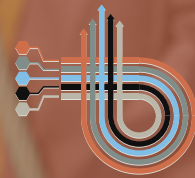




National Benchmarking Overview Report 2019-20



Local
Government
Benchmarking
Framework



Contents

Preface	4
Executive Summary	5
Children’s services	7
Adult social care	9
Culture and leisure services	10
Environmental services	11
Corporate services	11
Housing services	12
Economic development and planning	12
Financial sustainability	13
Tackling climate change	13
Introduction and Key Trends	14
i. The pre-Covid picture	15
ii. The impacts of Covid	18
iii. Implications for LGBF – Continuity, Evolution & Data Innovation	21
The LGBF Approach	24
LGBF framework indicators	26
LGBF data reliability	26
The purpose of this report	27
Children’s Services	35
Pre-school provision	37
Pre-school performance	39
Primary and secondary school spending	43
Primary and secondary school performance	46
Positive destinations and participation rate	69
Satisfaction with schools	72
Adult Social Care	74
Home care services	76
Balance of care	78
Readmission to hospital	79
Delayed discharges	81
Direct payments and personalised managed budgets	82
Care homes	84
Satisfaction with care services	86
Quality ratings of care services	91
Culture and Leisure Services	94
Sports facilities	95
Library services	97
Museum services	100
Parks and open spaces	102
Satisfaction with culture and leisure services	103

Environmental Services	107
Waste collection	109
Waste disposal	111
Recycling	112
Percentage of adults satisfied with waste collection	114
Street cleaning	115
Roads	120
Environmental health and trading standards	127
Corporate Services	131
Support services	132
Gender equality	134
Council tax	135
Sickness absence rates	139
Invoices paid	141
Corporate assets	142
Housing Services	144
Rent arrears	145
Rent lost due to voids	146
Housing repairs	148
Housing quality	149
Economic Development and Planning	152
Investment in economic development and tourism	153
Employment	155
Business support	157
Procurement	158
Planning	160
Available employment land	162
Town vacancy rates	163
Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband	165
Proportion of people earning less than the living wage	167
Financial Sustainability	169
Reserves	170
Cost of Borrowing	172
Budget Performance	174
Tackling Climate Change	176
Conclusions and Next Steps	180
Appendices	183
Appendix 1 – LGBF Indicator List	184
Appendix 2 – List of Family Groups	187
Appendix 3 – LGBF Credibility, Relevance and Reliability	188

Preface

This is the ninth annual report for the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). The LGBF represents a joint commitment by SOLACE (Scotland) and COSLA to develop better measurement and comparable data to target resources and drive improvement. Benchmarking enables greater understanding of why councils vary in terms of what they deliver and achieve for their communities and how they do so.

The data is used to inform learning and decision making. This approach has been successful in supporting all 32 Scottish councils to work and learn together. There is compelling evidence of Local Government's continuing commitment to this council-led improvement approach, with the framework continuing to gain traction. As the framework has matured, so too has councils' use of the data. Councils are moving past a focus on numbers and ranks, and towards a more strategic and diagnostic use of the data.

This information is available to all citizens and users of council services so that they can hold councils to account for what is achieved on their behalf, and ask questions of Local Government to promote improvement. The framework is continually reviewed and improved to ensure the best possible performance information is available to communities and to councils themselves.

Councils are at the heart of local democracy and deliver essential services to local communities, responding where they can to local priorities. Each council has therefore developed the structure and service arrangements it believes are the most appropriate and cost effective to support its local community. There is therefore diversity in the approach of councils across Scotland. All councils do however report their performance locally within locally developed and agreed public reporting frameworks, which draw upon LGBF information.

Councils are arranged in 'family groups' enabling comparisons to be made between councils that are similar in terms of the type of population that they serve (e.g. relative deprivation and affluence) and the type of area in which they serve them (e.g. urban, semi-rural, rural). The point of comparing like with like is that this is more likely to lead to useful learning and improvement.

There is a continuous improvement programme to refine the benchmarking framework to ensure it remains relevant. It is recognised in particular that a review of the benchmarking framework will be necessary to reflect Covid-19 and its impact on Local Government and the communities it serves. At the same time, the long-term overview provided through the framework will help us understand the full impacts of the pandemic.

The driving force behind this work is, and will always be, to improve the lives of people in communities across Scotland. We believe that effective public services contribute to both individual and community quality of life and the LGBF is an increasingly important element of the local intelligence necessary to achieve this vision. With the financial pressures, growing demand on services, increasing public expectations and now the profound effects of Covid-19, there has never been a greater requirement for working with and learning from each other.

Steve Grimmond

Chair of SOLACE (Scotland)

Councillor Alison Evison

Chair, Improvement Service
COSLA President



Executive Summary



The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) provides evidence of trends in how councils allocate resources, the performance of key council services and levels of public satisfaction with the major services provided and commissioned by councils. The rich data supports evidence-based comparisons between similar councils and over time, providing an essential tool for policy makers and the public.

This year's report draws on 10 years of LGBF data to provide an evidence-based picture of where Local Government had reached pre-Covid. The pandemic has altered the landscape and fundamentally affected Local Government services and the lives of the communities it serves. Going forward, the continuity provided by the LGBF will be invaluable in understanding the long-term impact of Covid on communities and on Local Government services. It will provide vital intelligence to assist the sector to learn lessons from its response and to strengthen and redesign services around future policy priorities to support recovery and renewal. It will also be critical in helping to track progress against the National Performance Framework (NPF) and in continuing to monitor the role Local Government plays in improving the outcomes in the NPF.¹ There is also now an opportunity to review and evolve the LGBF to reflect the new challenges and issues facing local government post-Covid, including innovation and transformation in the use of data and intelligence.

In 2019/20, Councils were operating in a more challenging context than when the LGBF began in 2010/11. Total revenue funding for councils has fallen by 7.2% in real terms since 2010/11 (and by 5.4% since 2013/14). Recent uplifts in funding have been insufficient to offset the major reduction in funding experienced over the last ten years. Funding for Councils is not increasing at a sufficient pace to keep up with demands. The overall funding position as set out above is exacerbated by the following pressures councils have had to manage across the last ten years: growing demographic pressures (>2% per annum); increasing costs, including the impact of living wage and pay settlements; additional impacts on demand from increasing levels of poverty; and higher public expectations. Councils have also faced increasing national policy and legislative demands, with a growing proportion of funding which has been ring fenced for these initiatives, reducing the flexibility councils have for deciding how they plan and prioritise the use of funding to respond to local priorities.

When looked at in totality, Local Government has largely sustained real-terms expenditure levels since 2013/14 despite reductions in funding from Scottish Government. Through legislation and Scottish Government policy, expenditure within Social Care and Education continues to be sustained and enhanced. As these areas account for over 70% of the benchmarked expenditure within the LGBF, this means most other services are increasingly in scope to bear a disproportionate share of current and future savings. Since 2010/11, this has included: 26% reduction in culture and leisure spending; 26% reduction in planning spending; 26% in corporate support service spending; 20% reduction in economic development revenue spending; 24% reduction in roads spending; 28% reduction in trading standards and environmental health spending; and 11% reduction in environmental services spending.

Despite significant and ongoing funding pressures, the long-term trends in the LGBF reveal that Local Government has continued to do well in sustaining performance. This includes

- Improving outcomes for children and young people, including the most vulnerable
- Significant transformation in social care provision
- Inclusive economic growth has gained ground
- Culture and Leisure have seen significant growth in digital provision
- Positive progress towards better environmental outcomes
- Improvement in housing quality and management

¹ <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>



- Continued improvement in efficiency and effectiveness of council's corporate services

However, the 2019/20 data indicates that some signs of strain in performance, satisfaction, and system capacity are beginning to emerge. Performance improvements gained in recent years are now beginning to slow or decline, a general pattern emerging across all key service areas. This is unsurprising given the long-term funding pressures on councils and local services.

Covid has delivered a significant shock to the system. Although the full effects will not be known for some time, there is a growing consensus that the future will bring increasing levels of poverty and inequality, a potentially overwhelming growth in mental health and wellbeing issues, and severe and long-lasting damage to the economy. These alarming trends create new patterns of need and vulnerability in our communities which are likely to have far reaching impacts on Local Government services. The largely improving trends in Local Government performance in the ten years prior to Covid provide some resilience against the shock to the system, including in relation to financial sustainability. In those areas already showing signs of stress however, it will be important to monitor whether this will be exacerbated by the impacts of Covid.

The next period brings an even more uncertain financial future along with significant projected increases in demand due to the long-term impacts of the pandemic. Data and intelligence will be more important than ever in helping Local Government respond to changing patterns in need and vulnerability, to learn lessons from its response thus far, and to grasp some of the positive opportunities emerging from this period in terms of digital transformation and new ways of working. The LGBF will evolve and adapt to respond to these challenges and ensure the approach continues to provide a valuable tool for Local Government improvement.

The national trends across each of the key service areas are presented below. There is however a wide range of variation in costs and performance across councils often reflecting local circumstances and priorities. It is this variation which provides the platform for learning and improvement. The full scale of this variation and the factors driving this variation are detailed within the report.

All cost and spend information throughout this report is adjusted for inflation and presented in **real terms** to allow meaningful comparison over time.

Children's services

1. Education spending has been largely sustained and expanded across the 10-year period, compared to other services, with spend growing by 8% since 2010/11. Across this period, provision has grown by 4%, including a 9% increase in primary school pupil numbers and a 5% growth in early years places.
2. In 2019/20, growth in education spend has accelerated, increasing by 7.1%. This reflects increased costs associated with the recent teacher pay award, access to additional monies via the Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Fund, and the Early Years Expansion programme.
3. Early years expenditure has grown by 80.3% since 2010/11, and by 31.7% in 2019/20. Real costs per pre-school place have risen for the sixth year in a row, increasing by 31.9% in 2019/20, from £5,141 to £6,783 per place.
4. Expenditure on Primary and Secondary education has grown by 3.8% and 4.8% in 2019/20. This growth in expenditure has reversed the previous trend of reducing costs per pupil, with primary and secondary pupil costs increasing in 2019/20 by 4.2% and 2.7% respectively. The real cost per primary pupil is now £5,595 compared to £5,695 in 2010/11. The real cost per secondary pupil is £7,531 compared to £7,521 in 2010/11.
5. Since 2010/11, the percentage of funded early years provision graded 'good or better' has improved from 87.1% to 90.2%, however rates have shown a small year on year decline in the last five years.



6. The percentage of children meeting all developmental milestones at their 27-30 month review has increased from 80.8% to 85.5% between 2013/14 and 2018/19, including a 1 percentage point increase between 2017/18 and 2018/19. Data for 2019/20 is not yet available.
7. Pupil attendance rates have remained at around 93% since 2010/11, falling slightly from 93.3% in 2016/17 to 93.0% in 2018/19. Attendance rates for looked after children are lower and have remained at around 86% across the period. Exclusion rates have continued to show significant improvement, falling year on year from 40.0 to 21.6 across the period, an improvement rate of 45.9%. While exclusion rates for looked after children remain higher, there has been a faster improvement rate. Rates per 1,000 pupils have fallen from 341 to 152 across the period, an improvement rate of 55.3%
8. While the vast majority of data in this years LGBF report presents the position pre-Covid, the 2019/20 educational attainment indicators refer to the academic year which was significantly impacted by the pandemic. For 2019/20 data, the absence of external assessment information led to grades awarded in 2020 being based on teacher estimates. These results are therefore not directly comparable with previous and future years. Any change between the attainment levels of the 2019/20 cohort and those of previous years should therefore not be seen as an indication that performance has improved, or worsened without further evidence.
9. Pre-Covid, measures of educational outcome have shown substantial positive progress since 2011/12 in the measures used in the LGBF, particularly for children from the most deprived areas in line with key priorities in education. Between 2011/12 and 2018/19, there has been substantial long-term improvement in the attainment of all pupils, and for those from deprived areas in relation to 5+ passes at SCQF level 5 and level 6. For level 5 awards, this increased from 51% to 63% for all pupils between 2011/12 and 2018/19, and from 29% to 45% for those from deprived areas. For level 6 awards, this increased from 26% to 35%, and from 10% to 19% for pupils from deprived areas
10. An improving trend could also be seen in average total tariff pre-Covid, increasing from 770 in 2011/12 to 895 in 2018/19, an increase of 16.3%. While this improving trend is evident for all SIMD groups, pupils from the most deprived groups have shown the largest improvement across the period, although tariff scores remain significantly lower than those achieved by pupils from less deprived groups. Average Tariffs have increased by 31.4% and 20.2% for the two most deprived groups compared to 11.7% and 8.5% for the least deprived groups.
11. The scale of changes seen between 2011-12 and 2018/19 reflect improvements equating to both better grades and more awards at higher SCQF levels. While achievement levels remain lower for children from the most deprived areas, there has been a faster rate of improvement within these groups.
12. Pre-Covid, the rate of improvement had slowed over recent years by many measures of attainment, including average tariff. The use of a wider range of achievement to recognise learners' success including ungraded awards and those not incorporated within the tariff scale reflects the increasing flexibility in the curriculum and may be important here.
13. Scottish schools continue to have a strong focus on employability, supported by national policies like Developing the Young Workforce. Progress in this area is evident in the improvement in participation of 16-19 year olds in further education, higher education, apprenticeships, training and employment from 90.4% to 92.1% between 2015/16 and 2019/20. In the last 12 months, there has been a 0.5 percentage point increase in the participation rate, from 91.6% to 92.1%. As with educational attainment, the gap in participation rates between the most deprived and least deprived areas has narrowed, but is still significant.
14. Satisfaction with schools has fallen by over 10 percentage points from 83.1% to 73.0% since 2010/11. However, following year on year reductions to 2017/18, satisfaction rates improved in in the past 2



years, from 70% to 73%. The LGBF satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and represents satisfaction levels for the public at large rather than for service users. Evidence shows there are differences between satisfaction levels for the wider public and service users, with satisfaction levels for service users consistently higher than those reported by the general population. While local analysis of service user experience and satisfaction is important, it is also useful to look at the wider perception of the public.

15. There has been a 18.8% growth in expenditure for Looked After Children since 2010/11, however this has fallen by 2.1% in the last 12 months. There has been a 25.0% growth in expenditure on children living in community settings and 14.3% growth in residential settings since 2010/11. In the last 12 months, both areas have seen a reduction in expenditure, - 1.1% for community expenditure, and -2.8% for residential expenditure.
16. In parallel, there has been a reduction in the number of children and young people who are looked after. There has been a 12.1% reduction in the number of children and young people who are looked after between 2010/11 and 2018/19 (data for 2019/20 is not yet available). The biggest reduction has been in those being looked after at home with parents (-35%), with little change (+0.1%) in the number of children looked after in kinship/foster care.
17. There has been slight improvement in placement stability for children who are looked after. The % of children experiencing more than one placement within the previous year reduced from 21.1% to 19.5% between 2010/11 and 2018/19. Data for 2019/20 is not yet available.
18. Child Protection re-registration rates (within 18 months) have remained fairly constant at around 6% between 2012/13 and 2018/19. However, between 2017/18 and 2018/19, rates increased from 6.0% to 7.2% and are currently at their highest level. Data for 2019/20 is not yet available.

Adult social care

1. To better reflect the wider integration landscape and progress across the whole system, the suite of adult social care measures was recently strengthened to include a number of new measures, with further inclusions planned for the period ahead. This will be particularly important to reflect the impact of Covid-19 on social care and the challenges which will continue as a result of the pandemic. Additional measures added so far aim to capture the wellbeing agenda at the heart of integration and strengthen coverage in key policy areas such as reablement and personalisation, and also to provide a richer picture in relation to system capacity and sustainability. The measures included are drawn from the core suite of integration indicators, and include data on delayed discharges, hospital readmissions, quality of care services, and a suite of 'satisfaction' measures to enable a focus on quality of life.
2. Significant variability exists across authorities reflecting the different stages of maturity integration authorities are currently at and the different local context and population profiles they serve. For example, factors such as the frailty of the local population, the availability of care home places and packages of care (particularly for those with the most complex care needs), discharge arrangements, co-ordination of follow up care, and communication between partners will be important in interpreting both national and local trends.
3. Councils' social care spending on adults has grown by 14.8% since 2010/11, and by 1.5% in 2019/20. Spending on home care and residential care for older people remains the most significant element of social care spend accounting for around 60% of the total.
4. Spending on home care for older people has risen by 22.6% since 2010/11, and by 5.2% in 2019/20. The number of provided hours of homecare has risen at a slower rate across this period, by 11.3% since 2010/11, and by 1.9% in 2019/20. Hourly costs have risen by 10.1% since 2010/11 from £23.72 to £26.13,



including a 3.3% increase in 2019/20. A significant element of this cost increase will be focussed on meeting living wage commitments. The delivery of homecare to meet increasingly complex care needs and other cost increases have resulted in an increase in the spending level which exceeds the growth in hours provided.

5. Net spending on residential care has fallen since 2012/13, by 5.5%. Due to a methodological change in 2012/13, direct comparison with years prior to this is not possible. The reduction in expenditure is largely because the net cost of residential care has come down rather than because the number of residents has fallen (-1.0%). Gross expenditure levels have remained steady over this period and the reduction in net expenditure indicates an increase in the income received by councils. The growth in the number of privately or self-funded clients as a proportion of all long stay residents over this period would support this trend, up from 28% to 34%. The average net cost of residential care per week per resident in 2019/20 is £401, compared with £421 in 2012/13.
6. Direct payments and personalised managed budgets have grown steadily across the period from 1.6% to 9.0% of total social work spend (1.6% to 5.6% excluding outliers), including a 1.8 percentage point increase in 2019/20 (0.5pp excluding outliers).
7. Progress has been made across the longer period in shifting the balance of care between acute and institutional settings to home or a homely setting. However, the growing elderly population living into older age means making further progress in this area will become increasingly challenging.
8. The proportion of older people assessed to have long term care needs being supported at home increased from 58.9% in 2010/11 to 61.7% in 2019/20. Rates have grown by 0.7 percentage points in 2019/20 after a small decline between 2017/18 and 2018/19. The number of people receiving home care has decreased over time and the hours of care they receive on average has increased, i.e. in shifting the balance of care, a greater resource has become targeted on a smaller number of people with higher needs. This position reflects the agreed eligibility criteria now in place to ensure the fair allocation of care.
9. While there has been an overall improving picture in terms of delayed discharges, improvements have levelled off in more recent years. Since 2013/14, the number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged has reduced by 16.1%, including a 2.4% reduction in 2019/20.
10. However, there has been an increase in hospital readmissions (within 28 days) across the same period. This has increased from 89.7 to 104.7 per 1,000 discharges between 2010/11 and 2019/20, a 16.7% increase. The trend has continued in 2019/20, increasing by 1.7%.
11. While there has been an overall improvement in care quality ratings since 2011/12, the most recent two years have seen consecutive deterioration in ratings. The percentage of care services graded 'good' (4) or 'better' (5) increased from 80.9% to 81.8% between 2011/12 and 2019/20. However, following four years of improvement, inspectorate quality ratings have fallen from 85.4% to 81.8% between 2017/18 and 2019/20, coinciding with the introduction of the new national Health and Social Care standards.
12. 'Satisfaction' measures in relation to quality of life, independent living, choice and control, and support for carers all reveal a decline across the period. The deterioration in perceived support for carers is most significant, showing an 8-percentage point reduction from 42.9% to 34.3% across the period. (Source: Health and Care Experience Survey).

Culture and leisure services

1. Despite a real reduction in spend of 26.5% since 2010/11, leisure and cultural services have sharply increased their usage rates, partly driven by the expansion in digital provision. During this time the



substantial increases in visitor numbers across sports (14%), libraries (41%), and museums (35%) have resulted in unit cost reductions of 35%, 50% and 34% respectively.

2. In 2019/20, there has been a further 3.3% real reduction in spend, marking 8 years of reducing spend on culture and leisure services. Attendances to libraries and museums are still on the rise over the last 12 months, by 1.9% and 4% respectively, leading to a further reduction in cost per use. However, sports facilities have seen a 4.5% drop in attendances over the same period which moderates the effect of 3.3% reduction in spend and has resulted in a 1.3% increase in cost per attendance at sport facilities.
3. Public satisfaction rates have fallen for all culture and leisure services since 2010/11, with the exception of parks and open spaces. Since the base year, satisfaction with libraries has reduced by 10.5 percentage points, museums and galleries by 6 percentage points, and leisure facilities by 6 percentage points.
4. However, for the first time since 2010, satisfaction rates showed improvement in 2019/20, by 0.9 percentage points for libraries, 0.5 for parks and open spaces and 1.1 for museums and galleries.

Environmental services

1. Environmental services are an area of significant spend for local authorities, and include waste management, street cleansing, roads services, trading standards and environmental health. These areas have seen some of the largest budget reductions in recent years, with real spending on environmental services reducing by 11% since 2010/11 (and by a further 0.7% in 2019/20).
2. This includes reductions in waste management (-2%) street cleaning (-31%) and trading standards and environmental health (-28%) since 2010/11. The reduction in overall waste management spend reflects an 8.3% reduction in waste collection and 3.7% growth in expenditure on waste disposal.
3. Alongside the overall reduction in spending on environmental services, there have been reductions in satisfaction with refuse and cleaning, and reductions in street cleanliness scores. Following the decline in 2018/19, the rate of recycling in 2019/20 is showing a small improvement, from 44.7% to 44.9%.
4. Since 2010/11, real spending on roads has fallen by 24.2%, including a 4.5% reduction in 2019/20 (excluding outliers). Since 2010/11, the road conditions index indicates conditions have been largely maintained across all class of roads with around 30% to 35% of roads continuing to require maintenance.

Corporate services

1. Corporate services spend has fallen by 26% in real terms since 2010/11, and now accounts for only 4.1% of total spending. This is the lowest corporate overhead ratio yet recorded and reflects councils' commitment to protect frontline services over 'back office' functions. It also reflects the maturation of councils' digital strategies. In 2019/20, there has been a 4.2% increase in the total general fund expenditure (0.7% adjusting for significant outliers) alongside a 0.8% reduction in spending on support services. The ongoing Review of Local Governance may provide an opportunity to mitigate some of the pressures on corporate services.
2. This reduction has been accompanied by significant improvement in key areas of performance. Council tax collection rates remain above 95%, although in 2019/20 there has been a dip of 0.2 percentage points after an all-time high in 2018/19. The cost of council tax collection has reduced by a further 7% in 2019/20, resulting in a 59% decrease in real terms since 2010/11. The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days remains above 90%, however has shown a slight dip since 2017/18, with rates reducing from 93.2% to 91.7% in 2019/20.



3. There has been continued annual improvement in the condition of councils' corporate assets over the period, with 82.5% of operational buildings suitable for their current use and 88.6% in satisfactory condition, the highest rates recorded since the benchmarking framework was launched.
4. The gender pay gap has narrowed across the last four years, from 4.5% to 3.4%. 2019/20 has seen the improvement rate accelerating, with the gap reducing a further 0.6 percentage points. Meanwhile, the proportion of the 5% highest earning staff who are female continues to rise. This is now at 57%, an increase of 10 percentage points since 2010/11.
5. Local Government absence levels are at their highest since 2010/11, revealing a 7% increase across the period. This reflects a 10% increase for non-teaching staff, and a 3% reduction for teaching staff. This is alongside a 4.3% reduction in FTEs for Local Government non-teaching staff and a 3% increase for teaching staff since 2010/11. Absence levels for both teaching and non-teaching staff have increased in 2019/20, by 3.1% and 3.8% respectively. For both groups, while the number of FTE's grew in 2019/20, the number of days lost increased at a faster rate.

Housing services

1. Councils continue to manage their housing stock well. Since 2010/11, the average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs has reduced by 28%, from 10.2 days to 7.3 days. Rent lost to voids has also reduced across this period, from 1.3% to 1.1%. However, since 2017/18 the % of rent lost has begun to increase, growing by 0.2 percentage points in the most recent two years. In 2019/20, £12.8m was lost due to voids, compared to £10.5m in 2017/18.
2. There have been consistent and significant improvements in terms of housing standards, with 95% of properties now meeting SHQS. Energy efficiency has also continued to improve, with the percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient rising by 19 percentage points, from 65% to 84% between 2015/16 and 2019/20. (Note, to reflect new energy efficiency standards, the LGBF now uses the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) as a reference instead of the NHER – SAP).
3. At the same time, the continued rate of growth in tenants' rent arrears from 5.6% to 7.3% between 2013/14 and 2019/20 reveals evidence of the increasing financial challenges facing both housing residents and councils alike. In 2019/20, this rate stabilised for the first time since 2013/14.

Economic development and planning

1. Economic development and tourism expenditure has increased by 10% since 2010/11. This growth is driven by significant capital expenditure across this period reflecting the regional economic growth agenda. This has grown by 121% since 2010/11 but reduced by 22% in 2019/20. Capital expenditure now forms 42% of total economic development expenditure, compared to 21% in 2010/11. Since 2010/11, revenue expenditure has fallen by 19.7%, although has increased by 11.6% in 2019/20.
2. Councils invest an average of £103,000 per 1000 population in Economic Development and Tourism, 5.2% more than in 2010/11, but 6.3% less than in 2018/19.
3. In terms of infrastructure for business, there is a 25% improvement in terms of efficiency in processing business and industry planning applications, reducing from 14 weeks to 10.5 weeks between 2012/13 and 2019/20. However, in 2019/20 this has shown a 16% increase, from 9 weeks to 10.5 weeks.
4. The cost per planning application has risen by 4.5% since 2010/11 but reduced by 3.6% in 2019/20. Across the period, the number of planning applications received by local authorities has declined by 29%, including a 2.5% reduction in 2019/20. Meanwhile expenditure on planning has reduced by 26% since 2010/11, including a further 6% in 2019/20. Planning has seen some of the largest reductions in expenditure of all service areas.



5. Town vacancy rates have remained relatively stable across the period despite challenging economic times, with figures currently at 11.7%. There has been a 23 percentage point increase in the availability of immediately available employment land, from 12.9% to 36.2% since 2014/15, but declining slightly in the 3 most recent years.
6. There has been continuous year-on-year improvement in the access to superfast broadband, now reaching 93% of properties. The Business Gateway start-up rate has reduced from 19% to 16.4% across the period.
7. Councils continue to spend over 25% of their procurement on local enterprises. This has increased over recent years, to 28.5% in 2019/20. Given the pressures on council budgets this is a positive outcome as it suggests that the drive to reduce costs has not resulted in local enterprises being displaced by national suppliers of goods and services.

Financial sustainability

8. In 2019/20, the framework introduced new measures to reflect the focus on Financial Sustainability. Local authorities are facing higher levels of scrutiny over their decision-making and financial management strategies as demand for services increases and cost pressures grow. Creating a common set of financial sustainability measures which are comparable across all Scottish local authorities, will support robust discussions around financial decision making and on the robustness of budgets.
9. From 2013/14, the proportion of income councils held in reserves has increased from 15.8% to 16.9%, showing that councils have added to their usable reserves across the period. Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue has remained stable at around 4%, and is currently 3.8%, within the approved rate for such balances of 2% to 4%.
10. The proportion of council revenue income being used to service debt has fallen from 8.5% to 7.2% since 2013/14 (and from 25.9% to 22.6% for HRA). Factors driving this are likely to be implementation of the 2016 Loans Fund regulations which allowed the re-profiling of principal repayments over a longer period of time thus reducing the annual loan charges. Effective borrowing, reduced interest rates and possible reduced capital investment may also be factors.
11. Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure has remained between 99% and 100% since 2013/14, showing slight but steady improvement across the period.

Tackling climate change

1. Given the significance of this major policy agenda for local government, work is underway to identify a suite of measures which could support Local Government in its efforts to contribute to national carbon reduction targets. As a starting point, two high-level measures on total CO₂ emissions have been included this year – CO₂ area wide emissions, and CO₂ area wide emissions within scope of local authorities.
2. The area wide and within scope CO₂ emissions measures follow a similar trend between 2010/11 and 2018/19, revealing a reduction in emissions of around 30%. Variation between authorities is significantly wider for area wide emissions (0.7 to 14.9) than for within scope emissions (3.5 to 7.9). Family Group analysis reveals a clear relationship with geography for within scope emissions, with rural authorities reporting significantly higher CO₂ emissions. No such relationship is evident for area wide emissions. Data for 2019/20 is not yet available.



Introduction and Key Trends

This year's report draws on 10 years of LGBF data to provide an evidence-based picture of where Local Government had reached pre-Covid. The pandemic has altered the landscape and fundamentally affected Local Government services and the lives of the communities it serves. Going forward, the continuity provided by the LGBF will be invaluable in understanding the impact of Covid on communities and on Local Government services. The framework will be critical in assisting the sector to learn lessons from its response and to strengthen and redesign services to support recovery and renewal. There is also now an opportunity to review and evolve the LGBF to reflect the new challenges and issues facing local government post-Covid, including innovation and transformation in the use of data and intelligence.

The focal points in this section are:

- i. The pre-Covid Picture – trends from 2019/20 LGBF data
- ii. The impact of Covid on Local Government services and local communities
- iii. Implications for the LGBF – continuity, evolution and data innovation

i. The pre-Covid picture

Despite significant and ongoing funding pressures, the long term trends in the LGBF data reveal that Local Government has continued to do well in sustaining performance, however some signs of strain are beginning to emerge.

In 2019/20, Councils were operating in a more challenging context than when the LGBF began in 2010/11. Total revenue funding for councils has fallen by 7.2% in real terms (and by 5.4% since 2013/14).² Recent uplifts in funding have been insufficient to offset the major reduction in funding experienced over the last ten years.

Funding for Councils is not increasing at a sufficient pace to keep up with demands. The overall funding position as set out above is exacerbated by the following pressures councils have had to manage across the last ten years: growing demographic pressures (>2% per annum); increasing costs, including the impact of living wage and pay settlements; additional impacts on demand from increasing levels of poverty; and higher public expectations. Councils have also faced increasing national policy and legislative demands, with a growing proportion of funding which has been ring fenced for these initiatives, reducing the flexibility councils have for deciding how they plan and prioritise the use of funding to respond to local priorities.

The 2019/20 data indicates that Local Government has managed the financial challenges well, reflecting a largely positive picture in terms of financial sustainability. Councils have delivered strong budget performance during this challenging time, stabilised or reduced borrowing costs, and overall have added to their reserves. This indicates councils have adopted a prudent approach against a climate of long anticipated financial uncertainties.

When looked at in totality, Local Government has largely sustained real-terms expenditure levels since 2013/14 despite reductions in funding from Scottish Government. Total General Fund Expenditure has grown in real terms by 0.7% in the last 12 months and fallen by 0.3% since 2013/14. Through legislation and Scottish Government policy, expenditure within Social Care and Education continues to be sustained and enhanced. This is often aligned to ringfenced funding. As these areas account for over 70% of the benchmarked expenditure within the LGBF, this therefore has a disproportionate effect on other Council services that are not subject to the same legislative or policy requirements. This means they are increasingly in scope to bear a disproportionate share of current and future savings. Since 2010/11, this has included: 26% reduction in culture and leisure spending; 26% reduction in planning spending; 26% in corporate support service spending; 20% reduction in economic development revenue spending; 24% reduction in roads spending; 28% reduction in

² <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefings/Report/2020/6/24/Local-Government-Finance--Facts-and-Figures-2013-14-to-2020-21>

trading standards and environmental health spending; and 11% reduction in environmental services spending.

The overall pattern is clear and unsurprising. Councils are prioritising statutory services and those areas where Scottish Government have allocated additional monies for specific purposes. The unpalatable but unavoidable choice faced by local authorities has been to prioritise where cuts should be made, and where investment is required to facilitate transformation. While there is clear evidence of a shift towards prevention and the anticipation of longer-term impact with the emphasis on early years, the reductions witnessed across some service areas may have important implications for other equally important priorities. Some of these are central to health and wellbeing priorities (culture and leisure services) and inclusive growth (economic development). And some are critical to Scotland's post Brexit offer (the quality of infrastructure, the integrity and responsiveness of the regulatory system). These areas are also key in terms of our resilience to and recovery from the Covid pandemic.

However, within these national trends, there is significant variation. Street cleaning, libraries, corporate services, community parks and open spaces, sports facilities, roads, environmental health and planning have all been hit hard, though with considerable variation across Scotland and at different times over the period of the LGBF. This lack of uniformity is an inevitable function of local democracy reflecting the different needs and priorities of local authorities.

Table 1 gives the breakdown of spending by service since 2010.

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

	Scotland 2010/11	Scotland 2018/19	Scotland 2019/20	% Change from 2010/11 to 2019/20	% Change from 2018/19 to 2019/20
Education	£4,669,987	£4,739,159	£5,077,611	8.0%	7.1%
Looked After Children	£436,796	£530,010	£519,075	18.8%	-2.1%
Adult Social Care	£3,008,422	£3,402,379	£3,454,520	14.8%	1.5%
Culture and Leisure	£602,440	£458,452	£443,383	-26.4%	-3.3%
Environmental Services	£813,907	£729,549	£724,340	-11.0%	-0.7%
Roads	£680,948	£540,661	£516,076	-24.2%	-4.5%
Planning	£145,191	£113,904	£107,024	-26.3%	-6.0%
Economic Development and Tourism	£404,226	£290,730	£324,476	-19.7%	11.8%
Central Support Services	£923,400	£686,390	£680,716	-26.3%	-0.8%

Note: Table 1 includes expenditure covered by the LGBF measures. While the LGBF measures reflect the significant areas of Local Government expenditure, there are some minor areas of spend excluded, which accounts for differences with Scottish Government published expenditure data. All trends represent gross expenditure, except Culture and Leisure and Residential Social Care which are based on net expenditure. Roads expenditure for 2019-20 has been adjusted to exclude expenditure on the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR).

Against this challenging financial context, significant improvement against key national outcomes has been delivered. The LGBF data provides a clear picture of improving performance in key policy areas across this 10-year pre-Covid period. For example:



- **Improving outcomes for children and young people, including the most vulnerable.**
The proportion of younger children meeting all developmental milestones has increased, along with higher levels of educational attainment, including for the most deprived. There is greater placement stability for children who are looked after and significant success in reducing school exclusions along with continued improvement in participation rates for 16-19 year olds. There has also been a significant expansion in early years provision, accompanied by an overall improvement in quality.



- **Significant transformation in social care provision.**
For older people, there has been progress in the personalisation agenda seen in the expansion of direct payment and personalised managed budget uptake, and progress in shifting the balance to greater community-based care alongside reductions in the rate of delayed discharge. There has also been an accompanying improvement in quality ratings of adult social care provision, particularly for care at home.



- **Inclusive economic growth has gained ground.**
Employment activities have seen more people supported into work, and critically a reduction in the % of people earning less than the living wage. Business infrastructure has seen significant improvement, including more procurement spent locally, an increase in available employment land, improved efficiency in processing business/industry planning applications, and significant growth in access to superfast broadband.



- **Culture and leisure have seen significant growth in digital provision.**
Culture and Leisure uptake has grown significantly, in part reflecting a significant digital shift and growth in virtual visits.



- **Positive progress towards better environmental outcomes.**
Recycling rates continue to improve along with a significant reduction in the proportion of waste landfilled. Carbon emissions, including those within scope of councils have reduced by 30%. The overall condition of the road network has also improved.



- **Improvements in housing quality and management.**
Significant improvements have been achieved in housing quality, energy efficiency and the management of voids and repairs.



- **Positive picture of council's corporate services.**
Improvements have been delivered in key areas of corporate performance, including council tax collection, invoicing, gender equality and the condition of corporate assets.

Whilst the above examples show that service performance has improved or been maintained remarkably well across key policy areas overall during the last ten years, there is evidence that performance, satisfaction, and system capacity are beginning to show signs of strain. Some important examples of this include: slowing progress in reducing the attainment gap (pre-Covid); an increase in child protection re-registration rates; recent declines in quality ratings for early years provision; and general slowing of improvement across corporate, economic, environmental and culture and leisure services.

These may be 'stress' indicators and a sign that, after almost 10 years, the challenging financial context is now starting to impact on local service performance. However, these are only short-term patterns, and the overall

trend data remains positive. These year on year changes need explored further, along with the substantial local variation (up and down) around these 'national' averages.

More concerning, as they reflect longer term trends are the increasing levels of council-wide sickness absence, tenant rent arrears, and hospital readmission rates. Local Government absence levels are at their highest since 2010/11, revealing a 7% increase across the period. This reflects a 10% increase for non-teaching staff, and a 3% reduction for teaching staff. This is alongside a 4.3% reduction in FTEs for Local Government non-teaching staff and a 3% increase in teaching staff since 2010/11. Absence levels for both teaching and non-teaching staff have increased in 2019/20, by 3.1% and 3.8% respectively.

The continued rate of growth in tenants' rent arrears from 5.6% to 7.3% between 2013/14 and 2019/20 reveals evidence of the increasing financial challenges facing both housing residents and councils alike. In 2019/20, this rate stabilised for the first time since 2013/14.

Hospital readmissions (within 28 days) have increased from 89.7 to 104.7 per 1,000 discharges between 2010/11 and 2019/20, a 16.7% increase. The trend has continued in 2019/20, increasing by 1.7%.

The long term declining public satisfaction with local services is also a concern, however, this has shown some positive signs of improvement in 2019/20. Public satisfaction rates have fallen for all services since 2010/11, with the exception of parks and open spaces. Education, Libraries and Street Cleaning have shown the most significant decline, all reducing by over 10 percentage points since 2010/11. However, for the first time since 2010, satisfaction rates for some areas showed improvement in 2019/20.

In summary, the pre-Covid picture emerging from the LGBF across the last 10 years is that Local Government has performed well across the period and delivered impressive achievements in areas of key policy priority despite growing pressure on budgets. This may in part be driven by the ring-fenced funding received, particularly in education and social care. However, there is evidence that performance, satisfaction, and system capacity are beginning to show signs of strain.

ii. The impacts of Covid

Impacts on local communities

This year's LGBF data sets out the position reached before the Covid pandemic delivered a significant shock to the system. Although the full effects will not be known for some time, there is a growing consensus that the future will see worrying new levels of poverty and inequality, a potentially overwhelming growth in mental health and wellbeing issues, and severe and long-lasting damage to the economy.

Research indicates that the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the public health measures taken to address the spread of the virus have been to widen the existing inequalities and exacerbate poorer outcomes, which is likely to be a long-term trend. Demographic groups that were already disadvantaged before the pandemic are more likely to experience negative effects in many different areas of their life, including in educational opportunities, employment prospects, financial security, social outcomes and health and wellbeing.³ Some of the most impacted groups are children and young people; older people who are isolated; people with pre-existing mental health problems; people with long-term disabling physical health conditions; unemployed people and those in insecure employment; Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities; single parents and women.⁴

3 <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2020/09/the-impacts-of-covid-19-on-equality-in-scotland/documents/full-report/full-report/govscot%3Adocument/Covid%2Band%2Binequalities%2BFinal%2BReport%2BFor%2BPublication%2B-%2BPDF.pdf>

4 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/impact-covid-19-communities-priorities-recovery-perspectives-organisations-working-communities/>

There are also warnings that a parallel pandemic of poor mental health is emerging, particularly for vulnerable demographic groups.⁵ The health impacts of Covid-19 and the broader impact on the economy and society are causing significant mental health difficulties such as prolonged grief, severe anxiety because of disrupted livelihoods, isolation and fears for the future, and lack of access to social support.

The impacts to the labour market from multiple lockdowns and extensive social distancing measures are severe and long-lasting, with some parts of the economy completely closed for lengthy periods while others are operating at significantly limited capacity. The IPPR estimate that across the UK over a million jobs currently furloughed will not return after Covid-19. These jobs are primarily held by those who are more likely to have no qualifications.⁶ Longer term damage is likely to come through changing behaviours, which will impact different industries in different ways, with businesses closing as a result. Women, BAME communities, young people and people with disabilities are already more likely to occupy low paid and unsecure positions and might be the most impacted by these long-term effects.

The pandemic has pushed many people into poverty, partly due to reduced income as result of reduced hours, reduced levels of pay from the furlough scheme and loss of employment. Analysis by the Legatum Institute suggests that 690,000 more people across the UK are now in poverty than would have been the case had the pandemic not occurred.⁷ As mentioned, this has not been evenly spread, with certain groups more likely to experience these negative effects, most often those who were already lowest paid and closest to poverty.

Impacts on Local Government services

These alarming trends create new patterns of need and vulnerability in our communities which are likely to have far reaching impacts on Local Government services. Some examples of which are outlined below:



- It is anticipated that Covid-19 will create an ongoing set of financial pressures impacting Councils in Scotland. Whilst the Scottish Government has allocated additional funding to Local Government for Covid-19 related financial impacts in 2021/22, only time will tell whether this is sufficient, with or without any further funding allocations that are made as part of the ongoing response to the pandemic. If the funding is insufficient and financial flexibilities are required to be used by councils, this may have an impact on the future financial sustainability of Local Government.



- There are growing concerns in relation to educational outcomes, and mental and emotional health for some of our most vulnerable children. For example, children and young people may be at a greater risk of neglect or abuse in the home as a result of school and early learning and childcare closures, and potentially reduced contact with professionals during this time. This is particularly true in relation to 'hidden' children, the ones whom children's services haven't seen before. The closure of schools may impact levels of attainment, including progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap, for the 2020-21 session and beyond.



- School leaver destinations are likely to be significantly impacted by Covid-19 for some time. Young people leaving school or graduating from university this summer are likely to be especially affected. They will be entering the labour market during a recession. It is clear from previous experience that this will not only lower their chances of getting a job immediately and will lower their wages substantially if they do, but also that those effects will persist for several years. In addition, workers under the age of 25 are two and half times more likely than those over 25 to have been working in sectors such as hospitality and non-food retail, those sectors hardest hit during the pandemic. The launch of the Young Persons Guarantee will be a

5 <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/scotland/coronavirus/divergence-mental-health-experiences-during-pandemic>

6 <https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/going-further>

7 <https://li.com/reports/poverty-during-the-covid-19-crisis/>

particularly important intervention here.⁸



- The impact of Covid within health and social care will continue across the coming period. Key areas of concern include the fragility of the care home sector, a frontline workforce that has been under tremendous pressure to maintain the same level of care, increased demands on mental health and wellbeing services and the way that services such as adult day services have had to adapt and change. Both living with, and recovering from Covid-19 is expected to increase the number of individuals requiring support from adult social care services. Services are already seeing additional demand associated with the pandemic, especially in the areas of adult protection, mental health and increasing support for unpaid carers. The pandemic has taken a significant toll on unpaid carers and families, who provide much needed support to some of our most vulnerable citizens.



- The pandemic has exacerbated significant concerns in relation to future funding for culture and leisure services, given the impact on current income streams. The current priority for the sector is on reopening facilities and services safely and effectively in line with Scottish Government guidance. The longer-term outlook is uncertain and there is recognition of the unprecedented challenges facing the sector due to the inevitable Covid-19 driven recession. The sector recognises the need to revitalise and rethink their role and approach. This includes promoting the role and value that culture and leisure will play in enhancing health and wellbeing, and strengthening the reach into communities, supporting recovery efforts.



- The challenges facing environmental services are likely to intensify, given that households are producing more waste than normal during lockdown and there is a reported increase in fly tipping. The impact of lockdown on roads services has resulted in a reduction in planned work and a reliance on reactive repairs of defects to keep road networks safe, which will inevitably lead to a backlog of repair work and a reduction in overall network condition and satisfaction. Considerable demands will continue to be placed on regulatory services (environment health and trading standards) to enforce Covid-19 public health measures and meet the demand for business support.



- The Covid 'major incident' is expected to skew all staff absence information in the short term i.e. during the pandemic and lockdowns. In the medium to long term, issues are already emerging as we transition into managing long-Covid absences where debilitating symptoms are still being experienced 6 months on. The consequences of delayed medical interventions and Covid-related mental health trauma may also result in increased absence rates.



- The economic impact of Covid will create direct challenges for the housing sector in relation to rental income. The projected increases in unemployment, along with fears of universal credit delays and backdating issues may result in rent arrears taking a significant hit and may lead to long-term arrears for many. Less rental income means less money for capital works programmes, which may have long term implications for stock quality. Lockdowns have also generated practical implications in terms of accessing properties for routine maintenance (i.e. gas boiler checks) and improvements. This has implications for works programmes timelines and could introduce significant challenges in relation to maintaining overall stock quality.



- Economic Development services across Scotland have been working at maximum capacity to deliver business support grant schemes on behalf of the Scottish Government. These grants have been a real lifeline for thousands of businesses and the failure rate would be far higher if it were not for these awards. When restrictions ease and businesses look to recover to previous levels of activity, councils will focus recovery efforts on areas which are strategically important and require the most support. Town centres, tourism, and rising unemployment are

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/young-persons-guarantee-phase-1-activity-plan/>

particular areas of concern. No One Left Behind,⁹ the local employability model launched in April 2019, will be critical in shaping Local Government's response to increasing unemployment and poverty levels.

Covid-19 will have prolonged impacts for the recovery of many council services, with some sectors, such as culture and leisure, likely to find it much harder to recover and develop in the way they might have done previously. The largely improving trends in Local Government performance in the ten years prior to Covid provide some resilience against the shock to the system, including in relation to financial sustainability. In those areas already showing signs of stress however, it will be important to monitor whether this will be exacerbated by the impacts of Covid.

iii. Implications for LGBF – Continuity, Evolution & Data Innovation

Providing continuity in the post-Covid world

The continuity the LGBF provides will be critical to understanding the full impacts of Covid-19 on long-term trends. This will be crucial to understand how the pandemic has affected Local Government services and the lives of the local communities it serves. It will provide vital intelligence to assist the sector to learn lessons from its response and to strengthen and redesign services around future policy priorities to support recovery and renewal.

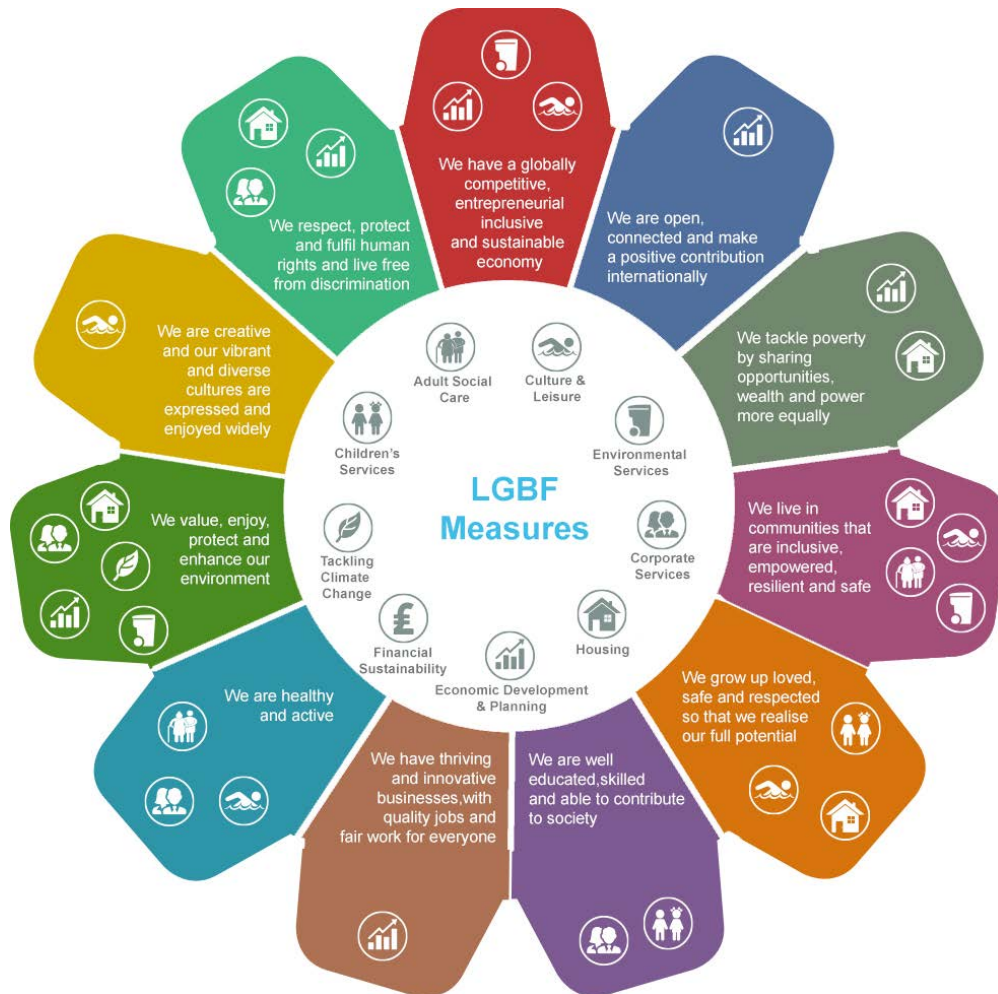
The existing 10-year data trends on core council services capturing expenditure, provision, performance, satisfaction and outcomes will provide a robust and comprehensive pre-Covid baseline against which impact (and progress) can be measured. The value in the LGBF lies within its whole system view of Local Government, covering all key policy areas. This data will show how core services responded during Covid, and also the medium and long-term impacts of Covid on these services. This will offer invaluable learning to help with recovery and renewal. The variation between councils will reflect different local contexts and priorities and will support councils to share practice and learn from each other.

Protecting the longitudinal significance of the framework will be vital in helping councils maintain focus and track progress on those longer-term strategic objectives and areas of transformation which will remain important priorities as we emerge from the pandemic.

The before and after dataset will also be critical in helping all spheres of government to track progress against the National Performance Framework (NPF), and in informing the reprioritisation that has and will continue to be made in the years ahead. Local Government is responsible for delivering 60% of the outcomes in NPF. Figure 1 shows how LGBF measures map to the outcomes in the NPF. The longitudinal data in the LGBF spanning pre and post-Covid will be essential in tracking and monitoring the role Local Government continues to play in addressing key outcomes such as child poverty, climate change, inclusive growth and the health and wellbeing of citizens.

⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/no-one-left-behind-delivery-plan/>

Fig 1: LGBF measures and the National Performance Framework



Evolving to respond to new challenges, risks and opportunities

There are significant new challenges, risks and opportunities arising from the Covid pandemic and the LGBF will need to evolve if it is to remain a useful tool for improvement as the sector strives to recover and renew. The LGBF Strategic Plan for 2021 - 2024 sets out how it will do this.

The significant long-term impacts from Covid on the economy, poverty and inequality, and mental health and wellbeing are key areas where a stronger focus in the framework will be required. It will be essential to work with professional associations and networks to understand what these new patterns of vulnerability and demand mean for Local Government services.

A critical risk across the public sector is that the system does not learn from its' successes and failures during Covid and by default instead reverts to doing things in the pre-Covid way. We have a unique opportunity within the LGBF to focus in on those things that are working well to help the sector build back better. This includes new ways of working, digital transformation and areas of ground-breaking service redesign. Evolving the framework to reflect lessons learned, new ways of working and changing priorities will be key if it is to be useful in shaping recovery and renewal, and if it is to continue to provide a useful platform to support learning and practice sharing.



Driving innovation and transformation in use of data/intelligence

The rapid pace of innovation and transformation has been a defining feature of Local Government's response to the pandemic and will be a key feature in how the sector recovers post-Covid. The sharper focus on the role of data and intelligence to inform the Covid-19 response has created a positive momentum around data sharing, data collaboration and data innovation. This has improved the currency of data and the use of intelligence for policy and decision making. There is an opportunity for the LGBF to build on the gains already achieved during this period and drive further innovation in Local Government's approach to data management.

A key focus of this will be the development of a Local Government Data Portal, a single data repository for Local Government data. The aim is to improve access to more timely data for decision making; improve governance around Local Government data; streamline the data reporting and scrutiny landscape; introduce greater automation and technical integration to simplify data management processes; improve data quality; and derive greater re-use and richer insights from data and intelligence produced by Local Government. Full realisation of this vision will take time given the transformational nature of the ambition. However, given the role of the LGBF, it is a challenge we must engage with and play a central role in addressing. Achieving this ambition will deliver substantial positives, not just for Local Government, but also for the wider public sector, including audit and scrutiny bodies and Scottish Government.

Conclusion

The pre-Covid picture demonstrates that across the previous 10 years, Local Government has delivered significant policy progress against a period of sustained financial challenge. However, some areas of stress in the system are beginning to appear. This overall picture of strong and improving performance and financial resilience has positioned Local Government well to respond to the immediate challenges presented by Covid-19.

The next period however brings an even more uncertain financial future along with significant projected increases in demand due to the long-term impacts of the pandemic both on communities and on key services. Data and intelligence will be more important than ever in helping Local Government respond to changing patterns in need and vulnerability, to learn lessons from its response thus far, and to grasp some of the positive opportunities emerging from this period in terms of digital transformation and new ways of working. The LGBF will evolve and adapt to respond to these challenges and ensure the approach continues to provide a valuable tool for Local Government improvement.



The LGBF Approach

3-WAY CONTROL

**WAIT HERE
UNTIL GREEN
LIGHT SHOWS**



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

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

1. It is important when looking at councils to compare like with like.
2. The focus presented in this report is on variations in spending and performance that councils can directly control.
3. The aim is to help councils improve and become more cost effective in delivering local services and through that support people in improving their life outcomes.
4. The framework provides high-level 'can openers' which are designed to focus questions locally on why variations in cost and performance are occurring between similar councils to identify opportunities for learning.

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

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

Councils continue to work together to 'drill-down' into the benchmarking data across service areas. This process has been organised around 'family groups' of councils so that we are comparing councils that are similar in terms of the type of population that they serve (e.g. relative deprivation and affluence) and the type of area in which they serve them (e.g. urban, semi-rural, rural). The point of comparing like with like is that this is more likely to lead to useful learning and improvement. Examples of best practice emerging from this collaboration are being shared across all local authorities and are being used to inform local improvement activity within self- evaluation, service review and service planning processes. Further information, briefing notes and case studies are available in the '[How Councils Are using the LGBF](#)' publication, and on the [LGBF website](#).¹⁰

The benchmarking data should not be considered in isolation. To support this, there is a growing focus to better align the benchmarking data with outcomes. A new [online interactive tool](#)¹¹ links the LGBF with outcomes data presented in the [Community Planning Outcomes Profile](#)¹² (a resource which provides trend data on outcomes, both at a local authority level, and at a locality level). The LGBF indicators have also been mapped to the National Performance Framework outcomes and public health priorities to support councils to demonstrate the important role they play in driving progress in these key areas. This will help to strengthen the narrative around the contribution council services play in improving outcomes, and support more strategic use of the LGBF in decision making and greater visibility within Public Performance Reporting.

¹⁰ www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/

¹¹ www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/outcomes-tool

¹² <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/performance-management-and-benchmarking/community-planning-outcomes-profile>



The introduction of thematic reporting in 2018/19 provides a ‘drill down’ into key policy areas to re-emphasise the ‘can opener’ nature of the LGBF information and strengthen the link between performance information and outcomes. The first of these reports focuses on children and young people’s services and is available on the LGBF website. This will encourage a more diagnostic use of the data, particularly within family groups. These developments will link with the [Community Planning Improvement Board \(CPIB\)](#)¹³ and support their work to improve the availability of performance evidence that can illuminate improvement in outcomes.

There is a continued commitment to make benchmarking information available to all citizens and users of council services. To further this end an online benchmarking public reporting tool has been designed called ‘[My Local Council](#)’¹⁴ and is incorporated within councils own local approaches to public performance reporting. All of the information generated by the LGBF is presented in this online benchmarking tool which contains “dashboards” for each council showing movement on indicators across the eight years covered, and a comparison with the Scottish and family group average for all indicators.

LGBF framework indicators

The framework is based on nine overall service groupings which cover the major public-facing services provided to local communities and the support services necessary to do that. This includes children’s services (education and childcare), adult social care, environmental services, culture and leisure, housing, corporate support services and economic development and planning.

To develop precise indicators of cost and performance for comparison between councils, these broad service categories are divided into more specific sub-categories. For example, children’s services divide into: pre-school education; primary education; secondary education; and child care and protection. For each category, standard indicators of spend and performance have been applied.

This year, the suite of measures has been strengthened to reflect the Climate Change agenda and the focus on Financial Sustainability.

A full list of service categories and indicators is attached (Appendix 1) and full technical specifications for all 97 indicators, including source details are available on the Local Government benchmarking website.

This framework is iterative, and councils continue to collaborate to strengthen indicators and address framework gaps. A Directors’ of Finance subgroup leads a programme of work to improve consistency in the recording of Local Financial Returns. We welcome public views in relation to how to improve this benchmarking framework and particularly if there are other measures which might usefully be included. You can provide feedback and suggestions by visiting our website (www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking).

LGBF data reliability

The LGBF has voluntarily adopted the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice to highlight the statistical rigour and reliability of framework data. Voluntary adoption of the code demonstrates our commitment to trustworthiness, quality and value and makes clear how our approaches and methods ensure the highest standards for production of data and analysis are met. This will provide important assurances to help ensure stakeholders within Local Government and the public have trust in our data.

An overview of highlighting 10 key messages on the credibility, relevance and quality of the LGBF data is included in Appendix 3).

¹³ www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/consultancy-and-support/community-planning-improvement-board

¹⁴ www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data



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

The purpose of this report

This report is an overview report and does not seek to replicate the local context or interpretation provided by each council via their Public Performance Reporting or the depth and detail of the '[My Local Council](#)' tool.¹⁵

The focus of this report is on three important areas:

1. Trends across Scotland for the key framework indicators covering the period 2010/11 to 2019/20 inclusive. For consistency all data is presented as financial years though some data may be for calendar years or academic years. For each unit cost indicator, we have presented the change over the period in **real terms**, that is taking account of the impact of inflation over time.
2. The level of variation across councils and factors shaping these trends including physical geography, population distribution, size of council and the impact of deprivation.¹⁶ Graphs are presented showing the level of variation across councils for each area benchmarking measure. To improve interpretation, these graphs include only the base year and two most recent years.
3. Identification of areas where unexplained variation exists, providing opportunities where councils may wish to target improvements and/or efficiencies.

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

¹⁵ www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data

¹⁶ Correlation analysis and Mann-Whitney/Wilcoxon Two-Sample Tests were carried out to establish where statistically significant relationships exist between framework indicators and levels of deprivation, rurality, population distribution and size of council.

Table 2: Overview table for all LGBF data 2019-20

Indicator Description	Scotland											%/value change 18/19 to 19/20	%/value change base* to 19/20
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20			
Cost per primary school pupil	£5,695	£5,537	£5,384	£5,268	£5,116	£5,148	£5,125	£5,229	£5,372	£5,595	4.2%	-1.8%	
Cost per secondary school pupil	£7,521	£7,299	£7,279	£7,271	£7,234	£7,317	£7,268	£7,220	£7,337	£7,531	2.7%	0.1%	
Cost per pre-school education registration	£3,939	£3,577	£3,522	£3,352	£3,640	£4,198	£4,480	£4,643	£5,141	£6,783	31.9%	72.2%	
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5		51	53	55	57	59	60	62	63	64*	dna	12.0*	
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6		26	27	29	31	33	34	34	35	38*	dna	9.0*	
% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)		29	32	34	37	40	41	42	45	47*	dna	16.0*	
% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)		10	11	14	14	15	16	17	19	21*	dna	9.0*	
The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week	£3,311	£3,498	£3,332	£3,468	£3,494	£3,722	£3,612	£3,653	£4,026	dna	10.2%	21.6%	
The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week	£241	£257	£284	£295	£307	£319	£337	£344	£357	dna	4.0%	48.2%	
Balance of care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the community	91.0	91.2	90.9	90.6	90.1	90.4	89.9	89.7	89.9	dna	0.2	-1.1	
% of adults satisfied with local schools	83.1		83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	72.5	73.0	0.5	10.1	
Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations		90.3	91.9	92.6	93.2	93.5	93.9	94.6	95.0	dna	0.4	4.7	
Overall average total tariff		770	798	827	860	877	888	894	895	929*	dna	16.3%*	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1		478	510	551	581	603	625	620	628	649*	dna	31.4%*	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2		618	644	685	716	741	751	752	743	759*	dna	20.2%*	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3		759	788	816	851	864	882	899	875	904*	dna	15.4%*	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4		909	929	962	984	998	1002	1019	1015	1029*	dna	11.7%*	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5		1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1224	1195	1240*	dna	8.5%*	

* For 2019/20, the absence of external assessment information and the Ministerial direction to award estimated grades have led to a different pattern of attainment than we have seen in previous years. The results for 2019/20 should not be directly compared to those in previous years or future years. The %/value change columns for these indicators therefore exclude the 2019/20 data, and cover only the years up to 2018/19.



	Indicator Description	Scotland											%value change 18/19 to 19/20	%value change base* to 19/20
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019/20			
Children's Services	% of children meeting developmental milestones (27-30 months)				80.8	80.8	81.6	82.4	84.6	85.5	dna	2.2	4.7	
	% Funded early years provision rated good/better	87.1	90.6	91.3	92.6	93.5	91.9	91.7	91.0	90.6	90.2	-0.4	3.1	
	School attendance rates	93.1		93.6		93.7		93.3		93.0		-0.3	0.1	
	School attendance rates (looked after children)	86.3		88.7		86.8		88.2		86.8		-1.4	0.5	
	School exclusion rates	40.0		32.8		27.2		26.8		21.6		-5.2%	-18.4%	
	School exclusion rates (looked after children)	340.8		280.3		246.8		210.1		152.2		-26.7%	-55.3%	
	Participation rates for 16-19 year olds						90.4	91.1	91.8	91.6	92.1	0.6	1.7	
	Child protection re-registrations within 18 months			6.5	6.8	6.7	6.2	6.5	6.0	7.2	dna	20.4%	11.6%	
	% of looked after children with more than 1 placement in the last year	21.1	21.4	21.2	21.9	21.4	20.7	21.2	20.5	19.5	dna	-5.1%	-7.7%	
	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy									72.3	dna			
	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy									79.1	dna			
	Literacy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils									20.7	dna			
	Numeracy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils									16.8	dna			



	Indicator Description	Scotland											%value change 18/19 to 19/20	%value change base* to 19/20
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20			
Corporate Services	Support services as a % of total gross expenditure	5.4	5.7	5.6	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.0	4.4	4.3	4.1	-0.2	-1.4	
	% Of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women	46.3	48.5	48.7	50.7	51.7	51.9	52.9	54.6	55.5	56.7	1.2	10.5	
	The gender pay gap						4.5	4.2	3.9	4.0	3.4	-0.5	-1.1	
	The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax	£16.27	£15.31	£15.12	£13.55	£12.07	£11.30	£9.56	£7.71	£7.09	£6.58	-7.2%	-59.6%	
	Sickness absence days per teacher	6.6	6.2	6.6	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.1	5.9	6.2	6.4	3.1%	-3.1%	
	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)	10.8	10.4	10.9	10.3	10.8	10.6	10.9	11.4	11.5	11.9	3.8%	10.5%	
	% of income due from council tax received by the end of the year	94.7	95.1	95.2	95.2	95.5	95.7	95.8	96.0	96.0	95.8	-0.3	1.0	
	% Of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days	89.5	90.2	90.5	91.9	92.5	92.8	93.1	93.2	92.7	91.7	-1.0	2.2	
Adult Social Care	Older persons (over 65) home care costs per hour	£23.72	£22.95	£23.27	£22.62	£22.30	£23.16	£24.14	£24.92	£25.30	£26.13	3.3%	10.1%	
	Direct payment & personalised budget spend as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+	1.6	2.9	6.0	6.4	6.9	6.7	6.4	6.8	7.2	9.0	1.8	7.4	
	% Of people 65+ with long-term needs receiving care at home	58.9	59.2	59.8	59.8	60.0	60.7	60.1	61.7	61.0	61.7	0.6	2.7	
	% Of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life				85.0		84.0		80.0		80.0	-0.1	-5.0%	
	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible				82.8		82.7		81.1		80.8	-0.4	-2.0%	
	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided				83.1		78.8		75.6		75.4	-0.2	-7.7	



	Indicator Description	Scotland											%value change 18/19 to 19/20	%value change base* to 19/20
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20			
Adult Social Care	Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role				43.0		40.0		36.6		34.3	-2.3	-8.7	
	Older persons (over 65's) residential care costs per week per resident	£457	£462	£421	£405	£409	£398	£397	£390	£396	£401	1.3%	-12.2%	
	Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges	89.7	92.5	93.5	95.3	97.2	98.1	101.0	102.7	103.0	104.7	1.7%	16.7%	
	Proportion of care services graded 'good' (4) or better in Care Inspectorate inspections		80.9	80.2	80.2	80.5	82.9	83.8	85.4	82.2	81.8	-0.3	1.0	
	Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, per 1,000 population (75+)				921.8	1043.7	914.7	839.8	761.7	792.7	773.8	-2.4%	-16.1%	
Culture and Leisure	Cost per attendance at sports facilities	£4.18	£3.74	£3.57	£3.56	£3.26	£3.19	£3.09	£2.85	£2.68	£2.71	1.3%	-35.2%	
	Cost per library visit	£4.01	£3.78	£3.58	£2.87	£2.70	£2.67	£2.12	£2.17	£2.10	£2.00	-4.7%	-50.1%	
	Cost of museums per visit	£4.95	£4.03	£4.08	£3.73	£3.67	£3.33	£3.54	£3.66	£3.56	£3.27	-8.1%	-33.9%	
	Cost of parks& open spaces per 1,000 population	£30,546	£28,176	£26,908	£26,023	£25,789	£23,819	£22,219	£20,764	£20,710	£20,107	-2.9%	-34.2%	
	% Of adults satisfied with libraries	83.5		83.0	81.0	77.0	74.0	73.0	72.0	72.1	73.0	0.9	-10.5	
	% Of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	83.1		86.0	86.0	86.0	85.0	87.0	85.0	82.5	83.0	0.5	-0.1	
	% Of adults satisfied with museums and galleries	75.5		78.0	76.0	75.0	71.0	70.0	69.0	68.9	70.0	1.1	-5.5	
% Of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	74.6		80.0	78.0	76.0	73.0	73.0	72.0	69.3	69.0	-0.3	-5.6		
Environmental	Net cost per waste collection per premises			£67.23	£68.49	£71.44	£70.21	£68.83	£69.14	£69.04	£68.77	-0.4%	2.3%	
	Net cost per waste disposal per premises			£104.95	£102.96	£100.50	£106.49	£105.34	£106.27	£100.05	£98.65	-1.4%	-6.0%	
	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	£23,386	£22,489	£19,939	£18,143	£17,427	£16,879	£15,453	£16,195	£15,890	£15,440	-2.8%	-34.0%	
	Cleanliness score (%age acceptable)	95.4	96.1	95.8	96.1	93.9	93.4	93.9	92.2	92.8	92.2	-0.6	-3.1	



	Indicator Description	Scotland										%value change 18/19 to 19/20	%value change base* to 19/20
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20		
Environmental Services	Cost of roads per kilometre	£13,067	£11,899	£11,306	£10,962	£10,851	£11,172	£11,026	£10,580	£10,102	£11,262	11.5%	-13.8%
	% of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	30.3	30.5	29.4	28.7	29.0	29.0	29.5	30.2	30.0	30.6	0.5	0.3
	% of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	35.8	36.3	35.0	35.2	36.1	34.8	34.8	35.9	35.7	35.0	-0.8	-0.8
	% of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	35.0	36.0	34.8	36.6	37.4	34.7	34.6	36.2	36.3	35.1	-1.1	0.1
	% of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	41.9	38.3	40.1	39.4	39.3	40.1	39.5	39.0	38.2	37.8	-0.4	-4.1
	Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	£28,668	£25,425	£24,288	£25,562	£24,540	£24,418	£22,799	£22,416	£21,267	£19,723	-7.3%	-31.2%
	Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population			£5,822	£6,261	£6,163	£6,269	£5,860	£6,174	£6,040	£5,952	-1.5%	2.2%
	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population			£18,466	£19,301	£18,377	£18,149	£16,940	£16,242	£15,261	£13,771	-9.8%	-25.4%
	% of total household waste arising that is recycled	38.7	40.1	41.1	42.2	42.8	44.2	45.2	45.6	44.7	44.9	0.2	6.2
	% of adults satisfied with refuse collection	80.9		83.0	83.0	84.0	82.0	79.0	75.0	74.9	73.0	-1.9	-7.9
% of adults satisfied with street cleaning	73.3		75.0	74.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	66.0	62.9	59.0	-3.9	-14.3	
Housing Services	Gross rent arrears as a % of rent due for the reporting year				5.6	5.9	6.2	6.5	6.7	7.3	7.3	0.0	1.7
	% of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.1	0.1	-0.2
	% of dwellings meeting SHQS	53.6	66.1	76.6	83.7	90.4	92.5	93.6	93.9	94.3	94.9	0.5	41.3
	Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs				10.2	9.9	9.4	8.7	7.5	7.8	7.3	-5.9%	-27.9%
	% of council dwellings that are energy efficient						65.2	71.2	75.3	80.9	84.1	3.2	18.9



	Indicator Description	Scotland											%value change 18/19 to 19/20	%value change base* to 19/20
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20			
Corp. Asset	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	73.7	74.8	75.9	78.2	79.0	79.6	79.8	80.8	82.1	82.5	0.3	8.8	
	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	81.3	82.7	82.6	80.9	82.0	81.5	84.5	86.3	87.2	88.6	1.4	7.3	
Economic Development	% of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes			9.1	12.5	14.1	14.1	14.0	14.3	12.6	12.7	0.1	3.5	
	Cost of planning and building standards per planning application	£4,195	£4,310	£5,652	£3,810	£3,730	£4,382	£4,085	£4,239	£4,551	£4,385	-3.6%	4.5%	
	Average time per business and industry planning application			12.8	13.7	10.6	10.6	9.3	9.3	9.1	10.5	16.0%	-24.7%	
	% of procurement spent on local enterprises	27.2	26.2	27.2	26.9	27.5	25.4	26.5	27.4	28.7	28.5	-0.2	1.3	
	No of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population				19.0	18.9	16.9	16.6	16.8	16.7	16.4	-1.8%	-13.8%	
	Investment in economic development & tourism per 1,000	£98,094	£87,750	£82,389	£80,478	£76,144	£69,780	£86,319	£97,215	£110,113	£103,194	-6.3%	5.2%	
	Proportion of people earning less than the living wage			18.8	18.6	19.3	19.6	20.1	18.4	19.4	16.9	-2.5	-1.9	
	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband				56.1	67.5	78.6	85.9	91.1	92.0	93.3	1.3	37.2	
	Town vacancy rates					10.1	11.9	10.2	11.5	10.0	11.7	1.7	1.6	
Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan					12.9	27.2	38.4	40.8	37.6	36.2	-1.3	23.3		



	Indicator Description	Scotland										%value change 18/19 to 19/20	%value change base* to 19/20
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20		
Financial Sustainability	Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue				15.8	16.6	17.9	17.2	16.9	16.5	16.9	0.4	1.1
	Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue				3.9	4.2	4.3	4.1	3.9	3.7	3.8	0.1	-0.2
	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - General Fund				8.5	8.4	7.8	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.2	-0.7	-1.3
	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - Housing Revenue Account				25.9	24.1	24.7	24.4	23.6	22.8	22.6	-0.3	-3.3
	Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure				99.1	99.0	99.0	99.3	99.3	99.4	99.4	0.0	0.3
Climate Change	CO2 emissions area wide per tonne, per capita	7.5	6.8	7.1	6.8	6.1	5.8	5.5	5.4	5.3	dna	-1.9%	-30.3%
	CO2 emissions are wide: emissions within scope of Local Authority per tonne, per capita	7.2	6.5	6.7	6.4	5.7	5.5	5.2	5.0	4.9	dna	-2.0%	-31.6%





Children's Services



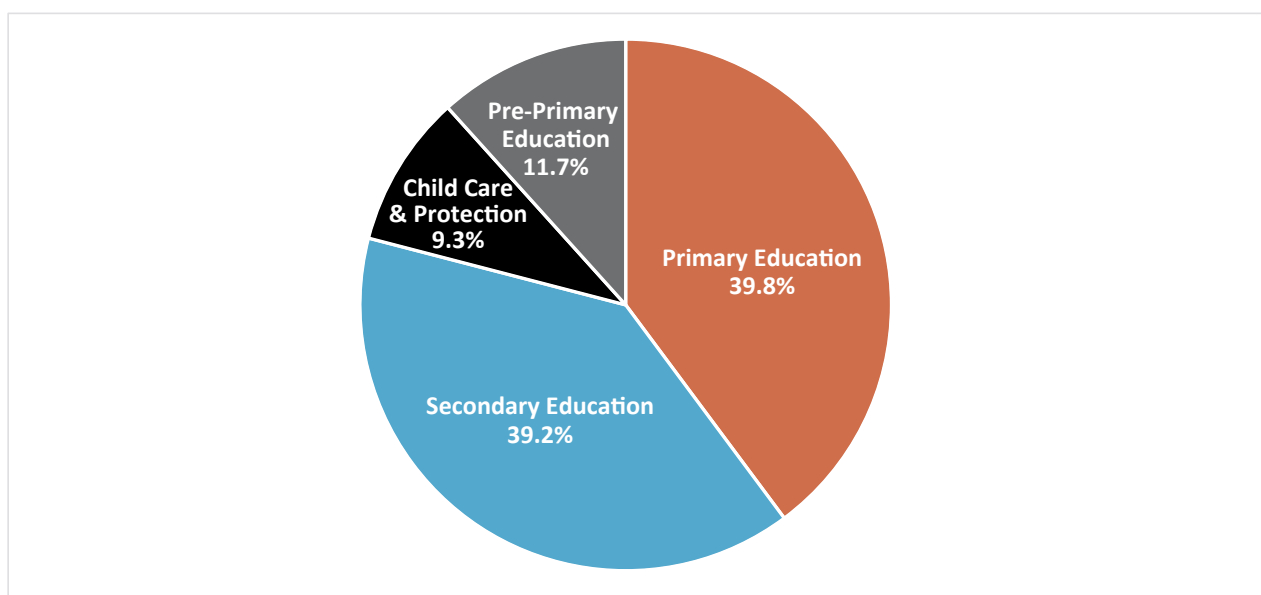
Expenditure on Children's services has been sustained and expanded between 2010/11 and 2019/20. Real-term spending has increased by 8% on Education (range: -14.3% to +23.5%), and by 19% on services for Looked After Children (range: -43% to +104%). During this time, there has been significant improvement in performance and outcomes across key aspects of the service, including for the most vulnerable. This includes progress in the proportion of younger children meeting developmental milestones; expansion in early years provision accompanied by an overall improvement in quality; higher levels of educational attainment, including for the most deprived; greater placement stability and significant success in reducing school exclusions for children who are looked after; and continued improvement in participation rates for 16-19 year olds.

The impact of Covid on children and young people, particularly on the most vulnerable, is an area of significant concern. While the full impact of Covid-19 on children's services will only become clear over a longer period of time, early evidence highlights concerns in relation to educational outcomes, mental health and emotional health for some of our most vulnerable children. Children and young people may be at a greater risk of neglect or abuse in the home as a result of school and ELC closures, and due to potentially reduced contact with professionals during this time. The reduction in referrals to children's services during lockdown and evidence revealing that less than 5% of vulnerable children attended school during lockdown highlight the potential risks in this area. This is particularly true in relation to 'hidden' children, the ones who children's services haven't seen before whose families are now facing poverty and who may be experiencing abuse for the first time. The impact on stability and security in placements and in relation to contact with family members for children who are looked after, may also be affected by the Covid restrictions in place. The potential increased future demand in relation to vulnerability may also have consequences on attempts to shift resources and funding for preventative and early intervention services across the coming period. 'The Promise'¹⁷ to care experienced children and young people will underpin how councils respond to new and growing harms emerging from the Covid pandemic.

The majority of data in this section highlights the position of children's services pre-Covid-19. However, as the educational attainment indicators cover the academic year, rather than the financial year, this means 2019/20 data reflects achievement which was significantly impacted by the pandemic. As the assessment methodology used to award grades in 2019/20 does not allow direct comparison with results in previous years, data for 2019/20 is presented separately.

The graph below shows the proportion of total spend on each of the major elements of children's services.

Fig 2: Proportion of gross revenue expenditure for children's services by element 2019-20



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

17 <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Promise.pdf>



As can be seen, primary and secondary school provision are the major spend areas, with pre-school education and childcare and protection¹⁸ accounting for a very much lower percentage of total spending on children. The proportion spent on pre-primary has grown over recent years in line with the policy agenda to expand early years provision. Each element is looked at in turn below.

2019/20 data on looked after children will be published in April/May 2021 therefore is not included within this analysis. The Benchmarking Framework will be updated to incorporate these figures at that time.

Pre-school provision

For pre-school educational provision for children (“nursery school”), spending has been standardised as total spend per publicly funded early learning and childcare (ELC) registration. Over the ten-year period the Scottish average for the cost per ELC registration has increased by 72.2%, an increase in real terms of £2,844 per registration. This reflects an 80.3% increase in gross expenditure and a 4.7% increase in the number of ELC registrations, an additional 4,345 places. While all councils have increased expenditure in this area, the scale varies significantly, ranging from an increase of 16% since 2010/11 to an increase of 200%.

In the last 12 months, real unit costs have increased by 31.9%. This reflects an increase in gross expenditure of 31.7% and a 0.2% decrease in the number of registrations during this period. Again, while all councils have increased expenditure in the past 12 months, this ranges from an increase of 4% to an increase of 77%.

Table 3: Cost per pre-school registration

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£3,939	£3,577	£3,522	£3,352	£3,640	£4,198	£4,480	£4,643	£5,141	£6,783	31.9%	72.2%

From August 2014, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 required local authorities to increase the amount of early learning and childcare from 475 hours a year to 600 hours for each eligible child. By August 2021, the Act introduces a further commitment to the near doubling of entitlement to funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours a year for all three and four-year olds and eligible two-year olds. This additional commitment is supported by additional funding from Scottish Government.

In the years leading up to the introduction of the 1140 duty, local authorities phased in expanded entitlement. The impact of the new entitlements has been to increase the unit cost per pre-school place due to the increased hours associated with each funded place. The additional staffing costs in delivering the new entitlements, and the commitment by councils to offer the extended hours in a way that allows parents some choice and flexibility over what pattern of hours they can get, will influence costs here. The establishment of an hourly sustainable rate paid to funded providers will also be a factor in understanding cost patterns.

In 2019/20, the average cost per registration was £6,783 with substantial and widening variation between councils, ranging from £4,551 to £9,756 per registration. Average costs tend to be higher in the most deprived councils than in the least deprived councils (£7,657 compared to £6,576). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group.

