Local Government Benchmarking Framework

National Benchmarking Overview Report

2013/14

Contents

Preface

This is the third annual report for the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). All 32 Scottish councils having been working with the Improvement Service (IS) over the last four years on developing a common approach to benchmarking, which is grounded in reporting standard information on the services councils provide to local communities across Scotland.

The core purpose of local government's efforts through this work is to support all councils to improve their services by working and learning together. By engaging in benchmarking we will learn how to keep improving the use of performance information, and keep improving understanding of why councils vary in terms of what they achieve for their communities and how good service practices can be better shared across all councils. We will also continue to make this information available to all citizens and users of council services, so that they in turn can hold councils to account for what is achieved on their behalf. As local government we will use the information generated to ask questions of our services in order to make them better. We would encourage citizens and service users to do likewise and engage with us in the improvement process via this information.

It is important to remember that councils across Scotland do not have common service structures. Each council has the structure and service arrangements that it believes are the most appropriate and cost effective to support its local community. Equally, all councils report their performance locally within locally developed and agreed public reporting frameworks. To ensure comparability across councils, it has been necessary to develop standard service definitions, and standard classifications for spending and performance. These are continually reviewed and improved to ensure the best possible performance information is available to communities, and to councils themselves.

As part of this work, councils have developed a process to drill into the information collated through the LGBF to understand, in more detail, why the variations we highlight in this report are occurring. This process has been organised around 'family groups' of councils so that we are comparing councils that are similar in terms of the type of population that they serve (e.g. relative deprivation and affluence) and the type of area in which they serve them (e.g. urban, suburban, rural).This allows us to identify and make improvements to the benchmarking framework itself but also to identify and share good practice between councils. There is a continuous improvement programme to refine the benchmarking framework and this year there will be a strong focus on improving the outcome benchmarks for pre-school and school provision in Scotland. We presently lack a consistent measure of children's development at entry to primary school, and our measures of attainment at secondary level are academically focused and take no account of vocational attainment or the wider achievements of pupils. Stronger measures to support improvements in outcomes for older people are also required given the existing focus on costs within the current measures.

The information presented in this report covers how much councils spend on particular services, service performance and how satisfied people are with the major services provided by councils. The headline findings for Scotland as a whole are that councils have continued to make substantial improvements in efficiency and productivity so that the cost of delivering services has reduced while service output and outcomes have been maintained and improved. This has been necessary because of increasing constraint on local budgets and councils have responded well to that pressure. Given further projected major cuts to public budgets across the next five years in the UK Government's financial plans, it is important that the impact on local service levels, service quality and public confidence in local services are closely monitored. The benchmarking framework allows us to do that.

Our ambition in undertaking this important work is to continue to improve the lives of citizens throughout Scotland's many diverse communities. Good public services can help contribute significantly to helping people to have better opportunities in life, and better quality of life. The cumulative impact of the whole public sector can add further value. To that effect we also encourage other public service partners to share in and learn from our work to date. We will work with colleagues across the wider public service in the years ahead to broaden the range of indicators being deployed to support benchmarking. To achieve our ambition will require a collective public service effort but we think that effort will be more than rewarded by further improvements in services to local people across Scotland.

David O'Neil **President, COSLA**	**Angela Leitch** **Chair of SOLACE (Scotland)**

Executive Summary

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 key aim of this approach is to support all councils to improve services by working and learning together. The framework reports on how much councils spend on particular services, service performance and how satisfied people are with the major services provided by councils. The framework represents all the significant areas of local government spend in 2013/14.

The headline findings for Scotland as a whole are that councils have continued to make substantial improvements in efficiency and productivity so that the cost of delivering services has reduced while service output and outcomes have been maintained and improved. This has been necessary because of increasing constraint on local budgets and councils have responded well to that pressure.

The key national trends are:

Education Services

1. The total number of pre-school places provided by councils has risen by 11.8% across Scotland since 2010, providing an additional 10,821 places, and this has been achieved against a backdrop of a 5.4% reduction in gross expenditure. The costs per place of pre-school education have decreased by 15.3% in real terms during this four year period. Increased efficiency in the allocation of available council provision, increased integration of pre-school and primary school provision and working on the balance between formally qualified teachers and early years staff appear to be key factors underpinning this trend.
2. In both primary and secondary education, there has been a reduction in real costs per pupil since 2010/11 (7.4% and 3.6% respectively), although the rate of this reduction has slowed in the last 12 months. In primary education, similar to pre-school, a 4.4% reduction in real gross expenditure has occurred in parallel with a 3.3% increase in pupil numbers. In secondary education, there was a 3.9% fall in pupil numbers, however the reduction in gross expenditure was proportionately larger (7.4%). Given the importance of salary costs in these trends, the retirement of older teachers has had an influence in this area.
3. This reduction in education costs has been accompanied by a continued improvement in relation to attainment. There has been a five percentage point increase in relation to the demanding criterion of pupils achieving 5+ awards at SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) level 6 since 2010/11, and a three percentage point increase in young people entering positive destinations upon leaving school (a rise from 89% to 92%). Initial exploration within family groups shows improved data intelligence to track young people and to target interventions, specialised 'key worker' provision within schools with a focus on supporting positive destinations, improved partnership working with local employers and colleges, and earlier intervention for children at risk have all contributed to this trend.
4. Continued progress is also being made in relation to attainment for those pupils in the 20% most deprived communities, where attainment of 5+ awards at level 6 increased from 10% to 13% of pupils in the last 12 months, and by 4.6 percentage points over the past four years.
5. Satisfaction with schools remains high at 81%, however this has reduced by 2.1 percentage points since 2010/11.

Corporate Services

6. In relation to overall council corporate and support costs, these continue to account for around 5% of total gross revenue spend for local government across Scotland. There has been a 9.1% real terms decrease in costs of the democratic core per 1000 population since 2010/11.

7. The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax has reduced by 16.7% over the four year period. Increased use of new technology including e-billing, text reminders and telephony systems, and the corresponding reduction in staffing costs underpins the reduction in costs for many councils. At the same time as a reduction in unit costs, the collection rate remains high at 95.2%, increasing from 94.7% in the base year.

8. There has been continued improvement in relation to ensuring equal pay opportunities across genders, with an increase in the percentage of women in the top 5% earners in councils, from 46% to 51% between 2010/11 and 2013/14.

Adult Social Care

9. Across adult social care, there has been a reduction in real costs in relation to home care unit costs and residential care unit costs while in relation to the balance of care, there has been an increase in the percentage of people with intensive needs cared for at home and the percentage of social work spend allocated to self-directed support.

10. Home care costs per hour per adult over the age of 65 have fallen by 4.6% in the past four years. While there has been an increase in gross expenditure, there has been a proportionately greater increase in the number of home care hours delivered. The actual number of people receiving home care has decreased, but the hours they are receiving on average has increased. This reflects the increased complexity of needs being catered for by home care services and the move towards provision focused on personal care rather than the more preventative elements of traditional home care. There has been an 8% shift from local authority provision to private/voluntary provision during this period which has contributed to reduced costs through lower salary and pension costs. In the absence of reliable indicators regarding the outcomes for older people, it is not possible to reflect the relative merits of the two service delivery models.

11. Residential care costs per adult over the age of 65 have reduced by 3% in the last 12 months. It is not possible to provide a comparison across four years due to a change in the way support costs have been apportioned. While the number of adults supported has increased slightly by 0.6% in the last 12 months, there has been a 2.5% reduction in real gross expenditure. As with home care, the reduction in costs across Scotland may to some extent reflect the continued shift from local authority (LA) provision to more private and voluntary sector provision (1.2% reduction in LA provision in the last year). The data reveals no systematic relationship between costs and the percdentage of self-funders or percentage of publicly funded places.

12. The effort to care for more people in their own home rather than institutional settings such as hospitals is an area of growing importance. The perentage of people with intensive needs receiving care at home has increased year on year from 32.2% in 2010/11 to 34.7% in 2013/14. Residential care also continues to play a key role in reducing unnecessary hospital stays. With care home numbers gradually falling and NHS continuing care also decreasing, how the system adapts to respond to meet the future needs of an aging population is an area for further exploration.

13. Self-directed support (SDS) has increased year on year in the past four years. As a percentage of total social work spend SDS has increased by 4.8 percentage points from 1.6% in 2010/11 to 6.4% in 2013/14. The majority of this growth occurred in Glasgow

where there has been a growth of 30 percentage points during the four year period. Glasgow City Council was part of a national project to drive increases in Direct Payments and has already assessed all of their under-65 clients under SDS. The continued growth in SDS will have further implications for the social care market place and our ability to accurately track where and how resources are spent.

14. The perentage of adults satisfied with social care/work services has decreased year on year since 2010/11. Satisfaction has dropped from 62% in 2010/11 to 55% in 2013/14. Satisfaction with social care services represents the lowest levels of satisfaction reported across the framework.

Culture and Leisure Services

15. Across culture and leisure services at a Scotland-wide level, costs per visit/attendance have reduced. Significant increases in visitor numbers for sports (17.3%), libraries (26.6%) and museums (25.8%) have been achieved against a backdrop of reductions in gross expenditure. Customer satisfaction rates for all culture and leisure facilities, except parks, have fallen in the last 12 months. A significant capital investment programme in sports facilities across Scotland 10 years ago is now bearing fruit and resulting in increased usage. For libraries, the increase in virtual visits, use of public access computers and mapping of opening times to user demand have driven continued increases in user numbers. Further exploration is required to understand the factors behind increased museum use; however increased promotion of exhibits and more robust footfall counting procedures may be contributing.

Environmental Services

16. Recycling rates continue to improve across Scotland from 41% in 2011/12 to 42.2% in 2013/14 as efforts are made to achieve Scotland's Zero Waste 60% household waste recycling target by 2020. The combined gross costs of waste management per premise (collection and disposal) have reduced by 3.2% in the past four years (and net costs have reduced by 0.7% in the past year). Exploration in family groups has identified the implementation of 'route optimisation' software systems saving costs on vehicles and employees, changes in working practices (e.g. shift working, zonal working, weekend working) and moving to three or four weekly refuse collections as key factors driving the reduction. Additionally, a nationwide reduction in waste arising due to the recession and austerity measures may account for some of the fall in costs in the last 12 months.

17. Street cleaning costs per 1000 population continue to reduce at an increasing rate, while the cleanliness score and satisfaction rates continue to improve, indicating the great care that has been taken to protect key areas of public concern even in the context of reducing budgets. The cost of street cleaning has reduced in real terms by 25.4% since 2010/11. The introduction of shift working, a decrease in staff numbers and maximising the use of assets has driven these reductions across many councils.

18. Overall costs for roads maintenance per km have reduced in real terms by 21.2% since 2010/11. The majority of the change appears to be due to lower winter maintenance expenditure during this period. 2010/11 was a particularly bad winter, with £120 million of additional costs and the much milder winters recently have led to lower associated expenditure. The condition of the roads network in terms of Class A, Class B and unclassified roads continues to improve. Family groups identified the implementation of Road Asset Management Plans and better targeting of spend as key factors driving this improvement.

Housing Services

19. When looking at council management of housing stock, the rent due lost to voids has remained unchanged at 1.3% since 2010/11. This suggests councils continue to manage their stock well in the face of mounting pressures as a consequence of the impacts of welfare reform among other factors. In terms of housing quality, there have been consistent and significant improvements over the past three years in terms of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards and energy efficiency standards.

Economic Development

20. In the last 12 months the Scotland average for the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes rose from 9.6% to 12.6% of total unemployed. There is a considerable range across councils, from 2.3% to 34.8%, and work is prioritised in the year ahead to improve the robustness of this measure and provide reliable data on the progression of these people into employment.

Conclusion

The core purpose of this exercise is to support local government through benchmarking to continue to improve the lives of citizens throughout Scotland's many diverse communities. The collective efforts of all 32 councils in Scotland has been important in taking this benchmarking project to its current stage of development and their on-going support will be critical to its further success.

There is a continuous improvement programme to refine the benchmarking framework and this year there will be a strong focus on improving the outcome benchmarks for pre-school and school provision in Scotland. We presently lack a consistent measure of children's development at entry to primary school, and our measures of attainment at secondary level are academically focused and take no account of vocational attainment or the wider achievements of pupils.

Introduction

Against a backdrop of wider public service spending pressures, councils and their partners are seeking to deliver better outcomes for communities, households and individuals through improving the performance of their services, developing new service delivery models, and by developing preventative approaches to service delivery.

Financial projections show that the spending available to councils will fall in both cash and real terms across the next five years. At the same time, demand is likely to rise across many council services as a result of demographic changes and significant reform in the welfare system. Against this context of increasing demands and declining public expenditure, the pressure for councils is to continue to drive productivity and efficiency gains across their services while maintaining or improving service levels, service quality, and public confidence.

Dealing with these pressures is at the heart of the current reform programmes that councils and other public sector partners in Scotland are implementing. These reforms include:

- The emphasis on prevention and early intervention across key areas such as early years development, youth unemployment and reshaping care for older people.
- Targeting to reduce persistent patterns of inequalities between and within communities.
- The renewed framework for Community Planning which emphasises the importance of partners working more closely together to plan service delivery in local areas, integrating, where appropriate, their services and in working jointly to share resources to help meet local needs across Scotland.
- A focus on localisation, community engagement and co-production which drive new ways of working with communities that builds on their resources and talents and ensures public services are attuned more fully to their needs. This focus is emphasised within the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill.
- Ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for councils and their partners to account to the people and communities of Scotland and to improve transparency over plans, expenditure and performance.

How to implement these reforms in ways which support councils to focus resources on areas of greatest impact is the basis for councils' improvement activities and their collective efforts embodied in projects such as the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). But the challenges are complex and will require major change in how the whole public sector, including councils, operates. It is against this backdrop that the work set out in this report should be read. The LGBF forms a key element in councils' collective and individual responses to the challenges they and their communities face.

Our Approach

The core purpose of the exercise is benchmarking. That is making comparisons on spending, performance and customer satisfaction between similar councils so that all councils can identify their strengths and weaknesses and learn from those who are achieving the best performance to improve local service delivery throughout Scotland. This work is on-going and all councils continue to participate in these collective efforts towards self-improvement.

Our approach means that there are three core points to bear in mind:

1. It is important when looking at councils to compare like with like.
2. The focus presented in this report is on variations in spending and performance that

councils can directly control.

3. The aim is to help councils improve and become more cost effective in delivering local services and through that, support people in improving their life outcomes.

The benchmarking framework reported here lends itself to any type of comparison councils or citizens wish to make. What is does not support is a crude “league table” assessment: it would be as misleading to assess the performance of councils with high levels of deprivation without taking account of that as it would be to explore the performance of island councils without noting they are island groups with a very distinctive population distribution.

The purpose, therefore, is to create a framework that supports evidence-based comparisons and, through that, shared learning and improvement. The indicators in the LGBF are very high level indicators and are designed to focus questions on why variations in cost and performance are occurring between similar councils. They do not supply the answers. That happens as councils engage with each other to “drill down” and explore why these variations are happening. That provides the platform for learning and improvement.

Over the past year, councils have started working together to ‘drill down’ into the LGBF data across a number of service areas such as positive destinations, roads maintenance, council tax collection, looked after children, waste management and sports services, with a longer term plan to roll out this activity across other service areas. This process has been organised around ‘family groups’ of councils so that we are comparing councils that are similar in terms of the type of population that they serve (e.g. relative deprivation and affluence) and the type of area in which they serve them (e.g. urban, suburban, rural). The point of comparing like with like is that this is more likely to lead to useful learning and improvement. Examples of best practice emerging from this collaboration are being shared across all local authorities and are being used to inform local improvement activity within self-evaluation, service review, and service planning processes.

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework

The framework is based on seven overall service groupings which cover the major public facing services provided by councils, and the support services necessary to do that. This includes children’s services (education and child care), adult social care, environmental services, culture and leisure, housing, corporate support services and economic development. Work continues with colleagues to develop credible benchmarks in the few areas not yet covered, such as planning.

To develop precise indicators of cost and performance for comparison between councils, these broad service categories are divided into more specific sub-categories. For example, children’s services divide into: pre-school education; primary education; secondary education and child care and protection. A full list of service categories and indicators is attached (See Appendix 1).

For each category, standard indicators of spend and performance have been applied. Spending has been standardised by expressing it as expenditure per standard unit (e.g. spending per pupil; spending per kilometre of road maintained; spending per residence for waste collection, etc.). These indicators have been standardised by application of rigorous protocols and provide a reliable basis for comparison between councils. Previously, the key source of the data for the cost indicators has been the Local Financial Return (LFR). The earlier publication of the LGBF this year means that the LFR data is not yet available. Therefore, the cost data used this year is based on a direct return to the Improvement Service, although to ensure reliable and comparable data, this continues to be based on LFR categories, guidance and definitions.

Indicators of performance have proven to be more difficult. For some services, well accepted measures of performance exist (e.g. pupil attainment at N5/standard grade or N6/higher level for secondary education). For others, no standard measures of performance are currently available (e.g. children's educational attainment at the end of primary school). For others again, performance is defined against policy requirements (e.g. percentage of older people with intensive needs receiving care at home). Finally, in some cases, community satisfaction with the service is used but is not equally available for all services. The sources used to populate the performance measures include performance and statistical returns to the Scottish Government, Scottish Qualifications Authority, The Scottish Housing Regulator, and SEPA, among others, as well as direct returns to the Improvement Service for a small number of measures not currently collected/published by another body. The Scottish Household Survey is used to provide customer satisfaction measures.

Full technical specifications for all 55 indicators, including source details are available on the Local Government Benchmarking Website.

This framework is iterative and councils continue to collaborate to strengthen indicators and address framework gaps. We welcome public views in relation to how to improve this benchmarking framework and particularly if there are other measures which might usefully be included. You can provide feedback and suggestions by visiting our website (www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking).

The Purpose of this Report

There is a continued commitment to make benchmarking information available to all citizens and users of council services. To further this end a new online benchmarking public reporting tool has been designed and is incorporated within councils' own local approaches to public performance reporting. All of the information generated by the LGBF is presented in this online benchmarking tool which contains "dashboards" for each council showing movement on indicators across the four years covered, and a comparison with the Scottish average for all indicators.

This report is an overview report and does not seek to replicate the depth and detail of the benchmarking tool. The focus is on three important areas:

1. Trends across Scotland for the key framework indicators covering the period 2010 to 2014. For consistency we report the data in financial rather than calendar years. For each unit cost indicator we have calculated the change over the four years covered by this report in cash and in real terms, that is taking account of impact of inflation over time. **To explore change over time we have focused on the real term change but to allow for other comparisons we have also included the cash figures for each relevant indicator.**

2. The level of variation across councils and factors shaping these trends including physical geography, population distribution, size of council and the impact of deprivation.[1]

3. Identification of areas where unexplained variation exists and significant improvement might be achieved by all councils getting close to the "best in class".

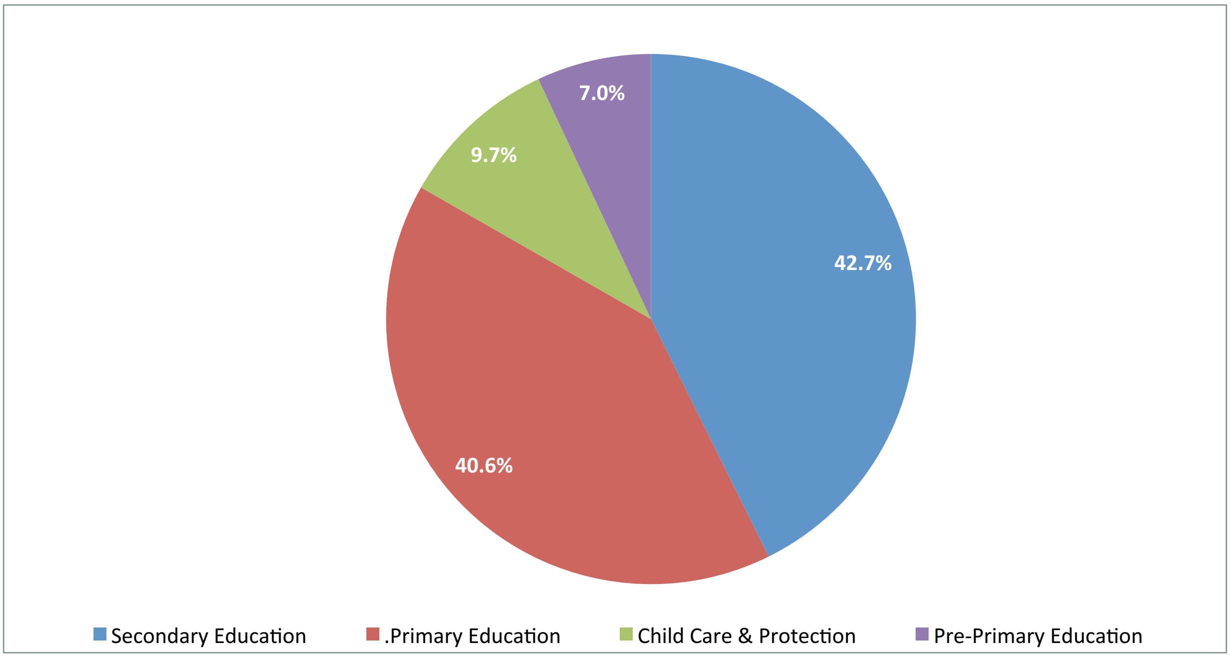
Those interested in further reading may wish to visit Viewstat (www.improvementservice.org.uk/viewstat/), an interactive mapping tool which provides further information on a variety of areas such as education, economic participation, housing and income, all of which may be useful in 'drilling-down' into the high-level benchmarking indicators.

1 Correlation analysis and Mann-Whitney/Wilcoxon Two-Sample Tests were carried out to establish where statistically significant relationships exist between the framework indicators and levels of deprivation, rurality, population distribution and size of council.

Children's Services

The major elements of children's services, and the percentage of total children's services spend on each one, are given in the chart below.

Proportion of Gross Revenue Expenditure for Children's Services by Element 2013/14



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

As can be seen, primary and secondary school provision are the major spend areas, with pre-school education and child care and protection accounting for a very much lower percentage of total spending on children. Each element is looked at in turn below[2].

