

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 June 2021

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2019/20

Report by Interim Chief Executive (Report No. 21/86)

This report presents a summary of Perth and Kinross Council's performance during 2019/20 against the Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators published by the Improvement Service in February 2021 and May 2021.

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 LGBF data for 2019/20 was published by the Improvement Service in February 2021 and refreshed in May 2021 via an online tool called '[MyLocalCouncil](#)', which can be accessed on the Council's website. The Improvement Service also produced a [National Overview Report 2019/20](#).
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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.

- 1.5 This year, the suite of measures for the environment has been expanded to including two new indicators for climate change and five new indicators on financial sustainability.

2. OVERALL RANKINGS AND VARIANCE 2019/20

- 2.1 All 54 non-cost performance indicators (PIs) with 2019/20 data has 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.

- 12 indicators (22%) are in the upper quartile;
- 19 indicators (35%) are in the upper middle quartile;
- 16 indicators (30%) are in the lower middle quartile; and
- 7 indicators (13%) are in the lower quartile.

- 2.2 Where 2019/20 data is available (excluding attainment), the non-cost data has been analysed to determine if our performance has improved or declined since last year. Cost data (excluding financial sustainability) has been analysed to see if costs have increased or reduced and a summary is presented below.

- 19 indicators (35% of performance indicators) have improved performance over the past year;
- 35 indicators (65% of performance indicators) have decreased performance over the past year;
- 9 indicators (47% of cost indicators) have increased costs from last year; and
- 10 indicators (53% of cost indicators) have decreased costs from last year.

- 2.3 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 2019/20; 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.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 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.

- 3.2 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:

- i) Scrutinises the LGBF results for 2019/20; and

- ii) Notes that the LGBF results will be used to inform the development of the Council's wider performance management and planning framework.

Authors

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
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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 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 Overview Report 2019/20](#) and the LGBF data made available to Councils by The Improvement Service.

3. APPENDICES

Local Government Benchmarking Framework PKC Summary 2019/20