

Report

Report to:	Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum
Date of Meeting:	21 March 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Local Government Benchmarking Framework Update on Future Reporting
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ provide the Forum with an update on future reporting of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the progress made with the Local Government Improvement Service on the Council's use of the LGBF be noted;
- (2) that the proposal to embed LGBF measures within Connect reporting via a new appendix at Q4 as described in section 4 be endorsed; and
- (3) that the mapping of remaining LGBF measures across other reporting mechanisms as described in section 4 be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. In the course of 2021, the Council raised a number of concerns about the LGBF with the Local Government Improvement Service (IS) and the LGBF Board.
- 3.2. Following this dialogue, the Council agreed to work with the IS to review how it uses the LGBF and in particular to develop an approach to LGBF reporting which will better reflect the Council's priorities and support scrutiny of progress in priority areas. These developments were reported to the Forum on 26 October 2021.
- 3.3. A subsequent report to the Forum on 16 August 2022 presented interim results from this work, including a draft suite of strategic LGBF indicators aligned to the outcomes within the new Council Plan.
- 3.4. This report presents the outcome of the review of LGBF reporting with a focus on new reporting arrangements which will better reflect the Council's priorities and strengthen scrutiny of council performance through the Framework.

4. Refining the Focus of LGBF Reporting

- 4.1. In December 2021, the Improvement Service provided a bespoke analysis of LGBF indicators for the Council, structured around the emerging key themes for the draft new Council Plan.

- 4.2. The aim of this exercise was to begin looking at the LGBF indicators more thematically and more strategically. Resources were asked to review the IS analysis and, in tandem with work on the new Council Plan, consider which LGBF indicators added value and which would be the best candidates for inclusion in a subset of indicators for future reporting.
- 4.3. At the meeting on 16 August 2022, the Forum noted the suite of LGBF measures shown at appendix 1. This matrix identifies 36 of the 99 LGBF indicators for inclusion within the reporting arrangements for the Council Plan. This is 36% of the current LGBF suite.
- 4.4. It was agreed that this strategic LGBF subset should be incorporated into reporting arrangements for the Council Plan and be reported alongside other measures relevant to the achievement of the six outcomes. To achieve this, the suite of strategic LGBF indicators will be brought together into a new appendix to the Council Plan Q4 report. This appendix will follow the format of the appendix currently provided with the annual LGBF results and will show the latest data for the Council together with the Scottish average and results for the last three years.
- 4.5. It is important to note that due to the time-lag involved in publication of LGBF figures, the results in this LGBF appendix will not cover the same period as the Q4 report, however, Q4 is considered the most appropriate time to take stock of performance against the Council Plan and to review the most up-to-date position regarding the strategic set of LGBF indicators.
- 4.6. To complement the reporting of this strategic LGBF suite, the remaining LGBF indicators have been mapped across the Council's reporting arrangements to identify where LGBF indicators can be reported alongside additional narrative and contextual data. The results of this exercise are shown in table 1 below. A significant proportion of LGBF indicators are included within the Council's Annual Performance Spotlights and the Public Performance Reporting pages of the website. Monitoring of visits to these web pages shows that this information is accessed regularly throughout the year and helps the Council fulfil its statutory duty with respect to use of the LGBF and public reporting of performance.

Table 1 – number and % of LGBF indicators reported via different routes

Route	Number of Indicators Included	% of total LGBF Suite
Annual LGBF results and action plan	99	100%
Strategic Suite of Indicators (see above)	36	36%
Annual Performance Spotlights or Public Performance Reports	69	70%
Other routes (e.g. Resource Plans)	29	29%

- 4.7. To summarise the outcome of the above work:-
- ◆ The annual LGBF report will continue to be provided to PRSF, containing all LGBF indicators. As other reporting arrangements mature, the scale of this report may be reduced.
 - ◆ The strategic suite of indicators aligned to Council Plan outcomes will feature in a new appendix to the Council Plan Q4 report, giving an opportunity to assess the Council's performance over time and comparative performance in the context of the Council Plan priorities.

- ◆ Further LGBF indicators will feature in the Council's public performance reporting, both in the Annual Performance Spotlights and in the PPR pages on the website. These are topic-based and place the LGBF information in a richer context than is possible in the annual LGBF report.

4.8. The conclusion of this work provides the Council with a comprehensive approach to LGBF which sees the indicators embedded across our reporting arrangements, with a strategic focus on those which are most relevant to the priorities for the Council. These arrangements strengthen opportunities to scrutinise the LGBF and enhance the role of the LGBF in the Council's public performance reporting.

4.9. Elected Members will continue to receive the annual LGBF report through the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum. However, the implementation of the approach described in this paper will offer more opportunities to scrutinise LGBF within an appropriate context and in the course of strategic decision-making. The focus will be placed on those indicators which are most relevant to the Council's outcomes as set out in the Council Plan Connect – illustrated in the matrix described at 4.3 above.

5. Next Steps and Recommendations

5.1. The Forum is asked to note the engagement with the IS on the LGBF and to note the reporting intention set out in section 4 above with regard to the Council Plan Connect.

5.2. The Forum is also asked to note the mapping of LGBF indicators across other reporting streams including the Annual Performance Spotlights and the Public Performance Reporting pages of the website.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. There are no direct employee implications.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. There are no direct financial implications.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

8.1. There are no direct climate change, sustainability and natural environment implications arising from this report.

9. Other Implications

9.1. Considering the detail of the report and identifying actions as appropriate contribute towards effective risk management.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.

10.2. There is no requirement for consultation on the content of the report.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

23 February 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
- ◆ Ambitious, self-aware and improving

Previous References

- ◆ Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum – 26 October 2021 – LGBF Update
- ◆ Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum – 16 August 2022 – LGBF Update

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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Appendix 1 – LGBF suite aligned to Connect Outcomes

Communities and Environment Caring, connected, sustainable communities	Education and Learning Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships	Health and Wellbeing People live the healthiest lives possible	Children and Young People Our children and young people thrive	Housing and Land Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live	Our Economy Thriving business, fair jobs and vibrant town centres	Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value
Refuse collection (recycled waste) ENV6	Looked After Children (LAC) Pupil Attendance Rates (CHN19b)	Delayed Discharges (SW8)	Child Poverty Rates (CHN24)	Rent Arrears (HSN1b)	Superfast broadband (ECON8)	% of income due from Council Tax received (CORP7)
Street Cleansing Score (ENV3c)	Literacy Attainment Gap (CHN14a)	Hospital readmissions (SW6)	Developmental Milestones (CHN17)	Voids (HSN2)	Town centre vacancy rates (ECON9)	Uncommitted General Fund (FinSus2)
Libraries Satisfaction (C&L5a) new	Numeracy Attainment Gap (CHN14b)	Home Care Costs (SW1)	LAC Placement Stability (CHN23)	Repair time (HSN4b)	Unemployment (ECON1)	Actual outturn as a % of budgeted expenditure (FINSUS5)
Leisure Satisfaction (C&L5d)	% Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 (SIMD) (CHN4)	Residential Care Costs (SW5)	Balance of Care CHN9	Energy Efficiency (HSN5a)	% earning less than the real Living Wage (ECON7)	
Museums and galleries Satisfaction (C&L5c) new	% School Leavers entering Positive Destinations (CHN11)		LAC Costs Community (CHN8b)		Roads Condition (all 4 measures ENV4b, ENV4c, ENV4d & ENV4e)	
Carbon Emissions (CLIM2)			LAC Costs Residential (CHN8a)			