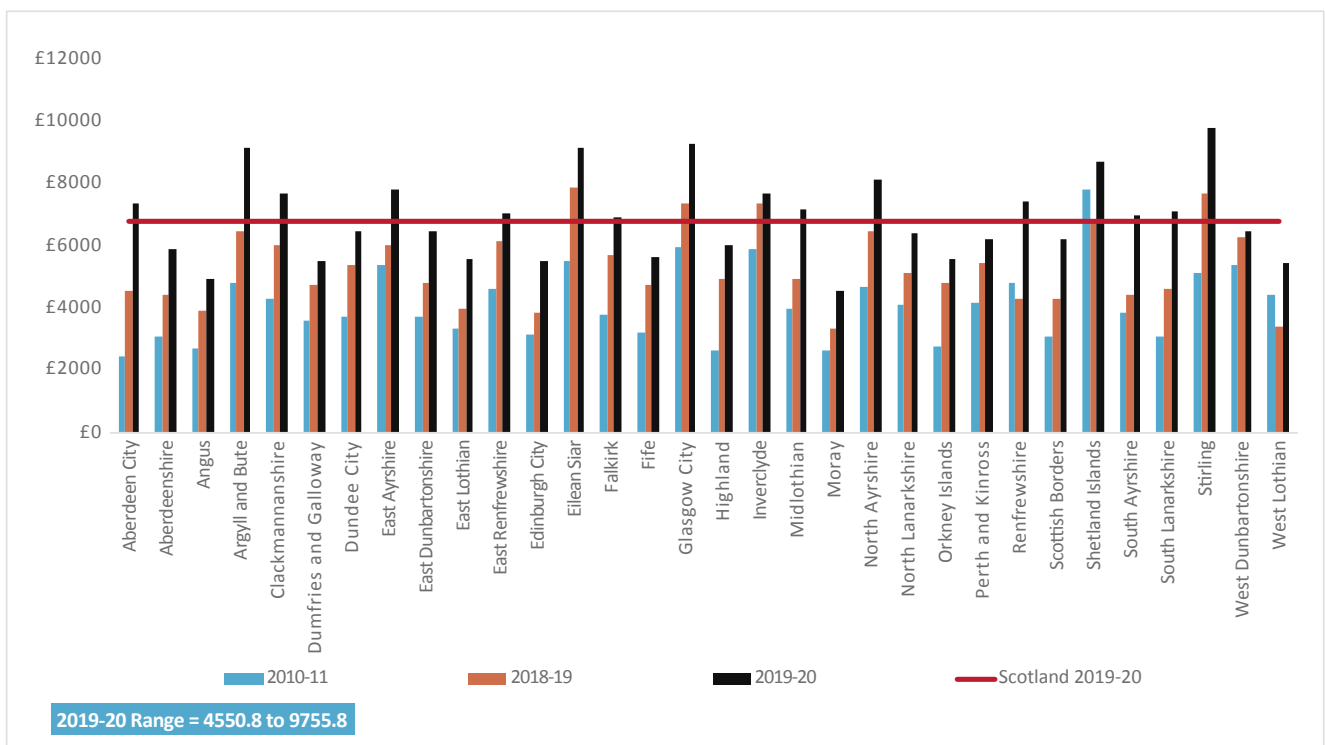
¹⁸ Expenditure on Looked After Children Placements (Community and Residential)



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

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

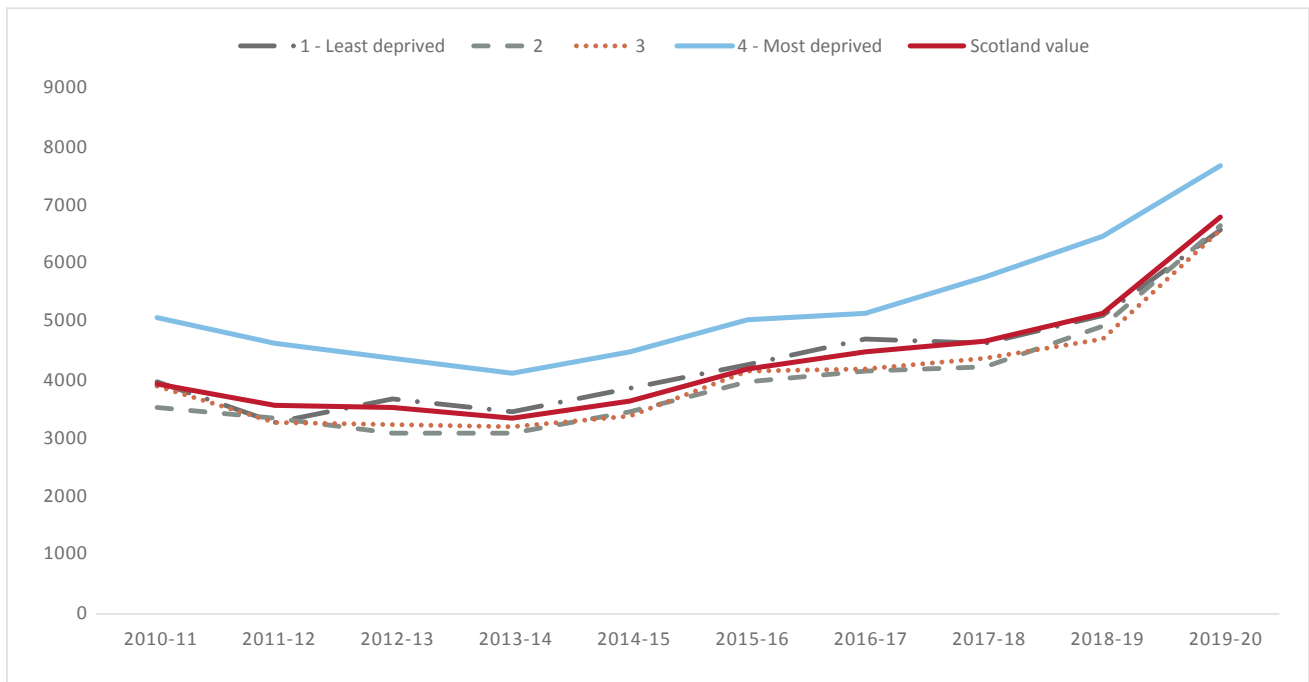
Fig 3: Cost per pre-school registration (£)



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



Fig 4: Cost per pre-school education registration (£) by family group - deprivation



Pre-school performance

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

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

Care Inspectorate quality evaluations reflect the number of publicly funded early years providers which were graded good or better for all quality themes . This is presented as a percentage of all publicly funded early years provision which was inspected. Overall, the proportion of publicly funded services graded good or better for all quality themes has increased between 2010/11 and 2019/20 although there has been a decline in the past five years. Between 2010/11 and 2014/15, quality ratings improved from 87.1% to 93.5%. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, small year on year reductions have seen quality ratings fall to 90.2%.

This trend is however not universal, with 15 authorities continuing to show improvement in quality ratings across the past 5 years. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, the change in quality ratings across councils ranged from an improvement of 12 percentage points to a decrease of 24 percentage points.

The balance between Local Authority and Partner provision may be an important factor for further exploration. The early years expansion has seen a rapid growth in the use of partner provision. In 2020, 27% of all children who will receive expanded hours will be in partner provision, up from 20% in 2019.¹⁹ Given Local Authority run services continue to receive higher quality ratings compared to other sectors, what impact this has on the overall trend may merit further exploration.

Improving quality of early years provision is a cornerstone of the Early Years expansion programme and while the current focus of investment is to deliver on the expanded entitlement commitment, the ambition is that quality improvements will follow.

¹⁹ Improvement Service Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Delivery Progress Reports - 2018-2020



Table 4: Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better²⁰

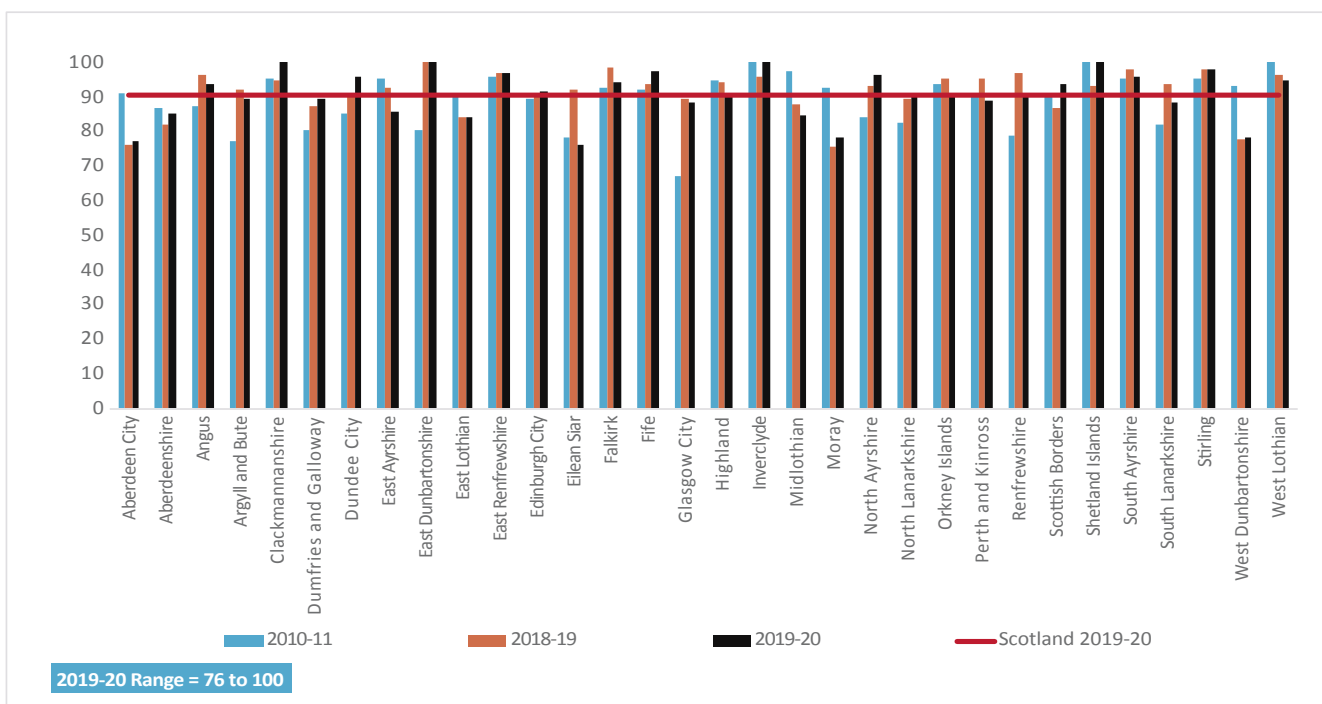
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
87.1	90.6	91.3	92.6	93.5	91.9	91.7	91.0	90.6	90.2	-0.4	3.1

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

- The decreasing number of registered day-care of children services
- Variation in return rates of annual returns, inspection methodology and inspection frequency
- Variations in the question wording in the annual return in line with changes to government policy (the biggest change in the question was between 2014 and 2015).
- Number of cancellations and new registrations of services
- Workforce expansion associated with 1140 duty, lowering the average experience level of the workforce.

There is considerable variation across councils, with good/better quality ratings in 2019/20 ranging from 76% to 100%. This variation has widened in recent years and does not appear to be systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of authority. The underpinning data and methodology used for this measure will be subject to further quality assurance going forward to ensure it is robust and reliable.

Fig 5: Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better



Source: Figures supplied by the Care Inspectorate

²⁰ Data is a snapshot as at 31 December each year.



Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

Children's development as they progress through the pre-school setting is reflected as the percentage of children meeting developmental milestones, i.e. with no concerns across any domain, at their 27-30 month review. This includes those with no concerns recorded but some domains incomplete/missing.

During 27-30 month reviews, the health professional (normally a health visitor) assesses children's developmental status and records the outcome (e.g. no concern, concern newly suspected as a result of the review, or concern or disorder already known prior to the review) against each of eight developmental domains (social, emotional/behavioural, speech language and communication, gross motor, fine motor, vision, hearing and problem solving). This is a key outcome measure adopted by the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC), formerly the Early Years Collaborative (EYC).

The percentage of children with no concerns increased from 80.8% to 85.5% between 2013/14 and 2018/19 revealing improvement in this important outcome area. While the average trend indicates positive progress across the period, there is variation between councils, ranging from an improvement of 10 percentage points to a 5 percentage point decline. While almost all authorities have reported improvements since 2013/14, ten authorities have shown a decline in the most recent 12 months reported.

It is important to note that changes in methodology and assessment practice in 2016/17 may affect comparability with previous years. The introduction of a new domain in the 27-30 month review has led to an increase in the number of incomplete returns. In addition, across the same period, there has also been a change in practice with Health Visitor assessments moving from clinic-based assessments towards greater focus on home-based assessments.

Table 5: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2013-14 to 2018-19
80.8	80.8	81.6	82.4	84.6	85.5	dna	0.9	4.7

Data for 2019/20 will be published later in 2021 and will be included in the LGBF when available.

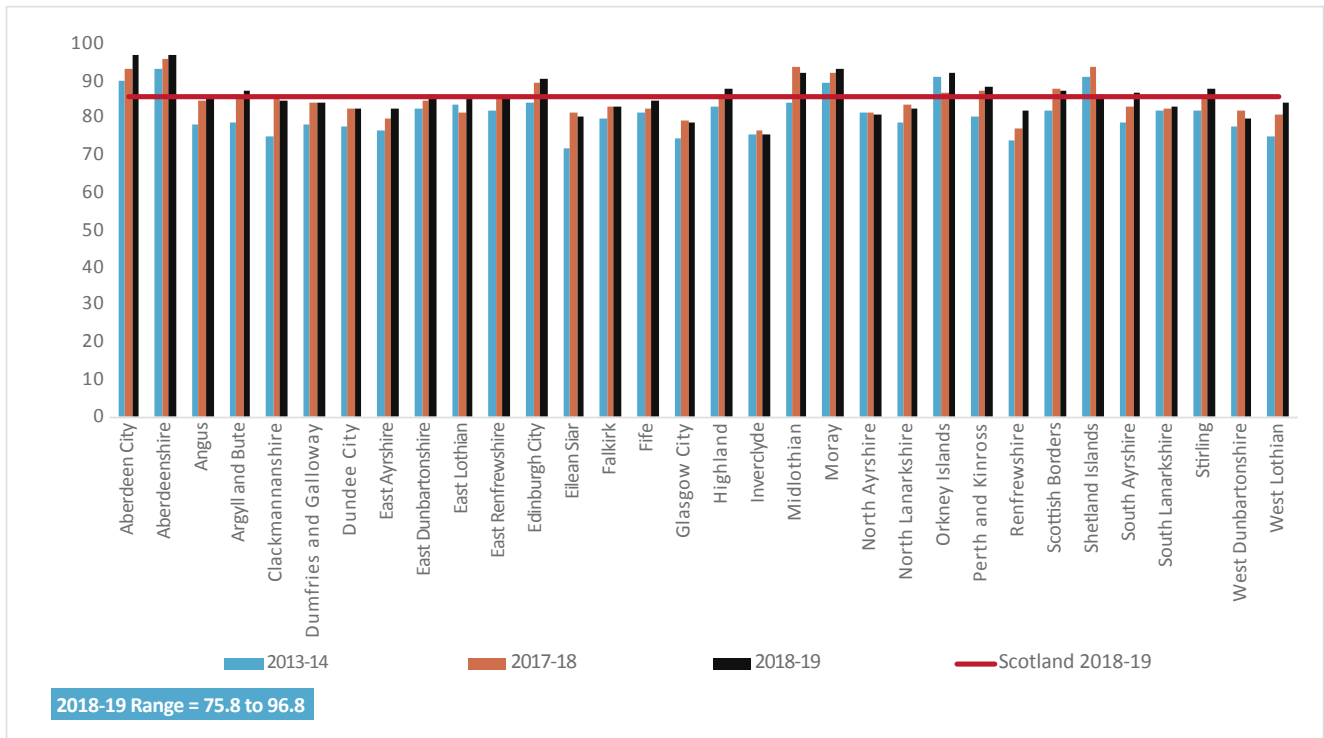
There is significant variation across councils, with figures in 2018/19 ranging from 75.8% to 96.8%. The percentage of children meeting developmental milestones is significantly lower in councils with higher levels of deprivation, 80.3%, compared to 90.3% for councils with lowest levels of deprivation.

In 2018/19 more than one in five children (22%) from deprived areas had at least one developmental concern compared to one in eleven for the least deprived areas (8%). Looked after children are twice as likely to have at least one developmental concern (28%) compared to those not looked after (14%) reflecting the broader vulnerability, and generally poor health, of this group of children.²¹

²¹ <https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/child-health/early-child-development/>

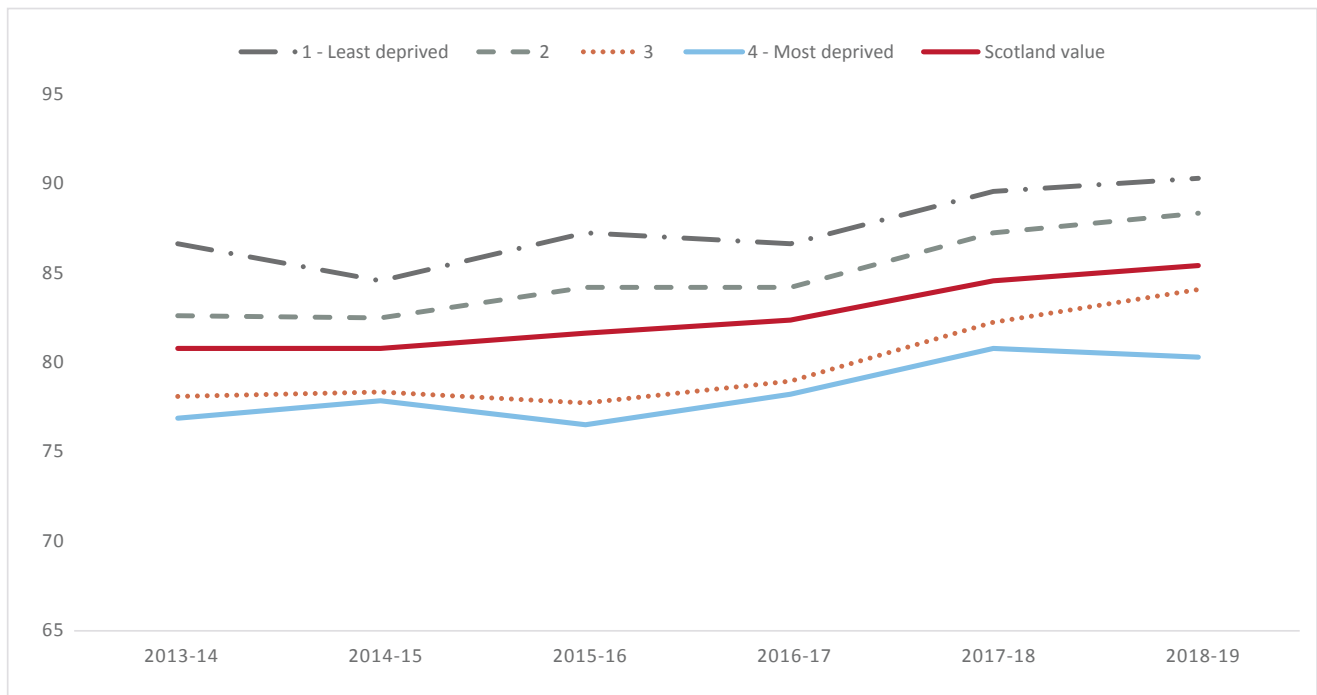


Fig 6: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones



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

Fig 7: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones by family group - deprivation





Primary and secondary school spending

The pattern of spend on primary and secondary schooling is standardised as “total cost per pupil”. In both primary and secondary education, the significant fall in costs observed between 2010/11 and 2014/15 has been cancelled out by recent increased expenditure. Average pupil costs in 2019/20 have largely returned to 2010/11 levels.

This trend is not universal, however. While the majority of councils have seen costs rise in recent years, eight authorities have reported a reduction in either primary or secondary costs in the past 12 months. The range in movement across authorities is - 2% to +12%.

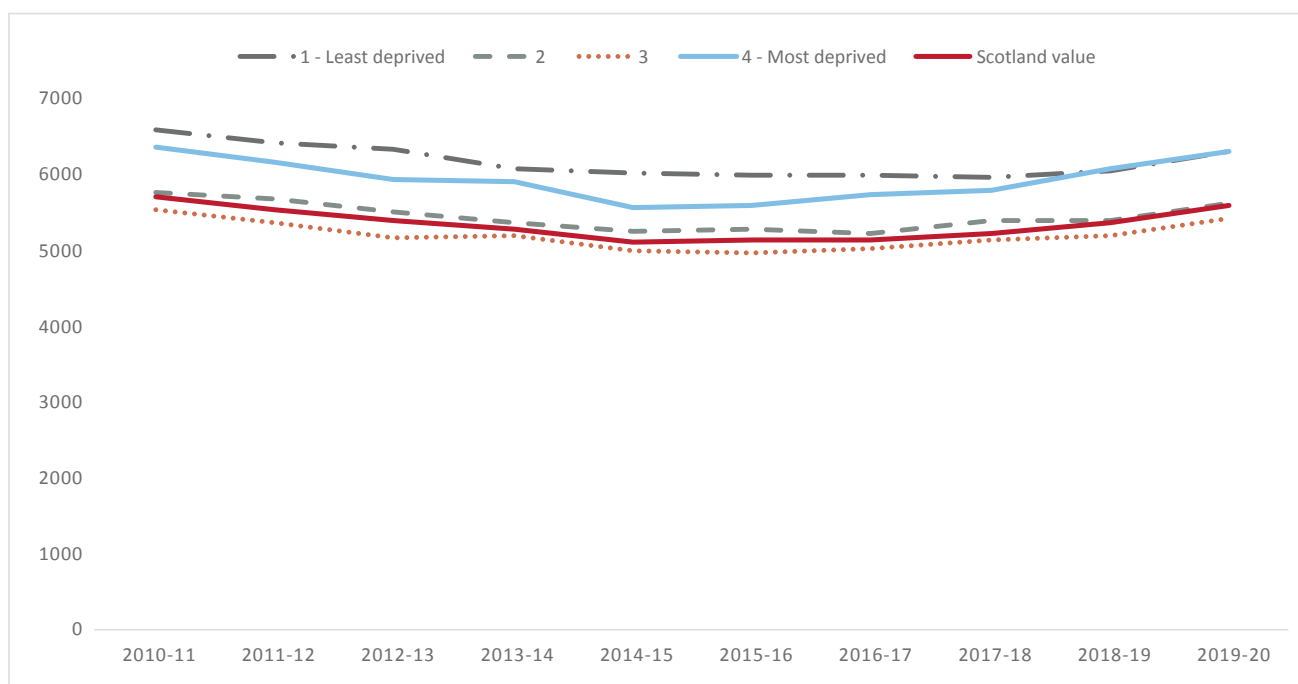
The recent increase in education spend by most authorities largely reflects the teachers’ pay award and additional monies received from central government via the Attainment Scotland Fund.

After a decade in which public sector pay has been frozen or rises capped at 1%, the 3% pay award for teachers in 2018/19 and 7% in 2019/20 following the relaxation of its public sector pay policy has a significant impact on costs. Around 60% of primary and secondary school spending is teaching staff costs. Given the current agreement between the Scottish Government and local authorities that teacher numbers will be maintained in line with pupil numbers, this represents a relatively fixed cost to councils. The award of a further 3% in 2020/21 will continue to impact budgets.

The Attainment Scotland Fund has seen in additional monies provided to Local Authorities and schools to support improvements in equity in education. In 2019/20, this reflected around £185 million in additional funding, including Pupil Equity Funding of £122 million, around £50 million for the Challenge Authorities and an additional £12.25 million from Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund.²²

Family Group analysis shows that in recent years expenditure has increased fastest for those authorities with the highest levels of deprivation. In the last two years, primary costs have increased by 9.1% for the most deprived councils on average, compared to 5.4% for the least deprived councils. Similarly, secondary costs have increased by 4.1% and 1.2% respectively. The distribution of additional monies will have played an important role here.

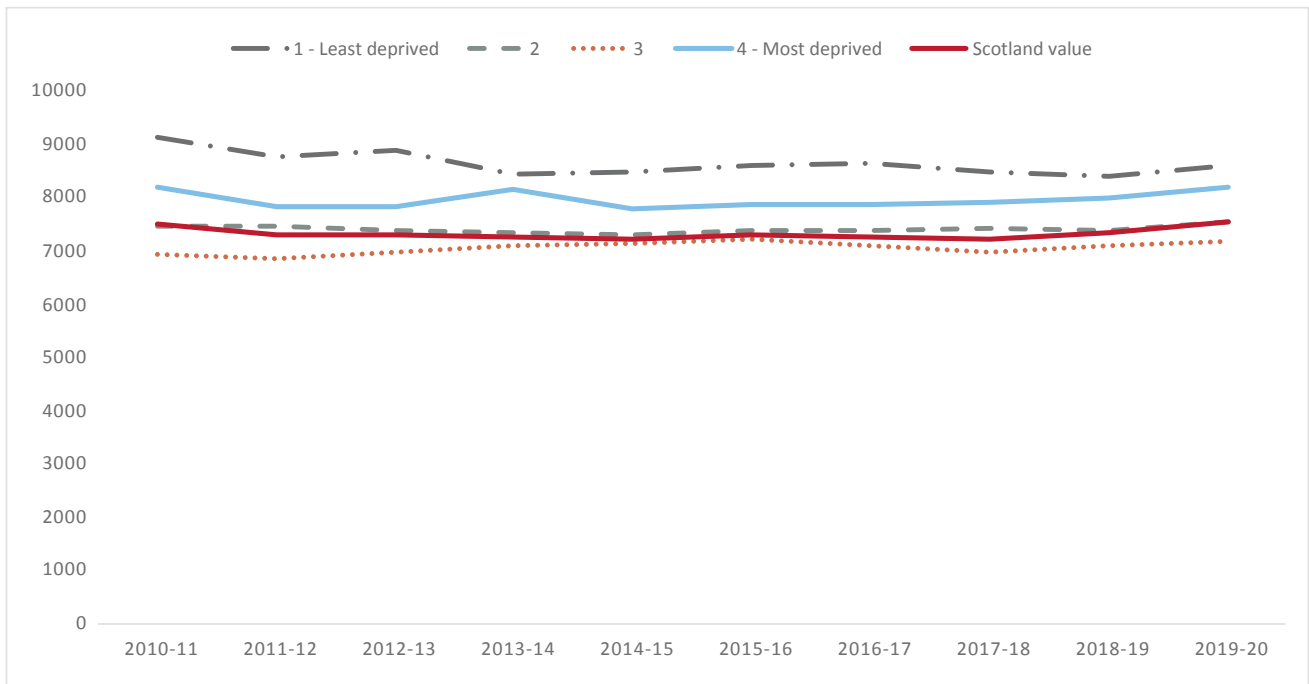
Figure 8: Cost per primary pupil by family group - deprivation



22 <https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/pupil-attainment/>



Figure 9: Cost per secondary pupil by family group - deprivation



Cost per primary pupil

There has been a real terms reduction of £100 per primary pupil since 2010/11, representing a 1.8% reduction. While real gross expenditure has increased by 7.3% across the period, there has been a 9.2% increase in pupil numbers during this time.

In 2019/20, the average cost per primary pupil increased by £224 from £5,372 to £5,595, an increase of 4.2% from the previous year. This reflects a 3.8% increase in gross expenditure and a 0.4% reduction in pupil numbers.

Table 6: Cost per primary pupil

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£5,695	£5,537	£5,384	£5,268	£5,116	£5,148	£5,125	£5,229	£5,372	£5,595	4.2%	-1.8%

Cost per secondary pupil

There was a real terms cost increase of £11 per secondary pupil between 2010/11 and 2019/20, representing a 0.1% increase in unit costs. There has been a 3.0% reduction in pupil numbers across this period and a 2.9% reduction in gross expenditure.

In 2019/20, the average cost per secondary school pupil increased by £195 from £7,337 to £7,531, an increase of 2.7% from the previous year. This reflects a 4.8% increase in expenditure, and a 2.1% growth in pupil numbers.

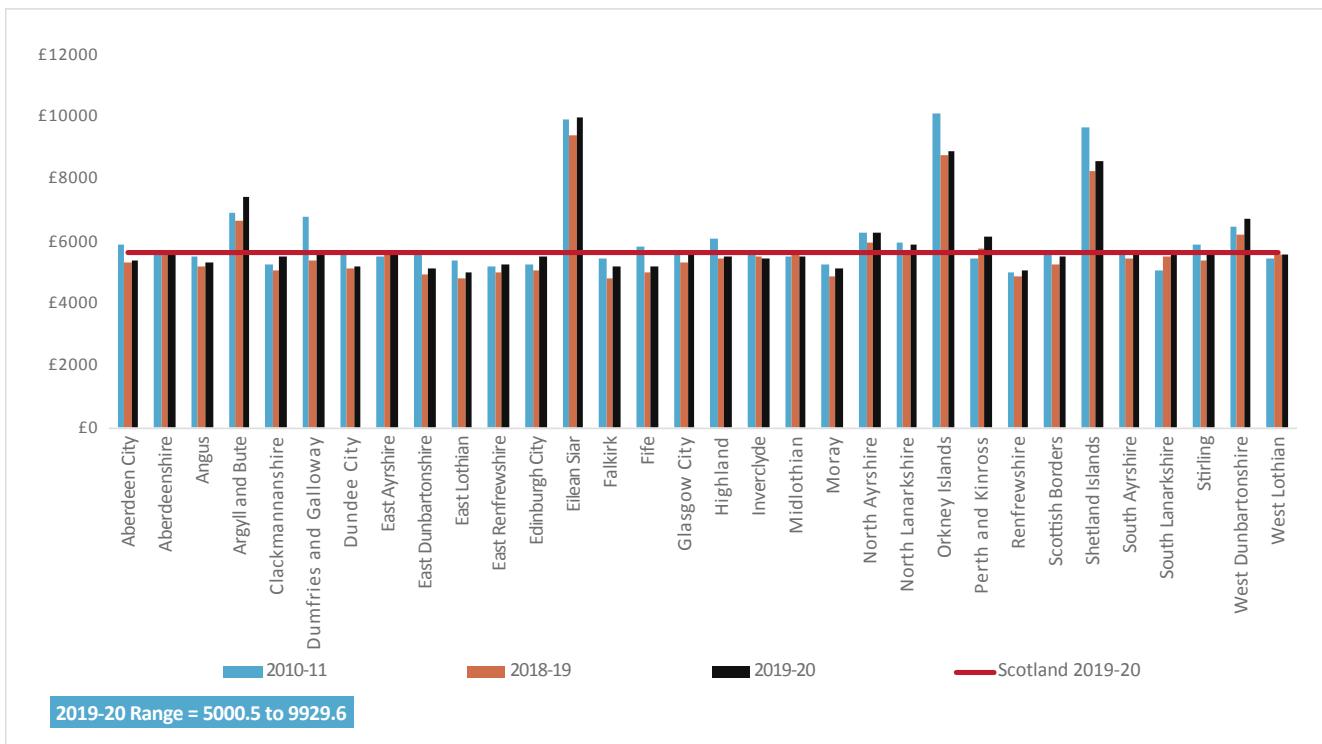


Table 7: Cost per secondary pupil

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£7,521	£7,299	£7,279	£7,271	£7,234	£7,317	£7,268	£7,220	£7,337	£7,531	2.7%	0.1%

There is still a considerable although narrowing level of variation across councils, particularly for secondary education. Cost data continues to show a very distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the island councils spending significantly more than others. In primary education, costs range from £5,000 to £9,929 (£5,000 to £7,419 excluding islands) while in secondary the range is £6,641 to £11,719 (£6,641 to £10,328 excluding islands).

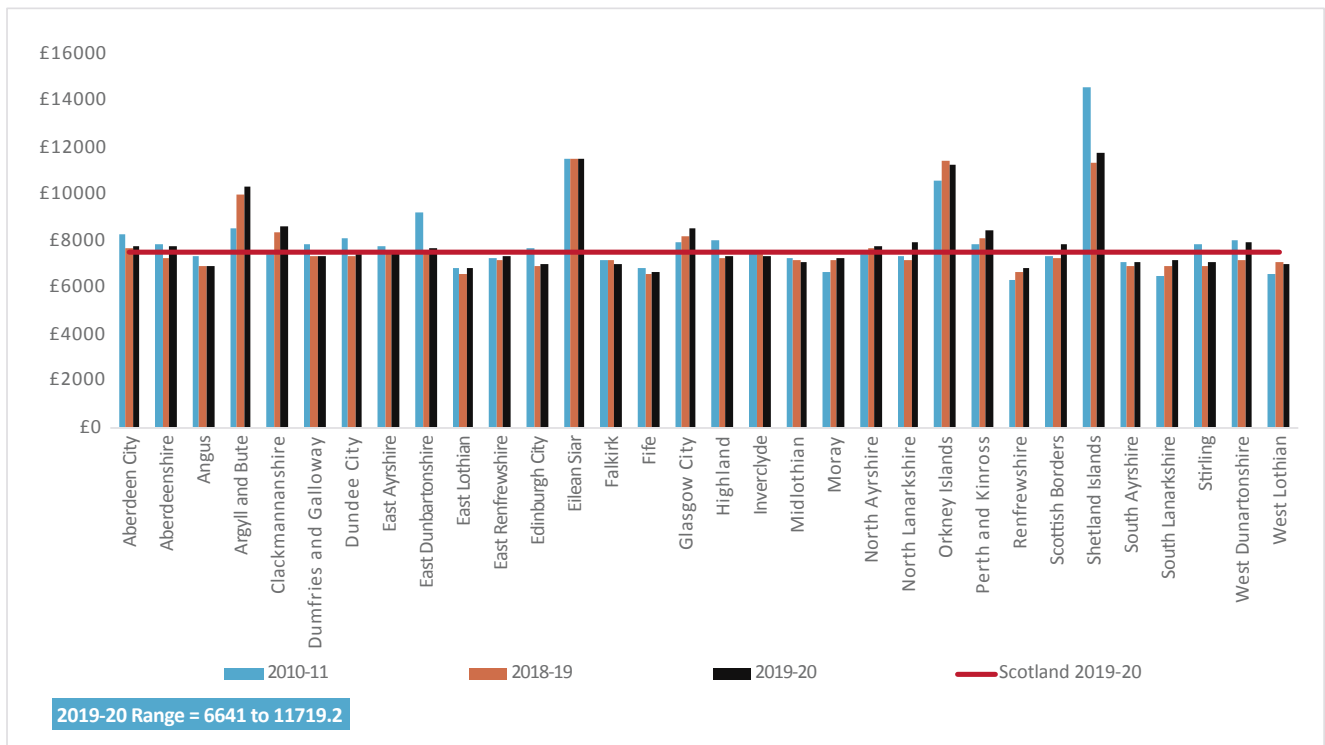
Fig 10: Cost per primary school pupil (£)



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



Fig 11: Cost per secondary school pupil (£)



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

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

- *Teacher demographics*
- *Local choices and priorities in relation to non-ringfenced elements of staffing budget such as support staff, teaching assistants, support for children with additional support needs, development teams*
- *PPP/PFI contract costs and arrangements*
- *Service design and growth of campus/hub school models*
- *Management structure and balance of senior roles*
- *Access to additional monies such as The Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity funding*
- *Demographic variability – depending on existing class sizes and teacher numbers locally, changes in pupil numbers will have a varying impact on expenditure patterns for councils.*

Primary and secondary school performance

Primary school performance

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



Since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) each local authority has worked with its schools to develop a framework for monitoring the progression of individual children through the curriculum.

Curriculum for Excellence Achievement levels capture the proportion of children in stages P1, P4, P7 and S3 of school who have achieved the “expected” level of CfE (i.e. those who have achieved the level expected for most children by the end of that stage of schooling). Each school reports annually on the proportion of children in stages P1, P4, P7 and S3 of school who have achieved the “expected” level of CfE.

In 2018/19, the LGBF introduced the following measures to help support local improvements in learning for pupils within the Broad General Education (stages P1 through to S3 of schooling):

- Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy
- Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy
- Literacy Attainment Gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 Combined)
- Numeracy Attainment Gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 Combined)

Due to the Covid pandemic and the closure of schools, the Scottish Government suspended the collection of the literacy and numeracy attainment data to avoid adding further pressures on schools during this challenging period and citing potential comparability issues with previous years. Data for 2019/20 is therefore not available, and the latest data from 2018/19 is included below.

Table 8: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils achieving expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy (to be updated)

	2018-19			
	All Children %	Most disadvantaged (bottom 20% SIMD) %	Least disadvantaged (top 20% SIMD) %	Gap (percentage points)
Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy	72.3	63.1	83.7	20.7
Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy	79.1	71.7	88.5	16.8

Source: Scottish Government

The frameworks developed within each local authority to measure the progression of learning are supported by a system of local moderation and peer review. These help to ensure a common understanding of the progression of learning across the schools within each local authority, and provide confidence that measured improvements over time at local authority level reflect real improvements in learning.

The framework used by each local authority is different and is supported by local arrangements for assessment, tracking and monitoring of pupil learning. Differences between local authorities in the level of achievement for CfE levels may reflect these differences in local approach, and caution should therefore be exercised when comparing data between local authorities. Further work to understand and support improvements in this area will be considered in the LGBF work programme in the period ahead.



Fig 12: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in literacy

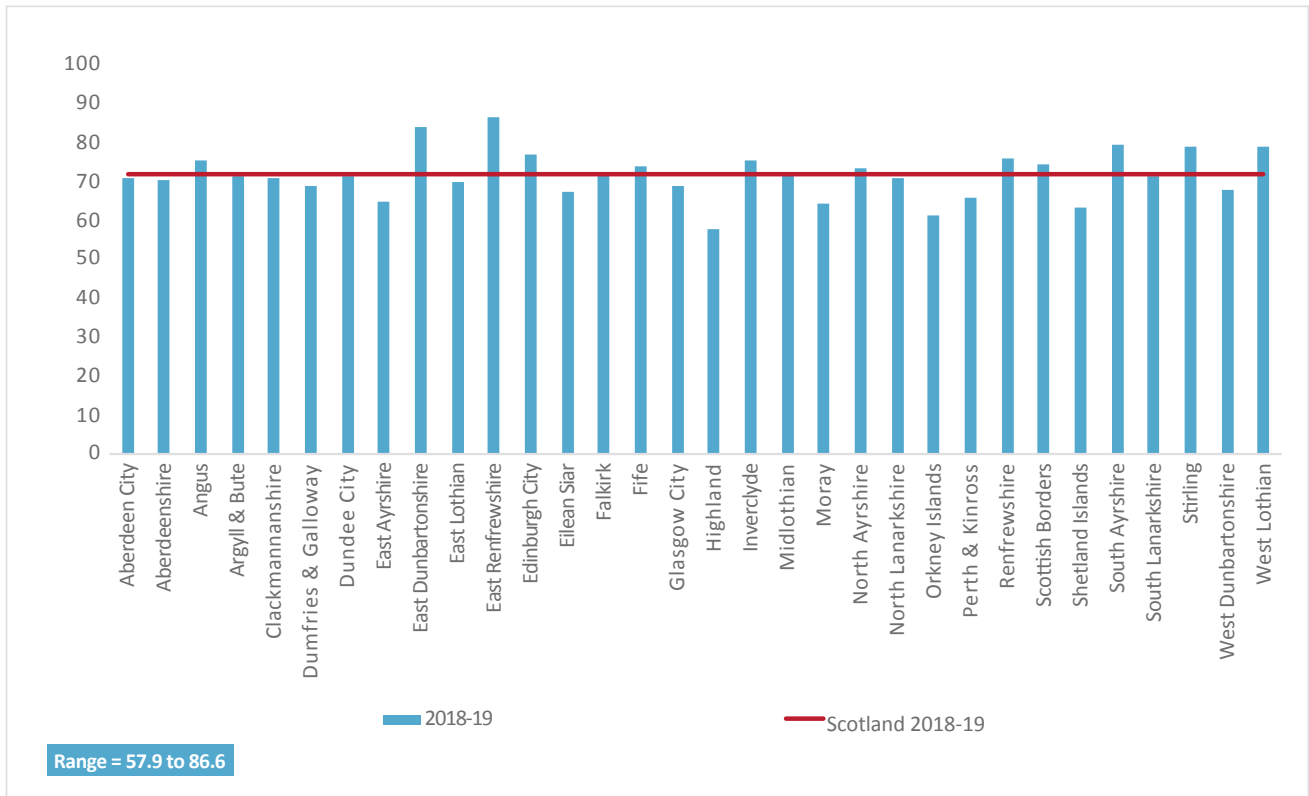


Fig 13 Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in numeracy

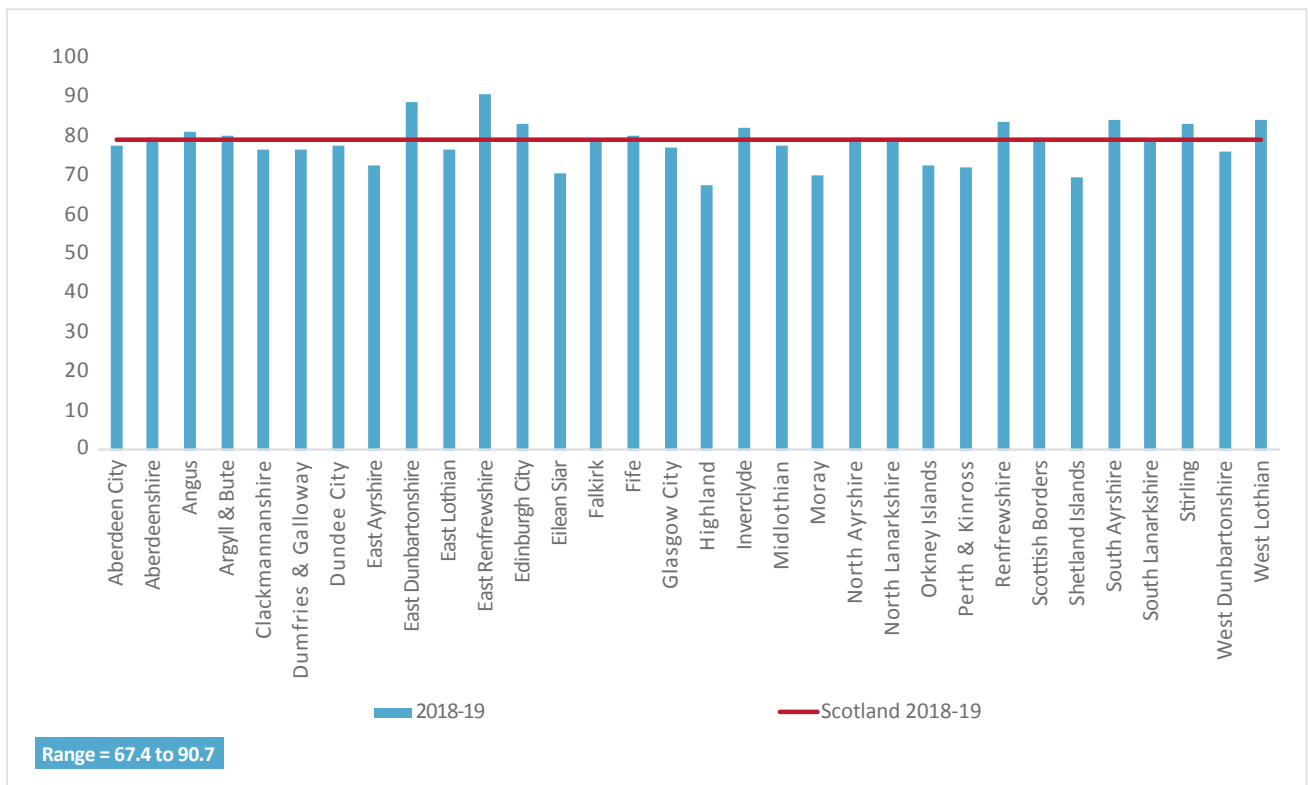
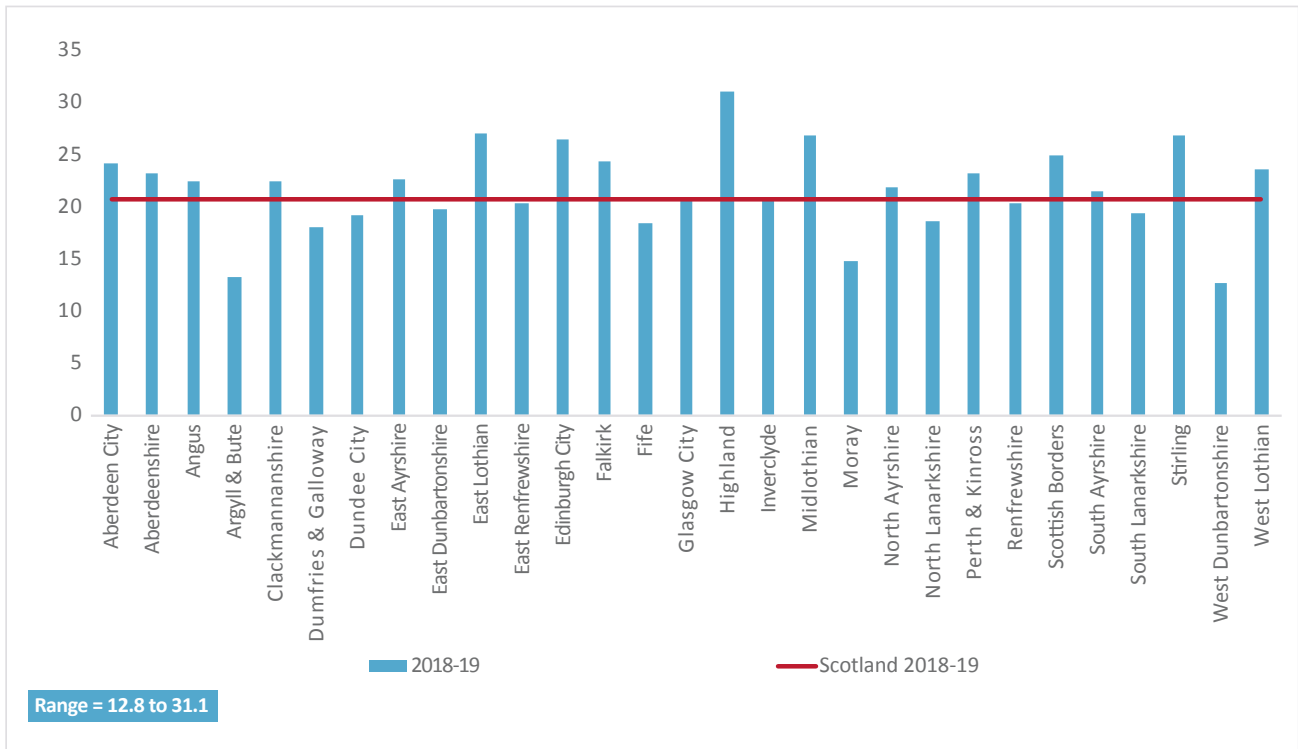


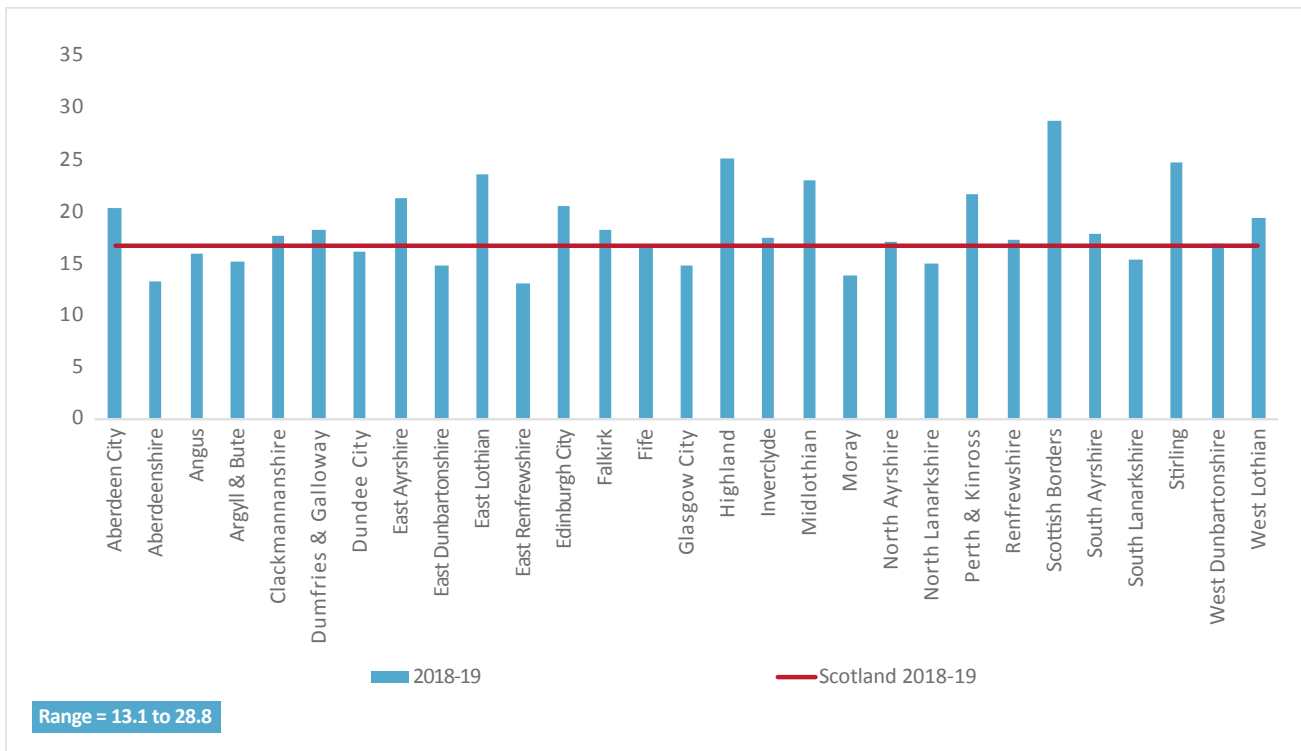


Fig 14: Literacy attainment gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 combined)



Note: Orkney and Shetland are excluded as they have no pupils in the most deprived areas.

Fig 15: Numeracy attainment gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 Combined)



Source: Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), Scottish Government

Note: Orkney and Shetland are excluded as they have no pupils in the most deprived areas.



School attendance rates

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

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

Attendance is standardised within this framework as "school attendance rates", the number of half- days attended for a local authority as a percentage of the total number of possible attendances.²³ Attendance rates have remained around 93% since 2010/11. Between 2010/11 and 2014/15, the attendance rate increased from 93.1% to 93.7%, with rates now falling to 93.0% in 2018/19. Data is published only every two years, with data for 2019/20 not available.

Table 9: School attendance rates for all pupils and for children who are looked after

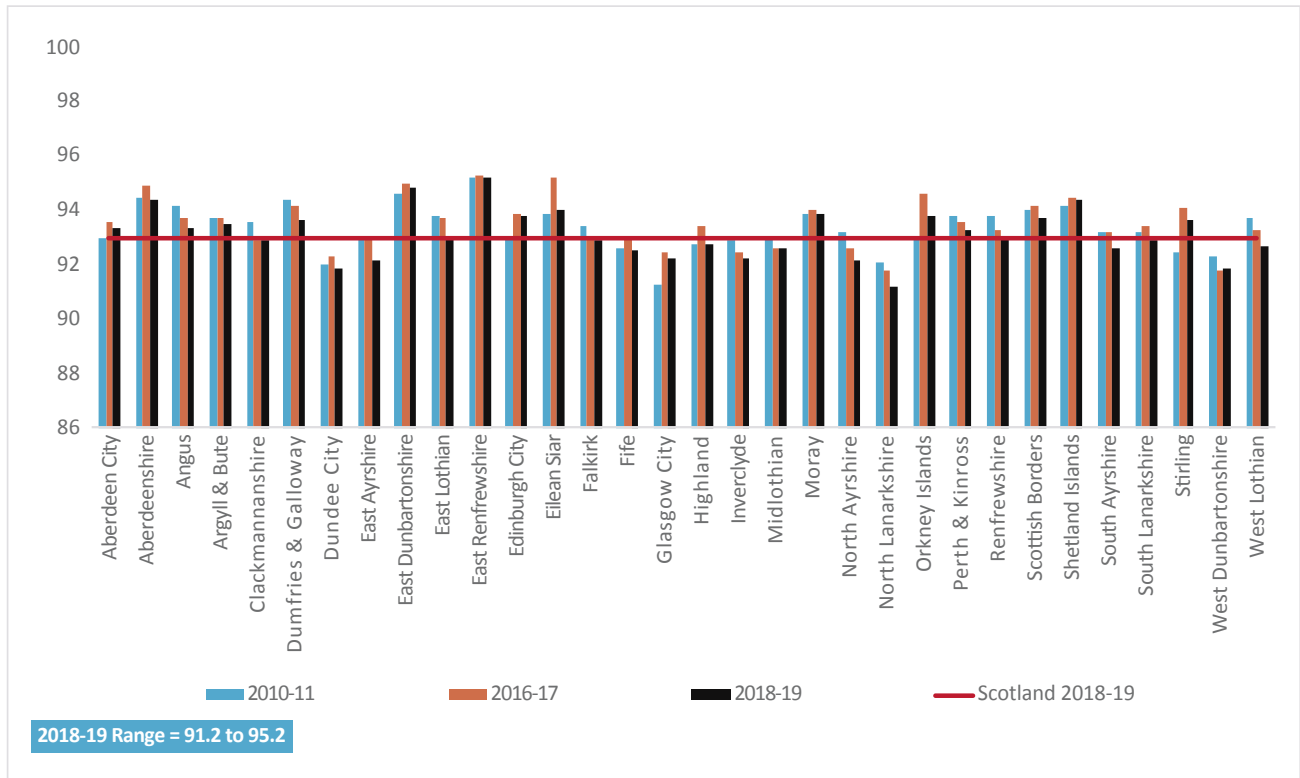
	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	Value Change 2016-17 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
School Attendance Rates	93.1	93.6	93.7	93.3	93.0	-0.3	-0.1
School Attendance Rates (LAC)	86.3	88.7	89.0	88.2	86.8	-1.4	0.5

In terms of variation across councils, attendance rates in 2018/19 range from 91.2% to 95.2%. This range of variation in attendance rates is consistent with the preceding years. The variation between councils is systematically related to deprivation, with attendance rates higher in those councils with lower levels of deprivation (94% compared to 92%).

²³ This is based on a 380 half day year. The national average is the average number of half-days attended for local authority and mainstream grant-aided schools in Scotland.

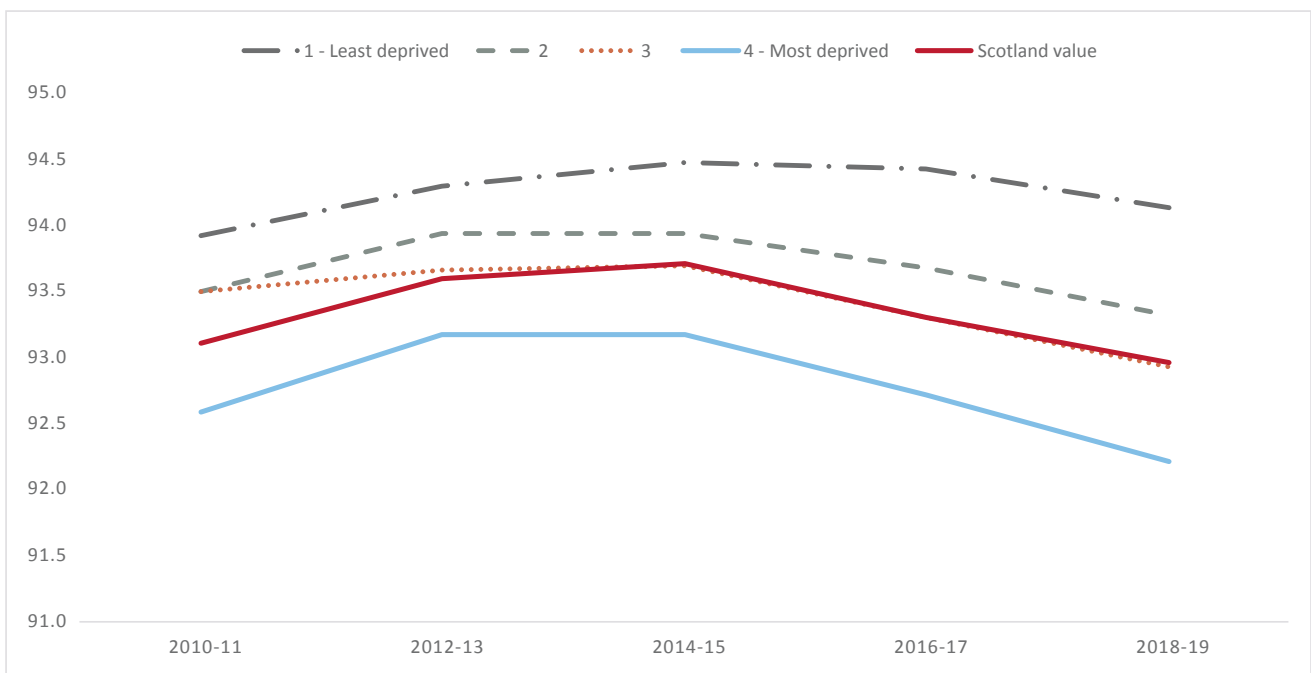


Fig 16: School attendance rates (%)



Source: Scottish Government attendance and absence figures

Fig 17: School attendance rates (%) by family group - deprivation





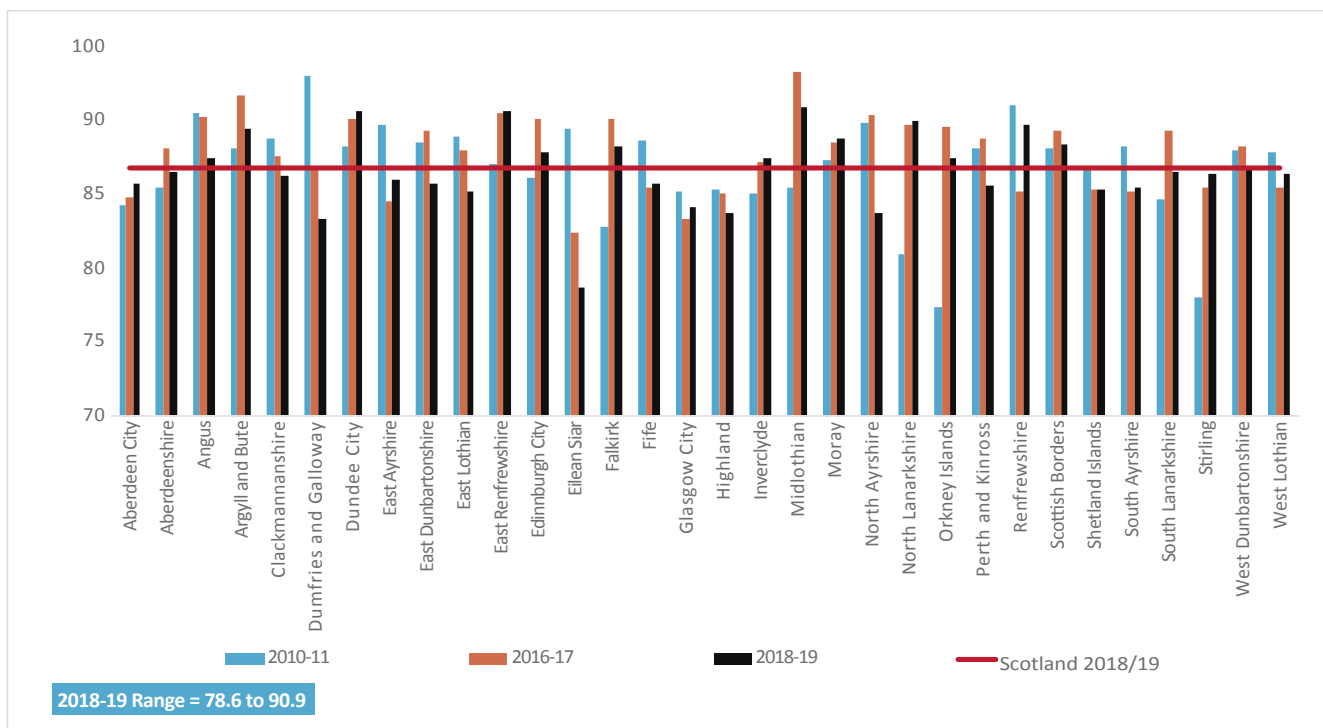
School attendance of looked after children is lower than attendance for all pupils and has remained between 86% and 88% since 2010/11.

Attendance is lowest for those looked after at home and with a greater number of placements. Looked after children have a lower attendance rate than all pupils in all school sectors but the differences are significant in secondary school (81.1% compared to 90.7% for all pupils in secondary school in 2018/19).

There is greater variation across councils in attendance rates for looked after children than for other pupils, ranging from 79% to 91% in 2018/19. Within this variation, there are no systematic effects of deprivation, rurality or size of council. The small number of looked after children in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation.

As with overall attendance rates, data is published only every two years, and data for 2019/20 is not available.

Fig 18: School attendance rates (looked after children) (%)



Source: Scottish Government Attendance and Absence figures

School exclusion rates

Councils strive to keep all learners fully included, engaged and involved in their education, wherever this takes place, and to improve outcomes for those learners at risk of exclusion. While the power exists to exclude children and young people from school, there have been significant, concerted efforts by schools and local authorities to implement a range of approaches and solutions to positively engage young people in their education and improve relationships and behaviour. This is based upon a shared approach of agencies working together and responding to the needs of learners early and effectively, in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Exclusion is considered only when to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or the educational wellbeing of the learners there.

Exclusion is standardised within the framework as “school exclusion rates”, the number of cases of temporary



exclusions and number of pupils removed from the register (previously known as 'permanent' exclusions) per 1000 pupils. Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, exclusion rates have reduced year on year, falling from 40.0 to 21.6 across the period.

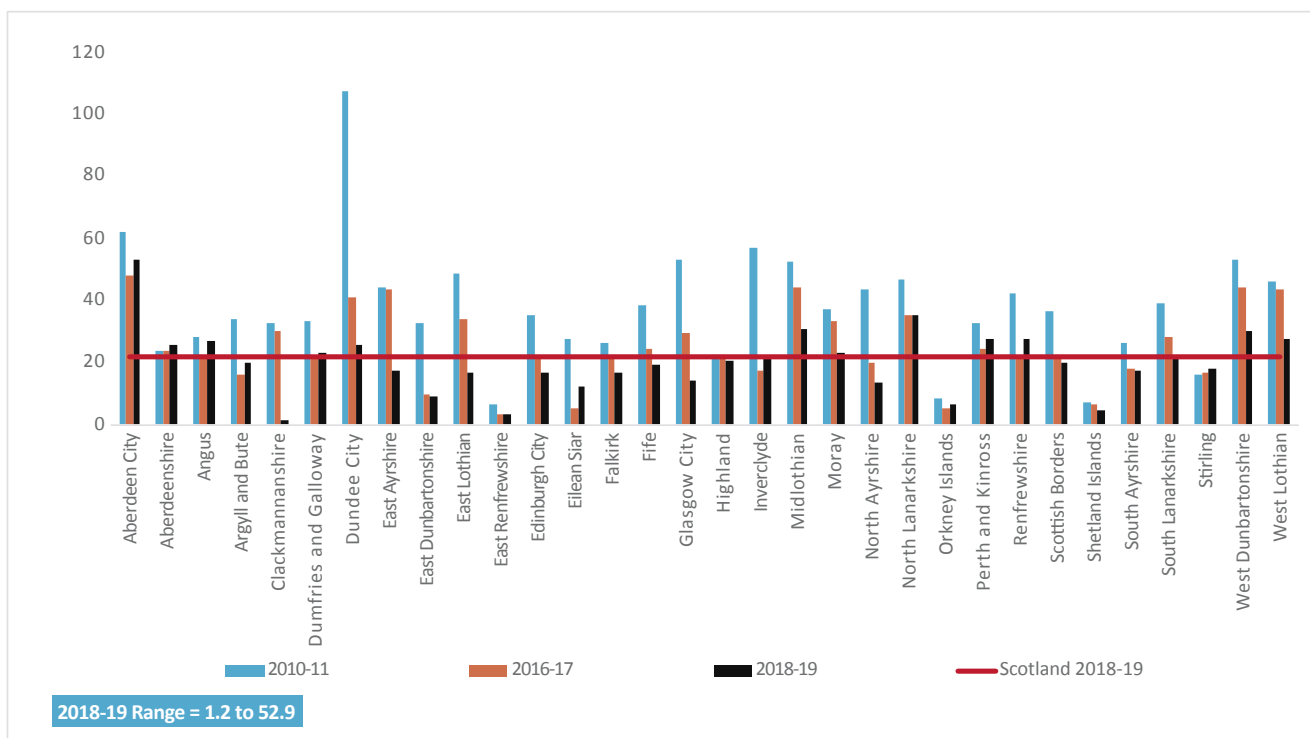
Table 10: School exclusion rates for all pupils and for children who are looked after

	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	% Change 2016-17 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
School Exclusion Rates	40.0	32.8	27.2	26.8	21.6	-19.4%	-45.9%
School Exclusion Rates (LAC)	340.8	280.3	246.8	210.1	152.2	-27.6%	-55.3%

There is significant but narrowing variation across councils in 2018/19, with rates per 1000 pupils ranging from 1.2 to 52.9. Average exclusion rates tend to be higher in the most deprived councils compared to the least deprived councils (21.0 compared to 18.2). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group. Analysis demonstrates a significant narrowing of the gap between most and least deprived councils. Since 2010/11, the exclusion rate has decreased by 61% for the most deprived councils on average, compared to a 30% decrease for the least deprived councils.

As with attendance rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years, and data for 2019/20 is not available.

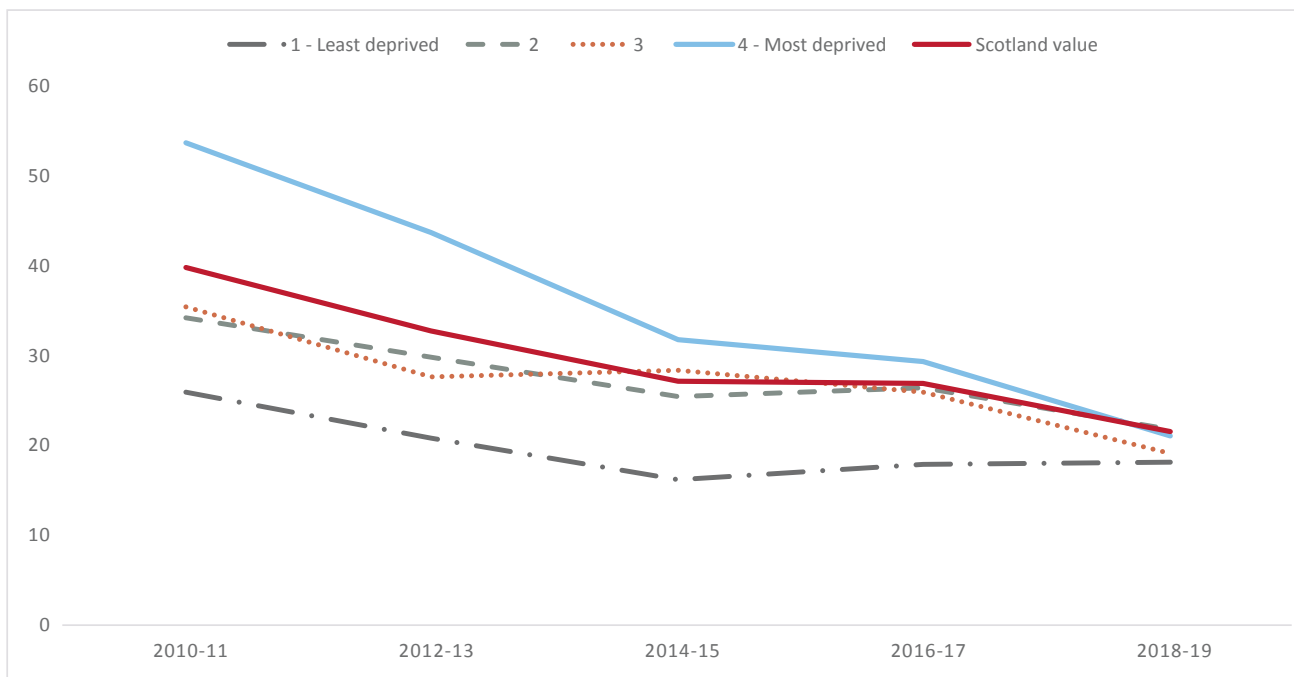
Fig 19: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils)



Source: Scottish Government Exclusions Dataset



Fig 20: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils) by family group - deprivation



Exclusion rates for children who are looked after are significantly higher than for all pupils, although they are reducing at a faster rate, so the gap is narrowing steadily. The exclusion rate for children looked after has more than halved since 2010/11. Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, exclusion rates for children who are looked after reduced from 340.8 to 152.2. This represents an improvement rate of 55%, compared to an improvement rate of 46% for all pupils across the same period.

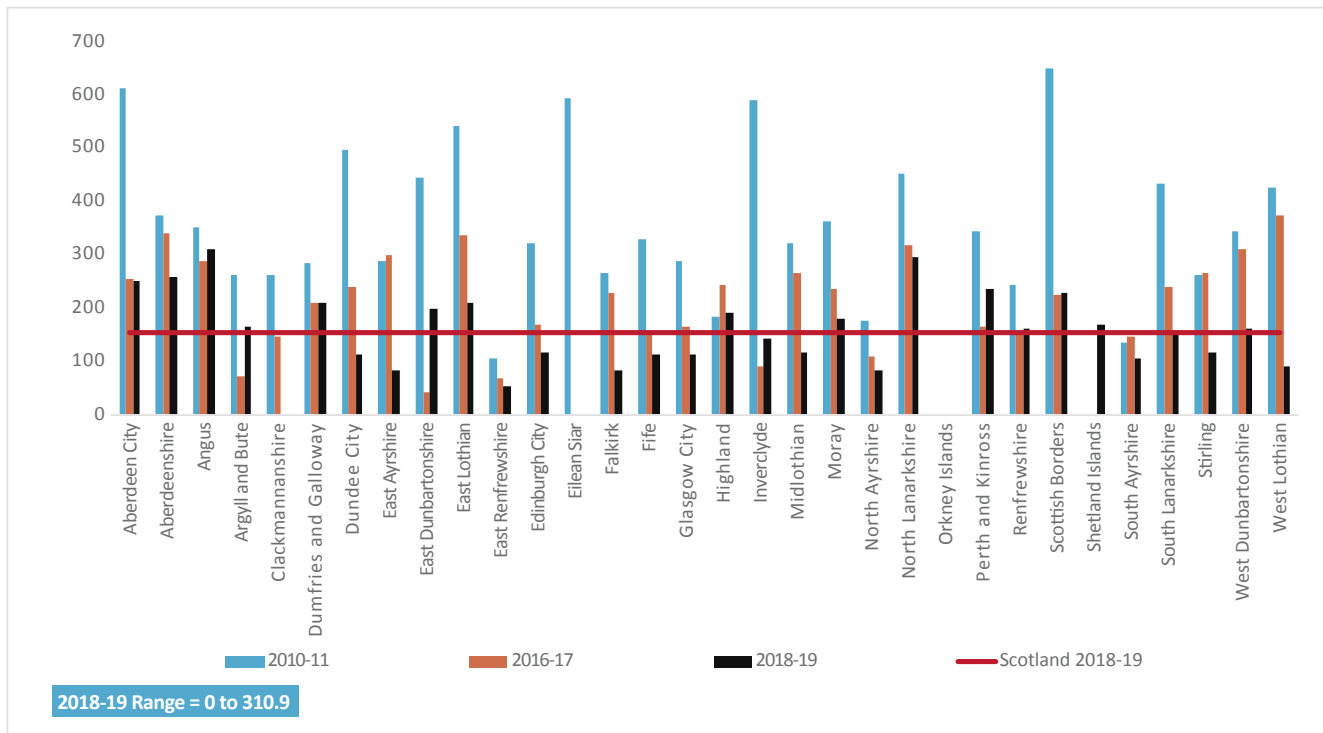
Those children in residential accommodation tend to have higher rates of exclusions than those looked after in the community. Children looked after at home have a noticeably higher exclusion rate than others looked after in the community, i.e. in foster care and with friends or relatives. There is a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

There is greater variation across councils in exclusion rates for looked after children than for all pupils, ranging from 0 to 311 in 2018/19. This variation between councils has narrowed significantly over time. There are no systematic effects in relation to council level of deprivation, rurality or size on exclusion rates. The small number of looked after children in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation.

As with overall exclusion rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years. Data for 2019/20 is not available.



Fig 21: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 looked after children)



Source: Scottish Government Exclusions Dataset

Secondary school performance

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

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

Performance at secondary level is currently measured within the LGBF by:

- Average tariff score (by SIMD quintile)
- Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ SCQF level 5 qualifications or higher (described as '5+ at Level 5' for the purpose of this report)
- Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ SCQF level 6 qualifications or higher (described as '5+ at Level 6' for the purpose of this report)
- Participation Rate measuring participation in learning (including school), training or work for all 16-19 year olds in Scotland.

The suite of measures also includes the percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations.



However, as this information is no longer published in December it is not possible to include 2019/20 data here. This will be included when it is published in March.

The most recent attainment data reflects achievement during the Covid period. For 2019/20 educational attainment data, the absence of external assessment information led to grades awarded in 2020 being based on teacher estimates. These results are therefore not directly comparable with previous years. Any change between the attainment levels of the 2019/20 cohort and those of previous years should therefore not be seen as an indication that performance has improved, or worsened without further evidence.

Average tariff

Average tariff is a summative measure of educational attainment which offers a broad measure of achievement to consider alongside breadth and depth measures. The tariff score is a summary measure calculated from all academic achievement of pupils during the senior phase (S4- S6) across a range of awards included in the benchmarking tool Insight. The tariff reflects the number of awards that a pupil achieves, the SCQF level at which each award is assessed, and the grade of the award achieved (for any of these awards which are graded). The measure here reflects cumulative attainment either to the point of leaving or to the end of S6.

Under Curriculum for Excellence, different curricular structures exist across Scotland and therefore the type of attainment offered will differ, which impacts the average total tariff presented in this report. This includes variations in the number of subjects typically studied by pupils, reflecting differing approaches to developing employability skills and the core qualification sets needed to enable a range of post school destinations.

As the school leaver data is not yet available for 2019/20, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data available on the Learning Analysis School Summary Dashboard, which is based on school leavers. To allow 2020 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupil's attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.

As noted above, for 2019/20 data, the absence of external assessment information led to grades awarded being based on teacher estimates. These results are therefore not directly comparable with previous and future years.

Table 11: Average total tariff by SIMD quintile, 2019-20

	2019-20	Range 2019-20
Overall Average Tariff	929	749-1400
Average Tariff SIMD Q1	649	436-1015
Average Tariff SIMD Q2	759	571-1127
Average Tariff SIMD Q3	904	631-1328
Average Tariff SIMD Q4	1029	747-1388
Average Tariff SIMD Q5	1240	905-1530

In 2019/20, the overall average tariff²⁴ obtained was 929, with scores ranging from 749 to 1400 across authorities. There is a significant variation in achievement between SIMD quintile groups, with higher average tariff scores for pupils from the least deprived quintiles. The average tariff for pupils from the least deprived SIMD Quintile 5 was 1240, compared to 649 for pupils from the most deprived SIMD Quintile 1.

²⁴ Overall average total tariff is calculated by the Improvement Service



Fig 22: Overall average total tariff, 2019-20

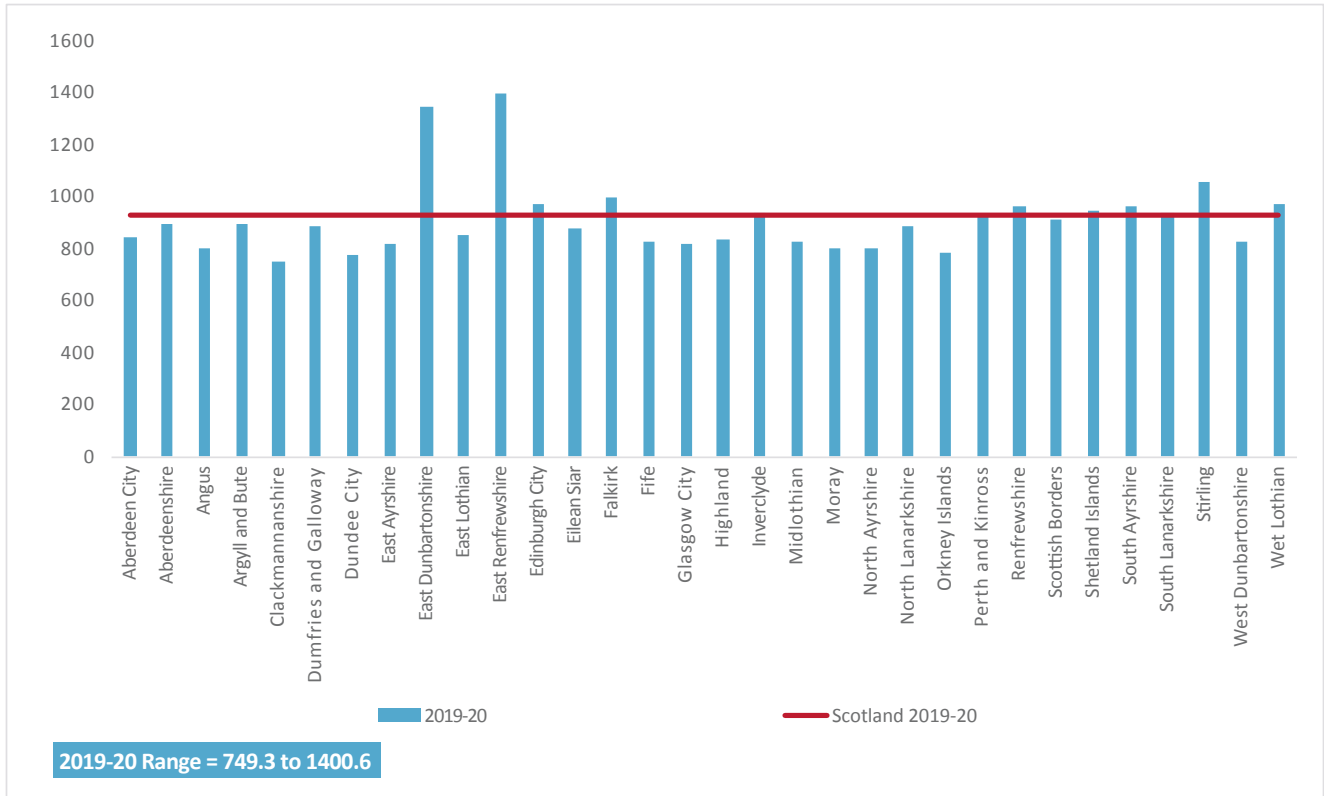
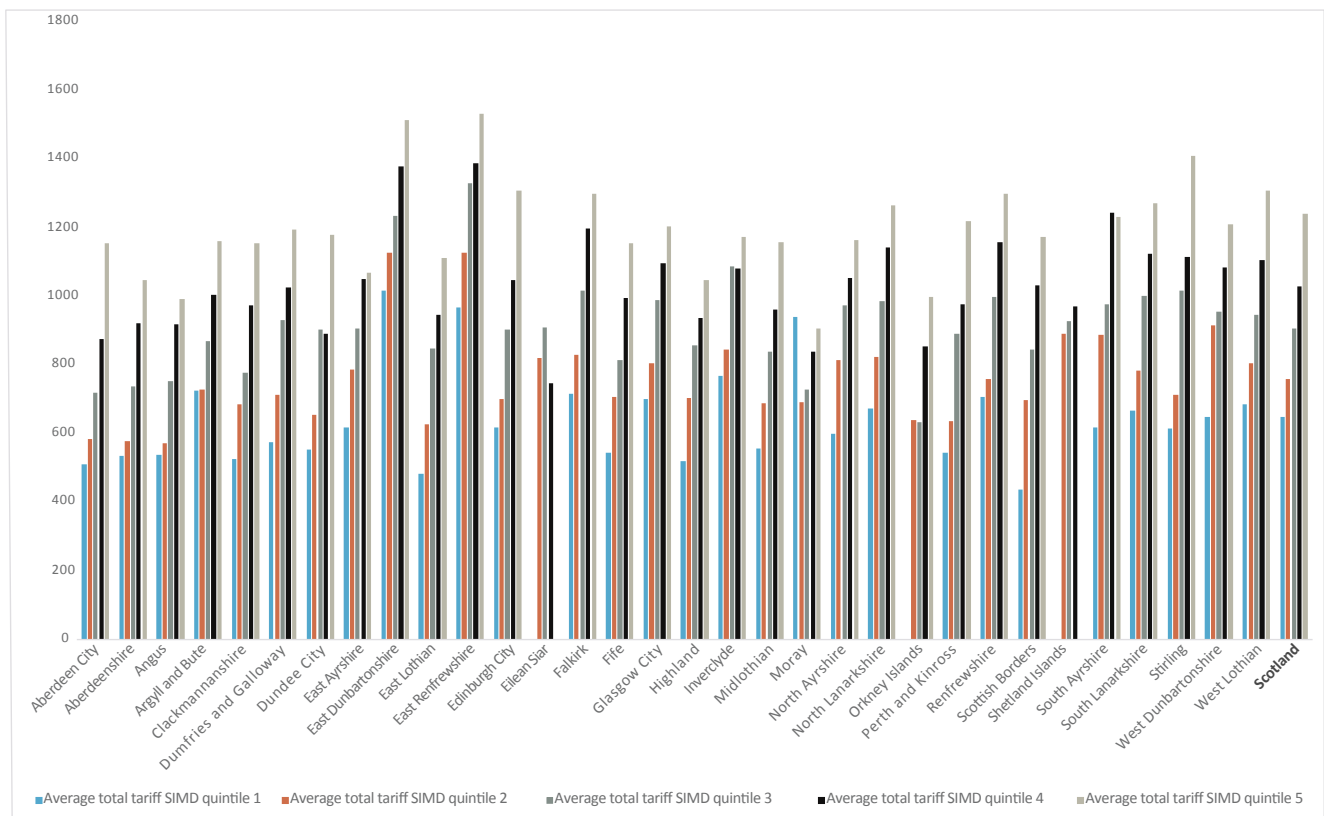


Fig 23: Average total tariff by SIMD quintile, 2019-20



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

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



Looking at the pre-Covid period, an improving trend is evident in average total tariff over the past eight years, increasing by 16.3% from 770 in 2011/12 to 895 in 2018/19. These changes reflect a significant improvement in the educational outcomes and life chances of Scotland's young people.

