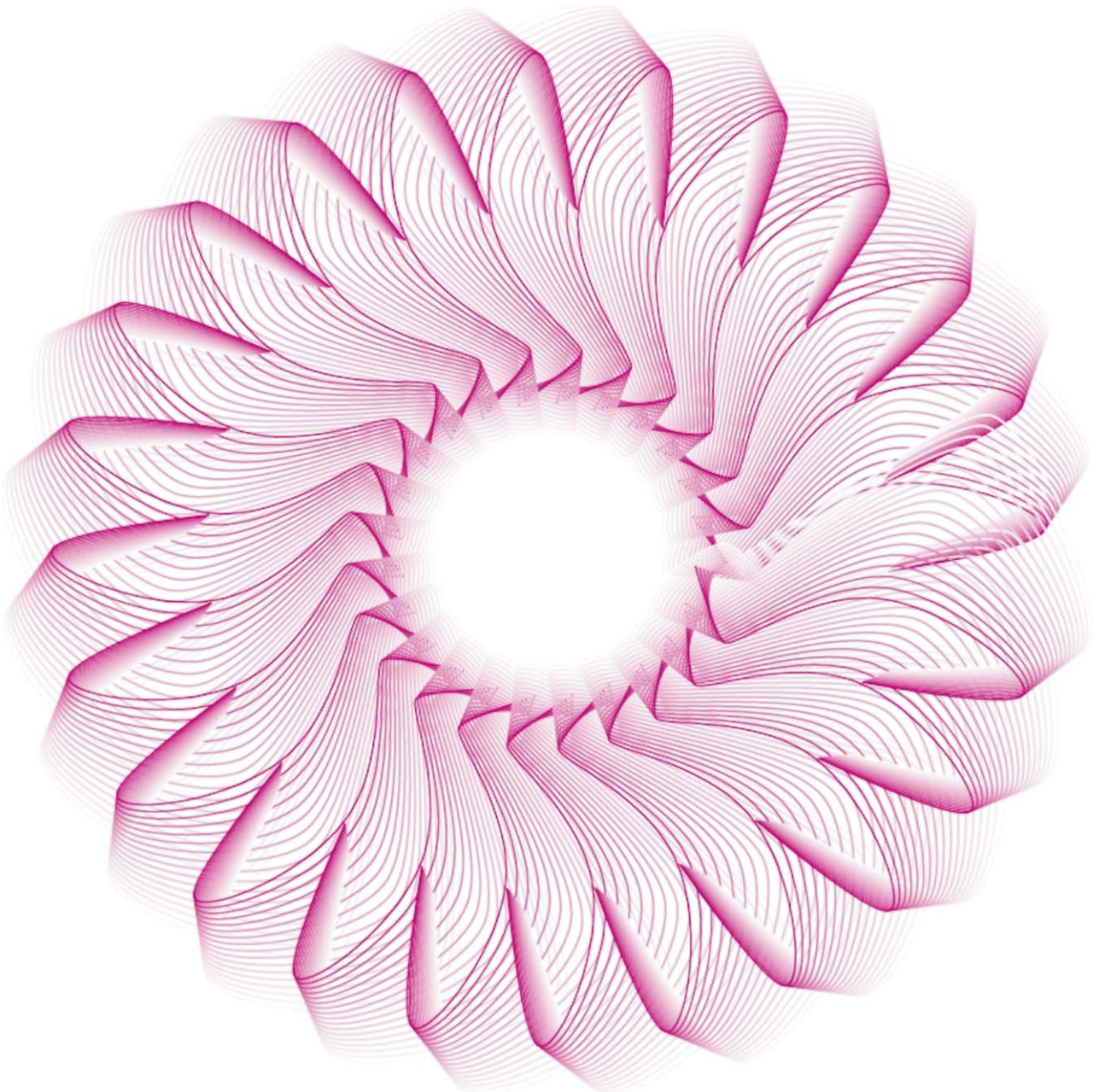


Best practice case studies 2012

Best and most improved performer award winners 2012



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Building cleaning

Best performer winner; Midlothian Council

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Overview

Midlothian Council is situated south of the Edinburgh City By-Pass and has a population of around 85,000. In 2011 a complete restructure of the Councils services in Janitorial, Cleaning and other property services was conducted resulting in a one stop Facilities Services Unit.

Facility Services comprises of all catering in School Meals, Welfare Meals, Corporate and Civic Functions, Vending & Staff Catering, General Building Cleaning, specialised Cleaning Unit, House Voids, Social Housing Cleans, Communal Stair and Close cleaning and House Clearances. Within the Facilities, we have responsibility for School caretaking, security, minor maintenance, CCTV, playground maintenance, and general services.

Within building cleaning there are 317 staff of which the biggest majority are part time with a mixture of 38, 39, 40 and 52 week contracts. We clean in 92 locations in schools, depots, offices, libraries and all other council buildings. We are also a sub-contractor to a PPP company for soft FM services in 7 primary schools. Within this contract we are responsible for all ground and landscape services, pest control, winter maintenance, recycling and waste management, caretaking and cleaning.

Midlothian is split into 2 areas and 2 Facility Officers are responsible for their area in providing a Facilities Service managed by a Facilities Service Manager for all council buildings with support from 3 Facility Coordinators in each area.

Each School has its own Facilities Supervisor responsible for all Facility operations within that building thus reducing the need for cleaning supervisors or senior cleaners.

We work to two Service Level Agreements; one with the Council and one with the PPP Contractor/client.

Improvements made and good performance

Our catering and building cleaning services have held the ISO;2008;2001 quality management system for 12 years and in 2011 the Janitorial services were included in the quality system along with our service to the PPP contractor and is embedded into our current and future service delivery.

All locations have a customer feedback form and an email address to send positive and negative comments. All Facility Officers have electronic hand-held devices for building and site monitoring on our service standards, health & safety and associated risks with

fixed rectification times. The results are downloaded and copies are sent to the building manager and facility staff.

