
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CUSTOMER SERVICES

18 JUNE 2019

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2017/18 – ANALYSIS
AND COMMENTARY**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper presents the final LGBF 2017/18 data for Argyll and Bute which includes 'Telling Our Story' and 'Looking Forward – Expected Impact On Indicator' 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
- Refers the relevant sections of the LGBF report to Strategic Committees to enable them to scrutinise and agree associated performance improvements.
- Agrees to send the report to a members' seminar to raise awareness and to better enable members to carry out their scrutiny function.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK (LGBF) 2017/18

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 – Expected Impact On Indicator' 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 Refers the relevant sections of the LGBF report to Strategic Committees to enable them to scrutinise and agree associated performance improvements.
- 3.3 Agrees to send the report to a members' seminar to raise awareness and to better enable members to carry out their scrutiny function.

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 81 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 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.
- 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 – Expected Impact On Indicator' 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 –

- Improvements identified by Heads of Service 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) or DNS (Data Not Submitted). For these indicators the percentage calculation from base to last year and two most recent years has not been done.
- Of the 81 indicators, 5 refer to Housing which we do not submit data for; there are 2 indicators that we either did not submit data (DNS) for or the data is not available (DNA).

- Some measures where appropriate have been pulled together as a basket of measures, such as the condition of roads network.
- There are nine survey satisfaction measures within the suite of indicators.

The Data comes from the Scottish Household Survey. The surveys cover a mixture of periods varying from a 3 year period to annual however, for most indicators the period is 2015-18. The data is a rolling 3-year average with a 5.5% confidence tolerance.

The sample and response sizes are both very small, these should be borne in mind when reviewing the satisfaction results.

To compliment these findings a local survey is planned for 2019/20. The findings will be presented once available.

- 4.9 Appendix 2 is an additional analysis exploring how geography or demography can have an impact on the indicators.
- 4.10 Table 1 illustrates the Council's performance for 2017/18 for all indicators compared to Scotland averages and by quartile.

Table 1.

Table 1:

COMPARED TO THE SCOTTISH AVERAGE (WHERE DATA AVAILABLE)			
BETTER THAN AVERAGE		21 INDICATORS = 28%	
SAME OR VERY SLIGHTLY WORSE		12 INDICATORS = 16%	
WORSE THAN AVERAGE		41 INDICATORS = 56%	
TOTAL		74 INDICATORS	
PERFORMANCE OF INDICATORS BY QUARTILE (74 INDICATORS)			
QUARTILE 1 (1-8)	QUARTILE 2 (9-16)	QUARTILE 3 (17-24)	QUARTILE 4 (25-32)
12	19	15	28
PERCENTAGE PER QUARTILE			
16.2	25.6	20.4	37.8

Tables 2a and 2b illustrates the Council's performance by quartile over time.

This illustration consists of a suite of 35 indicators that are used by Audit Scotland as a comparator of performance.

Table 2a.

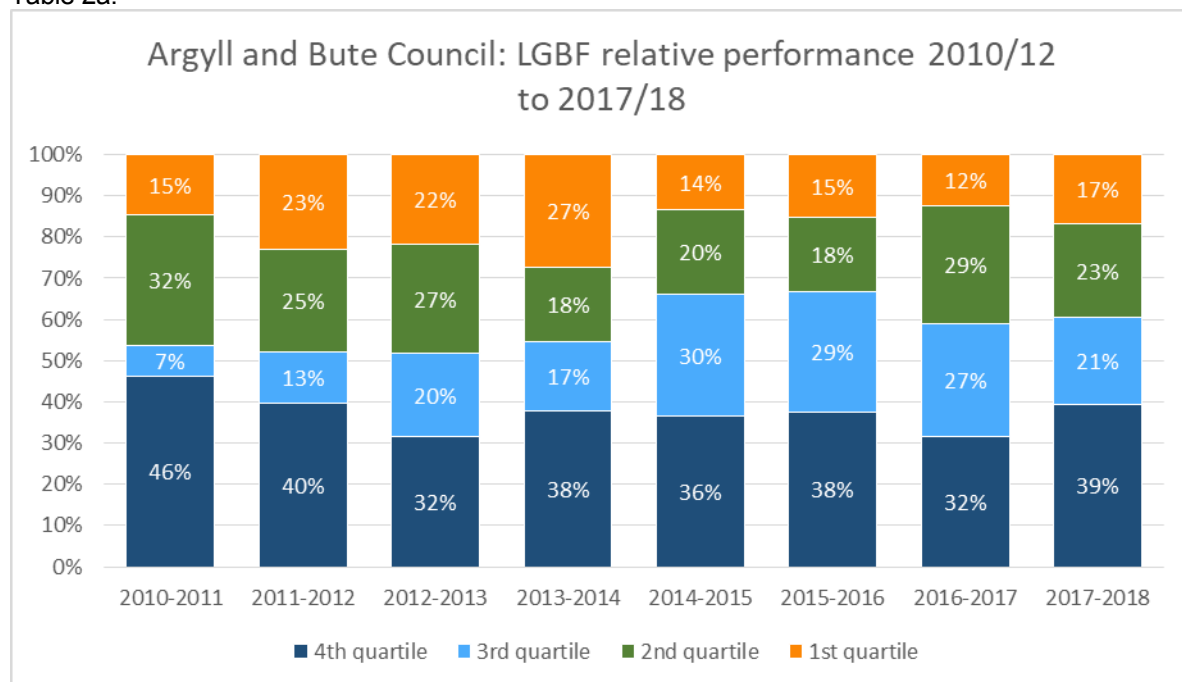


Table 2b. – Percentage per quartile

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
1st & 2nd quartile	46%	48%	48%	45%	34%	33%	41%	39%
1st quartile	15%	23%	22%	27%	14%	15%	12%	17%
2nd quartile	32%	25%	27%	18%	20%	18%	29%	23%
3rd quartile	7%	13%	20%	17%	30%	29%	27%	21%
4th quartile	46%	40%	32%	38%	36%	38%	32%	39%

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 2019/20, 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

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

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director - Customer Services

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 – LGBF Presentation.

Appendix 2 – Impact of geography or demography on indicators.