

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

19 February 2015

Report by Chief Executive

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK: 2013-14 PERFORMANCE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) and present an overview of the Council's performance against the indicators from 2011/12 to 2013/14 (Performance report attached at Annex 1).

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Cabinet:
- (a) Consider the Council's performance against the LGBF indicators and the action being taken by departments to address any performance issues.

BACKGROUND

3. The LGBF has been recorded and publically reported by all Scottish councils as a statutory requirement since last year. The framework provides comparative analyses for 55 indicators at a council level (Note that two relate to museums and therefore, only 53 are relevant to the Council). These are under service groupings:

- (a) Children's Services
- (b) Corporate Services and Asset
- (c) Adult Social Care
- (d) Culture and Leisure Services
- (e) Environmental Services
- (f) Housing Services
- (g) Economic Development

4. The Improvement Service (IS) has coordinated the collection and analysis of the indicator data for all 32 councils. This year's national report on the indicators was published on 30th January 2015 and is available on the IS website.¹ Some information contained in this national report has been included at Annex 1 to provide a national context for the local data. The national report includes a detailed explanation of data variances across Scotland and trends over time. The IS have also launched a public performance reporting tool *Mylocalcouncil* accessible [here](http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/) from the 30th January.

¹ <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/>

Changes to the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)

5. The LGBF provides a set of indicators around cost, productivity and outcomes. The cost indicators have been developed using the best available cost information for councils from existing sources such as the Local Financial Returns (LFRs). A range of satisfaction measures have also been included from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS).

6. A report on East Renfrewshire's performance against the LGBF indicators for 2010/11 to 2012/13 was considered by Cabinet in April 2014. Since then, the national LGBF framework has been subject to national review. Key changes include:

- (a) The earlier publication of the data in January this year (compared to March in previous years);
- (b) The alignment of Housing services indicators with those submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (highlighted in annex 1);
- (c) The alignment of educational attainment indicators with national policy developments around the new Curriculum for Excellence and INSIGHT tool.
- (d) Guidance on the format of councils' public performance reporting.

Publication Timescales

7. Reporting on the LGBF has always been historical, looking back on the previous year's performance. This is largely because a number of the indicators are cost indicators which rely on LFR data which is not finalised and submitted to the Scottish Government for validation until around October each year. To bring forward the publication timescales an agreement was made between the IS and Directors of Finance to use unaudited data in this initial launch of the LGBF framework to ensure its earlier publication. Therefore cost information is subject to change in a scheduled refresh of the framework expected in March.²

8. Data for a number of Children's Services indicators included in the framework has not yet been published. Data for looked after children is currently unavailable and will be included in the refresh of the framework. Educational attainment measures are, for the most part, also excluded. Discussions are ongoing as to what new indicators should be included in the national framework. Only data for awards gained at level 6 are included for consistency during this transitional period.

9. Note much of this data has been publically reported at the East Renfrewshire level already (e.g. roads maintenance data) as part of the council's performance management arrangements, but not all with the comparative detail.

10. It has proven to be a complex and challenging task to gather and validate the data. The data was finalised by the IS in January but a number of data issues remain (see paragraphs 18-20).

Family Group Work

11. The IS has been coordinating wider benchmarking activity across all Scottish councils and has also determined and allocated councils to family groups for more relevant comparisons, analysis and sharing of best practice. A pilot to test this approach on positive destinations for school leavers and roads data is now complete.

² Any other changes to the data following the launch of the framework will be incorporated into this refresh. Therefore data may be subject to change.

12. This family group benchmarking activity has now been extended to all indicators within the framework. The Council is participating fully in all of these and currently leading a group on council tax indicators, to compare performance and share best practice. Other family group projects currently being undertaken include Sports Services; Waste Management; and Looked after Children.

OVERVIEW OF COUNCIL PERFORMANCE

13. The IS has provided detailed comparative analyses for each indicator at the council level. East Renfrewshire's performance against the indicators is provided at Annex 1. The indicators are grouped and analysed within the service headings at paragraph 3. These have been broken down further into subgroups/services where appropriate. For each of these services, contextual information has been provided under each of the following subheadings:

- (a) National overview
- (b) Service overview
- (c) Strategic policy intention
- (d) Council performance
- (e) What the council is doing to improve services
- (f) How the public can get involved

These headings are different to last year's LGBF report to meet new guidance around the reporting of these indicators.

14. Previously, the IS have used this data to rank councils' performance from 1 to 32 for each indicator and allocated to appropriate quartiles (1 being the top quartile, 4 being the bottom). This will not be included this year in the national launch of the data by the IS. This data does not support crude "league table" analysis and it is inappropriate to consider individual indicators and their ranking positions in isolation. The format of comparative reports has meant that historically the rankings have been inappropriately used as council 'league tables' failing to account for legitimate variations in performance. The ranking positions have been included in this report for internal context and consistency only.

15. This data-set can be regarded as a useful "can opener" in flagging up issues worthy of further investigation. For example, high costs for one indicator may reflect investment to affect a policy change rather than inefficient spend and a trade off between cost and performance can be expected. Considering related indicators together 'in the round' under service headings provides a more rounded and accurate indication of performance in relation to other councils, and the balance between investment, efficiency and outcomes.

16. When considering the data, it is also important to be aware of intended/expected levels of performance, rather than focussing on the collective number of indicators in the top quartile. For example, the Council's spend on our schools means we are meeting our objective to achieve the highest educational attainment in Scotland. We would not expect to be in the top quartile (the lowest costs in Scotland) for our education costs and our position in the second quartile is appropriate and more efficient than average. A further example could be in relation to rent arrears where our policy on debt write off is more restricted than in some other councils with better performance. We have made bad debt provision to a higher level than these Councils rather than write off outstanding debt. Currently, we are reviewing our write off policy to consider changing this. The amount of rent collected, or income to the housing revenue account (HRA) is not changed by these policies but the performance on the indicator is. In fact, our performance in collecting current rent arrears is improving. Given welfare benefit changes this is in itself a significant achievement.

17. Comprehensive performance information for each of the service areas is listed in Annex 1. However a few areas are highlighted below.

- (a) Children's Services: Performance is particularly strong in relation to our education services, showing 2013-14 to be our best performance to date and top in Scotland for the educational attainment of children. We are also working to ensure there are opportunities for all with more of our most vulnerable children achieving five or more awards at level 6 (Higher A – C level) – an improvement compared to last year. This is despite relatively low and reducing school costs.
- (b) Corporate Services and Asset: We perform well in relation to council tax, have continually improved and are positioned in the top quartile for these indicators. There are areas for improvement as we perform in the lowest quartile for days lost through sickness absence and are second lowest in Scotland for invoice processing times. The council is working hard to improve performance in both these areas. Detailed action plans are in place so that progress can be monitored and improved upon. For invoice processing, extensive work is ongoing including a full review of the invoice process, extra staffing resource, detailed reports to Directors identifying specific areas for improvement and the introduction of an electronic document management system. We also recognise that absence levels are a concern and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) with Heads of Service are committed to tackling this. As well as an action plan there has been a Leadership group workshop held for best practice learning to be shared across services as well as the establishment of absence panels in some areas to take forward actions as a result of absence triggers.
- (c) Adult Social Care: Satisfaction with services in this area is high. We also remain in the second quartile for Self Directed Support (SDS) rates. Our home care and residential care costs have increased, although we have maintained our quartile positions.
- (d) Culture and Leisure Services: We know this is an area for improvement and generally perform in the lower quartiles for libraries and sports and leisure. However, performance has been broadly maintained over 2013-14 despite disruptions to services, where the Council is working hard to improve future performance in these areas, including the introduction of a culture and leisure trust.
- (e) Environmental services: Our performance around recycling has improved and we are the second highest performing council for this indicator. We have also improved the condition of our roads and cleanliness of our streets, although this is not reflected in our quartile positions and work remains to be done.
- (f) Housing services: Significant improvements have been made in relation to the condition of council housing, and we are now the joint leading Scottish council for the percentage of homes that are energy efficient. We have also improved on the amount of rent lost due to houses being empty. However, the Council is currently lowest in Scotland for rent arrears and this is an area where improvement actions are in place, including a full review of all former tenant arrear balances. This service will be transferring to Housing services in June 2015.
- (g) Economic development: We have supported more unemployed people into work from council operated/funded employability schemes and remain in the second quartile.