All our staff have an individual training programme which includes the 4 basic skills, BICSc stages 1 and 2, manual handling, induction training and COSHH. All the staff also do on-line training on equalities & diversity, health & safety, information management and customer care.

Efficiencies and savings

To improve our building cleaning service both in efficiencies and at the same time increasing our customer prospective, we introduced the cleaning methods which increased our productivity at the same time reducing our costs and greatly reducing our turnover of Facility Staff which were introduced to the PPP sub-contract which we were awarded.

We looked at each individual location and assessed type of building; old/new, the standard of the building fabric, standard of the floor areas, the views of the building staff and the views of how to improve from our own staff.

We looked at the chemicals we were using; were they doing what was required? We did a market appraisal for cost, dilution rates, green credentials and did it do the job. We looked at the janitorial supplies we were using, including moping systems, cloths, refuse sacks, washroom systems and floor pads for costs, duration of the produce and is there products doing the same job at less cost?

We did a complete review on all of our cleaning equipment and renewed 60% of them in a spend to save submission. Back-pack vacuums were introduced after intensive consultation with the staff and trade unions and after a 6 month trial period in 2 large primary schools.

Changes included introducing new cleaning methods, working in teams, using new equipment, wearing new uniforms and encouraging the staff to take ownership of their building, speaking to the building users in getting their feedback and raising the standards. Once all the information was collated and over a period of two years, the changes were made to the way we provided our service resulting in;

- Higher productivity levels
- Lower operational costs
- Higher customer satisfaction levels
- Reduction in staff turnover
- Reduction in staff absences
- Increase in staff participation and job satisfaction

The new cleaning methology has now been rolled out and introduced into all locations since January 2012 resulting in an efficient, progressive Service.

Future areas of focus

As previously stated the janitorial and facility services have recently undergone a major review with the merger of all associated services and we are now in a period of embedding these new working practices.

Our future focus is to continue providing a service that is both efficient and customer focused, continually looking at our property estate introducing "Hot Desking", closing of smaller offices and re-arranging larger offices to accommodate more staff.

Other areas include:

- Reducing the opening hours of community/education facilities to minimise building openings and maximising utilisation of others through the purchase of a centralised room booking system, which has been rolled out to the whole School Estate resulting in further efficiencies.
- Introduction of minor maintenance activities being undertaken by facilities staff.
- Savings on utilities costs due to selected buildings now being closed for community use.
- Staff participation, involvement and consultation in introducing further efficiencies due to the anticipated reduction in budgets.
- Continuing to assess our service in customer satisfaction, staff participation and service Improvement.

Most improved performer winner; Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

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Overview

Oldham Council cleaning service is the preferred provider throughout the borough of Oldham. We deliver a cleaning service every day to 80 schools and 90 offices including depots, libraries, council building, sports centres and markets. We also deliver a low level preventative support service for the vulnerable and elderly people of Oldham offering the following services:

- Cleaning
- Shopping
- Assisted shopping
- Bed making/changing
- Dog walking
- Washing and ironing
- Basic food preparation
- Visiting service

In order to deliver these services, we employ 400+ part time staff managed by 1 full time cleaning manager, 1 full time supervisor and 3 x25 hour supervisors. We also employ a Caretaker/Site Manager relief team to cover ad hoc additional services our schools may need from time to time. We work to tailor-made Service Level Agreements and are currently reviewing the SLA for academies.

Improvements made and good performance

Oldham cleaning services faced many challenges last year where we were required to assess our service delivery in many areas. With assistance from our Performance team, we reviewed our cleaning square meterage on all our establishments and ensured any hours for additional works and variation orders were separated from the contractual hours. We then recalculated productivity based on the new square meter measurements and identified how this affected our previous productivity.

The Cleaning Service is dedicated to improving communication with clients. In 2011, the annual satisfaction survey was reviewed and developed, using online technology to automate the survey process, increase the response rate and expand the performance measures generated. In January 2012 the average score had improved since 2011 taking the authority into excellent standard. Feedback from on-going consultation also revealed a growing level of demand for additional services. In order to respond to changes in demand and improve communication with clients and schools and increase awareness of the services on offer, a service brochure/leaflet was produced, which detailed all service offers and prices. This has already resulted in an increased number of additional services being purchased.

All of our staff are provided with site manuals on initial induction providing them with expected service standards, risk assessments, COSHH regulations etc., but we also offer NVQ Level 2 in cleaning which has been embraced by our cleaning team with positive feedback.

The Cleaning Service identified high staff absenteeism as a key area for improvement and volunteered to take part in a new monitoring pilot, which has ensured a more tailored assessment of each individual case of sickness absence, with the aim of reducing the level of sickness.

We also analysed our cleaning material/equipment costs and identified the potential to make savings through the Early Discount for suppliers scheme. All our suppliers signed up.

In order to continually review our provision of services, we reviewed our monitoring and recording processes in 2011 to better identify key areas for improvement. As well as using technology to record monitoring updates, we have ensured the maximum use of software to provide the team with access to timely, accurate data that can be used to better target resources and be more proactive in improving services.

Future areas of focus

The Cleaning Service aims to address any operational issues immediately to maintain the momentum and pace that we have been working towards. Whilst responding to budget pressures, we are continually investigating areas in which we can be innovative in effective ways of working to achieve our desired outcomes and continually work towards better, improved services.

An increase in service offers from external providers has increased the pressure to closely manage contracts and relationships to ensure services continue to be highly valued. Part of this work involves further developing the relationships we have established with clients. On-going communication with past and present clients has resulted in two schools who opted out to alternative providers last year are returning to us this year. Following initial consultation with schools to establish reasons for selecting external providers, we aim to use this as an opportunity to meet with other schools who previously opted out, assess their current requirements and communicate our improved service offer at the appropriate time for the contract.

We will also continue to lay focus on investment in our greatest asset which we consider to be our staff. This will involve reviewing and amending management systems as required and continued work on reducing staff absenteeism further, by further improving the data quality and management of sickness absence cases.

