

Minute

Development and Infrastructure Committee

Tuesday, 3 June 2025, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Kristopher D Leask, Mellissa-Louise Thomson, Graham A Bevan, Alexander G Cowie, P Lindsay Hall, Rachael A King, W Leslie Manson, Raymond S Peace, Gillian Skuse, Owen Tierney, Duncan A Tullock and Heather N Woodbridge.

Clerk

- Katy Russell-Duff, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Gareth Waterson, Director of Enterprise and Resources.
- Gavin Barr, Interim Head of Planning and Regulatory Services,
- Lorna Richardson, Head of Infrastructure Services (for Items 1 to 3).
- Karen Bevilacqua, Service Manager (Legal Services).
- Jamie Macvie, Service Manager (Development Management).
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance).
- Susan Shearer, Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning) (for Items 1 to 4).
- Derek Manson, Team Manager (Development Planning) (for Items 1 to 4).

In Attendance via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Hayley Green, Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

Observing

- Rikki Lidderdale, Planning Control Officer (for Items 4 to 6).
- Thomas Richards, Senior Human Resources Adviser (for Items 1 to 3).

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor P Lindsay Hall – Item 6.

Chair

- Councillor Kristopher D Leask.

1. Performance Monitoring – Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration

After consideration of a report by the Director of Enterprise and Resources, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

1.1. The performance of Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration for the reporting period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, in respect of directorate priorities and performance indicators, as set out in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 respectively to the report by the Director of Enterprise and Resources.

1.2. The complaints and compliments made to Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration in the six-month period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025 and for the two preceding six-month periods as set out in section 4 of the report by the Director of Enterprise and Resources.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

1.3. That the following actions, which had been progressed to completion, be removed from the Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration Directorate Delivery Plan:

- 03a International engagement – Deliver on existing commitments contained within Orkney's friendship agreement with Vestland and the Minute of Understanding with the Nordic Atlantic Cooperation.
- 03b International engagement – Develop a plan, aligned to the Council's priorities, that sets out key performance measures, targets, and resource commitments.
- 03c International engagement – Increase awareness and opportunities for the wider Orkney community to engage with communities within the Arctic and North Atlantic.
- 03d International engagement – Participate in the Arctic Circle Assembly in October 2024.

1.4. That the revised Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration Risk Register, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

2. Performance Monitoring – Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure

After consideration of a report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

2.1. The performance of Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure for the reporting period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, in respect of directorate priorities and performance indicators, as set out in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 respectively to the report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

2.2. The complaints and compliments made to Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure in the six-month period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, and for the two preceding six-month periods, as set out in section 5 of the report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council**:

2.3. That the following actions, which had progressed to completion, be removed from the Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Directorate Delivery Plan:

- 05 Capital Strategy – Develop and deliver a new Capital Strategy to facilitate the effective delivery of a programme of OIC's capital construction and other projects and improvements setting out a 10 year strategy to drive forward a programme.
- 09 ICT and Cybersecurity Strategy – Develop and deliver the new ICT and Cybersecurity Strategy 2024-2029.

2.4. That the following action be amended as indicated and thereafter incorporated within the Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Directorate Delivery Plan:

- 04 Local Place Plans – Promote and support the production of plans – target date to be extended from 31 March 2025 to 31 March 2027.

2.5. That the revised Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Risk Register, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved.

3. Integrated Waste Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, together with an Island Communities Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Infrastructure, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council**:

3.1. That the Waste and Resource Management Strategy, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved.

3.2. That the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development should develop the projects contained within the Waste and Resource Management Strategy, as resources allowed and in accordance with existing governance procedures.

4. Development Management Guidance – Interim Spatial Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Development Management Guidance – Interim Spatial Strategy, attached as Appendix 4 to this Minute, be approved.

5. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor Kristopher D Leask, seconded by Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson, the Committee resolved that the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting, as the business to be discussed involved the disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

6. Planning Enforcement

Councillor P Lindsay Hall declared an interest in this item and was not present during discussion of this item.

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 13 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Development Management), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to planning enforcement.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

7. Conclusion of Meeting

At 12:47 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Kristopher D Leask.

Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration (ESR)

Risk Register – February 2024

Strategic Risks

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Owner.
Financial.	3.	Head of Finance.
	5.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
	6.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.
	7.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.
	8.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
Staffing.	1.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
	2.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
Governance.		
Legislation.		
Communication.		
Reputational.	4.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.
Physical.		
Legislative / Governance.		
Technological.		

Risks by rating

Risk Rating.	Risk.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.
25	Loss of service due to lack of funding for Ferry and Terminal Replacement.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.	Financial.	8
20	Inability to deliver core services and expand demand-led services in line with expectation.	Head of Finance.	Financial.	3.
16	Continuity of staffing and knowledge.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.	Staffing.	1.
15	Major project delay or failure.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.	Financial	5.
12	Continued lack of Scottish Government support for costs of concessionary travel on ferries, air and community transport.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.	Financial	6.
12	Risk of reduced income from Harbours business activity as the market changes.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.	Financial	7.
9	Staff training and development.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.	Staffing.	2.
9	Airfield closure or non-conformity.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.	Reputational.	4.

Risk Matrix

			IMPACT				
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	5.	Almost Certain.	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	4.	Likely.	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	3.	Possible.	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	2.	Unlikely.	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	1.	Rare.	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Risk Title: 01 – Continuity of staffing and knowledge.

Likelihood.	3	Impact.	4	RAG.	High	Current Risk Score.	12	Target Risk Score.	8
Owner.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.						Cluster.	Staffing.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Smaller teams are less resilient and more vulnerable.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention are ongoing challenges due to a challenging job market.</p> <p>Small teams or single key people in critical posts.</p> <p>Demographic of the workforce with several staff members becoming eligible for retirement.</p>	<p>Unplanned and planned staff absence; unexpected and unplanned events.</p> <p>Retirement of staff members with many years of corporate knowledge.</p>	<p>Impact on staff morale and ability to take leave; impact on team effectiveness; poor communication; impact on management capacity; inefficient use of staff; inability to implement planned work and deliver statutory functions.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>01.01. Undertake workforce planning and opportunities for career succession planning.</p> <p>01.02. Take a flexible approach to staffing to help cover workloads.</p> <p>01.03. Develop a flexible post / job description to cover more than one area in the directorate.</p>

Risk Title: 02 – Staff training and development.

Likelihood.	3	Impact.	3	RAG.	Medium	Current Risk Score.	9	Target Risk Score.	4
Owner.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.						Cluster.	Staffing.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Staff may not be fully trained or experienced; staff may not be aware of or may inadvertently breach Council policy or Code of Practice; limited access to training budget.</p> <p>Staff may not feel valued if no investment in continuing professional development is made.</p>	<p>The Directorate and Council are unable to deliver functions effectively; lack of corporate consistency.</p>	<p>Lack of resilience; poor staff morale; legal and financial implications; reputational loss; increased rate of error; unable to meet professional development requirements.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>02.01. Development of skills identified through staff good conversations.</p> <p>02.02. Promote Council's Learning and Development programmes and resources.</p>

Risk Title: 03 – Inability to deliver core services and expand demand-led services in line with expectation.

Likelihood.	5	Impact.	4	RAG.	Extreme	Current Risk Score.	20	Target Risk Score.	9
Owner.	Head of Finance.						Cluster.	Financial.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
The risk of insufficient financial resources to meet current and future demand.	The Council's inability to deliver essential services within the funding package provided by Scottish Government; expectations outstrip capacity to deliver.	Community unrest; dissatisfied service users and elected members; unmet demand; loss of credibility of the Council; failure to deliver the range of services expected.	Treat. Tolerate.	03.01. Follow revenue budget monitoring process and procedures. 03.02. Communication with Scottish and United Kingdom Governments. 03.03. Implement strategy for efficiency savings and, with the Corporate Leadership Team, develop longer term strategic planning.

Risk Title: 04 – Airfield closure or non-conformity.

Likelihood.	3	Impact.	3	RAG.	Medium.	Current Risk Score.	9	Target Risk Score.	4
Owner.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.						Cluster.	Reputational.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Insufficient plans in place to ensure delivery of training and exercises take place. The Council may not have sufficient funds to sustain assets, replace ageing assets and develop key assets.</p> <p>Difficulty of staff recruitment in some areas.</p>	<p>Failure to carry out training of staff.</p> <p>Insufficient resilience of staff – singleton post.</p> <p>Changed standards for runways, facilities and equipment.</p> <p>Material deterioration of runways.</p> <p>Shortage of staff to muster fire team for any island.</p>	<p>Failure to provide a service to the outer islands of Orkney; airfields deteriorate; plant/vehicles deteriorate; scarce resources; reputational risk to Council; closure of islands airfields.</p> <p>Failure to monitor health due to lack of supplier or sufficient budget.</p>	Treat.	<p>04.01 – Improved training and exercise programme.</p> <p>04.02 – Plant and vehicle replacement programme.</p> <p>04.03 – Recruitment drive for new employees.</p> <p>04.04 - Airfield inspection and maintenance programme and introduction of Airfields Strategy.</p> <p>04.05 – Delivery of the Airfields investment plans for runways, buildings and plant.</p> <p>04.06 - Regular cycle of Safety Action Group and Safety Review Board meetings.</p>

Risk Title: 05 – Major project delay or failure.

Likelihood.	5	Impact.	3	RAG.	High	Current Risk Score.	15	Target Risk Score.	6
Owner.	Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.						Cluster.	Financial.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The risk of insufficient financial and/or staff resources to meet current and future demand makes it difficult for the Council to realise its priorities eg Scale Wind, Islands Deal, Harbours Master Plan.</p> <p>Failure to spend grant funding.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p>	<p>Strategic high-level project programme slippage or failure of being over budget.</p> <p>Scale of project management business requirements associated with the Islands Deal.</p>	<p>Failure to deliver major projects.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>05.01 – Ensuring appropriate consideration of pressures during capital and revenue budget setting and most efficient use of existing resources.</p> <p>05.02 – Establish additional project specific staff and budget resources to ensure new project delivery where required (property and planning resource reviews and commitment to increase resource levels). Challenge has been establishing sufficient management time to progress recruitment process.</p> <p>05.03 - Implement recommendations relevant to the capital programme arising from the external review of the Planning Service.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>05.04 – Seeking to conclude the planning for the next capital programme (period 2024 to 2029) and thereby adjusting resource levels to meet delivery demands.</p> <p>05.05 - Review of the level of support for the next stage of Islands Deal work beyond Strategic Outline Business Case. This would be addressed via future Project Management Office committed resource across the partners.</p>

Risk Title: 06 – Continued lack of Scottish Government support for costs of concessionary travel on ferries, air and community transport.

Likelihood.	4	Impact.	3	RAG.	Medium	Current Risk Score.	12	Target Risk Score.	4
Owner.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.						Cluster.	Financial.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council may not have sufficient funds for dealing with concessions on Ferries, Air and Dial-a-Bus.</p> <p>This vulnerability is also increasing due to the increased ageing population.</p>	<p>Ageing population. Reducing Scottish Government proportion of grant / Scottish Government “pot” is capped.</p> <p>Any change to Scottish Government Policy on the provision of support to concessions.</p>	<p>Vulnerable people left without ability to meet basic needs, budgets inadequate due to reduction in Scottish Government support.</p>	<p>Treat.</p> <p>Tolerate.</p>	<p>06.01 – Outwith Local Authority control: reimbursement of over 60/disabled National Entitlement Card paid by the Scottish Government.</p> <p>06.02 - Orkney Inter Islands Air and Ferry Study Project/Fair Funding activity.</p> <p>06.03 – contribute to the Transport Scotland Fair Fares Review.</p>

Risk Title: 07 – Risk of reduced income from Harbours business activity as the market changes.