Pre-school Provision for Children

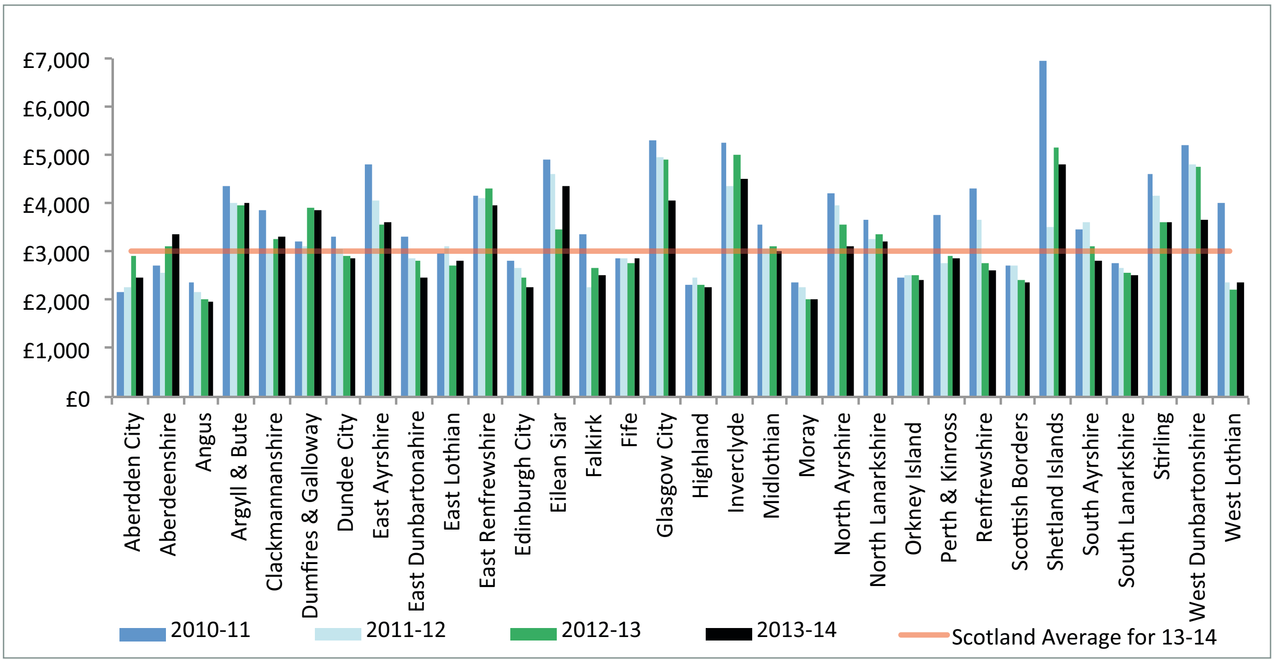
For pre-school educational provision for children ("nursery school"), spending has been standardised as total spend per pre-school place. The average cost per place in 2013/14 was £2998, with substantial variation between councils, ranging from £1959 per place to £4789 per place. There is no systematic connection with the different scale, population distribution or levels of deprivation for different councils. The variation seems more likely to reflect specific local cost factors such as workforce composition and age structure, capacity utilisation within establishments, and rationalisation of management overheads.

Over the four year period the Scottish average for the cost per pre-school place has reduced in real terms by £543. In percentage terms, this represents an average real terms reduction across Scotland of 15.3%. Of the 32 councils, 28 have seen a reduction in costs since 2010/11.

Real costs have reduced at a faster pace in the last 12 months after levelling out between 2011/12 and 2012/13. From 2012/13 to 2013/14 there was a real terms reduction of 5.2% compared to a reduction of 1.1% between 2011/12 to 2012/13.

2 Data on looked after children will be published in March 2015. The benchmarking framework will be updated to incorporate these figures at that time

Cost per Pre-School Registration



Source: Early Learning and Childcare Census, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures

Cost per Pre-School Place 2010/11 – 2013/14

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	-10.8	-15.3
2010/11 - 2011/12	-8.0	-9.6
2011/12 - 2012/13	0.5	-1.1
2012/13 - 2013/14	-3.5	-5.2

Significantly, the total number of pre-school places provided by councils has risen by 11.8% across Scotland since 2010, providing an additional 10,821 places, and this has been achieved against a backdrop of a 5.4% reduction in gross expenditure.

The extent to which individual councils use in-house/external provision is not important in understanding local costs (nationally, there has been a 1.7% shift away from partner providers and toward LA provision in the past four years[3]). The increased focus on the efficient allocation of available council provision, particularly through the introduction by many councils of the Nursery Admissions Management System, has been a key driver in this trend however.

There has also been increasing integration of pre-school and primary school provision supporting a smoother transition for children. This integration has delivered efficiencies through reducing property and staffing costs by enabling both the sharing of head teachers and school facilities.

The nationally agreed wage freeze continues to be a major factor in the cost reductions in recent years. Factors such as the age, experience and grade of staff deployed may also be part of an explanation as these are major cost elements in delivering the service. Councils have worked on the balance between formally qualified teaching staff and other early years practitioners. While the total number of staff across pre-school education provision has increased by 6.2%, the percentage of qualified teachers has reduced by 3.4% from 16.6% in 2010/11 to 13.2% in

3 Source: Early Learning and Childcare Census, Scottish Government

2013/14.[4] There has also been a small decrease in the age profile of pre-school teachers during this period.

Pre-School Performance

Currently there are no systematic and consistent measures deployed by all 32 councils for understanding children's' development as they progress through the pre-school setting. The Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) have recently committed to work with all national partners (COSLA, Education Scotland, Scottish Government and Improvement Service) to develop an outcomes-focused national performance framework which will enable councils to compare progress on a standardised basis. It is likely this will include consideration of measures identified by the Early Years Collaborative relating to expected developmental milestones by the 27-30 month health review and by the start of primary education. Progress in this important area will be provided in a future report.

Primary and Secondary School Spending

The pattern of spend on primary and secondary schooling is standardised as "total spend per pupil". In both primary and secondary education, there has been a reduction in real costs per pupil since 2010/11 (7.4% and 3.6% respectively), although the rate of this reduction has slowed in the last 12 months.

The data for primary and secondary costs continues to show a very distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the island councils spending significantly more than others. For example, <u>including</u> the islands, the range per primary school pupil is from £3890 to £8306 and from £5582 to £10,539 for secondary schools. <u>Excluding</u> the islands, the range per pupil for primary comes down to £3890 to £5911, and for secondary it comes down to £5582 to £7924. The distinctive physical geography and population distribution of the island councils results in a distinctive spending pattern.

Around 60% of primary and secondary school spending is teaching staff costs. This means that variation between councils is highly influenced by the age and salary costs of the teaching workforce. It is likely retirement patterns are having an influence on costs in this area. Across Scotland, there has been a 5% decrease in the number of teachers aged 45 and over since 2010/11 in both primary and secondary provision.[5]

A key factor underpinning staffing costs for councils relates to the current agreement between the Scottish Government and local authorities that teacher numbers will be maintained in line with pupil numbers. This means that in managing costs this element of the council workforce cannot be reduced below the stipulated levels and represents a fixed cost to councils.

A further 20% of education spending represents operating costs of which the biggest element is the provision of school facilities themselves. Variation in pupil costs between councils will be affected by the number and condition of the school buildings they provide. As a substantial proportion of the school estate has been renewed in the last 15 years using PPP/PFI vehicles, annual contract costs are also likely to be a significant factor.

It is also worth noting that the complex issues involved with school closures inhibits further rationalisation of facilities, which in turn also acts to maintain costs within both primary and secondary school expenditure. The impact of both teacher/pupil ratios and issues around school closures may limit councils efforts in seeking to generate further efficiencies in this major area of expenditure.

The charts below indicate that despite the common factors e.g. class sizes, teacher

4 Source: Teacher Census, Scottish Government

5 Source: Teacher Census. Scottish Government

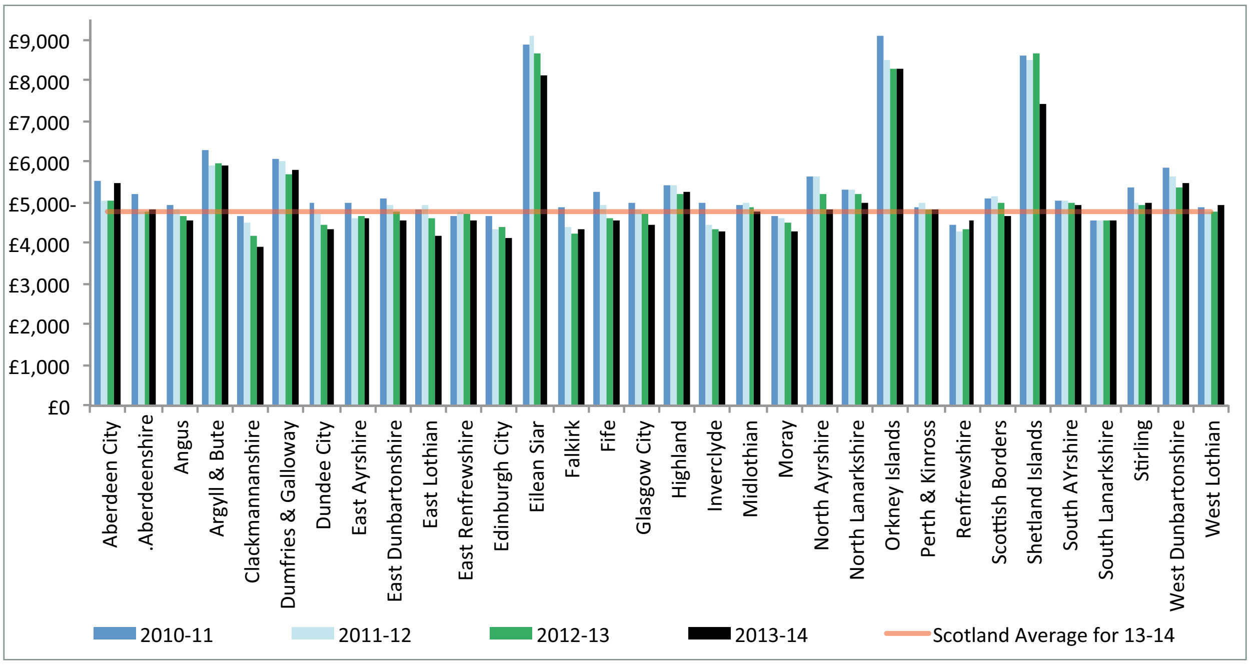
demographics and the school estate that influence provision across Scotland there are still substantial variations between councils, particularly for secondary education. This variation is most likely to be associated with choices made by councils in the past with respect to service delivery and design. The IS will work with all councils, ADES, Education Scotland and other relevant bodies to better understand the impact of these factors and fully share the insights gained into how some services are designed and delivered in ways that achieve greater efficiencies in expenditure.

Cost Per Primary Pupil

In 2013/14, the average cost per primary pupil was £4750, which is down from £4839 the previous year. Since 2010/11 there has been a real terms reduction of £381 per primary pupil. This represents a 7.4% real terms reduction during this period. This reduction in cost per pupil reflects a 4.4% reduction in real gross expenditure which has occurred in parallel with a 3.3% increase in pupil numbers.

The rate of reduction has slowed slightly in 2013/14 with a reduction of 1.9%, compared to 2.5% and 3.3% in the previous two years.

Cost Per Primary School Pupil



Source: Pupil Census, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures

Cost Per Primary Place 2010/11 – 2013/14

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	-2.4	-7.4
2010/11 - 2011/12	-1.6	-3.3
2011/12 - 2012/13	-0.9	-2.5
2012/13 - 2013/14	0.0	-1.9

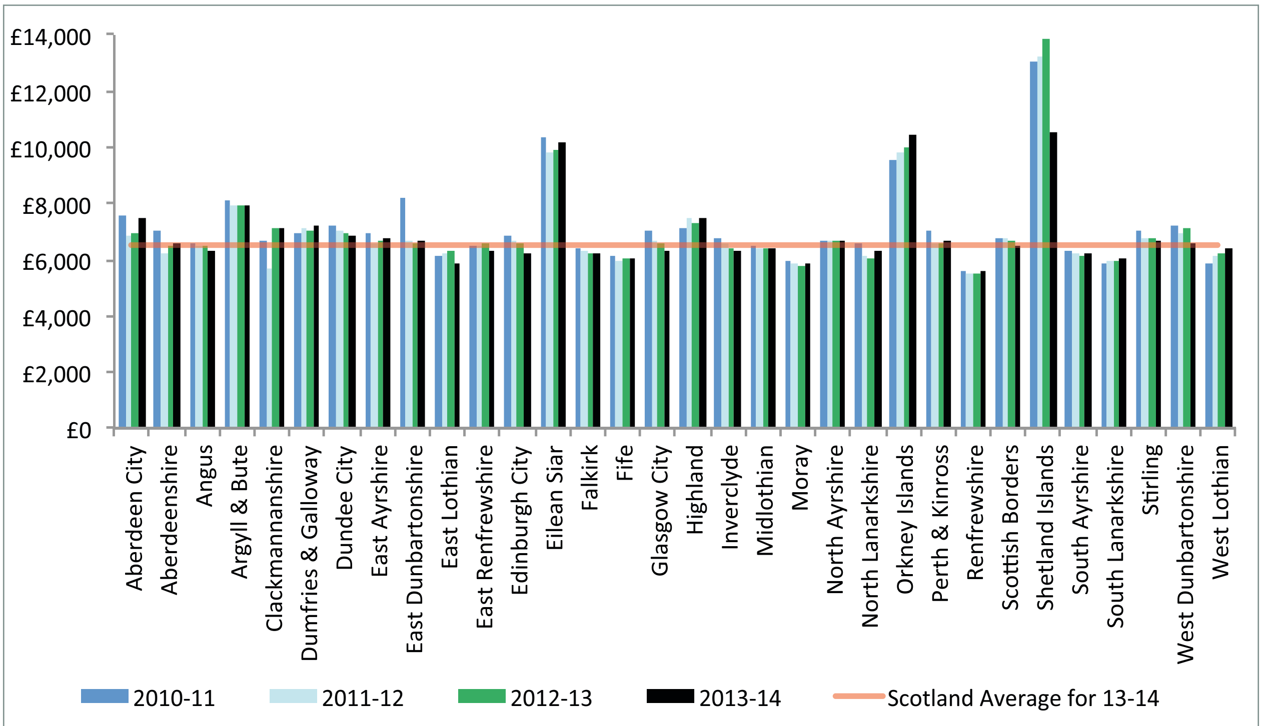
Primary School Performance

As with pre-school children's development there is currently no consistent method for assessing children's development through primary schools. Currently some councils deploy formal development measurement approaches while others adopt a different less formal approach to assessment. ADES have outlined their intention to co-produce with others a national performance framework for education which will include an element of measurement during the primary years. This outcomes-focused framework will help as part of an overall package of improvement measures to support the learners journey, raise attainment and close the inequality gap. We will work closely with ADES and key education partners to support this approach and will report in future years on this important area of development.

Cost Per Secondary Pupil

In 2013/14, the average cost per secondary school pupil was £6523, which has fallen slightly from £6545 last year. From 2010/11 to 2013/14 there was a real terms reduction of £245 per pupil, this represents a 3.6% reduction. In secondary education, there was a 3.9% fall in pupil numbers, however the reduction in gross expenditure was proportionately larger (7.4%).

Cost Per Secondary School Pupil



Source: Pupil Census, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures

As before, the rate of reduction has slowed in the most recent years with a 0.3% reduction in 12/13 to 13/14 compared to a 3.3% real terms reduction from 2010/11 to 2011/12.

Cost Per Secondary Pupil 2010/11 – 2013/14

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	1.6	-3.6
2010/11 - 2011/12	-1.6	-3.3
2011/12 - 2012/13	1.7	0.0
2012/13 - 2013/14	1.5	-0.3

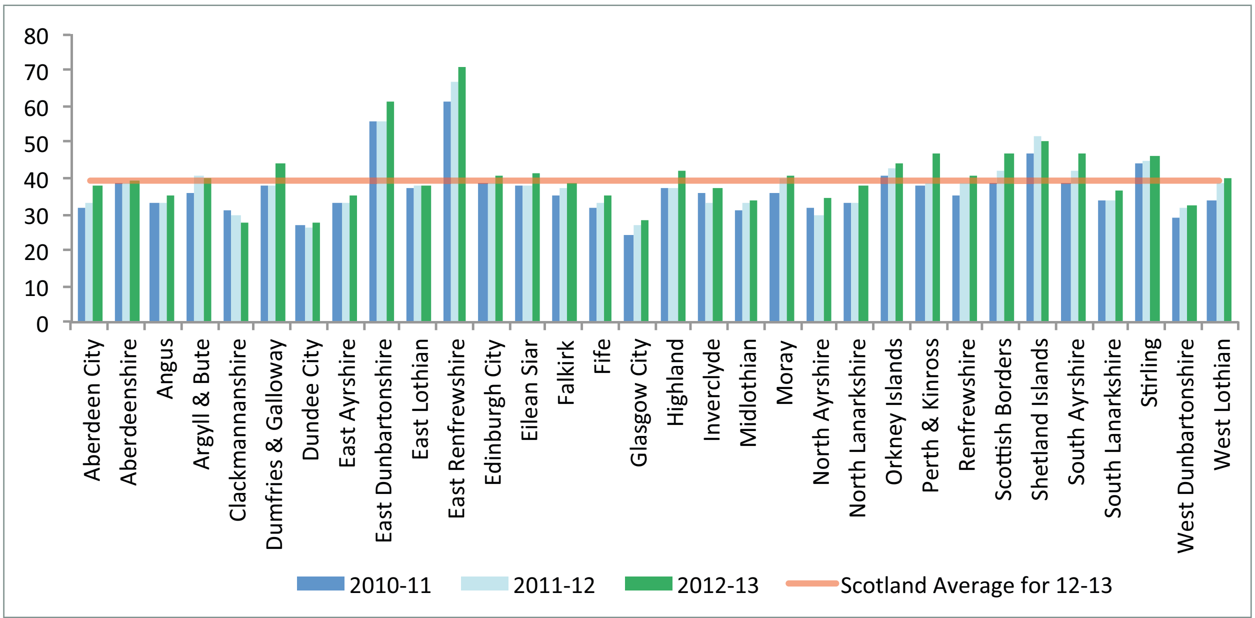
Secondary School Performance

To date, performance at secondary level has been measured by three indicators within the benchmarking framework: percentage of pupils achieving 5+ SQA level 5 qualifications

(Standard Grade credit or Intermediate 2 at A-C) at the end of S4 (described as '5+ at Level 5' for the purpose of this report); percentage of pupils gaining 5+ SQA level 6 qualifications (Higher A–C level)[6] by the end of S6 (described as '5+ at Level 6' for the purpose of this report) and the post-school destinations of pupils.

Due to the introduction of the new Nationals and the changes to the senior phase (S4-S6) as a result of Curriculum for Excellence, and the difficulty in ensuring strict comparability year on year, the Board overseeing the benchmarking framework concluded that the 5+ at Level 5 measure should not be included this year. ADES and education partners continue to work together as the new awards and curriculum models are implemented to agree outcome measures which accurately reflect the senior phase (S4-S6) landscape and in particular reflect wider educational achievement.

Percentage of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5



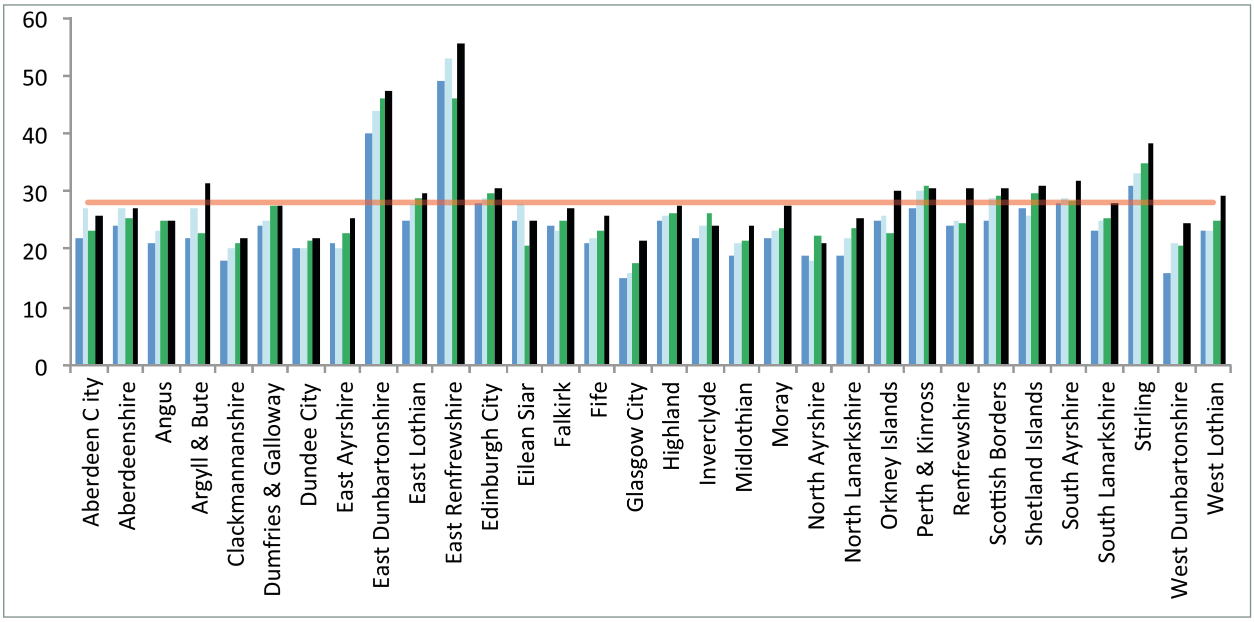
Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

An improving trend can be seen in the SQA level 5 and level 6 data across the years for which we have collated data. The total percentage of young people gaining five awards at level 5 and level 6 is increasing. In 2013/14, 28% of pupils achieved fove or more awards at level 6, an increase of two percentage points since 2012/13, and an overall increase of five percentage points since 2010/11. Since 2010/11, 31 of the 32 councils have seen an increase in attainment at this level, with 1 council observing no change.

Across Scotland, very substantial variations can be identified in level 6 qualifications for 2013/14, ranging from 21.1% to 55.4%. It should be noted that 5+ awards at SQA level 6 is a demanding academic criterion, and on its own provides a rather narrow picture of attainment.

6 The information for level 6 qualifications in 2010/11 is calculated using a slightly different basis from later years and is not completely comparable.

