



Children's Services



Adult Social Care



Culture and Leisure



Environmental Services



Corporate Services



Housing



Economic Development & Planning

Local Government Benchmarking Framework

National Benchmarking Overview Report 2017-18



Local Government Benchmarking Framework

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Preface

This is the seventh annual report for the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). All 32 Scottish councils have worked with the Improvement Service (IS) over the last eight 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.

This approach has been successful in encouraging councils to work and learn together to drive service improvements, using the data as a can-opener to inform learning and decision making. Benchmarking enables greater understanding of why councils vary in terms of what they deliver and achieve for their communities and how they do so. This information is available to all citizens and users of council services, so that they can hold councils to account for what is achieved on their behalf, and ask questions of local government to promote improvement.

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, which draw upon LGBF information.

Councils are arranged in 'family groups' enabling comparisons to be made between 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.

There is a continuous improvement programme to refine the benchmarking framework and the current priority is on improving the outcome benchmarks for the health and wellbeing of children, economic development, and outcomes for older people. Local government will, in the years to come, work with colleagues across wider public services to expand the range of indicators being deployed to support benchmarking.

The driving force behind this work is, and will always be, to improve the lives of people in communities across Scotland. We believe that effective public services contribute to both individual and community quality of life and the LGBF is an increasingly important element of the local intelligence necessary to achieve this vision.

Alison Evison
Chair, Improvement Service
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green
recycling



household
only



Executive Summary

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) reports on how much councils spend on particular services, service performance and how satisfied people are with the major services provided and commissioned by councils. The framework supports evidence-based comparisons between similar councils so that they can work and learn together to improve their services. The benchmarking framework now has eight years of trend data, covering 2010/11 to 2017/18. It is important to highlight that this report sets out the national position, however there is a wide range of variation in costs and performance across councils. It is this variation which provides the platform for learning and improvement.

Across the eight-year period for which we present data, total revenue funding for councils has fallen by 8.3% in real terms from £10.5 billion to £9.6 billion. Spending on education and care has been relatively protected over this period. As these account for over 70% of the benchmarked expenditure within the LGBF, most other service areas have experienced substantial real reductions in spending: 22% reduction in culture and leisure spending; 34% reduction in planning; almost 15% reduction in roads spending; and almost 10% reduction in environmental services spending.

Council spending across Scotland did stabilise against trend in 2017/18 but not sufficiently to offset the major reductions experienced since 2010/11. Across that period, service performance has been maintained remarkably well with improving trends in measurable performance across services. In 2017/18 there is indicative evidence across some services covered by the benchmarking framework that performance improvement is slowing down for the first time since 2010/11. 2017-18 also sees further falls in satisfaction with council services. This echoes concerns about the challenges councils face in meeting the increasing demand for services against tightening budgets, highlighted by the Accounts Commission in its Local Government in Scotland Financial Overview 2017/18.¹ One key message in the financial overview's summary was that "The financial outlook is for reductions in Scottish Government revenue funding to councils. This will mean continued and increasing financial pressures on council services, especially those that are not protected".

Children's services

1. Despite real reductions in the education budget of 2.5% since 2010/11, the number of pre-school registrations and primary pupils in Scotland has increased by over 30,000 and measures of educational outcome have shown substantial positive progress, particularly for children from the most deprived areas.
2. In pre-school, real costs per place have risen for the fourth year in a row, increasing by 4.3% in the past 12 months. This reflects the additional costs associated with new entitlements introduced in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The percentage of funded early years provision graded 'good or better' has improved from 87.1% to 91.0% since 2010/11, although it has shown a slight reduction in the past three years.
3. Although total spending on primary and secondary education has grown in cash terms, real spend per primary and secondary pupil has fallen by 8.1% and 3.7% since 2010/11 reflecting changes in pupil numbers. In the past 12 months, there has been a small increase in real spend per primary pupil and a small reduction in real spend per secondary pupil (1.7% and -0.8% respectively). The reduction in spend may to some extent have been offset by the increasing role of school /college partnerships and apprenticeships which are delivering outcomes using different skills and focuses, and not necessarily in school settings.

¹ <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/report/local-government-in-scotland-financial-overview-201718>



4. Pupil performance in education has continually improved since 2011/12 on the measures used in the LGBF. The average tariff score for all pupils improved by almost 16% across the period from 2011/12. In line with key priorities in education, the average tariff score for the most deprived quintiles improved most rapidly across the period since 2010/11 (improving by almost 30%). This pattern of improvement slowed in 2017/18, with no significant change in figures from the previous year. The pattern in the total tariff score data is replicated in the data on 5+ passes at SCQF level 5 and level 6 with substantial long-term improvement since 2011/12 in the attainment of all pupils, and for those from deprived areas. However, as with tariff scores, the rate of improvement has slowed across the last two years for all groups. While this reflects an overall slowing in progress to close the attainment gap, it is important to recognise the significant improvements achieved by Scotland's schools since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence, particularly given the context of continuing change within the school system over recent years.
5. Scottish schools have a strong focus on employability, supported by national policies like Developing the Young Workforce. The continued improvements in positive destinations from school reflect the positive impact that this approach is having, particularly for young people living in Scotland's most deprived areas. Post school destinations have seen a general improvement over recent years and further analysis of the data shows a measurable closing in the "destinations gap" for those living in Scotland's most disadvantaged areas. Similarly, the participation of 16-19-year olds in further education, higher education, apprenticeships, training and employment has improved year on year to an overall participation rate of almost 92%.
6. Satisfaction with schools has fallen for the sixth year in a row, reducing from 73% to 70% in the last 12 months, and by 13 percentage points since 2010/11. The LGBF satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and represents satisfaction levels for the public at large rather than for service users. Evidence shows there are differences between satisfaction levels for the wider public and service users and, while local analysis of service user experience and satisfaction is important, it is helpful to interpret this in the context of wider public perceptions.

Adult social care

7. Total social care spending on adults has grown across the period by 10.2% while spending on home and residential care for older people has fallen as a percentage of that total. Expenditure in all areas grew between 2016/17 and 2017/18.
8. Spending on home care for older people has risen by 15% since 2010/11, and 3% in the past 12 months, but the number of hours of homecare provided has been relatively static across the last few years. Home care costs per hour have risen by 5.4% since 2010/11 from £22.54 to £23.76, and by 3% in the past 12 months. A significant element of this will be focussed on meeting living wage commitments.
9. Spending on residential care has fallen across the period, by over 12%. This is largely because the net cost of residential care has come down rather than because the number of residents has fallen (-11.2% and -1.7% respectively). The average cost of residential care per week per resident is now £386, compared with £435 in 2010/11.
10. There has been progress in shifting the balance of spend between residential and home care. A record proportion of older people assessed to have long term care needs are being supported at home: 61.7% in 2017/18. However, hours of care at home are not growing and the number of residents in residential care is declining, which indicates that demand is not growing at the rate expected. Modelling has typically assumed growth of around 3% per annum in demand for care: the effective rate has been less than 50% of that.



11. Direct payments and personalised managed budgets have grown steadily across the period from 1.6% to 4.8% of total social work spend (excluding outliers).
12. In terms of care user satisfaction, 80% of users provide a positive rating in relation to quality and impact. This has declined across the last three years by around five percentage points.

Culture and leisure services

13. Despite a real reduction in spend of 22% since 2010/11, leisure and cultural services have sharply increased their usage rates and reduced their costs per use. During this time the substantial increases in visitor numbers across sports (19%), libraries (36%), and museums (29%) have resulted in unit cost reductions of 32%, 45% and 26% respectively. In the past 12 months, uptake of leisure services, swimming pools, libraries and museums has fallen.
14. While council spending across Scotland stabilised against trend for many service areas in 2017/18, culture and leisure expenditure decreased by a further 5.6%. This reflects a 5% reduction in parks expenditure, 8% reduction in libraries, and 6% reduction in sports. Notwithstanding the reductions in expenditure, the equivalent performance has not reduced at the same rate. Close monitoring will be required to assess the extent to which further efficiencies are possible or whether further performance reductions are inevitable as we further reduce expenditure on the services or change delivery that relies more on community rather than municipal delivery. This is an area which will be explored further with VOCAL and Community Leisure UK.
15. Public satisfaction rates have fallen for all culture and leisure services in the past 12 months. Since the base year, satisfaction with libraries has reduced by 11.5 percentage points, museums and galleries by 6.5 percentage points, and leisure facilities by 2.6 percentage points. Only satisfaction levels with parks and open spaces remain at similar levels to the base year, increasing by 1.9 percentage points.

Environmental services

16. Real spending on environmental services has reduced by 9.6% since 2010/11 with reductions in waste management (-3.2%), street cleaning (-27%) and trading standards and environmental health (-18%). The reduction in spend stabilised in the past 12 months, with overall spend reducing by only 0.3%. While recycling rates continue to improve and are now at 45.6%, recent years have seen further reductions in satisfaction with refuse and cleansing, and reductions in street cleanliness scores.
17. Across the period, real spending on roads has fallen by 15%, although this has stabilised in the past 12 months. Since 2010/11, the road conditions index indicates conditions have been largely maintained across all class of roads, however in the last 12 months, the condition of A, B and C class roads have all deteriorated.

Corporate services

18. Corporate services spend has fallen by 23% in real terms since 2010/11, and corporate services now account for only 4.5% of total spending. This is the lowest corporate overhead ratio yet recorded and reflects councils' commitment to protect frontline services over 'back office' functions. It also reflects the maturation of councils' digital strategies.
19. This reduction has gone along with continuing improvement in key areas of performance. Council tax collection within year is at an all-time high of 96% and the cost of collection has



reduced by over 50% in real terms since 2010/11. The gender pay gap has reduced at a rate of 12.5% across the last three years and by 6.6% in the last year, and the proportion of the 5% highest earning staff who are female has risen to almost 55%. The percentage of all invoices paid within 30 days has increased to over 93%, again the highest rate yet recorded.

20. Sickness absence days for teaching staff have reduced by 10% since 2010/11 and by 2.1% in the past 12 months. However, for non-teaching staff, sickness absence has increased by 5.7% since 2010/11, and by 4.5% in the past 12 months. This is alongside a 10% reduction in FTEs for non-teaching staff.

Housing services

21. Councils continue to manage their housing stock well with rent lost to voids reducing from 1.3% in 2010/11 to 0.9% in 2017/18, and a 26.2% reduction in average repair times across this period. There have also been consistent and significant improvements in terms of housing standards and energy efficiency standards, both of which are now above 90%.
22. However, at the same time, the growth in tenants' rent arrears from 5.6% to 6.7% between 2013/14 and 2017/18 reveals evidence of the increasing financial challenges facing both housing residents and councils alike.

Economic development and planning

23. To reflect the strategic importance of economic development and planning and the particular challenges facing discretionary services, an expanded suite of measures has been introduced to the framework following work with the Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group (SLAED).
24. Economic development and planning have seen some of the largest reductions in revenue spending since 2010/11, falling by 29% and 34% respectively. Expenditure has stabilised against trend in the past 12 months, both showing marginal growth (1.9% and 0.7%). There has been significant capital expenditure in economic development and tourism across this period reflecting the regional economic growth agenda. This has grown by 105% since 2010/11, and by 25% in the past 12 months.
25. Most measures of economic development and planning performance within the framework show maintained or improved performance across the period, although there is evidence that the improvement rate may be slowing in some areas. The percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes has increased from 9.1% in 2012/13 to 14.4% in 2017/18.
26. In terms of infrastructure for business, there is a 33% improvement in terms of efficiency in processing business and industry planning applications, reducing from 14 weeks to 9 weeks between 2012/13 and 2017/18. Town vacancy rates have remained stable across the period despite challenging economic times. There has been a 28% increase in the availability of immediately available employment land, from 12.9% to 40.8% since 2014/15. There has been a 35 percentage point improvement in access to superfast broadband. Despite these improvements, the Business Gateway start-up rate has reduced from 19% to 16.8% across the period, although has shown a slight improvement in the past 12 months.
27. Councils continue to spend over 25% of their procurement spend on local enterprises, increasing slightly in the past 12 months to 27.4%. 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 enterprises being displaced by national suppliers of goods and services. However,



while the value of money spent locally has held up well, there has been an overall drop in the number of local suppliers. There has been a commitment in recent months for local government economic development and procurement professionals to work on joint initiatives to enhance the impact of local government procurement spend.

28. The proportion of people earning less than the living wage has not reduced significantly across the period, fluctuating at around 18% to 19%. This partly reflects the move towards a more flexible labour market including zero-hour contracts.





Introduction

Trends and key issues

This section of the LGBF report highlights key national trends across Scotland's councils. The focal points this year are:

- i. Broad spending and performance trends across Scotland in the light of the Accounts Commission concerns about income and demand pressures.
- ii. Education performance and spending across Scotland given the high local and national priority attached to this.
- iii. Social care spending and performance given the expectation of very sharp increases in demand from the growing older population.
- iv. Spending and performance trends on corporate services given the key aims of protecting frontline services and reducing corporate overheads.

1. Spending and performance trends across Scotland

Total current spending by councils across Scotland fell very marginally in real terms in 2017/18 and at a much lower rate than average across the period from 2010/11. Most frontline services experienced stability and marginal growth in real terms in 2017/18. Table 1 gives the breakdown of spending by service since 2010, and the change across the last two years.

Table 1: Change in Expenditure Since 2010-11 (£000s)

	Scotland 2010/11	Scotland 2017/18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18	Range Among Local Authorities % Change from 2010/11 to 2017/18
Education	£4,465,224	£4,352,982	1.3%	-2.5%	-22% to 9%
Looked After Children	£414,992	£500,711	1.3%	20.7%	-26% to 89%
Adult Social Care	£2,858,249	£3,151,080	2.2%	10.2%	-7% to 33%
Culture and Leisure	£572,368	£446,672	-5.6%	-22.0%	-58% to 7%
Environmental Services	£773,279	£698,990	-0.3%	-9.6%	-33% to 8%
Roads	£654,285	£558,695	0.1%	-14.6%	-7.1% to 102%
Planning	£189,355	£125,269	0.7%	-33.8%	-7.1% to 68%
Economic Development and Tourism*	£493,031	£498,030	11.7%	1.0%	-66% to 972%
Central Support Services	£877,306	£675,338	-11.4%	-23.0%	-66% to 35%

Note: 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. All trends represent gross expenditure, except Culture and Leisure and Residential Social Care which are based on net expenditure.

*Economic development and tourism: these figures include both capital and revenue expenditure. Across the period, capital expenditure has grown by 105.5% while revenue expenditure has reduced by 29%.

Total current revenue funding for councils fell by 2.3% between 2016/17 and 2017/18 but cumulatively



has fallen by 8.3% in real terms since 2010/11.¹ Within council budgets, education and children's services, social care, roads, environmental services, economic development and planning have all had real terms growth or remained stable in the last year. Culture and leisure and corporate services had reductions in real terms of 5.6% and 11.4% respectively across that period.

The column on change in spending between 2010/11 and 2017/18 shows that spending on education and care has been relatively protected over this period but most other service areas have experienced substantial real reductions in spending: 22% reduction in culture and leisure spending; 34% reduction in planning; almost 15% reduction in roads spending; and almost 10% reduction in environmental services spending.

Across that period, service performance has been maintained remarkably well with improving trends in measurable performance across services. However, the Accounts Commission highlighted the challenges councils face in meeting the increasing demand for services against tightening budgets in its Local Government in Scotland Financial Overview 2017/18. One of the key messages was that "The financial outlook is for reductions in Scottish Government revenue funding to councils. This will mean continued and increasing financial pressures on council services, especially those that are not protected".

In 2017/18 there is indicative evidence across some services covered by the benchmarking framework that performance improvement is slowing down for the first time since 2010/11. Uptake of leisure services, swimming pools, libraries and museums has fallen since 2016/17, albeit there is still a very significant increase in uptake and use in comparison to 2010/11. Average total tariff scores (the summary measure of academic attainment at the point of leaving school) for children from the most deprived areas in Scotland fell marginally for the first time since 2010/11. However, the trend across the period since 2010/11 remains very positive: an improvement in average in tariff score of almost 30% (see below).

These may be 'stress' indicators and a sign that, after almost 10 years, austerity is catching up with local service performance. However, presently these are one year 'blips', not trends, and the trend data remains positive. These year on year changes need explored, however, and there is substantial local variation (up and down) around these 'national' averages. More concerning, as it is a trend, is declining public satisfaction year on year, and long term, with local services. Table 2 provides the data on change since 2010/11, and year on year.

Table 2: Public satisfaction with services (%)

	2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
Local Schools	83	83	81	79	74	73	70	-3.0	-13.1
Libraries	84	83	81	77	74	73	72	-1.0	-11.5
Parks and Open Spaces	83	86	86	86	85	87	85	-2.0	1.9
Museums and Galleries	76	78	76	75	71	70	69	-1.0	-6.5
Leisure Facilities	75	80	78	76	73	73	72	-1.0	-2.6
Refuse Collection	81	83	83	84	82	79	75	-4.0	-5.9
Street Cleaning	73	75	74	74	73	70	66	-4.0	-7.3

Source: Scottish Household Survey

¹ <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefings/Report/2017/6/21/Local-Government-Finance--facts-and-figures-2010-11-to-2017-18#Executive-Summary>



As can be seen, across all service areas for which data is available, both the long-term trend and the year on year change is a reduction in stated satisfaction. Three points need made about this data.

First, the data is not based on people who have used services: it is the total population whether they have used services or not. Second, it does not establish what it is about services people are satisfied with or not. They may be dissatisfied with cuts to funding for local services, for example, rather than service quality. Finally, across the period since 2010/11, public satisfaction has not reflected other measures of service quality, performance or impact which have consistently improved.

All of that said, even if much of the data is based on perception not experience, this needs addressed. If people believe that services are not available, or accessible, or of good quality, it may affect their uptake of services they would benefit from.

In summary, council spending across Scotland did stabilise against trends in 2017/18 but not sufficiently to offset any of the major reduction experienced since 2010/11. The improvement trends in performance slowed down in 2017/18 in several service areas but the trend since 2010/11 has been for substantial improvement. Reported public satisfaction has declined consistently since 2010/11 and did so between 2016/17 and 2017/18 and this needs addressed in dialogue with the public. Detailed local analysis of service user experience and satisfaction is important but needs linked to wider public perceptions. The impact that future demographic challenges and worsening poverty will have on councils' ability to achieve improvement, particularly in relation to non-protected elements of services, will need to be considered as part of this dialogue.

2. Education spending and performance

Education is the largest spending area for local government and because of the local and national priority attached to education, spending is subject to recurrent political scrutiny. Different measures of spending show different patterns in cash and real terms and for where spending is calculated per pupil. Tables 3a and 3b give total spending on primary, secondary, and preschool provision in cash and real terms, and expenditure per pupil or place.

Table 3a: Total education spending

		2010-11	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
Primary education - Gross expenditure (£000s)	Real	£1,974,153	£1,989,013	2.6%	0.8%
	Cash	£1,763,866	£1,989,013	4.6%	12.8%
Secondary education - Gross expenditure (£000s)	Real	£2,146,600	£1,935,923	-0.4%	-9.8%
	Cash	£1,917,944	£1,935,923	1.4%	0.9%
Pre-Primary education - Gross expenditure (£000s)	Real	£344,471	£427,996	3.1%	24.2%
	Cash	£307,778	£427,996	5.1%	39.1%



Table 3b: Expenditure per pupil or place

		2010-11	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
Cost per Primary School Pupil	Real	£5411	£4974	1.7%	-8.1%
	Cash	£4834	£4974	3.6%	2.9%
Cost per Secondary School Pupil	Real	£7145	£6880	-0.8%	-3.7%
	Cash	£6384	£6880	1.1%	7.8%
Cost per Pre-School Education Registration	Real	£3742	£4463	4.3%	19.3%
	Cash	£3344	£4463	6.3%	33.5%

Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

As can be seen, total spending on primary and secondary education has grown in cash terms but real spending is static for primary education and has fallen by 9.8% for secondary. However, real spending per pupil has fallen by over 8% since 2010/11 for primary pupils and by almost 4% for secondary pupils. Between 2016/17 and 2017/18, real spending per primary pupil rose by 1.7% and spending per secondary pupil fell by under 1%. Spending on pre-school provision rose substantially in cash and real terms, and real spending per place has risen by 20% since 2010/11, and by over 4% between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Whether spending on education is seen to have been maintained over time, or not, therefore depends on the spending measure adopted. Real spending per pupil is probably the most reliable measure as it standardises for inflation and demand. It should be noted that the national average trends noted here are quite dependant on 'ring fenced' grants from Scottish Government ('Pupil Equity' & 'Attainment Challenge' funds) that are targeted and not equally allocated to all councils. National averages, therefore, contain substantial local variation.

Pupil performance in education has continually improved since 2011/12 on the measures used in LGBF. There is an aggregate measure of formal attainment at the point of leaving school, the 'tariff' score, which is based on points allocated for different levels and grades of qualification achieved. This measure is weighted towards academic attainment.

There are two further measures of attainment: percentage of pupils achieving 5+ passes at level 5 (standard grade equivalent) and at level 6 (Highers). Again, these are almost entirely focused on academic attainment. These measures can be broken down by deprivation to look at the pattern for pupils from more or less disadvantaged backgrounds.

Table 4 below gives a breakdown of the tariff score data, and the change from 2011/12 and 2017/18. This is provided for each deprivation quintile from most to least deprived.

Table 4: Overall average total tariff and by SIMD quintile

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	% Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	% Change 2011-12 to 2017-18
Average Total Tariff	770	798	827	860	877	888	891	0.4%	15.8%
SIMD Q1	478	510	551	581	603	625	618	-1.1%	29.3%
SIMD Q2	618	644	685	716	741	751	750	-0.1%	21.4%
SIMD Q3	759	788	816	851	864	882	896	1.6%	18.1%
SIMD Q4	909	929	962	984	998	1001	1016	1.5%	11.8%
SIMD Q5	1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1221	0.9%	10.9%

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



As can be seen, the average tariff score for all pupils improved by almost 16% across the period from 2011/12. In line with key priorities in education, the average tariff score for the most deprived quintiles improved most rapidly across the period since 2011/12 (the average tariff for the most deprived group improving by almost 30%).

These changes reflect a significant improvement in the educational outcomes and life chances of Scotland's young people. To put these numbers in context: since 2011-12, the improvements seen in the total tariff measure of school leavers from SIMD quintile 1 are equivalent to the average leaver converting 1.5 passes at National 5 into Highers. This scale of change makes a significant and positive impact on post-school opportunities.

By comparison, there was no significant change in the total tariff measure for leavers in 2017/18 compared with the year before, with a change of a few tariff points for each measure (equivalent to a change of a grade or less for one award).

The lack of further progress in closing the attainment gap in 2017/18 was disappointing. However, it is important to recognise the significant improvements achieved by Scotland's schools since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence, particularly given the context of continuing change within the school system over recent years. Reducing the attainment gap further remains a key priority for local authorities and will require allowing the Regional Improvement Collaboratives to develop their full potential as a means of adding value to local authorities in their work supporting school improvement.

The '5+ at level 5 and level 6' measure shows a different picture in terms of long term trend, and year on year change. Table 5 provides the data for the whole pupil population, and for pupils from the most deprived areas.

Table 5: Percentage gaining level 5 and level 6 awards and by SIMD

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Improvement Rate 2016-17 to 2017-18	Improvement Rate 2011-12 to 2017-18
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	51	53	55	57	59	61	62	1.6%	21.6%
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	26	27	29	31	33	34	34	0.0%	30.8%
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	29	32	34	37	40	41	42	2.4%	44.8%
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	10	11	14	14	15	16	16	0.0%	60.0%

Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

As can be seen, for all pupils, the improvement is strong since 2011/12: 21% at level 5, and over 30% at level 6. For pupils from deprived areas, it is stronger still: 45% improvement rate for 5+ at level 5, and 60% at level 6. The year on year data from 2016/17 shows a relatively static picture for all pupils and pupils from deprived areas: very marginal improvement at level 5, and static at level 6 in both cases.

The picture is therefore of substantial long-term improvement since 2011/12 in the attainment of all pupils, and for those from deprived areas. However, the rate of improvement has slowed across the last two years for all groups and a significant 'attainment gap' exists on these measures.



Average total tariff points and achievement at Levels 5 and 6 provide two summary measures of the overall attainment of a cohort of school leavers. A range of other measures are available that give a more outcomes-focussed view of attainment or a more focussed view of the attainment of particular groups of school leavers. These also, generally, show a picture of sustained improvement in attainment over recent years and significant progress in closing the attainment gap.

Not all of the improvements arising from the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence can be measured through improved attainment. Scottish schools have a strong focus on employability, supported by national policies like Developing the Young Workforce. This includes the use of personal achievement awards and the development of personal skills in addition to accredited attainment. The continued improvements in positive destinations from school reflect the positive impact that this approach is having, particularly for young people living in Scotland's most deprived areas. Post-school destinations have seen a general improvement over recent years and further analysis of the data shows a measurable closing in the "destinations gap" for those living in Scotland's most disadvantaged areas. Similarly, the 'participation' measure that captures the participation of 16-19-year olds in further education, higher education, apprenticeships, training and employment has improved year on year to an overall participation rate of almost 92%. Full time participation in higher education has also grown consistently since the base year.

3. Social care spending and performance

Due to demand and cost pressures, spending on social care has grown across the period since 2010/11. Table 6 gives data on total social care spending on adults, home care spending on older people (65+) and residential care spending on older people in real terms, it also gives cost per hour for home care and cost per week for residential care. All figures are presented in real terms.

Table 6: Expenditure on total social care and home and residential care for older people

	2010-11	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
Gross Social Work spend on over 18s (£000s)	£2,858,249	£3,151,080	2.2%	10.2%
Total Homecare Expenditure (£000)	£486,906	£563,471	3.1%	15.7%
Older Persons (65+) Home Care Costs per Hour	£22.50	£23.80	3.0%	5.4%
Net Expenditure on Care Homes for Older People (£000s)	£701,565	£612,398	1.2%	-12.7%
Older persons (over 65's) Residential Care Costs per week per resident	£435	£386	1.8%	-11.2%

Several points follow: total social care spending on adults has grown across the period but spending on home care and residential care for older people has fallen as a percentage of that total. Spending on home care has risen by 15% over and above inflation, but the number of hours of homecare provided has been relatively static across the last few years (23,650 hours in 2014/15 to 23,712 hours in 2017/18). Spending on residential care has fallen across the period by over 12% but largely because the net cost of residential care has come down rather than because the number of residents has fallen (-11.2% and -1.7% respectively).

There are two positive points from those figures. First, shifting the balance of spend between residential and home care and that has happened. A record proportion of older people assessed to have long-term care needs are being supported at home. Second, that hours of care at home are not growing, and the number of residents in residential care is declining, suggests that demand is not



expanding at the rate expected. Modelling has typically assumed growth of around 3% per annum in demand for care:² the effective rate has been less than 50% of that.

There may be a few reasons for this. Older people may be living healthier lives, innovative preventative initiatives may be diminishing the need for long term care, or care may be more tightly rationed and targeted on the highest dependency cases with families and communities doing more for others. It may be a combination of all these factors. This needs explored at local level but the LGBF suite of measures also needs updated to take account of innovative preventative programmes and spending. The LGBF care data also needs to be linked to hours of personal care delivered through community nursing. Given the integration agenda, a focus solely on council provided social care will not accurately reflect the changing landscape. That will be explored with Health and Social Care Chief Officers across the next year.

A final point to note is that measures of care user satisfaction and the impact of care provided on their lives, have both declined across the last three years (by around 5%). That said, care still gets an 80% positive rating from users in terms of satisfaction and impact.

The care story is relatively positive across the period in terms of improving the proportion of older people supported in a home environment, albeit the pace is variable across local authorities. However, the available data reveals a more complex picture in relation to reducing the proportion of older people in need of care. This is highlighted in Audit Scotland's 2018 update report on health and social care integration³ which identified significant barriers that must be overcome to speed up change and presented evidence that spending reductions and increasing demand are impacting on some services. The factors that shape the conversion of demographic change into effective demand need more fully explored and the role of rationing and cost control explicitly discussed. It is noticeable that the major area of expenditure reduction in the last eight years has been in residential care, largely provided by the independent sector. This may raise longer term issues about sustainable supply. Social care is the single largest area of procurement for local authorities across Scotland and recent research reveals that in some areas, particularly rural, there are few suppliers and no active market alternative suppliers.⁴

4. Corporate services spending and performance

As noted in the broad overview, corporate services spend has fallen by 23% in real terms since 2010/11, and corporate services now account for only 4.5% of total spending. This is the lowest corporate overhead ratio yet recorded and in part reflects the maturation of councils' digital strategies. It also reflects councils' commitment to reducing 'back office' costs to target resources on front line priorities.

This reduction has gone along with continuing improvement in key areas of performance. Council tax collection within year is at an all-time high of 96% and the cost of collection has reduced by over 50% in real terms since 2010/11. The gender pay gap has reduced at a rate of 12.5% across the last three years and by 6.6% in the last year, and the proportion of the 5% highest earning staff who are female has risen to almost 55%. The percentage of all invoices paid within 30 days has increased to over 93%, again the highest rate yet recorded.

The overall corporate services picture is positive: substantially reduced costs and improved performance. There is a key area of concern, however, and that is council-wide sickness absence rates. Table 7 gives data on overall days lost, and days lost per employee, for teaching and non-teaching staff within councils. The percentage change from 2010/11 and 2016/17 are given.

2 <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/research/projected-cost-pressures-for-scottish-local-government.pdf>

3 <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/report/health-and-social-care-integration-update-on-progress>

4 Economic Outcomes Programme Overview Report, <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/econdev/eop-overview-report-aug18.pdf>



Table 7: Absence levels for teaching and non-teaching staff

	2010-11	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
Sickness Absence Days per Teacher	6.6	5.9	-2.1%	-10.2%
Overall Days Lost - Teachers	349,345	313,918	1.0%	-10.1%
FTE - Teachers	52,900	52,906	3.2%	0.0%
Sickness Absence Days per non-teaching staff member	10.8	11.4	4.5%	5.7%
Overall Days Lost – Non-Teaching staff	1,731,251	1,641,333	4.9%	-5.2%
FTE – Non-teachers	160,403	143,890	0.4%	-10.3%

Source: Council supplied figures⁵

As can be seen, overall days lost for teaching staff fell over 10%, and days lost per member of teaching staff also fell, by 10%. Overall days lost for non-teaching staff also fell by 5%, but days lost per non-teaching staff member rose by almost 6%. One possible explanation of the apparent discrepancy here is that overall non-teaching staff numbers have fallen by over 10% since 2010/11 but teaching staff numbers have been static across the period.

The number of lost days for non-teaching staff is first and foremost an issue of workplace health and wellbeing: 1.6 million days lost in 2017/18 at a rate of over 11 days per member of staff. Two key points need taken into account in interpreting these trends:

- i. There appears to be a direct relationship between the level of workforce reductions and the differential trends in sickness absence between teaching and non-teaching staff. Reductions in non-teaching staff posts is likely to have increased the pressure on staff who remain and stress related absence is growing.
- ii. Due to reduction in posts and low recruitment levels, the council workforce is an ageing workforce. Almost 40% of staff are over 50 and this is increasing year on year.⁶ It is likely that the health issues affecting this demographic in Scotland will impact on council absence rates.

This combination of a reducing workforce and an ageing workforce facing increased workload pressures is not likely to go away in the foreseeable future. Indeed, it is likely to become more acute. Councils current strategies focussing on employee wellbeing as well as health, in particular supporting good mental health, are working to the extent that the situation has not significantly worsened but improvement is needed. High absence rates simply increase the pressure on remaining staff.

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 to improve local service delivery throughout Scotland. All councils continue to participate in these collective efforts towards self-improvement.

⁵ FTE calculations used within council supplied figures for LGBF differ slightly from the PSE guidelines (<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/PublicSectorEmployment/PSEGuidance>)

⁶ <http://www.unison-scotland.org/library/Bargaining-Briefing-87-ageing-workforce.pdf>



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 very high-level indicators and are designed to focus questions on why variations in cost and performance are occurring between similar councils. They do not supply the answers. That happens as councils engage with each other to ‘drill down’ and explore why these variations are happening. That provides the platform for learning and improvement.

Councils continue to work together to ‘drill-down’ into the benchmarking data across 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. Further information, briefing notes and case studies are available on the [LGBF website](#).⁷

The benchmarking data should not be considered in isolation. To support this, there is a growing focus to better align the benchmarking data with outcomes. A new [online interactive tool](#)⁸ links the LGBF with outcomes data presented in the [Community Planning Outcomes Profile](#)⁹ (a resource which provides trend data on outcomes, both at a local authority level, and at a locality level). This will help to strengthen the narrative around the contribution council services play in improving outcomes, and support more strategic use of the LGBF in decision making and greater visibility within Public Performance Reporting.

The introduction of thematic reporting in 2018/19 provides a ‘drill down’ into key policy areas to re-emphasise the ‘can opener’ nature of the LGBF information and strengthen the link between performance information and outcomes. The first of these reports focuses on children and young people’s services and is available on the [LGBF website](#). This will encourage a more diagnostic use of the data, particularly within family groups. These developments will link with the [Community Planning Improvement Board](#) (CPIB)¹⁰ and support their work to improve the availability of performance evidence that can illuminate improvement in outcomes.

There is a continued commitment to make benchmarking information available to all citizens and

7 <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/>

8 <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/outcomes-tool.html>

9 <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/community-planning-outcomes-profile.html>

10 <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/oepb.html>



users of council services. To further this end an online benchmarking public reporting tool has been designed called ‘[My Local Council](#)’¹¹ and is incorporated within councils own local approaches to public performance reporting. All of the information generated by the LGBF is presented in this online benchmarking tool which contains “dashboards” for each council showing movement on indicators across the eight years covered, and a comparison with the Scottish and family group average for all indicators.

LGBF framework indicators

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 child care), 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.

This year, the suite of measures for economic development has been expanded. The majority of council plans and Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) assign a high level of strategic priority to local economic growth, job creation and tackling unemployment. As drivers of community planning and regional growth partnerships, councils recognise the importance of delivering better economic outcomes for their communities and understand the impact that local economic prosperity has on wider local government spend and income. The suite of measures in this area now includes:

- Total economic development revenue and capital investment per 1000 population
- Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated/funded employability programmes
- Cost per planning application
- Average time per business and industry planning application (weeks)
- Percentage of total procurement spent on local enterprises
- Number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population
- Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan
- Town centre vacancy rates
- Proportion of people earning less than the living wage
- Proportion of premises unable to access superfast broadband

A full list of service categories and indicators is attached (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,

¹¹ <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data.html>



Scottish Qualifications Authority, the Scottish Housing Regulator, and SEPA, among others. Where data is not currently collected/published by another body or where it is published too late to 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. A Directors' of Finance subgroup leads a programme of work to improve consistency in the recording of Local Financial Returns. We welcome public views in relation to how to improve this benchmarking framework and particularly if there are other measures which might usefully be included. You can provide feedback and suggestions by visiting our website (<http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking>).

The purpose of this report

This report is an overview report and does not seek to replicate the local context or interpretation provided by each council via their Public Performance Reporting or the depth and detail of the '[My Local Council](#)' tool.¹²

The focus of this report is on three important areas:

1. Trends across Scotland for the key framework indicators covering the period 2010/11 to 2017/18 inclusive. For consistency all data is presented as financial years though some data may be for calendar years or academic years. For each unit cost indicator, we have presented the change over the period in **real terms**, that is taking account of the impact of inflation over time.
2. The level of variation across councils and factors shaping these trends including physical geography, population distribution, size of council and the impact of deprivation.¹³ 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 two most recent years.
3. Identification of areas where unexplained variation exists, providing opportunities where councils may wish to target improvements and/or efficiencies.

Before examining each section in turn, Table 8 below presents an overview of the trends across all LGBF indicators.

¹² <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data.html>

¹³ 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.

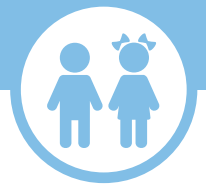
Table 8: Overview of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators 2017-18

Indicator Description	Scotland										%value change base* to 17/18		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	%value change 16/17 to 17/18				
Children's Services													
Cost per primary school pupil	£5,411	£5,271	£5,126	£5,014	£4,875	£4,902	£4,891	£4,974	1.7%	-8.1%			
Cost per secondary school pupil	£7,145	£6,948	£6,930	£6,920	£6,890	£6,968	£6,935	£6,879	-0.8%	-3.7%			
Cost per pre-school education registration	£3,742	£3,405	£3,354	£3,191	£3,468	£4,001	£4,280	£4,463	4.3%	19.3%			
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5		51	53	55	57	59	61	62	1.0%	11.0%			
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6		2	27	29	31	33	34	34	0.0%	8.0%			
% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)		2	32	34	37	40	41	42	1.0%	13.0%			
% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)		10	11	14	14	15	16	16	0.0%	6.0%			
The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week	£3,146	£3,330	£3,173	£3,301	£3,329	£3,547	£3,469	dna		10.3%			
The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week	£229	£244	£271	£281	£292	£304	£319	dna		39.0%			
Balance of care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the community	91.0	91.2	90.9	90.6	90.1	90.4	89.9	dna		-1.1%			
% of adults satisfied with local schools	83.1		83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	-3.0%	-13.1%			
Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations		90.1	91.7	92.5	93.0	93.3	93.7	dna		3.6%			
Overall average total tariff		770	798	827	860	877	888	891	0.4%	15.8%			
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1		478	510	551	581	603	625	618	-1.1%	29.3%			
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2		618	644	685	716	741	751	750	-0.1%	21.4%			
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3		759	788	816	851	864	882	896	1.6%	18.1%			
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4		909	929	962	984	998	1001	1016	1.5%	11.8%			
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5		1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1221	0.9%	10.9%			
% of children meeting developmental milestones (27-30 months)	87.1	90.6	91.3	92.6	93.5	91.9	91.7	91.0	-0.7%	-4.8%			
% Funded early years provision rated good/better										3.9%			
School attendance rates	93.1		93.6		93.7		93.3			0.2%			
School attendance rates (looked after children)	88.6		88.6		91.6		91.0			2.4%			
School exclusion rates	40.0		32.8		27.2		26.8			-32.9%			
School exclusion rates (looked after children)	165.6		184.5		94.3		80.0			-51.7%			

Indicator Description		Scotland										%value change 16/17 to 17/18	%value change base* to 17/18
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18				
Environmental Services	Net cost per waste collection per premises	£64.02	£65.20	£68.07	£66.91	£65.77	£65.98	0.3%	3.1%				
	Net cost per waste disposal per premises	£99.94	£98.01	£95.76	£101.49	£100.64	£98.42	-2.2%	-1.5%				
	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	£22,218	£21,409	£18,988	£17,271	£16,086	£15,551	5.3%	-30.0%				
	Cleanliness score (%age acceptable)	95.4	96.1	95.8	96.1	93.4	92.2	-1.7%	-3.2%				
	Cost of roads per kilometre	£12,556	£11,490	£10,935	£10,648	£10,710	£10,547	0.1%	-16.0%				
	% of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	30.3	30.5	29.4	28.7	29.0	30.2	0.7%	-0.1%				
	% of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	35.8	36.3	35.0	35.2	36.1	35.9	1.1%	0.1%				
	% of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	35.0	36.0	34.8	36.6	37.4	36.2	1.6%	1.2%				
	% of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	41.9	38.3	40.1	39.4	39.3	39.0	-0.5%	-2.9%				
	Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	£27,237	£24,204	£23,128	£24,335	£23,383	£21,783	-1.8%	-21.5%				
	Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population			£5,544	£5,960	£5,872	£5,974	£5,599	5.2%	6.2%			
	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population			£17,584	£18,374	£17,511	£17,296	£16,185	-4.3%	-11.9%			
	% of total household waste arising that is recycled	38.7	40.1	41.1	42.2	42.8	45.2	0.4%	6.9%				
	% of adults satisfied with refuse collection	80.9		83.0	83.0	84.0	82.0	79.0	-4.0%	-5.9%			
% of adults satisfied with street cleaning	73.3		75.0	74.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	-4.0%	-7.3%				
Housing Services	Gross rent arrears as a % of rent due for the reporting year				5.6	5.9	6.2	6.5	6.7	0.2%	1.1%		
	% of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.0%	-0.4%		
	% of dwellings meeting SHQS	53.6	66.1	76.6	83.7	90.4	92.5	93.6	93.9	0.3%	40.3%		
Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs				10.2	9.9	9.4	8.7	7.5	7.5	-14.0%	-26.2%		
% of council dwellings that are energy efficient	74.9	81.2	88.8	93.0	96.6	96.2	96.6	97.2	0.6%	22.3%			
Corp. Asset	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	73.7	74.8	75.9	78.2	79.0	79.6	79.8	81.0	1.2%	7.3%		
	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	81.3	82.7	82.6	80.9	83.0	81.5	84.5	86.3	1.8%	5.0%		

		Scotland										
Indicator Description		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	%value change 16/17 to 17/18	%value change base* to 17/18	
Economic Development												
% of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes		91	12.5	14.1	14.2	14.0	14.4	14.0	14.4	0.4%	5.3%	
Cost per planning application		£5,470	£5,284	£6,701	£4,719	£4,463	£4,998	£4,652	£4,819	3.6%	-11.9%	
Average time per business and industry planning application		27.2	26.2	14.0	13.7	10.6	10.6	9.6	9.3	-2.6%	-33.3%	
% of procurement spent on local enterprises			26.9	27.2	26.9	27.5	25.4	26.5	27.4	0.9%	0.2%	
No of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population			19.0	18.9	16.9	16.6	16.8	16.6	16.8	1.2%	-11.6%	
Investment in economic development & tourism per 1,000		£94,412	£83,926	£79,169	£78,194	£73,557	£67,395	£82,471	£91,806	11.3%	-2.8%	
Proportion of people earning less than the living wage			18.6	18.8	19.3	19.6	20.1	18.4	18.4	-1.7%	-0.4%	
Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband			56.1	78.6	78.6	85.9	91.1	85.9	91.1	5.2%	35.0%	
Town vacancy rates			10.1	11.9	11.9	10.2	11.5	10.2	11.5	1.3%	1.4%	
Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan			12.9	27.2	27.2	38.4	40.8	38.4	40.8	2.4%	27.9%	

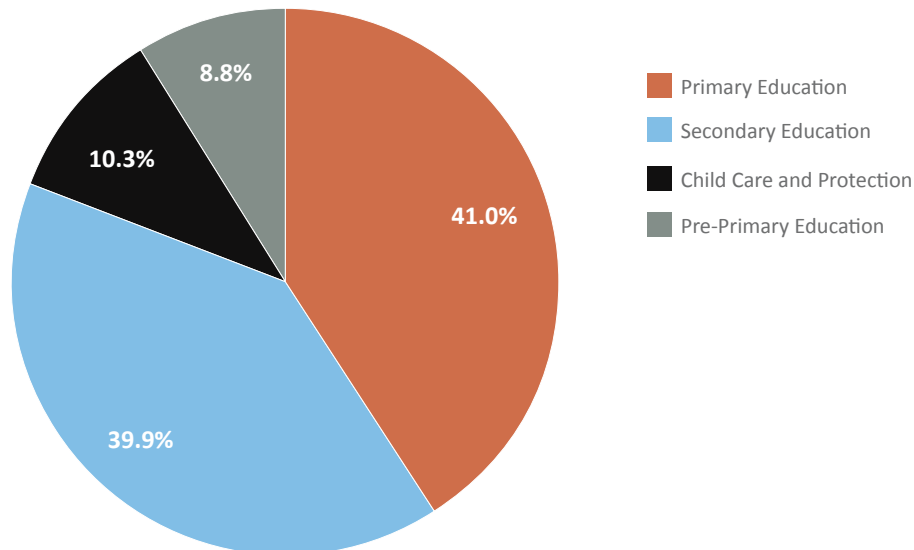




Children's Services

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 2017-18



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. The proportion spent on pre-primary has grown over recent years in line with the policy agenda to expand early years provision. Each element is looked at in turn below.