DATA ISSUES

18. The wide range of approaches to service delivery across Scotland's 32 councils has meant the collection and comparison of data has been challenging and further investigation is still required. Data issues include:

- (a) Varying data collection methods meaning indicators may not always be fully comparable e.g. LFR data;
- (b) SHS data used for local satisfaction measures in the framework are less robust for smaller authorities like East Renfrewshire due to small sample sizes;
- (c) Trend issues (comparing data from 2011/12 to 2013/14) e.g. "changes" can be due to natural annual fluctuations, better information gathering, organisational restructures, changes to how data calculated etc;
- (d) Varying methodological techniques to analyse data (e.g. rounding to different decimal places which can affect ranking and quartile positions).

19. Within the Council, Citizens' Panel data is used as the key measurement of customer satisfaction with services. The data is more appropriate than SHS in that it reflects the local demographic profile and response numbers are higher. Citizens' Panel data has been included where relevant in the report. This is significant, where, for example, the SHS survey records low levels of satisfaction for sports and leisure facilities (80 percent; falling from quartile 1 to 3) while our Citizens' Panel records an increase in satisfaction to 85% percent.

20. The LGBF indicators are only one means of recording and measuring the Council's performance, and there are a number of these measures that are not particularly useful as indicators of progress on our performance – especially when considered in isolation. Nevertheless, they are nationally reported and we will use these indicators as appropriate to evaluate and continually improve our service delivery for our customers.

PERFORMANCE REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

21. Within the Council, performance against the indicators will be monitored as part of our well established performance management arrangements (which includes six monthly reports to Cabinet and Committees) and published on our website. Performance data for the LGBF will also be published by the IS on their website.

22. All Scottish councils have a statutory duty to report performance information publically. All councils are required to report on LGBF as well as ensuring that our public performance reporting covers a wider range of corporate management and service performance information. The most recent review by Audit Scotland on the Council's public performance reporting in relation to this requirement showed us to be among the top performing councils in Scotland.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

23. There is a small annual charge paid by all councils of £2,016 to participate in the framework which is covered within existing budgets. Participation in the framework is mandatory.

CONSULTATION

24. The LGBF has been reviewed in consultation with councils and partners over the last year as well as working with the IS during the validation of the data.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

25. All 32 councils are participating in the development of the LGBF and working together to identify best practice through participation in the Family Group process.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

26. As this report is primarily a progress and performance update, there are no particular implications in terms of staffing, property, legal, IT, equalities and sustainability. Each of these issues has been mainstreamed through service plans and equality impact assessments carried out where appropriate.

CONCLUSIONS

27. Our performance against the LGBF dataset shows a broadly balanced picture of performance, with the majority of indicators (almost 60%) in the upper quartiles, and good performance in key outcome areas, making differences to people's lives in education, recycling and housing. The LGBF indicator set is only one means of recording and measuring the Council's performance. To achieve a balanced picture, the outcomes we are delivering through the Single Outcome Agreement; Outcome Delivery Plan and through various audits, inspections and self-assessments should be noted. There is a wide range of performance information scrutinised and reported by the Council which is not statutory and provides detailed information on performance.

28. Benchmarking is not about who is best/worst overall, neither is it about league tables and ranking positions. Comparing spending and performance information allows councils to investigate their performance further and identify best practice. The use of the LGBF and other benchmarking data to support service improvement is already ongoing within the Council.

29. Services are working hard to continually improve in challenging circumstances. In particular, in tackling sickness absence, invoice processing time and housing rent arrears there has been significant action taken with detailed improvement plans put in place to improve on current performance. Furthermore, through participating in family groups we are able to highlight where legitimate variations in performance exist and learn from each other on how to improve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

30. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) Consider the Council's performance against the LGBF indicators and the action being taken by departments to address any performance issues.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Local Government Benchmarking Framework: 2012-13 Performance, Cabinet, 10 April 2014
National Benchmarking Project, Cabinet, 28 March 2013

KEY WORDS

SOLACE, LGBF, benchmarking, Improvement Service, performance, indicators, SPIs, family groups

Children's Services

Attainment

Indicators:

Indicator type	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Outcome	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (Standard Grade A – C equivalent) (pre-appeal)	67%	71%	n/a	1	1	n/a	1	1	n/a
	Attainment of all children at S6 (% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (Higher A – C level) (pre-appeal)	53%	46%	55%	1	1	1	1	1	1
	% pupils in 20% most deprived areas getting 5+ awards at level 5	33.1%	32.1%	n/a	1	1	n/a	2	2	n/a
	Attainment at S6 of children who live in deprived areas (% pupils in 20% most deprived areas getting 5+ awards at level 6)	16.1%	13.3%	18.6%	1	1	1	2	3	2
	Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations	95.3%	95.8%	96.0%	1	1	1	2	2	3
Efficiency	Cost per primary school pupil	£4,586	£4,647	£4,580	2	2	2	11	14	13
	Cost per secondary school pupil	£6,298	£6,435	£6,359	2	2	2	14	14	13
	Cost per pre-school place	£3,968	£4,249	£3,961	4	4	4	27	28	27
Customer	Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools	n/a	87%	86%	n/a	2	2	n/a	11	10
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Nursery education % of service users rating service as very good/good¹</i>	96%	100%	93%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Primary education % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	100%	100%	98%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Secondary education % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	97%	96%	96%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Citizens' Panel – Additional support needs education % of service users rating service as very good/good²</i>	n/a	76%	91%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

¹ Where supplementary indicators to the national benchmarking set (e.g. Citizens' Panel data) have been included these are highlighted in italics. Note for nursery education ratings based on low level of responses. Therefore results should be treated with caution.

² Ratings based on low level of responses. Therefore results should be treated with caution.

National overview National trend data shows that costs around pre-school, primary and secondary education have decreased while at the same time there has been a continued improvement in relation to attainment – including for those pupils in the 20% most deprived communities. Despite this, satisfaction with schools has reduced nationally since 2010/11, from 83.1% to 81%.

Service overview Education is one of the most powerful tools for reducing poverty, promoting inclusion and building capacity within a community. The Scottish Government is committed to improving the life chances for all young people, particularly those from the most challenging social circumstances. Nationally the focus is on the full implementation of Curriculum for Excellence including the introduction of the new National Qualifications. East Renfrewshire Council is committed to ensuring all our children and young people have the skills for learning, life and work that they need to be successful. Our Single Outcome Agreement includes attainment measures and school leaver destinations as key indicators. The Education Department has developed extensive and robust analysis of educational performance at an authority, school and pupil level. The analysis includes the use of detailed benchmarking at various levels such as groups of pupils, subjects, school level and local authority, allowing schools and the department to identify trends, target areas for improvement and take account of factors which affect performance including gender, poverty and ethnicity.

What is our strategic policy intention? East Renfrewshire Education Department's vision is *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*. Underpinning our vision is our commitment to raising attainment for all learners exemplified by our ambition to be the highest attaining mainland council area as measured by national examinations. Maximising attainment for all learners is fundamental to their future success in securing a positive destination post school. In striving for this vision the Education Department seeks to ensure that all available financial resources are well directed and efficiently used to meet needs and to improve learning experiences.

