

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****18 April 2018****LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2016/17****Report by Depute Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer**

This report presents a summary of Perth and Kinross Council's performance during 2016/17 against the Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators published by the Improvement Service on 12 February 2018.

The benchmarking data helps the Council, members of the public and other stakeholders see how Perth and Kinross Council is performing in key areas compared to other local authorities.

BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

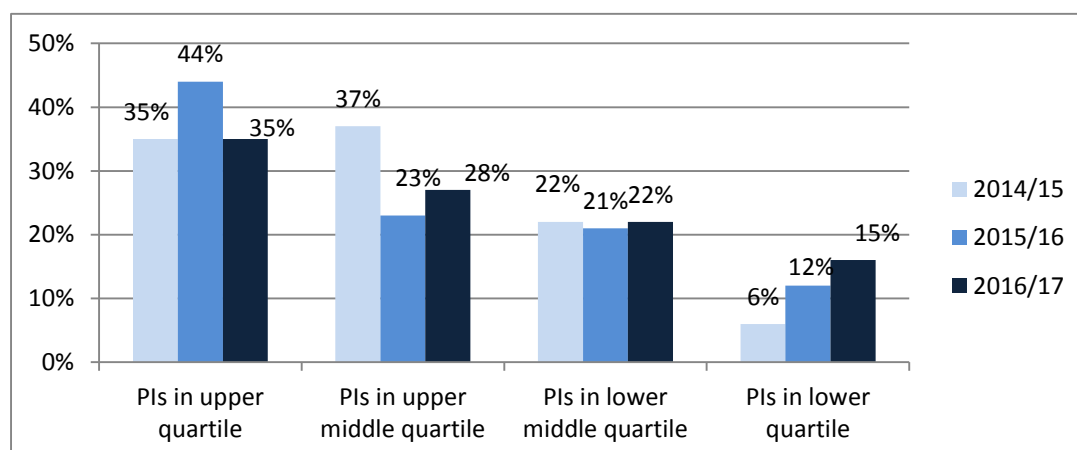
- 1.1 The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) was developed by the Improvement Service, on behalf of SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives), in 2012. The purpose of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework is to:
 - help councils and their services better understand why they achieve their current performance levels;
 - build our understanding of where council performance varies; and
 - help identify and share good practice across councils.
- 1.2 All Scottish local authorities have worked together to report on services which can be compared both across councils and year-on-year. This information takes the form of specific 'indicators' that measure aspects of performance. The indicators cover seven service areas which are: Children's Services, Corporate Services, Adult Social Care, Culture and Leisure Services, Environmental Services, Housing and Economic Development. The data is gathered from a number of sources. The Improvement Service also led the development of '[family groups](#)' based on factors such as population density and deprivation to provide groupings for similar local authorities.
- 1.3 LGBF data for 2016/17 was published by the Improvement Service on 12 February 2018 via an online tool called '[MyLocalCouncil](#)', which can be accessed on the Council's website. The Improvement Service also produced a [National Overview Report 2016/17](#).

- 1.4 The data is intended as a tool to support decision making to better understand factors that councils can control in balancing costs and performance. The benchmarking data on its own does not identify how to improve. Within each section of the [National Overview Report](#), a summary of factors has been compiled which the family groups have identified as important in understanding the variation between councils' performance.
- 1.5 Ranking data gives a sense of how Perth and Kinross Council is performing in comparison to other local authorities. However, it is necessary to take into account that legitimate variations in data will exist across Councils due to local policy choices and demographic profiles. For example, rural local authorities will have different calls upon their Environment Service functions compared to urban authorities, and these are reflected in their statistics. Rankings based on data which show small variations between councils can be misleading as it may only be 1 – 2% difference. For cost indicators, ranking is not useful as reduced costs do not necessarily mean improved outcomes for local communities and as a result, the cost indicators have not been ranked.
- 1.6 While recognising these issues, Perth and Kinross Council is committed to the LGBF and using benchmarking information to prompt and promote progressive improvement. The LGBF is only one source of benchmarking data, and the Council uses many sources to compare performance with other authorities and these can often show different trends and patterns.
- 1.7 This report provides an overview of the information that is contained within the Improvement Service National Overview Report 2016/17 and the online toolkit; taking account of the national and local trends and highlights for Perth and Kinross Council. The [online tool](#) is published on the Council's website and this report is intended to be used alongside it. It provides data for Perth and Kinross up to 2016/17; and allows members of the public to compare the performance of all 32 Scottish Local Authorities as well as compare our performance within our family groups.

2. OVERALL RANKINGS 2016/17

- 2.1 All 46 non-cost performance indicators (PIs) with 2016/17 data have been ranked in terms of their performance out of 32 local authorities, reflecting each local authority in Scotland. They are then divided into four groups, known as quartiles. Below provides a summary of how Perth & Kinross Council compares to all other local authorities in Scotland.
- 16 indicators (35%) are in the upper quartile;
 - 13 indicators (28%) are in the upper middle quartile;
 - 10 indicators (22%) are in the lower middle quartile; and
 - 7 indicators (15%) are in the lower quartile.