Percentage of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6



Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

Percentage of Pupils Achieving SQA Level 5 and Level 6 Awards

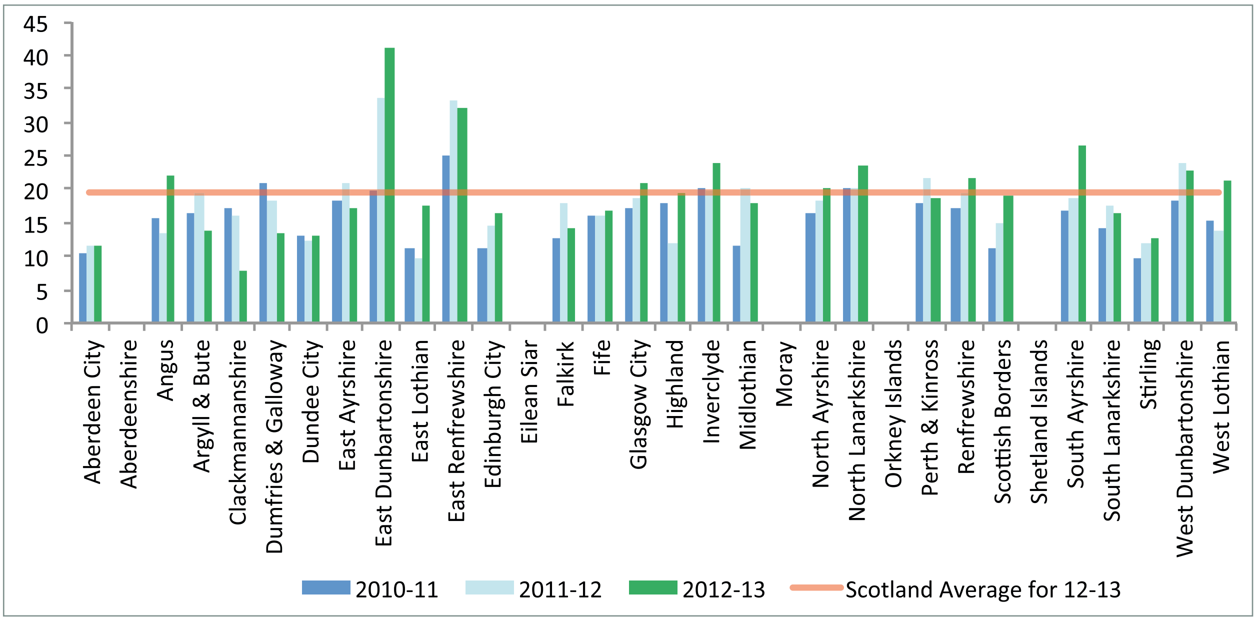
Year	% 5 or More Awards at Level 5 (2012/13)	% 5 or More Awards at Level 6 (2013/14)
2010/11	36	23
2011/12	37	25
2012/13	39	26
2012/14	-	28

In terms of understanding variations in educational attainment at level 5 and level 6, there is no significant relationship between type or size of council. However, a clear relationship does exist between multiple deprivation and educational attainment - both within and between councils. Within councils, the average performance of pupils from the 20% most deprived areas is well below the average for other pupils. Between councils, achievement varies systematically with the overall level of deprivation in the council area: this accounts for around 40% of the variation in outcome between councils.

There remains a significant degree of variation in attainment across councils which is unexplained and which provides interesting opportunities to drill down further. Two particular points need further exploration. First, councils with very low levels of overall deprivation are often achieving exceptional results with pupils from deprived areas.

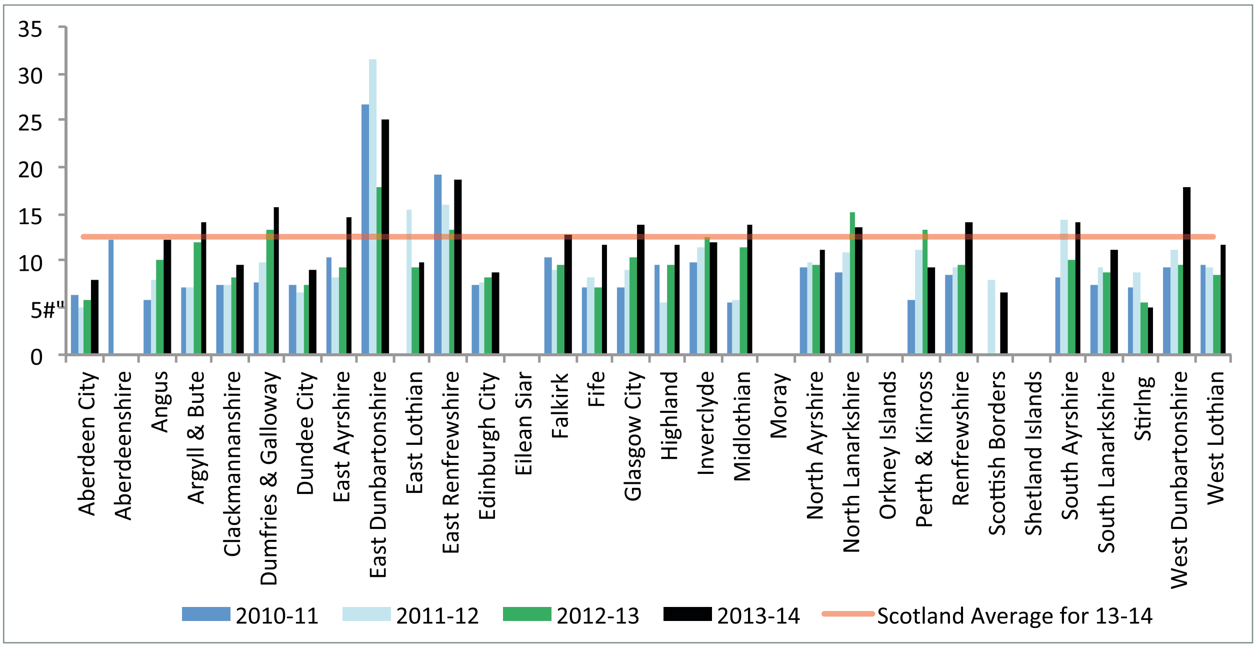
Second, if councils are grouped into four “families” based on their overall levels of deprivation, see below, differences emerge **within** the families as well as **between** them. If in family group 1 we exclude the performance of the two highest performing councils in Scotland - East Renfrewshire and East Dunbartonshire are outliers even within their family group – the range within that group narrows to around 5% for level 6. The range in performance within all four groups suggests that when councils are grouped on the basis of similar socio-economic and deprivation levels, some councils seem to be achieving better results with children from similar backgrounds than others. However, it may be the current family groupings are too broad and are not providing sufficiently ‘like for like’ comparisons within this particular service area. This is illustrated by the fact that within family group 1, while one council has close to 10% of its communities amongst the most deprived areas in Scotland, another council in the same family group has fewer than 3%. Given this, during the next phase we will review the family groupings across some of the service areas to improve the extent to which they provide meaningful comparisons.

Attainment at Level 5 for 20% Most Deprived Communities



Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government
Note: Missing values represent councils which have no communities in the 20% most deprived communities

Attainment at Level 6 for 20% Most Deprived Communities



Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government
Note: Missing values represent councils which have no communities in the 20% most deprived communities

	5 or More Awards at Level 5 (2012/13)				5 or More Awards at Level 6 (2013/14)			
FAMILY GROUP	**Avg**	**Min**	**Max**	**Range**	**Avg**	**Min**	**Max**	**Range**
FG1 – least deprived	45.4	38.0	70.7	32.7	30.5	25.6	55.4	29.8
FG2	40.4	34.2	46.7	12.5	28.7	24.1	38.3	14.2
FG3	39.2	27.9	47.0	19.1	27.7	21.9	31.8	9.9
FG4 – most deprived	34.8	27.9	41.5	13.6	24.2	21.1	25.5	4.4
SCOTLAND	39.3	27.9	70.7	42.8	28.1	21.1	55.4	34.3

As with the improving trend in the total percentage of young people gaining five awards at level 6, the overall percentage for young people from deprived areas achieving that level of award is also increasing. In 2013/14, 13% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived communities achieved five or more awards at Level 6, compared to 10% in 2012/13, and 8% in the base year 2010/11. This represents a five percentage point improvement across the four year period, a trend which can be tracked back across the last 10 years. The inequality between the most and least disadvantaged pupils has narrowed by much less because all pupils have improved their performance across the period. The IS has undertaken further research into the connections between multiple deprivation and the patterns of outcomes achieved for people in Scotland including educational performance of children. The findings of this work will be published in February 2015. As indicated above, across Scotland very substantial variations can be identified, ranging from 5% to 25% in 2013/14.

Percentage of Pupils Living in the 20% Most Deprived Communities Achieving SQA Level 5 and Level 6 Awards

Year	% 5 or More Awards at Level 5	% 5 or More Awards at Level 6
2010/11	16	8
2011/12	18	9
2012/13	20	10
2012/14	-	13

It is important to note that the above trends reflect ***average performance*** across the whole council area. In reality there are clusters of higher and lower performance within each council area at school level. We will work with all councils, ADES and Education Scotland to better understand this level of variation and the factors that drive it at school and council levels. Good practice will be captured and shared both on how our ‘higher performing’ schools operate and also in terms of how schools work with a wider range of services to support children and their families to improve the life outcomes for children including their educational attainment.

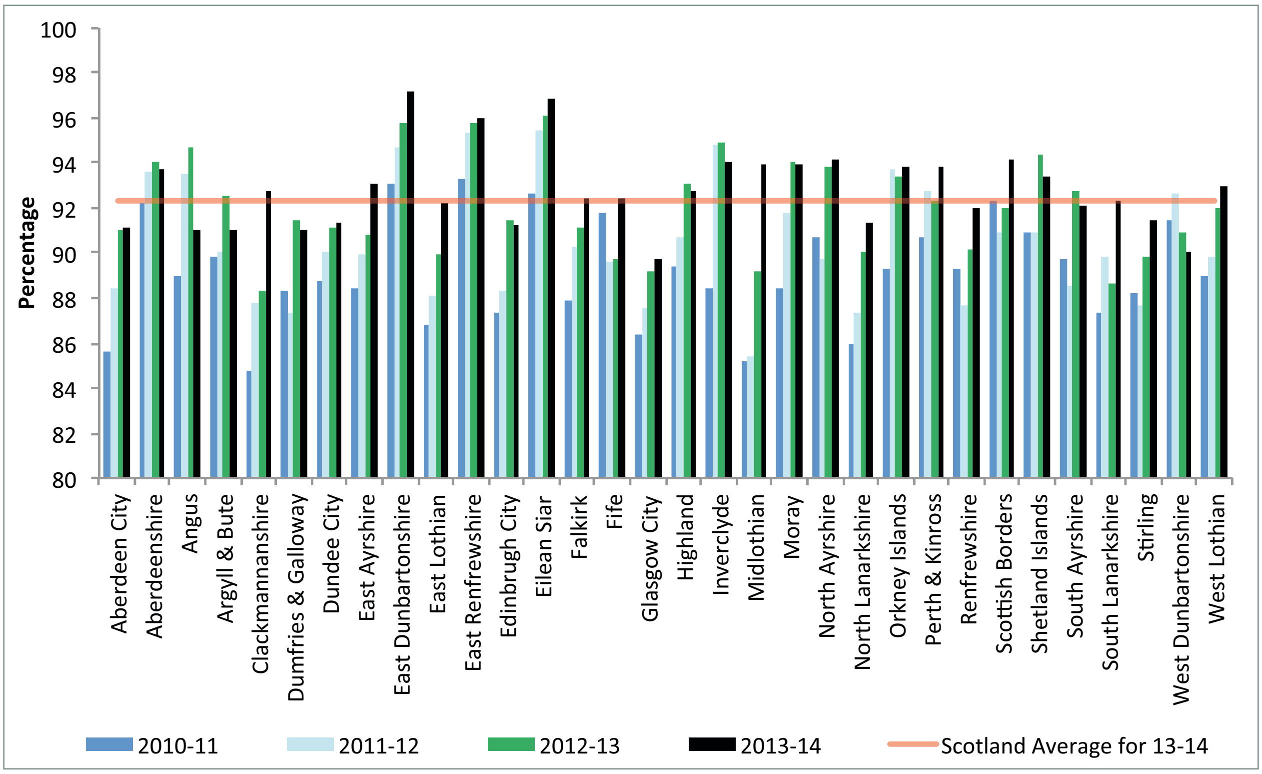
The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence and the new National qualifications have driven the development of a new online tool, INSIGHT, which will provide improved access to school level performance data and the promotion of virtual comparators. Building on this, we will work with colleagues across education services to develop benchmarking measures which reflect the whole range of measured achievement at school, taking into account vocational attainment or the wider achievements of pupils.

Positive Destinations

There has been continued improvement across the past four years in relation to the proportion of young people entering “positive destinations” after school (participation in Further Education (FE), Higher Education (HE), training/apprenticeships, or employment). In 2010/11, 89% of young people entered a positive destination compared to 92% in 2013/14.

While councils continue with their efforts to promote and drive positive destinations, it is important to note that trends will to a large degree be shaped by the broader economic climate and the opportunities available within local economies. For example, the impact of the recent recession on the proportion of young people entering employment between 2006 and 2009, and the corresponding impact on other destinations such as FE/HE is clear to see in the graph overleaf.

Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations

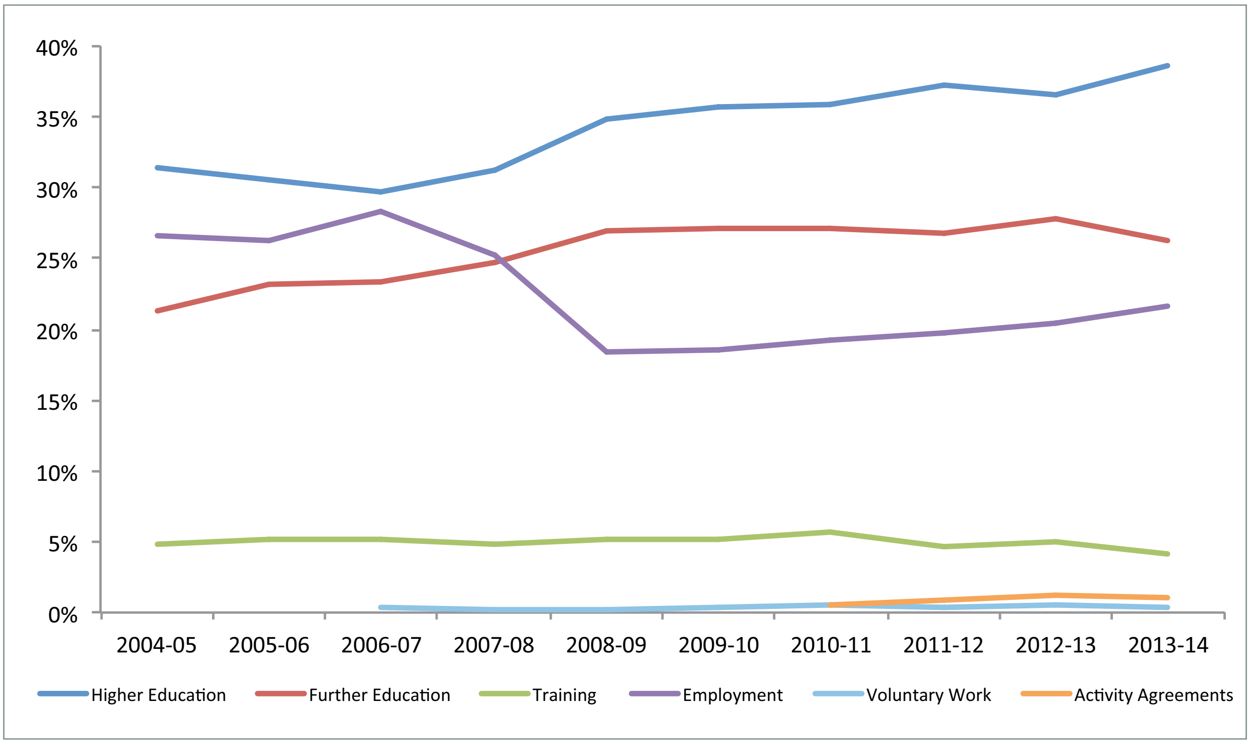


Source: School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR), Skills Development Scotland

Year	% Entering Positive Destinations
2010/11	89
2011/12	90
2012/13	91
2013/14	92

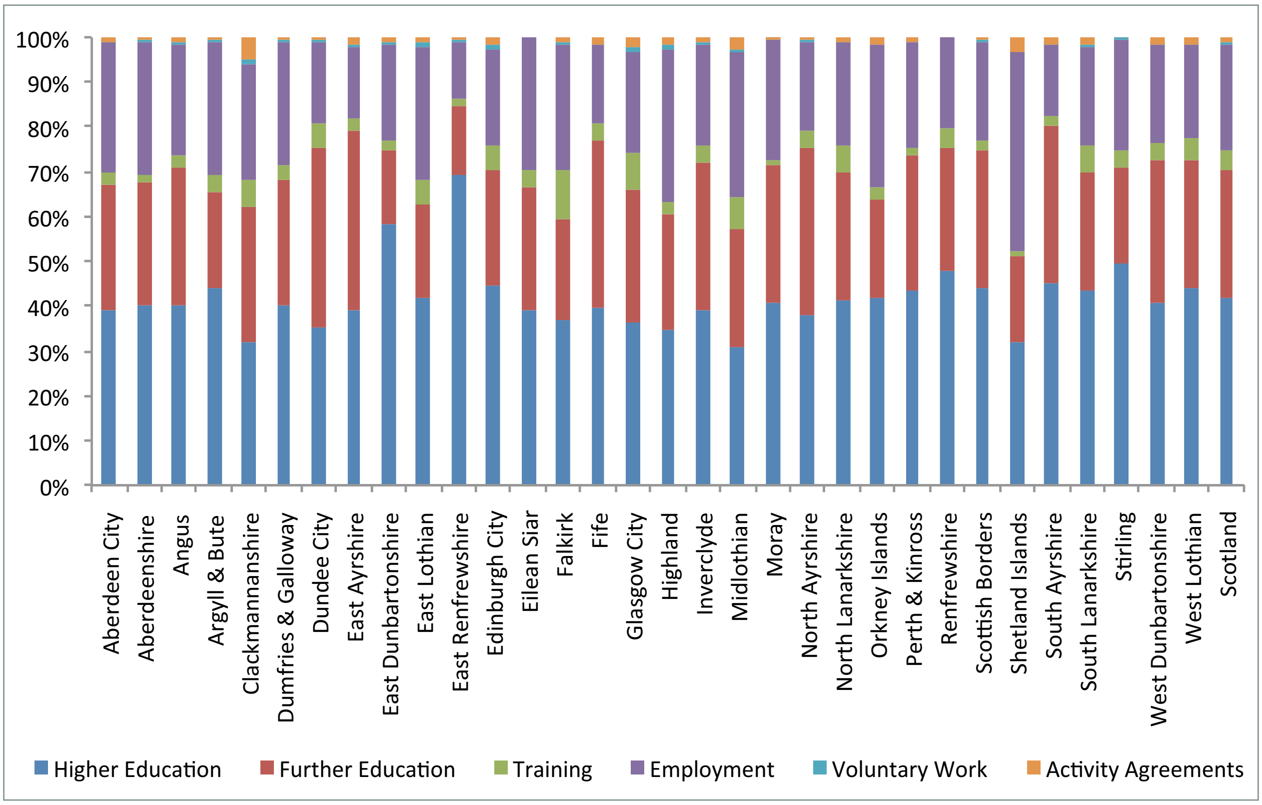
In 2013/14, the percentage of young people entering positive destinations across councils ranged from 89.7% to 97.2% across councils. There is a systematic relationship between the percentage of pupils entering positive destinations and deprivation, where those councils with higher levels of deprivation have lower percentage of young people entering positive destinations. This relationship becomes clearer when “positive destinations” is broken down into its component parts. The balance of participation in colleges and universities more or less reverses between councils with higher levels of deprivation and councils with lower levels of deprivation. There is a clear link between deprivation and lower participation in higher education across Scotland (although worth noting that the participation rate is still high: Glasgow, with the highest level of deprivation in Scotland, still has over 30% of all its pupils going to university). The percentage of pupils moving directly into unemployment is higher for councils with higher levels of deprivation although the relationship is not statistically significant.

Positive Destination Trends Across Scotland 2004/05 - 2013/14



Source: School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR), Skills Development Scotland

Breakdown of Positive Destinations by Council 2013/14



Source: School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR), Skills Development Scotland

As with educational attainment, it is important to note that this measure reflects average performance at council level and does not provide a full picture of what is happening within individual schools/clusters. For example, Glasgow's 33% university participants may disproportionately come from a small number of schools which may have significantly higher participation rates than the average for the city as a whole. The pupils in these schools may disproportionately come from the less deprived areas in the city, and may be very similar to their peers in more affluent council areas.

Councils have been working together in family groups to understand the national trends, the variation observed, and to share learning about good practices driving improvements in outcomes for young people.

The implementation of the senior phase has heightened expectations that all pupils are prepared for their next stage following school and that all pupils should have a positive destination (or an offer of one) prior to their leaving date, a direction further strengthened by the recent publication of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce[7]. The benefit of having a named resource physically within schools with responsibility for promoting these positive destinations was highlighted. This role is often taken on by those staff with a pastoral care role, working with pupils to remove barriers, and to re-engage and motivate young people.

There is evidence that councils have improved their effectiveness in tracking young people, and in particular, 'losing no-one' from the system. Ongoing and longer-term tracking of young people has also increasingly become a priority, as sustainability of these destinations and, more importantly, a route back to support for young people if circumstances change, are key to securing positive outcomes.

A number of councils have driven performance improvements through better use of data intelligence to shape expectations and target improvements, often involving the deployment of additional analytical resource. This also supports the priority being given to earlier intervention for children at risk, including pupils who are disengaging from learning, young carers, those who have English as their second language, those who are 'looked after' by the council, and those who have additional support needs.

Developing Scotland's Young Workforce has acted as a stimulus to encourage and strengthen links between schools and employers to deliver appropriate training opportunities and real long-term job prospects. The focus has been to extend opportunities in priority economic growth areas through stronger partnerships which ensure young people have the specific skills needed by public, private and third sector employers. These links are designed to embed employability and industry sector-skills based learning within the school curriculum from primary to post-school, with the intention of creating new opportunities for specialist and tailored learning in the senior phase, between S4-S6. Recognising their role as the largest employers in the region, there has also been a focus to maximise the opportunities the public sector offer to young people through work placements, vocational training and modern apprenticeships.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Education Services

In terms of adults satisfied with their local schools service, the range across Scotland is from 65% to 96%. The overall Scottish average satisfaction rate in 2010/11 was 83% which remained the same in 2012/13, however it has fallen to 81% in 2013/14. However, these satisfaction rates achieved by local schools remain among the highest rates achieved by local council services. There appears to be no firm link in the trends related to the size of the councils, the urban/rural nature of the councils or the level of deprivation in the council area.

