

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the Coat of Arms of the City of Edinburgh. The crest includes a crown at the top with four thistles, a shield divided into four quarters (a castle, a lion, a ship, and a unicorn), and a motto scroll at the bottom with the text 'ANE FOR A'.

## **Agenda Item 5**

# **Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2020/21**

## Agenda Item 5

**Title:** Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2020/21

**Meeting:** Scrutiny

**Date:** 8 September 2022

**Submitted By:** Director of Transformation, Communities and Corporate Services

### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data for 2020/21.

### **2. Recommendation(s)**

#### **2.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny:**

Note the report and scrutinise the Council's performance against the LGBF indicators.

### **3. Climate Change Implications**

- 3.1 Falkirk Council is working towards a target of net-zero scope 1 & 2 emissions (building energy and fuel for Council owned vehicles) by 2030.
- 3.2 The Council also has a statutory duty to support Scotland in achieving it's 2045 net zero target. To do this, the Council must reduce all of the emissions it is responsible for and support area wide emissions reduction.
- 3.3 This report contains reference to LGBF indicators that will form part of the performance monitoring framework against these climate change targets and align with the proposed new Council Plan which will report to Council on 28 September 2022.

### **4. Background**

- 4.1 The LGBF is a national approach to preparing, comparing, and improving the performance of Councils in Scotland. The LGBF is compiled by the Improvement Service (IS)<sup>1</sup>, on behalf of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

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<sup>1</sup> The Improvement Service was set up to deliver support to help councils to provide effective community leadership, strong local governance and deliver high quality, efficient local services.

- 4.2 The Accounts Commission use the LGBF indicators as a key element of the statutory performance reporting framework. The Council's appointed auditors will review the LGBF performance indicators when auditing the Council.
- 4.3 The LGBF provides Elected Members, Officers and the public, with comparative service performance data across Scotland. The Council will provide additional data and contextual information for its LGBF results.
- 4.4 The LGBF data are published on the [mylocalcouncil](#) website and will be uploaded to the Falkirk Council website '[Falkirk Performs](#)' for public scrutiny.
- 4.5 Due to the national collation and analysis of LGBF performance data, there is always a consequential time lag on the reporting of LGBF results. The data in this report is for financial year 2020/21, with the national information on this published in February 22 and an update in July 2022. The data allows the Council to benchmark against all of the 32 councils in Scotland.
- 4.6 Comparison of indicators between Falkirk Council and other councils should be made with the knowledge that each council reacts to operational challenges independently, therefore some level of disparity between councils' performance is to be expected. There is ongoing work with the Improvement Service to improve consistency in these measures across councils. The COVID-19 pandemic has also further impacted on the consistency of the data available and the Improvement Service are working with the Scottish Government to obtain missing/delayed data. This means there is only data available for 89 of the 102 indicators showing the Scottish Average against the LGBF framework for 2020/21, as outlined in 6.4.
- 4.7 The Chief Executive of Falkirk Council is the Chair of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework Board which leads the overall development of the national framework.
- 4.8 Appendix 1 details the full suite of indicators and some contextual commentary provided by each Service within the Council in July 2022.

## **5. Considerations**

### LGBF, Best Value and the Council Plan

- 5.1 The LGBF is part of the Council's performance management framework. A review of Council performance is a core action within the Council's [Best Value Strategic Action Plan](#), agreed by Council in February 2022.
- 5.2 An update on the Best Value Strategic Action Plan was reported to the Executive on 23 August 2022. The actions have led to a proposed new Council Plan that has been subject to Elected Members briefings and engagement. The final Council Plan will be presented to Council for consideration and approval on 28 September 2022.

- 5.3 The new plan proposes a refreshed performance management framework and set of success measures to enable the performance monitoring of the proposed Council Plan.
- 5.4 These success measures will be a set of key performance indicators, that will include a focused set of LGBF indicators to sustain quality services and improve performance, in line with Council priorities.