Likelihood.	4	Impact.	3	RAG.	Medium	Current Risk Score.	12	Target Risk Score.	4
Owner.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.						Cluster.	Financial.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Harbours has become increasingly reliant on the oil industry and cruise liners for generating income. Changes to these markets could have a profound effect on harbour revenues.	The Council fails to identify and exploit new markets / income streams if / when current marine activity reduces. Cruise ships reduce. Oil revenues worsen.	Failure to provide a comprehensive 24/7 marine service; reputational risk to Council; dissatisfied service users and elected members; failure to deliver the range of services expected. Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration self-financed budget strategy leading to overspend. Inability to provide funds to the Strategic Reserve Fund.	Treat.	07.01 - Development and marketing of infrastructure and services. 07.02 – New business eg Ship to Ship transfer in Scapa Flow and other oil and gas related activity. 07.03 - Identify and exploit new markets and invest in infrastructure and skilled people. 07.04 - Implementation and investment in the Harbours Master Plan. Costs associated balanced against implications for Council-wide financial planning.

Risk Title: 08 – Loss of service due to lack of funding for Ferry and Terminal Replacement.

Likelihood.	5	Impact.	5	RAG.	Extreme.	Current Risk Score.	25	Target Risk Score.	4
Owner.	Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.						Cluster.	Financial.	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council does not have sufficient funds for Ferry and Terminal maintenance and replacement programme.</p> <p>If Scottish Government funding is not forthcoming the costs of additional essential lifeline services could impact on other service priorities.</p>	<p>The Council cannot maintain or develop its essential assets to provide public services.</p>	<p>Ferries reach end of life with no replacement – rapid service deterioration.</p> <p>Excessive support costs as aged ferries kept running.</p> <p>Excessive running costs of old ferries.</p> <p>No opportunities to achieve expected service levels.</p> <p>Crisis purchase of new ferries – loss of bargaining power.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>08.01 - Contact with Scottish Government, Orkney Inter Islands Air and Ferry studies and Fair Funding process including beginning discussion on transfer of responsibility and fair funding.</p> <p>08.02 – A revised funding mechanism for revenue elements of ferry service provision has been established with the Scottish Government.</p> <p>08.03 - Establish revised funding mechanism for capital elements of ferry service provision.</p> <p>08.04 - Contribute to Islands Connectivity Plan to ensure appropriate cover for lifeline transport services.</p>

Orkney Islands Council (OIC) Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure (NSI) Service Risk Register – March 2025

Risks by risk number

Cluster.	Risk number.	Risk.	Owner.
Financial.	1.	Waste.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate – Fuel and inflationary costs.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Cluster.	Risk number.	Risk.	Owner.
Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Risks by cluster

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.	Owner.
Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	1.	Waste.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.	Owner.
Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Risks by Owner

Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.
Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	1.	Waste.
Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.

Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.	Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.

Risks by rating

Risk Rating.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
20.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.
20.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory	11.	Climate Change.
16.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.
15.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.
15.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.
15.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.
12.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.
12.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	1.	Waste.
12.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of

Risk Rating.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
				Trees and Woodlands.
9.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.	Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.
8.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.
6.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.

Risk Prioritisation Matrix

			IMPACT				
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
			Insignifica nt	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	5.	Almost Certain.	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	4.	Likely.	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	3.	Possible.	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	2.	Unlikely.	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	1.	Rare.	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Risk Number.		Risk Title.					Cluster.	Owner.		
01.		Affordability of Waste collection and disposal.					Financial.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.		
Likelihood:	4.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:		12.	Target Risk Score:	4.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Affordability of existing waste collection models.	The Council fails in the delivery of this service, waste is not collected.	<p>The Council will be unable to fulfil its regulatory obligations with regards to waste collection.</p> <p>The Council will not be able to close the gap towards meeting the Government targets for recycling.</p>	Treat.	<p>01.01 – Ongoing programme of review and service redesign.</p> <p>01.02 — Integrated Waste Strategy. Following the Council decision that a new facility is unaffordable, work has started on developing a new waste strategy which would look to identify service improvements, efficiencies and opportunities for redesign. This strategy is due to be discussed with Elected Members during the June 2025 Committee cycle.</p> <p>01.03 – The Service continues to review best practice and looking at examples from other places, both within Scotland and beyond.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.		Owner.		
02.		Workforce Planning.				Managerial/Professional.		Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:		12.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council may have insufficient training plans in place and Good Conversations (GCs) not being conducted regularly.</p> <p>Challenge of recruitment to key professional posts.</p> <p>Lack of proper training including career grade plans/apprenticeships will impact on the Service in the future.</p> <p>Workforce Plans were approved through Committee in March 2017, and further reviewed through the</p>	<p>The Council does not have fully trained staff, in the right place, at the right time, to deliver set priorities and/or statutory functions.</p> <p>Unable to recruit to key posts.</p>	<p>The Council cannot manage with an untrained workforce.</p> <p>Existing workforce becomes demoralised; service standards drop; an increased risk of non-compliance with changes in legislation, practices etc.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>02.01 – Appropriate systems in place to measure competency, ensure training, and people development is undertaken as required. With a particular focus on statutory services.</p> <p>02.02 – Workforce Plans implemented within teams. Noted that budget pressures will impact on plans, and that recruitment for some key posts remains very difficult. At every possible opportunity (such as a staff member leaving) the Service Manager and Head of Service will review their staffing profile and consider any reasonable changes.</p> <p>02.03 – A focus on Good Conversations for all staff from 2022/23 to date has significantly improved performance with feedback from staff who have conducted the Good Conversation framework that this is helpful for all involved.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
staffing re-structure in 2021/22.				<p>02.04 - Use of the Council's vacancy review process when a post becomes vacant. This can also provide internal opportunities and growth within existing employees.</p> <p>02.05 – Vacancy Management Process – a number of posts are exempt and others are being considered.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.		
03.		Major capital project delay or failure.				Reputational.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	AMBER.	Current Risk Score:	15.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The risk of insufficient financial and/or staff resources to meet current and future demand makes it difficult for the Council to realise its priorities e.g. Scale Wind, Islands Deal, Harbours Master Plan.</p> <p>Failure to spend grant funding.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p> <p>Resources – financial and people, including loss of key staff and difficulty in recruiting new members of the team on a timely basis.</p>	<p>Strategic high-level project programme slippage or being over budget.</p> <p>Scale of project management business requirements associated with key strategic projects over the next 5 to 10 years.</p>	<p>Failure to deliver major projects.</p> <p>Failure to deliver anticipated income or anticipated efficiency savings.</p> <p>Reputational harm.</p> <p>Impact on Service Delivery.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>03.01 – Ensuring appropriate consideration of pressures during capital and revenue budget setting and most efficient use of existing resources.</p> <p>03.02 – Establish additional project specific staff and budget resources to ensure new project delivery where required.</p> <p>03.03 – Complete the implementation of recommendations relevant to the capital programme arising from the external review of the Planning Service. Planning resource and planning agent role within the property team has been established but there are challenges in progressing recruitment.</p> <p>03.04 - New Capital Project Appraisal process has been developed to streamline the consideration of recommended projects, and is now in use. Training has been rolled out to NSI Managers.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>03.05 – Seeking to conclude the planning for the next capital programme (period 2024 to 2029) by May 2025, and thereafter adjust resource levels to meet delivery demands. The switch in focus towards a Capital Investment Strategy (CIS) will provide a refreshed and streamlined framework within which decisions can be made.</p> <p>03.06 - A number of projects were removed from the capital programme following a recommendation by the Policy and Resources Committee in June 2024.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.		
04.		Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.				Financial.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	2.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:	6.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council faces challenges because of the volatility of fuel costs and the very high rate of inflation, which affects both materials and labour costs.</p> <p>The running costs for plant and vehicles are directly affected by the cost of fuel. This is particularly challenging for contracted services where the Council is obliged to honour contractual agreements.</p>	The Council has a large increase in costs which impacts on the services that are delivered across this Directorate.	Running costs of Council premises and associated energy efficiency impacted.	Tolerate.	<p>04.01 – Contingency planning where possible to account for current financial situation, including information to Members when appropriate around risks and consequences.</p> <p>04.02 – Continued very close working relationship with Finance colleagues to seek advice and support.</p> <p>04.03 – Procurement critical in terms of seeking best tenders and appropriate value for money solutions, including the use of nationally agreed frameworks where appropriate (for example, energy costs).</p> <p>04.04 – Encourage lower fuel usage. Migration to low energy vehicles and other alternative fuels.</p> <p>04.05 – Capital project development of renewables to offset energy consumption</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>(electricity rather than oil) through Council owned renewables project and properties.</p> <p>04.06 – cost of electricity has dropped with the current contract however the risk remains given the world financial situation.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.		
05.		Reduced income from business activities from Quarries and associated budget overspend due to self-financed strategy which relies on income generation and continued supply.				Financial.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.		
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	20.	Target Risk Score:	4.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council Quarry has been a significant income resource which has been applied to a self-financing budget approach within NSI.</p> <p>This is market dependent on the availability of infrastructure and ongoing supply. When sales fall (as in 2022/23) this anticipated income is not realised and there is then an associated burden on the NSI budget.</p>	<p>Change in local market for quarry goods.</p> <p>Extensive periods of plant breakdown/time to replace unplanned failure.</p>	<p>Lack of availability of quarry products for Council projects and local markets.</p> <p>NSI self-financed budget strategy leading to overspend.</p>	Treat.	<p>05.01 – The updated Business Plan covering the period 2024 – 2029 has been approved by Council. This Plan identifies opportunities around income generation and sets out the platform for the long term sustainability of the Quarry. The Quarry Manager continues to proactively engage with external markets.</p> <p>05.02 – Closer working arrangements with the Roads Operations team to ensure that the Quarry team fully understands future demand and can supply the appropriate product.</p> <p>05.03 – The pricing strategy has been reviewed to ensure that it remains competitive within the market whilst covering costs. This remains under close review given the dynamic conditions within the market. The external market is</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>currently showing some signs of improvement.</p> <p>05.04 – External support for blasting procured and implemented in March 2023. This is a 3 year contract which will enable blasts to be planned and programmed in accordance with business needs and so as to ensure an appropriate supply of material to the market.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.		
06.		Insufficient Operational equipment and infrastructure funding, including support of the maintenance of current assets and infrastructure.				Financial.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	15.	Target Risk Score:	9.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council may not have sufficient funds to sustain assets, replace ageing assets and develop key assets and infrastructure.</p> <p>Essential plant and equipment have to be maintained to ensure they can support the Council's services.</p> <p>Existing building assets must be maintained to agreed standards and, where possible, supported towards Net Zero targets.</p>	<p>The Council does not have sufficient budget to maintain or develop its essential assets or infrastructure to provide public services.</p> <p>The Council cannot implement an asset management strategy.</p> <p>The Council fails to meet statutory or regulatory requirements on maintenance.</p>	<p>Plant, equipment and infrastructure deteriorate; services are not delivered.</p> <p>Council's reputation at risk.</p> <p>Risk of accidents and potential claims.</p>	<p>Tolerate.</p>	<p>06.01 – Funded asset management plans are in place for annual programmes for repair and replacement across roads, fleet, property and IT. The funding allocated for these programmes has been increased from FY 25/26 which will ease some of the pressure.</p> <p>06.02 – Capital programme planning and prioritisation focusing on repairs, renewals and additions that mitigate rising costs through a revised business focussed Capital Project Appraisal process and linked to the Asset Management Plan.</p> <p>06.03 – Consideration of the priorities for the Capital Programme for 2024 to 2029, and development of a new Capital Investment Strategy to cover this period.</p> <p>06.04 – Cross working with the Estates team to reduce the size of the “estate” in the current Medium-Term Resource</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>Strategy (MTRS) planning period to then see a fall in demand for maintenance (pressure on funding the asset replacement).</p> <p>06.05 – Through the budget process review the standards of service delivery to set a “lower bar” in terms of the performance target in areas such as roads and street cleansing. This then impacts on the volume of work and the plant and equipment/vehicles needed and would probably increase complaints and customer dis-satisfaction.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.		Owner.		
07.		Health and Safety; accidents and incidents.				Legislative/Regulatory.		Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	2.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:		8.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The risk of not managing accidents and health and safety incidents.</p> <p>Particular operational vulnerabilities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS), • quarrying accident, • lifting injury, • machinery injury, • heavy vehicle – moving injury, • Waste related injury / contamination, • lone working, • working at height and up ladders. 	<p>The Council not supporting the wellbeing of staff.</p> <p>The Council fails to manage accidents and health and safety incidents appropriately.</p>	<p>An increase in the number of accidents/ incidents; loss of productivity; loss of equipment; an increased risk of legal challenges; risk of financial claims and financial penalties.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>07.01 – Council Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Policy approved by Council in March 2025.</p> <p>07.02 – Control of Vibration Guidance drafted and under review at present.</p> <p>07.03 – Lone Working Policy and Guidance - due for review in 2025.</p> <p>07.04 - Fire Safety Policy – due for review in 2026.</p> <p>07.05 - Major Emergency Plan – due for review in June 2025.</p> <p>07.06 – Training programme(s), reporting, implementing improvements.</p> <p>07.07 – Work Methods Safety meetings and reviews. Safety Management Systems and Audit.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>07.08 – Maintaining a comprehensive schedule of staff and management meetings and culture in relation to health and safety matters e.g. quarterly cross service management health and safety meetings, tool box talks etc. Delivering the Safety Forums, including Member attendance.</p> <p>07.09 – Service Health and Safety Induction process and introduction of new Near Miss Process in Spring 2021.</p> <p>07.10 – Ongoing review of health and safety issues at various management forums including Heads of Service, works reps meetings and union meetings.</p> <p>07.11 – Access to People Safe MySOS devices (or equivalent devices) to services with a high level of lone working being evaluated.</p> <p>07.12 – Use of Violence/Unacceptable Behaviour Flagging process to alert staff of potentially challenging service users.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>07.13 – Health and Safety continues to be a priority topic for operational services, including at toolbox talks.</p> <p>07.14 – Promoting Positive Behaviour initiative to support staff in frontline roles.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.		
08.		Residual Liability for properties no longer in original use.				Financial.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.		
Likelihood:	3.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:	9.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council is exposed to significant expenditure to remediate sites to appropriate level.</p> <p>Public liability arising from the fact that sites are no longer in active use. Hence not necessarily secure or part of an inspection regime. The alternative is the Council does nothing and is at risk of claim arising from injury etc.</p>	Current liability (has been the case for many years).	<p>Financial, staff resources for inspection, planning, penalties. Specialist studies are required.</p> <p>Public health and reputation.</p>	Treat.	<p>08.01 – Asset Management planning and mitigation, including the disposal of assets which are no longer required.</p> <p>08.02 – Prioritise inspection and immediate remedial action through existing service budgets with corresponding risk of overspend.</p> <p>08.03 – Additional budget pressures associated with any approval for the final works programme.</p> <p>08.04 – Cross-directorate work to support the Estates team on accelerating (if possible) disposal routes, including bringing in external support to deliver this project given current lack of staffing resources within the Estates Team.</p> <p>08.05 – The Corporate Leadership Team to discuss a strategic approach towards</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>anticipated redundant assets in summer 2025.</p> <p>08.06 - Landfill and ex-quarries – disused quarries have been made safe but there is a risk that they need to be remediated before they are disposed of, some have ongoing maintenance requirements.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.		Owner.	
9.		Affordability of Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Services and likelihood of reduction in spending on discretionary services.				Financial.		Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	
Likelihood:	4.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:		16.	Target Risk Score: 4.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Political expectation that service levels will not change despite budget reductions.</p> <p>Discretionary services likely to be the focus for reductions in funding.</p>	Budget reductions below baseline service level requirement.	Budget overspends.	Treat.	<p>09.01 – Ensure full awareness and understanding of consequences through the budget setting process.</p> <p>09.02 – Strong Corporate Leadership/ Improvement Support Team Board approach to budget setting.</p> <p>09.03 – Follow through budget savings with service changes quickly and resolutely following decisions.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.		Owner.		
10.		Failure to progress strategic objectives due to the inevitable focus on day-to-day service delivery.				Managerial/Professional.		Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:		15.	Target Risk Score:	12.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Lack of progress on strategic outcomes.</p> <p>Loss of opportunity.</p> <p>Medium to long term failure of service.</p>	<p>Volume of attention required on day-to-day activities and priorities that removes time, resource commitment and focus away from progressing strategic objectives, e.g. both operational such as responding to day-to-day questions and/or requests and also corporate processes, e.g. Freedom of Information (FOI), performance management etc.</p>	<p>Strategies not delivered.</p> <p>Service failure.</p> <p>Negative impact on service delivery.</p> <p>Deterioration in long term performance of the service.</p> <p>Inefficiencies.</p> <p>Pressure on staff leading to poor health and wellbeing e.g. stress, sickness and/or a drop in morale.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>10.01 – Seek to focus resources on delivery of the Council Plan's approved strategic objectives/projects for the service.</p> <p>10.02 – Managing expectations in regard to the responsiveness of day-to-day operational demands and also corporate demands.</p> <p>10.03 – Re-calibration of service standards e.g. review service response standards/times for non-safety critical or strategic outcome items.</p> <p>10.04 – Regular and open communication with Community Councils and Councillors, with visible senior leadership throughout.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.		
11.		Climate Change.				Physical.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	4.	Impact:	5.	RAG:	Red.	Current Risk Score:	20.	Target Risk Score:	12.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Council infrastructure impacted by extreme and unpredictable weather, resulting in increased costs of maintenance and weakened or disrupted delivery of services including travel disruption.</p> <p>Communities facing increased frequency of coastal flooding and increased volumes of surface water.</p> <p>Local economic production affected by climate impacts.</p> <p>Transition to support climate response initiatives</p>	<p>Extreme and unpredictable sustained weather (lightning, winds, tides) causes increased damage or wear and tear to Council infrastructure.</p> <p>Increased severity of coastal flooding leads to damage to property in coastal communities, while surface water levels impact transport routes and agricultural activities in the community.</p> <p>Surface water and other climate impacts affect normal activity cycles impacting food production including agriculture.</p>	<p>Weakened or disrupted delivery of Council services including transport, roads maintenance, property access and digital services.</p> <p>Reduced economic output in Orkney requires increased Council interventions.</p> <p>Failure to meet targets or reductions in funding of other Council Priorities to support initiatives.</p>	Treat	<p>11.01 – Declaration of Climate Emergency.</p> <p>11.02 – New Council Plan has specific climate related goals including baseline review and Net Zero targets and milestones.</p> <p>11.03 – Orkney Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and the Carbon Management Plan.</p> <p>11.04 – Flood Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2028.</p> <p>11.05 – Resilience review and response to SEPA Flood Warnings as an Incident Management process.</p> <p>11.06 – Development of the Coastal Change Adaptation Plan is underway with expected completion towards the end of 2025/2026.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
require significant capital investment.	Move to Net Zero requires capital funding and resourcing beyond Council capacity.			<p>11.07 – Development of local resilience capabilities and the ongoing involvement in resilience planning and exercises.</p> <p>11.08 – Development of Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, with associated engagement events with Members and Officers.</p> <p>11.09 – Cross-Council officer working group established, recognising that Climate Change impacts all Directorates.</p> <p>11.10 – Contractors appointed to complete an independent study into indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero, work started Autumn 2024. Due to conclude in Quarter 3 of 2025.</p> <p>11.11 – Report along with a proposed new Vision statement, presented to Policy and Resources in September 2024 and approved.</p> <p>11.12 – The Council is a participant in the Strategic Territorial Partnership Board and therefore works across multiple authority areas, with a focus on decarbonisation.</p>

