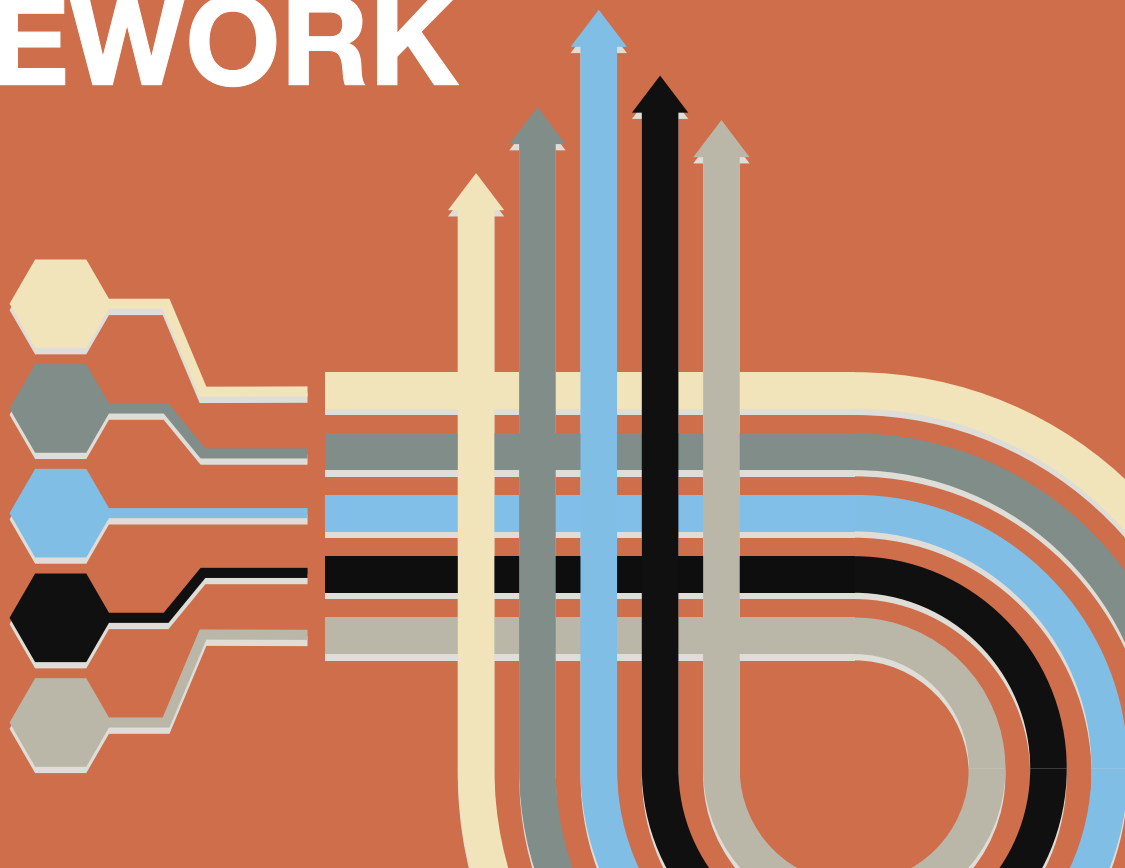


# HOW COUNCILS ARE USING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

2019





In 2019, the LGBF Board asked chief executives to share examples of how they are using the LGBF within their councils. This report is a collation of the responses provided.



SUPPORTING  
SCRUTINY ACTIVITY  
WITH ELECTED  
MEMBERS

## North Ayrshire



The LGBF data is scrutinised by the Council's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) when the data is released, and this leads to wider discussions within Services and with their Cabinet Portfolio Holders. Feedback from Directorates/ Services is brought back to an ELT meeting for further detailed analysis and discussion. Reports are then presented to and discussed with both our Cabinet and Audit and Scrutiny Committee. This includes the commentary on performance improvement activity from Directorates. This usually happens in May, once the refreshed LGBF data has been released. More detailed reports on our performance and comparisons with our Family Group are provided directly to Elected Members and is based on the graphs provided by the Improvement Service. An article is also produced for our Elected Member newsletter to ensure that they are updated and informed about the LGBF results and this includes links to the [Mylocalcouncil.info](http://Mylocalcouncil.info) website.

## Inverclyde



Inverclyde submits an annual report on the LGBF to Inverclyde Council Policy and Resources Committee. The contents of the report also form the basis of an Annual Briefing for Elected Members. The Briefing provides an additional opportunity for Councillors to scrutinise the wide-ranging information provided on the Framework - including comparing our performance with that of the other 31 local authorities - and ask questions on any indicators that may be of particular interest.

## East Ayrshire



The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) is reported annually to the Council's Governance and Scrutiny Committee, following review and extensive analysis of the LGBF data sets and the National Overview Report published by the Improvement Service.

The report to Members details East Ayrshire's position in respect of the LGBF indicators against all the other Scottish councils. It also provides an opportunity to identify areas where the Council is performing well and areas for improvement, and to understand the council's performance in line with the national average and 'best in class' performance. In particular, improvement actions are identified against quartile 4 performance indicators to improve service quality and reduce costs.

This report is available to services across the Council and is publicly available on the Council's website. Further benchmarking data is made available to elected members through the hyperlinks included within the report, providing easy access to the benchmarking tools, which are available on Improvement Service website.

## West Dunbartonshire



LGBF indicators are included alongside strategic and service specific indicators in the annual delivery plans for each Strategic Service of council. This ensures that Elected Members are able to scrutinise overall service performance including relative performance for LGBF indicators. This adds value to the overall performance discussion and also ensures that there is a focus on improvement activity and sharing/learning from best practice in other areas.

## Glasgow



The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) is scrutinised by the [Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee](#) (OPDSC) to review performance, and the [Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee](#) (FASC) in respect of value for money.

The Strategy and Performance Group, which is officer led, reviews improvement activity linked to the LGBF and shares the outcomes in the reports presented to elected members at the OPDSC and FASC on an annual basis. The officer group includes performance leads from services and ALEOs across the Council Family

Since 2018, the Strategic Performance Group has looked at the outlying indicators in the LGBF to better understand some of the potential operational and strategic issues that may underpin out performance. Where available, explanations on variances have been included in the [committee report prepared for OPDSC and FASC](#).

Each service's Annual Service Performance and Improvement Report (ASPIR) also provides [service specific commentary on LGBF related improvement actions](#). These are considered by their service committee and progress reviewed on a six monthly at OPDSC.

The [LGBF is a public document](#), and we actively encourage Elected Members to examine not just our own public report on it, but to examine the [My Local Council](#) webpage (hosted by the Improvement Service), which includes any refinements or additions to the data suite post publication.

## Argyll & Bute



We have strengthened the knowledge of the LGBF with elected members by presenting our detailed analysis at every strategic committee.

- We've held a members seminar for the ASC with arrangements in place to present to all elected members after the summer recess.
- We've held a session with chief officers group to discuss use of the LGBF and its indicators
- We produce a detailed report that shows performance and trends as suggested by the LGBF indicators. The report looks at our ranking for Scotland and our Family Groups, it also details the 'performance range'. The data is analysed and supported by commentary from Heads of Service who 'tell our story'. The report also includes 'looking forward – expected impact on indicator' commentary. This is where Heads of Service have indicated how they see services perform in the future – taking into account any changes that are on the horizon and where they can make improvements. Although improvements are not necessarily being driven by the LGBF, the LGBF is being used as a can-opener, and where we can showcase wider activity and drive improvement. This report has gone to SMT, the council's Audit and Scrutiny Committee, will shortly be presented at all Strategic Committee and is published on our website as part of our PPR duties.

## Orkney



When the annual National Benchmarking Overview Report is published it is distributed to Elected Members with a covering report highlighting the national picture. In addition, a breakdown of the OIC performance against the LGBF indicators is reported to the relevant service committees for elected member scrutiny. This includes the Council's performance compared to the previous year and Scottish average, along with the graphs for each indicator showing trends in performance over several years for the Council, our benchmarking family, and the Scottish average, and our rank out of all 32 Scottish local authorities. Where performance has varied significantly between the current and previous years, or where we are under-performing compared to our benchmarking family or the Scottish average, officers provide additional contextual information to explain the figures.

The LGBF data was reported to our service committees for the first time in April 2019 and elected member feedback on the information provided was positive. We intend to develop this further in future reports by providing more in-depth analysis in the contextual information for each indicator, including detailed self-assessment as well as our future aspirations and how we hope to achieve them.

This is part of a range of information reported to elected members to enable them to scrutinise performance, identify areas for further scrutiny and benchmarking, allocate resources and set strategic priorities.

## Renfrewshire



The data gathered through the LGBF is used to support scrutiny by our elected members, corporate management teams and senior management teams as part of an overall suite of performance indicators. The data allows us to identify areas where improvements are required, benchmarking opportunities and in some cases impacts upon policy decision making which has required additional investment/resourcing.

Indicators are monitored by our corporate management team (CMT) as well as services' senior management teams (SMT) on a quarterly basis. In addition to this, outturn reports which contain LGBF indicators are reported to elected members on a six-monthly basis.

At the point when the Improvement Service releases the LGBF data, an overall report on the Council's performance and an accompanying presentation detailing trend and contextual information is reported to and discussed by our corporate management team. Areas which are identified as requiring further analysis are selected by our CMT for a 'deep dive', in order to take a closer look at how the data has been compiled, where we differ from other local authorities and any remedial actions which are being planned.

A further report is then presented to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board on an annual basis. This report provides elected members with our overall performance on the LGBF indicators, including trend information, Scottish average and family group range for each PI. For any indicators in the bottom quartile an explanation of performance on the corrective actions that the service, HSCP and Renfrewshire Leisure, is planning to undertake is

also included. This report is publicly available on the Council's website.

## East Renfrewshire



Data gathered through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) is embedded in the Council's performance management arrangements and continues to be used to support effective scrutiny by our elected members and by the corporate and senior management teams and services. There are key LGBF measures within our strategic plans linked to our strategic outcomes for: Early Years and Vulnerable Young People; Learning, Life and Work; Economy and Environment; and Older People and People with Long Term Conditions as well as our organisational outcomes around our customers, our efficiency and our people. These measures are closely monitored, acted on as required and reported to our elected members and the public.

East Renfrewshire Council's Audit and Scrutiny Committee developed a 'Guide to Scrutiny and Review' for its own use and by others across the council. This guide was approved by full Council in June 2019. The document clearly sets out the value in reviewing and considering performance information; looking at indicators in terms of pursuing scrutiny work. There is particular reference to LGBF data within the guidance. When progressing detailed work, any relevant LGBF data is regarded as key and a valuable source of performance information to help judge and benchmark performance and to inform related discussions.

