



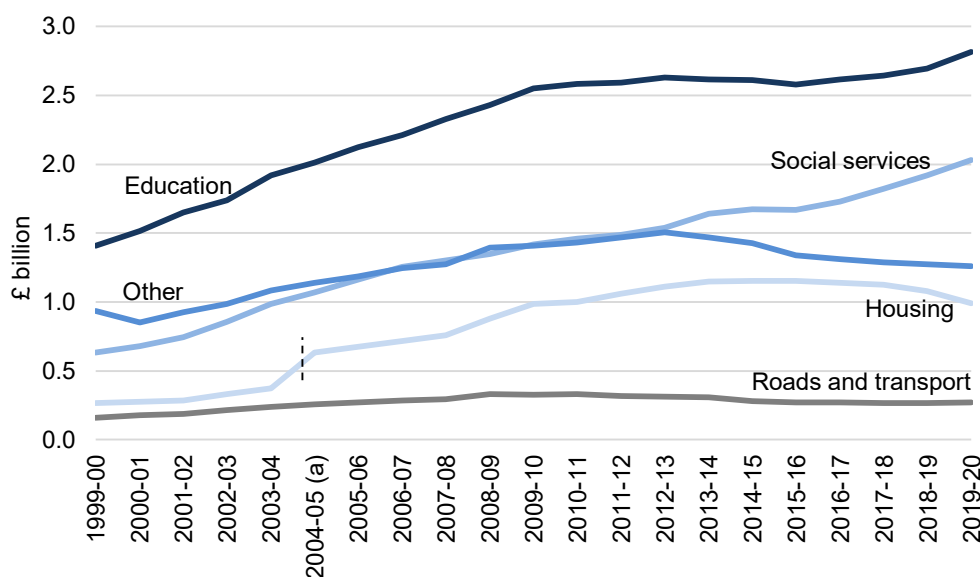
Local authority revenue and capital outturn expenditure 2019-20

27 January 2021
SFR 18/2021

Revenue

- In 2019-20, total revenue expenditure by Welsh local authorities increased by 2.4 per cent to £8.3 billion. This continues the broad picture seen since the economic downturn at the turn of the decade of reduced growth in expenditure. Revenue expenditure per head was £2,634 or £49 higher than the previous year.
- Prior to the 2008-09 recession and the subsequent austerity measures, annual increases of 5 per cent or 6 per cent were regularly reported but since 2010-11 only two years have seen growth exceeding 2 per cent.
- This has had a varying impact depending on the service areas, although changes in classification means analysis over time should be taken with caution. In general, statutory services such as education and social services have been protected (with social services having seen the biggest increase in expenditure) but other services such as libraries, local environmental services, roads and transport and planning have seen overall reductions since 2010-11. Education and social services now account for 66 per cent of overall unitary authority expenditure compared with 59 per cent in 2010-11 and 60 per cent in 1999-2000.

Chart 1: Breakdown of unitary authority revenue expenditure



(a) The large increase in housing in 2004-05 is due to rent rebates granted to HRA tenants being moved to the general fund.

About this release

This release analyses the revenue and capital outturn expenditure of Welsh local authorities.

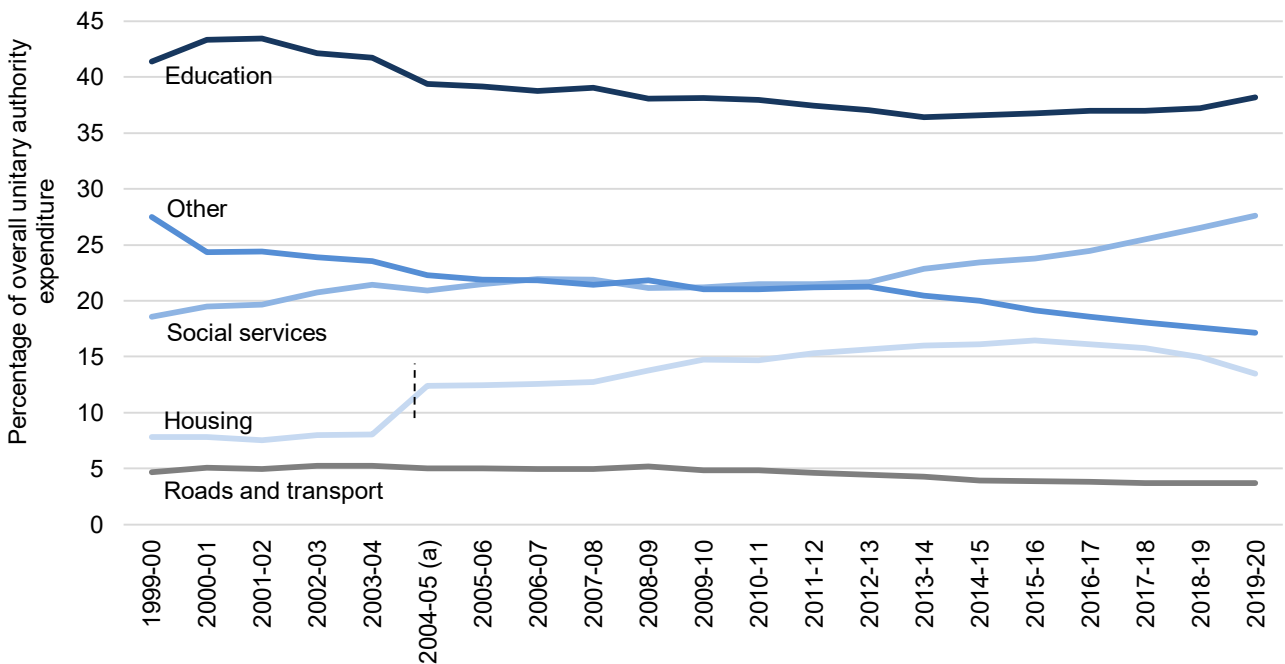
Revenue expenditure is the cost of running local authority services such as staffing, heating, lighting and cleaning, together with the expenditure on goods and services consumed within the year.

Capital expenditure is investment in local authority services, mainly the provision, acquisition and enhancement of fixed assets such as land, buildings, vehicles and machinery.