2.2 The chart below shows the movement between quartiles over the past three years.



2.3 The table below provides the ranking for non-cost indicators by service area of data available.

Service Area	Total no. of Pls	Upper quartile	Upper middle quartile	Lower middle quartile	Lower quartile
Children's Services	14	21% (3)	36% (5)	29% (4)	14% (2)
Corporate Services	9	33% (3)	22% (2)	33% (3)	11% (1)
Adult Social Care	2	-	100% (2)	-	-
Culture and Leisure Services	4	100% (4)	-	-	-
Environmental Services	8	38% (3)	25% (2)	12% (1)	25% (2)
Housing Services	5	40% (2)	20% (1)	-	40% (2)
Economic Development	4	25% (1)	25% (1)	50% (2)	-

3. OVERALL VARIANCE

3.1 The data has been analysed to determine how we performed over the six year period since 2010/11. Where variance is greater than 5% this has been highlighted. There are 22 indicators out of 63 where the full six years of data is not available however analysis has been carried out where there is at least two years of data.

3.2 29 indicators (46%) have improved performance;
 14 indicators (22%) have decreased performance;
 1 indicator (2%) performance has remained the same;
 2 indicators (3%) have no previous data;
 10 indicators (16%) have increased costs;
 7 indicators (11%) have decreased costs.

3.3 A decline or rise in a cost indicator may be as a result of changes in legislation, policy or resource decisions.

4. NATIONAL TRENDS

- 4.1 The [National Overview Report](#) provides analysis and interpretation of key performance trends within a national context. It also provides statistical information on how we have performed across all the data sets compared to the national average and other councils.

5. LOCAL TRENDS

5.1 2016/17 Highlights

5.1.1 Key highlights within 2016/17 across all service areas include:

- We continue to be ranked in the top quartile (seventh) for overall pupils' educational attainment (measured by total tariff points) and are above the Scottish average. There has been an 8% increase in tariff points since 2011/12 from 872 to 944 in 2016/17.
- There has been a 30% increase since 2011/12 in the average total tariff points for pupils in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived). There has also been a 31% increase for those pupils in SIMD quintile 3 and we are above the Scottish average and ranked in the top quartile (seventh).
- Perth and Kinross is ranked in the top quartile (eighth) for the percentage of adults satisfied with local schools (83%) and is above the Scottish average (75%).
- Although still small numbers, the self-directed support spend on adults as a percentage of total social work spend continues to rise. We are ranked ninth in Scotland overall in 2016/17 with a figure of 5.4%.
- We are in the top quartile (sixth) for the percentage of council houses that are energy efficient (99.9%) and second within our family group. This is an increase of over 31% since 2010/11.
- There has been a 45% increase in the number of our council dwellings meeting the Scottish Housing Standards since 2010/11, with 96% meeting the standard.
- We are in the top quartile (seventh) and second in our family group for the lowest percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids (0.6%).
- We are ranked third in Scotland for street cleanliness (98%) and first within our family group. We are also ranked in the top quartile (sixth) for the percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning (79%) and both are above the Scottish average.
- We remain in the top quartile for household recycling rates (seventh). We have seen a 3% increase since 2010/11 to 55% in 2016/17.
- Despite a reduction nationally in satisfaction levels for all council services (except parks and open spaces), within Perth and Kinross satisfaction levels have remained stable and well above the Scottish average. We are ranked in the top quartile for libraries (eighth 83%), museums and galleries

(sixth 81%), leisure facilities (seventh 81%) and parks and open spaces (first in Scotland 93%).

- We are ranked in the top quartile (seventh) for the average time per business and industry planning application (7.4 weeks). This is better than the Scottish average of 9.3 weeks and a 34% reduction in time since 2012/13 (11.2 weeks).
- We are ranked second highest in Scotland for Council Tax collection rates and first in our family group with collection rates of 98% in 2016/17.
- We are ranked in the top quartile (sixth) for sickness absence rates for non-teaching employees (9.6 days) and are performing better than the Scottish average (10.9 days). Nationally there has been an increase in staff absence rates. This trend has not been reflected within Perth and Kinross where there has been a decrease since 2010/11 (10.3 days).
- We are first in our family group and ranked third overall in Scotland for the gender pay gap.

