

## PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

STRATEGIC POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER  
2012

## BENCHMARKING WITHIN PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Report by Head of Finance and Head of Corporate Business  
Change and IT**ABSTRACT**

This report provides an update on the SOLACE benchmarking project, including a report on the data generated by it so far, and the locally identified benchmarking projects within Services.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.1 It is recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee:

- i) Note progress made in developing benchmarking within Perth and Kinross Council; and
- ii) Agree the Perth and Kinross Annual Report on the SOLACE Benchmarking Local Financial Return (LFR) Indicators for 2010/11 (see Appendix 2).

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2011 report published by Audit Scotland in March 2012 stated that Councillors often do not always have sufficient information on service costs and quality, user satisfaction and benchmarking information. In particular Councils need to make better progress in developing benchmarking programmes that cover all their services and make better use of comparative performance information.

2.2 The past two years has been the most challenging for Scottish councils in decades. Yet during that time our Services have continued to deliver high quality services and improvements that meet the needs of our residents and communities. To support further improvements, there is a need to utilise all available intelligence to shape efficient and effective service delivery. Effective benchmarking will be key to generating some of this information.

2.3 To support this, SOLACE asked the Improvement Service to develop a benchmarking framework on behalf of Scottish Local Authorities. The overall purpose is to support councils in focusing transformational change resources to areas of greatest impact in terms of efficiency, productivity and outcomes.

- 2.4 Perth and Kinross Council has engaged fully in the 'costs' focused SOLACE benchmarking project. In addition it is recognised that further development of 'process' benchmarking is also necessary in order to best support the improvement culture of Perth & Kinross Council. Therefore, several benchmarking projects were approved by the Executive Officer Team in May 2012. This report provides an update on both these areas.

### **3. CURRENT PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL BENCHMARKING**

- 3.1 Over past years the Council has been involved in a wide range of formal and informal benchmarking. This has included national benchmarking of Statutory Performance Indicators by Audit Scotland. In addition, as part of our commitment to continuous improvement, Perth and Kinross Council is a member of various benchmarking groups such as the ABC Group, Scottish Housing Best Value Network, the HMIE and the SCOTXED Programme, and SOCITM Benchmarking Club. Benchmarking activity in relation to a number of service areas is collated and reviewed at each Executive Director's ERD.
- 3.2 Benchmarking also forms a key stage of Best Value Reviews, Transformation Projects and other reviews such as those undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee.

### **4. SOLACE BENCHMARKING PROJECT**

- 4.1 The SOLACE benchmarking framework is intended to enable each council to:
- establish their own performance against the indicators;
  - to explore with other councils an understanding of variation in performance; and
  - encourage sharing of best practice and learning between councils and of services to support performance improvement.
- 4.2 To achieve this, a comparable set of performance indicators across all major service areas has been approved by SOLACE. They cover Children's Services, Social Work, Housing Services, Culture and Leisure Services, Environmental Services, and Corporate Services. The full list of indicators is contained in Appendix 1. The indicators have been taken from the Local Financial Return (LFR) and the Scottish Household Survey. A benchmarking guide to support councils in benchmarking activities has also been developed.
- 4.3 The Improvement Service and SOLACE released data drawn from the 2010/11 LFR returns and national comparative information to Chief Executives in each council during June 2012.
- 4.4 During July the LFR data, along with relevant performance data, was circulated to Services and the Corporate Finance Team for comment

on the accuracy and provision of contextual information on performance. This information is contained within Appendix 2, Annual Report on SOLACE Benchmarking Local Financial return Indicators 2010/2011, of this report. One change was identified as necessary, this information related to the indicator 'home care to the under 65's' and was resubmitted to the Improvement Service. At the beginning of August 2012 the Head of Finance approved the data as accurate.