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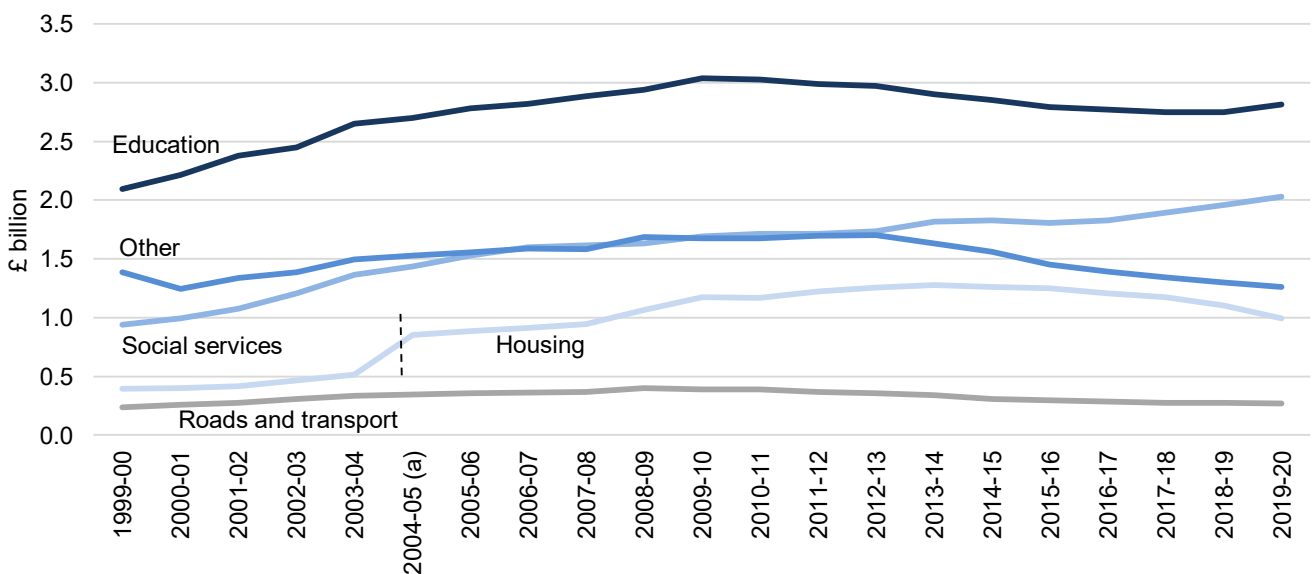
Chart 2: Distribution of unitary authority revenue expenditure



(a) The large increase in housing in 2004-05 is due to rent rebates granted to HRA tenants being moved to the general fund.

When accounting for inflation, overall revenue expenditure in 2019-20 is lower than in any year from 2008-09 onwards.

Chart 3: Real terms breakdown of unitary authority revenue expenditure (2019-20 prices)



(a) The large increase in housing in 2004-05 is due to rent rebates granted to HRA tenants being moved to the general fund.

Capital

- Capital expenditure increased by 1.2 per cent in 2019-20 to £1,246 million or £400 per head of population. This represents an increase of £15 million over the previous year.
- In general, capital expenditure is more volatile and can be impacted heavily by large investments or adjustments. Expenditure increased in 2019-20 despite a large decrease in education, which represents 20 per cent of capital expenditure. In contrast, since 2010-11 the share of capital expenditure spent on transport has fallen from 21 per cent to 15 per cent.
- Most of this capital expenditure was spent by unitary authorities, with police fire and national park authorities reporting expenditure of £38 million, £13 million and £3 million respectively.

Revenue

Table 1 shows the local authority revenue outturn expenditure. Education increased by 4.4 per cent, social services increased by 5.8 per cent and housing decreased by 8.3 per cent. Central administration is showing the largest percentage decrease at 12.1 per cent.

Table 1: Service level revenue expenditure and financing - Wales (a)

County and county borough council expenditure	2018-19 £ million	2019-20 £ million	Annual change £ million	Annual change %	2019-20 £ per head (b)
Education	2,694.6	2,812.7	118.1	4.4	892
Social services	1,920.8	2,032.2	111.5	5.8	645
Housing (c)	1,081.0	991.3	-89.7	-8.3	314
Local environmental services (d)	383.5	391.3	7.8	2.0	124
Roads and transport	267.1	270.5	3.5	1.3	86
Libraries, culture, heritage, sport and recreation	211.2	202.3	-8.8	-4.2	64
Planning, economic and community development	72.1	80.0	7.9	11.0	25
Council tax administration	36.0	44.1	8.2	22.7	14
Debt financing: counties	295.4	302.6	7.2	2.4	96
Central administration and other revenue: counties (e) (f)	274.5	241.4	-33.1	-12.1	77
All county and county borough council expenditure	7,236.0	7,368.4	132.4	1.8	2,337
Police (f)	705.3	753.5	48.2	6.8	239
Fire (f)	156.1	166.1	10.0	6.4	53
National parks (f)	15.0	16.2	1.3	8.5	5
Gross revenue expenditure	8,112.3	8,304.3	191.9	2.4	2,634
less specific and special government grants (g)	1,963.5	2,044.6	81.1	4.1	648
Net revenue expenditure	6,148.8	6,259.6	110.8	1.8	1,985
Putting to (+) / drawing from (-) reserves (h)	-27.1	17.9	45.1	.	6
Council tax reduction scheme	252.1	259.8	7.7	3.1	82
Budget requirement (f)	6,373.8	6,537.4	163.6	2.6	2,073
plus discretionary non-domestic rate relief	3.7	4.7	1.0	27.0	2
less revenue support grant	3,305.0	3,319.8	14.9	0.4	1,053
less police grant	209.0	213.9	4.8	2.3	68
less redistributed non-domestic rates income	1,050.0	1,061.0	11.0	1.0	337
Council tax requirement	1,813.6	1,947.4	133.9	7.4	618
of which:					
paid by council tax reduction scheme	252.1	259.8	7.7	3.1	82
paid directly by council tax payers	1,561.5	1,687.6	126.2	8.1	535

(a) Service expenditure is shown excluding that financed by sales, fees and charges, but including that financed by specific and special government grants. Figures are on an IFRS basis (see notes).

(b) The '£ per head' calculations use the 2019 mid year estimates of population.

(c) Includes housing benefit, and private sector housing costs such as provision for the homeless. Includes rent rebates granted to HRA tenants which is 100% grant funded. Excludes council owned housing.

(d) Includes cemeteries and crematoria, community safety, environmental health, consumer protection, waste collection/disposal and central services to the public such as birth registration and elections.

(e) Includes agricultural services, coastal and flood defence and community councils.

(f) Includes central administrative costs of corporate management, democratic representation and certain costs, such as those relating to back-year or additional pension contributions which should not be allocated to individual services, capital expenditure charged to the revenue account and is net of any interest expected to accrue on balances.