Technology will be key to driving the Cleaning Service forward. In 2013, we will build on the success of our online satisfaction survey by electronically disseminating monitoring results with clients on a regular basis to improve clarity and communication. The Service is also set to become a business unit, which will improve business intelligence and make the service more accountable around finance, procurement, HR/recruitment and performance.

Building Maintenance

Best performer winner; Bassetlaw District Council

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Overview

A1 Housing is an Arm's length management organisation (ALMO) engaged by Bassetlaw District Council to manage its Housing stock of 6929 properties and 855 garages. The district of Bassetlaw is situated about 30 miles north of Nottingham and is predominantly rural with 2 urban centres, Worksop and Retford. The Building Repairs Service carries out around 24000 repairs annually with a workforce of 40 operatives. Gas, oil, solid fuel servicing and associated repairs are carried out by private contractors.

Improvements made and good performance

Customer satisfaction, performance and value for money remain key drivers in the success of the organisation. These 3 key drivers have played a major role in driving improvement across the service, which in the last 12 months have included;

- As part of our processes to improve and maintain A1 Housings stock we have re-introduced a 5 year cyclical planned maintenance programme. This is particularly important as our Decent homes programme is due to end in 2014 and will ensure our housing stock continues to be maintained to a high standard and does not fall back into decline.
- A1 Housing has a programme of estate inspections in place. The aim being to visit all areas within the district on a quarterly basis ensuring all estates are kept to a high standard and free from dilapidation through identification and programming of repairs.
- All vehicles within our building repairs service have now been fitted with up to date tracker units which enable us to monitor fuel usage, vehicle speed, idling and location.
- We continue to use mobile working to maximise use of resources, efficiency and reduce service costs through better planning.
- We have re-configured how we carry out re-glazing works, due to the length of time and the in-house resource required. We have now outsourced this part of the operation and as part of the new process placed rigorous performance criteria within the specification. This new approach has freed up in-house resources, improved performance and as also achieved a more cost effective service.

- We have a growing programme of installing renewable energy systems (air and ground source). It is therefore vital that in future we are able to maintain and repair them. We have therefore trained all our plumbers on the maintenance of all systems we use.
- We have produced a Handy hints booklet for our tenants to help them carry out minor repairs by themselves. This saves them time in reporting and waiting for none urgent minor repairs to be carried out. It also reduces costs and enables us to make better use of resources.

Future areas of focus

We are currently looking to develop a garden nursery with the aim of growing our own natural hedging products to replace expensive fencing. As well as being beneficial to the environment there will also be an opportunity to work in partnership with other organisations in providing training for the unemployed and give A1 Housing another source of income.

A comprehensive review of our repairs policy will be undertaken to ensure we continue to improve and provide a robust cost efficient service.

We will also look to reducing paperwork through new automated administration processes.

Civic, community and cultural venues

Best performer winner; Baglan Community Centre, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

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Overview

The Community Development and Projects Section (CD&P) is part of the Lifelong Learning Service and sits within Neath Port Talbot Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning. The centre is 1 of 12 community centre venues managed by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

Baglan Community Centre is open 7 days a week and is run by 1 permanent community centre attendant and relief community centre attendants. The management and administration are based at the Lifelong Learning Service Offices in Port Talbot and consists of 1 Community Development & Projects Manager, 2 Community Development Officers, 1 Assistant Community Development Officer, 1 Projects Officer and 1 Finance Officer.

Improvements made and good performance

Baglan Community Centre has been fortunate to win this prestigious award previously and continues to achieve this level of performance by constantly ensuring that the centre provides a range of community services and facilities, by responding to local need, encouraging community participation and working towards achieving a healthy, safe, sustainable and confident local neighbourhood.

One of the big changes that has made a huge impact on the centre is the conversion of an old store room into an office. This has made the building more user friendly which has encouraged greater use from the local community/user groups. Wi-Fi has also been installed within the centre to help improve IT access.

Future areas of focus

For Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, the pressure is on to continuously strive for excellence and part of that process is to ensure that services are delivered as effectively and efficiently as possible. The following improvements are identified in our business plan:

- Developing stronger working partnerships with Adult Community Learning/Partners to tackle family/educational learning and deliver a range of courses that are easily accessible to the local community.

- Continue to work with PASS (Physical Activity and Sport Services) to provide further healthy lifestyle initiatives that meet the needs of the local community.
- Focus on developing new/existing user groups to identify further booking opportunities.
- The introduction of IT Access may help to improve efficiency and accessibility.

Education Catering

Best Performer 2012: Education Catering, East Renfrewshire Council

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Overview

East Renfrewshire Council provides school meals to 1 additional support needs school, 22 primary and 6 secondary schools within the East Renfrewshire Council area.

East Renfrewshire Council catering staff work as part of the Facilities Management team within the Education Department, and employ around 110 FTE catering staff, who serve around 8,000 school meals on a daily basis.

The service operates a two weekly menu cycle, which changes twice yearly at the Easter and October breaks. All school meal provision is fully compliant with the Health Promotion and Nutrition (Scotland) Act 2007.

It is recognised that the catering service has undergone a period of change in recent years, adapting to the challenges of budget savings and efficiencies, whilst seeking service improvement. Savings of around 15% have been taken to date whilst targets to improve service quality and throughput have been set. The management team set an average target for school meals output at 9 meals per hour across the primary and secondary sectors. The target currently being achieved is 9.61 across both sectors, which exceeds the APSE benchmark of 7.31 meals per hour for Scottish schools.

The catering team are focussed in making sustainable improvements and listen to views of children and young people to establish where there is potential for substantial improvements and innovation.

Strong links with Head Teachers and the Quality Improvement Team within Education ensures that the Health and Well Being curriculum is incorporated within the promotion of the school meals service.

Stakeholder Input

- Consultation takes place through a bi-annual questionnaire to all pupils within the authority
- The Director of Education holds pupil council forums, with representation from all schools, on a termly basis where young people represent their peers and report back on various issues, including school catering
- Parents are invited to join their children in tester lunches when children are starting primary school
- Catering Managers provide school meal tasters at parents evenings within high schools
- Facilities Management staff regularly liaise with Head Teachers and Parent Council to discuss the service.