7 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/4089

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Local Schools

Year	% Satisfied
2010/11	83
2012/13	83
2013/14	81

The customer satisfaction data that is included in the LGBF is derived from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the very small sample sizes and low confidence levels. We continue to work with colleagues across councils and within Scottish Government to develop an improved measure of customer/resident satisfaction which is comparable at local authority level.

Adult Social Care

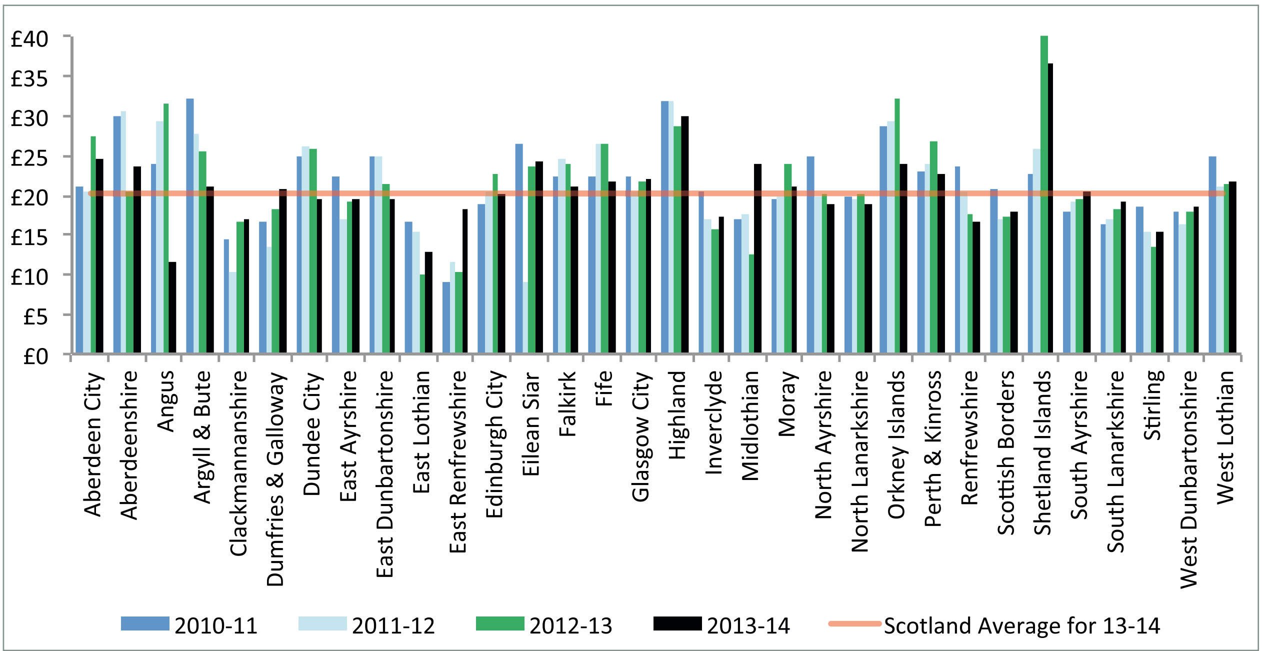
The provision of services to support vulnerable adults and older people is a major priority for councils and accounts for around a quarter of total council spend. This is an area where councils face growing demands due to an ageing population and the increasing complexity of needs experienced by vulnerable adults. It is forecast that the percentage of the population aged 65 or over will rise from 18.1% to 21.1% by 2024.[8] In the face of these increasing demands, councils continue to modernise and transform social care provision to enable increased choice and control in the way that people receive services.

Services are also experiencing major structural changes as council services integrate with services from the National Health Service to create new Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs). The purpose of these major changes is to strengthen the partnership working across public services to help improve outcomes for vulnerable adults and older people.

Home Care Services

Council spend on home care services has been standardised around home care costs per hour for each council. The average spend per hour in 2013/14 was £20.25 with the range in spending going from £11.48 per hour to £36.68 per hour.

Home Care Costs Per Hour for People Aged 65 or Over



Source: Social Care Survey, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures

In terms of understanding the variability across councils, there is a significant connection between costs per hour and the rural nature of the council, with rural councils on average having higher average hourly costs (£23.70) than urban councils (£19.60). The data does not reveal any significant impact in relation to deprivation or importantly, due to the age structure of the local population where it is often assumed that the older a population group then the higher the costs for service providers. This is not borne out by the data where the relationship between the cost per hour of home care services and the demographic structure of the local population is weak. Of more significance it would appear is the needs profile of the local population which is not simply determined by its age structure.

Overall, there has been a real terms 4.6% reduction in spending per hour on home care for

8 Source: General Registry Office for Scotland

people over 65 since 2010/11. There has been an altered rate of change over the four years however, with a reduction of 4.3% between 2010/11 and 2011/12, a real growth of 3% from 2011/12 to 2012/13 followed by a reduction of 3.2% between 2012/13 and 2013/14. Over the four year period, the reduction in unit costs reflects an increase in hours delivered of 8.3%[9] while gross expenditure has increased by 3.3%.

Home Care Costs Per Hour for People Aged 65 or Over

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	0.6	-4.6
2010/11 - 2011/12	-2.6	-4.3
2011/12 - 2012/13	4.7	3.0
2012/13 - 2013/14	-1.4	-3.2

While there has been an increase in gross expenditure across Scotland, there has been a proportionately greater increase in the number of home care hours delivered. The actual number of people receiving home care has decreased, but the hours they are receiving on average has increased. This reflects the increased complexity of needs being catered for by home care services and the move towards provision focused on personal care rather than the more preventative elements of traditional home-care. The introduction of Telecare for example is likely to have had an impact here, removing the less complex needs from the service. The level of vulnerability across the population is a key factor in driving demand pressures and we will explore with councils how those demands are being met in innovative ways by different councils and share that innovation across all authorities and their respective local partnerships.

There has been a shift from local authority provision to private/voluntary provision during this period (a decrease in local authority provision from 44% to 36%[10]) which has contributed to reduced costs through lower salary and pension costs. In the absence of reliable indicators regarding the outcomes for older people, it is not possible to reflect the relative merits of the two service delivery models. Working with colleagues from HSCPs, Social Work Scotland (SWS), Joint Improvement Team (JIT) and other relevant bodies, addressing this gap will be a priority in the next phase of development.

There are a wide range of further factors which might influence costs, such as the number of clients care workers support, the travel time between clients for workers and the numbers of clients requiring multiple assistance from two or more workers at a time, for example for lifting purposes. It is worth mentioning that 'hours' collected in the Home Care Survey relate to client hours and therefore don't include travel time between visits or staff time when multiple staff are needed to support a client.

The unit cost data presented above needs more detailed examination and improving this indicator will be an area for development in the project going forward. With the shift to self-directed support (SDS) in future it may make more sense to look at cost per client rather than cost per hour as SDS may be used to purchase a much wider variety of services not all of which can be measured in hours.

Direct Payments and Personalised Managed Budgets

Social work services continue to drive forward the use of self-directed support by clients to allow them to purchase their own care directly. The rationale of this is to engender greater client choice to reshape the provision of care by giving clients more control over the budget spent in supporting them. The Self-Directed Support Act was implemented from 1 April 2014,

9 This data reflects revisions Scottish Government have made relating to the number of home care hours and home care clients for 2013.

10 Source: Social Care Survey, Scottish Government

and therefore the data included here reflects the landscape before its implementation. This is an important point and the focus going forward will be on what this indicator might tell us in future following implementation of the bill.

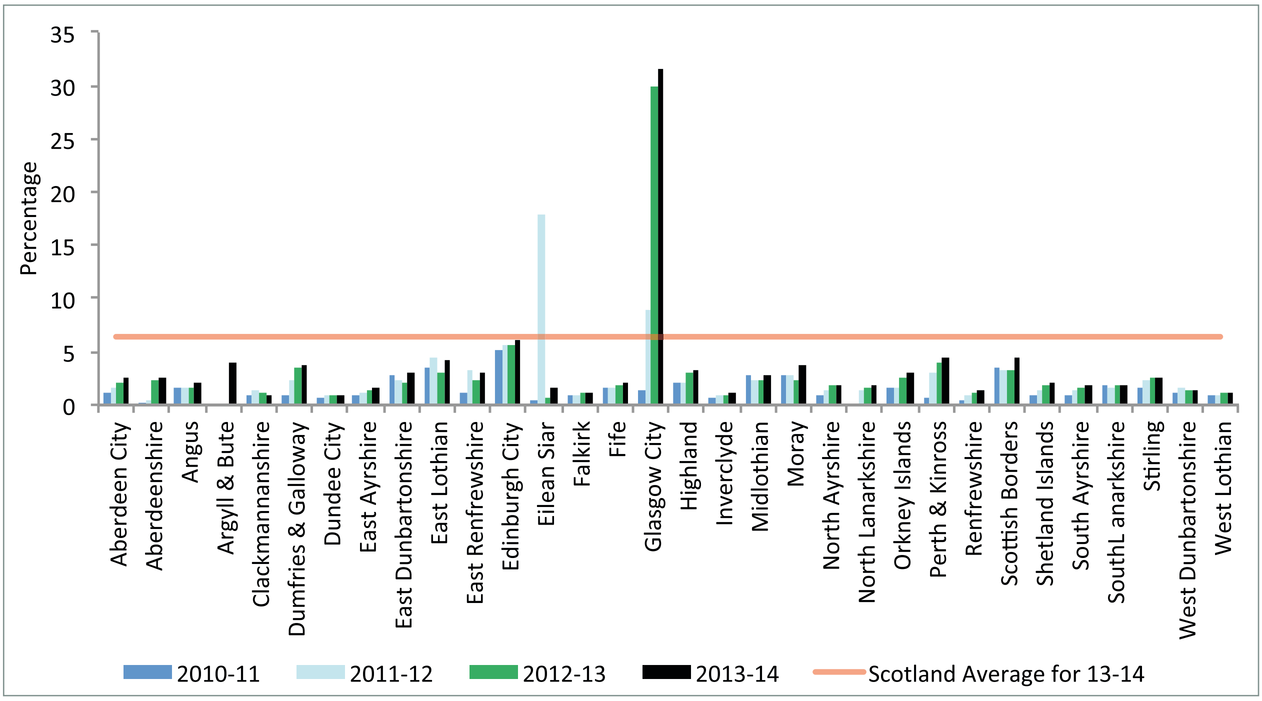
Self-directed support involves a range of options for how social care is delivered empowering people to decide how much ongoing control and responsibility they want over their own support arrangements. These include

- Direct payment (a cash payment).
- The budget is allocated to a provider the person chooses (sometimes called an individual service fund, where the council holds the budget but the person is in charge of how it is spent).
- The local authority arranges the support.
- A mix of the above.

At the moment, the council Local Finance Return includes SDS spend via Direct Payments and Personalised Managed Budgets (PMB).[11] The breakdown of spend available across the four options will become more sophisticated as the approach is fully implemented and this will be reflected in the development of this framework.

In 2013/14 the range in the percentage of social work spend on adults 18+ via SDS (Direct Payments and PMB) as a percentage of total social work spend on adults 18+ was 0.8% to 31%. The Scottish average in 2013/14 was 6.4%. Between 2010/11 and 2013/14 there has been a year on year increase in the percentage of social work spend allocated through SDS, the rate of growth was 4.8%. The majority of this growth occurred in Glasgow where there has been a growth of 30% during the four year period (representing a growth in actual SDS spend from £4.7 million to £106 million). Glasgow City Council was an early adopter of SDS and has already re-assessed all younger adult clients under SDS which explains why they look so different to everywhere else.

Direct Payment Spend as a Percentage of Total Social Work Spend



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures
Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

11 The PMB breakdown was included for the first time in 13/14, and includes only residual expenditure from the personalised budget where it is unknown what support was purchased, i.e. where the council used a third party to arrange services. It does not include where the budget has been used to purchase known services from either the authority or another provider.

While the overall percentage of social work spend via SDS is expected to increase following the implementation of the Self-Directed Support (Scotland) Act from April 2014, the current range between the highest and lowest performance on this measure is such that it will be important to identify service practices that are driving some councils forward at a faster rate than others. In examining the data there seems to be little connection between the data and sparsity or size of the council. There is also no systematic relationship between SDS and deprivation using this measure. However, analysis by Scottish Government examining uptake of Direct Payments and SIMD shows that while there is no clear relationship for the 18-64 adult population, older people living in less deprived areas are more likely to choose direct payments.[12]

We will continue to work with all 32 councils and Social Work Scotland to understand the local practices and the choices of individual councils which are important in driving forward this agenda of client empowerment, both in terms of speed of implementation and also quality of the assessment process.

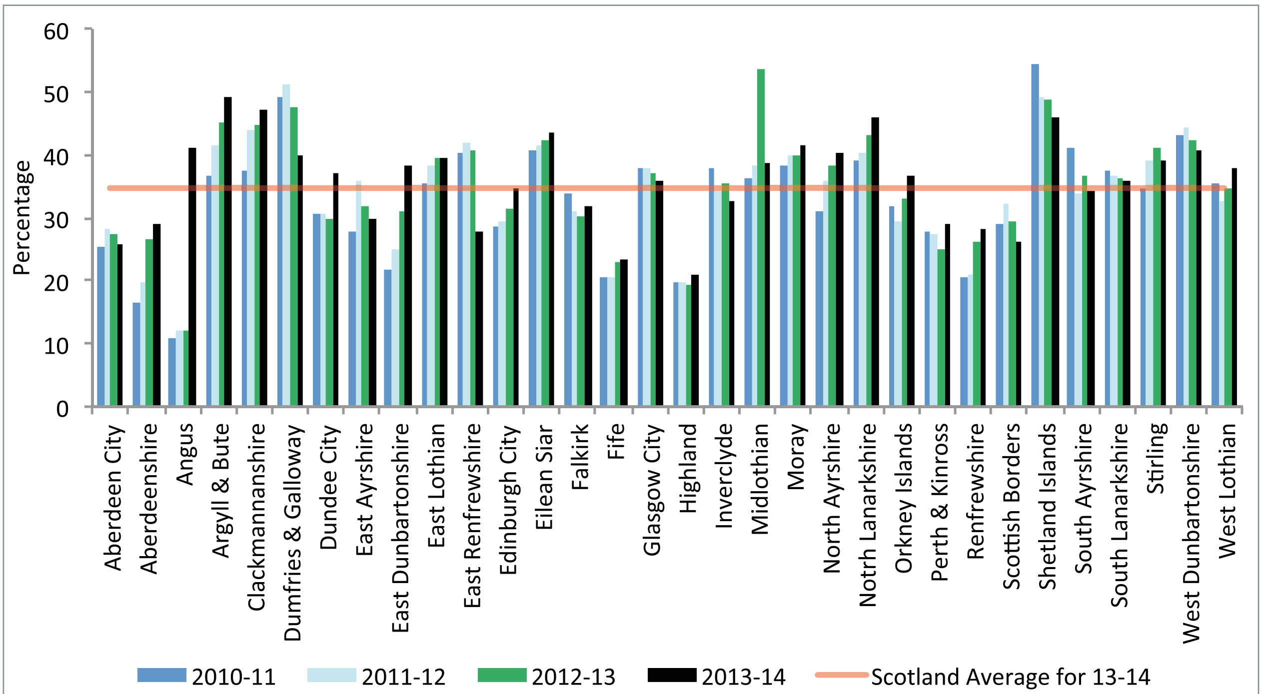
As SDS is rolled out further, it will be important to track the trends across Scotland in relation to take-up of all four SDS options. As all four SDS options are equally valid, there should be no drive to increase one option over another. Further work with SWS, HSCP's and JIT will be necessary in understanding the reasons for variations in the levels of the different options offered across councils. It is worth noting that the continued growth in SDS will have implications for our ability to accurately track where and how resources are spent.

Adults 65+ Intensive Home Care

The third area of social work services covered in the framework is the perentage of adults over 65 with intensive care needs (who receive 10+ hours of support) who are cared for at home. As part of the effort to care for more people in their own home rather than institutional setting such as hospitals this is an area of growing importance.

The percentage of people with intensive needs receiving care at home has increased year on year from 2010/11 to 2013/14. There has been an increase of 2.5 percentage points over the four year period, from 32.2% in 2010/11 to 34.7% in 2013/14.

Percentage of Adults 65+ with Intensive Care Needs Cared for at Home



Source: Social Care Survey, Scottish Government

12 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/11/1085/6

In 2013/14 the levels receiving care at home ranged from 21% to 49% across councils. Analysis of the data does not reveal any systematic variation across councils according to rurality, council size or deprivation, and therefore further work is required to explore what factors are currently driving these differences across councils.

Year	Percentage of people 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home
2010/11	32.2
2011/12	33.0
2012/13	34.1
2013/14	34.7

In the period ahead we will work with colleagues from HSCPs, Social Work Scotland, the Joint Improvement Team and other relevant bodies to capture the impacts that home care services can have upon life outcomes for older people. For example the shift to providing more intensive care has seen some of the more preventative services diminish. This leaves the system increasingly the preserve of older people in the most acute need, and may have long term consequences.

We also know that older people from more deprived communities are much more likely to be admitted to hospital over the course of a year on an unplanned basis than older people from more affluent communities. We will work with colleagues across this sector to better understand how the design and delivery of home care services can help prevent those most at risk of unplanned hospital admissions from entering the hospital sector unnecessarily. We will also explore the role residential care plays in reducing unnecessary hospital stays. With care home numbers gradually falling and NHS continuing care also decreasing, the extent to which the capacity in the system will be able to respond to meet the future needs of an aging population will be an area for further exploration. The effective practices we identify in this area will be fully shared with all councils and their local partners in support of their efforts to improve outcomes for older people.

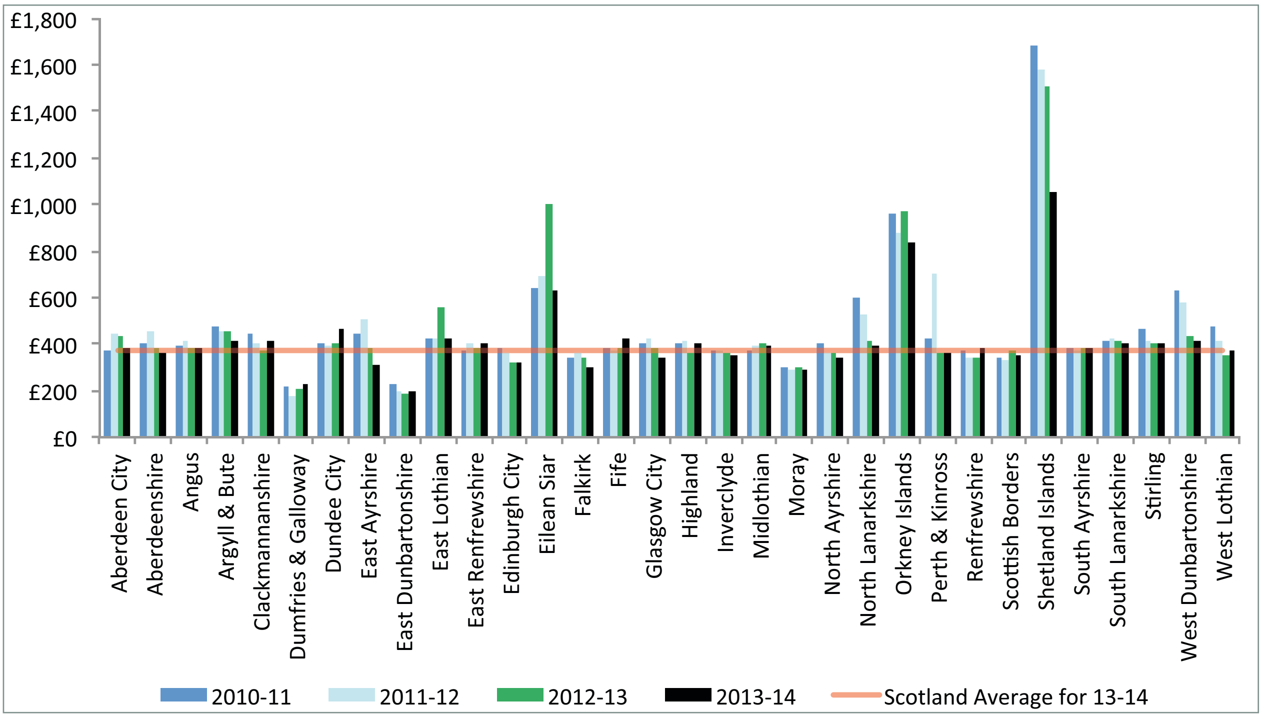
We shall also explore with colleagues how we might strengthen this indicator to capture the changing landscape in home care provision and to understand the trends and variations in outcomes. In particular, recognising 10+ hours of care does not take into account all of the care that a client receives and may not necessarily provide a good proxy for need, consideration will be given as to whether a more useful measure might be included (e.g. the percentage of those with personal care needs who receive care at home as the Scottish Government currently reports).

Residential Care

The fourth social work area covered by the framework is the net cost of residential services. The measure has been standardised by looking at residential costs per week per resident for people over the age of 65.

In 2013/14, the average cost across Scotland was £368 per week per resident, down 3% from £380 in 2012/13. Analysis of the data reveals considerable levels of variation across councils with island councils in particular reporting significantly higher costs. When island councils are excluded, costs ranged from £194 to £467. There are no systematic patterns in costs in relation to population sparsity, size of council or level of deprivation when island councils are excluded from the analysis.

Older Persons (over 65s) Residential Costs Per Week



Source: Community Care Quarterly Key Monitoring Return, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures

It is important to note that the figures for 2012/13 and 2013/14 have in agreement with the local government Directors of Finance excluded a Support Cost component which was included in 2010/11 and 2011/12, and therefore a direct comparison with costs from earlier years is not possible.

Residential Care Costs Per Week for People over 65

% Change	Cash	Real
2012/13 - 2013/14	-1.3	-3.0

While the number of adults supported in residential care homes has increased slightly by 0.6% in the last 12 months, there has been a 2.5% reduction in real gross expenditure. As with home care, the reduction in costs across Scotland may to some extent reflect the continued shift from local authority provision to more private and voluntary sector provision (1.2% reduction in proportion of residents in local authority provision last year).[13]

Net expenditure on residential care is defined as gross expenditure minus income. Up to and including 2014/15, the National Care Home Contract (NCHC) for residential care for older people will, to a large extent, have standardised costs. However, it is important to note that the net cost per resident will not equate to the NCHC rate. The NCHC rate only applies to local authority-funded residents who are in private and voluntary run care homes. Residential care costs however include net expenditure on:

- The net cost of any local authority-funded residents (this will be based on the NCHC).
- The net cost for self-funders (There are around 9,500 self-funders receiving Free Personal Care payments; around two-thirds also receive the Free Nursing Care payment).
- The net cost of running any local authority (LA) care homes (this will be gross cost less charges to residents). These will not equate to the NCHC rate and not all LAs run their

13 Source: Scottish Care Home Census, Scottish Government

own care homes so this may be something to explore further when examining differences across councils.

