

# PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

27 February 2019

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2017/18

### Report by Depute Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer (Report No. 19/62)

This report presents a summary of Perth and Kinross Council's performance during 2017/18 against the Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators published by the Improvement Service in February 2019.

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

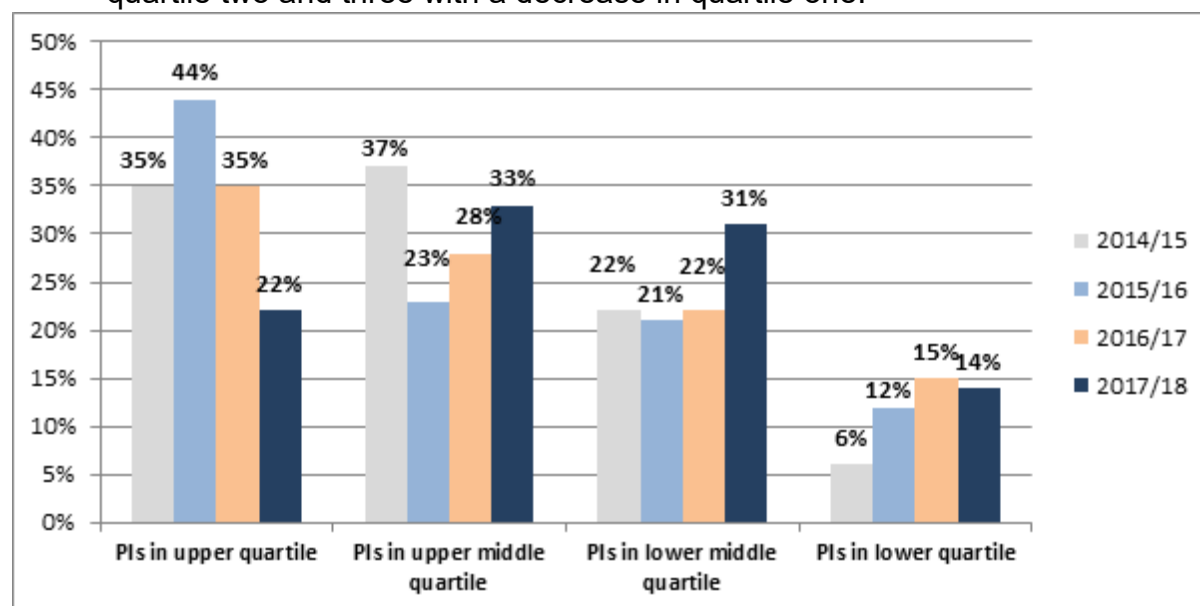
- 1.1 The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) was developed by the Improvement Service, on behalf of SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives), in 2012. The purpose of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework is to:
  - help councils and their services better understand why they 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 2017/18 was published by the Improvement Service in February 2019 via an online tool called '[MyLocalCouncil](#)', which can be accessed on the Council's website. The Improvement Service also produced a [National Overview Report 2017/18](#).
- 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 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 for each area.

- 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 year, the suite of measures for economic development has been expanded. 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 a result, the framework has been adapted to reflect this.
- 1.8 This report provides an overview of the information that is contained within the Improvement Service National Overview Report and the online toolkit; taking account of the national and local trends along with the key 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 2017/18; 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. In addition, this year an infographic summary has also been produced with the results for each indicator for Perth and Kinross alongside the national average for comparison. This highlights the rank, where appropriate, and whether performance or costs have gone up or down since last year. This is contained in appendix 1.

## **2. OVERALL RANKINGS 2017/18**

- 2.1 All 51 non-cost performance indicators (PIs) with 2017/18 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.
- 11 indicators (22%) are in the upper quartile;
  - 17 indicators (33%) are in the upper middle quartile;
  - 16 indicators (31%) are in the lower middle quartile; and
  - 7 indicators (14%) are in the lower quartile.

- 2.2 The chart below shows the movement between quartiles over the past four years. It shows that over the past three years our rankings have increased in quartile two and three with a decrease in quartile one.



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

Service Area	Total no. of PIs	Upper quartile	Upper middle quartile	Lower middle quartile	Lower quartile
Children's Services	13	0% (0)	46% (6)	46% (6)	8% (1)
Corporate Services	7	29% (2)	14% (1)	43% (3)	14% (1)
Adult Social Care	4	25% (1)	50% (2)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Culture and Leisure Services	4	100% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Environmental Services	8	25% (2)	38% (3)	13% (1)	25% (2)
Housing Services	5	0% (0)	60% (3)	20% (1)	20% (1)
Economic Development and Corporate Asset	10	20% (2)	20% (2)	40% (4)	20% (2)

- 2.4 During 2017/18, of the performance PIs (51) that had data available 30 were better than the Scottish average (59%), while 1 was the same as the Scottish average (2%) and 20 were worse than the Scottish average (39%).

### 3. OVERALL VARIANCE

- 3.1 Where 2017/18 data is available, the non-cost data has been analysed to determine how we performed since 2010/11 or when baseline data has become available. Cost data has been analysed to see if costs have increased or reduced and a summary is presented below.
- 3.2 31 indicators (61% of performance indicators) have improved performance; 20 indicators (39% of performance indicators) have decreased performance; 9 indicators (50% of cost indicators) have increased costs; and 9 indicators (50% of cost indicators) have decreased costs.

## **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.
- 4.2 Over the last eight years, total revenue funding for Local Authorities has fallen by 8.3% in real terms from £10.5 billion to £9.6 billion. Spending on education and care has been relatively protected over this period. As these account for over 70% of the benchmarked expenditure within the LGBF, most other service areas have experienced substantial real reductions in spending: 22% reduction in culture and leisure spending; 33% reduction in planning; almost 15% reduction in roads spending, and almost 10% reduction in environmental services spending. Revenue funding for Local Authorities from the Scottish Government has fallen in real terms by 9.6% between 2010/11 and 2018/19. This has presented councils with a major challenge in delivering services and making savings.
- 4.3 Council spending across Scotland did stabilise against trend in 2017/18 but not sufficiently to offset the major reductions experienced since 2010/11. Across that period, nationally, service performance has been maintained remarkably well with improving trends in measurable performance across services. In 2017/18, there is indicative evidence across some services covered by the benchmarking framework that performance improvement is slowing down for the first time since 2010/11. This echoes concerns highlighted by the Accounts Commission, in their Local Government in Scotland Financial Overview 2017/18, about the challenges councils face in meeting the increasing demand for services against tightening budgets.

