

news update

Welcome to the eighteenth edition of the APSE best value consultancy news update, a bimonthly news sheet to keep clients and associate consultants informed of what we are undertaking and also our future

Stores review

Best value consultancy has been appointed by a Borough Council to review their stores operation and establish whether it continues to offer best value. The review was required to consider the efficiency and organisation of operations, cost efficiency, equipment allocation, purchasing and bookings, and stock. The review includes comparison with similar authorities and will consider if the authority is making best use of the site and in addition any wider strategic issues such as, potential to explore regional purchasing. The report will lead to an option appraisal of a number of possible future approaches.

If you would like to discuss the potential benefits and strengths of your service please contact Andy Mudd, Principal Consultant amudd@apse.org.uk

Temporary employees and the recession

Past recessions have seen an increase in demand for interim managers. As recruitment budgets are frozen freelance workers and interims are often assigned as a method of filling skill gaps and implementing and assisting change on a short term basis. Often perturbed by the initial seemingly heavy costs, interim management rarely works out more than the annual salary over the same period. Once recruitment costs, NI, Pension contributions, annual leave and sick pay are taken into account, the costs for an interim manager

and their expenses, if necessary, have little between them, especially when considering the amount of time and effort that goes into recruitment of a temporary employee.

The other advantage of interim management in these times is interims are at the top of their game, they have the ability and experience to walk into any situation and start work with no need for induction or integration, so no time is wasted. Interims can bring objectivity to the process and can be particularly efficient when implementing new initiatives, there has been a steady increase in demand for interims as more and more local authorities and PCTs look at forming stronger partnerships. Interims have the change management skills necessary to drive these initiatives and provide support until the organisation is ready to take hold.

If you feel your service could benefit from an interim manager please contact ebarrow@apse.org.uk

Building Britain's Future

Following the ARCH (Association of retained council housing) event on local authority house-building at the House of Commons on 26th March, Arch set up an e-forum of authorities who are keen to build. The discussion at that time identified barriers that were standing in the way of local authorities. Following this the best value consultancy and UNISON are conducting research to determine to what extent recent announcements in the Government's Building Britain's Future document and proposed reform of the HRA finance system are likely to address



those barriers. The research should be published within the next few weeks.

If this research is of interest to you, or you would like to commission APSE and the consultancy to conduct research together with your organisation please contact Andy Mudd, Principal Consultant amudd@apse.org.uk.

Time and motion study

A Metropolitan Borough Council has engaged the best value consultancy to carry out time and motion studies on the recycling section of its waste collection service. The aim is to test the performance levels in operations and provide an indication of productivity levels being achieved at the current rate of recycling by householders. The authority is intending to use the study to create broad targets for future amendments to collection rounds. In order to achieve this, the studies will also provide a count of the numbers of bins / boxes / bags emptied and properties collected from on each day.

The studies will concentrate on two of the rounds selected by management to provide an indicative mixture of demographics and properties across the authority area

(or a mixture of different operations if desired). The consultancy is due to



begin another time and motion study within another local authority looking at their street sweeping rounds.

If you would like to discuss the potential benefits and outcomes of a time and motion study for your service please contact Damian Walshe, Senior Consultant amudd@apse.org.uk

Litter strategy

A Scottish authority has come to the best value consultancy looking for assistance to pull together various bits of existing information to create a litter strategy. Internally the authority is hoping to gain council approval of service standards, as well as improved resource deployment, budget provision, effective management and key performance indicators. Externally the council is aiming to improve communication and community understanding of why they do what they do and improve partnership working with other government agencies and the private sector. The authority is hoping to develop a communication strategy - utilising "Eco Man" strap line to publish the strategy and raise awareness of the cost and environmental impact of litter, fly tipping, dog fouling, graffiti, flyposting and abandoned vehicles. The consultancy has worked with grounds maintenance, street cleansing and environmental enforcement in preparing the strategy/plan. Councillor and public

consultation will also be considered in finalising the document.

If you would like to discuss the potential of implementing a litter strategy for your authority please contact Damian Walshe, Senior Consultant amudd@apse.org.uk

Strategic Housing

The consultancy is currently carrying out a review of a housing services non landlord functions including homelessness and housing options; private sector renewal and financial assistance and strategic responsibilities. Following a fairly critical report of the services, the best value consultancy was asked to carry out a review, with a view to implement a more robust performance management system. Since the original report was published the Council believes it has



made progress in implementing the recommendations of the report, but recognises that there are still weaknesses and is keen to develop its approach. The aim of the exercise is to establish a vigorous methodology for performance management/value for money. In order to create this it will be necessary to build a baseline picture of existing performance and systems. The review will identify gaps and construct an improvement template to address current vulnerabilities and develop it's approach to performance management and value for money.

If you would like to discuss the potential benefits and strengths of your service please contact Andy Mudd, Principal Consultant amudd@apse.org.uk

Job vacancy in best value consultancy

It with great sadness APSE best value consultancy and interim solutions will be saying goodbye to Damian Walshe, Senior consultant, as he takes up a new position of head of transport services at a local authority.

APSE is now looking for a Senior Consultant, based in its secretariat in Manchester. As you may be aware, the Association is owned by its member authorities, therefore you may wish to treat this as an internal vacancy and circulate it internally.

Senior Consultant

The post is graded PO1 – PO3 (SCP33 to 41) £27,573 to £34,207

With the potential to earn up to an additional £7,800pa PRP

Starting salary £27,573* per annum

() local government pay award pending*

Working for APSE, based at the Manchester office, operating throughout the united kingdom, the successful applicant will get involved with providing expert help to Local Authorities on a variety of matters including efficiency reviews, reorganisation, business planning, option appraisal, procurement and interim management.

For a candidate information pack please visit www.apse.org.uk/jobs/jobs-page.htm or call the apse secretariat on 0161 7721810 for a postal application pack

To find out more about how the consultancy can help you, contact:

Andy Mudd, Principal Consultant

amudd@apse.org.uk, 0161 772 1810

Damian Walshe, Senior Consultant

dwalshe@apse.org.uk, 0161 772 1810

Emma Barrow,

Client Coordination Officer

ebarrow@apse.org.uk, 0161 772 1810

Website:

www.apse.org.uk/consultancy.html