## **6. LGBF 2020/21 Performance Overview**

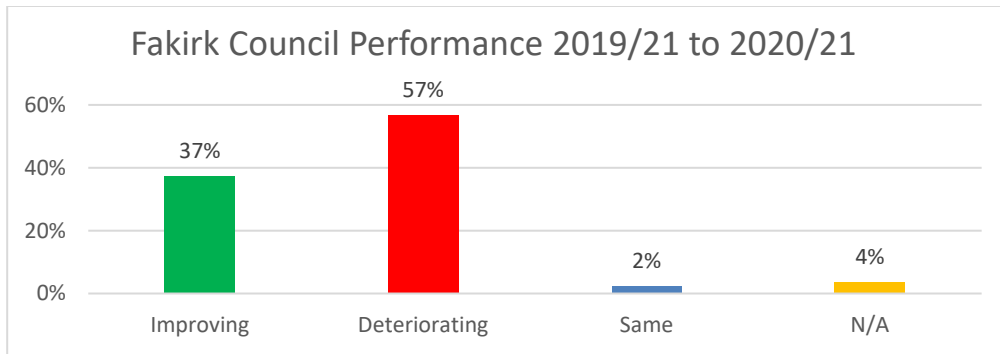
- 6.1 The LGBF indicators cover service cost, service delivery and customer satisfaction. Analysis of the information is useful in terms of identifying material disparities on cost or an improvement or deterioration in performance. It also allows Councils to benchmark their performance to the national average, other individual local authorities, and their own peer group of similar councils to facilitate collaboration and investigation of anomalies.
- 6.2 There are 102 LGBF indicators in total and 89 indicators were reported for Falkirk Council for 2020/21. The outstanding indicators may be reported by the Improvement Service later in the year following investigation into inconsistencies with the data due to the pandemic (but appear as gaps on the tables in the interim). For note, attainment data for 2019/20 & 2020/21 is based on assessments due to disruption of the examination diet during the pandemic (previous years' data were based on examinations).

### **6.3 Falkirk Council Performance from 2019/20 to 2020/21**

The graph below shows the breakdown of the indicators for the Council. From 2019/20 to 2020/21 there were 83 indicators which had data reported against them for **both** sets of data. 19 indicators were missing data from at least one of the years and a comparison could not be made. Of those that could be compared:

- 37% (31) of indicators are improving
- 57% (47) are deteriorating
- 2% (2) indicators showed no movement

The remaining 4% (3) relate to the Financial Sustainability section. They factually report accounting principles to which there is no prescribed direction that is best.

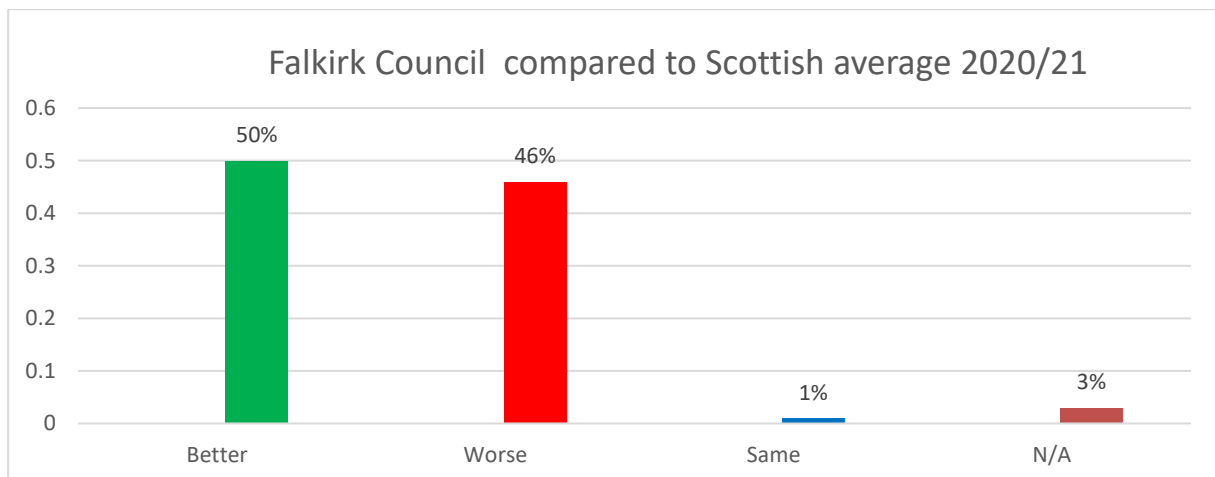


#### 6.4 Falkirk Council performance compared to Scottish average

The chart below shows a comparison of Falkirk Council performance to the Scottish national average for 2020/21. There were 89 indicators which had data reported against them for **both** sets of data. 13 indicators were missing the Scottish average data for 2020/21 and a comparison could not be made. Of those that could be compared:

- 50% (44) of the indicators performed better than the Scottish average.
- 46% (41) did not perform as well as the Scottish average.
- 1% (1) performed the same as the Scottish average.

