



*Our vision is to have a sustainable population and socially and economically thriving communities with a focus on our quality of life, natural heritage, and Gàidhlig language and culture.*

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE**  
**SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN**

For the Period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

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## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
KEY AREAS OF RISK FOR THE YEAR AHEAD .....	4
DELIVERING THE SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN AND ACHIEVING BEST VALUE .....	5
MEASURES AND ACTIONS.....	5
RESOURCING THE PLAN .....	8

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. I am pleased to introduce the Service Business Plan for 2024/25 which sets out our outcomes and priorities for the coming year. This is the main annual business planning document for the Chief Executive's Directorate. It reflects the Comhairle's key priorities as set out in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2027 and provides an overview of the service's main areas of activity. The Service provides a range of support both internally to the Comhairle and externally to, and on behalf of, the community. There are two service areas within the Service, the Chief Executive's Office and the Community Engagement Unit. Both services help to ensure that the Comhairle operates successfully in an increasingly complex and challenging environment, and although diverse, each service is essential to the running of the council and the delivery of its vision, values and priorities.
- 1.2. The **Chief Executive's Office** provides the necessary support to the Chief Executive, the Convener and Leader and provides the link between the political and organisational elements of the Comhairle. The Chief Executive is Head of the Paid Service of the Comhairle and is the Comhairle's chief policy adviser. He works with all services to provide sound, objective advice to the Comhairle, its Committees, Working Groups, and the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (OHCPP); to develop and maintain effective leadership; to provide strategic thinking and forward planning; to develop and support quality assurance; to represent and promote the Comhairle and the CPP; to promote continuous improvement; and to act as Returning Officer for all elections.
- 1.3. The Chief Executive's Office also provides a range of support both internally to the Comhairle and externally to the community and helps to ensure that the Comhairle operates successfully in an increasingly complex and challenging environment. The Service collaborates with Comhairle departments and external partner agencies in the efficient and effective development and delivery of major infrastructure investment projects achieving safe and high quality outcomes as part of the Capital Programme 2023-2028. The Service also includes technical oversight of the delivery of infrastructure projects as part of the proposed Islands Growth Deal and UK Government 's Levelling Up Fund projects.
- 1.4. The **Community Engagement Unit** works with community groups and provides support and equity across the Western Isles to strengthen the local economy, support resilient communities and quality of life. The Key areas of focus for the year ahead is to engage with community area forums and develop area wide mapping of community engagement services. There are four sections within the Community Engagement Unit: Communications; Community Learning and Development; Community Planning; and Community Wealth Building.
- 1.5. The Communications Team is responsible for Implementation of the Comhairle's Communications Strategy and media relations for the Comhairle and the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (OHCPP). The Community Learning and Development section focuses on Youth Work and Capacity Building, which are two of the national priority areas. As per the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the OHCPP have a duty to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) which sets out local priorities, aims, objectives and projected outcomes. The Community Planning section supports the Comhairle, as a member of the OHCPP, to work together with the Community to plan and deliver better services which make a difference to people's lives. The Comhairle is represented on the OHCPP Board by Elected Members and the Chief Executive. The Community Wealth Building section supports the delivery of the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) and other Government Funds, economic development community projects and, in doing so, supports socially and economically thriving communities of the Outer Hebrides.

Malcolm Burr  
Chief Executive



- 1.1.3. ID02 Unable to secure competitive and affordable construction tenders; reduced positive contribution to local economy.
    - *Risk Action:* Establish Corporate Construction Market Volatility risk register and action plan.
- 2.5 Elected Members can view the full risk register in the Comhairle’s performance management system, Interplan, within the Integrated Risk Management (IRM) module.

## DELIVERING THE SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN AND ACHIEVING BEST VALUE

### Strategic Outcomes

- 3.1 The Chief Executive's Directorate contributes to strategic outcomes 1.1.3: Investment in our buildings and infrastructure, 3.1.3 Planning and infrastructure meet the needs of our communities, 3.1.4: Our communities are safe, inclusive, and resilient and 4.1.1: Communities are empowered and continue to be at the heart of our decision making.

### Best Value

- 3.2 In working towards the four strategic outcomes, the Service aims to ensure that there is good governance and effective management of resources, with a focus on improvement, to deliver the best possible outcomes for the public and to make arrangements for the reporting to the public of the outcome of the performance of its functions. Table 1 lists the service outcomes established to support the delivery of the Service Business Plan (SBP) and to achieve Best Value.

Table 1: Service Outcomes

Delivering the SBP and achieving Best Value
<p><b>Service Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chief Executive's Directorate demonstrates the highest standards of integrity and transparency.</li> <li>• The Service communicates and collaborates effectively with colleagues, stakeholders and the communities in which we live and work.</li> <li>• Our customers receive quality technical and commercial advice in the development and delivery of major investment programmes and projects.</li> <li>• The Service demonstrates effective management of health, safety and welfare in the design, specification, procurement, construction and commissioning of major assets and infrastructure.</li> <li>• The Service demonstrates high standards of community engagement and community empowerment.</li> <li>• The workforce has the skills, flexibility, capacity and knowledge to provide infrastructure funding support to our communities.</li> </ul>

## MEASURES AND ACTIONS

- 4.1 The Accounts Commission’s [Best Value in Scotland](#) Report (2023) highlights “the pressures and spending constraints facing councils - increasing demand for services and a real-terms reduction in funding. In this context it is more critical than ever that councils secure and demonstrate Best Value.” The performance measures for the Chief Executive's Directorate are detailed in Tables 2 - 4.

