

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK – ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper presents the final LGBF 2016/17 data for Argyll and Bute which includes 'Telling Our Story' and 'Looking Forward' commentary from Heads of Service.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee (ASC) –
- considers the contents of the report prior to publication as part of our statutory Public Performance Reporting duty
 - agrees to send the report to a members' seminar to raise awareness and to better enable members to carry out their scrutiny function.
 - Refers the relevant sections of the LGBF report to Strategic Committees to enable them to scrutinise and agree associated performance improvements.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK (LGBF) 2016/17

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This paper presents the final LGBF 2016/17 data for Argyll and Bute which includes 'Telling Our Story' and 'Looking Forward' commentary from Heads of Service.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee:

- 3.1 Considers the contents of the report prior to publication as part of our statutory Public Performance Reporting duty
- 3.2 Agrees to send the report to a members' seminar to raise awareness and to better enable members to carry out their scrutiny function.
- 3.3 Refers the relevant sections of the LGBF report to Strategic Committees to enable them to scrutinise and agree associated performance improvements.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 All Scottish Councils participate in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) which is managed and produced by the Improvement Service (IS). The purpose of the LGBF is to improve performance through Benchmarking and sharing good practice between councils.
- 4.2 The Framework consists of 94 indicators that are collected through various means during the year. For example directly to the IS, CIPFA, the Scottish Government or the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). Many of the indicators have data from 2010/11.
- 4.3 In the past the LGBF has been widely criticised for using measures that many councils felt were not relevant, or the SHS size was too small a sample. Work is ongoing to improve and strengthen the measures to support a more strategic use of the LGBF and be more outcome focused.

- 4.4 The LGBF is a key element of our Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF). The PIF enables the Council to deliver its statutory duty to 'make arrangements to secure Best Value (continuous improvement in the performance of functions)' as required by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The use of the LGBF is also a key element in the current round of Best Value3 audits.
- 4.5 Some of the indicators in the LGBF are used strategically in our Service Plans and Scorecards while others are used operationally for Benchmarking.
- 4.6 The LGBF uses a rank structure to illustrate performance, from 1st to 32nd with the Scotland average also shown. The rank structure should be used in context of the actual performance. For example our performance may have improved but our rank position has worsen – this is because other Councils have also improved.

With this in mind, rather than simply analyse the data Heads of Service have added commentary that helps us 'Tell Our Story'. This also helps put into perspective some of the challenges and achievements that have occurred. The 'Looking Forward' section contains additional commentary by Heads of Service and explains any improvements that have been identified in the process.

The report is presented in the same order as the LGBF data, namely –

- Education
- Children and Families
- Corporate Services
- Social Care
- Community and Culture
- Roads and Amenity
- Economic Development & Strategic Transportation
- Facility Services
- Planning & Regulatory Services

- 4.7 The final data is normally received at the end of March / early April each year. Since then the data has been analysed and is now presented in a more user friendly way. It should be noted that the base year differs for some indicators.

- 4.8 Points for noting –

- Any Identified Improvements will be added to the Services' Improvement Plan in Pyramid for future monitoring and reporting.
- Not all data is available. Where applicable the indicator is noted with DNA (Data Not Available). For these indicators the percentage calculation from base to last year and two most recent years has not been done.
- 'Looking Forward' commentary is outstanding but expected to be received shortly for Adult Care. Any commentary received prior to the ASC meeting will be included.

- Commentary is still outstanding from LiveArgyll, this is expected to be received prior to the ASC meeting. Presently the LiveArgyll 'Telling Our Story' commentary has been provided by HROD after analysing the data.
- Education attainment data is greyed out. Education have provided the Attainment data, but as yet this has not filtered through to the IS and in turn the LGBF.
- Some measures where appropriate have been pulled together as a basket of measures, such as the condition of roads network.
- There is no data for Housing Services.

4.9 Attached is a short list of notable indicators for reference.

4.10 The following table illustrates the Council's performance compared to Scotland averages and by quartile.

COMPARED TO THE SCOTTISH AVERAGE (WHERE DATA AVAILABLE)			
BETTER THAN AVERAGE		35 INDICATORS = 45%	
SAME OR VERY SLIGHTLY WORSE		10 INDICATORS = 13%	
WORSE THAN AVERAGE		32 INDICATORS = 42%	
TOTAL		77 INDICATORS	
PERFORMANCE OF INDICATORS BY QUARTILE (77 INDICATORS)			
QUARTILE 1 (1-8)	QUARTILE 2 (9-16)	QUARTILE 3 (17-24)	QUARTILE 4 (25-32)
12	20	19	26
PERCENTAGE PER QUARTILE			
15.6%	26.0%	24.7%	33.7%

4.11 This is a large piece of work with a desired outcome of improved performance engagement and scrutiny by Officers, Elected Members and the Public. Consideration for future presentation options will be taken forward during the course of 2018/19, i.e. whether to continue with the presented format or use Pyramid to illustrate our performance.

4.12 Many of the Improvements mentioned in Looking Forward are captured in the current Service Plans, either as success measures or improvements. Other Improvements that are noted in Looking Forward will be identified and built in

Pyramid.

- 4.13 The IS are holding a series of Learning and Benchmarking events throughout the year. The purpose of these is to work with councils to further improve the appropriateness of the indicators. These are attended as often as possible however, the timing and location is sometimes a barrier. We are fortunate that Executive Director Pippa Milne is a member of the Board of the LGBF, this will support our engagement going forward.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The ASC considers the contents of the report prior to publication and agrees to send the report to a members' seminar to raise awareness and to better enable members to carry out their scrutiny function.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | None |
| 6.2 | Financial | None |
| 6.3 | Legal | Publication forms part of our statutory Public Performance Reporting duty |
| 6.4 | HR | None |
| 6.5 | Equalities | None |
| 6.6 | Risk | Engaging with the LGBF is an area of interest for the upcoming BV3 audit. |
| 6.7 | Customer Service | None |

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For further information contact: Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and HR

Appendices

Appendix 1 – LGBF Presentation.

Appendix 2 – Notable Indicators.