5.2 2016/17 Key Areas of Focus

5.2.1 Key areas of focus across all service areas include:

- We are ranked in the lower quartile (26th) for the percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (31%) and below the Scottish average (41%). However, this is an increase of 5% since 2011/12 and the very small numbers of pupils in this category (95 individuals – less than 7% of the cohort, compared to over 21% nationally) mean the measure is subject to large annual variation.
- There has been a 12% reduction over the last year in the average total tariff points for pupils in SIMD quintile 2 from 746 to 657 and we are below the Scottish average of 750 and ranked in the lower quartile (25th). The Perth and Kinross Raising Attainment Strategy 2016-2019, sets out a range of actions being taken forward to understand and target the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged, one of the four National Improvement Framework priorities. Again, small numbers in this cohort have an influence on annual variation.
- There has been a 25% reduction in the number of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population since 2013/14 (from 21.2 to 15.8 per 10,000). We are also now below the Scottish average of 16.6 per 10,000 population but nationally there has also been a decline. In Perth and Kinross we have another support mechanism The Growbiz “Enterprising Rural Perthshire” initiative which is supported by the Council. This provides assistance to new start and early stage rural and micro businesses and may result in lower Business Gateway engagement. More broadly, we have low unemployment which may impact on new business starts.
- The percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated / funded employability programmes has decreased over the last 12 months from 27% to 15%. However, we are still above the Scottish average of 14%. Consistently Perth and Kinross is within the top 5 lowest

unemployment claimant count rate areas in Scotland. In 2016/17, the percentage of working age population unemployed, based on the Jobseekers' Allowance claimant count within Perth and Kinross was 1.1%. Significant change in employability strategy at a national level has impacted our local approach, with a greater impetus on working with those clients with extensive barriers. This includes complex physical and mental health issues, criminal backgrounds, learning difficulties, social and geographical barriers and more. Barrier removal and navigation is the primary focus when assessing these client needs in this changing market. However, these people moving into quality, sustainable jobs will have maximum impact on our local economy (typically as users of multiple public services – Housing, Employability, Welfare Fund, debt/money advice etc.)

- We are ranked in the lower quartile for both the percentage of A Class roads (40%) and B Class roads (40%) that should be considered for maintenance treatment and are above the Scottish average for both. The survey determining this took place soon after the severe weather experienced in December 2016 and January 2017, and prior to a number of planned schemes being completed. An improvement in this percentage is expected in the future. The approved Roads Maintenance Strategy allows for a managed reduced level of investment in B, C and U class roads to facilitate the prioritisation of investment in the Council's A class roads network.
- We are ranked in the lower quartile (30th) for the sickness absence days per teacher. There has been an increase since 2010/11 (7.45 days) to 7.8 days in 2016/17. However, there has been a small improvement over the past 12 months (2015/16 7.9 days). The figure remains above the Scottish average of 6.1 days. The Society for Personnel Development Scotland and the Improvement Service has reviewed the guidance to ensure all councils are adopting a consistent standard for recording sickness. There have been wide variations across councils in terms of approach over the years. We are consistently following the guidance. We continue to take a pro-active and positive approach to health and wellbeing, supporting employees to maximise their attendance at work. This approach is based on a robust policy framework and promoting line management skills and behaviours to support staff who are off sick or who have health issues. We provide a range of support measures, such as occupational health advice, health promotion, flu vaccinations, physiotherapy and Counselling. Staff are returning to work as they recover from longer term and chronic conditions, where this might not have been possible previously. We are reviewing our sickness absence reports to allow further analysis and scrutiny. We have committed to review our sickness absence policies this year.
- We are ranked in the lower quartile (25th) for gross rent arrears at 10% and this continues to be a key focus with a range of improvement actions being undertaken. Nationally there has been a year-on-year increase from 5.6% in 2013/14 to 6.5% in 2016/17. Although we recognise the

levels of arrears within Perth and Kinross is greater we have seen a slight reduction over the past 12 months from 10.4% to 10%.

- We are ranked in the lower quartile (25th) for the average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs is 13.4 days. Nationally, the average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs has reduced from 10.2 days in 2013/14 to 8.7 days in 2016/17. There is significant variation across councils although this has narrowed slightly since the base year. In 2016/17, length of time ranged from 5.4 days to 17.5 days, with rural councils reporting longer times (11.7 days) compared to urban councils (8.3 days).

5.3 Costs Analysis

- Cost per pre-school education place have seen significant increases since 2010/11 from £3,550 to £4,998 in 2016/17. This is in line with the national trend and increased provision. Costs for primary and secondary school pupils have also increased since 2010/11 by around 13% for both. Our costs for all three are above the Scottish average, in line with several other mainland rural authorities.
- Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 and over have decreased (by 26%) from £21.74 in 2010/11 to £16.18 in 2016/17. Perth and Kinross is below the Scottish average of £22.54. There has also been a 29% reduction in residential cost per week for residents aged 65 and over. The costs for 2016/17 were £287 compared to £403 in 2010/11. The Scottish average for 2016/17 was £375.
- There has been a 60% increase in the costs per planning application in the last 12 months from £3,380 to £5,413. This is above the Scottish average of £4,635. The overall planning costs used to make this calculation include almost £2 million for developer contribution funded projects in this period. The value of developer contributions varies extensively year on year, and the inclusion of this figure has made the cost of planning per application appear higher than it is. This will be taken into account in the Local Financial Return for 2017/18 this year.
- Expenditure on road maintenance had been relatively stable since 2010/11 within Perth and Kinross and below the national average. However, in the past 12 months there has been a 55% increase from £7,343 per kilometre of road to £11,374 which is now above the Scottish average of £10,456. While the road maintenance costs per kilometre appear to have increased, the total cost attributed to roads maintenance includes £10m of funding for the improved A9/A85 link road and new junction. This money is investment in a new and improved road infrastructure, and is not part of the general road maintenance budget, making the road maintenance cost per kilometre appear significantly higher than it actually is. Again, this will be taken into account in the Local Financial Return for 2017/18.
- Costs for street cleaning per 1,000 population have decreased since 2010/11 both nationally from £19,851 to £14,726 in 2016/17 (a reduction