The remaining 3% (3) relate to the Financial Sustainability section. They factually report accounting principles to which there is no prescribed direction that is best.



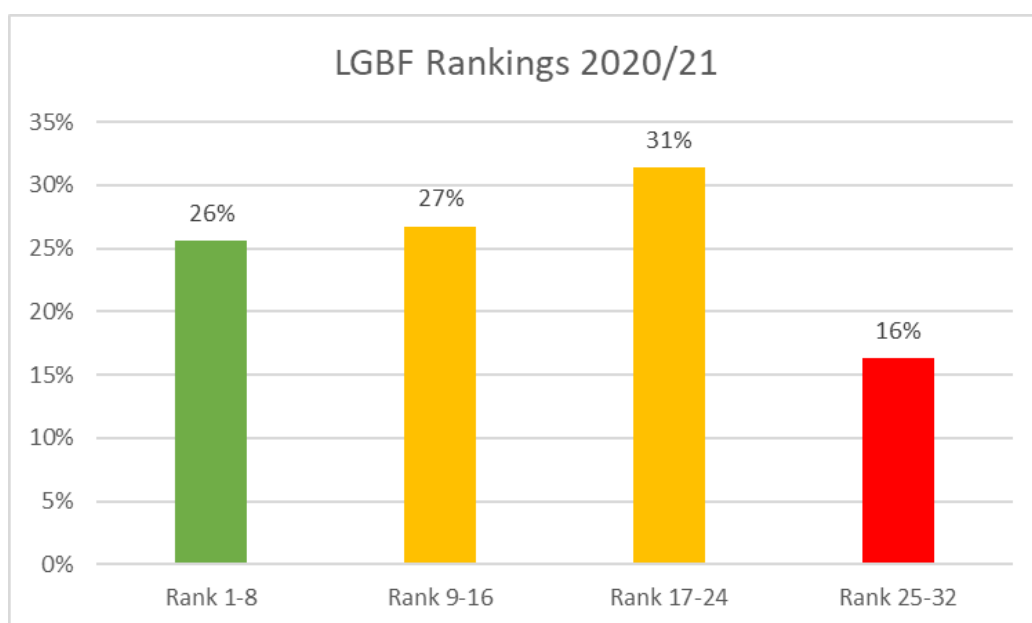
## LGBF Rankings

6.5 The chart below shows the ranking for Falkirk Council in relation to the Scottish national average for 2020/21. There were 87 indicators which had ranking data reported against them.

12 indicators were missing the Scottish average data for 2020/21 and a ranking could not be applied. 3 of the 87 relate to Financial Sustainability and no ranking should be applied. Of those that could be compared:

- 26% (23) indicators were ranked in the top eight Councils in Scotland.
- 58% (50) were in the middle rankings of Councils in Scotland and
- 16% (14) were in the bottom eight Councils in Scotland.

\* Percentages rounded to whole numbers.



## 6.6 Top Ranking Indicators

The following Falkirk Council LGBF indicators are ranked in the top 1 to 8 of councils in Scotland.

Reference	Indicator
SCHN1	Cost per primary school pupil £
SCHN4	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5
SCHN6	% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5
SCHN12a	Overall Average Total Tariff ( <i>Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation - SIMD</i> )
SCHN12b	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 1 ( <i>attainment highest deprivation locale</i> )
SCHN12d	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 3

SCHN12e	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 4
SCHN12f	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 5 ( <i>attainment lowest deprivation locale</i> )
SCHN13a	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy
SCHN20a	School Exclusion Rates (per 1000 pupils)
SCHN20b	School Exclusion Rates for Looked After Children (per 1000 looked after children)
SCHN22	% Child Protection Re-Registrations within 18 months
SSW5	The Net Cost of Residential Care Services per Older Adult (+65) per Week
SENV6	% of total household waste that is recycled
SCORP 04	The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax
SCORP 06a	Sickness absence days per teacher
SCORP 08	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days %
SHSN5	Percentage of council houses that are energy efficient
SECON4	% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises
SECON8	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband
SECON12b	Claimant Count as a % of 16-24 Population ( <i>Claiming benefits</i> )

## 6.7 Bottom Ranking Indicators

The following Falkirk Council LGBF indicators are ranked in the bottom 8 of the 32 councils in Scotland:

Reference	Indicator
SCHN9	Balance of Care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the Community
SSW1	Older Persons (Over65) Home Care Costs per Hour
SSW6	Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges
SSW8	Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, per 1,000 population (75+)
SC&L1	Cost per attendance of sport and leisure facilities (including swimming pools)
SC&L2	Cost per visit to libraries
SC&L3	Cost per visit to museums and galleries
SENV3c	Street Cleanliness Score

SENV4b	% of Class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment 10-12
SCORP 03b	The percentage of the highest paid 5% employees who are women
SHSN4b	Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs
SECON9	Town Vacancy Rates
SCLIM01	CO2 emissions area wide per capita

## 6.8 How these link to the proposed Council Plan

6.8.1 Councils are encouraged to interpret the LGBF information and use it to assist in reporting against the strategic priorities being pursued in their own strategic plan. Preparation for the proposed new Council Plan has incorporated a review of the LGBF results for Falkirk Council.

6.8.2 Whilst these will be subject to approval and change, the suggested LGBF indicators and 2020/21 results are likely to be the most relevant and meaningful LGBF measures for the areas of work to be undertaken by Council Services over the next five years. These will be in relation to communities, inequalities and poverty, education, sport and leisure, culture, economic growth and climate change. The key metrics are likely to include:

- Reduction in 'cost per attendance' of sport and leisure facilities.
- More looked after children are in community placements.
- Improve School Attainment rates.
- Improve School Attendance Rates.
- Less children living in poverty.
- Cost per visit to Libraries.
- Satisfaction with libraries.
- Cost per visit to Museums.
- % Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes.
- Improvement in cleanliness of our streets.
- Increase in household waste that is recycled.
- CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of LA per capita.
- Percentage of Buildings considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability.
- No of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population.

6.8.3 When the Council Plan is reported to Council in September, Members will be asked as part of this, to take a final decision on the range of proposed LGBF indicators, which will be supplemented by local indicators.



## **6.9 Partnership Working and Family Groups**

- 6.9.1 All 32 councils participate in a range of LGBF Benchmarking events, where colleagues from services come together to collaborate, to share practice and learn together. Councils are grouped together in Family Groups at these events, to bring together similar councils in terms of geography or deprivation.

The Falkirk Council family group:

- Falkirk
- Dumfries & Galloway
- Fife
- South Ayrshire
- West Lothian
- South Lanarkshire
- Renfrewshire
- Clackmannanshire

- 6.9.2 Benchmarking activity helps the Council to identify and learn from good practice in other local authorities. The use of the LGBF and other benchmarking data to support service improvement is ongoing within the Council.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 There is ongoing review and development of the LGBF in consultation with councils and partners. Work will continue with the Improvement Service on the validation of the LGBF data, with further reviews of the dataset thereafter.

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **Resources**

- 8.2 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

### **Legal**

- 8.3 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

### **Risk**

- 8.4 There are no direct risk implications arising from this report. The Council's corporate risk register will record relevant risks and mitigations in relation to performance as appropriate.

## **Equalities**

- 8.5 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. It should be noted that the equality indicators will have changed since the LGBF data was produced and they continue to be monitored.

## **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 8.6 There are no direct sustainability/environmental impact implications arising from this report.

## **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1 The report provides an overview of the 202/21 LGBF results for scrutiny.

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## **Director of Transformation, Communities and Corporate Services**

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**Date:** 22 August 2022

## **APPENDIX 1: LGBF Performance Report**

## Local Government Benchmark Framework

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework is based on seven overall service groupings which cover the major public-facing services provided to local communities and the support services. These groupings are;

1. Children's Services (Education and Child Care)
2. Adult Social Care (A link to separate report to IJB has been included in report)
3. Environmental Services
4. Culture and Leisure
5. Housing
6. Corporate Support Services
7. Economic Development and Planning
8. Financial Sustainability
9. Tackling Climate Change

Legend:



4 green bars = top quartile



3 amber bars = top - median quartile



2 amber bars = median - bottom quartile























1 red bar = bottom quartile

This report contains the 'Scotland Value' benchmark for each performance indicator and its quartile position based on 'All Scottish Performance Indicators' across the 32 councils in Scotland. The top 8 performing councils = 4 green bars, top quartile. Top Median quartile = 3 amber bars and so on.












The COVID-19 pandemic had a detrimental effect on many of the indicators outlined within this report. Comparison of indicators between Falkirk Council and other councils should be made with the knowledge that each council reacted to the operational challenges independently therefore some level of disparity between councils' performance is to be expected.

Falkirk appears in the top (green quartile) in 23 of the indicators, the top-median quartile on 23 indicators, the bottom-median quartile on 27 indicators and in the bottom quartile (red) indicators 14 times.