(g) Excludes police grant.

(h) Includes council tax collected in year adjustments and other adjustments.

. Data not applicable

Chart 4 shows revenue expenditure across services as a percentage of total expenditure. Education and Social Services make up more than half of the total expenditure.

Chart 4: Service level revenue expenditure in Wales, 2019-20

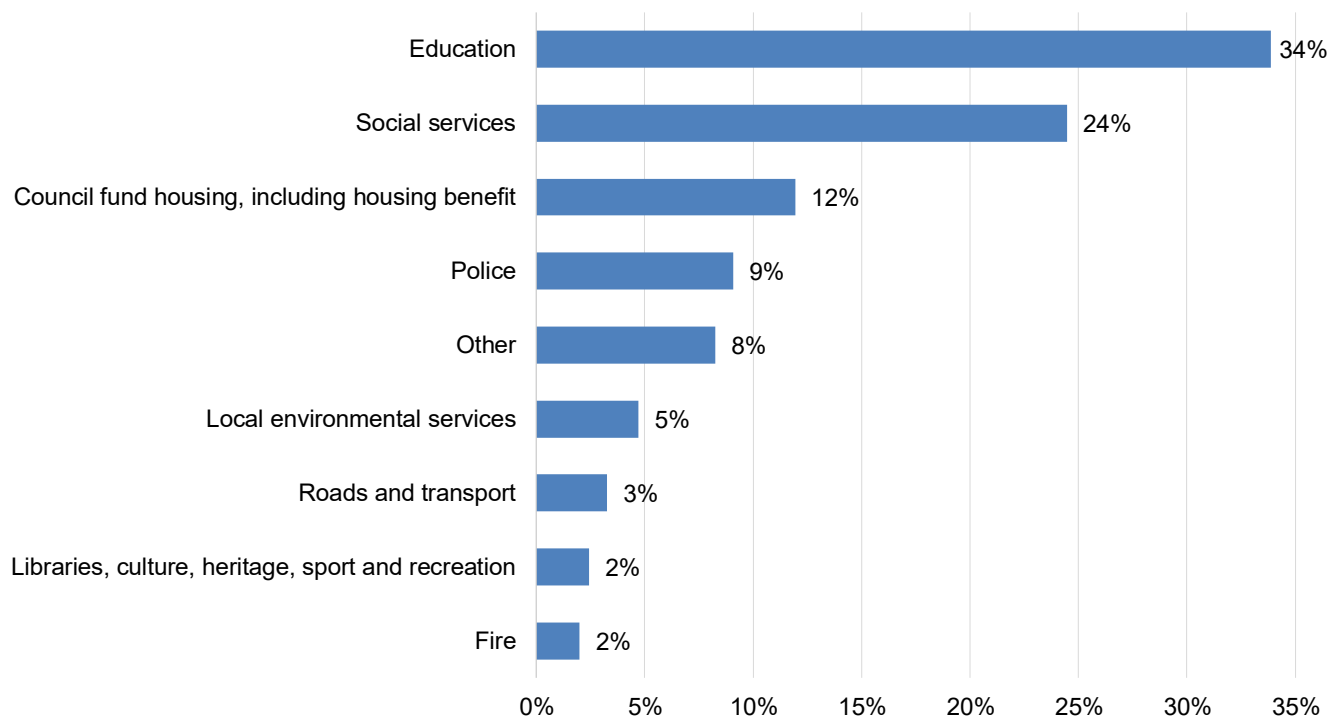


Chart 5 shows financing of budget requirement. Budget requirement is gross revenue expenditure less that funded by all non-police specific government grants and local authority reserves. It is the amount of expenditure which is supported by the council tax and general support from central government.

Chart 5: Financing of budget requirement in Wales, 2019-20

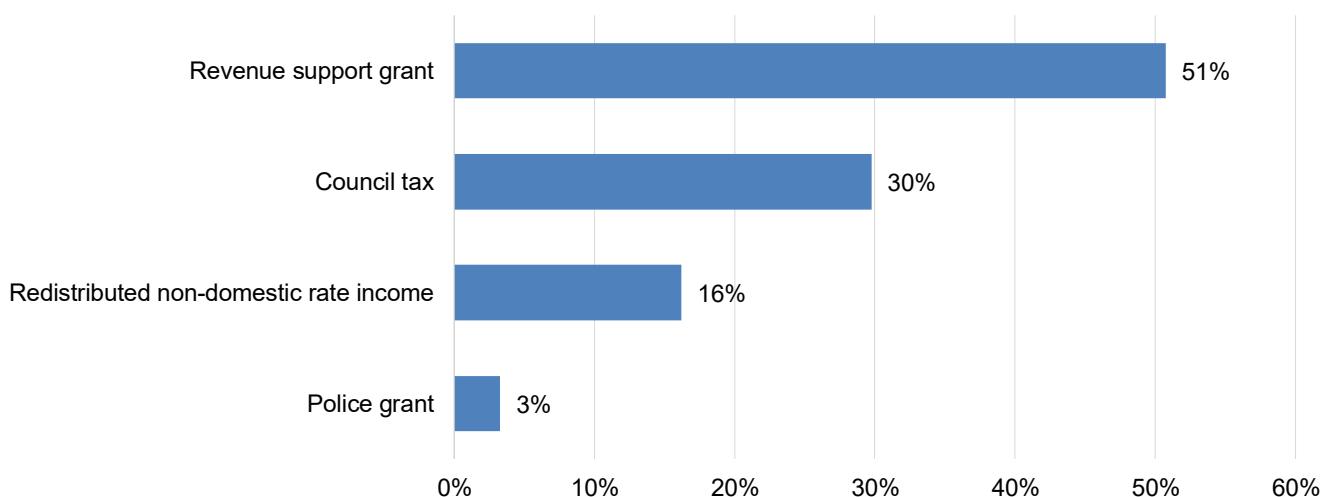


Table 2 shows the local authority revenue outturn expenditure. Of the unitary authorities, Ceredigion showed the largest percentage increase of 5.7 per cent.

