

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar



Action and KPI Progress Report

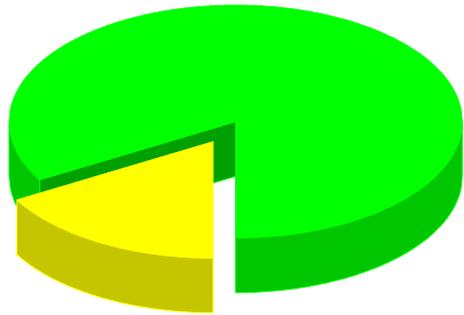
April 2023 - March 2024

STRATEGIC FINANCE

OVERALL PERFORMANCE - STRATEGIC FINANCE

Actions

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| On Track | 83.3% |
| Monitoring Required | 16.7% |
| Off Track | 0.0% |
| No Targets Set/ Ongoing | 0.0% |
| Total: | 100.0% |

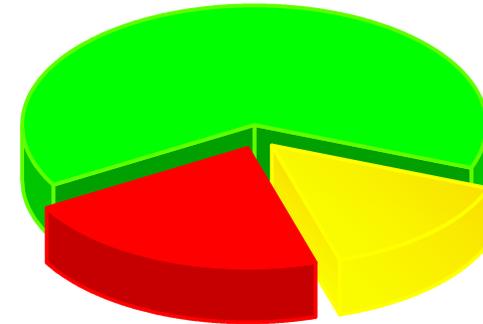


6 Actions reported on

- 5 Actions with at least 100% of target
- 1 Actions greater than 79 and less than 100% of target
- 0 Actions with less or equal to 79% of target
- 0 Actions with no target set / ongoing

KPIs

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| On Track | 64.3% |
| Monitoring Required | 14.3% |
| Off Track | 21.4% |
| Annual | 0.0% |
| Total: | 100.0% |



14 KPIs reported on

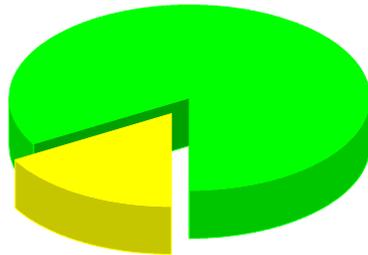
- 9 KPIs on track
- 2 KPIs monitoring required
- 3 KPIs off track
- 0 KPIs NA

Accountancy and Exchequer Services

Business Unit Overall Performance - Accountancy and Exchequer Services

Actions

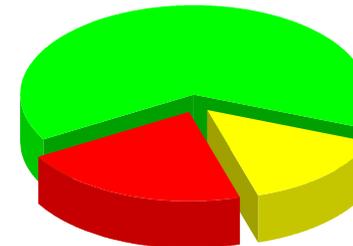
| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| On Track | 83.3% |
| Monitoring Required | 16.7% |
| Off Track | 0.0% |
| No Targets Set / Ongoing | 0.0% |
| Total: | 100.0% |



| | |
|----------|--|
| 6 | Actions reported on |
| 5 | Actions with at least 100% of target |
| 1 | Actions greater than 79 and less than 100% of target |
| 0 | Actions with less or equal to 79% of target |
| 0 | Actions with no target set / ongoing |

KPIs

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| On Track | 64.3% |
| Monitoring Required | 14.3% |
| Off Track | 21.4% |
| Annual | 0.0% |
| Total: | 100.0% |



| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| 14 | KPIs reported on |
| 9 | KPIs on track |
| 2 | KPIs monitoring required |
| 3 | KPIs off track |
| 0 | KPIs NA |

Comments - Accountancy and Exchequer Services

2023/24 End of Year (Q4) Progress Comment:

The continued delays with the completion of the audit of the Annual Accounts have been compounded by a requirement to incorporate the results of the Triennial Pension Valuation into the accounts, which requires an updated report from the Actuary. It is important to note that, had the audit been completed in line with the normal timetable, this would not have been an issue, as the draft valuation was not issued until mid-December 2023. All matters arising from the audit work were addressed and agreed with the auditor in January. The issues arising out of the conduct of the audit will be discussed at the Audit and Scrutiny Committee when the audit is finally completed.

Despite the Financial Management System not being available, the efforts of the accountants, working together with managers and support officers within service areas, ensured that the Budget and Council Tax were agreed on 20 February 2024, as planned.

Every aspect of the work within the service has been impacted by the cyber-attack. Although the introduction of manual/spreadsheet-based systems has meant that payments continue to be made and received, data for statistical returns and reports can be collated etc., this comes with a huge amount of extra effort, as routine tasks take a lot longer to complete. For example, the process for paying suppliers involves numerous checks to ensure bank details are correct, invoices aren't paid twice etc. The Payroll System is available, and although changes to working arrangements have been required, salaries are being paid and returns and payments made to HMRC and Pension Funds.