Future Improvements

East Renfrewshire is committed to promoting healthier schools and lifestyles among children and young people, and its catering service seeks to improve the quality of school meals and the dining experience. By providing nutritious school meals this should contribute positively on behaviour, learning and performance among pupils. Ensuring pupils are fit to succeed contributes to the Education Department's vision of *Inclusion, Achievement, Ambition and Progress for All*.

Continuous improvement drives the catering service to improve the uptake of healthy school meals and future improvements include:

- Increasing the uptake in secondary school meals
- Developing innovative new ways of engaging children in uptake of service
- Continuing to improve on the success of the restaurant style service in the primary sector
- Continuing to work within efficient targets set
- Reducing absence figures by ensuring the maximising attendance policy for the service is fully implemented
- Providing alternative café and servery style facilities in new school builds to better reflect what children and young people want.

Highways and winter maintenance

Most improved performer winner; Glasgow City Council

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Overview

Glasgow is Scotland's largest city and as such accounts for almost 16% of the Scottish economy. 11.3% of Scotland's population lives within the city.

Glasgow City Council is responsible for a roads network consisting of some 1,825km of public roads, 3,606km of footway, 385 structures, 830 signalised junctions and around 75,000 lighting columns. The development of a modern road network and award winning high quality public realm spaces has made a significant contribution to the economic regeneration of the city in recent years.

The road network is managed and operated by Land & Environmental Services who also provide a separate Project Management and Design Service. The Roads Services Team is responsible for the management and maintenance of the network and undertakes both the client commissioning function and the main contracting services by use of a retained workforce.

In 2011/12 Glasgow City Council invested £20.8 million in roads maintenance.

Improvements made and good performance

Absence

The improvement in Glasgow City Council's absence management profile has been achieved through a concerted effort in a range of initiatives across all Services. Importantly there is now a consistent application of our absence management policy throughout our organisation and we have improved our communication methods to ensure the absence management message is conveyed to all our employees through manager's briefings, our Intranet site and our internal magazine the Insider.

In addition, we have enhanced our existing training programme for managers through an on line interactive attendance management course.

Improved reporting and analysis of absence data to corporate and senior management, along with improved access for managers and employees to the services available from Occupational Health and our Employee Assistance provider, have contributed to our on-going improvement in attendance.

Increased Investment

In 2011/12 the percentages of planned and reactive carriageway maintenance spend were 85.29% and 13.32% respectively; these figures are greatly improved over the previous years' values of 55.88% (planned maintenance spend) and 44.12% (reactive maintenance spend).

Whilst maintenance schedules have always been predicated on a planned rather than reactive basis, the improvement in this indicator is attributable to a significant increase in investment in carriageway resurfacing in 2011. The decision to invest an additional £18M in carriageway resurfacing followed the presentation of Glasgow's first Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) to elected members.

Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP)

The RAMP encompasses the four main asset groups; carriageways, footways, structures and lighting and is based on actual inventory and condition.

The RAMP was able to:

- quantify the value of our assets in compliance with CIPFA code;
- identify investment needs and priorities;
- support and inform the budget setting process;
- estimate future funding requirements;
- assist in targeting resources effectively and efficiently;
- establish co-ordinated programmes.

Schemes were selected for inclusion in the works programme using an objective scheme ranking process which considered; carriageway condition, risk, strategic contribution and community benefit.

The number of carriageway potholes being reported has reduced considerably, reducing the amount being spent on temporary repairs. Customer satisfaction with carriageways has also improved, particularly on public transport routes which were specifically targeted in our Roads Investment Strategy.

The RAMP was updated and submitted to elected members in 2012 and additional annual capital investment of £13M in carriageway resurfacing has now been confirmed until 2015.

Category 1 defects

In 2011-12 Glasgow City Council reported 401 Category one defects; equating to 0.23 Category 1 defects per km of maintained carriageway. The previous year 5,088 Category 1 defects were reported which equates to approximately 2.89 Category 1 defects per km of maintained carriageway. The significant reduction in reportable Category 1 defects has been achieved by a combination of improved staff training and an increased level of investment in our road network.

Glasgow City Council has a dedicated team of seven full time safety inspectors who are responsible for reporting safety defects on our road network. Comparison of the volume of Category 1 defects being reported in Glasgow compared to similar authorities prompted a review of our safety inspection processes. This review found that there was inconsistency in how different inspectors assessed defects. There was also a tendency to

indiscriminately use the example *Investigatory levels* used in Table B1, Appendix B, of Well Maintained Highways (The Code), as triggers for Category 1 or Category 2 High defects. Consultation with the safety inspectors revealed that they found the risk matrix in Table 5 of the Code difficult to understand and use.

Trials of an alternative risk matrix had been carried out in 4 other local authorities. These were further developed, resulting in the production of a new matrix which allowed more differentiation of risk in the middle ground of the matrix and produced more consistent assessment results. A more detailed description of what high and low impact means, in terms of personal injury or property damage also proved useful in achieving consistency of risk assessment.

Training in how to assess defects, using the new matrix, was given to all safety inspectors and the descriptions of likelihood and impact were added for reference to the data capture devices being used to enter safety defects. The number of Category 1 defects reported by safety inspectors has now reduced dramatically. This reduction in Category 1 defects gives us the opportunity to reduce the number of temporary repairs we carry out and concentrate on cost effective permanent repairs.

Future areas of focus

- **Roads Asset Management Plan** - continuing development of the RAMP
- **Safety defects** - review of safety defect response targets and policy
- **Fault reporting** - further development of electronic methods of public defect reporting via mobile phones/web
- **Safety Inspections** - review and optimisation of safety inspection routes.