- 4.5 Although the data is accurate, there are still concerns about the overall benchmarking process. All LFRs are based on the Scottish Government guidance which also refers to the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice guidance when allocating costs to different sector headings. This allows councils a degree of flexibility in allocating costs which means that inconsistencies will still occur in the ways councils complete the LFRs.
- 4.6 The Scottish Government is reviewing the LFR's in consultation with the CIPFA Director's of Finance Section and COSLA as a result of issues raised as part of the SOLACE benchmarking exercise.
- 4.7 It should also be noted that the figures in the LFRs are based on gross expenditure and therefore ignore any income received, including grant income which gives a distorted view of the actual cost of service provision to the Council. Examples of indicators particularly affected by this relate to expenditure on both libraries and museums. For instance, the Perth and Kinross Museum figure includes £200,000 of grant related expenditure but does not take account of the income received. The Library is similar in that any income related to the Café and Theatre is ignored but the costs are included.
- 4.8 Analysis of performance and an understanding of each council's priorities is required to realise the potential of the raw data drawn from the LFR. The results for each council will vary due to the different political, demographic, environmental and economic contexts. Therefore, it will be important that analysis recognises the potential reasons for variance and that a decline in performance may not represent poor performance on the part of the service, particularly where this has been the result of a budget or service re-design decision.

## **5. LOCAL BENCHMARKING PROJECTS**

- 5.1 In May 2012 the Executive Officer Team approved a series of benchmarking projects to be developed by Services. The projects were identified following consideration of service areas that where capacity for specific improvements has been identified. Additional benchmarking activity was also agreed in a number of service areas to support forthcoming reviews including legal, accountancy and human resources.

- 5.2 The key areas to be benchmarked are residential childcare costs, integrated service provision for children in their early years, employability support, planning, outcome achievement in localities and learning disability services.
- 5.3 These projects are at various stages of development, this includes engagement in the CIPFA Corporate Services Benchmarking Club; work to develop meaningful information on cost and quality in relation to all early years and older people's service delivery; and engagement with the Association of Directors of Social Work to build on the benchmarking undertaken in the Learning Disabilities Review completed in 2011.
- 5.4 Progress in taking forward the Service benchmarking projects will be reported in the Service Annual Reports which will be presented to Committees in May/June 2013.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Executive Officer Team and the Council's Performance, Planning and Risk Group and were consulted in the development of this report.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Services will be required to identify support for benchmarking from within current resource allocation including resources from Service Finance Teams; this will be supplemented by resources from the Corporate Strategic Planning Improvement & Risk Team.

## **8. CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) *Provide a Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment*
- (ii) *Promote Healthy, Caring Communities*
- (iii) *Build a Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy*
- (iv) *Develop Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens*
- (v) *Support Confident, Active and Inclusive Communities*

This report supports delivery of all five Corporate Objectives.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)**

- 9.1 An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.

9.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- i) Assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA.

## **10. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

10.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).

10.2 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

11.1 The requirement to increase benchmarking activity within the Council is recognised as a priority. The Council is fully engaged in the SOLACE benchmarking project and has included the information emerging from this project in this report. In addition Services within the Council are developing ambitious benchmarking projects in specific priority service areas to identify improvement opportunities

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**Note:** No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

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**Appendix 1:** Improving Local Government Benchmarking: Suite of Indicators (August 2011)