Perhaps the biggest impact is within the Revenues and Benefits Service, where the absence of a system has meant that new applications, changes in circumstances etc., have not been processed since the attack. Benefit and Welfare payments are being processed, based on previous data and where changes can be implemented manually. This also meant that the Council Tax and Rates bills for 2024/25 could not be issued in March, as per the normal timetable. However, work on rebuilding the system is progressing well and it is hoped that the bills will be issued in May.

Across the service, progress is being made on the rebuild of the systems, in conjunction with suppliers, who have, overall, been very accommodating in taking the work forward at pace. Regular updates on progress are provided to the Incident Management Team.

The rebuild works are at an early stage and the effects of the attack will continue to impact on the service for some time.

Ending on a positive note, the Faire Service, implemented a new Alarm Receiving Centre in January, becoming the first council in Scotland to go live with this new digital platform. Whilst this is an important milestone, the next phase of the digital transformation, which will involve the replacement of the equipment in individual properties, is yet to be developed and will prove challenging. The introduction of the new ARC also allowed Faire staff to move to the new base, situated within Seaforth House.

Norman Macdonald, Chief Financial Officer, 26 April 2024

Action Progress - Accountancy and Exchequer Services

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

Objective:

Service Profile

Accountancy

| ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION STATUS | START DATE | END DATE | % COMP. | TARGET | PERFORMANCE |
|---|--|---------------|------------|------------|---------|--------|---|
| 4.1.4.3.Co-ordinate the production of the Comhairle's budget in line with the timetable | Norman Macdonald - Chief Financial Officer | Completed | 01/04/2022 | 31/03/2027 | 100% | 100% |  GREEN |

ACTION PROGRESS COMMENTS

A financial consultant has been engaged to take forward the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. This will form the basis of the budget for 2024/25 and provide indicative figures for the following two years. Initial presentations and discussions on the process have taken place with the Budget Board and Corporate Management Team. More detailed, service specific discussions have also taken place with Heads of Service and managers. It is planned to issue a template to Members by the end of July, providing service level budget and

background information, to allow some initial thoughts to be gathered on service priorities, savings etc.
 Update 11/10/23: The Draft MTFS has now been submitted to the Chief Executive, with further discussion to be undertaken with the Budget Board. Service Managers have completed templates, detailing the impact of savings/budget reductions of 5% and 10%, and this again will be submitted to Budget Board for initial discussions. Members have also requested "line by line" budget date and this is in the process of being collated.
 Update 29/01/24: Meetings of the Budget Board (2) and a Budget Workshop have been held to consider the savings proposals and to look at the budget lines in detail. Cash Planning Limits, based on the best estimated available, have been issued to services with a view to these being submitted at the beginning of February, to enable the budget reports to be prepared for Committees. These CPLs are still subject to change as the budget as the savings required to bridge the budget gap have still not been fully realised.
 Update 31/03/24: Budget and Council Tax set on 20 February 2024.

Service Profile

Accountancy

| ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION STATUS | START DATE | END DATE | % COMP. | TARGET | PERFORMANCE |
|---|--|---------------|------------|------------|---------|--------|---|
| 4.1.4.4. Produce Annual Accounts by the statutory deadline with no qualifications | Norman Macdonald - Chief Financial Officer | In Progress | 01/04/2022 | 31/03/2027 | 95% | 100% |  YELLOW |

ACTION PROGRESS COMMENTS

The Draft Annual Accounts were approved for submission to Audit Scotland by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 28 June 2023. Audit Scotland will commence detailed audit work towards the end of July, slightly later than planned, with the aim of the final accounts being signed off sometime in October.
 Update 11/10/23: Progress on the completion of the audit by the external auditors, will now be delayed until the end of November.
 Update 29/01/24: The detailed audit work has been completed but the audit opinion has not been issued. Late completion of audits has been an issue since the Covid Pandemic, due to resourcing issues within the external audit team.
 Update 31/03/24: Continued delays with the issuing of the audit opinion have meant that, as a result of the Triennial Pension Valuation now being issued, these results are now required to be incorporated into the Accounts. This will require updated reports from the Actuary, which will not be available until the end of April, delaying the audit even further. These late audits are unacceptable as they impact on other works within the Accountancy section.