of 26%) and for Perth and Kinross from £19,657 to £15,483 (a reduction of 21%).

- Cost per museum visit is showing an increase from £4.73 to £6.97 (47% increase) in the last 12 months and is above the Scottish average of £3.19. However, there has been under reporting of visitors to museums via electronic counting systems operated by Culture Perth and Kinross which has now been resolved and the figures have been adjusted. The actual cost per visit is £3.89 and this will be amended in the next refresh of the data by the Improvement Service.
- During the past 12 months, cost per library visit has decreased by 17% from £2.21 to £1.83 and is below the Scottish average of £1.98. Since 2010/11 library costs per visit within Perth and Kinross have decreased by 60% from £4.52.
- Our costs per dwelling for collecting Council Tax have decreased from £15.45 to £12.32 over the past 12 months, although our costs are still above the Scottish average of £8.98.

6. INDICATOR CHARTS

Family Group 1: PKC, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Edinburgh, Orkney and Shetland.

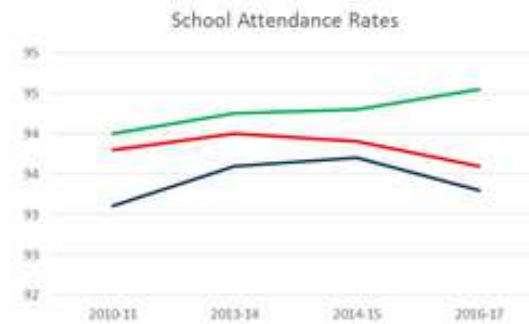
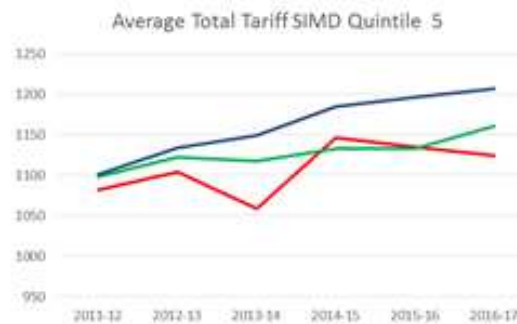
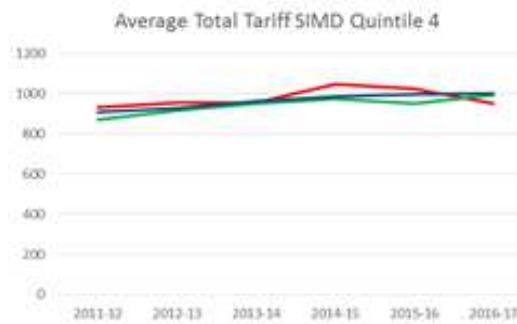
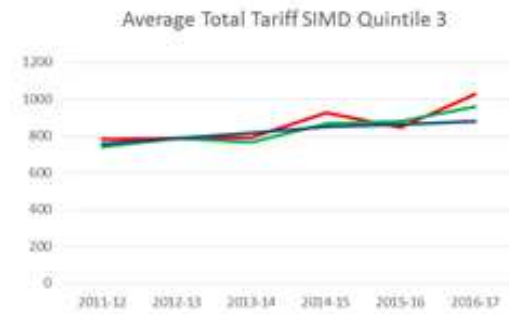
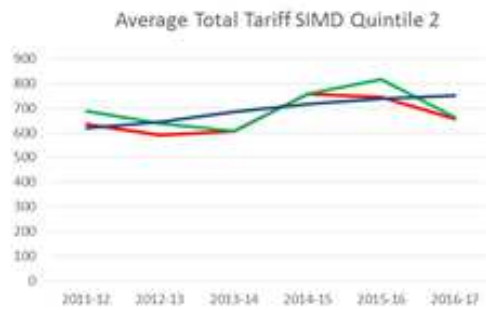
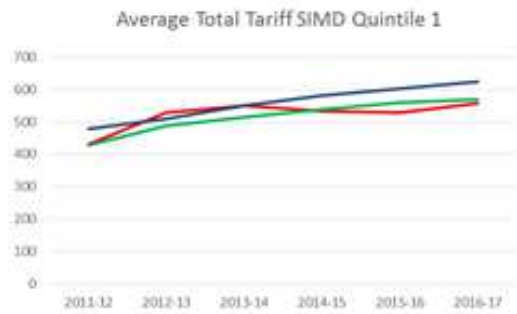
Family Group 2: PKC, East Ayrshire, East Lothian, Fife, Moray, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and Stirling.