Risk Number.		Risk Title.				Cluster.		Owner.		
12.		The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands on Land that is in the Ownership and Control of the Council.				Legislative/Regulatory		Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.		
Likelihood:	3.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:		12.	Target Risk Score:	12.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
The potential for falling trees or branches to cause injury to members of the public visiting the location or cause damage to neighbouring land/property.	<p>Lack of regular inspection of all trees in the ownership and/or control of the Council.</p> <p>Disease such as Ash Dieback affecting the structural integrity of a tree(s).</p>	<p>Injury to visiting members of the public and/or damage to neighbouring land and/or property, and/or damage to vehicles.</p> <p>Financial claims from third party if they suffer accident, injury, loss or damage.</p> <p>Reputational damage to Council.</p>	Treat.	<p>12.01 – Include all trees in the ownership and control of the Council in the bi-annual tree survey and inspection that is completed on some of OIC trees as part of the ground maintenance work completed by Engineering Services.</p> <p>12.02 – Establish a budget for the onwards maintenance and management of all trees in the ownership and control of the Council.</p> <p>12.03 – Undertake any maintenance works e.g. felling trees/lopping branches where there is an immediate risk to public safety.</p> <p>12.04 – Where a large number of trees require to be felled provide for compensatory replacement tree planting on-site or in general location.</p>



Waste and Resource Management Strategy

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Executive Summary

This Strategy aims to establish a comprehensive and sustainable approach to waste and resource management in Orkney, based on a vision of increased activity to prevent waste from occurring, to increase recycling levels and provide a service that is more efficient. This involves the delivery of actions that can provide wider benefits to the community, supporting increased employment, provide lower-cost goods and materials by keeping these in circulation for longer in Orkney. The result of this will be outcomes which deliver a more circular economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions compared to business as usual. This Strategy aligns with national policy and regulatory developments and outlines key initiatives and actions concerning prevention, reuse, recycling and disposal, the latter in terms of both energy from waste and landfill.

An important aspect of this Strategy is the cost implications that island authorities such as Orkney face, in terms of distance to large markets and the impacts this has on service delivery. Larger local authorities on the Scottish mainland have larger quantities of waste and are able to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to develop management options. This assists with significant capital investments as well as developing contracts with waste management contractors to deliver improved recycling and recovery services. Many of these local authorities have also been mandated to put in place food waste collections systems, a legal requirement, with funding support provided by the Scottish government to facilitate this. Orkney therefore has significant constraints which need to be understood when considering options for a strategy.

This Strategy has been developed at a time of uncertainty in terms of policy developments which could have significant implications in terms of costs, income and requirements in terms of materials that should be captured for recycling. However, initiatives which prevent and reduce waste, and recycle what is not prevented are those which are most likely to provide the most robust future proof waste service.

The vision is to provide the Orkney Islands with cost-efficient reuse, recycling and waste services, that maximises the recovery and recycling/reuse of valuable natural resources and meets the needs and expectations of residents and businesses. We will ensure that this service is compliant with forthcoming national legislation and compatible with any partnership working arrangements.

Key objectives

- Objective 1 - Delivery of a more efficient waste service by reducing costs per tonne and increasing the recycling rate performance by implementing an expanded kerbside collection service encompassing a wider range of materials.
- Objective 2 - Implement actions that deliver wider benefits to the community, such as employment, low-cost goods or materials for use on Orkney.
- Objective 3 – Reduce waste generation by implementing practices to minimise waste at source, for example by supporting and encouraging waste prevention and reuse.
- Objective 4 - Developing the Council's Household Waste Recycling facilities (HWRCs) to maximise items and materials for reuse and recycling.

- Objective 5 - Promote a sustainable approach to the use of infrastructure by encouraging the reuse of existing vehicles, buildings, etc.
- Objective 6 - Ensure compliance in terms of cost recovery from commercial waste management.

