

# Economic Development and Planning

Investing in economic development and employment opportunities results not just in a positive economic outcome, but can typically also lead to improvements across a wider range of social outcomes and reductions in demand for public services. The LGBF framework includes a suite of measures to reflect council performance across this strategically important area.

## Employment

The first measure is the ‘percentage of total unemployed people in an area assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes’. Most councils participate in employment-related support – either via direct provision and/or via funding delivery by third parties. Employability support is often delivered in partnership and this measure seeks to capture data on employability services where the council has either directly delivered and/or funded the intervention. The measure is an indication of the proportion of unemployed people in a council area that are participating in employability responses led or supported by the council, and in this sense assesses the reach and penetration of the intervention. Currently this measure utilises part of the data submitted by councils as part of their annual [Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development group \(SLAED\) return](#).

In 2015/16, the Scotland average for the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes was 13.9% of total unemployed. This reflects an increase from 9.6% in 2012/13, however a small reduction from 2014/15.

This reduction may reflect a number of factors: the continuing focus on getting more long-term workless people into work and the welfare changes that require these cohorts to undertake job search activities; the reduction in national funding for wage subsidy schemes; and improvements in the labour market that have removed some of the easier to assist persons from worklessness and left a residual group of harder to assist clients who take longer to progress into work.

There is a considerable range across councils, from 1.1% to 31.6%, with lower rates for the least deprived councils (7.4%) compared to the most deprived (16.1%).

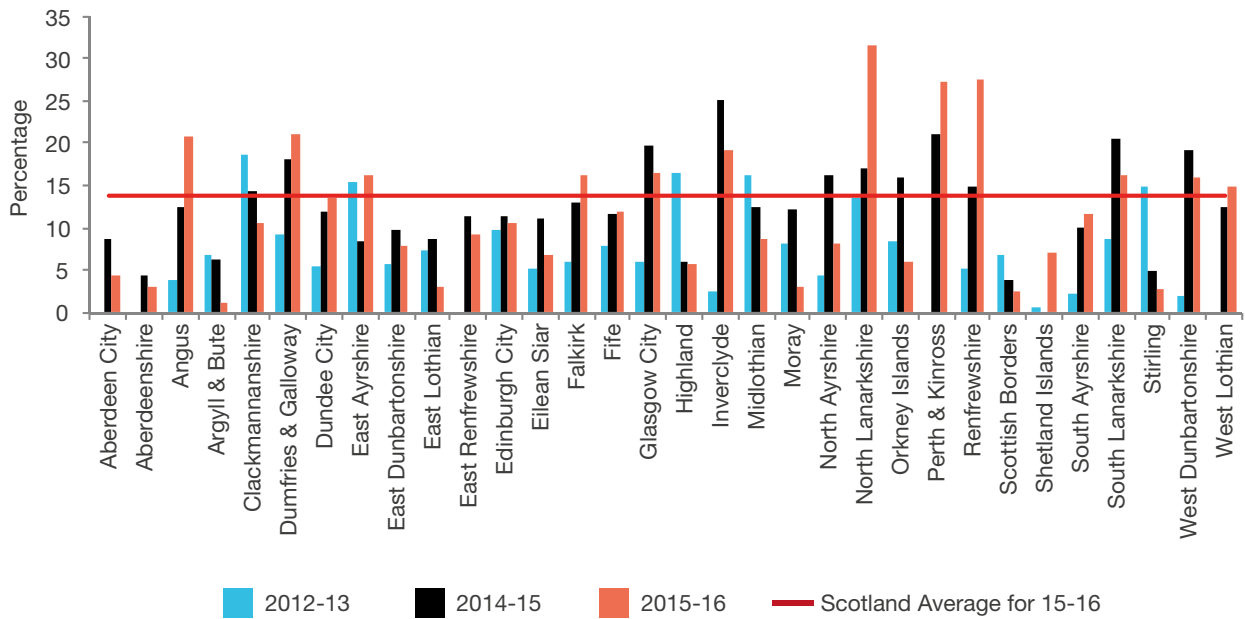
### Number of Unemployed People Assisted into Work from Council Operated/Funded Employability Programmes, as a Percentage of Total Unemployed in the Council Area

Year	% Unemployed People Assisted into Work from Council Operated/Funded Employability Programmes
2012/13	9.6
2013/14	12.5
2014/15	14.1
2015/16	13.9



*Renfrewshire has high and increasing levels of people back into work through council funded schemes. It has focused on reducing youth unemployment through a commitment between the council and business community to increase youth employment levels/reduce youth unemployment, and grow the local economy. The Council has supported companies to grow, develop and create jobs; get local companies to recruit from Renfrewshire's unemployed; and better prepare young people for the world of work through asking employers to deliver / support employability programmes.*

