



From mountain to sea

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Aberdeenshire Council: Annual Performance Report 2024-25

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Welcome



Jim Savege
Chief Executive

This Annual Performance Report is the first report aligned to our 2024-2029 Council Plan and offers a balanced view of our performance over the last year, focusing on our achievements and areas for improvement. A well-rounded perspective remains essential as we continue our pursuit of improvement and excellence in delivering for our community, especially in the face of what may be the most testing financial environment the public sector has ever encountered.

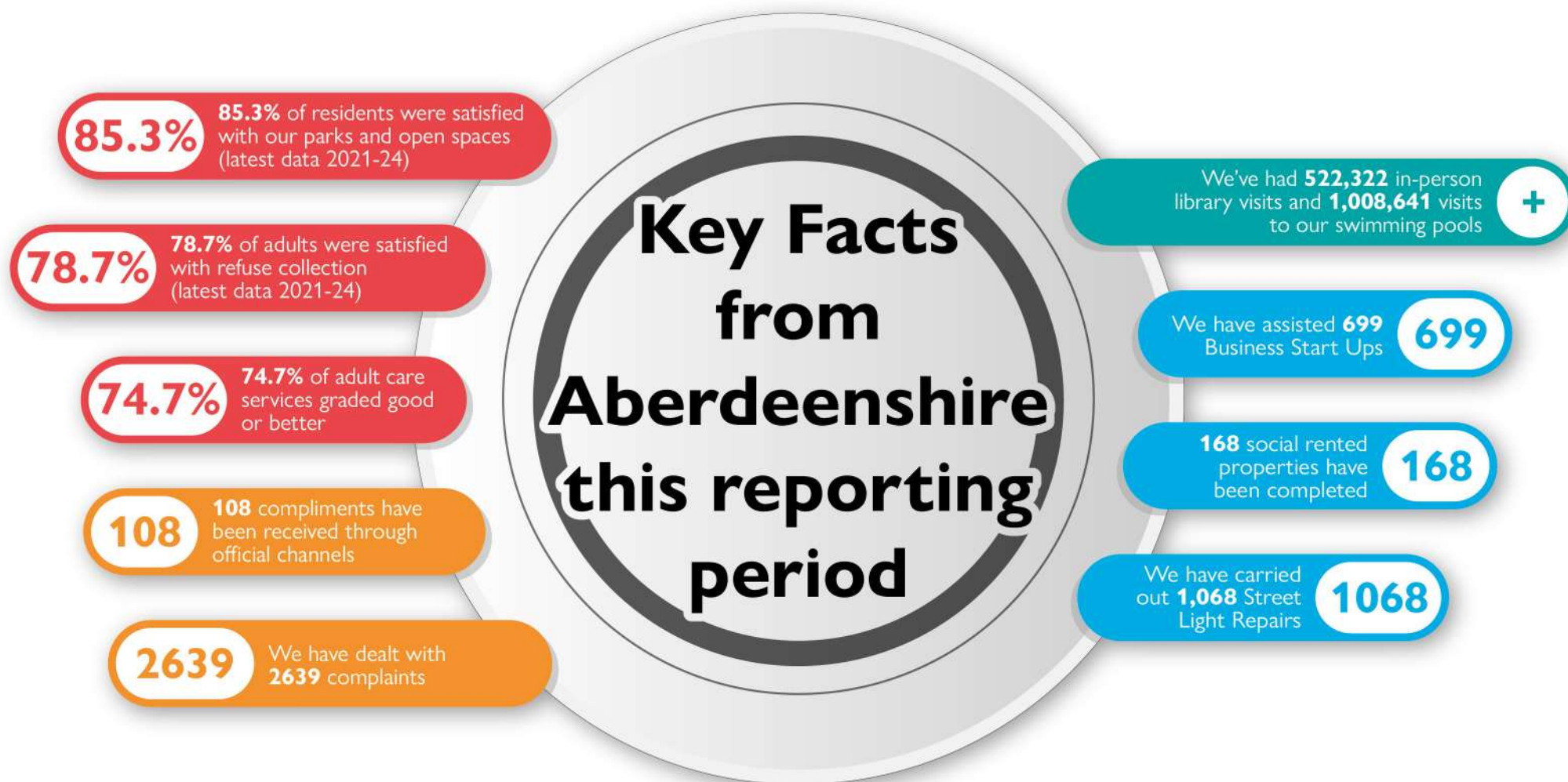
This report details our performance from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 against the strategic priorities in the Council Plan 2024-29. Overall, we are performing well against our priorities, with the majority of indicators for each of our three priorities, Connected Communities, Sustainable Economy and Living Well Locally meeting or exceeding expectations.

It is important to acknowledge trends observed across all local authorities in Scotland indicate that performance improvements against the Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators have slowed. However, the data shows that Aberdeenshire Council continues to compare favourably to the Scottish average across the majority of these indicators.

In presenting this report, we reaffirm our commitment to transparency and our determination to not only recognise our achievements but to reflect on the lessons learned. With a clear understanding of the pressing need for transformational change across our organisation, we are focused on strengthening what we do well and confronting the areas where we must do better.

This report marks a pivotal moment - one that reflects where we've been, and more importantly, where we need to go. With renewed purpose, we move forward - focused, accountable, and ready for what is next.

Delivering Aberdeenshire Council Services



Our Council Plan 2024 - 2029

Our Council Plan sets out our priorities for 2024-29. Aberdeenshire is a great place to live and work - with proud, resilient communities and thriving, diverse businesses. We don't take this for granted and recognise our role in maintaining and building on that success, working in partnership with communities and businesses across Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire Council must adapt to significant demographic changes and financial constraints. Our funding is not keeping pace with the growth and changes in our communities, along with their needs and expectations. By 2030, Aberdeenshire's population over 65 will rise by 28%, while the working-age and young populations are projected to decrease by 2% each. Additionally, a decline of up to 7% is expected in the school-age population across 11 of 17 school clusters. All this means we must review our priorities and focus on where we can make the greatest impact with the money we have.

Everything we do will consider the impact on our places and will be informed by the voices of our communities. We will involve communities and service users in shaping our services, including how and where they are delivered. We will work with local people to actively shape the places they live and work in, through supporting volunteering and helping them to make the best use of the assets and resources in their area.

Climate change and the drive to net zero will be at the heart of how we make decisions and deliver services to support the delivery of our strategic priorities in the long-term. Our decisions will be informed through the lens of climate change to support our communities to have a sustainable future.



Council Plan Performance Summary 2024 - 2025

Connected Communities

The outcomes that align to the Connected Communities priority are as follows:

- Support communities to articulate the challenges facing them and how we can achieve better outcomes together
- Collaborate with partners and communities to attract investment to enhance travel and transport connections between our towns and villages
- Encourage and promote active travel – supporting healthier, more sustainable and environmentally friendly travel options
- Improve digital connectivity by securing investment for better infrastructure for homes and businesses.

KEY STATISTICS:

TOTAL INDICATORS REPORTED

10

TOTAL INDICATORS MEETING/ EXCEEDING TARGET THRESHOLDS/GREEN

6

TOTAL INDICATORS NOT MEETING TARGET THRESHOLDS/AMBER/RED

4

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Engagement with the Council via social media

The annual total for this indicator for 2024/25 is 11,521,968. This illustrates the ‘reach’ of content posted on Aberdeenshire Council’s corporate Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) profiles. The corporate Facebook account has 47,864 followers, with content also viewed by those who don’t follow the account. The annual figure shows a rise in engagement from 2023/24 (which stood at 10,270,106) and in line with expectations. The figure is significantly above the 6,000,000 target. While communications and marketing staff take care to prepare content that is engaging, engagement is likely to be highest in connection with emergency messaging (storms, serious incidents, etc.) and changes to services which affect people directly.



The percentage of Class C roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

Aberdeenshire Council is responsible for 3,476 miles of carriageways and 904 miles of footways. Ensuring that the network is effectively maintained is a key priority for the Roads Service and asset management techniques are used to minimise the impact of ongoing budgetary pressures on road condition. The percentage of C Class Roads that should be considered for maintenance rose to 18% in 2024/25 but remains well below the Aberdeenshire target of 32% and below the Scottish Average of 34%. Aberdeenshire Council is ranked 1st in Scotland for this indicator.

The percentage of Unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

The percentage of Unclassified Roads that should be considered for maintenance rose to 26% in 2024/25 but remains below the Aberdeenshire target of 32% and below the Scottish Average of 36%. Aberdeenshire is ranked 2nd in Scotland for the third time in a row, placing it in the top quartile for this measure

Number of premises directly supported by the Digital Engagement Team

The number of premises supported in matters relating to digital connectivity by the Digital Engagement Team in 2024-2025 was 2,139 which far surpasses the 1,500 target for the year.

The length of path in the Core Paths Plan opened or improved annually

The total length of core path network upgraded by Aberdeenshire Council is 14.7km which is above the Aberdeenshire target of 10km. This includes work on the Deeside Way, Formartine & Buchan Way, Coastal Path, and other core paths across Aberdeenshire. The figure also includes non-motorised bridges which are part of the core path network.

KEY CHALLENGES:

Proportion of Properties Receiving Superfast Broadband

Aberdeenshire Council use the published Local Government Benchmarking Framework data to measure this indicator. The percentage of properties receiving superfast broadband within Aberdeenshire Council sits at 88.2%; this is based on the latest available published data by the Improvement

Service (2023/24). While Aberdeenshire Council is not performing as well as the Scottish average (95.9%), the latest data indicates that we are performing above the family group average of 86%.

Digital connectivity connections are continuously improving across Aberdeenshire, through ongoing commercial deployments from the telecoms industry, in addition to Government intervention through the Reaching 100% programme. With data provided by Ofcom as the industry regulator, in 2024, 8,453 new full-fibre broadband connections were built in Aberdeenshire, bringing availability of full-fibre broadband from 29.3% to 35.6% currently. Of these connections, 3,220 were provided to properties which previously did not have access to superfast broadband of at least 30Mbps. This has brought availability of superfast broadband up to 87.9% of all premises in Aberdeenshire, and 88% of all residential premises in Aberdeenshire, as of April 2025.

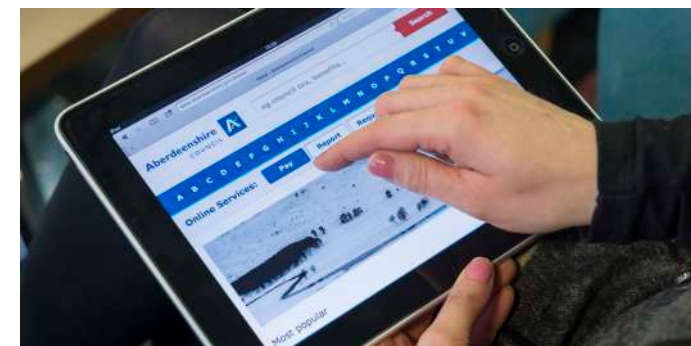
The Digital Engagement Team within Aberdeenshire Council continues to directly support residents, businesses and communities in matters relating to digital connectivity, having supported 2,200 individual premises in financial year 2024/25. The team has stimulated and supported the uptake of 1,057 Scottish Broadband Vouchers (SBVS) to deploy alternative broadband solutions for sub-superfast premises. This represents a 17%

uptake from eligible premises and remains the highest usage of SBVS vouchers in Scotland.

