North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Cunninghame House,
Irvine.

12 June 2014

Cabinet

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Cunninghame House, Irvine on **TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2014** at **2.30 p.m.** to consider the undernoted business.

Yours faithfully

Elma Murray

Chief Executive

1.   **Declarations of Interest**
       Members are requested to give notice of any declaration of interest in respect of items of business on the agenda.

2.   **Minutes (Page 5)**
       The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2014 will be confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (copy enclosed).

GENERAL BUSINESS FOR DECISION

       Reports by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

3.   **Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates Write off 2013-14 (Page 13)**
       Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the write off Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates debts during 2013-14 (copy enclosed).

4.   **Write off of irrecoverable and non-recoverable Housing Benefit and former Council Tax Benefit overpayments 2013/14 (Page 21)**
        Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on balances written off under delegated powers during 2013/14 (copy enclosed).

        Reports by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment)

5.   **A Vacant & Derelict Land Strategy for North Ayrshire (Page 27)**
        Submit report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on vacant and derelict land in North Ayrshire (copy enclosed).

GENERAL BUSINESS FOR INFORMATION

6.   **Benchmarking in the Council (Page 61)**
        Submit report by the Chief Executive on progress on Benchmarking activities undertaken (copy enclosed)

7.   **Audit Scotland Report: An Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2014 (Page 137)**
        Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) of the findings of the recent Audit Scotland report (copy enclosed).

8.   **Risk Management Annual Report 2013/14 (Page 189)**
        Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on work carried out across the Council in relation to risk management during 2013/14 and future planned work (copy enclosed).

9.   **Maximising Attendance Performance - March 2014 (Quarter 4 Summary) (Page 203)**
        Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on an analysis of sickness absence in Quarter 4 and the Quarterly trend from 2011/12 to 2013/14 (copy enclosed).

10.   **Employee Engagement Survey (Page 225)**
        Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on progress of the Employee Engagement Survey Council-wide Improvement Plan (copy enclosed).

11.   **Asset Management Plans (Page 263)**
        Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on progress made in delivering the agreed actions for each of the six themed Asset Management Plans during 2013/14 (copy enclosed).

MINUTES

12. **Minutes of 1st Tier JCC and Corporate Health & Safety Group held on 15 May 2014 (Page 291)**
Submit report by the Chief Executive on the minutes of the 1st Tier JCC and Corporate Health and Safety Group held on 15 May 2014 (copy enclosed).

EXEMPT INFORMATION

13. **Exclusion of the Public**
Resolve in terms of Section 50(A)4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the Meeting the press and the public for the following items of business on the grounds indicated in terms of Paragraph 9 (Items 13.1 and 13.2) of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Non Disclosure of Information
In terms of Standing Order 17 (Disclosure of Information) the information contained within the following reports is confidential information within the meaning of Section 50A of the 1973 Act and shall not be disclosed to any person by any Member or Officer.

13.1 **Land at Sharphill, Dalry Road, Saltcoats (Page 301)**
Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the proposal to dispose of Council owned land at Sharphill (copy enclosed).

13.2 **Surplus Property - Shiskine Schoolhouse, Shiskine, Isle of Arran (Page 309)**
Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the disposal of the residential property known as Shiskine Schoolhouse, Shiskine, Isle of Arran (copy enclosed).

14. **Urgent Items**
Any other item which the Chair considers to be urgent.

Cabinet

Sederunt:	**Elected Members**	Chair:
	Willie Gibson (Chair) Alan Hill (Vice-Chair) Marie Burns John Bruce Anthea Dickson Tony Gurney Ruth Maguire	Attending: Apologies: Meeting Ended:

Cabinet
3 June 2014

IRVINE, 3 June 2014 - At a Meeting of Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present
Willie Gibson, Alan Hill, Marie Burns, John Bruce, Anthea Dickson and Ruth Maguire, Very Reverend M. Canon McManus, Elizabeth H. Higton and Mark Fraser (Church Representatives), Nairn McDonald and Joshua McCormick (Youth Representatives).

Also Present
Elizabeth McLardy

In Attendance
E. Murray, Chief Executive; L. Friel, Corporate Director and T. Reaney, Procurement Manager (Finance and Corporate Support); A. Sutton, Head of Service (Community and Culture), S. Quinn, Head of Service (Development), M. Docherty, Head of Service (Education 3-18), F. Rodman, Senior Manager and A. MacMahon, Quality Improvement Officer (Education and Skills); C. Hatton, Corporate Director (Development and Environment); A. Fraser, Head of Service (Democratic and Administration), K. Dyson, Communications Officer and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

Chair
Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence
Tony Gurney and Gordon Smith.

1.   Declarations of Interest

In terms of Standing Order 16 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, Councillor Dickson, as the spouse of a Director of a nursery in North Ayrshire, declared an interest in Agenda Item 4 - 600 Hours and Provision for Two Year Olds, and took no part in the discussion thereon.

2.   Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meetings held on (i) 29 April and (ii) 6 May 2014 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

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3.   Proposal to Develop Irvine Royal Academy as an Ayrshire College and North Ayrshire Council Skills Centre of Excellence

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) which provided information on proposals to (a) develop an Ayrshire College Centre of Excellence at Irvine Royal Academy, providing an opportunity to offer the delivery of a range of vocational programmes up to and including SCQF level 6 skills in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence; (b) lease the relevant areas of the Irvine Royal Academy building to Ayrshire College; and (c) fund works to relocate classrooms to a maximum of £1m from the school estate fund.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

●   a project that will be undertaken to map the learner journeys and flexible pathways from broad education into the senior phase and beyond; and
●   work that is already underway with Irvine Royal Academy and Ayrshire College in order to deliver provision in two phases, commencing in September 2014 with sport/fitness, health and social care and if possible, catering for students;

The Cabinet agreed to (a) the proposals outlined in the report; (b) remit to officers to progress work to develop the Ayrshire College Centre of Excellence at Irvine Royal Academy; and (c) receive a progress report in October 2014.

4.   600 Hours and Provision for Two Year Olds

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Education 3-18) (Education and Skills) which provided information on (a) the progress made with provision of early learning and childcare for two year olds from households where families are seeking employment for August 2014; (b) the current provision of early learning and childcare within North Ayrshire for children under the age of three referred through the Partnership Forum; (c) the eligibility criteria from COSLA to be used when allocating places for two year old children; (d) a national marketing campaign that will be undertaken to encourage self-referral; and (e) an estimate of the number of children who will be eligible in North Ayrshire.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

●   work that has been done to ensure the required early learning places are available for all eligible two year olds from August 2014; and
●   the use of registered childminders where required and a campaign that will be undertaken to recruit more childminders.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the implementation of the progress made and the plans in place for August 2014; and (b) receive an update on progress in July 2014.

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5. Scots Language

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) which (a) provided details of the use and promotion of Scots Language in North Ayrshire; (b) funding from the Scottish Government as part of the 1 + 2 agenda; and (c) information on the work being done in schools to support the development of Scots language.

The Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to the use and promotion of Scots that allows young people to use both English and Scots when and where appropriate

Noted.

6. Curriculum for Excellence

Submitted report by the Head of Service, (Education 3-18) (Education and Skills) which (a) provided an update on the progress made in implementing Curriculum for Excellence, including continued support for curricular development across the three areas of numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing, the development of skills for learning, life and work, a range of opportunities for senior pupils to develop as responsible citizens, a review of the Work Experience Model as a result of feedback from local employers and the launch of the benchmarking tool 'Inspire' to evaluate educational attainment.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

* the Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool (SPBT), now called Inspire, that is a new approach to evaluating educational attainment and achievement;
* 16+ Co-ordinators that provide support for schools leavers; and
* work with young people at an early stage to match their skill-set and aspirations to further education and employment opportunities.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the progress made in North Ayrshire in implementation of Curriculum for Excellence; and (b) receive progress reports at future meetings.

7. Promoting the STEM Agenda in North Ayrshire Schools

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Education 3-18) (Education and Skills) which (a) provided details of the level of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) provision across all schools in session 2013/14; (b) funding to support STEM activities; (c) a number of projects and programmes that are underway with STEM partners; and (d) success in a variety of STEM related competitions.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to arrangements that could be made for Members to visit primary schools to look at some of work that is being done in maths and science.

The Cabinet agreed (a) that the Head of Service (Education 3 - 18) make the necessary arrangements for Members to visit primary schools to see the focus on STEM subjects; (b) to note the information provided; and (c) to receive regular updates at future meetings.

8.   Valedictory

On behalf of the Cabinet (Education), the Chair thanked Mary Docherty for her contribution to the work of the Cabinet and the Council.

9.   Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee- Changes to Minute of Agreement

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on changes to the Minute of Agreement setting up the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the revised Minute of Agreement relating to the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee.

10.   Gypsy/Traveller Policy on Unauthorised Encampments

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on (a) the terms of a draft Policy for managing unauthorised Gypsy/Traveller encampments (Appendix 1); (b) information on the existing permanent site for travellers in North Ayrshire and work by the Gypsy/Traveller Services Co-ordinator; and (c) the number and location of unauthorised encampments in North Ayrshire for 2013 and 2014 (Appendix 2).

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the responsible service for unauthorised encampments is Housing Services; (b) approve the proposal to appoint a temporary post to deal with the issues surrounding unauthorised encampments; and (c) approve the new draft Policy as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

11.   North Ayrshire Legacy 2014 Fund

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) which provided information on (a) the planning and delivery of the community applications to the North Ayrshire Council Legacy Fund 2014; and (b) the process that will determine the applications.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- a number of late applications that have been received from the community and a required deadline for applications; and
- an increase in funding that may be required to fund late applications.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the implementation of the local Legacy Funding to community organisations; (b) receive a further evaluation report on the programmes delivered by the Fund; (c) a deadline for receipt of applications by 16 June 2014; and (d) the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) monitoring the funding allocated to support groups and organisations in delivering the Legacy Plan.

12.   Kirktonhall, West Kilbride

Submitted report by the Head of Service, (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) which provided information on (a) Kirktonhall Creative Media Group's current proposals for Kirktonhall; (b) the findings of the review report by the Tourism Resources Company that identified and examined risks and issues on behalf of the Council; and (c) funding in place to develop Kirktonhall Creative Media Group's project.

The Cabinet was advised of a letter from Councillor McLardy that had been circulated to all Cabinet Members.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the continuation of the preferred bidder status for Kirktonhall Creative Media Group; and (b) that the Head of Service (Community and Culture) review progress after a 6 month period and provide an update to Cabinet in December 2014.

13.   Award of Contract - Measured Term Contract (MTC): Water Quality Management

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the result of the tender exercise for Water Quality Management.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the contract to Hertel Solutions Ltd, at a contract value of £97,500.

14.   Award of Contract - St Luke's Primary School extension works

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the result of the tender exercise for St Luke's Primary School extension works.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the contract to Ashleigh (Scotland) Ltd, at a contract value of £827,029.90.

15.   Award of Contract - New Day Care Centre and Flats (former Stevenson Institute site) Largs

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the result of the tender exercise for the new Day Care Centre and Flats (former Stevenson Institute site), Largs.
The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the contact to Ashleigh (Scotland) Ltd, at a contract value of £1,942,546.41.

16.   Welfare Reform Activity in 2013/14

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which provided information on welfare reform activity in 2013/14, including Spare Room Subsidy, Scottish Welfare Fund, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), Impact on Local Support Services, Single Fraud Investigation, Universal Credit, Employability Initiatives, Payday lending and Welfare Reform action plan and baseline indicators for 2014/15 to 2016/17.

The Cabinet noted (a) the progress on welfare reform in 2013/14; (b) the 2014 to 2017 Welfare Reform Action Plan as set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and (c) the 2014 to 2017 baseline indicators, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

17.   Community and Lifelong Learning Advisory Panel : 3 April 2014

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) on the minutes of the meeting of the Community and Lifelong Learning Advisory Panel held on 3 April 2014.

Noted.

18.   Brodick Pier Redevelopment Group : 11 April 2014

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development & Environment) on the Minutes of the meeting of the Brodick Pier Redevelopment Group held on 11 April 2014.

Noted.

19.   Ayrshire Economic Partnership : 23 April 2014

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development & Environment) on the Minutes of the meeting of the Ayrshire Economic Partnership held on 23 April 2014 .

Noted.

20.   Urgent Item

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency to allow the matter to be actioned without delay.

21.   Millport Pier

A structural survey has recently been undertaken of Millport Pier. Its early findings are that the pier is deteriorating at a greater rate than previously expected as a result of severe storms experienced over the winter.

The estimated costs for repair are £650,00 plus materials of £200,000 for extensive repairs to the timber section of the pier and an increase in the annual maintenance budget of £125,000. An intrusive survey of the masonry section of the pier is required at a cost of £60,000

It is therefore necessary to restrict access to the pier as follows:-

- no restrictions beyond the existing cordoned off area for foot traffic;
- prohibit vehicular traffic from all sections;
- no restrictions to the berthing of leisure and small craft although they will not be able to berth at low tides due to the cordoning off of the low level landing point;
- no restrictions for the typical Clyde estuary fishing vessels and sporadic visits by 'puffer' vessels;
- prohibit visits by vessels in excess of 100 tonnes - this includes the Waverley.

The Cabinet agreed that the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) make the necessary arrangements to (a) restrict access as outlined above; (b) commission an intrusive survey of the masonry section of the pier; (c) upon receipt of the masonry survey develop a suitable plan for the future provision of the pier for consideration by Cabinet; and (d) provide a briefing note to local Members outlining the current situation.

The meeting ended at 4.35 p.m.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 3

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates Write off 2013-14**
Purpose:	To advise Cabinet of the write off Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates debts during 2013-14, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2.
Recommendation:	That Cabinet homologates the write off of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates for 2013-14, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

1. Introduction

1.1 Council policy outlines the conditions under which debt may be written off:

- Deceased, with no funds in the estate
- Sequestration
- Sheriff Officer recommendation (Non-Domestic Rates only)
- Small balances

1.2 All Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates accounts go through a full recovery process, however sometimes during this process information is received that confirms that the debt is unlikely to be recovered or that continued recovery action is inappropriate. Current practice is that when a case meets the criteria for write-off Member approval is sought.

1.3 Sheriff Officer recommendations in respect of the write-off of debt only apply to Non-Domestic Rates. Any funds subsequently recovered after write off, for example from a trustee following sequestration, are brought into account.

1.4 The Council's annual accounts require to reflect the appropriate position in respect of monies owed to the Council, with appropriate adjustments made for sums considered to be irrecoverable. Appendices 1 and 2 summarise position at 31 March 2014.

2.   Current Position

2.1   Appendix 1 shows that £289,592.55 of Non-Domestic Rates debt was written off during the financial year 2013-14; this compares to £381,615.44 in 2012/13. The debts cover the 2011-12 to 2013-14 financial years.

2.2   Appendix 2 shows that £162,116.03 of Council Tax debt was written off during the financial year 2013-14, this compares to £211,264.34 in 2012-13. The debts cover the 2008-09 to 2013-14 financial years.

3.   Proposals

3.1   Cabinet is asked to homologate the write off Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates debt, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

4.   Implications

Financial Implications

4.1   Write off of any income due to the Council reduces available resources. Full provision for these bad debts has already been made in the Council's accounts. Any sums subsequently recovered are brought into account as additional income when received. The sums reported for Council Tax include amounts due to Scottish Water for water and waste water charges. Non-domestic rates bad debts are met in full by the Scottish Non-Domestic Rates pool.

Human Resource Implications

4.2   None

Legal Implications

4.3   None

Equality Implications

4.4   None

Environmental Implications

4.5   None

Implications for Key Priorities
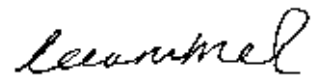
4.6   None

5. **Consultations**

5.1 There has been no consultation on these proposals

6. **Conclusion**

6.1 Homologation of the write off as set out in appendices 1 and 2 will allow the Debt Recovery Team and Non-Domestic Rates team to focus on the recovery of recoverable debt that will maximise the collection levels of the Council.

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LAURA FRIEL
Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference : SH
For further information please contact Stephen Humphries Senior Manager Revenues and Benefits on 01294 310106.

Background Papers
Council Tax draft abstract of accounts 2013/14
Non-Domestic Rates draft abstract of accounts 2013/14
Council Tax transaction reports 2013/14
Non-Domestic Rates transaction reports 2013/14

North Ayrshire Council
Write off
Business Rates and Statutory Additions 2013-14

Specific Debts

Year of Account	Business Rates	Statutory Additions	Total Written Off
	£	£	£
2011-12	34,905.21	3,223.36	38,128.57
2012-13	107,304.22	6,251.38	113,555.60
2013-14	130,763.03	7,145.35	137,908.38
Total	**272,972.46**	**16,620.09**	**289,592.55**

North Ayrshire Council
Council Tax and Statutory Additions 2013-14

Year of Account	Deceased (No Funds) £	Sequestration and Trust Deed £	Miscellaneous Small Balances £	Total Written Off £
2008	8,698.33	12,409.06	- 64.98	21,042.41
2009	9,829.67	12,671.30	- 18.08	22,482.89
2010	13,306.15	19,210.08	0.08	32,516.31
2011	12,538.04	24,532.32	4.00	37,074.36
2012	15,408.48	20,404.19	- 347.07	35,465.60
2013	5,824.14	7,846.69	- 136.37	13,534.46
Total	65,604.81	97,073.64	- 562.42	162,116.03

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 4

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Write off of irrecoverable and non-recoverable Housing Benefit and former Council Tax Benefit overpayments 2013/14**
Purpose:	To advise the Cabinet of (i) balances written off under delegated powers during 2013/14 and (ii) request authority to write off non-recoverable and irrecoverable Housing Benefit and former Council Tax Benefit overpayments in excess of £1,000 as set out in appendix 1.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet (i) notes the sums written off under delegated powers and (ii) agrees to write off Housing Benefit and former Council Tax Benefit overpayments in excess of £1,000, as set out in appendix 1.

1.   Introduction

1.1   On the 29 October 2013 the Cabinet approved a policy for the recovery of Housing Benefit, former Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Reduction overpayments. The policy states that overpayments in excess of £1,000 that cannot be recovered will be reported to Members with a recommendation to write off in accordance with the Council's Code of Financial Practice.

The Financial Regulations provide that sums due to the Council may be written off when all avenues for recovery have been exhausted and where the sums are deemed to be irrecoverable.

1.2   Overpayments of Housing Benefit (HB) or excess payments of former Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Reduction (CTR) are the result of a claimant being paid more Benefit than they are entitled to.

2. Current Position

2.1 In law, all benefit overpayments are considered recoverable unless they are classified as non-recoverable. Non-recoverable overpayments occur when an official body such as the Council or the DWP cause an overpayment by a change in policy, or failing to act, and the customer could not reasonably have been expected to know that they were being overpaid. In such cases the overpayment is not recovered from the claimant and is put forward for write off.

2.2 The decision to classify an overpayment as non-recoverable is taken by a senior member of the Benefits Service after taking into account the circumstances of the benefit claim. A full audit trail is kept of all non-recoverable overpayment decisions.

2.3 Appendix 1 shows that there are 37 non-recoverable overpayments below £1,000 with a value of £7,329.37 that have been written off under delegated powers. A further 6 accounts in excess of £1,000 totalling £6,922.82 require Member approval.

2.4 All other overpayments that are considered recoverable are recovered either from on-going benefit, by increasing the Council Tax liability or by sending out an invoice for payment where the claimant is no longer in receipt of Housing Benefit.

2.5 During the invoice recovery process cases are identified where it is clear that the overpayment is irrecoverable for example:

- Where the claimant is deceased or moved away and their whereabouts are unknown;
- Where continued recovery action would be inappropriate due to the mitigating circumstances of the claimant for example the debtor is elderly or where the debt is for a small balance;
- Where all attempts at recovery has been unsuccessful; and
- The overpayment cannot be substantiated due to a lack of documentary evidence and there is a level of uncertainty over its recovery.

2.6 Appendix 1 shows that there are 246 irrecoverable overpayments below £1,000 with a value of £33,852.68 that have been written off under delegated powers. A further 11 accounts in excess of £1,000 totalling £26,428.80 require Member approval.

2.7 The total amount written off under delegated powers and by Members is £41,182.05 and £33,351.62 respectively, totalling £74,533.67 compared to £227,190.04 in 2012/13.

2.8 Full lists detailing the accounts for write off are available for Members inspection if required.

3. Proposals

3.1 The proposal is for the Cabinet to (i) note the amount written off under delegated powers and (ii) approve the write off of the irrecoverable and non-recoverable Housing Benefit and former Council Tax Benefit overpayments in excess of £1,000 as set out in appendix 1.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications for the Council as a result of these proposals. Adequate provision has already been made for housing benefit and former council tax benefit and council tax reduction write off within the Council's financial statements.

Human Resource Implications

4.2 None

Legal Implications

4.3 None

Equality Implications

4.4 None

Environmental Implications

4.5 None

Implications for Key Priorities
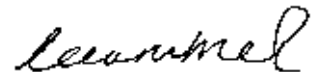
4.6 None

5. Consultations

5.1 There has been no consultation on these proposals.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   Approval of the write off will remove the non-recoverable overpayments from the benefits system and the irrecoverable overpayments from the debtors system. This will help the Benefits Service focus on the recovery of those overpayments that are considered recoverable.

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LAURA FRIEL
Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference : SH
For further information please contact Stephen Humphries Senior Manager Revenues and Benefits on 01294 310106

Background Papers
Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Reduction write off reports 2013/14

Irrecoverable & non recoverable Housing Benefit and former Council Tax Benefit overpayments - write off 2013-14

Irrecoverable overpayments										
	Deceased		Uneconomical to pursue		Unable to substantiate		Gone away / Mitigating Circumstances		Total	
Value of invoices	Number	Value	Number	Value	Number	Value	Number	Value	Number	Value
Less than £500	62	£12,533.73	87	£551.32	5	£518.25	80	£12,140.65	234	£25,743.95
£500 to £1,000	2	£1,370.44	0	£0.00	0	£0.00	10	£6,738.29	12	£8,108.73
Delegated powers	**64**	**£13,904.17**	**87**	**£551.32**	**5**	**£518.25**	**90**	**£18,878.94**	**246**	**£33,852.68**
Over £1,000	6	£17,353.37	0	£0.00	0	£0.00	5	£9,075.43	11	£26,428.80
	70	**£31,257.54**	**87**	**£551.32**	**5**	**£518.25**	**95**	**£27,954.37**	**257**	**£60,281.48**

Non-recoverable overpayments		
Value of invoices	Number	Value
Less than £500	32	£3,762.03
£500 to £1,000	5	£3,567.34
Delegated powers	**37**	**£7,329.37**
Over £1,000	6	£6,922.82
Total	**43**	**£14,252.19**

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 5

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**A Vacant & Derelict Land Strategy for North Ayrshire**
Purpose:	To examine the issue of Vacant & Derelict Land in North Ayrshire and consider opportunities for intervention.
Recommendation:	That Members approve the content of the draft Vacant & Derelict Land Strategy.

1. Introduction

1.1 Vacant land is defined by the Scottish Government as 'unused land viewed as an appropriate site for development, having either had prior development on it or preparatory work in anticipation of future development'. Derelict land is that 'damaged by development, so that it is incapable of development for beneficial use without some remedial works'. They are sometimes referred to as 'brownfield' sites.

1.2 North Ayrshire contains a legacy of Vacant and Derelict Land, often due to the decline in former industrial uses within the area and a legacy of issues such as undermining or contamination. Major industrial closures such as ICI, Volvo, Ayrshire Metal Products and Shell are examples.

1.3 In response to this issue this report seeks the approval of a Vacant & Derelict Land Strategy for North Ayrshire, a draft of which is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Current Position

Vacant & Derelict Land

2.1 The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS) provides a national data source for Vacant & Derelict Land. In 2013 there were 3,972 vacant and derelict sites covering 11,114 hectares of land in Scotland. The most common previous uses were defence, manufacturing, agriculture and residential development. Figure 1 illustrates those local authorities with the highest levels of urban Vacant & Derelict Land.

Fig 1: Local Authorities with the highest amount of Derelict & Urban Vacant Land 2013
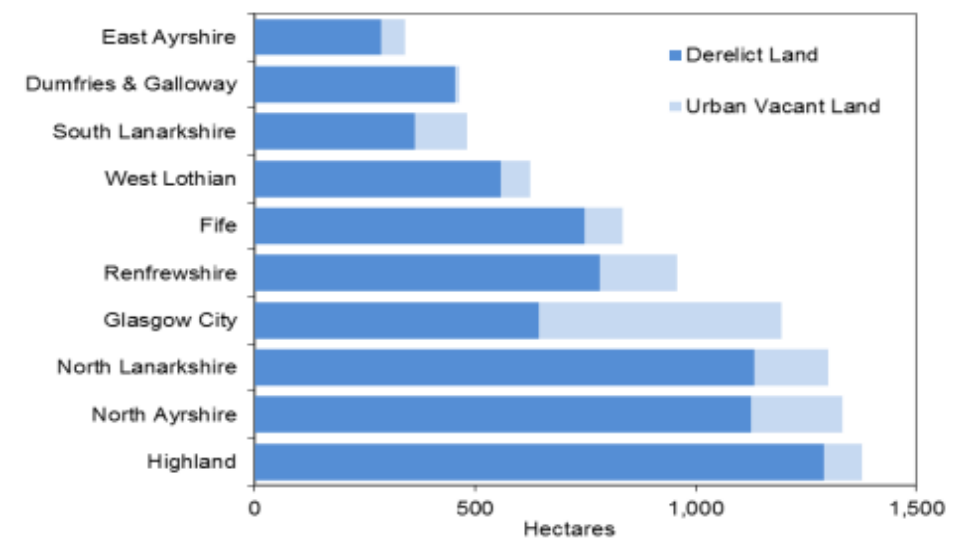
2.2 North Ayrshire contains the second highest level of Vacant & Derelict Land in Scotland with 1,333 ha of land across 255 sites. Of this total, 1,126 hectares or 136 sites are defined as derelict, and 207 hectares or 119 sites vacant. This is equivalent to the land area of the Three towns:- Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenson. The figure in North Ayrshire is however somewhat distorted by a number of large sites such as Ardeer (628ha), Riverside (104ha), Hunterston (67ha) and Lochshore North (40ha).

2.4 Vacant and derelict land occurs due to changes in the use of land. It remains due to development economics and difficulties with the viability of development. It can create a negative perception of an area for residents, businesses and inward investors, and attract issues such as fly tipping, overgrown vegetation/invasive species and graffiti.

Proposed Strategy

2.5 The scale of the issue faced in North Ayrshire and the effect that it has on local communities and the perception of the area is clear. Through the implementation of the draft strategy it is proposed to tackle this issue through three themes for intervention summarised below:

Theme 1 - Prioritise the investment of the Council in Vacant & Derelict Land

2.6   Key actions from this theme include:

- a comprehensive survey of vacant and derelict sites and the production of a database highlighting priorities which will inform the additional actions set out below;
- the prioritisation of investment by the Council and partners in vacant and derelict sites where appropriate;
- the continued promotion of major regeneration sites;
- the remediation of Council owned sites; and,
- the launch of a 'Stalled Spaces' programme which will encourage the community use of appropriate sites.

Theme 2 - Support the development of sites by the private sector

2.7   This will involve approaching landowners of priority sites to discuss potential means of intervention by the Council to improve viability and encourage redevelopment. This would include;

- the development of a revolving Local Regeneration Infrastructure Fund;
- the development of affordable housing on private sector land; and,
- implementation of advanced landscaping/open space provision.

Theme 3 - Continue to utilise appropriate legal interventions where other actions fail

2.8   Where other actions and negotiations have failed there are various forms of legal interventions available to the Council through Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health legislation which the Council may use to resolve issues of vacancy and dereliction. Government agencies such as the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage also have powers to deal with sites where contamination, invasive species, waste or pollution are causing concern.

Funding & Delivery

2.10   The division of the strategy into 3 Themes recognises that sites will require varying degrees of action and support to encourage improvement or reuse. The strategy contains an Action Plan that is broken down into short, medium and longer term actions, identifying the role of respective partners and the implications associated with its implementation.

2.11   The Scottish Government Vacant & Derelict Land Fund (VDLF) aims to tackle long-term Vacant & Derelict Land in Scotland. However, despite containing the second highest level of Vacant & Derelict Land in Scotland, North Ayrshire currently does not benefit from the fund. The Scottish Government has stated that it will work with COSLA to revisit the focus of the Vacant & Derelict Land in the future, to provide more flexibility to local authorities and widen its scope from 2016/17. Support from the fund for the implementation of this strategy will be sought.

2.12   In the meantime other national funds may be available including the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) Development Fund, Coastal Communities Fund and Big Lottery. With regards to European Funding the 2014-2020 programme is currently being finalised by the European Union, which may contain funding opportunities that align with the priorities contained within this Strategy.

Monitoring & Evaluation

2.13   An important element of the strategy is monitoring and evaluation of the success in implementing the key actions and identified priority sites. It is proposed that the strategy will be updated in a 2 year cycle to monitor success and inform the direction of funding.

2.14   Success will be measured through the Action Plan, annual reporting and bench-marking with other Council areas within Scotland.

3.   Proposals

3.1   It is proposed that Cabinet approves the Vacant & Derelict Land Strategy and associated Action Plan attached at Appendix 1.

4.   Implications

Financial Implications

4.1   The strategy proposes a number of actions that will require investment from the Council including the revolving infrastructure fund and the 'Stalled Spaces' programme. Indicative values are:-

- Officer Post - the appointment of an additional Regeneration Officer at grade 10 at a cost of £42,568 per annum (at the mid point of the salary scale, inclusive of on costs, and subject to job evaluation). This will be met from indicative budgets.

- Stalled Spaces and Revolving Infrastructure Fund - the provision of an annual sum of £150,000 in revenue funding to meet the combined costs of these programmes subject to the publication of detailed funding criteria and take up by the community/development market. This will need to be considered as part of future budget review.

Human Resource Implications

4.2   The implementation of the strategy will require a dedicated officer to promote and project manage the delivery of the Action Plan. This will be met from existing budgets.

Legal Implications

4.3   There are no legal implications at this stage.

Equality Implications

4.4   There are no equality implications at this stage.

Environmental Implications

4.5   The strategy proposes a number of actions that seek to improve the environment through the development and improvement of vacant and derelict sites. This will support the regeneration of our communities and have a direct benefit on health and well being.

Implications for Key Priorities

4.6   The proposals contribute to a number of key priorities within the Single Outcome Agreement and Council Plan. The Council's key objective of regenerating our communities and increasing employment is supported. The Single Outcome Agreement Action Plan states that NAC will target the redevelopment of vacant or derelict land.

Community Benefit Implications

4.7   There are no community benefit implications at this stage.

5.   Consultations

5.1   Consultation has been undertaken with officers from Streetscene, Housing, Estates and Planning.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   The continued legacy of Vacant & Derelict Land in North Ayrshire is a significant issue. The implementation of a Vacant & Derelict Land Strategy will assist with the prioritisation of sites, and consequently resources.

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Background Papers
N/A

North Ayrshire Council

Draft Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy

(Draft document to be re-formatted)

Contents

(Foreword to be drafted)

1. The Problem

What is vacant and derelict land?

Vacant land is defined by the Scottish Government as 'land viewed as an appropriate site for development, having either had previous development on it or preparatory work in anticipation of future development'.

Derelict land is that 'damaged by development, so that it is incapable of development for beneficial use without some remedial works'.

Both relate to land that is capable of being reused but due to particular issues with the condition of a site, new development has not occurred. They are sometimes referred to as 'brownfield' sites.

Why does this occur?

Our communities develop and change over time. Buildings may no longer be fit for purpose; employers may relocate to another site and the use of land can change to something else. Through this process of change some land can be left behind, lapsing into decay and through a lack of new investment can become vacant. It can then remain for a number of reasons, such as: economic, locational or physical obsolescence.

In North Ayrshire, vacant and derelict land is often the result of the decline in former industrial uses within the area and a legacy of issues such as undermining, contamination or deterioration. Major industrial closures such as ICI, Volvo, Ayrshire Metal Products and Shell are examples, while there has also been a historic oversupply of industrial land associated with the development of Irvine New Town.

Why does it remain?

As the development of vacant and derelict land for a productive use is reliant on the development market, the same issues that caused vacancy can affect the viability or prospects of redevelopment. In common with most parts of Scotland, development activity in North Ayrshire has reduced since the start of the economic downturn. Table 1 illustrates the decrease in housing completions in North Ayrshire since 2008-09.

The long term vacancy of sites is a function of development economics, becoming a long term problem when land owners find they cannot realise the price they want for sites or are otherwise unable to sell. Problems obtaining development finance, escalating remediation costs and a lack of demand also have an impact.

Table 1. Public/private house completions, North Ayrshire and Arran.

New Build Completions	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Private	365	140	155	141
Public	102	108	84	155

How much vacant and derelict land is there?

i) In Scotland

Vacant and derelict land is surveyed on an annual basis by North Ayrshire Council to inform the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS). It is the only national data source for urban vacant and derelict land. The survey:

i) provides an evidence base for monitoring the level of urban vacant and derelict land and its current state;

ii) monitors the remediation of and progress in bringing this land into reuse; and

iii) helps inform planning and other statutory documents/strategies.

In 2013 there were 3,972 vacant and derelict sites covering 11,114 hectares of land in Scotland. The most common previous uses were defence, manufacturing, agriculture and residential development. Table 2 illustrates those local authorities with the highest levels of urban vacant and derelict land.

Table 2 Vacant and Derelict Land by Local Authority .
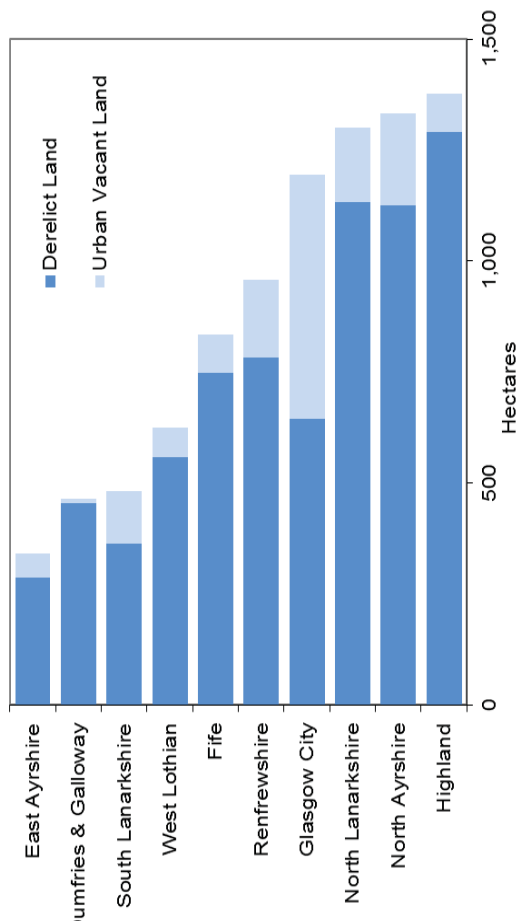
ii) In North Ayrshire

As shown in Table 2, North Ayrshire contains the second highest level of vacant and derelict land in Scotland with approximately 1,333 hectares split over 255 sites. To contextualise this it is the equivalent land area of the Three towns; Adrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenson.

Approximately 82% of the urban population in North Ayrshire is located within 500 metres of a vacant or derelict site. Most affected are those in the worst 15% of Social Multiple Index Deprivation Areas.

The survey also highlights that North Ayrshire has seen a 7% increase in the level of vacant and derelict land over the last seven years. Of the total amount of land 1,126 hectares or 136 sites are defined as derelict, and 207 hectares or 119 sites, are urban vacant.

This increase can be attributed in part to changes in the way that we assess and record vacant and derelict land. It should also be noted that the high level of vacant and derelict land in North Ayrshire is somewhat distorted by the large grouping of sites identified at Ardeer, which accounts for 628 hectares or 47% of the Councils total.

While the survey and these plans include sites over 1ha, the strategy applies to all sites. Appendix 1 contains a list of the 5 largest Vacant and Derelict Land sites identified in North Ayrshire and plans of all sites by Neighbourhood Planning Area.

What effect does this have on our communities?

Vacant and derelict land, whatever the size of the site, can have a significant impact on our communities. It can blight an area very quickly resulting in social, economic and environmental issues.

Sites can become a nuisance to communities attracting vermin, fly tipping/litter, contamination, invasive species and anti-social behaviour. It can create an impression of underinvestment and negative perception of the area for residents, businesses and potential inward investors.

2. The Solution

The scale of the issue faced in North Ayrshire and the effect that it has on local communities and the perception of the area is clear. The Council aim to tackle this issue through the implementation of this strategy.

Tackling the issue of vacant and derelict land has the potential to regenerate neighbourhoods, creating employment as well as an improved perception of the area. The purpose is to enable development or environmental improvements to reduce the amount of vacant and derelict land within our communities. This will build upon existing actions taken within North Ayrshire.

Policy context

The Scottish Government Regeneration Strategy sets out the Governments vision to support the most disadvantaged communities, promoting sustainability and well being. The Governments strategy promotes community led regeneration as local communities have a key role in this process to ensure that actions and projects reflect their needs and tackle the issues that have been identified.

The development and implementation of a vacant and derelict land strategy is consistent with the thrust of policy contained at national and local level. The North Ayrshire Single Outcome Agreement and Council Plan propose to implement key strategies that protect, support and enhance investment in our communities and our residents.

The Single Outcome Plan states that North Ayrshire Council will target the redevelopment of vacant and derelict land and property.

A key document is the Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy which sets out ambitious goals to transform North Ayrshire by ensuring that more businesses and jobs are located within the area and our town centres are revitalised.

A support mechanism for the actions contained within this strategy is the North Ayrshire Council Local Development Plan. The plan prioritises the allocation of brownfield land as opposed to new greenfield release, encouraging mixed use development of former industrial sites in recognition of a historic over supply of land. The Plan has led to initial planning activity on significant sites such as West Byrehill, North Newmoor and Nethermains, though delivery is yet to be realised.

One action described in this document will be the implementation of temporary landscapes and community gardens which on a more local level aims to deliver working open spaces that are inclusive, accessible and fit for purpose, helping invest in our communities and deliver key outputs of the Council's emerging Open Space Strategy.

Actions

This Strategy identifies 3 key themes for intervention. These are:

- **Theme 1.** Prioritise the investment of the Council in vacant and derelict land.

- **Theme 2.** Support the development of sites by the private sector.

- **Theme 3.** Continue to utilise appropriate legal interventions where other actions fail.

This strategy will be led by North Ayrshire Council but will require the support of partners, the development industry and local communities.

The associated Action Plan therefore identifies the role of respective partners and the resource implications associated with its implementation.

Theme 1. Prioritise the investment of the Council in vacant and derelict land.

North Ayrshire Council and their community planning partners administer a significant investment programme and can lead change in the area. The Council is also a major landowner and has considerable investment proposals within a 10 year capital plan.

The Council and Irvine Bay Regeneration Company (IBRC) have prioritised the regeneration of town centres, recognising their importance in improving perceptions of towns and of North Ayrshire as a whole. Significant development proposals include the proposed Irvine Leisure Centre and offices at Ardrossan Quayside which are high profile sites located within central areas.

The development of large scale regeneration schemes are also being pursued by IBRC at Ardrossan Harbour, Irvine Harbourside and Marine Drive with the intention to develop residential and leisure uses on vacant/derelict land and improve the perception of these areas.

Other examples include Montgomerie Park (case study 1), and improved public realm at the former Kilbirnie Police Station, Kilbirnie Cross and Kilwinning Park and Ride.

Through the development of its estate and investment through its capital programme, the Council can play a role and prioritise the development of vacant or derelict sites in public ownership.

Community Planning and strategic partners such as the NHS and housing associations can also have a direct influence on future development in the area though investment in for example, affordable housing or health facilities.

Case Study 1—Montgomerie Park, Irvine

Land at Montgomerie Park was transferred to North Ayrshire Council from the Irvine Development Corporation (IDC) in 1996. Extending to almost 200 acres the site was previously part of a combined housing/leisure/business proposal approved by IDC.

Development at Montgomerie Park is being led by the private sector with the Council aiding with the development of a masterplan and supporting the advance installation of infrastructure such as foul and surface water sewers; water; gas; electricity and fibre optics. This encourages development by limiting the up front investment requirements and hence risk exposure of private sector developers.

The Council adopted an innovative approach for the marketing of the site currently being developed by Persimmon Homes. It was agreed that the site should be made available as serviced development parcels available at limited up front cost with receipts paid as units are sold. The masterplan for the site is now being reviewed to take account of market conditions and revised planning policy guidelines.

Actions under Theme 1

Actions proposed within this theme are set out below.

Action 1: Survey of vacant and derelict sites and the production of a database highlighting priorities. This will inform the allocation of resources and other Actions within this strategy. Appendix 1 contains plans of Vacant and Derelict Land within North Ayrshire, and highlights those owned by the Council. These sites require to each be assessed to determine their ownership, potential future use, any constraints to development, any enabling works which could be undertaken. the requirement for any legal intervention, etc. This process will allow priorities for intervention to be further identified at a site specific level. It will inform other actions within the strategy and raise awareness of potential assets or development sites.

Action 2: Prioritisation of investment in Council owned sites. This will require that any new investment proposals by the Council first consider vacant and derelict land. The preparation of development briefs or masterplans will provide a clear indication of permitted use, forms/scale of development and any other terms and conditions which are likely to be required in a development scheme. This will inform proposals of the Council and Community Partners, and reduce uncertainty for prospective developers.

Action 3: The promotion of major regeneration priorities. There are a number of major vacant or derelict sites that will remain priorities for development and regeneration which are important due to their scale and location/prominence. These include Irvine Harbourside and Ardrossan North Shore. These will continue to be promoted alongside the Irvine Bay Regeneration Company, including the analysis of new or innovative delivery mechanisms in light of market conditions.

Action 4: Remediation of Council owned sites. Some Council owned sites are contaminated. The Contaminated Land Inspection Regime provides a basis for assessing contaminated sites however steps to resolve these issues depend on the level and type of contamination, the likelihood of future development and availability of resources. Projects may include the advance remediation of key sites identified through Action 1 or, phytoremediation through the planting of trees or short rotation crops for biomass to remove contaminants in top soil.

Action 5: Develop and launch a 'Stalled Spaces' programme. Many of these Actions will relate to larger sites, however the resolution of small scale sites will be just as important. We propose to launch a stalled spaces programme where the Council will provide initial 'seed funding' to allow communities to take and support appropriate action that remediates vacant and derelict land to their benefit. The scheme could provide opportunities for long term unemployed, providing experience for example with Council direct services. These projects may include: temporary landscapes; outdoor arts; or, community gardens/growing. Case Study 2 provides a local example of how this can be achieved.

The key actions from this Theme are:

Action 1: Survey of vacant and derelict sites and the production of a database highlighting priorities.

Action 2: Prioritisation of investment in Council owned sites.

Action 3: The promotion of major regeneration priorities.

Action 4: Remediation of Council owned sites.

Action 5: Develop and launch a 'Stalled Spaces' programme.

Case Study 2—Fairlie Growers

In May 2008 the Organic Growers of Fairlie agreed a lease to a disused site on the edge of the village.

Abandoned for 20 years, its historic use was as a railway station, until the 1950's, and more recently as a boatyard, the site suffered from a significant level of contamination.

Over the past 6 years the Organic Growers of Fairlie have spent over £60,000 in preparing and building up a 'grow your own' community garden containing a workshop, over 200 raised beds and 3 large polytunnels.

The garden has seen significant levels of demand with approximately 200 members and a lengthy waiting list.

Much of the capital investment was supported by external funders, donations and some revenue gained from a low cost annual membership.

Theme 2. Support the development of sites by the private sector.

The Council cannot deliver the strategy alone, in particular where sites are in private ownership. In recognition of development economics and the reasons for vacancy, a supporting role may however be played through the provision of advice, financial support, or legal intervention.

Support for intervention will be targeted on two levels:

• those that tackle decay across large geographical areas; and,

• small scale individual sites/premises that are scattered throughout the Council area.

In focussing intervention key sites will require to be prioritised. This will be informed by the assessment of sites proposed by Action 1, however there are likely to be several key priorities. These are considered to include.

Sites based upon their scale, condition and profile within settlements:

Irvine: Tournament Park, North Newmoor, Ayrshire Metal Products.

Kilwinning: West Byrehill.

3 Towns: Ardrossan North Shore.

Garnock Valley: Lochshore.

Site which represent priorities based upon economic development objectives:

Hunterston, Ardeer, Irvine Enterprise Area/i3 Business Park

Proposals for the development of these sites are at varying stages of evolution. The preparation of the North Ayrshire Council Local Development Plan recognises both the oversupply of industrial land and the need to focus development on vacant sites. Three of the above sites have been allocated as 'mixed use employment areas', the intention of which is to encourage a sustainable mix of uses, moving away from the tradition of large scale industrial land. This theme will involve approaching landowners of priority sites to discuss potential means of intervention by the Council to improve viability and encourage redevelopment.

The issue of development viability has been recognised in work relating to development delivery. Through consultation with the development industry the Council has considered its role in supporting private investors through the use or terms of disposal of land (an example being Montgomerie Park) or in supporting delivery through infrastructure provision and development agreements. This is noted within the actions proposed.

Actions under Theme 2.

Actions proposed within this theme are set out below.

Action 6: Development of a revolving Local Regeneration Infrastructure Fund. Development economics can be marginal in North Ayrshire, and the viability of investment is often narrow or negative. The Strategy will support private sector development through the creation of a fund as an incentive that in some cases will provide financial assistance to secure the development or improvement of vacant or derelict sites. In others it may be used as match funding to improve viability, supporting decontamination or infrastructure provision. Criteria for this fund based upon the level of priority a site represents, and the extent of commitment by any private sector partner will be developed and published following the approval of this strategy. This would provided in the form of a loan or grant depending on the scale of the site.

Action 7: Development of affordable housing on private and public sector land. This is linked to Action 6 above and aims to encourage the development of large private sector sites by considering the introduction of public or affordable housing by the Council or housing associations on to private sector development sites. While this will not be appropriate in all cases, the provision of affordable housing may assist in the creation of a sense of place upon which private development can be more readily introduced, and/or could assist in the sharing of infrastructure costs for later private sector development. This will require prioritisation in line with the Councils Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2012-2015 (SHIP). Masterplanning will play a key role to ensure a legible and attractive built environment.

Action 8: Implementation of advanced landscaping/open space provision. There is a requirement on sites above a certain scale for private developers to provide public open space as part of any new development. Where significant sites are to be delivered in a number of development parcels, open space would be created in and around these, or at the entrance to the site. By implementing advanced works we can remove a significant initial financial burden from developers whilst ensuring that the scale, type and design of new open space is in line with the Councils emerging Open Space Strategy. Another benefit of these advanced works would be the implementation of a temporary improvement.

These mechanisms are not mutually exclusive and in some cases a combination of measures may be required.

The key actions from this Theme are:

Action 6: Development of a revolving Local Regeneration Infrastructure Fund.

Action 7: Development of affordable housing on private and public sector land

Actions under Theme 3. Continue to utilise appropriate legal interventions where other actions fail.

Where other actions and negotiations have failed there are various legal powers which the Council can use to resolve issues of vacancy and dereliction as whatever the size, such sites can blight an area very quickly resulting in social, economic and environmental issues.

Government agencies such as the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage also have powers to deal with sites where contamination, invasive species, waste or pollution are causing concern.

Action 9: To maintain the availability and prioritise legal intervention where appropriate. There are various forms of legal interventions available to the Council through Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Legislation. These actions can range from serving Amenity, Abatement or Dangerous Building Notices. Such action is not appropriate for every situation and may be considered as a last resort following failure of more positive measures which may be agreed between private landowners and the Council. The benefits of taking such action can include helping to clear or improve key sites, and sending a message to landowners that vacant and derelict sites should be maintained in a reasonable condition.

The key action from this Theme is:

Action 9: To maintain the availability and prioritise legal intervention where appropriate.

Gap site, Saltcoats, before and after.
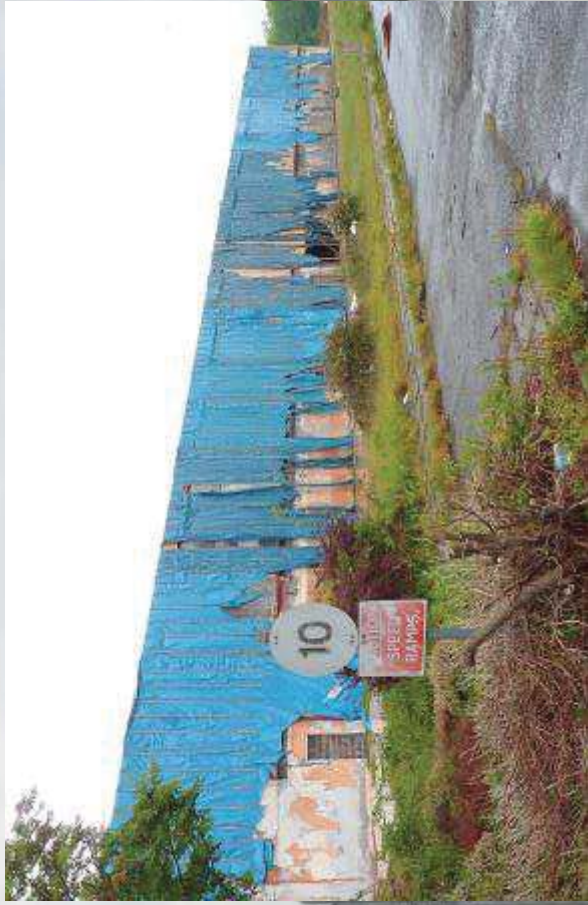
Case Study 3—North Newmoor, Irvine

A successful example of intervention without formal enforcement action is the former JRG Group fire place factory at 3 Crompton Way, North Newmoor, Irvine.   Following initial complaints and concerns regarding the condition of the site, the Council contacted the landowner.

An agreement between the Council and the landowner has ensured the clearance and security of the site without the need for formal action. The Council continues to monitor the site.

3. Funding and Delivering the Strategy

The division of this strategy into 3 Key Themes recognises that sites, either in public or private ownership, will require varying degrees of action and support to encourage reuse. The Action Plan is broken down into short (0-5 years), medium (6-10 years) and longer (11 years and beyond) term actions. It identifies the role of respective partners and the implications associated with its implementation.

Finance plays a key role. North Ayrshire currently does not benefit from the Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund, which is limited to 5 local authorities. This is despite North Ayrshire containing the second highest level of vacant and derelict land in Scotland and the more marginal development economics in the area.

North Ayrshire Council will therefore seek the support of the Scottish Government in the implementation of this strategy through an allocation from the VDLF when as intended its availability is widened from 2016/17. The VDLF is one clear source of funding but other sources of funding are available which will allow support from the Council to go much further.

Local funds will aid groups where it has been identified that community use is appropriate. However for more strategic actions national funds are available and include:

- The *Regeneration Capital Grant Fund* which seeks to support delivery of large scale improvements in deprived areas.

- The *Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) Development Fund* that aims to support projects that enhance the natural environment and improve access to high quality green space.

- The *Coastal Communities Fund* aims to encourage the economic development of UK Coastal communities for projects that create sustainable economic growth and jobs.

- Big Lottery in Scotland supports community groups and projects that improve health, education and the environment.

With regards to European Funding the 2014-2020 programme is currently being finalised by the European Union, which may contain funding opportunities that align with the priorities contained within this Strategy.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

An important element of the strategy is monitoring and evaluation of the success in implementing the key actions.

It is proposed that the strategy will be updated in a 2 year cycle to monitor success and inform the direction of funding. This will ensure that this document represents a robust and up to date position on the approach to vacant and derelict land. Linking the document to the North Ayrshire Local Development Plan will ensure that the strategic delivery of this strategy is consistent with the strategic control of development within the Council area.

Each revision to the strategy will contain a review of the previous Actions as well as setting out new priorities based on the progress and any new identified actions for the new document.

North Ayrshire Council will continue to inform the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS). As the only national data source the survey provides an annual update on levels of vacant and derelict land within Scotland.

Success will be measured through the Action Plan, annual reporting and benchmarking with other Council areas within Scotland.

5. Action Plan

Action Plan	Purpose	Lead Role	Resources and timescale
Action 1			
Survey of vacant and derelict sites and the production of a database highlighting priorities.	The maps will act as a central database to highlight vacant and derelict sites for the public and potential investors. It will contain basic information on size, site history, known restrictions, ownership and priorities for action based on either:	Led by officers within the Regeneration team, support from colleagues in Asset Management & Estates, Legal, Planning, Streetscene, Environmental Health, Community Planning and IT will be required.	<u>Resources</u> To be effective the action will require the employment of a dedicated Vacant and Derelict Land Officer to draft and maintain the database acting as a key contact for landowners and members of the public, in conjunction with other Actions within this Strategy.
	1) Support for development proposals, 2) Stalled Spaces/ community use, 3) temporary greening, 4) Legal action, or 5) no action.		<u>Timescales</u> It would be expected that this database would be finalised and available by winter 2014 with an annual commitment to assess and update the database.
	This will inform the allocation of resources through other Actions within this Strategy.		

Action Plan	Purpose	Lead Role	Resources and timescale
Action 2 Prioritisation of investment in Council owned sites.	Using the database identified within Action 1, we will prioritise Council owned sites for the drafting of development briefs or masterplanning to encourage the development or sale of land. Any council investment in the development of new industrial, office or residential proposals should first consider vacant and derelict land to effectively reduce the level of vacant and derelict land. This should align with the Local Development Plan.	Led by officers within Asset Management & Estates support from colleagues in Planning, will be required to advise on appropriate development as well as Legal, Streetscene, Environmental Health & the local community. Officers in Communications will be required to aid with the marketing and on-going advertisement of these sites External support may be required in the development of large scale masterplanning.	<u>Resources</u> Subject to advice from Estates, the development of briefs and marketing of key sites will be met within existing resources. External advice may be required on development viability and masterplanning as well as marketing. <u>Timescales</u> Prioritisation of sites for briefs and masterplans will occur following the completion of Action 1. The prioritisation of vacant and derelict sites for new Council led development will be on-going.
Action 3 The Council will continue to promote existing large scale priorities.	To prioritise investment and marketing of key large scale sites to reduce the number of large vacant and derelict sites located that are of particular strategic importance. Initially highlighting Irvine Harbourside and Ardrossan North Shore, using the list identified within Action 1, further key sites will be added to this list.	Led in conjunction between officers within Asset Management & Estates and Regeneration, support will be required from Planning and Irvine Bay Regeneration Company. Officers in Communications will be required to aid with the marketing and on-going advertisement of these sites	<u>Resources</u> Subject to advice from Estates, marketing of key sites will be met within existing resources. Individual sites may require capital resources to pump- prime development. <u>Timescales</u> Prioritisation of sites for briefs and masterplans will occur following the completion of Action 1. The prioritisation of vacant and derelict sites for new Council led development will be on-going.

Action Plan	Purpose	Lead Role	Resources and timescale
Action 4			
Remediation of Council owned sites.	Key sites will be prioritised with a view to reducing the number of sites that suffer from contamination and improve the prospects of selling Council owned land or finding other meanwhile uses such as energy production or greening of sites.	Linked to Action 1, this will be led by Regeneration in conjunction with officers from Environmental Health, Asset Management & Estates and Planning.	Resources

The Vacant and Derelict Land Officer would draft and maintain the database acting as a key contact to lead and manage projects as they develop, with advice from Estates, Planning and Environmental Health.

Funds will be required for projects to remediate sites. Revenue would aid in match funding where phytoremediation is proposed.

Timescales

Prioritisation of key sites will be identified within Action 1. Projects to remediate sites is a long term action with initial works beginning in Summer 2015. |
| **Action 5** | | | |
| Develop and launch a 'Stalled Spaces' programme | To reduce the number of small vacant and derelict sites located within settlements it is proposed that the Council will launch and manage a 'Stalled Spaces' programme that offers grants to community groups to encourage temporary use of vacant and derelict land. Including community growing, gardens and public art. | Jointly led by Regeneration and Community Planning with support/ advice provided by officers from Environmental Health, Asset Management & Estates, Education, Legal, Communications, and Planning. | Resources

The Vacant and Derelict Land Officer would promote and project manage the programme in conjunction with other Actions within this Strategy.

Annual revenue budget will be required to operate the scheme spread over promotion and a grant programme.

Timescales

Proposed launch of programme in Winter 2014. |

Action Plan	Purpose	Lead Role	Resources and timescale
Action 6 Development of a revolving Local Regeneration Infrastructure Fund.	To improve viability of sites in a marginal economy and provide grant assistance for small/medium scale landowners and developers to aid with costs associated with the development of vacant/derelict land. i.e. contamination, infrastructure, match funding. Criteria will be published which will include the level of priority a site represents and demonstration of the level of commitment by the private landowner.	Led by Regeneration with support/ advice provided by officers from Legal, Planning, Environmental Health, Building Standards and Asset Management & Estates.	<u>Resources</u> The Vacant and Derelict Land Officer would promote and project manage the programme in conjunction with other Actions within this Strategy. An annual budget will be required to operate the Fund. <u>Timescales</u> Proposed launch of Fund, Spring 2015 running initially until 2020.
Action 7 Development of affordable housing on private and public sector land	To encourage the development of large scale sites. The provision of affordable housing. may assist in the creation of a sense of place upon which private development can be more readily introduced, and/or could assist in the sharing of infrastructure costs for later private sector development. Council development will be prioritised through Action 1 in line with priorities contained within the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.	Led by Housing with support from officers in Planning, Regeneration, Environmental Health and Building Standards in conjunction with private landowners.	<u>Resources</u> To be met within existing resources within Housing. Delivered through existing budgets for affordable housing provision. <u>Timescales</u> On-going.

Action Plan	Purpose	Lead Role	Resources and timescale
Action 8 Implementation of advanced landscaping/ open space provision	To improve the appearance of sites, access to open space and unlock the development potential of privately owned sites, by reducing the burden for and private developers in the implementation of open space within prospective development sites.	Jointly led by Regeneration and Streetscene with support/advice provided by officers from Legal and Planning.	<u>Resources</u> The Vacant and Derelict Land Officer would promote and project manage the programme in conjunction with other Actions within this Strategy. Revenue would help in drawing in match funding from external funders. This would be agreed on a site by site bases. <u>Timescales</u> Initial medium term action.
Action 9 To maintain the availability and prioritise legal intervention where appropriate.	To ensure that where all other actions and negotiations have failed, appropriate action is taken to abate nuisances. The prioritisation or hierarchical use of a suite of legal interventions will ensure that 'problem' sites are maintained in a suitable condition.	Depending on type of action, led by either Planning, Environmental Health, Building Standards, Legal or Streetscene. Some sites may require partnership working with external agency staff such as those from SEPA & SNH.	<u>Resources</u> To be delivered through existing resources. <u>Timescales</u> On-going

Appendix 1— Vacant and Derelict Land by Neighbourhood Planning Area

The following maps highlight the location of sites, by neighbourhood area, that are contained within the 2013 survey carried out by North Ayrshire Council to inform the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS).

Six largest vacant and derelict sites identified in North Ayrshire.*

Site Location	Size (Hectares)
Ardeer Peninsula	628
i3 Business Park	104
Hunterston	67
Lochshore North	40
Redburn, Irvine	25

* SVDLS survey 2013

Irvine Neighbourhood Area

KILWINNING

IRVINE

Legend

🟩	Council Ownership within SVLDS
▢	SVLDS
▢	Neighbourhood Areas

1:35,000

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Development Plans

Kilwinning Neighbourhood Area

1:25,000

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Development Plans

Legend

Council Ownership within SVLDS

SVLDS

Neighbourhood Areas

Three Towns Neighbourhood Area

Legend

- Council Ownership within SVLDS
- SVLDS
- Neighbourhood Areas

Produced by the Technical Section
Development Plans

1:35,000

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Garnock Valley Neighbourhood Area

Legend

Council Ownership within SVLDS

SVLDS

Neighbourhood Areas

1:25,000

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North Coast Neighbourhood Area

Legend
- Council Ownership within SVLDS
- SVLDS
- Neighbourhood Areas

1:25,000

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NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 6

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Benchmarking in the Council**
Purpose:	To provide Cabinet with details of progress on Benchmarking activities undertaken including:- a. the current progress of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF); b. how the Framework is being used to support continuous improvement and self-evaluation by the Council; and c. the Benchmarking and best practice activities that the Council has undertaken.
Recommendation:	That Cabinet notes the report.

1. Introduction

1.1 Scottish Councils have been working with the Improvement Service (IS) over the last three years to develop a common approach to Benchmarking which reports standard information about council services to local communities. This supports Councils in implementing best practice and performance wherever it is found

1.2 The core purpose of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) is to support all councils to improve their services by working and learning together.

1.3 Benchmarking makes comparisons on spending, performance and customer satisfaction between similar councils. It enables Councils to identify their strengths and weaknesses and learn from those who are achieving the best performance to improve local service delivery.

1.4 The Council will continue to participate in these collective efforts towards self-improvement although there are three core points which need to be borne in mind:

- It is important when looking at the Council to compare like with like.
- The focus is on variations in spending and performance which the Council can directly control.

- The aim is to help the Council improve and become more cost effective in delivering local services and, through that, support people in improving their life outcomes.

1.5   The purpose of the LGBF framework is to support evidence based comparisons and, through that, shared learning and improvement. The indicators are very high level and are designed to focus questions on why variations in cost and performance are occurring between similar councils. Benchmarking provides a basis from which to ask questions and probe why differences occur. Councils can then "drill down" and explore why these variations are happening. Benchmarking provides the platform for learning and improvement.

1.6   There is however a degree of confusion as to what Benchmarking actually involves. A common misconception is that Benchmarking is simply comparing numerical indicators, such as those contained in performance indicators and league tables. These numerical measures are best referred to as benchmarks.

2.   Current Position

2.1   Due to the wide and diverse range of Council services the Council is involved in several Benchmarking groups including:

- Education Scotland Comparator Authorities/Schools
- Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool
- ABC Benchmarking Group (Community and Cultural Services)
- Scottish Housing Best Value Network
- Scottish Rent Arrears Forum
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA)
- SOCITM Benchmarking Club
- Scottish Community Care Benchmarking Network
- The Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators in Scotland (SOLAR)
- Building Standards - South West of Scotland authorities (the 3 Ayrshires plus Dumfries and Galloway. The new National Performance Framework for Building Standards will provide more robust Benchmarking opportunities.
- Customer Services Benchmarking Group
- Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) Performance Networks as indicated in the table below:-

● Building cleaning ● Building maintenance ● Cemetery and Crematoriums ● Education catering ● Highways and winter maintenance	● Refuse collection ● Street cleansing ● Street lighting ● Transport operations and vehicle maintenance ● Welfare catering

2.2   The Performance Management Update 14/15 to Cabinet on the 29 April 2014 advised of the Performance Management Forum Action Plan theme of "*Promoting a culture of learning from best practice* ". Work is ongoing with all Services to enhance the Council's approach including identifying those areas where Benchmarking exercises will be undertaken in the future.

2.3   There has been a concerted effort to obtain external recognition and share best practice and this can be demonstrated by the Council winning several awards during 2013/14 .

Scottish Business Excellence Award
●   Housing Services - EFQM 5 star accreditation and overall winner of the Scottish Business Excellence Award 2013.

Cosla Excellence Awards 2014
●   Gold Award - Innovation and Improvement - Social Services & Health - CareNA
●   Bronze Award - Tackling Inequalities and Improving Health - Social Services and Health (Dementia Support Services)
●   Bronze Award - Securing a Workforce for the Future - Development & Environment (Street Scene)
●   Bronze Award - Strong & Sustainable Communities - Development & Environment (Street Scene).

APSE
●   Finalist in 'Best Performing Council for Roads and Winter Maintenance' category
●   Best Performer Finalist: Transport operations and vehicle maintenance
●   National Finalist for Best Efficiency Project (Transport)
●   Winner APSE Rising Stars Awards - Transport
●   National finalist Scottish Apprentice if the Year award.

Other Awards
- Scottish Government's Award for Quality in Planning
- British Hallmarking Council, Touchstone Award for Excellence in Trading Standards Enforcement
- School catering achieved the Gold Food for Life Catering Mark from the Soil Association
- Scottish Government, Certificate of Achievement - European Structural & Social Change Award 2007 - 2012
- Short listed for Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Excellence Awards. - Exemplary Planning to deliver Housing - Housing you want to live in, in a place you would want to be in award
- The Council's website was awarded a four star rating from the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM)
- Housing Services, Revenues and Benefits achieved Customer Service Excellence recognition.
- Housing Services - Inside Housing have named St. Beya Gardens Millport Isle of Cumbrae as one of the UK's Top 5 Small Affordable Housing Developments, and one of the country's Top 50 Affordable Housing Developments in 2014.

Staff Awards
- APSE Rising Stars Award 2014 - Fleet Category
- Candidate of the year award in the National Customer Service Profession Qualification (CSPQ).
- Cost Sector Catering Awards winning the "Team of the Year" and the "Chef of the year" awards

Environment Awards
- Green Tourism Sliver Award - Eglinton Country Park
- Dreghorn Primary School - Winner of the 2014 Scotland's Finest Woods Award (FWA) for their 'Woodland Walk' project
- Newton Beach, Millport -2014, Blue Flag status
- Pencil Beach, Largs - 2014, Marine Conservation Society award

2.4 Services Plans contain a broad and balanced set of indicators covering costs, quality and customer results including the LGBF indicators (efficiency measures, and unit cost measures).Service Plans were reported to Cabinet on the 29 April 2014

2.5 In addition, performance on the LGBF indicators are reported through six monthly Service Plan Performance reports and the Council's annual Public Performance Report. These are considered by both Cabinet and the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee.

2.6   The Council also demonstrates a strong commitment to using the LGBF by:

- Having Council representation on various Improvement Service (IS) task groups including:

  ❑ Environmental Services Indicators Task group – July 2013
  ❑ Review of Social Work Indicators - July 2013
  ❑ Review of Housing Indicators Task Group - August 2013
  ❑ Benchmarking and Public Performance Reporting – October 2013
  ❑ Customer satisfaction measurement – October 2013

- Involvement as part of the framework, in a process to drill-into the information presented through the LGBF to understand in more detail why variations are occurring. The outputs of the first phase of this work will be reported by summer 2014. This focused on work being undertaken with Roads Services and around the Post-School Destinations of Children.

- The Council also demonstrates its overall commitment towards identifying best practice and during 2013/14 Services undertook additional   Benchmarking exercises which yielded positive outcomes including:

❑ Finance & Corporate Support

- Non-domestic rates collection- benchmarking with Perth and Kinross Council identified that the comparator Councils have a higher collection level but do not issue non - statutory Reminder notices whereas North Ayrshire do and therefore further work will be carried out in this area to find out if sending a non-statutory Reminder is a cost effective option. In addition the Assessor's non - domestic rates file which is received in March can contain new properties and large increases in Rateable Value, which means that there is no opportunity to recover the rates in that year. In turn this impacts on collection levels.   Perth and Kinross Council receive early notification from their Assessor of new properties or large changes in rateable value and they contact businesses in advance of sending out a demand notice to notify them of the payment due.   This practice is being introduced with the Council's Assessor and the non-domestic rates team will telephone businesses to encourage early payment.

- Council tax collection- benchmarking with Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire Councils' resulted in a change in the way in-year Council Tax collection figures are calculated. Both Councils' take a line by line approach, which basically means that income for Scottish Water is excluded from the calculation and only income recovered against Council Tax is reported. This has increased the Council's 2013/14 Council Tax collection figure to 94.75% compared to 93.35% under the previous method of calculation. This falls in line with the majority of other Scottish Councils who report in the same way.

- Procurement Capability Assessment (PCA) reported to Cabinet on the 29 April 014 provided information on the work being done to demonstrate and improve procurement practices

- Customer Contact Centre undertakes regular benchmarking exercises with a variety of Councils to review performance and to improve processes.

❑ Social Services - Educational attainment for looked-after children.

- The outcome of the exercise highlighted a common theme as opposed to stark differences between the Councils who were involved. That is, the gap between the educational attainment of looked after children and those who are not looked after, regardless of the length of time they had that status. Discussion is to take place with Education colleagues about the findings of the exercise to identify what further action is required.

❑ Legal Services

- The SOLAR Legal and Licensing Benchmarking took place in 2013 with 18 Councils participating. The exercise included various areas across the whole spectrum of the delivery of an in-house legal service. The outcome of the exercise has resulted in data becoming available which will allow benchmarking opportunities to identify best practice. Further analysis will take place in 2014/15.

- The Council contributes funding of £2016 for two years, to support the development of the LGBF and extension into Community Planning Partnerships.

2.7 The "Performance on a Page" report is based on the final 2012/13 data which has been previously provided to Elected Members through the Annual Performance Report and Service Performance Reports. The Council's position is as indicated in Appendix 1 which shows North Ayrshire's performance relative to all other Councils in Scotland. Certain indicators are constrained by specific socio-economic or geographic factors. For example there is a close link between lower levels of educational attainment and deprivation and similarly, how rurality and island communities impact on the cost of delivering services such as waste collection.

Appendix 2 explains how to read the charts.

2.8 Performance

- 68 per cent of our PIs are improving faster than the average Council, whereas last year it was only 53 per cent of the PIs. This is much stronger evidence of being an improving Council and being on a Good to Great journey;

- Areas of greatest strengths include:

  - CORP5b2 - (Domestic Noise) Average time (hours) between time of complaint and attendance on site, for those requiring attendance on site
  - C&L2 - Cost per library visit
  - C&L3 - Cost of museums per visit
  - ECON 1 - % Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes
  - HSN1 - Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due
  - HSN2 - Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids

- The greatest improvements have been seen in:

  - ENV3a - Net Cost of Street Cleaning per 1,000 Population
  - ENV3b - Street Cleanliness Index
  - CHN11 - Pupils entering positive destinations
  - HSN3 - Percentage of council dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Standards

- The Council has significantly fewer PI's in the bottom two quartiles, 37% as opposed to 45%. There are slightly fewer PI's in the top Quartile but this largely results from changes to the PI's reported;

- The number of PI's where we appear to be doing less well include:

  - CORP2 - Cost of Democratic Core per 1,000 population
  - CORPAM2 - Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
  - CHN9 - Balance of Care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the Community
  - CHN7 - % Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 (SIMD)
  - CORP6 - Sickness Absence Days per Employee.

2.9 All of the information generated by the LGBF has been placed in a dedicated website which has "dashboards" for each Council showing movement on indicators across the three years covered, and a comparison with the Scottish average for all indicators. It contains all Scotland and, where relevant, "benchmarking families" data for every listed indicator This website can be located through http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/.

3. Proposals

3.1 That the Cabinet notes (a) the current situation with the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF); (b) how the Framework is being used to support continuous improvement and self-evaluation by the Council; and (c) the benchmarking and best practice activities that the Council has undertaken.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial Implications.

Human Resource Implications

4.2 There are no human resources implications.

Legal Implications

4.3 There are no legal Implications.

Equality Implications

4.4   There are no equality implications.

        Environmental Implications

4.5   There are no Environmental Implications.

        Implications for Key Priorities

4.6   Implementation of effective benchmarking practices across the Council will support "Objective 4 - Operating more Efficiently and Effectively" contained in the Council Plan 2012 -17.

5.   Consultations

5.1   The Extended Corporate Management Team have been actively involved in the development, review and use of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework to support the Council's transformation agenda.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   The core purpose of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework is for Councils to work together to improve their use of performance information and their understanding of why councils vary in terms of what they achieve for their communities and how good service practices can be better shared across all Councils.

6.2   The Accounts Commission has commended the use of the framework recognising the significant resource implications, not only in benchmarking, but also in maintaining, reporting and developing performance indicators. In addition, the framework has a statutory basis and is endorsed by the Accounts Commission in its 13/14 Statutory Guidance.

Elma Murray

ELMA MURRAY
Chief Executive

Reference :
For further information please contact Andrew Fraser, Head of Democratic & Administration Services on 324125

Background Papers
None

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL CHANGE PROGRAMME

Local Government Benchmarking Framework - North Ayrshire Council

VER: 02.03

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NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL CHANGE PROGRAMME

LEGEND: Performance on a Page

LEGEND: Indicator Analysis (1)

LEGEND: Indicator Analysis (2)
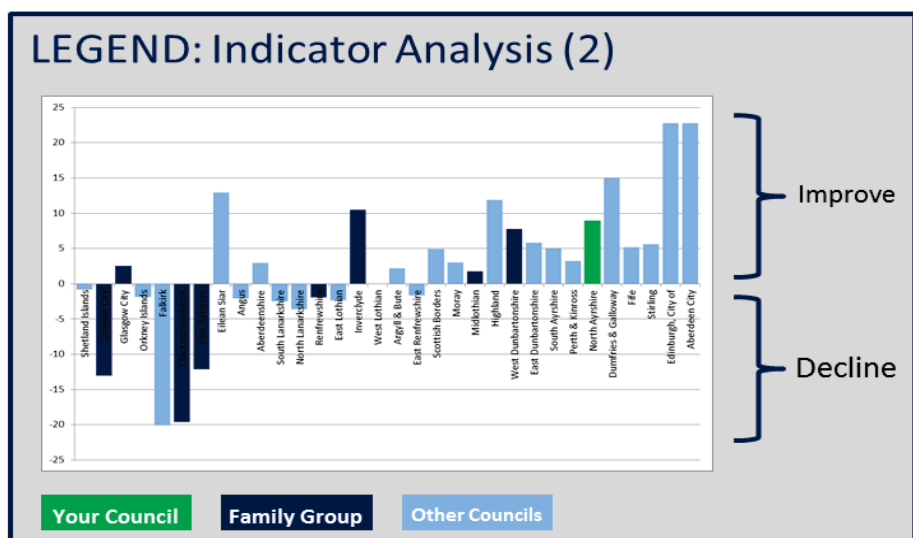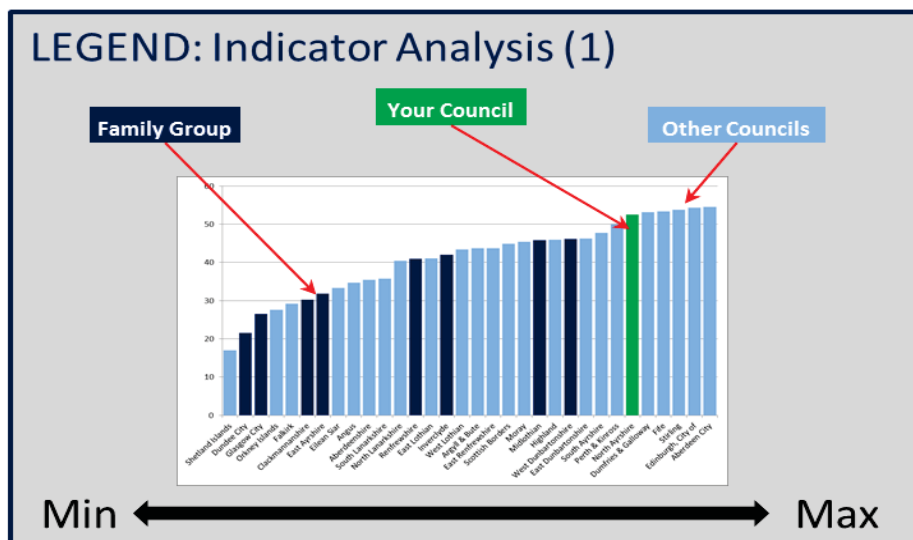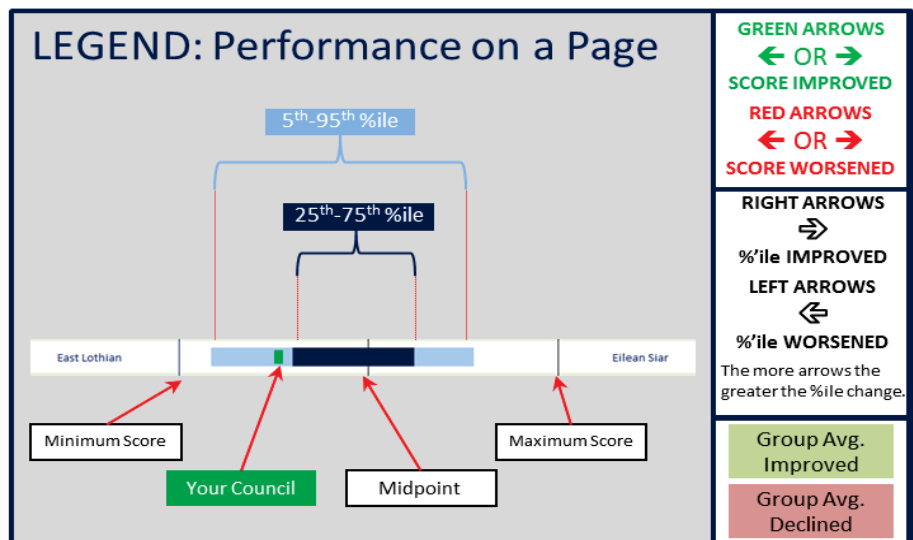
RELATIVE POSITION - SCOTLAND

North Ayrshire

			Min — Mid-point — Max		Change	% ile
Childrens Services	CHN1: Cost Per Primary School Pupil	Shetland Islands		Clackmannanshire	→	23%
	CHN2: Secondary School Cost per Pupil	Shetland Islands		Renfrewshire	←	39%
	CHN3: Cost per Pre-School Place	Shetland Islands		Moray	→	29%
	CHN4: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 for Standard Grade (Pre-Appeal)	Dundee City		East Renfrewshire	→→	16%
	CHN5: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 for Higher Grade by S6 (Pre-Appeal)	Glasgow City		East Renfrewshire	→→→	19%
	CHN6: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 for Standard Grade by SIMD (Pre-Appeal)	Clackmannanshire		East Dunbartonshire	→→	62%
	CHN 7: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 for Higher Grade by SIMD (Pre-Appeal)	Stirling		East Dunbartonshire	←←	56%
	CHN8a: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in a residential setting	East Renfrewshire		Scottish Borders	→→	59%
	CHN8b: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in the Community	Shetland Islands		Inverclyde	→→	65%
	CHN9: Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the Community	Orkney Islands		East Renfrewshire	←←←	35%
	CHN10: % of Adults satisfied with local schools	Angus		North Lanarkshire		3%
	CHN11: Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations	Clackmannanshire		Eilean Siar	→→→→→	74%
Corporate Services	CORP1: Central Support services as a % of Total Gross expend	Perth & Kinross		Shetland Islands	→	97%
	CORP2: Democratic Core Costs per 1,000 Population	Shetland Islands		North Lanarkshire	←←	61%
	CORP3b:Females in top 5%	Shetland Islands		Glasgow City	→	81%
	CORP4: Cost of Council Tax collection	Eilean Siar		Fife	→→	65%
	CORP5b2: Attendance time	Orkney Islands		Perth & Kinross	→	90%
	CORP6: Days Lost per FTE Employee	Clackmannanshire		Highland	←	68%
	CORP7: Council Tax paid by year end	Dundee City		Orkney Islands	→←	6%
	CORP8: Invoices paid in 30 days	Orkney Islands		Aberdeen City	→←	10%
Social Work	SW1: Home Care Costs per Hr (Over 65)	Shetland Islands		East Lothian	→→	61%
	SW2: SDS spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+	Eilean Siar		Glasgow City	→→→→	47%
	SW3: % of people 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home	Angus		Midlothian	→→	61%
	SW4: % of Adults satisfied with social care or social work services	South Ayrshire		Orkney Islands		74%
	SW5: Average weekly cost per resident	Shetland Islands		East Dunbartonshire	←←←	68%
Culture and Leisure Services	C&L1: Gross cost per attendance at Sports facilities	South Ayrshire		Stirling	→→	61%
	C&L2: Cost Per Library Visit	Orkney Islands		Highland	→←	84%
	C&L3: Cost per museum visit	Renfrewshire		Argyll & Bute	→←	93%
	C&L4: Cost of Parks & Open Spaces per 1,000 Populations	East Lothian		Eilean Siar	←	19%
	C&L5a: % of adults satisfied with libraries	Argyll & Bute		Dundee City		97%
	C&L5b: % of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	Argyll & Bute		East Lothian		74%
	C&L5c: % of adults satisfied with museums and galleries	Shetland Islands		Argyll & Bute		6%
	C&L5d: % of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	Argyll & Bute		Shetland Islands		87%
Environmental Services	ENV1b: Net Waste collection cost per premise	Shetland Islands		Aberdeen City		65%
	ENV2b: Net Waste disposal cost per premise	Eilean Siar		Falkirk		42%
	ENV3a: Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	West Dunbartonshire		East Renfrewshire	→→→→→	68%
	ENV3b: Overall cleanliness index	Aberdeen City		Moray	→→→→	55%
	ENV3c: Cleanliness Score (% acceptable)	Edinburgh City		Eilean Siar	←←←←←	45%
	ENV4a: Cost of Maintenance per Kilometre of Roads	West Dunbartonshire		Orkney Islands	→←	55%
	ENV4b: % of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	Argyll & Bute		Angus	→→	16%
	ENV4c: % of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	Argyll & Bute		Moray	→	16%
	ENV4d: % of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	Argyll & Bute		Orkney Islands	→←	6%
	ENV4e: % of unclassified class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	Dumfries & Galloway		Orkney Islands	←←	36%
	ENV5: Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 Pop	Shetland Islands		Midlothian	→→→→→	71%
	ENV5a: Cost of trading standards per 1,000 Pop	Shetland Islands		Renfrewshire		42%
	ENV5b: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 Pop	Shetland Islands		East Renfrewshire		74%
	ENV6: % of Total Waste arising that is recycled	Shetland Islands		Clackmannanshire	→←	84%
	ENV7a: % of adults satisfied with refuse collection	Edinburgh City		Shetland Islands		81%
	ENV7b: % of adults satisfied with street cleaning	Eilean Siar		Orkney Islands		48%
Housing Services	HSN1: Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due	East Lothian		Moray	→	96%
	HSN2: % of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	Orkney Islands		North Ayrshire	→←	100%
	HSN3: % of dwellings meeting SHQS	Renfrewshire		Clackmannanshire	→→→	96%
	HSN4: % of repairs completed within target times	Shetland Islands		Angus	←←	88%
	HSN5: % of council dwellings that are energy efficient	Renfrewshire		Aberdeen City	→	84%
Corporate Services -	CORPAM1: Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	Edinburgh City		South Lanarkshire	←←←	77%
	CORPAM2: Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	West Dunbartonshire		Shetland Islands	←←←←←	13%
ECON	ECON1: % Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes	Scottish Borders		Argyll & Bute		82%

North Ayrshire (Scotland)

Lower 25 %ile   Middle 50 %ile   Upper 25 %ile

- 21%
- 51%
- 28%

%'ile

North Ayrshire (Scotland)

Worsened   Static   Improved

- 27%
- 18%
- 55%

Δ %'ile

North Ayrshire (Scotland)

Worsened   Static   Improved

- 43%
- 0%
- 57%

Δ Score
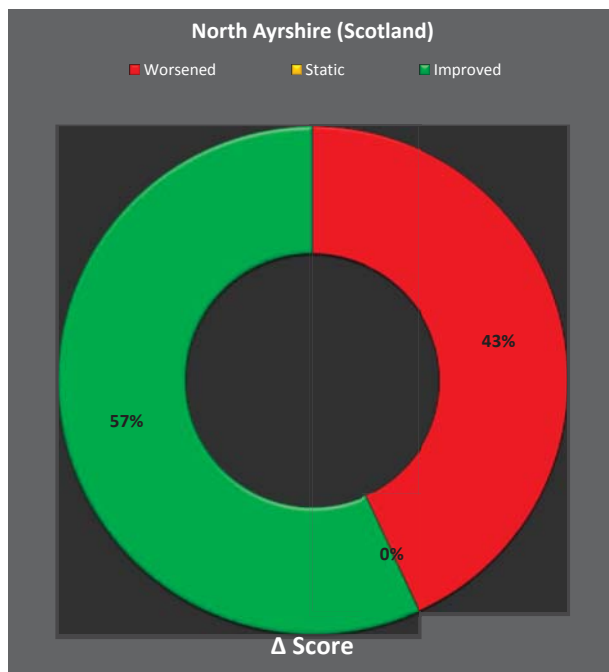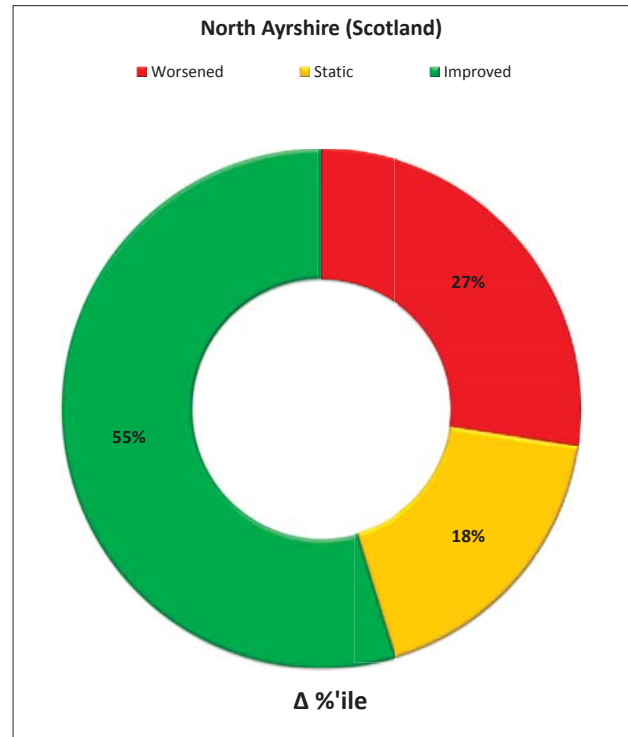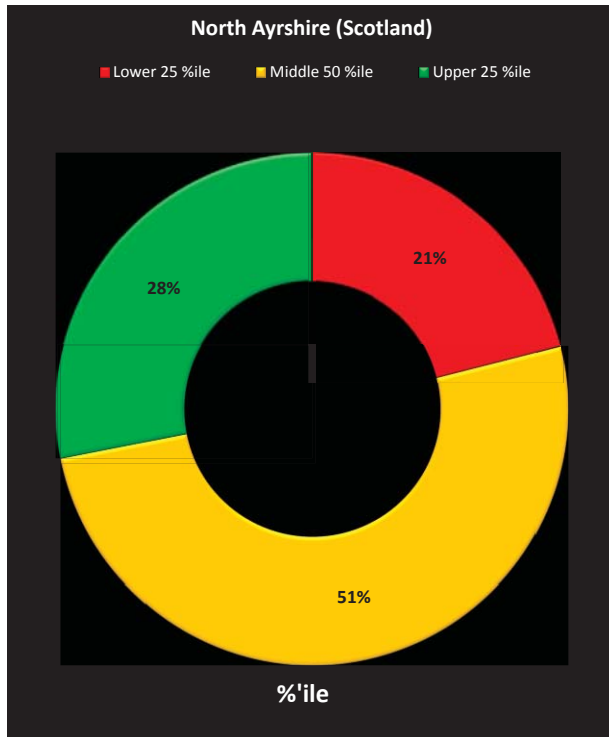
STRENGTHS

CORP5b2: Attendance time
C&L3: Cost per museum visit
ECON1: % Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes
HSN2: % of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
CORP1: Central Support services as a % of Total Gross expend
HSN1: Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due
C&L2: Cost Per Library Visit
ENV6: % of Total Waste arising that is recycled
HSN3: % of dwellings meeting SHQS
C&L5a: % of adults satisfied with libraries
C&L5d: % of adults satisfied with leisure facilities
CORP3b:Females in top 5%
HSN5: % of council dwellings that are energy efficient
HSN4: % of repairs completed within target times
CORPAM1: Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
ENV7a: % of adults satisfied with refuse collection

WEAKNESSES

C&L5c: % of adults satisfied with museums and galleries
ENV4d: % of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
ENV4b: % of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
C&L4: Cost of Parks & Open Spaces per 1,000 Populations
ENV4c: % of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
CORPAM2: Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
CHN4: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 for Standard Grade (Pre-Appeal)
CHN10: % of Adults satisfied with local schools
CHN5: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 for Higher Grade by S6 (Pre-Appeal)
CORP8: Invoices paid in 30 days
CHN1: Cost Per Primary School Pupil
CORP7: Council Tax paid by year end

North Ayrshire

RELATIVE POSITION - APPROPRIATE PEERS

			Min	Mid-point	Max		Change	% ile	PEER GROUP

Service	Indicator	Min peer	Chart	Max peer	Change	% ile	PEER GROUP
Childrens Services	CHN1: Cost Per Primary School Pupil	North Ayrshire		South Lanarkshire	→←	0%	Rurality
	CHN2: Secondary School Cost per Pupil	Dumfries & Galloway		Angus	→←	50%	Kids
	CHN3: Cost per Pre-School Place	East Ayrshire		South Lanarkshire	→←	17%	Rurality
	CHN4: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 for Standard Grade (Pre-Appeal)	Dundee City		North Lanarkshire	→→→→→	57%	Child Poverty
	CHN5: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 for Higher Grade by S6 (Pre-Appeal)	Glasgow City		Inverclyde	→→→→→	57%	Child Poverty
	CHN6: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 for Standard Grade by SIMD (Pre-Appeal)	Clackmannanshire		Inverclyde	→→→	43%	Child Poverty
	CHN 7: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 for Higher Grade by SIMD (Pre-Appeal)	Dundee City		North Lanarkshire	→←	57%	Child Poverty
	CHN8a: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in a residential setting	Angus		Scottish Borders	→→→	83%	Kids
	CHN8b: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in the Community	Scottish Borders		North Ayrshire	→→→→→	100%	Kids
	CHN9: Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the Community	Argyll & Bute		Dundee City	→←	0%	Kids
	CHN10: % of Adults satisfied with local schools	Angus		North Lanarkshire		3%	Scotland
	CHN11: Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations	Clackmannanshire		Inverclyde	→→→→→	86%	Employment
Corporate Services	CORP1: Central Support services as a % of Total Gross expend	Perth & Kinross		North Ayrshire	→←	100%	Population
	CORP2: Democratic Core Costs per 1,000 Population	Scottish Borders		Perth & Kinross	→→→	83%	Population
	CORP3b:Females in top 5%	Shetland Islands		Glasgow City	→	81%	Scotland
	CORP4: Cost of Council Tax collection	Dundee City		South Ayrshire	→→→	50%	Population
	CORP5b2: Attendance time	Fife		South Ayrshire	→←	83%	Rurality
	CORP6: Days Lost per FTE Employee	Clackmannanshire		Highland	←	68%	Scotland
	CORP7: Council Tax paid by year end	Dundee City		Clackmannanshire	→←	29%	Employment
	CORP8: Invoices paid in 30 days	Orkney Islands		Aberdeen City	→←	10%	Scotland
Social Work	SW1: Home Care Costs per Hr (Over 65)	Fife		East Lothian	→←	17%	Rurality
	SW2: SDS spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+	Eilean Siar		Glasgow City	→→→→	47%	Scotland
	SW3: % of people 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home	Angus		Midlothian	→→	61%	Scotland
	SW4: % of Adults satisfied with social care or social work services	South Ayrshire		Orkney Islands		74%	Scotland
	SW5: Average weekly cost per resident	Shetland Islands		East Dunbartonshire	←←←	68%	Scotland
Culture and Leisure Services	C&L1: Gross cost per attendance at Sports facilities	South Ayrshire		East Ayrshire	→←	50%	Rurality
	C&L2: Cost Per Library Visit	East Ayrshire		East Lothian	←←←	83%	Rurality
	C&L3: Cost per museum visit	South Ayrshire		North Ayrshire	→←	100%	Rurality
	C&L4: Cost of Parks & Open Spaces per 1,000 Populations	East Lothian		East Ayrshire	←←←	33%	Rurality
	C&L5a: % of adults satisfied with libraries	Argyll & Bute		Dundee City		97%	Scotland
	C&L5b: % of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	Argyll & Bute		East Lothian		74%	Scotland
	C&L5c: % of adults satisfied with museums and galleries	Shetland Islands		Argyll & Bute		6%	Scotland
	C&L5d: % of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	Argyll & Bute		Shetland Islands		87%	Scotland
	ENV1b: Net Waste collection cost per premise	Midlothian		East Ayrshire		83%	Rurality
	ENV2b: Net Waste disposal cost per premise	Eilean Siar		Falkirk		42%	Scotland
	ENV3a: Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	South Ayrshire		Midlothian	→→→→→	67%	Rurality
	ENV3b: Overall cleanliness index	Angus		Shetland Islands	→→→→→	67%	Rurality
	ENV3c: Cleanliness Score (% acceptable)	Glasgow City		Dumfries & Galloway	←←←←←	50%	Rurality
	ENV4a: Cost of Maintenance per Kilometre of Roads	East Lothian		Orkney Islands	←←←←←	50%	Size
	ENV4b: % of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	South Ayrshire		Orkney Islands	→→→	17%	Size
	ENV4c: % of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	South Ayrshire		Orkney Islands	←←←	17%	Size
	ENV4d: % of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	North Ayrshire		Orkney Islands	→←	0%	Size
	ENV4e: % of unclassified class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	South Ayrshire		Orkney Islands	→←	33%	Size
	ENV5: Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 Pop	South Ayrshire		Scottish Borders	→→→	67%	Population
	ENV5a: Cost of trading standards per 1,000 Pop	South Ayrshire		Perth & Kinross		50%	Population
	ENV5b: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 Pop	Perth & Kinross		Scottish Borders		50%	Population
	ENV6: % of Total Waste arising that is recycled	Shetland Islands		Clackmannanshire	→←	84%	Scotland
	ENV7a: % of adults satisfied with refuse collection	Aberdeen City		East Lothian		83%	Rurality
	ENV7b: % of adults satisfied with street cleaning	East Ayrshire		East Lothian		50%	Rurality
Housing Services	HSN1: Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due	East Lothian		Moray	→	96%	Scotland
	HSN2: % of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	Orkney Islands		North Ayrshire	→←	100%	Scotland
	HSN3: % of dwellings meeting SHQS	Renfrewshire		Clackmannanshire	→→→	96%	Scotland
	HSN4: % of repairs completed within target times	Shetland Islands		Angus	←←	88%	Scotland
	HSN5: % of council dwellings that are energy efficient	Renfrewshire		Aberdeen City	→	84%	Scotland
Corporate Services -	CORPAM1: Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	Fife		South Lanarkshire	←←←	67%	Rurality
	CORPAM2: Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	South Ayrshire		East Ayrshire	←←←←←	17%	Rurality
ECON	ECON1: % Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes	Scottish Borders		Argyll & Bute		82%	Scotland

North Ayrshire (Appropriate Peers)