## **5. LOCAL TRENDS**

### **5.1 2017/18 Highlights**

#### **5.1.1 Key highlights within 2017/18 across all service areas include:**

- Self-directed support spend on adults as a percentage of total social work continues to rise from 5.4% (2016/17) to 10.2% (2017/18). We are ranked second in Scotland overall for 2017/18 behind only Glasgow City Council (21.1%).
- Despite a reduction nationally in satisfaction levels for cultural services, satisfaction levels have remained stable and above the Scottish average within Perth and Kinross. We are ranked in the top quartile for libraries (seventh - 82%), museums and galleries (seventh - 79%), leisure facilities (eight - 79%) and parks and open spaces (second - 92%).

- We remain in the top quartile for household recycling rates (eighth). We have seen an increase from 54.7% in 2016/17 to 55.6% in 2017/18. We are also ranked in the top quartile (fifth) for the percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning (78%).
- We are ranked second in Scotland for the % of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated / funded employability programmes in 2017/18 (26%). We are also ranked second in Scotland for the lowest level of town vacancy rates (Perth and Kinross 8%, Scotland 12%).
- Since 2010/11, we have been ranked in the top quartile for collection rates for Council Tax. For 2017/18, we were ranked second highest in Scotland with collection rates of almost 98%.
- Since 2015/16 we have been ranked in the top quartile for the gender pay gap. In 2017/18 we are ranked fifth overall in Scotland (0.7%) which was lower than the Scottish average of 3.9%.

## 5.2 2017/18 Key Areas of Focus

### 5.2.1 Key areas of focus across all service areas include:

- We are ranked in the lower quartile (28th) for the average total tariff score for SIMD quintile 2 (646). This is a reduction on last year which was 658 (ranked 25th), but does reflect a long-term overall increase from 590 in 2012/13. The average total tariff SIMD quintile 3 has also dropped since 2016/17 from 1,029 to 856 (17% reduction) and our ranking has changed from 7th to 20th. This also shows a long-term increase from 789 in 2012/13.

Figures to be available shortly in the Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool *Insight* will allow us to compare the tariff points attained by school leavers at any stage, which will give a more comprehensive view of overall attainment. Closing the gap between children from the most disadvantaged areas and those from the least disadvantaged areas is a key priority of the National Improvement Framework, and there is a significant programme of work across Perth and Kinross to address these inequalities, based around the fundamental objectives of Excellence and Equity. Initially through the Closing the Gap programme, and more recently using the Pupil Equity Fund, schools across Perth and Kinross are supported to use evidence to identify areas for improvement and to build appropriate interventions into their School Improvement Plans.

- We continue to be ranked 30th for the past two years for sickness absence days lost per teacher. In 2017/18, the number of days lost was 8.06, this was a slight increase from last year, where it was 7.81 days. There has also been an increase the number of days lost for all other employees

since last year (11.5%) going from 9.63 to 10.74 days and our ranking has dropped from 6th to 11th.

Within Perth & Kinross, we have seen an increase in the number of employees who have long term sickness absences from work due to chronic conditions. We have a robust policy framework and promote 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, counselling and mental health first aiders. Prevention is important too and we take a holistic approach to wellbeing, recognising the benefits of good diet, sleep, exercise, etc. and building resilience to enable everyone to Live Life Well. The Council is currently reviewing our health and wellbeing policies, initiatives and support to managers and employees, with mental health a priority area.

- We are ranked in the lower quartile for both the percentage of A class roads (39%) and B class roads (40%) that should be considered for maintenance treatment and are above the Scottish average for both (Scottish average A class road 30%; and B class roads 36%). These results indicate that deterioration has halted and current investment is resulting in a stable position. The Roads Maintenance Strategy directs where the available funding is spent and is currently targeted at the Council's primary road network, with lower category roads receiving less expensive treatments such as patching and surface dressing. 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 (25th) for gross rent arrears (10.4%). This is a slight increase from 10% in 2016/17 but our rank remains the same. Preventing and reducing rent arrears is a key priority for the Council. As is the experience of many Local Authorities, the move over to Universal Credit has impacted on our arrears levels. We have introduced a range of measures including a Sustaining Tenancies Fund to help support tenants who are experiencing genuine financial hardship. In addition, and by undertaking comparisons with other councils on the treatment of debt write-off, we have adopted a similar approach to the treatment of long term former tenant arrears. This new approach will bring us more in line with the overall national average and provide a more accurate reflection of our arrears levels. The current tenant rent arrears, however, did fall throughout the year from 10.46% in March 2017 to 9.44% to the end of March 2018.
- In 2017/18, we were ranked in the lower quartile (27th) for the percentage of procurement spend spent on local enterprises (17.8%). The Scottish average was 27.4%. However, there was a large variation between the 32 local authorities from 54.1% to 9.5%. This calculation is based on payments which are made to addresses inside the boundaries of Perth and Kinross. This figure takes no account of the businesses located

within Perth and Kinross which also have offices elsewhere. Another gap is the numbers of small businesses which use a factoring service or a bank to handle invoices - generally meaning the address for remittance is other than that at which the business is located.

- The proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband has increased year on year within Perth and Kinross from 38% in 2013/14 to 82% in 2017/18 but we are still ranked in the lower quartile (25th). The Scottish average is 91%, but there is a large variation across the 32 local authorities from 98% to 66%. Innovative solutions are being deployed to bring broadband to hard to reach communities in Perth and Kinross. "Fibre to the Premises" technology has been deployed in Glenalmond and Scotlandwell. Openreach are still bringing fibre to some small communities for the first time, such as Grange and Kinrossie.

### 5.3 Costs Analysis

- As a result of replacing equipment during 2017/18 the cost for street cleaning per 1,000 population went from £15,777 in 2016/17 to £18,180. However, this was after a period where street cleaning costs had been reducing each year since 2010/11. Costs for trading standards and environmental health continue to reduce.
- Our costs per dwelling for collecting Council Tax have decreased from £12.55 to £6.94 since 2016/17, a reduction of 45%.
- Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over decreased from £16.49 in 2016/17 to £13.85 in 2017/18. Of all Local Authorities Perth and Kinross Council has the highest proportion of care at home services (excluding Rehabilitation care at home) commissioned from external providers. The benchmarking figure does not include the cost to the Council of providing rehabilitation, which is delivered by the internal care at home service, it remains lower than other Councils who provide a higher percentage of care at home through internal services. The most recent benchmarking of payment for external homecare showed that we pay a slightly higher than average hourly rate.
- The cost per library visit has increased by 21% from £1.86 to £2.26 since 2016/17. This trend is also reflected in the cost of museums per visit by 26%, going from £3.96 to £4.98.

