Local Government Benchmarking Framework

National Benchmarking Overview Report 2015/16

Local Government Benchmarking Framework

improvement service

Contents

Preface

This is the fifth annual report for the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). All 32 Scottish councils have worked with the Improvement Service (IS) over the last six years to develop 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, 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.

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. 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.

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, semi-rural, 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 the current priority is on improving the outcome benchmarks for health and wellbeing of children. Stronger measures to support improvements in outcomes for older people are imperative and developments here will be informed by the evolving core suite of health and care integration measures.

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'Neill
Chairman, Improvement Service
COSLA President

Fiona Lees
Chair of SOLACE (Scotland)

Executive Summary

The benchmarking 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 supports evidence based comparisons between similar councils so that they can work and learn together to improve their services.

Across the six-year period for which we present data, total current spending by Scottish councils has reduced by 11% in real terms from £17.18 billion to £15.30 billion. During this time, councils have achieved substantial improvements in efficiency, innovation and productivity while service output and outcomes have been maintained and improved. However there remains significant variation between councils as they pursue different policy choices in relation to where they prioritise spend.

While councils have continued to maintain and improve service outputs and outcomes across the majority of service areas in the last 12 months, there is evidence that the ongoing budget constraints are beginning to impact upon some service areas.

Education Services

1. Despite real reductions in the education budget since 2010/11, the number of pre-school and primary places in Scotland has increased by over 30,000, and measures of educational outcome continue to show positive progress, particularly for children from the most deprived areas.

2. In the past 12 months, there have been increases in real costs in pre-school, primary and secondary education, after year-on-year reductions in previous years. In pre-school, real unit costs have increased by 15.9% reflecting the additional costs associated with new entitlements introduced in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. In both primary and secondary education, the small increase in real costs in the past 12 months (1.1% and 1.8% respectively) may reflect access to additional monies such as the Attainment Challenge fund.

3. The trend data on senior phase attainment shows a very strong improving trend. Overall attainment (average tariff score) improved by around 14% but, within that, the most deprived pupils improved the most (25.5%). The pattern in the total tariff score data is replicated in the data on 5+ passes at SCQF levels 5 and 6 (or above). Average improvement rates on these indicators between 2011/12 and 2015/16 was 15.7% and 26.9% respectively. For the most deprived quintile it was almost double that: 34.5% and 50.0%. There is however, still a very substantial “gap” between the most deprived and the average, reflecting a wide range of factors including the different choices different pupils make and the qualifications necessary to pursue them.

4. Satisfaction with schools has fallen for the third year in a row, reducing from 79% to 74% in the last 12 months, and down nine percentage points since 2010/11. The LGBF satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey and represents satisfaction levels for the public at large, rather than only for service users.

Adult Social Care

5. Spending on care for older people has grown in real terms across the period since 2010/11 (+6%) but not at the level necessary to keep up with demographic change (2-3% per annum). The balance of care has shifted in line with policy across the period, with a growth in home care and a relative decline in residential places. As importantly, the number of people receiving home care has decreased over time and the hours of care they receive on average has increased, i.e. in shifting the balance of care, a greater resource has become targeted on a smaller number of people with higher needs. Self-directed support has grown steadily across

the period from 1.6% to 6.7% of total spend. A comparison of the base year and 2015/16, therefore, shows real growth in budgets, and steady progress on priority objectives.

6. This picture is qualified if the more recent years, 2014/15 and 2015/16, are focused upon and the trends above are linked to wider data on the health and care system. Across the past 12 months, spending on home care grew by 3.9% but the cost per hour of care increased by 6.1% and the number of hours provided fell by 2.8%. The number of older people placed in care homes grew by 1.2% having fallen in previous years.

Culture and Leisure Services

7. Across culture and leisure services, costs per visit/attendance have significantly reduced since 2010/11. Substantial increases in visitor numbers for sports (16.8%), libraries (29.8%), and museums (36.6%) have been achieved against a backdrop of a 12% reduction in net expenditure. The growth in visitor numbers has slowed in the past 12 months. Public satisfaction rates for all culture and leisure facilities have fallen in the last 12 months.

Environmental Services

8. Whilst spending on environmental services reduced by 4% from 2010/11 to 2014/15, it has grown in the past 12 months by 3%. This is partly due to a 9% growth in waste disposal expenditure and a 5% growth in roads expenditure since 2014/15. During this time, both road conditions and recycling rates have improved. There have been significant reductions in spend in street cleansing (-25% since the base year) although the rate of reduction has slowed in the past 12 months (-2%). Street cleanliness scores have reduced slightly in the past couple of years although are still above 90%. Public satisfaction rates for refuse collection and street cleaning have fallen since 2014/15, by 2% and 1% respectively.

Corporate Services

9. In relation to overall council corporate and support costs, these continue to account for only 5% of total gross revenue spend for local government across Scotland. There has been a 16.5% real terms decrease in costs of the democratic core per 1,000 population since 2010/11, including a 2.8% reduction in the past 12 months. The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax also continues to reduce, falling by 30% over the same period with the rate of reduction accelerating in recent years. Meanwhile, the collection rate continues to show steady improvement from 94.7% in the base year to 95.7% in 2015/16.

10. Sickness absence days have reduced for both teaching staff and non-teaching staff in the past 12 months (2.6% and 1.5% reduction).

Housing Services

11. Councils continue to manage their stock well, with a reduction in rent lost to voids since 2010/11, and consistent and significant improvements in terms of housing standards and energy efficiency standards. However, at the same time, the growth in tenant's arrears from 5.6% to 6.2% reveals evidence of the increasing financial challenges facing both housing residents and councils alike.

Economic Development and Planning

12. While there was an increase in the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes between 2012/13 and 2014/15, this has reduced slightly in the past 12 months (from 14.14% in 2014/15 to 13.91% in 15/16). The Business Gateway start-up rate has also reduced from 19% to 16.9% in the past 12 months.

13. In planning services, between 2010/11 and 2015/16 costs fell from £5,234 per application to £4,832 per application, however they have risen slightly in the past 12 months. In parallel, the time taken to process commercial planning applications reduced by 13.6% between 2012/13 and 2014/15, although again increasing slightly in the past 12 months.

Introduction and Key Issues

This report examines every indicator for every service within LGBF and provides analysis of the national trends and variations, both across councils and between councils. The structure of the report is in line with previous years' reports, although the range and depth of measures for education services has been significantly expanded.

This introductory section has been changed for this year's report. Rather than summarising and introducing the main sections of the report that follows, the aim is to highlight "key issues" that arise from this year's work, both from the statistical trends identified and exploration of those trends with councils. The key issues discussed in this year's report are:

1. Resilience and performance issues that are indicated by the data on expenditure and performance trends between 2010/11 and 2015/16.
2. Performance trends in education and their implications for educational reform.
3. Changes in home and residential care expenditure and provision and their implications.

Resilience and Performance: 2010/11 to 2015/16

Across the period of the LGBF, total current spending by Scottish councils has reduced by 11% in real terms from £17.18 billion to £15.30 billion. Local government's relative share of the Scottish budget has fallen and the NHS share has grown. Reduction in spend has been variable across service areas: education has been relatively protected (-4%), child protection has grown (+19%), adult social care has grown (+6%) and waste disposal spend has grown (+11%), the latter linked to the transition from landfill to recycling.

Other areas have had substantial cuts to spending. Leisure and culture services (-12%), parks and open spaces (-18%), roads maintenance (-21%) and corporate and democratic services (-14%). Even within prioritised areas, management and administration spend has been reduced in order to protect frontline spending. Despite average real reductions of 11% across the period, the vast majority of productivity, output and outcome measures have improved. For example:

- Council spend on sports and leisure facilities is down (-8%), charges are up, but attendance has grown (+16.8%). For libraries, spending has been reduced (-13%) but use of libraries has grown (+29.8%). The cost to councils per attendance/use in both cases has fallen by around 30%.
- Spending on roads has fallen by 21% across the period but the percentage of roads requiring maintenance has fallen slightly for all category of roads, i.e. roads condition has been preserved.
- Spending on secondary education has fallen by 8% across the period, linked to falling pupil numbers, but attainment overall, attainment on average and attainment of the most deprived pupils have all substantially improved (see below).

This absorption of major cuts while improving performance is an impressive achievement and there is a danger it is taken for granted: an assumption that, because savings have been made without a crisis of performance, savings can be continuously required and made. In reality, the trends above required an overall reduction in the workforce of 13%[1], staff accepting year on year real reductions in wages, and substantial improvements in efficiency, productivity and innovation. If similar savings were necessary again across the next five years, severe issues of capacity, resilience and maintaining performance will need addressed.

1 Source: Local Government Employment, Scottish Government, http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/PublicSectorEmployment/LAPSE

Table 1 – Changes in Real/Cash Expenditure since 2010/11 (£'000s)*

		Scotland Level						Change
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	10/11-15/16
Education	Cash	£4,014,907	£3,921,455	£3,946,388	£3,978,658	£4,002,342	£4,119,409	2.6%
	Real	£4,306,546	£4,148,678	£4,089,182	£4,055,758	£4,019,990	£4,119,409	-4.3%
Adult Social Care**	Cash	£2,551,691	£2,560,691	£2,688,155	£2,756,271	£2,817,141	£2,901,600	13.7%
	Real	£2,737,044	£2,709,067	£2,785,422	£2,809,683	£2,829,563	£2,901,600	6.0%
Culture and Leisure	Cash	£444,284	£428,394	£431,864	£437,382	£421,654	£418,025	-5.9%
	Real	£476,556	£453,217	£447,490	£445,858	£423,513	£418,025	-12.3%
Environmental	Cash	£614,060	£606,631	£602,181	£613,440	£610,956	£635,057	3.4%
	Real	£658,665	£641,781	£623,970	£625,327	£613,650	£635,057	-3.6%
Roads	Cash	£675,073	£324,455	£603,907	£582,995	£542,216	£570,733	-15.5%
	Real	£724,110	£343,255	£625,758	£594,293	£544,607	£570,733	-21.2%
Planning	Cash	£169,189	£157,059	£179,744	£132,155	£125,446	£137,882	-18.5%
	Real	£181,478	£166,159	£186,248	£134,716	£125,999	£137,882	-24.0%
Central Support Services	Cash	£783,855	£806,185	£796,541	£757,513	£769,090	£834,211	6.4%
	Real	£840,794	£852,898	£825,363	£772,192	£772,481	£834,211	-0.8%

** Table 1 includes expenditure covered by the LGBF measures. While the LGBF measures reflect the significant areas of Local Government expenditure, there are some minor areas of spend excluded, which accounts for differences with Scottish Government published expenditure data.*

*** Two councils are excluded from these figures due to incomplete returns in 2010/11*

The Scottish Government is committed to growing the NHS budget by £500 million in real terms by 2021, fully protecting the police budget in real terms, and doubling the hours of free pre-school education and child care by 2021 at an estimated cost of £500 million. The Scottish budget is forecast to reduce across the period to 2020 by at least 3.3%, and potentially by more if devolved tax receipts grow more slowly than their UK equivalent. The implication is that other services, including those in local government, would have to reduce spend by 4% to 5% in real terms if the Scottish Government implements its priority commitments.

Within the local government settlement, education is already relatively protected and growth will be targeted particularly on areas of relatively high deprivation. Growth monies for social care are ring-fenced within the NHS budget and, given demographic pressures, spending on care for older people will need to grow. The implication is that services that took the largest reductions across the last five years will also face the largest reduction across the next. This will not only require fundamental transformational change in the organisation, design and delivery of the services, but a robust re-evaluation of policy choices and priorities over the next few years.

The forward work programme will provide a focus on non-prioritised and non-protected service areas to capture innovation in response to budget constraints, and to monitor changes in expenditure and performance over time. The growth of collaborative, joint arrangements will be monitored and the structure of LGBF itself modified over time to accommodate that.

Performance Trends in Education and Future Reform

At national and local level, education reform and improvement has high priority. Reducing inequality by reducing the "attainment gap" between deprived and non-deprived pupils has been a key goal for local councils for several years, and the "National Improvement Framework" (NIF) reflects the importance of this goal for Scotland. A review of education governance is also in progress.

Education is central to the opportunities and outcomes for children and young people, and to inclusive economic growth and development in Scotland. For this reason, an expanded suite of education measures is being developed and a range of new measures have been included this year. Further measures will be introduced as suitable data becomes available over future years to improve the scope and balance of information available on children's services. As well as existing measures of expenditure, cost per pupil and percentage of pupils achieving five passes at SCQF level 5 or higher and level 6 or higher, the tariff score at the point of leaving school[2] has been added. This is a summary measure of the number, level and grade of qualifications children had achieved during the senior phase. This can be measured back to 2011/12 and provides some information on trends over time. It also allows some comparisons to be made between more and less deprived pupils.

The trend data on senior phase attainment shows a very strong improving trend using these measures. Overall attainment (average tariff score) improved by around 14% but, within that, the most deprived pupils improved the most (25.5%). The table below shows the improvement by deprivation quintile (1 = most deprived; 5 = least deprived) from 2011/12 to 2015/16.

Table 1: Average Tariff Scores by Quintile

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% change 2012-16
Average total tariff quintile 1	478	510	551	581	600	26%
Average total tariff quintile 2	618	644	685	716	739	20%
Average total tariff quintile 3	759	789	817	851	862	14%
Average total tariff quintile 4	909	929	962	984	997	10%
Average total tariff quintile 5	1101	1135	1149	1185	1195	9%
Average total tariff Scotland	770	798	827	860	875	13.7%

As can be seen, there appears to be a clear relationship between deprivation quintile and improvement: the more deprived, the greater the improvement. There is a strong, positive, statistically significant relationship between deprivation and improvement. This is a really important and impressive outcome. It reflects a strong emphasis on improving employability skills and wider achievement (much of which will not even be reflected in the tariff scale) of lower attaining pupils over recent years, with the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence and the Developing the Young Workforce agenda. Furthermore, it suggests the baseline for future reform should be this trend, not a single year, i.e. reform shoud be focused on enhancing the trend rate of improvement already established.

There is local variation around this national trend linked to two factors: the starting point for different councils in 2011/12 and the limitations of the measure itself. Those councils where children in the most deprived quintile were already achieving very highly in the base year have lower rates of improvement but also the highest tariff scores for that quintile in Scotland. Second, the measure gives a high weighting to qualifications with higher SCQF levels such as Highers, Advanced Highers and SVQs. Only SCQF learning programmes are included and so it does not include all accreditation that pupils achieve. It will not therefore reflect all learner journeys equally.

2 This refers to cumulative attainment either to the point of leaving school or to the end of S6.

More importantly, the measure does not control for the year in which pupils left school and so does not distinguish the attainment of pupils who left at the end of S4 with those leaving at the end of S6. Pupils from the most deprived quintile are more likely to leave school earlier than those from the least deprived quintile, most often to pursue continuing academic education in a college environment, or through vocational qualifications and apprenticeship options. As this is a school based measure, these are not subsequently tracked or scored and so it does not reflect attainment achieved in other settings after leaving school.

The pattern in the total tariff score data is replicated in the data on “5+ passes at SCQF level 5 or higher” and “5+ passes at SCQF level 6 or higher”. Average improvement rate on these indicators between 2011/12 and 2015/16 was 15.7% and 26.9% respectively. For the most deprived quintile, it was almost double that: 34.5% and 50.0%. There is still a very substantial “gap” between the most deprived and the average. This will reflect a wide range of factors, including, as noted above, the different choices different pupils make, and the qualifications necessary to pursue them.

The trend data for senior phase attainment raised three important issues for future reform and improvement. First, future improvement programmes need to be focused on recognising, celebrating and then enhancing the **current improvement trend**. For example, total tariff score for the most deprived quintile has been improving at around 5% per annum anyway so any improvement or reform activities should commit to improving on that trend to add value.

Second, the evidence to support the idea of an “attainment gap” as a form of inequality requires further investigation. There is a risk we undermine both the value of vocational education and the importance of young people’s own views if we regard not pursuing academic qualifications through to advanced higher level as a failure and an inequality. If young people attain what they need for their own chosen path, is this usefully viewed as an inequality **or** as a choice they have made about how they fulfil their potential? Given the investment in “Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce”, in apprenticeships and in full time vocational programmes in colleges, the latter would seem the more sensible approach. On that basis, the whole system has improved markedly in terms of both attainment and positive post school destinations across the period, but there will always be an “attainment gap” if pupils make different post school choices and require different school based attainment to access them.

Finally, in that context, measures of both attainment and outcome for education are presently crude and need developed, particularly as a better basis for comparison between councils. “Total tariff score” needs controlled for the year in which young people left school so that we compare like with like. This needs linked to not just immediate post school destinations but to measures of sustained participation in education, training or employment post school. The LGBF work programme for 2017/18 will investigate opportunities to improve measurement in both respects.

The overarching conclusion is that attainment is improving on average and very rapidly so for young people in the most deprived quintile. Forward reform and improvement programmes need designed in a manner that will add value to that trend and avoid disrupting or diverting current momentum. However, some of the variation which exists reflects different priorities and performance levels within local authorities and this will be explored and examined further within family groups over the coming period.

Trends in Adult Social Care

Spending on care for older people has grown in real terms across the period since 2010/11 (+6%) but not at the level necessary to keep up with demographic change (2%-3% per annum). The balance of care has shifted in line with policy across the period, with a growth in home care and a relative decline in residential places. As importantly, the number of people receiving home care has **decreased** over time (-5.8%) and the hours of care they receive on average has increased, i.e. in shifting the balance of care, a greater resource has become targeted on a smaller number of people with higher needs.[3] Self-directed support has grown steadily across the period from 1.6% to 6.7% of total spend. A comparison of the base year and 2015/16, therefore, shows real growth in budgets, and steady progress on priority objectives.

This picture is qualified if the more recent years, 2014/15 and 2015/16, are focused on and the trends above are linked to wider data on the health and care system. Across the two most recent years, spending on home care grew by 3.9% but the cost per hour of care increased by 6.1% and the number of hours provided fell by 2.1%. The number of older people placed in care homes grew by 1.2%, having fallen in previous years.

Discussions with councils suggest a variety of reasons for this change but two are important for future challenges. First, the phasing of the "living wage" for care workers will increase the unit cost of home care and reduce the hours a given level of budget can fund. Some of this pressure has been offset by additional resources provided through funding transfers from the NHS for social care. However, with only a one year settlement agreed, the future impact of this is presently unknowable. Second, many councils are experiencing capacity constraints in their local context and hours are falling because less supply is available. Care providers have indicated that this is, in part, a function of very short term contracts (often annual) that do not provide a secure basis for growth.

This has also to be seen against related trends. Over the period, the annual rate of delayed discharges from hospital has grown by 12%[4], and the rate of emergency admissions to hospital has grown by 8.8%[5]. Delayed discharges are directly related to inability to source and resource the appropriate package of care for a person, and growing numbers of emergency admissions may reflect the inability to provide preventative alternatives for frail and vulnerable older people.

Three issues need addressed. First, councils have given the highest priority to the care budget, at the cost of often severe cuts to other services. Adjusting for inflation, the adult care budget has grown by 6%. This has not been sufficient to keep up with demographic change and the Kings Fund estimate of 2% to 3% per annum real growth being necessary to do so may well be correct[6]. It is very hard to see how councils could achieve this as the overall budget falls by 2% to 3% in real terms per annum across the next few years.

Second, even if greater finances were available, there is a serious capacity issue in many parts of Scotland. Councils are no longer the major providers of home care in Scotland, and residential care is 94% provided by independent private or third sector providers[7]. The issue is market capacity and providing the commissioning and contractual frameworks that allow markets to grow. Short term, year-on-year contracts will not do this, but councils themselves have had exactly that for the last three years in terms of their own funding. The absence of certainty around future income streams may, therefore, be seen to be creating a market failure that is resulting in a reluctance for private and third-sector providers to invest in provision.

Finally, shifting the balance of care has involved targeting more hours of care on fewer people with high personal care requirements. The more preventative social and domestic support elements of care have declined and people are largely provided for when they already have high dependency. Free personal care entitlement drives this but loss of social support and prevention at this juncture is likely to be counter-productive in the longer term.

3 Source: Social Care Survey, Scottish Government: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/Data/HomeCare/HSCDHomecare

4 Source: Delayed Discharges, Information Services Division, http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Health-and-Social-Community-Care/Delayed-Discharges/. Please note that this figure relates to the period June 2013-2016.

5 Source: Emergency Admissions, Information Services Division, http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Quality-Measurement-Framework/Emergency-Admissions/

6 The King's Trust 2013, *Spending on Health and Social Care Over the Next 50 Years: Why Think Long Term?* ,p43, available at: https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/files/kf/field/field_publication_file/Spending%20on%20health%20...%2050%20years%20low%20res%20for%20web.pdf

7 Source: Care Home Census for Adults, Information Services Division, http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Health-and-Social-Community-Care/Publications/data-tables.asp?id=1315#1315

The fastest growing age range in the Scottish population across the next 20 years is the 75+ range and within that the fastest growing segment is the 85+ group[8]. The health and care system is already stressed but demand is likely to double across that period. Current entitlements, funding mechanisms, and care market development strategies need urgently reviewed to address that in order to develop a system that is sustainable and affordable.

The forward work programme in LGBF will develop a wider range of measures that allow demand, spend, capacity and impact to be monitored over time. Work with Health and Care Partnerships in the forthcoming year will focus on establishing market capacity measures and measures of assessed demand.

The LGBF 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 in order to improve local service delivery throughout Scotland. 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 it 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 is to create a framework that supports evidence-based comparisons and, through that, shared learning and improvement. The indicators in the LGBF are 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 process of engagement, analysis and discussion provides the platform for learning and improvement.

Councils have begun to work together to 'drill-down' into the benchmarking data across a number of 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, semi-rural, 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.

There is a continued commitment to make benchmarking information available to all citizens and users of council services. To further this end, an online benchmarking public reporting tool has been designed called '[My Local Council](http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/tool.html)'[9] and is incorporated within councils' own local approaches to public performance reporting. All of the information generated by the LGBF is presented in

8 Source: Population Projections, National Records of Scotland, https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-projections-scotland

9 http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/tool.html

this online benchmarking tool which contains "dashboards" for each council showing movement on indicators across the six years covered, and a comparison with the Scottish and family group average for all indicators.

Those interested in further reading may wish to visit the Community Planning Outcomes Profile[10] , an interactive tool which provides further information on outcomes, both at a local authority level, and also at a locality level.

The LGBF Framework

The framework is based on seven overall service groupings which cover the major public facing services provided to local communities, and the support services necessary to do that. This includes children's services (education and children and families services), adult social care, environmental services, culture and leisure, housing, corporate support services and economic development and 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. For each category, standard indicators of spend and performance have been applied.

A full list of service categories and indicators is attached (see Appendix 1) and full technical specifications for all 80 indicators, including source details, are available on the Local Government Benchmarking website.

The sources used to populate the measures include statistical returns to the Scottish Government, Scottish Qualifications Authority, the Scottish Housing Regulator and SEPA, among others. Where data is not currently collected/published by another body, or where the publication timeframe does not allow inclusion within the benchmarking framework, councils provide data directly to the Improvement Service. The Scottish Household Surveys and the Health and Care Experience Surveys are used to provide customer satisfaction measures.

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 further 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

This report is an overview report and does not seek to replicate the depth and detail of the 'My Local Council' tool[11]. The focus is on three important areas:

1. Trends across Scotland for the key framework indicators covering the period 2010/11 to 2015/16. For consistency we report the data in financial rather than calendar years. For each unit cost indicator we have calculated the change over the period in cash and in real terms, that is taking account of the impact of inflation over time. To explore change over time we focused on the **real term change.**

10 http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/community-planning-outcomes-profile.html

11 http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/tool.html

2. The level of variation across councils and factors shaping these trends include physical geography, population distribution, size of council and the impact of deprivation.[12] Graphs are presented showing the level of variation across councils for each area benchmarking measure. To improve interpretation, these graphs include only the base year and the two most recent years.

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

Before examining each section in turn, Table 2 below presents an overview of the trends across all LGBF indicators.

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

Table 2: Overview of Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators

	Indicator Description	Scotland						Change*	
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	% change base* to 15-16	% change 14-15 to 15-16
Children's Services	Cost per primary school pupil	5,222	5,070	4,924	4,825	4,684	4,733	-9.4%	1.1%
	Cost per secondary school pupil	6,888	6,688	6,659	6,659	6,618	6,737	-2.2%	1.8%
	Cost per pre-school education place	3,604	3,270	3,219	3,066	3,324	3,854	6.9%	15.9%
	Percentage of secondary pupils achieving 5 or more awards at level 5 or higher		51.0	53.0	55.0	57.0	59.0	8.0%	2.0%
	Percentage of secondary pupils achieving 5 or more awards at level 6 or higher		26.0	27.0	29.0	31.0	33.0	7.0%	2.0%
	Percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 or higher		29.0	32.0	34.0	37.0	39.0	10.0%	2.0%
	Percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 or higher		10.0	11.0	14.0	14.0	15.0	5.0%	1.0%
	The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week	3,015	3,189	3,036	3,165	3,185		5.6%	0.6%
	The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week	220	234	259	269	280		27.3%	3.8%
	Balance of care for 'looked after children': percentage of children being looked after in the community	91.0	91.2	90.9	90.6	90.1		-0.9%	-0.5%
	Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools	83.0		83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	-9.0%	-5.0%
	Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations	88.9	89.9	91.4	92.3	92.9		4.0%	0.6%
	Overall average total tariff		769.7	798.0	826.8	860.0	875.2	13.7%	1.8%
	Average total tariff SIMD Quintile 1		478.0	510.0	551.0	581.0	600.0	25.5%	3.3%
	Average total tariff SIMD Quintile 2		618.0	644.0	685.0	716.0	739.0	19.6%	3.2%
	Average total tariff SIMD Quintile 3		759.0	789.0	817.0	851.0	862.0	13.6%	1.3%
	Average total tariff SIMD Quintile 4		909.0	929.0	962.0	984.0	997.0	9.7%	1.3%
	Average total tariff SIMD Quintile 5		1,101.0	1,135.0	1,149.0	1,185.0	1,195.0	8.5%	0.8%

	Indicator Description	Scotland						Change*	
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	% change base* to 15-16	% change 14-15 to 15-16
Corporate Services	Support services as a % percentage of total gross expenditure	4.9	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.4	0.6%	0.4%
	Cost of democratic core per 1,000 population	35,907	33,292	32,928	32,646	30,829	29,981	-16.5%	-2.8%
	The percentage of the highest paid 5% employees who are women	46.3	48.5	48.7	50.7	51.7	51.9	5.6%	0.2%
	The gender pay gap						4.98		
	The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax	14.81	13.91	13.77	12.36	11.00	10.34	-30.2%	-6.0%
	(Domestic noise) average time (hours) between time of complaint and attendance on site, for those requiring attendance on site	47.8	31.6	43.2	80.7	58.9	70.3	47%	19.4%
	Sickness absence days per teacher	6.6	6.2	6.6	6.1	6.3	6.1	-7.4%	-2.6%
	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)	10.8	10.4	10.9	10.3	10.8	10.6	-1.5%	-1.5%
	Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year	94.7	95.1	95.2	95.2	95.5	95.7	1.0%	0.2%
	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days	89.5	90.2	90.5	91.9	92.5	92.8	3.3%	0.2%
Adult Social Care	Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over	21.60	20.92	21.21	20.65	20.33	21.58	-0.1%	6.1%
	SDS spend on adults 18+ as a percentage of total social work spend on adults 18+	1.6	3.0	5.9	6.4	6.9	6.7	5.1%	-0.2%
	Percentage of people aged 65 or over with intensive needs receiving care at home	32.2	33.0	34.1	34.3	35.3	34.8	2.5%	-0.6%
	Percentage of adults receiving any care or support who rate it as excellent or good.					85.0	84.0	-1.0%	-1.0%
	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life					84.0	81.0	-3.0%	-3.0%
	Residential costs per week per resident for people aged 65 or over	416.83	421.39	384.96	368.45	374.29	368.85	-11.5%	-1.5%

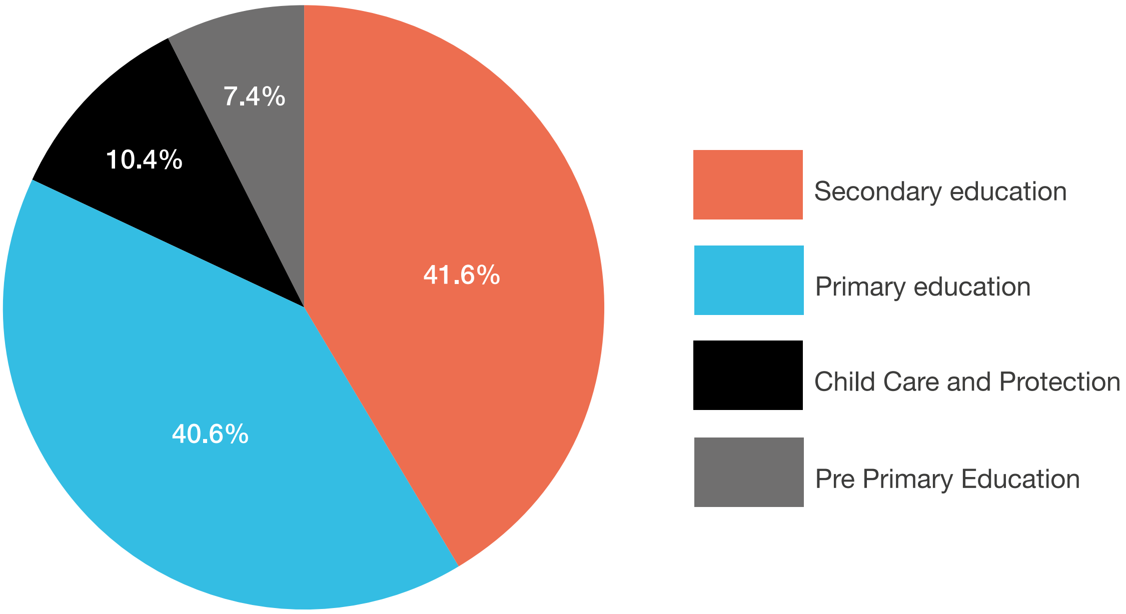
	Indicator Description	Scotland						Change*	
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	% change base* to 15-16	% change 14-15 to 15-16
Culture & Leisure Services	Cost per attendance at sports facilities	3.81	3.41	3.25	3.25	2.98	2.99	-21.4%	0.6%
	Cost per library visit	3.66	3.45	3.26	2.62	2.46	2.44	-33.2%	-1.0%
	Cost of museums per visit	4.52	3.69	3.73	3.43	3.24	3.07	-32.1%	-5.2%
	Cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population	27,814	25,688	24,518	23,748	23,509	22,232	-20.1%	-5.4%
	Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries	84.0		83.0	81.0	77.0	74.0	-10.0%	-3.0%
	Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	83.0		86.0	86.0	86.0	85.0	2.0%	-1.0%
	Percentage of adults satisfied with museums and galleries	76.0		78.0	76.0	75.0	71.0	-5.0%	-4.0%
	Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	75.0		80.0	78.0	76.0	73.0	-2.0%	-2.3%
Environmental Services	Net cost of waste collection per premise			61.26	62.50	65.41	63.40	3.5%	-3.1%
	Net cost of waste disposal per premise			95.62	93.80	91.47	97.02	1.5%	6.1%
	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	21,294	20,503	18,169	16,557	15,886	15,480	-27.3%	-2.6%
	Street Cleanliness score	95.40	96.14	95.80	96.09	93.90	93.40	-2.0%	-0.5%
	Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads	13,896	12,462	11,954	11,307	10,352	10,791	-22.3%	4.2%
	Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	30.3	30.5	29.4	28.7	29.0	29.0	-1.3%	-0.1%
	Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	35.8	36.3	35.0	35.2	36.1	34.8	-1.0%	-1.3%
	Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	35.0	36.0	34.8	36.6	37.3	34.7	-0.3%	-2.6%
	Percentage of U class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	41.9	38.3	40.1	39.4	39.3	40.1	-1.8%	0.8%
	Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population			5,502	5,809	5,764	5,873	6.7%	1.9%
	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population			17,750	18,621	17,776	16,849	-5.1%	-5.2%
	Percentage of total household waste arising that is recycled	38.7	41.0	41.7	42.2	42.8	44.3	5.6%	1.5%
	Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection	81.0		83.0	83.0	84.0	82.0	1.0%	-2.0%
	Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning	73.0		75.0	74.0	74.0	73.0	0%	-1.0%

	Indicator Description	Scotland						Change*	
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	% change base* to 15-16	% change 14-15 to 15-16
Housing Services	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year				5.6	5.9	6.2	0.7%	0.3%
	Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.1	-0.2%	-0.1%
	Percentage of council dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Standards	53.6	66.1	76.6	83.7	90.4	92.5	38.9%	2.1%
	Percentage of repairs completed within target times	93.3	93.6	93.1				-0.2%	-0.5%
	Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs				10.2	9.9	9.4	7.7%	5.1%
	Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient	74.9	81.2	88.8	94.0	96.5	96.2	21.3%	-0.4%
Corporate Asset	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	73.70	74.80	75.90	78.21	79.01	79.61	5.9%	0.6%
	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	81.30	82.70	82.64	80.92	82.92	81.49	0.2%	-1.4%
Economic Development	Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated / funded employability programmes			9.56	12.48	14.14	13.91	4.3%	-0.2%
	Cost per planning application	5,243	5,061	6,412	4,524	4,270	4,832	-7.8%	13.2%
	Average time per commercial planning application			12.96	12.88	10.95	11.19	-13.6%	2.2%
	Percentage of procurement spent on local small/medium enterprises	20.9	20.5	20.3	19.6	19.6	19.7	-1.2%	0.1%
	No of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population				19.0	18.9	16.9	-11.1%	-10.5%

Children's Services

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

Proportion of Gross Revenue Expenditure for Children's Services by Element 2015-16



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.[13]

Pre-School Provision

For pre-school educational provision for children ("nursery school"), spending has been standardised as total spend per pre-school place. Over the six-year period, the Scottish average for the cost per pre-school place has increased by 6.9% - an increase in real terms of £250 per place. During this time, the total number of pre-school places provided by councils has risen by 5.7% across Scotland, providing an additional 5,212 places. There has been a 13% increase in gross expenditure.