## 1. Children's Services

Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	All Scottish PIs
SCHN1	Cost per primary school pupil £	£4,655.15	£5,149.78	£5,606.21	£5,897.19	
SCHN2	Cost per secondary school pupil £	£7,000.90	£7,015.42	£7,275.82	£7,629.21	
SCHN3	Cost per pre-school place £	£5,517.92	£6,891.41	£9,426.68	£9,254.90	
SCHN4 (in plan)	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5	66%	68%	73%	67%	
SCHN5 (in plan)	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6	37%	38%	43%	41%	
SCHN6 (in plan)	% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5	46%	50%	57%	49%	
SCHN7 (in plan)	% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6	19%	22%	24%	23%	
SCHN8a	The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week £	£4,173.08	£3,508.61	£4,230.47	£4,379.87	
SCHN8b	The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week £	£335.62	£330.23	£326.25	£382.18	
SCHN9 (in plan)	Balance of Care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the Community	82.27%	81.84%	82.8%	90.3%	
SCHN10 (in plan)	% of Adults Satisfied with local schools	68.07%	71.40%	n/a	n/a	
SCHN11 (in plan)	Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations (subject to change to align with new measure from Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool)	94.87%	92.38%	95.43%	95.48%	
SCHN12a (in plan)	Overall Average Total Tariff	951.16	1,001.98	1,127.58	972.41	
SCHN12b (in plan)	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 1	703	716	767	688	
SCHN12c (in plan)	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 2	748	830	821	817	
SCHN12d	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 3	919	1,017	1,155	975	
SCHN12e	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 4	1,213	1,199	1,348	1,108	
SCHN12f	Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 5	1,174	1,302	1,440	1,320	
SCHN13a (in plan)	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy	72.03%		70.21%	67%	
SCHN13b (in plan)	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy	79.29%		77.68%	75%	
SCHN14a	Literacy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils	24.3%		23.92%	24.7%	

## Appendix 1








Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	2020/21 All Scottish PIs
SCHN14b	Numeracy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils	18.19%		21.12%	21.42%	
SCHN17	% of children meeting developmental milestones at their 27-30 month review	83.25%	86.8%	84.64%	85.06%	
SCHN18	% of funded Early Years Provision which is graded good or better	98.51%	94.1%	94.03%	90.93%	
SCHN19a (in plan)	School Attendance Rates (per 100 pupils)	92.94%		92%	92%	
SCHN19b (in plan)	School Attendance Rates for Looked After Children (per 100 Looked After Children)	85.16%	87%	87%	87.89%	
SCHN20a (in plan)	School Exclusion Rates (per 1000 pupils)	16.46		8.85	11.87	
SCHN20b (in plan)	School Exclusion Rates for Looked After Children (per 1000 looked after children)	80.27		61	77.81	
SCHN21	Participation Rate for 16-19 year olds (per 100)	92.3%	91.92%	91.82%	92.18%	
SCHN22	% Child Protection Re-Registrations within 18 months	3.94%	5.7%	1.69%	7.01%	
SCHN23 (in plan)	% Looked After Children with more than one placement within the last year	33.43%	20.6%	20.9%	16.79%	
SCHN24 (in plan)	% of children living in poverty (after housing costs)	23.76%	24.78%	21.52%	20.86%	

The Council continues to perform well on cost per primary school coming in well below the Scottish average. Indeed, only four councils in Scotland spend less per Primary School Pupil than Falkirk Council. Falkirk's spend per Secondary pupil is in the 2nd quartile and is £353 less than the Scottish average. These costs reflect the very efficient class configuration models that are used within the primary sector and reflect the DSM efficiencies that have been included in our staffing assessment model in High Schools. Also, some of our schools have very large school roll which allows for the benefits of economies of scale. Despite these cost efficiencies, attainment remains high across both settings. Early years provision is consistently graded good or better and tracks above the Scottish average. Spend is close to the Scottish average although coming in slightly higher at £9,254.90 per pre-school place and has followed an upward trend over the past few years due to the expansion of early years provision to 1140 hours per annum and are slightly higher than the Scottish average as they reflect that our provision covers non-statutory provision of childcare places for babies and toddlers, whereas some Councils do not provide this service yet.

SCHN9 has now been put into the new Council Plan to monitor.

\*Comparisons with attainment performance in Secondary Schools should be made with caution due to the Scottish Government decision to pause SQA Examinations in favour of teacher assessment process due to COVID-19 disruptions.