Table 2 - Revenue expenditure by local authority (a)

	2018-19 £ million	2019-20 £ million	Annual change £ million	Annual change %	2019-20 £ per head (b)
Isle of Anglesey	162.8	168.9	6.2	3.8	2,412
Gwynedd	285.3	300.0	14.7	5.2	2,409
Conwy	275.5	277.9	2.4	0.9	2,371
Denbighshire	237.2	244.9	7.7	3.2	2,559
Flintshire	325.4	330.0	4.5	1.4	2,114
Wrexham	290.9	300.7	9.7	3.3	2,211
Powys	297.1	312.8	15.7	5.3	2,362
Ceredigion	169.9	179.7	9.8	5.7	2,471
Pembrokeshire	266.0	280.3	14.3	5.4	2,228
Carmarthenshire	425.8	432.0	6.2	1.5	2,289
Swansea	558.0	562.6	4.6	0.8	2,278
Neath Port Talbot	351.7	361.5	9.8	2.8	2,522
Bridgend	339.8	336.7	-3.0	-0.9	2,290
Vale of Glamorgan	283.0	285.8	2.9	1.0	2,140
Cardiff	831.2	841.7	10.5	1.3	2,294
Rhondda Cynon Taf	622.2	612.6	-9.6	-1.5	2,539
Merthyr Tydfil	153.1	152.7	-0.4	-0.3	2,531
Caerphilly	417.1	416.6	-0.6	-0.1	2,301
Blaenau Gwent	177.3	178.6	1.3	0.7	2,557
Torfaen	219.9	225.1	5.2	2.3	2,396
Monmouthshire	183.5	184.7	1.1	0.6	1,952
Newport	363.3	382.8	19.4	5.4	2,475
All county and county borough councils	7,236.0	7,368.4	132.4	1.8	2,337
Dyfed Powys police	109.3	115.6	6.3	5.8	222
Gwent police	130.3	139.4	9.1	7.0	279
North Wales police	158.8	166.2	7.4	4.7	238
South Wales police	307.0	332.3	25.3	8.3	232
All police	705.3	753.5	48.2	6.8	239
Mid and West Wales fire authority	49.2	53.1	3.9	7.9	58
North Wales fire authority	35.3	36.3	1.0	2.9	52
South Wales fire authority	71.7	76.8	5.1	7.1	50
All fire authorities	156.1	166.1	10.0	6.4	53
Brecon Beacons national park authority	4.1	4.4	0.3	8.5	.
Pembrokeshire Coast national park authority	5.1	5.1	0.0	0.3	.
Snowdonia national park authority	5.8	6.7	0.9	15.5	.
All national park authorities	15.0	16.2	1.3	8.5	5
Wales	8,112.3	8,304.3	191.9	2.4	2,634

(a) Expenditure on fire services is financed by the county and county borough councils by means of levies to the fire authorities. For the purposes of this table the levies have been deducted from counties expenditure and included against the fire authorities. Similarly 25% of national park authority expenditure is financed by the county and county borough councils by means of levies to the national park authorities, the remainder being financed by specific grants.

(b) The £ per head calculations use the 2019 mid year estimates of population.

. Data not applicable due to national park population data not applying to users of the services.

Capital

In 2019-20, local authority capital expenditure was £1,246 million, an annual increase of 1%. A full breakdown of capital expenditure is shown in table 6.

Table 3: Local authority capital expenditure by service

	£ million							2019-20 over 2018-19 percentage change
	1996-97	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
Education	57.4	245.6	335.0	374.5	429.9	331.3	246.4	-26
Social services	12.4	22.9	12.6	14.7	17.0	26.3	22.0	-16
Transport	113.2	168.1	119.7	129.3	142.4	196.0	191.8	-2
Housing	271.0	260.3	316.5	330.5	318.3	336.7	382.5	14
General administration	36.0	41.9	36.3	38.0	35.8	44.4	54.6	23
Planning and development	39.3	103.3	92.7	73.1	43.8	75.6	152.3	102
Other services	145.3	125.1	1,039.4	110.4	135.4	172.4	145.1	-16
Law, order and protective services	18.6	48.0	57.3	42.7	51.6	48.1	50.8	6
Total expenditure	693.2	1,015.2	2,009.6	1,113.2	1,174.2	1,230.7	1,245.6	1
Total expenditure excluding 15-16 HRA subsidy buyout								
	693.2	1,015.2	1,090.6	1,113.2	1,174.2	1,230.7	1,245.6	1