The Family Group Median is in the midpoint between the 8 Councils.

6.1 Children's Services – FG1



Please note chart axes vary to accentuate change and careful interpretation is required.



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6.2 Corporate Services – FG2



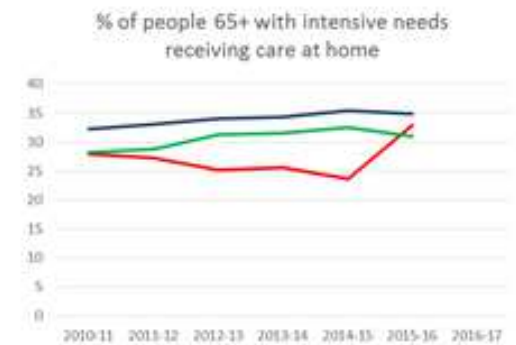
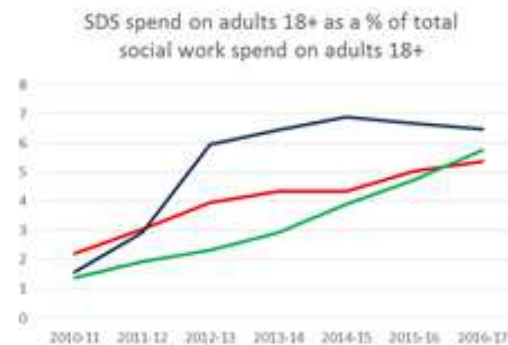
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6.3 Adult Social Care – FG1