## 2 Adult Social Care

Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	2020/21 All Scottish PIs
SSW1	Older Persons (Over65) Home Care Costs per Hour	£22.65	£25.00	£36.47	£27.65	
SSW2	Self directed support spend for people aged over 18 as a % of total social work spend on adults	5.23%	6.1%	4.77%	8.17%	
SSW3a	% of people aged 65 and over with long-term care needs who receiving personal care at home	65.14%	65.65%	66.8%	61.71%	
SSW4a	% of adults receiving any care or support who rate it as excellent or good		78.8%			
SSW4b	% of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life		78.8%			
SSW4c	% of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible		79.16%			
SSW4d	% of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided		78.6%			
SSW4e	% of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role		36.58%			
SSW5	The Net Cost of Residential Care Services per Older Adult (+65) per Week	£322.60	£363.88	£300.66	£438.59	
SSW6	Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges	117.38	122.07	162.96	120.03	
SSW7	Proportion of care services graded good or better	83.82%	87.43%	87%	82.5%	
SSW8	Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged, per 1,000 population (75+)	1,177.9	1,020.14	684.29	484.28	

Falkirk Health & Social Care Partnership have already reported their LGBF performance to Falkirk Integration Joint Board In June 2022 – see [here](#).

## 3. Culture &amp; Leisure














Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	2020/21 All Scottish PIs
SC&L1 (in plan)	Cost per attendance of sport and leisure facilities (including swimming pools)	£4.21	£3.89	£81.44	£40.36	
SC&L2 (in plan)	Cost per visit to libraries	£3.98	£5.58	£24.79	£2.88	
SC&L3 (in plan)	Cost per visit to museums and galleries	£7.71	£7.64	£118.80	£10.14	
SC&L4	Cost of Parks and Open Spaces per 1,000 of the Population	£17,631.28	£17,844.49	£17,999.50	£19,112.33	
SC&L5a (in plan)	% of adults satisfied with libraries	69.30%	69.97%			
SC&L5b	% of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	82.33%	80.00%			
SC&L5c	% of adults satisfied with museums and galleries		58.80%			
SC&L5d	% of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	74.33%	72.67%			

The 'cost per visit' metrics here are made up of two parts: costs and visits. Whilst cost increased slightly for Sports and Leisure this was not out of line with the overall trend for peer councils. Costs for both Libraries and Museums reduced during the period 2020/21, again in line with peers. Falkirk has a large number of sports and leisure facilities for its population whereas other councils tend to have fewer, better attended facilities. The number of visits to physical locations was affected considerably as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated enforced closures for social distancing and this has had a devastating impact on the 'cost per visit' metric. Explanation is two-fold:

- 1) The Trust staff were furloughed and not able to re-direct energies into providing existing services via alternative channels. Virtual museum visits and online lending in particular (Edinburgh Libraries won the PressReader International Award for most newspapers read online in the world in 2021).
- 2) Falkirk's locations were not used as Critical Community Response Hubs, COVID-19 vaccination or testing centres as they were in some other local authority areas who may have counted these as 'visits'.

The Culture & Leisure Service was within Falkirk Community Trust until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and is now directly controlled by the Council. The council is actively working to drive physical footfall back into premises and there is opportunity to investigate the digital methods other councils are using to increase virtual 'visits'.

## 4. Environmental Services

Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	All Scottish PIs
SENV1a	Net cost of Waste collection per premise	£60.97	£54.15	£65.74	£72.35	
SENV2a	Net waste disposal cost per premises	£75.66	£66.54	£74.38	£104.50	
SENV3a	Cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population £	12417	14445	14966	14845	
SENV3c (in plan)	Street Cleanliness Score	91.10	90.84	81.12	90.10	
SENV4a	Road cost per kilometre £	£10,725.97	£8,742.43	£10,792.75	£9,667.27	
SENV4b	% of Class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment 10-12	25.63%	28.7%	33.6%	29.8%	
SENV4c	% of Class B roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment 10-12	35.28%	31.69%	35.1%	34%	
SENV4d	% of Class C roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment 10-12	36.54%	34.23%	36.8%	33.6%	
SENV4e	Percentage of Unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	37.75%	39.16%	39.10%	38.30%	
SENV5	Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population £	£21,760.01	£18,006.09	£18,124.07	£18,463.04	
SENV5a	Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population £	£6,897.84	£6,749.95	£6,726.46	£5,857.30	
SENV5b	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population £	£14,862.17	£11,256.14	£11,397.61	£12,605.74	
SENV6 (in plan)	% of total household waste that is recycled	50.8%	53.02%	51.2%	42%	
SENV7a	% of adults satisfied with refuse collection	64.90%	62.23%			
SENV7b	% of adults satisfied with street cleaning	63.93%	60.60%			