Chart 6: Local authority capital expenditure and receipts

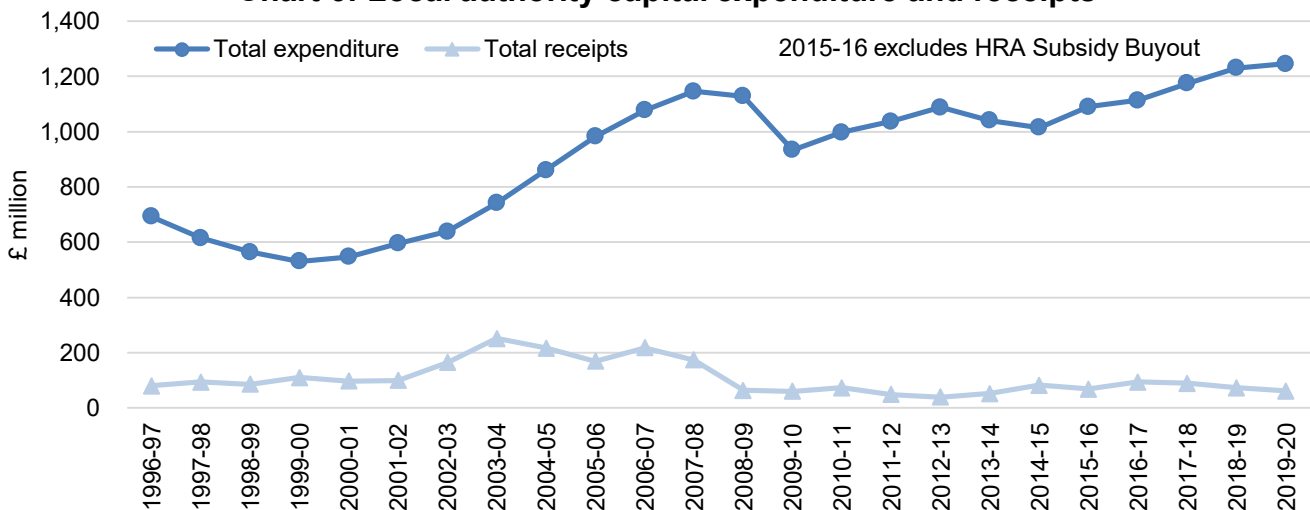


Chart 7: Local authority capital expenditure by service

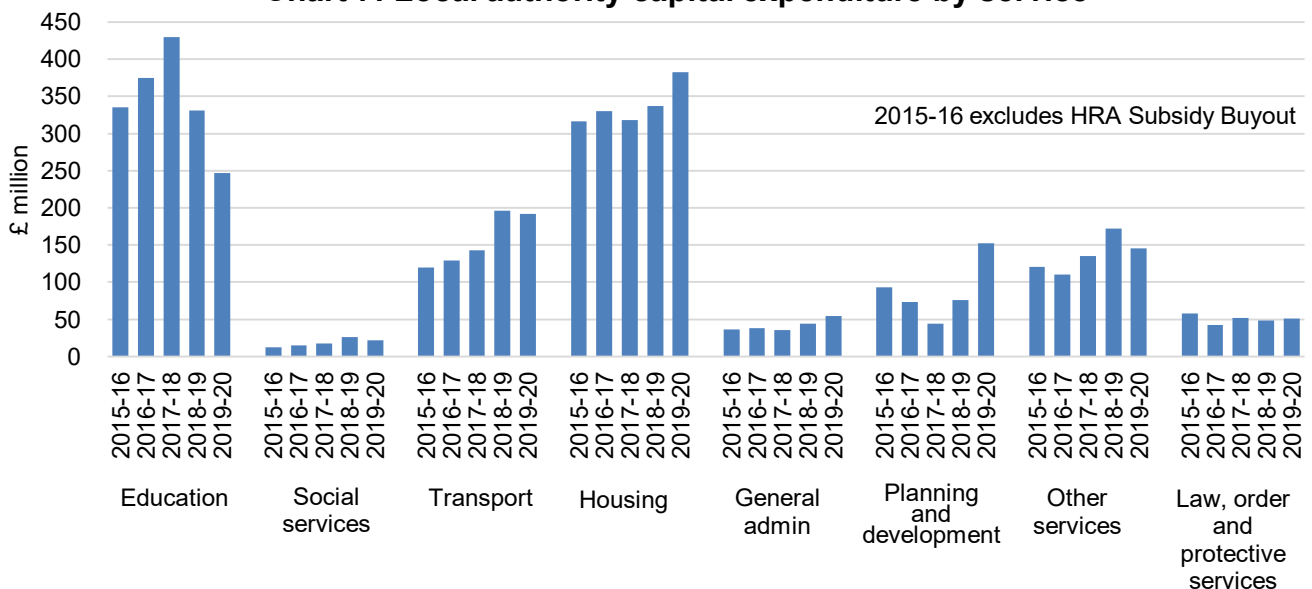


Table 4: Local authority capital receipts by service

£ million

	1996-97	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2019-20 over 2018-19 percentage change (a)
Education	0.6	14.6	4.0	5.9	18.9	7.4	5.2	.
Social services	0.2	5.3	2.6	2.7	1.1	4.2	3.9	.
Transport	1.8	1.1	1.2	0.2	0.8	0.6	0.4	.
Housing	49.3	15.4	17.0	17.8	15.9	16.0	21.1	.
General administration	6.9	17.4	15.3	18.8	13.1	13.2	7.6	.
Planning and development	12.6	13.5	13.3	13.7	24.8	14.3	10.6	.
Other services	4.2	12.8	11.3	32.7	12.0	15.0	9.3	.
Law, order and protective services	3.6	2.4	3.2	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.6	.
Total receipts	79.3	82.3	67.9	93.7	88.6	73.0	60.7	-17

(a) Comparisons are not calculated at a service level due to the small amounts involved and unpredictable nature of capital receipts year on year.

In 2019-20, local authority capital receipts were £61 million, an annual decrease of £12 million or 17%. A full breakdown of capital receipts is shown in table 7.

Chart 8: Local authority capital receipts by service

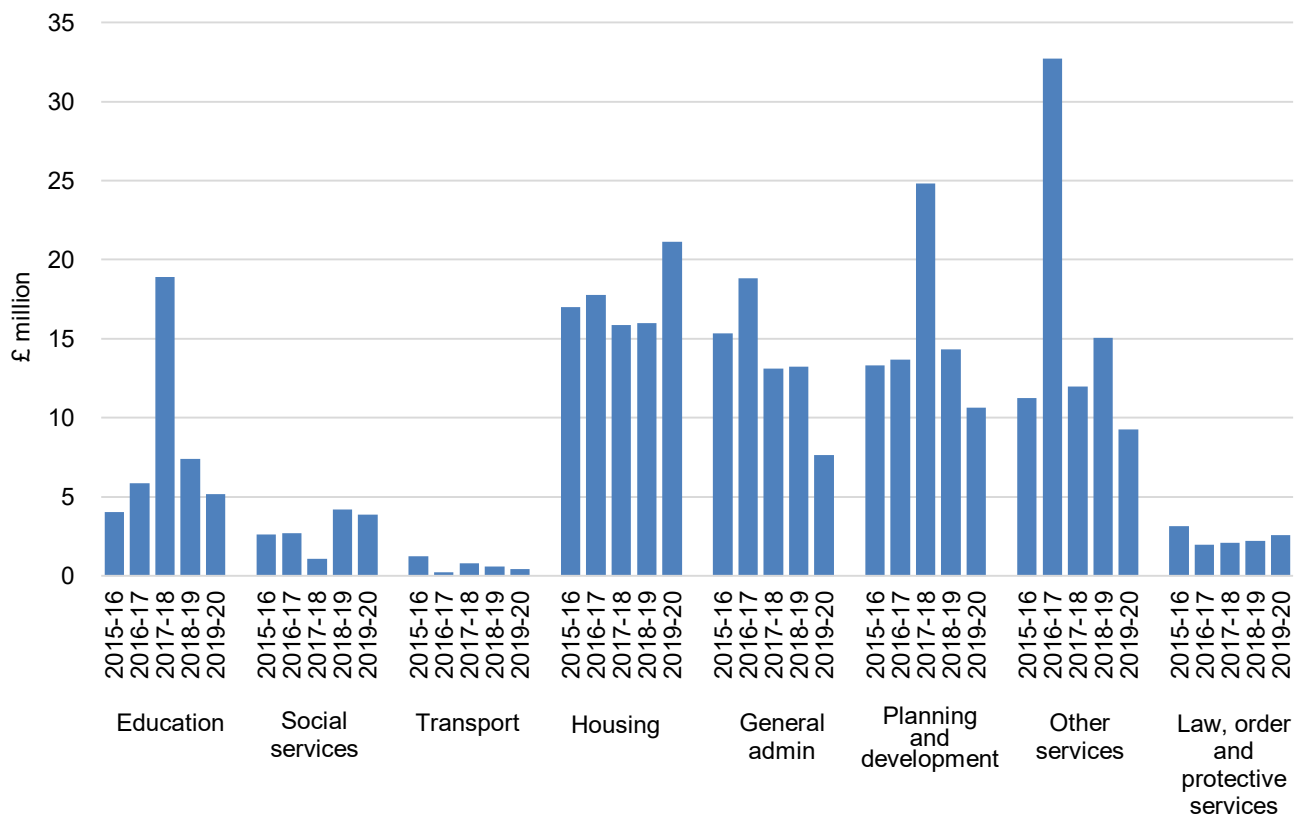


Table 5: Financing of local authority capital expenditure (a)