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee receive an annual report on Absence Management in which it

includes an analysis of LGBF absence data and local management information; this enables members to discuss any key trends, whilst comparing performance with other councils and proposed actions to address any issues. The LGBF data set is also amongst a range of key data sources used to demonstrate compliance with the key principles within the Code of Corporate Governance. Evidence is submitted annually to the committee and progress and improvement actions are agreed. Improvement actions for 2019/20 included a review of the Council's values.

## Stirling



**Corporate Performance Management:** Every year we report the LGBF data to our Council Management Team, Elected Members and to the Council's Audit Committee and our four decision making committees (i.e.. Children & Young People; Community Planning & Regeneration; Environment & Housing; Finance & Economy). In 2019, we introduced a new approach to sharing the LGBF with our senior leaders by running a benchmarking for improvement workshop. We presented our LGBF data for 2017-18 along with the results from our family group members and asked our leaders to prioritise the key indicators requiring improvement. Following the workshop, we worked with service managers to develop improvement actions for each of the priority indicators. Our aim is to report progress on these actions every 6 months to our Council Management Team.

**Clackmannanshire & Stirling Health & Social Care Partnership:** The annual LGBF data allows us to make comparisons with the other local authorities across Scotland. A link to information on how

Stirling compares to other local authorities is available on the Stirling Council website at the following link: <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data>

The Stirling Council website provides a link to the LGBF performance scorecard for all Stirling Council service areas. The scorecards provide yearly figures to allow for comparisons along with the Scottish average for each year. The following groups meet on a regular basis to monitor performance data and improvement activities:

- Stirling Council's Adult Social Care Panel.
- Stirling Council Audit Committee.
- Clackmannanshire and Stirling Health and Social Care Joint Management Team (JMT).
- Clackmannanshire and Stirling Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board (IJB).
- The Clinical and Care Governance Care Oversight Group monitor the safety of services delivered, and the outcomes achieved from delivery of those services.

## Fife



KPI and benchmarking data is used to report performance to senior officers and members. We take annual reports on LGBF benchmarking to the council executive team and to members of Scrutiny Committee which show our performance compared to other councils and, more crucially, the improvement activity being undertaken within those areas. Last year's report, [Scrutiny Committee of 25 September 2018](#), shows how LGBF was reported to scrutiny committee. Services are encouraged to report performance regularly to members, and to

include performance data when bringing proposals and reviews to members.

## Falkirk



Falkirk Council

As the Local Government Benchmarking Framework matures, so has Falkirk's use of the data gathered and provided by the framework. We are moving past the focus on number and rank and towards better understanding how our performance is improving and where we sit nationally in order to identify where we can improve outcomes and provide high quality services to our citizens.

The LGBF is embedded in our performance management and is reported directly to members at the Scrutiny Committee. We provide an overview report on all LGBF indicators, highlighting where we sit nationally, where we have improved or deteriorated over time and identify indicators in the first and forth quartiles.

Following this, each service report Performance Statements to Scrutiny Committee twice a year. Performance Statements contain:

- A service update outlining challenges, risks and changes to the service
- Update on major strategies
- Updates on progress towards outcomes and priorities (all actions/projects)
- Status of Important Indicators (KPI's)
- LGBF indicators – targeted Improved/ Deteriorated indicators

Within this section, our Performance & Intelligence Team analyse each indicator and identify indicators



that are performing poorly nationally or where our performance has deteriorated significantly. Analysis is then carried out, looking at the national context, range and where Falkirk sits in this picture; benchmarking with family group members or councils with similar characteristics where appropriate, and finally, looking at our own performance over time and triangulating performance data with cost, satisfaction and process data.

Services are then asked to provide contextual information on the national and local environment and policies impacting performance; outline benchmarking activity and engagement carried out; narrative on our local performance; any improvement actions planned or underway and inequalities considerations.

The Members have welcomed this approach and have recognised the benefit of the LGBF information.

Example: [Corporate & Housing Services Performance Update](#)

## South Lanarkshire



The LGBF is reported in full to Elected Members within a month or so of the final data being released by the Improvement Service. Additional scrutiny is applied by the council's Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum, which is chaired by the leader of the council. Although all LGBF indicators are reported, the format of the report focuses on areas where improvement activity might be needed – such as those which are below the Scottish average or which are declining year-on-year.

Representatives from council Resources are

requested to be in attendance to address any questions which may arise. In the recent past, as well as answering specific queries from Elected Members, the Forum has seen discussion about what “good” performance means (e.g., is a lower unit cost always a good thing), how the data for indicators is gathered, and how the LGBF indicators compare with local performance indicators used at a service level within the council. The council will shortly be introducing Elected Members to family group analysis, focusing on indicators which are showing poorer performance than the Scottish average.

## West Lothian



LGBF data is provided to Council Committees as part of performance reporting and financial monitoring and reporting arrangements, providing elected members with meaningful comparisons on the quality and cost of council services. In these reports, officers provide supplementary analysis of the LGBF information, explaining the trends – in the context of local priorities and challenges and operational matters – and will also offer comparative analysis of performance in relation to the national average, best in class performers and family group comparators.

The LGBF dataset is key benchmarking information for West Lothian Council as it extends over a range of services and key activities delivered by local authorities in Scotland and provides validated data. Comparative analysis of the whole LGBF dataset is undertaken with the publication of the national report and the data refresh.

Benchmarking is a key component of West Lothian Council's performance management framework. It is embedded in both the council's performance

management approach and the self-assessment model that are used to scrutinise and challenge service performance. In these systems, services are continually challenged on the quality and depth of the comparative data that is used to benchmark their performance.

## Dundee



The LGBF report is an annual event where the report goes to both the full Policy and Resources Committee and a separate Scrutiny Committee chaired by the leader of the opposition. In addition to the full committee the report is discussed throughout the process of approving the final version by the Council Management Team and the committee convenors, meaning both the Council Leader and Leader of the opposition have the opportunity to discuss the report in detail with officers.

The scope of the LGBF report means that all the senior executives from across the Council are in attendance and are called upon to answer questions about the comparative performance. This includes our two key partners Dundee Social Care Partnership and Leisure & Culture Dundee.

The Dundee Social Care Partnership also take a separate report on their relevant LGBF indicators to the Integrated Joint Board and set their own detailed targets for each LGBF indicator.

The LGBF indicators also feature other key corporate reports e.g. our City Plan (Known as the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan), Council Plan, service plans, etc all of which again go to appropriate Committees at least annually.

## Angus



Angus Council uses the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) extensively in improvement and performance management processes. The LGBF sits at the centre of many other data and benchmarking tools that services use to diagnose and identify areas for improvement and to develop improvement actions.

The Angus Council approach to the use of the LGBF in scrutiny continues the theme of using it as one part of a performance toolkit best suited to high level messages and strategic focus. LGBF data is used, where of most value, in service owned and produced performance reports. Here it sits alongside other data in the review, analysis, planning and reporting of improvement.

## Highland



The Highland Council is currently undergoing a governance review and survey work with Members on their role in both scrutiny and performance indicated the need for more Member engagement in target setting for the Corporate Plan. The majority of indicators in the Corporate Plan are LGBF and a workshop in May 2019 supported Members engage with benchmark data and start to discuss stretch targets for improvement with senior officers. This focused on the Council's quartile position and looked for improvement in quartile position over an agreed timescale. This work is linked to the outcomes that Members are seeking through the Highland Council Programme (Local Voices: Highland Choices), the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and the Council's Change Programme.

## North Lanarkshire

An example of the LGBF informing local scrutiny activity with elected members is detailed in our most recent [Best Value Audit Report May 2019](#). The report noted -

“The most recent Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) was published alongside the National Benchmarking Overview Report 2017/18 by the Improvement Service in February 2019. The LGBF provides a wide range of information for all Scottish councils, including how well councils are performing, the cost of services and customer satisfaction. The framework enables a council to compare its performance against other councils and the Scottish average. It also allows councils and the public to compare against others in family groupings. These group together councils that are facing similar challenges of population density and deprivation. The council analyses and reports on the LGBF data to identify areas for improvement. The data has been used as a trigger for further scrutiny reports to the audit and scrutiny panel. For example, a detailed report on the cost of care at home has provided elected members with additional information (paragraph 101 See below).”

101. The cost of care at home in North Lanarkshire is notably higher than the Scottish average. This has been subject to scrutiny by the council’s audit and scrutiny panel. The high costs are mostly attributed to the cost of caring for people with intensive needs at home, the upward regrading of home support staff and the council’s commitment to pay the Scottish Living Wage to third party providers. The 2018/19 budget was uplifted by £4.8 million to help support the payment of the Living Wage by third party social care providers. The council has a strong belief that fair work practices and paying the Living



Wage can have a positive effect on people’s lives and help create a fairer and more equal society.

## Midlothian

Following publication of the LGBF data, a report is presented to Cabinet and PRS with our results and analysis per LGBF category, the report presents the latest LGBF data and our results against the previous two years and comparison of Midlothian performance against the Scottish average and our family group average. This report is published on our Public Performance Pages of our website.



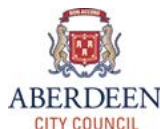
## South Ayrshire

South Ayrshire present a report to elected members on the Service and Performance Panel normally within one month of the LGBF data being published each year. Members have asked in-depth questions about areas of lower or higher performance, or where performance against comparator families is markedly different on certain measures and requested that services provide further input or information/reports back to the Panel for further scrutiny. This scrutiny also allows service to reflect on member feedback on performance. Review of the LGBF data forms part of the Council’s overall Performance Management Framework.



## Aberdeen City

Aberdeen City's Performance Management Framework includes a clear "line of sight" to all of the LGBF indicators. These are a key part of a balanced suite of metrics reported regularly to elected members. When reported, the data is reported in the context of trends, targets and benchmarks. Where performance is considered exceptional a full "deep dive" analysis is given to allow members to make informed decisions. In addition, regular analysis of service demand and relative performance is conducted throughout the year as part of service planning and design. The LGBF measures are a useful source of comparative data showing where the Council may be over or under performing and, therefore, driving future service design and allocation of resources."



## Moray

Performance against service specific LGBF indicators is reported to individual Service Committees to include national and comparator group results. A report on all Framework results is submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee to provide narrative on key trends, graphs exploring the relationship between cost and performance as well as analysis and context. Local Government Benchmarking Framework reporting continues to evolve; elected members request that future reporting align with Corporate Plan priorities to target scrutiny.