Therefore if we compare net expenditure with all long-stay care home residents (private/voluntary and local authority) we would expect the average rate to be lower than the NCHC rate.

Net expenditure is affected by income, and therefore by the ability of residents to contribute to the costs of their care, and the extent to which other sources of income, such as NHS Resource Transfers, are counted as a contribution to the local authority's costs for providing or funding care home placements. While variations in net expenditure between councils might be expected to be affected by variations in the numbers of eligible wealthier older people in care homes for whom the council is paying free personal and nursing care since these will cost less per week than full-funded LA care home placements, the data reveals no systematic relationship between costs and the percentage of self funders or percentage of publicly funded places.

The use of care homes for older people is changing and in future more emphasis will be given to use for rehabilitation and short-stays. Once again we will work with social work colleagues and other relevant bodies to better understand the reasons behind the variations across council areas; how different local partnerships including social work services are responding to the challenges around residential care services and to support the services in sharing effective good practices across Scotland.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Social Care or Social Work Services

The overall Scottish average satisfaction rate in 2010/11 was 62% and in 2013/14 this had reduced to 55%. The range across Scotland is from 41% to 85%, with the highest levels of satisfaction in island councils, each above 70%. Analysis of the data reveals there is no systematic pattern in relation to size of council, sparsity or deprivation in relation to satisfaction figures.

The reduced satisfaction levels may reflect the challenges social work services are facing in responding to rising demand for social care from increasing numbers of older people and disabled adults, and increasing patient discharges who need adult care support – all against a backdrop of budget constraints. This highlights the current pressure on councils, despite the fact that most continue to prioritise social care budgets, alongside other priorities such as education.

Year	% Satisfied
2010/11	62
2012/13	57
2013/14	55

Once again, this satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the very small sample sizes and low confidence levels. We will continue to work with colleagues across councils and within Scottish Government to develop an improved measure of customer/resident satisfaction which is comparable at local authority level.

Developing the section of the benchmarking framework relating to adult social care measures has been agreed as a key priority for development in the coming years, particularly the development of outcome measures. In conjunction with Social Work Scotland (SWS) we will link into current work being undertaken to agree outcome measures for health and social care integration. We will report on these developments in future years.

Culture and Leisure

Sports Facilities

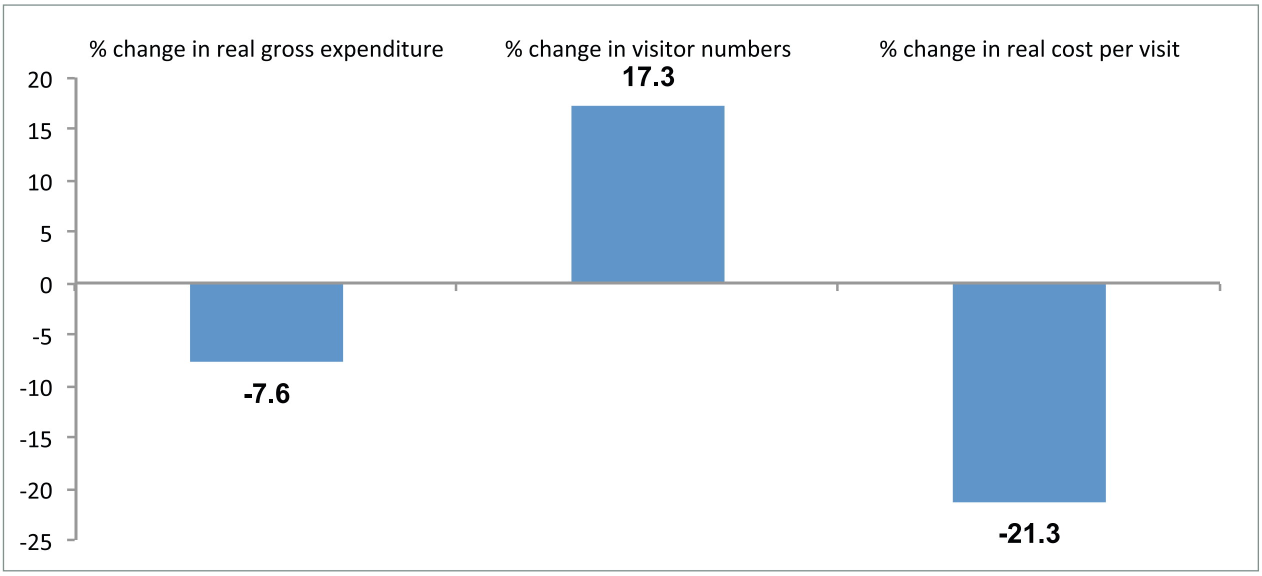
Culture and leisure services are an important local service making a significant contribution to the quality of life in local communities and they also play an ever more vital role in terms of supporting better health across the whole population.

The data presented below illustrates the unit costs of indoor and outdoor sports and recreation facilities. The figures cover costs for swimming pools, sports halls and leisure centres, running tracks, skating rinks, tennis courts, football pitches and golf courses.

Over the four year period from 2010/11 to 2013/14 the average cost per visit fell from £4.88 to £3.84 in real terms. In percentage terms this represents a 21.3% reduction. The rate of reduction has slowed from 11.8% in real terms in 2010/11 to 2011/12, to 9.7% between 2011/12 to 2012/13, to only 1.1% in 2013/14.

The cost per attendance figures on their own do not give a complete picture of what has been happening in sports services over the last four years. Significant increases in visitor numbers for sports facilities (up 17.3% since 2010/11) have been achieved against a backdrop of reductions in gross expenditure (7.6%).

Sports Facilities: Change in Total Spend and Cost Per Visit 2010/11 - 2013/14

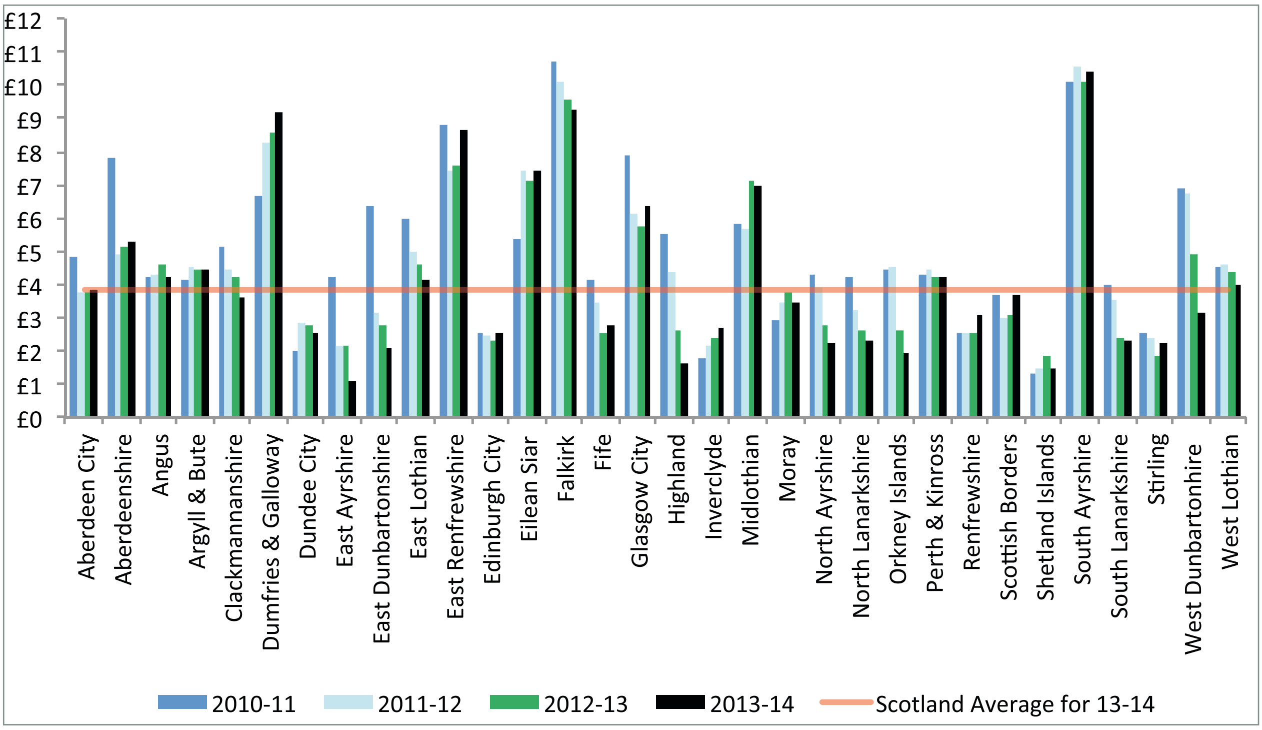


Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

The significant increase in user numbers while the unit cost of sports attendances has fallen indicates that leisure and recreation services have managed to attract more people into using their facilities and to do so while managing significant financial pressures. A key factor here is the significant capital investment programme in sports facilities across Scotland 10 years ago which is now bearing fruit and resulting in increased user numbers.

With respect to the cost to each council of an attendance at a sports facility, in 2013/14 the range in cost per visit was £1.11 to £10.43. The average cost per visit across Scotland was £3.84. There is a clear effect of population density, with urban councils typically having lower cost per visit than rural equivalents (£3.11 compared to £4.20). In rural areas the costs involved in providing the service to smaller populations dispersed over larger areas pushes costs up in comparison to densely populated parts of the country.

Cost Per Attendance at Sports Facilities



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

The picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. Work will start shortly within family groups to explore these trends more fully and identify and share the good practices of those councils who have increased visitor numbers by significant amounts while reducing their costs. A feature of particular interest within these discussions will be the range of service delivery models operating within local government with some councils choosing to establish arm's length trusts to manage their sports services while some retain the whole service in-house. The extent to which different service delivery models are able to explain variations in costs or productivity will be explored and reported on in a future report.

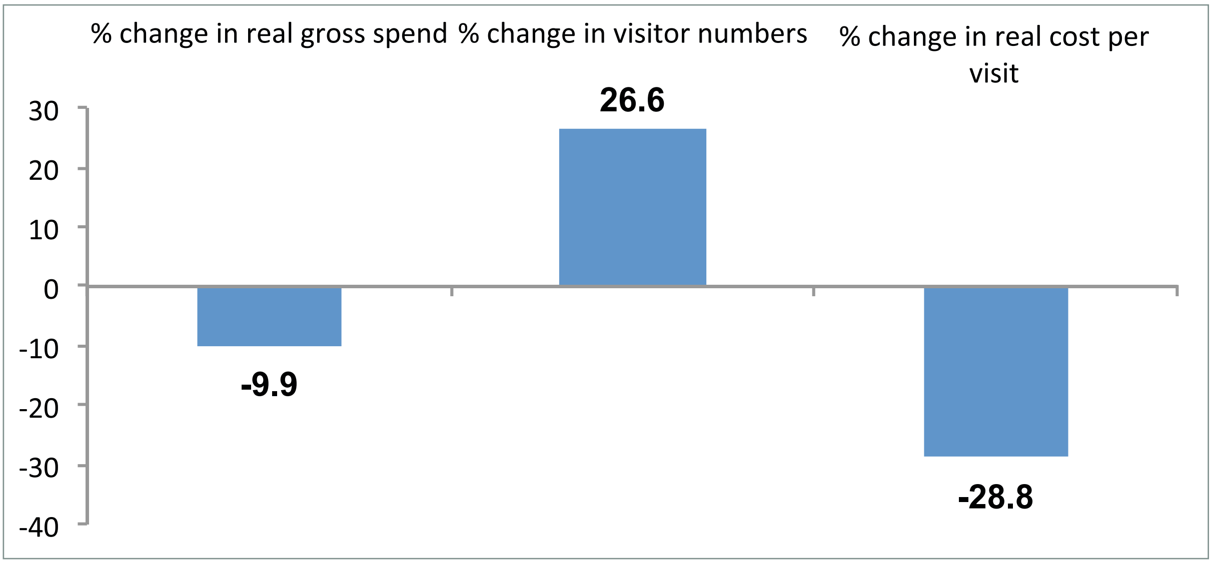
Library Services

Library costs are represented as the average cost per library visit. There has been a year on year reduction in unit costs. The average cost per library visit in 2013/14 was £2.71, while in 2010/11 the cost per visit was £3.80. In real terms, this represents a reduction of 28.8% over the four year period. In contrast with other culture and leisure service areas, the rate of reduction has increased in the last year, with a reduction of 19.9% compared to 5% in 2011/12 to 2012/13, and 6.5% between 2010/11 and 2011/12.

As with sports services unit cost figures on their own do not tell the full story of the last four years for library services. Over the four year period covered by the LGBF, gross spending on library services across Scotland fell by 9.9%. At the same time, visitor numbers increased across the country by 26.6%, with the largest increase occurring in the las 12 months when visitor numbers increased by 21.9%.

Again this indicates, that against a difficult financial backdrop, council services have achieved a growth in people using the service and as a consequence reduced the unit cost per visit to the council by a substantial margin. This shows that decisions around the rationalisation of local services have been implemented intelligently and rather than reduce access, the sector has been successful in increasing visitor numbers over the period. Key factors underpinning this increase in usage numbers include the increase in virtual visits, use of public access computers and mapping of opening times to user demand. As with sports attendance the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. We will capture and share the good practices of those councils who have increased visitor numbers by significant amounts while reducing their costs.

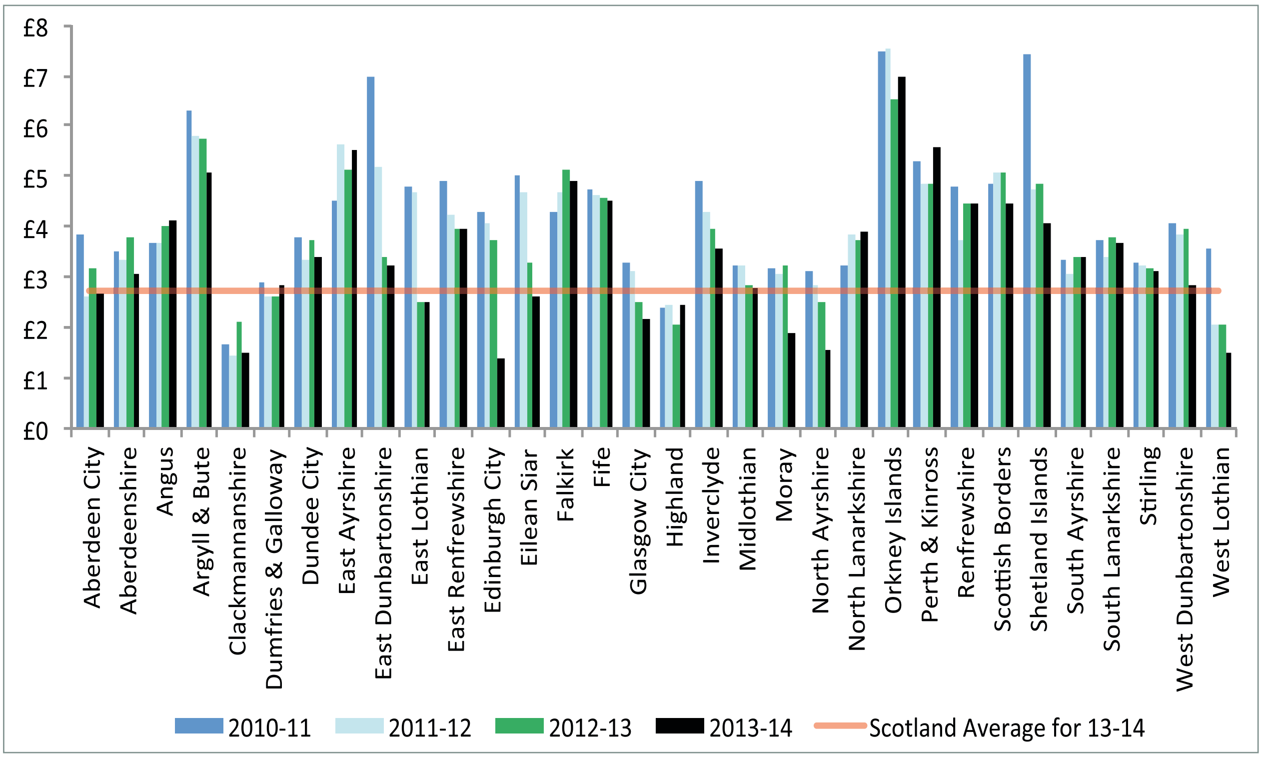
Libraries: Change in Spend, Visitor Numbers and Cost Per Visit 2010/11 - 2013/14



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

The range in cost per library visit in 2013/14 was £1.37 to £6.95. Similarly to sports costs, there is a clear effect of population density, with urban councils typically having lower cost per visit (£3.22 on average) than rural equivalents (£4.05 on average). Again, in rural areas the costs involved in providing the service to smaller populations dispersed over larger areas pushes costs up in comparison to densely populated parts of the country.

Cost Per Library Visit



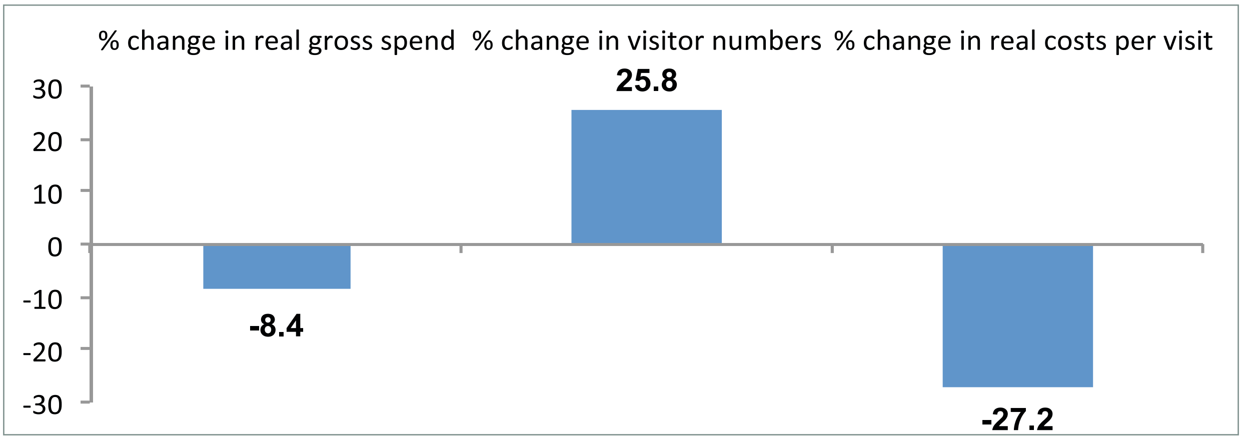
Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Museum Services

With respect to Museum services, similar patterns occur as with library and sports services in relation to falling unit costs accompanied by increasing visitor numbers. Over the four year period this represents a reduction of 27.2% in cost per visit in real terms, with most of this reduction (22.8%) taking place between 2010/11 and 2011/12. In recent years, a small growth in real unit costs of 1.9% between 2011/12 and 2012/13 has been followed by a reduction in costs last year of 7.4%.

As with other leisure and recreation services, the high level data only tells part of the story of what has been changing in museum services over the four year period. The average spending on museum services across Scotland has fallen by 8.4% since 2010/11 but in the same period visitor numbers have increased by 25.8%. The combined effect of this increase in the productive use of the service has been to reduce significantly the unit cost as measured by the cost per visit indicator.

Museums: Change in Spend, Visitor Numbers and Cost Per Visit 2010/11 - 2013/14

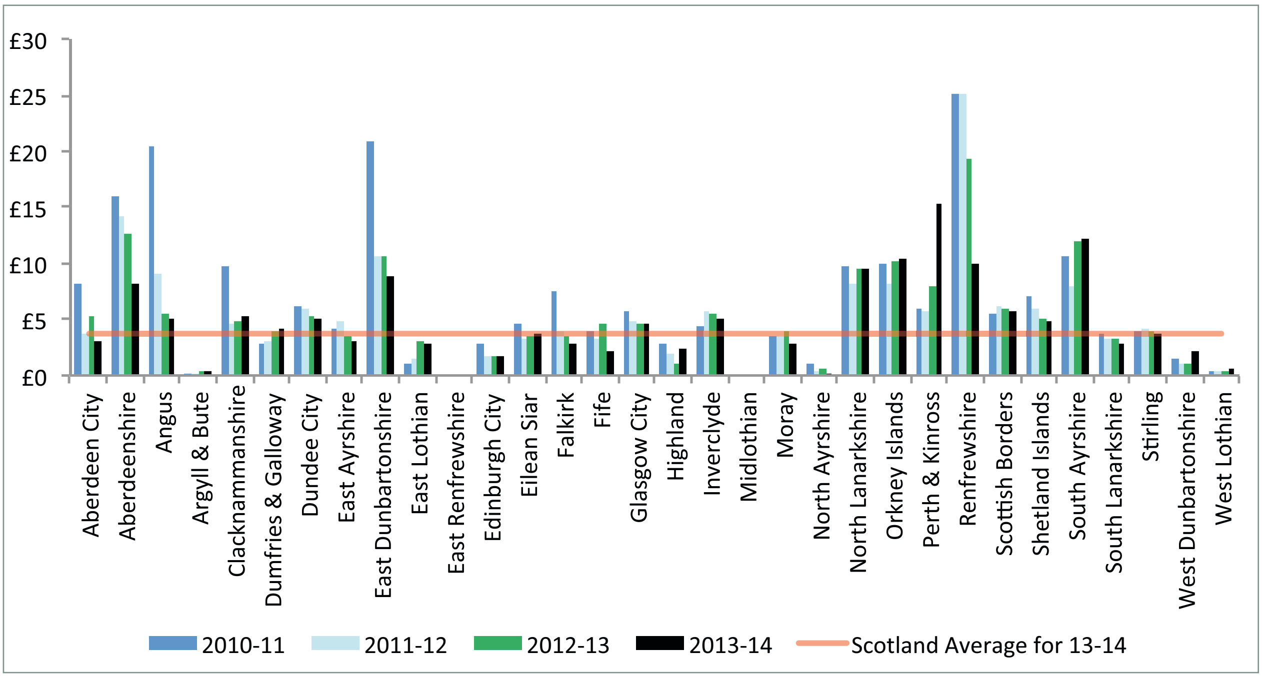


Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Further exploration is required to understand the factors behind increased museum use; however increased promotion of exhibits, increased virtual visits, and more robust footfall counting procedures may be contributing. As with sports and libraries attendance, the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. We will capture and share the good practices of those councils who have increased visitor numbers by significant amounts while reducing their costs.

