Democratic Services Benchmarking Club
2012

Darlington Borough Council

compared with

47 unitary authorities

FINAL REPORT

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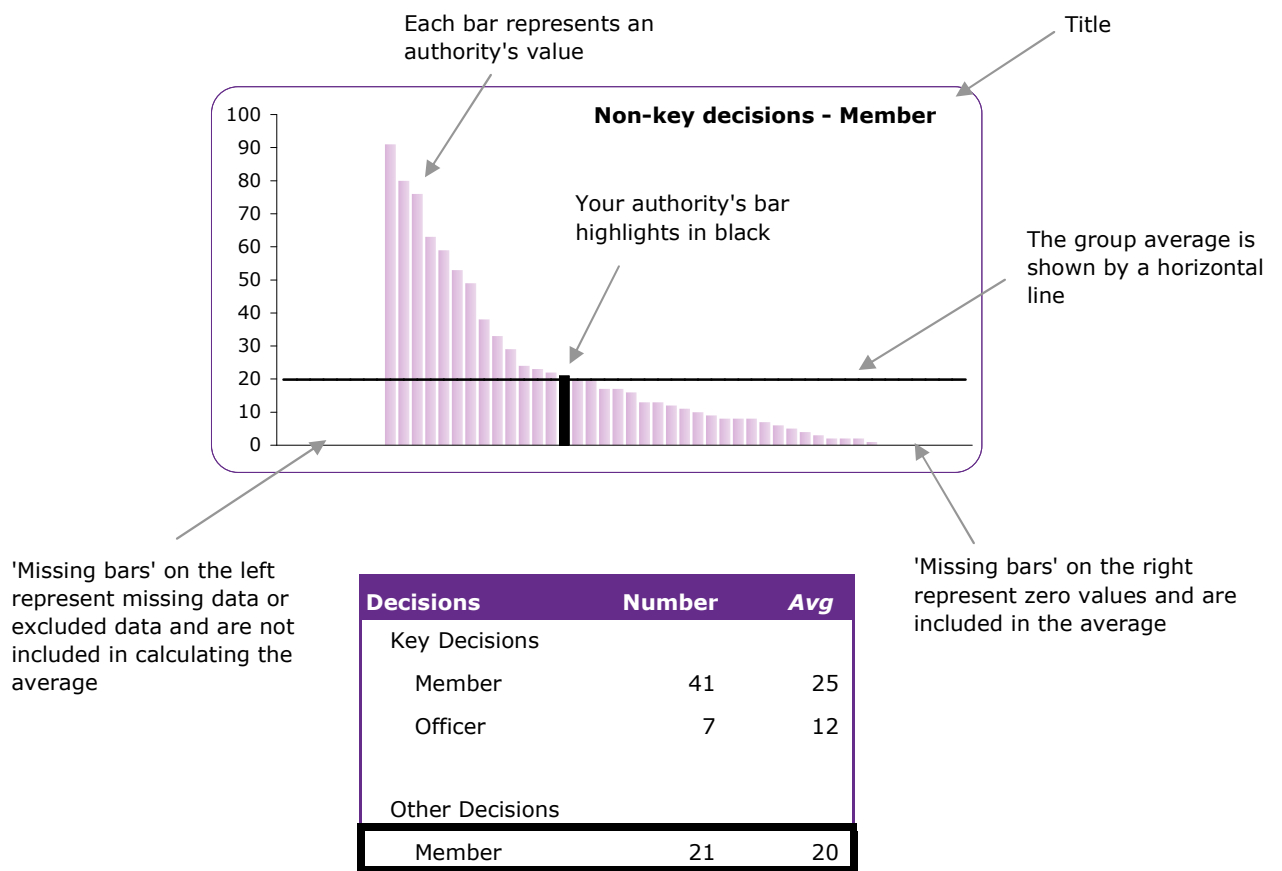Tel: 0203 117 1840

PREFACE

This report compares your data with the group of authorities specified on the title page.

Throughout the report your figures are shown in tables and in graphical form. If you are not familiar with our reports we hope this page will help you to better understand the way we present this data.

Averages: Almost all of our tables and charts compare your figure with a group average. The average is the unweighted mean value for the group. This average value ignores missing data, or data that we have excluded and for this reason sets of averages sometimes do not reconcile precisely.

Charts: We display a large amount of data on charts as this allows us to show the data for the entire group efficiently and gives far more information than a simple average (i.e. range of data, individual authority values etc…). Below we have annotated an example chart to help explain what they are showing.

Bar Charts: These are our standard method of displaying a full set of data

Each bar represents an authority's value

Title

Your authority's bar highlights in black

The group average is shown by a horizontal line

Non-key decisions - Member

'Missing bars' on the left represent missing data or excluded data and are not included in calculating the average

'Missing bars' on the right represent zero values and are included in the average

Decisions	Number	Avg
Key Decisions		
Member	41	25
Officer	7	12
Other Decisions		
Member	21	20

INTRODUCTION

This report compares your performance with the group of authorities specified on the title page. It is divided into the following sections.

Section 1 - General Information

In this section we provide some feedback on the contextual type information found at the start of the questionnaire regarding the make-up of council members and the type of mayor authorities have.

Section 2 - Committee Support

The main benchmarks in this section are the cost per 1,000 population of Committee Support for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

We also feed back information on:
· number and types of meetings
· services provided by Committee Support staff
· printing
· individual decisions

The population figures used in the calculations throughout this report are taken from the ONS mid-2010 estimates.

Section 3 - School Appeals

In this section we examine the costs involved in hearing and processing school appeals and also analyse the information around the ways in which appeals are resolved.

Section 4 - Member Support

This section looks at the cost per member in terms of staff and other direct costs and the basic and special responsibility allowances.

We also look at the expenditure on SRA's in more detail.

Section 5 - Mayor's Office

The main benchmark here is the cost per 1,000 population of the Mayor's Office for 2012/13.

We then run comparisons of the number of engagements held by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Section 6 -Overview & Scrutiny

The main benchmark here is the cost per 1,000 population of Scrutiny for 2012/13.

Feedback on workloads e.g. allocation of FTE time and scrutiny effort by activity, number of requests for scrutiny, scrutiny reviews, call-ins, are also provided in this section.
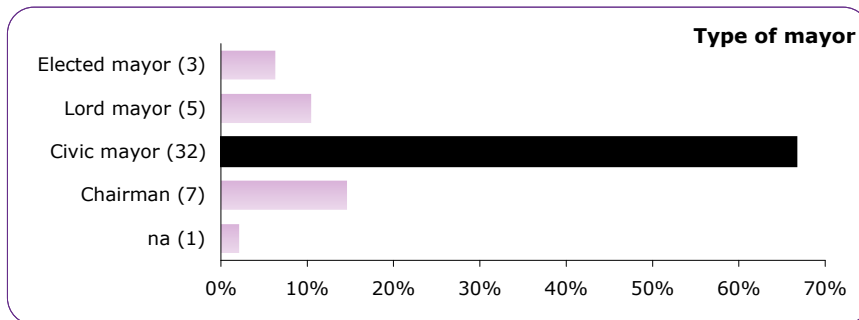
SECTION 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

Council Members
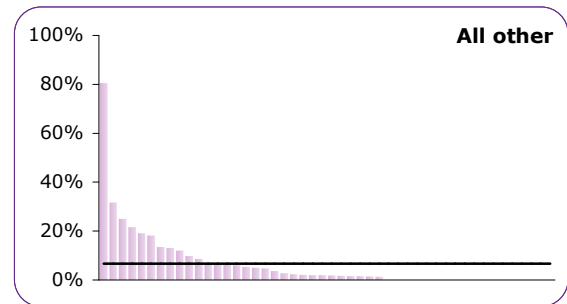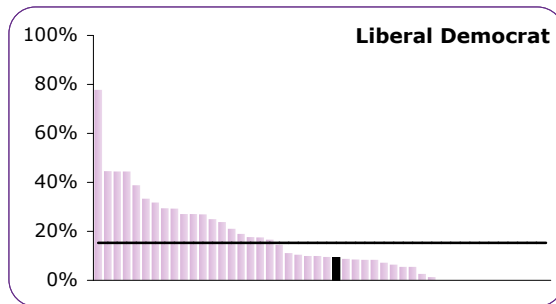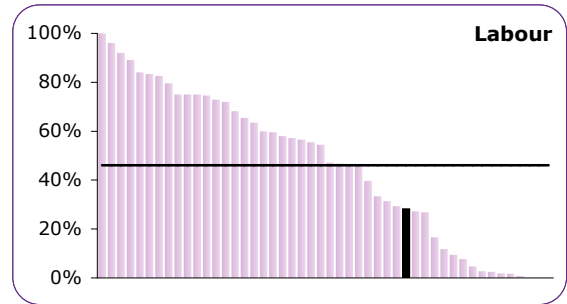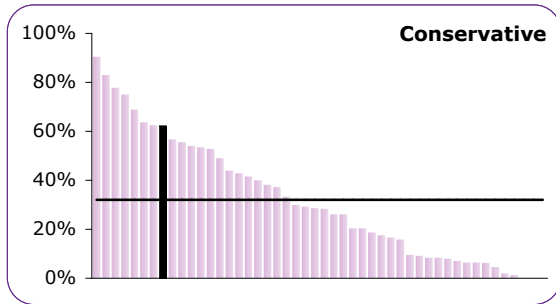
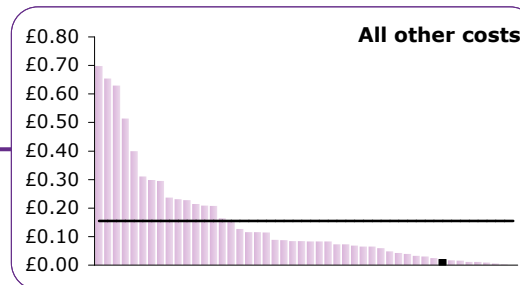| Council members	Number	%	Avg
Conservative	33	62%	32%
Labour	15	28%	46%
Liberal Democrat	5	9%	15%
All other	0	0%	7%
Total	**53**		

What kind of mayor does your authority have?

