



Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)

Benchmarking Overview - Summary 2021-22



Summary

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data provides evidence of trends in how resources are allocated, performance of services and levels of customer satisfaction. This year's results introduces data from 2021/22 and provides an evidence-based picture of the impact of the pandemic as well as the extraordinary effort and achievement during and following this exceptional period.

Exceptions based on 32 local authorities; areas of service delivery ranked in the lowest quartile are presented below as Notes to Benchmarking Results. Care should be taken when making comparison over time and with others due to the complexities around altered delivery and operating landscapes during the reporting period.

The [National Benchmarking Overview Report 2021/22](#) is available here.

Notes to Benchmarking Results (indicators ranked in the lowest quartile)	
No	Comment
Children's Services	
1-10	<p>The percentage of P1, P4 & P7 combined achieving expected CFE Levels for Literacy and Numeracy improved, encouraging given the disruption during Covid and the resulting lockdowns that had a significant impact on learning for children. The percentage point gap in between the least and most deprived pupils in the P1, P4 and P7 combined in numeracy increased against a generally a decreasing national trend.</p> <p>The percentage of secondary pupils gaining 5 or more awards at Level 5 improved and at Level 6 worsened slightly. Five of six average total tariff score measures remain in the lowest quartile.</p> <p>Analysis of achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels 2022 was presented to the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 25 January 2023 (item 8 of the Agenda refers). Further analysis at individual school level and support and challenge discussions followed. Quality Improvement visits in primary during Terms 1 and 2 focused on Learning, Teaching and Assessment centred on common areas for development including increased moderation within schools and associated school groups, building practitioner confidence in teacher professional judgements against national benchmarks and cross school and sector moderation activities focused on literacy and numeracy leading to redeveloped action plans. In secondary education, virtual and extended in-person improvement model visits supported by revised processes were undertaken during term 2 and support and challenge visits in term 3 in line with the Secondary Attainment and Performance Framework.</p> <p>Curriculum structures of authorities' impact on tariff points available to students through the number of qualifications they can take, where more demanding qualifications gain more points than less demanding ones and in graded courses, a grade 'A' is equivalent to more points than a grade 'C' within the same course. Therefore in addition, locally complementary tariff scores is measured to apply parity of achievement of young people in their top five qualifications studied.</p>
Corporate Services	
11	The Gender Pay Gap at 6.95% is almost double the national average of 3.54%. The gap in pay is the percentage difference between male employees' average hourly rate of and female employees average hourly rate of pay, where a positive figure indicates male employees are, on average, paid more per hour than female employees. Across Scotland, results range from -6.2 to 11.4, reinforcing the likely variations in methods of calculation.
12	Of the 202k invoices sampled, 85% were paid within 30 days. With all payments made immediately on receipt of authorised invoices from services, a measure taken during the pandemic to support the local economy, the pace of authorisation by budget managers impacts on this result. Heads of Service are periodically informed of the performance of their service in processing in order to improve.
13	Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) may be awarded when the Council considers that a housing benefit or Universal Credit claimant requires further financial assistance towards housing costs. In 2021-22, of the estimated £790k funding available, 76% was spent. Scottish Government has increased funding by around 40% since pre-covid levels. Increased workload and priority being

