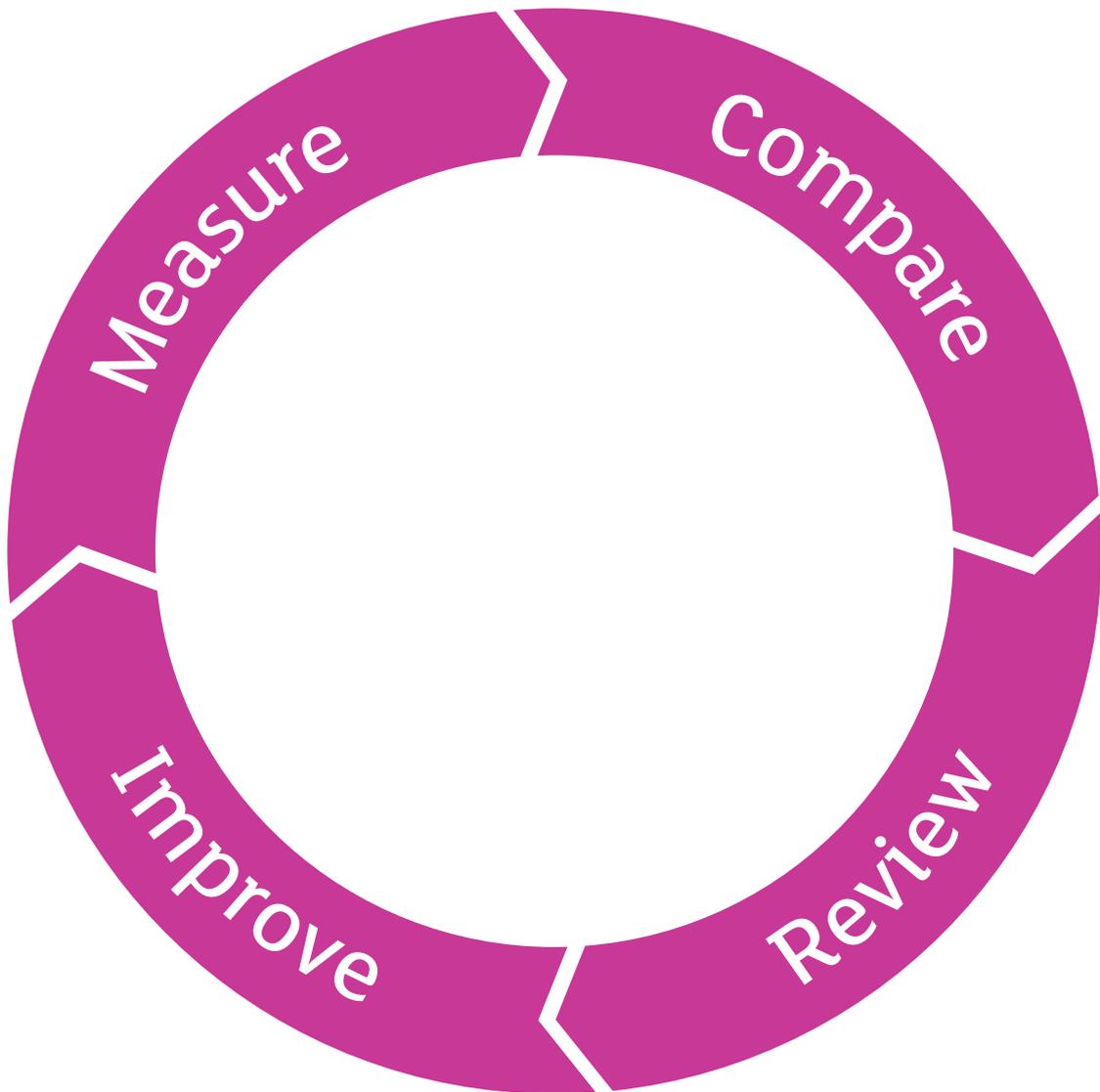


Research and Analytics

fees and charges

Benchmarking clubs



fees and charges

Are your service charges in line with your peers?

Local authorities are facing continuing cuts. This means that they must find new ways to balance the books. Generating income from services is one innovative way that you can help to improve the balance sheet. During 2013/14, income-generating activities accounted for £11.8bn of local government expenditure across England, representing just over 9% of the overall spend nationwide. However, this figure varies significantly by authority from just 2% to more than 50%.