Parks and Open Spaces

Most improved performer winner; Broxtowe Borough Council

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Overview

The strength of the Parks service at Broxtowe Borough Council is its unified approach to service delivery. A team of dedicated and experienced officers, covering the traditional client functions and the day to day delivery of services, work as one unified team. They have full management and maintenance responsibility for all green spaces in the Borough, including parks, open spaces, housing areas, highway land, nature reserves, allotments and cemeteries. All strands are brought together by the Green Spaces Strategy.

Improvements made and good performance

The current Green Spaces team has been created by taking out the previous client/contractor functions and bringing all the staff under one management team lead by the Parks & Environment Manager. The parks team has retained its core staff and skills base as a stand-alone unit and has avoided the temptation to group services under the 'Street Scene' banner.

A number of trusted and qualified local contractors are used to supplement the workforce at peak times and undertake functions such as hedge cutting, mechanical grave digging and flail mowing. The team still retains its own tree gang working alongside nominated sub-contractors to ensure cost effective and efficient service standards are achieved. The landscape design and site improvement work is all undertaken by members of the team with new schemes assessed to see what implications they will have on maintenance regimes and costs. Whilst there is not always full initial agreement between the design and maintenance managers, good communication and an element of compromise helps guide the service forward.

Nature conservation on all the green spaces is seen as a key strand of everything that the team does and not just as an add on. With a nominated officer covering all aspects of nature conservation, a service level agreement with the Notts Wildlife Trust and a 5-year Nature Conservation Strategy, significant goals have been achieved.

The management team for Green Spaces have, between them, over 100 years of horticultural/landscaping experience. However, this is not to say that the team is not forward looking and innovative, far from it. The achievements and progress that has been made in difficult and challenging times are significant.

The opportunity to maximise the income from Section 106 agreements has been fully realised in recent years. Recognising that the value of green space was being undersold when seeking contributions from developers, a change in policy raised dramatically the revenue and capital contributions developers are required to pay. This has seen a significant increase in income with over £0.5 million funding brought in within the last 2 years. This has been used to finance the maintenance of new open spaces and a wide remit of structural park improvements including path resurfacing, park railings renovation, pavilion improvements, new play facilities etc. All of these works have been identified as part of the Green Spaces Strategy and Site Quality Audits.

With the funding successes mentioned previously, the last few years have seen major improvements to the play facilities in the borough. All this has been linked to the Council's Play Strategy 'All to Play for in Broxtowe'. With each new facility that has been provided detailed consultation has been undertaken with young people to ensure we were providing what was wanted and in the right locations. Alongside traditional play areas there have been large multi-use games area installed with adjacent seating areas, and specific 'teen' areas with challenging equipment to encourage physical activity.

Future areas of focus

As part of the Green Spaces Strategy all of the Borough's green spaces are to be assessed and surveyed using the new Broxtowe Parks Standard. This is a hybrid assessment that will combine elements from the Green Stat and Green Flag assessment criteria.

The future holds many challenges. However, with their collective experience and knowledge and a track record of positive achievements, there is still much optimism within the team. The need to work more closely with other agencies has been identified and we are looking at sharing work with neighbouring authorities. These include grass mowing, play area maintenance, grave digging and landscape design work. Continuing to source additional funding is a priority both from external funding bodies and from other organisations that recognise the quality service the green spaces team can deliver. The team must ensure it is fully maximising the potential of its existing resources and a vehicle tracking system has just been installed for all the fleet to help achieve this.

Sports and leisure facility management

Best performer winner; East Riding of Yorkshire Council - Beverley Leisure Complex

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Overview

Beverley Leisure Complex is one of 11 sites managed by East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Leisure Service team. The Complex is situated in Beverley town centre and has a sub-regional 8 lane 25 metre pool and learner pool with 250 spectator viewing area, 6 court sports hall, fitness gym, multi-purpose function room for exercise classes/social activities, café and bar. Outdoor facilities include 5 grassed pitches, floodlit multi-sports area, skate park and bowling green. The Complex was refurbished in 2005 adding a new swimming pool, gym, and village style changing facility. Beverley Leisure Complex is part of a National Award winning Leisure Team including APSE Leisure, Sport and Cultural Team of the Year 2009 and 2011, highly commended finalist in the Local Government Management Team of the Year 2010, Institute of Customer Services (ICS) UK Customer Satisfaction Awards - Quality Service Provider finalist 2011 and Customer Innovation of the Year winner 2012.

Improvements made and good performance

East Riding Leisure offers a quality gym service which competes with the private sector in a highly competitive market and the Leisure Sure Card now boasts 64,000 users which amount to 19.5% of the East Riding population. Membership offers easy access to all our sites throughout the East Riding. Corporate memberships have increased significantly through partnership working with other services including police, fire service, health service, and local businesses. Coupled to this East Riding Leisure has been tackling the Health agenda in innovative ways including a customer centric training approach which includes motivational interviewing and nutritional training for front line staff including

gym instructors, receptionists and senior managers, improving the customer experience and retention. Customers now quote this as the single most influential contributor to their successful behaviour change.

East Riding Leisure has developed positive partnership working with GP's, other health professionals and the local Primary Care Trust through our 'Livewell Scheme', winning a contract against stiff opposition to deliver a service for 280 Bariatric patients. With over 4,500 individual interventions to date, on track for 84% finishing the course (the PCT had set a target of 20%). Building trust and confidence with local GP's and other health professionals is an essential part of this. Our unique motivational interviewing training for all gym instructors prepares the team for further commissioning works.

To support the customer journey East Riding Leisure has leading edge IT systems developed in-house and in partnership with a local private sector partner. This innovative and ground breaking technology understands customer needs whilst helping them achieve their goals and aspirations. The technology includes customer contact bars in all our gyms which can track a customer's visits and offers a highly personal service allowing for timely interventions. New technology linking GP surgeries direct to the Leisure Centre for exercise referrals has led to an increase attendance from 41% up to 100%, nowhere else in the UK has achieved this. Also, a new manager's dashboard provides live time information from point of sale to manage services effectively increasing income and customer satisfaction. Working hard at customer retention is a key factor in all of this. The customer centric approach 'Going beyond what customers expect' coupled to a programme of Centre refurbishments has seen an increase in user numbers across the Leisure Service from 3.5m to 4.5m since 2008-09.