£ million

	1996-97	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% of total
External financing								
General capital funding / grant (b)	343.7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Capital grants (c)	241.5	403.4	418.8	340.9	372.5	432.2	493.4	40
Supported borrowing	.	97.9	82.4	91.4	96.8	86.4	94.0	8
Major repairs allowance	.	60.4	60.4	60.4	60.4	60.4	60.4	5
Sub-total external financing	585.2	561.7	561.6	492.7	529.7	579.0	647.8	52
Internal financing								
Unsupported borrowing	.	234.7	238.6	298.4	334.2	338.8	379.1	30
Use of capital receipts	65.0	46.4	78.2	80.7	83.5	68.1	59.4	5
Capital expenditure charged to revenue	42.9	172.4	212.2	241.4	226.8	244.8	159.3	13
HRA subsidy buyout	.	.	919.0	.	.	.	.	.
Sub-total internal financing (d)	107.9	453.5	1,448.0	620.5	644.5	651.7	597.7	48
Total financing (d)	693.2	1,015.2	2,009.6	1,113.2	1,174.2	1,230.7	1,245.6	100

(a) Up to 2003-04, figures are on a cash basis, figures from 2004-05 onwards are on an accruals basis.

(b) Up to 2003-04, consists of basic credit approvals / general capital funding and supplementary credit approvals.

(c) Includes capital grants from the Welsh Government, other UK Government Departments, European Community Structural Funds (including ERDF) and grants and contributions from other sources.

(d) Includes financing of the 2015-16 HRA subsidy buyout.

In 2019-20, 52% of local authorities financing of capital expenditure came from central government (External financing), the remaining 48% was funded from their own resources (Internal financing).

External financing came from: capital grants £493 million (40%); supported borrowing £94 million (8%) and major repairs allowance £60 million (5%).

Internal financing was made up of: unsupported borrowing £379 million (30%); capital expenditure charged to revenue £159 million (13%) and use of capital receipts £59 million (5%).

Unsupported borrowing increased by 12% in 2019-20.

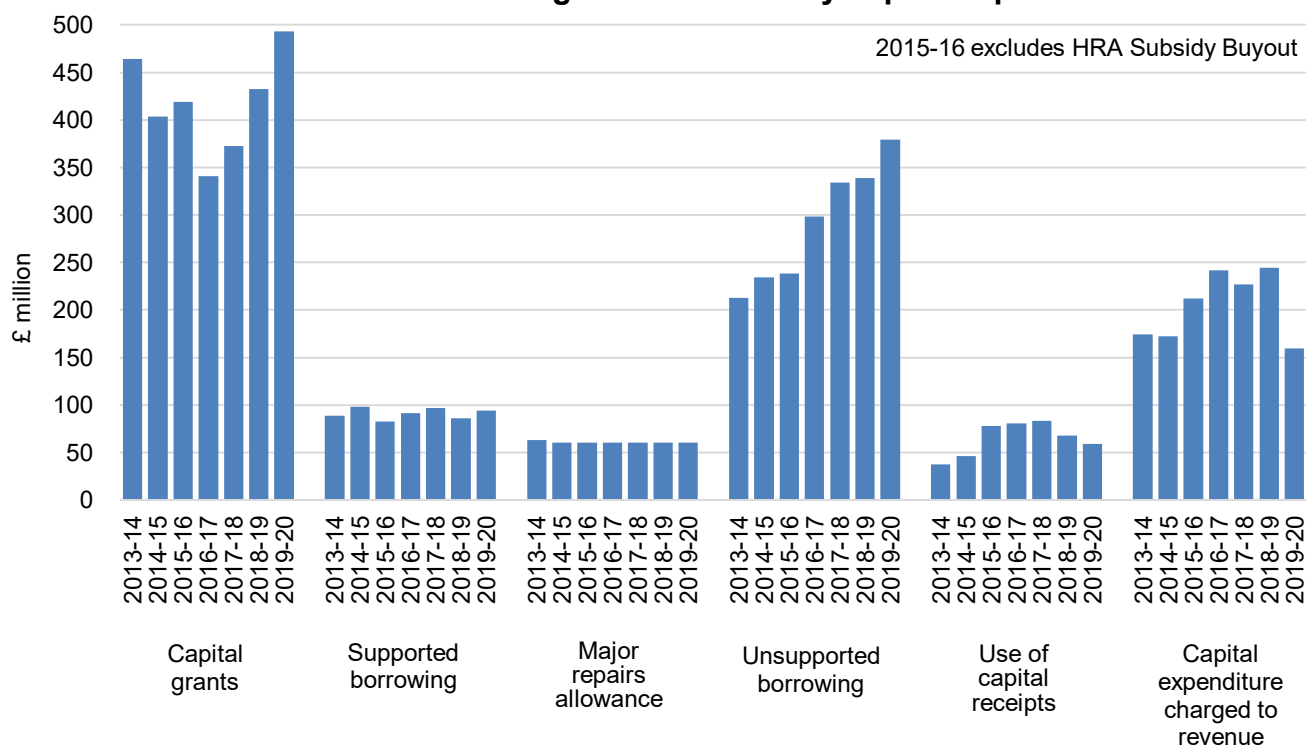
Chart 9: Financing of local authority capital expenditure