The Council typically reports below average spend on the cost of waste collection. Although no longer in the top quartile, the Council's performance is still favourable and coming in at £65.74 vs a Scottish average of £72.35 per premise. The Council continues to remain in the top eight councils with waste disposal costs that are consistently lower than both our peer group and the Scottish average. Spend in 2020/21 was £30.12 per premise less than the Scottish average at just £74.38.











Council performance on the Cost of Street Cleaning per 1000 population metric is very close to the Scottish Average and has remained consistent throughout the pandemic. The marginal increase in spend in the last two years is not out of line with the experience of other councils. However, the street cleanliness score for the council is now the very lowest among all the councils in Scotland due to a rapid decline in 2020/21 where we faced significant operational



pressures due to the pandemic. Street cleansing fell under the non-essential work category during COVID-19 and this led to our low score. Litter was seen as non-essential and an increase in fly tipping incidents caused additional pressures as they had to be prioritised due to the potential impact of such waste on public health during a pandemic.

There has been significant impact on Roads performance, in particular operational capacity, due to the pandemic and the restrictions that were enforced e.g social distancing in vehicles, staff absence etc. Cost reduction and quality improvements remain a top priority for the service. There is a renewed focus on both costs and quality of our roads and this is reflected in The Council Plan and the Service Delivery Plan going forward.

## 5. Corporate Services






Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	2020/21 All Scottish PIs
SCORP01 (in plan)	Support services as a % of total gross expenditure	3.15%	3.45%	3.61%	4.06%	
SCORP 4 (in plan)	The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax	£6.60	£4.92	£4.88	£6.64	
SCORP 6a (in plan)	Sickness absence days per teacher	4.68	4.88	2.8	4.16	
SCORP 6b (in plan)	Sickness Absence Days per Employee (excluding teachers)	10.43	11.64	9.67	9.71	
SCORP 7	Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year %	96.64%	96.42%	95.89%	94.77%	
SCORP 8	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days %	96.31%	97.01%	95.64%	91.76%	
SCORP03b	The percentage of the highest paid 5% employees who are women	49.33%	48.55%	49.84%	58.3%	
SCORP03c	The gender pay gap	5.19%	4.6%	4.86%	3.66%	
SCORP-ASSET1	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use %	87.73%	87.55%	87.54%	82.31%	
SCORP-ASSET2 (in plan)	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition %	90.15%	90.21%	90.41%	89.2%	

The council continues to perform well by collecting Council Tax at a cost significantly under the Scottish average due to operational efficiencies.

Sickness days per teacher has previously been in line with Scottish expectations however in 20/21 this reduced to just 2.8 days, per teacher, per year. Although Falkirk Council is well below the Scottish Average, much of Scotland is reporting a similar trend for 20/21 coming in at well below pre-pandemic levels.

The council acknowledges that we typically track behind the Scottish average on the highest paid 5% employees who are women however our performance here remains broadly consistent and we remain committed to monitoring and promoting equal gender pay, and indeed, equality for all.

## 6. Housing














Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	2020/21 All Scottish PLs
SHSN1b	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year	8.09%	8.42%	10.17%	8.19%	
SHSN2	% of council rent that was lost due to houses remaining empty	1.04%	1.31%	1.58%	1.38%	
SHSN3 (in plan)	% of council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	97.73%	97.78%	89.96%	90.26%	
SHSN4b	Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs	6.79	5.55	13.88	7.28	
SHSN5	Percentage of council houses that are energy efficient	95.61%	96.37%	96.51%	86.35%	

Rent arrears have increased bringing Falkirk Council above the Scottish average. This is consistent with an increase across Scotland due to the economic fall out of the COVID-19 pandemic with most local authorities suffering a downturn in rent collection. Falkirk was more acutely impacted as over recent years a holistic housing model reliant on personal, primarily face to face, contact (which was not a practical option) has been implemented for arrears which has had an effect on the gap between Falkirk and the Scottish average. Recovery plans are in place to address the trend.