## Scottish Borders

Scottish Borders Council view the LGBF data as a fundamental aspect of our performance management framework. Members receive an annual presentation when the LGBF data is published providing the opportunity for cross-party political scrutiny of the Council's performance relative to its peers.



## East Dunbartonshire



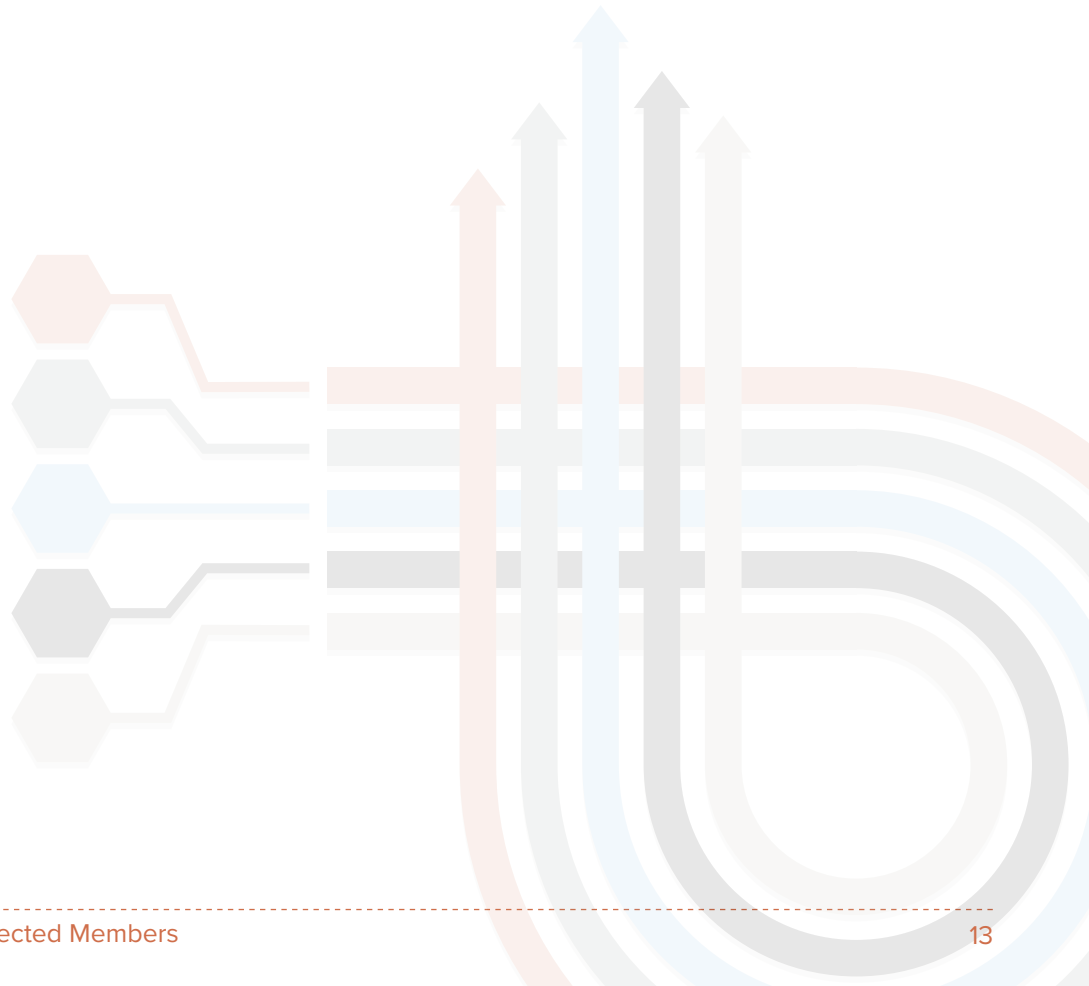
East Dunbartonshire actively encourages elected member scrutiny of LGBF data with Councillors being given a number of opportunities to query the published data. The most recent year of published data was reported to full Council for scrutiny purposes twice, once upon initial publication of the data with a second more detailed report being presented following the update of the dataset in April.

In addition to these reports we also held a dedicated scrutiny panel for elected members. This scrutiny panel included a presentation on LGBF and allowed members to go into further detail to increase their understanding of the framework and the methodology behind the collation of the indicators. The Scrutiny panel also resulted in instructions for officers to provide technical reports on selected indicators to ensure a clearer understanding of the context behind performance in certain areas.

## Shetland



When the LGBF figures are released, we do a full report to our [Policy & Resources Committee](#) which uses the graphics from the [mylocalcouncil](#) site to demonstrate our performance against time, Scotland, and our family groups. We also ask the responsible manager for each LGBF indicator to explain past performance and declare improvement plans. The 18/19 LGBF report is out for comments just now, it will be presented to committee at the beginning of March.





## North Ayrshire



A new Council Plan for North Ayrshire has been developed and is currently being consulted on with the public. As part of our Delivery Plan Performance Framework we have included some key indicators from the LGBF to inform our decision making and these will be reported as part of our priorities.

In 2016 all Executive Directors identified key indicators that were priorities for their Directorates. These priorities have been in place since then and were revised in 2019 to provide focus for reporting to our Elected Members. The priority indicators are highlighted along with notes to provide details of the progress being made against these.

## East Ayrshire



East Ayrshire Council continues to make effective use of a range of benchmarking tools. The data gathered as part of the LGBF reporting process is embedded in the Council's evidence base and used to inform strategic decision making and the service redesign process, the development of Council priorities and decision making in relation service planning and delivery.

Detailed LGBF analysis is used to inform our Service Improvement Plans. Our three year Service Improvement Plans are updated on an annual basis and used to contribute to the allocation of resources in line with local need. LGBF indicators are also built into service performance scorecards, which are available on the Council's online performance management system (Pentana) and aligned to priorities and outcomes.

The LGBF datasets have also been used as evidence in external inspection and assessment activity, including the most recent Best Value Assurance audit, to highlight the Council's areas of strength and to explain how the Council is using benchmarking activity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its services.

A review of the Council's performance management arrangements was carried out during 2018/19. This review provided the opportunity to streamline the Council's full range of statutory performance indicators, to provide an updated evidence base to inform performance reporting and improvement and decision making. To support comparison and benchmarking, the revised arrangements reflect an increased prominence in relation to LGBF measures.

## Inverclyde



Measures included in the LGBF Framework have been adopted into the Quarterly Service Reviews within the HSCP and this focusses on performance at a local level rather than comparative performance against other authorities. The incorporation of the LGBF measures in the local reports provides the opportunity for management to monitor improvement in areas compared nationally by the LGBF.

## Glasgow



Many of the LGBF indicators are mainstreamed as part of regular Performance Reporting. The Chief Executive Department, for example, scrutinises the Corporate Absence indicators on a quarterly basis. Key LGBF indicators have also been incorporated into the Council's new outcome based indicator framework that measures performance on the Council Strategic Plan and links to Scotland Performs and the UN Sustainability Goals.

It should also be noted that Council Family Services are also required to detail all wider Benchmarking activity not captured within the LGBF in their ASPIRs.

Since 2018, the Strategic Performance Group has looked at the outlying indicators in the LGBF to better understand some of the potential operational and strategic issues that may underpin out performance. In 2018-19, key data from the LGBF where Glasgow was an outlier was included in a review of performance information in Service Directors' annual one to one review meetings with the Chief Executive.

## West Dunbartonshire



A sub set of prioritised LGBF indicators have been identified in the Strategic Plan for Council and performance against this suite is reported in the strategic plan scorecard. Additionally, further trend analysis and forecasting activity has been carried out on these prioritised indicators to inform a service specific improvement plan where appropriate.

## Argyll & Bute



The LGBF helps us to find data to confirm the cost of residential care for children and young people locally, as compared to the national and like authority figures. This was used to inform the Business case for setting up Core and Cluster housing in Argyll and Bute, to enhance our local residential housing provision for children and young people(C&F).

Development Management (Planning) have referenced LGBF in a recent report to Planning, Protective Services & Licencing Committee (June 2019) on Costing the Planning the Service in Scotland, it was also referenced in budget templates 2018/19 and our Planning Performance Framework submission (PHRS).

## Orkney



Following our Best Value Assurance Report in 2017, which recommended that the Council should better evidence the impact of our actions and activities on communities, the Council Plan 2018 to 2023 was developed to incorporate a more outcomes-focussed approach. Service Plans which are currently being developed for 2019 to 2022, and which will be reviewed annually, will show clearer links with the corporate priorities in the Council Plan, with greater emphasis on the LGBF indicators to provide evidence of progress against our intended outcomes.

Within the context of the Strategic Planning Framework, the Council's performance management system has also been reviewed to ensure its ability to identify the impact of our



activities on our communities. The LGBF indicators are included in a suite of performance information that is reported to service committees on a six-monthly basis, with the interim report being presented to the November cycle of meetings and the final report to the June cycle. The following elements are individually monitored:

- Service action plans.
- Service key performance indicators.
- Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators.
- Service complaints, suggestions and compliments.
- Service risk registers.
- Service workforce planning actions.

When the LGBF data is verified, a breakdown of the Council's performance against the indicators is also presented to our Corporate Management Team. This includes information on performance compared to the previous year and Scottish average, graphs for each indicator showing trends in performance over several years for the Council, our benchmarking family, and the Scottish average, and our rank out of all 32 Scottish local authorities. This report also includes detail on indicators where the Council has made significant improvement, and areas where our level of performance has declined. This is part of a wide range of information presented to the Corporate Management Team to inform strategic decision-making.

## Renfrewshire



The data gathered through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) is embedded within our five outcomes for our Council Plan and departmental level service improvement plans, which are:

1. Reshaping our place, our economy and our future
2. Building strong, safe and resilient communities
3. Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all
4. Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy
5. Working together to improve outcomes

These outcomes and associated actions and indicators within the plans are used to contribute to the allocation of resources in line with local need.

## East Renfrewshire



East Renfrewshire Council's key strategic document, the Outcome Delivery Plan is a three year document, updated annually on a rolling basis. It sets out the Council's strategic priorities, critical activities and measures. Some of the key strategic measures are drawn from the LGBF data set and used to monitor performance and inform service improvement. The Council has robust performance management and reporting arrangements in place. LGBF historic and current data and performance targets are stored in the Council's online performance management and reporting system (Pentana). These arrangements include six monthly reporting to Cabinet on council

wide performance, augmented by six monthly performance review meetings for the Council and the HSCP, involving the Chief Executive, each Director and service managers. For the year ending March 2019, performance review meetings focused on latest performance around LGBF. Service areas provided benchmarking comparison with their family group alongside other local data. Comparative performance was discussed along with work being undertaken to improve performance in certain areas (e.g. tackling absence levels).