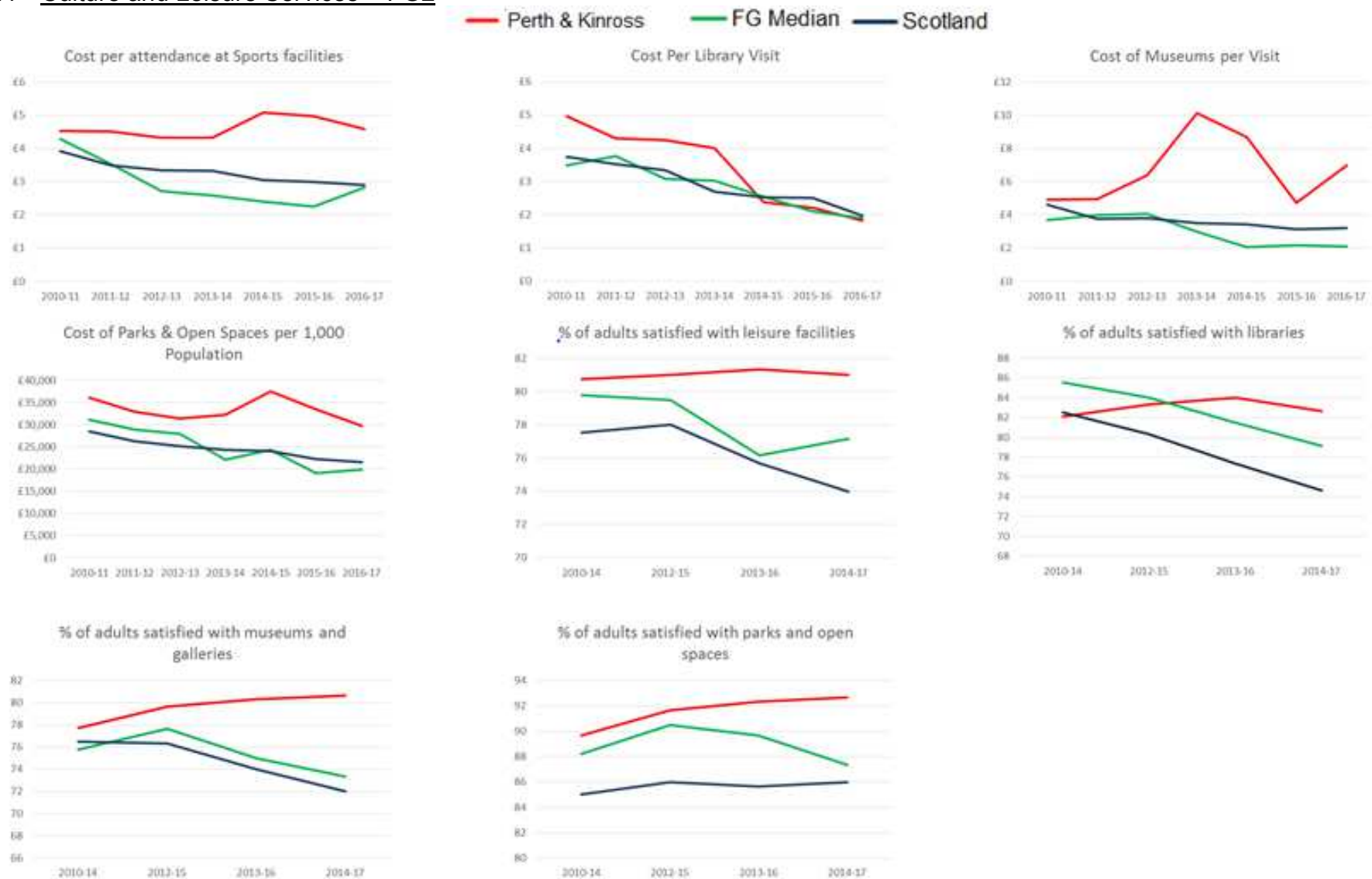


Perth & Kinross FG Median Scotland



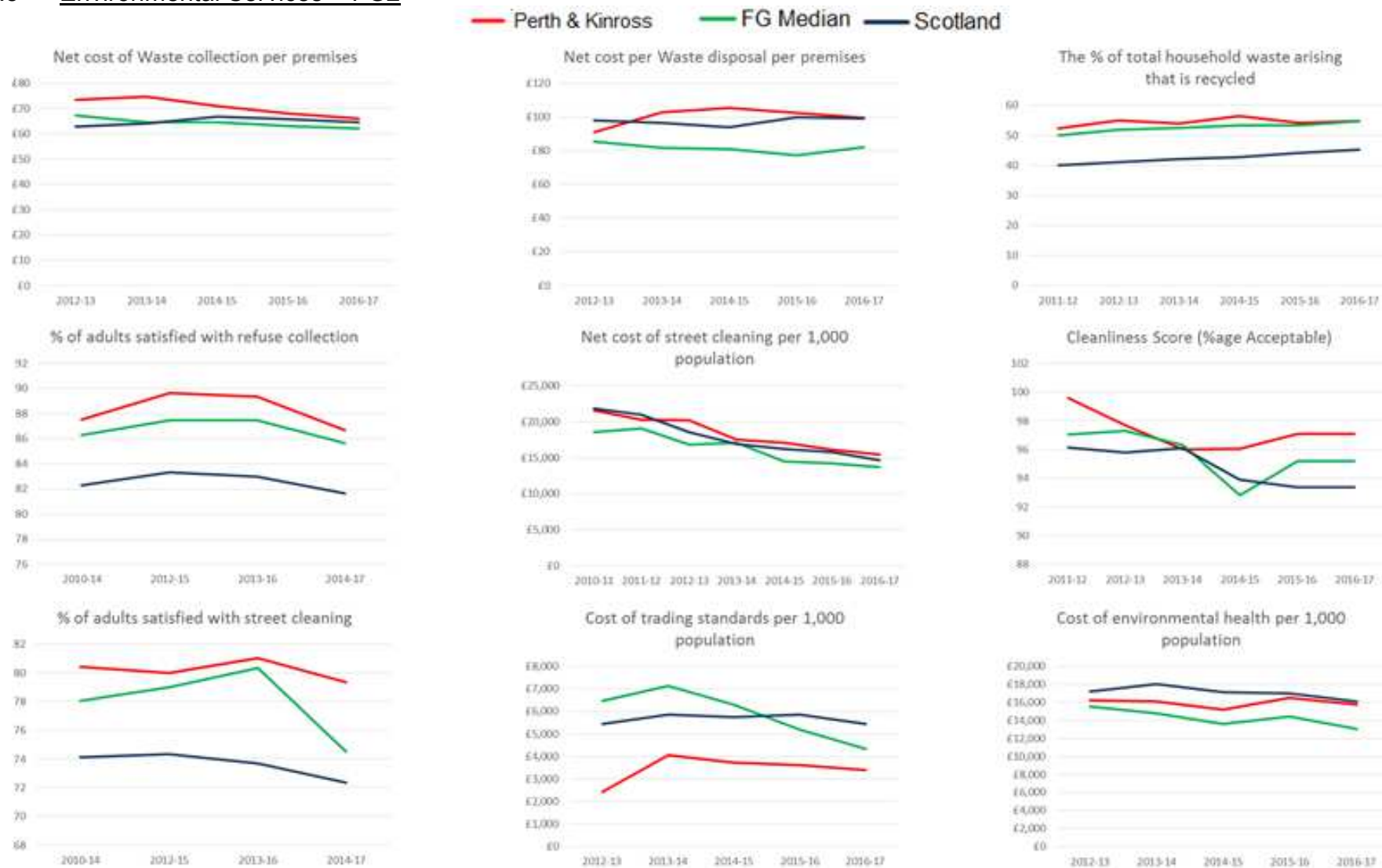
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6.4 Culture and Leisure Services – FG2