While this improving trend is evident for all SIMD groups, pupils from the most deprived groups have shown the largest improvement across the period, although tariff scores remain significantly lower than those achieved by pupils from less deprived groups. Average Tariffs have increased by 31.4% and 20.2% for the two most deprived groups compared to 11.7% and 8.5% for the least deprived groups.

Table 12: Average total tariff by SIMD quintile, 2011-12 to 2018/19

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2011-12 to 2018-19
Overall Average Tariff	770	798	827	860	877	888	894	895	0.1%	16.3%
Average Tariff SIMD Q1	478	510	551	581	603	625	620	628	1.3%	31.4%
Average Tariff SIMD Q2	618	644	685	716	741	751	752	743	-1.2%	20.2%
Average Tariff SIMD Q3	759	788	816	851	864	882	899	875	-2.7%	15.3%
Average Tariff SIMD Q4	909	929	962	984	998	1002	1019	1015	-0.4%	11.7%
Average Tariff SIMD Q5	1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1224	1195	-2.4%	8.5%

The scales of changes seen since 2011-12 clearly reflect general improvements equating to both better grades and more awards at higher SCQF levels. For example:

- The improvement seen in Overall Average Total Tariff (for all pupils) would equate to an improvement from: 2Bs and a C at Higher plus 3 additional grade A National 5s (776 tariff points – approximately, the average level of attainment in 2011-12) to 4 Bs at Higher plus 2As at National 5 (896 tariff points – approximately, the average level of attainment in 2018-19).
- Similarly, the improvement seen in Overall Average Total Tariff – for pupils from the most deprived 20% of areas in Scotland – would equate to an improvement from: 3As and 3Bs at National 5 (474 tariff points – approximately, the average level of attainment in 2011-12) to 1C and 1 D at Higher plus 2As and 2Bs at National 5 (625 tariff points – approximately, the average level of attainment in 2011-12).

By comparison, there was no significant change in the total tariff measure for leavers in 2018/19 compared with the year before, with a change of a few tariff points for each measure (equivalent to a change of a grade or less for one award).

Between 2011/12 and 2018/19 there was significant and widening variation between authorities across all 5 tariff measures. Further detail of the variation within councils is presented in the graphs below.



Fig 24: Overall average total tariff

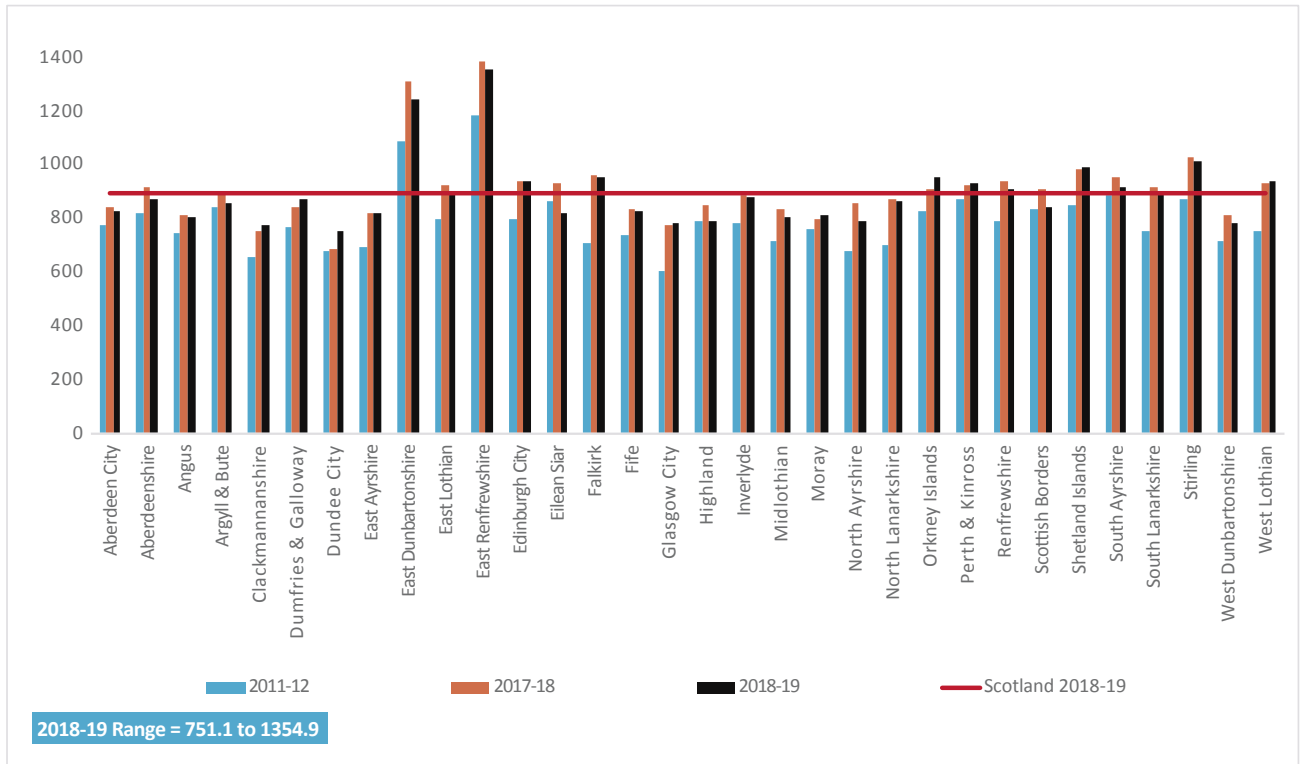


Fig 25: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1

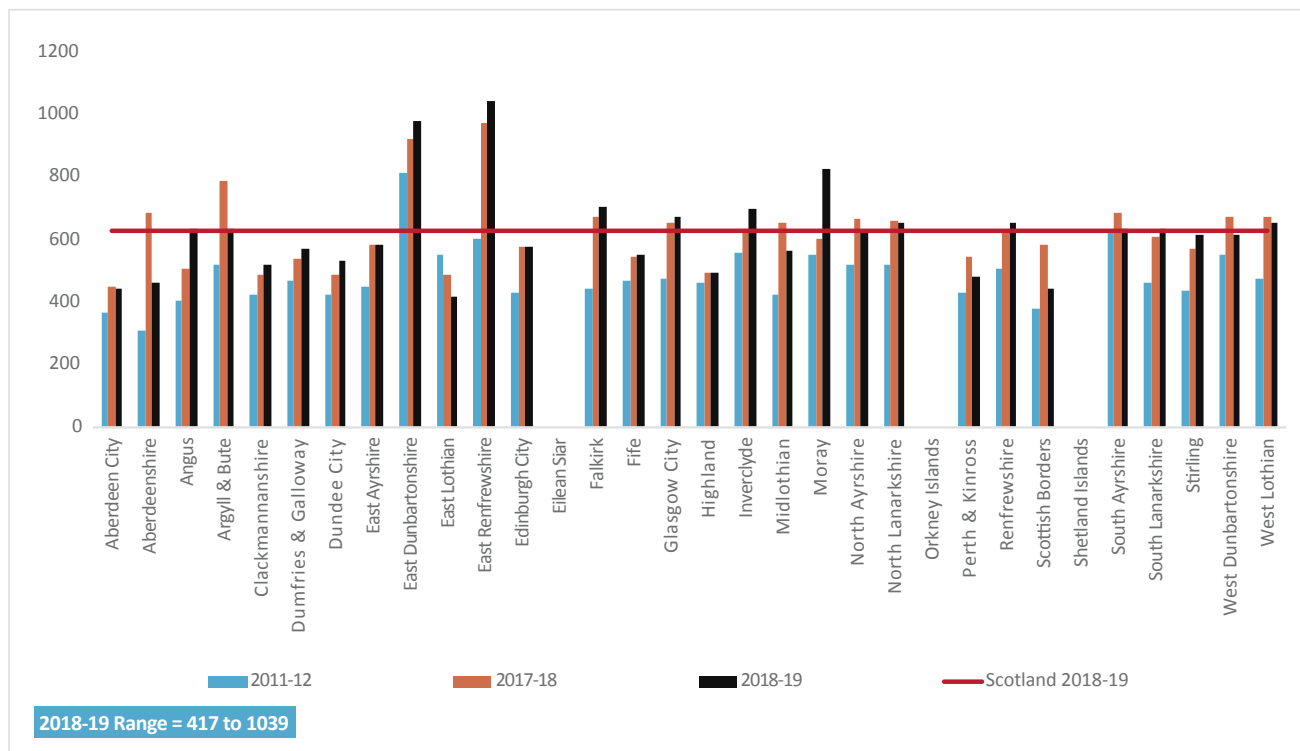




Fig 26: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2

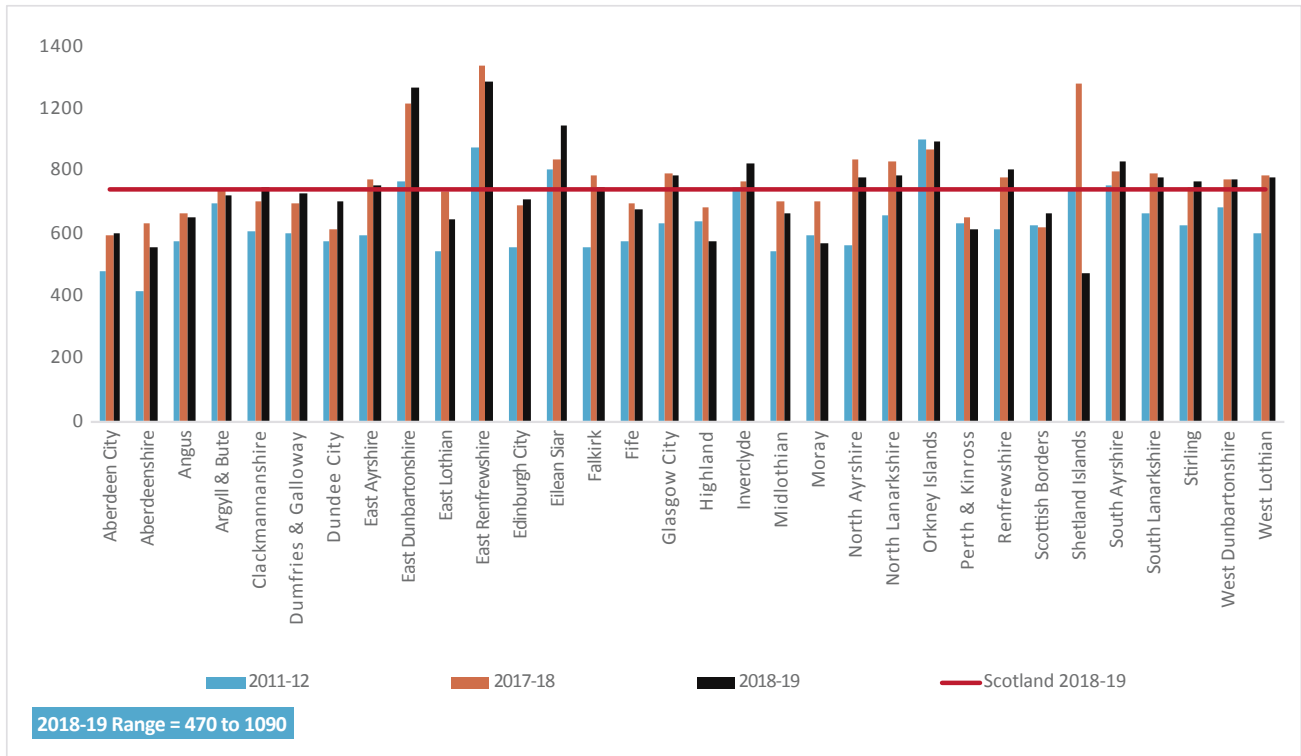


Fig 27: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3

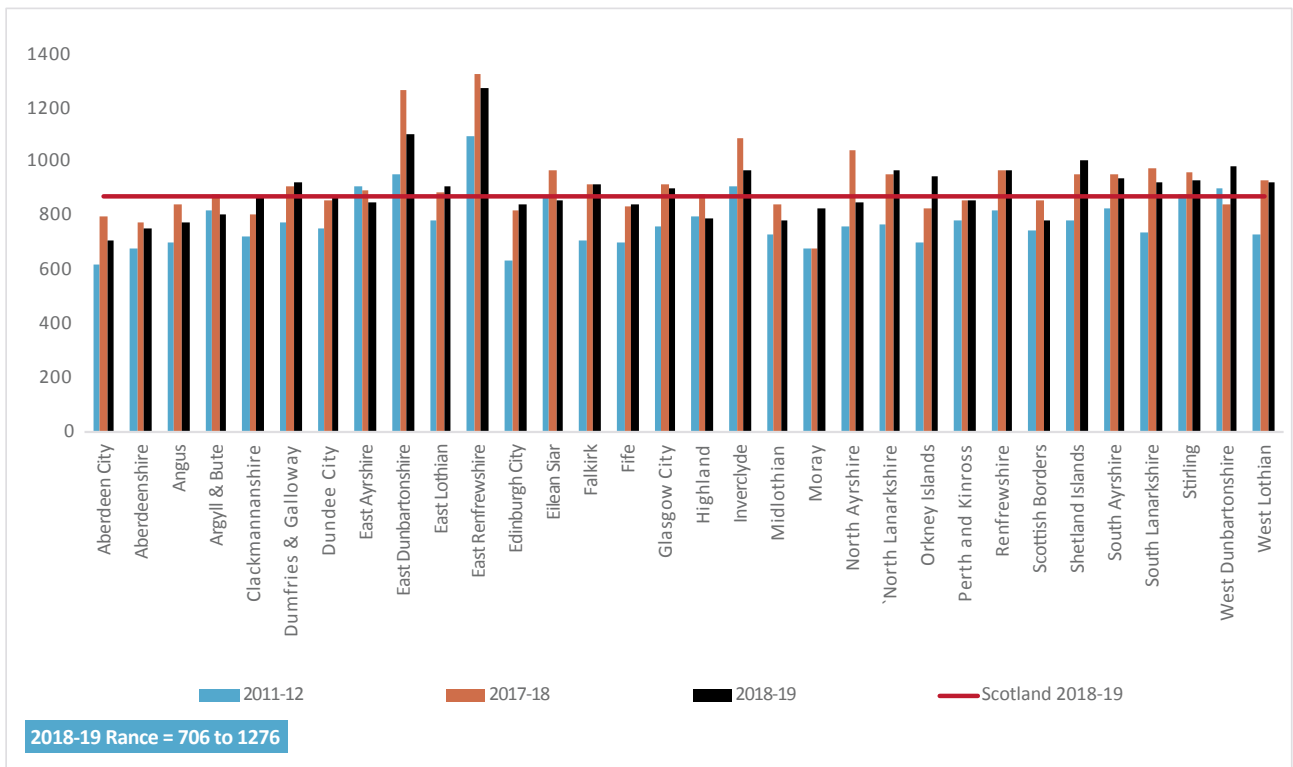




Fig 28: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4

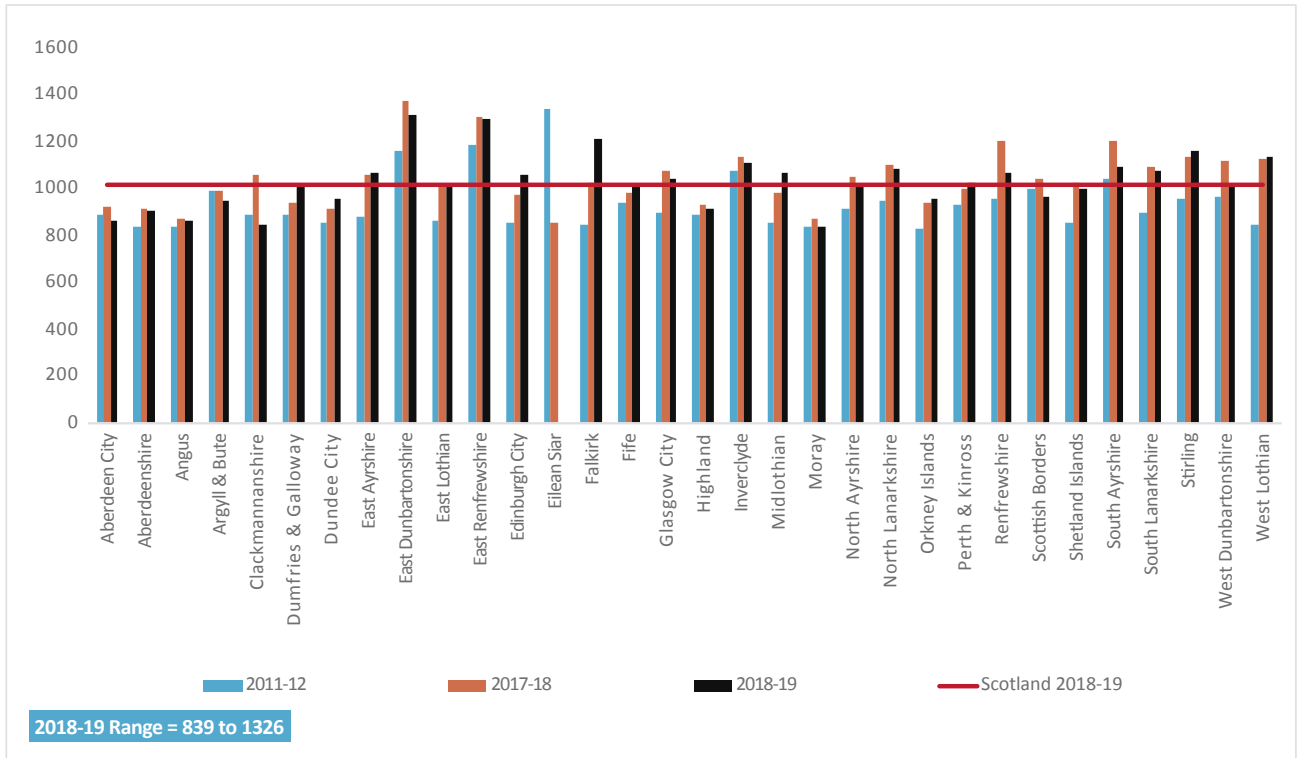
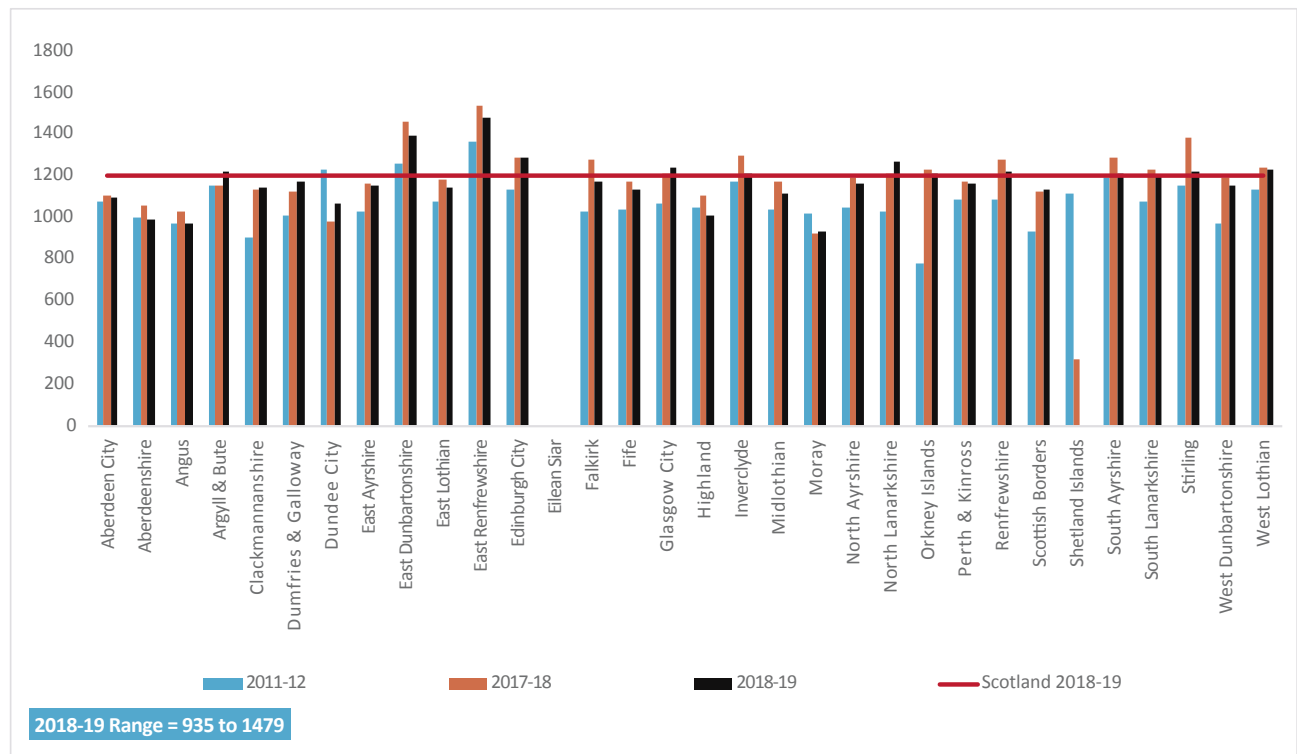


Fig 29: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5



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

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



Performance at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher

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

These measures reflect the cumulative attainment at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher, either to the point of leaving or to the end of S6. However, as with average tariff scores, as the school leaver data is not yet available for 2019/20, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data available on the Learning Analysis School Summary Dashboard which is based on school leavers. To allow 2020 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupils' attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.

As noted above, the absence of external assessment information led to grades awarded being based on teacher estimates. These results are therefore not directly comparable with previous and future years.

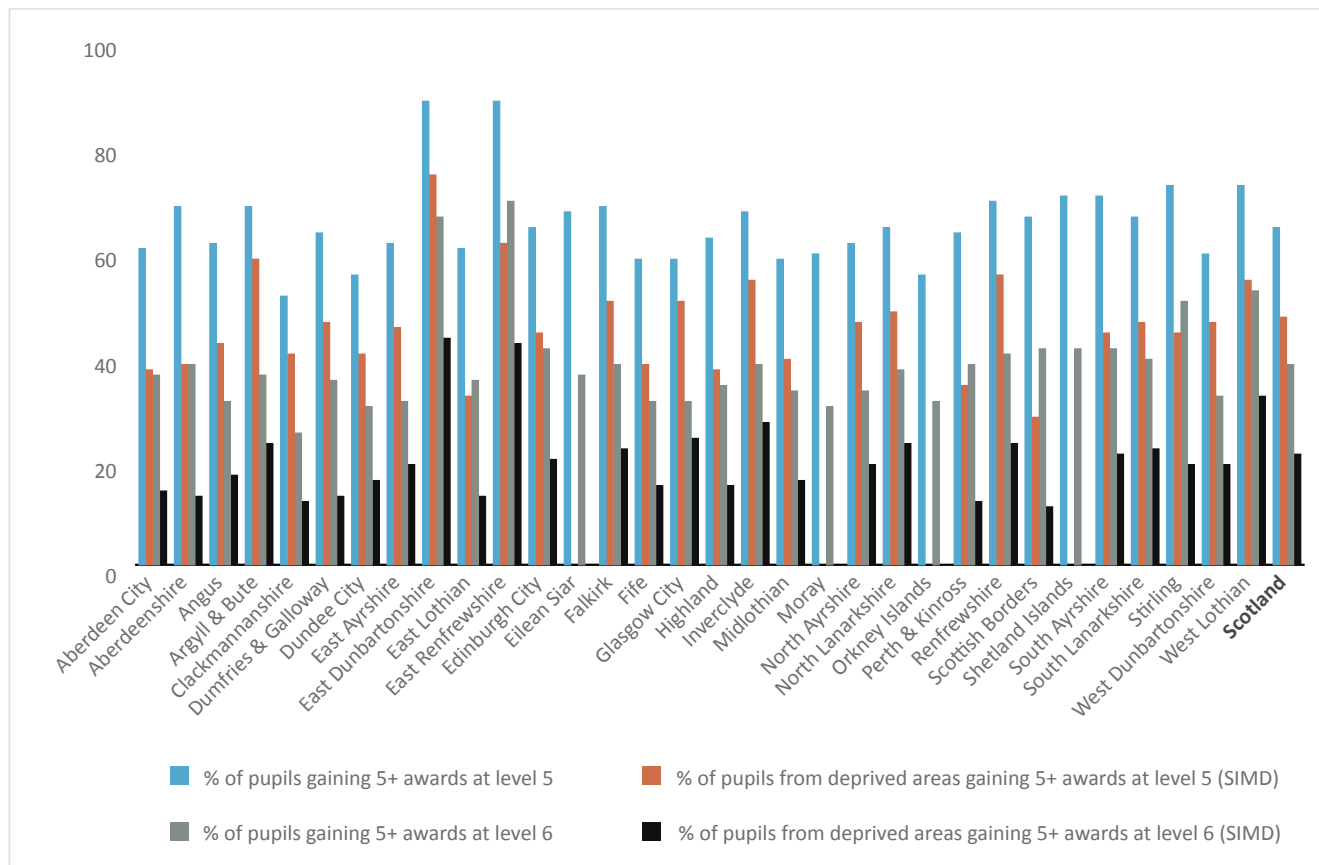
Table 13: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher, 2019-20

	2019-20	Range 2019-20
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	64	51-88
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	38	25-69
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 (SIMD)	47	28-74
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 (SIMD)	21	11-43

In 2019/20, 64% of pupils achieved 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5, including 47% of pupils from deprived areas. 38% achieved 5 or more awards at SCQF level 6, including 21% of pupils from deprived areas. Achievement varied significantly between authorities. The council range for 5+ awards at level 5 was 51%-88%, and for pupils from deprived areas it was 28%-74%. At level 6, the range was 25%-69%, and 11%-43% respectively.



Fig 30: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher, 2019-20



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

Looking at the pre-Covid picture, there is a clear improving trend in SCQF level 5 and level 6 attainment between 2011/12 and 2018/19. The total percentage of young people gaining 5+ awards at level 5 and level 6 has increased, for all pupils, and for those in the most deprived communities.

Table 14: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher, 2011-12 to 2018-19

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2011-12 to 2018-19
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	51	53	55	57	59	60	62	63	1.0	12.0
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	26	27	29	31	33	34	34	35	1.0	9.0
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 (SIMD)	29	32	34	37	40	41	42	45	3.0	16.0
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 (SIMD)	10	11	14	14	15	16	17	19	2.0	9.0



In 2018/19, 63% of pupils achieved five or more awards at level 5 or higher, an increase of 12 percentage points from 2011/12. Similarly, there has been a nine percentage point increase in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more awards at level 6 or higher during this time, from 26% to 35%. Since 2011/12, all 32 councils have seen an increase in attainment at these levels, with most showing a year on year improvement.

While achievement levels remain lower for children from the most deprived areas, there has been a faster rate of improvement within these groups. The percentage of children from the most deprived communities achieving 5+ awards at level 5 and level 6 in 2018/19 was 45% and 19% respectively, an increase of 16 percentage points and 9 percentage points from 2011/12. This is an improvement rate of 55% and 90%, compared to 24% and 35% for all pupil's achievement.

Between 2011/12 and 2018/19 there was significant and widening variation between authorities at both level 5 and level 6, and in achievement levels for the most deprived. Further detail of the variation within councils is presented in the graphs below.

Achievement varies systematically with the overall level of deprivation in the council area: this accounts for approximately 35% to 40% of the variation in outcome between councils. For example, if councils are grouped according to their levels of deprivation in 2018/19, the average at level 5 for the most deprived councils is 58% compared to 65% for the least deprived councils. However, there are some councils with very low levels of overall deprivation who are achieving exceptional results with pupils from deprived areas. There are also councils with relatively high levels of overall deprivation achieving higher than average results.

Figure 31: % pupils achieving 5 or more awards at Level 5 by family group - deprivation

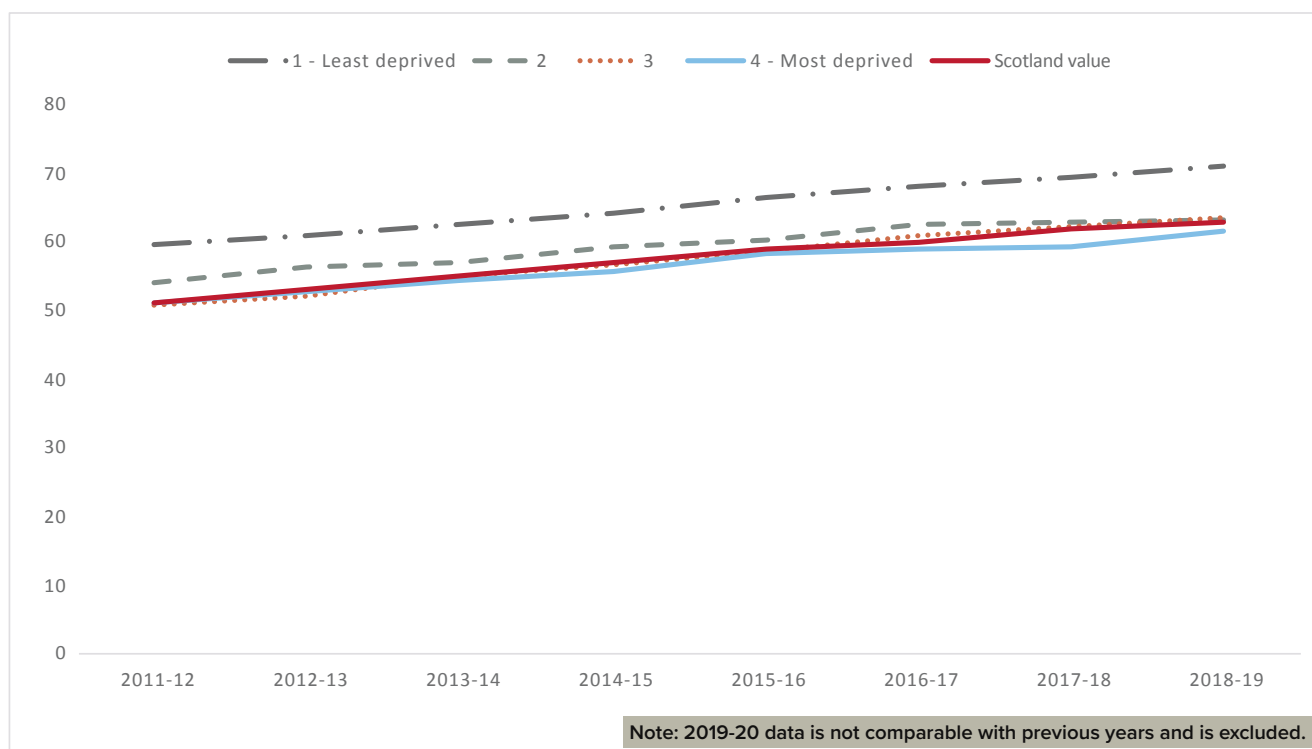




Figure 32: % pupils achieving 5 or more awards at Level 6 by family group - deprivation

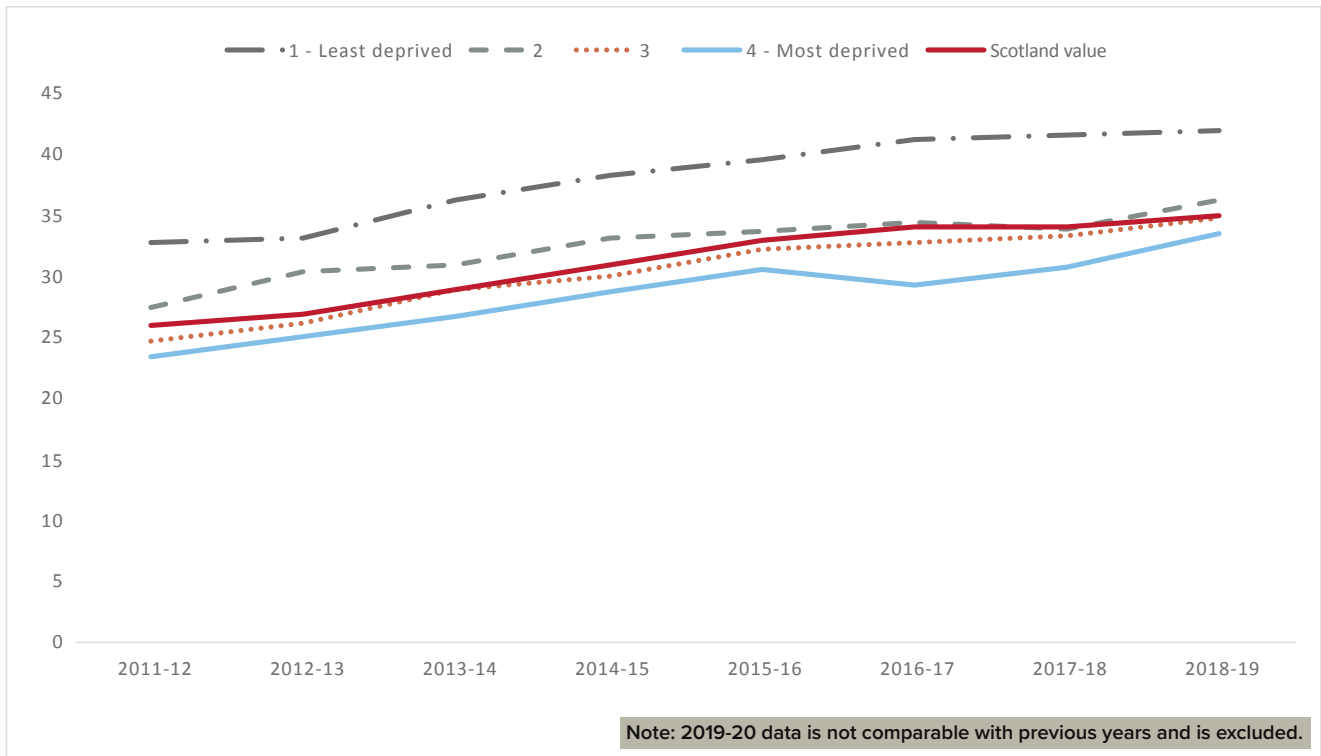


Fig 33: Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5

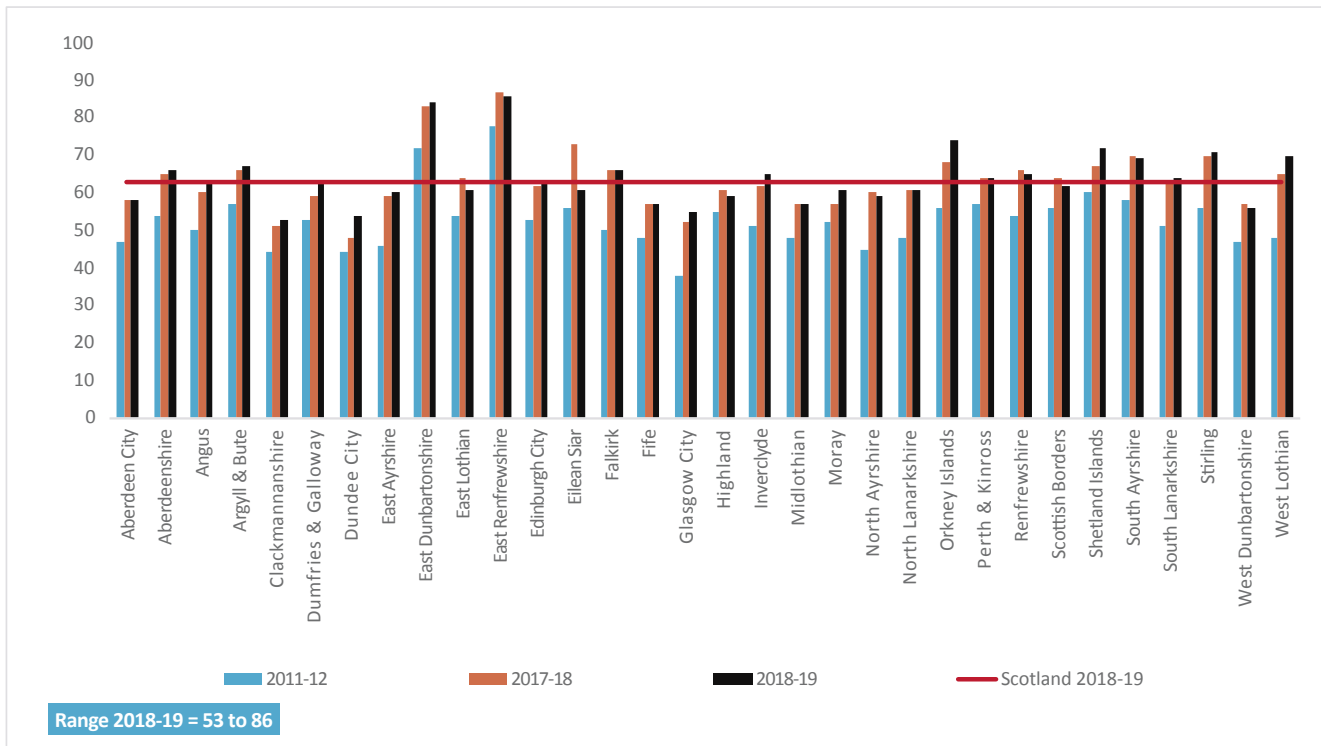




Fig 34: Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6

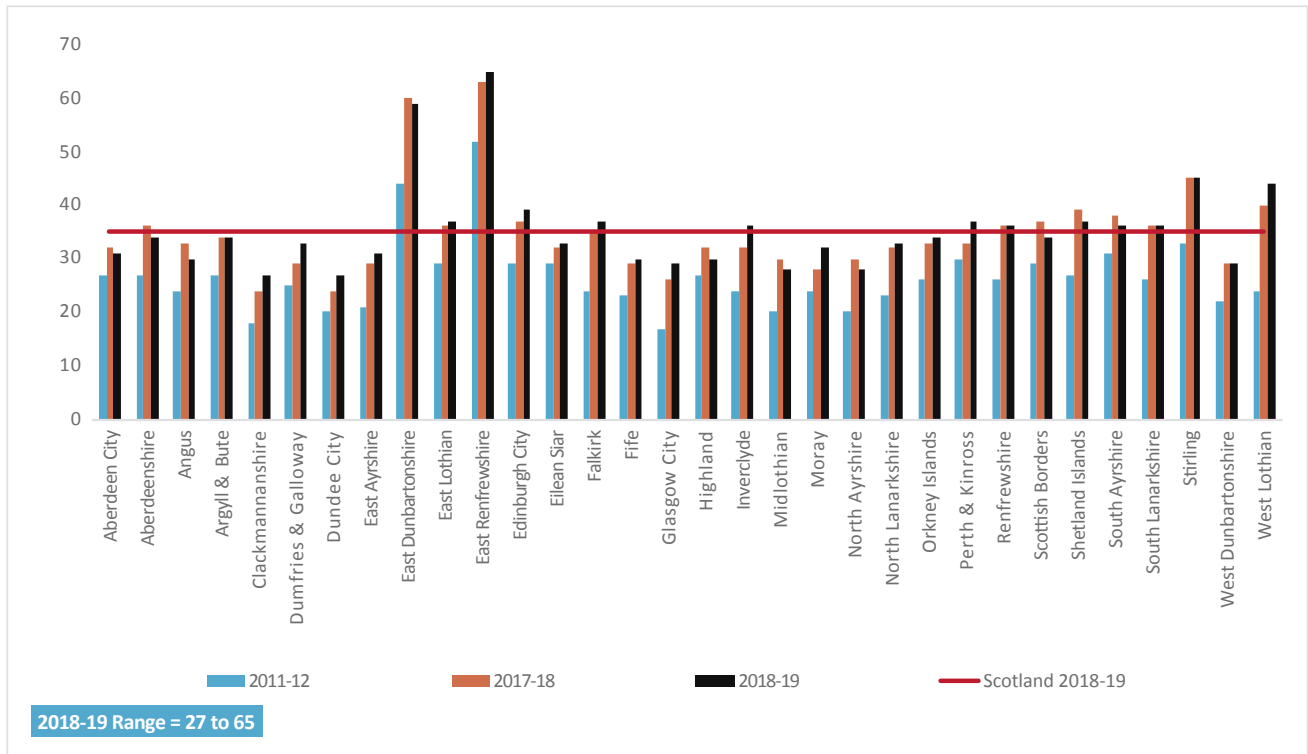


Fig 35: Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)

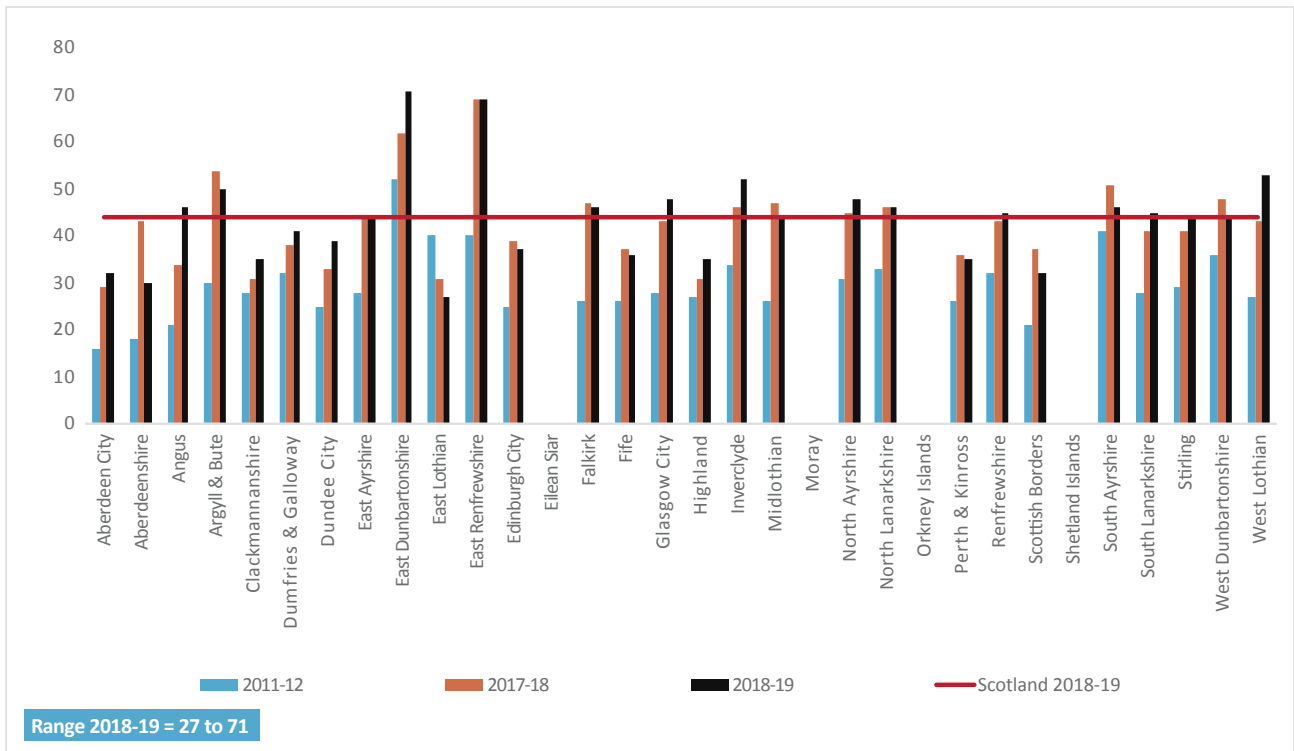
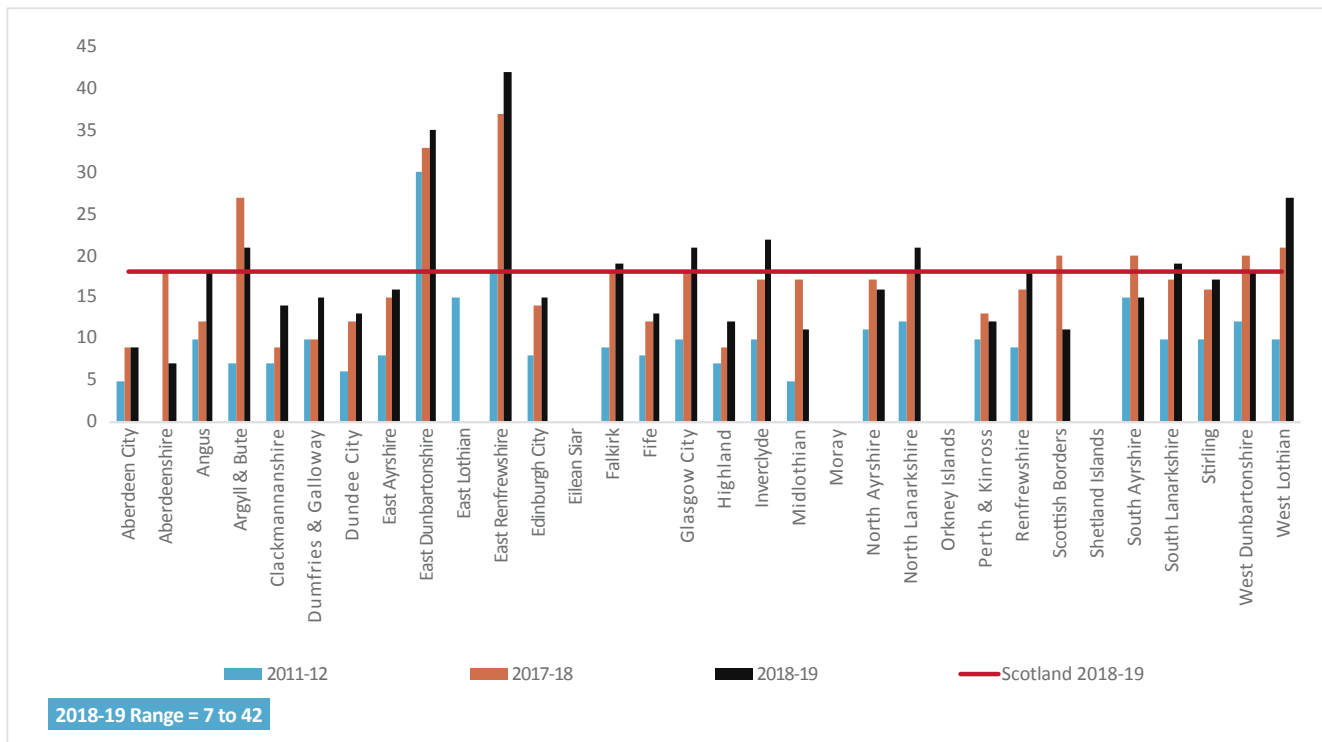




Fig 36: Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)



Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government.

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

Average total tariff points and attainment at levels 5 and 6 provide two summary measures of the overall attainment of a cohort of school leavers. A range of other measures are available of the key qualification sets that enable access to a wider range of post-school opportunities and life chances for school leavers. These have been the focus for improvement across local authorities in recent years and show a picture of sustained improvement in attainment across the period and significant progress in closing the attainment gap.

One example is the achievement of an award at SCQF level 6. This provides a route from school onwards to higher education, either through an HNC (in the case of 1 award at SCQF level 6), or directly on to a degree course (in the case of multiple awards at SCQF level 6). An increasing proportion of school leavers have been achieving this level of attainment over recent years, ensuring that they access to a wider range of post-school opportunities. Although progress slowed in 2018/19, it is particularly striking that overall improvement has in large part been due to a significant closing in the attainment gap, with a far greater improvement for those living in SIMD quintile 1, although attainment has improved across all social contexts (see table below –2019/20 data is not yet available and will have comparability issues with historic data).



Table 15: Improvement in the proportion of school leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF level 6

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Rate of Improvement
Quintile 1	34.9	38.5	41.2	42.7	43.0	44.4	43.5	24.6%
Quintile 2	45.0	49.1	50.6	52.2	52.4	52.8	50.8	12.9%
Quintile 3	55.8	57.2	60.3	62.2	62.0	62.5	60.2	7.9%
Quintile 4	65.7	66.9	69.2	71.1	70.5	70.5	70.0	6.5%
Quintile 5	77.3	79.1	80.3	81.2	80.6	81.8	79.3	2.6%
Gap between Quintiles 1 and 5	42.4	40.6	39.1	38.5	37.6	37.4	35.8	
National - Overall	55.8	58.1	60.2	61.7	61.2	62.2	60.5	8.4%

Source: Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, Scottish Government

There has also been an increasing focus over recent years in schools on offering a wider range of vocational awards, to better meet the needs of all learners. This change reflects the intention and ethos of CfE: to ensure that the needs of all learners are met through flexibility in the curriculum offered, and the use of a wider range of achievement to recognise learners' success. These changes are evident in the sustained increase in learners leaving school over recent years with vocational awards at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6 (see table below – 2019/20 data not yet available and will have comparability issues with historic data).

These awards develop and evidence skills which employers report are important to them and support the national goal of Developing the Young Workforce. They include National Progression Awards and are available in a variety of sectors, including: Construction, Childcare, Computer Games Development, Professional Cookery, Digital Media and Sports Coaching. It should be noted, that many of these awards are ungraded and (although better meeting the needs – and developing the skills – of those studying them) may attract fewer tariff points than a non-vocational course.

Table 16: Proportion of school leavers achieving vocational qualifications at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
1+ SCQF Level 4 or better	16.1	16.8	17.7	19.6	21.3	23.3
1+ SCQF Level 5 or better	7.3	9.0	10.7	12.8	14.8	17.1
1+ SCQF Level 6 or better	1.0	1.3	1.9	2.5	3.8	4.6

Source: Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, Scottish Government

Whilst the evidence above shows that there has been a significant improvement in attainment since 2011-12, it is also apparent that the rate of improvement has slowed by 2018/19 by many measures of attainment. This reflects the following points:

- Increasingly, improved achievement is not entirely measurable through tariff points alone, as schools increasingly use a wider range of awards to better meet the needs of all learners, including ungraded awards and those not incorporated within the tariff scale.
- Achieving further significant improvements in closing the attainment gap will be increasingly challenging, as schools seek to improve the outcomes of those learners who face the most significant barriers to learning and those who are furthest from attainment.

With the closure of schools from March to June 2020 due to Covid-19, and ongoing issues in the 2021 session, this may impact levels of attainment for session 2020-21, and arguably the effects of the pandemic will continue to impact on attainment for some time thereafter. Scrutiny of available data will be essential in



determining the impact on the poverty-related attainment gap in particular, and in planning for recovery in the medium and long term. How we evolve the work being driven forward with local authorities and schools under the Scottish Attainment Challenge will be instrumental here.

Positive destinations and participation rate

2019/20 data for Positive Destinations is not yet available, but previous trends show continued improvement between 2011/12 and 2018/19 in relation to the proportion of young people entering initial “positive destinations” after school,²⁵ increasing from 90.1% to 95.0%. Positive destinations include participation in further education (FE), higher education (HE), training/ apprenticeships, employment, volunteering or Activity Agreements. 2019/20 data will be included in the LGBF refresh following publication by Scottish Government.

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

This measure was first published in 2015 by Skills Development Scotland as experimental statistics and shows an improvement in the participation rate from 90.4 to 92.1 between 2015/16 and 2019/20. This has been driven by an increase in employment, particularly in part-time employment. In the last 12 months, there has been a 0.6 percentage point improvement in the participation rate, from 91.6 to 92.1.

This improving trend in participation however is not universal, with 5 councils reporting a decline since 2015/16 and 10 councils seeing a decline in the past 12 months. The variation in trend between authorities in the past 12 months ranged from an improvement of 2.6 percentage points, to a decline of 0.8 percentage points.

Table 17: Positive destinations and participation rate (%)

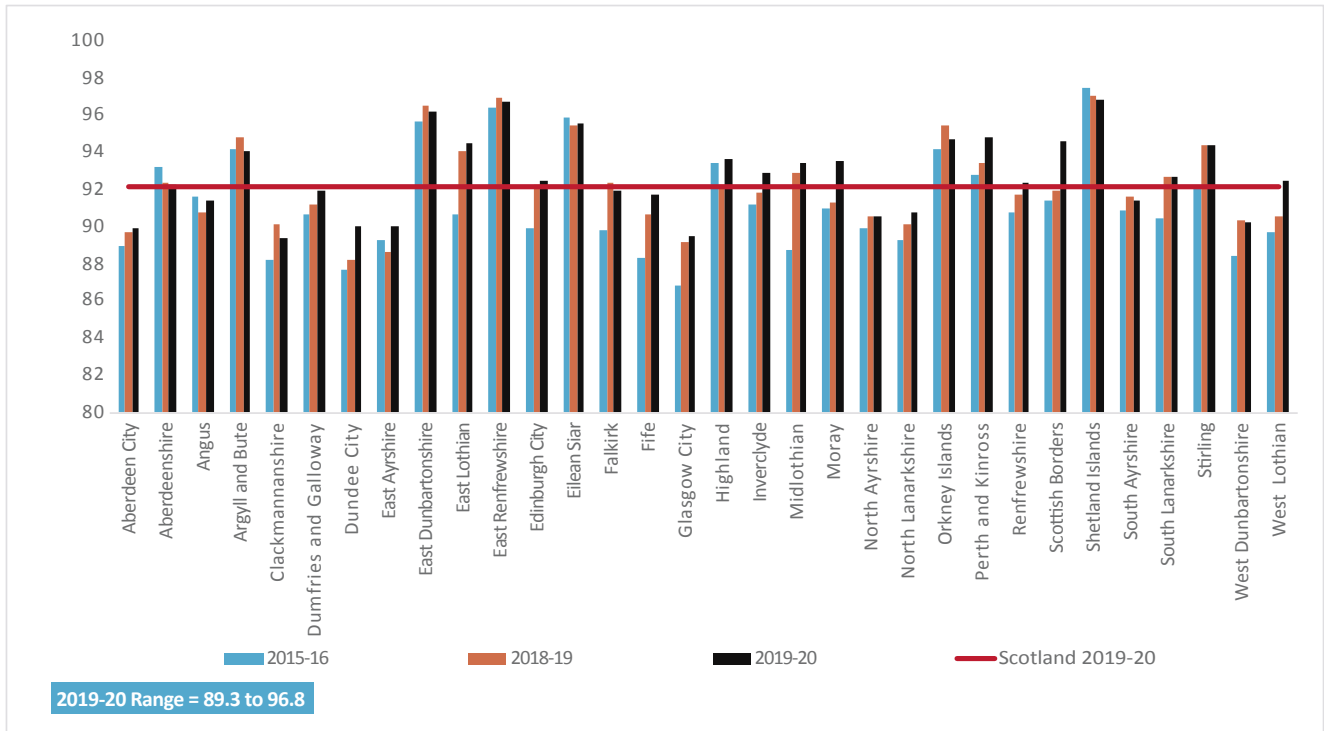
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change from Base Year
Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations	90.3	91.9	92.6	93.2	93.5	93.9	94.6	95.0	dna	0.6	4.9
Participation Rates for 16-19 Year Olds	-	-	-	-	90.4	91.1	91.8	91.6	92.1	0.6	1.7

In 2019/20, the participation rates for 16-19 year olds ranged from 89.3% to 96.8% across councils, with variation narrowing slightly. As with destinations, there is a systematic relationship between participation rates and deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting lower participation rates (e.g. 91.2% average for the most deprived councils versus 94.2% average for the least deprived councils).

25 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-attainment-initial-leaver-destinations-no-2-2020-edition/>

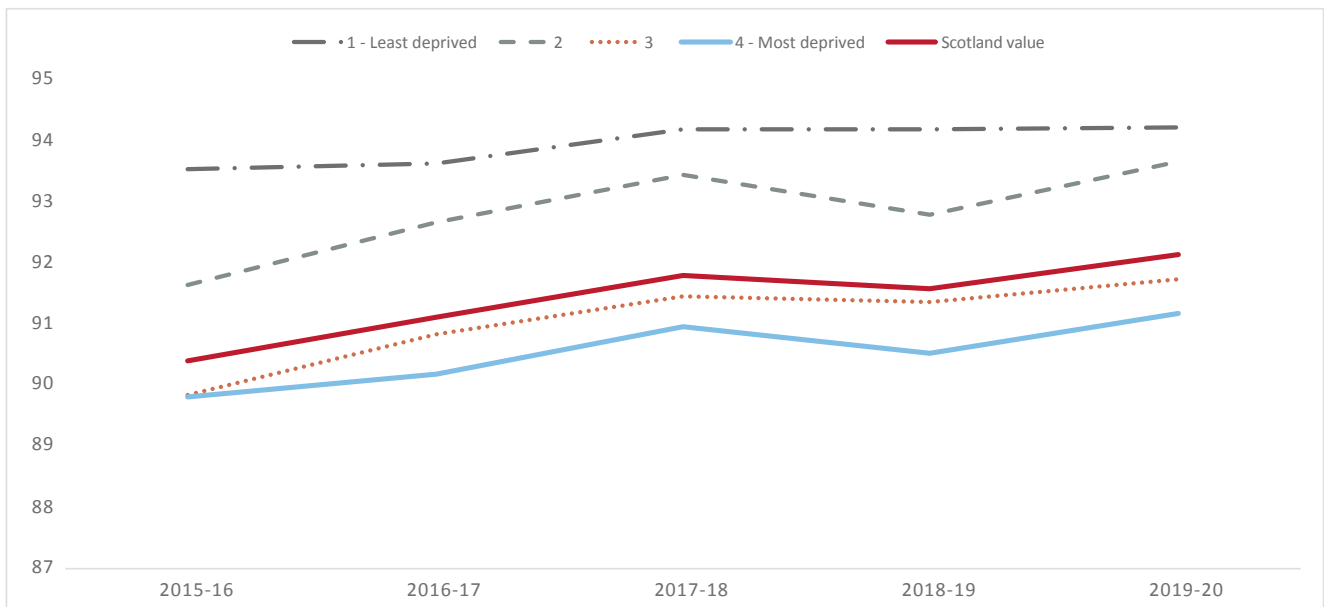


Fig 37: Participation rates for 16-19 year olds (%)



Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure

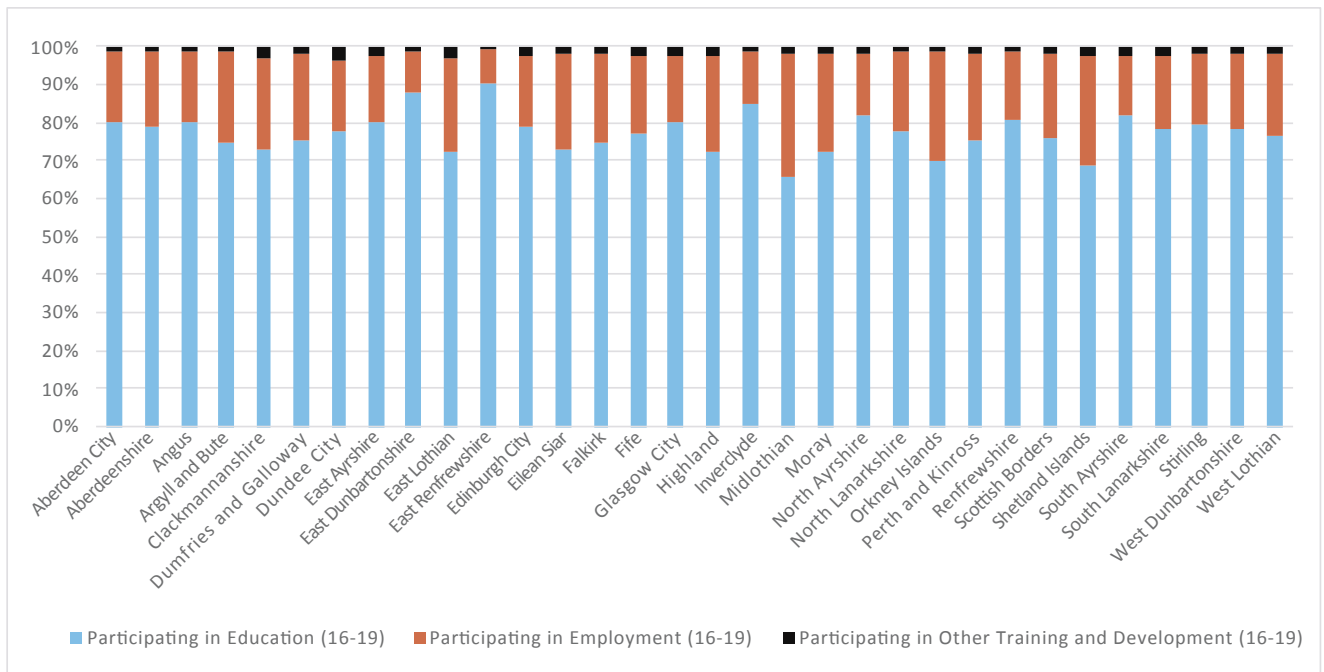
Fig 38: Participation rates for 16-19 year olds (%) by family group - deprivation



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



Fig 39: Participation rates - breakdown of participating status by council 2019-20 (%)



Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure

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

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

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

The impact of Covid is likely to be significant in this area. Those young people leaving school or graduating from university this summer are likely to be especially affected. They will be entering the labour market in the middle of a severe recession. It is clear from previous experience that this will not only lower their chances of getting a job immediately and will lower their wages substantially if they do, but also that those effects will persist for several years. In addition, workers under the age of 25 are two and half times more likely than those over 25 to have been working in sectors such as hospitality and (non-food) retail, those sectors hardest hit during the pandemic.

The launch of the Young Persons Guarantee²⁶ will be a particularly important intervention here. The Guarantee, backed by an additional £60 million investment, aims to give all young people in Scotland the chance to succeed despite the economic impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19). Organisations backing the Guarantee make five pledges to help young people at this critical time:

1. prepare young people for the world of work through work experience, volunteering and work-based learning opportunities
2. engage with and provide opportunities to young people who face barriers to work
3. create work-based learning, training and upskilling opportunities for young people
4. create jobs and opportunities for young people through apprenticeships, paid internships and work experience
5. create an inclusive workplace to support learning and enable young people to meet their potential

26 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/young-persons-guarantee-phase-1-activity-plan/>



Satisfaction with schools

There has been a 10.1 percentage point reduction in adults satisfied with their local schools service over the period, with satisfaction levels falling from 83.1% to 73.0% between 2010/11 and 2019/20. After year on year reductions between 2010/11 and 2017/18, satisfaction rates improved in the past two years, from 70% to 73%.

While almost all councils have experienced a decline in satisfaction levels since 2010/11, there is significant variation in the scale of this, from a decline of 24 percentage points to an improvement in one council area of 2.5 percentage points. In the past two years, while there has been an improvement in average satisfaction levels, more than half of councils actually report a decline.

Table 18: Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
83.1	-	83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	72.5	73.0	0.5	10.1

Source: Scottish Household Survey

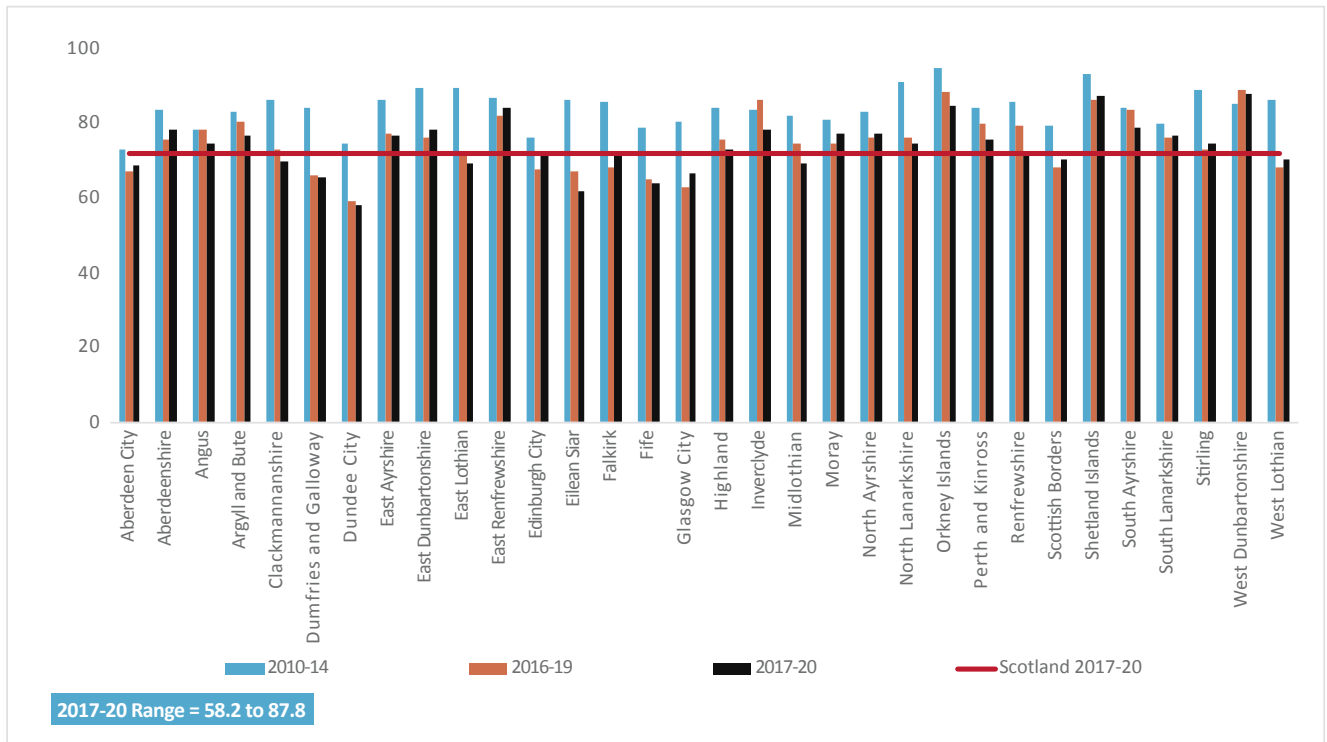
The customer satisfaction data that is included in the LGBF is derived from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, 3-year rolled averages have been used in local authority breakdowns. This ensures the required level of precision at local levels within confidence intervals of 6%. From 2018/19, questions used in the LGBF have also been included in the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) which provides a boosted sample size.

The data used represents satisfaction for the public at large rather than for service users. Smaller sample sizes for service users mean it is not possible to present service user data at a local authority level with any level of confidence. It should be noted that satisfaction rates for service users are consistently higher than those reported by the general population.

There is significant and widening variation in satisfaction levels with local schools across Scotland, with levels ranging from 58% to 88%. In the most deprived councils, levels have fallen by 11 percentage points on average, compared to 6.5 percentage point reduction in the least deprived authorities. However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family groups.

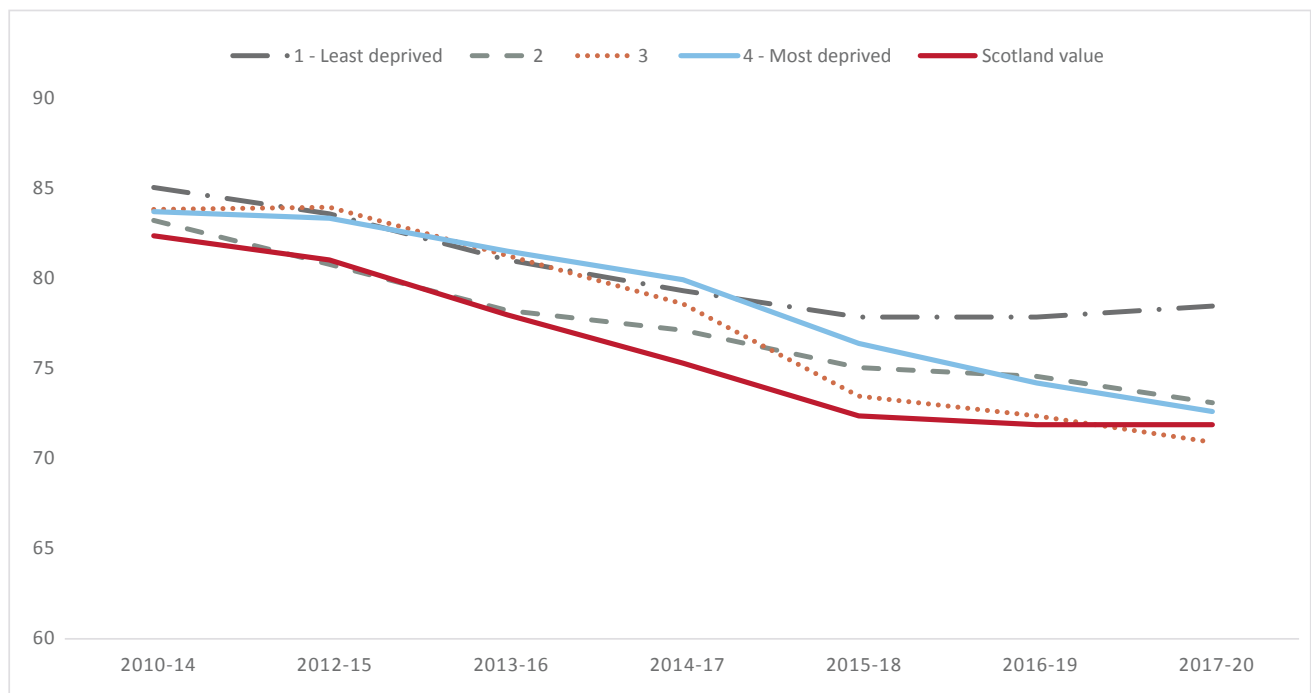


Fig 40: Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools



Source: Scottish Household Survey

Fig 41: Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools by family group - deprivation





Adult Social Care



Investment in services to tackle social inclusion and to support independent living for adults and older people is a major priority for councils and accounts for around a quarter of total council spend. Expenditure has increased by 15% in real terms in this area between 2010/11 and 2019/20 (range: -4% to +41%). Both council-run and council purchased services are included here.

Social care is an area where councils and their partners face growing demands due to an ageing population and the increasing complexity of needs experienced by older and disabled people. It is forecast that the percentage of the population aged 65 or over will increase by 4.7% by 2024 (and the over 75 population will increase by 19.3%).²⁷ In the face of these increasing demands, councils and their partners continue to modernise and transform social care provision to deliver better anticipatory and preventative care, provide a greater emphasis on community-based care, and enable increased choice and control in the way that people receive services.

The impact of Covid within health and social care will continue across the coming period and key areas affected of concern include the fragility of the care home sector, a frontline workforce that has been under tremendous pressure to maintain the same level of care, increased demands on mental health and wellbeing services and the way that services such as adult day services have had to adapt and change.

Both living with, and recovering from Covid-19 is expected to increase the number of individuals requiring support from adult social care services. The likelihood is there will be a continued increase in the number of people presenting as at risk of harm, or experiencing stress and distress, and whose age, disability, or health needs do not fit easily into current ways services are provided. Services are already seeing additional demand associated with the pandemic, especially in the areas of adult protection, mental health and increasing support for unpaid carers. The pandemic has taken a significant toll on unpaid carers and families, who provide much needed support to some of our most vulnerable citizens. The impact of Covid-19 on both delayed discharges and emergency attendances towards the end of 2019/20 and throughout 2020/21 is an area which will also require careful monitoring and interpretation across the coming period.

The fundamental reform which saw council services integrate with services from the National Health Service to create new Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) aims to strengthen the partnership working across public services to help improve outcomes for those using health and care services and also improve efficiency through the provision of more joined up services. This partnership approach will be relevant now more than ever as we continue to respond to the pandemic and work together to plan the route for recovery.

To reflect this major reform and to respond to the new challenges facing the sector from the Covid pandemic, we continue to work with Social Work Scotland and Chief Officers of the Integration Authorities to agree benchmarking measures which will usefully support Integration Joint Boards fulfil their duties. The current social care figures are likely to become more difficult to interpret over time as integration continues and the personalisation agenda gains pace. The current reform of adult social care,²⁸ the recently published Independent Review of Adult Social Care,²⁹ and the 2019 progress review of Health and Social Care integration³⁰ will inform developments in this area.

To better reflect the wider integration landscape and progress across the whole system, the suite of adult social care measures was recently strengthened to include a number of new measures, with further inclusions planned for the period ahead. Additional measures aim to capture the wellbeing agenda at the heart of

27 <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-projections-scotland/2018-based>

28 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/ministerial-strategic-group-health-community-care-review-progress-integration-health-social-care-final-report/>

29 <https://www.gov.scot/groups/independent-review-of-adult-social-care/>

30 <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/minutes/2019/06/ministerial-strategic-group-for-health-and-community-care-papers-may-2019/documents/item-3-integration-review-progress-update/item-3-integration-review-progress-update/govscot:document/Item+3+-+Integration+review+progress+update.pdf>



integration and strengthen coverage in key policy areas such as reablement and personalisation, and also to provide a richer picture in relation to system capacity and sustainability. The measures included are drawn from the core suite of integration indicators, and include data on delayed discharges, hospital readmissions, quality of care services, and a suite of ‘satisfaction’ measures to enable a focus on quality of life.

Home care services

Council spend on home care services has been standardised around home care costs per hour for each council. This includes expenditure across all providers. Since 2010/11 there has been a real- terms increase of 10.1% in spending per hour on home care for people over 65 across Scotland. This reflects an overall 22.6% increase in gross expenditure and 11.3% increase in the number of hours delivered during this period, although movement between years has fluctuated.

Table 19: Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£23.72	£22.95	£23.27	£22.62	£22.30	£23.16	£24.14	£24.92	£25.30	£26.13	3.3%	10.1%

In the past 12 months, spending per hour has increased by 3.3% from £25.30 to £26.13. This reflects a 5.2% increase in expenditure and a 1.9% increase in hours delivered. The increase in expenditure will reflect in part the commitment from October 2016 to pay all social care workers the living wage. Going forward, some caution may be required in the interpretation of care hour figures as we move away from recording hours of care into more person-centred care with the ability to select direct payments or more inventive provision of care under self-directed support options. This will be reflected in the current reform of adult social care and we will continue to work with Social Work Scotland and Chief Officers of the Integration Authorities to develop more meaningful measures which accurately capture progress and drive improvement in this area.

The average trend of increasing costs over the past 12 months is not universal. The range in movement across councils is -16% to +46%, with 16 authorities reporting reducing costs in the past 12 months counter to the national trend.

There is significant variation across councils in spend per homecare hour, ranging from £12.57 to £60.93. The level of variation observed is wider than any preceding year, with significantly higher and faster growing costs in more deprived council areas. Between 2010/11 and 2019/20, the average spend per hour for the most deprived councils increased by 35%, from £25.00 to £33.84. By comparison, spend in the least deprived councils increased by 1.8%, from £24.91 to £25.35.

While homecare costs remain higher for rural authorities, perhaps in part due to the longer travelling times involved in the delivery of care, the difference is no longer statistically significant due to variation within the family group. Urban authorities have also seen a faster cost increase than rural authorities over time. Average urban costs have increased by 13.9% from £24.09 to £27.45 while average rural costs have increased by 9.6% from £29.23 to £32.03. It is worth noting however, that island costs remain the highest of all councils, with the exception of Glasgow.



Figure 42 : Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over by family group - deprivation

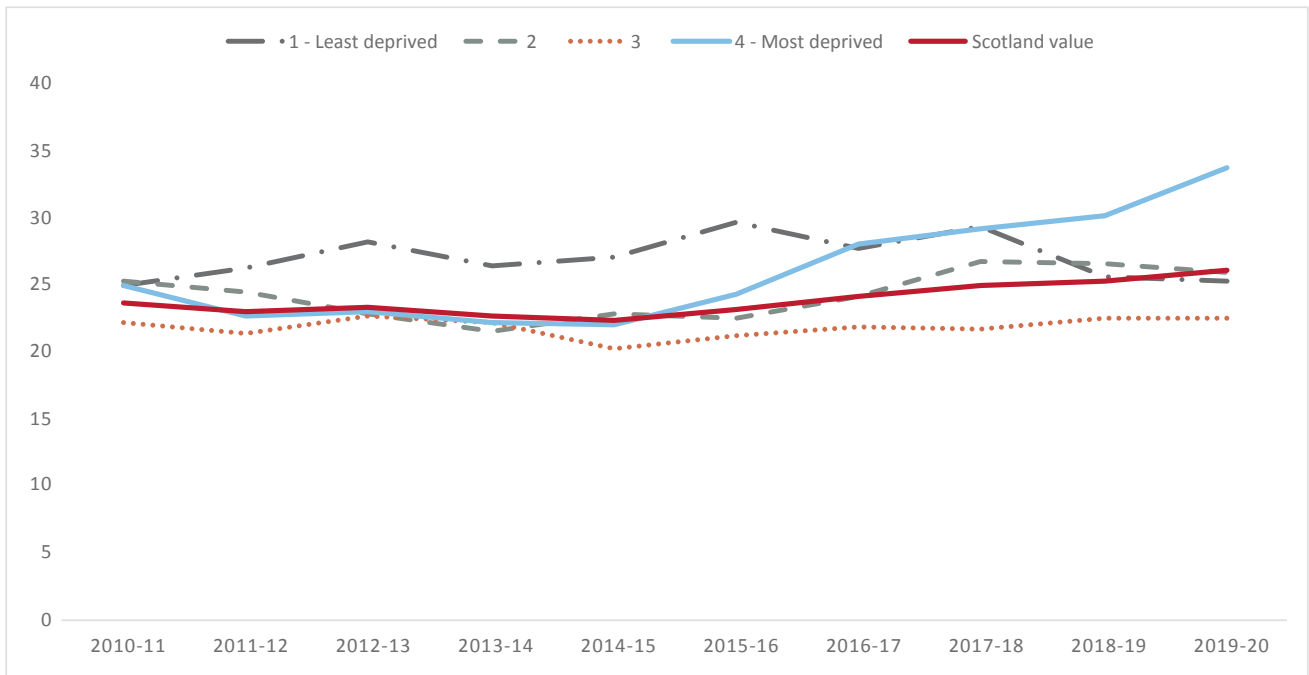


Figure 43 : Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over by family group - geography

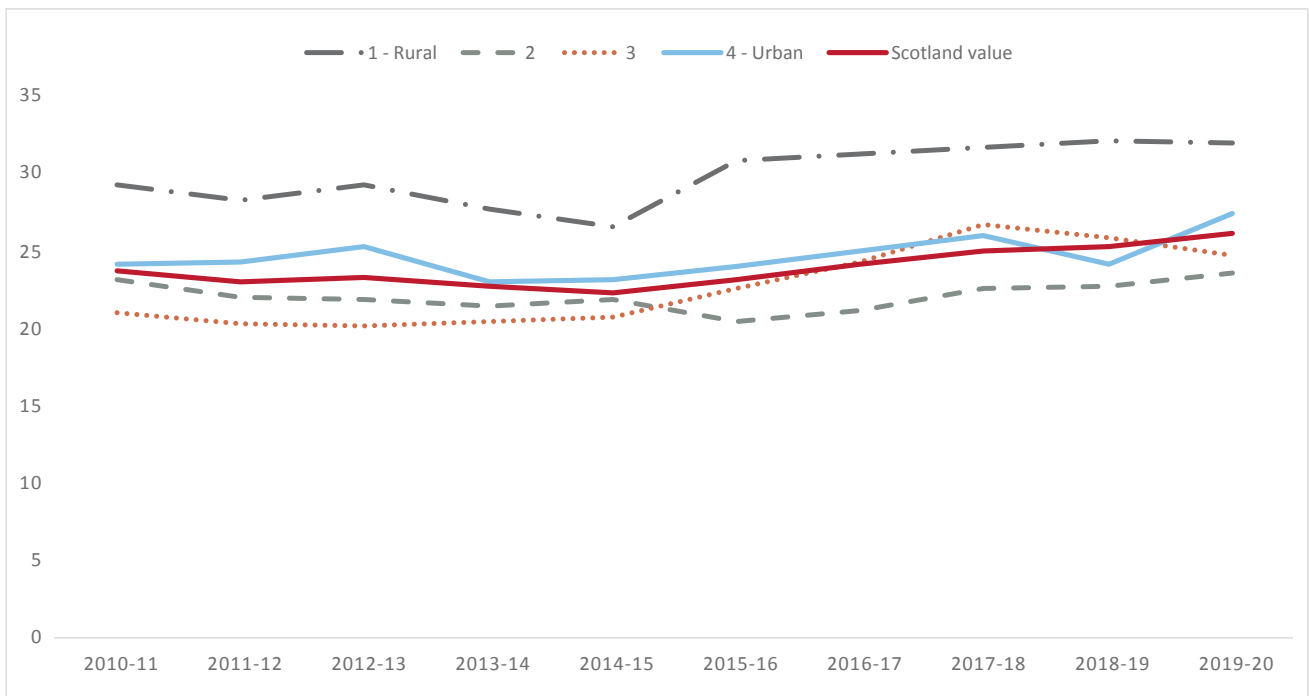
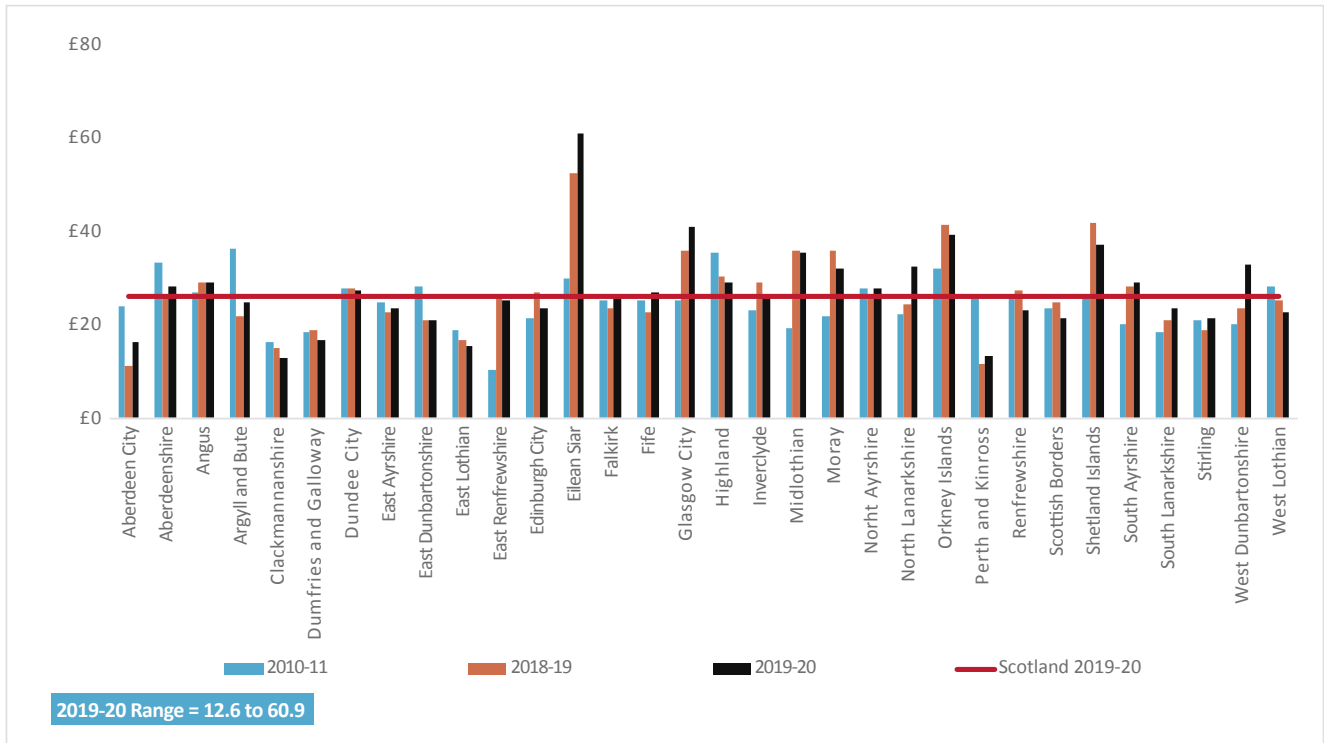




Fig 44: Older persons (over 65) home care costs per hour (£)



Source: Social Care Survey and Quarterly Survey, with additional data sourced directly from councils to allow adjustment for any Covid-19 impact on provision in March 2019. Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures

Balance of care

Balance of care is captured by the percentage of adults over 65 with long term care needs receiving care at home. This is an area of growing importance in an effort to care for more people in their own home rather than institutional setting such as hospitals. The effective design and delivery of home care services is central to independent living, citizenship, participation in society and in supporting a fulfilling life. Services can help prevent those most at risk of unplanned hospital admissions from entering the hospital sector unnecessarily. For those who do enter hospital, it can also help prevent delayed discharges.