## Edinburgh



### The Local Government Benchmarking Framework

forms part of the City of Edinburgh Council performance framework. The framework increases scrutiny and risk management throughout the Council and provides a full strategic oversight of performance and benchmarking in one place. As part of the framework the Council has developed Directorate scorecards to focus on the Council key priority performance indicators which are monitored quarterly by the Corporate Leadership Team.

The framework has been designed to drive the decisions right across the organisation and allows the Council to be more transparent with the public. It also demonstrates that the Council has an effective performance management that monitors benchmarking, operational performance and improvement actions. Reporting on Council's performance, including benchmarking information, is based on an assessment of progress towards meeting the Council's strategic aims and outcomes and the Change Strategy themes.

The LGBF analysis along with performance data is used to inform senior management

teams' discussions. This strategic overview of benchmarking and performance allows services to target areas of poor performance and the development of improvement plans.

The Council produces an LGBF Overview Report annually which is scrutinised by the Corporate Leadership Team and elected members.

The Council used the LGBF data to support the development of the Council Change Strategy. The analysis helped the Council to understand performance against other local authorities and this in turn informed the decision making process on the main elements of the Strategy. In particular the data informed:

- which areas of the Council the change strategy would focus on first
- helped the Council to understand how it is performing in these areas
- helped the Council to formulate a plan on making improvements and efficiencies.

## Stirling



### Corporate Performance Management:

During 2018-19 the Council introduced a more consistent approach to producing service plans, which show alignment with the strategic direction set out in the Stirling Business Plan and the Stirling Plan (LOIP). The data provided by the LGBF is included within our approach to service planning, as our new service planning guidance makes specific reference to the importance of using LGBF data when developing improvement actions for each plan.

**Schools & Learning:** LGBF data helps us to inform

strategic decision-making and reporting against outcomes and is an intrinsic part of the evaluation of our Schools, Learning and Education Improvement Plan. Reference is made to the LGBF in relation to all key measures, including performance of pupils in the senior phase (tariff points) taking into consideration SIMD data. This information is used to identify areas for improvement and effective interventions in order to close the poverty related attainment gap. The service continues to adapt its educational offer to target young people at risk of underachieving or disengaging from school. Alternative approaches are being implemented which are delivering high quality, bespoke learning experiences resulting in improvements in positive destinations.

**Stirling & Clackmannanshire Health & Social Care Partnership:** The strategic priorities set out in the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Commissioning Plan covering the period of 2019 – 2022 link with the LGBF performance indicators. As people are living longer with a range of more complex conditions that require care that is more integrated, the plan details how services will be developed and improved to contribute to better outcomes for people living within their own communities. The following strategies and initiatives are in place to support the implementation of new models of care:

- Intermediate Care (Care Closer to Home Priority)
- Primary Care Improvement Plan (Primary Care Transformation Priority)
- Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Free Personal Care for people aged under 65 ‘A Connected Scotland: our strategy for tackling isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections’, Public Health Priorities

for Scotland (Caring Connecting Communities Priority)

- Mental Health (Mental Health Strategy)
- Dementia Strategy (Supporting People with Dementia Priority)
- Forth Valley Alcohol and Drug Partnership Strategy (Alcohol and Drugs Priority)

The following activities are in place in order to drive forward the above priorities:

- Technology Enabled Care
- Workforce Planning and Development
- Housing/Adaptations
- Infrastructure

**Children & Families:** The strategic approach to the transformation of services undertaken by Children & Families is based on a sound understanding of our data in relation to children in need of care, support or protection. LGBF data and the associated benchmarking workshops provide important contextual information for how our performance compares nationally and within family groups. This information is included within reporting and scrutiny for the council’s corporate management team and elected members along with more detailed local performance reporting.

This work has been key to improving outcomes and service delivery and we use this information to:

- Target service redesign and ongoing improvement along with supporting the financial planning process.
- Support learning and information sharing with other local authorities.
- Showcase particular areas of good practice and improvement.

Some specific examples of improvements already implemented, or scheduled for implementation include:

- Our approach to rebalancing care and promoting the use of community-based placements in preference to residential placements.
- Our work to minimise the need for young people to become involved in the statutory care system
- The development and annual update of our accommodation strategy for young people with experience of care.
- The sourcing of a range of additional accommodation types to meet the needs identified in the strategy. Contextual information that informs the development of a range of business cases for service transformation and improvement.

### **Strategic Commissioning & Customer**

**Development:** Stirling Council's Commissioning and Procurement Strategy 2018-2021 "Towards Commercial Excellence" has LGBF indicators within its Action Plan. The Action Plan underpins our key objectives and is closely aligned with the Stirling Council 5 Year Business Plan 2017-2022. Stirling Council is committed to a place-based approach, which puts people and communities at the heart of what is happening in their local area. Local organisations play a key part in developing, and delivering tailored, responsive solutions. This will form a key part of the future planning process for procurement activity.

**HR Service:** We use the LGBF data to compare Stirling's performance, of our workforce, in comparison to other local authority employers, and against the average performance level in Scotland. Our aim is to perform above average with a drive to

be in the top quartile, where we have not reached that level of higher performance. Stirling Council Priority C is about setting exceptional standards, one element of which is employer practice.

Specific indicators:

- days lost due to sickness absence for the workforce
- gender balance of women in senior posts
- gender pay gap

**Planning & Building Standards:** The main LGBF indicator for Planning is ECON 2 'Cost per planning application'. Stirling Council participates in a range of benchmarking groups through Heads of Planning (HoPs). This indicator is discussed at these groups to probe for examples of best value. Going forward, HoPs agreed with the IS in February 2019 revisions to this indicator in terms of the scope of services to be included when estimating this cost. This change will bring about a consistency of approach and make cross-comparisons and benchmarking across Local Authorities more reliable.

## **Fife**



Key performance indicators (KPI) and benchmarking information are used to determine resource priorities to enable us to meet our outcomes. LGBF indicators are built into service performance scorecards; these are aligned to outcomes and are reviewed on a quarterly basis. LGBF indicators are now included in the performance reports relating to the Plan for Fife. These are in the process of being reported to Fife Council's Policy & Co-ordination Committee and are already reported to Fife Partnership Board and other relevant Partnership Groups.

## Falkirk

As the Local Government Benchmarking Framework matures, so has Falkirk's use of the data gathered and provided by the framework. We are moving past the focus on number and rank and towards better understanding how our performance is improving and where we sit nationally in order to identify where we can improve outcomes and provide high quality services to our citizens.

The LGBF helps management understand their services performance in both a national stage and over time. It allows management to see if there has been improvement and how we compare to other council's and nationally. This is valuable to informing our decisions; communicating where improvement is needed and where we have done well; benchmarking and setting targets.

The LGBF indicators are on our performance monitoring system. The LGBF indicators sit beside our Important Indicators and carry the same weight. We use this combination to understand current performance and identify areas of improvement.



## South Lanarkshire

The Council Plan Connect 2017-22 sets out our vision, values and ambitions, and what we aim to achieve in the five year period. This Plan is the starting point for the resource planning process and the annual Resource Plans show, in detail, how services contribute to the council's objectives in the coming year. The suite of LGBF indicators is included within the Resource Plans. The current format for performance reporting has been established for several years and is used



for Executive Director's report to the Chief Executive, Resource Committees and Resource Management Teams. The key focus is on reporting progress on council objectives, statutory performance indicators, other key performance measures and high level Resource priorities. The LGBF indicators provide essential comparative data on council performance which is integrated into strategic planning and reporting processes.

## West Lothian

West Lothian Council set strategic priorities for West Lothian in consultation with the local community. There are eight priorities that we believe will help our community to grow and succeed and as a result, will be a focus for council resources in the years ahead as we strive to deliver positive change in each one.

Each priority has an identified scorecard with performance measures for tracking progress and improvement. This scorecard is reported to elected members and to the public. A number of these priorities and associated measures are consistent with the focus areas of the LGBF. For example:



West Lothian Council Priority	LGBF Category
Improving attainment and positive destinations	Children's Services
Delivering positive outcomes and early interventions for early years	

West Lothian Council Priority	LGBF Category
Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	Economic Development Housing Services
Improving the quality of life for older people	Adult Social Care
Improving the employment position in West Lothian	Economic Development
Delivering positive outcomes on health	Adult Social Care
Protecting the built and natural environment	Environmental Services

Therefore, this data is being used to help understand the council's performance and progress in each priority in the context of national trends. It is also used as part of targets setting for measures and as a means of identifying and learning from sector leading performance. The council has been able to demonstrate improved performance and outcomes in priority areas.

## Dundee

The Council adopted a target in its Council Plan that at least 55% of its LGBF indicators should be in the top half of the relevant benchmarking family group with similar characteristics. This target rises to an ambitious 75% then leading 100% as a measure of the Council's commitment to use benchmarking as a critical part of its approach to continuous improvement.

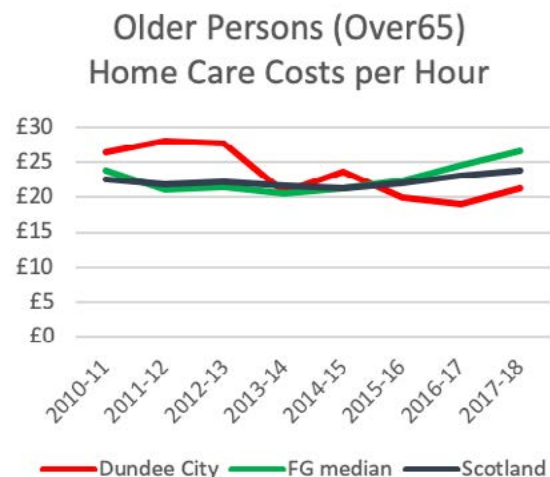
Cost reduction has been a necessary driver as part



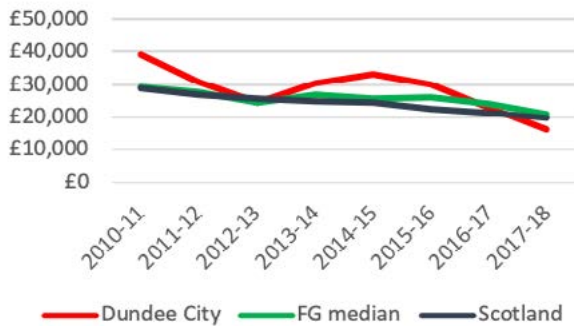
of the process of selecting projects for the Council's Changing for the Future transformation programme. A report to the Council Management Team identifies which LGBF unit cost (productivity efficiency) measures would provide scope to look for savings by closing the gap between being in the bottom half of the benchmarking group and the group mid-point. This has led to significant reviews of street cleaning, parks and open spaces, road maintenance esp winter maintenance and currently Looked after Children services, which have all yielded savings (with little or limited impact on satisfaction/performance) from engaging with benchmarking other councils as part of the review process.