	Authorities	Avg
Elected mayor	3	6%
Lord mayor	5	10%
Civic mayor	32	67%
Chairman	7	15%
Na (Not stated)	1	2%
Total	**48**	

SECTION 2 - COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Cost per 1,000 pop
2011/12 out-turn

Total cost

Staff cost

Printing
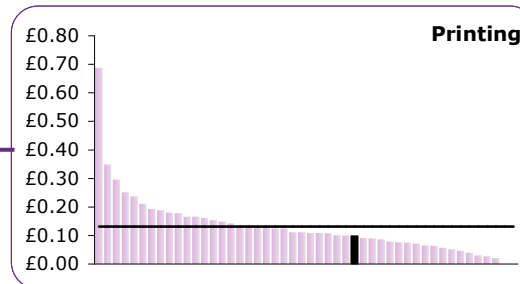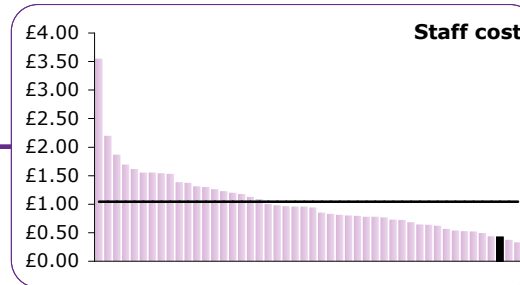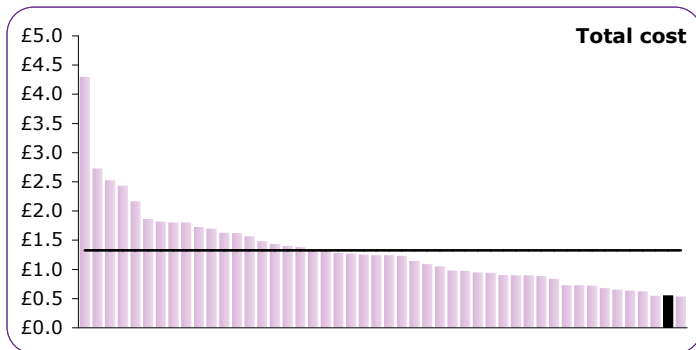
Population	101k

All other costs

Costs	£k	£/1000	Avg
Staff cost	43k	£0.43	£1.04
Printing	10k	£0.10	£0.13
Refreshments	0k	£0.00	£0.02
Accommodation & Facilities	0k	£0.00	£0.05
Other costs	2k	£0.02	£0.08
Total cost	**55k**	**£0.55**	**£1.32**

Cost per 1,000 pop
2012/13 budget

Total cost

Staff cost

Printing

All other costs

FTE/1000 pop

Cost/FTE
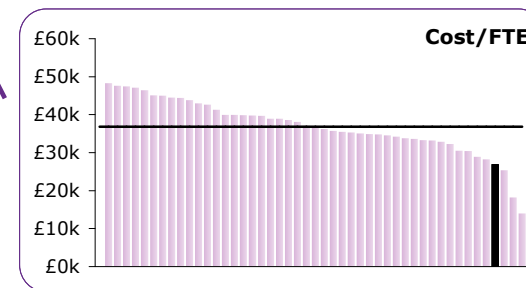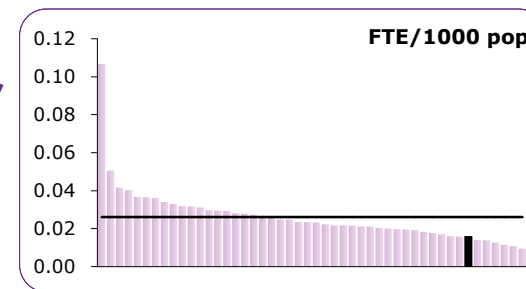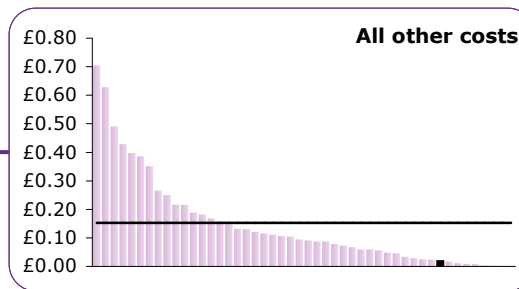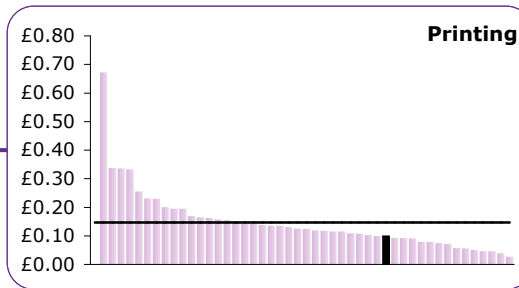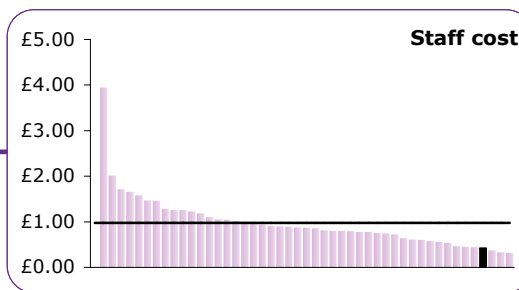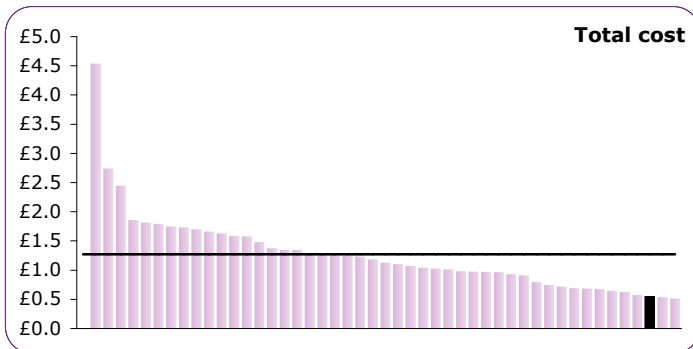
Population	101k

Costs	£k	£/1000	Avg
Staff cost	43k	£0.43	£0.97
Printing	10k	£0.10	£0.15
Refreshments	0k	£0.00	£0.02
Accommodation & Facilities	0k	£0.00	£0.05
Other costs	2k	£0.02	£0.08
Total cost	**55k**	**£0.55**	**£1.27**

FTE information	FTE	FTE/1000	Avg
FTE Staff	1.6	0.02	0.03
Cost per FTE	£27k		£37k

Meetings information
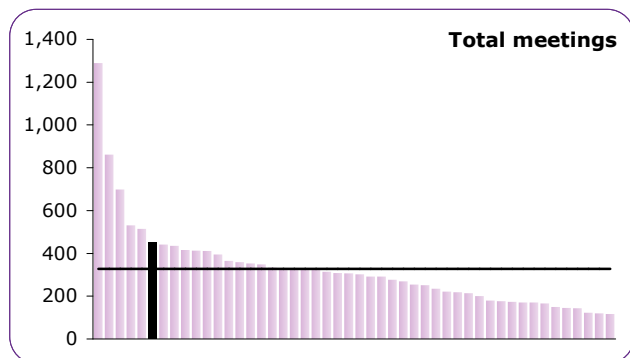
Total meetings

Meeting type	Number	Avg
Full Council	9	8
Executive/Cabinet	13	22
Regulatory	14	32
Quasi-judicial	31	34
Scrutiny	35	41
Area Committees	-	14
Other formal committees	16	25
Schools appeals	335	55
Corporate/Directors board	-	17
All others	-	75
Total meetings	**453**	**327**

