

Local
Government
Benchmarking
Framework



Local Government Benchmarking Framework

National Benchmarking Overview Report 2018-19

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Preface

This is the eighth 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. Recent years has seen a focus on the health and wellbeing of children, economic development, and outcomes for older people. In the future the framework will continue to adapt to the changing needs of Scottish Local Government, with digital and climate change two of the emerging areas.

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 and increasing public expectations there has never been a greater requirement for working with and learning from each other.

Councillor Alison Evison
Chair, Improvement Service
COSLA President

Jim Savege
Chair of SOLACE (Scotland)





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. All cost and spend information throughout this report is adjusted for inflation and presented in real terms to allow meaningful comparison over time. It is important to highlight that this report sets out the national position, however there is a wide range of variation in costs and performance across councils often reflecting local circumstances and priorities. It is this variation which provides the platform for learning and improvement.

Councils are now operating in a more challenging context than when the LGBF began. Across the nine-year period for which we present data, total revenue funding for councils has fallen by 9.4% in real terms (and by 7.6% since 2013/14). Against increasing budgetary pressure, councils have had to manage: growing demographic pressures; increasing national policy and legislative demands, and higher public expectations. In addition, the welcome introduction of the living wage and recent public sector pay increases, including Local Government pay awards, place further pressure on already tight budgets. While these reflect progress in relation to fairness and equity for staff, they represent a significant increase in expenditure without additional capacity within the system.

Over the last nine years of the framework, councils have been asked by governments and citizens to tackle substantial new challenges, with councils in 2019 significantly more embedded in the wellbeing of their communities than a decade ago. Over the period, councils and their partners have planned for and delivered health and social care integration, the biggest step change in public policy since devolution. Councils have undertaken the wholesale renewal of learning estates, delivered massive improvements to Scotland's infrastructure, embraced a transformation of early years, scoped and delivered City and Growth deals, embraced digital transformation and the challenge of net zero carbon emissions and climate change, taken on an increasing role in the delivery of the welfare state, promoted fairness and tackled complex community safety issues - whilst simultaneously shrinking their workforce by some tens of thousands. The way councils are working has also changed over the period of the LGBF, with much more partnership commissioning and a greater focus on community participation and coproduction following the implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

These are impressive achievements in a difficult fiscal environment. However, councils will struggle to invest in prevention as money tightens and demand continues to increase. Further planned transformation therefore will require greater partnership with and support from Scottish Government and other bodies.

This echoes concerns highlighted by the Accounts Commission in its 2018/19 Local Government in Scotland Financial Overview about the challenges councils face in meeting the increasing demand for services against tightening budget. The report highlights how councils are increasingly relying on reserves as budgets strain to keep pace with demand and draws attention to the growing proportion of funding which is committed to national policy initiatives reducing the flexibility councils have for deciding how they plan and prioritise the use of funding to respond to local priorities.

LGBF data reveals that councils are continuing to protect expenditure in core areas with spending on education and care relatively protected over this period, although they are not able to keep pace with demand or increasing cost of provision. These core areas account for over 70% of the benchmarked expenditure within the LGBF, which means most other service areas have experienced substantial real reductions in spending: 23% reduction in culture and leisure spending; 21% reduction in planning; 28% reduction in economic development revenue spending; 24% reduction in roads spending; and 10% reduction in environmental services spending.

Local Government has performed well across the period despite growing pressure on budgets, however,



there is evidence that performance, satisfaction, and system capacity are all beginning to show signs of strain. After a number of years where service performance has improved or been maintained remarkably well across key policy areas, the evidence emerging this year from the LGBF indicates that progress is now stalling. Performance improvements gained in recent years are now beginning to slow or decline, a pattern emerging across all key service areas and within all councils. This is unsurprising given the long-term funding pressures on councils and local services. Although too early to call a trend, the data highlights a real risk to the future delivery of key services if we continue on this path and it will become increasingly difficult to maintain the momentum that has been achieved without a sustained change in funding. The next phase will be more challenging with greater need for real collaboration.

Children's services

1. Education spending has been largely protected across the 9-year period, compared to other services, with spend growing by 1.5% since 2010/11. Across this period, provision has grown by 3%, including a 10% increase in primary school pupil numbers and a 5% growth in early years places.
2. In the last 12 months, education spend has grown significantly, increasing by 4.5%. 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. This growth in expenditure has reversed the longer-term reducing cost trend per pupil, with primary and secondary pupil costs increasing by 3.3% and 2.5% in the last 12 months. The real cost per primary pupil is now £5,250, and £7,185 per secondary pupil compared to £5,539 and £7,314 in 2010/11.
3. Early years expenditure has grown by 38.8% since 2010/11, and by 12.3% in the last 12 months. Real costs per pre-school place have risen for the fifth year in a row, increasing by 11.5% in the last 12 months, from £4,547 to £5,070 per place. Since 2010/11, the percentage of funded early years provision graded 'good or better' has improved from 87.1% to 90.6%, however rates have shown a small year on year decline in the last four years.
4. There has been a 22% growth in expenditure for Looked After Children since 2010/11, including a 1.3% increase in the last 12 months. Expenditure on looked after children placements in particular has been relatively protected during the period, while wider children's social work services have seen less protection. There has been a 27% growth in expenditure on children living in community settings and 18% growth in residential settings. In the last 12 months, for the first time there has been a reduction in community expenditure (-0.5%) while residential expenditure continues to grow (2.8%). The rising cost of externally provided care will likely be a factor in residential expenditure.
5. 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. Exclusion rates have continued to show significant improvement, falling year on year from 40.0 to 21.6 across the period.
6. This year, for the first time, data on Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels is included within the Local Government Benchmarking Framework in order to support local improvements in learning for pupils within the Broad General Education (stages P1 through to S3 of schooling). Data for 2018/19 is included to provide baseline data for future improvements within each local authority.
7. 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. There has been substantial long-term improvement since 2011/12 in the attainment of all pupils, and for those from deprived areas in relation to 5+ passes at SCQF level 5 and level 6. This has continued in the last 12 months, with achievement rates at level 5 and level 6 both improving by one percentage point, and by 2 percentage points for children from the most deprived areas. The average tariff score for all pupils improved by almost 16% across the period from 2011/12, while the average tariff score for the most deprived quintiles improved most rapidly (improving by 31%).



The scale of changes seen since 2011-12 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.

8. The rate of improvement has 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. It is worth noting that 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.
9. 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 91.6% between 2015/16 and 2018/19. In the last 12 months, there has been a 0.2 percentage point decrease in the participation rate, from 91.8 to 91.6. This is the first reduction since the base year and reflects a small reduction in participation of 18/19 year olds, particularly in relation to employment, along with an increase in the percentage of 16-19 year olds with 'unconfirmed status'.
10. Satisfaction with schools has fallen by over 10 percentage points from 83.1% to 72.5% since 2010/11. However, following year on year reductions, satisfaction rates improved in the past 12 months, from 70% to 72.5%. 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.

Adult social care

1. To better reflect the wider integration landscape and progress across the whole system, a number of new measures have been introduced in the benchmarking framework this year, with further inclusions planned for the period ahead. Additional measures 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 13.2% since 2010/11. While 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, there has been faster growth in spend on learning disability and mental health during this period.



4. Spending on home care for older people has risen by 17% since 2010/11, and by 2% in the last 12 months, but the number of hours of homecare provided has been relatively static across the last few years. Hourly costs have risen by 6.9% since 2010/11 from £23.07 to £24.67, and by 2% in the past 12 months. 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 needed to deliver a relatively static number of hours.
5. Net spending on residential care has fallen since 2012/13, by over 8%. Due to a methodological change in 2012/13, direct comparison with previous years 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 (-8.8% and -2.1% respectively). 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. The average net cost of residential care per week per resident is now £381, compared with £409 in 2012/13.
6. Direct payments and personalised managed budgets have grown steadily across the period from 1.6% to 5.1% of total social work spend (excluding outliers), including a 0.3 percentage point increase in the past 12 months.
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, this has stalled in the past 12 months and there is uncertainty about the extent to which we can continue to shift the balance of care, given that there is a growing elderly population living into older age. The proportion of older people assessed to have long term care needs being supported at home increased from 58.9% in 2010/11 to 61.0% in 2018/19. This represents a small decline from 61.7% in 2017/18. 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.
8. While there has been an overall improving picture in terms of Delayed Discharges, in the last 12 months, there has been a 4.1% increase in the number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged. Hospital readmissions per 1,000 discharges (within 28 days) have grown, from 89.7, to 103.0, a 14.8% increase across the period. In the past 12 months, the growth has levelled off, increasing by 0.2%.
9. There has been an overall improvement in care quality ratings since 2011/12, with an increase from 80.9% to 82.2% in the percentage of care services graded 'good' (4) or 'better' (5). Following four years of improvement, in the last 12 months inspectorate quality ratings have fallen from 85.4% to 82.2%.
10. 'Satisfaction' measures in relation to quality of life, independent living, choice and control, and support for carers all reveal a decline across the period. However, it is important to note that data for these measures is published only every 2 years, with data most recently available from the Health and Care Experience survey in 2017/18. With only 3 years of data currently available, trend analysis is limited at this stage.

Culture and leisure services

1. Despite a real reduction in spend of 23.5% since 2010/11, leisure and cultural services have sharply increased their usage rates and reduced their costs per use. During this time the substantial increases in visitor numbers across sports (20%), libraries (38%), and museums (30%) have resulted in unit cost reductions of 36%, 47% and 28% respectively.



2. In the past 12 months, there has been a further 1.6% real reduction in spend, marking 8 years of reducing spend on culture and leisure services. While uptake of leisure services, swimming pools, libraries and museums continues to grow, the rate of growth is slowing. Close monitoring will be required to assess the extent to which further efficiencies are possible or whether performance reductions are inevitable as we further reduce expenditure on the services or change delivery that relies more on community rather than municipal delivery. This is an area which will be explored further with VOCAL and Community Leisure UK.
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 11 percentage points, museums and galleries by 7 percentage points, and leisure facilities by 5 percentage points. In the last 12 months, satisfaction rates for libraries and museums have remained stable, while sports services have seen a further reduction of 2.7 percentage points. Only satisfaction levels with parks and open spaces remain at similar levels to the base year, although these too have reduced by 2.5 percentage points in the last 12 months.

Environmental services

1. Real spending on environmental services has reduced by 10.3% since 2010/11 with reductions in waste management (-2.3%), street cleaning (-32%) and trading standards and environmental health (-22%). The reduction in spend continued in the past 12 months, with overall spend reducing by 1.9%. Alongside this reduction in spend, there have been reductions in satisfaction with refuse and cleansing, and reductions in street cleanliness scores. For the first time, and following year-on-year improvements, the rate of recycling also declined in the last 12 months, falling from 45.6% to 44.7%.
2. Across the period, real spending on roads has fallen by 23.9%, including a 7.8% reduction in the last 12 months. 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 24% in real terms since 2010/11, and corporate services now account for only 4.4% 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.
2. This reduction has gone along with continuing improvement in key areas of performance. Council tax collection within year is at an all-time high of 96% and the cost of collection has reduced by over 56% in real terms since 2010/11. The gender pay gap has reduced at a rate of 12% across the last four years, although this has slowed in the last 12 months, and the proportion of the 5% highest earning staff who are female has risen to 56%. The percentage of all invoices paid within 30 days has increased to above 93%, again the highest rate yet recorded. There has also been continued improvement in the condition of councils' corporate assets over the period, with 82.1% of operational buildings suitable for their current use and 87.2% in satisfactory condition, the highest rates recorded since the benchmarking framework was launched.
3. Local Government absence levels are at their highest since 2010/11, increasing by 3.6% across the period. This is alongside a 5% reduction in FTEs for Local Government staff across this period. While absence levels for both teaching and non-teaching staff increased in the last 12 months, the data reveals a different trend pattern for each. Although teacher absence days have increased by 4.6% in the past 12 months from 5.9 days to 6.2 days, absence levels have reduced overall by 6% since 2010/11, albeit with fluctuations across the period. Sickness absence days for non-teaching staff are higher than those for teachers, and have increased by 6.4% since 2010/11, from 10.8 days to 11.5 days, which is the highest point since the base year. In the last 12 months, there has been a further 0.7%



increase. Although there have again been fluctuations during this period, a clearer increasing trend is observable in absence levels for non-teaching staff over the period.

Housing services

1. Councils continue to manage their housing stock well with rent lost to voids reducing from 1.3% to 1.0% since 2010/11, and a 23.3% reduction in average repair times across this period. Both of these areas have seen a small decline in performance in the last 12 months however. There have been consistent and significant improvements in terms of housing standards and energy efficiency standards, both of which are now well above 90%.
2. However, at the same time, the continued and accelerating rate of growth in tenants' rent arrears from 5.6% to 7.3% between 2013/14 and 2018/19 reveals evidence of the increasing financial challenges facing both housing residents and councils alike.

Economic development and planning

1. Economic development and planning have seen some of the largest reductions in revenue spending since 2010/11, falling by 28% and 21% respectively. Expenditure has stabilised against trend in recent years, both showing marginal growth in the last 12 months (2.0% and 3.5%). There has been significant capital expenditure in economic development and tourism across this period reflecting the regional economic growth agenda. This has grown by 160% since 2010/11, and by 13% in the past 12 months. Capital expenditure now forms 49% of total economic development expenditure, compared to 21% in 2010/11.
2. Most measures of economic development and planning performance within the framework show maintained or improved performance across the period, although there is evidence that the improvement rate is slowing in some areas. In terms of employment activities, while there has been an overall growth in the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes from 9.1% in 2012/13 to 12.6% in 2018/19, there has been a 1.7 percentage point reduction in the last 12 months.
3. In terms of infrastructure for business, there is a 35% improvement in terms of efficiency in processing business and industry planning applications, reducing from 14 weeks to 9 weeks between 2012/13 and 2018/19. Town vacancy rates have remained stable across the period despite challenging economic times. There has been a 24 percentage point increase in the availability of immediately available employment land, from 12.9% to 37.4% since 2014/15, declining slightly in the last 12 months. There has been a 36 percentage point improvement in access to superfast broadband. Despite these improvements, the Business Gateway start-up rate has reduced from 19% to 16.7% across the period.
4. Councils continue to spend over 25% of their procurement spend on local enterprises. This has increased over the past 3 years, to 28.7% in 2018/19 which is the highest rate recorded so far. Given the pressures on council budgets this is a positive outcome as it suggests that the drive to reduce costs has not resulted in local enterprises being displaced by national suppliers of goods and services. However, while the value of money spent locally has held up well, there has been an overall drop in the number of local suppliers. There has been a commitment in recent years for Local Government economic development and procurement professionals to work on joint initiatives to enhance the impact of Local Government procurement spend.
5. The proportion of people earning less than the living wage has not reduced significantly across the period, fluctuating between 18% and 19%, and showing a slight deterioration in the last 12 months from 18.4% to 19.4%. This partly reflects the move towards a more flexible labour market including zero-hour contracts. The deterioration in 2018/19 does not seem to be continuing with the most recent data.





Introduction and Key Trends

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) provides evidence of trends in how councils allocate resources, the performance of key services delivered and commissioned and levels of public satisfaction with these services. Comparisons can be made between authorities in any year and over time. The rich data in the LGBF is an essential tool for policy makers and the public. Lessons can be learned from this fairly comprehensive overview of Local Government performance and signs detected of where more effort is needed.

With nine years of data, the LGBF has existed long enough to give us insight into the impact of long-term trends as well as annual changes. Recorded annual trend data should be treated with care but can be early warnings or suggest emerging challenges and developments. Taken together with other evidence, a clear picture has emerged that should help inform policy making over the coming years.

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

- i. Pressures, trends and resources
- ii. Expectations and progress
- iii. Prioritising means deprioritising
- iv. Impact of protected budgets

Pressures, trends and resources

Over the period of the LGBF, councils have had to cope with the combined challenges of greater demand for services with fewer resources to meet this demand. It is estimated that increased demand since 2013/14 resulting from demographic change would have required almost 7% real terms increase in funding.¹ Welfare reform has added to challenges facing many individuals, families and communities with consequent impact on Local Government services. Councils are increasingly relying on reserves to keep up with demand and balance their budgets. This raises questions as to how they will cope delivering services, leaving aside how they can achieve necessary transformation, if funding trends continue. This is before the likely fiscal fallout from Brexit as well as any unforeseen crises are taken into account. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the combination of increased demand and decreased resources is having a detrimental effect on performance, inhibiting transformation and satisfaction with services.

The recently published Audit Scotland Financial Overview 2018/19 Report on Local Government in Scotland² confirms trends evident in the LGBF. While short term Scottish Government revenue funding increased in cash terms, it fell in real terms in the last year. Scottish Government funding to Local Government since 2013/14 has been reduced by 7.6%.³ A growing proportion of Scottish Government revenue funding for councils is committed to national policy initiatives for use as Scottish Government decides. The introduction of the living wage and recent pay awards are positive developments but contribute to financial challenges. Both may go some way towards rewarding staff at the cutting edge of delivering services but we should note the increase in absence levels recorded in this data point towards pressures on staff that pay rises alone cannot address. Local authorities' own resources have been unable to make up for these developments.

¹ https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/10731/projected-cost-pressures-for-scottish-local-government.pdf

² <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/report/local-government-in-scotland-financial-overview-201819>

³ <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefings/Report/2019/7/2/Local-government-finance--facts-and-figures-2013-14-to-2019-20>

**Table 1: Absence levels for teaching and non-teaching staff**

	2010-11	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
Sickness Absence Days per Teacher	6.6	5.9	6.2	4.6%	-6.0%
Overall Days Lost - Teachers	349,345	313,918	328,747	4.7%	-5.9%
FTE - Teachers	52,900	52,906	52,956	0.1%	0.1%
Sickness Absence Days per non-teaching staff member	10.8	11.4	11.5	0.7%	6.4%
Overall Days Lost – Non-Teaching staff	1,731,251	1,641,333	1,714,874	4.5%	-0.9%
FTE – Non-teachers	160,403	143,890	149,272	3.7%	-6.9%

Source: Council supplied data

The past year has seen some respite for councils but this does little to reverse longer trends in Scottish Government funding. Even though local authorities have used the full extent of powers to raise revenue following the end of the freeze on council tax, there is no prospect of the gap being closed. The overall fiscal situation today is significantly more challenging than it was when the LGBF began.

As the aforementioned recent Audit Scotland report noted, Scottish Government ring-fenced resources have increased. This is evident in LGBF data, where funding streams for Education and Adult Social Care have been protected. While this increased emphasis in these areas is to be welcomed, it has only been possible at the cost of other services. No local authority has been able to combine increasing support in these priority areas while retaining levels of support for other services.

Consequently, there are worrying trends both in performance and satisfaction levels. LGBF trends show us that overall performance is falling across all councils and that satisfaction with services is declining amongst the public. No local authority has been able to buck this general trend, regardless of resources or policies pursued suggesting that the causes are system-wide.

Table 2: Public satisfaction with services (%)

	2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
Local Schools	83	83	81	79	74	73	70	73	2.5	-10.6
Libraries	84	83	81	77	74	73	72	72	0.1	-11.4
Parks and Open Spaces	83	86	86	86	85	87	85	83	-2.5	-0.6
Museums and Galleries	76	78	76	75	71	70	69	69	-0.1	-6.6
Leisure Facilities	75	80	78	76	73	73	72	69	-2.7	-5.3
Refuse Collection	81	83	83	84	82	79	75	75	-0.1	-6.0
Street Cleaning	73	75	74	74	73	70	66	63	-3.1	-10.4

Source: Scottish Household Survey



Expectations and progress

Public expectations have not been reduced despite the reduction in Local Government resources and increased demand due to demographic and other change. The challenging resource context and political uncertainty may lead to short-term decision making which is not conducive to the kind of transformative change required in our public services. Despite this, councils have balanced the need to respond to current demands while making the necessary shift in service delivery and this has resulted in considerable progress.

A decade ago, a consensus was created across political parties, spheres of government and public, private and third sectors around the recommendations of the Future Delivery of Public Services (Christie) Commission.⁴ The LGBF allows us to consider the extent to which the reality has matched the stated support for the Christie principles. Four key inter-connected principles were outlined in the Commission's report:

- **greater community empowerment and personalisation in delivering services.** This has accelerated since the Community Empowerment Act, 2015.
- **more integration and partnership working.** There has been a transformation in the provision of Health and Social Care over the period of the LGBF though significant challenges remain. Other changes affecting Local Government partners, notably the reform of police and fire and rescue services, have had to be factored into Local Government work given local authorities' intimate relations with these other services.
- **a significant shift towards prevention.** The shifting emphasis on early years to address the prevention agenda has been evident in spending priorities though the full impact of this shift will take time to be appreciated. Local authorities have worked with a range of bodies to draft Growth Deals and contributed to responses to climate change.
- **more efficiency in service delivery.** Given spending on central support services has reduced dramatically, it is a remarkable achievement that councils are still delivering and transforming such high performing services. The fact that they are able to do this, with a significantly reduced workforce, provides compelling evidence of efficiency.

Further planned transformation will require greater partnership with and support from Scottish Government and other bodies. Councils will struggle to shift resources upstream as money tightens and demand continues to increase. There is no lack of ambition and ample evidence from the LGBF of what can be achieved but there is also evidence that much that has been achieved is now tailing off. Satisfaction levels are declining and it will become increasingly difficult to maintain the momentum that has been achieved without a sustained change in funding.

What emerges from the LGBF is a picture of considerable progress against a challenging backdrop while more work still needs to be done. There seems little reason to believe that the pressures will decrease over the coming years but this makes support for transformation essential.

Prioritising means deprioritising

The LGBF data identifies how councils have responded to challenges: which services have experienced increases in expenditure, which have been protected and which have felt the greatest impact in reduced overall spending. It is important to dig deeper as the aggregate Scottish data often hides variation within Scotland and over time. Within this Scotland-level data, we see some variation between services across local authorities reflecting different priorities and needs but also to identify important system-wide trends. Core areas have been protected or seen increases in spending with social work and education, which together constitute around 70% of expenditure covered in the LGBF, protected.

⁴ <https://www2.gov.scot/resource/doc/352649/0118638.pdf>

**Table 3: Change in Revenue Expenditure Since 2010-11 (£000s)**

	Scotland 2010/11	Scotland 2018/19	% Change from 2017/18 to 2018/19	% Change from 2010/11 to 2018/19	Range Among Local Authorities % Change from 2010/11 to 2018/19
Education	£4,570,865	£4,640,361	4.5%	1.5%	-20% to 14%
Looked After Children	£424,810	£517,037	1.3%	21.7%	-27% to 118%
Adult Social Care	£2,925,871	£3,311,080	3.1%	13.2%	-4% to 39%
Culture and Leisure	£585,909	£448,001	-1.6%	-23.5%	-59% to 57%
Environmental Services	£791,573	£709,726	-1.9%	-10.3%	-36% to 15%
Roads	£662,263	£504,035	-7.8%	-23.9%	-68% to 68%
Planning	£141,207	£111,089	3.5%	-21.3%	-81% to 136%
Economic Development and Tourism	£393,134	£282,108	2.0%	-28.2%	-74% to 228%
Central Support Services	£898,062	£682,851	-1.1%	-24.0%	-67% to 27%

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.

There have been improvements in some of these core areas, while the picture is less clear in other areas. For example, for education, there are strong improving trends in attainment for all pupils and, crucially, amongst the most deprived. The narrowing of the attainment gap may be slow but is still clearly perceptible.

However, in social care, the picture is less clear, and the *prima facie* evidence suggests that there may be issues that would benefit from further exploration. There are notable differences across Scotland in the growth or otherwise of social care provision and this complex area will require further careful analysis to unpack causes and trends. The data suggests that despite the comparatively protected level of resourcing, it does not yet appear to be having the desired impact on outcomes we would hope for. Further examination is required to understand the relationship between resourcing and outcomes in social care and how this can be improved, and in particular the operation of health and social care partnerships. The current reform of adult social care,⁵ and recent progress review of health and social care integration⁶ will be helpful in supporting progress in this area, with benchmarking providing an important role in helping us understand where best practice is emerging.

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

6 <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>

**Table 4: Overall average total tariff and by SIMD quintile**

	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
Average Total Tariff	770	798	827	860	877	888	894	892	-0.2%	15.9%
SIMD Q1	478	510	551	581	603	625	620	625	0.8%	30.8%
SIMD Q2	618	644	685	716	741	751	752	740	-1.6%	19.7%
SIMD Q3	759	788	816	851	864	882	899	872	-3.0%	14.9%
SIMD Q4	909	929	962	984	998	1002	1019	1013	-0.6%	11.4%
SIMD Q5	1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1224	1193	-2.5%	8.4%

Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

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

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Improvement Rate 2017-18 to 2018-19	Improvement Rate 2011-12 to 2018-19
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	51	53	55	57	59	60	62	63	2%	24%
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	26	27	29	31	33	34	34	35	3%	35%
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	29	32	34	37	40	41	42	44	5%	52%
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	10	11	14	14	15	16	16	18	13%	80%

Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government

Increasing or only maintaining levels of spending in some areas in a declining overall budget must mean cuts elsewhere. The unpalatable but unavoidable choice faced by local authorities has been where cuts should be made, especially if transformation is to occur. Between 2010-11 and 2018-19, central support services have experienced the most severe cuts followed by roads, culture and leisure, and planning. Expenditure on roads as a whole has fallen by about a quarter since 2010/11 but the change has varied between authorities from a fall of almost 70% to a rise of about the same. This lack of uniformity is an inevitable function of local democracy reflecting different needs and priorities. Benchmarking allows authorities to learn from each other but is not a tool for uniformity. Street cleaning, libraries, support for tourism, community parks and open spaces, sports facilities, roads and planning have all been hit hard, though with considerable variation across Scotland and at different times over the period of the LGBF. In the past year, the roads budget has suffered most followed by street cleaning for example. Digging deeper into the data, we see that while economic development and tourism have experienced an increase in expenditure, a significant increase in capital spending masks a large decrease in revenue spending. The pattern is clear and unsurprising. Councils are prioritising statutory services and those areas where Scottish Government have allocated additional monies for specific purposes.



While there is clear evidence of a shift towards prevention and a willingness to anticipate longer-term impact with the emphasis on early years, this has sometimes been at the cost of much short-term policy making with long-term implications. Cuts in the roads budget have a progressively damaging impact on this important infrastructure. Cuts in leisure and recreation and libraries are understandable at one level but will have longer-term negative effects in terms of physical and mental health.

Impact of protected budgets

In 2007, agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA resulted in a Concordat which included a reduction in ring-fencing. This was welcomed across local authorities. But ring-fencing has returned, limiting the transformative agendas of local authorities. There is disagreement on the extent of this new ring-fencing but no doubt that it has occurred. The aims of this ring-fencing is generally supported by local authorities but three issues arise that require attention:

- i. how decisions on aims and priorities are made, specifically the involvement of Local Government in the decision-making process;
- ii. the extent to which implementation needs to be uniform or might allow for different uses of the allocated resources for agreed outcomes;
- iii. the implications of ring-fencing for other services within an overall shrinking budget.

The approach that has been adopted has tended to be top-down and input-focused. Whether the allocation of resources has made an impact on outcomes tends to be assumed rather than demonstrated. The Pupil Equity Fund (PEF), teacher pupil ratios and adult social care are examples of centrally-determined policies. While there is a need for leadership from Scottish Government in consultation with Local Government on agreed outcomes, there is a need to allow local authorities to determine how these outcomes should be achieved. The LGBF is an important tool allowing authorities to learn from each other in the pursuit of these outcomes.

Conclusion

There have been impressive achievements over the last nine years. Greater emphasis has been placed on key priority areas including a shift towards public engagement, prevention and collaboration. This has been achieved in a difficult fiscal environment with increased demand and welfare reforms impacted on Local Government services. The LGBF provides evidence of the distance travelled but also worrying signs that momentum has slowed and in some areas has stalled. The next phase will be more challenging with greater need for real collaboration and real investment.





The LGBF Approach

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

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

1. It is important when looking at councils to compare like with like.
2. The focus presented in this report is on variations in spending and performance that councils can directly control.
3. The aim is to help councils improve and become more cost effective in delivering local services and through that support people in improving their life outcomes.

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

The purpose 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.⁷

The benchmarking data should not be considered in isolation. To support this, there is a growing focus to better align the benchmarking data with outcomes. A new [online interactive tool](#)⁸ links the LGBF with outcomes data presented in the [Community Planning Outcomes Profile](#)⁹ (a resource which provides trend data on outcomes, both at a local authority level, and at a locality level). 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.

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

⁷ www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/

⁸ www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/outcomes-tool

⁹ www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/performance-management-and-benchmarking/community-planning-outcomes-profile



and outcomes. The first of these reports focuses on children and young people's services and is available on the [LGBF website](#). This will encourage a more diagnostic use of the data, particularly within family groups. These developments will link with the [Community Planning Improvement Board](#) (CPIB)¹⁰ and support their work to improve the availability of performance evidence that can illuminate improvement in outcomes.

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

LGBF framework indicators

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

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

This year, the suite of measures for adult social care has been strengthened to better reflect the integration and personalisation landscapes and support the desired shift to preventative programmes and spending. The expanded suite draws on the Core Suite of Health and Integration measures and was developed in collaboration with HSC Chief Officers and Social Work Scotland. The current suite of measures is as follows:

- Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over
- Direct Payments + Managed Personalised Budgets spend on adults 18+ as a percentage of total social work spend on adults 18+
- Percentage of people aged 65 or over with long-term care needs receiving personal care at home
- Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided
- Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role
- Readmissions to hospital within 28 days of discharge
- Proportion of care services graded 'good' 4 or better in Care Inspectorate Inspections
- Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged
- Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life
- Residential costs per week per resident for people aged 65 or over

¹⁰ www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/consultancy-and-support/community-planning-improvement-board

¹¹ www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data



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

A full list of service categories and indicators is attached (Appendix 1) and full technical specifications for all 90 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).

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.¹²

The focus of this report is on three important areas:

1. Trends across Scotland for the key framework indicators covering the period 2010/11 to 2018/19 inclusive. For consistency all data is presented as financial years though some data may be for calendar years or academic years. For each unit cost indicator, we have presented the change over the period in **real terms**, that is taking account of the impact of inflation over time.
2. The level of variation across councils and factors shaping these trends including physical geography, population distribution, size of council and the impact of deprivation.¹³ Graphs are presented showing the level of variation across councils for each area benchmarking measure. To improve interpretation, these graphs include only the base year and two most recent years.
3. Identification of areas where unexplained variation exists, providing opportunities where councils may wish to target improvements and/or efficiencies.

Before examining each section in turn, Table 6 below presents an overview of the trends across all LGBF indicators.

¹² www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data

¹³ Correlation analysis and Mann-Whitney/Wilcoxon Two-Sample Tests were carried out to establish where statistically significant relationships exist between framework indicators and levels of deprivation, rurality, population distribution and size of council.



Table 6: Overview Table for all LGBF Data 2018-19

Indicator Description	Scotland						%/value change 17/18 to 18/19				
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16					
Cost per primary school pupil	£5,539	£5,384	£5,234	£5,115	£4,968	£4,993	£5,080	£5,250	3.3%	-5.2%	
Cost per secondary school pupil	£7,314	£7,098	£7,076	£7,059	£7,021	£7,096	£7,052	£7,011	2.5%	-1.8%	
Cost per pre-school education registration	£3,831	£3,479	£3,425	£3,256	£3,534	£4,074	£4,352	£4,547	£5,070	11.5%	32.3%
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5	51	53	55	57	59	60	62	63	1.0%	12.0%	
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6	26	27	29	31	33	34	34	35	1.0%	9.0%	
% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)	29	32	34	37	40	41	42	44	4.8%	51.7%	
% of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)	10	11	14	14	15	16	16	18	2.0%	8.0%	
The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week	£3,220	£3,401	£3,240	£3,368	£3,392	£3,509	£3,509	£3,551	dna	1.2%	10.29%
The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week	£235	£250	£276	£287	£298	£309	£328	£334	dna	2.0%	42.4%
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	dna	-0.2%	-1.3%
% of adults satisfied with local schools after in the community	83.1	83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	72.5	dna	2.5%	10.6%
Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations	90.1	91.7	92.5	93.0	93.3	93.7	94.4	dna	dna	4.3%	
Overall average total tariff	770	798	827	860	877	888	894	892	-0.2%	15.9%	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1	478	510	551	581	603	625	620	625	0.8%	30.8%	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2	618	644	685	716	741	751	752	740	-1.6%	19.7%	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3	759	788	816	851	864	882	899	872	-3.0%	14.9%	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4	909	929	962	984	998	1002	1019	1013	-0.6%	11.4%	
Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5	1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1224	1193	-2.5%	8.4%	



Indicator Description	Scotland							%/value change base* to 18/19
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
% of children meeting developmental milestones (27-30 months)				70.9	71.6	72.4	66.1	57.1
% Funded early years provision rated good/better	87.1	90.6	91.3	92.6	93.5	91.9	91.7	90.6
School attendance rates	93.1		93.6		93.7		93.3	93.0
School attendance rates (looked after children)	88.6		88.6		91.6		91.0	dna
School exclusion rates	40.0		32.8		27.2		26.8	21.6
School exclusion rates (looked after children)	165.6		184.5		94.3		80.0	dna
Participation rates for 16-19 year olds					90.4		91.1	91.8
Child protection re-registrations within 18 months				6.5	6.8	6.7	6.2	6.5
% 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
% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy								72.3
% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy								79.1
Literacy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils								20.7
Numeracy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils								16.8

Children's Services



Indicator Description	Scotland							%/value change base* to 18/19		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Support services as a % of total gross expenditure	4.9	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.0	4.5	4.4	-0.1%
% 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	55.8	1.2%
The gender pay gap										9.5%
The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax	£15.83	£14.88	£14.70	£13.15	£11.72	£10.97	£9.29	£7.49	£6.92	-7.6%
Sickness absence days per teacher	6.6	6.2	6.6	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.1	5.9	6.2	4.6%
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	0.7%
% 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	0.0%
% 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	-0.5%
Older persons (over 65) home care costs per hour	£23.07	£22.31	£22.63	£21.97	£21.66	£22.48	£23.45	£24.21	£24.67	1.9%
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	6.7	7.3	0.6%
% 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	-0.7%
% Of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life										2.1%
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible	85.0	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0	-4.0%
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided	82.8	82.7	82.7	82.7	82.7	82.7	82.7	82.7	82.7	-5.0%
Adult Social Care	83.1	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	-1.7%
										-7.5%



Indicator Description	Scotland							%/value change base* to 18/19	
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	
Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role				43.0	40.0		36.6		-3.5% -6.4%
Older persons (over 65s) residential care costs per week per resident	£445	£449	£409	£393	£397	£387	£386	£380	£381 0.3% -14.3%
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 0.2% 14.8%
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	-3.2% 1.3%
Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, per 1,000 population (75+)				921.79	1043.67	914.66	839.75	761.74	792.66 4.1 -14.0
Cost per attendance at sports facilities	£4.07	£3.64	£3.47	£3.46	£3.17	£3.10	£3.01	£2.76	£2.62 -5.0% -35.6%
Cost per library visit	£3.90	£3.68	£3.48	£2.79	£2.62	£2.59	£2.05	£2.12	£2.05 -3.3% -47.4%
Cost of museums per visit	£4.81	£3.92	£3.96	£3.63	£3.56	£3.23	£3.43	£3.58	£3.48 -3.0% -27.8%
Cost of parks& open spaces per 1,000 population	£29,708	£27,400	£26,164	£25,271	£25,040	£23,117	£21,587	£20,179	£20,174 -0.0% -32.1%
% Of adults satisfied with libraries	83.5		83.0	81.0	77.0	74.0	73.0	72.0	72.1 0.1% -11.4%
% Of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	83.1		86.0	86.0	86.0	85.0	87.0	85.0	83.0 -2.5% -0.6%
% Of adults satisfied with museums and galleries	75.5		78.0	76.0	75.0	71.0	70.0	69.0	69.0 -0.1% -6.6%
% Of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	74.6		80.0	78.0	76.0	73.0	73.0	72.0	69.3 -2.7% -5.3%
Net cost per waste collection per premises	£65.37	£66.51	£69.36	£68.14	£66.88	£67.21	£67.45	£67.45 0.4%	3.2%
Net cost per waste disposal per premises	£102.05	£99.98	£97.58	£103.35	£102.34	£103.28	£97.29	£97.29 5.8%	4.7%
Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	£22,744	£21,870	£19,387	£17,619	£16,921	£16,381	£15,013	£15,905	£14,880 -6.4% -34.6%
Cleanliness score (%age acceptable)	95.4	96.1	95.8	96.1	93.9	93.4	93.9	92.2	92.8 0.6% -2.6%



Indicator Description	Scotland							%/value change base* to 18/19		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Cost of roads per kilometre	£12,709	£11,572	£10,993	£10,646	£10,535	£10,842	£10,712	£10,323	£9,417	-8.8%
% of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	30.3	30.5	29.4	28.7	29.0	29.5	30.2	30.0	-0.1%	-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	-0.2%
% 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	36.2	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	-0.7%
Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	£27,881	£24,725	£23,615	£24,824	£23,827	£23,698	£22,150	£21,791	£20,884	-4.2%
Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population		£5,661	£6,080	£5,984	£6,084	£5,693	£6,001	£5,890	-1.9%	4.0%
Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population		£17,955	£18,744	£17,843	£17,614	£16,457	£15,789	£14,994	-5.0%	-16.5%
% of total household waste arising that is recycled	38.7	40.1	41.2	42.2	42.8	44.2	45.2	45.6	44.7	-0.9%
% of adults satisfied with refuse collection	80.9	83.0	83.0	84.0	82.0	79.0	75.0	74.9	-0.1%	-6.0%
% of adults satisfied with street cleaning	73.3	75.0	74.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	66.0	62.9	-3.1%	-10.4%
Gross rent arrears as a % of rent due for the reporting year		5.6	5.9	6.2	6.5	6.7	7.3	6.7	6.6%	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	0.1%
% of dwellings meeting SHQS	53.6	66.1	76.7	83.7	90.4	92.5	93.6	93.9	94.3	-0.3%
Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs				10.2	9.9	9.4	8.7	7.5	7.8	40.7%
% of council dwellings that are energy efficient	74.9	81.2	88.8	93.0	96.6	96.2	97.2	97.5	0.3%	-2.4%
										22.6%



Indicator Description	Scotland							%/value change base* to 18/19		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
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	1.3%
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	0.9%
% of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes	9.1	12.5	14.1	14.1	14.0	14.3	14.3	12.6	-1.7%	3.5%
Cost of planning and building standards per planning application	£4,079	£4,191	£5,495	£3,700	£3,622	£4,253	£3,969	£4,130	£4,439	7.5%
Average time per business and industry planning application	14.0	13.7	10.6	10.6	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.1	-2.7%	-35.1%
% of procurement spent on local enterprises	27.2	26.2	27.2	26.9	27.5	25.4	26.5	27.4	28.7	1.3%
No of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population	19.0	18.9	16.9	16.9	16.6	16.8	16.8	16.7	-0.8%	-12.2%
Investment in economic development & tourism per 1,000	£95,402	£85,334	£80,108	£78,154	£73,932	£67,723	£82,862	£95,611	£102,086	6.8%
Proportion of people earning less than the living wage	18.8	18.6	19.3	19.6	20.1	18.4	19.4	19.4	1.0%	0.6%
Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband	56.1	67.5	78.6	85.9	91.1	92.0	92.0	92.0	0.9%	35.9%
Town vacancy rates	10.1	11.9	10.2	11.5	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	-1.5%	-0.1%
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	37.4	37.4	37.4	37.4	-3.4%	24.4%

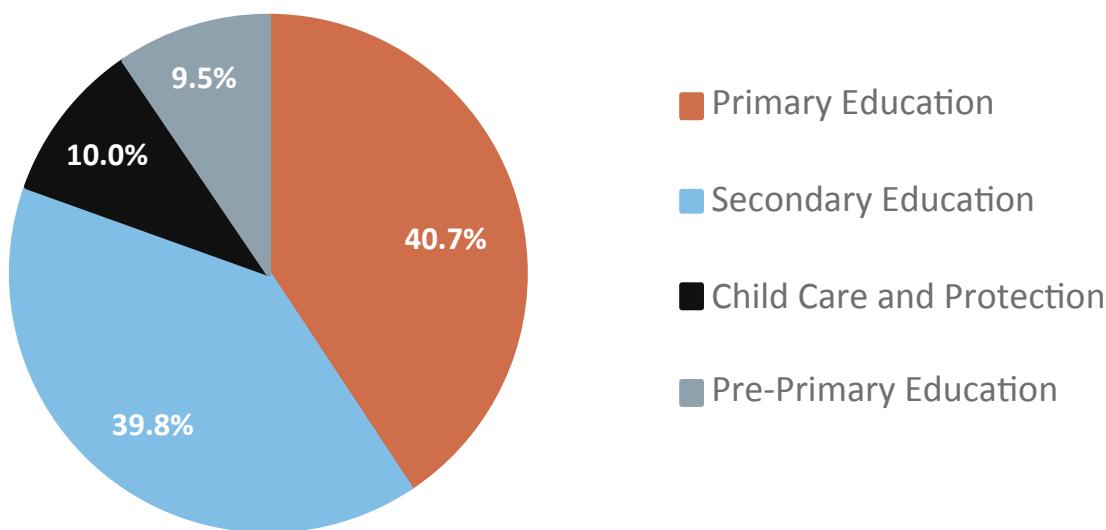




Children's Services

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

Fig 1: Proportion of gross revenue expenditure for children's services by element 2018-19



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

As can be seen, primary and secondary school provision are the major spend areas, with pre-school education and childcare and protection¹⁴ accounting for a very much lower percentage of total spending on children. The proportion spent on pre-primary has grown over recent years in line with the policy agenda to expand early years provision. Each element is looked at in turn below.

Data on looked after children will be published in March 2020 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 nine-year period the Scottish average for the cost per ELC registration has increased by 32.3%, an increase in real terms of £1,239 per registration. This reflects a 38.8% increase in gross expenditure and a 4.9% increase in the number of ELC registrations, an additional 4,499 places.

In the last 12 months, real unit costs have increased by 11.5%. This reflects an increase in gross expenditure of 12.3% and a 0.7% increase in the number of registrations during this period.

Table 7: Cost per pre-school registration

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£3,831	£3,479	£3,425	£3,256	£3,534	£4,074	£4,352	£4,547	£5,070	11.5%	32.3%

¹⁴ Expenditure on looked after children payments (community and residential).



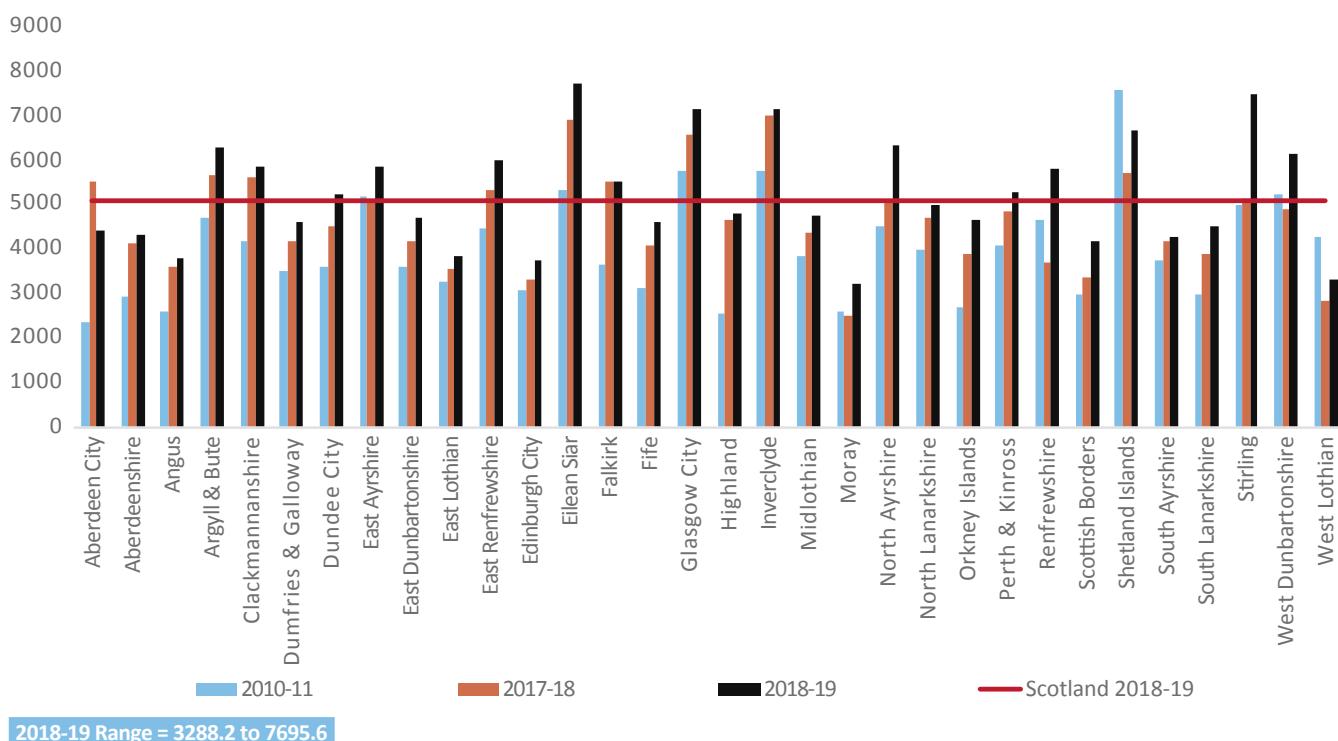
the amount of early learning and childcare from 475 hours a year to 600 hours for each eligible child. By 2020, the Act introduces a further commitment to the near doubling of entitlement to funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours a year for all three and four-year olds and eligible two-year olds.

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

In 2018/19, the average cost per registration was £5,070 with substantial and widening variation between councils, ranging from £3,228 to £7,696 per registration. Analysis of this variation reveals a systematic relationship with deprivation with the most deprived councils reporting significantly higher levels of spend than the least deprived councils (£5,984 compared to £4,480).

Fig 2: Cost per pre-school education registration (£)

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



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

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



Pre-school performance

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

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

Care Inspectorate quality evaluations reflect the number of publicly funded early years providers which were graded good or better for all quality themes as a percentage of all publicly funded early years provision which was inspected. Overall, the proportion of publicly funded services graded good or better for all quality themes has increased between 2010/11 and 2018/19 although there has been a decline in the past four years. Between 2010/11 and 2014/15, quality ratings improved from 87.1% to 93.5%. Between 2015/16 and 2018/19, small year on year reductions have seen quality ratings fall to 90.6%.

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. 26% of all children who will receive expanded hours will be in partner provision, up from 18%. 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.

Table 8: Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better¹⁵

2010-11	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 2010-11 to 2018-19
87.1	90.6	91.3	92.6	93.5	91.9	91.7	91.0	90.6	-0.4	3.5

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

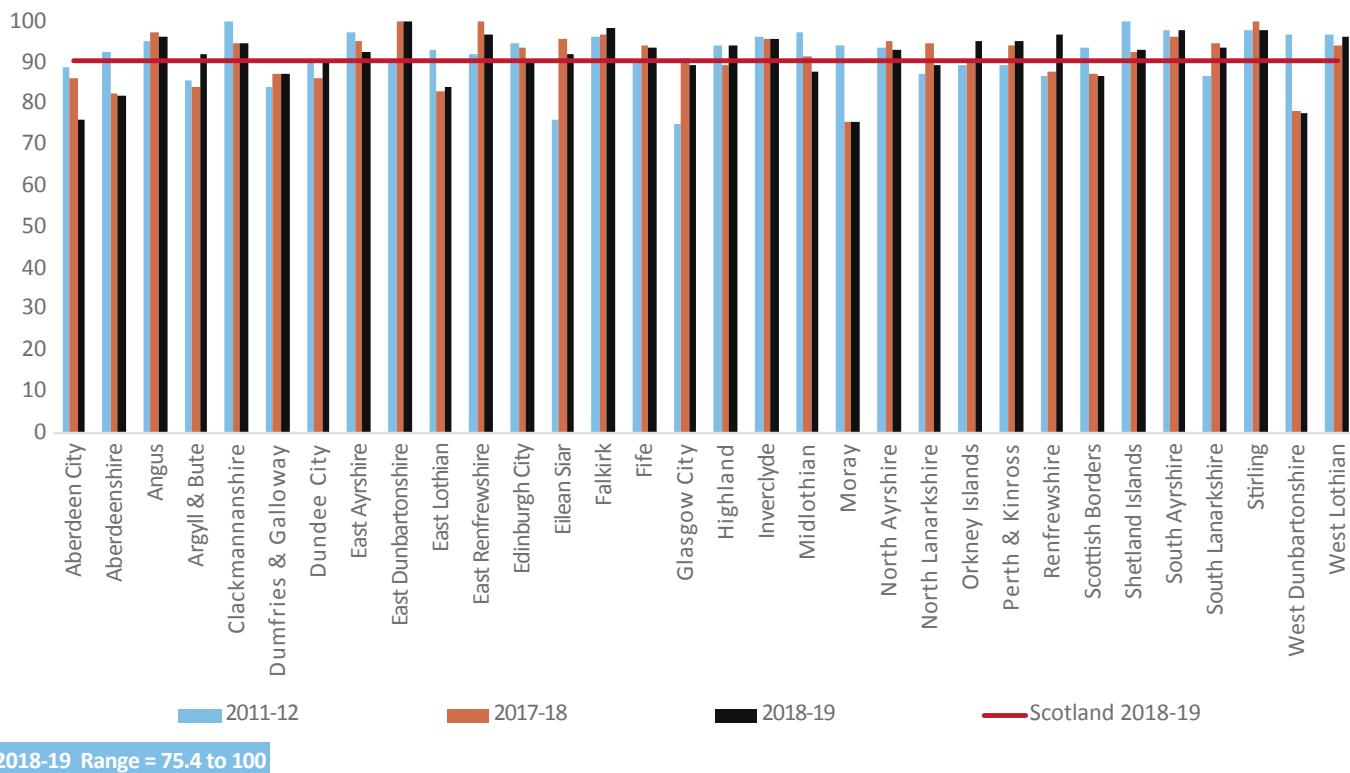
- The decreasing number of registered day-care of children services
- Variation in return rates of annual returns, inspection methodology and inspection frequency
- Variations in the question wording in the annual return in line with changes to government policy (the biggest change in the question was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

There is considerable variation across councils, with quality ratings in 2018/19 ranging from 75% to 100%. This variation has widened in recent years and does not appear to be systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of authority. The underpinning data and methodology used for this measure will be subject to further quality assurance going forward to ensure it is robust and reliable.

