

# network news

Year 13 - performance networks update

## The importance of performance measurement



Recent guidance issued by the relevant assemblies and governments throughout the UK emphasise the importance of

performance measurement and benchmarking not only in terms of evaluating service performance but also in assessing competitiveness.

### England

The recent 'open public services' white paper emphasises that data is critical to demonstrating competitiveness and also to accountability and transparency. The introduction of a new regime after Comprehensive Area Assessment will see a greater reliance on existing sources of data such as APSE performance networks. The House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee report on the audit and inspection of local authorities stated that with the demise of national indicators, for now at least, there should be comprehensive local reporting against local objectives with maximum transparency.

### Northern Ireland

Both the Local Government Reform 'Policy Proposals Consultation' by the DoE and the 'Case for Change'

Consultation Paper from the Local Government ICE Programme have made reference to performance management as fundamental for the development of local government in Northern Ireland. The reports talk about the need to specify performance indicators, publishing information and developing consistent, robust baseline data.

### Scotland

The Scottish Government's Commission for the Future Delivery of Public Services placed a significant emphasis on the need for robust approaches to benchmarking with organisations being required to use key data to assess and evaluate performance particularly in relation to the need to deliver outcomes. The principles of Best Value 2 include improved coverage of service performance and Best Value 2 is a proportionate and risk-based approach, founded on self-assessment.

### Wales

The Efficiency and Innovation Programme includes 7 workstreams and key to reporting on progress and achievements in terms of efficiency and innovation will be the use of performance management data. The new Performance Improvement Framework which was introduced in April 2011 has a focus on local, service improvement data as well as more formal, national measures.

# network news

Year 13 - performance networks update

## Performance networks seminar and awards 2011:

### Armchair Audit - is this the future of performance management in local government?

**Hilton Hotel,  
Blackpool,  
1st - 2nd December 2011**



The 2011 performance networks seminar is taking place in Blackpool on **1st and 2nd December**. As with the previous performance networks seminar there will be greater emphasis on the service specific workshops where there will be an opportunity to come together, discuss the current issues and share best practice. Please see the flyer attached to the network news email for more information.

We are currently looking for volunteers to lead discussions in the workshops. If you would like to be involved, or you have an idea for a topic to be discussed, please contact Emma Nolan or Cheryl Walker on 0161 772 1810.

### Awards

Those who submit their data by the dates to the right will automatically be considered for the best and most improved performer awards held during the performance networks seminar. If you have been shortlisted as a finalist you will be notified during October. Your status as a finalist will be subject to a validation which must be held before the seminar takes place.

## When should I submit my data?

The deadline for draft reports has now passed and we are currently processing all of the returns we have received. If you have sent in your data to us by 29th July then you should have received a draft report. The purpose of the draft reports is not for comparator reasons but to check that your data is correct. You will then be able to make any amendments, or submit your data if you have not already done so, for inclusion in the final reports by the following dates:

Building cleaning	23rd Sept 2011
Building maintenance	23rd Sept 2011
Civic, cultural and community venues	23rd Sept 2011
Culture, leisure and sport	30th Sept 2011
Education catering	23rd Sept 2011
Highways and winter maintenance	30th Sept 2011
Other (civic and commercial) catering	23rd Sept 2011
Parks, open spaces and horticultural services	30th Sept 2011
Refuse collection	30th Sept 2011
Sports and leisure facility management	30th Sept 2011
Street cleansing	30th Sept 2011
Street lighting	30th Sept 2011
Transport	30th Sept 2011
Welfare catering	23rd Sept 2011

## Projects

APSE have been working with a number of other organisations to add value to the indicators and analysis produced by APSE. Once again, we have been working with the FTA so that performance networks members do not need to submit data to the joint APSE and Public authority transport network survey if the data has already been included in performance networks. APSE has secured agreement from Waste Data Flow to obtain the recycling tonnages for participating authorities directly from them, which considerably reduces data collection. We have been liaising with Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) over the new data collection arrangements for NI 195 via LEQS Pro. KBT have agreed that APSE can access the data directly from them next year for those authorities who put their old NI 195

# network news

## Year 13 - performance networks update

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data into their database. APSE have also been working with County Surveyors Society (CSS) Wales and the North East Councils in England to support them in benchmarking their indicators for the coming year.

### Data validation training

APSE performance networks is offering its members the chance to become involved in data validation, peer support and peer checking processes. A key strength of performance networks is the involvement of practitioners in the development and validation of the model. There are a variety of opportunities to get involved in group checking, on-site audits or off-site support. The data validation training sessions will be highly interactive and you will be given a full training pack during the course of the day. In addition, you will receive the following APSE Certificates:

- ◆ APSE Approved Validator
- ◆ APSE Approved Mentor and Coach.

The training is set to take place on **21 September 2011** in Manchester and is free of charge. If you would like to be involved or would like some further information, please contact Emma Nolan or Cheryl Walker on 0161 772 1810.

### What help can I get?

Filling in the templates may seem daunting for those new to performance networks or for those who are not familiar with the templates. But don't worry, there is help available which is free of charge:

- ◆ Peer support program
- ◆ On site visits from APSE principal advisors
- ◆ Telephone support from the performance networks team.

You can direct any queries to Emma Nolan or Cheryl Walker on 0161 772 1810.

### Extra analysis



APSE performance networks now has 12 years of data across a number of service areas. As well as the standard performance, performance indicator standings, direction of travel and summary reports which have been issued, we are also able to produce any bespoke information, including the following, on request:

- ◆ Data tables - showing the raw data from participating authorities for a group of your choice.
- ◆ Performance reports by other groups - geographical, type of council or choose your own group!
- ◆ Year-on-year trend analysis
- ◆ Backdating old data

Any other analysis that you may require can be requested to Emma Nolan or Cheryl Walker on 0161 772 1810.

### Regional and area based reports

APSE have produced new regional and area based summary reports for 2010. The report is designed to bring together summary performance data, profile information and trend analysis for key performance indicators for all services. This report will be updated annually and circulated to all member authorities.

If you have not received a copy of this report, please contact Emma Nolan or Cheryl Walker on 0161 772 1810.