Full council

Executive/Cabinet

Regulatory

Quasi-judicial

Scrutiny

Area Committees

Other formal committees

Schools appeals

Corporate/Directors board

All other
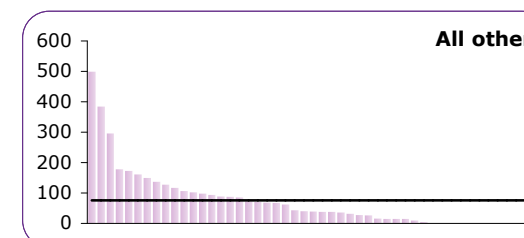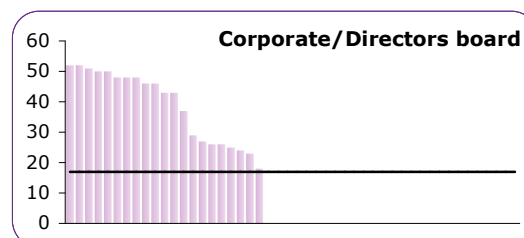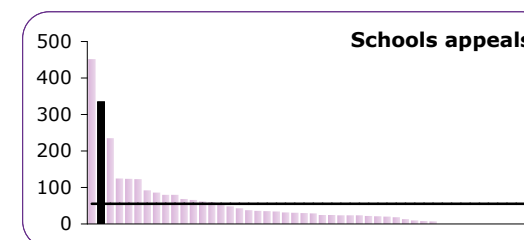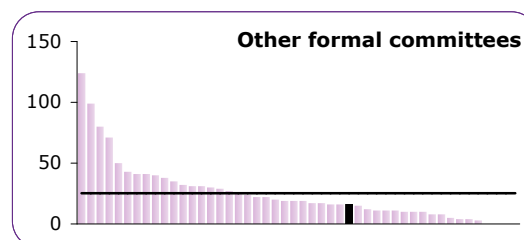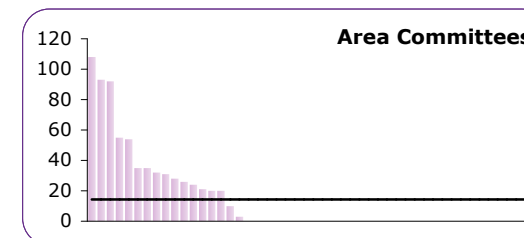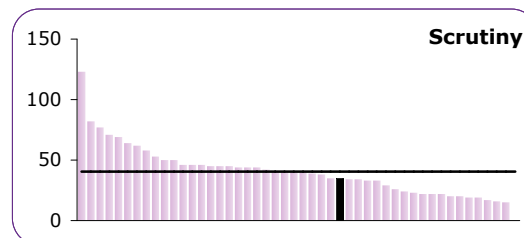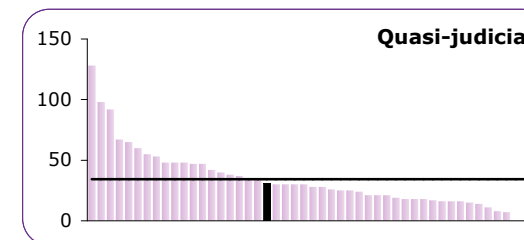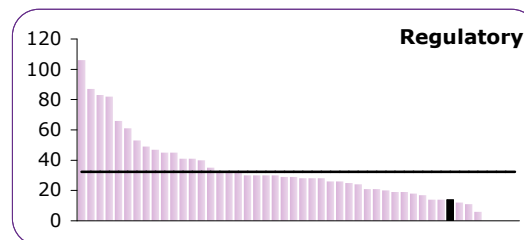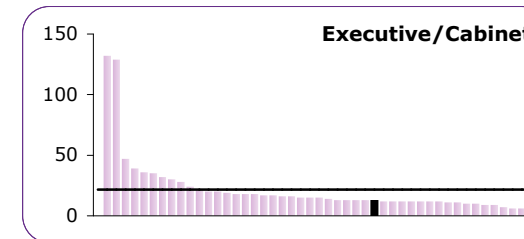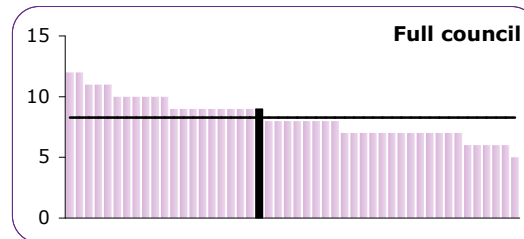
Tabular meetings information

Own Authority	Before 5pm	After 5pm	Total hours	Agenda pages
Full Council	-	9	22	69,300
Executive/Cabinet	-	13	26	49
Regulatory	14	-	42	35,000
Quasi-judicial	31	-	135	52,100
Scrutiny	35	-	140	65,625
Area Committees	-	-	-	-
Other formal committees	12	4	32	20,160
Schools appeals	335	-	400	13,400
Corporate Mgt/Directors Board	-	-	-	-
All others	-	-	-	-
Total meetings	**427**	**26**	**797**	**255,634**

Averages	Before 5pm	After 5pm	Total hours	Agenda pages
Full Council	2	6	21	70,430
Executive/Cabinet	16	10	31	97,156
Regulatory	15	17	67	74,891
Quasi-judicial	25	9	75	59,706
Scrutiny	18	23	86	68,368
Area Committees	2	12	33	11,683
Other formal committees	15	11	42	48,301
Schools appeals	53	2	159	17,049
Corporate Mgt/Directors Board	17	0	44	11,311
All others	60	15	99	97,569
Total meetings	**223**	**104**	**656**	**517,741**

Services provided by Committee Support

Services	Full Council	Avg	Executive	Avg	Regulatory	Avg	Quasi-judicial	Avg	Scrutiny	Avg	Area Committees	Avg	Schools	Avg
Attend pre-meeting	✔	96%	✔	75%	✘	79%	✘	73%	✘	83%	✘	29%	✘	33%
Produce agendas	✔	100%	✔	100%	✔	96%	✔	98%	✔	98%	✘	33%	✔	83%
Give procedural advice	✔	94%	✔	96%	✔	92%	✔	92%	✔	96%	✘	29%	✔	77%
Manage public	✔	100%	✔	100%	✔	94%	✔	98%	✔	96%	✘	33%	✔	79%
Take minutes	✔	100%	✔	100%	✔	96%	✔	98%	✔	98%	✘	33%	✔	77%
Post meeting follow-up	✔	94%	✔	94%	✔	88%	✔	88%	✔	92%	✘	33%	✔	79%

Printing

Printing information		Avg
Cost of printing agendas	10k	30k
Agendas pages printed	255,634	689,806
Cost per agenda page	£0.04	£0.05
Cost of a standard print job	na	£551.56