Council performance East Renfrewshire's schools are known to be some of the top performing in Scotland and we have maintained our position as the top performing education authority as measured by national examinations. Changes to the LGBF framework for education indicators to align with national policy developments around Curriculum for Excellence and measures included in Insight [Scottish Government Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool] are still being agreed. As a result, 2013-14 data has only been made available for awards gained at level 6 (S6 pupils) as at this stage, these indicators are thought to give the most accurate and comparable indication of performance. Using these measures, for educational attainment this is our best year to date and we continue to perform in the top quartile. The education attainment of our most deprived children has also improved this year helping to reduce inequalities and in doing so providing more opportunities for all. The attainment data is provided by the Scottish Government to the Improvement Service, therefore local authorities are unable to check the data or analyse the indicators at a school level. The percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations has increased, is our best performance to date and we remain in the top quartile, although our relative position has declined. We also record high levels of satisfaction with education services as measured by the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), on which the national benchmarking satisfaction indicators are based, and our Citizens' Panel results. This is despite relatively low costs in comparison to other Scottish councils. Indeed East Renfrewshire's costs per pupil have also reduced for secondary, primary and preschool education this year. Our costs for pre-school places, although falling, remain relatively high reflecting the high percentage of children using the local authority provision rather than partner providers. From August 2014 all councils are required to offer 600 hours of early learning and childcare.

What the Council is doing to improve services East Renfrewshire Education Department will continue to challenge and support schools to improve performance further for all children and young people. Key activities include supporting schools to implement the Recognising Achievement Raising Attainment action plan; Curriculum for Excellence action plan; the Opportunities for All Plus strategy and a focus on raising the attainment of the lowest performing children and young people. The department and schools will continue to make rigorous use of attainment and benchmarking data at all levels as well as qualitative measures to inform improvement. There continues to be an ongoing commitment to quality assurance and moderation of assessment as staff deliver Curriculum for Excellence and the new national qualifications.

In East Renfrewshire, benchmarking data including the LGBF is used as a results-driven process to increase effectiveness and improve outcomes for learners. Full and open reporting of performance results, in the context of benchmarking with other local authorities/schools/groups, enables a better understanding of the areas where excellent practice exists. Best practice is also disseminated to improve outcomes for all children and young people. East Renfrewshire Council has been part of the LGBF positive destinations family group pilot. Meetings with other local authorities focused on exploring the reasons behind the variation in performance in positive destinations and has enabled sharing of good practice. In terms of efficiencies, the replacement of some teachers in prefive with child development officers will be a cost reduction from session 2014/15 onwards. More generally the department will continue to manage on-going budget reductions by continuing to seek further efficiency savings and take action to minimise the impact of savings ultimately approved.

How the public can get involved A key aspect of the Council's Parenting Strategy is to achieve "Family Friendly" accreditation in all local authority and partner provider nurseries. All establishments are committed to engaging parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school. The Education Department supports schools to do this through the Parental Involvement Strategy. In addition all schools produce a handbook and have up-to-date websites, which provide a range of detail including, for instance, a section on how parents can become involved in the life of the school. East Renfrewshire Council Education Department uses pupil, parent and staff questionnaires to gather the views of its stakeholders. All educational establishments will be sampled over a four-year period from 2012-13 to 2015-16, with the results collated cumulatively. The statistics from the questionnaires feature in the Outcome Delivery Plan and Education Department Standards and Quality Report and are used to identify strengths and further areas for improvement. This data is analysed along with that provided through the Citizens' Panel and Scottish Household Survey.

Corporate Services and Asset

Corporate Costs and Processes

Indicators:

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Efficiency	Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure	5.3%	5.0%	6.2%	3	3	3	23	20	24
	Cost of democratic core per 1,000 population	£33,823	£29,100	£30,525	3	2	2	18	12	15
	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days	83.1%	80.1%	79.5%	4	4	4	27	30	31
	The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax	£11.29	£7.01	£6.06	2	1	1	13	2	2
	Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year	97.2%	97.6%	97.9%	1	1	1	6	4	2

National overview Overall council corporate and support costs continue to account for around 5% of total gross revenue spend for local government across Scotland. There has been a decrease in costs of the democratic core per 1000 population since 2010/11. The cost of per dwelling of collecting council tax has reduced nationally over the four year period and the collection rate remains high at 95.2%. The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days has steadily increased from 89.5% to 91.9% over the four year period 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Service overview The indicators under the heading Corporate Services include a number of efficiency measures. These are typically used for the monitoring of internal processes and are not outcome focused. The democratic core indicator reflects the support function for elected members provided by officers in the democratic core. Council Tax is collected on all domestic properties to pay for local services such as schools, waste collection, roads and street lighting. The collection indicator shows the amount of payments received against Council Tax for the year due, excluding water charges.

What is our strategic policy intention? To provide efficient and effective support services to properly and adequately resource the democratic governance of the Council and the area.

Council performance We perform well in relation to council tax collection. East Renfrewshire is now the second best performing council in Scotland for income due from council tax received and we maintained our position of second in Scotland for cost of collecting council tax with costs consistently declining. We are also leading a benchmarking family group on council tax to compare performance with other councils and share best practice. We have maintained our quartile position in relation to support costs and cost of democratic core. Although these are higher than the national picture, the increase in support costs can be explained to some extent by service restructuring, investment in technology

systems and enhanced identification of qualifying support costs within individual services. However, this increase can also be explained by changes to the way this indicator is calculated and is not strictly comparable with previous years. Similarly, despite a slight increase in democratic core costs, we have also maintained our quartile position for this indicator. Our invoice processing times remain an area for improvement and we are second lowest in Scotland for this indicator. Performance shows a downward trend and we perform in the bottom quartile. The Council is working hard to address this (see below).

What the Council is doing to improve services The Council is working hard to improve invoice processing. The invoice processing performance figures for 2013/14 are based on the starting date of the invoice date provided by the supplier as opposed to the date received in the Council. Around 80% of councils use the date received. Therefore, it is difficult to directly compare with other councils. However regardless of which date is used, improvements are required to modernise the service and optimise payment times. Over the past 6 months, the following action has been taken to improve invoice processing:

- Full review of the invoice process with action plan.
- Discussions with senior management within departments on how they can improve their invoice process.
- Detailed performance reports sent to Directors to enable them to pinpoint specific areas for improvement.
- Additional staffing support within the creditors' team to progress queries more effectively. New processes developed to improve workload.
- Creditors' staff encouraged to report any non-compliance or delays to senior management.
- Enforcing messages about better procurement practices with suppliers and staff.

As part of a modernisation project, an electronic document management system (EDMS including invoice scanning) will be extended to invoice processing by late Autumn 2015. This system is working well in council tax and benefits having modernised their service and improved performance management. A Project Officer (Creditors) has been recruited (January 2015) for 18 months to implement the new system and to work closely with departments and suppliers to improve the overall invoice processing service. The EDMS system will simplify the process and provide opportunities for better storage and retrieval of invoices across the whole Council. The invoice processing performance continues to be monitored closely, is considered one of our main priorities and is discussed frequently by the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

How the public can get involved A Council Tax survey completed every 2 years lets customers give their views on how to improve Council Tax services. For example, our most recent survey asked customers if e-billing would improve the current service. Results have shown that nearly half of respondents would be interested in using e-billing and this is being investigated.

Corporate Asset

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Efficiency	Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	76.9%	78.6%	79.5%	3	3	3	24	23	24
	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	75.6%	75.7%	79.7%	4	4	4	25	26	26

National overview [No comment in national report]

Service overview Property & Technical Services (PATS) provides a professional property management service to the Council. The service covers all property design matters including asset and estate management, repairs, maintenance, refurbishment and new build projects. This work is undertaken by a mix of professional and support staff including Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Estate Surveyors, Engineers and Property Maintenance Officers.