Many authorities are hardly scratching the surface in exploring and exploiting the many income generation powers and options available to them. Options some authorities are now finding can not only make a real impact in generating additional funds, but can also bring more autonomy, independence and a reduced reliance on central government support.

One of the key drivers of income generation are the discretionary fees and charges levied by local authorities. To that end, CIPFA are launching a new Fees and Charges Benchmarking exercise. Following on from our successful Income Generation Profiles and Income Generation Management Reports, the new exercise will drill-down into the discretionary charges levied for key services and allow local authorities to fully understand what their peers are charging for similar services. Only by understanding how your charges compare to your peers will you be able to develop informed strategies around charging for services.

- Should we be charging more?
- Are our charges fair?
- Should we introduce a charge for this service?
- What is a sensible charging mechanism?
- Should we charge less?
- What are our peers doing?
- Should this service be free?

These are some of the crucial questions that the new exercise will answer.

Who is the Fees and Charges exercise for?

This service has been specifically designed for anyone in a local authority with responsibility for informing charging policy. Whether you are a chief executive, chief financial officer, responsible for business transformation, or a service manager, Fees and Charges Benchmarking offers you a unique means of:

- understanding your charges in relation to your peers,
- learning from charging practices and strategies elsewhere
- comparing your charges with that of your peers and best practice, and
- identifying where there is scope to change your charging policy and strategy.

What the service offers you

The Fees and Charges questionnaire is relevant for all local authorities and covers the following key services:

- Health and Social Care
- Children's Services
- Cemeteries and Crematoria
- Highways and Transport
- Licensing
- Environmental Health
- Leisure, Culture and Young People
- Neighbourhoods, Housing and Customer Services
- Regeneration (including Parking)
- Resources

The questionnaire also captures information on authority-wide strategies and significant income generation activities and projects, which will provide a rich source of ideas and good practice to be shared and used.

How to take part

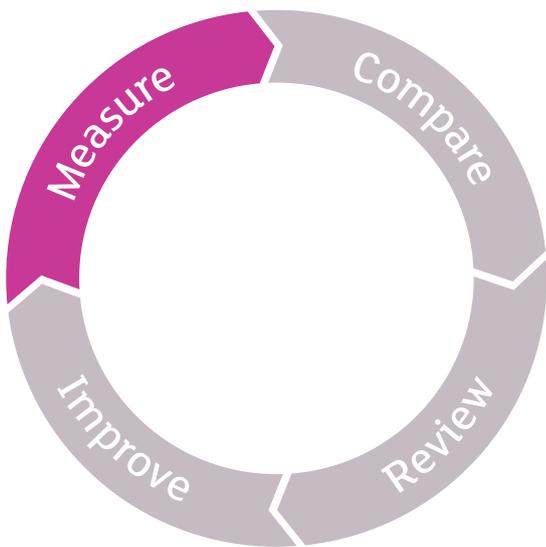
In order to take part or to find out more, please visit: www.cipfa.org/benchmarking or contact us on the details below.

T: **020 7543 5600** E: customerservices@cipfa.org

the benefits of service membership

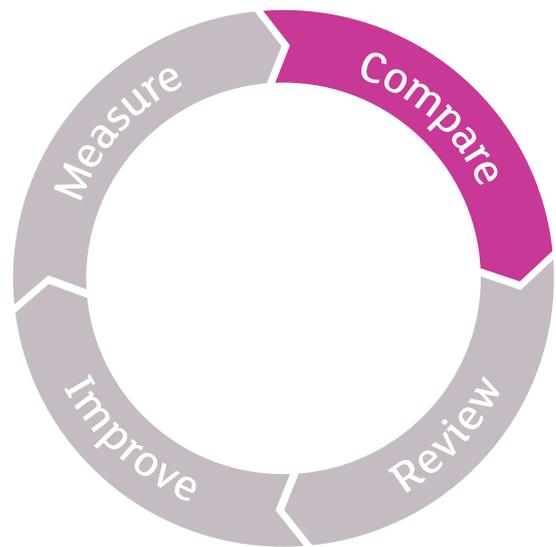
We have developed our service with a real collaborative ethos. To benefit from the huge advantages on offer, all you need to do is pay an annual membership fee and complete the questionnaire. The service is run to a timetable that ensures that you can benefit from the outputs when they are the most useful to you.

CIPFA services follow the well-established improvement cycle:



Questionnaire: A user-friendly questionnaire is circulated to nominated contacts with detailed definitions and guidance to aid completion. A telephone and email helpline is also available to answer any queries. You will typically have a six-eight week period in which to return data.