- 4.2 The Corporate Strategy was reviewed in 2023 to ensure that it continues to state and communicate the ambition, aspirations and commitments of the Comhairle. The overarching aim and ambition of the Corporate Strategy 2024-2027 is to retain and increase the population of the Outer Hebrides. It takes account of national priorities and local needs but does not include actions to achieve its strategic outcomes as these have been developed by the Corporate Management Team and included in the appropriate SBP for monitoring and reporting to ensure that the Comhairle’s mission is achieved. The actions for the Service are detailed in Tables 5 - 7.

**How we will measure our performance**

- 4.3 The tables below are grouped by Strategic Priority and include the Corporate Strategy ‘Measures of Success’ Strategic Outcome KPIs approved by Comhairle in October 2021 that the Service contributes to and the LPIs chosen by the Service to strengthen its focus on improvement. There are no service prioritisation Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) SPIs aligned to the Chief Executive’s Directorate.
- 4.4 Each performance measure, where applicable, includes the baseline year and data, the target for 2024/25 and the aspirational target for 2030.

**Strategic Priority 1.1 Strengthen the local economy.**

**Strategic Outcome: 1.1.3: Investment in our buildings and infrastructure maximises effectiveness of available internal and external funding source**

Table 2: Performance Measures

Measure (KPI title)	Baseline 2019/20	Target 2024/25	Target 2030	Service
1.1.3. IDU001: Safety Management – Number of RIDDOR incidents.	0	0	0	Chief Executive's Office

**Strategic Priority 3.1 Support caring and resilient communities and quality of life**

**Strategic Outcome: 3.1.3 Planning and infrastructure meet the needs of our communities**

Table 3: Performance Measures

Measure (KPI title)	Baseline 2021/22	Target 2024/25	Target 2030	Service
3.1.3.CS01 - CE120: Percentage of respondents who felt lonely some, most, or all of the time during the last week.	2018 17.2%	20%	20%	Community Engagement Unit
3.1.3.CS02 - CE121: Proportion of adults who live within a 5-minute walk of their local green or blue space.	2019 82.6%	86%	90%	Community Engagement Unit
3.1.3.CS03 - CE122: Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that there are places where people can meet up and socialise	2019 49.1%	52%	60%	Community Engagement Unit

**Strategic Priority** 4.1 Deliver Community Leadership

**Strategic Outcome:** 4.1.1 Communities are empowered and continue to be at the heart of our decision making

Table 4: Performance Measures

Measure (KPI title)	Baseline 2021/22	Target 2024/25	Target 2030	Service
4.1.1. CE001b: Number of Local Media press releases (Trend KPI).	212	N/A	N/A	Community Engagement Unit
4.1.1.CS01 - CE123: 'Have Your Say' Consultations completed (Trend KPI)	2019 9	N/A	N/A	Community Engagement Unit
4.1.1.CS02 - CE124: 'Have Your Say' Community Participation Requests received (Trend KPI)	2017/18 1	N/A	N/A	Community Engagement Unit
4.1.1. CE001b: Number of Local Media press releases (Trend KPI).	2019/20 241	N/A	N/A	Community Engagement Unit

**What actions we will take**

4.5 The SBP strengthens the links with the Corporate Strategy and the LOIP. The actions take into consideration the key areas of risk identified at section two whilst focusing on progressing the strategic outcomes.

**Strategic Priority:** 1.1 – Strengthen the local economy.

**Strategic Outcome:** 1.1.3: Investment in our buildings and infrastructure maximises effectiveness of available internal and external funding source

Table 5: SBP Actions

Action	Service
1.1.3.1 Support delivery of RCGF (Regeneration Capital Grant Fund) economic development projects.	Community Engagement Unit
1.1.3.14 Support delivery of Island’s Programme Funding, Island’s Growth Deal – Destination Development and eligible Comhairle funding bids on behalf of community bodies.	Community Engagement Unit
1.1.3.15 Development and delivery of major infrastructure projects, meeting targets associated with safety management, programme, cost and quality.	Chief Executive's Office

**Strategic Priority:** 3.1 Support caring and resilient communities and quality of life

**Strategic Outcome:** 3.1.4 Our communities are safe, inclusive, and resilient

Table 6: SBP Actions

Action	Service
3.1.4.1 Ensure delivery, quality assurance and development of Youth and Community Work services to support the outcomes of the Community Learning and Development Plan	Community Engagement Unit

**Strategic Priority:** 4.1 Deliver Community Leadership

**Strategic Outcome:** 4.1.1 Communities are empowered and continue to be at the heart of our decision making

Table 7: SBP Actions

Action	Service
4.1.1.2 Support the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) to deliver the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and Locality Plans.	Community Engagement Unit
4.1.1.4 Review and deliver the Comhairle's Communication Strategy	Community Engagement Unit
4.1.1.7 Support delivery of the Comhairle's Community Engagement Strategy including Youth Voice and Community Voice opportunities.	Community Engagement Unit

## RESOURCING THE PLAN

- 5.1 The funding and staffing resources identified to implement our SBP is summarised in Tables 8 and 9 as per the budget approved by Comhairle in February 2024 and the annual budget setting salary estimates exercise.

### Revenue Budget 2024/25

- 5.2 The Chief Executive's Directorate has a Net Revenue Budget of £1.2m, which is allocated across the service within the sections detailed in Table 8.

Table 8: Net Revenue Budget by Service Profile 2024/25

Detail	£'000	%
Chief Executive's Office	319	27
Community Engagement Unit	872	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Capital Budget 2024/25

- 5.3 There is no Capital Budget for the Service.

### Service Employees

- 5.4 The Service has 18FTE employees working across the service within the sections listed in Table 9. We support these employees to deliver their duties through a range of policies including personal appraisal and a robust training framework.

Table 9: FTE Employees

Service Profile	Number of FTE employees
Chief Executive's Office	3.4
Community Engagement Unit	14.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>