¹⁵ Data is a snapshot as at 31 December each year.



Fig 3: Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better



Source: Figures supplied by the Care Inspectorate

Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

Understanding children's development as they progress through the pre-school setting is reflected as the percentage of children meeting developmental milestones, i.e. with no concerns across any domain, at their 27-30 month review. During 27-30 month reviews, the health professional (normally a health visitor) assesses children's developmental status and records the outcome (e.g. no concern, concern newly suspected as a result of the review, or concern or disorder already known prior to the review) against each of 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 70.9% to 72.4% between 2013/14 and 2015/16, however changes in methodology and assessment practice in 2016/17 mean it is not possible to provide a direct comparison 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. This has resulted in the 2016/17 data not being directly comparable to previous years data.

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. This will hopefully improve the reach of assessments, and importantly increase the number of assessments which take place with more vulnerable families which were previously harder to reach in the clinic-based approach. This will have an impact on the measure as this key cohort of children was previously under-reported.

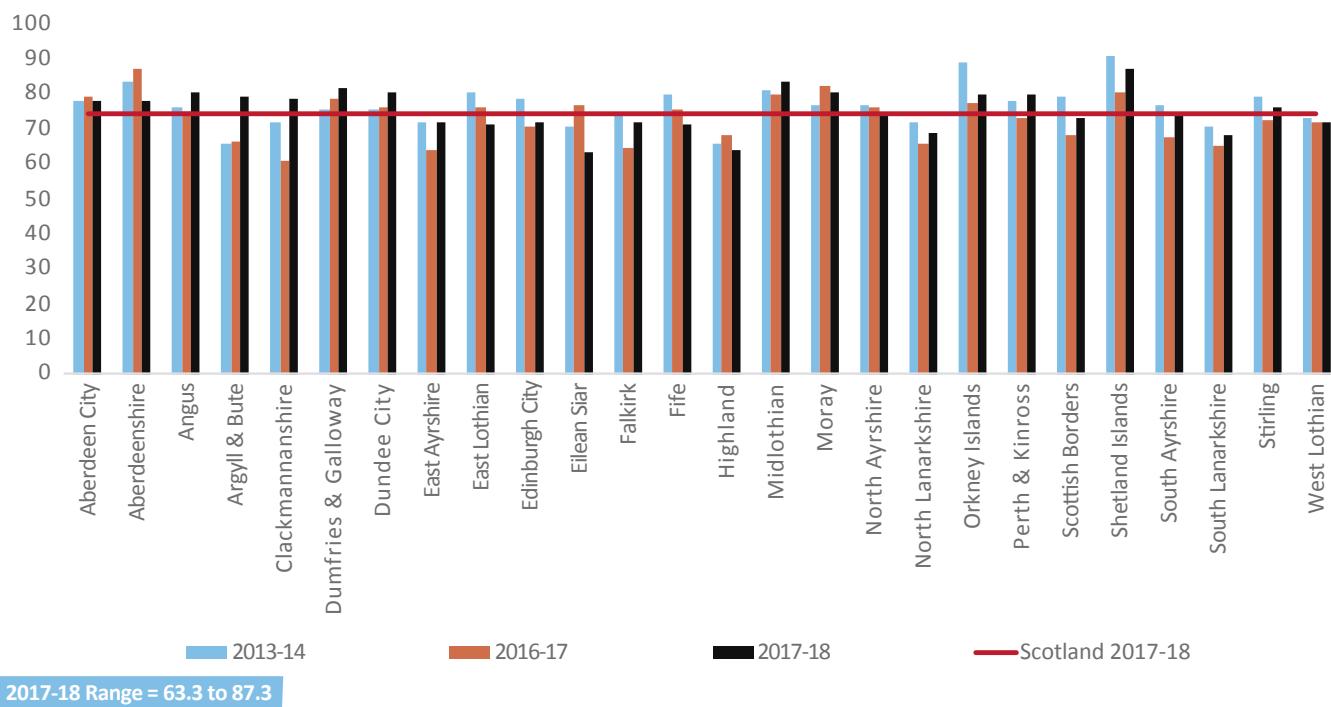
**Table 9: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones**

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2016-17 to 2017-18	Value Change 2013-14 to 2017-18
70.9	71.6	72.4	66.1	57.1	dna ¹⁶	-9.0%	-13.7%

Data for 2018/19 will be published in 2020 and will be included in the LGBF refresh if available.

While it is not currently possible to compare progress over time in relation to the included measure, an alternative measure looking at the percentage of children with one or more concern identified in the 27-30 month review reveals improvement in this important outcome area. This measure shows improvement from 19.1% to 15.4% between 2013/14 and 2017/18, an improvement rate of 20%. For this alternative measure, there is a significant relationship with deprivation. In 2017/18 more than one in five children (22.4%) from deprived areas had at least one developmental concern compared to one in eleven for the least deprived areas (9%). Looked after children are more likely to have at least one developmental concern (29%) compared to those not looked after (15%).¹⁷

For the original LGBF measure, the percentage of children meeting developmental milestones, there was significant variation across councils in 2017/18, ranging from 63% to 87% (excluding outliers).

Fig 4: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

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

16 <https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics//Child-Health/Publications/2019-04-09/visualisation.asp>

17 <https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Child-Health/Publications/2019-04-09/2019-04-09-Child-Health-27m-review-Report.pdf>



Primary and secondary school spending

The pattern of spend on primary and secondary schooling is standardised as “total cost per pupil”. In both primary and secondary education, there has been a reduction in real costs per pupil since 2010/11 (-5.2% and -1.8% respectively). However, recently, due to an increase in levels of expenditure, costs have now begun to rise.

The recent increase in spend on education 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 recent 3% pay award for teachers in 2018/19 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 awards of a further 7% in 2019/20 and 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 2018/19, this reflected £179 million¹⁸ in additional funding, including Pupil Equity Funding of £120 million, and around £45 million to nine Challenge Authorities.

Cost per primary pupil

There has been a real terms reduction of £288 per primary pupil since 2010/11, representing a 5.2% reduction. While real gross expenditure has increased by 3.9% across the period, there has been a 9.6% increase in pupil numbers during this time.

In 2018/19, the average cost per primary pupil increased by £170 from £5,080 to £5,250, an increase of 3.3% from the previous year. This reflects a 3.3% increase in gross expenditure and a 0.01% reduction in pupil numbers.

Table 10: Cost per primary pupil

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£5,539	£5,384	£5,234	£5,115	£4,968	£4,993	£4,973	£5,080	£5,250	3.3%	-5.2%

Cost per secondary pupil

As with primary pupil costs, there was a real terms reduction of £129 per secondary pupil between 2010/11 and 2018/19, representing a 1.8% reduction in unit costs. There has been a 4.9% reduction in pupil numbers across this period; however, the reduction in gross expenditure has been proportionately larger at 6.6%.

In 2018/19, the average cost per secondary school pupil increased by £174 from £7,011 to £7,185, an increase of 2.5% from the previous year. This reflects a 4.0% increase in expenditure, and a 1.5% growth in pupil numbers.

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/pupil-attainment/>

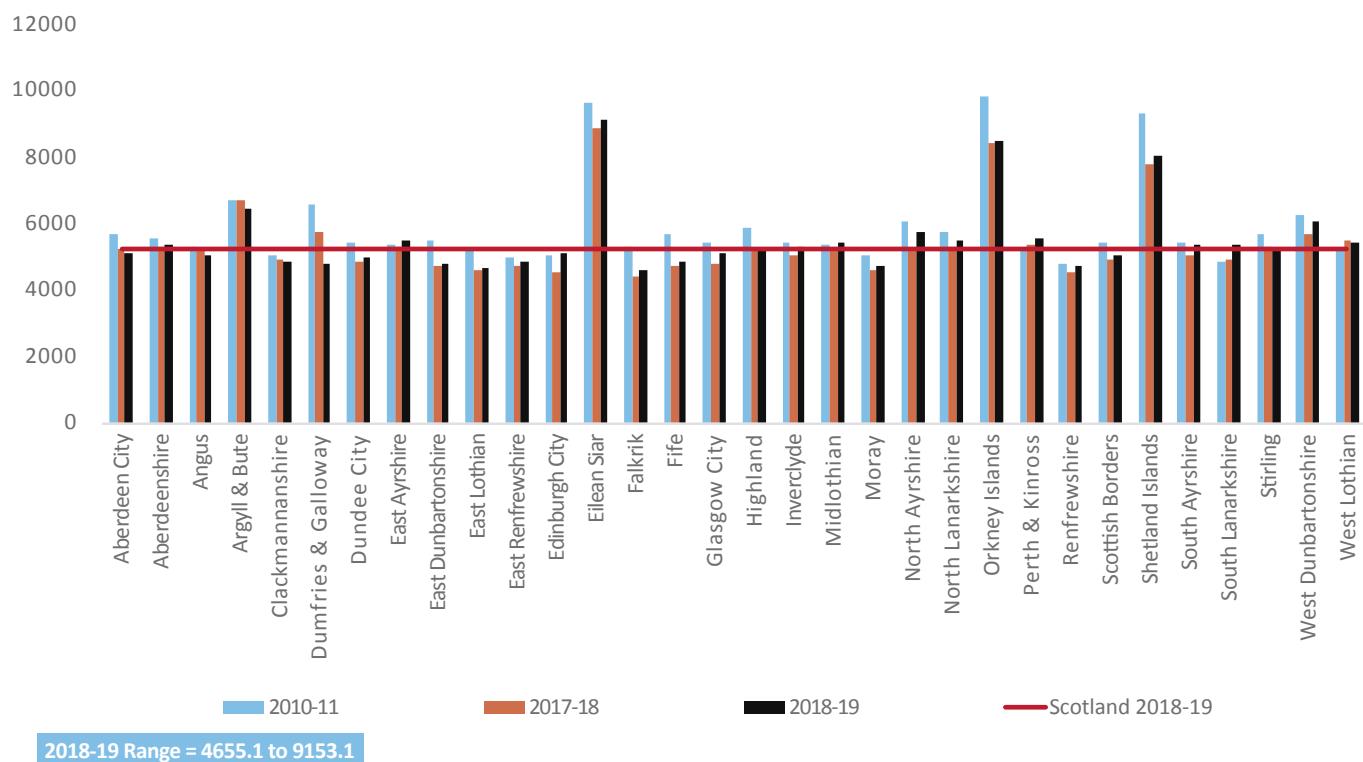


Table 11: Cost per secondary pupil

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£7,314	£7,098	£7,076	£7,059	£7,021	£7,096	£7,052	£7,011	£7,185	2.5%	-1.8%

There is still a considerable although narrowing level of variation across councils, particularly for secondary education. Cost data continues to show a very distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the island councils spending significantly more than others. In primary education, costs range from £4,655 to £9,153 (£4,655 to £6,490 excluding islands) while in secondary the range is £6,407 to £11,248 (£6,407 to £9,720 excluding islands).

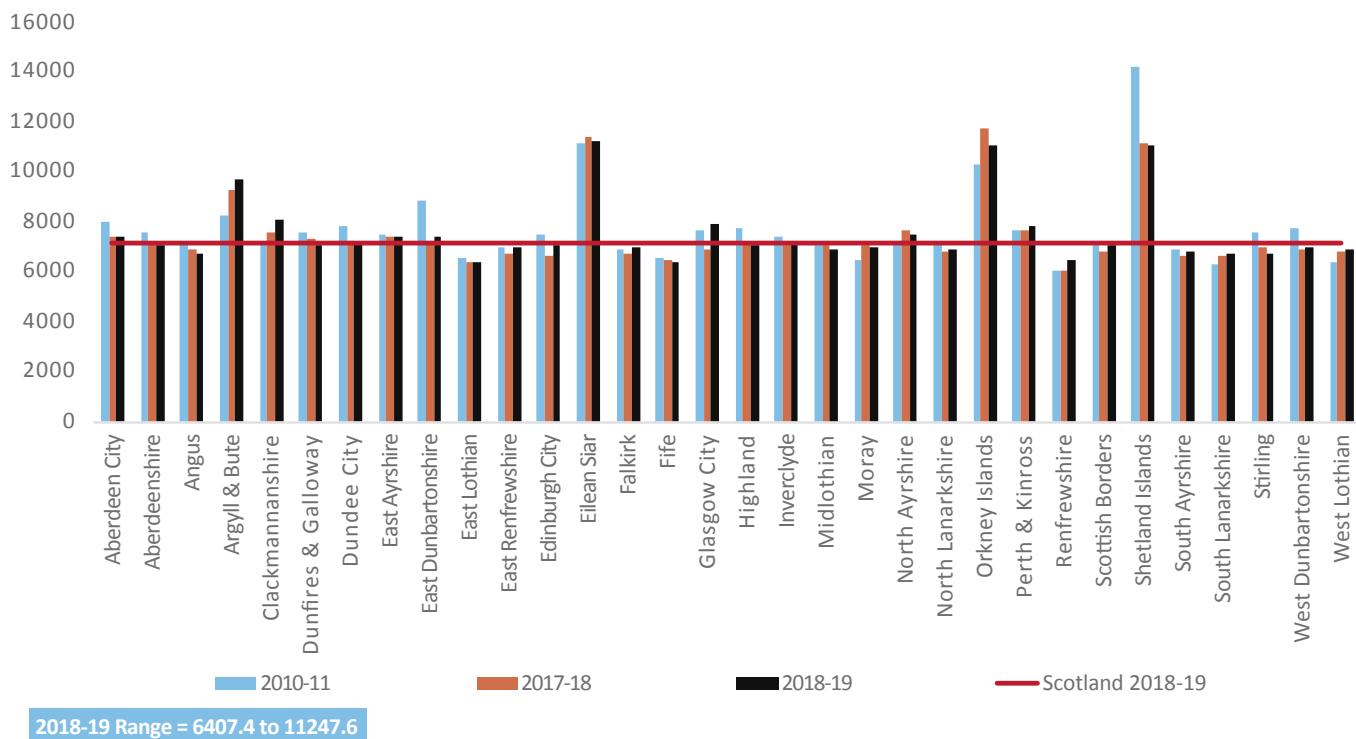
Fig 5: Cost per primary school pupil (£)



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



Fig 6: 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.

This data has been published by Scottish Government as “experimental data” for the past 3 years, however, in 2019, the Scottish Government considered this data sufficiently consistent and reliable to remove the experimental status. This follows a national programme of quality assurance and moderation to provide more support and improve confidence and understanding among teachers and, from August 2017, new nationally consistent standardised assessments have been made available for teachers to help inform their judgements.¹⁹ Data for 2018/19 is therefore included within the LGBF and provides baseline data to help support local improvements in learning for pupils within the Broad General Education (stages P1 through to S3 of schooling). The following measures are included:

- 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)

Table 12: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils achieving expected CfE levels in Literacy and Numeracy

	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	72.30	63.06	83.72	20.66
Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy	79.07	71.68	88.48	16.81

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.

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/achievement-curriculum-excellence-cfe-levels-2018-19/pages/3/#Chapter1.3>



Fig 7: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy

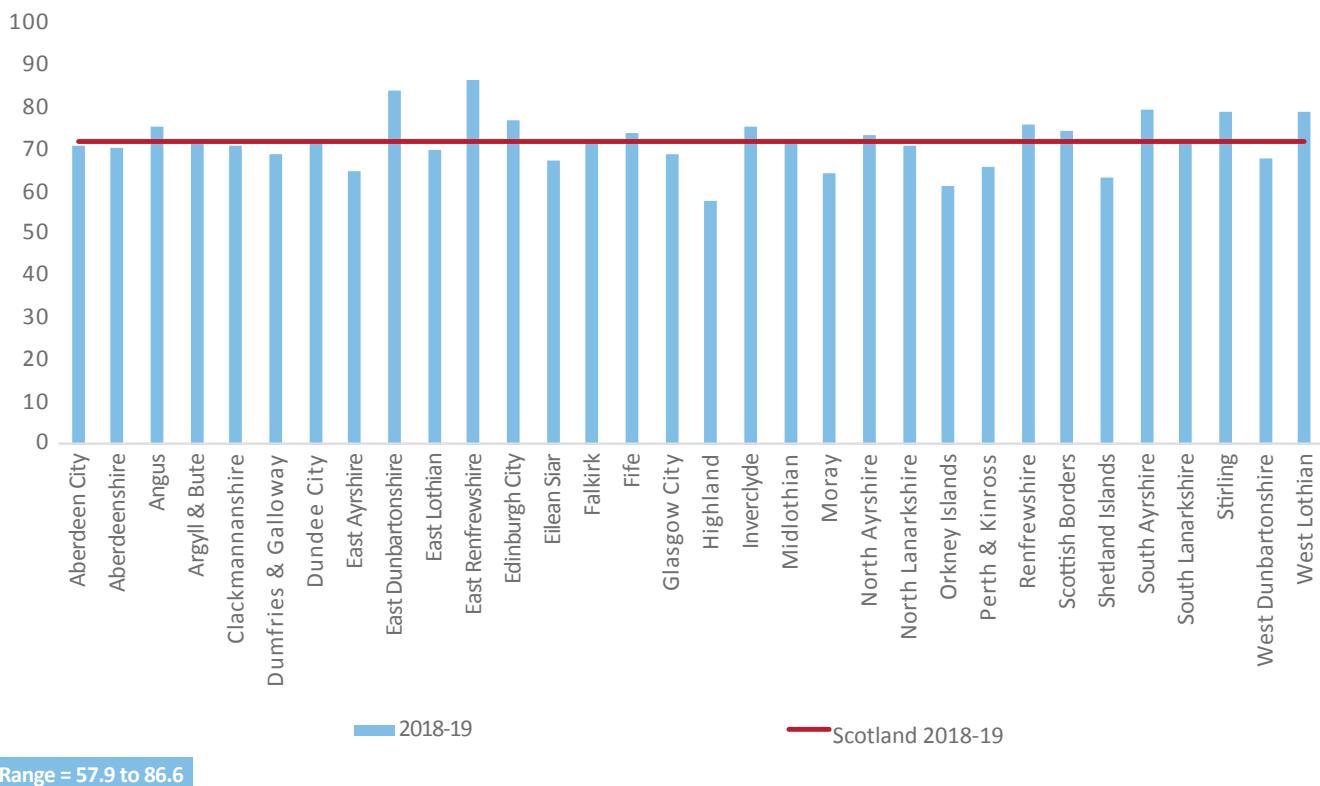


Fig 8: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy

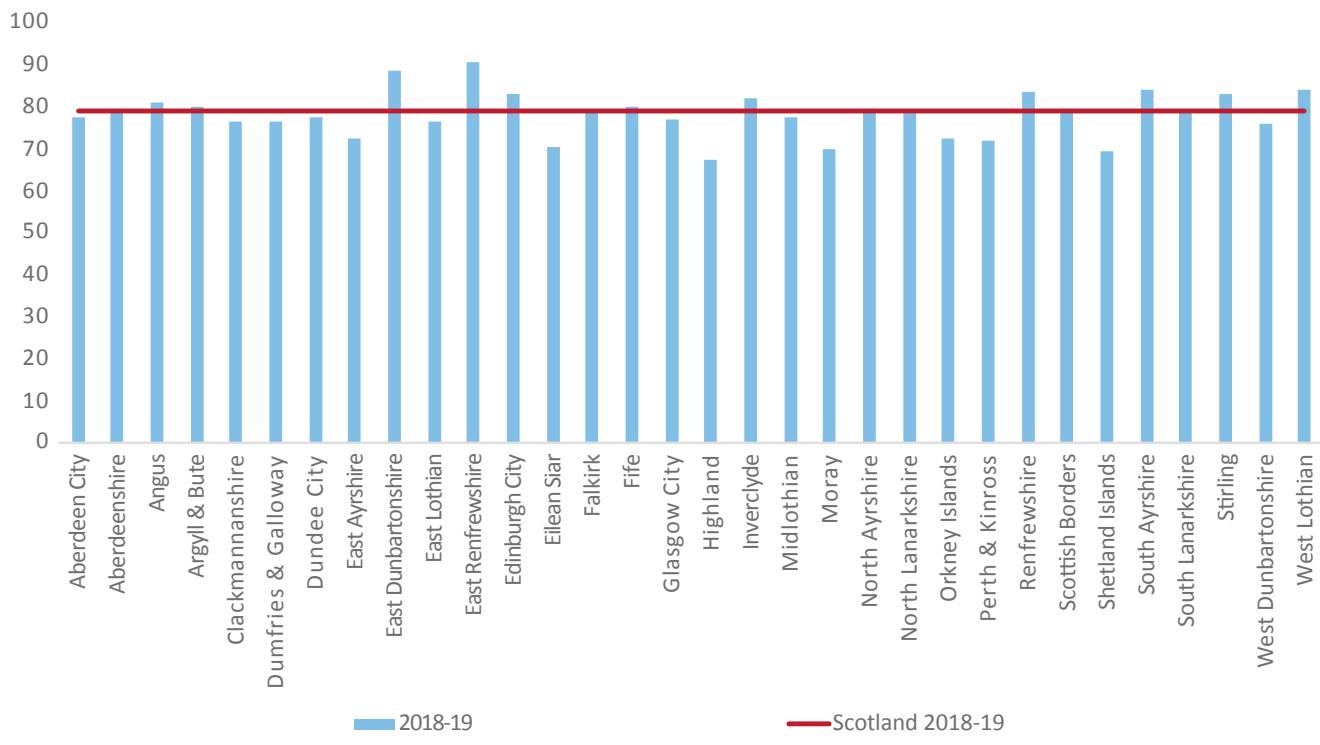




Fig 9: Literacy Attainment Gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 Combined)

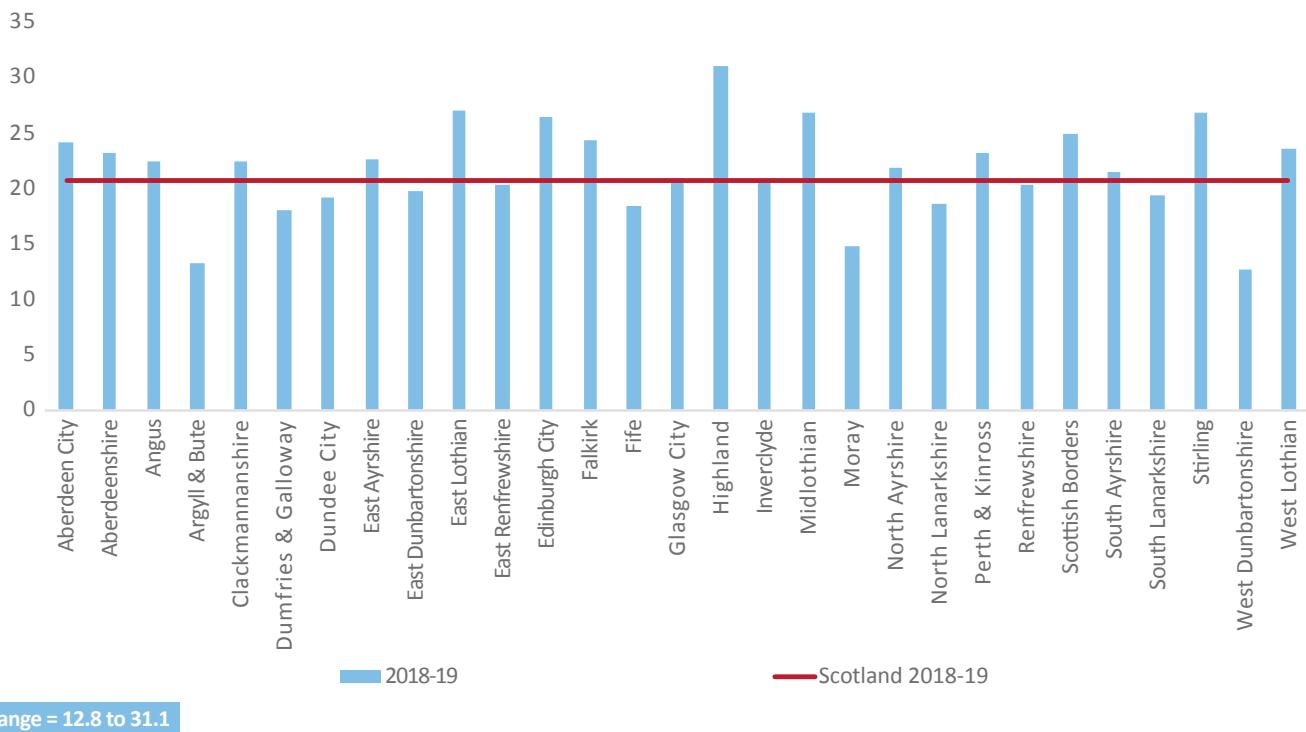
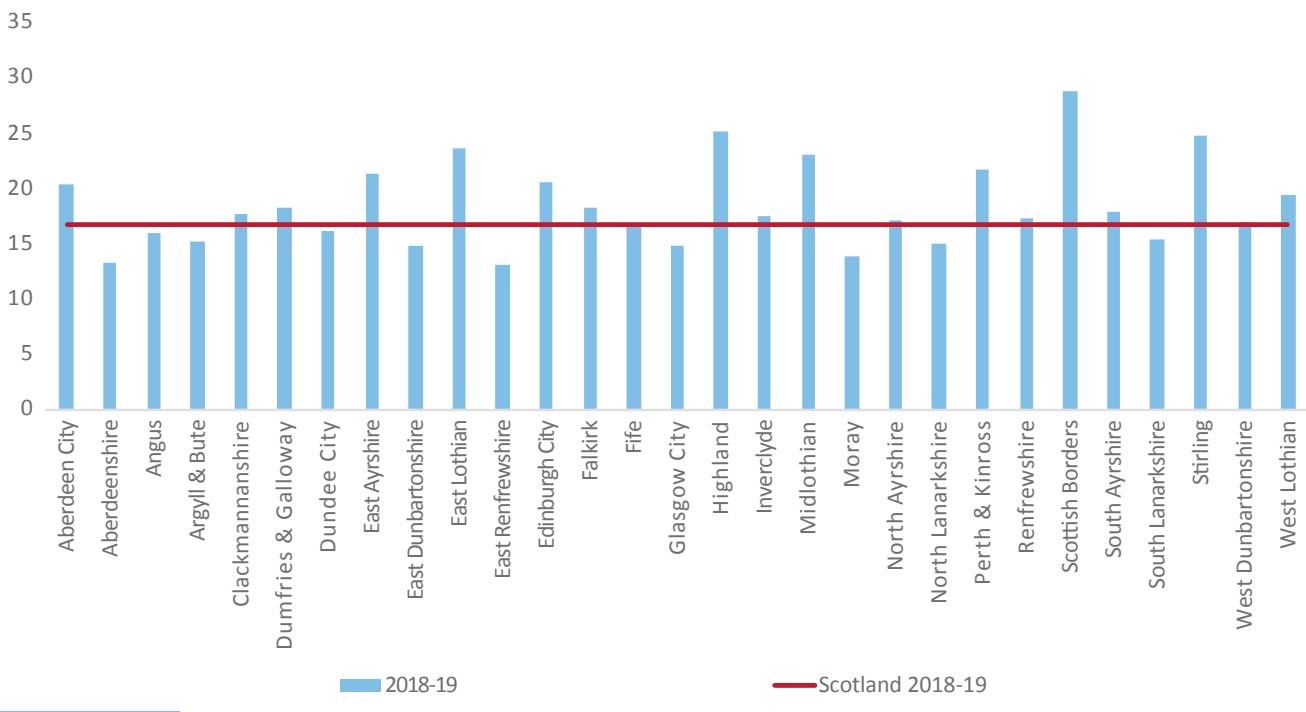


Fig 10: Numeracy Attainment Gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 Combined)



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



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.²⁰ 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.

Table 13: School attendance rates for all pupils and for children who are looked after

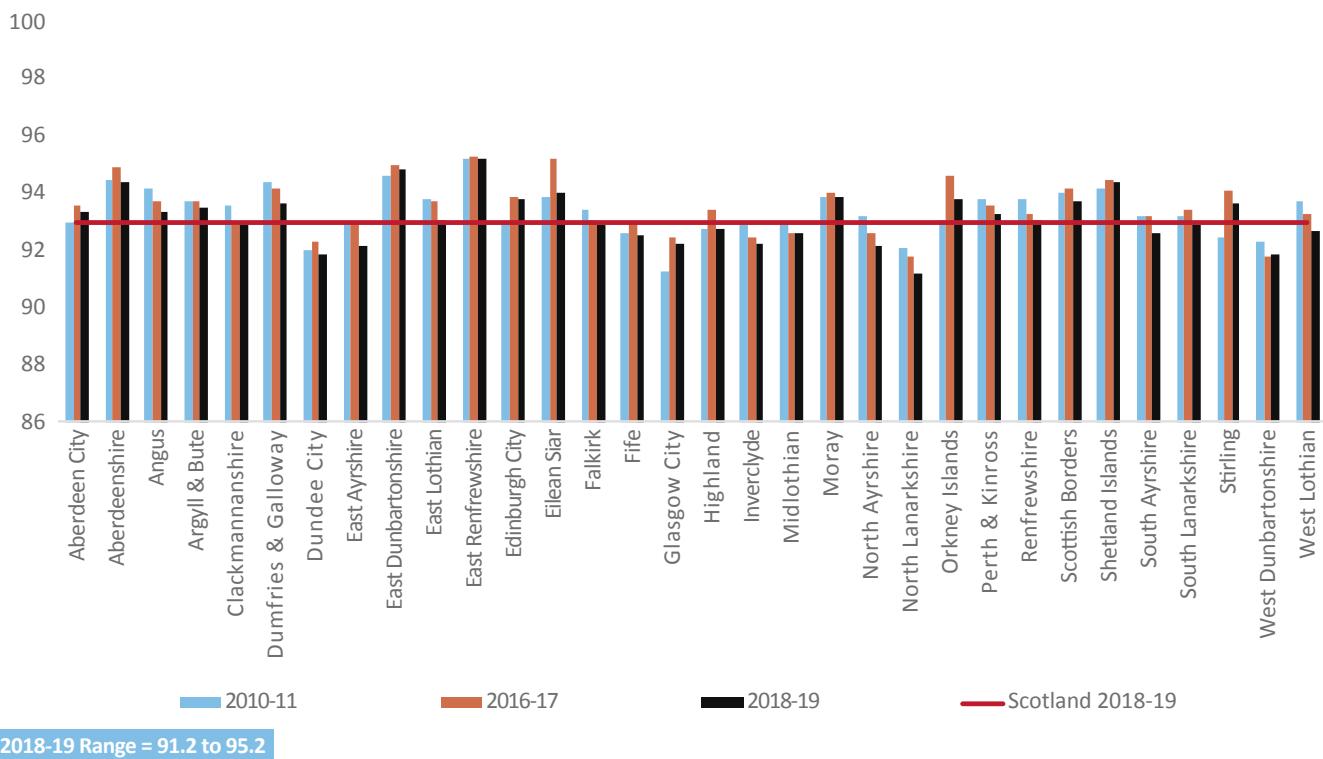
	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	Value Change 2016-17 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
School Attendance Rates	93.1	93.6	93.7	93.3	93.0	-0.3	0.1
School Attendance Rates (LAC)	88.6	88.6	91.6	91.0	dna	n/a	2.4

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%).

²⁰ 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 11: School attendance rates (%)



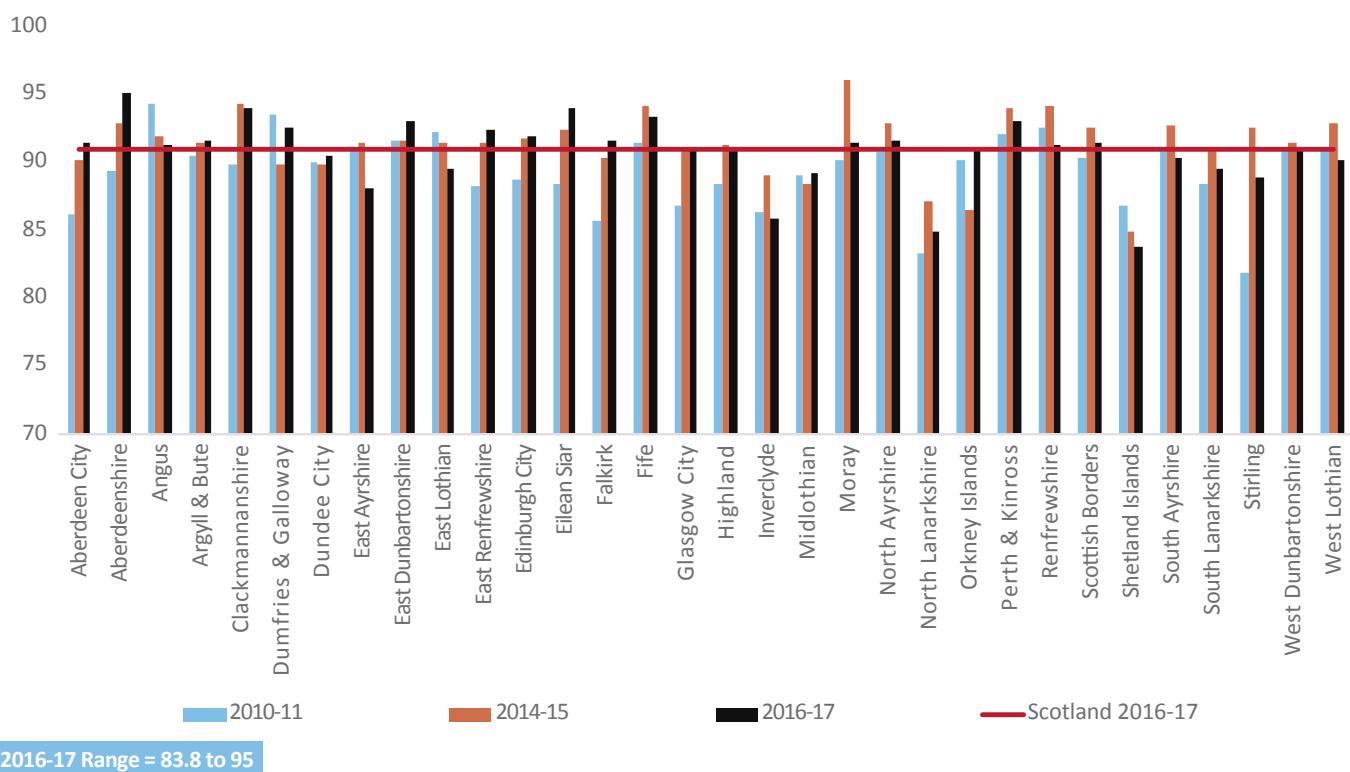
Source: Scottish Government attendance and absence figures

2018/19 data for school attendance of looked after children is not published until June 2020. In terms of previous trends, the school attendance of looked after children has improved from 88.6% in 2010/11 to 91.0% in 2016/17, with improvement stalling in the most recent years. The attendance rates of looked after children are below those of all pupils, however, the gap between looked after children and all children has been closing across this period due to a faster improvement rate for looked after children, with the gap reducing from 5.1 percentage points to 2.3 percentage points in 2016/17. Attendance is lowest for those looked after at home and with a greater number of placements. Looked after children have a lower attendance rate than all pupils in all school sectors but the differences are significant in secondary school (75.1% compared to 91.2% for all pupils in secondary school). As with overall attendance rates, data is published only every two years.

There is greater variation across councils in attendance rates for looked after children than for other pupils, ranging from 83% to 95% in 2016/17. 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.



Fig 12: 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 half-days of temporary exclusions and number of pupils removed from the register (previously known as ‘permanent’ exclusions) per 1000 pupils.²¹ Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, exclusion rates have reduced year on year, falling from 40.0 to 21.6 across the period.

²¹ As LAC pupil numbers at local authority level are not available on a consistent basis for the time series required, total LAC numbers are used. These figures therefore differ from Scotland figures published by the Scottish Government which are based on LAC pupil numbers

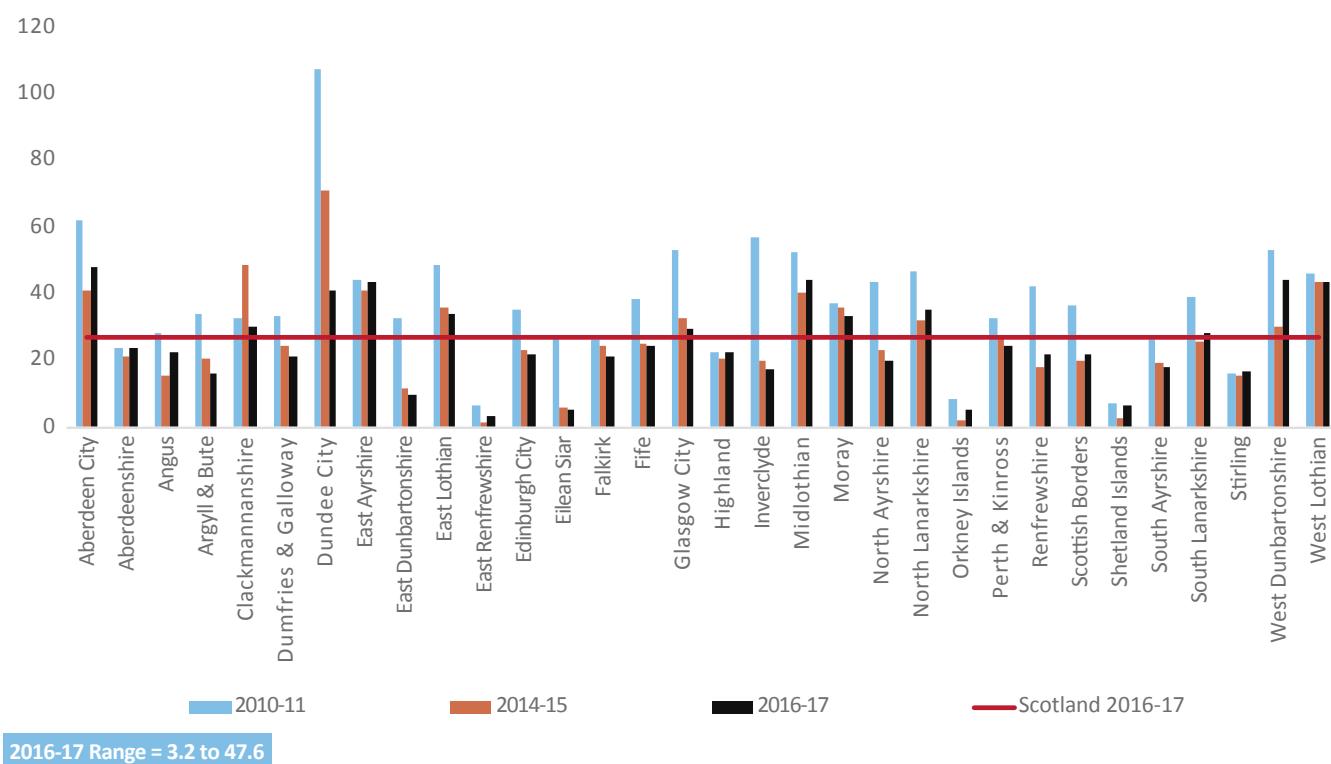


Table 14: School exclusion rates for all pupils and for children who are looked after

	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%	-46.0%
School Exclusion Rates (LAC)	165.6	184.5	94.3	80.0	dna	n/a	-51.7%

Local authority level data for school exclusion rates is not published until March 2020. In terms of previous trends, there was significant but narrowing variation across councils in 2016/17, with rates per 1000 pupils ranging from 3.2 to 47.6. The variation between councils appears to be related to the level of deprivation within councils, with lower exclusion rates reported in those councils with lower levels of deprivation. As with attendance rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years.

Fig 13: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils)



Source: Scottish Government Exclusions Dataset

2018/19 data for exclusion rates of looked after children is not published until June 2020. In terms of previous trends, 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 for the full year has more than halved since 2010/11. Between 2010/11 and 2016/17, exclusion rates for children who are looked after reduced from 165.6 to 79.9. This represents an improvement rate of 52%, compared to an improvement rate of 33% for all pupils across the same period.

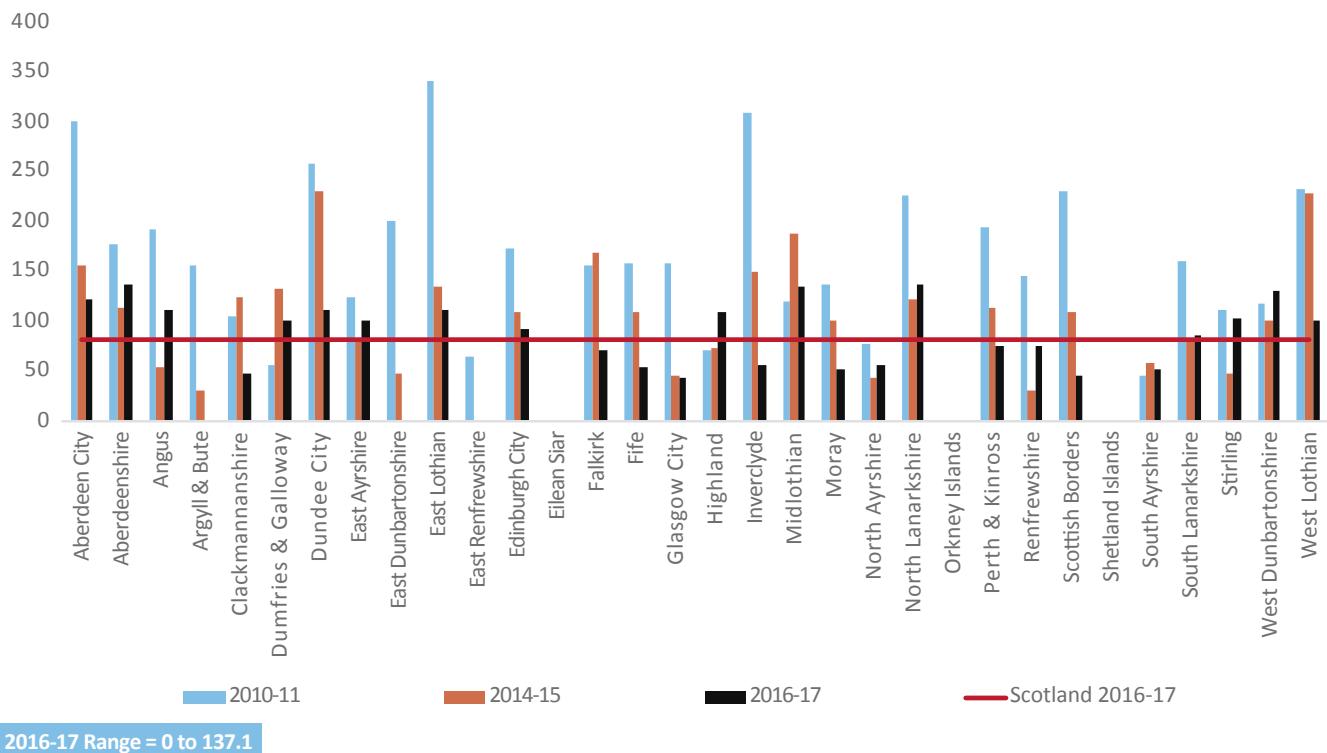
Those children in residential accommodation tend to have higher rates of exclusions than those looked after in the community. Children looked after at home have a noticeably higher exclusion rate than others looked after in the community. There is a tendency for looked after children with a greater number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



There is greater variation across councils in exclusion rates for looked after children than for all pupils, ranging from 0 to 137 in 2016/17. This variation between councils has narrowed significantly in the most recent year. There are no systematic effects in relation to council level of deprivation, rurality or size on exclusion rates. The small number of looked after children in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation.

As with overall exclusion rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years.

Fig 14: School exclusion rates (looked after children) (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 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 was not possible to include 2018/19 data here. This will be included when it is published in March.

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, the number of subjects typically studied by pupils varies between local authorities. This reflects differing approaches to developing employability skills and the core qualification sets needed to enable a range of post school destinations. Tariff scores strongly reflect the total number of subjects studied while the complementary tariff may be more useful in reflecting different curriculum models.

As the school leaver data is not yet available for 2018/19, 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 2019 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupil's attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.²²

Table 15: Average total tariff by SIMD quintile

	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	Range 2018-19
Overall Average Tariff	770	798	827	860	877	888	894	892	-0.2%	15.9%	749-1354
Average Tariff SIMD Q1	478	510	551	581	603	625	620	625	1.0%	30.8%	417-1039
Average Tariff SIMD Q2	618	644	685	716	741	751	752	740	-1.6%	19.7%	470-1088
Average Tariff SIMD Q3	759	788	816	851	864	882	899	872	-3.0%	14.9%	706-1275
Average Tariff SIMD Q4	909	929	962	984	998	1002	1019	1013	-0.6%	11.4%	836-1310
Average Tariff SIMD Q5	1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1224	1193	-2.5%	8.4%	926-1478

An improving trend can be seen in average total tariff over the past eight years, increasing by 15.9% from 770 in 2011/12 to 892 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

²² Overall average total tariff is calculated by the Improvement service



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 30.8% and 19.7% for the two most deprived groups compared to 11.4% and 8.4% for the least deprived groups.

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 1D 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).

While there is a general narrowing of variation between councils in relation to overall average tariff (749 to 1354) and within the least deprived quintile groups, the level of variation is widening for the most deprived quintile groups. Further detail of the variation within councils is presented in the graphs below.