The review of the costs of children's services and looked after children is current and the Council is actively engaging with the LGBF family group conference on this topic and being supported by the Improvement Service Team to identify drill down data that would support the review.

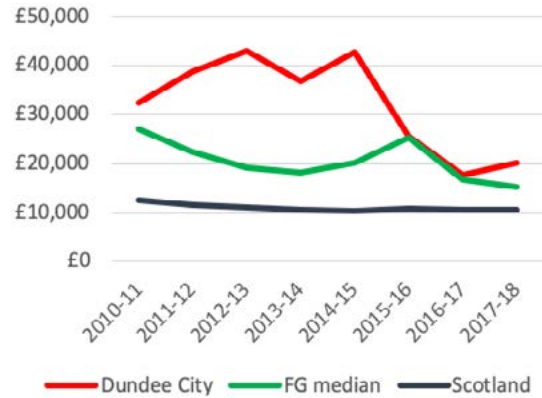
The following graphs identify where over the years Dundee has consciously reduced costs to get to the benchmark.



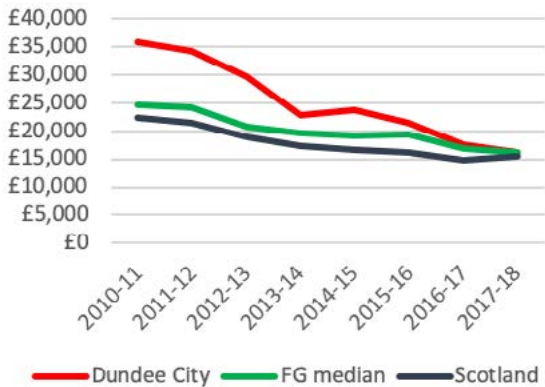
### Cost of Parks & Open Spaces per 1,000 Population



### Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads



### Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population



## Angus



Angus Council uses the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) extensively in improvement and performance management processes. The LGBF sits at the centre of many other data and benchmarking tools that services use to diagnose and identify areas for improvement and to develop improvement actions.

For example, we have recently used the LGBF information extensively in our Organisational Design and Zero Based Budgeting Programme over the last year to better understand our relative performance and to aid discussions about future options for every area of service. We produced a datapack for Rapid Improvement Events covering every area of service and LGBF information featured strongly in those datapacks. We've also used LGBF information to prepare a comparisons analysis for our budget strategy group to consider as part of our 2020/21 to 2022/23 budget strategy.

To ensure that Angus Council makes the most of the LGBF as a data source, a weekly LGBF Update is sent to senior service and corporate managers and service data and performance staff. Staff are encouraged to share this with any interested or relevant colleagues. This ensures that the LGBF becomes a key part of the performance led culture of Angus Council while recognising that services have a depth of data, knowledge and networks of their own.

## Dumfries & Galloway



The LGBF indicators are being used routinely for example as part of our transformation programme where we are looking to transform how we deliver services and close the budget gap in future years. The service used the cost indicators in relation to schools to help shape the future model of education within Dumfries and Galloway.

The data is also used to explore the differences between ourselves and other comparator authorities where we gained an insight into what we could do to deliver the services differently.

The indicators have been used as results data when conducting our Public Service Improvement Framework self-assessments.

## Perth & Kinross



In 2014 the Council approved a road maintenance strategy aimed at ensuring that priority areas are addressed within the budget available. LGBF data indicated the need for treatment of the A class road

network as a higher priority as this need had been consistently higher than the Scottish and family group averages over recent years. The approved Roads Maintenance Strategy allows for a managed reduced level of investment in B, C and U Class roads to facilitate the prioritisation of investment in the Council's A Class roads network.

At that time the condition of the C and U class road network was better than the national average therefore primarily these roads received less expensive treatments such as patching and surface dressing. The 2017/18 LGBF data indicated that deterioration has halted and current investment is resulting in a stable position. The Council agreed additional investment in road maintenance in 2018/19 which will show through in terms of overall road condition in future years.

## Highland



The Highland Council redesign process is overseen by a Board of elected members and Trade Union representatives. It has 5 objectives and the first is for the Council to be more open-minded to new ways of delivering services. The main method used for this objective is peer reviews which challenge whether we have the best service delivery model in place. 10 options for service delivery are appraised. The overall approach to peer review is available at: [http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/18528/peer\\_review\\_framework\\_2017](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/18528/peer_review_framework_2017).

An early part of the peer review is evidence gathering and this includes data available on performance and cost, including benchmarked data. The LGBF is used at this stage, including family group analysis. This is proving valuable contextual



information for both Members, Trade Unions and officers to better understand the impact of change and improvement for the organisation and for people using our services. For other redesign objectives (including being more commercially minded and more community minded) we use different methods including Lean reviews and we are developing new community reviews. All will rely on using data to understand our current position and to identify where improvement is needed. We can share our learning with the Improvement Service and other Councils to continuously improve our approach to performance, cost and benchmarked data.

## Midlothian

The LGBF is embedded in our Performance Management Framework and Service improvement plans contain the relevant indicators for their particular area. Senior Management monitor our indicators quarterly and a methodology sheet for each indicator is prepared annually by officers for internal audit purposes.



Midlothian

## Eilean Siar

Education, Skills and Children's Services use LGBF measures to inform strategic decisions at both a Departmental and Business Unit level through inclusion of the data in our [Strategic Needs Assessment document](#).



## South Ayrshire

Data from the LGBF has and does play a part in forming the measures contained within service and Council Plans for South Ayrshire, and using this information coupled with locally created and monitored measures provides a rounded set of parameters for review of Council/service performance. This information is scrutinised by the Service and Performance Panel and Council on a six-monthly basis.



## Scottish Borders

The Council's Executive Committee also receive quarterly performance updates, alongside detailed financial monitoring information, using LGBF data where appropriate to drive our efforts to improve performance. LGBF data is also used throughout the year to provide authoritative benchmarking data on a range of service specific reports.



## East Dunbartonshire

LGBF Indicators are incorporated into our Business Improvement Plans which and are linked to the Councils Priority Outcomes. Our annual Public Performance Report (PPR) also reports progress on LGBF indicators which is directly linked to our priority outcomes.

Benchmarking against other Local Authorities is also now a key element in our Prioritising Our Services, Prioritising Our Resources Approach to



Strategic Planning and service areas are required to outline how they plan to utilise benchmarking to improve service delivery as part of their Business Improvement Planning process.

## Moray



LGBF data supported the Council's intention to target an average position in Scotland for road condition by reducing the level of investment to facilitate the prioritisation of investment to priority outcomes. Monitoring of the impact on performance continues.

Moray has a disproportionate number of children looked after in residential placements in comparison to other Scottish local authorities, and as a result the cost of caring for Moray's Looked after Children is significantly higher. The LGBF data on this was used to consider alternatives.

# TARGETING AND SHOWCASING IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY

## North Ayrshire

Improvement activity is highlighted through our LGBF report that contains narrative against each indicator. An example is Cost of Parks & Open Spaces per 1,000 Population – Comprehensive review of costs included in Indicator carried out together with Benchmarking with East Ayrshire Council to compare performance. Measures put in place to accurately reflect costs by removing certain costs in line with published guidance going forward will see improvement performance.



## East Ayrshire

East Ayrshire Council is committed to seeking continuous improvement and our use of EFQM across all Council services since 1997, is the foundation for this.

Participation in the benchmarking family groups provides opportunities to share good practice and networking to good effect. In particular, this activity allows the Council to identify and understand local variation with other local authorities across Scotland, including: demographic variability; local service design and workforce structures; local strategic plans and priorities; scale and provision of services; working practices; access to external funding streams, service integration; and procedural variations.

Further to the review and implementation of the Council's revised sickness absence management policy 2015, which provides a comprehensive framework to secure attendance of all employees throughout the working week, this approach has



resulted in sustained performance improvement and, in particular, that LGBF rankings highlight that East Ayrshire has maintained the lowest rates of employee sickness absence across Scotland in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

## Inverclyde



Council Services consider the indicators and use them as part of the broader self-evaluation process they undertake to inform future improvement planning. The annual report on the Framework includes a number of sections for each indicator: What the data tells us (including the range details); Contextual information; and Next steps. Four years of data is included in the report, together with our position in the quartiles and in the national rankings, as well as the Scottish average for each measure. Changes in our position in the national rankings are reported using the traffic light system i.e. red - (performance) declined, amber - performance maintained, and green - (performance) improved.

## Glasgow

Currently a subgroup of Directors of Finance across all 32 authorities is looking in detail at how to improve consistency, identify potential anomalies, and highlight areas for improved financial recording and reporting within the LGBF. Glasgow is actively engaged in this group.

The issue of street cleaning costs is one the Council is addressing through technological evolution and bin replacement, and improvement actions should be measurable over the coming years within the



LGBF indicator.

Glasgow continued to engage in the Benchmarking Learning Events throughout 2018-19; including specific service areas like:

- Libraries
- Economic Development
- Waste Management
- Museums
- Adult Social Care
- Finance

In 2015/16 Glasgow led on the Council Tax collection indicator within its Family Group producing a report which was submitted to the Improvement Service in 2016.

## Argyll & Bute

The LGBF has been used in completing Argyll and Bute's Child Poverty Action Plan; for example to look at the educational performance of Argyll and Bute's children in comparison to the Scottish average and those in similar local authorities. Also exclusion rates. Also useful with regard to the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the Child Poverty Action Plan, for finding data / making comparisons in areas such as: economic development; transport and environmental factors; access cultural and leisure facilities and housing services (C&F).



## West Dunbartonshire



A sub set of prioritised LGBF indicators have been identified in the Strategic Plan for Council and performance against this suite is reported in the strategic plan scorecard. Additionally, further trend analysis and forecasting activity has been carried out on these prioritised indicators to inform a service specific improvement plan where appropriate.