The balance of care has shifted in line with policy objectives between 2010/11 and 2019/20, with a growth in home care hours provided (11.3%) and a relative decline in residential places (-3.5%). The percentage of people with long-term needs who are now receiving personal care at home has increased from 58.9% in 2010/11 to 61.7% in 2019/20. As importantly, the number of people receiving home care has decreased over time and the hours of care they receive on average has increased, i.e. in shifting the balance of care, a greater resource has become targeted on a smaller number of people with higher needs. The reducing number of home care service users, alongside the size of the package delivered reflects the agreed eligibility criteria now in place to ensure the fair allocation of care.

There is variation beneath this national trend. While the national balance of care continues to improve, the range in movement across councils is -7 to +13 percentage points since 2010/11, a decrease in the percentage of people with long-term needs receiving personal care at home, counter to the national trend.

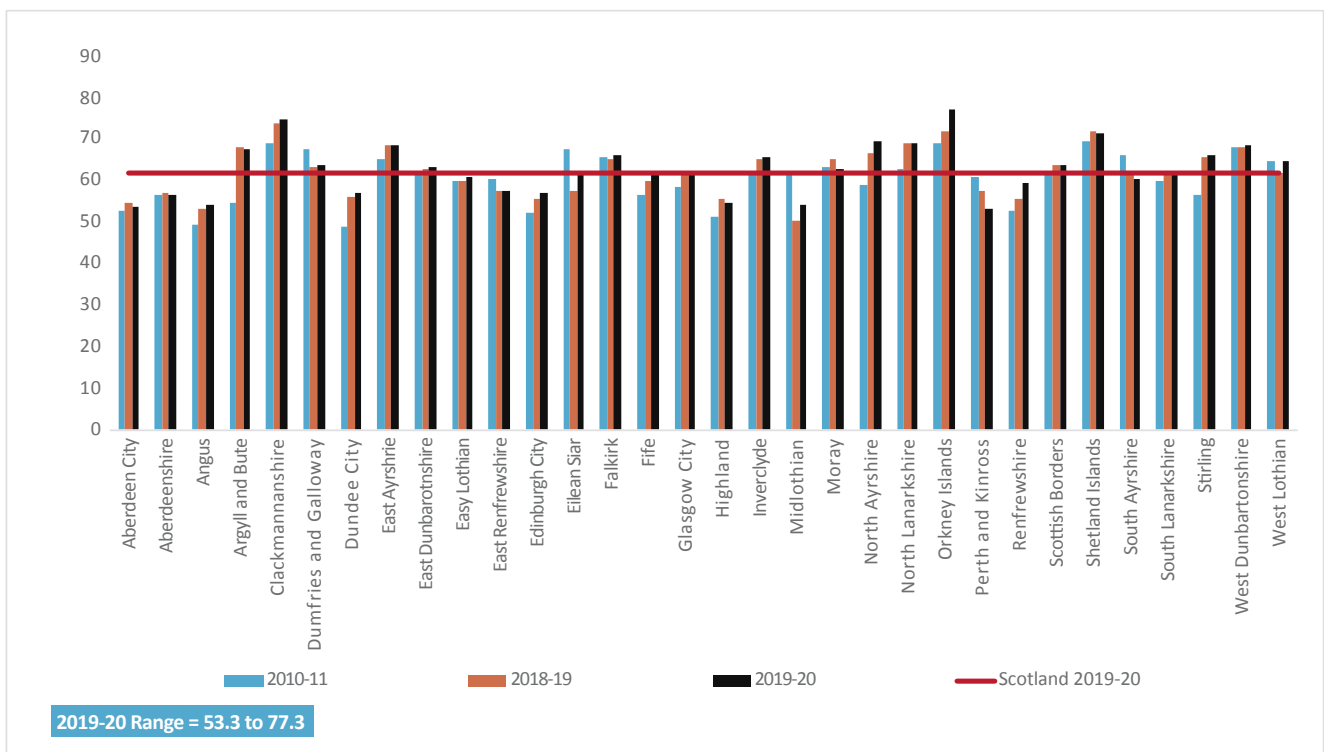


Table 20: Percentage of people aged 65 or over with long-term care needs receiving care at home

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
58.9	59.2	59.8	59.8	60.0	60.7	60.1	61.7	61.0	61.7	0.6	2.7

There is significant and constant variation across councils in relation to the balance of care, ranging from 53.3% to 77.3% across Scotland. Smaller councils report significantly higher rates of people receiving personal care at home than areas with larger populations (73% compared to 59%).

Fig 45: Percentage of people aged 65 or over with long-term care needs who are receiving personal care at home



Source: Social Care Survey and Quarterly Survey, Scottish Government. Additional data sourced directly from councils to allow adjustment for any Covid-19 impact on provision in March 2019.

Readmission to hospital

The readmission rate reflects several key elements of an integrated health and care service, including discharge arrangements and co-ordination of follow up care underpinned by good communication between partners.

This measure captures the rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges. The 28-day follow-up is selected as this is the time that the initial support on leaving hospital, including medicines safety, could have a negative impact and result in readmission. A longer period of follow up would be more likely to include admissions that are unrelated to the initial one, whereas a shorter period (e.g. 7 days) is more likely to only pick up immediate issues linked to the hospital care.



Since 2010/11, the rate of readmissions to hospital within 28 days (per 1,000 discharges) has increased year on year, from 89.7 to 104.7, a 16.7% increase. In the past 12 months, the growth has continued, increasing by 1.7%.

This increasing trend is not however universal. Since 2010/11, readmission rates have increased in 30 council areas, with the range in movement across councils -5.8% to +43.6%. In the past 12 months, while there has been a 1.7% national increase, the range in movement is -18.2% to +8.7%, with 11 councils reporting reducing readmission rates counter to the national trend.

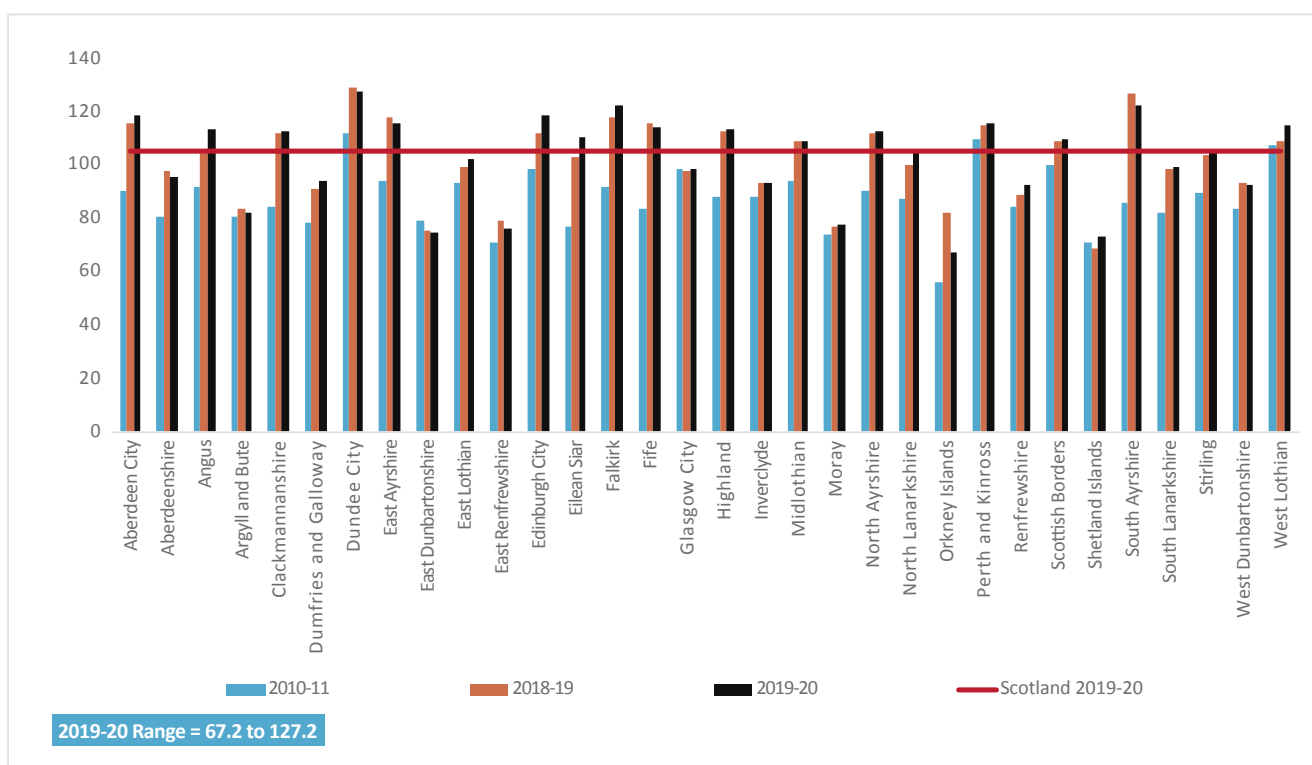
Table 21: Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
89.7	92.5	93.5	95.3	97.2	98.1	101.0	102.7	103.0	104.7	1.7%	16.7%

Source: ISD

There is significant and widening variation between authorities, with readmission rates ranging from 67.1 to 127.2. There is a statistically significant relationship with deprivation, with admission rates lower in the least deprived authorities compared to the most deprived council areas (92.3 compared to 106.8).

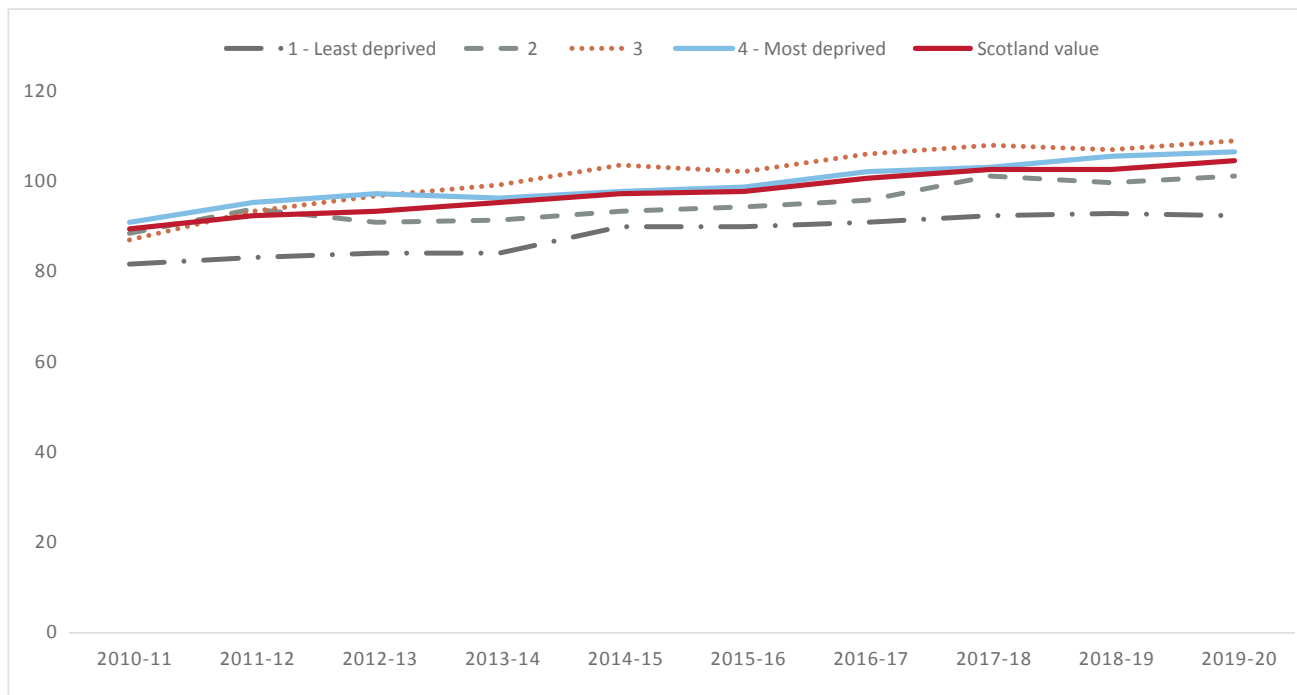
Fig 46: Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges



Source: ISD



Fig 47: Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges – family group - deprivation



Further exploration would be helpful to understand the role of factors such as increasing complexity of need and frailty in an ageing population, co-ordination, delivery and capacity in relation to follow-up support, and decision making in relation to discharge or readmission.

Delayed discharges

Health and Social Care services strive to ensure that people do not have to wait unnecessarily for more appropriate care to be provided after treatment in hospital. Waiting unnecessarily in hospital is a poor outcome for the individual and is particularly bad for the health and independence of older patients. It is an ineffective use of scarce resource potentially denying an NHS bed for someone else who might need it.

This indicator presents the number of days over 75s spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged. The indicator on its own does not tell us about the outcomes, as people need to be discharged to an appropriate setting that is best for their reablement. Focusing on discharging patients quickly at the expense of this is not desirable, and improvements need to be achieved by better joint working and use of resources.

Since 2016/17, there has been a 7.9% reduction in the number of days over 75s spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged. This has reduced from 840 to 774 days per 1,000 population. Due to a methodological change in 2016/17, data for the years prior to this is not directly comparable. Following a quality improvement exercise, delays for healthcare reasons and those in non-hospital locations (e.g. care homes) are no longer recorded as delayed discharges.

The national reducing trend in delayed discharges is not universal, with significant variation in trend across the country. The range in movement since 2016/17 is -72% to +257%, with 12 council areas reporting increasing delayed discharges counter to the national trend.

In the past 12 months, there has been a 2.4% decrease in the number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, following a 4% increase in 2018/19. The range in movement across authorities in the last year is -53% to +87%, with 14 authorities reporting an increase in the rate of delayed discharges counter to the national trend.



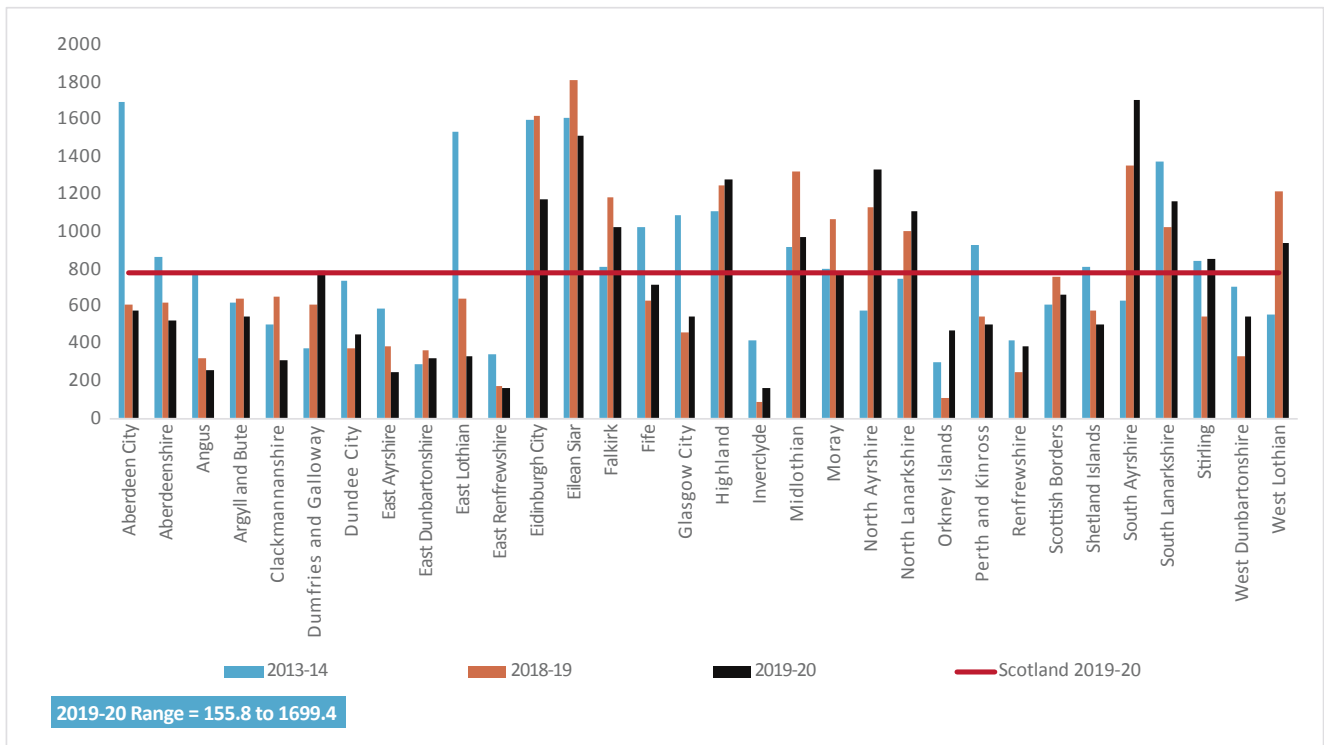
Table 22: Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, per 1,000 population (75+)

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
921.8	1043.7	914.7	839.8	761.7	792.7	773.8	-2.4%	-16.1%

Source: ISD

There is very significant variation across authorities in terms of the number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, with rates per 1000 ranging from 156 to 1699. There are no statistically significant relationships with deprivation, geography or council size.

Fig 48: Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, per 1,000 population (75+)



Source: ISD

This has been an area of significant and sustained focus for authorities and has shown some improvement across the longer period. However, the current increasing rates reported in over a third of council areas is a matter of concern. The availability of care home places and packages of care (particularly for those with the most complex care needs) varies between councils, which will have an impact on the volume of delayed discharges.

Direct payments and personalised managed budgets

From 1st April 2014, self-directed support introduced a new approach which gives people who require social care support more choice and control over how their support is delivered. Social work services continue to drive forward changes to ensure people’s outcomes are being met, rather than a person fitting in to a service.



The Self-Directed Support Act 2013 puts a duty on local authorities to be transparent about the resources available to provide support and offer a choice as to how that support is managed/ delivered/ organised through the following four options:

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

The indicator here refers to the percentage of total social work spend allocated via direct payments (DP) or Personalised Managed Budgets (PMB).³¹ Since 2010/11, the proportion of total social work spend allocated via DP and PMB has grown steadily from 1.6% to 9.0%. All 32 authorities have reported growth during this period. Glasgow and North Lanarkshire account for a significant proportion of this growth, where expenditure via DP and PMB has grown from £5.2 million to £150.5 million. Excluding Glasgow and North Lanarkshire, the spend on direct payments and PMB as a percentage of total social work spend increased from 1.6% to 5.6% across the same period, with direct payments accounting for 70% of this spend (down from 74%).

In the last 12 months, the proportion of spend via DP and PMB rose from 7.2% to 9.0% (from 5.1% to 5.6% excluding Glasgow and North Lanarkshire). This increase however was not universal, with 13 authorities reporting a small decline in the past year. Excluding outliers, the range in movement across councils is -1.8 percentage points to +3.5 percentage points

Table 23: Spend on direct payments and personalised managed budgets as a percentage of total social work spend on adults 18+

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
1.6	2.9	6.0	6.4	6.9	6.7	6.4	6.8	7.2	9.0	1.8	7.4

Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

In 2019/20 the range in spend across councils was 2.3% to 27.8% (2.3% to 11.8% excluding outliers). Variation has widened in 2019/20 after narrowing in recent years.

The data suggests a relationship between deprivation and the uptake of DP and PMB. Those councils with lower levels of deprivation have a statistically higher uptake of direct payments (5.3% compared to 2.7% in the most deprived areas). Councils with higher levels of deprivation have a statistically higher uptake of PMB, (6.5% compared to 1.6% in the least deprived areas). This finding is supported by Scottish Government’s examination of the uptake of direct payments and SIMD which shows that people living in less deprived areas are more likely to choose direct payments.³²

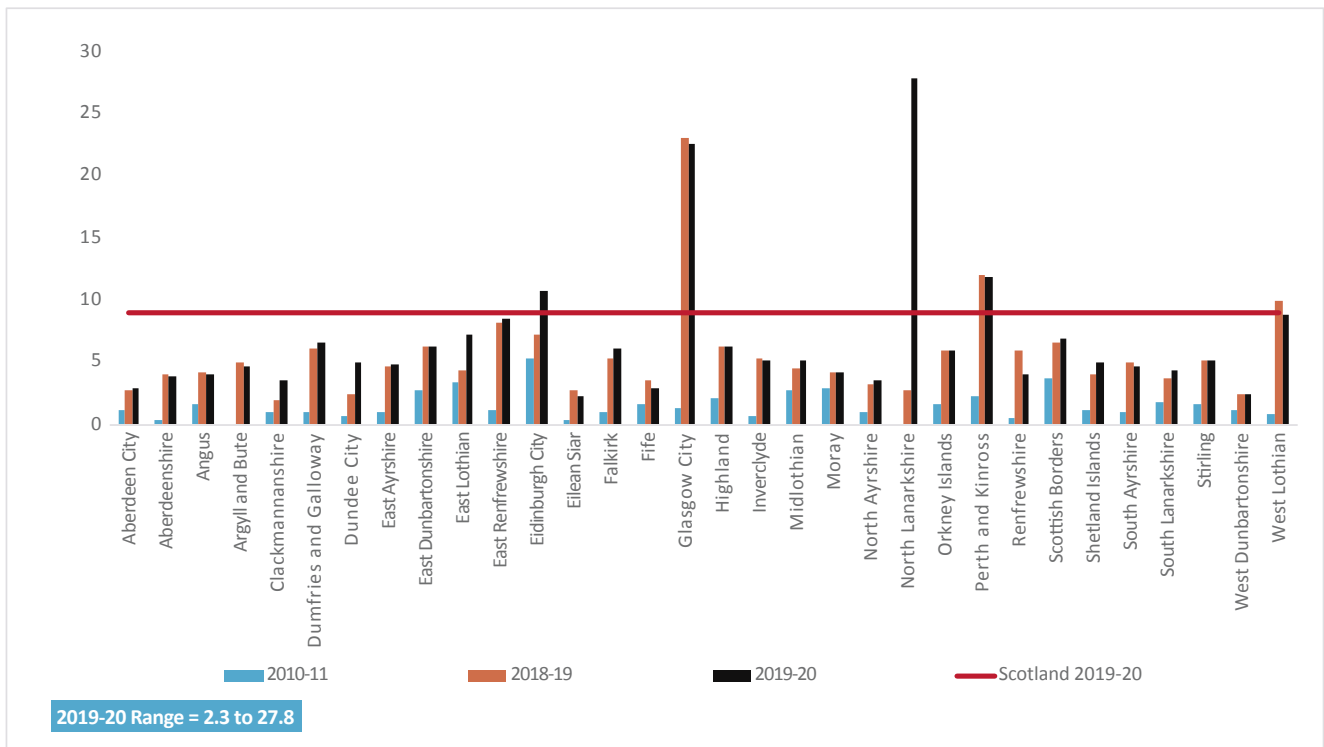
31 The PMB breakdown was included in councils return to the Improvement service for 13/14 - 18/19, and includes only residual expenditure from the personalised budget where it is unknown what support was purchased, i.e. where the council used a third party to arrange services. It does not include where the budget has been used to purchase known services from either the authority or another provider. Analysis of the data however indicates some variation in relation to what is included currently.

32 Self-Directed Support, Scotland, 2017-18. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/free-personal-nursing-care-scotland-2017-18/>



Analysis of the LGBF data reveals rurality is also important in understanding the variation between councils, with supported people in rural authorities more likely to opt for direct payments, and supported people in urban authorities more likely to opt for personalised managed budgets (these relationships are both statistically significant)

Fig 49: Spend on direct payments and personalised managed budgets as a percentage of total social work spend on adults 18+



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

Care homes

The cost of care home services is reflected in the framework by a standardised measure using net costs per week per resident for people over the age of 65.

It is important to note that the figures for 2012/13 to 2019/20 have in agreement with the Local Government Directors of Finance excluded a support cost component which was included in 2010/11 and 2011/12, and therefore a direct comparison with costs from earlier years is not possible.

Over the eight years for which we have comparable data, there has been a 4.5% reduction in unit costs from £421 to £401. This has been driven by an 5.5% reduction in net expenditure and a reduction in the number of adults supported in residential care homes of 1.0%.

Gross expenditure levels have remained steady over this period therefore the reduction in net expenditure indicates an increase in the income received by councils rather than a reduction in expenditure. The growth in the number of privately or self-funded clients as a proportion of all long stay residents over this period would support this trend (an increase from 28% to 34% between 2010/11 and 2018/19).³³

33 <https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/health-and-social-care/social-and-community-care/care-home-census-for-adults-in-scotland/>



Although the national trend shows a 4.5% reduction in unit costs, the range in movement across councils was -74% to +44%, with 13 authorities reporting increased costs since 2012/13, counter to the national trend.

In the last 12 months, the average cost per week per resident increased by 1.3% from £396 to £401. This reflects a 2.5% increase in net expenditure and 1.2% increase in the number of residents.

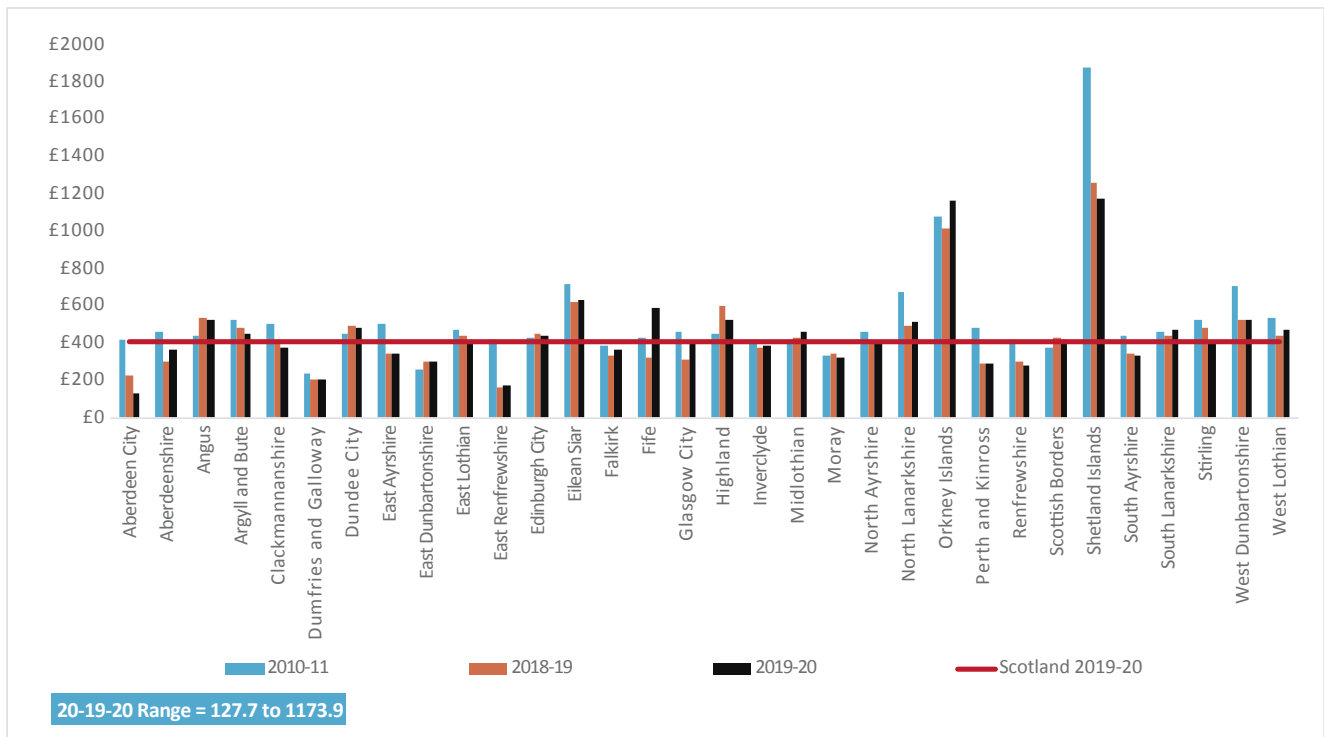
While the average cost increased in the past 12 months, the range in movement across councils was -43% to +80%, with 14 authorities showing reducing costs counter to the national trend.

Table 24: Care home costs per week for people over 65

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£457	£462	£421	£405	£409	£398	£397	£390	£396	£401	1.3%	-12.2%

There is a considerable level of variation in home care costs across councils, ranging from £128 to £1,174 in 2019/20. Island authorities on average report significantly higher costs. When island councils are excluded, costs range from £128 to £581. The level of variation narrowed between 2013/14 and 2015/16 but has widened again over the past four years.

Fig 50: Older persons (over 65s) residential care costs per week per resident (£)



Source: Social Care Survey and Quarterly Survey, with additional data sourced directly from councils to allow adjustment for any Covid-19 impact on provision in March 2019., Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures

Up to and including 2019/20, the National Care Home Contract (NCHC) for residential care for older people will, to a large extent, have standardised costs. However, it is important to note that the net cost per resident will not equate to the NCHC rate, as care home residents will pay a proportion of their care home fees. The NCHC rate only applies to LA-funded residents who are in private and voluntary run care homes. Residential care costs however include net expenditure on:



- The net cost of any LA-funded residents (paying the NCHC rate)
- The cost of paying free personal care and free nursing care payments to self-funders (there are around 10,000 self-funders receiving Free Personal Care payments; around two-thirds also receive the Free Nursing Care payment)³⁴
- The net cost of running any LA care homes (this will be gross cost less charges to residents). These will not equate to the NCHC rate and not all LAs run their own care homes so this may be something to explore further when examining differences across councils.

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

Based on the above, variation in net costs between councils will be largely influenced by the balance of LA funded/self-funded residents within each area, and the scale of LA care home provision and associated running costs. There may be value in reviewing whether further breakdowns in this measure could provide further insight around the variation between areas.

Satisfaction with care services

The LGBF includes a suite of 'satisfaction' measures to capture progress made in relation to improving personal outcomes, promoting enablement, increasing choice and control, and supporting carers. These measures are taken from the HSC Core Suite of integration Indicators³⁵ with data drawn from the bi-annual Health and Care Experience Survey.

The Health and Care Experience Survey provides a more locally robust sample than is available from the Scottish Household Survey in relation to social care. The experience survey is part of the GP survey and asks about experience of 'care'. The data cannot be related to a specific element of social care and may reflect users experience across a mixture of health care, social care, and district nursing for example.

Across the suite of measures, there have been year on year reductions in satisfaction across each element. Since 2013/14,

- the percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life has fallen from 85% to 80%. The range in movement across councils was -18 percentage points to +8 percentage points, with 5 councils showing improvement counter to the national trend.
- the percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible has fallen from 83% down to 81%. The range in movement across councils was -12 percentage points to +19 percentage points, with 12 councils showing improvement counter to the national trend.
- the percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided has fallen from 83% down to 75%. The range in movement across councils was -18 percentage points to +12 percentage points, with 3 councils showing improvement counter to the national trend.
- the percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role has fallen from 43% down to 34%. The range in movement across councils was -15 percentage points to +4 percentage points,

34 Free Personal and Nursing Care, Scottish Government, <https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-care/reforming-adult-social-care/>

35 <https://www.gov.scot/groups/independent-review-of-adult-social-care/>



with 2 councils showing improvement counter to the national trend.

Table 25: Satisfaction with care services

	2013-14	2015-16	2017-18	2019-20	Value Change 2017-18 to 2019-20	Value Change 2013-14 to 2019-20
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life	85.0	84.0	80.0	80.0	0.1	-5.0
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible	82.8	82.7	81.1	80.8	-0.4	-2.0
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided	83.1	78.8	75.6	75.4	-0.2	-7.7
Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role	43.0	40.0	36.6	34.3	-2.3	-8.7

For all these elements, satisfaction levels vary considerably across councils. For those who agree services had a positive impact on quality of life, this ranges from 68% to 88%; for independence, satisfaction ranges from 71% to 98%; for control and choice, the range is 67% - 87%; and for Carers, satisfaction ranges from 29% to 50%. For satisfaction with impact and independence, variation is not related to deprivation, rurality or size of authority. However, rural authorities report significantly higher rates for Carers satisfaction (38% compared to 35%), and the least deprived authorities report higher satisfaction rates in relation to control and choice (79% compared to 76%).



Figure 51 – Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided by family group - deprivation

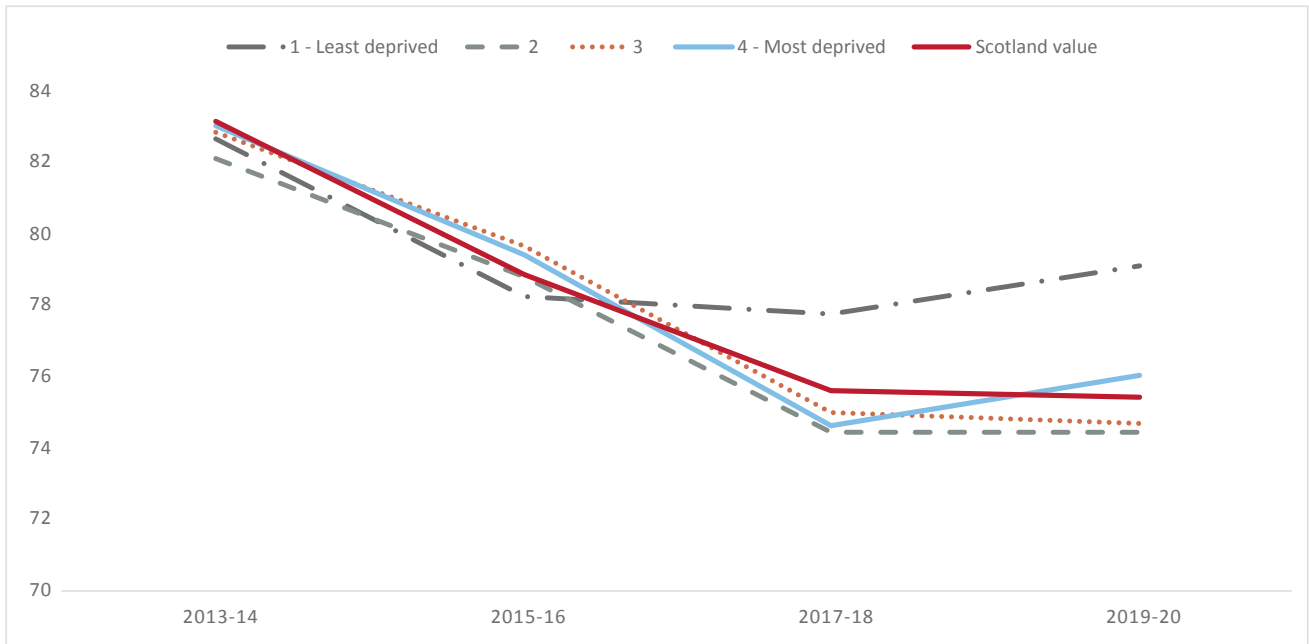


Figure 52 – Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role by family group - rurality

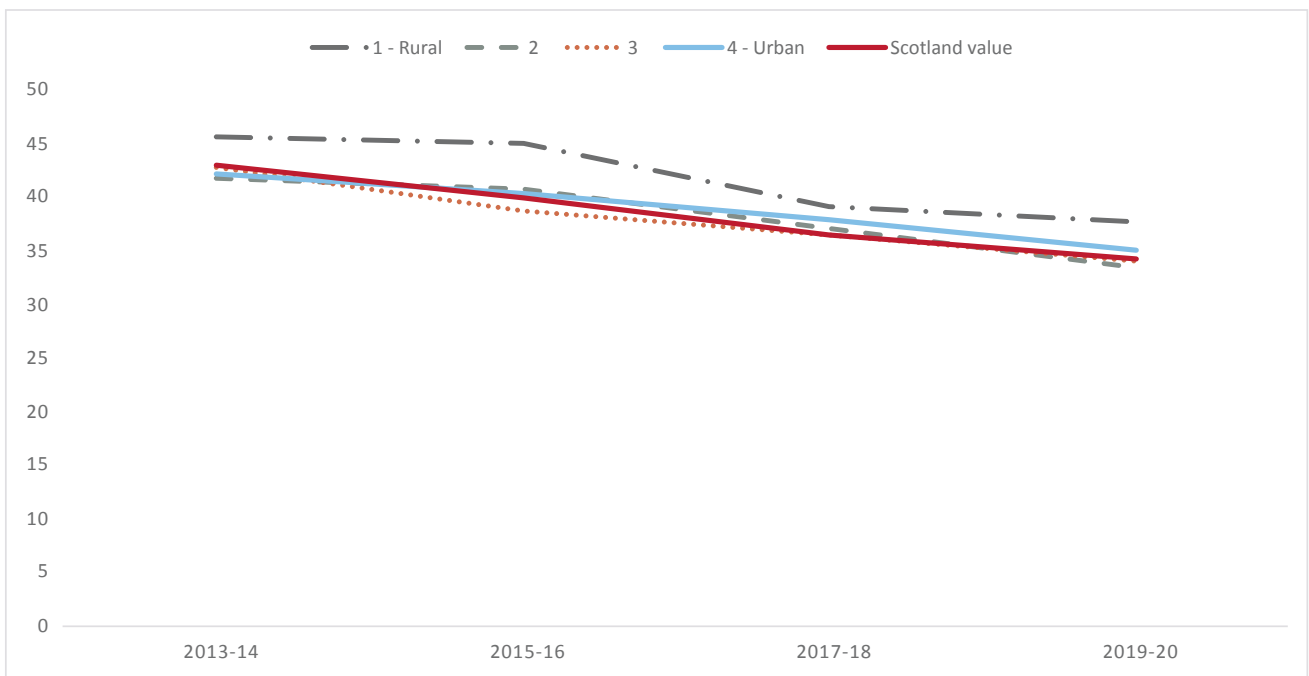




Fig 53: Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life

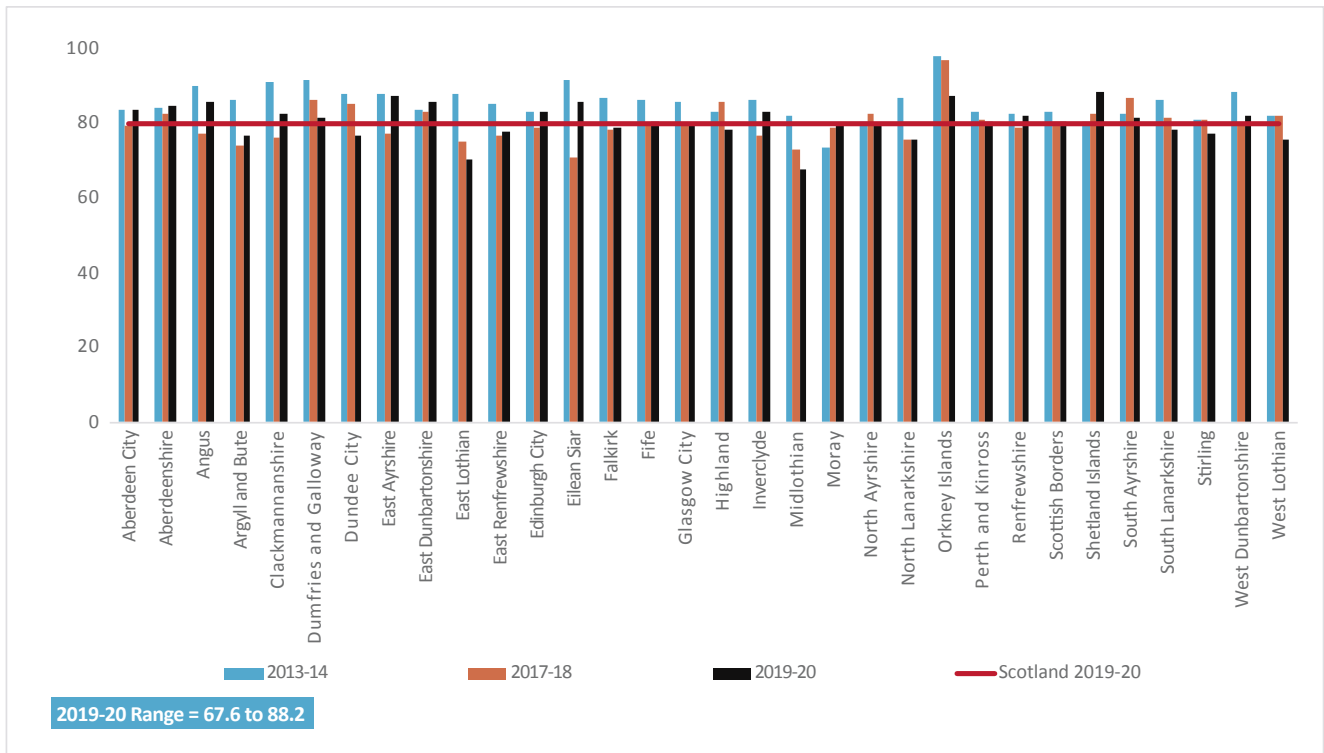


Fig 54: Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible

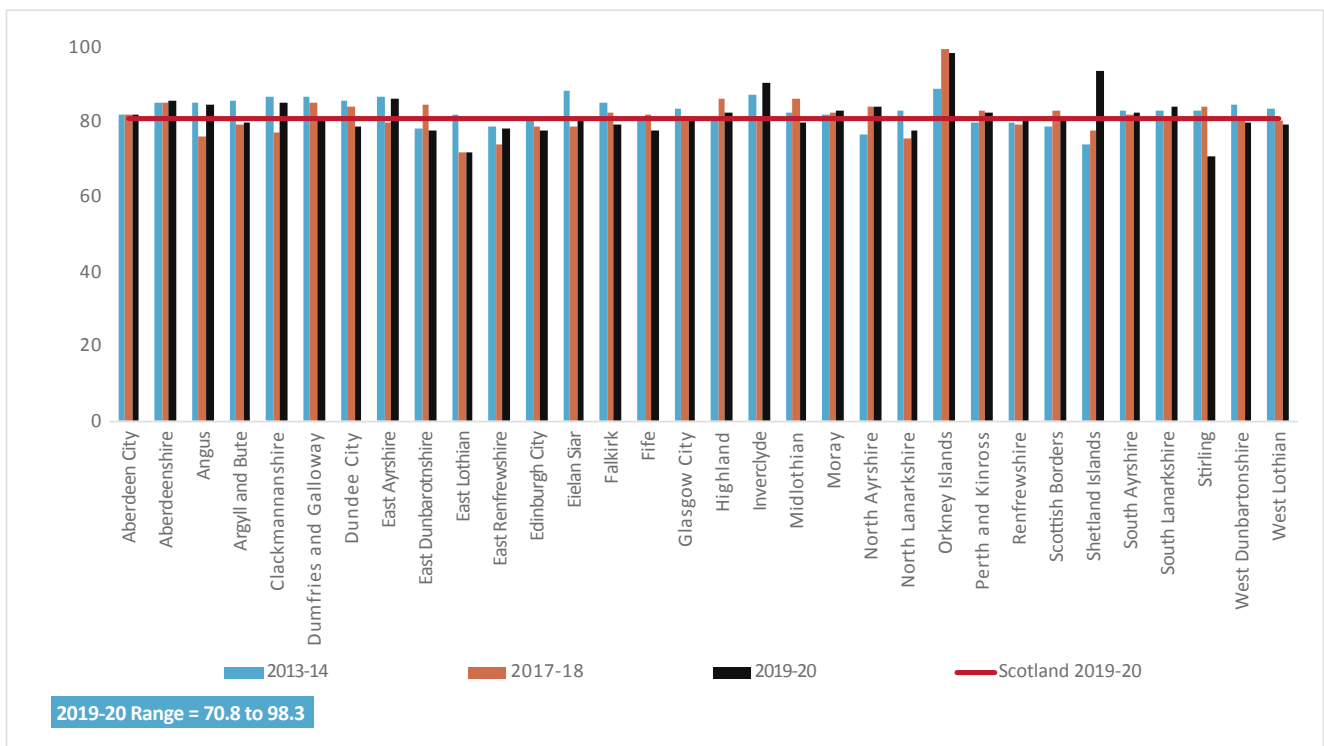




Fig 55: Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided

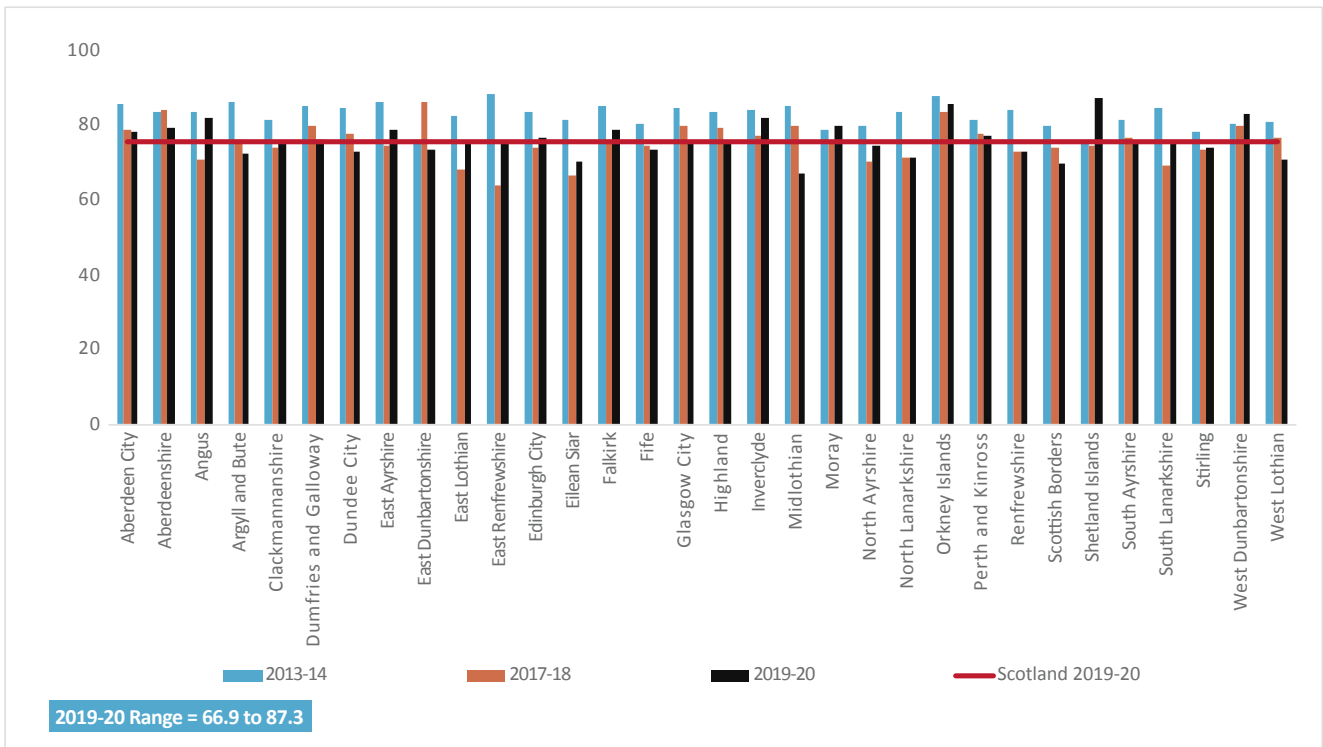
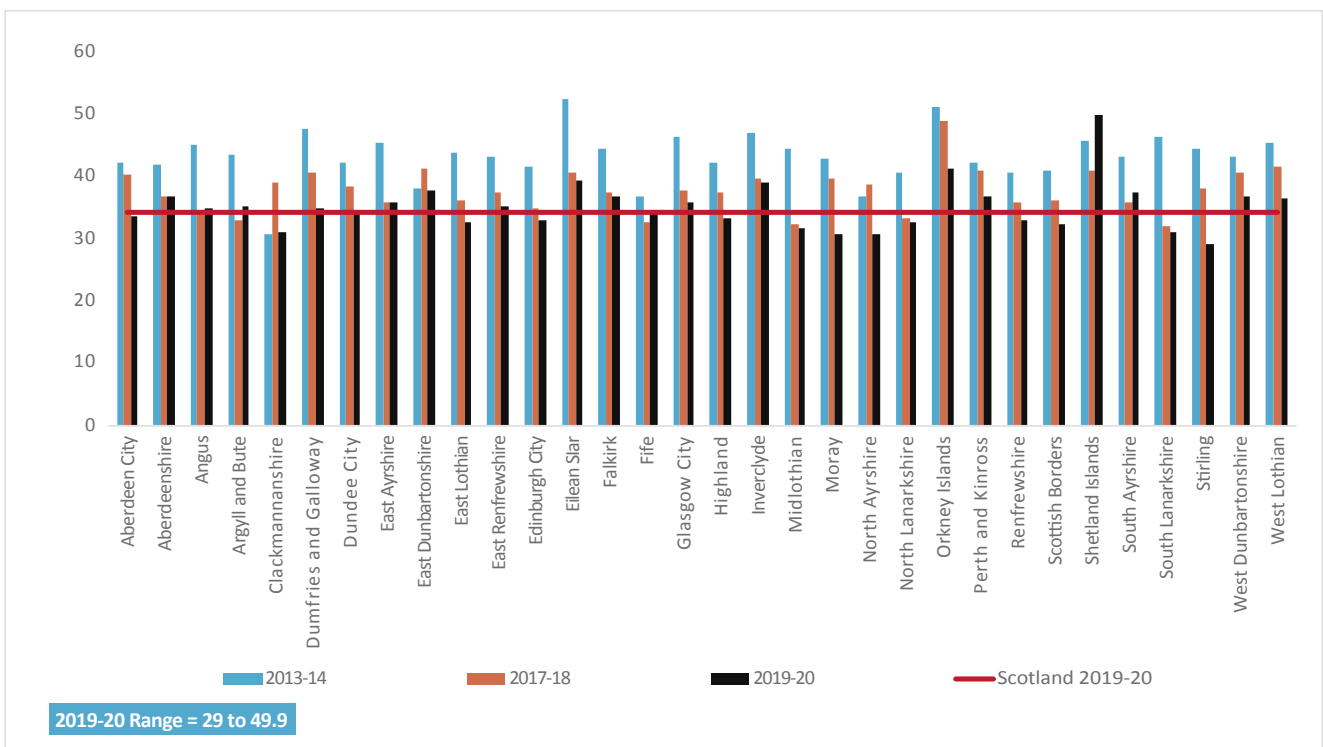


Fig 56: Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role



Source: Health and Care Experience Survey



Quality ratings of care services

This indicator provides a measure of assurance that adult care services meet a reasonable standard. This includes care provision provided by Local Authority, Health Board, Third Sector and Private Sector and includes the following care services:

- Care Homes for adults and older people
- Housing Support Services
- Support Services including Care at Home and adult Daycare
- Adult placements
- Nurse Agency

The Care Inspectorate grades care services on the following themes:

- Quality of Care and Support
- Quality of Environment (Care Homes only)
- Quality of Staffing
- Quality of Management and Leadership

New Health and Social Care Standards were published by the Scottish Government in June 2017.³⁶ These new standards are relevant across all health and social care provision. They are no longer focused only on regulated care settings, but are for use in social care, early learning and childcare, children’s services, social work, health provision, and community justice.

The Care Inspectorate is changing the way it inspects the quality of care and support to reflect the new Health and Social Care Standards. From July 2018, a new framework for inspections of care homes for older people was introduced, drawing heavily on the new Health and Social Care Standards. Similar frameworks will be developed for other settings in due course. It will be important to consider the impact of these new standards and inspection frameworks when interpreting future data on care quality ratings.

There has been an overall improvement in quality ratings since 2011/12, with the % of care services graded ‘good’ (4) or ‘better’ (5) increasing from 80.9% to 81.8%. The range in movement is -14pp to +19pp, with 14 councils declining counter to the national trend.

After 4 years of improvement, in the last 2 years inspectorate quality ratings have fallen from 85.4% to 81.8%. During this time, the range in movement is -13pp to +11pp, with 8 councils improving, counter to national trend.

Table 26: Proportion of care services graded ‘good’ (4) or better in Care Inspectorate inspections

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2011-12 to 2019-20
80.9	80.2	80.2	80.5	82.9	83.8	85.4	82.2	81.8	-0.3	1.0

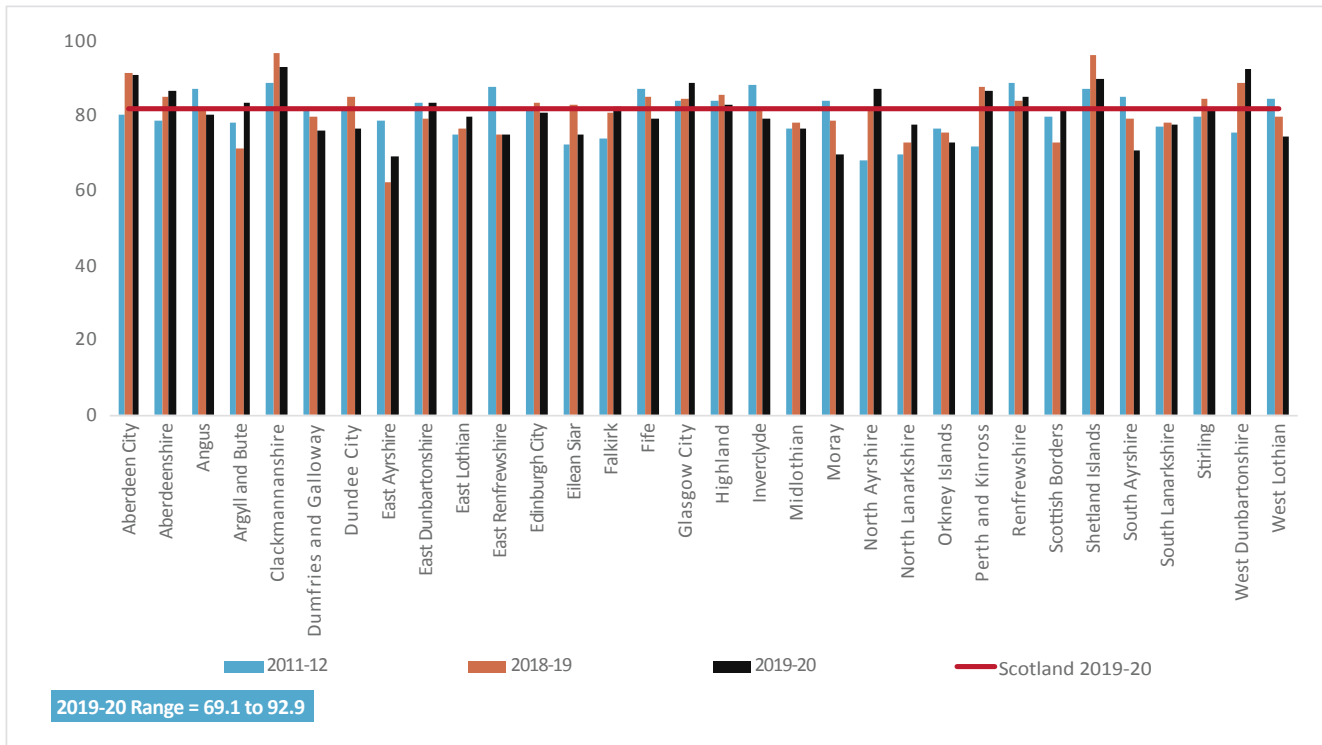
Source: Care Inspectorate

36 <http://www.newcarestandards.scot/>



There is significant and widening variation between councils, with ratings in 2019/20 ranging from 69.1% to 92.9%

Fig 57: Proportion of care services graded ‘good’ (4) or better in Care Inspectorate inspections



Source: Care Inspectorate

The overall number of care services has been declining. The number of services registered with the Care Inspectorate has steadily declined to fewer than 12,000 in 2019-20. This may be due to financial pressures within the sector, which discourages providers with services of lower capacity as bigger services are more financially viable.

Until April 2018, the overall performance of care services was improving, with the proportion of good or better services growing and the maximum obtained grade rising. During the last two inspection years, this long-term trend was reversed with quality ratings decreasing for Care homes for Older People (63% in 2019/20). This coincided with the introduction of the new care standards, which may have played a role in this. If removed, the Scotland average rating would continue to improve for care services overall.

Work continues with Social Work Scotland and HSC Integration Chief Officers to improve the relevance and utility of this suite of measures with some improvements requiring longer-term development. This work will link with the current reform of adult social care,³⁷ and build on the learning from recent reviews of Adult Social Care³⁸ and Health and Social Care integration.³⁹

The following areas have been identified and prioritised for further exploration within Phase 2 of LGBF development. These areas will support the ongoing transformation of social care, and will be a critical focus for the sector in supporting recovery from Covid-19:

37 <https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-care/reforming-adult-social-care/>

38 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/independent-review-adult-social-care-scotland/>

39 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/ministerial-strategic-group-health-community-care-review-progress-integration-health-social-care-final-report/>



- System capacity, and particularly staffing/workforce planning.
- Widening focus beyond services and outcomes for older people, to reflect the complex care agenda and the growing cost and pressures associated with supporting adults with Learning Disabilities and Autism, and also to reflect other key areas of social care such as Mental Health and Substance Misuse.
- Improved cost measures to reflect development of new delivery models/markets/the personalisation agenda and personal care.

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

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



Culture and Leisure Services



Culture and leisure services play an important role in the quality of life in local communities and have seen their usage grow significantly across the ten-year period, in part reflecting the expansion of digital provision during this time. In addition to the social and economic benefits delivered, the impact culture and leisure services have on promoting better health and wellbeing of the population and in reducing demand on other core services is well documented. Culture and leisure services also connect well with communities who more traditional and regulated services often struggle to reach. This unique relationship provides real potential to achieve impact for people in the greatest need.

There has been substantial capital investment in the cultural and leisure infrastructure in Scotland during the lifespan of the LGBF. Examples of new builds include the Emirates Arena & Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Glasgow 2012, the Kelpies, Falkirk 2015, the V&A, Dundee 2018, while areas of major investment include Time Capsule refurbishment in North Lanarkshire in 2011, and Aberdeen Sports Village in 2019.

However, given there is little in the way of statutory protection for culture and leisure spending, culture and leisure services face a particularly challenging financial context across the coming period. Since 2010/11, overall gross revenue expenditure on culture and leisure services has fallen by 26.5% in real terms (range: -47% to +12%). The Covid-19 pandemic has intensified concerns around potential future funding for culture and leisure services, including the impact on current income streams. The current priority for the sector is on reopening facilities and services safely and effectively across the coming period. The longer-term outlook is uncertain and there is recognition of the unprecedented challenges facing the sector as a result of the inevitable COVID-19 driven recession. The sector recognises the need to revitalise and rethink their role and approach. This includes promoting the role and value that Culture and Leisure will play in enhancing health and wellbeing, and strengthening the reach into communities, supporting recovery efforts.

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

Sports facilities

The data presented below illustrates the net cost per attendance at sports and recreation facilities. Over the ten-year period from 2010/11 to 2019/20 the average unit cost has reduced year on year from £4.18 to £2.71 in real terms. In percentage terms, this represents a 35.2% reduction.

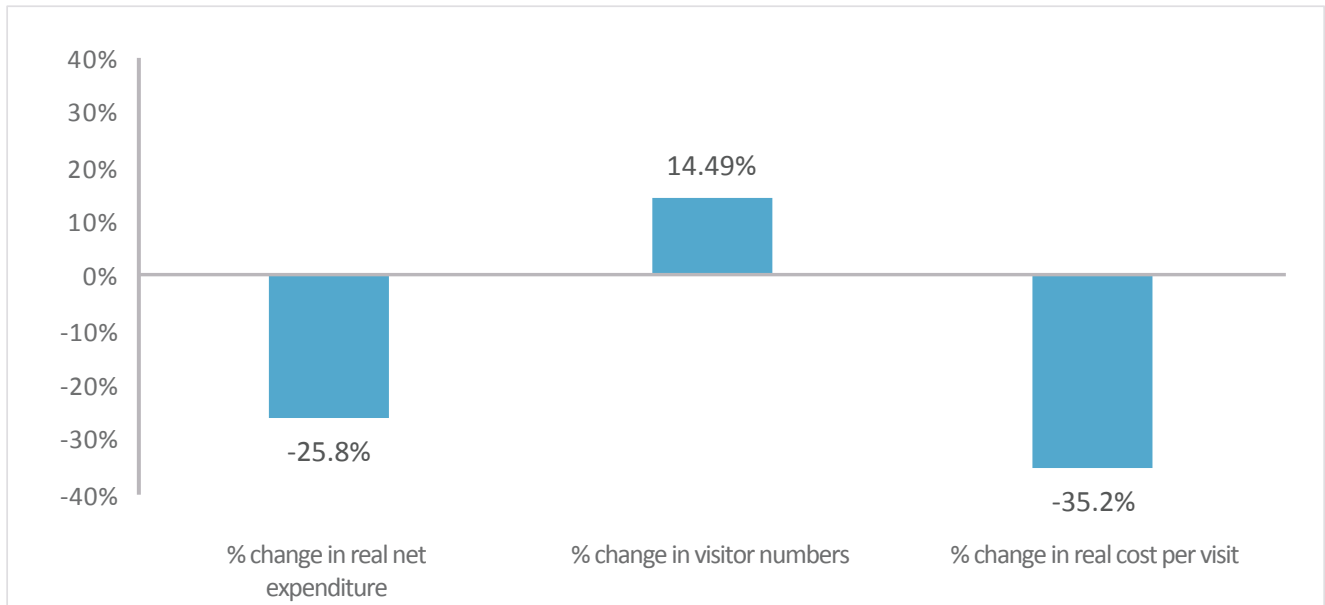
While the average cost reduction across this period is 35.2%, the range in movement is -110% to +18% (excluding outliers) with 4 authorities reporting increasing costs counter to the national trend.

Table 27: Cost per attendance at sports facilities

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£4.18	£3.74	£3.57	£3.56	£3.26	£3.19	£3.09	£2.85	£2.68	£2.71	1.3%	-35.2%



Fig 58: Sports facilities: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit 2010/11 - 2019/20



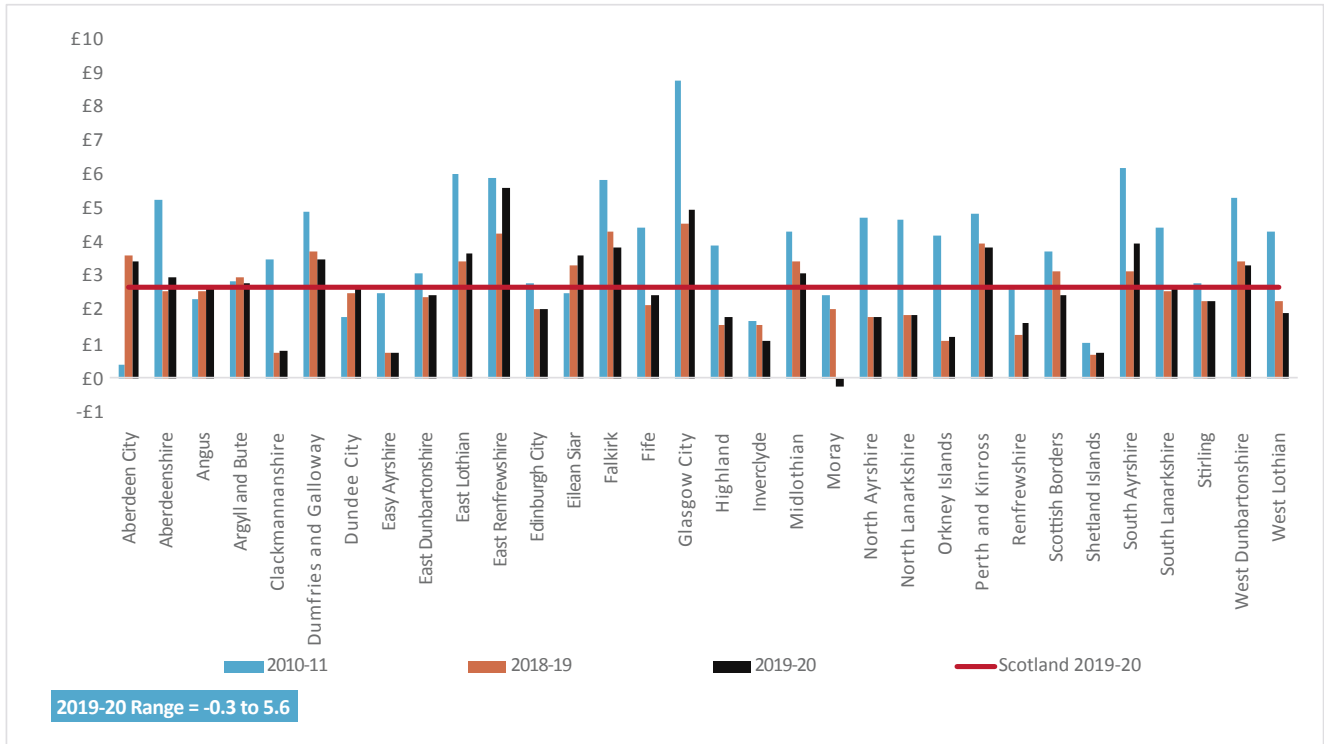
Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Over the ten-year period, the significant increase in user numbers while the unit cost of sports attendances has fallen indicates that leisure and recreation services have managed to attract more people into using their facilities while managing significant financial pressures. A key factor here may be the significant capital investment programme in sports facilities across Scotland in the noughties now bearing fruit. However, it may be that the additional capacity generated through this investment has now been reached, and thus the growth in user numbers is tapering off.

However, the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal. In 2019/20, costs per attendance at a sports facility ranged from £0.73 to £5.60, excluding outliers. The variation in unit costs has widened in the past year after narrowing in recent years due. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.



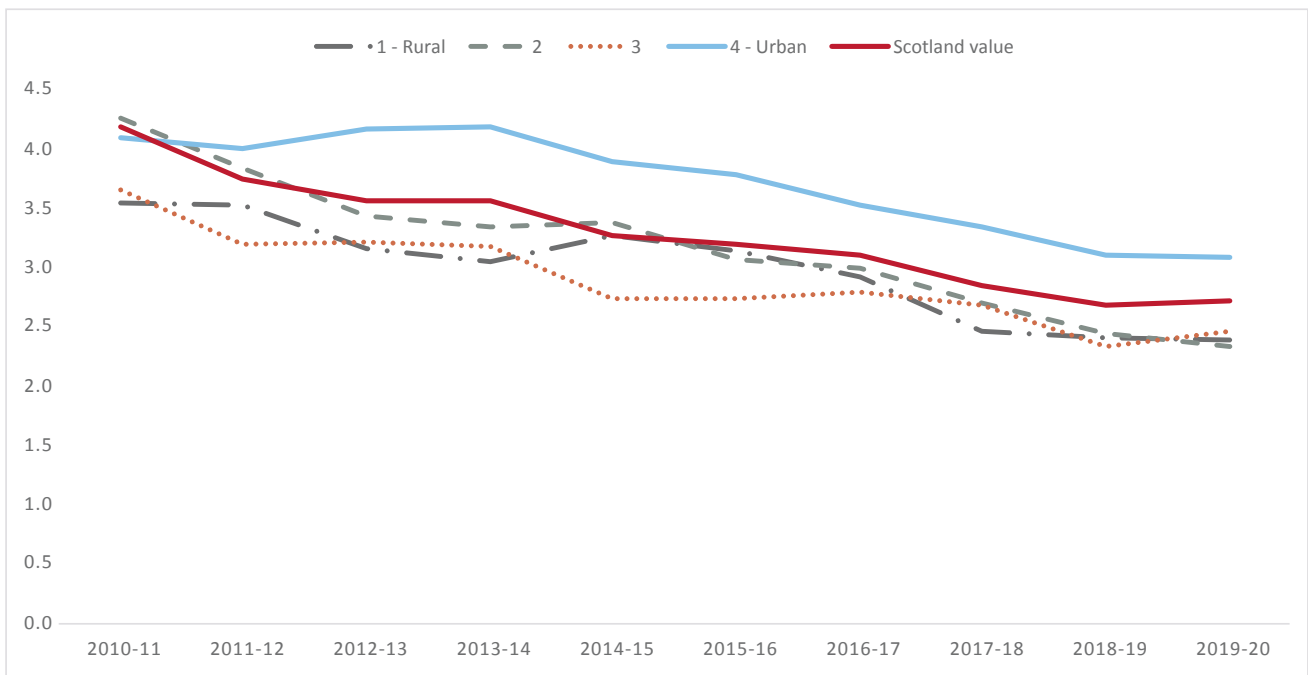
Fig 59: Cost per attendance at sports facilities (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Costs remain higher for urban authorities on average compared to rural authorities (£3.10 compared to £2.40) and have not declined at the same rate (-25% compared to -33%). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with rurality due to variation within the family group

Fig 60: Cost per attendance at sports facilities (£) by family group - rurality





Library services

Library costs are represented as the average cost per library visit (both physical and virtual). There has been a significant 50.1% reduction in unit costs since 2010/11, with cost reductions levelling out in recent years. The average cost per library visit in 2019/20 was £2.00, while in 2010/11 the cost per visit was £4.01.

While the average reduction in cost per visit is 50.1%, the range in movement is -93% to +63%, with three councils reporting increasing costs counter to the national trend. Cost reductions have been greater for rural authorities on average than for urban or semi-rural authorities, -53% compared to -35%.

Fig 61: Cost per library visit by family group - rurality

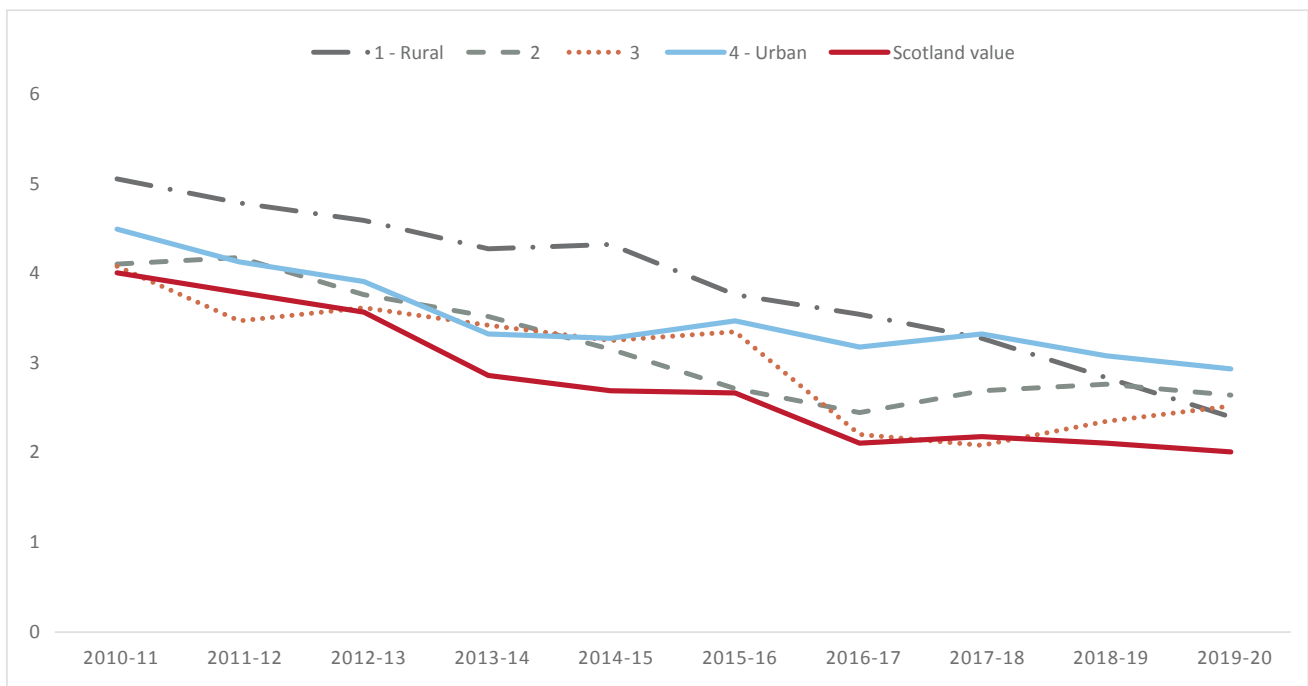


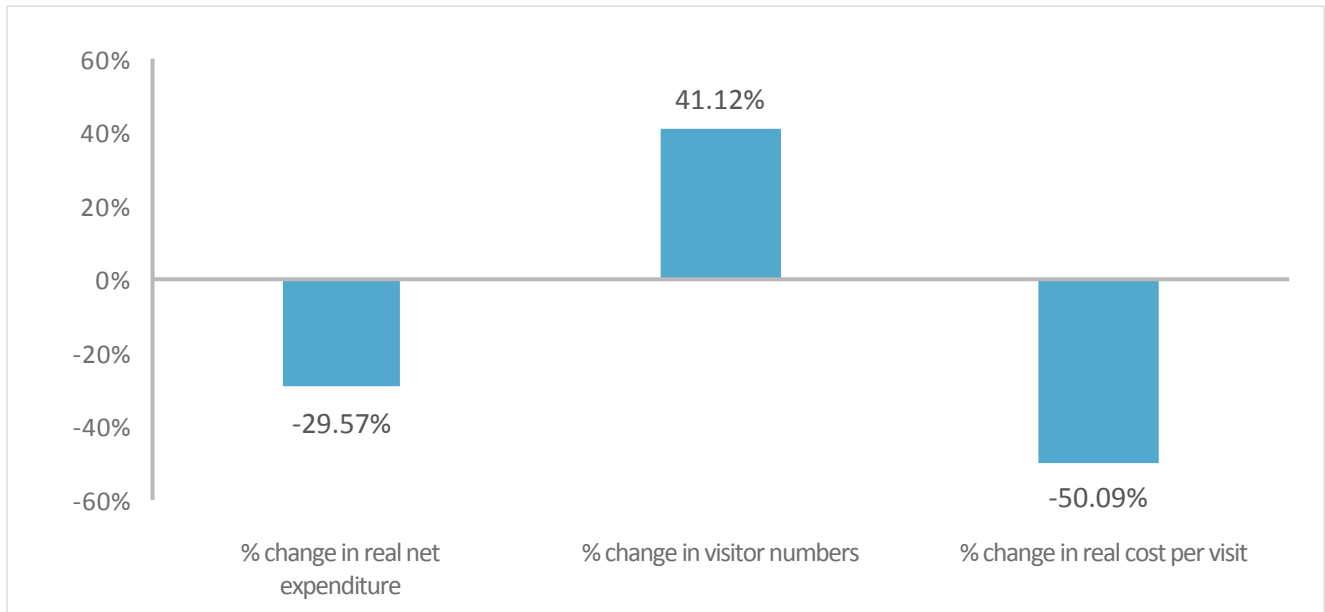
Table 28: Cost per library visit

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£4.01	£3.78	£3.58	£2.87	£2.70	£2.67	£2.12	£2.17	£2.10	£2.00	-4.7%	-50.1%

As with sports services unit cost figures on their own do not tell the full story of the last ten years for library services. Over the period covered by the LGBF, there has been a reduction in net spending on library services of 29.6%. At the same time, visitor numbers increased from 31.8 million to 44.9 million, an increase of 41.1%. Across this period, there has been a year on year reduction in expenditure levels, including a 2.8% reduction in the past 12 months. Meanwhile, while the number of library visits increased significantly between 10/11 and 16/17, growth has slowed in recent years. The treatment of social media may account for some of the movement in recent years and strengthened guidance has been introduced to improve data robustness in this area.



Fig 62: Libraries: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit, 2010/11 - 2019/20



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

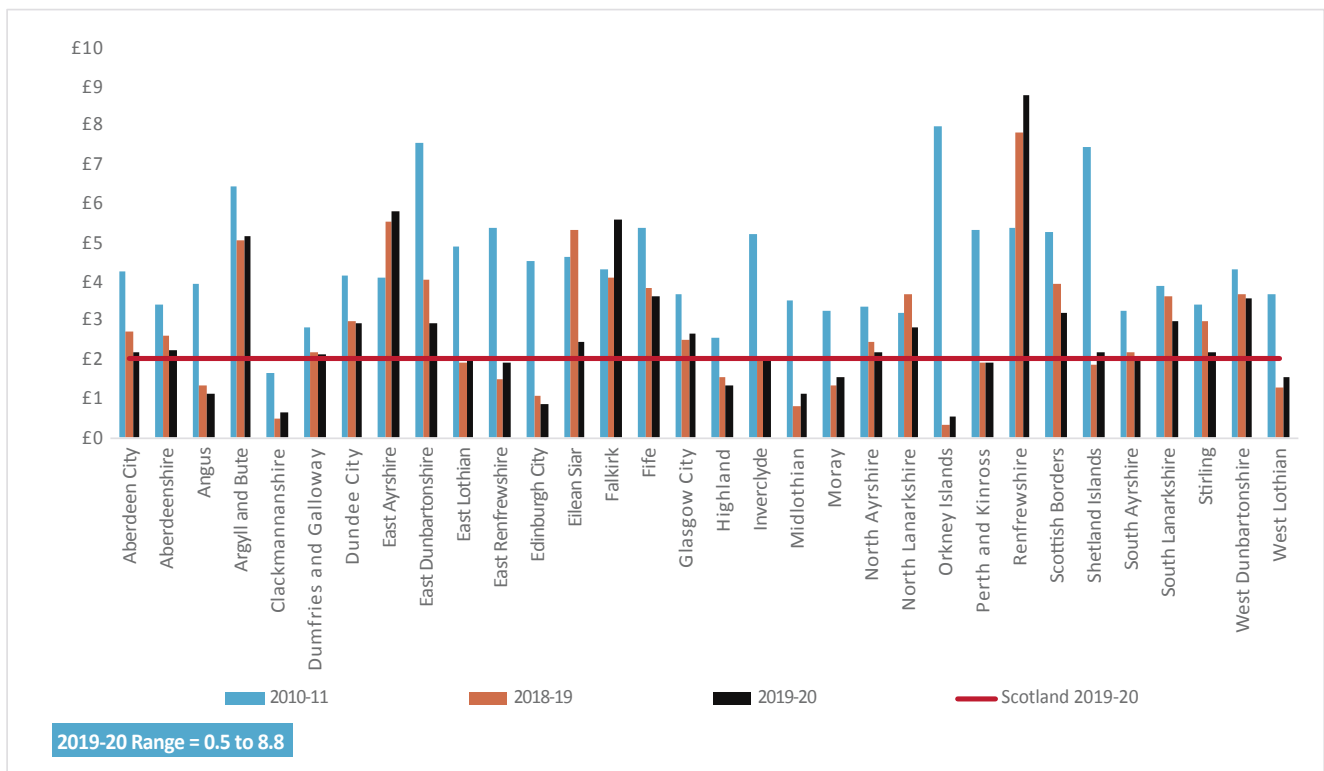
Over the period, this indicates that against a difficult financial backdrop council services have achieved a growth in service user volume and as a consequence reduced the unit cost per visit to the council by a substantial margin. This shows decisions around the rationalisation of local services have been implemented intelligently and rather than reduce access, the sector has been successful in increasing visitor numbers over the period. The recent slowdown in visitor figures suggests that close monitoring of this area will be required across the period ahead to assess the longer-term impacts of these decisions.