	given to processing Self Isolation Support Grant impacted on the time available for DHPs, albeit in the reporting period there was less need for DHPs for new tenants or tenants looking to move to new tenancies. Scottish Government have since investigated and will reduce funding provided for future.
Assets	
14	The Moray Learning Estate is a significant contributory factor to the operational building condition indicator result. A programme of Local condition surveys has progressed, to provide a more accurate picture of schools' condition with historical surveys between 5-8 years old. Improvements are ongoing through the upgrade programme.
Adult Social Work	
15	Nationally there is significant variation in both the scale of growth and the pattern of uptake of direct payments (DP) or Personalised Managed Budgets (PMB). In Moray, of the £63m gross social work spend on over 18s, £2.3m was through Self-Directed Support. Self-Directed Support (SDS) Scotland published a report in September 2021, My Support My Choice; People's Experiences of Self-directed Support and Social Care in Moray which considered the views of 54 people in Moray who received SDS reporting positive views across several aspects. The research identified recommendations in response to concerns, which will inform and influence Health and Social Care Moray's ongoing efforts in responding to areas of challenge. Moray was one of three local authority areas chosen to work intensively with the SDS Project Team at Social Work Scotland to test out and develop the approved Framework Standards that will support future practice across Scotland. Locally, work has also progressed in creating an Option 2 Flexible Framework to support greater choice for individuals.
16	The percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life is one of the national core indicators reflecting the aggregate impact of local person-centred work to improve personal outcomes. Moray's result (73.3%), below the national average (78.1%) was reported for the first time to the Integration Joint Board Audit, Performance and Risk Committee in June 2022.
Environmental Services	
17	Adults satisfied with refuse collection improved to 71.7%. The data source is the Scottish Household Survey and results are presented as a rolling average. Typically, responses total around 10,000, however responses were significantly affected during the pandemic when fieldwork was suspended and the survey was carried out using remote interviewing, therefore results are not comparable to previous years.
Housing Services	
18	The requirement for housing stock to meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) compliance was introduced in January 2021 and amended fire safety regulation from February 2022, both contributory factors to achieving target. Completion of fire safety upgrades and focus on heating installations will improve performance results in the percentage of council housing stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).
19	Conclusion of a major contract for Warm Homes Round 4 grant funding was delayed throughout the pandemic periods resulting in heating installation work being suspended for several months. Surveys continue and completion of heating systems programme is dependent on Air Source Heat Pumps and boilers availability, also affected by industry shortages therefore it is unlikely to see any significant improvement in the percentage of council dwelling that are energy efficient in the short term.
Economic Development	
20	In the period to March 2022, 88 people were assisted into work from council employability programmes. A suite of employability services is being delivered through the Local Employability Partnership Plan using Scottish Government and UK Shared Prosperity Funding. Annual progress around Employability and Skills was reported within the Information Report: Economic Recovery Plan to Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee on 22 March 2022 (para 11 refers)
21	In January 2021 Moray Speyside were awarded £350k over the next 3 years in support of its Moray Investment in Economic Development & Tourism Recovery Plan. In addition, a successful application was submitted to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) for the Coast to Country project, an integral part of Moray wide strategic staycation programme, in September 2021, that was match funded by the Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. It is anticipated that these opportunities will contribute to improved performance going forward.
Financial Sustainability	
22	The Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream – General Fund is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income. This is factored into the Council's financial planning and will be used as a tool for assessing affordability in reviews of the capital plan.

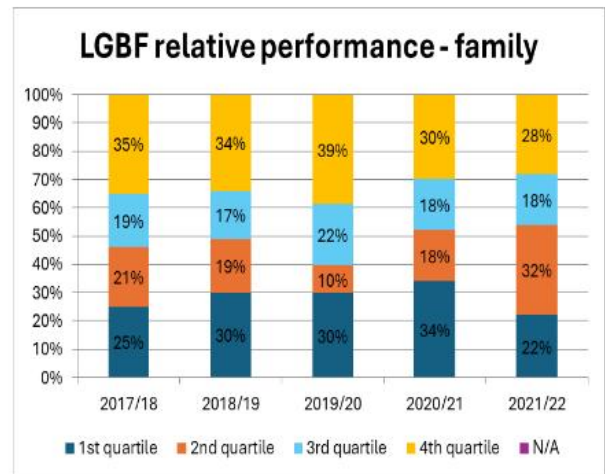
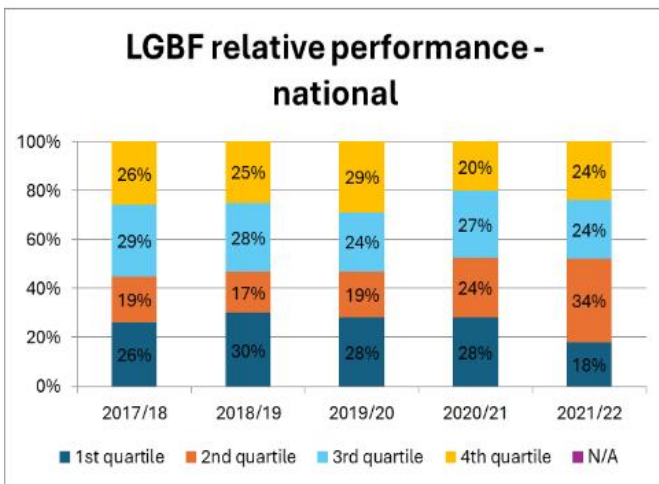
23	Actual Outturn is calculated as the total actual revenue expenditure as a percentage of the total budgeted revenue expenditure. Patterns of budgeted spend are impacted across all local authorities, albeit in different ways, with for an example an increase in the level of reserves held a common feature. Budget manager training is key to an accurate forecasting.
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Climate Change

24	Emissions within scope of Local Authority per capita increased and remain above the national average. The annual report on Energy Strategy/Actions was submitted to the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee on 15 November 2022. Publication of the Scottish Government’s The Heat in Buildings Strategy set the requirement for all local authorities to produce a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) by December 2023. In March 2021 the Council adopted the Climate Change Strategy which set the goal of the Council being carbon neutral by 2030 and approved the Route Map to Net Zero creating a framework for actions aimed at reducing carbon emissions.
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Caution on making direct comparison over time in the charts below due to the significant impact of Covid-19 on more recent results. Results show improving and worsening positions in equal share, but a general shift of results is evident from 1st to 2nd quartile.