Table 6: Capital expenditure, by authority and service, 2019-20

	£ million								£ per head	
	Education	Social services	Transport	Housing	General administration	Planning and development	Other services	Law, order and protective services	Total capital expenditure	Total capital expenditure (a)
County/county borough councils:										
Isle of Anglesey	4.0	0.7	3.5	12.8	1.1	1.6	6.3	.	30.0	429
Gwynedd	9.3	2.0	6.0	3.8	1.7	0.6	5.7	.	29.1	233
Conwy	4.5	0.8	7.9	2.3	2.4	3.3	11.5	.	32.7	279
Denbighshire	12.5	0.3	5.7	10.3	2.3	2.1	3.8	.	37.0	387
Flintshire	12.5	2.7	6.7	35.4	3.1	0.5	2.2	.	63.0	404
Wrexham	5.2	1.6	3.2	63.2	0.6	1.1	3.8	.	78.8	579
Powys	14.0	1.0	9.5	22.1	1.3	1.0	13.4	.	62.4	471
Ceredigion	2.4	0.2	3.7	2.5	0.1	0.1	5.4	.	14.5	199
Pembrokeshire	10.4	0.1	7.1	11.1	3.4	2.5	7.5	.	42.1	335
Carmarthenshire	12.0	1.4	11.3	30.3	3.5	11.3	6.6	.	76.4	405
Swansea	16.9	1.1	22.2	58.2	3.3	15.5	9.3	.	126.6	512
Neath Port Talbot	13.9	0.8	7.5	3.7	0.3	6.6	6.2	.	39.1	273
Bridgend	4.1	0.2	7.3	2.9	3.8	1.5	3.0	.	22.8	155
Vale of Glamorgan	23.1	0.6	9.5	10.5	1.1	0.6	7.6	.	53.1	398
Cardiff	17.5	1.5	16.3	46.6	9.7	66.2	6.7	.	164.4	448
Rhondda Cynon Taf	28.5	4.2	28.7	6.0	8.7	26.7	18.6	.	121.3	503
Merthyr Tydfil	4.2	0.2	6.8	0.9	0.3	1.3	1.9	.	15.6	259
Caerphilly	4.7	0.8	8.7	52.5	0.4	1.2	8.0	.	76.3	421
Blaenau Gwent	6.2	0.5	2.2	0.6	1.6	1.4	3.1	.	15.5	221
Torfaen	26.6	0.4	2.4	1.4	1.0	1.9	1.1	.	34.8	370
Monmouthshire	4.4	0.4	7.2	0.9	3.5	0.8	6.2	.	23.4	248
Newport	9.7	0.5	8.3	4.3	0.4	4.4	5.6	.	33.2	215
All county/county borough councils	246.4	22.0	191.8	382.5	53.7	152.3	143.3	.	1,192.1	383
Police:										
Dyfed Powys	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5.1	5.1	10
Gwent	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10.1	10.1	17
North Wales	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6.4	6.4	9
South Wales	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	16.7	16.7	12
All police	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38.2	38.2	12
Fire authorities:										
Mid and West Wales	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5.1	5.1	6
North Wales	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.8	0.8	1
South Wales	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6.6	6.6	4
All fire authorities	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12.5	12.5	4
National park authorities:										
Brecon Beacons	.	.	.	.	0.0	0.0	0.6	.	0.6	.
Pembrokeshire Coast	.	.	.	.	0.0	0.0	0.7	.	0.7	.
Snowdonia	.	.	.	.	0.9	0.0	0.5	.	1.4	.
All national park authorities	.	.	.	.	0.9	0.0	1.8	.	2.7	1
Wales	246.4	22.0	191.8	382.5	54.6	152.3	145.1	50.8	1,245.6	400

(a) The £ per head calculations use 2019 mid-year estimates of population.

Table 7: Capital expenditure and receipts, by detailed service, 2019-20

Service	Expenditure			Receipts	
	£ million	£ per head (a)	% of Total	£ million	£ per head (a)
Education:					
Pre-primary	4.8	2	-	0.0	0
Primary	101.6	33	8	1.7	1
Secondary	104.3	34	8	1.7	1
Middle	15.2	5	1	0.0	0
Special	8.8	3	1	0.0	0
Youth service	0.2	-	-	0.5	-
Other education services	11.5	4	1	1.3	-
All education	246.4	79	20	5.2	2
Social services	22.0	7	2	3.9	1
Transport:					
Roads, street lighting and road safety	168.8	54	14	0.4	-
Parking of vehicles	9.3	3	1	0.0	0
Public passenger transport	11.4	4	1	0.0	0
Other	2.3	1	-	0.0	-
All transport	191.8	62	15	0.4	-
Housing:					
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	323.0	104	26	19.6	6
Council fund and other housing	59.5	19	5	1.5	-
All housing	382.5	123	31	21.1	7
General administration	54.6	18	4	7.6	2
Planning and development	152.3	49	12	10.6	3
Other services:					
Library services	5.5	2	-	0.9	-
Museums and art galleries	2.0	1	-	0.0	0
Art activities and facilities	7.8	3	1	0.0	-
Agriculture and fisheries	19.8	6	2	5.5	2
Sports facilities	16.7	5	1	0.0	-
Sports development	2.1	1	-	0.0	-
Derelict land reclamation	0.0	-	-	0.0	0
Parks and open spaces	14.1	5	1	0.0	-
Waste collection and disposal	37.4	12	3	0.2	-
Community safety	1.5	-	-	0.0	-
Environmental health	7.5	2	1	0.0	0
Industrial and commercial	13.0	4	1	1.9	1
Other trading services	5.5	2	-	0.1	-
Miscellaneous	12.1	4	1	0.6	-
All other services	145.1	47	12	9.3	3
Law, order and protective services:					
Police	38.2	12	3	2.5	1
Fire service and civil defence	12.5	4	1	0.1	-
Coroners' courts	0.0	0	-	0.0	0
All law, order and protective services	50.8	16	4	2.6	1
Total all services	1,245.6	400	100	60.7	20

(a) The £ per head calculations use 2019 mid-year estimates of population.

Glossary

Revenue definitions

Gross revenue expenditure is total local authority expenditure on services, plus debt financing costs, but net of any income from sales, fees, and charges and other non-grant sources. It includes expenditure funded by specific and special government grants and expenditure funded from local authority reserves. It does not include the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is a separate financial account used by local authorities for council housing income and expenditure.

Net revenue expenditure is gross revenue expenditure excluding that funded by specific and special grants (except police grant).

Budget requirement is the amount of expenditure that is funded by council tax and general support from central government, i.e. revenue support grant, police grant, redistributed non-domestic rates, and any transitional grant relief for council tax. It differs from net revenue by the amount drawn from or added to reserves.

The real terms data has been calculated using the [GDP deflators published by the Treasury](#).