Lower 25 %ile · Middle 50 %ile · Upper 25 %ile

19%
35%
46%

%'ile

North Ayrshire (Appropriate Peers)

Worsened · Static · Improved

23%
41%
36%

Δ %'ile

North Ayrshire (Appropriate Peers)

Worsened · Static · Improved

43%
57%
0%

Δ Score
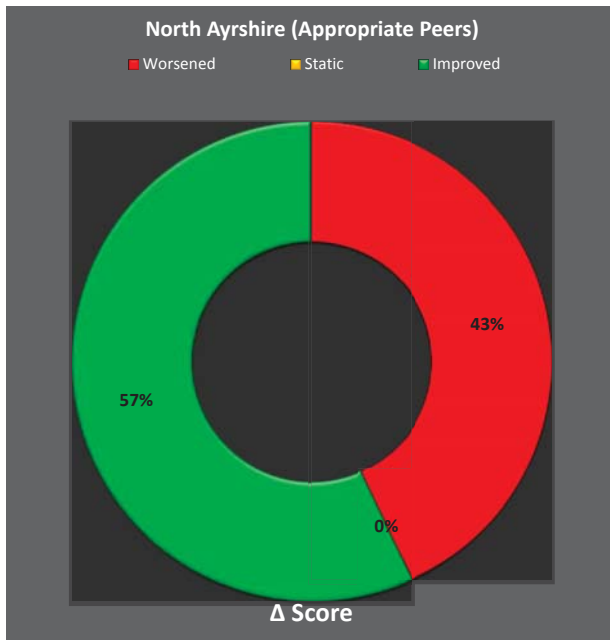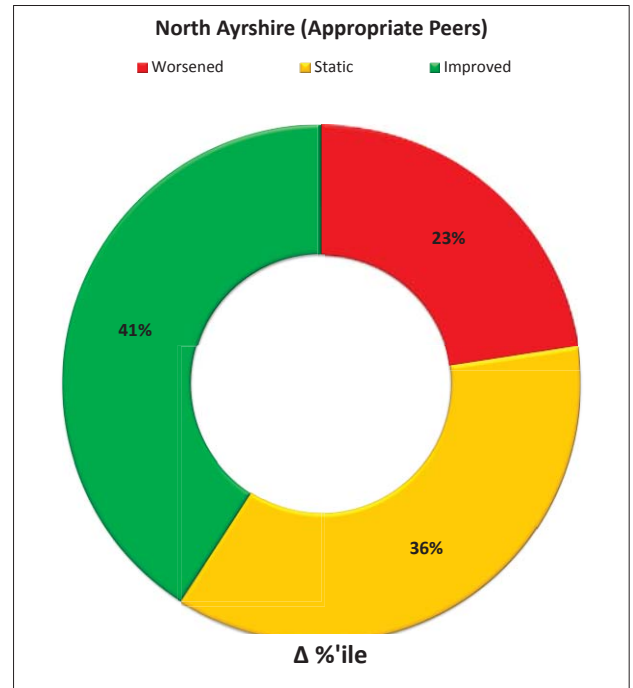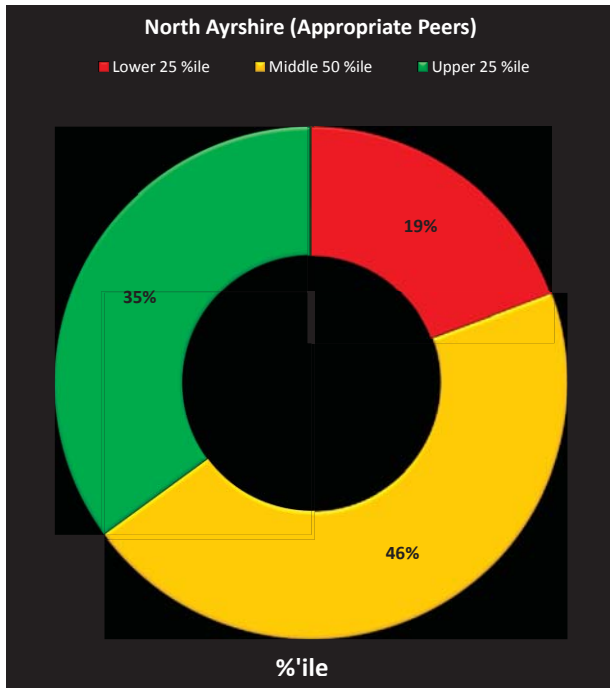
STRENGTHS

ECON1: % Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes
C&L3: Cost per museum visit
HSN2: % of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
CORP1: Central Support services as a % of Total Gross expend
HSN1: Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due
CORP5b2: Attendance time
C&L2: Cost Per Library Visit
CHN8b: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in the Community
ENV6: % of Total Waste arising that is recycled
ENV1b: Net Waste collection cost per premise
HSN3: % of dwellings meeting SHQS
C&L5a: % of adults satisfied with libraries
C&L5d: % of adults satisfied with leisure facilities
CORP3b:Females in top 5%
CHN8a: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in a residential setting
CORP2: Democratic Core Costs per 1,000 Population
HSN5: % of council dwellings that are energy efficient
HSN4: % of repairs completed within target times
ENV7a: % of adults satisfied with refuse collection
CHN11: Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations

WEAKNESSES

C&L5c: % of adults satisfied with museums and galleries
ENV4b: % of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
ENV4d: % of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
ENV4c: % of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
CHN3: Cost per Pre-School Place
CHN1: Cost Per Primary School Pupil
CORPAM2: Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
CHN10: % of Adults satisfied with local schools
SW1: Home Care Costs per Hr (Over 65)
CORP8: Invoices paid in 30 days
CHN9: Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the Community

North Ayrshire

CHN1: Cost Per Primary School Pupil
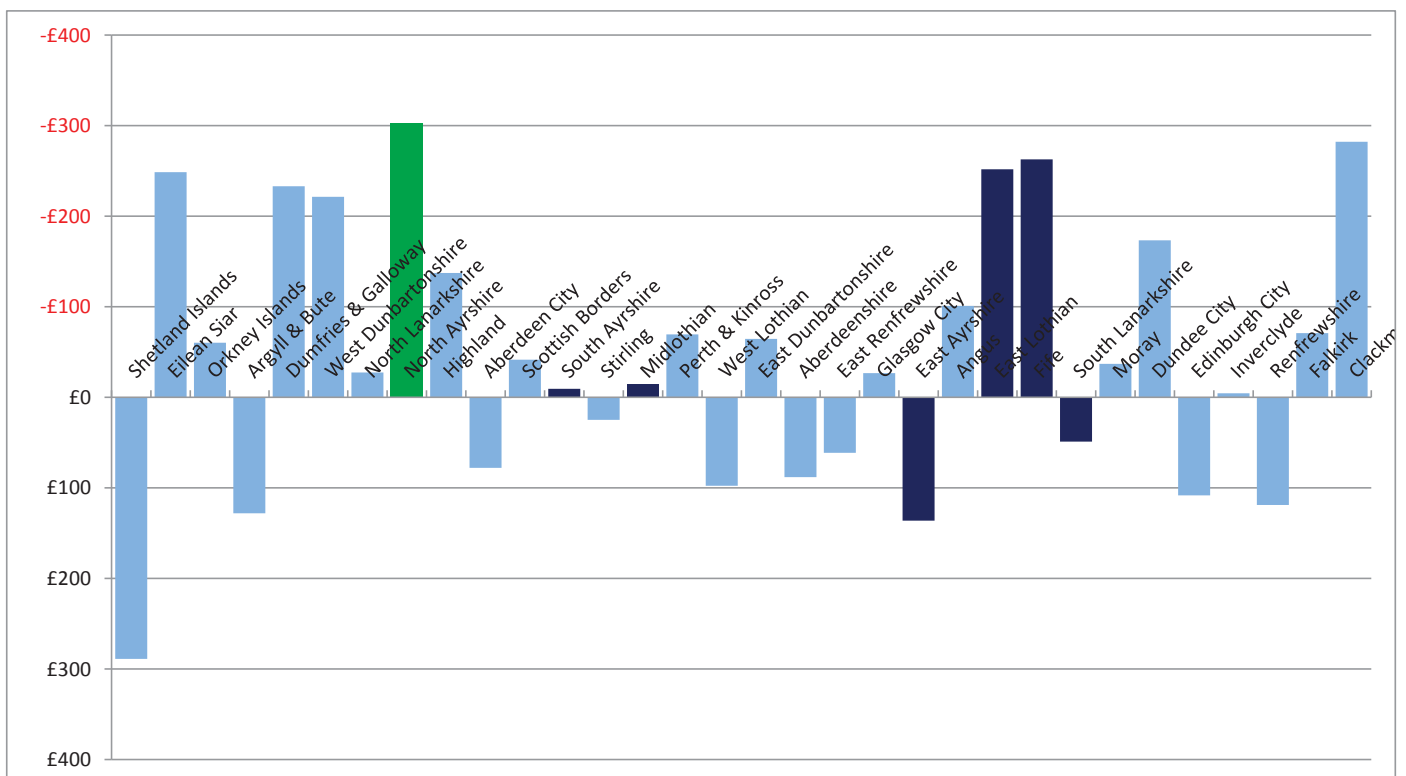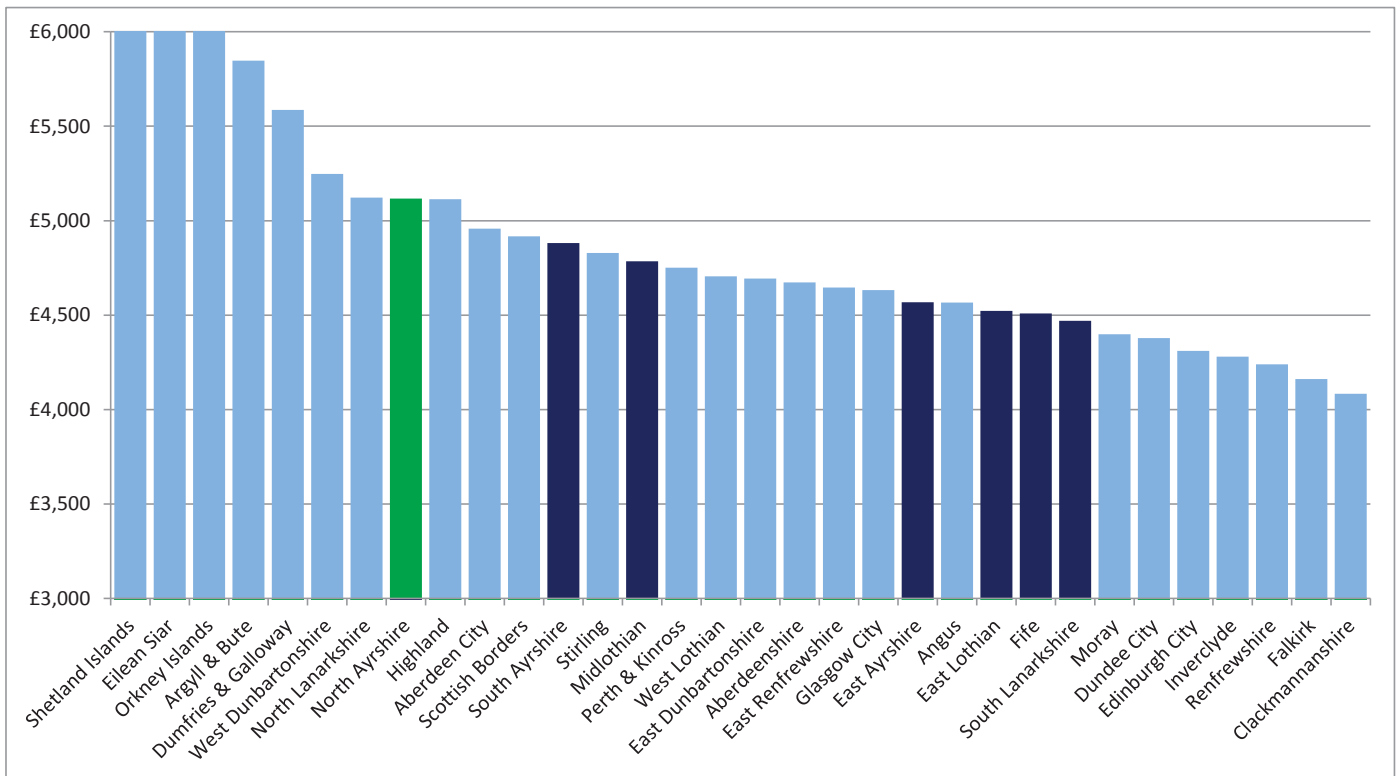
North Ayrshire

CHN2: Secondary School Cost per Pupil
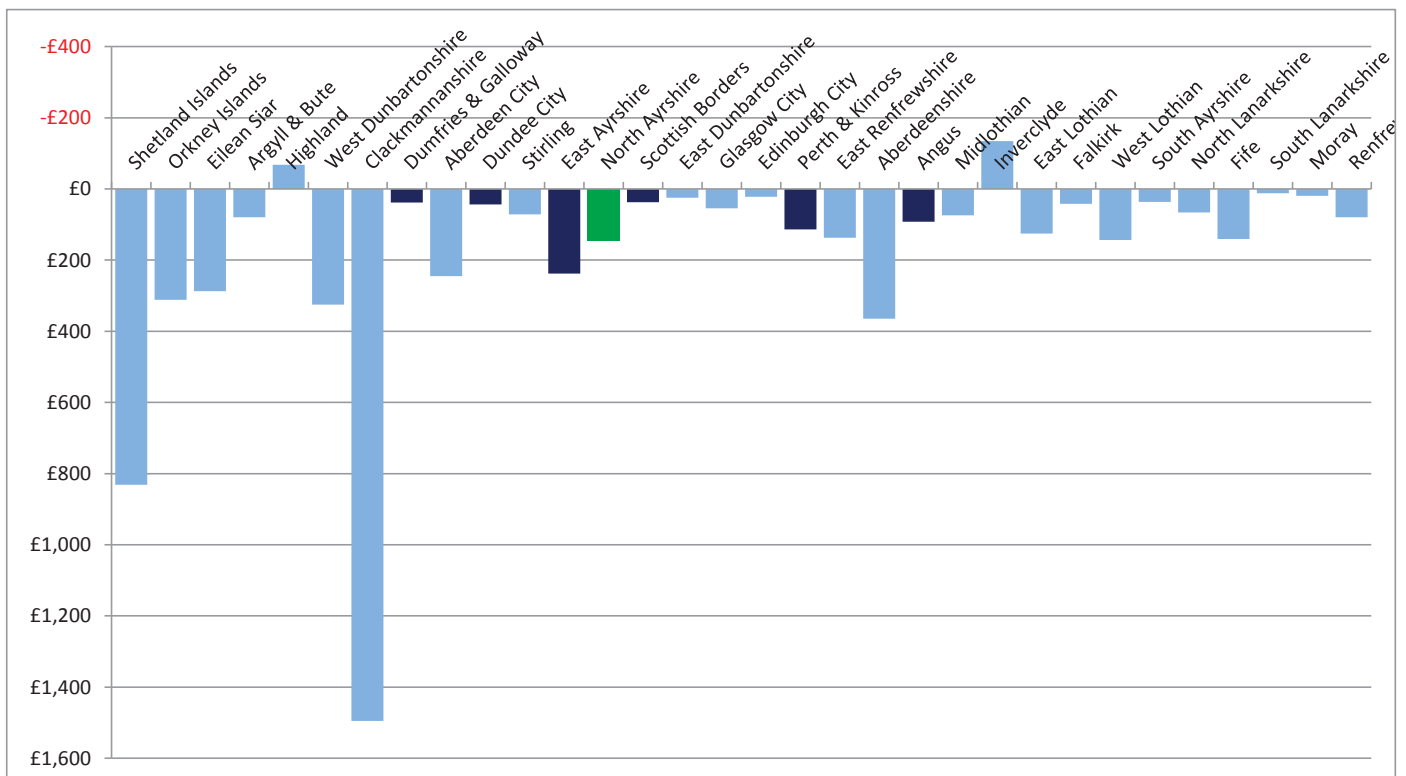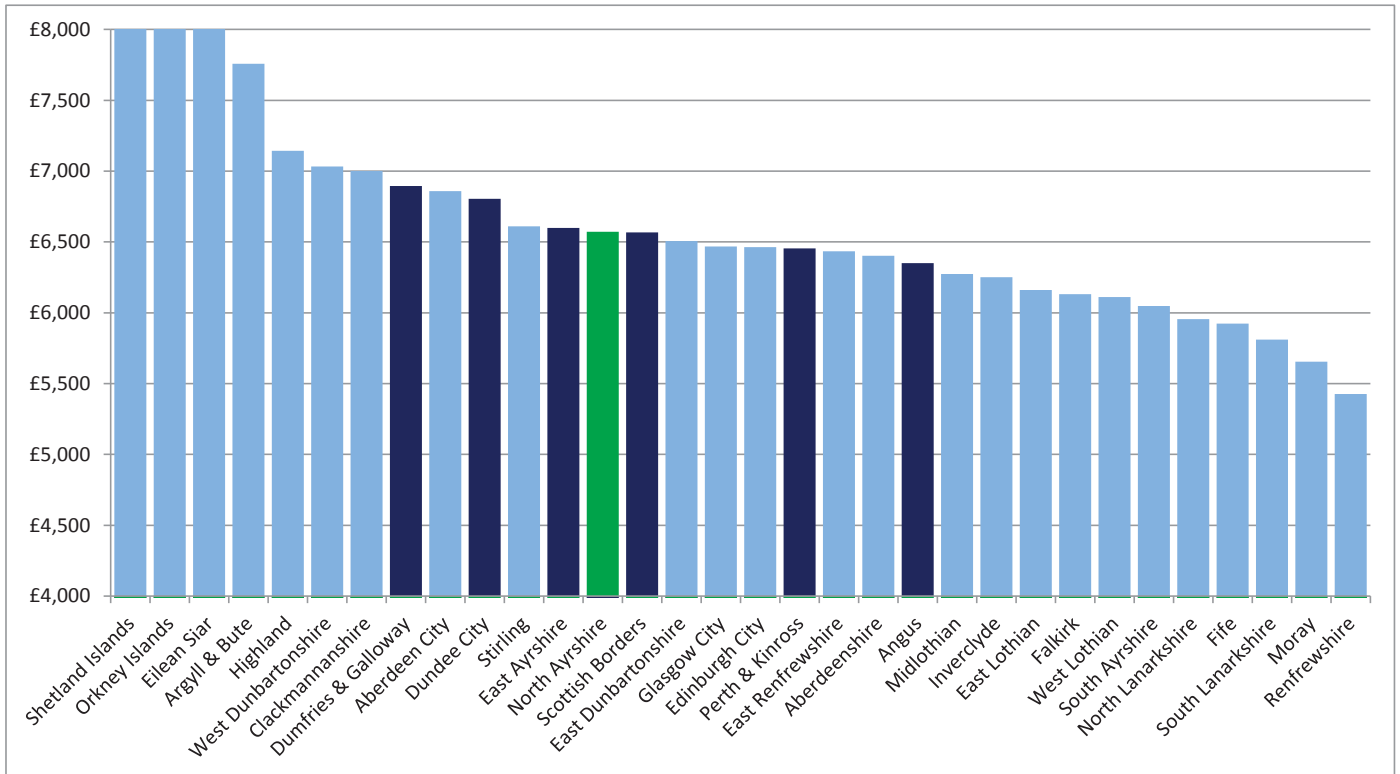
North Ayrshire

CHN3: Cost per Pre-School Place
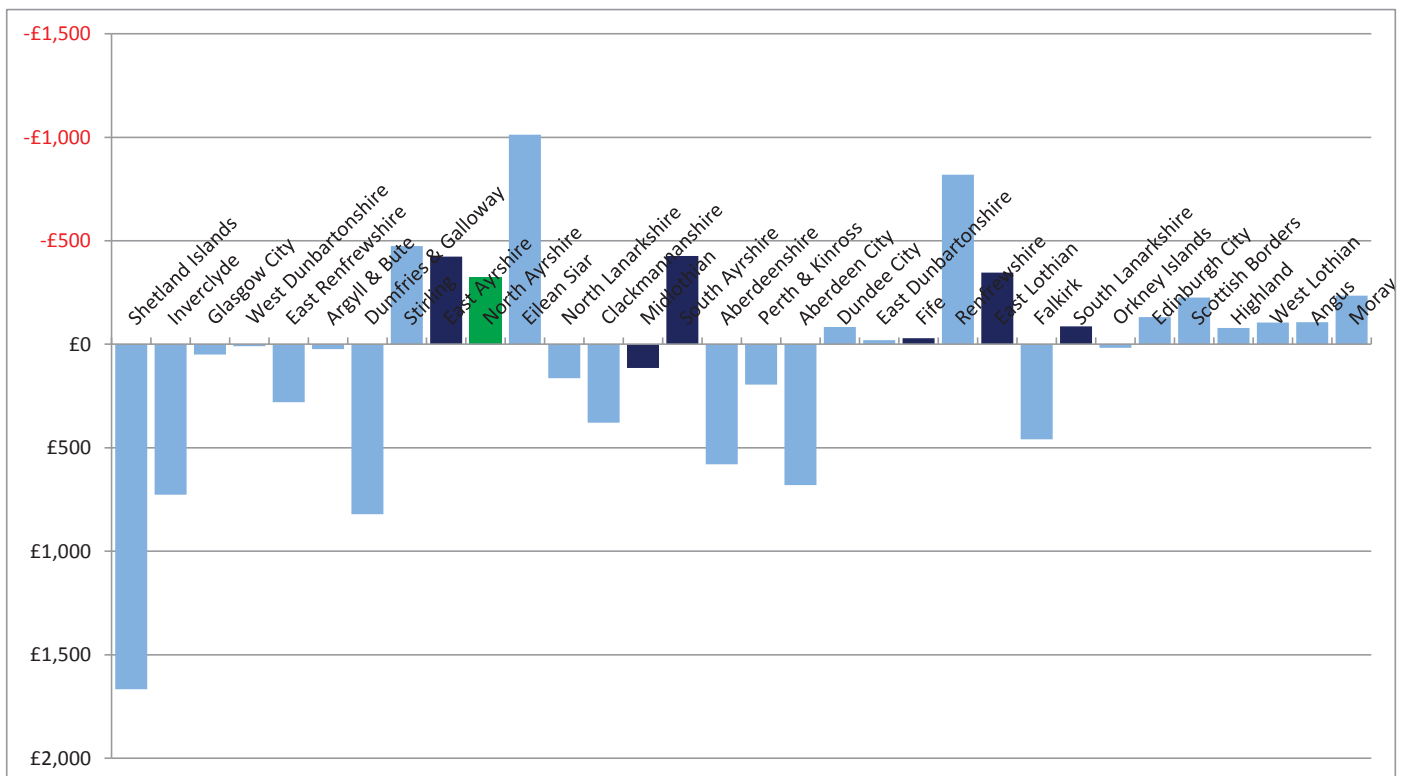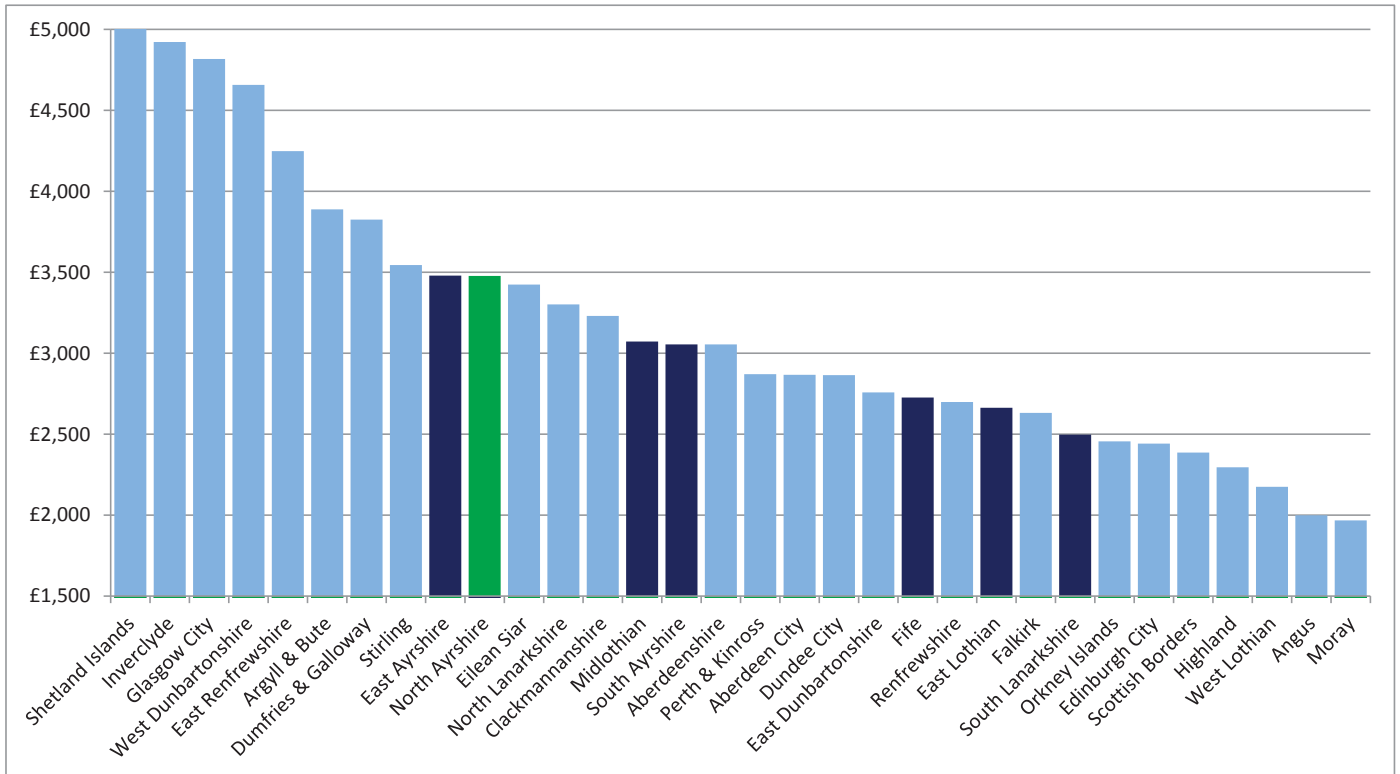
North Ayrshire

CHN4: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 for Standard Grade (Pre-Appeal)
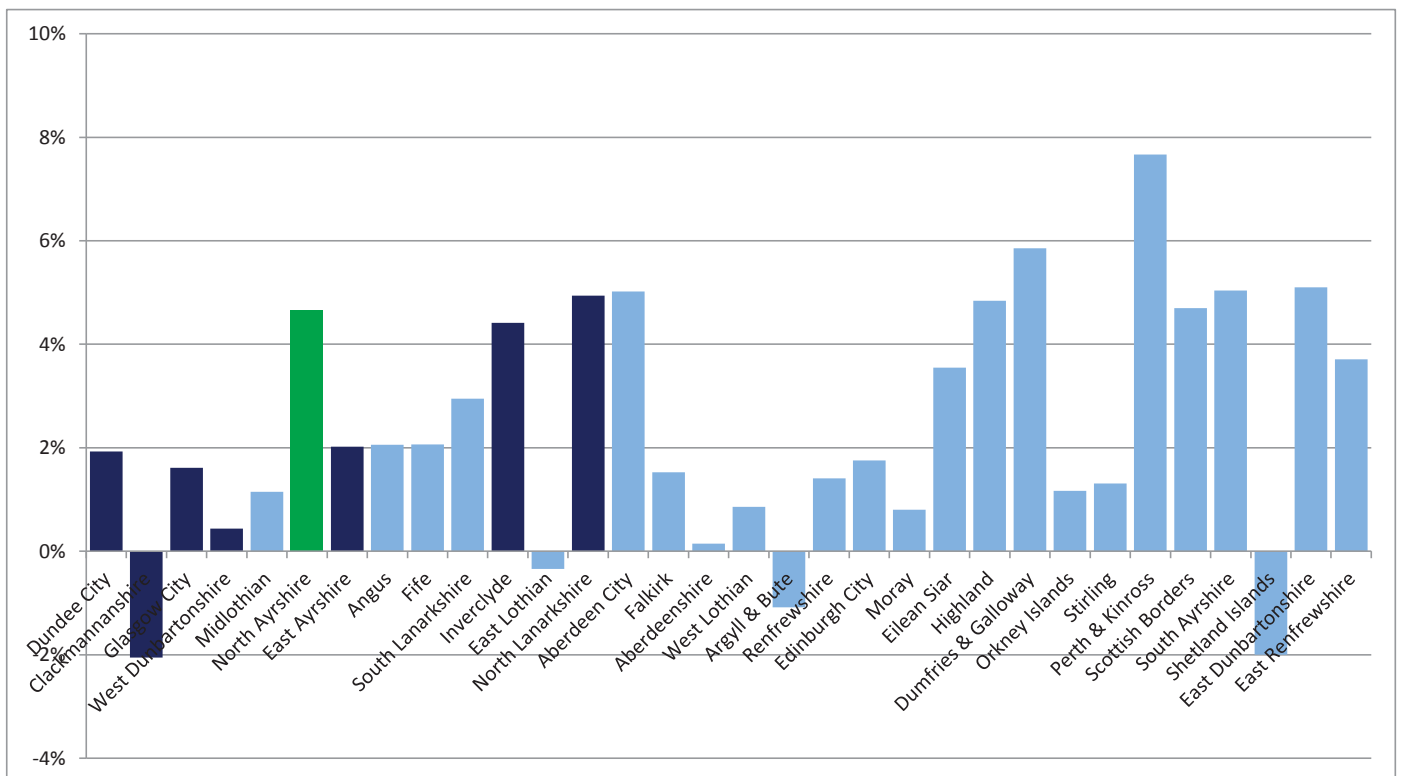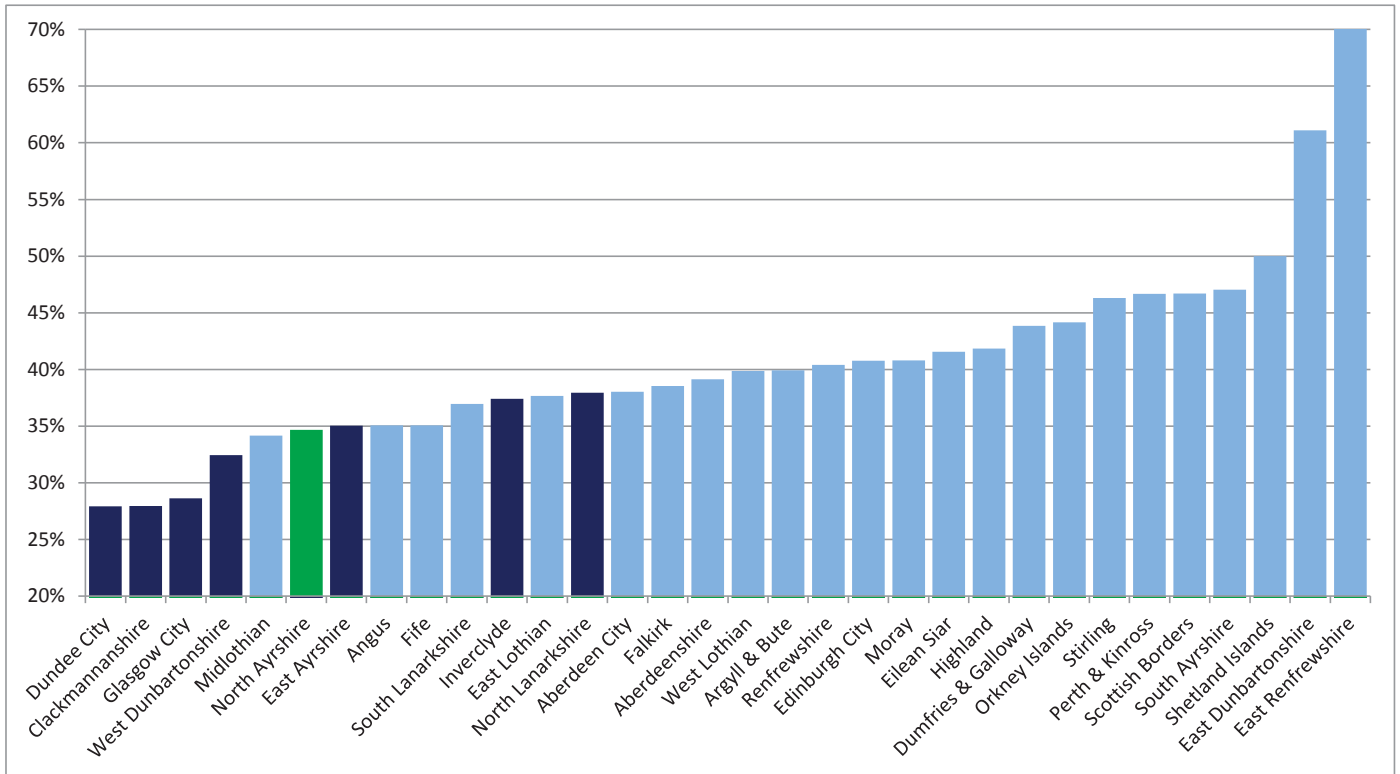
North Ayrshire

CHN5: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 for Higher Grade by S6 (Pre-Appeal)
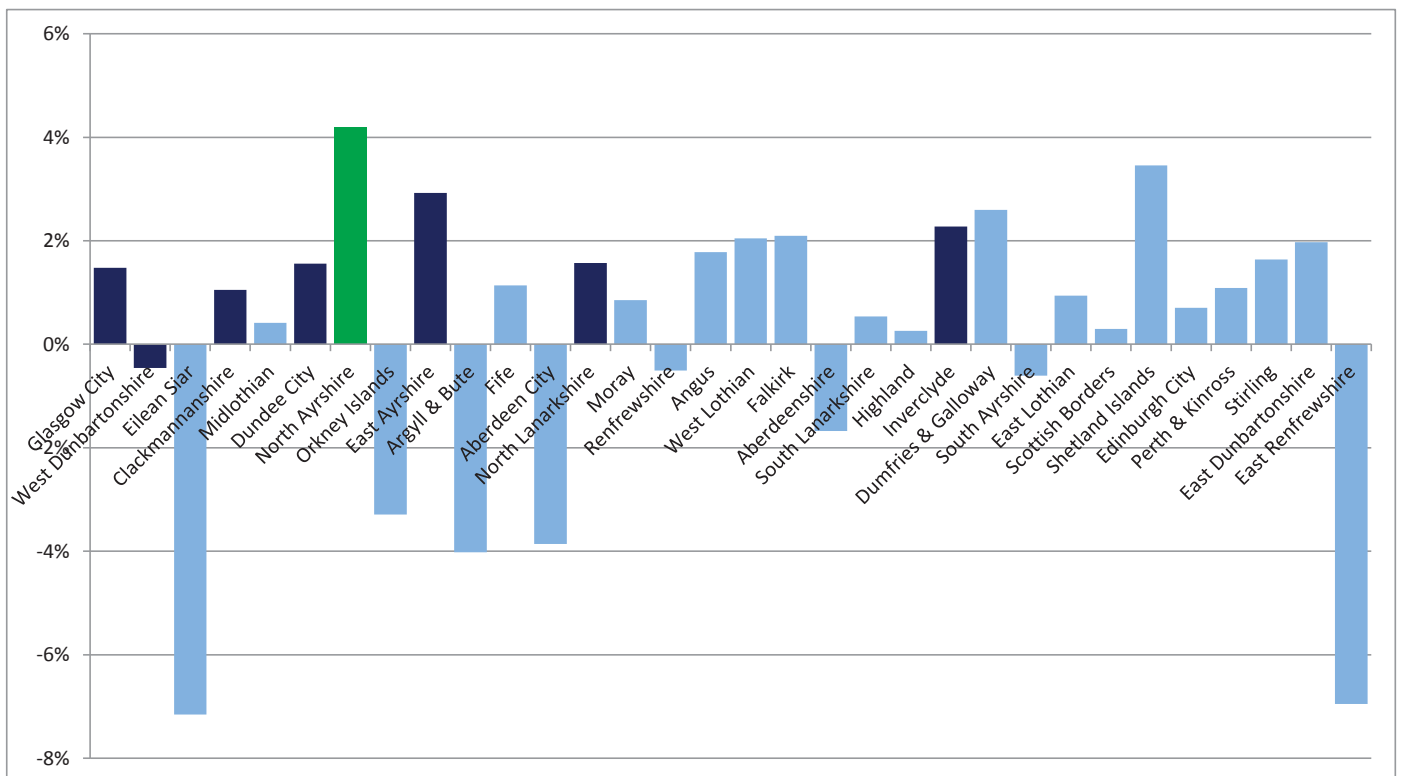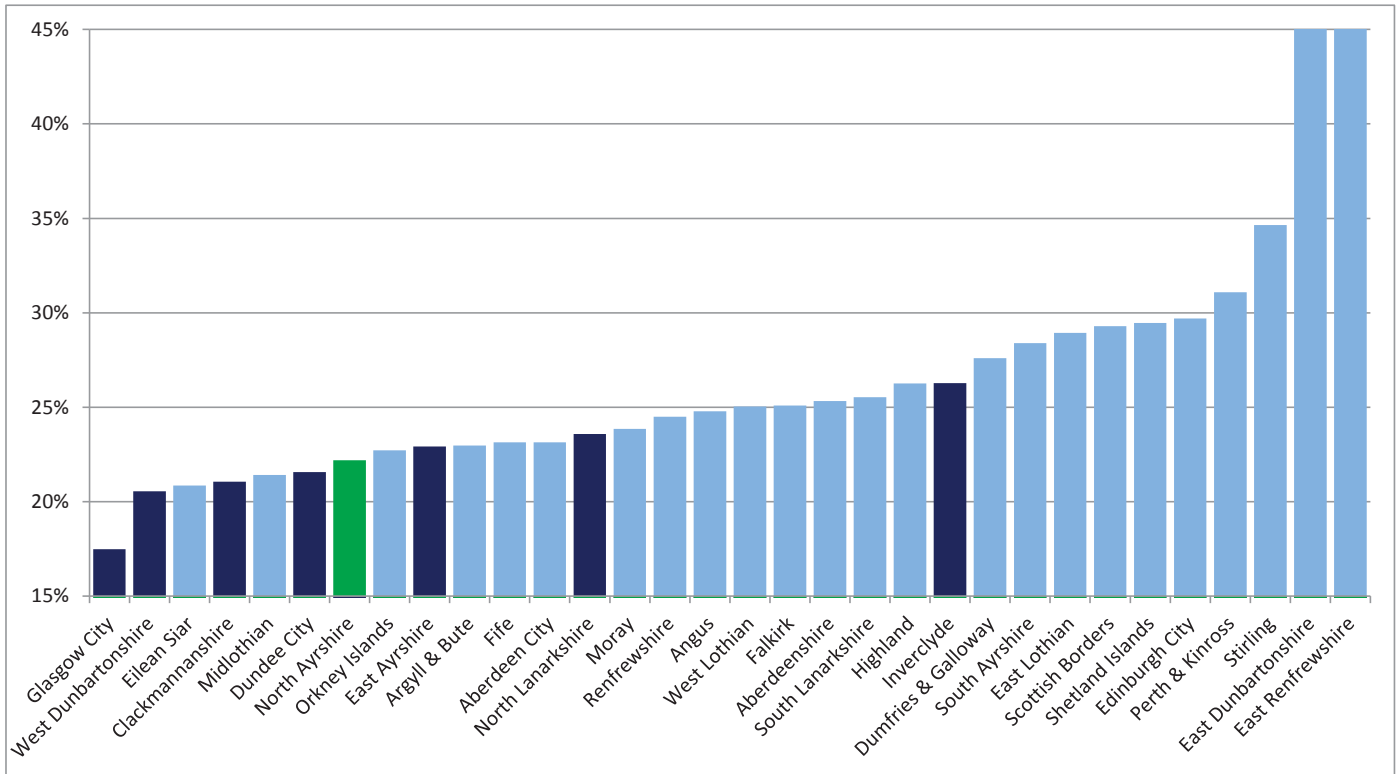
North Ayrshire

CHN6: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 for Standard Grade by SIMD (Pre-Appeal)
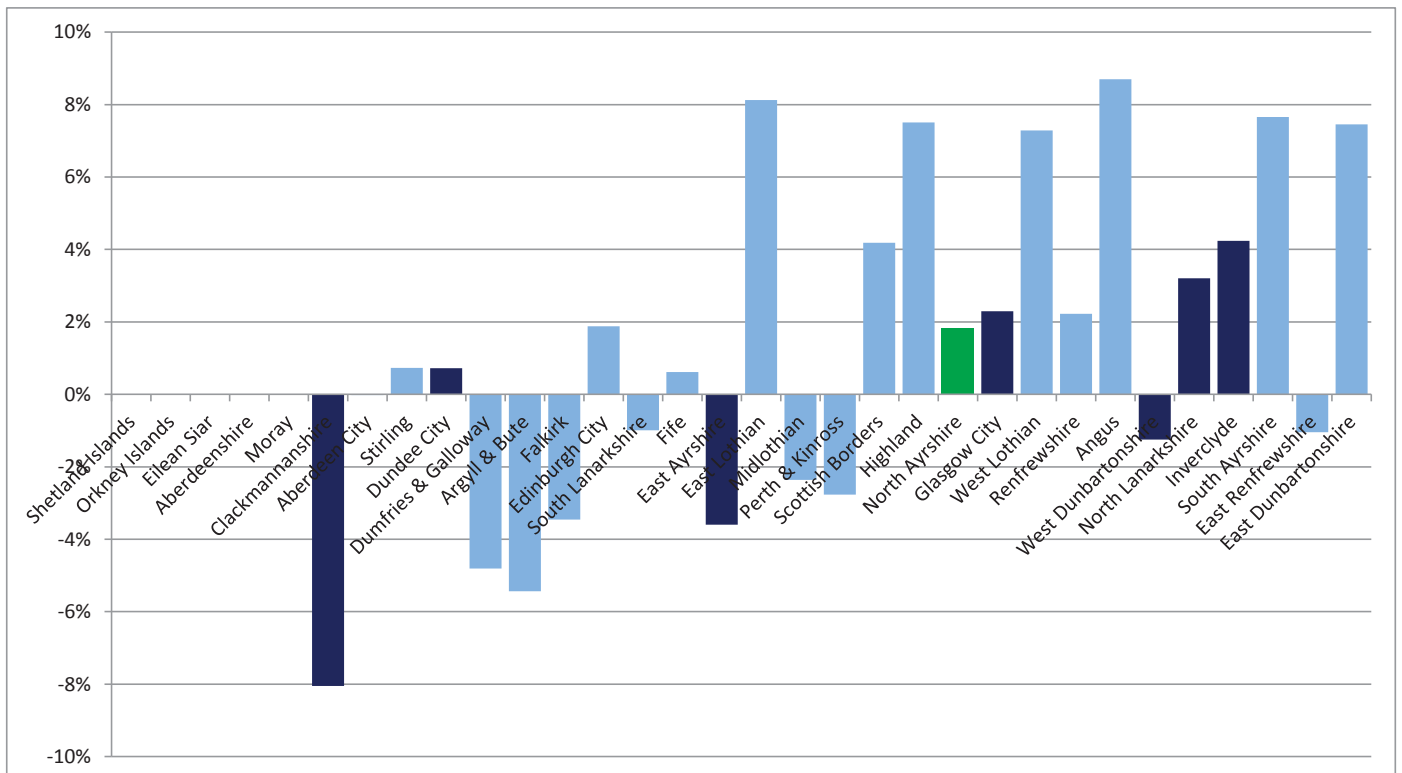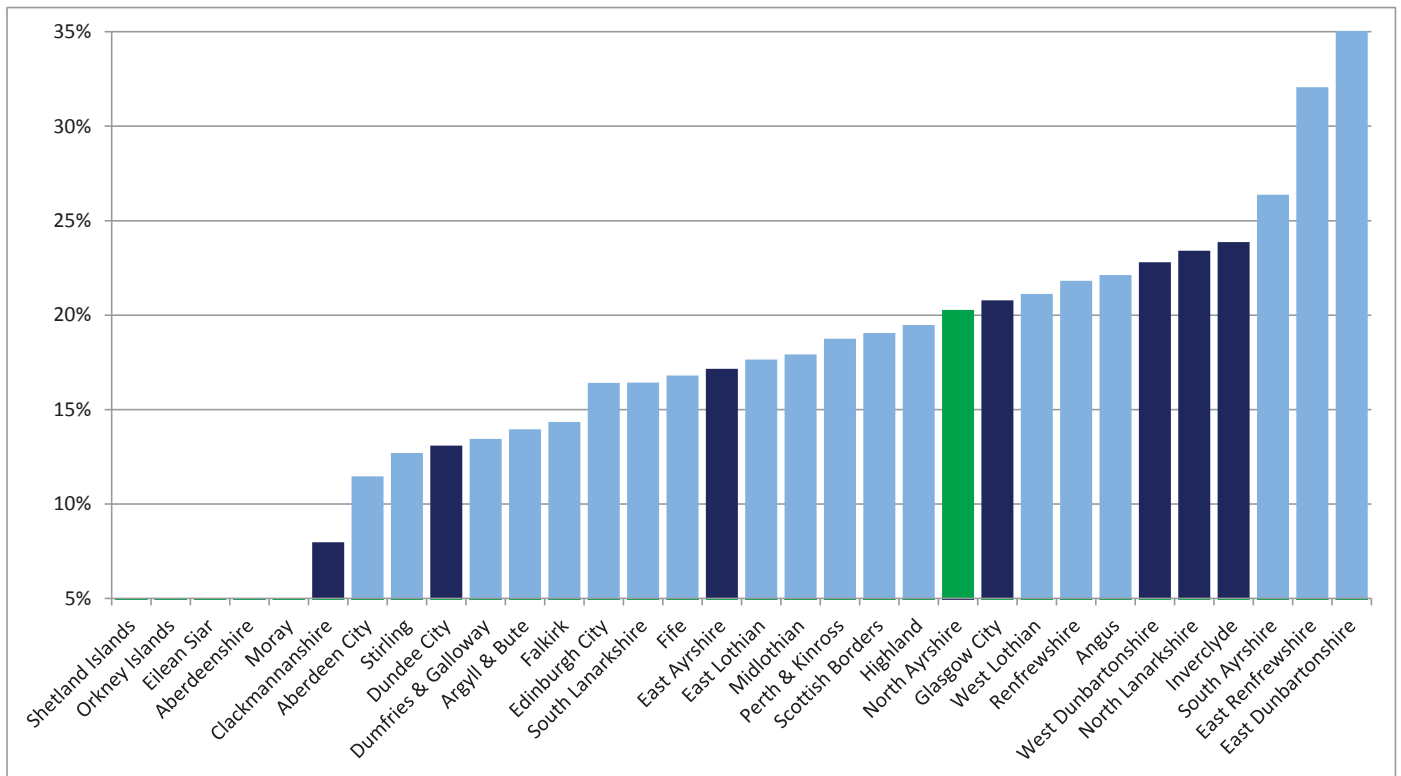
North Ayrshire

CHN 7: % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 for Higher Grade by SIMD (Pre-Appeal)
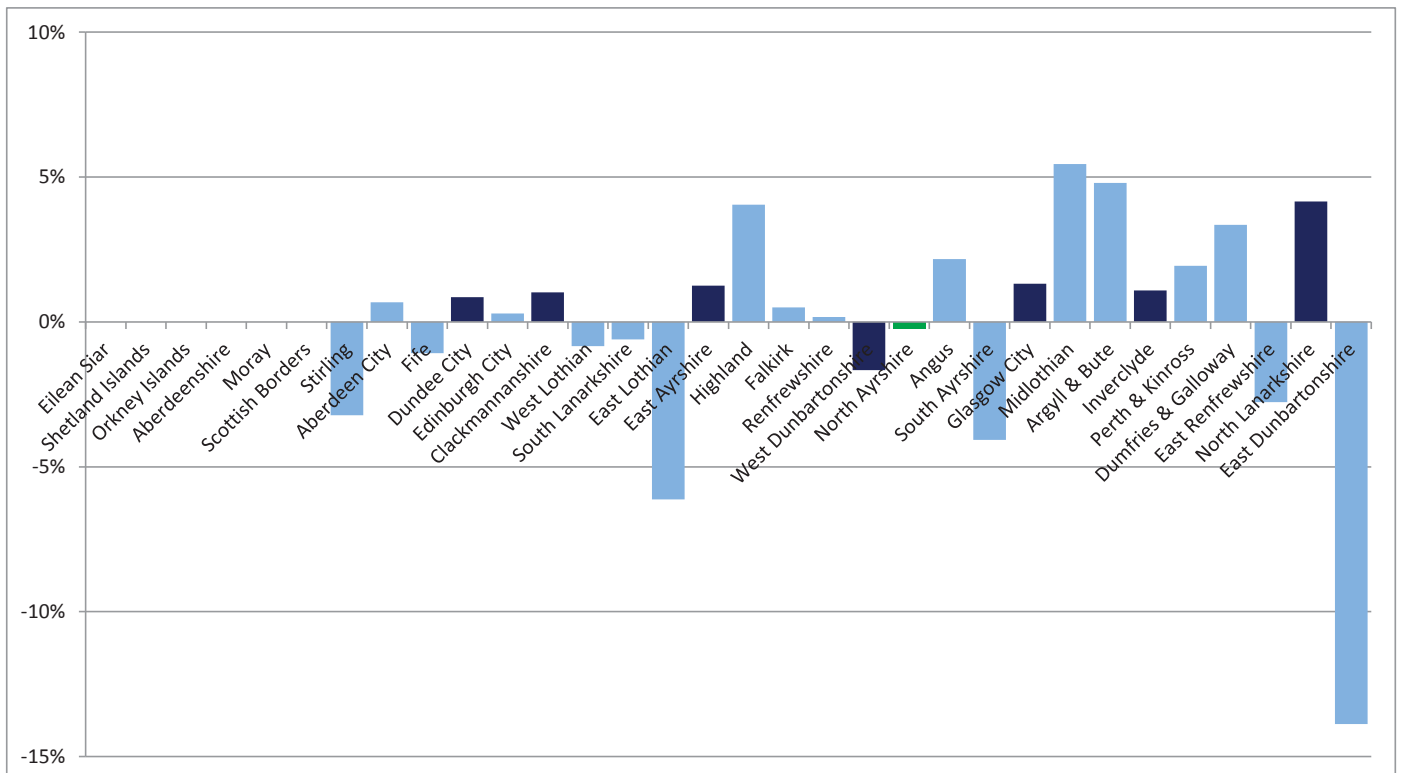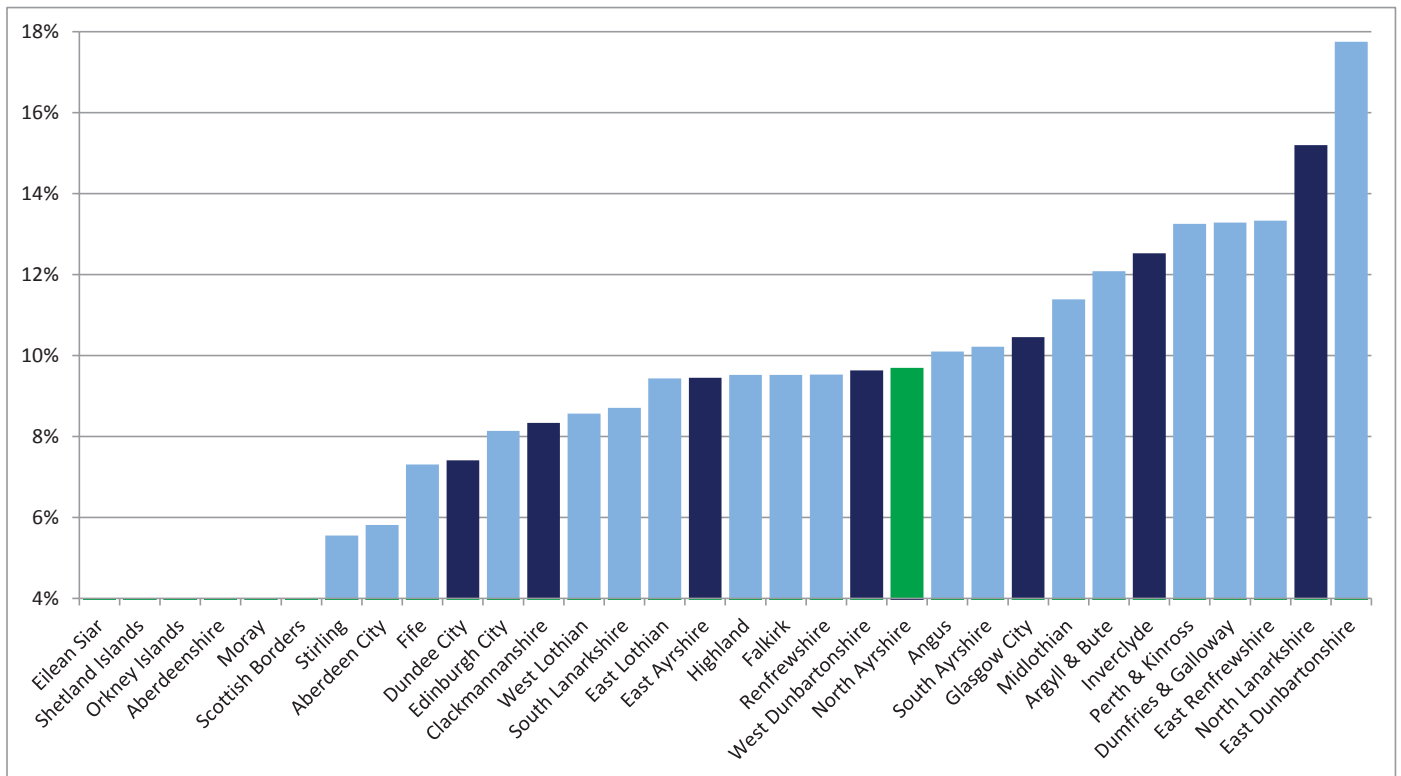
North Ayrshire

CHN8a: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in a residential setting
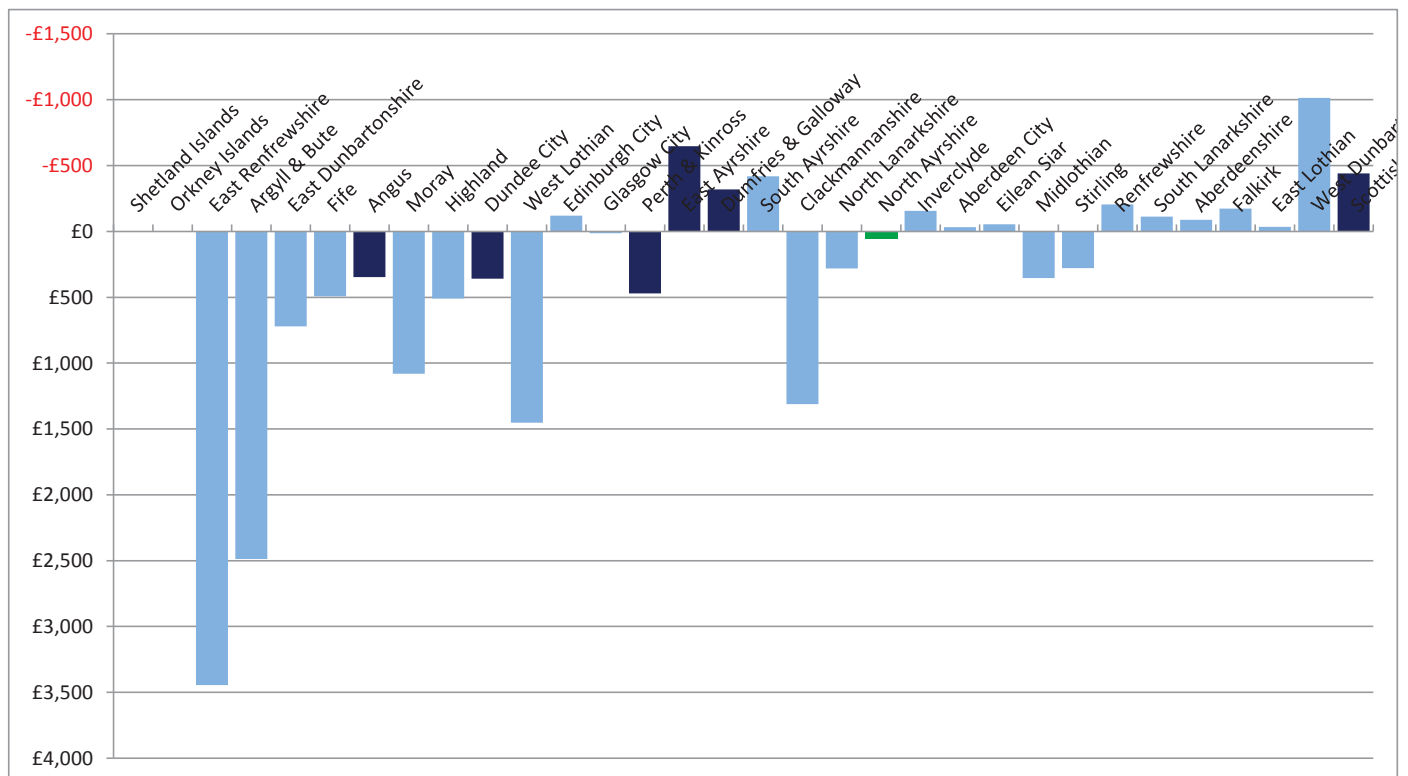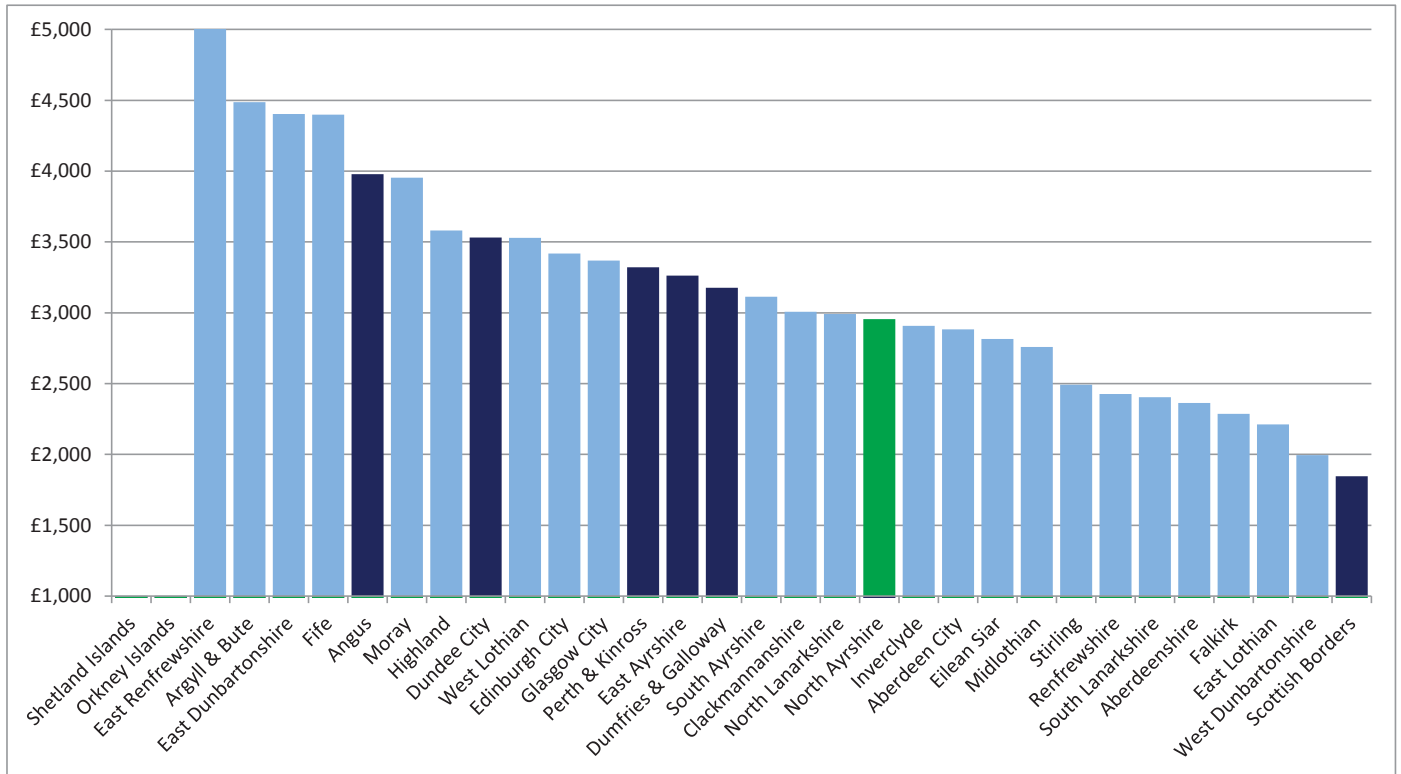
North Ayrshire

CHN8b: Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in the Community

85
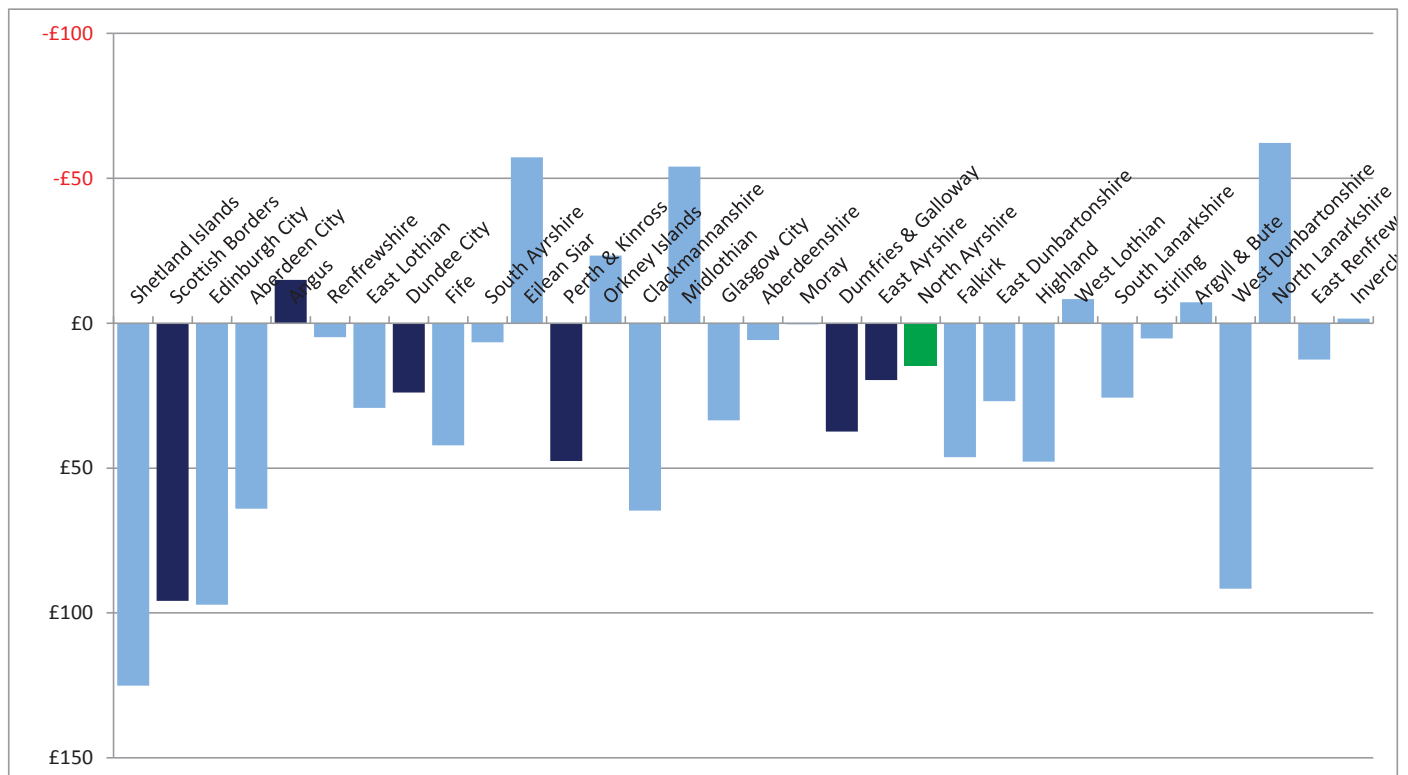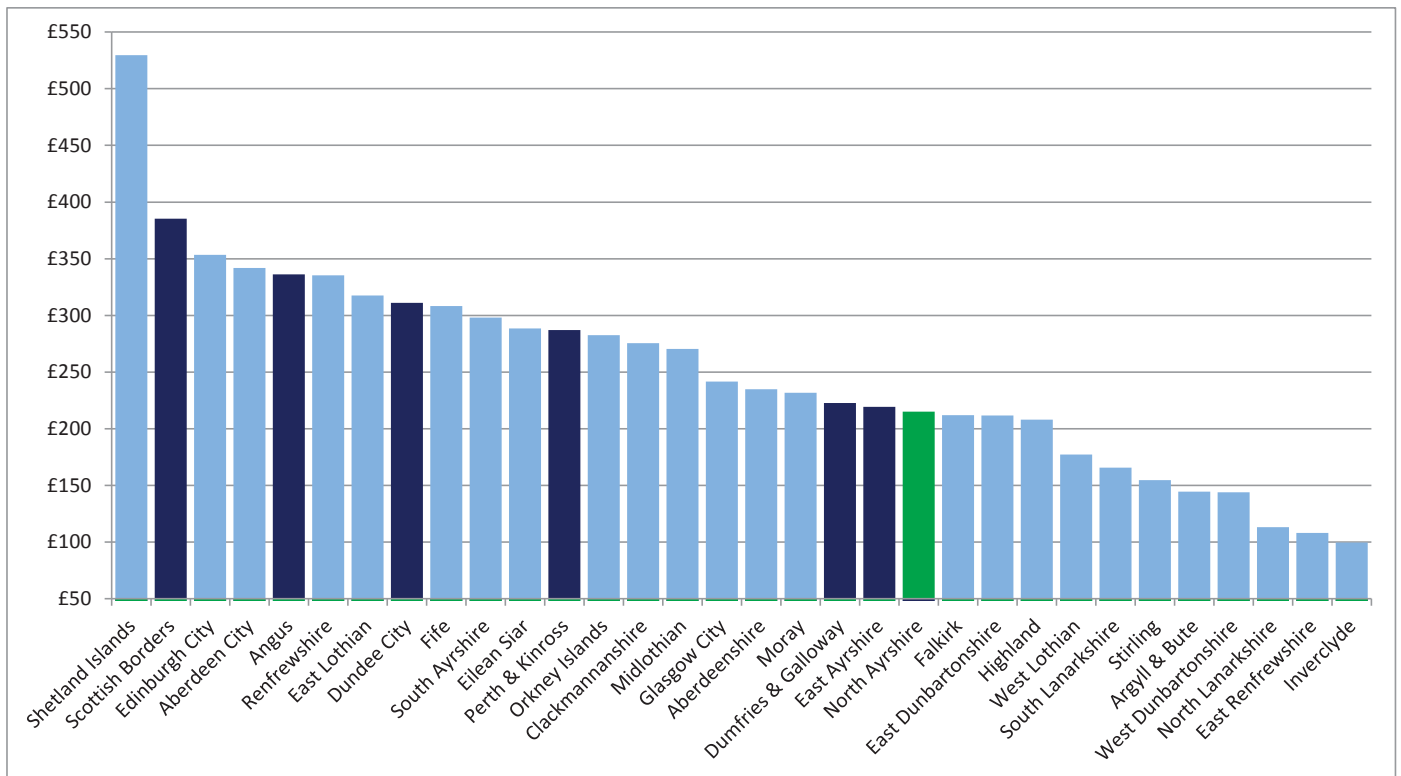
North Ayrshire

CHN9: Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the Community
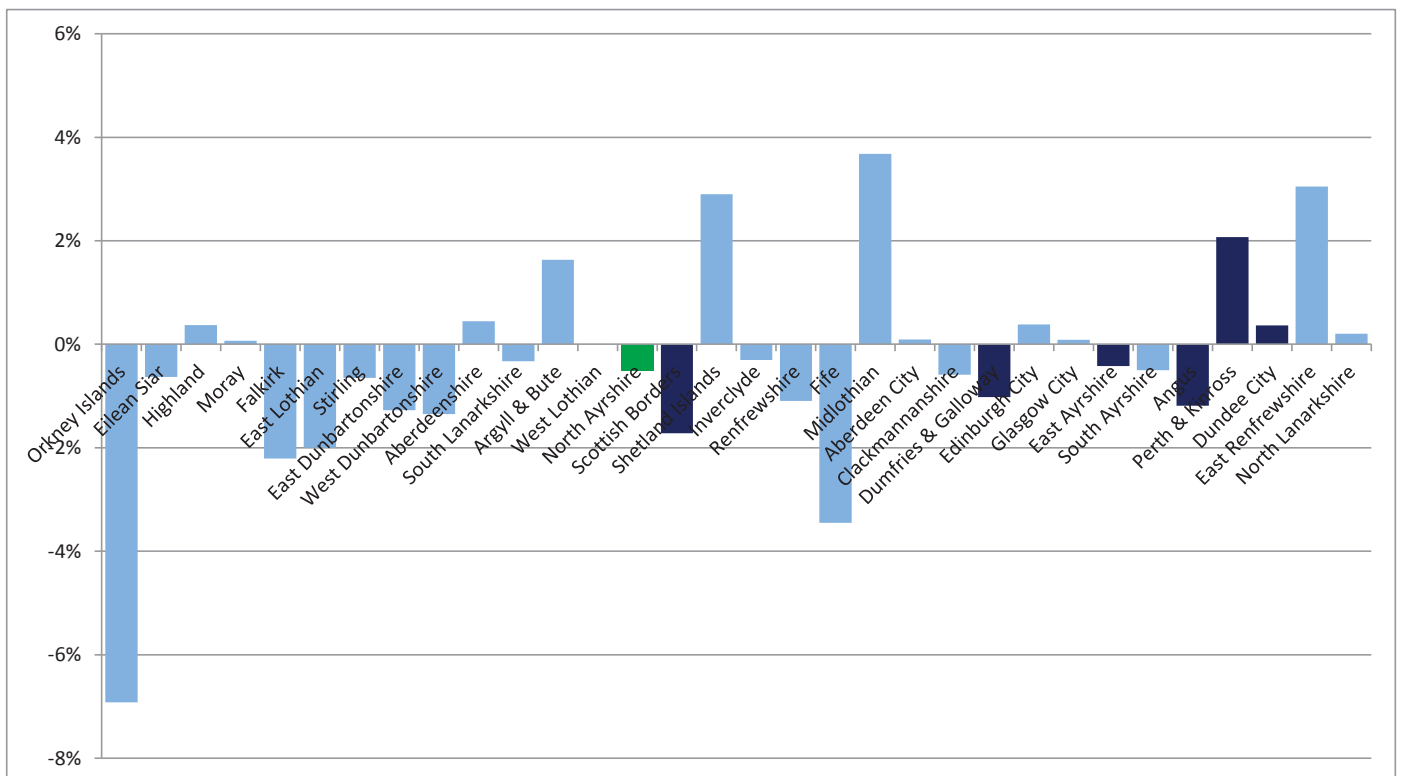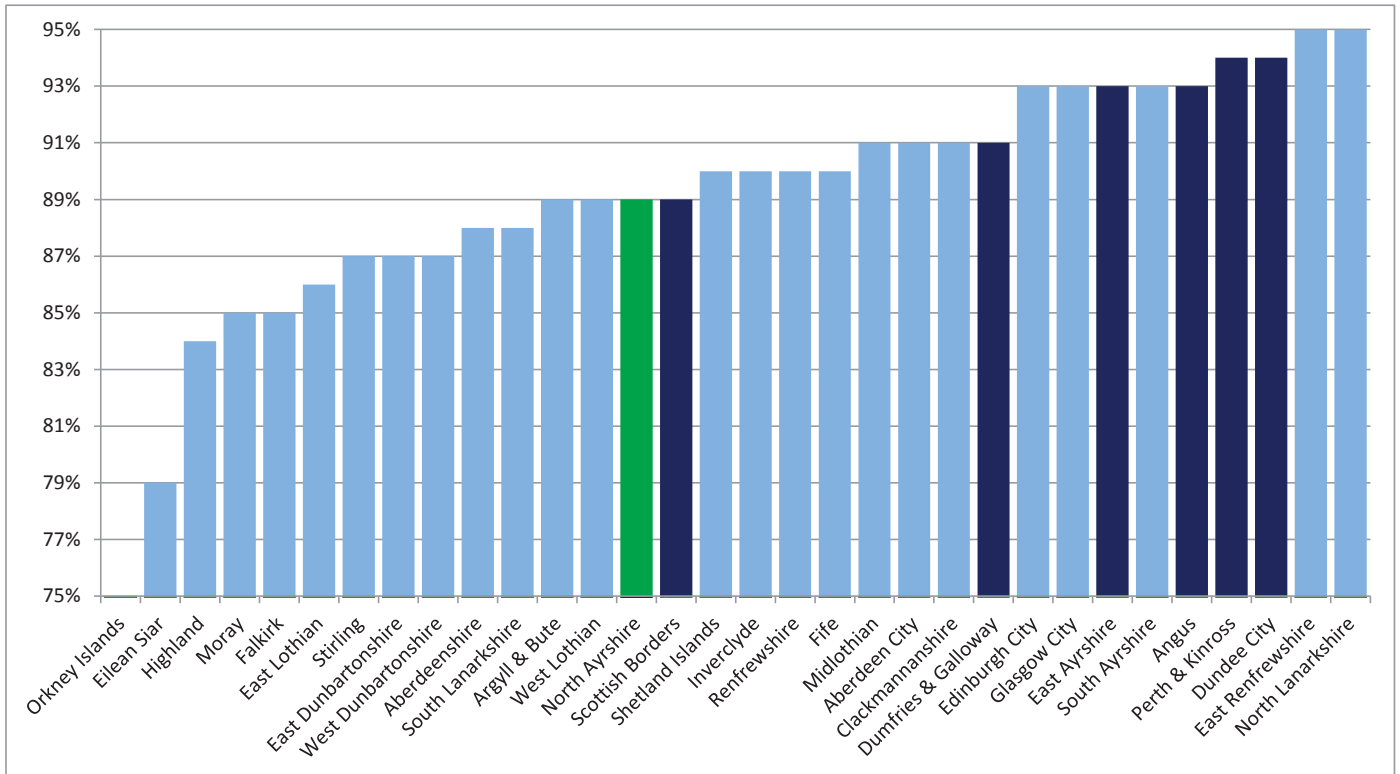
North Ayrshire

CHN10: % of Adults satisfied with local schools
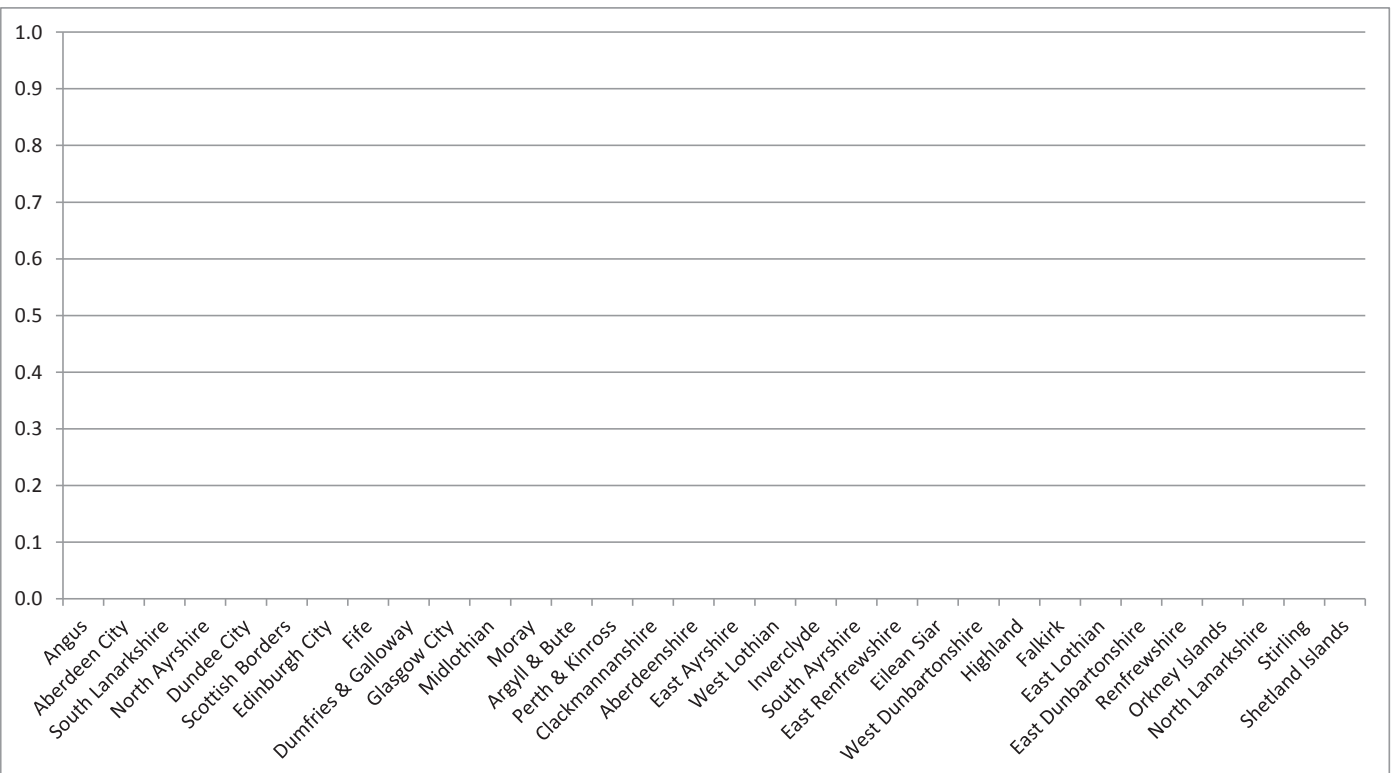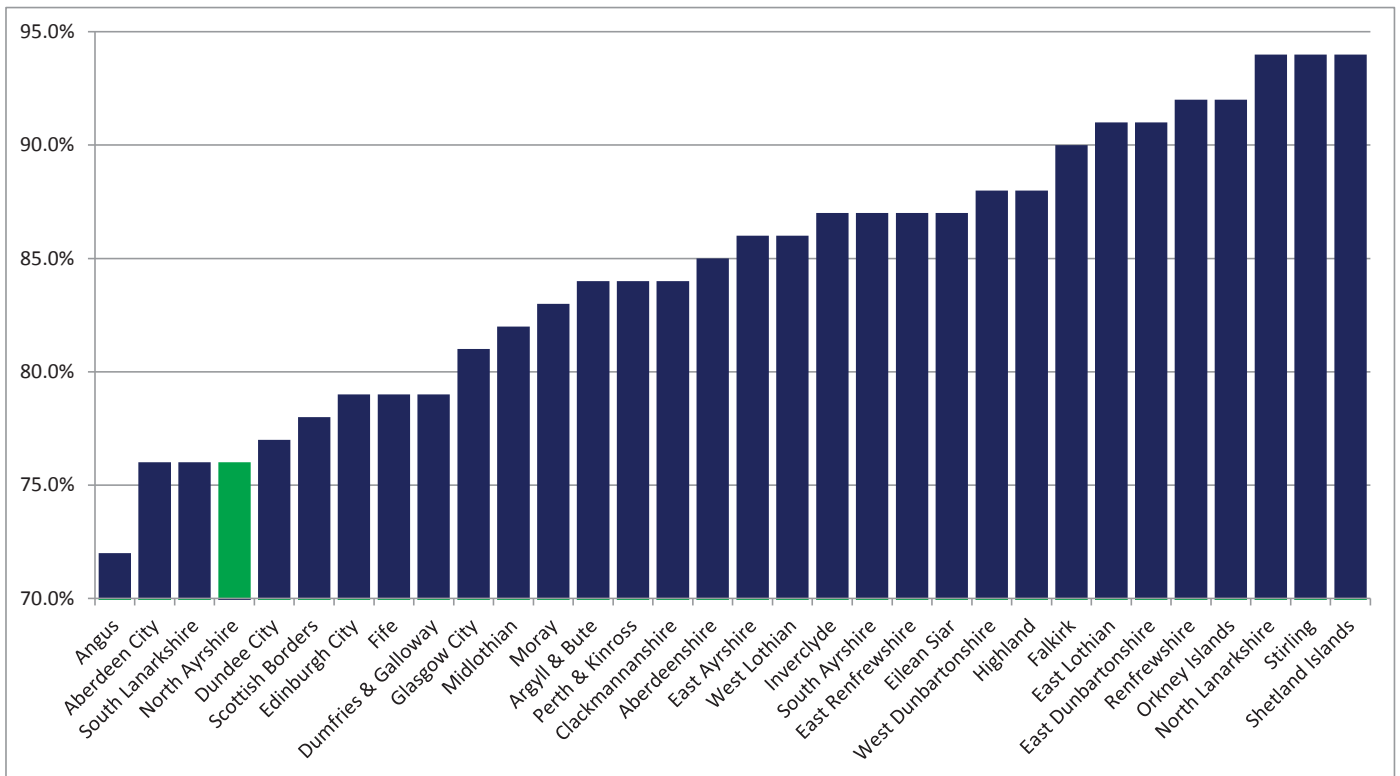
North Ayrshire

CHN11: Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations
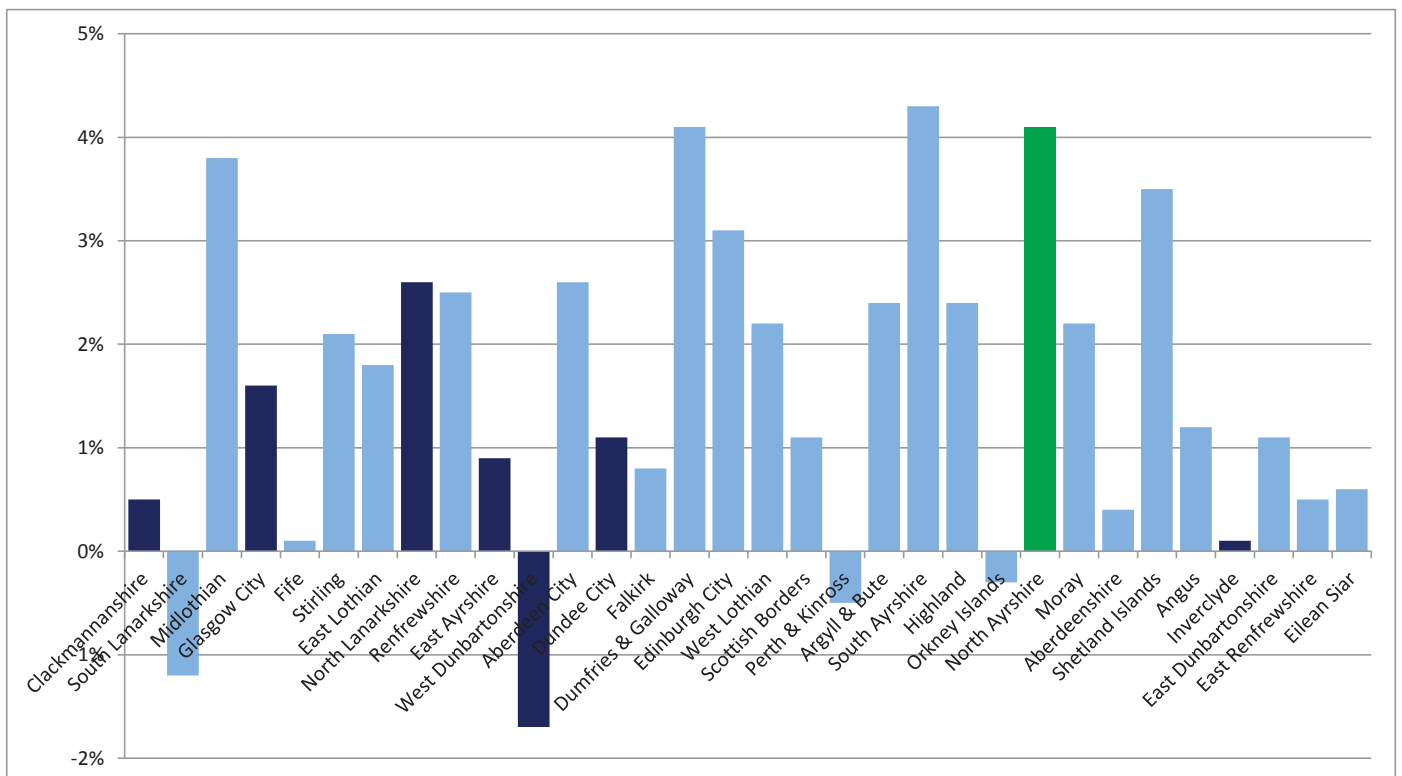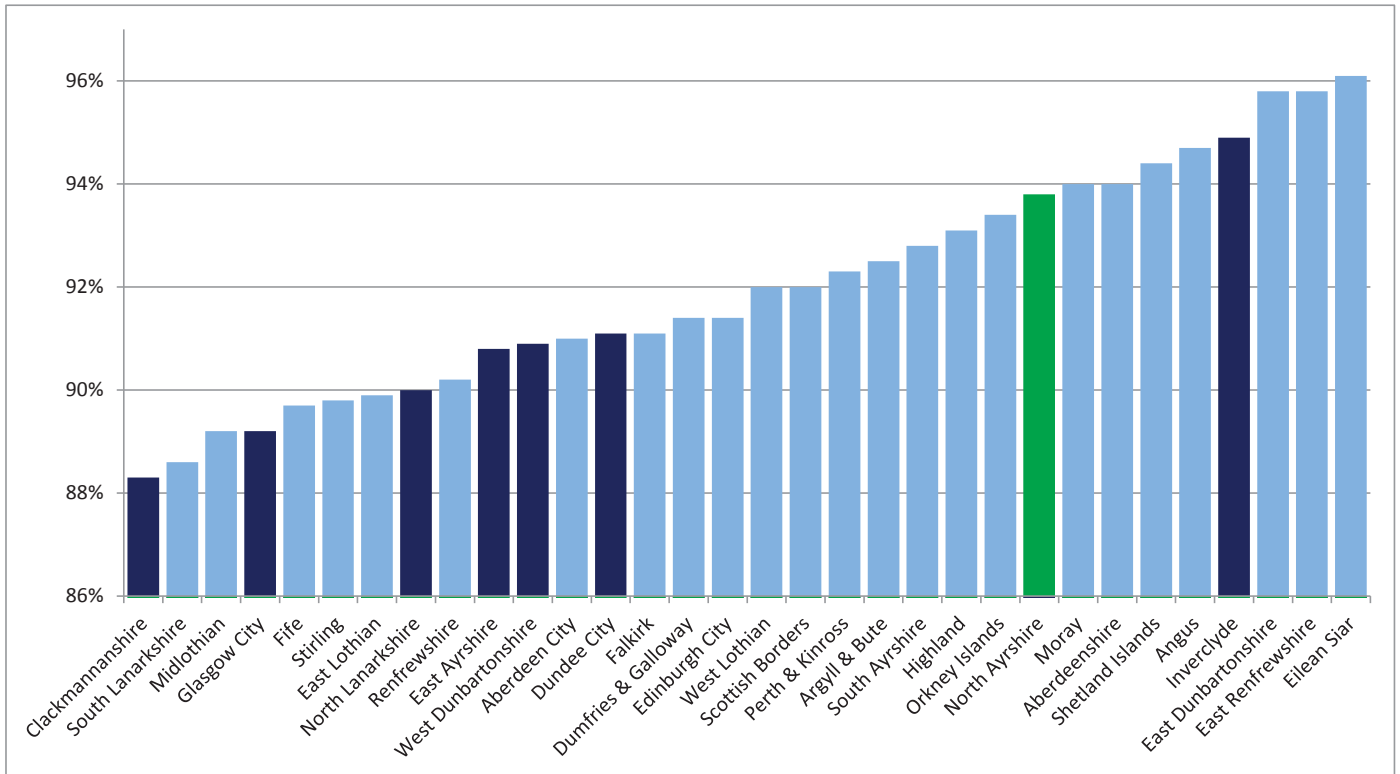
North Ayrshire

CORP1: Central Support services as a % of Total Gross expend
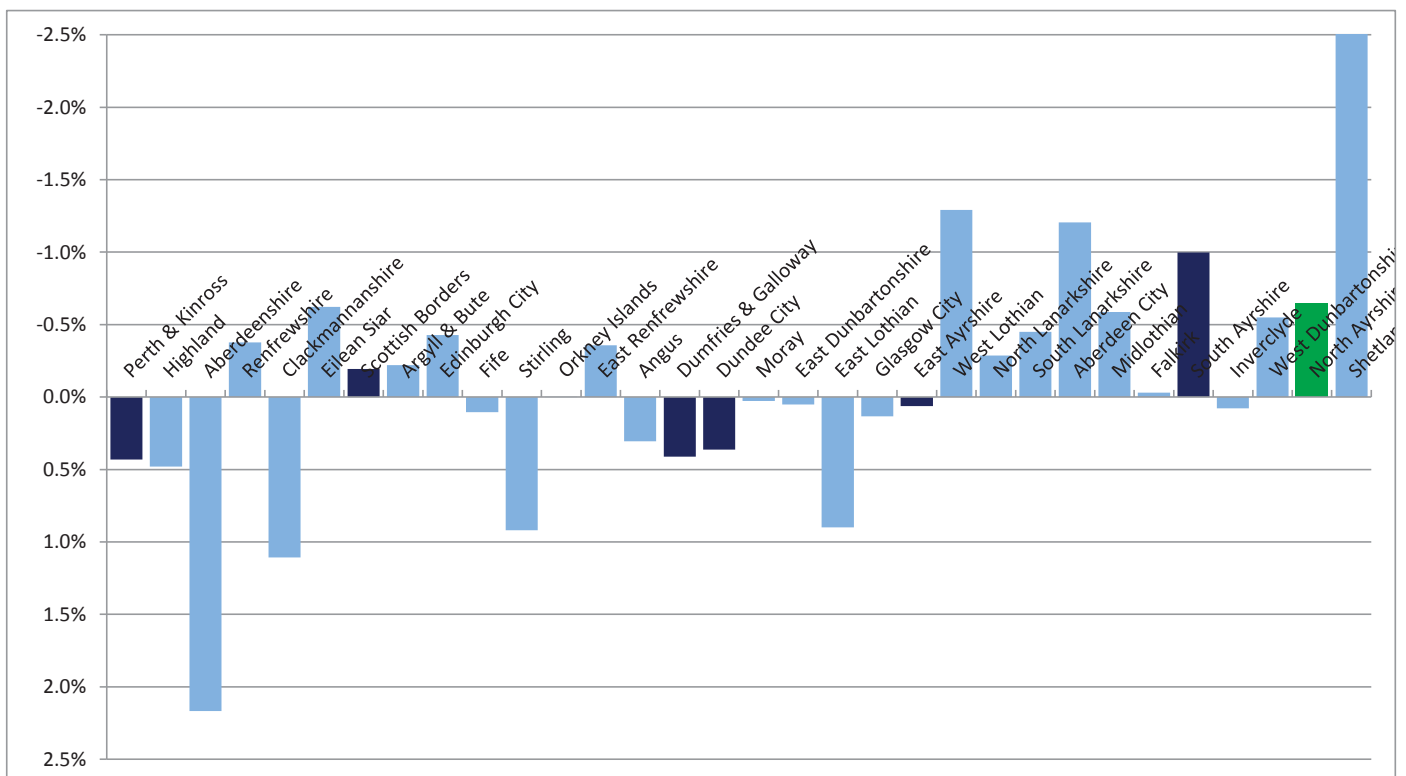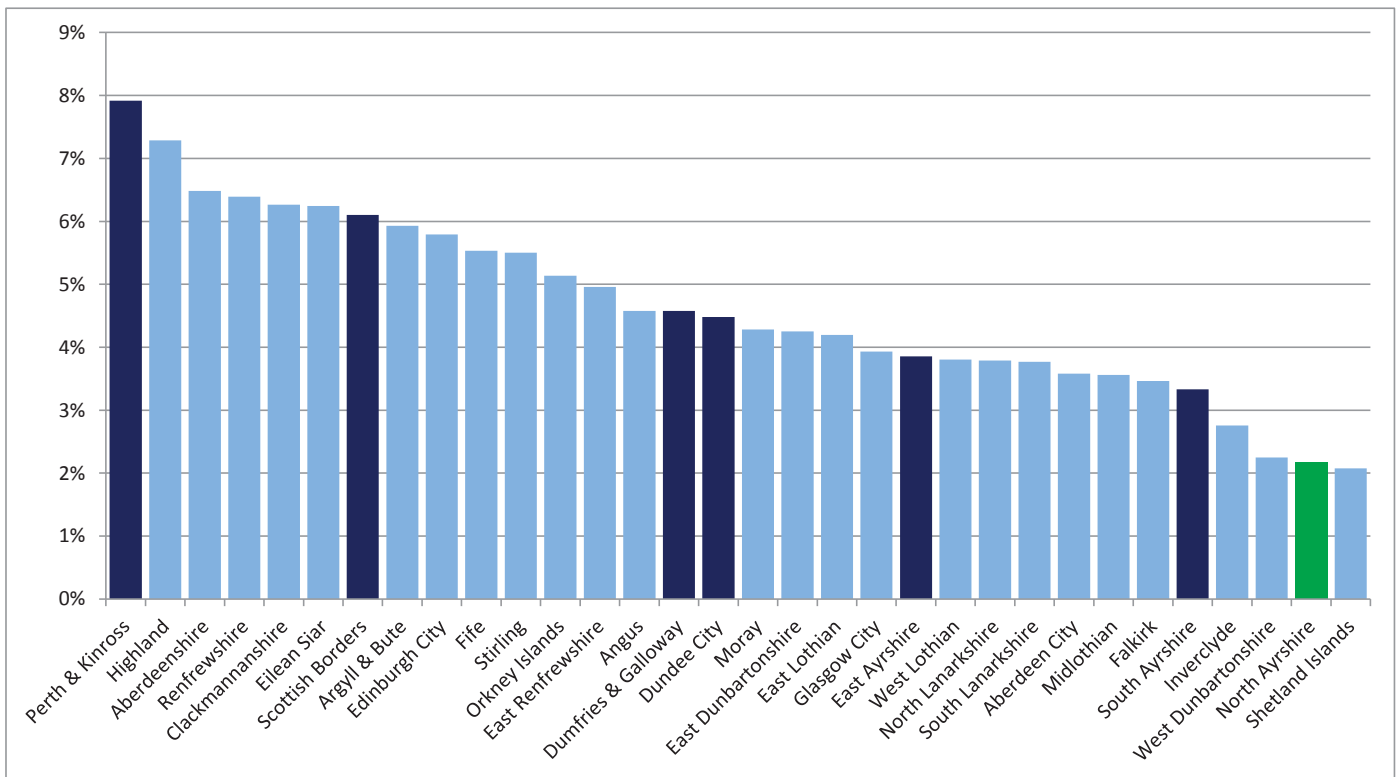
North Ayrshire