Relative performance: Percentage of indicator rankings by quartiles –



2020/21
vs
2021/22

Results improved
48 indicators



No change
2 indicators

Results worsened
49 indicators

Results improved / worsened (past 12 months)

Results that improved by 5% or >

- 10% reduction in the gross cost of looked after children in residential-based services resulted in a fall in the cost per child per week and improvement in ranked position to the lowest recorded in over a decade
- £703k of Scottish Welfare Fund payments were made, 99% of budget, improving on previous years percentage spend
- Homecare costs per hour for people aged 65 or over decreased due to a reduction in total homecare costs and increase in care hours
- 13% reduction in net expenditure on care homes for older people against a small increase in number of long-stay residents gives a low cost per resident
- Significant reduction in rate of readmissions to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges
- Increased attendance and income resulted in reduced cost per attendance at sports facilities
- Proportionately larger increase in number of library visits than net expenditure led to lower cost per library visit
- Increased number of premises for refuse collection against reduction in net expenditure gave a reduced cost of collection per premise, lowest nationally
- Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes improved albeit as a result of a proportionately larger decrease in the model-based unemployment count than those assisted into work
- Slight improvement in average time in processing weeks per planning application
- The rise in the number of Business Gateway Start Ups led to an improved ratio per 10,000 population
- Significant increase in gross expenditure in Economic Development and Tourism resulted in improved investment per 1,000 population, albeit position remains less than half national average and in the lowest quartile
- GVA per capita increased slightly albeit the ranking remained unchanged
- Claimant count as a percentage of working age population reduced due to a significant fall in the claimant count overall and within the 16-24 population

Results that worsened by 5% or >

- 6% increase in gross expenditure and slight decrease in pupil numbers contributed to an overall increase in cost per primary school pupil
- 22% increase in pre-school gross expenditure resulting in another significant rise in cost per pre-school education place
- Reduction in the percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas

- Attainment gap in literacy and numeracy between least and most deprived has widened, is above national average and dropped in ranking to the lower quartiles
- Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones decreased and ranked position dropped to second quartile
- Significant increase in percentage of child protection re-registrations within 18 months
- Sickness absence days per teacher and non-teacher increased because of a 44% and 34% rise in days lost against a 9% and 5% rise in FTE staff numbers respectively to levels similar to pre-Covid. 2020/21 results were unusually low, mirrored nationally
- The proportion of Discretionary Housing Payment funding spent reduced with the result now ranking second lowest nationally
- Drop in overall internal floor area of operational buildings considered satisfactory in condition maintaining ranking of lowest nationally
- Percentages of adults supported at home agreeing that they had a say in how services were provided or that they improved or maintained their quality of life both fell slightly
- Significant increase in the number of bed days people (75 and over) spend in hospital when ready to be discharged, rate per 1,000 population returning to pre-Covid levels, positioned mirrored nationally
- Increase in the cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population due to 23% increase in net expenditure against a slight increase in estimated population
- 7% increase in cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population due to slight increases in net expenditure
- 17% increase in the cost of road maintenance per kilometre resulting in an increased cost of maintenance per kilometre
- Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population increased as a result of 24% rise in gross expenditure largely attributed to environmental health
- Properties within scope of housing quality standard increased whilst those meeting standard considerably reduced resulting in drop in performance, a similar position reflected in national results
- Non-emergency house repairs rose considerably in a return to pre-Covid levels whilst working days to complete more than doubled last year, both contributing to an increase in average days to complete repairs
- Slight increase in planning applications against proportionately higher gross expenditure led to an increase in cost per planning application and a drop in ranked position nationally

<p>gaining 5+ awards at Levels 5 and 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gross costs of looked after children in a community setting increased slightly against a drop in the number of children looked after resulting in a greater cost per child per week• Drop in overall average tariff SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived), result above national average	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of immediately available employment land dropped by half, albeit remaining in the 3rd quartile• Percentage of uncommitted General Fund Balance against budgeted net revenue fell by five percentage points to below national average and from the top to third quartile• CO2 emissions area wide and within scope of Local Authority per capita increased
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