Another area of high importance is our swimming lesson programme. Beverley leisure Complex leads the way with swimming lesson income up from £301k in 2010-11 to £360k in 2011-12. In 2012 we added value to this important income strand by offering free swimming to all our customers on the swimming lesson programme to encourage greater usage of our pools.

There has been a drive throughout the Leisure team to provide quality services to our customers by sharing best practice and benefitting from the experience and expertise gained from management tools within award processes. These include ICS ServiceMark where the service compares favourably with private sector business achieving an UKcsi (customer satisfaction index) score of 89.6 January 2013, second only to Amazon across all UK service sectors. The Leisure Service also holds the Customer Service Excellence and Investors in People awards. We also have robust service standards which are measured through our APSE annual survey and the results are acted upon.

East Riding Leisure has a robust system of monitoring individual site performance using APSE performance indicators and discussions are held with site managers looking at areas they can improve on. Subsequent actions are built into facility business plans cascading down to individual action plans. This process creates clarity of role and responsibility. We

have also kept our costs in check, including staffing and the Beverley Leisure Complex has undertaken a staffing review resulting in annual savings of £20k.

Future areas of focus

East Riding Leisure has subsidies which are reducing year on year and are looking at an ambitious three year Service Transformation Plan to bring down costs to a break even and recuperate any losses through further income generation. This will be achieved by focussing on all areas of the business, including Centre opening times review, new opportunities for commissioning work, and further reducing expenditure. Reinvesting, particularly in our gyms, is crucial to achieving our Service transformation aspirations. We have an ambitious programme of further refurbishments including Haltemprice extension to include new library and GP surgery, new build for Leisure World in Bridlington, and Hornsea Leisure Centre refurbishment. This will help ensure we continue to compete in a changing and highly competitive market.

The team has raised the bar substantially since 2009, delivering services which are self-financing ensuring sustainability and value for money. Our areas for future focus include all of the above with customer centric applications at our heart. Our core aim is 'Go beyond what our customers expect'.

Street Cleansing

Most improved performer – Conwy County Borough Council

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Overview

Street Cleansing in Conwy County Borough Council is part of the Street Scene section of Environment and Technical Services.

For the past 3 years we have been recognised by Keep Wales Tidy as having the cleanest streets in Wales and this year is also the second year running that we have been named the Most Improved Performer for Street Cleansing at the APSE Performance Network Awards. These accolades demonstrate our commitment to providing a county that our residents and visitors can be proud of.

This case study highlights the key changes we have made in our Street Cleansing Service over the past 4 years including, participating in APSE and developing the service to be more customer focussed, developing a more proactive approach to street cleansing and raising awareness in our communities of the importance of keeping the local environment clean and tidy.

Improvements made and challenges overcome

We believe that community engagement is an important part of keeping our streets clean. By engaging with residents and promoting the importance of environmental quality we aim to encourage them to take pride in their own communities which in turn will rub off onto other residents and lead to cleaner towns and villages.

Tidy Towns - We engage with the residents of Conwy in a number of ways including, working closely with Keep Wales Tidy and their Tidy Towns initiative that offers grant funding for improving local environmental quality.

Tidy Towns funding has been used in a number of successful ventures including:

- A second year of The Big Spring Clean event in partnership with neighbouring authorities that invited residents and community groups to help tidy up beaches along the North Wales coast over the course of a week in May;

- The purchase of 25 sets of litter picking equipment, for adults and children, including litter pickers, bag hoops and high visibility vests for our community groups to borrow free of charge when organising their own clean up events;
- Fly-tipping hotspots were targeted for clean ups and were cleared of rubbish then landscaped. Residents were encouraged to use the area for community or recreational use and to avoid further fly tipping in the future;
- A number of cigarette bins were purchased to help tackle the issue of smoking litter in town centres and tourist areas.

New Friends Groups - We have been working hard to set up new friends groups around the County. These groups are made of enthusiastic members of the local community who are interested in improving the quality of their local environment. The groups meet to discuss issues in the local area, organise events such as beach and river clean ups and apply for grant funding if a specific project is identified.

Ward Audits - Ward audits are carried out in each ward in the county once a year by Managers and Supervisors from Street Scene, staff members from other relevant council departments, Town and County Councillors and the Police.

During the audits an inspection is carried out of the local area to identify any street scene issues.

The type of issues inspected during the ward audit include fly tipping, litter, graffiti, blocked road gully's, damaged litter bins, potholes in the road, unsafe pavements, missing road name plates, damaged road signs and unsafe properties etc.

Identification and prompt rectification of these issues improves the quality and overall appearance of the local area. It also shows the residents that the Council are taking a proactive approach to looking after the street scene and will not tolerate any decline in standards.

Conwy has an extensive coastline so in a similar style to ward audits, Promenade Consultative meetings are held twice a year to identify problems along the County's coastline. These meetings are facilitated by the Harbour Master and attended by representatives from relevant and interested council departments, the business community and Town and County Councillors.

Environment Days - Since 2009 we have been organising Community Environment Days, each month, in a different location across the county. These events allow residents to dispose of their unwanted household and garden waste that may otherwise end up as fly tipping.

During these days we also undertake other work in the area including; overgrowth clearance, litter picking, street sweeping, play equipment refurbishment, tree planting and minor repairs such as fixing broken fencing or painting bus stops.

The aim of the events is to leave residents with an area that they can take pride in, encouraging them to look after their own local environment. During 2011-2012 we held 10 community environment days around the county that collected and recycled almost 60 tons of unwanted waste which may have otherwise ended up as fly tipping.

We receive very positive feedback from residents, community groups, Councillors and the Police about Environment Days and they generate very positive publicity in the local newspapers and radio stations.

Community Consultation - During 2011/2012 we undertook our annual satisfaction survey using the APSE criteria and form and we received a customer satisfaction rate of 98%. We were extremely pleased with this and feel that it reflects the level and quality of service we provide, the high standard of cleanliness we keep around the county and the good relationship we have with our community.