**Appendix 2:** Annual report on SOLACE benchmarking Local Financial Return indicators 2010/11

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## APPENDIX 1

### Improving Local Government Benchmarking: Suite of Indicators (August 2011)

	<b>Children's Services</b>
CHN1	Cost per Primary School Pupil
CHN2	Cost per Secondary School Pupil
CHN3	Cost per Pre-School place (Includes Under 3s, Ante-Pre-School, Pre-School and Deferred Entry)
CHN4	Attainment of Children at Standard Grade Level by all Children
CHN5	Attainment of Children at Higher Grade Level by all Children
CHN6	Attainment of Children at Standard Grade Level by Children from Deprived Backgrounds (SIMD)
CHN7	Attainment of Children at Higher Grade Level by Children from Deprived Backgrounds (SIMD)
CHN8 (a)	The Gross Cost of "Children Looked After" in a residential establishment per Child per Week
CHN8 (b)	The Gross Cost of "Children Looked After" in a Community Setting per Child per Week
CHN9	Balance of Care for Looked After Children: % of Children Being Looked After in the Community
CHN10	% of Adults satisfied with local schools
CHN11	Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations
	<b>Corporate Services</b>
CORP1	Central Support Services as a Proportion of Council Running Costs
CORP2	Cost of Democratic Core per 1,000 Population
CORP3	Total HR Cost per 1,000 Employees (FTE)
CORP4	Total Finance Cost per 1,000 Employees (FTE)
CORP5	Total ICT Cost per 1,000 Employees (FTE)
CORP6	Sickness Absence Days per Employee (FTE)
CORP7	Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year
	<b>Social Work</b>
SW1	Adult Home Care Costs per Hour
SW2	Gross Residential Costs per Week
SW3	Percentage of People Aged 65+ with Intensive Needs (Plus 10 Hours) Receiving Care at Home
SW4	% of Adults satisfied with social care or social work services

	<b>Culture and Leisure Services</b>
CUL&LEIS1	Cost per Attendance of Sport and Leisure Facilities (Including Swimming Pools)
CUL&LEIS2	Cost per Visit to Libraries
CUL&LEIS3	Cost per Visit to Museums and Galleries
CUL&LEIS4	Cost of Parks and Open Spaces per 1,000 of the Population
CUL&LEIS5	% of Adults Satisfied with Culture and Leisure Services
	a: % of adults satisfied with libraries b: % of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces c: % of adults satisfied with museums and galleries d: % of adults satisfied with leisure facilities.
	<b>Environmental Services</b>
ENV1	Gross Cost of Waste Collection per Premise
ENV2	Gross Cost per Waste Disposal per Premise
ENV3a	Net Cost of Street Cleaning per 1,000 Population
ENV3b	Street Cleanliness Index
ENV4a	Cost of Maintenance per Kilometre of Roads
ENV4b	Percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment by road category (A,B,C)
ENV5	Cost of Trading Standards and Environmental Health per 1,000 Population
ENV6	% of Total Waste arising that is recycled
ENV7	% of Adults Satisfied with Environmental Services
	a: % of adults satisfied with refuse collection b: % of adults satisfied with street cleaning
	<b>Housing Services</b>
HSN1	Current Tenants' Arrears as a Percentage of Net Rent Due
HSN2	Percentage of Rent Due in the Year that was Lost Due to Voids
HSN3	Percentage of Dwellings Meeting SHQS
HSN4	Percentage of Repairs Completed within Target Times
HSN5	Percentage of Council Dwellings that are Energy Efficient
	<b>Corporate Services: Asset Management and Property</b>
CORPAM1	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
CORPAM2	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
CORPAM3	Gross Property Costs of the Operational Estate as a % of the Gross Revenue Budget
CORPAM4	% Gross Internal Floor-Space in Condition Categories A-B (Good or Satisfactory)
CORPAM5	Energy Costs/Consumption Spend per m2 (Gas, Electricity, Oil, Solid Fuel)
CORPAM6	% of Public Service Buildings that are Suitable and Accessible to Disabled People
CORPAM7	Operational Property as a % of the Total Portfolio



# **Annual Report on SOLACE Benchmarking Local Financial Return Indicators 2010/11**

## INTRODUCTION

Due to the current financial climate and the performance challenges Local Authorities face, benchmarking has become even more important. Councils need to ensure they learn from best practice and make best use of resources. To support this, SOLACE asked the Improvement Service to develop a benchmarking framework on behalf of Scottish Local Authorities. The overall purpose is to support councils in focusing transformational change resources to areas of greatest impact in terms of efficiency (unit costs), productivity and outcomes and providing vital evidence for decision making.

The Improvement Service and SOLACE have developed a suite of indicators, however there is a strong focus on 'cost' measures. This report presents the Local Financial Return data for 2010/11 only. The report presents the PKC figure, the mean, median, range and quartile. Data definitions are presented below.