In 2013/14 the range in cost per visit was from £0.16 to £15.31 and the Scottish average cost per visit was £3.72. The data reveals no systematic cost per visit patterns in relation to sparsity, size of council or deprivation.

Cost Per Museum Visit

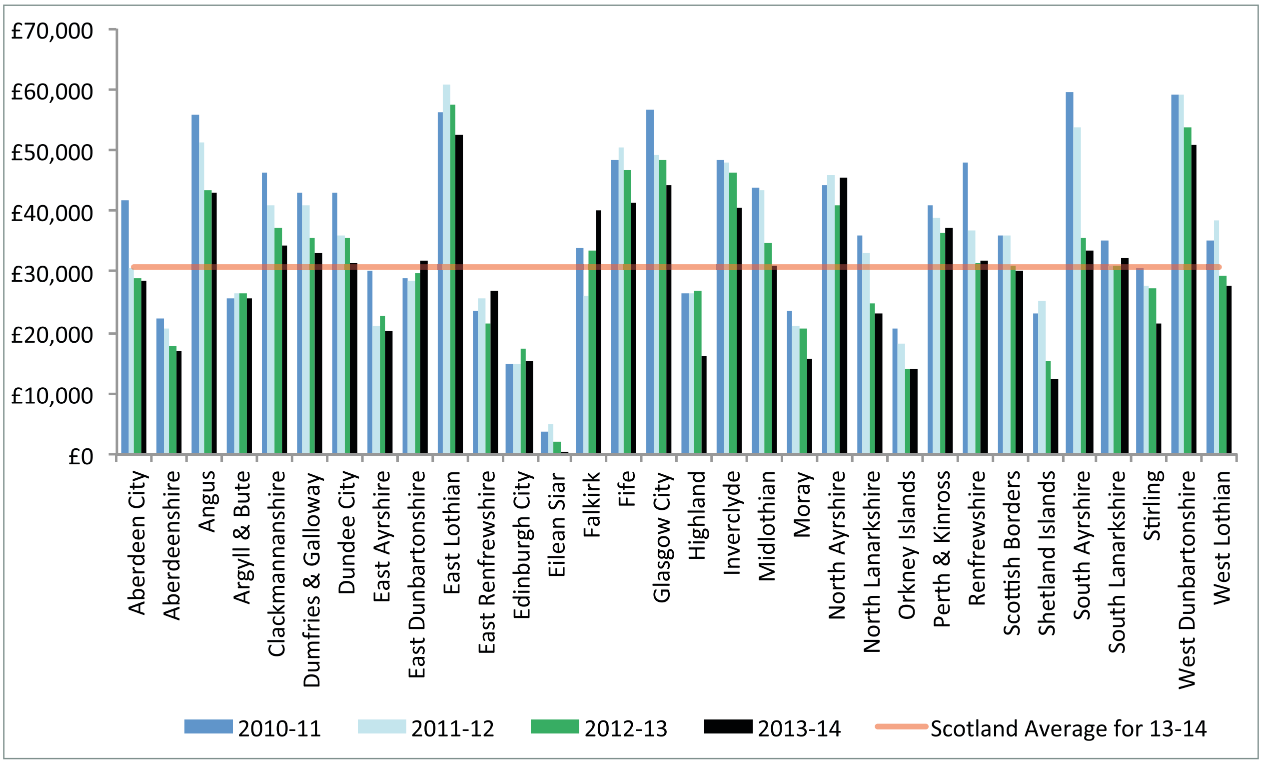


Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures
Note: Missing values for East Renfrewshire and Midlothian reflect no council provided museum service

Parks and Open Spaces

In terms of parks and open spaces the information suggests that the geographical nature of the area a council covers is the most important point in shaping the cost of providing the service.

Cost of Parks and Open Spaces Per 1000 Population



Source: Mid-year population estimates, National Records Scotland (NRO); Council supplied expenditure figures

In 2013/14 the Scottish average of the service measured on a per 1000 population basis was £30,786, the range in cost was from £584 to £52,486. Over the four year period from 2010/11 to 2013/14 the change in real terms was -19.9%. The rate of change has remained consistent across the four year period, with a 7.7% real terms reduction in 2010/11 to 2011/12, a 7.3% reduction between 2011/12 and 2012/13, and a 6.3% reduction between 2012/13 and 2013/14.

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	-15.5	-19.9
2010/11 - 2011/12	-6.1	-7.7
2011/12 - 2012/13	-5.8	-7.3
2012/13 - 2013/14	-4.6	-6.3

In examining the data, rural councils typically have lower costs (£17,083 on average) but councils covering a semi-rural area have typically the highest costs (£32,837 on average). This is largely down to the concentration of open space in more urban areas meaning that the cost to maintain those spaces is reduced as a result and in rural areas there is less publicly maintained open space. In semi-rural areas though there are urban communities requiring access to open space but these facilities will be dispersed across a much wider geography than in a purely urban council area and so higher costs to semi-rural councils are evident. The absence of a quality measure to control for trends in spend is an area we will work with colleagues to address going forward.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied With Culture and Leisure Services

Year	Leisure % satisfied	Libraries % satisfied	Museums % satisfied	Parks % satisfied
2010/11	75	84	76	83
2012/13	80	83	78	86
2013/14	78	81	76	86

Satisfaction levels for all areas of culture and leisure remain high at above 75%. However, for leisure facilities, libraries and museums, satisfaction levels reduced in the last 12 months. There are no obvious effects of deprivation, sparsity or council size on satisfaction levels in relation to culture and leisure services.

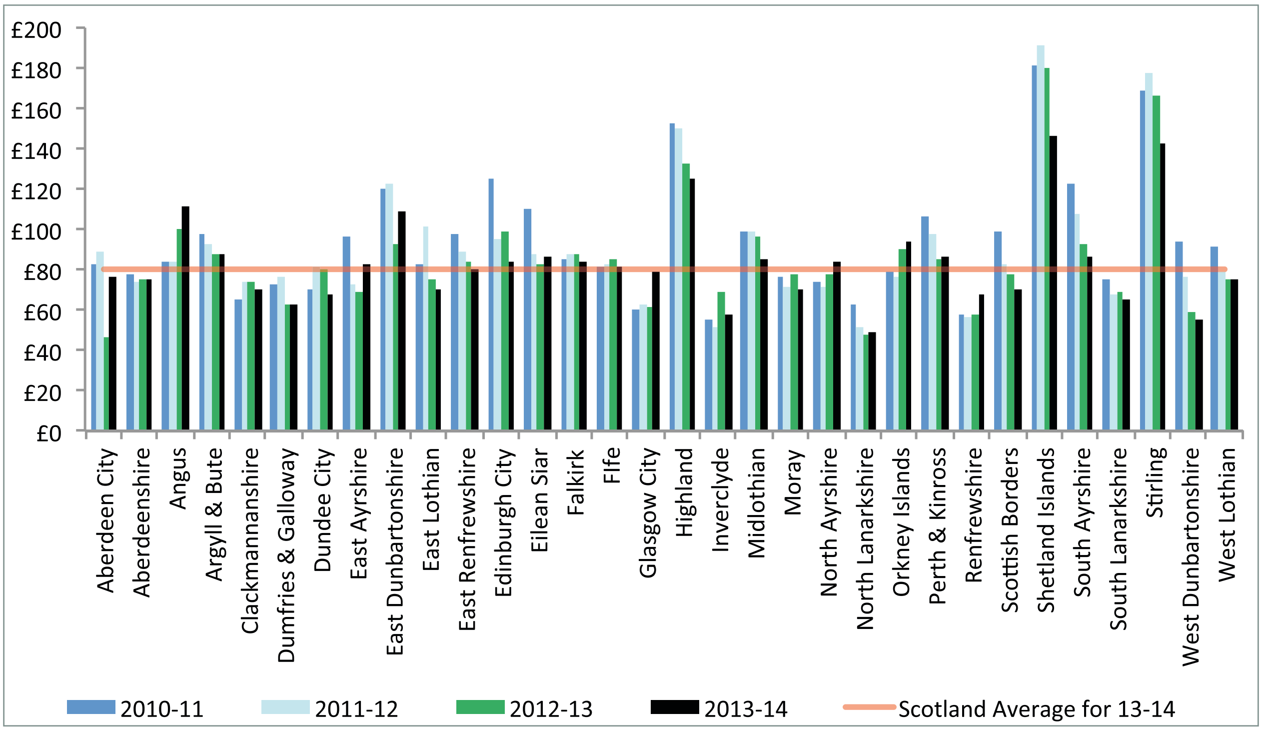
As noted previously, this satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while this data is proportionate at Scotland level, there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the very small sample sizes and low confidence levels. We will continue to work with colleagues across councils and within Scottish Government to develop an improved measure of customer/resident satisfaction which is comparable at local authority level.

Environmental Services

Waste Collection

In examining the cost of waste collection services across councils we had previously gathered information on the basis of the gross cost of collection on a per premise basis. We are now moving to a measure on the net cost of waste collection per premise. This development is in recognition of the increased efforts of councils to recycle waste which generates additional costs to the service but also an additional revenue stream as recycled waste is sold by councils into recycling markets. Below we report the gross costs of waste collection over the four year period and for 2012/13 and 2013/14 we also report the net cost of the service. In future years we will replace the gross cost per premise data with the net cost data.

Gross Cost of Waste Collection Per Premise



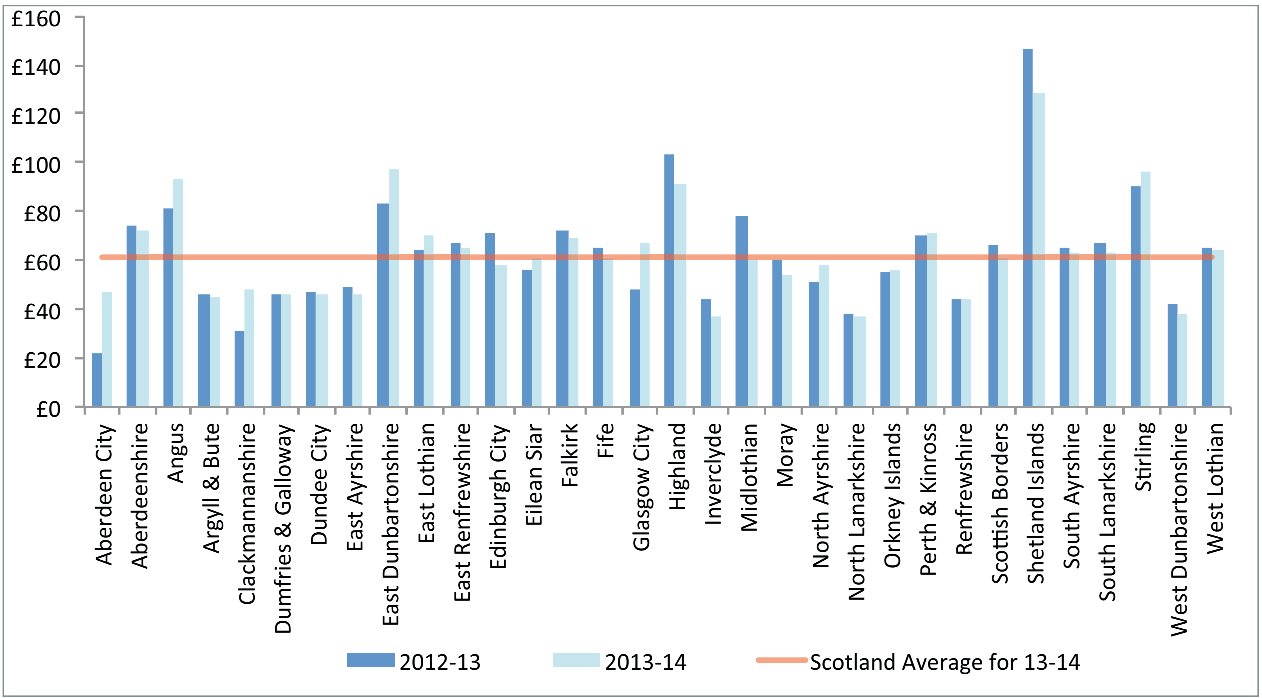
Source: Council supplied figures

In 2013/14 the Scottish average cost (**<u>gross</u>**) of waste collection per premise was £79.88 but in **net** terms the average cost per premise was £61.29. The range in 2013/14 across Scotland on a gross basis was from £48.55 to £146.66. This range is however distorted by the impact of factors such as rural sparsity or the tenemental structure of local housing on the service. Across rural councils the average gross cost per premise was £86.13, in urban councils it was £76.04 and in semi-rural councils it was £80.97.

When the figures are examined on a net basis the same broad trend occurs with urban councils delivering the service at a lower cost. The average among urban councils was £47.08, among rural councils £61.26 and in semi-rural council areas £61.73. Within each grouping of councils there remains significant variation in both the gross and net costs.

The reasons behind this variation and the identification and sharing of good practice are currently being explored within family groups. Some of the factors identified to date involve differences in investment cycles, collection programmes and frequencies, timescales for the roll out of food waste collection and investment in front line service infrastructure.

Net Cost of Waste Collection Per Premise



Source: Council supplied figures

Over the four year period from 2010/11 to 2013/14 the Scottish average cost per premise for waste collection (on a Gross basis only) reduced by 10.1% in real terms. The rate of annual reduction in cost has been relatively steady over the first three years at around 6% reduction per annum in real terms, however in the past year, there has been a small real terms growth of 0.8%. Similarly, in relation to net costs, in the last year there has been a growth in costs of 1.8%.

Work in family groups has identified the more efficient use of assets and resources as key factors driving the overall reductions in relation to collection costs. Examples include ‘route optimisation’ software systems saving costs on vehicles and employees, and changes in working practices (e.g. shift-working, zonal working, weekend working). The move to three or four weekly refuse collections was also cited as a factor here. Given the rate of reduction has slowed in the past 12 months, this indicates that cost saving exercises may have ‘bottomed out’ and it may be that lesser cost savings, if any, are available in future years.

Gross Cost Waste Collection Per Premise

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	-5.3	-10.1
2010/11 - 2011/12	-3.9	-5.6
2011/12 - 2012/13	-4.0	-5.6
2012/13 - 2013/14	2.7	0.8

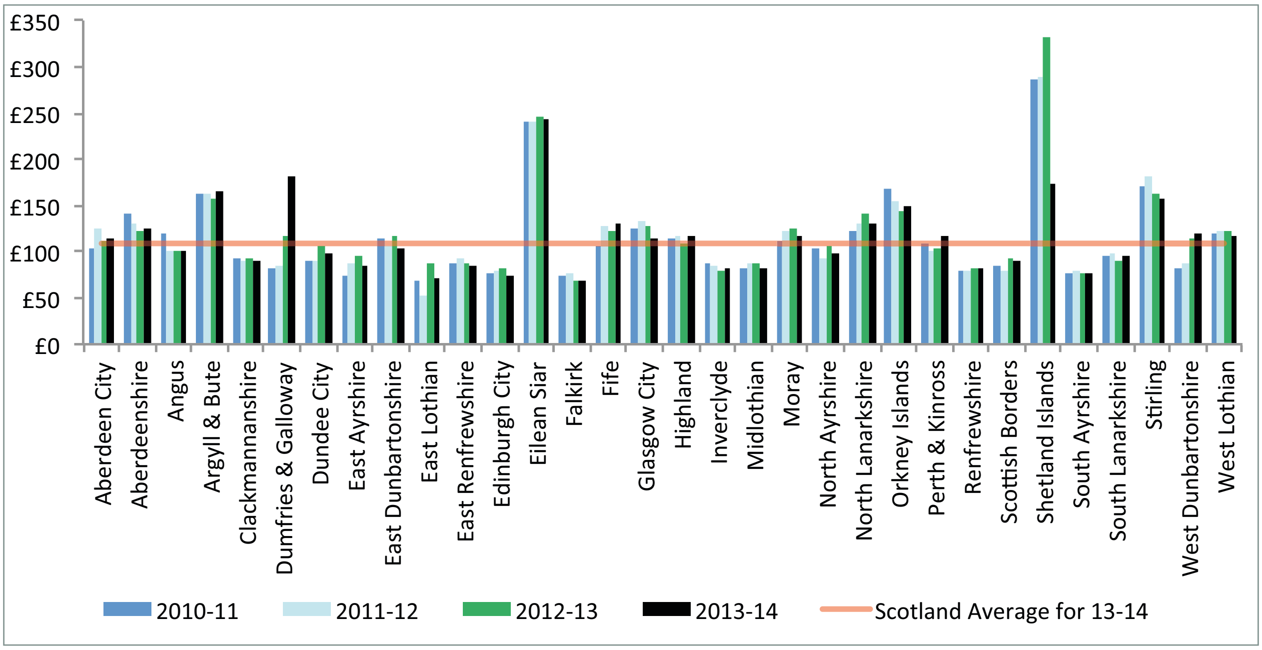
Net Cost Waste Collection Per Premise

% Change	Cash	Real
2012/13 - 2013/14	3.7	1.8

Waste Disposal

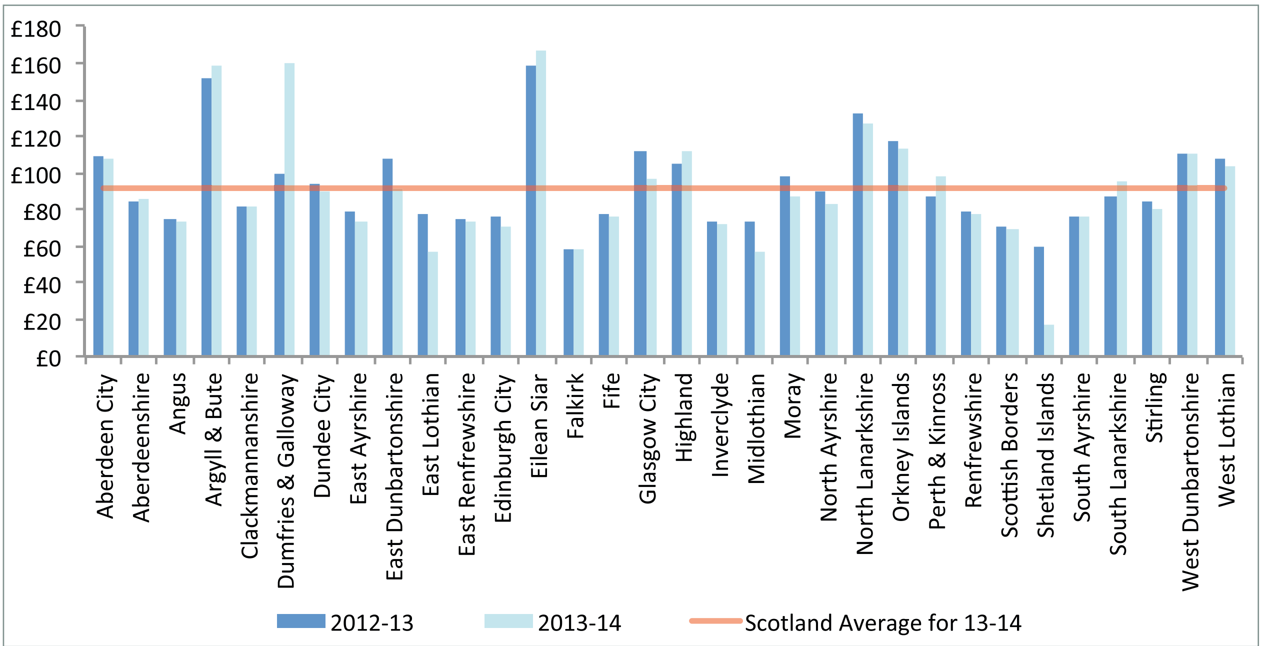
As with waste collection we are able to report both the **gross** and the **net** cost of disposal per premise. In future years as the net cost data builds up we will move towards reporting this figure alone. The graphs below report the gross and net cost per premise since 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Gross Cost of Waste Disposal Per Premise



Source: Council supplied figures

Net Cost of Waste Disposal Per Premise



Source: Council supplied figures

In 2013/14 the Scottish average **gross** cost of waste disposal per premise was £108.76 while in **net** terms the cost was £91.80. The range across councils for gross costs was from £67.41 to £242.49. The average gross cost for urban councils was £102.47, for rural councils it was £149.03 but in semi-rural council areas it was £94.03. On a net basis the figures for 2013/14 were £90.81 for urban councils, £112.16 for rural councils and £75.95 for semi-rural council areas. In both cases the island councils typically face higher costs due to the geography of the island communities and the associated costs of supporting the local populations within the islands.

Some variation between councils may reflect the fact that a small number of councils still have landfills which will require investment up to and beyond their closure dates over the next seven years. However, given the wide range of costs across councils, even councils of the same type, there would appear to be scope for sharing best practice and making significant efficiencies in this service. Generating understanding of the reasons behind the variations in both the gross and net costs of waste disposal and the exchange of good practice across all councils will be a priority in the year ahead for the project.

Over the four year period from 2010/11 to 2013/14 the Scottish average **gross** cost of waste disposal has increased in real terms by 2.5%, from £106.07 in 2010/11 to £108.76 in 2013/14. The rate of increase has slowed in recent years and in the past year there has actually been a real terms reduction of 1.7% in gross costs. Similarly, in the last year there has also been reduction in **net** costs of waste disposal, falling by 2.3% in real terms. The nationwide reduction in waste arisings, in part due to the recession and austerity measures, may account for some of the fall in waste disposal costs in the last 12 months.

Gross Cost Waste Disposal Per Premise

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	8.1	2.5
2010/11 - 2011/12	4.7	2.9
2011/12 - 2012/13	3.1	1.4
2012/13 - 2013/14	0.1	-1.7

Net Cost Waste Disposal Per Premise

% Change	Cash	Real
2012/13 - 2013/14	-0.5	-2.3

Waste Recycling

Over recent years councils have put greater emphasis on the recycling of waste in compliance with the National Zero Waste Plan[14]. Recycling rates continue to improve across Scotland from 41% in 2011/12 to 42.2% in 2013/14 as efforts are made to achieve Scotland's Zero Waste 60% household waste recycling target by 2020.

The range in recycling rates achieved is significant, ranging from 12.2% to 59.9% in 2013/14. Shetland Council is a significant outlier here with significantly lower recycling rates. Given its costly shipping costs due to its geographical location, Zero Waste Scotland reported that Shetland's Best Practice Environmental Option (BPEO) is to burn materials that are recycled by other councils (paper, card, plastic) and only textiles, cans and glass are to be recycled.