Within the next 12 months, we expect to see approximately 1,500 new full-fibre connections through the Reaching 100% programme, with significant further commercial deployments on top of this. In addition, UK Government's Project Gigabit is currently in procurement for the North East of Scotland and once closed will be providing significant public subsidy to a successful telecoms operator to build extensive full-fibre infrastructure in much of Aberdeenshire. It is expected that superfast broadband availability will increase to 90-91% in the next 12 months, with availability of full fibre expected to increase to around 42%.

% of engagement activity where feedback is provided within 3 months

The overall percentage of engagement activity where feedback is provided within 3 months for year 2024/25 was 79.75%. While Aberdeenshire Council is not meeting its annual target of 90%, we have seen increased performance over the year. The percentage of projects meeting the 3-month feedback target has steadily improved from 66% in quarter 1 to 92% in quarter 4. In the latest reporting window (quarter 4), only one project missed the target, and it was just slightly over the 12-week mark.



The % of people who believe that the council takes account of resident views:

Satisfaction with the statement 'The council takes account of residents' views has shown a steady decline over recent years. In 2024/25, only 41% of respondents agreed with this statement, down from 47% in 2023/24 and 56% the year before. This trend reflects a broader national pattern of declining satisfaction with public services and is well below the target of 75%. While there is already strong use of the Engage Aberdeenshire platform for community engagement, the need for clearer feedback has been emphasised. A recommended approach is the 'What you told us – What we're doing' format, which helps demonstrate how resident input influences decisions.

KEY REPORTS:

[Connected Communities Performance Report](#)

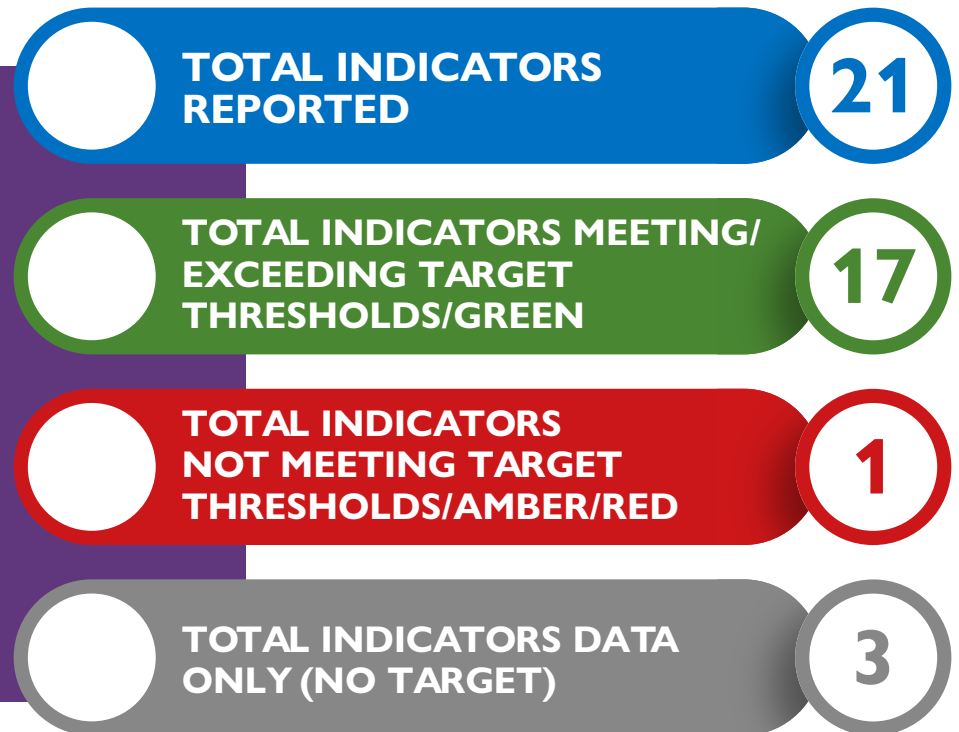
Council Plan Performance Summary 2024 - 2025

Living Well Locally

The outcomes that align to the Living Well Locally priority are as follows:

- Ensure children and young people have a greater say in matters that will affect them now and in the future.
- Promote greater participation by communities so we are working to shared and collective ambitions in our places.
- Improve the life chances of people at risk of falling into poverty, or already living in poverty
- Work with and support opportunities for residents to be healthy and active
- Facilitate the provision of affordable housing
- Help people to lead independent lives through prevention and early intervention, providing care and support to those most in need

KEY STATISTICS:



KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Percentage increase in Free School Meals (FSM) uptake in secondary schools for those entitled (S1 to S6)

The target for free school meal uptake among secondary school pupils is 50%. In the 2022/2023 financial year, uptake was 40%, rising to 46% in 2023/2024. This financial year (2024/2025), we've seen a significant improvement, with uptake reaching 63% among those entitled and present on the day.

Percentage of placements meeting looked after child's needs:

As we continue to develop our Promise to Care Experienced young people, independent Review Managers play a key role in assessing how well placements are meeting the needs of the children. This year, 99% of placements were found to be meeting those needs, exceeding our target of 95%. While this is a positive outcome, we remain committed to ongoing efforts to ensure every child's needs are consistently and fully met.



Total number of people who have participated in the services, opportunities, and events that the partners have collectively delivered in the year:

Over the past year, 32,701 people have engaged with the services, opportunities, and events delivered by our partners. This marks a significant increase from 23,482 in 2023/24 and surpasses the Aberdeenshire target of 24,000.

Number of households supported to reduce their housing costs

Projects currently in place have helped reduce household costs for 12,863 households—an increase from 12,704 in 2023/24 and exceeding the Aberdeenshire target of 12,000.



Total number of countryside ranger public, community group, and school sessions delivered

Across quarters 1 & 2 the Ranger Service delivered a total of 176 events/group sessions/school sessions. Across quarters 3 and 4 for 2024/2025 the Ranger Service delivered 27 events, 25 group sessions, and 47 school sessions. Whilst this represents a dip in numbers from quarters 1 and 2 this is an expected seasonal trend and performance is in line with our expectations and outcomes and meets our quarter 3 & 4 target of 80.

Events and sessions follow three aims: Promotion of our Natural and Cultural Heritage, Support Nature Connection in School Pupils and Young People, and Protect, Sustain, and Enhance care of our natural heritage. The third of these is not included within these figures as it relates solely to the provision of advice and does not represent an event or group directly facilitated by the Ranger Service.

Sessions include a wide variety of initiatives like talks to gardening clubs, making bird feeders, bird and insect surveys, community tree planting, pond dips, and pollinator information sessions.

Current Tenant Arrears as % of Rent Due

The value of current tenant arrears as a percentage of annual rent due was 1.95% in 2024/25, down from 2.78% in 2023/24. This continues the downward trend that began in 2023/24, after several years of increasing rent arrears that reflected the impact of both the Covid pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Performance is now well within target levels and, based on Scotland’s Housing Network benchmarking data, significantly better than the Scottish Local Authority average, which was 4.5% as at the end of 2024/25. Despite this positive performance we are aware that cost of living pressures remain a challenge to our tenants and arrears levels continue to be closely monitored. A key priority for the service is engaging with tenants with relatively low arrears, as this allows us to identify and support tenants at an early stage while their arrears are more manageable.

Average Time to Resolve Homeless Cases

Aberdeenshire Council continues to perform significantly better than the national average in relation to this indicator. Our average time to resolve homelessness cases has been decreasing consistently over a number of years and 2024-25 saw a further reduction to 63.4 days, down from 74.4 days in 2023/24. While overall performance remains strong, 2024/25 did see more quarter on quarter variations in presentation numbers and resolution

times and therefore presentation levels and open case numbers continue to be closely monitored.

KEY CHALLENGES:

Annual attendance for Live Life Aberdeenshire (LLA):

While Aberdeenshire Council did not meet the annual attendance target for Live Life Aberdeenshire (4,285,028), total attendance for the year reached 2,962,920—an increase of 8.9% compared to the 2023/24 figure of 2,720,505. In Quarter 4 alone, Live Life Aberdeenshire recorded 798,592 attendances, representing a 21.7% rise from the same quarter in 2023/24 (656,301), and an 11.5% increase from the previous Quarter 3 figure of 715,935. Overall, Quarter 4 continues to reflect a positive long-term trend in engagement.

KEY REPORTS:

[Living Well Locally Performance Report](#)



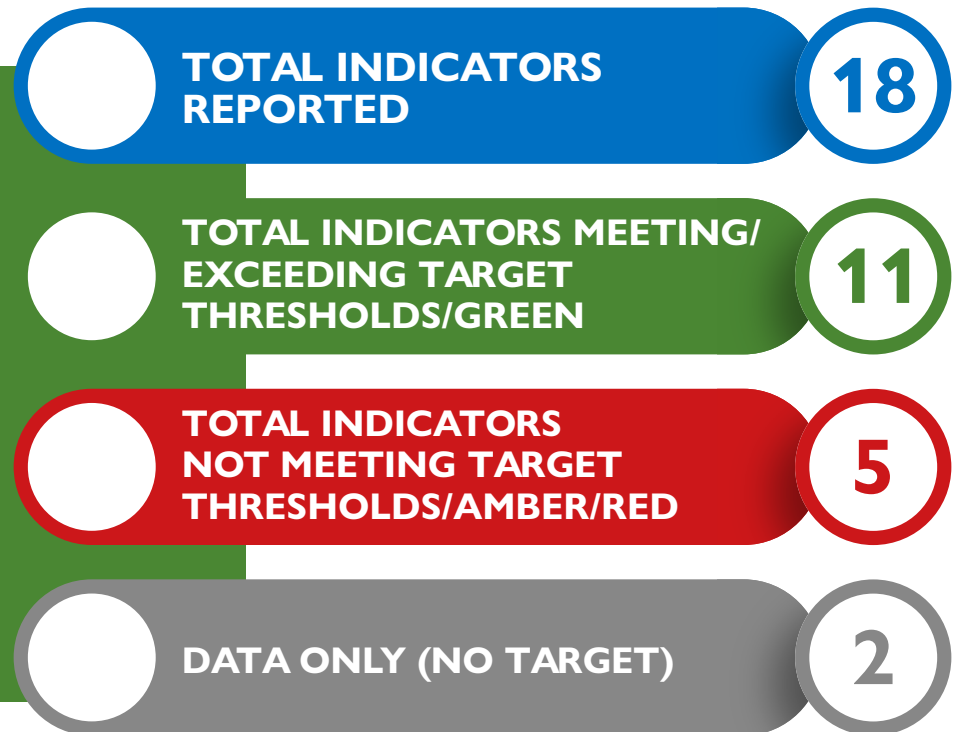
Council Plan Performance Summary 2024 - 2025

A Sustainable Economy

The outcomes that align to the Sustainable Economy priority are as follows:

- Support new and existing businesses to thrive and provide fair work opportunities
- Secure inward investment to sustain economic growth
- Contribute to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce by developing the skills our children and young people need for learning, life and work now and in the future
- Equip residents to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives through lifelong learning
- Attract and retain people of working age to the region

KEY STATISTICS:



KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Number of young people currently involved in Level 4-6 Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) programmes in Aberdeenshire schools as part of the Aberdeenshire managed FA programme:

Although the measure shows a significant fall (from 896 in 2023/24 to 790 in 2024/25), this remains a good performance which is well above target (686). The reduction this year is mainly attributable to changes in the funding arrangements for FAs nationally, which meant that a more rigorous approach to determining the number of students required to make individual school level cohorts viable to run, had to be adopted. Nevertheless, there are FA classes running in 9 Level 6 frameworks and 3 frameworks at Levels 4/5.