Fig 15: Overall average total tariff

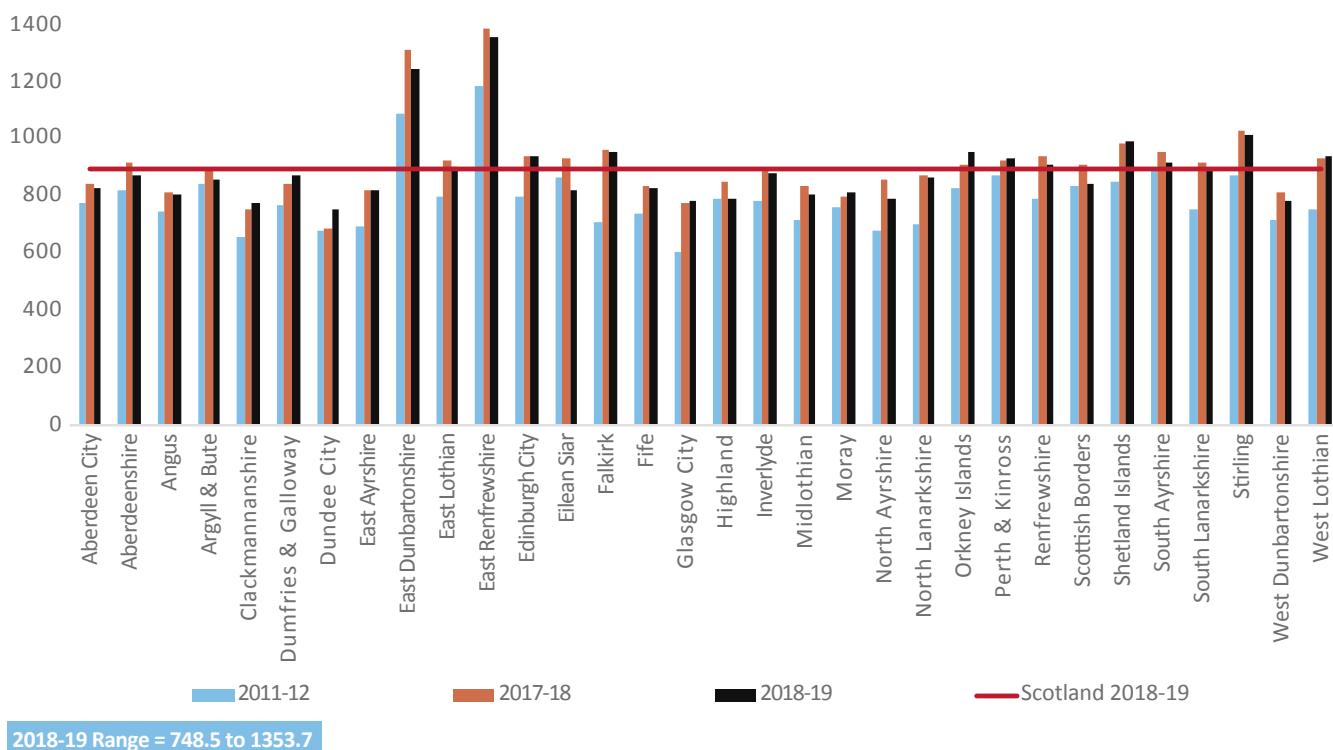




Fig 16: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1

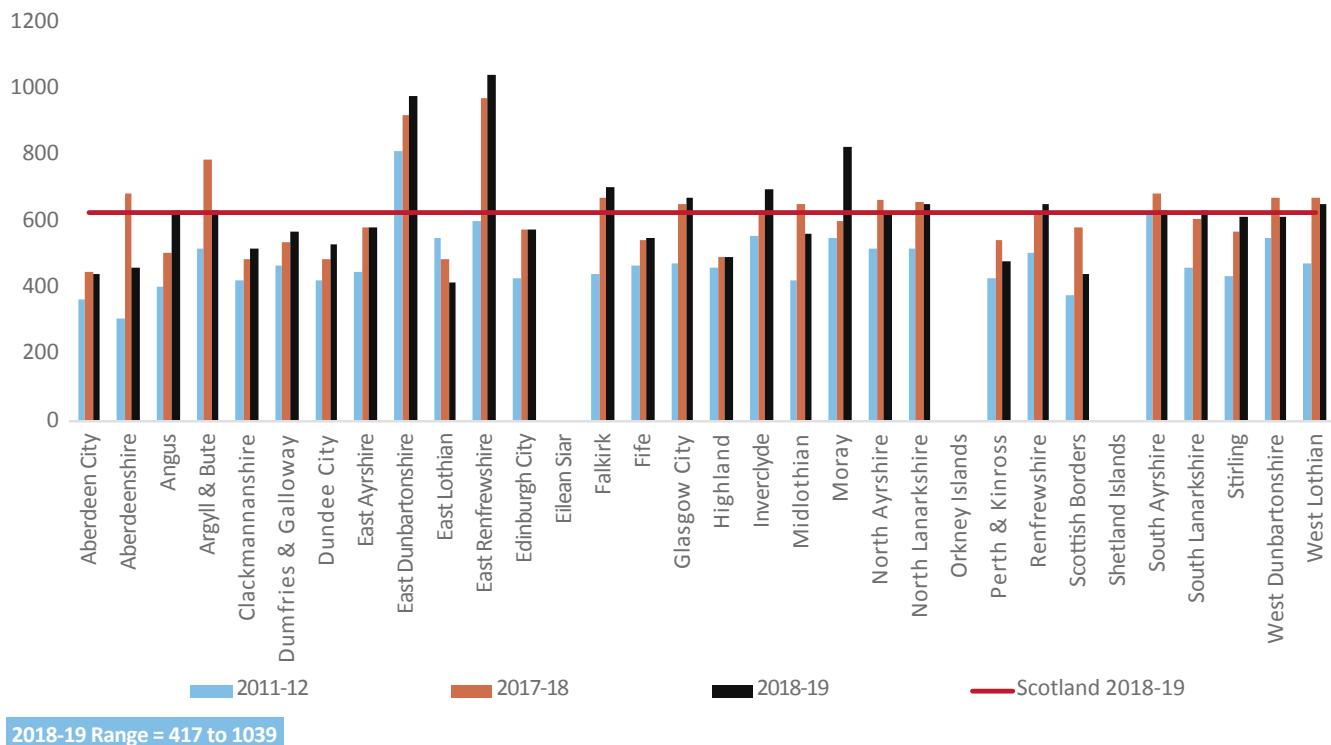


Fig 17: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2

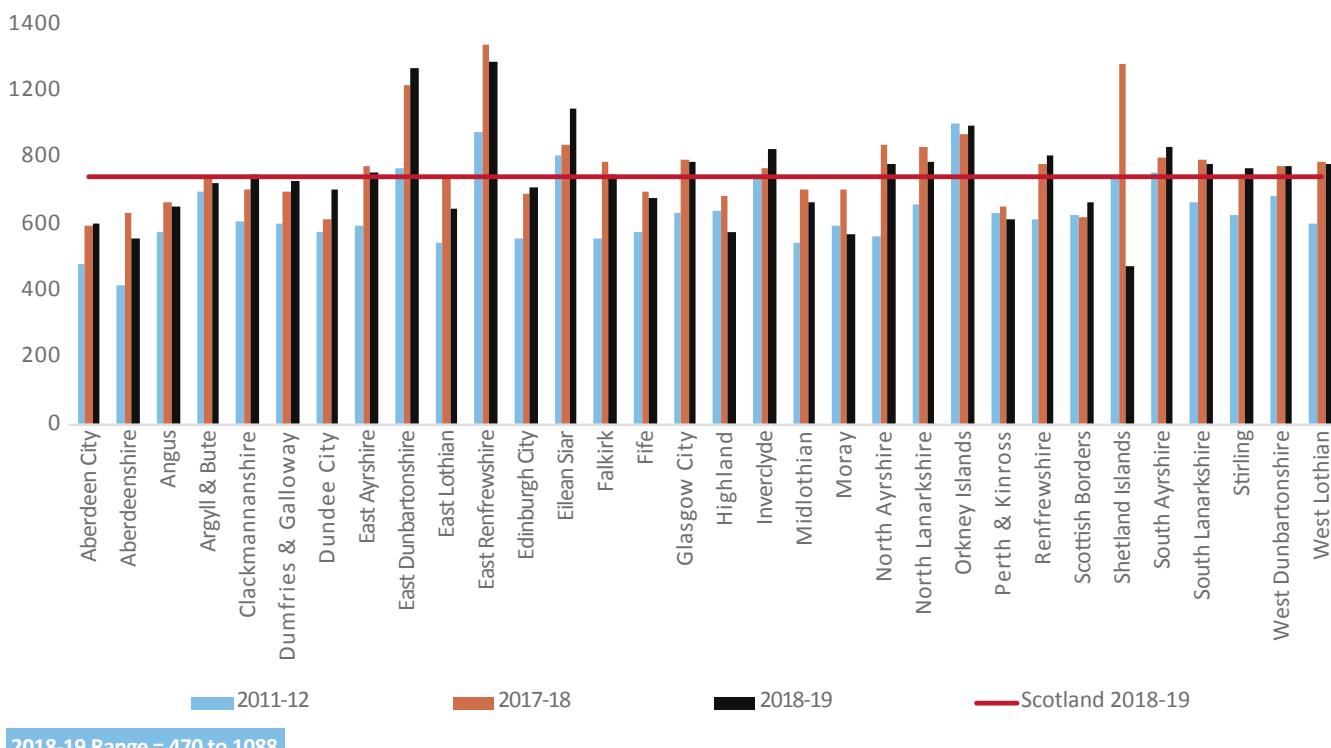




Fig 18: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3

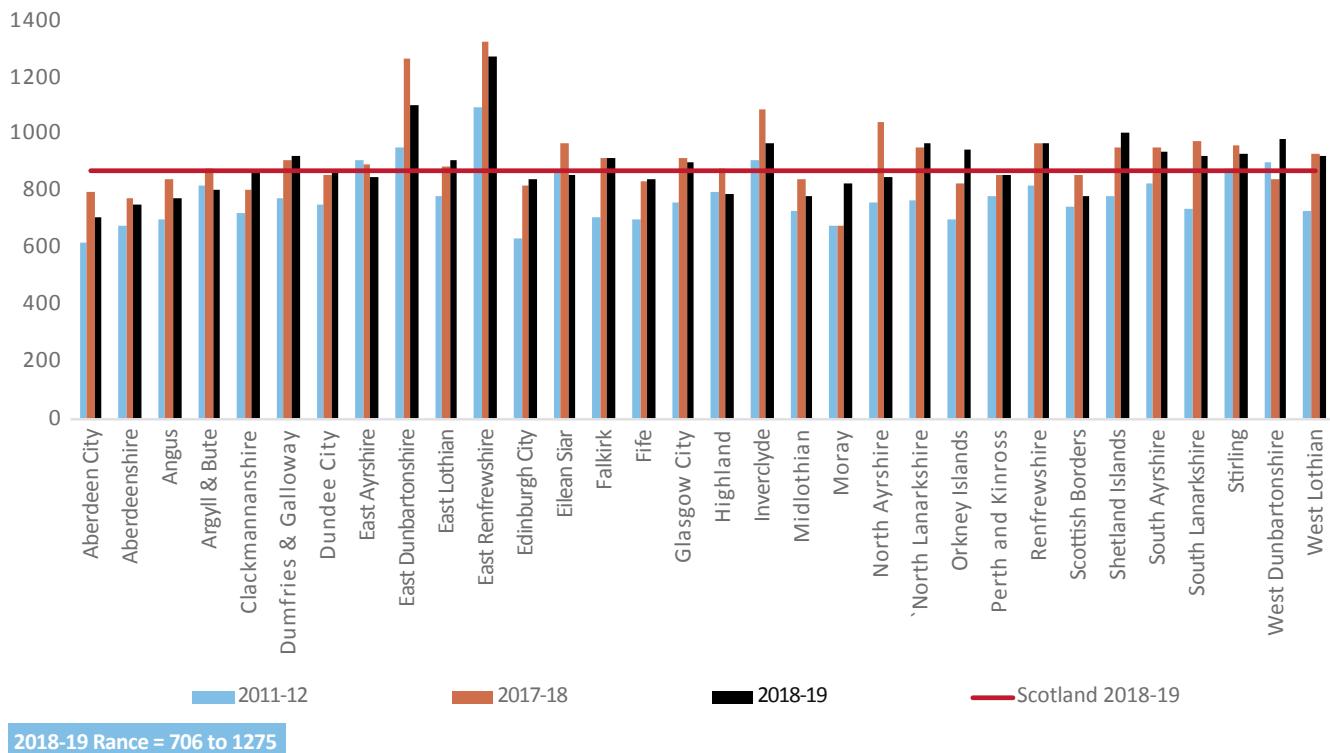


Fig 19: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4

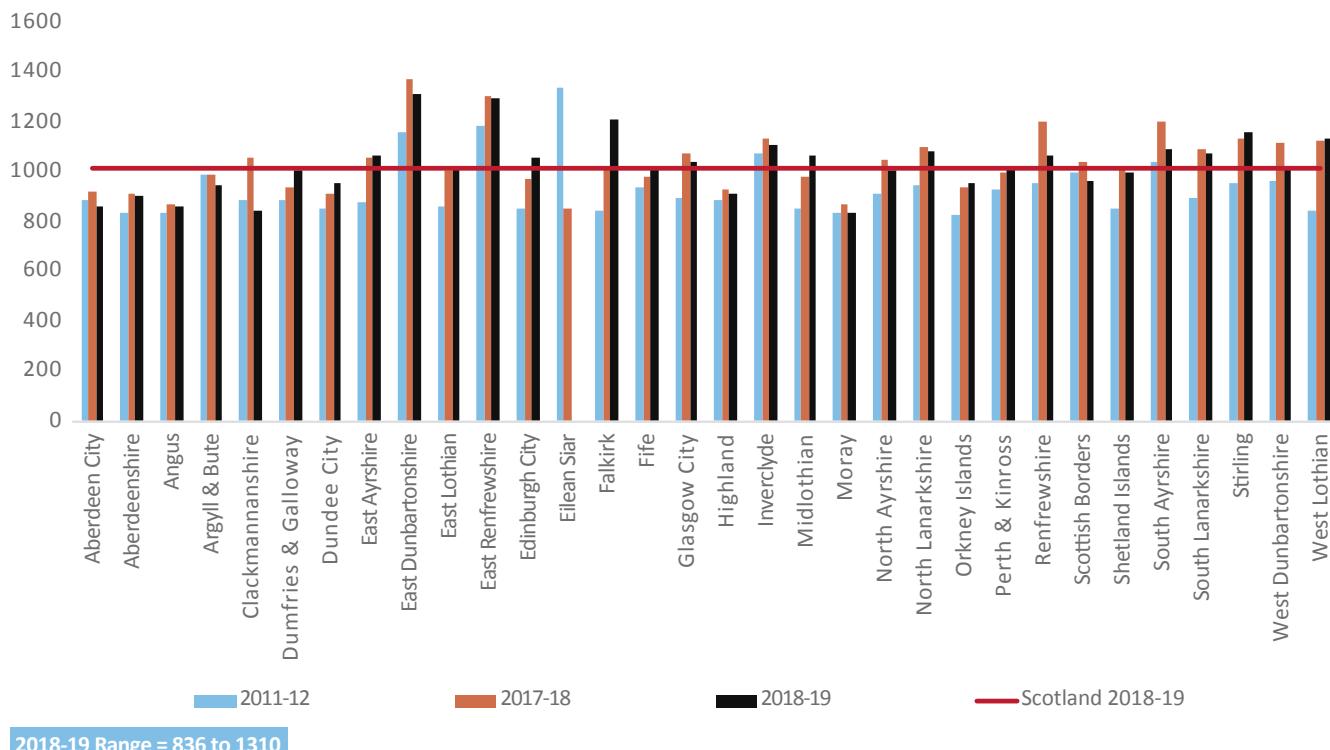
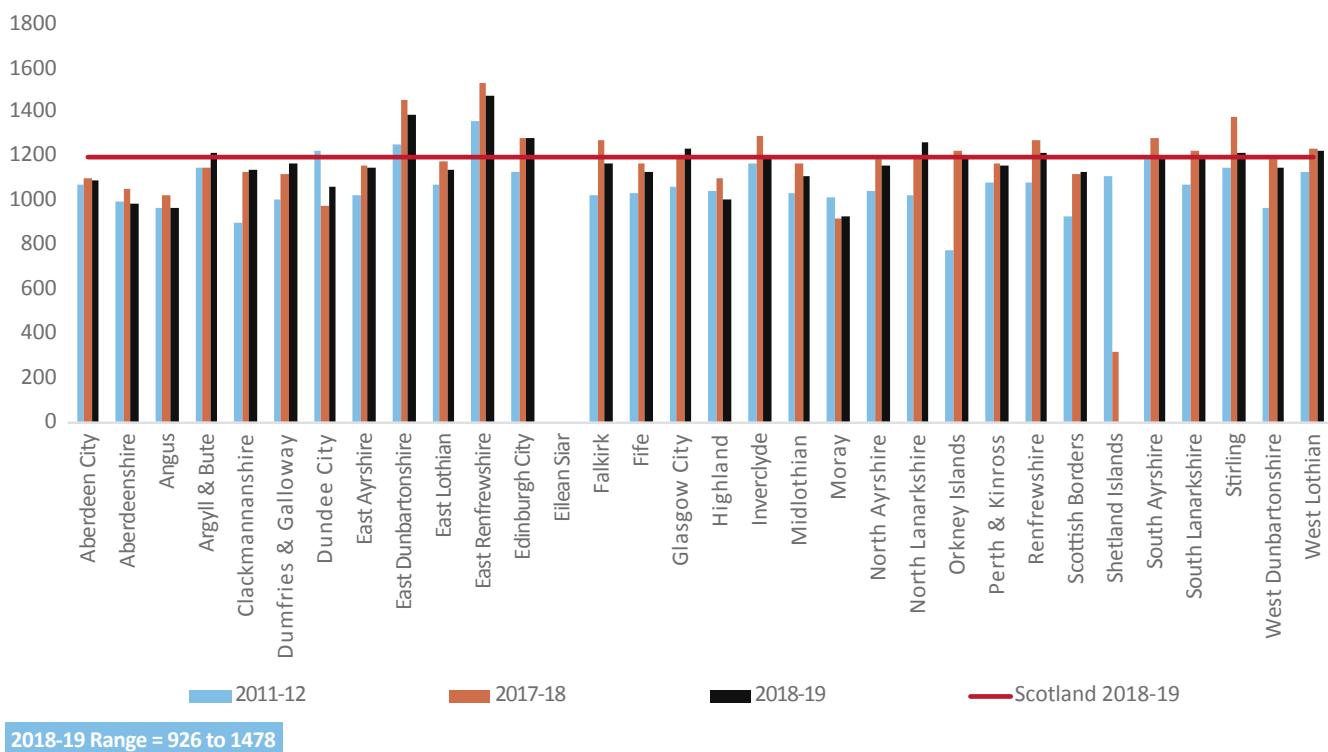




Fig 20: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5



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 2018/19, 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 2019 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupils' attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.

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



Table 16: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	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	44	2.0	15.0
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 (SIMD)	10	11	14	14	15	16	16	18	2.0	8.0

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. In the last 12 months, achievement rates at level 5 and level 6 both improved by one percentage point.

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 44% and 18% respectively, an increase of 15 percentage points and 8 percentage points from 2011/12. This is an improvement rate of 52% and 80%, compared to 24% and 35% for all pupil's achievement. In the past 12 months, there was a two percentage point improvement at both level 5 and level 6.

Across Scotland, substantial and widening variation between councils can be identified at both level 5 and level 6, ranging from 53% to 86% and 27% to 65% respectively. This trend is particularly true at Level 6. Substantial variations can also be seen between councils in achievement levels for the most deprived, ranging from 27% to 71% at level 5, and 7% to 42% at level 6. As with all pupils, the variation has widened in recent years.

Achievement varies systematically with the overall level of deprivation in the council area: this accounts for approximately 35% to 40% of the variation in outcome between councils. For example, if councils are grouped according to their levels of deprivation, the average at level 5 for the most deprived councils is 58% compared to 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.



Fig 21: Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5

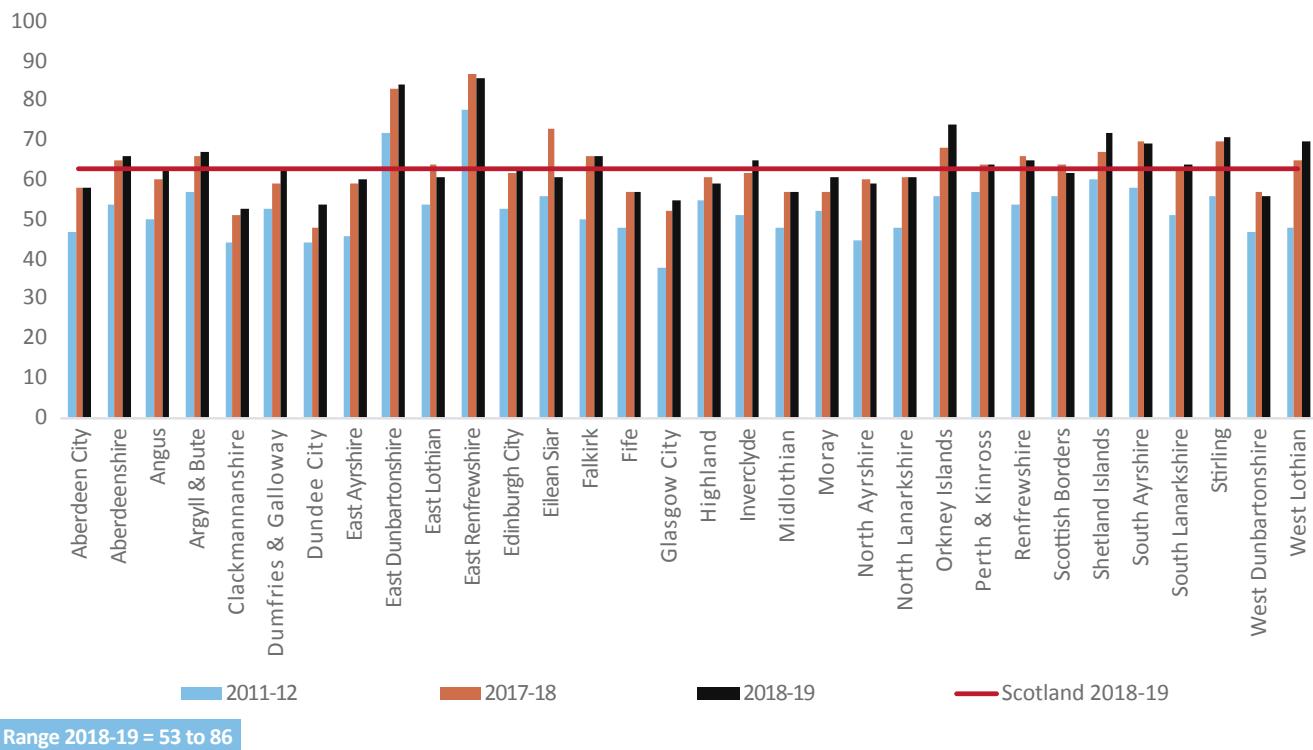


Fig 22: Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6

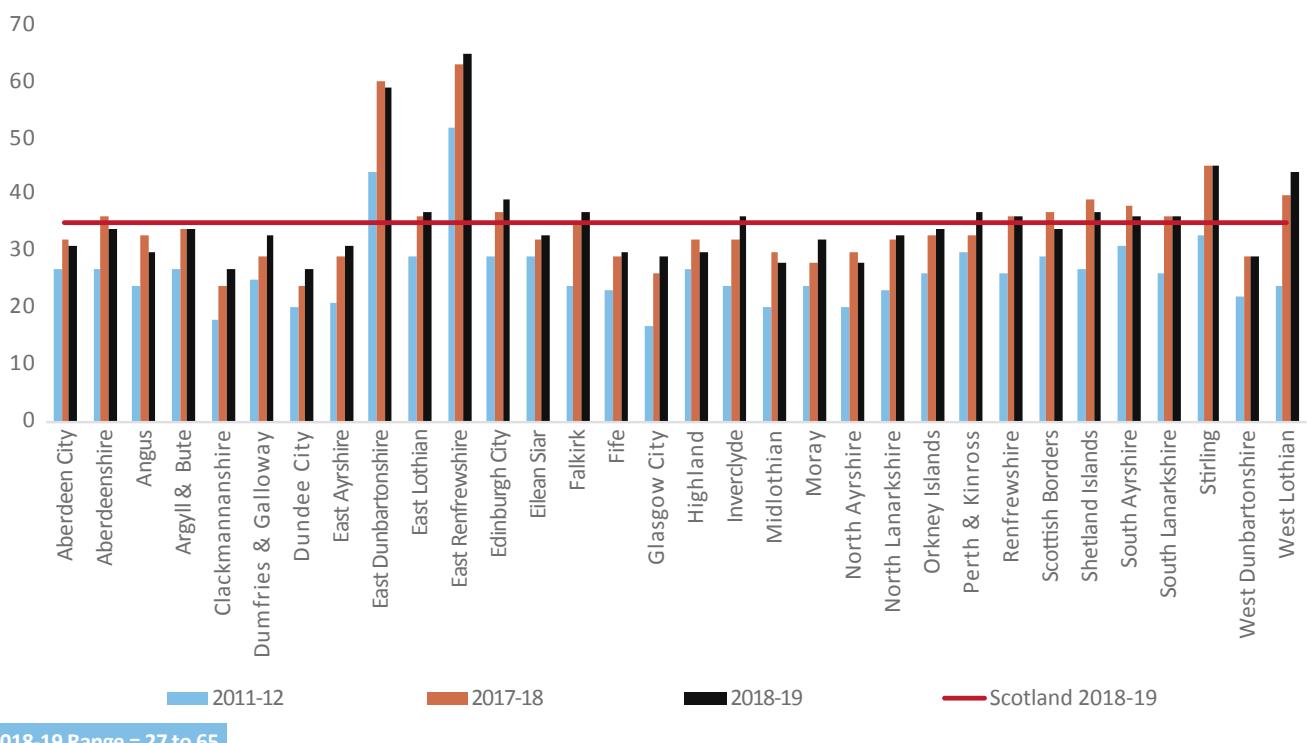




Fig 23: Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)

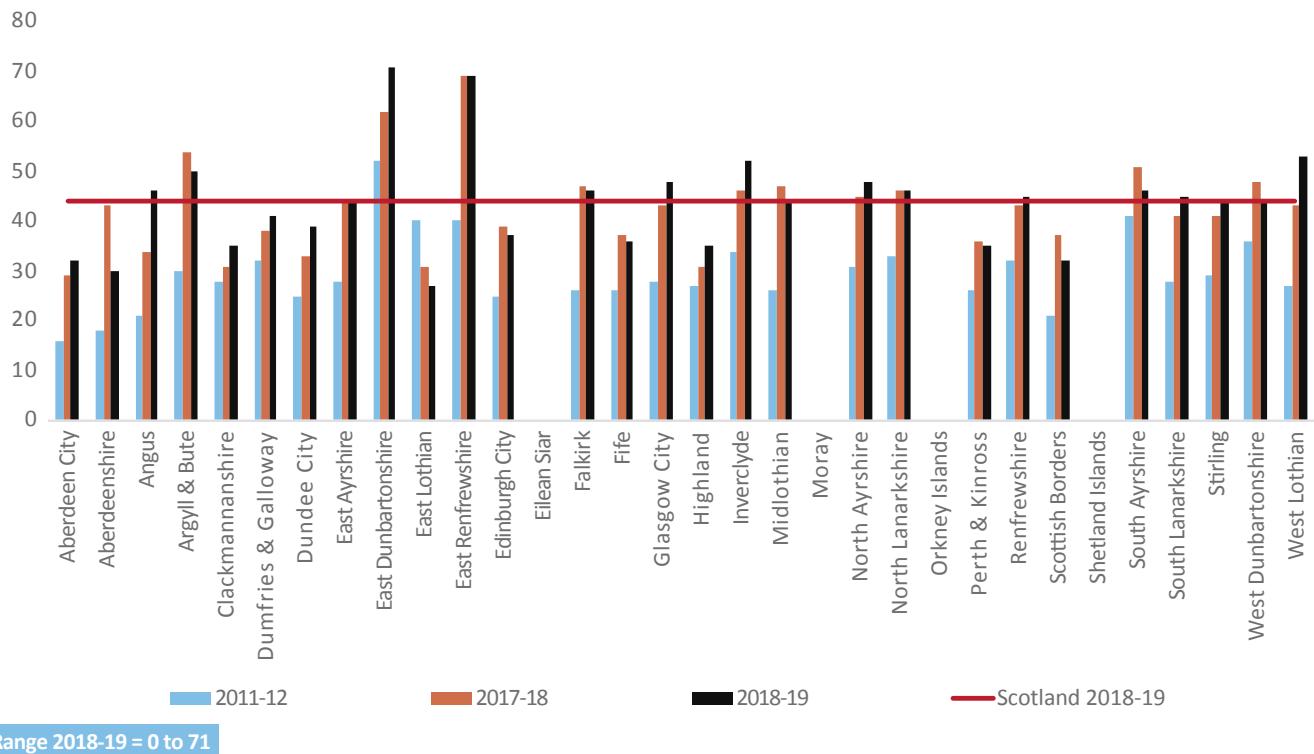
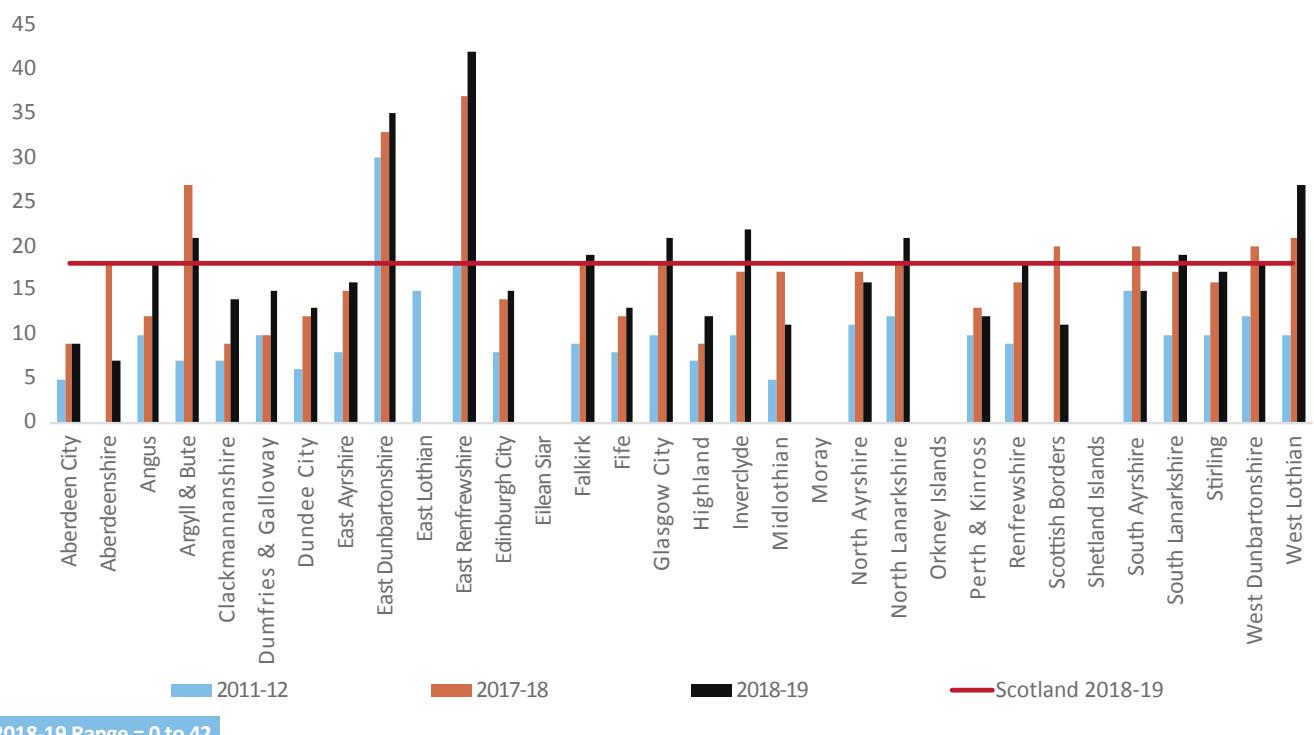


Fig 24: Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)



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. It is particularly striking that this 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).

Table 17: Improvement in the proportion of school leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF level 6

Percentage of School Leavers Achieving 1 or More Level 6 Award	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Rate of Improvement
Quintile 1	34.9	38.5	41.2	42.7	43.0	44.4	27.2%
Quintile 2	45.0	49.1	50.6	52.2	52.4	52.8	17.3%
Quintile 3	55.8	57.2	60.3	62.2	62.0	62.5	12.0%
Quintile 4	65.7	66.9	69.2	71.1	70.5	70.5	7.3%
Quintile 5	77.3	79.1	80.3	81.2	80.6	81.8	5.8%
Gap between Quintiles 1 and 5	42.4	40.6	39.1	38.5	37.6	37.4	
National - Overall	55.8	58.1	60.2	61.7	61.2	62.2	11.5%

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).

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

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

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 over recent years by many measures of attainment. This reflects both:

- The fact that, 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.
- The fact that 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.

The work being driven forward with local authorities and schools under the Scottish Attainment Challenge will be instrumental here. National and local partners will work together to identify the specific work that can be implemented successfully in classrooms and which will have a significant impact on the attainment of children from deprived communities. The local economy, size of the higher education/further education sector and types of local services supporting education are also important factors in understanding the variation. We will continue to work with all councils, ADES and Education Scotland to better understand the existing level of variation and the factors that drive it at school and council levels.

Positive destinations and participation rate

2018/19 data for Positive Destinations is not yet available, but previous trends show continued improvement between 2011/12 and 2017/18 in relation to the proportion of young people entering initial “positive destinations” after school,²³ increasing from 90.1% to 94.4%. Positive destinations include participation in further education (FE), higher education (HE), training/apprenticeships, employment, volunteering or Activity Agreements. 2018/19 data will be included in the LGBF March refresh following publication by Scottish Government.

The participation measure measures 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 increase in the participation rate from 90.4 to 91.6 between 2015/16 and 2018/19. This has been driven by an increase in employment, particularly in part-time employment. In the last 12 months, there has been a 0.2 percentage point decrease in the participation rate, from 91.8 to 91.6. This is the first reduction since the base year and reflects a reduction in participation of 18/19 year olds, particularly in relation to employment, along with an increase in the percentage with ‘unconfirmed status’.

²³ Scottish Government, Initial Destinations of Senior Phase School Leavers

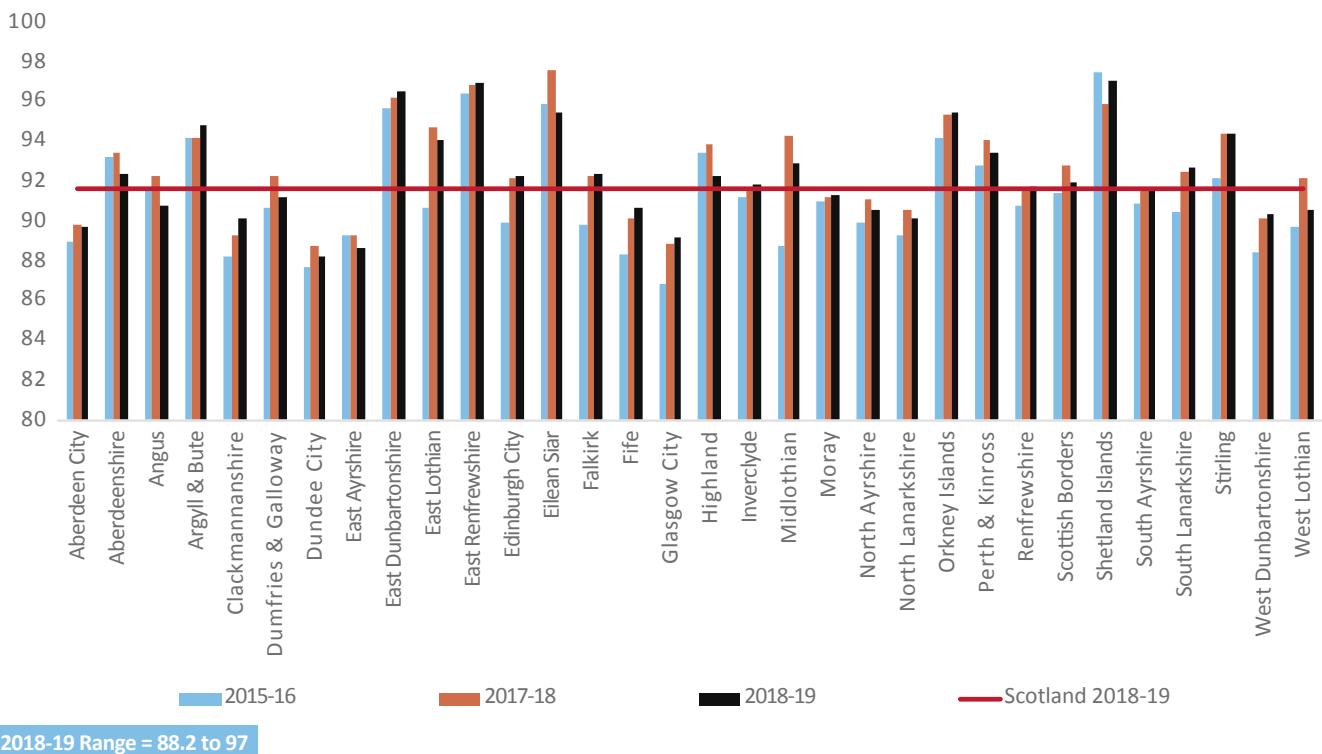


Table 19: Positive destinations and participation rate (%)

	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 from Base Year
Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations	90.1	91.7	92.5	93.0	93.3	93.7	94.4	dna		4.3
Participation Rates for 16-19 Year Olds	-	-	-	-	90.4	91.1	91.8	91.6	-0.2	0.8

In 2018/19, the participation rates for 16-19 year olds ranged from 88.2% to 97.0% across councils, with variation narrowing slightly. As with destinations, there is a systematic relationship between participation rates and deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting lower participation rates (e.g. 90.2% average for the most deprived councils versus 94.7% average for the least deprived councils).

Fig 25: Participation rates for 16-19 year olds (%)

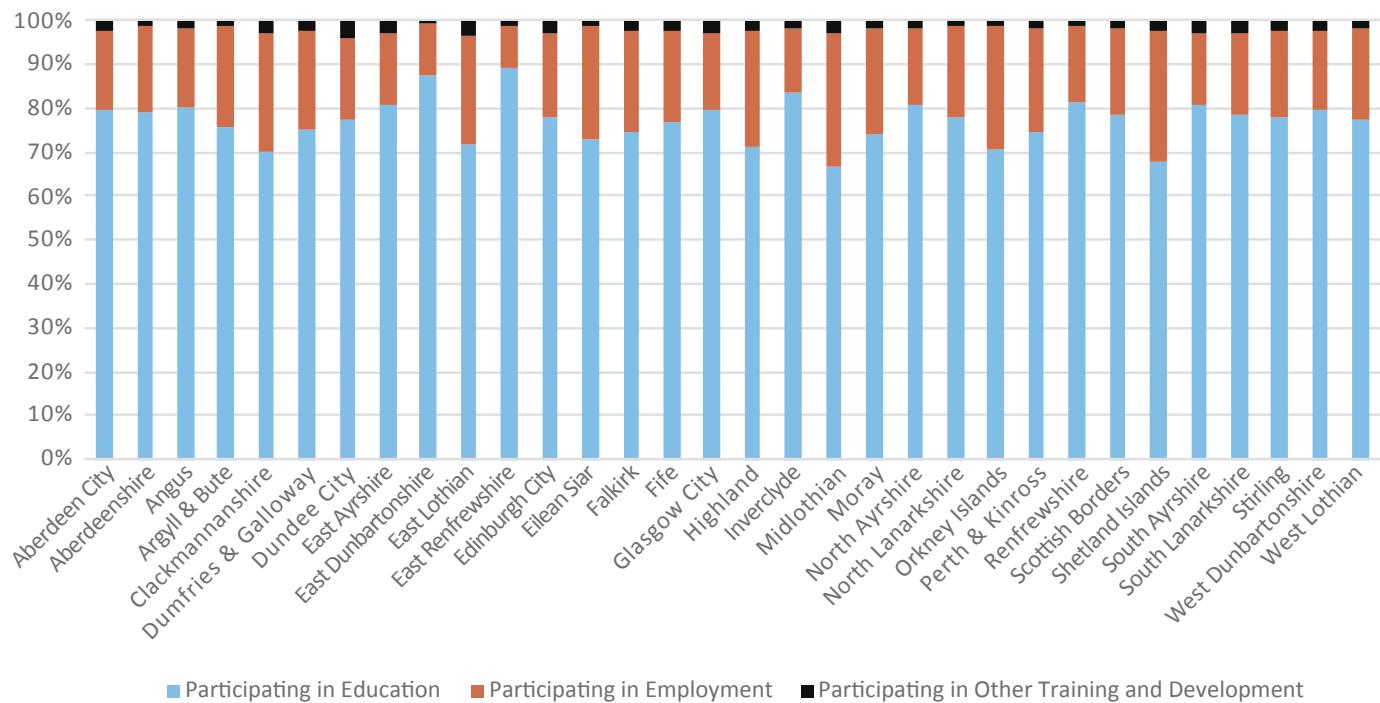


Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure

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



Fig 26: Participation rates - breakdown of participating status by council 2018-19 (%)



Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure

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

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

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

Satisfaction with schools

There has been a 10.6 percentage point reduction in adults satisfied with their local schools service over the period, with satisfaction levels falling from 83.1% to 72.5% between 2010/11 and 2018/19.

After year on year reductions between 2010/11 and 2017/18, satisfaction rates improved in the past 12 months, from 70% to 72.5%.

Table 20: 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	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
83.1	-	83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	72.5	2.5	10.6

Source: Scottish Household Survey

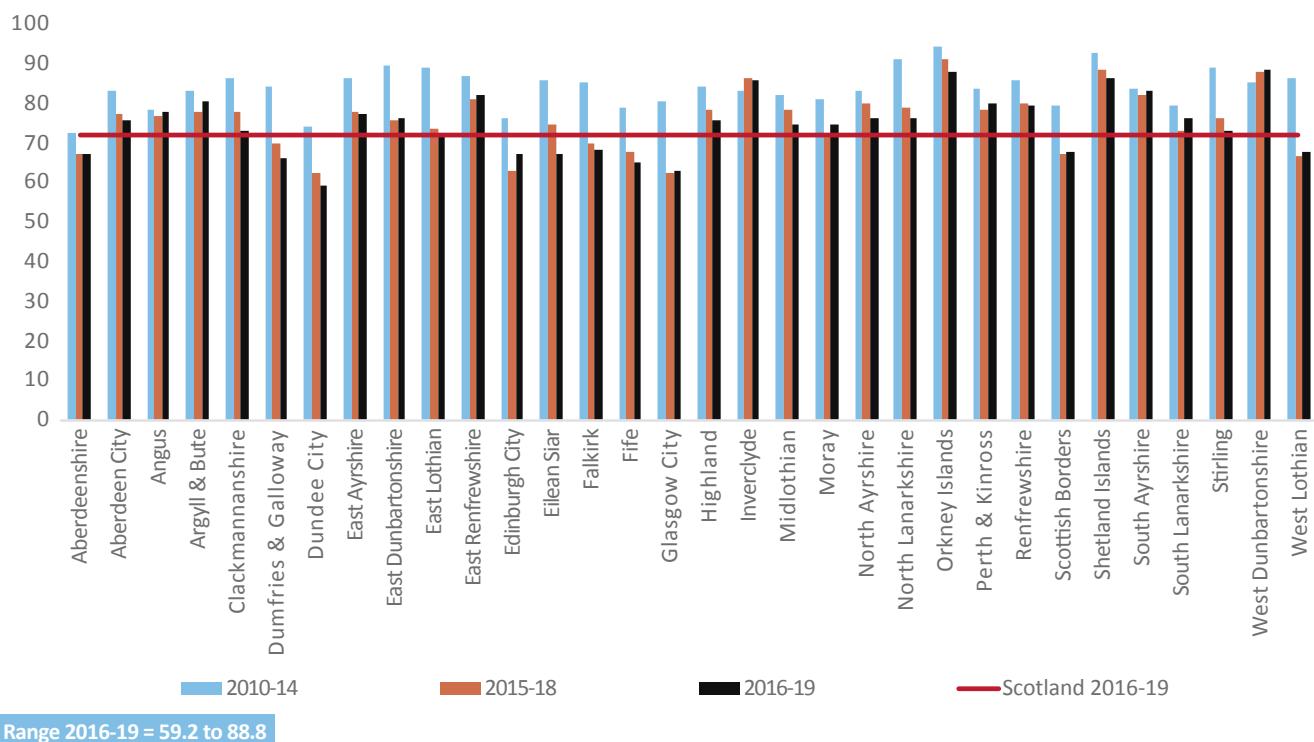
The customer satisfaction data that is included in the LGBF is derived from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost 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 59% to 88%. Smaller authorities report higher levels of satisfaction, although the difference is not significant (80% in smaller authorities compared to 72% in larger authorities).

Fig 27: Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools



Source: Scottish Household Survey





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. 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 9.4% by 2024 (and the over 75 population will increase by 15.6%).²⁴ 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.

Social care services have undergone fundamental reform as council services integrate with services from the National Health Service to create new Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs). The purpose of these major changes is to strengthen the partnership working across public services to help improve outcomes for those using health and care services and also improve efficiency through the provision of more joined up services.

To reflect this major reform, we continue to work with Social Work Scotland and Chief Officers of the Integration Authorities to agree benchmarking measures which will usefully support Integration Joint Boards fulfil their new duties. The current social care figures are likely to become more difficult to interpret over time as integration continues and the personalisation agenda gains pace. The current reform of adult social care,²⁵ and recent progress review of Health and Social Care integration²⁶ will inform developments in this area.

This year, the framework has been strengthened to include key indicators from the core suite of health and social care integration measures particularly in relation to the following areas:

- **Balance of care and sustaining people at home** – To provide insight in relation to the success of prevention and early intervention approaches (enablement/re-enablement) designed to promote independence and sustain people at home for as long as possible.
- **System capacity and sustainability** – To better understand local system capacity pressures and longer-term sustainability issues in relation to social care markets, and support progress in developing strategic commissioning approaches to design and deliver services which meet the needs of local populations.
- **Quality of Life** – To provide a focus on the outcomes experienced by those in receipt of social care services.
- **Service Quality** – To provide a focus on the quality of services provided.
- **Personalisation** – To better understand progress in relation to the Personalisation agenda, and whether people in receipt of services feel involved in their assessment, and have a say in how their care is delivered.

²⁴ Source: Population Projections, National Records of Scotland, <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-projections-scotland/2016-based>

²⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-care/reforming-adult-social-care/>

²⁶ <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>



- Carers** – To provide a focus on the growing role for carers and new duties to support carers introduced under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

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 6.9% in spending per hour on home care for people over 65 across Scotland. This reflects an overall 17.3% increase in gross expenditure and 9.7% increase in the number of hours delivered during this period, although movement between years has fluctuated.

Table 21: Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over

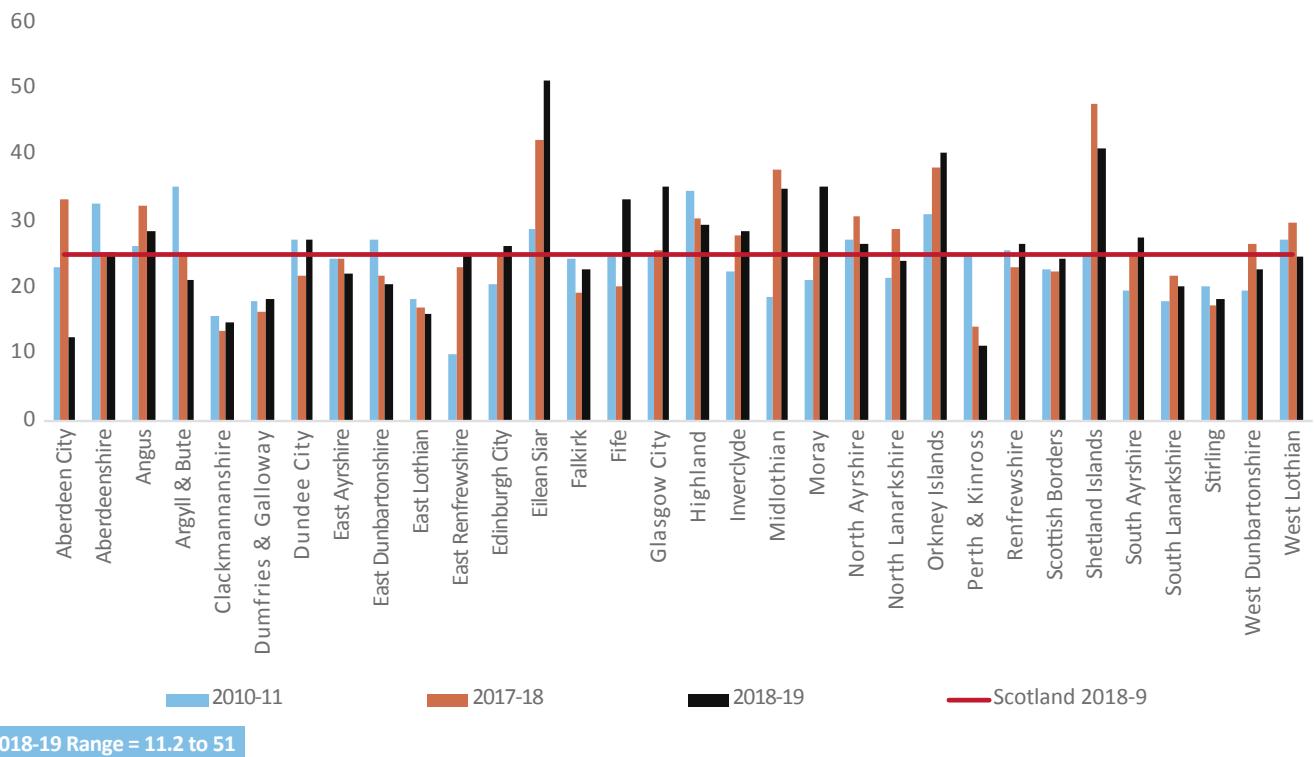
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£23.07	£22.31	£22.63	£21.97	£21.66	£22.48	£23.45	£24.21	£24.67	1.9%	6.9%

In the past 12 months, spending per hour has increased by 1.9% from £24.21 to £24.67. This reflects a 1.9% increase in expenditure and a 0.1% decrease 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.

There is significant variation across councils, with spend per hour ranging from £11.22 to £51.01. The level of variation observed is wider than any preceding year, however there is no longer any systematic relationship with rurality. Rural councils historically tended to have higher costs on average, often due to longer travel time between clients, this is no longer the case. Over time, average rural costs have reduced by 16.8% and average urban costs have increased by 11%. It is worth noting however, that island costs remain the highest of all councils.



Fig 28: Older persons (over 65) home care costs per hour (£)



Source: Social Care Survey and Quarterly Survey, 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 across the period with a growth in home care hours provided (9.7%) and a relative decline in residential places (-4.6%). 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 61.0% in 2018/19 (although this declined slightly from 61.7% in 2017/18). As importantly, the number of people receiving home care has decreased over time and the hours of care they receive on average has increased, i.e. in shifting the balance of care, a greater resource has become targeted on a smaller number of people with higher needs.