Care should be taken in interpreting data as in some instance low spend is good but equally for other indicators we would expect it to be high as this is a priority for the Council.

## DATA DEFINITIONS

**Mean** - The term mean refers to the average value found by adding all the numbers together and dividing by the amount of numbers.

**Median** - The term median refers to an average value indicated by the middle number in a series.

**Quartile** - The term quartile means a data set is divided into four equal parts, with the first quartile being the best, for comparison purposes.

## SERVICE COMMENTS ON LFR DATA

### WASTE

#### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator/s	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Gross Waste collection cost per premise	<b>£100.75</b>	£92.08	£83.76	£52.78 to £225.68	4th
Gross Waste disposal cost per premise	<b>£102.77</b>	£106.83	£97.51	£67.95 to £271.37	3rd

#### Contextual information

Perth and Kinross has a large geographical foot print with a diverse range of population settlements ranging from urban city and town locations and sparsely populated rural settlements. We provide on an annual basis, weekly residual collections to 2% of households and provide alternative weekly residual and DMR collections to 98 % of households and fortnightly enhanced garden and food waste collections to 80% of households. The Council commercial waste collections are available to all businesses within Perth and Kinross without any rural disadvantage. We provide the collection of commercial waste in urban and in rural areas and the Operation of a commercial dry mixed recycle collection service to all areas.

The Council runs a wide range of waste minimisation, reuse and recycling initiatives as well as providing waste disposal facilities. These include the operation of 4 transfer stations and 8 attended Recycling Centres. In addition 86 Recycling Points are located throughout the area.

We have introduced new ways of working that increased the operational use of our collection vehicles and enabled an actual reduction in fleet numbers, and reduced our disposal and processing gate fee costs due to successful re-tendering exercises. Even with these efficiencies, we realise our cost base for both collection and disposal has increased to fund these recycling and diversion activities to ensure we are working towards meeting the Zero Waste Regulation targets.

With that in mind; when making direct comparisons between all local authorities we must take in to account the difference between urban and rural authorities. The costs associated with the collection and disposal costs between urban and rural services will be different and in some cases will be significantly higher. Our rural comparators are: The Scottish Borders; Dumfries and Galloway; Highland; Aberdeenshire; Orkney Islands; Shetland Island and Eilean Siar. Within our comparators we are third for gross waste disposal costs, but fifth for gross waste collection costs. But, we also should consider the different levels of service offered by each authority when making comparisons to ensure a fair and consistent approach. For example rural authorities that provide kerbside recycling collection including garden waste collections are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quartile compared to rural authorities that do not supply kerbside garden waste collection that sit in either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile.

Gross cost includes the cost of (but excludes income from) commercial waste activities. This will further distort comparison.

## TRADING STANDARDS

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	<b>£25,315</b>	£26,398	£25,050	£12,296 to £72,813	3rd

### Contextual information

The cost relates to the services of food safety, health and safety, environmental health and trading standards. The cost per 1,000 head of population is below the Scottish average and being slightly higher than the median indicates that PKC is in the middle of the cost range with as many authorities above it as there are below it.

The diverse range of services covered by these disciplines will vary between authorities dependent upon the populations served both in terms of residents, commercial enterprises and the level of service provided in respect of each area of service provision. These figures do not reflect the current costs as there have been substantial cost reductions of £340,000 achieved following the implementation of a review of Regulatory services in 2011.

## ROADS

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads	<b>£4,285</b>	£10,150	£9,029	£2,809 to £32,451	1st

### Contextual information

The out-turn cost per kilometre of these statistics is in the correct range in terms of overall expenditure versus network length.

This data relates to revenue expenditure and does not include additional expenditure allocated from the capital budget.

We have a road network within our urban and rural environment of approximately 2,500 kilometres. Maintenance of the network has recently undergone a review and is now under the management of a Road Maintenance Partnership which includes the roads contracting arm of the Council, Tayside Contracts.