Housing quality was impacted by new legislation and a change to the way Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing is measured. This has resulted in less properties meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standards new criteria bringing the performance to just under the Scottish Average where previously we excelled. Energy efficiency dipped slightly (although we remain in the top quartile) due to COVID-19 restrictions and the delay in starting the window and door replacement project.

Non-emergency repairs were performing well in prior years but have been impacted by the pandemic with Falkirk Council now sitting in the lowest quartile. COVID-19 brought particularly challenging pressure on operational capacity. Restrictions in place drove a focus on conducting only 'essential' work, social distancing (e.g. shared vehicles) brought further pressures still. Falkirk Council faced significant Union pressure on these matters which further compounded the challenge and could go some way to explaining the disparity in performance against other councils. These pressures meant that the reduced operational capacity was prioritised in favour of meeting statutory requirements such as homelessness. It is also worth noting that throughout the pandemic the council made a conscious decision to maintain consistent performance in emergency repairs which again had a knock-on effect on the non-emergency repair performance due to the operational challenges discussed above. Emergency repair data for other councils is not known and therefore makes direct comparison of operational effectiveness on repairs overall very challenging.



## 7. Economic Development

Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	All Scottish PLs
SECON1 (in plan)	% Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes	24.26%	14.45%	3.79%	5.98%	
SECON2	Cost per planning application	£4,526.32	£4,960.66	£5,810.09	£5,043.90	
SECON3	Average time taken to deliver a commercial planning application decision	8.1	7.14	10.14	11.08	
SECON4	% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises	32.34%	33.00%	36.20%	29.11%	
SECON5 (in plan)	No of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population	19.33	19.77	12.77	11.19	
SECON6	Cost of Economic Development & Tourism per 1,000 population	70,419.11	54,882.22	64,617.59	87,793.45	
SECON7	Proportion of people earning less than the living wage	18.9%	15.2%	14.9%	15.2%	
SECON8	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband	96.7%	97.1%	97.1%	93.79%	
SECON9 (in plan)	Town Vacancy Rates	14.38%	14.38%	15.05%	12.41%	
SECON10 (in plan)	Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes	58.87	58.87	35.83	38.91	
SECON11	Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita	25,265.06	25,607.56	23,094.17	24,720.82	
SECON12a	Claimant Count as a % of Working Age Population	3.4%	3.3%	5.9%	6.1%	
SECON12b	Claimant Count as a % of 16-24 Population	4.59%	4.33%	8.14%	7.17%	

For 20/21 Falkirk Council placed 21 out of 32 with a cost per planning application of £5810 which is roughly consistent with the last few years. It is also worth noting that the number of planning applications has dropped significantly between 19/20 and 20/21, and this has driven up the cost per application, despite costs remaining similar year-on-year.

Town vacancy rates have moved into the lowest performing quartile in 20/21. The Town Centre Capital Fund award was £2.6m. Larger projects have been delayed due to COVID-19, now programmed to be delivered in Falkirk, Grangemouth and Bo'ness during 2022/23. These are targeted at specific physical town centre interventions and environmental improvements. Other activity has included targeted grant support to owners of large vacant commercial premises on Falkirk High St for feasibility support to allow consideration of repurposing large empty retail units. New external grant funding applications supporting our town centres when launched by funders, will be actively bid for during 22/23.

## 8. Financial Sustainability

Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	All Scottish PLs
SFINSUS01	Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue	12%	10%	17%	23.6%	
SFINSUS02	Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue	3%	3%	3%	3.52%	
SFINSUS03	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - General Fund	5	3	3.38	6.24	
SFINSUS04	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - Housing Revenue Account	19	20	31	22.91	
SFINSUS05	Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure	99.9%	100.9%	101.59%	97.44%	

SFINSUS01 - Although Falkirk is in the lower quartile it is not significantly different from most other councils. With a few exceptions, councils are tightly grouped around the Scottish average.

SFINSUS03/4 - These indicators reflect the percentage of resources that pay the cost of borrowing. For Falkirk the increasing percentage for housing reflects the substantial housing capital investment programme. Conversely the Council has lower General Fund borrowing costs in relation to other Councils.

## 9. Tackling Climate Change

Code	Title	Falkirk Data			Benchmark & Quartile	
		2018/19 Value	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Scotland - Value	2020/21 All Scottish PIs
SCLIM01 (in plan)	CO2 emissions area wide per capita	14.76%	13.81%	13.28%	4.62%	
SCLIM02	CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of LA per capita	4.37%	4.03%	3.61%	4.09%	

SCLIM01 (in plan) has been put into the new Council Plan to monitor.