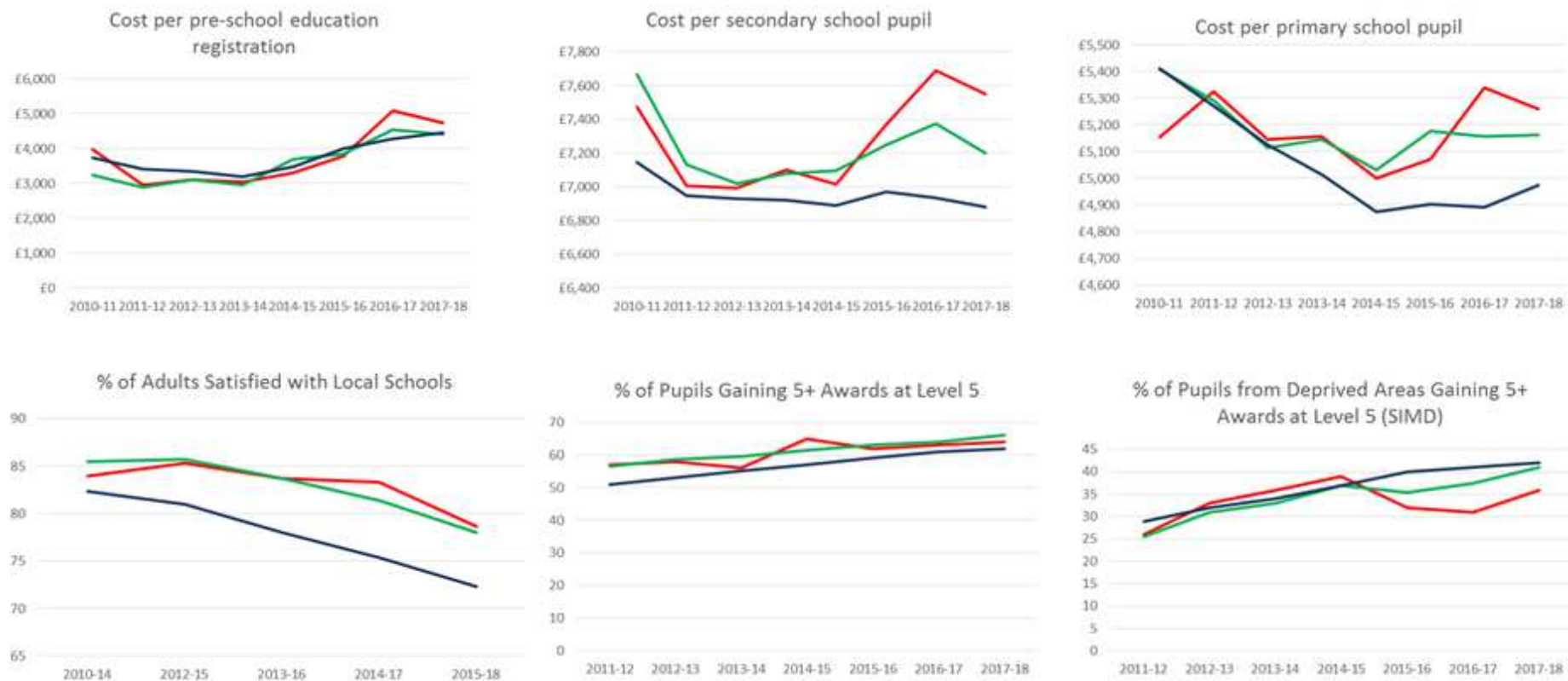
## 6. INDICATOR CHARTS

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.

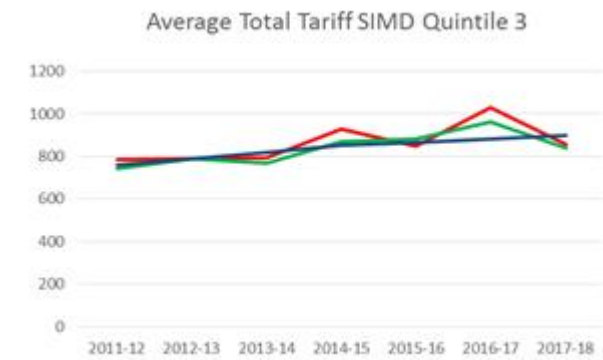
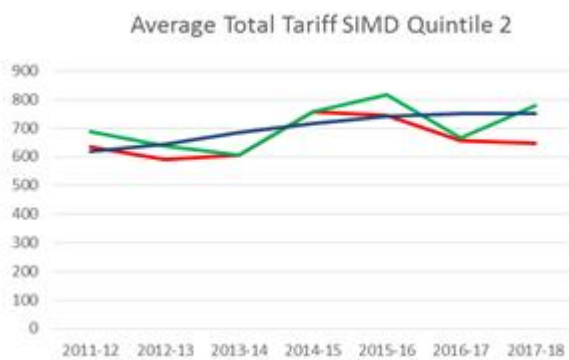
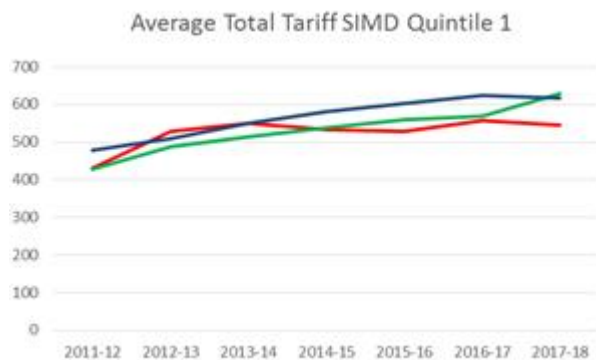
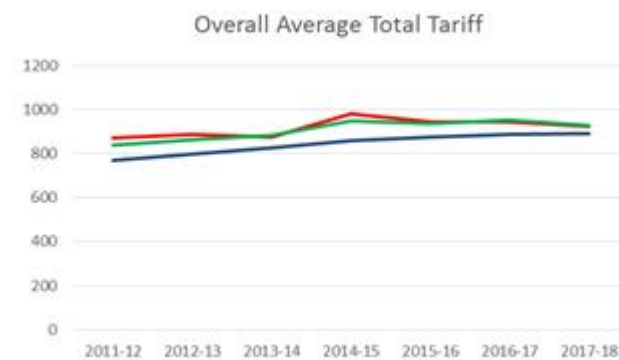
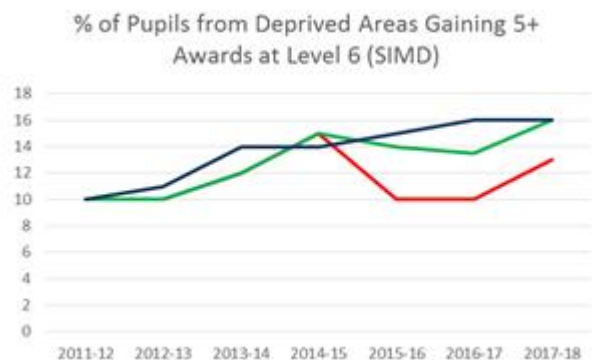
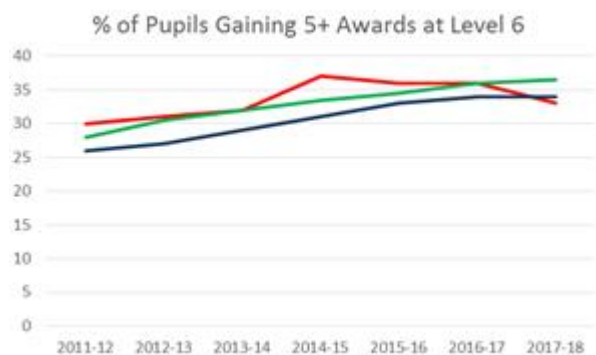
### 6.1 Children's Services – FG1