We monitor performance through the Society of Chief Officers for Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) and in doing so are compared against 7 other like authorities. Six of these authorities are in the 1<sup>st</sup> quartile and PKC compare very favourably with them confirming our performance level to be good.

The road network is surveyed annually and the PKC network condition remains better than the Scottish average demonstrating that the PKC Road Maintenance team is providing a cost effective service. Of those spending less per kilometre, 4 have a better overall network condition.

## STREETS

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	<b>£19,657.60</b>	£16,989.66	£16,360.68	£1,988 to £34,499.71	3rd

### Contextual information

Perth and Kinross has a large geographical foot print with a diverse range of population settlements ranging from urban city and town locations and sparsely populated rural settlements. Perth and Kinross attracts large numbers of visitors annually to our various towns and villages and rural sites throughout the area.

We have a road network within our urban and rural environment of approximately 2,500 kilometres which is maintained by our street cleansing section; we strive to meet the EPA standards to ensure the reputation, public image and identity of Perth and Kinross as a safe, secure and welcoming environment is maintained for all residents and visitors to the area.

The composition of the street cleaning operation is made up of town or urban street cleaning mobile squads or individual (barrow) sweeping operatives supported by mechanical brush operations. In total 74 staff are involved in the front line delivery of street cleaning services and due to the size of our geographical foot print, the street cleansing section is operated and managed out of 5 depots.

Perth & Kinross Council has performed consistently over the years, performing well above the required standards for street cleanliness to ensure our most closely scrutinised civic spaces – our city, towns and village centres and our rural environment conform to the required standards. However, when making direct comparisons between all local authorities we must take in to account the difference between urban and rural authorities. The costs associated with street cleansing between the urban and rural services will be different and in some cases will be significantly higher. We also should consider the different levels of service offered by each authority when making comparisons to ensure a fair and consistent approach.

## PARKS & OPEN SPACES

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Cost of Parks and Open Spaces per 1,000 population	<b>£38,699</b>	£35,141	£34,958	£3,436 to £56,416	3rd

### Contextual information

This indicator cost per head of 1,000 population is one indicator amongst many which will create an overall picture of performance. We are a rural authority with a large geographical area therefore we have more travel than many other authorities. APSE has put us into a family group which is considered similar to us on specification of works for example chemical control methods, number of grass cuts per annum and percentage of grass that is cut and lifted. There is obviously variation on this. Many other authorities do not have the bedding displays that we have or win national bloom competitions. We provide more play areas than many of the authorities that we benchmark with and we have more events in our parks which all add to the costs.

Also not all authorities cost the same way. In each of our budgets we have a central establishment charge apportioned against each cost centre, not all authorities do this so we are not always comparing like for like.

## REVENUES

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year	97.2%	95.1%	95.1%	92.3% to 97.6%	1st

### Contextual information

Our performance in this area continues to be very good.

## HOME CARE

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Home Care Costs per Hr (Over 65)	£19.17	20.33	21.12	£7.84 to £31.20	2nd

### Contextual information

Perth and Kinross provides Homecare Services across a large geographic area with a diverse range of population settlements from urban city and town locations to sparsely populated rural settlements. This will result in significant levels of travel costs and staff time which will be reflected in unit costs. The Service provided is being delivered to people who are frail, dependant and will have significant personal care needs. The Service provided a high proportion of personal care with significantly less focus on non personal care tasks. In addition, the Service introduced a Reablement Service during the financial year as part of the transformation of Older Peoples Services while commissioning a larger proportion of care hours from the private sector partners.

Information is extracted from two key legacy systems which are audited. The cost comes from the final audited account and level of activity is provided by our IT system. The average unit cost dependant upon the level of in house or externally commissioned services and the needs and/or locations of the clients. The Service is a member and contributes to research and benchmarking groups undertaken by the Association of Directors Of Social Work (ADSW) for Homecare including unit cost information.