CORP2: Democratic Core Costs per 1,000 Population
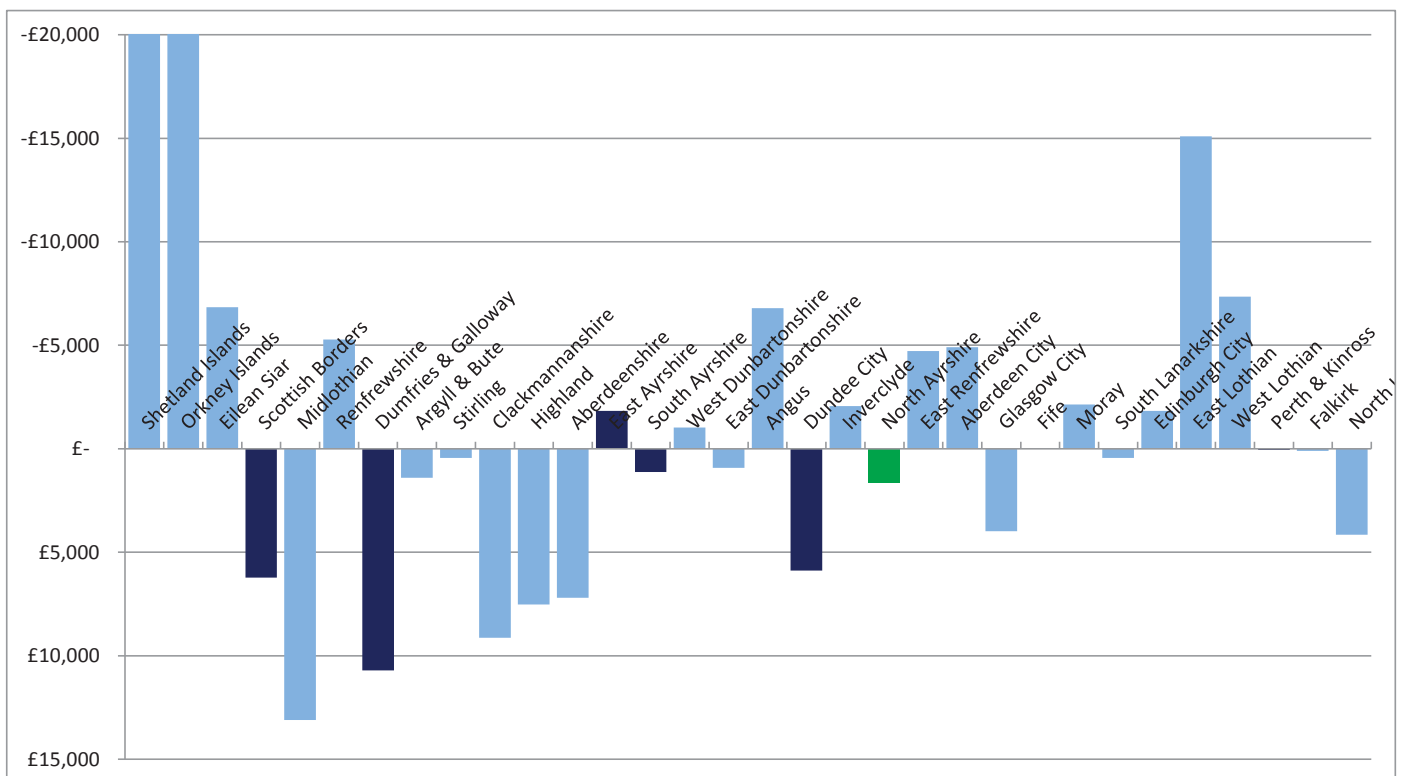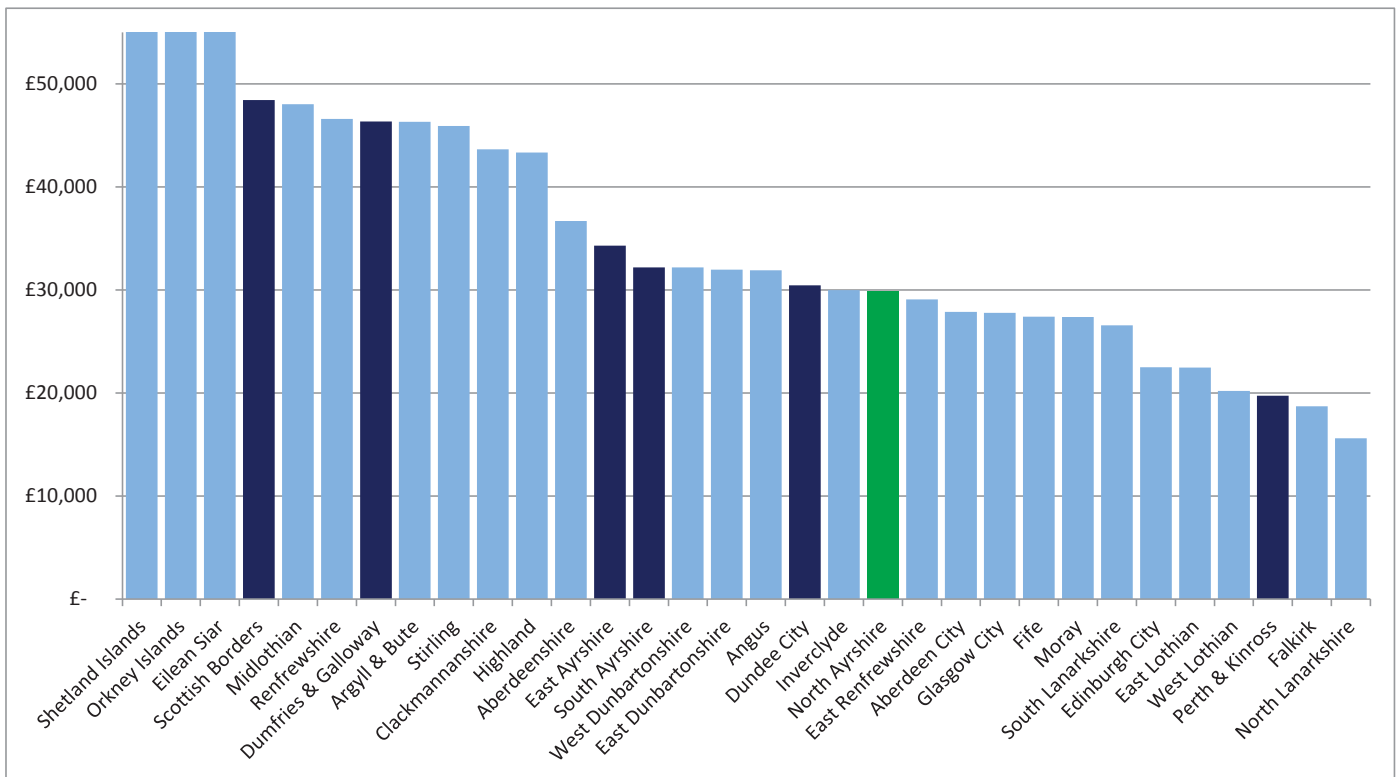
North Ayrshire

CORP3b:Females in top 5%
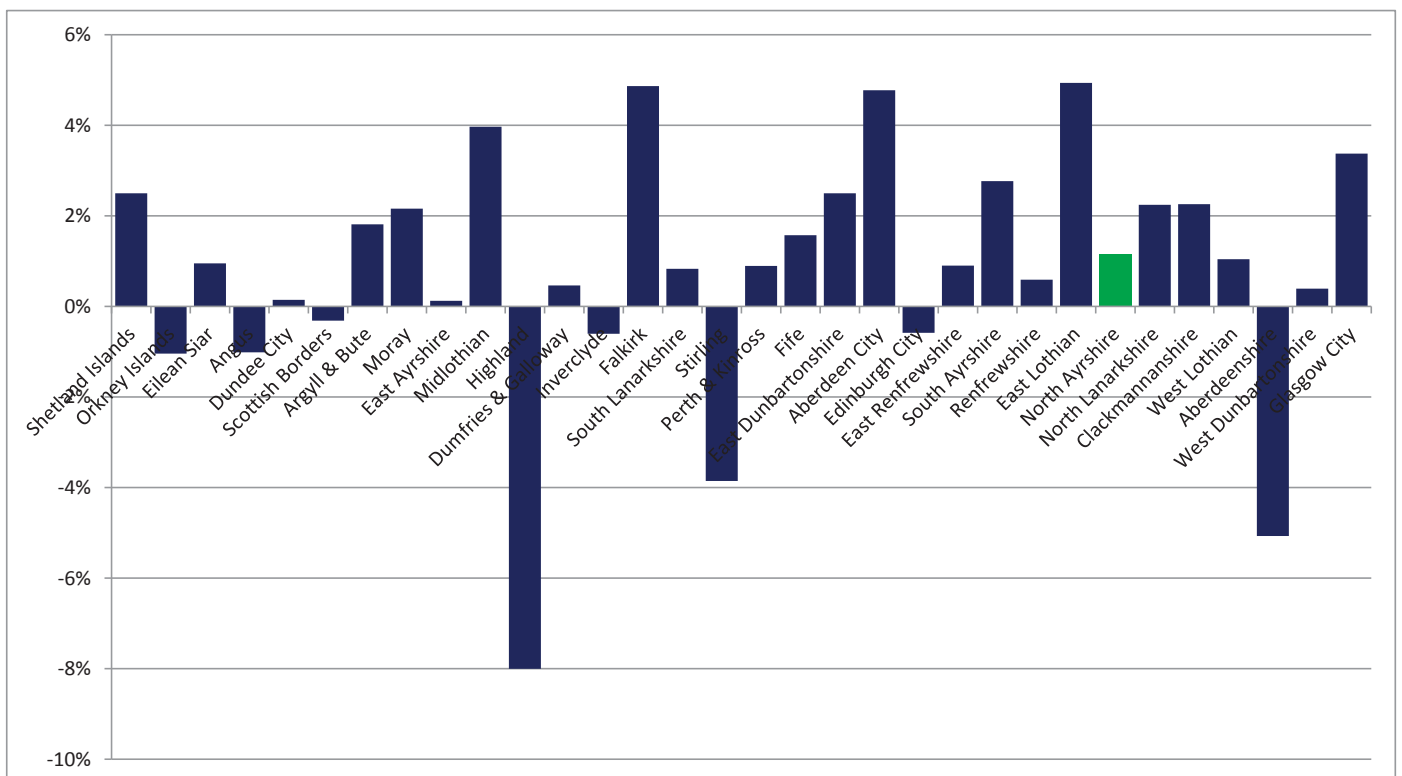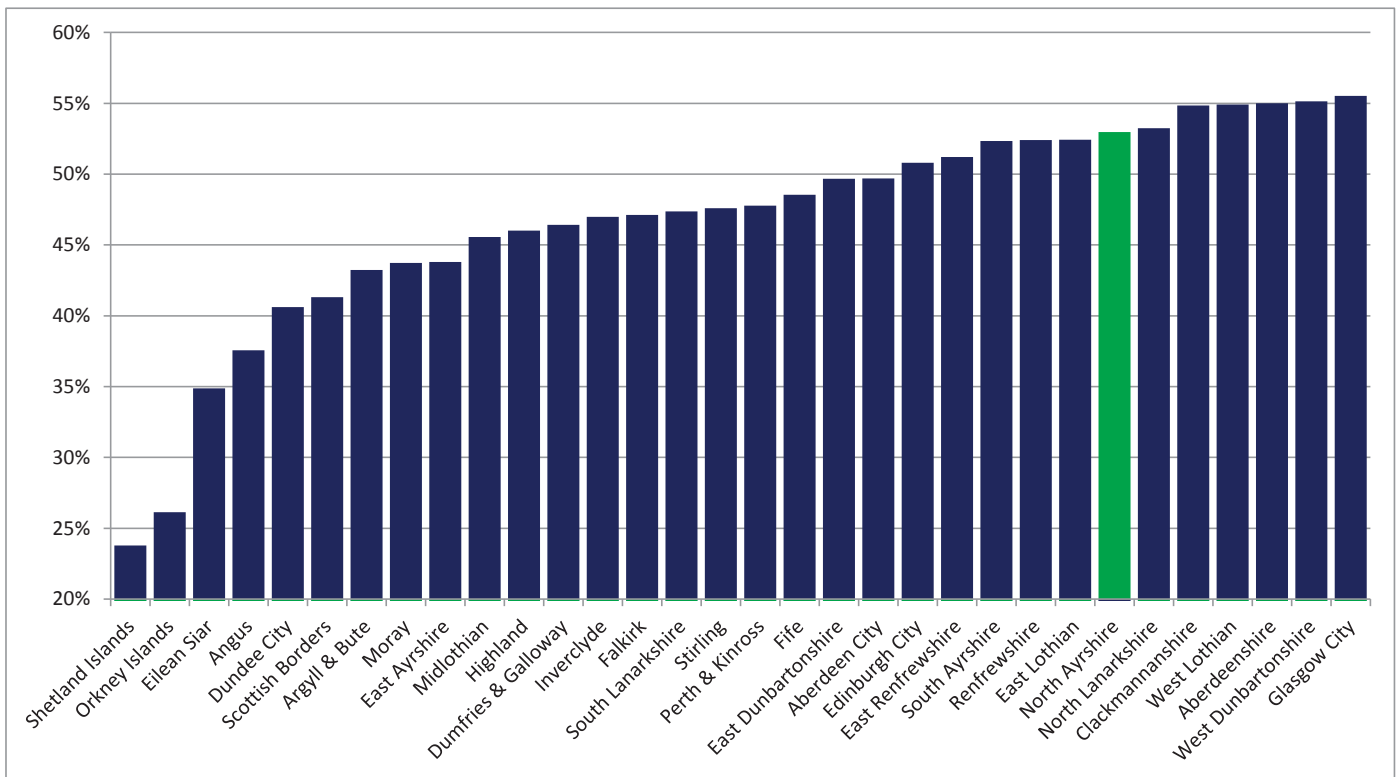
North Ayrshire

CORP4: Cost of Council Tax collection
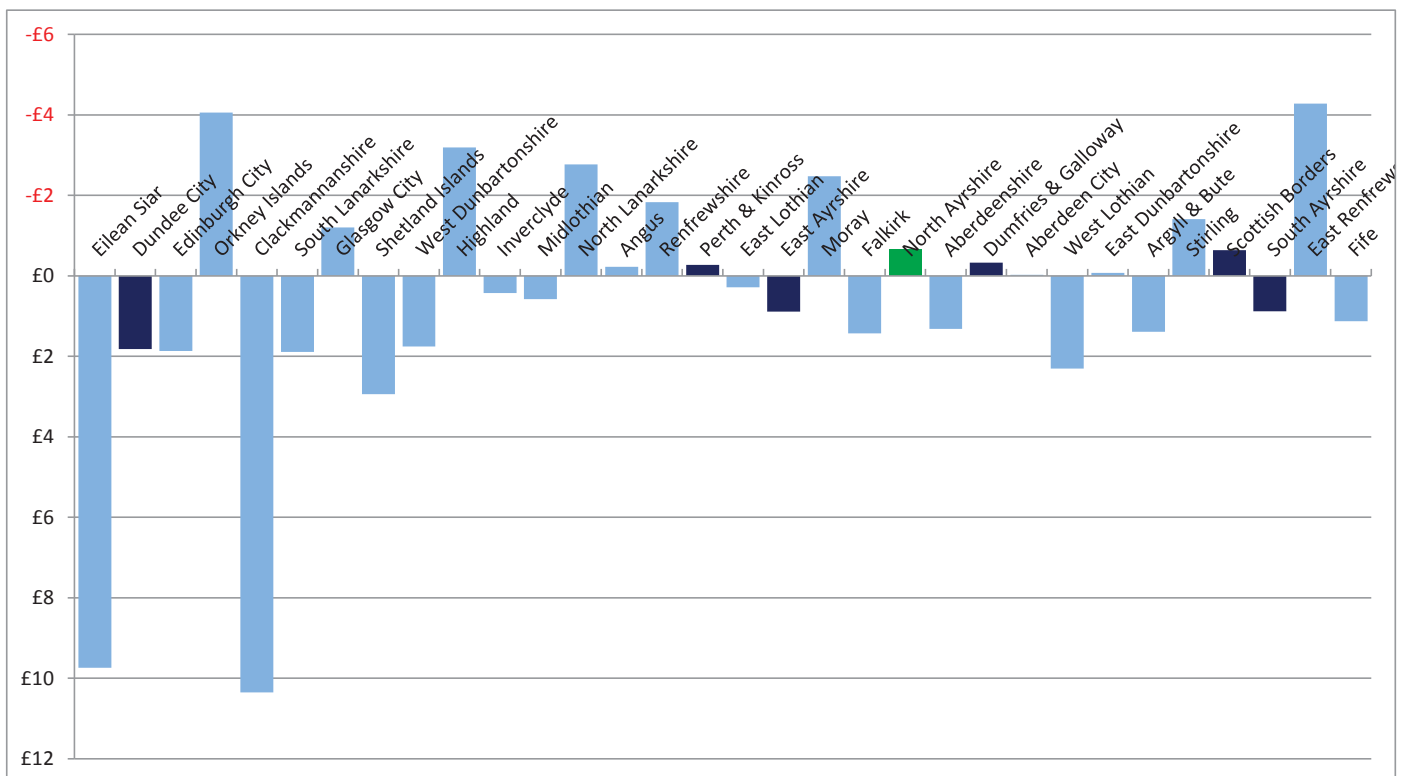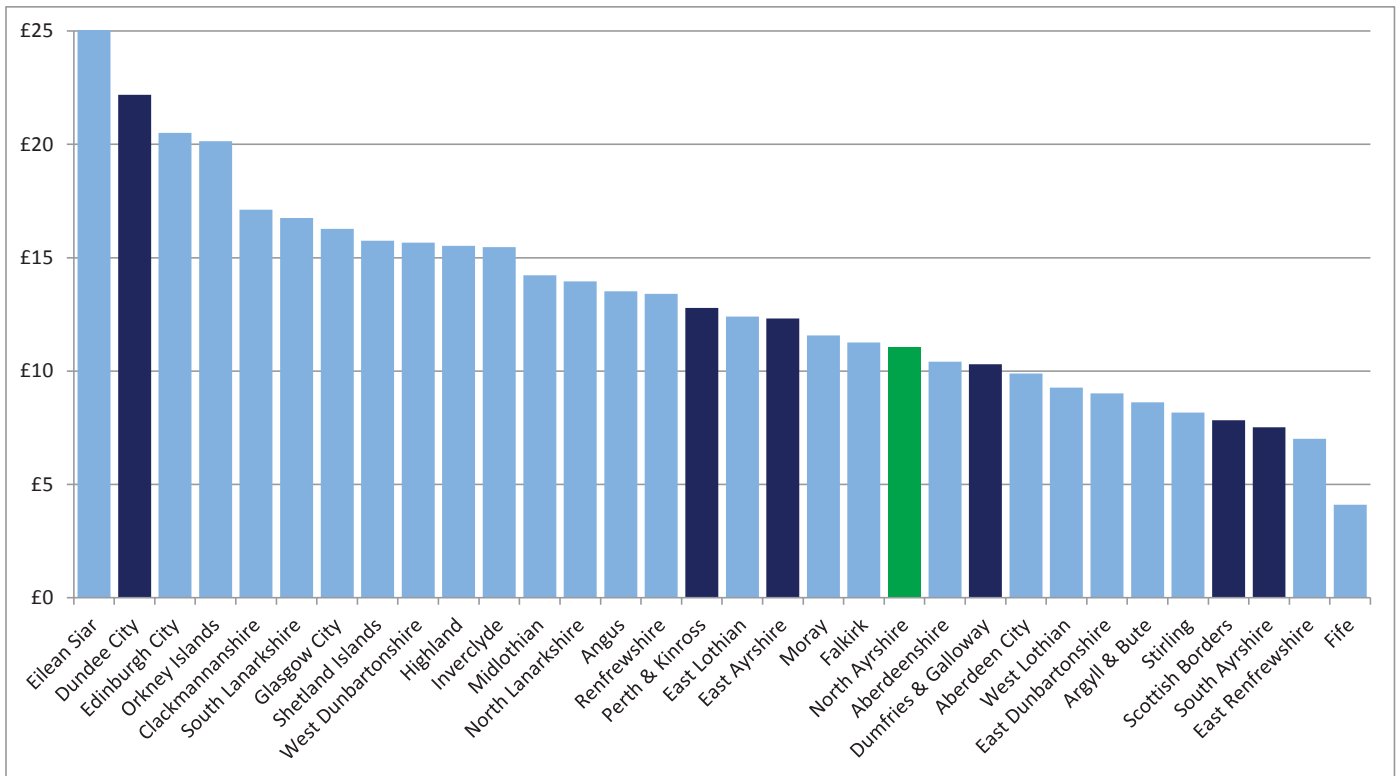
North Ayrshire

CORP5b2: Attendance time
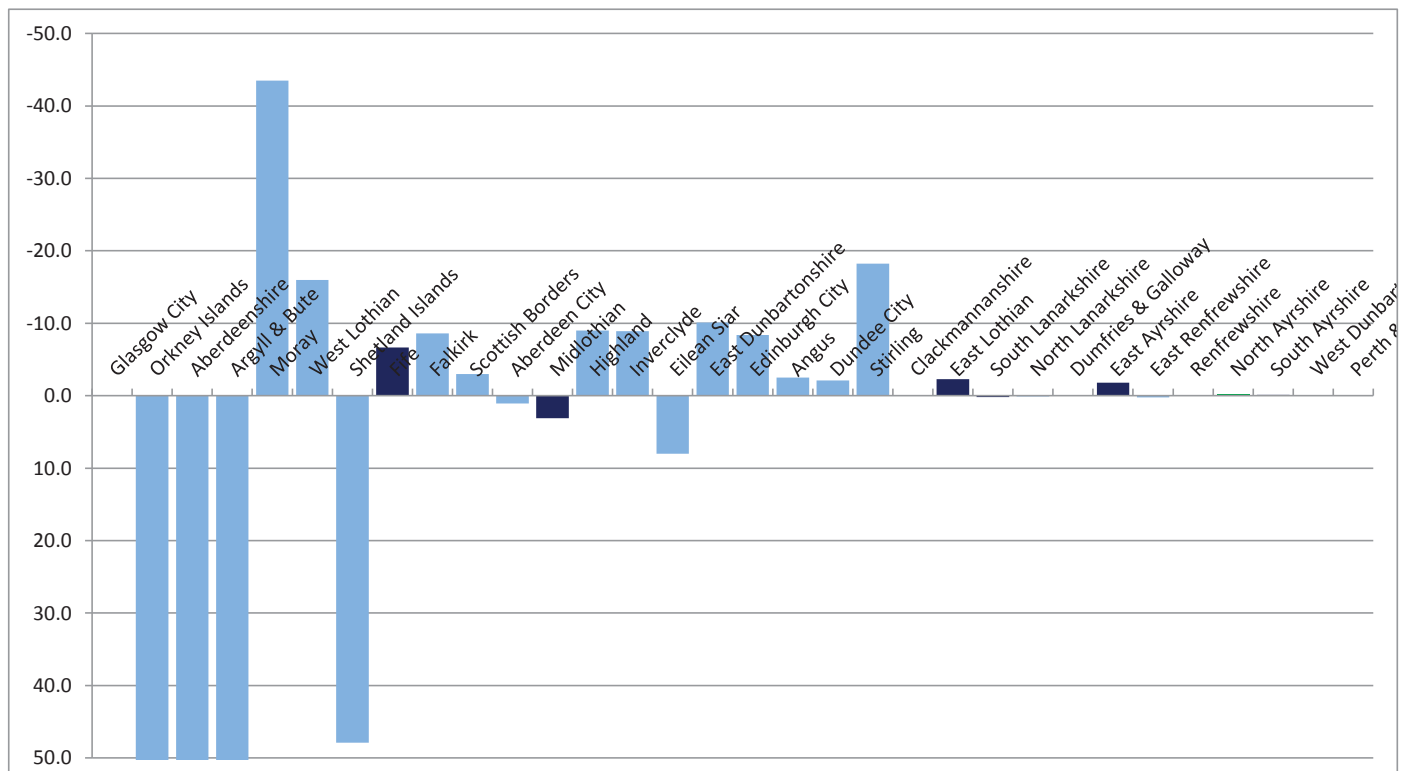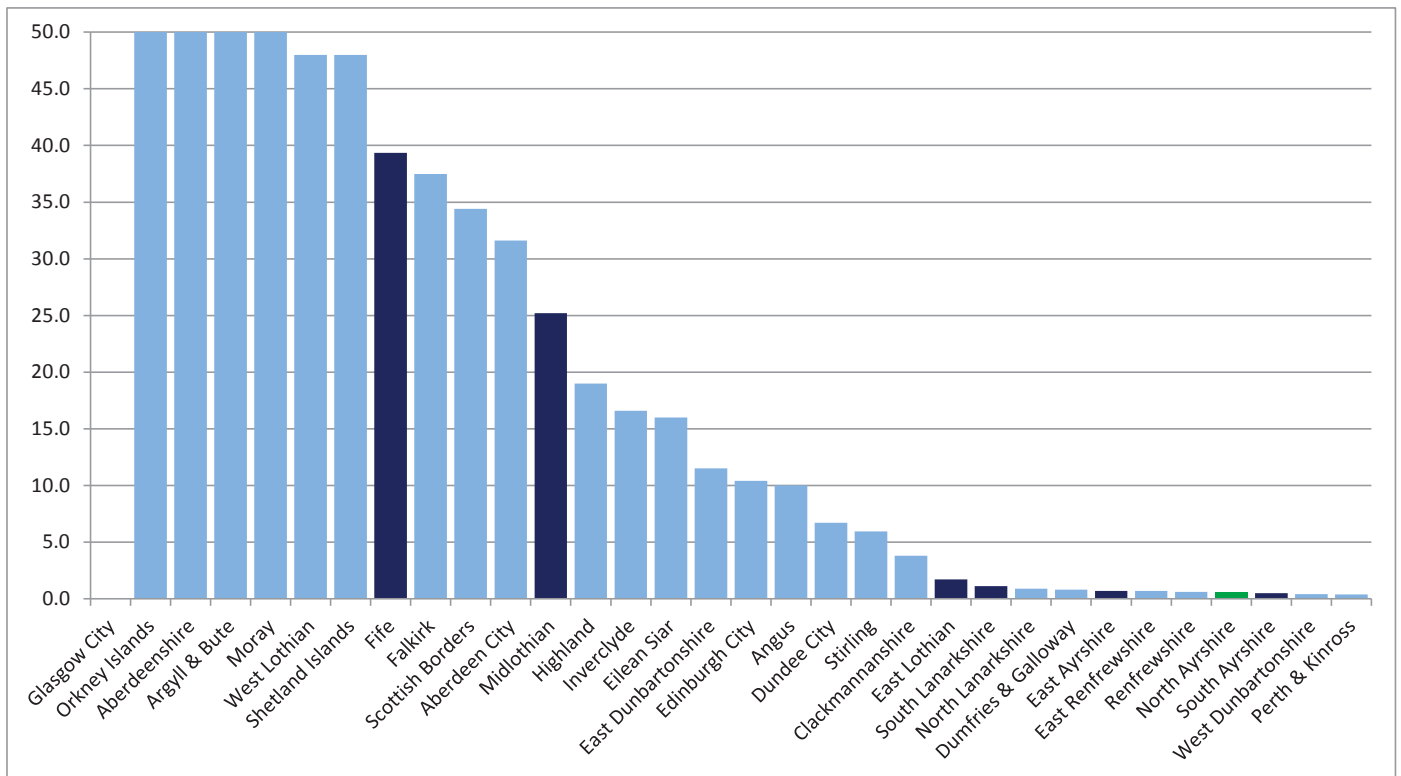
North Ayrshire

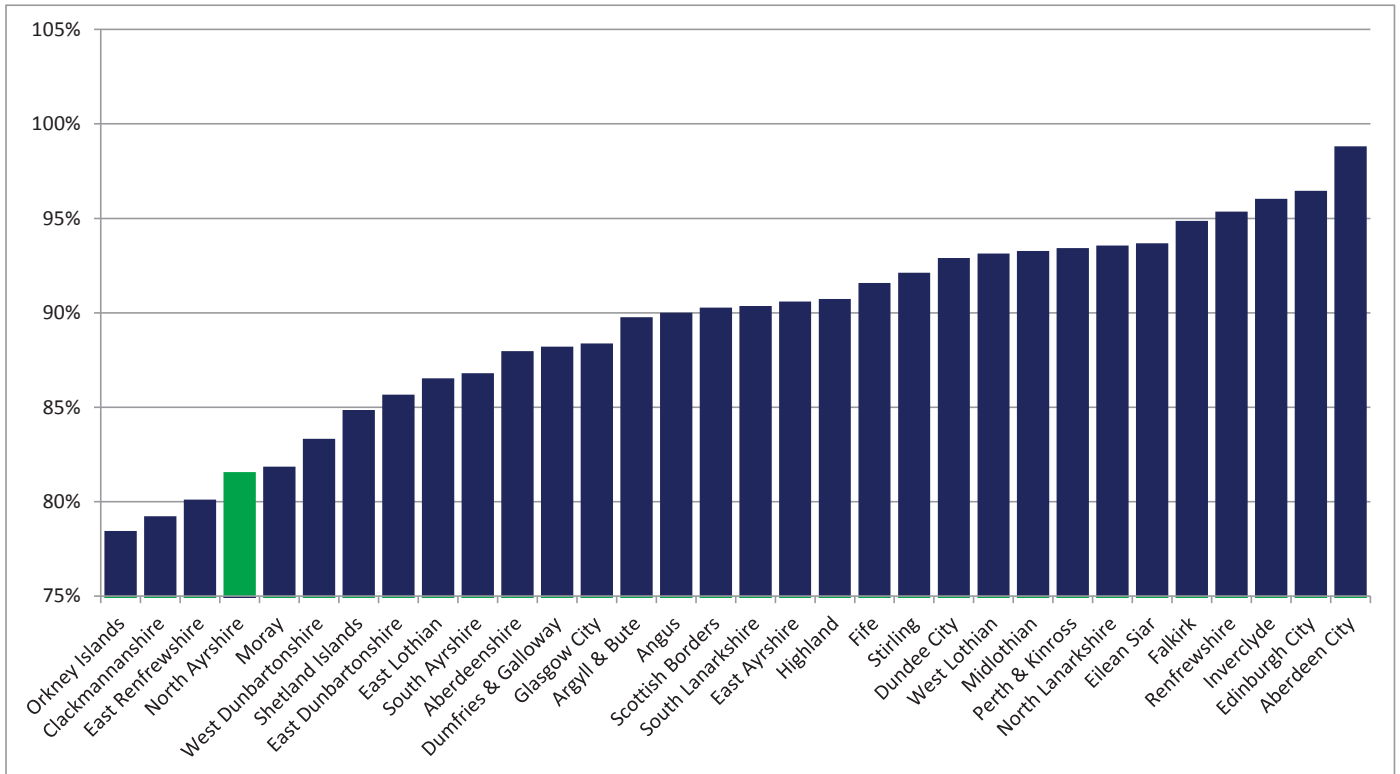## CORP6: Days Lost per FTE Employee
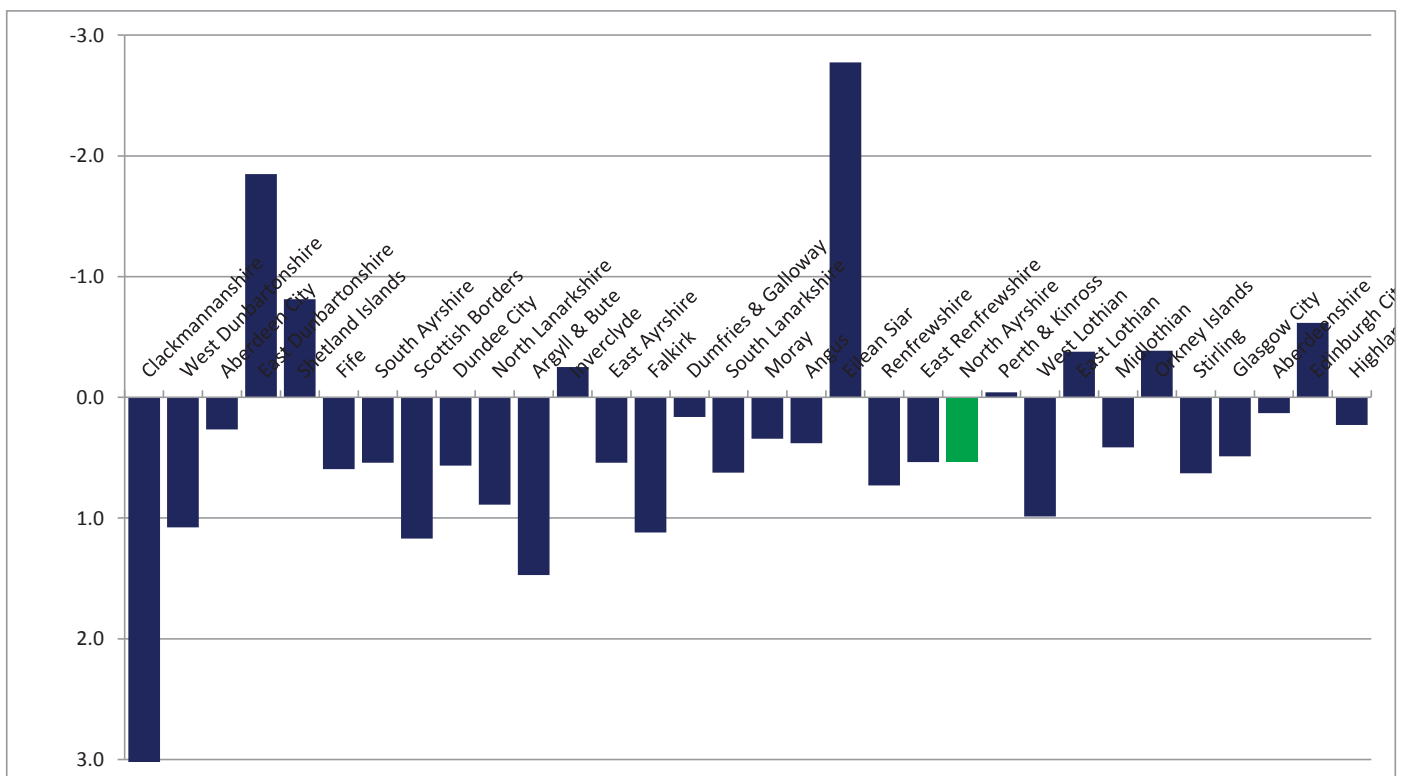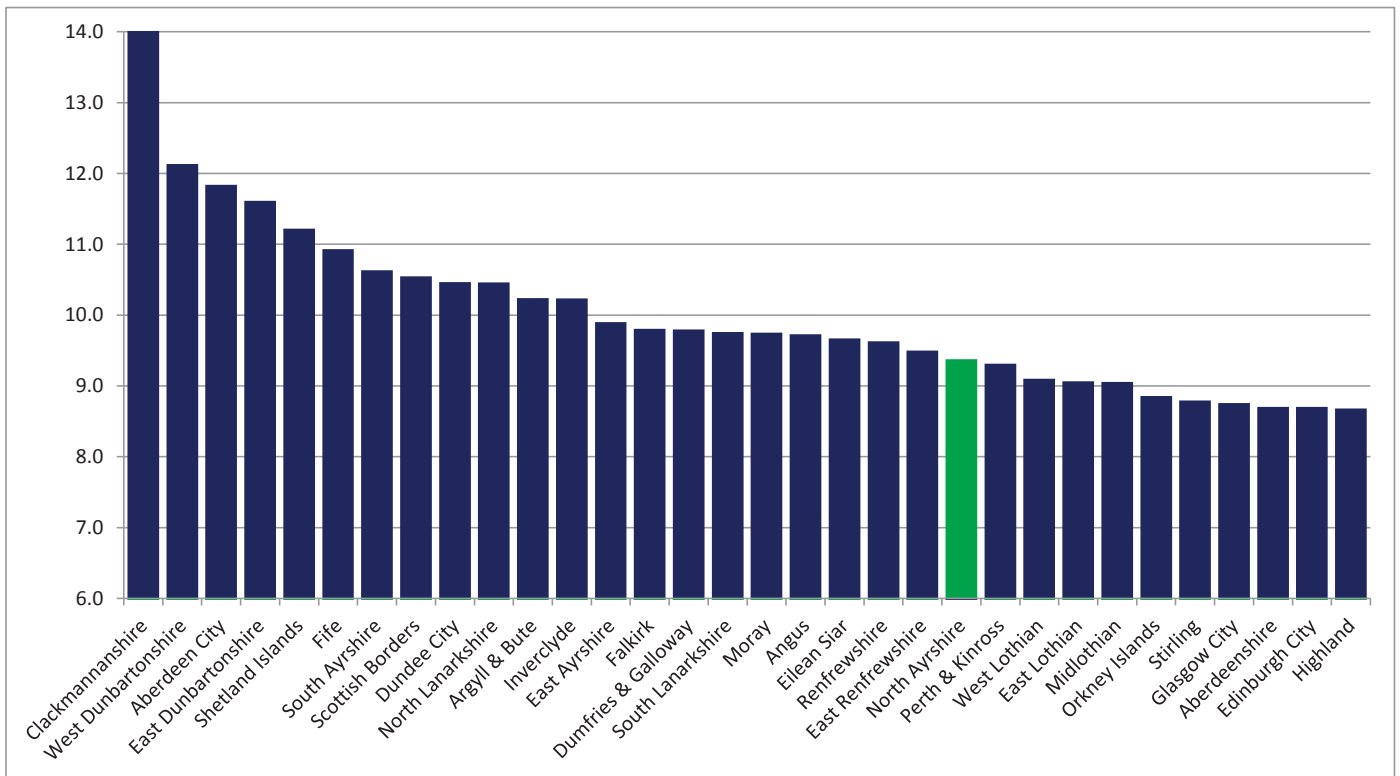
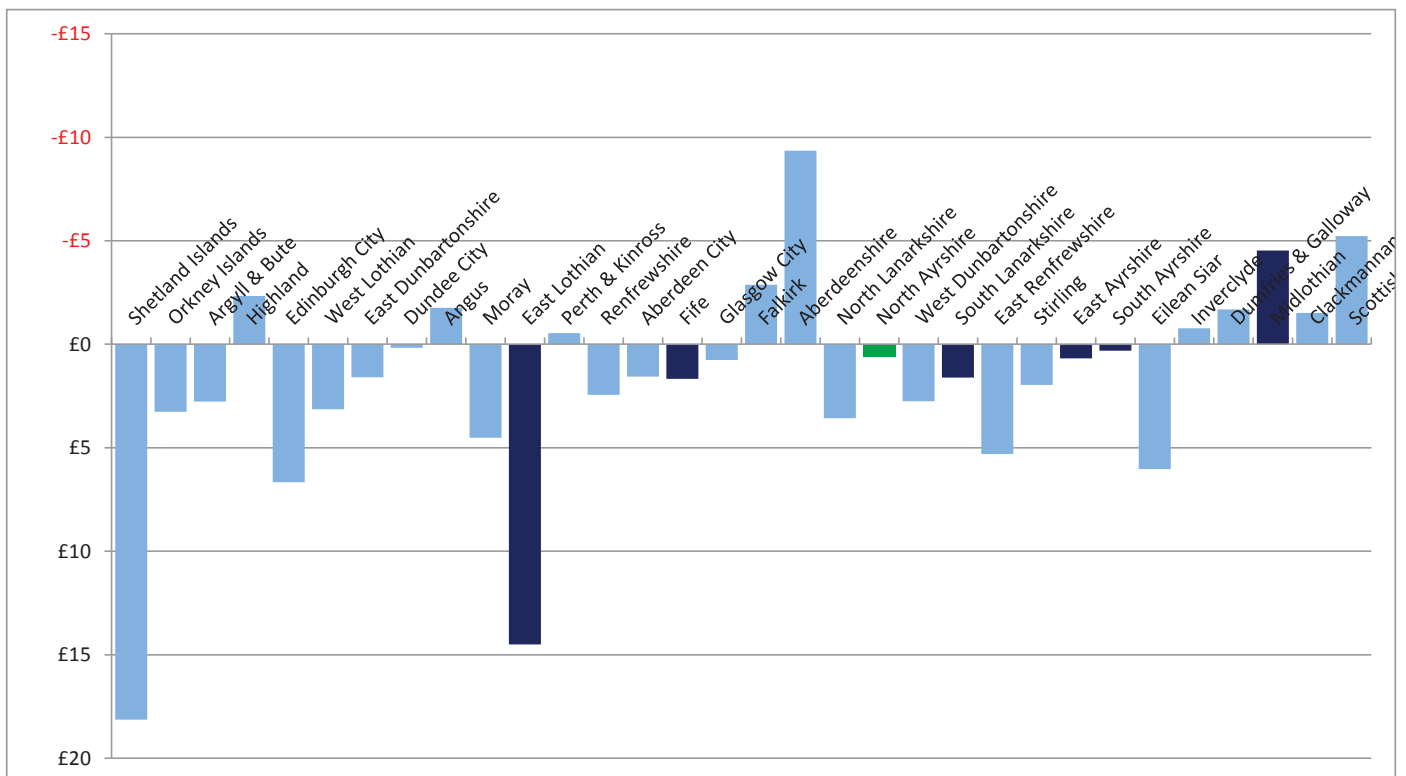# North Ayrshire
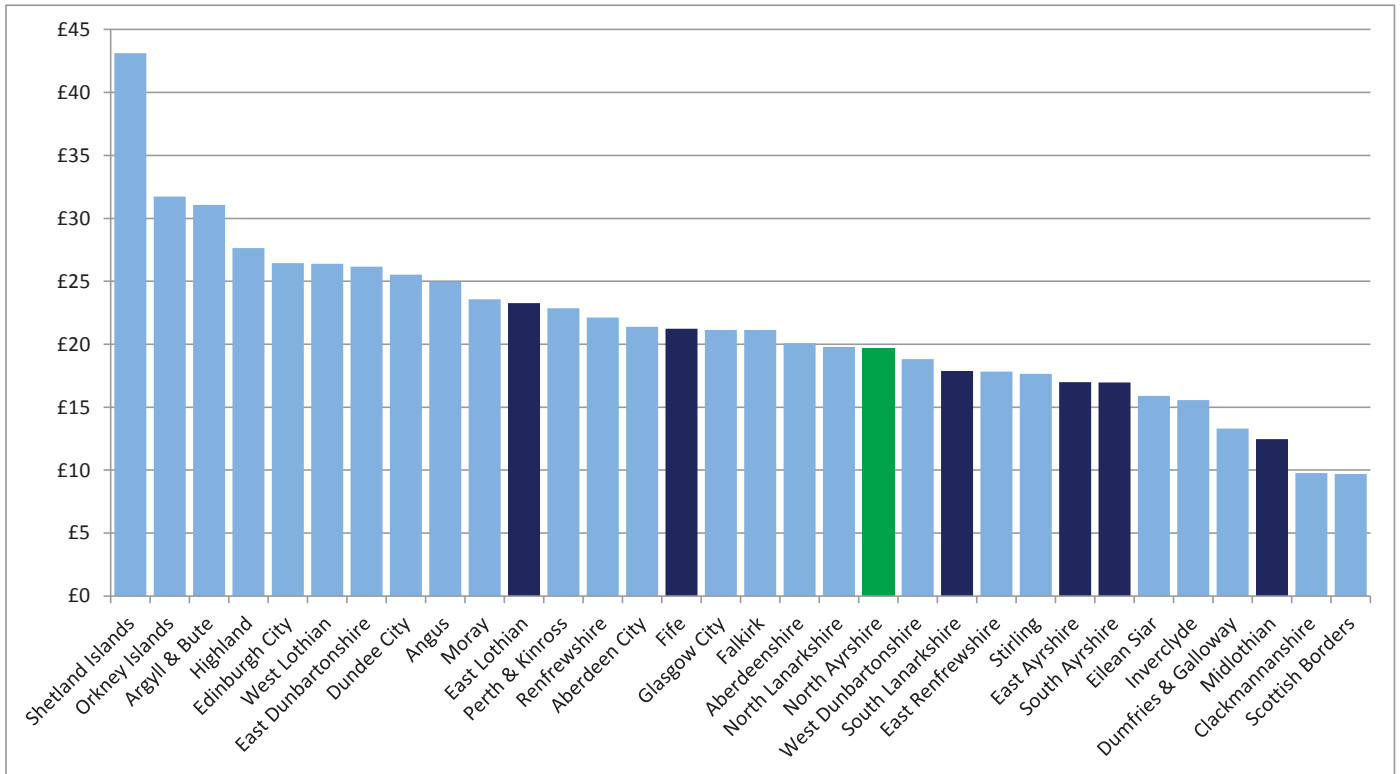
CORP7: Council Tax paid by year end
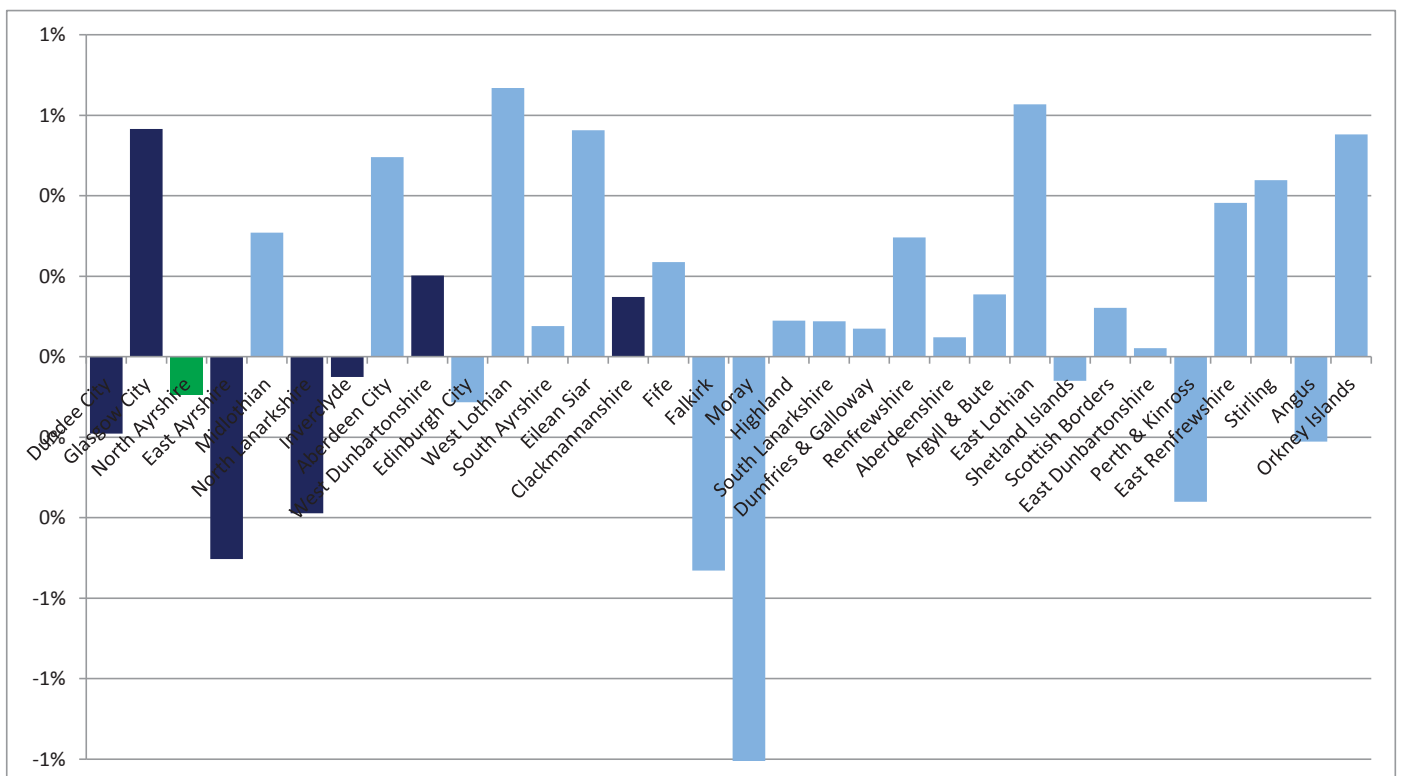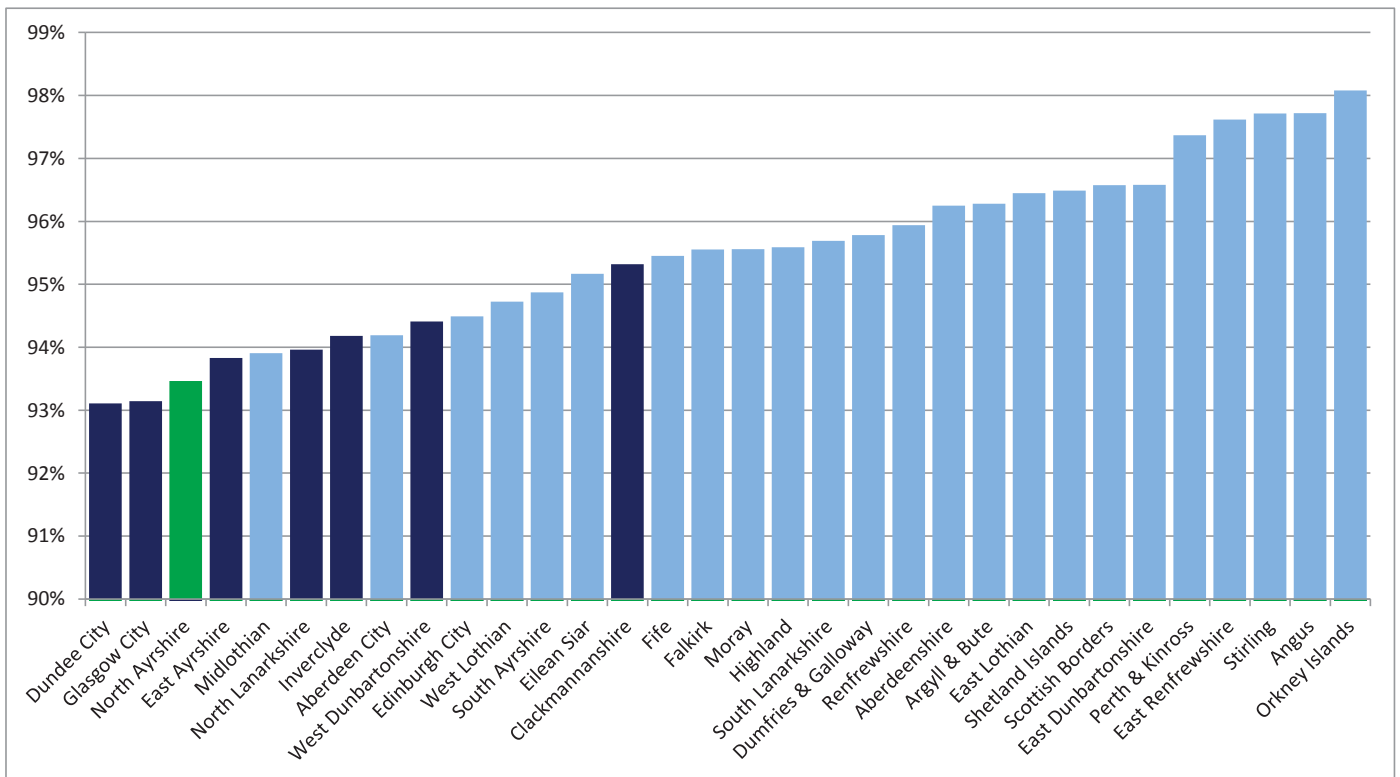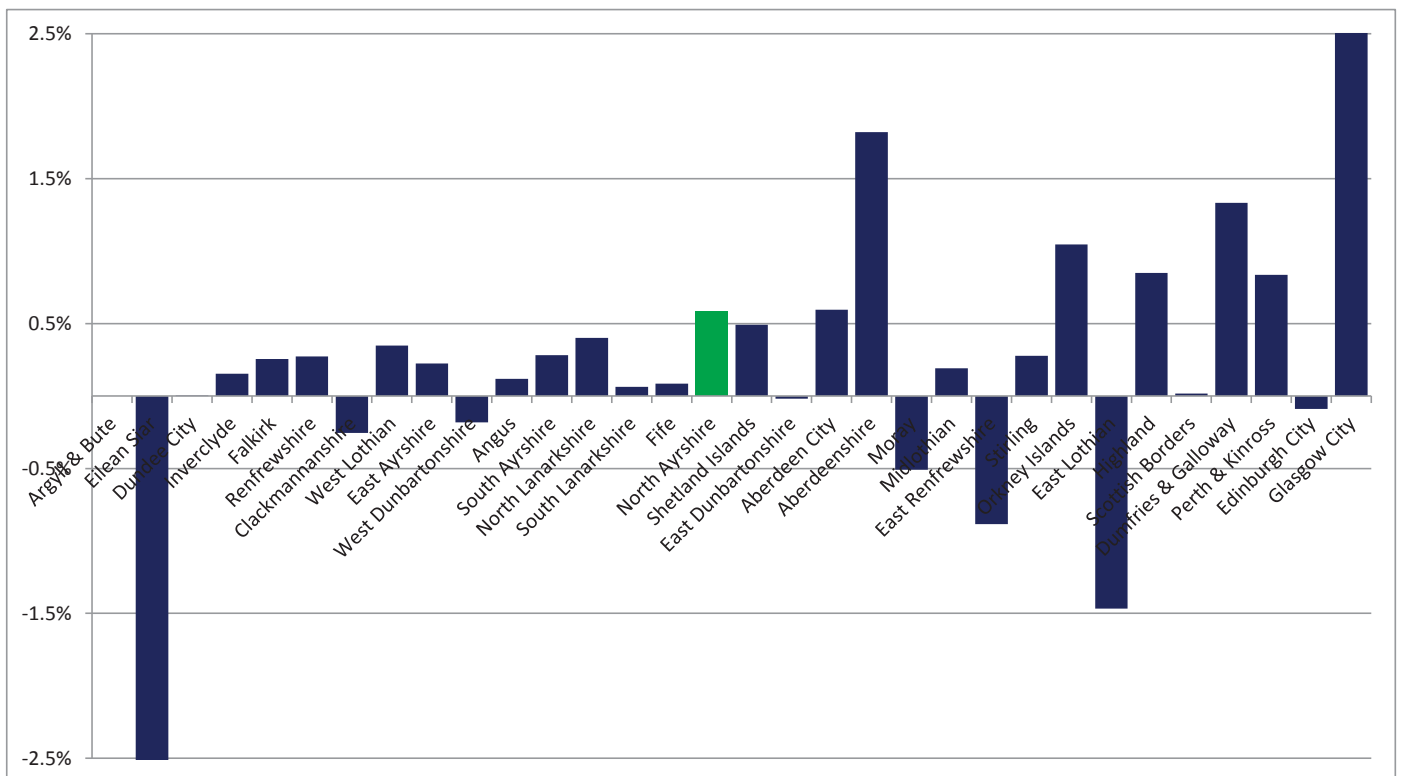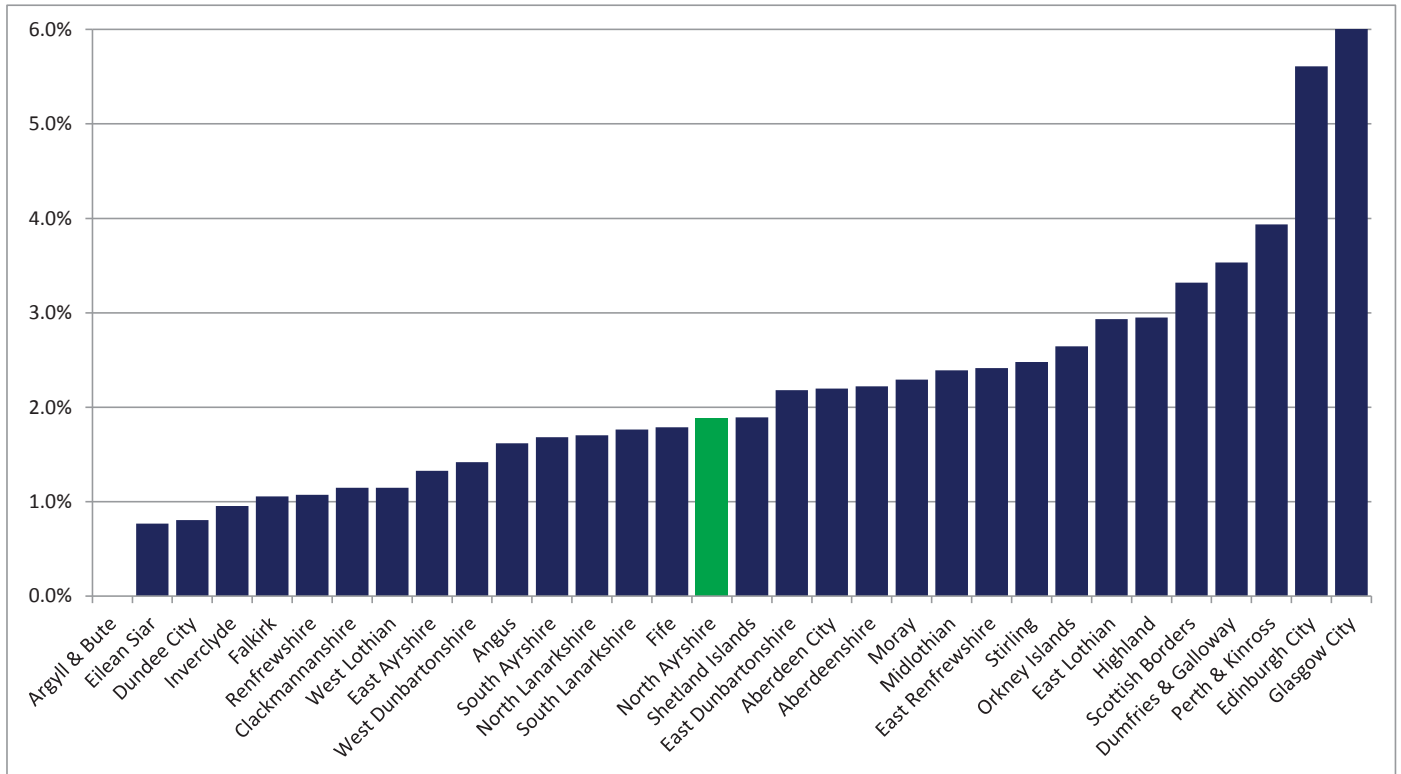
North Ayrshire

CORP8: Invoices paid in 30 days
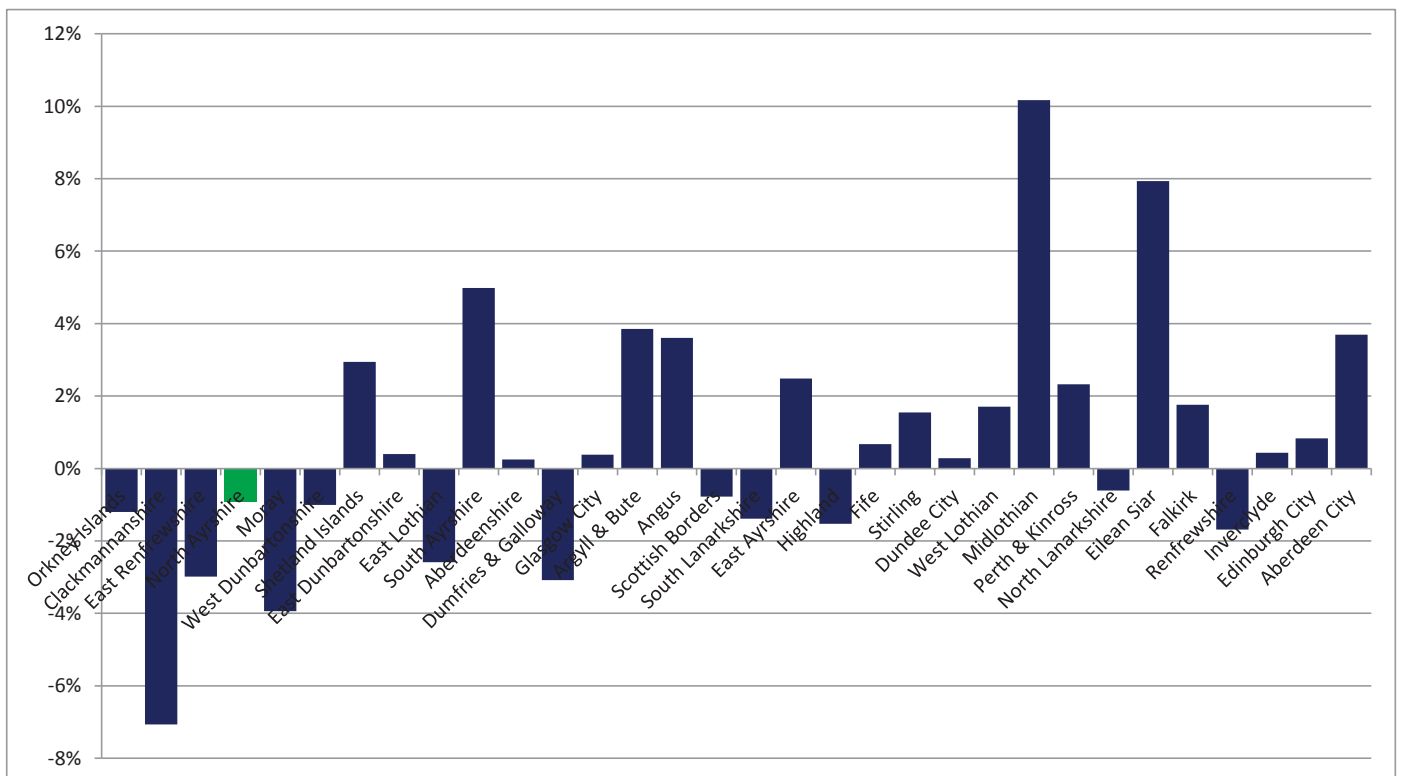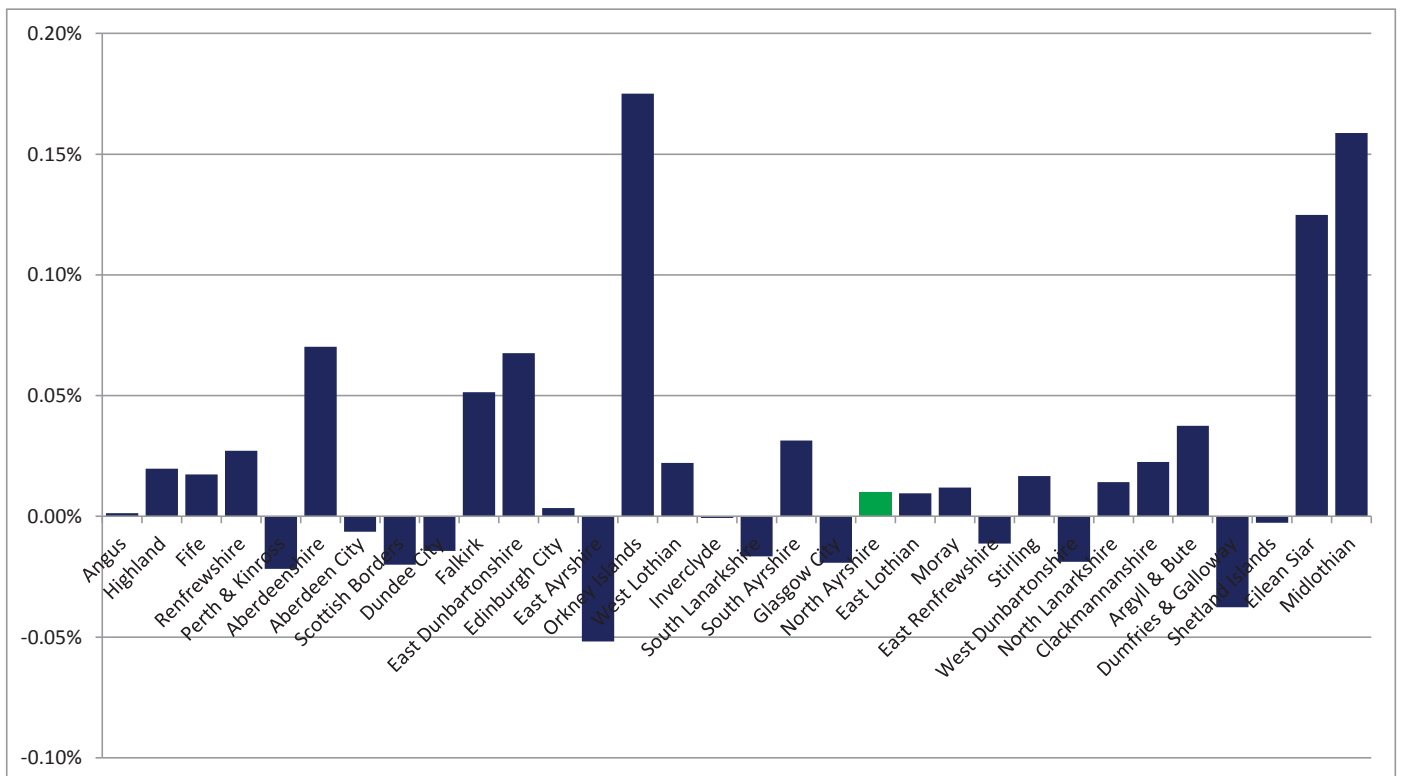
North Ayrshire

SW1: Home Care Costs per Hr (Over 65)

North Ayrshire

SW2: SDS spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+

North Ayrshire

SW3: % of people 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home
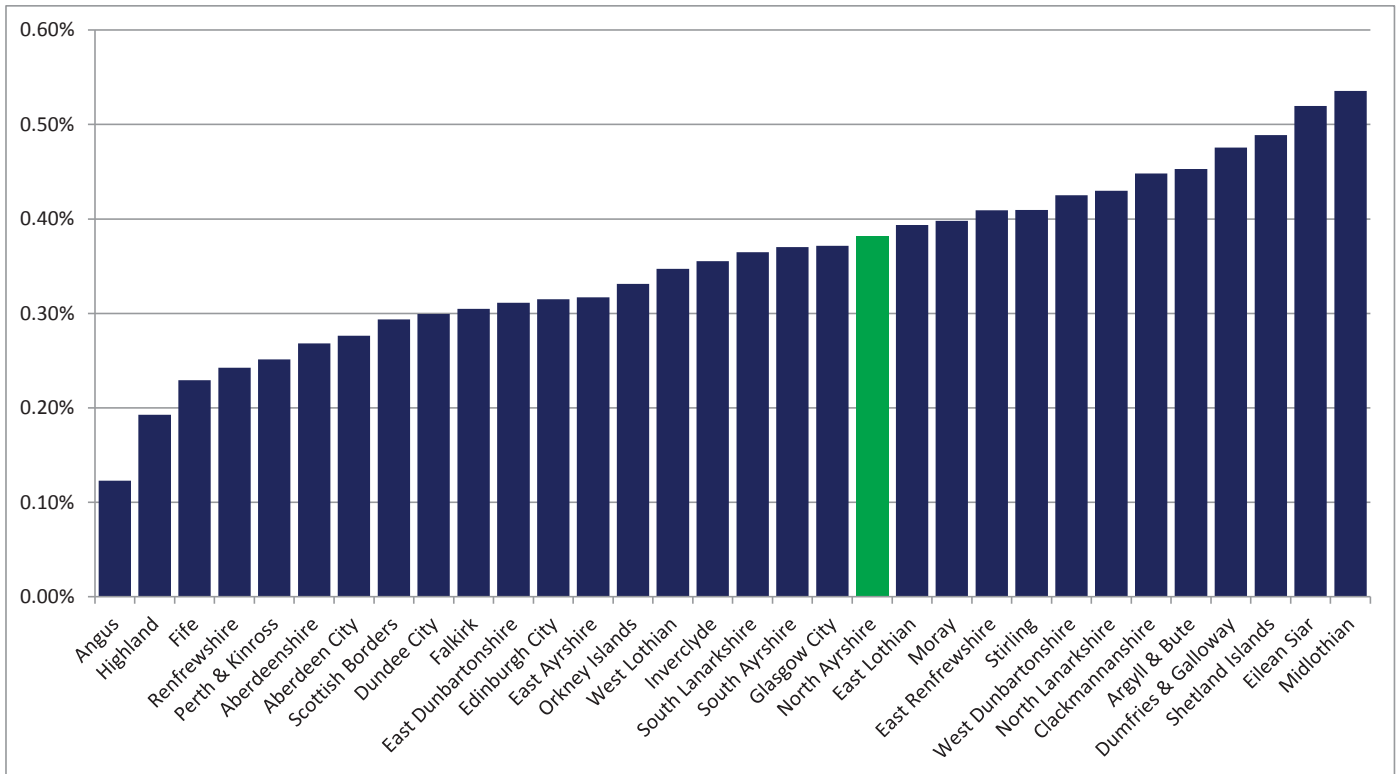
North Ayrshire

SW4: % of Adults satisfied with social care or social work services
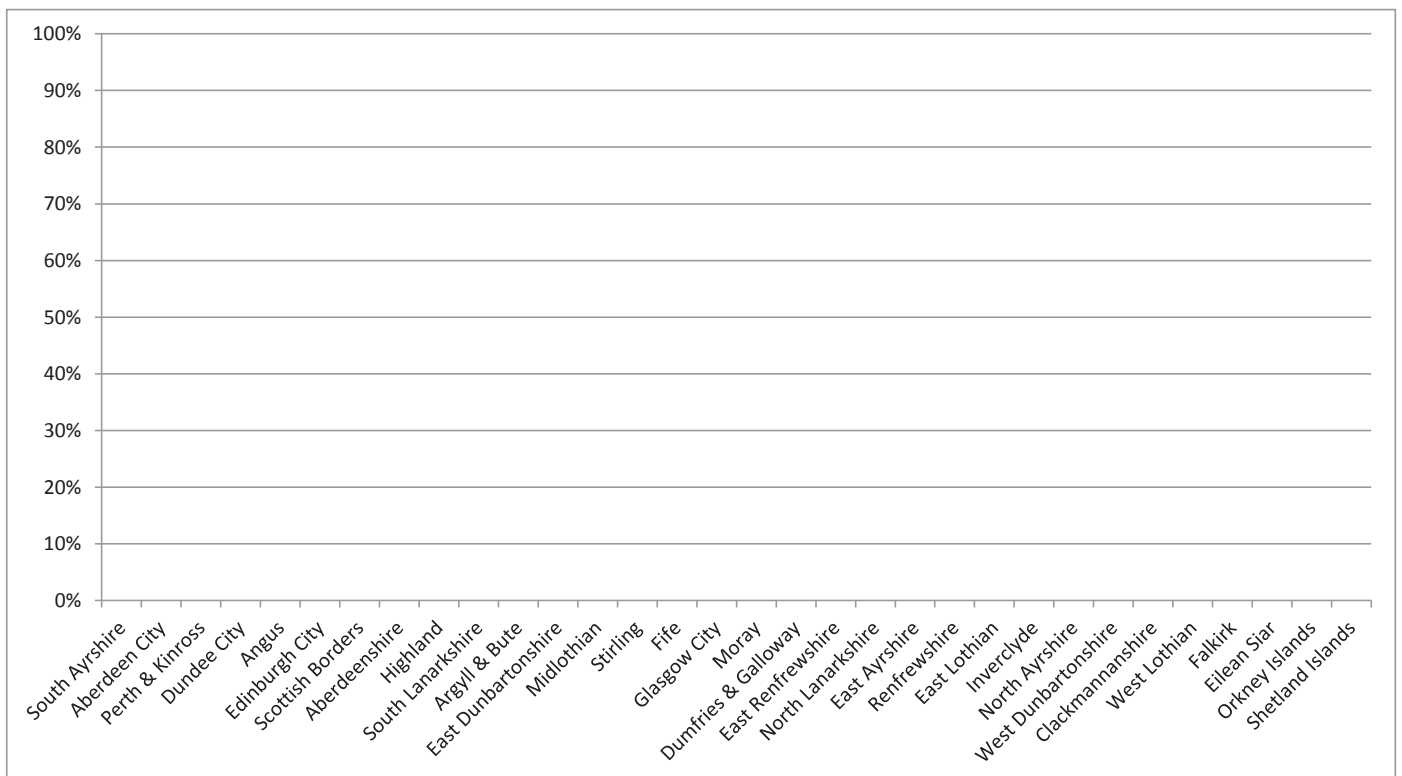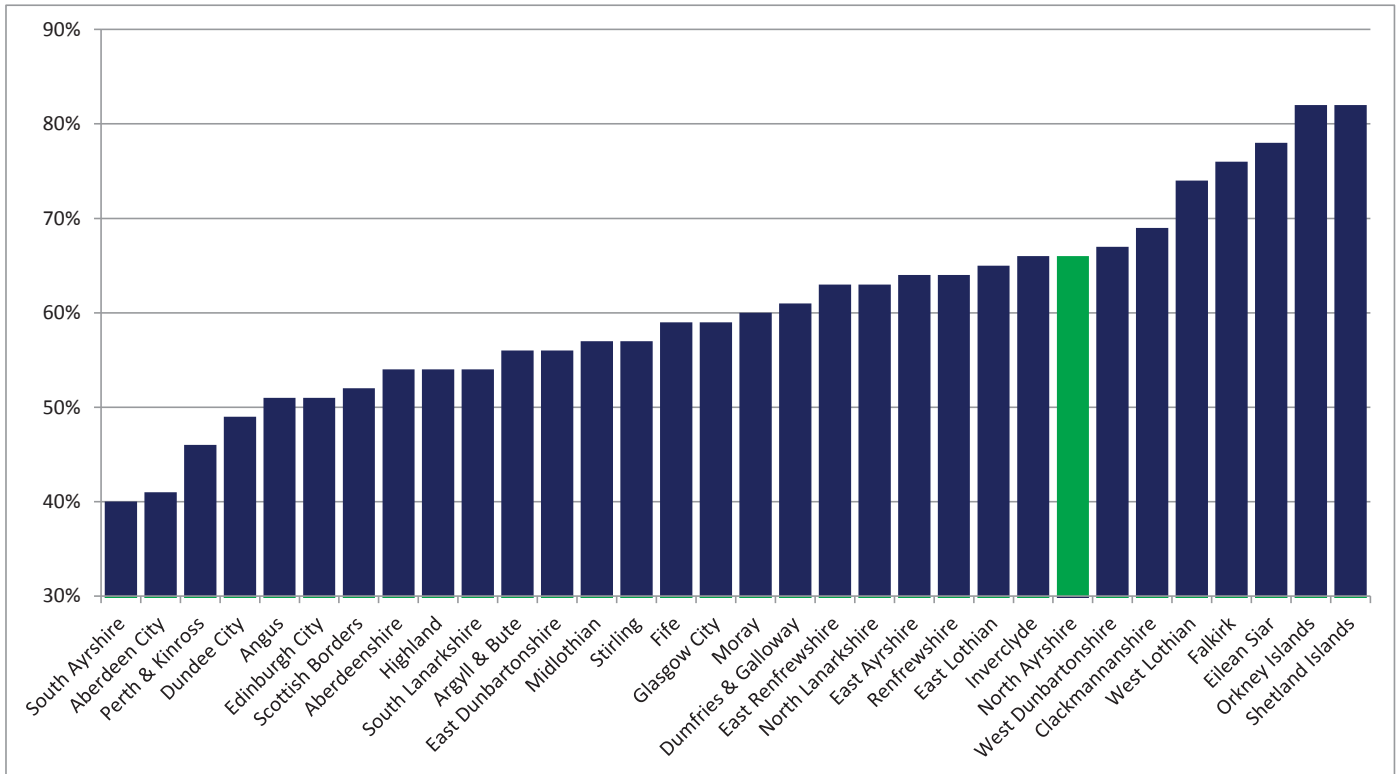
North Ayrshire

SW5: Average weekly cost per resident
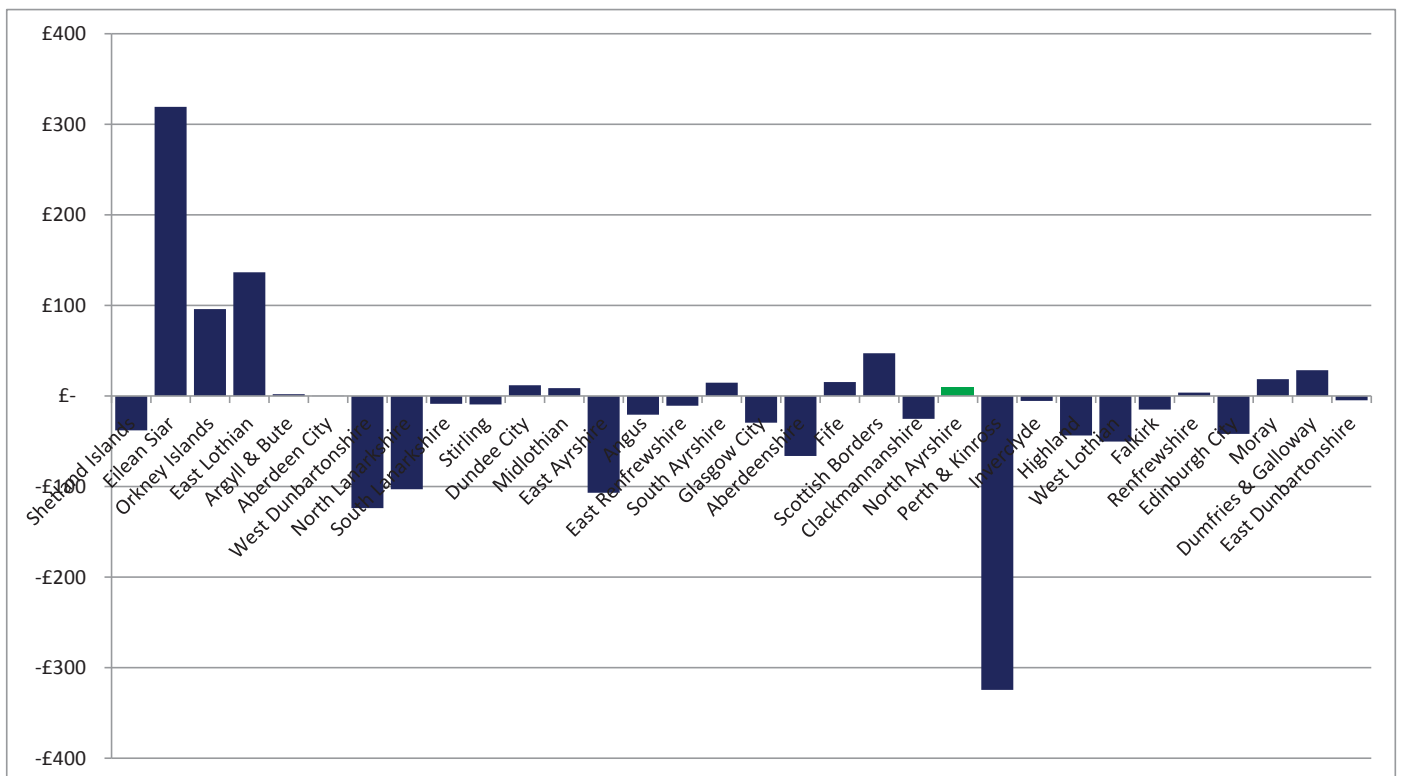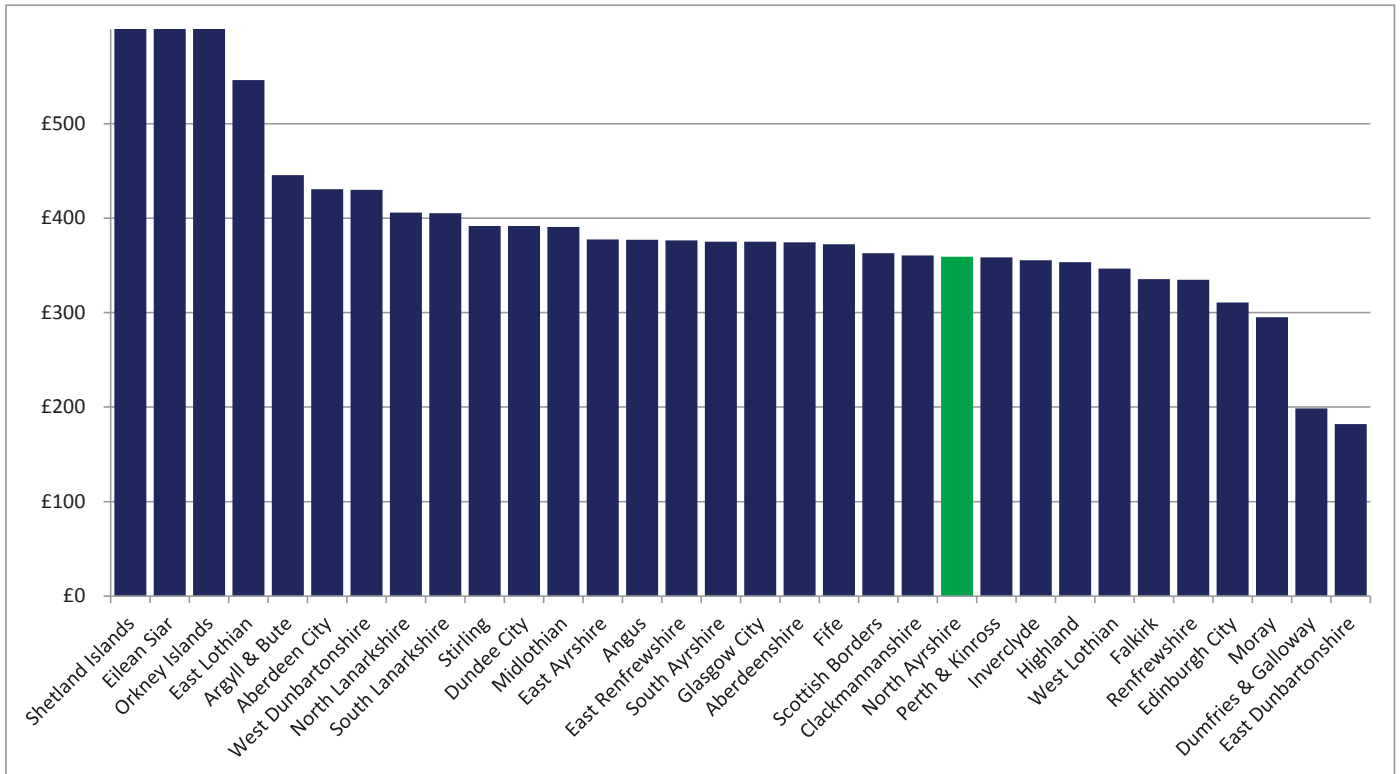
North Ayrshire

C&L1: Gross cost per attendance at Sports facilities
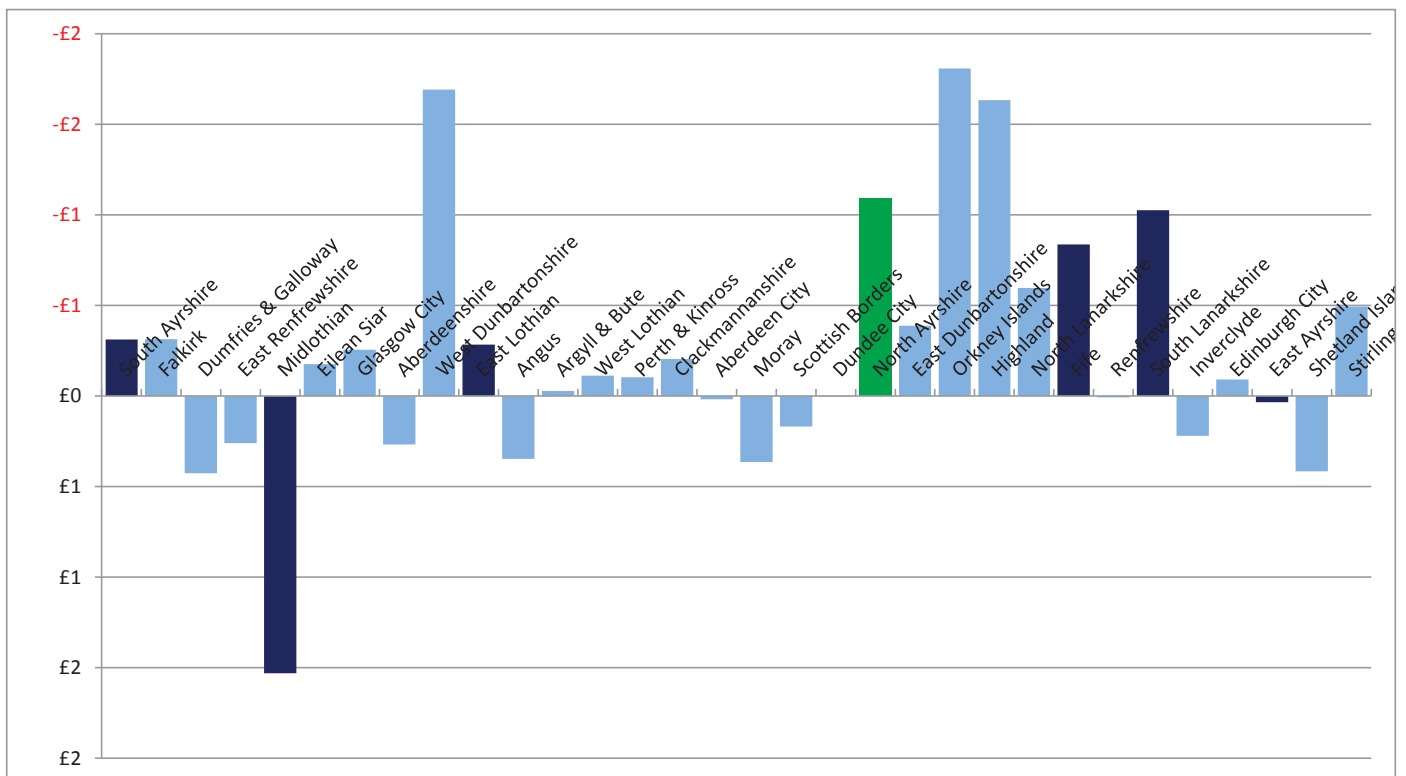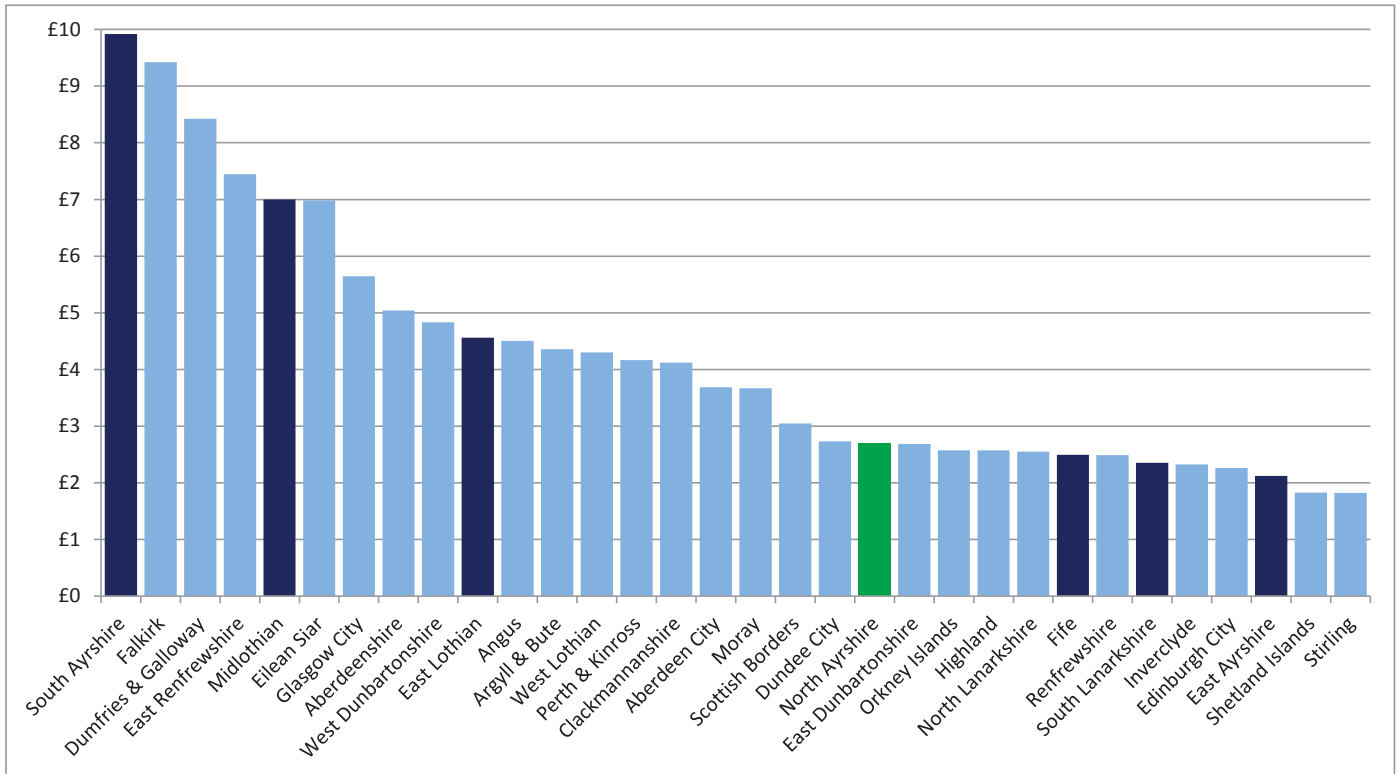
North Ayrshire

C&L2: Cost Per Library Visit
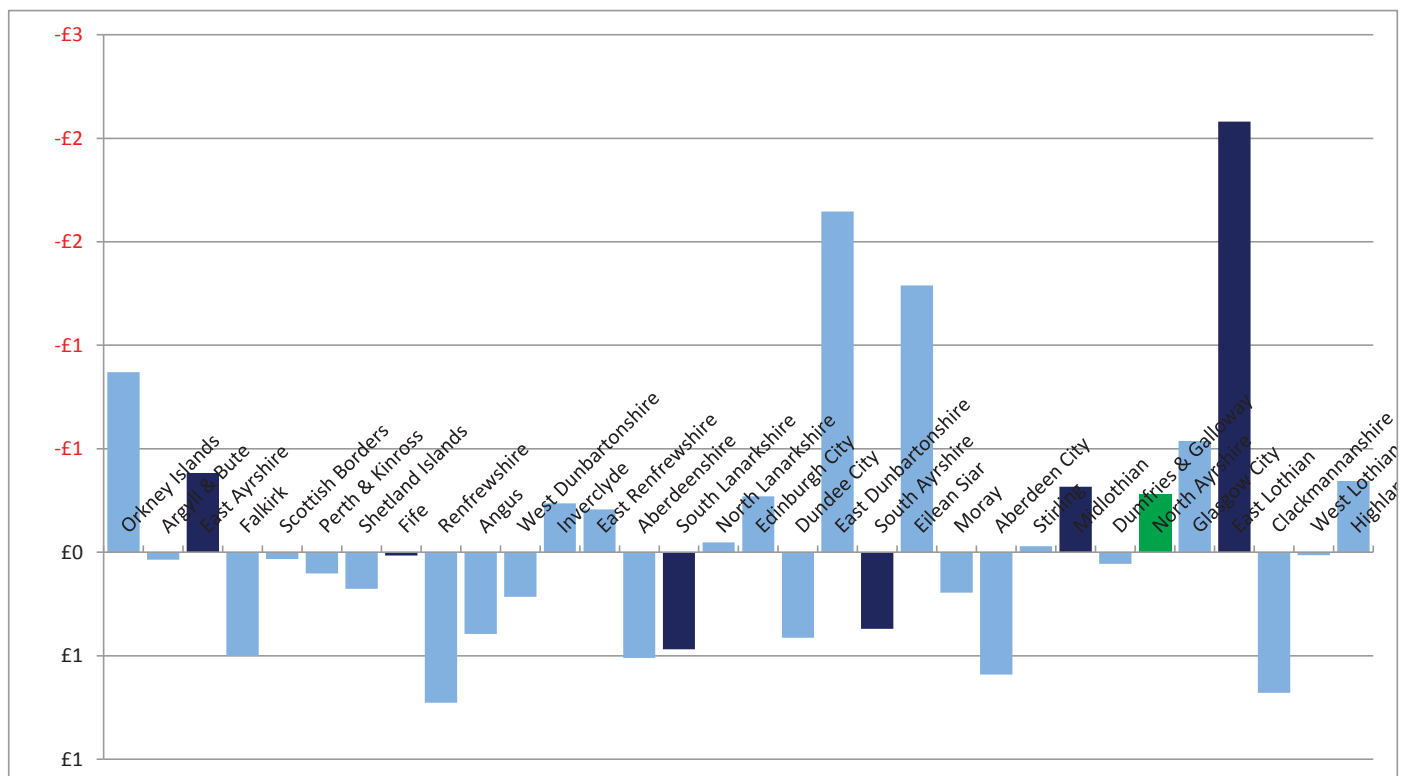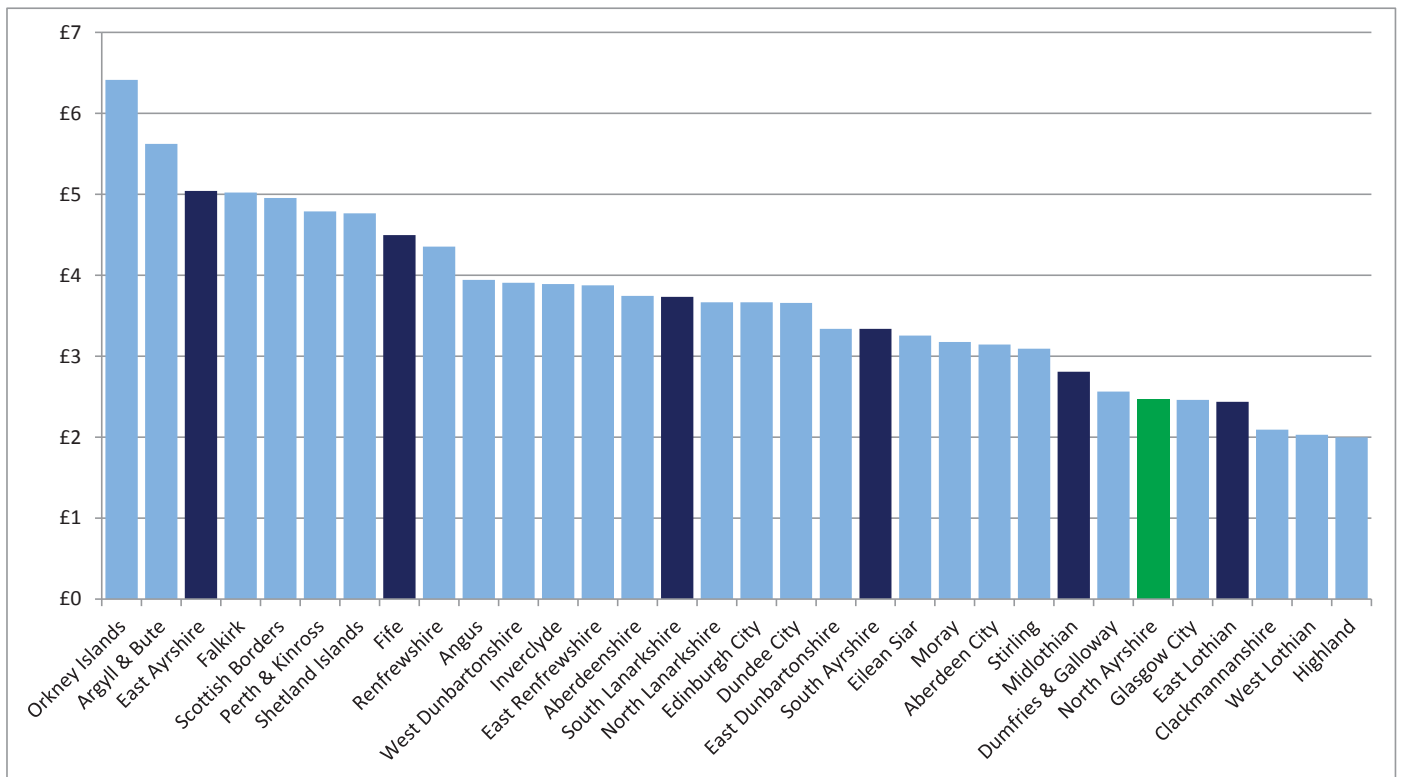
North Ayrshire