## Orkney



The Council uses the How Good is Our Council? (HGIOC?) self-assessment tool. We revised our methodology for self-assessments in 2018 and rolled out our revised HGIOC? Tool at service-level in the first half of 2019. The service-level self-assessments involve a two-stage process, the first of which is a mapping exercise using a range of performance information, including the LGBF data, to identify areas of weakness and gaps in scrutiny. Based on this evidence, services then select between three and six areas for self-assessment. The second part of the process is to carry out the HGIOC? service-level self-assessments to identify areas for improvement and these are then used to inform service, team and individual plans as appropriate. The Corporate Management Team (SMT plus Heads of Service) also consider the results of the service-level assessments and a similar process is carried out for a corporate-level self-assessment.

LGBF data has also been used in the self-evaluation process which takes place as part of the Council's inspection regime. For example, LGBF data has been used to evidence the impact of our actions in the 2017 Best Value Assurance Report, and in the

2019 Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection.

To give a further example, the LGBF data showed that the Council was consistently under-performing for the indicator on invoice payments. In 2016 a report highlighting the issue was considered by the Senior Management Team which agreed that the invoice payment indicator should become a cross-council performance indicator, to be monitored on a six-monthly service-by-service basis. This allowed the Senior Management Team to set targets in relation to this indicator and the added focus, initiated by the LGBF data, has seen gradual improvement within services and across the Council. Furthermore, performance against this indicator is expected to significantly improve later in 2019 when the Council introduces an electronic 'purchase-to-pay' system.

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## Renfrewshire

In terms of showcasing improvement activity, the Council's Policy and Commissioning and Communication teams work together to ensure a proactive [press release](#) is issued in advance of the Board.



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## Stirling

**Schools & Learning Service:** Data from the LGBF enables us to compare the quality of early years settings in Stirling with provision across the country, giving opportunity to network with colleagues nationally to share and learn about good practice. This will continue to allow



us to ensure we consistently provide high quality early learning and childcare as we move through the early years expansion. The data is also helpful when reporting to elected members. Evidence that the quality of service is improving has validated that our approach to improvement is having an impact. Data in the LGBF supports education to monitor and scrutinise expenditure for early years provision over time, both within Stirling Council and to compare this across the country. It has supported us to identify areas where spend is different and to enter into discussions regarding service/operating models to share, and learn about, good practice. This has in turn, supported financial planning. The analysis of data over time is very helpful to support monitoring so that we continue to improve the service provided.

### Strategic Commissioning & Customer

**Development:** Further work is underway with the support of the Supplier Development Programme to develop relationships with the local supply chain to ensure potential bidders are business-ready to bid for local contracts. Key to this will be maximising end user and stakeholder feedback regarding existing and future commissioning, and procurement exercises. The ambition for Stirling is to achieve optimal balance between the use of national, regional and local contracts and frameworks within the context of the Stirling Plan, its Economic ambition and the Sustainable Procurement Duty. The Strategic Commissioning and Procurement Team continue to work with Scotland Excel and other local authorities to deliver on our improvement plans. The continued use of LGBF data will be a key component within this development work.

## East Renfrewshire



On release of the verified LGBF data a comprehensive report is submitted to Cabinet outlining the LGBF results and providing analysis and responses for services across East Renfrewshire Council, HSCP and the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust. The report presents three-year trend data, ranking and quartile positions and a comparison of the Council's position against the Scottish average. The report includes graphs and trends over time as well as national and family group comparative trends. To ensure consistency of reporting all LGBF data is presented in line with our own Performance Management Framework meaning that all indicators are reported under our corresponding strategic outcomes highlighted above. Service areas contribute directly to the report. Each service sets out their strategic policy intention in relation to the LGBF indicators being discussed. They provide a detailed commentary on their performance over the 12 month period and set out future activity and any planned improvement actions as a result of the LGBF data.

A three year project to introduce an evaluative approach to service business planning in East Renfrewshire Council is ongoing. The aim is to produce single comprehensive plans for each service which are meaningful, business focused and data driven. LGBF indicators, data and trends form a core requirement for inclusion in the plans and performance monitoring arrangements at a service level.

An example of how services are using LGBF data to monitor and improve performance is in our Revenues Service. Work is underway to review and develop a new KPI pack for the service which incorporates relevant LGBF indicators and more

regular monitoring of progress against the service's priority outcomes. To ensure the service delivers best value it is essential to maximise the potential income stream, focusing on prevention of rent arrears and rent lost through empty properties. Now more frequent performance reporting is being used to monitor key indicators to improve and sustain service level, targeting resources appropriately, particularly as the impact of universal credit is likely to increase rent arrears.

LGBF data on roads cost and conditions has been useful in identifying areas for improvement across the ERC area. Significant additional investment has been targeted over the next five years to improve the quality and condition of the roads network and infrastructure. The LGBF indicator on invoice processing has also been instrumental in tracking improvement in processing times and enabling efficient payment to local contractors.

## Fife



The LGBF data is used to identify performance issues and develop action plans. Following analysis of data, [detailed reports](#) were taken to our Scrutiny Committee providing a drill down into the factors influencing current performance levels and outlining interventions to improve performance.

Participation in the benchmarking family groups has enabled the sharing of good practice/improvements and networking to good effect. A Disciplines of Excellence (4DX) repairs projects has led to a significant review of the repairs process, including streamlining of tasks, removal of duplication and improved cross-service approaches. This has considerably reduced the average number of

days taken to complete repairs from 10.0 to 8.1 days. Learning from the success of this project will continue to support performance improvement. To this end a 4DX rents project is being introduced to improve the coordination of cross-service working in rent collection.

## Falkirk

The LGBF has helped us engage with other local authorities and look for ideas on how we can improve our practice. For example, to improve rent arrears, we surveyed all local authorities, and identified authorities we would like to learn from to establish best practice.

We visited Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), Fife Council and Dundee City Council. All visits were beneficial, and integral in improving how we collect rent and with the wider delivery of the housing service. Over the last two years we have deployed improvements.

These improvements include implementation of the Corporate Debt Policy and improved communications with tenants when they fall into debt. One of the key areas moving forward, to help us further improve, is embedding rent focus, early intervention and support in the role of Housing Officers.

## South Lanarkshire

In April 2016, the council replaced its three year rolling programme of service reviews with a one- year targeted self-assessment programme. This new approach was introduced to make improvement activity



more proportionate, risk-based, and adaptable to changing circumstances.

The annual programme is developed through a horizon-scanning exercise which looks at risks, performance and new developments at a service level. Within this exercise, the LGBF plays a key role in determining which areas of service should be subject to self-assessment and review. Services where the council's LGBF results are consistently lower than the Scottish average or have been declining for 2 or more years are identified and how they intend to review their performance and deliver improvement. If there are no plans in place, these services become candidates for self- assessment and targeted improvement activity, and will be included in the annual improvement programme with the agreement of the head of service. Once the improvement programme is agreed, it is monitored through an annual report to CMT and Elected members.

## West Lothian

Extensive analysis of the LGBF dataset is undertaken each year (and with the Refresh process in March/April) to understand the council's performance in line with both the national average and best in class performance. The actual performance and ranking information is used to develop challenging targets and the learning from family groups and networks is used to improve service quality and reduce costs. For example:

- Council officers, particularly the Responsible Officers and Finance Officers, analyse the cost information included within LGBF to monitor and compare variation in the costs of services. This





is also used to understand the relative value of services, in conjunction with the measures tracking performance in the key priorities/ outcomes, process measures and satisfaction levels with services.

- Council officers have extensively used benchmarking (LGBF and Education networks) to learn from the practice of others and to develop strategies and stretch targets to improve the number one corporate priority area – improving attainment and positive destinations. This has resulted in the council achieving year on year improvement in key measures of attainment.
- The council has used benchmarking data to address specific performance issues by undertaking a more in-depth analysis of the policy, procedural and practices adopted by other authorities and its impact on performance. Recently this was used to target an improvement in sickness absence performance and supporting employees in the workplace. Learning has subsequently helped inform and shape proposals to review the Council’s policies and procedures.
- Benchmarking in family groups has improved the in-year collection rates, specifically around implementation of Water Direct (where the payment for water bills is deducted directly from benefits), ongoing promotion of direct debit take up, earlier recovery intervention, targeted sequestration action and timely reviews of single person discounts.
- Benchmarking in family groups has helped council’s highlight measures that are not as effective and make recommendations to enhance or improve the LGBF dataset.
- Benchmarking in a family group has offered an

insight into a leading authority’s approach to increased investment in employability provision alongside other councils in their region, which subsequently had a rapid fall in unemployment and particularly youth unemployment.

The council has developed a strong understanding of our strengths and areas for improvement – relative to the national average, best in class performers and our family group comparator authorities – through effective analysis and application of the LGBF dataset.

Comparative performance is highlighted as part of performance management and reporting arrangements so that staff, elected members, our stakeholders and the public share a common understanding of how the council compares across the different categories and performance measures contained in the LGBF.

The LGBF dataset has also been used as evidence in external inspection and assessment activity to highlight the organisation’s areas of strength but also, to explain how the council is using benchmarking to improve the efficiency, effectiveness of our services.

## Clackmannanshire

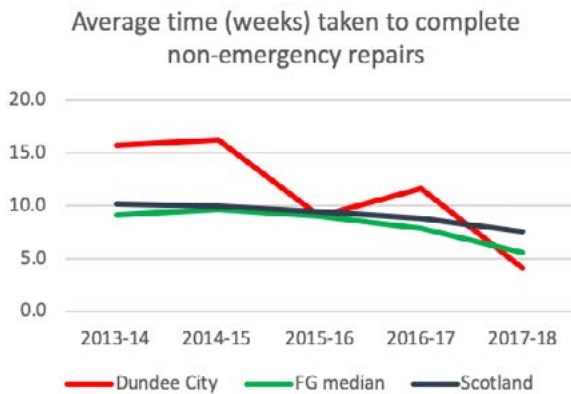


Clackmannanshire  
Council

We are using LGBF to improve how we use data to inform service developments and decision making. Current examples include undertaking a benchmarking review of cost indicators to identify opportunities to learn from other local authorities; Undertaking a failure demand cost analysis relating to waste and recycling services and benchmarking review of absence indicators to identify opportunities to learn from other authorities.

## Dundee

Significant performance reviews have been triggered by the LGBF data and for example the Council's time to carry out housing repairs went from bottom to top in a couple of years following a lean systems review.



The LGBF report contains both highlights as well as areas for improvements. The highlights are as important and provide evidence to the local population of that in each area of service there is evidence that they are getting the best in class value for money or seeing improvement.