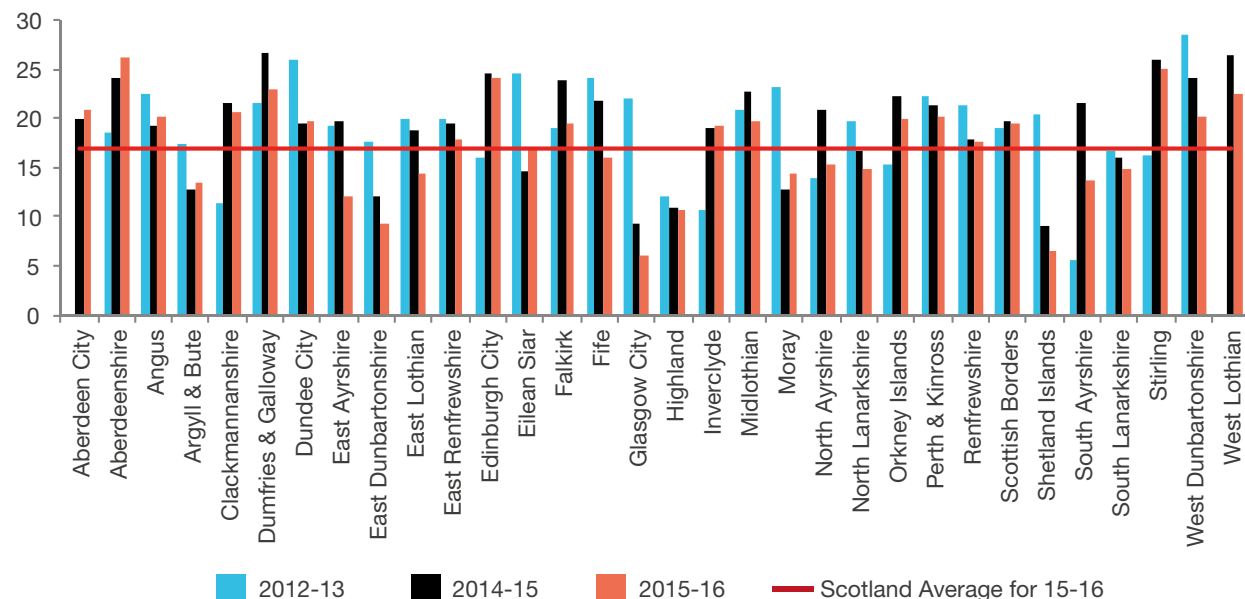
## Percentage of Unemployed People Assisted into Work from Council Operated/Funded Employability Programmes



## Business Support

As the ‘employability’ measure, on its own, does not fully monitor the performance by councils in delivering economic development, a measure reflecting the significant investment in business development and support (e.g. Business Gateway) has been introduced. The number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population has reduced since 2013/14 from 19% to 16.9% in 2015/16. The graph below shows the significant variation which exists across councils, ranging from 6.17% to 26.15%. There is no systematic relationship with start-up rates and rurality, deprivation or size of council. This may reflect a strategic decision by some Business Gateway areas to focus a higher proportion of resources on supporting growth service companies as opposed to business start-ups. In areas where start-up numbers are good this may have greater job creating potential.

## Business Gateway Start-Ups Per 10,000 Population



Source: Business Gateway National Unit, COSLA; Mid-year population estimates, NRO



