

Use of the LGBF

Role of LGBF in PSIF Self-Assessment Process

Dundee City Council

Background of PSIF and LGBF

PSIF

The Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) is a performance improvement model using a self-assessment approach which encourages organisations to conduct a comprehensive review of their own activities and results. It promotes a holistic approach to continuous improvement, and is mapped to a number of established organisational improvement tools:

- The EFQM Excellence Model;
- The New Customer Service Excellence Standard;
- Best Value principles;
- Education Scotland;
- Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

The PSIF provides a framework of key questions to challenge and stimulate performance through a structured process, which is developed to suit organisational needs.

Some 33 organisations are now using PSIF across the public and Third Sector, including 2/3rds of Councils. As an improvement model designed for the public and Third Sector organisations across Scotland, PSIF is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains relevant and reflects the context in which public services are operating, with the most recent review concluding in early 2016. Most notably, the recent three-yearly review of PSIF has responded to the expectations of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, with an increased focus on community engagement and improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged individuals and communities, as well as reflecting the growing importance of how digital approaches can provide efficiencies and support change and improvement.

LGBF

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) brings together a wide range of information about how all Scottish councils perform in delivering services to local communities.

The purposes of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework are:

- To help councils and their services better understand why they achieve their current performance levels;
- To build our understanding of where council performance varies;
- To build our understanding of why council performance varies;
- To help identify and share good practice across councils.

All Scottish local authorities have worked together to report standard information on the services they provide which can be compared across councils and year-on-year. This information takes the form of specific 'indicators' that measure aspects of performance. The indicators cover seven service areas which together account for over 60% of local government spending. The service areas are: children, corporate, adult social care, culture and leisure, environmental, housing and economic development.

Case Study of Corporate PSIF Self-Assessment of Dundee City Council

This report will examine the role of LGBF as part of supporting the PSIF Corporate self-assessment in Dundee City Council. In PSIF, evidence from a number of sources is utilised to support participants in developing an Improvement Plan, the output of the self-assessment process. PSIF looks to clarify the importance of the linkages between the results that the organisation seeks to achieve and improve upon, linking to the critical role that people have in reflecting upon and developing actions to achieve these results. A key element of results is the importance of participants understanding and drawing upon as comprehensive and robust an evidence base as possible to identify strengths in performance and areas for improvement. LGBF was a key element of this evidence base in Dundee and was utilised in a number of ways. LGBF data was examined in meetings with the performance team in Dundee City Council to facilitate a general discussion that highlighted particular issues in terms of trends for particular services. When performance trends were considered in relation to priority areas for Dundee City Council, LGBF provided a robust evidence base and as such was a critical resource to assist focussing upon key areas where improvements should be considered.

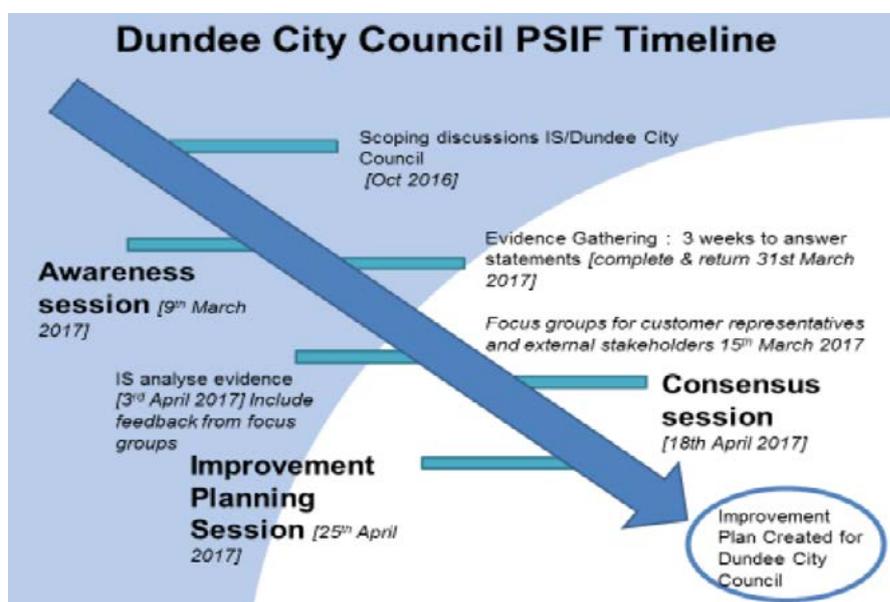
During the Consensus sessions with senior staff in the Council, LGBF data was also part of the evidence base used in the presentation, with LGBF data presented from Dundee Performs from the Council's website. In Dundee Performs which sits on Dundee City Council's website, the LGBF data is presented in an easy to see format, with key trends across services such as children and families, health and social care and corporate services are presented, in some cases compared against Dundee City Council's LGBF Family Group. This allowed key performance trends to be highlighted during the presentation that were linked into evidence that emerged from the Checklist and the focus groups to identify areas that were strengths and also where improvements needed to be focussed.