Cost of standard print job

Total cost of printing agendas

Total agenda pages printed

Cost per agenda page printed

Individual Decisions

Key Decisions - Member

Non-key decisions - Member
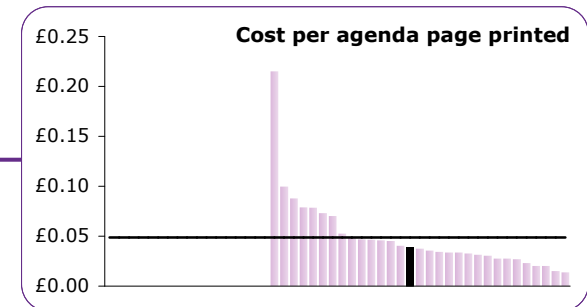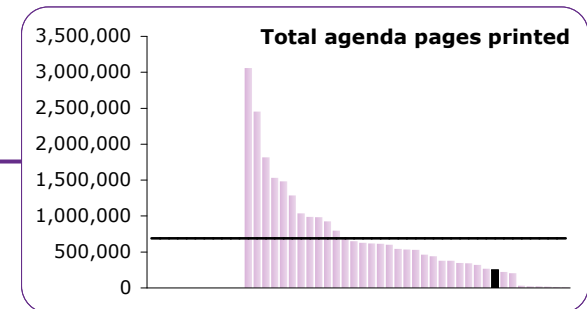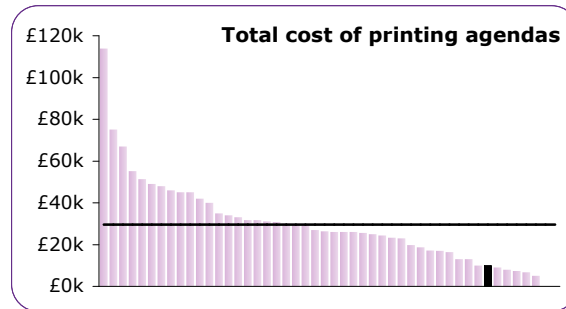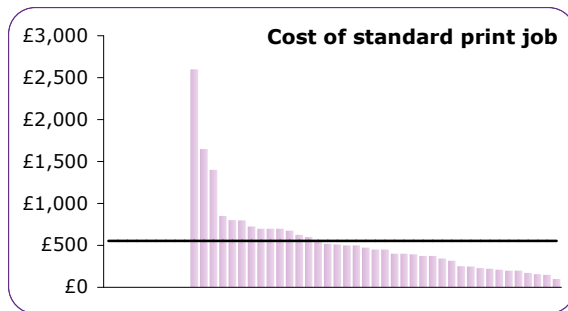
Key Decisions - Officer
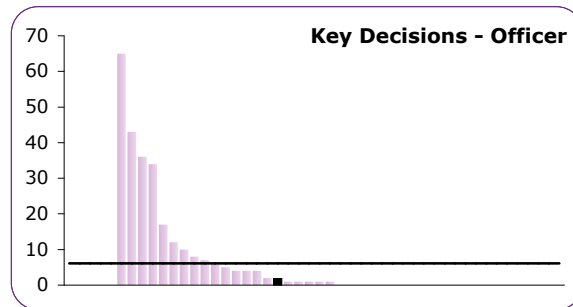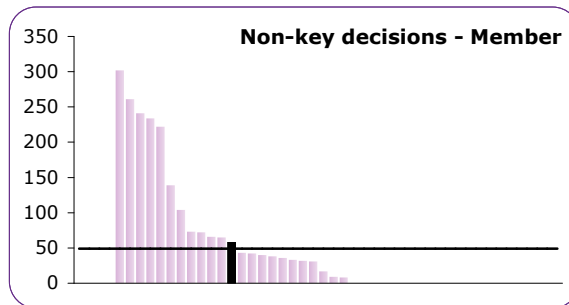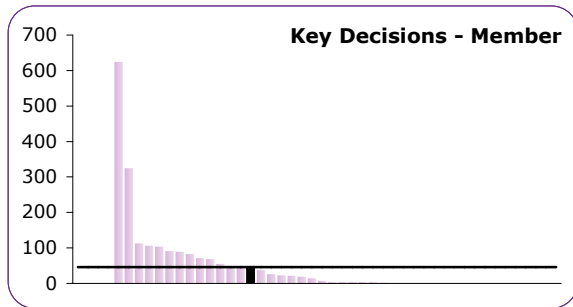
| Decisions	Number	Avg
Key Decisions		
Member	42	46
Officer	2	6
Other Decisions		
Member	58	49

SECTION 3 - SCHOOL APPEALS

2012/13 budget costs
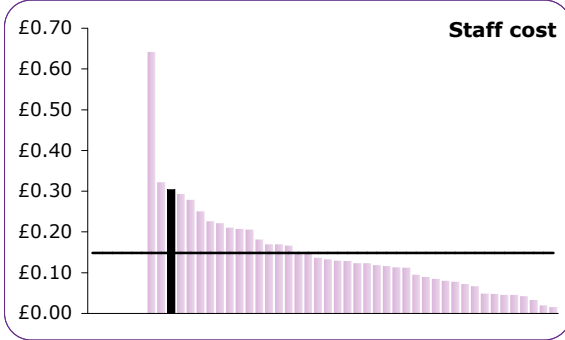
Staff cost

Population	101k

FTE information		£/1000	Avg
Staff cost	31k	£0.30	£0.15
FTE Staff		1.0	1.1
Cost per FTE	31.6k		32.8k

FTE Staff

Cost/FTE

Total appeals received
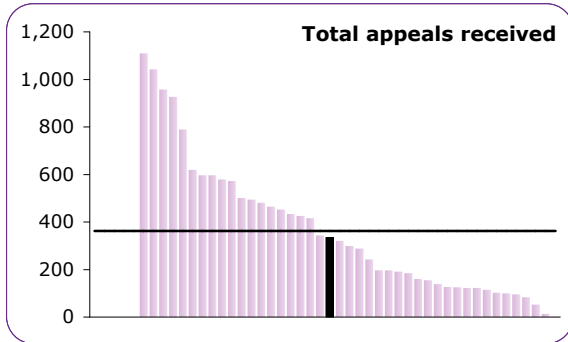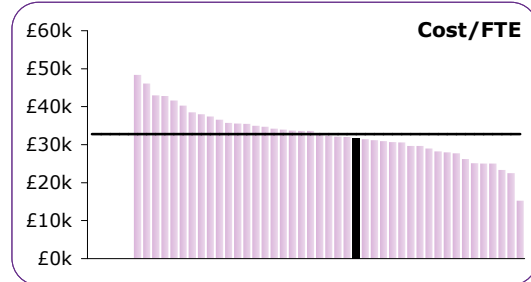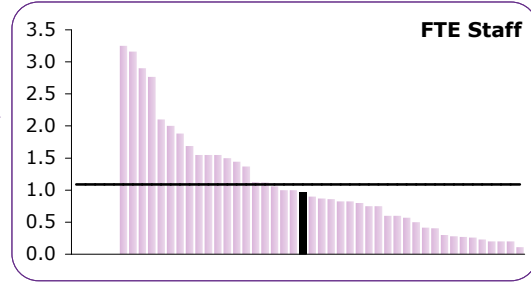
Appeals	Number	% Total	Avg
Selection reviews	-		15
Other admission	334		347
Exclusions	1		3
Total received	**335**		**362**
Allowed	109	33%	20%
Refused	141	42%	54%
Otherwise settled	85	25%	26%

	Number	Avg
No. of hours of hearings	170	225
Appeals per hour	2.0	1.6

Appeals per hour

Allowed

Refused

Otherwise settled
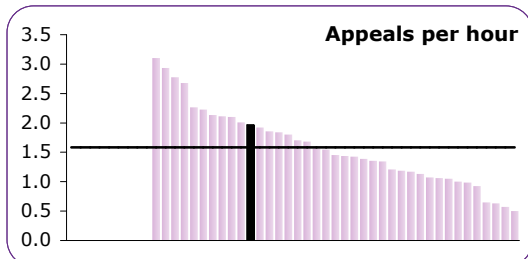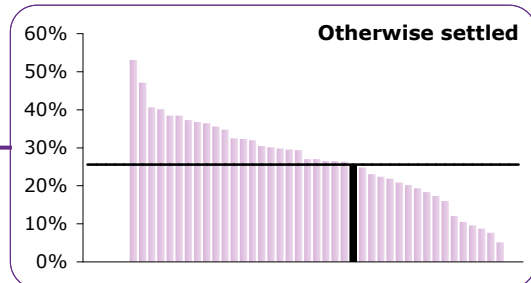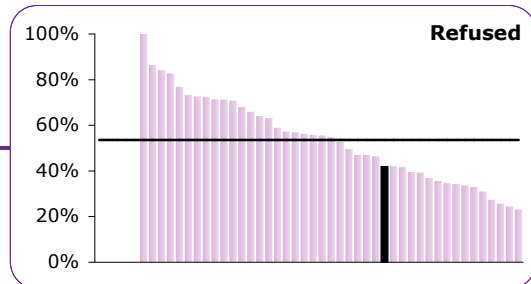
SECTION 4 - MEMBER SUPPORT

Cost per Member
2011/12 out-turn

Total cost per member
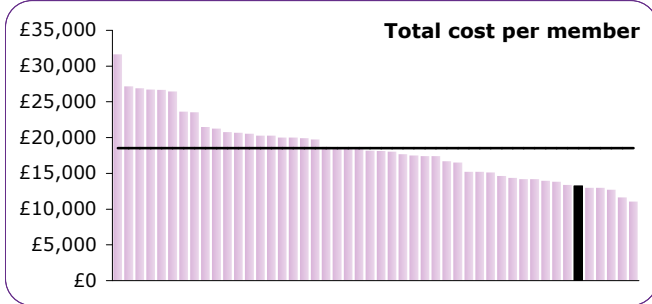
	Number	Avg
Council Members	53	59

Population	101k

Costs	£'k	£/ member	Avg
Staff cost	29k	£549	£2,729
Member training	10k	£189	£219
IT support	0k	£0	£395
Travel & subsistence	0k	£0	£283
Other costs	22k	£415	£279
Basic Allowances	425k	£8,027	£9,805
SRA's	216k	£4,070	£5,006
Total cost	**702k**	**£13,249**	**£18,507**