Service Profile

Customer Services

| ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION STATUS | START DATE | END DATE | % COMP. | TARGET | PERFORMANCE |
|---|--|---------------|------------|------------|---------|--------|--|
| 4.1.4.9. Review and develop the Customer Service Strategy for implementation within the Comhairle term. | Malcolm Macpherson - Customer Services Manager | Completed | 01/04/2022 | 31/03/2024 | 100% | 100% |  GREEN |

ACTION PROGRESS COMMENTS

The Comhairle's Customer Service Strategy has 4 key strategic aims:
 To provide a consistent, corporate approach to customer service delivery, guided by our customer care standards;
 To achieve a high level of customer satisfaction and to use Customer views to help improve and shape future service delivery.
 To increase the range of services provided through a corporate team, based on convenience to the customer;
 To provide customers with the most cost effective channel for the service they need;
 The gradual shift to on line service delivery accelerated significantly during the pandemic and continues to increase. A corporate standard on how best to deliver services based on ensuring accessibility, accommodation and resources will need to be agreed across service areas.
 Further dialogue planned with service areas on how best to ensure consistency in managing customer contact. This should be discussed in tandem with wider accommodation plans.
 Work will continue with service areas as their accommodation plans become clearer. Face to face service delivery has plateaued after a small increase as restrictions eased. Developing an appropriate channel mix will determine customer satisfaction with service areas.

 CMT are currently undertaking a strategic self-assessment using PSIF methodology. One element of this focuses on our ability/capacity to deliver services based on customer needs. This self-assessment will inform the customer service and digital strategy, and provide further insight into the optimal use of corporate assets.
 Continued work to develop optimum channel mix based on service area resources and asset management plan.



Focused has moved to develop interim solutions and support services recover from the November 2023 outage. An interim website has been developed with basic online forms to handle service requests and enquiries. Telephone capacity has increased with a new phone system being rolled out over the 1st quarter of 2024. CS will continue to field enquiries for service areas and support recovery of key back office systems. The customer service strategy will be reviewed in the context of the cyber incident and how best to support services provide a consistent level of service with the resources available. Particular focus will be on channel shift and customer contact and how best to deliver services efficiently whilst ensuring they are accessible to all.

Service Profile

Payroll and Business Management

| ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION STATUS | START DATE | END DATE | % COMP. | TARGET | PERFORMANCE |
|---|--|---------------|------------|------------|---------|--------|---|
| 4.1.4.18. Implement the Accountancy and Exchequer Services budget savings as agreed by the Comhairle. | Norman Macdonald - Chief Financial Officer | Completed | 01/04/2023 | 31/03/2024 | 100% | 100% |  GREEN |

ACTION PROGRESS COMMENTS

The savings required to bring the budget with cash planning limits have already been built into service budgets and there are currently no significant issues identified. The outturn position will continue to be monitored and any issues highlighted.

Service Profile

Accountancy

| ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION STATUS | START DATE | END DATE | % COMP. | TARGET | PERFORMANCE |
|--|--|---------------|------------|------------|---------|--------|---|
| 4.1.4.19. Implement and monitor the 2023-28 Capital Programme. | Norman Macdonald - Chief Financial Officer | Completed | 01/04/2023 | 31/03/2028 | 100% | 100% |  GREEN |

ACTION PROGRESS COMMENTS

"Implementation" of the Capital Programme is the responsibility of the lead project officers, this is not an action attributable to one individual. The monitoring of the programme is, however, the responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer and delegated staff. The first quarter Capital Monitoring Report was presented to Policy and Resources Committee in September and collation of the data for the second quarter is in progress and will be reported to Policy and Resources Committee in November.

Update 29/01/24: The second quarter Capital Monitoring Report was presented to Policy and Resources Committee in November and at that stage there were no significant areas of concern to report. The third quarter report was due to be presented to committee in February but the level of data available following the cyber-attack has meant that this was not possible. Work is continuing on developing a spreadsheet based system to allow budget monitoring to be undertaken and a report will be prepared once this is available.

Update 26/04/24: An Update Report was presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 24 April, based on data collated up until the end of January. Work is now progressing on finalising outturn figures for the year.

Strategic 4.1.5. Effective governance of the Comhairle is in place.

Objective:**Service Profile**

Payroll and Business Management

| ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION STATUS | START DATE | END DATE | % COMP. | TARGET | PERFORMANCE |
|--|--|---------------|------------|------------|---------|--------|---|
| 4.1.5.52. CIAP: Implement the Payroll & Expenses Internal Audit Follow Up Review (FU12-2021/22) recommendations. | Norman Macdonald - Chief Financial Officer | Completed | 22/04/2022 | 30/09/2023 | 100% | 100% |  GREEN |

ACTION PROGRESS COMMENTS

As per the Payroll & Expenses Internal Audit Follow Up Review (FU11-2021/22) 23 December 2022, Internal Audit note that out of the 11 follow up recommendations made in the original report 8 appear to have been fully implemented, and management have confirmed that the remaining recommendations will be implemented by 30 September 2023.

COMPLETE - 2.1 - Action recommended: The Business Travel Policy - Payment of Travelling Expenses and the Reimbursement of Expenditure to be refreshed stating the review date to ensure they continue to reflect best practice.

- Action By: Organisational Strategy Manager

- Progress as at 23/12/2022: A revised Business Travel Policy has been drafted and was recently circulated to the Business Manager for comment. Following any amendments, it will be presented to the JCC for consideration before going to the Comhairle for approval.