At Level 6, the students are engaged in courses that will see them develop knowledge and skills as well as work-based experiential learning in Accountancy, Business Skills, Creative and Digital Media, Civil Engineering, Engineering, Food and Drink Technologies, IT Software Development, Scientific Technologies, Social Services (Children & Young People) and Social Services (Health and Social Care). At Levels 4 and 5, the students are involved in FAs in Automotive Skills, Construction Skills, and

Hospitality. Notwithstanding the fall in this measure in 2024-25 compared with 2023-24, performance in this measure remains good, and needs to be viewed in the context of the national picture. Our target is to aim for at least 1 in 10 of the senior phase school roll to be taking an FA and across Aberdeenshire, this is being achieved. The latest national figures available show that across Scotland less than 5% of senior phase students are taking an FA.

% of contracts include clause relating to fair work

In 2024/25, 97% of contracts included requirements related to Fair Work Practices—an improvement from last year’s figure of 92% and exceeding Aberdeenshire Council’s target of 95%. It’s important to note that these figures are based on information published in contract notices on Public Contracts Scotland. A detailed review is carried out during the preparation of the annual procurement report, which may result in updates to the reported figure.

Number of individuals who have been supported to enhance their employability skills through targeted training programmes, work experience and delivery of supported employment schemes

A total of 1,783 people were supported to enhance their employability skills through targeted training programmes, work experience, and supported employment schemes. This represents an increase from the previous year’s figure of 1,243 and exceeds Aberdeenshire Council’s target of 1,000. Of those supported, 967 were individuals, 293 were young people, and 523 were parents who received help to improve their employability and secure employment.

Percentage of Community Learning & Development learners achieving learning outcomes

For 2024/25, the percentage of Community Learning & Development (CLD) learners achieving learning outcomes was 98.4% which exceeds the target of 90%. This is higher than the 2023/24 recorded figure of 97.4%. The total number of learners who attended 1 or more sessions during 2024/25 was 1,898 of which 1,868 achieved at least one learning outcome. Due to the targeted nature of delivery, variations are to be expected during any given period; this is in line with the CLD Service delivery plans.

KEY CHALLENGES:

% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises:

This is a Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicator. The most recent data from the Improvement Service (2023/24) shows Aberdeenshire Council at 28.1%, which is below both the Scottish average of 30.7% and the family group average of 36.4%. The Commercial and Procurement team has been working closely with colleagues in Economic Development—including newly appointed Procurement Development Officers—to identify upcoming opportunities within the Council’s contract pipelines for targeted supplier engagement and support.

It’s important to note that these figures do not account for businesses sub-contracted through a main contractor, which is common practice in large construction projects and the HardFM contract. When factoring in just two examples of local sub-contracting through high-value projects (HardFM and capital projects with Morrison Construction), local supplier spend would increase to 29%.

Percentage of S4 getting 5+ SCQF awards at level 5

This measure is based on data published on the Scottish Government Insight national benchmarking tool, which provides an accurate reflection of learners’ attainment. The percentage for this measure is based on assessment information from school session 2023/24, focusing on learners’ attainment where five or more awards were gained at Level 5 or above by the end of S4.

Performance on this measure combining the 17 secondary schools across Aberdeenshire is lower than seen over recent years (51.8%) with the different approaches to assessment and certification, reducing by 3.8% compared to the 2023 diet (55.6%). In this latest exam diet, decreases in results were seen in five of our council areas (ranging between -15.3% and -1.52%), with one of our council areas increasing (+5.6%).

KEY REPORTS:

[A Sustainable Economy Performance Report](#)



Notes for Consideration

Figures for the 2024-25 period are based on information available in July 2025. Where indicators are benchmarked externally, this can lead to a delay in receiving the verified information. Therefore, for indicators included in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) and other similar benchmarking groups, it is likely that 2023-24 stats are provided.

Some indicators are currently under review and will not be reported on within this year's annual performance report, these include:

- Funding to assist organisations which support inclusion, reduce poverty, tackle local issues and increase offer in areas of deprivation and rural disadvantage
- Develop and support community dialogue on Live Life Aberdeenshire services and future delivery
- Percentage of children, and pupils with ASN, meeting developmental milestones
- Deliver portfolio of outdoor pitches and spaces that meet community need
- Increased Participation in physical activity



Directorate Overviews

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Education and Children's Services (ECS) Directorate remains committed to delivering high-quality, inclusive, and sustainable services aligned with both local priorities and national policy frameworks. This performance summary highlights key achievements during 2024/25, outlines the primary challenges and areas for improvement, and sets out our strategic priorities for 2025/26.

1. Key Achievements against Strategic Priorities & Benchmarking

Positive Destinations

96.1% of school leavers achieved a positive destination (positive destinations include higher education, further education, training, employment, voluntary work, and personal skills development). This is an improvement on the previous year and exceeds both the national rate (95.7%) and the Northern Alliance rate (95.4%).

Foundation Apprenticeships (FA)

98.5% of young people completing a FA transitioned into a positive destination. Aberdeenshire's FA model has gained national recognition, with best practices being shared across Scotland following its inclusion in a recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report, highlighting successful approaches to work-based learning.

Adoption Service

The Adoption Service received an 'excellent' Care Inspectorate grading, reflecting sector leading performance in their support and outcomes for adoptive families.

Looked After Child Placements

99% of placements, as reviewed by independent Review Managers, were assessed as meeting the needs of Looked After Children. This exceeds target levels and reflects the Services' ongoing commitment to The Promise and improving experiences for care-experienced young people.

Free School Meals

Uptake in both Primaries and Secondaries increased from last year to 70% and 63% respectively and is above target levels. This demonstrates the positive impact of ongoing initiatives to improve access, although further work is required to address barriers among secondary pupils.

Community Learning and Development (CLD) Learners Outcomes

98.4% of learners engaged in CLD programmes achieved their identified learning outcomes, exceeding the 90% target and improving on last years' performance. CLD continue to have a key role in empowering individuals and communities and these learning opportunities support people to build confidence, influence change, and have a voice around decision making with issues relevant to them.

Live Life Aberdeenshire (LLA) Attendance

There were 2,981,437 physical visits made to LLA facilities in 2024/25, an increase of over 200,000 in comparison to 2023/24. This is the equivalent of nearly one visit per month for each resident in Aberdeenshire.

Swimming Lessons

More than 400,000 swimming lessons were delivered by LLA pools, an increase of more than 40,000 compared to the previous year. This equates to 9,000 swimming lessons being delivered per week, with additional lessons reducing waiting lists by half. Aberdeenshire’s swimming lesson programme is the largest in Scotland.

2. Challenges and Areas for Improvement

Financial Pressures

Increasing service costs and increasing demand continue to present significant budgetary challenges and will impact how services are delivered moving forward. Addressing these will require robust financial management, sustainable investments in digital infrastructure and community-based service models, and greater efficiency and service redesign.

Ongoing recruitment and retention challenges

Ongoing recruitment and retention challenges—particularly in hard-to-fill roles—continue to place pressure on service delivery. Prioritising staff wellbeing, succession planning, and targeted professional development is critical to sustaining a resilient and skilled workforce.

Demographic changes

Notably the growing population aged 65 and over and declining pupil rolls in some rural and less urban area primary schools are having a significant impact on school estate utilisation, early learning and childcare planning, and the delivery of community-based services. ECS are actively implementing the Learning Estates Strategy to ensure a fit-for-purpose, financially sustainable learning estate that provides best value and meets the evolving needs of communities.

3. Future Priorities and Plans (2025/26)

The strategic focus for ECS include:

- Financial Sustainability: Delivering high-quality services within allocated budgets through robust financial planning, cost-effectiveness, and resource optimisation.

- Service Transformation: Driving innovation and efficiency through service redesign, with a focus on equality.
- Targeted Service Delivery: Effective use of data and evidence to ensure the right services are delivered to the right people at the right time in the right way.
- Climate Change: Embedding climate policies in the learning estate, prioritising energy efficiency, sustainable heating, and carbon reduction initiatives.
- Workforce Wellbeing and Development: Supporting staff wellbeing, retention, and professional development through effective workforce planning.
- Place: Consider the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes in the review of service redesign and changes to ensure positive outcomes for our communities.

These priorities align seamlessly with Aberdeenshire Council’s Council Plan 2024 - 2029 and ensures every initiative directly contributes to the Council’s strategic direction. These priorities will drive efficiencies, sustainability, and resilience, reinforcing a joined-up approach to delivering the right services at the right time to the right people.

Directorate Overviews

BUSINESS SERVICES

This summary highlights key achievements for Business Services during 2024/2025, outlines the primary challenges and areas for improvement, and sets out our strategic priorities for 2025/2026.

1. Key Achievements against Strategic Priorities & Benchmarking

Customer and Digital Services

Customer Services has improved delivery through digital tools like web chat, automation, and online systems, enabling faster, self-service options and streamlining back-office processing. This has also boosted efficiency, reduced wait times, and cut abandonment rates in the Contact Centre. The implementation of the Customer Service Strategy aims to further enhance channels for first-contact resolution, reduce repeat enquiries, and ensure timely, fair service through collaboration, process review, and continued digital transformation.

Business Services have been driving digital transformation across the organisation through tools such as Copilot and automation.

These innovations have helped streamline processes, improve time efficiency, and support the wider digitisation of the council.

HR Operational

Over the past year, HR has supported employees in reaching their full potential by providing procedures, guidance, and training aligned with legislative changes. This includes updates related to flexible working, prevention of sexual harassment, bullying and harassment, and grievance processes.