C&L3: Cost per museum visit
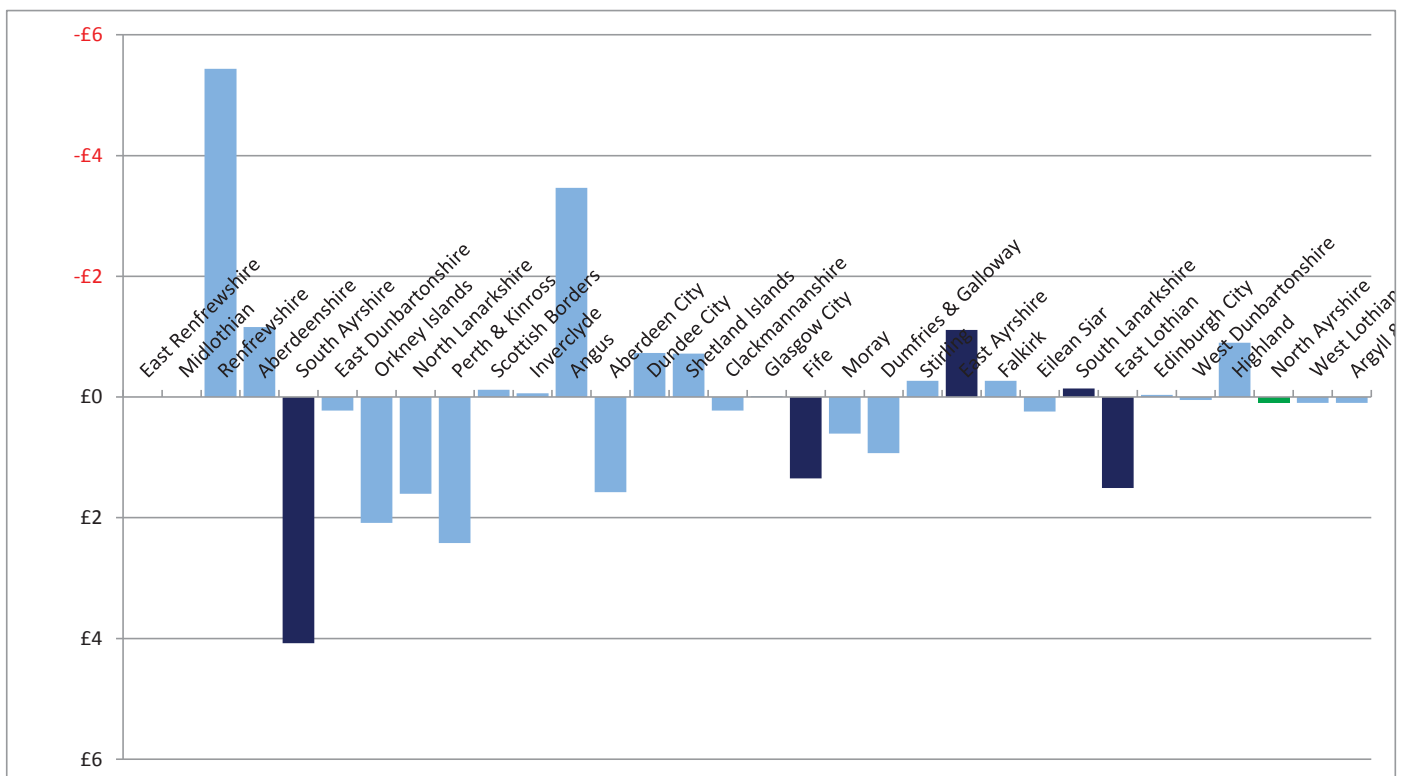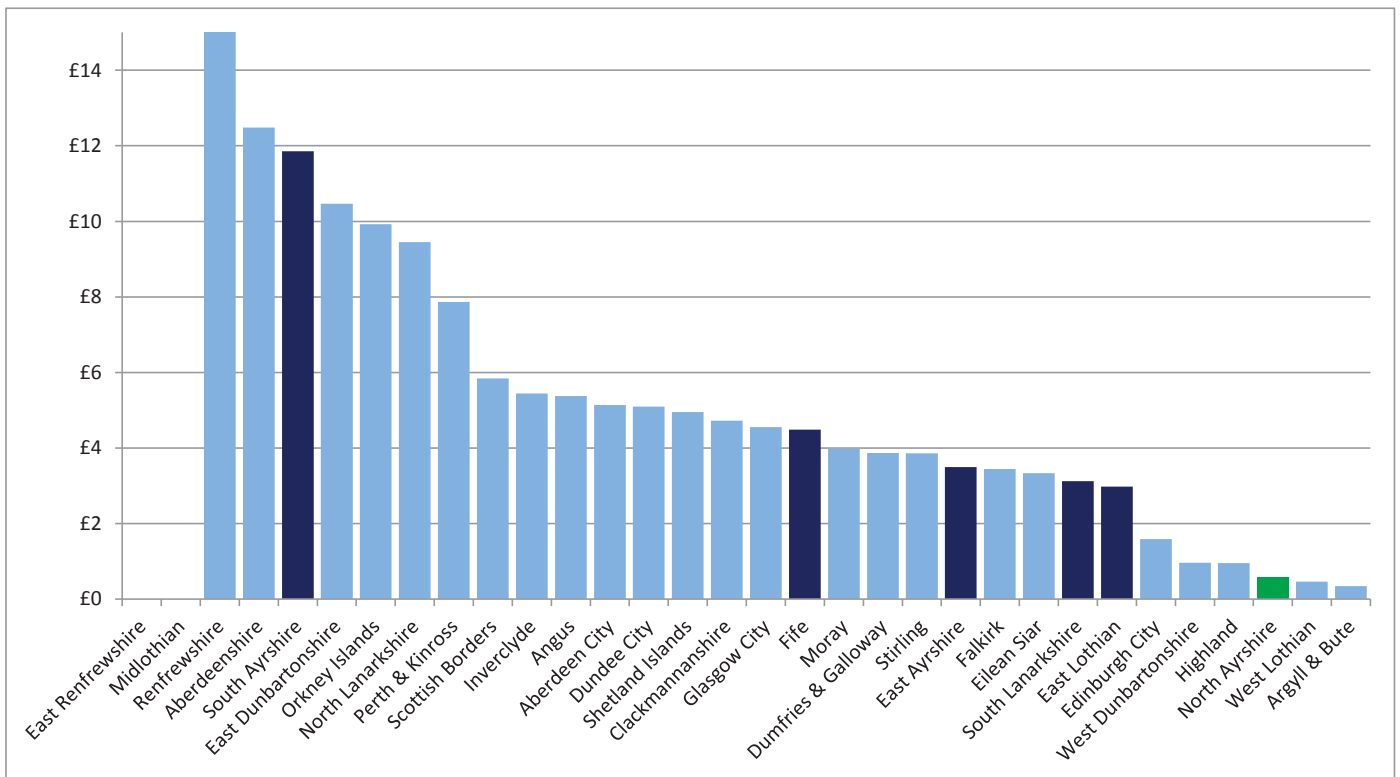
North Ayrshire

C&L4: Cost of Parks & Open Spaces per 1,000 Populations
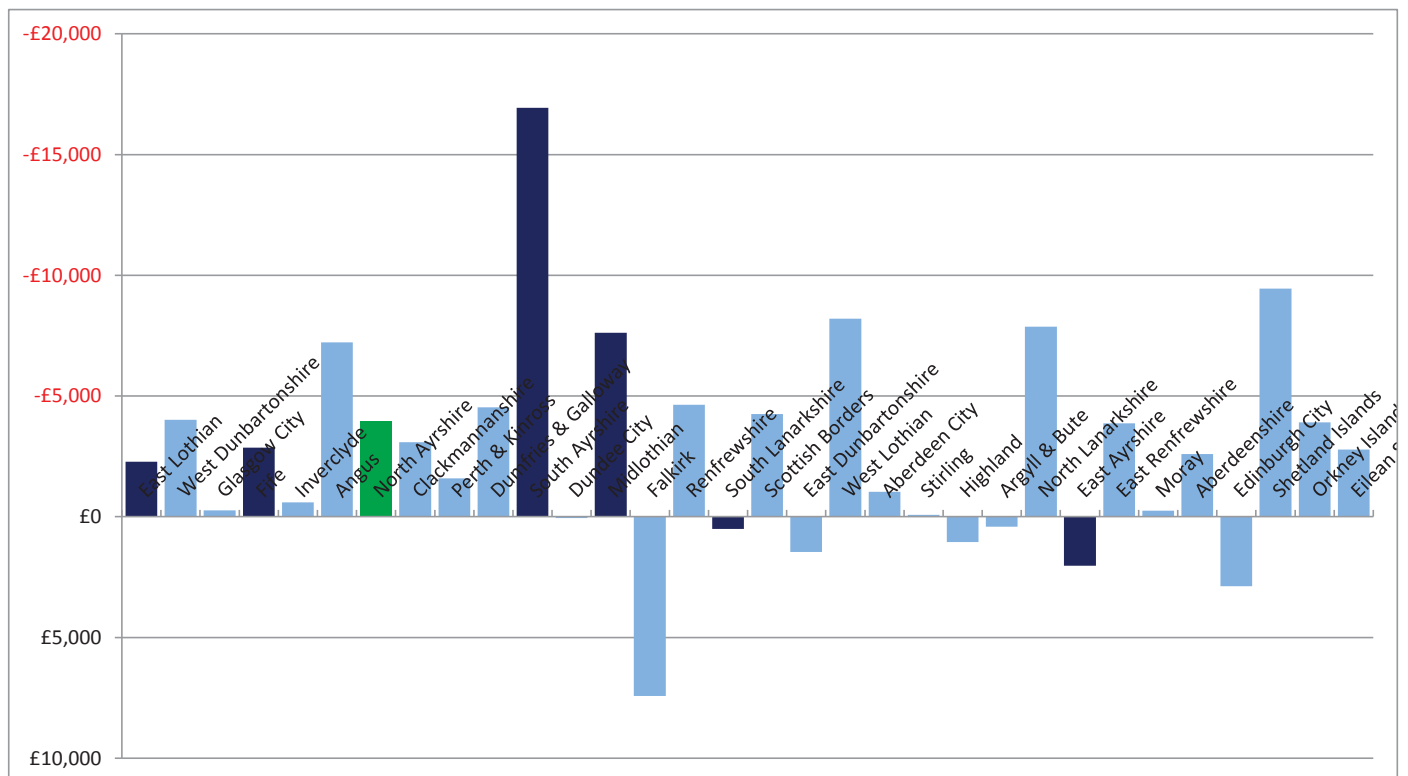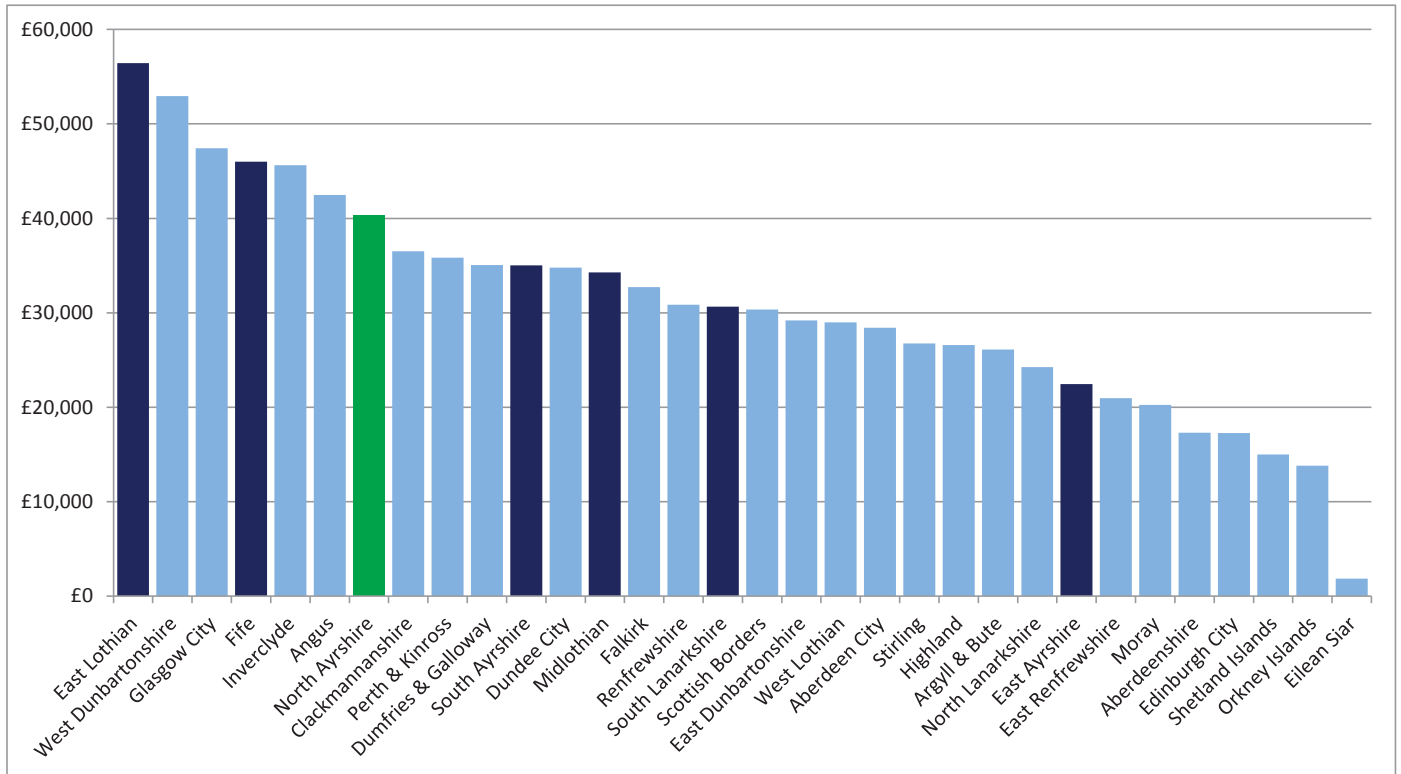
North Ayrshire

C&L5a: % of adults satisfied with libraries
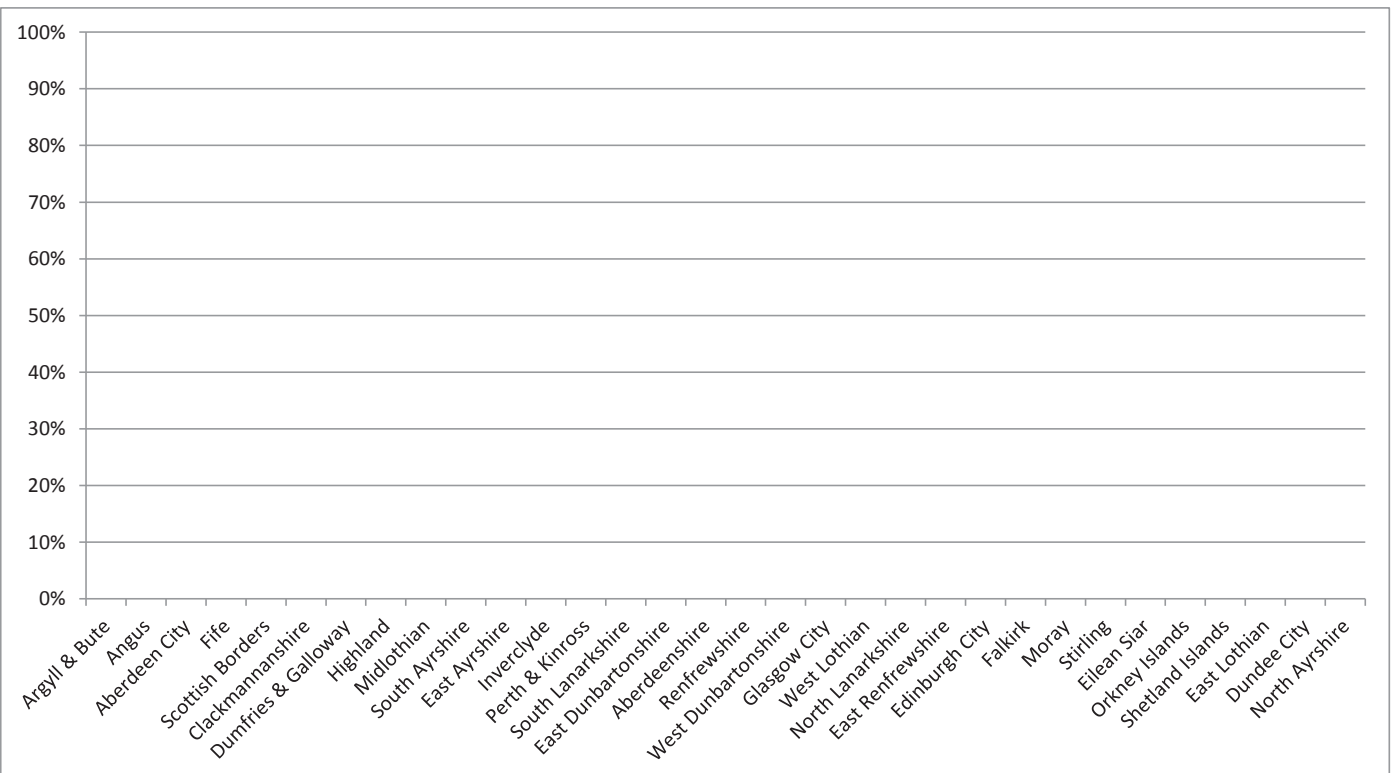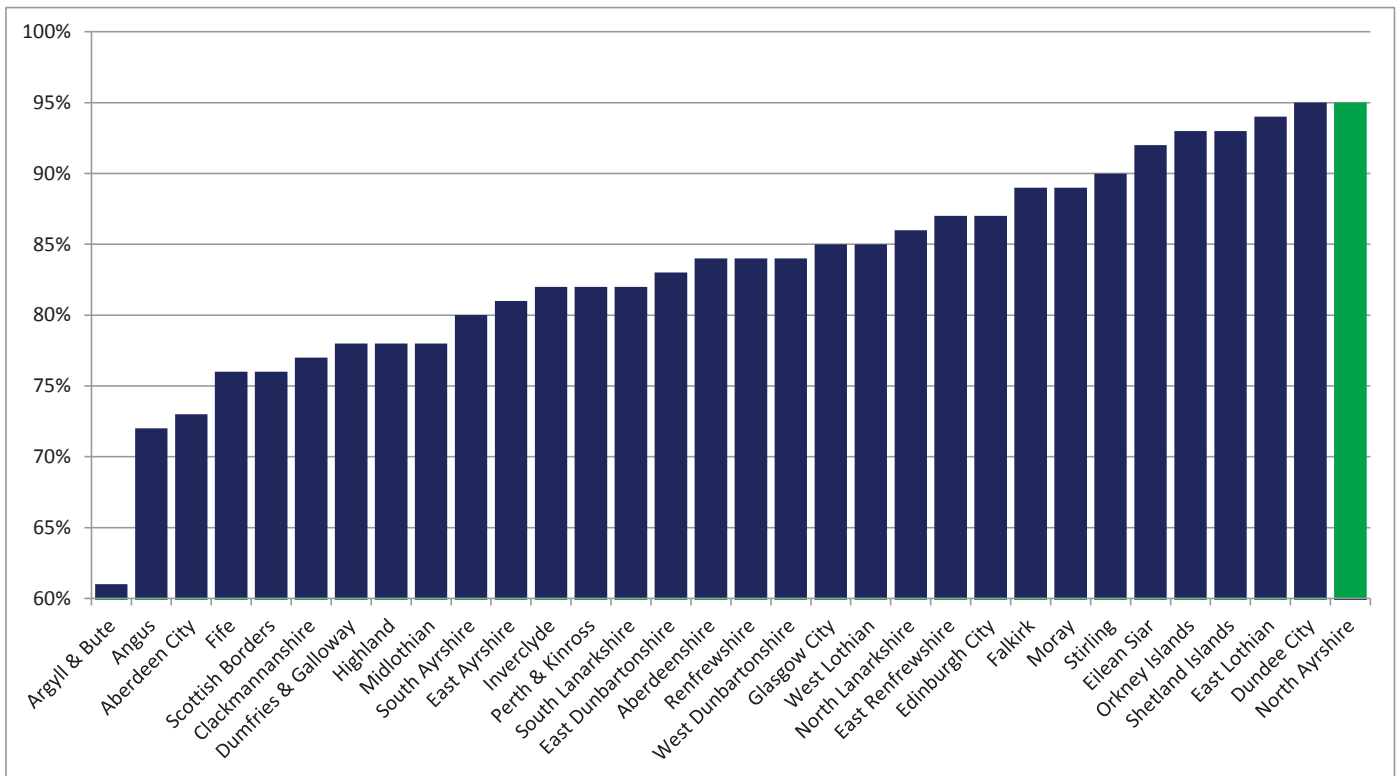
North Ayrshire
C&L5b: % of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces
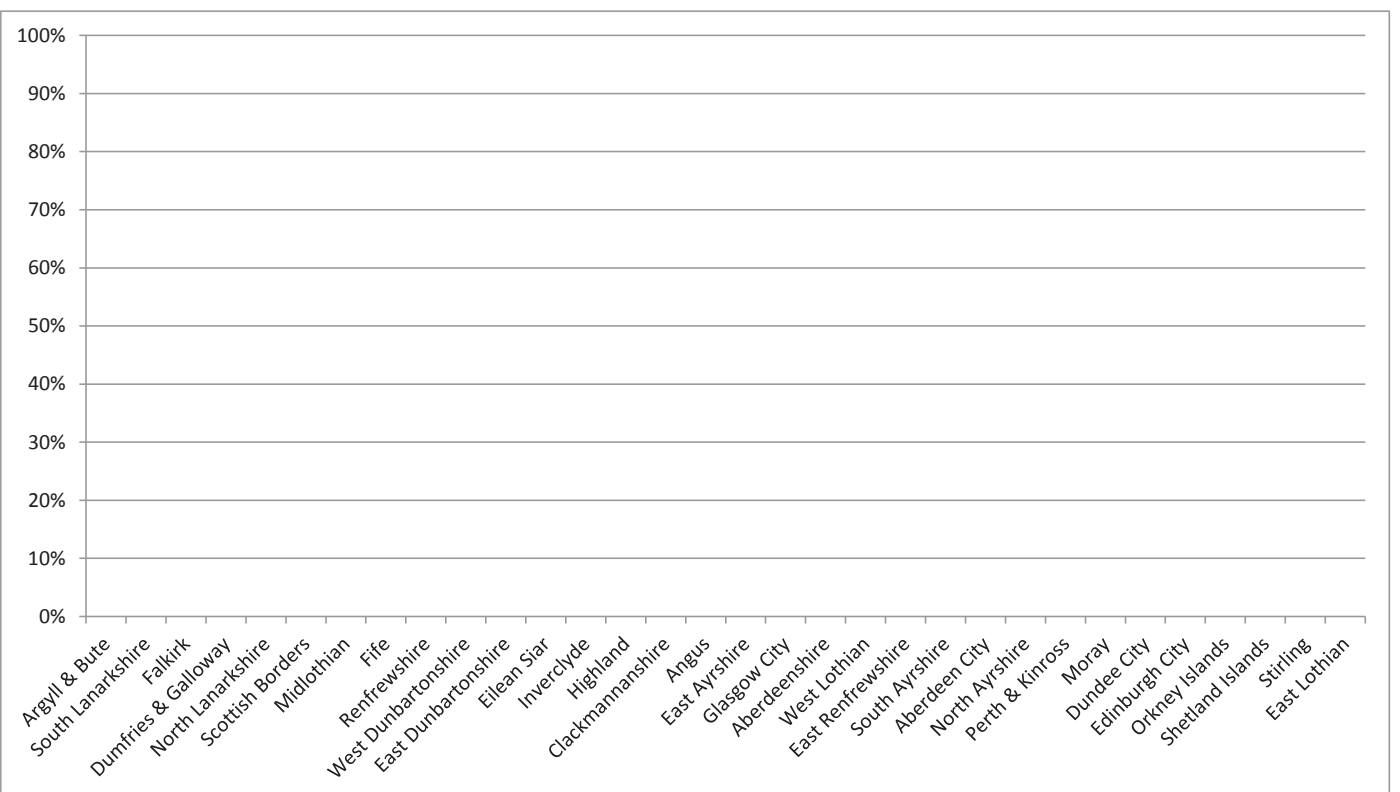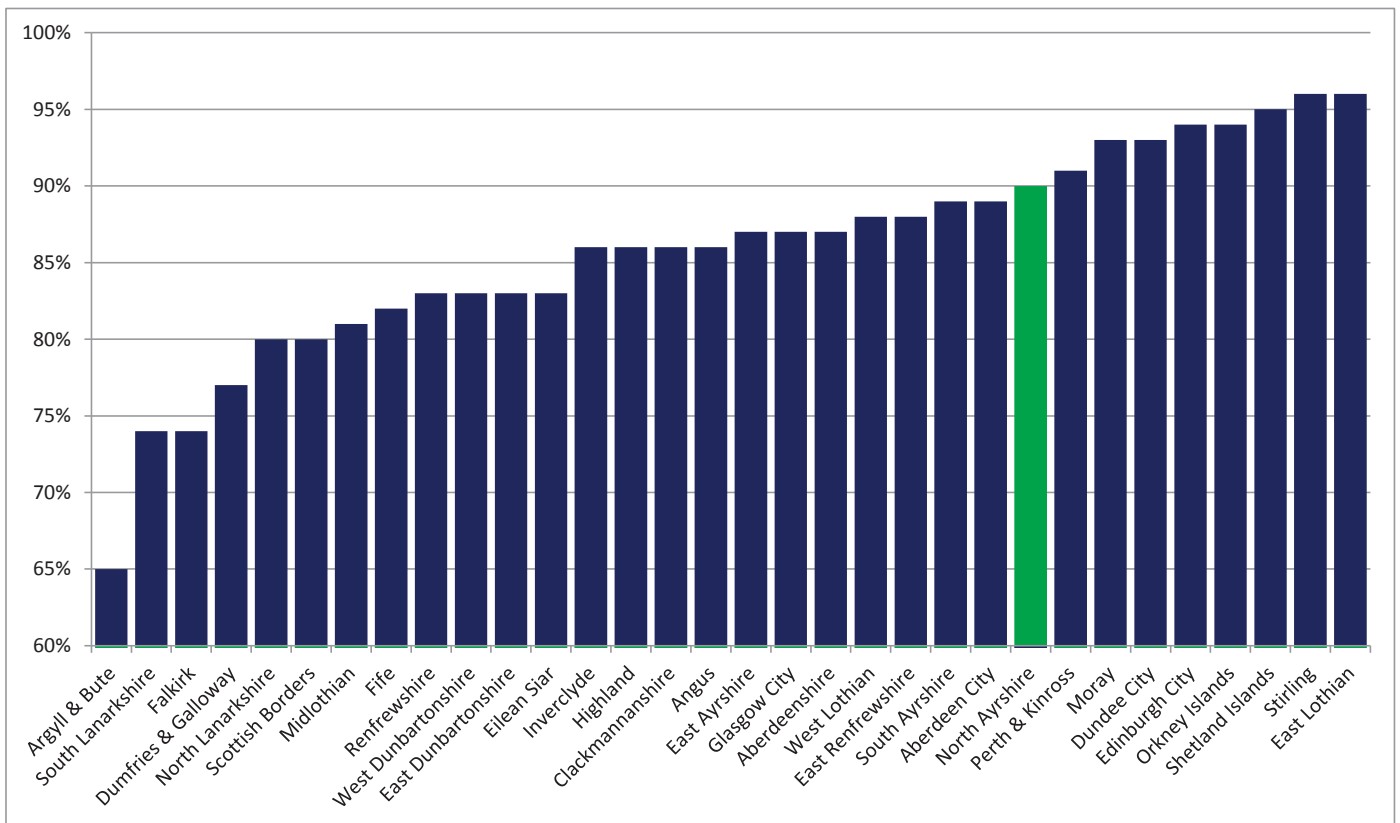
North Ayrshire

C&L5c: % of adults satisfied with museums and galleries
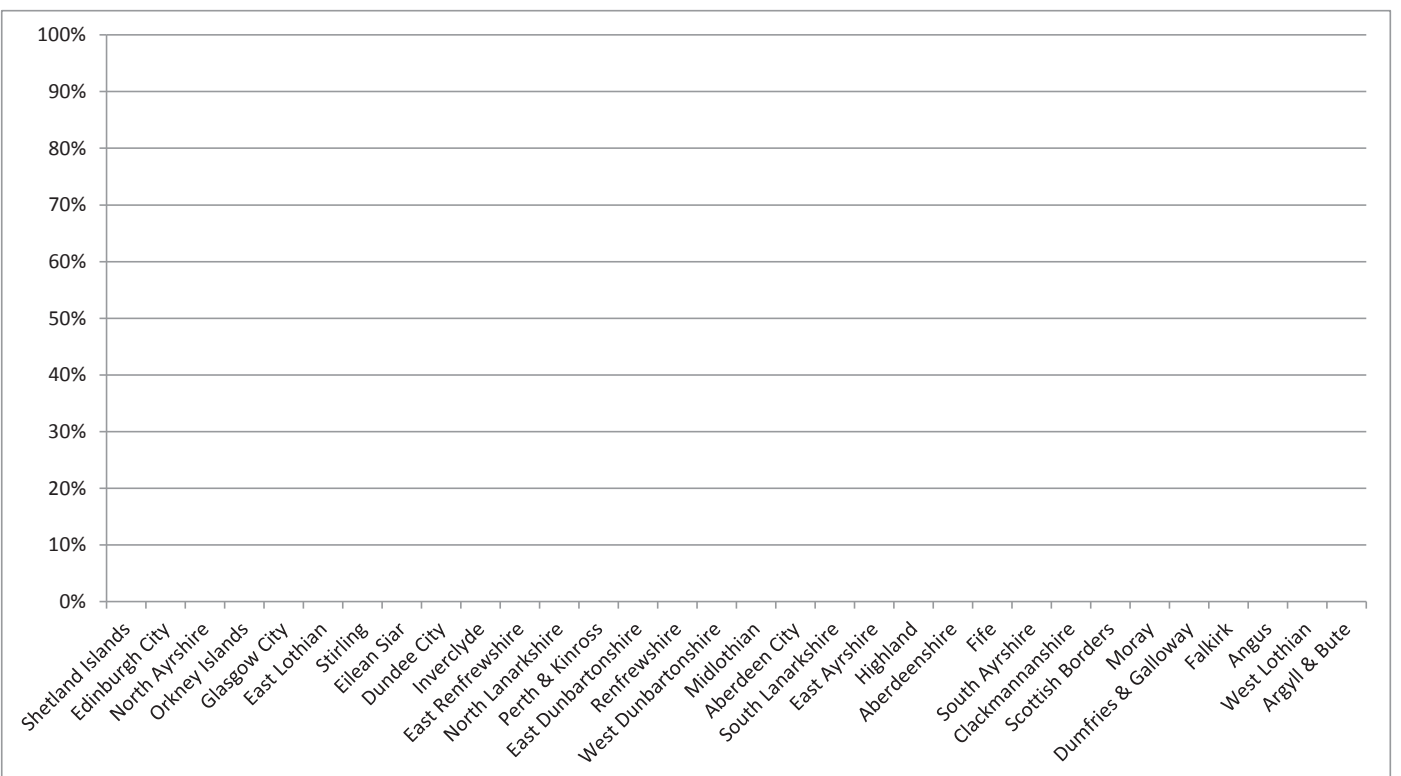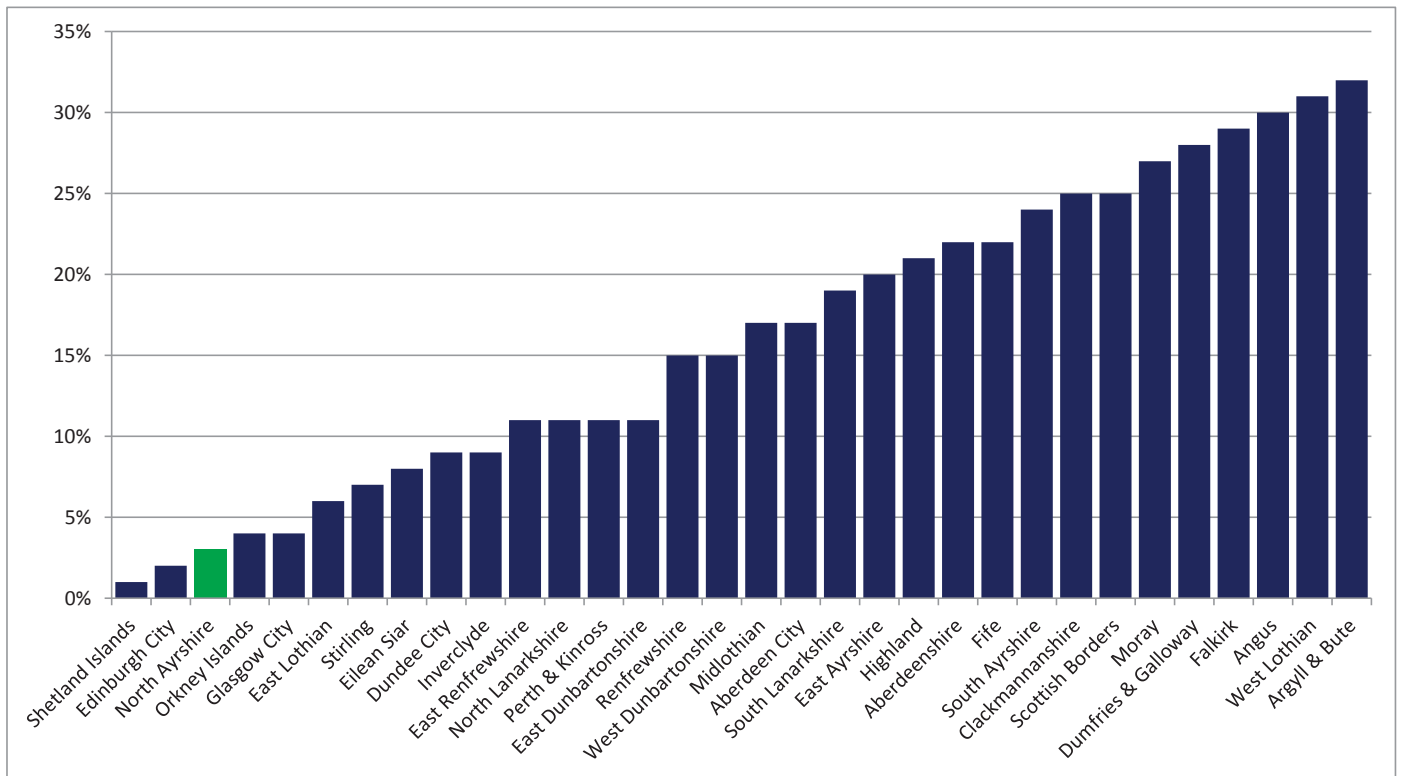
North Ayrshire

C&L5d: % of adults satisfied with leisure facilities

109
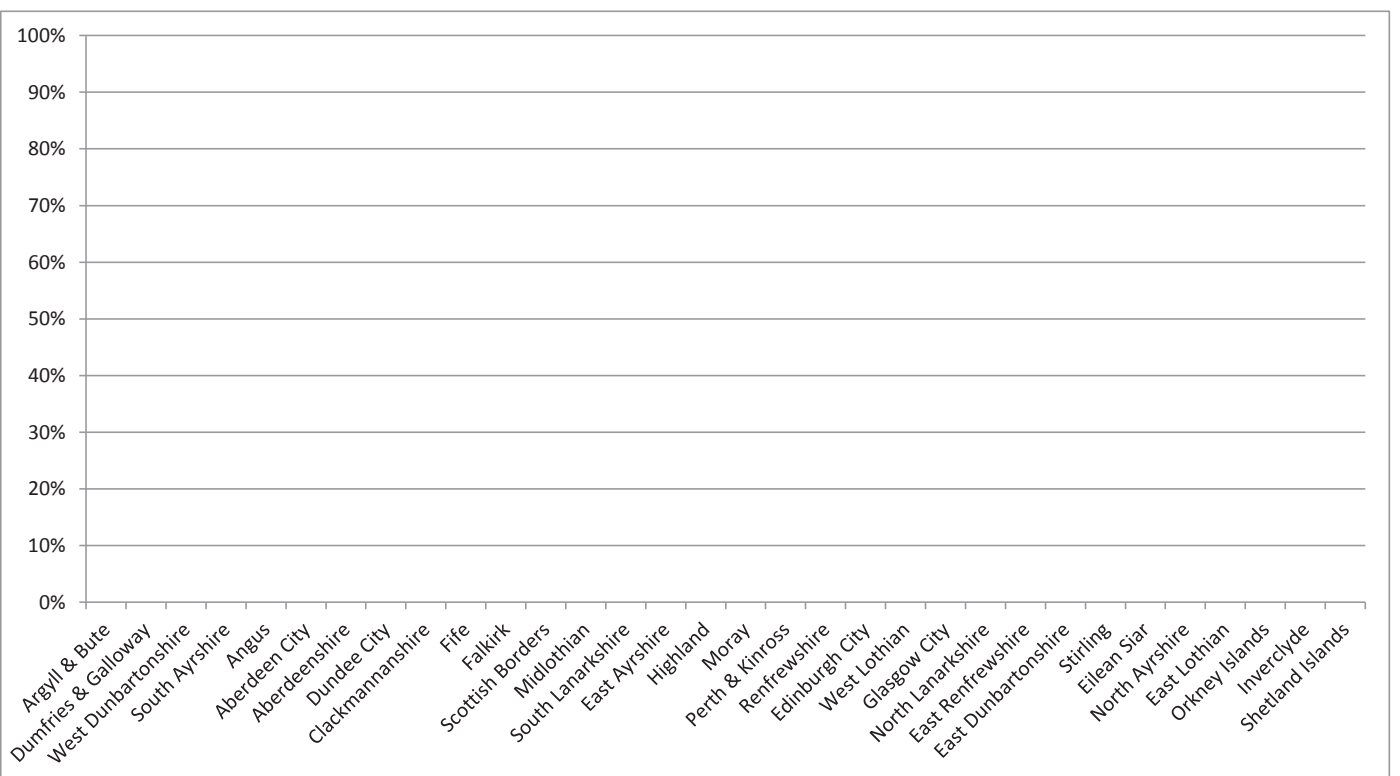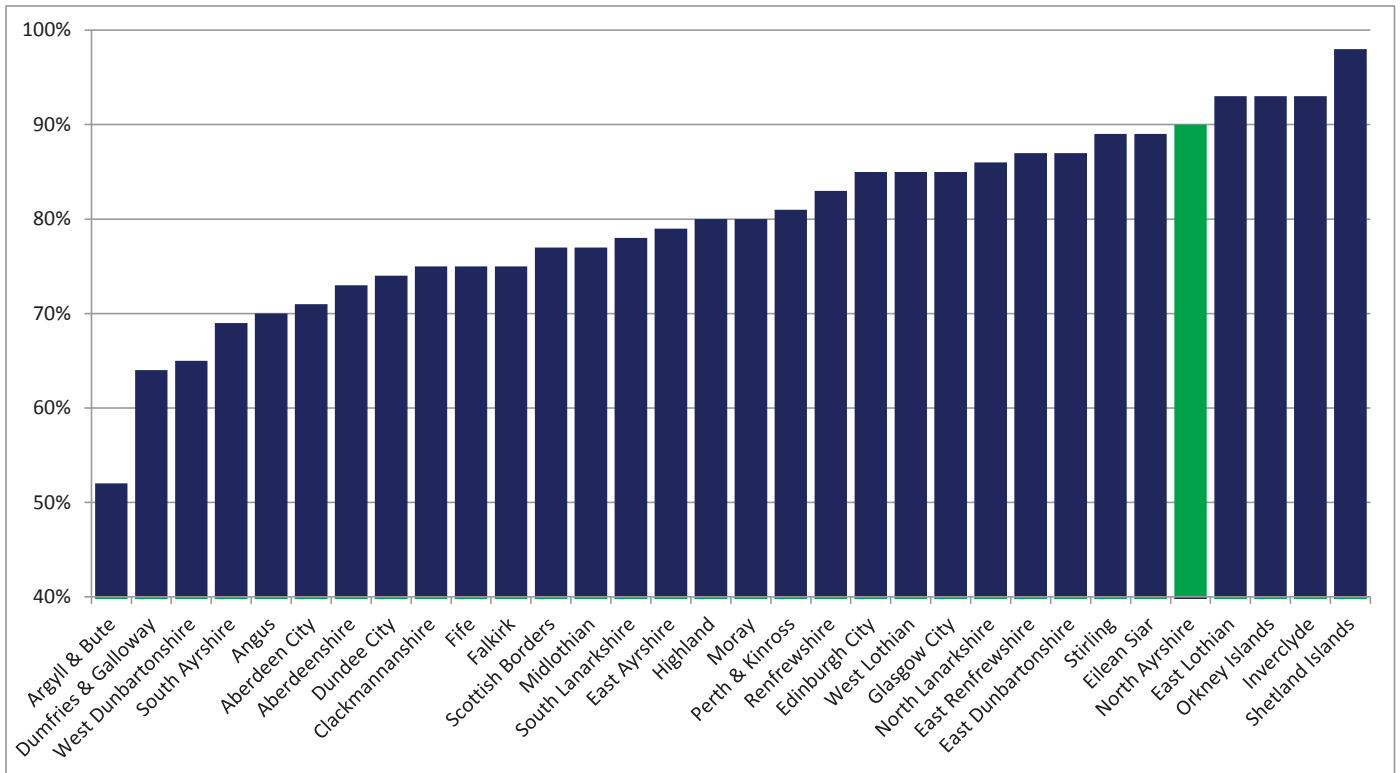
North Ayrshire

ENV1b: Net Waste collection cost per premise

110
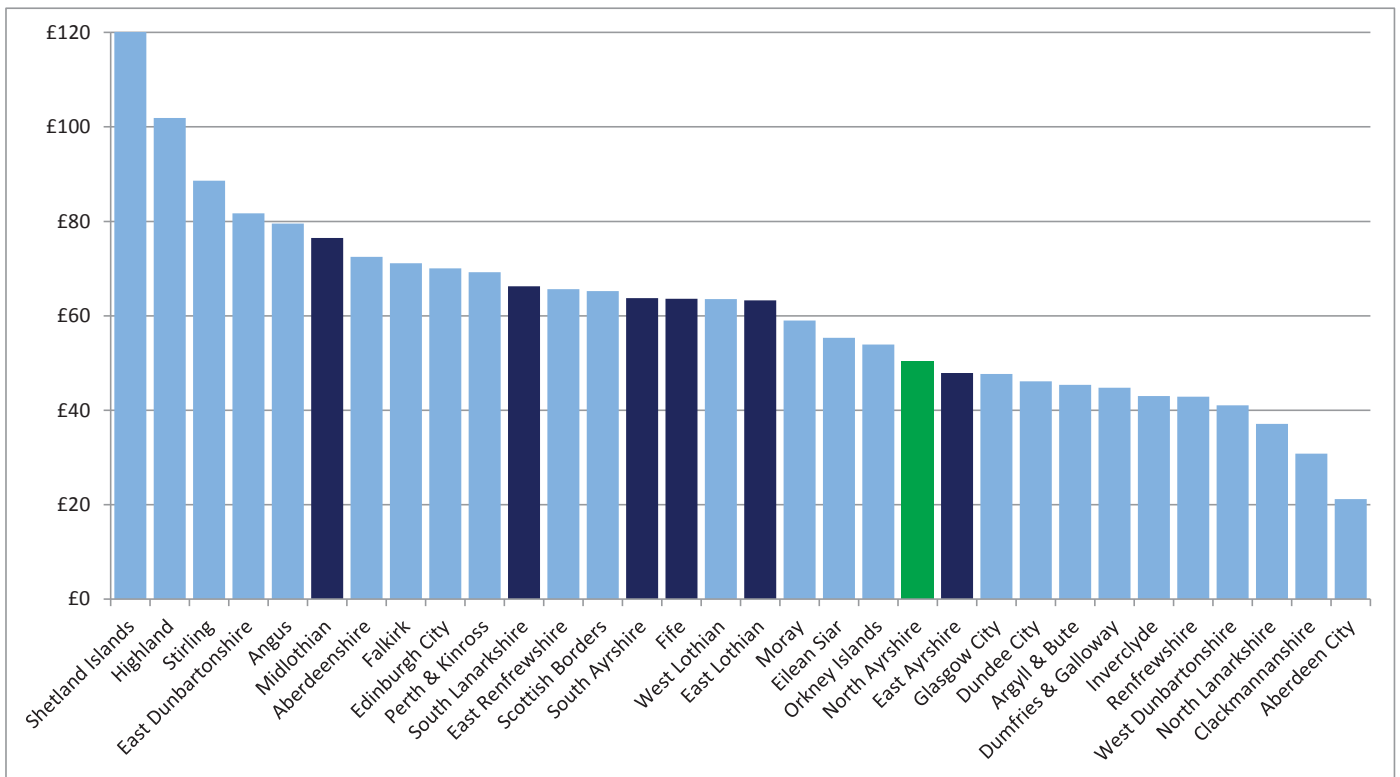
North Ayrshire

ENV2b: Net Waste disposal cost per premise
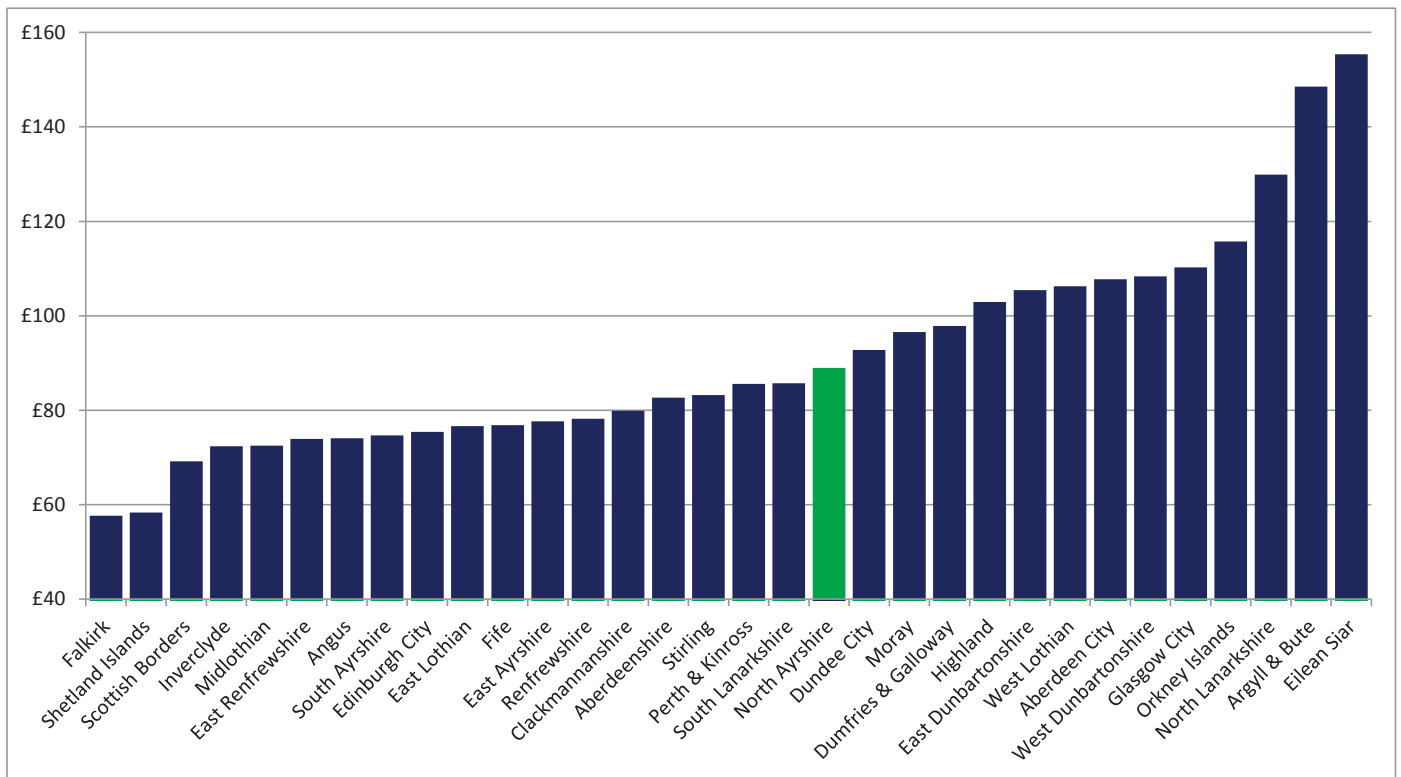
North Ayrshire

ENV3a: Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population
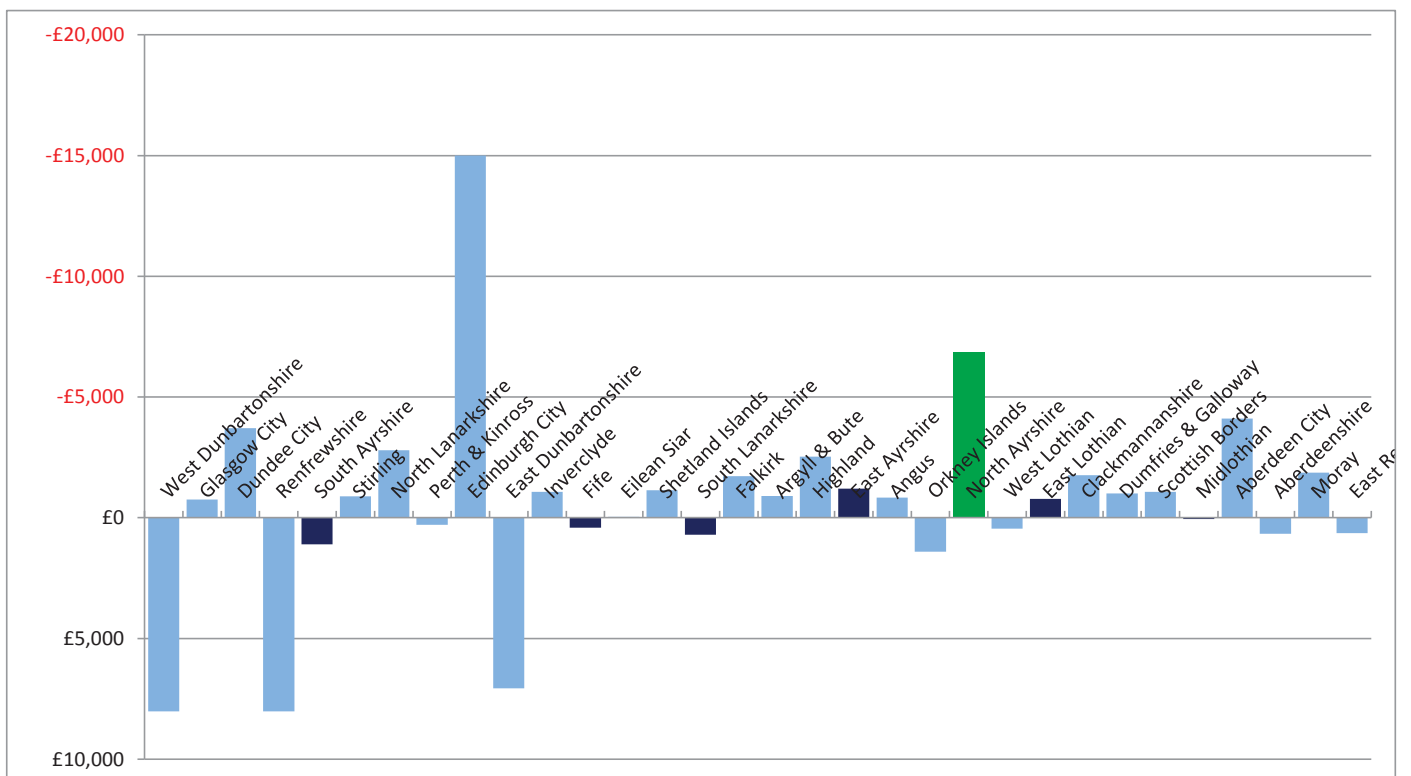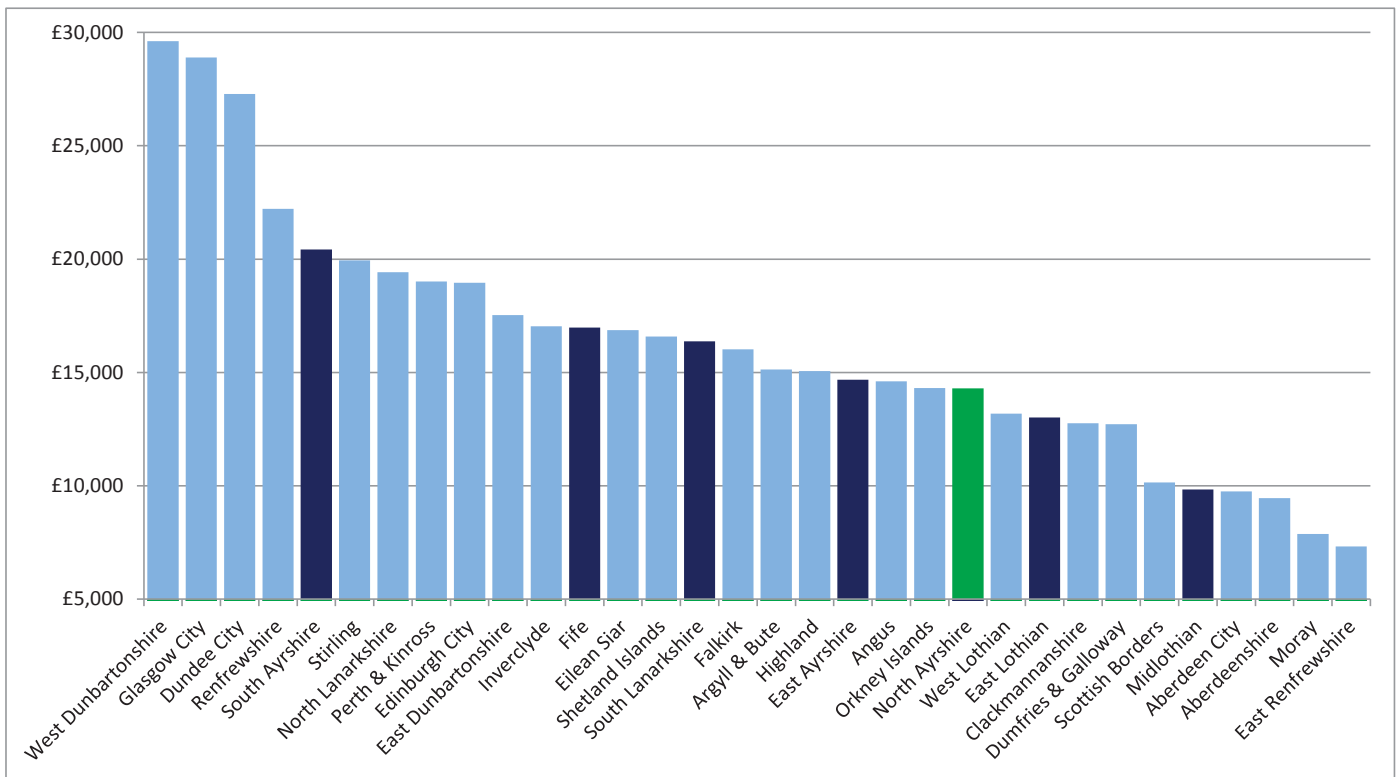
North Ayrshire

ENV3b: Overall cleanliness index
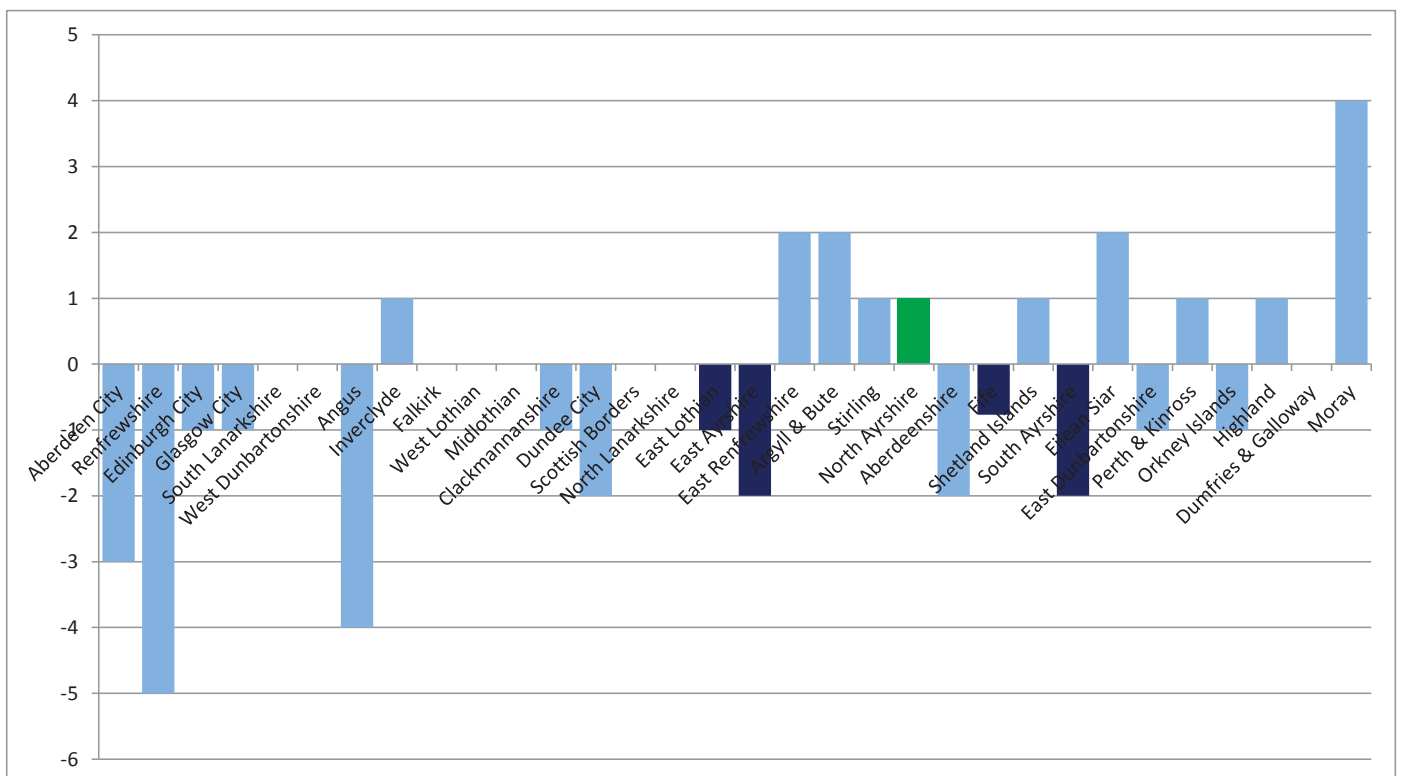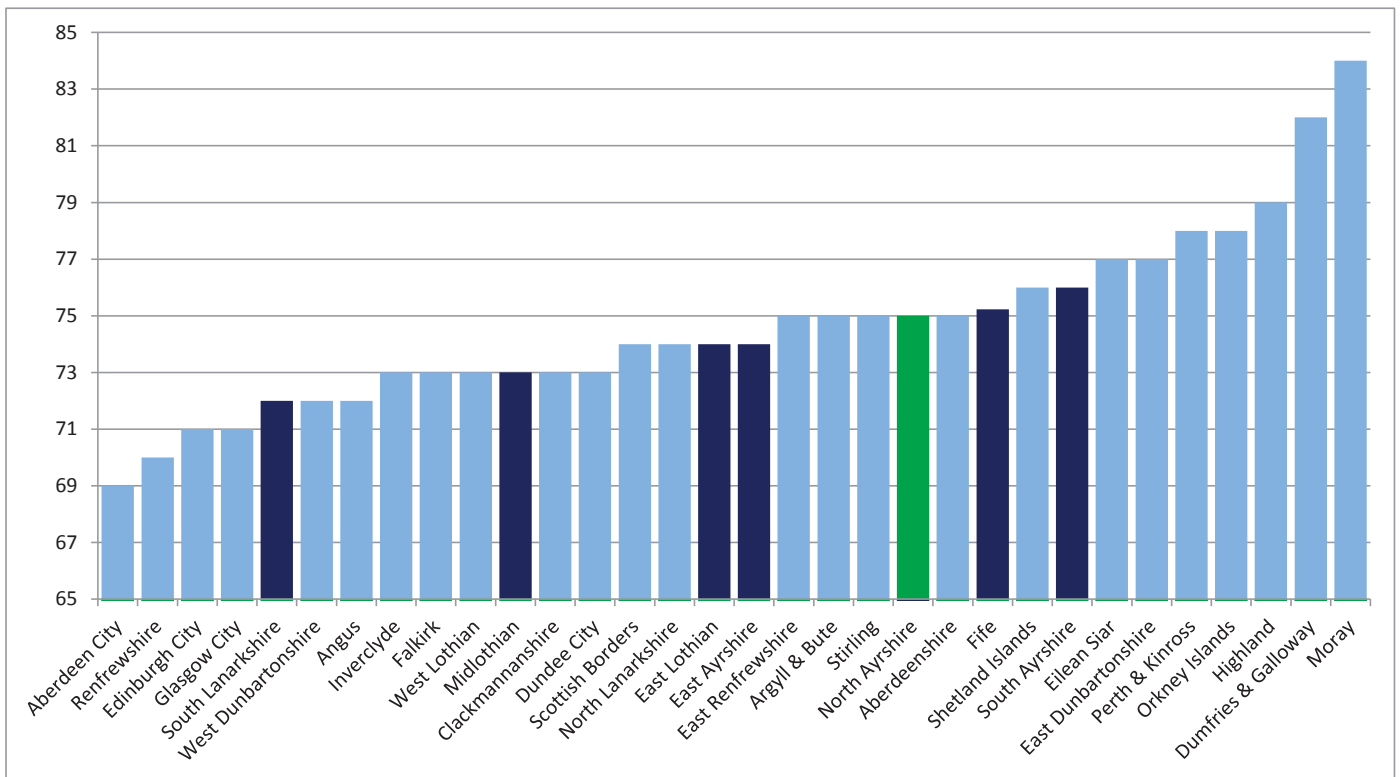
North Ayrshire

ENV3c: Cleanliness Score (% acceptable)
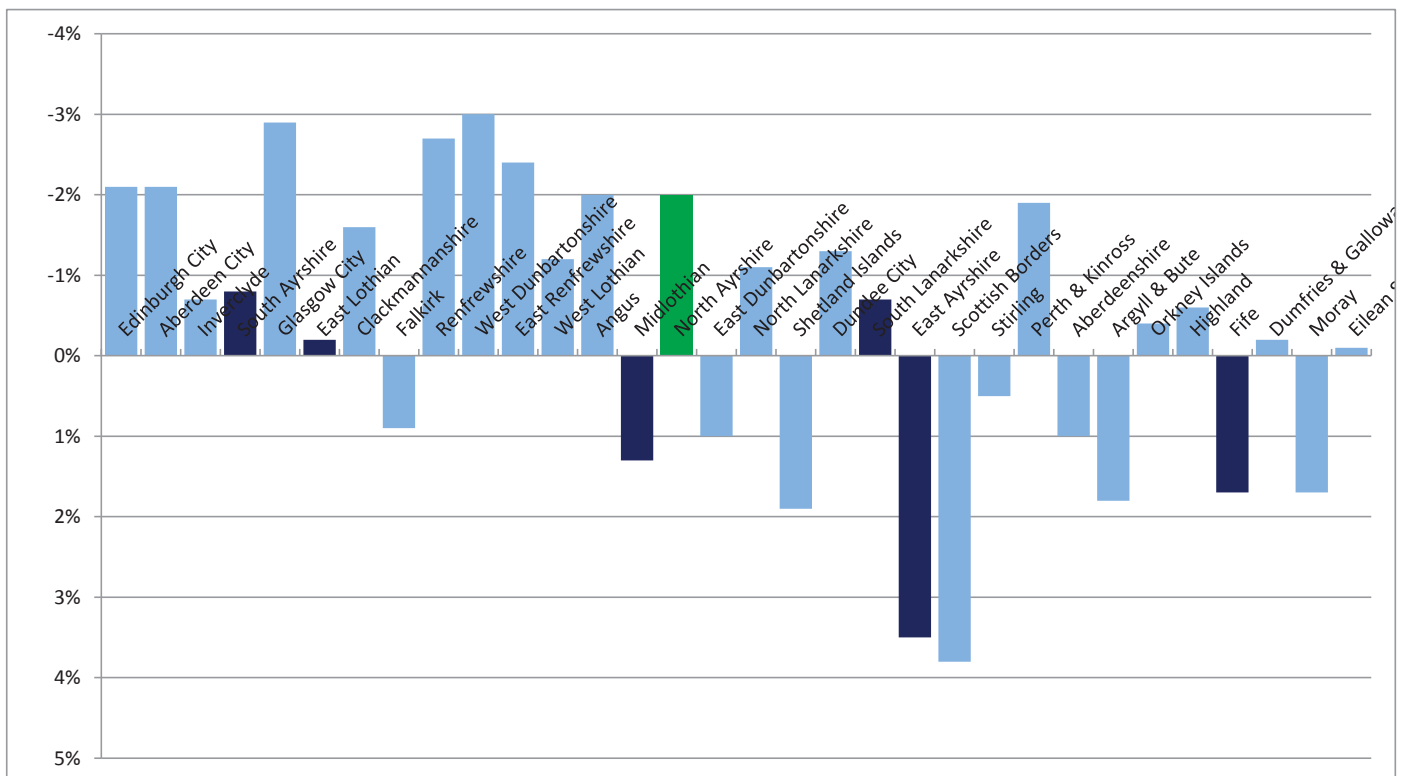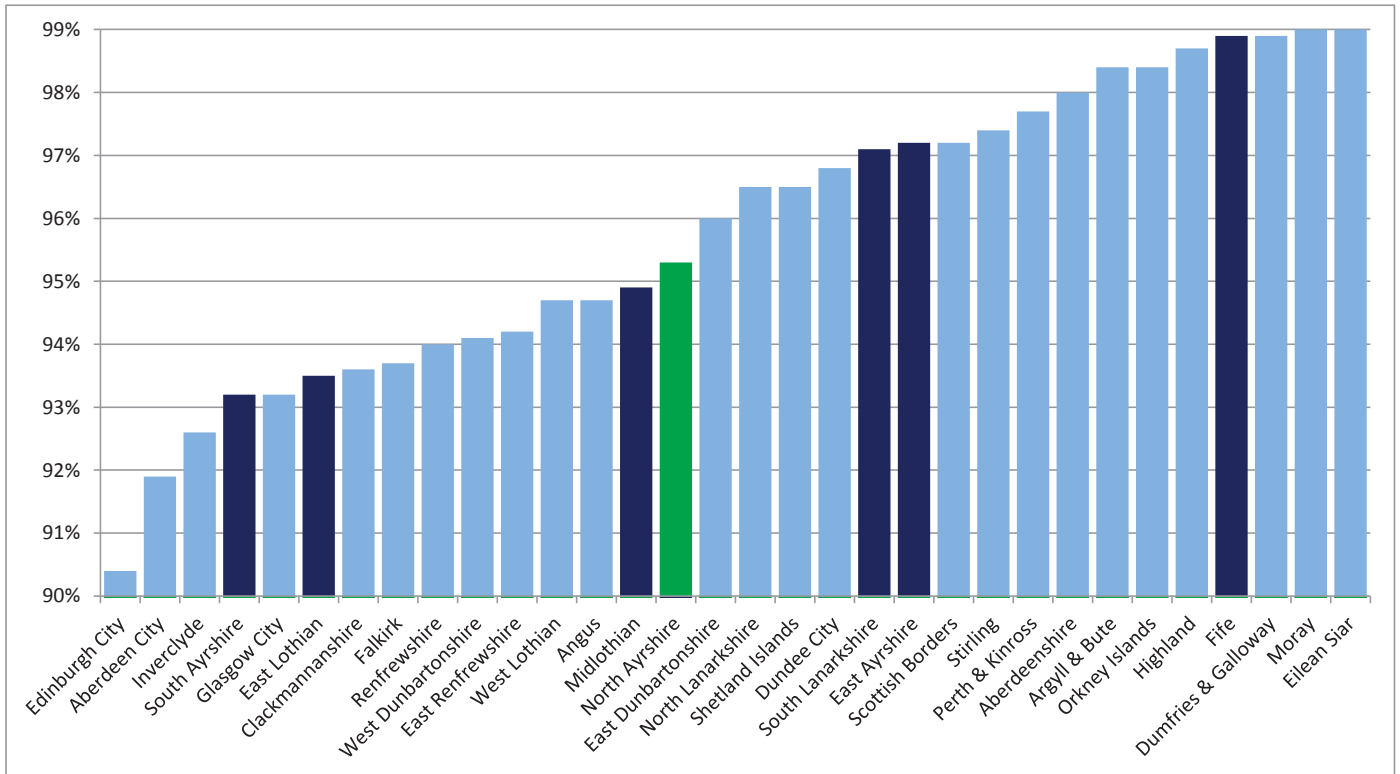
North Ayrshire

ENV4a: Cost of Maintenance per Kilometre of Roads
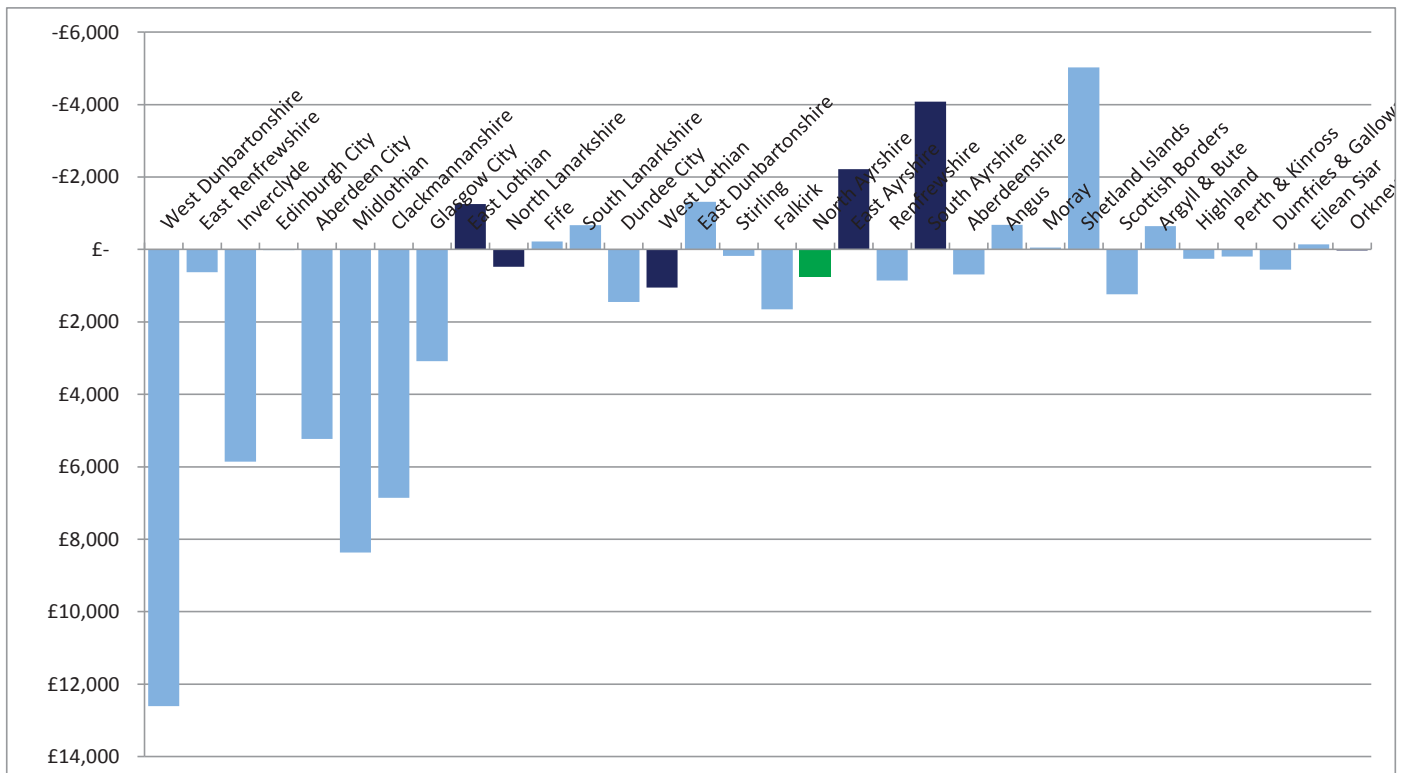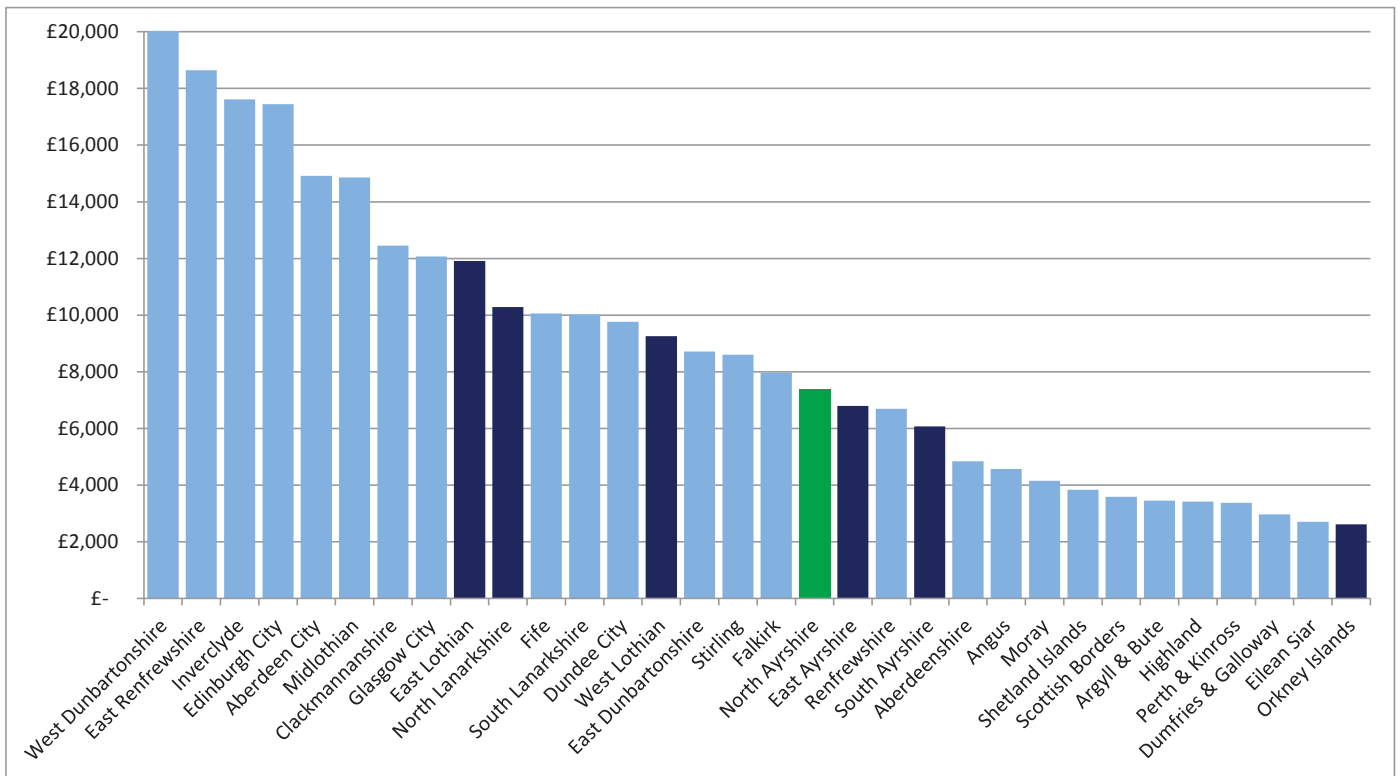
North Ayrshire

ENV4b: % of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
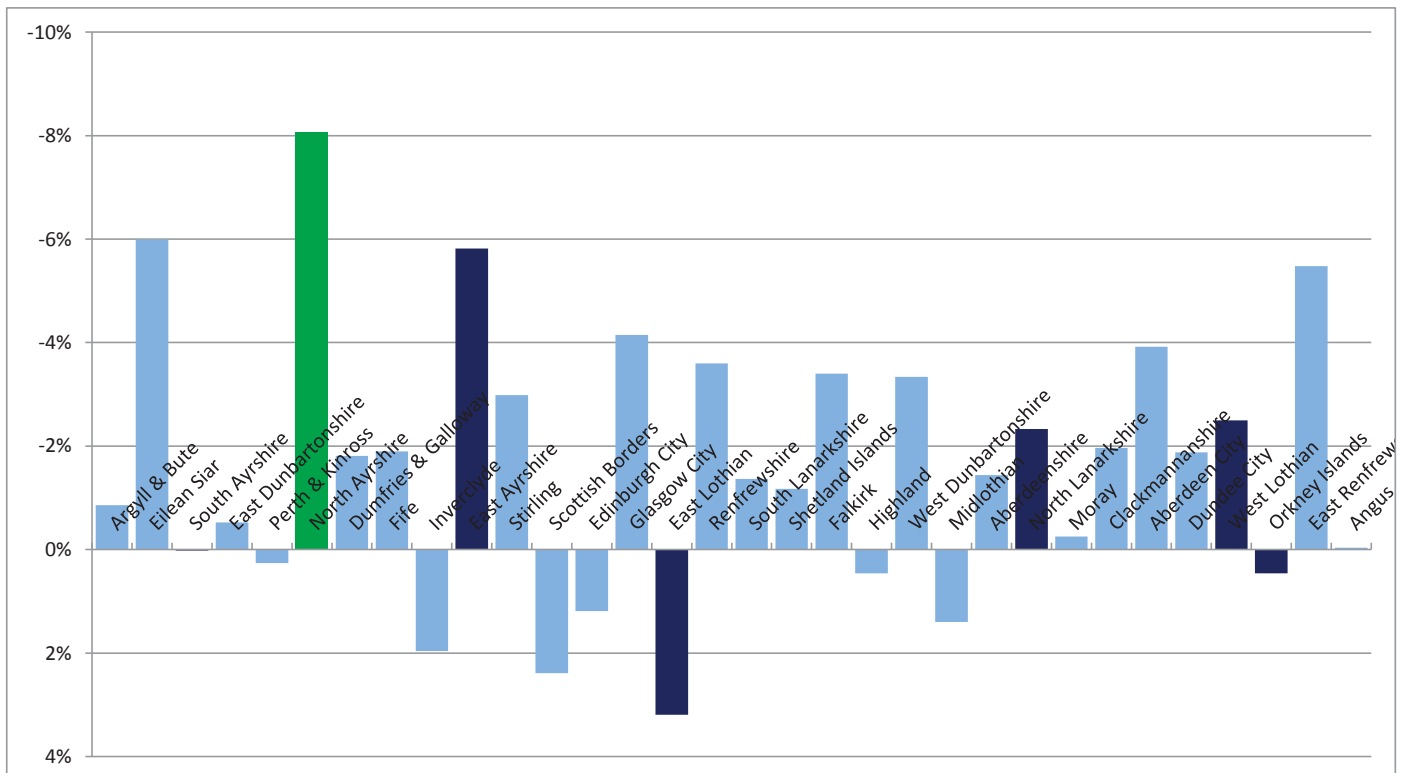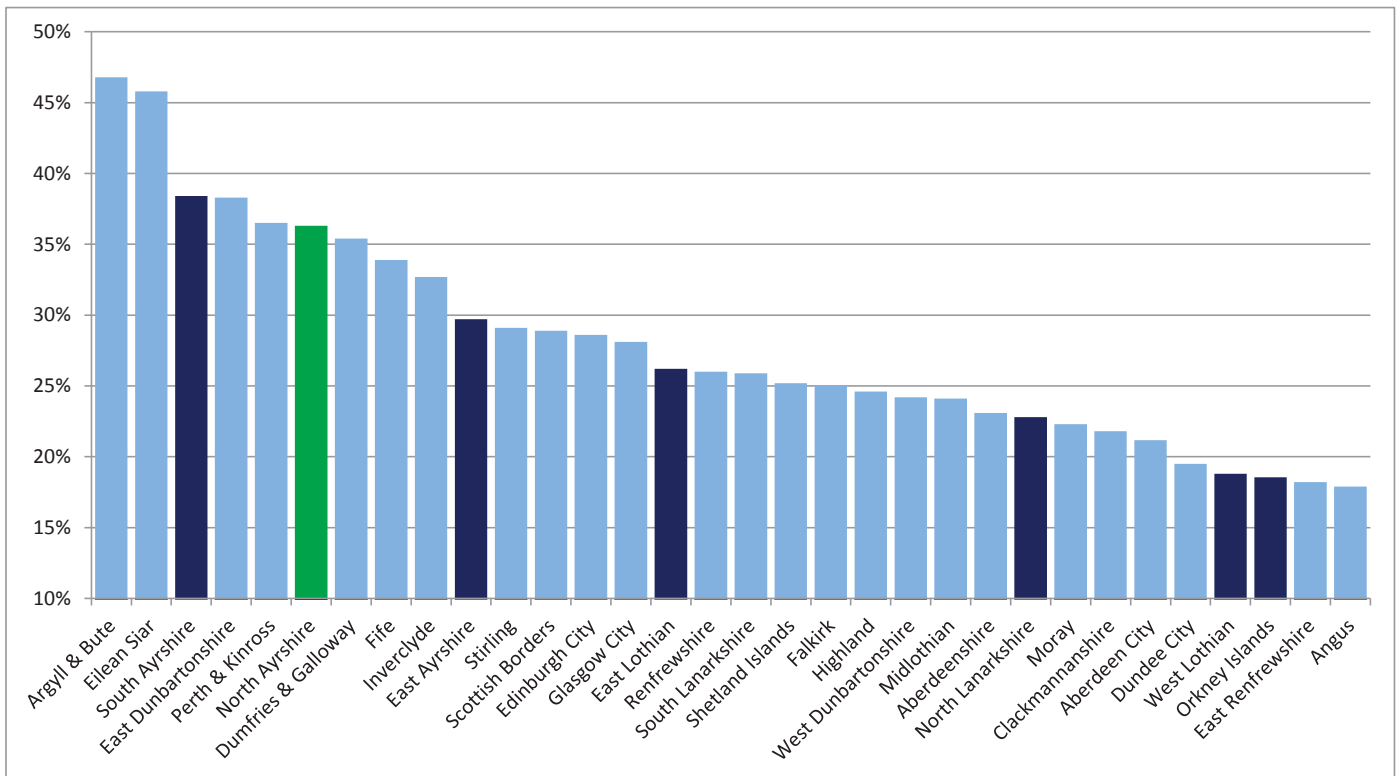
North Ayrshire

ENV4c: % of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
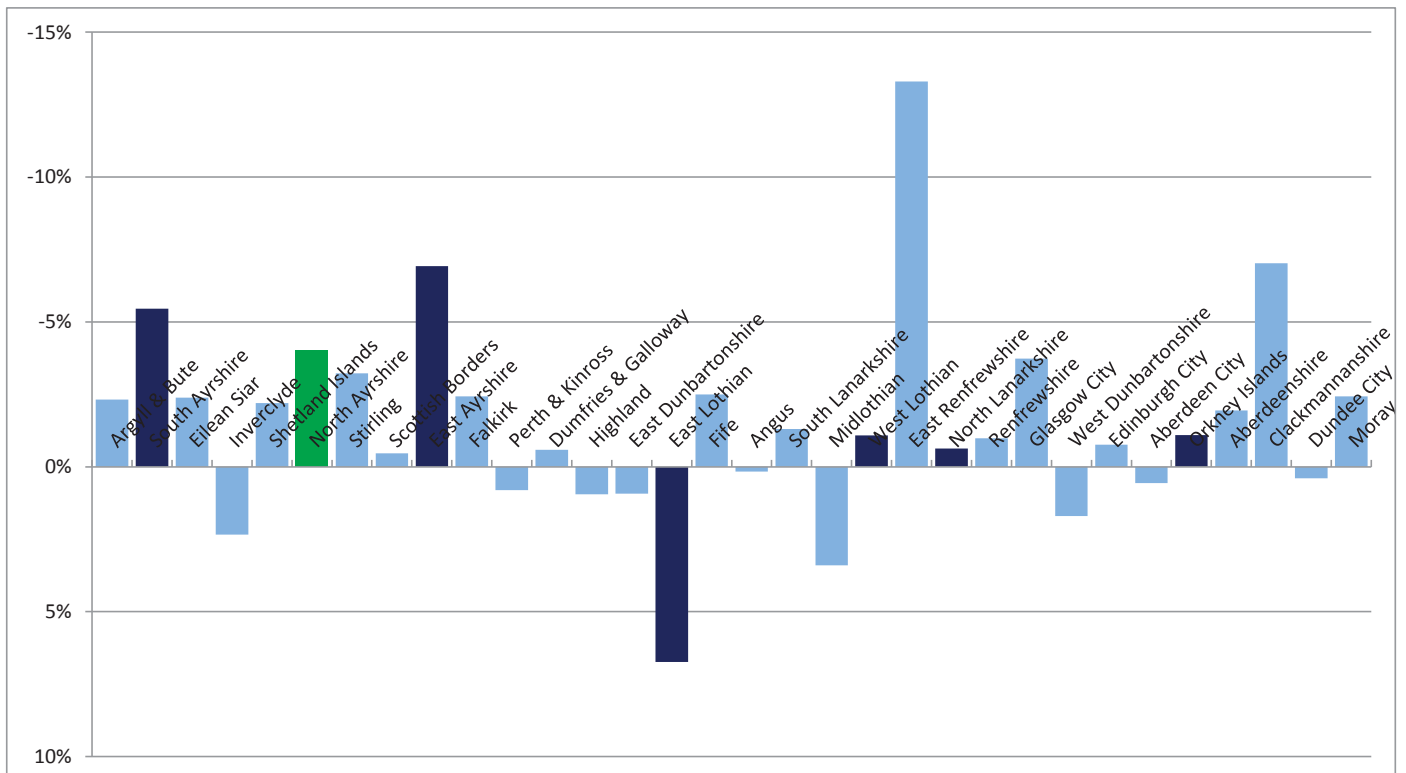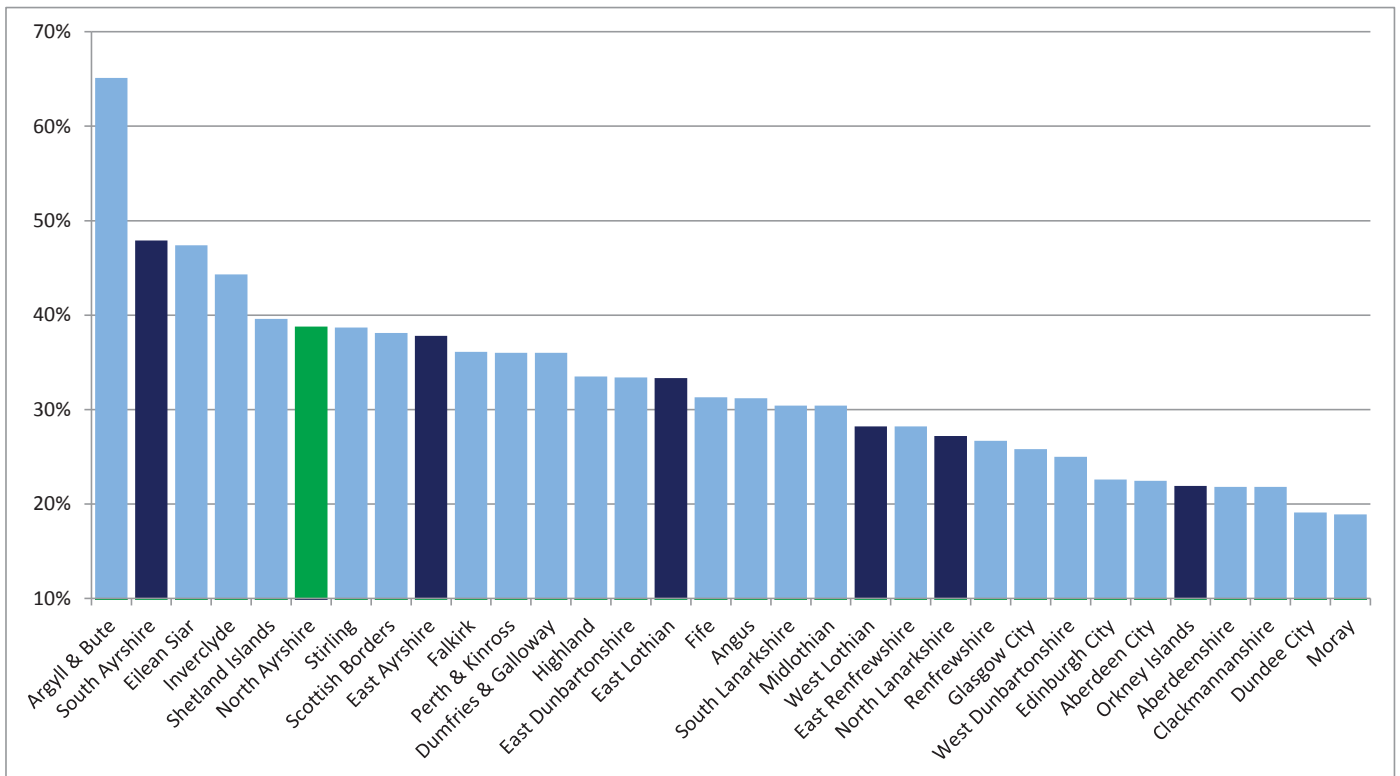
North Ayrshire

