
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

EXEC DIRECTOR KIRSTY FLANAGAN

15 DECEMBER 2020

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2018/19 – ANALYSIS
AND COMMENTARY**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report and Appendix 1 provides commentary and analysis relating to the Local Government Benchmarking Framework dataset for 2018/19, which was published in spring 2020.

Appendix 1 includes performance information for LGBF indicators previously identified of being of particular importance or interest to Argyll and Bute, along with commentary from Heads of Service.

It is recommended that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee consider the contents of the report ahead of its publication, which forms part of our statutory Public Performance Reporting duty.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2018/19 – ANALYSIS
AND COMMENTARY**

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This paper presents the LGBF 2018/19 data for Argyll and Bute. Information provided includes: performance data; information about trends; comparison with Scottish performance and, where appropriate, with other councils. Commentary relating to performance has been provided by Heads of Service.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee:

- 3.1 Consider the contents of the report ahead of its publication as part of our statutory Public Performance Reporting duty.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1 All Scottish Councils participate in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF), which is produced by the Improvement Service (IS). The purpose of the LGBF is enable benchmarking activity and the sharing of good practice between councils, thereby enabling the identification of opportunities for improvement.
- 4.2 The full LGBF dataset for 2018/19 includes 85 indicators (excluding Housing). However, no data was available for several of these. Additionally, following decisions taken previously wherein it was decided to focus on a shortened suite of indicators, which have been identified as being of particular importance or interest in Argyll and Bute. Appendix 1 includes performance information relating to the shortened suite of indicators for which data has been published.
- 4.3 The indicators are based on data collected from a range of sources. These include: CIPFA; the Scottish Household Survey; Local Finance Returns. Performance information for many of these indicators have been published continuously since the LGBF dataset was first produced, relating to the year 2010/11.

- 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 LGBF indicators are used in our Service Plans and scorecards, while others are used operationally for benchmarking.
- 4.6 As well as providing measures of performance, the LGBF ranks individual councils' performance from 1 (best performance) to 32 (poorest performance). Because rankings are relative to other councils' performance: (1) they do not show in absolute terms how different performance between councils is, and (2) rankings may go down even where performance has improved in absolute terms, if other councils have improved their performance at a faster rate. For these reasons, rankings should be considered in conjunction with the performance measures, and not considered in isolation.
- 4.7 Heads of Service have provided commentary for each of the indicators included in Appendix 1. The commentary added as 'Telling Our Story' and 'Looking Forward – Expected Impact on Indicator' provides information to help put the performance information into context. Much of the activity highlighted by the Heads of Service is in Service Plans.
- 4.8 A couple of points should be borne mind.
- There are nine survey satisfaction measures included within the LGBF. Most of these come from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), and are reported as 3-year rolling averages. As a result, where changes to a service are made, the impact of these changes on satisfaction will be 'smoothed' across several years of results.
 - The data reported here relates to 2018/19. The next iteration of the LGBF will relate to the year 2019/20, and will therefore not reflect the impact of COVID-19. If the current schedule of publication is followed, the impact of COVID-19 will not be reflected in the dataset until March 2022, when the data for 2020/21 is published.
- 4.9 Table 1 sets out the Council's performance for 2018/19 for all indicators and for those included in the report by quartile of performance.

Table 1:Percentage of Argyll and Bute indicators that fall within each quartile of the LGBF 2018/19 dataset (all indicators and indicators identified as being of interest/importance to Argyll and Bute)

	Indicators identified as important/of interest	All indicators
Q1 (best)	23.26%	22%
Q2	16.28%	18%
Q3	23.26%	24%
Q4	37.21%	36%

4.10 Table 2 sets out the Council's performance across the lifetime of the LGBF. Note, however, that the indicator set has varied from year to year, so differences in percentages reflect both changes within the dataset and changes in performance.

Table 2: Percentage of Argyll and Bute indicators that fall within each quartile of the LGBF dataset (all indicators)

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Q1 (best)	15%	22%	23%	28%	6%	18%	13%	17%	22%
Q2	35%	24%	24%	19%	15%	17%	28%	22%	18%
Q3	5%	14%	19%	15%	29%	29%	28%	18%	24%
Q4	45%	40%	34%	38%	50%	36%	32%	42%	36%

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This report and Appendix 1 presents information from the LGBF dataset for 2018/19, which was published earlier this year.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy: None arising directly from this report.

6.2 Financial: None arising directly from this report.

6.3 Legal: Publication forms part of our statutory Public Performance Reporting duty.

- 6.4 HR: None arising directly from this report.
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None arising directly from this report.
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics: None arising directly from this report.
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty: None arising directly from this report.
 - 6.5.3 Islands: None arising directly from this report.
- 6.6 Risk: None arising directly from this report.
- 6.7 Customer Service: None arising directly from this report.

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30 October 2020

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2018/19