

Public Health Spending by London Boroughs

February 2022

Introduction

Public Health grant allocations have been published by the Department of Health and Social Care. These allocate £0.69bn of funding to London boroughs. This note sets this figure in context relative to the size of London's population and explains how the level of spending on public health by London boroughs has changed in recent years.

This briefing has been prepared under challenging circumstances and to a short timescale. Thus, any errors and omissions are the author's own.

Context: spending on public health by London boroughs since 2013/14

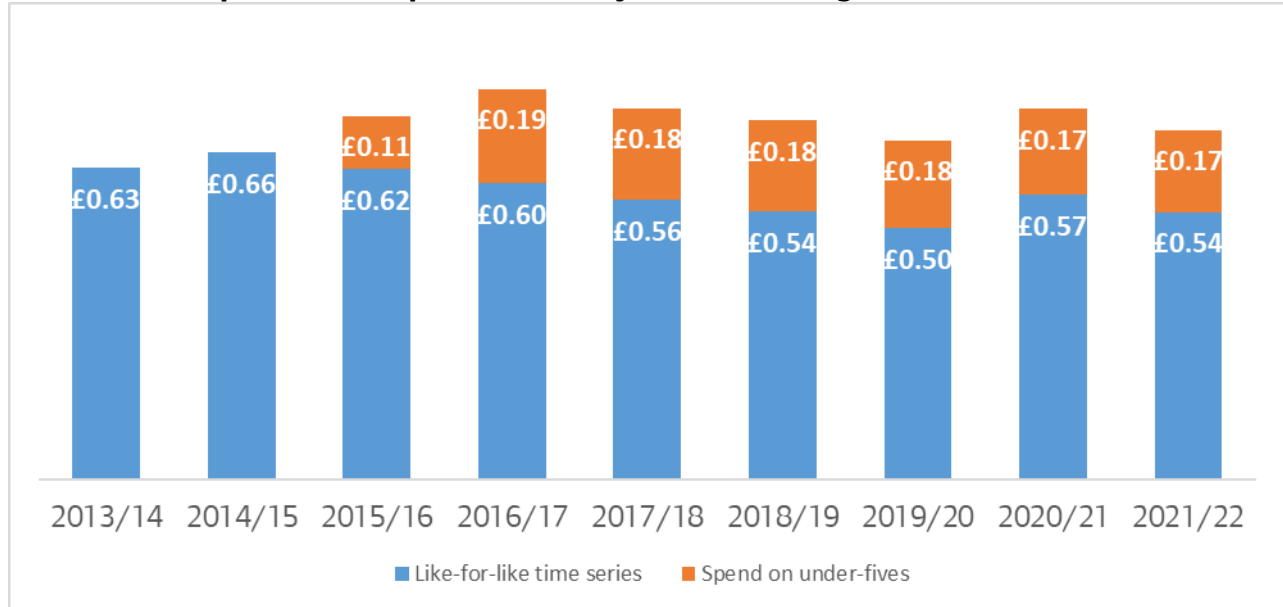
Responsibility for public health was devolved to local authorities in 2013/14. They are now responsible for improving the health of their local population and for public health services including most sexual health services and services aimed at reducing drug and alcohol misuse ([Heath 2014](#)).

In October 2015, further responsibilities and additional funding for children under the age of five were transferred to local authorities ([NCB 2016](#)).

The chart below shows how total spending on public health by London boroughs has changed since 2013/14, dividing spend into a like-for-like component, which excludes spend on children under five, and the additional spending on under-fives from 2015/16 (using the method in [King's Fund 2018](#)).

This shows that in real terms, like-for-like spending has fallen by 14 per cent since 2013/14. Including spend on under fives, real spending has fallen by 10 per cent since 2016/17. Equivalent figures for the rest of England are 4 per cent and 5 per cent respectively.

Net revenue expenditure on public health by London boroughs, 2013/14 to 2021/22 (£bn)



Source: Analysis of local authority revenue, expenditure and finance, 2013/14 to 2021/22, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP October 2021 (Budget and Spending Review), HM Treasury

Notes: data is in 2020/21 prices. 2021/22 figures not final.