ENV4d: % of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
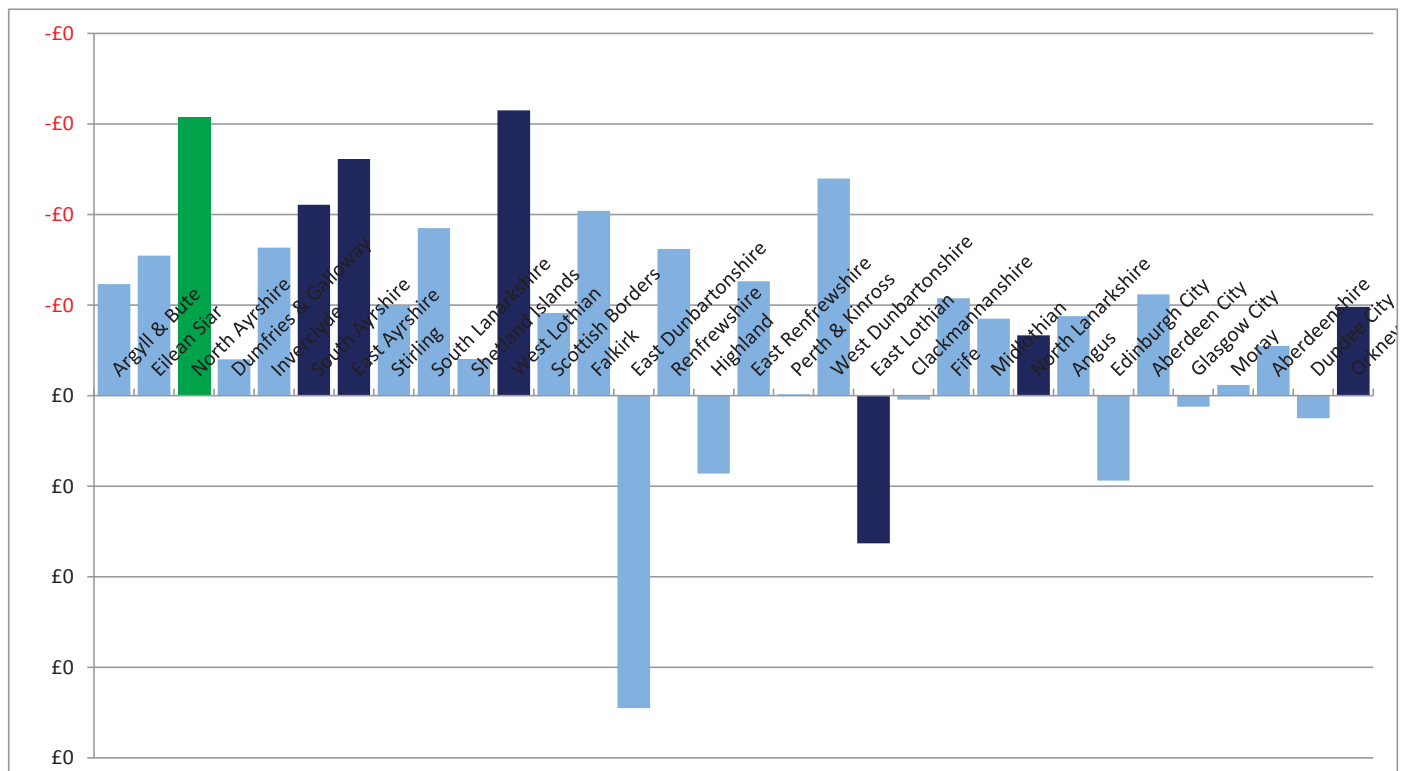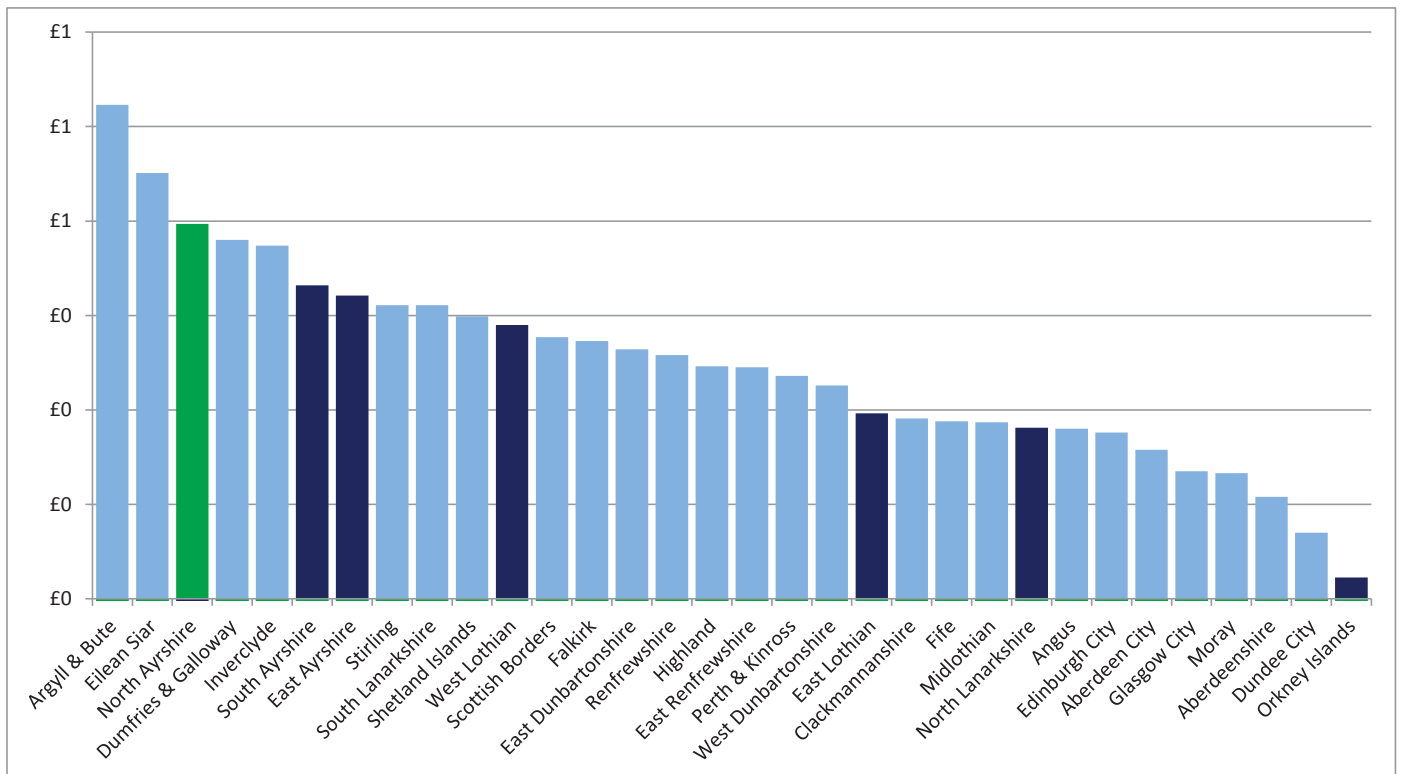
North Ayrshire

ENV4e: % of unclassified class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment
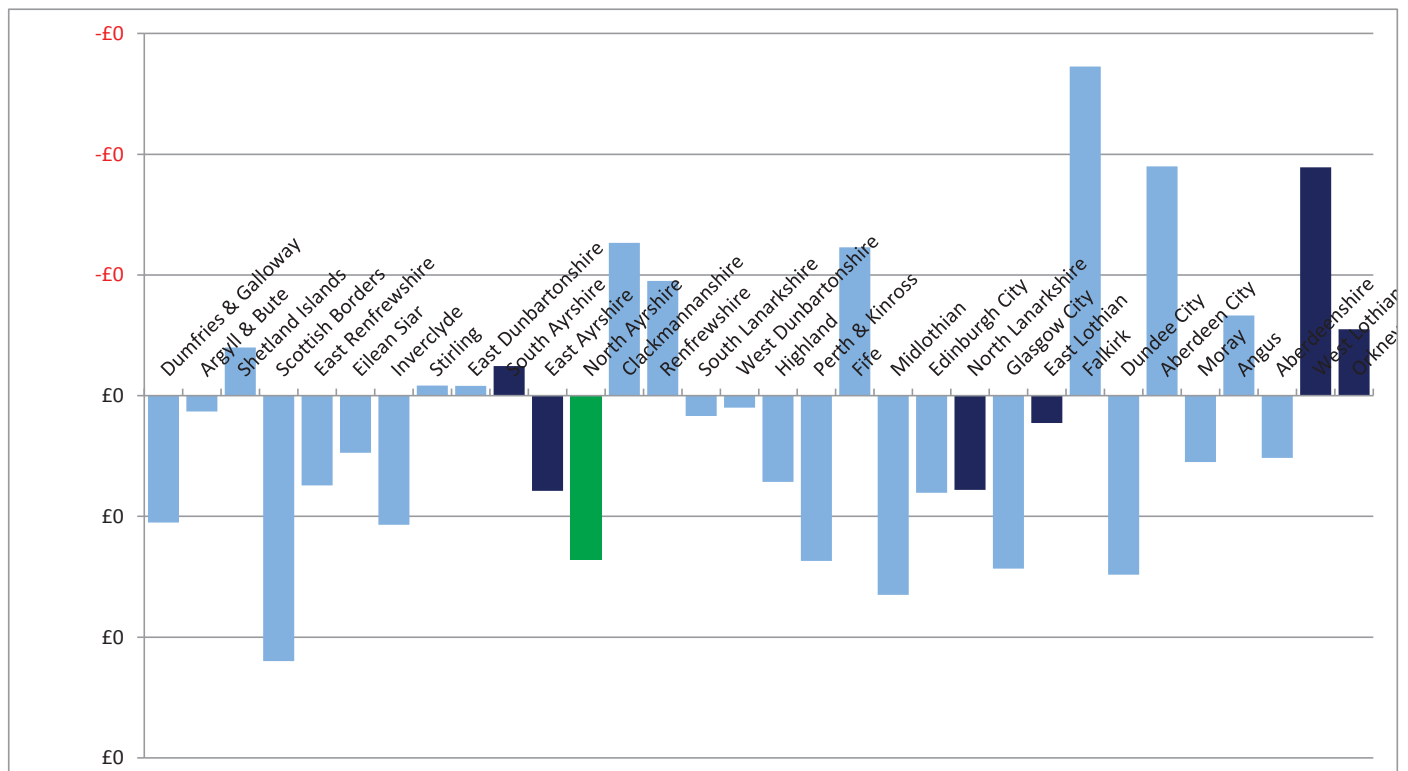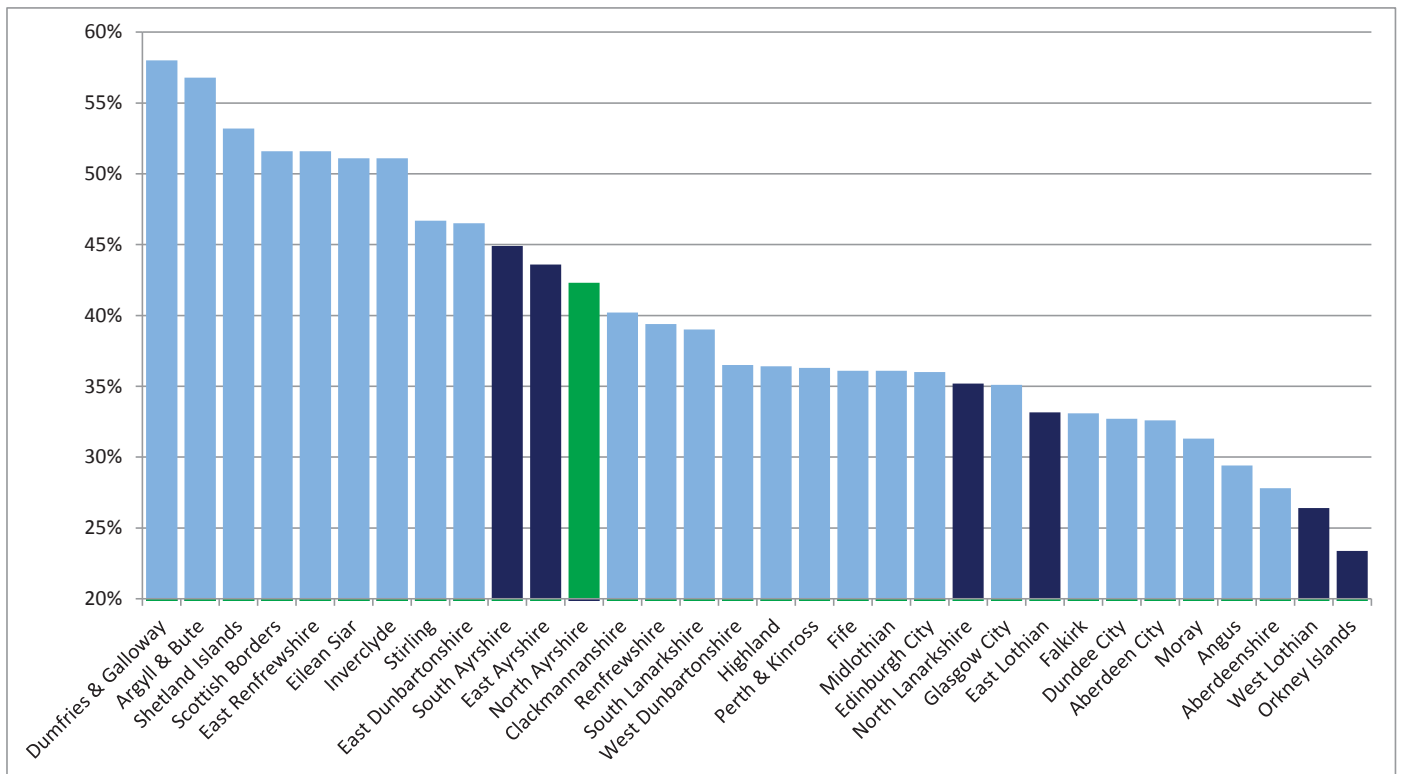
North Ayrshire

ENV5: Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 Pop
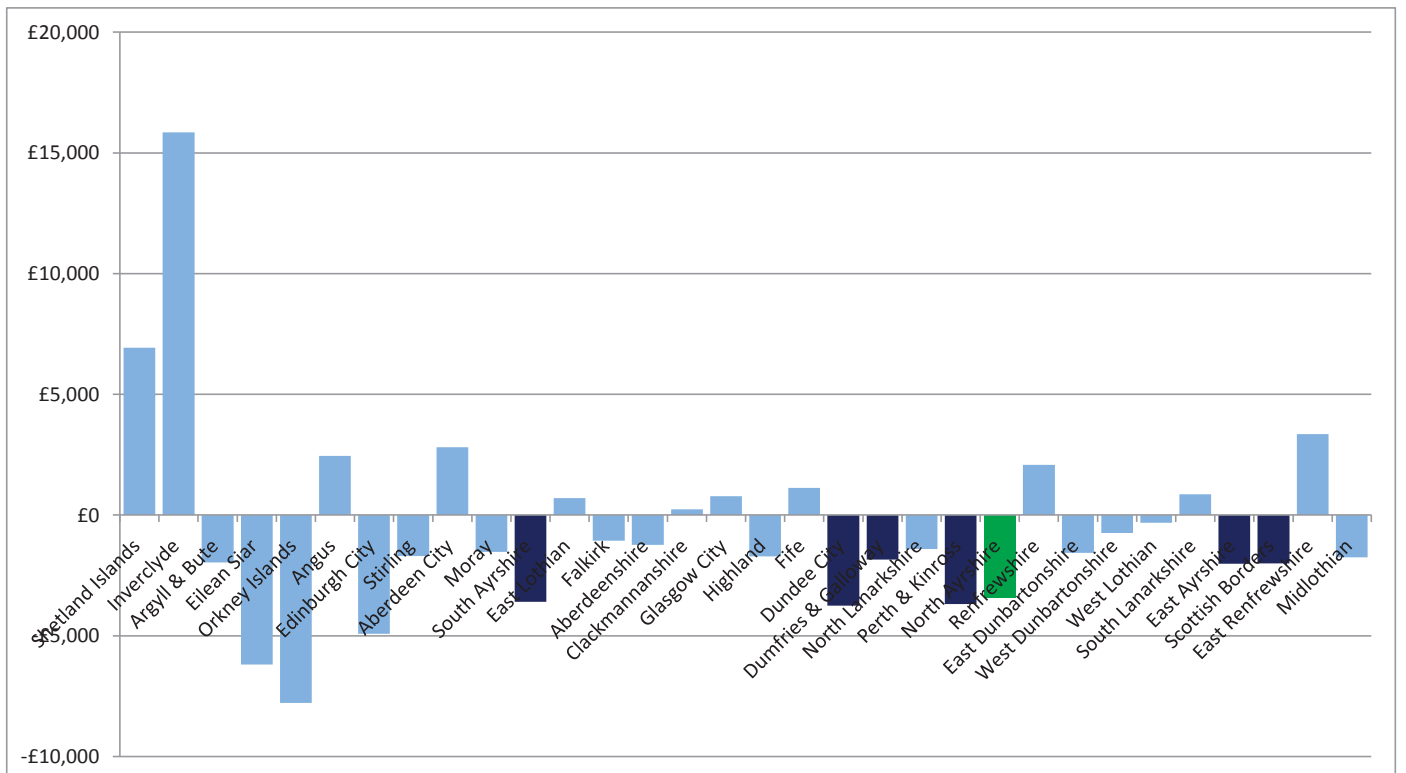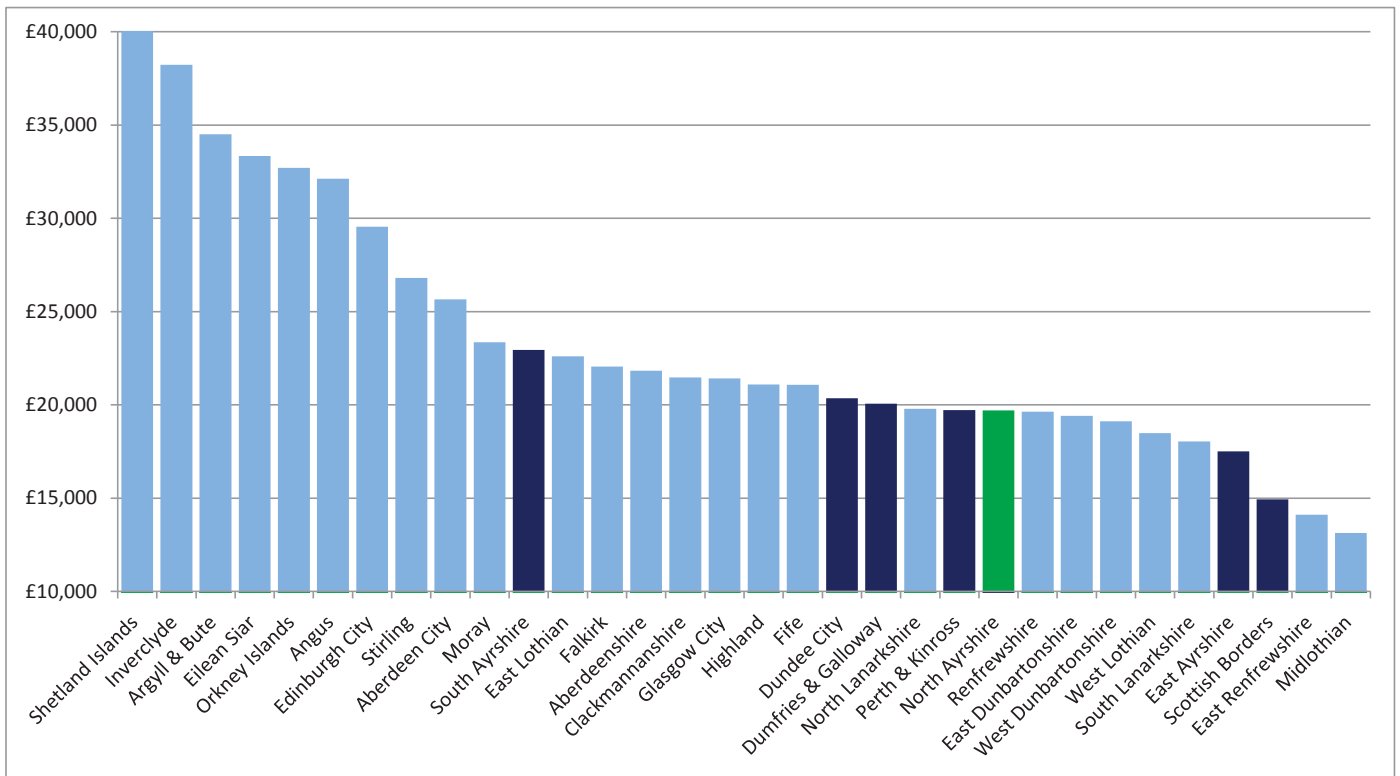
North Ayrshire

ENV5a: Cost of trading standards per 1,000 Pop
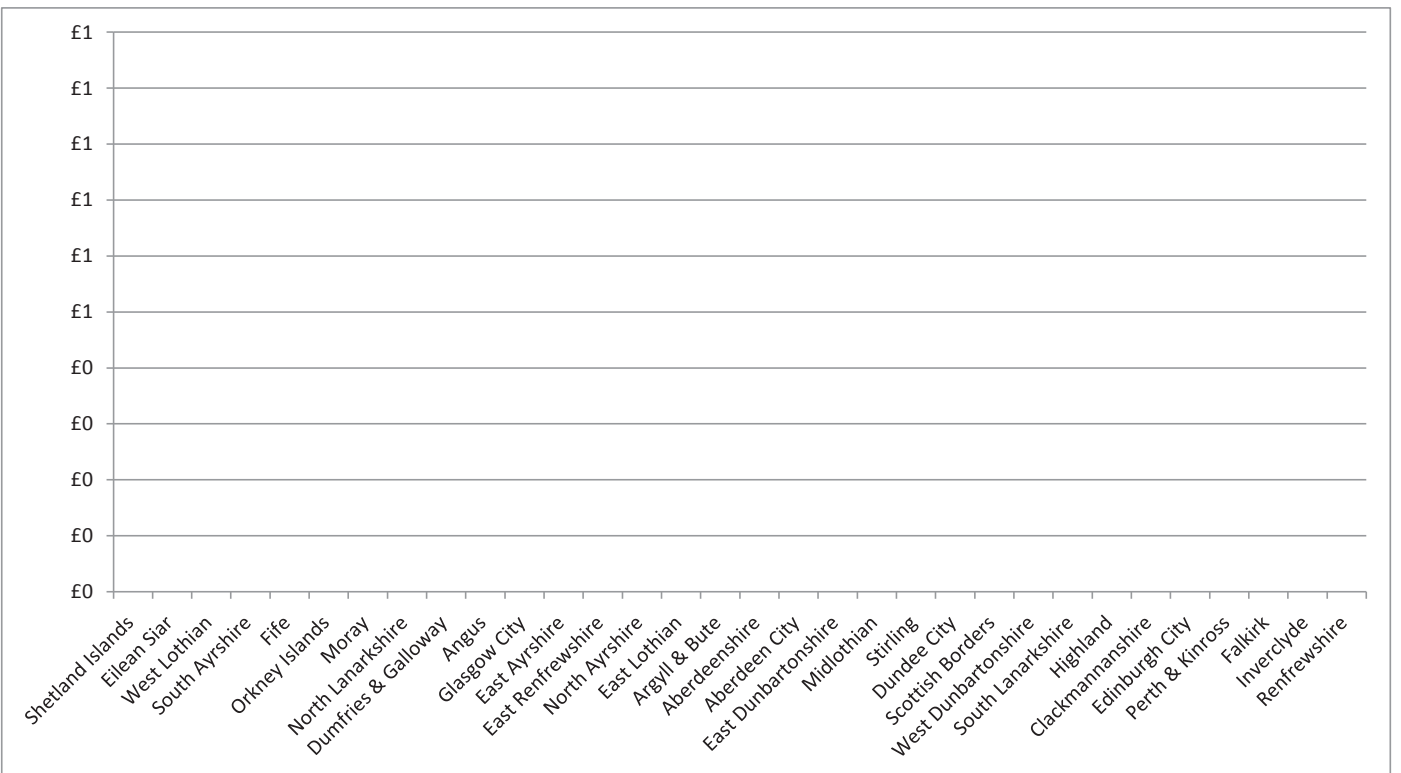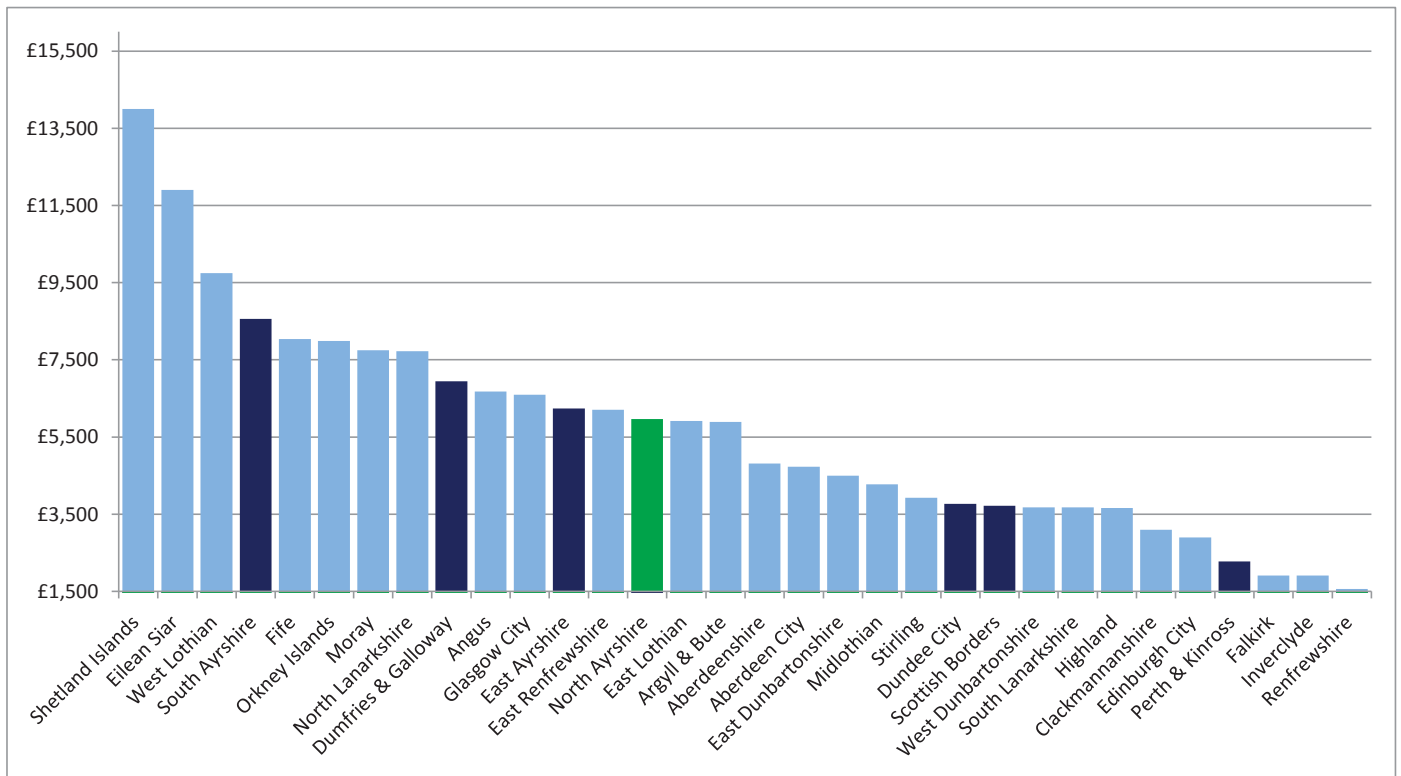
North Ayrshire

ENV5b: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 Pop
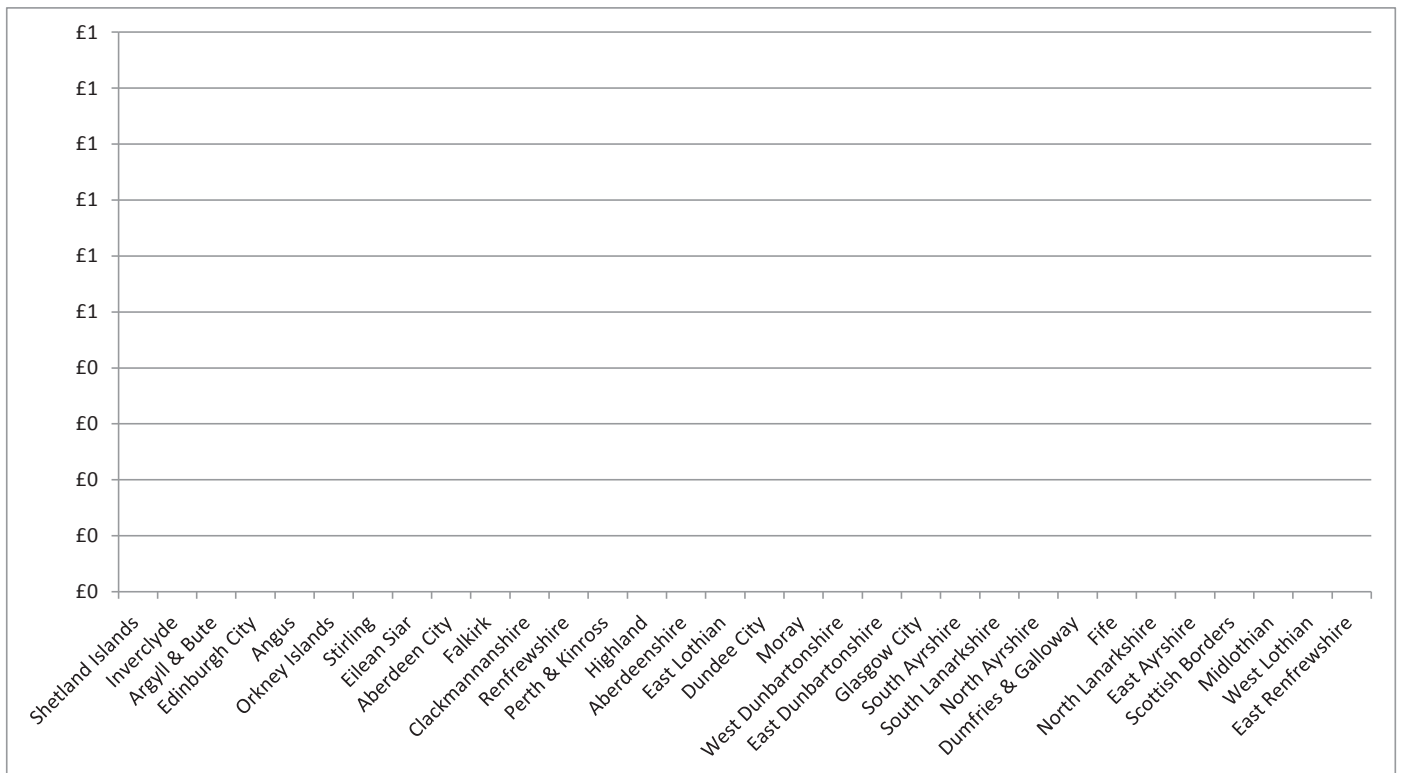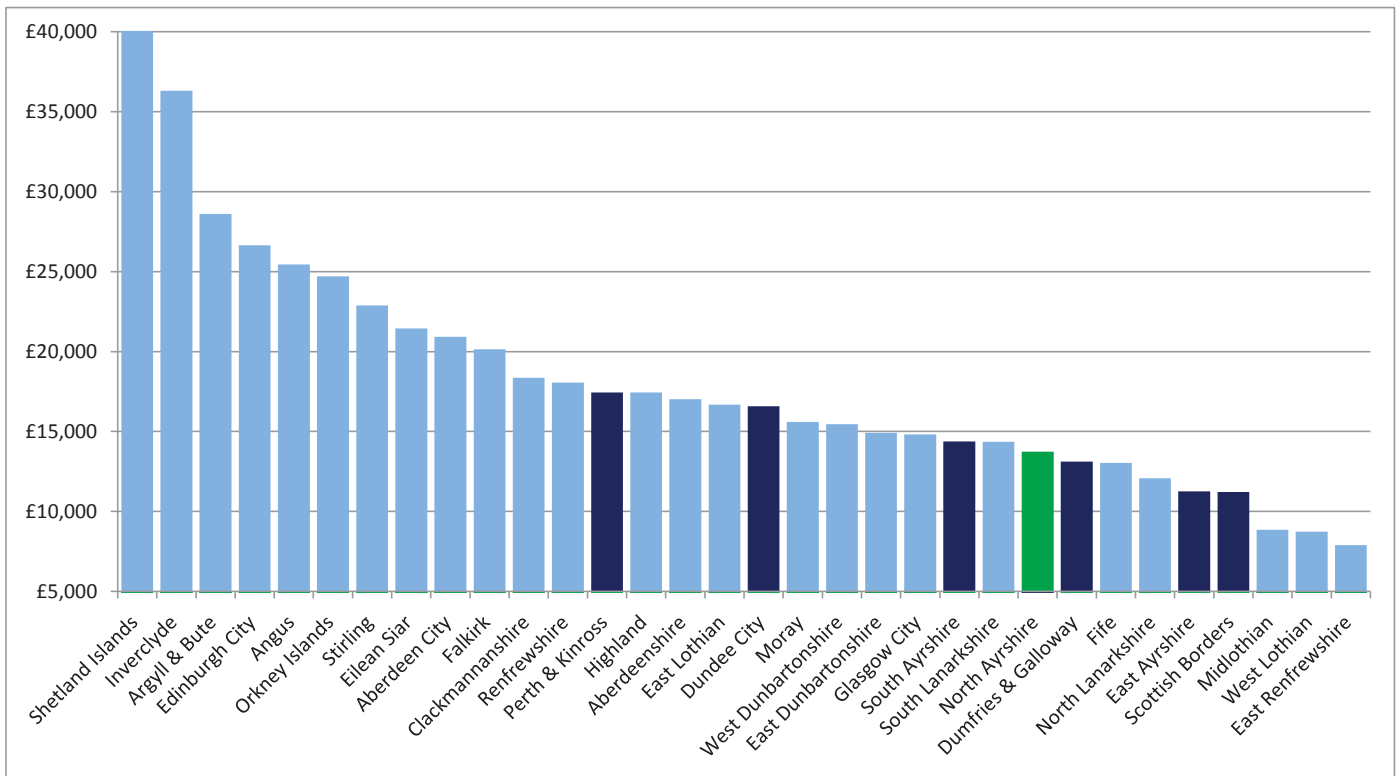
North Ayrshire

ENV6: % of Total Waste arising that is recycled
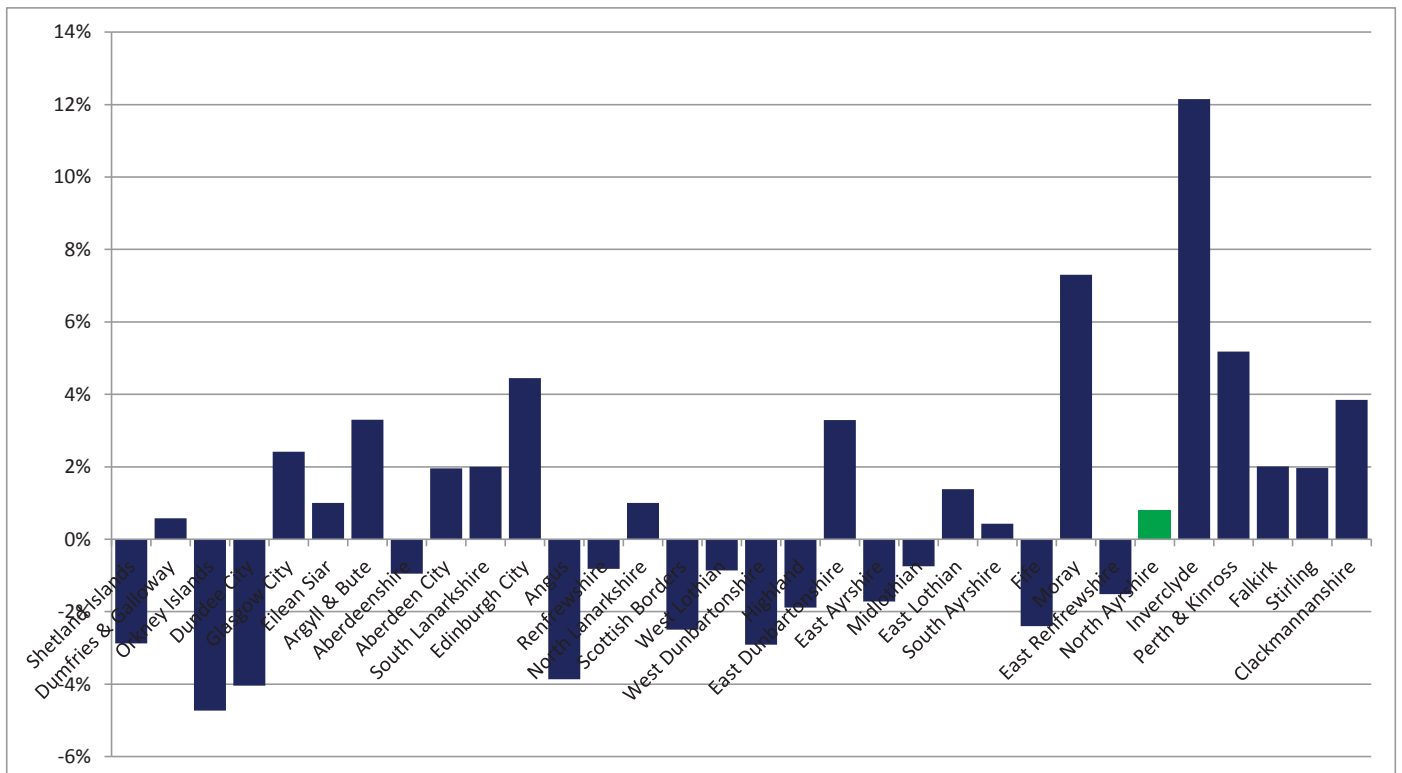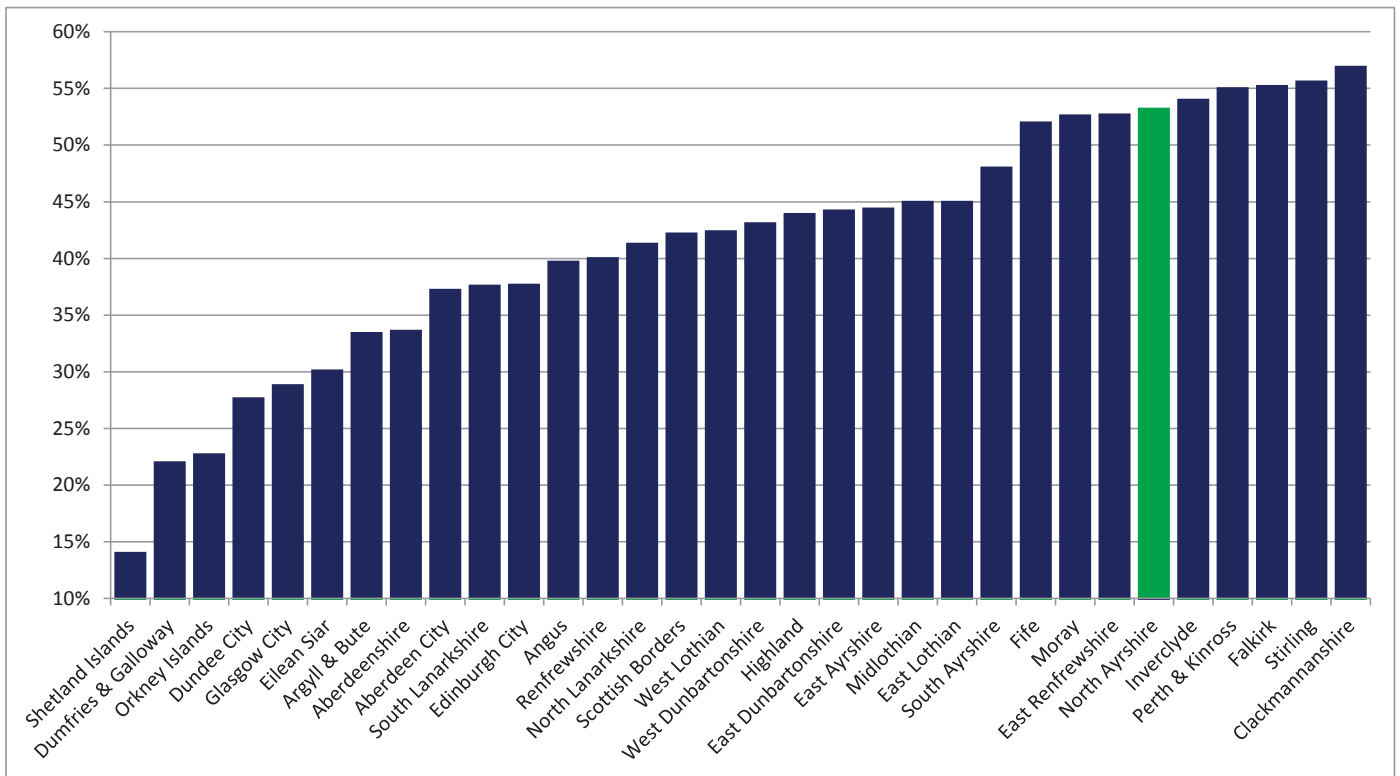
North Ayrshire

ENV7a: % of adults satisfied with refuse collection
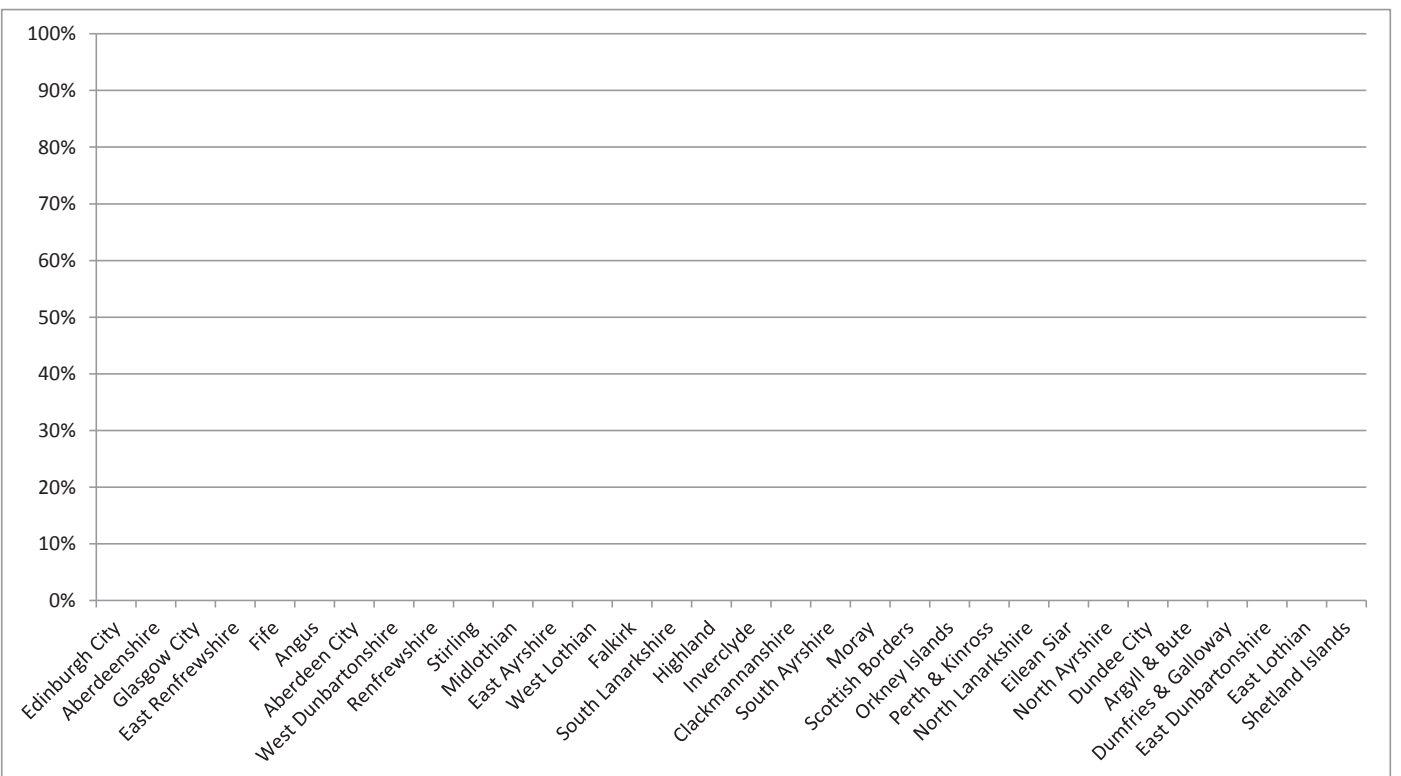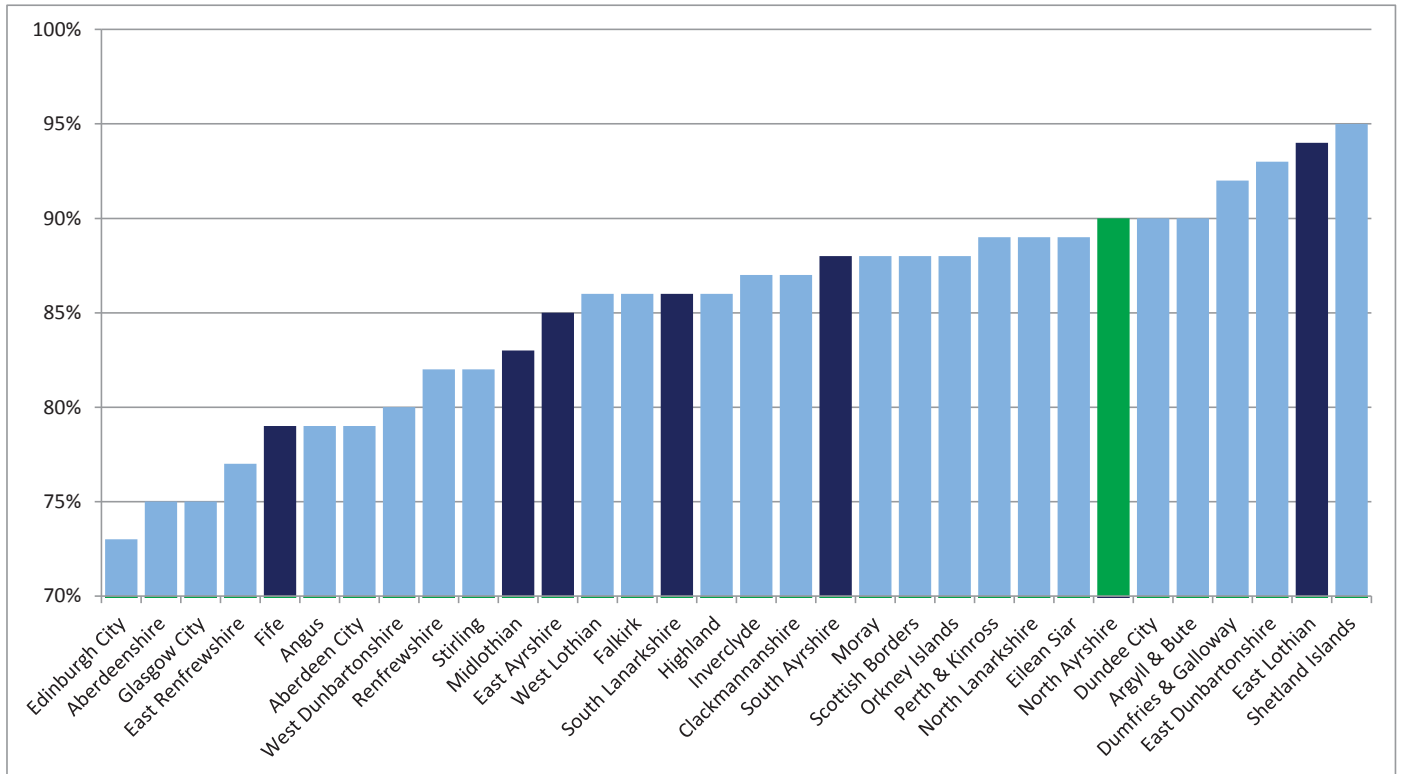
North Ayrshire

ENV7b: % of adults satisfied with street cleaning
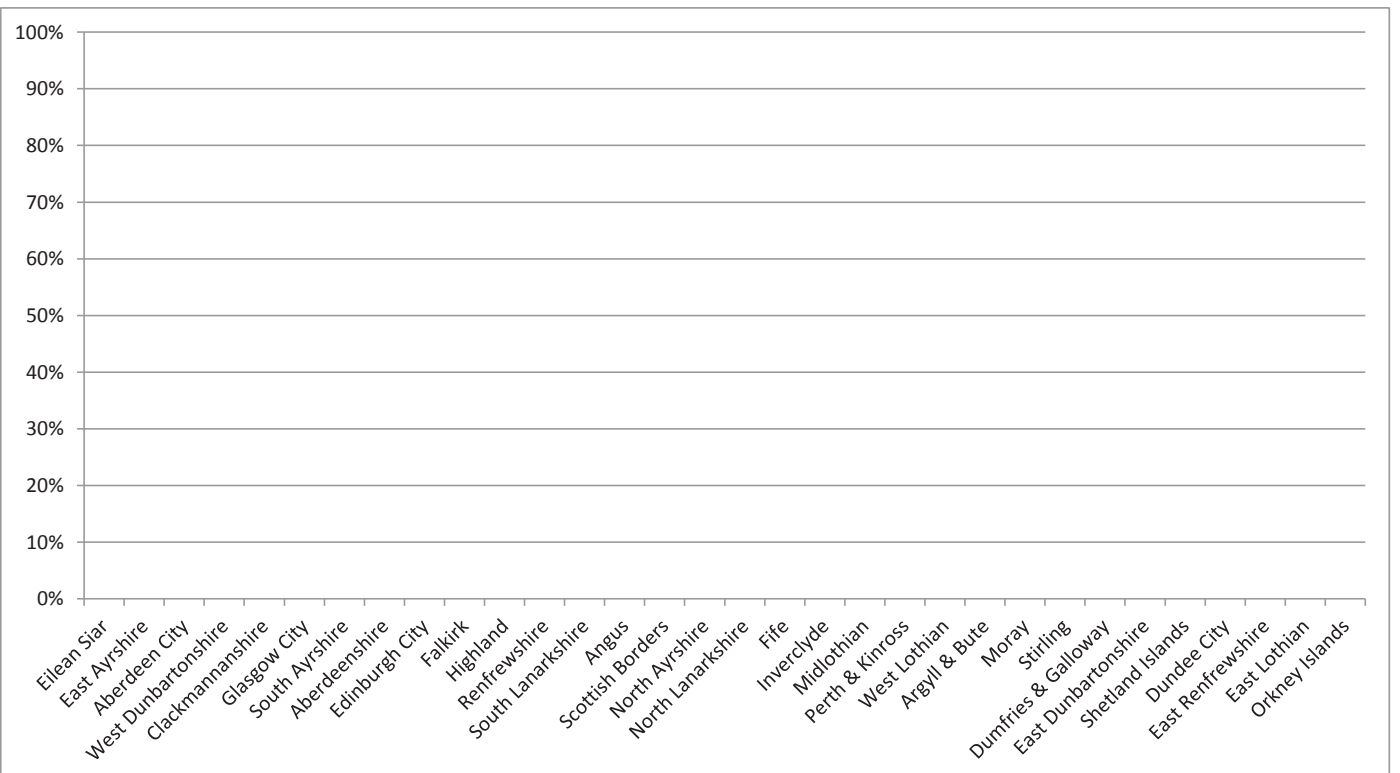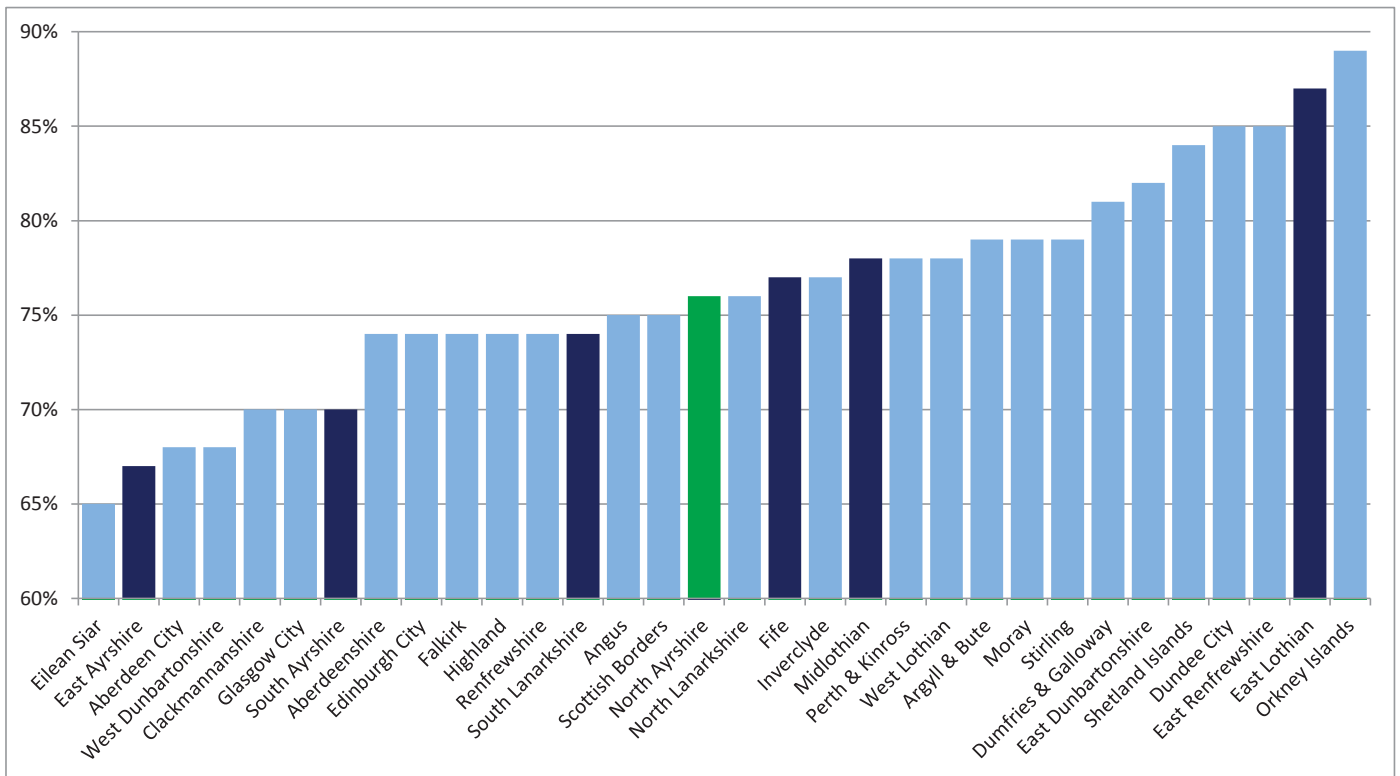
North Ayrshire

HSN1: Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due
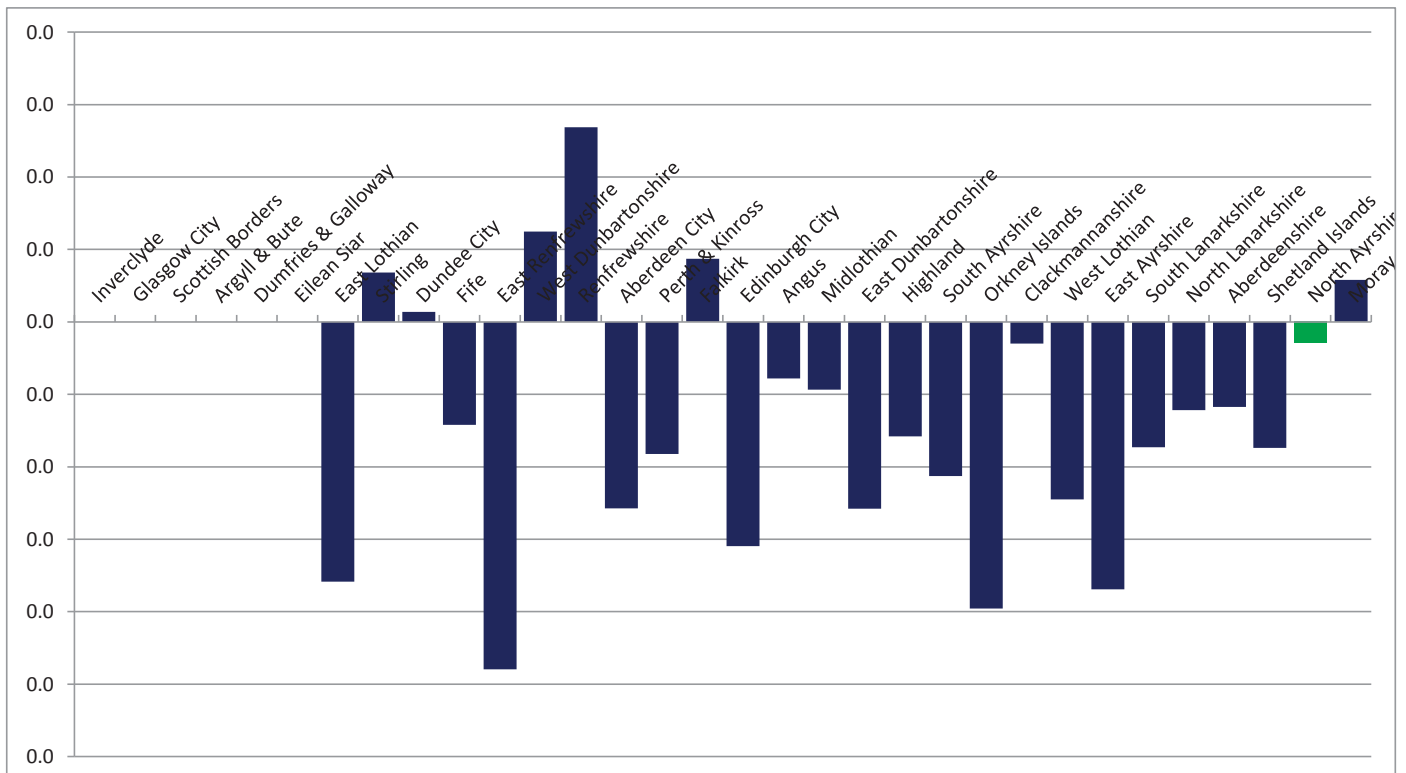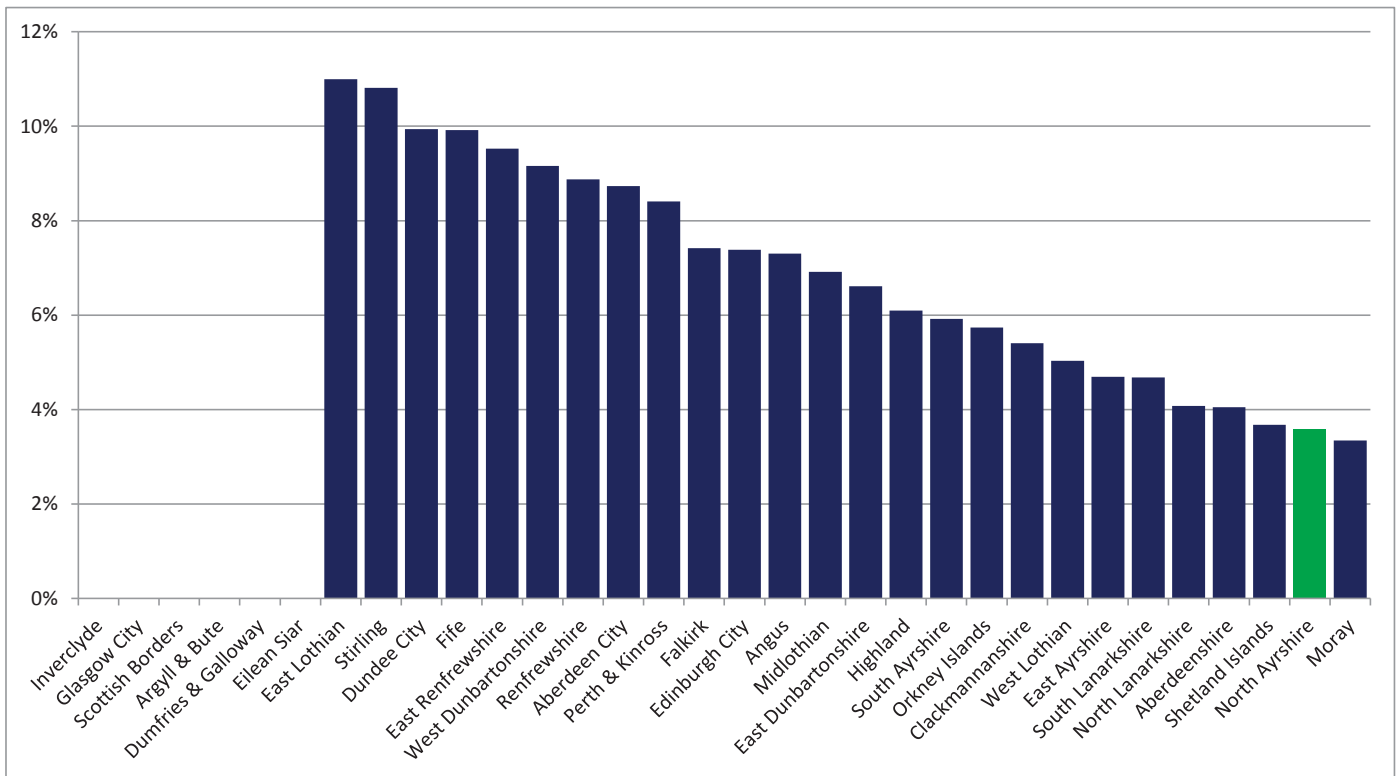
North Ayrshire

HSN2: % of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids
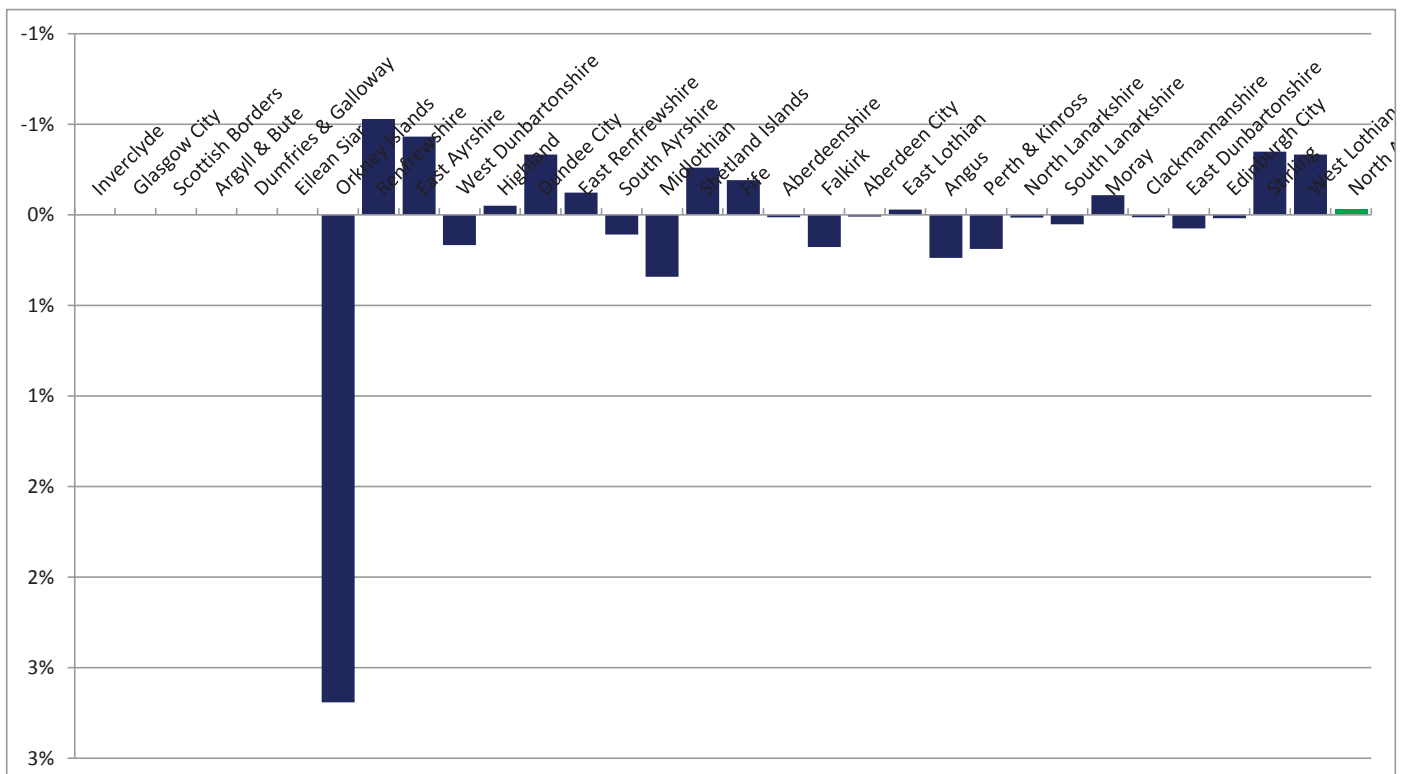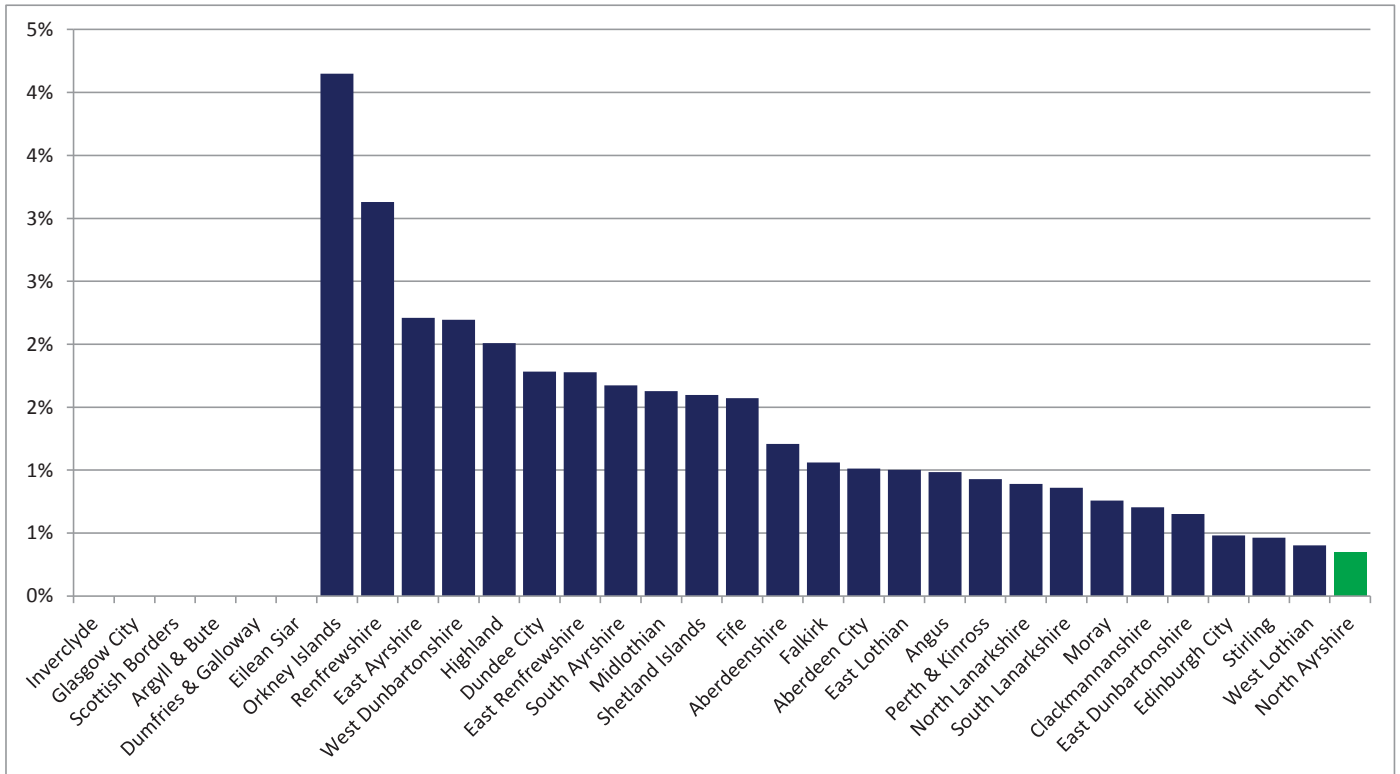
North Ayrshire

HSN3: % of dwellings meeting SHQS
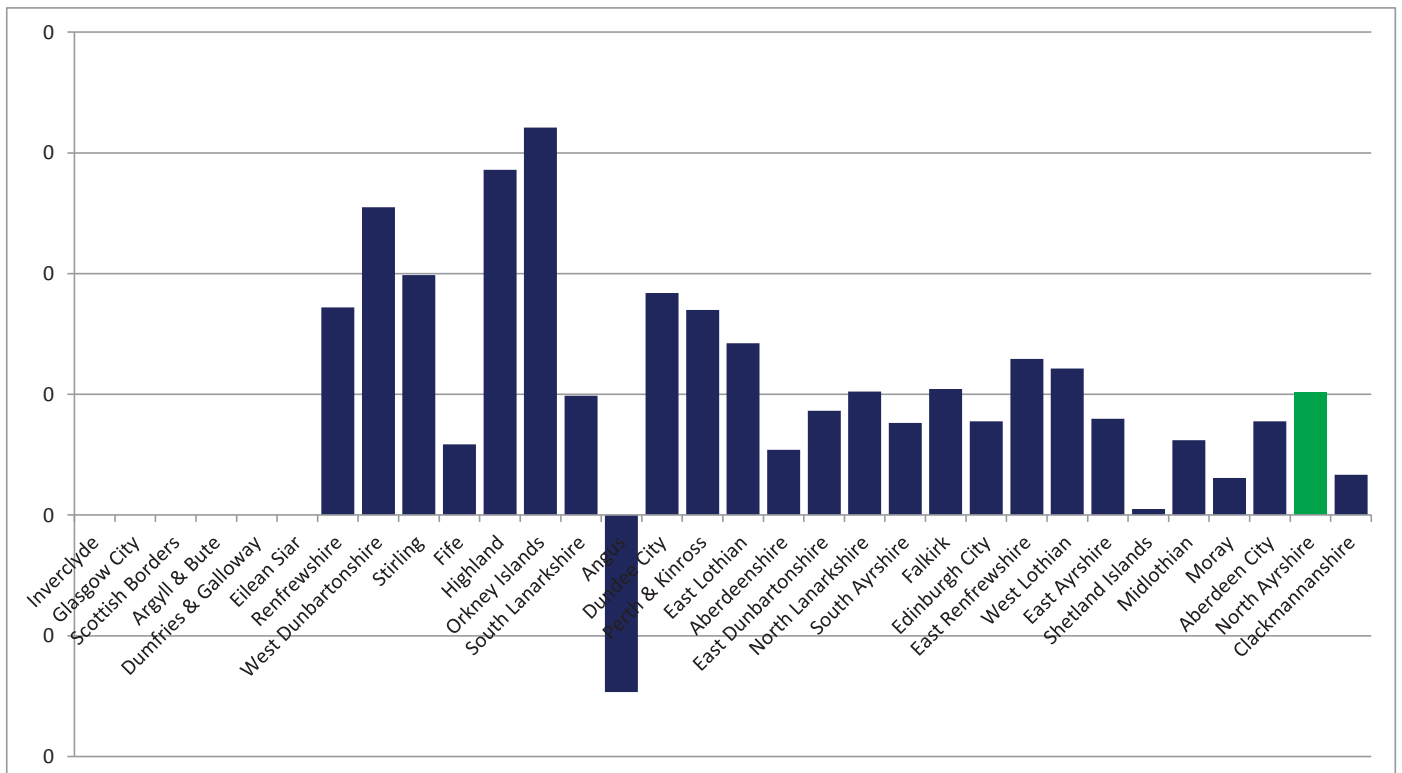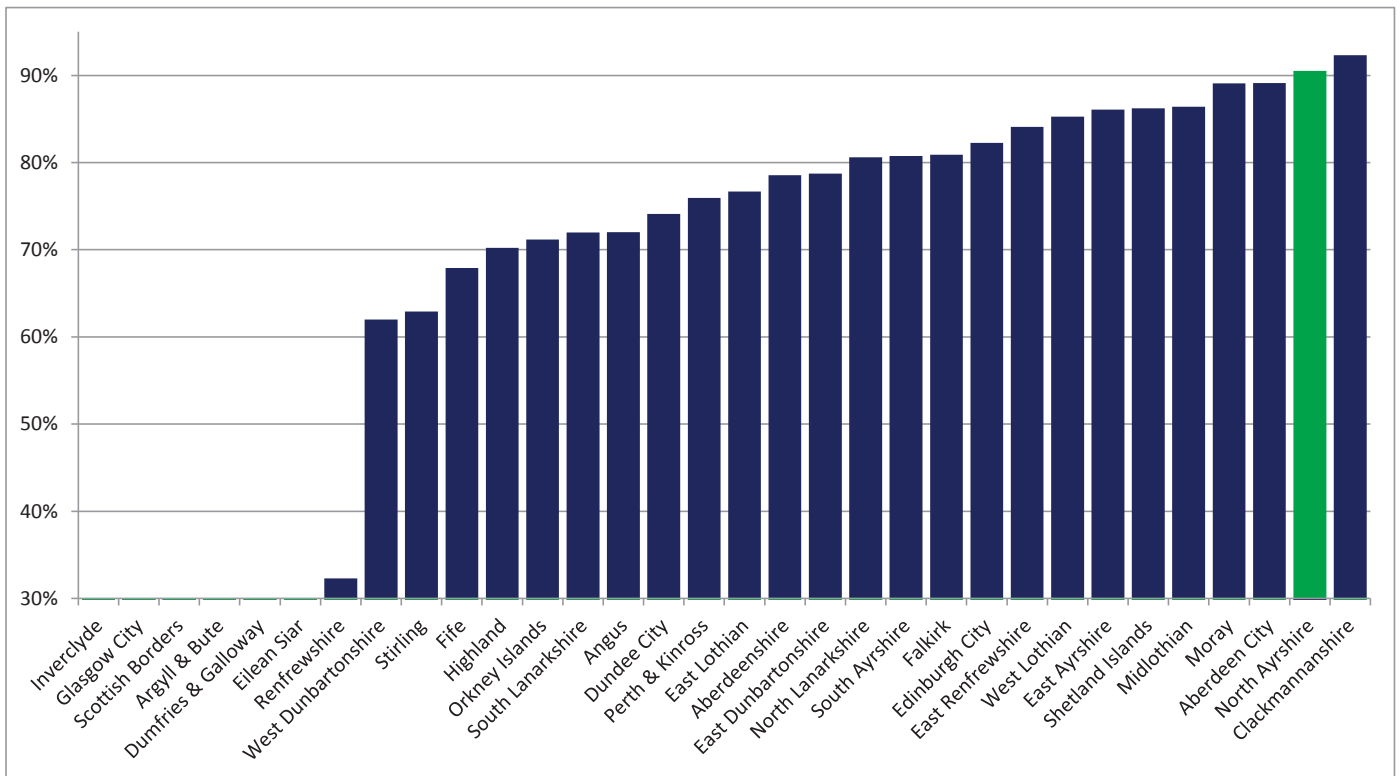
North Ayrshire

HSN4: % of repairs completed within target times
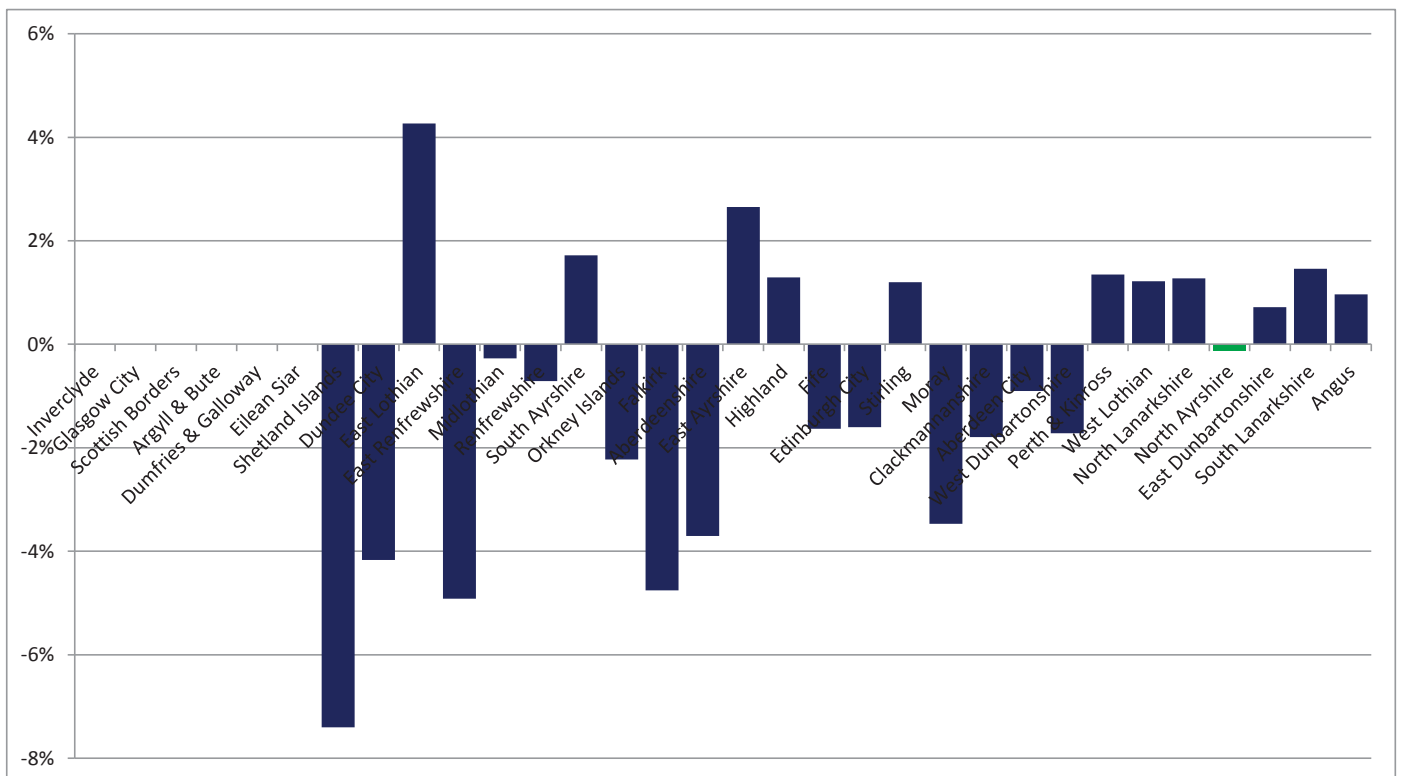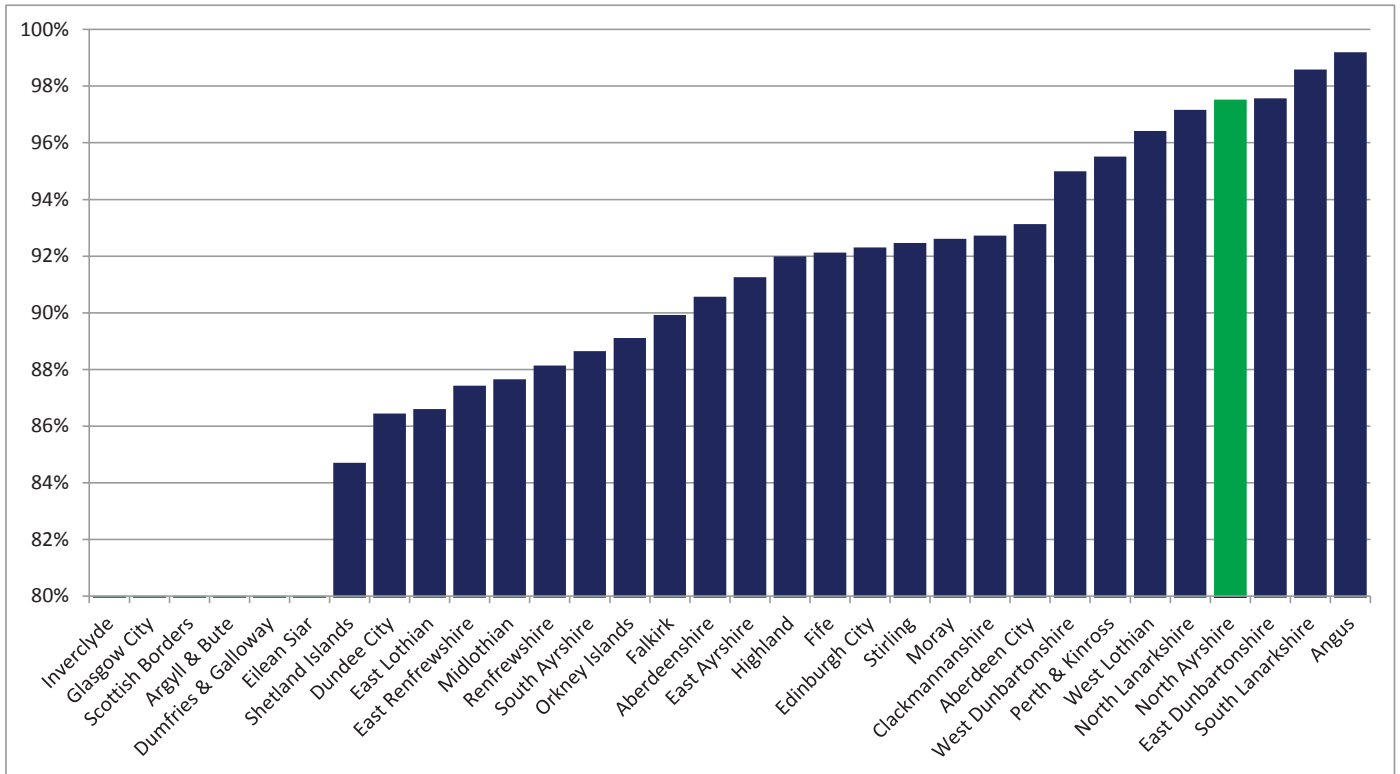
North Ayrshire

HSN5: % of council dwellings that are energy efficient
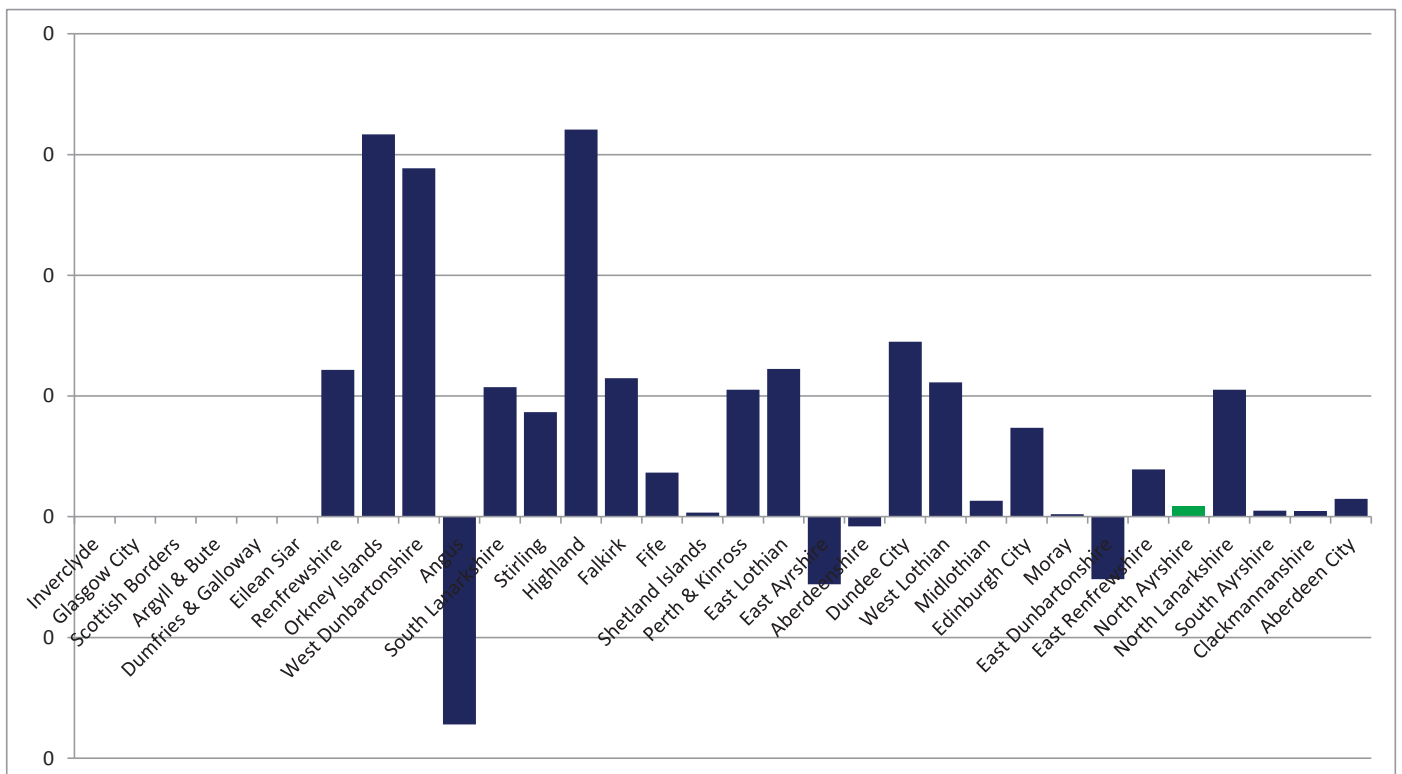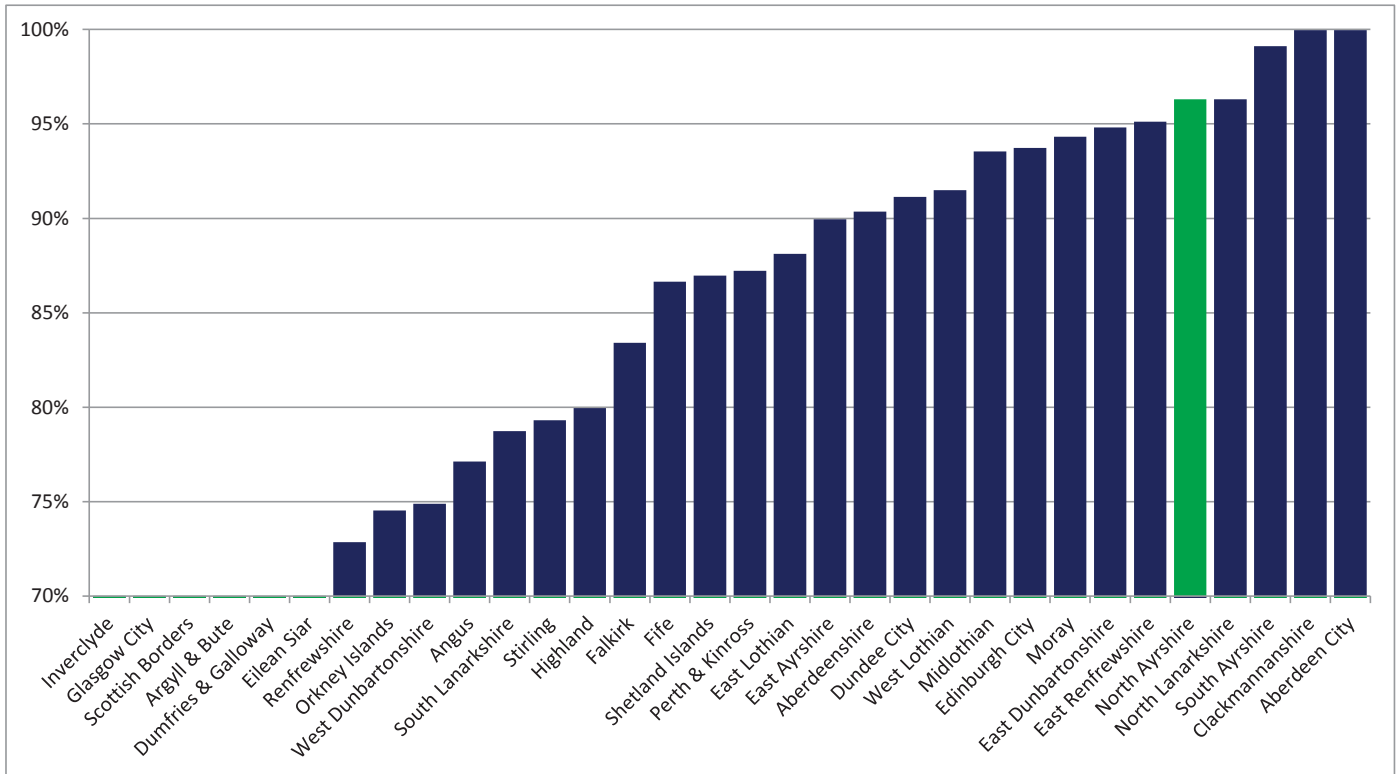
North Ayrshire

CORPAM1: Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use
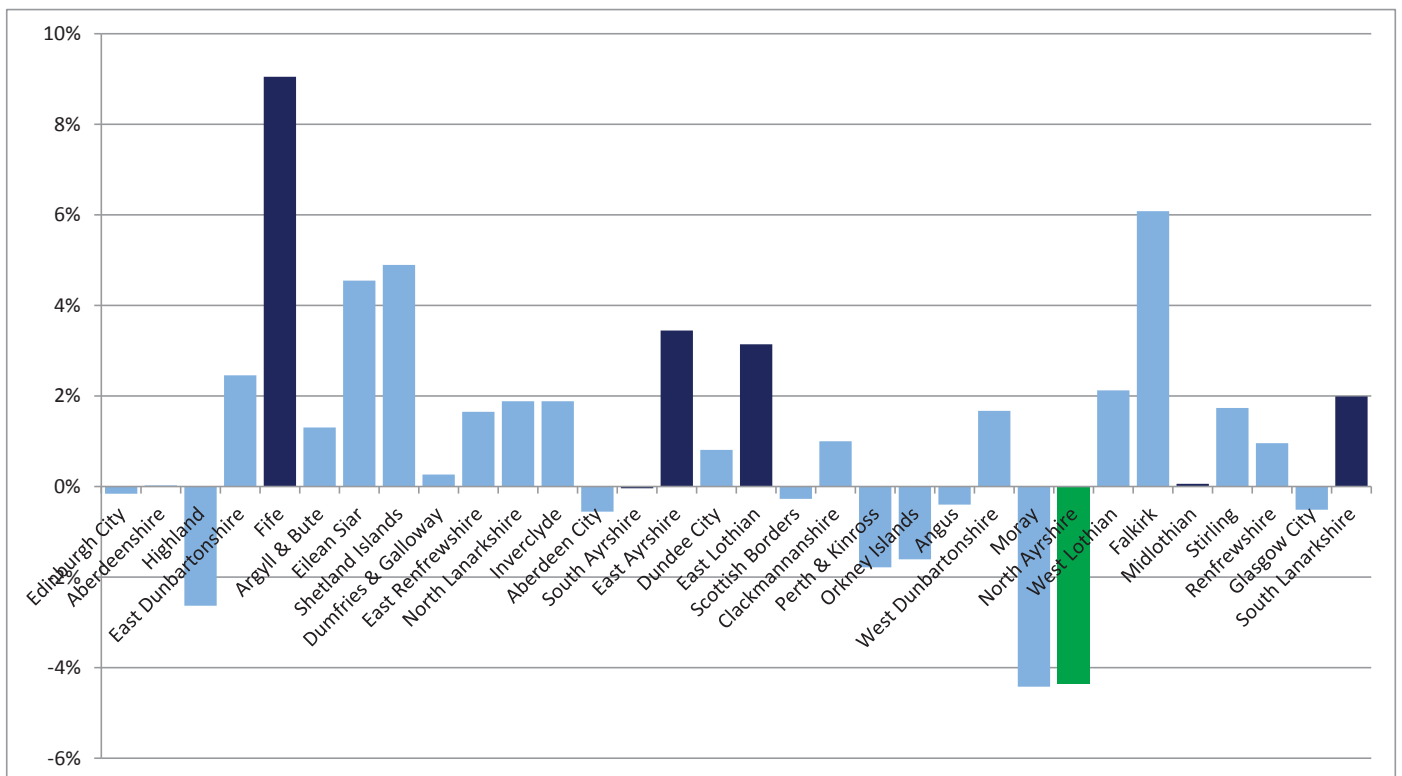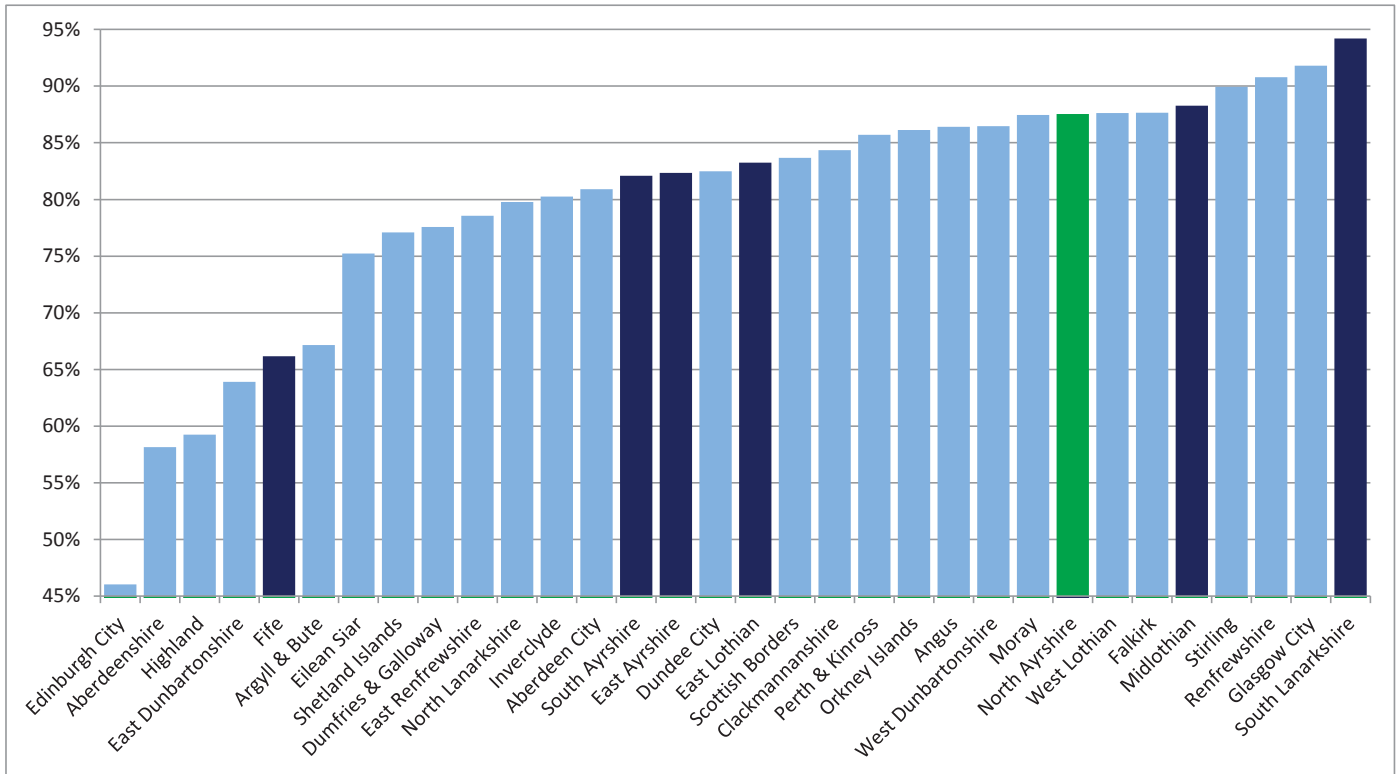
North Ayrshire

