

Local Government in Scotland: an overview

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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Local Government in Scotland

- 32 local authorities
- Diversity:
 - Rural/urban
 - Geographical area
 - Population size



Accountability

- Councils in Scotland operate independently of central government
- Councils are accountable to their electorates for the provision of services.
- Scottish Government works with local government and provides funding and the framework for accountability and performance.



Councils

- Each local authority is governed by a council.
- Councils are made up of councillors directly elected by the residents of the area they represent (referred to as a council ward).
- Each ward has three or four councillors.



Councils

- **Administration** - Group of councillors able to command majority support which controls the running of the council.
- **Council Leader** - normally elected by the party or coalition that forms the administration of the council.
- **Convenor** - Each local authority elects a Convenor, who chairs council meetings and represents the council on civic and ceremonial occasions.
- **Officers** - Staff within councils including administrative staff; teachers, social workers and planning officers who carry out its functions.
- **Chief Executive** - The head of its paid staff, employed by and responsible to the council.



Elections 2017

- Council elections took place on 4 May
- Proportional representation
- Election turnout was 46.9%
- All mainland councils have coalition or minority administrations
- 29% of councillors elected are women



Services

- Councils are responsible for providing a range of public services including:
- education, social care, roads and transport, economic development, housing and planning, environmental protection, waste management, cultural and leisure services.

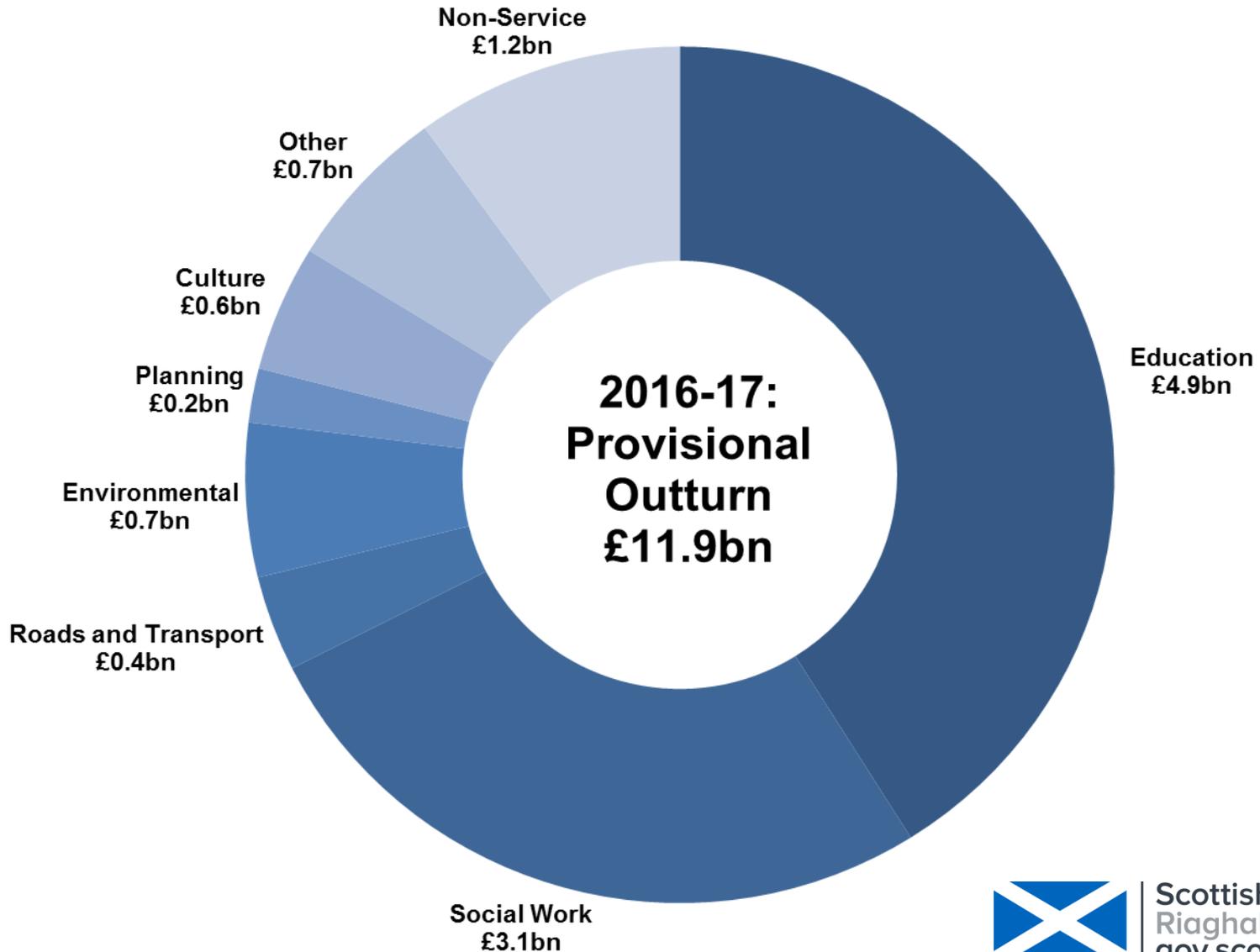


Powers and duties

- Councils have a number of powers and duties which are set out in legislation:
 - **mandatory duties** - such as providing schooling for 5-16 year olds and social work services;
 - **permissive powers** - such as economic development and recreation services; and,
 - **regulatory powers** - such as trading standards, environmental health and licensing for taxis and public houses.



Funding



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