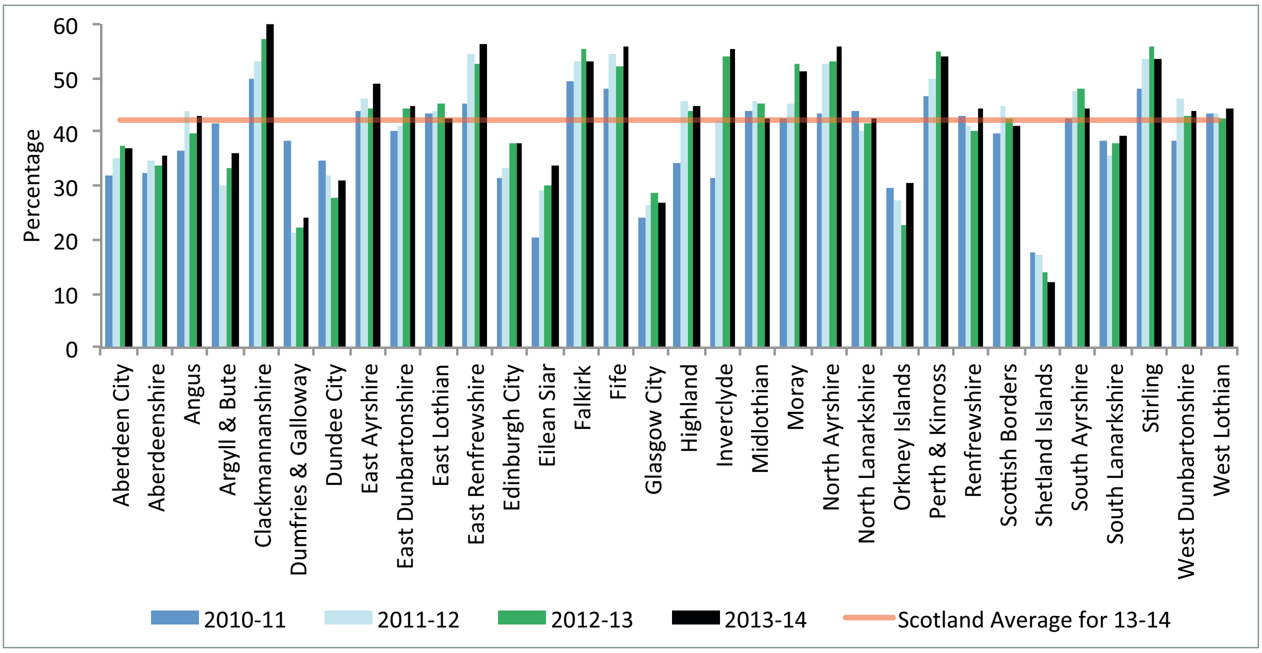
Rural councils achieved on average a rate of 35.8%, urban councils achieving an average of 42.3% and semi-rural area councils achieving an average of 50.1%. Within these groups it would seem that in general medium-sized, mixed area councils achieve the highest rates of recycling. The reasons behind this are being further explored within family groups. Further exploration is also ongoing to better understand the linkages between waste collection, disposal and recycling and the good practices being employed in some councils will be fully shared across all authorities.

14 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/06/08092645/0

Satisfaction levels for waste collection remain extremely high at above 80%, with levels increasing since the base year. It is of interest here that the service restructuring that has been introduced including for example, reductions in collections frequencies, do not appear, in broad terms at least, to have had a detrimental impact on public satisfaction with the service.

As noted previously, this satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the very small sample sizes and low confidence levels. We will continue to work with colleagues across councils and within Scottish Government to develop an improved measure of customer/resident satisfaction which is comparable at local authority level.

Percentage of Household Waste Arising that is Recycled



Source: WasteDataFlow, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Waste Collection

Year	% Satisfied
2010/11	81
2012/13	83
2013/14	83

Street Cleaning

The cleanliness of Scotland's streets remains a priority for councils both in terms of improving the appearance of our streetscapes but also in terms of environmental improvements in the quality of people's lives.

Street cleanliness is presented using the Street Cleanliness Score, which is produced by Keep Scotland Beautiful[15] and measures the percentage of areas assessed as 'clean' rather than completely litter free sites (considered impractical in areas of high footfall) and allows authorities to tackle litter problem areas to achieve better results.

The Scottish average for both the cleanliness score and satisfaction with street cleaning has

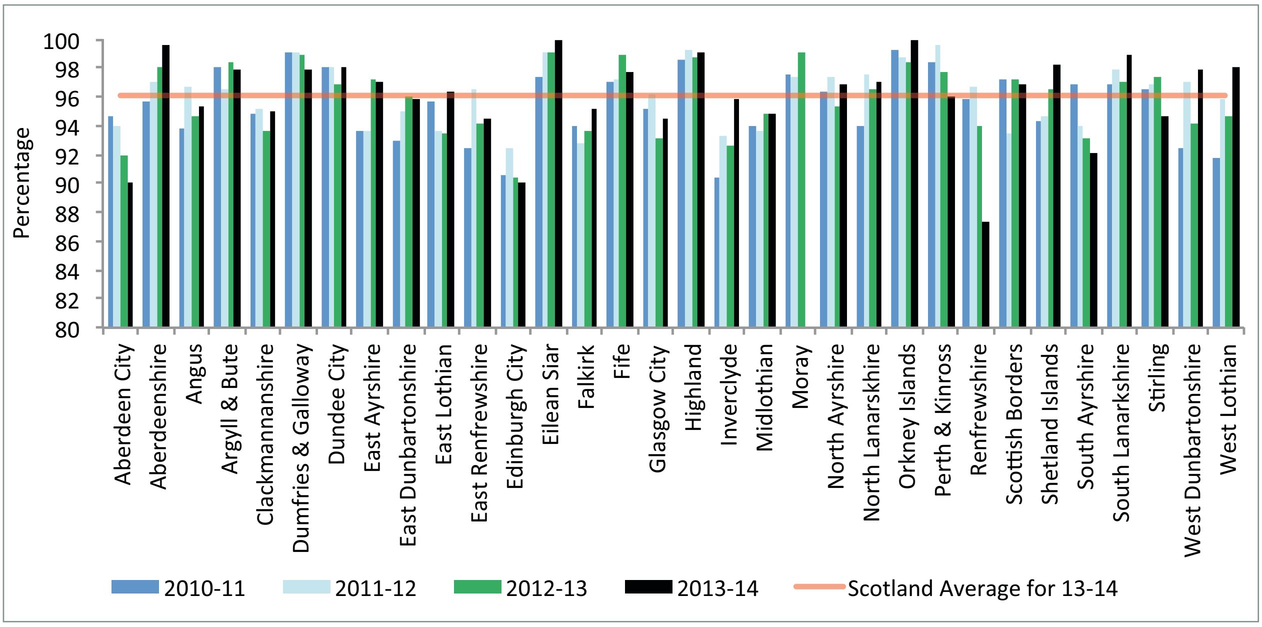
15 http://www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/

increased over the four year period from 95.4% to 96.1% and from 73% to 74% respectively. Both the cleanliness score and satisfaction with cleanliness were lower in urban areas.

Over the same four year period the Scottish average for net cost of street cleaning has reduced in real terms by 25.4%. This rate of reduction has increased in recent years from 4.1% in real terms from 2010/11 to 2011/12 to 11% and 12.5% in more recent years. The introduction of shift working, a decrease in staff numbers and maximising the use of assets has driven these reductions across many councils.

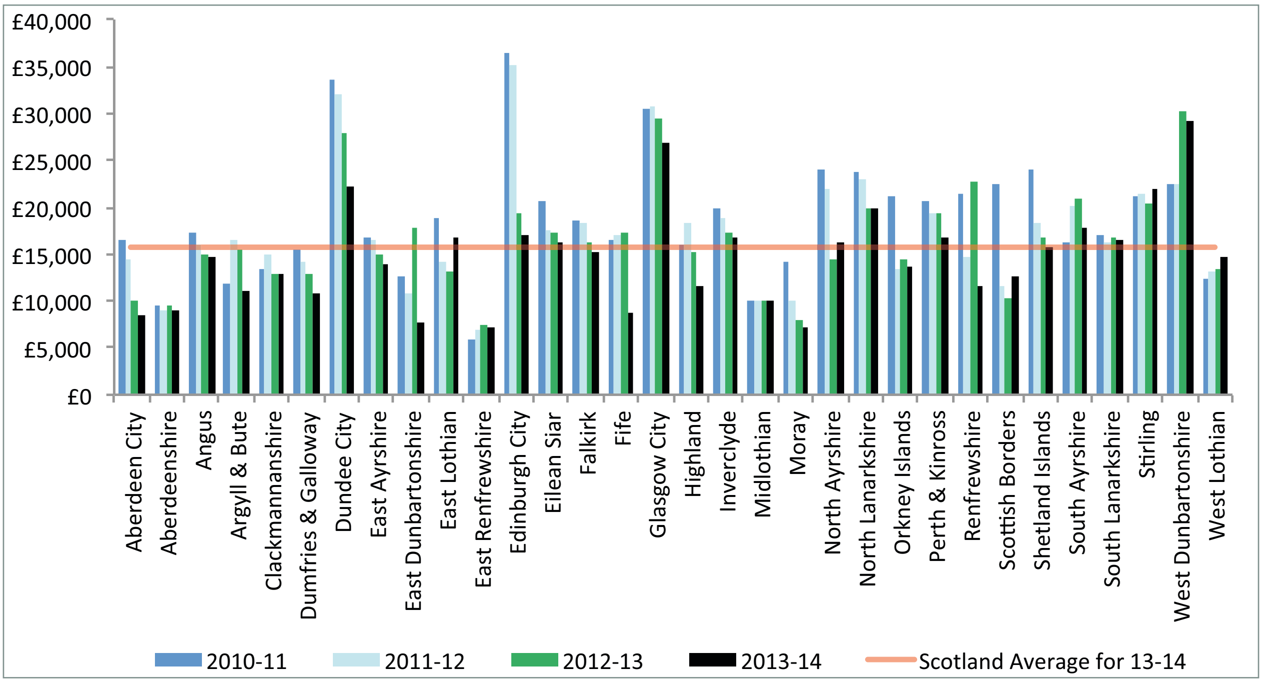
The range across councils varies significantly (from £7271 to £29,317) with the Scottish average at £15,617. There are significantly higher costs in urban areas, £17.036 on average, compared to £12,672 in rural areas.

Street Cleanliness Score (%)



Source: Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS), Keep Scotland Beautiful
Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

Net Cost of Street Cleaning Per 1000 Population



Source: Mid-year population estimates, National Records Scotland (NRO); council supplied figures

Net Cost of Street Cleaning Per 1,000 Population

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	-21.3	-25.4
2010/11 - 2011/12	-2.4	-4.1
2011/12 - 2012/13	-9.5	-11.0
2012/13 - 2013/14	-10.9	-12.5

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Street Cleaning

Year	% Satisfied
2010/11	73
2012/13	75
2013/14	74

Satisfaction levels for street cleaning remain high at above 70%, with levels increasing since the base year. As with waste management, it is again encouraging to note that the significant efficiencies that have been introduced do not appear to have had a detrimental impact on public satisfaction. Looking at both the street cleanliness index and satisfaction levels, this indicates great care has been taken to protect key areas of public concern even in the context of reducing budgets.

As noted previously, this satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the very small sample sizes and low confidence levels. We will continue to work with colleagues across councils and within Scottish Government to develop an improved measure of customer/resident satisfaction which is comparable at local authority level.

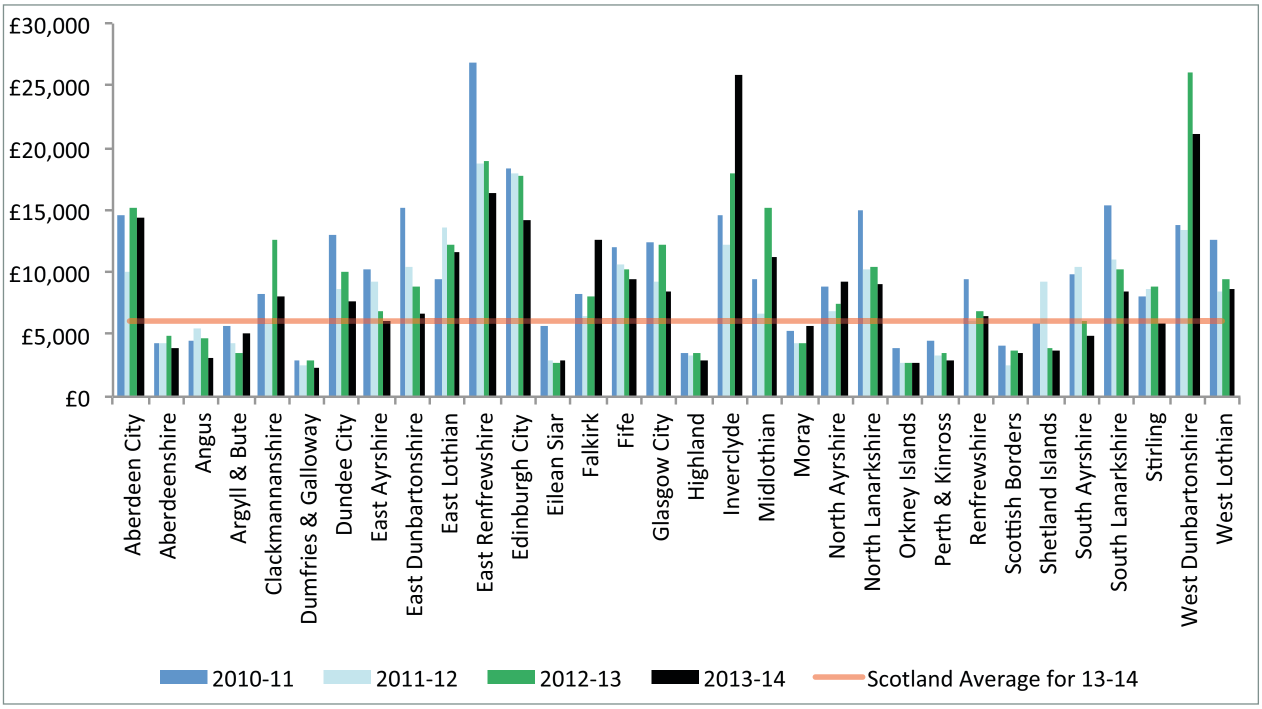
Roads Maintenance

In terms of the cost of road maintenance per kilometre, the Scottish average was £6,058 in 2013/14, with councils ranging from £2392 to £25,960. There is a significant difference in costs between urban, rural and semi-rural councils. The average in 2013/14 for urban councils was £8972 per kilometre, for rural councils it was £2842 and for semi-rural area councils it was £8476. The higher traffic volumes experienced in urban and semi-rural areas, where some large towns are located, is a key factor behind the variations in spending.

For the four years for which we have data the Scottish average cost per kilometre fell in real terms by 21.2%. The rate of reduction has altered significantly over the four years with a real terms reduction of 16.3% in 2010/11 to 2011/12, followed by a growth in real terms of 5.4% in 2011/12 to 2012/13, and finally a further reduction of 10.6% in 2012/13 to 2013/14. The majority of the change appears to be due to lower winter maintenance expenditure during this period. 2010/11 was a particularly bad winter, with £120 million of additional costs and the much milder winters recently have led to lower associated expenditure.

It is worth noting that this cost measure does not include capital spend and therefore does not accurately capture the extent of variations in spend across councils. We will work with the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) and roads colleagues across councils to improve the usefulness of this measure during the next phase.

Cost of Maintenance Per Kilometre of Road



Source: Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) / Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) returns; council supplied expenditure figures

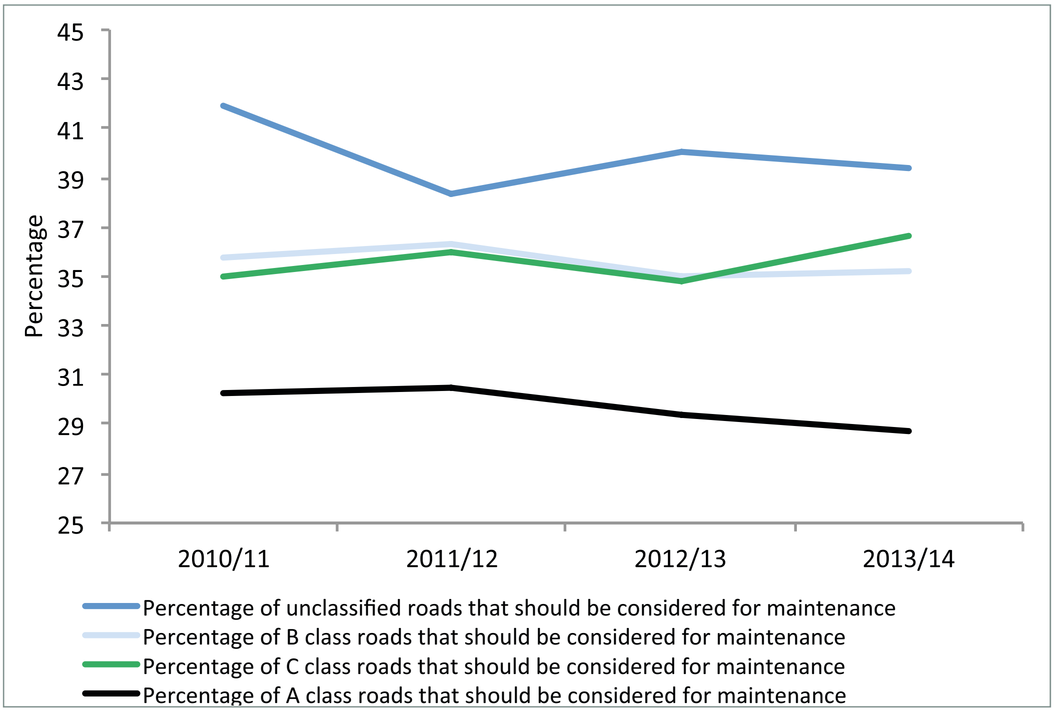
Cost of Maintenance Per Kilometre of Road

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2013/14	-16.9	-21.2
2010/11 - 2011/12	-14.8	-16.3
2011/12 - 2012/13	7.1	5.4
2012/13 - 2013/14	-9.0	-10.6

When road condition data is examined there are clear differences between urban, rural and semi-rural councils. For class A roads in urban areas the percentage in need of repair in 2013/14 was 25.5%, in semi-rural area councils it was 26.3% and in rural areas it was 29.4%. Similar patterns prevailed across B, C and U class roads, with conditions faring better in urban areas than those in rural and semi-rural areas.

Over the four year period covered by this report the overall condition of A, B, and unclassified roads has improved, with percentage of A roads in need of repair decreasing from 30.3% to 28.7%, the percentage of B roads reducing from 35.8% to 35.2%, and the percentage of unclassified roads reducing from 41.9% to 39.4%. However, the opposite is true of C class roads, with the percentage in need of repair showing a small increase. Despite the overall reductions on spending therefore, the condition of the roads networks for A, B and unclassified roads at least has improved over the four year period. Family groups identified the implementation of Road Asset Management Plans, better targeting of spend and a focus on intervention treatments through significant programmes of permanent patching repairs as key factors driving this improvement.

Percentage of A, B, C, Unclassified Roads Which Should be Considered for Maintenance Treatment (%)

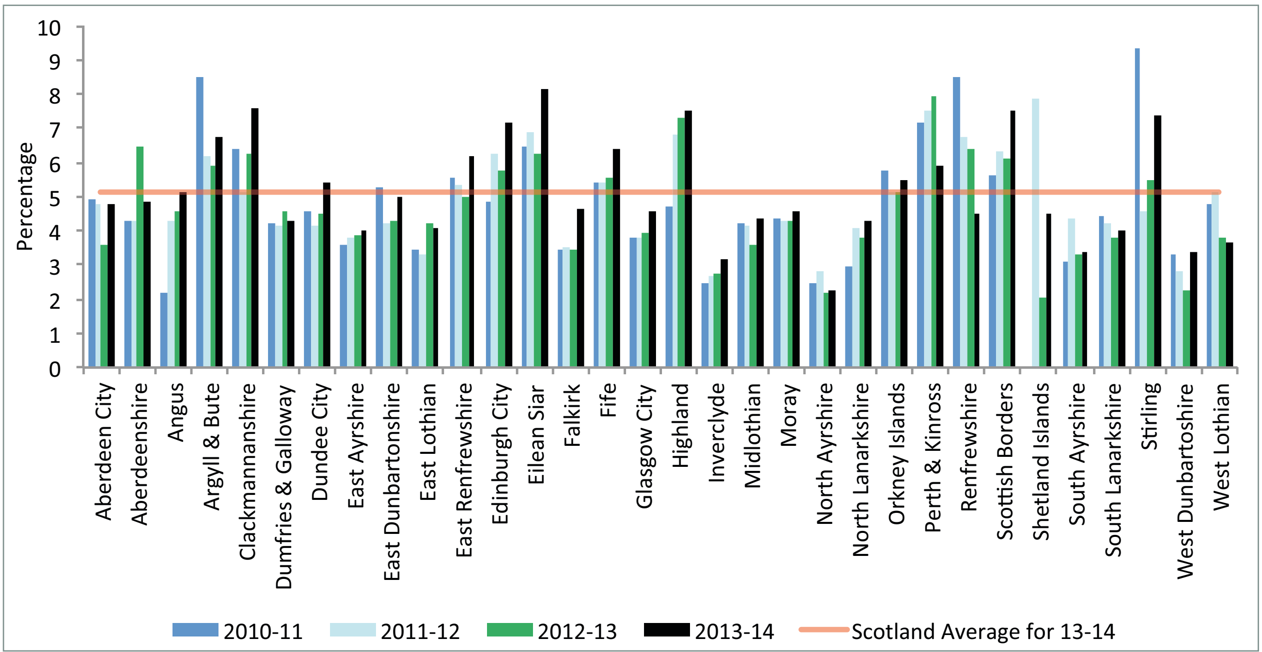


Source: Roads Asset Management Database, Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS)

Corporate Services

Support Services

Support Services as a Percentage of Total Gross Expenditure



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures
Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

Corporate support services within councils cover a wide range of functions including finance, human resources, corporate management, payroll legal services and a number of other corporate functions.

In 2013/14 the Scottish average among councils for the cost of support services as a percentage of the total revenue budget of a council was 5.1%. While this figure represents a slight increase from 2010/11 when the figure was 4.6%, this is at least in part due a difference in accounting methodology.[16] When an adjustment is made to allow for comparison, the percentage of total revenue budget remains stable at 5.1% between 2012/13 to 2013/14.

In 2013/14 the range across councils is from 2.2% to 8.1% with clear differences between urban, rural and semi-rural councils. In general terms, rural authorities displayed a higher percentage than urban and semi-rural area councils; the rates were 5.9% on average for rural councils and 4.6% for urban councils.