Future areas of focus

We will continue to build on the work outlined above:

- Continue with Community Environment Days each month to reduce fly tipping;
- Engage with our residents by helping to set up further friends groups;
- Continue to fully utilise Tidy Towns funding, entering its 6th year in 2013, to enable us to keep the quality of the local environment in Conwy to a consistently high standard;
- Continue to monitor our performance with the help of the APSE performance reports and customer satisfaction surveys to identify areas of focus and improvement.

Street Lighting

Best performer winner; Denbighshire County Council

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Overview

Denbighshire County Council is responsible for 11,800 street lights and 2,500 illuminated signs and bollards.

The street lighting section has merged both client and contracting functions to provide a fully integrated service. The service offers a complete street lighting design, install and maintenance facility for internal and external clients. The department employs eleven members of staff of which eight are front line operational staff who deal with a variety of work types ranging from planned/reactive lighting maintenance, installation and removal of illuminated and non-illuminated street furniture and installation of decorative/festive lighting.

Improvements made and good performance

Routine Maintenance

Lighting faults are reported either as a result of night time inspections or through the customer service centre via the 'Customer Relationship Management' database with direct links to all Highways orientated services. This function has facilitated improvements, particularly in the time taken from the initial report through to completion.

The maintenance process is further aided by the use of portable hand held devices which have allowed for a more efficient working process which not only reduces back office paperwork systems but offers more flexibility in allocating maintenance repairs to specific teams whilst in the area. The section is in the process of updating the asset management in order to introduce electronic/remote working for all operational staff, which once introduced will have a significant effect on performance and streamline working processes in all aspects of street lighting installation and maintenance.

Procurement

Partnerships have been established between the authority, EDF Energy and Buying Solutions (formerly OGCB). This has allowed the authority to gain an improved understanding of all aspects of energy procurement and has led to more favourable and supportive pricing due to the collaborative agreement and economy of scale. As a result of the partnership, all North Wales authorities including Denbighshire have transferred to a more cost effective and efficient system for Half Hourly Un-metered Electricity. This

initiative has realised significant financial savings and also facilitated reductions in carbon emission within each participating authorities region.

Staff Absence

The authority has recently introduced a corporate sickness management framework to ensure that all managers and supervisors comply with absence policy and procedures in a consistent way. As part of the process, regular reviews are undertaken to identify areas of concern and set targets for individuals to improve the level of sickness. Interviews are carried out following any period of absence; patterns of sickness are monitored in order to provide possible solutions to prevent further absence. The sickness trend is monitored and reviewed during sectional department meetings and is further supported by individual staff appraisals, carried out with staff annually.

Quality Assurance and Community Consultation

The authority is accredited to ISO9001 and National Highways Sector Schemes 8 &12D. This provides the authority with the scope to maintain continuous improvements as regular audits are undertaken to ensure compliance.

Perception surveys are sent to all internal/external customers and clients. In addition we have recently introduced a prepaid questionnaire survey which is issued to members of the public on completion of upgrade schemes and routine maintenance works. All information returned is analysed to identify any areas of concern which are then evaluated and discussed during regular sectional review meetings.

Future areas of focus

As an authority we will continue to seek new initiatives in order to identify further efficiency savings. We have recently developed the North Wales procurement tender to include all the commodities not previously covered within the specification. As lead authority Denbighshire wanted to promote the benefits of collaboration using the previous successes within group procurement initiatives as an example of what outcomes could be achieved collectively. The revised tender has since been extended as collaborative partnership throughout Wales and the AGMA regions which now involves some twenty eight local authorities and public organisations. A significant number of benefits have been generated for the Public Sector following the award of this agreement. The range of benefits that have been identified are both cashable and non-cashable savings, process and operational changes to working practices.

Most improved performer winner; East Riding of Yorkshire

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Overview

East Riding of Yorkshire Council is responsible for the maintenance of around 40,000 street lights and over 3,500 illuminated signs/ bollards/ VMS & VAS as well as 87 traffic signal sites across an area over 1,000 square miles.

The street lighting/traffic signal team consists of a client of seven officers and operational team of a supervisor and eleven operatives who are supplemented by framework contract staff. Also under the street lighting wing is an in-house sign shop staffed by two sign makers. The operational team also are responsible for non-illuminated sign/ street name plate erection for Highways staff. Both client and operational staff come under one Service Manager.

Improvements made and good performance

The authority as a whole and the street lighting team in particular are extremely customer focused and seek customer satisfaction statistics via N.H.T surveys as well as through the authorities marketing teams. A recent survey of customers who had used the service brought a satisfaction level of 96.2 %. The authority has recently attained an IIP Gold standard award. The street lighting team have weekly staff team meetings and monthly full team meetings to discuss all on going initiatives.

Health and safety is of paramount importance to the street lighting team who work very closely with the training team to deliver all the relevant health and safety training. A training matrix exists to monitor training needs and highlight the need to refresh. Health and safety is an agenda item at team meetings at all levels and monthly tool box talks are delivered to operational staff. The team have recently joined forces with the Fire Service to deliver bucket to bucket Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) rescue as part of the Rescue Plan for Lone Workers.

Capital investment to reduce carbon use/energy costs began in April 2011 with the street lighting team embarking on a programme of luminaire replacements. White light sources have been chosen for their energy efficiency with a balanced approach of initial cost, energy saving & future maintenance being taken resulting in LED, Cosmopolis & Fluorescent (both PLL & PLT) luminaires being installed. Dimming/trimming or both has been incorporated in all new luminaires. De-illumination of signs & bollards in line with

DFT relaxations has also been undertaken. Whilst this four year programme of luminaire replacement is on-going the Bulk Lamp Change programme has been suspended. In January 2012 the street lighting energy contract switched to Half Hourly metering reducing the cost of energy by 1.5 pence per unit.

