REPORT TO: **AUDIT AND PERFORANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON 15 APRIL 2015**

SUBJECT: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2013/14 RESULTS**

BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 The reason for this report is to present to the Committee benchmarking summary performance data for the period 2013/14 following the publication of national results.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III I (17) and (20) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to reviewing how performance information can be used to improve performance and receiving reports on trends within all Council services.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee –

(i) considers the Council's performance in terms of informing potential future agenda items;

(ii) notes national progress against the Family Group Benchmarking Process.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In the report Local Government Benchmarking Framework presented to the meeting of this Committee on 8 October 2014, 2012/13 benchmarking information in summary format was considered helpful in order to analyse Moray's performance against family group and national averages (paragraph 10 of the Minute refers).

3.2 Following a refresh of data from Local Financial Returns used to calculate cost data; the detailed report will be updated and placed on the Council's Performance webpage before 24 April 2015.

3.3 Overall the picture in 2013/14 is a positive one, with the majority of indicators improving and remaining within the top 16 Councils in Scotland (quartiles 1 and 2). Of the indicators where results have dropped, almost half remained within the top half of the table. Indicators featuring in the lowest quartile (Council's ranked 25th to 32nd) have been or are due to be scrutinised in relation to potential for improvement by the relevant Service Committees. The summary **(Appendix 1)** includes

- a performance summary against Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators for Moray
- detailed breakdown of results and rankings in the 3 years to 2013/14 for each indicator

3.4 Summary data provided could inform future agenda items if Committee is minded to revisit individual areas.

3.5 Progress has been made with Family Group Benchmarking activity albeit in some service areas out with original timescales. Benchmarking family groups are led by services within councils and while they will ultimately be self-sustaining, they have had support from the Improvement Service in the initial set up phase. The benchmarking schedule endorsed by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives aims to embed benchmarking across all service areas where there is not already existing arrangements in place. Moray is within Family Group 2 for People Services (education, social work and housing) and also for Other Services (environmental services and culture / leisure services).

3.6 In Phase 1 Council officers from Council Tax and Waste Management have met within their family groups, discussed the key areas of difference or similarity in performance and the reasons for variances, identified and documented good practice case studies and agreed action points as a family group going forward. The Sports Services Family Group met in mid March and the Looked after Children Family Group in early April, learning points across all Family Groups are published on the Improvement Service Knowledge Hub.

3.7 During the process, Moray provided good practice case study guidance on Council cash office closures and Waste Management customer engagement.

The schedule is set out below.

Phase 1 – Starting August 2014

	Sports Services	Council Tax	Waste Management	Looked After Children
FG 1	Shetland Islands	Western Isles	Highland	Edinburgh
FG 2	Perth & Kinross	North Ayrshire	Stirling	Argyll & Bute
FG 3	Renfrewshire	East Renfrewshire	Clackmannanshire	Fife
FG 4	Aberdeen City	Glasgow	Dundee	Inverclyde

Phase 2 – Starting March 2015

	Museums	Street Cleaning	Equalities	HR
FG 1	Orkney	Dumfries & Galloway	Aberdeenshire	Borders
FG 2	North Ayrshire	North Ayrshire	Fife	Fife
FG 3	Angus	Midlothian	South Lanarkshire	West Lothian
FG 4	North Lanarkshire	Falkirk	West Dunbartonshire	East Dunbartonshire

Phase 3 – Starting June 2015

Economic Development	Libraries	Support Services

Phase 4 – Starting October 2015

Parks and Open Spaces	Trading Standards and Environmental Health	Democratic Services	Invoicing

4.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a)   **Moray 2023: A Plan for the Future/Service Plan**
The Council and its partners have agreed 5 priorities, as set out in Moray 2023, with a range of outcome targets included in the 10 year plan for each of the priorities. It will be important that service committees keep those targets in mind when reviewing the performance data in the national benchmarking results, for two reasons:
1. To recognise that to achieve success against the 10 year plan targets might mean weaker performance in non-priority areas; and
2. To consider whether the priorities and targets should be reviewed or amended in light of the information contained within the national benchmarking results.

(b)   **Policy and Legal**
The Council has a statutory obligation to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

(c)   **Financial implications**
There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

(d)   **Risk Implications**
There are no direct risk implications arising from this report although effective performance management assists in the management of risk.

(e) **Staffing Implications**
There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) **Property**
None.

(g) **Equalities**
An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the report is to inform the committee on performance issues.

(h) **Consultations**
The Corporate Policy Unit Manager has been consulted and is in agreement with the contents of this report. Service Managers provided input in terms of their response to Local Government Benchmarking Framework results.

5. **CONCLUSION**

5.1 **In 2013/14, 61% of Local Government Benchmarking indicator results featured in the top 16 of 32 Scottish Local Authorities. Good progress has been made in the Family Group Benchmarking Process which supports the council in its improvement activities in learning from established good practice.**

5.2 **Service committees will be asked to review the relevant benchmarking results for their services and to do this with close regard to the targets in Moray 2023.**

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Background Papers: Held by author
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