Table 22: Percentage of people aged 65 or over with long-term care needs receiving care at home

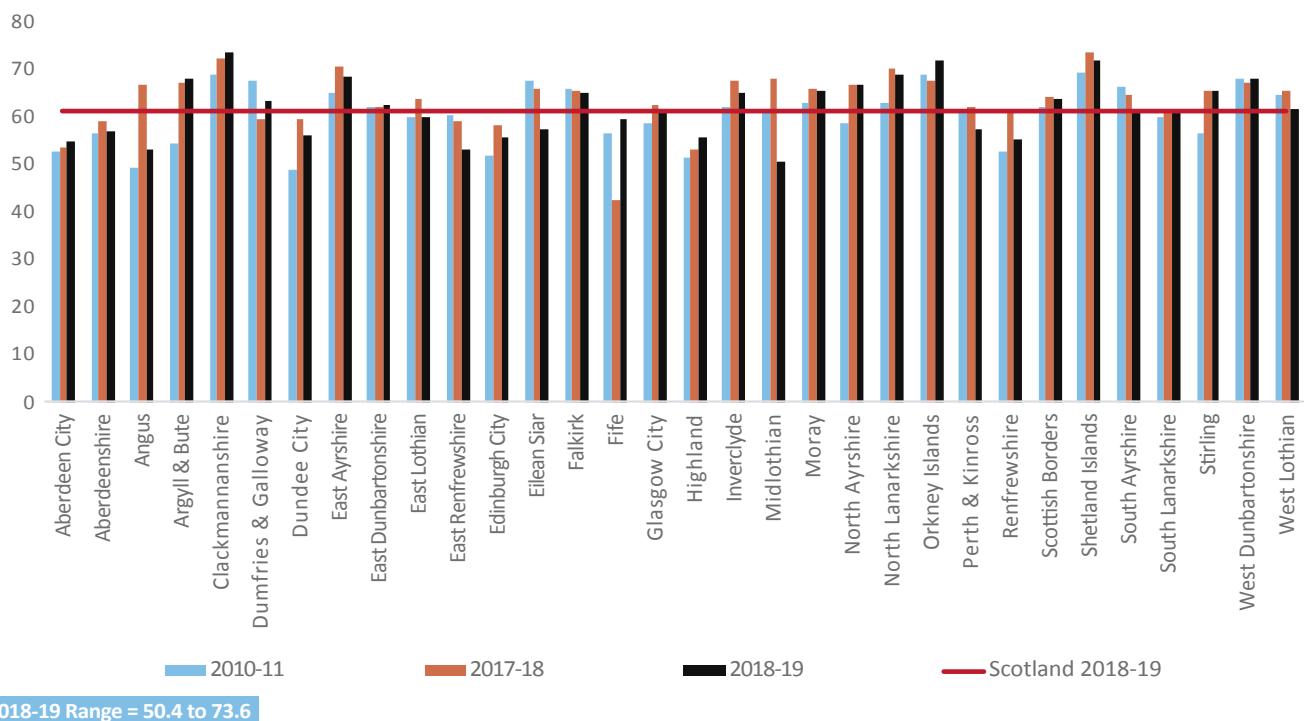
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
58.9	59.2	59.8	59.8	60.0	60.7	60.1	61.7	61.0	-0.7	2.1

There is significant and constant variation across councils in relation to the balance of care, ranging from



50.4% to 73.6% across Scotland. Smaller councils report higher rates of people receiving personal care at home than areas with larger populations (72% compared to 58%) although this difference is not statistically significant.

Fig 29: 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

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 103.0, a 14.8% increase. In the past 12 months, the growth has levelled off, increasing by 0.2%.

Table 23: Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges

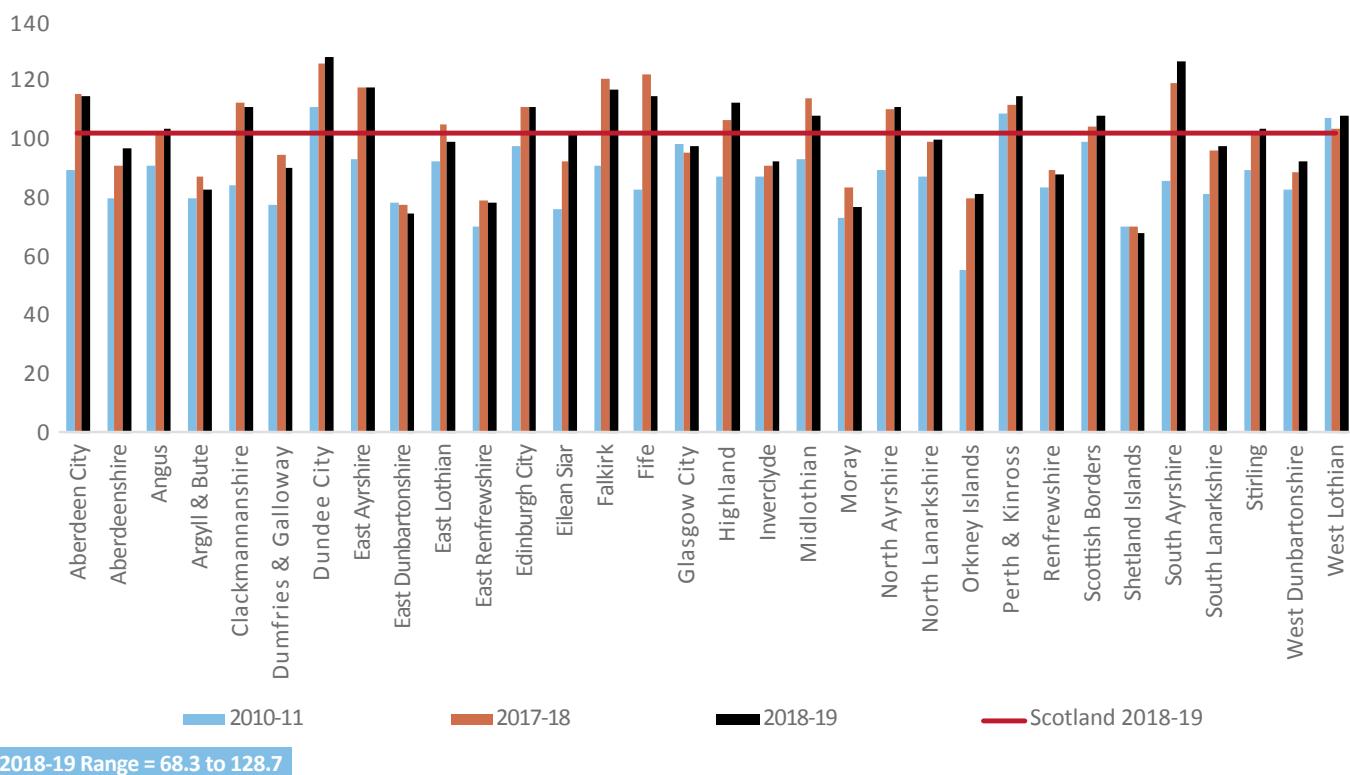
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
89.7	92.5	93.5	95.3	97.2	98.1	101.0	102.7	103.0	0.2%	14.8%

Source: ISD



There is significant and widening variation between authorities, with rates ranging from 68.3 to 128.7. Smaller and more rural authorities tend to have a lower rate of readmission (97.4 for rural authorities compared with 100.1 for urban) and 92.5 for smaller authorities compared with 105.9 for bigger authorities).

Fig 30: Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges



Source: ISD

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 5.6% reduction in the number of days over 75s spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged. This has reduced from 840 to 792 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.



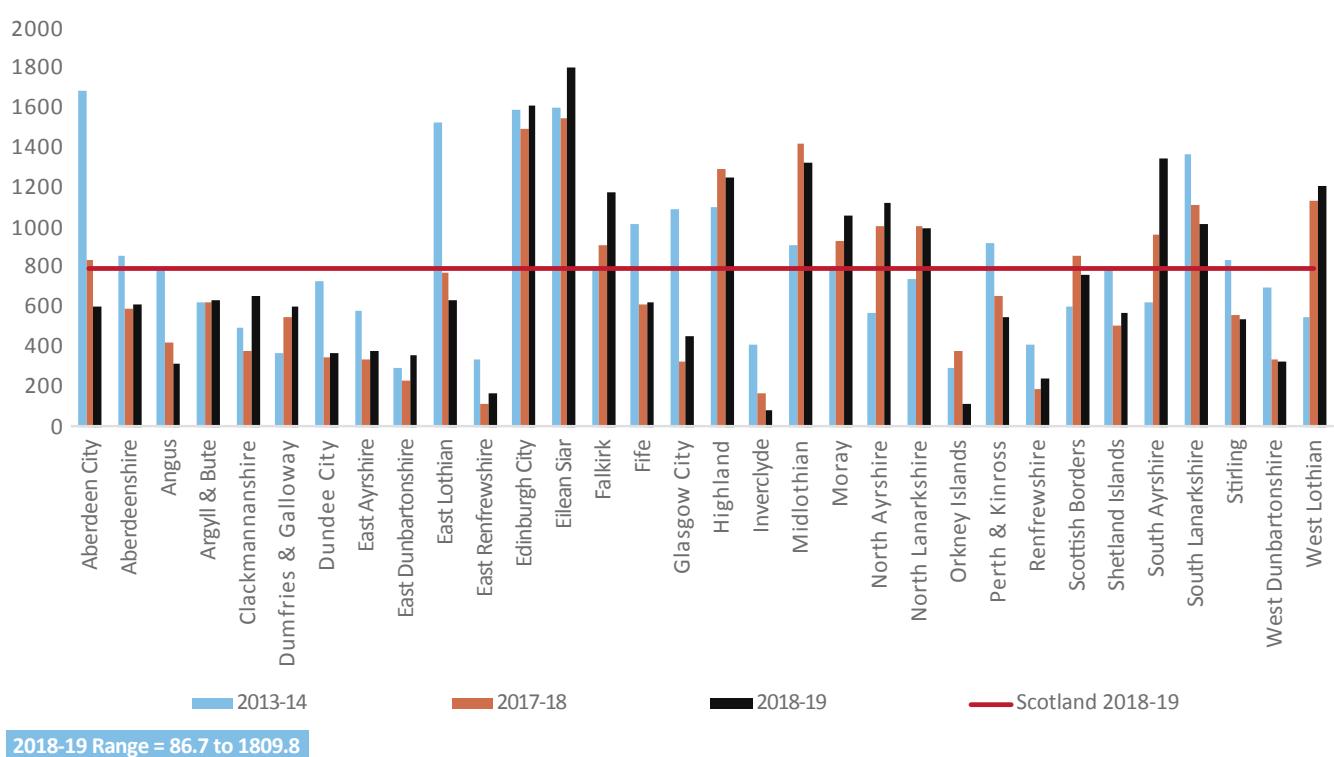
Table 24: Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, per 1,000 population (75+)

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
921.8	1043.7	914.7	839.8	761.7	792.7	4.1%	-14.0%

Source: ISD

In the past 12 months, there has been a 4.1% increase in the number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged. There is also very significant variation across authorities, with rates ranging from 86.7 to 1810.0. Urban authorities tend to have lower rates (458) compared to rural (614) and mixed (647).

Fig 31: 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 recent increase in the past two years is an area 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 or Personalised Managed Budgets.²⁷ The breakdown of spend available across the four options will become more sophisticated as the approach is fully implemented and this will be reflected in the development of this framework.

Since 2010/11, the proportion of total social work spend allocated via direct payments and Personalised Managed Budgets has grown from 1.6% to 7.3%. Glasgow accounts for a significant proportion of this growth, where expenditure via these two options has grown from £4.8 million to £92.6 million. Excluding Glasgow, the spend on direct payments and PMB as a percentage of total social work spend increased from 1.6% to 5.1% across the same period, with direct payments accounting for 72% of this spend (down from 74%).

In the last 12 months, the proportion of spend via Direct Payments and Personalised Managed Budgets rose slightly from 6.7% to 7.3% (4.7% to 5.1% excluding Glasgow).

Table 25: 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	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
1.6	2.9	6.0	6.4	6.9	6.7	6.4	6.7	7.3	0.6	5.7

Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

In 2018/19 the range in spend across councils was 1.1% to 21.1% (1.1% to 10.2% excluding outliers).

The variation has narrowed in recent years. The data reveals a relationship between rurality and deprivation, and the uptake of direct payments and Personalised Managed Budgets. Those councils with lower levels of deprivation tend to have higher uptake of direct payments (5.0% compared to 2.4% in the most deprived areas). Councils with higher levels of deprivation tend to have higher uptake of PMB, although this is not statistically significant (3% compared to 1.5% in the least deprived areas). This finding is supported by Scottish 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.²⁸

Analysis of the LGBF data reveals rurality is also important in understanding the variation between councils,

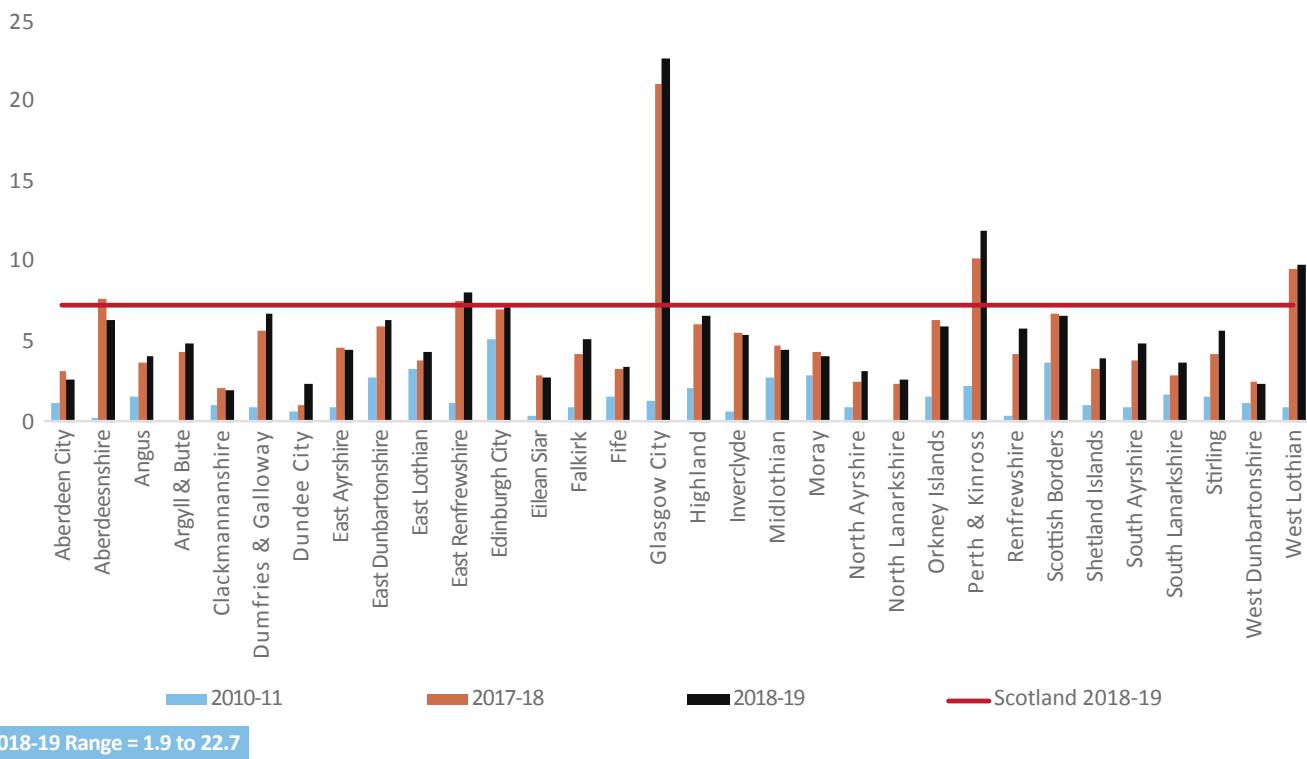
27 The PMB breakdown was included in councils return to the Improvement service for 13/14 - 18/19, and includes only residual expenditure from the personalised budget where it is unknown what support was purchased, i.e. where the council used a third party to arrange services. It does not include where 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.

28 Self-Directed Support, Scotland, 2016-17 <https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/health-and-social-care/social-and-community-care/care-home-census-for-adults-in-scotland/>



with supported people in rural authorities more likely to opt for direct payments, and supported people in urban authorities more likely to opt for personalised managed budgets (although this last relationship is not significant).

Fig 32: 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 2018/19 have in agreement with the Local Government Directors of Finance excluded a support cost component which was included in 2010/11 and 2011/12, and therefore a direct comparison with costs from earlier years is not possible.

Over the six years for which we have comparable data, there has been a 6.8% reduction in unit costs from £409 to £381. This has been driven by an 8.8% reduction in net expenditure and a reduction in the number of adults supported in residential care homes of 2.1%.

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 of 2.9% between 2010/11 and 2016/17).²⁹

In the last 12 months, the average cost per week per resident increased by 0.3% from £380 to £381. This reflects a 2.5% reduction in net expenditure and 2.8% reduction in the number of residents.

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

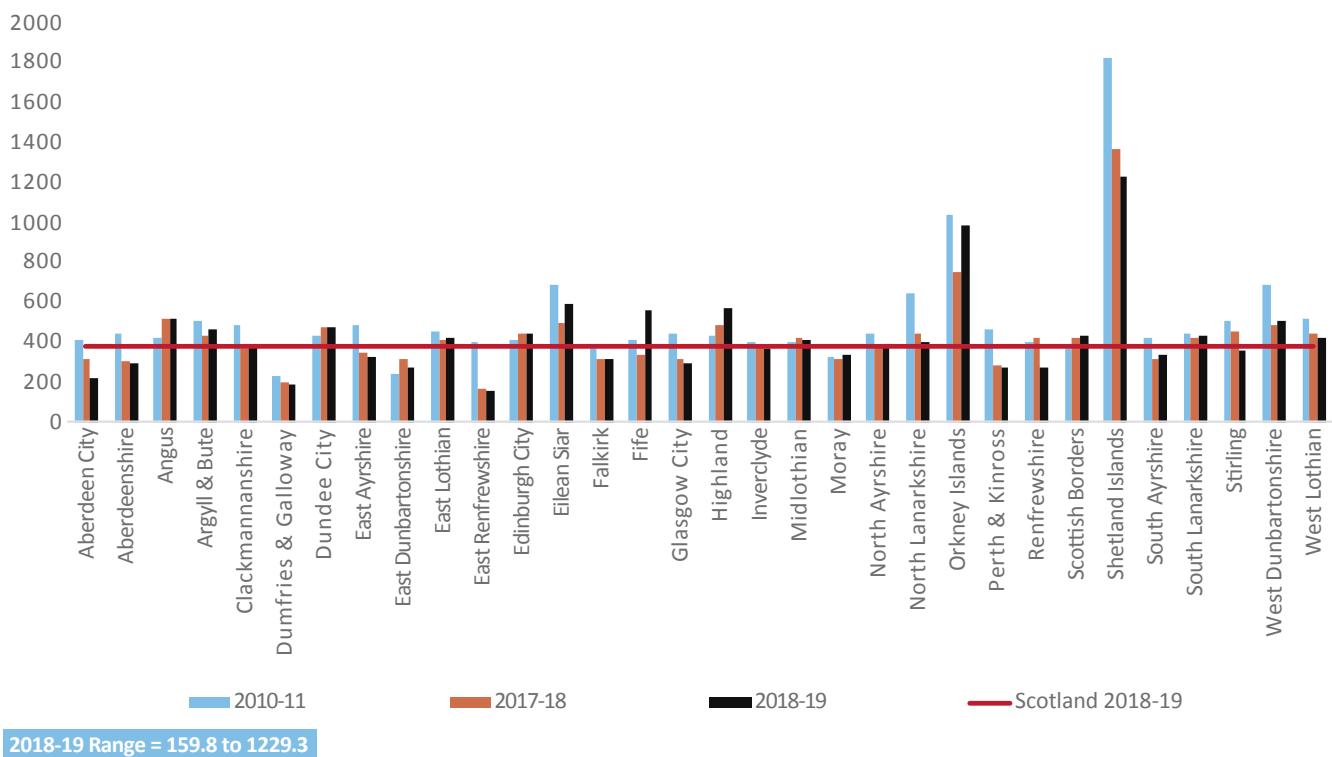


Table 26: Care home costs per week for people over 65

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£445	£449	£409	£393	£397	£387	£386	£380	£381	0.3%	-14.3%

There is a considerable level of variation across councils with care home costs ranging from £160 to £1,229 in 2018/19. Island and rural authorities on average report significantly higher costs. When island councils are excluded, costs range from £160 to £577. The level of variation narrowed between 2013/14 and 2015/16 but has widened again over the past three years.

Fig 33: Older persons (over 65s) residential care costs per week per resident (£)



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

Up to and including 2018/19, the National Care Home Contract (NCHC) for residential care for older people will, to a large extent, have standardised costs. However, it is important to note that the net cost per resident will not equate to the NCHC rate, as care home residents will pay a proportion of their care home fees. The NCHC rate only applies to LA-funded residents who are in private and voluntary run care homes. Residential care costs however include net expenditure on:

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



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.

Satisfaction with care services

This year 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 Indicators³⁰ with data drawn from the bi-annual Health and Care Experience Survey, for which the most recent data is 2017/18. The next data available is for 2019/20. The survey takes place every two years, and only three years of data is currently available limiting trend analysis at this stage.

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 2014/15,

- 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 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 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 76%
- the percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role has fallen from 43% down to 37%

³⁰ <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Policy/Adult-Health-SocialCare-Integration/Outcomes/Indicators/Indicators>



Table 27: Satisfaction with care services

	2013-14	2015-16	2017-18	Value Change 2015-16 to 2017-18	Value Change 2013-14 to 2017-18
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life	85.0	84.0	80.0	-4.0	-5.0
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible	82.8	82.7	81.1	-1.6	-1.7
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	-3.2	-7.5
Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role	43.0	40.0	36.6	-3.5	-6.4

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 71% to 97%; for independence, satisfaction ranges from 72% to 100%; for control and choice, the range is 64% - 86%; and for Carers, satisfaction ranges from 32% to 49%. For most of these, variation is not related to deprivation, rurality or size of authority. However for Carers satisfaction, smaller authorities report significantly higher rates.

Fig 34: Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life

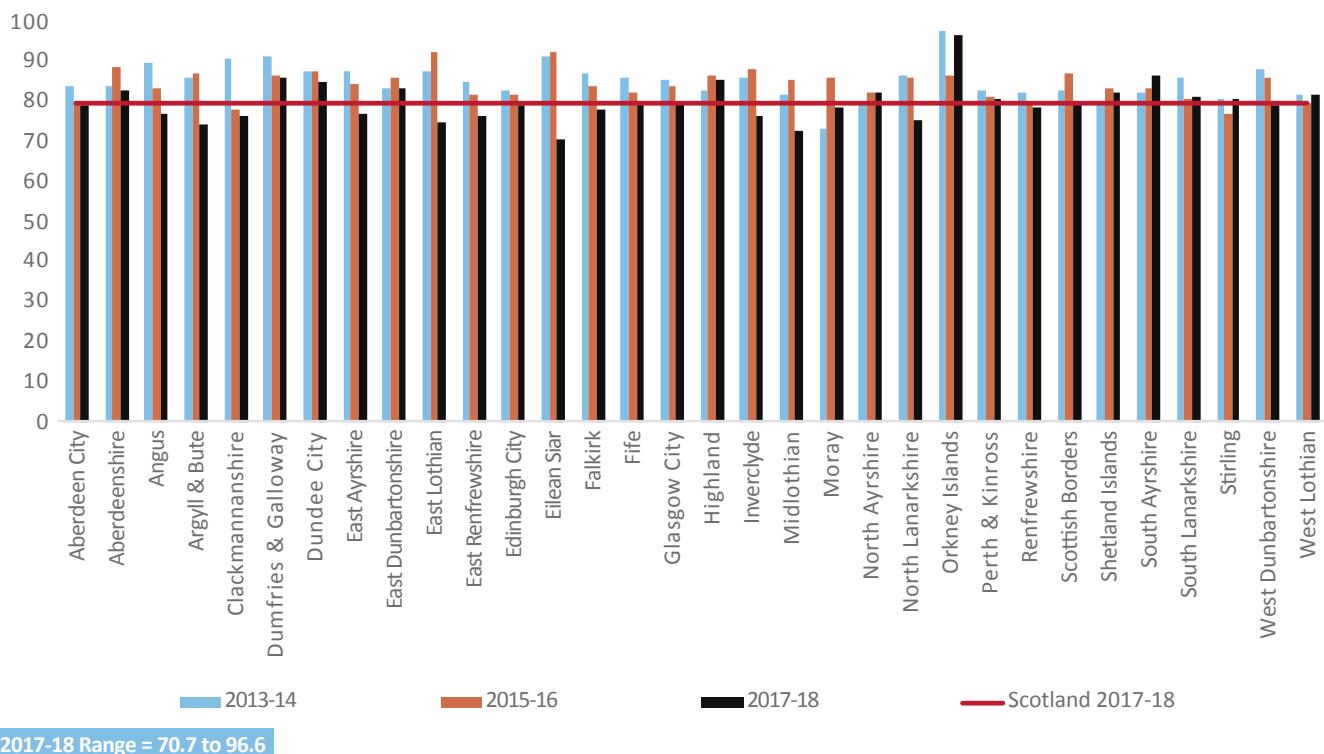




Fig 35: Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible

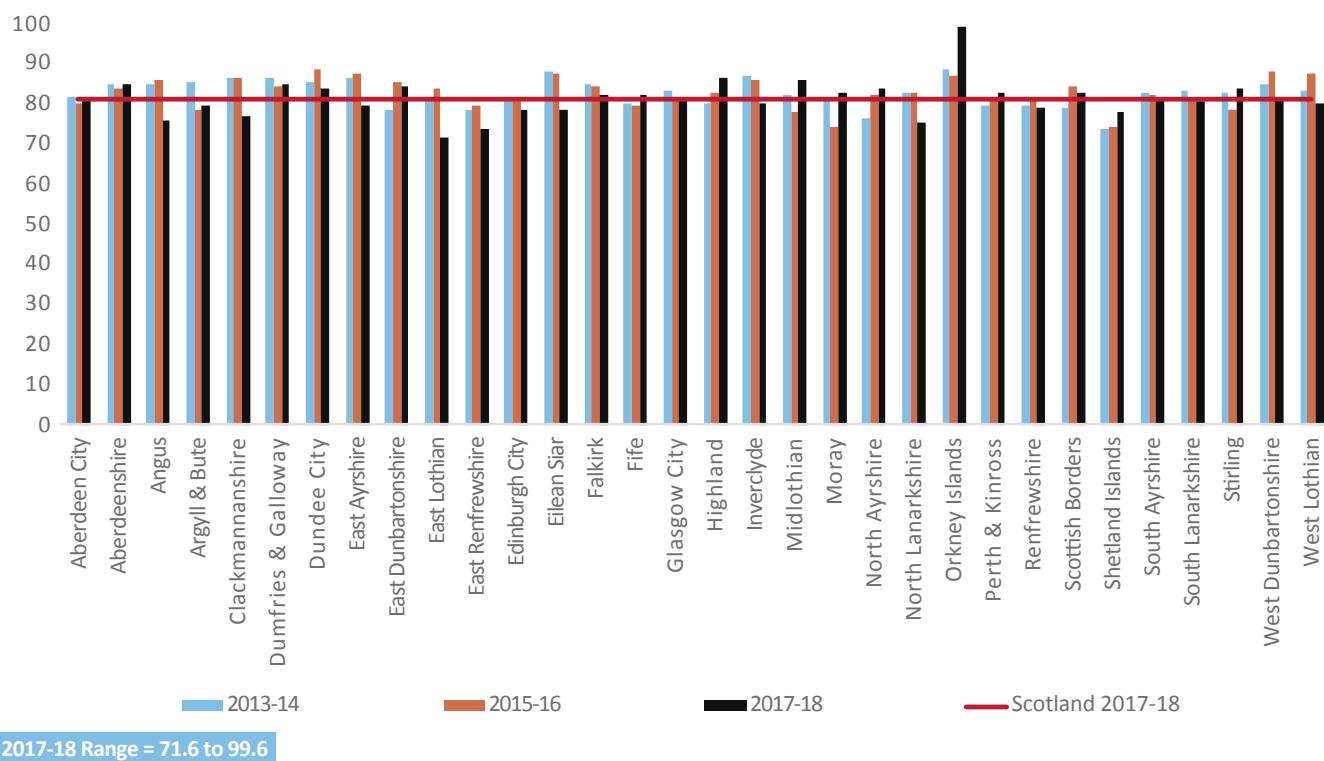


Fig 36: Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided

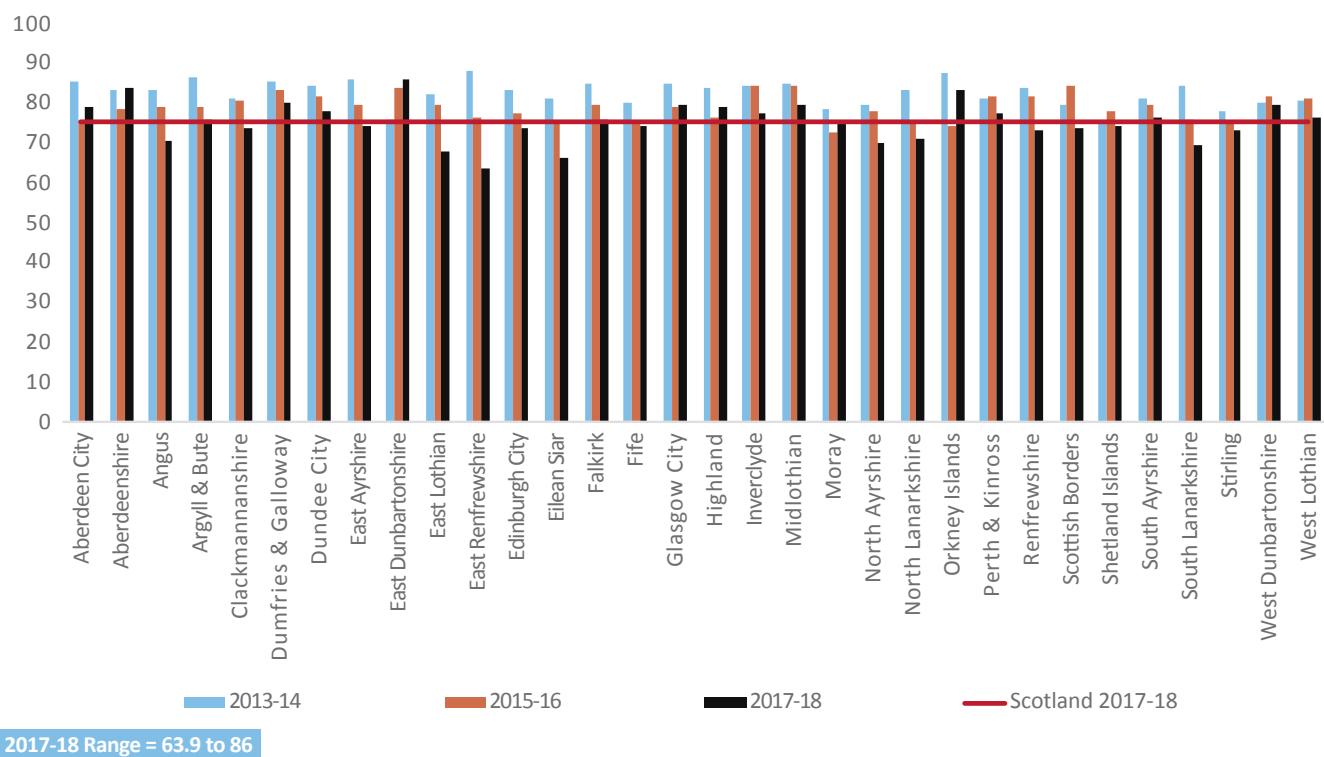
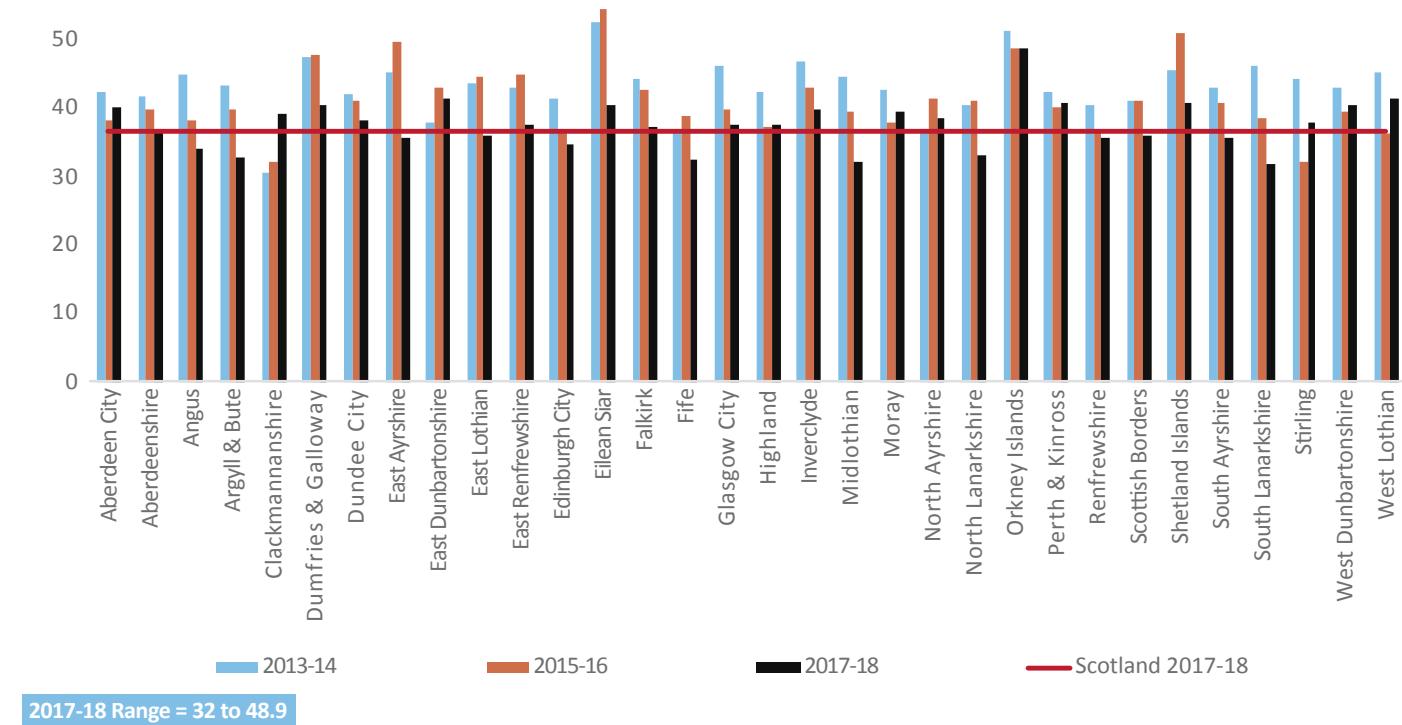




Fig 37: Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role



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

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 82.2%. After 4 years of improvement, in the last 12 months inspectorate quality ratings have fallen from 85.4% to 82.2%.



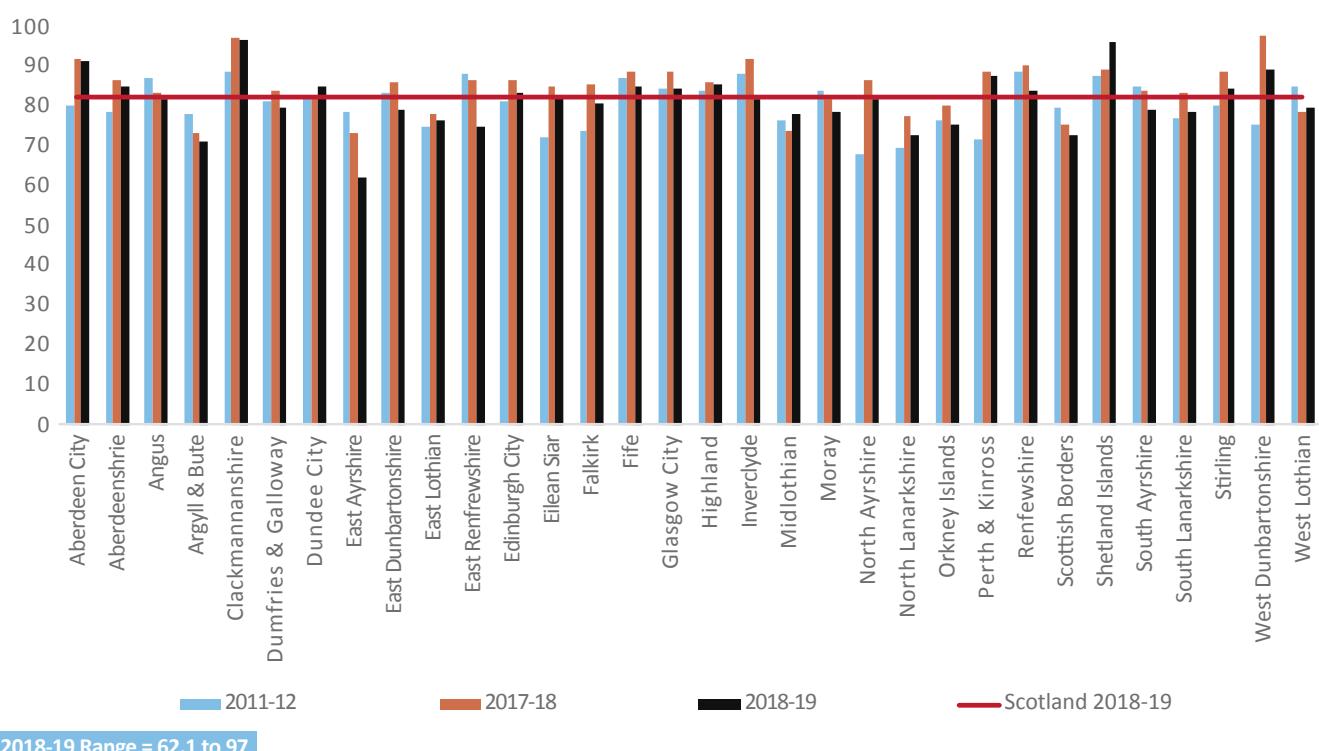
Table 28: Proportion of care services graded ‘good’ (4) or better in Care Inspectorate inspections

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
80.9	80.2	80.2	80.5	82.9	83.8	85.4	82.2	-3.2	1.3

Source: Care Inspectorate

There is significant and widening variation between councils, with ratings ranging from 62.1% to 97.0%

Fig 38: 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. For the first time the number of services registered with the Care Inspectorate steadily declined to fewer than 13,000 in 2018-19. 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 inspection year, this long-term trend was reversed – coinciding with the introduction of the new care standards, which may have played a role in this. The lower and reducing quality ratings for Care Homes for Older People may also be important in understanding the overall trend (if removed, the Scotland average rating would continue to improve for care services).

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,³¹ and build on the learning from the review of Health and Social Care integration.³²

The following areas have been identified and prioritised for further exploration within Phase 2 of LGBF development:

- 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.
- Opportunities to shape and inform the work of the Ministerial Strategic Group for Health and Community 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.³³*
- *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*

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

32 <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>

33 Free Personal and Nursing Care, Scottish Government, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/free-personal-nursing-care-scotland-2017-18/>





Culture and Leisure

Culture and leisure services play an important role in the quality of life in local communities. In addition to the social and economic benefits delivered, the impact they have on promoting better health and wellbeing of the population and in reducing demand on other core services is well documented. Culture and leisure services also connect well with communities who more traditional and regulated services often struggle to reach. This unique relationship provides real potential to achieve impact for people in the greatest need. However, given there is little in the way of statutory protection for culture and leisure spending, culture and leisure services face a particularly challenging financial context across the coming period. Since 2010/11, overall gross expenditure on culture and leisure services has fallen by 23.5% in real terms.

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.

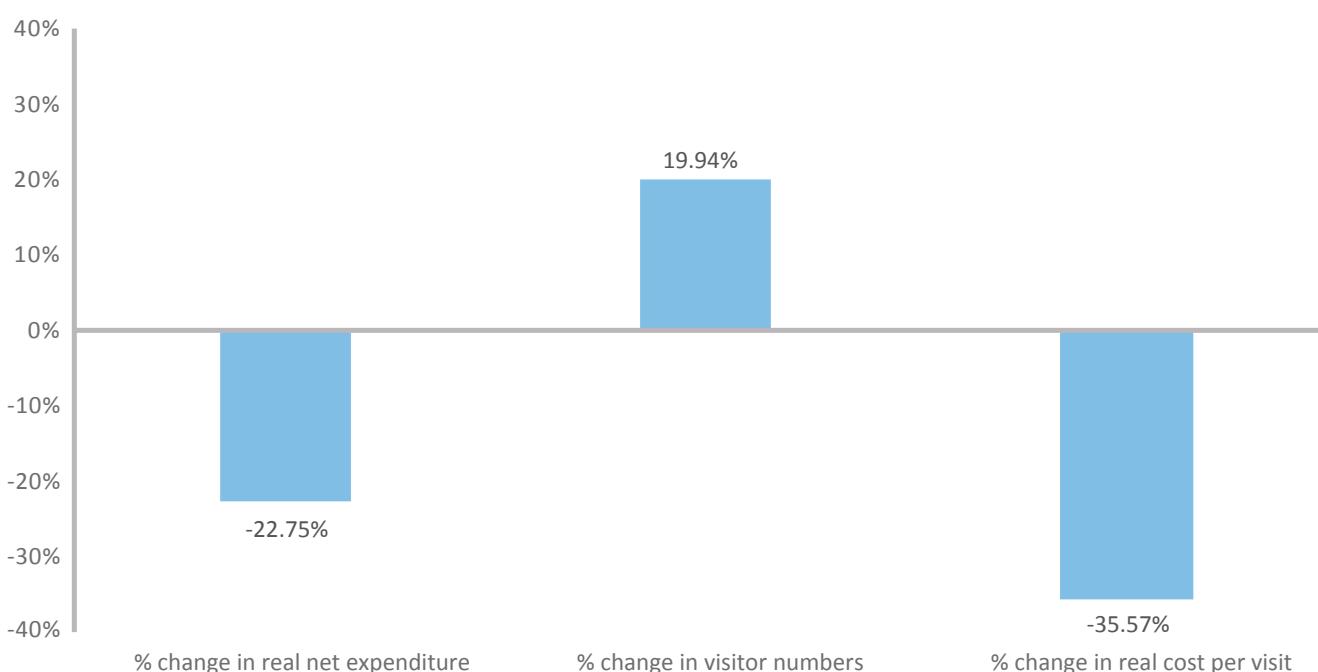
Sports facilities

The data presented below illustrates the net cost per attendance at sports and recreation facilities. Over the nine-year period from 2010/11 to 2018/19 the average unit cost has reduced year on year from £4.07 to £2.62 in real terms. In percentage terms, this represents a 35.6% reduction.

Table 29: Cost per attendance at sports facilities

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£4.07	£3.64	£3.47	£3.46	£3.17	£3.10	£3.01	£2.76	£2.62	-5.0%	-35.6%

Fig 39: Sports facilities: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit 2010/11 - 2018/19



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

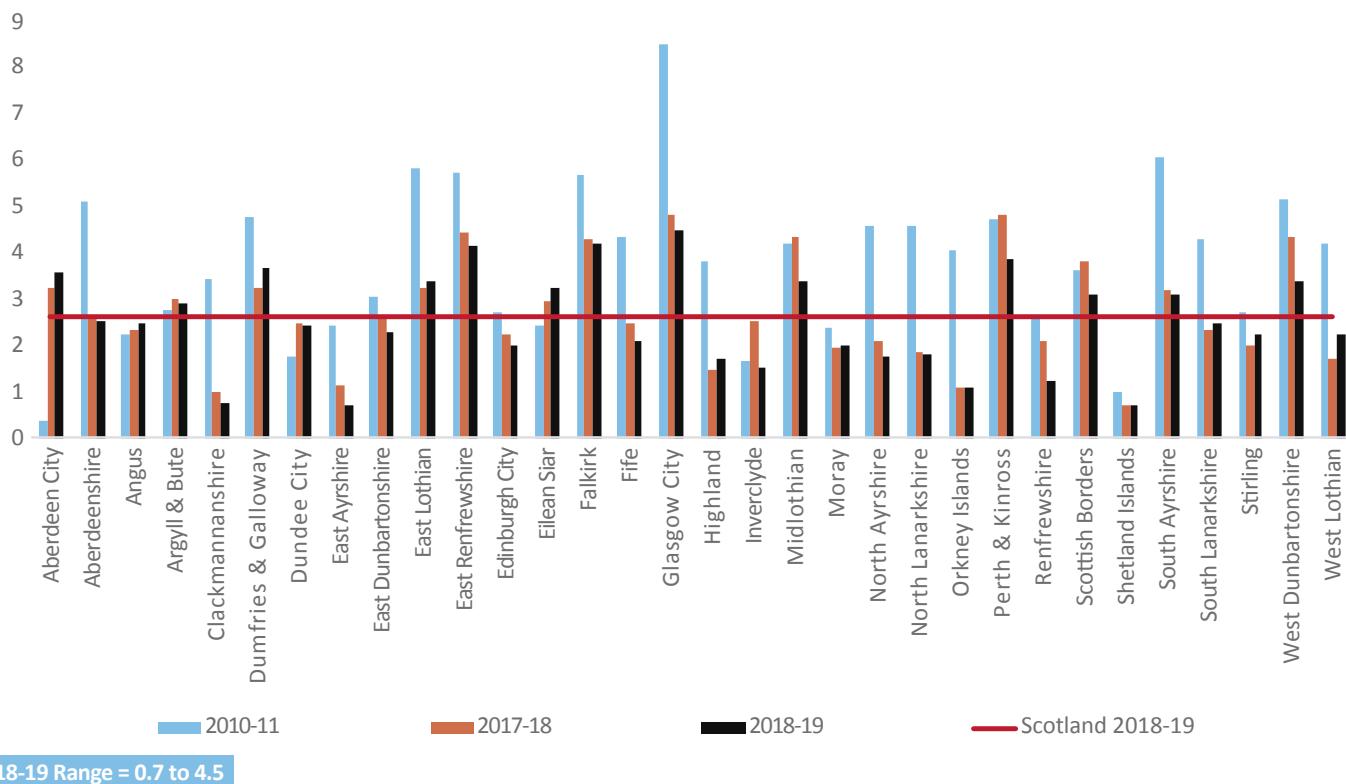
National Benchmarking Overview Report 2018/19



Over the nine 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 2018/19, costs per attendance at a sports facility ranged from £0.70 to £4.47. The variation in unit costs has narrowed in recent years due to significant reductions at the higher cost end. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Fig 40: Cost per attendance at sports facilities (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Library services

Library costs are represented as the average cost per library visit (both physical and virtual). There has been a significant 47.4% reduction in unit costs since 2010/11, with cost reductions levelling out over the past 24 months. The average cost per library visit in 2018/19 was £2.05, while in 2010/11 the cost per visit was £3.90.