Data on looked after children will be published in March 2019 therefore is not included within this analysis. The Benchmarking Framework will be updated to incorporate these figures at that time. The recently published [LGBF Thematic Report](#) on children and young people's services provides full analysis including the most recent years data for all looked after children measures.

Pre-school provision

For pre-school educational provision for children ("nursery school"), spending has been standardised as total spend per publicly funded early learning and childcare (ELC) registration. Over the eight-year period the Scottish average for the cost per ELC registration has increased by 19.3%, an increase in real terms of £721 per registration. This reflects a 24.2% increase in gross expenditure and a 4.2% increase in the number of ELC registrations, an additional 3,843 places.

In the last 12 months, real unit costs have increased by 4.3%. This reflects an increase in gross expenditure of 3.1% and a 1.1% reduction in the number of registrations during this period.

Cost per pre-school registration

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£3,742	£3,405	£3,354	£3,191	£3,468	£4,001	£4,280	£4,463	4.3%	19.3%

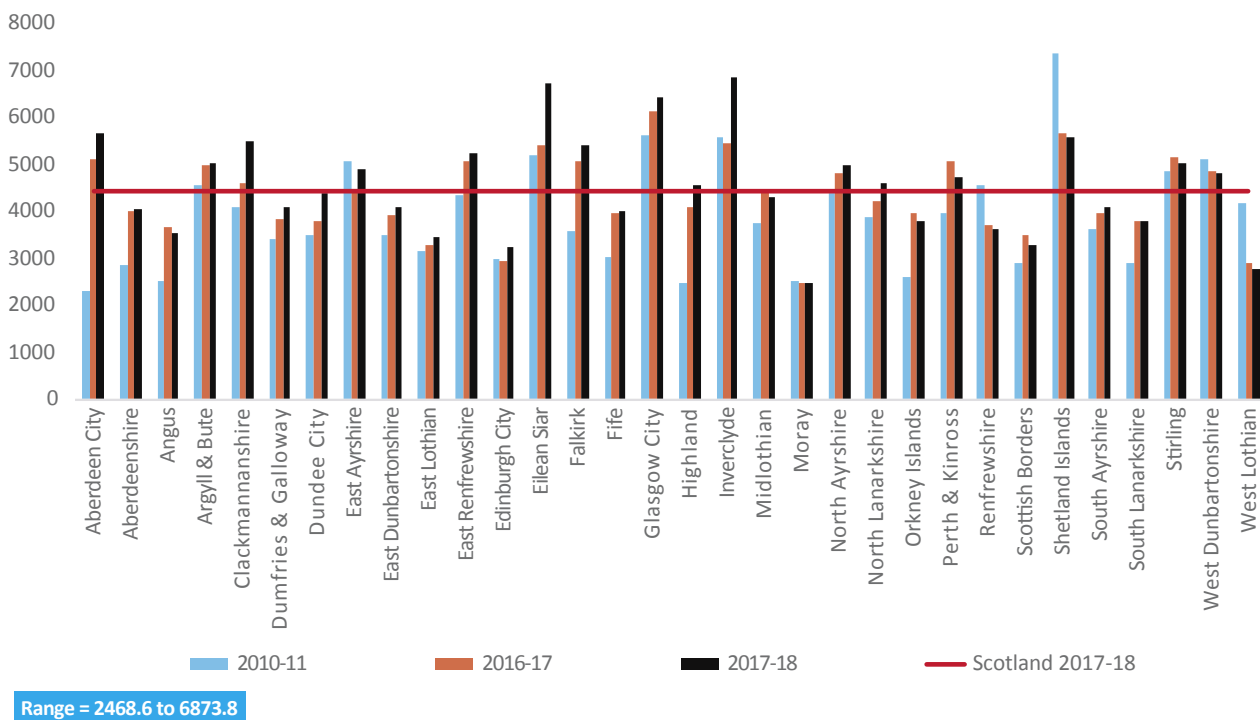


From August 2014, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 required local authorities to increase the amount of early learning and childcare from 475 hours a year to 600 hours for each eligible child. By 2020, the Act introduces a further commitment to the near doubling of entitlement to funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours a year for all three and four-year olds and eligible two-year olds.

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.

In 2017/18, the average cost per registration was £4,463 with substantial and widening variation between councils, ranging from £2,469 to £6,874 per registration. Analysis of this variation reveals no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Cost per pre-school education registration (£)



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

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

- Workforce composition – age, experience, grade and qualification level of staff
- Balance between council and partner provision
- Level of integration of pre-school and primary school provision
- Demographic variation and local capacity to respond



Pre-school performance

Care Inspectorate quality evaluations for early years services and Health Visitor assessments at 27-30 months are used to provide consistent measures for assessing performance within the pre-school sector, and for understanding children's development as they progress through the pre-school setting.

Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better

Care Inspectorate quality evaluations reflect the number of publicly funded early years providers which were graded good or better for all quality themes as a percentage of all publicly funded early years provision which was inspected. Overall, the proportion of publicly funded services graded good or better for all quality themes has increased between 2010/11 and 2017/18, although there has been a small decrease in the past three years.

Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better¹⁴

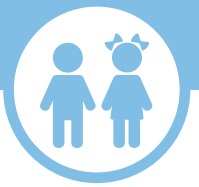
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
87.1	90.6	91.3	92.6	93.5	91.9	91.7	91.0	-0.7%	3.9%

Further exploration is needed to fully understand the trends observed, including what role the following factors may play:

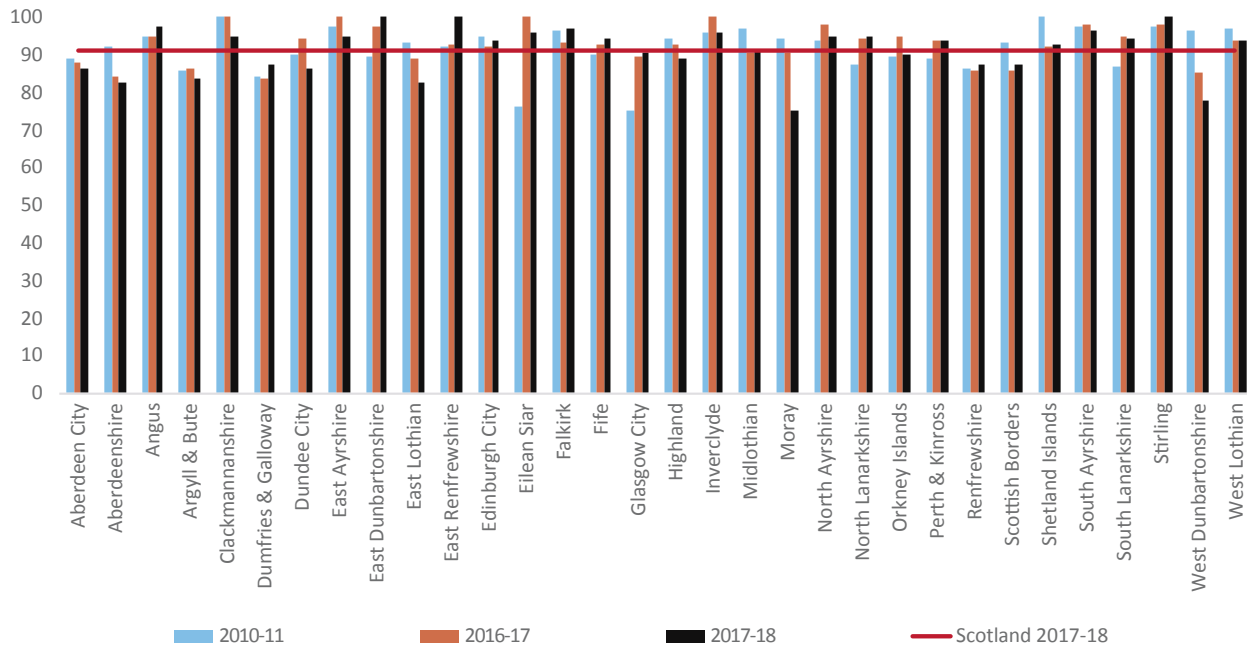
- The decreasing number of registered day-care of children services
- Variation in return rates of annual returns, inspection methodology and inspection frequency
- Variations in the question wording in the annual return in line with changes to government policy (the biggest change in the question was between 2014 and 2015).
- Number of cancellations and new registrations of services

There is considerable variation across councils, with quality ratings in 2017/18 ranging from 75% to 100%. This variation has widened in recent years and does not appear to be systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of authority. The underpinning data and methodology used for this measure will be subject to further quality assurance going forward to ensure it is robust and reliable.

¹⁴ Data is a snapshot as at 31 December each year.



Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better



Range = 75.4 to 100

Source: Figures supplied by the Care Inspectorate

Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

Understanding children's development as they progress through the pre-school setting is reflected as the percentage of children meeting developmental milestones, i.e. with no concerns across any domain, at their 27-30 month review. During 27-30 month reviews, the health professional (normally a health visitor) assesses children's developmental status and records the outcome (e.g. no concern, concern newly suspected as a result of the review, or concern or disorder already known prior to the review) against each of nine developmental domains (social, emotional, behavioural, attention, speech language and communication, gross motor, fine motor, vision and hearing). This is a key outcome measure adopted by the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC), formerly the Early Years Collaborative (EYC).

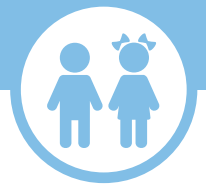
The percentage of children with no concerns increased from 70.9% to 72.4% between 2013/14 and 2015/16, however a change in methodology in 2016/17 means it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with previous years. Data for 2017/18 will be published later in 2019 and will be included in the LGBF refresh if available.

Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2013-14 to 2017-18
70.9	71.6	72.4	66.1	dn ¹⁵	-6.3%	-4.8%

While it is not currently possible to compare progress over time in relation to the included measure, an alternative measure looking at the percentage of children with one or more concern identified in the 27-30 month review reveals improvement in this important outcome area. This measure shows improvement from 19.1% to 17.6% between 2013/14 and 2016/17, an improvement rate of 8%. For this alternative measure, there is a significant relationship with deprivation. In 2016/17 almost one in four

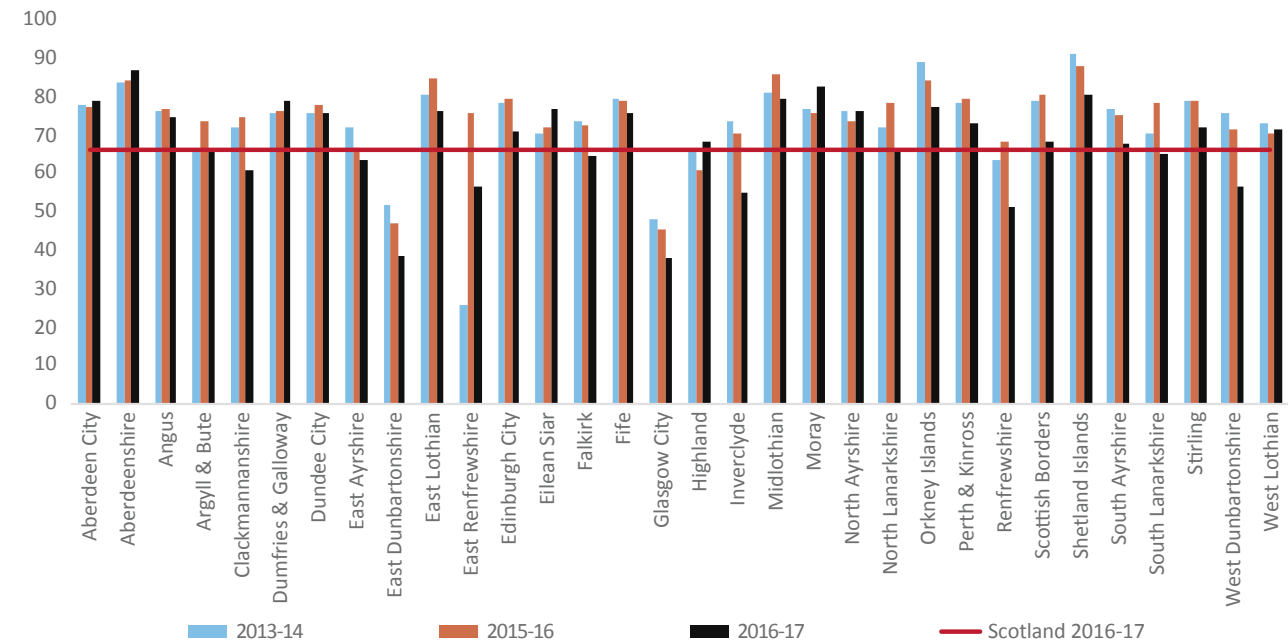
¹⁵ Data not yet published



children (24%) from deprived areas had at least one developmental concern compared to one in nine for the least deprived areas (11%). Looked after children are more likely to have at least one developmental concern (38%) compared to those not looked after (18%).¹⁶

For the original LGBF measure, the percentage of children meeting developmental milestones, there was significant variation across councils in 2016/17, ranging from 38% to 87%.

Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones



Range = 37.9 to 87

Source: ISD, Child Health 27-30 Month Review Statistics

Primary and secondary school spending

The pattern of spend on primary and secondary schooling is standardised as “total cost per pupil”. In both primary and secondary education, there has been a reduction in real costs per pupil since 2010/11 (-8.1% and -3.7% respectively), although the pace of reduction has slowed in recent years.

Cost per primary pupil

There has been a real terms reduction of £436 per primary pupil since 2010/11, representing an 8.1% reduction. While real gross expenditure has increased by 0.7% across the period, there has been a 9.6% increase in pupil numbers during this time.

In 2017/18, the average cost per primary pupil increased by £84 from £4,891 to £4,974, an increase of 1.7% from the previous year. This reflects a 2.6% increase in gross expenditure and a 0.9% increase in pupil numbers.

¹⁶ <https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Child-Health/Publications/2018-04-24/2018-04-24-Child-Health-27m-review-Report.pdf>



Cost per primary pupil

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£5,411	£5,271	£5,126	£5,014	£4,875	£4,902	£4,891	£4,974	1.7%	-8.1%

Cost per secondary pupil

As with primary pupil costs, there was a real terms reduction of £266 per secondary pupil between 2010/11 and 2017/18, representing a 3.7% reduction in unit costs. There has been a 6.3% reduction in pupil numbers across this period; however, the reduction in gross expenditure has been proportionately larger at 9.8%.

In 2017/18, the average cost per secondary school pupil was £6,879, which has reduced from £6,935 in 2016/17, a reduction of 0.8%. This reflects a 0.45% reduction in expenditure, and a 0.36% growth in pupil numbers.

Cost per secondary pupil

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£7,145	£6,948	£6,930	£6,920	£6,890	£6,968	£6,935	£6,879	-0.8%	-3.7%

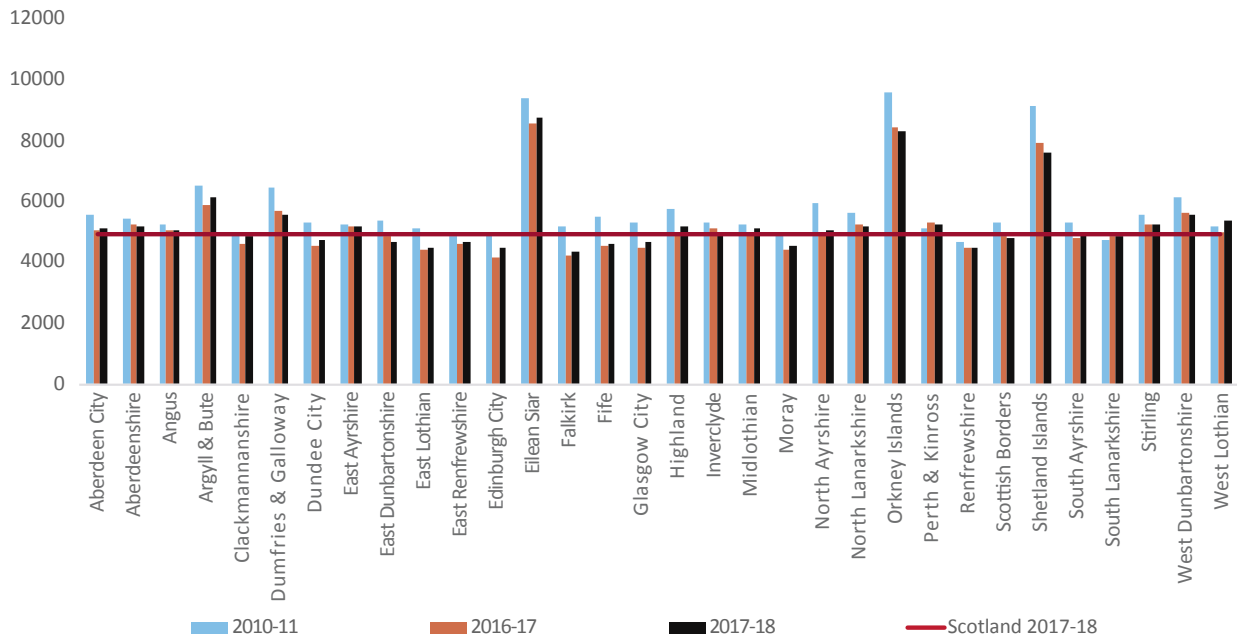
The reduction in spend may be partially offset by the increasing role of school/college partnerships and apprenticeships which are delivering outcomes using different skills and focuses, and not necessarily in school settings. Further exploration may be helpful here to understand expenditure patterns across different models of provision. The number of subjects offered in schools/local authorities varies and further investigation may be useful to understand if there is any relationship with expenditure.

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 and implement the curriculum in a way that meets local needs. In addition, after a decade in which public sector pay has been frozen or rises capped at 1%, the relaxation of its public sector pay policy, although it does not apply to local government, could, by raising expectations, put an upward pressure on budgets going forward.

However, despite the fixed costs associated with teacher numbers, there is still a considerable although narrowing level of variation across councils, particularly for secondary education. Cost data continues to show a very distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the island councils spending significantly more than others. In primary education, costs range from £4,372 to £8,749 (£4,372 to £6,135 excluding islands) while in secondary the range is £5,910 to £11,559 (£5,909 to £9,126 excluding islands).



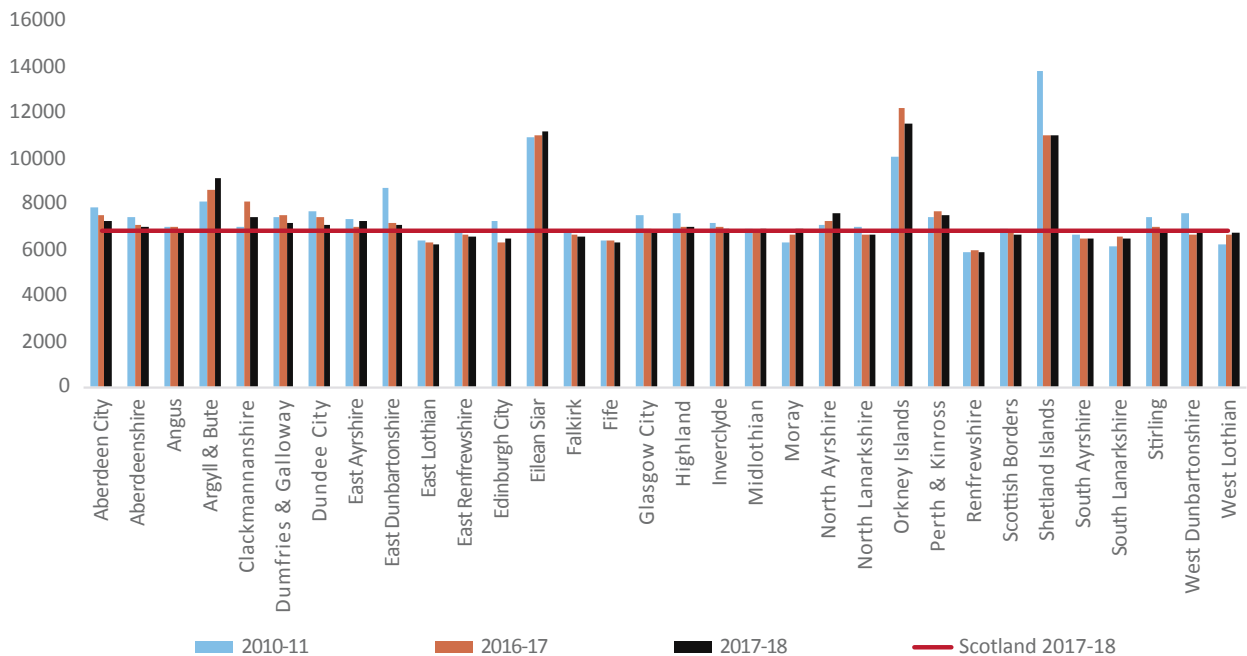
Cost per primary school pupil (£)



Range = 4371.6 to 8748.7

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

Cost per secondary school pupil (£)



Range = 5909.6 to 11559.1

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



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

- *Teacher demographics*
- *Local choices and priorities in relation to non-ringfenced elements of staffing budget such as support staff, teaching assistants, support for children with additional support needs, development teams*
- *PPP/PFI contract costs and arrangements*
- *Service design and growth of campus/hub school models*
- *Management structure and balance of senior roles*
- *Access to additional monies such as The Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity funding*
- *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.*

Primary and secondary school performance

Primary school performance

The National Improvement Framework has committed to introducing a consistent method for assessing children's development throughout the Broad General Education, P1-S3. This development is a significant contribution and addresses an important gap in understanding the educational journey of children across all stages of the curriculum.

For the past three years, the Scottish Government has published “experimental data” based on teacher professional judgements.¹⁷ 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 has been put in place to provide more support and improve confidence and understanding among teachers and, from August 2017, new nationally consistent standardised assessments have been 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.

School attendance rates

Good school attendance is key to ensuring that every child gets off to the best start in life and has access to support and learning that responds to individual needs and potential. The role of school attendance in the protection of children is key.

Local authorities record information on pupils' attendance and absence from school and the reasons for this. This information is used to monitor pupil engagement and to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing by following up on pupils who do not attend school.

Attendance is standardised within this framework as “school attendance rates”, the number of half-days attended for a local authority as a percentage of the total number of possible attendances.¹⁸ Attendance rates have remained above 93% since 2010/11. Between 2010/11 and 2014/15, the attendance rate increased from 93.1% to 93.7% and then decreased to 93.3% in 2016/17. Data is

¹⁷ <https://www2.gov.scot/Publications/2018/12/6014>

¹⁸ This is based on a 380 half day year. The national average is the average number of half-days attended for local authority and mainstream grant-aided schools in Scotland.



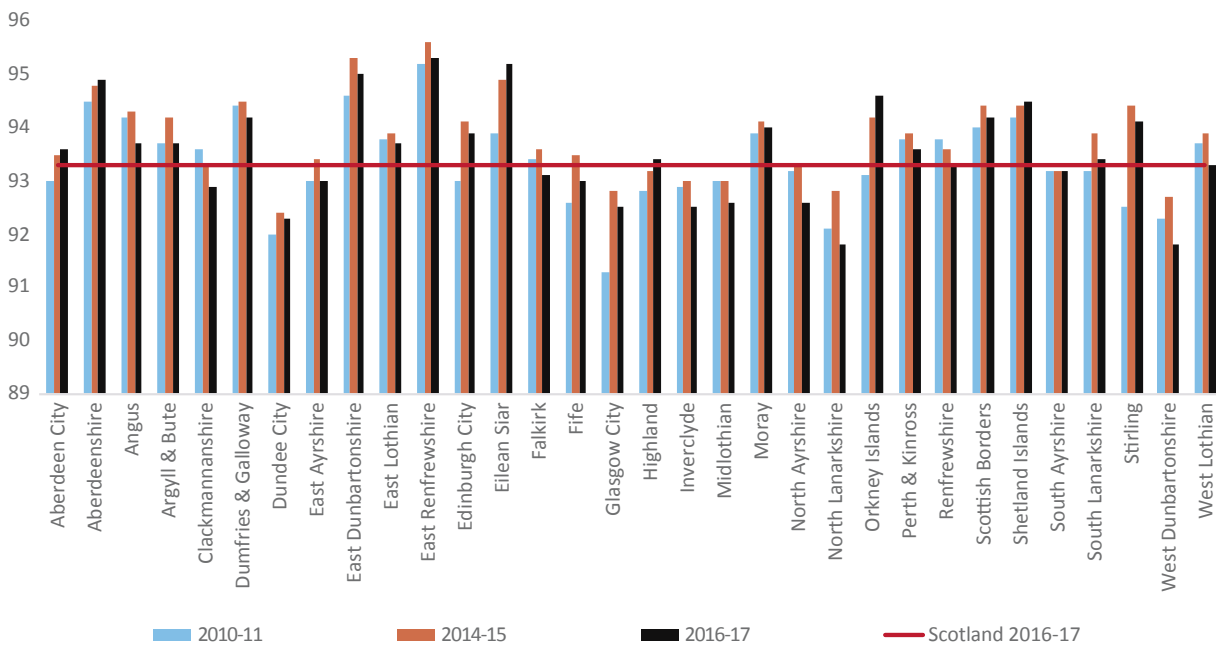
published only every two years.

School attendance rates for all pupils and for children who are looked after

	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2014-15 to 2016-17	Change 2010-11 to 2016-17
School Attendance Rates	93.1	93.6	93.7	93.3	dna ¹⁹	-0.4%	0.2%
School Attendance Rates (LAC)	88.6	88.6	91.6	91.0	dna	-0.6%	2.4%

In terms of variation across councils, attendance rates in 2016/17 range from 91.8% to 95.3%. This range of variation in attendance rates is consistent with the preceding years. The variation between councils is systematically related to deprivation, with attendance rates higher in those councils with lower levels of deprivation.

School attendance rates (%)



Range = 91.8 to 95.3

Source: Scottish Government Attendance and Absence figures

The school attendance of looked after children has improved since 2011/12, but improvement stalled between 2015/16 and 2016/17 and it is still below that of all pupils. However, the gap between looked after children and all children has been closing across this period due to a faster improvement rate for looked after children, with the gap reducing from 5.1 percentage points to 2.3 percentage points. School attendance rates for children who are looked after improved from 88.6% in 2010/11 to 91.0% in 2016/17. As with overall attendance rates, data is published only every two years.

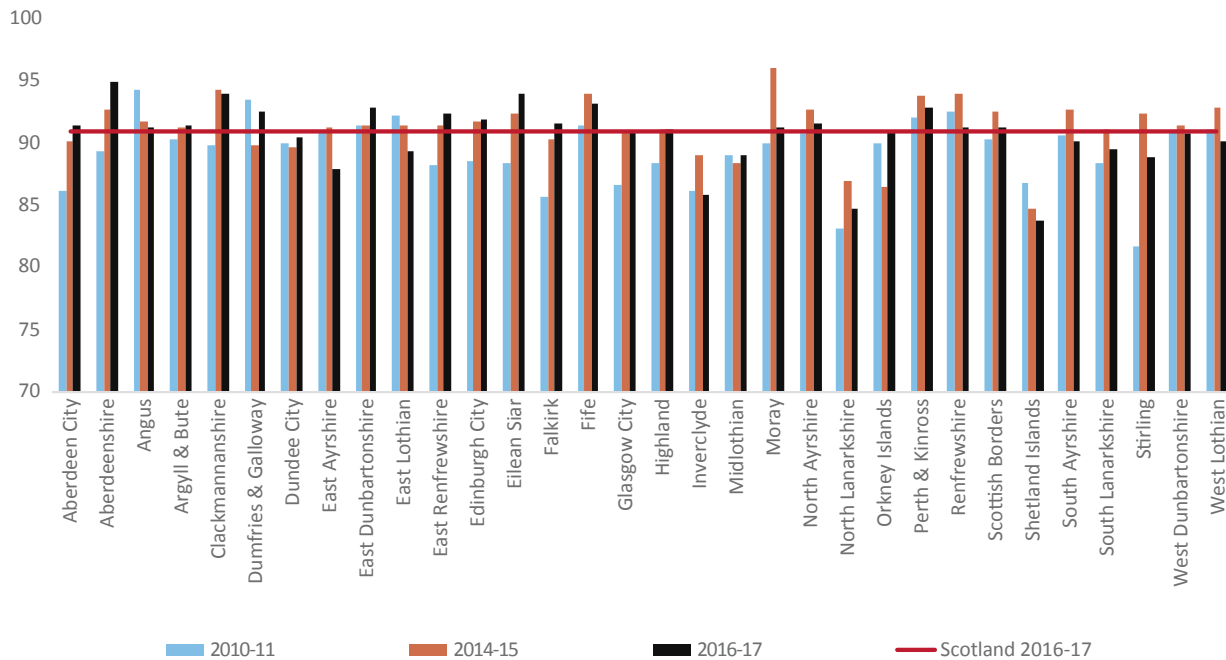
Attendance is lowest for those looked after at home and with a greater number of placements. Looked after children have a lower attendance rate than all pupils in all school sectors but the differences are significant in secondary school (75.1% compared to 91.2% for all pupils in secondary school).

¹⁹ Data not yet published



There is greater variation across councils in attendance rates for looked after children than for other pupils, ranging from 83% to 95%. Within this variation, there are no systematic effects of deprivation, rurality or size of council. The small number of looked after children in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation.

School attendance rates (looked after children) (%)



Range = 83.8 to 95

Source: Scottish Government Attendance and Absence figures

School exclusion rates

Councils strive to keep all learners fully included, engaged and involved in their education, wherever this takes place, and to improve outcomes for those learners at risk of exclusion. While the power exists to exclude children and young people from school, there have been significant, concerted efforts by schools and local authorities to implement a range of approaches and solutions to positively engage young people in their education and improve relationships and behaviour. This is based upon a shared approach of agencies working together, and responding to the needs of learners early and effectively, in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Exclusion is considered only when to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or the educational wellbeing of the learners there. Exclusion is standardised within the framework as “school exclusion rates”, the number of half-days of temporary exclusions and number of pupils removed from the register (previously known as ‘permanent’ exclusions) per 1000 pupils.²⁰ Between 2010/11 and 2016/17, exclusion rates reduced from 40.0 to 26.8.

²⁰ As LAC pupil numbers at local authority level are not available on a consistent basis for the time series required, total LAC numbers are used. These figures therefore differ from Scotland figures published by the Scottish Government which are based on LAC pupil numbers

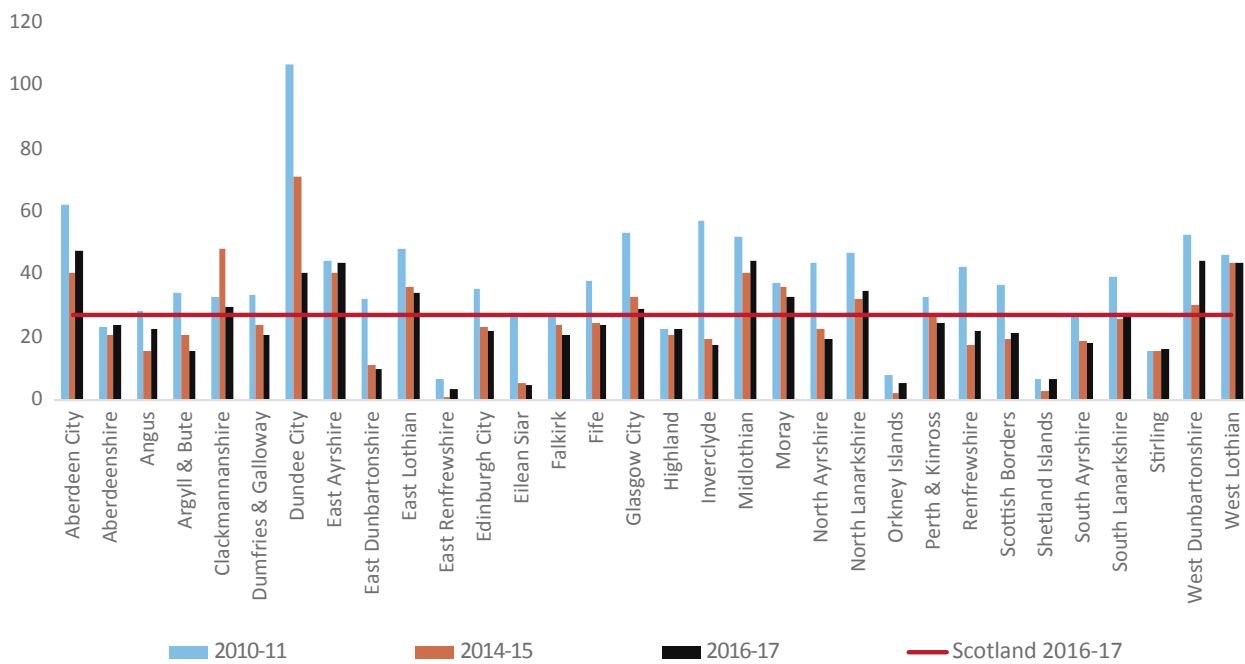


School exclusion rates for all pupils and for children who are looked after

	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2017-18	% Change 2014-16 to 2016-17	% Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
School Exclusion Rates	40.0	32.8	27.2	26.8	dna ²¹	-1.3%	-32.9%
School Exclusion Rates (LAC)	165.6	184.5	94.3	80.0	dna	-15.2%	-51.7%

There was significant but narrowing variation across councils in 2016/17, with rates per 1000 pupils ranging from 3.2 to 47.6. The variation between councils appears to be related to the level of deprivation within councils, with lower exclusion rates reported in those councils with lower levels of deprivation. As with attendance rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years.

School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils)



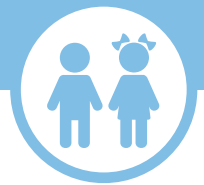
Source: Scottish Government Exclusions Dataset

Exclusion rates for children who are looked after are significantly higher than for all pupils, although they are reducing at a much faster rate, so the gap is narrowing steadily. The exclusion rate for children looked after for the full year has nearly halved. Between 2012/13 and 2016/17, exclusion rates for children who are looked after reduced from 184.5 to 79.9. This represents an improvement rate of 57%, compared to an improvement rate of 33% for all pupils. As with overall exclusion rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years.

Those children in residential accommodation tend to have higher rates of exclusions than those looked after in the community. Children looked after at home have a noticeably higher exclusion rate than others looked after in the community. There is a tendency for looked after children with a greater number of placements to have a higher rate of exclusions and children looked after for part of the year with more than one placement have a notably high rate of exclusions.

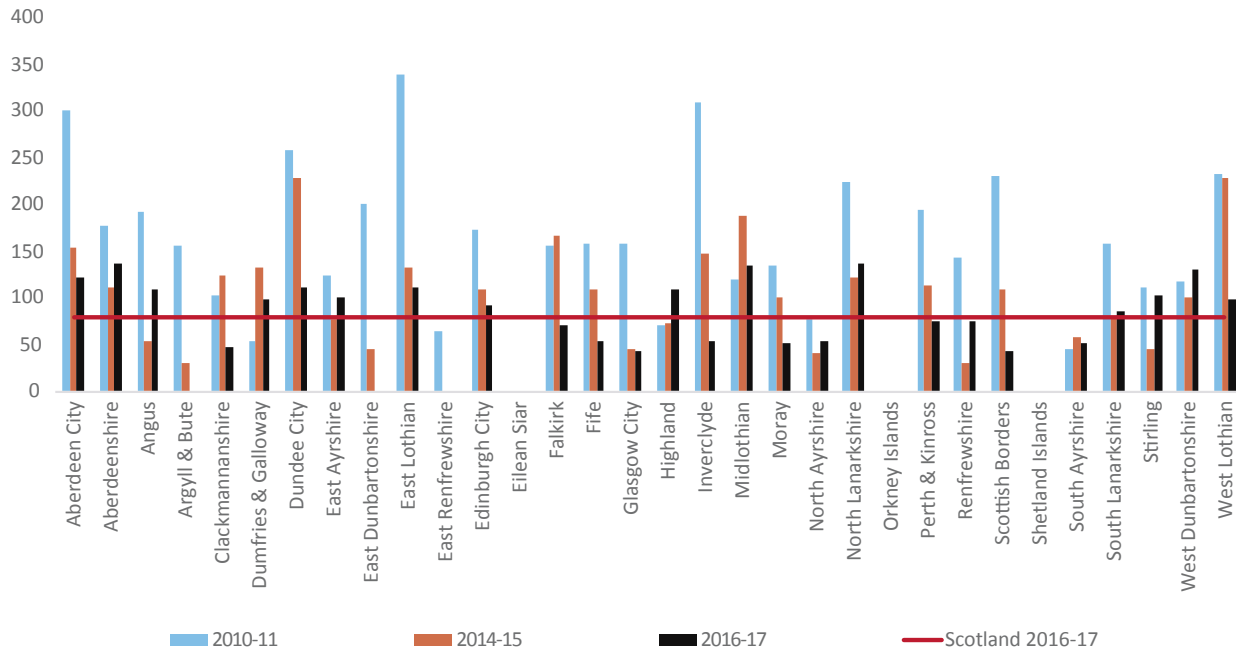
There is greater variation across councils in exclusion rates for looked after children than for all pupils, ranging from 0 to 137. This variation between councils has narrowed significantly in the

²¹ Data not yet published



most recent year. There are no systematic effects in relation to council level of deprivation, rurality or size on exclusion rates. The small number of looked after children in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation.

School exclusion rates (looked after children) (per 1,000 looked after children)



Range = 0 to 137.1

Source: Scottish Government Exclusions Dataset

Secondary school performance

The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) has helped to ensure that all young people receive a curriculum that is better focussed on their individual needs. This is reflected in the long-term trends seen for the attainment of school leavers, with a sustained improvement in overall levels of attainment and a significant closing of the attainment gap over recent years.

The LGBF Board is committed to developing a suite of performance measures which accurately reflect the senior phase (S4-S6) landscape and 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 in December it was not possible to include 2017/18 data here. This 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 All²² 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 while the complementary tariff may be more useful in reflecting different curriculum models.