As with sports attendance the picture across councils with respect to the general trend is not universal.

In 2019/20 the range across councils in cost per library visit was £0.53 to £8.78. The level has widened in recent years. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.



Fig 63: Cost per library visit (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Museum services

With respect to museum services, the pattern is similar to library and sports services in relation to falling unit costs accompanied by increasing visitor numbers. Over the ten-year period there has been a real terms reduction of 33.9% in cost per visit, from £4.95 to £3.27.

While the average cost reduction is 33.9%, the range in movement is -83% to +85%, with 9 authorities reporting increasing costs per visit counter to the national trend.

There has been an 8% reduction in unit costs in 2019/20. The range in movement is -85% to +176%, with 11 councils reporting increasing costs counter to the national trend.

Table 29: Cost per museums visit

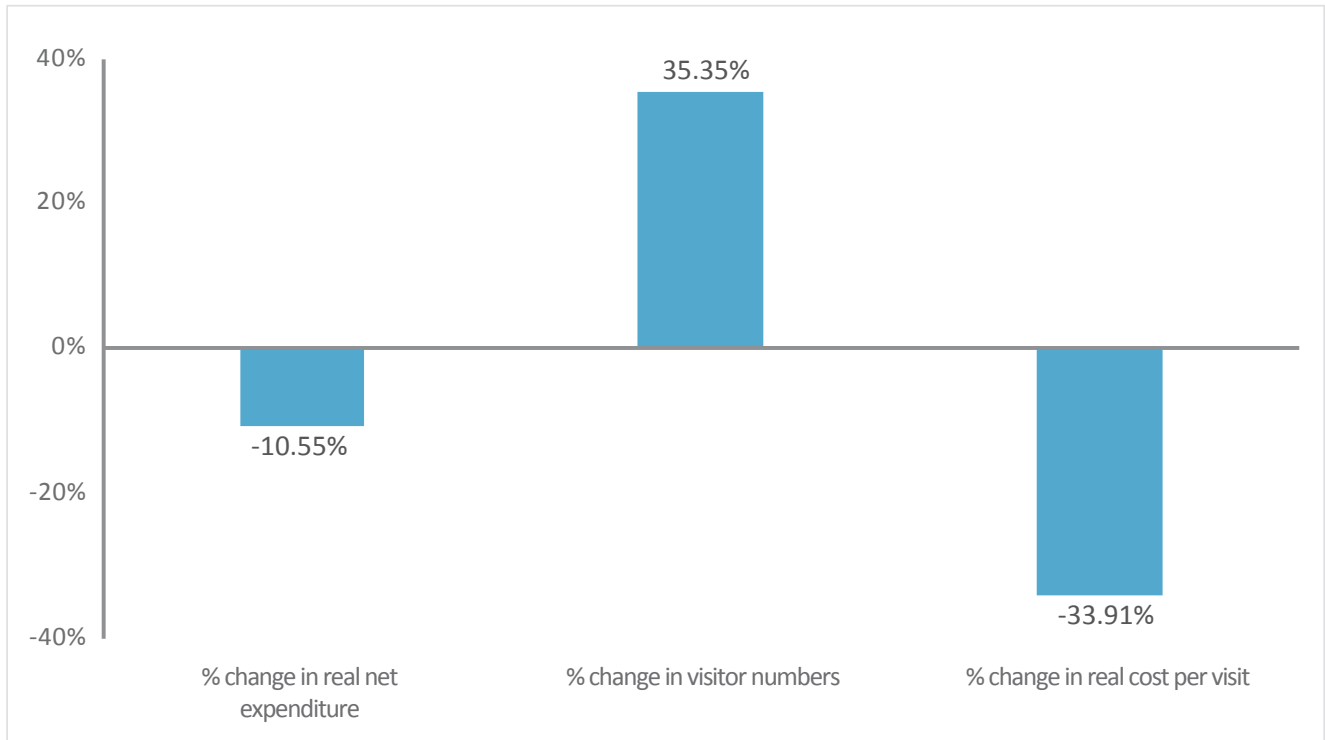
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
£4.95	£4.03	£4.08	£3.73	£3.67	£3.33	£3.54	£3.66	£3.56	£3.27	-8.1%	-33.9%

Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

As with other leisure and recreation services the high-level data only tells part of the story of what has been changing in museum services over the ten-year period. Net spending on museum services across Scotland has fallen by 10.5% since 2010/11 but in the same period visitor numbers have increased from 9.3 million visitors to 12.5 million visitors, an increase of 35.3%. The combined effect of this increase in the productive use of the service has been to reduce significantly the unit cost as measured by the cost per visit indicator across the period.



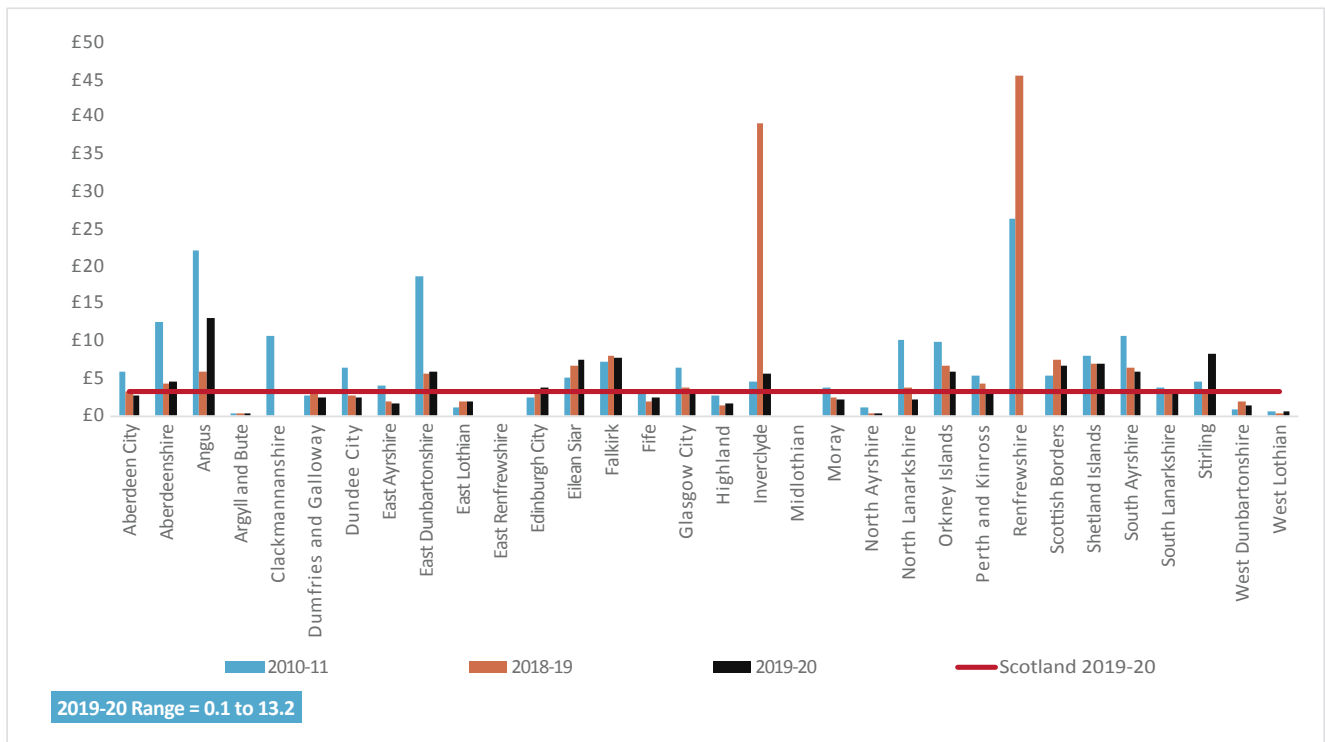
Fig 64: Museums: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit, 2010/11-2019/20



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

There is a significant range between councils' museums costs, which has narrowed in the past 12 months. In 2019/20 the range in cost per visit was £0.05 to £13.15. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Fig 65: Cost of museums per visit



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

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



Parks and open spaces

Spend on parks and open spaces is reflected as spend per 1,000 population. Over the ten-year period from 2010/11 to 2019/20 spend has reduced in real terms by 34.2%, from £30,546 to £20,107. There has been a year on year reduction across the period, including a 2.9% in 2019/20.

While average costs have reduced by 34.2%, the range in movement is -94% to +6%, with three councils reporting increasing costs counter to the national trend.

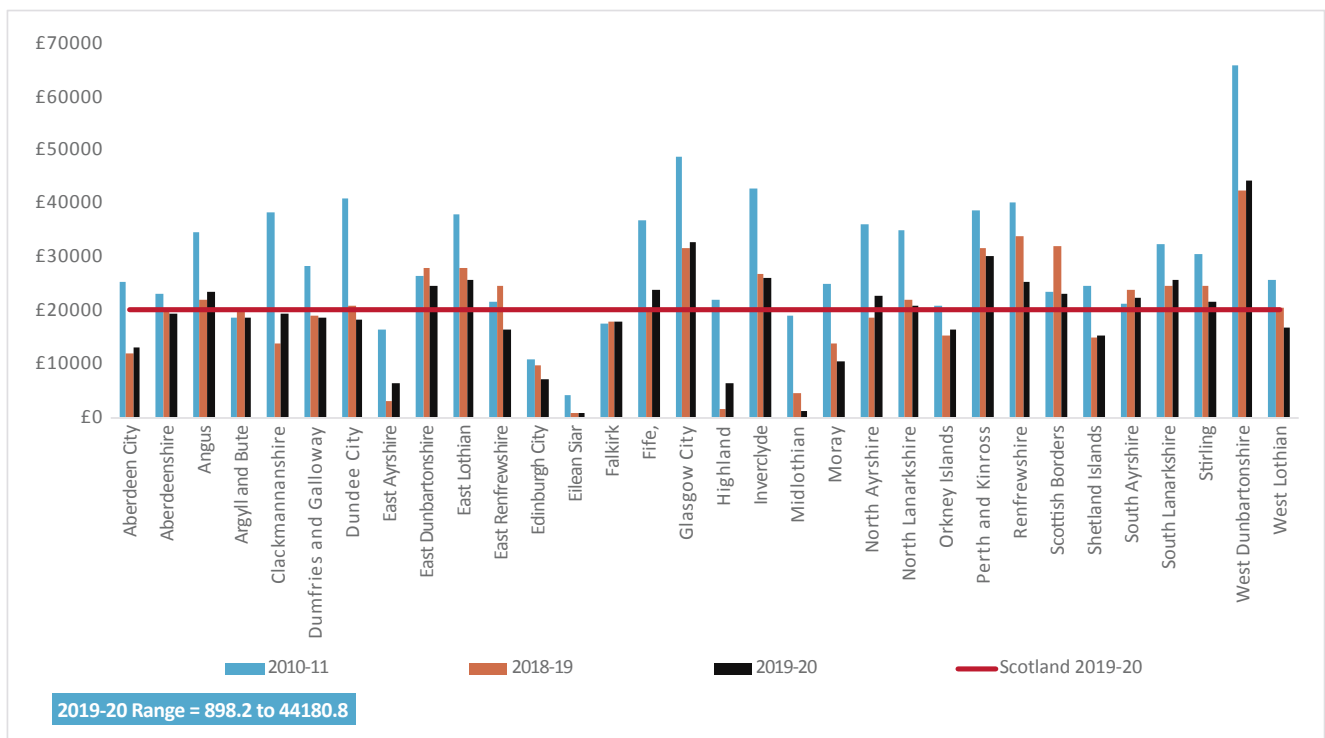
Table 30: Cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
30,546	28,176	26,908	26,023	25,789	23,819	22,219	20,764	20,710	20,107	-2.9%	-34.2%

In 2019/20 the average cost of parks and open spaces was £20,107, ranging from £898 - £44,181. The variation across councils has narrowed since the base year due to a significant cost reduction at the higher end.

In previous years, councils with higher levels of deprivation spent significantly more on parks and green spaces. However, due to a sharper reduction in spend in these authorities this is no longer the case. Costs have reduced by 41% in the most deprived councils compared to 26% in the least deprived councils.

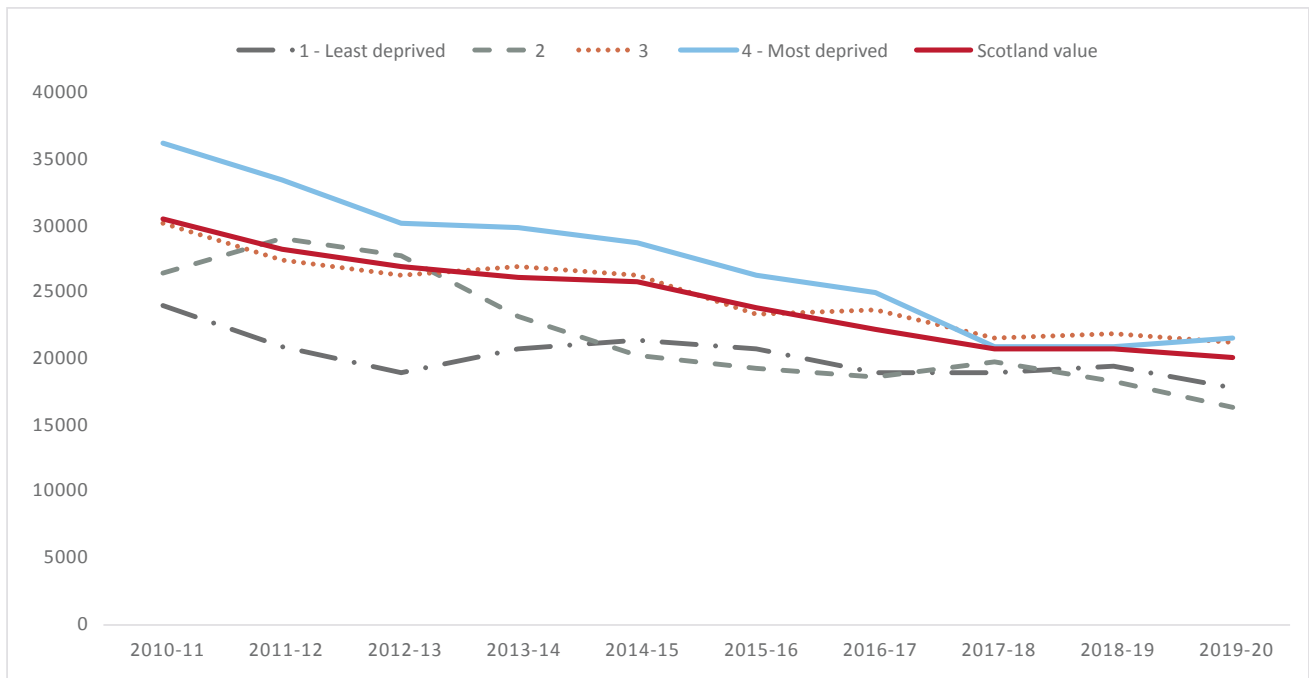
Fig 66: Costs of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population (£)



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



Fig 67: Costs of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population (£) by family group - deprivation



Satisfaction with culture and leisure services

Satisfaction levels for all areas of culture and leisure remain high at around 70% or above. All areas have, however, experienced declining satisfaction since 2010/11, except parks and green spaces. While this is a consistent picture across most authorities, a small number of authorities have experienced increasing satisfaction levels during this period. In 2019/20, national satisfaction rates for libraries, museums and parks have all improved, while leisure continues to show a small decline. Significant local variation exists beneath each of these national trends.

Table 31: Percentage of adults satisfied with culture and leisure services

	2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
Libraries	83.5	83.0	81.0	77.0	74.0	73.0	72.0	72.1	73.0	0.9	-10.5
Parks and Open Spaces	83.1	86.0	86.0	86.0	85.0	87.0	85.0	82.5	83.0	0.5	-0.1
Museums and Galleries	75.5	78.0	76.0	75.0	71.0	70.0	69.0	68.9	70.0	1.1	-5.5
Leisure Facilities	74.6	80.0	78.0	76.0	73.0	73.0	72.0	69.3	69.0	-0.3	-5.6

As with satisfaction with local schools, to boost sample sizes 3-year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels. From 2018/19, questions used in the LGBF have also been included in the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) which provides a boosted sample size. The



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

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

data used represents satisfaction for the public at large rather than for service users. It should be noted that satisfaction rates for service users are consistently higher than those reported by the general population, but the smaller sample sizes available for service users mean it is not possible to present this data with any level of confidence.

For all culture and leisure services, satisfaction levels vary considerably across councils and this variation has been widening. In leisure, satisfaction rates range from 38% to 90%; in libraries, it is 49% - 92%; for museums, 43% - 90%; and finally, for parks the range is 37% - 91% (71%-91% excluding Eilean Siar as an outlier). There are no systematic effects of deprivation, sparsity or council size on satisfaction levels in relation to culture and leisure services.

Fig 68: Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities

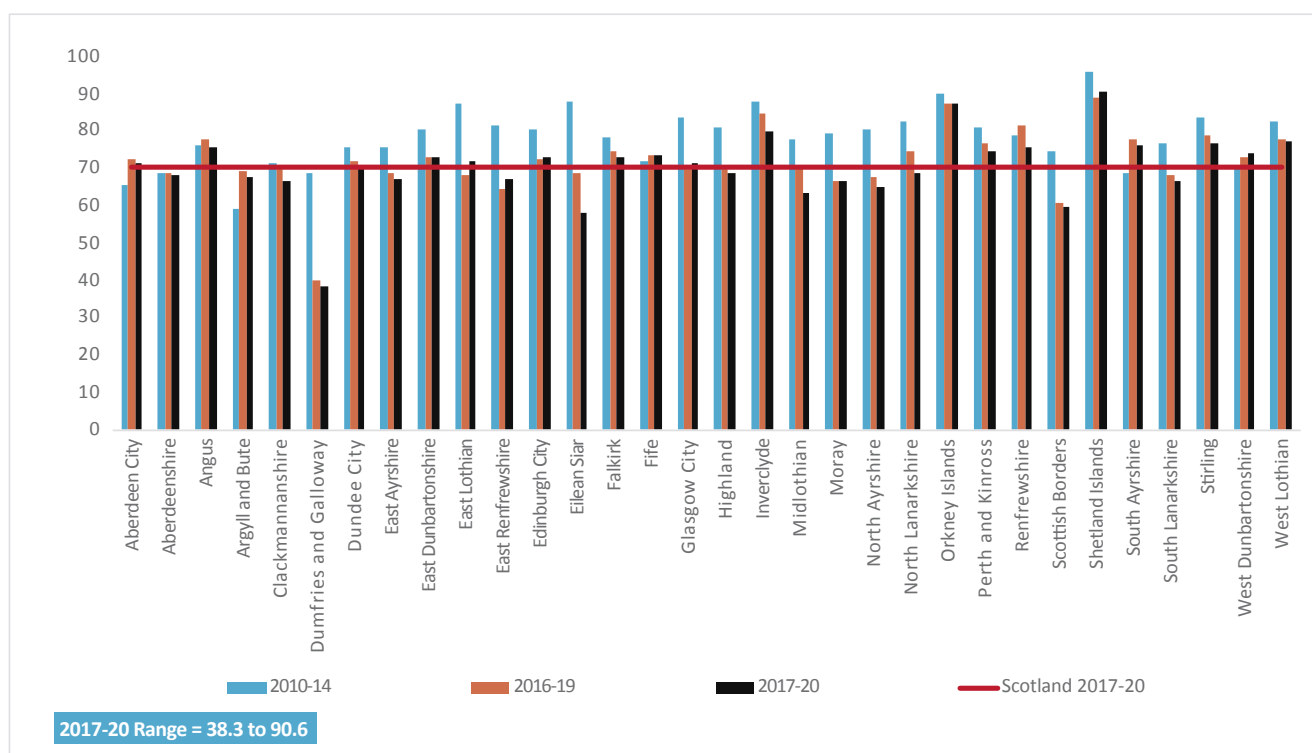




Fig 69: Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries

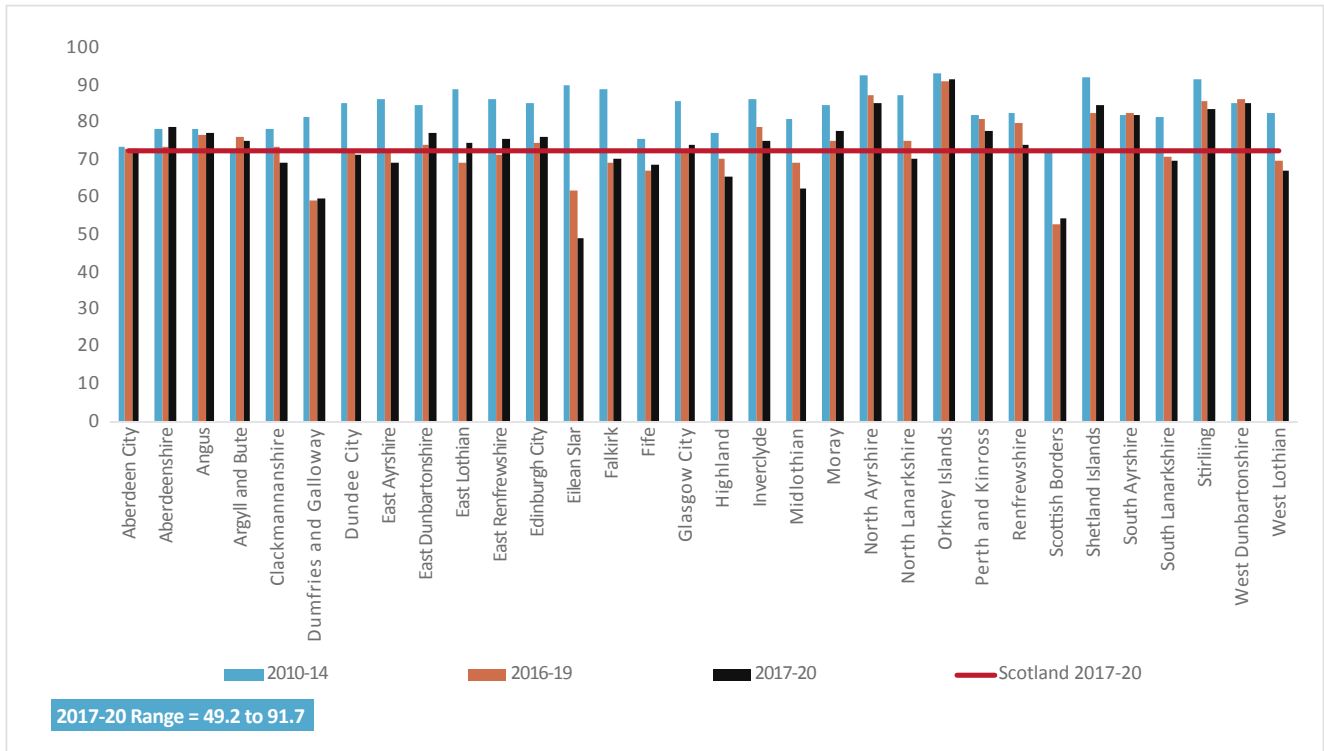
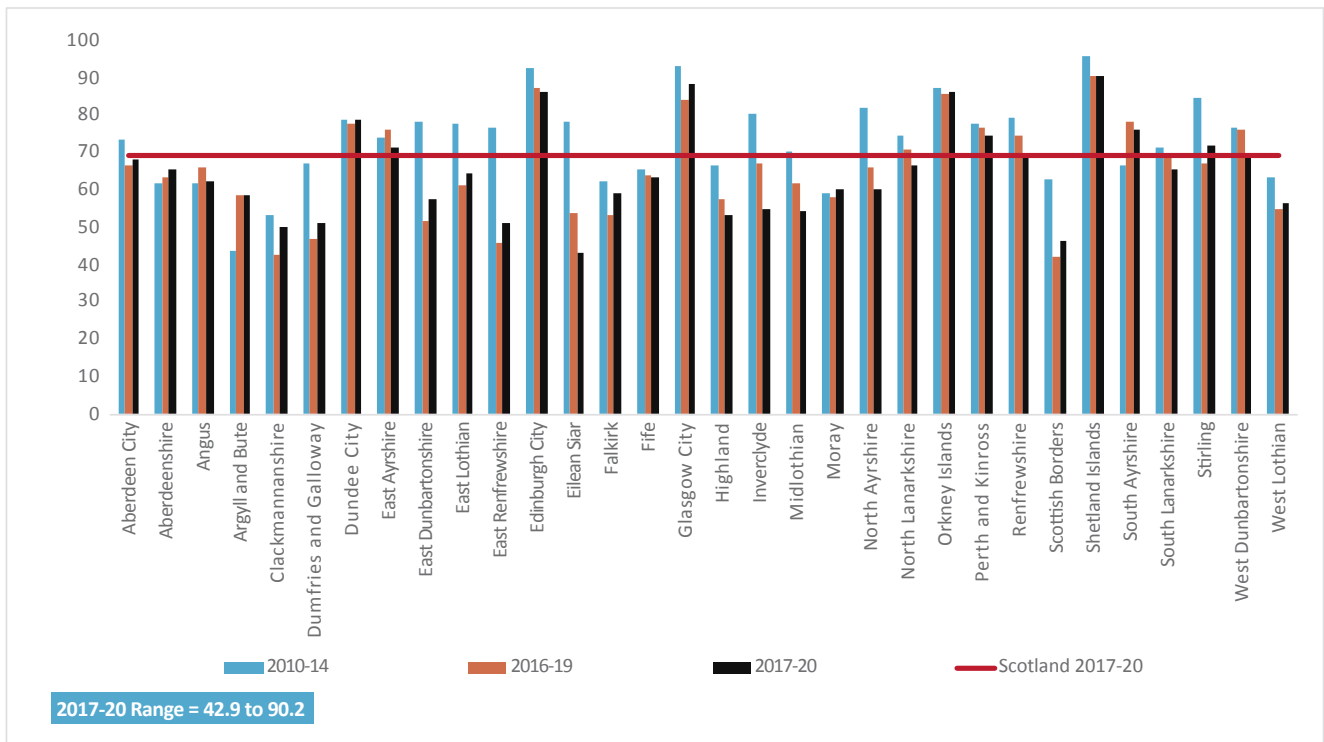


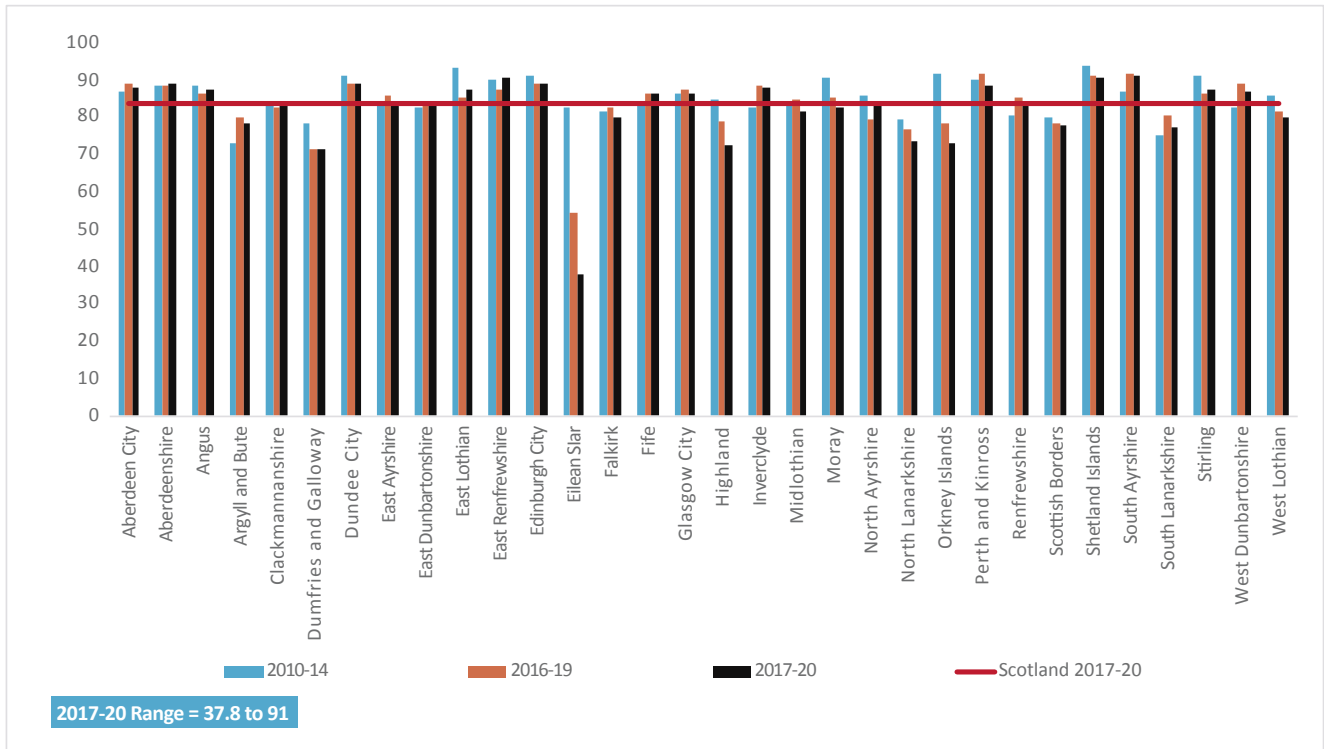
Fig 70: Percentage of adults satisfied with museums and galleries



Note: Clackmannanshire, East Renfrewshire and Midlothian have no council provided museums service



Fig 71: Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces



Source: Scottish Household Survey

A person wearing a grey work uniform with orange safety reflective stripes, orange safety gloves, and dark rubber boots. They are holding a broom in their right hand and a shovel in their left hand. They are standing on a paved street next to a large green trash bin. The scene is outdoors, likely in an urban or industrial setting.

Environmental Services



Environmental services are an area of significant spend for local authorities, and include waste management, street cleaning, roads services, trading standards and environmental health. These areas have seen some of the largest budget reductions in recent years, with overall gross spend on Environmental Services reducing by 11% since 2010/11 (range: -36% to +14%) and expenditure on Roads services reducing by 24% (range: -67% to +435%). Against this reduction in expenditure, councils face growing challenges in maintaining or improving performance levels in relation to recycling, street cleanliness, roads condition and satisfaction. The financial pressures created by the Covid-19 pandemic are likely to exacerbate these challenges as local authorities are seeing more waste produced from households than normal, as lockdown keeps families at home, coupled with an increase in fly tipping responses. Additionally, the impact of lockdown on roads services has resulted in a reduction in planned work and a reliance on reactive repairs of defects to keep road networks safe, and this will inevitably lead to a backlog of repair work and a reduction in overall network condition and satisfaction. Considerable demands will continue to be placed on regulatory services (environment health and trading standards) to enforce Covid-19 public health measures and meet the demand for business support.

Waste management

In examining the cost of waste management services across councils we use a measure of the net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise. Net costs are used in recognition of the increased efforts of councils to recycle waste which generates additional costs to the service but also an additional revenue stream as recycled waste is sold by councils into recycling markets. It is worth noting that the price for recycle is volatile and influenced by global economic conditions.

Going forward, it will be important to review the impact that the Deposit Return Scheme will have on data for waste services. This is likely to change the baseline quite considerably as glass bottles will no longer be included in recycling rates, and the lost income from glass may also have an impact on service costs.

As this measure was introduced in 2012/13, only eight years of data is presented here.

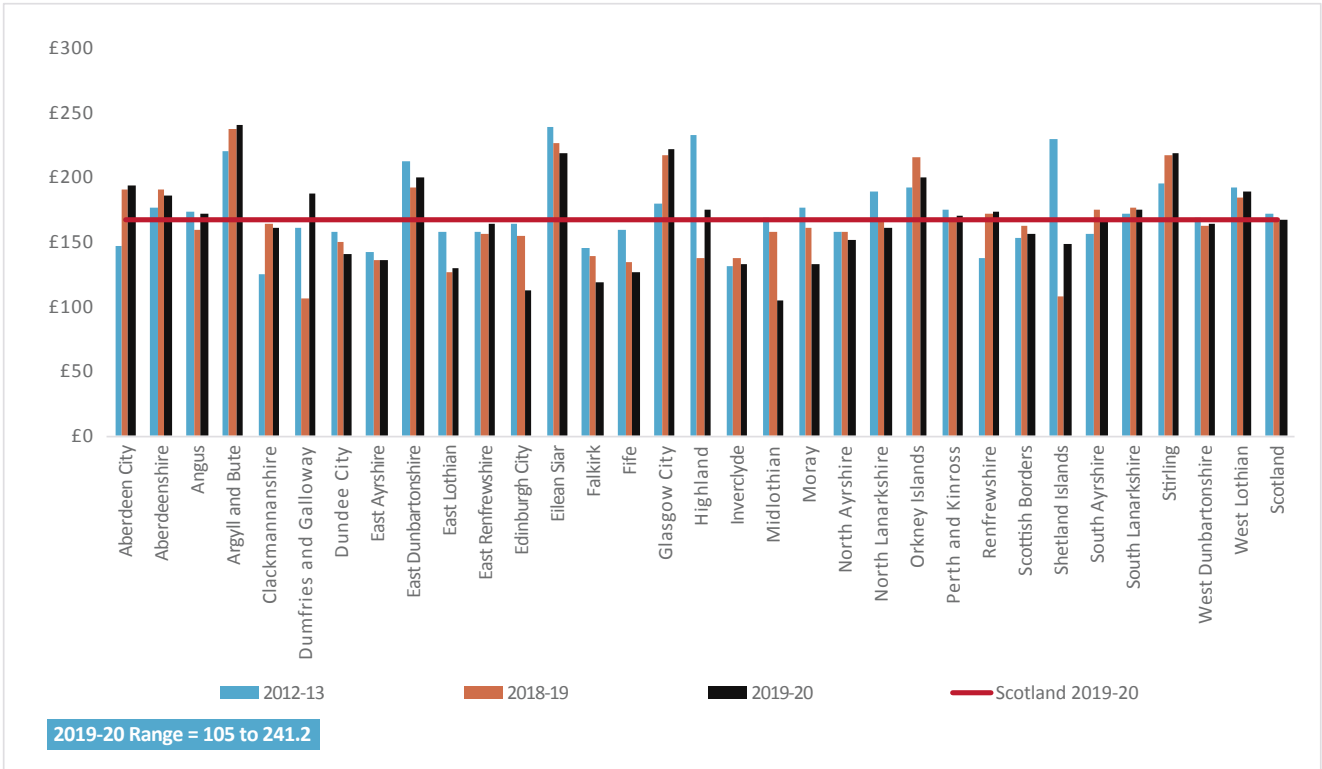
The combined net cost of waste disposal and collection reduced by 2.8% between 2012/13 and 2019/20, from £172 to £167 per premise. After remaining constant during the first three years, the combined cost increased by 2.7% in 2015/16 before falling in 2018/19 by 3.4%. These trends largely mirror movements in waste disposal costs. The range across Scotland in 2019/20 was £105 to £241.

Table 32: Net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise (£)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2012-13 to 2019-20
Collection	£67.23	£68.49	£71.44	£70.21	£68.83	£69.14	£69.04	£68.77	-0.4%	2.3%
Disposal	£104.95	£102.96	£100.50	£106.49	£105.34	£106.27	£100.05	£98.65	-1.4%	-6.0%
Total	£172.18	£171.45	£171.94	£176.70	£174.17	£175.41	£169.09	£167.42	-1.0%	-2.8%



Fig 72: Net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

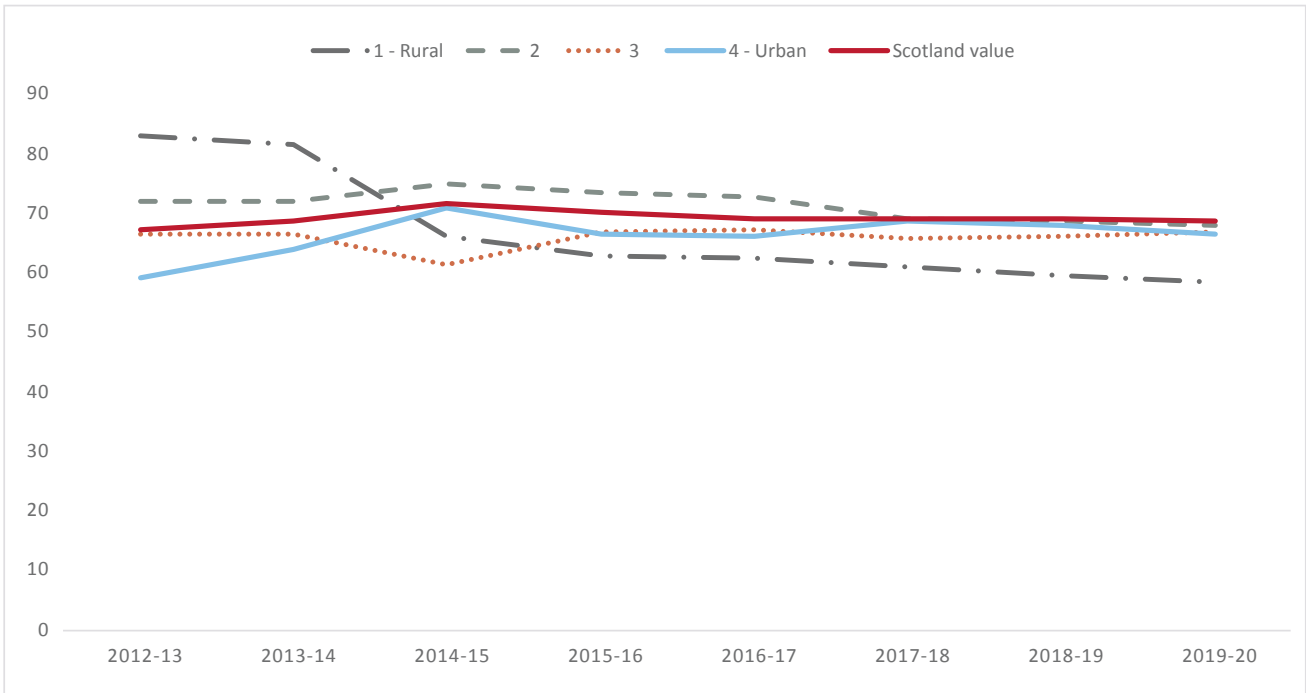
Waste collection

Over the eight-year period from 2012/13 to 2019/20 the Scottish average cost per premise for waste collection increased from £67.23 to £68.77, representing a real terms percentage increase of 2.3%. While the number of premises increased by 5.8% during this period, total spend increased by 7.3%.

While average costs increased by 2.3% across the period, the range in movement is -54% to +66% (excluding outliers), with 17 councils reporting reducing costs counter to the national trend. Rural authorities have seen the largest decrease in costs during this period, falling from £82 per premise to £58, a decrease of 29%.



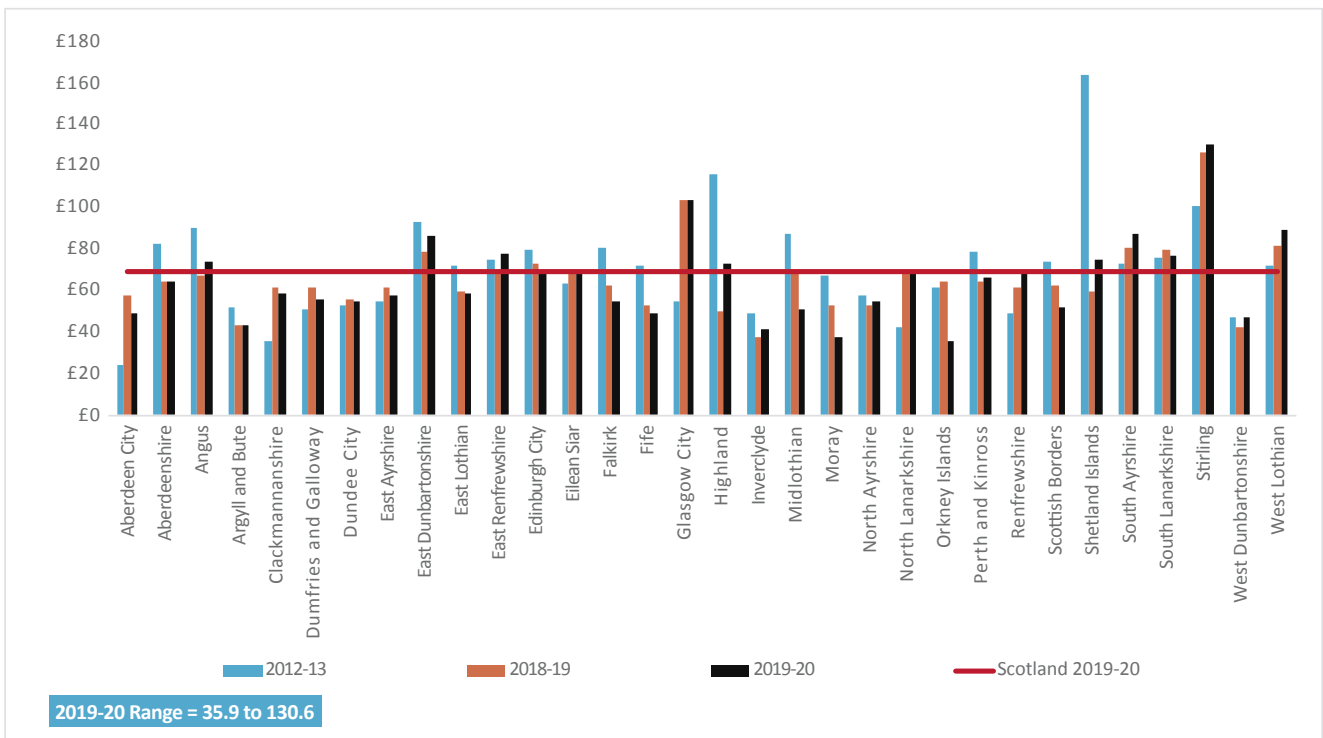
Fig 73: Net cost of waste collection per premise (£) by family group - rurality



There has been little change in the past 12 months, with costs decreasing by 0.4%. This reflects small increases in both net expenditure (0.4%) and premises served (0.8%).

There is considerable and widening variation between councils in relation to waste collection costs, ranging from £35.87 to £130.62. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, geography or authority size.

Fig 74: Net cost of waste collection per premise (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures



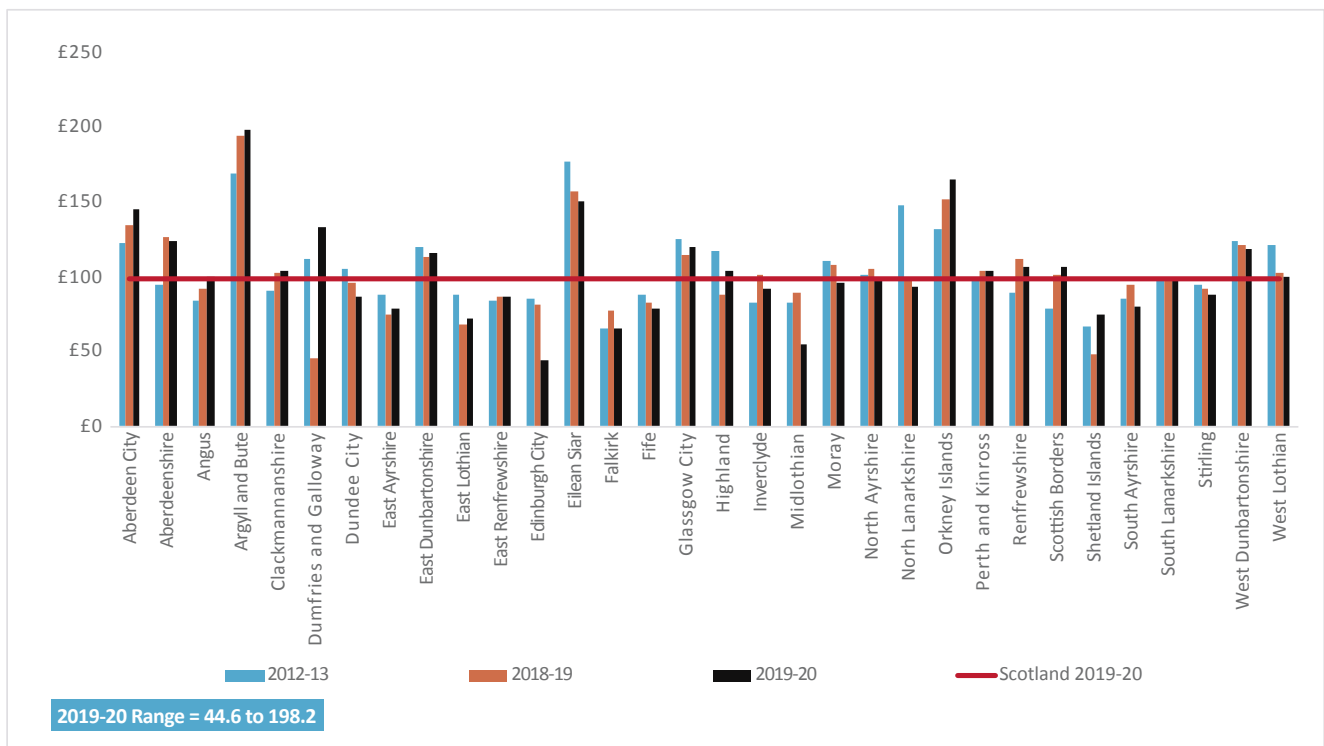
Waste disposal

Over the eight-year period from 2012/13 to 2019/20 the Scottish average net cost of waste disposal has reduced by 6.0%, from £104.95 to £98.65 per premise. This reflects a 1.4% reduction in net expenditure and a 5.8% increase in the number of premises served. The trend has not been consistent across the period, with costs falling in the first two years, before increasing in 2015/16, and then falling back in the past 2 years.

While average costs have reduced by 6% since 2012/13, the range in movement is -48% to +34%, with 14 authorities reporting increased costs during the period counter to the national trend.

In 2019/20, costs reduced by 1.4%, reflecting a 0.6% reduction in expenditure, and 0.8% growth in premises served. The range in disposal costs across councils was £44.57 to £198.21. Variation has widened in the most recent year, with analysis revealing significantly higher costs in rural authorities compared to urban authorities (£131 compared to £98).

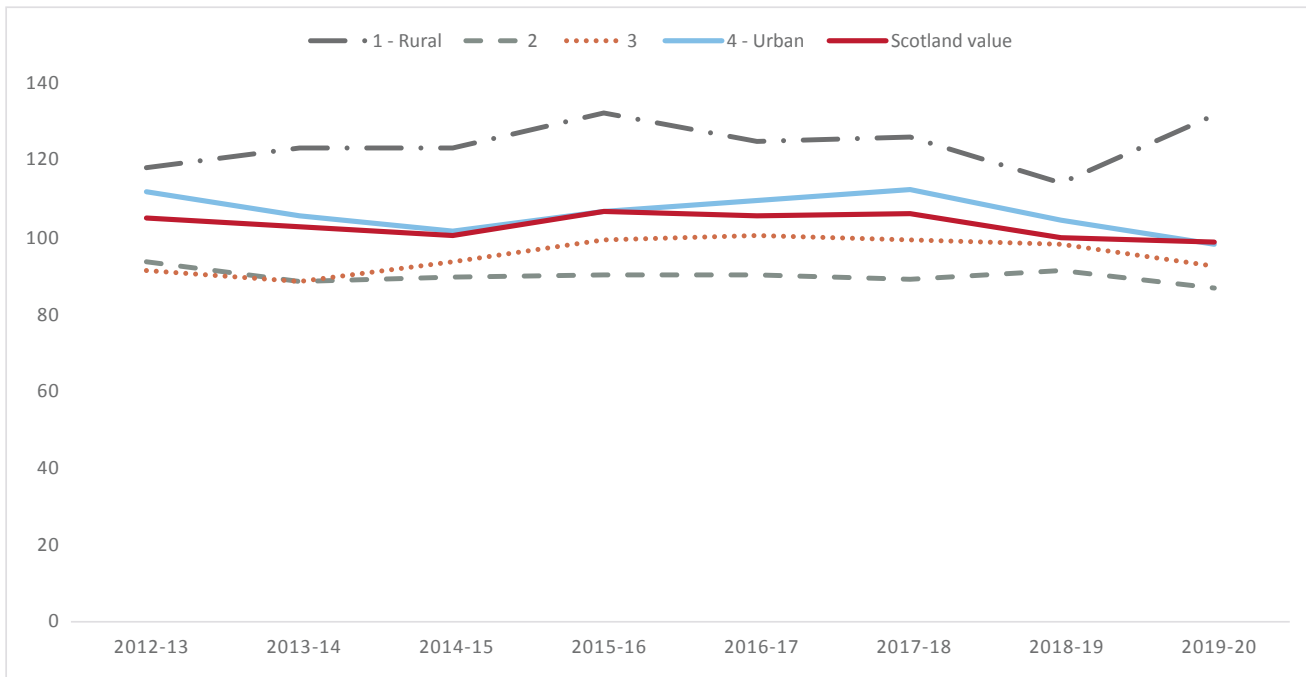
Fig 75: Net cost of waste disposal per premise (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures



Fig 76: Net cost of waste disposal per premise (£) by family group - rurality



Recycling

Over recent years councils have put greater emphasis on the recycling of waste in compliance with Scotland’s Making Things Last strategy (2016) to achieve Scotland’s target to recycle 70% of all waste by 2025.⁴⁰ There has also been raised awareness of environmental factors from both producers and consumers, including a greater focus on reducing unnecessary waste packaging which has resulted in less waste in the system overall.

Recycling rates have improved overall across Scotland from 40.1% in 2011/12 to 44.9% in 2019/20. In the past 12 months rates improved by 0.2 percentage points. This follows a dip in performance in the previous year, the first since the start of reporting under the current definition of household waste in 2011. An eighth consecutive increase in plastics recycled was offset by a decrease in paper and cardboard wastes recycled and organic wastes composted.

While the average rate of recycling has improved by 4.8 percentage points since 2011/12, the range in movement is -11.2 percentage points to +17.6 percentage points, with 6 authorities reporting a reduction in their recycling rate across this period counter to the national trend.

From 2014/15, the recycling rate is calculated on a different basis from that used in previous years and so is not directly comparable. It is useful to note that for individual authorities, the new SEPA recycling definition may result in a slightly lower recycling rate than the previous definition. Prior to 2014, household waste composted that did not reach the quality standards set by PAS 100/110 was included in the recycling figures.⁴¹

There has been a significant 26% reduction in the amount of Scottish household waste landfilled in 2019 and a decrease of 48% since 2011. This is the eighth consecutive decrease in household waste landfilled since 2011. For the third consecutive year, in 2019 there was more Scottish waste recycled than landfilled.

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/making-things-last-circular-economy-strategy-scotland/>

⁴¹ Household Waste data 2019: <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/waste/waste-data/waste-data-reporting/household-waste-data>



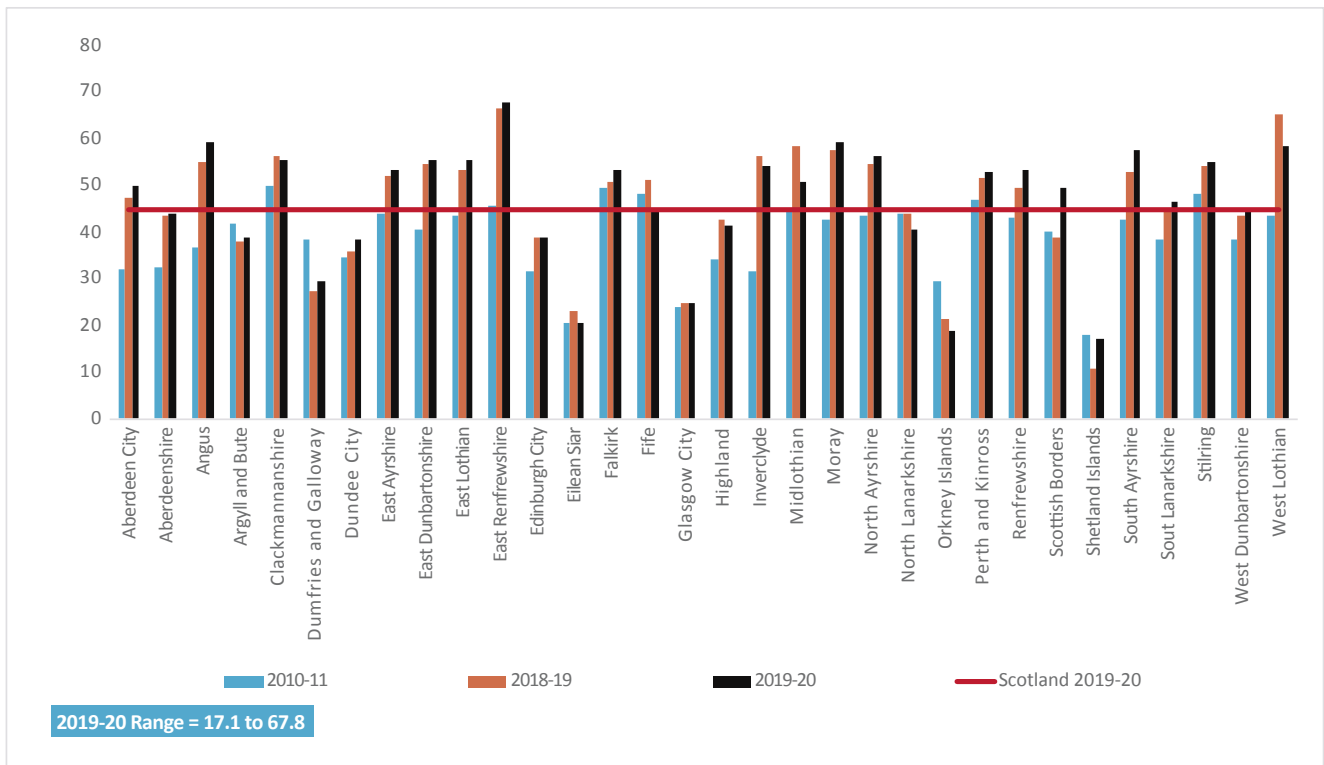
Table 33: Percentage of household waste that is recycled

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2011-12 to 2019-20
38.7	40.1	41.2	42.2	42.8	44.2	45.2	45.6	44.7	44.9	0.2	6.2

*Note: Figures from 2010/11 – 2013/14 use the old recycling definition, while figures from 2014/15 to 2019/20 are calculated using the new definition.

There is significant and widening variation in recycling rates across Scotland, with Island councils reporting significantly lower rates than other areas. Excluding islands, the range across Scotland in 2019/20 is 24.7% to 67.8%. Rural authorities recycle 32% of household waste on average, significantly less than other authorities, with urban authorities recycling 43%, and semi-rural authorities 55%.

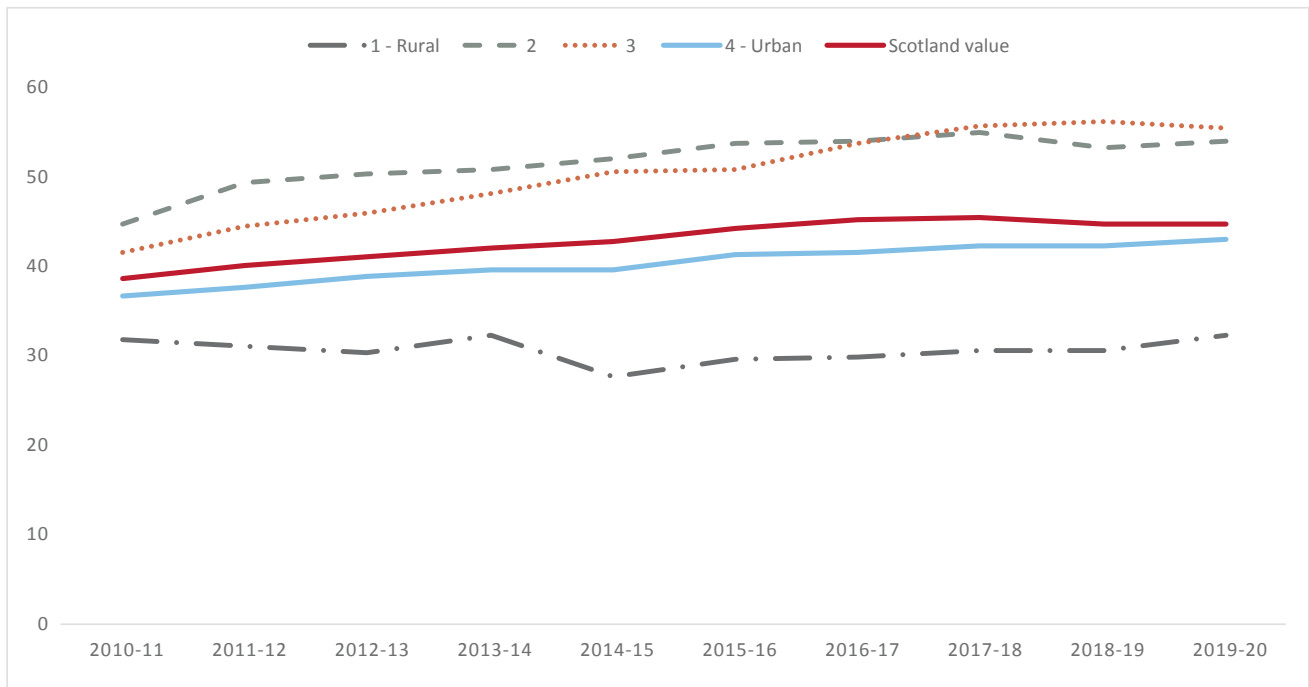
Fig 77: Percentage of total household waste that is recycled



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



Fig 78: Percentage of total household waste that is recycled by family group - rurality



Percentage of adults satisfied with waste collection

Satisfaction levels with waste collection services are 8 percentage points lower in 2019/20 than they were in 2010/11, falling from 80.9% to 73.0%. This includes a further reduction of 1.9 percentage points in the past 12 months.

While the average satisfaction level has reduced by 8 percentage points since 2010/11, the range in movement is -33pp to +6pp, with eight authorities reporting improved satisfaction levels across this period counter to the national trend.

In 2019/20 there is widening variation across councils, with satisfaction rates ranging from 56% to 91% across Scotland. Variation is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council.

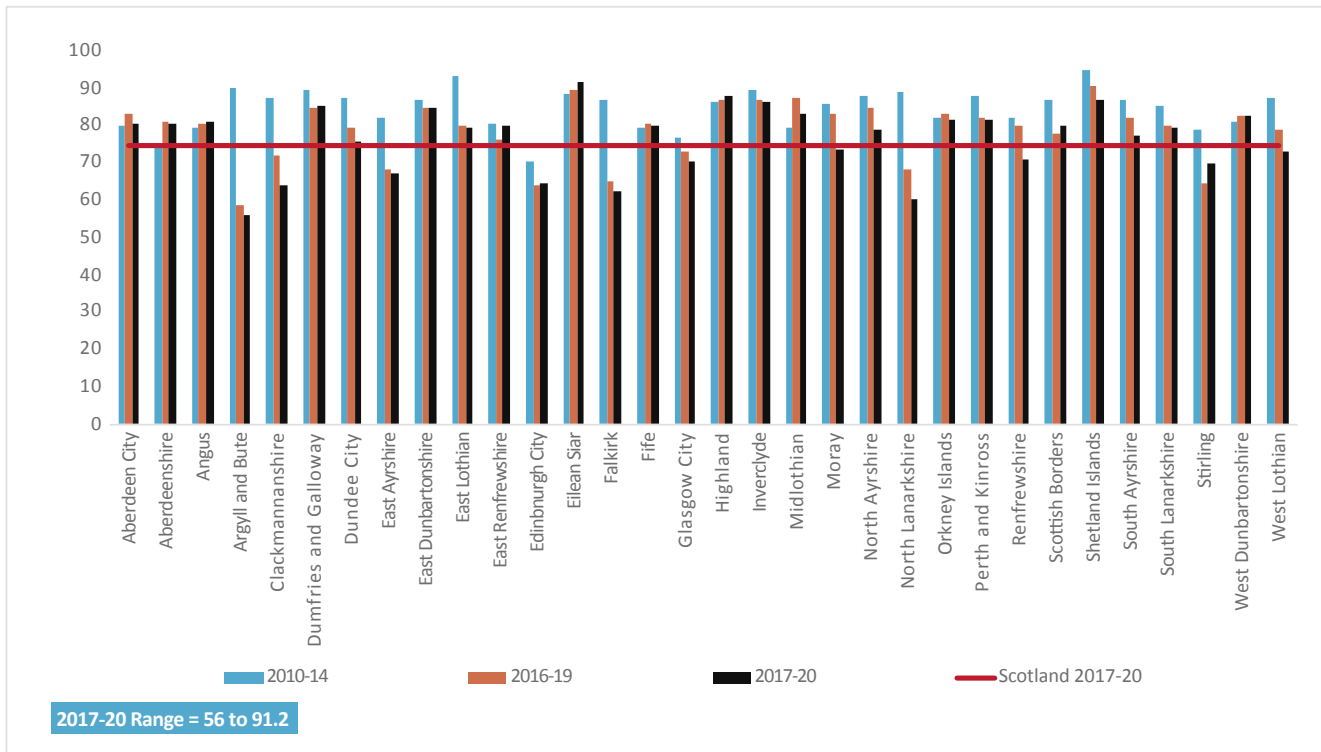
Table 34: Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection

2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
80.9	83.0	83.0	84.0	82.0	79.0	75.0	74.9	73.0	-1.9	-7.9

As noted previously, the satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while proportionate at Scotland level, there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the very small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes 3-year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels. From 2018/19, questions used in the LGBF have also been included in the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) which provides a boosted sample size.



Fig 79: Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection



Source: Scottish Household Survey

Street cleaning

The cleanliness of Scotland’s streets remains a priority for councils both in terms of improving the appearance of our streetscapes but also in terms of environmental improvements in the quality of people’s lives. The revised Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (Scotland)⁴² came into force in 2018 and may affect both costs and standards going forward.

Street cleanliness is presented using the Street Cleanliness Score, which is produced by Keep Scotland Beautiful.⁴³ This measures the percentage of areas assessed as ‘clean’ rather than completely litter free sites (considered impractical in areas of high footfall) and allows authorities to tackle litter problem areas to achieve better results.

The Scottish average for the cleanliness score has remained above 90% since the base year, although scores have shown a reducing trend since 2013/14. In 2019/20, 92.2% of streets were assessed as ‘clean’, a small decrease of 0.6 percentage points in the past 12 months. Rates are down by 3.1 percentage points from 95.4% in 2010/11. The range of movement since 2010/11 is -13pp to +2pp, with 9 councils reporting improvement in street cleanliness, counter to the national trend.

Table 35: Percentage of clean streets

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
95.4	96.1	95.8	96.1	93.9	93.4	93.9	92.2	92.8	92.2	-0.6	-3.1

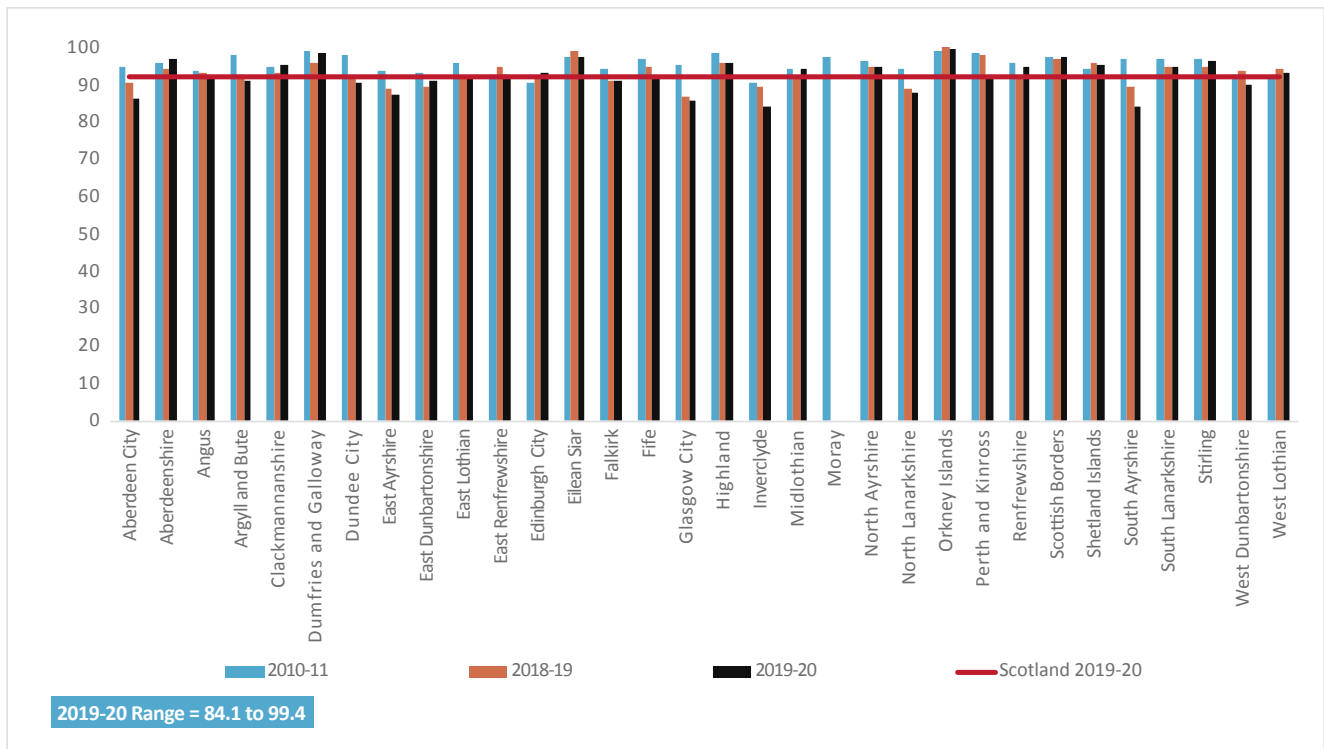
42 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-practice-litter-refuse-scotland-2018/>

43 <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/>



There is a relatively narrow range of cleanliness scores across Scotland. The level of variation has widened in the past 12 months. In 2019/20, scores ranged from 84.1% to 99.4%, with urban and deprived areas reporting significantly lower scores (e.g. 88-91% for urban or deprived areas compared to 94-96% for rural or affluent areas). This is supported by evidence published by Keep Scotland Beautiful, highlighting a significantly more rapid decline of local environmental quality in the poorest parts of Scotland.⁴⁴

Fig 80: Cleanliness score (percentage acceptable)



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

44 <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/media/1566897/leq-2020-report-final-041220.pdf>



Fig 81: Cleanliness score (percentage acceptable) by family group - rurality

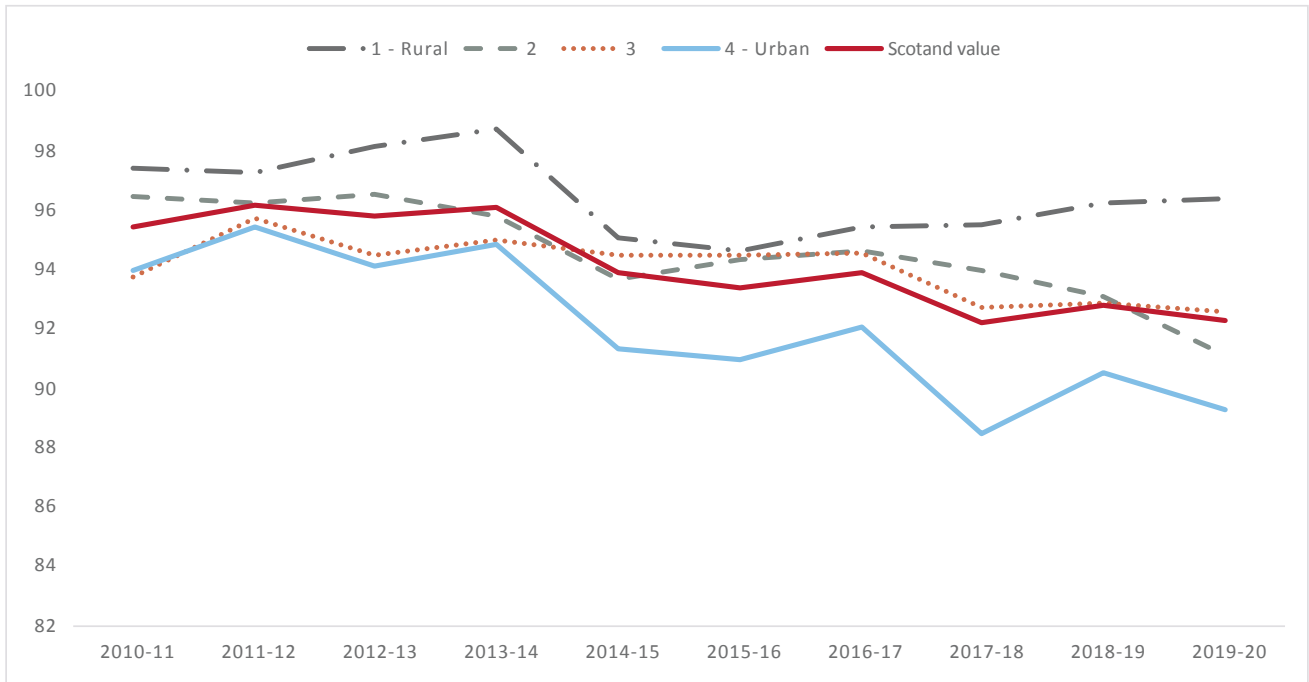
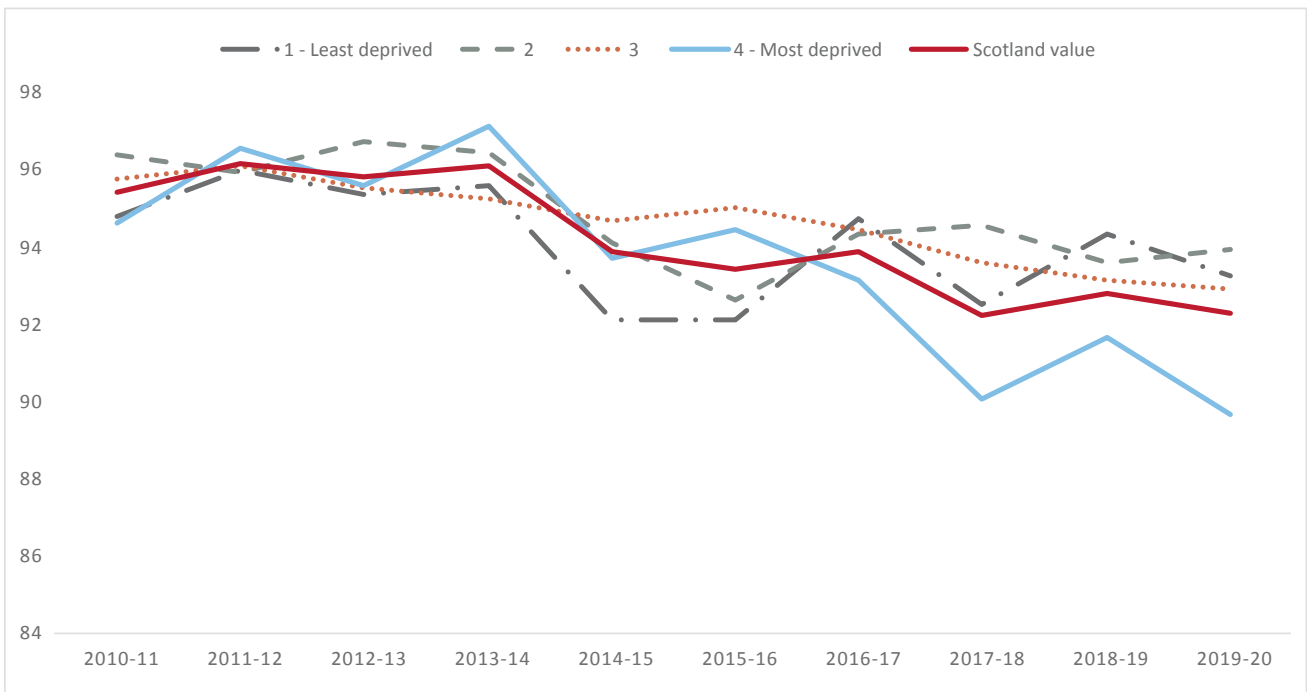


Fig 82: Cleanliness score (percentage acceptable) by family group - deprivation



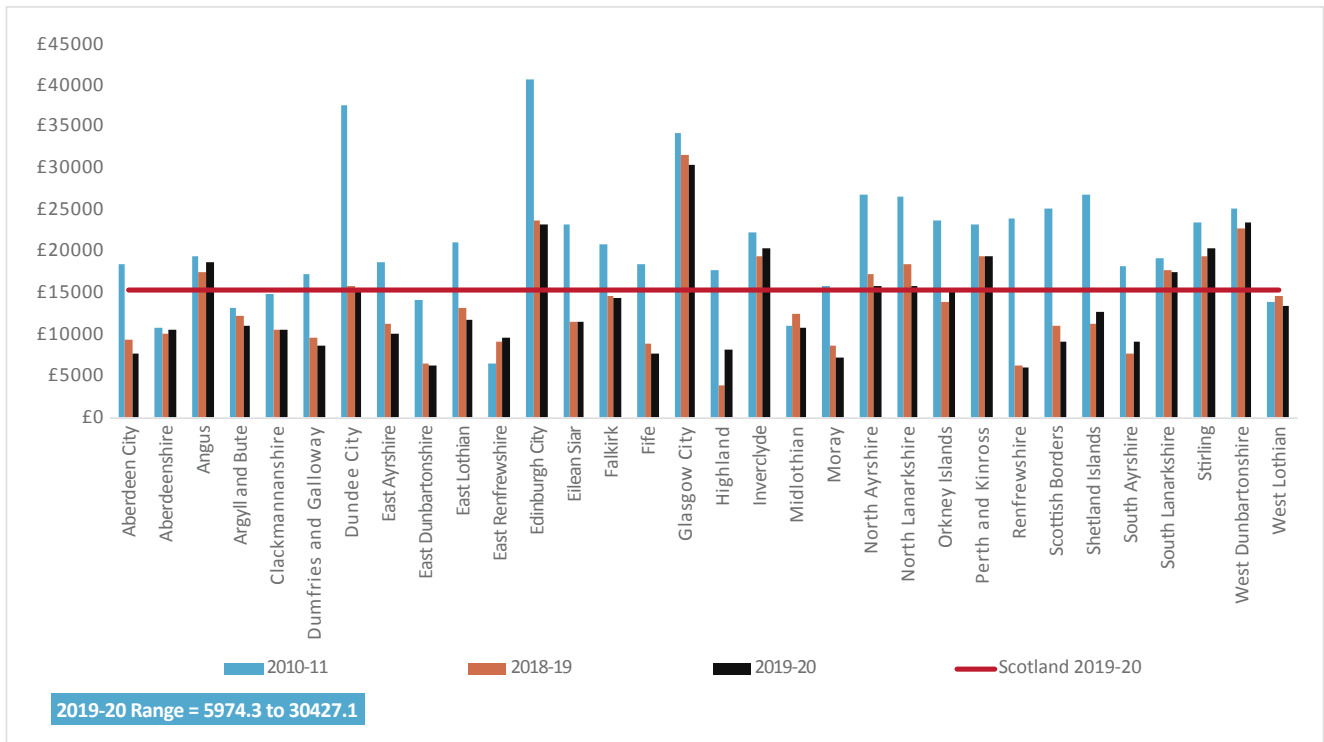
Over the same nine-year period the Scottish average for net cost of street cleaning has reduced by 34.0%, from £23,386 per 1,000 population in 2010/11 to £15,440 in 2019/20. This reflects a year on year reduction in costs, including a 2.8% reduction in the past 12 months. Since 2010/11, all authorities except one have reported reducing costs in this area.



Table 36: Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population - (£)

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
23,386	22,489	19,939	18,143	17,427	16,879	15,453	16,195	15,890	15,440	-2.8%	-34.0%

Fig 83: Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population (£)

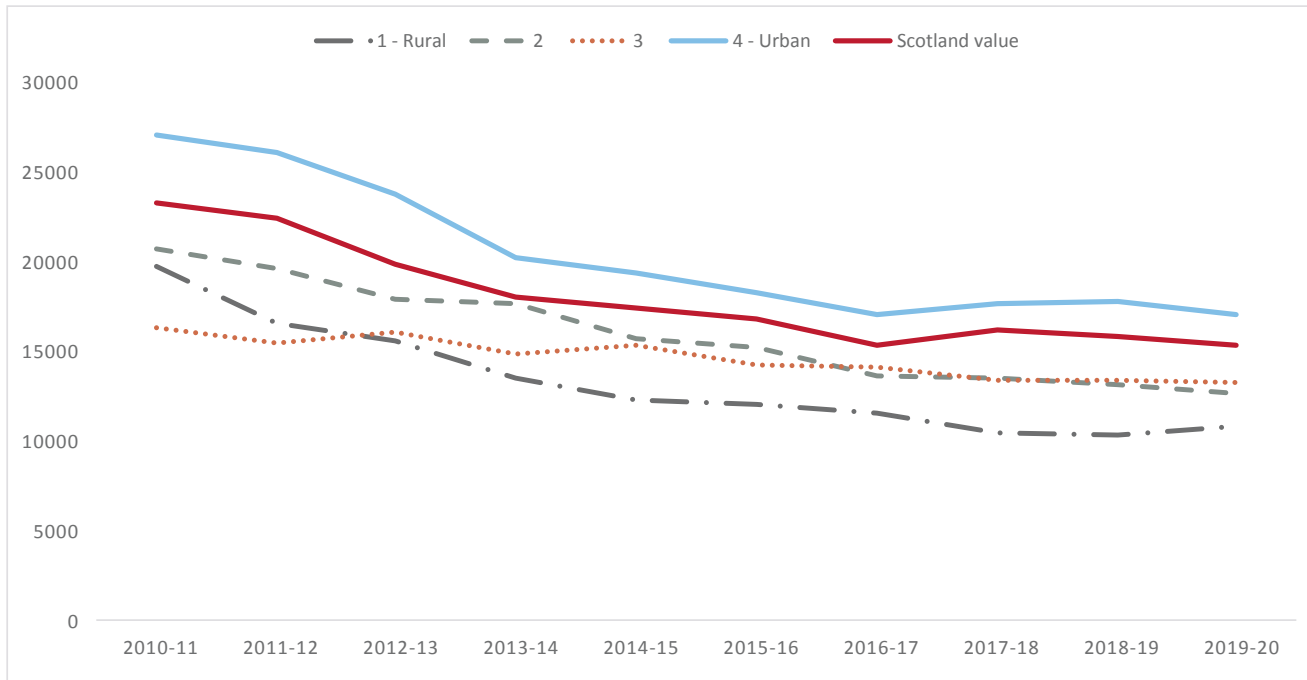


Source: Mid-year population estimates, National Records Scotland (NRO); council supplied figures

There is significant but narrowing variation across councils, with street cleaning costs ranging from £5,974 to £30,427 in 2019/20. Urban authorities tend to report higher costs on average compared to rural authorities (£17,057 compared to £10,880). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with rurality due to variation within the family group.