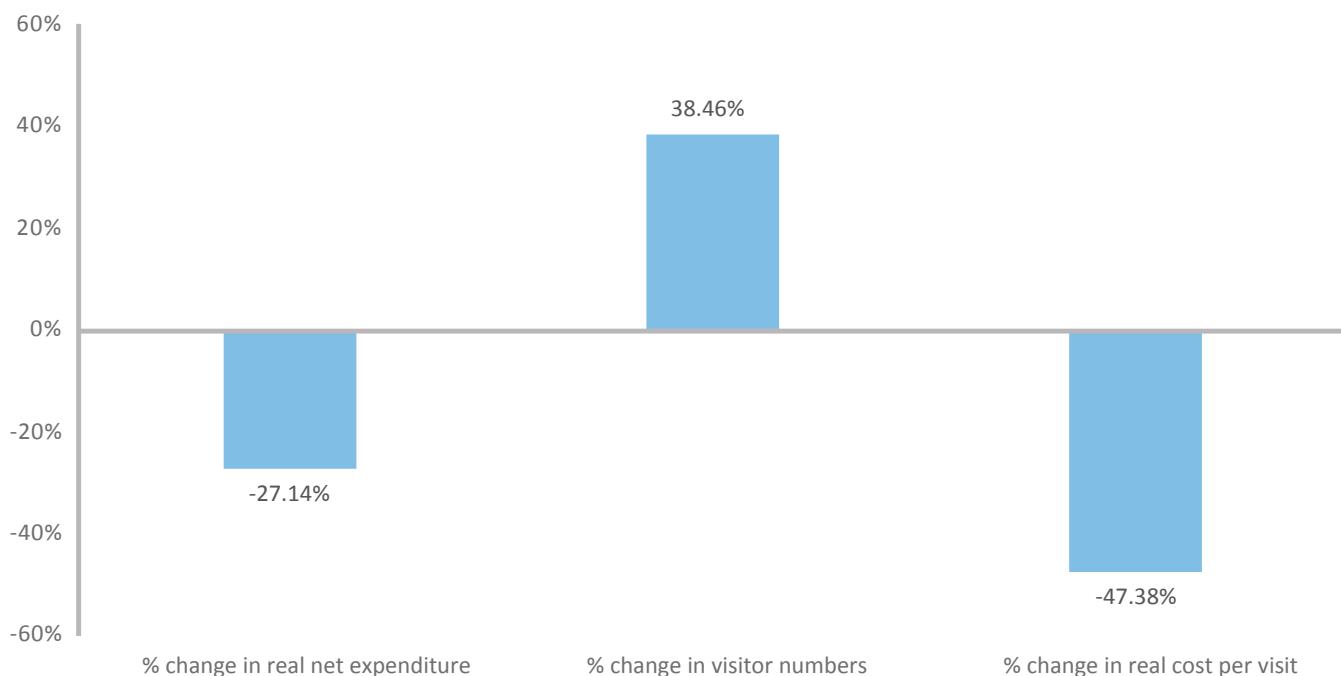
Table 30: Cost per library visit

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£3.90	£3.68	£3.48	£2.79	£2.62	£2.59	£2.05	£2.12	£2.05	-3.3%	-47.4%



As with sports services unit cost figures on their own do not tell the full story of the last nine years for library services. Over the period covered by the LGBF, there has been a reduction in net spending on library services of 27.1%. At the same time, visitor numbers increased from 31.8 million to 44.0 million, an increase of 38.5%. Across this period, there has been a year on year reduction in expenditure levels, including a 1.5% 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, reducing by 6% in the past 24 months. 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 41: Libraries: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit, 2010/11 - 2018/19



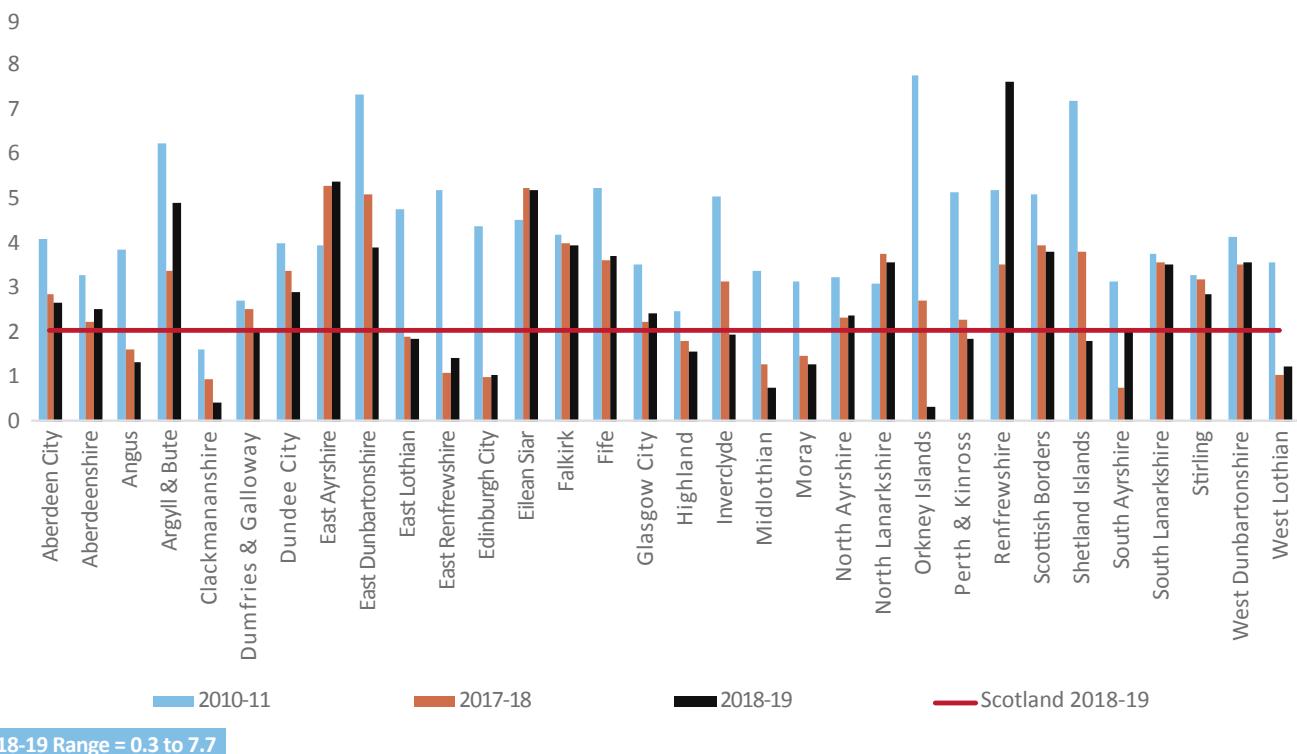
Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

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 2018/19 the range across councils in cost per library visit was £0.31 to £7.65. The level of variation across councils has not changed significantly since the base year. There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.



Fig 42: 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 nine-year period there has been a real terms reduction of 27.8% in cost per visit, from £4.81 to £3.48.

Table 31: Cost per museums visit

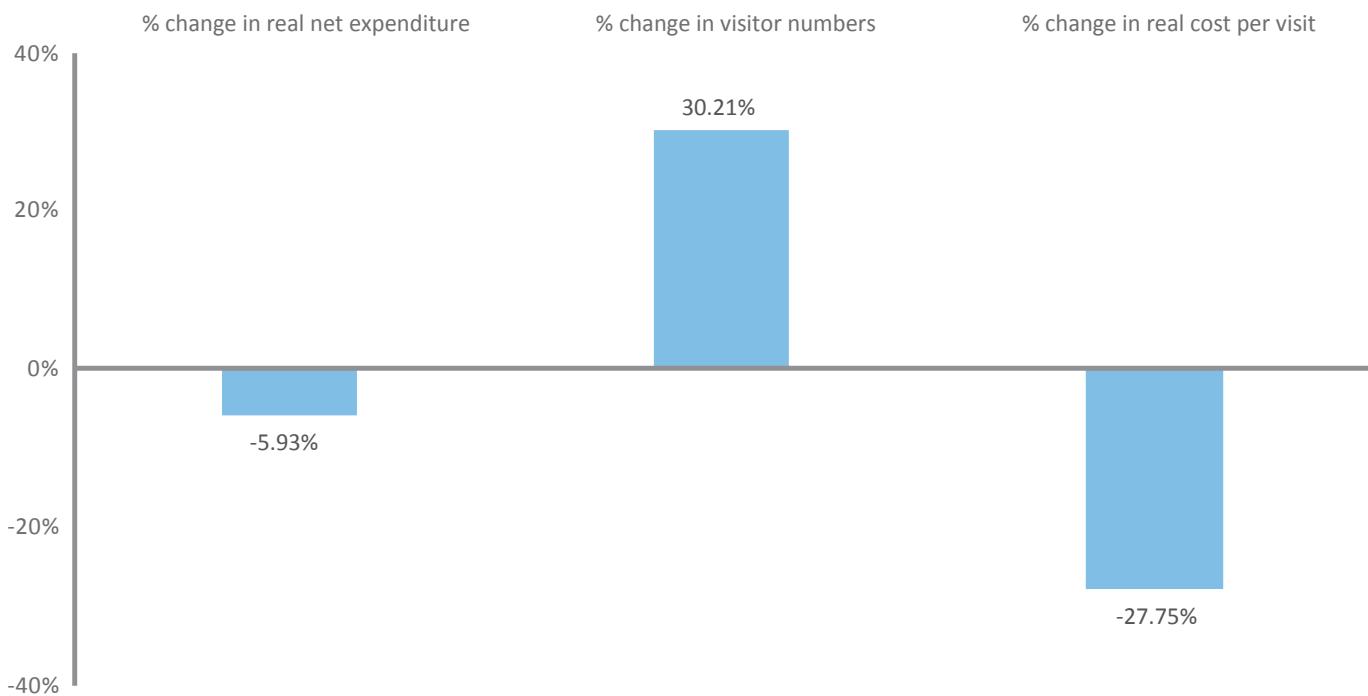
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£4.81	£3.92	£3.96	£3.63	£3.56	£3.23	£3.43	£3.58	£3.48	-3.0%	-27.8%

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 nine-year period. Net spending on museum services across Scotland has fallen by 5.9% since 2010/11 but in the same period visitor numbers have increased from 9.3 million visitors to 12.1 million visitors, an increase of 30.2%. 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 43: Museums: change in total spend, visitor numbers and cost per visit, 2010/11-2018/19

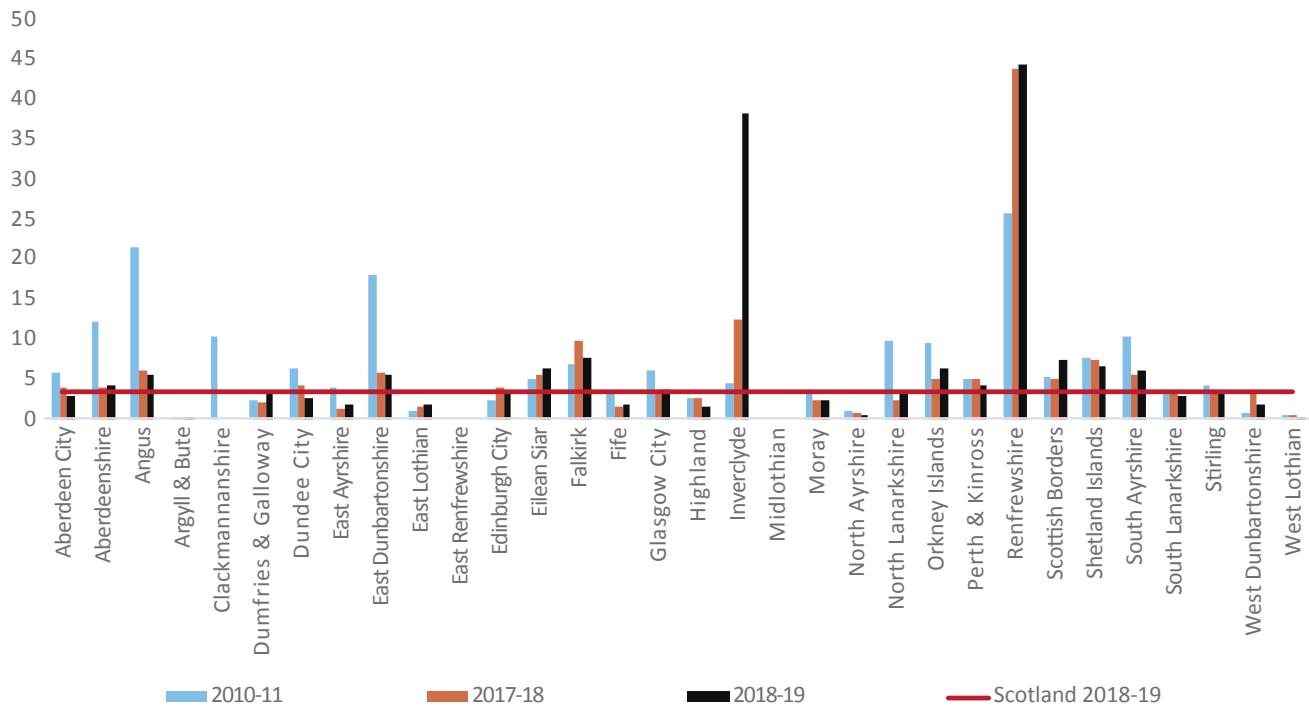


Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Although there has been a 3% reduction in unit costs over the past 12 months, the last 3 years has seen a levelling out in cost reductions due to visitor number reductions, and a levelling out in expenditure reductions.

There is a significant range between councils' museums costs, which has widened substantially in the past three years. In 2018/19 the range in cost per visit was £0.06 to £44.47 (£0.06 to £7.71 excluding Inverclyde and Renfrewshire as outliers). There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Fig 44: 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

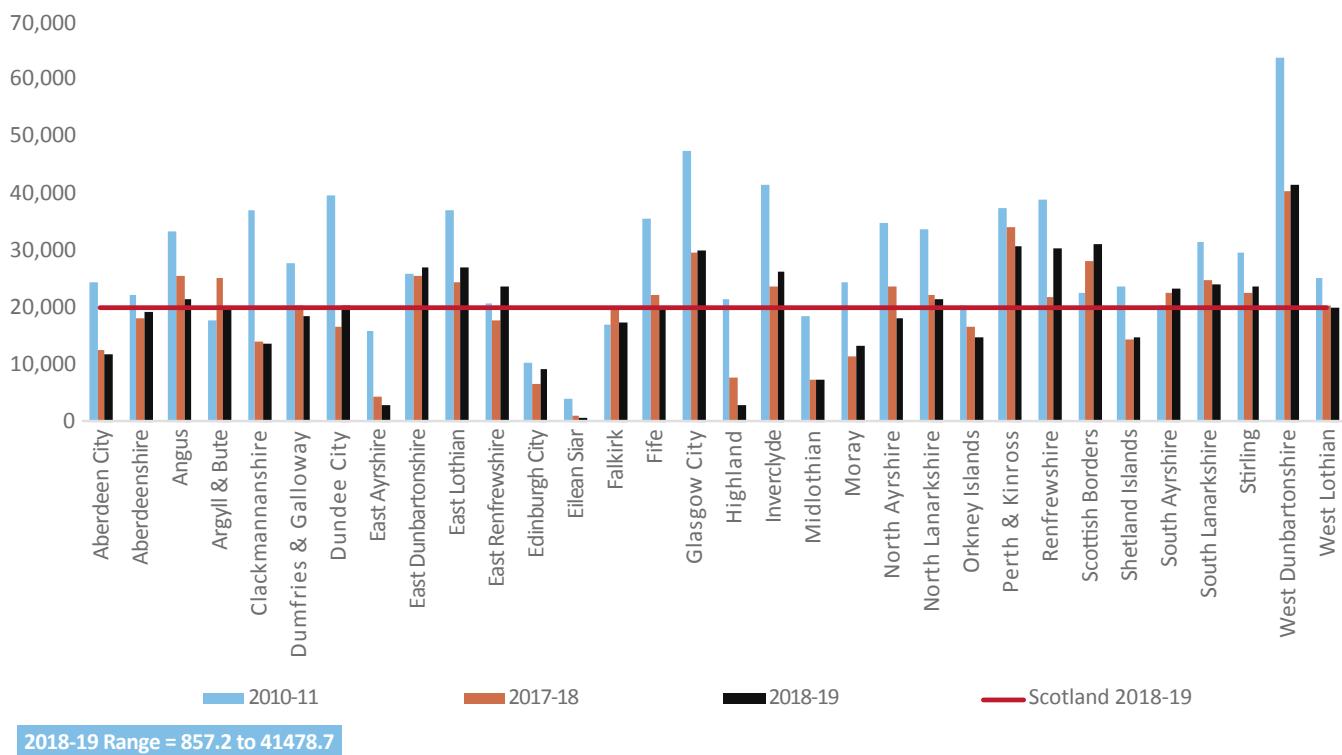
Spend on parks and open spaces is reflected as spend per 1,000 population. Over the nine-year period from 2010/11 to 2018/19 spend has reduced in real terms by 32.1%, from £29,708 to £20,174. There has been a year on year reduction across the period, although this has significantly slowed in the past 12 months with costs reducing by only 0.02% during this period.

Table 32: 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	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£29,708	£27,400	£26,164	£25,271	£25,040	£23,117	£21,587	£20,179	£20,174	0.0%	-32.1%

In 2018/19 the average cost of parks and open spaces was £20,174, ranging from £857 - £41,479. The variation across councils has narrowed since the base year due to a significant cost reduction at the higher end. In previous years, the costs of parks and open spaces varied systematically with the level of deprivation in councils, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation spending significantly more on parks and green spaces. While this still tends to hold true, the relationship is no longer significant. The average for councils with the lowest deprivation by SIMD is £17,065 compared to £23,960 for areas with highest levels of deprivation by SIMD.

Fig 45: Costs of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population (£)



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



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

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

Satisfaction with culture and leisure services

Satisfaction levels for all areas of culture and leisure remain high at around 70% or above. All areas have, however, experienced declining satisfaction since 2010/11, except parks and green spaces. In the last 12 months, satisfaction rates for libraries and museums have remained stable, while parks and sports services have seen reductions of around 2.5 percentage points.

Table 33: 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	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
Libraries	83.5	83.0	81.0	77.0	74.0	73.0	72.0	72.1	0.1	-11.4
Parks and Open Spaces	83.1	86.0	86.0	86.0	85.0	87.0	85.0	83.0	-2.5	-0.6
Museums and Galleries	75.5	78.0	76.0	75.0	71.0	70.0	69.0	69.0	-0.1	-6.6
Leisure Facilities	74.6	80.0	78.0	76.0	73.0	73.0	72.0	69.3	-2.7	-5.3

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 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 40% to 89%; in libraries, it is 53% - 91%; for museums,



42% - 91%; and finally, for parks the range is 54% - 92% (71%-92% 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 46: Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities

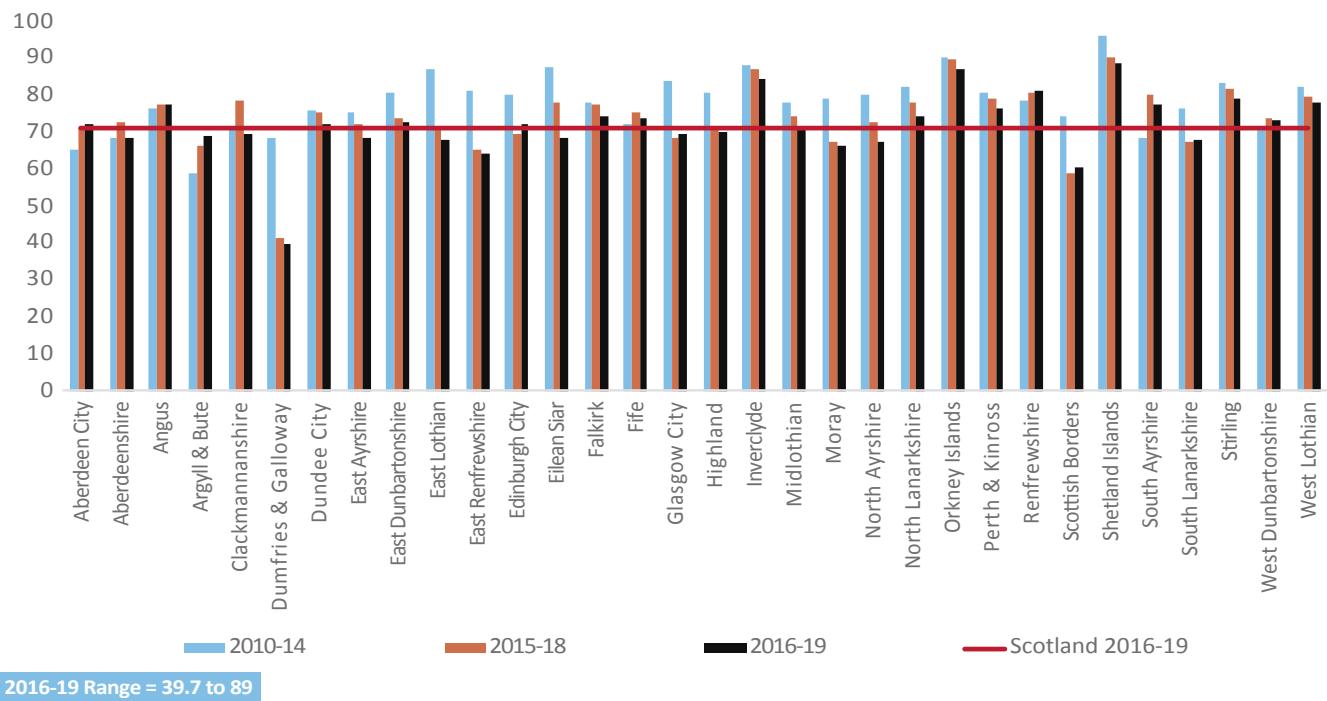


Fig 47: Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries

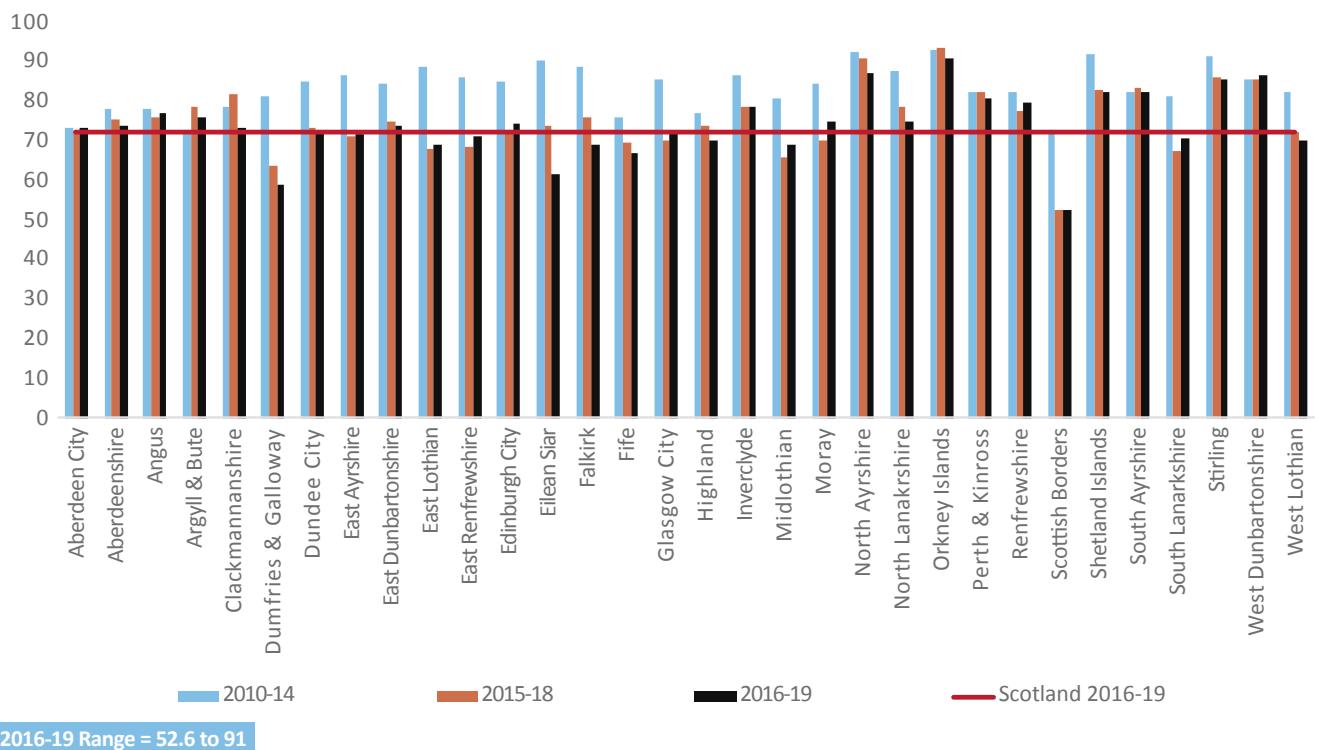
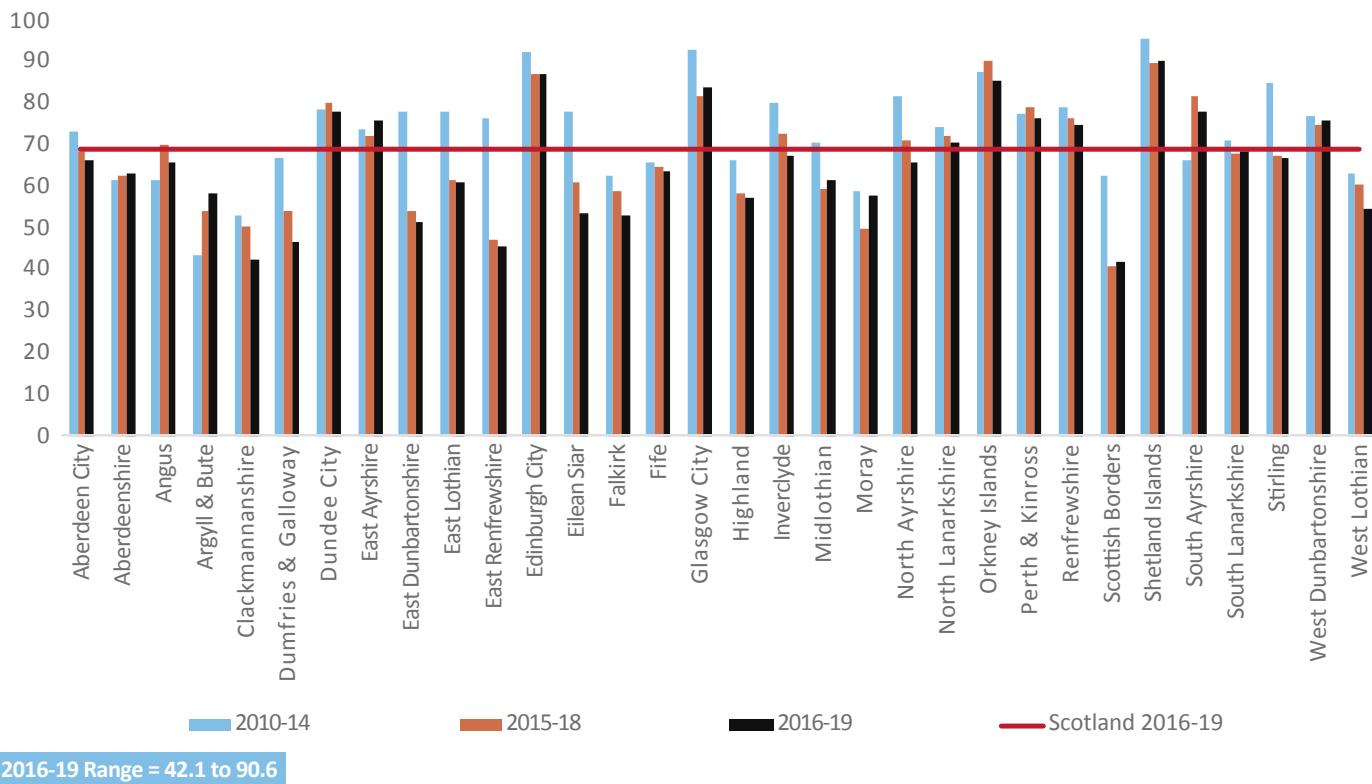


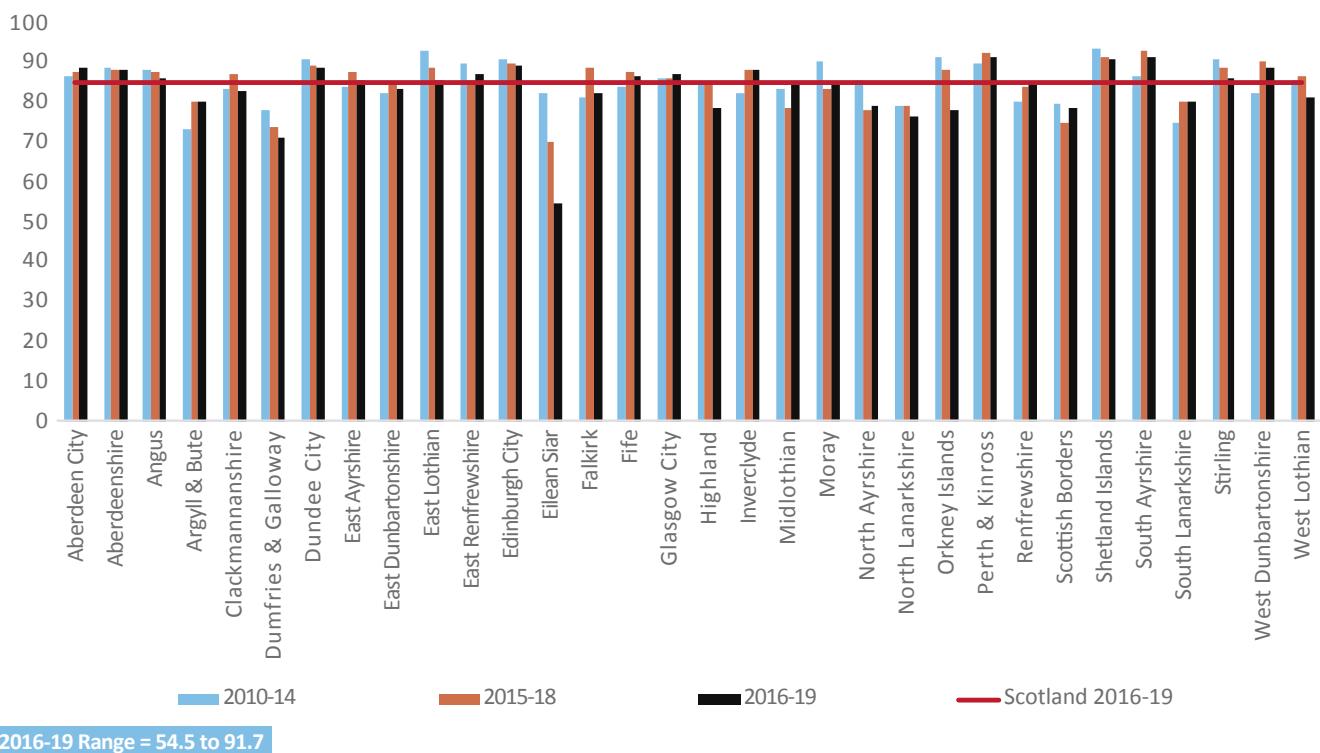


Fig 48: Percentage of adults satisfied with museums and galleries



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

Fig 49: Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces



Source: Scottish Household Survey





Environmental Services

Environmental services are an area of significant spend for local authorities, and include waste management, street cleansing, roads services, 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 10.3% since 2010/11 and expenditure on Roads services reducing by 23.9%. Against this reduction in expenditure, councils face growing challenges in maintaining or improving performance levels in relation to recycling, street cleanliness, roads condition and satisfaction.

Waste management

In examining the cost of waste management services across councils we use a measure of the net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise. Net costs are used in recognition of the increased efforts of councils to recycle waste which generates additional costs to the service but also an additional revenue stream as recycled waste is sold by councils into recycling markets. It is worth noting that the price for recyclate is volatile and influenced by global economic conditions. As this measure was introduced in 2012/13, only six years of data is presented here.

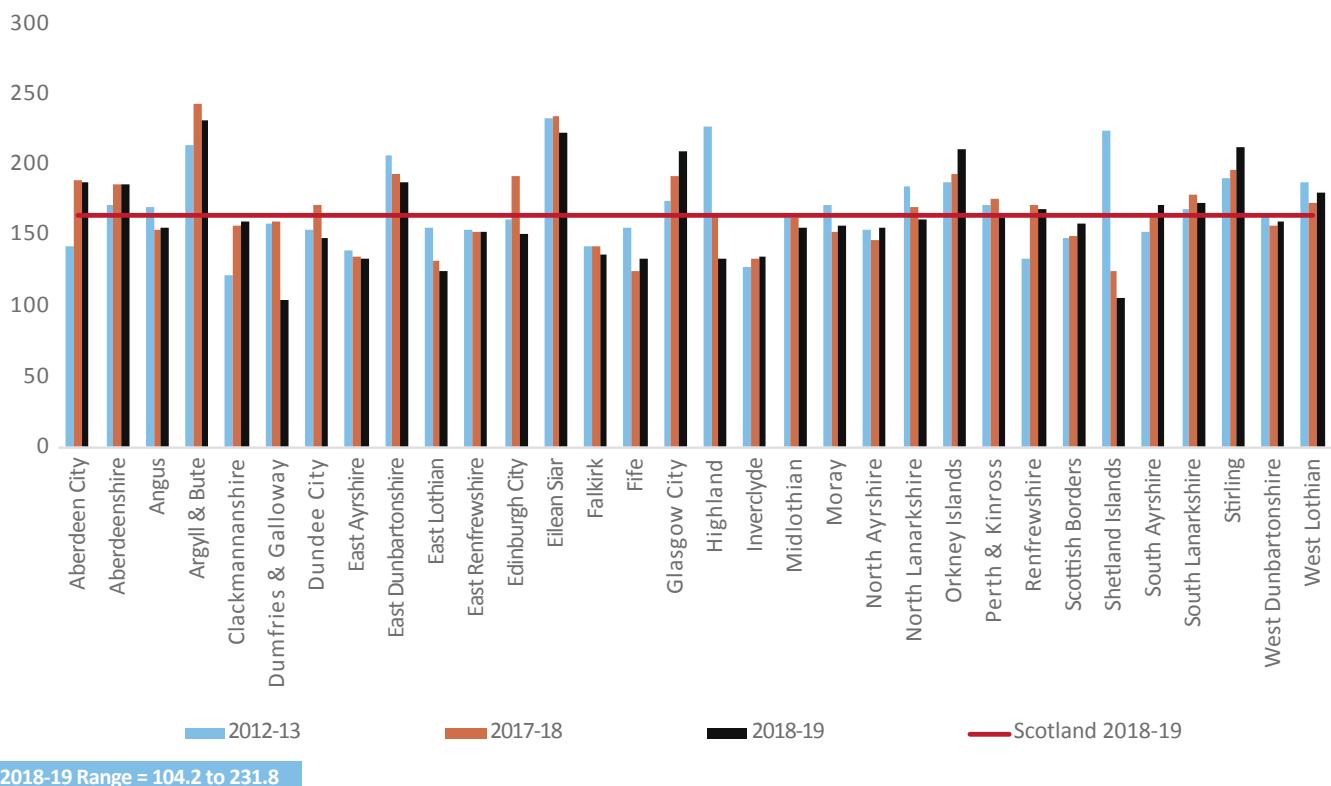
The combined net cost of waste disposal and collection reduced by 1.6% between 2012/13 and 2018/19, from £167 to £164 per premise. After remaining constant during the first three years, the combined cost increased by 2.7% in 2015/16 before falling in 2018/19 by 3.4%. These trends largely mirror movements in waste disposal costs. The range across Scotland in 2018/19 was £104 to £232.

Table 34: Net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise (£)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2012-13 to 2018-19
Collection	£65.37	£66.51	£69.36	£68.14	£66.88	£67.21	£67.45	0.4%	3.9%
Disposal	£102.05	£99.98	£97.58	£103.35	£102.34	£103.28	£97.29	-5.8%	-4.7%
Total	£167.42	£166.49	£166.94	£171.49	£169.22	£170.49	£164.74	-3.4%	-1.6%



Fig 50: Net cost of waste collection and disposal per premise (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Waste collection

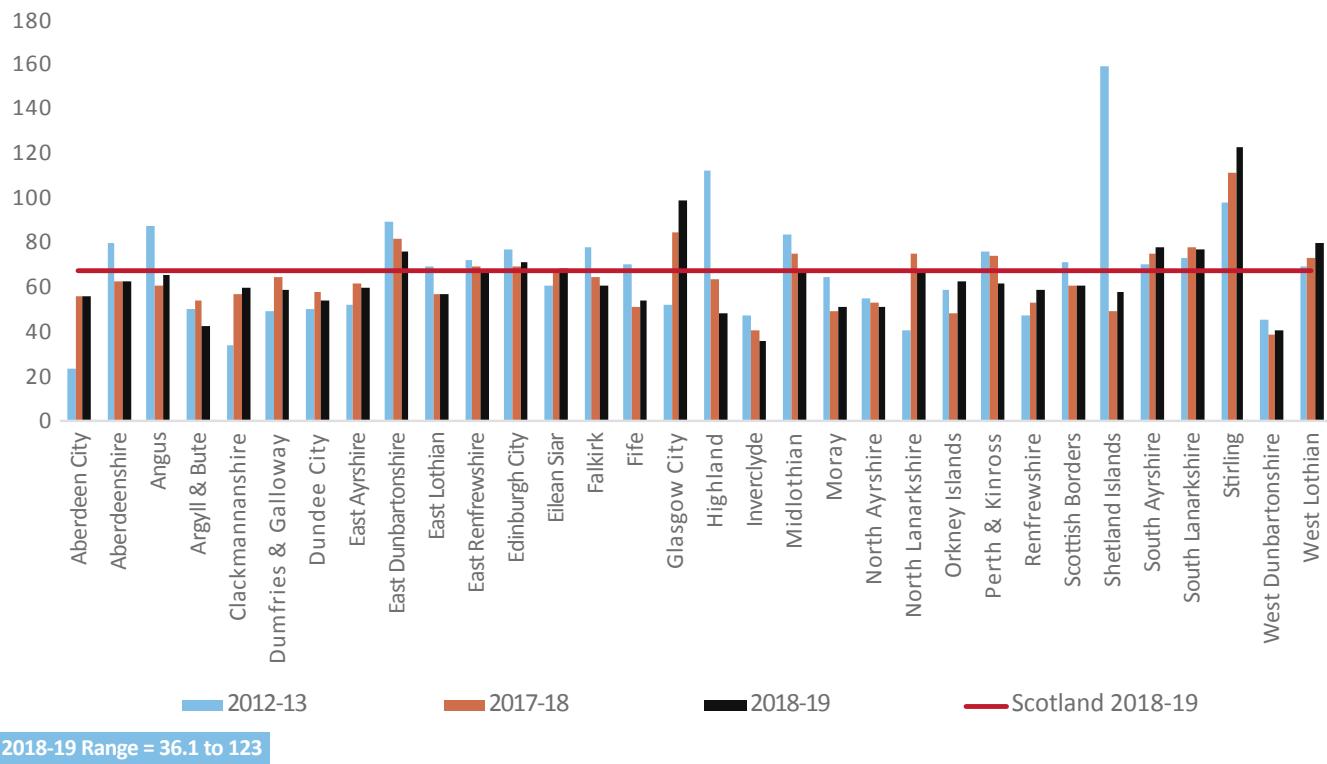
Over the seven-year period from 2012/13 to 2018/19 the Scottish average cost per premise for waste collection increased from £65.37 to £67.45, representing a real terms percentage increase of 3.2%. While the number of premises increased by 4.9% during this period, total spend increased by 7.4%.

There has been little change in the past 12 months, with costs increasing by 0.4%. This reflects small increases in both net expenditure (1.3%) and premises served (0.9%).

There is considerable although narrowing variation between councils in relation to waste collection costs, ranging from £33.08 to £122.98. In the past, waste collection costs varied systematically with deprivation, with areas of higher deprivation spending more. The data no longer reveals this pattern.



Fig 51: Net cost of waste collection per premise (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

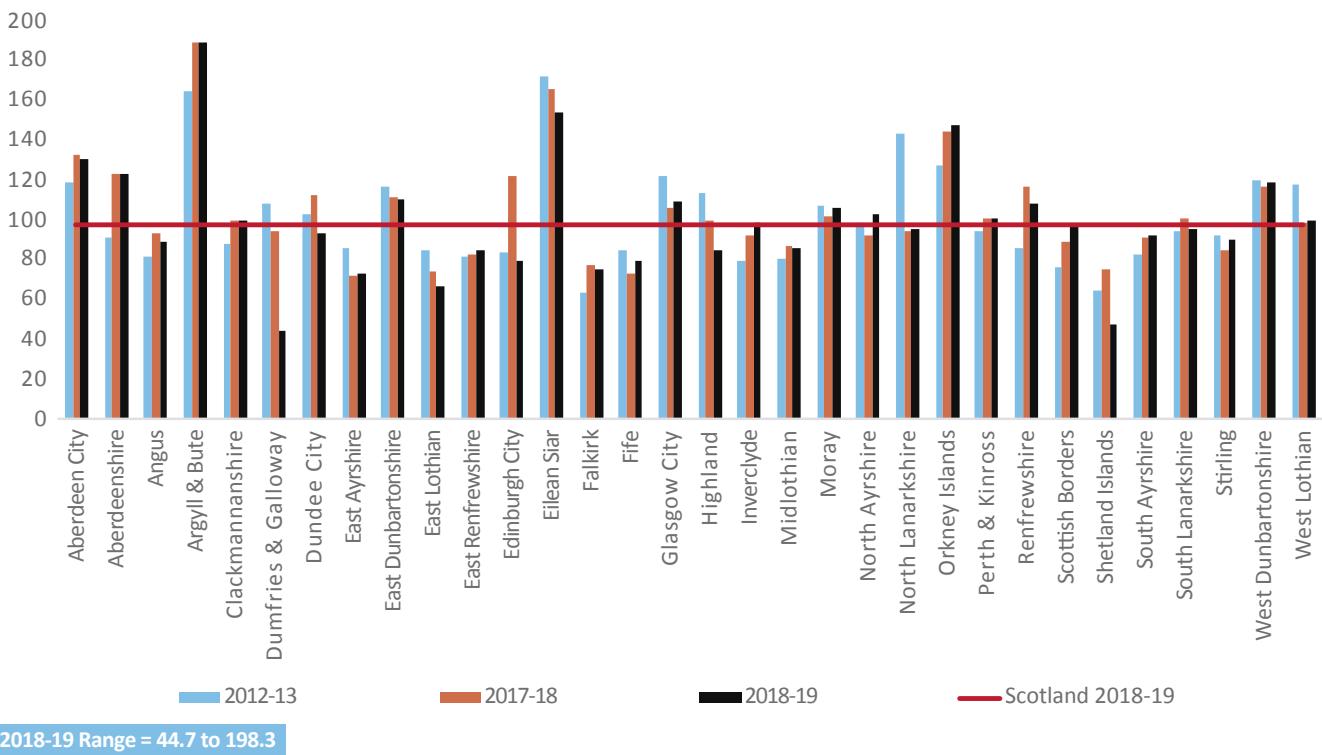
Waste disposal

Over the seven-year period from 2012/13 to 2018/19 the Scottish average net cost of waste disposal has reduced by 4.7%, from £102.05 to £97.29 per premise. This reflects a 0.8% reduction in net expenditure and a 4.9% 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 12 months. In 2018/19, costs have reduced by 5.8%, reflecting a 4.9% reduction in expenditure, and 0.9% growth in premises served.

The range in disposal costs across councils was £44.69 to £189.28 in 2018/19. Variation has narrowed in recent years, with analysis revealing no clear relationships to rurality, deprivation or demography.



Fig 52: Net cost of waste disposal per premise (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure and visitor figures

Recycling

Over recent years councils have put greater emphasis on the recycling of waste in compliance with Scotland's Zero Waste Plan to achieve Scotland's 60% household waste recycling target by 2020 and 75% recycling target by 2025.³⁴ 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.

While recycling rates have improved overall across Scotland from 40.1% in 2011/12 to 44.7% in 2018/19, the last 12 months has revealed a slight reduction, with rates falling from 45.6% to 44.7%. This is the first year on year decrease in the household waste recycling rate since the start of reporting under the current definition of household waste in 2011. A seventh consecutive increase in plastics recycled was offset by a decrease in paper and cardboard wastes recycled and organic wastes composted.

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. If such waste was included, as in the previous method, the overall recycling rate in 2018/19 would have been 45.4%, an increase of 5.3 percentage points from the 40.1% achieved in 2011, but still a drop from 46.1% in 2017/18.³⁵

There has been a 7% reduction in the amount of Scottish household waste landfilled in 2018 and a decrease of 29% since 2011. This is the seventh consecutive decrease in household waste landfilled since 2011. For the second consecutive year, in 2018 there was more Scottish waste recycled than landfilled.

34 <https://www2.gov.scot/Publications/2010/06/08092645/11>

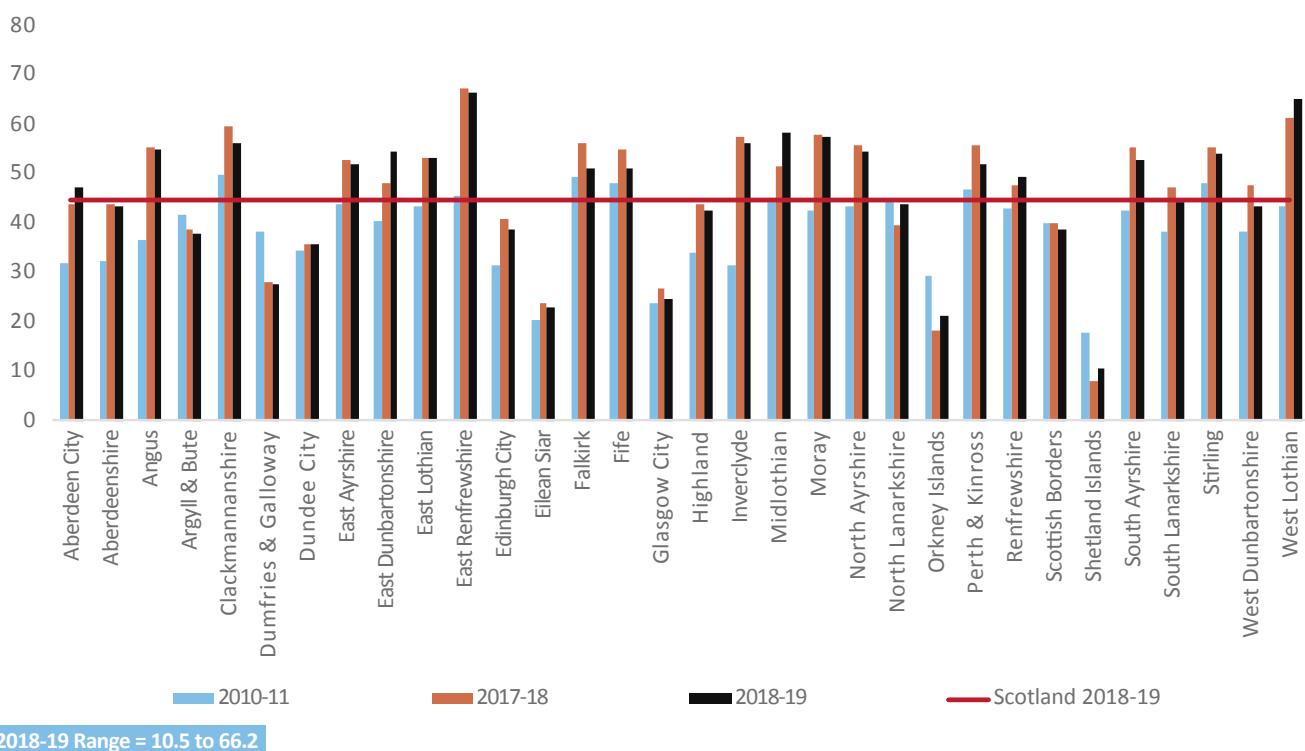
35 <https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/469650/2018-household-waste-commentary.pdf>

**Table 35: 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	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2011-12 to 2018-19
38.7	40.1	41.2	42.2	42.8	44.2	45.2	45.6	44.7	-0.9	6.0

*Note: Figures from 2010/11 – 2013/14 use the old recycling definition, while figures from 2014/15 to 2018/19 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 2018/19 is 24.6% to 66.2%.

Fig 53: Percentage of total household waste that is recycled

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

Percentage of adults satisfied with waste collection

Satisfaction levels are 6 percentage points lower in 2018/19 than they were in 2010/11, falling from 80.9% to 74.9%. Satisfaction levels are unchanged in the past 12 months. There is widening variation across councils, with rates ranging from 59% to 90% across Scotland in 2018/19. Variation is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council.

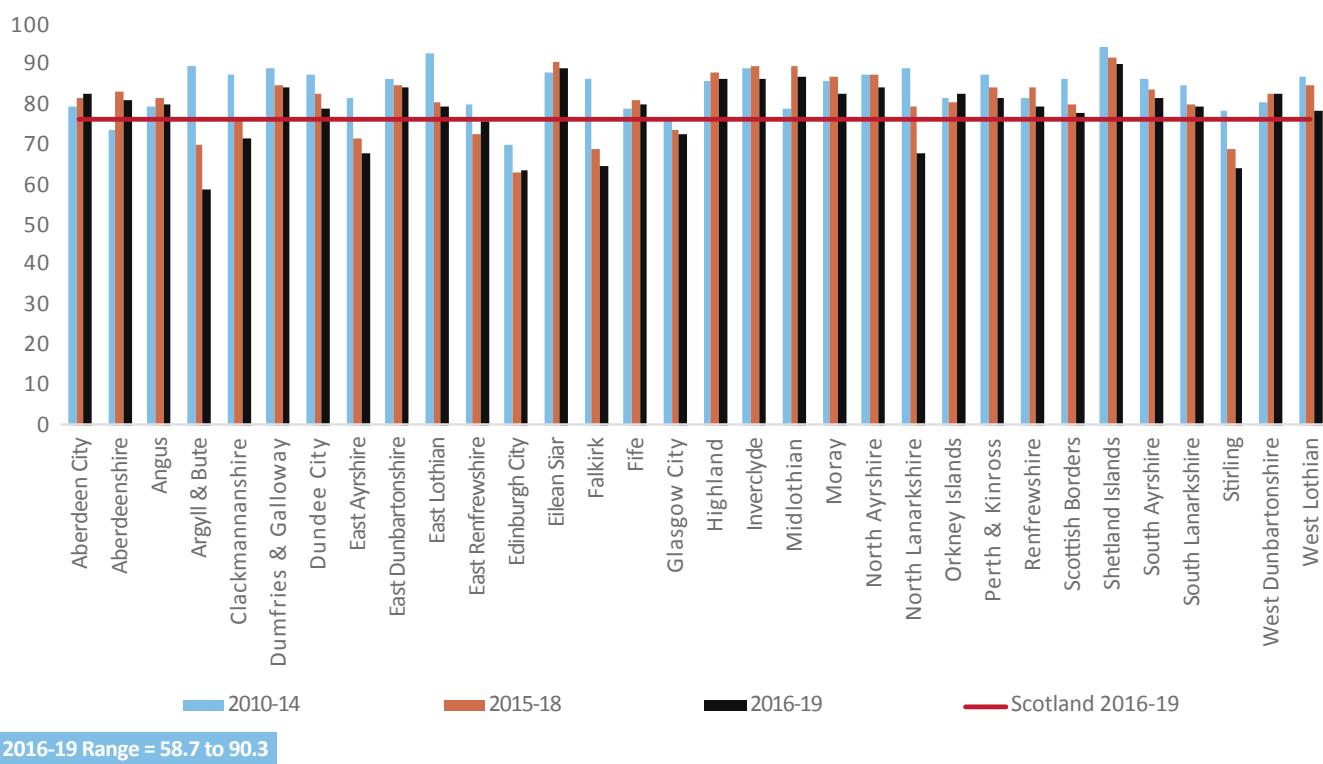
Table 36: Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection

2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
80.9	83.0	83.0	84.0	82.0	79.0	75.0	74.9	-0.1	-6.0



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 54: 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)³⁶ 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.³⁷ 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 2018/19, 92.8% of streets were assessed as 'clean', a small increase of 0.6 percentage points in the past 12 months. This is down by 2.6 percentage points from 95.4% in 2010/11.

