

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION SERVICE: OUTCOME DELIVERY REPORT

Report by Chief Officer, Economic & Community Regeneration

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to present the half-year progress of the 2024/25 Strategic Priorities for the Economic & Community Regeneration Service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides a 2024 / 25 half year progress report on the strategic priorities aligned to the service. An update on key areas of strategic risk is included, along with progress on the strategic outcomes and the resources identified to implement the business plan.
- 2.2 Strategic risk is aligned with the Corporate Strategy 2024-2027. There are two key areas of strategic risk identified in relation to the work of the service, one with a High rating and one with a Medium rating. These are reduced to Medium and Low respectively after risk actions have been implemented. Strategic risk is monitored on Interplan and reported externally via the Comhairle's website. Graphical representation of the Comhairle's strategic risk is provided at paragraph 6.
- 2.3 The Business Plan is aligned to three strategic priorities, and the Service contributes to the fulfilment of ten strategic outcomes. Progress on the outcome delivery plans is detailed in the main body of the report at paragraph 7.
- 2.4 Full detail in regard to Business Plan progress for the Economic & Community Regeneration Service can be viewed at: [Service Business Plan Progress Reports](#). In line with Audit Scotland's recommendations, Elected Members are also encouraged to access the Comhairle's online performance monitoring and reporting system Interplan, which contains all departmental Business Plans. Interplan can be accessed at: [Interplan](#).
- 2.5 The Economic and Community Regeneration Service has a Net Revenue Budget of £3.2m for 2024/25. Due to the impact of the 2023 cyber-attack on the Comhairle's systems, it has not been possible to provide a mid-year Revenue Monitoring Outturn Report at this stage and it is hoped this information will be available for the next series of meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle notes the half-year progress of the 2024/25 Departmental Outcome Delivery Plans.**

Contact Officer: Anne Murray, Chief Officer, Economic & Community Regeneration
Background Papers: Corporate Strategy 2024-27

IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

Resource Implications	Implications/None
Financial	There are no financial implications associated with this Report
Legal	There are no legal implications associated with this Report
Staffing	There are no staffing implications associated with this Report
Assets and Property	There are no asset and property implications associated with this Report
Strategic Implications	Implications/None
Risk	Risk Management associated with the Service Business Plan is identified at paragraph 6 of the Report
Equalities	There are no identified equality issues within this Report
Corporate Strategy	The Service Business Plan is aligned with the Corporate Strategy 2024-27.
Environmental Impact	There are no identified environmental impacts within this Report
Consultation	There is no consultation associated with this Report. The Business Plan and the quarterly progress updates are published on the Comhairle's webpages.

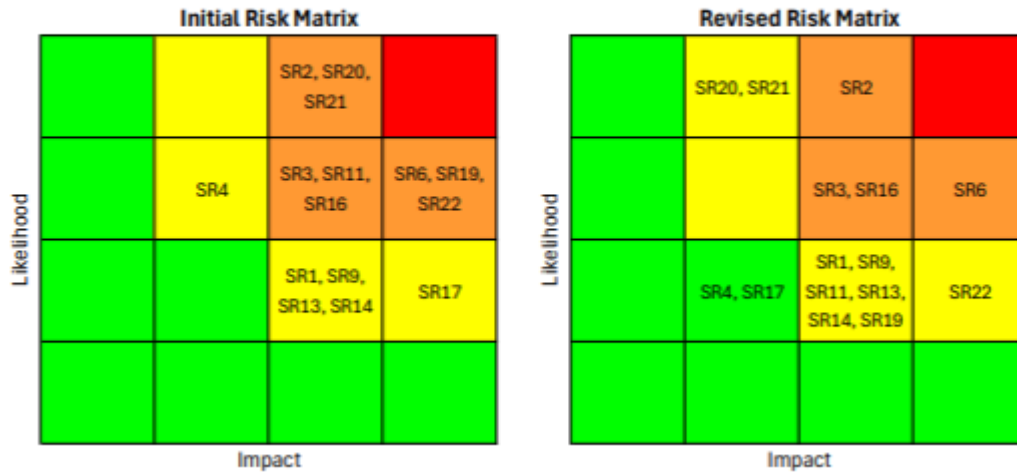
BACKGROUND

- 5.1 While previous quarterly reporting provided an update on business plan progress, this report is designed to provide Members with information on progress of the strategic priorities that the department is aligned to. The report includes an update on key areas of strategic risk, progress on the strategic outcomes that services contribute to, and the resources identified to implement the business plan.
- 5.2 The Corporate Strategy has four strategic priorities and 20 strategic outcomes.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Comhairle has identified 17 strategic threats and two are monitored by the Economic and Community Regeneration Service (SR4 and SR22). SR4 is rated Medium and SR22 is rated High. After controls are implemented, SR4 risk is rated as Low and SR22 is rated as Medium.
- 6.2 The full risk register details can be accessed via the [Interplan Risk Management Module](#).