Fig 84: Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population (£) by family group



Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning

As with other services, satisfaction levels for street collection have experienced a downward trend, reducing from 73.3% to 59.0% between 2010/11 and 2019/20. In the past 3 years, the rate of reduction has accelerated with satisfaction levels reducing by eleven percentage points between 2016/17 and 2019/20, including 3.9 percentage points in the past 12 months. This declining trend is evident in all authorities except one.

Until 2015-16, it appeared that the substantial efficiencies that have been introduced in delivering this service did not appear to have had a significantly detrimental impact on public satisfaction, indicating the care taken to protect key areas of public concern. The significant recent reductions in satisfaction however indicate a shift in public perceptions in the context of continuing significant reductions in budgets.

Table 37: Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning

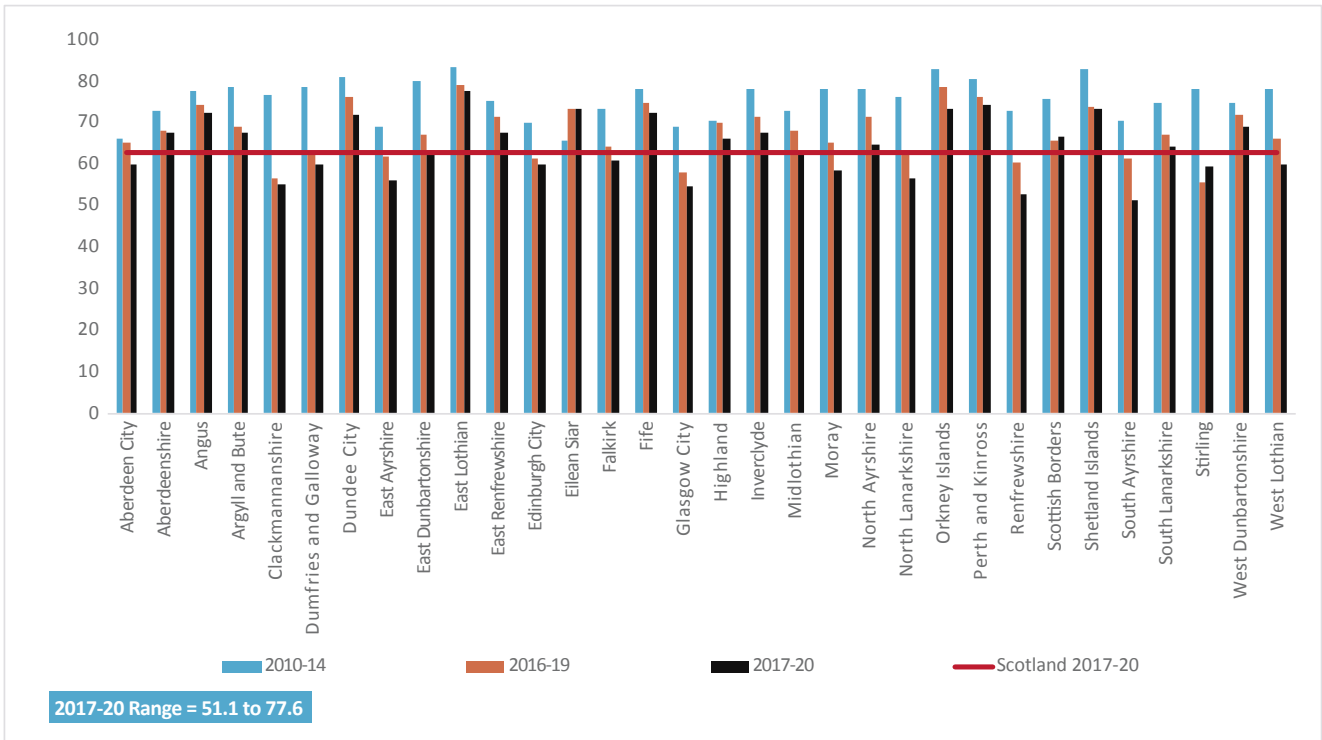
2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
73.3	75.0	74.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	66.0	62.9	59.0	-3.9	-14.3

As noted previously, the satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while proportionate at Scotland level, there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, 3-year rolled averages have been used to ensure the required level of precision at local levels. From 2018/19, questions used in the LGBF have also been included in the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) which provides a boosted sample size.

There is significant and widening variation in satisfaction levels across Scotland, ranging from 51.1% to 77.6%. Satisfaction levels are significantly higher in the least deprived authorities compared to the most deprived authorities (67% compared to 64%).

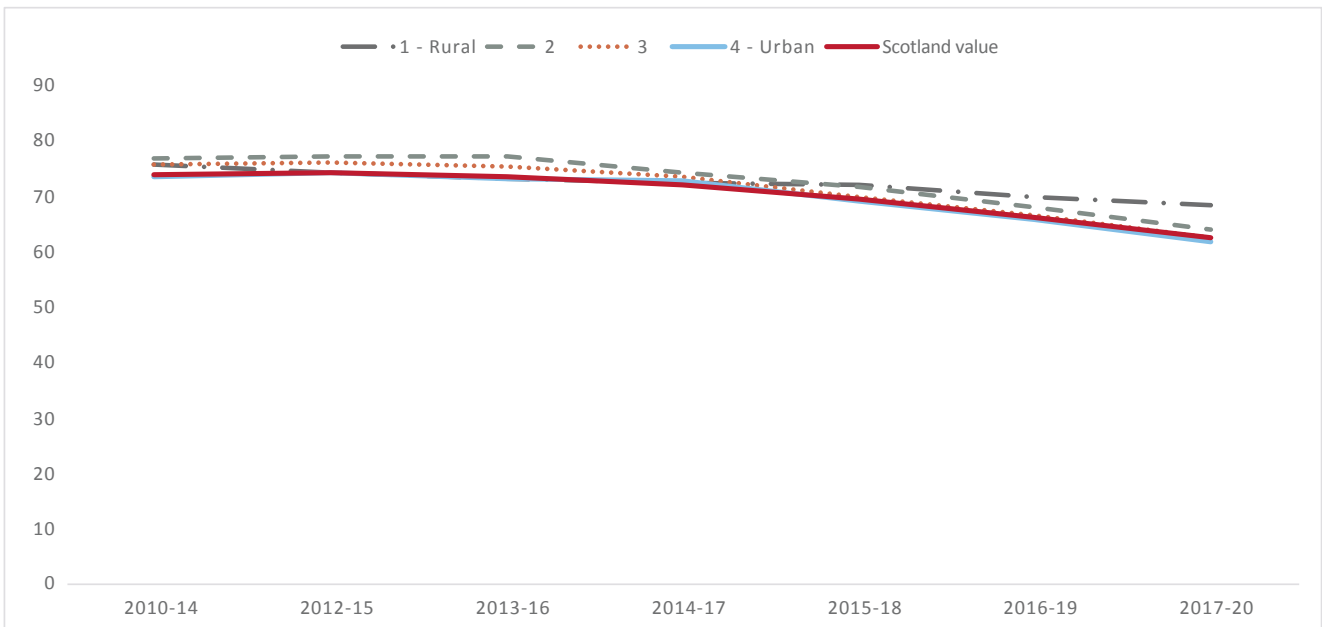


Fig 85: Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning



Source: Scottish Household Survey

Fig 86: Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning by family group





Roads

Across the period, there have been significant reductions in expenditure on roads (-24%), while the condition has remained largely unchanged. While it is reassuring that conditions have so far remained relatively static, road condition will generally fall in years following budget reductions, following a lack of investment. Continued close monitoring will be helpful to assess the longer-term impact of these funding reductions.

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

For the ten years for which we have data, the Scottish average cost per kilometre has reduced by 13.8% from £13,067 to £11,262. This reflects a general reducing trend until 2018/19, and an increase of 11.5% in the past year. However, the increase in the last 12 months is entirely driven by additional spend by Aberdeen City in 2019/20 due to increasing costs related to the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route. Excluding this from the analysis, real spending on roads has fallen by 24.2% since 2010/11, including a 4.5% reduction in the past 12 months. Similarly, cost per kilometre has fallen from £13,067 to £9,619 since 2010/11, a fall of 26%, and from £10,102 to £9,619 in the past 12 months, a fall of 4.8%.

While the average cost of roads per kilometre has reduced since 2010/11, across councils the range in movement is -67% to +389% (or +116% excluding Aberdeen), with ten councils reporting increasing costs during this period counter to the national trend.

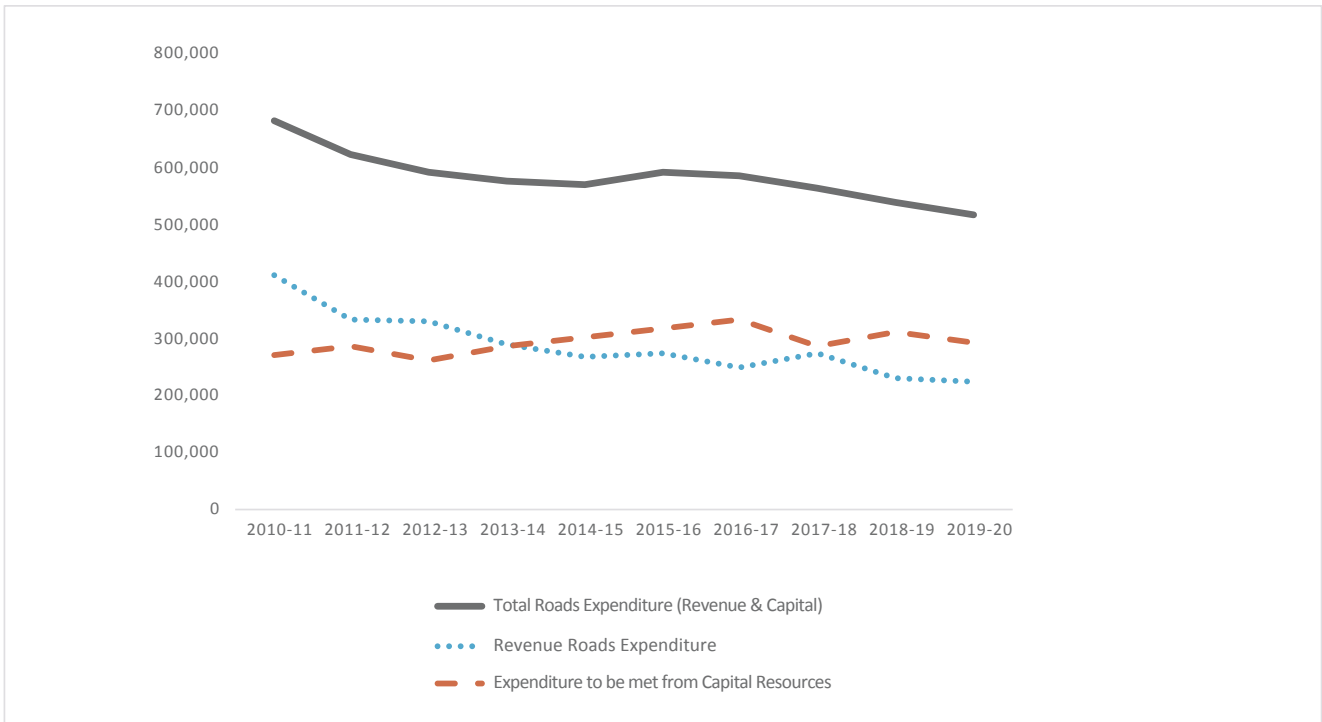
Table 38: Cost of roads per kilometre - (£)

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
13,067	11,899	11,306	10,962	10,851	11,172	11,026	10,580	10,102	11,262	11.5%	-13.8%

As the graph below shows, overall revenue expenditure on roads has reduced significantly, by 46%, since 2010/11, while capital expenditure has increased by 8.5% across the period. In the past 12 months, both revenue and capital expenditure have fallen; revenue by -3.4% and capital by 5.4%. Outliers are excluded from this analysis.



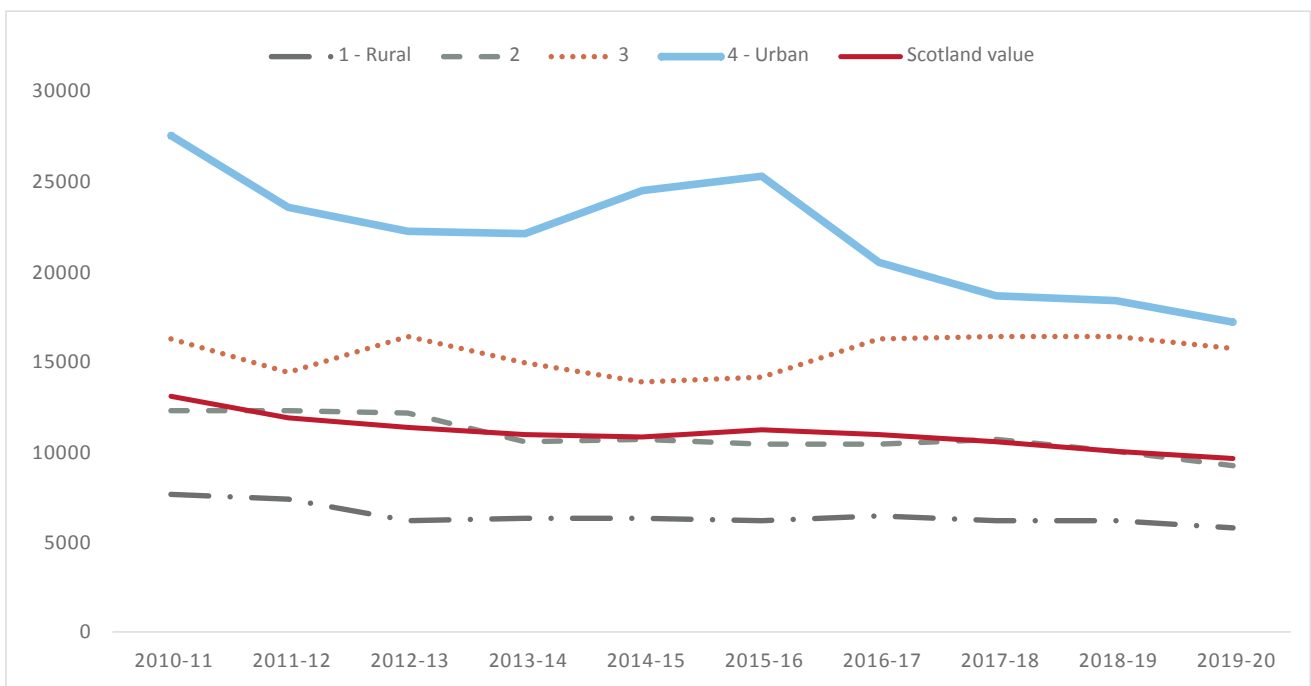
Fig 87: Roads expenditure - revenue and capital (£)



2019-20 expenditure has been adjusted to exclude expenditure on the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR).

While the variation in roads costs across Scotland is significant, this has narrowed substantially in recent years. In 2019/20, costs ranged from £3,220 to £29,020 (excluding outliers). Variation across councils is systematically related to rurality, with significantly higher costs in urban areas compared to rural areas (£17,190 compared to £5,860). Costs in urban areas have reduced at a faster rate than other areas, however.

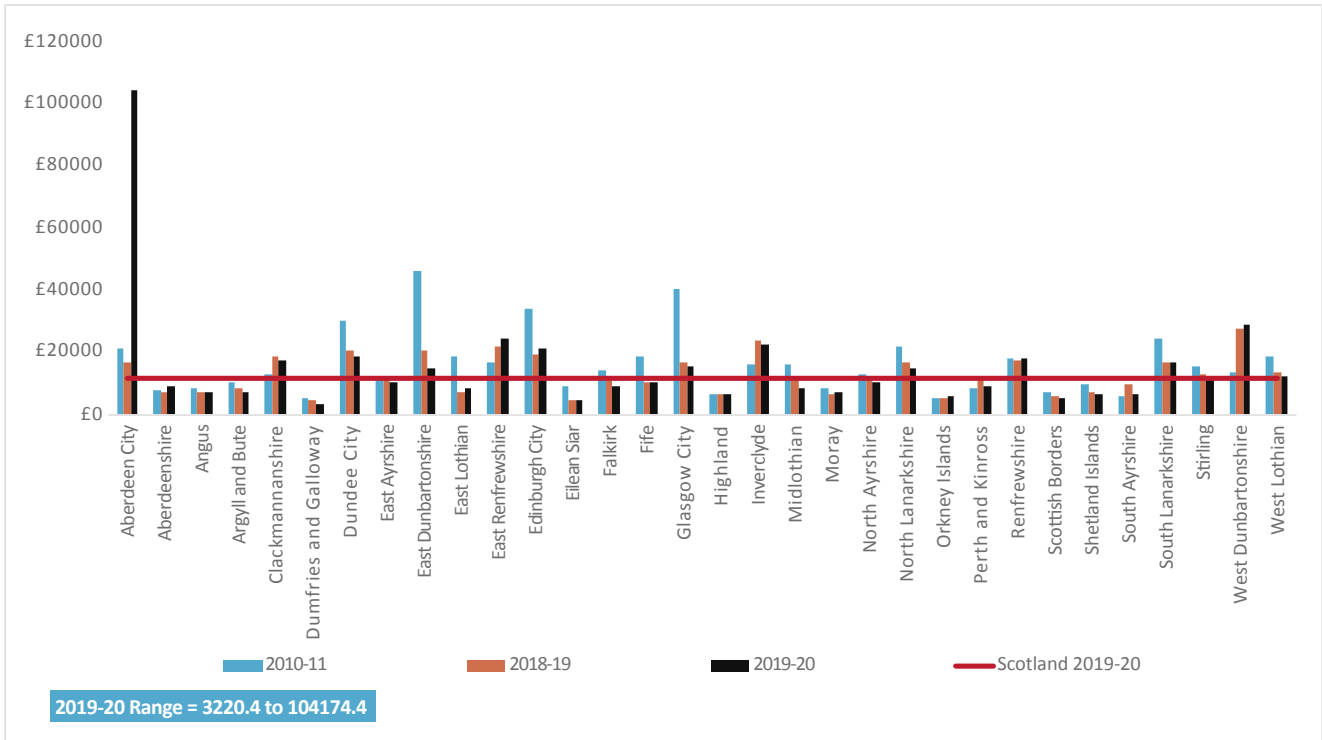
Fig 88: Cost of roads per kilometre (£) by family group - rurality



2019-20 expenditure has been adjusted to exclude expenditure on the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR).



Fig 89: Cost of roads per kilometre (£)



Source: Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) / Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) returns; council supplied expenditure figures. Aberdeen outlying figure reflects additional expenditure on Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route.

In terms of the condition of the road network, the ten-year period covered by this report has seen very little change in the A, B and C class road network overall, with around 30% to 35% of roads continuing to require maintenance. This indicates that despite the significant reductions on spending, the condition of key parts of the roads networks has been maintained. Over the past 12 months, there has been very small improvements in in B class roads, C class roads and Unclassified roads, while A class roads have shown a very small deterioration.

While network level road condition has remained steady, this is being driven by the unclassified network (non A, B C) condition as this makes up a huge proportion of every authority’s network. Overall, there has been a steady decline in the condition of the classified (A, B, C) network.

While the initial cuts to Roads budgets were, in many cases, mitigated by moving maintenance expenditure to capital, everything that can be moved has been moved. It is therefore now cyclic and routine maintenance that is bearing the brunt of the expenditure reductions. While most of this work can be viewed as low level and without any immediate visual effect e.g. gully and ditch cleaning, this however has serious long-term maintenance consequences. The change in weather patterns has exacerbated the drainage issues resulting from these reductions. The extreme rain events the country has been subjected to has had a catastrophic effect on transport infrastructure, not just roads, across all areas of Scotland.

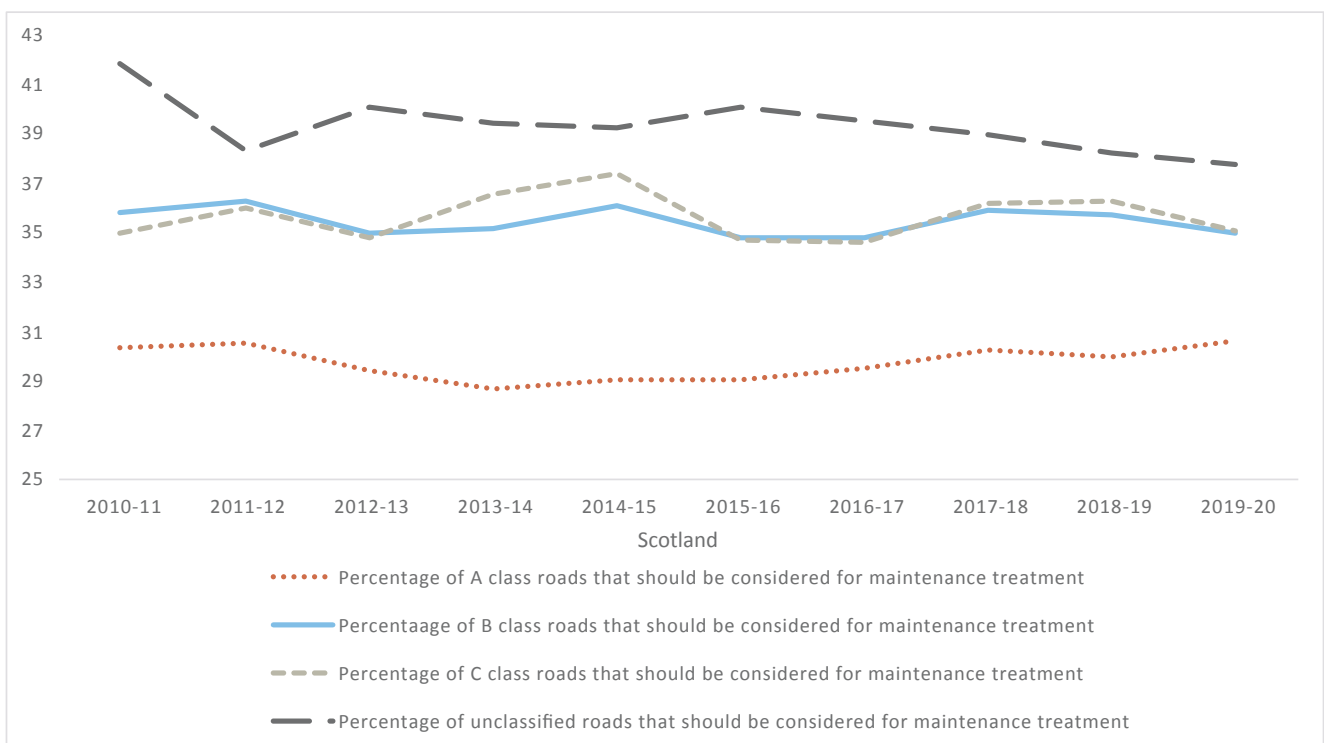


Table 39: Percentage of A, B, C class and Unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance

	2009-11	2010-12	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	2018-20	Value Change 2017-19 to 2018-20	Value Change 2009-11 to 2018-20
% A Class Roads	30.3	30.5	29.4	28.7	29.0	29.0	29.5	30.2	30.0	30.6	0.5	0.3
% B Class Roads	35.8	36.3	35.0	35.2	36.1	34.8	34.8	35.9	35.7	35.0	-0.8	-0.8
% C Class Roads	35.0	36.0	34.8	36.6	37.4	34.7	34.6	36.2	36.3	35.1	-1.1	0.1
% Unclassified Roads	41.9	38.3	40.1	39.4	39.3	40.1	39.5	39.0	38.3	37.8	-0.4	-4.1

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

Fig 90: Percentage of A, B, C class and unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance



The variation in condition varies significantly across Scotland for all classes of road, however this has narrowed since the base year. In 2018/20, the range for A class roads is 15% to 42%; B class roads is 18% to 62%; C class roads is 14% to 57%; and for unclassified roads the range is 21% to 58%. The data reveals that the condition of roads in urban areas is significantly better than that in rural areas. This reflects the pattern of higher spend in urban areas, although further exploration would be required to understand what, if any relationship, exists between these two factors.

For the recent 2-year period 2018 – 2020, 17 out of 32 authorities have improved or stayed the same in terms of their road condition overall. This could be reflective of capital investment allowing roads to be maintained to a steady state level. However, over half of all roads authorities have a local road network that is in a worse condition than it was over the previous period, thereby reflecting the gradual decline in revenue investment



generally over the longer term, restricting cyclical maintenance work such as drainage maintenance which can have a detrimental effect on the life of the road.

Many local roads authorities are adapting to manage declining investment levels, by using alternative road resurfacing techniques and processes that, whilst providing a short-term improvement in condition, aren't as preventative to decline as some of the treatments that may have been chosen in the past. However, the alternative road resurfacing techniques, whilst less expensive initially, don't result in the same lifespan as treatments that may be preferred, thereby requiring further intervention/expenditure at an earlier stage.

Fig 91: Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

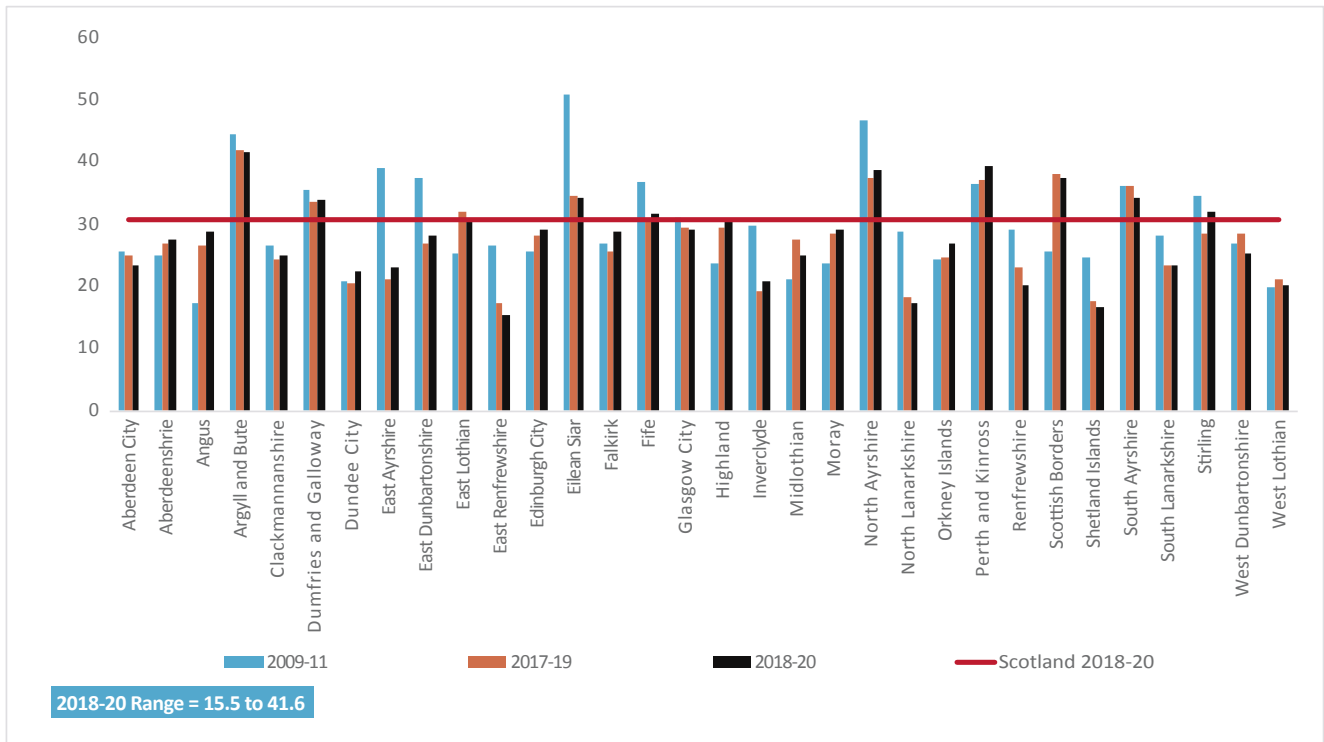




Fig 92: Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

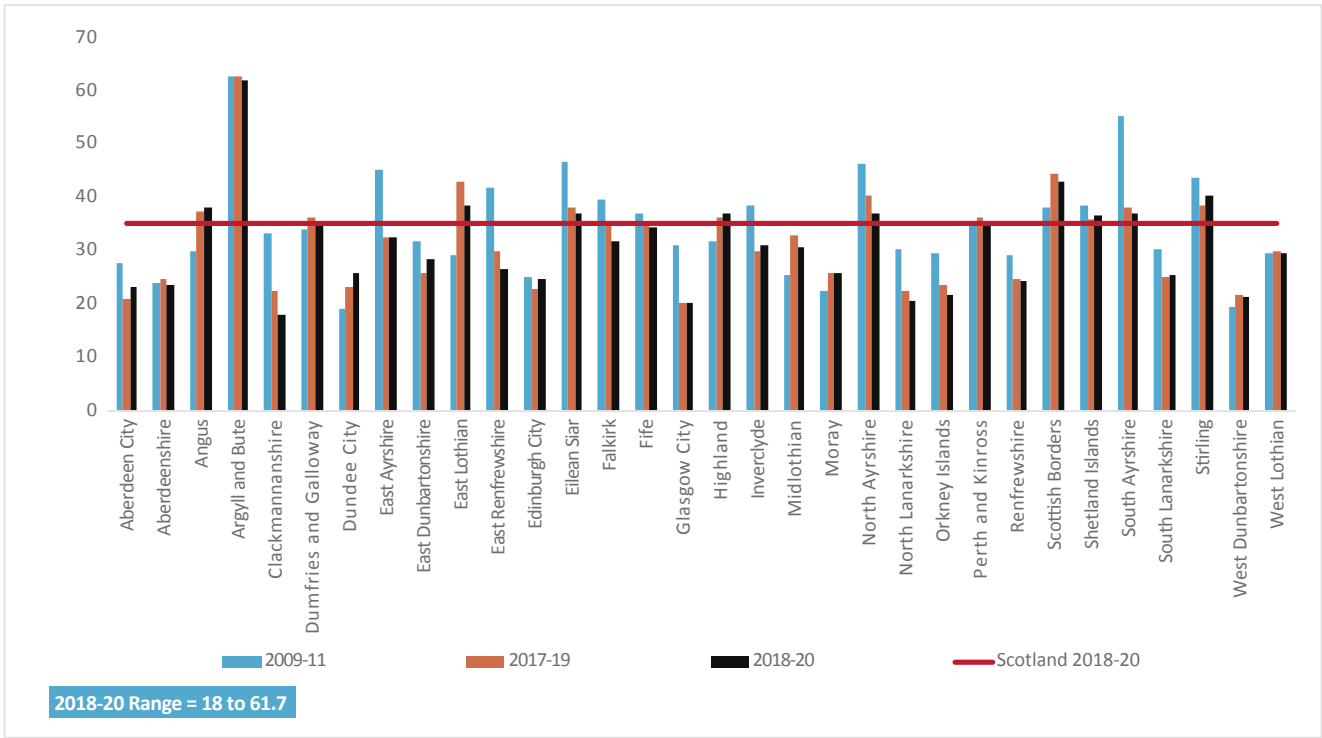


Fig 93: Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

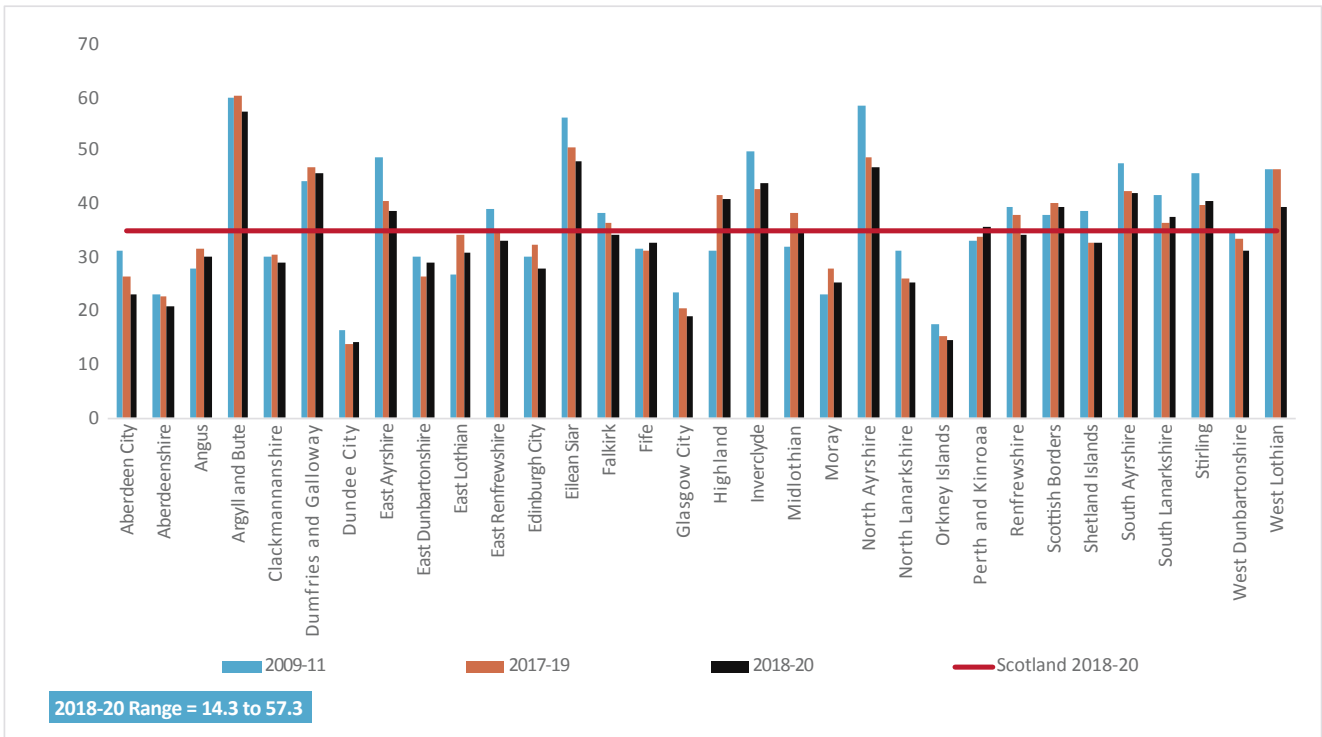
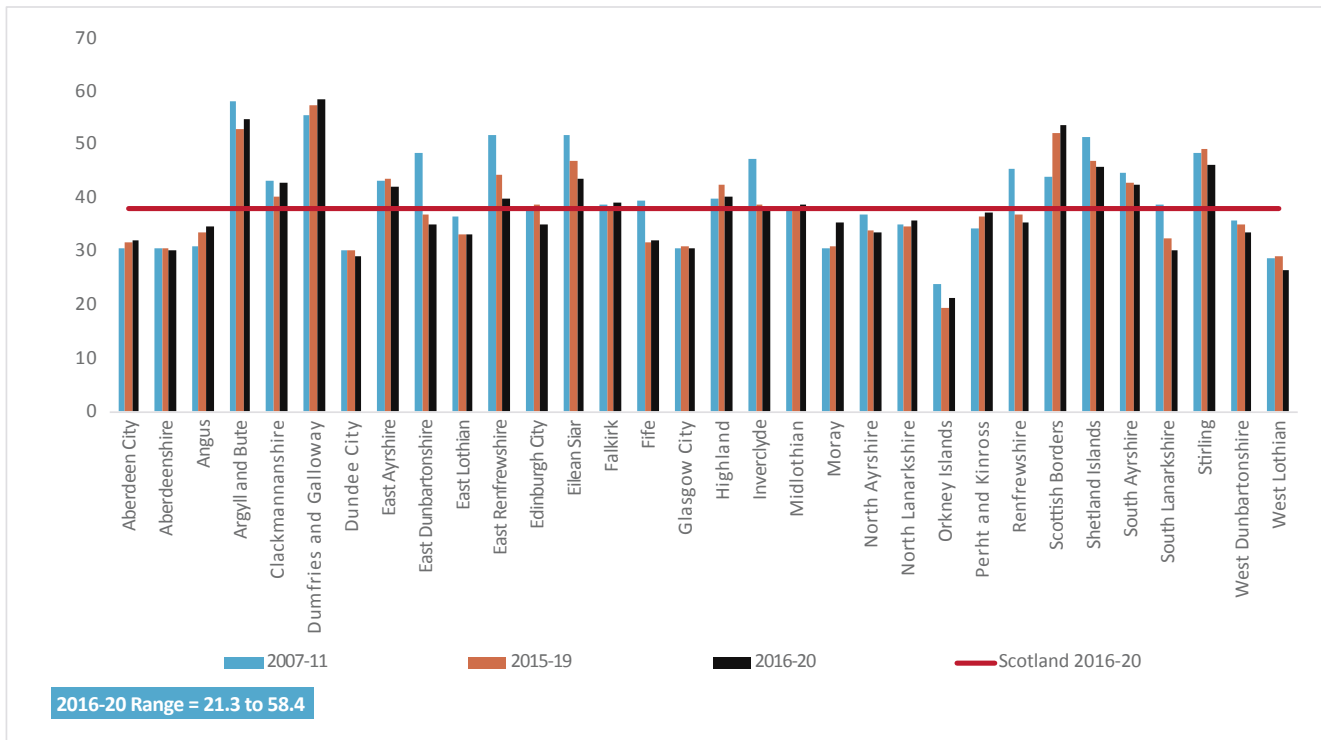




Fig 94: Percentage of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment



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

Environmental health and trading standards

Since 2010/11, the aggregated environmental health, trading standards, money advice and Citizens’ Advice grant costs have reduced by 31.2% from £28,668 to £19,723. At the same time, demand for these services is increasing in terms of reactive complaints and proactive business support and interventions. There have been considerable demands on environment health to prepare for the impact of EU Exit, and in particular export health certification. This will continue to be a pressure in 2020/21. Additional demand through COVID enforcement responsibilities and public health protection work will further add to the challenges facing this sector across the coming period.

In 2012/13, the framework split measures to enable a better understanding of trends. Trading standards costs include trading standards, money advice and citizen’s advice and have been standardised within the framework as costs per 1,000 population. Since 2012/13, the cost of these services, while volatile, has increased by 2.2%, from £5,822 to £5,952. In the past 12 months, costs have reduced by 1.5%. The data should not be taken as an indication of local authority trading standards resource alone, which has fallen close to minimum levels as highlighted by Audit Scotland reports in 2002 and 2013.

In 2019/20, costs ranged from £2,598 to £14,092. The graph below reveals higher average costs for rural councils compared to urban councils (£8,107 compared to £6,376). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with rurality due to variation within the family group.

Across this same period, there was a 25.4% reduction in the cost of environmental health services per 1,000 population, from £18,466 in 2012/13 to £13,771 in 2019/20. In the past 12 months, the reduction in costs has accelerated, falling by 9.8% from £15,261 to £13,771.

There is significant variation across councils which has widened in the past 12 months, with costs ranging



from £5,639 to £31,588. As with Trading Standards, the graph below reveals higher average environmental health costs for rural councils compared to urban councils (£20,535 compared to £14,666). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with rurality due to variation within the family group.

Table 40: Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population - (£)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2012-13 to 2019-20
Trading Standards, Money Advice & Citizens Advice	5,822	6,261	6,163	6,269	5,860	6,174	6,040	5,952	-1.5%	2.2%
Environmental Health	18,466	19,301	18,377	18,149	16,940	16,242	15,261	13,771	-9.8%	-25.4%

Fig 95: Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population (£)

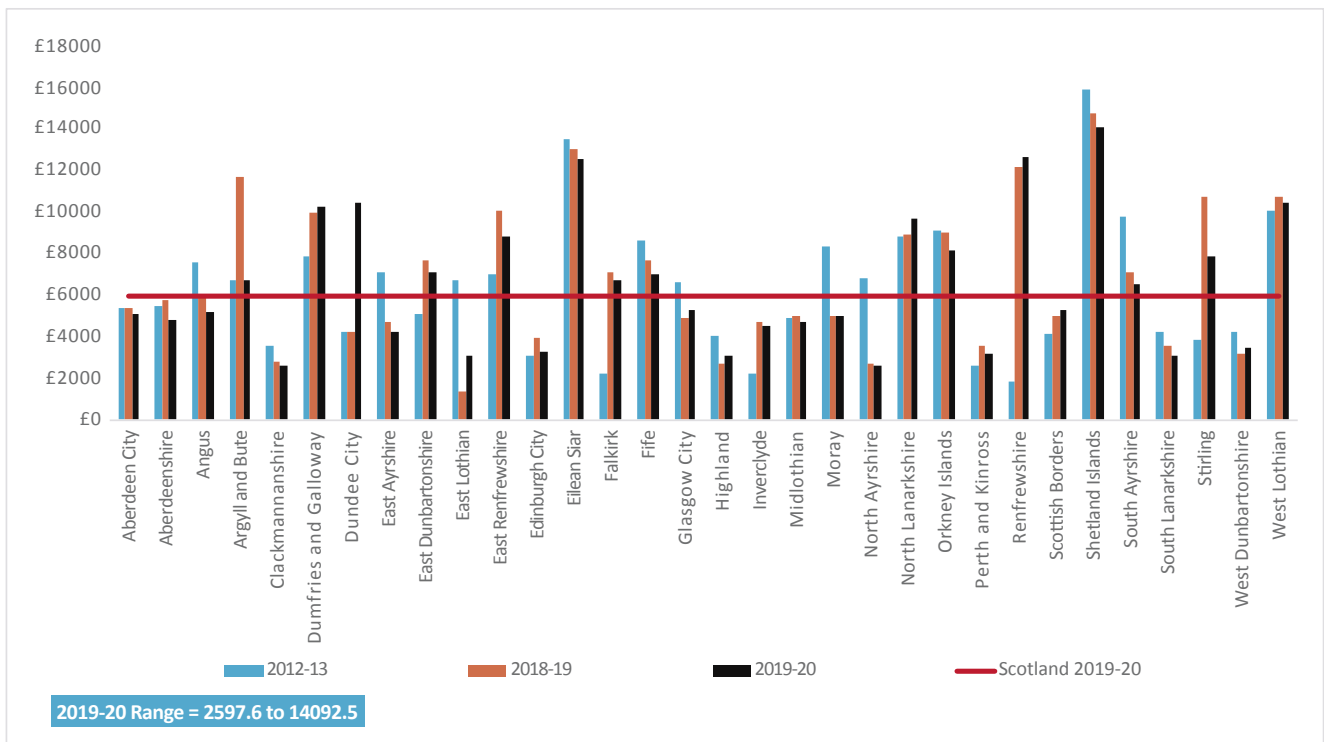
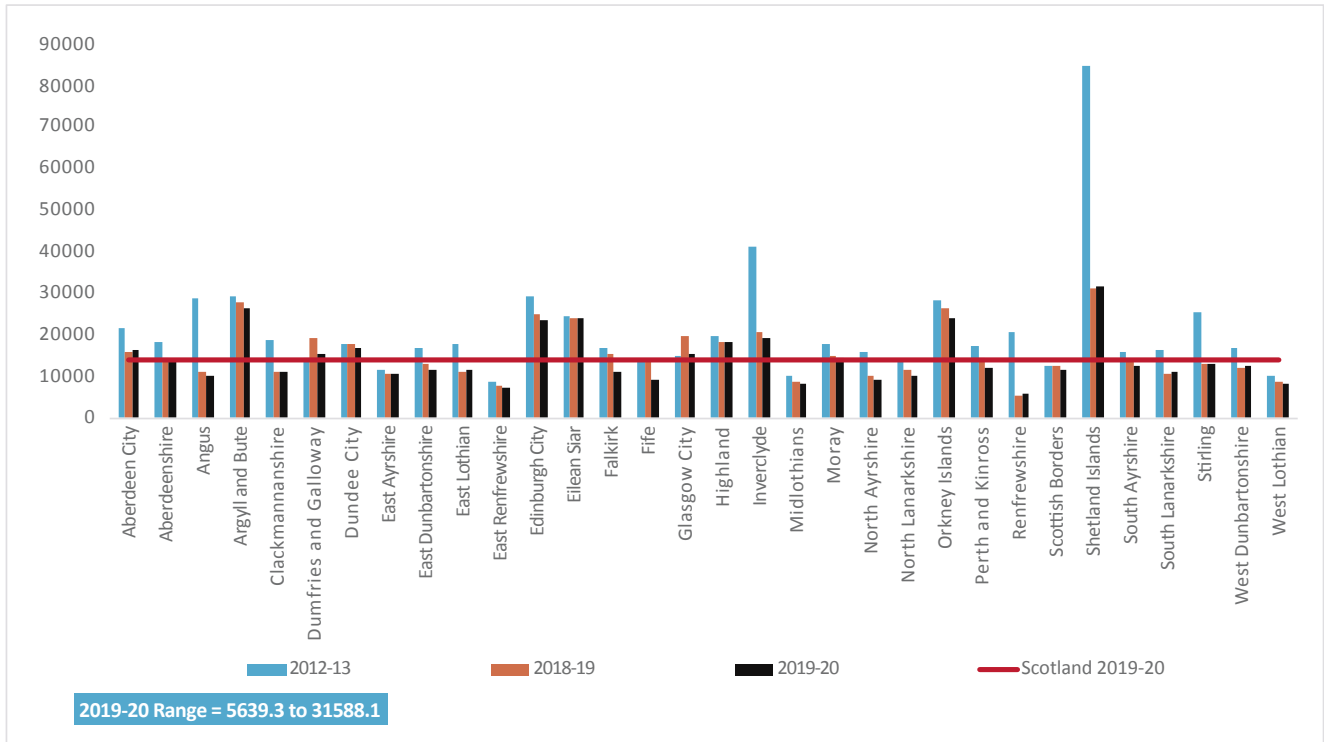




Fig 96: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population (£)



Source: Council supplied figures

Fig 97: Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population (£) By family group - rurality

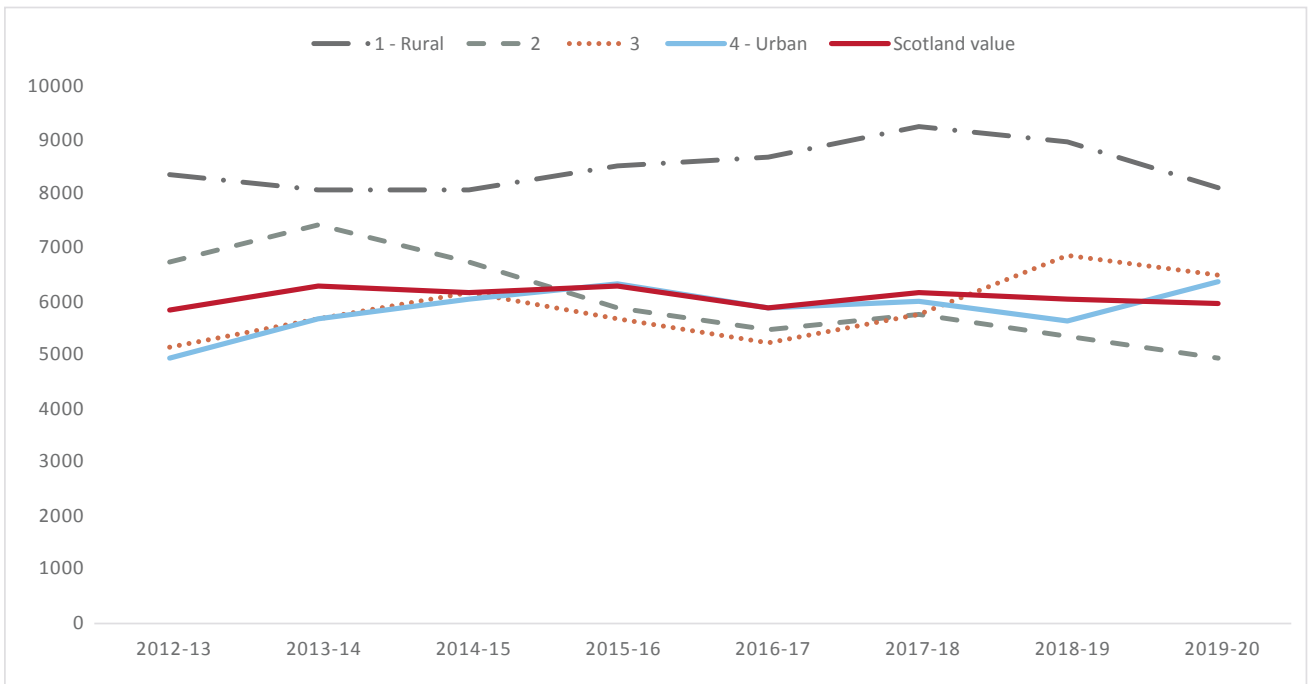
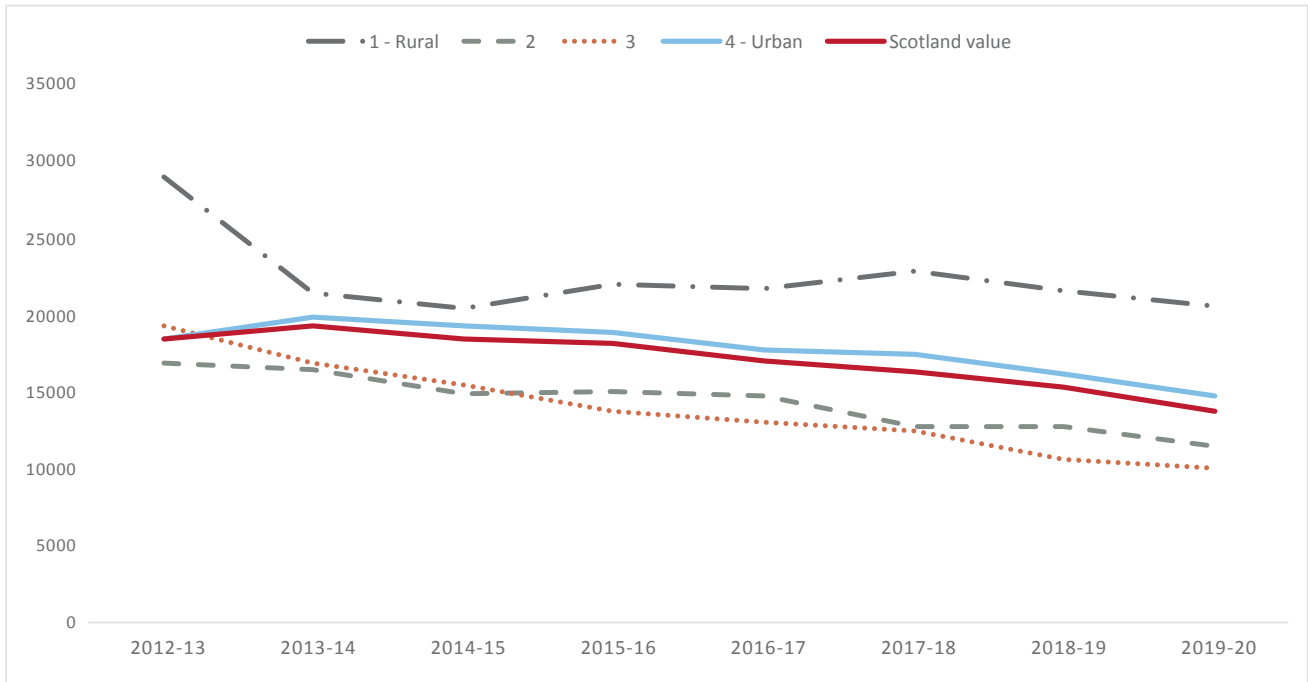




Fig 98: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population (£) by family group - rurality



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

- *Local political/strategic priority given to the role of environmental services in supporting improvements in wider outcomes and tackling inequalities*
- *Workforce composition and demographic profile*
- *Working practices, e.g. shift patterns*
- *Service integration (e.g. waste management, roads, street cleaning, parks services)*
- *Collection programmes, frequencies and model of service*
- *Asset management approaches – e.g. super depots and leased vehicles*
- *Stage in investment cycle*
- *Whether councils have landfills in their authority area which will require investment up to and beyond their closure dates over the next five years.*
- *Contract and procurement costs*
- *Access to external funding streams*

A woman with red hair, wearing a black blazer and a headset, is seated at a desk in a call center. She is looking down at a keyboard. In the background, other call center agents are visible, also wearing headsets and working at their desks. The office has a modern, open-plan layout with glass partitions and warm lighting.

Corporate Services



Over the last decade there is evidence to suggest that there has been a significant reduction in the costs of running Council's Corporate Services. Real terms expenditure has reduced by 26% since 2010/11 (range: -66% to +35%). This period has largely equated to one of financial austerity typified by real terms reductions in funding for Councils and increased use of ringfencing of funding for specific policy initiatives. The impact of this has been that resulting financial gaps and required savings have tended to be more targeted to some services such as those traditional back room and support functions, in order to protect as far as possible front-line service provision. To date digital transformation and other efficiency savings have enabled spending on Corporate Services to reduce without detriment to overall performance. However, the impact of Covid-19 has reinforced the importance of these functions with key skills being required to support Councils responses to the pandemic. With previous savings often delivered through a combination of measures including head-count reductions there is a risk that some specialism experience is lost and resources are not sufficient to sustain former performance improvements alongside the required Covid response.

Support services

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

For standardisation purposes, support services are represented as a % of total gross revenue expenditure in the benchmarking framework. The figure has remained around 5% across the 9-year period. The total gross revenue expenditure for 2019/20 has been adjusted for significant outliers.⁴⁵

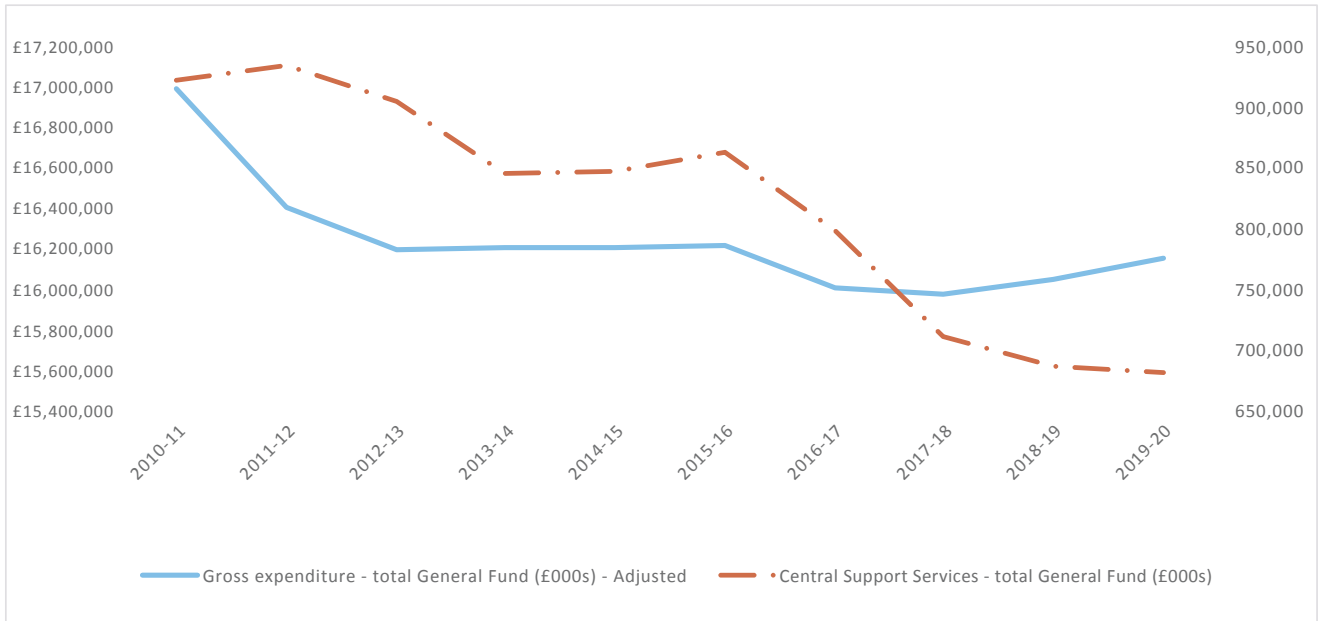
In 2019/20 the Scottish average was 4.2% compared to 5.4% in 2010/11, although there has been fluctuation across the period. The reduction between 2010/11 and 2019/20 reflects a 26.3% reduction in support costs in parallel with a 4.9% reduction in Total General Fund. This both reflects councils' commitment to protect front-line services over 'back office' functions and the maturation of councils' digital strategies. It is possible that an element of this significant reduction is due to improved reporting following refined guidance in relation to the treatment of support costs within the financial return.

In the last 12 months, there has been a 0.7% increase in Total General Fund expenditure (adjusting for significant outliers) alongside a 0.8% reduction in spending on Support services.

⁴⁵ Adjusted to exclude £440 million Equal Pay settlement in Glasgow and £90 million surplus costs for APWR.



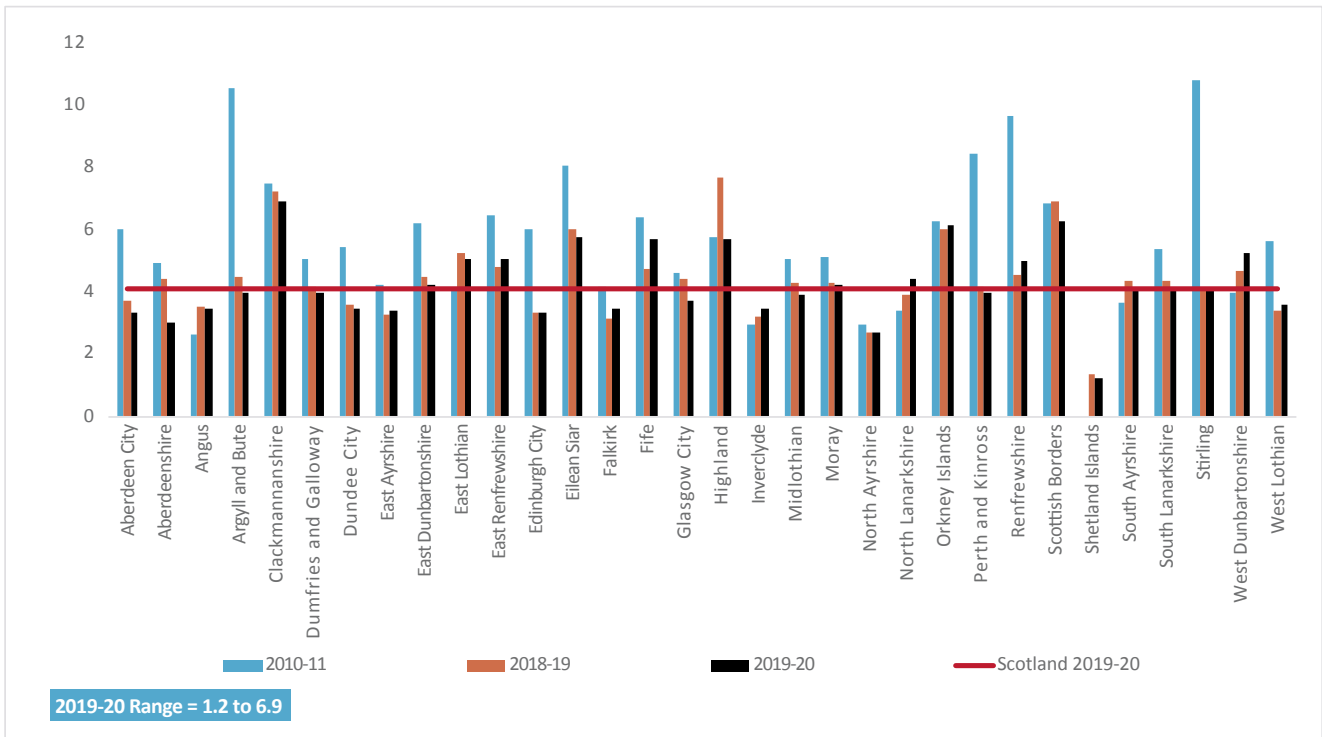
Fig 99: Support services expenditure and total gross expenditure (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

There is significant but narrowing variation between councils in Support Service expenditure. The proportion ranges from 1.2% to 6.9% in 2019/20. Rural authorities have seen support service costs reduce at a faster rate over the period. However, there is no statistically significant relationship with rurality due to variation within the family group.

Fig 100: Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

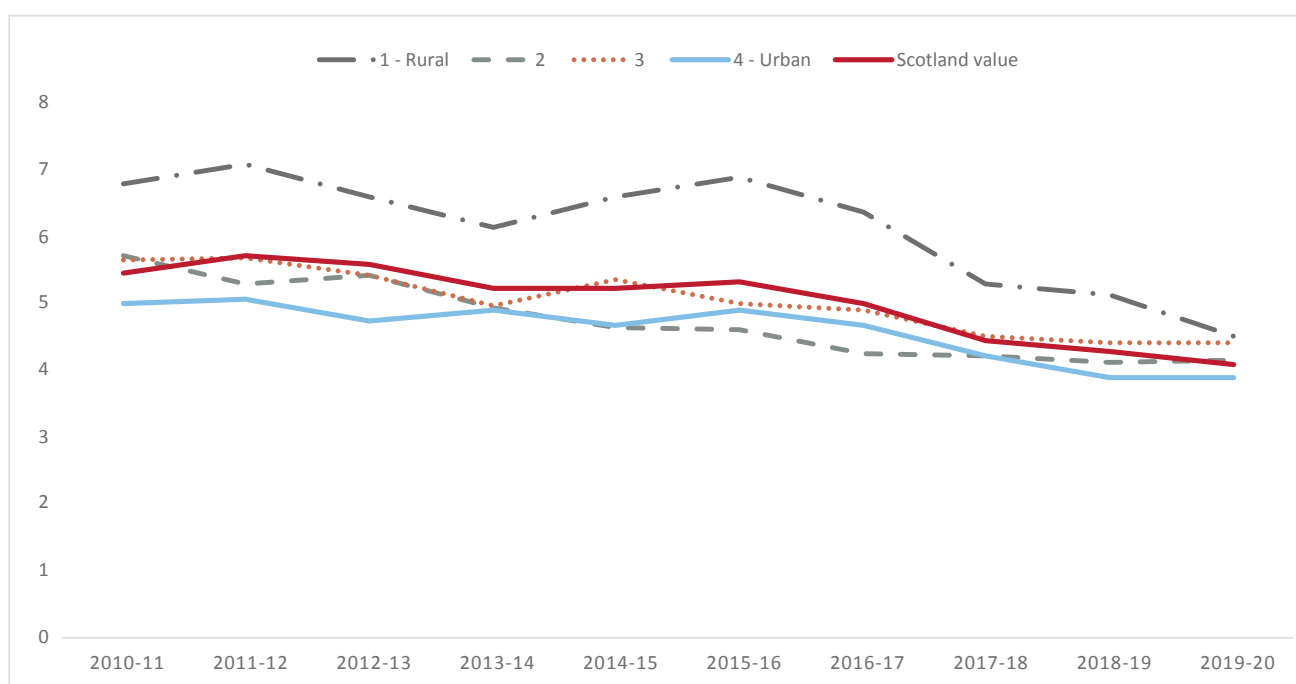
Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year



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

- *Workforce composition and structure – workforce exit; staff terms & conditions; role redefinition*
- *Asset Management and rationalisation*
- *Service redesign – service integration; centralisation; self-service; outsourcing*
- *Digital Strategy*

Fig 101: Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure by family group - rurality



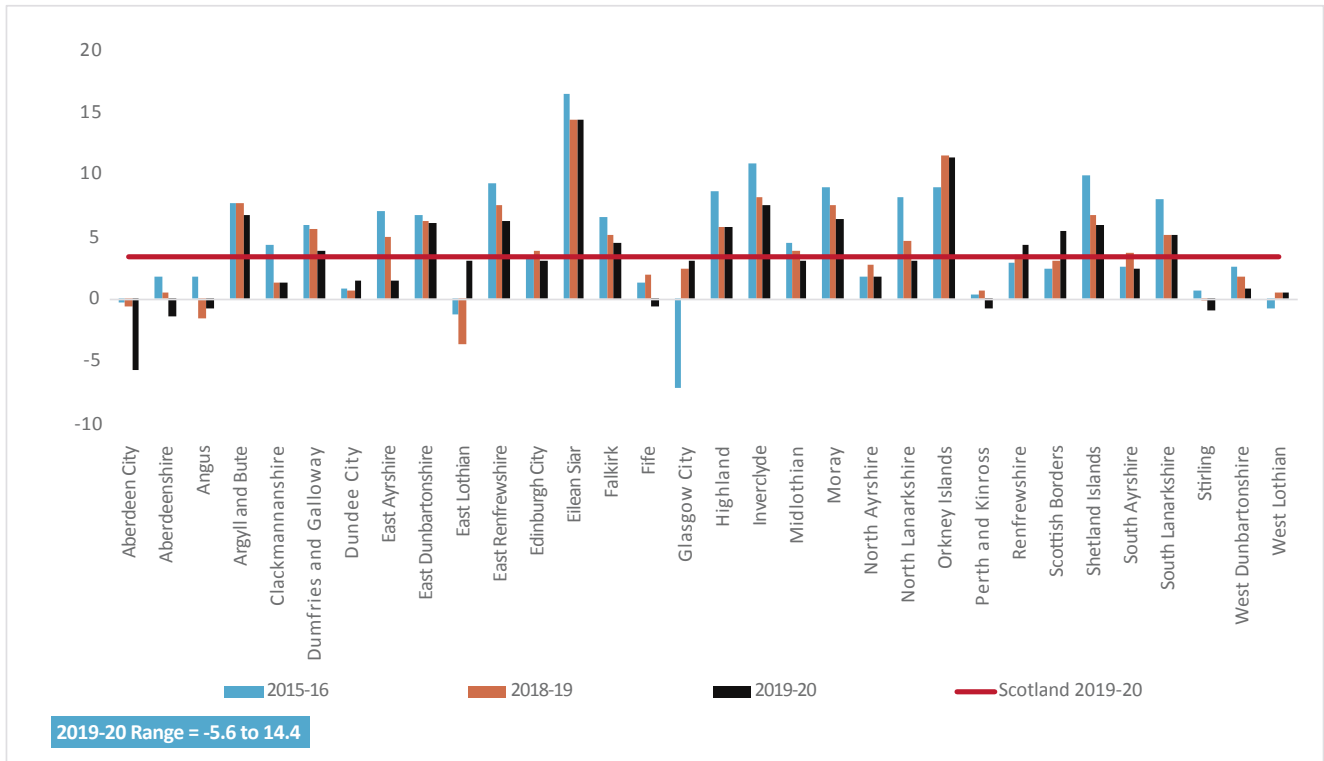
Gender equality

The percentage of women in the top 5% of earners in councils is a significant measure of the attempts by councils to ensure equal opportunity between genders. From 2010/11 to 2019/20 this has increased from 46.3% to 56.7%. The range across councils is from 29% to 67%, with rural councils reporting lower rates.

While this is an important measure reflecting the progress which has been made in relation to gender equality in senior positions within Local Government, there is a need to capture the progress being made across the wider workforce. As such, our measure of the gender pay gap represents the difference between men's and women's earnings within local authorities and is a key measure under the Public-Sector Equality Duty. This measure takes the average (mean) hourly rate of pay (excluding overtime) for female employees and divides this by average (mean) hourly rate for male employees. This is used to calculate the percentage difference between pay for men and pay for women. Negative values indicate that women are paid more than men. Both part-time and full-time employees are included. This measure The Gender pay gap has narrowed across the past 5 years, falling from 4.5% to 3.4% between 2015/16 and 2019/20. The gap ranges from -5.6% to 14.4% and is significantly higher in rural areas compared to urban areas (6.6% compared to 2.1%). Those staff employed via arms-length organisations are not included within the calculation which will influence the variability observed and may be important in understanding the figures observed for some authorities.

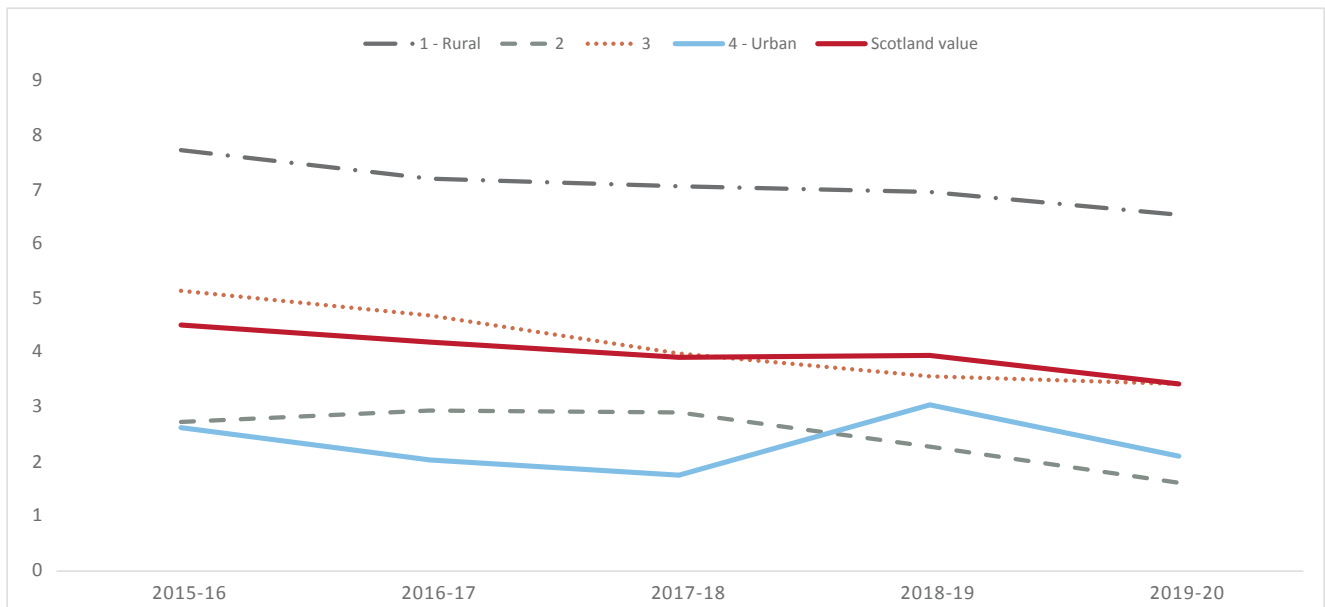


Fig 102: The gender pay gap (%)



Source: Council supplied figures

Fig 103: The gender pay gap (%) by family group - rurality



Council tax

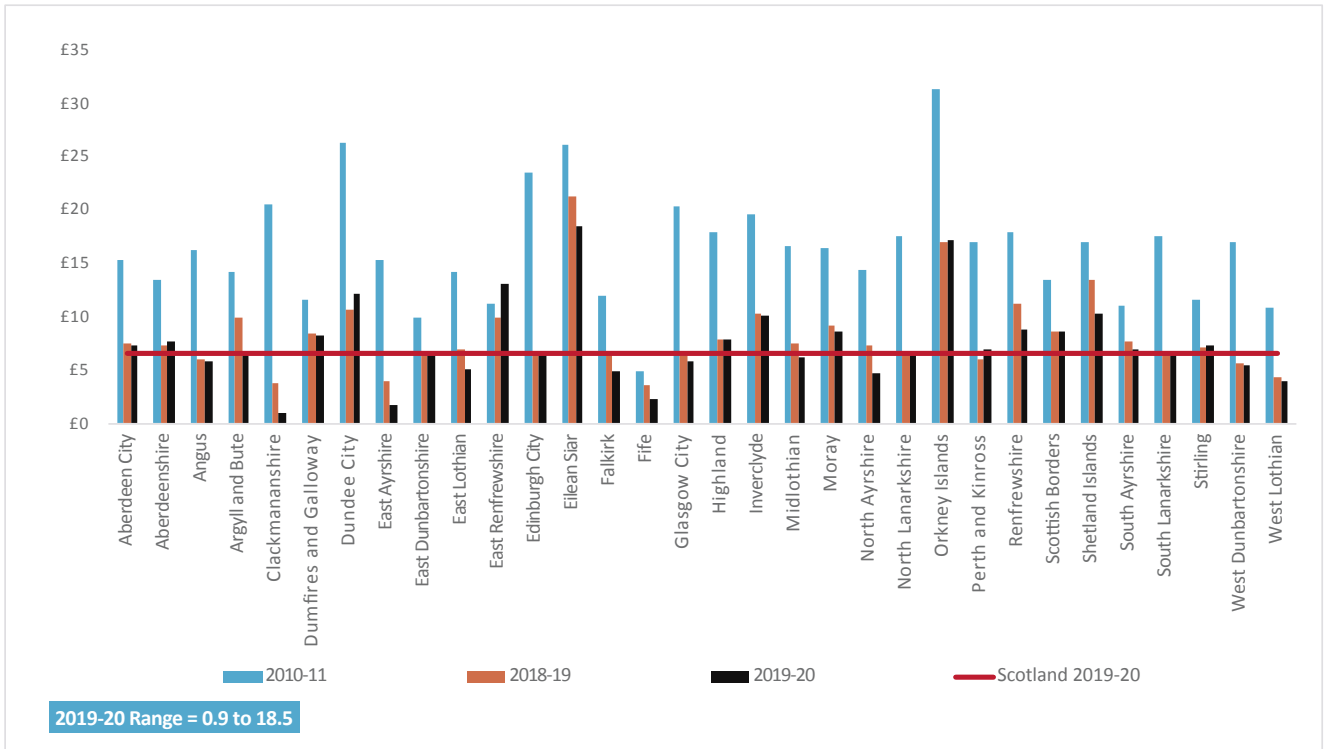
The cost of collecting council tax is measured on a per property basis to standardise the measure across councils. Over the ten-year period from 2010/11 to 2019/20 costs have reduced by 59.6%, from £16.27 to £6.58. There has been a year on year reduction in costs, with no slowdown in the rate over recent years. In



the past 12 months, costs reduced by 7.2%. Almost all councils report significant cost reductions across this period, a key driving factor is the continued digital transformation and shift to embrace new technology and automation.

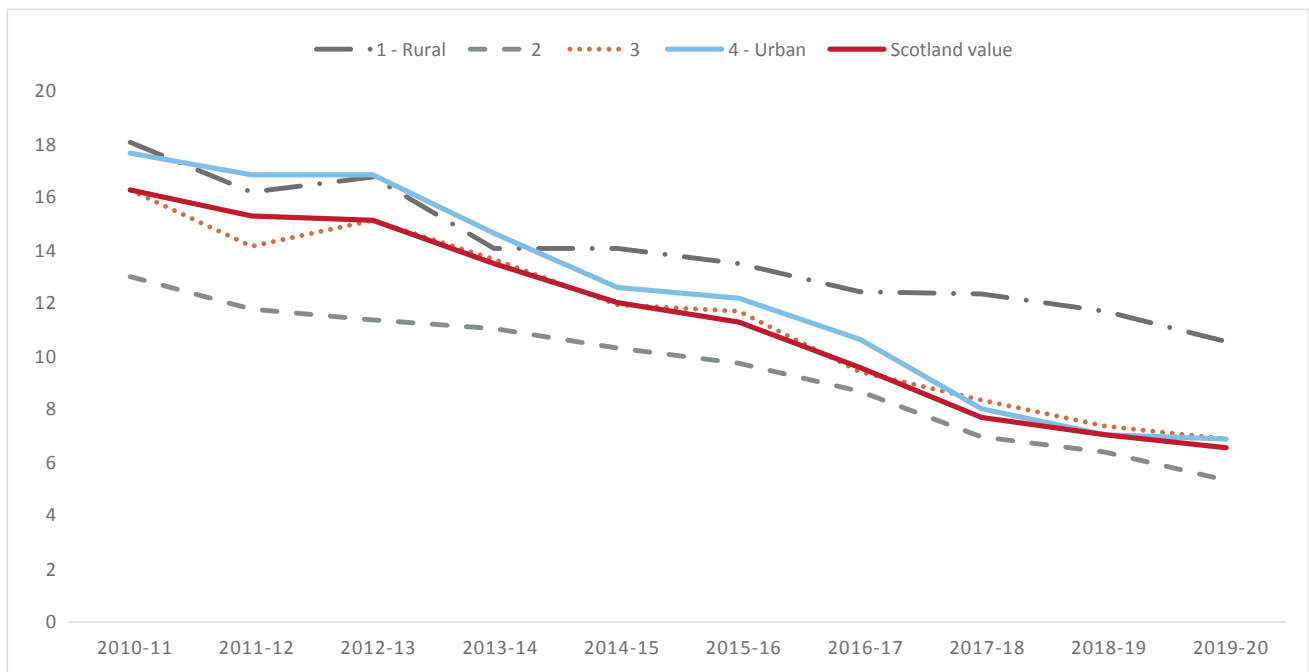
Although narrowing, the range varies significantly from £0.85 to £18.52, with island and rural councils reporting significantly higher costs and a slower rate of cost reduction.

Fig 104: The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax (£)



Source: Council supplied figures

Fig 105: The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax (£) by family group - rurality





At the same time as the significant reduction in unit costs, the overall rate of in-year collection for council tax has remained high and shown steady improvement from 94.7% in 2010/11 to 95.8% in 2019/20. The improvement has stalled in recent years, showing a slight dip of 0.2pp in the past 12 months. Council tax collections improved as a direct result of the council tax freeze from 2008/09 to 2016/17, a trend which has continued despite the challenges created by a difficult economic climate and significant welfare reform. It will be important to monitor what impact the Covid-19 pandemic has on average payments, debt repayment time and collection levels in future years.

The variation across councils is narrowing over time, with rates in 2019/20 ranging from 93.3% to 97.8%. Council tax collection rate shows a significant pattern in relation to level of deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting significantly lower rates paid on time compared to the least deprived councils (94.6% compared to 96.6%). The impact of Covid and ongoing roll-out of Universal Credit is likely to further exacerbate this over the coming period.