ORPAM2: Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition
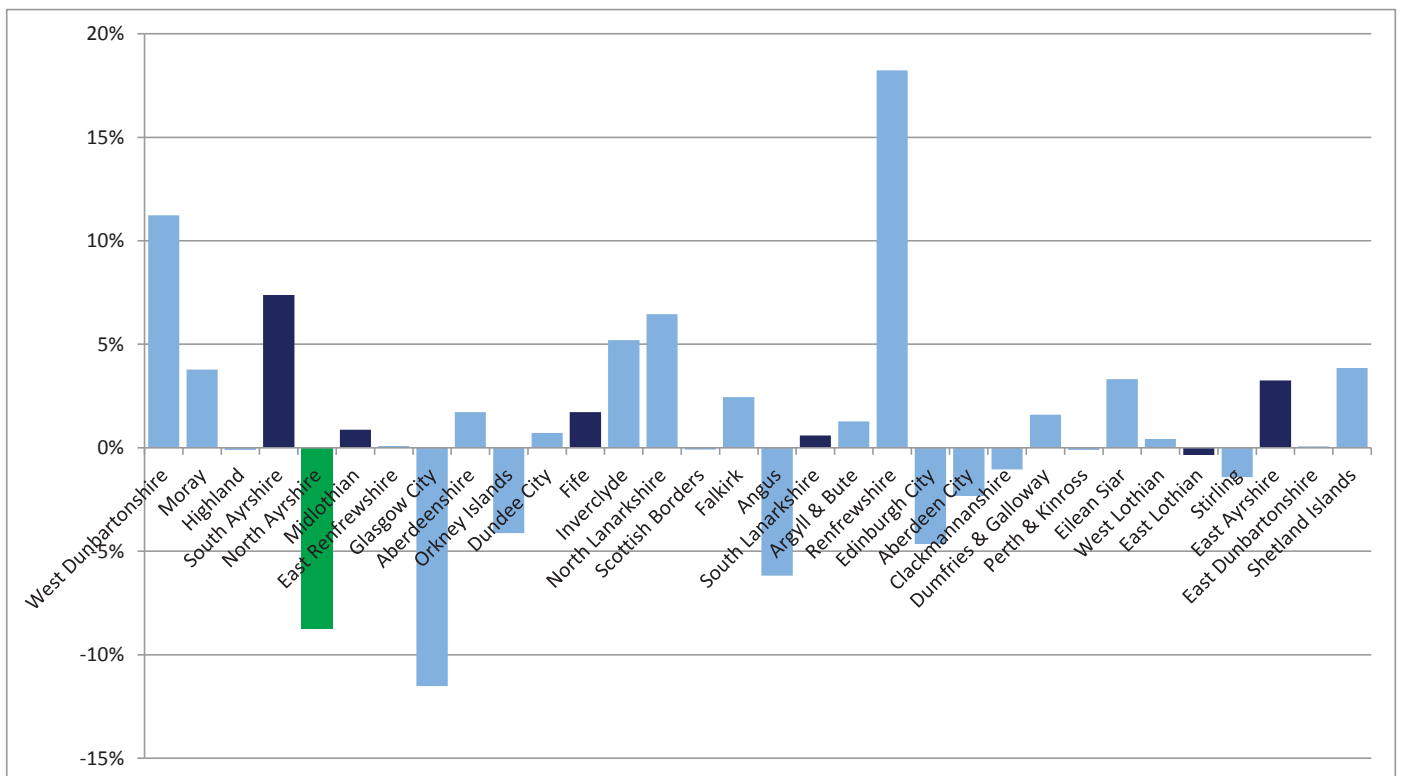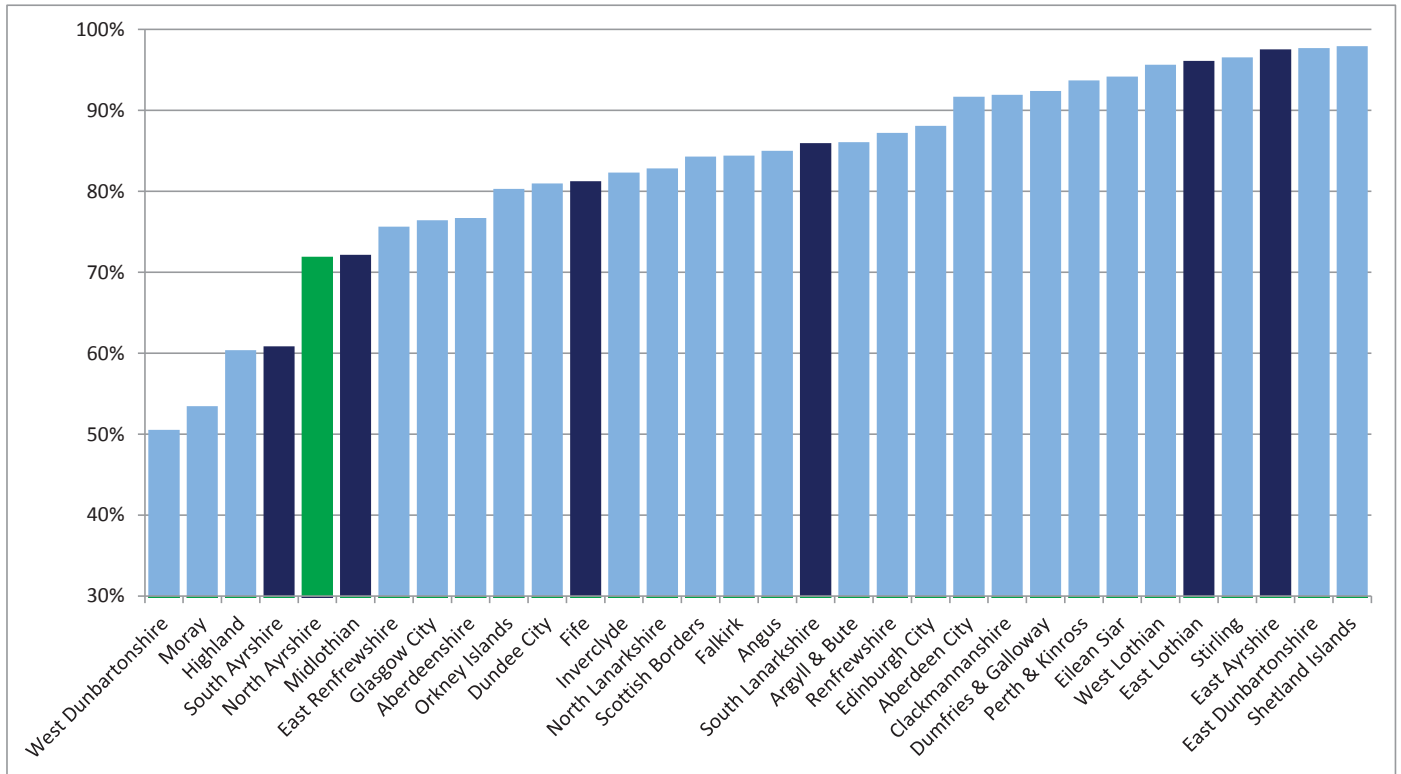
North Ayrshire

Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Pro
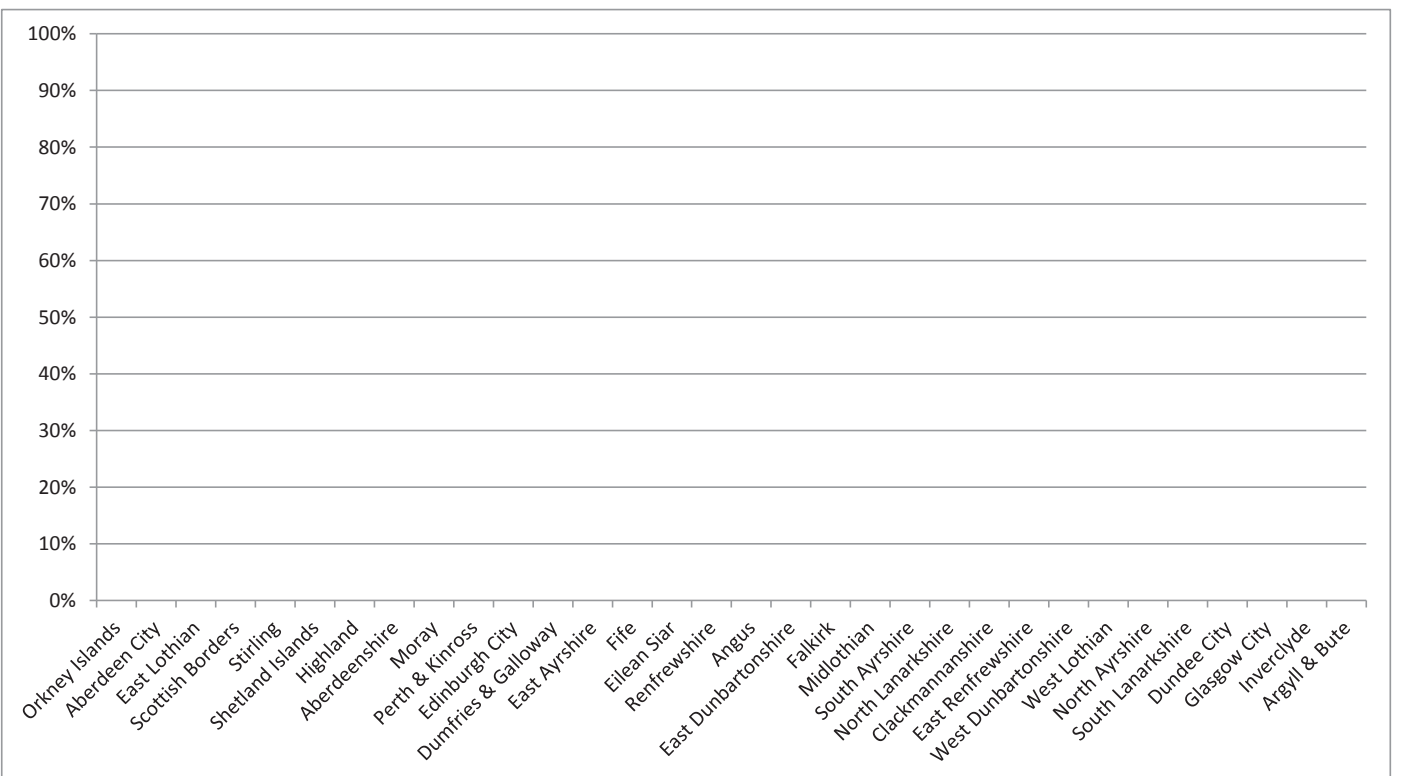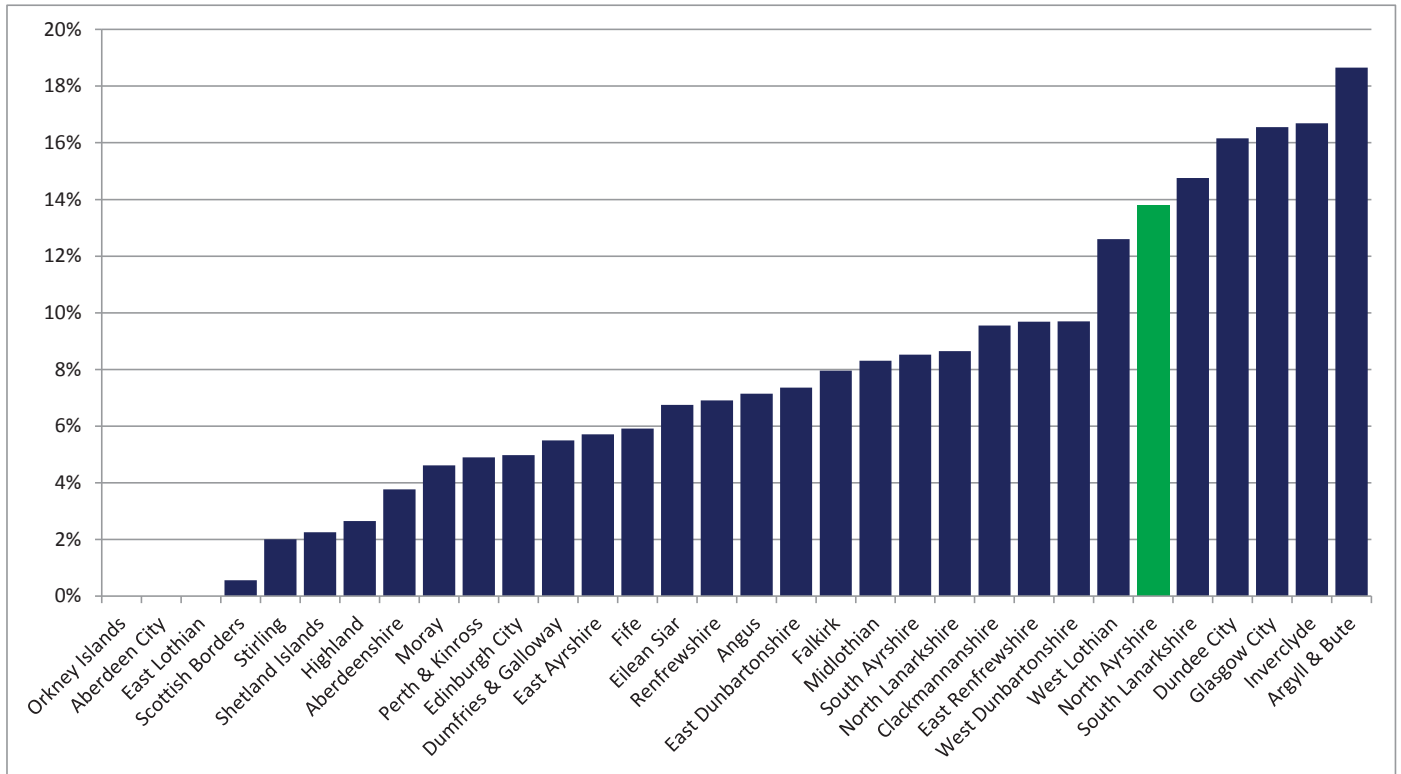
Local Authority	Similarity	Family Group	Population	Health	Employment	Size	Kids	Child Poverty	Pensioners	Rurality	Driving
Aberdeen City	1	No							Similar		
Aberdeenshire	0	No									
Angus	1	No					Similar				
Argyll & Bute	1	No									Similar
Clackmannanshire	2	Yes			Similar			Similar			
Dumfries & Galloway	2	No	Similar				Similar				
Dundee City	7	Yes	Similar	Similar	Similar		Similar	Similar	Similar		Similar
East Ayrshire	6	Yes	Similar		Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar		Similar	
East Dunbartonshire	0	No									
East Lothian	3	No				Similar				Similar	Similar
East Renfrewshire	1	No									Similar
Edinburgh City	0	No									
Eilean Siar	1	No		Similar							
Falkirk	1	No							Similar		
Fife	1	No								Similar	
Glasgow City	3	Yes		Similar	Similar			Similar			
Highland	0	No									
Inverclyde	3	Yes		Similar	Similar			Similar			
Midlothian	2	Yes								Similar	Similar
Moray	1	No									Similar
North Ayrshire	9	Yes	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
North Lanarkshire	4	No		Similar	Similar	Similar		Similar			
Orkney Islands	1	No				Similar					
Perth & Kinross	3	No	Similar				Similar		Similar		
Renfrewshire	2	Yes		Similar					Similar		
Scottish Borders	2	No	Similar				Similar				
Shetland Islands	0	No									
South Ayrshire	3	No	Similar			Similar				Similar	
South Lanarkshire	1	No								Similar	
Stirling	0	No									
West Dunbartonshire	3	Yes		Similar	Similar			Similar			
West Lothian	2	No				Similar			Similar		
PEERS			7	8	8	7	7	8	7	7	7

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The spine charts are an attempt to summarise, on one page, what the 55 separate data tables provided by the Improvement Service suggest about the performance of your council. They are not meant to provide a detailed analysis, just an overview.

These infographics contain textual, pictorial, and numeric data for each indicator including…

1. The **percentile** (%'ile) which Your Council falls into (i.e. the % of Councils with an equal or lower score than Your Council).
2. The Councils who returned the **lowest** and the **highest** scores.
3. Your Council's **position relative to**…
   a. The lowest and highest score.
   b. The 5th, 25th, 75th, & 95th percentiles.
4. How the **national average** in 2012-13 compares to the previous year: whether it has improved or worsened.
5. How Your Council's 2012-13 figure compares to the **previous year's score**: whether it has improved, worsened, or remained static.
6. How Your Council's 2012-13 result compares to the **previous year's percentile**: whether it has improved, worsened, or remained static and also including an indication of the size of any change.

This information can be read as follows:

1. **Your Council's percentile**
   Shown in the extreme right hand column, under % ile.
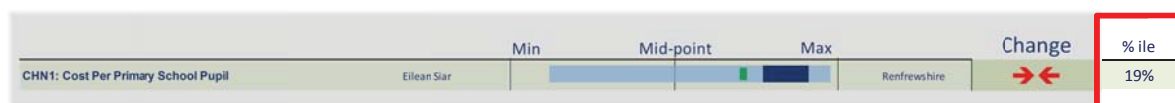
2. **The lowest and the highest scoring councils**
   The lowest scoring council is shown to the left of the data bar, highlighted below in red.
   The highest scoring council is shown to the right of the data bar, highlighted below in green.
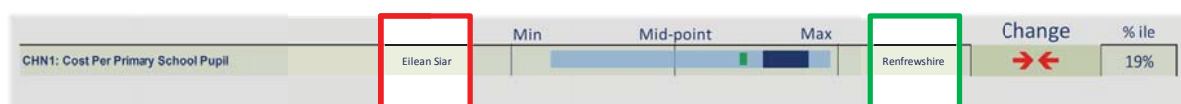
*   N.B. The charts always read left to right for low to high performance, regardless of whether a higher or lower number equates to higher performance (e.g. % satisfaction and cost respectively).

3. **Your Council's position relative to other Councils**
   The range from lowest to highest scores runs from the extreme left to the extreme right.
   The range from the 5th to 95th percentiles is shown by the light blue bar.
   The range from the 25th to the 75th percentiles is shown by the dark blue bar.
   The green block shows yourCouncil's relative position.
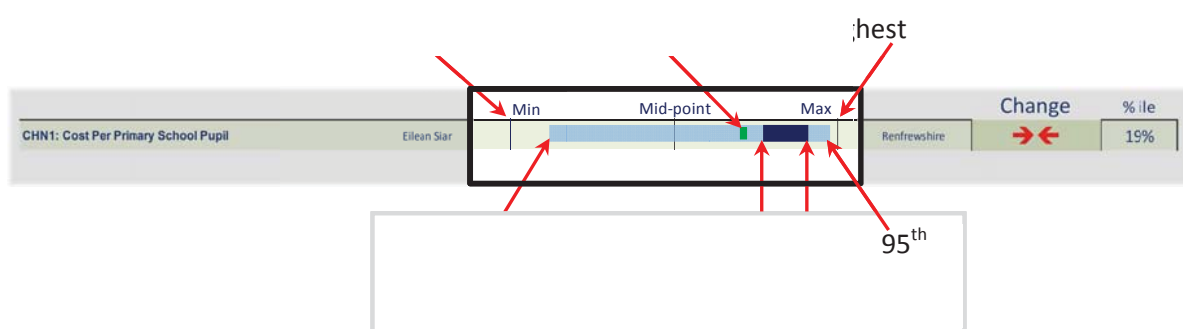
The colour coded symbols in the second from last field, on the right hand side, describe how the figures have changed from one year to the next.
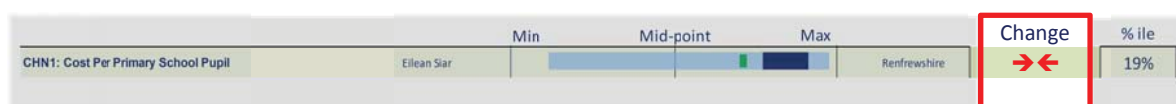
It is recommended that, when comparing performance across indicators, that the chart is considered one Service area at a time. Similarly, when doing so, it is easier to focus on interpreting each aspect of change separately, as they are all independent of one another.

4. **Change to the national average compared to prior year**

The background colour of this field describes whether the **national average** has…

Improved (Green):

Worsened (Red):
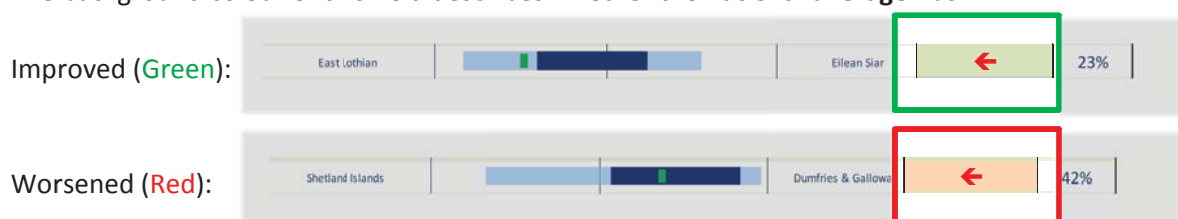
5. **Change to Your Council's score compared to prior year**

The colour of the arrows, regardless of direction, describes whether the **Council's score** is…

Improved (Green):

Static (Amber):

Worsened (Red):

6. **Change to Your Council's percentile compared to prior year**
The direction of the arrows, regardless of colour, describes whether the Council's percentile is…

Improved (➔):

Static (➔←):

Worsened (←):
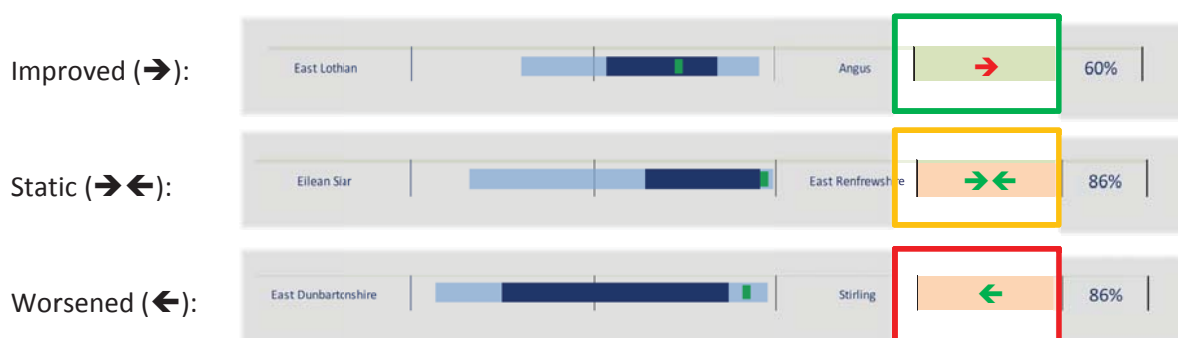
The number of arrows is also significant and relates to the scale of the change in the Council's percentile, with each arrow equating to a shift of up to 6.25% (or 2 positions in the Scotland chart).

➔←	No Change	←←←	12.5% - 18.75% (5-6 places)
←	0% - 6.25% (1-2 places)	←←←←	18.75% - 24% (7-8 places)
←←	6.25% - 12.5% (3-4 places)	←←←←←	>24% (circa 9+ places)

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 7

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Audit Scotland Report: An Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2014**
Purpose:	To inform the Cabinet of the findings of the recent Audit Scotland report.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet notes the findings of the recent Audit Scotland report, the current position in North Ayrshire and further actions being taken to address the issues within the report.

1.   Introduction

1.1   Audit Scotland recently published its annual 'Overview of Local Government in Scotland' report. This examines how local authorities are responding to the main challenges that they face and identifies what more needs to be done.

1.2   This report will highlight the main issues from the Audit Scotland study, which is attached in full at Appendix 1.

2.   Current Position

2.1   The Audit Scotland report covers 3 key priorities for councillors in 2014:

- understanding the changing context and the crucial role of councillors;
- meeting user demands and the financial challenges;
- providing strong leadership and governance to support change.

2.2   This report will highlight the main issues from each of these sections. Each one concludes with a small number of action points; Appendix 2 to this report details these action points and the relevant work that has been undertaken, or is planned to be undertaken, by North Ayrshire Council to address these.

<u>Understanding the changing context and the crucial role of councillors</u>

2.3   The Audit Scotland report notes that decisions in relation to the allocation of resources are becoming increasingly difficult, particularly in relation to a real terms reduction in revenue funding. Councils face particular challenges in areas such as reshaping care for older people and settling equal pay claims.

2.4   In addition to challenges, public service reform provides opportunities for new approaches to service delivery, with an increased emphasis on early intervention and prevention, partnership working and community empowerment.

2.5   The report notes the impact of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 including contributing to increasing levels of rent arrears and, when fully implemented, will remove more than £1.6 billion from the Scottish economy each year. Uncertainties in the introduction of universal credit make it difficult for Councils to plan ahead.

2.6   The integration of Health and Social Care services is noted as being potentially the biggest change in local government since 1996.

2.7   Audit Scotland also notes the complex and demanding role undertaken by councillors and the particularly challenging political context in 2014 with the referendum on Scottish independence. This will introduce additional demands on councillors, requiring a careful balance between their role in Councils and their political interest in the referendum.

2.8   It is essential that councillors have the right skills, information and support to carry out their roles. Audit Scotland identifies that there is a continuing demand and need for more training and development.

<u>Meeting user demands and the financial challenges</u>

2.9   Councillors need good information on performance and costs of current service activities. Audit Scotland highlights that more needs to be done to ensure the quality of performance information and that there is a clear link between the information and Councils' objectives. The report notes the significant improvement in Public Performance Reporting (PPR) over the last 3 years, although it highlights that around half of Councils do not include information showing how they are performing relative to other Councils.

2.10   Developments in benchmarking are noted, particularly in relation to the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). This will facilitate comparisons on spend and performance between Councils, enabling authorities to learn from others that seem to be doing better.

2.11   Audit Scotland highlights that Councils have substantial discretion on how services are delivered and by whom. The importance of robust options appraisal is highlighted, with an expectation that this will be a standard part of decision-making involving changes in how services are delivered and major capital projects.

2.12   The report notes the importance of intelligent purchasing in improving the quality of services and reducing costs. Councils need to have well-trained staff and effective systems to provide the procurement capability to achieve good results.

2.13   Finally, in this section, the role of charging for services is noted and how they can be a means to sustain and improve services. The important role of councillors is recognised in determining charging policies, participating in the design of charges and concessions and understanding the contribution charges make to the Council's overall financial position.

Providing strong leadership and governance to support change

2.14   Over one third of councillors elected in May 2012 were new to local government and there have also been substantial changes to senior management teams in recent years. Against this background of significant change, Audit Scotland has highlighted the need to build and maintain strong working relationships and to implement effective governance arrangements.

2.15   The report notes that tensions are inevitable given the differing policy objectives of political parties and individuals; however, the best performing Councils see councillors from all political groups in general agreement on the overall priorities and debates focuses on how best to deliver them.

2.16   Audit Scotland notes that decisions on services are becoming increasingly difficult. So far, tighter budgets have generally been met by reducing staff numbers; more work is needed to monitor the impact of staff reductions on front-line services. Increased use of overtime may be an indication of pressures in services.

2.17   Work is also required to identify the impact of reductions on the capacity and resilience of support functions, including Finance, ICT and HR. For example, councillors should consider whether delays in receiving up-to-date financial information are indicative of under-staffing or reduced skills and capacity in Finance services.

2.18 Staff reductions are not sustainable and there is emerging evidence that Councils are considering options to either reduce or stop services. Councillors need to explain the rationale to local people and monitor the impact.

2.19 The report highlights the principles of good governance and in particular notes the importance of a strong Audit Committee. This should be chaired by someone who is not a member of the political administration to ensure the independence of the Committee is not compromised.

2.20 Through the Audit Committee, councillors need to be firm in challenging officers on areas such as weaknesses in controls and to ensure that effective actions are implemented within acceptable timescales.

2.21 The report also notes the importance of the role of the chief financial officer (or section 95 officer) in providing professional advice to colleagues and elected members on all aspects of the Council's finances. Councillors should also be aware of the important contributions of other statutory officers; for example, the monitoring officer is responsible for advising on the legal position and for ensuring proper procedure is followed.

2.22 Councils hold cash-backed reserves which are available to finance service expenditure, ensure stability in cash flow, build up funds for predicted cost pressures or as a contingency for unforeseen expenditure. The overall level of reserves increased at 31st March 2013; however, the level of free or unearmarked reserves fell for the first time in recent years. Audit Scotland is of the view that more needs to be done to provide more information on why reserves are held, how this fits with the overall financial strategy and how the reserves will be used. North Ayrshire holds unearmarked reserves in line with its reserves strategy.

2.23 The report notes that few Council have longer-term financial plans showing links between finances, workforces and assets; North Ayrshire is an exception to this with a 10-year financial strategy in place.

2.24 Audit Scotland reports an encouraging level of engagement with the public, employees and other key stakeholders in terms of the choices that have to be made in budget setting. There is also evidence of Councils developing a priority-based approach to budgeting, involving a clear understanding of how services contribute to strategic priorities, developing options for services and agreeing options prioritised to achieve particular outcomes.

2.25   In relation to partnership working, the report highlights a renewed focus on community planning and notes the need for strong and sustained leadership from Community Planning Partnership (CPP) boards. In general, CPPs are not able to show that they have had a significant impact.

2.26   CPPs need to ensure that Single Outcome Agreements are a true plan for the communities they serve and show how they are directing public money and other resources to target inequalities and improve outcomes. They also need to ensure that partners align their service and financial planning arrangements.

3.   Proposals

3.1   It is proposed that Cabinet notes the findings of the Audit Scotland report which are summarised above and detailed in Appendix 1.

3.2   It is further proposed that Cabinet notes the work which has already been done and is planned to be done by North Ayrshire Council, detailed at Appendix 2, in tackling the action points highlighted by Audit Scotland.

4.   Implications

Financial Implications

4.1   None.

Human Resource Implications

4.2   None.

Legal Implications

4.3   None.

Equality Implications

4.4   None.

Environmental Implications

4.5   None.

        Implications for Key Priorities

4.6   None.
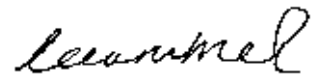
5.   Consultations

5.1   Consultation has taken place with senior officers across the Council, who have responsibility for implementing the actions detailed at Appendix 2 to this report.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   North Ayrshire Council measures well in relation to the various issues in the national Audit Scotland report.

6.2   There are opportunities for further improvement and these are detailed in Appendix 2 to this report.

LAURA FRIEL
Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :
For further information please contact Laura Friel, Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on 01294-324512.

Background Papers
None

An overview of local government in Scotland 2014
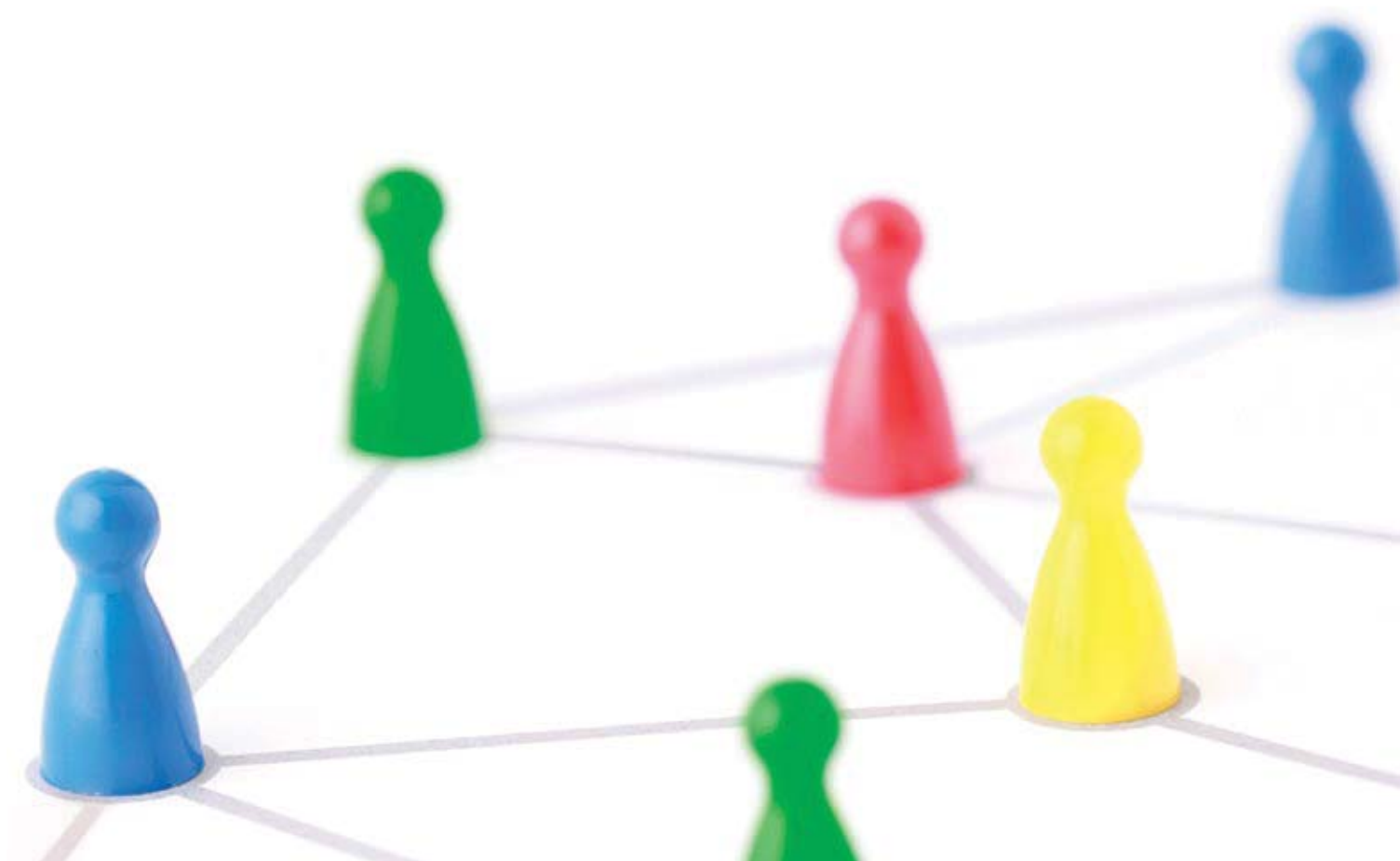
ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

The Accounts Commission

The Accounts Commission is the public spending watchdog for local government. We hold councils in Scotland to account and help them improve. We operate impartially and independently of councils and of the Scottish Government, and we meet and report in public.

We expect councils to achieve the highest standards of governance and financial stewardship, and value for money in how they use their resources and provide their services.

Our work includes:

- securing and acting upon the external audit of Scotland's councils and various joint boards and committees
- assessing the performance of councils in relation to Best Value and community planning
- carrying out national performance audits to help councils improve their services
- requiring councils to publish information to help the public assess their performance.

You can find out more about the work of the Accounts Commission on our website: **www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/about/ac**

Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. We help the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission check that organisations spending public money use it properly, efficiently and effectively.

Contents

Exhibit data

When viewing this report online, you can access background data by clicking on the graph icon. The data file will open in a new window.

Summary

Key facts

Revenue spend

£18.5 billion

£18.6 billion — Income

Value of assets — **£38** billion

£1.86 billion — Useable reserves[1]

Capital spend — **£2.3** billion

Staff employed — **204,500**
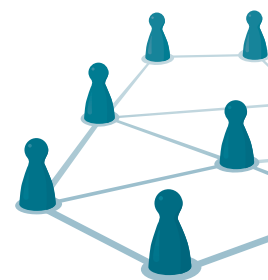
1,223 — Councillors
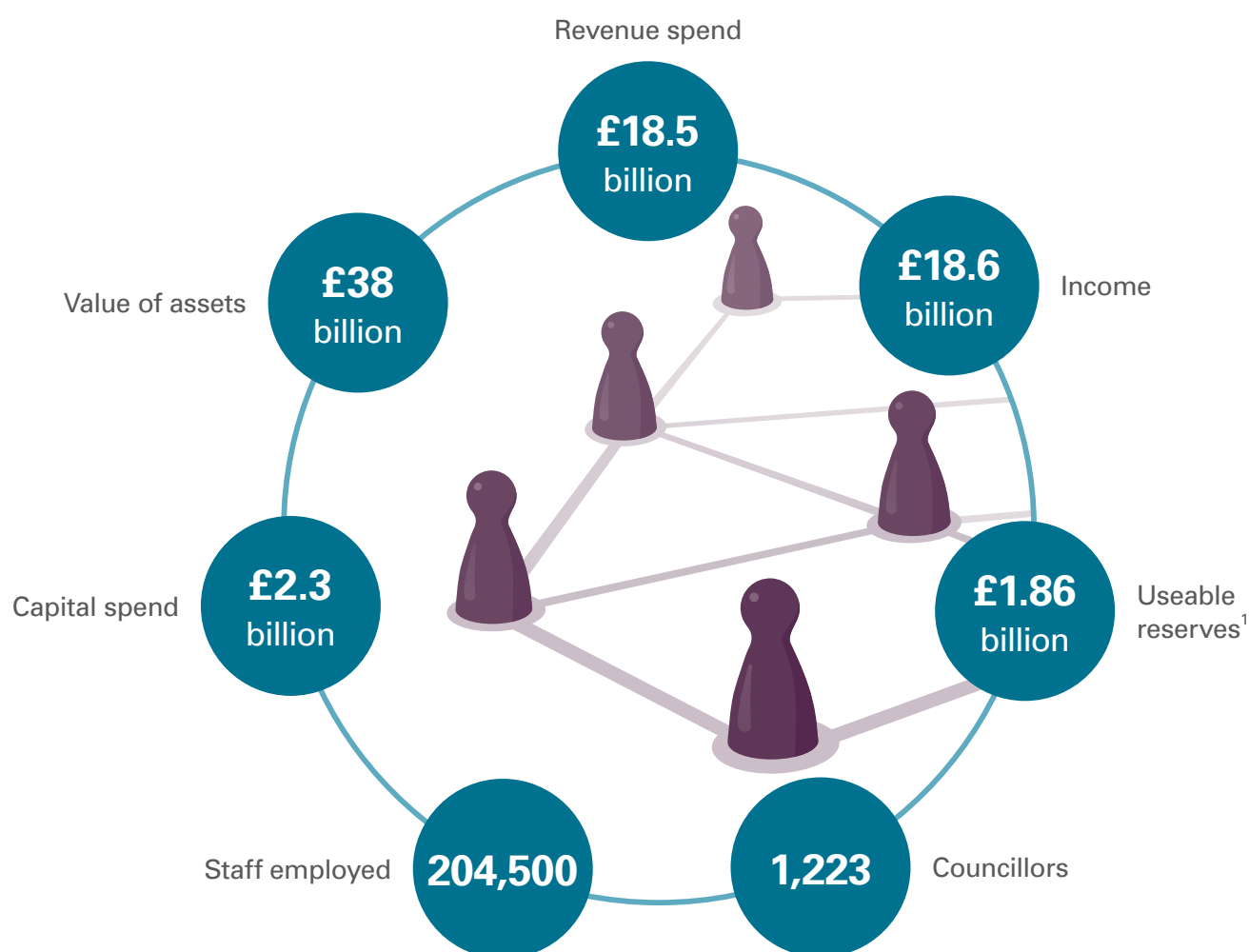
Note: 1. Excludes Orkney and Shetland Islands councils which hold large reserves and balances arising mainly from harbour and oil-related activities.

Chair's introduction

1. Scotland's 32 councils provide vital public services from the cradle to the grave. Delivered directly or in partnership with others, these services involve substantial resources. In 2013 councils spent nearly £21 billion, employed 204,500 staff and used buildings and other assets with a value of around £38 billion. Councils face reducing budgets and increasing demand. Finances remain tight and councils anticipate further budget reductions. To date they have balanced budgets mainly by reducing staff numbers but this alone is not sustainable in the longer term. Increasing numbers of older people, who typically need more public services – notably health and social care, as well as the public's rising expectations of service quality are among a range of factors contributing to increased demands on services.

2. Thus councils face increasingly difficult choices. To help make these decisions they need to make better and consistent use of options appraisal so that they can deliver the best possible value-for-money services to their communities. Councils need to ask the question, 'What works best and can we prove it?' The Commission recognises that options appraisal is challenging for councils, councillors, managers and staff. Loyalties run deep in councils, strong political beliefs are held and balancing competing interests is always difficult but the duty of Best Value – making best use of public resources – must always be paramount. Potential cuts require rigorous appraisal of alternatives so that decisions are transparent and based on solid information. Over and above these internal challenges, councils are having to deal with the impact of welfare reform, to plan with their partners for changes in health and social care and to deepen and strengthen the effectiveness of community planning.

3. In this complexity of change, the foundation stones of good governance and accountability remain constant. A fundamental principle of good governance is councillors and officers operating in clearly defined and understood roles. The role of the councillor can best be described as being at the start and the end of the process; at the start deciding policy, and at the end holding officers to account for their performance in implementing the policy. The part in the middle, the management of the council, is the responsibility of officers. Our audits have consistently shown that where roles are clear and respected and where Best Value is at the heart of its business, a council will be best placed to meet the challenges of 2014 and beyond. In contrast, bad governance is debilitating, time-consuming and expensive.

4. Strong political and managerial leadership is also more important than ever. While political coalitions have worked well in recent years there is evidence of heightened tensions in council chambers. Of course there will always be different views and approaches across political parties; that is the essence of local democracy. However, the Commission has expressed its consistent view that it is unacceptable if political tensions become so extreme that they compromise a council's ability to ensure effective leadership, demonstrate good governance and, as a result, weaken the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the council and its councillors to conduct public business.

5. The Commission's messages and recommendations are not new; they reflect recommendations and messages in previous overview reports. The fact they are similar serves to underline their continuing relevance and importance.

Douglas Sinclair
Chair of the Accounts Commission

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About the report

6. The Accounts Commission's overview report is based on the local government audit work in 2013. We use this to provide a high-level, independent view on the progress councils are making in managing their finances and in achieving Best Value, and to help councillors identify priorities in 2014.

7. The report focuses on what more needs to be done. First, we set out the context for local government and the key role of councillors within that. We then consider what more councillors need to know about current services and the options for providing services. We conclude by focusing on key elements needed to deliver Best Value, ie leadership and governance, and how more can be achieved through partnership working.

8. The report is supported by two appendices:

- Appendix 1 summarises how councils used resources in 2013.

- Appendix 2 contains a checklist and links to other material which is available to support improvement in 2014.

9. The report is primarily for councillors, as a source of information to support them in their role. However, councillors will need to work closely with officers to identify the position in their councils and to address the priorities we identify. We also expect councils to discuss the report with their community planning partners.

Key messages
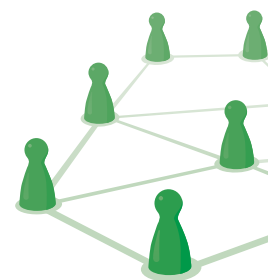
1   Councillors need to maintain a good understanding of the rapidly changing economic, social and political context. Demands on services and resources continue to increase and need to be managed alongside public service reforms, including changes in the welfare system and in health and social care.

2   Achieving Best Value requires good information about the cost and performance of current services and robust analysis of the options and the related risks associated with alternative ways of delivering services.

3   Governance is more important than ever. Councillors need to scrutinise reports from officers on the financial position and service performance: get the right information; ask the right questions; and ensure issues are resolved. They also need to scrutinise reports from auditors and get assurances from officers that weaknesses in financial systems are addressed. Councillors should assure themselves that the officer responsible for the council's finances retains appropriate access and influence within management structures.

4   The total level of reserves has increased but the level of 'free' reserves has fallen, with councils predicting future funding gaps. More work is needed to develop longer-term resource plans that show connections between savings, staff changes and how assets, such as land and buildings, are used to best effect in providing services.

5   Councils are working with their partners to meet the challenges of significant service reforms. Achieving more from Community Planning Partnership (CPP) working requires strong shared leadership, more effective governance and making the most of the combined public sector resources in the area.

6   There is increased evidence of political tensions and instability which is leading to strained working relationships. This comes at a time when decisions on services are becoming increasingly difficult and require strong political and managerial leadership. There will be additional demands on councillors in the run-up to the independence referendum. This will require a balance between their council responsibilities and their wider political activities.

Key recommendations

Councils continue to face significant challenges. They need to review how services are currently delivered and consider options as to how services might be delivered in future. They also need to increase the focus on partnership working and longer-term resource planning. Councils that place Best Value at the heart of all they do are best placed to deal with the challenges in 2014 and beyond.

Key priorities for councillors in 2014

- Understanding the changing context and the crucial role of councillors
  – Maintaining a clear understanding of the financial position.
  – Understanding the public reform agenda, including the impact of welfare reform.
  – Preparing for changes in health and social care.
  – Keeping up to date through training and development.

- Meeting user demands and the financial challenges
  – Appraising the options for delivering services and charging for services.
  – Requiring good-quality cost and performance information for decisions and scrutiny.
  – Making better use of benchmarking to support service improvement and public reporting.

- Providing strong leadership and governance to support change
  – Maintaining good professional working relationships and providing strong political leadership.
  – Getting assurance that governance is sound, including where arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs) are in place.
  – Providing stronger leadership of CPPs and working with partners to make the best use of the overall public resources available in the area.

Priorities in 2014
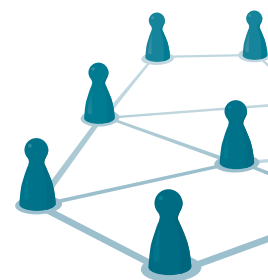
Understanding the changing context and the crucial role of councillors

10. Councils are continuing to operate in challenging financial circumstances and against a backdrop of increasing expectations and demands on services. To achieve success for their local communities, councillors need to maintain a good understanding of the rapidly changing economic, social and political context within which their council operates.

11. In this section of the report we set out the context for services in 2014 and review the councillor's role, which is crucial to success.

There are continuing pressures on finances and services

12. Pressures on resources in local government are not new. Councils, as with other parts of the public sector, have always faced difficult choices in allocating limited money, staff and other assets such as buildings across competing priorities. However, against a backdrop of savings and staff reductions to date, these decisions are increasingly difficult.

13. Local government's share of the Scottish budget has remained fairly constant but, for revenue funding, translates to a real terms reduction, ie after factoring in the effects of inflation. The funding settlement to councils for 2014/15 is £10.6 billion, an increase of about 2.9 per cent in cash terms or 0.8 per cent in real terms. Revenue funding has remained constant at £9.8 billion which represents a decrease of 1.2 per cent in real terms. Capital funding has increased to £0.8 billion in 2014/15, an increase of 40 per cent in cash terms or 37.1 per cent in real terms. The majority of this increase is due to the reprofiling of capital funding which resulted in £120 million moving from 2012/13 to 2014/15 and £100 million moving from 2013/14 to 2015/16.

14. Key information about council finances is included in Appendix 1 (page 33). This shows that spending on services is around £21 billion, ie £18.5 billion on the day to day business of providing services and £2.3 billion on buildings and other assets used to provide services over time. The day-to-day costs are matched broadly by income from government grants, council tax, charges for services and the application of reserves. Upward pressures on the costs involved in providing services, including energy costs, waste disposal and maintenance, are continuing and need to be managed alongside increasing expectations and demands for services Exhibit 1 (page 10).

15. The public sector faces significant challenges in reshaping care for older people. This involves changing the way services are delivered while continuing to meet current need. People are living longer with more complex care needs and

> the councillor role is crucial in meeting the challenges in 2014 and beyond

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Exhibit 1
Demand and resource pressures in 2014 and beyond

Demand pressures

Population growth and changes:
- demand for social care services
- demand on school places

Economic pressures:
- increasing benefits claimants/pressures on welfare benefits and advice services
- social housing demand
- demand on economic regeneration and business advice services

Impact of welfare reform

Implementing national and local priorities

Local pressures:
- increasing maintenance costs for roads and other assets
- flooding/winter maintenance demands

Council services

Resource pressures

Reducing revenue budgets

Salary, equal pay and pension commitments

Reducing staff numbers and increasing span of control

Borrowing commitments

Capital programme slippage

Economic pressures:
- council tax freeze
- council tax arrears
- rent arrears
- reducing income from sale of buildings/assets
- reducing income from cash deposits/investments
- reducing income from planning and building control fees
- inflation and rising costs, eg fuel
- opencast mining and landfill site obligations
- waste disposal

Source: Audit Scotland

this has implications for councils and other organisations that provide services for older people. Our report *Reshaping care for older people* (PDF) found that the programme has brought together the different bodies involved in these services, which cost £4.5 billion a year. These organisations now need to better target resources at preventing or delaying illness and at helping people to keep living at home.

16. There are also substantial pressures within individual services. In housing, for example, councils have a long-standing role and wide-ranging responsibilities, including specific legal requirements to tackle sub-standard housing and homelessness. Our report *Housing in Scotland* (PDF) highlighted significant challenges from population and policy changes in the next few years. For example, the ageing population is likely to increase demand for supported living, the number of single-person households is set to rise and welfare reform will further increase pressures on housing services.

17. Dealing with equal pay claims and the associated costs remains a significant issue. Councils continue to settle equal pay claims and make provision for those cases not yet settled. Cumulatively, councils had paid out £507 million by March 2013, including payments of over £32 million in 2012/13. A further £73.2 million is set aside to meet expected future amounts. In addition, around two-thirds of councils anticipate future costs which cannot yet be quantified.

18. The costs of settlements are significant but there are also unquantified workforce resources and associated costs, particularly for legal and human resource departments. It is in councils' interests to resolve these cases as quickly as possible, not least to eliminate the continuing uncertainties this issue presents in terms of their overall financial position.

19. Councils' experience of dealing with equal pay claims has identified the ongoing need to deliver pay equality. The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) has been working with the Society of Personnel Directors in Scotland and unions to review the terms and conditions of service for local government employees. This review will reflect the developing legislative environment and best employment practices. These changes are not anticipated to raise difficult matters for negotiation, but will ensure that the employment schemes are compliant with the latest legal position at European and UK levels.

Public service reform provides challenges and opportunities for new approaches to services

20. Alongside demand and resource pressures in services, councils are at the centre of wider public service reforms introduced by the Scottish Parliament and by the UK Parliament. The Scottish Government's approach is founded on 'four pillars' for change: shifting resources towards prevention; integrated local services through better partnership working; workforce development; and transparent and improving performance.

21. Responding to public service reform is challenging but it can also help councils deal with demand and resource pressures, address inequality and better meet the expectations of people and communities. The increasing emphasis on partnership working and community empowerment, while challenging, also provides opportunities for new approaches to services.

22. Single police and fire and rescue services came into effect in April 2013. This was one of the largest and most complex restructuring reforms in the public sector for many years, involving services with annual expenditure of the order of £1.4 billion.

23. Councils retain an important role in helping to strengthen connections between the police and fire and rescue services and local communities and are responsible for monitoring services in their areas. They are working with their local commanders (police) and local senior officers (fire and rescue) to develop approaches to local scrutiny and engagement, including links to community safety partnerships and CPPs.

24. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 aims to improve work incentives, simplify the benefits system and deliver savings. This is the biggest reform of the UK welfare system for 60 years and has significant implications for households, and for councils and the services they provide.

25. We have been monitoring the position and our survey in 2013 indicated that councils have carried out a significant amount of work to plan for and to mitigate the impact of the reforms. They are working closely with partners such as COSLA, the Scottish Government and the UK's Department for Work and Pensions to deliver the changes. However, uncertainties remain that make it difficult for councils to plan ahead, particularly in relation to the shift from housing benefits to universal credit and the level of support they are expected to provide to customers in future.

26. It will be some time before the full impact of welfare reform is clear. However, surveys by the Scottish Housing Regulator[1] and COSLA[2] indicate that the removal of the spare room subsidy may be contributing to increasing levels of rent arrears. More widely, a report commissioned by the Scottish Parliament in April 2013 estimated that, when fully implemented, welfare reform will take more than £1.6 billion out of the Scottish economy each year. Councils with higher levels of deprivation are likely to be hardest hit and, over time, the reforms could have a substantial impact on local economies.

27. The integration of health and social care services affects major parts of the public services and, potentially, represent the biggest change in local government since reorganisation in 1996. The aim is to improve the quality and consistency of care for adults, and to shift resources away from institutional to community care.

28. Councils are at various stages in preparing for health and social care integration. We support the principle that public services should be designed around the needs of the service user, and that public bodies should seek to overcome the organisational barriers that get in the way of delivering seamless integrated health and social care. It is essential that services are able to work well together to respond to needs while making the best use of existing resources and delivering high-quality services. We have highlighted in several reports the need for barriers to partnership working to be addressed and the importance of a joint vision and clear priorities for the use of shared resources.

29. Looking further ahead, the Scottish Government has brought forward proposals in the Community Empowerment Bill.[3] These highlight the important role that communities can play in participating in new models of service delivery and developing models of 'co-production' that draw upon the knowledge, skills and experience of local people in ways that maximise the impact and value of public assets, eg people, buildings and local knowledge. This may lead to changes in the relationship between councils and communities.

30. We provided a response to the Bill covering areas such as common good, community planning, scrutiny and the possible accounting implications of the transfer of assets to communities. Our response reflects on our experience in the scrutiny of community planning and of our responsibilities in holding councils to account and encouraging improvement. We welcome the increased emphasis for CPPs on delivering outcomes and the opportunity for clarity on responsibilities, accountability and governance.

Councillors have a complex and demanding role, which is crucial to the success of their councils

31. Councillors represent their constituents, provide leadership and direction and scrutinise service performance and how resources are used. The effectiveness of councillors has a strong bearing on the achievement of Best Value and the overall success of councils.

32. As we state in our 'how councils work' report *Roles and working relationships: are you getting it right?* (PDF) this is a complex and demanding role, made more so in the current context where reduced budgets mean that choices and decisions are more difficult. Councillors are involved at the start of the process (getting views from people and communities and setting policies) and at the end (holding officers to account for the implementation of policies and keeping people and communities informed about services changes and performance), Exhibit 2 (page 14). The part in the middle, the management of services, is the responsibility of council officers.

33. The political context in 2014 is particularly challenging with local, national and international interest in the referendum on Scottish independence. This is likely to mean additional demands on councillors, requiring a careful balance between their crucial role in councils and their political interest in the referendum.

34. Whatever the outcome of the independence referendum, further discussions are likely on local services, governance and accountability. In October 2013, COSLA established a commission on Strengthening Local Democracy to consider how local democracy and accountability might be improved and to provide advice on what is needed for that to happen. Discussions are also ongoing on the the joint initiative 'Our Islands Our Future' which seeks greater powers for the islands councils. More recently the Scottish Parliament's Local government and Regeneration Committee launched an inquiry into the flexibility and autonomy of local government.

35. In this quickly changing context it is more important than ever that councillors are supported in their role. We are of the firm view that effective democratic decision-making can only take place when councillors have the right skills, information and support to carry out their roles. It is essential that officers provide councillors with sufficient, well-researched and presented information to enable them to carry out this role. Other key requirements are awareness and understanding of governance processes; our audits confirm that there is a continuing demand and need for more training and development.

36. There is already a wide range of material and resources available to councillors. For example, the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework established by the Improvement Service in consultation with local government provides professional and personal development opportunities in a wide range of important skills.

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Exhibit 2
The councillor role

People/
communities

Information
on costs and
performance

Engages/
informs

Requests/
receives for
scrutiny

Councillor

Gives direction/
decides

Options

Decision

Delivery
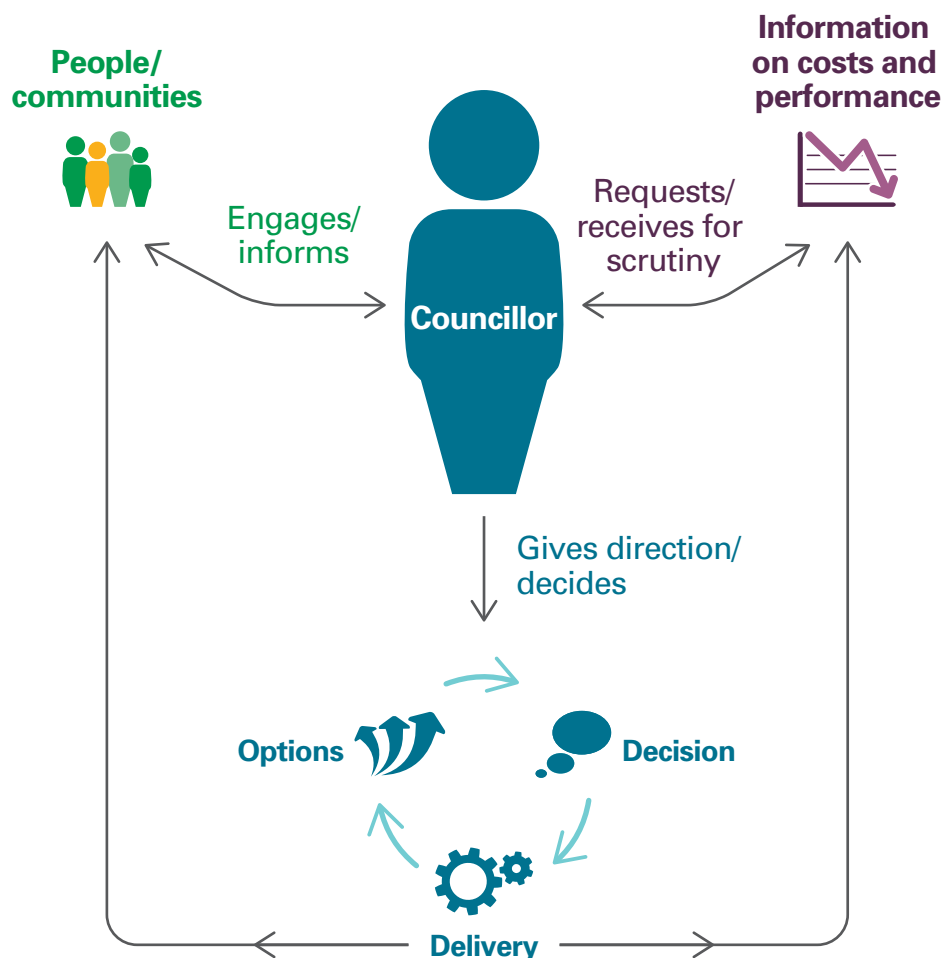
Source: Audit Scotland

37. However, the onus is on councillors to ensure that they regularly review personal development plans and discuss training needs. A recent Improvement Service survey of councillors showed that, of those who responded, around 80 per cent said that local induction programmes addressed their needs.[4] Around two-thirds felt that they had been given adequate training to carry out their scrutiny role effectively. This is encouraging but also suggests that there is still a long way to go before all councillors have the support they feel they need.

Summary and points for action in 2014

- Maintaining a clear understanding of the financial position.

- Understanding the public reform agenda, including the impact of welfare reform.

- Preparing for changes in health and social care.

- Keeping up to date through training and development.

Meeting user demands and the financial challenges

38. Councils need to consider options to decide which services best meet the needs of the people and communities they serve. In so doing, they must comply with their statutory duty to provide Best Value. This requires continuous improvement while maintaining a balance between quality and cost and having regard to value for money, equal opportunities and sustainability.

39. Faced with reducing finance and increasing demands and expectations of services, councils are reviewing the way they deliver services. Pressures are building and councils need to identify innovative and ambitious approaches to services and then make consistent use of options appraisal to decide the way forward. Changes always carry some degree of risk; our expectation is that councils should be risk aware, not risk averse.

40. In this section of the report, we consider what more councillors need to know about current services and about options for future services.

Councillors need good information to support decision-making and accountability, consistent with Best Value responsibilities

41. To scrutinise and assess services, councillors need good information on performance and costs of current service activities. This is crucial information which highlights what is working well and where there may be emerging problems, where improvement may be needed and whether value for money is being achieved.

42. Our 'how councils work' report *Managing performance: Are you getting it right?* (PDF) sets out the key aspects of performance management, including the key characteristics for managing performance and improvement. The report emphasises that everyone in the council has a role in managing performance and that, together, council officers and councillors are responsible for ensuring their council meets the Best Value duty.

43. Councils are working to review and refine performance arrangements. However, more needs to be done to ensure the quality of performance information and that there is clear read-across between the information which is collected and councils' objectives, so that progress can be measured. The evidence indicates, in particular, that the priorities in 2014 are to:

- Include more information on costs, outcomes and service users' views.

- Use performance information alongside cost information to assess value for money.

- Identify and prioritise areas for improvement.

- Evaluate the impact of improvement activity, including the impact of self-evaluation using approaches such as the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF).

44. Managing performance based on the 'plan-do-review-revise' cycle provides a systematic framework for performance management. Within that, councillors need to focus on the crucial contribution they make in this process Exhibit 3 (page 16). In summary, councillors:

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- Need to be clear about what the council is wanting to achieve and how they will monitor and review performance.

- Need to be prepared and equipped to challenge officers on service performance and to ensure that priorities are delivered and that the needs of local communities are being met.

- Can support improvement by showing they are actively interested in performance management and taking action based on what performance information is telling them.

Exhibit 3
Councillors' role in managing performance: the 'plan-do-review-revise' cycle

Plan
- Set out the objectives or targets
- Identify what needs to be done to achieve these
- Identify how this will be done and what resources will be needed
- Identify who is responsible
- Set clear measures

Do
- Ensure the necessary systems and processes are in place
- Take action
- Identify and manage risks
- Support staff to achieve their objectives

Plan **Do**

Revise **Review**

Revise
- Incorporate improvements into future planning
- Revise objectives and targets
- Update resource planning

Review
- Monitor progress regularly
- Identify what worked well and what could be improved
- Speak to service users and stakeholders about their experience
- Scrutinise performance and hold those responsible to account

Source: Audit Scotland

45. As part of their Best Value responsibilities, councils have a duty to report their performance publicly so that local people and other stakeholders know what quality of service is being delivered and what they can expect in the future. Public Performance Reporting (PPR) has significantly improved over the last three years, with improvement across all corporate themes and service areas. However, there is still room for improvement Exhibit 4 (page 17).

46. We are encouraged by developments in local government benchmarking. SOLACE, COSLA and the Improvement Service have been leading work in

Exhibit 4
Public Performance Reporting

Improvements achieved in 2013:

- More information on comparisons over time.

- Improved coverage of the statutory performance indicators.

Improvements required in 2014:

- More narrative and contextual information to help the reader understand the indicators and performance information provided.

- More use of targets, trends, progress with initiatives or actions being taken to address underperformance, to help the reader understand how well the council is performing.

Source: Audit Scotland

this area through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). This provides comparative benchmarking covering all major service areas, with a strong emphasis on costs. Data for 2012/13 was recently released accompanied by an overview[5] covering broad trends and variations. The benchmarking website has interactive capabilities to extract data sets both on a council basis and for individual indicators, allowing councils to undertake their own detailed analysis.

47. A key element of PPR is comparing performance with other councils. Consistent with the improvements in PPR generally, more councils are including this as part of their reports. However, fewer than half of councils include information showing how they are performing relative to other councils. With the increasing availability and refinement of LGBF data we expect there will be opportunities for greater use of comparisons with other councils in PPR material in 2014 and that this will result in better information for the public.

48. More generally, the LGBF will facilitate comparisons on spend and performance between similar councils so that councils can identify strengths and weaknesses, learn from councils that seem to be doing better and improve their performance. The data covers 60 per cent of the total spend of local government and provides the opportunity for services to use the data to determine why disparities exist between services in different councils and to support change and accountability for service performance.

Councils need to consider options for new ways of working and changes in the way services are delivered and paid for
49. Everything councils do has its roots in legislation. Some services are more prescribed in legislation than others, for example collection of council tax and business rates; for other services councils have discretion on the level of service provided. Even for those services where there is some prescription it is normally relatively limited and councils have substantial discretion on how services are delivered and by whom.

50. An options appraisal is all about making well-informed decisions; the basic stages are shown in Exhibit 5. The '*Best Value: Making Choices*'[6] guidance published by the Scottish Government in 2001 noted that, as with any decision-making tool, options appraisal provides support to the process, it does not provide the answers. The value of decision-making tools is that they take people through the process stage by stage, and assist in making sure that everything relevant is taken into account.

Exhibit 5
Basic stages of options appraisal
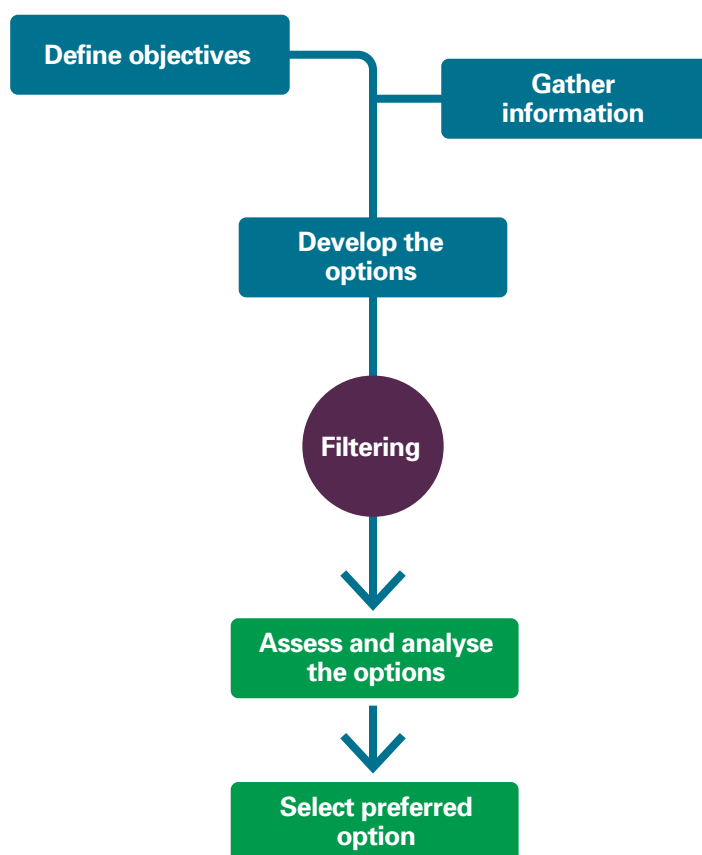
Source: *Capital Planning and Option Appraisal – A Best Practice Guide for Councils*, CIPFA Local Government Directors of Finance, October 2006

51. Our expectation is that options appraisal is a standard part of decision-making involving changes in how services are delivered and involving major capital projects. We recently published a further report in the 'how councils work' series, *Options appraisal: Are you getting it right?* (PDF).

52. Cost information is important in assessing performance and value for money in existing services over time. Looking at service performance alone is not sufficient - what it costs to provide the services is an important factor in forming overall judgements. Cost information is also crucial in reviewing options for new ways of delivering services. Our 'how councils work' report *Using cost information to improve performance: are you getting it right?* (PDF) identified what cost information involves and how it can be used more effectively.

53. In redesigning services, councils need to ensure they are designed around the needs and expectations of the people who use that service. A decision to pursue an alternative method of service delivery can change long-standing arrangements and can have far-reaching consequences for service users, services, systems and staff. Successful engagement with the public and staff can help manage expectations about what can be achieved in the context of reducing budgets.

54. Options for the delivery of council services include the use of arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs). ALEOs offer an alternative to more traditional 'in-house' or contract-based service delivery and usually take the form of companies or trusts. ALEOs provide recognised 'council services', such as leisure services, but they can also deliver commercial operations such as exhibition facilities. While the ALEO takes on responsibility for services, the council remains responsible for both the public money it gives to the ALEO and for the quality of services the ALEO delivers.

55. We have an ongoing interest in ALEOs. With COSLA, we published a *Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound*[7] which set out the principles of best practice for councils when establishing funding relationships of this type. While the context has changed since the Code was published in 1996, the principles remain valid Exhibit 6.

Exhibit 6
The 'following the public pound' code principles

The principles of openness, integrity and accountability apply equally to funds or other resources which are transferred to ALEOs. The code sets out six principles that require councils to:

1. have a clear purpose in funding an ALEO

2. set out a suitable financial regime

3. monitor the ALEO's financial and service performance

4. carefully consider representation on the ALEO board

5. establish limits to involvement in the ALEO

6. maintain audit access to support accountability.

Source: Audit Scotland

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56. Our 'how councils work' report *Arm's-length external organisations: Are you getting it right?* (PDF) pointed out that delivering projects or services through ALEOs is likely to make governance complex but that the same principles of good governance apply. For those councils that have not done so already, the time is right for a systematic review of their involvement in ALEOs and underlying agreements.

57. Our report *The Highland Council: Caithness Heat and Power: Follow-up statutory report* (PDF) demonstrated the serious consequences of weak governance in dealings with ALEOs. This case provides useful learning points

for all councils, particularly the need for robust governance and accountability in which roles and responsibilities are clear, particularly those of councillors. We have shared our findings with all councils.

58. Options not only include changing who provides the service; there will be opportunities to simplify, standardise or adjust existing approaches to achieve better value for money, eg by reviewing existing systems for paying for goods and for collecting money.

59. Intelligent purchasing may help public bodies to improve the quality of services they provide and help them to reduce costs. Public bodies need to have well-trained staff and effective systems to provide the procurement capability to achieve good results. While some bodies perform well in these areas others have a significant amount of work to do to demonstrate value for money in procurement. We will shortly publish a report on procurement in local government.

60. We welcome the Scottish Government's proposals to set a new general duty on public bodies to conduct procurement in a transparent and proportionate manner. The requirement on authorities with significant procurement expenditure to produce a procurement strategy and annual procurement reports will support this duty.

61. Also, within existing service arrangements, charges can be a means to sustain and improve services. They can also be used to bring in new sources of income or help a council to improve the services it offers.

62. Our 'how councils work' report *Charging for services: Are you getting it right?* (PDF) looked at the contribution charges make to budgets and how charges can influence how people choose to use services (Exhibit 7, page 21). The report also contains examples of good practice, including understanding costs and getting the views of people who use services, and a guide to managing charges.

63. Our report found councils can make more effective charging decisions when they consult with service users, community planning partners, residents and other stakeholders over proposed charges. Councils need to provide leadership in ensuring that these decisions do not adversely impact on particular groups of people. Equalities-impact assessments should be considered as part of any significant charging decision or service change.

64. We concluded that councils should have clear policies in place for charges and concessions and that they should regularly review charges to ensure that they are appropriate and meet their intended objectives. The report also recognised the important role of councillors in determining charging policies, participating in the design of charges and concessions and understanding the contribution charges make to their council's overall financial position.

Summary and points for action in 2014

- Appraising the options for delivering services and charging for services.

- Requiring good-quality cost and performance information for decisions and scrutiny.

- Making better use of benchmarking to support service improvement and public reporting.

Exhibit 7

Income from sales, fees and charges compared to income from council tax (shown in 2011/12 prices)

Income from charges is increasing, while income from council tax has declined in real terms.
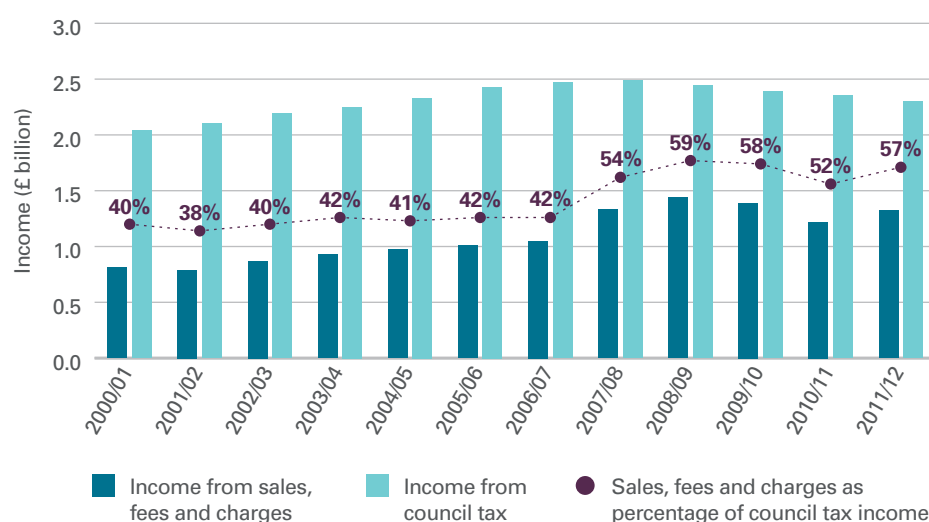
Note: Figures adjusted in real terms to 2012.

Source: Audit Scotland and Scottish Government Local Financial Returns

Providing strong leadership and governance to support change

65. In previous reports we highlighted the significant changes in the make-up of the people leading, managing and working in councils. Over a third of councillors elected in May 2012 were new to local government. There have also been substantial changes in council senior management teams in recent years, including changes in the chief executive in nearly half of all councils.

66. Working together, councillors and officers lead and manage their councils to provide vital services for the people and the communities they serve. Trust, confidence and good conduct between councillors, and between councillors and officers, are essential for good working relationships. Against a background of changes in the people leading and managing councils, we have highlighted the need to build and maintain strong working relationships, and the potential risks to leadership and Best Value where problems emerge.

67. We have also emphasised the importance of good governance, including the structures which provide the basis for good financial governance, and the role and behaviours of councillors and officers in ensuring effective governance in practice.

68. In this section of the report we focus on leadership and governance, and how to make more from community planning.

There is evidence of increasing political tensions and instability which is leading to strained working relationships

69. Our 'how councils work' report *Roles and working relationships: are you getting it right?* (PDF) acknowledges that politics is an integral and important part of local government decision-making and that tensions are inevitable given the differing policy objectives of political parties and individuals. The best performing councils are able to identify when to set aside political differences and work on a constructive basis to support the council as a whole. In these councils, councillors from all political groups generally agree on the overall priorities for the area, with debate focusing on how best to deliver them.

70. There is increasing evidence of political tensions and instability which is leading to strained working relationships or where working relationships have broken down and present risks to the council's ability to do business effectively and achieve Best Value.

71. For example, in Argyll and Bute Council the auditors concluded that political instability meant that there was a lack of collective strategic leadership by councillors. They also found that the council's political management arrangements were contributing to the problems rather than helping the council do business effectively. Working relationships between councillors and between a few councillors and officers were strained and the challenges facing the council were affecting the capacity of senior managers.

72. While the problems were not yet affecting frontline services, they were beginning to inhibit progress with strategic planning and there was a risk that services may suffer in the future if the difficulties were not addressed. We expressed concerns in our findings and requested a report on progress within six months (Exhibit 8, page 23).

73. In Falkirk Council auditors reported that not all councillors were participating in new decision-making structures. Some councillors were not attending executive and scrutiny committee meetings and scrutiny and policy development panels because of their concerns about the lack of effective scrutiny. The auditors noted significant risk to the effectiveness of the council's governance arrangements.

74. At Aberdeen City Council the auditors highlighted the importance of setting aside politics to support the constructive working of the council. They had observed political tensions among councillors in several meetings which affected the effectiveness of decision-making. Behaviour in the council chamber was regularly disrespectful and it had been necessary for councillors to be reminded of the requirements of the councillors' Code of Conduct. A number of local issues had been particularly challenging and had added to the political tensions.

75. Helping to improve working relationships can absorb a large amount of councillor and senior manager time when there are already pressures on senior managers to deliver the changes required to address existing service and financial issues.

76. Looking ahead, further pressures and tensions are likely. Locally, the political make-up of councils is closely balanced, with half of councils run by coalitions, and reduced budgets mean that choices and decisions on services are harder. Nationally, the referendum on independence is the main political issue in Scotland in 2014, with heightened political activity for all parties and elected representatives, including councillors.

Exhibit 8
Argyll and Bute Council: extract from the Accounts Commission's findings

'...the Commission is seriously concerned about substantial risks to the council caused by the instability of leadership by elected members since the last council election. The council's ability to set and maintain a clear strategic direction is at risk of being compromised and the Commission is concerned that this will, in time, negatively affect the services that the council provides for the people of Argyll and Bute. We are also concerned about the negative effect that this is having on the council's reputation.

The quality of leadership of the council has been inadequate. We urge the elected members and the corporate management team to work together to provide stronger and effective leadership of the council. Effective working relationships between elected members, and between members and officers, need to be based upon mutual trust, respect and transparency. Elected members need to achieve a more effective balance between focusing on local issues and priorities and the longer term strategic objectives of the council and the best interests of the whole community of Argyll and Bute...'

Source: Accounts Commission's findings, Argyll & Bute Council Statutory report, October 2013

77. Councils are also changing the way services are managed. Management restructuring and significant changes in the role of officers need to be handled carefully to ensure consistency and continuity of leadership and governance. This can provide opportunities to review and develop the senior management arrangements. For example, our report *The City of Edinburgh Council: the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning* (PDF) highlighted significant changes at managerial level and that good relationships and strong leadership resulted in a more corporate and strategic approach.

78. Building and maintaining good working relationships are vital to the success of all organisations. In local government, good working relationships are a key component in the conditions necessary to achieve Best Value (Exhibit 9, page 24).

Decisions on services are becoming increasingly difficult and require strong leadership and governance

79. So far, tighter budgets have been met by reducing staff numbers (Appendix 1, page 33). Our report *Scotland's public sector workforce* (PDF) identified that councils have managed workforce costs and numbers in a number of ways including pay restrictions/freezes, managing vacancies and redeploying staff to new areas of work. All councils have used voluntary departures to reduce staff costs. As part of a wider review across the public sector in Scotland, we considered the use of voluntary departures in local government.[8] In view of the likelihood of further early departures to reduce costs we took the opportunity to emphasise good practice standards including the need for clear policies, to consider all costs and potential savings, and to check that savings are delivered (Exhibit 10, page 25).

80. More work is needed to monitor the impact of staff reductions on front-line services but also on the capacity and resilience of support functions, including

Exhibit 9
Governance, working relationships and Best Value

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│       Delivery of Best Value         │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
        │ requires        ▲ ensures
        ▼                 │
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│      Good working relationships      │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
        │ requires        ▲ ensures
        ▼                 │
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│     Clear roles and responsibilities │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
        │ requires        ▲ ensures
        ▼                 │
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│     Sound governance arrangements    │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
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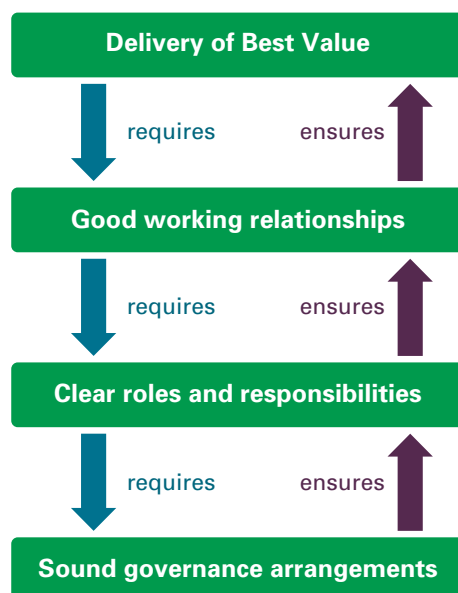
Source: Audit Scotland

finance departments, ICT and people management. This may be apparent from routine performance information but may also require connections to be made with other information, including audit reports. For example, councillors should consider whether delays in performing key, routine accounting controls or delays in receiving up-to-date information on the financial position are indicative of under-staffing or reduced skills and capacity in finance departments.

81. More widely, increasing levels of staff overtime may be indicative of pressures in services which in time may affect service performance and diminish the savings anticipated from decisions to reduce the size of the workforce.

82. While councils have relied mainly on staff reductions, this is not sustainable in the longer term and they face having to consider policy options which they may have previously rejected because they are politically unacceptable or unpopular. There is emerging evidence that councils are considering options to reduce or stop services by, for example, removing subsidies for bus services, closing libraries or reducing support for arts development. As indicated earlier, good decision-making requires good-quality information on costs and performance and rigorous options appraisal.

83. Having taken difficult decisions, strong leadership is required to see them through. Councillors need to explain the rationale to local people and to monitor the impact. Officers need to implement the changes agreed by the council and ensure systems are in place to provide information on the consequences of the changes in terms of cost, performance and value for money. Our report *Maintaining Scotland's Roads: An audit update on councils' progress* (PDF) 🖥, for example, highlighted the need for councils to continue to monitor the impact of changing levels of maintenance expenditure on the condition of their roads.

Exhibit 10

Early departures – principles of good governance

The Accounts Commission's report on voluntary departures re-emphasised key principles in the governance of early retirements.

Framework for decision-making

- Early retirement policies should be approved by councillors and reviewed regularly.

Informing members

- Councillors should receive a report at least annually that details the number of early retiral decisions, along with information on the associated costs and savings.

Decision-making

- Councils should rigorously appraise individual cases to ensure the expected savings associated with a retiral outweigh the costs.

- To improve accountability and assist in monitoring, the costs of early retirement should be charged to the appropriate service budget.

- Councillors should be involved in approving early retirement decisions for senior staff.

Source: Audit Scotland

Effective governance of finances is more important than ever

84. In the current financial circumstances, the principles of good governance are more important then ever. This means providing clear direction and strong control, regardless of how services are provided, ie by in-house services, through contracts and, as set out in the previous section of this report, through other options including ALEOs.

85. Audit committees provide a focus on financial control and risk and enhance public trust and confidence. We remain strongly of the view that audit committees should be separate from the executive and chaired by someone who is not a member of the political administration. We are pleased to note that this has been achieved in councils where that was previously not the case. Elsewhere, councils need to monitor their approach to ensure transparency and that the actual and perceived independence of the Audit Committee is not compromised.

86. The effectiveness of the Audit Committee depends on the committee members and their approach. They need to know how services and resource management work and be prepared to ask challenging questions. Particular areas for focus include cases where weaknesses in basic accounting systems and controls, under-resourcing of internal audit (generally, and in relation to pension funds) and under-developed risk management are reported to the Audit Committee. If basic financial information is compromised so are decisions based on that information.

87. Councillors need to be firmer in asking what officers are doing to address these problems and to follow through to obtain assurances that effective action is

implemented within acceptable timescales. This in itself requires particular skills, and there is evidence that councillors see the need for more training to support their scrutiny activities.

88. The chief officer for finance (also known as the statutory officer for finance or the section 95 officer) has a crucial role in providing professional advice to colleagues and councillors on all aspects of the council's finances and is central to effective financial governance. CIPFA's guidance[9] develops the requirements of the role.

89. The focus on finances means that the chief financial officer role is increasingly important. The role carries overall responsibility for financial management and reporting, contributing to the strategic management of resources and advising on the financial aspects of what are often complex options for new ways of delivering services. However, management restructuring and the shift to smaller management teams means that in about half of councils the chief financial officer is not now a member of the senior management team.

90. There is a risk, therefore, that the statutory role is less visible and that financial governance is affected. Where the chief financial officer is not a member of the senior management team, we re-emphasise that councillors need to understand why that is the case and satisfy themselves that the officer has appropriate access and influence to perform this crucial role.

91. Councillors also need to be aware of the important contributions provided by the other statutory officers who, like the proper officer for finance, act independently to promote and enforce good governance. The monitoring officer, for example, is responsible for advising councillors on the legal position on proposals and ensuring that the council follows proper procedures. More details about the statutory officers can be found in our 'how councils work' report *Roles and working relationships: are you getting it right?* (PDF) 🖥.

Reserves have increased but the level of 'free' reserves has fallen, partly because they have been applied to reduce funding gaps

92. Annual audited accounts show a council's financial performance and position and are important in demonstrating the proper stewardship of public money. The accounts should be published as soon as possible after the end of the financial year, along with an opinion from the independent, external auditor stating whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view. This provides important assurance on financial reporting.

93. For financial year 2012/13, accounts for all councils and other local authority organisations, including the 11 local authority-administered pension funds, were presented for audit on time and signed off by auditors without qualification. We welcome this achievement and the assurance it provides to the public and other stakeholders.

94. Despite the financial pressures that they face, all councils managed to balance finances and most identified underspends at the end of 2012/13. Reduced staff numbers and the corresponding reduction in costs was the main reason for under-spending but the reasons varied. Some councils used 'free' or unearmarked reserves to ease financial pressures.

95. Councils hold cash-backed reserves (useable cash funds as opposed to reserves which are the product of accounting practice) which are available to

finance service expenditure, to ensure stability in cash flow, to build up funds for predicted costs pressures, and as a contingency for unforeseen expenditure. The overall level of reserves increased by £174 million to £1.86 billion at 31 March 2013.

96. Within the overall figure, general fund balances totalled £1.05 billion. Councils earmark these reserves for reasons including devolved school management, workforce change or voluntary redundancy and corporate improvement programmes. Earmarked reserves increased by £170 million to £743 million at 31 March 2013. The remaining reserves are deemed unearmarked or 'free'. The level of 'free' reserves has fallen for the first time in recent years, from £334 million at 31 March 2012 to £312 million at 31 March 2013, a reduction of 6.7 per cent.

97. The amounts in cash-backed reserves are substantial and we remain of the view that more needs to be done to provide more information on why reserves are held, how this fits with the council's overall financial strategy and how they will be used. Councillors in particular need good information about movements in earmarked funds, to assist their full understanding of their council's overall financial position.

98. While the short-term (this year and next) financial position is relatively stable, councils are identifying medium-term funding gaps and need to make substantial savings, at least over the next four years. Few councils have longer-term financial plans, beyond a four-year period, which identify gaps and how these will be addressed, with full explanations of the assumptions and risks under-pinning projections.

99. More work is also needed in these longer-term financial plans to show the links between finances, workforce and assets, to build a complete picture of how the overall resource will be applied and the connections between resources.

100. As indicated, there is some evidence that reserves are being used in the short term to narrow funding gaps. However, this is not sustainable because reserves can only be used once and can not support recurring expenditure.

101. In terms of annual budgets, we are encouraged by the extent to which councils are engaging with the public, employees and other key stakeholders, sometimes with the assistance of external researchers. This helps build a better understanding of the council's financial position and the choices that have to be made within available budgets. Particularly, within councils, it helps further reinforce awareness of costs and the need to make the most of available resources.

102. There is also evidence of councils developing a priority-based approach to budgets, which is an alternative to the traditional, incremental approach to budget-setting. It involves a clear understanding of how services contribute to the council's strategic priorities, developing options for services and agreeing options which are prioritised to achieve particular outcomes.

103. Following our previous reports on *Scotland's public finances*[10] we have collected further information on how councils are addressing the financial pressures in budgets. We will summarise key issues in a report later this year, in advance of the next budget cycle. This will include materials for councillors to assist their consideration of 2015/16 budgets.

104. We will continue our focus on other key aspects of councils' finances. In our previous overview report we noted that councils determine programmes for capital investment in accordance with the prudential code, which supports local authorities' capital investment decisions.

105. In the period since the code was introduced in 2004, the overall level of net indebtedness increased by around 45 per cent, from £9.1 billion to £13.3 billion. Bearing in mind local circumstances, there is wide variation across councils in the change in net indebtedness in the years since the prudential code came into effect. We will review the position, including the use of the code, as part of our audit of council treasury management and borrowing.

Achieving more from partnership working requires strong shared leadership supported by more effective governance

106. Community planning is the process by which councils and other public bodies work together, with local communities, businesses and voluntary groups, to plan and deliver better services and improve the lives of people who live in Scotland. It was given a statutory basis by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 (the Act). That Act, and the statutory guidance supporting it, sought to establish community planning as the key means of leading and coordinating partnership working at the regional, local and neighbourhood level.

107. The Scottish Government and COSLA reviewed community planning and Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) in 2012. They then published a joint Statement of Ambition. This sets out high expectations for community planning and puts the community planning process at the heart of public service reform Exhibit 11. It also emphasises that all partners are collectively accountable for delivering services.

108. The Statement of Ambition is clear that significant changes to improve community planning are needed to respond to the challenges of reducing public finances while demand for services increases. CPPs also need to be equipped to reduce the stark variations in outcomes experienced by different communities.

Exhibit 11
Expectations of community planning:

- taking the lead role in securing integrated public services

- focusing more on potential problems and identifying ways to prevent them happening

- ensuring public bodies continue to improve the ways in which they manage and provide services

- achieving better outcomes for communities, such as better health and lower crime

- providing the foundation for effective partnership working, within which wider reform initiatives will happen.

Source: Audit Scotland

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109. There is now a renewed focus on community planning which provides a clear opportunity to deliver a step change in performance. This will require strong and sustained shared leadership from CPP boards.

110. Partnership working is now generally well established and many examples of joint working are making a difference for specific communities and groups across Scotland. But overall, and ten years after community planning was introduced, CPPs are not able to show that they have had a significant impact in delivering improved outcomes across Scotland.

111. *Improving community planning in Scotland* (PDF) 🖵 identified key issues from the CPP audits carried out in 2013. To implement the Statement of Ambition successfully we concluded that CPPs need to:

- focus more clearly on where they can make the greatest difference in meeting the complex challenges facing their communities

- ensure that all partners align their service and financial planning arrangements with community planning priorities

- significantly improve their governance and accountability, and planning and performance management arrangements.

112. Community planning is at a crossroads. This offers a significant opportunity to establish a system of leadership, governance and performance that ensures continuous improvement in community planning (Exhibit 12, page 30). This will not be easy. Barriers stand in the way, and this virtuous cycle will only be achieved through a level of sustained leadership that is significantly stronger than we have seen to date.

113. Our other national report work supports our key findings. For example, our report *Housing in Scotland* (PDF) 🖵 recognises that planning arrangements are complicated and have many partners. Councils must demonstrate leadership and work to influence partners. Our report *Maintaining Scotland's Roads: An audit update on councils' progress* (PDF) 🖵 recommends that councils need to work with partners to produce a strategy for developing the best service and structural models to deliver roads maintenance.

Partnerships need to identify and make better use of the overall resources available in their area

114. CPPs need to focus more clearly on where they can make the greatest difference in meeting the complex challenges facing their communities. They need to make their SOAs a true plan for the communities that they serve. They need to show how they are directing the significant public money and other resources available to CPP partners to target inequalities and improve outcomes. SOAs need to specify what will improve, how it will be done, by whom, and when.

115. CPPs also need to ensure that partners align their service and financial planning arrangements with community planning priorities. This means ensuring that budget setting and business planning decisions by CPP partners such as councils and NHS boards take full account of community planning priorities and SOA commitments.

116. The national Community Planning Group agreed that it should focus on getting partners to deploy their resources jointly towards partnership objectives.

171

As a result an Agreement on Joint Working on Community Planning and Resourcing was published in September 2013 (Exhibit 13, page 31). We will review progress during our CPP audits.

Summary and points for action in 2014

- Maintaining good professional working relationships and providing strong political leadership.

- Getting assurance that governance is sound, including where ALEOs are in place.

- Providing stronger leadership of CPPs and working with partners to make the best use of the overall public resources available in the area.

Exhibit 12
A virtuous cycle of continuous improvement in community planning

- Meaningful community consultation
- Working with, and for, communities
- Locality-based planning and service delivery

Effective community consultation and engagement

- SOA as true 'plan for place'
- Improvement targets focused on equalities outcomes
- Shared vision for public service reform driven by the CPP

- Critical review of partnership working and its effectiveness
- Robust self-evaluation by CPPs

Review of outcomes and culture of self-evaluation

Strong shared leadership supported by effective governance

Ambitious shared improvement priorities

- Meaningful, relevant performance data
- Robust challenge and holding to account by CPP boards
- Effective external scrutiny of CPPs

Effective performance management, scrutiny and challenge

Robust planning and alignment of resources to agreed goals

- Partnership prevention plans
- Shared workforce development strategies
- Joint asset planning
- Partner resources directed to agreed improvement areas

Improved outcomes for communities and demonstrable impact of community planning

Source: Audit Scotland

Exhibit 13
Resourcing CPPs – Agreement on joint working

Individually and collectively the relevant partners in each CPP will:

- ensure the SOA is the focal point for the planning and deployment of resources locally

- share budget, investment and resource planning information through the CPP, at an early stage in the decision-making process, including setting out the broad financial parameters they are working to, key milestones, and how resources are already utilised and can further support SOA delivery

- agree how total resources can most effectively be deployed and aligned between partners to achieve the outcomes set out in the agreed SOA and ensure that deployment and alignment in practice

- demonstrate commitment and adherence to this agreement through their engagement with CPPs and in relevant governance and budget-making processes, including final budget documents, delivery plans and subsequent accountability arrangements.

Source: National Community Planning Group

Endnotes
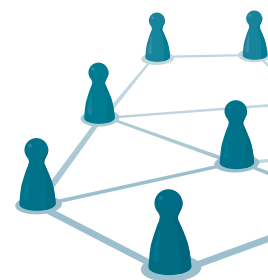
◄ 1 *Early Impacts of Welfare Reform on Rent Arrears - Research Report*, Scottish Housing Regulator, October 2013.

◄ 2 *Housing Impacts of Welfare Reform - Survey of Councils*, COSLA, July 2013.

◄ 3 Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, November 2013.

◄ 4 *Scotland's Councillors 2013, Research Report*, Improvement Service, December 2013.

◄ 5 *2014 Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Overview report*, Improvement Service, March 2014.

◄ 6 *Making Choices: Volume 2: A Practice Guide to Best Value, Procurement and Competitiveness*, Scottish Government, December 2001.

◄ 7 *Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound*, Accounts Commission/COSLA, 1996.

◄ 8 *Managing early departures from the Scottish public sector* (PDF) Audit Scotland, May 2013.

◄ 9 CIPFA statement on the role of the chief finance officer, CIPFA.

◄ 10 *Scotland's public finances: Preparing for the future* (PDF) Audit Scotland, November 2009 and *Scotland's public finances: Addressing the challenges* (PDF) Audit Scotland, August 2011.

Appendix 1
Resource use in 2013 – summary
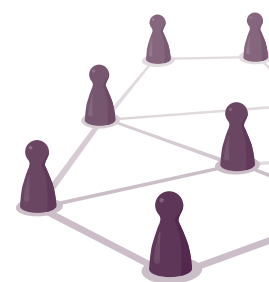
Finance

- Total income was £18.6 billion (Exhibit 14), the same as in 2011/12. The Scottish Government provided around 80 per cent of total income through revenue and capital funding and the redistribution of non-domestic rates.

- Councils spent £20.8 billion, £18.5 billion on services and £2.3 billion on capital.

- Spending on services was £18.5 billion (Exhibit 14), a one per cent reduction on 2011/12 (£18.7 billion). The proportion of spend on individual services was broadly the same as 2011/12.

Exhibit 14
Council income and expenditure 2012/13

General revenue funding from government £7.8bn

Service fees, charges, other revenue government grants and housing rents £5.5bn

Council tax £2.3bn

Non-domestic rates £2.3bn

Capital grants & contributions £0.7bn

Income £18.6 billion

Education £5.4bn

Social work £3.9bn

Housing £3.4bn

Roads, environment, culture and planning £3.3bn

Other services and operating expenditure £1.7bn

Police and fire & rescue services £0.8bn

Expenditure £18.5 billion

Source: Audit Scotland

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- Spending on capital assets was around £2.3 billion, three per cent less than 2011/12 (£2.4 billion) and around ten per cent less than planned (£2.6 billion). Three-quarters of councils spent less than they planned.