There are only three boroughs where like-for-like spending, in real terms, has gone up since 2013/14: Merton (41 per cent), Kensington and Chelsea (27 per cent) and Bexley (9 per cent). The other 30 boroughs have all seen a fall since 2013/14. Including spend on under fives, real spending has fallen in all boroughs apart from the three mentioned above, as well as Bromley, which has seen a 1 per cent increase since 2013/14.

Change in net revenue expenditure on public health by individual London boroughs from 2013/14 to 2021/22

| | Like-for-like % change | Incl. under 5s % change |
|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| City of London | -0.17 | -0.12 |
| Camden | -0.10 | -0.21 |
| Greenwich | -0.15 | -0.18 |
| Hackney | -0.17 | -0.13 |
| Hammersmith & Fulham | -0.10 | -0.12 |
| Islington | -0.21 | -0.09 |
| Kensington & Chelsea | 0.27 | 0.22 |
| Lambeth | -0.05 | -0.07 |
| Lewisham | -0.15 | -0.07 |
| Southwark | -0.04 | -0.17 |
| Tower Hamlets | -0.25 | -0.13 |
| Wandsworth | -0.24 | -0.10 |
| Westminster | -0.04 | -0.03 |
| Barking & Dagenham | -0.20 | -0.14 |
| Barnet | -0.25 | -0.14 |

| | | |
|----------------------|-------|-------|
| Bexley | 0.09 | 0.05 |
| Brent | -0.18 | -0.11 |
| Bromley | -0.22 | 0.01 |
| Croydon | -0.16 | -0.18 |
| Ealing | -0.31 | -0.14 |
| Enfield | -0.10 | -0.18 |
| Haringey | -0.25 | -0.15 |
| Harrow | -0.20 | -0.05 |
| Havering | -0.13 | -0.12 |
| Hillingdon | -0.22 | -0.13 |
| Hounslow | -0.30 | -0.17 |
| Kingston upon Thames | -0.32 | -0.25 |
| Merton | 0.41 | 0.25 |
| Newham | -0.13 | -0.11 |
| Redbridge | -0.09 | -0.13 |
| Richmond upon Thames | -0.14 | -0.07 |
| Sutton | -0.07 | -0.02 |
| Waltham Forest | -0.05 | -0.15 |

Source: Analysis of local authority revenue, expenditure and finance, 2013/14 to 2021/22, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP October 2021 (Budget and Spending Review), HM Treasury

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The Indices of Deprivation show London remains an area of mixed fortunes, with some wealthier areas alongside pockets of deprivation across the capital¹. Generally, London is showing less deprivation over time compared with other parts of the country, and the pockets of deprivation are becoming more dispersed. Looking at the 'average score' measure of deprivation for each borough in both the 2015 and 2019 indices and seeing where there has been an increase i.e. that borough has become more deprived (of which there are five), it is noticeable that in all but one borough, there has been a decrease in like-for-like spending and in spending that includes under fives, in real terms, since 2013/14². The four boroughs where deprivation has gone up, while spending has gone down are City of London, Harrow, Hillingdon and Kingston upon Thames. The one borough where deprivation has gone up, with spending up as well, is Bexley.