Fire authorities and national park authorities

These authorities fall within the general definition of local authorities. Fire authorities receive all of their funding as a levy from the county and county borough councils, whilst National Park authorities receive about 25% of their funding as a similar levy, and 75% in the form of specific grants from central government. The county and county borough council figures in this release have been reduced by the amount of the levies in order to give the full picture for the expenditure of the fire authorities and national park authorities.

Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute (RECS)

Prior to 2008-09, authorities used deferred charges to recognise expenditure that regulations permitted to be funded from capital resources, but which did not satisfy criteria to be classified as capital expenditure. Examples of deferred charges included work on property not owned by the authority and grants for economic development purposes, where the grant was to be spent on capital items. In 2008-09 deferred charges were replaced with this new category of expenditure. This required the expenditure to be recorded notionally against the appropriate service with no impact on an authority's Council Tax requirement. From 2010-11 figures are on a non-RECS basis.

International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

This is a set of accounting standards developed by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). The goal of IFRS is to provide a global framework for how public sector and private companies prepare and disclose their financial statements. Having an international standard is especially important for large organisations. Adopting a single set of world-wide standards will simplify accounting procedures by allowing a company to use one reporting language throughout. A single standard will also provide customers and auditors with a cohesive view of finances. IFRS should not be confused with IAS (International Accounting Standards), which are older standards that IFRS has now replaced.

Capital definitions

Up to 2003-04

Capital expenditure was financed by a variety of sources. General capital funding was a combination of general capital grant (paid by the Welsh Government) and basic credit approvals (permission to borrow/financed by revenue support grant) which could be used for spending on any project.

Supplementary credit approvals and capital grants were provided by the Welsh Government and UK Government departments for spending on specific projects. Local authorities were also able to augment this spending by applying capital receipts (although part of these receipts had to be set-aside for the repayment of debt) and by making contributions from a revenue account. Expenditure and financing figures were on a cash basis.

From 2004-05 onwards

The prudential framework came into force on 1st April 2004. From that date, basic and supplementary credit approvals were replaced by hypothecated supported borrowing (Borrowing and credit arrangements that attract central government support), general capital grant and specific grants such as Major Repairs Allowance. Under this framework, authorities are allowed to borrow for capital purposes without Government consent, provided they can afford to service the debt. This is known as prudential or unsupported borrowing. Expenditure and financing figures are on an accruals basis.

Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Buyout

Eleven local authorities in Wales with council housing stock exited from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system and became self-financing in April 2015.

Key quality information

Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political reference.

This section provides a summary of information on this output against six dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, Coherence, and Comparability.

Relevance

The statistics are important and have a number of uses, for example: advice to Ministers; local government finance revenue settlement calculations; unitary authority comparisons and benchmarking; expenditure in Wales compared to other countries; informing the debate in the Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament and beyond; assisting in research in public expenditure issues; economic analysis.

Accuracy

The main sources of information on local authority revenue expenditure are the Revenue Outturn (RO) and Capital Outturn (COR) returns. More information relating to forecast budgeted expenditure is available from the revenue account (RA) budget and capital forecast (CFR) returns.

We collect 100% of returns from all twenty-two county councils, four police and crime commissioners, three fire and rescue authorities and three national park authorities.

Local authorities in the United Kingdom are required to keep their accounts in accordance with 'proper practices'. [SeRCOP](#) (previously BVACOP) establishes 'proper practice' with regard to consistent financial reporting below the Statement of Accounts level. [SeRCOP](#) is reviewed continuously and is normally updated annually.

The data that is collected adhere to these recognised professional standards. Specifically, the finance data is required under legislation and also must adhere to CIPFA accounting procedures. However, [further guidelines](#) are also issued on the interpretation of these standards to ensure consistency across authorities.

The collection is a 100% survey and as such no estimation of the figures is calculated, and hence there is no sampling error. The survey itself has built-in rigorous validation and historical data to aid the users complete the data collection accurately.

Local authorities extract the data from their accounting systems in order to complete the data collection exercise. Each authority has a nominated contact whose responsibility it is to ensure that the data is correct before submission. All further validation and verification checks are then carried out by the same contact.

Once we receive the data, it goes through further comprehensive validation and verification checks, for example:

- spend per head by local authority;
- arithmetic consistency checks;
- cross checks with other relevant data collections;
- thorough tolerance checks;
- outturn comparison with budgets;
- cross checks with data from other government departments;
- verification that data outside of tolerances are correct.

In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.

The social services outturn data will also be included in a statistical release 'Social Services activity 2019-20' to be published later in the year.

Timeliness and punctuality

The data collection is carried out over the summer. The data is normally published in October, this allows time to collect, collate and validate the data.

In 2020, local authorities were given deadline extensions due to the Covid-19 pandemic and data was received throughout the year up until publication.

All outputs adhere to the Code of Practice by pre-announcing the data of publication through the [upcoming calendar](#) web pages.

Accessibility and clarity

The Welsh local government finance statistics are published in an accessible, orderly, pre-announced manner on the Welsh Government website at 9:30am on the day of publication. All releases are available to download for free.

More detailed data are also available at the same time on the StatsWales website and this can be manipulated online or downloaded into spreadsheets for use offline.

We aim to use Plain English in our outputs and all outputs adhere to the Welsh Government accessibility policy. Furthermore, all our headlines are published in Welsh and English.

We regularly peer review our outputs.

Comparability and coherence

Adhering to the professional code (CIPFA's [SeRCOP](#)) has meant that changes over time have been minimal. Where there have been time series which are not comparable from the start of the time series to the end this will be shown clearly in the outputs. Where advance warning is known of future changes these will be pre-announced in accordance with Welsh Government arrangements.

The existence of a professional code and our adherence to it provides assurance that the data are consistent across domains, such as local authorities.

Statistics on revenue outturn are also published in both [England](#) and [Scotland](#).

Impact of COVID-19

The data collection period for this release ran from mid-May and had a deadline in August. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data was received throughout the year up until publication.

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in March 2019 following a [compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation](#). These statistics last underwent a [full assessment against the Code of Practice](#) in 2011.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Added extra information on the validation checks that are performed on the data;
- Explained the role of CIPFA's code of practice in local authority accounting;
- Included a link to the guidance document that accompanies the data collection;
- Provided details of the financial data being included in a separate over-arching social services statistical release.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

The document is available at:

<https://gov.wales/local-authority-revenue-and-capital-outturn-expenditure>

Further data is available on our StatsWales website:

[StatsWales website: Revenue](#)

[StatsWales website: Outturn](#)

Next update

October 2021 - Statistical first release and StatsWales update for 2020-21 outturn.

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.finance@gov.wales

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