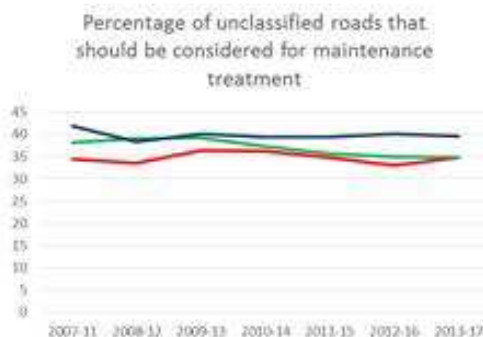
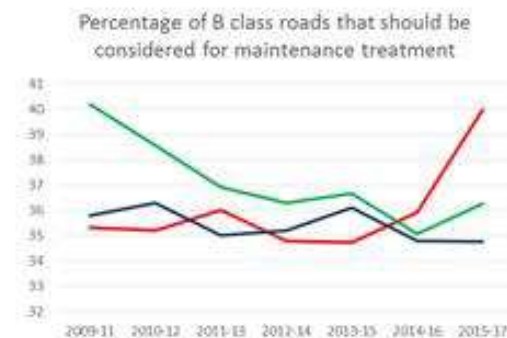
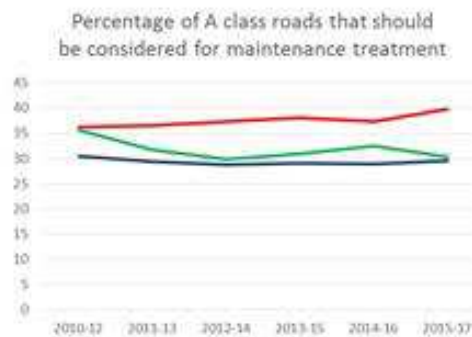


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6.5 Environmental Services – FG2