What is our strategic policy intention? PATS strategic ambition is to provide an efficient and effective property and asset management service to ensure that the property stock effectively supports all Council initiatives and service delivery.

Council performance Our performance for these indicators and the condition of Council buildings has been continually improving over the last three years. This has been due to the continued application of effective asset management practices together with targeting and prioritising defects to make best use of available funding. The improvement in this area reflects not only the introduction of the new Eastwood High facility but the continued targeted application of available funding to prioritise maintenance expenditure. Our improvement is not being reflected in ranking and quartile positions however, as other Councils also reflect improvement, and we remain in the lower quartiles for these indicators.

What the Council is doing to improve services The property portfolio will be assessed at the end of the financial year to reflect any capital and revenue works which have improved a property's overall condition. Any defects occurring during the year are also considered. Close liaison will be maintained with client departments to highlight both budgetary and property maintenance issues. The replacement of life expired property and disposal of poor performing stock will provide a further increase in both suitability and condition indicators. East Renfrewshire Council provides robust data based upon up-to-date stock condition information and this ensures that a true reflection of the property stock is provided. This enables informed decisions to be made for future investment. Inconsistencies in the way this data is recorded across councils brings into question the validity of ranking and quartile positions. This has been highlighted through work with the National Best Value Benchmarking Scheme, CIPFA and the Association of Chief Estate Surveyors. CIPFA is now raising these issues with individual authorities to query.

How the public can get involved PATS involve the public with consultations and design discussions to assist in the development process for new build projects. This ensures that stakeholders and building users' needs are recognised and addressed where practical and financially possible. This process ensures that the public is made aware very early in the design process of the potential development. Parent Councils are also

engaged on a regular basis with regard to potential developments affecting schools and there is a direct interface between PATS and home owners/tenants whilst managing Housing maintenance contracts. Consultation is carried out to explain the extent of works and advise of the breakdown of charges attributable and also payments available for redecoration.

Domestic noise complaints

Indicators:

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Efficiency	Average time (hours) between time of complaint and attendance on site, for those requiring attendance on site	0.5	0.7	0.8	1	1	2	3	6	9

National overview [No comment in national report]

Service overview The Community Safety Unit provides a 24 hour service, 365 days a year in respect of domestic noise issues. Members of the public are encouraged to use the Ring and Report, free, confidential antisocial behaviour helpline for reporting such incidents. The Community Safety Officers (Wardens) are available to attend, monitor, advise on and enforce the legislation, where appropriate. More complex issues are then referred to the antisocial investigation officer. In addition the service provides a mediation service aimed at resolving neighbour issues without having to resort to legal proceedings. As well as considering the noise impact of new developments, the Environmental Health service, in partnership with Community Safety, also investigates complaints of noise nuisance from businesses and homes. They work to ensure that residents can enjoy an appropriately quiet environment within their homes, free from unreasonable disturbance and may serve formal noise abatement notices, where necessary.

What is our strategic policy intention? We aim to provide a modern, effective one stop service that promotes compliance with legislation and prevention of harm by pro-active engagement with residents and businesses through advice, education and enforcement.

Council Performance The average time taken to respond to domestic noise complaints has continued to increase meaning we have dropped from the first to second quartile for this indicator. This could be explained by an increase in the number of domestic noise complaints registered requiring action under the Antisocial Behaviour Act (265 in 2012-13 compared to 284 in 2013-14), however we are still within our target of 1 hour and nationally set response times.

What the Council is doing to improve services Environmental Health and Community Safety will continue to work in partnership with the Police to offer an effective response service to noise complaints. We are also continuing to focus on resolving noise complaint issues without the need to attend site to give a more direct and timely resolution to complaints.

How the public can get involved Residents can feedback to the council on community safety issues through our Citizens' Panel.

Employees

Indicators:

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
People	The percentage of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women	50.3%	51.2%	50.9%	2	2	2	12	11	13
	Sickness absence days per employee	9	9.5	10.3	2	2	4	12	12	27

National overview There has been continued improvement in relation to ensuring equal pay opportunities across genders, with an increase in percentage of women in the top 5% earners in councils, from 46% to 51% between 2010/11 to 2013/14. The management of sickness absence is a major priority for councils in their efforts to manage their costs. The rate has remained relatively flat at 10 days average from 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Service overview East Renfrewshire Council is committed to maximising employee attendance at work, to ensure that the Council is equipped with the necessary human resources to deliver a high quality, efficient and cost effective service to our local residents and to continue to strive for public service excellence. The Council values and recognises the significant contribution made by employees at work, and that the good health of its workforce and the provision of a healthy work environment are essential to achieving low levels of absence. It is therefore committed to assisting employees with healthy life choices by developing Occupational Health and related services in order to improve health in the workplace and maximise employee attendance at work.

What is our strategic policy intention? To reduce the number of sickness absence days within the Council and that ERC continues to be a fair and equal employer.

Council performance Our commitment to equalities at the Council is reflected where we record good rates of high female salary earners in Scotland. As data on high female wage earners was previously a Statutory Performance Indicator (SPI), the historical data tells us the percentage of the highest paid 5% who are women is prone to minor annual fluctuations. Our performance around absence has deteriorated and we have dropped from the second to the fourth quartile. This decrease in quartile position can be attributed to a number of factors including the high levels of change activity over a sustained period; the continued increase of our average age profile from 42.9 years in 2010 to 44.7 years in 2014 as well as the Council continues to provide a significant number of services which have a high level of manual tasks, whereas many other councils use arms length organisations to deliver e.g. homecare. The CMT recognise this is a significant issue and are taking action.

What the Council is doing to improve services Improving our absence rates is a priority. Our Maximising Attendance policy is being supported by a detailed absence management action plan aimed at improving rates of sickness. We are undertaking a range of actions within this to improve rates of sickness including a workshop for all members of the Leadership group which was an opportunity for best practice and learning to be shared across services. One department has introduced a dedicated business support resource to review the compliance with return to work and absence reviews to ensure that the maximising attendance policy is being followed, and another has introduced absence panels. Both practices

are being monitored and successes are being shared across all departments. Additional HR resource is being put in place to manage absence, focusing on coaching and mentoring of managers on this aspect of people management targeting hotspot areas. We have also recently developed our E-HR system to provide triggers to managers to encourage more stringent management of absence. In addition, there is a focus on training and more consistent implementation of the Maximising Attendance Policy, which will impact upon future levels of attendance. There is also work underway with the current Occupational Health provider to reduce the times for employees returning to work by reducing occupational health referral process times and to support appropriate ill health retirements.

How the public can get involved Both employee indicators are internal to the organisation therefore a public consultative approach is not applicable to improve performance.

Adult Social Care

Indicators

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Outcome	Percentage of people 65+ with intensive needs (plus 10 hours) receiving care at home³	42.1%	40.9%	27.7%	1	2	4	5	10	28
Efficiency	Older persons (Over65) home care costs per hour⁴	£11.28	£10.01	£18.15	1	1	1	3	2	8
	SDS (Direct payments) spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+⁵	3.3	2.4	2.9	1	2	2	5	10	12
	The Net Cost of Residential Care Services per Older Adult (+65) per Week	£387.63	£376.82	£404.28	2	3	3	15	18	21
Customer	Percentage of adults satisfied with social care or social work services	n/a	63%	69%	n/a	2	1	n/a	13	7
	<i>Citizens' Panel – Homecare services % of service users rating service as very good/good⁶</i>	74%	81%	89%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Health and social care services for children and young people % of service users rating service as very good/good⁷</i>	n/a	92%	78%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Health and social care for adults % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	83%	88%	89%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview Across adult social care, there has been a reduction in costs in relation to home care unit costs and residential care unit costs while in relation to the balance of care, there has been an increase in the percentage of people with intensive needs cared for at home and percentage of social work spend allocated to self-directed support. The percentage of adults satisfied with social care/work services has decreased year on year since 2010/11.