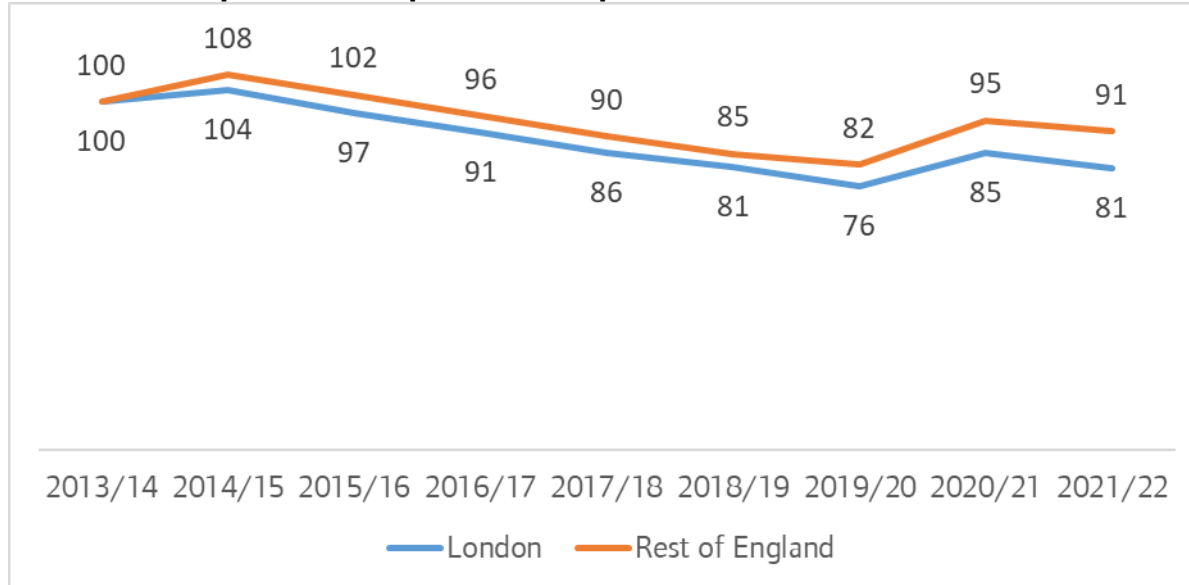
London has higher per-capita spending on public health than the rest of England. In 2021/22 London boroughs have budgeted to spend 28 per cent more per head; £60 versus £47.

Comparing how real spend per head has changed since 2013/14, in London it has fallen by 19 per cent on a like-for-like basis, compared to 9 per cent in the rest of England (see chart below). Both follow a similar pattern. The gap between London and the rest of England has widened since 2019/20.

¹ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/indices-of-deprivation>

² The average score summary measure is calculated by averaging the LSOA deprivation scores in each larger area (in this case, the borough) after they have been population weighted.

Net revenue expenditure on public health per head, 2013/14 to 2021/22 (Index: 2013/14=100)



Source: Analysis of local authority revenue, expenditure and finance, 2013/14 to 2021/22, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP October 2021 (Budget and Spending Review), HM Treasury; ONS and GLA population projections; ONS population estimates

Notes: data is in 2020/21 prices. Excludes new spend on under fives from 2015/16 on. 2021/22 figures not final.

2022/23 Public Health Grant Allocation

In 2022/23, London boroughs will be allocated £0.69bn of public health funding through the public health grant, compared to £0.67bn in 2021/22.

The Department of Health and Social Care have provided estimates of what this funding means in per head terms, using 2018-based population projections produced by the Office for National Statistics.

The table below compares the 2021/22 and 2022/23 figures in real terms, using both the ONS population projections and our own GLA Population Projections, which the City Intelligence Unit regard as a better estimate of London’s population.

While funding per head is higher in London, the real per head change in funding between 2021/22 and 2022/23 is the same as the rest of England. Using ONS population projections, real funding per head will fall by 0.4 per cent in London, as well as in the rest of England. Using GLA population projections, real funding per head will fall by 0.9 per cent in London.

Table comparing 2021/22 and 2022/23 public health grant allocations, using ONS and GLA population projections for London, and ONS population projections for the rest of England

| | London | Rest of England |
|---------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| 2021/22 | | |
| Cash terms | £0.67bn | £2.7bn |
| Real (2020/21 prices) | £0.68bn | £2.7bn |
| Real per head (ONS projections) | £74.5 | £55.7 |
| Real per head (GLA projections) | £76.0 | |
| 2022/23 | | |
| Cash terms | £0.69bn | £2.7bn |
| Real (2020/21 prices) | £0.68bn | £2.7bn |
| Real per head (ONS projections) | £74.2 | £55.5 |
| Real per head (GLA projections) | £75.3 | |
| Percentage change | | |
| Cash terms | 2.8% | 2.8% |
| Real (2020/21 prices) | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| Real per head (ONS projections) | -0.4% | -0.4% |
| Real per head (GLA projections) | -0.9% | |

Source: [Department of Health and Social Care Public Health Grants to Local Authorities: 2020 to 2021](#); GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP October 2021 (Budget and Spending Review), HM Treasury; GLA population projections

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