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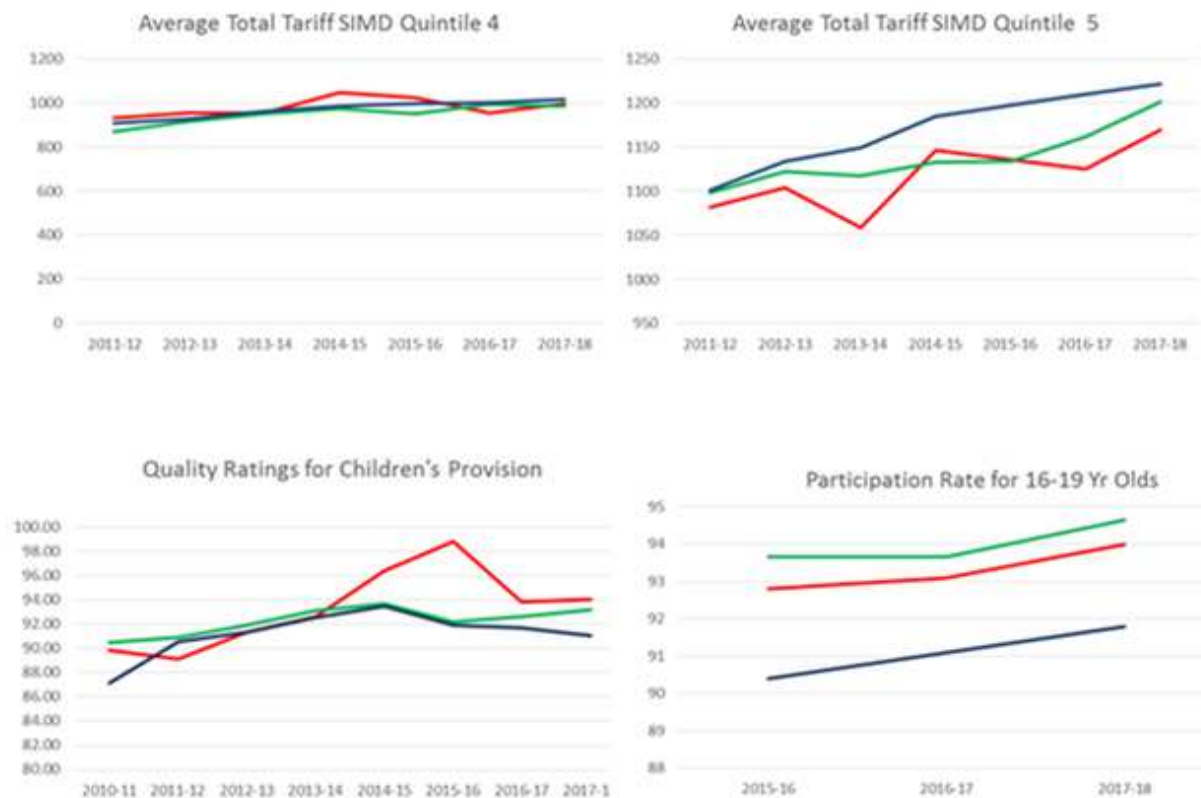
Perth & Kinross ☒ FG Median ☒ Scotland ☒





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— Perth & Kinross — FG Median — Scotland



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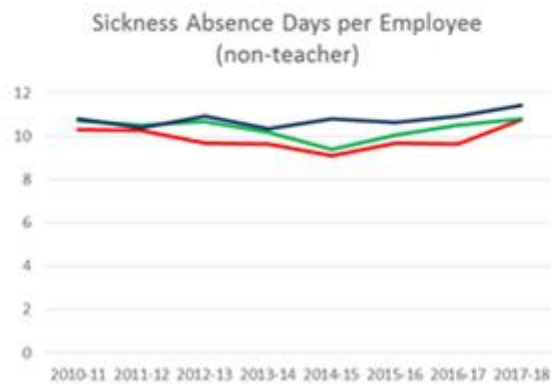
Perth & Kinross    FG Median    Scotland

## 6.2 Corporate Services – FG2



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

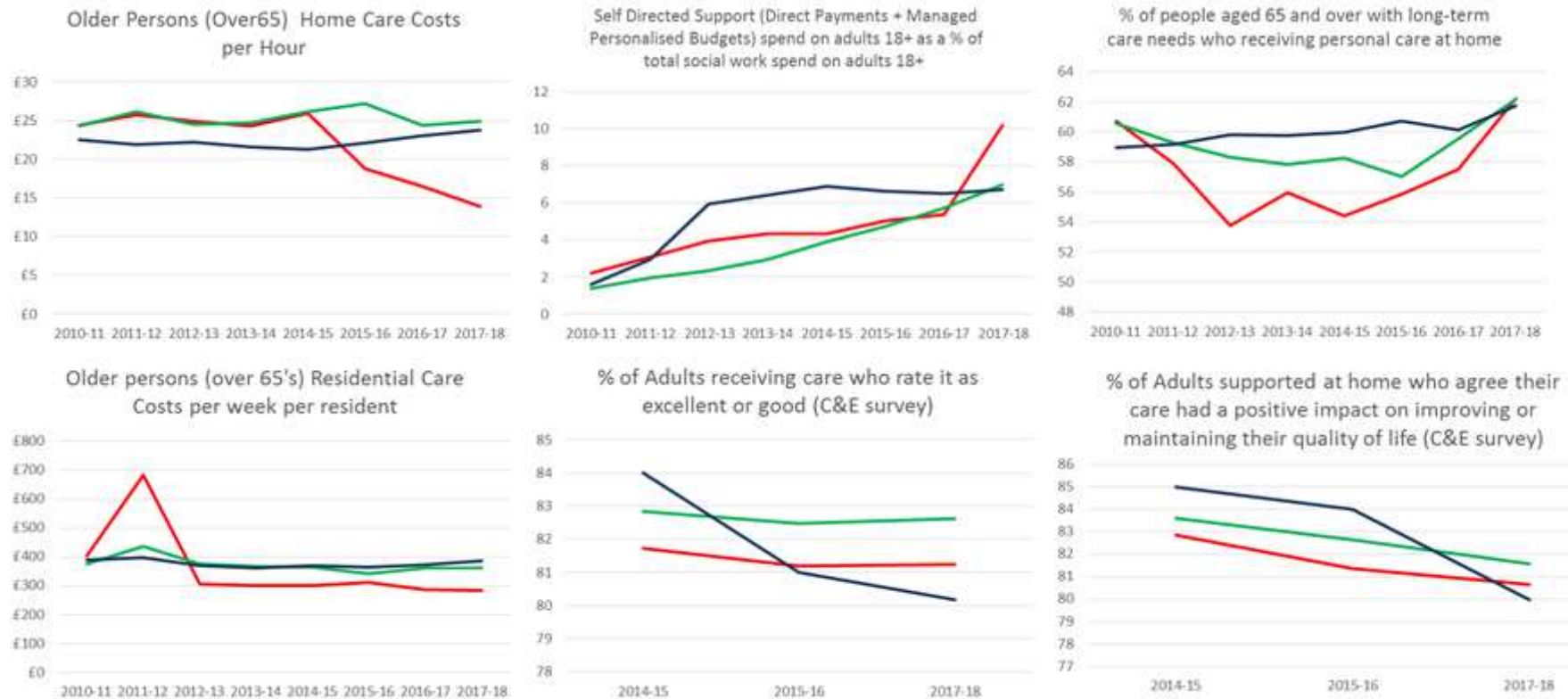
— Perth & Kinross    ☒    — FG Median    ☒    — Scotland    ☒