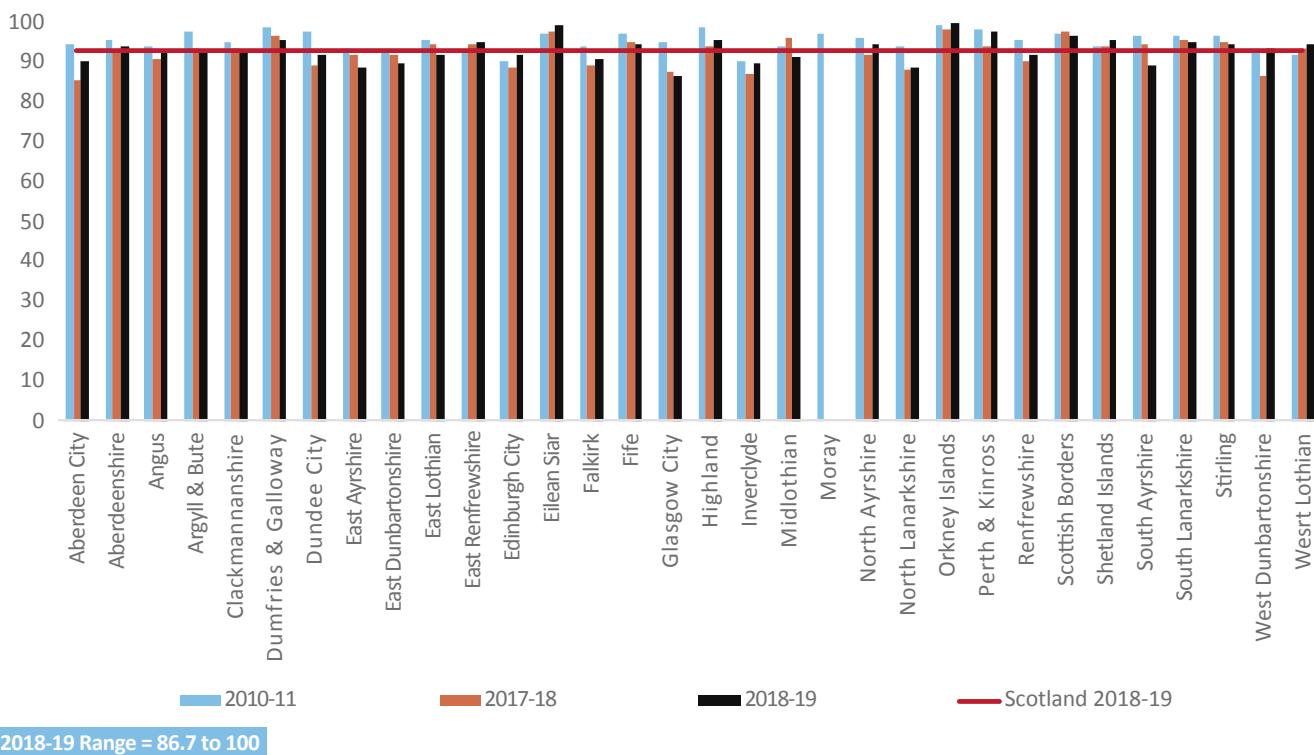
³⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-practice-litter-refuse-scotland-2018/>

³⁷ Source: Keep Scotland Beautiful, <http://www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/>

**Table 37: Percentage of clean streets**

2010-11	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 2010-11 to 2018-19
95.4	96.1	95.8	96.1	93.9	93.4	93.9	92.2	92.8	0.6	-2.6

There is a relatively narrow range of cleanliness scores across Scotland. The level of variation widened between 2013/14 and 2015/16 but narrowed in recent years. In 2018/19, scores ranged from 86.7% to 100%, 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).

Fig 55: 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

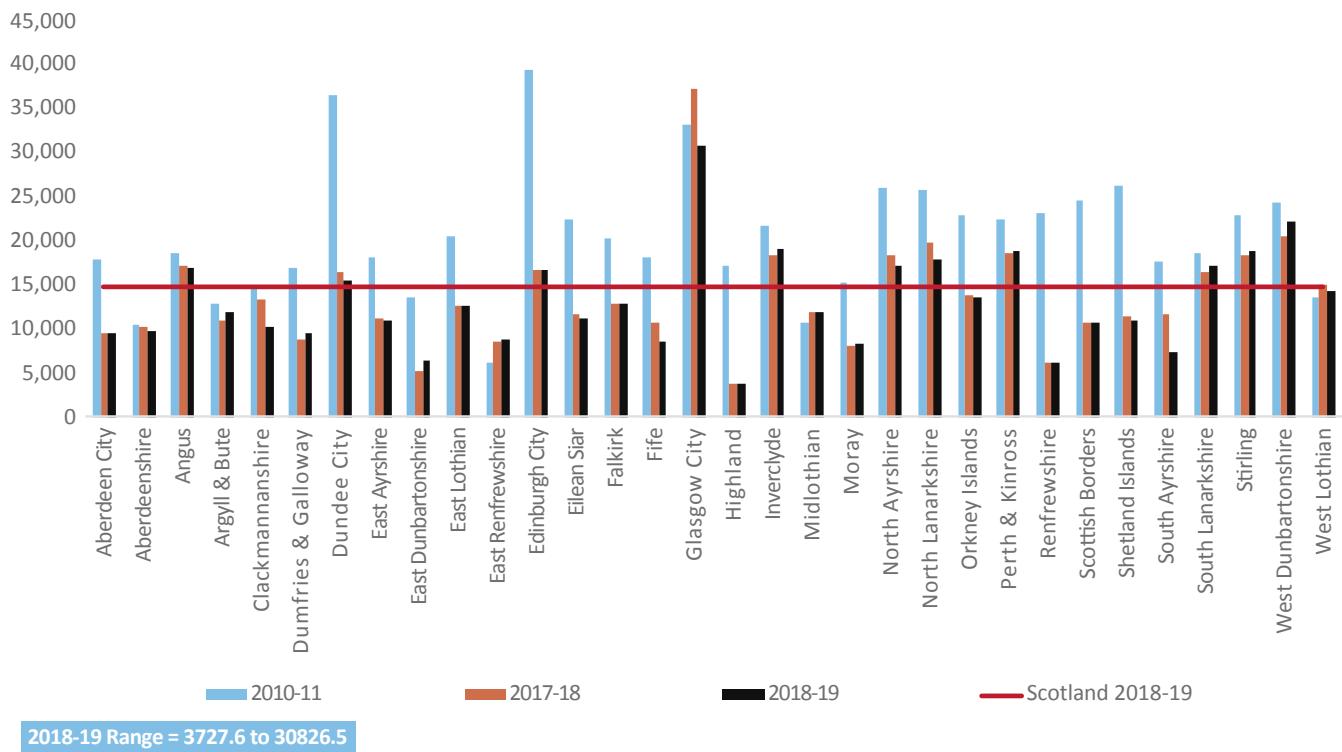
Over the same nine-year period the Scottish average for net cost of street cleaning has reduced by 34.6%, from £22,744 per 1,000 population in 2010/11 to £14,880 in 2018/19. This reflects a year on year reduction in costs, including a 6.4% reduction in the past 12 months.

Table 38: 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	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£22,744	£21,870	£19,387	£17,619	£16,921	£16,381	£15,013	£15,905	£14,880	-6.4%	-34.6%



Fig 56: Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population (£)



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

There is significant but narrowing variation across councils, with street cleaning costs ranging from £3,728 to £30,826 in 2018/19. Street cleaning costs vary systematically with deprivation, with higher costs in authorities with higher levels of deprivation (£17,541 for areas with the highest level of deprivation compared to £11,130 for councils with the lowest levels).

Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning

As with other services, satisfaction levels for street collection have experienced a downward trend, reducing from 73.3% to 62.9% between 2010/11 and 2018/19. In the past 2 years, the rate of reduction has accelerated with satisfaction levels reducing by four percentage points between 2016/17 and 2017/18, and by a further 3.1 percentage points between 2017/18 and 2018/19. 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 39: Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning

2010-11	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	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	-3.1	-10.4

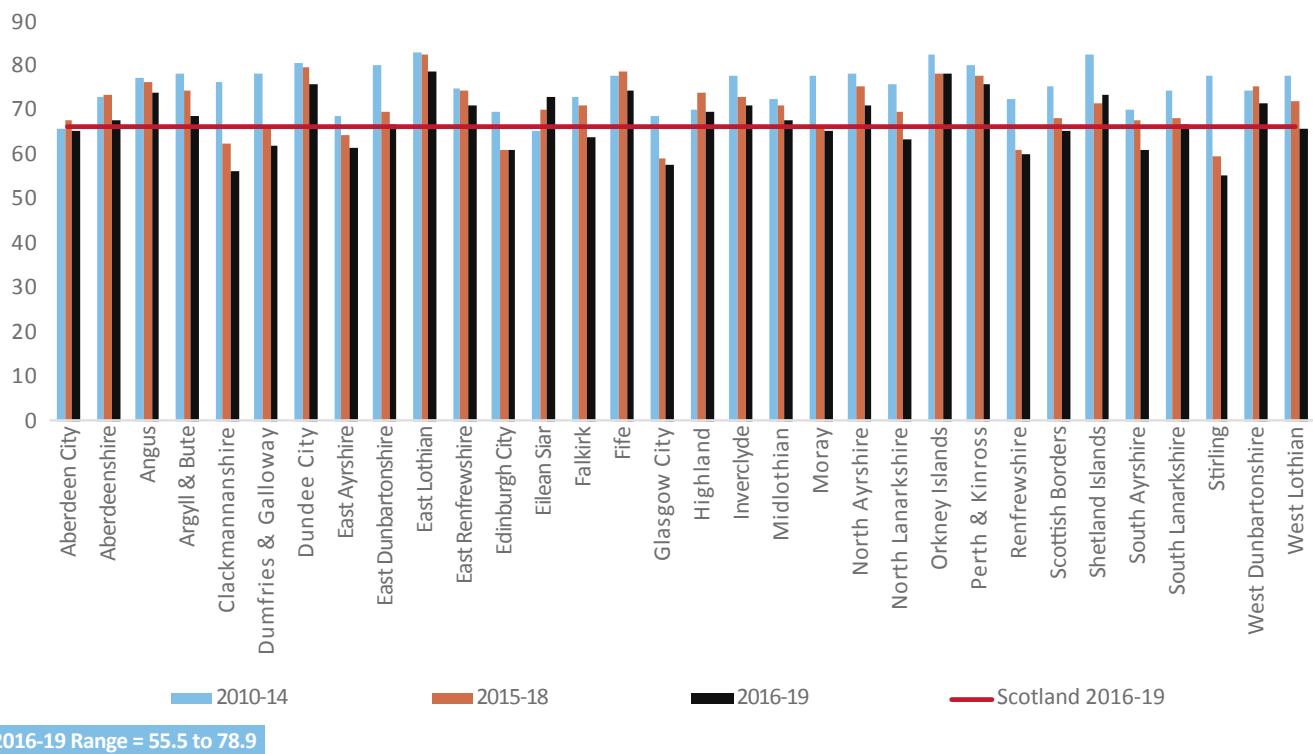
As noted previously, the satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and while proportionate at Scotland level, there are limitations at local authority level in relation to the small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, 3-year rolled averages have been 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 55.5% to 78.9%. Variation is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council.

Fig 57: Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning



Source: Scottish Household Survey

Roads

Across the period, there have been significant reductions in expenditure on Roads, 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 nine years for which we have data, the Scottish average cost per kilometre has reduced by 25.9% from £12,709 to £9,417. This reflects year on year reductions, including an 8.8% reduction in the past 12 months, with costs per kilometre falling from £10,323 to £9,417.

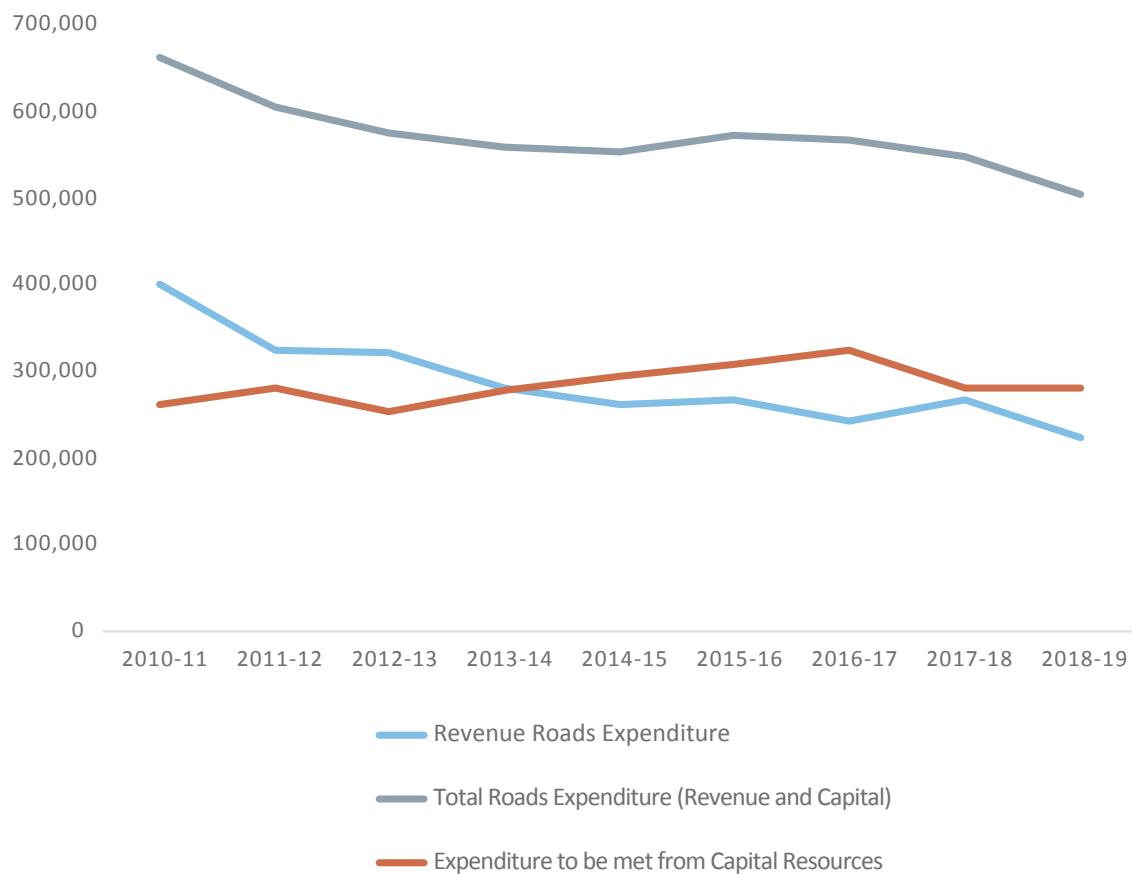
Table 40: Cost of roads per kilometre

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£12,709	£11,572	£10,993	£10,646	£10,535	£10,842	£10,712	£10,323	£9,417	-8.8%	-25.9%

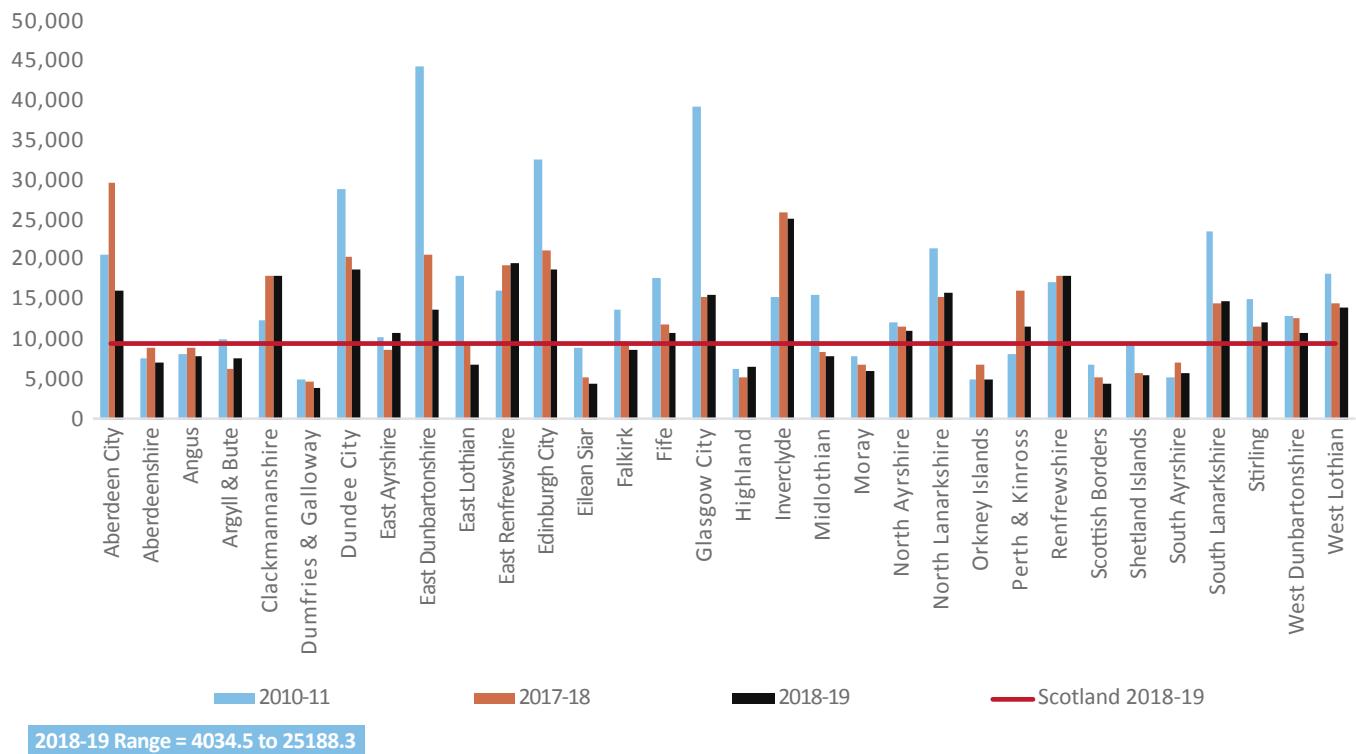


As the graph below shows, overall revenue expenditure on roads has reduced significantly, by 44.0%, since 2010/11, while capital expenditure has increased by 6.6% across the period. In the past 12 months, revenue expenditure has fallen by 15.8%, and capital has fallen by 0.3%.

Fig 58: Roads expenditure - revenue and capital (£)



While the variation in roads costs across Scotland is significant, this has narrowed substantially in the last two years. In 2018/19, costs ranged from £4,034 to £25,188. Variation across councils is systematically related to rurality, with significantly higher costs in urban areas (e.g. £15,918 in urban areas compared to £5,549 in rural areas).

**Fig 59: 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

In terms of the condition of the road network, the nine-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 A and B class roads and Unclassified class roads, while C class roads have shown a very small deterioration.

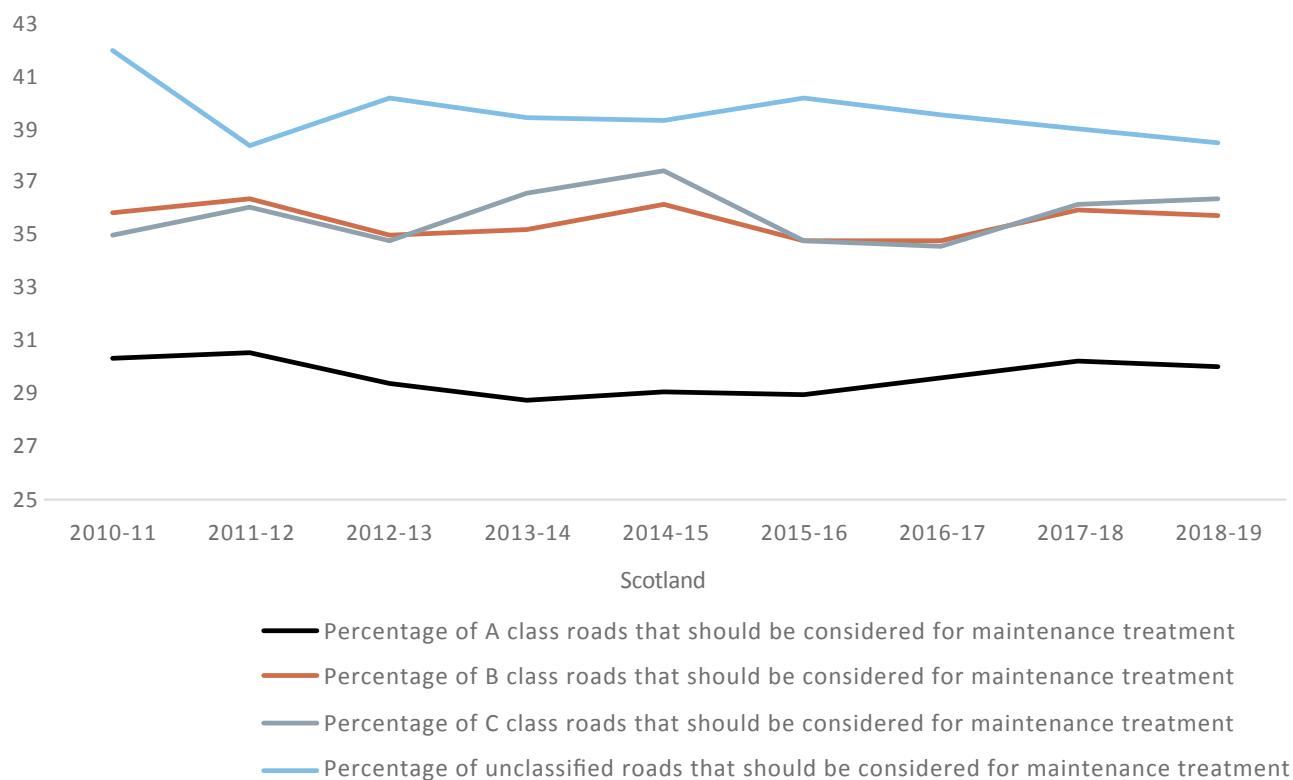
Table 41: Percentage of A, B, C class and Unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance

	2009-11	2010-12	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	Value Change 2016-18 to 2017-19	Value Change 2009-11 to 2017-19
% A Class Roads	30.3	30.5	29.4	28.7	29.0	29.0	29.5	30.2	30.0	-0.1	-0.3
% B Class Roads	35.8	36.3	35.0	35.2	36.1	34.8	34.8	35.9	35.7	-0.2	-0.1
% C Class Roads	35.0	36.0	34.8	36.6	37.4	34.7	34.6	36.2	36.3	0.1	1.3
% Unclassified Roads	41.9	38.3	40.1	39.4	39.3	40.1	39.5	39.0	38.3	-0.7	-3.7

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



Fig 60: 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 2017/19, the range for A class roads is 17% to 42%; B class roads is 20% to 63%; C class roads is 14% to 60%; and for unclassified roads the range is 20% to 57%. The data reveals that the condition of roads in urban areas is significantly better than that in rural areas. This reflects the above 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 2017 – 2019, 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. Almost half of all roads authorities have a local road network that is in a worse condition than it was over the previous 2 year 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 61: Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

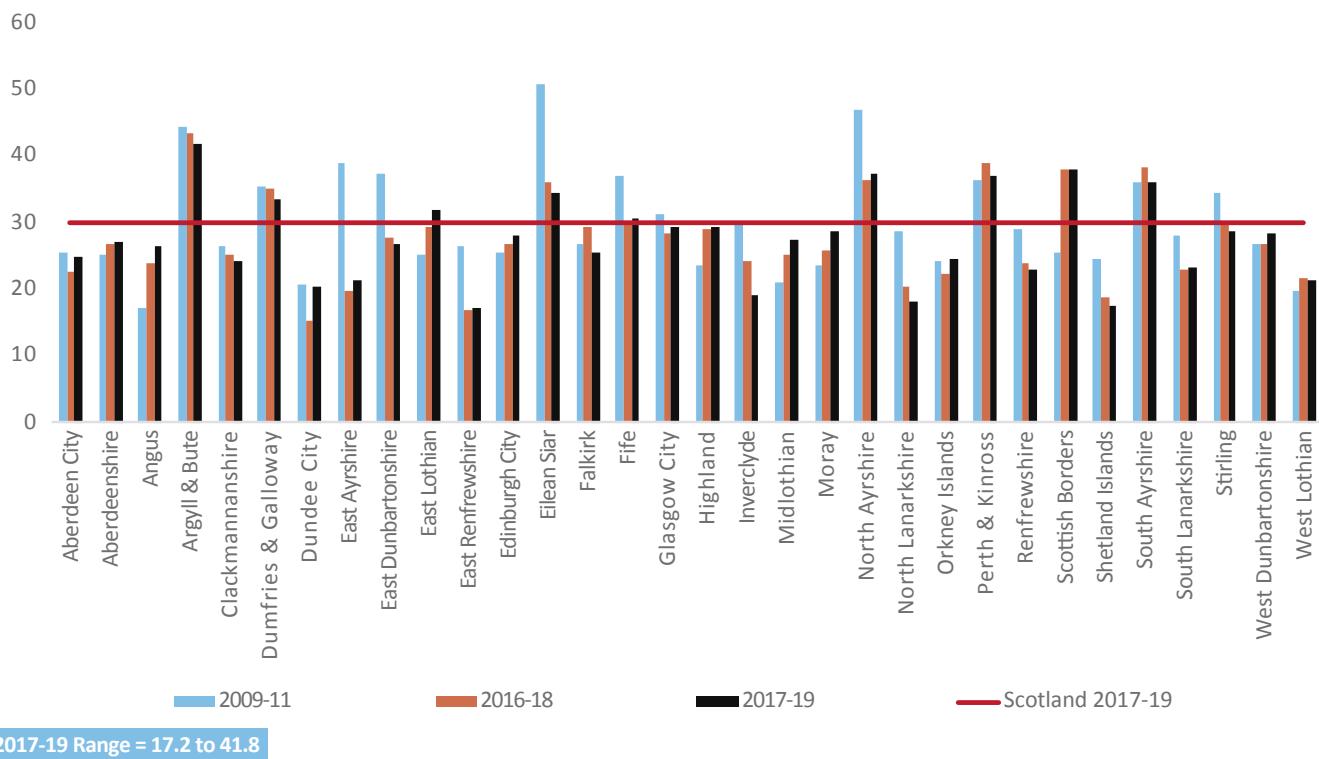


Fig 62: Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

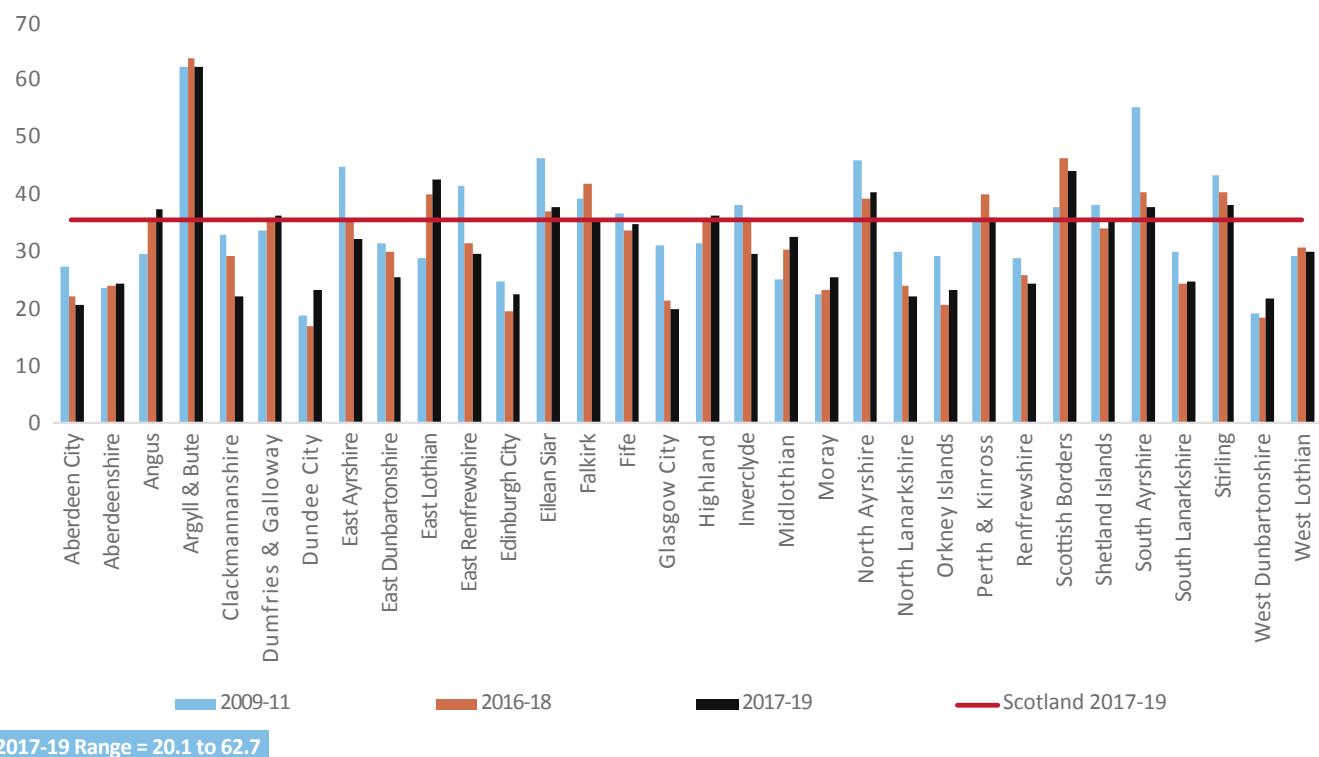




Fig 63: Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment

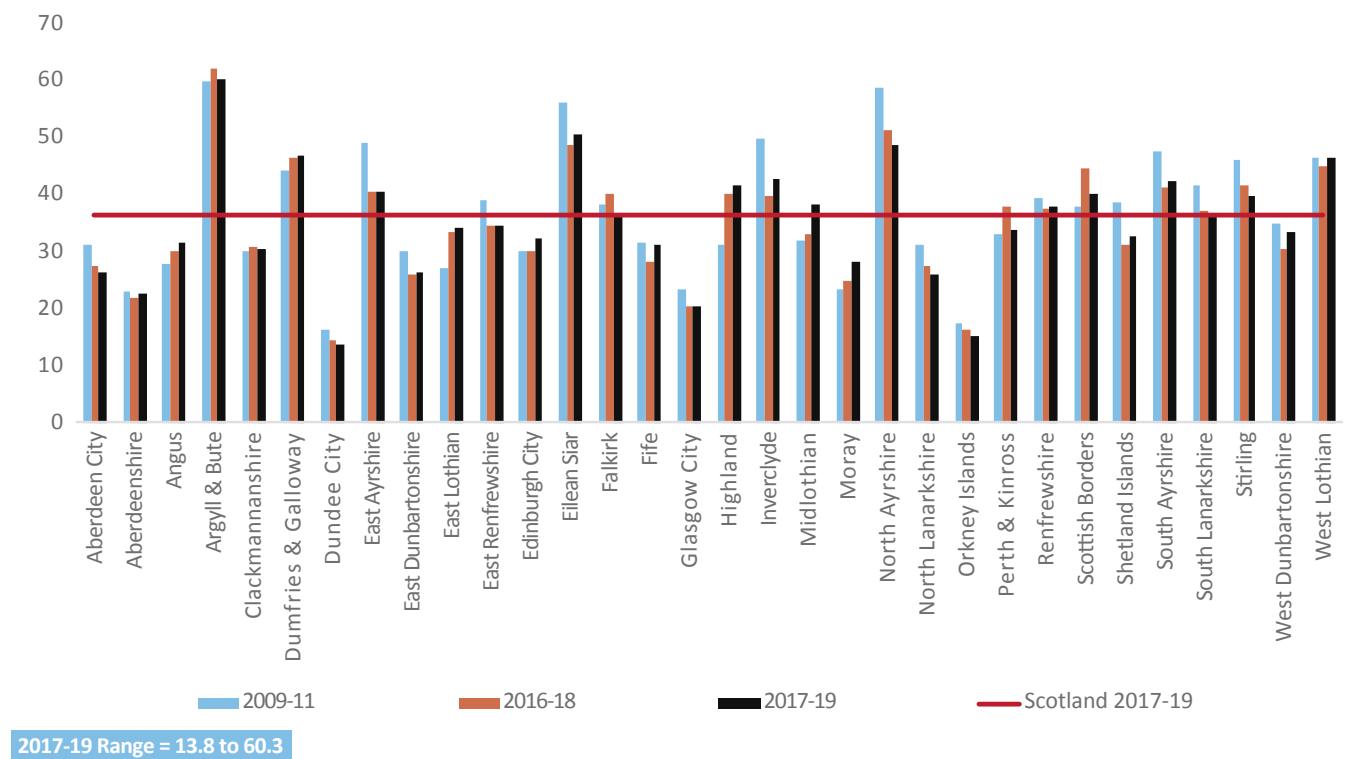
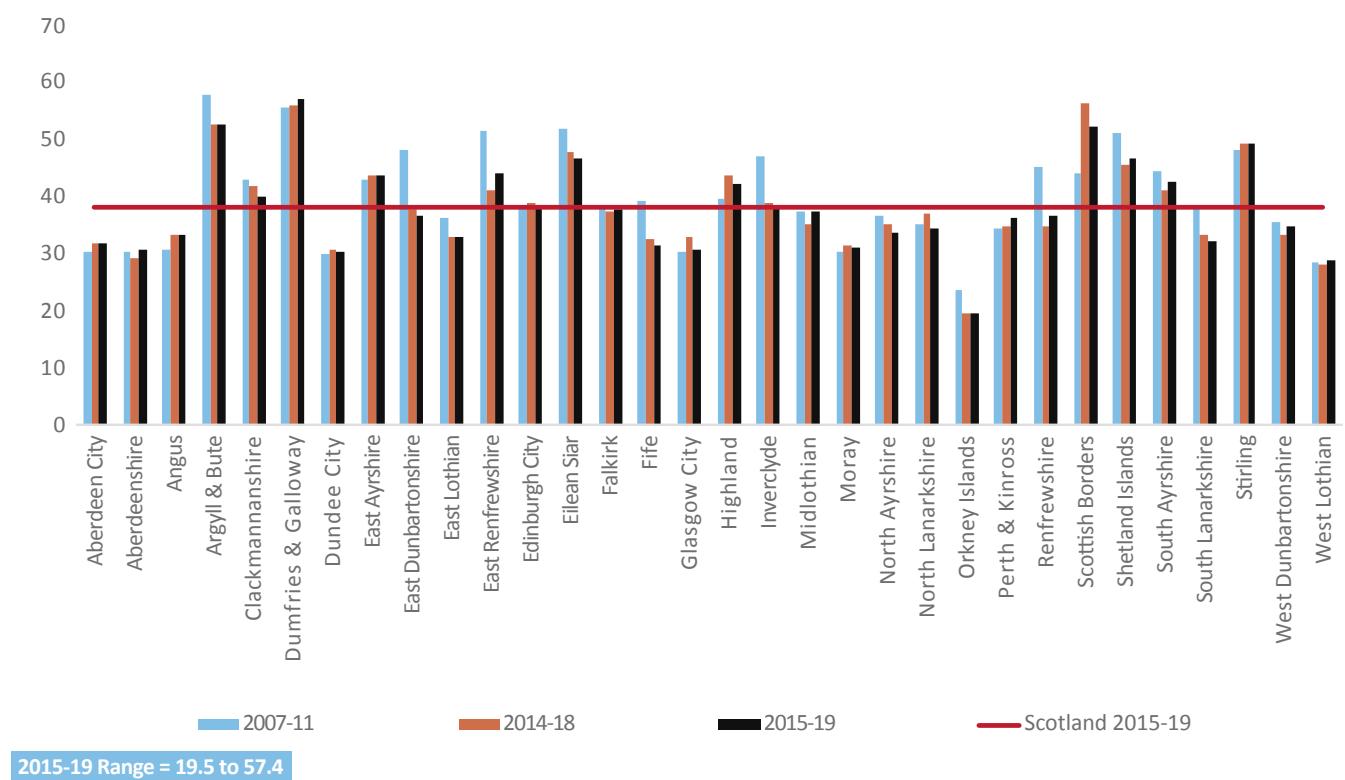


Fig 64: Percentage of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment



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



Environmental health and trading standards

Since 2010/11, environmental health and trading standards costs have reduced by 25.1% from £27,881 to £20,884, including a significant reduction of 11.3% between 2010/11 and 2011/12. In 2012/13, the framework split these measures to enable a better understanding of the trends in each of these services.

Trading standards costs include trading standards, money advice and citizen's advice and have been standardised within the framework as costs per 1,000 population. Since 2012/13, the cost of these services, while volatile, increased overall by 4.0%, from £5,661 to £5,890. In the past 12 months, costs have reduced by 1.9%.

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

In 2018/19, costs ranged from £1,304 to £14,354. Trading standards costs are higher in councils with lower levels of deprivation although this is not significant (£6,704, compared £4,364 for councils with the highest level of deprivation).

Across this same period, there was a 16.5% reduction in the cost of environmental health services per 1,000 population, from £17,955 in 2012/13 to £14,994 in 2018/19. In the past 12 months, costs have fallen by 5.0% from £15,789 to £14,994. There is significant variation across councils which has widened in the past 12 months, with costs ranging from £4,995 to £30,274. Rurality has a systematic impact on the cost of environmental health, with rural councils reporting significantly higher costs than urban or semi-rural authorities (£18,650 compared to £14,862 and £10,760 respectively).

Table 42: 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	% Change 2016-17 to 2018-19	% Change 2012-13 to 2017-18
Trading Standards, Money Advice & Citizens Advice	£5,561	£6,080	£5,984	£6,084	£5,693	£6,001	£5,890	-1.9%	4.0%
Environmental Health	£17,955	£18,744	£17,843	£17,614	£16,457	£15,789	£14,994	-5.0%	-16.5%



Fig 65: Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population (£)

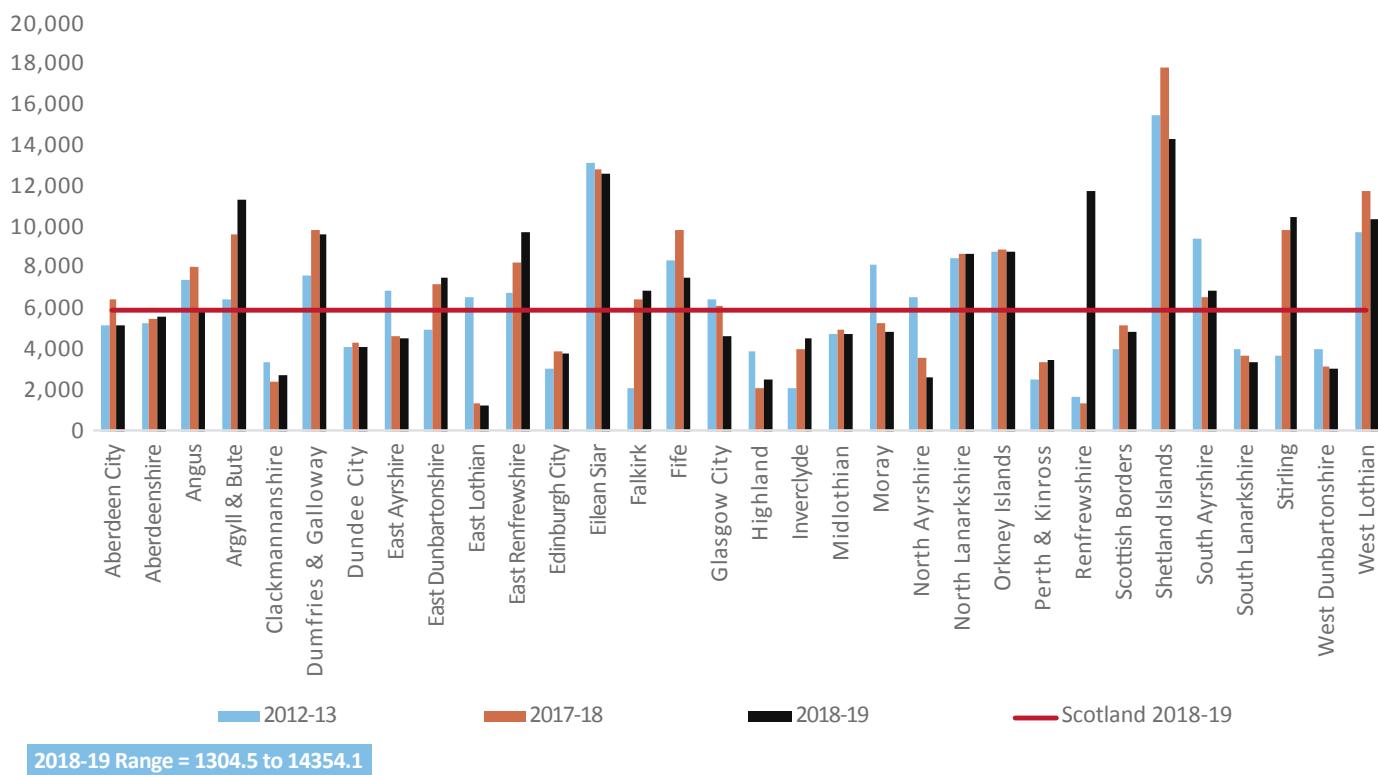
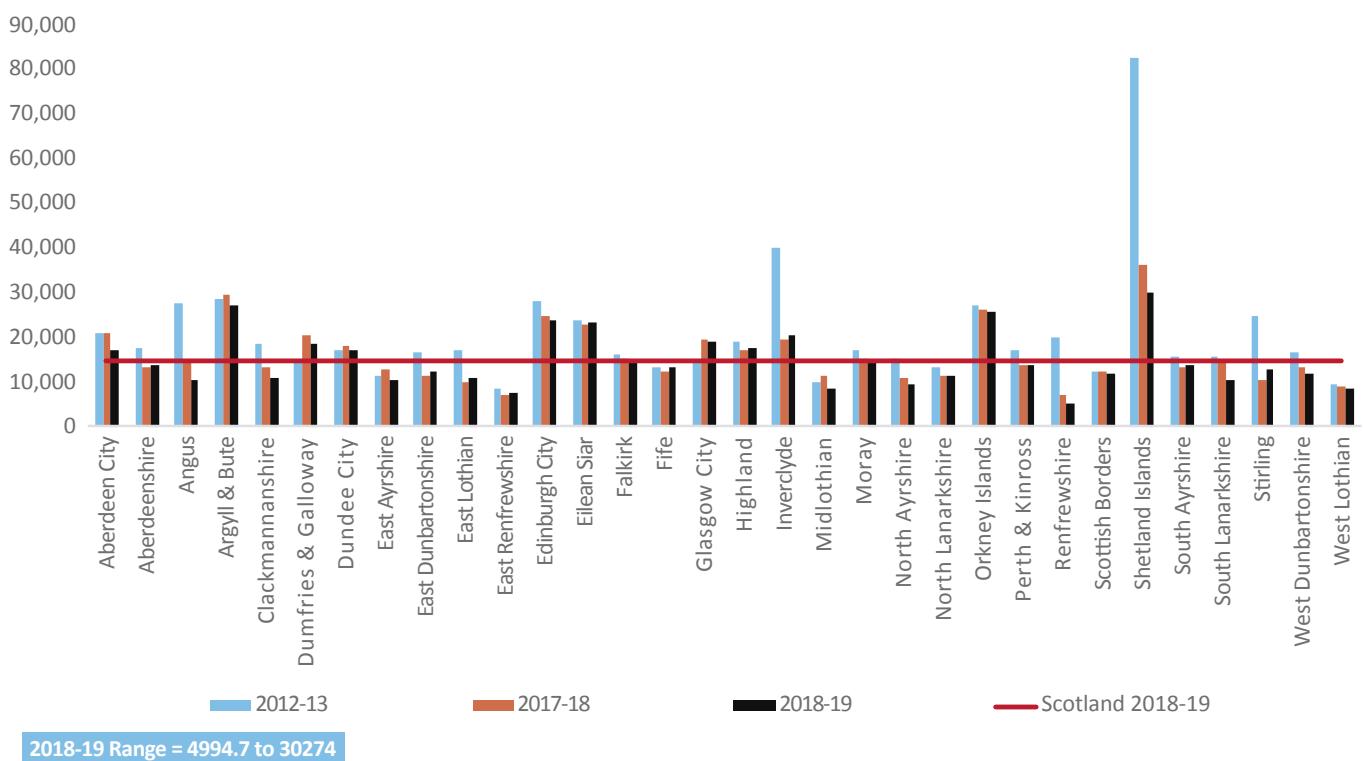


Fig 66: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population (£)



Source: Council supplied figures



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

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





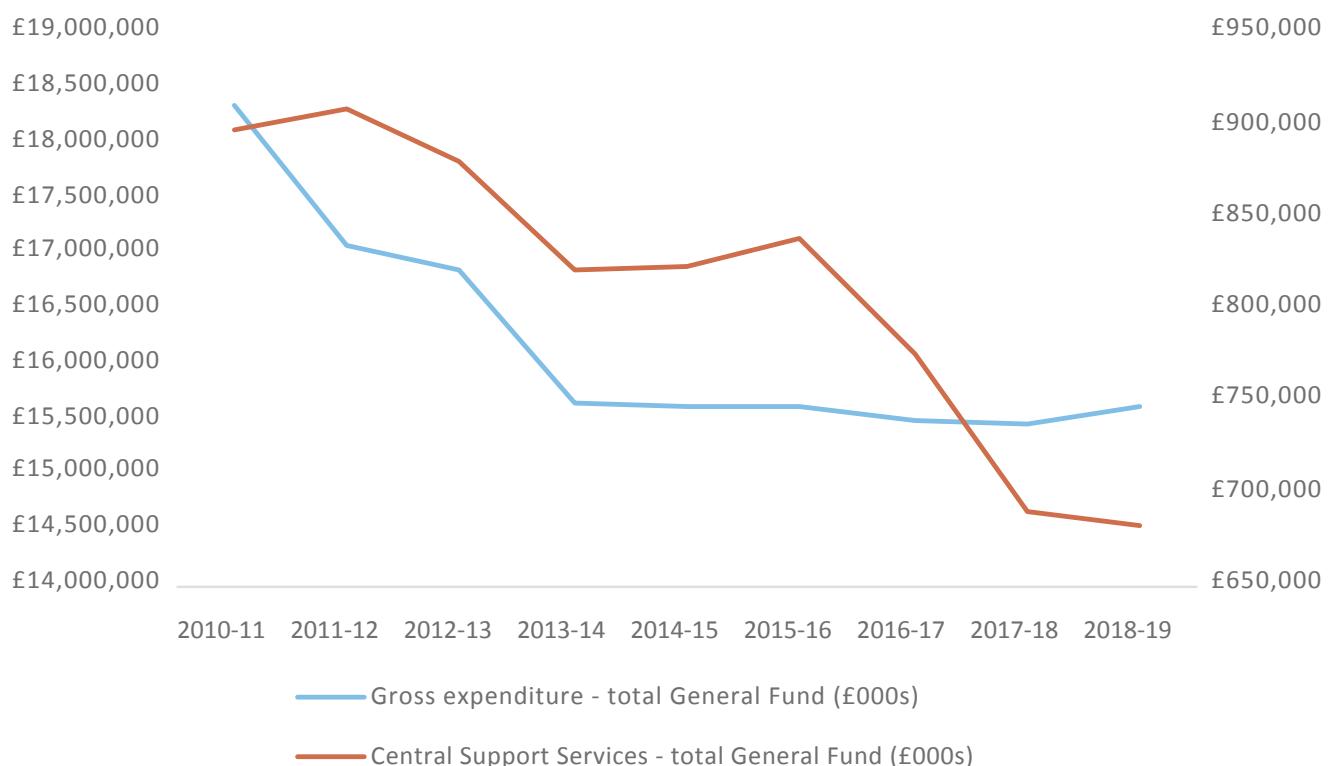
Corporate Services

Support services

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

For standardisation purposes, support services are represented as a % of total gross revenue expenditure in the benchmarking framework. The figure has remained around 5% across the 9-year period. In 2018/19 the Scottish average was 4.4% compared to 4.9% in 2010/11, although there has been fluctuation across the period. The reduction between 2010/11 and 2018/19 reflects a 24.0% reduction in support costs in parallel with a 14.9% 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.