The team successfully achieved reaccreditation of the Ministry of Defence Gold Award and secured acceptance onto the Equally Safe at Work accreditation programme.

Professional advice was provided to services undergoing redesign to help achieve agreed savings and deliver strategic priorities for change—such as reductions in school estates, care home rationalisation, and office space optimisation.

Additionally, the Corporate Voluntary Severance (VS) programme was delivered successfully, resulting in annual salary savings exceeding £2.7 million beyond year one costs.

Wellbeing & Resourcing

Workforce planning has been integrated into Head of Service Operational plans, initiating deeper, long-term planning. Additionally, the introduction of an automated reporting system for vacancy management has contributed to a reduction in the number of advertised posts.

Strategic Finance

Officers and members were supported in setting balanced revenue, capital, and Housing Revenue Account budgets for 2025/26. A comprehensive review of all Financial Regulations was also completed.

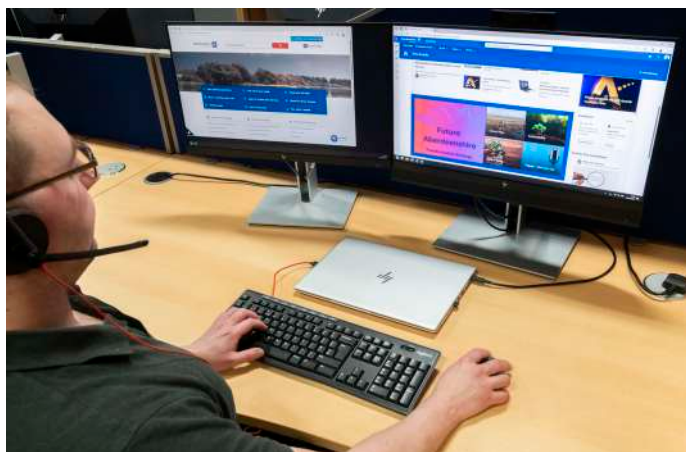
Risk & Resilience

The Cyber Response Plan, approved by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) in August 2024, has enhanced our organisational resilience against the growing cyber threat.

KEY DATA, MILESTONES, OR RECOGNITIONS

Customer and Digital Services

- Call volumes have reduced by 24% and our answered call volumes have increased by 12%. Additionally, abandoned calls are now at 10% (down from 30% 12 months ago). Our average call wait time is now 4 minutes (down from 14 minutes 12 months ago)
- Tranche 1 of our Digital Transformation Programme has been delivered, which includes invoice automation, process automation, Co-Pilot, and Data Hub, along with investment in workforce digital skills.



Wellbeing & Resourcing

Working with Microsoft 365 Tribe has enabled the delivery of a full year of digital learning to our community of 500 digital champions. This has led to the achievement of 1,834 digital learning badges, 2,670 digital mentoring points, and a weekly time saving of 55 hours through the practical application of digital skills. Supported by a strong digital learning network, champions have actively shared solutions and best practices, contributing to improved service delivery and greater efficiency across the organisation.

Commercial & Conveyancing

Commercial, and Property and Conveyancing teams worked together to achieve a successful exit from the Huntly Care Home and transfer to a new provider to save the home from closure.

Governance/Democratic/Committee

Over the past year, the Governance/Democratic/Committee teams have processed over 3,000 licences, supported 39 Licensing Board hearings and 24 Licensing Sub-Committee hearings, monitored 1,072 reports, and attended 138 Committee meetings.

Advice & Representation/Registration/Elections

Advice and Representation continued to work closely with the Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver an ever-increasing number of Guardianship and Intervention Orders to safeguard the wellbeing of adults with incapacity.

The Election team successfully delivered three by-elections in November 2024 and piloted the use of new digital software at polling stations.

Property & Facilities Management

In 2024/25, a total saving of £314,000 was achieved through property closures in Banff, Fraserburgh, Ellon, Portlethen, Aboyne, and Alford. Additionally, the implementation of the new Heating Policy led to a significant reduction in both heating expenditure and carbon emissions.

2. Challenges & Areas for Improvement

Customer and Digital Services

Each month, the council receives approx. 55,000 external calls with only 16,000 calls (29%) handled by Customer Services. The decentralised telephony arrangement creates challenges in ensuring consistent call handling standards and complicates the evaluation of service quality.

Additionally, the demand and expectation on digital to support fundamental change and deliver savings across the organisation far outweighs the resources available.

- We will embark on a project to analyse all telephony services to assess performance and service levels and evaluate cost-effectiveness and determine opportunities for consolidation or savings
- A rolling programme of digital transformation activity is in place; the team is being restructured to provide a robust staffing model and ensuring the best alignment across teams.

HR Operational

Significant changes in service delivery will require additional HR resources to support the increasing demand and pace of change.

Wellbeing & Resourcing

Our performance indicators show a decline in performance with regards to our wellbeing and accident rate. HR teams are working with managers to enhance wellbeing, feedback, and performance conversations.

Other key challenges and areas for improvement include maintaining employer attractiveness and

addressing issues such as equality, remuneration, geographic isolation, workforce planning, career pathways and apprenticeship opportunities.

Plans for addressing challenges:

Plans to address these challenges include implementing targeted initiatives to improve key performance indicators related to wellbeing, absence, and accident rates. Additionally, efforts will focus on increasing workforce engagement by enhancing communication channels and making better use of available resources.

3. Future Priorities & Plans (2025/26)

Focus areas for the next year

- Transformation will continue to be a focus for all teams, both in terms of enabling and supporting transformation across the organisation and ensuring all teams across Business Services remain fit for the future.
- Overarching pressures on budgets is likely to add continued pressure the teams to deliver ever more ambitious digital projects within limited resources.



Directorate Overviews

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

The Environment & Infrastructure Services (EIS) Directorate remains committed to enhancing the quality of life for the people of Aberdeenshire and delivering high-quality, accessible services for all, which are aligned with local policies and national policy frameworks. This summary highlights key achievements during 2024/2025, outlines the primary challenges and areas for improvement, and sets out our strategic priorities for 2025/2026.

1. Key Achievements against Strategic Priorities & Benchmarking

National Planning Improvement Framework:

Aberdeenshire Council Planning Authority volunteered to take part in the first cohort of 10 Planning Authorities to pilot a new continuous improvement reporting framework developed by the National Planning Improvement Service. Based on a self-assessment approach, involving staff, stakeholder peer review and a collaborate deep dive with our partner Local Authority, Scottish Borders Council.

Aberdeenshire Energy Developments

The Energy Team are continuing to process and determine a high number of energy and national energy applications, under increasing pressure from the government regarding timescales for speeding up the decision-making process. This aims to progress toward net zero by using national policy to encourage, promote, and support development that reduces emissions and adapts to both current and future climate change impacts. The intended policy outcomes is: Development results in reduced emissions; and places become more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards exceeded all performance indicator targets, achieving 96% of high-risk premises visited, 83.5% of complaints resolved within 14 days, and 87.5% of planned inspections completed. The Service submitted 38 reports to the Procurator Fiscal and successfully delivered 58 positive informal enforcement outcomes.

Economic Development

The Investments and Projects Team has worked to secure additional external funding to support the delivery of Council projects such as the redevelopment of Macduff Marine Aquarium and development of a cultural quarter in Peterhead. In addition, the team has continued to administer a number of funds from the UK and Scottish Governments and Crown Estate Scotland, including the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Rural Community Led Local Development (RCLLD) and Coastal Communities Challenge Fund (CCCF). These funds have provided grants to support a wide range of projects, benefiting communities and businesses throughout Aberdeenshire.

Roads

Roads have overseen the successful outcome of a full audit of the teams' processes and practices by the Council's Internal Audit team. The audit has determined that the team is well managed with sound practices. Some areas of minor improvement are recommended, and these align closely with the team's existing plans.



Awards

Aberdeenshire has received 8 awards in the Keep Scotland Beautiful’s Beach Awards 2024. Scotland’s Beach Awards are the benchmark for quality, celebrating clean, well-managed and sustainable beaches. The award-winning beaches demonstrate excellent beach management and environmental best practice, and the maintenance of high standards.

2. Challenges & Areas for Improvement

Digital Technology

Investing in digital technology presents challenges in terms of resourcing digital systems and pre-empting how digital technology will be maintained with diminishing corporate assistance, due to budgetary challenges. Investing in new technology and supporting current digital systems and databases is critical to delivering an efficient streamlined paid for customer experience and service.

Scheme of Governance

Further review of the Scheme of Governance is required to streamline processes and responsibilities.

Recruitment

Recruitment and retention remain ongoing challenges across the Directorate, particularly in hard-to-fill roles such as qualified planners, where there is a national shortage. A rolling recruitment strategy continues to explore solutions within available budgets. Multiple approaches have been identified, including succession planning, upskilling, and recruiting from related disciplines—all while maintaining a strong focus on staff wellbeing.

Financial Pressures

The Directorate aims to deliver an effective and innovative approach to budget management in response to rising service costs versus delivery expectations. Opportunities for external funding will be actively monitored and pursued to support the delivery of place-based projects.

3. Future Priorities & Plans (2025/26)

The strategic focus for EIS includes:

- Ensuring our service models are sustainable over time.
- Service transformation through efficiencies and where possible, innovation.
- Targeted service delivery ensuring effective use of data and evidence to ensure the right services are being delivered at the right level at the right time.
- Climate change.
- A Place Information and Delivery Team Strategy for 2025-2030 was published in early 2025 (Place Information and Delivery Team Strategy) which highlights the Team’s vision, future priorities and plans.

Directorate Overviews

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP (HSCP)

1. Key Achievements against Strategic Priorities & Benchmarking

Significant accomplishments

The Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership's (AHSCP's) draft Annual Performance Report for 2024-25 was presented to the Integrated Joint Board (IJB) for approval at its meeting in July 2025. This report provides further detail on key achievements against the IJB's 5 strategic priorities. At the time of writing, some performance data remains incomplete as it has not yet been published by Public Health Scotland (PHS) to enable benchmarking comparison against the National Core Suite of Integration Indicators. Once available, relevant data will be updated accordingly and finalised for publication via the HSCP website.



Key data, milestones, or recognitions

A range of inspections were undertaken by the Care Inspectorate in Aberdeenshire during 2024-2025. Several services achieved ratings of 5/Very Good across the criteria assessed, including the South and Central Aberdeenshire Care at Home services, Aberdeenshire Responders for Care at Home (ARCH) Service, Bennachie View Care Home, Playfauld House Very Sheltered Housing, Ellon Day Opportunities, and Willowbank residential care provision for adults with Learning Disabilities.

2. Challenges & Areas for Improvement

Key obstacles and impact

The AHSCP continued to face significant financial challenges over the year and the pressure of rising demand and complexity of need within the health and social care system. Despite a range of targeted work in relation to savings projects and efficiencies, the AHSCP recorded an overspend in 2024/25 of over £24 million. This required additional funding support from our partner bodies, with actions agreed and undertaken in line with the IJB's Integration Scheme.