STRATEGIC RISK MATRICES - September 2024
THREATS



OUTCOME DELIVERY PLANS

- 7.1 The Business Plan is aligned to three strategic priorities, and the Service contributes to the fulfilment of ten Strategic Outcomes. Progress on the outcome delivery plans is reported below under each of these.

Priority 1.1: Strengthen the local economy.

Outcome 1.1.1 Development projects associated with the Islands Deal are delivered.

- 7.2 Selection of a private project partner for the Islands Deal funded Net Zero Hub is under consideration and the project will be delivered in two phases: Phase 1 (2024-2030): production of Green Hydrogen for local demand, supply of Green Hydrogen for the conversion of SGN’s Stornoway Town Centre Gas Network and initial ship-borne export of Hydrogen derivatives through the new Deep Water Terminal; and, Phase 2 (2031 onwards) large scale production of Green Hydrogen powered by ScotWind Offshore Wind for ship-borne export as Hydrogen derivative initially to be followed by export as direct gaseous Hydrogen through the planned Hydrogen Backbone Link (HBL) subsea pipeline from 2035 onwards.
- 7.3 In respect of the Primary Industries strand of the Islands Deal programme, a contract for delivery of the Acarsaid Harbour development project in Eriskay was awarded to Breedon Hebrides, to the value of £483k. Completion of the contract was achieved during Q1, with the facility handed back to the Comhairle by the contractors by the end of June. Regarding the Vatersay Gear Storage project, plans have been prepared and the project is expected to commence during Q3. This project will facilitate diversification of fishing activities in the area and help bolster a remote fishing fleet. Work to identify where new Food Hub projects can be identified and developed - and to secure match-funding from a range of sources to enable existing projects to proceed as planned – continues.

Outcome 1.1.5 Growth in small and medium sized businesses demonstrated.

- 7.4 Business Gateway continued to provide a range of support to businesses across the Outer Hebrides. The support included advice, information, business skills courses and funding. Except for a 30% increase in business enquiries, activity levels for Q1 and Q2, although challenging, were similar when compared to the same period last year. Fewer local Workshops and Webinars were delivered, due to an increase in Webinars being delivered by the Business Gateway National Unit. The number of jobs supported was similar, resulting in almost 50 jobs created / safeguarded for the year to date. The number of young people dealt with was slightly down on the same period last year. The number of business start-ups supported during the period (25) was similar to the same period last year. Business

Gateway local promotion increased during the period, using digital platforms such as Facebook, resulted in a 30% uplift in business enquires. Wider economic factors still appear to be having a negative impact on business confidence and activity levels as many of the projects coming forward are relatively small scale.

- 7.5 Business Gateway dealt with 238 business enquiries – i.e. 120 pre-start enquiries and 126 existing businesses, which was almost 30% higher than the same period last year. Young people accounted for about 15% of all enquiries received, which is similar to last year. During the period Gateway also supported 25 full and part-time start-ups, which are expected to create 19.5 FTE jobs initially. In addition, 10 existing businesses, which is the same as last year, were supported to achieve modest levels of growth - which will help to create or safeguard 13 FTE jobs. The split between male and female was as follows: start-ups (18 M, 10 F), growth businesses (7 M, 5 F) and business enquiries (114 M and 118 F). Business Gateway Outer Hebrides compares well to other Business Gateways in Scotland – to date it dealt with the most enquiries per 10k of working population (203.9), with Orkney next at 92.37. In terms of start-up per head of population, Business Gateway Outer Hebrides also fared well, fourth highest out of 32 Gateways. The lowest was 3.62, the highest was 18.02 and for this area it was 16.1.
- 7.6 Business Gateway delivers several grant and loan schemes aimed at encouraging business development. During the first half of 2024-25 – 10 businesses were supported with grant funding totalling almost £22,212 and loan funding totalling £4,000. During this period, one investment was made in the fisheries sector.

Priority 3.1: Support resilient communities and quality of life.

Outcome 3.1.1 The Gaelic language, natural heritage and cultural of our communities is supported and promoted.

- 7.7 During the period, work commenced with Nature Scot and Community Landowners on projects to be funded through the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund. However, that funding stream was withdrawn at short notice and is currently on hold, which will impact on progress against the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 7.8 The service continued to work with the Tourism Leadership Group on various visitor economy priorities and to work directly with the sector through its representative body, Outer Hebrides Tourism, to support implementation of the Tourism Outer Hebrides 2030 visitor strategy. Considerable focus in the period with regard to the introduction of the Transient Visitor Levy and this is set to continue for the remainder of the financial year. Comhairle will shortly be establishing a working group to develop proposals and carry out wider consultation with the sector on priorities for Transient Visitor Levy investments.
- 7.9 Utilising Scottish Government Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme 2023-24 funding, the Comhairle commissioned a study into Rural and Agricultural Development - as a collaboration project - jointly with Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council, HIE and the three island areas' CLLD LAGs. The study focused on how the new Agricultural Bill would affect Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides uniquely, in order to maximise its potential across the three islands areas. The report was published and workshops held at the Comhairle subsequently to discuss its findings. Comhairle representatives attend meetings of the Scottish Government Cross-Party Group on Crofting - which includes MSPs, Crofters Commission representatives and other relevant stakeholders/ agencies - in order to represent the views of the Outer Hebrides crofting sector at these meetings. The Comhairle continues to work with partners - including SCF and HIASG (Highlands & Islands Agriculture Support Group) in order to ensure any emerging replacement schemes deliver benefits for the Outer Hebrides Crofting sector. A consultation on the new Crofting Bill was released and officers attended consultation meetings held across the islands, in addition to responding to the consultation. A report on the

consultation was presented to the Primary Industries MOWG and Sustainable Development committee.

- 7.10 A Report on Tasglann nan Eilean's Forward Plan and suite of policies to guide the delivery and strategic objectives of Tasglann nan Eilean (the Comhairle's archive service) over the next four years was submitted to the Sustainable Development Committee on 24 September 2024 and approved by Comhairle. The report detailed that when Tasglann nan Eilean relaunched at Lews Castle in 2016 it had been an ambition to apply for Archive Service Accreditation, but due to the level of resource which has been available to the service in terms of budget and staffing, this is not currently a realistic aspiration. The detrimental effect of the cyber-attack on data and information systems also makes accreditation an unrealistic goal at present. As this SBP Action cannot be taken forward it has, therefore, been marked as complete.
- 7.11 Heritage Service staff continue to research and plan the 2025 Emigration Exhibition 'Cianalas 's Dochas' which will be on display in both museum venues from end May – end Oct 2025. Discussions taking place with National Museums Scotland regarding temporary loans for both Museum nan Eilean Stornoway and Benbecula in conjunction with the emigration exhibition. Plans have also commenced for an Emigration Conference in early October 2025. Discussions have also taken place with the Flemming Collection, the Scottish National Mining Museum and with the Scottish Diaspora Tapestry regarding loans for 2025.
- 7.12 Tasglann nan Eilean is working on a partnership project 'Following the Fish' with Highland Archive, Suffolk Archive and Norfolk Records Office to research the stories of the women who worked as Herring Girls, following their stories through their journeys. This will result in an online and travelling exhibition in 2025 which will open at Highland Archive Centre in Wick. The Heritage Service worked in partnership with the National Library of Scotland and the National Library of Wales to preserve and digitise the historically important Chapman Gibbs 1817 'Plan of the Island of Lewis', which is part of the collections of Western Isles Libraries.
- 7.13 Due to the impact of the criminal cyber incident experienced by the Comhairle in November 2023, we were required to alert Museum and Galleries Scotland as our Accreditation body due to our collections data being inaccessible. The Accreditation Panel's decision was to reduce our accreditation level from Full Accreditation to Provisional Accreditation (for 12 months). Actions are now being progressed to enable full accreditation to be regained.
- 7.14 The Heritage Service continues to support Comann Dualchas Innse Gall (Outer Hebrides Heritage Forum) in implementation of the Great Place Strategy. The Heritage Forum have identified priorities from the Great Place Strategy to take forward, including retaining the Heritage Forum Coordinator and two new posts to support them. Work to secure match funding is ongoing. The Heritage Trails post (funded by Scottish Government / hosted by CnES within Heritage Team) submitted a successful application to Museum Galleries Scotland in partnership with the Heritage Forum, in relation to the project, 'A'togail suas an Dualchais tro na h-Eileanan an Iar | Heritage Building in the Outer Hebrides'. Through research, training and skills development, the project will support museums and heritage organisations with digital development such as marketing, social media and outreach, and will improve access to and quality of information on heritage sites and museums in the area in a collaborative and networked manner
- 7.15 Work continued in delivery of the Comhairle's Gaelic Language Plan. In May, the Comhairle applied to Bòrd na Gàidhlig's new Strategic Stream fund for local authorities. This fund provides funding as a three-year package in order to allow for the development of strategically significant projects which will help implement organisational Gaelic Plans. This funding replaces Bòrd na Gàidhlig's annual Gaelic Plans Fund. The Comhairle submitted an application which sought support for the following: 1) a new Gaelic Communications Officer post, which would support the increased use of Gaelic in all Comhairle communications, internally, and in press releases and on all social media platforms; 2) a new Gaelic