Service overview Across our Adult Services we have a range of programmes in place to transform our approach and re-design services. This includes a major change programme to reshape care at home, and we expect reductions in intensive support at home as re-ablement is further

³ Note trend information changed due to recalculation by the Improvement Service.

⁴ As above.

⁵ Formerly titled 'Self Directed Support spend on adults 18+ as % of total social work spend on adults 18+'.

⁶ Ratings based on low level of responses. Therefore results should be treated with caution.

⁷ As above.

rolled-out. This targeting of resources to meet increasing demand at a time of pressure and budget constraints is proving challenging however our Talking Points - Personal Outcomes measures consistently record positive outcomes from our service users.

What is our strategic policy intention? We intend to increase the uptake of Self Directed Support (SDS) by ensuring our staff engages with service users to discuss all options available to them. Further training in good practice will be delivered to support staff in this process. Across older peoples services we are reviewing how we monitor and deliver our services to deliver support that helps keep people out of hospital and residential care. There are signs of improvement in long-term conditions but our ageing population will continue to increase demand. We are putting in place joint commissioning plans to build on our approach to a sustainable model of care for older people and people with disabilities.

Council performance The results show that satisfaction with social work services, as per both the SHS and Citizens' Panel data, has generally improved and we perform in the top quartile for this indicator. Our own internal surveys record even higher levels of satisfaction. Our internal survey of home care service users' present a positive picture, with high levels of satisfaction and a number of positive areas relating to performance. The results indicate that over 93% (ranging between 94% and 98%) were satisfied with their service and had a consistent group of carers. A larger than average percentage of our spend is on residents who have direct control over the care they receive. We remain in the second quartile for self directed support (SDS) rates in Scotland. The data on the proportion of our residents with intensive support needs who receive care at home submitted to the Scottish Government (and subsequently included in this framework) was incorrect. We believe this figure to be around 59.6% which would have placed us in the top quartile. Reablement – working with people to support them to regain skills and become more independent – is a key aspect around prevention and a local SOA commitment and we are making good inroads in this area. Our net residential costs for older adults have increased in contrast to the national picture and our relative position has slipped for this indicator, an increase which can be attributed to the National Care Home Contract 2.7% inflationary increase and the client mix between self funders and Free Personal Care clients locally. On the other hand, despite increasing this year, our home care costs remain among the lowest in Scotland.

What the CHCP is doing to improve services We have implemented new monitoring and scheduling system to deliver more efficient care at home that will cut costs while delivering more personalised support. We expect reductions in intensive support at home as re-ablement is further rolled-out. We are reviewing and re-designing services in line with self-directed support. We continue to invest resources in hospitals to identify people who require support following their discharge. Better partnership working between CHCP and hospital staff has impacted on days lost as a result of delayed discharge. Emergency admissions for people aged 75 and over have reduced in 2013/14 however there may be scope for further improvement.

How the public can get involved A number of mechanisms are in place to support the public to shape services. These include the Public Partnership Forum, Older People's Reference Group, user groups, advocacy, complaints and suggestions, national and local surveys, Citizens' Panel, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Patient Feedback Webpage, and specific peer initiatives like the Big ShoutER. We have identified areas of good practice particularly in our work on Reshaping Care for Older People and Public Social Partnership. One of the successful models we wish to build on is 'Let's Take Time to Talk' which brings together local stakeholders to discuss a particular theme in a workshop setting.

Culture and Leisure Services

Libraries

Indicators

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Efficiency	Cost per visit to libraries	£4.08	£3.88	£3.97	3	3	3	20	20	22
	<i>Net cost per library visit</i>	£3.78	£3.66	£3.77	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Customer	Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries	n/a	87%	85%	n/a	2	2	n/a	10	13
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Libraries % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	98%	98%	90%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview Across culture and leisure services at a Scotland-wide level, costs per visit/attendance have reduced. Significant increases in visitor numbers for sports (17.3%) and libraries (26.6%) have been achieved against a backdrop of reductions in gross expenditure. Customer satisfaction rates for libraries and sports facilities have fallen in the last 12 months.

Service overview Library services are delivered from 4 main libraries (Barrhead, Clarkston, Giffnock, Mearns), 4 smaller libraries (Busby, Eaglesham, Neilston, Thornliebank), and 2 library centres (Netherlee and Uplawmoor). Services offered at all libraries include free book lending, newspapers and magazines, DVD hire, free computer and internet access, and photocopying/faxing facilities. An increasingly significant proportion of our services are delivered on-line. On-line services – reservations and renewals, e-books and magazines, e-reference materials – are accounting for an increasing proportion of our delivery. The Council's Heritage Centre, based in Giffnock Library also offers services and information on local history and genealogy. In addition to lending services, libraries:

- Deliver a range of programmes and learning activities aimed at children and their families, older adults and the wider community
- Support literacy initiatives in conjunction with local schools
- Serve as a focal point for sharing information with residents
- Provide vital access to IT resources, in particular for residents seeking employment or accessing benefit support as a result of Welfare Reform

What is our strategic policy intention?

- To maximise the contribution the service makes to the Council's Early Years Agenda
- To further develop libraries as focal points for community learning and community development
- To improve efficiency and responsiveness to customers by reviewing service provision, increasing the ability to access services on-line, and continuing to develop libraries as community hubs. The outcome of this will be increased visitor numbers and reduced costs per visit.
- To maintain and enhance our engagement with and support of older residents of the community.

Council performance The refurbishment of Giffnock Library and preparations for transferring library services in Barrhead to The Foundry meant that both of these libraries were in reduced, temporary accommodation for large parts of 2013/14. Visitor numbers fell resulting in an increased cost per visit across the service unlike the national picture, although we maintained our quartile position. Increased visitor numbers in Giffnock since re-opening in March 2014 suggest that the new facility has been well received and bodes well for the opening of The Foundry in early 2015. Rates of satisfaction as measured by both SHS and Citizens' Panel data have declined, similar to what has occurred nationally, although for SHS, rates remain relatively high in comparison with other councils and we continue to perform in the second quartile for this indicator.

There is evidence that the work of the service is delivering positive outcomes for the community. A particular success story is the Bookbug programme - a Scottish Book Trust early years initiative, co-ordinated by East Renfrewshire Libraries and delivered in conjunction with local partners including schools, pre-five establishments, Adult and Family Learning, and the Community Health and Care Partnership. Evaluation and research undertaken in Madras Family Centre in Neilston found that positive impacts on children's development included turn taking, attention, literary skills, language development, creativity, communication skills and role playing, as well as improving parents' abilities to play and interact with their children.

What the Council is doing to improve services The Barrhead Foundry will open in early 2015. It will contain a new library for Barrhead, in an innovative building with a prominent main street location. This, and the opportunity to work jointly with partners in the Foundry, will stimulate library use. The service will continue to develop the role of Giffnock Library in its community and extend this approach to other libraries, Mearns and Clarkston in particular by March 2016. We will review methods of delivery in the smaller libraries, identifying and implementing options for maintaining services at reduced cost. We would also expect to see improvements to the quality of service and its efficiency through the introduction of the culture and leisure trust.

How the public can get involved The Service undertakes a major survey of 1,000 customers every two years. The next survey will be carried out in April 2015. There will also be consultation with customers and communities on the continuing service re-design currently being undertaken.