SRA's	Number		Avg
Number receiving	26	49%	55%
SRA per receiver		£8,296	£9,178

Staff cost

Other direct costs

Basic allowance per member

SRA per member

Member training

IT support

Travel & subsistence

SRA allowance per receiver

% Members receiving an SRA

Special Responsibility Allowances

Leader/Elected Mayor

Cabinet members

Scrutiny chairs

Deputy Leader

Committee chairs

Leader of opposition
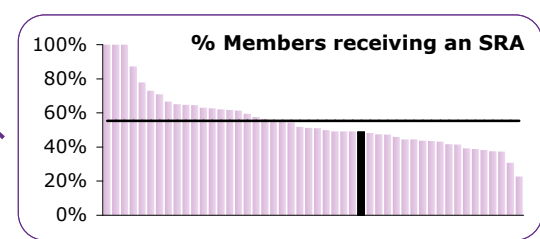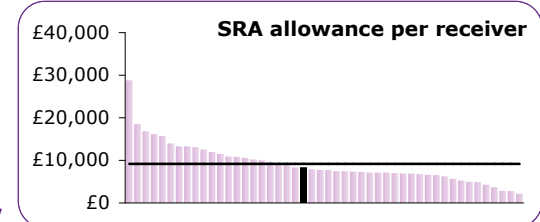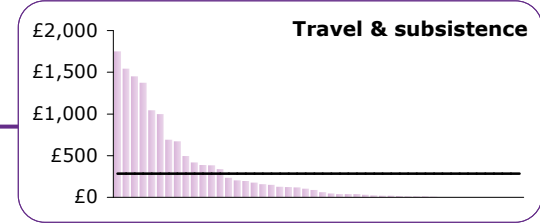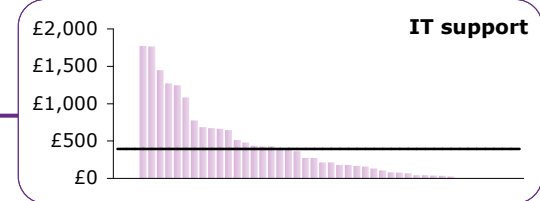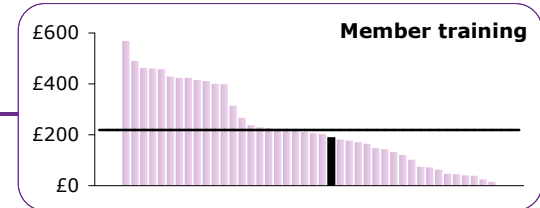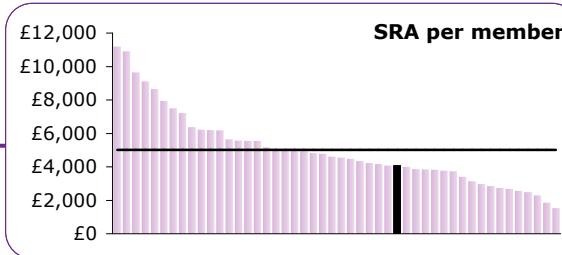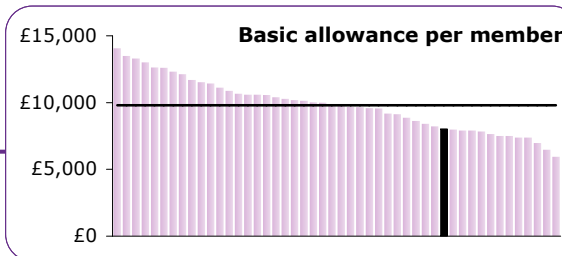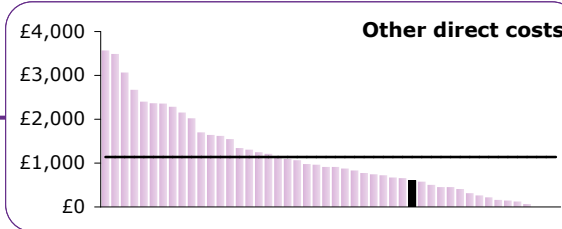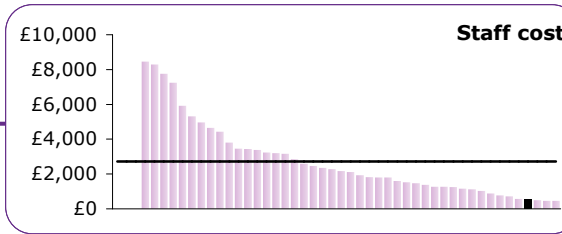
All others
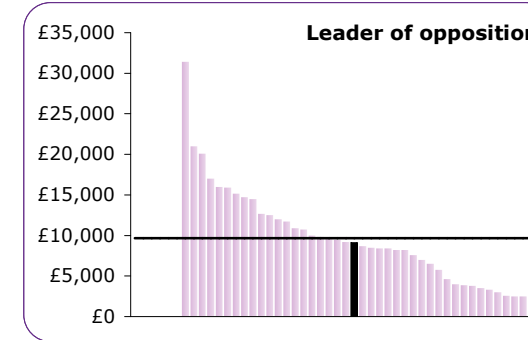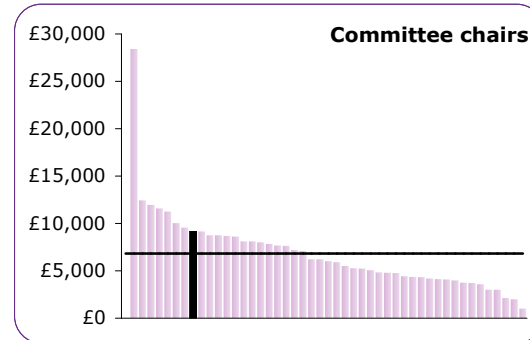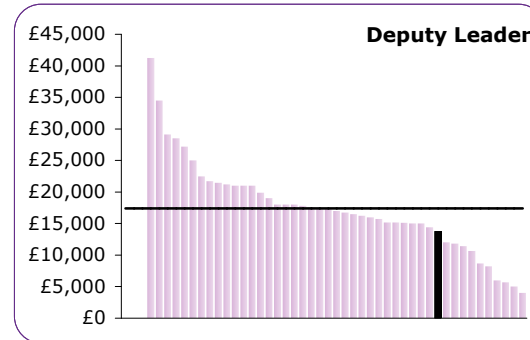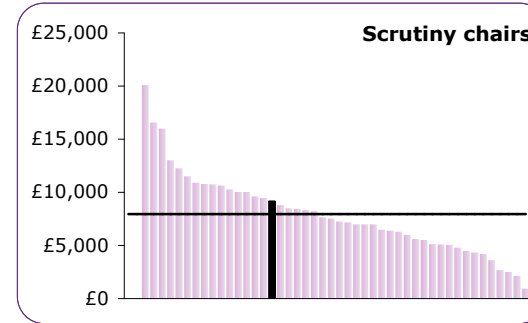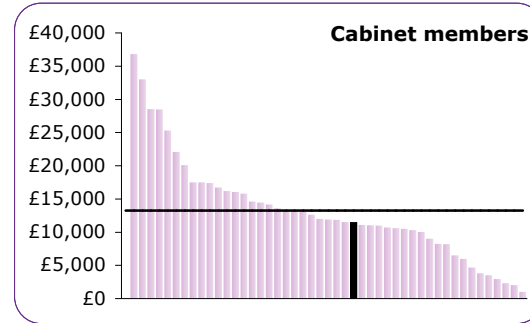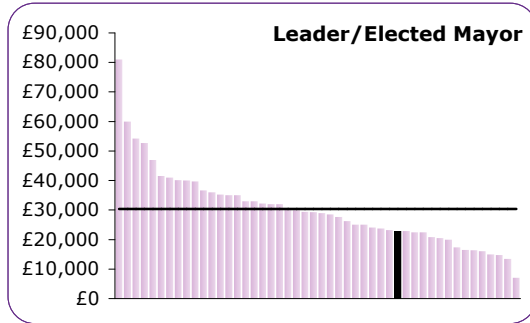
SRA's	Total £'000	No. receiving	Avgerage allowance	Avg
Leader/Elected Mayor	23k	1	£22,932	£30,354
Deputy leader	14k	1	£13,759	£17,415
Cabinet members	80k	7	£11,467	£13,247
Committee chairs	18k	2	£9,173	£6,839
Scrutiny chairs	37k	4	£9,173	£7,938
Leaders of opposition	9k	1	£9,173	£9,667
All others	35k	10	£3,452	£5,232
Total	**216k**	**26**	**£8,296**	**£9,178**
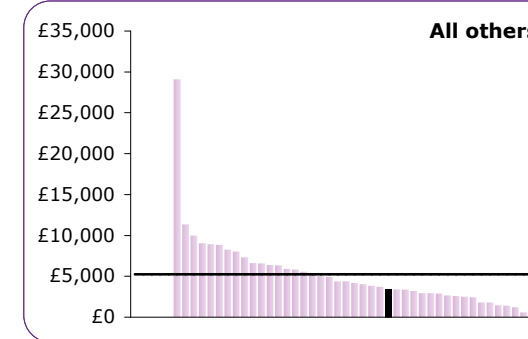
SECTION 5 - MAYOR'S OFFICE