Policy Implementation Officer post (0.4 fte), to assist in the implementation of the Gaelic Language Plan and Gaelic First Policy, liaising with section heads, setting targets, and reporting on progress, and; 3) the Gaelic Student Placement Scheme). Funding has been secured towards the Gaelic Policy Officer post and the continuation of the Gaelic Student Placement scheme.

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

- 7.16 The effects of the cyber-attack continue to impact the work of the Development Plan team, as we continue in the preparation of the new Local Development Plan, and maintenance of date socio-economic statistics and data. The annual programme of work (Development Plan Scheme) to maintain and deliver the Development Plan was consulted on and approved, and this continues to direct workstreams, and will be continuously monitored and updated taking account of internal and external parameters. In the past 6 months work on the new LDP, has included: stakeholder surveys (DM and Members); a series of further Key Agency Group workshops sessions covering Barra and South Uist; Planning training for Community Councils, engagement with various communities on the scope of Local Place Plans (LPPs); targeted groups' engagement; and the commissioning of an Infrastructure Capacity Study to inform the Evidence Report stage of the new Plan. This work has been underpinned by participation in training or key agencies' briefing around the new Development Planning process and the roll out of National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 including for community benefit, LPPs, climate data & action, fixed links, infrastructure levy, and strategic flood risk assessment.
- 7.17 Supplementary Guidance remains a key component of the current Development Plan providing more detail on technical or specialist policy areas. Work on a new Guidance for Minerals has resumed with a review of the 2023 Operators' Mineral Audit, though a number of new Mineral consents have been determined in the meantime. Revisions to the Guidance for Marine Fish Farming have been drafted but remains paused until further advice is received from the Marine Directorate in relation to a number of aspects being considered nationally.
- 7.18 Affordable Housing Supply Programme: The Affordable Housing Programme continues to make steady progress. There are currently 84 units at different stages of development. These can be broken down as follows:
- 84 Units currently on site Leverburgh (12) and Blackwater (72)
 - a further 38 units are going through assessment, financial appraisal, or Planning: South Lochs (4), Bernera (4), Scott Rd (24) and Leverburgh (6).
 - In addition, since the start of the current funding programme in 2018, a further 260 units have been completed at: Tom na Ba (4), Stag Road (12), Cleascro Road (10), Back Care Unit (3), Corran Cismul (6), Horgabost (4), An Glib (2), Mackenzie Avenue (50), Breasclate (10), Tolsta (4), Garrabost Care Unit (2), Torlum (2), Winfield (1), Scotland Street (6), Edgemoor (2), Garrynamonie (5), South Dell (6), Goathill (74), Shawbost (4), Tarbert (8), Howmore (4), Barvas (8), Balivanich (10), Crowlista (5), Cleit Barra (6) and Lochmaddy (12).
- 7.19 Homelessness Strategy: While the fundamental aspirations of rapid rehousing were not fully realised within the five years of the Comhairle's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 to 2023/24, work continues to build on the good progress which was made.
- 7.20 The average waiting times to being permanently housed in the Outer Hebrides increased by 5% to 268 days for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024. Lengths of stay in temporary accommodation for cases closed in the year increased by 13% to 215 days for the same period. Of the 83 households awaiting a permanent offer on 30 September 2024, 24 had been waiting for more than one year and seven for more than two years. Although this backlog has increased slightly from 2023/24, nine

households have received a provisional offer for a Blackwater property which, if all accept, will reduce the backlog to its lowest level since 2012.