Fig 67: Support services expenditure and total gross expenditure (£)

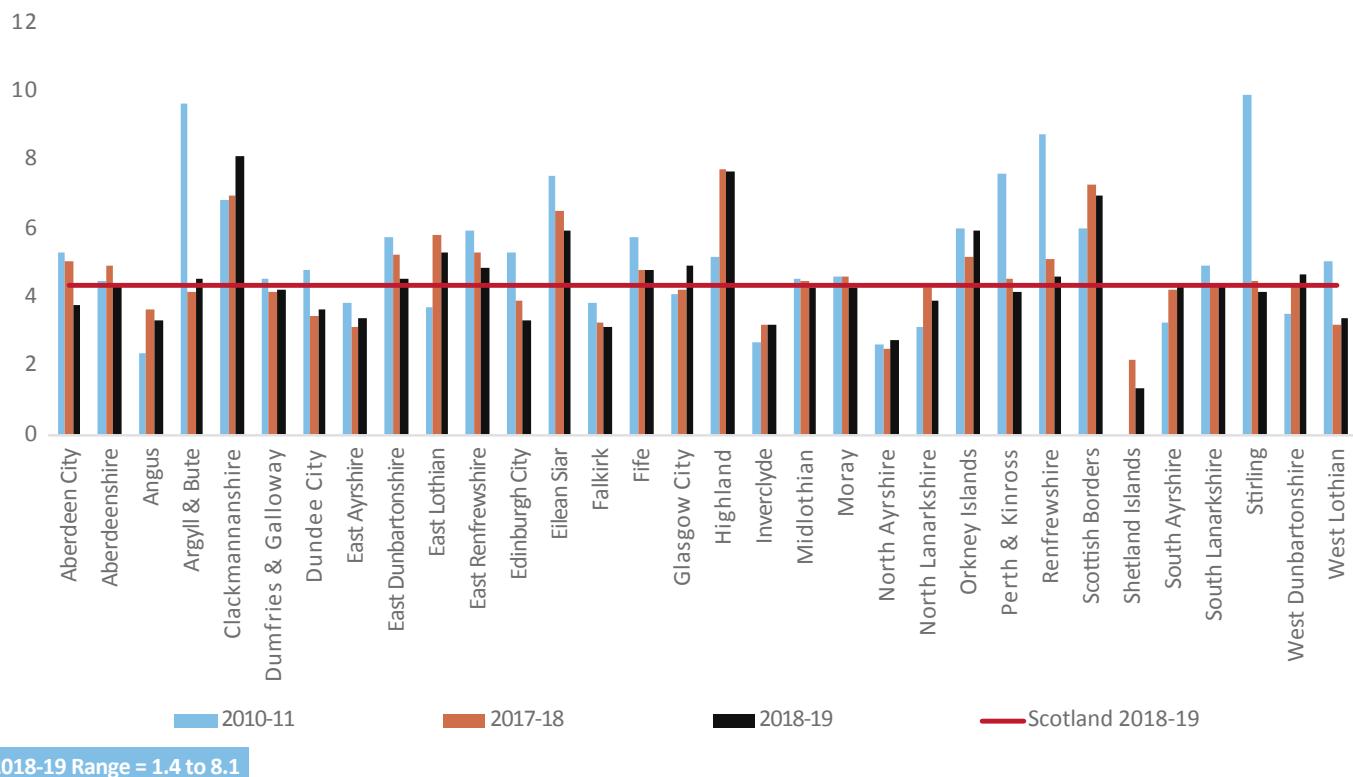


Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

There is significant but narrowing variation between councils in Support Service expenditure. The proportion ranged from 1.4% to 8.1% in 2018/19, with no systematic differences by rurality, deprivation or size of authority.



Fig 68: Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure



2018-19 Range = 1.4 to 8.1

Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Note: Missing values reflect no data returned for that year

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

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

Gender equality

The percentage of women in the top 5% of earners in councils is a significant measure of the attempts by councils to ensure equal opportunity between genders. From 2010/11 to 2018/19 this has increased from 46.3% to 55.8%. The range across councils is from 24% to 68%, with rural councils reporting lower rates.

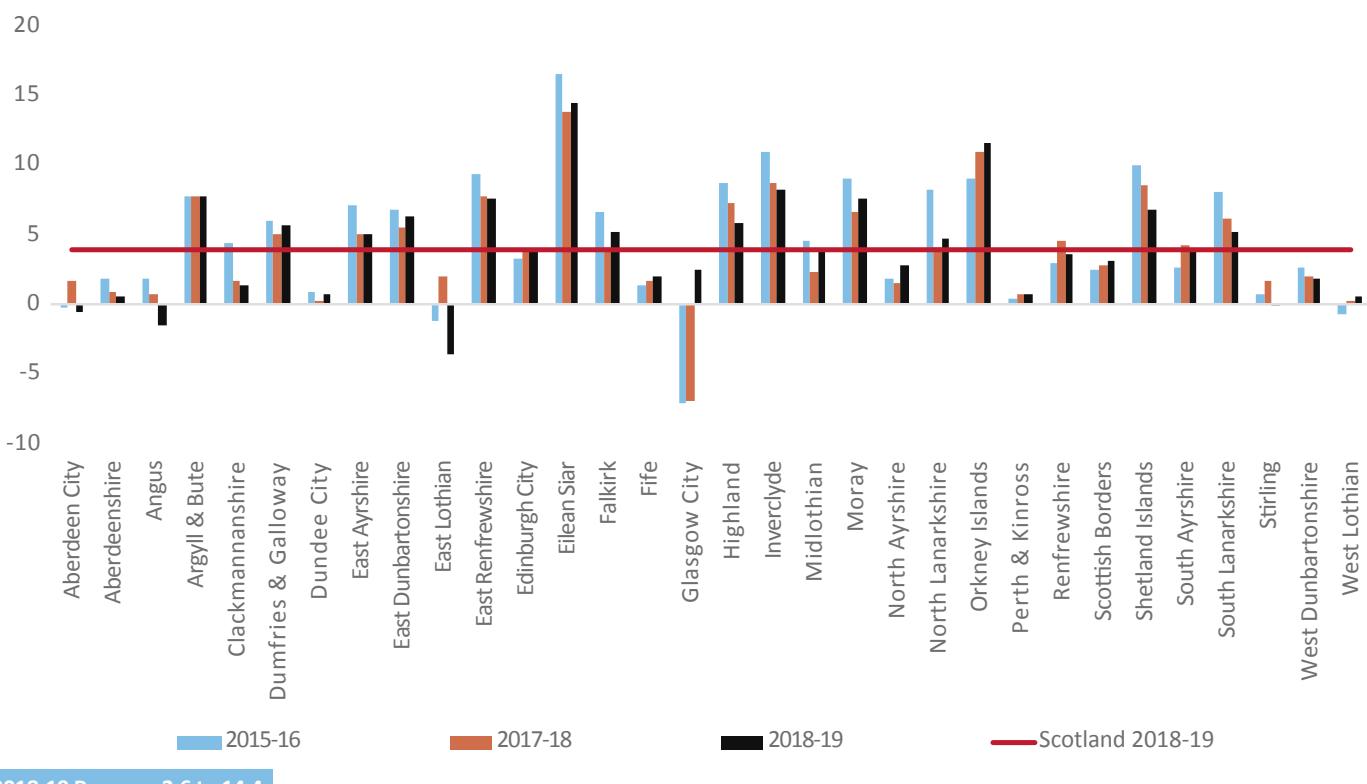
While this is an important measure reflecting the progress which has been made in relation to gender equality in senior positions within Local Government, there is a need to capture the progress being made across the wider workforce. As such, our measure of the gender pay gap represents the difference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



will be subject to review and on-going development across the coming period.

In 2018/19 the Gender Pay Gap was 4.0%. This is an improvement from 4.5% in 2015/16, but a slight increase of 0.1 percentage point from 2017/18. The gap ranges from -3.6% to 14.4%, with rural areas reporting wider gaps on average. Those staff employed via arms-length organisations are not included within the calculation which will influence the variability observed and may be important in understanding the figures observed for some authorities.

Fig 69: The gender pay gap (%)



Source: Council supplied figures

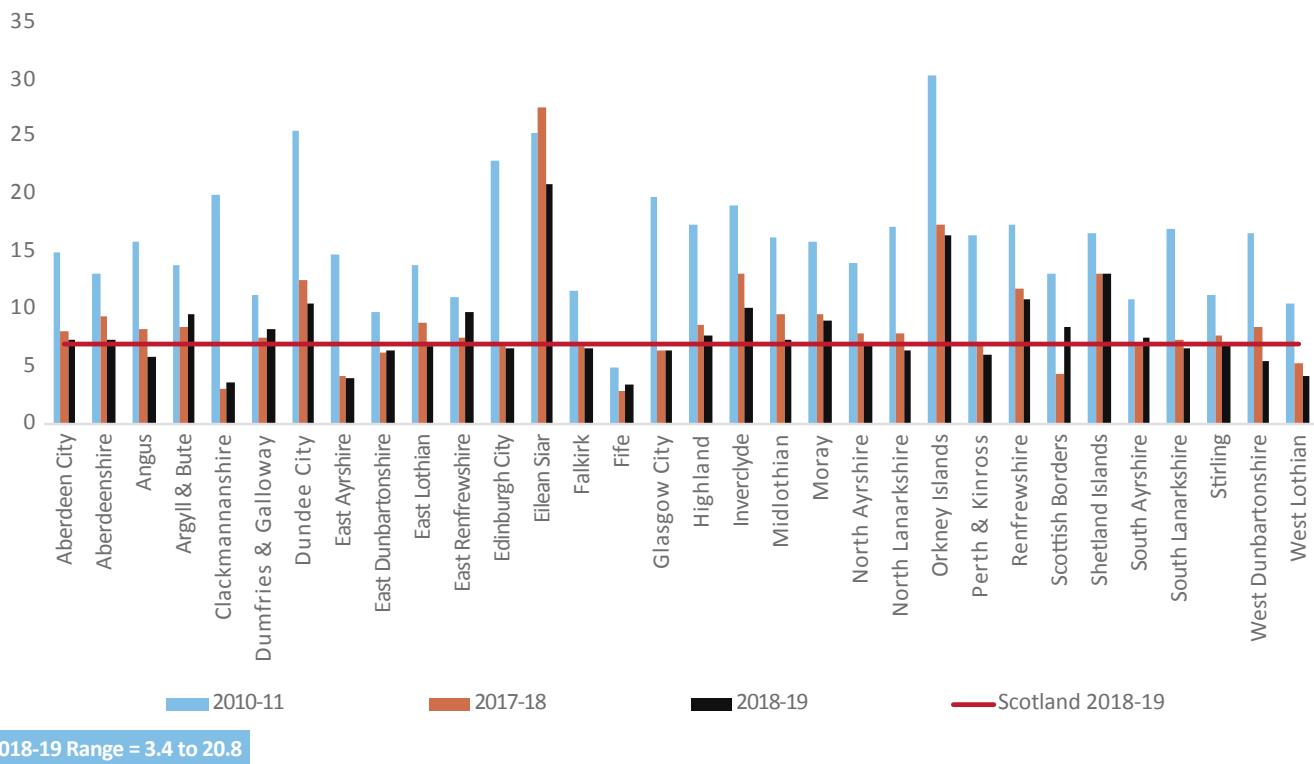
Council tax

The cost of collecting council tax is measured on a per property basis to standardise the measure across councils. Over the nine-year period from 2010/11 to 2018/19 costs have reduced by 56.3%, from £15.83 to £6.92. 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 7.6%. A key factor driving the reduction in costs is the continued digital transformation and shift to embrace new technology and automation.

Although narrowing, the range varies significantly from £3.43 to £20.78, with smaller sized and island councils reporting significantly higher costs.



Fig 70: The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax (£)



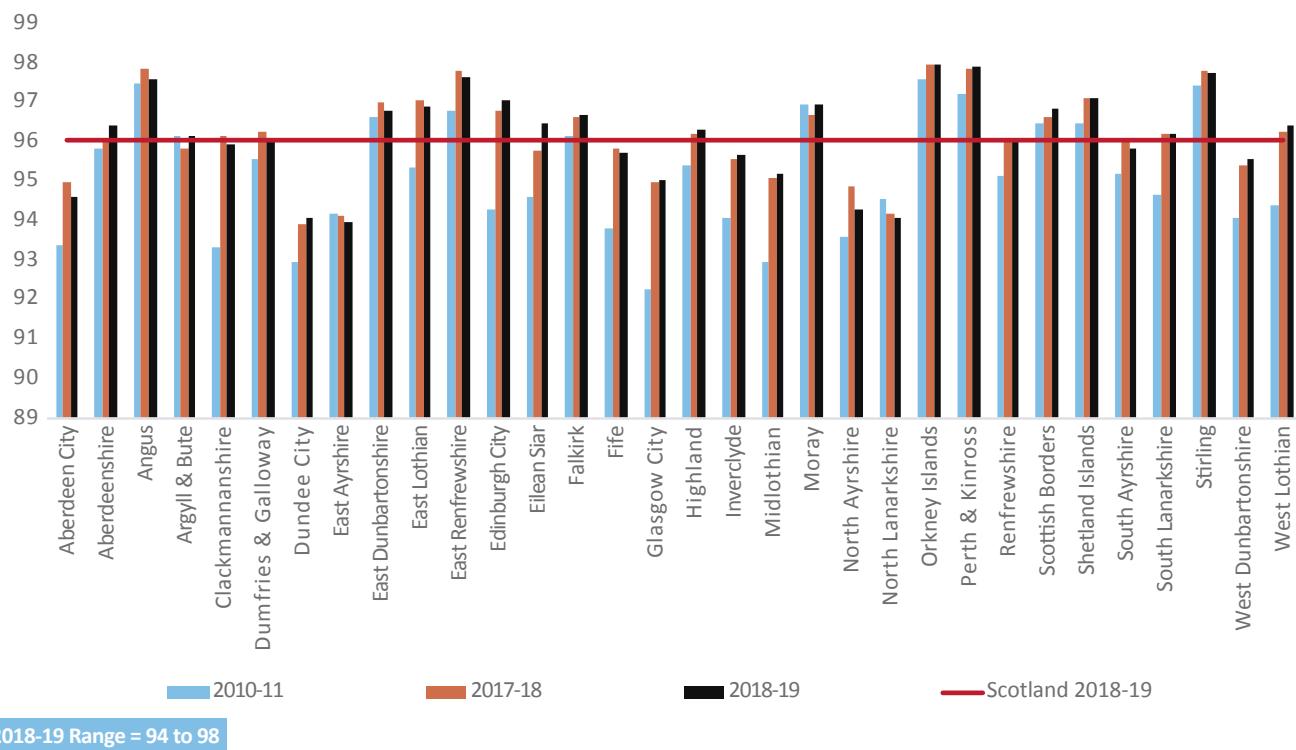
Source: Council supplied figures

At the same time as the reduction in unit costs, the overall rate of in-year collection for council tax has remained high and shown steady improvement from 94.7% in 2010/11 to 96.1% in 2018/19. While council tax collections have improved as a direct result of the council tax freeze from 2008/09 to 2016/17, this has continued despite the challenges created by a difficult economic climate and significant welfare reform. Some areas have reported reducing average payments in the current year, and an emerging trend around debt taking longer to pay in full. It will be important to monitor what impact this may have on collection levels in future years.

The variation across councils is narrowing over time, with rates in 2018/19 ranging from 94.0% to 98.0%. Council tax collection rate shows a significant pattern in relation to level of deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting significantly lower rates paid on time. The roll-out of Universal Credit is likely to further exacerbate this over the coming period.



Fig 71: Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year



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

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



Sickness absence rates

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

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.

Absence levels overall are at their highest since 2010/11, increasing by 3.6%; however, during the same period full time equivalent staff numbers have reduced by 5.2%.³⁸ The data reveals a different pattern for teaching staff and non-teaching staff.

Although there have been fluctuations, sickness absence days for teaching staff have reduced by 6.0% since 2010/11, from 6.6 days to 6.2 days. In the past 12 months however, absence days for teachers have increased by 4.6% from 5.9 days to 6.2 days. The number of absence days ranges from 4.7 to 9.1, with smaller authorities reporting significantly higher levels (7.9 compared to 5.9). 19 out of 32 councils showed an increase in teachers absence between 2017/18 and 2018/19.

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
- PSA reductions
- Patterns of retirement
- Ageing workforce

Sickness absence days for non-teaching staff are higher than those for teachers, and have increased by 6.4% since 2010/11, from 10.8 days to 11.5 days, which is the highest point since the base year. Although there have again been fluctuations during this period, a clearer increasing trend is observable in absence levels for non-teaching staff over the period. In contrast to teaching staff, there has been a 7% reduction in non-teaching staff numbers since 2010/11, and a 0.1% reduction in total days lost. In the last 12 months, there was a 3.4% increase in staff numbers, which marks the first increase for 5 years. The number of days lost for non-teaching staff ranges from 8.8 to 15.0 with no systematic relationship to size, rurality or deprivation. 21 out of the 32 authorities showed an increase in absence between 2017/18 and 2018/19.

In terms of understanding increasing absence figures, CIPD reports³⁹ that mental ill health, musculoskeletal injuries (including back pain), stress and acute medical conditions are the most common causes of long-

³⁸ 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>)

³⁹ <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/trends/uk-working-lives>



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 72: Sickness absence days per teacher

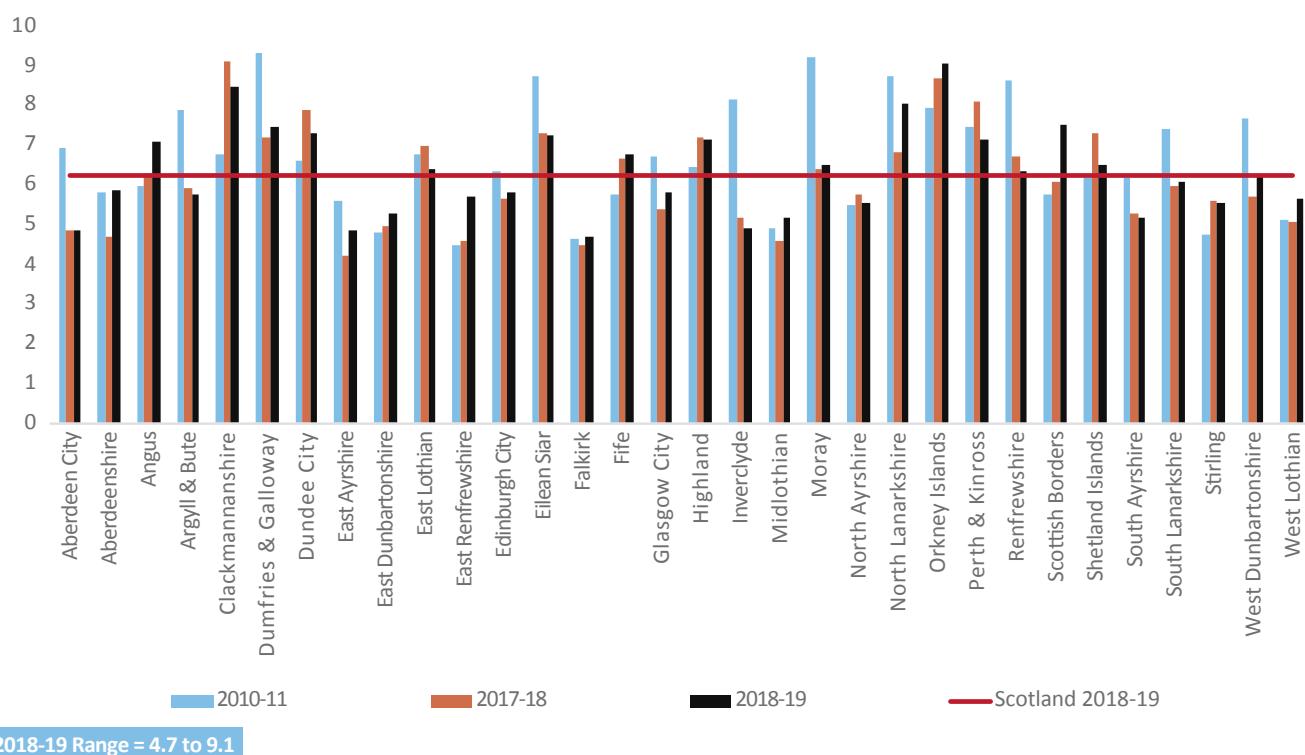
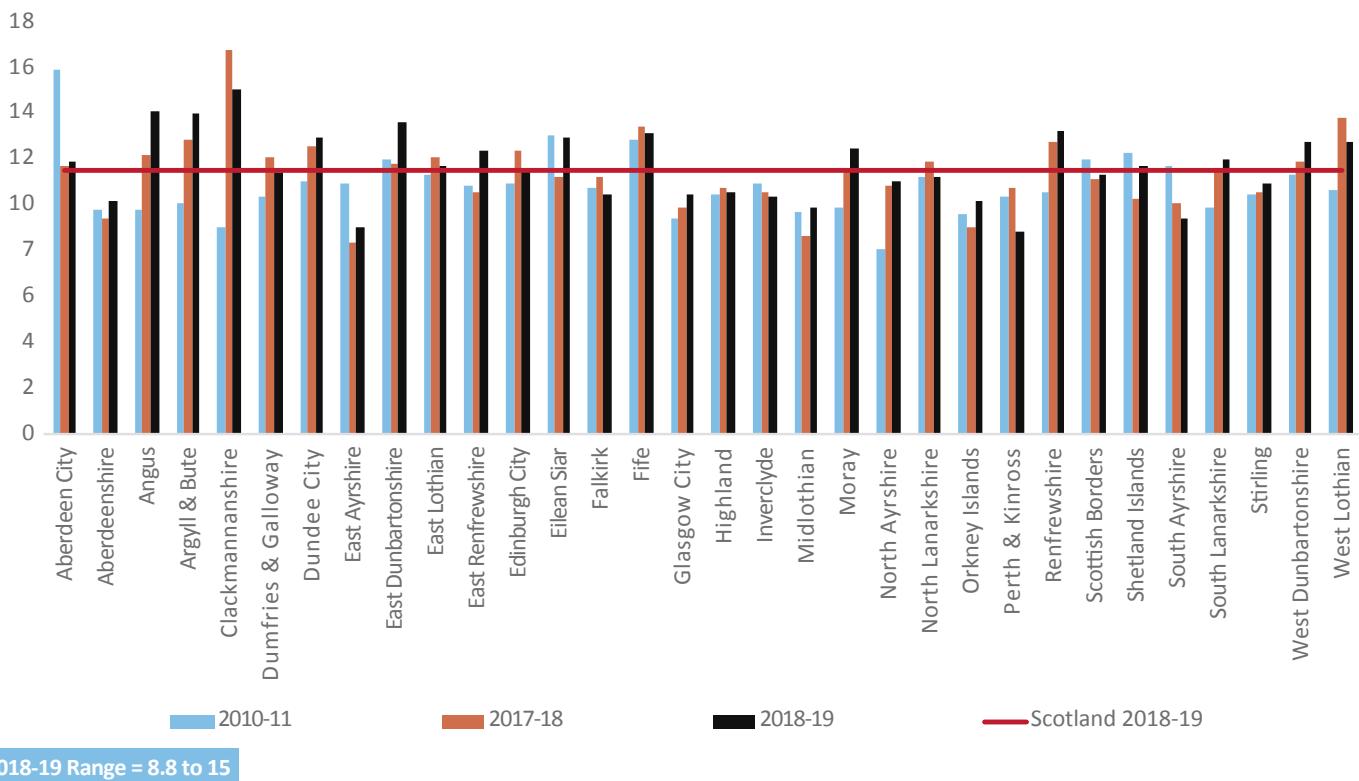




Fig 73: Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)



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:

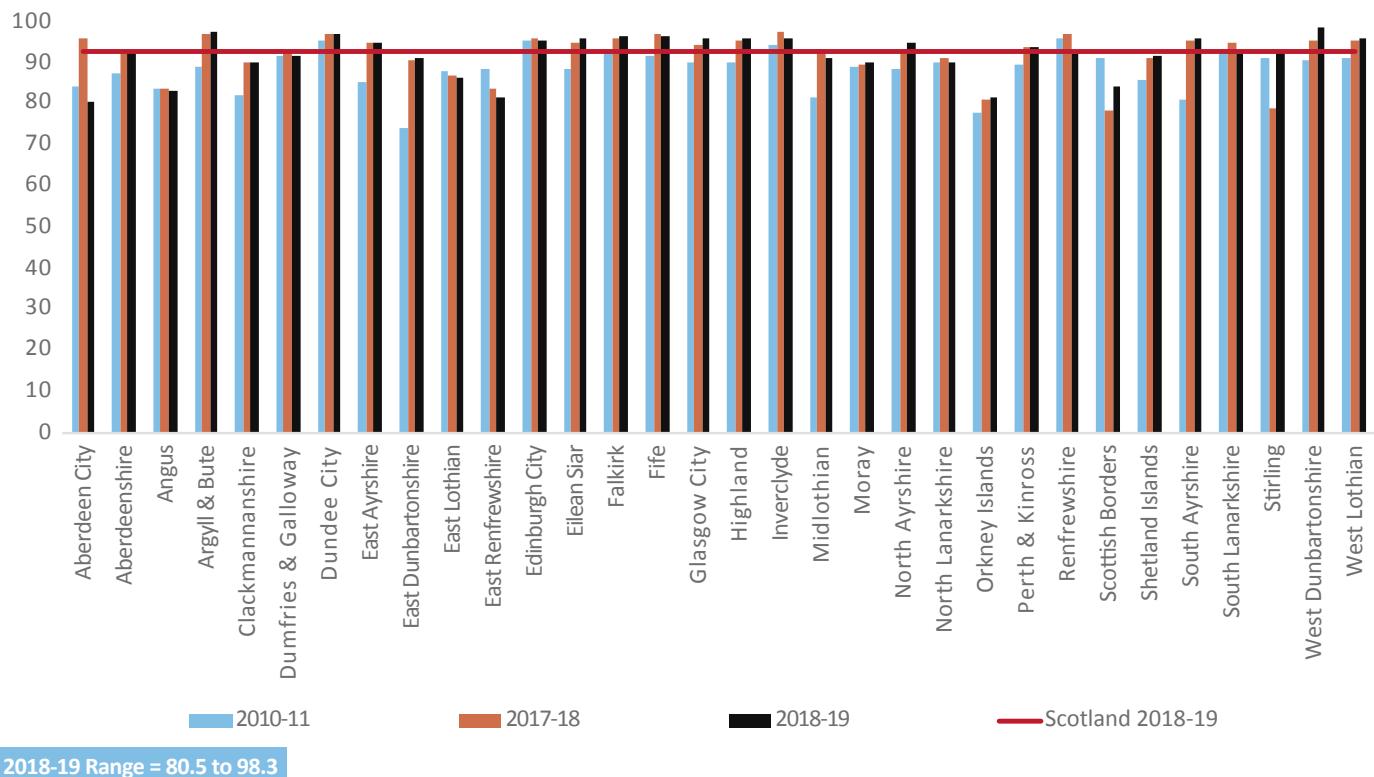
- *Workforce composition and age profile*
- *Priority given to performance management and business intelligence to support early intervention*
- *Strategic priority given to Health and Wellbeing initiatives*
- *Level of staff engagement and involvement*
- *Differences in Absence Management policy and 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 steadily increased from 89.5% to 92.7 (93.2% excluding outliers) over the nine-year period, with levels of variation remaining largely unchanged. In 2018/19, the range across councils was 80.5% to 98.3%.



Fig 74: Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days



Source: Council supplied figures

Corporate assets

There has been improvement in the condition of councils' corporate assets over the period. The percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use has improved from 73.7% to 82.1% and the proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition has improved from 81.3% to 87.2%.

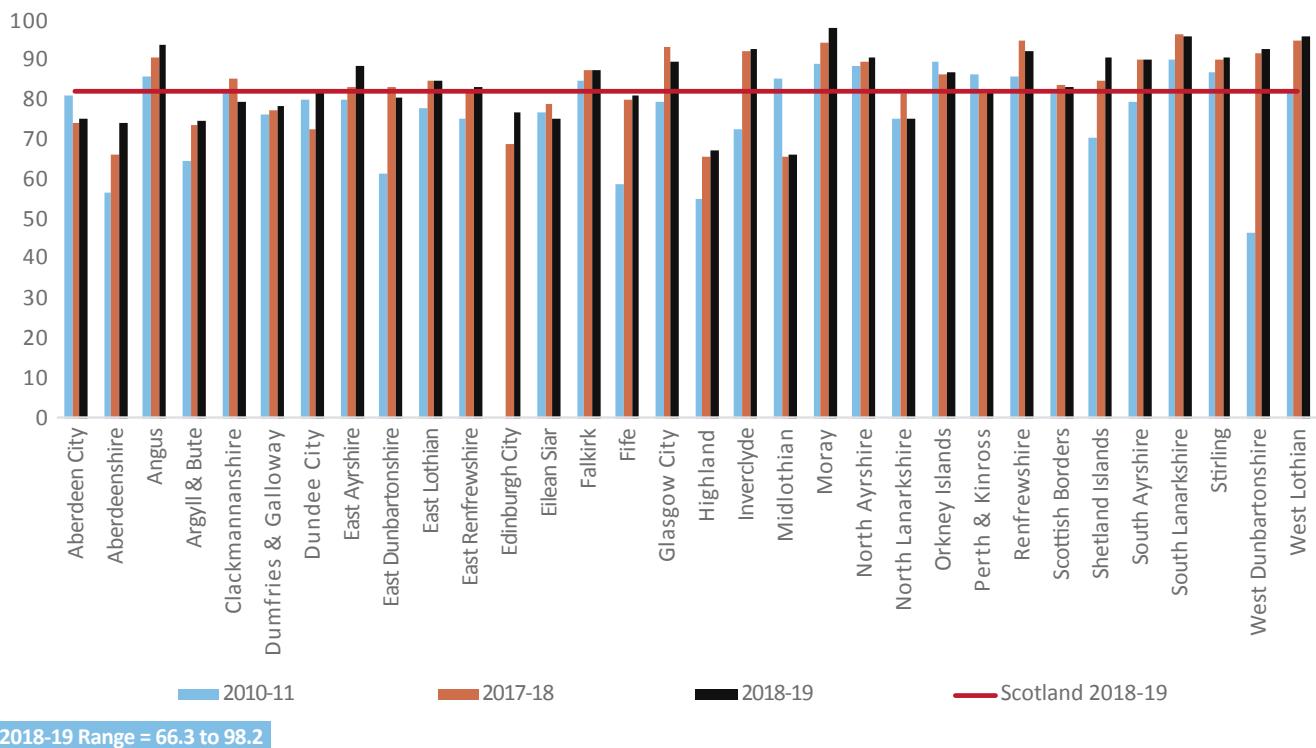
There is significant but narrowing variation across councils in both measures, ranging from 66% to 98% for buildings suitable for use, and 54% to 100% for condition of floor area. There is no relationship with rurality, deprivation or size of authority.

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*

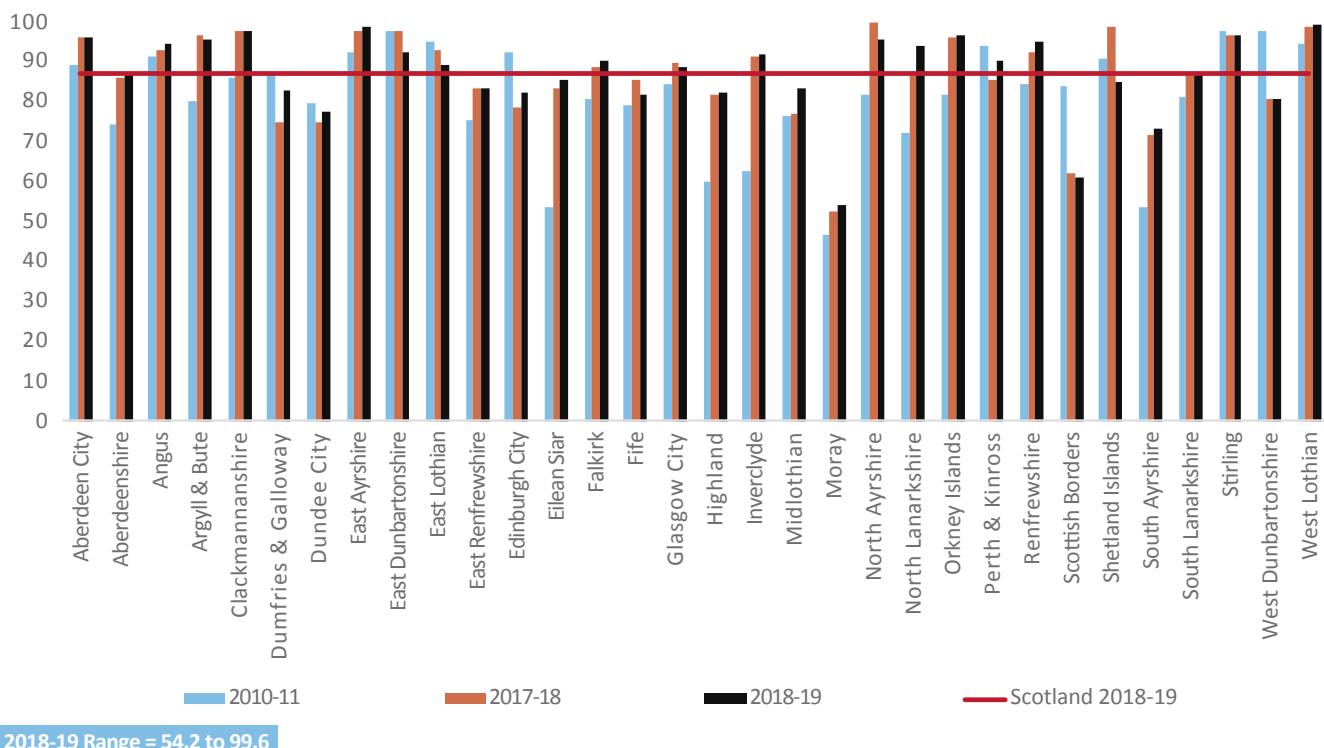


Fig 75: Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (%)



Source: Council supplied figures

Fig 76: Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition (%)



Source: Council supplied figures





Housing

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

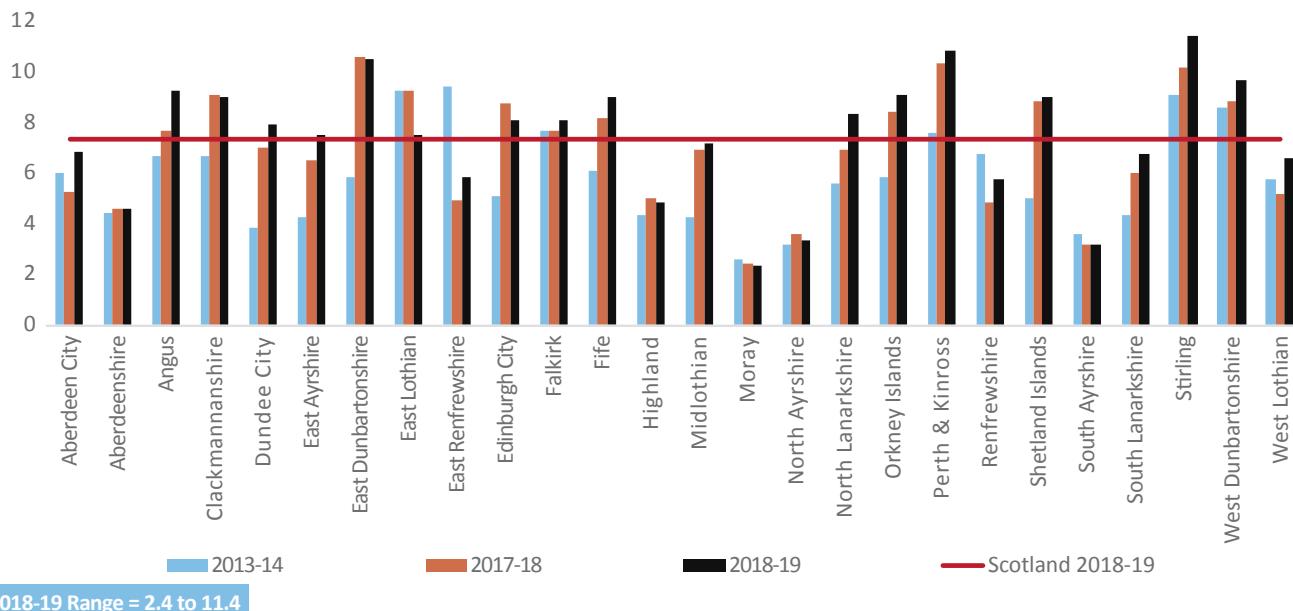
Rent arrears

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 2018/19. This reflects an increase in gross rent arrears during this time of 36.8%, which is an increase of £23 million from £62.2 million in 2013/14 to £85.1 million in 2018/19.

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

In 2013/14, the definition and methodology for this measure changed, therefore it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with previous years. In 2018/19, the percentage of arrears range from 2.4% to 11.4% across councils which indicates a widening variation since 2013/14. Analysis indicates variation is not systematically related to levels of deprivation within a council, rurality or size of authority area.

Fig 77: Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year



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

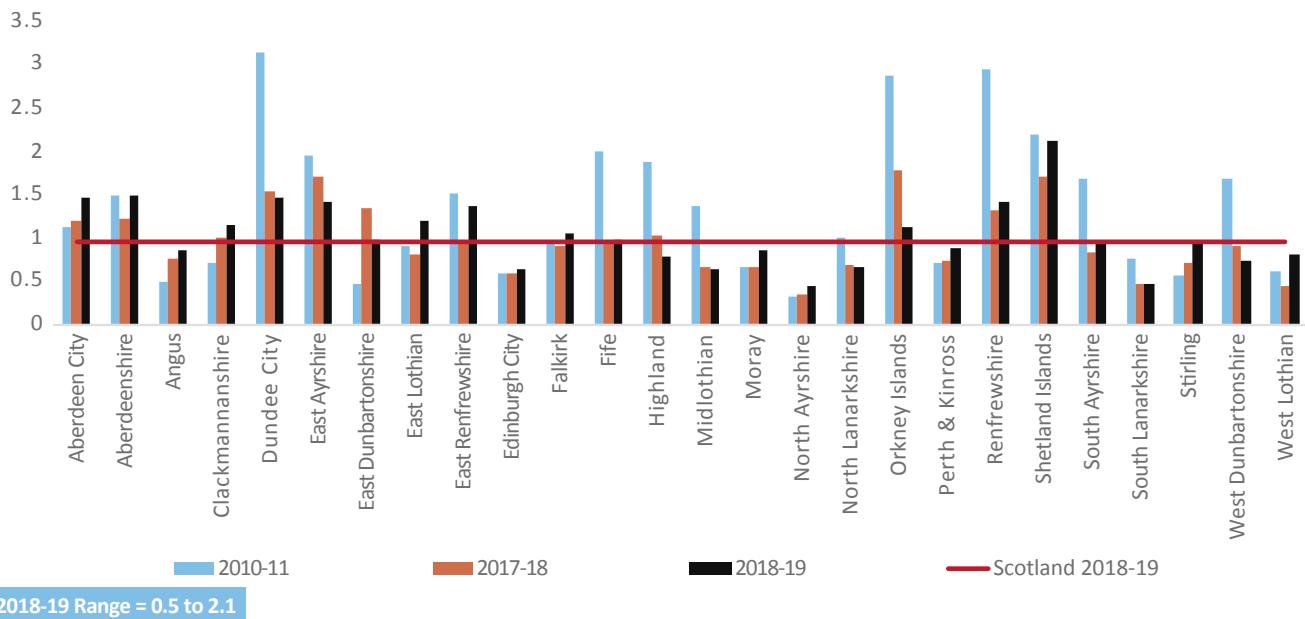
Note: Missing values represent the six councils who do not provide housing services following transfer to Registered Social Landlords



Rent lost due to voids

Rent lost due to voids has reduced from 1.3% in 2010/11 to 1.0% in 2018/19, although this has increased by 0.1% in the past 12 months. Again, figures vary across authorities, from 0.5% to 2.1%, however the level of variation has reduced since the base year. Rural and less densely populated authorities tend to report higher rates of rent loss than urban and semi-rural areas.

Fig 78: 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

Housing repairs

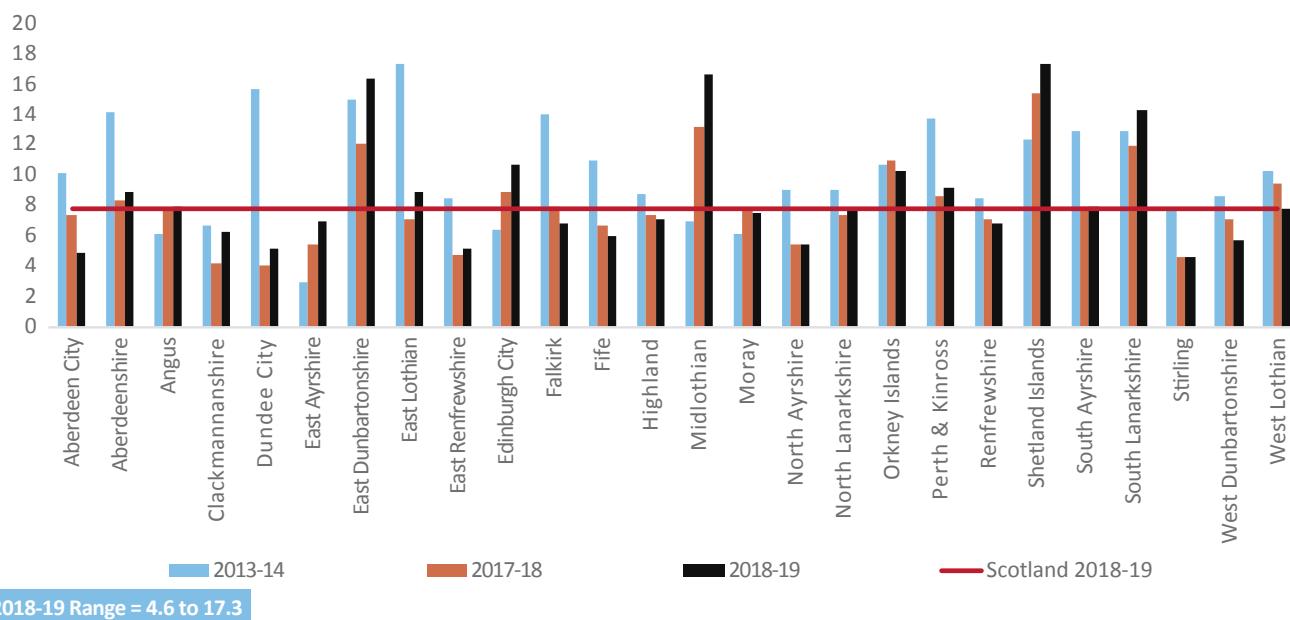
The average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs has reduced by 23.3% over the period, from 10.2 days in 2013/14 to 7.8 days in 2018/19. After year on year improvements, there has been a 4% increase over the past 12 months, with repair time increasing from 7.5 days to 7.8 days. As with 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 2018/19, length of time ranged from 4.6 days to 17.3 days, with no systematic effects of rurality, deprivation or size of council.

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



Fig 79: 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

Housing quality

In terms of housing quality, there have been significant improvements over the past 9 years in terms of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) and energy efficiency standards.⁴⁰ In 2018/19, 94.3% of council dwellings met the SHQS, an increase of 41 percentage points from 2010/11. The range across councils varies from 83.3% to 100%, although this range has narrowed significantly since 2010/11.

In 2018/19, 97.5% of council dwellings were energy efficient, an increase from 74.9% in 2010/11. Councils range from 86.9% to 100%.

Table 43: Housing quality and energy efficiency (%)

	2010-11	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 2010-11 to 2018-19
% dwellings meeting SHQS	53.6	66.1	76.6	83.7	90.4	92.5	93.6	93.9	94.3	0.4	40.7
% dwellings that are energy efficient	74.9	81.2	88.8	93.0	96.6	96.2	96.6	97.2	97.5	0.3	22.6

⁴⁰ Energy efficiency standards are based on the SHQS Guidance for properties meeting NHER/ SAP



Fig 80: Properties meeting SHQS (%)

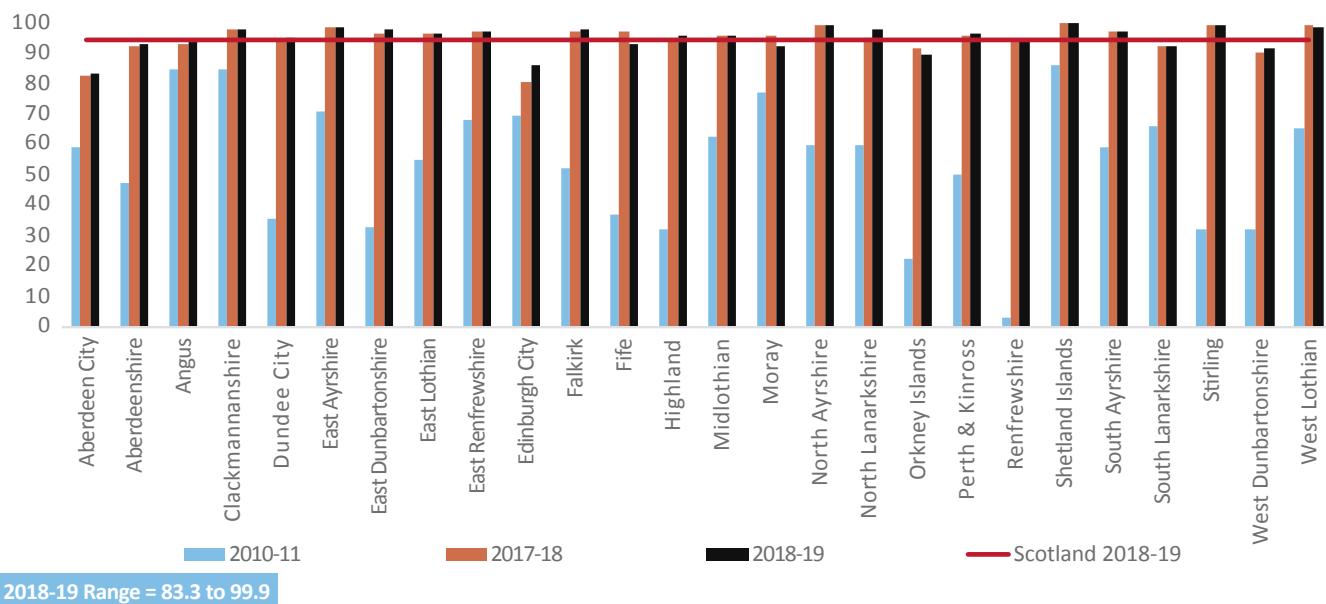
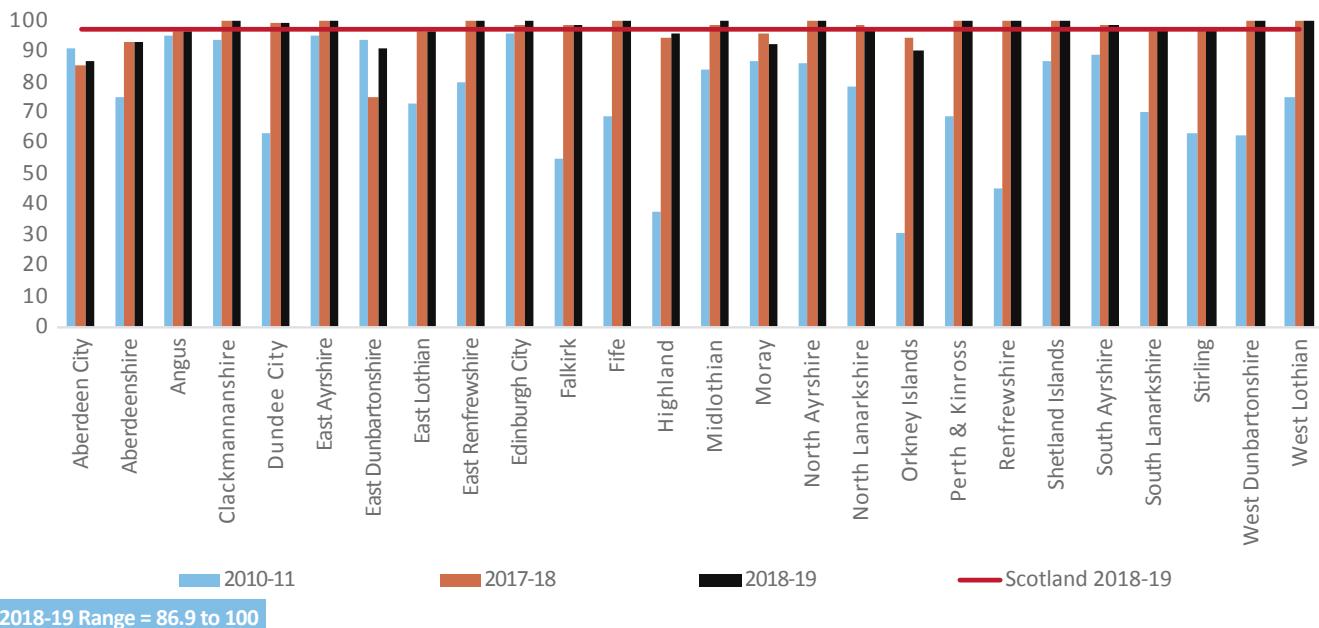


Fig 81: Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient



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

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.





Economic Development and Planning

Investing in economic development and employment opportunities results not just in a positive economic outcome but can typically also lead to improvements across a wider range of social outcomes and reductions in demand for public services. The majority of council Plans and Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) assign a high level of strategic priority to local economic growth, job creation and tackling unemployment. As drivers of Community Planning and Regional Growth Partnerships, Councils recognise the importance of delivering better economic outcomes for their communities and understand the impact that local economic prosperity has on wider Local Government spend and income.