Although not every measure is the best in the country, the fact that some are is reassuring that the local government system delivers quality services.

It also provides evidence to support professional awards for teams behind these services.

## Angus



Angus Council finds that the high-level nature of the data and the benchmarking Family Groups is strategically invaluable in framing our improvement agenda; helping us to identify areas for attention and potential solutions in place in other Scottish council areas. A strategic report on the LGBF data is presented to Senior Management each year, detailing performance, key messages and performance priorities.

At the service level Angus Council combines the insights from the LGBF with more detailed analysis using other benchmarking datasets from the wide range of groups and resources available to Scottish local government. Analysis of this more detailed and timeous data, combined with local administrative sources is used in developing improvement actions suited to our local context.

Outputs from this work are in turn key inputs in LGBF Family Group work. The relationships developed through this activity form an important part of our network of critical friends, complementing the work of the Scottish Performance Management Forum and service specific networks.

## Aberdeenshire



Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days - Organisationally, invoices are paid within the terms of each supplier. A review has been undertaken to improve systems and introduce electronic payments which has resulted in improvements within payment terms of 76% in 2015/16 to 92% in 2017/18 whilst the Scottish

average has remained consistent.

Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use & Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition - There is a year on year improvement on our performance (of approx. 1%).

## East Lothian



The Council's relatively poor comparative results on the sickness absence indicators was one of the prompts to East Lothian Council to review its Sickness Absence Policy and procedures assisted by benchmarking.

Analysis is being carried out to increase understanding of why some of the Council's cost indicators are either significantly higher or lower than the Scottish average (e.g. higher cost of open space is higher and lower cost per primary and secondary school pupils).

## Dumfries & Galloway



The LGBF indicators are being used routinely with the data used to explore the differences between ourselves and other comparator authorities to gain an insight into what we could do to deliver the services differently. The indicators have been used as results data when conducting our Public Service Improvement Framework self-assessments.

## Perth & Kinross



LGBF data showed that between 2012 /13 and 2014/15 the proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition dropped from the upper quartile to the upper middle quartile. Recognising this, the council approved significant investment in a capital programme in 2016 to improve the suitability and condition of its buildings. It is recognised capital investment takes time to implement, however the 2018/19 LGBF indicators will show an improvement in condition from 86% to 91%.

## Midlothian



Midlothian

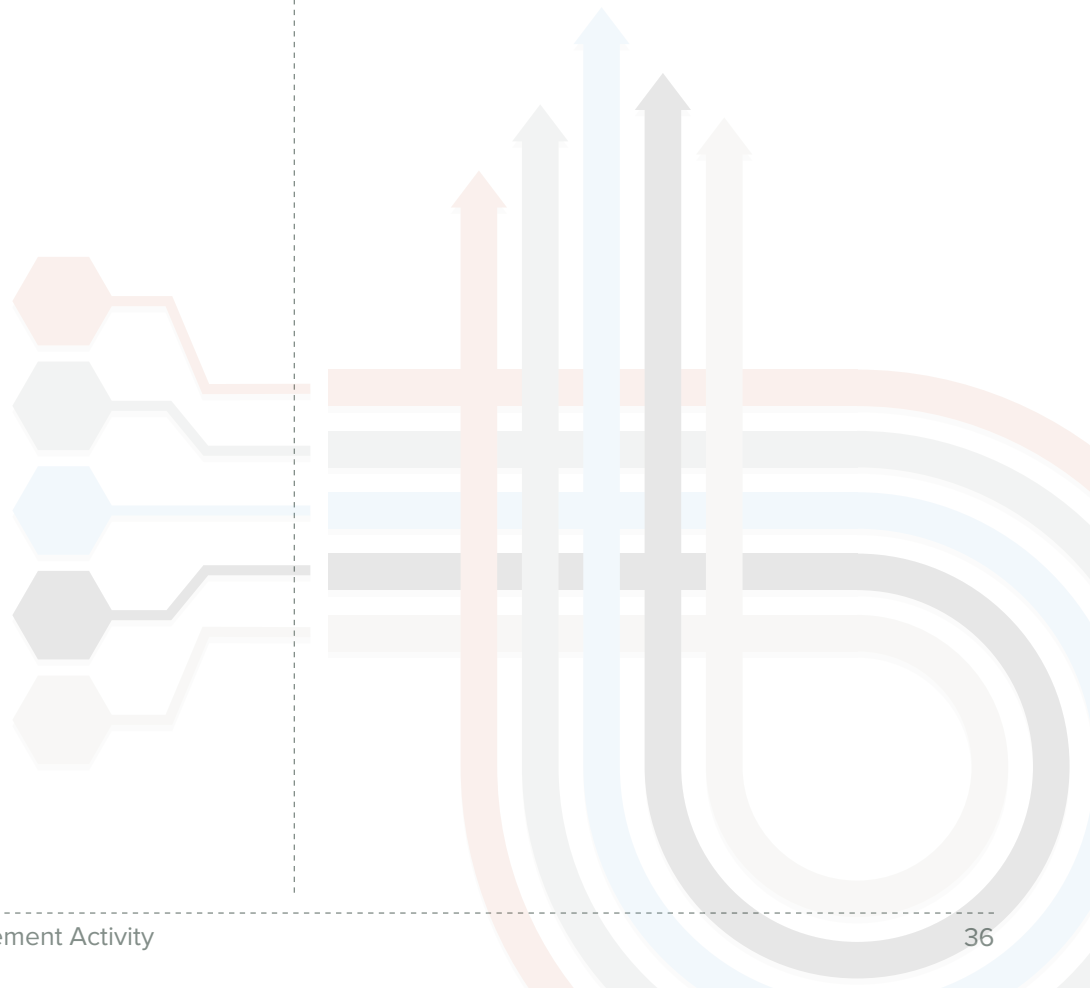
Sickness/Absence figures and the Midlothian Maximising Attendance at Work policy. HR Business Partner attended the HR Learning Event and was approached by another council who are due to visit to discuss our absence processes, especially any areas that are different from theirs. Also, to discuss how our SPI figures are calculated and what absence reports are provided/available for managers.

## South Ayrshire



The LGBF data has a part to play in our self-evaluation as a Council, providing services with data for triangulation during the self-evaluative activity. We have also taken areas of good performance by services from the LGBF report and highlighted the information to the public through our Public Affairs team and social media channels.

In our annual LGBF report to Council we require Executive Officers to submit an improvement narrative for all indicators that either fall into the bottom quartile or have dropped significantly in rank from previous periods. This narrative is intended to provide the context as to why performance is poorer than other councils in this area and outline the actions that are in place to improve performance in future years.



STRENGTHENING  
LOCAL PUBLIC  
PERFORMANCE  
REPORTING

## North Ayrshire

The Council has dedicated benchmarking web pages on our public website that contain a range of information. Each year these are reviewed and updated. There are clear links to the national Mylocalcouncil.info website and we encourage our residents to view comparisons. We include the individual indicators on the web pages with more detailed information which we believe has strengthened the information available to our communities and residents.



## East Ayrshire

It is important that the Council manages its performance and reports on results to local communities and stakeholders. The Council currently utilises a comprehensive and wide-ranging list of indicators derived from the following performance frameworks, to report progress on service performance, agreed local priorities and outcomes for communities and our partnership activity within the local community planning framework, as part of our public performance reporting arrangements:

- Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs);
- East Ayrshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) (formerly the Single Outcome Agreement); and
- the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

The Council's annual public performance report provides a section which references the LGBF indicators, including hyperlinks to the



'mylocalcouncil' benchmarking tool, which can be accessed on the Improvement Service website and aims to help members of the public and others understand how well their council is performing across a range of council services.

## Glasgow

The [LGBF is a public document](#), and we actively encourage Elected Members to examine not just our own public report on it, but to examine the [My Local Government](#) webpage, which includes any refinements or additions to the data suite post publication.

To ensure that we are fully transparent, the Glasgow City Council website features [information on specific areas of performance](#) which includes a link to the LGBF. As noted above, the LGBF is now also embedded within the service specific ASPIR reports, which are publicly reported and accessible.



## Argyll & Bute

The LGBF report is published on our website as part of our PPR duties. As the LGBF report is on the Council website, this means that improvements and achievements can be signposted to the public / community groups and they can be encouraged to check, for example, how much the Council spends per pupil in secondary schools and what percentage of secondary school pupils achieved 5 plus awards at SCQF level 5 or higher? Hence it is a useful tool for interacting with a wide range of individuals and assists with facilitating feedback. They can also see how the council performs around a number of



equalities markers; for example, what is the average tariff score in SIMD quintile 5?

How many people in my council earn less than the living wage? What is the quality and standard of housing provided by my council measured by the Scottish Housing Quality Standard? The LGBF is therefore useful in forwarding the equalities agenda with the public (C&F).

We use the qualitative data that supports the LGBF indicators to tell our citizens ‘Did you know..’ facts that supports our performance, such as the number of bins that we empty each week.

## Orkney

Public Performance Reporting is a requirement carried out largely through the Council’s Public Performance Reporting (PPR) area on our website. The PPR webpages contain a wide variety of performance reports, for example, the Council’s Annual Performance Report, six-monthly Council Plan Monitoring Reports, six-monthly service performance reports, and inspection reports of Orkney’s schools and social care centres, all of which are also available in paper copy by request.

The Council’s Annual Performance Report contains two sections – the first is our performance against targets set in the Council Plan, the second is our performance against the LGBF indicators to evidence the impact of our activities and how they are improving outcomes for our community.

We have also recently added a section on our performance against the LGBF indicators on our PPR webpages, and this includes a link to the LGBF website.



## Renfrewshire



Along with the press release and the report to Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board mentioned above, we have created and improved the content on our website for [public performance reporting](#) and the LGBF data has been key to strengthen these pages.

The content on these pages aims to be transparent, balanced and provide members of the public with a clearer sense of how we are performing. They also have better signposting to show the progress made on our Council Plan outcomes, how quickly we respond to complaints, benchmarking data and service information etc.

The pages include sections on performance, benchmarking and Renfrewshire’s data, providing:

- the latest version of ‘it’s all about you’ as a storymap, includes a ranges of performance data, images and case studies;
- the open data platform and the most up to date needs assessment; and
- benchmarking information such as the latest Local Government Benchmarking Framework report to Board and the link to mylocalcouncil.info site.

The ‘It’s all about you’ annual public performance report uses a selection of our prioritised LGBF indicators and provides the public with benchmarking information and the story around the data.