A Code of Practice covering all aspects of lighting design, installation & maintenance has been approved by members and has resulted in increased investment in structural testing of columns. Structural testing in line with ILP TR22 guidelines had indicated a shortfall in the required number of tests being undertaken. The increased investment over the next two years will remove that shortfall and reduce the risk of column failures. A focus is to deliver that programme in the most cost effective manner.

The Code of Practice includes the challenge for the need for lighting in the first instance and also, when undertaking column replacements, if there is a need to improve lighting levels or to carry out point for point replacements, which reduces installation costs as well as the number of resident complaints.

Future areas of focus

The main focus going forward is to maintain the high levels already set, to meet the customer expectations, to deliver the capital funded energy reduction programme in the most cost effective way, and to maintain the emphasis on health and safety.

CE marking of signs/sign posts and columns is another major focus of attention in the coming year, with all the systems needing to be in place/ improved before July as well as expanding our business with schools/leisure centres and private business both for street lighting and the sign shop.

Transport

Most improved performer winner; North East Derbyshire DC

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Overview

North East Derbyshire covers a land mass area of 27,652 hectares with 44,400 (approximately) households and 99,000 heads of population. The district has a 65% urban and 35% rural split with its largest urban concentrations in Dronfield and Clay Cross.

The Fleet Transport Service resides within the Streetscene Team (Neighbourhoods Directorate) undertaking maintenance and repair of the Council's vehicle fleet and operational plant, supporting the wider high profile front line services in order that they may operate effectively and efficiently. The Transport Team manages the Council's Operators License in accordance with its statutory requirement; scope of the service comprises:

- Vehicle and plant procurement
- Fleet transport advice
- Fleet vehicle maintenance and repair
- Fleet vehicle and taxi testing
- Operational plant maintenance

The Council's fleet consists of 151 vehicles; 17 of which are 'O' Licensed (LGV's) and the remainder consisting predominantly of light commercial vans, tractors, ride-on-mowers and quad bikes; as well as approximately 200 items of small operational plant items.

The Transport Team also support the Council's Strategic Housing Provider (Rykneld Homes) in their fleet vehicle requirements, consisting of 76 vehicles; predominantly panel vans ranging from car derived to short wheel based units. Overall the split of vehicles between Housing Revenue and General Fund services is 50\50 (approximately).

Improvements made and good performance

Fleet Review and Consultation

A review of the Council's vehicle fleet was undertaken; predominantly focussed on vehicle requirements for our strategic housing partner. This resulted in a reduction in their overall fleet from 110 (approximately) units to the current 76. Also, base vehicle and fitment specifications focused on service function rather than a 'one vehicle' fits all activity approach. This greatly assisted Rykneld Homes to reduce the overall cost of its vehicle

fleet operating costs and establish and communicate a program of planned fleet maintenance and inspections around their own service delivery program.

Arising from increasing pressure on waste collection arrangements and capacity to absorb new housing growth, the Council's introduced 8x4 (32 tonne) Refuse Vehicles which assisted in reduced dependency on spot hire vehicles and better manage vehicle weights.

Pre-planned maintenance and inspection frequencies of light commercial vehicles were reduced from 4 to 2 occurrences per annum, which provided opportunity to balance staff resource to better meet overall fleet maintenance demands, thus improving vehicle turn round performance, downtime and dependency on spot hire and relief vehicle requirements.

The Council operated two operational depots; however, in 2011 one was closed in the Southern area of the district as part of on-going efficiency measures. Further to this, the Council entered a depot sharing agreement with Bolsover District Council and have since been operating their southern refuse collection and street cleansing operations from Bolsover's facility.

Since 2003 North East Derbyshire have relied on contract hire as their primary fleet procurement vehicle; however, 26 light commercial vehicles replaced in 2012 were purchased outright by way of prudential borrowing and it is anticipated this approach may be adopted with future replacements; in particular due to efficiency savings which were achieved over contract hire.

Bolsover District and North East Derbyshire District Councils have since entered a wider Strategic Partnership involving the sharing of senior management which is delivering efficiency savings of £600,000 (approximately). During 2011/12, the Councils undertook a joint review of their Streetscene Services management and administrative arrangements and have since implemented a shared management structure which is delivering further shared savings of £100,000 (approximately). Throughout all stages of the Strategic Alliance and service reviews, both Councils Members have given full support.

Efficiency savings arising from our Strategic Alliance with Bolsover District Council has benefitted Streetscene Service by way of reduced management and overhead costs, thus improving cost efficiency of the trading services, not least Fleet and Transport Services.

The two Council's share relief vehicle and operational plant capacity where ever possible, resulting in vastly reduced dependency on spot hire vehicles to meet operational demand.

Future areas of focus

As a further development of our Strategic Alliance with Bolsover, a joint review of both Councils Fleet Transport arrangements was undertaken identifying further shared efficiency savings of £100,000 (approximately). We are now in the process of implementing the review's agreed outcomes and moving towards shared service arrangements, as follows:

- Bolsover developed an ATL facility and since brought taxi and hackney carriage testing back in-house, increasing income generation. Taxi operators now have a wider choice of test centres at which they may choose to present their vehicles.

- North East Derbyshire undertaking maintenance and repair of grounds maintenance machinery on behalf of Bolsover, increasing income generation.
- Improved procurement arrangements through an increase in efficiency of scale (i.e. vehicle fuel).
- Improved cost recovery of operational depot assets by way of increased usage and income generation.
- Implementing a Joint Fleet Manager responsible for the management of each Council's Fleet (300 approximately) Transport Services. Anticipated delivery is by June 2013.
- Implementing a shared ICT Fleet Management solution reducing the need for each Council to procure its own separate solutions.
- Moving towards a fully integrated joint fleet maintenance service with potential of redefining wider service operational boundaries based around Bolsover and North East Derbyshire operational depots.
- The two Councils are jointly reviewing their skip and domestic rural refuse collection arrangements and anticipate further shared savings (£60,000 approximately) from reduced vehicle requirements through sharing under-utilised vehicle resource.