Plans for addressing challenges

The Aberdeenshire IJB has agreed a Recovery Plan and Revenue Budget for 2025/26 including the efficiency and savings proposals which will be essential to ensuring the stability of IJB finances from 2025/26 onwards and support the delivery of Best Value over the longer term. Work continues under the Social Care Sustainability Programme Board overseeing a range of significant service reviews including in-house care at home services, learning disability day services, care homes and very sheltered housing, with reports and recommendations to be considered by the IJB as these progress.



3. Future Priorities & Plans

Focus areas for the next year

The AHSCP will consult on its new Strategic Plan from 2025 onwards when the current plan ends. A supporting delivery plan will detail key objectives, workstreams and performance indicators and inform the Aberdeenshire IJB's planning and prioritisation of future health and social care services in Aberdeenshire, recognising our responsibility to achieve financial stability as well as developing the longer-term vision to improve health outcomes for our communities in Aberdeenshire within the resources available.

Expected challenges and planned initiatives

The financial challenges facing health and social care mean that decisions will have to be made in terms of the level of service that can be delivered in many areas. Agreeing the planned initiatives that can ensure finances are brought back into line with allocated budgets and to support the redesign of services is essential to ensure that the HSCP can address these challenges and sustain services to meet the needs of people with the greatest need. Monitoring and understanding the cumulative impacts of service changes and redesigns, through continued engagement with those affected and our communities, will be central to our approach.



Case Studies: *Best Practice*

PRIORITY: LIVING WELL LOCALLY

Name of Project:	Who was Involved:
Primary Care: Stonehaven Vaccination Centre/ Stroke Prevention	The Stonehaven vaccination centre team working collaboratively with the Stroke Association (national charity), NHS Grampian Public Health and Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership, to be part of a Stroke Prevention Media Campaign.
Summary:	
This was a pilot to help increase public awareness of how an irregular pulse (atrial fibrillation) could lead to a stroke. Through a media campaign led by Stroke Association, patients within a 3km radius of Stonehaven GP practice were invited to check their pulse and if in doubt about the rate or rhythm, to make appointment at the local vaccination clinic to get their pulse and blood pressure checked.	
Best Practice:	
The campaign proved very effective in raising public awareness of atrial fibrillation as a risk factor for stroke and was considered successful by all stakeholders.	
Improved Performance:	
Although no atrial fibrillation detected, patients with high blood pressure were identified and commenced treatment following review by a GP. The service has now been rolled out to 9 GP practice populations.	

PRIORITY: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Name of Project:	Who was Involved:
Engage Aberdeenshire – ‘What You Told Us - What We’re Doing’ Feedback	The initiative is coordinated by the Engagement & Consultation Officer within Customer and Digital Services. A wide range of services across Aberdeenshire Council contribute to the success of the feedback process by actively using the ‘What You Told Us – What We’re Doing’ format on Engage Aberdeenshire. Each service is responsible for drafting and submitting feedback, which is reviewed and published by the Engagement & Consultation Officer. This collaborative approach ensures consistency in tone and structure while allowing services to tailor content to their specific audiences. Key contributors include Planning and Economy, Landscape Services and Learning Estates.
Summary:	
To improve transparency and accountability in community engagement, Aberdeenshire Council introduced a performance indicator to monitor the percentage of engagement activity where feedback to communities is provided within three months. This process is implemented on the Engage Aberdeenshire platform using the ‘What you told us - What we’re doing’ format. The initiative aims to ensure that residents who participate in surveys or consultations receive timely updates on how their input is being used.	
Best Practice:	
A key element of best practice is the consistent use of the ‘What You Told Us – What We’re Doing’ section on Engage Aberdeenshire. This format allows for clear, structured feedback that is easy for the public to understand. The process is supported by a centralised spreadsheet to track feedback timelines, maintained by the Engagement & Consultation Officer. Project Administrators receive regular reminders and support to ensure all feedback activities are recorded. There is also flexibility to include general updates when final decisions are pending, which helps maintain transparency and engagement with the public.	
Improved Performance:	
In 2024/25, feedback was provided for 51 projects across the organisation. In Quarter 4 of 2024, 92% of engagement activities had feedback provided within the three-month target, a significant improvement from 66% in Quarter 1. This progress demonstrates the effectiveness of the Engage Aberdeenshire model in embedding feedback as a core part of the engagement process.	

PRIORITY: SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Name of Project:	Who was Involved:
Education and Children’s Services (ECS) Digital Solutions	ECS Digital Solutions are led by the Resources and Performance service within ECS, in collaboration with various stakeholders across the service. The ECS Digital Innovation Officer works with any stakeholder / team to support them identify and implement targeted digital solutions
Summary:	
<p>Below is an overview of several digital solution initiatives that have been developed recently.</p>	
<p>1. Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) Dashboard</p>	
<p><i>A digital dashboard was developed to automate the EMA application process. The solution integrates Microsoft Forms, Power Automate and SEEMiS to:</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Automatically populate applicant data ■ Track application progress and administrator involvement ■ Send automated acknowledgements and reminders ■ Reduce administrative workload 	
<p>2. DataSpace2</p>	
<p><i>An enhanced digital platform for the School Counselling Service, DataSpace2 builds on the success of DataSpace1 by:</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Centralising case records for accurate reporting and continuous professional development (CPD) planning ■ Replacing complex SharePoint structures with a user-friendly interface ■ Reducing administrative time and improving data transparency ■ Financial saving by replacing an external system 	

3. Funded Provider Application Management Tool

This tool streamlines the contract application process for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) funded providers by:

- Replacing manual Word and email-based workflows with a Microsoft Form and automated flows
- Reducing administrative time
- Improving record-keeping, reducing errors, and enhancing service user experience

4. Pupil Information Data Hub (PIDH)

Developed for the Foundation Apprenticeships and Work Placement Team, PIDH:

- Consolidates pupil data from SEEMIS, WorkIT, and registration forms
- Supports placement matching, PPE allocation, and GDPR compliance
- Enables real-time reporting via Power BI
- Reduces workload and risk of error across a hybrid team of 30+ staff

5. ECS Facilities Hire App

A digital dashboard was developed to automate the Facilities Hire application process. The solution integrates Microsoft Forms and Power Automate and:

- Automatically populates the Hire application data.
- Tracks application progress and administrator involvement.
- Develops internal communication.
- Manages applicants' documentation - Risk Assessment document, Constitution Document, Food Hygiene Certificate, and Public Liability Insurance documents.
- Sends automated acknowledgements and reminders.
- Reduces administrative workload.
- Creates invoices.
- Enables real-time reporting via Power BI.

This project has recently been expanded to include Live Life Aberdeenshire (LLA) and Townhall bookings.

Best Practice:

Across all the digital solution projects, the following best practices have been consistently applied:

- User-Centred Design: Solutions were co-designed with service teams to ensure relevance and usability.
- Agile Development: Iterative prototyping and piloting enabled continuous improvement.
- Automation and Integration: Microsoft Power Platform tools were used to streamline workflows and reduce manual effort.
- Data Governance: All solutions were developed in compliance with GDPR and Council data protection policies.
- Scalability and Reusability: Solutions were designed with potential for wider application across ECS and the Council.

Improved Performance:

Project Key Benefits

EMA Dashboard

- Reduced administrative workload by approximately 80%, freeing up staff time for higher-value tasks.
- Improved communication with applicants through automated acknowledgements and reminders, enhancing service user experience.
- Strengthened audit trail and compliance with funding requirements, reducing risk of error and improving transparency.
 - Enabled real-time tracking of application progress, improving responsiveness and accountability.

DataSpace2

- Replaced a costly third-party system, generating annual savings of approximately £10,000.
- Centralised case management has improved data accuracy, reduced duplication, and enhanced reporting capabilities.
- Reduced administrative burden on counselling staff, allowing more time to be spent on direct support for children and young people.
- Improved data protection and information governance through secure, role-based access and audit functionality.

Funded Provider Application Tool

- Streamlined the Early Learning and Childcare contract application process, reducing administrative time from 90.5 hours in year one to just 13 hours in subsequent years.
- Improved accuracy and consistency of provider submissions, reducing follow-up queries and delays
- Enhanced record-keeping and audit readiness, supporting compliance with national funding requirements.
- Improved provider experience through a simplified and transparent application process.

Pupil Information Data Hub (PIDH)

- Consolidated data from multiple systems into a single, secure platform, reducing reliance on spreadsheets and manual data entry.
- Improved placement matching and resource allocation, including PPE distribution and risk assessments.
- Enabled real-time reporting and data visualization through Power BI, supporting evidence-based decision-making.
- Supported a hybrid team of over 30 staff, improving collaboration, reducing duplication, and enhancing service sustainability.

ECS Facilities Hire App

- Streamlined the booking application process for the administrative team, improving overall efficiency.
- Implemented automated notifications for the Hire Team to monitor real-time progress on applications.
- Enabled automated emails, reminders, approvals, and rejections for hire applicants.
- Incorporated real-time reporting and data visualization using Power BI to support evidence-based decision-making.

Collectively, these solutions demonstrate the critical role that digital innovation has in enabling ECS to deliver smarter, more responsive, and more sustainable services.

They align with the Council’s priorities and ECS service priorities as well as aligning with the Council’s digital strategy and transformation priorities and provide scalable models for future service improvement across the Directorate.

What's happening in your area?

BUCHAN

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Community Asset Transfer:

Community Asset Transfer, a tool used by community organisations to deliver on local community priorities, continued successfully. The transfer of former Maud Area Office to Bairnessities (a local charity that provides pre-loved baby essentials to families across the North Aberdeenshire) was successfully completed in June 2024 and a further two transfer requests were received that are being progressed in line with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and local policy.

Coastal Communities Funding

We have successfully delivered 21 coastal Communities funded projects.

Freedom of Aberdeenshire

Peterhead hosted the granting of the Freedom of Aberdeenshire to the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

Peterhead: Plan for Neighbourhoods

In March 2025, the UK Government relaunched its Plan for Neighbourhoods, formerly known as the 'Long-Term Plan for Towns', supporting 75 UK towns including ten in Scotland. The programme announced a potential £20 million in funding for Peterhead over 10 years from April 2026 with new capacity building funding starting from spring 2025. This investment aims to empower communities with the resources to develop their vision for renewal, addressing the root causes of local deprivation. This programme

will unite residents, businesses, and community representatives to drive positive change, ensuring everyone, regardless of background, can benefit.

Peterhead 2040

Peterhead 2040 is an example of how Aberdeenshire Council is thinking about planning for place long-term and on a large scale. It is also an example that recognises places are successful because of the actions of many organisations and groups. Sharing a broad view of needs, opportunities and challenges mean we can all achieve more for our communities. Peterhead 2040 has developed a shared vision, through a collaborative approach, with plans now underway to conduct a community sense check which will help us to create a shared place plan.



Peterhead 2040, a shared Place Plan – what are the benefits and what will this help us to achieve?

- Improved connectivity across partners, including those from the voluntary and private sectors
- A shared understanding of place and community issues – supported by data and community perspectives
- To provide a robust framework for managing change
- To support decision making across partners and provide a focus for the targeting of services and resources
- To provide a delivery programme for partners to jointly work to, with a clear action plan of how identified issues are going to be tackled, assigned projects and activities with clear timelines

Family Whole Wellbeing Team Peterhead

Whole family wellbeing is one of the five priorities in the Aberdeenshire Children's Service Plan and will be promoted and improved by supporting families to get the right support early and effectively. Its focus is on improving family wellbeing, reducing inequalities, reducing the number of families requiring crisis intervention, reducing the number of children and young people living away from their families and increasing the number of families taking up wider supports. The Peterhead Whole Family Wellbeing Team are now well established and are running regular activities and events including free weekly connecting families drop-in sessions, as well as providing a range of help and support to help meet local needs.

KEY CHALLENGES:

Some key challenges facing Buchan in 2024-25 were as follows:

- The impact of adverse weather and ongoing resilience support required for communities or storms over winter 2023/24
- Impact of continued cost of living challenges on households and communities
- Managing community expectations in an increasingly financially challenged environment

KEY LINKS:

[Buchan Coastal Communities Commissioning Strategy 2022-2027](#)

[Sun shines on the SCOTS Regiment - Aberdeenshire Council](#)

[Next steps approved for Peterhead Community Campus project - Aberdeenshire Council](#)

[Peterhead: Plan for Neighbourhoods | Engage Aberdeenshire](#)

[Peterhead 2040 - what it's all about | Engage Aberdeenshire](#)

[A year in Review 2024](#)

What's happening in your area?

BANFF & BUCHAN

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Just Ask Boyndie

Launched in April 2025, this two-year pilot project supports rural communities in north-west Aberdeenshire with transport and crisis support. Led by Banffshire Partnership Ltd and funded by a £100,000 grant from Aberdeenshire Council's Rural Poverty Fund, the Project provides initial support to mitigate urgent need whilst also connecting clients to services and specialist support through a referral network and access to community transport.

Building Community Capacity

- Community Action Plans (CAPs): Updated CAPs were published by New Aberdour, Tyrie and Pennan Community Council, and Aberchirder and District Community Association. Rosehearty Community Council is set to publish a CAP in Summer 2025.
- Youth Place Planning: Young people in Banff, Macduff, and Fraserburgh engaged in place planning through initiatives supported by A Place in Childhood, Aberdeen for a Fairer World, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), and others, contributing to community-led plans and charters.

Fraserburgh Essentials – Food Collaboration

Three local food providers, supported by Fair Food Aberdeenshire, secured funding for food security resources, including cooking equipment and recipe cards.

Banff Academy Projects

- #Delete the Filter (S3): Pupils explored digital citizenship and contributed to a Bill with a local MSP, presenting their work at the Scottish Parliament.
- YPI (S2): Pupils partnered with local charities to address social issues, with the winning team securing £3,000 for a local cause.
- Banff to Bethlehem: A global art collaboration with Palestinian students fostered celebrated community-connected learning and gained national attention.

Wellbeing Festival

Expanded Grampian-wide in 2024, the festival saw increased participation. Events in Banff and Fraserburgh promoted mental wellbeing, including a well received menopause information brunch at Banff Castle.

Whole Family Wellbeing (Fraserburgh)

The Whole Family Wellbeing team hosted a Family Fun Event and launched weekly sessions including:

- Gather and Grow (0–5s and families)
- Coffee and Claik (parent peer support)
- Drop-In (service signposting)

Two Towns: Big Ideas

Aberdeenshire Council’s initiative encouraged residents, businesses, and community groups to propose projects boosting town centre footfall and vitality. From eight submissions, six were funded between April and September 2024:

- Museum of Banff – Bicentenary Exhibition
- CattleSkate Academy – Skate Park
- Banff Castle Community Association – Highland Day
- A Place in Childhood – Youth Hub
- Banff Academy – Mission Connect
- The Forge Banff CIC – Inclusive Event Space

Impact Highlights:

- 40 organisations involved
- 7 new products/services developed
- 63 public events held
- 4,000 participants (344 young people)
- 2 buildings improved
- 15 marketing campaigns launched

Banff and Macduff Towns Summit

In October 2024, a Town Centre Forum responded to local business feedback, drawing 50 attendees. Topics included tourism, vacant properties, marketing, and community wealth building, with contributions from regional and national partners.

KEY CHALLENGES:

Key challenges facing Banff and Buchan in 2024-25 were as follows:

- The impact of adverse weather and ongoing resilience support required for communities or storms over winter 2024/25
- Impact of continued cost of living challenges on households and communities.
- Managing community expectations in an increasingly financially challenged environment
- Supporting community capacity with diminishing pool of volunteers and the challenge of succession planning

KEY LINKS:

[Aberdeen for a Fairer World](#)

[A Place in Childhood](#)

[Place Plans](#)

[Chartering Network](#)

[Just Ask Boyndie](#)

[Just Transition Project](#)

[Place Planning](#)

[Banff Academy Raises Awareness of Online Disinformation](#)

What's happening in your area?

KINCARDINE & MEARN'S

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Asset transfers

The successful asset transfer of the Mill of Benholm was followed by officer support to develop the site into a tourist attraction - achieved at no cost to the council. This project reflects a strong communal effort to cultivate a space that is both nourishing and educational for visitors and the wider community

The successful asset transfer of the 'Old Sea Cadet' building to a youth group will benefit the wider Kincardine & Mearns community.

Coastal Communities

The Coastal Communities funded projects were delivered successfully.

Working with Community Groups

Two Local Place Plans (Stonehaven and Newtonhill & Muchalls) and one Community Action Plan (CAP – St Cyrus) have been developed with more expected in 2025/26.

Edzell Woods

Funding has been secured (Circa 400K) for the creation of a community Facility in Edzell Woods which we hope will increase the resilience of the local community.

Growing Network

The development of 'Growing Network' in South Mearns has helped develop a new service to refresh towns with a focus in edibles, perennials and herbs.

New Rugby- Compatible Service

An agreement secured through Developer Obligations will provide a new rugby-compatible facility at Mearns Academy, with a cost of nearly £300,000, scheduled for delivery in Autumn 2025.

KEY CHALLENGES:

Key challenges facing Kincardine & Mearns in 2024-25 were as follows

- Impact of coastal erosion on the South coastline.
- Inability of the council to replace / repair a number of structures damaged by storms (Shakkin Brig as an example)

What's happening in your area?

MARR

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Community Projects

The Marr Area Committee budget supported twenty-two community projects, including facility improvements, heritage initiatives, festivals, and recreational activities.

Community Councils

Following single status, Marr has a full complement of (15) community councils, with two having ballots. Working with The Huntly Town Team, The Marr area team facilitated the opening of 'No.30' with £145K in Place Based Investment Funding.

Asset Transfers

The team has facilitated two Asset Transfers that will have a significant benefit for residents and visitors to Alford and Banchory (Haughton Park Pump Track and the Bellfield Store respectively). The Braemar Woodland Community Asset Transfer has been agreed and is expected to progress in 2025/26.

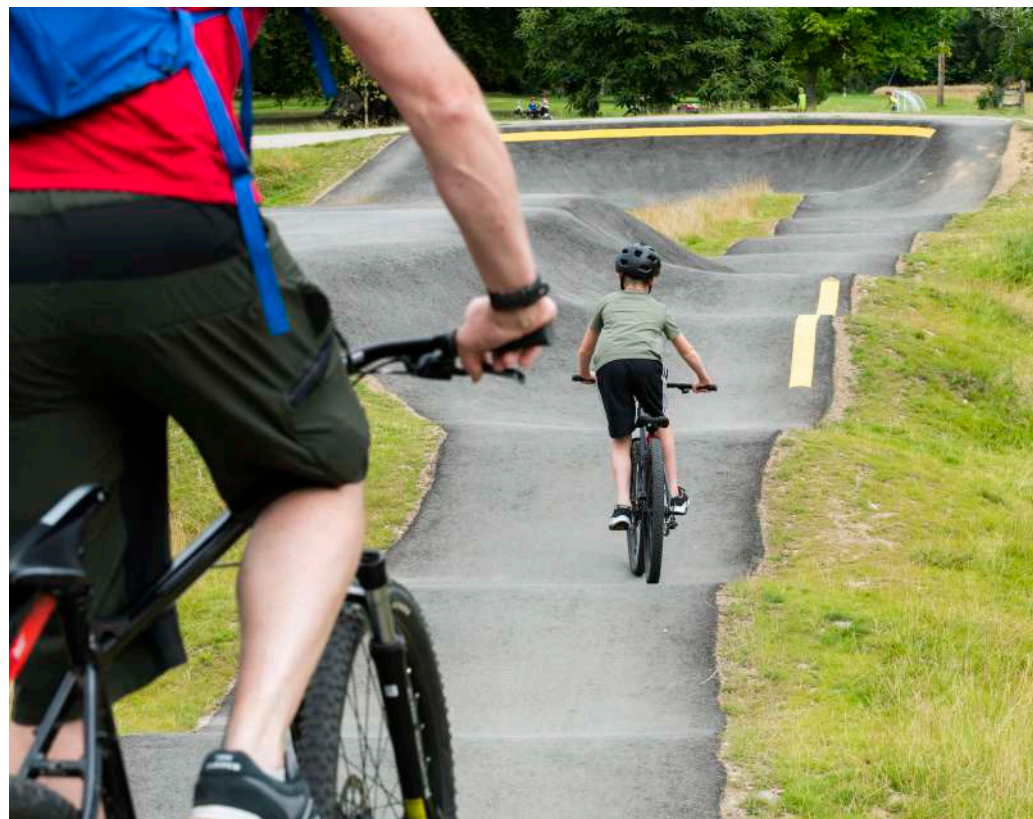
Marr Food Plan

We continue to deliver the Marr Food Plan.

Working with Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action, fifteen organisations have benefitted from Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Funding to the value of £140K in Marr. Six organisations benefitted from the Just Transition Fund to the value of £180,000.

KEY CHALLENGES:

Managing expectations of community groups who themselves are managing a perceived reduction in public sector services.



What's happening in your area?

FORMARTINE

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Opening of Formartine House

The official opening of Formartine House marked a major milestone, providing a modern, accessible hub for council services and community engagement in the heart of the area.

Delivery of the Formartine Coastal Community Fund

A range of impactful local projects have been supported through the Coastal Community Fund, enhancing tourism, sustainability, and economic resilience in coastal settlements across Formartine.

Allocation of the Formartine Area Committee Budget

The Area Committee successfully allocated its annual budget to support a diverse mix of community-led initiatives, infrastructure improvements, and local priorities.

Community Council Renewal

Following a successful election process, all Community Councils in the area are now fully constituted, with new members bringing fresh energy and ideas to local representation.

Haughs Improved Access Project – Construction Phase Complete

The construction phase of the Haughs Access Project in Turriff has been completed, delivering enhanced pathways, signage, and inclusive access to this much-loved green space.

Ellon CCTV Initiative

A new CCTV system has been installed in Ellon town centre, improving public safety and supporting local businesses through enhanced security and crime prevention.

Blackdog Community Facility – Design Concept Approved

The approval of a design concept for a new community facility marks a major step forward for Blackdog, paving the way for detailed planning and opening up future funding opportunities.

Asset Transfer of the Sand Bothy, Balmedie

The Sand Bothy has been successfully transferred to community ownership, empowering local volunteers to manage and develop the facility as a hub for visitors and residents alike.

Balmedie Country Park Management Plan Delivered

A comprehensive management plan for Balmedie Country Park has been completed, setting out a clear framework for conservation, visitor experience, and long-term sustainability.

KEY CHALLENGES:

Key challenges for the Formartine area in 2024-25 have included:

- Capacity in teams to move projects forward
- Signposting opportunities for community groups to access funding
- Impact of temporary staffing arrangements in team
- Operating a corporate facility (Formartine House) with limited staffing resources
- Supporting communities in Ward 7 with concerns around development of Energy related infrastructure



What's happening in your area?

GARIOCH

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Ward 10 West Garioch:

Bennachie Leisure Centre

Through the Rural Poverty Fund, the Bennachie Leisure Centre, was funded to roll out a varied action plan to support reduction of poverty in Ward 10. Along with Employability funding, this action plan - delivered through a service level agreement - aims to support young families, older people and people getting back into work. Projects include the Charity Shop, Community Café, Employability programme, Health and wellbeing classes, Community Gardening group, Kids Holiday activities (food included), Sporting memories, digital inclusion, and 'Bus for Access' to the centre.

Bus Park

The Bus Park for Kemnay Academy was completed in August 2024. It has created space for buses and removed impact on Bremner Way. It was an identified issue raised by the school, ward members and the community.

Cricket Square

Developer Obligations funds were invested in an all-weather cricket square in Bogbeth Park in Kemnay. This means that a cricket team could have a new home and support local players, young and old to play.

Community Action Plan

Bennachie Community Council, supported by Art by Jax, (the consultant funded by Garioch Area Committee budget), and the Garioch Community Planning Officer completed its Community Action Plan (CAP). The community engagement saw incredible numbers of residents involved in the process. It is a unique CAP that covers multiple settlements.

Ward 11 Inverurie and District:

The Farmers Market

The Farmers Market held in Market Place car park has been extended successfully in terms of the footprint, held once a month. Working with the Roads team, a pilot of road closures was agreed and learning from the road closures is being fed into the ongoing feasibility work on traffic movement in the town centre that has been commissioned by Transport Strategy team via the Inverurie Town Team.

St James Paths upgrade in Inverurie on the River Don

On the south bank, the path section has been upgraded to asphalt for approximately 470m with a 2m width. The south bank work was completed at the end of March 2025. Work on the north bank started in March and the path has been upgraded to asphalt for approximately 400m, at 2m width. The rubber mats previously used for the surface have been recycled where possible and used to improve access along a 140m grass path section.

A Place in Childhood

An interesting and fulfilling project run by A Place in Childhood team, alongside the Area Team, Inverurie Town Team and working with young people from Inverurie Academy, Kellands School and Port Elphinstone School. A 20-minute neighbourhood plan was produced and this sits with the Inverurie Place Review (phase 1 place plan). Delivery of identified actions include reviewing parking around Kellands School, lighting in green spaces, meeting venues and activities for young people. The projects are being added to the place plan project portfolio. This project was funded by the Rural Poverty Fund.

Ward 12 – East Garioch:

Blackburn and Kinellar Community Council

Area Teams, led by the Area Committee Officers, rolled out the agreed Single Election for Community Councils successfully in September 2024. Ward 12 benefitted from the additional exposure and focused approach and Blackburn and Kinellar Community Council was established by November 2024. There had not been a community council representing the area for 8 years.

Kintore Pleasure Park

Football is very popular, and participation is increasing across Garioch. The space at Kintore Pleasure Park has been reconfigured from one pitch to two following consultation with clubs and the community council. The work is spanning two years, and the wait is now on for the seeded areas to take and grow. This work was partially funded by Area Committee Budget and the Gordon Leisure Projects Trust.

It’s Your Neighbourhood Team

The Area Committee Budget funded Kintore & District Community Council’s project to support the aims of the It’s Your Neighbourhood Team. The community have taken responsibility for improvement activity and where possible the Council has said yes. Removal of barriers for communities to deliver their own activities is key.

Ward 13 – Westhill & District:

Westhill & Elrick Community Action Plan

Westhill & Elrick Community Action Plan (CAP) was commissioned and driven forward by Westhill and Elrick Community Council supported by the Area Committee budget funded consultant. The steering group developed a neighbourhood approach and created a robust CAP with a variety of well thought out and achievable actions. Delivery is ongoing, and this work forms the foundation for the place plan work which will commence later in 2025.

Denman Park

The Westhill Rotary Club were awarded funds from Developer Obligations and have installed a Pentaque Court in Denman Park. The addition compliments the tennis courts and bowling green. Landscape Services supported the groups ambition and worked in partnership to remove greenery to facilitate the construction.

Westhill & Elrick Community Council, using Place Based Investment Programme funding, have improved the path network. Landscape Services and Area Project Officer supported through the procurement and delivery process. A great example of communities driving projects forward and the Council facilitating.

Across the Garioch Area

- Community capacity building has been supported through the Area Office and by Services. Oyne, Kirkton of Skene, Westhill and Bennachie area have all either published a Community Action Plan (CAP) or have continued to deliver identified actions in CAPs.
- Area Committee Budget continued to support a range of community projects and the report to committee highlighted this financial year's projects and outcomes.
- Asset Transfer works continues across Garioch. Notable is the successful asset transfer of Leisureland to Inverurie Men's Shed, an active group that delivers community activities across demographics and the town. There are multiple expressions of interest and groups in Culsalmond, Kintore, and Kemnay were awarded Shared Prosperity Funding in 2024/25 to commission feasibility studies to progress their asset transfer proposals.
- Through Area Committee Budget grant funding, Cycling without Age Chapters are flourishing in Garioch. Inverurie Chapter has been joined by Westhill Inch and Kemnay Chapters
- Community resilience work is ongoing across the areas, led by Community Councils. This includes an increase in generator installations, access to external funding, and agreed plans, all supported by the Area Team and the Risk and Resilience Team.

KEY CHALLENGES:

In addition to budget and capacity issues, there have been a range of challenges to the work of the Area Team and Services delivering in the Garioch Area.

- There has been noticeable youth anti-social behaviour in settlements, often not reported to Police Scotland but on Facebook sites. There has been partnership working across Police Scotland and Council to support the communities, explore intervention activities and work with the

young people. This is an ever-present issue that is cyclical. Other anti-social behaviour includes graffiti and the cost and difficulty of removal.

- The Home Office's procurement of a hotel to provide contingency accommodation for asylum seekers in Westhill continues to be a challenge in terms of the Area Team's capacity and mitigating the impact on the resident community and the hotel residents. Social cohesion and stability is the aim. The team continue to work closely with the community resilience group and partners.
- Garioch's offices are all located in Inverurie. The agreed closure of Gordon House to achieve agreed budget savings for financial year 2024/25 was rolled out through the Inverurie Office Programme. The saving was achieved. Gordon House was vacated and all staff decanted. The challenge of being in temporary accommodation will remain and will require to be monitored whilst planning for the permanent solution is progressed. The Gordon House Service Point has been relocated to the Library following a community conversation via the Inverurie Town Team.

KEY LINKS:

<https://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/garioch-bennachie-community-action-plan.pdf>

[Bogbeth Park – New opening date – Crescent Cricket Club](#)

[The Children and Teenagers Neighbourhood Project | A Place in Childhood](#)

<https://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/garioch-westhill-elrick-community-action-plan.pdf>

[Community Planning In Action – Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership](#)

[Agenda for Garioch Area Committee on Tuesday, 18th March, 2025, 9.30 am - Aberdeenshire Council \(item 6\)](#)

[Building Better Lives - Cycling Without Age - Cycling Without Age](#)

How do we compare to others?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

A suite of indicators are reported on annually by all local authorities in Scotland and the results are published by the Improvement Service. This is known as the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). The Improvement Service offer a LGBF Tool on their website which allows for a direct comparison of Aberdeenshire Council’s performance against the Scottish Average or against similar councils.

To better assess how we perform against councils similar to our own, the Improvement Service divides councils into “Family Groups” depending on the indicator. A list of who we are grouped with and for what type of indicators can be found here.

There are 108 indicators currently published for Aberdeenshire Council under the LGBF. Of the 108 indicators, 51 are not meeting the Scottish Average and 57 are bettering the Scottish Average.

A selection of the LGBF indicators are contained within the Council Plan and assist in measuring our performance against our priorities.

The table below shows how many indicators are bettering the Scottish Average (Green) and how many are not performing as well as the Scottish Average (Amber/Red) for each directorate.

Directorate	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Business Services	8	0	14
Education & Children’s Services	20	1	17
Environment & Infrastructure Services	17	0	20
Health & Social Care Partnership	5	0	6

Community Planning Partnership: Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) Annual Report which can be found [here](#) when published, provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made by the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025. .

The key achievements this year include:

- Through the power of partnership, 28,830 households have been supported to increase household incomes, improve employability and mitigate against the rising cost of living.
- Employment CONNECT (Local Employability Partnership) delivers a diverse range of programmes and projects throughout Aberdeenshire. Over 1,800 people have been assisted in enhancing their employment chances through upskilling, reskilling and targeted training programmes and work experience placements.
- The Information and Advice Services within Aberdeenshire has increased household income by securing an additional £12,523,808 for clients.
- The work around directly involving those with lived experience in decision making, allocating funding, coproducing and delivering training is being used as good practice at a national level and the Aberdeenshire Lived Experience Framework has informed work in other areas of Scotland.
- The Peterhead Locality Plan focuses on addressing inequalities and improving outcomes for communities experiencing the greatest disadvantage. It is part of Aberdeenshire’s wider community planning approach and aligns with priorities of the Buchan Community Plan and the ‘Developing Excellence in Our North Coast Communities’ strategy. This aims to transform Peterhead into a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable town by 2040 through a place-based approach. Key projects under development over the 12 months include the Peterhead Cultural Quarter which will become a focal point of the town as a prominent and dynamic regional Museum of Aberdeenshire, and the UK Government’s ‘Plan for Neighbourhoods’ with investment aiming to empower communities with the resources to develop their vision for renewal and addressing the root causes of local deprivation.

Managing Our Finances

Key Facts

- £1,393.42 Band D Council Tax 2024/25 (increase of 0% from 2023/24)
- £1,421 Band D Scottish average 2024/25 (increase of 0.282% from 2023/24) (increase of 5% from 2022/23)

Our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) supports the delivery of the Council Plan and associated priorities by setting out the framework within which resources are available over the medium term and the financial challenges facing the Council. In doing so, it incorporates all revenue and capital funding and use of reserves. As part of the MTFS, the Council set its budget for 2024/25 on 22 February 2024 (item 4) with a funding gap being met through a range of budget savings, use of Reserves and increases to Council fees and charges.

The financial performance monitoring process reporting to Policy Committees and then to Council is an integral part of the MTFS. It compares the assumptions that were used to develop the budget to the actual expenditure incurred or income received, allowing for the identification of areas where the assumptions used to set the budget differ from the reality. It allows the monitoring and reporting of risks that may have crystallised during the year, which, in turn helps inform the following years budget setting process.

General Fund Revenue 2024/25: The General Fund sets out the cost of running the day-to-day services (excluding Council housing) and shows where the money comes from to fund these costs.

The 2024/25 revenue budget was initially set at £753.266m. The current financial allocation for service delivery has increased to £776.326 million due to the use of earmarked reserves and changes in government funding that occurred after the budget was approved. The final net expenditure for the year to 31 March 2025 is a net over budget position of £4.074 million (0.5% of revised budget).

In 2024/25, Aberdeenshire Council, like all councils across Scotland, faced ongoing economic challenges. The post-pandemic landscape, combined with the global repercussions of Russia’s war in Ukraine, contributed to a sustained cost-of-living crisis. Supply chain disruptions persisted, and interest rates remained volatile as the Bank of England continued efforts to manage inflation. Despite these pressures, the Council demonstrated strong financial management throughout the year.

In January 2025, the forecast indicated an anticipated over budget position of £6.656 million. To address this, measures were implemented including limiting recruitment to essential vacancies, suspending all non-essential spending and utilising earmarked reserves in accordance with the agreed strategy and purpose. As the final position is a lower over budget position than that reported in January 2025, less needs to be drawn down from reserves.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2024/25

The Council owns or leases 13,443 housing properties. The income and expenditure associated with the management of these properties is reflected in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), a statutory account that the Council must maintain separate to the General Fund. All expenditure incurred, and tenant rents and service charges income received in the provision of rented accommodation must be retained in the HRA. This income must be sufficient to cover the expenditure on the HRA.

The HRA budget was set on 22 February 2024 (item 5) at £71.682m. At the end of the financial year a £500,000 surplus was recorded. As agreed by Council in February 2025, when approving the 2025/26 budget, this net £500,000 under budget position is to be transferred to a newly created HRA Insurance Fund.

In 2024/25, Aberdeenshire collected 100.65% of the rent due in the year, a substantial increase over the 2023/24 figure of 99.80%. This is also significantly higher than the average for Scottish Local Authorities (based on 2024/25 figures of 100.47%). Overall arrears performance has also improved, with Gross Arrears in 2024/25 equal to 4.14% of total rent due, compared to 4.76% last year. Aberdeenshire Council was already one of the strongest performing local authorities in Scotland in terms of arrears (in 2024/25, the Scottish Local Authorities average was 8.56%).

NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE 2024/25

2023/24	Net Expenditure £	Cost per head of population* £
Business Services	49,176,000	186
Communities	189,741,000	719
Education & Children's Services	440,668,000	1,671
Infrastructure Services	67,567,000	256

* based on Aberdeenshire population 2022 – 263,750

General Fund Capital Expenditure 2024/25: Capital expenditure differs to revenue expenditure in that rather than being day-to-day expenditure on delivering services, it is expenditure incurred on acquiring or improving existing assets such as buildings or roads.

The Council’s capital investment plan considers the capital investment requirements to deliver the Council’s priorities against the affordability within the overall MTFS. The effective use of capital resources, including asset management, is fundamental to the Council achieving its medium and long-term strategic objectives.

In 2024/25 actual expenditure incurred on the General Services Capital Plan was £60.603m, subject to finalising the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Lifecycle Replacement Costs. This was £38.201m below the revised budgeted capital expenditure position or 39% lower than had been planned.

A number of significant projects have faced delays during 2024/25 with scope and design changes; contractors withdrawing and price increases all contributing to

revised works programmes being required. Although expenditure against budget was lower than anticipated, several projects were completed or progressed during the year. Refurbishments and upgrades were completed across the school estate, leisure centres and depots. A new office facility was completed in Ellon (Formartine House) and the vehicle replacement programme continued on track.

The inherent complexities and risks associated with capital projects often leads to unforeseen challenges that can affect their timelines. In addition, many capital works span more than one financial year further increasing the likelihood of encountering delays.

FUNDING OF THE CAPITAL PLAN

The General Fund Capital Plan is funded by a combination of General Capital Grant from Scottish Government, Capital Receipts, Other Capital Grants & Contributions and Borrowing.



HRA CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2024/25

The HRA Capital Budget was set on 22 February 2024 (item 5) at £50.312m. The actual expenditure incurred during the year was £41.485m or £8.827m lower than budget. As with the General Fund capital programme, there are inherent complexities and risks associated with the HRA capital programme which often lead to unforeseen challenges that can affect the timeline.

Delays in the New Build Programme and the Housing Improvement Programme (HIP) mainly account for the under-budget position. The New Build Programme was temporarily paused to determine capacity across workstreams within the HRA Business Plan and contractor availability, together with extended lead times on materials, led to delays in the delivery of these programmes.

Income was also lower than budget resulting in an increase in the prudential borrowing required to support the HRA Capital Plan of £2.656m. This will result in higher capital financing charges for HRA in future years and budgets from 2025/26 will require to be amended.

A detailed report on the Financial Performance for 2024/25 was presented to the Council on 26 June 2025 (Item 7)



Delivering Best Value

CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Our Corporate Improvement Plan incorporates the council’s high level improvement action plans which relate to Best Value & Self Evaluation. The progress of the plan is reported to Audit Committee on a quarterly basis and Full Council bi-annually.

Key Improvements

Key Improvements within the last 12 months include but are not limited to:

Improvement Activity	Summary
Corporate Data Hub	A data hub contract has been awarded and we are working with the supplier on use cases/proof of concepts and beginning the migration of key data sets. Regular meetings have been established with data contacts in every service.
Staff Upskilling	A competency framework and associated app, the digital skills Microsoft 365 app and the springboard programme (Options, Skills and Careers) have all been launched in the last 6 months. All tools assist colleagues to meet their development needs, and this is monitored through comprehensive plans during the PPP process. Now that the framework is now in place, work continues to improve uptake of all tools and programmes.
Workforce Strategy	Each Head of Service now has an Operational plan which includes a workforce plan which outlines the services plans for Right People, Right plans, Wellbeing, Fairness and Development for service colleagues. These plans are summarised in the Directorate Strategic Plan which is monitored at service committees. The corporate workforce plan, called the People Strategy is monitored at Business Services Committee. Workforce data analysis is conducted both council-wide and at the service level, integrating into the workforce elements of service operational plans. Ongoing efforts of HR in discussion with services, aim to enhance the reach of recommendations and extract deeper insights from data and emerging trends. A set of Workforce KPIs has been developed to monitor key areas, including the impact of Springboard and the advancement of digital skills essential for driving innovation. These KPIs will be reported to the Business Services Committee on 17th April 2025 and subsequently reviewed every six months.

External Audit

ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT

The most recent Best Value Thematic [external annual audit](#) was conducted by Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditor appointed by Audit Scotland. The external audit focuses on the five key themes below:

KEY FINDINGS:

Workforce Strategy & Priorities

The council has a Workforce strategy, Transformation strategy and Council Plan in place. There should be a formal linking of these three key documents to better inform workforce planning. Workforce planning data should be maintained and considered on a council-wide basis to ensure there is effective integration with strategic plans and priorities.

Digital Technology & the Workforce

The council's former Digital Strategy was well implemented and identified some cash savings. There is limited data to support that the strategy supported workforce productivity and improved service quality. The achievements of the Digital Transformation Programme will require to be monitored closely to ensure that cash savings are made, but also productivity, service quality and outcomes are achieved.

Flexible Working and other innovative staff deployment

The council is effectively using workSTYLE to promote flexibility in working arrangements. Benefits of rationalising office space required have not been achieved in full by the council.

Developing Future Skills and Capacity

The council has launched its 'Springboard' programme, which aims to redeploy skills across the council. Implementation of the programme is limited to date and without a council-wide workforce analysis of skills gaps, will not achieve the savings and benefits envisaged.

Joint Workforce Arrangements across Services and Partners

The council has made limited progress in sharing roles and functions to date.

Measuring the Impact of Workforce Planning

The council is measuring the impact of workforce planning but needs to enforce rigorous review of performance going forward to ensure objectives are met. Council-wide workforce analysis should be implemented and used to ensure the impact of change is measured properly.

What you told us

COMPLAINTS:

- In 2024/25 complaints received were:
- Total closed complaints: **2639**
- Total resolved at stage one and within timescale: **2122 closed at stage 1 (80%) – 64.53% within timescale**
- Total that went to stage 2 and were resolved within timescale: **517 closed at stage 2 (20%) – 68.7% within timescale**
- Total complaints partially or fully upheld: **46.9%**

Investigations initiated by Scottish Public-Sector Ombudsman					
Year	Not Upheld	Upheld	Some Upheld	Not taken further	Total (Closed)
2024 - 2025	0	0	2	47	49

Complaints Received by Directorate			
Directorate	2023/24	2024/25	Trend
Business Services	236	189	Down
Education and Children's Services	260	287	Up
Health & Social Care	79	123	Up
Environment & Infrastructure Services	1864	1837	Down
Live Life Aberdeenshire	122	203	Up
Total	2561	2639	

REPUTATION TRACKER:

Reputation Tracker is a monthly insight into how people view Aberdeenshire Council, including feedback from residents. Monthly dashboards are produced and published on the council's website. These dashboards also contain information on social media reach, data from customer services and the feedback team. The result of some key overarching reputation tracker questions are as follows:

- 57% are satisfied with services provided by the Council, this is down from 68% in 2023/24
- 49% agree the Council is efficient and well run, this down from 59% in 2023/2024
- 49% agree that council services are value for money, this is down from 54% in 2023/24
- 49% agree they would speak highly of the council; this is down from 58% in 2023/24
- 41% of respondents believe that Aberdeenshire Council takes account of resident views-this is down from 57% in 2023/24.

