



Report to: Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee **Meeting Date:** 25 November 2025

Report by: Executive Director Education, Housing and Communities

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Subject: Performance Report (Education Resources and Communities) – Period to September 2025

1. PURPOSE

☒ For Decision ☐ For Information

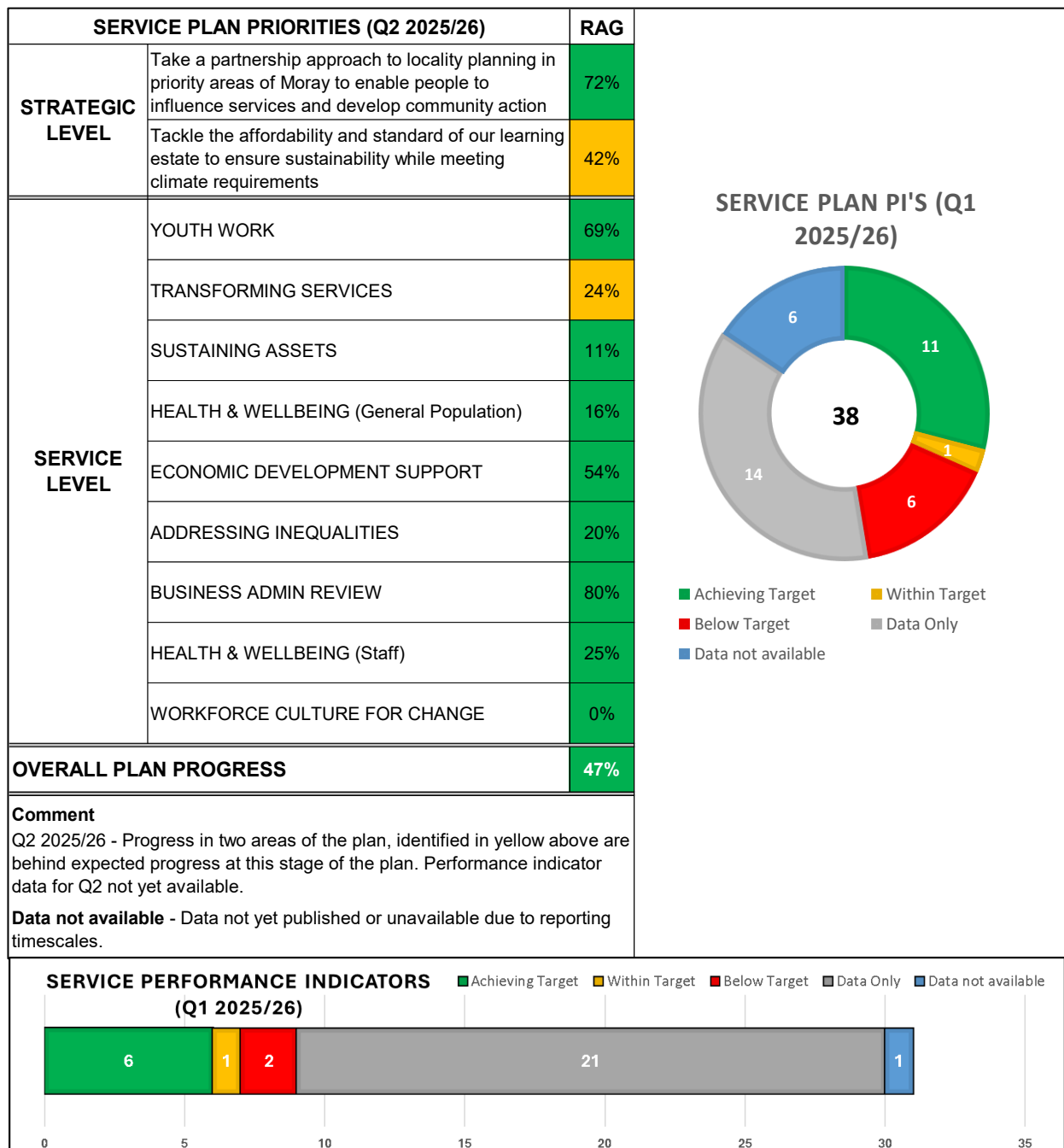
- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to scrutinise performance in areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2025 and note actions being taken to improve performance where required.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Committee in terms of section III (A) (4) of the Council's Scheme of Administration to monitor performance in accordance with the Council's Performance Management Framework.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report identifies the progress of Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators highlighting areas of good progress and areas where there have been challenges. Mitigations and actions taken to address challenges are detailed within the body of the report.