**Cost per 1,000 pop
2012/13 estimates**
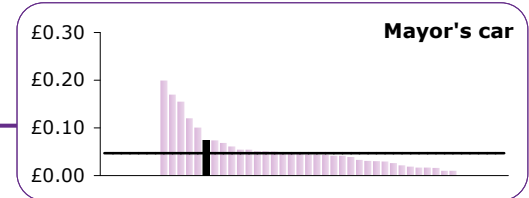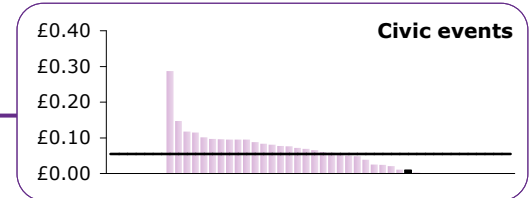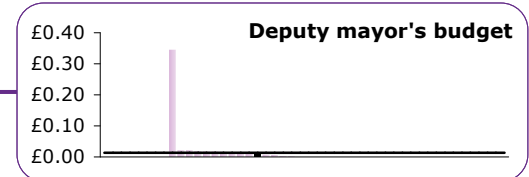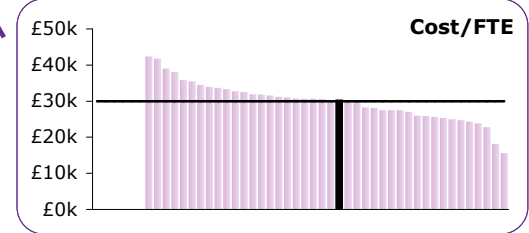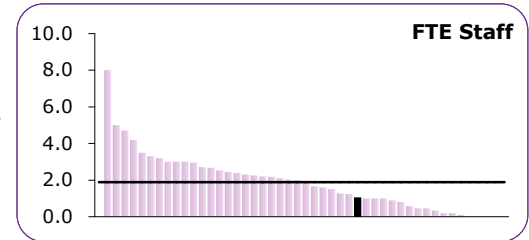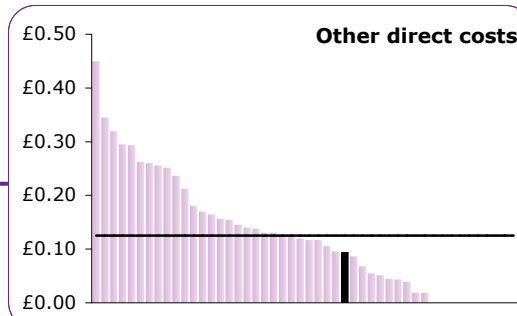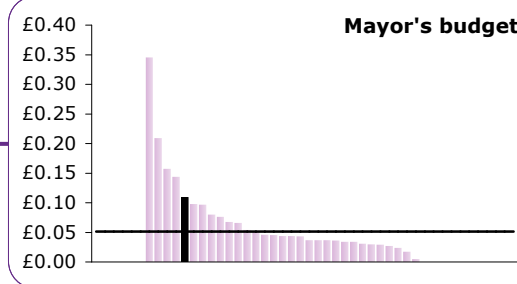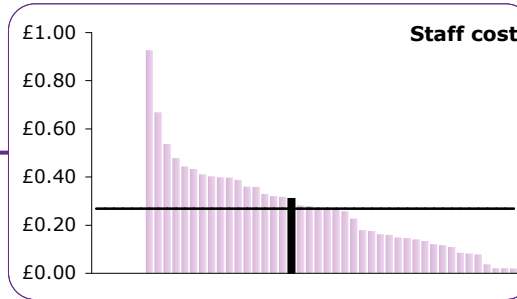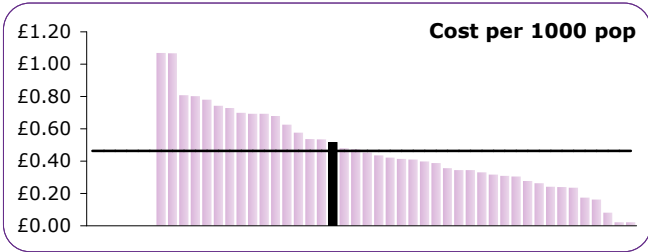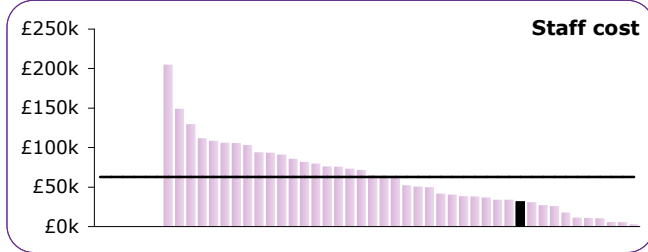
Population 101k

Costs	£k	£/1000	Avg
Staff cost	32k	£0.31	£0.27
Mayor's budget	11k	£0.11	£0.05
Deputy mayor's budget	1k	£0.01	£0.01
Civic events	1k	£0.01	£0.06
Mayor's car	8k	£0.07	£0.05
Other costs	0k	£0.00	£0.03
Total cost	**52k**	**£0.52**	**£0.46**

Staff		Avg
FTE Staff	1.0	1.9
Cost per FTE	30.3k	29.9k

Engagements - 2011/12 municipal year
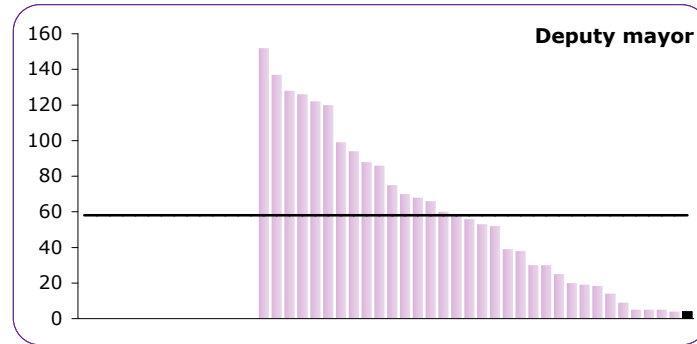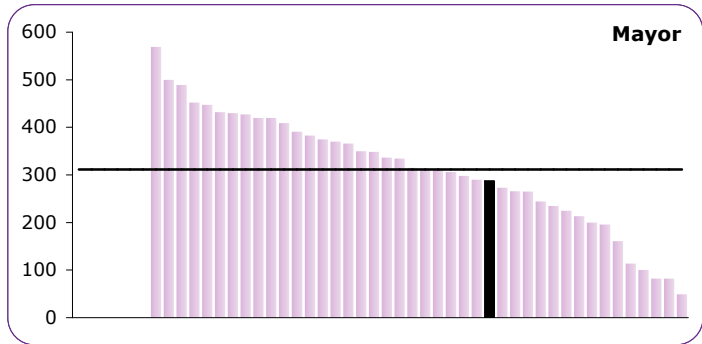
Mayor

Deputy mayor

Engagements	Number	Avg
Mayor	288	311
Deputy Mayor	4	58

SECTION 6 - OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

Cost per 1,000 pop
2012/13 budget

Total cost

Staff cost

Other scrutiny budget
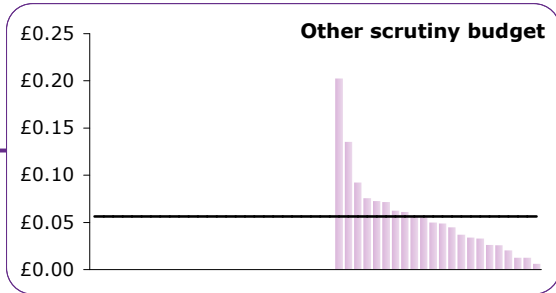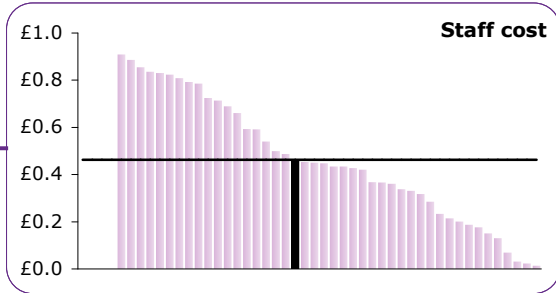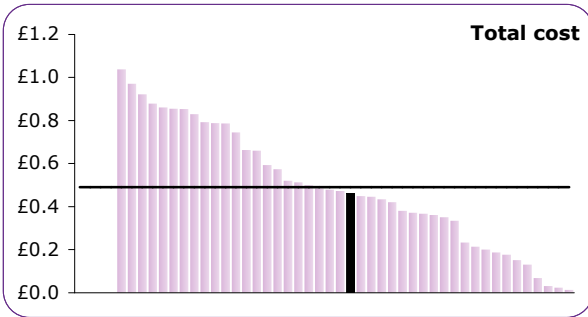
Population	101k

Costs		£/1000	Avg
Staff cost	46.6k	£0.46	*£0.46*
Other scrutiny budget	0.0k	na	*£0.06*
Total cost	**46.6k**	**£0.46**	***£0.49***