- Useable cash-backed reserves increased by £174 million (over ten per cent), they totalled £1.86 billion at 31 March 2013. Within that General Fund balances increased by £147 million to £1.05 billion at 31 March 2013. The amounts earmarked for specific purposes increased significantly by £170 million to £743 million at 31 March 2013.

- The unearmarked portion of council General Fund balances reduced by £22 million, around seven per cent, to £312 million (Exhibit 15). This is the first time in recent years that there has been a reduction in unearmarked balances.

- Net indebtedness has increased. From a level of £9.1 billion in 2003/04 net indebtedness has increased by around 45 per cent to £13.3 billion at 31 March 2013 (£12.9 billion at 31 March 2012).

Exhibit 15

Earmarked and unearmarked General Fund balances

Percentage increase or decrease on previous year
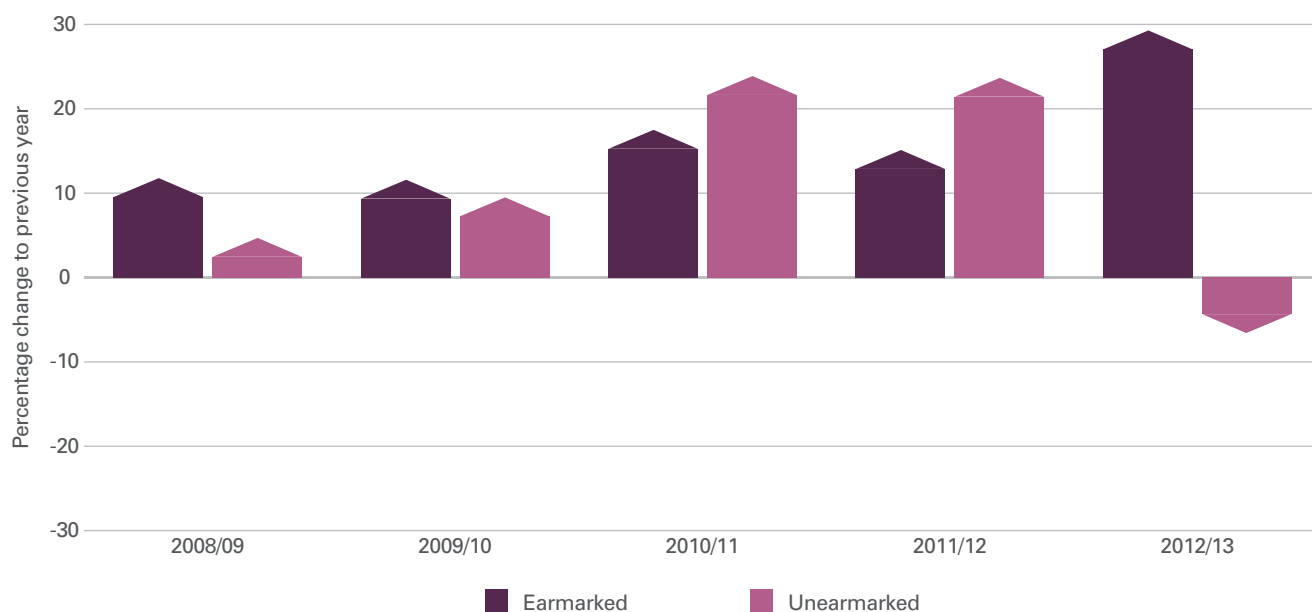
Source: Audit Scotland

Assets

- **Councils held assets worth £38 billion at 31 March 2013**. This is a slight increase in the balance sheet value of assets of £37.4 billion at 31 March 2012 and reflects changes in valuation and accounting adjustments, in addition to spend on assets.

- **Major capital projects generally cost significantly more than councils estimate**. An audit of major capital projects reported that only two-fifths of projects were completed within initial cost estimates. Estimating improved significantly as projects advanced, plans became clearer and contracts were awarded.

Procurement

- **Councils spend over £5 billion annually in procuring goods** to deliver public services, around half of the total for the whole Scottish public sector.

- **Most spending is on social care (23 per cent) and construction/construction materials (30 per cent)**, spending on goods and services is diverse.

- **Four councils have still to achieve the 50 per cent target level of procurement capability** that the Public Procurement Reform Board set for all public bodies. This is based on the results of the 2013 Procurement Capability Assessment.

Workforce

- **Workforce numbers are falling**. In March 2013 there were 204,500 whole-time equivalent staff employed by councils. In 2009 there were 228,300 whole-time equivalent staff but numbers have fallen by an average of 2.6 per cent each year. This is in part due to the transfer of staff to ALEOs. In the four year period since March 2009, around 9,000 staff transferred to ALEOs. Councils forecast that numbers will continue to fall over the next two years.

- **Staff costs are at least £6 billion**, one-third of the £18.5 billion spent on providing services.

- **Councils paid out £32 million on equal pay claims** in 2012/13. Council balance sheets identify future payments of £73.2 million. Twenty-three from 32 councils have identified the need for potential future payments but their uncertainty means they can not yet be quantified.

- **Sickness absence increased in over two-thirds of councils** in 2012/13. Overall sickness absence rates were 6.6 days for teachers (6.2 the previous year) and 10.9 days for other council staff (10.4 the previous year). These increases go against the trend of recent years.

Appendix 2
Checklist and resources
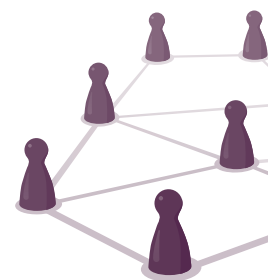
Checklist to support the local government overview report

Do I have a good understanding of the changing context in my council around:		
• financial and service pressures?	Y	N
• the impact of police and fire reforms?	Y	N
• the impact of welfare reform?	Y	N
• the integration of health and social care?	Y	N
Do I understand my role and responsibilities and those of officers?	Y	N
Am I supported in my role?	Y	N
Do I have access to, and take up, appropriate development opportunities?	Y	N
Do officers provide me with performance information which is clear and concise and enables me to judge how well we are doing?	Y	N
Does the information I receive cover:		
• service performance?	Y	N
• service costs?	Y	N
• customer satisfaction?	Y	N
• trend data?	Y	N
• benchmarking data?	Y	N
• targets and outcomes?	Y	N

Question	Assessment	
Do I have good understanding of performance and value for money across the council?	Y	N
Do we, as a council, provide clear information to the public on our performance?	Y	N
Am I provided with options and supporting information to support the decisions on services and capital projects that I have to take?	Y	N
Do I receive cost information that helps me make decisions?	Y	N
Does the way our services are designed and delivered meet people's needs?	Y	N
Am I clear on our objectives, purpose and role when involved with ALEOs?	Y	N
Do I give direction over aims and priorities for charges (in areas where the council has discretion)?	Y	N
Do I understand the non-financial contribution of charges, eg to behaviours and service uptake?	Y	N
Providing strong leadership and governance to support change (paragraphs 65 – 116)		
Is my relationship with other councillors, and with officers, professional and constructive?	Y	N
How effective am I in contributing to constructive challenge and debate at meetings?		
How well do we work together as councillors, and with officers, to deliver the best outcomes for our communities?		
Do I receive information on early retirals along with associated costs and savings?	Y	N
How effective is the Audit Committee (or equivalent)? Is it challenging to officers?		
Do I know who the council's statutory officers are and what they do?	Y	N
How well is the council working with the leaders of community planning partners to deliver better outcomes for communities?		
Are we working with community planning partners to deploy resources jointly in our partnership objectives?	Y	N

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Useful resources

Councillors may find the following publications in our 'how councils work' series, along with their checklists useful. These publications explore some of the issues highlighted throughout this report in more detail.

Roles and working relationships: are you getting it right? (PDF)

Arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right? (PDF)

Using cost information to improve performance: are you getting it right? (PDF)

Managing performance: are you getting it right? (PDF)

Major capital investment in councils: good practice guide (PDF)

Charging for services: are you getting it right? (PDF)

Options appraisal: are you getting it right? (PDF)

An overview of local government in Scotland 2014

This report is available in PDF and RTF formats, along with a podcast summary at:
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

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PART 1 – Understanding the changing context and the crucial role of councillors

Key action points in 2014	Lead Officer(s)	Current NAC Position	Planned NAC Actions
Maintaining a clear understanding of the financial position.	Laura Friel	The Council reviews its budget annually for the forthcoming 3 years to ensure it plans effectively for the medium term. In addition, the Council has its long term financial strategy which was approved by Council In May 2013; this ensures visibility of the longer term financial challenges.	A refresh of the long term financial strategy will be carried out in 2015.
Understanding the public reform agenda, including the impact of welfare reform.	Laura Friel	The Council has been proactive in its approach to welfare reform, establishing a corporate welfare reform working group and allocating resources to mitigate as far as possible the impact of welfare reform on residents and the Council. The Council has made a public commitment to building community capacity, through the CPP and Education and Skills. Work has been carried out to provide training and guidance to facilitate community-driven development.	A report was presented to Cabinet on 3rd June 2014 which outlines the planned action over the period 2014 to 2017.
Preparing for changes in Health and Social Care.	Iona Colvin	The Shadow Health & Social Care Partnership has been established, overseen by a Shadow Integration Board to which the Council has delegated responsibility for all social work/care services for adults and children, together with Criminal Justice social work. NHS Ayrshire & Arran has similarly delegated responsibility for community health services. The Council and the NHS have jointly appointed the Partnership director. The Council has developed a programme plan with its partners NHS Ayrshire & Arran and the other Ayrshire local authorities which will lead to the establishment of an Integration Joint Board from 1 April 2015.	Note – most of the actions are joint actions with the NHS and other partners: • Jointly appoint with the NHS the Partnership senior management team by September 2014 • Review decisions already taken to ensure that they are compliant with the Regulations currently being drafted and consulted on by Scottish Government. • Develop the Scheme of Integration • Develop Strategic Plan • Keep in view the impact of the creation of the Partnership on other Council services (e.g. support services)

Key action points in 2014	Lead Officer(s)	Current NAC Position	Planned NAC Actions
Keeping up to date through training and development of elected members.	Andrew Fraser	Elected Members are provided with CPD support via internal, external and online interventions. These are in the form of: • Learning events (internal) - a variety of development topics are delivered in short sessions by Council Officers throughout the calendar year. • Masterclasses (external) – a variety of topics are delivered by the Improvement Service in venues across Scotland. • Group and 1-2-1 Coaching IT development sessions (internal) – delivered by council officers focusing on current IT systems and equipment. • Online (external and internal) – E-learning modules and guidance documents and information are available online via the Council's intranet site and e-learning platform. In addition to this information is also available on the Improvement Service's knowledge hub site. In addition to this, all Members are offered the opportunity to participate in '360 degree' feedback and development discussion sessions.	All of the CPD activity mentioned in the current position will continue; however, this will continue to evolve both in terms of topics covered and delivery methods.

PART 2 – Meeting user demands and the financial challenges

Key action points in 2014	Lead Officer(s)	Current NAC Position	Planned NAC Actions
Appraising the options for delivering services and charging for services.	Laura Friel	As part of its approach to developing services and managing the financial challenge the Council faces, alternative service delivery options are considered. An annual review of charging is carried out by the Council.	Work is in progress to conduct a fundamental review of charging across the Council.
Requiring good-quality cost and performance information for decisions and scrutiny.	Laura Friel	The Council has robust and transparent financial management arrangements in place with the financial implications of all decisions being clear. The Council is committed to improving its performance and underlying performance information. This is reflected in the work which has been carried out in partnership with Solace and the LGBF. North Ayrshire's performance report, including its PPR provides information on how it performs relative to other local authorities.	As part of its commitment to continuous improvement the Council continues to develop its financial and performance information.

Key action points in 2014	Lead Officer(s)	Current NAC Position	Planned NAC Actions
Making better use of benchmarking to support service improvement and public reporting.	Andrew Fraser	a) The Council is involved in several Benchmarking groups including: • Education Scotland Comparator Authorities/Schools • Scottish Housing Best Value Network • Scottish Rent Arrears Forum • Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) • SOCITM Benchmarking Club • Scottish Community Care Benchmarking Network • Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) Performance Networks b) The Council also actively makes use of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators (efficiency, and unit cost measures). Service Plans contain a broad and balanced set of indicators covering costs, quality and customer results. In addition, performance on the LGBF indicators is reported through six monthly Service Plan Performance reports and the Council's annual Public Performance Report. The Council also demonstrates a strong commitment to using the LGBF by participating in various Improvement Service (IS) task groups. c) During 2013/14, Services including Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Social Services undertook additional Benchmarking exercises.	The Performance Management Update 2014/15 to Cabinet on the 29 April 2014 advised of the Performance Management Forum Action Plan theme of "*Promoting a culture of learning from best practice*". Work is ongoing with all Services to enhance the Council's approach, including identifying those areas where benchmarking exercises will be undertaken in the future. In addition, the Council will continue its involvement with the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

PART 3 – Providing strong leadership and governance to support change

Key action points in 2014	Lead Officer(s)	Current NAC Position	Planned NAC Actions
Maintaining good professional working relationships and providing strong political leadership.	Andrew Fraser	The Council's governance set-up of Cabinet with scrutiny through the Audit and Scrutiny Committees provides clear decisions with adequate scrutiny. Each member of Cabinet has responsibility for a portfolio of services allowing a close working relationship to develop between officers and Portfolio Holders. The Council has established 2 cross-party Policy Panels to consider developing issues. Group Leaders meetings and working groups also allow the development of policies through consensus away from the political limelight.	Enhancement of the Council's Transformation and Neighbourhood Planning process to develop a data led approach to decision-making, informed by fact, minimising the risk of decisions being taken for political advantage.
Getting assurance that governance is sound, including where arm's length external organisations (ALEOs) are in place.	Andrew Fraser	A review of the Council's governance documents during 2013/14 is almost complete. Audit Scotland's May 2014 report found no significant issues with the governance of ALEOs.	Final adoption of new Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation and further work on joint communication and risk involving ALEOs.

Key action points in 2014	Lead Officer(s)	Current NAC Position	Planned NAC Actions
Providing stronger leadership of CPPs and working with partners to make the best use of the overall public resources available in the area.	Elma Murray	Ongoing delivery of SOA 2013-17 in partnership with improvements through CPP Audit Improvement Plan. All CPP partners are committed to the SOA outcomes and have referenced CPP and SOA responsibilities within their governance structures, strategic plans and risk registers. Structural changes implemented within Community Planning Partnership to ensure that we are best placed to achieve the SOA outcomes: • Membership of Strategic Management Team amended to include Third Sector representation; • Establishment of the new Children's Services Strategic Partnership; • Remit and membership of the RIPE (Research, Information, Performance and Evaluation) group has been improved. Two CPP Board Development sessions held. These considered the specific themes of organisational development and joint resource planning along with the sharing of information about partners. Significant progress made in the CPP's Neighbourhood Planning approach. Areas of Family Resilience reports for each of the 6 neighbourhoods completed with a broad range of socio-economic information included. Neighbourhood forums undertaken in each area to engage with local communities and consider the reports. Partner Resource Mapping group established to estimate total service expenditure for CPP partner organisations across the six neighbourhoods and aligned to SOA.	Progress resource mapping work to develop this information into a viable planning tool and the adoption of an outcomes-based budgeting approach from which to address our SOA commitments. Support the proposed transition of community justice to Community Planning. Agree a CPP Organisational Development Plan. Provide feedback to six neighbourhood areas on engagement exercise. Consider potential governance models for the Neighbourhood Planning Approach. Undertake a Partnership Healthcheck for the CPP in conjunction with the Improvement Service

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 8

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Risk Management Annual Report 2013/14**
Purpose:	To inform Elected Members of work carried out across the Council in relation to risk management during 2013/14 and future planned work.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet agrees to note (a) the content of the Annual Report, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and (b) progress being made in developing the Council's approach to risk management.

1.   **Introduction**

1.1   North Ayrshire Council is committed to ensuring that it responds to and manages the challenges impacting on the authority. The Council recognises that a certain amount of risk is inevitable if it is to achieve its objectives.

1.2   A risk management framework which includes the identification of key risks and mitigating actions through the service planning and budgeting process has been established to support services and inform decision-making.

1.3   The Council's Strategic Risk Register for 2013/14 was reported to the Cabinet on 26 March 2013 and was also reported to the Audit Committee on 27 May 2013.

1.4   This annual report provides an overview of risk management activities undertaken during 2013/14, which contribute to improving the risk control environment, and also details further work which will be carried out during 2014/15.

2.   **Current Position**

2.1   The Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1. The report details activity undertaken by Services linking back to the 2013/14 strategic risks and aims to raise the profile of risk management and the benefits gained from having a structured and integrated approach.

2.2   Some examples of actions which have been implemented during 2013/14 are:

- managing the implementation of the various welfare reforms through the Welfare Reform Act 2012;
- developing a 10 year Financial Strategy;
- continuing to deliver the Economic Development and Regeneration strategy;
- continuing to develop the 'early intervention and prevention' approach;
- preparing for the integration of health and social care services.

Information on each of these and other examples is provided within the Annual Report.

2.3   Some of the further actions being implemented during 2014/15 are:

- the further development of the Council's business continuity arrangements;
- risk management and business continuity awareness training for all elected members;
- further development of a risk management framework for the Community Planning Partnership.

3.   Proposals

3.1   It is proposed that the Cabinet notes (a) the content of the attached annual risk management report, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report and (b) progress being made in developing the Council's approach to risk management.

4.   Implications

Financial Implications

4.1   None.

Human Resource Implications

4.2   None.

Legal Implications

4.3   None.

Equality Implications

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4.4   None.

        Environmental Implications

4.5   None.

        Implications for Key Priorities

4.6   Risk Management activity contributes towards Core Objective 4 (Operating more efficiently and effectively) in the Council Plan 2012-2017.
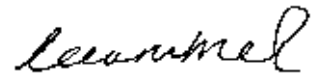
5.   Consultations

5.1   Consultation has taken place with the Corporate Risk Management Group on the content of the annual report.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   Significant action has been taken across the Council during 2013/14 to help manage the key strategic risks which the authority faces.

6.2   Further work to embed a culture of risk management across the organisation will continue during 2014/15.

LAURA FRIEL
Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :
For further information please contact Paul Doak, Senior Manager (Internal Audit, Risk and Performance) on 01294-324561.

Background Papers

None.

North Ayrshire Council
Risk Management Annual Report

2013/2014

Version:	FINAL
Date:	04/06/2014
Author:	Paul Doak
Classification:	Public

North Ayrshire Council

Contents

2

Introduction and Background

North Ayrshire Council is committed to ensuring that it responds to and manages the risks impacting on the authority. The Council recognises that a certain amount of risk is inevitable if the organisation is to achieve its objectives. A Risk Management Strategy has been established to support Services in managing these risks, ensuring that they are 'risk aware' rather than 'risk averse' and are able to identify opportunities that can enhance Service provision.

The Strategy provides a framework through which a consistent approach to the management of risk can be maintained. The framework is embedded within the Service Planning and Budgeting process and allows Services, and the Council, to identify the significant risks impacting on the authority.

The most significant risks are identified through the Council's Strategic Risk Register. The register identifies the Council's top risks, recognising the challenges facing the authority and demonstrating the arrangements in place to manage these risks. The register forms part of a larger governance process with additional risks and issues identified through Service Plans, Audit Reports and Project Plans.

The aim of risk management is to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of risk by identifying and controlling risks to the Authority by taking appropriate actions. If risk is to be managed appropriately, and Services are aware of these risks, risk management can contribute positively towards the organisation's decision making processes, making the Council more innovative and effective in its approach to service delivery.

Purpose of Report

The Cabinet received a detailed report on the Council's strategic risk register in March 2013 and this information was also provided to the Audit Committee in May 2013. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of actions undertaken during 2013/14 to help mitigate against the Council's top strategic risks.

The report details activity undertaken by Services - linking back to the strategic risks - and aims to raise the profile of risk management and the benefits gained from having a structured and integrated approach.

The risk score is noted against each of the risks and page 9 of the report details the risk matrix which is utilised in identifying the score.

In addition, the report details areas for further development by the Risk and Insurance team during 2014/15 which will further strengthen the Council's risk management framework and help provide assurance that effective arrangements are in place.

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Strategic Risks

Welfare Reform (2013/14 risk score = 18)

The UK Government's Welfare Reform Act 2012 aims to improve work incentives, simplify the benefits system and reduce administration costs and the overall cost of welfare benefit. The Act contains a range of welfare reforms that will have significant consequences for all benefit claimants, the wider local community and for the delivery of Council Services and related strategies. The risk to be managed by the Council is the impact this change will have on local communities and the demand for Council services.

In 2012, the Council established a 'Welfare Reform Working Group' with a remit to identify, co-ordinate and respond to the implications of the reforms, keeping Members and the Corporate Management Team updated. During 2013/14, Services delivered the welfare reform action plan, which included the implementation of the spare room subsidy, the Scottish Welfare Fund, Council Tax Reduction scheme, Benefit Cap, significant growth in Discretionary Housing Payments and the processing of new claims for Personal Independence Payments, as well as measures to improve work chances for those affected by the changes.

Some reforms have still to be implemented, including Universal Credit. This will continue to progress during 2014/15, but the Council is not currently expected to be involved until 2016.

Financial Environment (2013/14 risk score = 18)

The risk is that the Council will require to take increasingly difficult and challenging decisions, potentially operating with increasing levels of risk. This, together with the increasing financial uncertainty associated with the global economic downturn and demographic pressures, impacts on the ability of services to meet need against a backdrop of reducing resources and increasing demand.

During 2013/14, Finance and Corporate Support developed a 10 year financial plan for the Council's General Fund revenue budget; this was approved by the Council in May 2013 and has been developed to steer the Council through the current economic climate, supporting the delivery of key priorities at a time of reducing resources. The primary objective of the financial strategy is to ensure longer term financial sustainability.

The Council continued to develop and implement a programme of transformational change to assist with meeting the financial challenges. Progress during 2013/14 included the initial development of Outcome Based Budgeting and the adoption of a 'Lean' approach to process review, with training delivered to key individuals across the Council.

Economic Inequalities (2013/14 risk score = 18)

North Ayrshire has for a sustained period experienced a continued increase in the level of unemployment amongst certain groups and number of residents receiving key benefits. The economic downturn makes the interventions required by the Council, to halt and reverse this trend, both more difficult and of greater importance.

During 2013/14, the Council continued to deliver its Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy. This included the development of a 'one-stop shop' approach to account management with key local businesses and the introduction of 'Team North Ayrshire'. This new business support offering within North Ayrshire is unique within local authorities and continues to develop to

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increase business competitiveness through the development of an international strategy, investment in new flexible forms of funding, a sector specific engagement model and the development of an offer specifically focussed on the stimulation of innovation and R&D activities.

Town centre regeneration has continued across North Ayrshire, most notably in Irvine, Saltcoats and Kilbirnie.

The Employability & Skills section has continued to deliver on its employability programmes including placing 180 young people in modern apprenticeships within the Council and 21 graduate interns in place across services, helping to provide training and employment opportunities for local people. Work continues with the long term unemployed and those furthest away from the jobs market with programmes delivered in the most deprived wards. The Rocket Science Review in January 2014 provided the basis for the development of pilot programmes under each of the five work streams recommended in the report. These programmes are designed to support the business growth agenda and to tackle unemployment rate across all age groups of 5.2% at May 2014. This approach is in advance of securing European Funding to deliver a larger focused programmes.

Health Inequalities (2013/14 risk score = 15)

Communities in North Ayrshire have persistently poorer health compared to Scotland as a whole and the gap is increasing. There are also significant differences in the health of people living in the wealthier parts of North Ayrshire compared to its more deprived areas. Life expectancy in the most deprived areas is 15 years less than the more affluent communities. Health inequality is closely linked to poverty, employment and people's earliest experiences as children. Drug and alcohol misuse is also a major factor. The risk to the Council is that we fail to reduce levels of health inequality within North Ayrshire.

During 2013/14, the Council continued to develop its 'early intervention and prevention' approach to improve outcomes for all children and young people. Early years centres across the area have developed a high quality service for children and families, providing targeted support for parents. Work continued to develop literacy and reading skills through the delivery of the 'Bookbug' programme within libraries and work continues to increase awareness of the benefits of play. 14 Healthy Start Clubs are in place across North Ayrshire.

The delivery of the integrated Health and Social Care Partnership, covered in more detail below, will also assist with addressing health inequalities through the introduction of a more 'joined-up' approach to service delivery.

Integration of Health and Social Care (2013/14 risk score = 15)

The integration of health and social care will change the way NHS Ayrshire and Arran and the Council work together and in partnership with the third and voluntary sectors. These changes aim to ensure that patients, service users and carers receive an improved and more integrated service. The integration of services will require a step change in partnership working at a time when resources are stretched. Differences in culture, historic structures and priorities will require to be addressed in order for the Health and Social Care Partnership to achieve real improvements for service users and patients.

The Council and NHS Ayrshire & Arran have formally delegated operational responsibility for partnership services to the North Ayrshire Shadow Integration Board, which succeeded the Transition Integration Board on 1 April 2014. Arrangements for widening the membership of the

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Shadow Integration Board to meet legislative requirements have been agreed. In North Ayrshire, 2014/15 will be a "shadow year" for the partnership, with integration taking full effect from 1 April 2015.

During 2013/14, the Strategic Alliance integration workplan continued to be progressed through a number of pan-Ayrshire workstreams. Partners have agreed the principles for lead partnership arrangements for pan-Ayrshire services. Some services will require further review and this has been programmed for the "shadow year" 2014/15.

The Director of the partnership was appointed in November 2013, interim management arrangements have been agreed and it is intended that an integrated management team will be in place by September 2014.

Strategic Workforce issues (2013/14 risk score = 15)

The Council is making changes to the services provided, impacting on the size and experience of the workforce. The need to develop additional skills and capacity within the workforce to meet new challenges is recognised. Organisational Development has a key role to ensure the skill sets, knowledge and capabilities are in place to deliver the reformed Service. There is an overarching corporate risk that change management activities which are core to the Council's future delivery models and long-term financial sustainability fail to deliver and potentially disengage employees. Additionally, required budget savings in relation to workforce costs may present a significant risk to employee relations.

Work on the development of a proposed 'People Management Strategy' was deferred pending the introduction of an 'employer brand' for North Ayrshire Council. However, HR and OD implemented the action plan which arose from the employee engagement survey which took place in 2012 and undertook a follow-up 'pulse survey' towards the end of 2013/14 to monitor any improvements which have taken place. Results from this will be available in summer 2014.

During 2013/14, the Council continued to implement its Office Rationalisation Strategy, reducing the number of operational buildings while providing a more modern environment for staff. Bridgegate House was completed and fully occupied. Work on the phased refurbishment of Cunninghame House began in March 2014 and proposals in relation to Saltcoats Town Hall were approved by Cabinet during the same month.

Information Governance (initial 2013/14 risk score = 12, rising to 15)

The Council's Information Management and ICT Strategies recognise the need for flexible and enabling service delivery support and also the need to establish Information Governance, protect critical information and comply with information security requirements and standards. Furthermore, the Council requires to meet its obligations in relation to statutory requirements of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011. The key risk to the authority relates to the loss of public confidence associated with the loss of personal or sensitive data. Associated financial risks may also be experienced by the authority through fines and service disruption.

The Council has a range of policies in place around information governance; however, an Internal Audit review during 2013/14 expressed significant concern at the implementation of these across the Council. The risk was reassessed by the Corporate Risk Management Group in November 2013 and the risk scoring increased from 12 to 15 to reflect the continuing and increasing challenges being faced by the authority in managing data.

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During 2013/14, the responsibility for records management, freedom of information and data protection was integrated within Democratic and Administration Services, with funding for new posts agreed by Cabinet in December 2013. Recruitment to these posts remains ongoing.

Community Capacity Building (2013/14 risk score = 12)

The development of community capacity and appropriate support mechanisms to allow local communities to determine their own objectives and have their voices heard in the planning and delivery of services is a key priority of North Ayrshire Council. The ability of communities and organisations to do this varies and the Council is committed to providing the appropriate support, according to local need, to ensure that communities are able to achieve their potential in this challenging economic climate. The risk facing the authority is that that varying levels of support are required to empower community groups and organisations across the authority to achieve their aspirations.

North Ayrshire Council has made a public commitment to community capacity building, through the Community Planning Partnership and through the Education and Skills vision and associated service plan. During 2013/14, Education and Skills continued to work with partners to develop and deliver appropriate training and guidance sessions to facilitate community driven development, including supporting social enterprises. The service also provided advice, guidance and assistance to help identified groups produce sustainability plans and helped to increase the capacity of individuals and communities to develop "asset transfer plans".

In relation to volunteering and in partnership with TACT (The Ayrshire Community Trust), Education and Skills has further strengthened and improved the volunteering experience across North Ayrshire. Staff are continuing to support volunteers from community associations by identifying volunteering tasks and identifying new volunteers and are engaging with community development staff to ensure there is no duplication.

Continued Viability of Private Care Providers (2013/14 risk score = 10)

A significant volume of care for adults and older people, particularly in relation to residential and nursing care, is delivered on the Council's behalf by independent care providers. There is perceived to be a lack of financial stability in the sector. Failure to provide and maintain standards will impact upon the welfare of vulnerable people and may expose the authority to increased internal and external scrutiny. In the event of a financial failure on the part of an independent provider the Council may have to step in, incurring additional cost, or may have to arrange for residents to be moved to alternative care facilities. The process of moving is a known risk factor, especially for older people.

The Council's tendering process for providers requires an assessment of financial viability prior to selection. During 2013/14, the monitoring process was strengthened further through a review of the contract management framework and an update of the processes and procedures to include bi-annual provider self-assessment and quarterly reporting on Care Inspectorate grades and care deficiencies.

The arrangements for continuity planning were the subject of an Internal Audit review which did not recommend any further actions. By the end of 2013/14, this risk was considered to have been mitigated to a sufficient extent such that it no longer features on the strategic risk register in 2014/15.

7

Sustainability, Energy and Waste Management (2013/14 risk score = 9)

The Council has established a vision of a sustainable North Ayrshire, ensuring the environment is enhanced and protected and considering the future implications of our decisions on North Ayrshire and its communities. Commitments under the Single Outcome Agreement, corporate priorities and legislation through UK & Scottish Governments must be met if the council is to maximise savings and efficiencies from this area. The risk to the Council is that it fails to realise these savings and is unable to meet statutory targets.

During 2013/14, the Council continued to implement the Waste Strategy, which will ensure the Council achieves the national and international waste and recycling targets. Actions included continuing to work in partnership with the Clyde Valley Residual Waste Project to procure a long-term residual waste treatment solution for non-recyclable waste; the finalising of an options appraisal report for Arran to assist in the development of a sustainable waste management strategy for the island; the extension of food waste collections throughout the Council area for high flats and communal properties; the completion of drilling works to install a gas pipeline to allow the export of landfill gas to the energy generation compound at the Waste Transfer Station at the opposite side of the A78; and the commencement of new working patterns and waste collection round layouts from 27 January 2014.

The Council has agreed to invest £5million in providing solar panels and on the installation of bio-mass boilers in a number of the main Council buildings. Work also commenced on developing a sustainable energy management strategy for North Ayrshire; the completion of a study is expected by September 2014.

Areas for Further Development During 2014/15

Business Continuity

The Council has established business continuity plans but following recent restructures across Services these plans need to be reviewed. Initial work on revising the Council's Business Continuity Strategy and associated templates was progressed during 2013/14; these will be further developed and relevant training provided to Services during 2014/15.

Risk Management Training

Training will be provided to elected members to raise awareness of the Council's approach to risk management and business continuity.

Community Planning Partnership Risk Register

The Council prepares an annual Strategic Risk Register which is reported to Cabinet and the Audit Committee. A separate risk register is prepared in relation to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP). During 2014/15 the CPP risk management framework will be revised to ensure that its risk register clearly identifies each individual partner's role in managing the Partnership's shared strategic risks.

Conclusion

This report summarises the key actions undertaken by Council Services to assist with mitigating against the Council's strategic risks during 2013/14 and provides information on additional work to be undertaken during 2014/15 to further strengthen the Council's approach to risk management.

8

THE RISK MATRIX

Services identify risks through a variety of means:

- Strategic Risks identified through the Corporate Management Team;
- Assurance and Improvement Plans;
- Service Plans;
- through the Community Planning Partnership;
- through Internal or External Audits;
- through the Council's Change Programme;
- Risks associated with projects;
- Service delivery.

Once a risk is identified, the risk matrix allows the level of risk to be quantified by considering the likelihood and impact of the risk occurring. The assessment results in a prioritised list of risks, ensuring that limited resources can be allocated to those areas of greatest risk.

When considering the likelihood and impact, Services must be able to demonstrate that the assessments undertaken can be justified and the priority allocated is reasonable. The purpose of the risk matrix and accompanying risk categories are to ensure that assessments undertaken are consistent across Services.

As shown in the matrix below, Impact x Likelihood produces a risk rating.

Likelihood	1 Negligible	2 Marginal	3 Critical	4 Catastrophic
6 very high	6	12	18	24
5 High	5	10	15	20
4 significant	4	8	12	16
3 Low	3	6	9	12
2 Very Low	2	4	6	8
1 Almost Impossible	1	2	3	4

Impact

The scoring assessment provides an indication of the level of risk and identifies those risks where further review of the controls in place should be undertaken.

Green: There is confidence that the risk is being adequately managed and does not present a significant threat to the authority.

Yellow: There is uncertainty over the threat presented and additional consideration of the risk should be undertaken to determine any additional controls required.

Red: A significant level of risk exists and, where possible, additional controls should be established to minimise the likelihood and/or the impact of the risk occurring.

9

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 9

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Maximising Attendance Performance - March 2014 (Quarter 4 Summary)**
Purpose:	This report provides an analysis of sickness absence in Quarter 4 and the Quarterly trend from 2011/12 to 2013/14.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet notes the information contained in the report.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report presents the sickness absence data for Q4 and the final year end position.

2. Current Position

2.1 The whole Council target for maximising attendance performance has been set at 8.1 average days lost per employee for 2013/14. This target represents a reduction of just under 14% of the 2012/13 actual average days lost 9.4.

2.2 The table below shows the average days lost per FTE by Directorate against the quarterly target (Appendix 1 details the complete service breakdown):

	Q4/Jan - Mar 2014			Whole year 2013/14		
	Actual	Target	Variance	Actual	Target	Variance
Democratic & Admin Services	1.5	1.8	-0.3	4.3	7	-2.7
Finance & Corporate Support	2.4	1.8	0.6	7.2	7.3	-0.1
Social Services & Health	3.5	2.3	1.2	13	9.2	3.8
Education & Skills	1.8	1.7	0.1	6.4	6.8	-0.4
Development & Environment	2.8	2.4	0.4	10.7	9.6	1.1
North Ayrshire Total	2.5	2.0	0.5	9	8.1	0.9

There has been an overall increase in sickness absence from 2.4 in Q3 to 2.5 days lost per FTE in Q4 with Social services & Health, Finance & Corporate Support, Education & Skills and Development & Environment failing to achieve targets.

For 2013/14 as a whole both Social Services & Health and Development & Environment failed to achieve their targets

2.3   Cost of Sickness Absence - by Service

The following table shows the pay costs (Excluding employers' on-costs). The calculation applied takes account of half and no pay situations. Replacement costs for the cover of critical posts are not included.

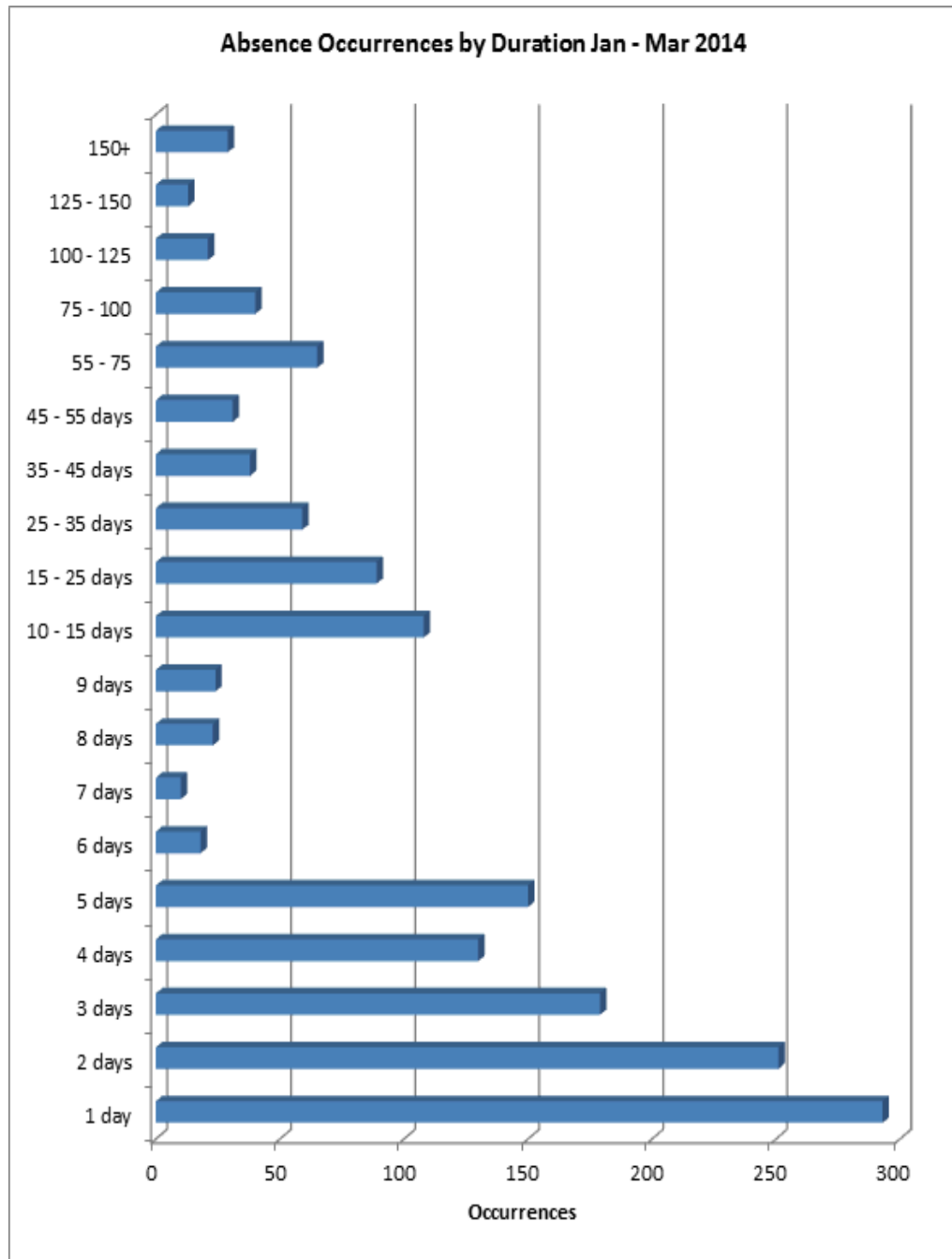| Cost of Absence Apr 2013 - Mar 2014					
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Democratic & Admin Services	5,697	5,063	9,764	15,062	35,586
Develop & Environment	386,084	417,983	376,101	445,371	1,625,539
Education & Skills	604,537	269,574	610,131	618,814	2,103,056
Finance & Corp Support	101,188	90,963	87,445	131,752	411,348
Social Services & Health	486,221	457,874	431,855	416,957	1,792,907
Total	1,583,727	1,241,457	1,515,296	1,627,956	5,968,436

The cost of sickness absence increased by £112,660 in Quarter 3, this is consistent with the 0.1 increase in Days Lost per FTE.

Duration Profile and Absence Trend

The table below shows the duration and scope of absence during Quarter 4:

Absence Profile by Directorate Quarter 4 Jan - Mar 2014					
Directorate	Staff sickness FTE	Occurrences	Average days taken	Days taken in period	Median days
Democratic & Admin Services	12.8	13	14.5	116	3
Develop & Environment	379.2	464	23.7	4,256	5
Education & Skills	475.1	573	15.9	3,958	3
Finance & Corp Support	125	139	12.5	1,135	3
Social Services & Health	322.3	382	21.5	3,877	5
	1,314.3	1,571	17.6	13,342	4

2.4 The chart below profiles the duration of absence between January and March 2014 – it shows the number of occurrences in terms of the days taken:

Absence Occurrences by Duration Jan - Mar 2014

Duration	Occurrences (approx.)
150+	30
125 - 150	15
100 - 125	25
75 - 100	43
55 - 75	67
45 - 55 days	33
35 - 45 days	40
25 - 35 days	62
15 - 25 days	92
10 - 15 days	110
9 days	28
8 days	26
7 days	12
6 days	22
5 days	153
4 days	133
3 days	182
2 days	254
1 day	295

Occurrences

2.5   This chart can be usefully compared to the table below which plots days taken by duration between January and March 2014:

Duration	FTE days taken	Cumulative %
1 day	268	2%
2 days	523	6%
3 days	523	10%
4 days	497	14%
5 days	595	18%
6 days	174	19%
7 days	140	20%
8 days	180	22%
9 days	230	23%
10 - 15 days	1,483	35%
15 - 25 days	1,988	49%
25 - 35 days	1,432	60%
35 - 45 days	1,277	70%
45 - 55 days	1,547	81%
55 - 75	2,485	100%

This demonstrates that in frequency terms short term absence is higher, in actual days taken, it is not as significant – 1 to 5 day absences for example only accounting for 18% of FTE absence days.

2.6   Lastly, the table below shows the monthly pattern of absence from April to March:

| Monthly Absence Profile April 2013 - March 2014				
Month	Staff sickness FTE	Occurrences	Average days taken	Days taken in period
Apr-13	523	621	46.1	4,375
May-13	534	654	46.3	4,986
Jun-13	491	599	48.5	4,567
Jul-13	407	473	57.1	4,637
Aug-13	417	492	54	4,411
Sep-13	529	633	39.6	4,364
Oct-13	576	682	36.8	5,029
Nov-13	633	743	33.5	4,842
Dec-13	510	609	38.5	4,292
Jan-14	580	708	34.6	4,570
Feb-14	569	687	29.8	4,508
Mar-14	530	634	28.3	4,449

2.7 Workforce Absence Profile

The table below shows sickness absence for the period by Employee Type:

Absence Duration by Employee Type Q4/Jan - Mar 2014					
Employee Type	Occurrences	Staff FTE	Average days taken	Days taken in period	Median days
APT&C General	820	712	17.4	6,792	4
Manual Worker	457	336	28.4	4,721	5
Teachers	294	266	10.3	1,830	3
	1,571	**1,314**	**18.7**	**13,342**	**4**

This shows that manual workers have a longer duration of absence both in Average days taken (28.4) and Median value (5)

2.8 The graph below charts the FTE absence days taken in the period per 1000 employees for absences between 10-15 days and 55-75 days demonstrating again that manual workers have more long term absence. It also shows that teachers have taken the least long term absence:

208
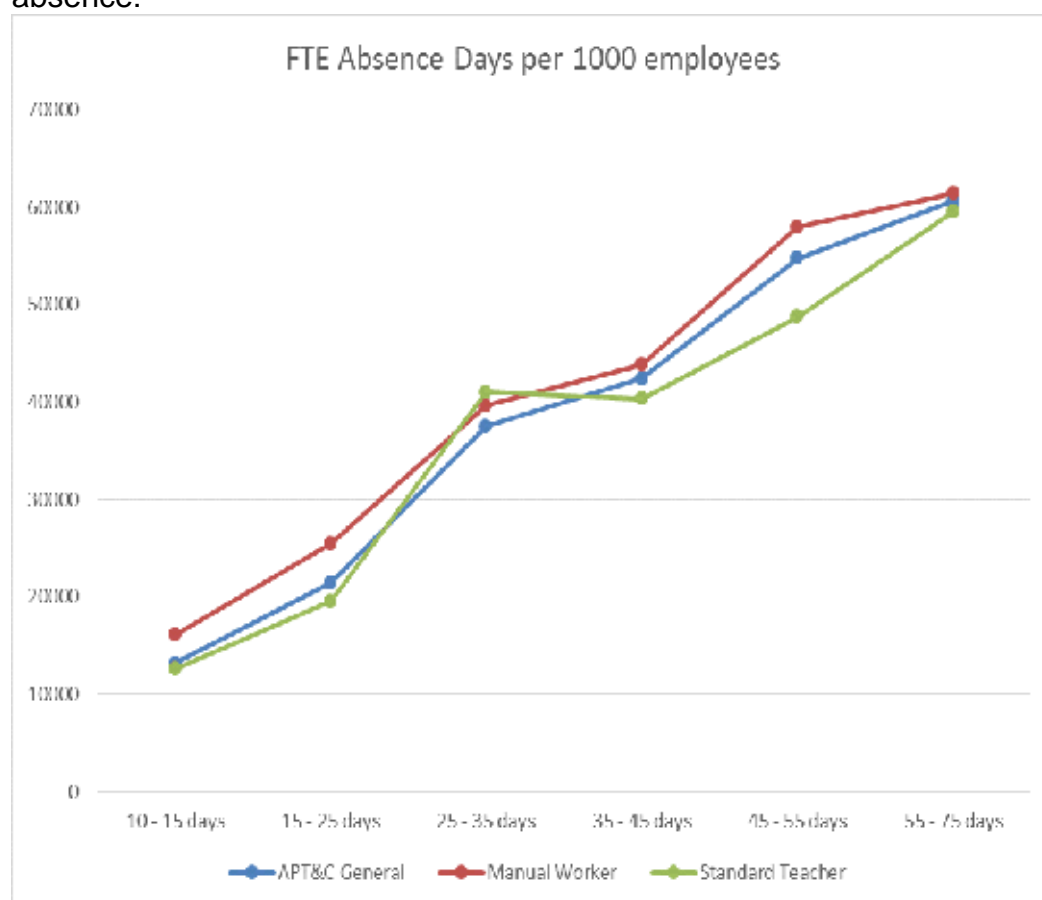
2.9   The following graphs chart the trend of Occurrences, Average days taken and Days taken by Employee Type by Quarter from 11/12 to 13/14:

Average Duration by Employee Type
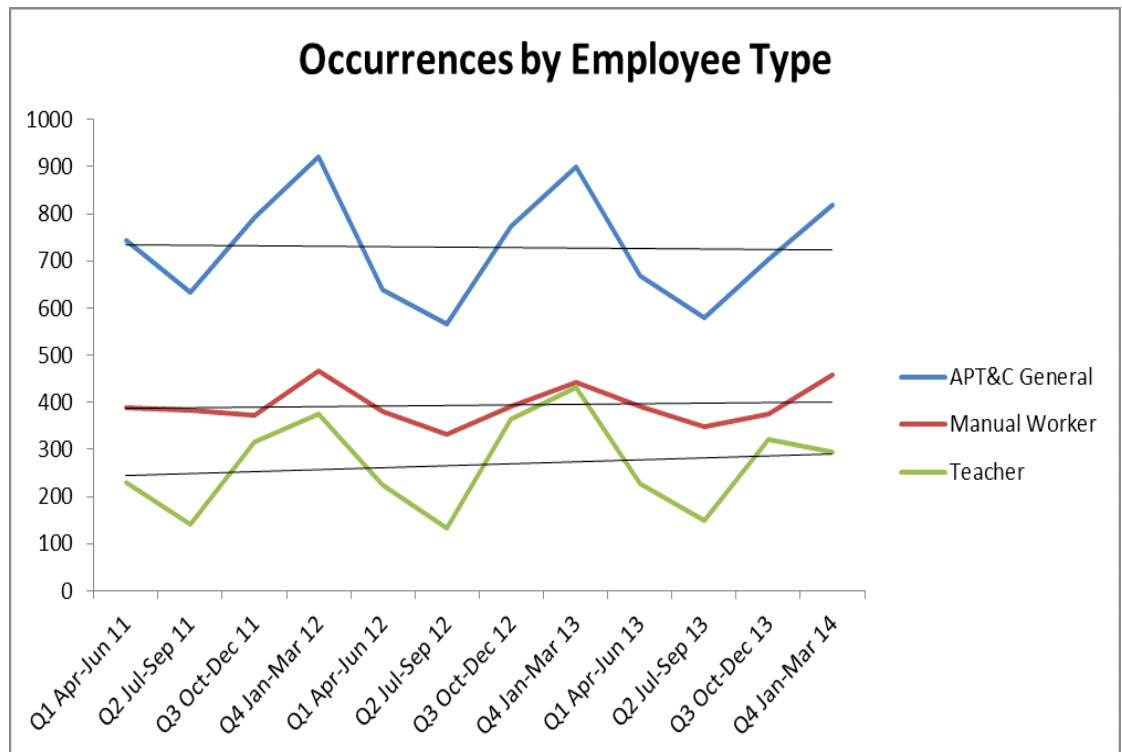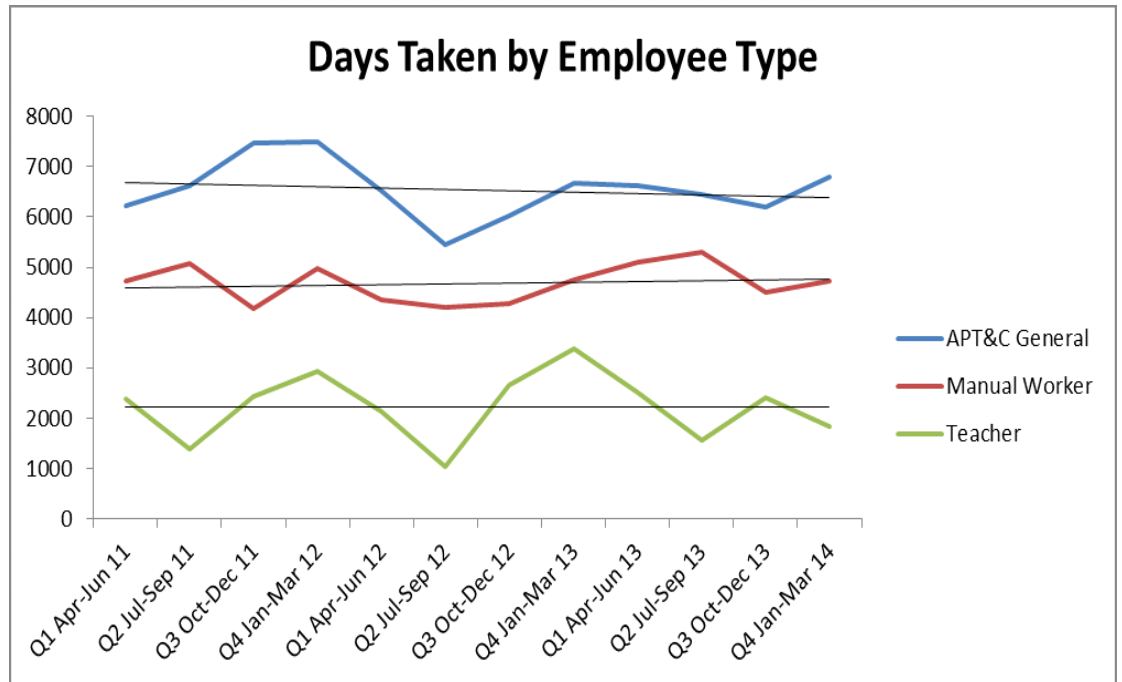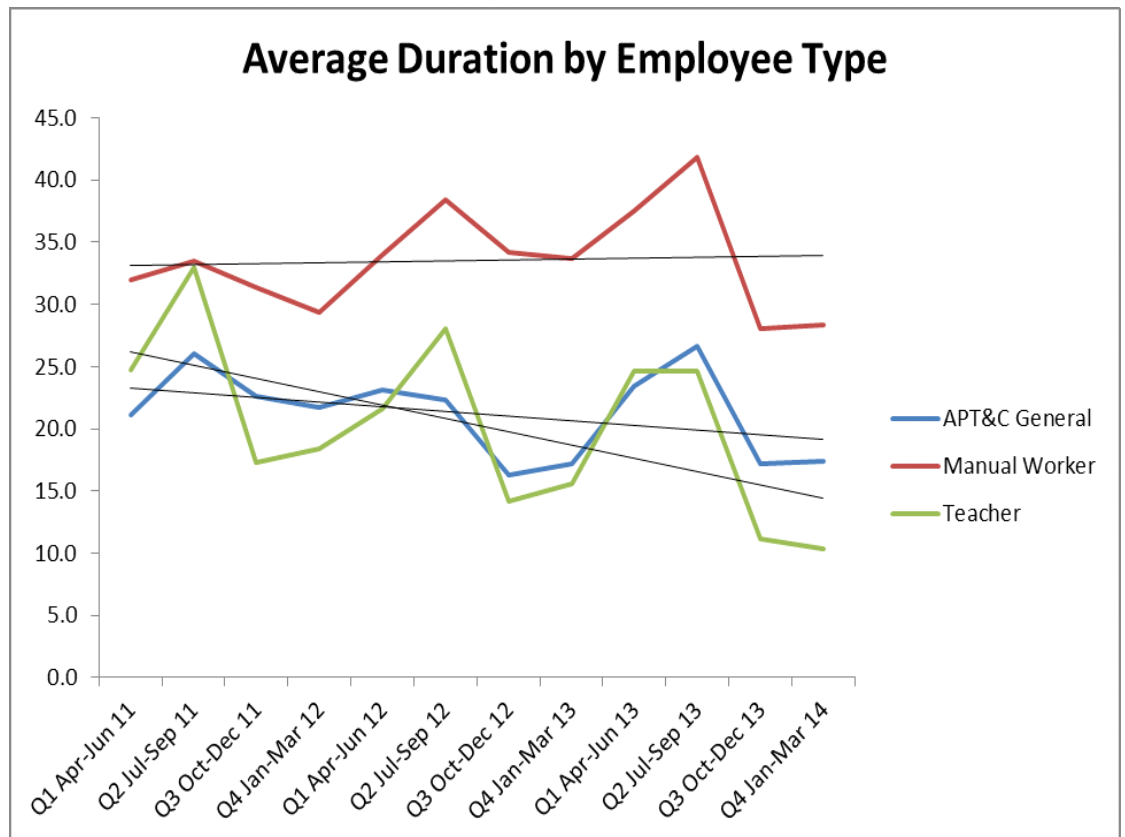
The graphs show a relative decline in both Days taken and Occurrences for APT&C staff across the period. It also highlights a reduction in the Average sickness days taken for both APT&C staff and Teachers.

2.10 The table below details sickness absence by Gender for the period;

Absence duration by Gender Q4/Jan - Mar 2014						
	Occurrences	Staff FTE	Average days taken	Days taken in period	Ratio of Occurrences to FTE	Ratio of Days taken to FTE
Female	1,200	962	18.2	9,399	1.2	9.8
Male	371	353	22.8	3,943	1.1	11.2
	1,571	**1,314**	**20.5**	**13,342**	**1.2**	**10.2**

When an FTE ratio is applied this demonstrates that female employees have more absence occurrences (1.2 vs 1.1) with shorter absence duration (9.8 vs 11.2)

2.11   Reasons for Absence

The table below shows sickness absence for the period by absence reason ordered by days taken:

| Reason for Sickness Absence Quarter 4 Jan - Mar 2014				
Category	Occurrences	Staff FTE	Average days taken	Days taken in period
Musculo/Skeletal	184	151.4	35.3	2,218
Stress/Anxiety	103	82.8	38.9	1,679
Surgical Procedure	77	64.8	32.2	1,268
Gastro Intestinal	350	292.6	4.9	1016
Cardio Vascular	36	29.8	39.4	622
Viral	165	142.2	4.2	607
ENT/Eyes	191	164.9	4.0	582
Depression	25	20.1	71.2	582
Chest/Lung	74	61.1	16.6	579
Work Related Stress	21	18.8	62.1	483
Cancer/Cancer Related	17	13.4	76.1	359
Miscellaneous	28	24.6	19.2	350
Neurological	64	51.2	10.6	339
Gynaecological	18	14.7	35.7	326
Bereavement	29	22.4	18.1	320
Pregnancy Related	28	24.2	14.6	263
Urinary Tract	30	23.6	12.6	260
Infections	35	30.1	6.3	165
Injury/Accidents	13	11.6	11.4	135
Inflammatory Conditions	3	2.2	78.0	115
Work Related Injury/Ill	5	4.4	29.2	115
Psychiatric/Emotional D.	4	3.3	27.5	88
Glandular Disorders	3	2.3	36.3	81
R.T.I	9	8.0	11.5	62
Psychological	1	1.0	63.0	58
Medical Treatment	2	1.8	18.5	32
Skin Conditions	4	4.0	6.3	25
Blood Conditions	2	2.0	11.5	23
Dental	11	8.9	2.1	18
	1,532	**1,281.8**	**18.0**	**12,772**

2.12 The table below provides a further breakdown by staff type of the ratio of days taken to staff type FTE within the Quarter 4 period for the principal causes of absence:

Category	APT&C General	Manual Worker	Teachers
Musculo/Skeletal	0.33	0.81	0.15
Stress/Anxiety	0.32	0.41	0.16
Surgical Procedure	0.23	0.36	0.09
Gastro Intestinal	0.23	0.16	0.11
Cardio Vascular	0.08	0.28	0.01
Viral	0.11	0.13	0.08
ENT/Eyes	0.12	0.05	0.13
Depression	0.05	0.24	0.08
Chest/Lung	0.11	0.14	0.06
Work Related Stress	0.11	0.08	0.04

This shows Manual workers having a significantly higher level of absence due to Musculo/Skeletal causes. Similarly having a higher incidence of Stress/Anxiety, Surgical Procedures and Depression. Teaching staff show the lowest ratios in almost all the categories.

2.13 The table below provides a breakdown by gender of the ratio of days taken to staff gender FTE within the Quarter 4 period for the principal causes of absence:

Category	Female	Male
Musculo/Skeletal	0.41	0.37
Stress/Anxiety	0.40	0.10
Surgical Procedure	0.20	0.29
Gastro Intestinal	0.21	0.12
Cardio Vascular	0.05	0.24
Viral	0.12	0.08
ENT/Eyes	0.12	0.07
Depression	0.09	0.14
Chest/Lung	0.12	0.08
Work Related Stress	0.07	0.13

This shows that female staff have a significantly higher level of absence due to Stress/Anxiety than their Male colleagues. Male staff have a higher ratio of Cardio Vascular absence days. Finally, female staff have a relatively higher level of absence due to Gastro Intestinal causes.

2.14 The following graphs chart the trend of FTE Days taken by those causes that account for most absence days by Quarter from 11/12 to 13/14:

Musculo/Skeletal - Stress/Anxiety

Surgical Procedure/Gastro intestinal

Cardio Vascular/Viral

ENT eyes/Depression

214
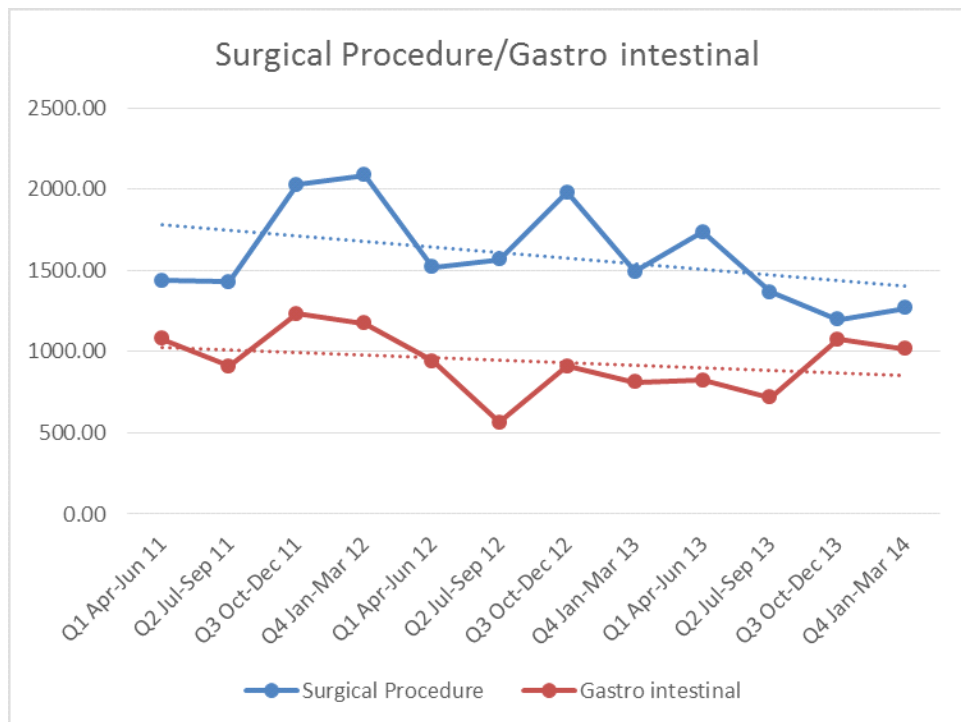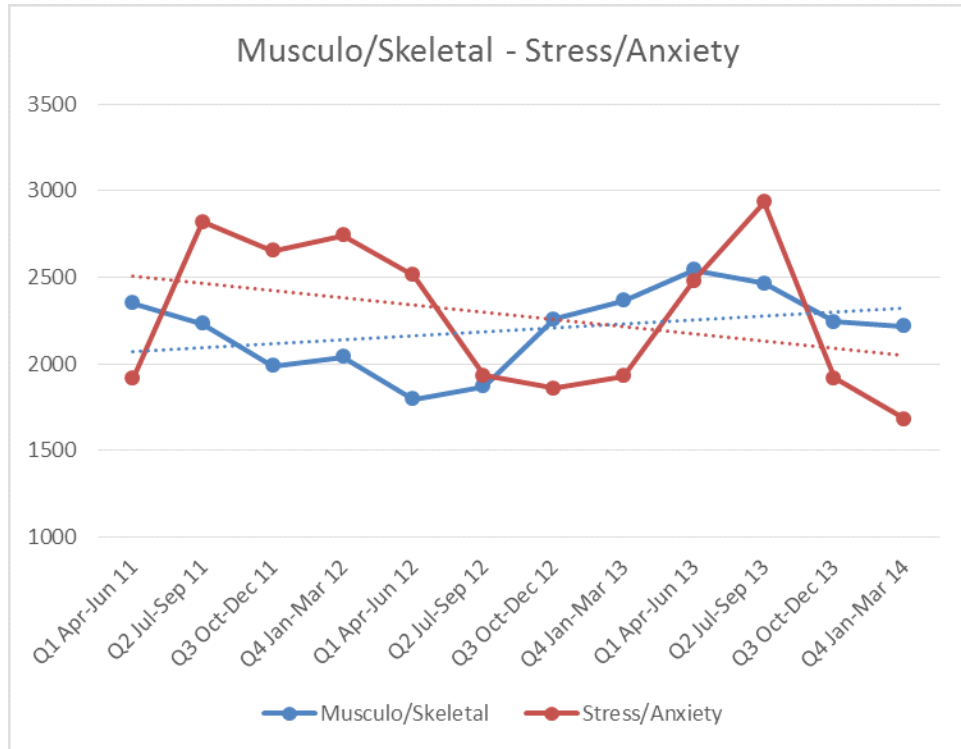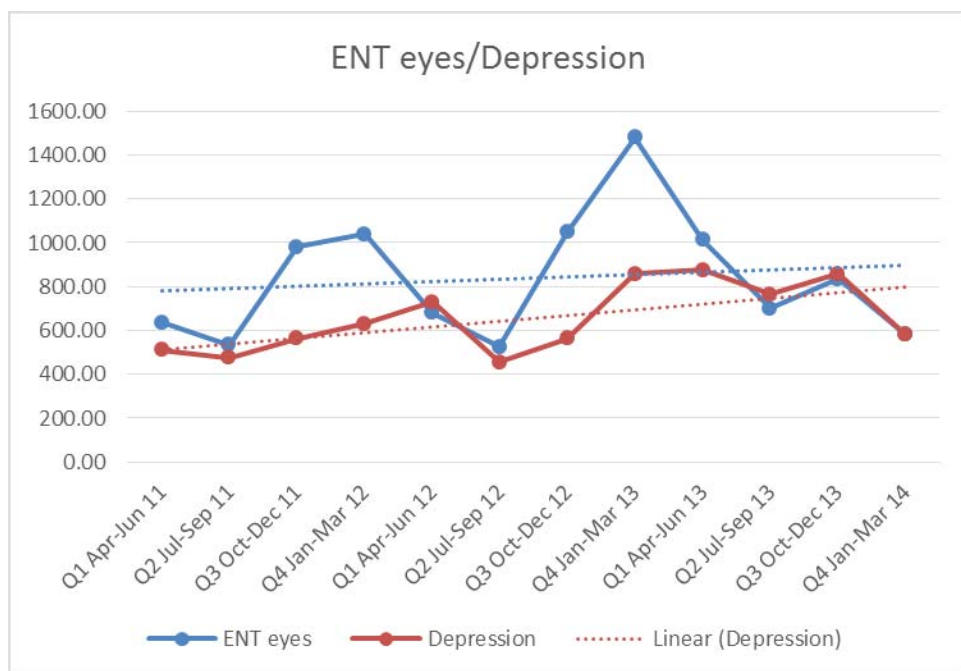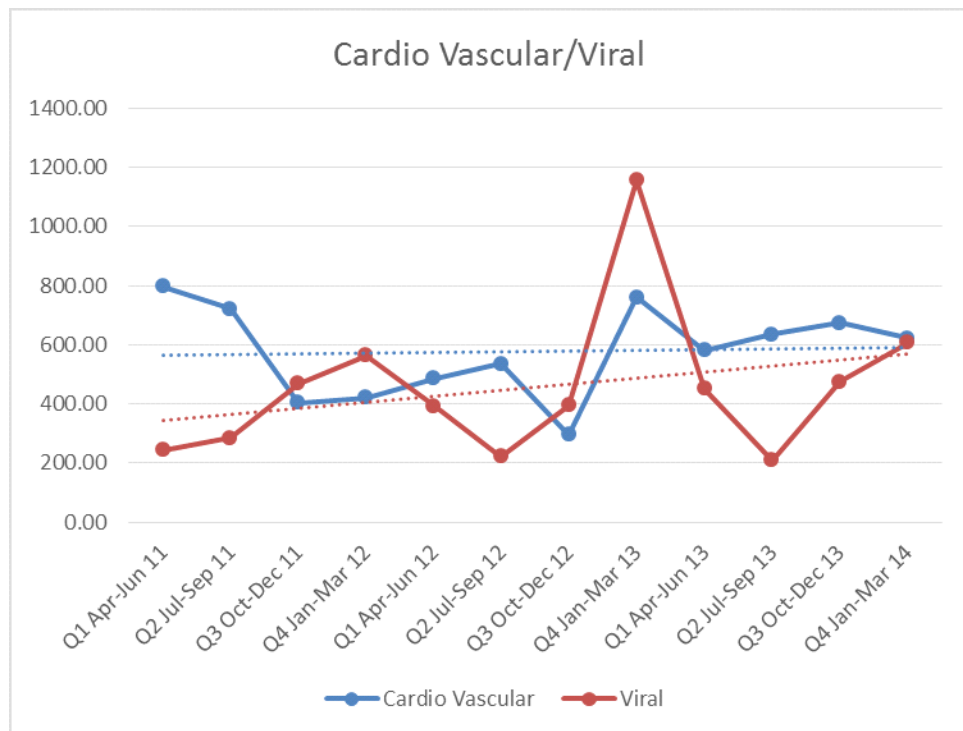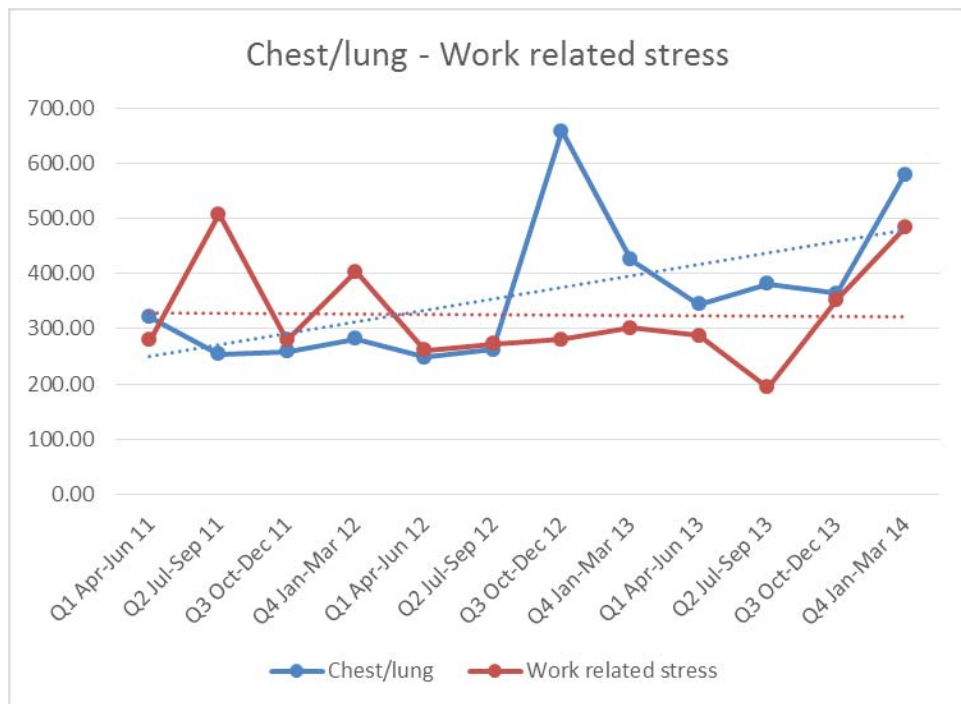
There are a number of trends within the charts:

- an increase in Musculo/Skeletal causes

- a decrease in Stress/Anxiety

- a decrease in Surgical procedures

- a decrease in Gastro intestinal causes

- an increase in Viral causes

- an increase in Depression

- an increase in Chest/lung causes

2.15 Reviews

The table below links sickness absence to employee reviews within the Jan – Mar 2014 quarter:

Directorate	Absence Occurrences	EXCLUDED (absence ends after 14 March 2014)	Meetings	% meetings plus exclusions
Democratic & Admin Services	13	2	11	**100%**
Develop & Environment	464	112	265	**81%**
Education & Skills	573	84	25	**19%**
Finance & Corp Support	139	19	103	**88%**
Social Services & Health	382	109	10	**31%**
	1571	**326**	**414**	**47%**

This shows that either all return to work meetings are not taking place or are not being recorded in the CHRIS system.

The table below shows the outcomes of the 414 meetings that did take place:

Directorate	Long term trigger	Short term trigger	Monitor Approach Trigger	No Action No Trig Breach	Trig Breach -Discretion	**ALL**
Democratic & Admin Services	2	1		8		**11**
Develop & Environment	12	40	25	179	9	**265**
Education & Skills		4		21		**25**
Finance & Corp Support	1	15	7	79	1	**103**
Social Services & Health	1	3		6		**10**
	16	**63**	**32**	**293**	**10**	**414**

2.16   Occupational Health

The table below shows the number of referrals by Directorate for the Q4 Jan-Mar period:

	Chief Executive	Develop & Environment	Education & Skills	Finance & Corp Support	Social Services & Health	TOTAL
Management Referrals	2	70	23	11	66	172
Management Review	0	58	24	10	31	123
Self referral	0	7	12	6	13	38
	2	**135**	**59**	**27**	**110**	**333**

In terms of the rate of referral the analysis below shows the ratio of referrals per 1000 FTE employees:

	Referrals	Referral rate per 1000 FTE
Democratic & Admin Services	2	26.8
Develop & Environment	135	89.3
Education & Skills	59	26.2
Finance & Corp Support	27	53.5
Social Services & Health	110	91.8
	333	

This shows Social Services & Health/Development & Environment as having the highest rates of referral to Occupational Health with Education & Skills having the lowest rate.

Lastly, the table below show the number of occupational health referrals by Gender and Employee type respectively:

	Female	Male
Management Referrals	119	53
Management Review	71	52
Self referral	23	15
	213	120

	APT&C General	Manual Worker	Teacher
Management Referrals	68	95	9
Management Review	53	62	8
Self referral	23	5	10
	144	162	27

2.17 Key Points

- Overall increase in sickness absence from 2.4 to 2.5 days lost per FTE for Q4

- The council as a whole failed to achieve its FTE days lost sickness target by 0.9

- A higher frequency of short term absences though long term absence accounts for the majority of days taken

- Manual workers have both the longest average absence length and take the most absence days particularly in terms of long term days

- Teachers have both the shortest average absence length and take the least absence days

- A downward trend in absence duration for both teachers and APTC staff

- An upward trend in absence duration for manual workers

- Musculo/skeletal causes and stress and anxiety are the principal categories of staff absence

- Musculo/skeletal causes particularly associated with Manual workers

- Stress/Anxiety particularly associated with female staff

- Under 50% of absence review meetings are being carried out/entered on to the HR CHRIS system council wide

- Social services has the highest rate of referral to occupational health

3. Proposals

3.1 This report is work in progress and the Cabinet is requested to note its content and provide feedback as to which of the thematic aspects may be usefully developed.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

4.1 Sickness absence presents a cost to the Council, both in terms of the direct costs of providing for those absent and in terms of lost work days resulting in reduced or delayed service delivery.

Human Resource Implications

4.2 None.

Legal Implications

4.3 None.

Equality Implications

4.4 None.

Environmental Implications

4.5 None.

Implications for Key Priorities
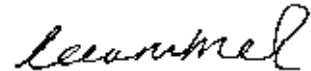
4.6 None.

5. Consultations

5.1 There is no requirement for consultation respect of the content of this report.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Despite having sound procedures sickness absence has increased in Q4 from the previous year's quarter and overall the council failed to achieve its target. Services should continue to utilise occupational health services, where required seek advice from HR Advisers and ensure that an approach of early intervention is taken where employees are on long term sickness absence.

leanmel

LAURA FRIEL
Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :
For further information please contact Jackie Hamilton, Employment Services Manager on 01294 324694

Background Papers
None

Appendix 1

Days Lost per FTE Q4/Jan - Mar 2014			
SERVICE	Qtr 4	Quarterly Target	Variance
Democratic & Admin Services	**1.5**	**1.8**	**-0.3**
Finance & Corporate Support			
Audit, Risk & Performance	0.8	1.8	**-1**
Financial Management	1.2	1.8	**-0.6**
Management	0.3	1.8	**-1.5**
Procurement & Creditors	0.5	1.8	**-1.3**
Revenues & Benefits	3.7	1.8	**1.9**
Property	2.3	1.8	**0.5**
Human Resources	0.3	1.8	**-1.5**
ICT	3.1	1.8	**1.3**
Customer Services & Registration	2.8	1.8	**1**
Business Support	2	1.8	**0.2**
Finance & Corporate Support Total	**2.4**	**1.8**	**0.6**
Social Services & Health			
C&F - Fieldwork	2.6	2.3	**0.3**
Criminal Justice	1.9	2.3	**-0.4**
C&F - Fam Pl / Disa	0.7	2.3	**-1.6**
C&F - Residential/Thcare	4	2.3	**1.7**
C&F - Special Supp	2.5	2.3	**0.2**
Policy & Practice	1.1	2.3	**-1.2**
CC - Fieldwork	2.4	2.3	**0.1**
CC - MH / LD	2.9	2.3	**0.6**
CC - Personalisation	0.4	2.3	**-1.9**
CC - Service Delivery	3.9	2.3	**1.6**
CC - Assess & Enablement	3.9	2.3	**1.6**
CC - Care Manage & Review	6.4	2.3	**4.1**
Res - Business Support	2.3	2.3	**0**
Res - Planning & Performance	6.8	2.3	**4.5**
Res - Money Matters	2.5	2.3	**0.2**
Res - Service Development	0.9	2.3	**-1.4**
Social Services Total	**3.5**	**2.4**	**1.1**
Educational Services			
Education - Resources	2.1	1.7	**0.4**
Education - Secondary	1.4	1.7	**-0.3**
Education - Primary	1.6	1.7	**-0.1**
Education - Early Years	1.8	1.7	**0.1**
Education - Support Staff	0.6	1.7	**-1.1**
Add Support for Learning	1.3	1.7	**-0.4**
Comm Ser - Info & Culture	2	1.7	**0.3**
Comm Ser - Comm Dev	0.7	1.7	**-1**
Country Parks	0	1.7	**-1.7**
Community Facilities	1.6	1.7	**-0.1**
Childcare Information	0	1.7	**-1.7**
Educational Services Total	**1.8**	**1.8**	**0**
Development & Environment			

Appendix 1

Building Standards	0	2.1	**-2.1**
Environmental Health	3.5	2.1	**1.4**
Streetscene non operations	0.8	2.3	**-1.5**
Streetscene operations	3.2	2.3	**0.9**
Waste awareness team	1.3	2.1	**-0.8**
Waste disposal	3.1	2.5	**0.6**
Waste office staff	2.2	2.1	**0.1**
Planning & Regulatory	1.3	2.1	**-0.8**
Roads	2.3	2.4	**-0.1**
Economic Development	1	2.1	**-1.1**
D & E Management	0	2.3	**-2.3**
Transport	1.7	2.3	**-0.6**
Waste collection	4.6	2.5	**2.1**
Facilities Management	2.8	2.4	**0.4**
Housing	2	1.8	**0.2**
Building Services	2.4	2.4	**0**
Development & Environment Total	**2.8**	**2.4**	**0.4**
North Ayrshire Total	**2.5**	**2.1**	**0.4**

Appendix 2

SERVICE	F.T.E	April	May	June	Qtr 1	July	Aug	Sept	Qtr 2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Qtr 3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Qtr 4	YTD	Target	Variance
Admin & Democratic Services	**78**	0.3	0.2	0.0	**0.54**	0.4	0.4	0.3	**1.1**	0.1	0.4	0.6	**1.1**	0.7	0.6	**0.3**	**1.5**	**4.3**	**7.0**	**-2.7**
Finance & Corporate Support																				
Audit, Risk & Performance	10	0.1	0.8	0.0	**0.9**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.3	0.1	0.2	**0.6**	0.2	0.0	0.6	**0.8**	**2.3**	**7.3**	**-5.0**
Financial Management	62	0.5	0.4	0.4	**1.3**	0.2	0.2	0.4	**0.8**	0.4	0.3	0.0	**0.7**	0.6	0.5	0.1	**1.2**	**4.0**	**7.3**	**-3.3**
Management	3	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.3	0.0	0.0	**0.3**	**0.3**	**7.3**	**-7.0**
Procurement & Creditors	11	0.1	0.5	1.4	**2.0**	1.6	1.5	2.9	**6.0**	2.1	0.1	0.0	**2.2**	0.2	0.3	0.0	**0.5**	**10.7**	**7.3**	**3.4**
Revenues & Benefits	84	0.8	0.9	0.7	**2.4**	1.0	0.7	0.4	**2.1**	0.8	0.5	0.9	**2.2**	1.3	1.2	1.2	**3.7**	**10.4**	**7.3**	**3.1**
Property	85	0.4	0.3	0.3	**1.0**	0.2	0.2	0.2	**0.6**	0.2	0.4	0.4	**1.0**	0.8	0.8	0.7	**2.3**	**4.9**	**7.3**	**-2.4**
Human Resources	37	1.5	1.3	1.2	**4.0**	1.0	1.0	1.5	**3.5**	1.4	0.9	0.2	**2.5**	0.1	0.1	0.1	**0.3**	**10.3**	**7.3**	**3.0**
ICT	62	1.1	0.6	0.4	**2.1**	0.5	0.6	0.6	**1.7**	0.4	0.4	0.4	**1.2**	1.3	1.0	0.8	**3.1**	**8.1**	**7.3**	**0.8**
Customer Services & Registration	71	0.3	0.5	0.6	**1.4**	1.3	0.6	0.8	**2.7**	0.8	0.5	0.5	**1.8**	0.8	0.8	1.2	**2.8**	**8.7**	**7.3**	**1.4**
Business Support	92	0.6	0.6	0.9	**2.1**	1.0	0.7	0.7	**2.4**	1.2	0.8	0.6	**2.6**	0.7	0.4	0.9	**2.0**	**9.1**	**7.3**	**1.8**
Finance & Corporate Support Total	**516**	**0.7**	**0.6**	**0.6**	**1.9**	**0.7**	**0.6**	**0.6**	**1.9**	**0.8**	**0.5**	**0.5**	**1.8**	**0.8**	**0.7**	**0.8**	**2.4**	**7.2**	**7.3**	**-0.1**
Social Services & Health																				
C&F - Fieldwork	86	1.3	1.0	1.3	**3.6**	1.7	1.1	0.8	**3.6**	0.9	1.2	1.2	**3.3**	0.7	0.8	1.1	**2.6**	**13.1**	**9.2**	**3.9**
Criminal Justice	57	0.9	0.6	0.7	**2.2**	0.4	0.2	0.3	**0.9**	0.1	0.7	0.6	**1.4**	1.0	0.5	0.4	**1.9**	**6.4**	**9.2**	**-2.8**
C&F - Fam Pl / Disa	27	0.5	0.7	1.3	**2.5**	1.7	1.4	0.4	**3.5**	0.0	0.0	0.3	**0.3**	0.1	0.0	0.6	**0.7**	**7.0**	**9.2**	**-2.2**
C&F - Residential/Thcare	101	1.3	1.5	1.4	**4.2**	1.4	1.0	1.1	**3.5**	1.5	1.1	1.6	**4.2**	1.4	1.3	1.4	**4.0**	**15.9**	**9.2**	**6.7**
C&F - Special Supp	78	0.3	0.9	0.6	**1.8**	0.8	0.5	0.7	**2.0**	1.1	1.0	1.2	**3.3**	1.0	0.5	1.0	**2.5**	**9.6**	**9.2**	**0.4**
Policy & Practice	9	0.1	0.0	0.0	**0.1**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	1.1	0.0	0.0	**1.1**	**1.2**	**9.2**	**-8.0**
CC - Fieldwork	9	0.3	0.0	0.3	**0.6**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.7	0.1	1.7	**2.4**	**3.0**	**9.2**	**-6.2**
CC - MH / LD	75	1.2	0.7	0.8	**2.7**	1.0	0.8	1.0	**2.8**	1.6	1.7	1.3	**4.6**	1.1	0.7	1.1	**2.9**	**13.0**	**9.2**	**3.8**
CC - Personalisation	19	0.7	1.2	0.7	**2.6**	0.2	0.2	0.1	**0.5**	0.2	0.0	0.0	**0.2**	0.4	0.0	0.0	**0.4**	**3.7**	**9.2**	**-5.5**
CC - Service Delivery	429	1.5	1.7	1.6	**4.8**	1.7	1.7	1.6	**5.0**	1.8	1.3	1.5	**4.6**	1.9	1.7	0.4	**3.9**	**18.3**	**9.2**	**9.1**
CC - Assess & Enablement	35	1.3	2.0	1.7	**5.0**	2.0	0.9	1.1	**4.0**	1.7	1.9	1.4	**5.0**	1.4	1.1	1.4	**3.9**	**17.9**	**9.2**	**8.7**
CC - Care Manage & Review	37	1.5	1.8	1.6	**4.9**	1.9	1.6	2.4	**5.9**	1.7	0.9	0.8	**3.4**	2.7	2.0	1.7	**6.4**	**20.6**	**9.2**	**11.4**
Res - Business Support	198	1.0	0.8	1.0	**2.8**	0.8	0.7	0.7	**2.2**	0.6	0.4	0.4	**1.4**	0.5	0.8	1.0	**2.3**	**8.7**	**9.2**	**-0.5**
Res - Planning & Performance	6	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	1.3	0.0	0.0	**1.3**	0.0	3.3	3.5	**6.8**	**8.1**	**9.2**	**-1.1**
Res - Money Matters	21	0.1	0.1	0.0	**0.2**	0.2	0.0	0.1	**0.3**	0.2	0.4	0.1	**0.7**	1.4	0.6	0.5	**2.5**	**3.7**	**9.2**	**-5.5**
Res - Service Development	22	1.1	2.2	1.5	**4.8**	2.7	2.5	0.4	**5.6**	0.8	1.4	2.3	**4.5**	0.6	0.2	0.1	**0.9**	**15.8**	**9.2**	**6.6**
Social Services Total	**1207**	**1.0**	**1.1**	**1.1**	**3.2**	**1.2**	**0.7**	**0.9**	**2.8**	**1.1**	**0.9**	**1.0**	**3.0**	**1.3**	**1.1**	**1.1**	**3.5**	**13.0**	**9.2**	**3.8**
Educational Services																				
Education - Resources	64	0.8	1.2	1.3	**3.3**	1.3	1.3	1.7	**4.3**	0.9	1.1	0.8	**2.8**	1.0	0.9	0.2	**2.1**	**12.5**	**6.8**	**5.7**
Education - Secondary	802	0.3	0.5	0.5	**1.3**	0.03	0.4	0.6	**1.0**	0.6	0.7	0.6	**1.9**	0.6	0.3	0.5	**1.4**	**5.7**	**6.8**	**-1.2**
Education - Primary	883	0.6	0.7	0.5	**1.8**	0.1	0.3	0.5	**0.9**	0.5	0.5	0.5	**1.5**	0.6	0.5	0.5	**1.6**	**5.8**	**6.8**	**-1.0**
Education - Early Years	209	0.9	1.0	0.8	**2.7**	0.6	0.6	0.6	**1.8**	0.8	0.7	0.6	**2.1**	0.6	0.6	0.6	**1.8**	**8.4**	**6.8**	**1.6**
Education - Support Staff	37	0.0	0.2	0.3	**0.5**	0.7	0.8	1.4	**2.9**	1.4	1.2	0.3	**1.7**	0.2	0.1	0.4	**0.6**	**5.7**	**6.8**	**-1.1**
Add Support for Learning	161	0.9	1.5	1.1	**3.5**	0.01	0.7	0.8	**1.5**	0.9	0.9	0.8	**2.6**	0.8	0.2	0.4	**1.3**	**9.0**	**6.8**	**2.2**
Comm Ser - Info & Culture	99	0.3	0.7	0.4	**1.4**	0.5	0.5	0.6	**1.6**	0.9	0.8	0.6	**2.3**	0.6	0.8	0.6	**2.0**	**7.3**	**6.8**	**0.5**
Comm Ser - Comm Dev	54	1.2	0.9	1.1	**3.2**	1.7	1.2	1.4	**4.3**	0.8	0.1	0.1	**1.0**	0.1	0.3	0.3	**0.7**	**9.2**	**6.8**	**2.4**
Country Parks	11	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**0.0**	**6.8**	**-6.8**
Community Facilities	48	1.5	1.6	0.8	**3.9**	1.3	0.7	0.5	**2.5**	0.1	0.4	0.2	**0.7**	0.5	0.2	1.0	**1.6**	**8.7**	**6.8**	**1.9**
Childcare Information	2	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**0.0**	**6.8**	**-6.8**
Educational Services Total	**2369**	**0.6**	**0.7**	**0.6**	**1.9**	**0.3**	**0.5**	**0.6**	**1.4**	**0.6**	**0.6**	**0.5**	**1.7**	**0.6**	**0.4**	**0.5**	**1.8**	**6.4**	**6.8**	**-0.4**
Development & Environment																				
Building Standards	8	0.0	0.4	0.4	**0.8**	0.3	0.0	0.0	**0.3**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**1.1**		**1.1**
Environmental Health	22	0.1	0.0	0.2	**0.3**	1.0	0.4	0.0	**1.4**	1.0	1.3	0.0	**2.3**	0.9	1.0	1.6	**3.5**	**7.5**		**7.5**
Streetscene non operations	6	1.5	0.0	0.0	**1.5**	0.0	2.3	3.5	**5.8**	3.8	4.3	6.5	**14.6**	0.8	0.0	0.0	**0.8**	**22.7**		**22.7**
Streetscene operations	199	1.1	1.3	0.9	**3.3**	1.4	1.3	1.2	**3.9**	1.8	2.0	1.7	**5.5**	1.5	0.9	0.8	**3.2**	**15.9**	**9.1**	**6.8**
Waste awareness team	12	0.8	0.5	0.0	**1.3**	0.0	0.1	0.6	**0.7**	0.7	0.7	0.0	**1.4**	0.0	1.0	0.3	**1.3**	**4.7**		**4.7**
Waste disposal	37	1.2	1.1	0.6	**2.9**	0.7	0.8	1.0	**2.5**	1.0	0.5	0.7	**2.2**	0.8	1.2	1.1	**3.1**	**10.7**	**9.6**	**1.1**
Waste office staff	11	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.3	1.9	**2.2**	**2.2**		**2.2**
Planning & Regulatory	31	0.4	0.4	0.4	**1.2**	0.9	0.8	0.8	**2.5**	0.9	0.7	0.4	**2.0**	0.3	0.0	1.0	**1.3**	**7.0**	**8.2**	**-1.2**
Housing	224	0.3	0.5	0.7	**1.5**	0.6	0.5	0.4	**1.5**	0.3	0.4	0.6	**1.3**	0.6	0.6	0.8	**2.0**	**6.3**	**7.0**	**-0.7**
Roads	92	0.9	1.0	1.4	**3.3**	1.8	1.5	0.9	**4.2**	1.4	1.0	0.8	**3.2**	0.6	0.6	1.1	**2.3**	**13.0**	**9.6**	**3.4**
Economic Development	120	0.4	0.6	1.4	**2.4**	1.4	1.6	0.4	**3.4**	0.4	0.1	0.04	**0.5**	0.2	0.3	0.5	**1.0**	**7.3**	**8.2**	**-0.9**
D & E Management	2	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	0.5	**0.5**	0.0	0.0	0.4	**0.4**	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**0.9**	**9.1**	**-8.2**
Transport	34	2.2	2.4	2.0	**6.6**	2.3	1.6	0.7	**4.6**	1.8	1.5	0.3	**3.6**	0.8	0.7	0.2	**1.7**	**16.5**	**9.1**	**7.4**
Waste collection	115	1.2	1.5	1.3	**4.0**	1.4	1.6	1.7	**4.7**	1.6	1.6	1.1	**4.3**	1.7	1.4	1.5	**4.6**	**17.6**		**17.6**
Facilities Management	442	0.9	1.5	1.3	**3.7**	1.1	1.0	0.8	**2.9**	0.9	0.8	0.6	**2.3**	0.8	1.0	1.0	**2.8**	**11.7**	**9.6**	**2.1**
Building Services	290	0.6	0.7	0.6	**1.9**	1.4	1.3	1.0	**3.7**	0.9	0.9	0.6	**2.4**	0.5	0.8	1.1	**2.4**	**10.4**	**9.6**	**0.8**
Development & Environment Total	**1643**	**0.9**	**1.3**	**1.0**	**3.2**	**1.3**	**1.2**	**1.0**	**3.5**	**1.1**	**1.1**	**0.8**	**3.0**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**1.0**	**2.8**	**10.7**	**9.6**	**1.1**
North Ayrshire Total	**5814**	**0.7**	**0.9**	**0.8**	**2.4**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**2.4**	**0.9**	**0.8**	**0.7**	**2.4**	**0.8**	**0.7**	**0.8**	**2.5**	**9.0**	**8.1**	**0.9**

Agenda Item 10

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Employee Engagement Survey**
Purpose:	To provide the Cabinet with the final update on progress on the Employee Engagement Survey Council-wide Improvement Plan.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet : i. Notes progress in relation to Improvement Plan actions; ii. Notes the next steps planned in relation to monitoring the impact of improvement plan actions.

1. **Introduction**

1.1 In October 2012, the Cabinet acknowledged the results of the 2012 Employee Engagement Survey and approved the Council-wide Improvement Plan.

1.2 This Improvement Plan addressed the employee experience factors that were highlighted in the survey results and which have the greatest potential to positively impact on engagement throughout the Council:

● Your involvement and value to the Council;
● The Council's quality principles and practices;
● Communication within the Council;
● The Council's mission and purpose;
● Teamwork and cooperation within the Council;
● Your learning and development;
● Your role and its clarity;
● Leadership and management of change.

1.3 Improvement actions were structured into four main themes:

● Communications
● Development
● Planning & Performance
● Customer Service

1.4   The Improvement Plan covered the period October 2012 to December 2013, and the Cabinet agreed that they would receive updates on improvement plan activities on a six-monthly basis. Previous updates have been provided to the Cabinet in April and December 2013.

1.5   This paper provides the final update to the Improvement Plan, incorporating updates from all Service Improvement Plans in relation to the Survey. In addition, the paper summarises the methods that will be implemented to measure whether these actions have resulted in increased engagement levels within the Council.

2.   Current Position

2.1   All Services had Improvement Plans in place in relation to Survey findings, which included:

- Actions that would contribute to the Council-wide Improvement Plan actions; and
- Actions that would improve the themes identified as areas for improvement within the Service.

2.2   The Council's Performance Management system, Covalent, was used on a quarterly basis to monitor progress on actions within Service Improvement Plans. The information obtained from these updates has then been used to inform the update to the Council-wide Improvement Plan. All Improvement Plans were due to be completed by December 2013.

Council-wide Improvement Plan update

2.3   The final update, as at 31st March 2014, to the Council-wide Improvement Plan actions is enclosed at Appendix 1.

2.4   A summary of the key actions that have been put in place under each of the themes of the Improvement Plan are:

2.4.1   *Communications:*

- A number of actions within this theme related to increasing the visibility of the Extended Corporate Management Team (ECMT), including increasing the frequency of Chief Executive's Blog, and 'Tea with' the Chief Executive. The 'Back to the Floor' programme has also been extended to the ECMT, and an article was published in the winter 2013 Staff Talk magazine with details of some of these sessions.

- A firm programme of Managers' Conferences is in place, with three Conferences held in 2013 - in February, July and October. In 2014, one Conference has been held so far in February, with a forward programme of Conferences in place. The focus of future conferences will change to Leadership Conferences. The Extended Corporate Management Team (ECMT) now plays an integral part in these events, which also aims to increase their visibility. Joint Headteacher Conferences are also held to focus on excellence and improvement.

- Increased collaborative working was highlighted as an area for improvement, and Services have provided a number of examples of collaborative working on service specific projects, cross-Service initiatives and with partner organisations. Examples include collaborative working in relation to Welfare Reform, the Health & Social Care Partnership, review of Educational Services, work on a joint ICT project, a number of Service Improvement Conferences within Education and Skills, collaboration between Streetscene and Environmental Health & Planning regarding problem areas, between Human Resources and Organisational Development and Development Planning regarding the Graduate programme, a pan-Ayrshire practice teacher / link worker forum and the development of Ayrshire Central Hospital,

- In relation to improving internal communications, the Team Talk initiative was launched in March 2013. This is now established as a mechanism for ensuring consistency of communications, and is monitored regularly throughout the year. The staff magazine, "Staff Talk" was also relaunched in September 2013, in both electronic and hard-copy formats. Further issues of the magazine have been issued in November 2013 and March 2014, and regular issues are planned.

- Sharing information was also highlighted as an area for improvement, and Services have introduced a number of approaches which complement Team Talk, to support this. Examples include a virtual management system (use of television screens, information boards, etc), and the use of Quickr sites to share information between Services.

