the development of gigabit capable telecom networks for all of Orkney.
- Milestones will need to adapt to complex funding landscape.

Progress

The Enterprise Service is taking forward a number of initiatives that are aiming to deliver on the Council's digital connectivity aims. This includes significant lobbying activity and a local advisory service.

I6_Social housing

Lead: Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness



Invest in social housing to endeavour to address waiting lists and improve temporary housing availability, including:

- Developing social housing across Orkney in line with housing need and demand.
- Ensuring all future housing is energy efficient in line with Scottish Government requirements.

Progress

The Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029, as underpinned by a robust and credible Housing Need and Demand Assessment, was approved in June 2024. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan was approved in December 2024. Plans to develop affordable housing are progressing through the Housing Market Partnership, with relevant partners, accordingly and subject to Scottish Government grant being available.

The Scottish Government has recalled their Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 (EESSH2) guidance and consulted on a new Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS). The consultation closed in March 2024, and revised guidance is awaited.

In the meantime, the Council continues to report on progress against EESSH1. As at 31 March 2025, out of our stock of 1,025 properties, 957 achieved the standard. Of the remaining 68 properties 34 were exempt and out-of-scope, leaving only 34 properties not achieving compliance – a compliance rate of 97%.

17_Mid-market rental properties

Lead: Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness



To investigate the potential for the development of an affordable programme of mid-market rent (MMR) properties across Orkney;

- To ensure this additional form of housing is available in the market.
- Provide accommodation for inward migration and to support provision of housing for existing workforce.
- Provision of housing for those employed on Orkney including essential workers.
- Building out with Kirkwall in line with housing need and demand.
- Through our Local Housing Strategy we will continue to support vulnerable and island communities to access the Scottish Government's Rural and Island Housing Fund to seek to address their own housing aspirations / demand for private sector accommodation.
- This includes an enhanced analysis of housing need and demand across all tenures to focus on areas such as key worker needs and link to the Local Housing Strategy.

Progress

The Essential Worker Housing Strategy was recommended for approval by the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee in March 2024, with the funding requirements to be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment was signed off by the Scottish Government as robust and credible in October 2023.

The Local Housing Strategy has been developed, through the Housing Market Partnership, and was recommended for approval by the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee in June 2024. Discussions are ongoing with other housing providers on the potential to develop additional housing including mid-market rent properties in Orkney. Once the outcome of these discussions is known, a report will be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee regarding the funding requirements of delivering the Essential Worker Housing Strategy which includes the potential development of mid-market rent properties in Orkney.

I8_Orkney's Community Wind Farm Project

Lead: Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth



Deliver Orkney's Community Wind Farm Project, maximising community benefit and securing a transmission connection for Orkney. Delivery subject to relevant approvals.

Progress

The Council's wind farm sites all have planning permission and grid connection agreements in place. A decision on project progression was taken to the Council in February 2025. The Council approved an investment decision for Quanterness, but requested reappraisal of the Hoy project, with options to be taken back to the Council. Faray remains under development.

I9_Islands Growth Deal projects

Lead: Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth



Ten-year package of investment with suite of projects that will seek to drive economic growth and the creation of sustainable jobs across Shetland, Orkney, and the Outer Hebrides. Key objectives – job creation, leveraging investment and net zero.

Progress

Work is progressing on the completion of final business cases for most of the Growth Deal Projects. The Islands Centre for Net-Zero (ICNZ) has reached final business case and is now a live project.

I10_Integrated waste facility

Lead: Head of Infrastructure Services



Review and prioritisation of the capital programme. This will result in the list of capital projects, including new build and building refurbishment projects, being considered and prioritised for delivery. The programme covers a diverse range of projects, for example the construction of new buildings, the refurbishment of leisure facilities and the development of critical infrastructure across Orkney, including the ferry linked isles

Progress

This action is now closed.

I11_Capital Strategy – Review and Prioritisation

Lead: Head of Property and Asset Management



Review and prioritisation of the capital programme. This will result in the list of capital projects, including new build and building refurbishment projects, being considered and prioritised for delivery. The programme covers a diverse range of projects, for example the construction of new buildings, the refurbishment of leisure facilities and the development of critical infrastructure across Orkney, including the ferry linked isles.

- Deliver the new Capital Investment Strategy.

Progress











This action is now complete.

The existing capital programme continues to be delivered, the title for this programme has been changed to Capital Strategy which is part of the ongoing review of the process and was agreed by the Corporate Leadership Team on 29 April 2024. An update on capital slippage and a revised Capital Project Appraisal process has been developed through working with the finance team in partnership with whom a review of the programme has been done, with projects which cannot progress at present being removed from the programme and agreed at Policy and Resources Committee, which reduces artificial items of slippage. The updated Capital Strategy and updated Capital Project Appraisal process was presented to Policy and Resources Committee in November 2024 and was approved.




The Capital Project Appraisal process and the engagement with the Capital Projects Board ensures that any new projects go through the proper process before they can be approved.

5.0. Transforming our Council

5.1 Council Plan Performance Measures

ID	Description	Baseline 2020/21	Current Status		Target 2027/28
401	Level of customer satisfaction experienced by the public with queries handled by the customer service	87%	93%		95%
402	Orkney Islands Council recognised as an Investors in People (IiP) Platinum Organisation	N/A	Standard Achieved		Platinum Achieved
403	Overall staff satisfaction with working at Orkney Islands Council	58%	76%*		80%
404	Staff satisfaction with our leadership style and culture	58%	66%*		80%
405	Percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	88%	90%		90%
406	Actual outturn as a percentage of staff budget	100%	99.3%		100%
407	Recruitment and retention, staff turnover	5.14%	2.14%		4%
408	Cost of agency worker as a percentage of our staff budget	3.7%	6.59%		4%
409	Sickness absence days per teacher	4.2	10.76		6
410	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)	10.3	14.13		9

5.2 Council Delivery Plan Projects

<p>T1_Staff recognition and retention</p> <p>Lead: Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>	
<p>Improve staff recognition and engagement so staff feel more valued. Improve openness and transparency so it is a safe place to raise concerns. Provide a suite of work options and terms and conditions that meet the needs of the organisation, our customers and service users, providing the flexibility, wellbeing support, and recognition that our employees desire.</p>	
<p>Progress</p>	
<p>The suite of flexible working related policies is currently under consultation including input from the Equally Safe at Work working group as part of the Council's accreditation process under that scheme.</p>	
<p>T2_Reduce bureaucracy.</p> <p>Lead: Head of Corporate Governance, Head of Performance and Business Support</p>	
<p>Reduce bureaucracy within and between agencies wherever possible improving working between partners. Consideration of the Single Authority Model (SAM) is included as part of this work.</p>	
<p>Reduce bureaucracy and improve ways of working through the implementation of corporate administration and the delivery of the corporate administration improvement agenda.</p>	
<p>Progress</p>	
<p>The Business Support teams are working together to streamline processes and reduce bureaucracy.</p>	
<p>The Council is in active dialogue with NHS Orkney, the Integration Joint Board and Scottish Government on the development of a routemap to reform of public services in Orkney, in line with the Scottish Government's Programme for Government and Public Service Reform commitments.</p>	
<p>T3_Invest in staff development opportunities.</p> <p>Lead: Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>	
<p>Create a programme for equal access to growth and learning opportunities for employees to develop their full capability aligning with our organisational goals, workforce planning, and talent management priorities, with a particular focus on areas where there are skills gaps.</p>	

Progress

A co-ordinated approach to our Learning and Development approach has been agreed and is now being implemented. This will be reflected in the revised workforce strategy. Work has also been undertaken on reviewing the Council's Values.

T4_Recruitment including trainee programme.

Lead: Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development



Consideration of recruitment approaches to attract potential candidates to Council posts. Development and delivery of specific pathways into OIC for trainees including comprehensive induction, orientation, skills, and leadership programmes for effective integration into teams with a focus on alignment with organisational values, promotion of core skills, attitudes and behaviours underpinning sustainable employment.

Progress

The remaining actions from the recruitment taskforce are close to being complete. The final launch of the new branding has been delayed until October and November 2025 to allow further time to transfer content. There is a focus on Orkney Health and Care (OHAC) priorities around recruitment and retention issues which HR have been working closely with OHAC senior management on.

T5_Staff working locations, operational property and estates assets review and development.

Lead: Head of Property and Asset Management



Review Council estate, disposing of unwanted assets and transforming required assets so they are fit for purpose. This will include School Place and Hatston depot and garage. Diversify spread of Council working locations across rural and isles communities.

- Complete the Strategic Asset Review of Council Property

Progress

The Property Asset Management Plan 2024 has been developed, and papers are currently being prepared relating to the disposal of properties for consideration by the Asset Management Sub-committee on a case-by-case basis as individual properties are proposed for disposal.

T6_Improving our processes through the development of our systems.

Lead: Head of Performance and Business Support



Improve processes and service delivery through the development of corporate and service digital systems.

Corporate systems such as:

- Digital service delivery (the Customer Service Platform / Microsoft 365 tools).
- Electronic Document and Records Management System Implementation.
- Finance (Integra Centros).
- HR and Payroll (Resource Link / MyView).
- Service systems such as:
 - Health and Social Care (Paris).
 - Housing (Northgate Housing).
 - Infrastructure Services (New Horizons replacement).
 - Planning system (IDOX).
 - Property Assets Management (Concerto).
 - Revenue and Benefits (NEC Revenue and Benefits).
 - Schools Education System (SEEMiS).

Full details with specifics for each system will be provided in the Digital Strategy Delivery Plan which will support the delivery of the Council Plan. Tier systems to be defined in the Digital Strategy Delivery Plan.

Progress

Delivery of the 2023-2026 Digital Strategy is ongoing, and various actions have already been carried out. This includes a full review of the software inventory which has been tiered so that efforts can be focused on the Council's most critical systems. Continuing priorities are development of the Health and Social Care system (PARIS), and the Customer Service Platform, known to the public as MyOrkney. Further work to approve a programme of development for core corporate systems and core business processes has commenced.

Delivery Projects BRAG System



Complete

We have achieved what we set out to achieve.



Progressing well

We expect to achieve what we set out to achieve.



Progress at risk.

Risk we may not achieve as expected.



Progress issues

Not achieving what we expected.

Performance Indicator RAG System



The performance indicator is experiencing significant underperformance, with a medium to high risk of failure to meet its target



The performance indicator is experiencing minor underperformance, with a low risk of failure to meet its target



The performance indicator is likely to meet or exceed its target