Fig 106: Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year

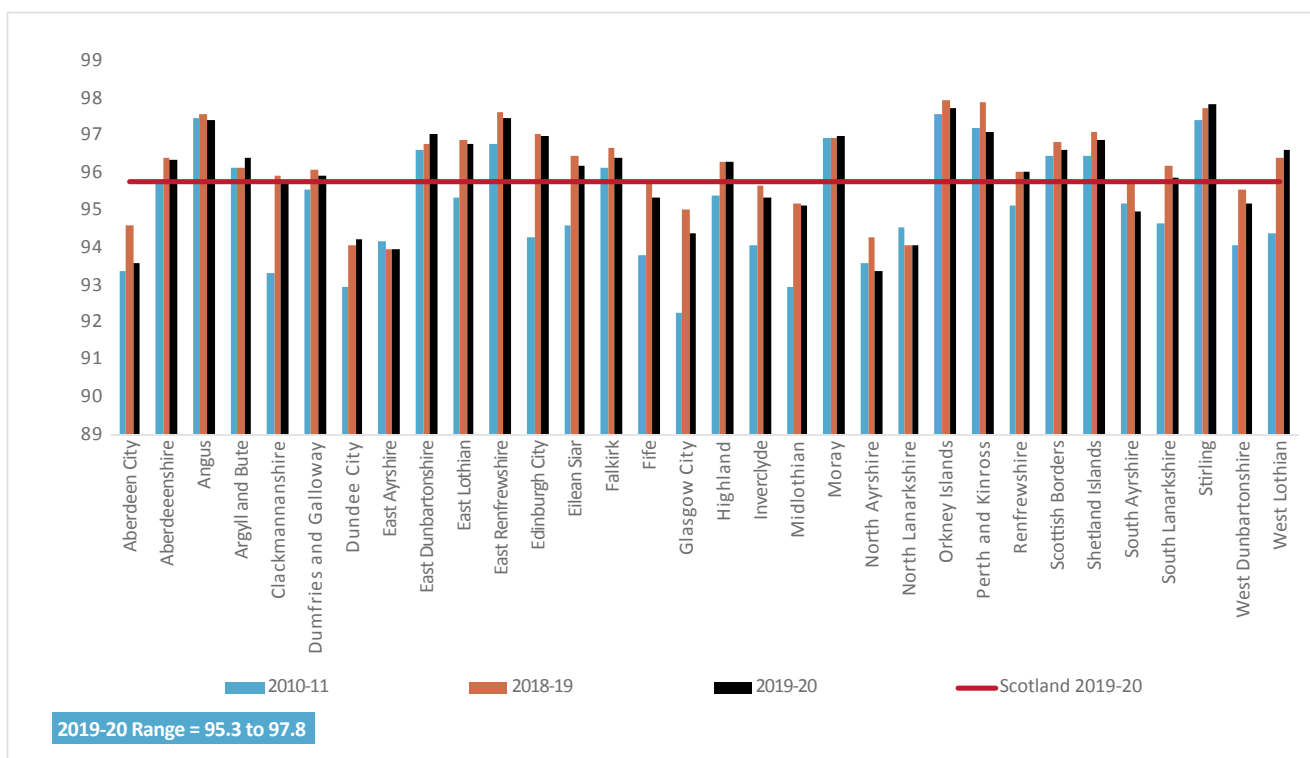
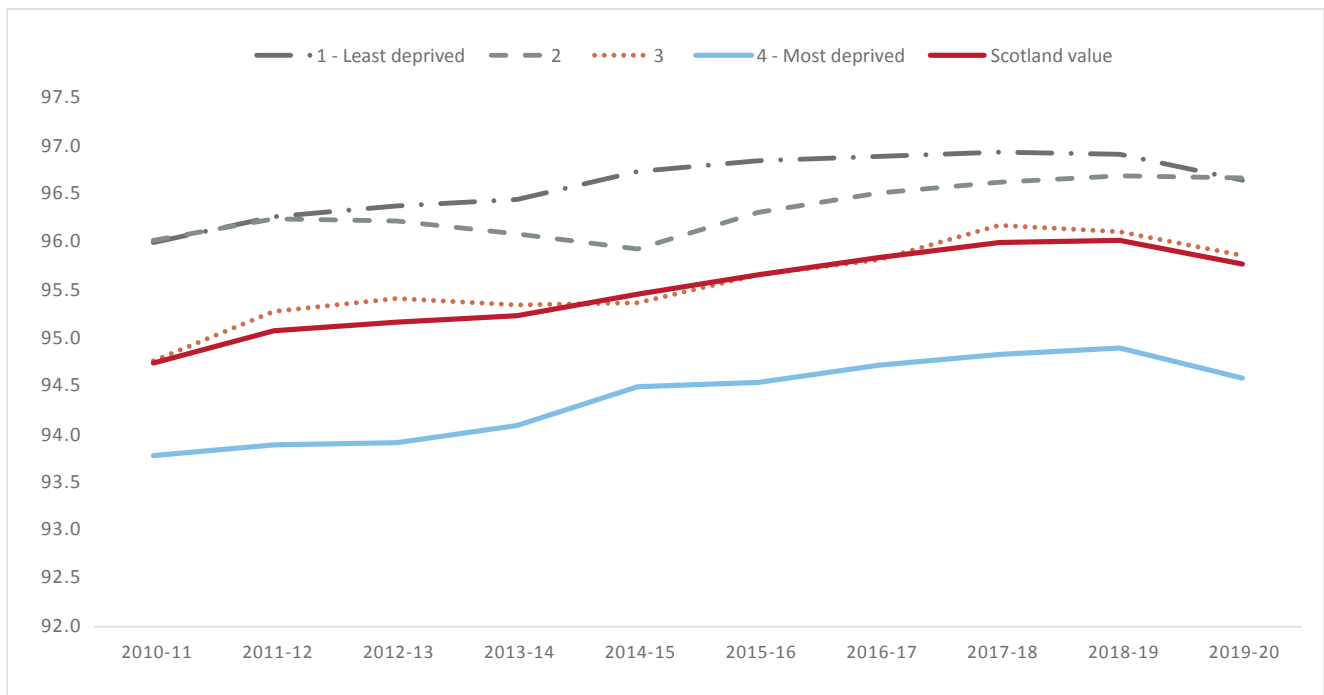




Fig 107: Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year by family group - deprivation



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

- *Channel shift to greater automation and self-service (both customer facing and back office)*
- *Structural variations in relation to council owned or transferred housing stock and the impact of discount/exemption/council Tax Reduction(CTR) take-up on collection*
- *Procedural variations such as:*
 - *Local set ups – Revenues and Benefits, shared service etc*
 - *Impact of annual/regular billing regimes on subsequent collection and recovery*
 - *Types/variety of accessible payment options, particularly the level of Direct Debit payment*
 - *Follow-up and recovery timetables*
 - *Payment arrangement guidelines*
 - *Impact of 'water only' debt and success of DWP collections (including Water Direct)*
 - *Working with others – RSL's, Educational Establishments, Advice Sector*
- *Recovery and Enforcement approaches, e.g.:*
 - *Corporate debt strategies (refunds/offsets etc)*
 - *In-house recovery activity*
 - *Pre and post warrant intervention*
 - *Use of available diligence and enforcement actions*
 - *Relations with/management of Third Party Collectors (Sheriff Officers etc.)*
- *Asset management and rationalisation in relation to office premises*



Sickness absence rates

The management of sickness absence has been and will continue to be a major priority for councils in their efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of their workforce and to manage their costs. The unprecedented pace of change and transformation across Local Government places further emphasis on the importance of developing effective strategies to manage absence.

Local authorities are adopting a holistic and supportive approach to absence management to engage and retain employees, in recognition that such strategies make good business sense. Although local context will differ, authorities are adopting similar policies and good practice procedures focussing on employee wellbeing, and in particular supporting good mental health. Deployment of a progressive response requires capacity and resources. This creates challenges, particularly at a time when there are huge demands for cashable savings and limited opportunities to invest, even in political priorities.

The Covid 'major incident' is expected to skew all absence information in the short term i.e. during the pandemic and lockdowns. In the medium to long term, issues are already emerging as we transition into managing long-Covid absences where debilitating symptoms are still being experienced six months on. In addition, the consequences of delayed medical interventions and Covid-related mental health trauma are also a key risk for the economy, businesses and working lives and there are likely to be absences associated with such circumstances for a period.

The LGBF data reveals that Local Government absence levels are at their highest since 2010/11, increasing by 7% across the period from 9.8 to 10.5 days.⁴⁶ This reflects a 10% increase for non-teaching staff (from 10.8 days to 11.9 days), and a 3% reduction for teaching staff (from 6.6 days to 6.4 days).

Absence levels for both teaching and non-teaching staff have increased in 2019/20, by 3.1% and 3.8% respectively. While average absence rates have increased, 11 councils reported decreasing levels during this time, counter to the national trend.

The variation between authorities has remained fairly stable over time, with teacher absence in 2019/20 ranging from 4.2 days to 10.0 days, and non-teacher from 8.2 days to 14.1 days. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation or rurality.

Trends in sickness absence levels may be indicative of the tension between reducing staff numbers across local government (in response to sustained budget pressures) and the continuing increase in demands and requirements. Whilst we have seen the benefits of digital and technology-based solutions across all our services, such solutions only introduce efficiencies in some contexts. Where the people element of the service is key, we often see greater impact on absence levels, particularly in those services involved in front-line delivery.

Further exploration may be helpful to understand what role the following factors play, if any, in understanding teacher absence:

- Recent pay negotiations
- Pace of change and transformation
- Increase in violence and aggression incidents
- Teacher shortages

⁴⁶ FTE calculations used within council supplied figures for LGBF differ slightly from the PSE guidelines (<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/PublicSectorEmployment/PSEGuidance>)

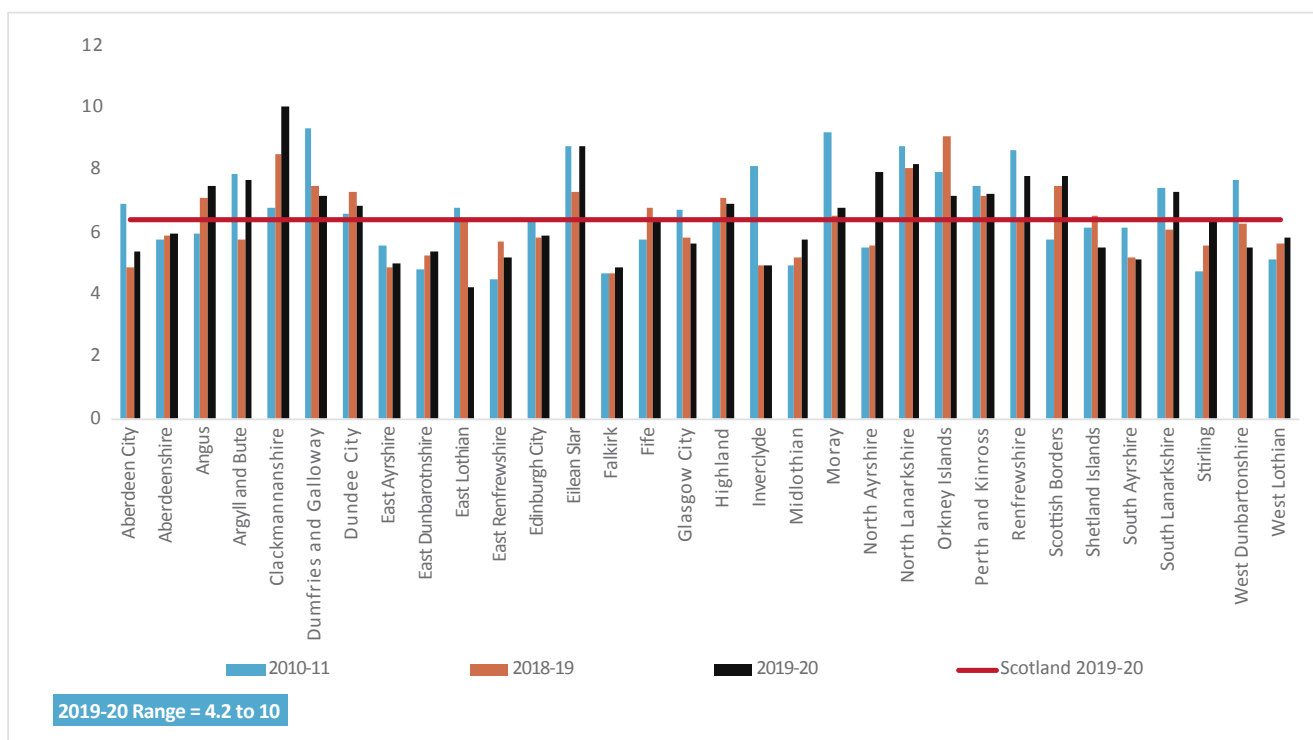


- PSA reductions
- Patterns of retirement
- Ageing workforce

In terms of understanding increasing absence figures, CIPD reports⁴⁷ that mental ill health, musculoskeletal injuries (including back pain), stress and acute medical conditions are the most common causes of long-term absence, as in previous years. In their 2018 report, however, more organisations include mental ill health among their most common causes of short and long-term absence. More than half (55%) of organisations report that reported mental health conditions have increased over the last 12 months.

CIPD reports that stress ranks top amongst public sector organisations' top three causes of long-term absence (71% compared with 45% of private sector services). Workload/volume of work remains by far the most common cause of stress in the public sector (66%), followed by management style (40%), considerable organisational change/restructuring (34%), nonwork relationships/family (26%) and relationships at work (24%). Four-fifths of public sector organisations are taking steps to identify and reduce workplace stress and the most common methods include promoting flexible working options/improved work–life balance, employee assistance programmes, staff surveys and/or focus groups to identify causes, and risk assessments/stress audits. More organisations are providing training aimed at building personal resilience (such as coping techniques, mindfulness) compared with previous years (2018: 44%; 2016: 26%).

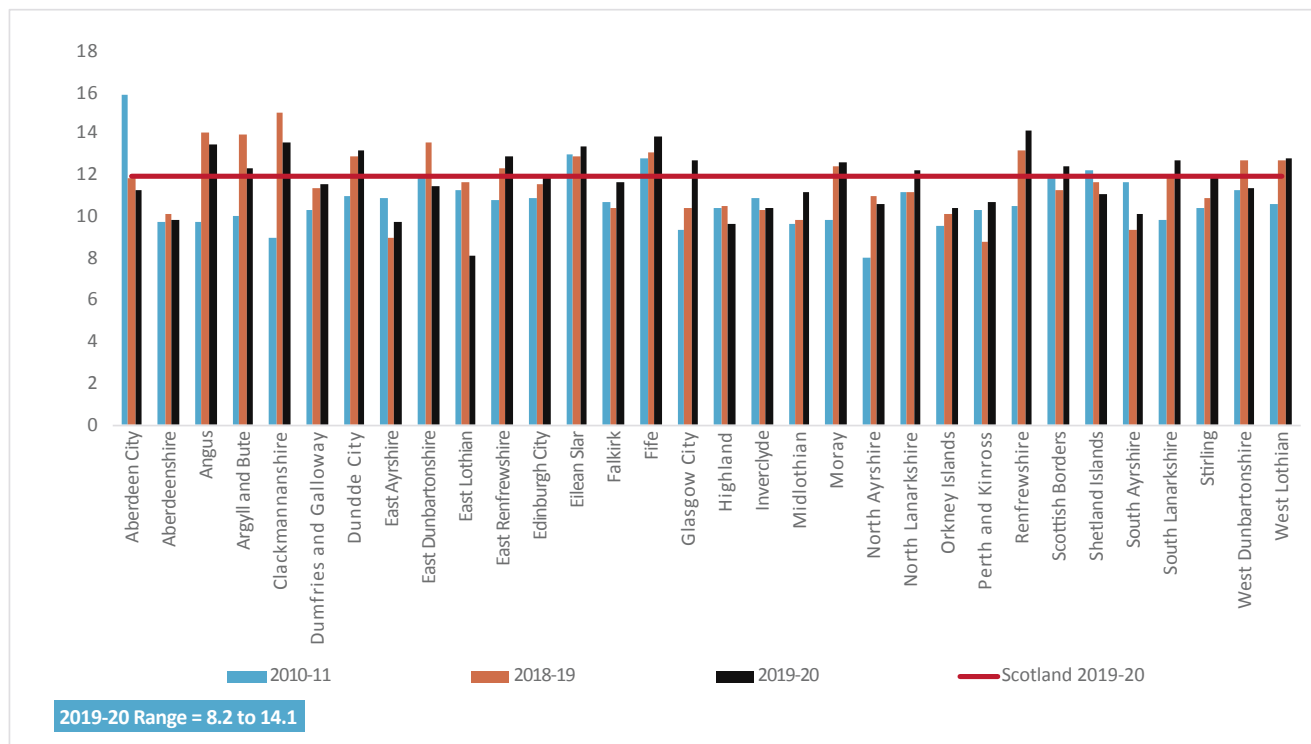
Fig 108: Sickness absence days per teacher



47 <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/trends/uk-working-lives>



Fig 109: Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)



Source: Council supplied figures

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

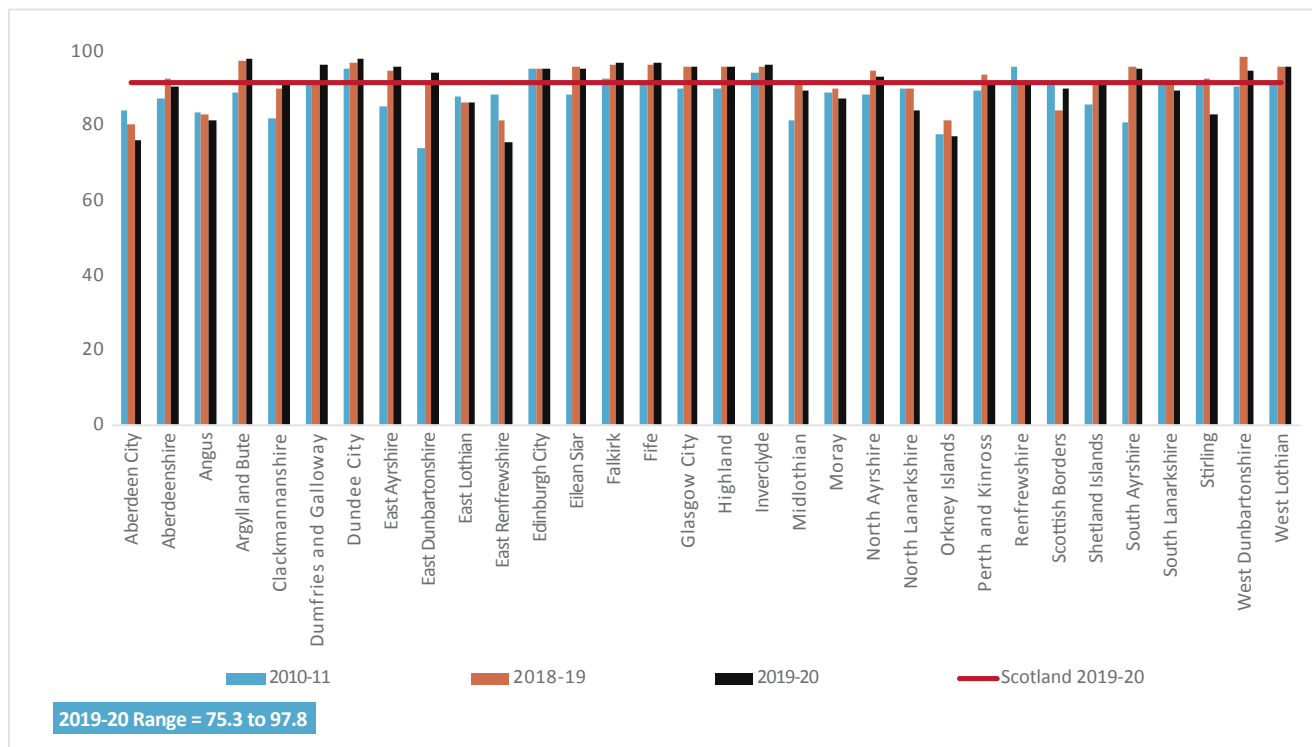
- Workforce composition and age profile
- Priority given to performance management and business intelligence to support early intervention
- Strategic priority given to Health and Wellbeing initiatives
- Level of staff engagement and involvement
- Differences in Absence Management policy and procedures, including the point at which disciplinary intervention is triggered
- Level of flexible working practices
- Level and type of occupational health and counselling
- Level of resource dedicated to maximising attendance and managing absence

Invoices paid

Councils are major purchasers of goods and services both within their local economies and across the Scottish economy as a whole. The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days has improved from 89.5% to 91.7 over the ten-year period. Performance has shown a slight dip in the two most recent years reported, after a long-term improving trend. Rates reduced from 93.2% to 91.7% between 2017/18 and 2019/20, and current rates are now lower than those reported in 2013/14. Levels of variation have widened in the most recent year, with the range across councils 75.3% to 97.8%. There are no systematic relationships with deprivation or rurality.



Fig 110: Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days



Source: Council supplied figures

Corporate assets

There has been significant and continued improvement in the condition of councils' corporate assets over the period. The percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use has improved from 73.7% to 82.5% and the proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition has improved from 81.3% to 88.6%. These trends however are not universal, with a fifth of councils showing a decline in this area counter to the national trend.

There is significant but narrowing variation across councils in both measures, ranging from 67% to 98% for buildings suitable for use, and 54% to 100% for condition of floor area. There is no relationship with rurality, deprivation or size of authority.

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

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



Fig 111: Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (%)

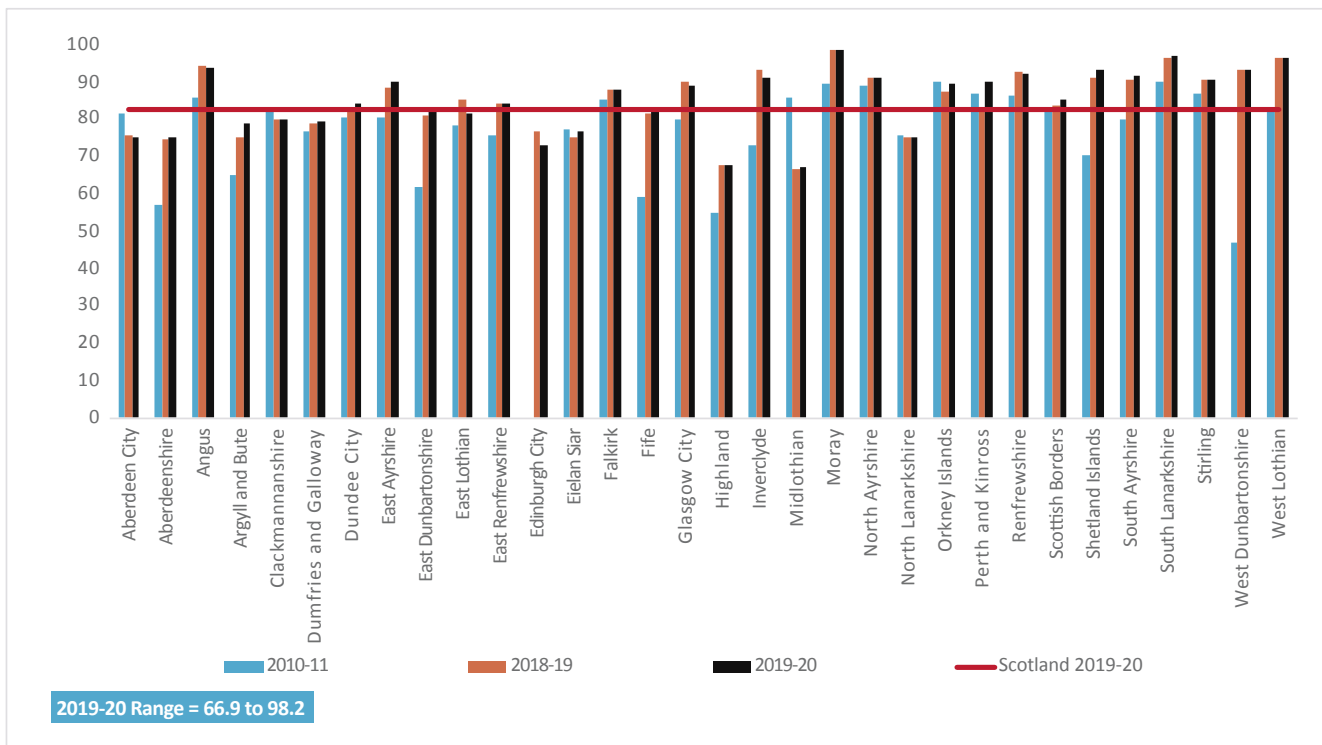
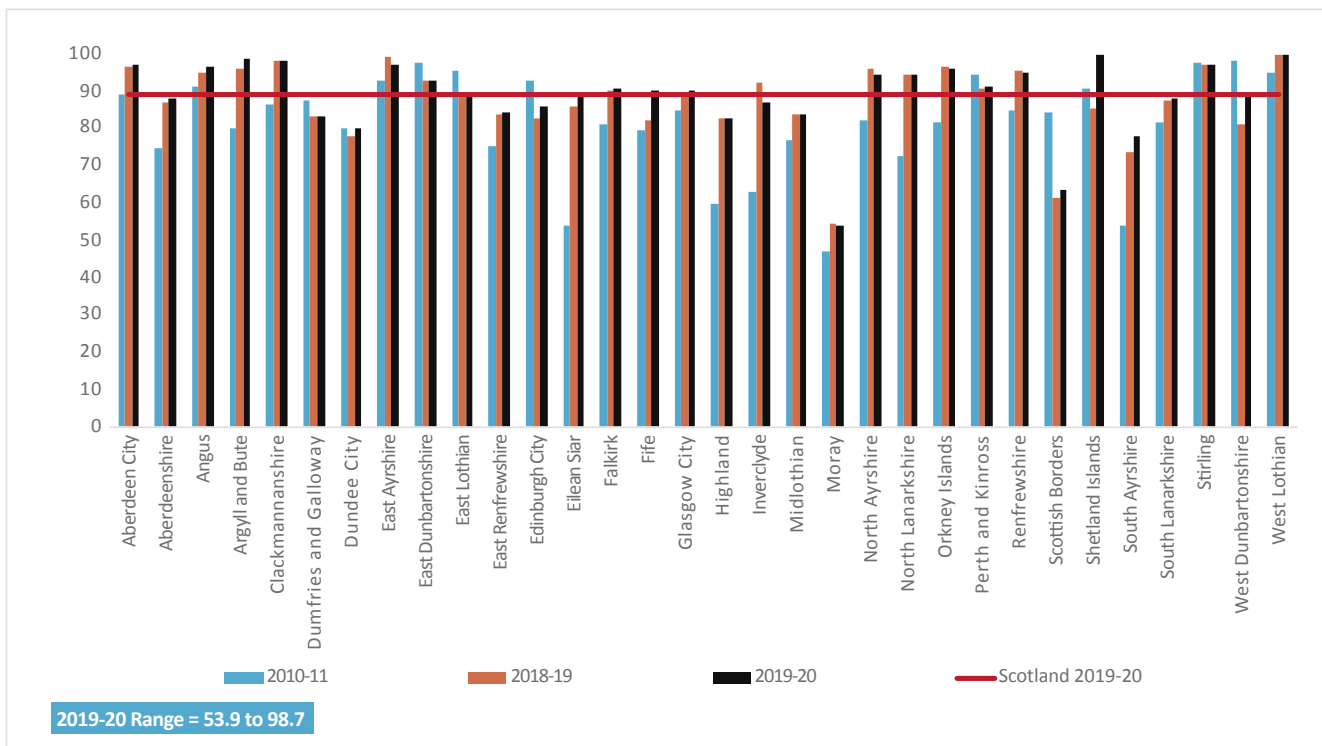


Fig 112: Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition (%)



Source: Council supplied figures



Housing Services



The housing information within the benchmarking framework covers housing management, housing conditions and energy efficiency. Across the period, councils continue to manage their housing stock well, delivering sustained improvements in repair times and rent lost due to voids, and overseeing consistent and significant improvements in housing standards and energy efficiency. There has been growth in tenants rent arrears across the period, although this trend appeared to stabilise in 2019/20.

The economic impact of Covid will create direct challenges for the housing sector in relation to rental income. The anticipated increase in unemployment, along with fears of universal credit delays and backdating issues may create a significant 'bump' in rent arrears and may lead to long-term arrears for many. Less rent coming in to the council means less money for capital works programmes, which may have long term implications for stock quality. The Covid pandemic also brings practical implications in terms of accessing properties for routine maintenance (i.e. gas boiler checks) and also for improvements. This has implications in terms of timelines for works programmes and could introduce significant challenges in relation to maintaining overall stock quality.

Only those councils who have responsibility for the provision of Housing Services are included here. Resources for housing services come from the Housing Revenue Account which is funded by tenants' rents and service charges, rather than from the General fund, which funds the other services covered in the LGBF.

Rent arrears

The average Scottish tenants' arrears as a percentage of rent due has increased year on year from 5.6% in 2013/14 to 7.3% in 2019/20. The rate of arrears stabilised in 2019/20. The increase since 2013/14 reflects an increase in gross rent arrears during this time of 37.5%, which is an increase of £24 million from £64.0 million in 2013/14 to £88.0 million in 2019/20.

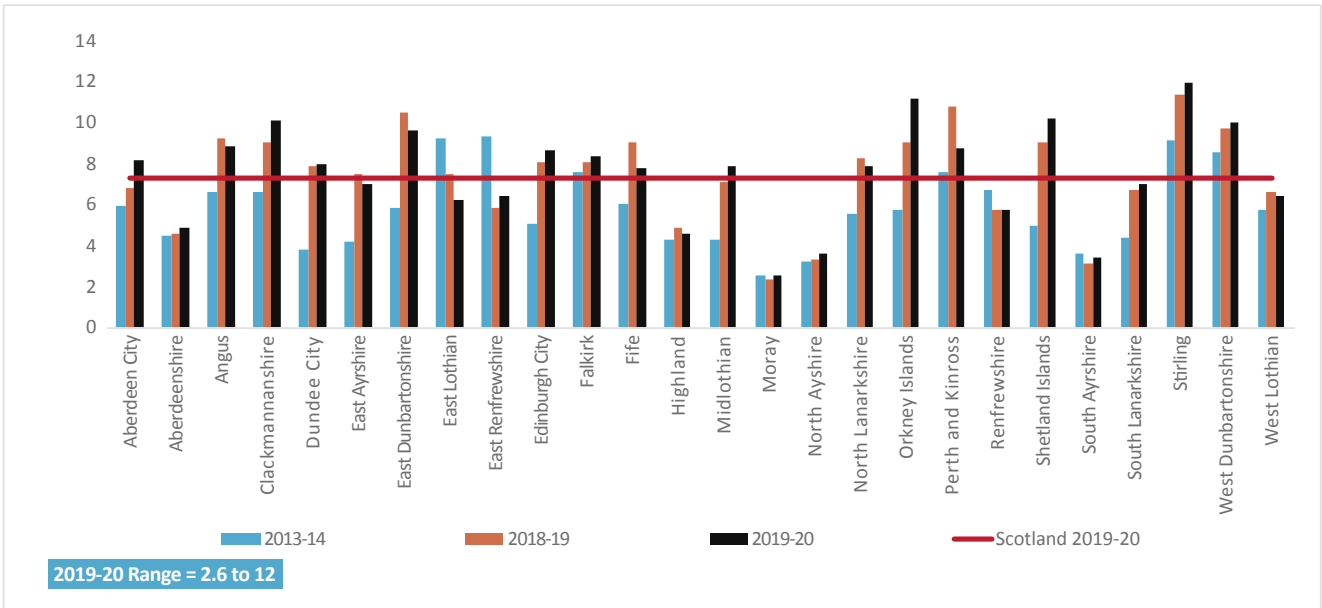
The impact of Covid, along with continuing welfare reform and Universal Credit roll out may create further pressure on this trend and it will be important to monitor this. Early research indicates that one-in-six (17%) of social renters have fallen into (or further into) rent arrears as a result of the coronavirus income shock.⁴⁸ Similarly, where evidence is available from Universal Credit pilot councils, there was a significant increase in rent arrears following the introduction of Universal Credit Full Service. Beyond the immediate impact on some individuals and families, an increase in arrears will result in the loss of rental income for councils and potentially affect the ability to build affordable housing.

In 2013/14, the definition and methodology for this measure changed, therefore it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with previous years. In 2019/20, the percentage of arrears range from 2.6% to 12.0% across councils which indicates a widening variation since 2013/14. Rent arrears tend to be higher for the least deprived group of councils on average compared to the most deprived (8.5% compared to 7.3%). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group.

48 <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/coping-with-housing-costs-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/>



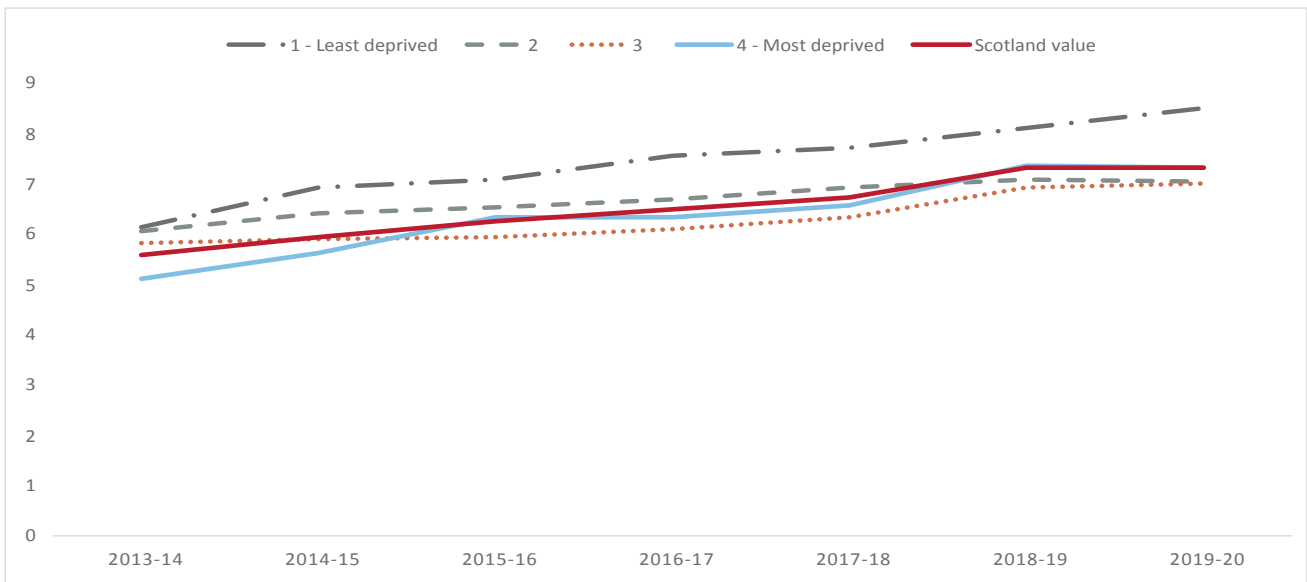
Fig 113: Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year



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

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

Fig 114: Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year by family group - deprivation



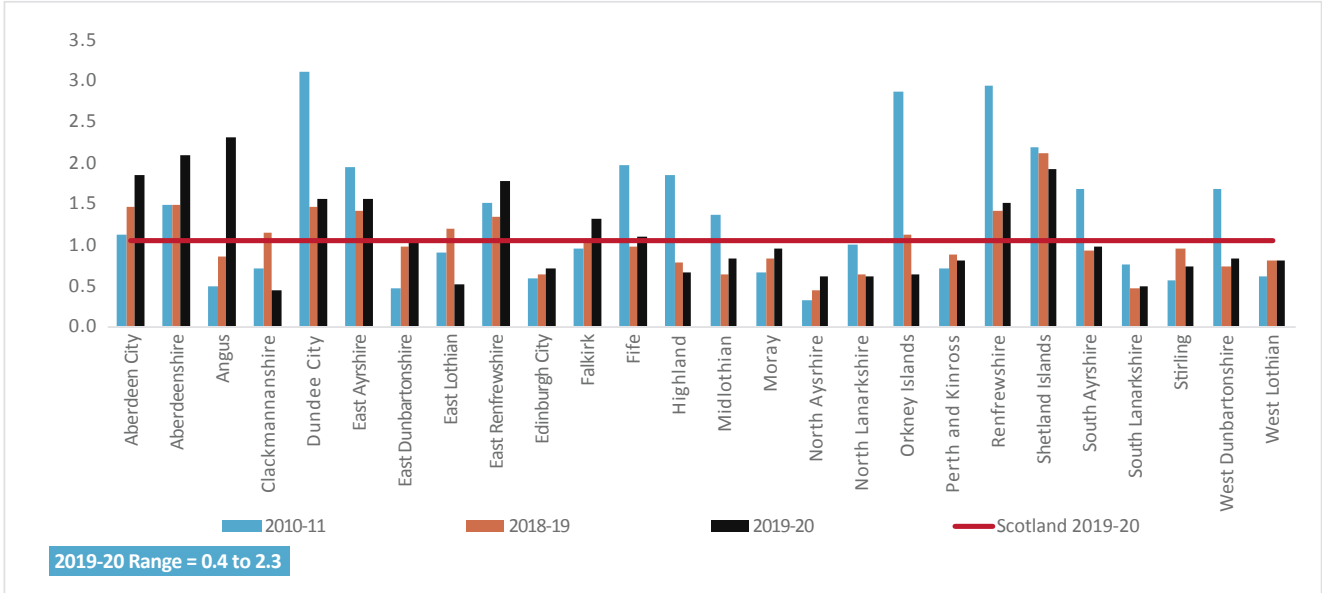
Rent lost due to voids

Rent lost due to voids has reduced from 1.3% in 2010/11 to 1.1% in 2019/20, although this has increased by 0.2 percentage points in the most recent 2 years. Again, figures vary across authorities, from 0.5% to 2.3%, however the level of variation has reduced since the base year. The rent lost due to voids appears to be increasing faster in the least deprived councils in recent years (from 1.1% to 1.4% between 2015/16 to 2019/20).



However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group.

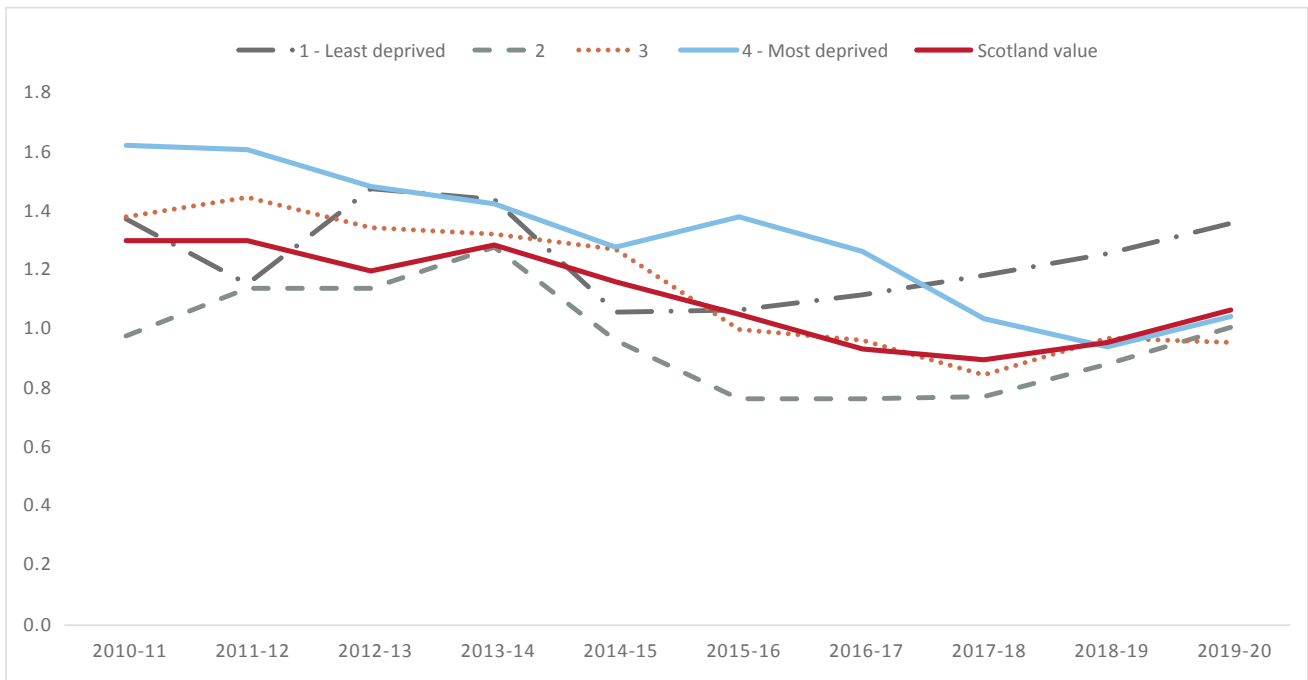
Fig 115: Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids



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

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

Fig 116: Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids by family group





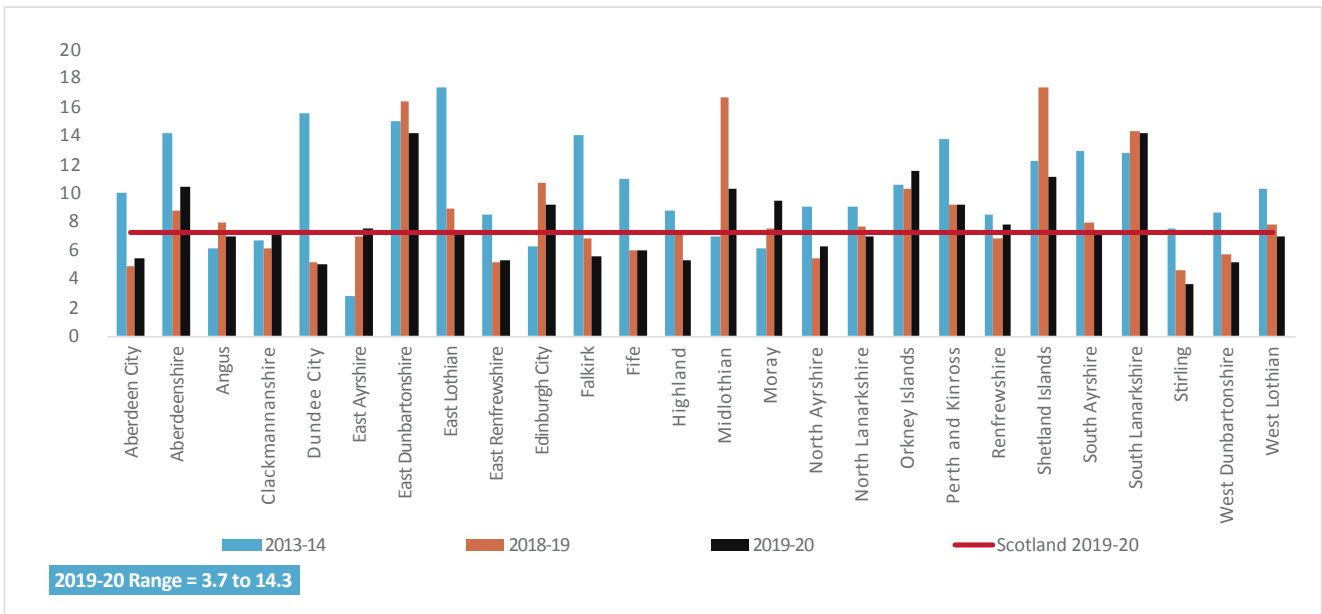
Housing repairs

The average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs has reduced by 27.9% over the period, from 10.2 days in 2013/14 to 7.3 days in 2019/20. Improvement has continued in 2019/20, following a slight decline in 2018/19. As with rent arrears, the definition and methodology for this measure changed in 2013/14, therefore it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with previous years.

There is significant variation across councils since the base year. In 2019/20, length of time ranged from 3.7 days to 14.2 days. Repair times tend to be higher for the least deprived group of councils on average compared to the most deprived (9.6 days compared to 6.2 days). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group.

Overall, these figures suggest the councils continue to manage their stock well in the face of mounting pressures, however future performance should be monitored closely to understand if the recent decline in performance indicates the emergence of a longer-term trend.

Fig 117: Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (no. of days)

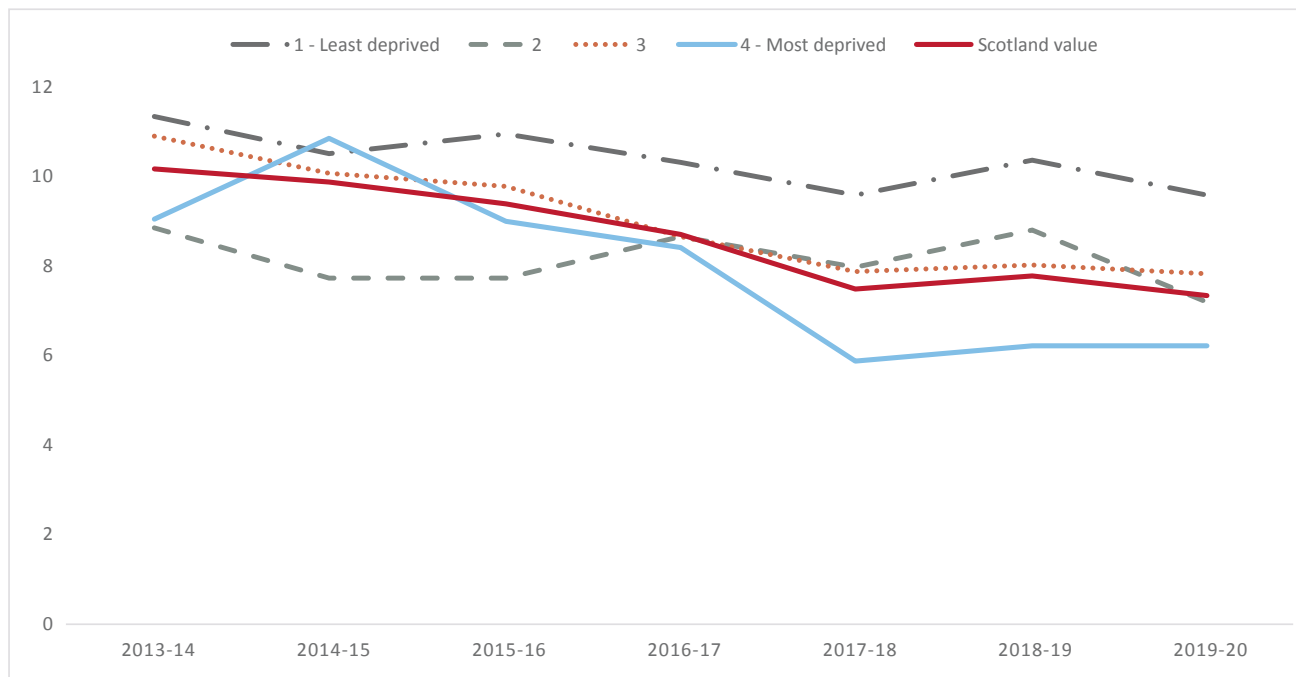


Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

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



Fig 118: Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (no. of days) by family group - deprivation



Housing quality

In terms of housing quality, there have been significant improvements over the past 10 years in terms of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) and energy efficiency standards.⁴⁹ In 2019/20, 94.9% of council dwellings met the SHQS, an increase of 41 percentage points from 2010/11. The range across councils varies from 88.1% to 99.6%, although this range has narrowed significantly since 2010/11.

In 2019/20, 84.1% of council dwellings were energy efficient, an increase from 65.2% in 2015/16. Councils range from 55% to 99%, with higher rates on average for councils with higher levels of deprivation. However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group.

Table 41: Housing quality and energy efficiency (%)

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
% dwellings meeting SHQS	53.6	66.1	76.6	83.7	90.4	92.5	93.6	93.9	94.3	94.9	0.5	41.3
% dwellings that are energy efficient						65.2	71.2	75.3	80.9	84.1	3.2	18.9

⁴⁹ To reflect new energy efficiency standards, the LGBF indicator has been amended to adopt the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) as a reference, replacing NHER – SAP.



Fig 119: Properties meeting SHQS (%)

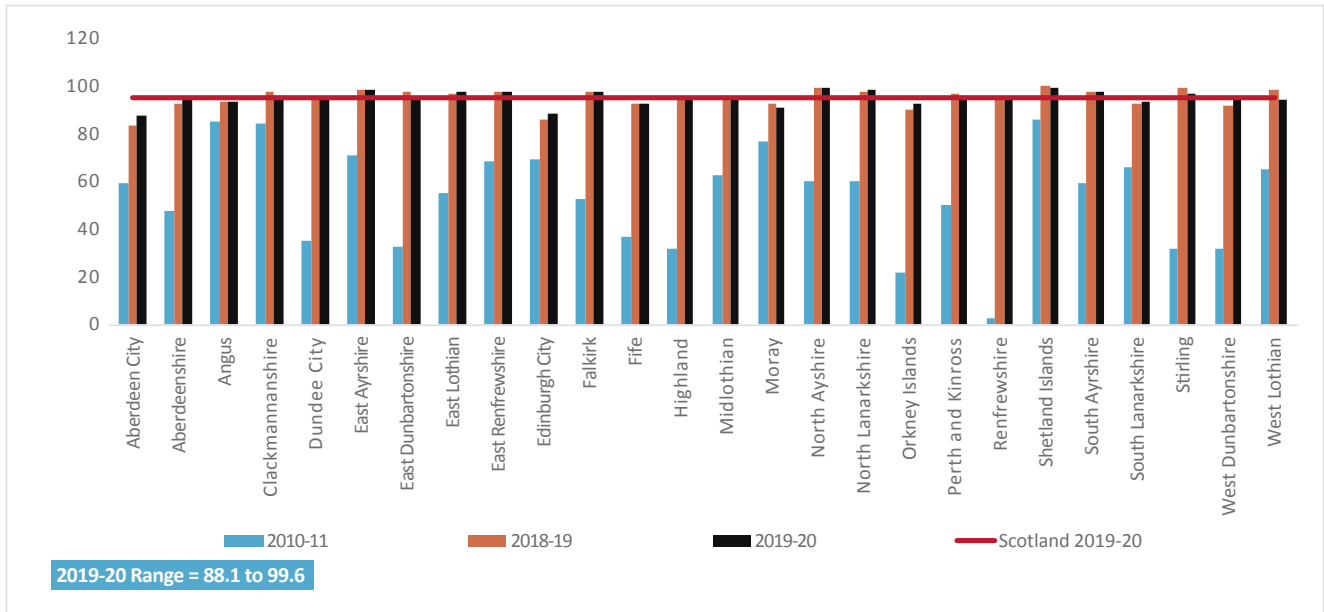
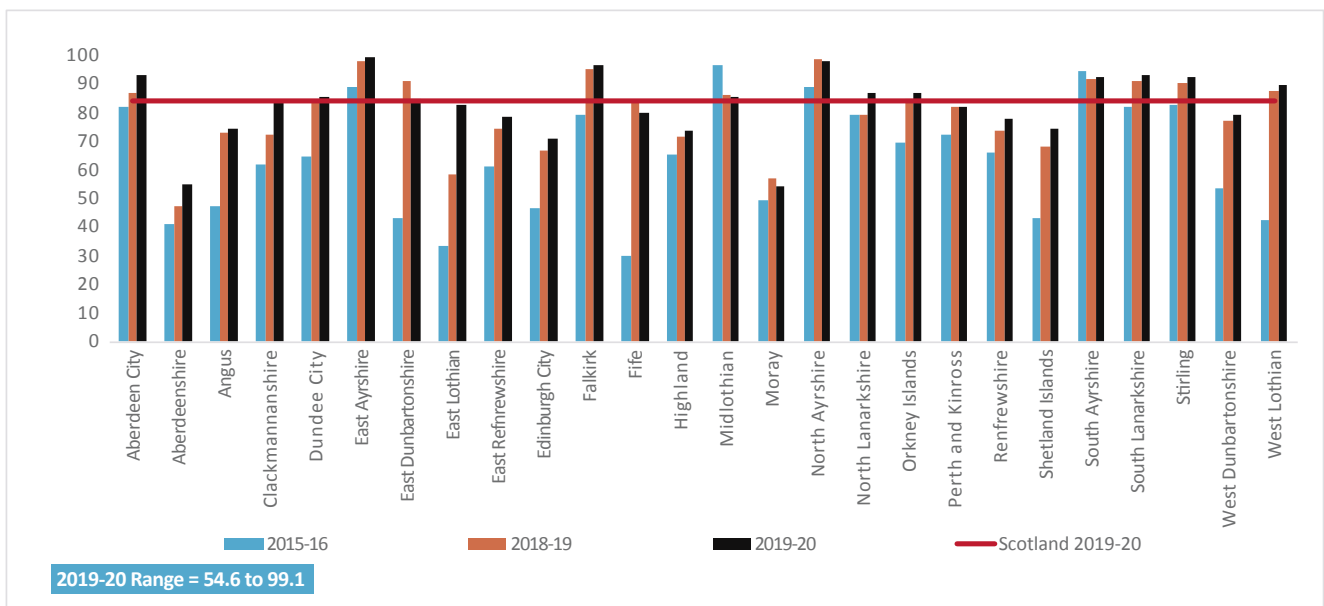


Fig 120: Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient

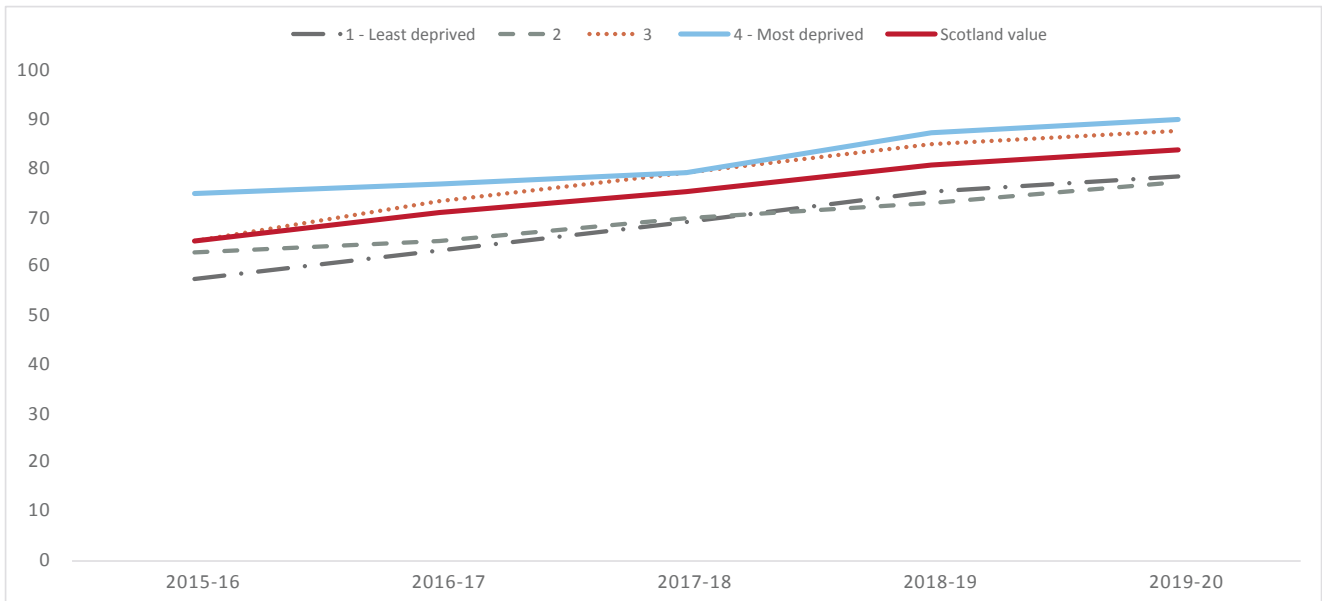


Source: Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

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



Fig 121: Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient by family group - deprivation



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

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Investing in economic development and employment opportunities results not just in a positive economic outcome but can typically also lead to improvements across a wider range of social outcomes and reductions in demand for public services. The majority of council Plans and Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) assign a high level of strategic priority to local economic growth, job creation and tackling unemployment.

As drivers of Community Planning and Regional Growth Partnerships, Councils recognise the importance of delivering better economic outcomes for their communities and understand the impact that local economic prosperity has on wider Local Government spend and income. This focus will become ever greater as Local Government responds to the challenges arising from the Covid pandemic.

Although there are local variations, Economic Development services across Scotland have been working at maximum capacity to deliver Covid grant schemes on behalf of the Scottish Government. Despite high demands and enquiry levels, Local Authorities have successfully awarded millions of pounds to businesses allowing them to stay afloat until such time they can again operate. These awards have been a real lifeline for thousands of businesses and the failure rate would be far higher if it were not for these awards.

At some point restrictions will ease and businesses will look to recover to previous levels of activity. The impact has varied between sectors and Local Authorities will focus recovery efforts on areas which are strategically important and require the most support. Town centres, tourism, and rising unemployment are particular areas of concern. No One Left Behind, the local employability model launched in April 2019, will be critical in shaping local governments response to increasing unemployment and poverty levels.

Investment in economic development and tourism

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

Table 42: Investment in economic development and tourism per 1,000 population - (£)

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
98,904	87,750	82,389	80,478	76,144	69,780	86,319	97,215	110,113	103,194	-6.3%	5.2%

There has been a 5.2% increase in economic development and tourism investment between 2010/11 and 2019/20 from £98,904 to £103,194 per 1,000. This reflects a real terms growth in expenditure of 10.1%, against a population growth of 4.6%. Across the period, investment per 1,000 reduced by 41% between 2010/11 and 2015/16, before increasing by 50% between 2016/17 and 2018/19. In the past 12 months, investment per 1,000 has reduced by 6.3%.

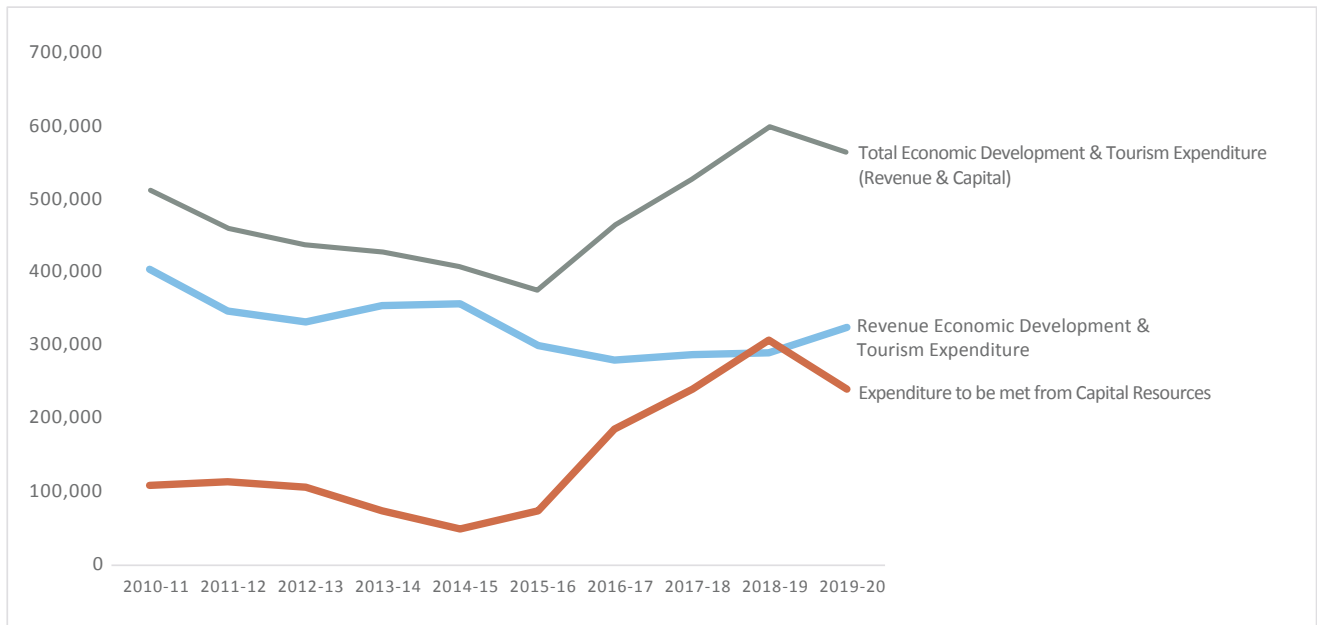
This measure combines the costs of Economic Development and Tourism, with Economic Development accounting for over 90% of expenditure. Closer analysis reveals very different trends within these service areas. Across the period, Economic Development expenditure has grown by 11.9% in real terms, while Tourism has reduced by 14.9%. In the past 12 months, Economic Development expenditure has fallen by 6.9%, while Tourism has grown by 18.1%.

There has been significant capital investment in Economic Development and Tourism across this period as part of the current regional growth development programmes, including the Cities deals. While total expenditure has grown by 10.1% since the base year, there has been a 19.7% reduction in revenue funding, and a 121% growth in capital (from £108 million to £239 million). In the past 12 months, there has been a 11.6%



growth in revenue expenditure and 22.3% reduction in capital. As can be seen in the graph below, this has seen capital expenditure grow from 21% of total economic development expenditure to 42% between 2010/11 and 2019/20.

Fig 122: Economic development and tourism expenditure - revenue and capital (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Future post-Brexit uncertainty may impact adversely on Economic development funding. Currently, every £1 of council funding invested in economic development, levers an additional £1.63.⁵⁰ EU funding makes up a significant element of this. The demise of EU funding for the UK and its replacement by a, yet to be fully defined, ‘Shared Prosperity Fund’⁵¹ could affect council investment returns in this area, including the outputs/ outcomes returned for our investment.

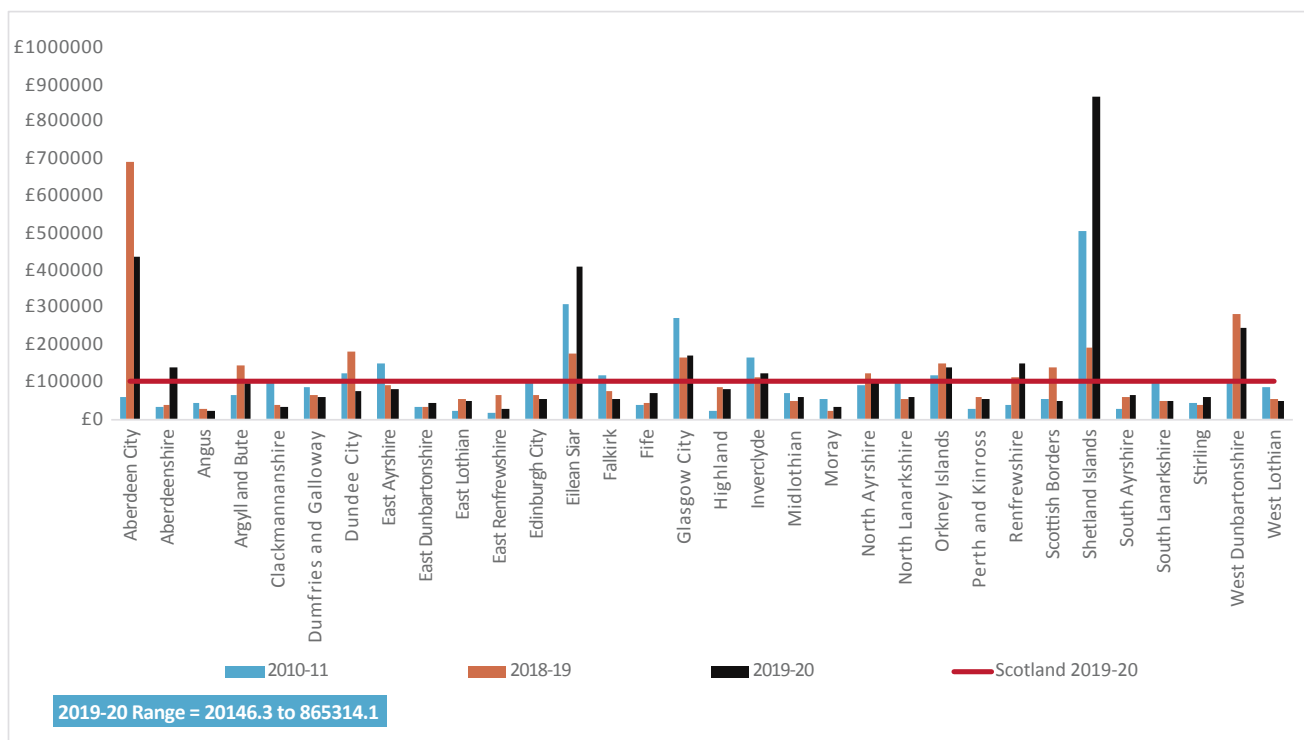
The graph below shows the significant variation between councils in economic development and tourism investment per 1,000. In 2019/20 investment ranged from £20,146 to £865,314 per 1,000. Variation has widened significantly in 2019/20. There is no significant relationship with rurality, deprivation or size of council.

50 <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/consultancy-and-support/economic-outcomes-programme/slaed-indicators-framework>

51 <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8527>



Fig 123: Investment in economic development and tourism per 1,000 population (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Employment

The second measure is the ‘percentage of total unemployed people in an area assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes’. All councils participate in employment-related support – either via direct provision and/or via funding delivery by third parties. Scottish and Local Government entered into a partnership agreement for employability in December 2018 with funding allocated to all 32 local authorities to deliver all-age employability support through No One Left behind from April 2019. Employability support is often delivered in partnership and this measure seeks to capture data on employability services where the council has either directly delivered and/or funded the intervention. The measure is an indication of the proportion of unemployed people in a council area that are participating in employability responses led or supported by the council, and in this sense, assesses the reach and penetration of the intervention. Currently this measure utilises part of the data submitted by councils as part of their annual Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development group (SLAED) return.

In 2019/20, the Scotland average for the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes was 12.7% of total unemployed. This reflects an increase from 9.1% in 2012/13, but a reduction from 14.3% in 2017/18. Rates have remained relatively stable in the most recent 12 months. While there has been a reduction in the total number of unemployed people assisted into work across the period (42% since 2012/13 and 22% in 2019/20), this has taken place against a faster drop in the unemployment count, which reduced by 58% since 2012/13, and 22% in 2019/20.

Table 43: Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded employability programmes

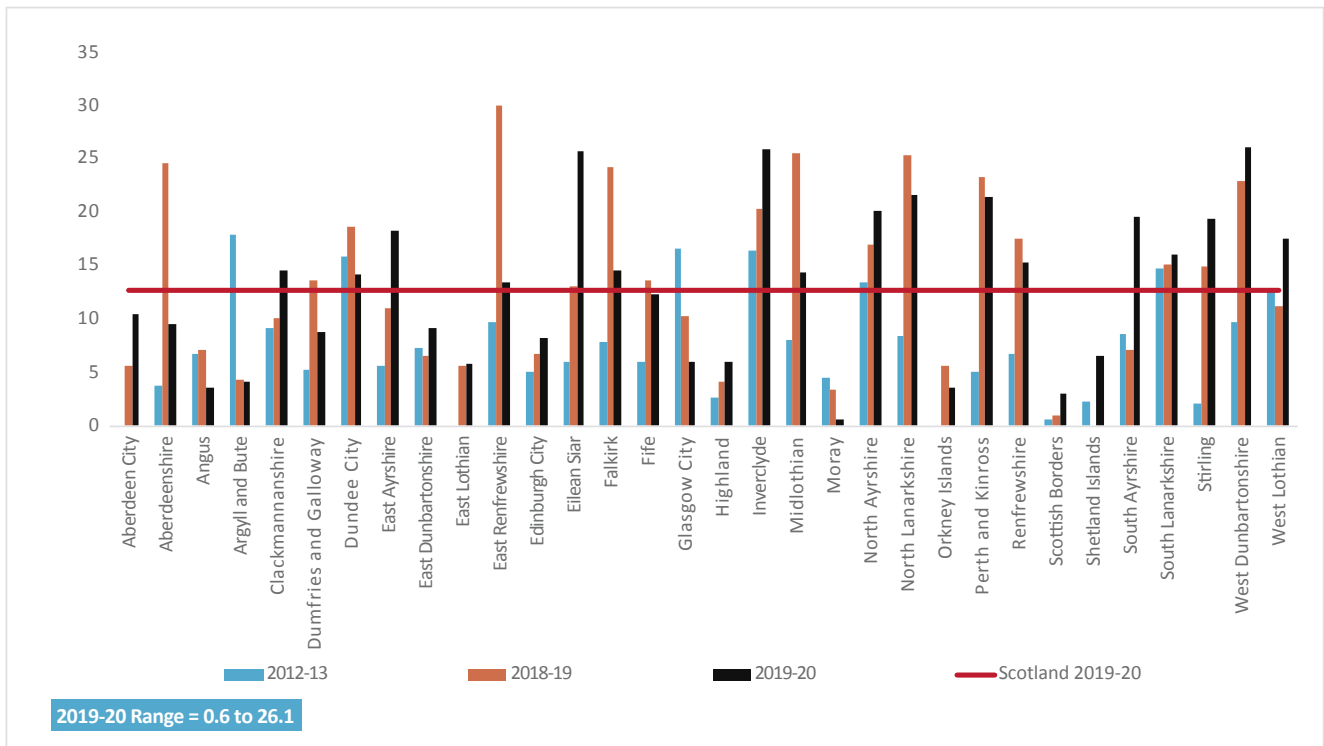
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2012-13 to 2019-20
9.1	12.5	14.1	14.1	14.0	14.3	12.6	12.7	0.1	3.5



The slowing improvement rate and recent decline in this measure may reflect a number of factors, including: the continuing focus on getting more long term workless people into work and the welfare changes that require these cohorts to undertake job search activities; and the impact of growing budgetary pressures on national funding for wage subsidy schemes. As unemployment has fallen to historically low levels, the focus for Council funded support has increasingly been directed towards long term workless people with multiple barriers. This client group require more intensive support and may take longer to re-enter the labour market.

There is considerable and widening variation across councils, from 0.6% to 26.1%. Rates are significantly higher for the most deprived councils compared to the least deprived (19.7% compared to 10.3%).

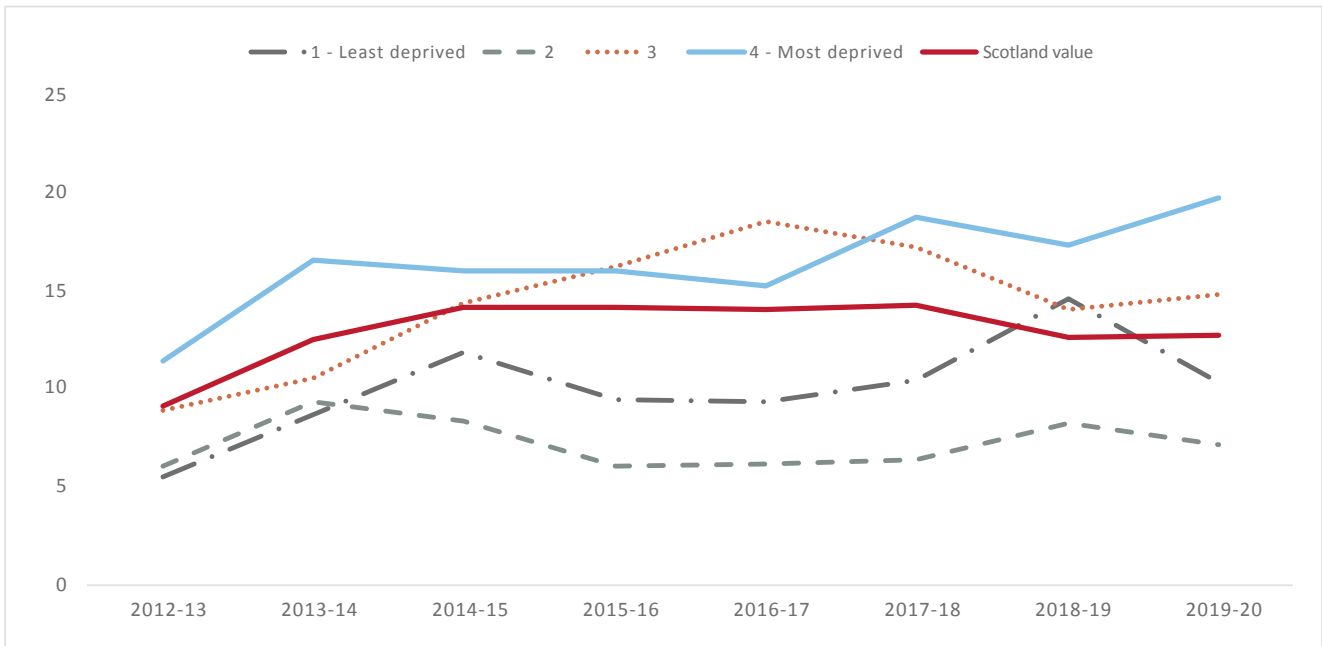
Fig 124: Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded employability programmes



Source: Model based estimates for unemployment, Office for National Statistics (ONS); SLAED Indicators Framework Note: Missing values reflect no SLAED return for that year



Fig 125: Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded employability programmes by family group - deprivation



Business support

To capture wider economic development and reflect the significant investment in business development and support (e.g. Business Gateway), the benchmarking framework includes the number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population. The start-up rate has slowed from 19.0 in 2013/14 to 16.4 in 2019/20. Rates have remained relatively stable since 2015/16, with a small reduction in the most recent 12 months, of 1.8%.

The balance between support for start-ups and support for existing businesses with growth potential shifted a number of years ago which partially accounts for the decrease against the base year. This reflects a longer-term strategic decision by some Business Gateway areas to focus a higher proportion of resources on supporting the growth and development of existing businesses as opposed to business start-ups. In areas where start-up numbers are good this may have greater job creating potential. Volume start numbers can also be affected by underlying economic conditions with higher demand for start-up support during periods of economic downturn when people have been made redundant and may look to self-employment as a route back into work.

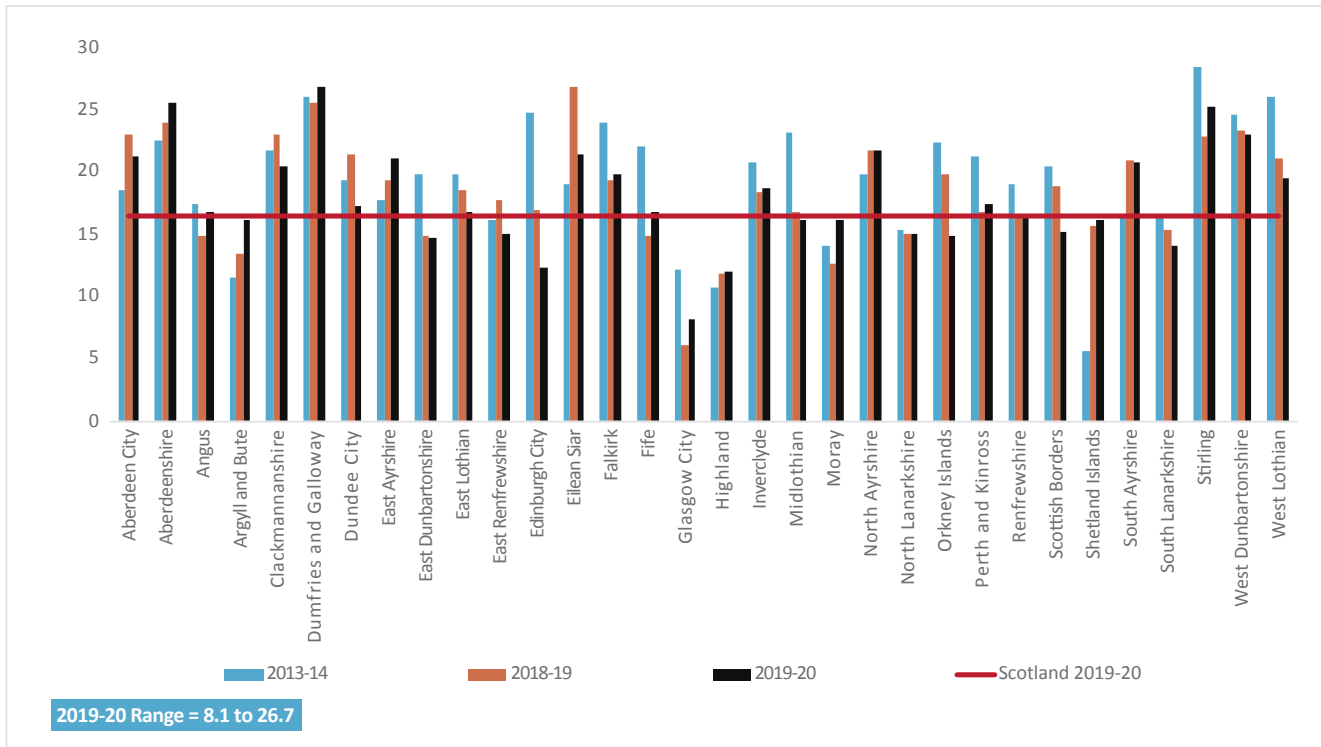
Table 44: Number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2013-14 to 2019-20
19.0	18.9	16.9	16.6	16.8	16.7	16.4	-1.8%	-13.8%

The graph below shows the significant variation which exists across councils, which has remained constant since 2013/14. In 2019/20, start-up rates ranged from 8.1 to 26.7 with no systematic relationship with rurality, deprivation or size of council.



Fig 126: Number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population



Source: SLAED Indicators Framework; Annual Population Survey, ONS

Procurement

Procurement spend in Local Government accounts for a significant proportion of total spend. The proportion of this spend which is targeted at local enterprises is an important indicator of the progress councils are making in delivering on their standing commitment to invest in their local economies and create employment.

Table 45: Proportion of procurement spent on local enterprises

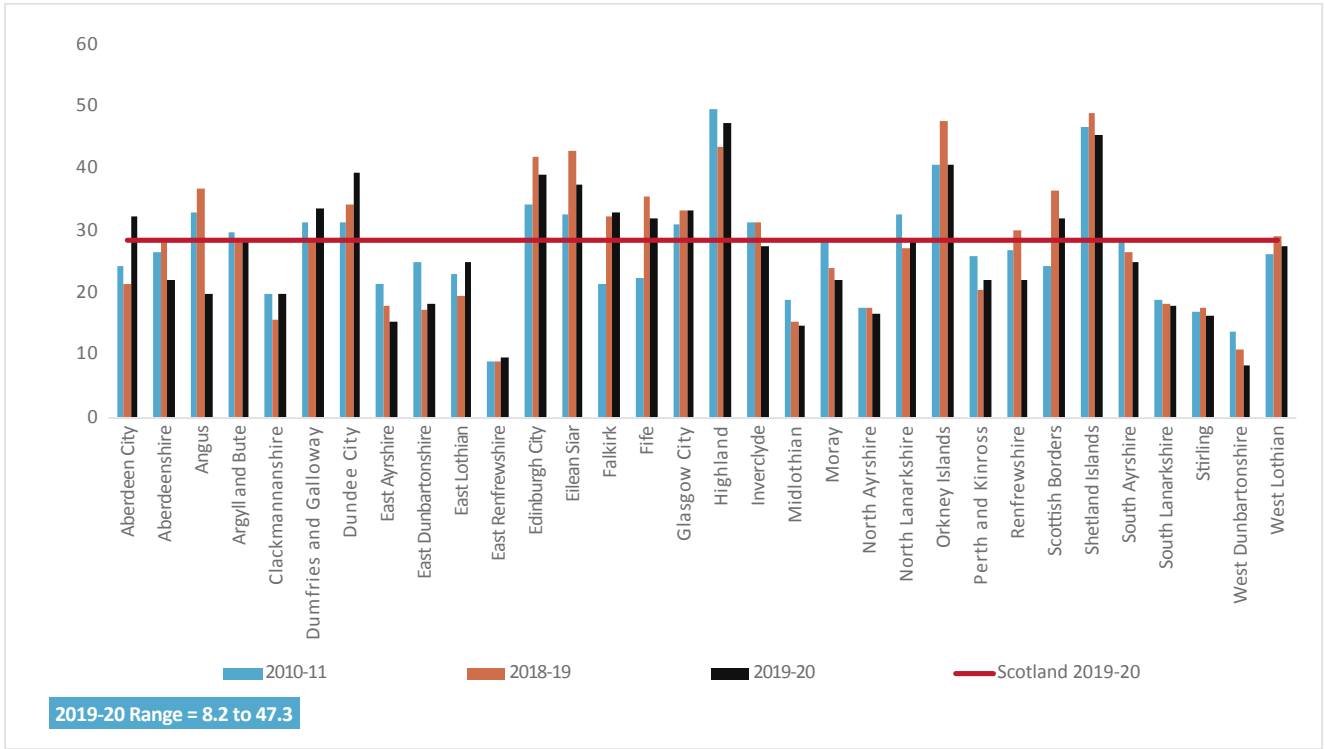
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
27.2	26.2	27.2	26.9	27.5	25.4	26.5	27.4	28.7	28.5	-0.2	1.3

In 2019/20, the percentage of procurement spend on local enterprises was 28.5%. This is an increase from 27.2% in 2010/11, and consistent with the peak achieved in 2018/19. Given the pressures on council budgets this is a positive outcome as it suggests that the drive to reduce costs has not resulted in local enterprises being displaced by national suppliers of goods and services. This may reflect continuing investment in Council local supplier development activity and the Council funded national Supplier Development Programme. However, while the value of money spent locally has held up well, there has been an overall drop in the number of local suppliers. There has been a commitment in recent months for Local Government economic development and procurement professionals to work on joint initiatives to enhance the impact of Local Government procurement spend.

There is significant variation across councils in relation to procurement spend, ranging from 8.2% to 47.2%. The Islands and rural authorities report higher procurement spend on local enterprises than other authorities, with Island authorities all spending more than 35% locally.

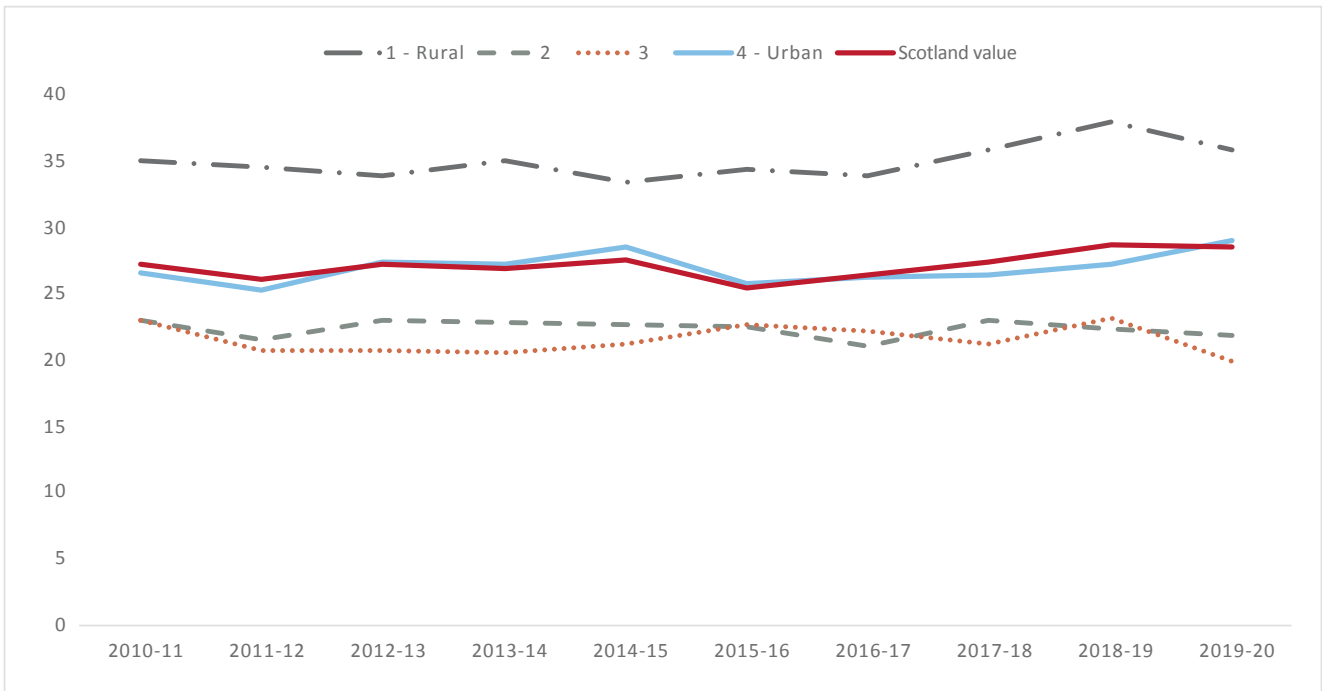


Fig 127: Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises



Source: Scottish Government Procurement Hub

Fig 128: Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises by family group - rurality





Planning

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

Two indicators are included here. A measure of spend on planning and business standards which is standardised per planning application and the average time taken to process local business and industry planning applications.