Sports Facilities

Indicators

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Efficiency	Cost per attendance of sport and leisure facilities (including swimming pools)	£7.18	£7.44	£8.68	4	4	4	29	29	29
	<i>Gross cost per attendance at sports facilities (indoor)</i>	£6.12	£6.29	£7.51	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Gross cost per attendance at sports facilities (outdoor)</i>	£1.06	£1.16	£1.17	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Net cost per attendance at sports facilities</i>	£3.81	£4.17	£4.81	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Customer	Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	n/a	87%	80%	n/a	1	3	n/a	8	17
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Sport and Leisure facilities % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	86%	79%	85%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview (see above)

Service overview East Renfrewshire operates four sport and leisure centres – Barrhead Sports Centre, Eastwood Park Leisure, Eastwood High Sports Centre and Neilston Leisure Centre. All four have 25 metre swimming pools. Barrhead Sports Centre and Eastwood Park both have major fitness gyms, with a smaller operation based in Neilston. In addition, Barrhead and Eastwood High have games hall facilities used for fitness classes, badminton, indoor football and a range of community sports clubs. Refurbishment programmes and major maintenance requirements meant that there was no period during 2013/14 when all four facilities were operational causing service disruptions and some impact on performance.

What is our strategic policy intention?

- To increase the contribution to the health and well-being of local residents
- To maximise the contribution made to the Council's Early Years Agenda
- To improve the customer experience in these centres, thereby increasing visitor numbers, financial performance and impact on the community
- To improve efficiency and responsiveness to customers through reviewing service provision
- To maintain and enhance our engagement with and support of older residents of the community.

Council Performance Our costs for attendance at sports facilities remained relatively high in comparison to other local authorities and increased in 2013-14, despite decreasing nationally. Our quartile and ranking position remained the same. The main contributing factor to the rise was a decrease in attendances linked to facility closures. With respect to net cost per visit, a drop of just over 6% in gym memberships, attendances and corresponding income contributed to an increase in 2013/14. SHS data indicates a decline in customer satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities, which would have been expected given the disruptions to services. Citizens' Panel results suggest an increase in satisfaction rates however.

What the Council is doing to improve services The Transformation Programme initiated in 2013/14 will continue into 2014/15, identifying and driving forward improvements in Sports programming, facility operations and staffing structures. In addition, a proposal to move service provision to a culture and leisure trust was agreed by Council in December 2014. Experience in other local authorities suggests that this could deliver the same or improved levels of service with a reduced level of expenditure for the Council, thereby improving efficiency and related performance indicators. Performance in Eastwood High Sports Centre and Neilston Leisure Centre has shown improvement since these facilities re-opened and the opening of Barrhead Sports Centre as The Foundry in January 2015 should deliver additional improvements. It is expected that the renewal of the gym equipment in Barrhead and Eastwood Park in January/February, along with reviewing and re-designing gym and fitness programmes will improve customer satisfaction and the uptake of gym membership/attendance. A capital programme bid has also been put forward for Eastwood Park Leisure.

How the public can get involved Initiatives such as The Foundry have been developed through input from customer consultation, such as through Citizens' Space (the Council's on-line engagement tool). As part of service improvements, our sports facilities will be developing a range of initiatives to capture ongoing feedback and the involvement of communities in the design of programmes across all venues. Opportunities for involvement will be promoted through individual services and the Council's website.

Parks and Open Spaces

Indicators:

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Efficiency	Cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population	£24,830	£20,960	£26,929	1	1	2	8	7	12
	<i>Net cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000</i>	<i>£16,149</i>	<i>£13,402</i>	<i>£20,951</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Customer	Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	n/a	88%	90%	n/a	2	2	n/a	12	13
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Public parks and open spaces % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	<i>90%</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>94%</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>

National overview Nationally, customer satisfaction with parks and open spaces has remained the same and costs have declined.

Service overview The Parks service manages and maintains East Renfrewshire's parks, open spaces and landscaped areas. It plays an essential role in ensuring the area is perceived as a high quality place to live or to visit and as such is integral to the success of campaigns such as the 'Place' campaign. The Parks service also plays a key supporting role to the work of the Council's Core Paths Plan and Outdoor Access strategy, by providing the maintenance and management of new paths and surrounding open space. We have developed 5 and 10 year management plans for our parks that will guide further improvements to enable residents to continue to have an attractive, sustainable space for recreation activities.

What is our strategic policy intention? To provide excellent quality greenspace for our residents and visitors.

Council performance The vast majority of residents are satisfied with our parks and open spaces according to data available. Although our relative position has declined slightly, there has been an increase in satisfaction with these services according to both Citizens' Panel and SHS data. The costs around our parks and open spaces have increased and we have moved into the second quartile for this indicator. This is due to additional one off expenditure for improvements to Cowan Park and storm damage in 2013/14 that was more severe than 2012/13. While our position in comparison to other councils is lower for 2013/14 this is in part due to increased investment in the service which should help to build on improving customer satisfaction levels.

What the Council is doing to improve services The regeneration project in Rouken Glen Park is on track and well under way. The project will restore the Park's infrastructure and as part of this process it will uncover and interpret the Park's heritage. The programme will also develop volunteering and training activities and introduce a sustainable management and maintenance regime into the Park. The initial work in the park already completed has included refurbishment to the pavilion, improvements to the children's play park and lighting and power upgrades.

Following on will be improvements to the boating pond, rebuilding lost sections of the Glen Path and refurbishment of the walled garden, the project being due for completion March 2016. We will also be planning to ensure its proper management in the long term.

How the public can get involved As part of the Heritage Lottery Fund project in the park we are seeking volunteers to help with a variety of projects including photography, history/archaeology, creating visitor leaflets, horticulture and park conservation. We also actively encourage individuals and groups to come to the park to pursue their own interest with our activity staff. At Dams to Darnley we have also published a new country park environmental education pack to promote the countryside ranger service as a free resource for local schools.

Environmental Services

Waste and recycling

Indicators:

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Outcome	The percentage of total household waste that is recycled	54.3%	52.8%	56.3%	1	1	1	2	7	2
Efficiency	Net cost of waste collection per premise	£68.5	£65.61	£64.96	n/a	3	3	n/a	21	22
	Net cost per waste disposal per premise	£77.08	£73.94	£74.02	n/a	1	2	n/a	6	9
	<i>Gross cost of waste collection per premises</i>	£86.10	£82.44	£80.50	3	3	2	22	19	16
	<i>Gross cost per waste disposal per premises</i>	£88.47	£85.86	£84.20	2	1	1	14	7	8
Customer	Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection	n/a	77%	76%	n/a	4	4	n/a	29	26
	<i>Citizens' Panel – Wheeled bin refuse collection % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	84%	88%	82%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Recycling % of service users rating service as very good/good</i>	89%	93%	82%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview Recycling rates continue to improve across Scotland from 41% in 2011/12 to 42.2% in 2013/14 as efforts are made to achieve Scotland's Zero Waste 60% household waste recycling target by 2020. Net combined costs have reduced in the past year. Satisfaction levels for waste collection remain extremely high at above 80%, with levels increasing since the base year.

Service overview The Waste Strategy section is responsible for ensuring that the Council meets its Regulated waste requirements by planning and implementing waste reduction initiatives such as Managed Weekly Collections, Excess Waste Policy, Plastic Kerbside Collection, and various home composting campaigns. The section also maintains all contracts in relation to the collection, disposal and recovery of waste streams, for both household and commercial properties in the area.

What is our strategic policy intention? We intend to manage our waste in line with Scotland's Zero Waste Plan, by increasing recycling and reducing landfill, in order to minimise our impact on the Environment and meet the requirements of the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

Council performance East Renfrewshire's performance in relation to recycling is strong. Managed Weekly Collections has resulted in a reduction in waste going to landfill and an increase in waste being recycled. We are the second highest performing council in Scotland for this indicator. There has been a very slight increase in net costs around waste disposal and despite a continual decline in our waste collection net costs, this is not reflected in our ranking position in comparison to other councils. There has also been a slight reduction in satisfaction with recycling services across satisfaction measures unlike the national picture, although our relative position has improved.