As the school leaver data is not yet available for 2017/18, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data available on the Learning Analysis School Summary Dashboard, which is based on school leavers. To allow 2018 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupil's attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.²³

Average total tariff by SIMD quintile

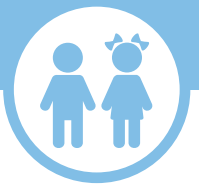
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2011-12 to 2017-18	Range 2017-18
Overall Average Tariff	770	798	827	860	877	888	891	0.4%	15.8%	686 - 1388
Average Tariff SIMD Q1	478	510	551	581	603	625	618	-1.1%	29.3%	446 - 972
Average Tariff SIMD Q2	618	644	685	716	741	751	750	-0.1%	21.4%	591 - 1139
Average Tariff SIMD Q3	759	788	816	851	864	882	896	1.6%	18.1%	673 - 1324
Average Tariff SIMD Q4	909	929	962	984	998	1001	1016	1.5%	11.8%	861 - 1369
Average Tariff SIMD Q5	1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1221	0.9%	10.9%	314 - 1527

An improving trend can be seen in average total tariff over the past seven years, increasing by 15.8% from 770 in 2011/12 to 891 in 2017/18. These changes reflect a significant improvement in the educational outcomes and life chances of Scotland's young people.

While this improving trend is evident for all SIMD groups, pupils from the most deprived groups have shown the largest improvement across the period, although tariff scores remain significantly lower

²² Source: 'Developing a 'Participation' Measure for Post 16 Learning, Training and Work' 2013 Consultation, Scottish Government, <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/scotstat/PartMeasureConsult/PartMeasCons-Report>

²³ Overall average total tariff is calculated by the Improvement service

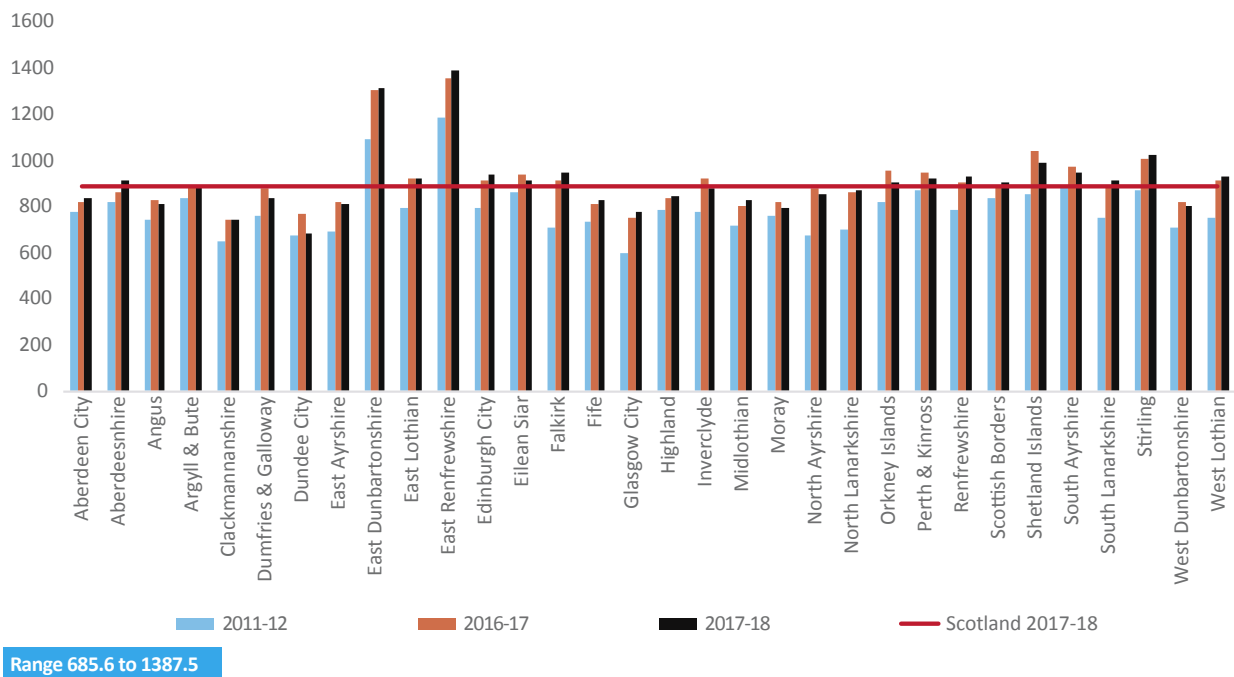


than those achieved by pupils from less deprived groups. Average Tariffs have increased by 29.3% and 21.4% for the two most deprived groups compared to 11.8% and 10.9% for the least deprived groups. The improvements seen in the total tariff measure of school leavers from SIMD quintile 1 since 2011/12 are equivalent to the average leaver converting 1.5 passes at National 5 into Highers. This scale of change makes a significant and positive impact on post-school opportunities.

By comparison, there was no significant change in the total tariff measure for leavers in 2017/18 compared with the year before, with a change of a few tariff points for each measure (equivalent to a change of a grade or less for one award). While this reflects an overall slowing in progress to close the attainment gap in 2017/18, it is important to recognise the significant improvements achieved by Scotland's schools since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence, particularly given the context of continuing change within the school system over recent years. Reducing the attainment gap further remains a key priority for local authorities and will require allowing the Regional Improvement Collaboratives to develop their full potential as a means of adding value to local authorities in their work supporting school improvement.

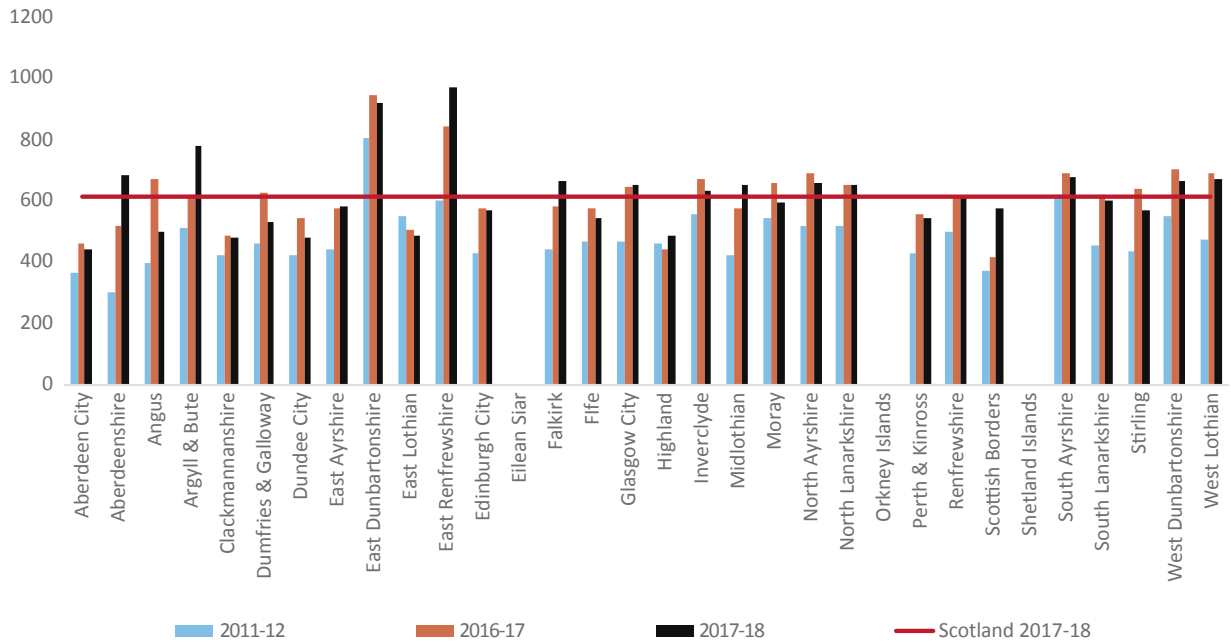
There is a considerable and widening level of variation between councils in relation to overall average tariff (685 to 1387), and within each quintile group. Further detail of the variation within councils is presented in the graphs below.

Overall average total tariff



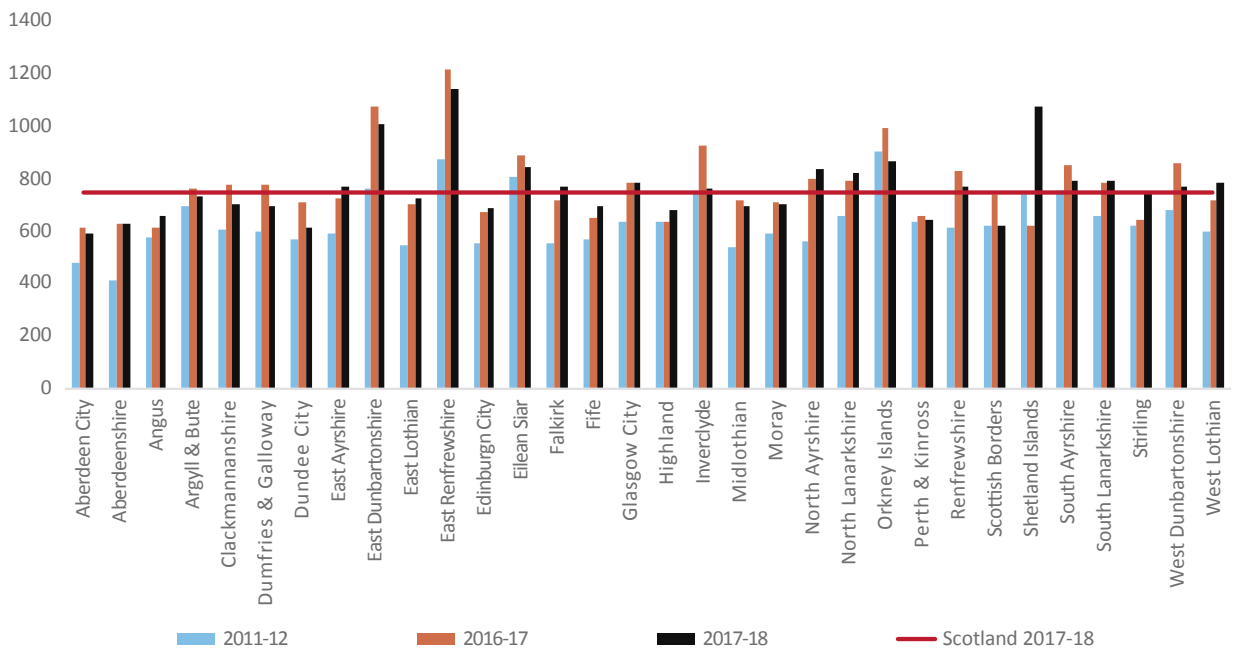


Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1

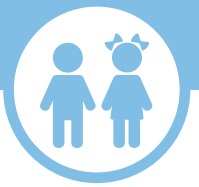


Range = 446 to 972

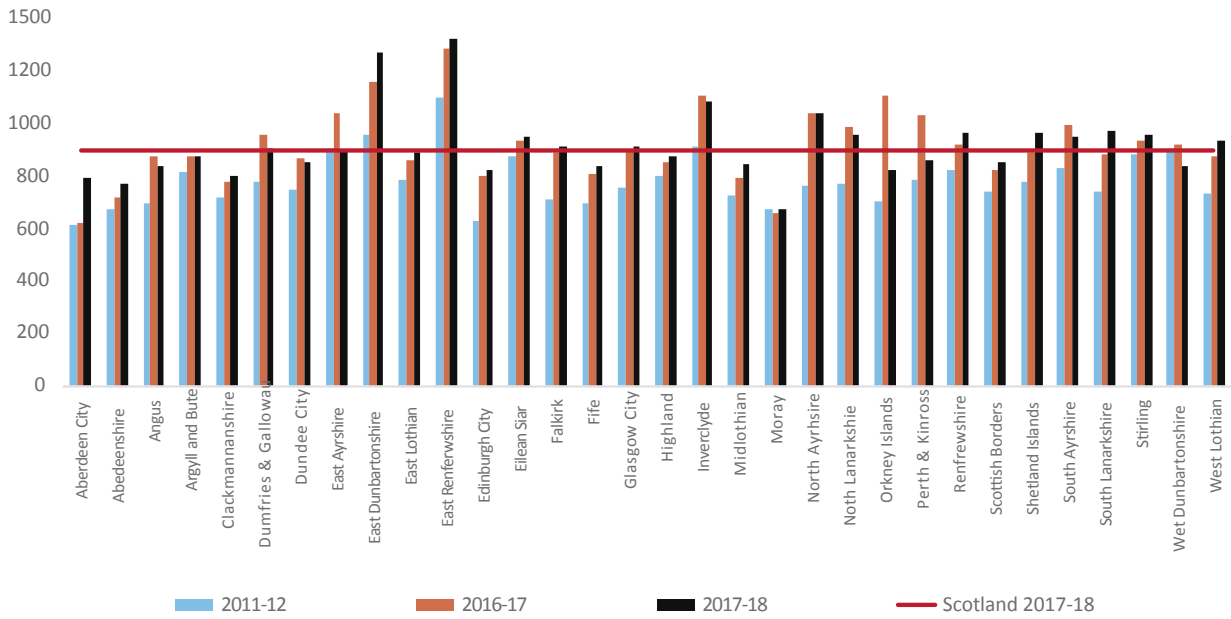
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2



Range 591 to 1139

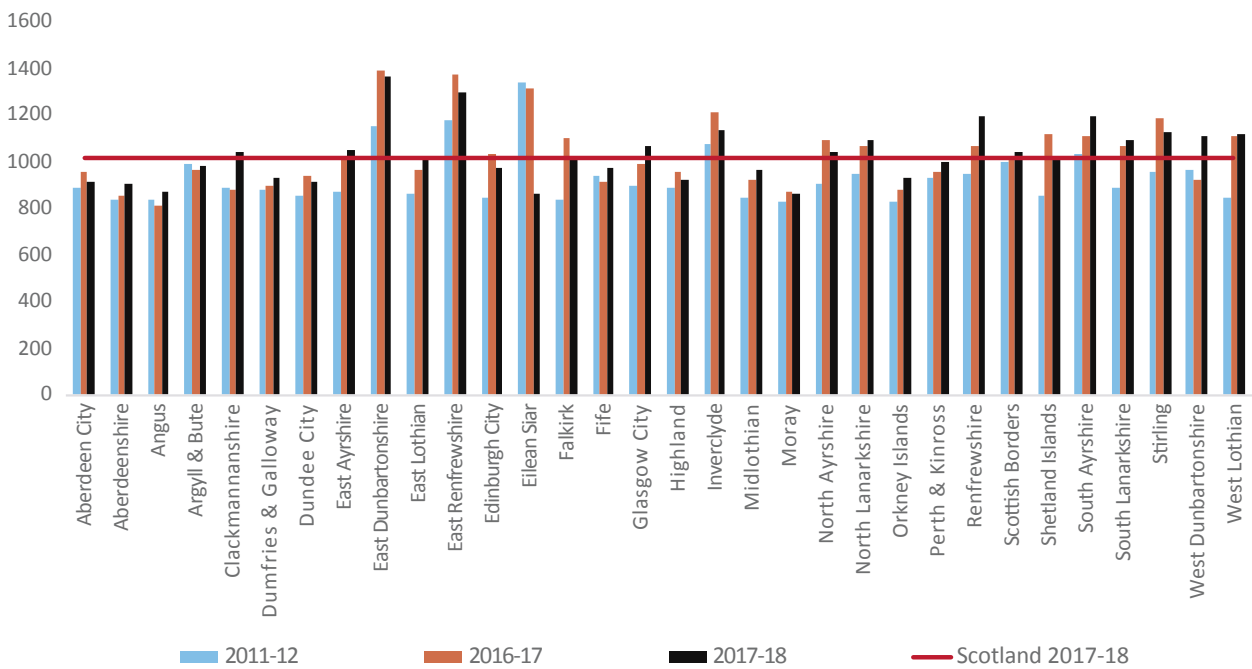


Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3



Range = 673 to 1324

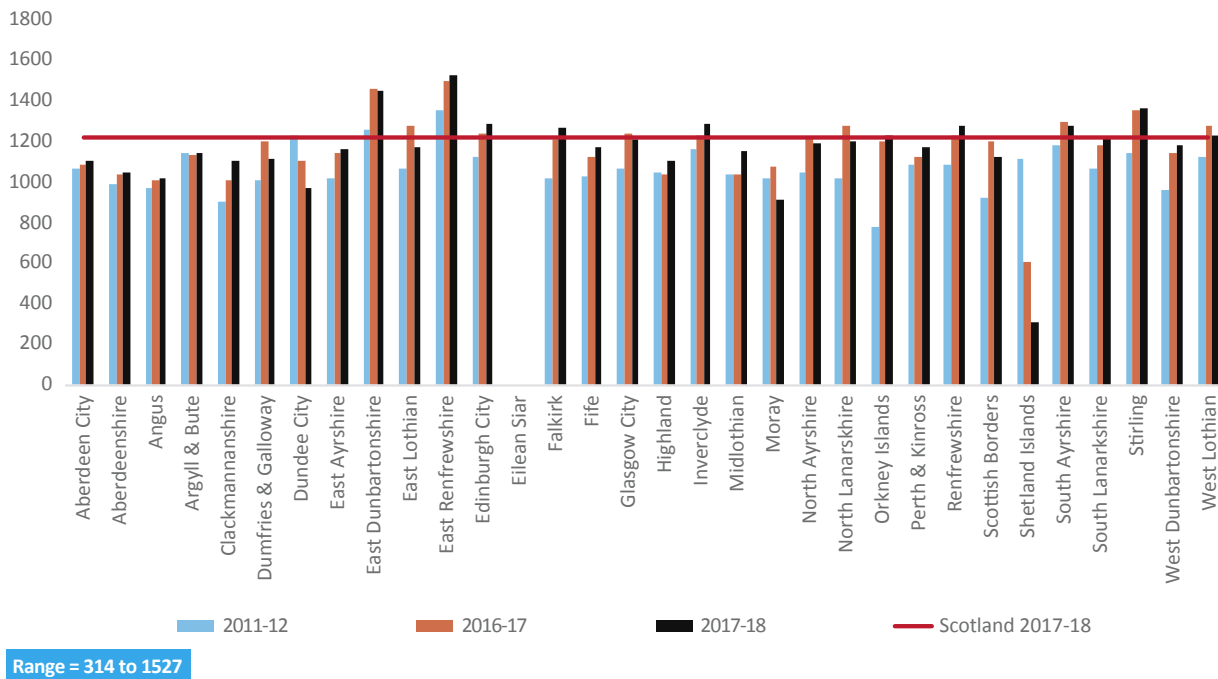
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4



Range = 861 to 1369



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

Performance at level 5 and level 6 or higher 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 2017/18, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data available on the Learning Analysis School Summary Dashboard which is based on school leavers. To allow 2018 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 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

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2011-12 to 2017-18
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	51	53	55	57	59	61	62	1.0%	11.0%
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	26	27	29	31	33	34	34	0.0%	8.0%
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 (SIMD)	29	32	34	37	40	41	42	1.0%	13.0%
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 (SIMD)	10	11	14	14	15	16	16	0.0%	6.0%

In 2017/18, 62% of pupils achieved five or more awards at level 5 or higher, an increase of 11 percentage points from 2011/12. Similarly, there has been an eight percentage point increase in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more awards at level 6 or higher during this time, from 26% to 34%. Since 2011/12, all 32 councils have seen an increase in attainment at these levels, with most showing a year on year improvement. In the last 12 months, achievement rates at level 5 improved by one percentage point, while there was no change at level 6.

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 2017/18 was 42% and 16% respectively, an increase of 13 percentage points and 6 percentage points from 2011/12. This is an improvement rate of 45% and 60%, compared to 22% and 31% for all pupils achievement. In the past 12 months, as with the results for all pupils, there was a one percentage point improvement at level 5, and no change at level 6.

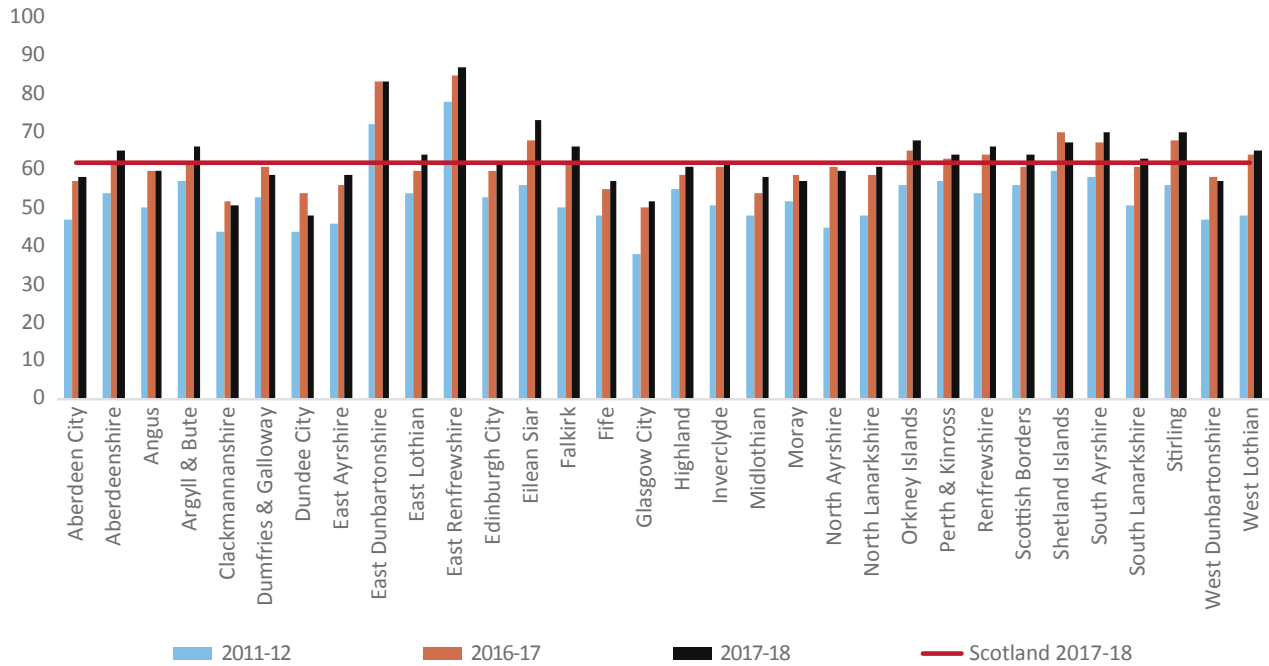
Across Scotland, substantial and widening variation between councils can be identified at both level 5 and level 6, ranging from 48% to 87% and 24% to 63% respectively. Substantial variations can also be seen between councils in achievement levels for the most deprived, ranging from 29% to 69% at level 5, and 9% to 37% at level 6. As with all pupils, the variation has widened in recent years.

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 councils is 58% compared to 66% for the least deprived councils. However, there are some councils with very low levels of overall deprivation who 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 will 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.

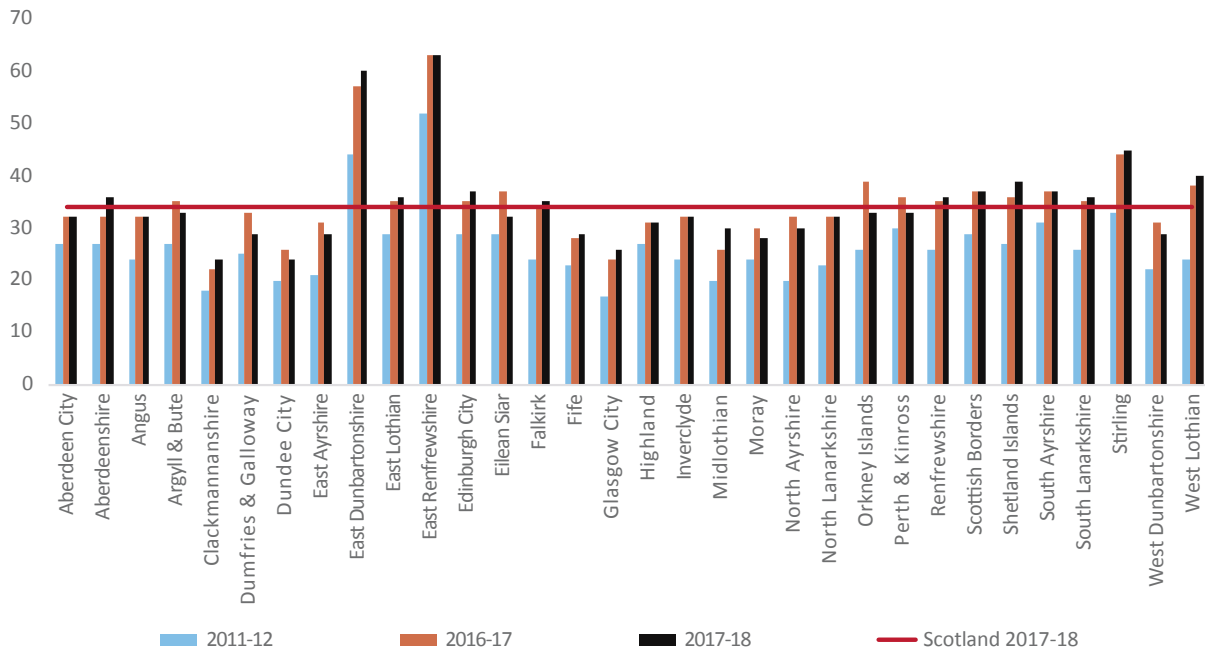


Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5



Range = 48 to 87

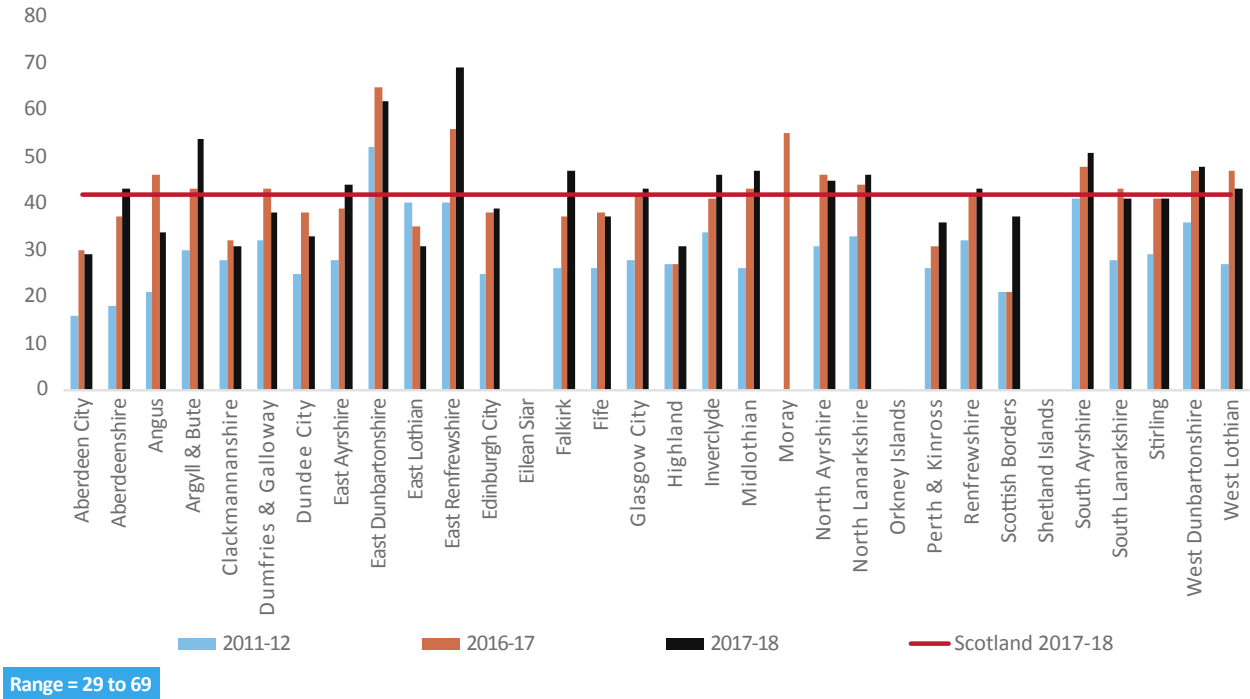
Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6



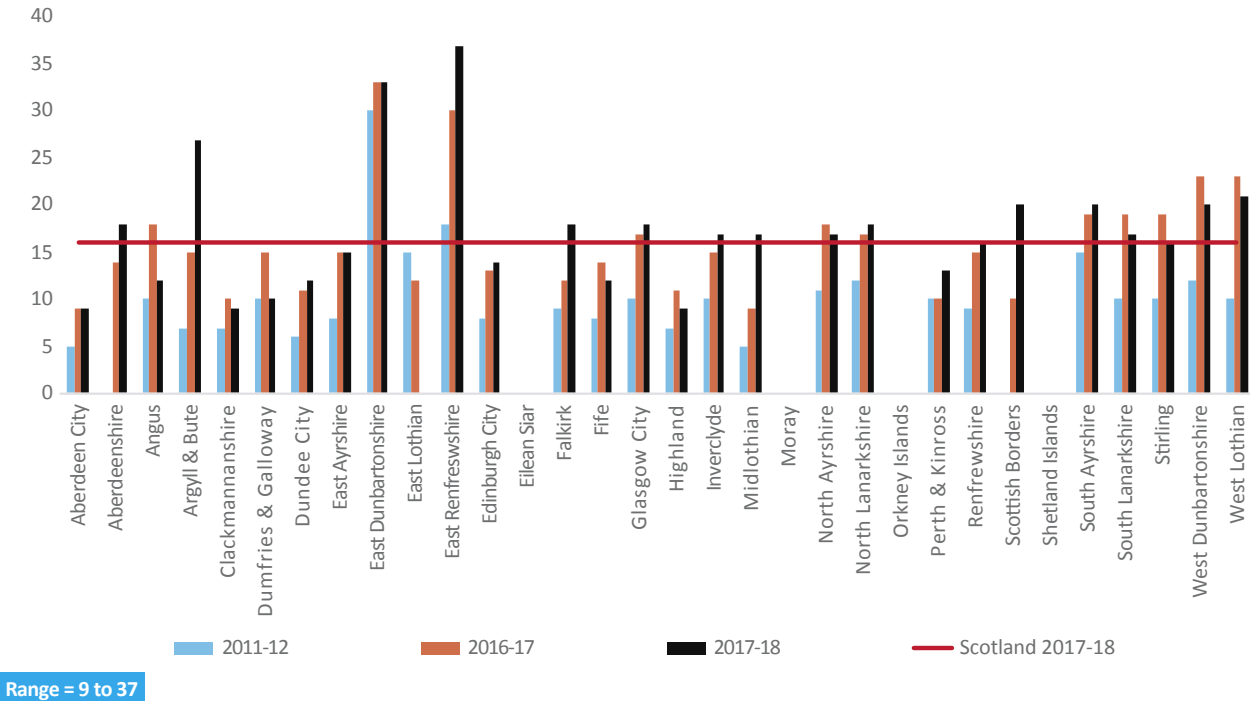
Range - 24 to 63



Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)



Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)



Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

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



Positive destinations and participation rate

Average total tariff points and attainment at levels 5 and 6 provide two summary measures of the overall attainment of a cohort of school leavers. A range of other measures are available that give a more outcomes-focused view of attainment or a more focussed view of the attainment of particular groups of school leavers. These also, generally, show a picture of sustained improvement in attainment over recent years and significant progress in closing the attainment gap.

Between 2011/12 and 2016/17, there has been continued improvement in relation to the proportion of young people entering initial “positive destinations” after school,²⁴ increasing from 90.1% to 93.7%. Positive destinations include participation in further education (FE), higher education (HE), training/apprenticeships, employment, volunteering or Activity Agreements. Data is not yet available for 2017/18 but will be included in the LGBF March refresh.

The participation measure measures participation in learning (including school), training or work for all 16-19 year olds in Scotland (as defined by Opportunities for All Data Practice Framework, Scottish Government, August 2014). This measure provides a useful opportunity to track the progress of young people beyond the point at which they leave school. It also recognises that all participation is positive and should be regarded as transitional — education and training are important phases in a young person's life that can improve their job options but are not destinations in themselves.

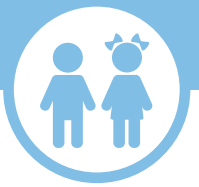
This measure was first published in 2015 by Skills Development Scotland as experimental statistics and shows an increase in the participation rate from 90.4 to 91.8 between 2015/16 and 2017/18. This has been driven by an increase in employment, particularly in part-time employment.

Positive destinations and participation rate (%)

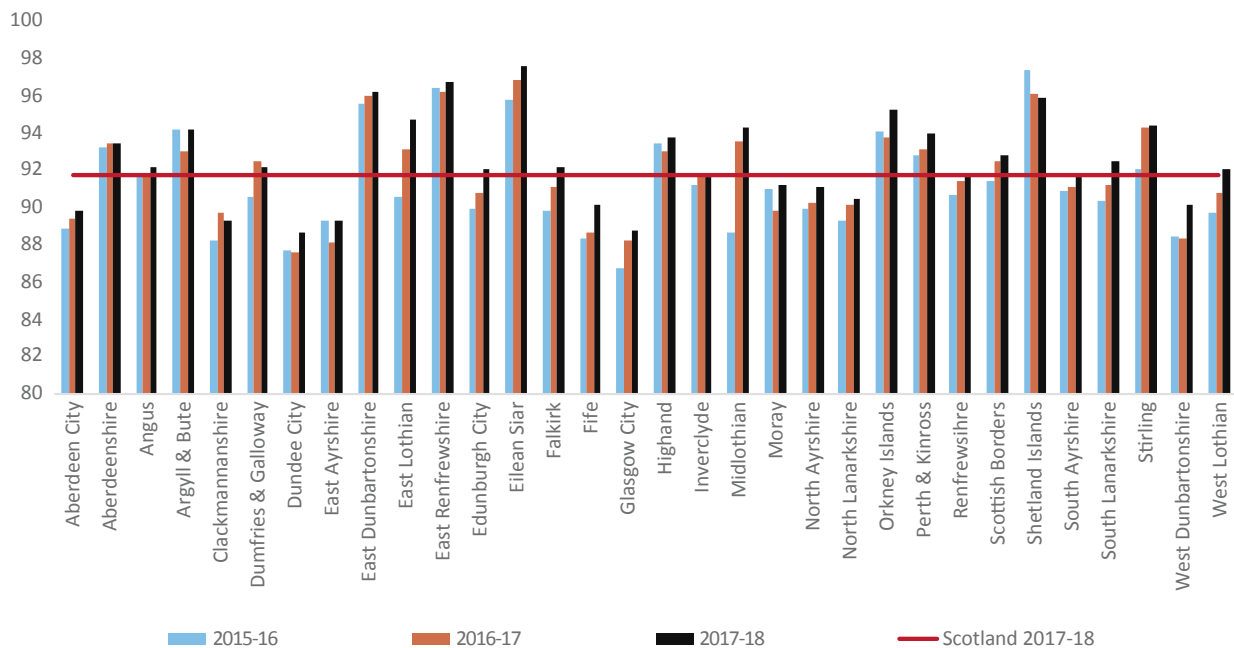
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change from Base Year
Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations	90.1	91.7	92.5	93.0	93.3	93.7	dna	0.4%	3.6%
Participation Rates for 16-19 Year Olds	-	-	-	-	90.4	91.1	91.8	0.7%	1.4%

In 2017/18, the participation rates for 16-19 year olds ranged from 88.7% to 97.6% across councils, with variation narrowing slightly. As with destinations, there is a systematic relationship between participation rates and deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting lower participation rates (e.g. 90.3% average for the most deprived councils versus 95.0% average for the least deprived councils).

²⁴ Scottish Government, Initial Destinations of Senior Phase School Leavers



Participation rates for 16-19 year olds (%)

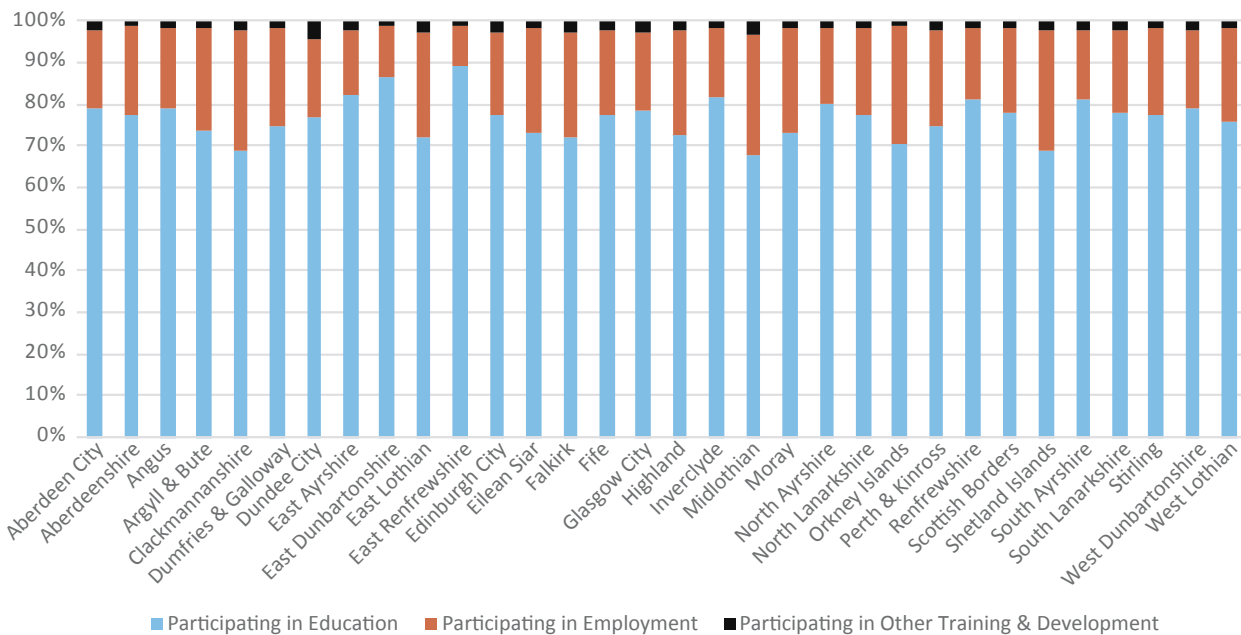


Range = 88.7 to 97.6

Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure

There is significant variation across councils in the breakdown of participation status by education, employment and training as can be seen in the graph below. Further disaggregation of these categories will be provided as additional trend data becomes available in future years.

Participation rates - breakdown of participating status by council 2017-18 (%)



Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure

Education includes: school pupils, higher education & further education.

Employment includes: full time employment, part time employment, self-employment and modern apprenticeships.

Other training & development includes: employability fund, activity agreements, other formal training, personal skills development and voluntary work



Satisfaction with schools

There has been a 13 percentage point reduction in adults satisfied with their local schools service over the period, with satisfaction levels falling from 83% to 70% between 2010/11 and 2017/18.

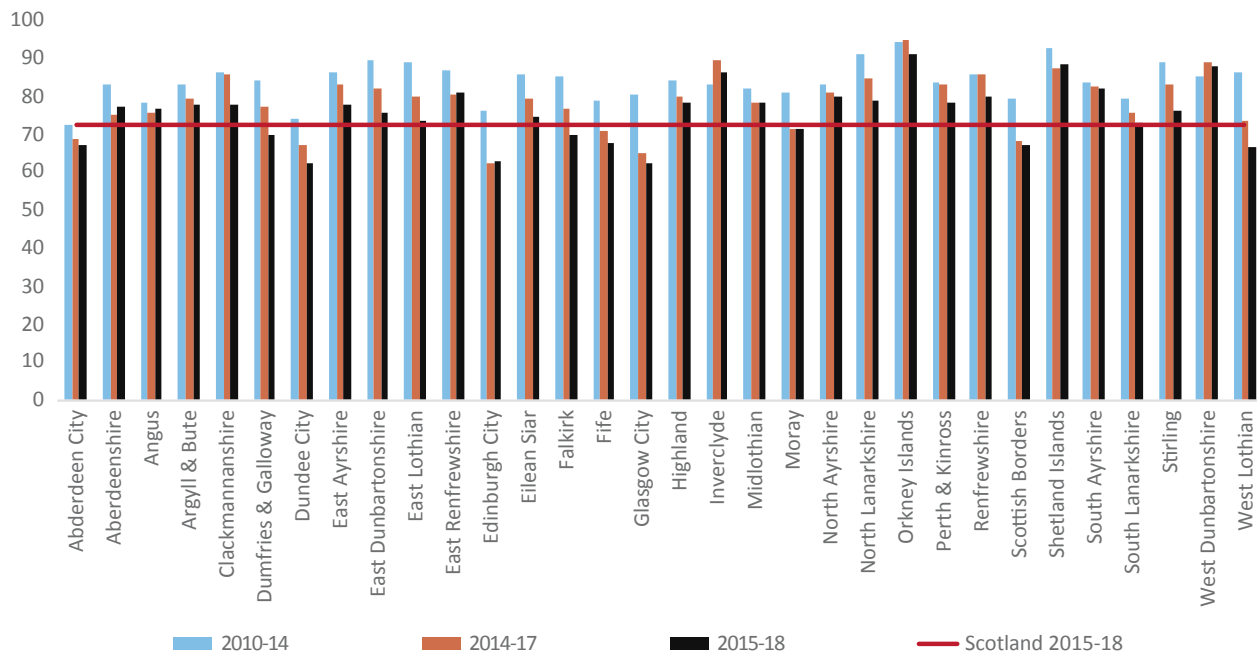
Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools

2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
83.1	83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	-3.0%	-13.1%

The customer satisfaction data that is included in the LGBF is derived from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, 3-year rolled averages have been used in local authority breakdowns. 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 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 63% to 91%, with smaller authorities reporting significantly higher levels of satisfaction (83% in smaller authorities compared to 70% in larger authorities).

Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools



Range = 62.7 to 91.3

Source: Scottish Household Survey





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. Both council run and council commissioned services are included here. Social care services have undergone 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 those using health and care services and also improve efficiency through the provision of more joined up services.

To reflect this major reform, we continue to work with Social Work Scotland, Chief Officers of the Integration Authorities, and the new Health and Social Care Improvement body to agree benchmarking measures which will usefully support Integration Joint Boards fulfil their new duties. The current social care figures are likely to become more difficult to interpret over time as integration continues and the personalisation agenda gains pace. Work will therefore draw upon the core suite of health and social care integration measures and will consider measures which might usefully be included to provide a fuller picture of improvement towards the national health and wellbeing outcomes and 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 18.7% to 20.6% by 2024.²⁵ 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 increase of 5.4% in spending per hour on home care for people over 65 across Scotland. This reflects an overall 15.7% increase in gross expenditure and 9.8% increase in the number of hours delivered during this period, although movement between years has fluctuated.

Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£22.54	£21.84	£22.16	£21.54	£21.25	£22.07	£23.06	£23.76	3.0%	5.4%

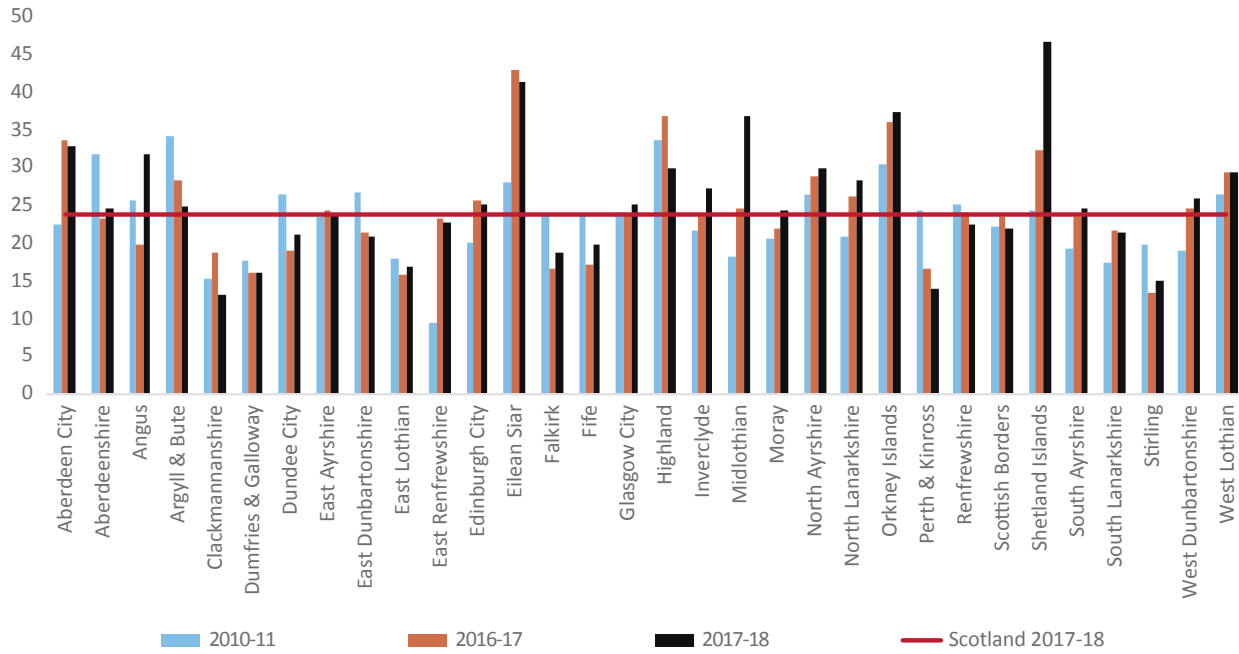
In the past 12 months, spending per hour has increased by 3.0% from £23.06 to £23.76. This reflects a 3.1% increase in expenditure and a 0.1% increase in hours delivered. The increase in expenditure will reflect in part the commitment from October 2016 to pay all social care workers the living wage. Going forward, some caution may be required in the interpretation of care hour figures as we move away from recording hours of care into more person-centred care with the ability to select direct payments or more inventive provision of care under self-directed support options.

²⁵ 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/2016-based>



There is significant variation across councils, with spend per hour ranging from £13.28 to £46.76. The level of variation observed is wider than any preceding year, however there is no longer any systematic relationship with rurality. Although rural councils still tend to have higher costs on average, often due to longer travel time between clients, this is no longer statistically significant. Over time, average rural costs have reduced and average urban costs have increased.

Older persons (over 65) home care costs per hour (£)



Range = 13.3 to 46.8

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

Balance of care

The second area of adult social care services covered in the framework is the percentage of adults over 65 with long term care needs receiving care 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.

The balance of care has shifted in line with policy objectives across the period with a growth in home care hours provided (9.8%) and a relative decline in residential places (-1.7%). The percentage of people with intensive needs who are now receiving personal care at home has increased from 58.9% in 2010/11 to 61.7% in 2017/18. 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.

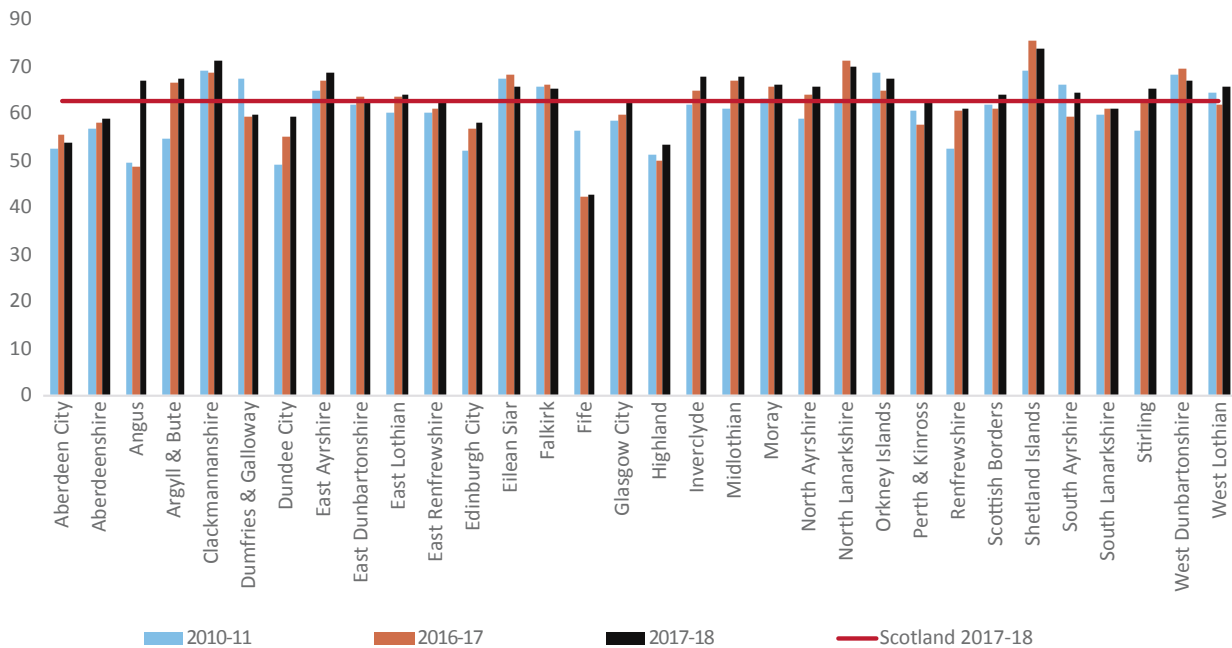
Percentage of people aged 65 or over with long-term care needs receiving care at home

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
58.9	59.2	59.8	59.8	60.0	60.7	60.1	61.7	1.6%	2.8%



There is significant although narrowing variation across councils in relation to the balance of care, ranging from 42.6% to 73.7% across Scotland. Councils with larger populations have significantly lower rates of people receiving personal care at home than smaller areas (58% compared to 69%).

Percentage of people aged 65 or over with long-term care needs who are receiving personal care at home



Range = 42.6 to 73.7

Source: Social Care Survey, Scottish Government

Direct payments and personalised managed budgets

From 1st 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 resources available to provide support and offer a choice as to how that support is managed/delivered/organised through the following four options:

1. Direct payment (a cash payment)
2. 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)
3. The local authority arranges the support
4. 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.²⁶ The breakdown of spend available across the four options will

²⁶ The PMB breakdown was included in councils return to the Improvement service for 13/14 - 17/18, and



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%. Glasgow accounts for a significant proportion of this growth, where expenditure via these two options has grown from £4.8 million to £79.3 million. Excluding Glasgow, the spend on direct payments and PMB as a percentage of total social work spend increased from 1.6% to 4.8% across the same period, with direct payments accounting for 74% of this spend.

In the last 12 months, the proportion of spend via Direct Payments and Personalised Managed Budgets rose slightly from 6.5% to 6.7% (4.7% to 4.8% excluding Glasgow).

Spend on direct payments and personalised managed budgets as a percentage of total social work spend

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
1.6	2.9	6.0	6.4	6.9	6.7	6.5	6.7	0.2%	5.1%

In 2017/18 the range in spend across councils was 1.1% to 21.1% (1.1% to 10.2% excluding outliers). The variation has narrowed in recent years. The data reveals a relationship between rurality and deprivation, and the uptake of direct payments and Personalised Managed Budgets. Those councils with lower levels of deprivation tend to have higher uptake of direct payments (5.0% compared to 2.4% in the most deprived areas). Councils with higher levels of deprivation tend to have higher uptake of PMB, although this is not statistically significant (3% compared to 1.5% in the least deprived areas). This finding is supported by Scottish Governments examination of the uptake of direct payments and SIMD which shows that people living in less deprived areas are more likely to choose direct payments.²⁷

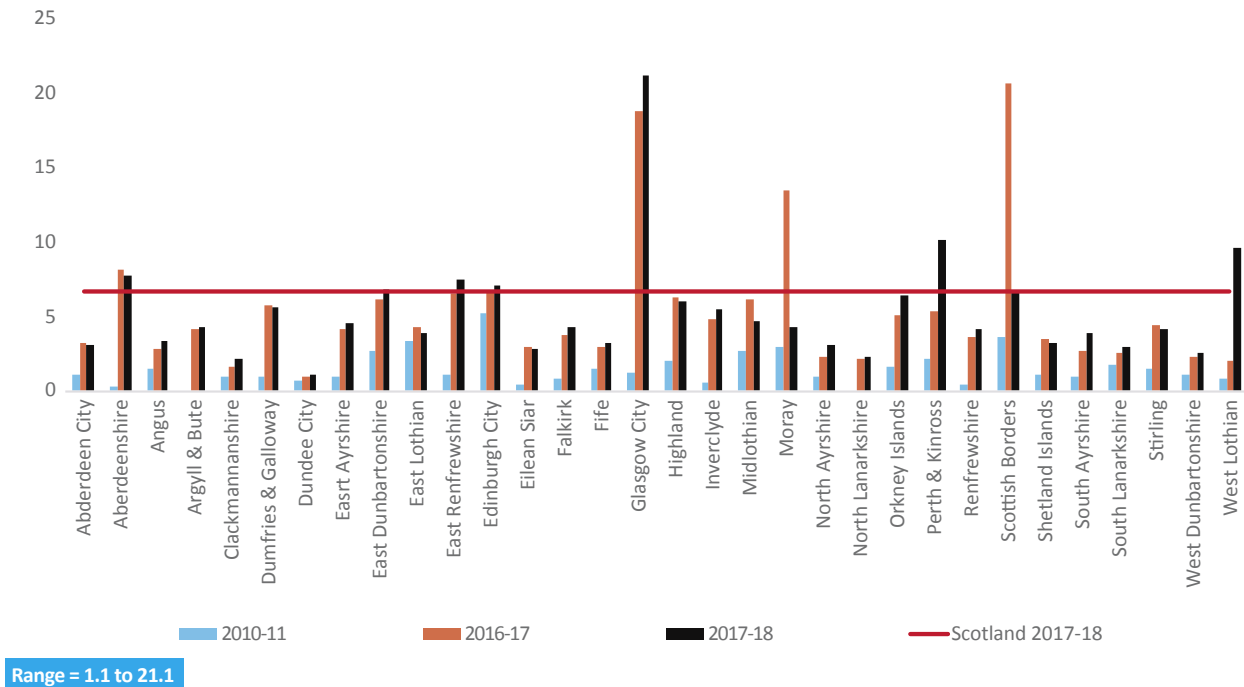
Analysis of the LGBF data reveals rurality is also important in understanding the variation between councils, with supported people in rural authorities more likely to opt for direct payments, and supported people in urban authorities more likely to opt for personalised managed budgets (although this last relationship is not significant).

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.

²⁷ Source: Self-Directed Support, Scotland, 2016-17 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/self-directed-support-scotland-2016-17/>



Spend on direct payments and personalised managed budgets as a percentage of total social work spend on adults 18+



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

Care homes

The fourth area covered by the framework relating to adult social care is the net cost of care home services. The measure has been standardised using net costs per week per resident for people over the age of 65.

It is important to note that the figures for 2012/13 to 2017/18 have in agreement with the local government Directors of Finance excluded a support cost component which was included in 2010/11 and 2011/12, and therefore a direct comparison with costs from earlier years is not possible.

Over the six years for which we have comparable data, there has been a 3.5% reduction in unit costs from £400 to £386. This has been driven by a 2.8% reduction in net expenditure while the number of adults supported in residential care homes during this period has increased by 0.8%.

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 2.9% between 2010/11 and 2016/17).²⁸

In the last 12 months, the average cost per week per resident increased by 1.8% from £379 to £386. This reflects a small increase in net expenditure (1.2%) and a small reduction in the number of residents (-0.6%). However, as the net expenditure data for 2017/18 is calculated on a slightly different basis from previous years and includes an element of other accommodation-based services such as sheltered housing, it is not directly comparable to previous years.

²⁸ Care Home Census 2010-2018, ISD, <http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Health-and-Social-Community-Care/Care-Homes/>

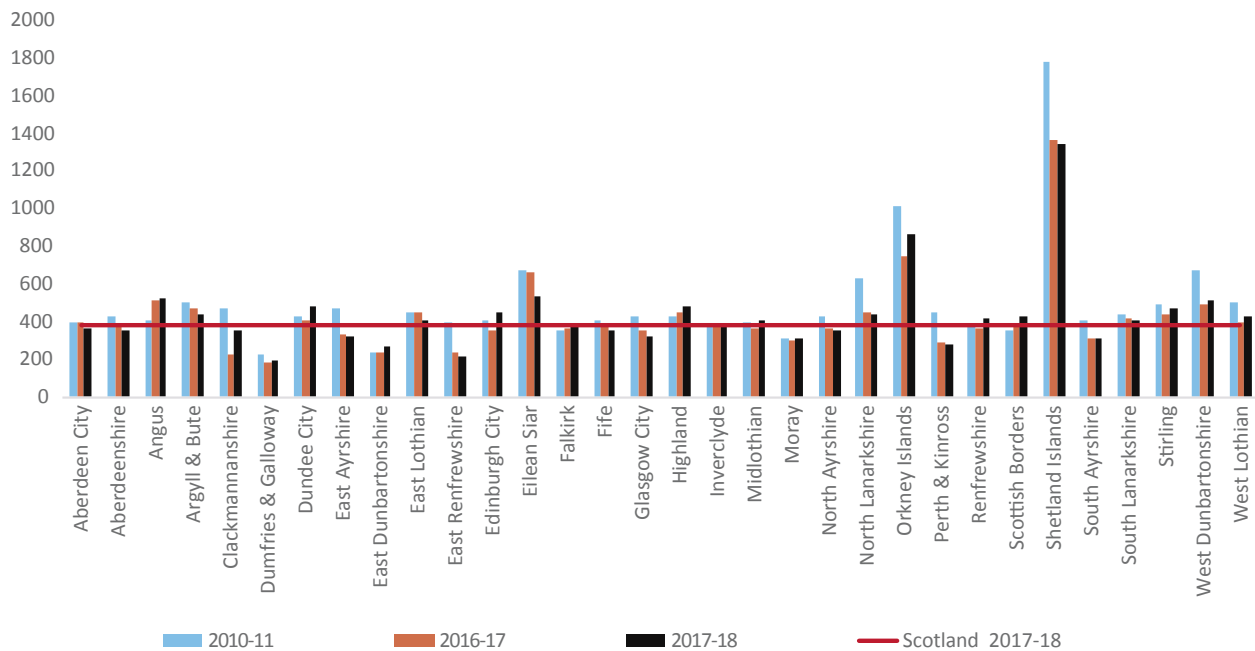


Care home costs per week for people over 65

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2012-13 to 2017-18
£400	£385	£390	£380	£379	£386 ²⁹	1.8%	-3.5%

There is a considerable level of variation across councils with care home costs ranging from £195 to £1,349 in 2017/18. Island and rural authorities on average report higher costs, although the difference is not statistically significant. When island councils are excluded, costs range from £195 to £527. The level of variation is significantly higher than observed in the first three years, although has remained unchanged in the past 12 months.

Older persons (over 65s) residential care costs per week per resident (£)



Range = 195.3 to 1348.6

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

Up to and including 2017/18, 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, as care home residents will pay a proportion of their care home fees. 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 on:

- The net cost of any LA-funded residents (paying the NCHC rate)
- The cost of paying free personal care and free nursing care payments to 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.

²⁹ The net expenditure data for 2017/18 is calculated on a slightly different basis from previous years and includes an element of other accommodation-based services such as sheltered housing and is not directly comparable to previous years.



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 adult social care services

In 2015/16, two measures from the Health and Care Experience Survey were introduced to the benchmarking suite to reflect service user satisfaction with social care services. These measures align with the 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 2 years, and only 3 years of data is currently available limiting trend analysis at this stage.

The percentage of adults receiving any care or support who rate it as excellent or good reduced from 84% in 2014/15 to 80% in 2017/18, a significant reduction at national level. Similarly, the percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life reduced from 85% in 2014/15 to 80% in 2017/18. This reduction is also significant.

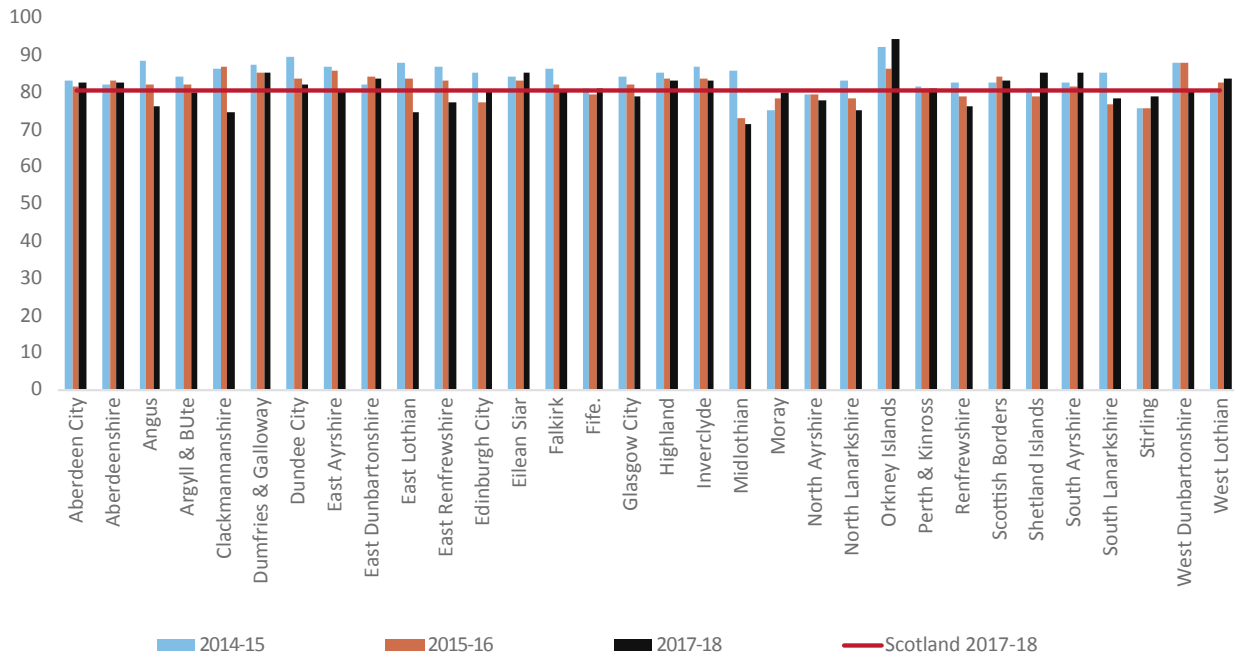
Percentage of adults satisfied with adult social care services

	2014-15	2015-16	2017-18	Change 2015-16 to 2017-18	Change 2014-15 to 2017-18
Percentage of adults receiving any care or support who rated it as excellent or good	84.0	81.0	80.2	-0.8%	-3.8%
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life	85.0	84.0	80.0	-4.0%	-5.0%

The variation between councils in satisfaction rates has widened, ranging from 71% to 94% for those rating the care/support as excellent or good, and from 71% to 97% for those who agree their support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life. Respondents in rural areas are more likely to rate their care or support as excellent or good compared to those in urban areas (83% compared to 80%). There is no systematic effect of deprivation, rurality or size of council in relation to views on whether the services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life.

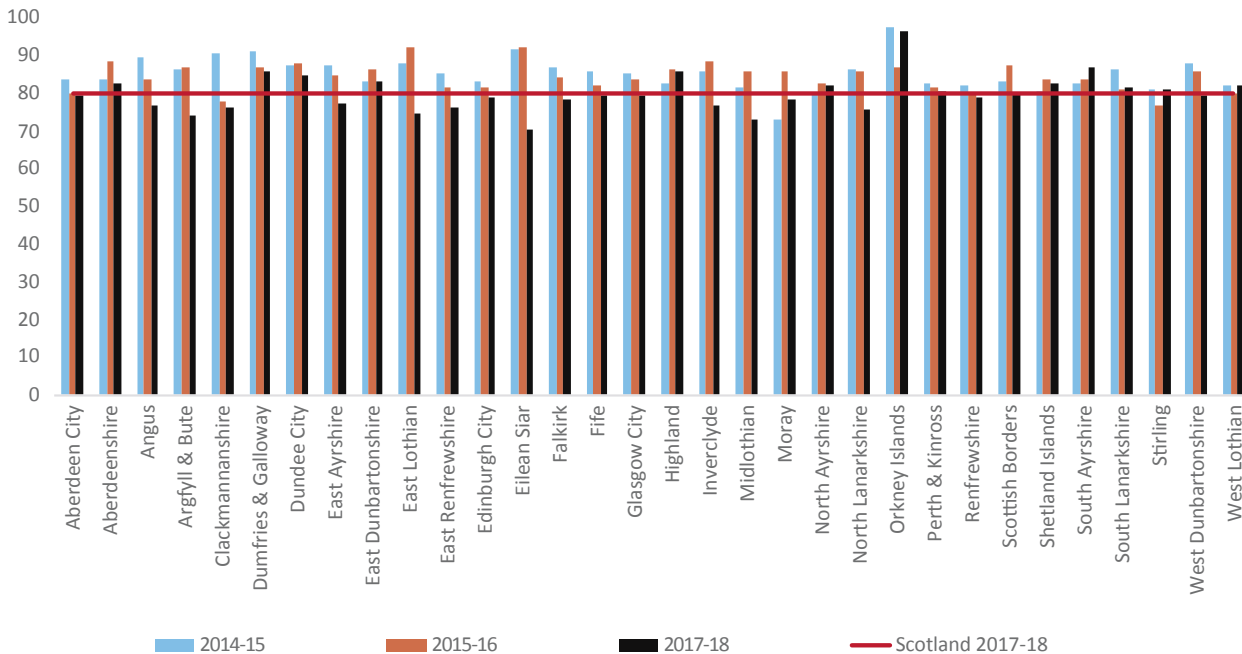


Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life



Range = 71.4 to 94.3

Percentage of adults receiving any care or support who rate it as excellent or good



Range = 70.7 to 96.6

Source: Scottish Care and Experience Survey, Scottish Government



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

- *Rurality: there is some connection between rurality and the cost of social care provision. Rural authorities have higher residential and home care costs, although this effect is not significant. Rural areas also tend to have higher satisfaction rates in the quality of the service and in relation to its impact on their outcomes, although again, this is not statistically significant. Councils with the largest populations have a significantly lower proportion of people cared for at home.*
- *Demographic variability: the number and proportion of over 75s within local populations will have a significant influence on the cost and balance of social care service provision locally.*
- *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.³⁰*
- *Local service design and workforce structure – local factors such as the service delivery balance between local authority provision and private/voluntary provision locally, along with variability in the resilience and capacity within local workforce and provider markets, will influence both costs and balance of care*

³⁰ Free Personal and Nursing Care, Scottish Government, <http://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 also connect well with communities who 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.

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/arm's 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

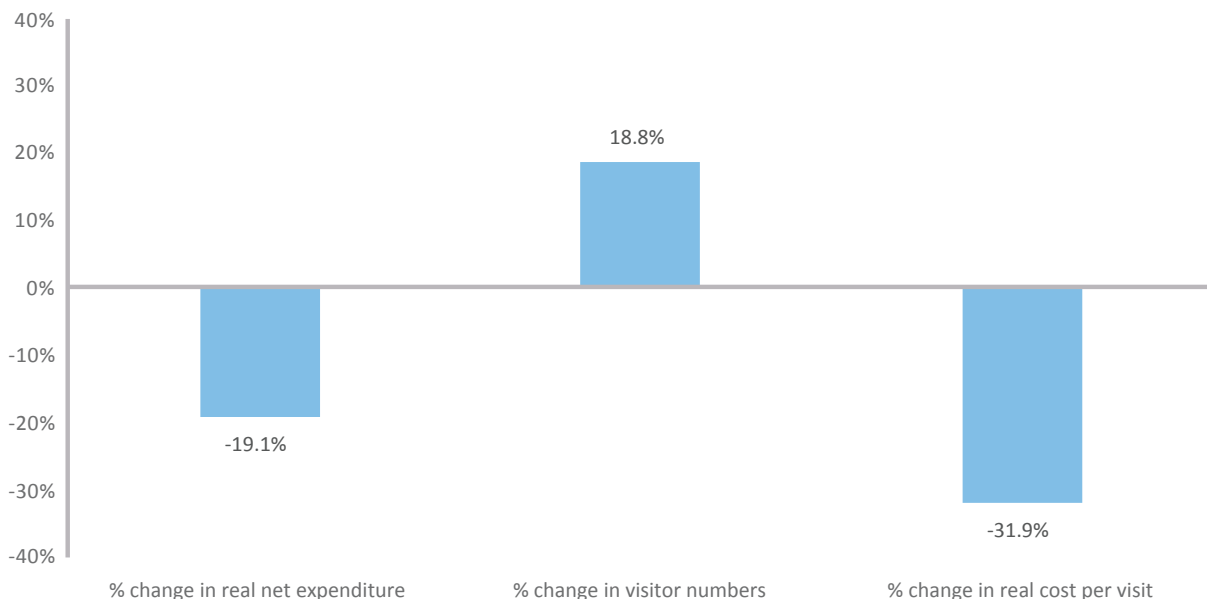
The data presented below illustrates the net cost per attendance at sports and recreation facilities. Over the eight-year period from 2010/11 to 2017/18 the average unit cost has reduced year on year from £3.97 to £2.71 in real terms. In percentage terms, this represents a 31.9% reduction.

Cost per attendance at sports facilities

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£3.97	£3.56	£3.40	£3.39	£3.11	£3.04	£2.96	£2.71	-8.4%	-31.9%

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. The growth in service users has slowed in recent years, showing a 0.1% reduction in the past 12 months.

Sports facilities: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit 2010/11 - 2017/18



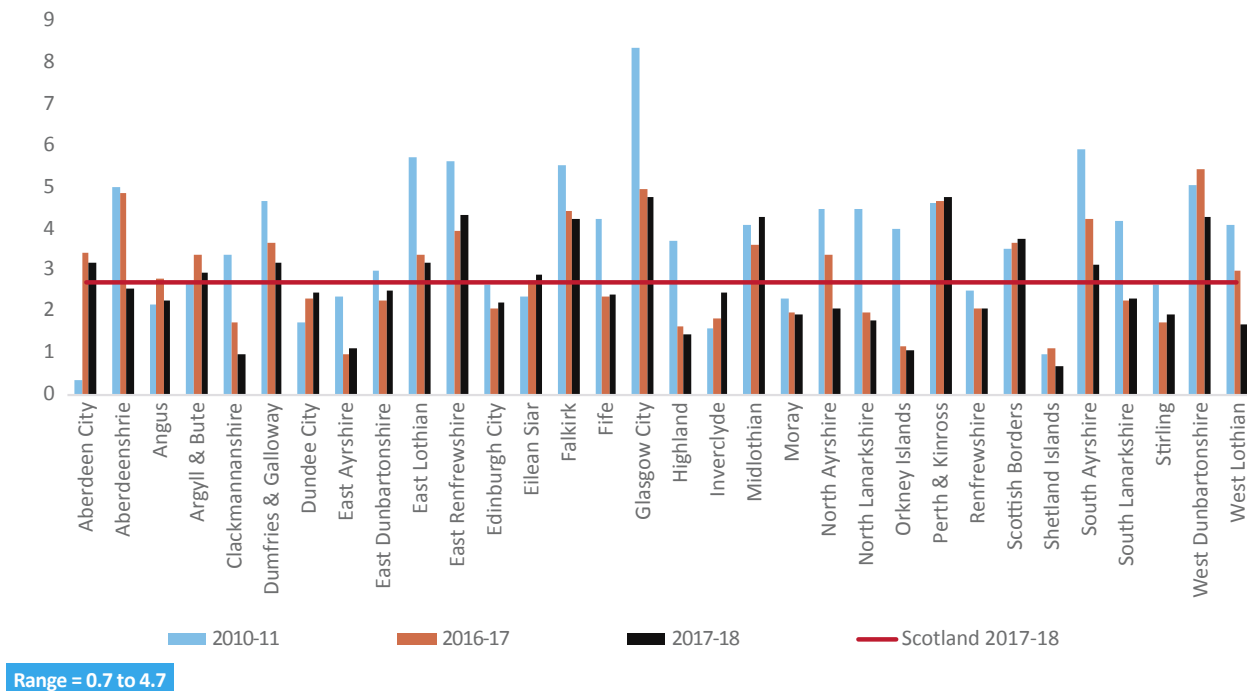
Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures



Over the eight 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 in the noughties 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 tapering off.

However, the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. In 2017/18, costs per attendance at a sports facility ranged from £0.70 to £4.75. The variation in unit costs has narrowed in recent years due to significant reductions at the higher cost end. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

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, until the past 12 months. The average cost per library visit in 2017/18 was £2.08, while in 2010/11 the cost per visit was £3.81. In real terms, this represents a reduction of 45.4% over the period.

Cost per library visit

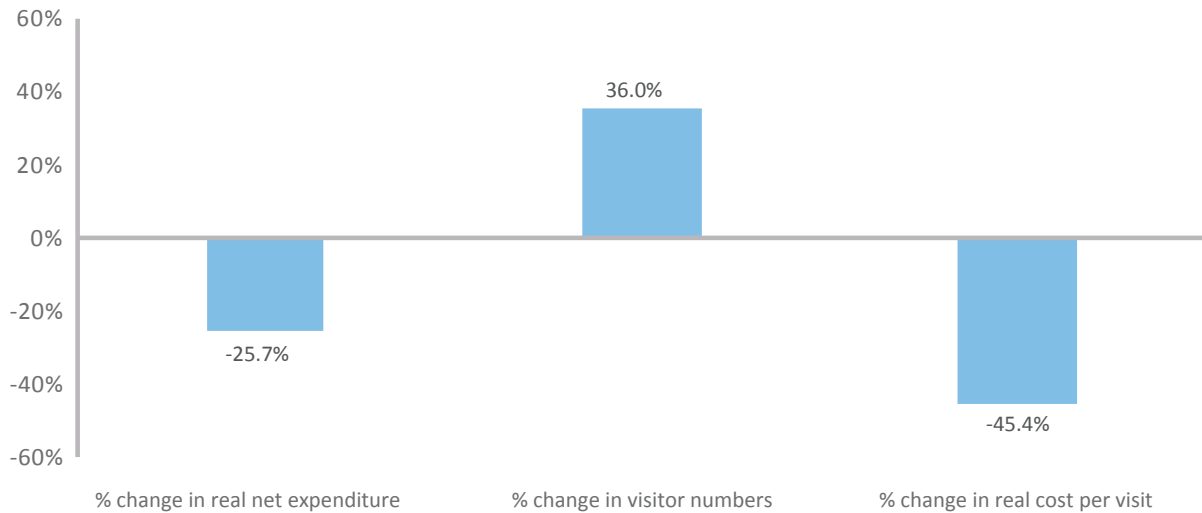
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£3.81	£3.60	£3.41	£2.74	£2.58	£2.55	£2.02	£2.08	3.1%	-45.4%

As with sports services unit cost figures on their own do not tell the full story of the last seven years for library services. Over the period covered by the LGBF, there has been a reduction in net spending on library services of 25.7%. At the same time, visitor numbers increased from 31.8



million to 43.3 million, an increase of 36%. Across this period, there has been a year on year reduction in expenditure levels, and a year on year increase in visit numbers. However, in the past 12 months, while net expenditure continued to reduce (-4.6%), the number of library visitors showed a reduction for the first time (-7.5%). The treatment of social media may account for some of the movement in recent years, and work is underway to strengthen guidance to address this going forward.

Libraries: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit 2010/11 - 2017/18



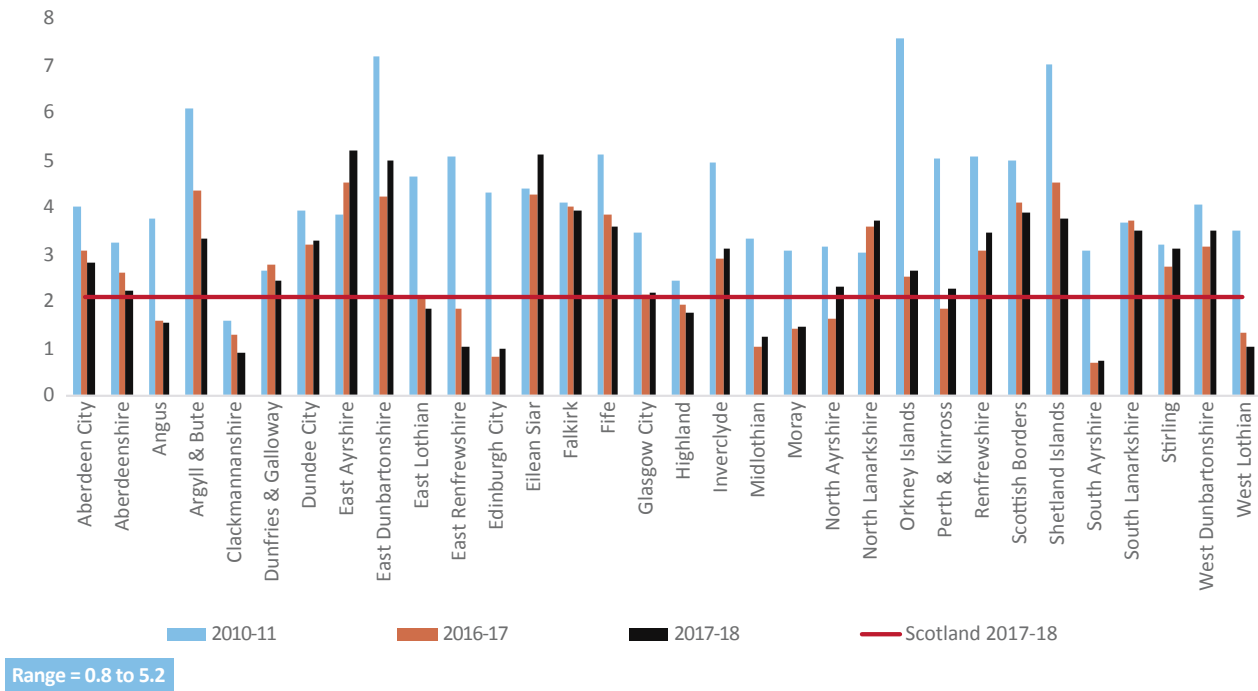
Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Over the period, 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 2017/18 the range across councils in cost per library visit was £0.76 to £5.19. The level of variation across councils has not changed significantly since the base year. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.



Cost per library visit (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

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 eight-year period there has been a real terms reduction of 25.9% in cost per visit, from £4.70 to £3.49.

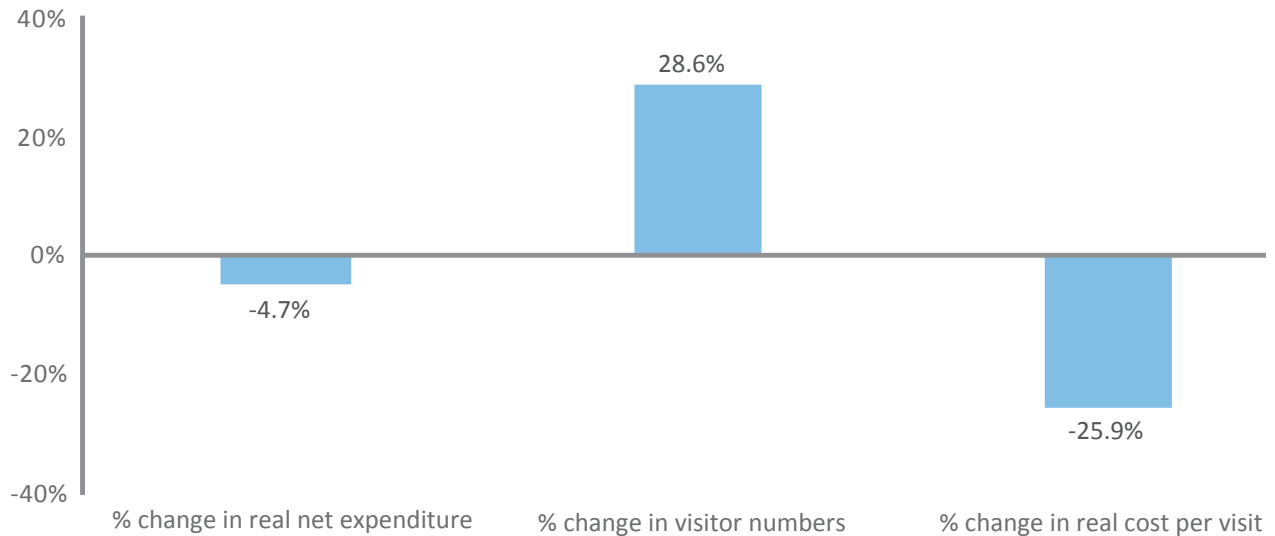
Cost per museums visit

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£4.70	£3.84	£3.88	£3.56	£3.50	£3.17	£3.38	£3.49	3.2%	-25.9%

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 eight-year period. Net spending on museum services across Scotland has fallen by -4.7% since 2010/11 but in the same period visitor numbers have increased from 9.2 million visitors to 11.9 million visitors, an increase of 28.6%. 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 across the period.



Museums: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit, 2010/11 - 2017/18

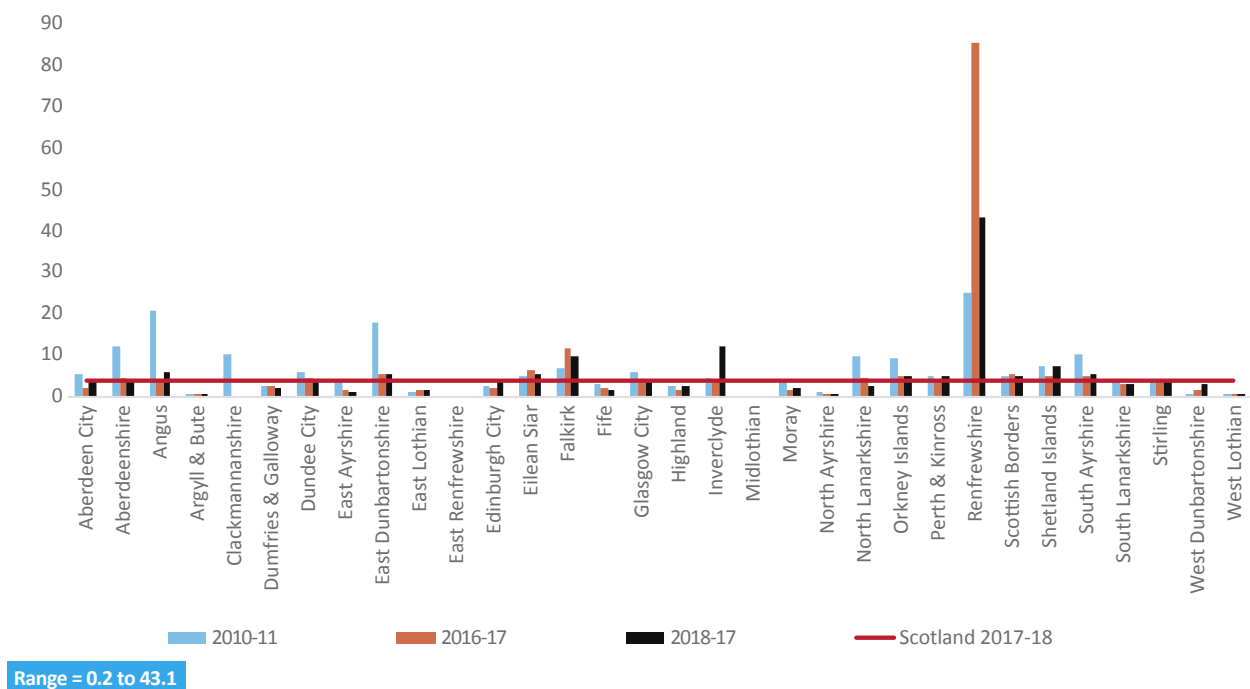


Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Over the past two years however, unit costs have begun to rise. This is due both to visitor number reductions in recent years, and a levelling out in expenditure reductions. This has resulted in an increase in cost per visit of 3.2% over the last 12 months.