## East Renfrewshire

Publication of the annual report on the LGBF dataset forms a key part of East Renfrewshire Council's statutory reporting requirements. Each year the LGBF report is presented to Cabinet for scrutiny and discussion in March. The indicators are analysed within service headings and grouped under each of our strategic delivery outcomes and our organisational outcomes, Efficiency, Customer and People as part of the Council's balanced scorecard approach. Local results are considered in the context of the national picture including comparison with previous years' data, Scottish average and graphs showing trend data against the Scottish and Family Group averages. Information on our performance is published on our [performance webpages](#). This is where you can find a video showcasing our most recent performance. We also have a benchmarking page, providing information at a local and national level as well as encouraging the public to check out the Improvement Service's [mylocalcouncil](#) page to view how we are performing in relation to other councils.



## Stirling

The Stirling Council website includes a dedicated section for performance, which provides the public with information on how the Council plans and prioritises; monitors and manages performance; and undertakes reviews and improvement activities. Our public performance reporting (PPR) tells our citizens/communities about where we are performing well, and what we plan to do in the future to address areas of poorer performance to ensure continuous



improvement.

Our PPR consists of an annual report, performance information for each of our services, and access to our key strategic plans, (i.e. the Stirling Plan (LOIP) and the Stirling Business Plan). The service performance information includes the relevant LGBF indicators and we provide access to a separate LGBF scorecard with commentary to explain performance levels and our plans for improvement.

Further information on the LGBF is also available via a link to the Improvement Service LGBF website. During 2019-20, our aim is to identify improvement opportunities that will make our PPR more accessible and appealing to the public.

## Fife

Fife Direct website contains a section on performance. The aim of this area is to provide the public with information on how the council plans and manages its performance. Managing our performance and reporting our results is a necessary and important requirement. Telling our customers and stakeholders about how well we are doing, what quality of service is being delivered and what they can expect in the future, demonstrates our ability to be transparent and accountable. It also demonstrates our commitment to seeking continuous improvement. [Fife's Performance](#).





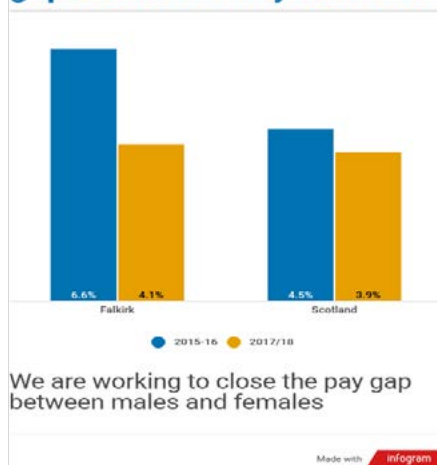
## Falkirk

The LGBF is embedded in our Performance Pages, with links to the MyCouncil tool. We also provide an outline on each of the areas from services, describing any changes and actions. Example: [Environment Services LGBF Overview](#)

This year, we will produce LGBF infographics. These are more engaging to the public and we hope this will reach a wider audience. The LGBF infographics will be feature on our website, social media and on other publications. This is part of work going on to improve Public Performance Reporting and to make it more interesting and engaging to the public.

Example:

### What is the current gender gap for staff in my council?



## West Lothian

The LGBF dataset is a critical part of the council's public performance reporting arrangements, with the council also providing details of our comparative analysis alongside the data and commentary.

The council's comparative performance in the LGBF is also considered by the Council's Performance Committee each year and is now part of financial monitoring information that is provided to the Council's Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels on a scheduled basis.

Benchmarking within the family groups has positively impacted on efforts to improve processes and review cost information, increasing our understanding of how similar councils have achieved performance and/or improvements.



## Dundee

The LGBF My Council Website is embedded in our Dundee Performs webpage, along with a link to the latest reports. The ability of the local citizens or subject experts to compare the Council with all another Scottish councils provides a vital method of holding local government to account and leads to a rising tide of performance and value. It could only be improved by adding where possible international comparisons.

The individual LGBF indicators are also being included in Dundee's list of Performance Indicators. These are individual graphs listed in alignment with our own Strategic Service areas as another way for the public to see our performance on an ongoing basis.



The LGBF, City Plan, Council Plan, etc reports are all available for public viewing.

Additionally, we are now using this data and other performance data more proactively via our own 'Newsroom' and in social media. From time to time when its topical individual results in the LGBF report can be tweeted. This is being led by our Communications team.

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## Highland

Following the last external audit of PPR the Highland Council sought to improve the information in the public domain by making it more accessible to the public in terms of the format. We have developed a set of infographics for the LGBF and these are used in an annual newsletter to the public covering our performance which is both printed and published on-line. This has been shared with our external auditors with positive feedback in our annual audit report.

The most recent newsletter can be found at : [http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19099/high\\_points\\_issue\\_10\\_-\\_spring\\_2018](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19099/high_points_issue_10_-_spring_2018) and a LGBF summary only is available at: [http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/18955/highlights\\_-](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/18955/highlights_-)

You may also be interested in our 'How we Compare' pages on our Performance section of our web – this links to the published data by the Improvement Service and also provides access to relevant committee report and the infographics summary at: [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20009/performance/608/how\\_we\\_compare\\_to\\_other\\_councils](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20009/performance/608/how_we_compare_to_other_councils)



## Midlothian

Our public performance pages on our website are arranged into a dedicated pages for each area of Public Performance requirements. The pages contain a wide range of information relating to each area and includes a dedicated LGBF indicator page and a link to our Performance Management System – Pentana for further information. This page is reviewed annually: [https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/691/performance\\_and\\_spending/257/council\\_performance](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/691/performance_and_spending/257/council_performance). Our annual Public Performance Report provides summaries of our LGBF data



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## South Ayrshire

For 2018/19 South Ayrshire has refined their approach to Public Performance Reporting, moving away from a previous public calendar model which contained short extracts of service performance, towards a more rounded annual performance report that is presented to Council in December of each year. This report contains all the LGBF data within an appendix, as well as assisting services to provide information on performance from throughout the 2018/19 year. The Council also makes the LGBF data available to the public on the performance pages of the council website.



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## East Dunbartonshire

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework is integral to our PPR process. In addition to signposting to the Improvement Service LGBF



website which provides the data in a clear accessible format. We also publish our own LGBF committee reports directly on the public performance report of our website. In addition, on publication of the LGBF we have signposted to the publication on our Social Media pages. Our Annual public performance report also includes the full suite of LGBF indicators and aligns these to the Priority outcomes and guiding principles as outlined in our LOIP.

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## Moray

LGBF indicators are incorporated in the Council's annual [Public Performance Report](#). The Council's [Performance webpage](#) signposts the public to Community, Corporate and Service performance areas, includes links to LGBF reports and to '[mylocalcouncil](#)' benchmarking tool.



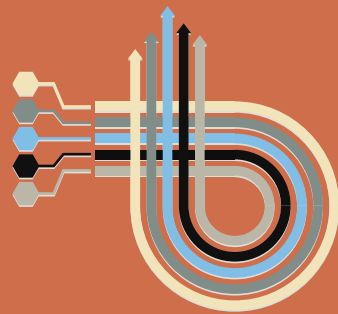
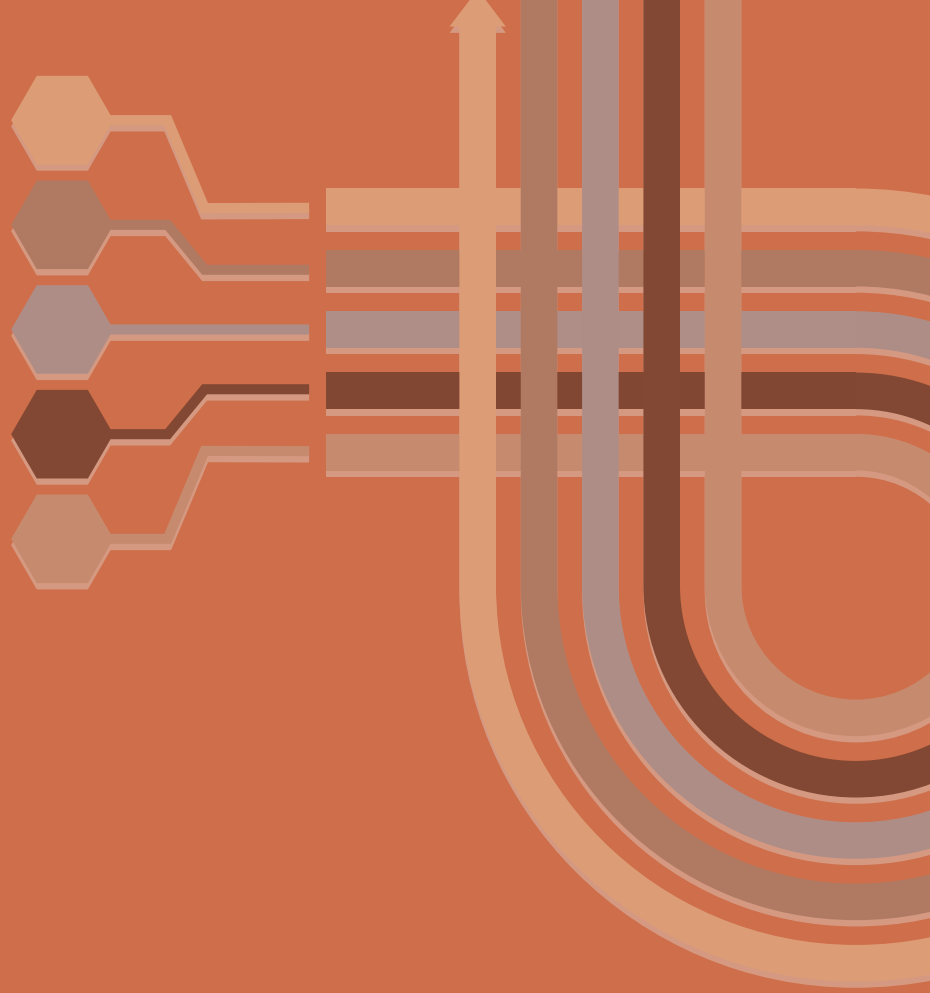
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## Shetland

The [mylocalcouncil](#) website is linked from our main [performance page](#).

LGBF indicators and mylocalcouncil graphics and comments on performance, and Improvement also feature in our [annual performance reports](#).





Local  
Government  
Benchmarking  
Framework

[WWW.IMPROVEMENTSERVICE.ORG.UK/BENCHMARKING](http://WWW.IMPROVEMENTSERVICE.ORG.UK/BENCHMARKING)