FTE Information

FTE Staff

Cost/FTE

Dedicated Scrutiny Officers
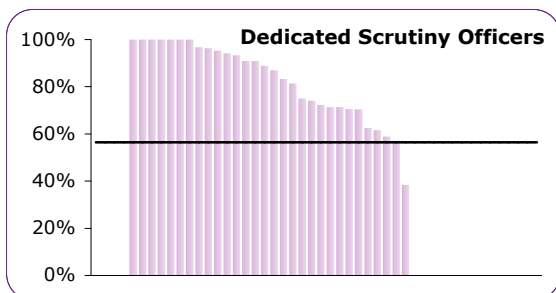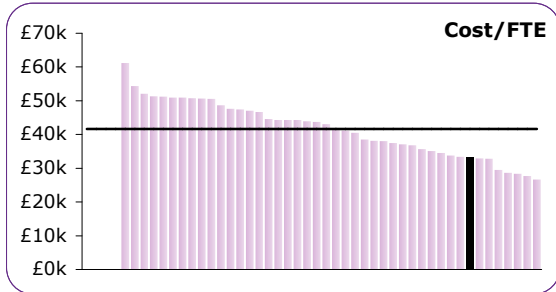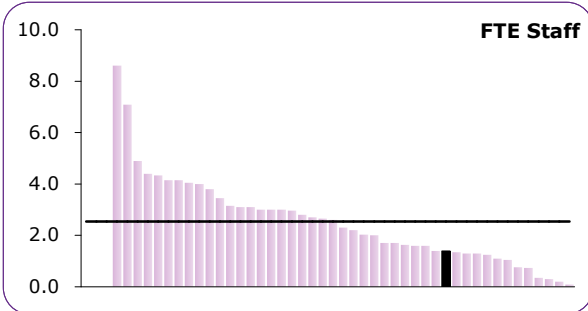
Staff information		Avg
FTE staff	1.4	*2.5*
Dedicated Scrutiny Officers	-	*1.6*
Cost per FTE	33.3k	*41.6k*

Allocation of FTE by activity

Research

Work programme

Standing/statutory/public Scrutiny meetings

Other Member meetings

Public consultation

Scrutiny training

Other meetings

Drafting review reports

Publicity

Misc. Scrutiny queries
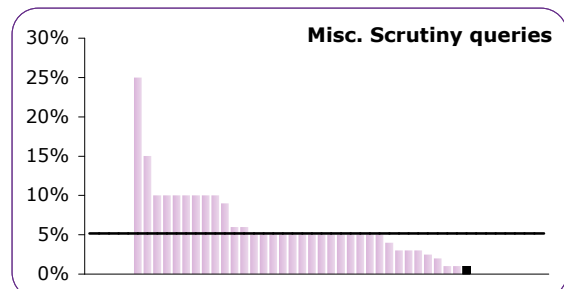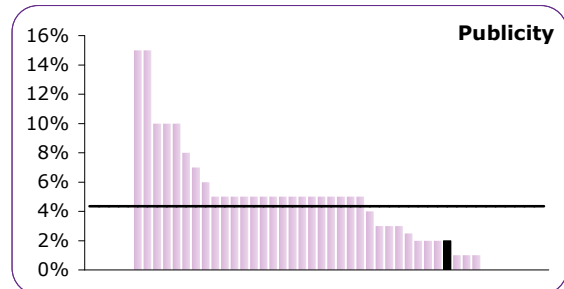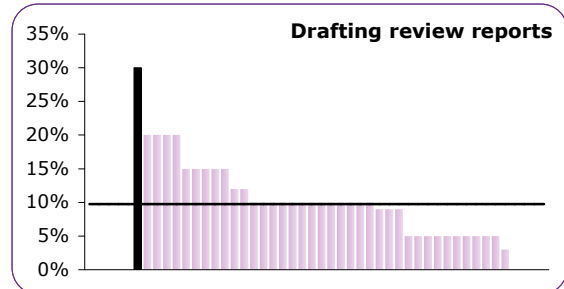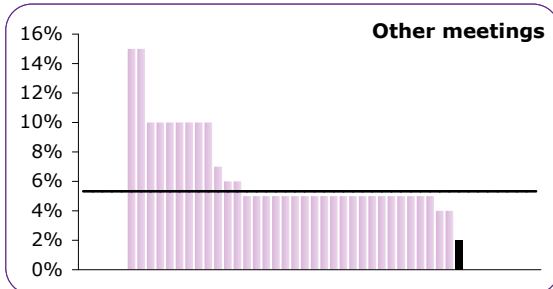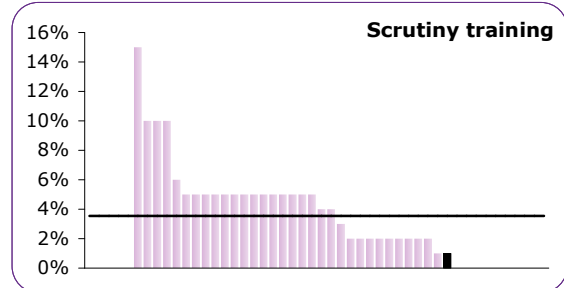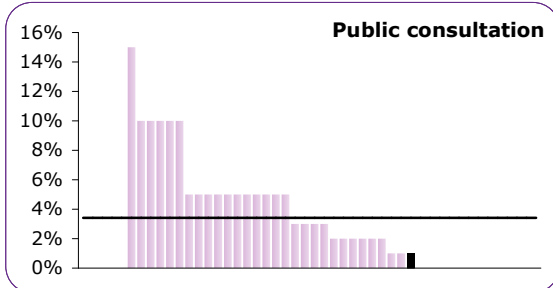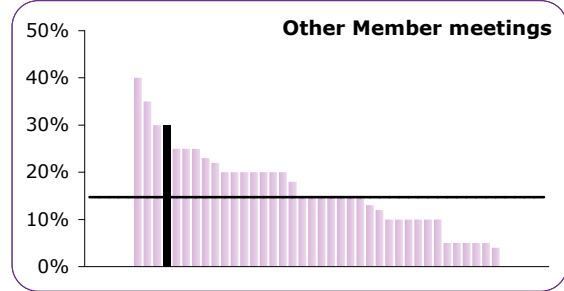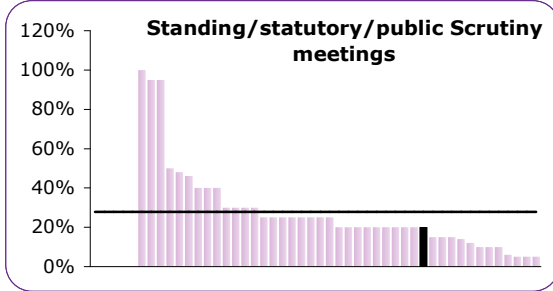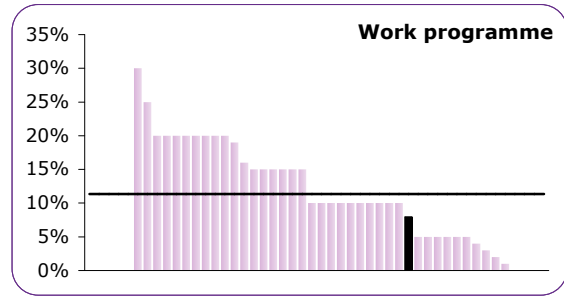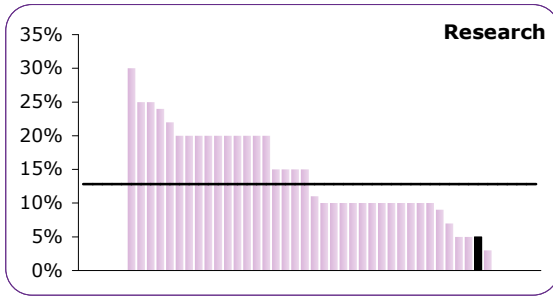
Allocation of staff time by activity	%	Avg
Research	5.0%	12.8%
Work programme	8.0%	11.3%
Standing/statutory/public Scrutiny	20.0%	27.8%
Other Member meetings	30.0%	14.7%
Public consultation	1.0%	3.4%
Scrutiny training	1.0%	3.5%
Other meetings	2.0%	5.3%
Drafting review reports	30.0%	9.7%
Publicity	2.0%	4.4%
Misc. Scrutiny queries	1.0%	5.2%
All other	0.0%	1.8%