- 7.21 HHP have agreed to continue to permanently house at least 25 single person homeless households in Stornoway for the year from June 2024. To date, eight allocations of this type have been made in 2024/25, representing 89% of all two apartment Stornoway allocations made.
- 7.22 The Comhairle has significantly reduced its overall usage of Bed and Breakfast for temporary accommodation. Only one household was accommodated by the Comhairle in this type of accommodation in the first six months of 2023/24 with a stay of six nights. This is a significant decrease from the nine households accommodated for an average length of stay of 32 weeks in 2019/20.
- 7.23 Eight households are currently being provided with housing first support in their permanent tenancy. All these tenancies are being successfully sustained. A further two households are being supported while they await an offer of a housing first tenancy. The Comhairle also works in partnership with HHP to provide support to tenants, when required, to prevent homelessness by offering support to those at threat of eviction because of rent arrears or antisocial behaviour.
- 7.24 Homelessness prevention will be a significant ongoing strategic focus for the Comhairle in light of new duties for public bodies included in the Housing (Scotland) Bill, introduced to the Scottish Parliament in March 2024. Detailed guidance is anticipated to accompany the forthcoming legislation.
- 7.25 Local Housing Strategy: Good progress had been made with the development of the Comhairle's new Local Housing Strategy. Community Consultation took place in the early summer 2024, providing very useful information on housing aspirations. A well-attended Housing seminar was held in May 2024 involving local partners. Again, this resulted in valuable feedback. The overall project plan for the LHS has slipped due to staff sickness. A review of the project plan will be carried out once the Housing Services Team is back to full strength.

Outcome 3.1.4: Our communities are safe, inclusive, and resilient.

- 7.26 During the first two quarters of the year Building Standards have maintained an effective Building Standards service to customers despite the disruption caused by the loss of the Uniform case management system. Monitoring and reporting of performance continues to be affected but contingency systems have been put in place on a temporary basis and reporting to the Scottish Government against the Building Standards Performance Framework should recommence during quarter 3. The Scottish Government is being kept informed of progress in Cyber-attack recovery. The IDOX Uniform systems are being rebuilt and are scheduled to become available during quarter 3. This includes the Public Access website that gives access to the public on up-to-date Planning and Building Standards information.

Outcome 3.1.5: Reduce inequality and poverty and promote social mobility

- 7.27 Outer Hebrides Fuel Poverty Strategy: The key activity is the delivery of the Energy Efficient Scotland (EES) programme (formerly known as HEEPS). The EES programme is delivered by Warmworks, the Comhairle's Managing Agent for the scheme, through a network of local sub-contractors. EES aims to deliver a range of insulation and energy efficiency measures to private sector households throughout the islands.
- 7.28 Warmworks is also the national agent for the Scottish Government's 'Warm Homes Scotland' scheme and is able to deliver both programmes locally.

- 7.29 Comhairle agreed to participation in the ECO4 Energy Efficiency scheme and it is expected that a protocol for delivering the scheme will be developed during Q3. The Comhairle is also investigating the possibility of re-introducing an ECO-Flex programme.
- 7.30 Now that the 1.8GW Western Isles Transmission Link project is in procurement by SSEN Transmission for delivery by 2030, work on the Onshore Wind Shared Ownership Joint Venture between the Comhairle and The Stornoway Trust has been reactivated. Shared Ownership onshore and Power Purchase Agreement offshore could form the basis for accessing renewable electricity for retail to island consumers at discounted price. Developers are willingly engaging in this process and a brief for expert advice around the structure and operation of a Local Energy Economy is in preparation.

Priority 4.1: Be a sustainable and inclusive Council.