Quarter 2 performance indicator results, and complaint data was not available at the time of reporting, therefore narrative relates to quarter 1 data. Service Plan action updates relate to quarter 2.

The Service Plan has been designed as a 3-year Service Plan (2025-28) with several actions carried forward from the previous plan already well progressed. At the end of September, Service Plan actions are 47% complete and with most actions progressing well. Three Strategic Level actions have completed within the first half of this reporting year. One Strategic and one Service Level actions have not completed by due dates.



3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- i) Scrutinises performance in areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2025 and note actions being taken to improve performance where required.

Iain Sneddon
Research & Information Officer

4. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 4.1 Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities.
- 4.2 Service Plan actions are weighted to reflect priority ratings. Actions with higher priorities receive greater weightings which contribute more to the overall delivery of the Plan. Progress on Service Plan priorities and outcomes and key areas of operational performance is reported by exception, highlighting successes and giving assurances around the challenges and actions to support. Links to Service Plan Actions, priority ratings and weightings and Performance Indicators can be accessed within the background papers section of this report.
- 4.3 Progress on Service Plan priorities and outcomes and key areas of operational performance is reported by exception, highlighting successes and giving assurances around the challenges and actions to support. Links to Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators can be accessed within the background papers section of this report.
- 4.4 Complaints are reported in terms of time taken to respond, outcomes and learning points. Links to Complaints tables can be accessed within the background papers section of this report.
- 4.5 Latest Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) results for 2024/25 are published throughout the year with final refresh of data around June 2026. The full suite can be view via the [LGBF Dashboard](#). Published indicators for this service have been incorporated with the relevant section of this report depending on whether used to evidence progress against strategic, service level or service performance priorities. LGBF indicator targets and RAG status in the backing tables is now based on ranking thresholds aligning with exception reporting.
- 4.6 The Sustainable Development Statement was approved by the Corporate Committee on 5 November 2024 (para 16 of the Minute refers). The Statement draws out the way in which sustainable development is embedded in the Corporate Plan 2024-29 and wider corporate policies, strategies, and plans with progress being reported through several updates and reports, one of which is quarter 4 performance reporting. Service Plan actions and indicators that underpin the delivery of Sustainable Development Goals are highlighted in the backing table documents and comment where relevant is incorporated in this report. An overview of progress will be presented in the annual Corporate Plan progress update.

5. PROPOSALS

Successes – Service Plan Strategic & Service Level Outcomes and operational Service Performance

- 5.1 The digital engagement platform ‘Moray Engage’ went live during quarter 2. Designed as the primary method of engaging with the public on local and strategic level projects, the platform already has several projects ongoing. Even at this early stage, the signs are encouraging with many council services using the platform to consult across different workstreams. Action STRAT ERC 1.6 25-28

- 5.2 The learning estate public engagement process on sustainability options is complete, with an information report on the progress of the learning estate review submitted to this committee. A final report detailing findings and recommendations is to be presented to this committee in March 2026. The process took 20 months to complete with the final Associated School Group (ASG) (Lossiemouth) completing during quarter 1 2025/26. Action STRAT ERC 2.6 25-28
- 5.3 The recommendation to close Crossroads Primary school was approved at the meeting of this Committee on 13 May 2025 (para 10 of the minute refers). The Council decision to close the school was approved by Scottish Government Minister on 15 Jun 2025. The surplus report has been issued to the Asset Management Working Group with handover finalised in September. Action STRAT ERC 2.7 25-28
- 5.4 Targeted youth work to address wellbeing and employability for S3 pupils is progressing well. The Employability Summer Programme to help young people transition from school into the workplace was well attended, with all 26 participants moving on to positive destinations. Along with other activities the programme has contributed to improving the annual participation measure, with the Moray proportion now being 1% higher than the national average. SERV ERC 1.1 25-28, Pls ERC023 & ERC023a
- 5.5 Income raised from admissions to leisure services continues to increase. In quarter 1 £530,172 was raised, significantly more than the corresponding quarter of 2024/25 (£492,192), showing a 7.6% increase in income. Pls ERC018 & ERC018a.
- 5.6 Attendances at both Moray Council swimming pools and fitness facilities remain comfortably above target at the end of quarter 1. Pls EdS407.1 & EdS407.2
- 5.7 The proportion of both freedom of information (99.4%) and data protection (100%) requests responded to within respective timescale achieved target in quarter 1. Pl CE015 & CE037

Challenges and actions to support – Service Plan Strategic & Service Level Outcomes and operational Service Performance