- Action outstanding: Policy to be finalised and submitted for approval.

Progress update: The Business Travel Policy has been considered by CMT and is waiting for the next JCC meeting before being presented to the Comhairle for approval.

COMPLETE - 2.3c - Action recommended: The Business Manager organises refresher training to the Heads of Service and Managers to reiterate the problems caused by departments not submitting information correctly and on time.

- Action By: Business Manager

- Progress as at 23/12/2022: Email sent out offering refresher training and guidance on the internet for managers. There is an open offer for training and this can be arranged to suit service requirements.

- Action outstanding: Training uptake to be looked at and sessions organised. Training is ongoing, therefore this specific action is regarded as being complete.

COMPLETE - 2.5 - Action recommended: The Comhairle considers that the current service level agreement be reviewed and updated to confirm that the Comhairle are getting value for money for the services undertaken.

- Action By: Head of Accountancy and Exchequer Services

- Progress as at 23/12/2022: Up to date SLA sent to LCC but not yet returned, Contract in place for another 2 years with HHP. All invoices raised monthly and quarterly for SLA.

- Action outstanding: There have been subsequent discussions with the college regarding the payroll contract, and they have indicated that the contract will cease, as a result of the college merger. Any issues with the revisions to the SLA are therefore deemed to be concluded.

Scorecard - Accountancy and Exchequer Services

| 2023/24 SBP PIs - Accountancy and Exchequer Services | Unit | Target | Actual | Indicator | Comments |
|---|------|--------|--------|---|---|
| 4.1.1. AFR029: Sundry Debts - Percentage collected in year. Responsible Officer: Jenny Macleod | % | 87.00 | 0.00 |  RED | Target set by service. |
| 4.1.4. AFR002: Percentage of customers satisfied with quality of Customer Services (Town Hall, Stornoway). Responsible Officer: Malcolm Macpherson | % | 0.00 | 0.00 |  GREEN | The Customer Satisfaction survey was previously carried out Face to Face from the Town Hall. This mode is on hold until we establish a permanent service base that would enable its facilitation. Currently looking at options including a more prominent online feedback method to encourage higher response rates. |
| 4.1.4. AFR008: Percentage of financial transactions paid on time to employees and members. Responsible Officer: Donella Brown | % | 95.00 | 99.98 |  GREEN | |
| 4.1.4.CS11 - AFR022(M): Time taken to process a Crisis Grant (Days). Responsible Officer: Jenny Macleod | Days | 2.00 | 1.44 |  GREEN | The Target of 2 days is set by Scottish Government. |
| 4.1.4. AFR023: Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) - Percentage collected in year. Responsible Officer: Jenny Macleod | % | 98.00 | 92.20 |  YELLOW | |
| 4.1.4. AFR027: The cost of collecting Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) per chargeable property. Responsible Officer: Donella Brown | £ | 58.00 | 0.00 |  GREEN | |
| 4.1.4. AFR028: Sundry Debts: cost per invoice. Responsible Officer: Jenny Macleod | £ | 15.00 | 0.00 |  GREEN | |
| 4.1.4. AFR030: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction: YTD average number of days taken to process a change in circumstances. Responsible Officer: Jenny Macleod | Days | 10.00 | 13.95 |  RED | The Target of 10 days is set by DWP for changes in circumstance. |
| 4.1.4. AFR041: Annual accounts completed on time and number of qualifications zero. Responsible Officer: Norman Macdonald | % | 100.00 | 90.00 |  YELLOW | Accounts completed but audit opinion not issued. |
| 4.1.4. AFR051: Cost of Payroll Service per transaction. Responsible Officer: Donella Brown | £ | 10.50 | 0.00 |  GREEN | |
| 4.1.4. AFR052: Cost of processing Creditor's invoices (£ per inv.). Responsible Officer: Donella Brown | £ | 2.60 | 0.00 |  GREEN | |
| 4.1.4. AFR054: Comhairle budget set in line with timetable. Responsible Officer: Norman Macdonald | % | 100.00 | 100.00 |  GREEN | |

| 2023/24 SBP PIs - Accountancy and Exchequer Services | Unit | Target | Actual | Indicator | Comments |
|--|------|--------|--------|--|--|
| 4.1.4. AFR065: Percentage of Registration entries without corrections (Jan-Dec). Responsible Officer: Malcolm Macpherson | % | 94.00 | 96.28 |  GREEN | Target set by service. The registration KPI is determined by District Examiners from National Records of Scotland. Please note that the figure reflects events registered annually i.e. January – December of that year. |
| 4.1.4. AFR094: Average time taken to complete a financial assessment. Responsible Officer: Jenny Macleod | Days | 30.00 | 61.15 |  RED | Processing time based on when all the information is received from the service user. |