Scrutiny function time & effort by activity

Call-ins

Councillor calls for action

Policy development

Pre-decision survey

Performance reviews

Service reviews

Annual reports

Work programme
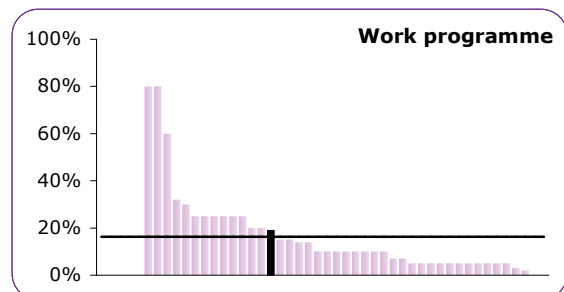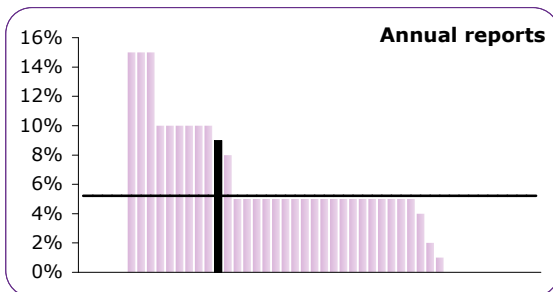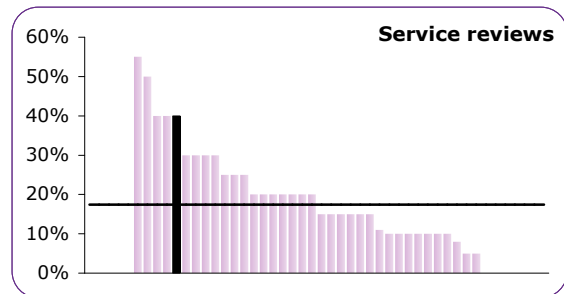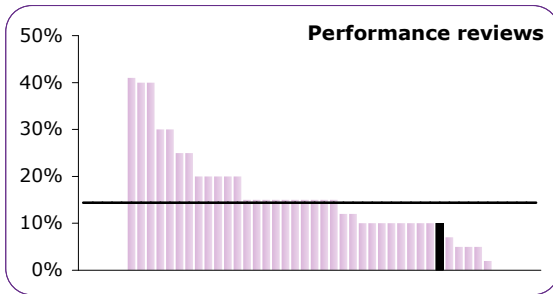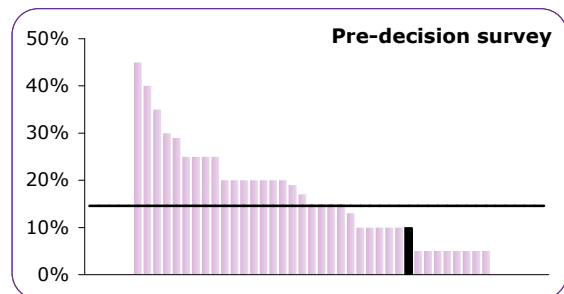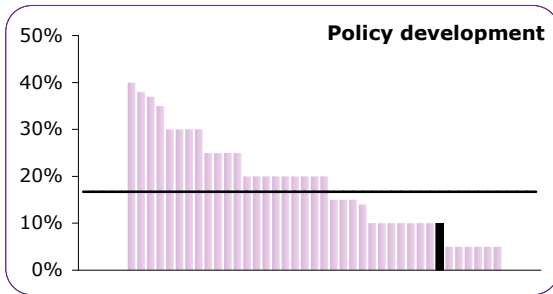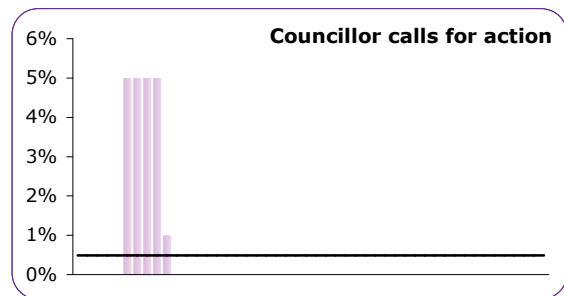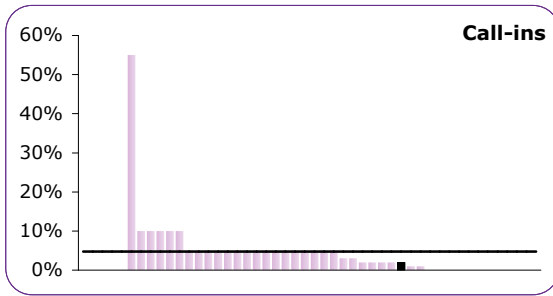
Other

Time & effort by activity	%	Avg
Call-ins	2.0%	4.7%
Councillor calls for action	0.0%	0.5%
Policy development	10.0%	16.7%
Pre-decision survey	10.0%	14.6%
Performance reviews	10.0%	14.4%
Service reviews	40.0%	17.4%
Annual reports	9.0%	5.2%
Work programme	19.0%	16.3%
Other	0.0%	10.1%
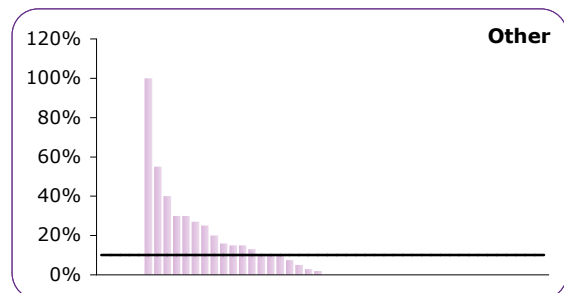
Sources of support to Scrutiny function

Scrutiny Officers

Committee Support Officers

Departmental Officers

Other Officers
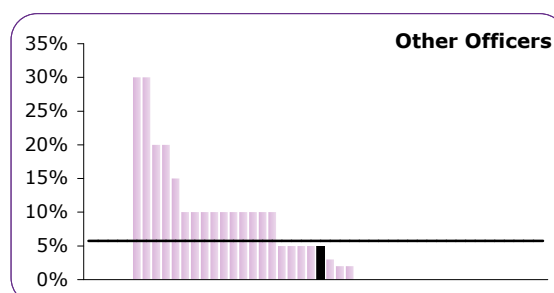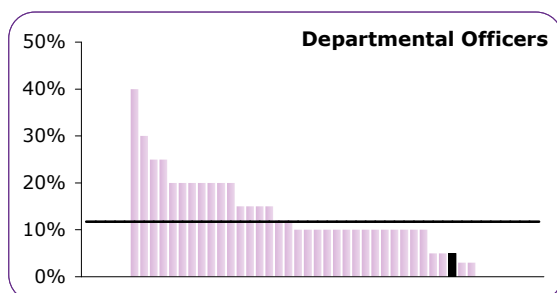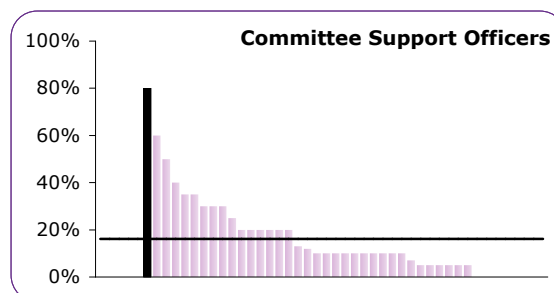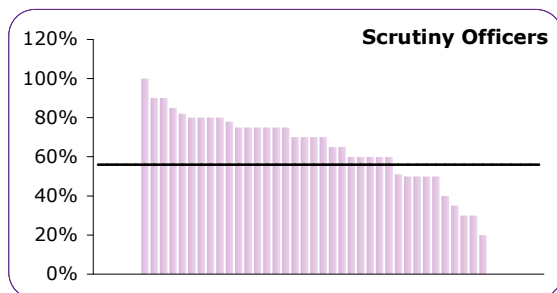
Elected Members

Sources of Support	%	Avg
Scrutiny Officers	0.0%	56.1%
Committee Support Officers	80.0%	16.2%
Departmental Officers	5.0%	11.7%
Other Officers	5.0%	5.7%
Elected Members	10.0%	10.2%
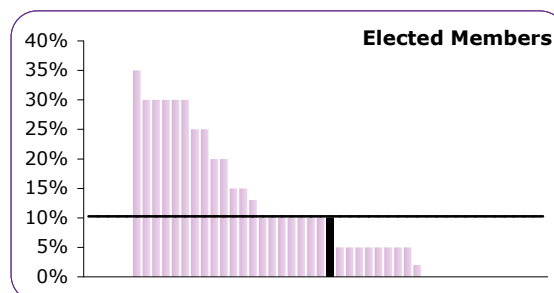
Additional workload information

Workloads		Avg
Reports completed in 2011/12		
Councillor calls for action	-	0.4
Requested/generated by Scrutiny Committee/Chairman	27	38.7
Requested/generated by Cabinet	3	6.6
Requested/generated by Council departments	10	18.7
Items suggested by public & external organisations	7	6.2
Other	-	2.7
Total	**47**	**71.3**
Scrutiny reviews		
In-depth reviews undertaken	18	9
Number of recommendations	55	39
% recommendations accepted	100%	78%
% recommendations implemented in 12 months	80%	60%
Call-ins		
Total call-ins	1	4.1
No. referred back to decision-maker	-	0.4
No. amended of those referred back	-	0.2