There is a significant range between councils' museums costs, which has widened substantially in the past two years. In 2017/18 the range in cost per visit was £0.28 to £43.06 (£0.28 to £12.34 excluding Renfrewshire as an outlier). There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Cost of museums per visit



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

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



Parks and open spaces

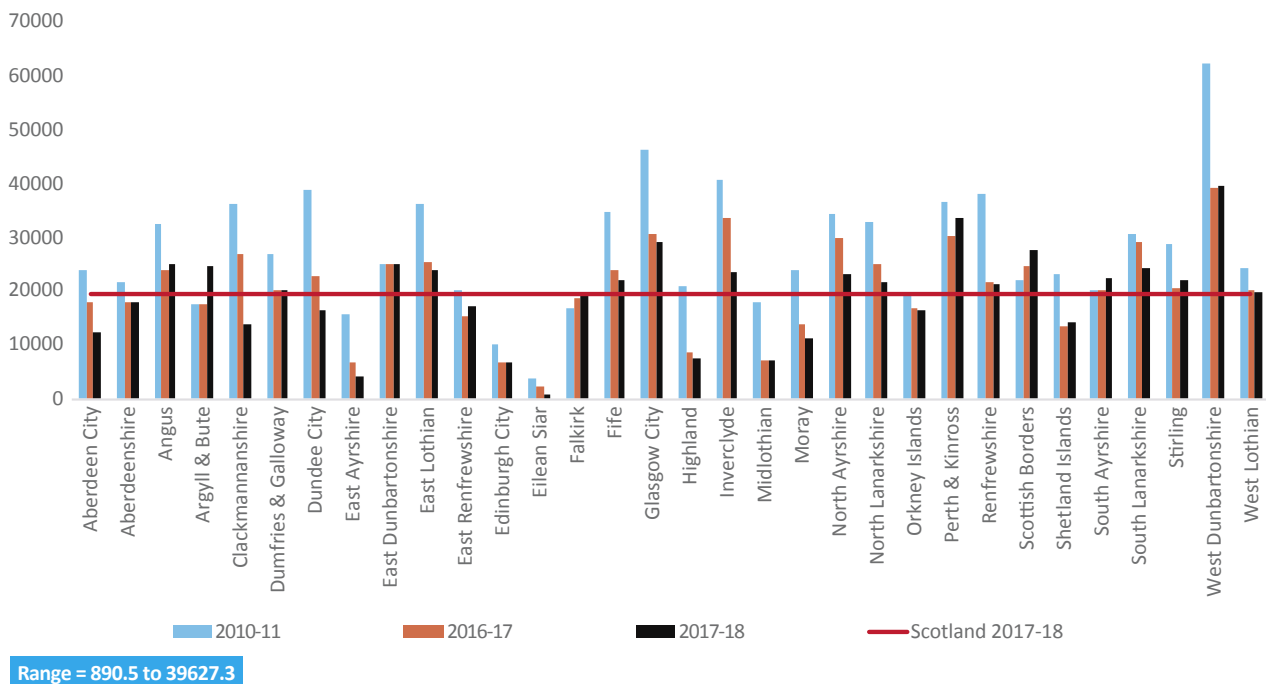
Spend on parks and open spaces is reflected as spend per 1,000 population. Over the eight-year period from 2010/11 to 2017/18 spend has reduced in real terms by 31.7%, from £29,022 to £19,814. There has been a year on year reduction across the period, including a 6.7% reduction in the past 12 months.

Cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£29,022	£26,823	£25,624	£24,773	£24,574	£22,700	£21,229	£19,814	-6.7%	-31.7%

In 2017/18 the average cost of parks and open spaces was £19,814, ranging from £890 - £39,627. The variation across councils has narrowed since the base year due to a significant cost reduction at the higher end. In previous years, the costs of parks and open spaces varied systematically with the level of deprivation in councils, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation spending significantly more on parks and green spaces. While this still tends to hold true, the relationship is no longer significant. The average for councils with the lowest deprivation by SIMD is £17,207 compared to £22,618 for areas with highest levels of deprivation by SIMD.

Costs of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population (£)



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



Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in culture and leisure services:

- *Local political and strategic priority given to the role of culture and leisure in supporting improvement in wider outcomes e.g. health and wellbeing, tackling inequality, economic development, community empowerment*
- *Scale of provision and level of service*
- *Digital channel shift*
- *Service delivery model and balance between in house and arm's length/trust delivery*
- *Service structure and integration with other services*
- *Staffing composition, level and roles*
- *Level of volunteering, community involvement and asset transfer*
- *Income generation capacity*
- *Asset management and co-location/multi-use venues*

Satisfaction with culture and leisure services

Satisfaction levels for all areas of culture and leisure remain high at around 70% or above. All areas have, however, experienced declining satisfaction since 2010/11, except parks and green spaces. All areas inclusive have seen a reduction in the past 12 months.

Percentage of adults satisfied with culture and leisure services

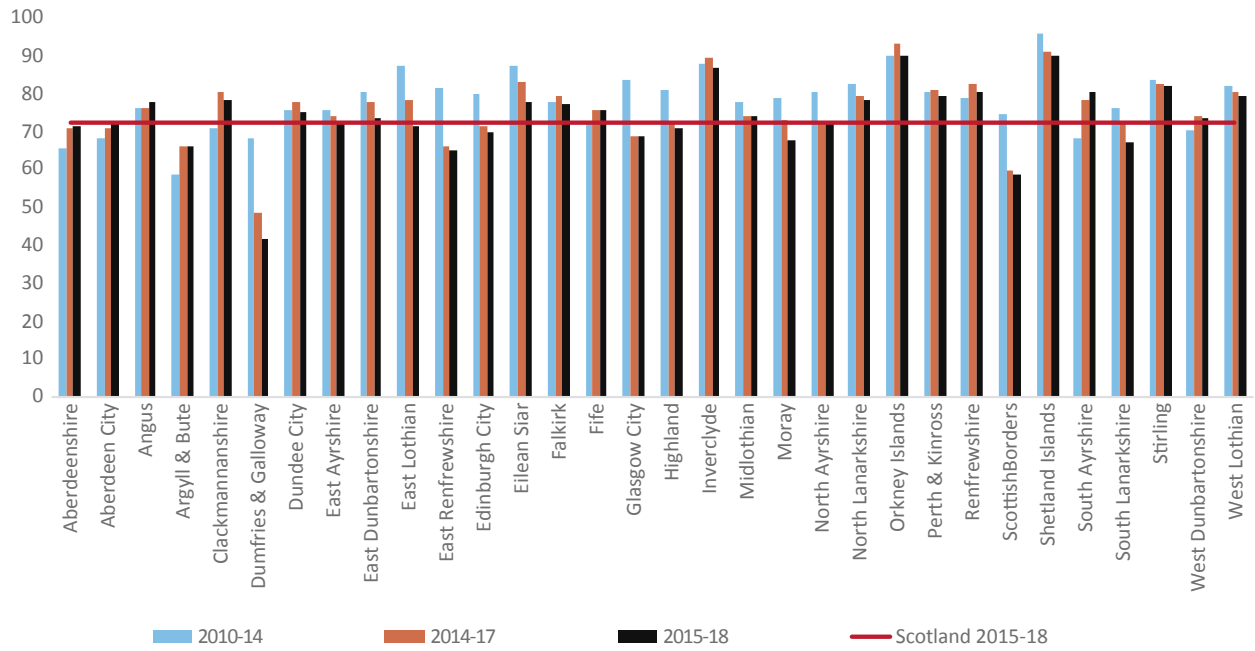
	2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
Libraries	83.5	83.0	81.0	77.0	74.0	73.0	72.0	-1.0%	-11.5%
Parks and Open Spaces	83.1	86.0	86.0	86.0	85.0	87.0	85.0	-2.0%	1.9%
Museums and Galleries	75.5	78.0	76.0	75.0	71.0	70.0	69.0	-1.0%	-6.5%
Leisure Facilities	74.6	80.0	78.0	76.0	73.0	73.0	72.0	-1.0%	-2.6%

As with satisfaction with local schools, to boost sample sizes 3-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 this data with any level of confidence.

For all culture and leisure services, satisfaction levels vary considerably across councils and this variation has been widening. In leisure, satisfaction rates range from 42% - 90%; in libraries, it is 52% - 93%; for museums, 40% - 90%; and finally, for parks the range is 70% - 93%. There are no systematic effects of deprivation, sparsity or council size on satisfaction levels in relation to culture and leisure services.

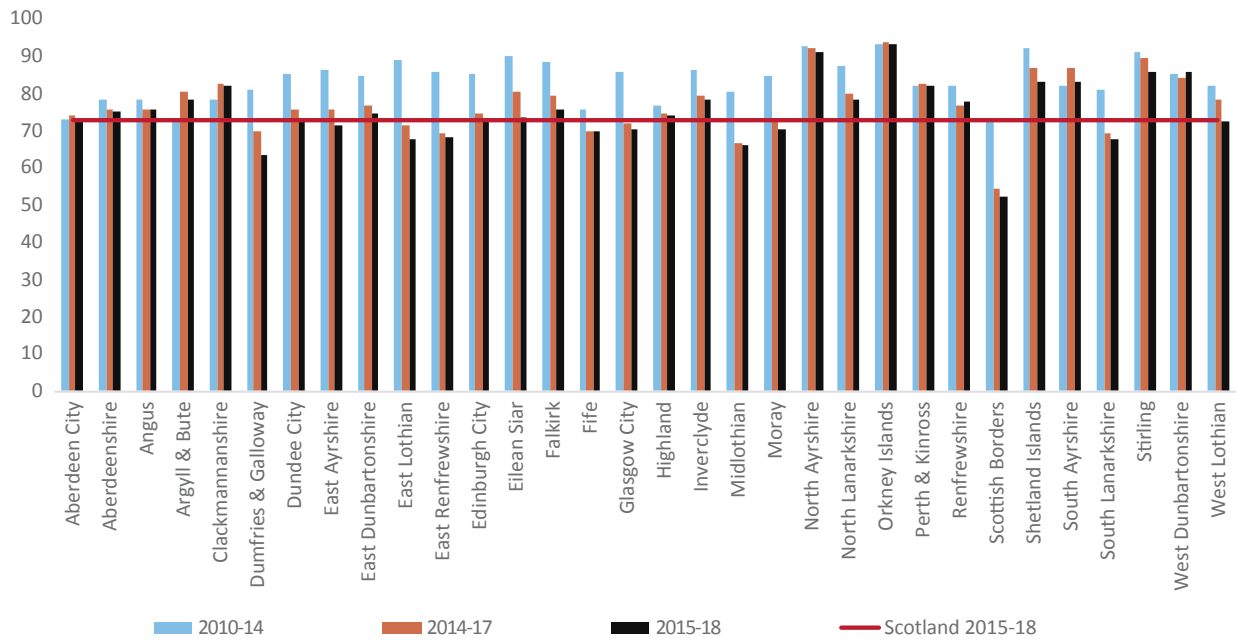


Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities



Range = 41.7 to 90.3

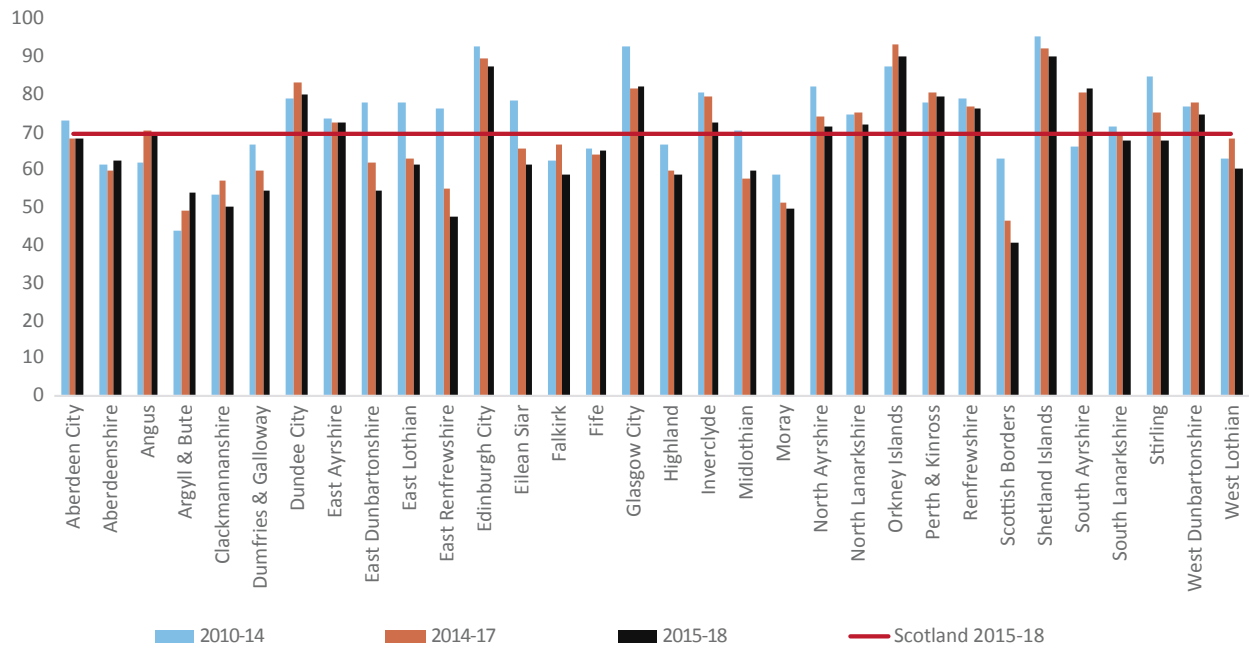
Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries



Range = 52.3 to 93.3

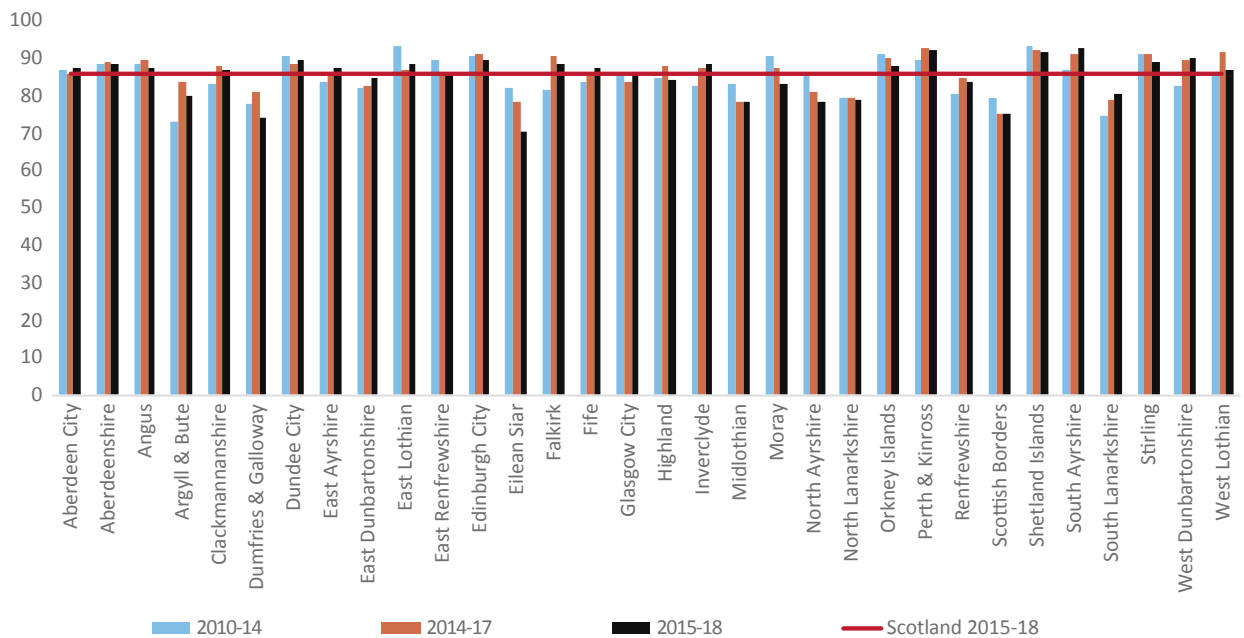


Percentage of adults satisfied with museums and galleries



Range = 40.7 to 90.3

Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces



Range = 70.3 to 93

Source: Scottish Household Survey





Environmental Services

Environmental services are an area of significant spend for local authorities, and include waste management, street cleansing, roads services, and trading standards and environmental health. These areas have seen some of the largest budget reductions in recent years, with overall gross spend reducing by 9.6% since 2010/11. Against this reduction in expenditure, councils face growing challenges in maintaining or improving performance levels in relation to recycling, street cleanliness, roads condition and satisfaction.

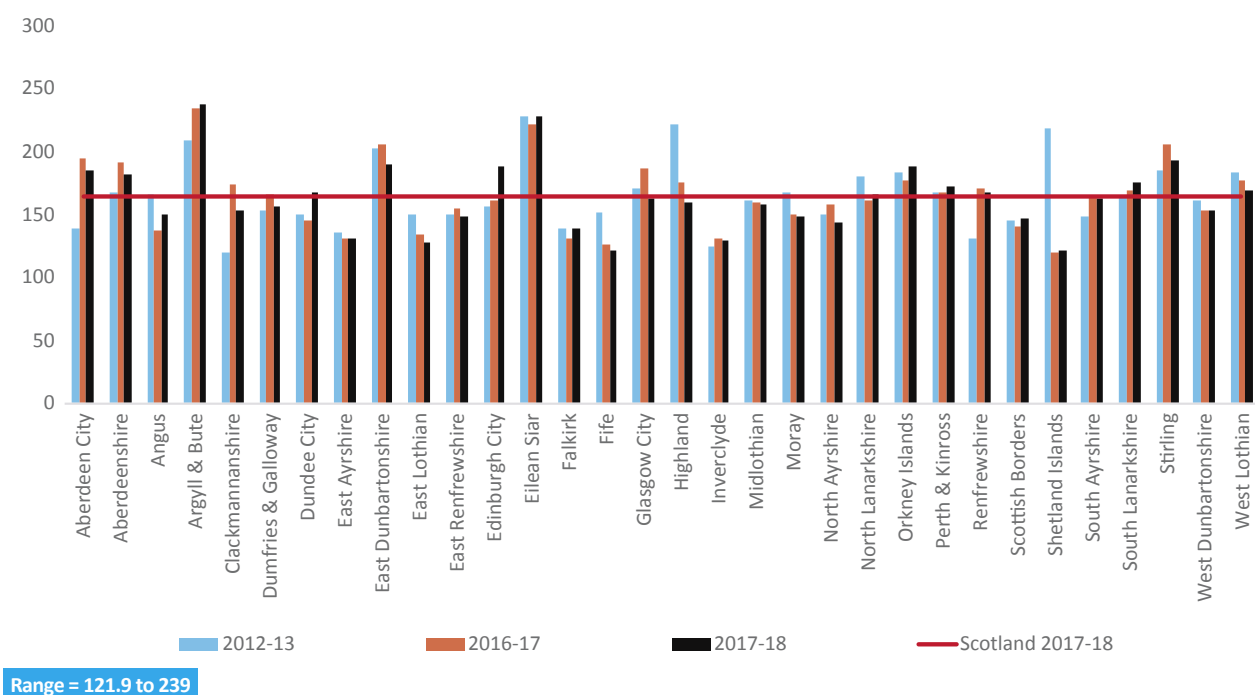
Waste management

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. Net costs are used 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. It is worth noting that the price for recyclate is volatile and influenced by global economic conditions. As this measure was introduced in 2012/13, only six years of data is presented here.

In 2017/18, the combined net cost of waste disposal and collection per premise is £164.40, a 0.3% increase from 2012/13. After remaining constant during the first three years, the combined cost increased in 2015/16 by 2.8% due to a significant increase in disposal costs, before falling again in 2016/17. The range across Scotland in 2017/18 was £121 to £239.

Net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise (£)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2012-13 to 2017-18
Collection	£64.02	£65.20	£68.07	£66.91	£65.77	£65.98	0.3%	3.1%
Disposal	£99.94	£98.01	£95.76	£101.49	£100.64	£98.42	-2.2%	-1.5%
Total	£163.96	£163.21	£163.83	£168.4	£166.41	£164.40	-1.2%	0.3%



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures



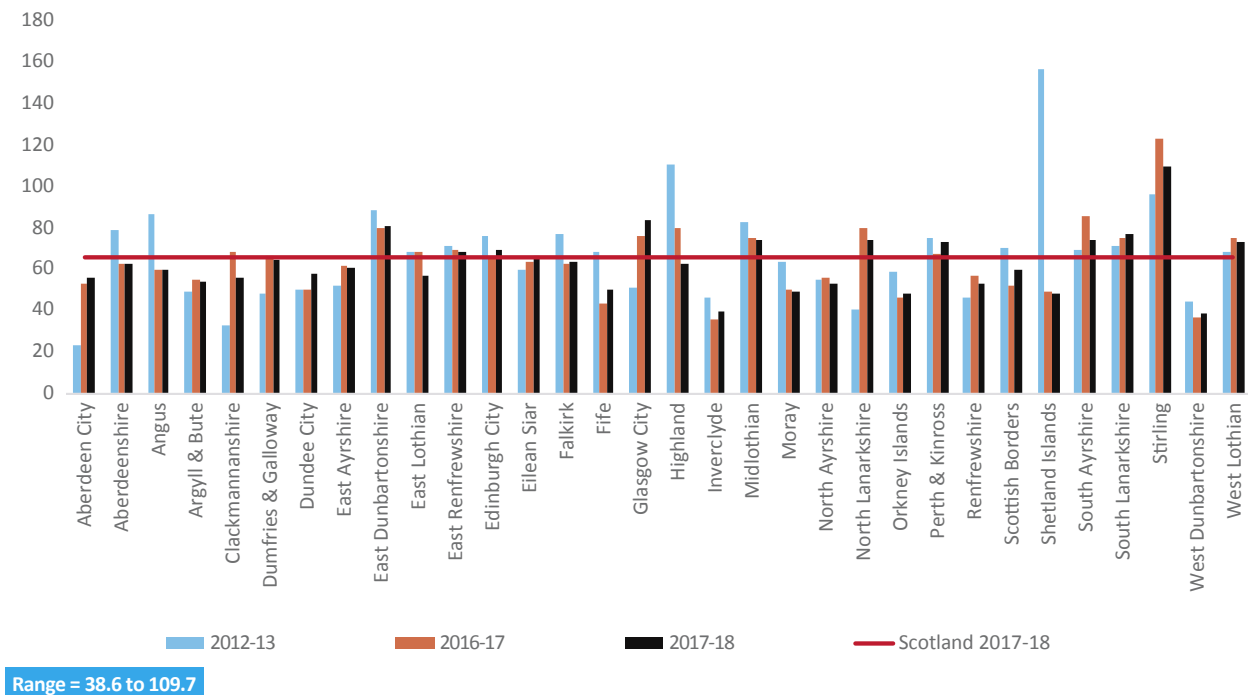
Waste collection

Over the six-year period from 2012/13 to 2017/18 the Scottish average cost per premise for waste collection increased from £64.02 to £65.98, representing a real terms percentage increase of 3.1%. While the number of premises increased by 3.9% during this period, total spend increased by 6.2%.

There has been little change in the past 12 months, with costs increasing by 0.3%. This reflects small increases in both net expenditure (0.9%) and premises served (0.5%).

There is considerable although narrowing variation between councils in relation to waste collection costs, ranging from £38.63 to £109.67. In the past, waste collection costs varied systematically with deprivation, with areas of higher deprivation spending more. The data no longer reveals this pattern.

Net cost of waste collection per premise (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

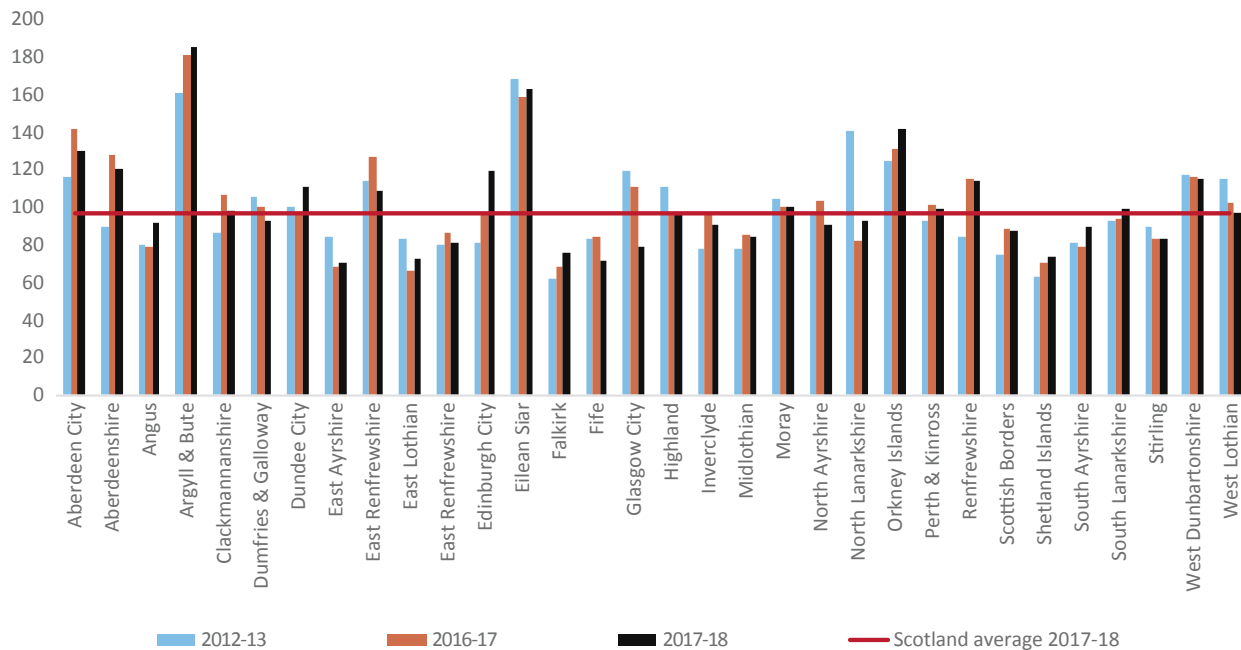
Waste disposal

Over the six-year period from 2012/13 to 2017/18 the Scottish average net cost of waste disposal has reduced by 1.5%, from £99.94 to £98.42 per premise. Across this period, there has been a 3.9% increase in the number of premises served accompanied by a smaller 1.5% increase in net expenditure.

In the last 12 months, disposal costs per premise reduced by 2.2%. This reflects a 1.7% reduction in net expenditure and 0.5% increase in the number of premises. The range in disposal costs across councils was £70.81 to £185.28 in 2017/18. Variation has narrowed in recent years, with analysis revealing no clear relationships to rurality, deprivation or demography.



Net cost of waste disposal per premise (£)



Range = 70.8 to 185.3

Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Recycling

Over recent years councils have put greater emphasis on the recycling of waste in compliance with Scotland’s Zero Waste Plan.³¹ There has also been raised awareness of environmental factors from both producers and consumers, including a greater focus on reducing unnecessary waste packaging which has resulted in less waste in the system overall.

Recycling rates continue to improve across Scotland from 40.1% in 2011/12 to 45.6% in 2017/18 as efforts are made to achieve Scotland’s 60% household waste recycling target by 2020. From 2014/15, the recycling rate used a new calculation from that used in previous years and so is not directly comparable. 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. Prior to 2014, household waste composted that did not reach the quality standards set by PAS 100/110 was included in the recycling figures. If such waste was included, as in the previous method, the overall recycling rate in 2017 would have been 46.1% an increase of 6.0 percentage points from the 40.1% achieved in 2011.

Percentage of household waste that is recycled

2011-12*	2012-13*	2013-14*	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2011-12 to 2017-18
40.1	41.1	42.2	42.8	44.2	45.2	45.6	0.4%	5.5%

*Note: Figures from 2010/11 – 2013/14 use the old recycling definition, while figures from 2014/15 to 2017/18 are calculated using the new definition.

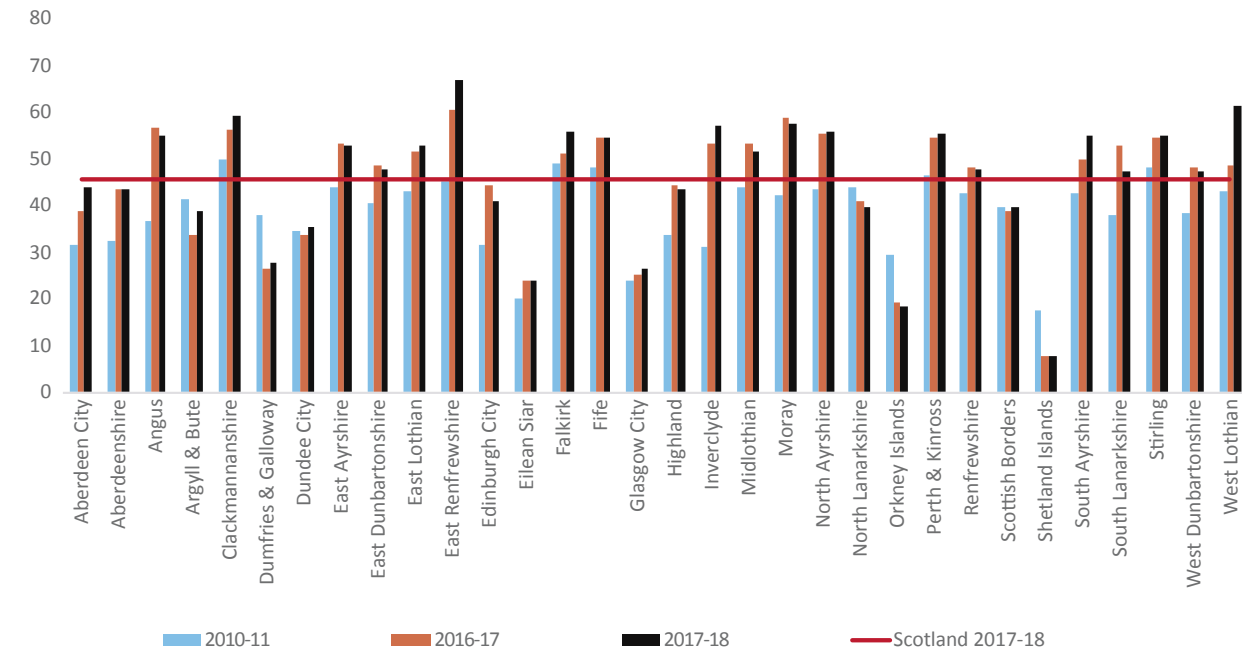
There is significant and widening variation in recycling rates across Scotland, with Island councils reporting significantly lower rates than other areas. Excluding islands, the range across Scotland in

³¹ Source: Scotland’s Zero Waste Plan, Scottish Government, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/06/08092645/0>



2017/18 is 26.7% to 67.1% in 2017/18.

Percentage of total household waste that is recycled



Range = 8 to 67.1

Source: WasteDataFlow, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Data is calendar year.

Percentage of adults satisfied with waste collection

Satisfaction levels for waste collection remain high at 75% although, as with other services, there has been a reduction in the past 12 months. Satisfaction levels are 5.9 percentage points lower in 2017/18 than they were in 2010/11. There is widening variation across councils, with rates ranging from 63% to 92% across Scotland. Variation is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council

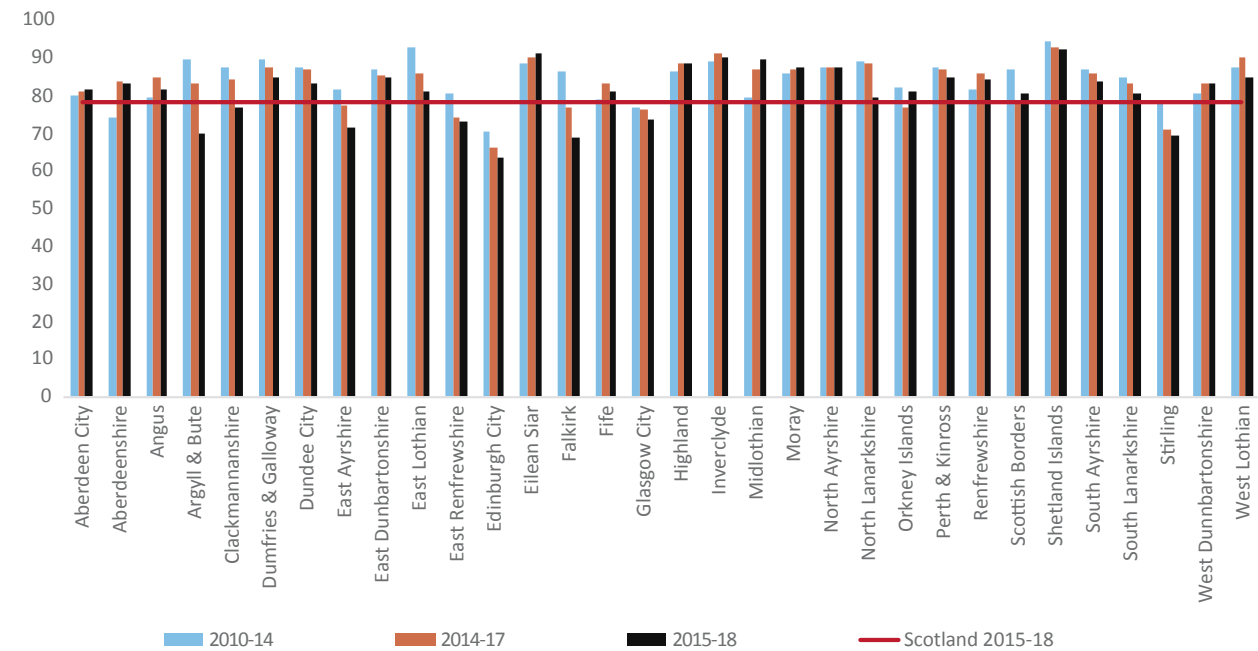
Percentage of adults satisfied with waste collection

2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
80.9	83.0	83.0	84.0	82.0	79.0	75.0	-4.0%	-5.9%

As noted previously, the satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while proportionate 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 3-year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels.



Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection



Range = 63.3 to 92

Source: Scottish Household Survey

Street cleaning

The cleanliness of Scotland’s streets remains a priority for councils both in terms of improving the appearance of our streetscapes but also in terms of environmental improvements in the quality of people’s lives. The revised Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (Scotland) came into force in 2018 and may affect both costs and standards going forward.

Street cleanliness is presented using the Street Cleanliness Score, which is produced by Keep Scotland Beautiful.³² 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.

The Scottish average for the cleanliness score has remained above 90% since the base year, although scores have shown a reducing trend since 2013/154. In 2017/18, 92.2% of streets were assessed as ‘clean’, compared to 95.4% in 2010/11, a reduction of 3.2 percentage points.

Percentage of clean streets

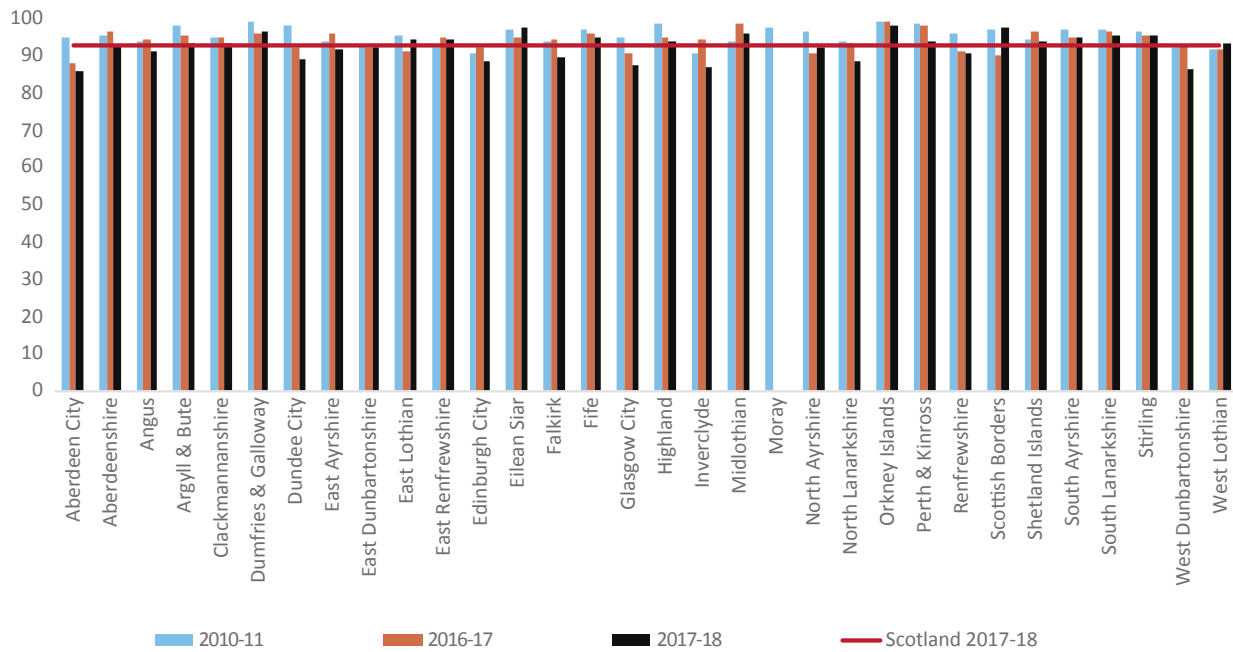
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
95.4	96.1	95.8	96.1	93.9	93.4	93.9	92.2	-1.7%	-3.2%

There is a relatively narrow range of cleanliness scores across Scotland. The level of variation widened between 2013/14 and 2015/16 but narrowed in recent years. In 2017/18, scores ranged from 85.8% to 98.2%, with urban and deprived areas reporting significantly lower scores (e.g. 88% for urban or deprived areas compared to 94% for rural or affluent areas).

³² Source: Keep Scotland Beautiful, <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/>



Cleanliness score (percentage acceptable)



Range = 85.8 to 98.2

Source: Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS), Keep Scotland Beautiful

Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

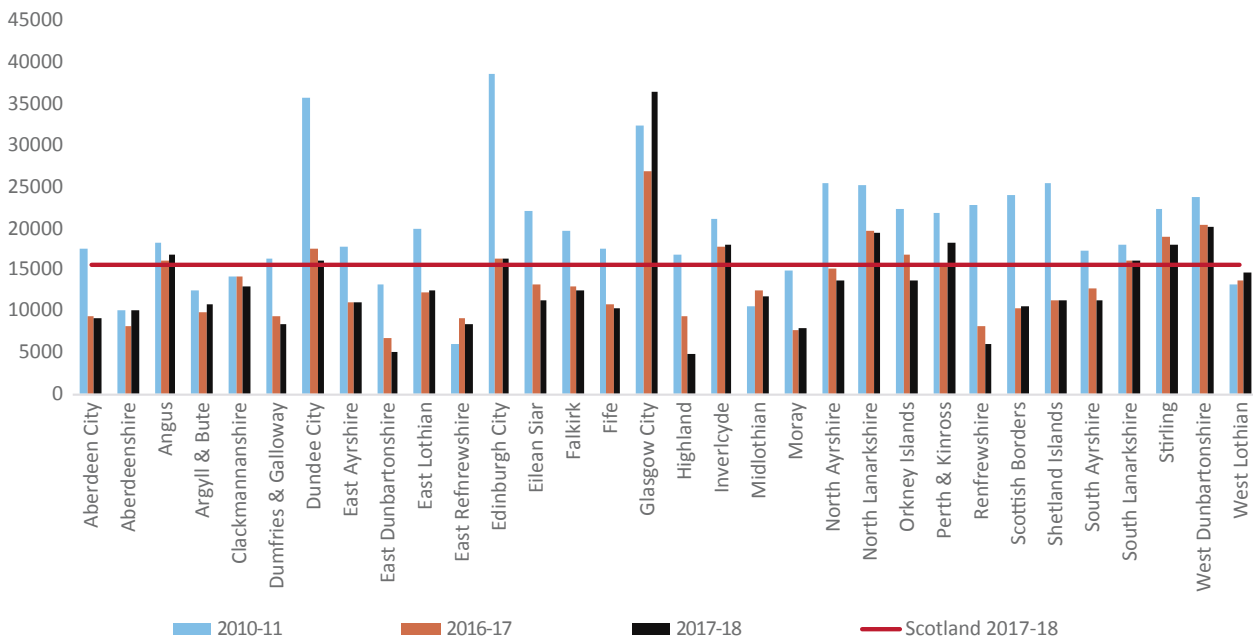
Over the same eight-year period the Scottish average for net cost of street cleaning has reduced by 30%, from £22,218 per 1,000 population in 2010/11 to £15,551 in 2017/18. This rate of reduction reflects a year on year reduction in costs until the past 12 months, where costs have increased by 5.3%. Glasgow is a significant outlier here reporting a significant increase in expenditure on cleansing and enforcement. When removed from the calculation, average costs across Scotland have reduced by 2.8% in line with previous trends.

Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£22,218	£21,409	£18,988	£17,271	£16,606	£16,086	£14,764	£15,551	5.3%	-30.0%



Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population (£)



Range = 4915.4 to 36496.4

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

The range across councils varies significantly, from £4,915 to £36,496 (or £4,915 to £20,131 excluding outliers). The variation has widened in the last 12 months, after narrowing in previous years. Street cleaning costs vary systematically with deprivation, with higher costs in authorities with higher levels of deprivation (£17,044 for areas with the highest level of deprivation compared to £11,371 for councils with the lowest levels).

Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning

As with other services, satisfaction levels for street collection have experienced a downward trend, reducing from 73.3% to 66% between 2010/11 and 2017/18. In the past 12 months, the rate of reduction has accelerated with satisfaction levels reducing by four percentage points. Until 2015-16, it appeared that the substantial efficiencies that have been introduced in delivering this service did not appear to have had a significantly detrimental impact on public satisfaction, indicating the care taken to protect key areas of public concern. The recent reduction in satisfaction however indicates a shift in public perceptions in the context of continuing significant reductions in budgets.

Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning

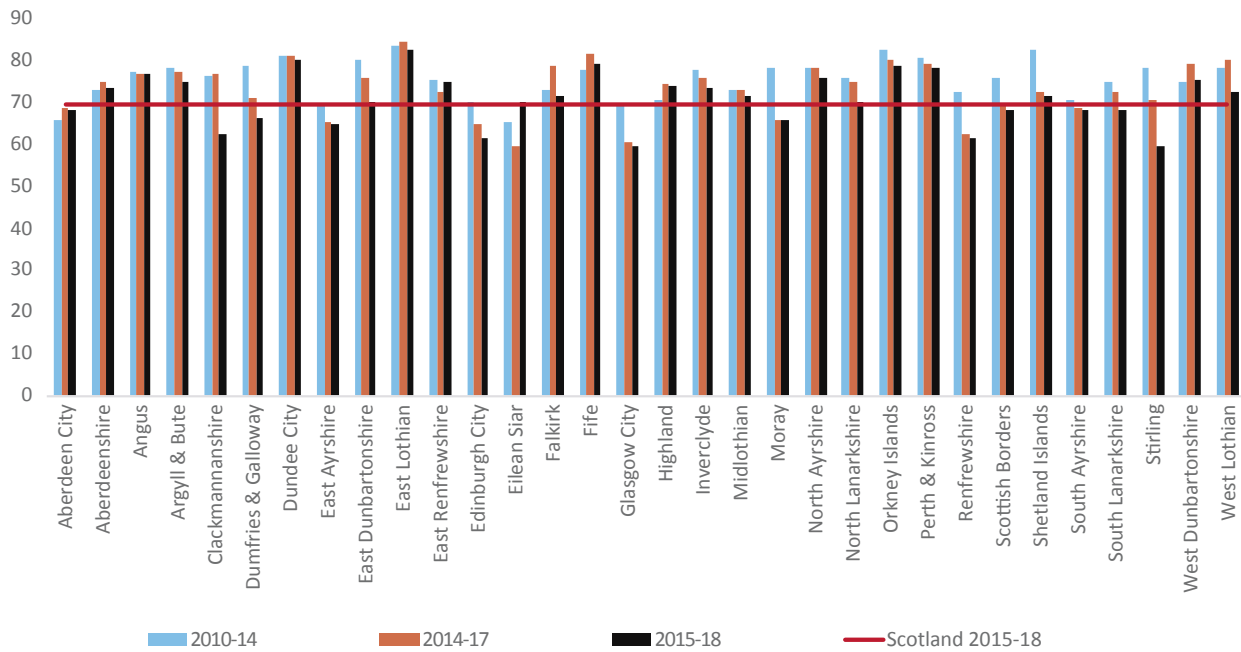
2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
73.3	75.0	74.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	66.0	-4.0%	-7.3%

As noted previously, the satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while proportionate 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, 3-year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels.

There is significant and widening variation in satisfaction levels across Scotland, ranging from 59.3% to 82.7%. Variation is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council.



Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning



Range = 59.3 to 82.7

Source: Scottish Household Survey

Roads

Roads costs are represented in this framework using a cost of roads 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 eight years for which we have data, the Scottish average cost per kilometre has reduced by 16.0% from £12,556 to £10,547. After year on year reductions until 2014/15, costs have levelled out over the past two years.

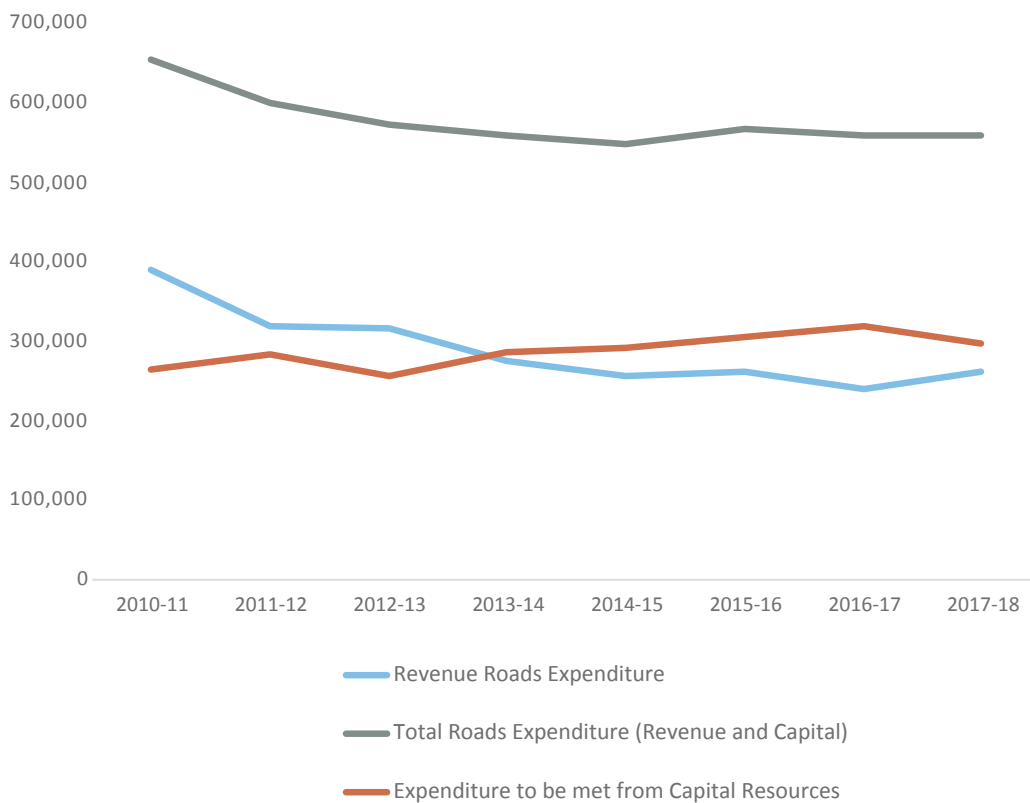
Cost of roads per kilometre

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£12,556	£11,490	£10,935	£10,648	£10,392	£10,710	£10,535	£10,547	0.1%	-16.0%

As the graph below shows, overall revenue expenditure on roads has reduced significantly, by 32.8%, since 2010/11, while capital expenditure has increased by 12.3% across the period. The past 12 months however have shown a different trend, with revenue expenditure increasing by 9.8%, and capital falling by 7.2%. The increase in revenue expenditure may reflect increased expenditure due to the severe and prolonged winter weather experienced in 2017/18.

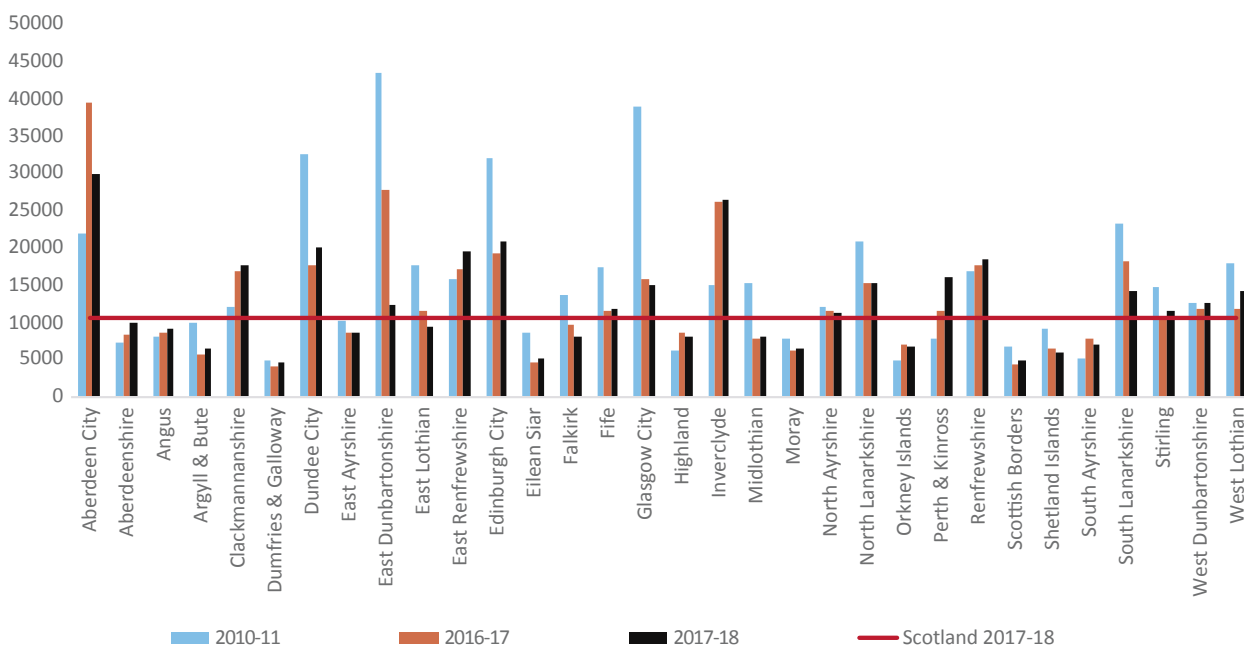


Roads expenditure - revenue and capital (£)



Over the past 12 months, the overall cost of roads per km has remained largely unchanged, increasing by 0.1% from £10,535 to £10,547 per km. While the variation across Scotland is still significant, this has narrowed substantially in the past 12 months. In 2017/18, costs ranged from £4,676 to £29,996. Variation across councils is systematically related to rurality, with significantly lower costs in rural areas (e.g. £6,541 in rural areas compared to £15,205 in urban areas and £11,411 in semi-rural areas).

Cost of roads per kilometre (£)



Range = 4675.6 to 29995.6

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



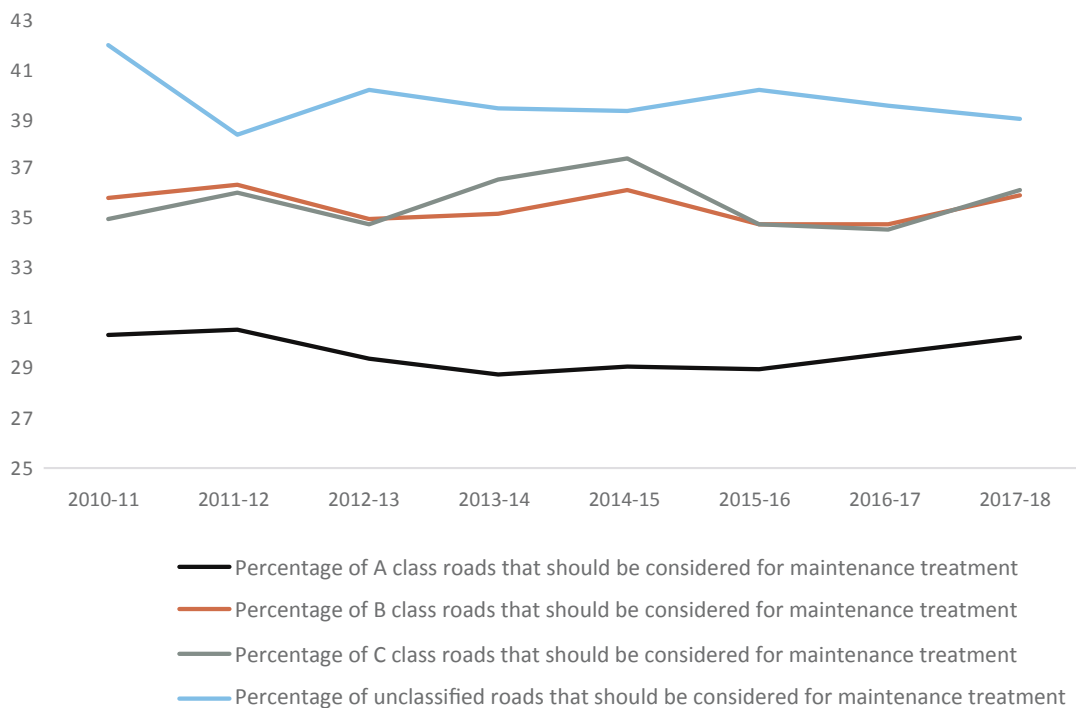
In terms of the condition of the road network, the eight-year period covered by this report has seen very little change in the A, B and C class road network overall, with around 30% to 35% of roads continuing to require maintenance. This indicates that despite the significant reductions on spending, the condition of key parts of the roads networks has been maintained.

Over the past 12 months, there has however been a small deterioration in A, B and C class roads, with only unclassified roads improving.

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

	2009-11	2010-12	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	Change 2015-17 to 2016-18	Change 2009-11 to 2016-18
% A Class Roads	30.3	30.5	29.4	28.7	29.0	29.0	29.5	30.2	0.7%	-0.1%
% B Class Roads	35.8	36.3	35.0	35.2	36.1	34.8	34.8	35.9	1.1%	0.1%
% C Class Roads	35.0	36.0	34.8	36.6	37.4	34.7	34.6	36.2	1.6%	1.2%
% Unclassified Roads	41.9	38.3	40.1	39.4	39.3	40.1	39.5	39.0	-0.5%	-2.9%

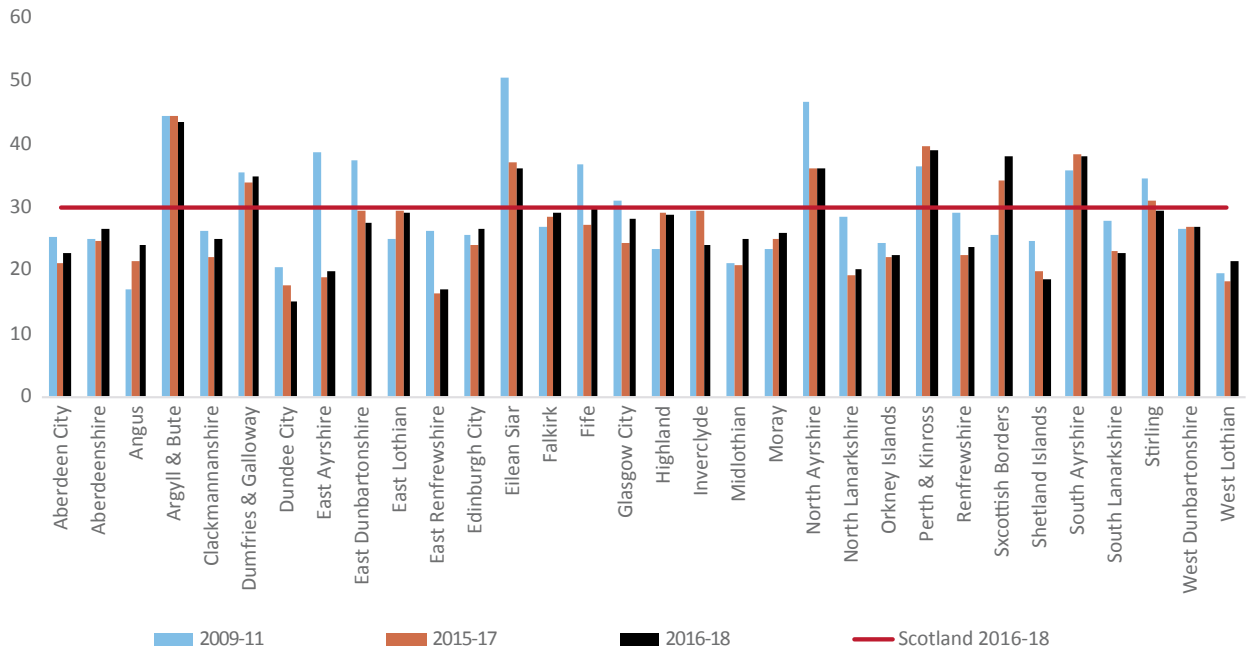
Source: Roads Asset Management Database, Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS)



The variation in condition varies significantly across Scotland for all classes of road, however this has narrowed since the base year. In 2016/18, the range for A class roads is 15% to 43%; B class roads is 17% to 64%; C class roads is 14% to 62%; and for unclassified roads the range is 20% to 57%.

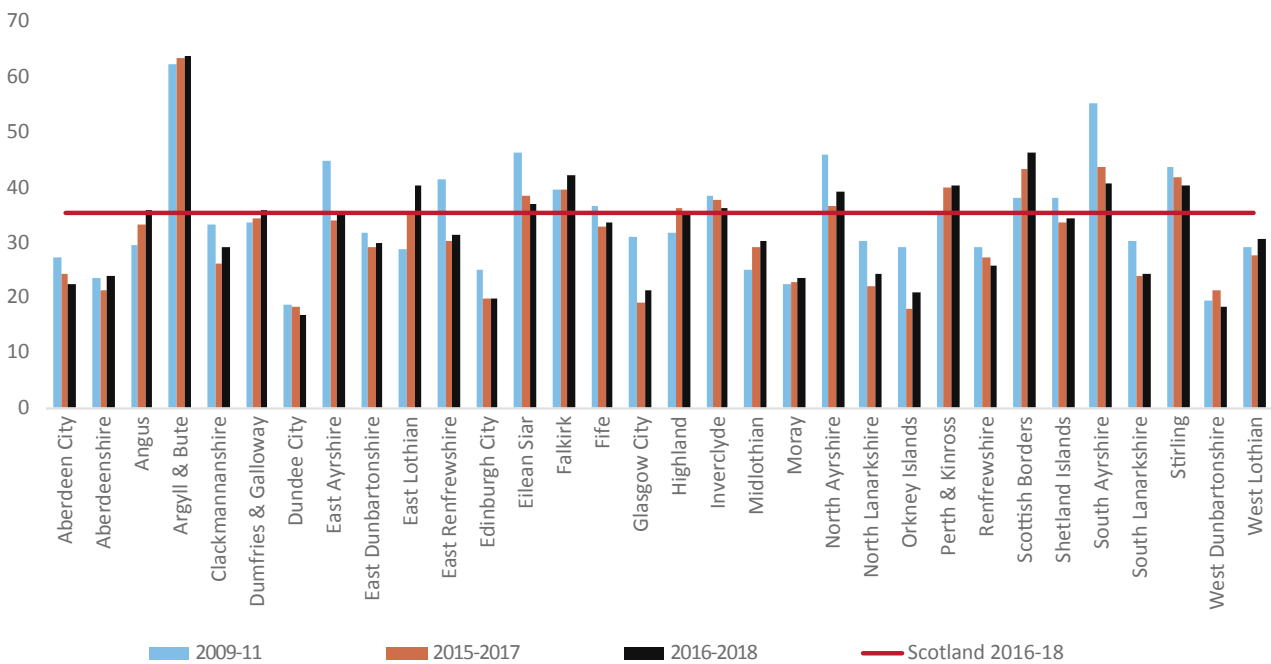


Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment



Range = 15.2 to 43.5

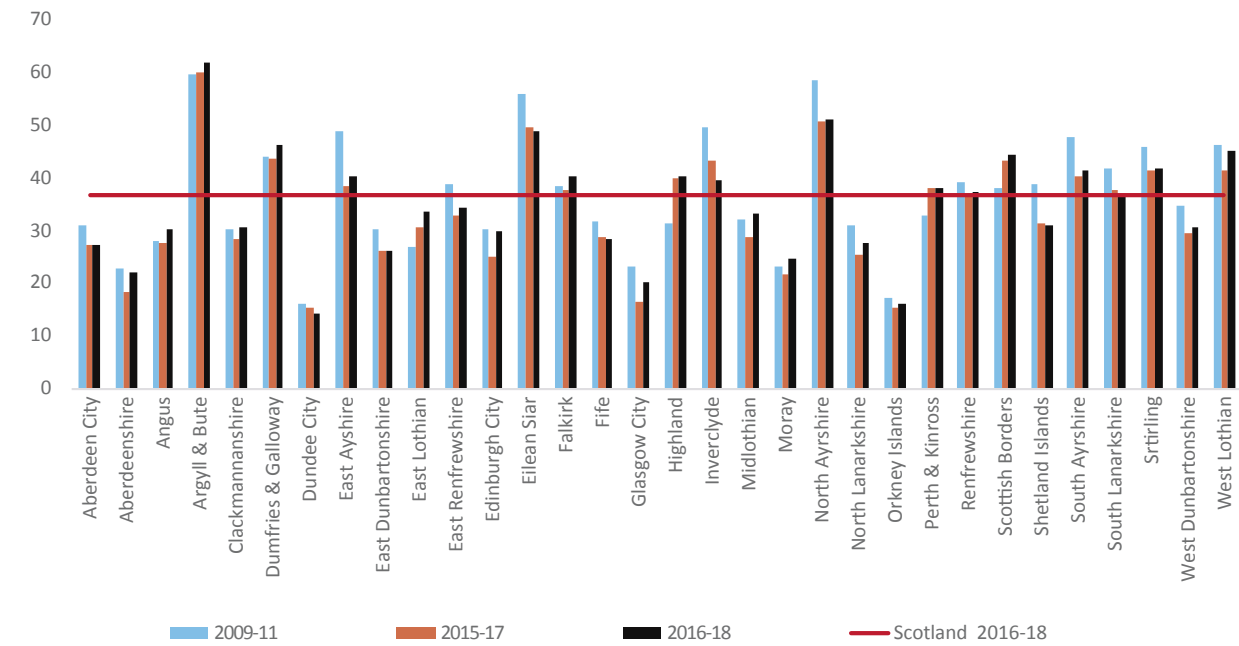
Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment



Range = 16.9 to 63.9

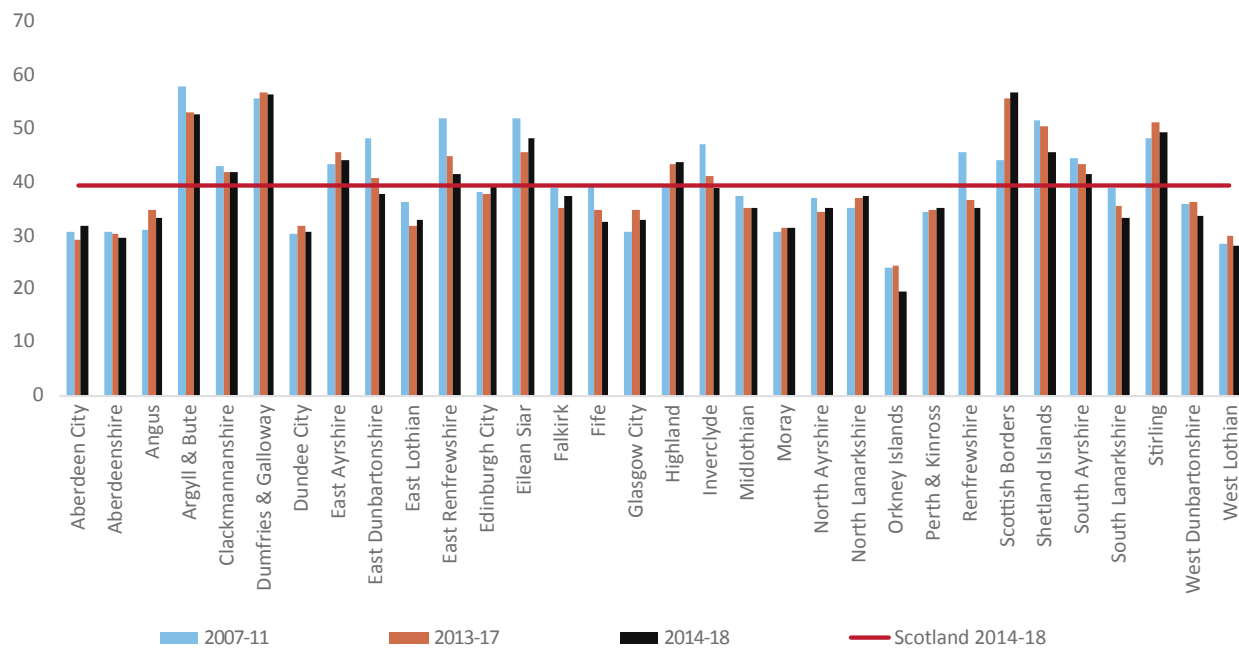


Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment



Range = 14.4 to 62.1

Percentage of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment



Range = 19.6 to 56.6

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

Environmental health and trading standards

Since 2010/11, environmental health and trading standards costs have reduced by 21.5% from £27,237 to £21,385, 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.



Trading standards costs include trading standards, money advice and citizen’s advice and have been standardised within the framework as costs per 1,000 population. Since 2012/13, the cost of these services per 1,000 population, while volatile, increased overall by 6.2%, from £5,544 to £5,890. This includes a 5.2% increase in costs in the past 12 months.

At the same time, trading standards services are seeing increasing demands for service in terms of reactive complaints and business support (e.g. export certificates). This workload is likely to increase, in part as a result of Brexit, and there is a need to ensure that there are appropriate regulatory arrangements in place.

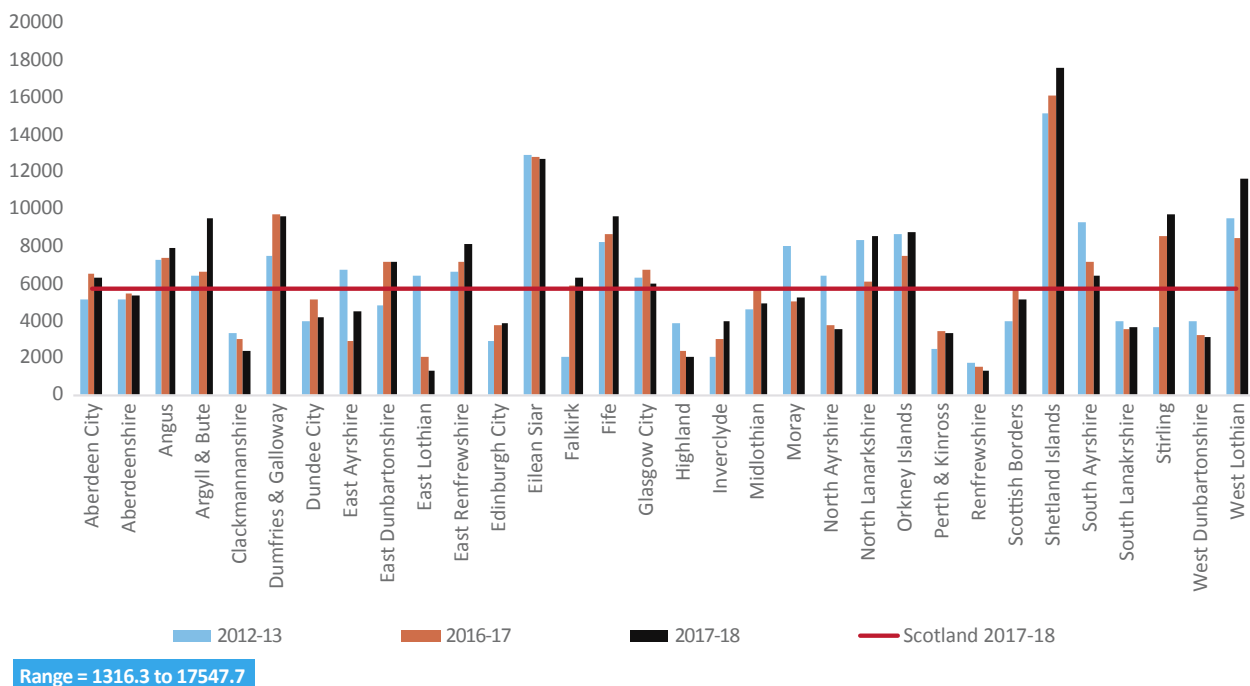
In 2017/18, costs ranged from £1,316 to £17,547 with variation systematically related to levels of deprivation within a council area. Trading standards costs are higher in councils with lower levels of deprivation (£7,547, compared £3,758 for councils with the highest level of deprivation).

Across this same period, there was a 11.9% reduction in the cost of environmental health services per 1,000 population, from £17,584 in 2012/13 to £15,496 in 2017/18. In the past 12 months, costs have fallen by 4.3% from £16,185 to £15,496. There is significant variation across councils which has widened in the past 12 months, with costs ranging from £6,849 to £35,441. Rurality has a systematic impact on the cost of environmental health, with rural councils reporting significantly higher costs than urban or semi-rural authorities (£20,033 compared to £15,309 and £12,357 respectively).

Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population

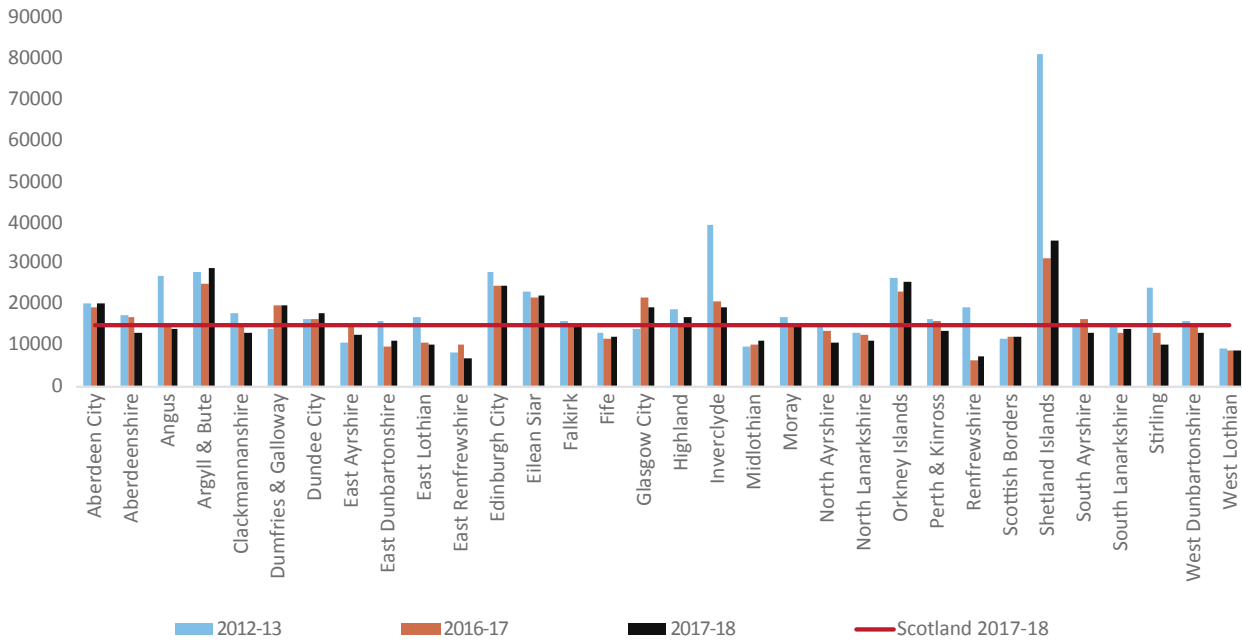
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2012-13 to 2017-18
Trading Standards, Money Advice & Citizens Advice	£5,544	£5,960	£5,872	£5,974	£5,599	£5,890	5.2%	6.2%
Environmental Health	£17,584	£18,374	£17,511	£17,296	£16,185	£15,496	-4.3%	-11.9%

Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population (£)





Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population (£)



Range = 6848.9 to 35441.9

Source: Council supplied figures

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 model of service
- 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 five years.
- Contract and procurement costs
- Access to external funding streams





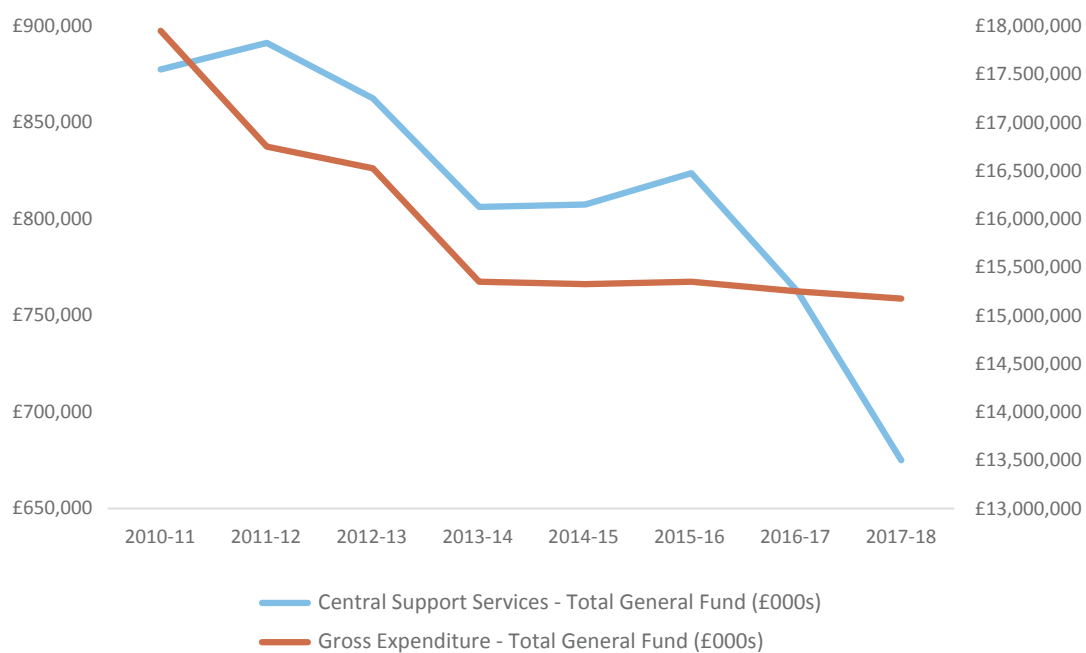
Corporate Services

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.

For standardisation purposes, support services are represented as a % of total gross revenue expenditure in the benchmarking framework. The figure has remained around 5% across the 8-year period. In 2017/18 the Scottish average was 4.5% compared to 4.9% in 2010/11, although there has been fluctuation across the period. The reduction between 2010/11 and 2017/18 reflects a 23% reduction in support costs in parallel with a 15.4% reduction in Total General Fund. This both reflects councils' commitment to protect front-line services over 'back office' functions and the maturation of councils' digital strategies. It is also possible an element of this significant reduction is due to improved reporting following refined guidance in relation to the treatment of support costs within the financial return.

Support services expenditure and total gross expenditure (£)

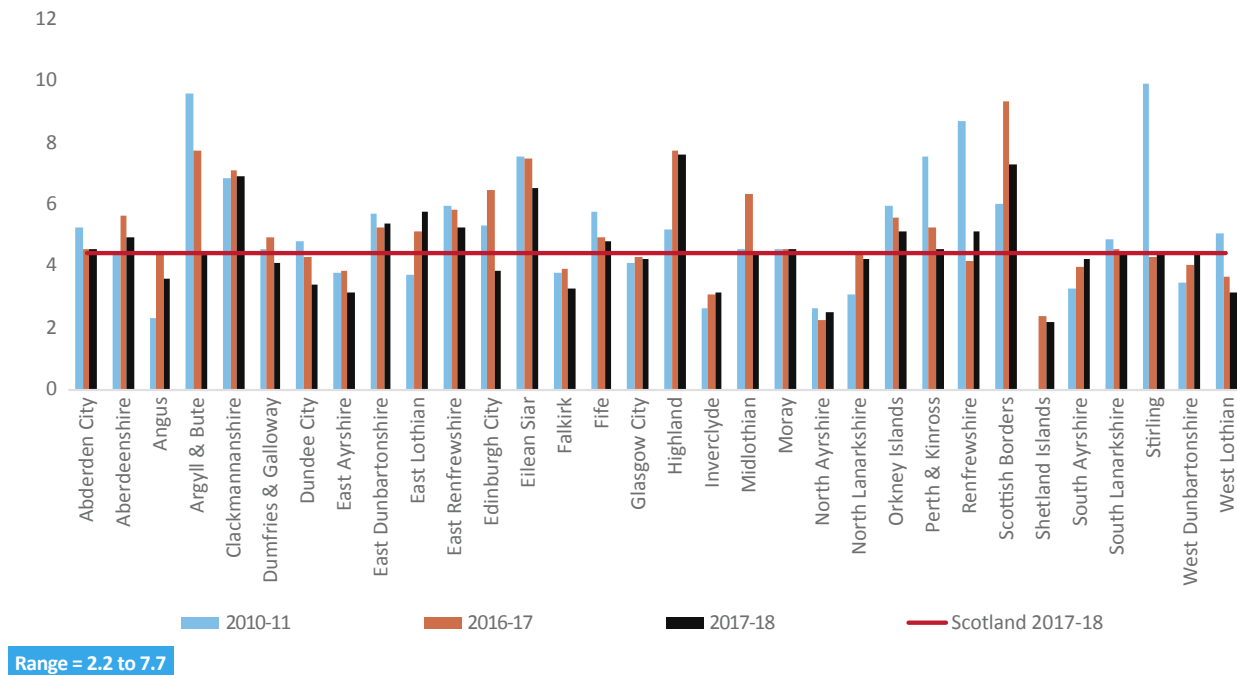


Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

There is significant but narrowing variation between councils in Support Service expenditure. The proportion ranged from 2.2% to 7.7% in 2017/18 with notable differences between urban, rural and semi-rural councils, although these were not statistically significant.



Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

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; outsourcing*
- *Digital Strategy*

Gender equality

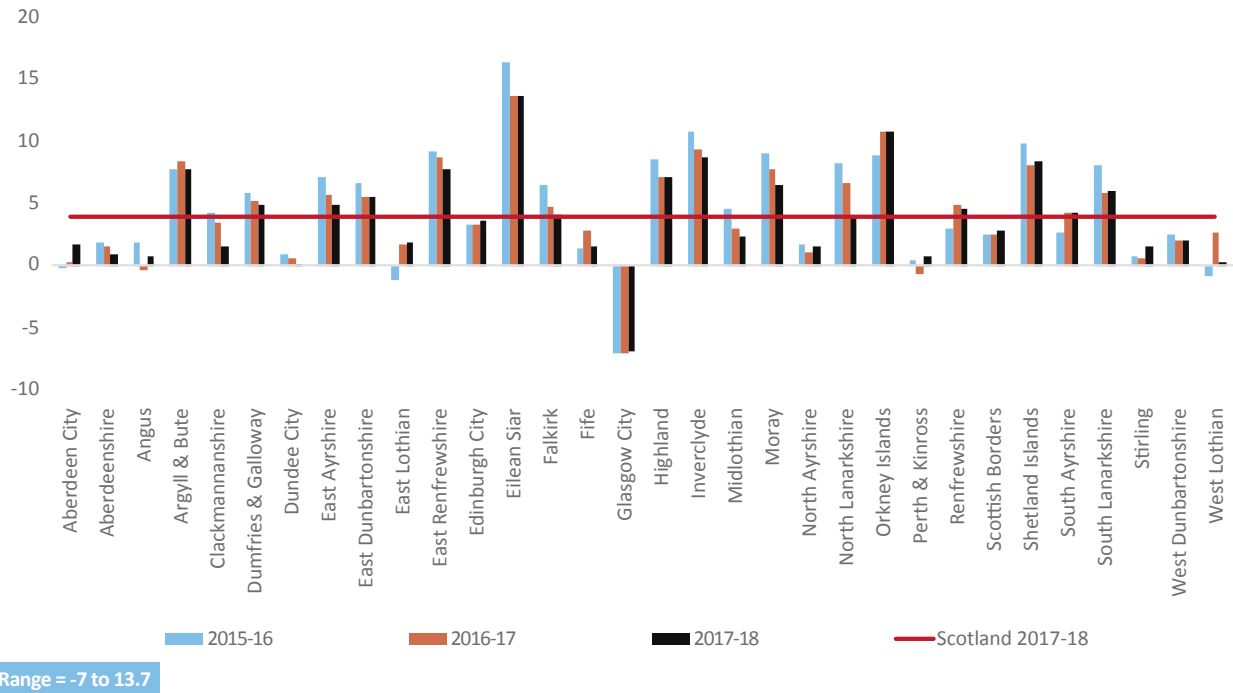
The percentage of women in the top 5% of earners in councils is a significant measure of the attempts by councils to ensure equal opportunity between genders. From 2010/11 to 2017/18 this has increased from 46.3% to 54.6%. The range across councils is from 27% to 65%, with rural councils reporting lower rates.