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

- 7.31 Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme: For 2024-25, the Scottish Government allocated an initial funding tranche of £6.7m to support CLLD across Scotland, of which an initial allocation of £219,077 (£120,555 revenue and £98,523 capital) has been made available to the Outer Hebrides Local Action Group (LAG). It is hoped that additional funding will become available at a later stage. Each CLLD area is managed by a LAG made up of public, private and third-sector representatives.
- 7.32 The LAG uses earlier studies, learning from previous Programmes, feedback from the community and members' personal knowledge and experience to prepare a local development programme - entitled its annual 'Community Led Vision' (CLV). For 2024-25 the LAG has agreed the following priorities:
- Community Wealth Building;
 - Supporting children and young people (with and through the OH CLLD Youth LAG); and
 - Dùthchas & Dualchas, and utilising this as a catalyst for economic development.
- 7.33 A set of second-tier priorities have also been identified, which the LAG will aim to support if funds allow, i.e.
- Working towards Net Zero;
 - Transport; and
 - Fair Work and Employability.
- 7.34 The 2024-25 CLLD Fund, which is expected to be used to allocate all the capital and possibly some of the available revenue, closed on 19th September 2024 and was significantly oversubscribed. The LAG expects to reach funding decisions in the near future. To put communities at the heart of decision-making, the LAG considered once again using Participatory Budgeting to allocate some of the funding. This was trialled in 2023-24 and was deemed a positive experience. Due to time constraints and the relatively small amount of funding available to the LAG, however, they concluded to revert to the tried-and-tested approach of the LAG scoring applications and awarding funding.
- 7.35 The LAG allocated £25,000 of its revenue budget to its Youth LAG who will be using some of their allocation to award their own fund, aimed in particular at benefitting young people in the Outer Hebrides. The YLAG Fund is expected to close towards the end of October.
- 7.36 The LAG is further considering undertaking a "road show" or other community engagement activity, to visit various communities throughout the islands, so that anyone interested can engage with them directly, find out more about CLLD, discuss projects and priorities, or raise concerns.

7.37 In relation to marine planning, historical files remain inaccessible, and work on the statutory terrestrial Development Plan has been prioritised. However, Planning staff continue to engage with Marine Directorate colleagues, and input to work to inform the new National Marine Plan 2.

Outcome 4.1.2 Reduction in our carbon footprint and development of an island route map to net zero.

7.38 The Comhairle / HIE: Innse Gall led Major Developments Forum is now operational and working well. There is full attendance at all meetings and good collaboration between developers emerging in areas like worker accommodation, peat management, freight logistics and combined project comms. Much work remains to be done and momentum will have to be maintained to ensure alignment between developers, maximum opportunities for the local supply chain and minimum disruption for the local community.

7.39 Northland Power have announced their Community Benefit commitment from the 'Spiorad na Mara' Wind Farm to the four land-owning Estates on the West Side. The commitment is £4.5m per annum, index linked from date of first production and running for the 35 year lifetime of the Wind Farm. This is the first formal commitment to Community Benefit from any ScotWind developer and represents the equivalent of the onshore Community Benefit standard of £5K per MW installed. Work is now commencing on the second pot of 'Spiorad na Mara' Community Benefit which will be applied to the wider Outer Hebrides area under the direction of the Comhairle.

7.40 The UK Government has purchased indicative figures for a Transmission Infrastructure Community Benefit Fund. If carried through to legislation, this could include £1,000 off electricity bills for ten years for households impacted by Transmission infrastructure, a lump sum of £200K per substation and a payment per km of transmission cable, overhead or underground. The final form of this scheme remains to be confirmed by the new Government.

Outcome 4.1.4 Efficient and sustainable services are provided to the community.

7.41 In June 2021, the Comhairle approved the prioritisation of two LGBF indicators for the Service areas relevant to this Report:

Sustainable Development Committee

- cost of museums per visit
- % of adults satisfied with museums and galleries

7.42 The relevant service areas continue to review budgets and activity with a view to achieving the outlined reductions and improvements.

Outcome 4.1.5 Effective governance of the Comhairle is in place.

7.43 The Comhairle has suffered a criminal cyber incident which has required significant work in the recovery of systems and data. The Corporate Business Continuity and Incident Management Structures have been deployed successfully in managing business as usual and the recovery process. A risk assessed approach is being utilised for the revised system and data storage requirements. Information and experience are being shared with other local authorities and national agencies.

RESOURCING THE PLAN

Financial Performance

- 8.1 The Economic and Community Regeneration Service has a Net Revenue Budget of £3.2m for 2024/25. Due to the impact of the 2023 cyber-attack on the Comhairle's systems, it has not been possible to provide a mid-year Revenue Monitoring Outturn Report at this stage and it is hoped this information will be available for the next series of meetings.

Workforce Planning

- 8.2 Workforce Plans for each individual service area will be reviewed in Q3.

CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Economic and Community Regeneration Service has maintained good controls on business planning and governance during the first two quarters of 2024 / 25. In addition to its core functions and responsibilities, key tasks include working to review, update and implement the Comhairle's Corporate Strategies and political priorities while delivering a strong set of services on behalf of the community across a broad service portfolio and seeking to take best advantage of new and emerging economic opportunities.