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Home Care Costs per Hr (Under 65)	£19.17	35.49	15.89	-£2.07 to £158.53	3rd

### Contextual information

The costs of home care are not held by age group; they are held in a single cost centre. Should there be a requirement to isolate the over 65 group from other adult services users then a further cost centre can be set up. The figure of £19.17 is based on the total costs of home care per the Final Accounts apportioned on a pro rata basis to the hours provided to the under and over 65 age group. This revised figure has now been submitted to the Improvement Service (as per section 3.3).

## ADULT SOCIAL WORK

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Self directed support (SDS) spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+	0.6%	1.4%	1.0%	0% to 5.2%	4th

### Contextual information

The Council have implemented direct payments for SDS. The Council have been striving to increase the level of resources towards SDS future reporting will show continued to increases year on year.

## EDUCATION

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Cost per Primary School pupil	£4,611	£5,195	£4,798	£4,313 to £8,608	1st

### Contextual information

Costs per pupil are dependent on a considerable number of factors. For instance, the size of the school plays a big part in determining costs per pupil, and a small primary school in a rural area is almost certainly likely to have a much higher unit cost than a large urban primary school. Other schools have particular situations, an annexe for example, which may considerably raise their unit costs. However despite this, Primary School costs in Perth and Kinross are low.

The grant expenditures covers: active schools; play start; Gaelic provisions; youth music; out of school clubs; the determined to succeed scheme; and educational maintenance allowances. However, the majority of these grants are funded from matching income which is not taken into account and has inflated the costs.

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Secondary cost per pupil	£6,683	£6,809	£6,491	£5,549 to £12,385	3rd

### Contextual information

This figure has been increased due to the affect of IIL unitary charge expenditure within secondary schools of £2.7M or £356 per pupil. Without these costs PKC would have been in the 2nd quartile. Also the non domestic rates for all IIL schools are about 50% higher than our other secondary schools.

Secondary schools do not have as flat a management structure as primary schools, secondary schools have many more principal teachers and a business manager. This reflects their size and range of subjects they are required to deliver. The cost of these posts contributes to an increased cost per secondary pupil compared to the cost per primary pupil.

## LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Cost per pre-school place	<b>£3,116</b>	£3,051	£2,788	£1,908 to £5,738	3rd

### Service comments

Perth & Kinross Council includes service provision such as the Childcare Strategy Team within the Nursery Sector and this affects the cost per place. Without these costs PKC would have been in the 2nd quartile. Not all other Local Authorities will account for these costs within the cost per pre-school place.

Perth & Kinross Council has made a policy decision to invest in the early years. This has resulted in an increase in the number of full-time nursery places (264). This changes the staffing ratios from 1:10 to 1:8 and incurs additional costs.

## CULTURAL SERVICES

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Gross cost per attendance at sports facilities	<b>£4.07</b>	£4.70	£4.10	£0.89 to £10.16	3rd

### Contextual information

This indicator is just one of several which the Council uses to monitor participation, performance and quality of sports and active recreation provision in Perth and Kinross. In 2011/12 there were just under 1.3 million participants in wider sports and active recreation activities in total, both within and outwith sports facilities. The geography of the PKC area, which represents key challenges in meeting the needs of rural and isolated communities alongside the urban centres of Perth, Pitlochry, Blairgowrie etc is also an explanatory factor.

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Cost per library visit	<b>£5.03</b>	£4.04	£3.77	£1.56 to £7.09	4th

### Contextual information

This indicator is just one of several which the Council uses to monitor participation, performance and quality of library provision in Perth and Kinross. It does not include the range of outreach services provided, for example, in care homes, Perth Prison and to rural and remote communities. In 2011/12, there were 5,300 visits to libraries per 1000 of population and services delivered outwith library buildings – for example online and via eBooks are being actively developed to provide services which are both more responsive to community needs and more cost effective. The collation methodology relating to this indicator does not reflect the true cost of providing this service as there is no allowance in these figures for income received from the Shop or Theatre, but they do include the costs of providing these additional functions. Finally, the figures include a £750,000 lease cost to LAL for the AK Bell Library, equal to £0.91 per visit. They also include costs associated with the Investment In Learning programme at the 4 Community Campuses, which include major library hubs. The geography of the PKC area, which represents key challenges in meeting the needs of rural and isolated communities alongside the urban centres of Perth, Pitlochry, Blairgowrie etc is also an explanatory factor.



## LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Cost per museum visit	<b>£5.72</b>	£6.62	£4.82	£0.26 to £23.85	3rd

### Contextual information

This indicator is just one of several which the Council uses to monitor participation, performance and quality of arts and heritage provision in Perth and Kinross. It does not include the range of museum education outreach services provided, including online access to museum collections or, for example, via the Living Communities project, which is one of the largest cultural heritage participation projects in Scotland and has been rolled out to all schools in Perth and Kinross. There was £190,000 of grant funded expenditure included in the Gross expenditure position, with the Grant income being ignored in the SOLACE LFR; this is equal to £0.92 per visit which if taken into account brings the cost below the median. The geography of the PKC area, which represents key challenges in meeting the needs of rural and isolated communities alongside the urban centres of Perth, Pitlochry, Blairgowrie etc is also an explanatory factor.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Weekly gross costs per 'Looked After' Child in a residential setting	<b>£1,401</b>	£3,263.50	£2,854	£1,367 to £12,615	1st
Weekly gross costs per 'Looked After' Child in the community	<b>£271</b>	£207.90	£190	£48 to £446	4th

### Contextual information

The performance in both these areas reflects Council policy and commitment to preventative approaches. In comparison with other councils, Perth and Kinross traditionally have the lowest percent of children in residential settings and highest percent in community settings.

The higher than average costs of supporting Looked After Children in the community reflect that Perth & Kinross Council have one single payment to carers for all costs associated with a community placement which includes all costs related to the care of the child. Other Local Authorities may make a core payment but may also have additional payments, for example for transport and school uniforms, which are excluded from this PI.

We have an excellent rate of retention for foster carers with no foster carers moving from Perth & Kinross Council to private agencies, and occasionally we have people coming from private agencies seeking to be recruited as Perth and Kinross Council carers. This is a reflection of the good quality of support provided and probably that the rates of pay offered are in line with the fostering network rate. Although this results in the cost per child 'Looked after' in the community being higher than some other local authorities it reflects the emphasis we place on prevention of the need for children to be accommodated in residential settings at significantly higher cost.

It is also important to note that, although we were below the average during 2010/11 for the costs per Looked after child in a residential setting, the figure can fluctuate significantly due to the considerable needs of some children i.e. some children requiring secure care.

## DEMOCRATIC COSTS

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Democratic Core Costs per 1,000 population	<b>£26,063</b>	£57,469.97	£36,311.61	£19,504 to £352,053	1st

### Contextual information

Democratic Core Costs are made up of the following areas of expenditure: members' allowances and expenses, costs of officers time spent on advice and support activities; the functions of the head of paid service; completing and submitting the Statement of Accounts, annual reports and public performance reports; the cost of the statutory external audit and the cost of external inspection. The Council's position within the first quartile demonstrates relatively low expenditure in this area.

## CENTRAL SUPPORT COSTS

### LFR 2010/11 information

Indicator	PKC Figure	Mean	Median	Range	Quartile
Central Support services as a % of Total Gross expenditure	<b>4.5%</b>	4.6%	4.3%	2.2% to 9.4%	3rd

### Contextual information

Central Support Costs include the following expenditure areas: Local Tax Collection; Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages; Elections; Emergency Planning; Local Land Charges; General Grants, Bequests and Donations and Licensing. Additionally the Improvement Service's definition includes the following support services costs which would normally been allocated to front line services: Financial Services; Human Resources; Legal Services; Information Communication Technology; Customer Services; Health and Safety and Procurement. The position of PKC within the benchmark shows that expenditure is just below the mean within the range.