While this is an important measure reflecting the progress which has been made in relation to gender equality in senior positions within local government, there is a need to capture the progress being made across the wider workforce. As such, our measure of the gender pay gap represents the difference between men's and women's earnings within local authorities and is a key measure under the Public-Sector Equality Duty. This measure takes the average (mean) hourly rate of pay (excluding overtime) for female employees and divides this by average (mean) hourly rate for male employees. This is used to calculate the percentage difference between pay for men and pay for women. Negative values indicate that women are paid more than men. Both part-time and full-time employees are included. This is only the third year of publication, and this measure will be subject to review and on-going development across the coming period.



In 2017/18 the Gender Pay Gap was 3.9%, reducing from 4.5% in 2015/16. The gap ranges from -7.0% to 13.7%, (0.2% to 13.7% excluding Glasgow as an outlier) with rural areas reporting wider gaps on average. 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.

The gender pay gap (%)



Source: Council supplied figures

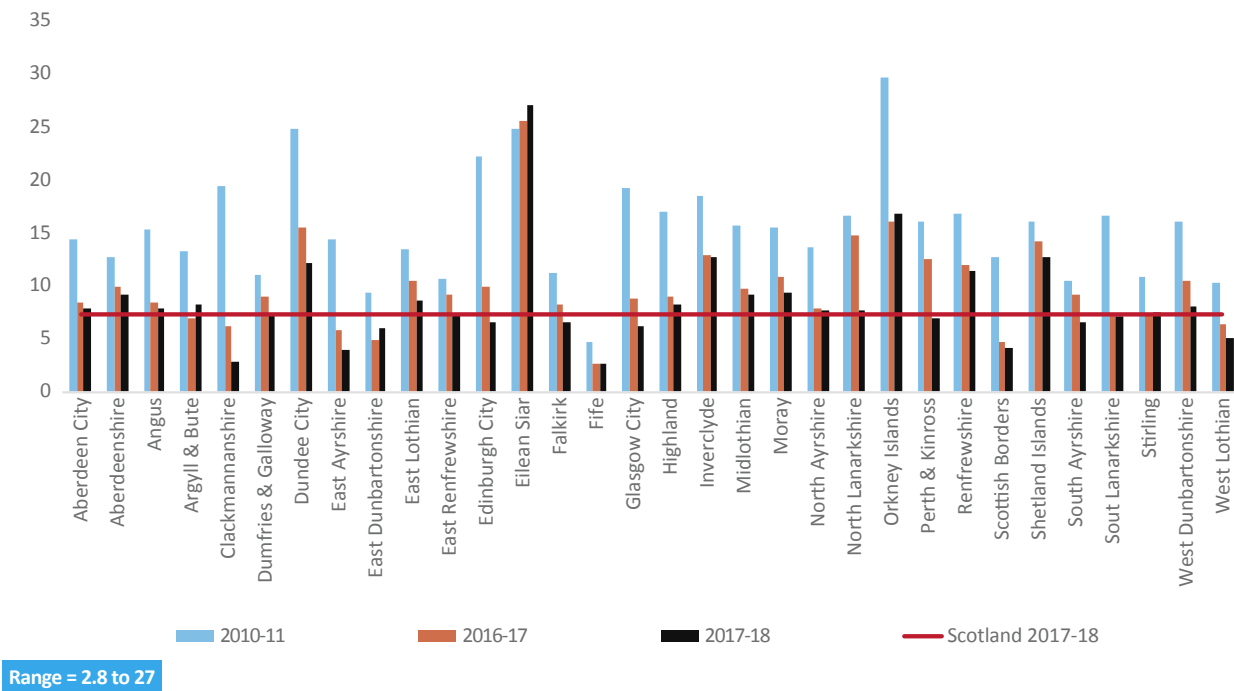
Council tax

The cost of collecting council tax is measured on a per property basis to standardise the measure across councils. Over the eight-year period from 2010/11 to 2017/18 this has reduced by 52.4%, from £15.46 to £7.35. There has been a year on year reduction in costs, which has accelerated in recent years, reducing by 19.5% in the past 12 months.

The range however varies significantly from £2.78 to £27.02, with smaller sized and island councils tending to report higher costs. A key factor driving the reduction in costs is the continued digital transformation and shift to embrace new technology and automation.



The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax (£)

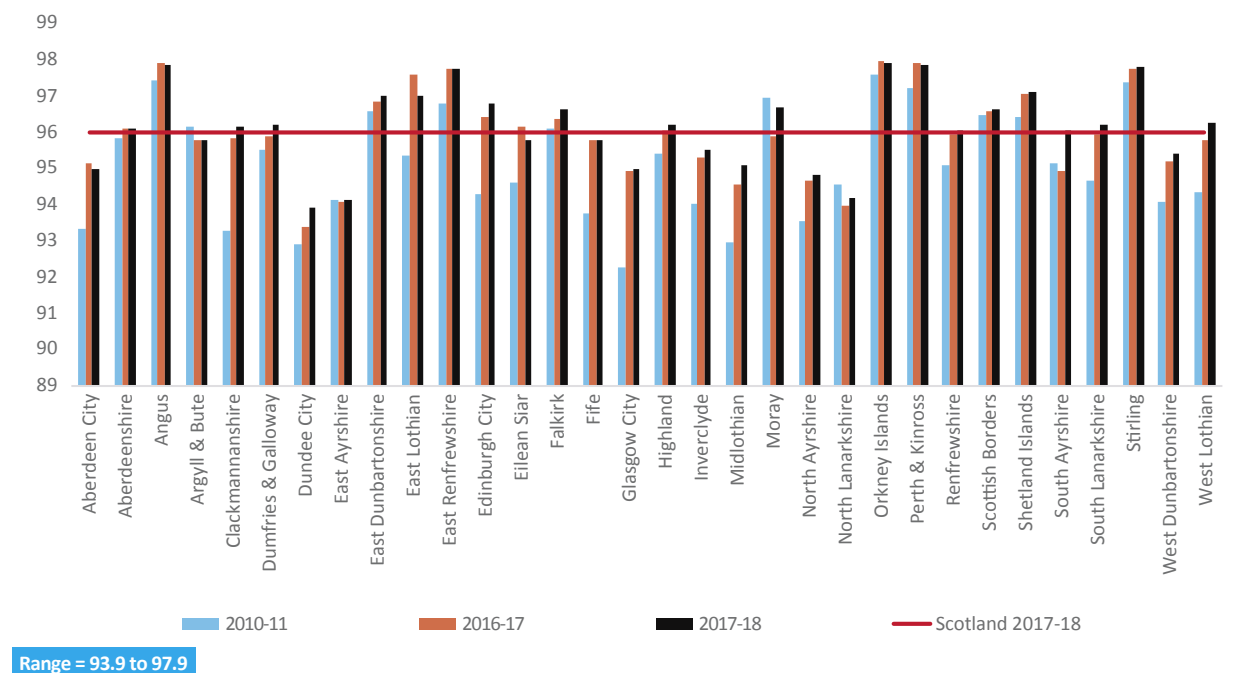


Source: Council supplied figures

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 96.0% in 2017/18. This has been achieved despite the challenges created by a difficult economic climate and significant welfare reform.

The variation across councils is narrowing over time, with rates in 2017/18 ranging from 93.9% to 97.9%. Council tax collection rate shows a significant pattern in relation to level of deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting significantly lower rates paid on time. The roll-out of Universal Credit is likely to further exacerbate this over the coming period.

Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year



Source: Council supplied figures



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/council Tax Reduction(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 recovery*
 - *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*

Sickness absence rates

The management of sickness absence is a major priority for councils in their efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of their workforce and to manage their costs. The unprecedented pace of change and transformation across local government places further emphasis on the importance of developing effective strategies to manage absence. Although local context will differ, authorities are adopting similar policies and good practice procedures and are generally focussing on employee wellbeing as well as health, in particular supporting good mental health.

Absence levels overall are at their highest since 2010/11, increasing by 6%; however during the same period Full Time equivalent staff numbers have reduced by 10.3%.³³ The data reveals a different pattern for teaching staff and non-teaching staff.

Although there have been fluctuations, Sickness Absence days for teaching staff have reduced by 10.2%, from 6.6 days to 5.9 days since 2010/11, and from 6.1 to 5.9 days in the past 12 months (a 2.1% reduction). The data reveals an overall reduction in days lost for teaching staff against a backdrop of unchanged teacher numbers. The number of absence days ranges from 4.2 to 9.1, with rural and smaller authorities tending to report slightly higher levels. 15 out of 32 councils showed an increase in Teachers absence between 2016/17 and 2017/18

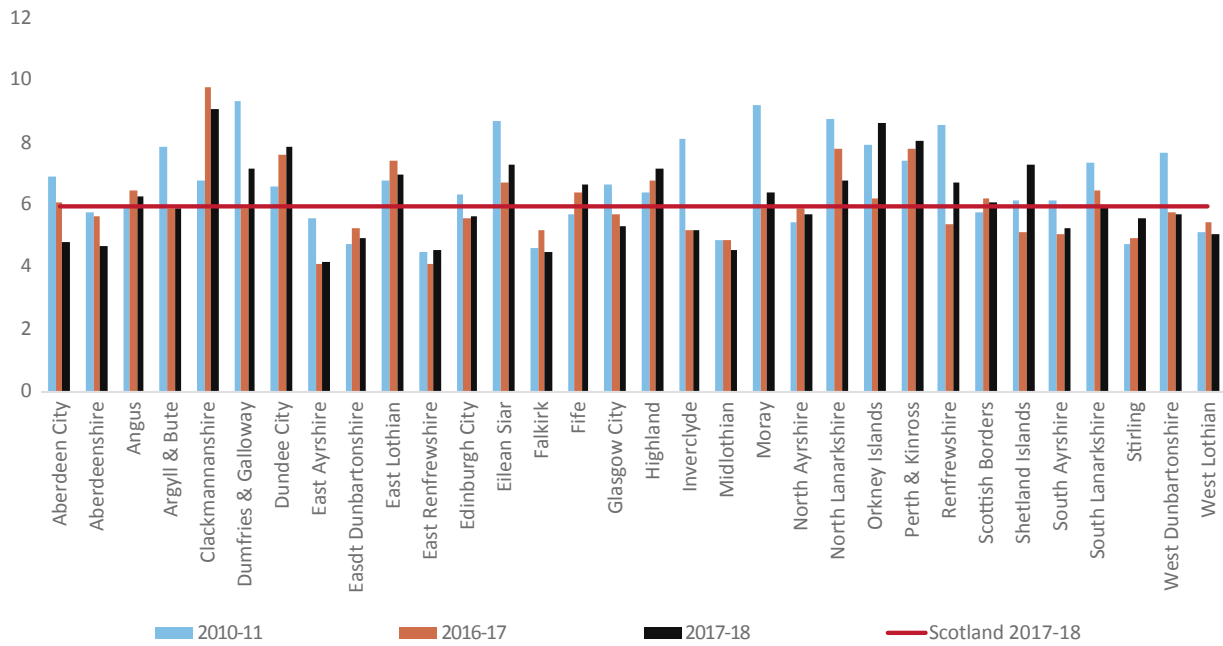
Sickness absence days for non-teaching staff are higher than those for teachers, and have increased by 5.7% since 2010/11, from 10.8 days to 11.4 days. Although there have again been fluctuations during this period, the 4.5% increase in the past 12 months has taken levels to their highest point since the base year. In contrast to teaching staff, while overall days lost for non-teaching staff also fell, this was in parallel with a 10% reduction in overall staff numbers since 2010/11. The number of days lost range from 8.4 to 16.8 with no systematic relationship to size, rurality or

³³ FTE calculations used within council supplied figures for LGBF differ slightly from the PSE guidelines (<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/PublicSectorEmployment/PSEGuidance>)



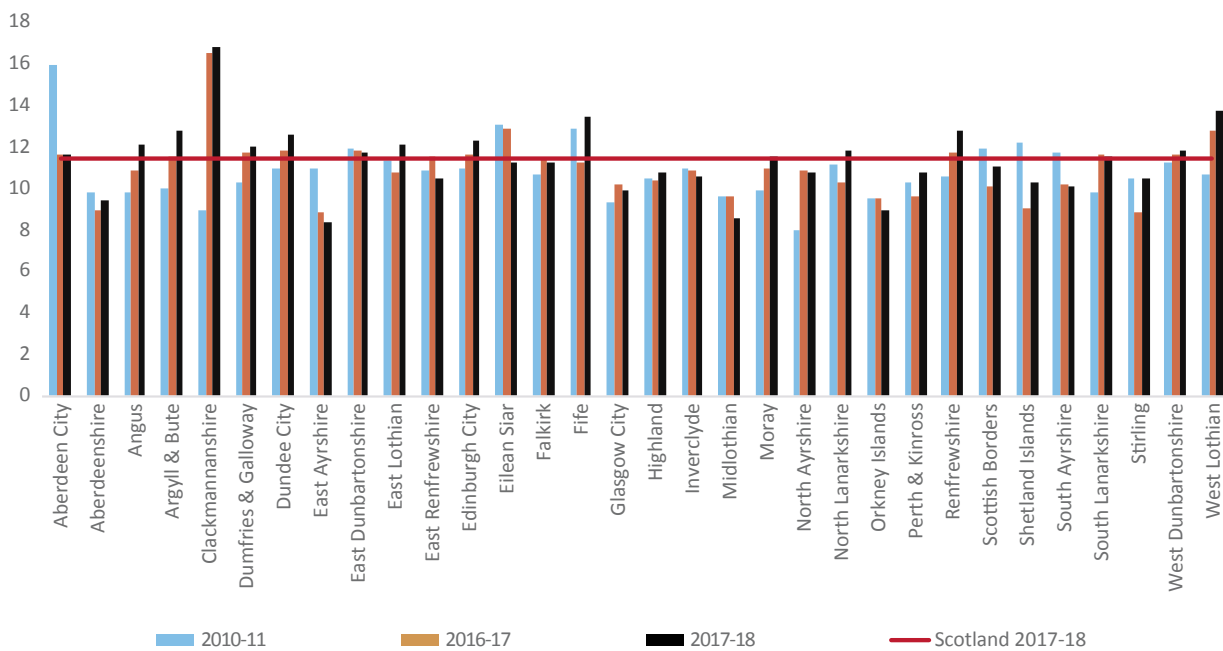
deprivation. 20 out of the 32 authorities showed an increase in absence between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Sickness absence days per teacher



Range = 4.2 to 9.1

Sickness absence days per employee (non teacher)



Range = 8.4 to 16.8

Source: Council supplied figures



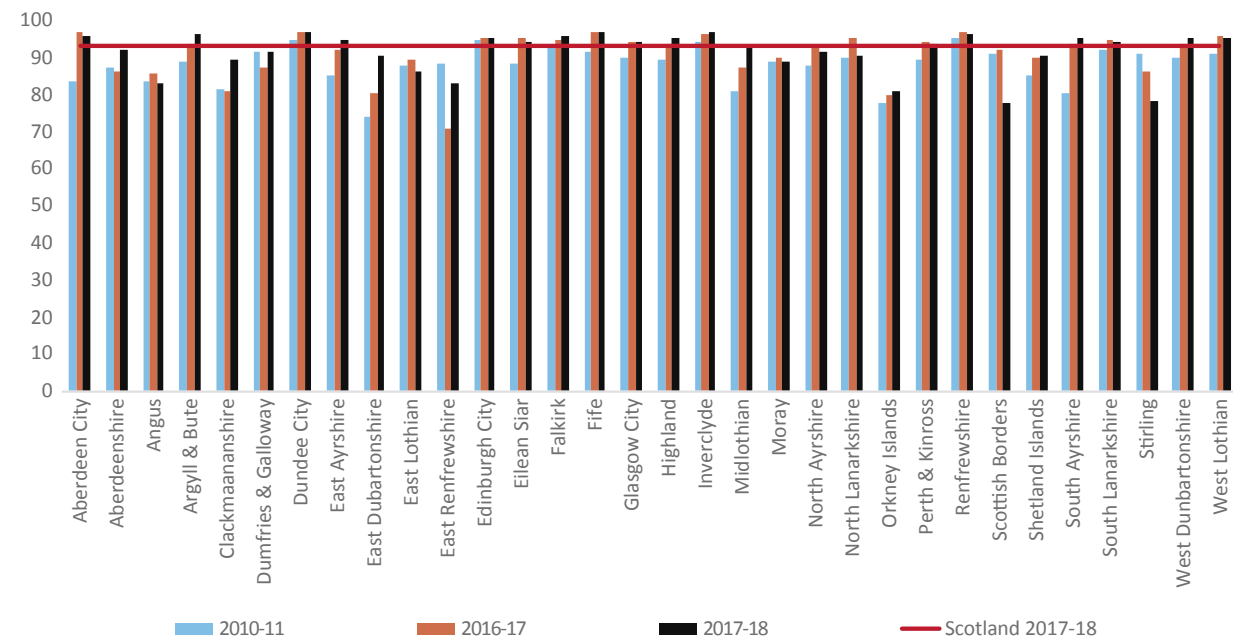
Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in sickness absence levels:

- 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 93.2% over the eight-year period, with levels of variation remaining largely unchanged. In 2017/18, the range across councils was 78.0% to 97.1%.

Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days



Range = 78 to 97.1

Source: Council supplied figures

Corporate assets

There has been improvement in the condition of councils' corporate assets over the period. The



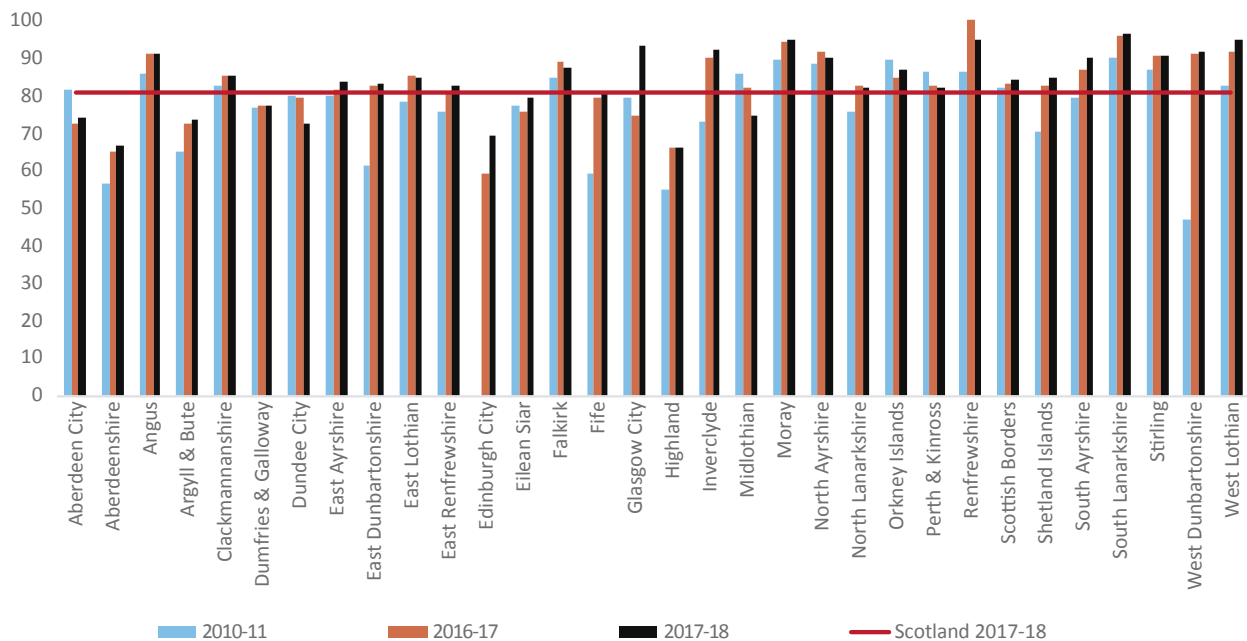
percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use has improved from 73.7% to 81.0% and the proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition has improved from 81.3% to 86.3%.

There is significant but narrowing variation across councils in both measures, ranging from 66% to 96% for buildings suitable for use, and 52% to 100% 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.

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the variation between authorities in relation to corporate assets:

- *Review programme for school estate*
- *Investment in improvement works*
- *Lifecycle – key elements at end/past their useful economic life e.g. roofs/heating systems*
- *Capital programmes – investment in schools/energy efficiency programmes*
- *Asset transfer and the Community Empowerment agenda*

Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (%)

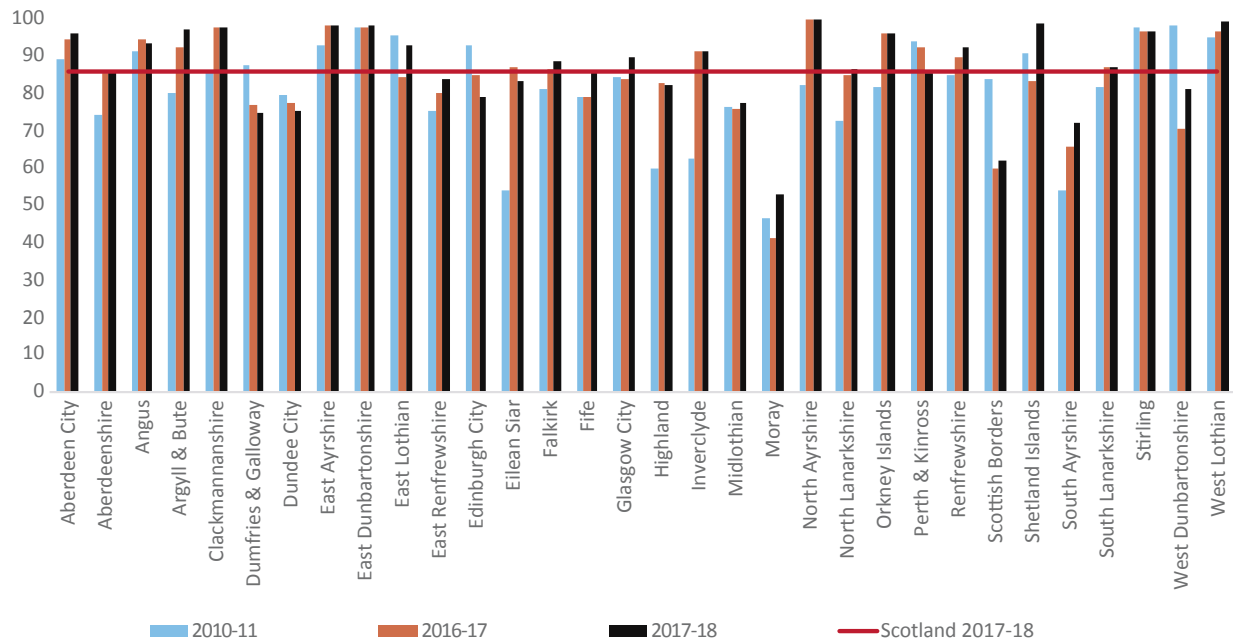


Range = 66.1 to 96.5

Source: Council supplied figures



Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition (%)



Range = 52.6 to 99.7

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.

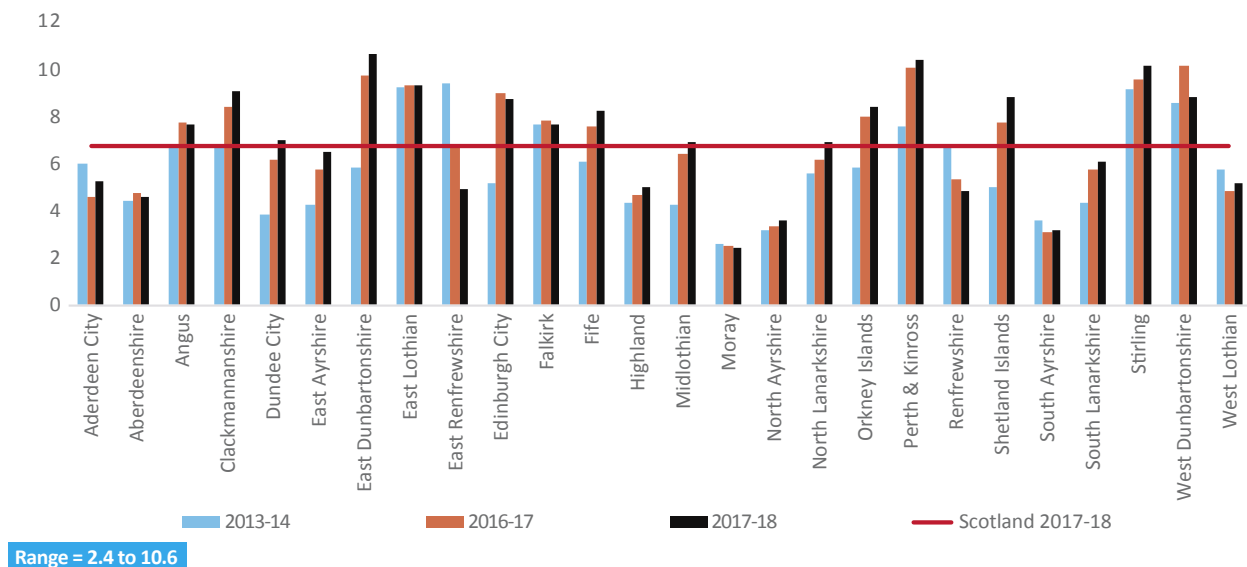
Rent arrears

The average Scottish tenants' arrears as a percentage of rent due has increased year on year from 5.6% in 2013/14 to 6.7% in 2017/18. This reflects an increase in gross rent arrears during this time of 24.7%, which is an increase of £15 million from £61.0 million in 2013/14 to £76.0 million in 2017/18.

Welfare reform and Universal Credit roll out may create further pressure on this trend and it will be important to monitor this. Where evidence is available from Universal Credit pilot councils, there was a significant increase in rent arrears following the introduction of Universal Credit Full Service. Beyond the immediate impact on some individuals and families, an increase in arrears will result in the loss of rental income for councils and potentially affect the ability to build affordable housing.

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 2017/18, the percentage of arrears range from 2.4% to 10.6% across councils which indicates a widening variation since 2013/14. Analysis indicates variation is not systematically related to levels of deprivation within a council, rurality or size of authority area.

Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 march each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year



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

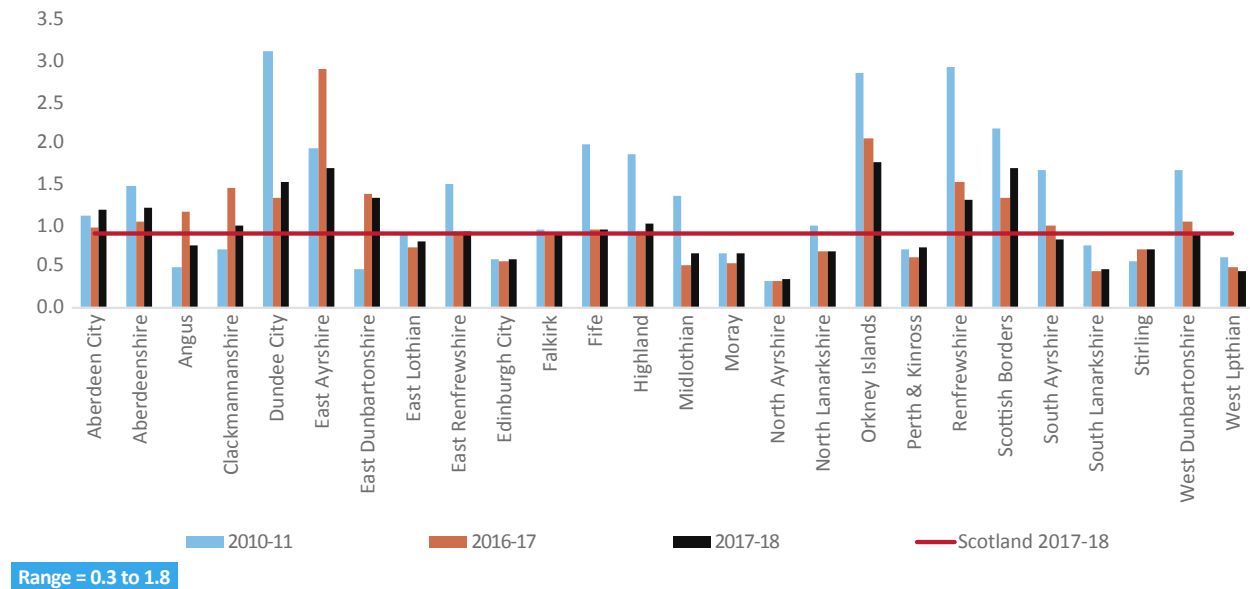
Rent lost due to voids

Meanwhile, the rent lost due to voids has reduced from 1.3% in 2010/11 to 0.9% in 2017/18. Again,



figures vary across authorities, from 0.3% to 1.8%, however the level of variation has reduced since the base year. Rural and less densely populated authorities tend to report higher rates of rent loss than urban and semi-rural areas.

Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids



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

Housing repairs

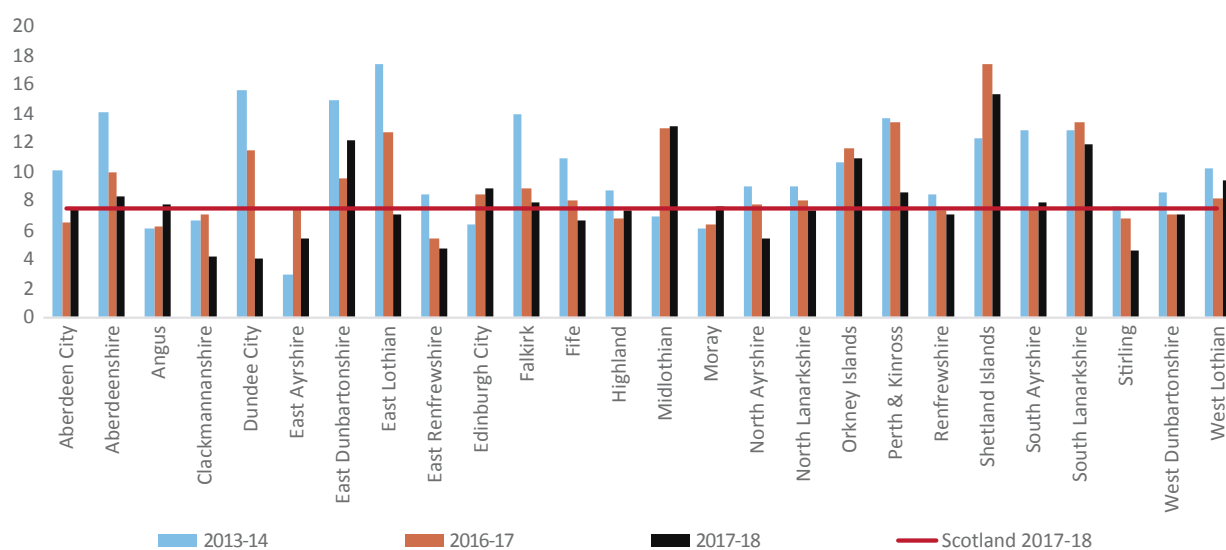
The average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs has reduced by 26.2% over the period, from 10.2 days in 2013/14 to 7.5 days in 2017/18. As with Rent arrears, the definition and methodology for this measure changed in 2013/14, therefore it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with previous years.

There is significant variation across councils although this has narrowed slightly since the base year. In 2017/18, length of time ranged from 4.1 days to 15.4 days, with no systematic effects of rurality, deprivation or size of council.

Overall, these figures suggest the councils continue to manage their stock well in the face of mounting pressures.



Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (no. of days)



Range = 4.1 to 15.4

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

Housing quality

In terms of Housing Quality, there have been significant improvements over the past 8 years in terms of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) and energy efficiency standards.³⁴ In 2017/18, 93.9% of council dwellings met the SHQS, an increase of 40 percentage points from 2010/11. The range across councils varies from 80.8% to 99.9%, although this range has narrowed significantly since 2010/11.

In 2017/18, 97.2% of council dwellings were energy efficient, an increase from 74.9% in 2010/11. Councils range from 75.3% to 100%.

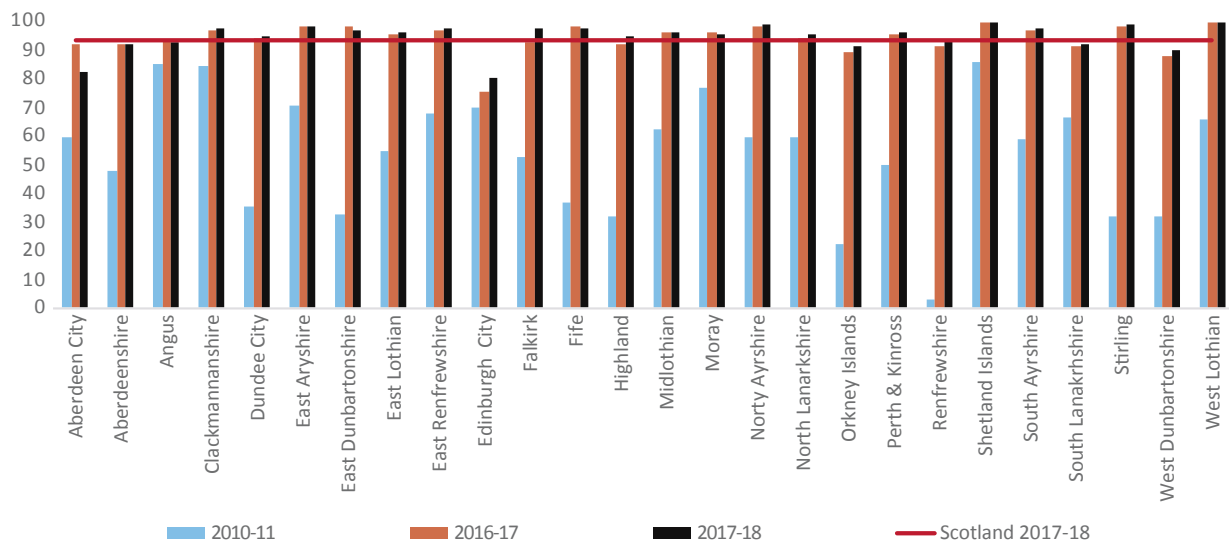
Housing quality and energy efficiency (%)

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
% dwellings meeting SHQS	53.6	66.1	76.6	83.7	90.4	92.5	93.6	93.9	0.3%	40.3%
% dwellings that are energy efficient	74.9	81.2	88.8	93.0	96.6	96.2	96.6	97.2	0.6%	22.3%

³⁴ % of properties at or above the appropriate NHER (National Home Energy Rating) or SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) ratings. This is just one criterion of the Energy Efficiency element of the SHQS (there are other criteria relating to loft and wall insulation, heating systems, etc.). Landlords were expected to be in compliance with SHQS as from 2015 (with some valid exemptions and abeyances). Attention is now switching to progress towards the Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing (EESH), which raises the minimum EPC requirements from SHQS. Landlords are required to meet EESH by 2020.

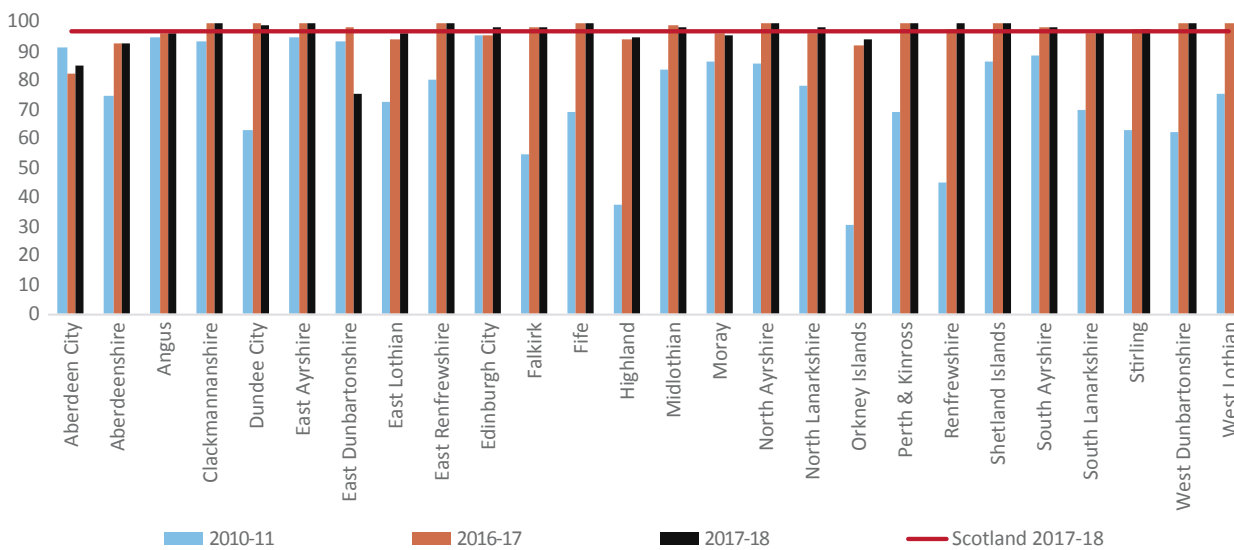


Properties meeting SHQS (%)



Range = 80.3 to 99.9

Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient



Range 75.3 to 100

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 majority of council Plans and Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) assign a high level of strategic priority to local economic growth, job creation and tackling unemployment. As drivers of Community Planning and Regional Growth Partnerships, Councils recognise the importance of delivering better economic outcomes for their communities and understand the impact that local economic prosperity has on wider local government spend and income.

In common with other service areas, there has been pressure on economic development budgets in recent times. Against this backdrop, councils have endeavoured to maximise their impact through joint working with community planning partners, developing regional and growth deal proposals and influencing economic impact through procurement and recruitment policies

To reflect the strategic priority given to this area, this year sees the introduction of an expanded suite of Economic Development measures within the LGBF to reflect council performance in this area. As a discretionary service area, Economic Development is delivered in different ways across the 32 local authorities reflecting the diverse nature of local economies and different priorities and challenges. Nevertheless, common areas of support include the Business Gateway Service, Supplier Development, Employability Support, Sector Development and Town Centre Management. The Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group (SLAED) have worked with the LGBF board to develop an expanded suite of measures which provide a useful overview of performance across these areas.

Investment in economic development & tourism

As with other service areas, the framework now includes an indicator to capture the amount that each council is spending per capita. This will provide important context when considering performance outputs and outcomes. This measure provides a measure of each council's investment in economic development and tourism services, both in terms of capital projects and revenue costs.

Investment in economic development and tourism per 1,000 population

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£94,412	£83,926	£79,169	£78,194	£73,557	£67,395	£82,471	£91,806	11.3%	-2.8%

There has been a small reduction in economic development and tourism investment between 2010/11 and 2017/18 from £94,412 to £91,806 per 1,000, a reduction of 2.8%. This reflects a real terms growth in expenditure of 1.0%, against a population growth of 3.9%. Across the period, investment per 1,000 reduced by 28.6% between 2010/11 and 2015/16, before increasing by 36% in the past two years, including an 11% increase in the last 12 months.

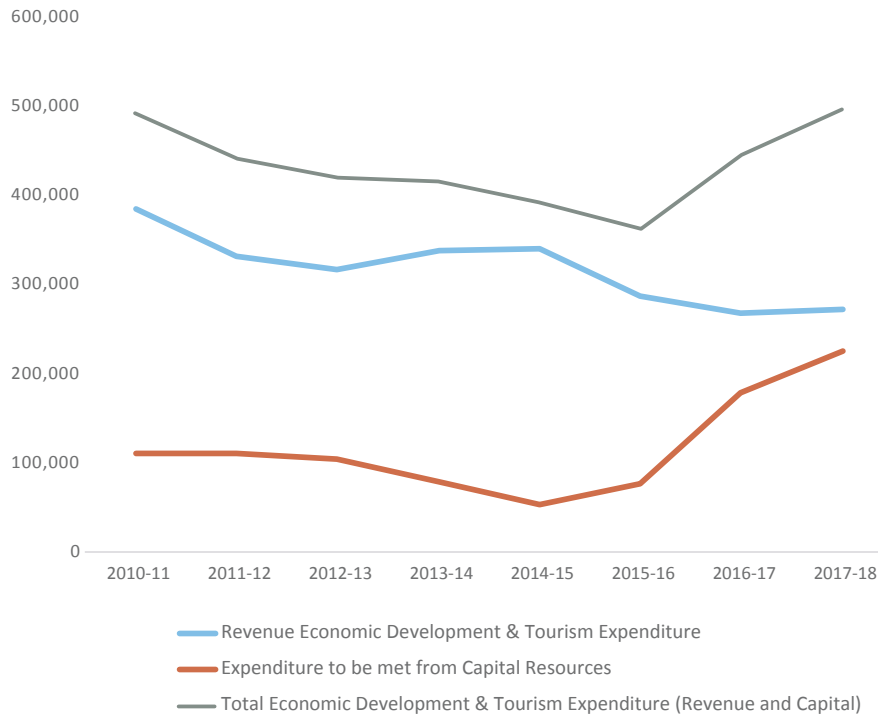
This measure combines the costs of Economic Development and Tourism, with Economic Development accounting for over 90% of expenditure. Closer analysis reveals very different trends within these service areas. Across the period, Economic Development expenditure has grown by 2.8% in real terms, while Tourism has reduced by 27.8%. In the past 12 months, Economic Development expenditure has grown by 12.7%, while Tourism has reduced by 8.9%.