Strategic initiatives

- Considering Orkney's distance to markets, and its island setting, reach agreement within local and Scottish Government, on the acceptable limitations, exemptions and expectations, with respect to recycling and associated methodologies used for data reporting.
- Preparing for a potential significant increase in the cost of waste managed for Orkney Islands Council (OIC), by Shetland Islands Council (SIC) if additional costs associated with the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) are applied to the incinerator there.
- Managing services to maximise the potential opportunities that are going to arise from extended producer responsibility schemes, circular economy, deposit return schemes and a potential visitor levy.
- Reviewing the current approach for waste shipped to Shetland to identify opportunities for greater transparency in reporting and landfill tax charging.
- Engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including potential community partners, to promote a circular economy and culture of sustainability.
- Assessing the capacity of the existing fleet of vehicles and buildings to manage an expanded kerbside collection service.
- Assessing how the existing HWRCs can be most effectively managed to support greater reuse and recycling. This could include the potential of a booking system to prevent commercial waste being illegally discarded at the sites.
- Develop an understanding of how services in the outer isles can be delivered in partnership with community organisations and contractors, for example by collaborating to deliver improved reuse by delivering bulky waste services.
- Understanding the potential value of new technologies for the treatment of residual waste.
- Community engagement through awareness raising and partnering with local communities to support household and community initiatives that result in reduced levels of waste.

Expected outcomes

- An incremental improvement approach adopted that aligns with budget and funding opportunities and constraints.
- The delivery of a more efficient waste service, which maximises the potential to reduce costs or mitigate effectively against future price increases.
- An increase in reuse and recycling levels, where the value of achieving improved recycling is balanced with the cost and income landscape.
- Opportunities to manage resources locally are prioritised.
- Opportunities to reuse existing infrastructure are maximised.
- Beneficial partnership opportunities are maximised, which may include collaboration with potential community and private contractors.

- Compliance in terms of commercial waste management and charging is demonstrated.
- Discussions with SIC to explore efficiencies the services could deliver.

Actions for delivering the strategy

The actions required to deliver the vision and objectives are summarised below, with the priorities indicated.

1. Preparing for the forthcoming policy and regulatory change:

- Being an active contributory part of a future Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) system – high priority.
- Avoid major changes in collections service until the new Code of Practice is confirmed – high priority.
- Engage with the Scottish Government to ensure Orkney's unique challenges are understood in the design of policy and regulations. This may be most effectively facilitated by engaging through existing networks, such as the Waste Management Officers' Network (WMON), the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA), or a separate new group of island local authorities with similar challenges – high priority.
- Plan for the potential inclusion of SIC Incinerator in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and an accelerated programme of actions to reduce costs if necessary – high priority.
- Review this Waste Strategy in 2030 when more information is known about the impacts of policy and regulatory change.

2. Delivering an enhanced composting service:

Investigate food waste capture and recycling by OIC

The capture of food waste for composting would require significant investment in vehicles for kerbside collections and the construction of an In Vessel Composter (IVC), with food waste mixed with garden waste. Unless required by government, and funding is provided, this is a Low Priority.

Enhanced garden waste recycling by OIC

Conforming with the PAS100 standard to produce an enhanced compost and achieve recycling status requires the construction of a shed to reduce rainwater ingress and associated slab to ensure only compostable material is being handled. This could involve the expansion of the current composting slab at Bossack and the construction of a building to reduce rainwater ingress or could be at another site in collaboration with a third party e.g. UHI Orkney. Unless required by government, and funding is provided, this is a Low Priority.

3. Supporting householders and community composting:

Household food and garden waste composting

OIC to continue negotiating discounted home composting units suitable for efficient processing of both food and garden waste. Communication and awareness raising provision required to support the successful and meaningful delivery of this

programme. Although there is an operational cost for OIC in providing support through staff time, this may be offset by avoided waste disposal costs. Medium Priority.

Community composting projects for food and garden waste

OIC to support the development of community composting projects in terms of policy, awareness raising and communications (may be part of community food growing projects). Although there is an operational cost for OIC in providing staff time support, this may be offset by avoided waste disposal costs. Medium priority.

4. Supporting improved kerbside recycling of Dry Mixed Recyclates (DMR)s - introduction of expanded dry mixed recycling:

Assessing the capacity of the existing Refuse Collection and Recycler fleet. Need to understand what existing vehicles could be used, the future needs and costs. High priority.

Route reviews to inform capacity assessment of existing fleet. Significant time since this has been done - the most effective routes need to be considered along with the vehicle capacity assessment. High priority.

Consider if the collection of separate DMRs and their sorting in Orkney continues to be the preferred approach e.g. compared to hauling mixed DMRs to contractors in other parts of the UK for separation, with the higher costs incurred. Not sorting DMRs (e.g. at Chinglebraes) means that there would be no sorting equipment required, but also no compaction (preferred by sorting facilities elsewhere), which would increase haulage costs. High priority.

If sorting in Orkney is preferred, move to two stream collection with 2x 240l bins for paper/card/cardboard and plastics & cans - providing extra material storage for households. Supported by a major communications campaign. High priority.

Understand if outer isles' communities can provide a different role to make DMR recycling more effective (learning from previous services) including support of bring centres. High priority.

5. Supporting improved bulky waste services for reuse & recycling:

Evaluate the cost and income for the current collection (for cost recovery) and amend service if/where required. High priority.

Carry out investigations in the outer isles, for sourcing collections through organisations and groups in these islands, maximising potential for reuse and recycling through collaborations. High priority (starting with Hoy, Flotta, Westray and Shapinsay).

6. Actions to improve Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) services:

Developments for enhanced recycling & cost savings

Consider business case, including manpower, cost-benefits, for managing Hatston and Stromness HWRCs to deliver efficiencies e.g. compacting of waste to reduce the number of

haulage trips. Manpower and compliance in terms of commercial waste to be understood and improvement plans initiated. High priority.

Where a business case permits, develop Hatston HWRC to be Orkney's premier recycling centre - use Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) payments or approach Scottish Government and other island-focused grant programmes for funding to expand the site. High priority.

Deliver pilot projects to investigate the opportunities around the capture of waste wood and inert materials separately for recycling, using separate skips where space can be made available. High priority.

Develop a business case for the introduction of a booking system (for commercial or all users) which can then prevent significant quantities of commercial waste being illegally discarded and reduce costs. High priority.

Development for enhanced reuse

Understand the full potential for developing the sites to improve collections of items for reuse. This should consider the potential for collaboration with Orkney social enterprises. High priority.

7. Improve communications and campaigns:

Major communications plan to be developed and implemented to support new kerbside collections scheme, as well as other new initiatives described in this strategy e.g. the development of HWRCs to allow new materials to be accepted for recycling, providing links to community and household composting resources. High priority.

8. Improved data management:

The current data reporting templates and methodology to be reviewed to allow quarterly and annual waste reporting on recycling and waste disposal to be clearer. This includes the methodology for distinguishing commercial from household waste generated. Opportunities associated with digital waste tracking to be included in this assessment. High priority.

The reporting of reused items and materials collected through OIC infrastructure to be captured consistently in data outputs. High priority.

9. Improve practices related to landfilling:

Discussions with SIC to take place to re-evaluate the current approach for managing waste stored at landfill prior to incineration – the aim being to create a more transparent method which makes it easier to attribute tonnes of waste being managed with the costs incurred. High priority.

Understand the potential tonnage of inert waste that could be recovered for recycling by piloting the introduction of skips at HWRCs and assessing the viability of future reprocessing activities. The latter would require discussions with OIC departments to understand if demand for such materials could be generated. High priority.

Engage with commercial operators managing waste to understand how collaboration may result in more effective and lower cost waste management for all parties. High priority.

10. Optimising and understand the most effective utilisation of OIC sites for waste processing:

Optimising the Chinglebraes site

The potential to expand Chinglebraes to take additional DMRs and sorting equipment requires layout design work to be undertaken, with drawings and costs produced. This may also need to consider the potential for changes to external areas to accommodate residual waste drying equipment. High priority.

Optimising the Hatston site

The potential of the Hatston site is linked to the potential at Chinglebraes and the needs of different departments at OIC. An assessment should be carried out after the Chinglebraes review is completed and the potential there is understood in detail. Expansion of the HWRC to facilitate greater material separation and reuse opportunities should be a key focus. High priority.

Understanding what the optimal garden waste composting site is

Understanding and agreement of the need, or otherwise, to produce a PAS100 compost. If this is established, or to assist in reaching this conclusion, an assessment of the costs and the potential for collaborating with UHI Orkney needs to be understood. Medium priority.

The following table summarises the ten overarching actions and priorities of the waste strategy.

Summary of actions and priorities

Number	Actions	Priority
1	Preparing for the forthcoming policy and regulatory change	High
2	Delivering an enhanced composting service	
2a	Investigate food waste capture and recycling by OIC	Low
2b	Enhanced garden waste recycling by OIC	Low
3	Supporting householders and community composting	
3a	Household food and garden waste composting	Medium
3b	Community composting projects for food and garden waste	Medium
4	Supporting improved kerbside recycling of Dry Mixed Recyclates (DMR)s - introduction of expanded dry mixed recycling	High
5	Supporting improved bulky waste services for reuse & recycling	High
6	Actions to improve Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) services	
6a	Developments for enhanced recycling and cost savings	High
6b	Development for enhanced reuse	High
7	Improve communications and campaigns	High

8	Improved data management	High
9	Improve practices relating to landfilling	High
10	Optimising and understand the most effective utilisation of OIC sites for waste processing	
10a	Optimising the Chinglebraes site	High
10b	Optimising the Hatston site	High
10c	Understanding what the optimal garden waste composting site is	Medium

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Vision and Objectives

In a world of finite resources, the prevention and management of waste is an increasingly important challenge. Waste is a threat to our environment, a drag on our economy, and has a negative impact on our communities. Orkney has its own unique challenges in reducing and managing waste. This strategy sets out how Orkney Islands Council (OIC) can optimise its performance for the benefit of all, working with partners, businesses and residents.

The vision is to provide Orkney with cost-efficient reuse, recycling and waste services, that maximises the recovery and recycling/reuse of valuable natural resources and meets the needs and expectations of residents and businesses. We will ensure that this service is compliant with forthcoming national legislation and compatible with any partnership working arrangements.

This Strategy aims to reduce the amount of waste produced and recover as many valuable materials from it as possible. The focus of the strategy is to make a significant contribution towards tackling rising costs and build a more resilient, efficient and effective waste service, with a greater focus on high quality recycling and reuse.

The associated objectives are:

- Objective 1 - Delivery of a more efficient waste service by reducing costs per tonne and increasing the recycling rate performance by implementing an expanded kerbside collection service encompassing a wider range of materials.
- Objective 2 - Implement actions that deliver wider benefits to the community, such as employment, low-cost goods or materials for use on Orkney.
- Objective 3 – Reduce waste generation by implementing practices to minimise waste at source, for example by supporting and encouraging waste prevention and reuse.
- Objective 4 - Developing the Council's Household Waste Recycling facilities (HWRCs) to maximise items and materials for reuse and recycling.
- Objective 5 - Promote a sustainable approach to the use of infrastructure by encouraging the reuse of existing vehicles, buildings, etc.
- Objective 6 - Ensure compliance in terms of cost recovery from commercial waste management.

1.2 The Waste Hierarchy

This Strategy is aligned with the waste hierarchy and the principles of the circular economy – where the model of production and consumption involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended.

The waste hierarchy ranks waste management options for solid wastes according to the best environmental and cost outcomes taking into consideration the lifecycle of the material. The lifecycle of a material is an environmental assessment of all the stages of a product's life from-cradle-to-grave (i.e. from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, repair and maintenance, and disposal or recycling).

In its simplest form, the waste hierarchy gives top priority to preventing waste to save resources and costs of disposal. When waste is created, it gives priority to preparing it for reuse, then recycling, then other recovery such as creating energy, and last of all, disposal such as landfill.



Figure 1. Scotland's Waste Hierarchy

1.3 Data and background research informing the strategy

This Waste and Resource Strategy has been informed by the development of a detailed Position Paper, which provides data, stakeholder engagement, costs etc. to inform the actions and priorities described here. Waste arisings in Orkney fluctuate on an annual basis, as they do in any other local authority. In recent years the total arisings of both household and commercial waste have amounted to around 14,000 tonnes, with circa 70% of this (just under 10,000 tonnes) generated from households and 30% coming from commercial sources (just over 4,000 tonnes). More than 80% of the household waste generated is diverted from landfill i.e. 20% recycled, 50% incinerated and circa 10% managed under waste exemption regulations, as a composted soil conditioner.

Currently, kerbside recycling collections are in place in Mainland Orkney and the linked isles of Burray and South Ronaldsay, together with Shapinsay. This is a four-weekly recyclates collection system and fortnightly for residual waste. These collections consist of one bin containing glass and one bin containing plastic bottles on one cycle and then, two weeks later, one bin for paper and thin card and one bin for ferrous metals and aluminium. All other isles have bring sites for recycling, with separate skips for glass, paper/thin card and ferrous metal/aluminium mixed. A weekly residual waste collection service operates on the outer isles in addition to the bring sites. The same service is provided for commercial waste, with the addition of corrugated cardboard packaging (Mainland and linked isles – not Shapinsay or other non-linked isles). Bulky waste collections are provided by the Council across all of Orkney.

The current system for household waste is shown below.

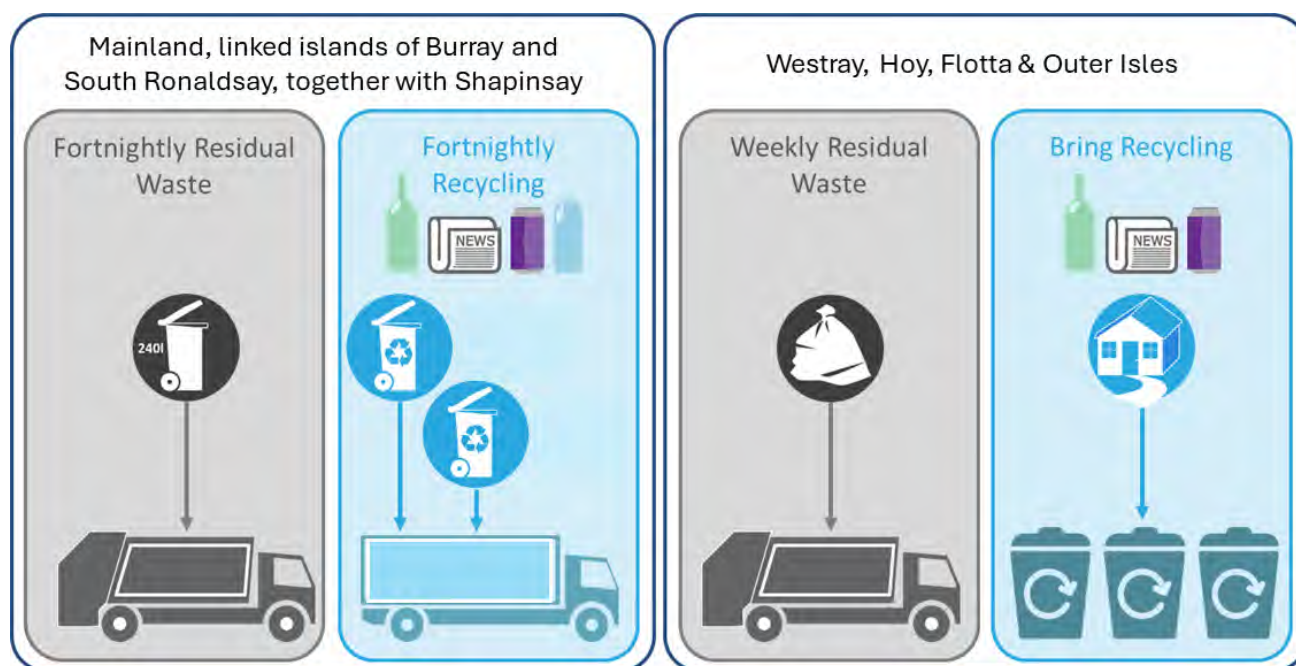


Figure 2. Overview of current (Feb 2025) kerbside system

1.4 Overview of the strategy approach

The work done to develop the Strategy has involved looking at affordable options to minimise waste arisings, increasing options to reuse materials within Orkney, increase the quantity of materials recycled and opportunities to manage resources locally where possible.

Key points of consideration in developing actions within the Strategy were:

- The opportunities to maximise the use of existing infrastructure, such as buildings, vehicles, bins, recycling centres and other waste sites etc.
- An incremental improvement approach was adopted, recognising that there are budget constraints and OIC will require to prioritise actions based on their impact for the investment made.
- Improving the environmental performance of the current waste service, including air quality and climate related emissions.
- Factoring in Orkney's remote and rural location to ensure the Strategy accounts for the distance and expense of moving materials to market, and the low volume of materials produced in the islands.
- Opportunities for partnership or collaboration with the third sector and other organisations to be explored and the view of key stakeholders to be taken into account.
- Delivery of a more efficient residual waste treatment service.
- Any cost efficiency opportunities to be maximised, however, recognising any procurement challenges and complexities in delivering changes within the service.
- Recognising the major change required in communications and services to underpin a wider culture of resource efficiency and circularity in Orkney that supports the "green" image Orkney desires for visitors.

- The value of achieving recycling targets balanced against costs, income and the wider benefit to the Orkney community when financial resources are limited.
- Developing strategic options for waste services in Orkney, which will ensure Orkney complies with regulatory requirements and meets its required environmental outcomes.
- Ensuring that commercial waste services are fairly charged for cost recovery wherever possible.
- The potential for securing alternative sources of funding that could assist with investment required in the recycling services.

1.5 Future obligations

The Waste Strategy aims to ensure that Orkney Islands Council will meet its regulatory obligations. A number of future regulations and policies have been identified that will affect waste services in the near future, including:

- Increases in Scottish Landfill Tax.
- The UK Emissions Trading scheme inclusion of Energy from Waste facilities.
- A UK driven Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers.
- The Circular Economy Act (Scotland) 2024 and its associated Route Map.
- The Charter for Household Recycling and its Code of Practice.
- Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging materials.
- The biodegradable waste ban for landfilling.

These are discussed in more detail in the next section.

2.0 National Policy Implications

2.1 Overview

At the time of the production of this Strategy there are a range of significant changes occurring in the legal and policy framework for waste management and the circular economy, both in Scotland and the UK. There is considerable uncertainty about how some of these changes will be implemented and what further regulations will follow. In this section the most significant of these changes are outlined along with the potential high-level impacts on OIC, using the information available as at December 2024.

2.2 Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and Landfill Tax

The Scottish landfill tax for household waste is £126.15 per tonne in the 2025/26 fiscal year (£103.70 24/25), with the lower, inert waste rate also experiencing a rise to £4.05 per tonne (£3.30 24/25). These are significant increases designed to encourage greater levels of reuse, recycling/composting.

In addition to the landfill tax rate increase, the UK ETS is proposed to apply to energy from waste (EfW) facilities by 2028. Monitoring of such facilities for inclusion in the ETS will begin in 2026. This change is anticipated to increase the cost per tonne of disposal at such facilities by around £40.

It is unclear if the incinerator facility at Shetland used by OIC will be incorporated into the ETS under the current scheme rules. It may, or may not, receive an exemption for the 2026-2030 allocation period. If the Shetland EfW facility is exempt from ETS this would be of significant benefit to OIC, as the cost per tonne is likely to avoid the expected increases that will be experienced by larger mainland facilities. If the incinerator is not ETS exempt then the increased disposal costs will make reuse, recycling and composting options more economically viable. In combination the impact of increased landfill tax and potential ETS payments would increase disposal costs by around £381-470K per annum based on 2023/24 tonnages. Therefore, these changes could have significant cost impacts on OIC without mitigations measures.

2.3 Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

After the scrapping of the implementation of a Scottish DRS there are plans for a UK wide system. Recent statements from the UK Government suggest they wish to introduce this by October 2027. There will be aligned deposit return schemes covering Scotland and England & Northern Ireland which will include polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic, steel, and aluminium drink containers, but not glass at this stage.

The DRS for drinks containers would include single-use drinks containers from 150ml to 3 litres in size. The Deposit Management Organisation (DMO) responsible for running the scheme will be required to reach a collection rate of 90% of DRS containers in year 3 of the scheme.

Should a DRS be established then the overall waste arising and recycle tonnage handled will drop, impacting upon OIC's recycling performance and budgets. This will be common to

all Scottish Councils and so it is likely that an agreement will be formed on how this change will impact on any future recycling targets.

With the logistical challenges of collecting drinks containers in Orkney there is the potential that OIC could position its kerbside collections as a form of DRS collection. This may be a potential income stream, if such an approach is accepted by the DMO, however, it may require investment in sorting equipment and staff resource to manage material quality.

2.4 Circular Economy (Scotland) Act 2024

The Scottish Parliament passed the Circular Economy (Scotland) Act on 26 June 2024. The key features of the Act affecting OIC are:

- Imposing a duty of care on householders and setting targets for local authorities regarding household waste and its recycling; and
- Expanding Local Authorities' enforcement powers, for example in relation to fly tipping and littering from a vehicle.

Councils will have to consider how they meet any statutory targets imposed upon them by 2030 for reuse or recycling/composting as well as the use of any new enforcement powers regarding household waste separation for reuse, recycling or composting. Until any secondary legislation and the Scottish Government's revised Circular Economy Strategy are produced there are many unknowns arising from the Act.

2.5 Charter for Household Recycling and the Code of Practice

The Charter and Code of Practice (CoP) on household recycling, was agreed by the Scottish Government and CoSLA in 2015. It requires signatory councils to abide by the charter and collect waste and recycle according to a code of practice. This Charter and Code of Practice have been voluntary to date however, it is expected this code will become mandatory by 2027.

The impact of the revised charter cannot be estimated yet although it may reconfirm existing principles, such as the two stream collection of recyclates to improve quality. Potential changes include an expansion of the current food waste collection requirement and garden waste collections becoming mandatory. OIC does not currently offer these services and if it were obligated to provide this service, it would require significant capital investment in treatment facilities, wheeled bins and collection services, along with an extensive campaign of communications to householders.

2.6 Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR)

This scheme is still in an early stage of development and its planned approach may change. Payments are made by the industry to all local authorities for the waste packaging they collect and recycle. In the initial year the payments will be 100% based on the existing waste collection and the classification of the local authority type. Thereafter payments can be reduced by up to 20% where the local authority collection is considered as not meeting best practice guidelines. The Scheme Administrator may be likely to adopt national standards, such as the Household Waste Recycling Charter Code of Practice to determine what is a best practice collection in Scotland. Payments for 2025/26, subject to final calculations, are estimated to be £1,692,000. However, it should be noted that if significant numbers of producers do not pay then the amount will reduce.

2.7 Biodegradable waste ban for landfill

The ban on landfilling biodegradable municipal waste is scheduled to come into place in 31 December 2025. The ban covers mixed waste and separately collected wastes from households and businesses.

Wastes from non-municipal sources (e.g. agriculture, construction and demolition, water and wastewater treatment etc.) are not banned from landfill disposal. Currently, it appears that OIC is already in compliance with the ban as most of its residual waste is incinerated except for some agricultural and construction waste, transported in containers to Shetland's landfill site. It appears that OIC have a solution through using the SIC facilities.

2.8 Summary of known impacts

Cost impacts on OIC for 2025/26 can be estimated for some of these potential changes, based on 2023 waste tonnages and performance.

- The Scottish Landfill Tax increase will add approximately £28,898 in costs per annum.
- A DRS could result in a £14k p.a. loss of revenue from the sale of materials.
- The EPR for packaging scheme may provide c. £1,692,000 of income in 2025/26.
- The anticipated cost impact if the Shetland incinerator fails to get an ETS exemption would be £353,000 – £442,000 p.a.

Actions to prepare for the forthcoming policy and regulatory change

- Having the aim of being an active contributory part of a future DRS system – high priority.
- Avoid major changes in collections service until the new Code of Practice is confirmed.
- Engage with the Scottish Government to ensure Orkney's unique challenges are understood in the design of policy and regulations – high priority.
- Plan for the potential inclusion of SIC Incinerator in the ETS and an accelerated programme of actions to reduce costs if necessary.
- Review this Waste Strategy in 2030 when more information is known about the impacts of policy and regulatory change.

3.0 Partnership Working

3.1 Overview

With costs and complexities of waste management rising significantly it is increasingly necessary for Councils to work with each other, or a range of local partners and service providers, to find cost effective solutions.

3.2 Other Council Programmes

The Islands Centre for Net Zero (ICNZ) is an Islands Deal project, being led by the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC), interested in delivering high value circular economy projects that have the potential to support the development of scientific/technological capacity building in Orkney. The ICNZ could be a partner, providing a pathway to support circular economy projects in the future which deliver on net zero ambitions, with access to a range of funding streams.

3.2 Shetland Islands Council (SIC)

OIC already has a strong working relationship with SIC through the use of the Shetland incinerator and landfill and given the benefits to OIC, there are opportunities for this to develop further and explore future investment opportunities together. In the short term the cost of residual waste will increase significantly due to the landfill tax change, and this therefore further encourages greater separation and recycling of waste to reduce costs impacts. As described later, the current system in place between OIC and SIC is complex for landfill tax and waste data flow recording and there would be value in engaging with SIC to develop a more straightforward system.

In the medium to longer term, should the Shetland EfW facility be brought into the ETS, this partnership may be even more important to minimise ETS costs. Shetland currently utilise the Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) as landfill cover however, there is the potential for using IBA as recycled aggregates if this landfill cover requirement reduces with lower levels of landfilling.

3.3 The Third Sector

There are a range of active third sector organisation in Orkney that could potentially work with OIC to deliver waste services. These include:

- Restart Orkney with a focus on the reuse of products and materials.
- Men's Shed (Stromness) with a focus on mental health using reuse and repair as a shared activity.
- Greener Orkney with a focus on community food schemes, beach cleans and awareness raising.
- Zero Waste Orkney with a focus on community/home composting, Stromness reuse yard and composting advice/training.
- The Island of Hoy Development Trust (IoHDT) with a focus on home composting, reuse and recycling points.

3.4 Other potential partners

There is initial interest in the possibility of a collaborative operation, where a composting facility is run in partnership with UHI Orkney. This could provide technical skills and manpower, supported by the Council.

The Island of Hoy Development Trust has expressed an interest in bulky waste collections, working in partnership with the Council and an investigation of out-sourcing waste collections in Hoy, Flotta, Westray and Shapinsay may identify further beneficial options.

See also the section on the Outer Isles below.

3.5 Scottish Government

The key aspects of engagement with the Scottish Government are around future funding and the design of legislation and regulations that may impact OIC. OIC may benefit from a closer relationship with the Scottish Government to ensure that Orkney's unique delivery and cost challenges are fully considered in any legislation and policy being developed, such as the Code of Practice for kerbside collections and statutory recycling targets due by 2030. Similarly, a closer relationship with Scottish Government could increase opportunities for funding for innovative projects that may help Orkney meet any future targets.

4.0 Waste Prevention and Reuse

The implementation of policies that deliver against the waste hierarchy, as well as describing more efficient approaches to managing waste, can also deliver outcomes which produce the lowest costs for OIC and maximise the potential for managing resources locally in Orkney. The socio-economic benefits of doing this can be significant, for example reusing furniture, electrical goods, textiles, bric-a-brac, bikes, etc provides an income for those organisations engaged in such economic activities, with the added value that such items and materials often do not become part of any waste stream because of their continued economic value and reuse potential.

Although reuse activities do not generate as large quantities as those associated with recycling and disposal, they do often create significant numbers of jobs, as well as creating opportunities for associated repair, cleaning and remanufacturing activities. The inclusion of people who may be vulnerable or distant from the job market can often be supported by social enterprises working in this area. To support repair there has been a growth in the interest and delivery of repair cafes across the Council, which can allow skills to be transferred, as well as keeping items in use for longer than would otherwise be the case.

In addition to reuse, activities that lead to the generation of less garden and food waste for processing by OIC is a clear way of demonstrating both environmental and commercial benefits. There are different options when it comes to generating less food waste, one of which includes kerbside collection, while others involve communities and householders diverting their food waste through home composters or community composting projects. Opportunities to reduce waste and reuse items and materials are identified under different headings in this strategy.

5.0 Recycling

5.1 Overview

The management of waste, involving its processing and use within Orkney should always be the first consideration when options are being explored. However, because there are no plastics, metal and paper/card recycling and reprocessing infrastructure at the moment in Orkney the options for these waste streams involve exporting them for (i) recycling; (ii) energy from waste; and/or (iii) landfill (separately collected recyclates cannot be landfilled or incinerated). Currently the Council provides monthly collections of specific materials from households via kerbside collections for recycling. This includes plastic bottles, glass and paper plus thin card (no cardboard).

Glass has been recycled in Orkney before, included in the production of concrete blocks, often used for the Churchill Barriers. Glass can also be processed and incorporated with aggregate mixes for use in construction products. Organic wastes such as food and garden waste have the potential to be kept in Orkney, with garden waste currently composted under a waste management exemption and given away free of charge to local farmers and Orkney residents. OIC does not provide separate collection or processing of food waste at the moment.

5.2 Garden and food waste

In 2023, 1,200 tonnes of garden waste was generated and composted, a level which generally only fluctuates annually by +/-20%. Composting was carried out in the open (windrow method), and did not involve compliance against the Publicly Available Standard (PAS) 100, which is required for the process to be considered recycling by government and its regulator (SEPA). This represents circa 20% of total household waste which means that Orkney's recycling rate would increase from circa 20% to 40% if such composting could be considered a true recycling process. This would immediately shift the local authority's performance significantly upwards in the recycling league table that many authorities are compared against in Scotland and the UK.

A Business Case prepared for OIC in 2019 identified that in vessel composting (IVC) was the preferred method for recycling both food and garden waste, where this complied with the PAS100 standard. It was estimated that the quantity of food waste that may be collected from household kerbside collections is around 500 tonnes per year, with another 100 tonnes from commercial waste uplifts. Recycling this quantity of household food waste would increase the recycling rate by 5%, however, to achieve this food waste would need to be collected separately and then mixed with garden waste for processing using the IVC method. OIC has to consider whether the capital investment costs required, which could be £1 to 2 million is the most sustainable way forward, in particular when composted garden waste already has economic value and is being used locally (branded as a soil conditioner).

Actions at the kerbside and waste transfer stations

Food waste capture and recycling by OIC

Action: The capture of food waste requires significant investment in vehicles for kerbside collections and the construction of an IVC, with food mixed with garden waste. This could be at the Bossack waste transfer station or at another site, and in collaboration with a third party e.g. UHI Orkney.

Priority level: Unless required by government, and funding is provided, this is a low priority.

Enhanced garden waste recycling by OIC

Action: Conforming with the PAS100 standard to produce an enhanced compost and achieve recycling status requires the construction of a shed to reduce rainwater ingress and associated slab. This could involve the expansion of the current composting slab at Bossack and the construction of a building to reduce rainwater ingress or could be at another site in collaboration with a third party e.g. UHI Orkney.

Priority level: Unless required by government, and funding is provided, this is a low priority.

In addition to kerbside collections there is the potential to develop further garden and food waste composting, at a household/business premises level as well as through community projects. Household composting can be used for food and garden waste, providing a resource which avoids purchasing compost produced from outwith Orkney, and which therefore has a lower carbon footprint. Community composting projects can also process a combination of garden and food waste, with current regulations indicating how meat, eggs etc (animal by-products) should be managed – staying below a 10 tonne threshold per annum will mean that there are not the complex waste permission activities required (more information, provided by Zero Waste Scotland [here](#)).

The Position Paper describes a scenario where additional home and community composting could mean that 150 tonnes of waste is managed locally. If circa 40 tonnes of this was food waste diverted from the residual stream shipped to Shetland a cost saving of circa £7,000 per annum.

Actions supporting householders and community composting

Household food and garden waste composting

Action: OIC to continue negotiating discounted home composting units suitable for efficient processing of both food and garden waste. Communication and awareness raising provision required to support the successful and meaningful delivery of this programme.

Priority level: Medium priority. Although there is an operational cost for OIC in providing support staff time, this may be offset by avoided waste disposal costs.

Community composting projects for food and garden waste

Action: OIC to support the development of community composting projects (may be part of community food growing projects) in terms of policy, awareness raising and communications.

Priority level: Medium priority. Although there is an operational cost for OIC in providing support staff time, this may be offset by avoided waste disposal costs.

5.3 Kerbside collection system for recycling and reuse

There is the potential to significantly increase the tonnage of recyclates being uplifted for recycling through an expanded kerbside collection, and there may be opportunities for social enterprises and private contractors to support recycling and bulky waste collections in the outer isles. The islands of Hoy, Flotta, Westray and Shapinsay have been identified by the Council as the initial priorities for carrying out investigations for sourcing collections through organisations and groups in these islands.

Recycling rates can be increased eight percentage points (1,295 tonnes) by taking forward the actions that deliver enhanced kerbside collection services for paper, cardboard, card and mixed plastic streams. However there also need to be further work to understand the cost-benefits of doing so, in particular when there are cost implications from the reduced prices paid for mixed plastics (compared to single plastic bottle polymers) and cardboard mixed with paper (segregated cardboard generates the highest price per tonne in income).

To incentivise participation in an expanded kerbside collection system recycling bins could be increased from the current 140 litres to 240 litres (some already have these – provided on request), except for glass (140 litres). Residual waste bins would be retained or reduced to 180 litres when a replacement is needed, however, this process could involve an assessment, for example 180 litre bins may be appropriate for smaller properties. This would be delivered using the current frequency of collections, involving monthly recyclates uplifts for each DMR stream with fortnightly residual collections. The alternative is to move to a three weekly (or longer) collection cycle, which would in turn require separate food waste collections. There are also vehicle and infrastructure impacts and costs (described later), but more positively, through the EPR scheme local authorities, including Orkney are to receive significant levels of funding to improve the recycling of packaging waste (i.e. bottles, jars, cans, boxes etc), which means there is finance available to develop improved infrastructure and services which are more cost efficient.

An alternative to the above is to not do any kerbside sorting of recyclates, all placed in one bin, or to collect them as indicated above and then do no sorting in Orkney (e.g. at Chinglebraes). The recyclates would subsequently be hauled to other locations in the UK for processing. In this scenario the marketplace would want materials to be provided loose, rather than baled, which would increase haulage costs. There would be a gate fee charged for accepting such mixed recyclates which would need to be considered against the savings that could be made by avoiding waste transfer station upgrades to create more space, as well as avoiding the purchase of sorting equipment and associated staff costs.

Actions supporting improved kerbside recycling of DMRs

Introduction of expanded dry mixed recycling

Action: Assessing the capacity of the existing RCV /Recycler fleet. Need to understand what existing vehicles could be used, the future needs and costs.

Priority: High

Action: Route reviews to inform capacity of existing fleet. Significant time since this has been done, - the most effective routes need to be considered along with the vehicle capacity assessment.

Priority: High

Action: Consider if the collection of separate DMRs and their sorting in Orkney continues to be the preferred approach e.g. compared to hauling mixed DMRs to contractors in other parts of the UK for separation.

Priority: High

Action: If sorting in Orkney is preferred move to two stream collection with 2x 240l bins for paper/card/cardboard and plastics & cans -providing extra material storage for households. Supported by major communications campaign.

Priority: High

Action: Develop an outer isles strategy for DMR recycling, learning from previous services.

Priority: High

5.4 Bulky waste collections

The Council's current bulky waste service has a standard charge for up to three items, with additional items also collected on the basis of an individual charge, up to a maximum of 15 items. There is no limit on how many times a bulky waste collection can be booked. Bulky waste is, at the time of drafting this strategy, not securing cost recovery and collections are not rationalised in line with recycling and residual collections.

There are a number of social enterprises already involved in the reuse of bulky items, with interest from others (including the Island of Hoy), which provides an important opportunity in terms of delivering socio-economic benefits. These have the potential to provide jobs and training, as well as deliver on waste prevention and circular economy policies.

Actions supporting improved bulky waste services for reuse & recycling

Action: Evaluate the cost and income for the current collection (for cost recovery) and amend service if/where required.

Priority: High

Action: Carrying out investigations in the outer isles, for sourcing collections through organisations and groups in these islands, maximising potential for reuse and recycling through collaborations.

Priority: High (starting with Hoy, Flotta, Westray and Shapinsay).

5.5 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) development potential

Orkney has a number of HWRCs and recycling bring sites, with those in Kirkwall and Stromness serving the most significant population centres which means that these have the most significant potential for cost savings and improved waste prevention, reuse and recycling. There are immediate opportunities to offer segregated wood skips, which have recycling markets in the Scottish mainland, also offering significant savings per tonne compared to incineration in Shetland e.g. the cost of haulage to Shetland is similar to Aberdeen, however, recycling infrastructure at the latter means that target waste wood will be accepted free of charge, compared to a gate fee of £75 per tonne in Shetland. Inert materials such as concrete blocks, bricks, ceramics, sub soils etc can be processed to produce recycled aggregates and soils in line with existing standards and specifications. For this to be sustainable there has to be market and therefore OIC as one of the largest buyers of aggregates and soils would need to buy in to more sustainable practices.

An important way of making waste prevention happen is to capture items and materials for reuse. There are many operational models across the country which demonstrate how reuse infrastructure, usually in partnership with social enterprises, can be set up to make reuse happen at scale, with HWRCs often at the heart of this (Zero Waste Scotland guidance is available [here](#)).

The way in which waste is stored and hauled for further processing can be made more efficient, reducing costs and carbon emissions associated with road haulage. For example, currently garden waste from Hatston is being collected in a skip which is then hauled to Bossack for composting. This takes place without any compaction which means that the number of trips could be two or three times more than needed. Although there is some limited compaction happens at Stromness there are also opportunities here.

The manpower used at the two large HWRCs would benefit from re-evaluation in what are busy sites, at risk of being used by commercial waste operators (e.g. in unmarked vans) which is illegal. The cost of managing commercial waste has to be fully recovered by local authorities, and the current use of HWRCs is free of charge when limited to householders only. Each HWRC is operated by one person, and there would be value in establishing both the efficiencies and compliance benefits of increasing this number as well as considering the value of introducing booking systems, to prevent commercial waste being deposited.

Actions to improve HWRC services

Developments for enhanced recycling & cost savings

Action: Consider business case, including manpower, cost-benefits, for managing Hatston and Stromness HWRCs to deliver efficiencies e.g. compacting of waste to reduce the

number of haulage trips. Manpower and compliance in terms of commercial waste to be understood and improvement plans initiated.

Priority: High.

Action: Where a business case permits, develop Hatston HWRC to be Orkney's premier recycling centre - use EPR payments or approach Scottish Government and other island-focused grant programmes for funding.

Priority: High.

Action: Deliver pilot projects to capture waste wood and inert materials separately for recycling, using separate skips where space can be made available.

Priority: High.

Action: Consider the potential for introducing a booking system (for householders and/or commercial users) which can then prevent significant quantities of commercial waste being illegally discarded and reduce costs.

Priority: High.

Development for enhanced reuse

Action: Understand the full potential for developing the sites to improve collections of items for reuse. This should consider the potential for collaboration with Orkney social enterprises.

Priority: High.

5.6 Communications and campaigns

Any investment in infrastructure and improved household services needs to be matched by a commitment to the required investment in communications and awareness. One of the features of high performing councils is clear and regularly updated information on how services should be used via websites, signage, campaigns and sticklers/leaflets. This investment is not a “nice to have” but an essential part of obtaining the performance data required and making a culture change towards a greener economy within the community that pays back in reduced costs in years to come.

A different aspect of a future communications programme concerns the situation where the Council decides that capital investment and monitoring costs are not merited to meet standards that increase official recycling rates when the status quo already has reasonable outcomes. In this case there may be value in discussions with the Scottish Government to understand if there can be circumstances where the actions of rural, remote communities (such as Orkney) can be considered comparable to recycling on the mainland where, for example, investing in composting infrastructure to meet a recycling standard (PAS 100) is more straightforward to secure. Regardless of whether this engagement with government takes place or not, if the Council decides that the status quo is the more sustainable position, there may be value in communication activities with stakeholders and the community to demonstrate that the Council is working to achieve the best outcomes for Council taxpayers.

Action to improve communications and campaigns

Action: Major communications plan to be developed and implemented to support new kerbside collections scheme, as well as other new initiatives described in this strategy e.g. the development of HWRCs to allow new materials to be accepted for recycling; providing links to community and household composting resources.

Priority level: High.

5.7 Data management

Data is important for OIC to manage its waste and that of commercial customers efficiently, to ensure that processes are compliant with legislation as well as achieving full cost recovery, for example with respect to commercial waste management (which should not be subsidised by household waste collections). Considering how data is managed and used may also provide insights on future waste management options and changes e.g. to describe the impacts of changing practice, for example on specific actions related to construction/building waste, soils and wood, where separate datasets are not currently being recorded.

Consistent data tracking processes can also ensure the full scope of waste management activities, including partnerships with other organisations is understood, for example with respect to the recycling and reuse of items collected through council infrastructure such as HWRCs.

Developments in digital waste tracking (coming into force in April 2026) may provide assistance in making changes in the future, which could be particularly important with the respect to EPR administration, where reviews of data will feed into the scheme and payments received going forward.

The methodology for the export of waste to Shetland, for incineration and landfill, is complex in terms of the data produced on what goes to landfill, or incinerated, with the financial impacts associated with this difficult to understand. The approach requires simplification, to allow OIC to track landfill tax and gate fee costs. This is discussed more in the landfill section.

Actions for improved data management

Action: The current data reporting templates and methodology to be reviewed to allow quarterly and annual waste reporting on recycling and waste disposal to be clearer. This includes the methodology for distinguishing commercial from household waste generated. Opportunities associated with digital waste tracking to be included in this assessment.

Priority: High

Action: The reporting of reused items and materials collected through OIC infrastructure to be captured consistently in data outputs.

Priority level: High

6.0 Waste Disposal and Treatment

6.1 Overview

As indicated in the introduction, OIC manages c14,000 tonnes of waste annually, and it is estimated that around 70% of this is household waste. Both household and commercial waste is managed in the same way, in terms of the disposal routes, which for Orkney include both energy from waste (EfW) and landfill disposal in Shetland.

6.2 Energy from Waste (EfW)

Currently OIC has a very valuable arrangement with SIC, using the SIC incinerator for its household and commercial waste. While the gate fee is cost effective there is the added cost of transport to Shetland and bringing containers back, which makes this type of treatment expensive. Aside from the efforts to reduce residual waste which are noted above, there are some other options and risks to consider.

In the medium to longer term, should the Shetland EfW facility be brought into the ETS, it is anticipated that EfW operators will take a more aggressive pricing approach to different waste types given their impact on their CO₂e emissions allowances in the ETS.

This is likely to encourage greater take up of biogenic wastes by operators and reduced incentives for materials derived from fossil fuel/hydrocarbons. It may also discourage greater use of Solid Recovered Fuel (SRF) production technologies, as these further concentrate the plastic-based waste over biogenic sources.

The pre-sorting of waste to extract more recyclates prior to incineration is currently not attractive or incentivised, however it may be if Shetland's incinerator is within the ETS in the future. This pre-sort could increase recycling rates and non-EfW recovery rates for both OIC and SIC as well as reduce ETS allowance fees.

There are some mitigations that may reduce the overall impact. The efficiency of the plant as a district heating source and potential use of carbon capture technology may reduce the ETS allowances required to operate the facility. However, all of this is essentially speculative at this stage and will depend on the scheme parameters set in the future and SIC's future investment choices that OIC may wish to contribute to.

Alternative options to reduce OIC's overall incineration and associated transportation costs include processing the residual waste in some way at Chinglebraes that reduces its tonnage for transport to Shetland. Western Isles Council is leasing a technology that may do this. A proprietary technology is being leased to shred, bio stimulate and dry residual waste. There is an opportunity to use this as a case study which OIC can learn from before deciding if this is an appropriate way forward for Orkney to reduce the tonnage of waste going to Shetland. Discussions with SIC will also need to establish their view on taking and paying for a lower tonnage of material which may subsequently return to an increased weight if it stored in the open. Alternatively, the viability and cost-benefits of purchasing a baler and wrapper could be considered, to protect bales from rainfall. This could cost several hundred thousand pounds.

The system is leased from the technology provider rather than being a capital purchase. However, to incorporate this within existing operations will require a redesign of the Chinglebraes site, adjacent/external to the residual waste baling area. If the technology reduced the weight of residual waste by 25%, annual savings of over £200k could be made, however a proper costing to assess viability would be required.

6.3 Landfill

The data section in this report refers to the situation in Shetland where residual waste sent from Orkney for incineration is often stored at the active landfill site at Gremista, to allow the Council there to manage the flow of feedstock so that it matches the demand for heat e.g. more heat is needed in winter. A complication that arises from this approach is that landfill tax is incurred as a result of this storage, which is immediately charged to OIC. This is then provided as a rebate after bales of residual waste are then used in the incinerator. The result is that it is difficult to understand in the data and cost reconciliations which year costs are being attributed to, as well as making it more complex than may necessarily be the case to verify tonnages with the costs incurred.

Around 1,000 tonnes of the waste Orkney generates, from both household and commercial waste, is landfilled, both in Shetland and Orkney, the latter being inert waste landfilled at Bossack. In addition, around another thousand tonnes is typically generated as Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) from the EfW facility in Shetland, sent to landfill as a capping layer to cover the waste deposited there.

There are opportunities to reduce the quantity being landfilled, and to increase the recycling rate, with the inert waste landfilled in Orkney being one that the Council is able to manage itself. This inert waste is a combination of concrete blocks, bricks, subsoils etc and it is now commonplace in Scotland for such waste to be screened and crushed where required to make recycled aggregates and soils for construction projects. The potential for this material requires a demand for their use, which in turn would be facilitated by awareness raising in OIC departments where such materials are procured (e.g. Roads). The Bossack site may be a location where a separate area could be identified and used for the storage and potentially, for the processing of inert waste. However, since the quarry at Cursiter is where aggregates are produced and where many businesses visit to collect materials from, this may be the more practical and efficient location. Recycled concrete aggregates are a product sold from time to time at the quarry, from material dropped off at the site, usually by private contractors. The tonnage of inert materials being generated can only be estimated, informed by the level of recovery at other Scottish local authorities. The Position Paper indicates that this could potentially be just over 200 tonnes of waste such as bricks, blocks etc, with circa 1,000 tonnes of soils.

The IBA generated in Shetland (used as an inert landfill cover material, charged at the lower rate of tax) could be reprocessed and also used as an inert aggregate material, however, once sent to Shetland it is, in effect, SIC's waste unless contractual agreements are set up between both councils to do things differently. There is limited activity or incentive in Shetland in terms of adding value to this waste stream at the moment, which means that this opportunity to increase OIC's recycling rate will be limited unless both council's decided to take forward action in this area.

Other wastes, from commercial sources such as contaminated bale wrap (farming sector), NHS waste, plasterboard etc are also landfilled in Shetland. Activities are already ongoing

in terms of recycling clean bale wrap and the NHS facility is currently evaluating opportunities to recycle significant quantities of its plastic wastes.

Actions to improve practices related to landfilling

Action: Discussions with SIC around management and acceptance of waste– the aim being to ensure the attribution of tonnage and associated costs is more transparent.