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

Perth & Kinross ☒ FG Median ☒ Scotland ☒

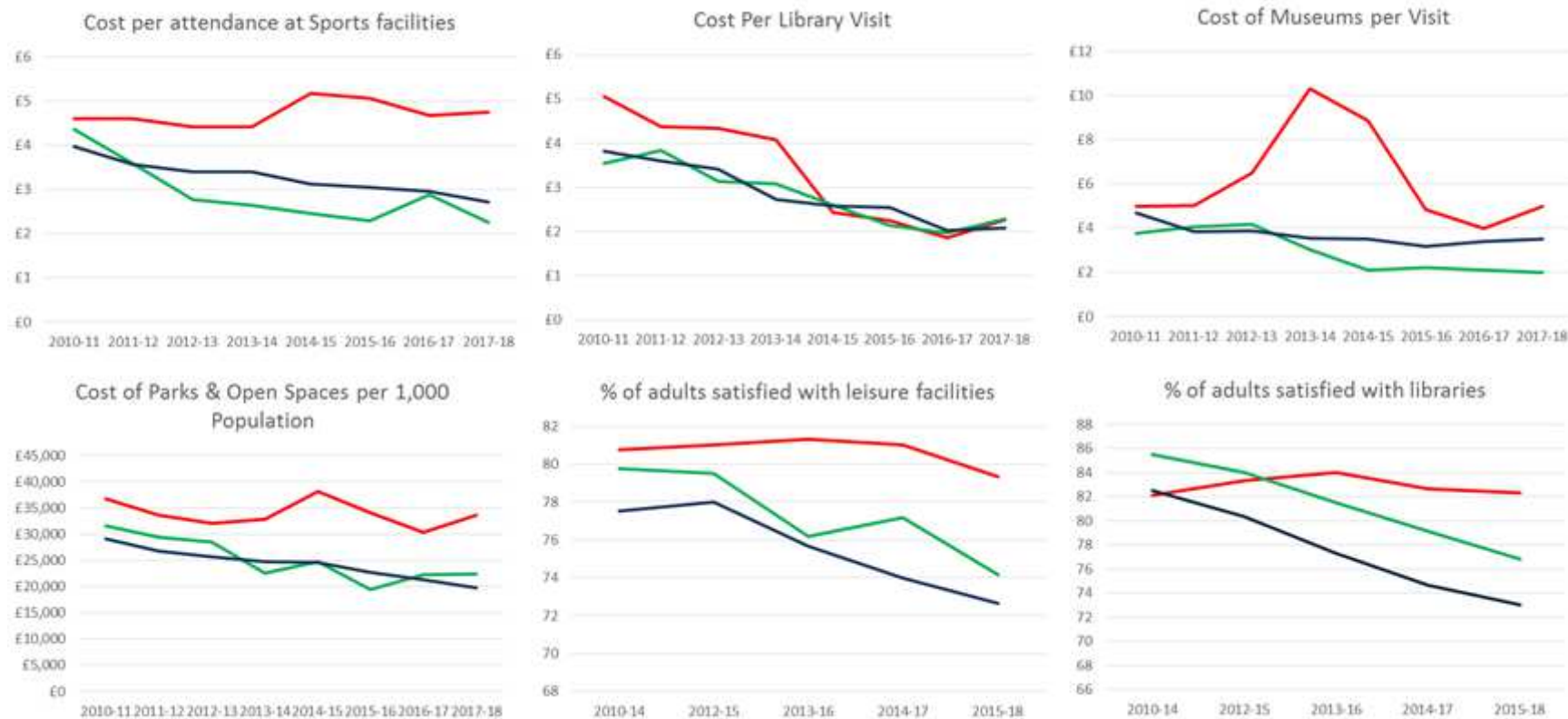
### 6.3 Adult Social Care – FG1



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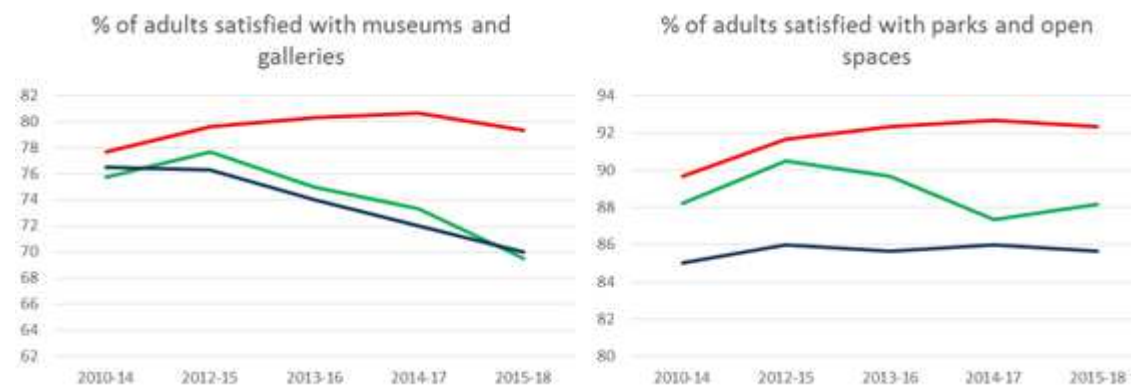
— Perth & Kinross — FG Median — Scotland