There has been significant capital investment in Economic Development and Tourism across this



period as part of the current regional growth development programmes, including the Cities deals. While total expenditure has grown by 1.0% since the base year, there has been a 29.0% reduction in revenue funding, and a 105.5% growth in capital (from £109 million to £224 million). In the past 12 months, there has been a 1.9% growth in revenue expenditure and 25.7% growth in capital. As can be seen in the graph below, this has seen capital expenditure grow from 22% of total economic development expenditure to 45% between 2010/11 and 2017/18.

Economic development and tourism expenditure - revenue and capital (£)



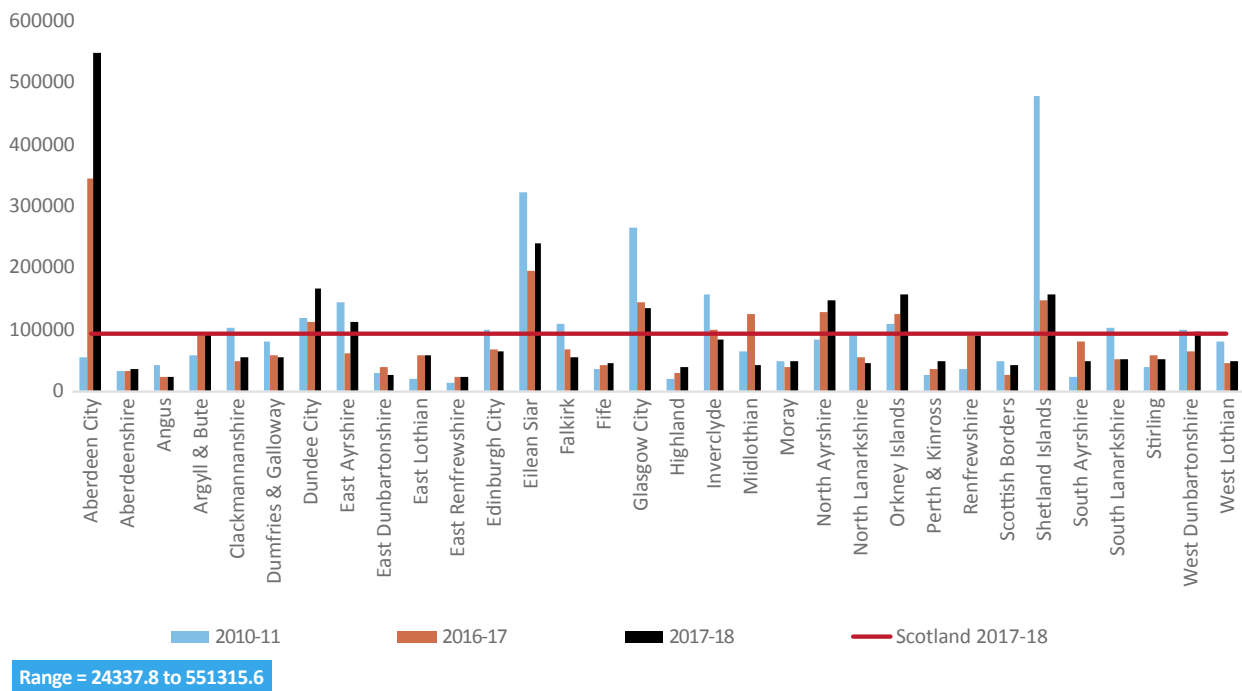
Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Future post-Brexit uncertainty may impact adversely on Economic development funding. Currently, every £1 of council funding invested in economic development, levers an additional £1.71. EU funding makes up a significant element of this. The future demise of EU funding for the UK and its replacement by a, yet to be fully defined, ‘Prosperity Fund’ could affect council investment returns in this area, including the outputs/outcomes returned for our investment.

The graph below shows the significant variation between councils in economic development and tourism investment per 1,000. In 2017/18, investment ranged from £24,338 to £551,316 per 1,000. Variation has widened significantly in 2017/18 after narrowing in recent years. There is no significant relationship with rurality, deprivation or size of council.



Investment in economic development and tourism per 1,000 population (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Employment

The second 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 2017/18, the Scotland average for the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes was 14.4% of total unemployed. This reflects an increase from 9.1% in 2012/13, and a small increase from 14.0% in the past 12 months. While there has been a reduction in the total number of unemployed people assisted into work across the period (-14.6% since 2012/13 and -3.5% in the past 12 months), this has taken place against a much faster drop in the unemployment count, which reduced by 46.0% since 2012/13, and by 6.1% in the past 12 months.

Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded employability programmes

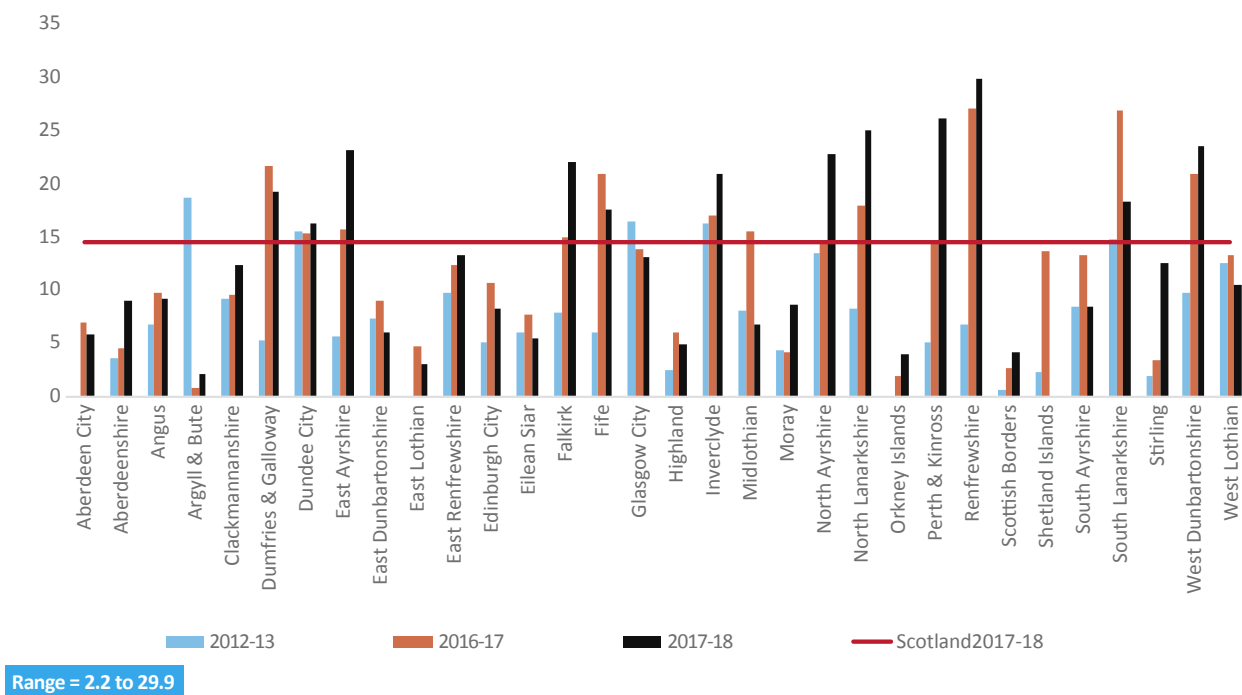
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2012-13 to 2017-18
9.1	12.5	14.1	14.2	14.0	14.4	0.4%	5.3%



The improvement rate has levelled off since 2014/15. This trend may reflect a number of factors, including: 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 facing multiple barriers to employment who take longer to progress into work.

There is considerable and widening variation across councils, from 2.2% to 29.9%, with significantly lower rates for the least deprived councils compared to the most deprived (6.1% compared to 21.9%). Rural authorities also have lower rates than urban authorities (5.2%, compared to 16.4%), although this difference is not statistically significant.

Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded employability Programmes



Source: Model based estimates for unemployment, Office for National Statistics (ONS); SLAED Indicators Framework

Note: Missing values reflect no SLAED return for that year

Business support

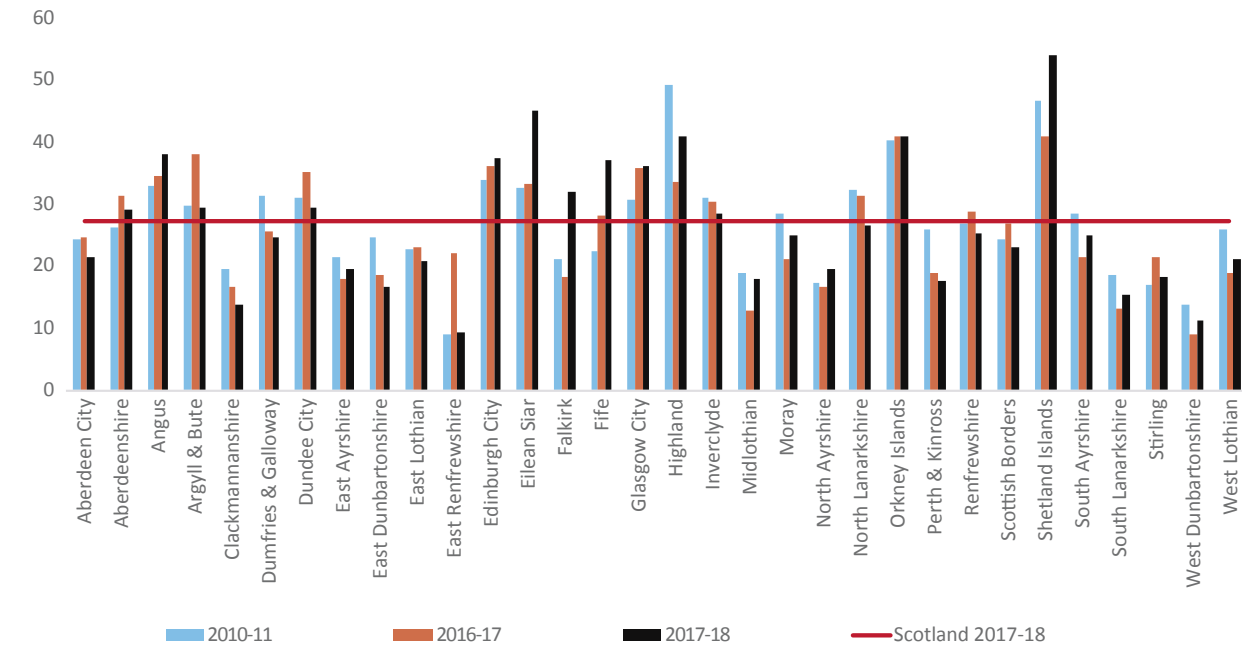
To capture wider economic development and reflect the significant investment in business development and support (e.g. Business Gateway), the benchmarking framework includes the number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population. The start-up rate has slowed from 19.0 in 2013/14 to 16.8 in 2017/18. This may reflect a longer-term strategic decision by some Business Gateway areas to focus a higher proportion of resources on supporting the growth and development of existing businesses as opposed to business start-ups. In areas where start-up numbers are good this may have greater job creating potential. The downward trend has levelled off since 15/16, with rates showing a very small increase in the past 12 months, from 16.6 to 16.8.



been a commitment in recent months for local government economic development and procurement professionals to work on joint initiatives to enhance the impact of local government procurement spend.

There is significant variation across councils in relation to procurement spend, ranging from 9.5% to 54.2%. The Islands and rural authorities report higher procurement spend on local enterprises than other authorities, with Island authorities all spending more than 40% locally.

Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises



Range = 9.4 to 54.2

Source: Scottish Government Procurement Hub

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. Within this framework, expenditure on planning includes spend on building control, development control, planning policy and environmental initiatives.

Two indicators are included here. A measure of spend on planning which is standardised per planning application and the average time taken to process commercial planning applications (Business and Industry applications).

Cost of planning per application

The cost of planning per application has fallen from £5,470 in 2010/11 to £4,819 in 2017/18, a real terms reduction of 11.9%. Although there have been fluctuations across the period, the trend represents a 33.8% reduction in gross expenditure and a 24.9% reduction in planning applications since 2010/11.

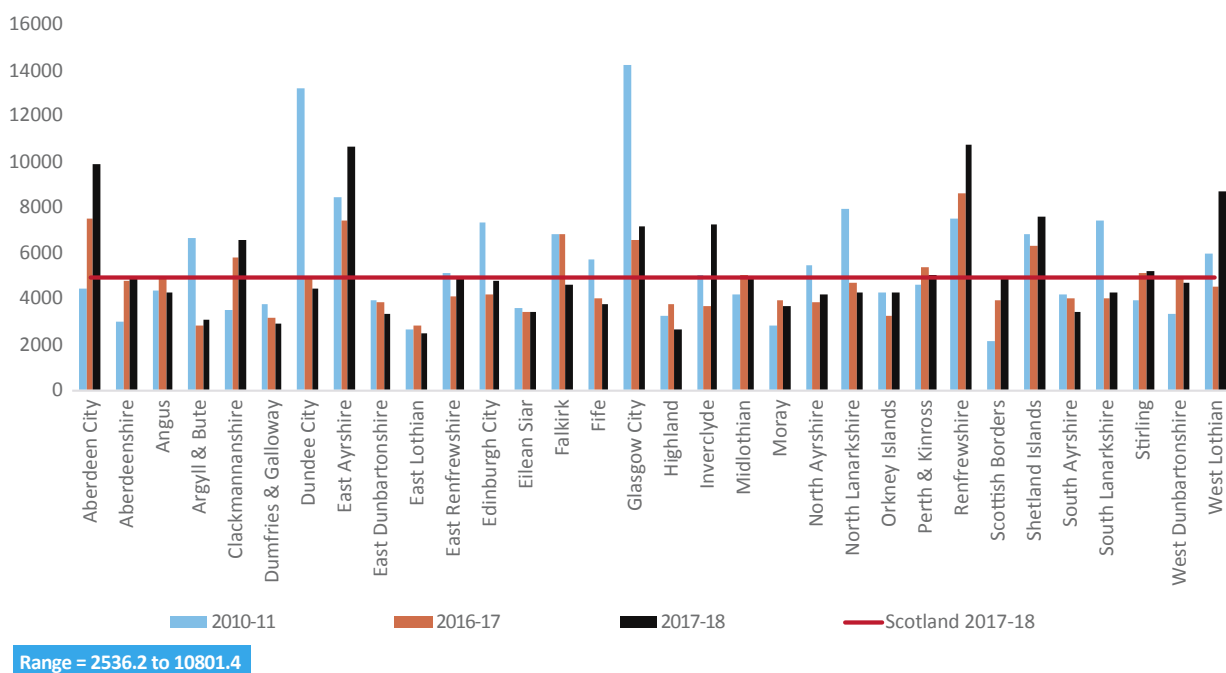


Cost per planning application

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2010-11 to 2017-18
£5,470	£5,284	£6,701	£4,719	£4,463	£4,998	£4,652	£4,819	3.6%	-11.9%

In the past 12 months, costs have increased by 3.6%, reflecting a 0.7% real growth in gross expenditure and a 2.8% reduction in planning applications. There is substantial and fluctuating variation in planning costs across Scotland, ranging from £2,536 to £10,801 in 2017/18. While rural authorities continue to spend less on average than urban and semi-urban authorities, this difference is no longer statistically significant (£4,268 compared to £4,718 and £4,619 respectively).

Cost per planning application (£)



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

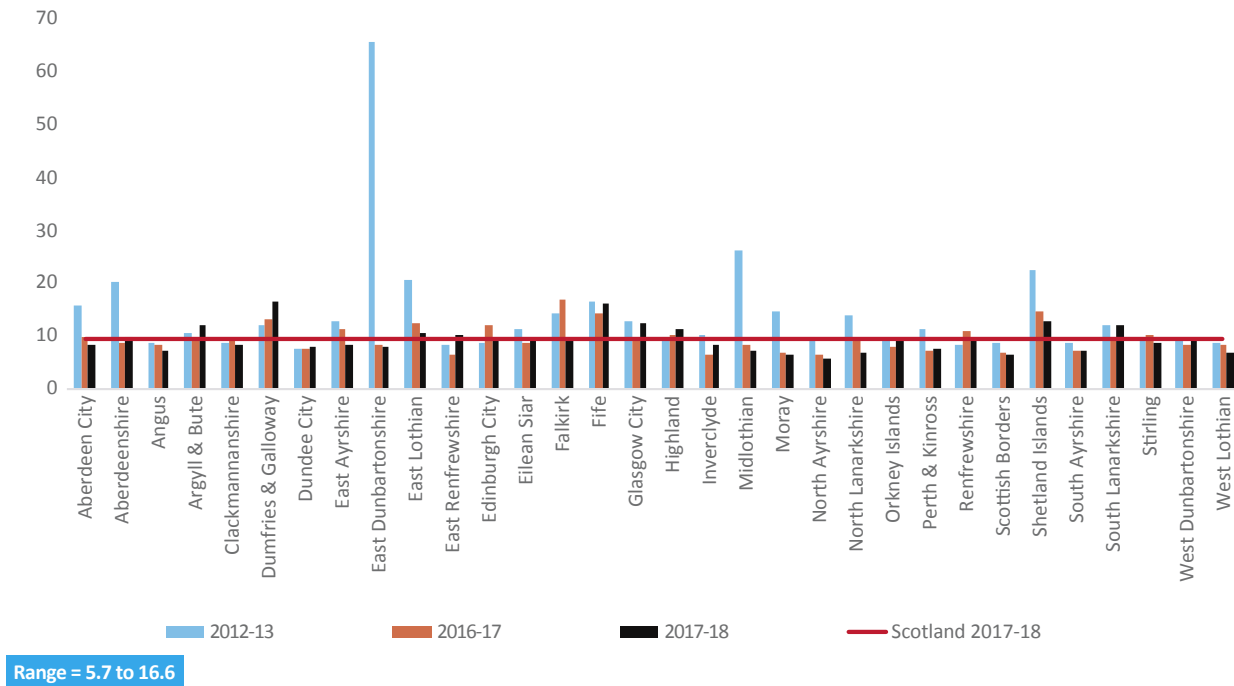
Average time per business and industry planning application

There has been a year on year reduction in the average time per business and industry planning application since 2012/13. In 2017/18 the average time taken was 9.3 weeks, compared to 14 weeks in 2012/13, a 33.3% reduction. During this time, there has been a 36% reduction in the number of business and industry planning applications (reducing from 2,531 down to 1,609).

In the last 12 months, the average time taken per application has fallen by 2.6% from 9.6 weeks to 9.3 weeks. There is significant variation between authorities however, although this is narrowing over recent years. In 2017/18, the time taken ranged from 5.7 weeks to 16.6 weeks, with no statistically significant relationships with deprivation, rurality or size of council.



Average time per business and industry planning application (no. of weeks)



Source: Planning Authority Performance Statistics, Scottish Government

Available employment land

The availability of land for development is a significant factor that affects local economic growth and it falls within councils’ local development planning powers to influence this. This is included in the framework for the first time in 2017/18 and is standardised as immediately available land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan. Immediately available land is land which is serviced and marketed as opposed to simply being designated for employment use. This measure utilises data submitted by councils as part of their annual SLAED return.

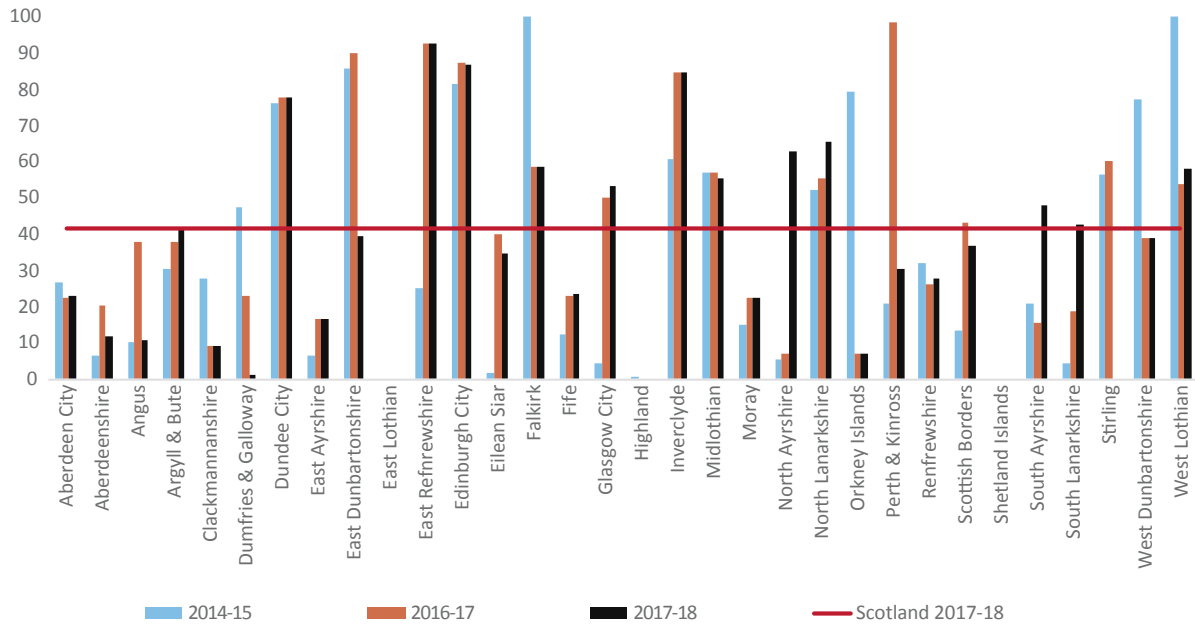
Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2014-15 to 2017-18
12.9	27.2	38.4	40.8	2.4%	27.9%

Since 2014/15, there has been significant and year on year growth in the Scotland average for availability of employment land, from 12.9% to 40.8%. However, there is very significant variation across councils, ranging from 1% to 93% in 2017/18. As a newly introduced measure, further work will be undertaken with local authorities to ensure consistency of reporting in relation to this indicator.



Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan



Range = 1.1 to 92.8

Source: SLAED Indicators Framework

Town vacancy rates

The vibrancy of town centres is a strategic priority for Economic Development and Planning Services. An important measure of the extent to which town centre management / regeneration policies and initiatives are working is the level of vacant units within town centres. A new measure in the framework for 2017/18 is a measure of vacant commercial units as a percentage of total units for the local authority’s key town centres. Towns should have a population of at least 5,000 people. This indicator does not include edge of town and out of town retail units. Data for this measure is submitted by councils as part of their annual return under the SLAED Indicators Framework and is available from 2014/15 onwards.

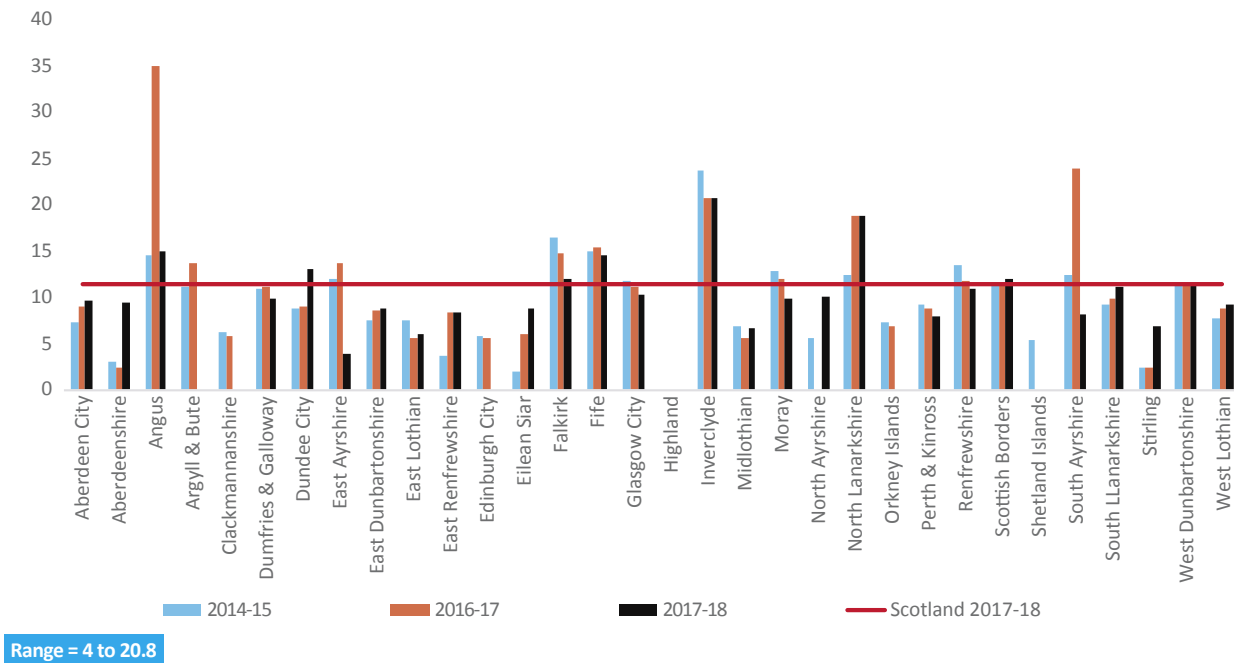
Town vacancy rates

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2014-15 to 2017-18
10.1	11.9	10.2	11.5	1.3%	1.4%

The Scotland figure for town vacancy rates has remained relatively constant since 2014/15. In 2017/18, an average of 11.5% of town centre properties were vacant across Scotland. The graph below shows the significant but narrowing variation across councils, with vacancy rates ranging from 4.0% to 20.8% in 2017/18.



Town vacancy rates (%)



Source: SLAED Indicators Framework

Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband

Access to good digital infrastructure is a key driver of economic competitiveness and productivity. Local authorities have a role alongside telecoms companies in facilitating and enabling the development of effective digital infrastructure and this newly introduced indicator measures the impact of this work. The data from this measure is taken from the Ofcom Connected Nations Report and is available from 2013/14 onwards.

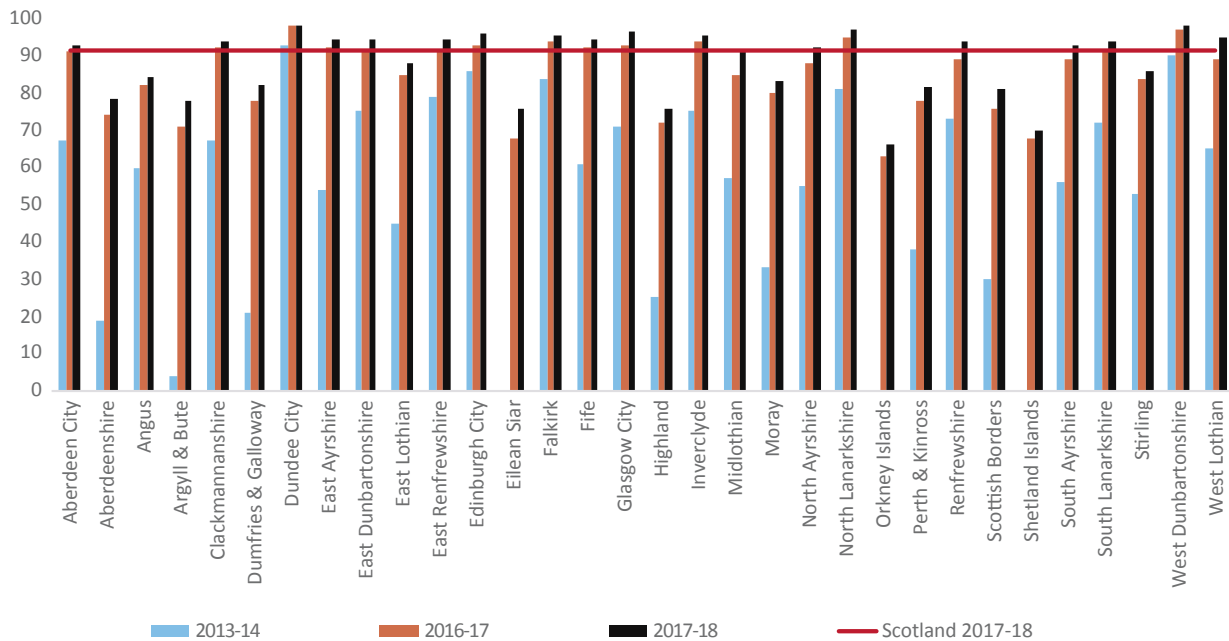
Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2013-14 to 2017-18
56.1	67.5	78.6	85.9	91.1	5.2%	35.0%

Access to superfast broadband has grown significantly across Scotland, with the Scotland figure increasing from 56.1% to 91.1% between 2013/14 and 2017/18. The variation between councils has narrowed significantly across the period, although is still substantial with figures ranging from 66.3% to 98.1% in 2017/18. Rural authorities have significantly lower rates of access than urban and semi-urban authorities, 77.7% compared to 95.8% and 93.3% respectively.



Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (%)



Range = 66.3 to 98.1

Source: Ofcom Connected Nations Report

Proportion of people earning less than the living wage

Inclusive growth is a central part of the government’s economic strategy and local authorities are important partners in the drive to reduce income inequality. Economic Development Services play an important role in this through supporting people to develop the skills to progress in the labour market, by attracting higher value employment opportunities and by encouraging employers to pay the living wage. A measure of the % of employees earning below the living wage allows for the impact of interventions in addressing low pay to be monitored. Data for this new framework measure comes from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), with figures available from 2012/13 onwards.

Proportion of people earning less than the living wage

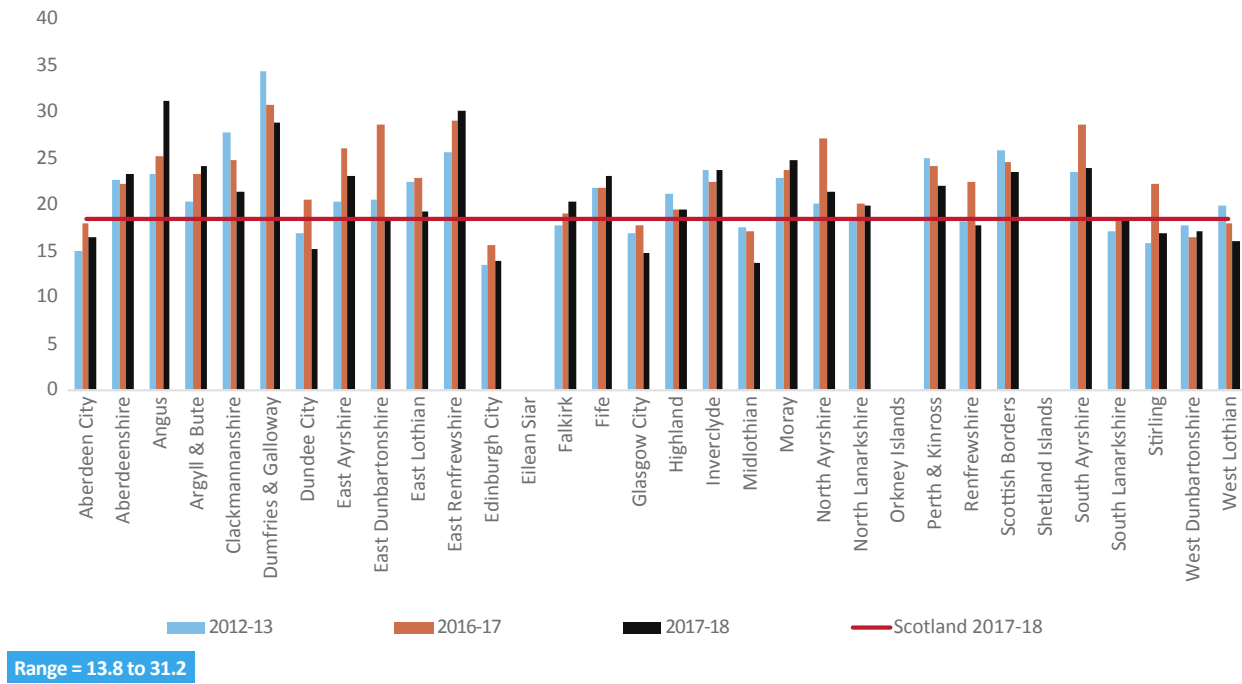
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Change 2012-13 to 2017-18
18.8	18.6	19.3	19.6	20.1	18.4	-1.7%	-0.4%

The proportion of people earning less than the living wage in 2017/18 was 18.4%, a similar level to 2012/13. The proportion rose to a peak of 20.1% in 2016/17 and has shown a 1.7 percentage point reduction in the past 12 months.

The graph below shows the significant variation across councils, ranging from 13.8% to 31.2% in 2017/18. This level of variation has remained constant since 2010/11, with urban authorities showing a significantly lower proportion of people earning less than the living wage. In 2017/18, the average proportion for urban authorities was 17.2% compared to 23.4% in rural authorities, and 22.2% in semi-rural.



Proportion of people earning less than the living wage



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2018, ONS





Conclusions and Next Steps

This last year has seen councils across Scotland continue to strive to improve the quality and performance of key services while continuing to manage pressures to reduce costs. The data presented shows the scale of the budgetary pressures facing councils, the policy choices being made locally to meet the needs of local communities, and the impact of these choices on performance, satisfaction and 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 differences and the approaches which may deliver improvements. The core purpose of the LGBF is to support councils to target their resources to areas of greatest impact and to ask important questions of key council services. The framework provides councils with insight into their own performance and provides a strengthened evidence base to help drive improvement, promote collaboration and learning, and strengthen public accountability.

The Local Government Benchmarking Board endorsed a 3-year Strategic Plan to support the continuous improvement and evolution of the LGBF. This plan, which has been welcomed by the Accounts Commission, sets out the following priorities to strengthen the LGBF across the next period:

1. To ensure the framework has relevance, credibility and timeousness

Progress has already been made in improving the timeousness of the data, and in strengthening the framework in relation to children and young people, and economic development measures. The next year will see work with Health and Social Care Chief Officers to strengthen the suite of measures on adult social care to take account of innovative preventative programmes and spending, and to better reflect the integration and personalisation landscape. The board will also consider how the framework might capture the totality of capital expenditure to better understand the impact local government has in this area. This will pose a wider set of questions in relation to benchmarking and data cleansing.

2. To better align the LGBF and outcomes

An online interactive tool³⁵ has been developed to link the LGBF with outcomes data presented in the Community Planning Outcomes Profile³⁶ (a resource which provides trend data on outcomes, both at a local authority level, and at a locality level). This helps to strengthen the narrative around the contribution council services play in improving outcomes, and support more strategic use of the LGBF in decision making and greater visibility within Public Performance Reporting.

The first of a series of LGBF thematic reports has been produced, focussing on Children and Young People. The report offers a more holistic view of services for Children and Young People and explores the link with outcomes. The report also provides an opportunity to include data not available at the time of the February publication of the LGBF overview report, particularly that relating to children and young people who are looked after. It is hoped the report will provide a useful supplement to the National Overview report and support the more strategic use of LGBF. Future reports are planned on health and wellbeing, economic development, and community safety. These developments will link with the Community Planning Improvement Board (CPIB) and support their work to improve the availability of performance evidence that can demonstrate improvement in outcomes.

³⁵ <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/outcomes-tool.html>

³⁶ www.improvementservice.org.uk/community-planning-outcomes-profile.html



3. To demonstrate how the framework is being used to inform decision making, drive improvement, and strengthen public accountability.

A supplement highlighting examples of the ways the framework is being used across local government will be published shortly on the LGBF website. This will help local government demonstrate their ongoing commitment to this improvement approach.





Appendix 1 – LGBF Indicator List

	Indicator Ref	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	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5
	CHN5	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6
	CHN6	% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)
	CHN7	% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)
	CHN8a	The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week
	CHN8b	The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week
	CHN9	% of children being looked after in the community
	CHN10	% 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
	CHN17	% of children meeting developmental milestones
	CHN18	% of funded early years provision which is graded good/better
	CHN19a	School attendance rate
	CHN19b	School attendance rate (looked after children)
	CHN20a	School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils)
CHN20b	School exclusion rates (per 1,000 'looked after children')	
CHN21	Participation rate for 16-19 year olds	
CHN22	% of child protection re-registrations within 18 months	
CHN23	% LAC with more than 1 placement in the last year (Aug-July)	
Corporate Services	CORP 1	Support services as a % of total gross expenditure
	CORP 3b	% of the highest paid 5% employees who are women
	CORP 3c	The gender pay gap (%)
	CORP 4	The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax
	CORP 6a	Sickness absence days per teacher
	CORP 6b	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)
	CORP 7	% of income due from council tax received by the end of the year
	CORP 8	% of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days



	Indicator Ref	Indicator Description
Adult Social Care	SW1	Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over
	SW2	Direct payments + managed personalised budgets spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+
	SW3a	% of people aged 65 and over with long-term care needs receiving personal care at home
	SW4a	% of adults receiving any care or support who rate it as excellent or good.
	SW4b	% of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life
	SW5	Residential costs per week per resident for people aged 65 or over
Culture & Leisure Services	C&L1	Cost per attendance at sports facilities
	C&L2	Cost per library visit
	C&L3	Cost of museums per visit
	C&L4	Cost of parks & open spaces per 1,000 population
	C&L5a	% of adults satisfied with libraries
	C&L5b	% of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces
	C&L5c	% of adults satisfied with museums and galleries
	C&L5d	% of adults satisfied with leisure facilities
Environmental Services	ENV1a	Net cost of waste collection per premise
	ENV2a	Net cost of waste disposal per premise
	ENV3a	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population
	ENV3c	Street cleanliness score
	ENV4a	Cost of roads per kilometre
	ENV4b	% of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV4c	% of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV4d	% of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV4e	% of U class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
	ENV5	Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population
	ENV5a	Cost of trading standards per 1000
	ENV5b	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population
	ENV6	% of total household waste arising that is recycled
	ENV7a	% of adults satisfied with refuse collection
ENV7b	% 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	% of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
	HSN3	% of council dwellings meeting Scottish housing standards
	HSN4b	Average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs
	HSN5	% of council dwellings that are energy efficient
Corporate Asset	CORP-ASSET1	% of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
	CORP-ASSET2	% of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition



	Indicator Ref	Indicator Description
Economic Development & Planning	ECON1	% of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated/funded employability programmes
	ECON2	Cost per planning application
	ECON3	Average time per business and industry planning application (weeks)
	ECON4	% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises
	ECON5	No of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population
	ECON6	Investment in economic development & tourism per 1,000 population
	ECON7	Proportion of people earning less than the living wage
	ECON8	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband
	ECON9	Town vacancy rates
	ECON10	Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan



Appendix 2 List of Family Groups

To understand why variations in cost and performance are occurring, councils work together to ‘drill-down’ into the benchmarking data across 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.

People Services	Children, Social Work & Housing Indicators			
	Family Group 1	Family Group 2	Family Group 3	Family Group 4
	East Renfrewshire	Moray	Falkirk	Eilean Siar
	East Dunbartonshire	Stirling	Dumfries & Galloway	Dundee City
	Aberdeenshire	East Lothian	Fife	East Ayrshire
	Edinburgh, City of	Angus	South Ayrshire	North Ayrshire
	Perth & Kinross	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	North Lanarkshire
	Aberdeen City	Highland	South Lanarkshire	Inverclyde
	Shetland Islands	Argyll & Bute	Renfrewshire	West Dunbartonshire
Orkney Islands	Midlothian	Clackmannanshire	Glasgow City	

Least deprived ← → Most deprived

Other Services	Environmental, Culture & Leisure, Economic Development, Corporate & Property indicators			
	Family Group 1	Family Group 2	Family Group 3	Family Group 4
	Eilean Siar	Perth & Kinross	Angus	North Lanarkshire
	Argyll & Bute	Stirling	Clackmannanshire	Falkirk
	Shetland Islands	Moray	Midlothian	East Dunbartonshire
	Highland	South Ayrshire	South Lanarkshire	Aberdeen City
	Orkney Islands	East Ayrshire	Inverclyde	Edinburgh, City of
	Scottish Borders	East Lothian	Renfrewshire	West Dunbartonshire
	Dumfries & Galloway	North Ayrshire	West Lothian	Dundee City
Aberdeenshire	Fife	East Renfrewshire	Glasgow City	

Rural ← → Urban



Children's Services



Adult Social Care



Culture and Leisure



Environmental Services



Corporate Services



Housing

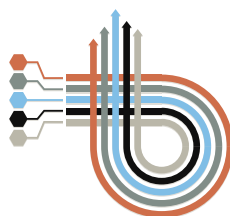


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