Data Analysis and Validation: The returned data is subject to extensive analysis and validation to ensure that data is as accurate as possible. A draft report is then issued providing you with an opportunity to revise data if we reveal any inconsistencies before final reports.

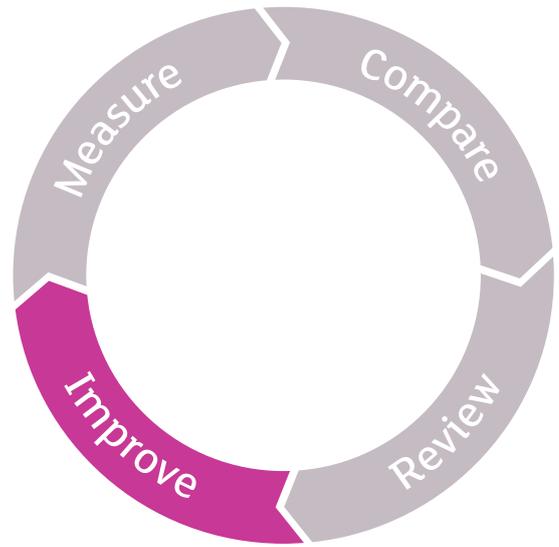
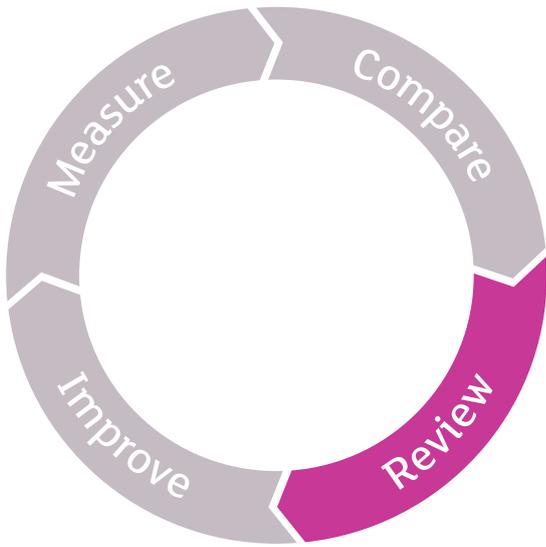


Graphical Reports: Members receive detailed reports that will identify your specific authority in a series of easy to understand tables and graphical visualisations that collectively build up a detailed view of your service charges and provide actionable insights.

Insights: The exercise includes questions covering strategy and key initiatives that provide detailed insight into approaches taken by peer organisations in a clear and simple to read set of documents

Having access to good quality information from your organisation and from your peers is only part of the cycle.

Fees & Charges Benchmarking will allow you to fully understand your charges in relation to your peers and allow you to shape your charging policy based on reliable evidence.



Database and Interactive Report: The full database is available for club members, including all data and member contact details, and a user-friendly interactive reporting tool allowing you to recreate any of the charts from the main reports using alternative groupings, you can carry out deeper analysis.

Review Meetings: At the end of the exercise, members can attend review meetings to discuss and debate the findings; you can also use this as a chance to discuss best practice and matters of mutual concern with your peers.

You use your learning to make changes in your organisation. We can also offer additional support interpreting and utilising your benchmarking results to support organisational transformation and improvement through our expert advisory service.

We work to constantly improve the benchmarking service and so at the end of the process we assemble a steering committee, formed of experienced practitioners from the service area to ensure the scope of the exercise and the questionnaire meets your needs. All our exercises are guided by you so we can collect information that will continue to help you in the delivery of your services.

What will you receive?

By joining you will receive a suite of comparative reports, the full club database, an interactive reporting tool, a scrapbook of approaches and the opportunity to attend a review meeting. All within the club price!

we also provide..

Corporate Services Benchmarking Clubs

Clubs are grouped into the following themes:

- Finance
- Audit and risk
- Revenues and benefits
- Staff
- Legal and democratic
- Supplies

For more information visit:

www.cipfa.org/corporateservices

Social Care Benchmarking Clubs

We offer clubs in:

- Children's Care
- Adult Care
- Public Health

For more information visit:

www.cipfa.org/services/benchmarking/social-care

VfM Indicators

- Communications
- Estates Management
- Finance
- Human resources
- ICT
- Legal
- Procurement

For more information visit:

www.cipfa.org/services/benchmarking/vfm-indicators



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