What the Council is doing to improve services We are currently undertaking a number of improvement projects to meet the requirements of Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 including supporting businesses to recycle dry recyclables (glass, metal, paper, cardboard and plastic) and seeking landfill alternatives for residual waste. We have also entered a partnership with neighbouring local authorities to undertake a joint procurement of residual waste disposal. By improving our recycling rates and diverting increasing amounts of waste away from landfill we will see improvements to our disposal costs. In order to improve efficiency in our collection methods we have recently undertaken a review of our waste collection routes to take account of ongoing improvements in recycling and changes in the housing estate.

How the public can get involved Due to the new Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012, the Waste Strategy team visited every trade waste customer (approximately 250) to inform and help with the transition to compliance with recycling requirements. The Waste Strategy Officer has also delivered 7 information events and talks to a variety of groups including community councils, schools, and the general public. We will continue to engage with the public and businesses to achieve our zero waste targets. Residents are also surveyed on this frontline service as part of the Citizens' Panel questionnaire and the service encourage residents to let us know about areas for improvement.

Road Condition

Indicators:

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Outcome	Percentage of class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ⁸	23.7%	18.2%	21.6%	1	1	1	8	2	8
	Percentage of class B roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ⁹	41.5%	28.2%	28%	3	2	2	24	12	12
	Percentage of class C roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ¹⁰	37.0%	34.5%	36.7%	3	2	2	17	16	16
	Percentage of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ¹¹	50.1%	51.6%	50.3%	4	4	4	28	28	26
	<i>The percentage of the road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment.</i>	45.1%	43.3%	43.5%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Efficiency	Road cost per kilometer	£18,018	£18,646	£16,418	4	4	4	32	31	30
Customer	<i>Citizens' Panel - Maintenance of roads – percentage rating this as good or very good</i>	22%	29%	30%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview Overall costs for roads maintenance per km have reduced since 2010/11. The condition of the roads network in terms of Class A, Class B and unclassified roads continues to improve.

Service overview The Roads and Transportation Service manage and maintain the road network within East Renfrewshire Council, to ensure the safety of all road users, whilst minimising delays to travellers. The Service also acts as the Council's technical adviser on flooding issues, both strategically and operationally and advises the Planning Service on development control issues from a roads and flooding perspective.

⁸ Data relates to 2010-12, 2011-13, 2012-14

⁹ As above.

¹⁰ As above.

¹¹ Data relates to 2008-12, 2009-13, 2010-14.

What is our strategic policy intention? Ensuring that the roads network is in a reasonable condition and ensuring that the impact of any investment is maximised.

Council performance The data shows an upward trend for satisfaction with the condition of our roads. We have maintained our quartile positions for roads performance and also know that overall, our roads improved slightly in 2013-14. This was also achieved with lower costs, although our costs are among the highest in Scotland. Of the four LGBF indicators relating to road maintenance, two show improvement and two show decline and we recognise that we still have a way to go regarding progress with our overall road condition and in particular our unclassified roads.

What the Council is doing to improve services We have a Revenue Maintenance Programme that consists of three main elements: Structural Maintenance – carriageway and footway resurfacing and patching; routine maintenance which involves potholing, verges, tree work, street lighting, traffic signals, drainage and flooding works as well as gully cleaning; and winter maintenance which involves gritting and snow clearing. These programmes are reviewed annually using anticipated weather patterns, historical spend and rigorous assessment processes to prioritise specific projects. Reactive maintenance and patching work is generated on a needs basis subsequent to a road inspection regime. The Revenue works programme 2014/15 was approved by Cabinet in March 2014 with the additional provision of £0.5m to be spent on resurfacing and patching projects. The Capital investment programme which relates to road and footway reconstruction/overlay, bridge works, traffic safety schemes and new street lighting infrastructure, is a rolling eight year programme with an allocation of £1.34m for 2014/15 and we would expect to see improvements.

How the public can get involved Residents are surveyed on this frontline service as part of the Citizens' Panel questionnaire. As part of the review of Traffic Regulation Orders throughout East Renfrewshire the Roads service has undertaken extensive consultation with local residents and businesses. We also actively encourage residents to let us know where there are road or lighting defects in need of repair and these can be logged through our website. We also work with local schools to promote road safety and provide bikeability training to all primary schools in the area.

Cleanliness

Indicators:

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Outcome	Street cleanliness score – % areas assessed as clean	96.6	94.2	94.5	3	3	4	17	22	26
Efficiency	Cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	£6,689	£7,327	£7,290	1	1	1	1	1	2
Customer	Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning	n/a	85%	75%	n/a	1	3	n/a	3	19
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Street cleaning/ litter control % rating this as good or very good</i>	55%	61%	64%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview Street cleaning costs per 1,000 population continue to reduce at an increasing rate, while the cleanliness score and satisfaction rates continue to improve.

Service overview The Cleansing Service undertakes street and pavement cleaning operations, as well as graffiti removal. It also works closely with CHCP in provision of the Council's Community Offender programme. In addition to the direct street cleansing operations, the service adopts a proactive role in education on litter issues and collaborative detection of litter, graffiti and fly tipping offences. The street cleansing operation engages with communities by meeting with community groups, schools and library 'surgeries' to discuss street cleansing and other issues with residents. In collaboration with Housing Services, the street cleansing service is an active participant in Estate Walkabouts to gain firsthand experience of cleansing issues.

What is our strategic policy intention? Maintaining and improving street cleanliness making East Renfrewshire Council an attractive natural and built environment.

Council performance Our performance for street cleaning has slightly improved. In line with what's happening nationally, more of our roads were assessed as clean and this was achieved with lower costs and among the lowest costs in Scotland. The SHS data suggests satisfaction with street cleaning has declined and has dropped to the bottom quartile, although the issues with this data is well known and deemed less reliable than our local Citizens' Panel. In fact, this data shows that more of our residents were satisfied with the service. It is disappointing that although in the round performance has generally improved, this is not reflected in our ranking and quartile positions for these indicators as other councils also improve.

What the Council is doing to improve services We will continue to review and monitor the service to identify further areas for improvement. A revised street cleaning operation has been developed to take account of recent funding awarded from Zero Waste Scotland which has delivered a network of chipped bins. We will utilise the intelligence gathered from the public litter bins in 2014/15 to ensure we have a sufficient number of receptacles in the correct locations throughout East Renfrewshire. We will also be investigating the placement of public recycling bins in the area. This, along with the introduction of trackers on street-sweeping vehicles, will ensure that bins are emptied and streets swept in the most efficient manner with the resources available.

How the public can get involved Residents are surveyed on this frontline service as part of the Citizens Panel questionnaire. Litter surgeries are also run regularly that invite local groups and schools to take part in litter picks to raise awareness of fly tipping and litter management. As before, we also actively encourage residents to let us know about incidences of fly tipping and street cleanliness issues so our teams can maintain East Renfrewshire as an attractive environment.

Trading standards and environmental health

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Efficiency	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population	£7,145	£7,899	£7,180	n/a	1	1	n/a	1	1
	Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population	£3,606	£6,207	£7,694	n/a	3	3	n/a	20	23
	Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	£10751.25	£14105.24	£14874.32	1	1	1	1	2	1
Customer	Citizens' Panel - Trading Standards % of service users rating service as very good/good ¹²	n/a	89%	79%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Citizens' Panel - Environmental health % of service users rating service as very good/good ¹³	89%	85%	83%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview [No comment in national report]

Service overview The Trading Standards service has a statutory duty to enforce consumer protection legislation in East Renfrewshire. This includes the enforcement of product safety legislation including the prevention of underage sales such as tobacco, licensing of petrol stations and licensing of firework storage, as well as enforcing a wide variety of other legislation. The service is also a resource for local business. This is particularly suited to large or growing businesses who wish to use the service to develop quality systems that comply with consumer protection legislation. The Environmental Health service ensure the food we eat is safe and of good quality, improve housing conditions, safeguard standards of workplace health and safety and create a better environment.