Cost of planning and building standards per application

The Cost of Planning and Building Standards Services is standardised per planning application. This measure includes costs of both planning and building standards services but does not include the environmental services element.

The cost of planning and building standards per application has increased from £4,195 in 2010/11 to £4,385 in 2019/20, a real terms growth of 4.5%. Although there have been fluctuations across the period, the trend represents a 26.3% reduction in gross expenditure (range: -73% to +119%) and a 29.5% reduction in planning applications since 2010/11.

Table 46: Cost of planning and building standards per planning application - (£)

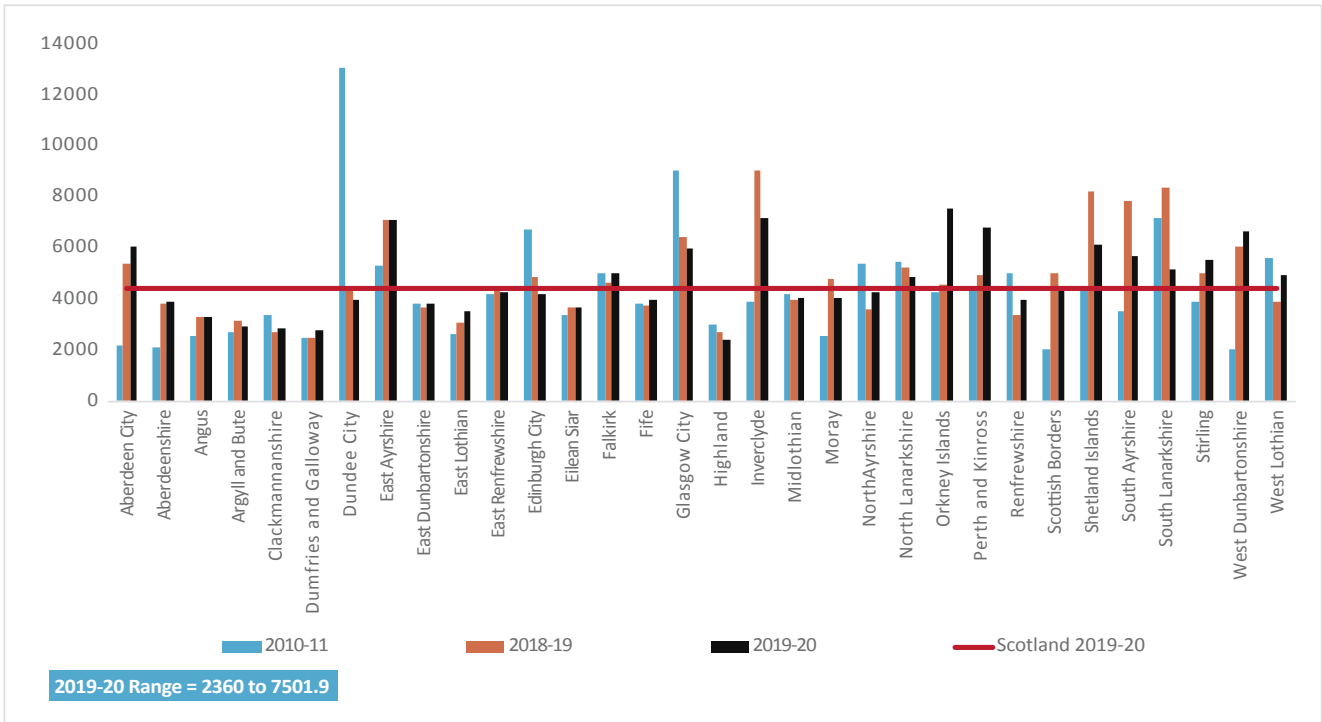
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	% Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
4,195	4,310	5,652	3,810	3,730	4,382	4,085	4,239	4,551	4,385	-3.6%	4.5%

In the past 12 months, costs have reduced by 3.6%, reflecting a 6.0% reduction in gross expenditure and a 2.5% reduction in planning applications.

There is substantial and fluctuating variation in planning costs across Scotland, ranging from £2,360 to £7,502 in 2019/20. While urban authorities previously spent more on average than rural and semi-urban authorities, this difference is no longer statistically significant.

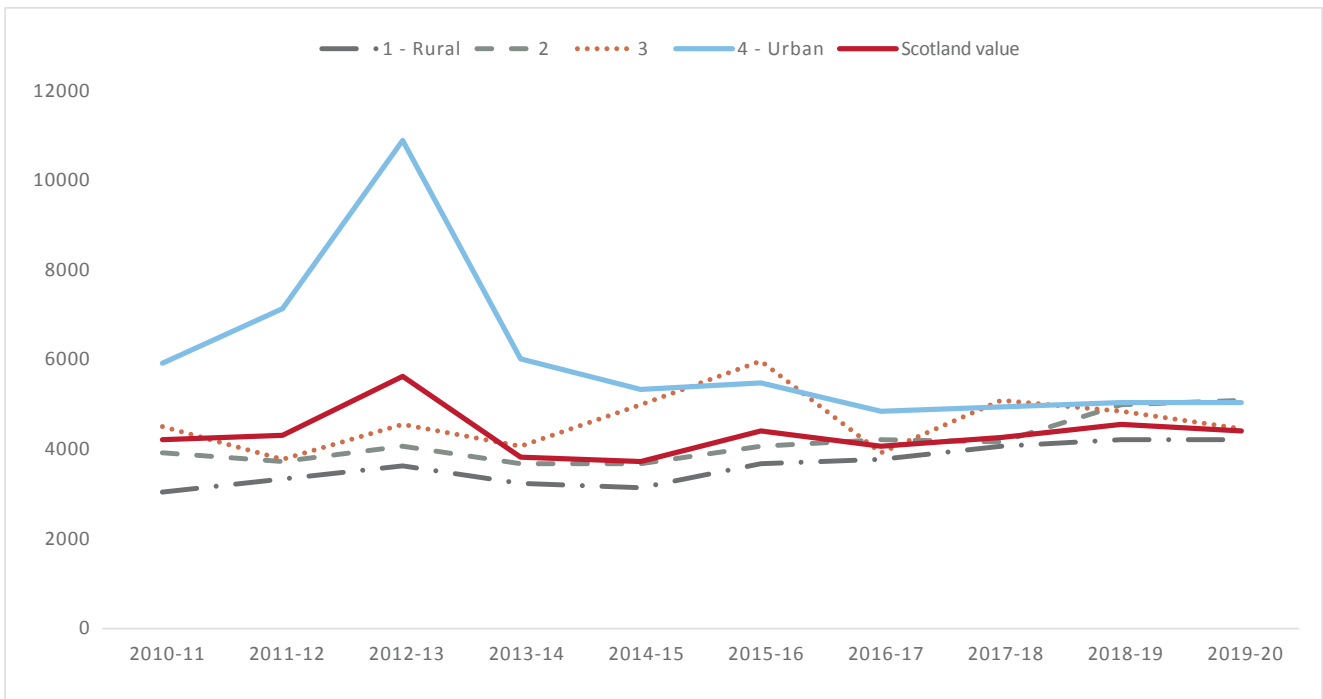


Fig 129: Cost of planning and building standards per planning application (£)



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

Fig 130: Cost of planning and building standards per planning application (£) by family group - rurality



Average time per business and industry planning application

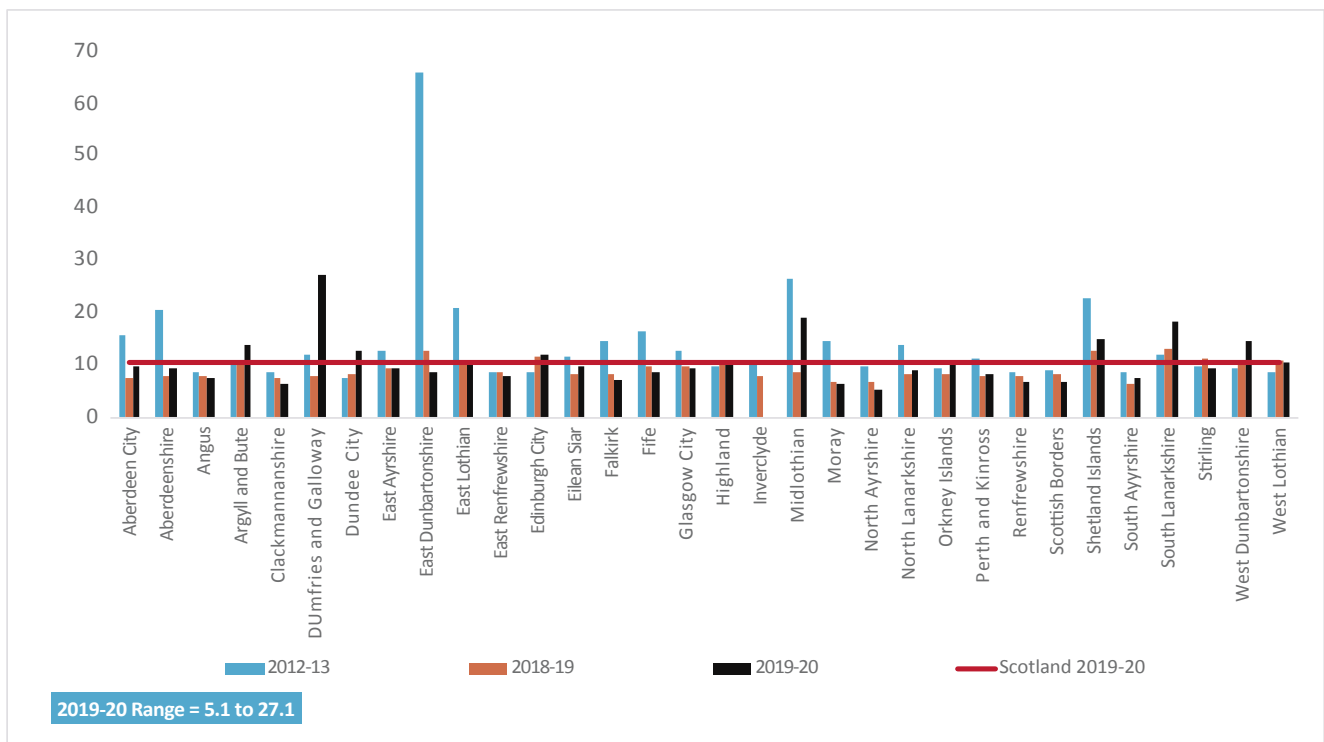
This measure is standardised as the average time in weeks taken to process local business and industry planning applications. Major applications are not included within this calculation. There has been a 18%



improvement in terms of efficiency in processing business and industry planning applications, reducing from 13 weeks to 10.5 weeks between 2012/13 and 2019/20. However, in the past 12 months this has shown a 16% increase, from 9.1 weeks to 10.5 weeks. Since 2012/13, there has been a 45% reduction in the number of business and industry planning applications (reducing from 2,531 down to 1,394).

There is significant variation between authorities which widened in 2019/20, following years of narrowing. In 2019/20, the time taken ranged from 5.1 weeks to 27.1 weeks, with no statistically significant relationships with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Fig 131: Average time per business and industry planning application (no. of weeks)



Source: Planning Authority Performance Statistics, Scottish Government

Early evidence indicates that the Covid pandemic has resulted in an increase in householder planning applications and a reduction in business and industry planning applications, at least in the short term. Should the proposed fee increase set out in the Planning Act go through, this may cause a possible surge in planning applications across the coming period.

Available employment land

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

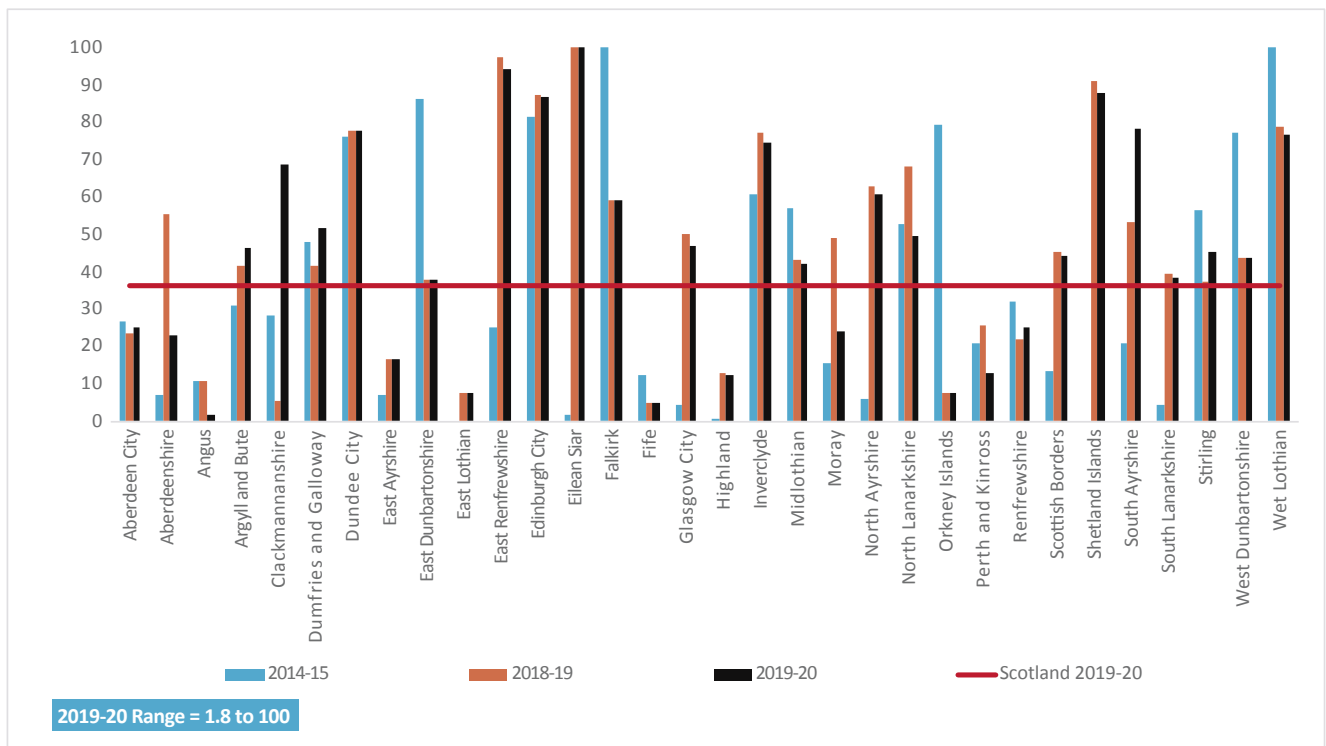


Table 47: Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2014-15 to 2019-20
12.9	27.2	38.4	40.8	37.6	36.2	-1.3	23.3

Since 2014/15, there has been significant growth in the Scotland average for availability of employment land, from 12.9% to 36.2% in 2019/20. However, there has been a 4.6 percentage point reduction between 2017/18 and 2019/20. There is very significant variation across councils, ranging from 1.8% to 100% in 2019/20. As a newly introduced measure, further work will be undertaken with local authorities to ensure consistency of reporting in relation to this indicator.

Fig 132: Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan



Source: SLAED Indicators Framework. Modelled estimates have been used for the following councils for 2019/20 due to missing data values: East Renfrewshire; Inverclyde; North Ayrshire; Highland; Shetland Islands

Town vacancy rates

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



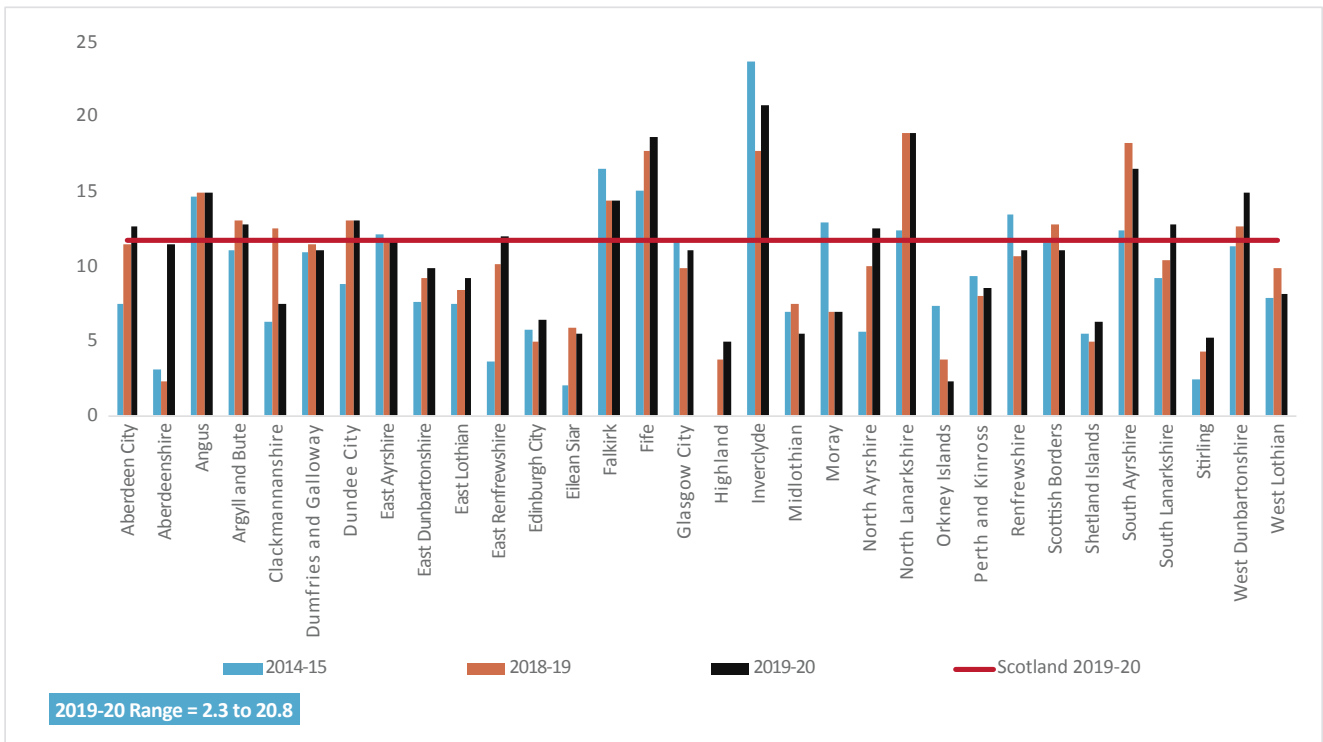
Table 48: Town vacancy rates

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2014-15 to 2019-20
10.1	11.9	10.2	11.5	10.0	11.7	1.7	1.6

The Scotland figure for town vacancy rates has remained relatively constant since 2014/15. In 2019/20, an average of 11.7% of town centre properties were vacant across Scotland, a slight decline from 10% in 2018/19. The relative stability in this measure is a positive finding given the continuing pressure on retailing sector from online trading and out of town shopping.

The graph below shows the significant variation across councils, with vacancy rates ranging from 2.3% to 20.7% in 2019/20. Vacancy rates are significantly higher in more deprived council areas (13.5% compared to 8.6%)

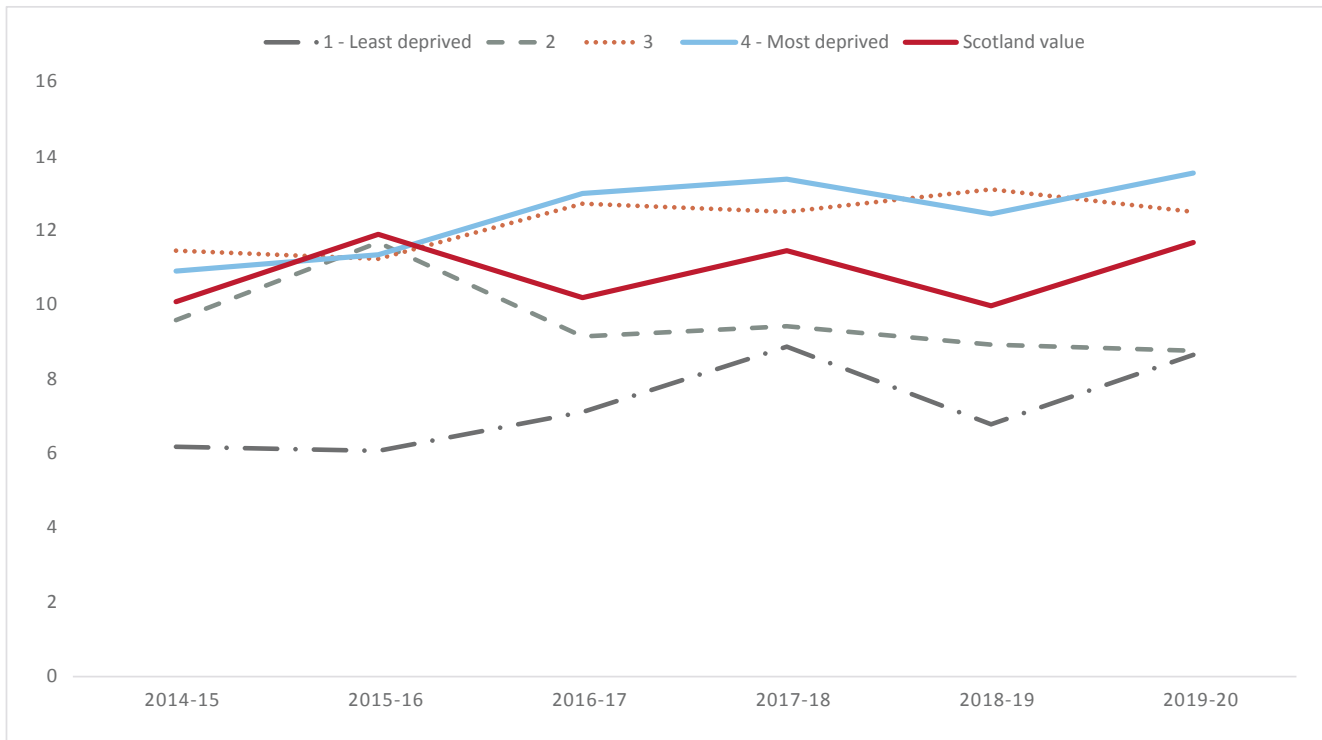
Fig 133: Town vacancy rates (%)



Source: SLAED Indicators Framework . Modelled estimates have been used for the following councils for 2019/20 due to missing data values: Inverclyde; East Renfrewshire; West Dunbartonshire



Fig 134: Town vacancy rates (%) by family group - deprivation



Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband

Access to good digital infrastructure is a key driver of economic competitiveness and productivity and this measure captures the proportion of all properties within the local authority area receiving superfast broadband. Local authorities have a role alongside telecoms companies in facilitating and enabling the development of effective digital infrastructure and this indicator measures the impact of this work. The data from this measure is taken from the Ofcom Connected Nations Report and is available from 2013/14 onwards.

Table 49: Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2013-14 to 2019-20
56.1	67.5	78.6	85.9	91.1	92.0	93.3	1.3	37.2

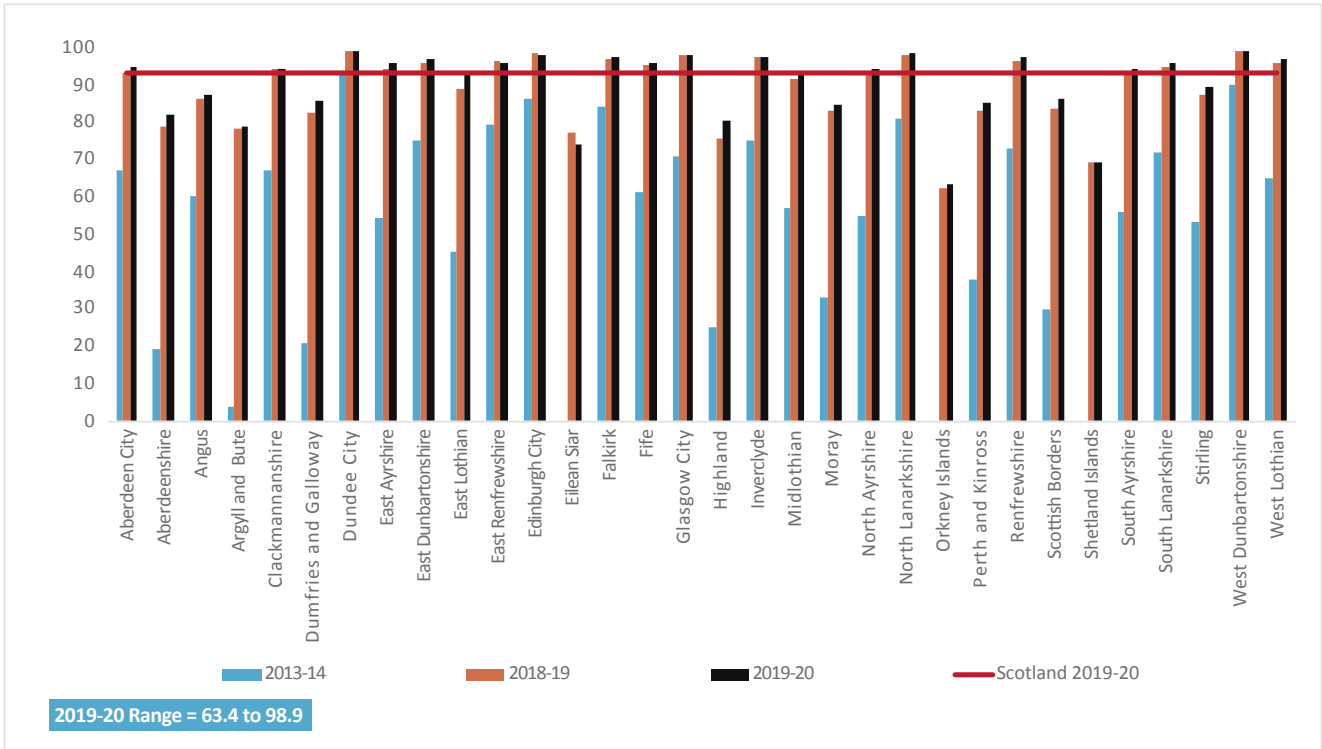
Access to superfast broadband has grown significantly across Scotland, with the Scotland figure increasing from 56.1% to 93.3% between 2013/14 and 2019/20.

The rate of improvement (1.3pp) has slowed in comparison with previous years as the indicator reaches a ceiling. Digital connectivity is an increasingly important consideration in terms of economic competitiveness and the trend observed in terms of access to superfast broadband, underpinned by programmes like R100, is encouraging. There is no scope for complacency however due to low levels of fibre to the premise across Scotland which will necessitate considerable investment over the next few years to ensure Scotland remains competitive.

The variation between councils has narrowed significantly across the period, although is still substantial with figures ranging from 63.4% to 98.9% in 2019/20. Rural authorities have significantly lower rates of access than urban authorities, 77% compared to 98% respectively.

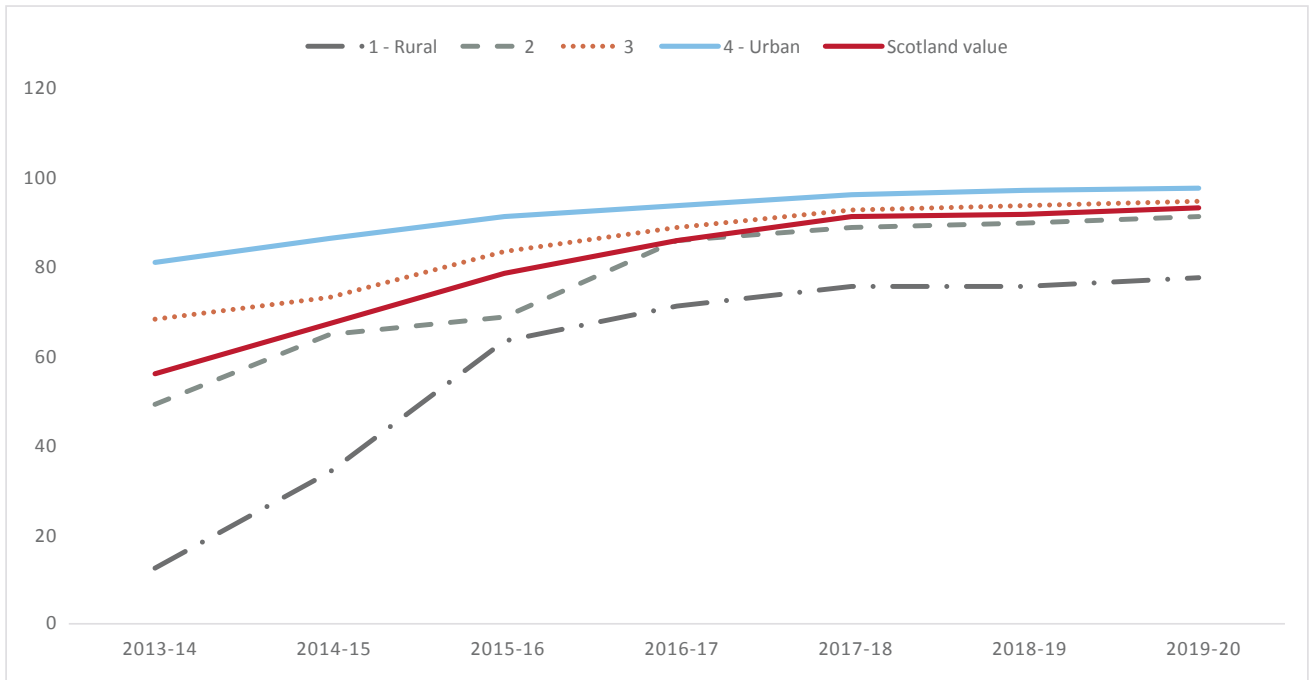


Fig 134: Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (%)



Source: Ofcom Connected Nations Report

Fig 135: Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (%) by family group - rurality





Proportion of people earning less than the living wage

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

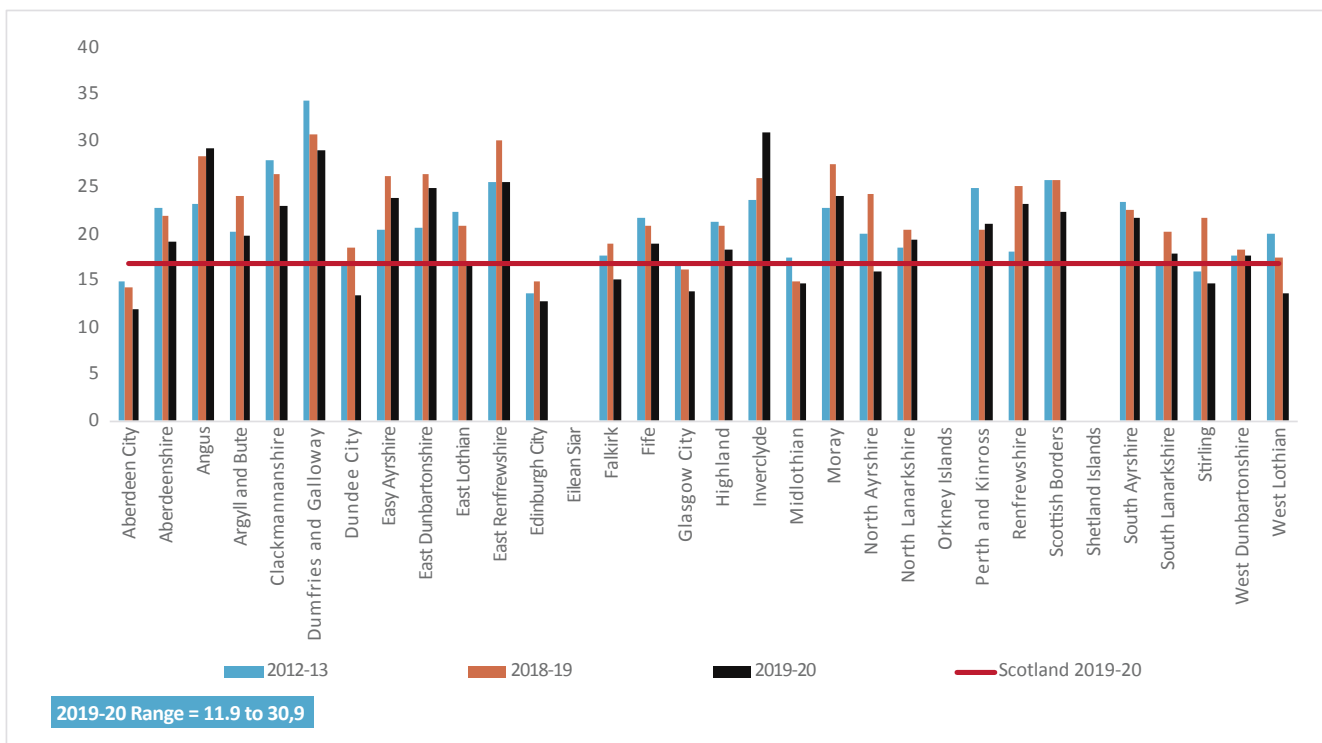
Table 50: Proportion of people earning less than the living wage

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2012-13 to 2019-20
18.8	18.6	19.3	19.6	20.1	18.4	19.4	16.9	-2.5	-1.9

The proportion of people earning less than the living wage has reduced from 18.8% to 16.9% since 2012/13, with significant improvement occurring in 2019/20. This improving picture is not universal however, with performance declining in a quarter of authorities during this period.

The graph below shows the significant variation across councils in 2019/20, ranging from 11.9% to 30.9%. This level of variation has remained constant since 2010/11, however has widened in 2019/20. Urban authorities tend to have a lower proportion of people earning less than the living wage compared to rural authorities (16.1% compared to 22.2%). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with rurality due to variation within the family group.

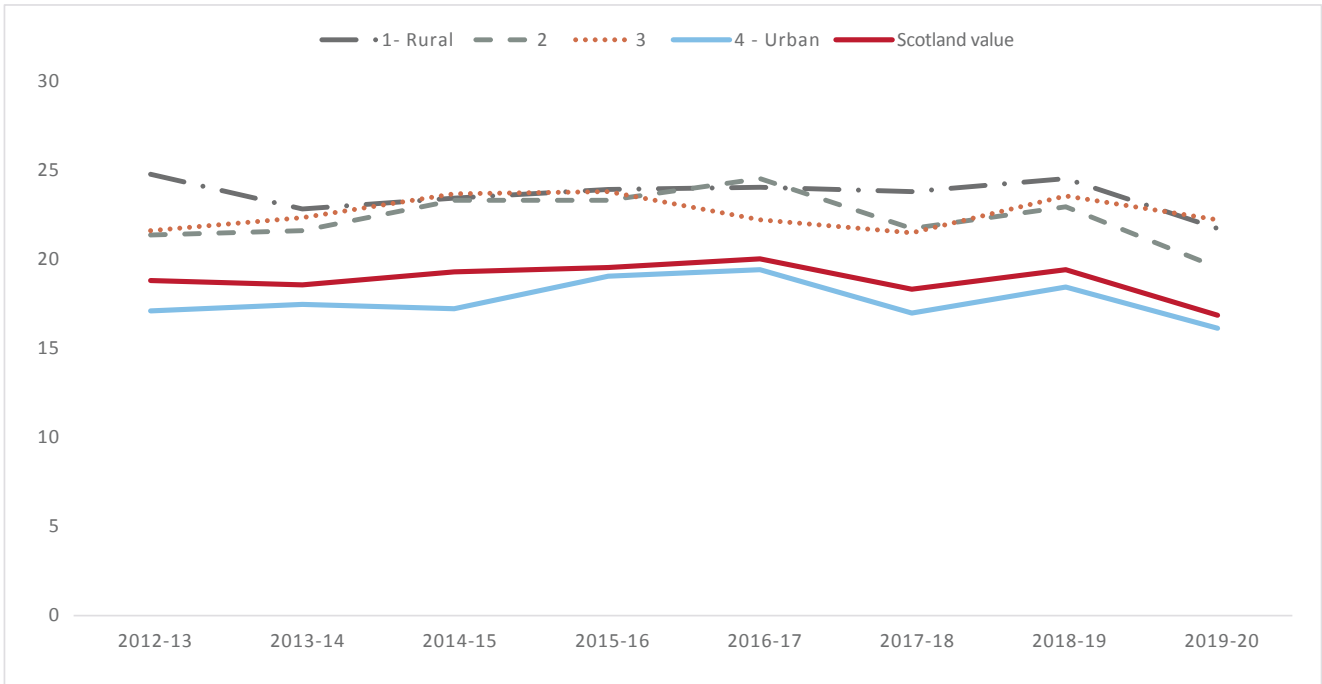
Fig 136: Proportion of people earning less than the living wage



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2018, ONS. Modelled estimates have been used for the following councils for 2019/20 due to missing data values: Clackmannanshire



Fig 137: Proportion of people earning less than the living wage by family group - rurality





Financial Sustainability

As demand for services is increasing and cost pressures are rising, local authorities are facing higher levels of scrutiny over their decision-making and financial management strategies. Robust scrutiny is a core step towards financial decisions that best serve our organisations and our communities. Central to balancing the budget gap has to be a clear understanding of possible areas of financial risk, and how these can be responded to.

Creating a common set of financial sustainability measures which are comparable across all Scottish local authorities, will support robust discussions around financial decision making and on the robustness of budgets.

This year, the LGBF has introduced new measures to reflect this focus.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has had a significant impact on Councils finances within the current year and beyond. The impact and the ability to deal with the pressures varies across Councils and the measures that have been developed provide an indication of the financial resilience of each Council. Loss of income is a significant challenge at the moment and the reliance on this funding source is dependant on the level of budgeted income within each Council. The ability to deal with the impact is also dependant on decisions that Councils have taken in the past in relation to level of reserves and the changes to service delivery linked to budget savings. Therefore it is a complex area and there are different factors to be considered when considering the financial resilience of Councils. The inclusion of these new measures therefore provides an opportunity to compare the financial sustainability of Councils, however caution needs to be exercised in the initial conclusions that are drawn from doing so.

Reserves

This will provide an indication of how councils are placed to meet unforeseen events. A low level of unallocated reserves may be a sign that a council could struggle if any unknown financial events were to occur.

The two measures are:

- Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue
- Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue

Table 51: Usable Reserves & Uncommitted General Fund Balance

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue	15.8	16.6	17.9	17.2	16.9	16.5	16.9	0.4	1.1
Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue	3.9	4.2	4.3	4.1	3.9	3.7	3.8	0.1	-0.2

Note: Scotland value for Total useable reserves is adjusted to exclude Orkney and Shetland values due to harbour reserves.

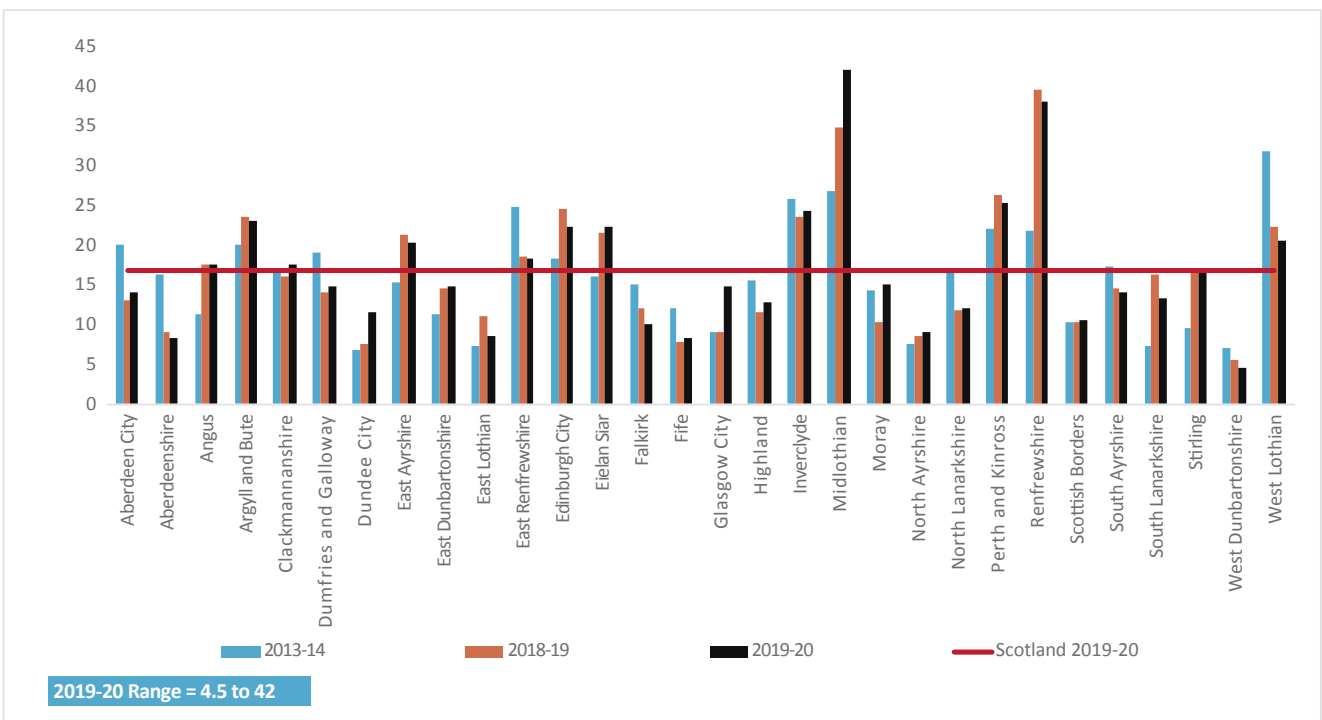
From 2013/14, the proportion of income councils held in reserves has increased from 15.8% to 16.9%, showing that councils have added to their usable reserves across the period. The increasing trend however is not universal. The range in movement across councils is -11 percentage points to +16 percentage points

(excluding Shetland and Orkney as significant outliers), with 12 councils reporting a decreasing trend counter to the national trend.

There is a significant variation across authorities in the current proportion of income held in reserves, ranging from 4% - 42% (excluding Shetland and Orkney as significant outliers). There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

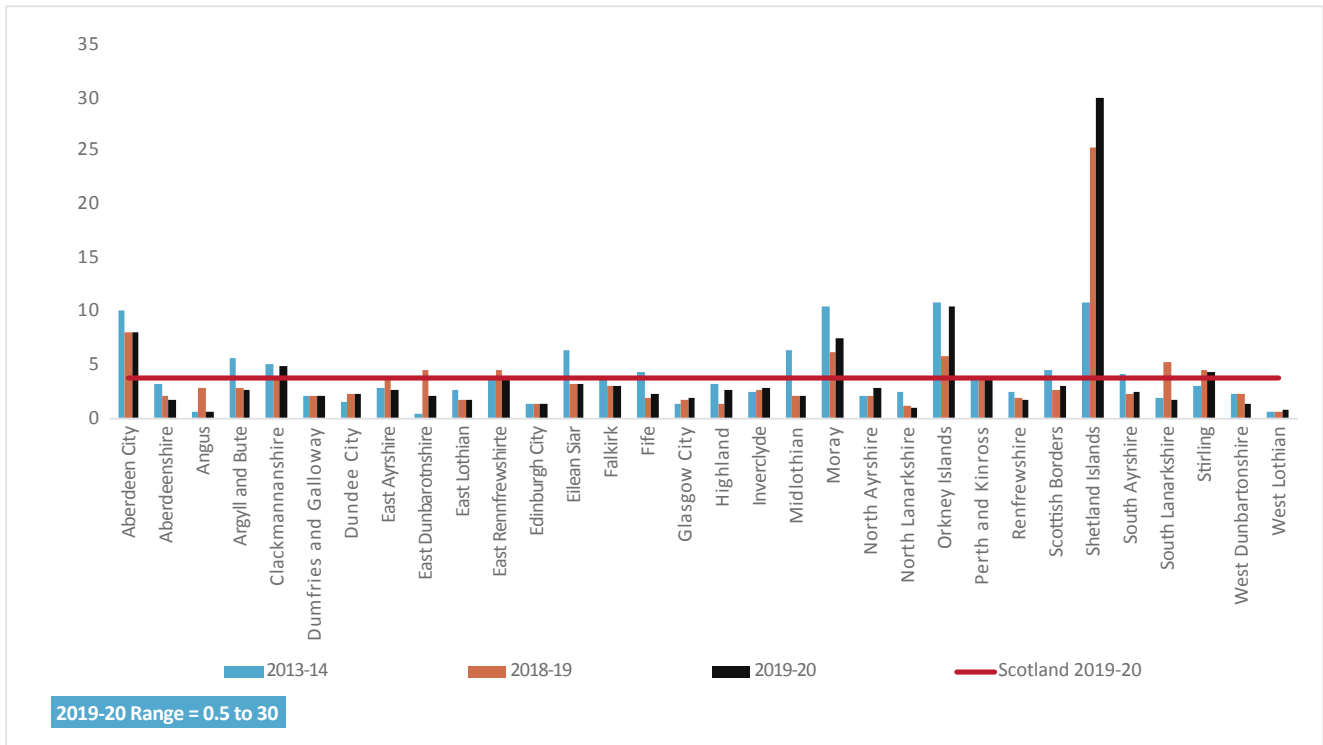
Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue has remained stable at around 4%. The rate in 2019/20 is 3.8%, within the approved rate for such balances of 2% to 4% as recommended by Audit Scotland. There is variation between councils, with values ranging from 0.5% to 30% (0.5% to 10% excluding Shetland as an outlier). There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Fig 138: Total Usable Reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures. Orkney and Shetland values are significant outliers due to harbour reserves and are excluded.

Fig 139: Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Cost of Borrowing

The LGBF has introduced two new indicators of affordability which highlight the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income. These new indicators are two of the Prudential indicators currently published by Councils during their budget setting process.

The two new measures are:

- Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - General Fund
- Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - Housing Revenue Account

Table 52: Financing Costs

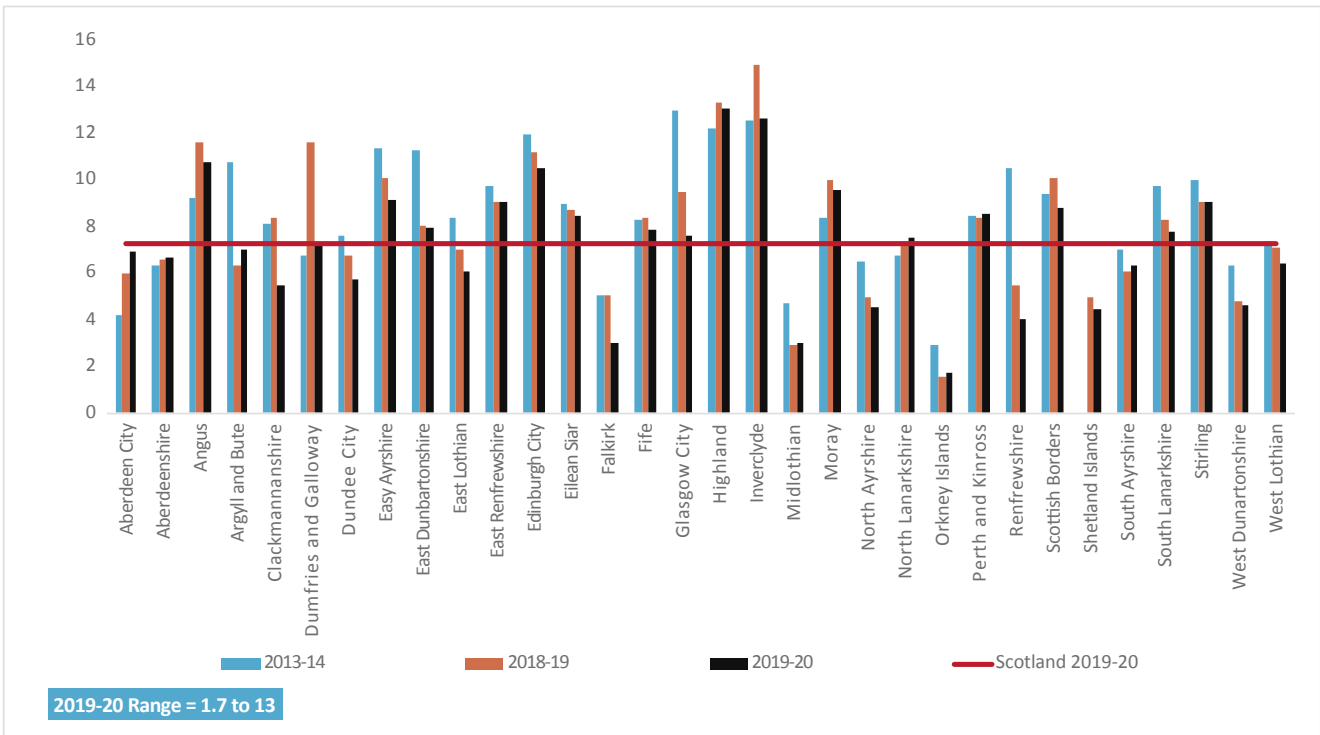
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - General Fund	8.5	8.4	7.8	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.2	-0.7	-1.3
Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - Housing Revenue Account	25.9	24.1	24.7	24.4	23.6	22.8	22.6	-0.3	-3.3

The proportion of council revenue income being used to service debt has fallen from 8.5% to 7.2% since 2013/14 (and from 25.9% to 22.6% for HRA). Factors driving this are likely to be implementation of the 2016 Loans Fund regulations which allowed the re-profiling of principal repayments over a longer period of time thus reducing the annual loan charges. Effective borrowing, reduced interest rates and possible reduced capital investment may also be factors.

While the average cost of borrowing has fallen across the period, this trend is not universal. The range in movement across authorities is -6.5 percentage points to +3.1 percentage points, with 10 authorities reporting increasing costs during this period counter to the national trend. There is greater variation in relation to HRA borrowing costs. The range in movement across authorities is -45pp to +10pp, with half of authorities reporting an increase in HRA borrowing costs during the period counter to the national trend.

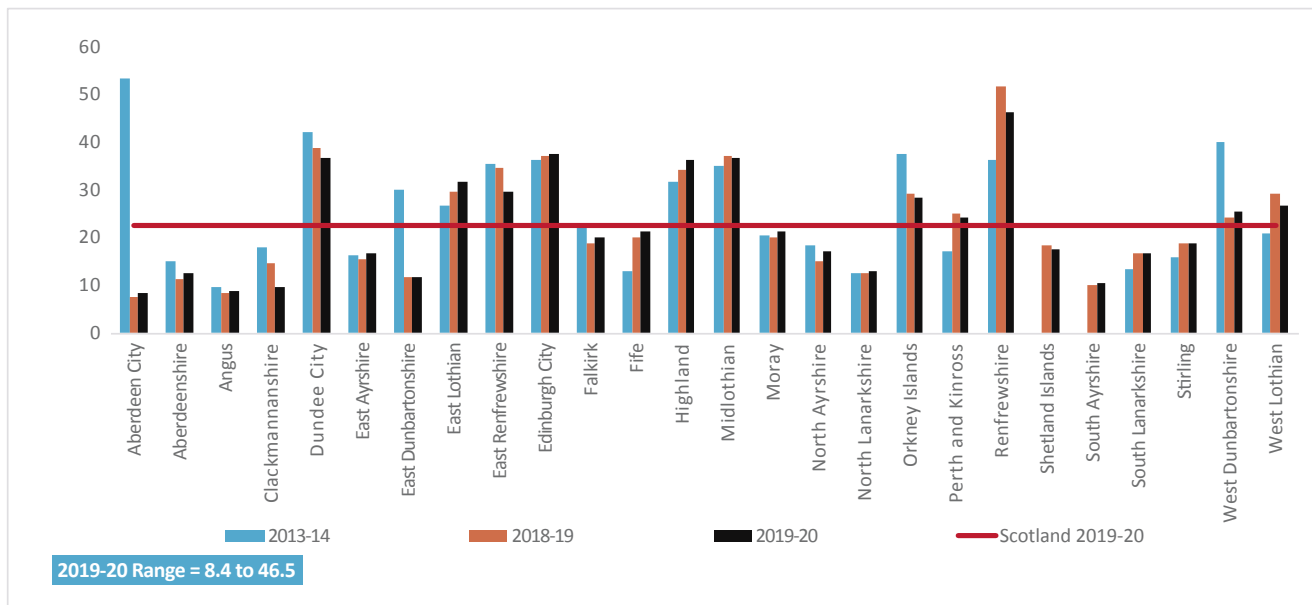
In 2019/20, the range in financing costs for Councils ranges from 2% to 13% (and 8% to 46% for HRA). There are no systematic relationships with deprivation, rurality or size of authority.

Fig 140: Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream – General Fund



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Fig 141: Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream – Housing Revenue Account



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Budget Performance

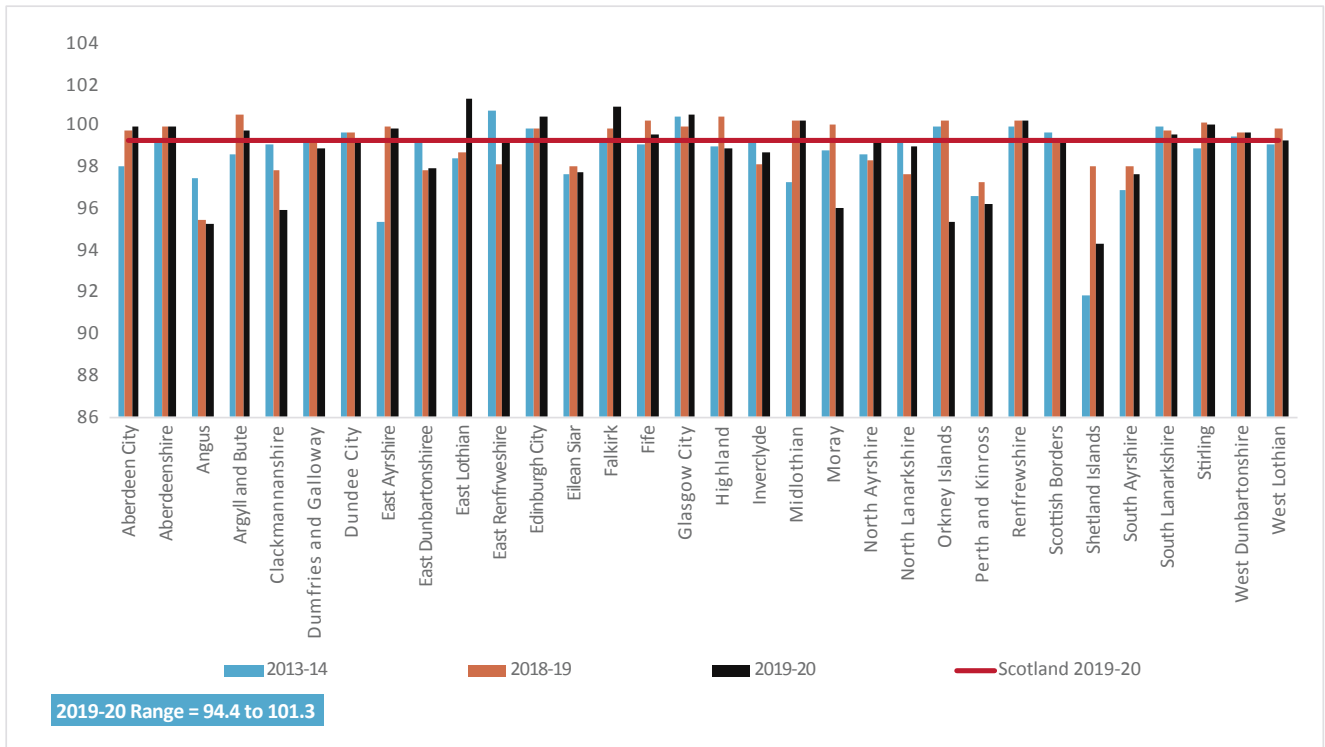
The need for budgets and forecasts to reflect actual spending becomes increasingly important for councils with decreasing or low levels of usable reserves to draw on. Councils cannot continue to rely on underspends in certain services offsetting overspending elsewhere. Where services have been found to consistently overspend, budgets should be revised to reflect true spending levels and patterns. This requires good financial management to ensure spending is accurately forecast and monitored within the year.

Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure has remained between 99% and 100% since 2013/14, showing a steady increase from 99.1% to 99.4%. The range in movement across councils is -5pp to +5pp, with 13 authorities reporting a reduction in their ratio over the period counter to the national trend. In 2019/20, the range across councils is 94% to 101%, with the smallest councils in terms of population reporting significantly lower outturn ratios.

Table 53: Actual Outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure	99.1	99.0	99.0	99.3	99.3	99.4	99.4	0.0	0.3

Fig 142: Actual Outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures



Tackling Climate Change





In October 2019, the [Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\) \(Scotland\) Bill 2019](#) received Royal Assent, amending the [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) and setting out targets to reduce Scotland’s emissions of all greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045 at the latest, with interim targets for reductions of at least 56% by 2020, 75% by 2030, and 90% by 2040.

The Public Bodies Duties in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 make it a legislative requirement for public bodies to act on climate change, both mitigation and adaptation, and to do so within the frame of sustainability. The current Covid context has further sharpened our focus on Climate Change, with green recovery and sustainability at the heart of recovery and renewal priorities

Given the significance of this major policy agenda for local government, it is important that the LGBF includes measures which support Local Government in its efforts to contribute to national carbon reduction targets. This year, the framework introduces two new measures to reflect this focus drawn from UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics. Data for 2019/20 is not yet available, so the analysis below is based on data from 2010/11 to 2018/19.

The two new measures included in the LGBF are:

1. CO2 emissions area wide
2. CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of LA – subset

Within scope emissions form a subset of the area wide measure, excluding certain emissions which it has been considered local authorities are unable to directly influence. Removing these emissions has a significant impact on some Local Authorities. The following emissions included in the full dataset are excluded from ‘within scope’:

- emissions from sites within the EU ETS (except power stations, whose emissions are indirectly included via the end-user estimates which cover electricity use),
- emissions from motorway traffic
- emissions from diesel railways, and
- emissions from the Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) sector.

Table 54: Carbon Emissions

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
CO ₂ emissions area wide per tonne, per capita	7.54	6.81	7.1	6.8	6.1	5.8	5.5	5.4	5.3	dna	-1.9%	-30.3%
CO ₂ emissions are wide: emissions within scope of LA per tonne, per capita	7.19	6.46	6.7	6.4	5.7	5.5	5.2	5.0	4.9	dna	-2.0%	-31.6%

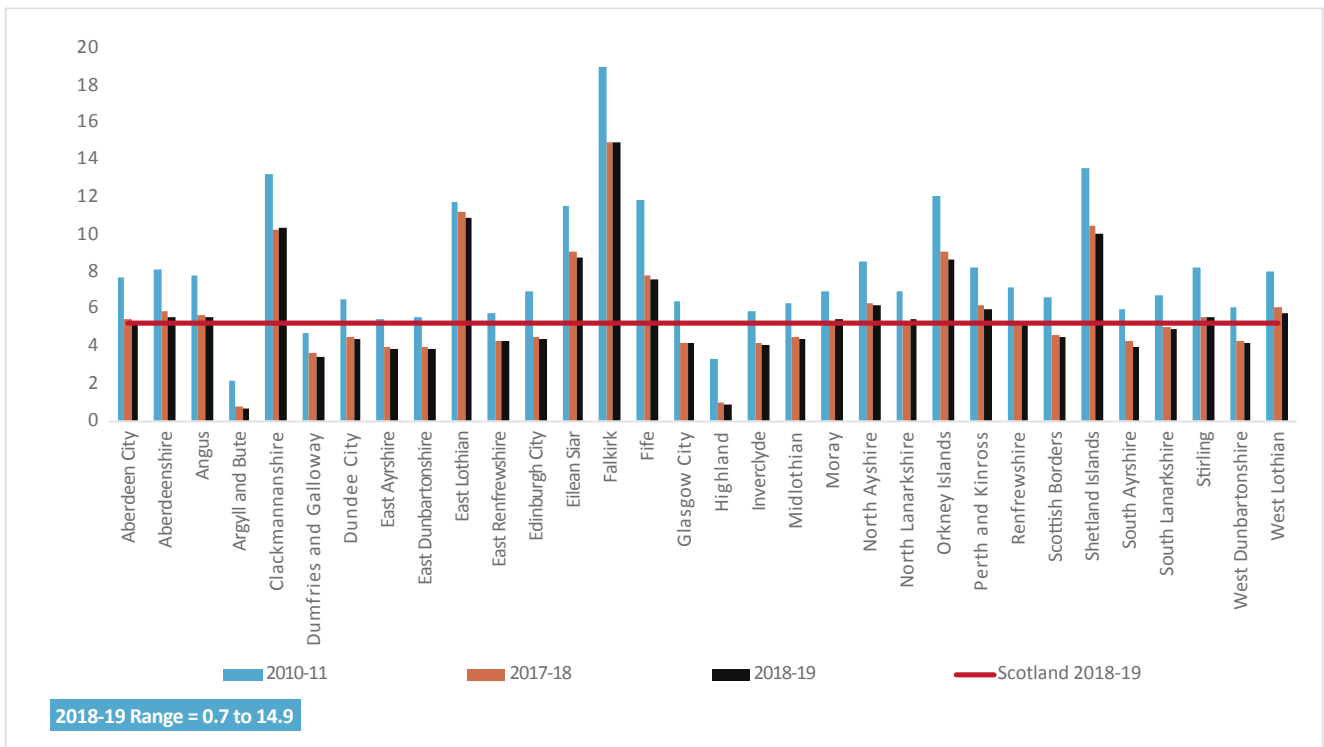


The area wide and within scope CO2 emissions measures follow a similar trend between 2010/11 and 2018/19, revealing a reduction in emissions of around 30%. Reductions have been reported in all 32 council areas, ranging from -75% to -7% (and from -42% to -19% for **within scope emissions**).

In 2018/19, the variation between authorities is significantly wider for **area wide emissions** (0.7 to 14.9) than for **within scope emissions** (3.5 to 7.9). While there is no systematic relationship with rurality or deprivation for **area wide emissions**, factors which may contribute to variation between councils include the level of heavy industry, land use, transport, and population density.

Variation in **within scope emissions** does reveal a clear relationship with geography as can be seen in the graph below, with rural authorities reporting significantly higher CO2 emissions (6.5 compared to 4.2).

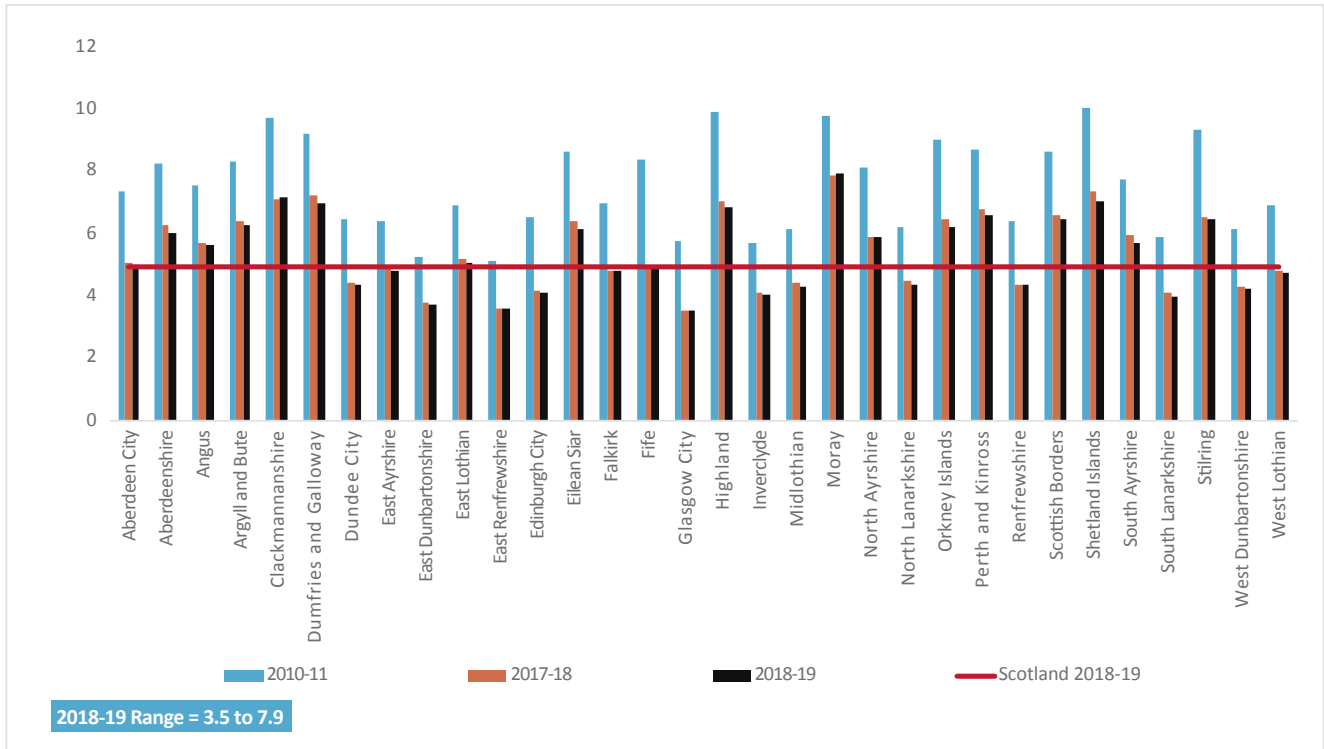
Figure 143: CO2 emissions area wide per capita



Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics

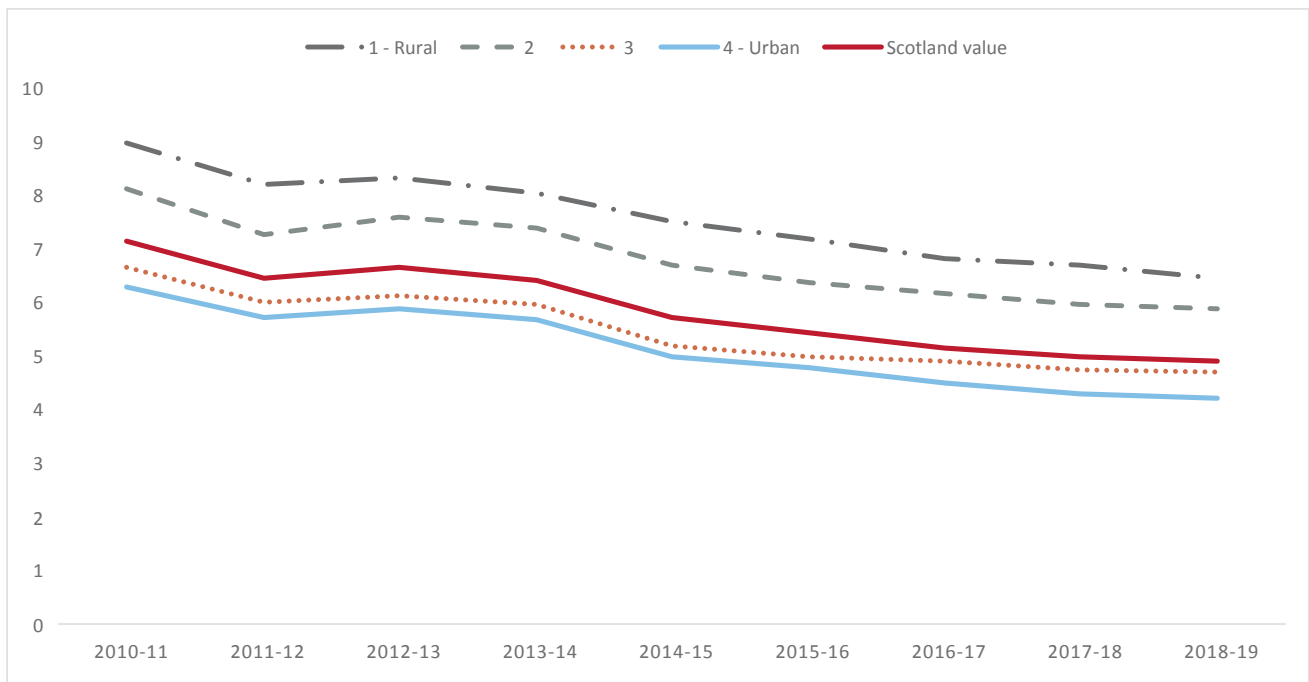


Figure 144: CO2 emissions area wide within scope of LA per capita



Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics

Figure 145: CO2 emissions area wide within scope of LA per capita by family group - geography





Conclusions and Next Steps





This year's report draws on 10 years of LGBF data to provide an evidence-based picture of where Local Government had reached pre-Covid. The framework data demonstrates how councils across Scotland have continued to strive to improve the quality and performance of key services during this time while managing pressures to reduce costs. The data presented shows the increasing scale of the demand and budgetary pressures facing councils, even before the profound effects of Covid-19 begin to emerge. The policy choices being made locally to meet the needs of local communities, and the impact of these choices on performance, satisfaction and costs are clear within this data.

While councils have continued to provide valuable services and work with communities to achieve critical outcomes, despite growing pressure on their budgets, the evidence emerging from the LGBF shows that improvements gained in previous years are now beginning to slow or decline. The next phase will be even more challenging as councils continue to respond to, and recover from, the Covid-19 pandemic. The need to prioritise and collaborate will therefore be greater than ever.

This report highlights the significant variation in both cost and performance which exists between councils. It is these variations which provide the opportunities for learning. They provide 'can openers' which support collaboration and sharing between councils to better understand the differences and the approaches which may deliver improvements. With the acute and far reaching effects of Covid-19, there has never been a greater requirement for working with, and learning from, each other.

For the foreseeable future, the Covid-19 pandemic has altered the context we operate within, the design and delivery of Local Government services, and the pattern of need in the communities we serve. Going forward, the continuity provided by the LGBF will be invaluable in understanding the long-term impact of Covid on communities and on Local Government services. It will provide vital intelligence to assist the sector to learn lessons from its response and to strengthen and redesign services around future policy priorities to support recovery and renewal. It will also be critical in helping all spheres of government to track progress against the National Performance Framework (NPF) and in informing the reprioritisation that has and will continue to be made in the years to come.

There is also now an opportunity to review and evolve the LGBF to reflect the new challenges and issues facing Local Government post-Covid, including innovation and transformation in the use of data and intelligence. The following three strategic priorities have been identified by the Local Government Benchmarking Board to drive progress and support transformation across the next 3-year period.

1. To continue to strengthen the relevance and credibility of LGBF

We will evolve the LGBF framework to reflect the challenges, risks and opportunities facing Local Government as it responds to the Covid pandemic and aims to build back better. We will work with SOLACE, Professional Associations and other key stakeholders to protect and promote the longitudinal significance of the framework, and the value provided by existing LGBF measures in capturing the impact of Covid on long-term trends across core council services. We will strengthen the framework in key areas to reflect the changing context and ensure the approach remains fit for purpose. This will include a strengthened focus on key areas such as poverty and inequality, mental health and wellbeing, new ways of working and digital transformation. We will also continue to strengthen links between the LGBF and the National Performance Framework and Public Health priorities to support Local Government in its efforts to demonstrate how it is supporting progress in these areas.

2. To position the LGBF to lead improvements in the wider data reporting and scrutiny landscape

Rapid progress has been achieved both locally and nationally in data sharing, data collaboration and data innovation, facilitated by the increased focus on the role of data and intelligence during the pandemic. We will build on this, and ensure the LGBF is at the heart of progressing system wide improvements in addressing



current lags in data availability, streamlining data reporting/scrutiny landscapes, enabling greater automation and technical integration of data systems, and strengthening available insights from data and intelligence. Progress in these areas will provide both an opportunity and an important test of relevance for the LGBF.

3. To continue to build momentum in the use of the LGBF to transform and improve council services

Demonstrating how councils are utilising data and intelligence to transform and improve services will be more important than ever across the coming period. As the framework has matured, councils' use of the LGBF to support collaboration, improvement and strategic decision making has grown and become more sophisticated. We will prioritise support and engagement activities which will build on this progress, and effectively assist councils in their efforts to use data and intelligence, including the LGBF, to transform and improve services as part of recovery and renewal across the next 3 years.



Appendices





Appendix 1 – LGBF Indicator List

Indicator Ref	Indicator Description
CHN1	Cost per primary school pupil
CHN2	Cost per secondary school pupil
CHN3	Cost per pre-school education registration
CHN4	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5
CHN5	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6
CHN6	% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)
CHN7	% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)
CHN8a	The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week
CHN8b	The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week
CHN9	% of children being looked after in the community
CHN10	% of adults satisfied with local schools
CHN11	Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations
CHN12a	Overall average total tariff
CHN12b	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1
CHN12c	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2
CHN12d	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3
CHN12e	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4
CHN12f	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5
CHN13a	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy
CHN13b	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy
CHN14a	Literacy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils
CHN14b	Numeracy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils
CHN17	% of children meeting developmental milestones
CHN18	% of funded early years provision which is graded good/better
CHN19a	School attendance rate
CHN19b	School attendance rate (looked after children)
CHN20a	School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils)
CHN20b	School exclusion rates (per 1,000 'looked after children')
CHN21	Participation rate for 16-19 year olds
CHN22	% of child protection re-registrations within 18 months
CHN23	% LAC with more than 1 placement in the last year (Aug-July)
CORP 1	Support services as a % of total gross expenditure
CORP 3b	% of the highest paid 5% employees who are women
CORP 3c	The gender pay gap (%)
CORP 4	The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax
CORP 6a	Sickness absence days per teacher



Indicator Ref	Indicator Description
CORP 6b	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)
CORP 7	% of income due from council tax received by the end of the year
CORP 8	% of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days
SW1	Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over
SW2	Direct payments + managed personalised budgets spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+
SW3a	% of people aged 65 and over with long-term care needs receiving personal care at home
SW4b	% of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life
SW4c	% of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible
SW4d	% of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided
SW4e	% of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role
SW5	Residential costs per week per resident for people aged 65 or over
SW6	Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges
SW7	Proportion of care services graded 'good' (4) or better in Care Inspectorate inspections
SW8	Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged
C&L1	Cost per attendance at sports facilities
C&L2	Cost per library visit
C&L3	Cost of museums per visit
C&L4	Cost of parks & open spaces per 1,000 population
C&L5a	% of adults satisfied with libraries
C&L5b	% of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces
C&L5c	% of adults satisfied with museums and galleries
C&L5d	% of adults satisfied with leisure facilities
ENV1a	Net cost of waste collection per premise
ENV2a	Net cost of waste disposal per premise
ENV3a	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population
ENV3c	Street cleanliness score
ENV4a	Cost of roads per kilometre
ENV4b	% of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
ENV4c	% of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
ENV4d	% of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
ENV4e	% of U class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
ENV5	Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population
ENV5a	Cost of trading standards per 1,000
ENV5b	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population
ENV6	% of total household waste arising that is recycled
ENV7a	% of adults satisfied with refuse collection
ENV7b	% of adults satisfied with street cleaning



Indicator Ref	Indicator Description
HSN1b	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year
HSN2	% of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
HSN3	% of council dwellings meeting Scottish housing standards
HSN4b	Average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs
HSN5a	% of council dwellings that are energy efficient
CORP-ASSET1	% of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
CORP-ASSET2	% of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
ECON1	% of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated/funded employability programmes
ECON2	Cost of planning and building standards per planning application
ECON3	Average time per business and industry planning application (weeks)
ECON4	% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises
ECON5	No of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population
ECON6	Investment in economic development & tourism per 1,000 population
ECON7	Proportion of people earning less than the living wage
ECON8	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband
ECON9	Town vacancy rates
ECON10	Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan
FINSUS1	Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue
FINSUS2	Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue
FINSUS3	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - General Fund
FINSUS4	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - Housing Revenue Account
FINSUS5	Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure
CLIM1	CO2 emissions area wide per capita
CLIM2	CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of Local Authority per capita



Appendix 2 List of Family Groups

To understand why variations in cost and performance are occurring, councils work together to ‘drill-down’ into the benchmarking data across service areas. This process has been organised around ‘family groups’ of councils so that we are comparing councils that are similar in terms of the type of population that they serve (e.g. relative deprivation and affluence) and the type of area in which they serve them (e.g. urban, semi-rural, rural). The point of comparing like with like is that this is more likely to lead to useful learning and improvement.

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

Least deprived ← → Most deprived

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

Rural ← → Urban



Appendix 3

LGBF Credibility, Relevance and Reliability

10 Key Messages

The LGBF is a Local Government led improvement approach reflecting a commitment by SOLACE to develop better measurement/comparable data as a catalyst for improving services and enhancing public accountability.

The purpose of the LGBF is to provide comparative information which offers high-level 'can openers' which can be used strategically and diagnostically. The framework provides a robust foundation for benchmarking practice through the application of comprehensive and well-established quality assurance and verification processes to ensure a high level of accuracy and comparability across local authorities.

Credibility

- 1.** The LGBF voluntarily complies with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice which provides assurances on the trustworthiness, quality and value of LGBF data.
- 2.** The Accounts Commission supports and trusts Local Government in their commitment to embed and develop this improvement approach as evidenced by the reference to LGBF within statutory direction (replacing the previous SPI regime) and the use of LGBF within BVAR.
- 3.** There is significant wider interest in the LGBF data e.g. Parliamentary Committees, First Minister Questions, COSLA campaigns, SPICe Briefings and within the National Media. There is also interest among other public sector partners in learning from Local Government's journey in developing benchmarking.

Relevance

- 4.** The LGBF Board works closely with council Chief Executives and professional associations to continuously review and improve the framework to ensure the relevance of measures included. SOLACE, Professional associations and data providers are represented on the LGBF Board to ensure the relevance, appropriateness, and accuracy of indicators used within the framework. Priorities for development are set out in the LGBF Strategic plan and regularly reviewed by the board, SOLACE and the Accounts Commission. Recent developments include strengthening the suite of measures in relation to Children and Young People, Economic Development and Adult Social Care, Financial Sustainability and Tackling Climate Change.
- 5.** Local Government's ongoing commitment to this sector-led improvement approach can be evidenced in the significant progress achieved to date in embedding LGBF within strategic decision making, scrutiny, improvement and public performance reporting, and in its commitment to continuous improvement going forward.



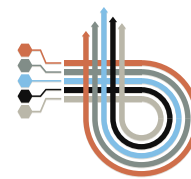
Reliability

- 6.** Detailed guidance and metadata for all LGBF indicators have been produced in collaboration with professional associations and data owners to ensure consistent and comparative data is returned. The metadata is freely available and published together with our data on our website. This metadata outlines all the methods used, data sources, and limitations with the data.
- 7.** Councils are responsible for assuring the quality of underpinning data provided for the framework and are required to confirm compliance with the associated guidance upon submission. Family Group Benchmarking events provide opportunities for councils to understand and resolve any methodological differences. The IS also offers bespoke support to councils to drill down into their data to better understand and address any anomalies within their own methodology.
- 8.** In most cases, LGBF indicators are drawn from existing published data sources, all of which are audited and quality assured by the relevant data owners (e.g. Scottish Government; Scottish Housing Regulator). Where indicators rely on sample data (e.g. satisfaction data is provided via Scottish Government national surveys) the data used within the LGBF is accurate at 95% confidence intervals. To further improve the accuracy of estimates, particularly for smaller authorities, the data is rolled into 3-year averages which improves the sample size and narrows confidence intervals.
- 9.** Where the LGBF collects administrative and performance data directly from local authorities, the robust protocols for validating and cleaning the data are significantly enhanced compared to those in place under the previous SPI regime. All data received is compared against previous years and other local authorities to check consistency and all outliers are checked, queried and confirmed with the source and with relevant professional associations.
- 10.** A range of cluster, variation and outlier analysis is carried out across the 10 years of data available in the LGBF to ensure the quality of the data. Analysis of the variance within LGBF data highlights significant improvements in data quality over time, confirms the accuracy and consistency of the current data presented, and does not reveal evidence of significant differences in current counting or recording techniques. In the very small number of cases where inconsistencies may remain, we work with individual councils and professional associations to resolve these.



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