## 6.4 Culture and Leisure Services – FG2



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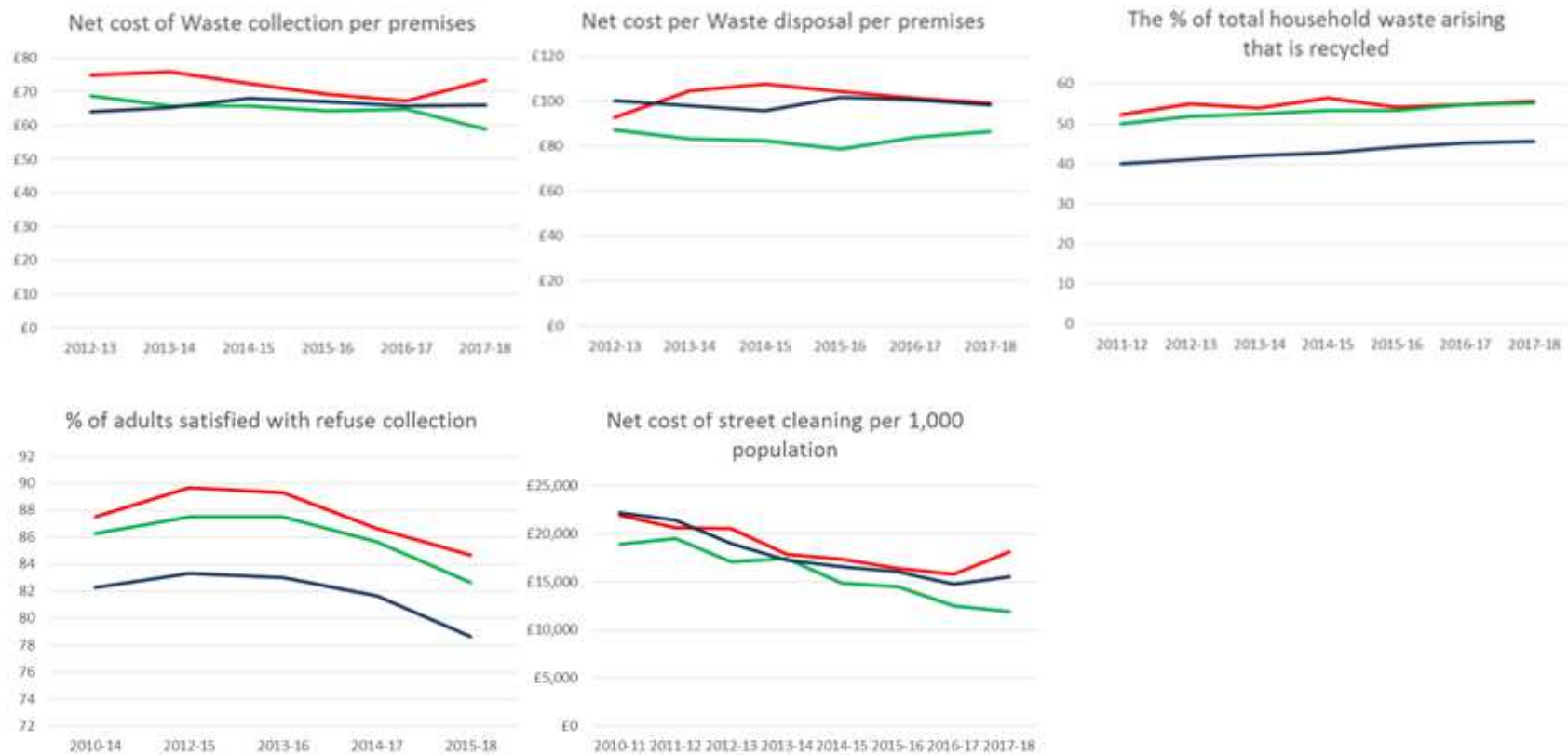
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Please note chart axes vary to accentuate change and careful interpretation is required.

— Perth & Kinross ☒
— FG Median ☒
— Scotland ☒

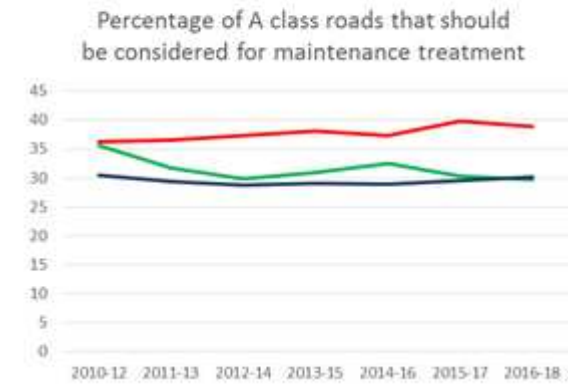
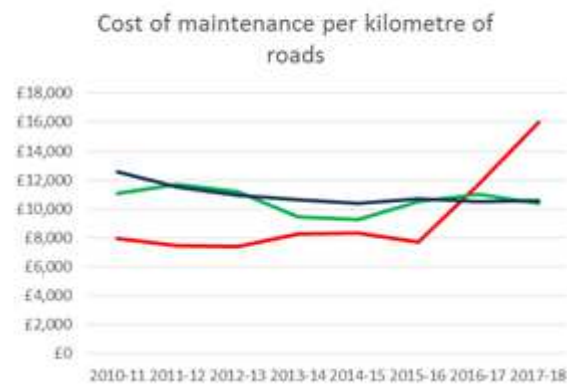
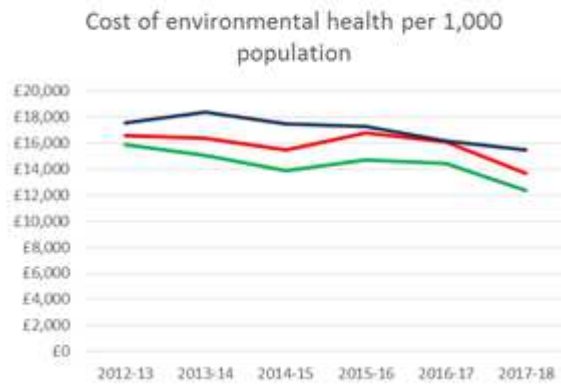
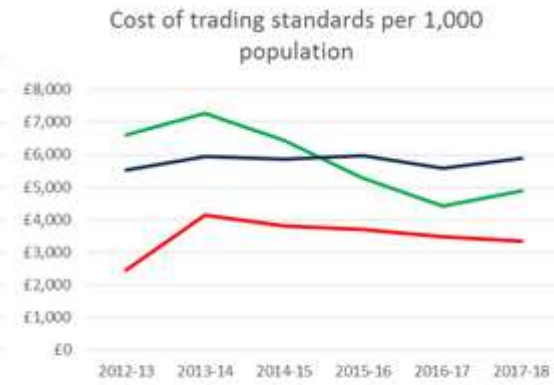
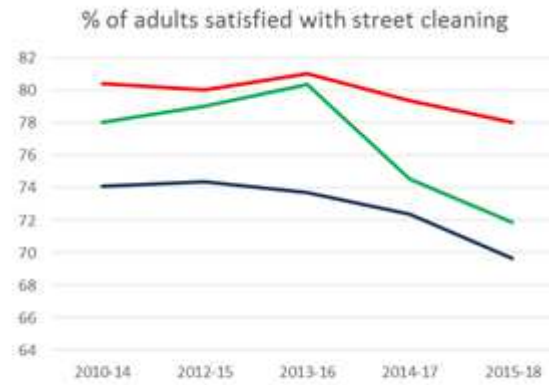
## 6.5 Environmental Services – FG2