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

Investment in economic development and tourism

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

Table 44: 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	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£95,402	£85,334	£80,108	£78,154	£73,932	£67,723	£83,862	£95,611	£102,086	6.8%	7.0%

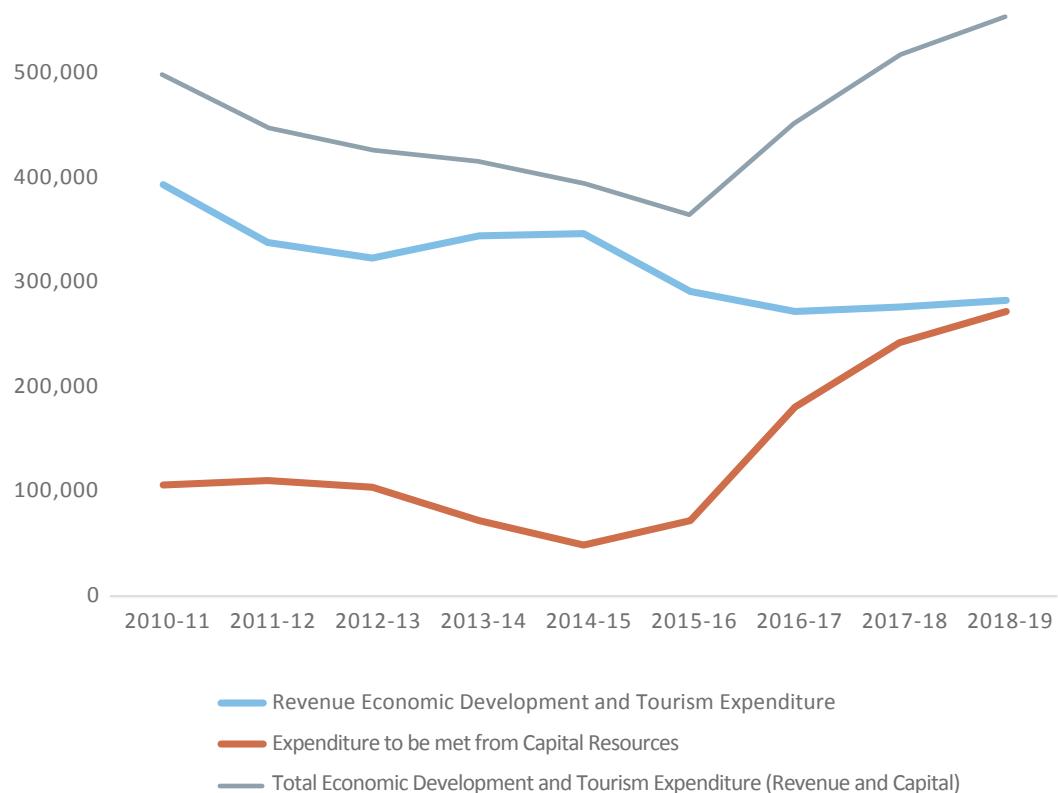
There has been a 7% increase in economic development and tourism investment between 2010/11 and 2018/19 from £95,402 to £102,086 per 1,000. This reflects a real terms growth in expenditure of 11.4%, against a population growth of 4.1%. Across the period, investment per 1,000 reduced by 41% between 2010/11 and 2015/16, before increasing by 50% over the past 3 years, including an 6.8% increase in the last 12 months.

This measure combines the costs of Economic Development and Tourism, with Economic Development accounting for over 90% of expenditure. Closer analysis reveals very different trends within these service areas. Across the period, Economic Development expenditure has grown by 14.2% in real terms, while Tourism has reduced by 25.9%. In the past 12 months, Economic Development expenditure has grown by 7.3%, while Tourism has grown by 2.3%.

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 11.4% since the base year, there has been a 28.2% reduction in revenue funding, and a 160.0% growth in capital (from £105 million to £273 million). In the past 12 months, there has been a 2.0% growth in revenue expenditure and 12.8% growth in capital. As can be seen in the graph below, this has seen capital expenditure grow from 21% of total economic development expenditure to 49% between 2010/11 and 2018/19.



Fig 82: 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 £1.63.⁴¹ EU funding makes up a significant element of this. The future demise of EU funding for the UK and its replacement by a, yet to be fully defined, ‘Prosperity Fund’⁴² could affect council investment returns in this area, including the outputs/outcomes returned for our investment.

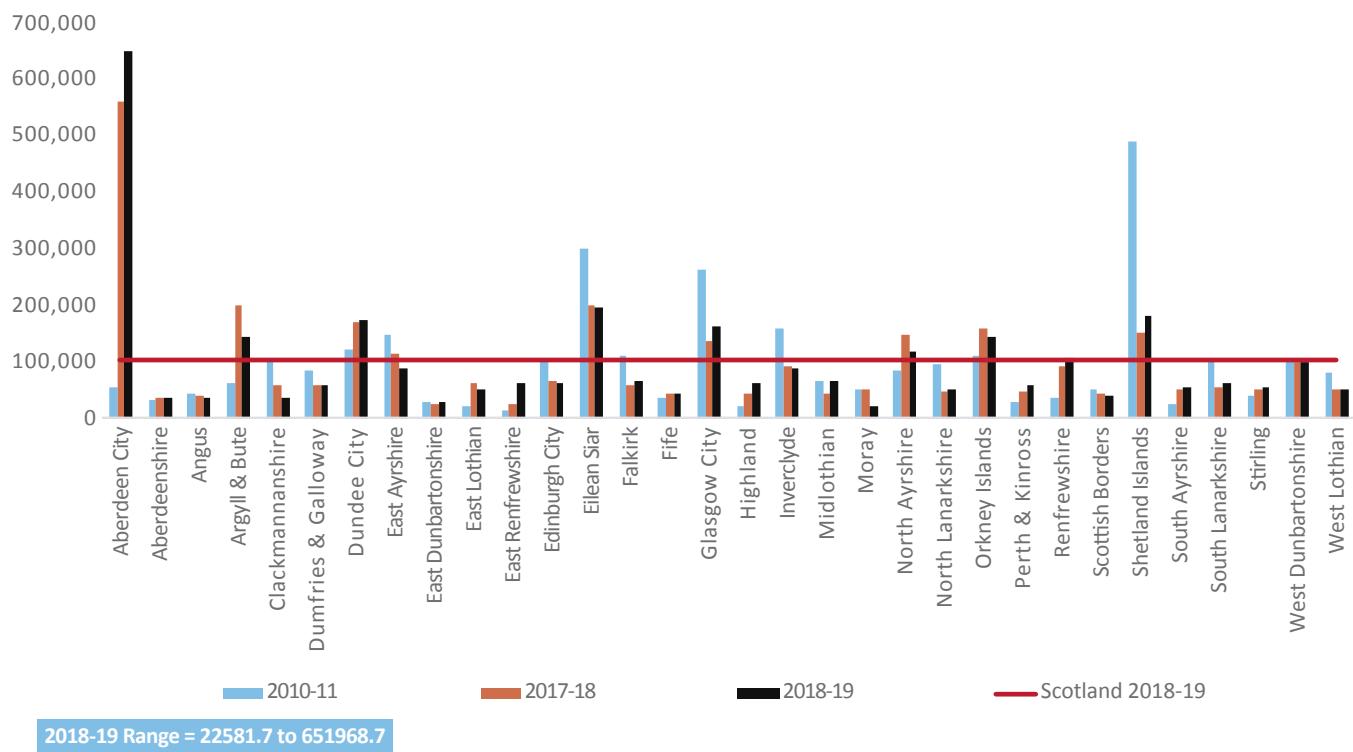
The graph below shows the significant variation between councils in economic development and tourism investment per 1,000. In 2018/19 investment ranged from £22,581 to £651,969 per 1,000. Variation has widened significantly in 2018/19 after narrowing in recent years. There is no significant relationship with rurality, deprivation or size of council.

⁴¹ <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/consultancy-and-support/economic-outcomes-programme/slaed-indicators-framework>

⁴² <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8527>



Fig 83: Investment in economic development and tourism per 1,000 population (£)



Source: Council supplied expenditure figures

Employment

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

In 2018/19, the Scotland average for the percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes was 12.6% of total unemployed. This reflects an increase from 9.1% in 2012/13, but a reduction from 14.3% in the past 12 months. While there has been a reduction in the total number of unemployed people assisted into work across the period (25.2% since 2012/13 and 12.3% in the past 12 months), this has taken place against a much faster drop in the unemployment count, which reduced by 45.8% since 2012/13, although by only 0.6% in the past 12 months.

Table 45: Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded employability programmes

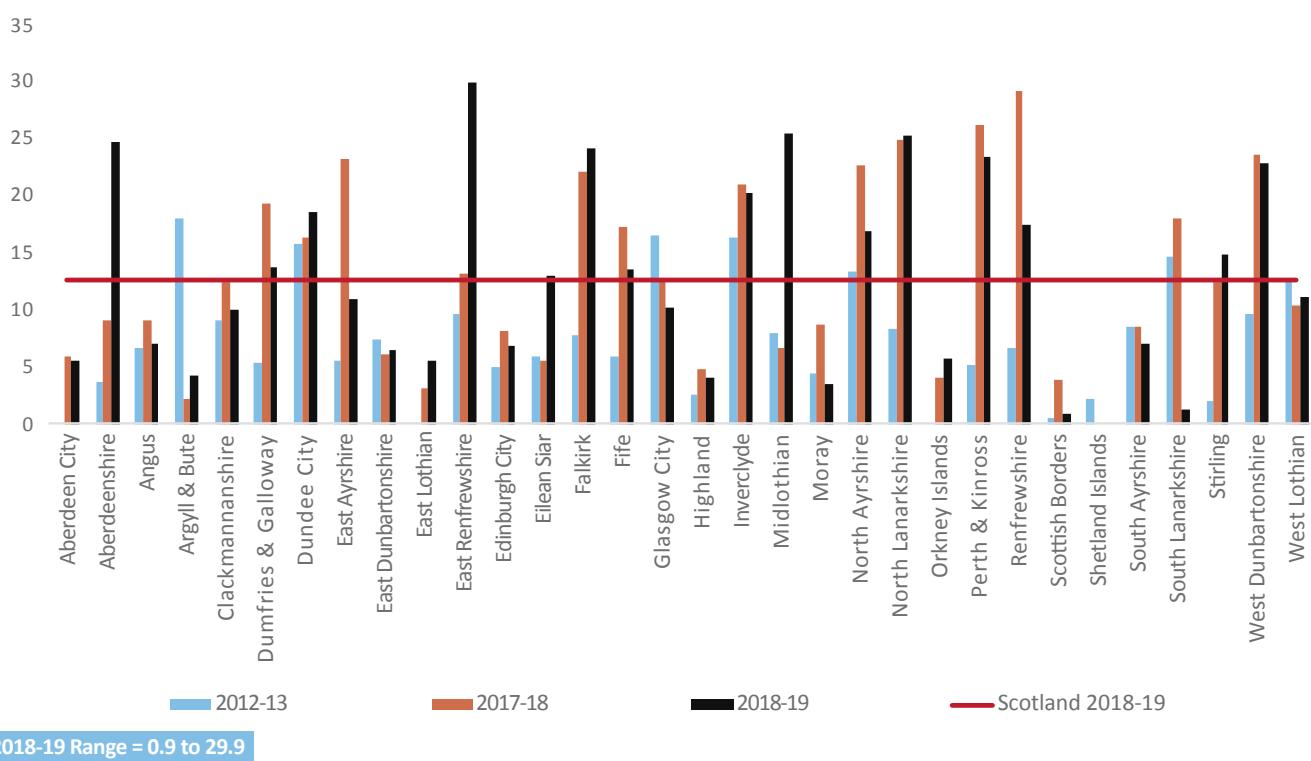
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2012-13 to 2018-19
9.1	12.5	14.1	14.1	14.0	14.3	12.6	-1.7	3.5



The improvement rate has levelled off since 2014/15, and shown a reduction in the past 12 months. This trend may reflect a number of factors, including: the continuing focus on getting more long term workless people into work and the welfare changes that require these cohorts to undertake job search activities; 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 0.9% to 29.9%, with lower rates for the least deprived councils compared to the most deprived although the difference is not statistically significant (6.4% compared to 18.1%). Rural authorities also have lower rates than urban authorities (9.3%, compared to 17.5%), although again, this is not statistically significant.

Fig 84: Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded employability programmes



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

Business support

To capture wider economic development and reflect the significant investment in business development and support (e.g. Business Gateway), the benchmarking framework includes the number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population. The start-up rate has slowed from 19.0 in 2013/14 to 16.7 in 2018/19, showing a very small reduction in the past 12 months, of 0.1%.

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



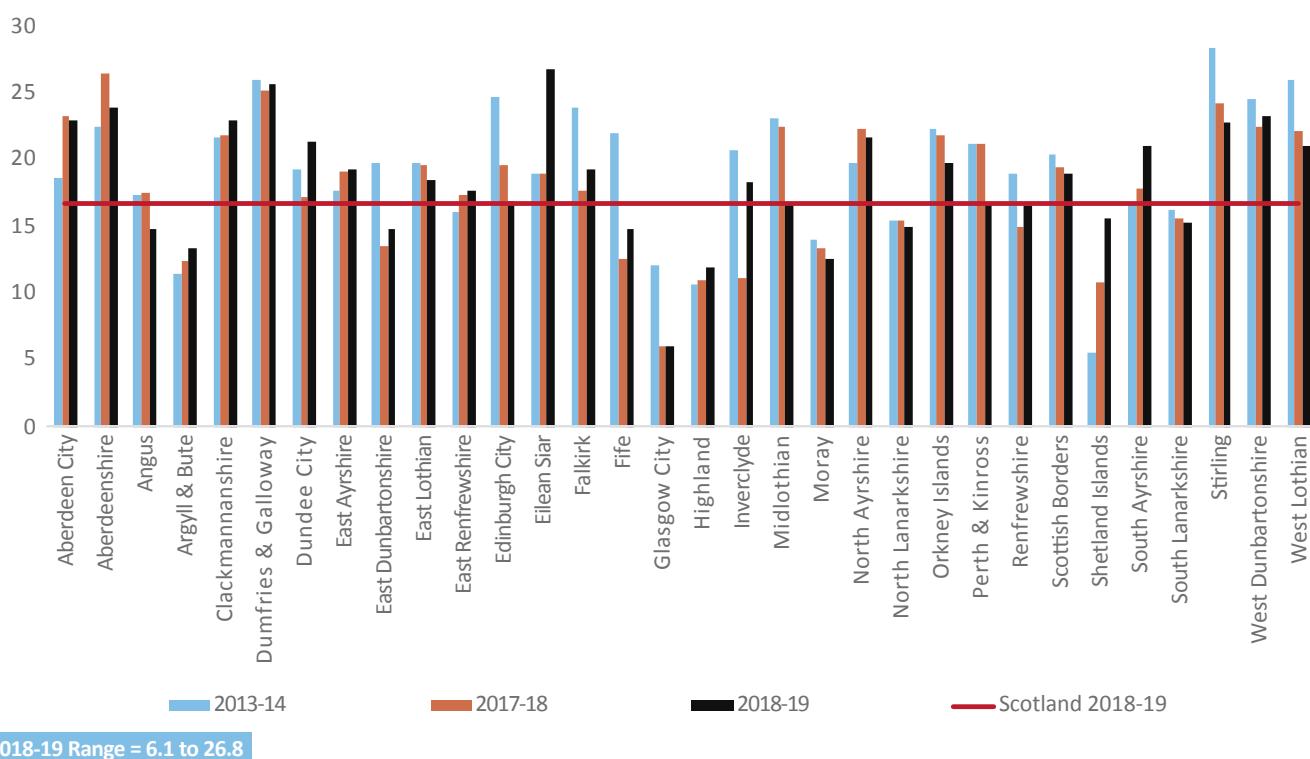
be affected by underlying economic conditions with higher demand for start-up support during periods of economic downturn when people have been made redundant and may look to self-employment as a route back into work.

Table 46: Number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2013-14 to 2018-19
19.0	18.9	16.9	16.6	16.8	16.7	-0.8%	-12.2%

The graph below shows the significant variation which exists across councils, which has remained constant since 2013/14. In 2018/19, start-up rates ranged from 6.1 to 26.8 with no systematic relationship with rurality, deprivation or size of council.

Fig 85: 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. This measure focussing on 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.



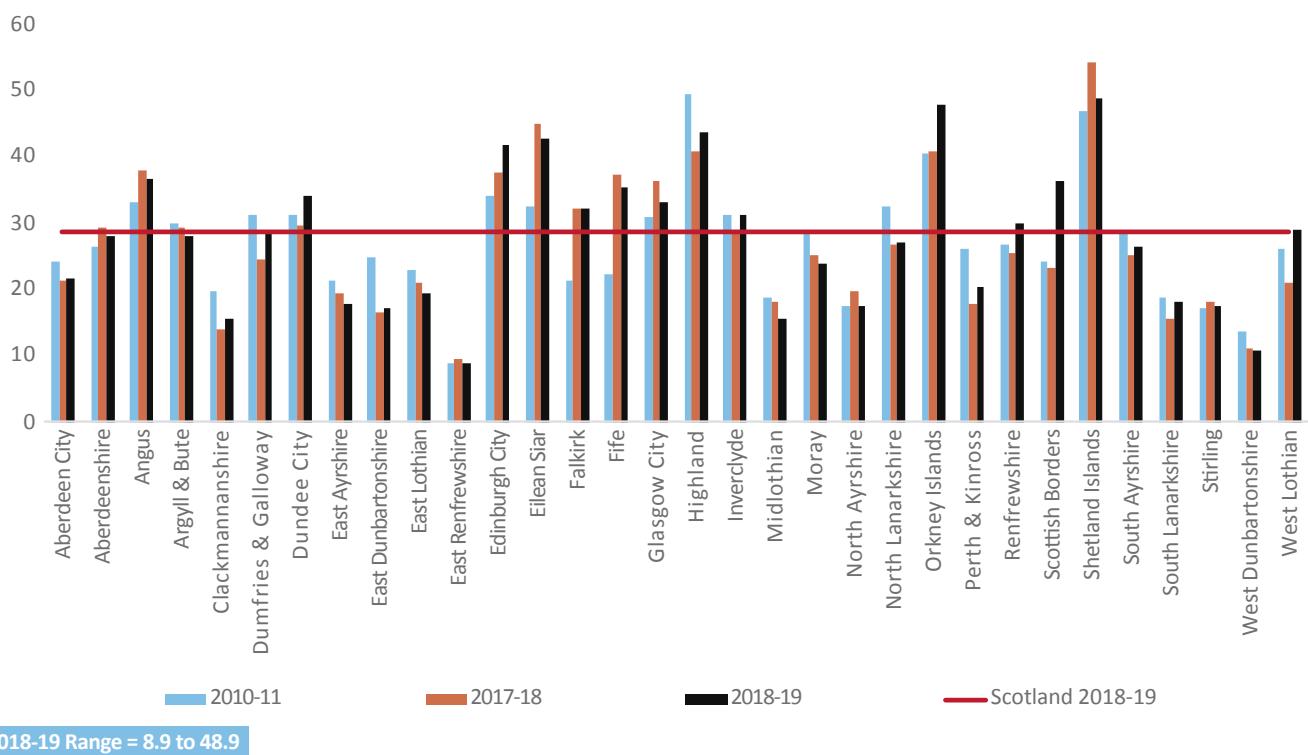
Table 47: Proportion of procurement spent on local enterprises

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
27.2	26.2	27.2	27.0	27.5	25.4	26.5	27.4	28.7	1.3	1.5

In 2018/19, the percentage of procurement spend on local enterprises was 28.7%, the highest level reported since the base year. The trend has remained relatively stable since 2010/11, growing slightly in the past 3 years. 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 8.9% to 48.9%. The Islands and rural authorities report higher procurement spend on local enterprises than other authorities, with Island authorities all spending more than 40% locally.

Fig 86: Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises



Source: Scottish Government Procurement Hub

Planning

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



growth and delivering high quality development in the right places. Within this framework, expenditure on planning includes spend on building control, development control, planning policy and environmental initiatives.

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

Cost of planning 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 £4,079 in 2010/11 to £4,439 in 2018/19, a real terms reduction of 8.8%. Although there have been fluctuations across the period, the trend represents a 21.3% reduction in gross expenditure and a 27.7% reduction in planning applications since 2010/11.

Table 48: Cost of planning and building standards per planning application

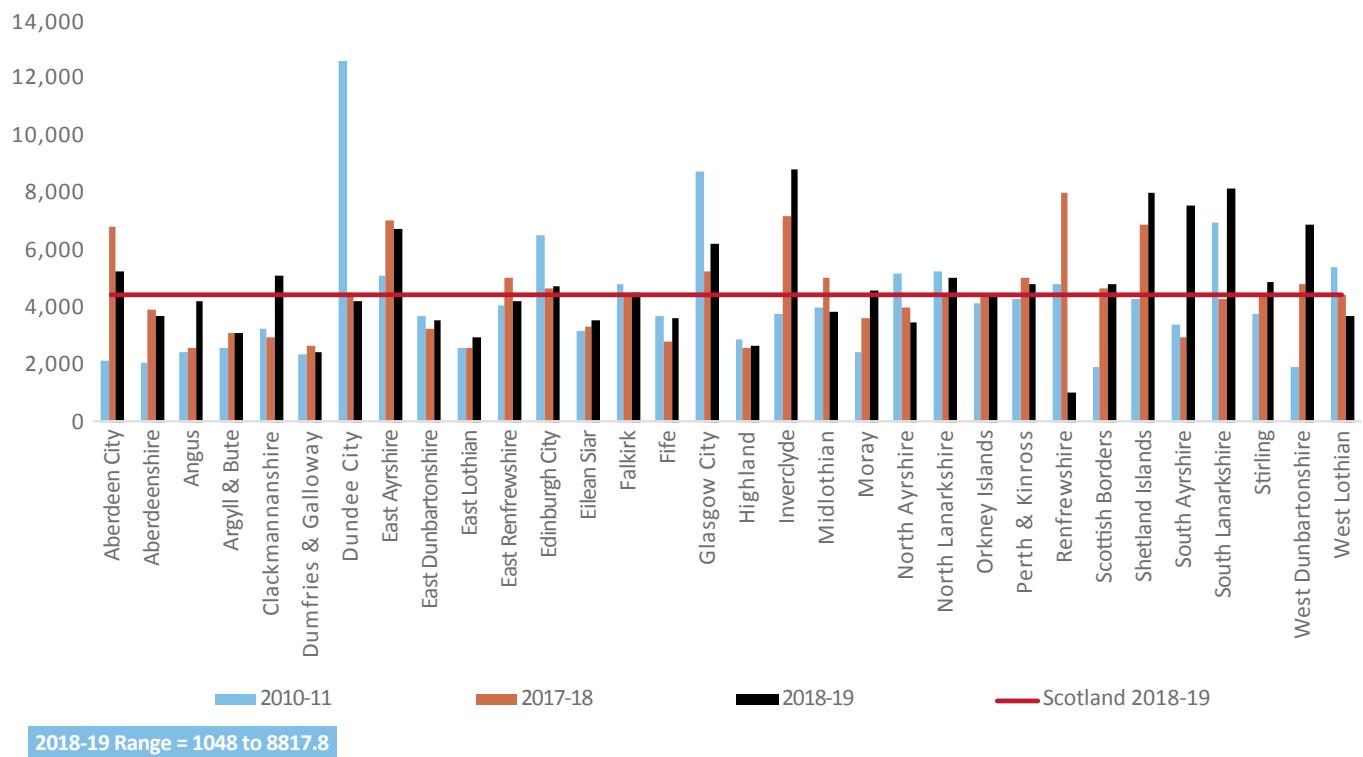
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	% Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
£4,079	£4,191	£5,495	£3,700	£3,622	£4,253	£3,969	£4,130	£4,439	7.5%	8.8%

In the past 12 months, costs have increased by 7.5%, reflecting a 3.5% real growth in gross expenditure and a 3.7% reduction in planning applications. This may reflect a small number of councils receiving increased revenue from Major Application Fees and subsequent reinvestment.

There is substantial and fluctuating variation in planning costs across Scotland, ranging from £1,048 to £8,817 in 2018/19. While rural authorities continue to spend less on average than urban and semi-urban authorities, this difference is no longer statistically significant (£3,686 compared to £4,733 and £4,420 respectively).



Fig 87: Cost of planning and building standards per planning application (£)



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

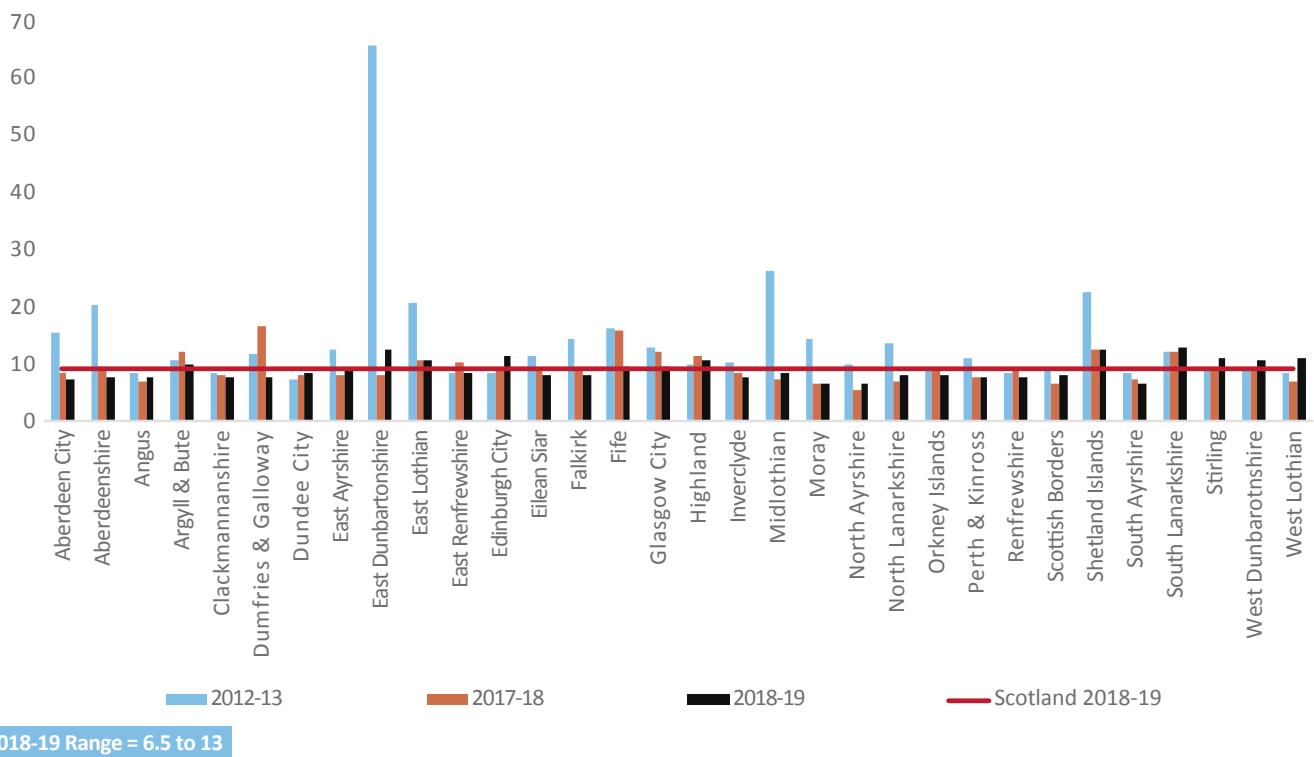
Average time per business and industry planning application

This measure is standardised as the average time in weeks taken to process local commercial planning applications (business and industry applications). Major applications are not included within this calculation. There has been a year on year reduction in the average time per business and industry planning application since 2012/13. In 2018/19 the average time taken was 9.1 weeks, compared to 14 weeks in 2012/13, a 35.1% reduction. During this time, there has been a 42% reduction in the number of business and industry planning applications (reducing from 2,531 down to 1,477).

In the last 12 months, the average time taken per application has fallen by 2.7% from 9.3 weeks to 9.1 weeks. There is significant variation between authorities however, although this is narrowing over recent years. In 2018/19, the time taken ranged from 6.5 weeks to 13.0 weeks, with no statistically significant relationships with deprivation, rurality or size of council.



Fig 88: Average time per business and industry planning application (no. of weeks)



Source: Planning Authority Performance Statistics, Scottish Government

Available employment land

The availability of land for development is a significant factor that affects local economic growth and it falls within councils' local development planning powers to influence this. This is 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.

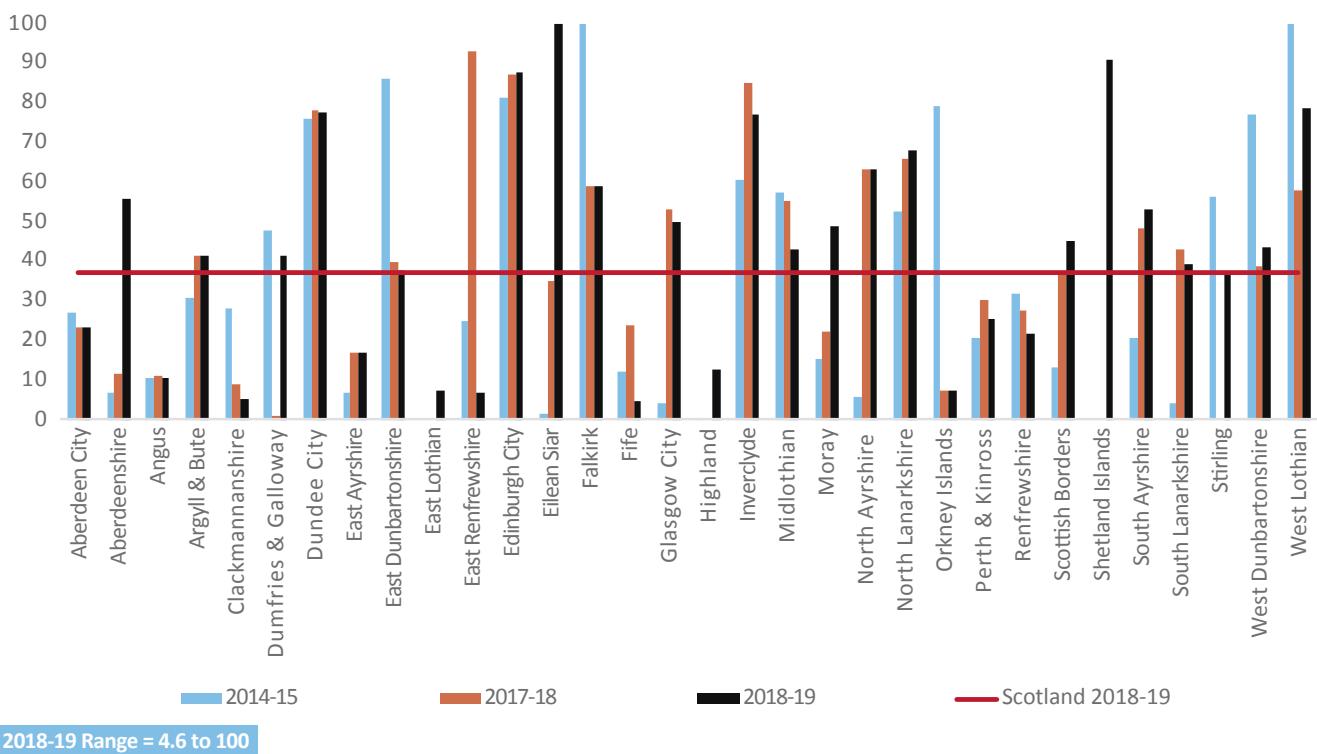
Table 49: Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2014-15 to 2018-19
12.9	27.2	38.4	40.8	37.4	-3.4	24.4

Since 2014/15, there has been significant growth in the Scotland average for availability of employment land, from 12.9% to 37.4%, although there has been a 3.4 percentage point reduction in the past 12 months. There is very significant variation across councils, ranging from 4.7% to 100% in 2018/19. As a newly introduced measure, further work will be undertaken with local authorities to ensure consistency of reporting in relation to this indicator.



Fig 89: Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan



Source: SLAED Indicators Framework

Town vacancy rates

The vibrancy of town centres is a strategic priority for Economic Development and Planning Services. An important measure of the extent to which town centre management / regeneration policies and initiatives are working is the level of vacant units within town centres. 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 50: Town vacancy rates

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2014-15 to 2018-19
10.1	11.9	10.2	11.5	10.0	-1.5	-0.1

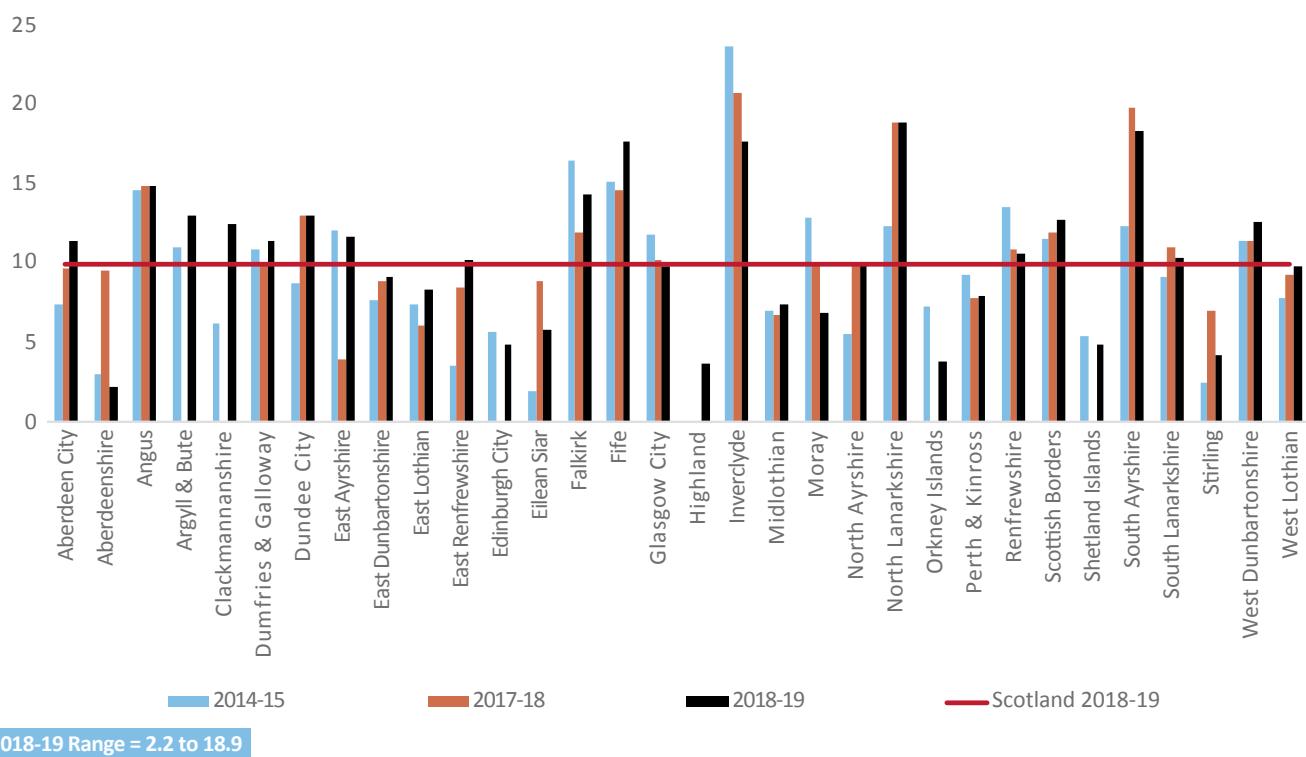
The Scotland figure for town vacancy rates has remained relatively constant since 2014/15. In 2018/19, an average of 10.0% of town centre properties were vacant across Scotland, an improvement from 11.49 in 2017/18. This is a positive finding given the continuing pressure on retailing sector from online trading and out of town shopping.

Some caution is advised when considering the data given a number of councils have submitted this indicator for the first time this year, many of whom have low vacancy rates.



The graph below shows the significant but narrowing variation across councils, with vacancy rates ranging from 2.2% to 18.9% in 2018/19. Rural areas have significantly lower vacancy rates than Urban authorities (5.8% compared to 11.4%).

Fig 90: Town vacancy rates (%)



Source: SLAED Indicators Framework

Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband

Access to good digital infrastructure is a key driver of economic competitiveness and productivity 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 51: Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change 2017-18 to 2018-19	Value Change 2013-14 to 2018-19
56.1	67.5	78.6	85.9	91.1	92.0	0.9%	35.9%

Access to superfast broadband has grown significantly across Scotland, with the Scotland figure increasing from 56.1% to 92.0% between 2013/14 and 2018/19.

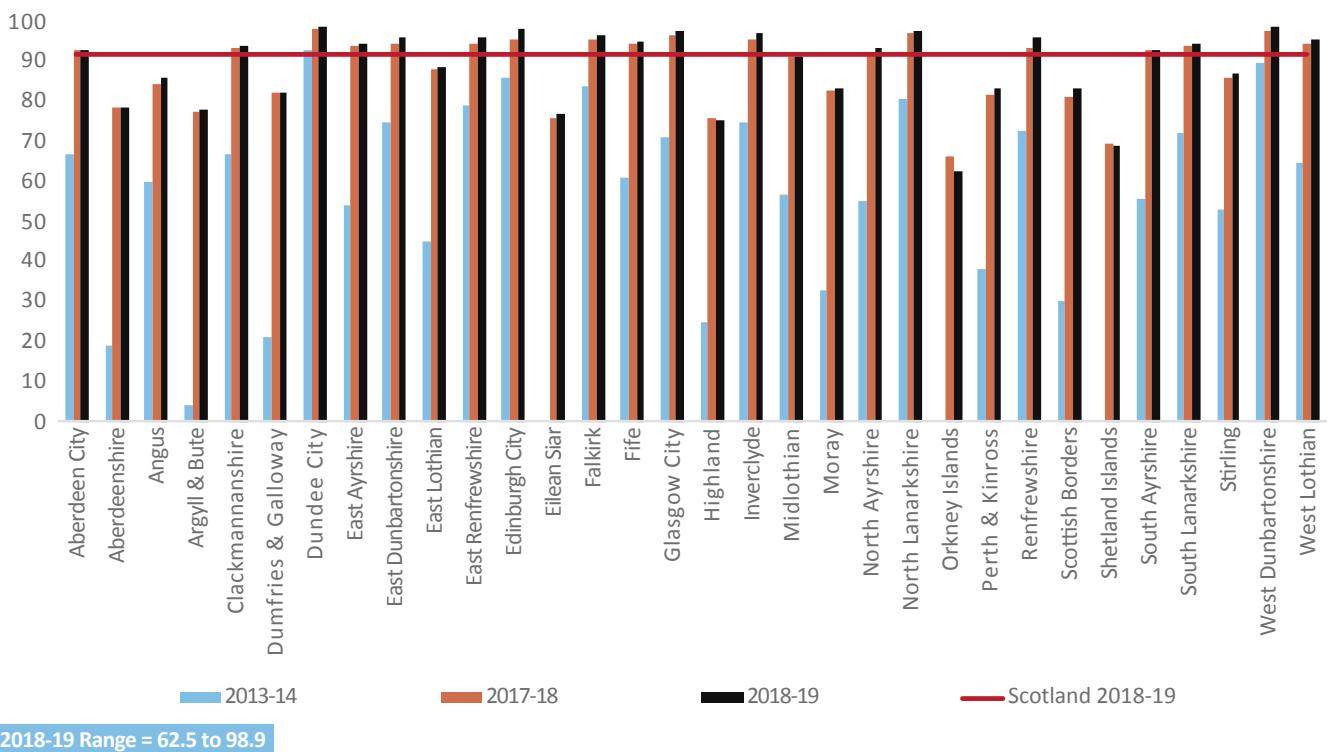
The rate of improvement (0.9pp) has slowed in comparison with previous years suggesting the indicator may be reaching a ceiling. Digital connectivity is an increasingly important consideration in terms of economic competitiveness and the trend observed in terms of access to superfast broadband, underpinned 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 62.5% to 98.9% in 2018/19. Rural authorities have significantly lower rates of access than urban and semi- urban authorities, 78.3% compared to 97.7% and 93.9% respectively.

Fig 91: Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (%)



Source: Ofcom Connected Nations Report

Proportion of people earning less than the living wage

Inclusive growth is a central part of the government's economic strategy and local authorities are important partners in the drive to reduce income inequality. Economic Development Services play an important role in this through supporting people to develop the skills to progress in the labour market, by attracting higher value employment opportunities and by encouraging employers to pay the living wage. A measure of the % of employees earning below the living wage allows for the impact of interventions in addressing low pay to be monitored. Data for this 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 52: Proportion of people earning less than the living wage

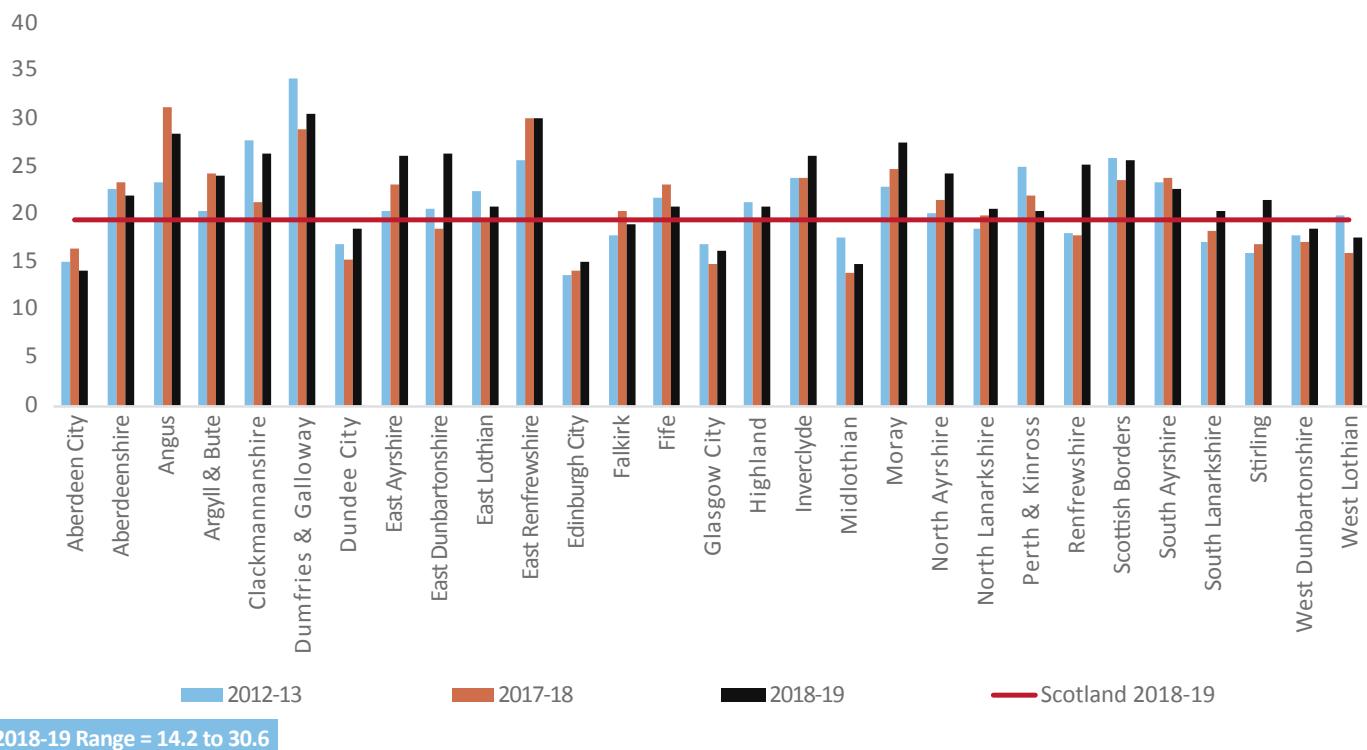
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Value Change	
							2017-18 to 2018-19	2012-13 to 2018-19
18.8	18.6	19.3	19.6	20.1	18.4	19.4	1.0	0.6

The proportion of people earning less than the living wage in 2018/19 was 19.4%, an increase of 1 percentage point from 2017/18, although lower than the peak of 20.1% in 2016/17. It is worth noting that the decline observed in 2018/19 does not seem to be continuing with figures for 2019/20 showing improvement in this important area.



The graph below shows the significant variation across councils in 2018/19, ranging from 14.2% to 30.6% in 2018/19. This level of variation has remained constant since 2010/11, with urban authorities showing a significantly lower proportion of people earning less than the living wage. In 2018/19, the average proportion for urban authorities was 18.5% compared to 23.0% in rural authorities, and 23.4% in semi-rural.

Fig 92: Proportion of people earning less than the living wage



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





Conclusions and Next Steps

This last year has seen councils across Scotland continue to strive to improve the quality and performance of key services while continuing to manage pressures to reduce costs. The data presented shows the increasing scale of the demand and budgetary pressures facing councils, the policy choices being made locally to meet the needs of local communities, and the impact of these choices on performance, satisfaction and costs.

While councils have continued to do well providing valuable services and working with communities to achieve strong 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. Although too early to call a trend, this is a pattern emerging across all key service areas and within all councils. The next phase is expected to be more challenging, and the need for councils 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. The core purpose of the LGBF is to support councils to target their resources to areas of greatest impact and to ask important questions of key council services. The framework provides councils with insight into their own performance and provides a strengthened evidence base to help drive improvement, promote collaboration and learning, and strengthen public accountability.

The Local Government Benchmarking Board is committed to the continuous improvement of the LGBF to ensure it remains a relevant and valuable improvement tool for councils. In March 2019, the following six strategic priorities were identified for the period ahead to ensure activity is targeted in the most useful areas to drive progress and support transformation.

1. Further promote the credibility and reliability of the LGBF

As the framework has matured, councils use of the LGBF to support collaboration, improvement and strategic decision making has grown and become more sophisticated. To support continued progress in this area, we will strengthen communications and engagement activities to continue to promote the credibility, relevance and reliability of the framework and build confidence and engagement across key stakeholder groups. To help ensure the public and our stakeholders within Local Government have trust in our data and to provide assurances on the statistical rigour and reliability of framework data, the framework is now published under the voluntary adoption of the [UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice](#).

We will continue to work closely with the Accounts Commission and collaborate on areas of common strategic interest. The Commission continues to support the LGBF approach as an example of sector led improvement and have welcomed the significant progress made to date in strengthening the relevance and use of the framework and Local Government’s commitment to continuous improvement. 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. We will continue to work with professional associations and data providers to improve the reliability, consistency and robustness of underpinning data used in the framework and to improve supporting technical guidance and methodology. Improving the timeliness of the framework remains a priority for the LGBF Board and we will continue to build on the recent progress achieved in this area.

2. Continue to build the growing evidence base in relation to LGBF use within councils

We are committed to growing the evidence base showcasing how the LGBF is being used within Local Government. The second edition of [‘How Councils are using the LGBF’](#) has been published on the LGBF website and includes examples from authorities on how the framework is being used locally to support



strategic decision making, inform improvement and support scrutiny with Elected Members. We will continue to work with authorities to demonstrate Local Government's continuing commitment to this council-led improvement approach and provide clear evidence that the framework continues to gain traction.

3. Strengthen the suite of measures on adult social care

This year, we have introduced an interim suite of social care measures in collaboration with Social Work Scotland and the Health and Social Care Chief Officer Network. These draw on the Core Suite of Integration measures, with measures aiming to capture the wellbeing agenda at the heart of integration. Within phase 2, the following areas have been prioritised for further exploration with partners: system capacity and workforce planning; the wider complex care agenda; and improved cost measures to better reflect the development of new delivery models and social care markets, and the personalisation agenda

4. Address existing framework gaps

The LGBF Board is committed to the continuous improvement and evolution of the framework to ensure relevance and to reflect the changing Local Government policy context. In recent years we have strengthened the framework in relation to children and young people, adult social care and economic development. We will continue to review framework focus and emphasis, and over the period ahead we are committed to work with key partners to explore potential developments in the following areas:

- Public protection
- The digital agenda
- The climate change agenda
- Financial resilience and sustainability

5. Develop thematic reporting in key strategic/policy areas

The introduction of thematic reporting provides a 'drill down' into key policy areas to re-emphasise the 'can opener' nature of the LGBF information and strengthens 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. We will continue to develop our approach to thematic reporting in areas of key strategic importance over the period ahead.

6. Improve elected member engagement with the framework

As the framework has matured and councils have grown in confidence in their use of the data, elected members' interest in benchmarking has been growing and their understanding has become more nuanced. To build on this we will continue to work closely with COSLA colleagues to strengthen elected member engagement with the LGBF.





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
CORP 6b	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)



Indicator Ref	Indicator Description
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 adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided
SW4f	% 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
SW9	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
HSN	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year
	% of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
	% of council dwellings meeting Scottish housing standards
	Average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs
	% of council dwellings that are energy efficient
CORP-ASSET	% of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
	% of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
ECON	% of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated/funded employability programmes
	Cost of planning and building standards per planning application
	Average time per business and industry planning application (weeks)
	% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises
	No of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population
	Investment in economic development & tourism per 1,000 population
	Proportion of people earning less than the living wage
	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband
	Town vacancy rates
	Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan



Appendix 2 List of Family Groups

To understand why variations in cost and performance are occurring, councils work together to ‘drill-down’ into the benchmarking data across service areas. This process has been organised around ‘family groups’ of councils so that we are comparing councils that are similar in terms of the type of population that they serve (e.g. relative deprivation and affluence) and the type of area in which they serve them (e.g. urban, semi-rural, rural). The point of comparing like with like is that this is more likely to lead to useful learning and improvement.

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

Least deprived ← → Most deprived

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

Rural ← → Urban



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.
- 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 9 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.



Improvement Service
iHub
Quarrywood Court
Livingston
EH54 6AX



T: 01506 282012
E: info@improvementservice.org.uk
W: www.improvementservice.org.uk

www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking