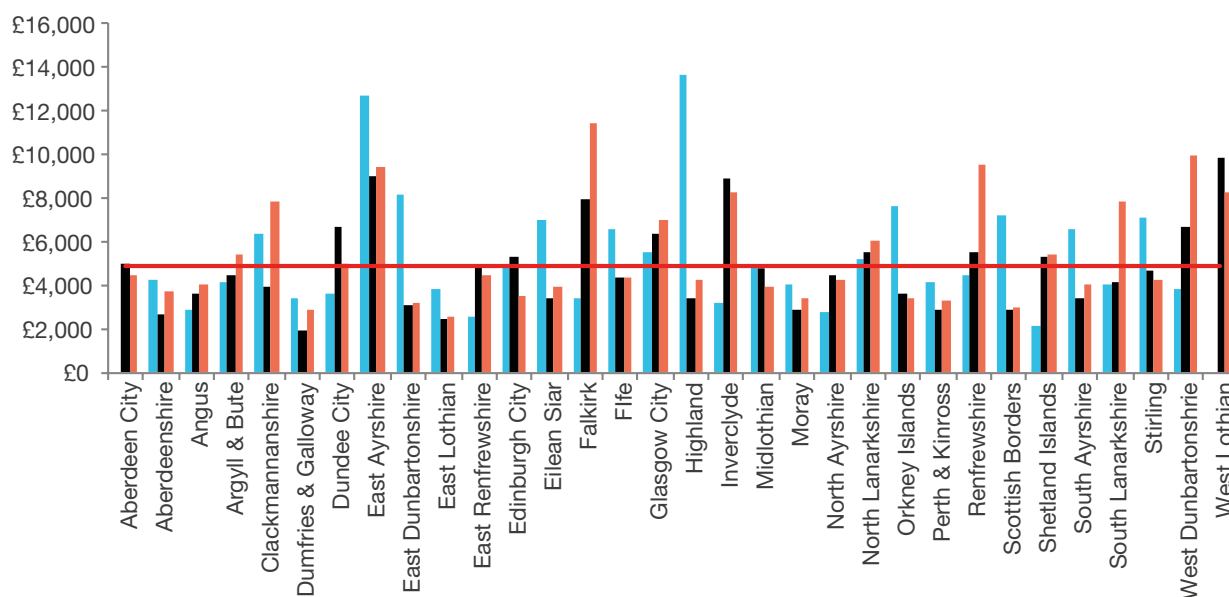
## Cost of Planning Per Application

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-0.1	-7.8
2010/11 - 2011/12	-2.1	-3.5
2011/12 - 2012/13	29.4	26.7
2012/13 - 2013/14	-28.3	-29.4
2013/14 - 2014/15	-4.2	-5.6
2014/15 - 2015/16	13.7	13.2

The cost of planning per application has fallen from £5,243 in 2010/11 to £4,832 in 2015/16, a real terms reduction of 7.8%. Costs increased by 13.2% in the past 12 months. This increase perhaps reflects an increase in generated income across this period which is not reflected up in this gross measure.

There is a significant variation in planning costs across Scotland, ranging from £2,504 to £11,422. There is a significant relationship with deprivation levels and planning costs, with higher costs reported by those authorities with higher levels of deprivation. The average planning costs for councils with the highest levels of deprivation is £7,432, compared to £3,527 for authorities with the lowest deprivation levels. While not significant, urban authorities also tend to spend more than rural and semi-rural authorities – although this is likely to be a corollary of the deprivation effect.

## Cost Per Planning Application

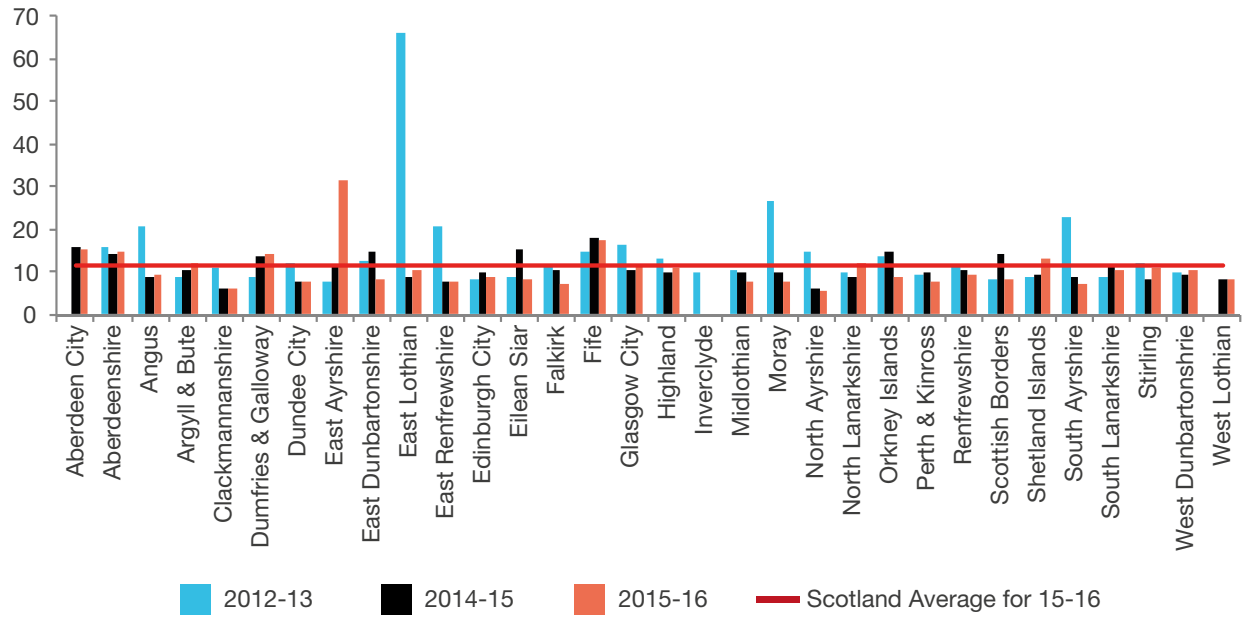


Source: Planning Authority Performance Statistics, Scottish Government; Council provided expenditure figures

There has been a reduction in the average time per commercial planning application since 2012/13. In 2015/16 the average time taken was 11.2 days, compared to 13 days in 2012/13.

There is significant variation between authorities however, ranging from 5.31 days to 31.63 days, although this narrows to 5.31 to 15.31 when outliers are removed. There are no statistically significant relationships with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

## Average Time Per Commercial Planning Application



Source: Planning Authority Performance Statistics, Scottish Government