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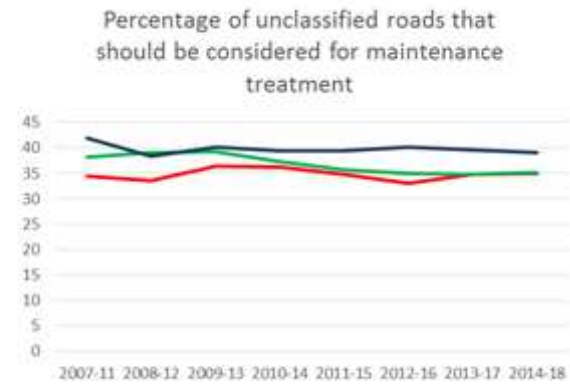
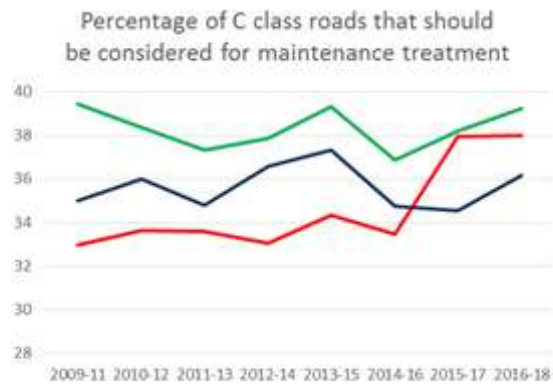
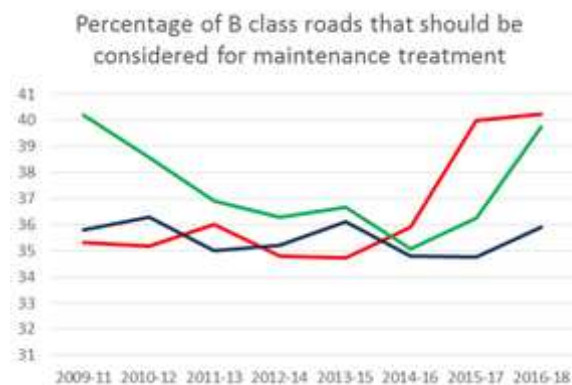
— Perth & Kinross ☒
— FG Median ☒
— Scotland ☒





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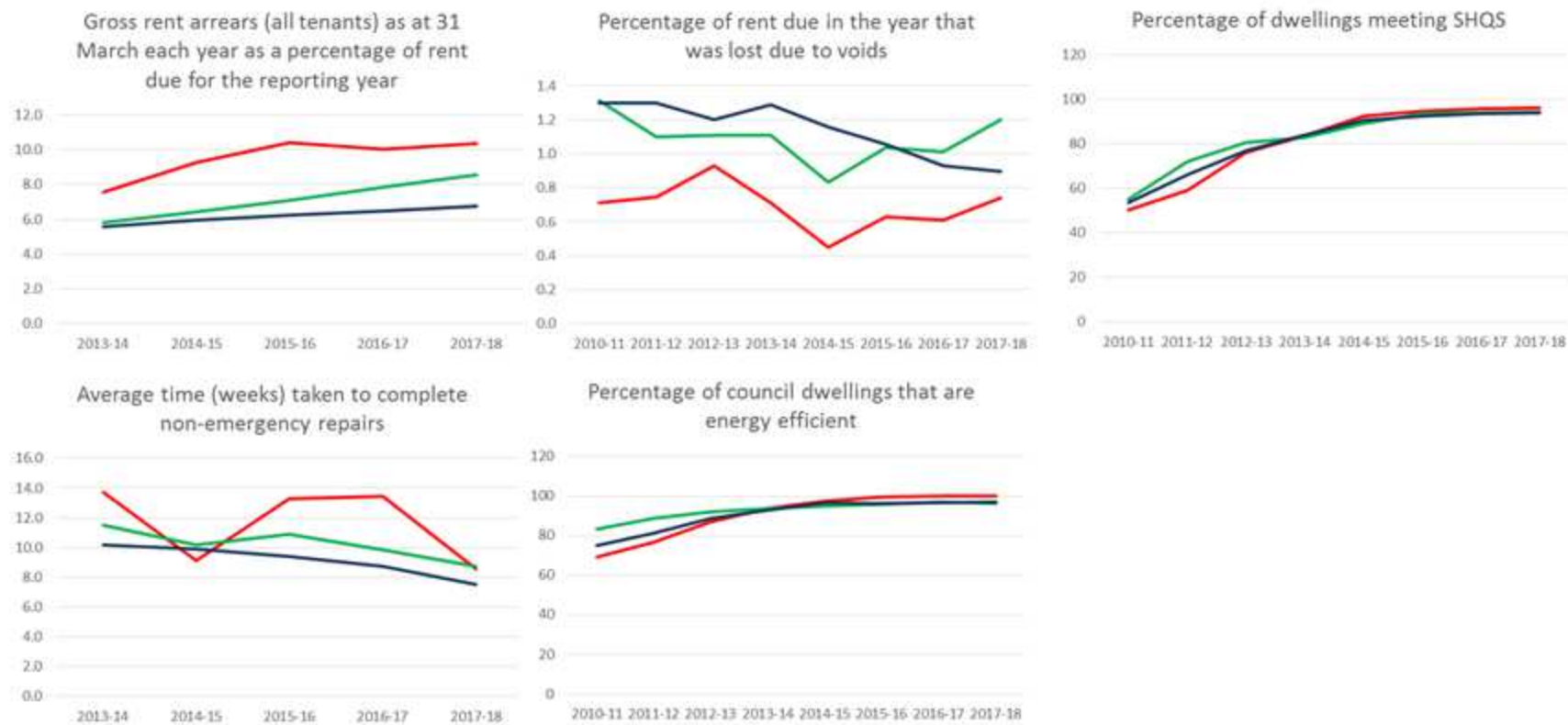
— Perth & Kinross — FG Median — Scotland