  Education & Skills have also introduced a Virtual Learning Environment and Video conferencing as a facility for pupils taking part in lessons, and staff in participating in development opportunities, in hard to reach areas. Some Directorates have introduced weekly emails from the Corporate Director to all employees to update on developments.

The use of Navigate as a mechanism for sharing information has been extended, with 'Touch Down' points being introduced to provide this facility for those employees without access, and the content of Navigate and the Education & Skills website reviewed and developed by various Services to ensure information is up to date and accurate. A number of Services also hold Briefings to update employees on activities as part of the Change programme.

2.4.2 Development:

- The annual 'health check' on participation levels for the Performance & Personal Development (PPD) procedure showed that 95% of employees had received an annual PPD discussion by March 2013. Information on participation levels as at March 2014 is currently being collated.

  A number of mechanisms have been introduced to support a consistent approach to these discussions, including Spotlight on PPD articles on Navigate, an e-learning package for all employees, and a workshop for managers focusing on effective discussions.

  Within Education & Skills, the Professional Review & Development procedure has been revised and launched, linking to the GTCS Standards for Registration, to ensure a consistent approach. Some Services have also introduced regular 1-2-1s with employees, in addition to those Services that were already conducting these. Various Services have held employee briefings to ensure a consistency of approach and to encourage participation, with further information supplied by Services, such as 1-2-1 procedures, to support these briefings.

- Leadership and Management Development remains a key development focus, and the Council now has a three-tier Leadership Development Programme - for First, Middle and Strategic Managers. These programmes continue to be evolved and delivered.

  - The High-Impact Leadership programme has been extended to include Senior Managers.
  - The Development Programme in Leadership & Management (Middle Managers) has been reviewed, resulting in a more focused 8-day programme.
  - The First Line programme is delivered internally, and is regularly reviewed and extended to meet business needs.

In addition to these programmes, further development opportunities are available for Managers:

- Seven one-hour learning events, covering a variety of topics, were delivered in 2013, with an ongoing programme of events organised for 2014.
- Two pan-Ayrshire Masterclasses have also been organised to support Managers in their ongoing development, and further events will be organised.
- The Chief Executive's Shadowing programme has also been extended to shadow Corporate Directors, and is available to Senior Managers on the Strategic Leadership Development programme.

- The use of more cost effective learning methods was also highlighted within the Improvement Plan as an action, and examples have been provided by some Services on how this is being encouraged. A corporate directory of learning events, including tutor-led courses, e-learning and self-study packages, supplies information on all Corporate, Social Services and Health and Facilities Management events. Housing Services have introduced an in-house policy in relation to learning opportunities, providing information on a range of learning methods. Social Services have delivered a blended approach to their Self-Directed Support training programme.

2.4.3 Planning & Performance:

- One of the areas identified in the improvement plan was increased involvement of employees in the planning process. Although the Service Planning process for 2013/14 is complete, services provided a number of examples of how employees are involved in the planning the way forward, including the creation of vision statements and mechanisms for sharing information on plans.

   The Service Planning process for 2014/15 has commenced, and the guidance in relation to this has been extended to encourage employee involvement. Services have provided examples of how employees are being involved in this process, for example all-staff working groups, team days, briefings, Service Improvement Conferences, and Staff Reference Groups.

- Service examples were provided on how performance information is shared with employees, including team briefings, sharing of minutes, staff reference groups, and staff improvement days. Vision Statements are being created by some Directorates to clarify what the Directorate aims to achieve and simplify performance requirements.

- Individual and team achievements are recognised on an ongoing basis. Included within this is the Council's employee recognition programme, North Ayrshire Achieves, which is promoted within Services in a variety of ways. Additional recognition methods are in place, such as a recognition lunch - where those nominated for NAA are congratulated - Staff Improvement Days, inclusion on agenda items, the Provost's Civic Pride awards, and via weekly Directors' emails,

- Benchmarking performance areas was also identified as an area for improvement, and a variety of examples have been provided by Services in relation to benchmarking standards and performance: The Council is fully involved in progressing the SOLACE Benchmarking Framework; Some Services are benchmarking on a national level, including Housing Services, Roads Service, Building Services and Finance and Property Services, on issues such as Council Tax collection and Non-Domestic Rates; Other services are reviewing benchmarking activities on a pan-Ayrshire basis, such as Environment Health, Trading Standards, HR & OD; A benchmarking strategy has been introduced within Social Services & Health.

2.4.4 Customer Service:

- The implementation of the Customer Service strategy is progressing well. The new Council website was launched in April 2013 and improved performance has been demonstrated following this, and recently the revised website achieved a 4-star rating, improved from its previous 1-star rating, by the Society of IT Managers (SOCITM). A communication plan is in place to encourage more customers to use this website. A number of Directorates are reviewing Customer Service Charters, in line with the revised Corporate Customer Service Standards. Increased parental involvement is being achieved within Education & Skills, and redesigned service delivery within Social Services and Health aims to increase service user participation.

- A new Complaint Handling process is in place for every Service (with the exception of Social Services) and a half-day Complaint Handling course has been delivered to employees within all relevant Services. In addition, the corporate Customer Service training event has been reviewed and updated to reflect this new process.

- Services are regularly reviewing the service provided, liaising with their customers/stakeholders to determine improvements required. Examples provided from Services include liaison meetings, involvement of Parent Council Chairs at Policy Board meetings, a cross-Service Practice Improvement forum, and a Customer Care Working Group. A number of Service Improvement Plans are in place within Directorates in relation to Customer Service.

2.5   The following actions remain outstanding as at the close of the Improvement Plans:

2.5.1 Communications:

- Employee Suggestion Scheme (Action 1.6c): a corporate approach to gathering suggestions from employees has been developed, but requires further refinement. This action was delayed due to competing priorities, however this will now be taken forward by the Communications Team to review current practices across the Council and ensure consistent application of key principles, but recognising that suggestion/feedback schemes may take different formats in different Services.

2.5.2 Planning & Performance:

- Involvement of employees in plans (Action 3.1c): one activity within this action of the improvement plan is outstanding - Finance and Corporate Support are developing a vision for the Directorate, although this work is not yet complete. This has been paused due to a planned launch of revised Council-wide values.

- Standardisation of procedures and documentation (Action 3.5): Work on this action has not progressed due to the Information and Records Manager post being vacant. An appointment for this post has recently been confirmed and this action will now be reviewed within overall work plans.

Communications

2.6   A number of methods have been used to update employees on how the findings of the 2012 Employee Engagement Survey have been addressed, and how the Council-wide Improvement Plan in relation to this is progressing.

2.7   A newsletter, 'Engage' has been introduced to provide employees with an update on Council-wide Improvement Plan actions.   The first edition of this was issued to all employees in January 2014, and provided an update in the format 'We asked, you said, we did', i.e. the key areas the 2012 Employee Engagement Survey asked, a summary of the response received in relation to these areas, and the actions taken following the survey.

2.8   The 8-weekly core briefing process, 'Team Talk', was also used to update employees on action taken, in February 2014.

2.9   To further expand on these points, an article was also included in the March 2014 issue of the staff magazine, Staff Talk.

Monitoring Impact

2.10   To determine the impact that improvement plan actions have had, and whether these have resulted in increased levels of employee engagement, a shorter Employee Engagement Survey was issued to employees in March 2014.   This contained a reduced question set from the original survey, and focused on questions that measure engagement levels, in addition to focusing on two themes that received the least level of positive responses in the 2012 Survey:

●   Leadership and management of change;
●   Communication.

2.11   A series of 'straw-polls' will also be held on Navigate, to determine the impact on the remaining employee experience factors highlighted in paragraph 1.2.   These polls will be short surveys, of three or four questions, and will be conducted bi-monthly between May 2014 and March 2015.

2.12   The findings from the 2014 Employee Engagement Survey and series of straw-polls will be analysed in order to measure the impact that improvement actions have achieved, and identify any further areas for improvement. This will ensure that a clear focus remains on identifying and progressing actions that will improve engagement levels within the Council.

3.   Proposals

3.1   The Cabinet is asked to:

   i) Note the progress in relation to Improvement Plan actions; and
   ii) Note the next steps planned in relation to monitoring the impact of improvement plan actions.

4.   Implications

Financial Implications

4.1   There are no Financial implications arising from the report.

Human Resource Implications

4.2   There are no Human Resource implications arising from the report.

Legal Implications

4.3   There are no Legal implications arising from the report.

Equality Implications

4.4   There are no Equality implications arising from the report.

Environmental Implications

4.5   There are no Environmental implications arising from the report.

Implications for Key Priorities

4.6   There are no implications for Key Priorities arising from the report.

5.   Consultations
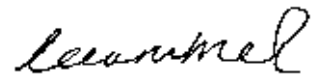
5.1   Initial briefings / consultations were held with Heads of Service, to provide information on the analysis of the survey findings in relation to their Service and to determine the best way forward for improvement planning within their Service.

5.2   Consultation was held with Service Focus Groups to identify actions in relation to Service Improvement Plans.

5.3   Consultations were also held with key contacts within Services to identify the most appropriate method for issue of the 2014 Employee Engagement Survey, for those employees without email access.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   The Council-wide and Service Improvement Plans in relation to the 2012 Employee Engagement Survey have now been completed.

6.2   Further mechanisms are in place to determine the impact Improvement Plan actions have had, and measure Employee Engagement levels.

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LAURA FRIEL
Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :
For further information please contact Gavin Macgregor, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, or Fiona Walker, Organisational Development Manager on telephone number 01294 324053.

Background Papers
Survey responses

Colour Code	Parent Action
	Sub Action

1. Communications

Status	
Overdue	2
Completed	15

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_1.1	**Managers' conferences**	100%	🟢		**31-Dec-2013**	**PARENT ACTION**
EES_CW_1214_1.1a	Hold three Managers' Conferences per calendar year	100%	🟢	In 2013, three Managers' Conferences were held in February, July and October. To ensure that the Managers Conferences are current and fit for purpose a cross service focus group reviewed the approach and offered suggestions for improvement. In addition, Joint Head Teacher Conferences, which focus on a number of themes to drive excellence and improvement, have been held each term. As these conferences are ongoing, this action has been marked as complete.	31-Dec-2013	Chief Executive's Office
EES_CW_1214_1.1b	Increase ECMT involvement in the Managers' Conference to raise visibility	100%	🟢	Corporate Directors and Heads of Service have been involved in each Manager's conference held in 2013, and it is planned that this involvement continues for 2014 conferences.	31-Dec-2013	ECMT
EES_CW_1214_1.2	Collaborative Working. Regularly encourage individuals at all levels, and teams within services to work collaboratively on service specific projects and cross service initiatives.	100%	🟢	A number of mechanisms have been put in place within Directorates and Services to encourage collaborative working, and this is now business as usual. A summary of the actions taken over the period of the improvement plan is provided below. Within **Democratic & Administration Service**, Legal Services provide advice and support in relation to projects such as child protection and managing gypsy / traveller unauthorised encampments. Regular in-Service and cross-Service team meetings are held. In addition, a cross-Directorate group conducted the Council wide PSIF self-assessment and the Council's Annual Performance report encouraging collaborative working. Within **Development & Environment**, a cross-directorate group, comprised of a range of positions and grades, recently reviewed the work undertaken by the management group, and a draft improvement plan is being developed. Staff are involved in a large number of in-service groups and projects, e.g. collaboration between Streetscene and Environmental Health & Planning regarding problem areas, cross-	31-Dec-2013	All Services

Colour Code | Parent Action |
| Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				Service activities such as the ICT Steering Group, testing of the HAVS system, and Fair Trading. Collaboration continues with external organisations (e.g. development of Ayrshire Central Hospital). Each service has also produced interactions maps to highlight areas of overlap and opportunities to improve collaboration on key projects. Housing Services adopt working groups to cover key activities which have cross staff representation at all grades and from all service areas, in addition to Manager service development days and Staff improvement day including service planning briefing sessions and a relaunch of the Service Staff Suggestion scheme. Within **Education & Skills**, Service Improvement Conferences have been held each term to encourage individuals to work collaboratively to improve the service provided. Each Conference is themed on a particular topic, and includes presentations from staff members and workshops held to determine areas of duplication and service priorities. One conference, planned for December 2013, was cancelled due to significant changes at Senior Management Level. However planning for future conferences remains ongoing. In addition, Senior Managers are directly involved in the development of both the Service and Operational Plans. Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, a number of cross service and cross Council initiatives are in place within Finance & Property involving Corporate Procurement, Property, Revenues & Benefits, Financial Management Audit & Risk and Business Support. Examples include collective planning and delivery of the Council's capital programme and Service conferences to focus on delivery of key objectives and identify opportunities for improvements to working practices and service delivery. Within HR & OD, examples provided include collaborative working between HR & OD and Development & Environment in relation to the graduate programme, liaising with Services in relation to North Ayrshire Achieves, Payroll employees working with Facilities Management to provide training in relation to payroll documentation, cross-Service review of HR policies such as Maximising Attendance and Health & safety working with various services to develop an electronic incident reporting system, and Service Level Agreements set up between Customer Services and various services. Within **Social Services & Health**, Social Services have reviewed their Knowledge Exchange programme and plan to re-align this to support the review of the Community Care operating		

Colour Code | Parent Action |
| Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				model and the Integration of Health and Social Care. Plans include a multi-site symposium and webinar, and question time session, which will facilitate the exchange of ideas. Advisory roles have been undertaken with the SSSC, and across five universities. A pan-Ayrshire practice teacher / link worker forum facilitates the exchange of ideas, and the Staff Reference Group continues. A number of **cross-Service and cross-Organisation** activities have also involved collaborative working, such as Welfare Reform, Health & Social Care Partnership, and the review of Educational Services.		
EES_CW_1214_1.3	**Sharing Information**	100% 🟢			**31-Dec-2013**	**PARENT ACTION**
EES_CW_1214_1.3a	Increase the use of Navigate as a means of promoting the Council's mission and objectives and disseminating information.	100% 🟢		Existing information held on Navigate has been reviewed by a number of Services, to ensure the information held is relevant and up to date. A Corporate Intranet Focus Group is currently reviewing the requirements for Navigate, as part of this wider project. In addition, to increase the use of Navigate, a number of areas have been progressed within Services and a summary of actions taken over the period of the improvement plan is provided below: **Development & Environment** have introduced a number of 'Touch Down' points to provide the facility for employees to access Navigate. The **Education & Skills** website has been further developed which has enabled pupils and teachers in schools to have internet access with a variety of mobile devices. In addition, individual school websites are now used more frequently to inform all stakeholders about the work of schools and publish Standards and Quality reports. Within **Finance & Corporate Support,** HR & OD have updated various information: Human Resource Advisers & Resourcing have published information in relation to 'getting a job'. Health & Safety are updating policies and documents in line with H&S action plans. Employment Services have created a new section and work is ongoing to extend the information in relation to resourcing and information management. Customer Services are working with Navigate authors to progress and publish online ideas submitted from Quality Improvement Team. In	31-Dec-2013	All Services

Colour Code	Parent Action
	Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				addition, the use of Meta-Compliance software as a method to publicise information to the workforce has been explored and is available for use, by submitting requests to the IT Service Desk, although extending the use of this may require additional resource. Finance & Property Services are updating essential information only, until the Intranet site is reviewed corporately. Information published includes progress on key capital projects, particularly where there is a direct impact on Council staff. Information concerning staff conferences is also promoted on Navigate.

Social Services & Health continue using and promoting Navigate across the Directorate, with examples including implementing the Directorate Vision statement, GIRFEC developments, Employee Survey results, Carers' Week, press releases, introduction of careNA. The Corporate Director's weekly email is used to inform all staff of the redevelopment of the Navigate site and encourage employees' views. Staff will be kept updated on progress and will be given the opportunity to influence the design and functions of the new intranet through focus groups and other mechanisms. | | |
| EES_CW_1214_1.3b | Explore other media options to ensure information is disseminated to hard to reach areas. | 100% 🟢 | | A variety of different media options have been developed / introduced / utilised by Services to share information, particularly in hard to reach areas, and greater consideration is being given to the methods of communication used. As this is now ongoing, the action has been marked as complete. A summary of the actions taken is as follows:

Within **Development & Environment**, Visual Management Display boards (television screens, information boards, posters etc.) are in most locations, with Service Plan performance displayed against Service objectives. Building Standards have weekly performance information displayed. Quickr sites are being introduced as a means of sharing information/knowledge across the Directorate. Facilities Management are piloting the recording of personal email addresses on CHRIS, for use in cascading communications. Housing Services has recently launched a Facebook page.

Within **Education & Skills,** the pilot of using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to deliver lessons is being extended to all Secondary schools. This has been evaluated with success being reported, dependent on connection issues. Development opportunities on the use | 31-Dec-2013 | All Services |

Colour Code | Parent Action |
             | Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				of VLE will be available for new users in 2014, and IT Services are currently working on multi-centre use of VLE for sharing lessons/workshops/lectures and discussions across a number of educational establishments. Videoconferencing has been used to enable Head teachers and teachers an Arran to participate remotely in CPD events, Head teachers meetings and subject network meetings. The Service continues to use GLOW to support learning and teaching by sharing good practice and resources, in addition to publishing bulletins to staff and pupils.

Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, the use of Quickr sites has been extended within HR & OD to share information. In addition, ICT Services have created a private area on Navigate to share information within the Service. Within Finance & Property Services, papers for the Council's Corporate Capital Programme and Assets Group (CPAG) are circulated via a Quickr site.

Within **Social Services & Health**, the Corporate Director's weekly email is used to inform all staff of the redevelopment of Navigate and encouraged employees to submit their views at the earliest opportunity to provide guidance from the outset. Staff will be kept updated on progress and will be given the opportunity to influence the design and functions of the new intranet through focus groups and other mechanisms. | | |
| EES_CW_1214_1.4 | Change Programme. Establish formal briefing sessions within each service to advise employees on what activities are being undertaken as part of the change programme. | 100% | 🟢 | Activities to advise employees of actions under the Change Programme are now undertaken on an ongoing basis, and this action has therefore been marked as complete. A summary of the actions implemented is provided below:

The Council's new Core Briefing process, 'Team Talk' and the new quarterly staff magazine 'Staff Talk' will provide regular updates on larger, cross Service change projects. Corporate Directors/Heads of Service are responsible for engaging and advising employees in Service specific change projects and for identifying where these projects should be communicated to a wider audience (via Team Talk and/or Staff Magazine).

Democratic & Administration held Service Team briefings in February and September, and these will continue in 2014. In addition, the Change | 31-Dec-2013 | All Services

Policy & Service Reform |

Colour Code	
Parent Action	
Sub Action	

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				Team liaise with project sponsors to ensure that Directors/Heads of Service incorporate staff engagement within their project plans. **Development & Environment** use Directorate / Team Talk briefings to cascade information on change. The communication working group have developed a standard agenda for team meetings and a communication sheet will be issued to ensure that all key information is communicated in a consistent manner at team meetings. Some Services have information displayed on TV Screens, and a process is in place to record feedback. Housing Services held an annual Staff Conference, in addition to monthly team meetings incorporating SMT updates. The Service Staff suggestion scheme has also been reviewed and relaunched. Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, HR & OD teams are updated via briefing emails on change projects, via Navigate communications, or updates at team meetings. In addition, task force meetings have been introduced in relation to change projects, in order to share information regarding these with other relevant parties. Within Finance & Property Services, team meetings and six-monthly Staff meetings are used to brief employees. Within **Social Services & Health**, a number of briefings have taken place, including Service Redesign (Nov 12), redesigning Community Justice System (Mar 13), Personalisation/SDS Roadshows (May 13), Future of Health & Social Care Integration (June/July 13). Messages have been reinforced through other channels including the Directors weekly email, and the CareNA homepage under latest news.		
EES_CW_1214_1.5	Equality and Fairness. Raise the Equalities Awareness agenda, to ensure all employees are treated fairly and respectfully in the workplace	100%	🟢	Services have implemented a number of actions in order to raise the Equalities Awareness agenda. The Council has agreed and published its equality outcome, which includes "Employees are able to respond more confidently and appropriately to the needs of colleagues and customers." Actions are included within the Equality Action Plan 2013-14 to support the delivery of this outcome including promotion of the equalities e-learning course. General awareness of equalities issues is being raised through improvements in the budgeting and service guidance and through the provision of an Equalities Awareness e-learning package. In addition, the rolling programme of five Equality Impact Assessments per Service per year on existing policies is being led by the Corporate Equality Group, and the toolkit for conducting Equality Impact Assessments has been improved.	31-Dec-2013	All Services Policy & Service Reform

Colour Code | Parent Action |
| Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				Within Directorates and Services, a variety of methods are being used to raise the Equality Awareness Agenda. Examples provided include: ***Democratic & Administration*** has provided specialised training for Elected Members on equalities issues, and support is being provided for Services in completing Equality Impact Assessments. A reminder has also been issued to staff to complete the mandatory Equalities Awareness e-learning package. Within ***Development & Environment***, Streetscene Services have rolled out 'Team Talk' through service managers who are organising to cascade this process through the reporting structure and Facilities Management have planned 'Team Talk' tool box talks for the remainder of 2013/14. Each session will include agenda items that cover equalities and fairness. Housing Services have a specific Equalities Working Group with membership from a cross selection of staff, who have developed accessibility and equalities policies, introduced a visually impaired database, and a Braille machine for printing documents. Within ***Education and Skills***, Stonewall has delivered training on tackling homophobic language and bullying and supporting LGBT young people to primary and secondary groups of Equalities Champions. Following a survey of how safe and cared for pupils feel in schools, outcomes and suggestions for actions were provided to all Champions. Good practice in schools in regard to actions to prevent discrimination has been collated and is being shared with all Equalities Champions. Within ***Finance & Corporate Support***, updates from the Corporate Equalities Group are provided at management meetings within HR & OD to ensure the equalities agenda is progressed. Equality Impact Assessments are conducted as and when a policy or procedure is created or updated and this will continue. Recruitment processes are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with legislation. All employees in both HR & OD and Finance & Property Services have been encouraged to complete the Equalities Awareness e-learning package. Within ***Social Services & Health***, a review of the content of the 'Promoting Equalities' 2-day training programme is underway.		

Colour Code

| Parent Action |
| Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_1.6	**Improve internal communications.**	97% 🟢			**31-Dec-2013**	**PARENT ACTION**
EES_CW_1214_1.6a	Launch and implement the 'Team Talk' initiative i.e. an approach for face to face communications in order to emphasise a focus on discussion and feedback, and three way communications.	100% 🟢		The Team Talk core briefing process was launched in March 2013, and is now established, ensuring corporate consistency of staff meetings. The Team Talk process has been monitored regularly throughout the year.	31-Dec-2013	Communications
EES_CW_1214_1.6b	Ensure consistency of team Meetings across the Council.	100% 🟢		Services have provided numerous examples on how the consistency of team meetings has been reviewed and strengthened. As these are now on-going, this action has been marked as complete as at December 2013. Examples of the approaches introduced are as follows: The Team Talk briefing process, mentioned above, has assisted in ensuring consistency. A number of Services are aligning team meetings with when this is due, in addition to aligning with Management Meetings, to ensure consistency of message (e.g. Democratic & Administration, HR & OD). The process will be assessed and refined in 2014, within the Council-wide PSIF Improvement Plan. Standard Agendas are another method used by a number of Services in order to ensure consistency (e.g. HR & OD, Housing Services). *Housing Services* have received Council approval to close all offices every second Thursday (pm) in the month to allow for team meetings and staff training. *Revenues & Benefits* open to the public at 10am each Wednesday with the first hour used for team meetings and staff training. *Social Services & Health* have promoted the enhanced consistency of team meetings through the implementation of the Service Vision / Values Statement and using the findings of the Employee Survey.	31-Dec-2013	All Services

Colour Code | Parent Action |
| Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_1.6c	Establish a consistent Council-wide approach to employee suggestions, ensuring all feedback and suggestions are reviewed.	80%	⚠	**Outstanding Action as at March 2014:** A proposed approach to a Council-wide Suggestion Scheme has been developed jointly by Corporate Communications and HR. CMT has asked for this approach to be refined. Further work will be undertaken jointly by Communications and HR to develop the approach and implementation. However, this has not been progressed due to capacity issues within the Learning & Organisational Development and Communications Teams.　This action remains outstanding.	31-Dec-2013	Communications
EES_CW_1214_1.6d	Ensure Workforce Communications more structured, regular and consistent	100%	🟢	The Staff Talk magazine and News in Brief weekly email have been introduced to ensure workforce communications are more frequent and consistent. The first edition of the new Staff Newsletter, Staff Talk, was published in September 2013, with further editions issued in November 2013 and March 2014, and future publications are at the planning stage. The staff weekly update email, 'News in Brief', has been launched which gives staff a quick snapshot of key news and events, happening across the Council over the next seven days.	31-Dec-2013	Communications
EES_CW_1214_1.6e	Increase the frequency of the Chief Executive's blog and continue 'Tea with' the Chief Executive, ensuring two way continued dialogue with employees.	100%	🟢	The Chief Executive has set a target for the Blog to be updated at least once a month and this target has been consistently met. "Tea with Elma" sessions are continuing and the Chief Executive has increased the annual target from six to eight sessions per annum. Since 2010, 200 staff have met with the Chief Executive.	31-Dec-2013	Chief Executive's Office
EES_CW_1214_1.6f	Reinstate 'Back to the floor' sessions which successfully served to raise the visibility of ECMT.	100%	🟢	An article, publicising the Back to the Floor sessions conducted by the ECMT, was published in the Staff Talk magazine in November 2013. Details of Back to the Floor sessions due to be held in 2014 has now also been collated, and this is now also business as usual. Further articles will be published in the Staff Talk magazine, to update employees on these visits. As this is now business as usual, this action has been marked as complete.	31-Dec-2013	Human Resources
EES_CW_1214_1.6g	Reinstate Council Staff newsletter as a means of sharing information council-wide	100%	🟢	The first issue of the staff magazine, 'Staff Talk' was issued in September 2013, both in electronic and hard-copy version. Further editions have been issued in November 2013 and March 2014, and further issues are in the planning stage. As this is now business as usual, this action has been marked as complete.	31-Dec-2013	Communications

Colour Code | Parent Action
| Sub Action

2. Development

Status	
Completed	12

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_2.1	**Performance & Personal Development (PPD)**	100%	🟢		**31-Dec-2013**	**PARENT ACTION**
EES_CW_1214_2.1a	Ensure a consistent approach to annual PPD discussions is adopted, ensuring individual understand what is required of them in their role, work objectives and individual goals are aligned with team objective and to ensure that to learning needs are identified and prioritised.	100%	🟢	All Directorates / Services advise that PPDs are completed in accordance with corporate guidelines, using a consistent approach. A number of actions have been implemented to assist with this, which are summarised below. As no Service has reported any outstanding activities, this action has been marked as complete. The annual 'Healthcheck' in relation to PPD completion, as at March 2013, was 95% participation. The Healthcheck will be conducted again to obtain participation figures, as at March 2014. To encourage participation and a consistent approach, **HR & OD** provided a series of weekly 'Spotlight on PPD' articles published on Navigate in January / February 2013, and this will be conducted again in 2014. These articles provide reminder information on the procedure, encourage participation, and encourage a consistent approach. A PPD E-learning module is now available to all employees and a PPD Discussion for Managers Workshop to assist managers in holding effective PPD discussions - both are advertised via the Corporate Learning & Development Directory. A review of the PPD procedure is also currently underway. The Service has also arranged a 'PPD Advise Desk', to provide HR & OD colleagues the facility to drop in to discuss any aspect of the PPD process. Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, Finance and Property Services had planned to design a checklist to ensure consistency in the PPD process. However, having conducted research into the requirements of this, the Service has determined that the Corporate Guide, Flowcharts,	31-Dec-2013	All Services

Colour Code | Parent Action |
| Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				series of Spotlight on PPD articles, and e-learning package available are sufficient, and this is therefore not required. Managers within the Service are provided with details of employees where the PPD discussion is still required, and Business Support offer assistance to input this information onto CHRIS. Within **Development & Environment**, PPDs and regular 1-2-1s ensure a consistent approach and that all service plan objectives are reflected. Within Housing Services, the Learning & Development Working Group takes ownership of the annual process, and an email is issued to all managers with links to the relevant paperwork and timescales for completion. Within **Education & Skills**, the Professional Review & Development (PRD) /Professional Update (PU) has been reviewed and updated, and briefing sessions have been provided to all clusters. A short-life working group will meet with the General Teaching Council (Scotland) in January 2014 to review the Council's approach to PRD and PU from August 2014 onwards. Representatives from the Service also participated in a pan-Ayrshire event to engage staff further in professional updating. **Social Services & Health** have reviewed PPD implementation within the Service, and various channels of communication will be utilised to reinforce messages about planning and practice.		
EES_CW_1214_2.1 b	Reinforce the Behavioural Competency Framework, during annual PPD discussions, to ensure employees fully understand the behaviours required to be demonstrated.	100% 🟢		Annual PPD discussions incorporate reflections on the behavioural competencies and how these are demonstrated. The points mentioned above demonstrate how a consistency of approach in relation to conducting PPD discussions has been approached. The points below provide further information on actions taken in relation to this. One of the 'Spotlight on PPD' articles published by **HR & OD** focused on the Behavioural Competency Framework, and how this should be reviewed during PPD discussions. **Social Services & Health** have reviewed the specific competency relevant to this Service only, Social Care Practice, to reflect SDS / Personalisation, and a first draft of a revised version has been produced. Within **Development & Environment**, Housing Services have reviewed and updated their 1-2-1 procedure to ensure this concentrates on the competencies and behaviours required. Within **Education & Skills**, the professional Review & Development (PRD) procedure has been reviewed and updated to incorporate reflection on the GTCS Professional	31-Dec-2013	All Services

245

Colour Code	Parent Action
	Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				Standards, which incorporates the behaviours required as part of teaching roles.		
EES_CW_1214_2.1 c	Conduct regular 1-2-1s with employees, to provide the opportunity for regular two way discussion, feedback and recognition.	100%	●	A number of Services have introduced regular 1-2-1s, in addition to those that were already conducting these, including Democratic & Administration, Development & Environment, Housing Services. *Housing Services* have recently reviewed and updated their procedure for 1-2-1s, to ensure these concentrate on the competencies and behaviours required. No activities are outstanding in relation to this action and it has therefore been marked as complete.	31-Dec-2013	All Services
EES_CW_1214_2.2	**Leadership & Management Development**	100%	●		**31-Dec-2013**	**PARENT ACTION**
EES_CW_1214_2.2 a	Reinforce leadership & management development programmes to ensure that the focus on collaborative working, team working, communication continues.	100%	●	The Council's three-tier leadership and management development programmes continue to be delivered and developed. These will continue to be evolved and delivered to support managers at all levels. Details of the three programmes are as follows: **High-Impact Leadership -** Phase 1 of this programme for the ECMT is now complete. However, to ensure continued development, a forward programme of development activity is currently being designed. This phase of the programme has been evaluated to determine whether outcomes have been achieved, and positive feedback has been received. Phase 2, for Senior Managers, has commenced with 32 Senior Managers participating in 2013/14 programmes. The programme is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure the focus on collaborative and team working remains and is linked to the current business focus. **Middle Management Development Programme** - The Leadership & Development Programme for Middle Managers has recently been reviewed, resulting in a more focused, 8-day programme. Two cohorts have been organised for the remainder of 2013. **First Line Management Programme** - This programme continues to be delivered. A review of the assessment requirements for the qualification has recently been undertaken.	31-Dec-2013	Human Resources

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	Colour Code	Parent Action
		Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				In addition, *Social Services & Health* have reviewed Leadership Development activities undertaken. This incorporates two Extended SMT development sessions, undertaken in April (which focused on the Change Programme), and December (which focused on the new operational model, health and social care integration, service priorities, governance and engaging with staff and service users). As these programmes are reviewed on an ongoing basis, this action has been marked as complete.		
EES_CW_1214_2.2 b	Develop and deliver regular learning events aimed at Managers to extend learning, provide further development opportunities, and encourage networking/sharing of good practice.	100%	🟢	A total of seven learning events were held in 2013, in April, May, June, October, and three in November. A further four learning events have been held in 2014 to date, and the programme of Learning Events for 2014 continues. One pan-Ayrshire Masterclass took place in March 2013, and another in March 2014. Further Masterclasses are being organised for 2014. These events are now standard business practice and will continue to be organised. This action is therefore marked as complete.	31-Dec-2013	Human Resources
EES_CW_1214_2.2 c	Extend the Shadowing programme currently in place for employees to shadow the Chief Executive, to the CMT.	100%	🟢	The Chief Executive's Shadow programme has now been extended to offer a shadow opportunity to Corporate Directors. This is now in place and opportunities are being offered to the delegates on the Strategic Leadership Programme to shadow not only the Chief Executive, but also all Corporate Directors. The shadow programme is now fully embedded and is part of the continued professional development of Senior Managers, and this action has therefore been marked as complete.	31-Dec-2013	Human Resources
EES_CW_1214_2.3	**Development Solutions**	100%	🟢		**31-Dec-2013**	**PARENT ACTION**
EES_CW_1214_2.3 a	Review, develop and promote a Corporate Calendar of learning and development events	100%	🟢	The 2013 Learning & Development Directory and calendar of events of Corporate development, in addition to Social Services and Facilities Management development opportunities, continue to be reviewed and updated as new development opportunities are identified. Social Services have added a number of development events in relation to Money Matters and Care at Home. The directory and calendar continue to be promoted throughout the Council at every opportunity via Navigate, staff notice boards and courses delivered.	31-Dec-2013	Human Resources

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	Colour Code	Parent Action
		Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_2.3b	Extend the practice of more cost effective development methods and knowledge transfer solutions such as job shadowing, e-learning, webinars etc.	100%	●	All services promote the use of various development methods and knowledge-transfer solutions on an on-going basis. As no activities are outstanding in relation to this action, the action has been marked as complete. A summary of activities undertaken in relation to this action are provided below. Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, HR & OD publish an annual calendar of development activities - including tutor-led courses, e-learning courses, self-study packs - on an annual basis. The development opportunities available are regularly reviewed, and the variety and number of e-learning courses has been extended. From 2013, this calendar incorporates development opportunities provided by Social Services and Facilities Management Services. Finance & Property Services are currently designing an e-learning course on the procurement processes. Within **Development & Environment**, Building Services deliver a training week to operatives that cover any training that is deemed mandatory and ensures that all trade cards etc. are renewed prior to expiry. Driver assessments for all new drivers, and refreshers for existing drivers, are provided by the Council's Road Safety Officer. Training provision for seasonal staff has been reviewed and updated, including induction training and LEAMS training. Service specific manuals for Facilities Management Staff have been reviewed. In Housing Services, the Learning & Development working group has developed an in house policy which identifies a wide range of learning opportunities for all staff, including job shadowing, coaching, mentoring, e-learning, on the job and planned reading. In addition, an e-learning induction programme for new staff has been developed and is in use. **Education & Skills** continue to provide cross- and intra-Service job shadowing opportunities. Within **Social Services & Health**, a training programme for Self-Directed Support / Personalisation has been delivered which incorporates blended learning methods.	31-Dec-2013	All Services
EES_CW_1214_2.4	Recording of Development Needs. Expand utilisation of the development module on CHRIS to ensure the corporate system is being used to its full	100%	●	Work to ensure the CHRIS Development module is fully utilised, and development needs are recorded, has progressed within all Services. No activities are outstanding in relation to this action, and it has therefore been marked as complete. A summary of the activities undertaken during the period of the Implementation Plan is detailed below.	31-Dec-2013	All Services

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Colour Code | Parent Action
| Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
	potential and that all development needs are recorded.			Within **Democratic & Administration**, all staff have been made aware that training requirements should be passed to CHRIS administrator for input. Within **Development & Environment**, each employee has a training folder, and courses are recorded on CHRIS. Housing Services use the CHRIS system to record all Learning & Development activity - on a monthly basis all managers are issued with a L&D proforma to complete, which is then returned to the Quality & Performance to upload all activities to CHRIS Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, all development needs are recorded on CHRIS. In addition, within HR & OD, monitoring of CHRIS Development Records continues. One monitoring check carried out, council-wide, identified a number of individual records held in the development records screen which were inaccurate. This information was sent to Services to progress and the monitoring check will be conducted again to ensure this information has been updated by services. In addition, Leadership Development screens have recently been redesigned to improve the recording of development in relation to this. Within **Social Services & Health**, PPD/Supervision briefings during Nov - Dec 12 promoted effective capturing of development plans within CHRIS. Within **Education & Skills,** utilise the in-house system GATEWAY and the CHRIS system to maintain staff CPD records and the service is exploring how the capturing of CPD records can be applied consistently across all teams.		

Colour Code	Parent Action
	Sub Action

3. Planning and Performance

Status	
Overdue	3
Completed	6

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_3.1	**Planning and Performance**	98%	●		31-Dec-2013	**PARENT ACTION**
EES_CW_1214_3.1 a	Anticipate future strategic development needs linked to changing legislation and policy drivers.	100%	●	Within Directorates / Services, no activities are outstanding in relation to this action. Therefore, the action has been marked as complete. A summary of the activities implemented is detailed below: All Services have created Service Plans for 2013/14 based on the combined service planning and budgeting guidance which aims to ensure effective integration of strategy and resources to deliver improved outcomes for the people of North Ayrshire. The Service Planning and Budgeting Guidance 2014/15 has been strengthened to encourage Services when developing Service Plans to demonstrate the Golden Thread showing effective integration of all strategies and resources to deliver improved outcomes for the people of North Ayrshire.	31-Dec-2013	All Services Policy & Service Reform
EES_CW_1214_3.1 b	Ensure that all objectives are connected i.e. Single Outcome Agreement, Council Plan and Service Plans all explain the requirements of the council and its purpose - the 'bigger picture'	100%	●	As mentioned above, all Services have created Service Plans for 2013/14 based on the combined service planning and budgeting guidance. In addition, the Service Planning & Budgeting Guidance for 2014/15 incorporates guidance on developing Operational Plans which will provide a key document for staff to ensure that their PPD objectives align with the objectives and actions of the Directorate and or Service. As no activities are outstanding in relation to this action, it has been marked as complete.	31-Dec-2013	All Services Policy & Service Reform

		Colour Code	Parent Action
			Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_3.1c	Actively promote the involvement of employees in the creation of service and team plans, including the creation of plans or initiatives aimed at customers, as a means of harnessing employee knowledge and creating a sense of involvement and ownership.	95%	🟢	**Outstanding action as at March 2014** The outstanding activity for this action relates to Finance & Corporate Support - within Finance & Property Services, a 'vision' was being developed for the Service, and suggestions were sought from employees to develop this. However, this has been delayed, as a decision has been made to create a single vision for the Directorate rather than at a Service level. This is being progressed through the FACS Leadership Team, and it is estimated that this will be completed by September 2014. There are no outstanding actions from other Directorates / Services. A summary of the activities in relation to this action is detailed below. Within **Democratic & Administration**, an all staff working group was formed to provide input and commence the development of the Service Plan. Within **Development & Environment**, employee briefings took place throughout June/July and regular meetings were held to ensure employees are aware of service priorities and updated on progress and performance. Performance information is displayed on visual management boards in most areas, including all High Schools. Facilities Management introduced a Staff information pocket leaflet that covers the Council's vision in addition to information about various procedures and service issues. Planning Services held a session on 'Performance Management' for all staff in April 2013. A cross-Directorate working group comprising of a range of positions and grades is currently being established with a view to reviewing the work on the PSIF self-assessment exercise. Housing Services have continued to review and enhance their performance framework with tenants to align this with new performance indicators and reporting requirements. **Education & Skills** held a Service Improvement Conference in October 2013, which involved senior staff and key stakeholders discussing and developing the content of the 2014-15 Service Plan. This incorporated a Service Planning workshop, where discussions were held on service priorities and objectives. An evaluation of the Directorate's 'Employability Services' was undertaken using the EFQM model as a guide, and a full	31-Dec-2013	All Services

Colour Code	Parent Action
	Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				report of this exercise including recommendations has been compiled. Within *Finance & Corporate Support* the Performance Team (FCS) supported initial Service SMT meetings to launch the 2014/15 Service Planning Process. All staff have had the opportunity to participate in this process, via Team Meeting Agendas and Team Days and the SMT and eSMT are now working on these plans. Service Planning has been analysed as part of the Directorate PSIF Self-assessment exercise. A SWOT/PEST analysis was carried out and the output from this will feed into the Service Planning Process for 2014/15 as will areas for improvement highlighted during the assessment process. Within HR & OD, employees have been involved in the Service Planning process in a variety of ways, such as work groups at team meetings, on-line consultative approach, or surveys to inform the key priorities and actions. **Social Services & Health** has reviewed the role of their Staff Reference Group and will enhance their communication of activities. In addition, the Service has created a Vision Statement and this has been rollout out throughout the Service, through team development activities undertaken in November 2012.		
EES_CW_1214_3.1d	Develop Performance Management Frameworks within all services across the Council as a means of involving managers and staff in target setting, actively encouraging staff to make decisions in line with policies and procedures; giving accountability to all staff at various levels; and assigned areas/teams/responsibilities to staff that are then accountable for the performance within them.	100% ●		No activities are outstanding in relation to this action, and it has therefore been marked as complete. Services have been encouraged to develop their own Performance Management Frameworks to embed a performance management culture as articulated in the Council's Performance Management Strategy 2012/15. **Finance and Corporate Support** have a dedicated Performance Team which implements the Corporate Performance Management Framework. Key Performance Indicators and targets are developed in consultation with Senior Managers. The Directorate has a comprehensive range of statutory and local indicators and targets which allow the Directorate to monitor and manage performance effectively and systematically. **Social Services & Health** have developed a performance framework based on an integrated scorecard, and reports are available to the SMT. Minor modifications will be made to ensure they remain meaningful and enable performance management. Strategy mapping is adopted to	31-Dec-2013	All Services Policy & Service Reform

	Colour Code	Parent Action
		Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				facilitate the identification of further KPIs. Performance will be monitored through the Carefirst reporting system All Service Managers within **Development & Environment** have presented to the Directorate Management Team how their service can improve, and key actions have been included within relevant operational plans. These will be monitored via quarterly performance presentations to the Directorate Management Team. Housing Services have a Performance Management Framework (PMF) that has been continuously enhanced over a number of years in line with service developments. Through a comprehensive set of statutory and local indicators, targets and service standards the PMF allows the Service to monitor and manage our performance effectively and systematically to ensure they achieve the best possible outcomes for our customers. The framework is being reviewed, in consultation with tenants, to align with the new performance indicators and reporting requirements to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).		
EES_CW_1214_3.2	Service Briefings. Introduce Service Development Days/ Annual Briefings/ Update Sessions across the Council as a means of sharing information with all employees	100% 🟢		All Services advise that mechanisms for briefing employees are in place. As these are done on an ongoing basis, the action has been marked as complete. A summary of the actions taken is as follows: **All Democratic and Administration Service** staff were encouraged to attend Team Briefings held in February and September 2013, with a positive response being received. Staff have also been asked to indicate their preferences for future staff briefings and these will be undertaken during 2014/15. Within **Development & Environment**, Extended DMT minutes are distributed to staff. Corporate updates are included within Team Briefs (Team Talk) along with key Departmental information and discussed at the Extended DMT meetings. Information contained within team briefs are then updated to include key team messages and disseminated through the use of team meetings. Directorate wide employee briefings took place throughout June/July, to celebrate key achievements in 2012/13 and reaffirm the key commitments for each service for 2013/14. Building Services are in the process of redesigning their staff newsletter to ensure that all service goals, performance and key information are included. The communication working group will be developing a standard agenda for	31-Dec-2013	All Services

Colour Code | Parent Action |
| Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				team meetings and a communication sheet will be issued to ensure that all key information is communicated. Housing Services re-instated their staff improvement day in September 2013, which allows for updates on the Service Plan and details how individuals and the Service contribute to the overall vision of the Council. **Education and Skills** have developed 'Team Talk Briefings' to ensure staff are kept informed of all key activities and developments which are likely to impact on the delivery of services. These have been circulated to the Extended Leadership Team and an administration process is now in place to ensure that team talk is circulated to all Managers timeously to ensure face to face discussions takes place with any comments being reported back. Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, bi-annual Service-wide Service Briefings have been introduced within Finance and Property, held in November 2012, May 2013 and November 2013 and further meetings will be held every six months. Within HR & OD, all staff were invited to attend Service Briefing sessions in December 2013, however due to a variety of reasons, these did not progress. However, the Head of HR & OD has been attending individual team meetings to share information with employees, and will consider the use of service briefings in 2014. **Social Services & Health** aim to promote an enhanced team-based approach to service improvement, and there has been significant employee involvement in wide range of improvement activities relating to individual services including: Money Matters/NACAS, Mental Health Services, Children & Families Residential Units, and various others. In addition, a Vision / Values statement was used through team development activities between November 2012 and March 2013.		
EES_CW_1214_3.3	Recognising Achievement. Reinforce and promote 'North Ayrshire Achieves' as a means of celebrating and rewarding individual or team contributions, good practice, etc.	100% 🟢		Individual and employee achievements are recognised by all Services on an ongoing basis, and this action has therefore been marked as complete. A summary of the examples of opportunities used to recognise employee achievement, and promote North Ayrshire Achieves is as follows: **HR & OD** launched the North Ayrshire Achieves (NAA) programme for 2013, which was promoted within Services in a variety of ways, including posters in all locations, information on Navigate, and payslip advertising. A total of 218 nominations were received and the winners were	31-Dec-2013	All Services

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| Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				announced at the Awards Ceremony on 15th November 2013. The processes used in the 2013 programme are been reviewed, and proposals for the 2014 NAA programme will be submitted to the CMT for consideration early 2014. ***Development & Environment*** introduced a recognition lunch in November 2013, which provided recognition to staff nominated / short listed for internal awards, and those put forward for external recognition. Positive feedback has been received on this lunch. The implementation of visual management, mentioned above, and quality circles provides a platform for staff innovation, the sharing of ideas and best practice. Housing Services re-instated their Staff Improvement Day, which was held in September, and provided an opportunity to thank staff and recognise achievements. ***Education & Skills*** Service managers include employee recognition as an agenda item for staff meetings. Irvine Library won the Employer Diversity category at the Ayrshire Business Awards in November. Nominations are also being developed for the Provost's Civic Pride awards. Within ***Finance & Corporate Support***, the Corporate Director's briefing highlights success and achievements and the Head of Finance highlights successes at the six-monthly service review meetings. Finance & Property Services plans to introduce a service newsletter have not been taken forward due to staff work commitments and lack of volunteers, and instead information will be provided via SMT minutes. Within ***Social Services & Health***, Social Services regularly reinforce and recognise achievements through the weekly Director's email, team meetings and SMT meetings. In addition, a communication plan is being prepared to publicise the 2014 North Ayrshire Achieves programme.		
EES_CW_1214_3.4	Benchmarking. Increase the use of benchmarking as a way of raising quality standards and performance across the Council.	100% 🟢		All Services advise that opportunities for benchmarking have been reviewed and increased where possible. As this is now done on an ongoing basis, the action has been marked as complete. A summary of the actions taken during the period of the improvement plan is as follows: **Democratic & Administration** support the Council in progressing the SOLACE Benchmarking Framework and is actively reviewing the results of the 2011/12 Solace indicators. A programme of action with Services has commenced to increase the use of benchmarking to improve service delivery. The Council is participating in the two pilot projects to test the	31-Dec-2013	All Services

Colour Code	Parent Action
	Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				dynamics and methodology of Family Group activity, and establish the time/effort/resources required to make the Family Group benchmarking process work. The two pilots are 1) Positive Destinations (for "People" Services) and 2) Roads (for "Other" Services). Data for the 2013 indicators has been gathered, and will be published in March 2014. There will be a workshop organised by the Improvement Service on February 6th to present the data for Councils, and to highlight the emerging themes. **Development & Environment** have representatives on three of the Task Groups to progress the SOLACE Benchmarking Framework and Family Groups/Benchmarking Clubs have been established within the Directorate. Environmental Health and Trading Standards are actively reviewing benchmarking activities on an Ayrshire-wide basis. Planning Services benchmarking opportunities have been reviewed, with a further opportunity identified which is being explored with the authorities involved. Benchmarking forms part of Building Standards mandatory Balanced Scorecard approach and is currently being further developed by the implementation of a national performance framework which will allow more meaningful outcomes. Facilities Management are reviewing APSE data and attending family group workshops throughout 2013/14 to identify any smarter ways of working and best practice. Roads Services benchmark with Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) against other local authorities and the minor works framework to benchmark against external providers. Housing Services benchmark performance via the Scottish Housing Best Value Network (SHBVN), on a wide range of housing management and homelessness indicators. SHBVN will provide their annual on-site presentation in December 2013 which gives managers the opportunity to explore and compare performance and identify areas for improvement. The Service are also reviewing indicators to meet the requirements of the new regulatory framework will also provide further benchmarking opportunities with local and national Social Landlords. **Education and Skills** participated in the SOLACE 'Positive Destinations' benchmarking pilot project, which is part of the Improvement Service led Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) project. The LGBF is a framework to enable collaborative working across councils in		

	Colour Code	Parent Action
		Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				Scotland in terms of cost, productivity, and outcomes. The aim of the Pilot is that councils will be able to highlight strengths and weaknesses, share good practice, learn from each other, and implement improvements. The directorate also carried out an analysis of the Standard Tables and Charts (STACS) which give a detailed analysis of the national Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) examination results and trends over the past five years and makes comparisons with other similar education authorities, national performance, and past performance in North Ayrshire. Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, benchmarking has been undertaken in relation to Revenues / Benefits, Welfare Reform and Procurement. In addition, there are various elements of benchmarking within HR & OD, including SOCITM Benchmarking undertaken for ICT Service Delivery and Customer Satisfaction. Within the L&OD Team, previous benchmarking has been conducted in relation to the Employee Engagement Survey findings and in relation to delegate days for training. The 18001 framework has also been used for benchmarking Health & Safety performance, and audits undertaken to provide compliance data. **Social Services & Health** have prepared a benchmarking strategy, which places benchmarking firmly in the field of practice improvement, performance information and management.		
EES_CW_1214_3.5	Investigate ways of standardising, controlling, measuring, and auditing procedures and documentation across the Council.	50%	⚠	**Outstanding Action as at March 2014** Initial action in relation to this action was undertaken by the Information & Records Manager with the service that identified good practice during the Employee Engagement consultation. This highlighted three elements for further exploration and an interim report on progress made was prepared in 2013. However, the action has not progressed, due to the Information & Records Manager position being vacant. Interviews are being held in early May 2014 for this position, and once appointed, consideration will be given to reviewing this activity in light of the expanded role of the Information Governance Manager.	31-Dec-2013	Policy & Service Reform

Colour Code	Parent Action	
	Sub Action	

4. Customer Service Strategy

Status	
Completed	4

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
EES_CW_1214_4.1	Customer Service Strategy. Develop and deliver the new Customer Service strategy by continuously looking to operate more efficiently and effectively responding to customer needs.	100%	🟢	All Services advise that actions in relation to the Customer Service Strategy are progressing and are either completed, or ongoing and therefore business as usual. Therefore, this action has been marked as complete. A summary of the updates provided by Services for the period of the Improvement Plan is as follows: **Customer Services** are developing and delivering the new Customer Service Strategy. The focus for 2012/13 was main projects, including the new Customer Service Centre at Bridgegate House, a new Complaint Handling process which is now embedded across the Council - the first 6-monthly report has been provided to the CMT and Elected members, and positive feedback received. The new Council website was launched in April 2013, and improved performance has been demonstrated via Key Performance Indicators for customer satisfaction and visitor numbers. The Contact Centre has been in a period of consolidation within 2013, with analysis of various services undertaken, including Council Tax and Benefits and improvements implemented as a result. A communication plan is also in place to encourage more customers to transact via the website. The Channel shift approach has been agreed and a team set up to take this forward in 2014. The Council's CRM, Lagan is being upgraded and this will provide added benefits in managing customer contacts including making it easier to take payments online and the use of electronic forms. **Democratic & Administration** hold regular liaison meetings with Housing, Estates (General), Estates (Debt), Social Services (Litigation), Social Services (Community Care), Social Services (Contracts) and will be aiming to extend these to other Services. **Development & Environment** aim to review their customer service charter, in line with revised corporate Customer Service Standards, and this work is ongoing. In addition, they have reviewed and updated the existing Service Communications strategy to improve the way the Service communicates with staff and other stakeholders including internal / external customers,	31-Dec-2013	All Services Customer Services

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| Sub Action

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				and communications flows have been produced for all services. Within Housing Services, the Customer Care Working Group are continuing to review new initiatives. Within **Education & Skills,** work is ongoing to increase levels of parental involvement, with an Education Scotland representative providing a presentation to all Headteachers and Parent Partnership meetings now being held to progress this. Within **Finance & Corporate Support,** the Head of Finance & Property Service highlighted compliments from customers at the staff briefing sessions held for all employees in November 2013. **Social Services & Health** aim to improve service user participation in planning and implementation activity for redesigned service delivery, Personalisation approach, Self Directed Support and RAS, and this work is ongoing.		
EES_CW_1214_4.2	Obtaining Customer Feedback. Develop council-wide approach to obtaining customer feedback and establish across the board standards for acting upon this insight, including creating a 360 degree view of customer: Consolidate council-wide customer feedback (surveys, focus groups etc.) and findings and make this insight available to all employees together with information on action taken (via Navigate etc.)	100%	🟢	The progression of this action to developing a council-wide approach to gathering customer feedback was delayed due to capacity issues and awaiting the outcome of other pieces of work, namely Corporate PSIF and the Household survey. However, the Customer Service Forum have now reviewed this as part of the Corporate PSIF Assessment and a number of actions have been identified to progress this, including: · Develop Corporate Customer Perception Measures, internal Customer Satisfaction measures, and community perception measures. · Developing a more proactive and creative approach to increase the visibility of information highlighting performance against standards. · Undertake further analysis regarding customers' preferred service delivery and communication channels. · Including top level service standards in the Council Plan and developing Performance Indicators to highlight progress and performance of the Council in meeting these standards. Directorates should also include Service Standards in Service Plans and link these to a range of performance measures. Although this work is not yet completed, the above actions will be progressed as part of the Corporate PSIF Self-Assessment Plan. Further updates on progress towards these points will therefore be incorporated	31-Dec-2013	Customer Services

Colour Code

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Sub Action	

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				in Council Plan updates. This action has therefore been marked as complete in this Improvement Plan. In addition, Services are continuing to obtain and act on customer feedback. A summary of the examples provided by Services throughout the period of the Improvement Plan are as follows. **Development & Environment** provide monthly and quarterly reports, using an in-house reporting tool, to each service area and customer feedback will be a standing item on meeting agendas. The Housing Service Customer Care Working Group meets monthly, has developed an annual action plan that includes actions in relation to corporate changes and initiatives, and continues to review initiatives to improve service. Within **Education & Skills,** work is ongoing to increase levels of parental involvement. Following a presentation to all Headteachers and Parent Council Chairs by an Education Scotland representative, meetings have been held with Parent Council Chairs to explore ways of increasing parental involvement and further 'Parent Partnership Meetings' will continue. In addition, the Community Engagement Strategy has been agreed with CPP partners and the action plan agreed with the Community Engagement Reference Group. A number of employees have also been identified to participated in accredited consultation and engagement training in order to provide a corporate pool to support consultation and engagement. Within **Finance & Corporate Support**, a Service Improvement Plan in relation to Customer Service is ongoing and a number of actions are included in the 2013/14 Service Plan. Information obtained from customer feedback is shared with Finance and Property Service employees during full service briefings. Customer Surveys are undertaken by Corporate Procurement and Internal Audit, whilst		

Colour Code | Parent Action |
            | Sub Action |

Action Code	Action Description	Progress	Expected Outcome	Latest Note	Due Date	Description
				Revenues and Benefits hold Customer Service Excellence accreditation. Within **Social Services & Health** a cross-Service Practice Improvement Forum was established in November 12 and a bulletin was distributed to help communicate collaborative initiatives for practice improvement. Practice changes relating to redesign of service delivery to be developed for implementation.		
EES_CW_1214_4.3	Customer Service Training. Establish a level of consistency across the Council in terms of customer service training provision.	100%	🟢	This action is now complete. Existing Customer Service training delivery has been reviewed and updated to reflect the new Complaint Handling procedure and establish a consistency in relation to delivery. The revised course is delivered regularly throughout the year, in addition to service specific requests. The Customer Service Professional qualification, a professional qualification for customer service staff working in the public sector, is now available for employees. A Learning Event for Managers was held in March 2014 to explain this qualification and its benefits and encourage participation	31-Dec-2013	Human Resources
EES_CW_1214_4.4	External Accreditation. Look to expand Council competencies linked to attaining external accreditation in the domain of customer service i.e. Customer Service Excellence award	100%	🟢	An assessment of the work required to complete this and the possible costs has been completed. As a result this action was closed and may be revisited when a performance based culture is embedded within the organisation through the use of PSIF.	31-Dec-2013	Customer Services

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 11

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	Asset Management Plans: 2013/14 Progress
Purpose:	To inform the Cabinet of progress made in delivering the agreed actions for each of the six themed Asset Management Plans during 2013/14.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet agrees to note the progress made by Council services in implementing the 2013/14 Asset Management Action Plans.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council's Best Value 2011/12 Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) identified the need for the Council to develop a more robust approach to managing its core assets, ensuring optimal operation of Council assets to support the delivery of corporate goals and objectives.

1.2 On 30 January 2013, the Council approved the Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAS) 2013-2023. This CAS is recognised as representing a long-term broad plan for the management of all Council assets.

1.3 The CAS acts as an "umbrella" document for subsidiary asset management plans and adheres with CIPFA guidance in terms of classifying assets under six generic categories, namely:

- Property (including common good assets);
- Housing;
- Information and Communication Technology ("ICT");
- Roads (including structures, lighting and water infrastructure);
- Open Space; and
- Fleet (including vehicles, plant and equipment).

1.4 The updated themed Asset Management Plans (AMPs) covering the period 2014-2017 were approved by Cabinet on 6 May 2014.

1.5 Quarterly progress reports are submitted to the Council's Capital Programme & Assets Group (CPAG), with annual progress reports being presented to Cabinet.

2. Current Position

2.1   Progress by services in implementing planned actions for 2013/14 is provided in Appendices 1-6.

2.2   Members are advised that the symbols used within the "expected outcome" column within the appendices have the following meaning:

🟢   On Target;
🔺   Slightly adrift of target; and
❌   Significantly adrift of target.

2.3   For each asset category, commentary on progress made in the delivery of the 2013-14 action plans is noted as follows:

2.4   Property

2.4.1   Including the commercial estate, the Council owns 756 properties, with a total value of £375 million.

2.4.2   With effect from April 2013, the Council has adopted a 'Corporate Landlord' approach to the management of property related activity. This function is delivered by the Property Management and Investment team. This corporate approach to property management has been developed to ensure all property assets are managed in an efficient and effective manner that will assist with the delivery of the appropriate Council core objectives.

2.4.3   All planned actions were completed during 2013/14. Key developments of note include the following:

- Successful implementation of life-cycle costing techniques to accurately inform and determine future property maintenance and capital investment requirements;
- Development of a surplus property plan for the period 2013-2023 that identifies properties that have been declared surplus to operational requirements. During the 2013/14 financial year, this focussed approach to property disposals has resulted in 6 properties being sold, with capital receipts of £0.436m being generated. In addition to this, a further 4 properties were sold, subject to the conclusion of legally binding missives;
- Completion of the Bridgegate House refurbishment works and commencement of the Cunninghame House refurbishment project. Upon completion of Cunninghame House, both facilities will offer a modern, flexible and customer serviced approach to how the Council deliver key services to customers;

- Significant progress has been made in collating and interpreting baseline property asset data in relation to the neighbourhood approach to delivering Council and partner services. This intelligence will prove invaluable when exploring possible joint service delivery opportunities during the period 2014-2017; and
- Further implementation of recognised project management techniques, incorporating formal client change request logs and monthly formal update reports to the appropriate Senior Reporting Officers.

2.5   Housing

2.5.1   The Council owns 13,350 housing assets. At March 2014, the net value of these assets was £466.7 million. This includes all social housing, sheltered housing units, garages, hostels and traveller sites.

2.5.2   By 31 March 2014, 97% of the housing stock met the SHQS standard. Continued investment is required to maintain the stock in good condition. The APEX asset management system supports this with comprehensive and robust information, including condition and survey data on all Council houses. This ensures that investment decisions are well-informed and priority driven.

2.5.3   All planned actions were completed during 2013/14. Key developments of note include the following:

- Development and delivery of large-scale mixed tenure external wall insulation schemes, which has significantly improved the insulation qualities of both Council and privately owned properties in some of the most fuel poor areas of North Ayrshire. As at 31 March 2014, this project has benefitted 141 homes within North Ayrshire and has attracted external funding in excess of £1.0m;
- Successful implementation of Property Factoring Services that allows the Council to adopt an increasingly pro-active approach to managing mixed tenure property blocks; and
- Further implementation of recognised project management techniques, incorporating formal client change request logs and monthly formal update reports to the appropriate Senior Reporting Officers.

2.6   Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

2.6.1   The Council's ICT assets are valued at approximately £8.9m with annual support contracts and rental costs in excess of £1.0m. ICT assets provide resources and facilities which support the efficient delivery of the majority of the Council's services. The Council's ICT assets are used by over 6,500 staff and 19,000 school pupils.

2.6.2 Technology has continued to move forward, with the IT industry increasing focus on mobile working and BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) and with hosted services, cloud computing and virtual environments.

2.6.3 All planned actions were completed during 2013/14. Key developments of note include the following:

- Commenced implementation of infrastructure investment including:

  - Upgrade of the Wide Area Network (WAN) – To provide a more resilient network infrastructure with improved bandwidth and a fully managed service;
  - Upgrade of the Local Area Network (LAN) – To provide a more resilient and robust infrastructure through replacement and upgrade of switch hardware throughout the corporate and schools estate;
  - IP Telephony (IPT) – To replace the ageing corporate phone system and benefit from the improved WAN and LAN infrastructure. To provide improved collaboration tools and speed up moves and changes;
  - Wireless Networking (WLAN) for the schools estate – To provide a fully managed and standardised system throughout the schools estate allowing teachers and pupils controlled and effective access to the internet.

- Replaced 1,600 desktops and laptops to support desktop asset rationalisation as part of the PC replacement programme;
- Standardisation of the Microsoft Office environment (Windows 7 operating system and Office 2010) for all corporate users;
- Secured PSN compliance;
- Implemented a secondary backup data centre, providing off-site backup and data replication for business continuity and disaster recovery; and
- Implemented data archiving to allow the transfer of older documents to less expensive storage, freeing up space for live data on high-availability storage.

2.7   Roads

2.7.1   The Council is responsible, as the local Roads Authority, for the maintenance and management of the local road network; this includes 1,031km of road, 276 road bridges, 22,600 street lighting columns, along with street furniture, safety fences, flood defences and coastal features. The total value of the adopted road network, calculated in 2012, is £1.7 billion.

2.7.2   The roads infrastructure in North Ayrshire is vital in supporting the local and wider economy by facilitating the movement of goods and services and connecting people with economic opportunities. The asset management approach identifies the optimal allocation of resources to manage, maintain and improve the road infrastructure.

2.7.3   Roads & Transportation 2013/14 Year end performance update

        10 key actions were identified within the 2013/14 Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) of which 7 have been 100% complete. 2 of the actions were slightly behind schedule at 95% and 75% complete and will be completed early in 2014/15. The remaining key action which had a completion date of May 2016 is still on target and will be carried forward into the new action plan:

●   Customer surveys for Roads and Winter Maintenance have now been completed for 2013/14 in addition to the individual project questionnaires that are routinely carried out. Analysis of the survey results will identify areas for improvement that will be incorporated into the future delivery of the Service.

●   A Road Maintenance Manual has now been introduced as part of the continuous improvements being developed through the national SCOTS asset management project. The manual records how we manage and maintain our road assets; providing links to relevant policies and procedures and guidance to those tasked with management of the road asset.

●   North Ayrshire Council are one of the first local authorities to introduce an inspection and maintenance programme for Vehicle Restraint Systems (VRS) following a robust condition assessment that was carried out on this asset type. The data collected as part of the new asset management based approach will enable a more proactive maintenance regime to be adopted for this asset.

- The implementation of a robust risk based condition assessment process and prioritisation matrix has ensured that investment is targeted effectively across North Ayrshire. Taking into account condition, network hierarchy, stakeholder concerns and community priorities; a Strategic List of Priorities has been developed which effectively targets investment across North Ayrshire. This has also assisted with North Ayrshire Council being identified as being the 5th most improved Authority in relation to the Road Condition Indicator (RCI), which demonstrates a clear link between investment and performance.
- The action to produce a formal Lighting Policy Document encompassing the approach to both rural and urban lighting across North Ayrshire is only slightly behind schedule, with a report being presented to Cabinet in July 2014.

- The development of a process to analyse customer enquiries and service requests has been slightly delayed while a project to integrate the Roads WDM Pavement Management System with the Corporate CRM System was initiated. The integration work to be carried out by ICT has now been programmed to start in July 2014, although an interim solution to obtain the information was provided by the Customer Services Team in lieu of this work being competed.

2.8 Open Space

2.8.1 The Council provides over 2,410 hectares of public open space, including parks, cemeteries, civic spaces, woodlands, sports pitches, equipped play areas, promenades and beaches. The annual revenue expenditure of maintaining open space facilities is £5.9 million.

2.8.2 Two of the key planned actions identified for 2013/14 are complete, with the remaining 6 actions being re-prioritised. Key developments of note include the following:

- Development of the Open Space Strategy which will be presented to Cabinet in the autumn of 2014. The Open Space Strategy will be used to guide the future planning and management of open space within North Ayrshire in a more co-ordinated, proactive and sustainable way.

- The four year plan to improve the walls and infrastructure within North Ayrshire cemeteries has continued, with years 1 & 2 of the project now complete on time and within budget. The project has seen improvements to the cemeteries in Largs, Millport, Kilwinning, Hawkhill, Old Parish (Irvine), Knadgerhill, Dreghorn and Kilbirnie.

- The development of an output specification for land maintained for Housing Services has been completed and is currently being considered by Housing Services. The development work undertaken to inform the output specification consisted of mapping all sites on GIS and assigning them unique numbers which are used to reference each site and the maintenance works required on each of them. The information gathered from this exercise is being used to develop/enhance Streeetscene Operations electronic work scheduling and monitoring system.

2.9 Fleet

2.9.1 The effective allocation and utilisation of transport assets supports the delivery of a wide range of Council Services and contributes towards the successful achievement of many of the Council's objectives.

2.9.2 The establishment of the centralised transport hub has invoked a more corporate and strategic approach to the management of the supply and demand for transport across Council Services. It has also enabled the aggregation of external transport contracts for more effective procurement through the centralisation of the renegotiation and tender processes.

2.9.3 All planned actions were completed during 2013/14. Key developments of note include the following:

- The Transport Hub continued to review and scrutinise the demand for external hired vehicles and plant, through the centralised corporate hire desk. The Hub has increased the internal vehicle pool to utilise, where appropriate, for spot hires;
- Implementation of the corporate tracking system has facilitated enhanced management of vehicle utilisation; and
- Two demonstration electric vehicles, one based at Cunninghame House and the other at the Transport Hub (Montgomerie House) were made available to employees as part of a pilot exercise to review and monitor the suitability of electric vehicles within a vehicle pool. Users were asked to complete feedback forms, to allow the gathering of information and further research is now being carried out to inform further consideration.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that the Cabinet notes the progress made by Council Services in implementing the 2013/14 asset management plans action plans.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

4.1 The updating, review and implementation of the Council's 6 themed AMPs demonstrates robust and prudent management of all of the Council's physical assets, thereby allowing effective investment decisions to be made.

Human Resource Implications

4.2 There are no direct human resource implications.

Legal Implications

4.3 There are no direct legal implications.

Equality Implications

4.4 There are no direct equality implications.

Environmental Implications

4.5 There are no direct environmental implications.

Implications for Key Priorities
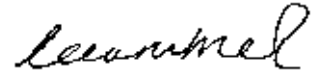
4.6 Robust asset planning contributes towards the delivery of the Council Plan through:

- Core objective 4 (Improving Services) – Operating more efficiently and effectively; and
- Our values 5.3 – Striving for continuous improvement.

5. Consultations

5.1 All relevant Council Services have been fully engaged in the development of the Council's approach to asset management and associated action plans.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Significant progress has been made during the year in the management of the Council's many and varied assets and this is reflected in the delivery of the majority of the planned actions. Where identified actions have not been fully implemented, these have been carried forward for delivery during the life of the 2014-17 AMPs.

LAURA FRIEL
Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :
For further information please contact David Tate, Senior Manager, Property Management & Investment on 225051.

Background Papers
Appendix 1 - Property Asset Management Plan - Action Plan 2013/14;
Appendix 2 - Housing Asset Management Plan - Action Plan 2013/14;
Appendix 3 - ICT Asset Management Plan - Action Plan 2013/14:
Appendix 4 - Roads Asset Management Plan - Action Plan 2013/14;
Appendix 5 - Open Space Asset Management Plan - Action Plan 2013/14; and
Appendix 6 - Fleet Asset Management Plan - Action Plan 2013/14.

2013/14 Property Asset Management Plan

Code	Description	Expected Outcome	Progress Bar	Latest Note	Due Date	Managed By	Assigned To
PAMP_A01	Implement a work plan with the NHS to identify projects that provide future opportunities for joint-working and co-location	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The action has been progressed as far as possible during 2013/14, with PMI collecting all baseline data. It has been agreed that with the creation of the new Health & Social Care Partnership, delivery of joint initiatives will progress through the 2014-17 PAMP.	31-Mar-2014	Yvonne Baulk	Ian Cathcart; Alistair Ross; David Tate
PAMP_A02	Explore Property Partnership opportunities through the Neighbourhood Group approach with other public sector partners eg. Police, Fire, Ambulance Service	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Initial work undertaken to understand partnership opportunities. The three strands of the Property Review (office accommodation, review of educational services and wider portfolio review) are all identified as key deliverables within the 2014-17 PAMP.	31-Mar-2014	Yvonne Baulk	Ian Cathcart; Alistair Ross; David Tate
PAMP_A03	Develop a property performance management framework that can be benchmarked with our benchmarking partners	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four** Performance data now being collected and reported. During 2014/15, this action will be further developed to replicate the	31-Mar-2014	Yvonne Baulk	Ian Cathcart; Alistair Ross; David Tate

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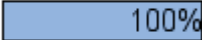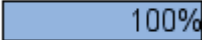
				process in place within the HAMP, thereby providing a consistent approach throughout PMI.			
PAMP_A04	Embed lifecycle costing within the asset management planning process to support capital and major revenue maintenance investment decisions	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The 2014/15 property maintenance projects are based on stock condition and lifecycle information. It is envisaged that all future capital and revenue projects will progress in this manner with lifecycle and condition information being a major consideration.	31-Mar-2014	Yvonne Baulk	Ian Cathcart; Alistair Ross; David Tate
PAMP_A05	Assess and report on the impact of the introduction of Building Information Modelling (BIM) legislation on asset management planning	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** An assessment including a review of the implications and advantages of BIM are now established, with delivery of BIM utilisation to be delivered by March 2017.	31-Mar-2014	Yvonne Baulk	Ian Cathcart; Alistair Ross; David Tate
PAMP_A06	Set up plans for each surplus property with forecasts of likely capital receipts and timescales to formulate a 10 year surplus property project plan	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** A 10 year capital receipt plan is in place and a disposal strategy will be further developed during 2014/15.	31-Mar-2014	Yvonne Baulk	Ian Cathcart; Alistair Ross; David Tate

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2013/14 Housing Asset Management Plan - Detailed Information on all Actions
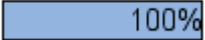
Code & Title	Expected Outcome	Progress Bar	Latest Note	Original Due Date	Due Date	Assigned To
HAMP_A01 Working in conjunction with Building Services and Customer Services, ensure delivery of replacement integrated IT system	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** PMI have completed all tasks required to date and are continuing to work with the project team to ensure successful delivery. The project has now gone beyond the original scope with completion now planned for the second quarter of 2014/15.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A02 Development of a 'Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency Strategy,' which fully reflects the requirements of Housing Services	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update T**he Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) was published on 28 March 2014 and developing a strategy to ensure delivery will be implemented through 2014/15. The Council has delivered a range of ECO and HEEPS projects through 2013/14, all of which have proven successful at reducing fuel poverty and increasing energy efficiency within North Ayrshire homes.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A03 Development and delivery of large-scale mixed tenure external wall insulation schemes, utilising ECO funding and national retrofit monies	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The 2013/14 ECO and HEEPS projects have progressed in-line with the proposal submitted to the Scottish Government. The North Ayrshire 'core bid' for 2014/15 was submitted to the Scottish Government on 11 April 2014.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A04 Introduce property factoring services and processes, that comply with requirements of the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The property factoring service in now in place, along with all information and processes required to adhere with the requirements of the Act. Following an audit on compliance with the Scottish Social	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate

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			Housing Charter, positive feedback was received on the systems being operated by PMI.			
HAMP_A05 Development of Apex Asset Management System that will utilise the asset condition intelligence information to manage the housing stock on the principles of effective asset management	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The stock condition audit is now complete, with Apex performing in-line with expectations.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A06 Development of section wide quality manual, incorporating revised and standardised policy and procedures for all activities undertaken and services provided	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Development work now complete, with a standardised template now in place. This action will be expanded to encompass all of PMI during 2014/15.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A07 Further develop and implement performance management framework for service, including ongoing review against SHBVN and M3	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** All performance management indicators now in place and have been agreed with Housing Services	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A08 Improve the performance of the client's agent role in respect of housing repairs, via implementing agreed actions to control and reduce spend, whilst delivering an improved service to our tenants	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** All actions that were identified at the start of 2013/14 are now complete.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A09 Roll out and utilise recognised project management methodology in relation to all capital and major revenue works	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Prince 2 methodology has now been adopted and has been rolled out across all major projects. Full compliance with 'Audit Scotland - Major Capital Investment In Councils' captured as part of the 2014/15 property asset management plan.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate
HAMP_A10 Deliver SHQS in-line with Housing Services' Business Plan expectations	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Compliance as at 31 March 2014 was 97.08%, compared against a year-end target of 92%.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Ian Cathcart; David Tate

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2013/14 ICT Asset Management Plan - Detailed Information against all actions

Code	Description	Expected Outcome	Progress Bar	Latest Note	Due Date	Managed By	Assigned To
ICTAMAP_A01	Work with Education and Skills on the outcome of the review of IT assets management carried out in 2012/13	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The work scheduled for 2013/14 is complete. However, further work will be taken forward as a new action in the 2014/17 Asset Management Plan and as part of the development of an Education ICT Strategy	31-Dec-2013	Gavin MacGregor	Carol Anne Beattie; Alan Blakely; Lorna Morley
ICTAMAP_A02	Consolidate all Services IT Licences and IT Support Contracts within IT Services	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The work scheduled for 2013/14 is complete. However, further work will be taken forward as a new action in the 2014/17 Asset Management Plan, to work with Finance in the review of IT software licences and support contracts across all Services to consider centralising control of these within IT Services	31-Mar-2014	Gavin MacGregor	Carol Anne Beattie; Alan Blakely; Iain Chisholm
ICTAMAP_A03	Review SOCITM benchmarking KPI measures and develop improvement plan	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Although IT Services slipped back slightly from the highest user satisfaction score in Scotland in 2011,	31-Mar-2014	Gavin MacGregor	Carol Anne Beattie; Alan Blakely; Lorna Morley

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				second place in the 2013 survey has been achieved. The Council missed out on first position by 0.01 (in scale of 1-7). The results are still highly encouraging with highest scores being achieved in 10 of the 20 indicators and no indicator being outwith the top 5. From the 2011 Action Plan, 2 major areas of improvement have generated very rewarding results: The Desktop Replacement Programme allowed the replacement of ~1500 devices. This saw an increase in laptops, with 56% of the estate now being laptop devices to support more agile working. 80% of desktops are now within the manufacturer's warranty period of 3 years or less. The Microsoft Enterprise Agreement has allowed standard Microsoft Windows operating system and standard Microsoft Office providing all Council services with standard, up-to-date products as well as assisting the Council's			

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				compliance with PSN. In addition, the agreement provides tools to control software assets.		
ICTAMAP_A04	Develop roadmaps and replacement plans for ICT assets in line with the ICT Strategy Applications Review Implement New Network Infrastructure - Wide Area Network (WAN) - Local Area Network (LAN) - IP Telephony - Wireless Networks in Schools (WLAN)	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** See sub headings	31-Mar-2015	Gavin MacGregor	Alan Blakely; Iain Chisholm; Brendan Quigley
ICTAMAP_A04a	Corporate Applications Technical and Business Review - Stage 1 - Stage 2	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update Progress** Reviews completed for: Roads Job Costing; RACE Repairs; and The Municipal Bank. The FMS Review is complete. However, implementation is currently on hold due to resource constraints within FACS and will form part of the 2014/17 Action Plan.	31-Jul-2014	Gavin MacGregor	Alan Blakely; Brendan Quigley
ICTAMAP_A04b	Wide Area Network (WAN)	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Procurement complete Contracts negotiated and signed off	31-Mar-2015	Gavin MacGregor	Carol Anne Beattie; Alan Blakely; Iain Chisholm
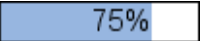
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				Implementation underway Implementation of the Infrastructure investment will take place over the next two years forming part of the 2014/17 Asset Management Plan			
ICTAMAP_A04c	Local Area Network (LAN)	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Procurement complete Contracts negotiated and signed off Implementation underway Implementation of the Infrastructure investment will take place over the next two years forming part of the 2014/17 Asset Management Plan	31-Mar-2015	Gavin MacGregor	Carol Anne Beattie; Alan Blakely; Iain Chisholm
ICTAMAP_A04d	IP Telephony (IPT)	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Procurement complete Contracts negotiated and signed off Implementation underway Implementation of the Infrastructure investment will take place over the next two years forming part of the 2014/17 Asset Management Plan	31-Mar-2015	Gavin MacGregor	Carol Anne Beattie; Alan Blakely; Iain Chisholm
ICTAMAP_A04e	Wireless Networks in Schools (WLAN)	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Procurement complete Contracts negotiated and signed off Implementation underway	31-Mar-2015	Gavin MacGregor	Carol Anne Beattie; Alan Blakely; Iain Chisholm

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				Implementation of the Infrastructure investment will take place over the next two years forming part of the 2014/17 Asset Management Plan			

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2013/14 Actions Roads Asset Management Plan

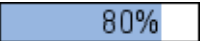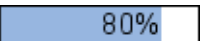| Code & Title	Expected Outcome	Progress Bar	Latest Note	Original Due Date	Due Date	Assigned To
RAMP_1314_A01 To carry out a Roads Service customer questionnaire to ascertain current levels of customer satisfaction with the service provided	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Three Update** Analysis of the returns has now been completed and a report is currently being prepared which will be presented to Corporate Director and HofS.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_1314_A02 Produce a Road Maintenance Manual to record procedures, policies and methodologies for all roads assets	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The first draft of the Road Maintenance Manual is now complete. This manual records how we manage and maintain our road assets providing links to relevant information and Codes of Practice.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_1314_A03 Produce formal Lighting Policy Document encompassing the approach to both rural and urban lighting	🟢	95%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The development of the policy has been incorporated into the Energy and Savings Maintenance project that is currently being reviewed for authorisation.	30-Sep-2013	31-Mar-2014	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_1314_A04 Introduce an inspection programme for Vehicle Restraint Systems and document a procedure for inspection and maintenance	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The procedure for inspection and maintenance of Vehicle Restraint Systems is now documented. An programme of inspections has been developed to commence in April 2014.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_1314_A05 Detailed structural and condition information to be recorded for all retaining walls	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The risk assessment matrix for assessing retaining walls is complete. A training presentation has been developed for the Road Inspectors to enable collection of detailed structural and condition information to commence.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_1314_A06 A19 Inventory data for road assets, where	🟢	35%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** A response process has been implemented to enable	31-Mar-2016	31-Mar-2016	Susan MacFadyen

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maintenance responsibility was previously with other NAC Services, to be collected			emergency repairs to be carried out. A list of priorities has been developed to identify locations requiring major maintenance work. Work is also currently underway to develop a framework for the management of these additional assets which formed part of the asset transfer project.			
RAMP_A03 Develop a process to analyse customer enquiries and service requests	🟢	75%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Work on the interface between Lagan and WDM is being programmed by IT Services. When complete, a full analysis of customer enquiries and service requests will be available. An interim solution has been developed.	30-Jun-2012	30-Apr-2013	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_A07 Undertake traffic counts to assess deterioration due to levels of HGV traffic on rural roads	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Three Update** Traffic counts have now been completed at specified locations on the rural network. The results have now been analysed and will assist in determining appropriate treatments for these routes	30-Apr-2014	30-Apr-2014	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_A09 Establish clear links between investment and performance	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Three Update** The implementation of a robust risk based condition assessment process and prioritisation matrix has ensured that investment is targeted effectively across North Ayrshire. Taking into account condition, network hierarchy, stakeholder concerns and community priorities; a Strategic List of Priorities is produced which targets investment across North Ayrshire.	31-Mar-2013	31-Mar-2014	Susan MacFadyen
RAMP_A12 To further develop risk assessment matrices	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Three Update** A draft priority assessment matrix has been developed for lighting replacement. This produces a score for lighting in each street which will enable a Strategic List of Priorities to be drawn up for Lighting infrastructure. A	30-Sep-2012	31-Mar-2014	Susan MacFadyen

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			risk assessment matrix for categorisation of lighting defects has been finalised.			

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2013/14 Actions Open Spaces Asset Management Plan

Code & Title	Expected Outcome	Progress Bar	Latest Note	Original Due Date	Due Date	Assigned To
OSAMP_1314_A01 Develop and implement the Open Space Action Plan	🟢	95%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Open Space Action Plan has been developed and implementation dates identified.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Donald Wilson
OSAMP_1314_A02 Implement Year 2 of the Cemetary Walls & Pathways Project	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Year 2 Cemetery Walls and Infrastructure programme has been completed on time and within budget.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Donald Wilson
OSAMP_A01 Finalise Local Development Plan.	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The Report of the Examination of the LDP was received on 11th March, as the reporters opted to issue a final call for information in relation to National Planning Framework 3. The reporter's recommendations were submitted to LDP Committee on 4th April, and approval was secure to adopt and publish the new LDP.. The procedural steps required to adopt the LDP, which include a press advertisement and letters to all objectors to the LDP, are now in hand. The LDP is therefore finalised, and formal adoption is anticipated in early May.	31-Oct-2013	31-Oct-2013	David Hammond
OSAMP_A02 Complete audit of Open Space and prepare a strategy for adoption.	🟢	95%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The audit of open spaces and the first draft of the Open Space Strategy is complete as is the following supporting strategies - Sports Pitch, Equipped Play Facilities, Woodland and Cemetery. It is anticipated that the Open Space Strategy will be placed before Cabinet in October 2014.	31-Mar-2013	31-Oct-2014	Donald Wilson

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OSAMP_A03 Expand the range of 'friends' groups to empower communities in the management of open spaces.	🟢	80%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Work is continuing to expand "Friends" groups and during this quarterthe service has established a relationship with Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh which will develop the capability to be involved in ex-situ conservation.	31-Oct-2014	31-Oct-2014	Donald Wilson
OSAMP_A04 Review and develop an action plan to improve information promoting Open Space.	🟢	80%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The 2014 Events Steering Group are leading a review of signage which includes the development of a North Ayrshire strategy looking at gateway, boundary and town signage. Information and interpretation signage requirements promoting open space are included within the developing strategy. Education and Skills are continuing to develop heritage trails. Supported by Streetscene and Irvine Bay, the Harbour side/Burns Trail in Irvine continues to be developed which will incorporate improved information and interpretation signage.	31-Oct-2012	31-Oct-2014	Donald Wilson
OSAMP_A08 Complete service level agreements (SLA's) in respect maintenance.	🟢	95%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Service Level Agreement for Housing has been drafted, Housing Services have still to sign it off.	31-Mar-2013	31-Mar-2013	Donald Wilson
OSAMP_A11 Digitally map all assets.	🟢	95%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The digital mapping of assets continues and during this quarter the servicehas ensured that all bins have been mapped on the GIS. The remaining assets to be mapped is seats, picnic benches, bollards, information panels/signs and water safety equipment stations.	31-Dec-2012	31-Oct-2014	Donald Wilson

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2013/14 Fleet Asset Management Plan Includes

Code & Title	Expected Outcome	Progress Bar	Latest Note	Original Due Date	Due Date	Assigned To
FAMP_1314_A01 Review the use of externally hired vehicles	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** TheTransport Hub continued to review and scrutinise the demand of external hired vehicles and plant, through the centralised Corporate hire desk. The Hub have increased the internal vehicle pool to utilise where appropriate for spot hires.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Gordon Mitchell
FAMP_1314_A02 Review and further Develop the Corporate Transport Hub.	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** TheTransport Hub has been implemented and is working as intended. The Hub continues to review the use of external hired vehicles and plant, through the centralised Corporate hire desk. The suitability of alternatively powered or low emission vehicles are continually reviewed as part of the procurement process for vehicle replacement and electric demonstration vehicles have been made available to assess suitability. Service user meetings are ongoing which allows for reviews of service requirements and will allow for the formalisation of the draft SLA. Change Team resource has been approved to assist in further developments of the Transport Hub facility by reviewing business mileage, grey fleet and current administration processes.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Gordon Mitchell
FAMP_1314_A03 Evaluate alternative and hybrid powered vehicles and where appropriate utilise within the replacement programme	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** The Council had two demonstration electric vehicles, one based at Cunninghame House and the other at the Transport garage. Users were asked to complete Feed back forms, to allow the gathering of information on the suitability of electric vehicles being used within a Council vehicle pool. The response was positive and the electric options will be considered during the grey fleet and pool vehicles review.	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Gordon Mitchell
FAMP_1314_A04 Review the method of purchasing and financing	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** An options appraisal in conjunction with Capita Asset	31-Mar-2014	31-Mar-2014	Gordon Mitchell

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vehicles			Services was carried out in March 2014 to compare the methods of leasing and capital purchase for ten Transit type vans. At this time there was no clear differential between the financial benefit of each model. However provided capital finance is available to support outright purchase there are a number of inherent benefits within capital purchase:- · Avoidance of end of lease costs, particularly in respect of annual mileage and return condition; · Flexibility in respect of use and length of ownership; · Avoidance of early termination penalties should service reviews identify the requirement for a different type of vehicle; · Negates premium lease payments to compensate for low residual values associated with specialist vehicles with limited second-hand opportunities. This exercise will be repeated on a regular basis, particularly when purchasing large numbers of vehicles, to ensure the most efficient method of finance is used and to support the Council's budget setting process.			
FAMP_A11 Complete Service Level Agreements (SLA's) with service users.	🟢	100%	**2013/14 - Quarter Four Update** Regular service user meeting are now taking place, reviewing the implementation of the Transport Hub, budgets and progress. The draft SLA's are being amended to reflect changing service demand.	31-Oct-2012	31-Dec-2013	Gordon Mitchell

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NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 12

17 June 2014

Cabinet

Subject:	**Corporate Health and Safety Group and 1st Tier Joint Consultative Committee: Draft Minutes of Meetings held on 29 May 2014**
Purpose:	To submit the Draft Minutes of the Meetings of the Corporate Health and Safety Group and 1st Tier JCC both held on 29 May 2014.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet agrees to note the draft Minutes contained in Appendices 1 and 2.

1. **Introduction**

1.1 The Council's Corporate Health and Safety Group consists of Elected Members, Officers who chair the four Health and Safety Planning Groups and safety representatives from the Trade Unions. The Group aims:-

- To engage employee representatives as an inclusive partner in the Council's arrangements for the management of health and safety to create a safe working environment that supports the well being of the Council's employees.

- To provide a forum for Council Elected Members, senior managers and safety representatives to meet on a regular and constructive basis to exchange information and resolve issues of mutual concern.

1.2 The 1st Tier Joint Consultative Committee comprises Elected Members, Officers and Trade Union representatives. Its purpose can be summarised as follows:

- "To provide a forum and procedure for Council members and Trade Unions to meet on a regular and constructive basis to exchange information and resolve issues of mutual concern"; and

- "To promote and develop good relations between the Council, Management, employees and their Trade Unions".

2.   Current Position

2.1   Both the Corporate Health and Safety Group and 1st Tier JCC meet up to four times per year. The Draft Minutes of the latest meetings, held on 29 May 2014 are appended for information.

3.   Proposals

3.1   The Cabinet is invited to note the content of the draft Minutes contained in Appendices 1 and 2.

4.   Implications

Financial Implications

4.1   There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resource Implications

4.2   There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

4.3   There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality Implications

4.4   There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

4.5   There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Implications for Key Priorities

4.6   There are no implications for key priorities arising from this report.

5.   Consultations

5.1   No consultations were required.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   The attached draft Minutes are submitted for information.

ELMA MURRAY
Chief Executive

Reference :
For further information please contact Angela Little, Committee Services
Officer on 01294 324132

Background Papers
Nil

Corporate Health and Safety Group
29 May 2014

Irvine, 29 May 2014 - At a Meeting of the Corporate Health and Safety Group of North Ayrshire Council at 1.00 p.m.

Present

Willie Gibson, Robert Barr, Ronnie McNicol, Tom Marshall and Robert Steel (North Ayrshire Council); P. Watkins (UCATT), P. Houston and P. Arkison (GMB); C. Nicol (SSTA); and J. Purvis and L McDaid (Unison).

Also Present

Alan Hill

In Attendance

G. Macgregor, Head of Service and C. Smyth, Acting Team Leader (Health and Safety) (Human Resources and Organisational Development), W. Turpie, Operations Manager (Streetscene) and S. Kean, Area Manager (Environment and Related Services) (Development and Environment); D. Reid, Team Manager (Education and Skills); J. Davis, Manager Business Support (Social Services and Health); ; A. Hale, Health Improvement Officer and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Bell and Peter McNamara.

1.   **Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Group held on 6 February 2014 were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

2.   **Matters Arising**

The Group was advised that the reporting of sexually motivated incidents to the Police would be incorporated into future reports.

3.   **Health and Safety: Progress Report**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the implementation of the Council Health and Safety Action Plan with a summary of main points:-

- Health and Safety groups;
- Guidance on the management of work involving asbestos;
- Management of stress;
- Incident reporting procedures;
- Corporate audit;

- 6 monthly workplace inspections;
- Moving and handling;
- Flu vaccinations;
- Stock conditions surveys on Education and Skills free standing wall structures; and
- Incident statistics

Discussion took place on the following:-

- work by both Corporate Health and Safety and Union representatives to encourage staff to complete the Stress Risk Assessment in order to increase the participation rates and therefore the quantity, quality and range of information gathered;
- paper copies of the stress risk assessment that are available for those staff who do not have access to the on-line facility;
- further time that is required to assess the information from the Stress Risk Assessment;
- management of Stress Guidance that has recently been reviewed;
- a review that has recently been undertaken of the guidance of Management of Stress;
- work that will be undertaken to further examine the three highest categories of absence which includes stress;
- a further breakdown of statistical information to allow comparisons to be made;
- the future provision of dates and times against graphs and pie charts;
- the Health and Safety Executive category 'greater than 7 days' and the future provision of the exact number of days of absence; and
- one incident that resulted in injuries to two Burial operatives.

The Group agreed that (a) an update on the Stress Risk Assessment be provided to the next meeting; and (b) future reports provide (i) the exact number of days absence as a result of incidents; and (ii) a break down of statistical information.

3.   Health and Safety Groups

3.1 Development and Environment

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on progress to date in meeting the actions set out in the Corporate Health and Safety Strategy.

Noted.

3.2 Education and Skills

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) on the current position of Education and Skills management of health and safety.

Discussion took place on:-

- CALM training that is provided for staff when there is an identified issue in a school; and
- the East Lothian scheme that introduced 'no parking' in and around certain schools. The schools were all set within cul-de-sac locations and Traffic Regulation Orders were put in place to prevent parking at specific times of the school day. Consultation had been undertaken with relevant parties and access/parking was permitted for certain groups such as Blue Badge holders and cyclists. To date the scheme is considered to be a success.

Noted.

3.3 Social Services & Health

Submitted report by the Director (North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership) on the current position of the Social Services and Health and Safety Plan.

Noted.

4. Livewell - Healthy Working Lives

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on an update on the Healthy Working Lives Programme.

Discussion took place on the recommendation that cardiovascular risk assessments be incorporated into pre-employment health checks, and that this could be viewed as part of the interview process that candidates required to pass.

The Group agreed (a) that it should be made clear that participation in a cardiovascular risk assessment is part of the NHS Keepwell Programme and not part of the Council's interview and selection process; and (b) to otherwise note the report.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 23 October 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

The meeting ended at 2.00 p.m.

1st Tier Joint Consultative Committee
29 May 2014

Irvine, 29 May 2014 - At a Meeting of the 1st Tier JCC of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Willie Gibson, Robert Barr, Alan Hill, Ronnie McNicol and Tom Marshall (North Ayrshire Council); L. McDaid, J. Purvis, F Boyle and M. Gettins (Unison); P. Watkins, P. Arkison and P. Houston (GMB)

In Attendance

G. Macgregor, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development and A. Young, HR Operations Manager (Finance and Corporate Support); A. Laurenson, Team Manager (Regeneration) (Development and Environment) and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's)

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Bell and Peter McNamara.

1.   Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 6 February 2014 were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

2.   Presentation - Regeneration

The Committee received a presentation from the Team Manager (Regeneration) on regeneration in North Ayrshire.

The presentation included information on:-

- The Council's Role;
- Promoting the strengths of the area;
- Economic development;
- Structure within the Development Planning Service;
- Priorities of Regeneration Team;
- Town Centres;
- Major projects;
- Strategic investment sites;
- Tourism and events;
- External funding;
- Corporate policy; and
- What else might we look at/what are others are doing?

Discussion took place on the following:-

- out of town retail outlets that impact on town centre traders;
- provisions within procurement processes that encourage community benefit;
- work by the Procurement Team to assist local companies with procurement processes and procedures;
- the large social care sector in North Ayrshire and the increase in the number of job in this area;
- work that is done to inform local businesses of the assistance that is available from the Council;
- discussions with companies in relation to a number of projects including the development of quality housing in Ardrossan;
- work that is underway to explore the emerging energy sector;
- self-build housing that has been successful in Inverclyde and could be explored in North Ayrshire; and
- an investment of £5m in the Council's school estate to reduce the energy consumption, carbon footprint and reduce costs.

Noted.

3.   Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 23 October 2014 and will receive a presentation on procurement.

The meeting ended at 3.10 p.m.