Democratic Core

The democratic core service of local authorities covers all the services including committees that are necessary to support the council in discharging its democratic functions on behalf of the community.

In 2013/14 the Scottish average for the cost of the democratic core per 1000 of population was £32,077. The range across councils was from £14,775 to £295,431, with rural councils having significantly higher costs than urban/semi-rural equivalents (£45,802 for rural councils on average compared to £26,623 and £29,264 for urban/semi-rural respectively). If the Island

16 In contrast to previous years, in 2013/14 the total revenue budget was not adjusted to take account for contributions to joint boards, police, fire and transport bodies

councils are removed from this range it reduces from £14,775 to £46,894. These figures indicate the higher costs for rural and island councils face associated with the distances elected members have to travel to attend meetings plus accommodation and other expenses incurred as a consequence of this.

Over the four year period 2010/11 to 2013/14, the cost reduced by 9.1% in real terms. The rate of reduction has slowed in from 7.6% in real terms from 2010/11 to 2011/12 to 0.7% and 0.9% in recent years.

Percentage of Women in Top Salaries

The percentage of women in the top 5% of earners in councils is a significant measure of the attempts by councils to ensure equal opportunity between genders. From 2010/11 to 2013/14 this has increased from 46.3% to 50.7%. Again, the range across councils was significant from 24% to 61.8%, with urban councils reporting significantly higher levels at 54.2% compared to rural councils at 45.7%.

While this is an important measure reflecting the progress which has been made in relation to gender equality in senior positions, there is also a need to capture the progress being made across the wider workforce. The Gender Pay Gap, i.e. the difference between men's and women's earnings, is a key measure under the Public Sector Equality Duty and we will continue to work with colleagues across councils, the Equalities & Human Rights Commission, Scottish Government and Close the Gap to improve the consistency of the data reported in order that this measure can be included within the next publication.

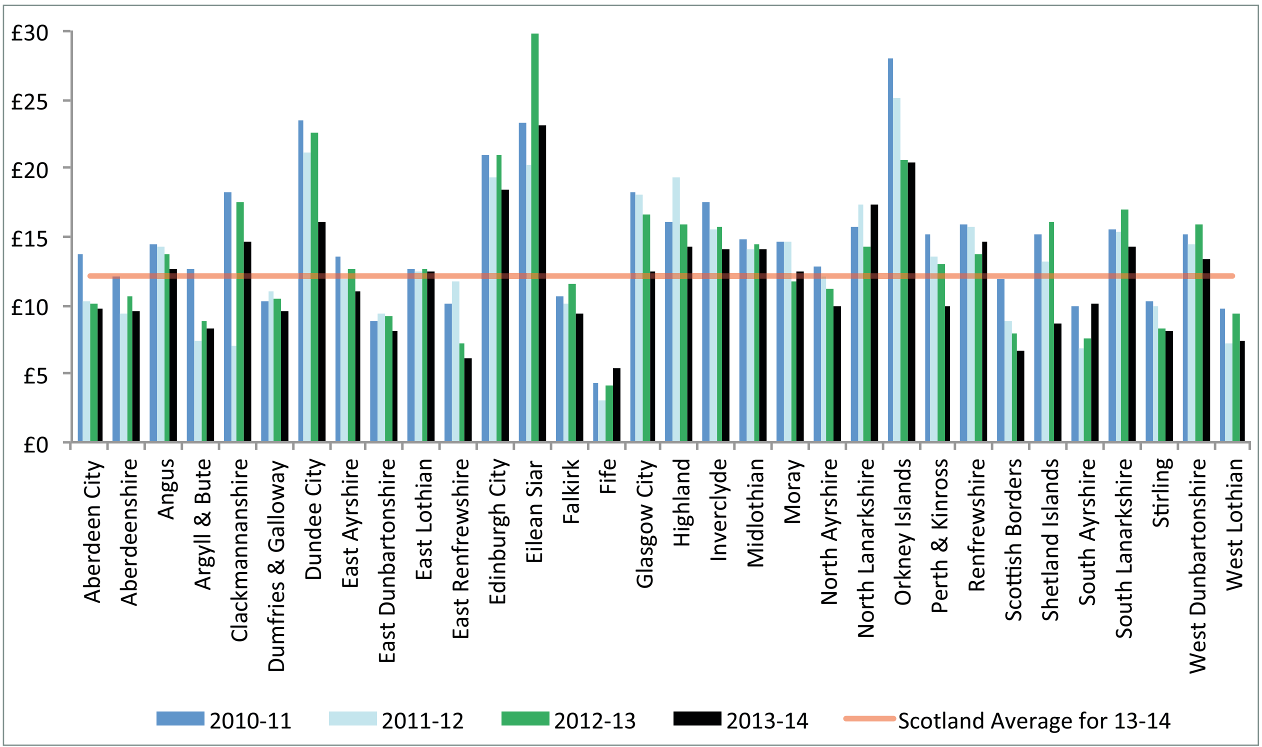
Council Tax Collection

The cost of collecting council tax is measured on a per property basis to standardise the measure across councils. Over the four year period from 2010/11 to 2013/14 this has reduced by 16.7%, from £14.55 to £12.13. The range however varies significantly from £5.45 to £23.20, with urban councils reporting higher costs on average (£13.31) than rural councils (£9.60).

Work within family groups has identified that an increased use of new technology including e-billing/text reminders/ IVR telephony systems which encourage customers to self-serve and a corresponding reduction in staffing costs underpins the reduction in costs for many councils. It is important to acknowledge there may be a deprivation factor in relation to the reach of these approaches as they assume the population we are collecting from have access to conventional banking and we know that a proportion of the population in deprived urban areas has significantly less access. Other efficiency factors include reductions in printing costs, sheriff officer commission costs, and reduced central support recharges from customer services (front end calls and enquiries) due to more self-service.

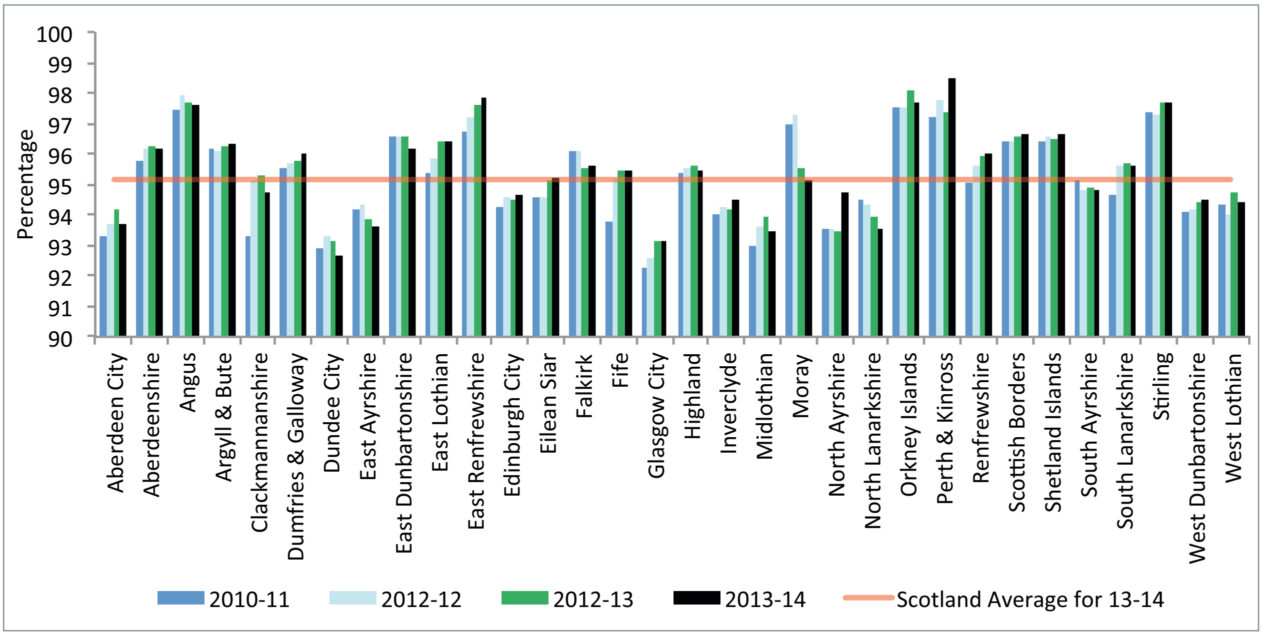
At the same time as the reduction in unit costs, the overall rate of in-year collection for council tax has remained high and constant at 95.2%. This has been achieved despite the challenges created by a difficult current economic climate and significant welfare reform. This represents an overall increase from the base year where the collection rate was 94.7%. The range across councils is 92.7% to 98.5% with no significant pattern in relation to rurality, deprivation or size of council.

Cost of Collecting Council Tax (£)



Source: Council supplied figures

Percentage of Income Due from Council Tax Received by the End of the Year (%)



Source: Council supplied figures

Sickness Absence Rates

The management of sickness absence is a major priority for councils in their efforts to manage their costs. The rate has remained relatively flat at 10 days average from 2010/11 to 2013/14. There is little variation based on the urban rural nature of a council or size.

Invoices Paid

Councils are major purchasers of goods and services both within their local economies and across the Scottish economy as a whole. The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days has steadily increased from 89.5% to 91.9% over the four year period 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Housing Services

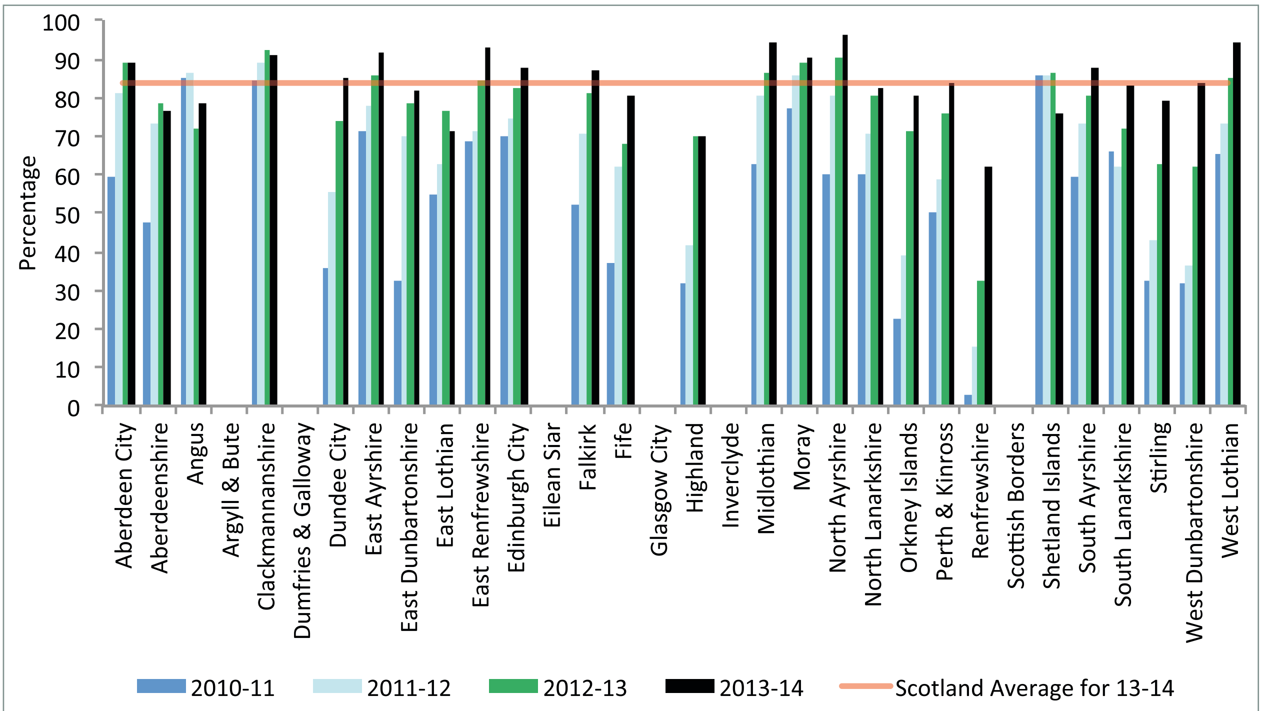
The housing information within the benchmarking framework covers housing management, housing conditions and energy efficiency. Only those councils who have responsibility for the provision of housing services are included here.

In 2013/14, the average tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due was 5.5%. Across councils, this represents a range of 2.6% to 9.4%, with arrears lowest in rural councils (4.7%) compared to 5.9% in urban councils and 5.8% in semi-rural. This year, for the first time, this measure is taken from the Housing Charter and as the methodology differs slightly from the previous measure, it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with previous years.[17]

Meanwhile, the rent lost due to voids remains steady at 1.3%. Again, figures vary across authorities, from 0.4% to 3.5%, however neither the urban/rural nature of the council nor the size have a systematic impact here. Overall, these figures suggest the councils continue to manage their stock well in the face of mounting pressures as a consequence of the impacts of welfare reform among other factors.

In terms of housing quality, there have been significant improvements over the past four years in terms of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) and energy efficiency standards. In 2013/14, 83.7% of council dwellings met SHQS, an increase of 30 percentage points from 2010/11. The range across councils varies significantly from 62% to 96%, although this range has been narrowing since 2010/11.

Percentage of Dwellings Meeting SHQS



Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)
Note: Missing values represent the six councils who do not provide housing services

In 2013/14, 94% of council dwellings were energy efficient, an increase from 74.9% in 2010/11. Councils range from 76% to 100%, with rural councils on average having lower levels (89%)

17 It is important to note that the sources used within this publication are not based on the Scottish Government data sources (Housing Revenue Account statistics and Scottish Housing Condition Survey) rather they are based on data collected by the Scottish Housing Regulator. There will be differences between the two sets of data. For example, the data published here reports only on council provision rather than provision by all registered social landlords. Additionally, there are differences in the SHQS methodology between SHR and SHCS.

compared to 94% in urban councils and 98% in mixed councils. This significant progress in improving the energy efficiency of council dwellings reflects the local government commitment to support the Scottish Government target to eradicate fuel poverty by 2016.

Year	% council dwellings meeting SHQS	% council dwellings that are energy efficient
2010/11	53.6	74.9
2011/12	66.1	81.2
2012/13	76.6	88.8
2013/14	83.7	94.0

Economic Development

Economic outcomes are recognised as a route to addressing a wider range of social and other outcomes. Employment is a key priority for most Councils/SOAs (Single Outcome Agreements) and accessing employment results not just in a positive economic outcome, but can typically also lead to improvements across a wider range of outcomes and reductions in demand for public services. In this respect, improving economic outcomes is critical to the prevention agenda, in helping achieve an affordable level of public sector spend and in driving improved outcomes for the people of Scotland.

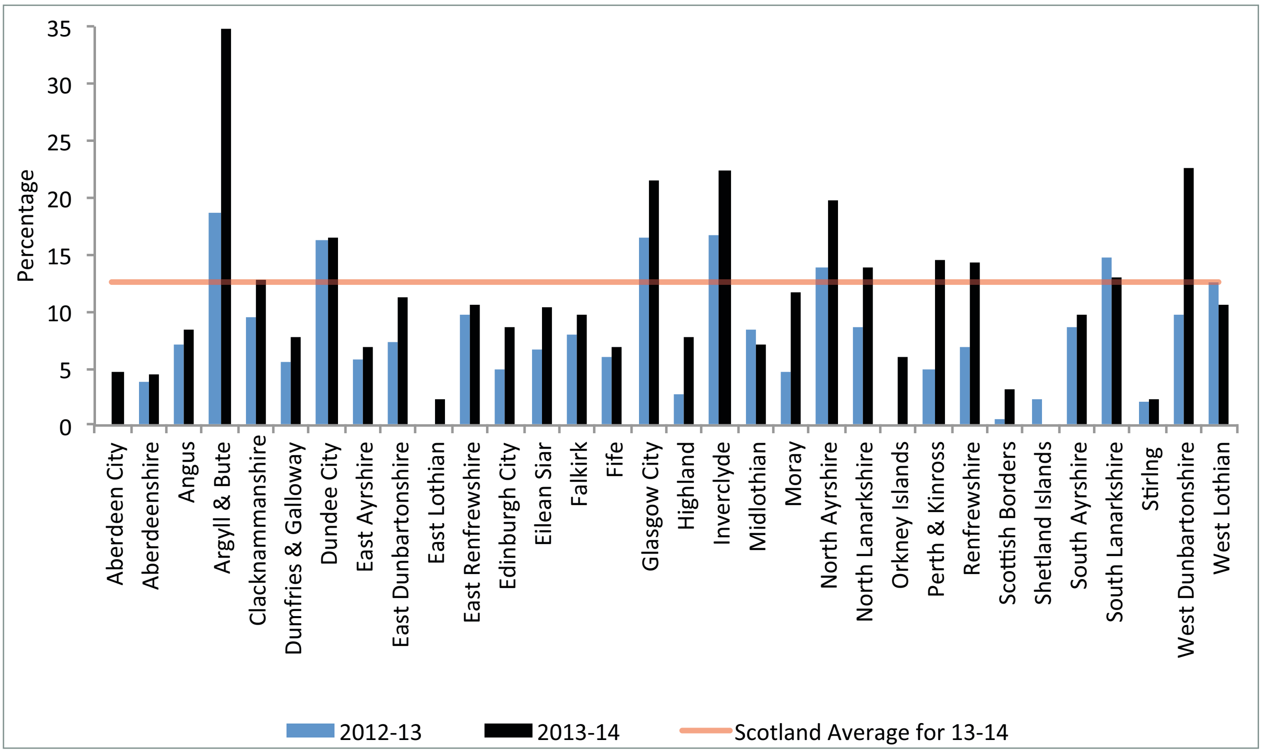
Economic development is represented within the LGBF in a measure of the 'percentage of total unemployed people in an area assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes'. Most councils participate in employment-related support – either via direct provision and/or via funding 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. Work is prioritised in the year ahead to improve the robustness of this measure and providing reliable data on the progression of these people into employment.

In 2013/14, the Scotland average for the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes was 12.6% of total unemployed, an increase from 9.6% last year. There is a considerable range across councils, from 2.3% to 34.8%, with a tendency for higher rates being achieved in urban councils. Some of the variation is likely to be due to differing priorities and approaches to employability across councils.

Year	% Unemployed People Assisted into Work from Council Operated/Funded Employability Programmes
2012/13	9.6
2013/14	12.6

As the 'employability' measure, on its own, does not fully monitor the performance by councils in delivering economic development, the SLAED Indicators work will seek to develop a robust benchmark to reflect the significant investment in business development and support (e.g. Business Gateway) that may be used in the future LGBF. We will continue to work with SLAED to improve both the quality of the data underpinning this specific indicator and in driving forward with their own benchmarking work which is complementary to this programme.

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



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics (ONS); SLAED Indicators Framework returns
Note: Missing values reflect no SLAED return for that year

Conclusions and Next Steps

The core purpose of this exercise is to support councils to deliver better outcomes for communities by benchmarking and learning from those councils who are achieving the best performance in relation to local service delivery. The benchmarking framework supports evidence based comparisons on spending, performance and customer satisfaction between similar councils to enable this. This last year has seen councils continue to improve the quality and performance of the services covered by the LGBF while continuing to manage pressures to reduce costs in all service areas.

The collective efforts of all 32 councils in Scotland has been important in taking this benchmarking project to its current stage of development and their on-going support will be critical to its further success. There is a continuous improvement programme to refine the benchmarking framework and this year there will be a strong focus on improving the outcome benchmarks for preschool and school provision, and for adult social care provision. We will prioritise the following actions to strengthen the LGBF further by working with all councils and relevant partners to:

1. Develop a standardised and comparable approach to better understanding the development of children as they progress through pre-school and primary school.
2. Agree outcome measures for senior phase education which reflect the whole range of measured achievement.
3. Develop stronger measures to support improvements in outcomes for older people.
4. Work to include a measure on the Gender Pay Gap as outlined under the Public Sector Equality Duty.
5. Roll out where relevant the use of net cost indicators rather than gross cost indicators.
6. Work to better understand the linkages between waste collection, disposal and recycling.
7. Take forward our on-going commitment to improve the measurement of customer satisfaction across local services.

To develop a richer understanding of the factors underpinning national trends and local variations, to promote good practice, and to facilitate learning between councils, we will continue to support councils to embed existing family group activity and to roll out activity across new service areas. We will also strengthen our processes for capturing and sharing good practices emerging from the benchmarking work across all councils to inform local improvement activity.

Appendix 1 Full List of Indicators and Service Categories

	Data	Indicator Description
Children's Services	CHN1	Cost per primary school pupil
	CHN2	Cost per secondary school pupil
	CHN3	Cost per pre-school education registration
	CHN4	Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5
	CHN5	Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6
	CHN6	Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)
	CHN7	Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)
	CHN8a	The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week
	CHN8b	The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week
	CHN9	Balance of care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the community
	CHN10	Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools
	CHN11	Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations
Corporate Services	CORP1	Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure
	CORP2	Cost of democratic core per 1,000 population
	CORP3b	The percentage of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women
	CORP4	The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax
	CORP5b2	Average time (hours) between time of noise complaint and attendance on site, for those requiring attendance on site
	CORP6	Sickness absence days per employee
	CORP7	Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year
	CORP8	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days
Adult Social Care	SW1	Older persons (over 65) home care costs per hour
	SW2	SDS spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+
	SW3	Percentage of people 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home
	SW4	Percentage of adults satisfied with social care or social work services
	SW5	Net residential costs per week for older persons (over 65)
Culture & Leisure Services	C&L1	Cost per attendance at sports facilities
	C&L2	Cost per library visit
	C&L3	Cost of museums per visit
	C&L4	Cost of parks & open spaces per 1,000 population
	C&L5a	Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries
	C&L5b	Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces
	C&L5c	Percentage of adults satisfied with museums and galleries
	C&L5d	Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities

	Data	Indicator Description
Environmental Services	ENV1a	Net cost of waste collection per premises
	ENV2a	Net cost of waste disposal per premises
	ENV3a	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population
	ENV3c	Street Cleanliness Score
	ENV4a	Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads
	ENV4b	Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV4c	Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV4d	Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV4e	Percentage of U class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV5a	Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population
	ENV5b	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population
	ENV6	The percentage of total waste arising that is recycled
	ENV7a	Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection
	ENV7b	Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning
Housing Services	HSN1	Gross rent arrears as a percentage of rent due
	HSN2	Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
	HSN3	Percentage of dwellings meeting SHQS
	HSN4	Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs
	HSN5	Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient
Corp. Asset	C-AST 1	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
	C-AST 2	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
Econ Dev	ECON1	Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated/funded employability programmes



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