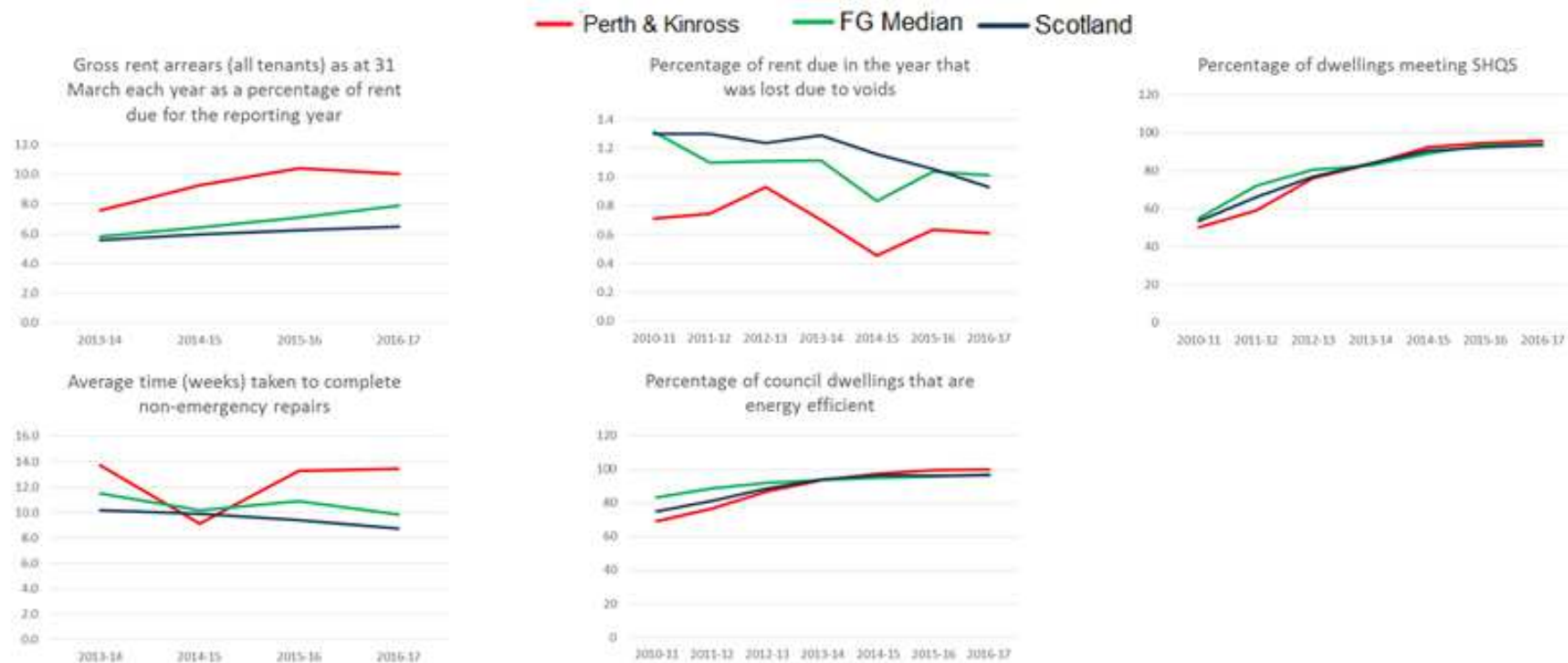


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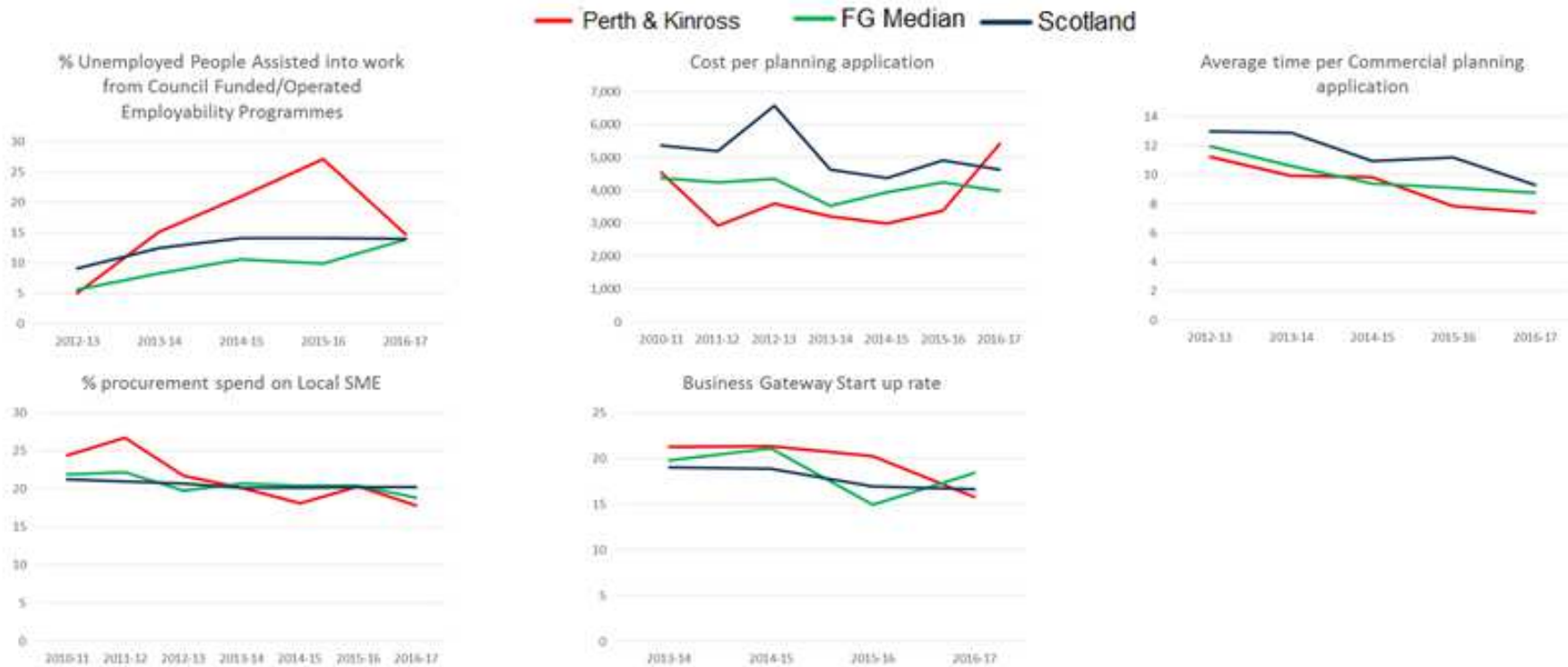
Please note chart axes vary to accentuate change and careful interpretation is required.

6.6 Housing – FG1



Please note chart axes vary to accentuate change and careful interpretation is required.

6.7 Economic Development – FG2



Please note chart axes vary to accentuate change and careful interpretation is required.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 Perth and Kinross Council is committed to using benchmarking to improve our understanding of how we perform in comparison to other councils and why difference in performance occurs. Benchmarking supports change and improvement by helping the Council to identify and share good practice.
- 7.2 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:
- i) Considers the LGBF results for 2016/17; and
 - ii) Notes that the LGBF results will be used to inform the development of the Council's Transformation Programme and the Council's wider performance management and planning framework.

Authors

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Jim Valentine	Depute Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer	3 April 2018

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Corporate Plan

- 1.1 This report supports the delivery of the Strategic Objectives within Perth and Kinross Community Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) 2017-2027 and Corporate Plan 2018-2022.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising from this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- Assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.4 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.
- 3.5 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Legal and Governance

- 3.6 Not applicable.

Risk

- 3.7 Not applicable.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Executive Officer Team, Senior Service Management Teams, the Corporate Performance, Planning and Risk Group and the Corporate Communications Team were consulted during the preparation of this report.

External

4.2 Not applicable.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The background papers referred to within the report are:

Report by Improvement Service: National Benchmarking Overview Report 2016/17 and the LGBF data made available to Councils by The Improvement Service at <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/tool.html>.

3. APPENDICES

None