Cost per Pre-School Place 2010/11 – 2015/16

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	14.7	6.9
2010/11 - 2011/12	-8.0	-9.3
2011/12 - 2012/13	0.5	-1.6
2012/13 - 2013/14	-3.2	-4.7
2013/14 - 2014/15	10.0	8.4
2014/15 - 2015/16	16.4	15.9

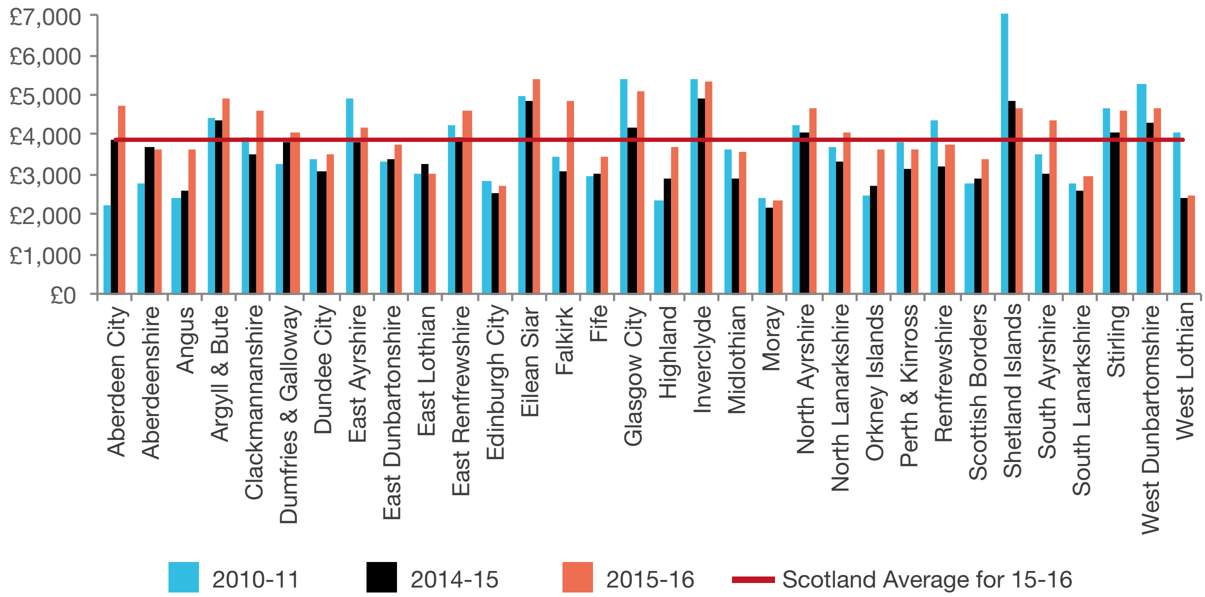
13 Data on Looked After Children will be published in March 2017. The Benchmarking Framework will be updated to incorporate these figures at that time

In the last 12 months, real unit costs have increased by 15.9% after falling in the previous five years. This reflects an increase in gross expenditure of 11.1% and a 4.1% reduction in the number of places provided during this period.

From August 2014, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 required local authorities to increase the amount of early learning and childcare from 475 hours a year to 600 hours for each eligible child. The impact of the new entitlements has been to increase the unit cost per pre-school place due to the increased hours associated with each funded place. The additional staffing costs in delivering the new entitlements, and the commitment by councils to offer the extended hours in a way that allows parents some choice and flexibility over what pattern of hours they can get, will influence costs here. This potentially underestimates the movement in total spend because in some councils this will be recorded under children and families services and/or the Health and Social Care Partnership.

In 2015/16, the average cost per place was £3,854, with substantial and widening variation between councils, ranging from £2,367 to £5,409 per place.

Cost per Pre-School Registration



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

> ***Shetland Council** has shifted the balance of qualified teaching and nursery staff across the workforce, and has moved to more peripatetic delivery.*

> *In **Moray Council**, the majority of Early Years provision is partnership based, with only 22 of the 60 early years centres operated by the Council.*

> *In **Scottish Borders** and **South Ayrshire**, a recent fall in the birth rate has led to a reduction in the uptake of places, without corresponding decrease in funding.*

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in costs for pre-school provision.

Level of deprivation – there is a statistically significant relationship with deprivation, e.g. cost for the most deprived family group is £4,654 compared to £3,694 in the least deprived family group.

Workforce composition and age structure – age, experience, grade and qualification level of staff

Balance between council and partner provision – with higher levels of council provision in deprived areas (47% of provision in the most deprived areas is local authority provision compared to 27% in the least deprived areas)[14]

Integration of pre-school and primary school provision and rationalisation of overheads in relation to property and staffing

Demographic variation and local capacity to respond

Pre-School Performance

Currently, there are no systematic and consistent measures deployed by all 32 councils for assessing performance within the pre-school sector, or for understanding children's development as they progress through the pre-school setting.

As a priority, we are currently working to develop a wider suite of children's measures which will reflect performance and progress in this important area, and to identify potential sources of data to support this. Potential areas which merit further exploration include Care Inspectorate Quality Evaluations for Early Years services and Health Visitor assessments at 18-36 months.

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 (-9.4% and -2.2% respectively), although an increase in the past 12 months (1.1% and 1.8% respectively).

Cost per Primary Pupil

Since 2010/11 there has been a real terms reduction of £489 per primary pupil, representing a 9.4% reduction. This reflects a 2.9% reduction in real gross expenditure, which has occurred in parallel with a 7.1% increase in pupil numbers.

In 2015/16, the average cost per primary pupil was £4,733, a 1.1% increase from £4,684 the previous year. This reflects a 2.6% increase in gross expenditure and a 1.5% increase in pupil numbers.

14 www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/3591/Early%20Learning%20and%20Childcare%20statistics%20report%202015.pdf

Cost per Primary Place 2010/11 – 2015/16

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-2.8	-9.4
2010/11 - 2011/12	-1.6	-2.9
2011/12 - 2012/13	-0.9	-2.9
2012/13 - 2013/14	-0.4	-2.0
2013/14 - 2014/15	-1.5	-2.9
2014/15 - 2015/16	1.5	1.1

Cost per Secondary Pupil

As with primary pupil costs, between 2010/11 and 2015/16 there was a real terms reduction of £152 per secondary pupil, representing a 2.2% reduction in unit costs. There has been a 6.4% reduction in pupil numbers across this period; however, the reduction in gross expenditure has been proportionately larger at 8.4%.

In 2015/16, the average cost per secondary school pupil was £6,737, which has increased from £6,618 in 2014/15, an increase of 1.8%. This reflects a 0.8% increase in expenditure, and a 1% reduction in pupil numbers.

Cost Per Secondary Pupil 2010/11 – 2015/16

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	4.9	-2.2
2010/11 - 2011/12	-1.6	-2.9
2011/12 - 2012/13	1.7	-0.4
2012/13 - 2013/14	1.6	0.0
2013/14 - 2014/15	0.9	-0.6
2014/15 - 2015/16	2.2	1.8

Around 60% of primary and secondary school spending is teaching staff costs. Given the current agreement between the Scottish Government and local authorities that teacher numbers will be maintained in line with pupil numbers, this represents a relatively fixed cost to councils. As such, this may limit councils' efforts in seeking to generate further efficiencies in this major area of expenditure.

However, despite the fixed costs associated with teacher numbers, there is still a considerable level of variation across councils, particularly for secondary education. In primary education, costs range from £4,052 to £8,381, while in secondary the range is £5,767 to £11,669. This variation provides opportunities to explore how some services are designed and delivered in ways that appear to achieve greater efficiencies in expenditure.

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities

Rurality – cost data continues to show a very distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the Island councils spending significantly more than others.

Teacher demographics – the age and salary costs of the local teaching workforce

Local choices and priorities in relation to non-ring fenced elements of staffing budget such as support staff, teaching assistants, ASN staff

PPP/PFI contract costs and arrangements

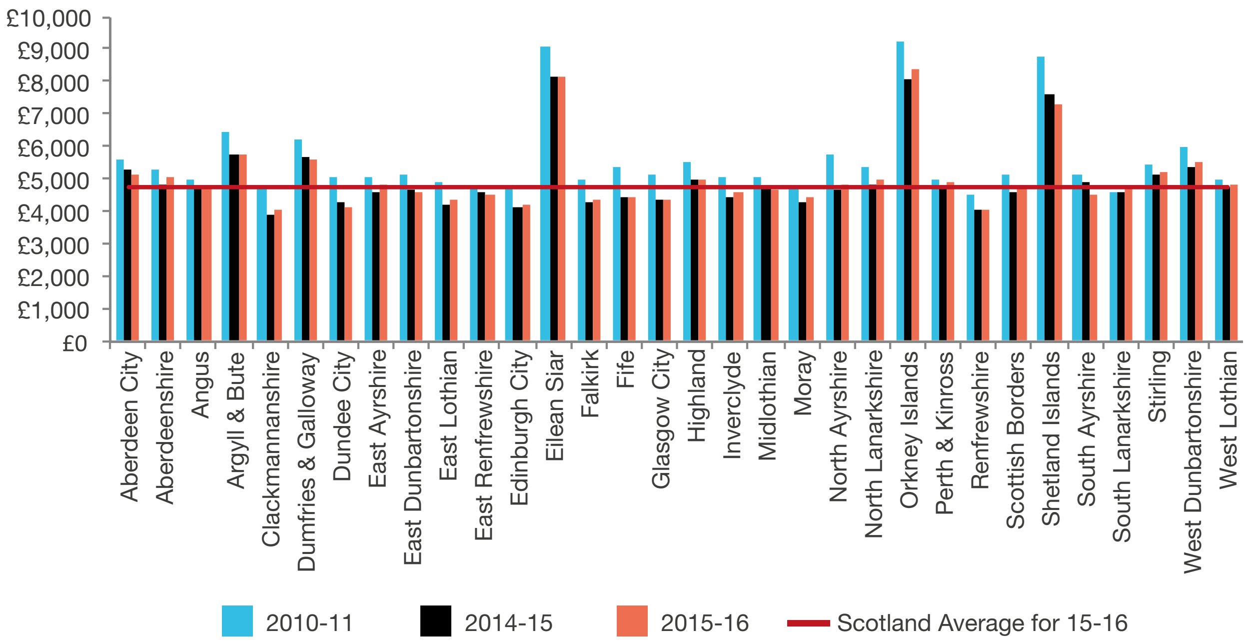
Growth of campus/hub school models

Management structure and balance of senior roles

Access to additional monies such as the Attainment Challenge Fund – targeted at pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas

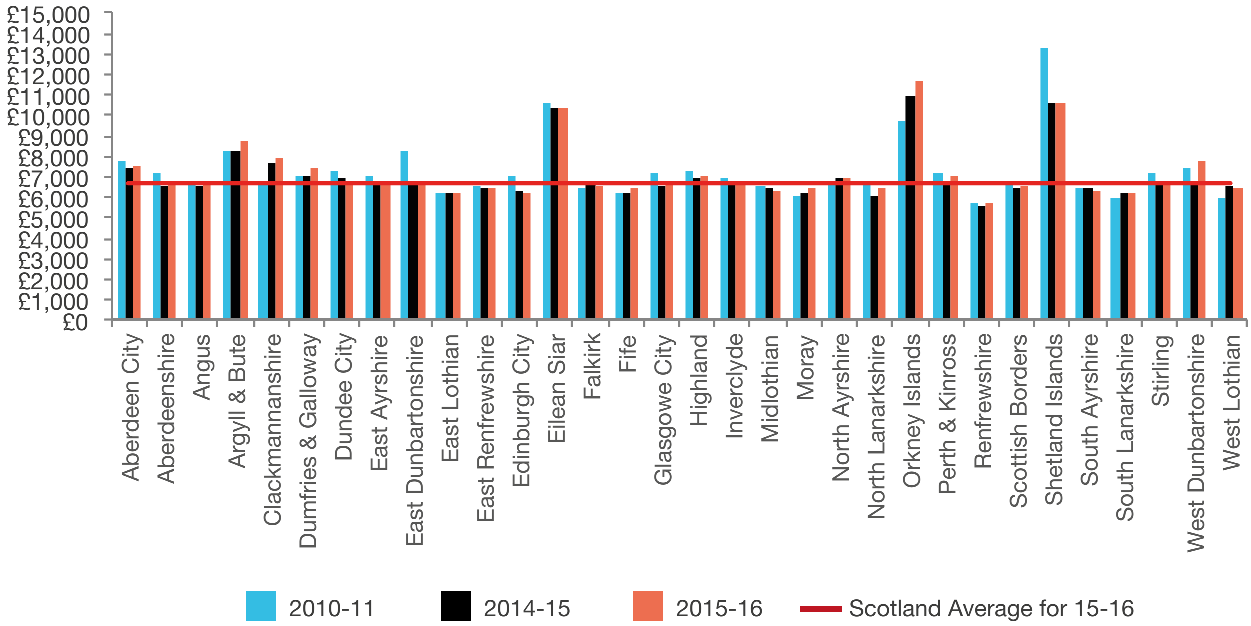
Demographic variability – depending on existing class sizes and teacher numbers locally, changes in pupil numbers will have a varying impact on expenditure patterns for councils.

Cost per Primary School Pupil



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

Cost per Secondary School Pupil



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

Primary School Performance

The National Improvement Framework has committed to introducing a consistent method for assessing children's development throughout primary school. This development is a significant contribution and addresses an important gap in understanding the educational journey of children across all stages of the curriculum.

This year the Scottish Government published "experimental data" based on teacher professional judgments (www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/ACEL). As there are still issues with consistency and reliability, this data is not yet sufficiently robust for benchmarking purposes. A new national programme of quality assurance and moderation is being put in place to provide more support and improve confidence and understanding among teachers, and, from August 2017, new nationally consistent standardised assessments will be made available for teachers to help inform their judgements.

We welcome these developments and will continue to work with Scottish Government and Education Scotland to strengthen this information to enable inclusion in the framework in future.

Secondary School Performance

The LGBF Board has expanded the performance measures to more accurately reflect the senior phase (S4-S6) landscape and, in particular, reflect wider educational achievement. The transitional suite presented here marks an important step in this development, however further measures will be introduced as suitable data becomes available over future years, to improve the scope and balance of information available on children's services.

Performance at secondary level is currently measured by:

- Average Tariff Score (by SIMD quintile)
- Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ SCQF level 5 qualifications or higher (described as '5+ at Level 5' for the purpose of this report)

- Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ SCQF level 6 qualifications or higher (described as '5+ at Level 6' for the purpose of this report)

The suite of measures also includes the percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations. However, as this information is no longer published by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in December, it was not possible to include here. Destinations data will be included when this is published in March.

The new Participation Measure was first published as experimental statistics in 2015 and provides a useful opportunity to track the progress of young people beyond the point at which they leave school. This measure reflects Opportunities for All[15] and measures participation in learning (including school), training or work for all 16-19 year olds in Scotland. As this approach matures, we will work with education partners to agree how this information might be used alongside school leaver destinations in future publications.

Average Tariff

Average Tariff is an overall measure of educational attainment which offers a wider measure of achievement to consider alongside breadth and depth measures. The tariff score is a summary measure calculated from the latest and best achievement of pupils during the senior phase (S4-S6) across a range of awards included in the benchmarking tool Insight. The measure here reflects cumulative attainment either to the point of leaving or to the end of S6.

Under Curriculum for Excellence, the number of subjects typically studied by pupils varies between local authorities. This reflects differing approaches to developing employability skills and the core qualification sets needed to enable a range of post school destinations. Tariff scores strongly reflect the total number of subjects studied and a measure is needed to reflect different curriculum models better. Work is ongoing nationally to develop these better measures and they will be included in LGBF when available.

As the school leaver data is not yet available for 2015/16, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data available on Parentzone which is based on school leavers. To allow 2016 data to be included the Scottish Government has provided pupil's attainment by S6, based on the S4 cohort.

Average Total Tariff by SIMD Quintile

Year	Overall Average Total Tariff	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 1	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 2	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 3	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 4	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 5
2011/12	769.7	478.0	618.0	759.0	909.0	1101.0
2012/13	798.0	510.0	644.0	789.0	929.0	1135.0
2013/14	826.8	551.0	685.0	817.0	962.0	1149.0
2014/15	860.0	581.0	716.0	851.0	984.0	1185.0
2015/16	875.2	600.0	739.0	862.0	997.0	1195.0
% change	14%	26%	20%	14%	10%	9%
Range 15/16	737-1313	428-970	489-1177	668-1238	820-1331	936-1448

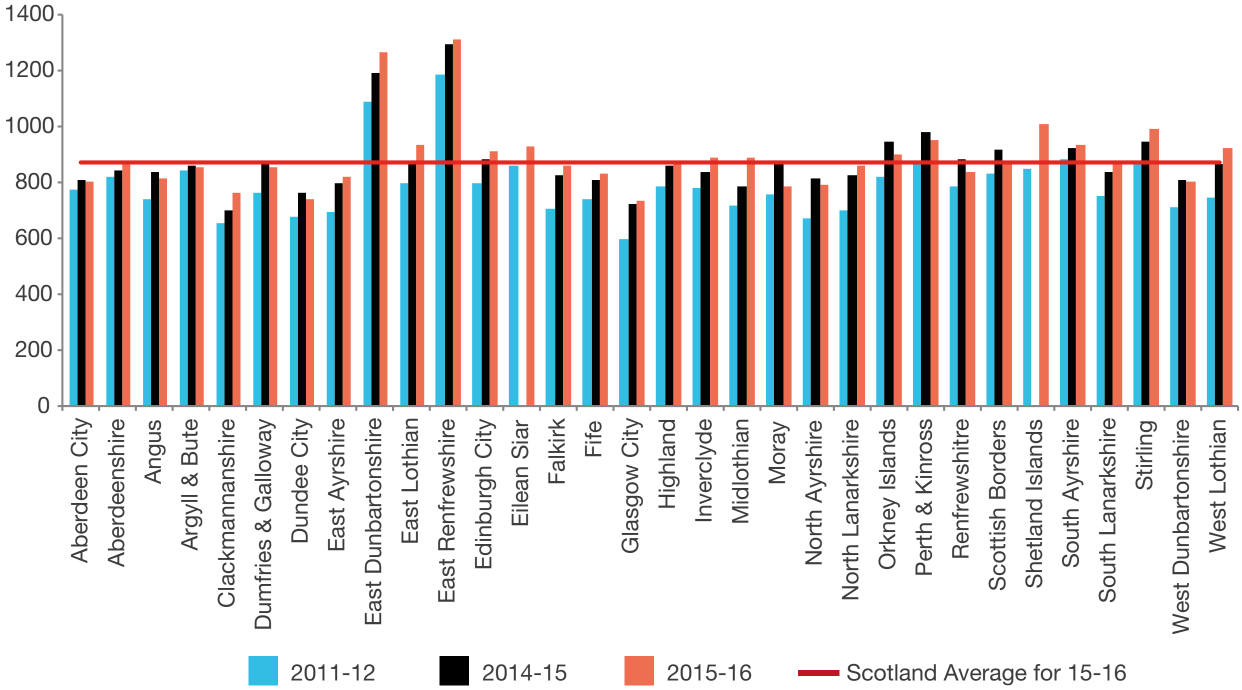
An improving trend can be seen in Average Total Tariff over the past five years, increasing by 14% from 769.7 in 2011/12 to 875.2 in 2015/16. While this improving trend is evident for all SIMD groups, pupils

15 Source: 'Developing a 'Participation' Measure for Post 16 Learning, Training and Work' 2013 Consultation, Scottish Government, www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/scotstat/PartMeasureConsult/PartMeasCons-Report

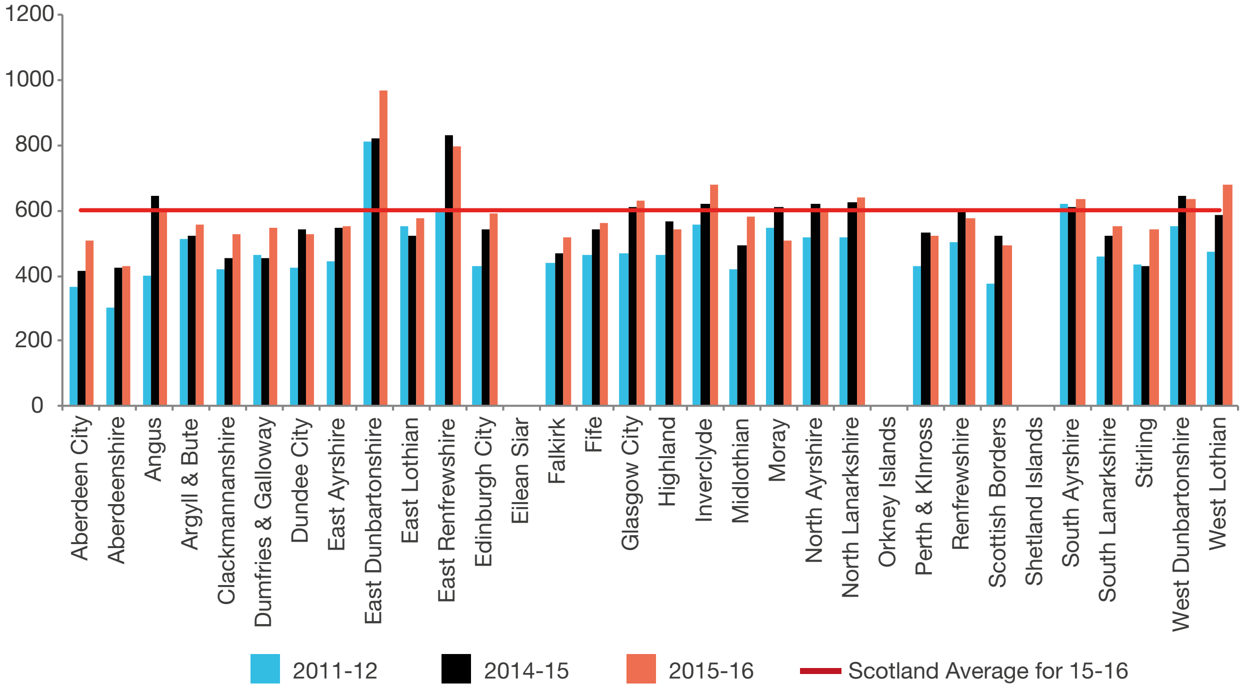
from most deprived groups have shown the largest improvement. Average tariffs have increased by 26% and 20% for the two most deprived groups compared to 9% and 10% for the least deprived groups. However, Average Total Tariff Scores remain significantly lower for those pupils from the most deprived areas. Pupils from the least deprived quintile achieved an average tariff score of 1,195 compared to 600 for pupils from the most deprived quintile.

There is a considerable level of variation between councils in relation to Overall Average Tariff (737 to 1,313) and within each quintile group. Further detail of the variation within councils is presented in the graphs below.

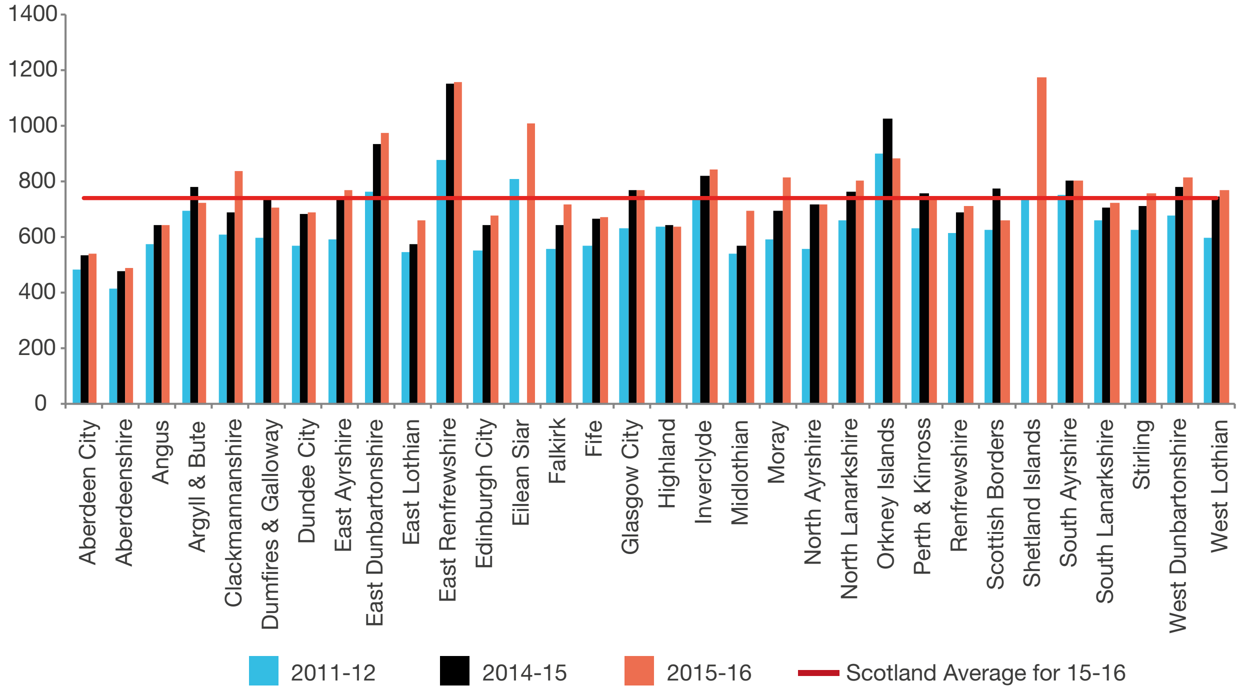
Overall Average Tariff



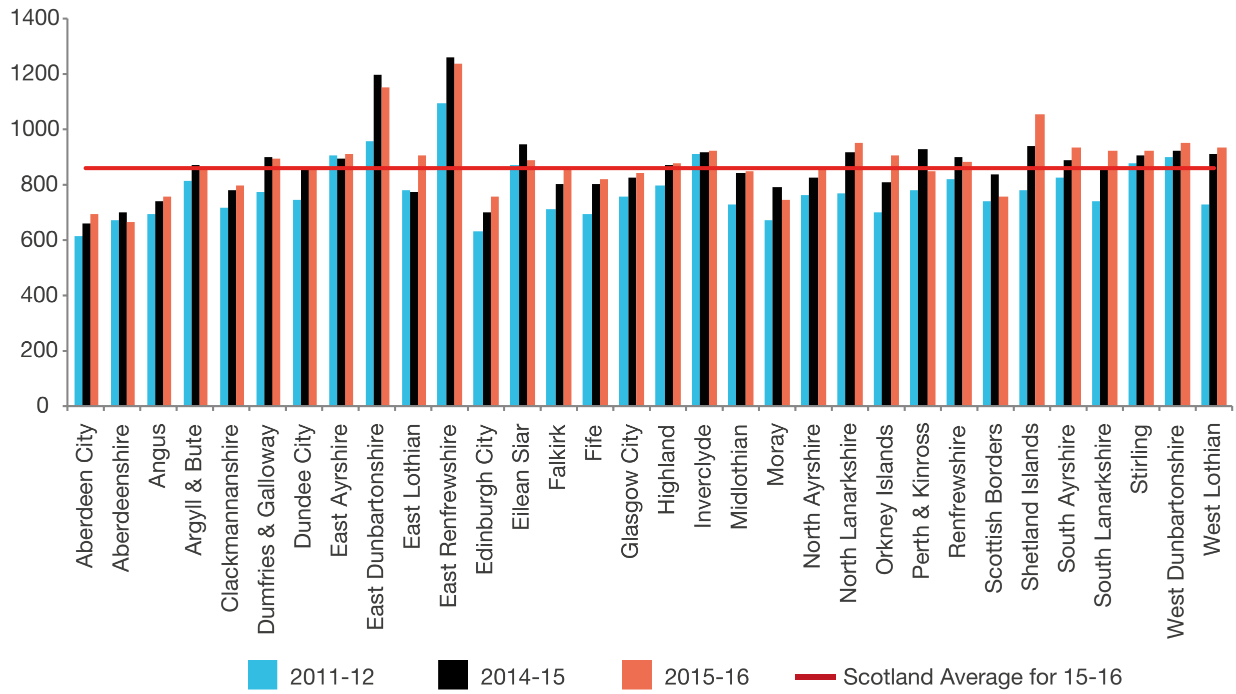
Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 1



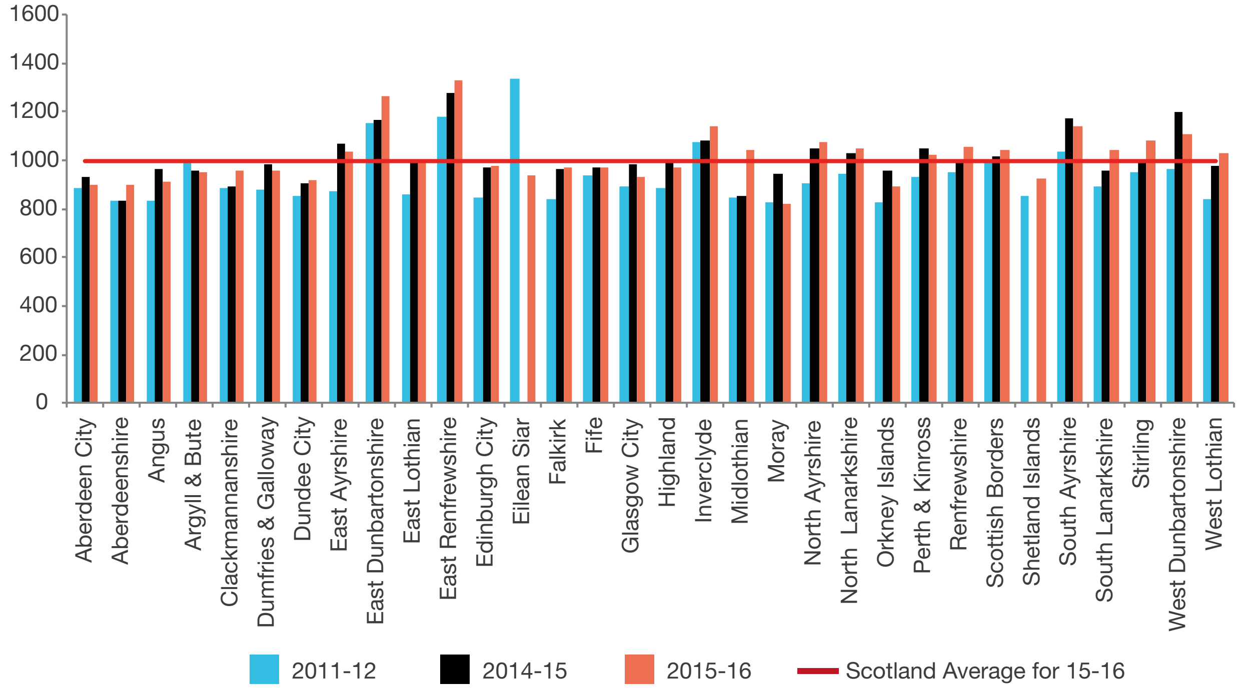
Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 2



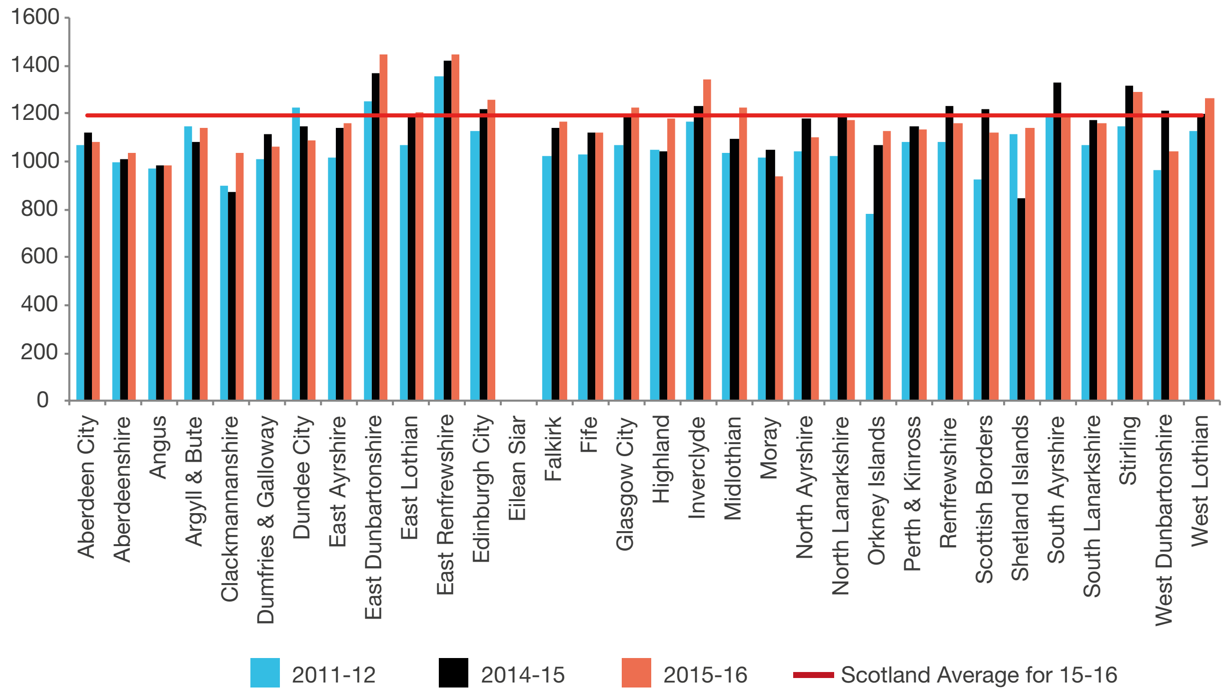
Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 3



Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 4



Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 5



Source: Breakdown of average total tariff by SIMD quintile provided by the Scottish Government and overall average total tariff calculated from this by the Improvement service

Note: Missing values represent councils which have no pupils in this SIMD quintile

Performance at SCQF Level 5 and Level 6 or higher

These indicators provide a breadth and depth measure of achievement for pupils at higher levels of attainment, for all pupils and for those from more deprived areas. It should be noted that 5+ awards at SCQF Level 5 and Level 6 or higher are demanding academic criteria, and on their own provide a rather narrow picture of attainment. They are concentrated heavily on high attainers – those who would typically progress to higher education - and do not adequately reflect the outcomes and life chances of all school pupils.

These measures reflect the cumulative attainment at SCQF Level 5 and Level 6 or higher either to the point of leaving or to the end of S6. However, as with Average Tariff scores, as the school leaver data is not yet available for 2015/16, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data available on Parentzone, which is based on school leavers. To allow 2016 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupils' attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.

An improving trend can be seen in the SCQF level 5 and level 6 data across the years for which we have collated data. The total percentage of young people gaining 5+ awards at Level 5 and Level 6 or higher is increasing - for all pupils, and for those in the most deprived communities.

Percentage of Pupils Achieving 5 or More Awards at SCQF Level 5 and Level 6 or Higher

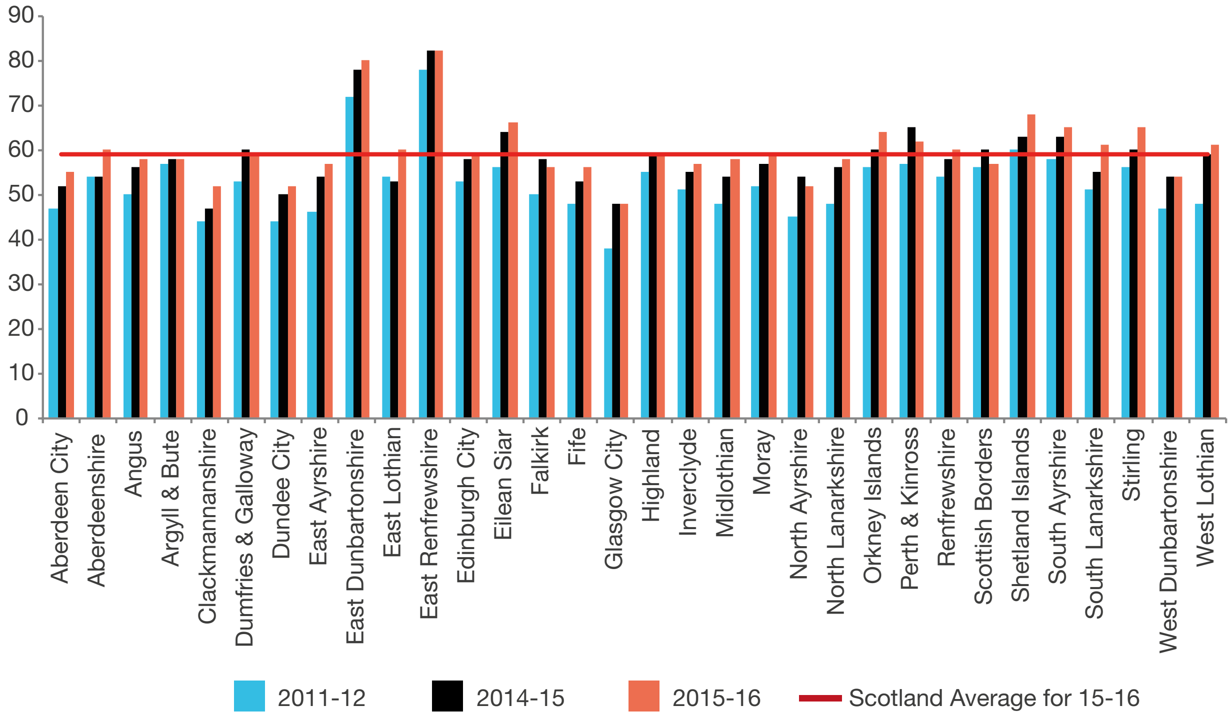
Year	% 5 or more awards at Level 5	% 5 or more awards at Level 5 in 20% most deprived communities	% 5 or more awards at Level 6	% 5 or more awards at Level 6 in 20% most deprived communities
2011/12	51.0	29.0	26.0	10.0
2012/13	53.0	32.0	27.0	11.0
2013/14	55.0	34.0	29.0	14.0
2014/15	57.0	37.0	31.0	14.0
2015/16	59.0	39.0	33.0	15.0

In 2015/16, 59% of pupils achieved five or more awards at Level 5 or higher, an increase of eight percentage points from 2011/12. Similarly, there has been a seven percentage point increase in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more awards at Level 6 or higher during this time, from 26% to 33%. Since 2011/12, all 32 councils have seen an increase in attainment at these levels, with most showing a year on year improvement.

While achievement levels remain lower for children from the most deprived areas, there has been a faster rate of improvement within these groups. The percentage of children from the most deprived communities achieving 5+ awards at Level 5 and Level 6 in 2015/16 was 39% and 15% respectively, an increase of 10 percentage points and five percentage points from 2011/12. This is an improvement rate of 34.5% and 50.0%, compared to 15.7% and 26.9% for all pupils, leading to a relative narrowing of the attainment gap.

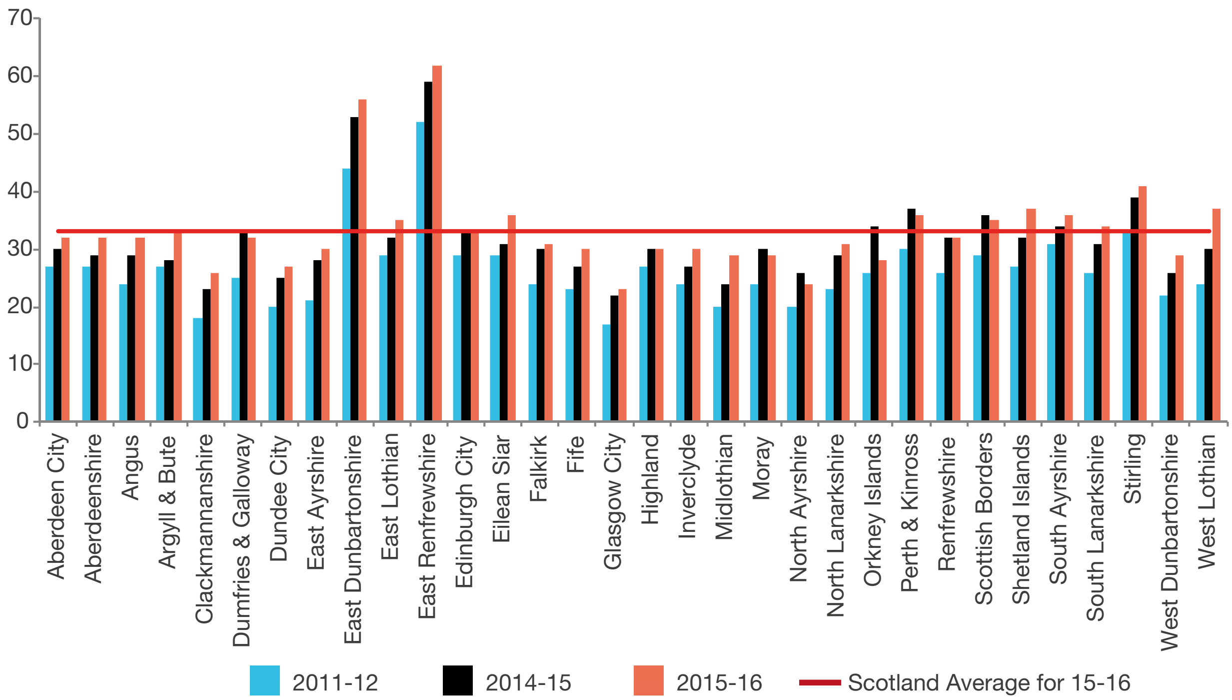
Across Scotland, substantial variations between councils can be identified at both Level 5 and Level 6, ranging from 48% to 82% and 23% to 62% respectively. While the range has narrowed for Level 5 (due to faster improvement at the lower performance end), it has widened for Level 6 (due to faster improvement at the higher performance end). Substantial variations can also be seen between councils in achievement levels for the most deprived, ranging from 19% to 56% at Level 5, and 8% to 38% at Level 6.

Percentage of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 or Higher

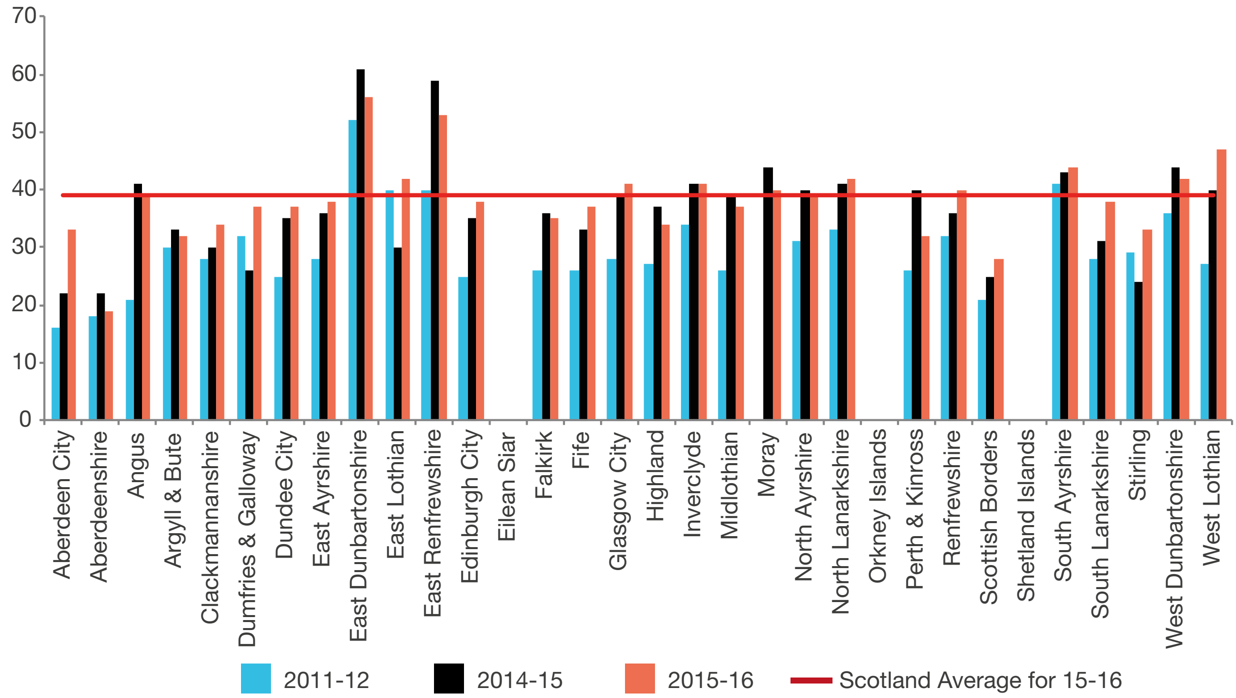


Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

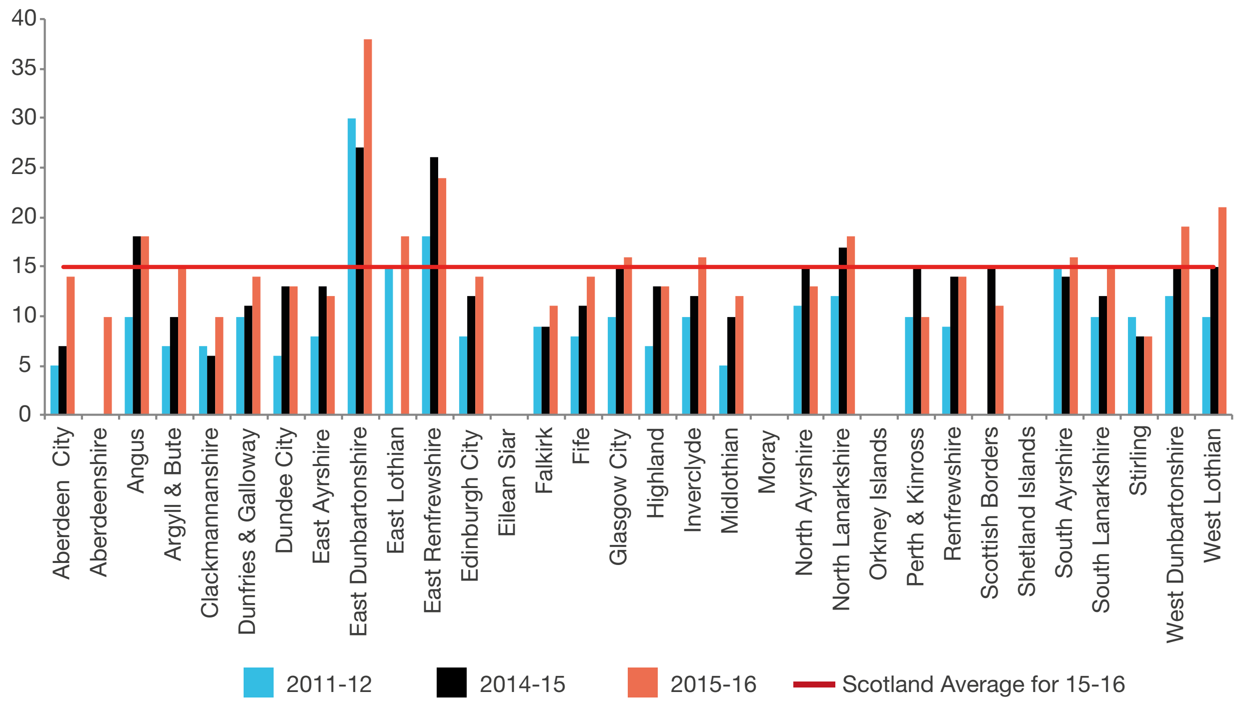
Percentage of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 or Higher



Percentage of Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 or Higher (SIMD)



Percentage of Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 or Higher (SIMD)



Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

Note: Missing values represent councils which have no pupils in the 20% most deprived communities

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in senior phase attainment.

Deprivation - achievement varies systematically with the overall level of deprivation in the council area: this accounts for approximately 35% to 40% of the variation in outcome between councils. For example, if councils are grouped according to their levels of deprivation, the average at Level 5 for the most deprived council is 53% compared to 62% for the least deprived councils. However, there are some councils with very low levels of overall deprivation which are achieving exceptional results with pupils from deprived areas. There are also councils with relatively high levels of overall deprivation achieving higher than average results.

The work being driven forward with local authorities and schools under the Scottish Attainment Challenge has the potential to be instrumental here. National and local partners will work together to identify the specific work that can be implemented successfully in classrooms and which will have a significant impact on the attainment of children from deprived communities.

The local economy, size of the higher education/further education sector and types of local services supporting education are also important factors in understanding the variation.

We will continue to work with all councils, ADES and Education Scotland to better understand the existing level of variation and the factors that drive it at school and council levels.

***East Renfrewshire Council** focuses on strategic, operational and systematic approaches coupled with improved learning and teaching to maintain high levels of attainment. The department has a strong ethos of 'support and challenge' with an emphasis on data sharing, rigorous self-evaluation and good improvement planning, for example through shared learning (through dialogue between head teachers and the positive use of robust data) and the consistent use of challenging but achievable targets for schools.*

Satisfaction with Schools

In terms of adults satisfied with their local schools service, this has reduced from 83% in 2010/11 to 74% in 2015/16. However, these satisfaction rates achieved by local schools remain among the highest rates achieved by local council services.

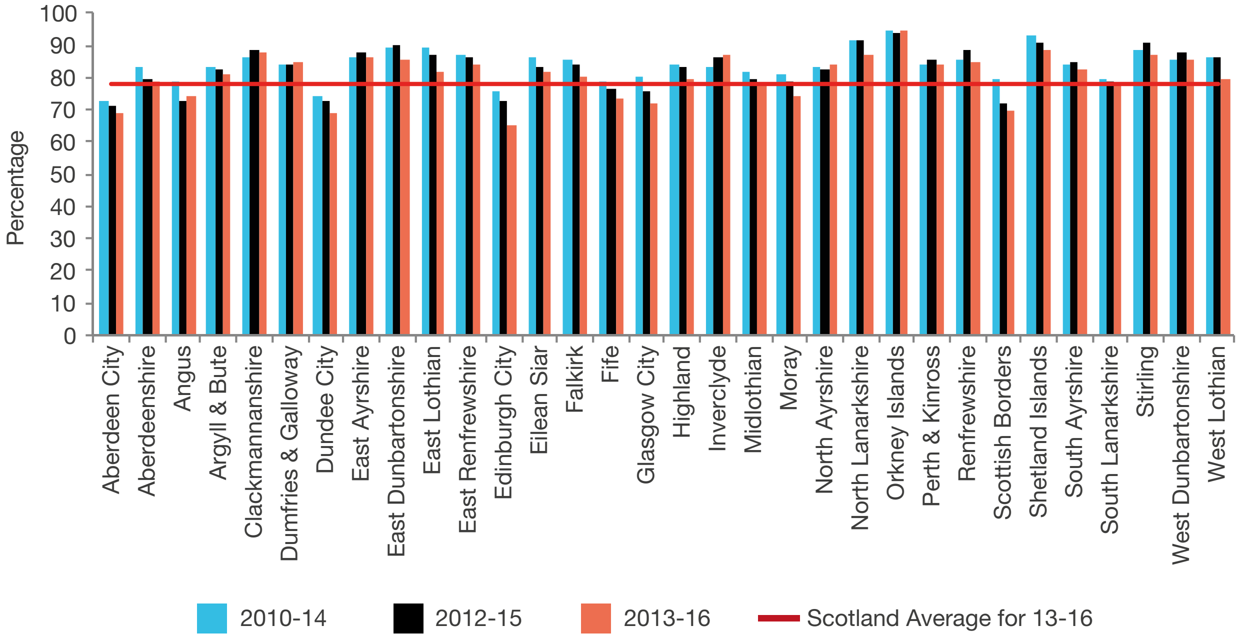
Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Local Schools

Year	% Satisfied
2010/11	83
2012/13	83
2013/14	81
2014/15	79
2015/16	74

The customer satisfaction data that is included in the LGBF is derived from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is robust at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, three year rolled averages have been used here. This ensures the required level of precision at local levels within confidence intervals of 6%. The data used represents satisfaction for the public at large rather than for service users. Smaller sample sizes for service users mean it is not possible to present service user data at a local authority level with any level of confidence. It should be noted, however, that satisfaction rates for service users are consistently higher than those reported by the general population.

The range in satisfaction with local schools across Scotland is 65% to 95%, with larger authorities reporting significantly lower levels of satisfaction (75% compared to 88% in smaller authorities). The variation between authorities in satisfaction has widened recently due to a reduction in levels at the lower end.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Local Schools



Source: Scottish Household Survey, Scottish Government

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. Social care services are undergoing fundamental reform 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 and also reduce the inefficiencies associated with dis-jointed systems.

To reflect this major reform, we continue to work with Social Work Scotland, Health and Social Care Chief Officers, and the new Health and Social Care Improvement body to agree benchmarking measures which will usefully support Integrated Joint Boards fulfil their new duties. This will draw upon the core suite of Health and Social Care integration measures, which is currently being reviewed and will consider measures which might usefully be included to provide a fuller picture of outcomes/user experience.

Social care is an area where councils and their partners 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[16]. In the face of these increasing demands, councils and their partners continue to modernise and transform social care provision to deliver better anticipatory and preventative care, provide a greater emphasis on community-based care and enable increased choice and control in the way that people receive services.

Home Care Services

Council spend on home care services has been standardised around home care costs per hour for each council. This includes expenditure across all providers. Since 2010/11 there has been a real terms reduction of 0.1% in spending per hour on home care for people over 65 across Scotland. This reflects a 7.2% increase in the number of hours delivered while gross expenditure has increased by 7.1%.

In the past 12 months, spending per hour has increased by 6.1%, which reflects a 3.9% increase in expenditure and a 2.1% reduction in hours delivered.

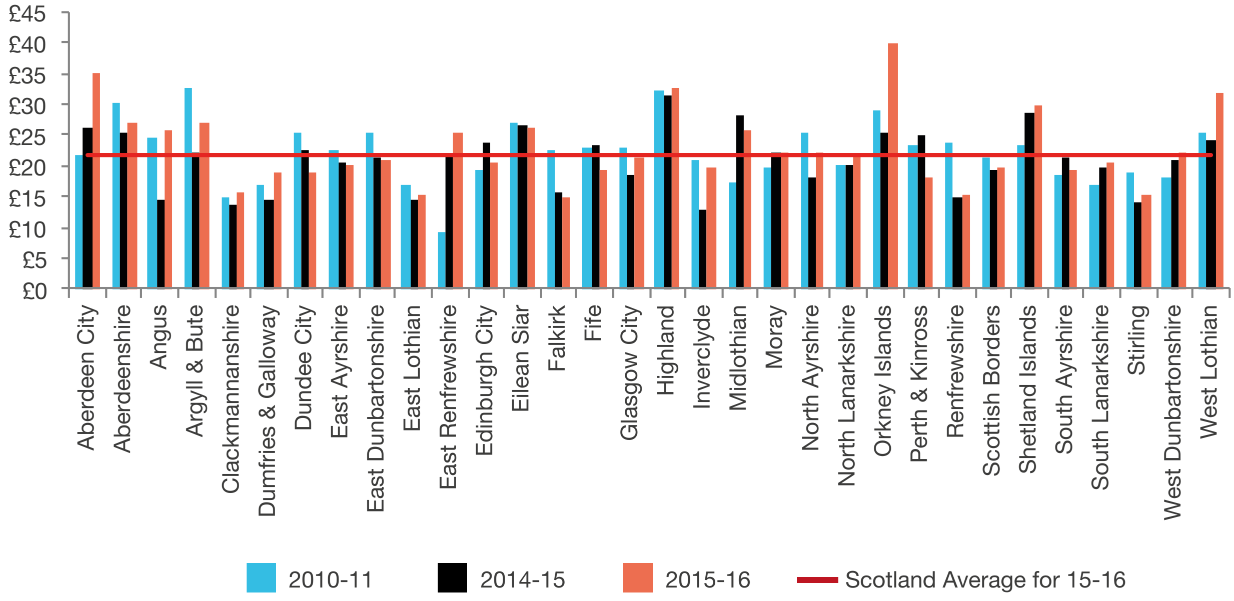
Home Care Costs per Hour for People Aged 65 or Over

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	7.2	-0.1
2010/11 - 2011/12	-1.8	-3.2
2011/12 - 2012/13	3.5	1.4
2012/13 - 2013/14	-1.0	-2.6
2013/14 - 2014/15	-0.1	-1.5
2014/15 - 2015/16	6.6	6.1

The average spend per hour in 2015/16 was £21.58 per hour, ranging from £14.74 per hour to £40.07 per hour.

16 Source: Population Projections, National Records of Scotland, www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-projections-scotland/2014-based

Home Care Costs per Hour for People Aged 65 or Over



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

Balance of Care

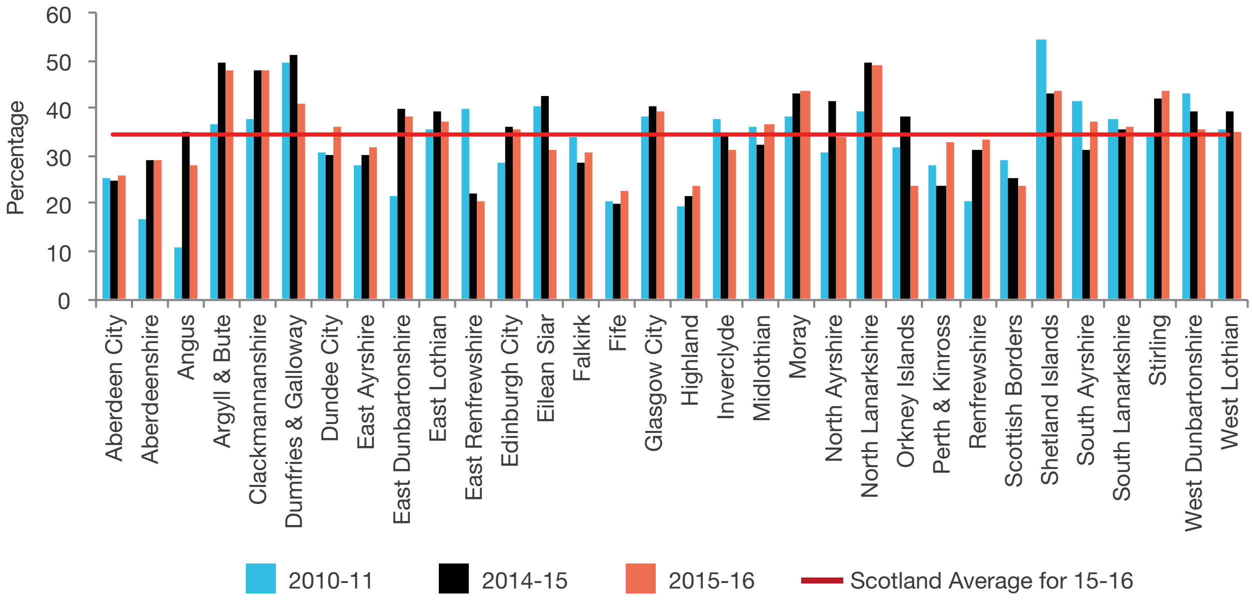
The second area of adult social care services covered in the framework is the percentage of adults over 65 with intensive care needs (who receive 10+ hours of support) who are cared for at home. This is an area of growing importance in an effort to care for more people in their own home rather than institutional setting such as hospitals. The effective design and delivery of home care services can help prevent those most at risk of unplanned hospital admissions from entering the hospital sector unnecessarily. For those who do enter hospital, it can also help prevent delayed discharges.

Percentage of people aged 65 or Over with Intensive Needs Receiving Care at Home

Year	% of over 65's with Intensive Needs Receiving Care at Home
2010/11	32.2
2011/12	33.0
2012/13	34.1
2013/14	34.3
2014/15	35.3
2015/16	34.8

Since 2010/11, the percentage of older people with intensive needs receiving care at home has increased from 32.2% to 34.8%. However, after a year-on-year growth in this balance, there has been a reduction within the past 12 months. In 2015/16, 34.8% of older people with intensive needs received care at home, which ranged from 20.4% to 48.8% across Scotland. This range has narrowed since 2010/11 due to faster growth at the lower levels.

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



Source: Social Care Survey, Scottish Government

Direct Payments and Personalised Managed Budgets

From 1 April 2014, Self-directed Support introduced a new approach which gives people who require social care support more choice and control over how their support is delivered. Social work services continue to drive forward changes to ensure people's outcomes are being met, rather than a person fitting in to a service. The Self-Directed Support Act 2013 puts a duty on local authorities to be transparent about the cost of support under each of the 4 options:

- Direct payment (a cash payment)
- Personalised Managed Budget (PMB) where 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.

The indicator here refers to the percentage of total social work spend allocated via Direct Payments or Personalised Managed Budgets.[17] 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.

Since 2010/11, the proportion of total social work spend allocated via Direct Payments and Personalised Managed Budgets has grown from 1.6% to 6.7% (or 1.6% to 3.8% excluding Glasgow as an outlier).

In the last 12 months, the proportion of spend via Direct Payments and Personalised Managed Budgets grew from 3.2% to 3.8% (excluding outliers). Direct Payments account for approximately 80% of this spend.

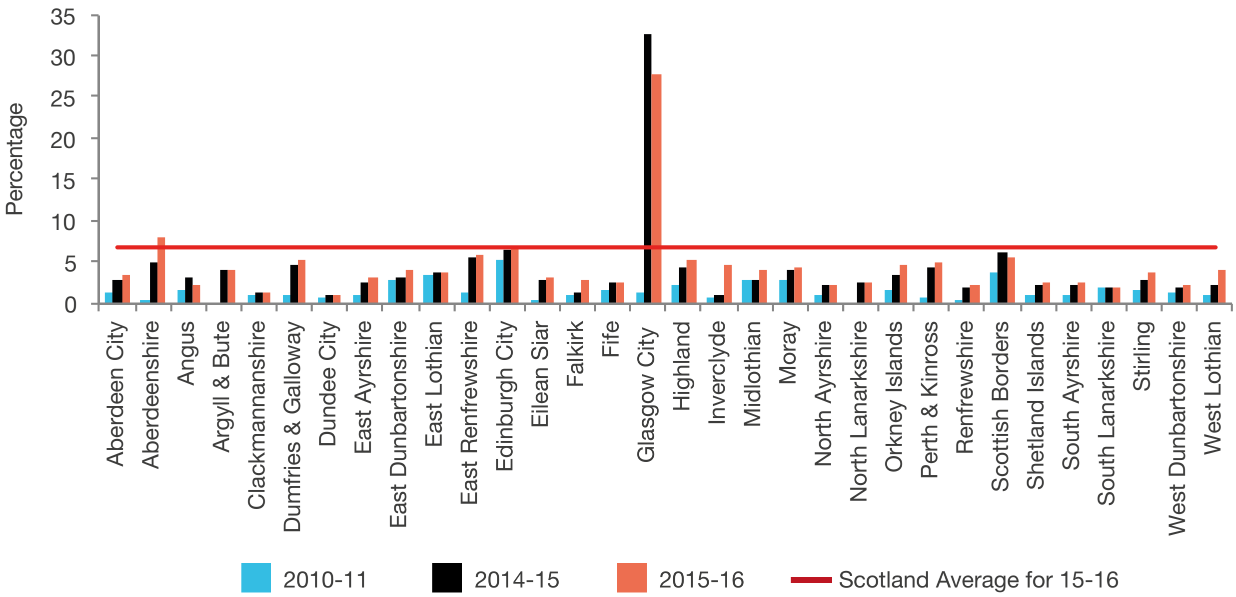
17 The PMB breakdown was included in councils return to the Improvement service for both 13/14 and 15/16, and includes only residual expenditure from the personalised budget where it is unknown what support was purchased, i.e. where the council used a third party to arrange services. It does not include where the budget has been used to purchase known services from either the authority or another provider. Analysis of the data however indicates some variation in relation to what is included currently.

Spend on Direct Payment and Personalised Managed Budgets as a Percentage of Total Social Work Spend

Year	Direct Payment & PMB Spend as a % of Total Social Work Spend
2010/11	1.6
2011/12	3.0
2012/13	5.9
2013/14	6.4
2014/15	6.9
2015/16	6.7

In 2015/16 the range in spend across councils was 0.9% to 28% (0.9% to 7.9% excluding Glasgow). Excluding Glasgow, the range has widened slightly in recent years. Rural authorities and councils with lower levels of deprivation tend to have higher levels of uptake of Direct Payments and PMB (5.0% of spend in rural councils compared to 2.6% in urban, and spend of 4.8% of spend in the least deprived Family Group compared to 2.7% in the most deprived). This finding is supported by Scottish Government examination of the uptake of Direct Payments and SIMD, which 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.[18]

Direct Payment/PMB Spend as a Percentage of Total Social Work Spend



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

Care Homes

The final area covered by the framework relating to adult social care is the net cost of care home services. The measure has been standardised by looking at net costs per week per resident for people over the age of 65.
In 2015/16, the average cost across Scotland was £369 per week per resident, a slight reduction of 1.5% from £385 in 2014/15 and a reduction of 4.2% since 2012/13. It is important to note that the figures for 2012/13 to 2015/16 have - in agreement with the local government Directors of Finance - excluded a

18 Source: Social Care Services, Scotland, 2014, Scottish Government, www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/11/1085/6

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.

Care Home Costs Per Week for People Over 65

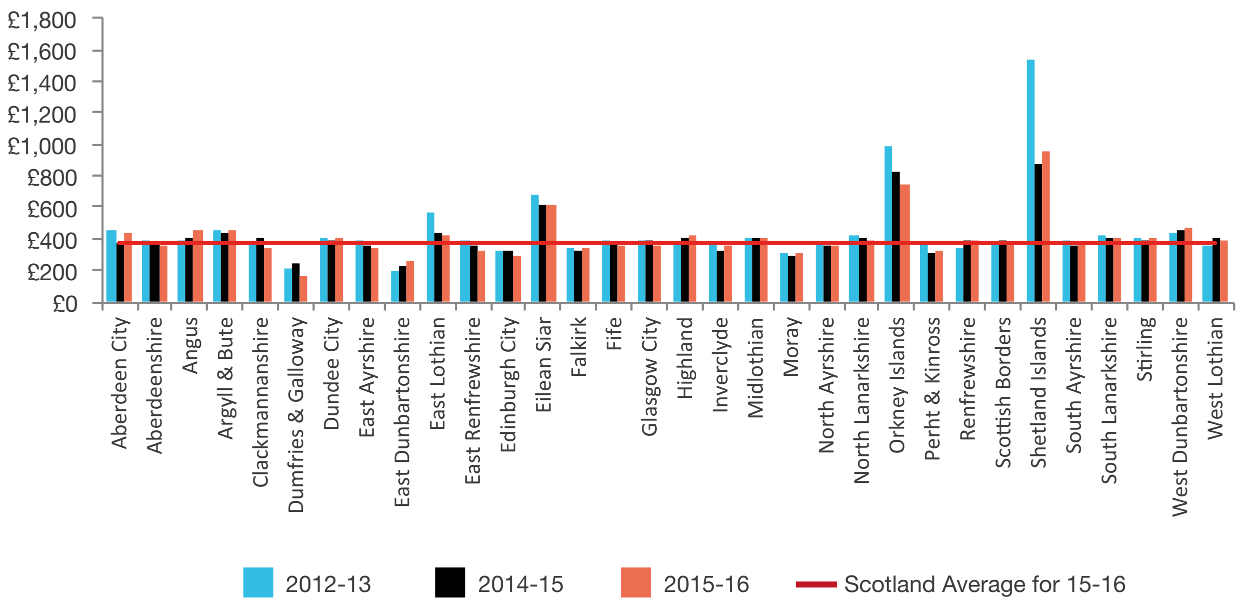
% Change	Cash	Real
2012/13 - 2015/16	-0.7	-4.2
2012/13 - 2013/14	-2.7	-4.3
2013/14 - 2014/15	3.1	1.6
2014/15 - 2015/16	-1.0	-1.5

Over the four years for which we have comparable data, reduction in unit costs has been driven by a -2% reduction in net expenditure, while the number of adults supported in residential care homes during this period has increased by 2.2%. This pattern continued in the last 12 months, with a small decrease in expenditure (-0.3%) and an increase in number of residents (1.2%).

Gross expenditure levels have remained steady over this period therefore the reduction in net expenditure indicates an increase in the income received by councils rather than a reduction in expenditure. The increase in the number of privately or self-funded clients as a proportion of all long stay residents over this period would support this trend (an increase of 3.3% between 2010/11 and 2015/16).[19]

There is a considerable level of variation across councils, with island councils in particular reporting significantly higher costs. When island councils are excluded, costs ranged from £171 to £466.

Older Persons (Over 65s) Residential Costs Per Week



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

Up to and including 2015/16, 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 LA-funded residents who are in private and voluntary run care homes. Residential care costs however include net expenditure

19 Care Home Census 2010-2014, ISD, www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Health-and-Social-Community-Care/Care-Homes/

on:

- The net cost of any LA-funded residents (this will be based on the NCHC)
- The net cost for self-funders (There are around 10,000 self-funders receiving Free Personal Care payments (around two-thirds also receive the Free Nursing Care payment)
- The net cost of running any 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 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.

Based on the above, variation in net costs between councils will be largely influenced by the balance of LA funded/self-funded residents within each area, and the scale of LA care home provision and associated running costs.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Social Care Services

This year, two measures from the Health and Care Experience Survey have been introduced to the benchmarking suite to reflect service user satisfaction with social care services. These measures align with the initial Core suite of HSC Integration Measures, and provide a more locally robust sample than is available from the Scottish Household Survey in relation to social care. The survey takes place every two years, and, at this time, only two years' worth of data is currently available.

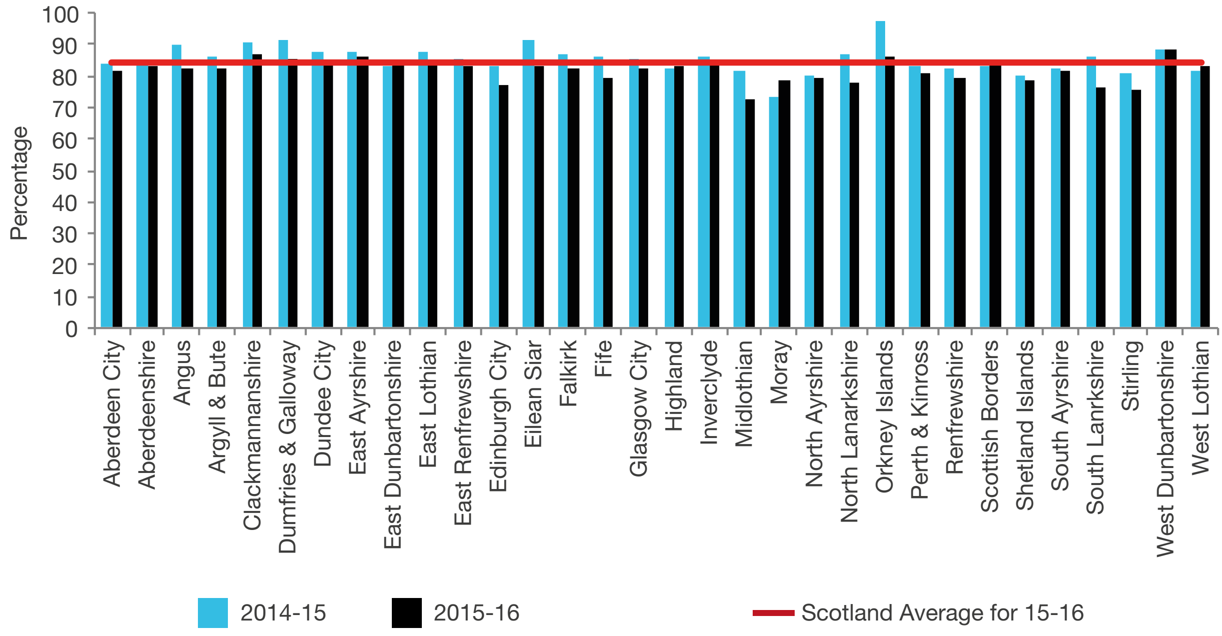
In 2015/16, the percentage of adults receiving any care or support who rate it as excellent or good was 85%, falling slightly from 84% in 2013/14. Similarly, the % of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life was 81%, falling from 84% in 2013/14.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Social Care Services

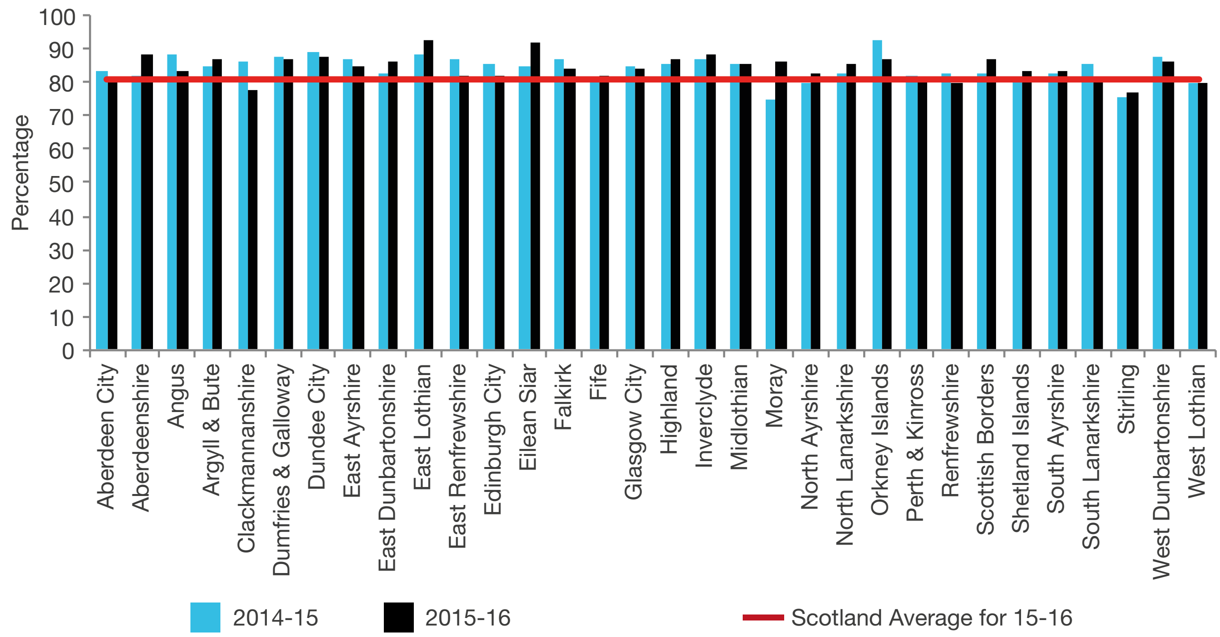
Year	% Receiving Any Care or Support who Rate it as Excellent or Good	% Supported at Home who Agree that their Services and Support had an Impact in Improving or Maintaining their Quality of Life
2013/14	85	84
2015/16	84	81

Satisfaction rates vary from 73% to 88% for those rating the care/support as excellent or good, and from 77% to 92% for those who agree their support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life.

Percentage Receiving Any Care or Support Who Rate it as Excellent or Good



Percentage Who Agree That Their Services and Support had an Impact in Improving or Maintaining Their Quality of Life



Source: Scottish Care and Experience Survey, Scottish Government

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities

Rurality: there is a significant connection between rurality and the cost and balance of social care provision. Rural authorities have higher residential and home care costs and a lower proportion of people cared for at home. Rural areas also have higher satisfaction rates in the quality of the service and in relation to its impact on their outcomes.

Demographic variability: the number and proportion of over 75's within local populations will have a significant influence on the cost and balance of social care service provision.

Service Delivery Model, balance between LA provision and private/voluntary provision locally and variability in the resilience and capacity within local provider markets will influence both costs and balance of care

Proportion of self-funders locally and impact on residential care expenditure - variations in net expenditure between councils are systematically related to the percentage of self-funders within council areas.[20]

Local priority given to increasing the use of bank staff rather than sessional staff, and work to improve the occupancy rate within LA provision will also be important in understanding variation

20 Free Personal and Nursing Care, Scottish Government, www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/Data/FPNC

Culture and Leisure

Culture and leisure services play an important role in the quality of life in local communities. In addition to the social and economic benefits delivered, the impact they have on promoting better health and wellbeing of the population and in reducing demand on other core services is well documented. Culture and leisure services can also connect well with communities that more traditional and regulated services often struggle to reach. This unique relationship provides real potential to achieve impact for people in the greatest need. However, given there is little in the way of statutory protection for culture and leisure spending, culture and leisure services face a particularly challenging financial context across the coming period.

For the first time, all culture and leisure cost measures are presented as Net measures. This provides a better basis to compare like by like between councils, particularly in relation to different service delivery models, e.g. in-house/arms length provision. It also recognises the increasing need for authorities to income generate across culture and leisure services, and ensures this activity is reflected accordingly.

Sports Facilities

The data presented below illustrates the cost per attendance at sports and recreation facilities.

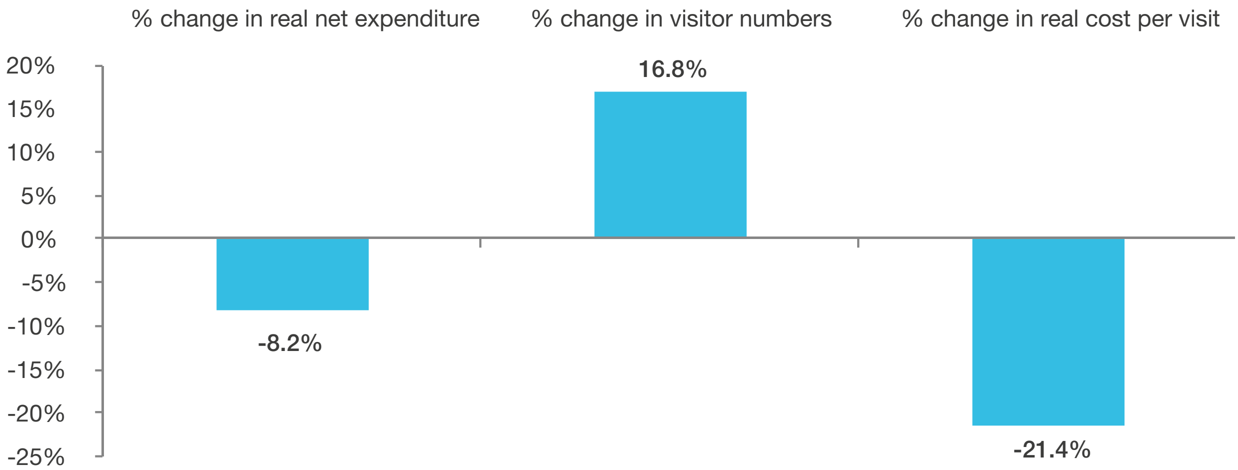
Over the six-year period from 2010/11 to 2015/16 the average unit cost has reduced from £3.81 to £2.99 in real terms. In percentage terms, this represents a 21.4% reduction. After a year-on-year unit cost reduction since 2010/11, in the past 12 months there has been a slight increase of 0.6%.

Cost Per Attendance at Sports Facilities

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-15.7	-21.4
2010/11 - 2011/12	-9.1	-10.4
2011/12 - 2012/13	-2.7	-4.7
2012/13 - 2013/14	1.6	0.0
2013/14 - 2014/15	-7.1	-8.5
2014/15 - 2015/16	1.1	0.6

The cost per attendance figures on their own do not give a complete picture of what has been happening in sports services over the period. Significant increases in visitor numbers have been achieved against a backdrop of reductions in real net expenditure. However, the growth in service users has slowed in recent years, growing only 0.7% in the past 12 months. Counter to previous years, there was also a slight increase in expenditure in the past 12 months of 1.3%.

Sports Facilities: Change in Total Spend, Visitor Numbers and Cost Per Visit, 2010/11 - 2015/16



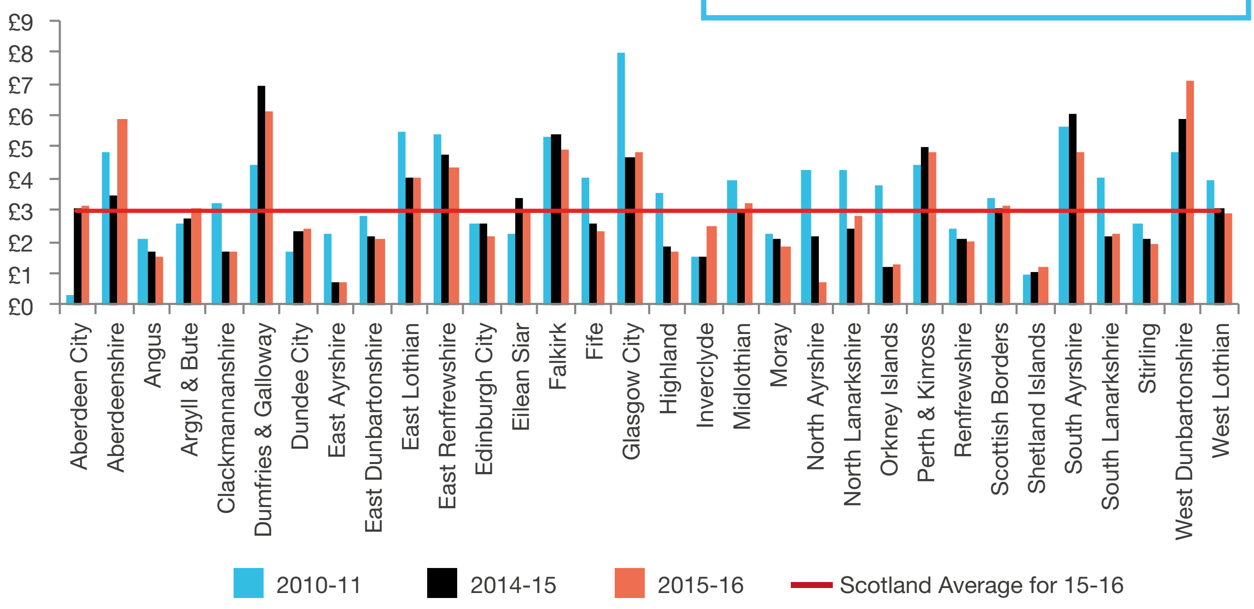
Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Over the six-year period, 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 while managing significant financial pressures. A key factor here may be the significant capital investment programme in sports facilities across Scotland 10 years ago now bearing fruit. However, it may be that the additional capacity generated through this investment has now been reached, and thus the growth in user numbers is now tapering off.

However, the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. In 2015/16, costs per attendance at a sports facility ranged from £0.68 to £7.06.

East Ayrshire Council - *have consistently low cost per sports attendance, and have reported a significant reduction in expenditure (80%) since 2015/16 and now have the lowest costs in their family group. The council are working to implement the Community Empowerment agenda by focusing on Community Asset Transfer. Several sporting facilities have been transferred to the community including a golf course and pitches and pavilions, delivering savings in running costs, staffing costs as well as a reduction in maintenance and repairs liability. The programme also delivers additional community benefits around health and wellbeing and community capacity building.*

Cost Per Attendance at Sports Facilities



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Library Services

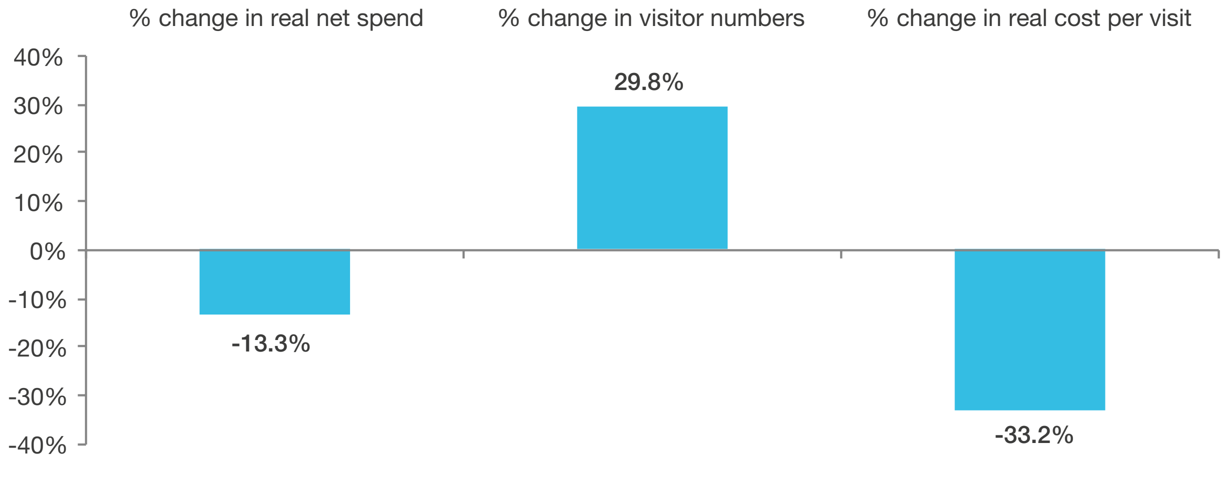
Library costs are represented as the average cost per library visit (both physical and virtual). There has been a year-on-year reduction in unit costs since 2010/11. The average cost per library visit in 2015/16 was £2.44, while in 2010/11 the cost per visit was £3.66. In real terms, this represents a reduction of 33.2% over the period. This represents significant year on year reductions of above 5%, until the past 12 months when the rate or reduction slowed to -1%.

Cost Per Library Visit

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-28.4	-33.2
2010/11 - 2011/12	-4.4	-5.7
2011/12 - 2012/13	-3.3	-5.3
2012/13 - 2013/14	-18.3	-19.7
2013/14 - 2014/15	-4.6	-6.0
2014/15 - 2015/16	-0.5	-1.0

As with sports services, unit cost figures on their own do not tell the full story of the last six years for library services. Over the six-year period covered by the LGBF, net spending on library services across Scotland fell by 13.3%. At the same time, visitor numbers increased across the country by 29.8%. Across this period, there has been a year on year reduction in expenditure levels, and a year on year increase in visit numbers. In the past 12 months however this rate of change has slowed, with library visitor numbers growing by only 0.9%, and expenditure remaining largely unchanged from last year (-0.03%).

Libraries: Change in Total Spend, Visitor Numbers and Cost Per Visit, 2010/11 - 2015/16

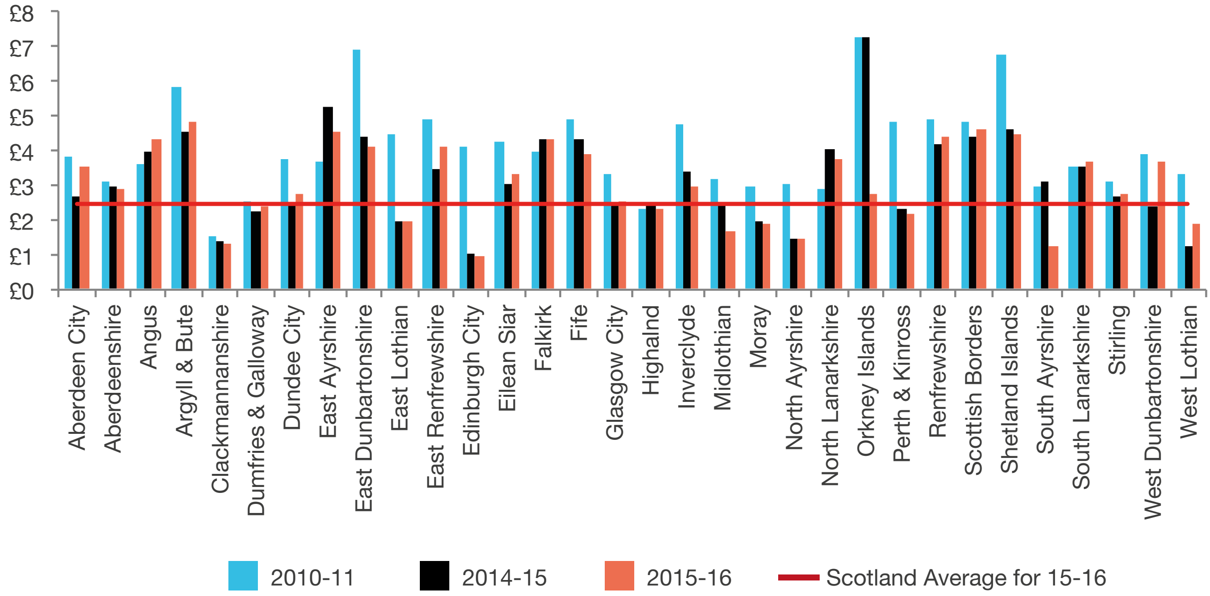


Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Again this indicates that, against a difficult financial backdrop, council services have achieved a growth in service user volume and, as a consequence, reduced the unit cost per visit to the council by a substantial margin. This shows 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.

As with sports attendance, the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. In 2015/16, the range across councils in cost per visit was £0.98 to £4.85. This range has narrowed significantly since the base year due to reductions at the higher cost end.

Cost Per Library Visit



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

***West Lothian** significantly restructured the library service and introduced a greater focus on channel shift and implementing the use of technology. This has seen the introduction of self-service kiosks and an eResource providing digital resources resulting in low and reducing cost per visit and an increase in visitor numbers without closing any libraries.*

***North Ayrshire** is undertaking significant transformation of its Library Services based on an extensive participatory budgeting programme with 13 public workshops. This includes the reduction of pay roll costs, growing digital services, and partnership working leading to low and reduced cost per visit and increased visitor numbers.*

Museum Services

With respect to museum services, the pattern is similar to library and sports services in relation to falling unit costs accompanied by increasing visitor numbers. Over the six-year period, there has been a real terms reduction of 32.1% in cost per visit, from £4.52 to £3.07.

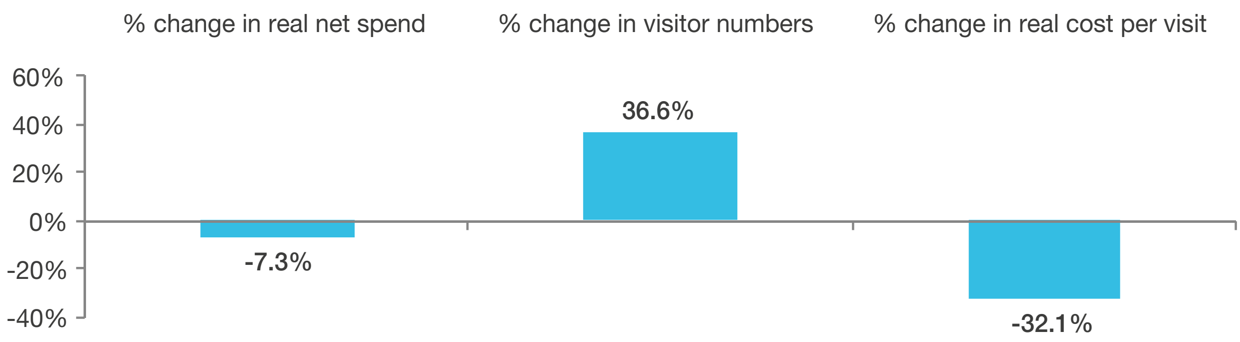
Cost Per Museums Visit

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-27.2	-32.1
2010/11 - 2011/12	-17.3	-18.5
2011/12 - 2012/13	3.3	1.2
2012/13 - 2013/14	-6.6	-8.1
2013/14 - 2014/15	-4.1	-5.5
2014/15 - 2015/16	-4.8	-5.2

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 six-year period. Net spending on museum services across Scotland has fallen by 7.3% since 2010/11 but, in the same period, visitor numbers have increased by 36.6%. 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.

As with libraries and sports, in the past 12 months the growth in museum visitor numbers has slowed to 2.1%. During the same period, the reduction in spend has accelerated again after slowing the previous year (-3.3%).

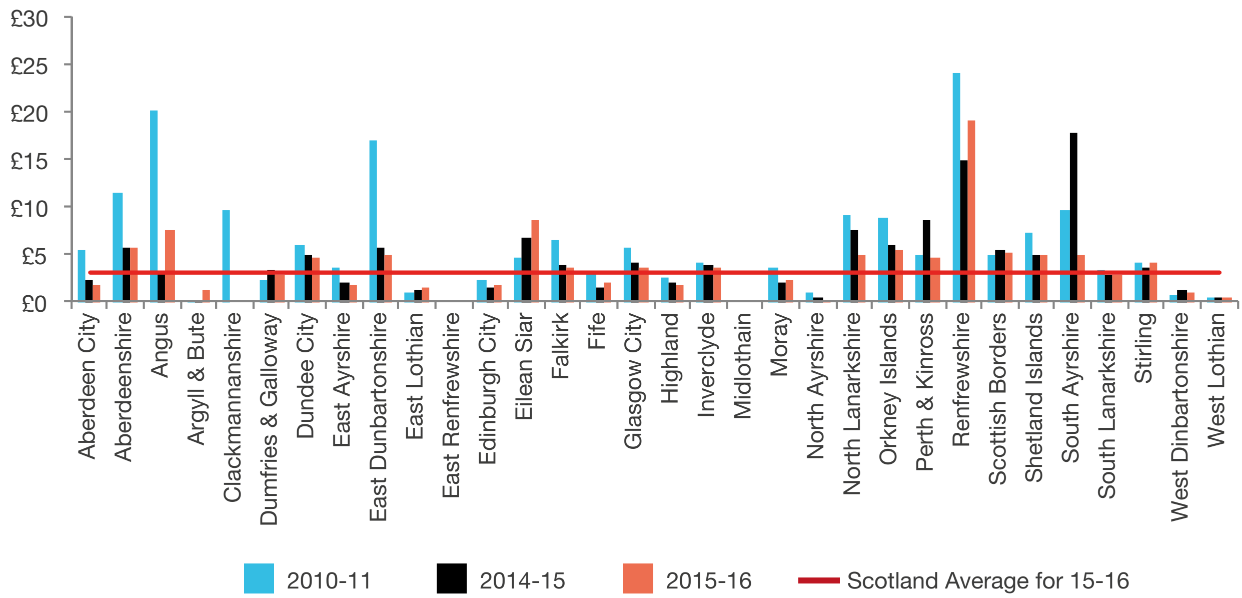
Museums: Change in Total Spend, Visitor Numbers and Cost Per Visit, 2010/11 - 2015/16



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

There is a significant range between councils' museums costs. In 2015/16, the range in cost per visit was £0.31 to £18.95 (£0.31 to £8.47 excluding Renfrewshire as an outlier). The range has narrowed significantly across the six-year period due to reductions at the higher cost end (again excluding Renfrewshire).

Cost Per Museum Visit



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Note: Missing values for Clackmannanshire, East Renfrewshire and Midlothian reflect no council provided museum service

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in Culture & Leisure services

Local political and strategic priority given to role of culture and leisure in supporting improvement in wider outcomes e.g. health and wellbeing, tackling inequality, economic development, community empowerment etc

Scale of provision and level of service

Digital channel shift

Service delivery model and level of in house, arms-length/trust delivery

Staffing composition, level and roles

Level of volunteering, community involvement and asset transfer

Income generation capacity

Asset management and co-location/multi-use venues

Geographical nature (e.g. in parks service, urban authorities have significantly higher costs than rural £23,236 compared to £17,252)

***North Ayrshire Council** focus on social return on investment, increasing digital skills for residents and community engagement via social media to plan and deliver customer driven services. This has resulted in increased museum visitor numbers while maintaining consistently low spend on museums.*

Parks and Open Spaces

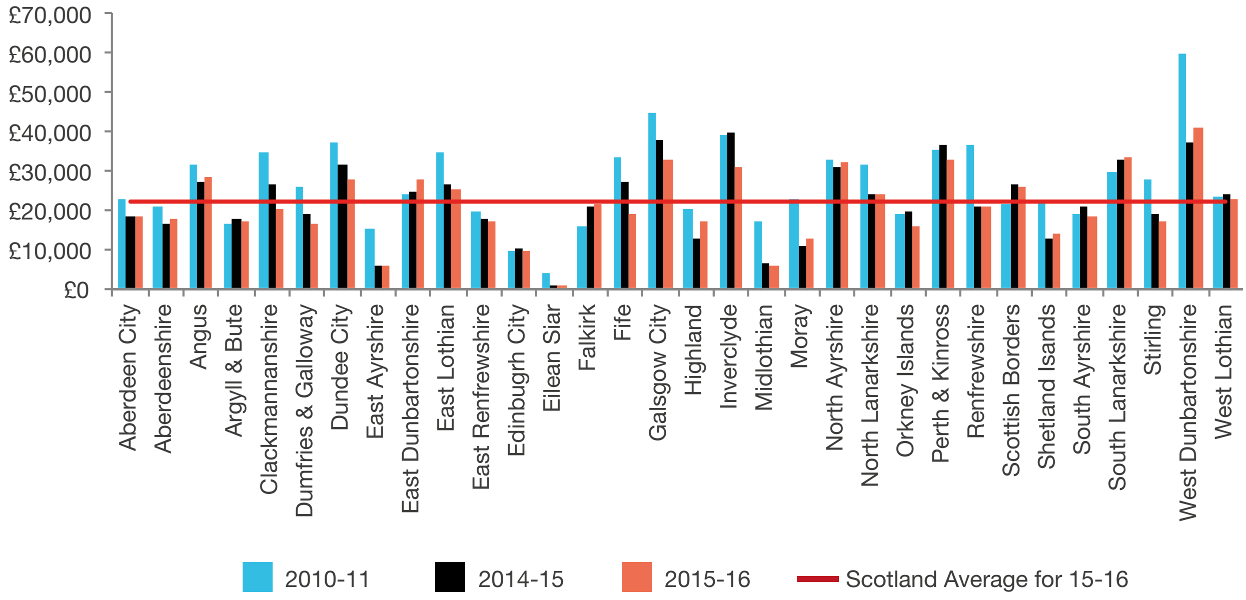
Spend on parks and open spaces is reflected as spend per 1,000 population. Over the six-year period from 2010/11 to 2015/16, this has reduced in real terms by 20.1%, from £27,814 to £22,232. There has been a year-on-year reduction across the period, with the rate of reduction accelerating in the last 12 months.

Cost of Parks and Open Spaces per 1,000 Population

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-14.3	-20.1
2010/11 - 2011/12	-6.4	-7.6
2011/12 - 2012/13	-2.5	-4.6
2012/13 - 2013/14	-1.5	-3.1
2013/14 - 2014/15	0.5	-1.0
2014/15 - 2015/16	-5.0	-5.4

In 2015/16 the range in costs across councils was £960 - £40,942. However, when excluding Islands councils which have significantly lower costs, the range was £5,515 - £40,942. The range across councils has narrowed since the base year due to a reduction in costs at the higher end.

Cost of Parks and Open Spaces Per 1,000 Population



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

Satisfaction with Culture and Leisure Services

Satisfaction levels for all areas of culture and leisure remain high at above 70%. However, all have decreased in the last 12 months.

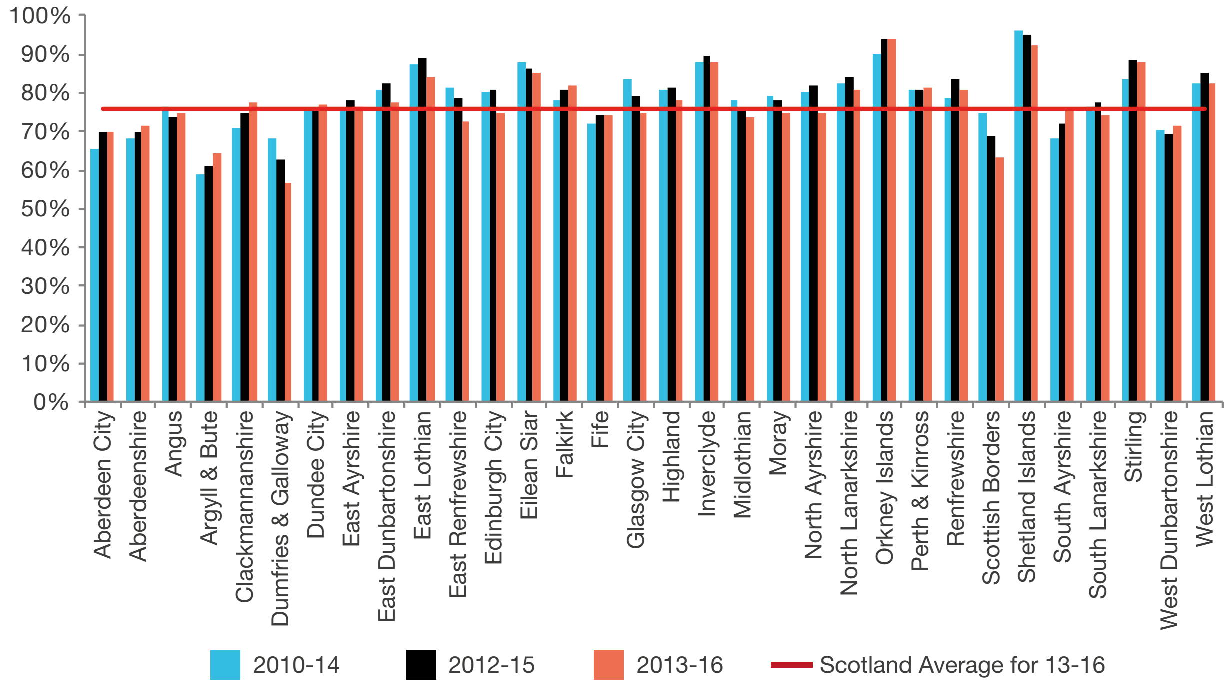
Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Culture and Leisure Services

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
2014/15	76	77	75	86
2015/16	73	74	71	85

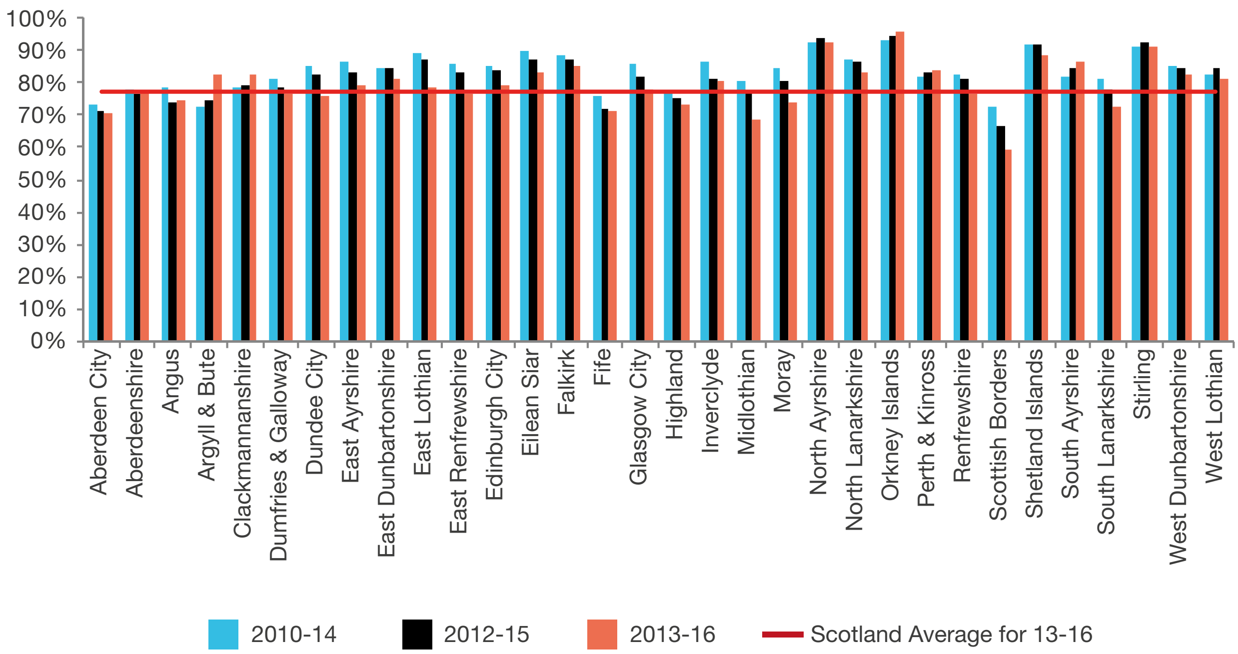
As with satisfaction with local schools, to boost sample sizes, three year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels. The data used represents satisfaction for the public at large rather than for service users. It should be noted that satisfaction rates for service users are consistently higher than those reported by the general population, but the smaller sample sizes available for service users mean it is not possible to present such data with any level of confidence.

For all culture and leisure services, satisfaction levels vary considerably across Scotland. In leisure, satisfaction rates range from 57% - 94%; In libraries, it is 59% - 96%; for museums, 46% - 94%; and, finally, for parks the range is 74% - 93%. There are no systematic effects of deprivation, sparsity or council size on satisfaction levels identified in the data analysis in relation to culture and leisure services.

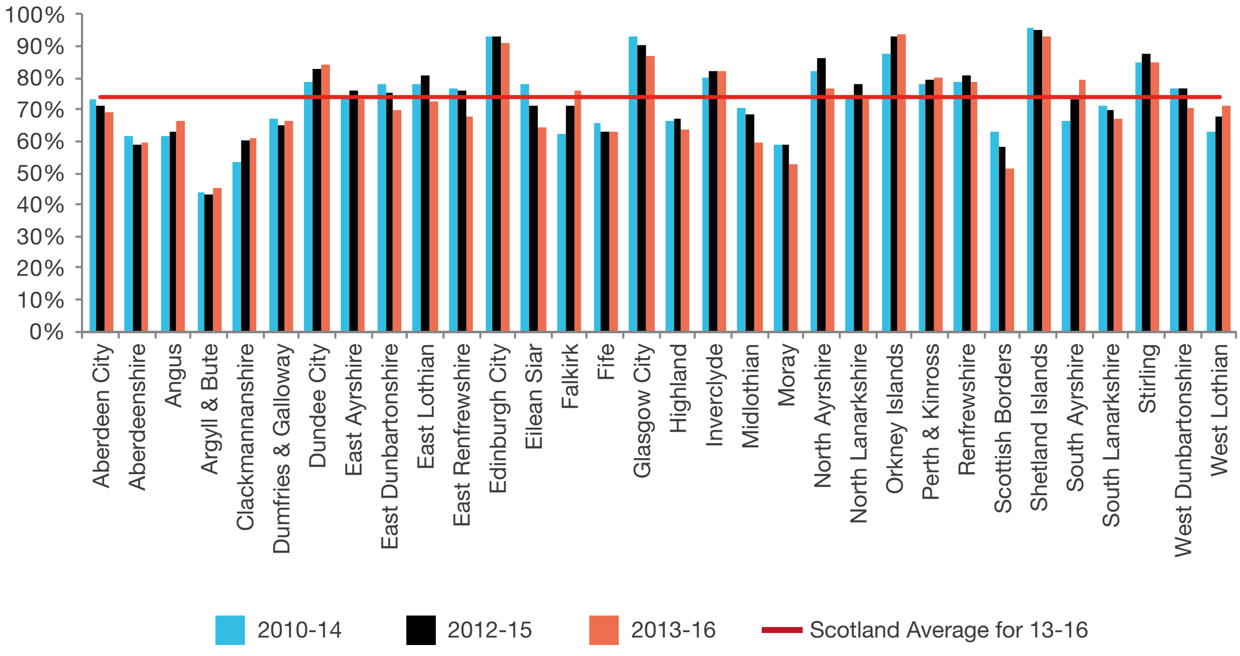
Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Leisure Facilities



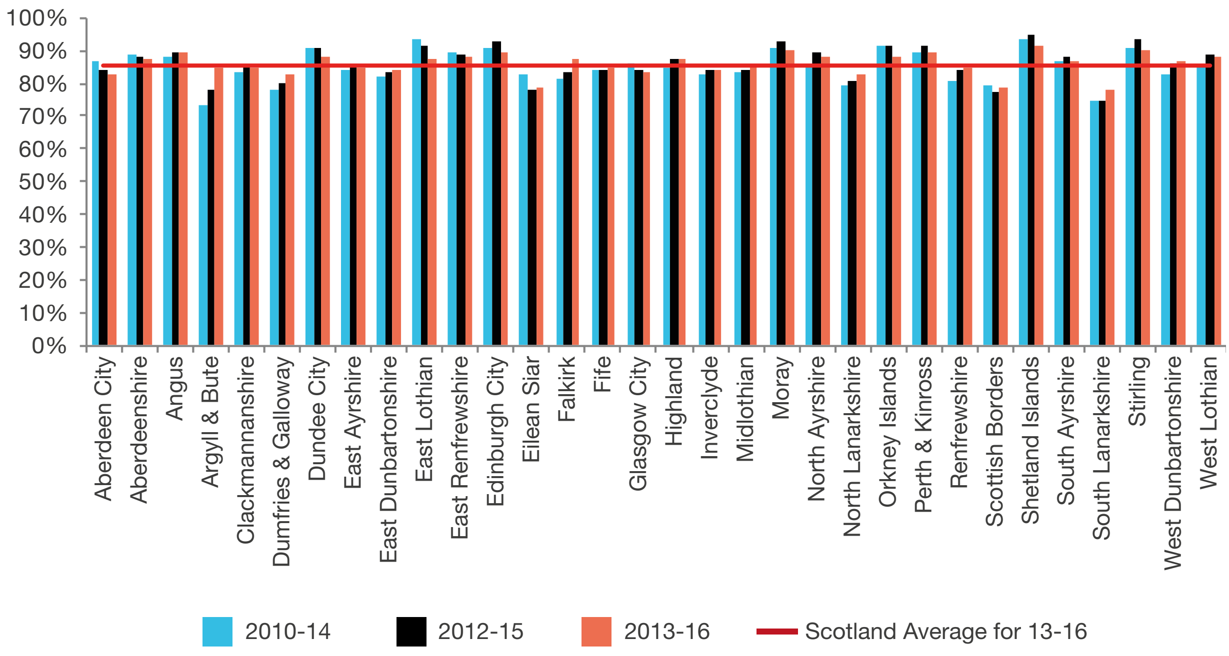
Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Libraries



Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Museums and Galleries



Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Parks and Open Spaces



Source: Scottish Household Survey, Scottish Government

Environmental Services

Environmental services is an area of significant spend for local authorities, and include waste management, street cleansing, roads services, trading standards and environmental health. These areas have seen some of the largest budget reductions since 2010/11, with roads expenditure reducing by 21% and street cleaning by 25%. Against this reduction in expenditure, councils have largely succeeded in maintaining or improving performance levels in relation to recycling, street cleanliness, roads condition and satisfaction.

Waste Management

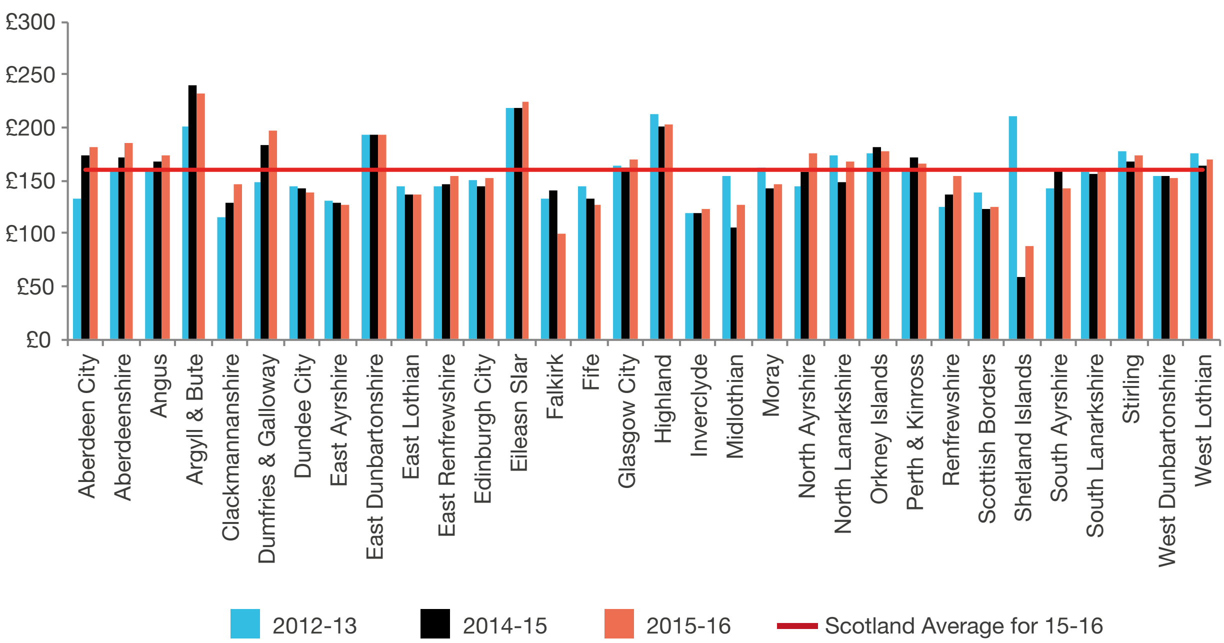
In examining the cost of waste management services across councils, we use a measure of the net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise. This move to a net measure was in recognition of the increased efforts of councils to recycle waste, which generates additional costs to the service, but also an additional revenue stream as recycled waste is sold by councils into recycling markets. We moved to this new measure in 2012/13, and therefore only four years of data are presented here.

In 2015/16, the combined net cost of waste disposal and collection is £160.43 per premise. After remaining constant over the past three years, the combined cost has increased by 2.3% in the past 12 months, from £156.88 to £160.43 per premise. An increase in disposal costs during this period (from £91.47 to £97.02) counter to the trend in previous years is driving this change. This increase cancels out a 3.1% reduction in collection costs across the same period The range across Scotland for combined costs was £99.95 to £231.48.

Net Cost of Waste Collection and Disposal Per Premise

Year	Collection	Disposal	Total
2012/13	61.26	95.62	156.88
2013/14	62.50	93.80	156.31
2014/15	65.41	91.47	156.88
2015/16	63.40	97.02	160.43

Net Cost of Waste Collection and Disposal Per Premise



Source: Council supplied expenditure and premise figures

__Fife Council__ reduced waste management costs through changes to the level and type of service provided (for example moving to Twin Shift Patterns and Vehicle Utilisation.) Fife also developed the resource management company Resource Efficient Solutions (REFSOL), the first council owned arm's length organisation in Scotland to deal with refuse collection and disposal, which introduces opportunities to generate income for the service.

Waste Collection

Over the four-year period from 2012/13 to 2015/16, the Scottish average cost per premise for waste collection increased from £61.26 to £63.40, representing a real terms percentage increase of 3.5%. While the number of premises increased by 2.8% during this period, the total net spend increased by 5.5%.

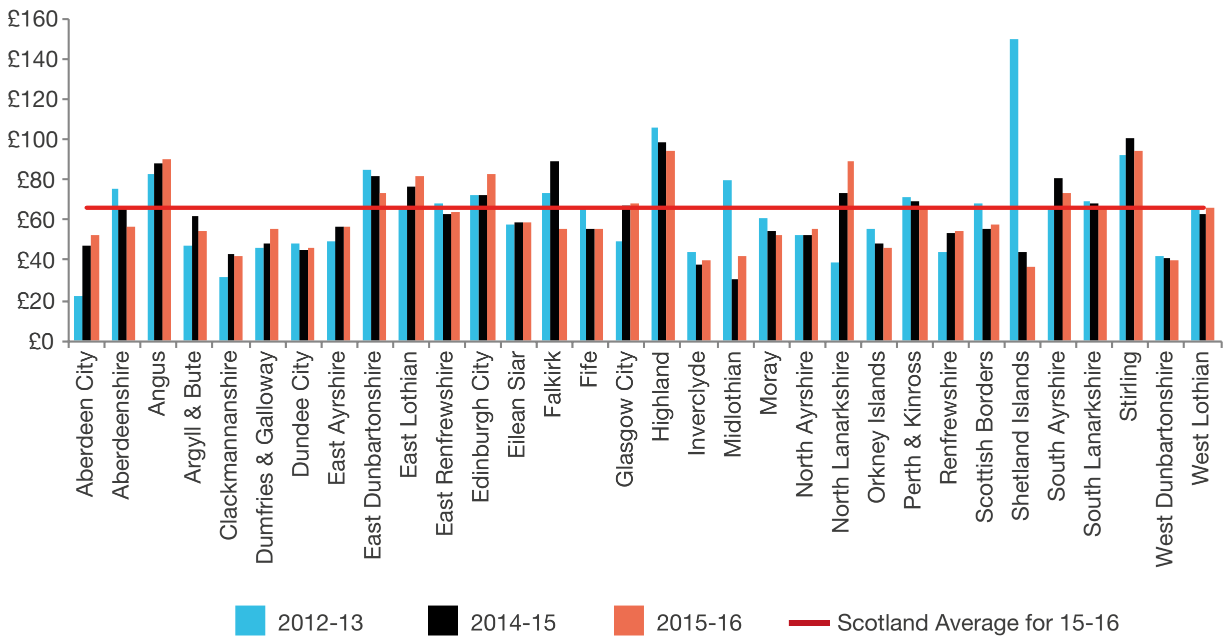
However, there has been a reduction of 3.1% in waste collection costs in the past 12 months. This reflects a reduction of 1.6% in net expenditure and an increase of 0.6% in premises served.

Net Cost of Waste Collection

% Change	Cash	Real
2012/13 - 2015/16	7.2	3.5
2012/13 - 2013/14	3.7	2.0
2013/14 - 2014/15	6.2	4.6
2014/15 - 2015/16	-2.6	-3.1

There is considerable variation between councils in waste collection, with costs in 2015/16 ranging from £36.60 to £94.40. This range has narrowed since 2012/13, reflecting an increase in costs at the lower end.

Net Cost of Waste Collection Per Premise



Source: Council supplied expenditure and premise figures

__Scottish Borders__ Council reduced waste management collection costs by focusing on the collection of business intelligence, route optimisation, and making changes to the level of service provided (for example stopping bi-weekly garden waste collection).

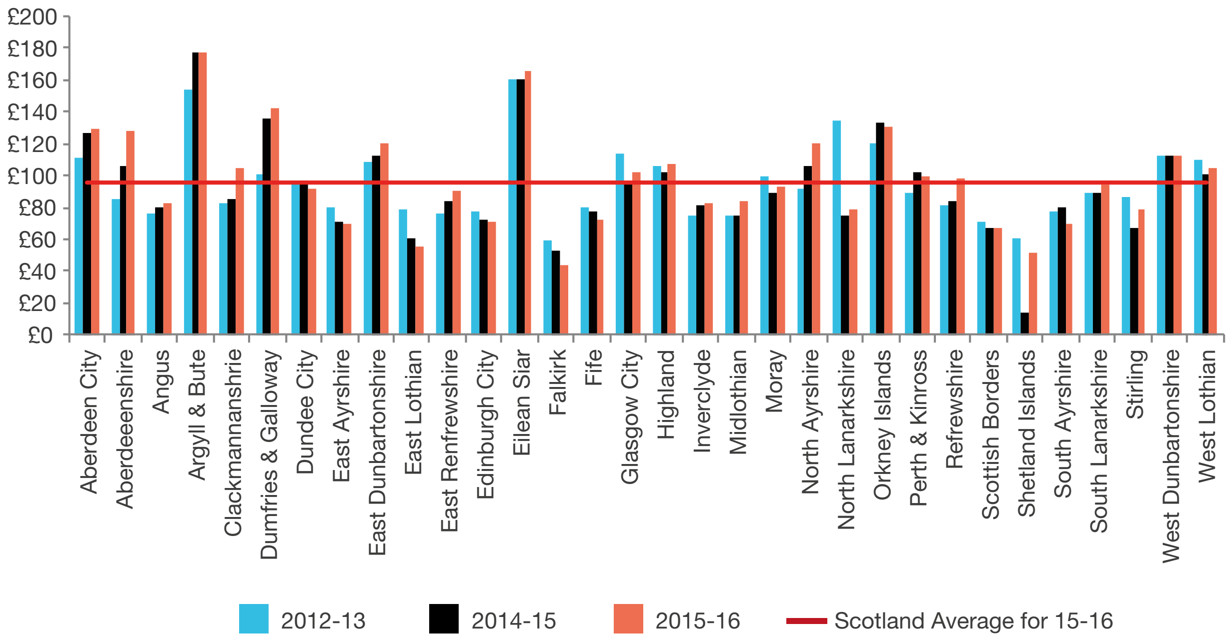
Waste disposal

Over the four-year period from 2012/13 to 2015/16 the Scottish average net cost of waste disposal has increased by 1.5%, from £95.62 to £97.02. Across this period, there has been a small increase in the number of premises served (2.8%), accompanied by a larger 3.4% increase in net expenditure. Net expenditure increased by 6.8% in the past 12 months after reducing in previous years, leading to a 6.1% increase in cost per premise between 2014/15 and 2015/16. In 2015/16, the range in disposal costs across councils was £43.90 to £176.82.

Net Cost of Waste Disposal

% Change	Cash	Real
2012/13 - 2015/16	5.1	1.5
2012/13 - 2013/14	-0.3	-1.9
2013/14 - 2014/15	-1.0	-2.5
2014/15 - 2015/16	6.5	6.1

Net Cost of Waste Disposal Per Premise



Source: Council supplied expenditure and premise figures

__Falkirk Council__ have implemented several interlinking, innovative changes to service provision since 2013. For example they were the first local authority to move to 3 weekly and then 4 weekly collections for residual waste and then also introduced a 4 weekly brown bin collection. This has resulted in increased levels of recycling and reduced costs for disposal and collection.

Recycling

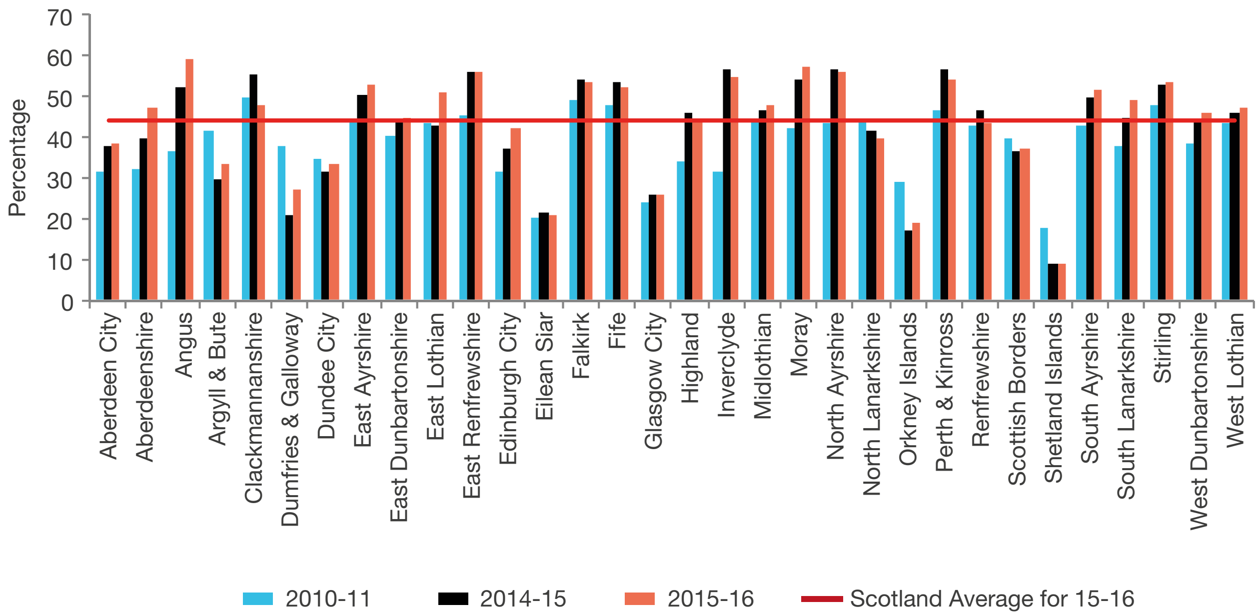
Over recent years, councils have put greater emphasis on the recycling of waste in compliance with the National Zero Waste Plan.[21] Recycling rates continue to improve across Scotland from 41% in 2011/12 to 44.3% in 2015/16 as efforts are made to achieve Scotland's Zero Waste 60% household waste recycling target by 2020. From 2014/15, the recycling rate used a new calculation used from that in previous years and so is not directly comparable with previous years. It might also be useful to note that, for individual authorities, the new SEPA recycling definition may result in a slightly lower recycling rate than the previous definition.

Percentage of Total Household Waste that is Recycled

Year	Percentage of waste recycled
2010/11	38.7
2011/12	41.0
2012/13	41.7
2013/14	42.2
2014/15	42.8
2015/16	44.3

There is a significant and widening variation across Scotland in recycling rates, from 26.0% to 59.2%.

Percentage of Household Waste Arising that is Recycled



Source: WasteDataFlow, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

21 Source: Scotland's Zero Waste Plan, Scottish Government, www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/06/08092645/0

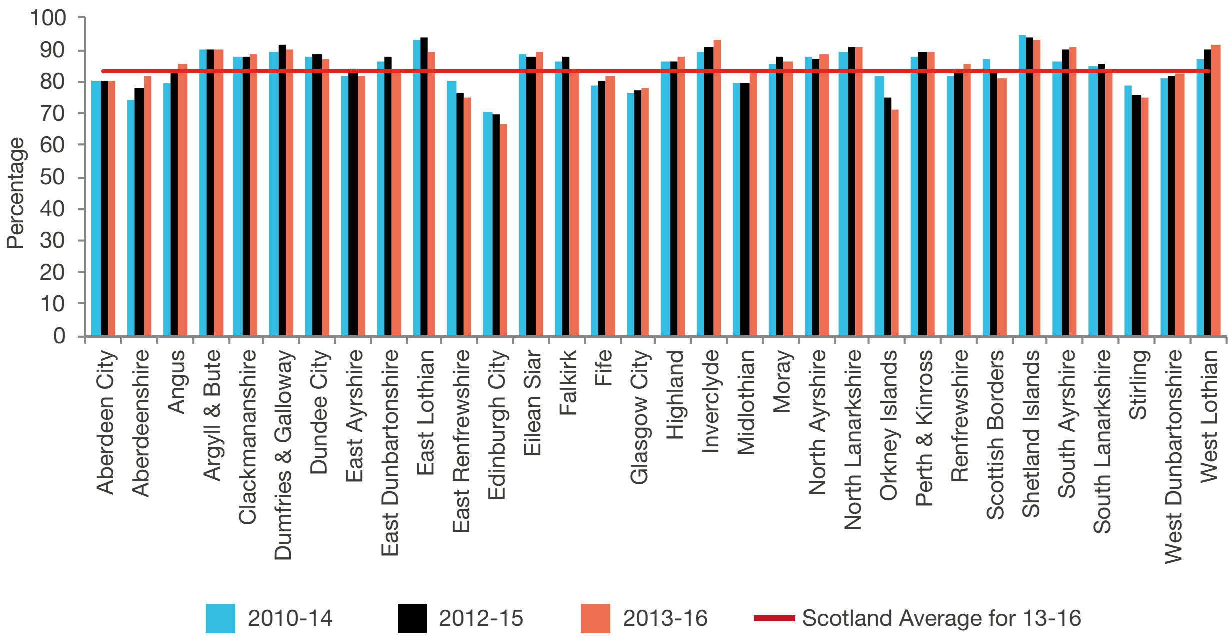
Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Waste Collection

Year	Waste Collection % Satisfied
2010/11	81
2012/13	83
2013/14	83
2014/15	84
2015/16	82

Satisfaction levels for waste collection remain extremely high at above 80%, although, as with other services, there has been a small reduction in the past 12 months from 84% to 82%. Satisfaction levels range from 67% to 93.3% across Scotland, and are not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council.

As noted previously, the satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while robust at Scotland level, there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the very small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, three year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Refuse Collection



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 impacting on the quality of people's lives.

Street cleanliness is presented using the Street Cleanliness Score, which is produced by Keep Scotland Beautiful.[22] This 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.

22 Source: Keep Scotland Beautiful, www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org

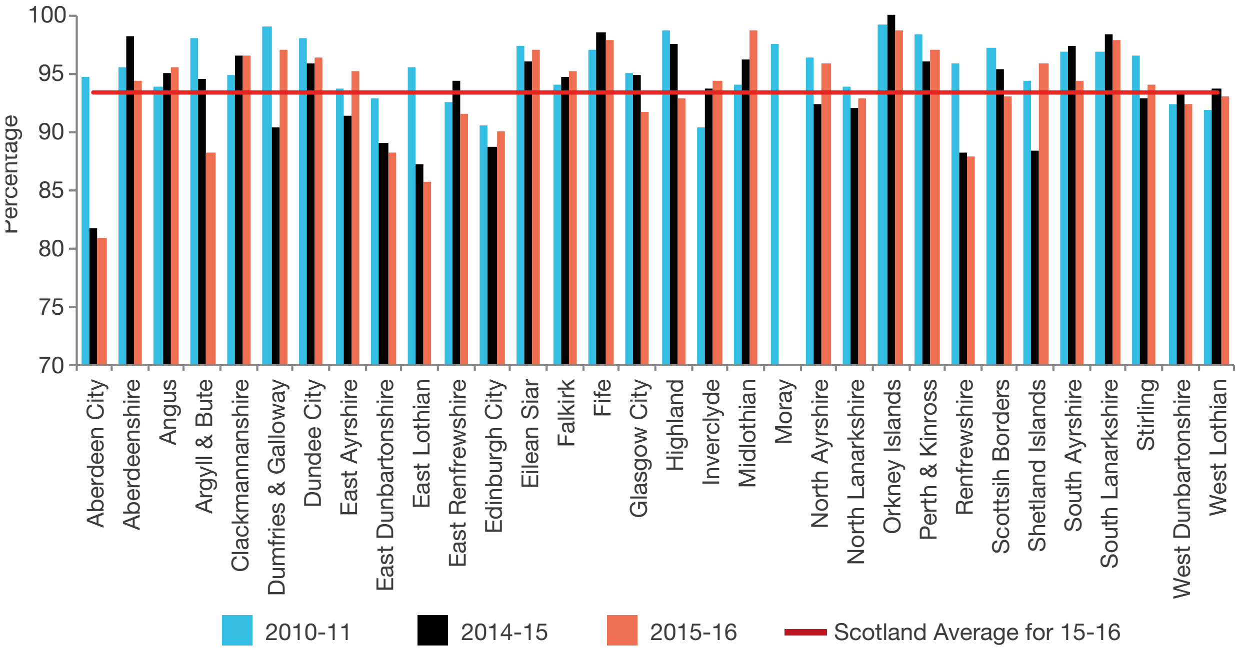
The Scottish average for the Cleanliness Score has remained above 90% since the base year, but has reduced by 2.7 percentage points from 96.1% to 93.4% in the last two years.

Percentage of Clean Streets

Year	% Clean Streets
2010/11	95.4
2011/12	96.1
2012/13	95.8
2013/14	96.1
2014/15	93.9
2015/16	93.4

The range in scores across councils has widened since the base year, mainly due to reductions in the minimum value. In 15/16, cleanliness scores ranged from 81.0% to 98.7%.

Street Cleanliness Score



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

Midlothian *have undertaken a more targeted approach targeting hotspot areas and increasing mechanisation, both of which have reduced cost and increased cleanliness.*

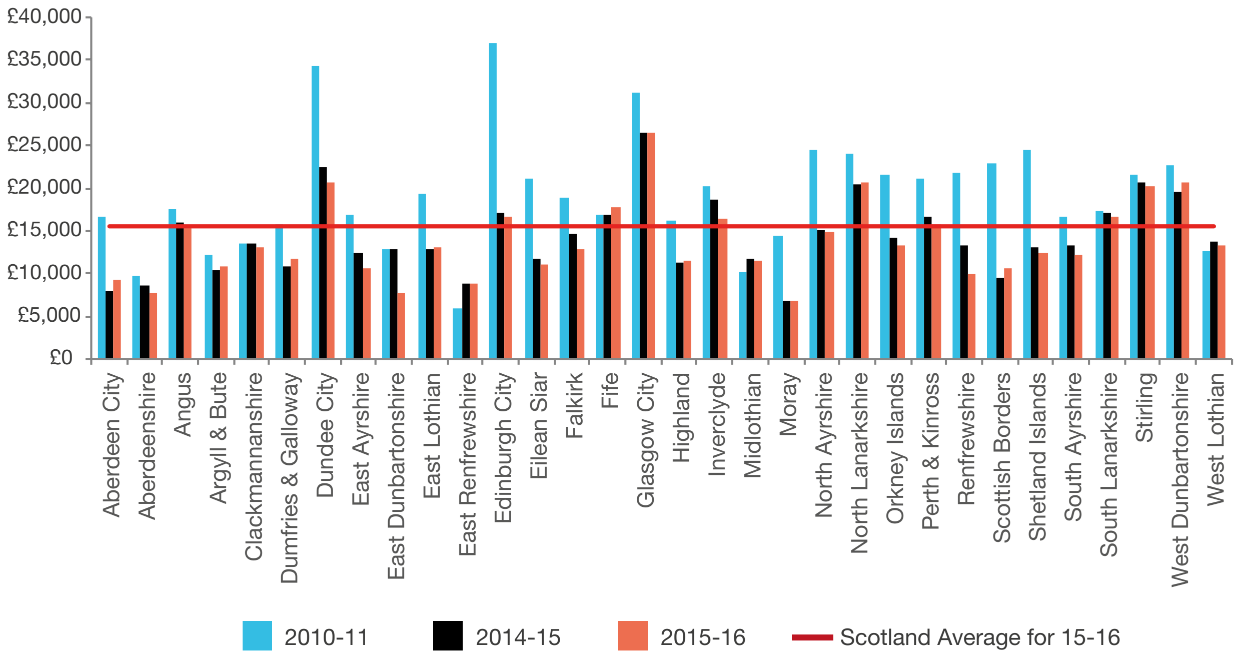
Edinburgh Council *implemented a preventative approach through the 'Our Edinburgh' initiative, which aims to address anti-social behaviour such as littering, fly-tipping and dumped trade waste to clean up the streets and educate residents about waste disposal. The first phase resulted in a 52% increase in the amount of litter collected from bins and there has been a reduction in costs from 2010/11-15/16.*

Over the same six-year period, the Scottish average for Net Cost of Street Cleaning has reduced by 27.3%, from £21,294 to £15,480. This rate of reduction reflects a year-on-year reduction in costs although this has slowed in the last 12 months.

Net Cost of Street Cleaning per 1,000 Population

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-22.0	-27.3
2010/11 - 2011/12	-2.4	-3.7
2011/12 - 2012/13	-9.5	-11.4
2012/13 - 2013/14	-7.4	-8.9
2013/14 - 2014/15	-2.6	-4.0
2014/15 - 2015/16	-2.1	-2.6

Cost of Street Cleaning Per 1,000 Population



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

The range across councils varies significantly (from £6,879 to £26,460, with the Scottish average at £15,480). This range has narrowed significantly over this period due to reductions at the higher cost end.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Street Cleaning

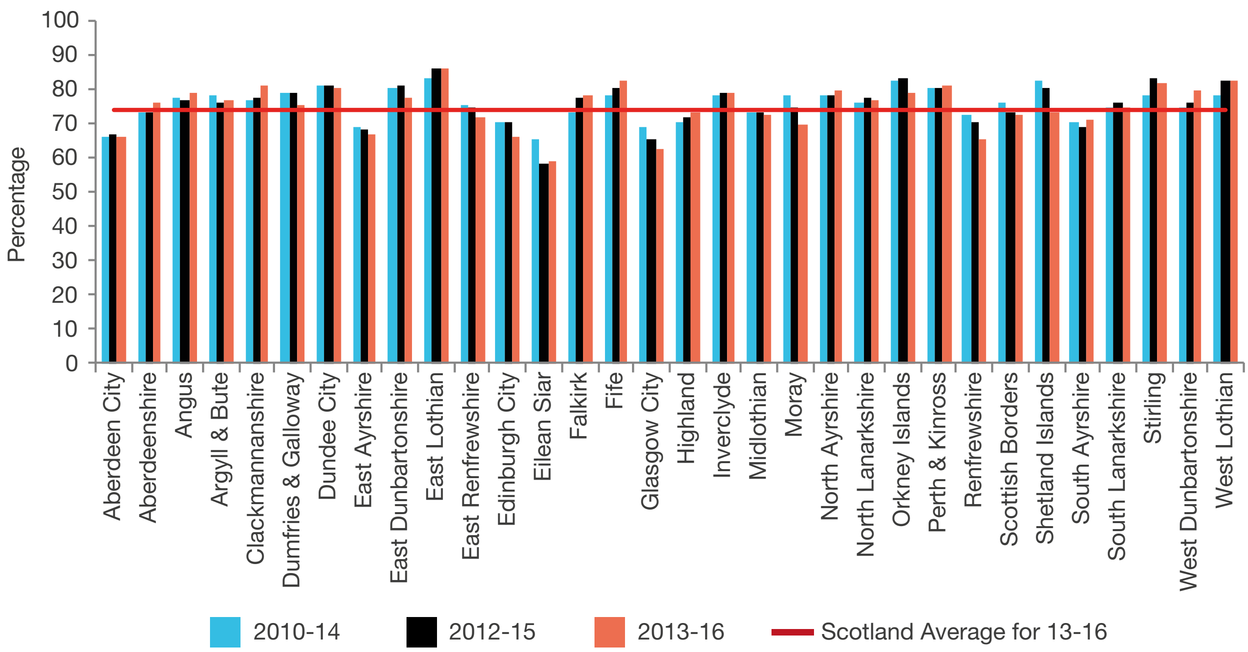
Satisfaction levels for street cleaning remain high at above 70%, however rates have reduced slightly since 2012/13, from 75% to 73%. It is encouraging to note that the substantial efficiencies that have been introduced in delivering this service do not appear to have had a significantly detrimental impact on public satisfaction. Looking at both the street cleanliness score and satisfaction levels, this indicates great care has been taken to protect key areas of public concern even in the context of reducing budgets.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Street Cleaning

Year	Street Cleaning % satisfied
2010/11	73
2012/13	75
2013/14	74
2014/15	74
2015/16	73

As noted previously, the satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while robust at Scotland level, there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, three year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels. Using this methodology, satisfaction levels range from 58.7% to 85.7% across Scotland. The variation is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Percentage of Adults Satisfied with Street Cleaning



Source: Scottish Household Survey, Scottish Government

Roads Maintenance

Roads maintenance costs are represented in this framework using a cost of roads maintenance per kilometre measure. This measure includes both revenue and capital expenditure. The condition of the roads network is represented by the percentage of roads in various classes which require maintenance treatment.

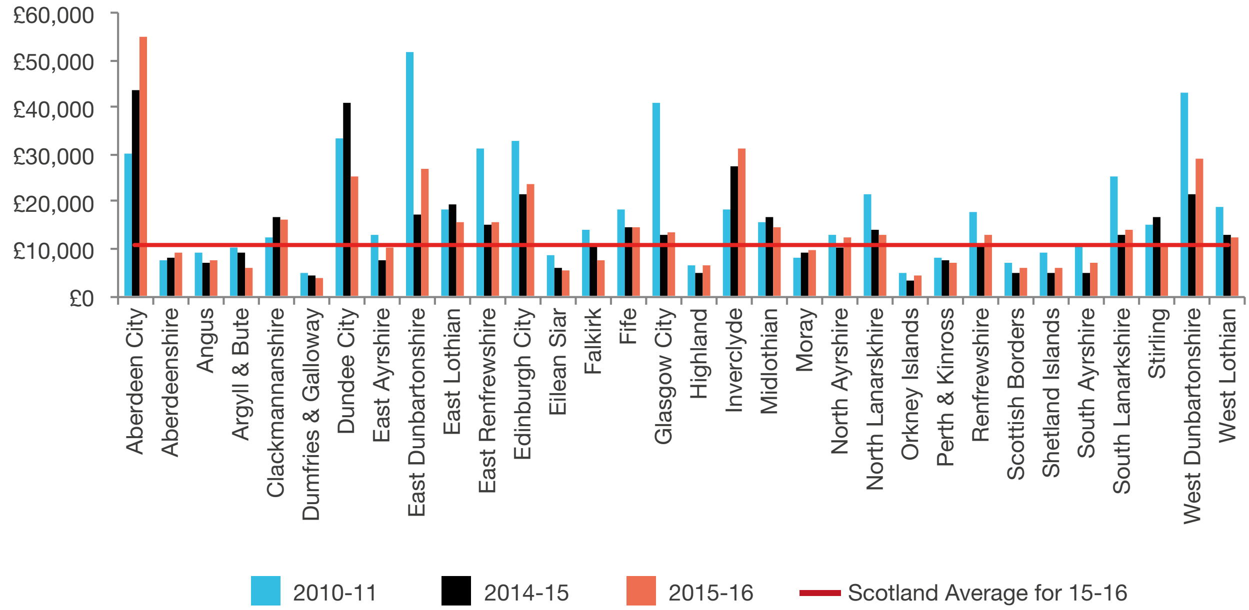
For the six years for which we have data, the Scottish average cost per kilometre fell by 15.5% from £14,652 to £12,384. Although there has been an overall reduction across the period, expenditure patterns have not followed a consistent downward pattern across the period. Fluctuations in winter maintenance expenditure associated with severity of winters may be an important factor here.

Cost of Maintenance Per Kilometre of Road

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-16.7	-15.5
2010/11 - 2011/12	-9.1	-9.9
2011/12 - 2012/13	-2.1	17.9
2012/13 - 2013/14	-3.9	-9.7
2013/14 - 2014/15	-7.1	-14.1
2014/15 - 2015/16	4.7	2.5

There exists significant variation in the range of maintenance costs across councils, although this has narrowed since the base year. In 2015/16 costs ranged from £3,997 to £31,164 across councils (excluding Aberdeen which is an outlier at £55,152).

Cost of Maintenance Per Kilometre of Road



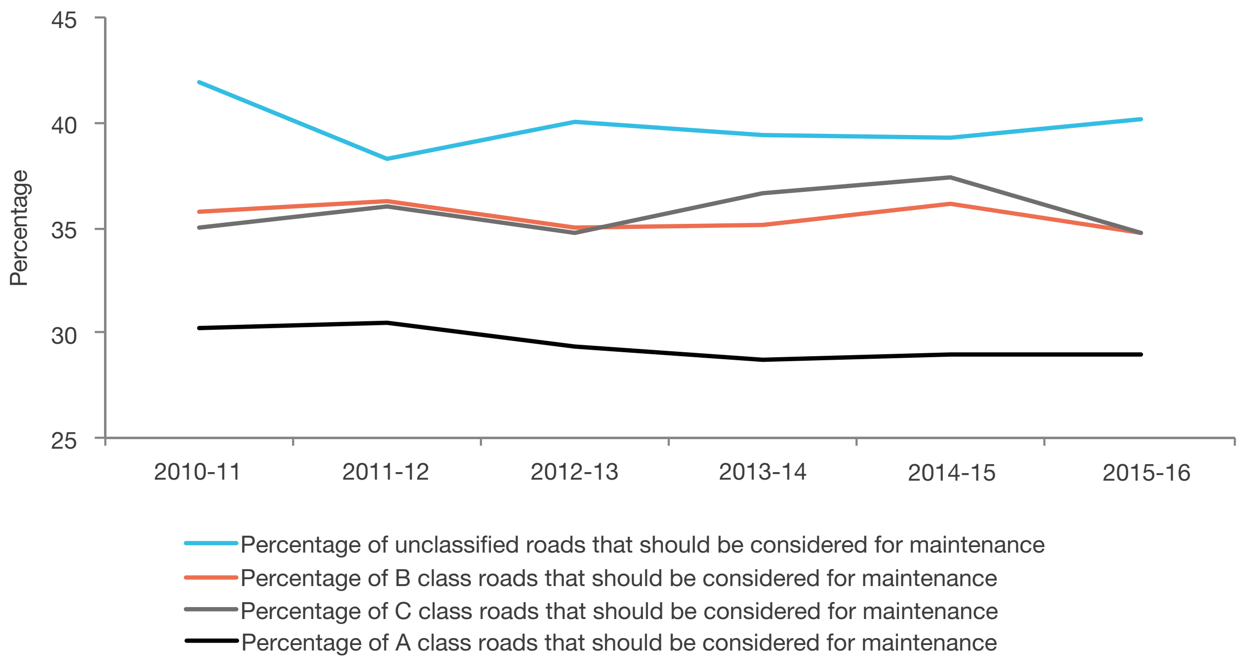
Source: Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) / Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) returns; council supplied expenditure figures

In terms of the condition of the road network, over the six-year period covered by this report, the overall condition of all class of roads has improved. Despite the significant reductions on spending therefore, the condition of key parts of the roads networks has improved.
Over the past 12 months, there has been an improvement across B class and C class roads, the condition of A class roads has remained constant, with only Unclassified roads deteriorating during this period.

Percentage of A, B, C class and Unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance

Year	% A class roads to be maintained	% B class roads to be maintained	% C class roads to be maintained	% unclassified class roads to be maintained
2009/11	30.3	35.8	35.0	41.9
2010/12	30.5	36.3	36.0	38.3
2011/13	29.4	35.0	34.8	40.1
2012/14	28.7	35.2	36.6	39.4
2013/15	29.0	36.1	37.3	39.3
2014/16	29.0	34.8	34.7	40.1

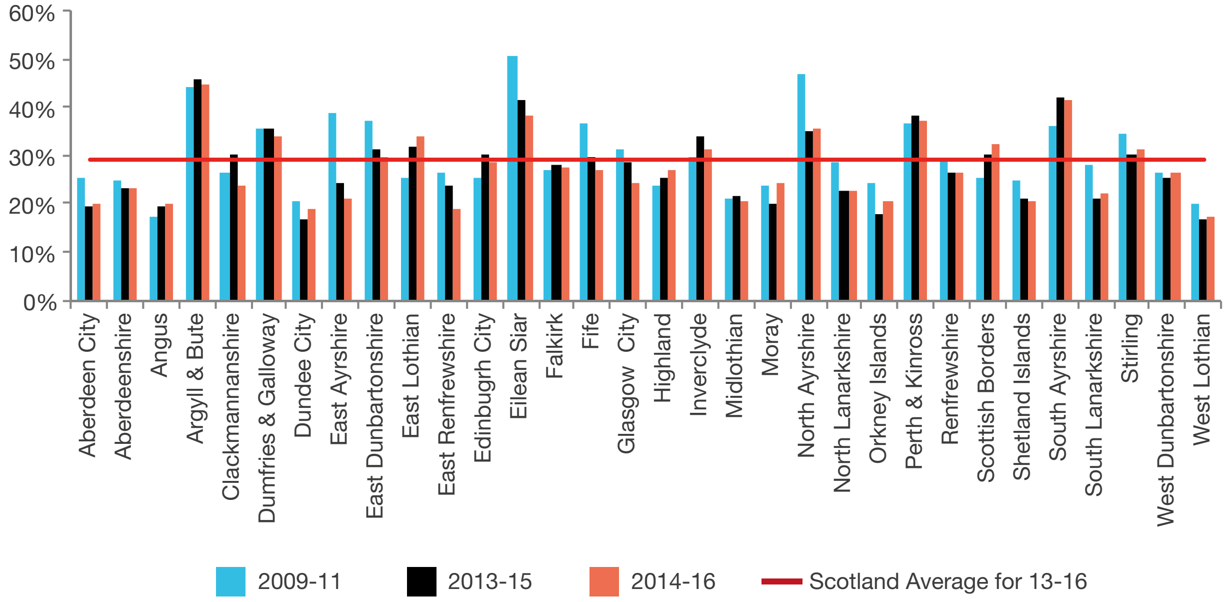
Percentage of A, B, C, Unclassified Roads Which Should Be Considered for Maintenance Treatment



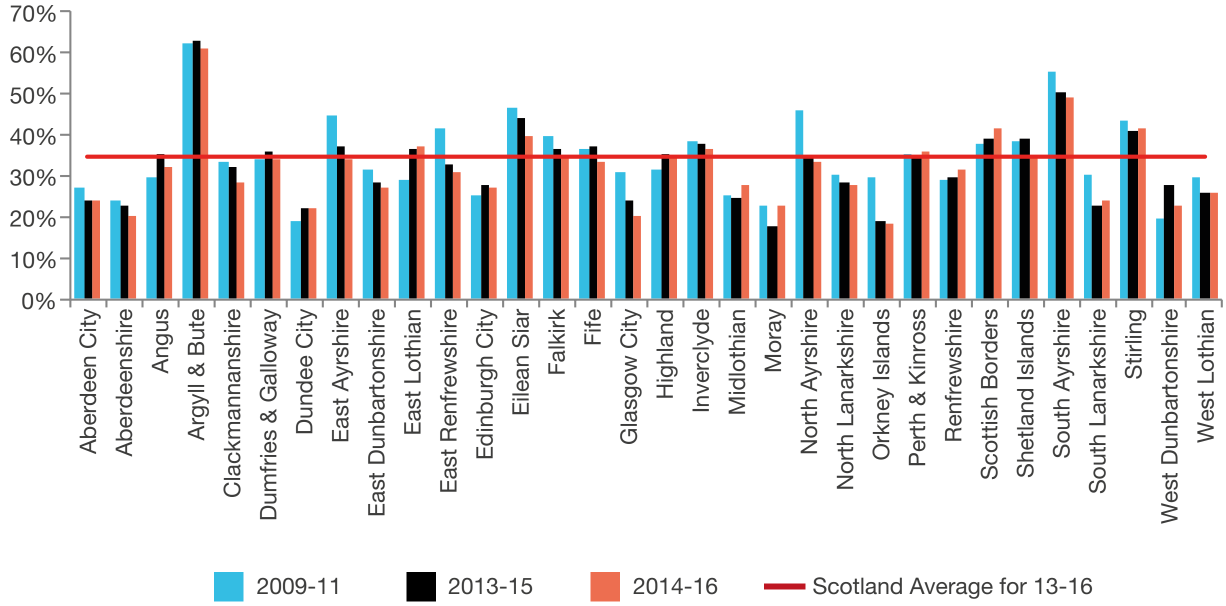
Source: Roads Asset Management Database, Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS)

The variation in condition varies significantly across Scotland for all classes of road, however this has narrowed since the base year. In 2015/16, the range for A class roads is 17% to 45%; B class roads is 18.4% to 61.0%; C Class roads is 15% to 58%; and for Unclassified Roads the range is 24% to 59%.

Percentage of A Class Roads Requiring Maintenance

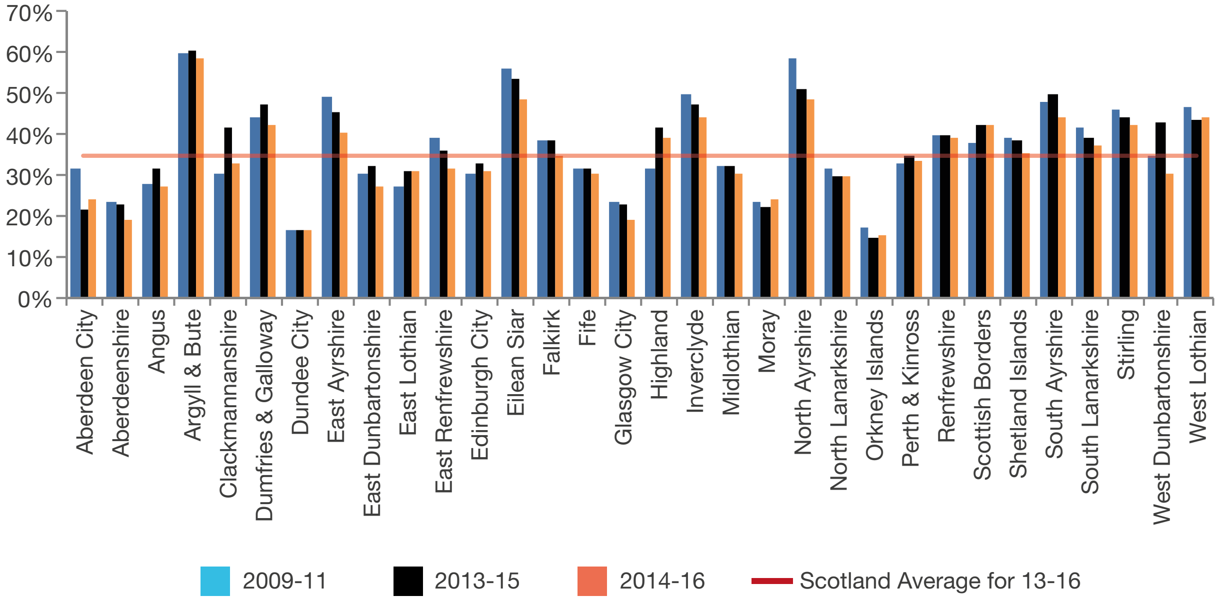


Percentage of B Class Roads Requiring Maintenance

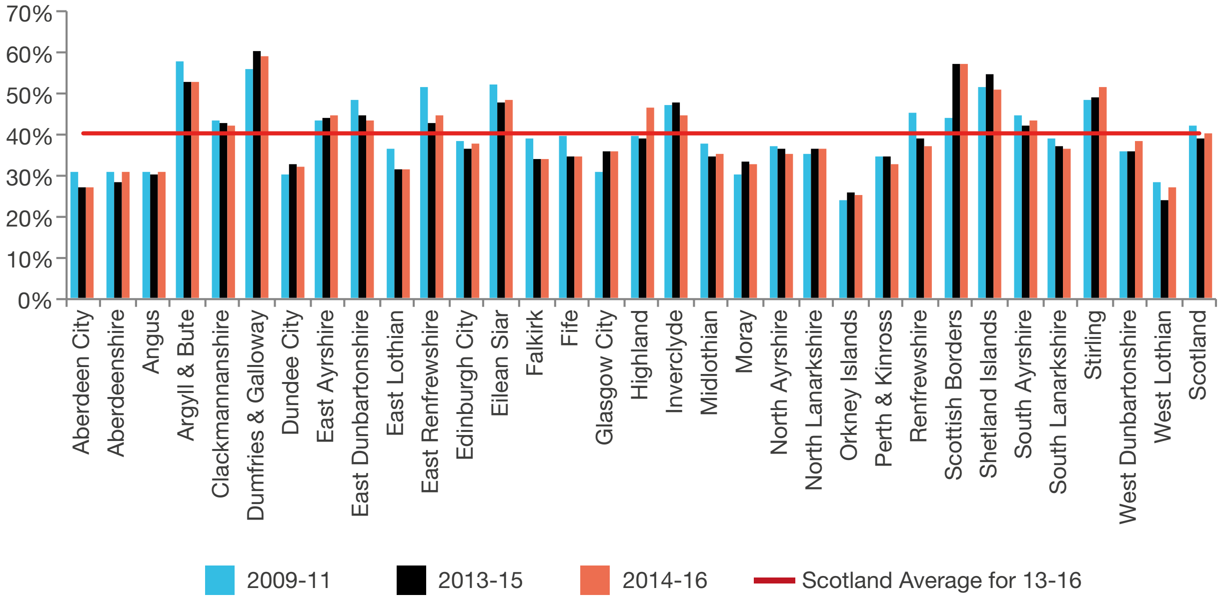


Source: Roads Asset Management Database, Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS)

Percentage of C Class Roads Requiring Maintenance



Percentage of Unclassified Roads Requiring Maintenance



Environmental Health and Trading Standards

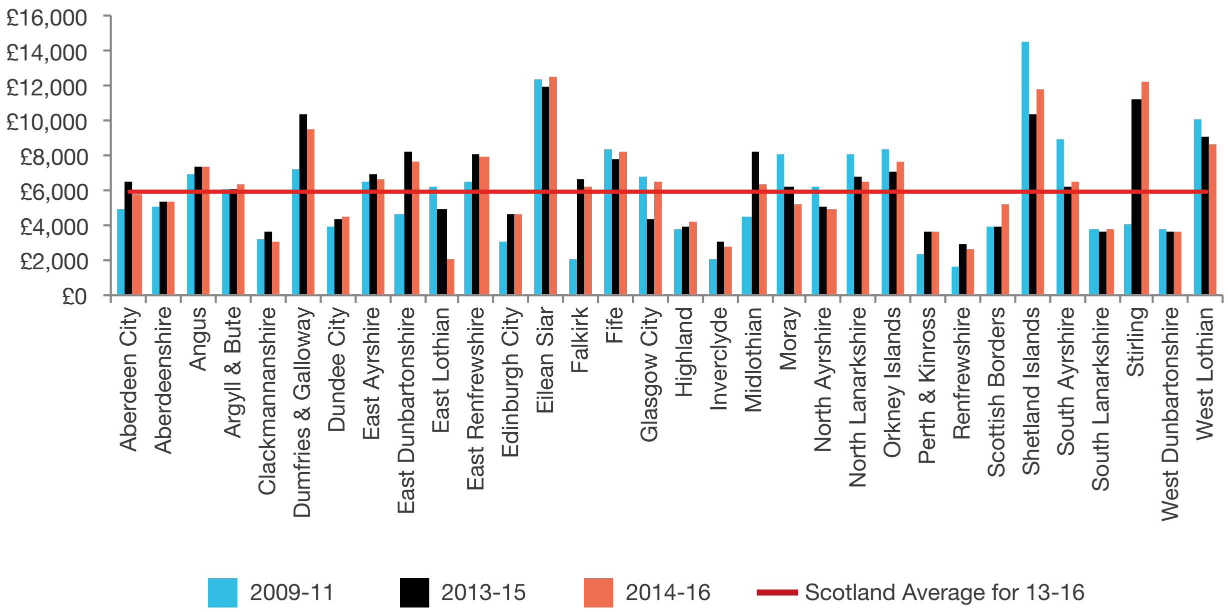
Since 2010/11, environmental health & trading standards costs have reduced by 12.8% from £26,064 to £22,723, with most of this reduction taking place between 2010/11 and 2011/12. In 2012/13, the framework split these measures to enable a better understanding of the trends in each of these services.

Since 2012/13, there has been a 6.7% increase in the cost of trading standards services per 1,000 population, from £5,502 to £5,873. In 2015/16, costs ranged from £1,999 to £12,523. Across this same period, there was a 5.1% reduction in the cost of environmental health services per 1,000 population, from £17,750 to £16,849, with costs ranging from £7,402 to £27,845 in 2015/16. The geographical nature of the council has a systematic impact on the cost of environmental health, with higher costs for rural councils (£18,914) than urban (£16,988) or semi-rural (£13,792). Rural authorities also tend to have higher trading standards costs (£6,364) compared to £5,726 in urban authorities, although this difference is not statistically significant.

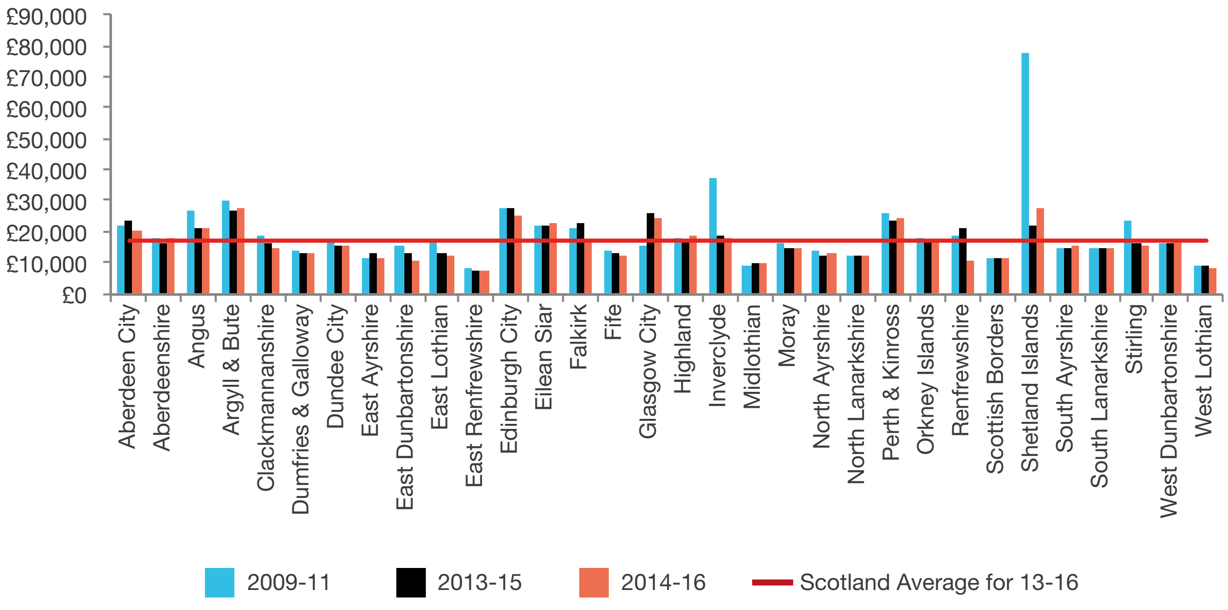
Cost of Trading Standards and Environmental Health Per 1,000 population

	Trading Standards		Environmental Health	
% Change	Cash	Real	Cash	Real
2012/13 - 2015/16	10.6	6.7	-1.6	-5.1
2012/13 - 2013/14	7.3	5.6	6.6	4.9
2013/14 - 2014/15	0.7	-0.8	-3.1	-4.5
2014/15 - 2015/16	2.3	1.9	-4.8	-5.2

Cost of Trading Standards Per 1,000 Population



Cost of Environmental Health Per 1,000 Population



Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in Environmental Services

Local political/strategic priority given to the role of environmental services in supporting improvements in wider outcomes and tackling inequalities

Workforce composition and demographic profile

Working practices, e.g. shift patterns

Service integration (e.g. Waste Management, Roads, Street Cleaning, Parks Services)

Collection programmes, frequencies and type/model of service (e.g. co-mingled)

Asset management approaches – e.g. super depots and leased vehicles

Stage in Investment cycle

Whether councils have landfills in their authority area which will require investment up to and beyond their closure dates over the next 5 years.

Contract and procurement costs

Access to external funding streams

Rural/urban nature of authorities has an important and significant influence on the cost of Environmental services

Corporate Services

Support Services

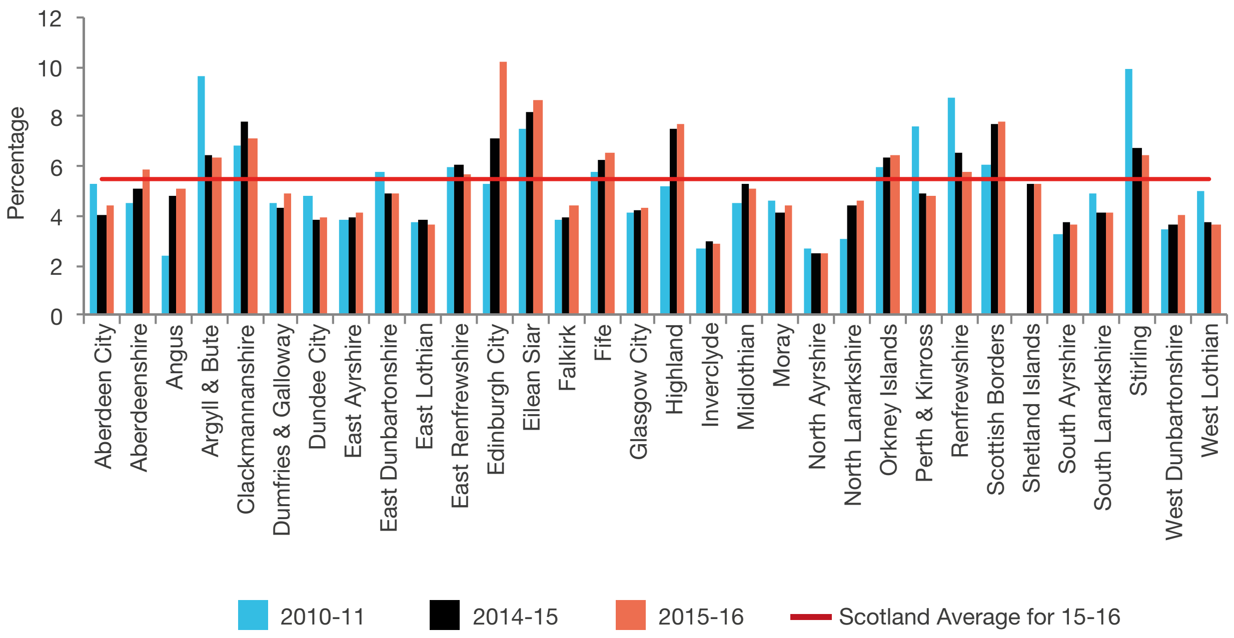
Corporate support services within councils cover a wide range of functions including finance, human resources, corporate management, payroll, legal services and a number of other corporate functions.

In 2015/16 the Scottish average among councils for the cost of support services as a percentage of the total revenue budget of a council was 5.4%. an increase from 4.9% in 2010/11. Spend on support services has reduced by 0.8% during this 6-year period, however there has been a proportionately larger reduction in the total revenue budget of councils which has reduced by 11%.

In the last 12 months however, expenditure on support services has increased by 8%. Significant digital investment and increasing centralisation of support services may be important factors contributing to this trend. However, it is also possible an element of this increase is due to improved reporting following refined guidance from the Scottish Government in their financial return.

In 2015/16 the range across councils is from 2.5% to 10.2%, with clear differences between urban, rural and semi-rural councils. In general terms support services represent a higher percentage of the total gross expenditure in rural authorities than urban and semi-rural councils; the rates were 6.3% on average for rural councils and 4.3% and 4.4% for urban and semi-rural councils respectively.

Support Services as a Percentage of Total Gross Expenditure



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

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 2015/16, the Scottish average for the cost of the democratic core per 1,000 of population was £29,981. Over the six-year period 2010/11 to 2015/16 the cost reduced by 16.5% in real terms.

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in Support Services

Workforce composition and structure – workforce exit; staff terms & conditions; role redefinition

Asset Management and rationalisation

Service redesign – service integration; centralisation; self-service;

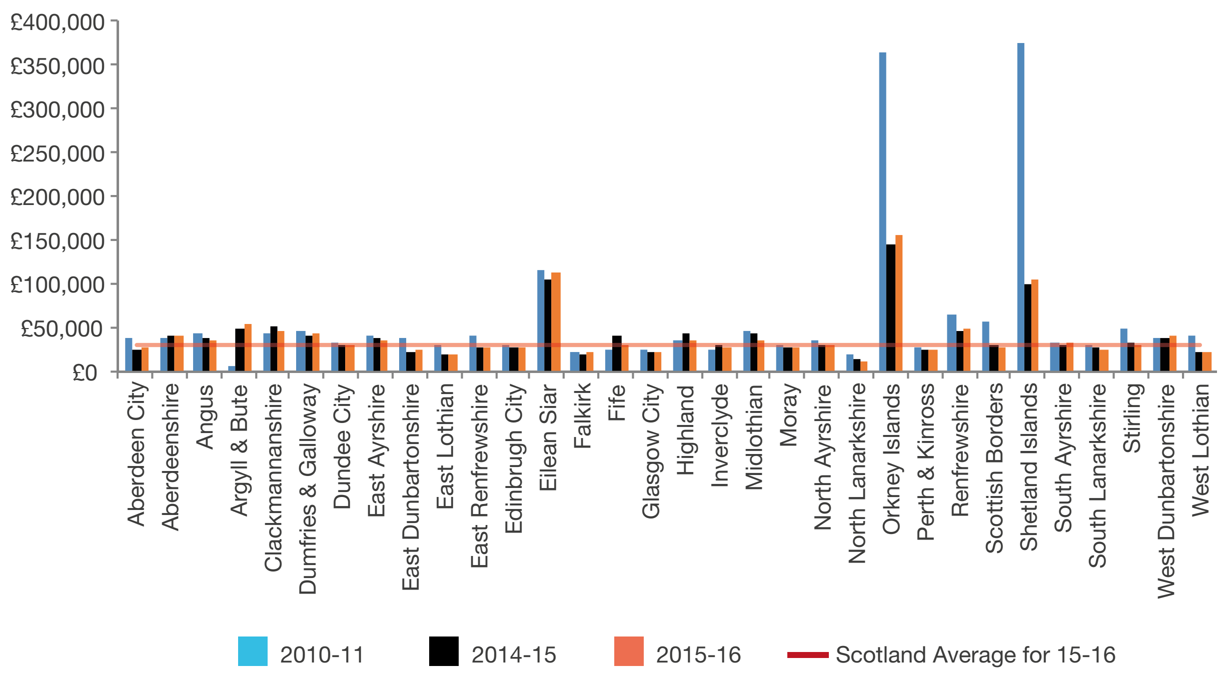
Digital Strategy

Cost of Democratic Core Per 1,000 Population

% Change	Cash	Real
2010/11 - 2015/16	-10.4	-16.5
2010/11 - 2011/12	-6.0	-7.3
2011/12 - 2012/13	1.0	-1.1
2012/13 - 2013/14	0.8	-0.9
2013/14 - 2014/15	-4.2	-5.6
2014/15 - 2015/16	-2.3	-2.8

In 2015/16, there remains significantly large variation across councils although this has narrowed since the base year. Excluding the islands which are significant outliers, costs range from £12,490 to £53,148, This range widens to £12,490 to £152,699 including islands. Rural councils have significantly higher costs than urban/semi-rural equivalents (£42,493 for rural councils on average compared to £26,503 and £29,296 for urban/semi-rural respectively). These figures indicate the higher costs 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.

Cost of Democratic Core Per 1,000 Population



Source: Mid year population estimates, National Records Scotland: Council expenditure figures

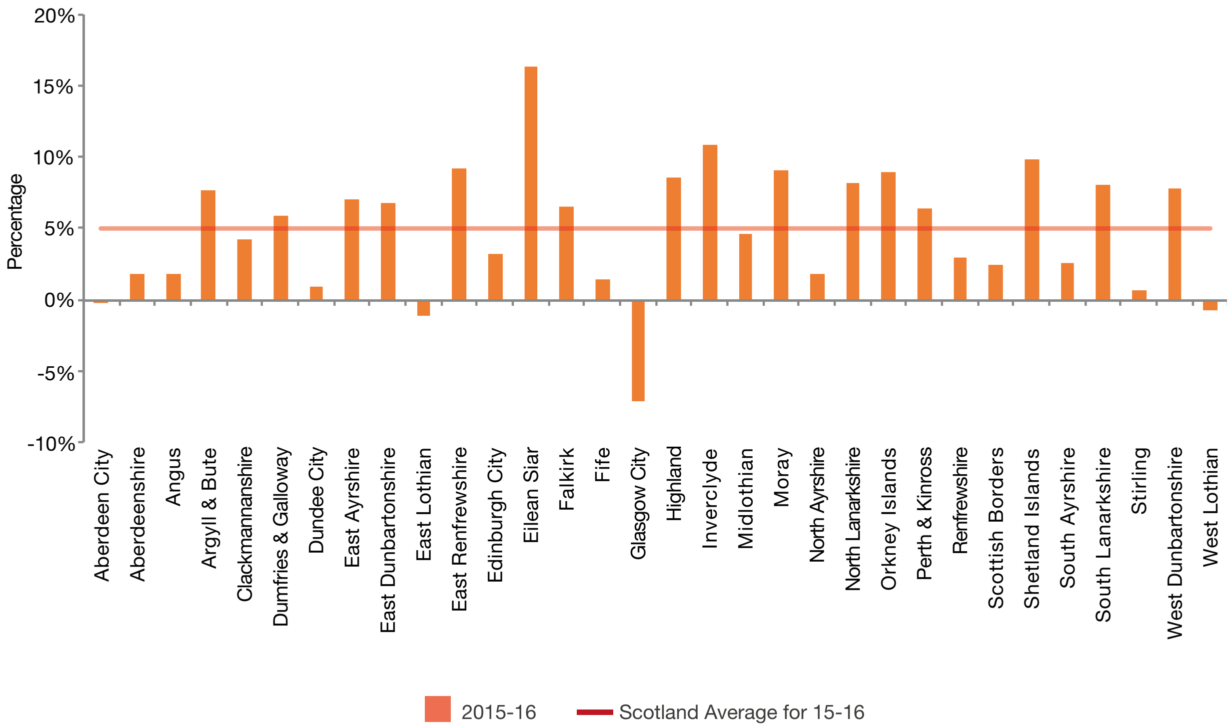
Gender Equality

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 2015/16 this has increased from 46.3% to 51.7%. The range across councils is from 23% to 61%.

While this is an important measure reflecting the progress which has been made in relation to gender equality in senior positions, there is a need to capture the progress being made across the wider workforce. As such, we have been working with councils and other partners to include a measure on the Gender Pay Gap which is introduced here for the first time. The Gender Pay Gap represents the difference between men's and women's earnings and is a key measure under the Public Sector Equality Duty. This measure takes the average hourly rate of pay (excluding overtime) for female employees and divides this by average hourly rate for male employees (also excluding overtime). Both part-time and full-time employees are included. As this is the first year of inclusion, this measure will be subject to review and on-going development across the coming period.

In 2015/16, the Gender Pay Gap was 4.98%, ranging from -7.0% to 16.4%. Those staff employed via arms-length organisations are not included within the calculation, which will influence the variability observed and may be important in understanding the figures observed for Glasgow.

Gender Pay Gap

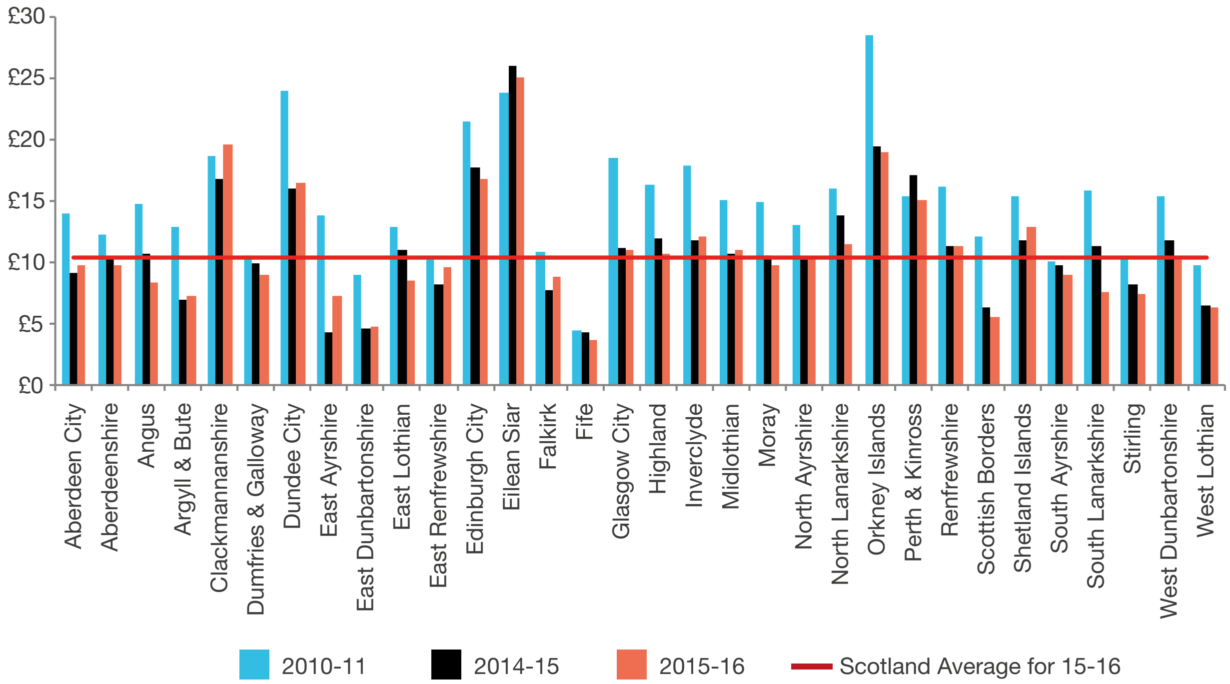


Council Tax

The cost of collecting Council Tax is measured on a per property basis to standardise the measure across councils. Over the six-year period from 2010/11 to 2015/16, this has reduced by 30.2%, from £14.81 to £10.34. There has been a year-on-year reduction in costs, which has accelerated in recent years.

The range however varies significantly from £3.65 to £24.98, with medium-sized councils reporting the lowest costs. A key factor driving the reduction in costs is the continued digital transformation and shift to embrace new technology and automation.

Cost of Collecting Council Tax (£)



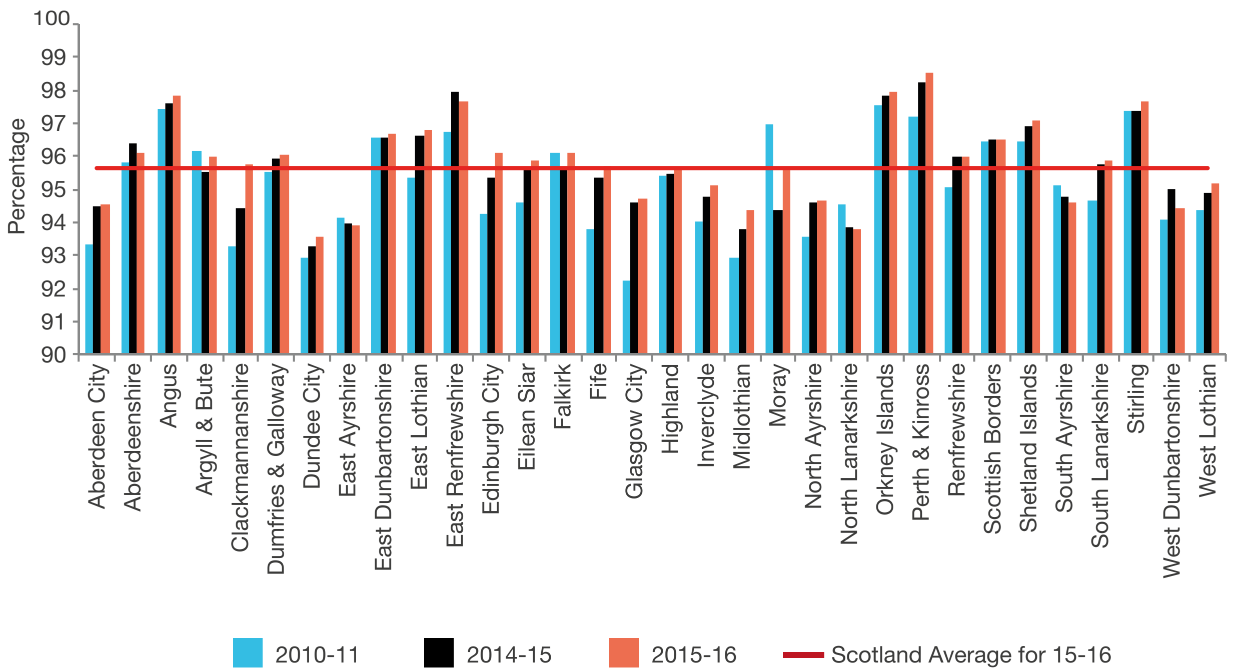
Source: Council supplied figures

At the same time as the reduction in unit costs, the overall rate of in-year collection for Council Tax has remained high and shown steady improvement from 94.7% in 2010/11 to 95.7% in 2015/16. This has been achieved despite the challenges created by a difficult economic climate and significant welfare reform.

The range across councils is 93.6% to 98.5% with a significant pattern in relation to rurality and level of deprivation. The roll-out of Universal Credit is likely to further exacerbate this over the coming period.

***Fife Council** has low and reducing collection costs along with high collection rates. The council has focused on channel shift by investing in digital methods to reduce the number of council tax reminders issued, administration costs and incoming calls.*

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



***Eilean Siar** Council traditionally had higher costs for Council Tax collection with a lower collection rate. Benchmarking was undertaken with all other councils to ascertain the timescales they used for council tax debt recovery and identify options for change to increase council tax collection. Following this research, the service's recovery timetables were amended resulting in an increase in recovery performance.*

***East Ayrshire Council** expanded council tax payment options and used a targeted approach, including cold calling, to improve contact with hard to reach customers and reduce administration costs. The Council has significantly reduced the cost of collecting council tax (47% reduction to below the Scotland and family group average), without having a detrimental impact..*

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in Council Tax performance

Channel Shift to greater automation and self-service (both customer facing and back office)

Structural variations in relation to council owned or transferred housing stock and the impact of discount/exemption/CTR take-up on collection

Procedural variations such as:

- *Local set ups – Revenues and Benefits, shared service etc*
- *Impact of annual/regular billing regimes on subsequent collection and recover*
- *Types/variety of accessible payment options, particularly the level of Direct Debit payment*
- *Follow-up and recovery timetables*
- *Payment arrangement guidelines*
- *Impact of 'water only' debt and success of DWP collections (including Water Direct)*
- *Working with others – RSL's, Educational Establishments, Advice Sector*

Recovery and Enforcement approaches, e.g.

- *Corporate debt strategies (refunds/offsets etc)*
- *In-house recovery activity*
- *Pre and post warrant intervention*
- *Use of available diligence and enforcement actions*
- *Relations with/management of third party collectors (Sheriff Officers etc.)*

Asset Management and rationalisation in relation to office premises

Rurality - rural councils have higher collection rates (96.1% compared to 94.7% for urban and 95.6% for semi-rural authorities)

Deprivation - the least deprived councils have higher collection rates (96.9% in the family group with lowest levels of deprivation compared to 94.6% family group with the highest levels in the most deprived councils). The collection rates vary by council tax banding, with lower collection rates achieved for properties in the lowest value council tax bandings (A-D). Therefore, councils with a lower proportion of properties in the lowest value council tax banding (A-D) have on average a higher collection rate (96.7%) than councils with a higher proportion of properties in the lowest value council tax banding (95.1%). This trend is consistent across all years[23]

23 Source: Local Government Finance Statistics, Scottish Government, http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Local-Government-Finance/PubScottishLGFStats

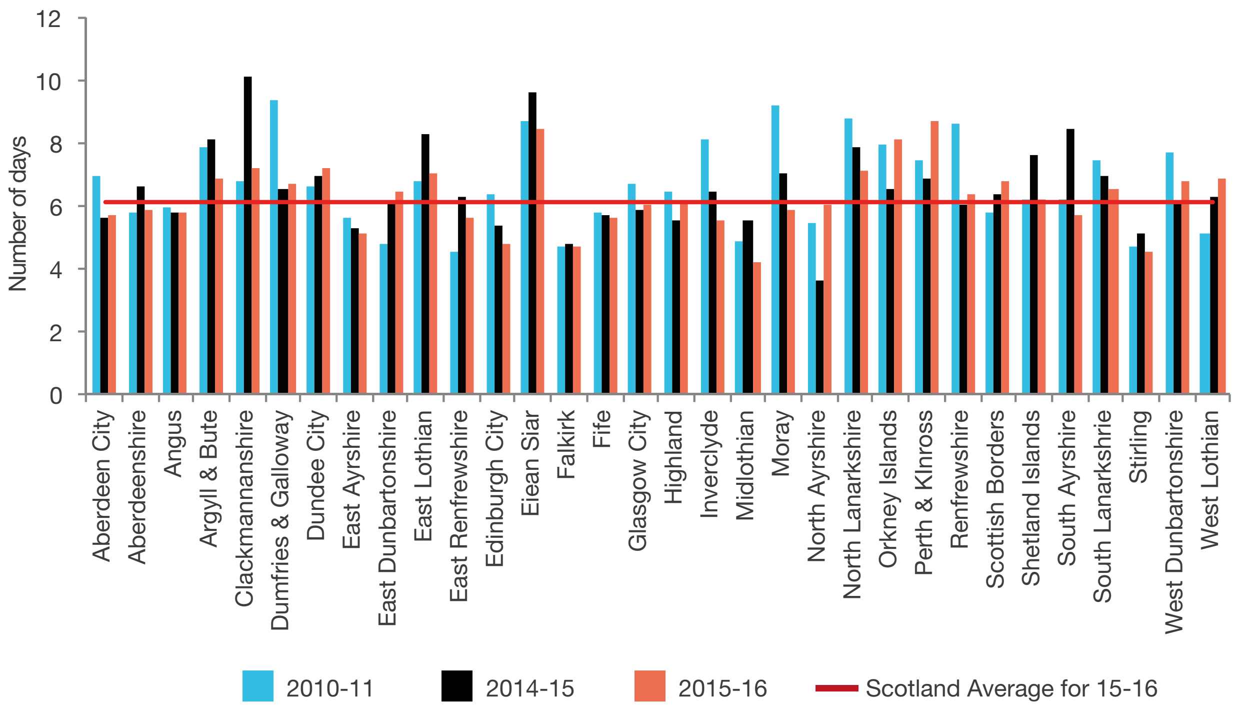
Sickness Absence Rates

The management of sickness absence is a major priority for councils in their efforts to manage their costs. There has been a small reduction in sickness absence days per employee both for teaching and non-teaching staff since the base year. Sickness absence days for non-teaching staff has reduced from 10.8 days to 10.6 days, while for teaching staff this has reduced from 6.6 days to 6.1 days. Although this has fluctuated over the period, there has been a reduction for both groups in the past 12 months.

__North Lanarkshire__ conducted a review of all long term absence cases and were successful in getting a number of cases back to work with an overall reduction in absence levels. Absence rates have reduced over the past 4 years by 10.5%.

For teaching staff, the number of absence days ranges from 4.16 to 8.68, with rural authorities reporting significantly higher levels, and smaller authorities reporting significantly lower levels. For non-teaching staff, the number of days range from 8.76 to 14.76 with variation not related to the urban/rural nature of a council or its size.

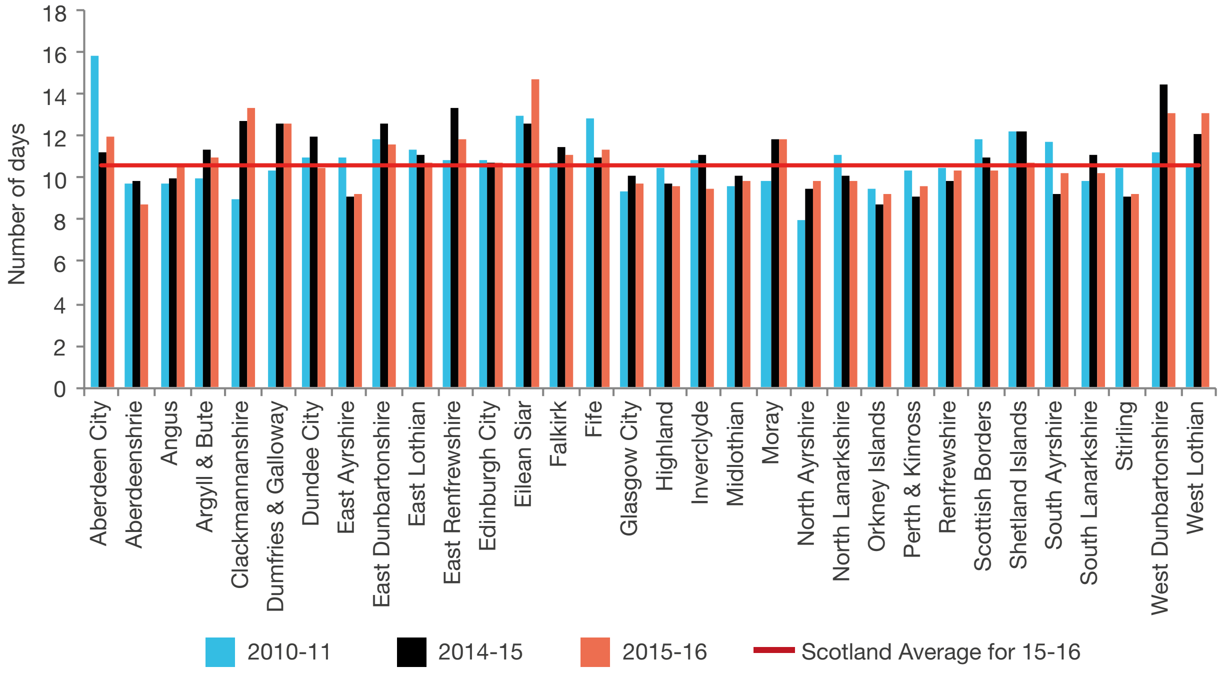
Number of Sickness Absence Days Per Teacher



__South Ayrshire Council__ have improved all staff attendance through a review of absence management arrangements and an improved monitoring and reporting regime, which is aimed at supporting staff and their overall welfare to ensure attendance at work and facilitate early return to work if sickness absence does occur.

__Shetland Council__ introduced a greater focus on case management of sickness absence that includes the organisations most senior management and have seen a reduction in staff absence.

Number of Sickness Absence Days Per Employee (Non-Teacher)



Source: Council Supplied Figures

***Aberdeenshire Council** reduced both staff and teacher absence through enhanced practical attendance management policy training and the provision of guidance to managers which focuses on the proactive management of attendance and the follow through of the attendance management processes. Further targeted support was provided by HR to line managers in areas with high absence levels and the provision of Wellbeing Initiatives has also been made available.*

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in sickness absence levels

Workforce composition and age profile

Priority given to performance management and business intelligence to support early intervention

Strategic priority given to health and wellbeing initiatives

Level of staff engagement and involvement

Differences in absence management policy and procedures, including the point at which disciplinary intervention is triggered

Level of flexible working practices

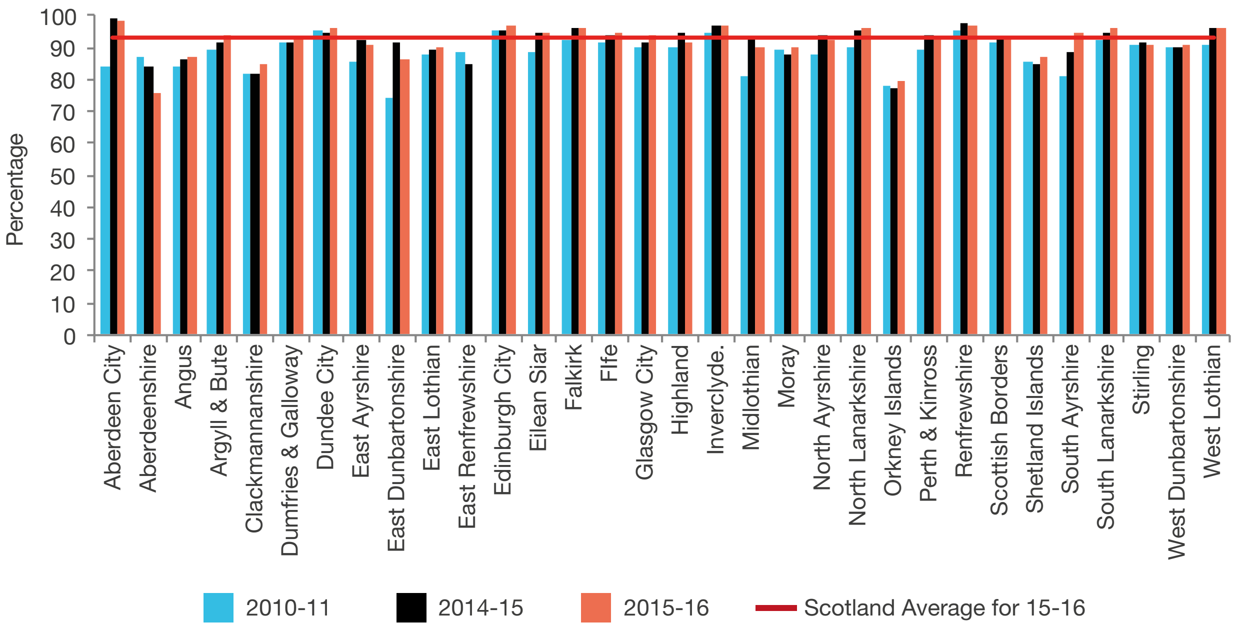
Level and type of occupational health and counselling

Level of resource dedicated to maximising attendance and managing absence

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 92.8% over the six-year period. In 2015/16 the range across councils was 75.9% to 98.0%.

Percentage of Invoices Sampled that were Paid Within 30 Days



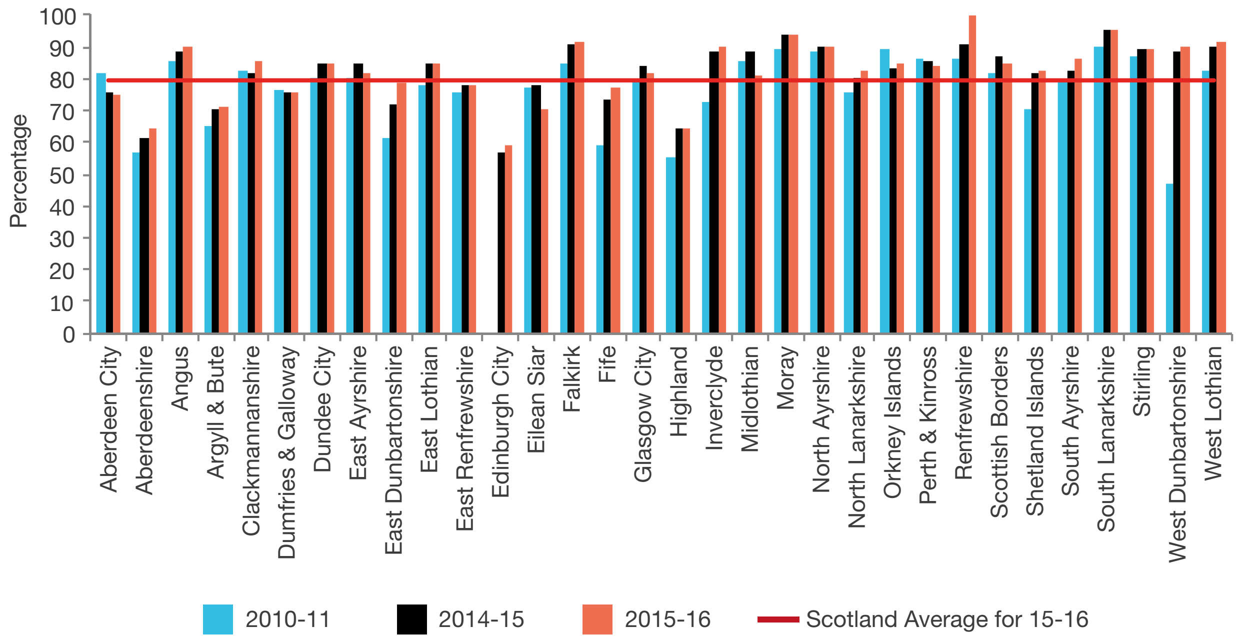
Source: Council Supplied Figures

***Aberdeen City Council** focused on digital channel shift, completed a workflow project for invoice processing and introduced more online services including e-invoicing, resulting in an improvement in the percentage of invoices being paid within target.*

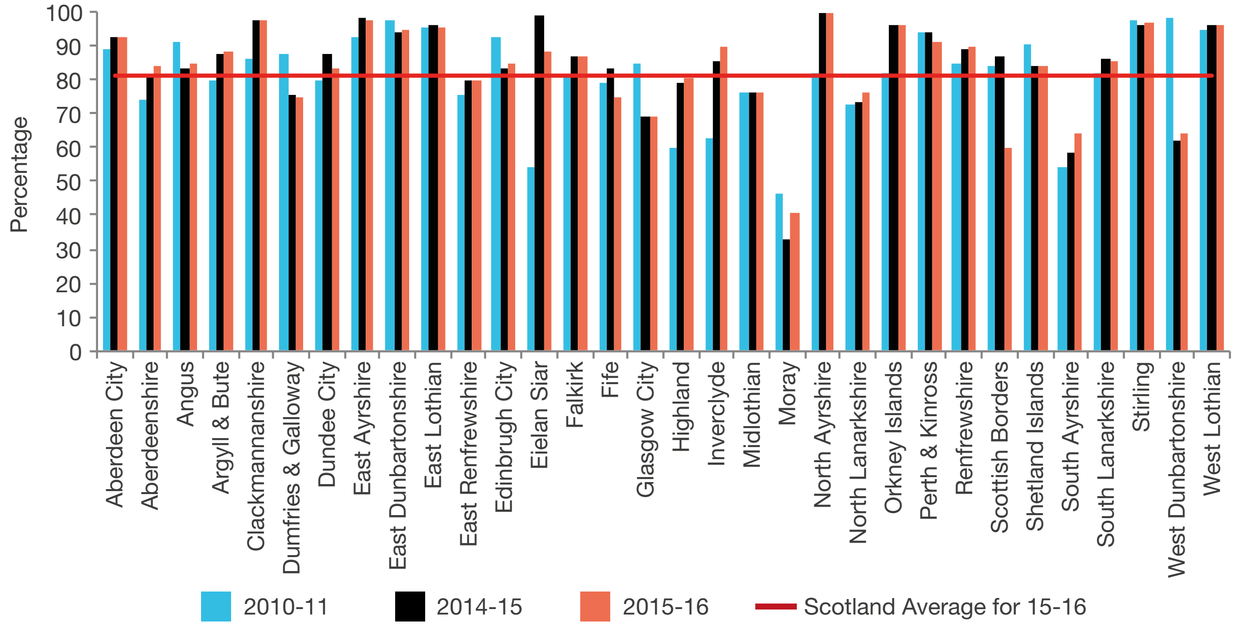
Corporate Assets

There has been consistent improvement in the condition of councils' corporate assets over the period. The percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use has improved from 73.7% to 79.6%. The proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition has improved since the base year and has remained consistently high at above 80%. There has been some fluctuation over the period, with a slight deterioration in the last 12 months from 82.9% to 81.5%. There is significant variation across councils in both measures, ranging from 59% to 100% for buildings suitable for use, and 41% to 99% for condition of floor area. Rural councils have significantly lower levels of buildings suitable for their current use, although there is no similar relationship in terms of the condition of internal floor area.

Proportion of Operational Buildings that are Suitable for their Current Use



Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in a Satisfactory Condition



Source: Council supplied figures

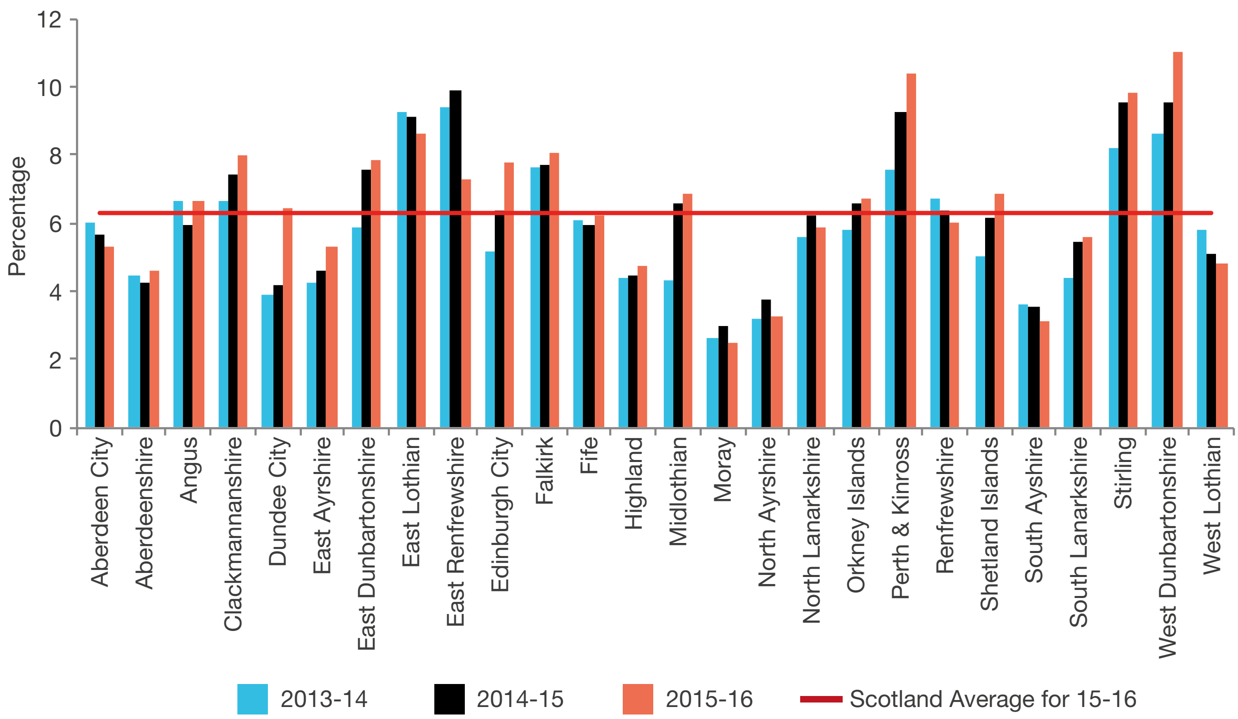
Housing

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.

The average Scottish tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due has increased year-on-year from 5.6% in 2013/14 to 6.2% in 2015/16. As with Council Tax payments, evidence is emerging that the roll-out of Universal Credit is a significant detrimental factor. In 2013/14, the definition and methodology for this measure changed, therefore it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with previous years

In 2015/16, the percentage of arrears range from 2.4% to 11.0% across councils however analysis indicates variation is not systematically related to levels of deprivation, rurality or size of authority area.

Gross Rent Arrears as a Percentage of Rent Due



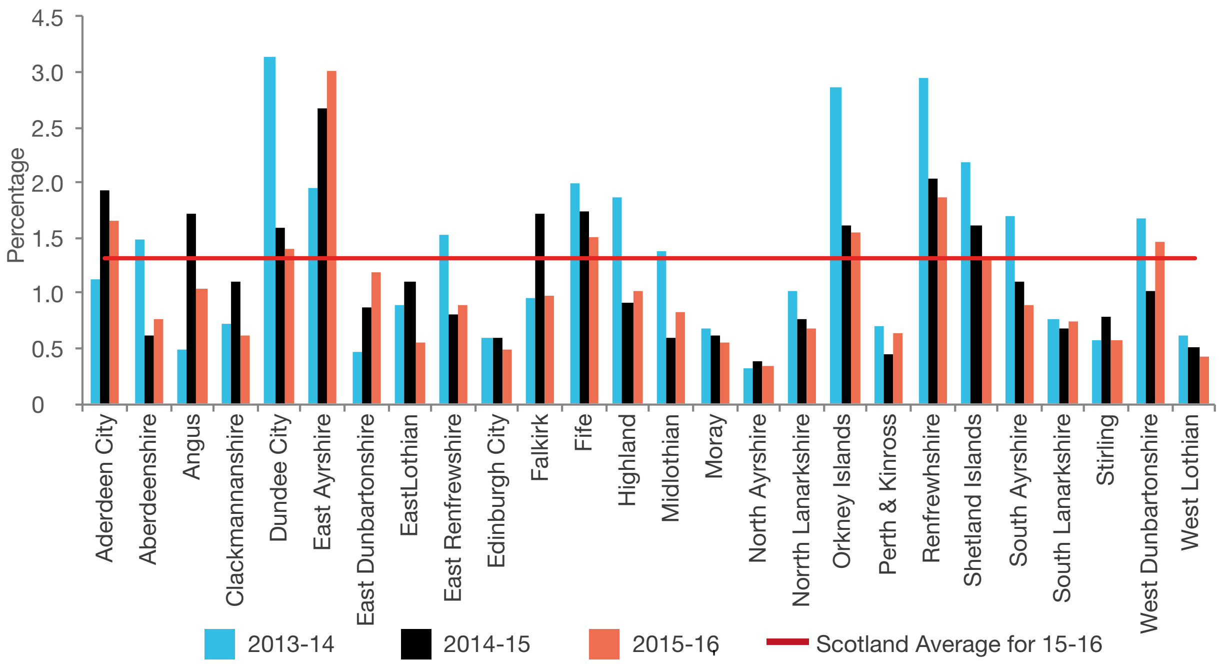
Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

Note: Missing values represent the six councils who do not provide housing services following transfer to Registered Social Landlords

***East Lothian** - East Lothian Council Revenues Team established several actions to address the issue of housing rent arrears recognising levels were higher than in other similar councils. Benchmarking exercises were undertaken by the council's Revenues Team via the Scottish Rent Forum, through the use of a Housing Quality Network Health Check and the reporting of benchmarking data regarding rent arrears to the council's Policy & Performance Review Committee which helped to raise the profile of the issue within East Lothian. This has resulted in a reduction in arrears year on year since 2013/14.*

Meanwhile, the rent lost due to voids has reduced from 1.3% to 1.1% since 2010/11. Again, figures vary across authorities, from 0.3% to 3.0%, however the level of variation has reduced since the base year. 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.

Rent Lost Due to Voids



Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

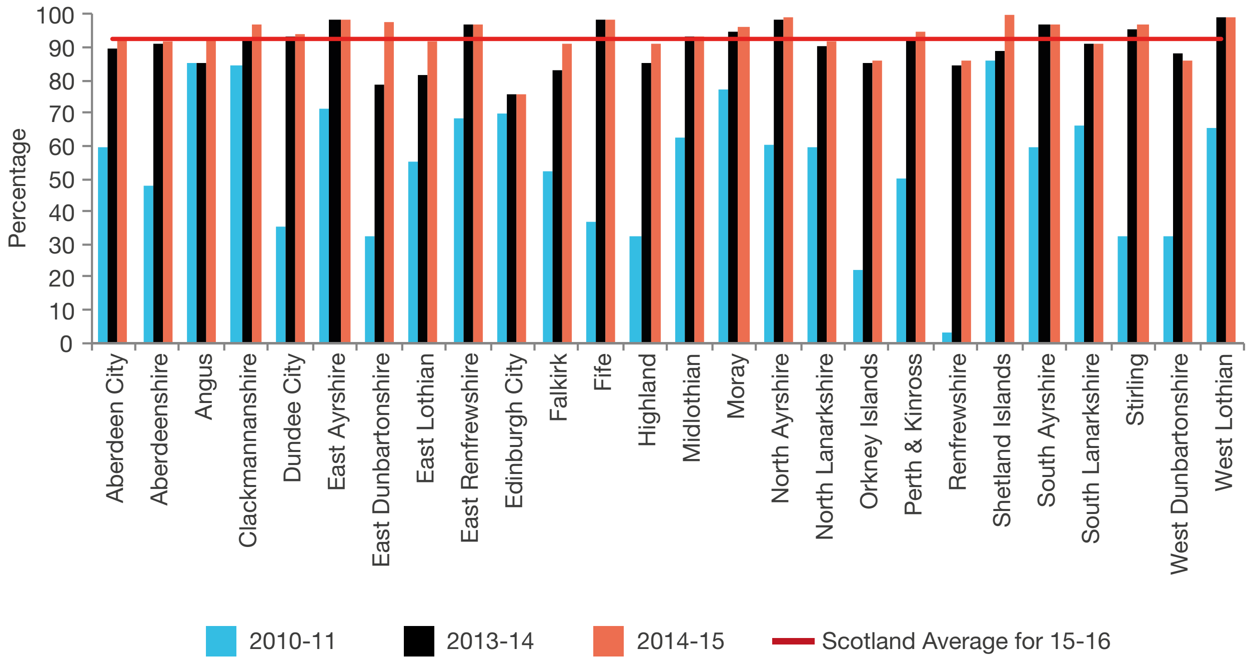
In terms of housing quality, there have been significant improvements over the past six years in terms of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) and energy efficiency standards[24]. In 2015/16, 92.5% of council dwellings met the SHQS, an increase of 39 percentage points from 2010/11. The range across councils varies significantly from 75.7% to 99.9%, although this range has narrowed since 2010/11.

Year	% council dwellings meeting SHQS	Percentage of 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
2014/15	90.4	96.5
2015/16	92.5	96.2

In 2015/16, 96.2% of council dwellings were energy efficient, an increase from 74.9% in 2010/11. Councils range from 82.0% to 100% with rural councils on average reporting lower levels of energy efficiency.

24 % of properties at or above the appropriate NHER (National Home Energy Rating) or SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) ratings

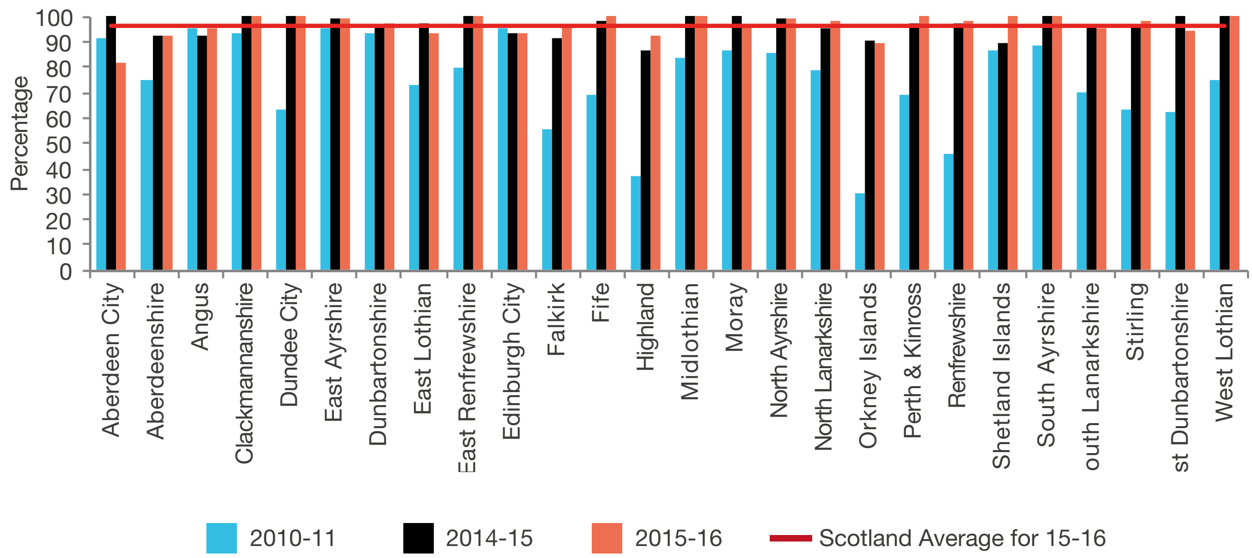
Percentage of Dwellings Meeting SHQS



Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

Note: Missing values represent the six councils who do not provide housing services

Percentage of Council Dwellings that are Energy Efficient



Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

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

Economic Development and Planning

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

Employment

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

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

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

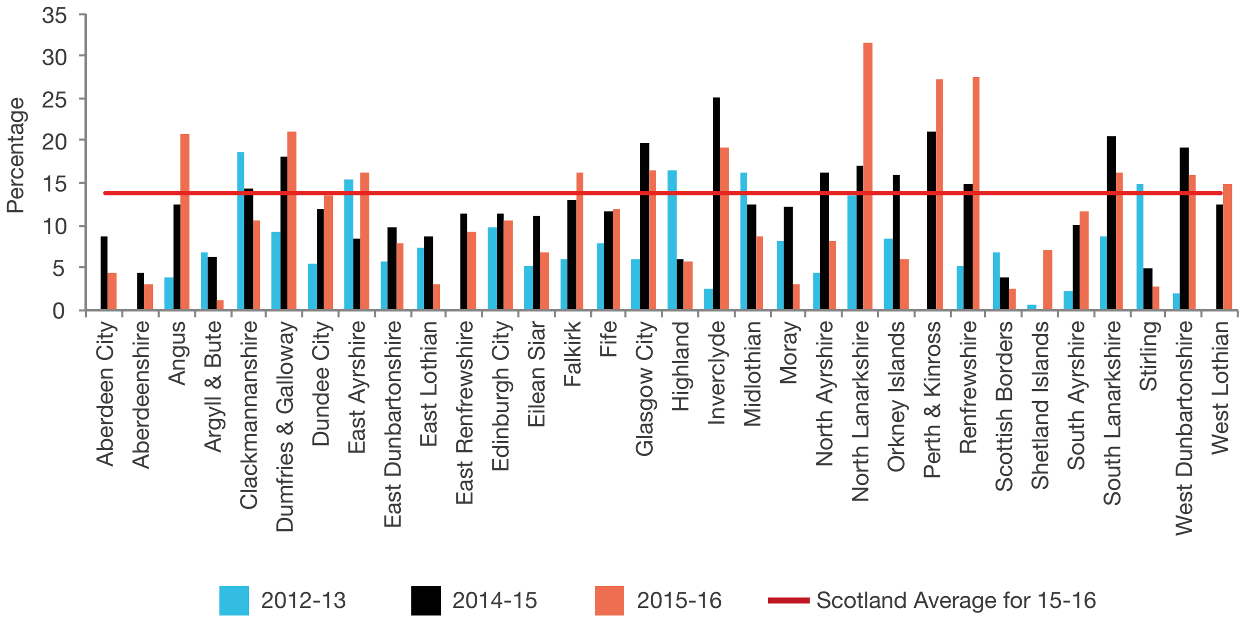
There is a considerable range across councils, from 1.1% to 31.6%, with lower rates for the least deprived councils (7.4%) compared to the most deprived (16.1%).

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

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

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

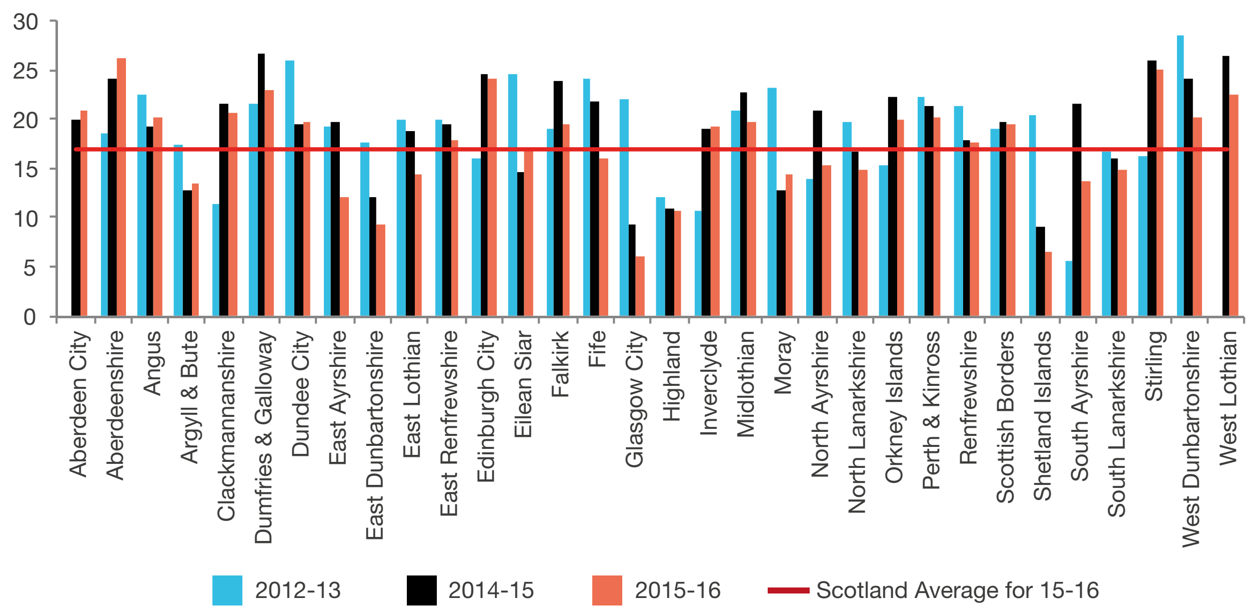
Percentage of Unemployed People Assisted into Work from Council Operated/Funded Employability Programmes



Business Support

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

Business Gateway Start-Ups Per 10,000 Population



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

Clackmannanshire Council's Economic Development delivery service has focused on the integration of employability and business support functions and the development of a close working relationship with the locally based Business Gateway contractor to provide business support services

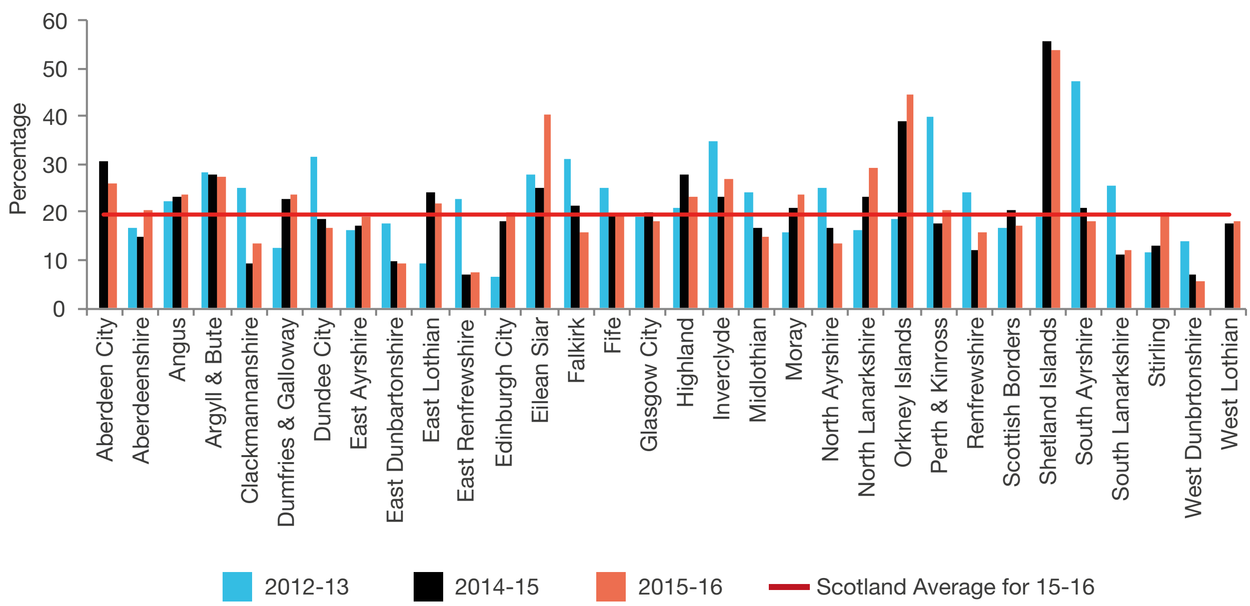
Procurement

Procurement spend in local government accounts for a significant proportion of total spend. This measure focussing on the proportion of this spend which is spent on local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is an important indicator of the progress councils are making in delivering on their standing commitment to invest in their local economies and support local employment.

In 2015/16, the percentage of procurement spent on local small/medium enterprises was 19.7%, only a very slight reduction from 20.9% in the base year. Given the pressures on council budgets this is a positive outcome as it suggests that the drive to reduce costs has not resulted in local SMEs being displaced by larger national suppliers of goods and services.

There is significant variation across councils in relation to procurement spend, ranging from 5.8% to 53.6%, however this narrows to 5.8% - 29.3% when the islands are excluded. The islands and rural authorities report higher procurement spend on local SMEs than other authorities. Rural authorities spend on average 23.5% on local SMEs compared to 16.5% in urban authorities and 18.5 in semi-rural. Islands on average spend 42%.

Percentage of Procurement Spent on Local Small/Medium Enterprises



Source: Scottish Procurement Hub, Scottish Government

Planning

Although spend on planning accounts for a relatively small amount of overall spend, this is a strategically important area in terms of the future development and use of land in our towns, cities and countryside. An efficient and well-functioning planning service plays an important role in facilitating sustainable economic growth and delivering high quality development in the right places.

Two indicators are included here. A measure of the total cost involved per planning application and the average time taken to process commercial planning applications (business and industry applications).

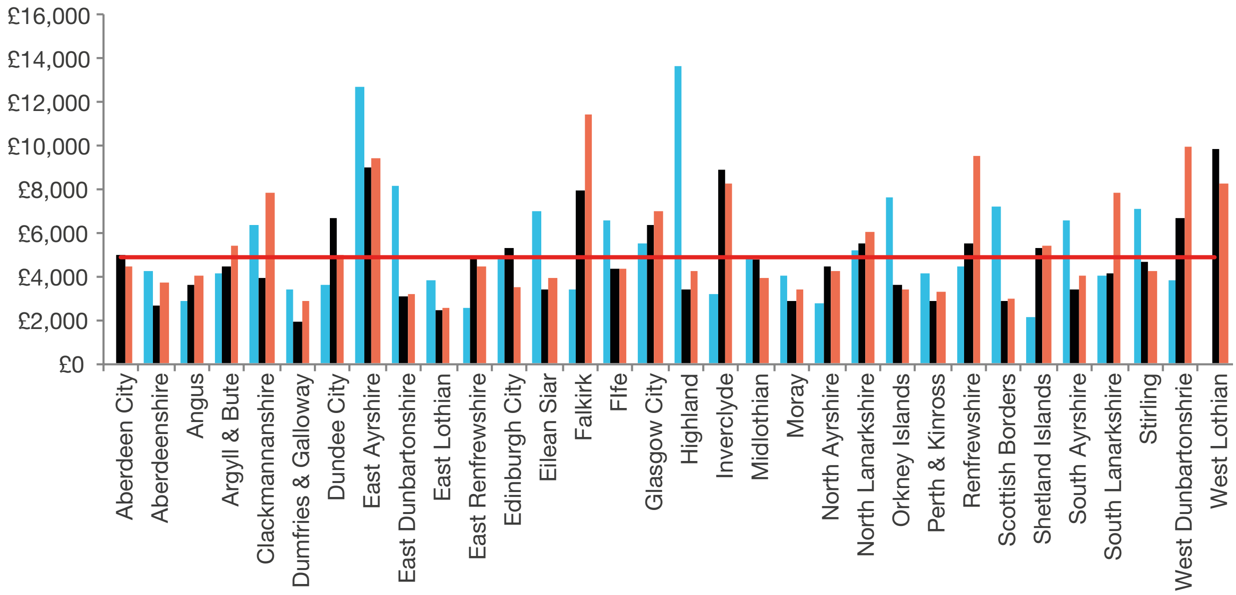
Cost of Planning Per Application

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

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

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

Cost Per Planning Application

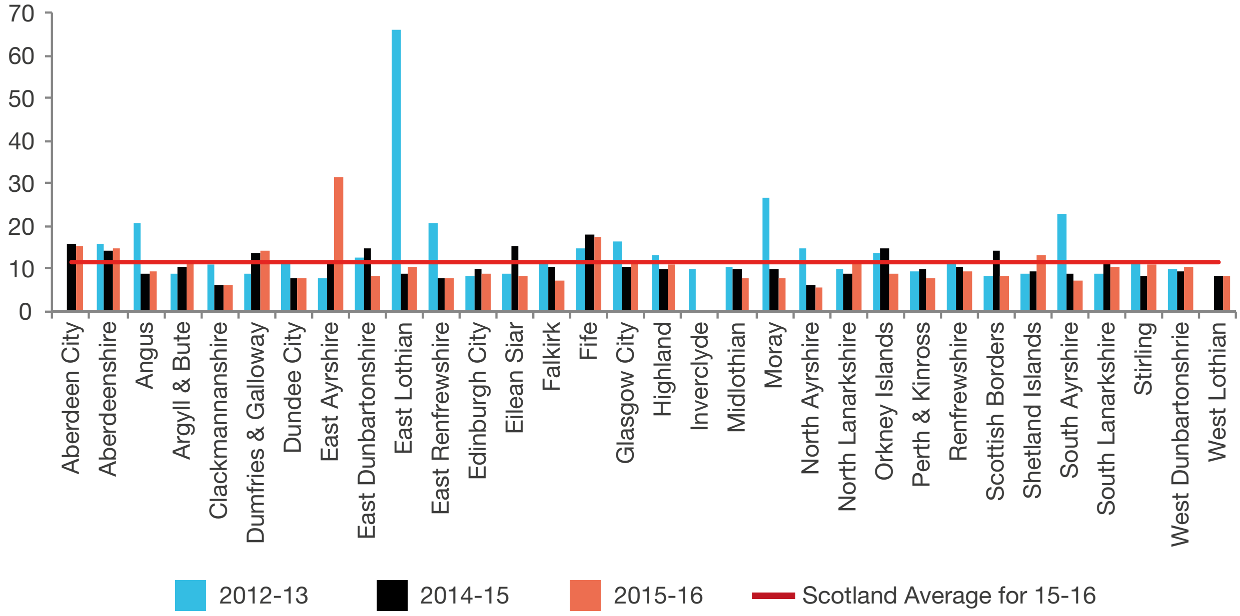


Source: Planning Authority Performance Statistics, Scottish Government; Council provided expenditure figures

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

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

Average Time Per Commercial Planning Application



Source: Planning Authority Performance Statistics, Scottish Government

Conclusion and Next Steps

The core purpose of the LGBF is to support councils to deliver better outcomes for communities. The framework offers greater insight into their own performance and a strengthened evidence base to support councils to drive improvement, support performance management, promote collaboration and learning, and strengthen public accountability.

This last year has seen councils across Scotland improve the quality and performance of key services while continuing to manage pressures to reduce costs. This report highlights the significant variation in both cost and performance which exists between councils. It is these variations which provide the opportunities for learning. They provide ‘can openers’ which support collaboration and sharing between councils to better understand the factors underpinning the differences and the approaches which may be delivering the desired benefits.

There is a continuous improvement programme to refine the benchmarking framework to ensure the measures included remain relevant and focus attention on the areas which matter most to local government. We will work with all councils and relevant partners to prioritise the following actions to strengthen the LGBF across the next period:

I. Develop a wider suite of children’s and young people’s measures which reflect a more holistic picture of children’s services and which will help inform and support improvements in the educational outcomes and life chances of all children and young people. Representing the first stage of this development, additional education measures have been included this year. Further measures will be introduced over future years to improve the scope and balance of information available on children’s services.

II. Strengthen the link with outcomes to support the wider Community Planning reform agenda, while still ensuring councils have access to the operational information necessary to demonstrate accountability in how resources are used within services.

III. Provide a focus on non-prioritised and non-protected service areas to capture innovation in response to budget constraints, and to monitor changes in expenditure and performance over time. The growth of collaborative, joint arrangements will be monitored and the structure of LGBF itself modified over time to accommodate that.

IV. Develop a wider range of measures that allow demand, spend, capacity and impact across the social care system to be monitored over time. We will work with Health and Social Care Partnerships in the period ahead to establish market capacity measures and measures of assessed demand.

The collective efforts of all 32 councils in Scotland have 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.

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 or higher
	CHN5	Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 6 or higher
	CHN6	Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at Level 5 or higher (SIMD)
	CHN7	Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at Level 6 or higher (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
	CHN12a	Overall average total tariff
	CHN12b	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1
	CHN12c	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2
	CHN12d	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3
	CHN12e	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4
	CHN12f	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5
Corporate Services	CORP 1	Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure
	CORP 2	Cost of democratic core per 1,000 population
	CORP 3b	The percentage of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women
	CORP 3c	The gender pay gap
	CORP 4	The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax
	CORP 5b2	Average time (hours) between time of domestic noise complaint and attendance on site
	CORP 6a	Sickness absence days per teacher
	CORP 6b	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)
	CORP 7	Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year
	CORP 8	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days

	Data	Indicator Description
Adult Social Care	SW1	Older persons (over 65) home care costs per hour
	SW2	SDS spend on adults 18+ as a percentage of total social work spend on adults 18+
	SW3	Percentage of people 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home
	SW4a	Percentage of adults receiving any care or support who rate it as excellent or good.
	SW4b	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life
	SW5	Older persons (over 65's) residential care costs per week per resident
Culture & Leisure Services	C&L1	Net cost per attendance at sports facilities
	C&L2	Net cost per library visit
	C&L3	Net cost of museums per visit
	C&L4	Net cost of parks and 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
Environmental Services	ENV1a	Net cost per waste collection per premises
	ENV2a	Net cost per waste disposal per premises
	ENV3a	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population
	ENV3c	Cleanliness score (% acceptable)
	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 Unclassified 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 household waste arising that is recycled
	ENV7a	Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection
	ENV7b	Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning
Housing Services	HSN1b	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year
	HSN2	Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
	HSN3	Percentage of dwellings meeting SHQS
	HSN4b	Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs
	HSN5	Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient
Corporate Asset	CORP-ASSET1	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
	CORP-ASSET2	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition

	Data	Indicator Description
Economic Development	ECON1	Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/ operated employability programmes
	ECON2	Cost per planning application
	ECON3	Average time per commercial planning application
	ECON4	Percentage of procurement spent on local small/medium enterprises
	ECON5	No of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population

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Local Government Benchmarking Framework

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