Methodology

Overview of PSIF Process

The Corporate PSIF approach follows a number of key stages designed to allow participants to consider current strengths in Corporate performance and to highlight areas where improvements can be made. Throughout the process, information and evidence from sources is gathered to support participants to have a clear understanding of Dundee City Councils' performance and its priorities across a number of areas. Participants are encouraged to discuss and evaluate this evidence across a number of interactive sessions and then asked to reach agreement of key actions for improvement to go forward.

The following timeline demonstrates the delivery of the programme delivery and its defined stages:



Gathering Evidence

Evidence is gathered to support participants in their efforts to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The following are the areas from which evidence has been gathered as part of this Corporate PSIF self-assessment.

- **The Checklist:** The quantitative and qualitative responses to this electronic survey are gathered, collated and analysed by the Improvement Service. The responses to the Checklist are completely anonymous and the response rate to this Checklist was an extremely commendable 80%. The Checklist itself consists of 35 statements in sections: leadership; service planning; people (staff); partnerships and resources; processes and service; and results. At the end of each section participants are asked to provide details of where the Council performs well and also provide details of how the Council can improve their approach. This data is pulled together by the Improvement Service and is part of the documents provided to participants in advance of the Consensus Session.
- **Focus Groups:** To provide further evidence to support the self-assessment the Performance Team within Dundee City Council undertook two focus groups with external stakeholders and

community representatives. The findings from these were part of the evidence presented to participants in advance of the Consensus Session.

- **Results:** The Performance Team and the Improvement Service drew upon available statistical evidence to raise issues around key priorities facing the Council. Data was drawn from the Local Government Benchmarking Framework and Dundee Performs to highlight areas where Dundee City Council is looking to seek improvements.

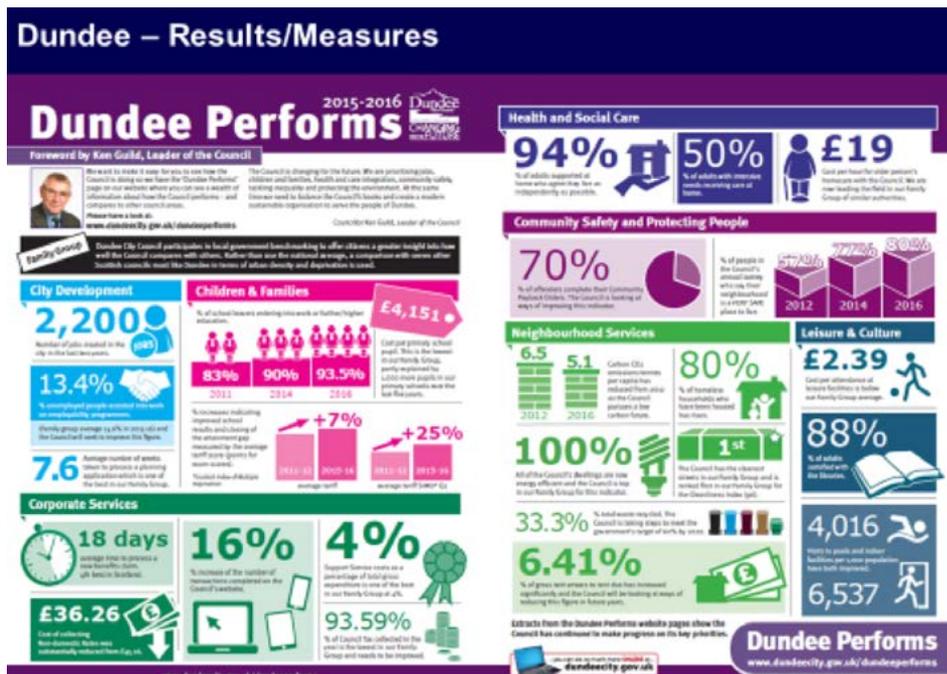
LGBF Linking to Strategic Aims

The use of key indicators by the Council is a key part of the process to highlight priority areas for those participating in the self-assessment. The following are some of the strengths identified through the Checklist feedback on results:

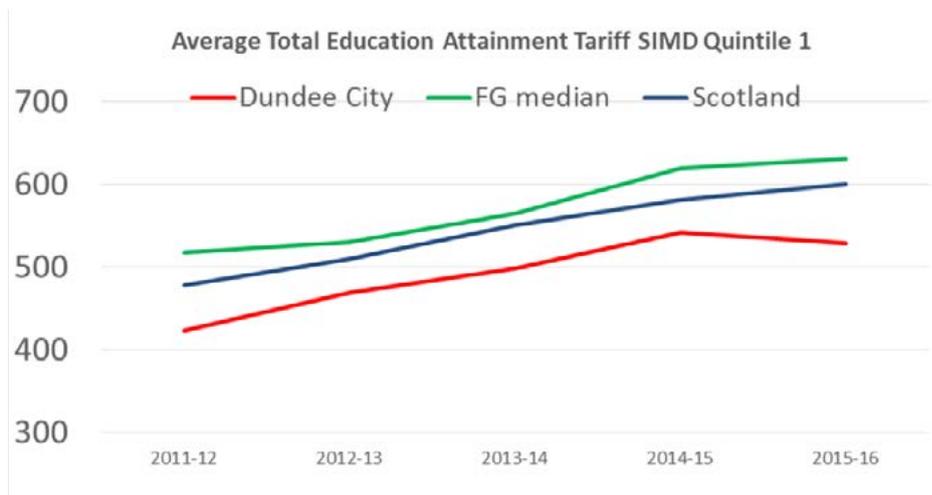
- The Council has performance data that is utilised to measure progress to improve outcomes internally and externally. With the LOIP being developed these are being reviewed;
- Previously, Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data has been used to highlight areas where our expenditure was high. This led to reviewing our street cleaning and open space maintenance resulting in significant financial savings being achieved over the last 3-4 years with minimal reduction to service performance;
- A particular strength is in the use of info-graphics to share performance information from LGBF with customers online and with the press. Also reports around Listening to Our Customers show we take on board feedback and make changes to further enhance and promote services.

As part of the PSIF process, key performance data from LGBF that links to the strategic priorities of the Council are presented to those participating in the self-assessment. This allows those going through the process to have access to LGBF evidence to support them in identifying potential areas for improvement. The LGBF data is designed to supplement the evidence gathered from the Checklist Report and also from the focus groups with community representatives and external stakeholders.

One such example of this performance data shared with participants was taken from Dundee City Council's website and shows a range of LGBF data shown as part of Dundee Performs (see table below). As can be seen from the following table, LGBF data from Children and Families, Corporate Services, Health and Social Care and other service areas is presented demonstrating performance trends in key areas.



Participants are asked to pay particular attention to key LGBF data that link to the strategic priorities of Dundee City Council, many of which had been highlighted as priorities by the Chief Executive at the introductory Awareness Session for participants. Of particular note, was the strategic priority to close the educational attainment gap for those children from deprived backgrounds. As such, further drilled down data on educational attainment from LGBF was provided to participants to further illustrate the current context of performance in this area (see figure 3 below).



LGBF Linking to Improvements for Dundee City Council

Having gathered evidence to support the self-assessment process from a range of sources, including the Checklist, focus groups and key performance LGBF data, participants took part in a ½ day session to consider the evidence and then select 6 key areas for improvement. Having identified the 6 key improvement actions in the Consensus Session, participants met a week later to consider these actions in terms of an Improvement Plan. Here, participants are asked to think about a number of areas to progress these actions, such as: what activities need to be planned for to progress the action; what risks and resources are tied to these activities; what are the timescales for these activities; what

group or individual(s) are responsible for progressing these activities; what milestones can be put in place that will demonstrate when activities are completed; what is the outcome that the improvement action is hoped to achieve?

It is interesting to note the extent to which the improvement actions identified by those participating in the Corporate PSIF Self-Assessment reflect the evidence from the Checklist, the focus groups and the performance issues raised by LGBF. One of the improvement actions identified by Dundee City Council was about closing the educational attainment gap, which clearly links to performance issues raised by LGBF about the Average Total Tariff for Quintile 1 and the importance of this area highlighted by the Chief Executive.