Priority level: High

Action: Understand the potential tonnage of inert waste that could be recovered for recycling by piloting the introduction of skips at HWRCs and assessing the viability of future reprocessing activities. The latter would require discussions with OIC departments to understand if demand for such materials could be generated.

Priority level: High.

Action: Engage with commercial operators managing waste to understand how collaboration may result in more effective and lower cost waste management for all parties.

Priority level: Medium

7.0 Waste Transfer Buildings and Sites

7.1 Overview

OIC has a number of sites delivering waste and resource management services to meet the needs of local communities in as cost effective a way as possible. This involves members of staff working in the collection, sorting and management (e.g. reuse, recycling and disposal) of waste, doing so across a number of sites used to consolidate, bulk and process the wastes collected. The following sections describe the sites and the potential for these to deliver the vision and objectives of this strategy.

7.2 Chinglebraes

Chinglebraes waste transfer station is an existing operation that is key to OIC's management of waste streams collected from the kerbside, for both households and commercial operators. It is also a location where waste can be dropped off by commercial operators. It is currently the location where DMRs and residual waste is processed, for onwards dispatch to recycling markets or Shetland for incineration and landfill. The expanded DMR collections described in this strategy do not result in any additional throughput of waste at Chinglebraes but do shift the balance by making less residual waste available and more recyclates. Opportunities to increase the building footprint externally and modify the layout internally can facilitate the move to increased levels of recycling. Conveyors and an eddy current separator would be required as a result of the expanded DMR kerbside collection system identified above. However, if it was decided that no sorting of DMRs was to take place in Orkney (e.g. to be done in other parts of the UK) this would significantly reduce the area required.

The residual waste drying system referred to previously requires significant consideration and evaluation. If these considerations indicate that it could be a viable option, then future work on the development opportunities for Chinglebraes should consider this.

Optimising the Chinglebraes site

Action: The use of the Chinglebraes site will require evaluation of how an expanded DMR collection should be stored and processed, this determined by the level of sorting required, if any. The preferred options for processing DMRs should be considered along with the storage areas for materials, in and out of the facility. This will require design work to be undertaken, with drawings and costs produced for the layout options. This may also need to consider the potential for changes to external areas to accommodate drying equipment.

Priority level: High

7.3 Hatston

The former abattoir building and site within the Hatston industrial estate is owned by OIC and currently used by the collections team for vehicle parking, bin storage (for issue to householders/commercial customers) and as office and welfare space. The building has a significant internal footprint (2,621m²), larger than that available at Chinglebraes, however, it is separated into many individual spaces and further work would be required to understand the potential from an operational perspective. The site surrounding the

building, which runs adjacent to the HWRC, provides space that could be used for a number of different opportunities, e.g. windrow composting instead of at Bossack. However, this would require starting from scratch and incur costs such as groundworks, construction of a concrete slab and the purchase of a weighbridge, supported by additional operational staff, all of which are in place at Bossack.

If the work described previously to understand the potential of Chinglebraes indicates limited opportunities for expansion, then understanding the options for Hatston should be the next step in terms of future waste sorting. The existing building space is currently only partly utilised, with the main hall (nearest the HWRC) still configured as an abattoir. Much of the other areas are used for bin storage, with others used by different Council departments for the storage of a range of items. Considering there are other sheds at other locations at the site, in different conditions, the overall potential of the existing Hatston infrastructure for OIC could merit being assessed. A key opportunity which can be considered independently involves areas of the site being evaluated for future expansion of the adjoining HWRC (to incorporate skips for additional segregated materials, as well as reuse infrastructure) as described previously above.

Optimising the Hatston site

Action: The potential of the Hatston site is linked to the potential at Chinglebraes and the needs of different departments at OIC. An assessment should be carried out after the Chinglebraes review is completed and the potential there is understood in detail. Expansion of the HWRC to facilitate greater material separation and reuse opportunities should be a key focus.

Priority level: Medium

7.4 Bossack and other potential sites

Bossack is currently used as a waste transfer station, an HWRC, inert landfill and garden waste composting site. With a recently upgraded weighbridge it is also the key site in terms of where a range of commercial businesses can bring their waste for recycling and disposal. It requires two members of staff to be working at any time. This offers an operational advantage in terms of providing garden waste composting processes, with the existing staff able to provide the required support. Most of the garden waste comes from householders however a significant percentage is also from commercial sources. A significant opportunity for the Council, with respect to Bossack is to enlarge the existing slab used for composting operations, and to construct a basic, Dutch Barn style shed as outlined earlier, to meet PAS100 quality requirements and increase recycling rates. An alternative approach may be to use existing agricultural infrastructure available elsewhere in Orkney, for example the UHI Orkney farm (Weyland, Kirkwall), if there is an opportunity for collaborative working. However, all of this is dependent on the Council determining whether additional investment with the objective of increasing recycling rates is a desired approach, since the output material already has a local market.

Understanding what the optimal garden waste composting site is

Action: Understanding and agreement of the need, or otherwise, to produce a PAS100 compost. If this is established, or to assist in reaching this conclusion, an assessment of the costs and the potential for collaborating with UHI Orkney needs to be understood.

Priority level: Medium

8.0 Outer Isles Service Provision

Due to the cost, logistics, road network and isolation of the outer islands it is not possible to provide the same waste services as on the mainland of Orkney. Budget and logistic challenges therefore require more innovative thinking, more partnership working and perhaps different funding sources.

Outer island recycling point sites and collection services are challenging to maintain and currently the kerbside collection prioritises black bag/residual waste with several past attempts to change this service proving difficult. As they are unmanned, recycling points can be misused and end up as a dumping ground for wastes.

However, Community organisations on outer islands could help run facilities. For example, on Berneray, in the Western Isles, a bring centre at the harbour opens for two hours, on Saturday mornings, between 10:00 and 12:00 run by local volunteers from the community council.

The Community Planning team have been working to develop an understanding of the projects taking place in Orkney at the moment. with capacity building, the potential to create paid work being important ways of developing sustainable projects/initiatives in the future. The outer isles are an important part of this, with the examples of Westray and Sanday highlighted, which have shops selling second hand items.

Alternative funding options may be available for such services. For example, the ICNZ has an accelerator element to their fund which may support a sustainable waste programme in Orkney as part of wider climate action.

A review of the services that could be offered is included in the actions above.

Development Management Guidance – Interim Spatial Strategy

June 2025

Introduction

This Development Management Guidance (DMG) provides direction on the Council's interpretation of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017 (OLDP2017).

The DMG is intended to operate as an interim position until such time as the Proposed Plan is published. The Proposed Plan once published will have material weight in the determination of planning applications. This DMG, once approved, will represent Orkney Islands Council's position on this matter.

Throughout NPF4 it is noted that Local Development Plans (LDPs) should be informed by an understanding of population change over time, locally specific needs, market circumstances and characteristics; and that LDPs can have tailored approaches to development. In this regard, the Spatial Strategy of the OLDP2017 is considered to remain relevant and appropriately reflects Orkney, its development pressures and consequently that it remains appropriate as a Statement of Orkney's Spatial Strategy in the context of the overarching principles of NPF4.

Evidence base: The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment and the Local Housing Strategy

Findings through monitoring and consultation for the review of the OLDP2017, provides evidence that the existing Spatial Strategy of the OLDP2017 appropriately reflects Orkney. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2024 and Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2024 consider that the Spatial Strategy of the OLDP2017 provides for adequate housing supply for at least a five-year period.

The HNDA looks at population and demographic change and the housing needs and demands for Orkney. In doing this Orkney is divided into five Housing Markets Areas. These areas are geographical areas where the demand is relatively self-contained. It should be noted that the non-linked Islands of Orkney form one separate Housing Market Area. In addition, these housing documents acknowledge that the demographics of our non-linked islands are different than that of the Mainland and the Linked Isles, with population decline rather than population growth, lower incomes levels and higher percentage of second or vacant homes.

The LHS looks to assess the housing needs of all persons in the area, across all housing tenures drawing on the HNDA, develops strategies to meet these needs and sets out priorities and actions for new housing supply. This work provides the review of the Local Development Plan (LDP) with local housing outcomes.

The Scottish Government Chief Planner Letter – 8 February 2023

The Scottish Government Chief Planner wrote to all Planning Authorities in February 2023 to provide guidance on the implementation of the new NPF4 policy, in particular the relationship that this should have in relation to Local Development Plans.

“LDPs already adopted will continue to be part of the development plan. For avoidance of doubt, existing LDP land allocations will be maintained. Whether an LDP has been adopted prior to or after the adoption and publication of NPF4, legislation states that in the event of any incompatibility between a provision of NPF and a provision of an LDP, whichever of them is the later in date is to prevail (Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (“the 1997 Act”); section 24(3)). It is important to bear in mind NPF4 must be read and applied as a whole. The intent of each of the 33 policies is set out in NPF4 and can be used to guide decision-making. Conflicts between policies are to be expected. Factors for and against development will be weighed up in the balance of planning judgement.”

The Scottish Government’s Urban Rural Classification 2020 (May 2022)

Policies within NPF4 refer to using the Urban Rural Classification 2020. It is considered that this national classification system is an unrefined method for assessment in the Orkney context. It considers only population and accessibility in its classification of Scotland in terms of Large Urban Areas, Other Urban Areas, Accessible Small Towns, Accessible Rural Areas and Remote Rural.

There is no consideration of facilities and services and the service provision our settlements provide to our rural areas and islands; and it does not appropriately reflect the local circumstances of Orkney.

Accessibility is based on drive times with some consideration of ferries. We consider having an assessment based on drive times is not reflective of the climate change agenda of NPF4 or the policy provisions on local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods. Driving as the mode of transport does not consider Orkney as a rural archipelago where journeys are made regularly by ferry and plane.

Therefore, it is considered that the six fold Urban Rural Classification 2020 is not appropriate for Orkney.

The Interim Spatial Strategy and the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017

For the review of the OLDP2017 we have completed significant work to look at the locations of facilities and services within Orkney considering what is important to the County in the development of sustainable opportunities for growth. This work backs up the work that was undertaken previously for the drafting of the OLDP2017.

The present Spatial Strategy for the OLDP 2017 has three classifications that acknowledge the facilities and services of the County and their inter-relationship with our rural areas and island communities.

The classifications are:

The Settlements of the Mainland and Linked Isles – settlements throughout this area are identified where there are services, facilities, retail, infrastructure, employment and centres of population are primarily located and act as service centres for our rural communities and non-linked isles. There are opportunities for sustainable development.

The Countryside of the Mainland and Linked Isles – provides opportunities for new sustainable economic development including that of new homes, whilst seeking to protect Orkney's landscape and natural environments for future generations.

The Isles Approach – development which supports permanent resident populations and are served by public transport services and does not place any unacceptable burden on existing infrastructure and services, will be supported.

The Interim Strategy

This Interim Strategy reflects the local housing outcomes of the HNDA and LHS. The Council's Interim Spatial Strategy for the purposes of interpreting NPF4 Policies will be defined as Settlements of the Mainland and Linked Isles, the Countryside of the Mainland and Linked Isles and the Isles as mapped and defined in the adopted OLDP2017.

In addition, the NPF4 definitions will be interpreted as follows:

The Spatial Strategy of the OLDP2017 reflects Orkney, the existing pattern of development, Orkney's distinct communities and looks to the future in terms of development aspirations for sustainable growth. By reading and applying NPF4 as a whole, this Spatial Strategy supports the Spatial Strategy and the Six Spatial Policies of NPF4 – Just Transition, Conserving and Recycling Assets, Local Living, Compact Urban Growth, Balanced Development and Rural Revitalisation.

The following classifications in NPF4 will be interpreted as:

Quality Homes – The Settlements of the Mainland and Linked Isles.

Rural Areas – The Countryside of the Mainland and Linked Isles.

Remote Rural Areas and Fragile Communities – The Islands Approach (Orkney Non-Linked Isles).