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

Perth & Kinross FG Median Scotland

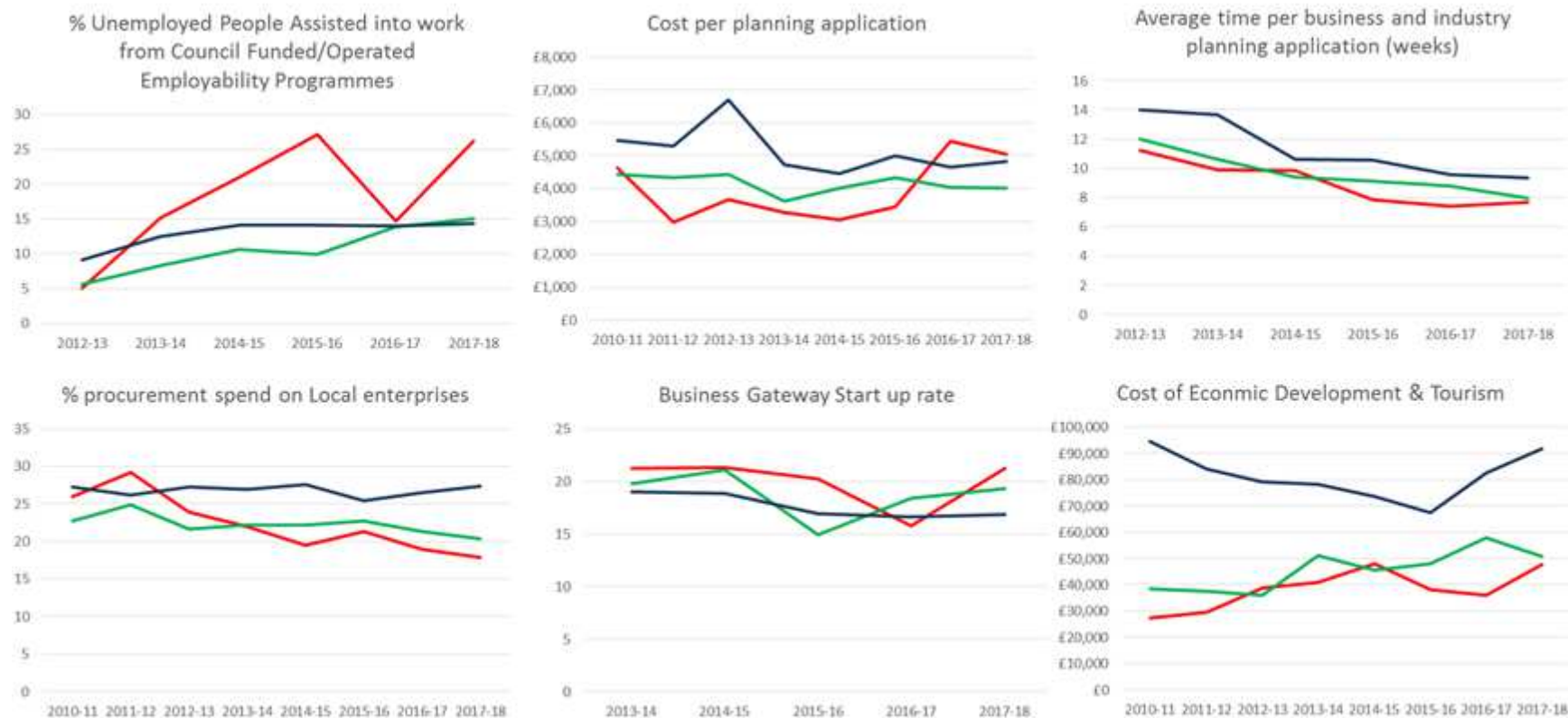
## 6.6 Housing – FG1



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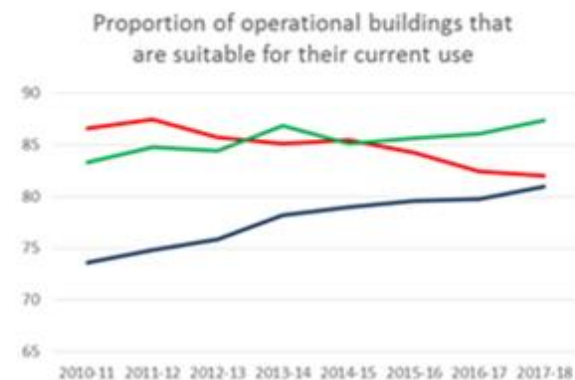
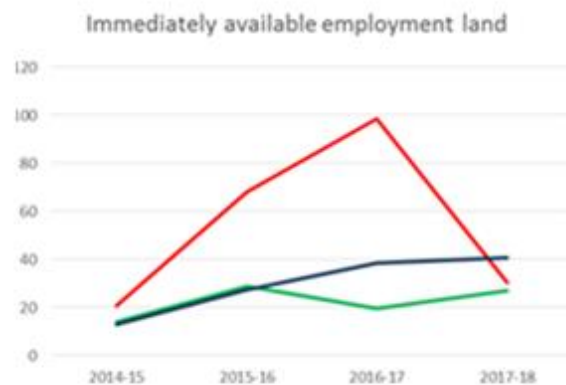
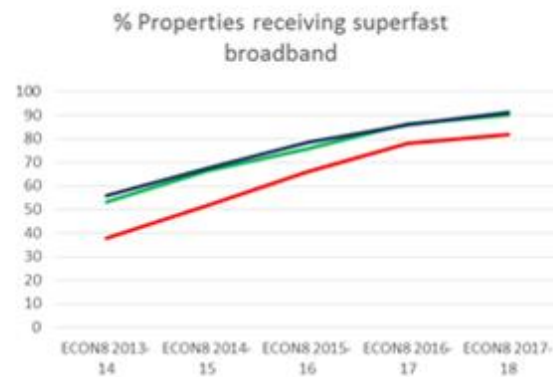
— Perth & Kinross — FG Median — Scotland

## 6.7 Economic Development – FG2



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— Perth & Kinross — FG Median — Scotland



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

— Perth & Kinross — FG Median — Scotland

## 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 Council:

- i) Notes the LGBF results for 2017/18; 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	20 February 2019

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You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

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

### 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 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 2017/18](#) and the LGBF data made available to Councils by The Improvement Service.

## **3. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Local Government Benchmarking Framework PKC Summary 2017/18