- 5.8 The long-term investment strategy in development of ASG options was unable to complete by end of June 2025 with resourcing proving difficult and other service priorities taking precedence. Elected Members will be briefed of initial findings at this Committee, with a final report planned by March 2026. Interdependancies with action STRAT ERC 25-28 slowed progress due to the length of time to undertake ASG consultations. Action STRAT ERC 2.4 25-28
- 5.9 The reduction of staffing hours and reallocation of budget within the music service ensures that the service can operate within budget for 2025/26. However, due to changing circumstances, a new operating model is not yet in place. The service will continue to operate within the current model whilst work continues in developing the new model. The pace of development will be dependent on available resource to undertake pilot engagement work and gather more evidence supporting development. Action SERV ERC 2.2 25-28

- 5.10 The implementation of a systems-based approach to strategy and planning is slower than anticipated due to lack of capacity. It is anticipated that the plan will be finalised with implementation initiated in the second half of 2025/26. PI ERC054
- 5.11 The percentage increase of participants involved in Active Schools and Community Sport targeted programmes dropped by 8% in quarter 1, in comparison with the corresponding quarter of 2024/25. 203 were involved in quarter 1 2025/26, 21 less than quarter 1 of 2024/25. PI ERC021
- 5.12 The proportionate increase in admissions to Moray Council leisure services (including Community Centres) continues to remain below target. Quarter 1 witnessed a decline in visits by 8.1%. As mentioned in para 5.6 of this report, overall income from leisure services has increased, this may indicate that people are visiting facilities and engaging in more than one activity with each visit. Three swimming pools being affected by unexpected short-term closures will have contributed to the decreased attendances. PI ERC 018b & ERC018c, PI ERC EdS407.5

Complaints and MP/MSP Enquiries

- 5.13 Three complaints were closed during quarter 1 (one Frontline & two Investigative). The frontline complaint was not upheld and both investigative complaints were upheld. Of the three complaints received, two were regarding Leisure services with the remaining complaint in relation to the use of common good land to build the new Forres Academy. None of the complaints were responded to within timescales, with the average response times being 6 days (frontline) and 47 days (investigative). Neither of the two investigative complaints were resolved within 20 days and neither were granted extensions. The resolution of one investigative complaint took 67 days, which has resulted in the high figure of average days to resolve. These delays are due to officer capacity being stretched across priorities.

Case Studies

- 5.14 Nothing to report

Consultation and Engagement

- 5.15 The ASG element of the Learning estate engagement has completed. The final phase is underway with a focus group for head teachers in Lossiemouth held during quarter 1.
- 5.16 The first of two Pre-Planning Application Public Consultations for the new Forres Academy campus was completed in Q1 and the second in Q2. 111 community members engaged.
- 5.17 As mentioned in para 5.1 of this report, 'Moray Engage' is now live with consultations ongoing across many Council services. Ongoing consultations include Forres Academy Relocation consultation, playparks, 20mph speed zones, Moray Champions Board, Buckie Harbour masterplan, Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Coastal Communities Grant Fund, Moray Growth Deal and Early Learning and Childcare Survey.

6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcome Improvement Plan)	X	
Policy and Legal		X
Financial		X
Risk		X
Staffing		X
Best Value and Transformation	X	
Property		X
Information Communications Technology/Digital		X
Equalities. Social Inclusion and Economic Impact		X
Climate Change and Biodiversity Impact		X

6.2 **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

Improved Collaborative Leadership, as part of continuous improvement through Best Value, will better enable the Council to fulfil the ambitions set out in its strategic plans.

a) Links to Council Corporate Plan – The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:

- ☐ Tackle Poverty and Inequality.
- ☐ Build Stronger Greener Vibrant Economy.
- ☒ Build Thriving, resilient, empowered Communities.

b) Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan – The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:

- ☐ Developing a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable economy
- ☒ Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.
- ☒ Empowering and connecting communities.
- ☒ Improving wellbeing of our population

6.3 **Policy and Legal**

The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

6.4 **Financial**

There are none arising from this report.

6.5 **Risk**

There are none arising from this report.

6.6 **Staffing**

There are none arising from this report.

6.7 **Best Value and Transformation**

How councils plan for, manage and report on performance is a key area of focus in external audit work, particularly on best value.

6.8 Property

None arising from this report.

6.9 Information Communications/Technology/Digital

None arising from this report.

6.10 Equalities, Social Inclusion and Economic Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

6.11 Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

None arising from this report.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the Executive Director Education, Housing and Communities, Service Managers, and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer and any comments made have been incorporated into the report

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 [Service Plan Actions](#)
[Performance Indicators \(Q1 2025/26\)](#)
[Service Performance Indicators \(Q1 2025/26\)](#)
[Service Complaints \(Q1 2025/26\)](#)