What is our strategic policy intention? To provide a modern, effective one stop service that promotes compliance with legislation and prevention of harm by pro-active engagement with residents and businesses through advice, education and enforcement.

Council performance Our costs for environmental health remain the lowest in Scotland and reduced further in 2013-14, whilst our costs for trading standards have increased. Our costs are influenced by accountancy practices where our costs for money advice services are included here. Despite approximately four out of five panel respondents' answering they were satisfied with trading standards and environmental health the data suggests there has been a decline in satisfaction with the service. However, ratings here are based on a low level of responses the reductions in satisfaction should be treated with caution.

¹² Ratings based on low level of responses. Therefore results should be treated with caution.

¹³ As above.

What the Council is doing to improve services The Prevention Services Division (combining resources between Environmental Health and Trading Standards) will be joint working on an “early years project” incorporating food standards, nutrition, housing conditions, child safety matters, value for money advice on purchase of goods and services with the intention of improving standards in line with our Single Outcome Agreement. Residents are also surveyed on this frontline service in the Citizens Panel survey. As part of the prevention agenda the team attends a number of community engagement events throughout the year. Members of the public can attend these events to ask general advice or request specific support from the prevention team.

Housing Services

Indicators

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Outcome	% of stock meeting the SHQS	71.2%	84.1%	92.9%	2	2	1	13	9	4
	% of council dwellings that are energy efficient ¹⁴	91.2%	95.1%	100%	2	1	1	10	6	1
Efficiency	NEW Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year	n/a	n/a	9.4%	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	26
	% of rent due lost through properties being empty during the last year	1.9%	1.8%	1.3%	4	4	3	21	20	15
	NEW Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs	n/a	14	8.5	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	9
	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of net rent due	7.1%	9.5%	n/a	3	4	n/a	17	22	n/a
	Percentage of repairs completed within target times	92.3%	87.4%	n/a	3	4	n/a	16	23	n/a
Customer	Citizens' Panel - Local authority housing % of service users rating service as very good/good ¹⁵	n/a	48%	52%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

National overview When looking at council management of housing stock, the rent due lost to voids has remained unchanged since 2010/11. In terms of housing quality, there have been consistent and significant improvements over the past 3 years in terms of dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Standards and energy efficiency standards. In 2013/14, the average Scottish gross tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due was 5.5%.

Service overview East Renfrewshire Council have continued to invest in our housing stock to bring it up to the new Scottish Housing Quality Standard by the target date of 2015. The money collected from tenants for rent is used for this investment. The Revenues Section is responsible for collection of all sums due to the Council including rents. At the national level for housing services there has been an increase in the percentage of tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due since 2010/11, with the rate of this increase accelerating in the past year, a likely effect of welfare reform.

¹⁴ Actual title of indicator is % of properties at or above the appropriate NHER or SAP ratings specified in element 35 of the SHQS, as at 31st March each year

¹⁵ Ratings based on low level of responses. Therefore results should be treated with caution.

What is our strategic policy intention? Our long term vision is to be the best Scottish council in delivering Housing and Housing related services to our customers.

Council performance We are now joint first for the proportion of our homes that are energy efficient, have moved up to the top quartile for the proportion of homes that meet the SHQS (which has consistently improved in line with national trends) and customer satisfaction shows an improving trend. In comparison to other councils we perform well for the average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs. This is an improvement from 14 days in 2012/13 to 8.5 days in 2013/14. We have improved performance and our quartile position for the percentage of rent lost due to voids despite the ongoing issue of a high number of houses that are difficult to let in particular areas of Barrhead – an improvement of over 30% in void rent loss. We are lowest in Scotland and perform in the bottom quartile for rent arrears. A full review of all former tenant arrear balances is currently being undertaken (details below).

What the Council is doing to improve services A full review of all former tenant arrear balances is currently being undertaken to ensure that either appropriate recovery action is being taken or if balances are deemed to be irrecoverable they will be recommended for write off. To date a significant amount of former tenant arrears has been identified for potential write-off. Details will be presented to Cabinet on 19 March 2015. Our Write-Off Policy will be reviewed as most other Councils appear to permit higher levels of write-off debt. The best performing Councils in Scotland have their rent collection service embedded within the Housing Service where relationships with tenants are well established. A restructure in June 2015 will see our rents team embedded within the Housing Service to enable a more holistic approach with greater opportunities for early intervention with tenants. To improve our performance around repair response times, the service has been undergoing significant review including a Public Service Excellence (PSE) improvement project in this area. This process made several recommendations particularly in relation to the IT systems used. Several of our peers implemented mobile working which allows these councils to deliver a quicker service. The servitor system upgrade is now complete, the asset management system has been installed and plans are in place to implement mobile working in 2014/15. We would therefore expect to see future improvements in this indicator. The service is continuing to review void rent loss and is actively working to reduce re-let times through faster repair times and changes to allocation processes.

How the public can get involved In October 2014 Housing Services published the Customer Engagement Strategy. The strategy outcome is to ensure that all customers of Housing Services have the opportunity to participate and influence decision making. The strategy provides customers with a range of ways to engage with Housing Services and ensures this information is used to improve performance. In August 2014 Housing Services undertook a tenant survey, which found that 83% of tenants were satisfied with the overall service provided. This is an increase from 71% in 2012.

Economic Development

	Full name	2011/12 value	2012/13 value	2013/14 value	2011/12 quartile	2012/13 quartile	2013/14 quartile	2011/12 rank	2012/13 rank	2013/14 rank
Outcome	% unemployed people accessing jobs via council operated/funded employability programmes	n/a	9.7%	10.5%	n/a	2	2	n/a	9	15

National overview In the last year the Scotland average for percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council funded/operated employability programmes rose from 9.6% to 12.6% of total unemployed. There is a considerable range across councils, from 2.3% to 34.8%, and work is prioritised in the year ahead to improve the robustness of this measure and provide reliable data on the progression of these people into employment.

Service overview Economic Development and Regeneration encompasses three core service areas – Employability, Economic and Business Development and Regeneration. These are designed to support and develop the three core areas of the economy; the skills and employability of our local residents, local business and place and Infrastructure to support economic growth. Economic Development is responsible for the Council's overarching economic strategy, 'a place to grow' and for coordinating actions across the community planning partnership in response to the current economic downturn.

What is our strategic policy intention? Employability services were brought together to create a centralised team - 'Work-er'. This more streamlined service focuses on those furthest from the labour market and managing progression from unemployment into positive training and employment destinations.

Council performance 273 unemployed people were assisted into work in 2013/14 compared to 242 in 2012/13. This continues to place us in the 2nd quartile, although our relative position has declined. Resources are being allocated to ensure the target number of individuals entering employment, training, education or volunteering as a result of training and employability services is met. However, going forward we require to be aware of the UK Government's Welfare Reform agenda and the pressure this may place on Council services.

What the Council is doing to improve services The Economic Development Team will deliver Skills Development Scotland's Employability Fund through WorkER and the European Social Fund Priority 5 to increase engagement with individuals and the numbers entering employment, training, education and volunteering. We are also providing targeted support and training opportunities for young people including implementing earlier interventions to reduce youth unemployment and support to local unemployed residents through the Renfrewshire Employability Partnership.

How the public can get involved Economic Development is a front line service engaging the business community, unemployed people and the general public to use our services. All customers are surveyed on the service provided and invited to feedback on their experience. In addition, the Local Plan consultations, business networking events, job fairs and drop-in events are all utilised in public engagement.