

network news

Year 13 data collection

APSE Gives Evidence to parliament on local government frameworks



The future of Audit and Inspection in local authorities has been widely discussed and consulted on in England during the past few months. APSE has provided a written response to the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee Inquiry on this and as a result of this paper, APSE's Chief Executive, Paul O'Brien, was called to provide oral evidence to the Parliamentary committee on 21 March 2011. APSE's evidence highlighted the importance of not 're-inventing the wheel' and using robust performance measurement models like APSE performance networks. More information on the response is available by [clicking here](#)

Value for money: Making your case

APSE members are increasingly using performance networks data as independent evidence to prove the value of their services. As a result, APSE has been pulling together these case studies which can be shared amongst our membership. If you are in a similar position and would like more information on these case studies, please email djohns@apse.org.uk

Best and most improved performer case studies

The case studies from the winners of the performance networks awards 2010 will be emailed out to members shortly. These provide a valuable insight into why particular authorities are performing well within their field. Also, the case studies from all of the finalists will be available as service-specific publications in the summer.

Performance networks partnerships

We have been working with a number of other organisations to further refine and refresh the indicators for the coming years. Once again, APSE has secured agreement from Waste Dataflow to obtain the recycling tonnages for participating authorities directly from them, which considerably reduces data collection. APSE has 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 data into their database. APSE have also been working with County Surveyors Society (CSS) Wales to support them in benchmarking their indicators for the coming year.

Direction of travel reports

The direction of travel reports are available to view on the members only portal. These personalised reports cover all services and show the last 5 years results across selected performance indicators against the overall average for each service. If you would prefer a printed copy of the service wide report, please contact Emma Nolan or Cheryl Walker at the APSE office on 0161 772 1810. The main authority contact for performance networks will be sent a copy of the full authority wide report shortly.

Process benchmarking meetings

The need for services to demonstrate their competitiveness and value for money has never been greater than in the current economic climate. The data and evidence from the last 12 years is going to be crucial to member authorities as a means of identifying methods and approaches to delivering quality services with reduced resources. A key component of identifying efficiencies or areas for improvement is taking benchmarking to the next level and working with your peers to look at the key processes involved in delivering front line services.

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To share the different approaches taken by councils, APSE have launched a series of process benchmarking groups. Active process benchmarking groups have been established in Scotland covering building maintenance, parks and open spaces, refuse collection and roads services and in England and Wales these have initially been developed for building maintenance, refuse collection, street cleansing, parks and transport, although it is intended to expand the work across other services. These involve facilitated meetings for members and involve sharing resources and building up a knowledge base to support individual service areas. The performance networks web portal is also used by the group as a hub to share documents and policies.

Key areas of work include:

- ◆ Building maintenance - customer satisfaction, voids, responsive repairs and gas safety checks
- ◆ Parks – developing a quality standard for parks, service specifications and local distinctiveness/design issues
- ◆ Refuse collection – food waste, productivity and operational issues
- ◆ Street cleansing – NI 195 and LEAMS, recycling street sweeping arisings and mechanical v manual sweeping
- ◆ Transport – using the fleet information system

If you are interested in getting involved in these groups, please contact Cheryl Walker on 0161 772 1810 and for the Scottish process benchmarking groups, Andrew Spowart on 01698 454015

Year 13 data templates now available!

Performance networks is now in its 13th year of data collection and is a powerful performance tool for local government. Over the last few years, performance networks membership and participation has been growing fast and it is an obvious statement to make that you will only get the most out of performance networks if you take part in it.

I am pleased to inform you that the year 13 data templates are now available to download from the members only portal on the apse website www.apse.org.uk. If you do not have your login details for the members only portal, please

contact Michael Egerton megerton@apse.org.uk at the APSE office who will be able to supply these.

Next deadline 15th July 2011

The deadline for performance networks returns is 15th July 2011. All authorities that submit their data by this date will receive a draft performance indicator standings report for the purpose of checking that their data is correct.

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	23rd 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	23rd Sept 2011
Transport	30th Sept 2011
Welfare catering	23rd Sept 2011

If you are unable to submit your data by the 15th July 2011 then don't worry, it is not too late! If this is the case then please ensure your submission is received as soon as possible but before the deadlines listed below. The sooner we receive your submission the more time we have to check it for any errors and query these with you.

Please note: if you send in your data after 15th July 2011 then we will be unable to send you a draft performance indicator standings report.

Changes to year 13 templates

Highways and street lighting

The CSS Wales group approached APSE to look at combining the performance networks highways and street lighting templates with the CSS Wales templates which were previously returned to the Wales Audit Office. Performance networks and the CSS Wales group have worked together to make sure that the Year 13 templates include all of the combined information. Therefore there will be new information requested on this years templates but hopefully members will find it easier to complete all of this information on just the one template.

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Refuse collection

This year we have added new sheets to the templates to make data input easier and also to expand the data that is collected; the new sheets are as follows:

- ◆ Waste disposal
- ◆ Systems
- ◆ Contracts
- ◆ Fleet calculation

The above sheets are all optional and have been requested by the North East Councils and the working group. These are open to all member authorities to participate in. The performance indicator outputs will not be affected if these sheets are not completed. However, we will produce new profile tables based on these data collection sheets for those authorities who do participate in these.

Street cleansing

As with refuse collection, street cleansing has also had a new sheet added this year as follows:

- ◆ Fleet calculation

Again, this is optional and has been requested by the North East Councils and the working group.

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:

- ◆ Peer support program
- ◆ Data completion sessions
- ◆ 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.

Data completion training

To aid with inputting data into the data templates, APSE performance networks are offering its members the chance to attend a data completion training session. These sessions are free of charge and are aimed at those who are less

experienced in completing the data templates or those who wish to understand more about them. You will particularly benefit from this training if you have never completed a data submission before or you are new to performance networks and responsible for collecting the data. The training provides delegates with an opportunity to clarify the basic issues relating to the data collection process in a facilitated environment. Technical guidance about which data to include or exclude from a calculation is given and members are able to raise any individual queries relating to the data collection, information sources, definitions and/or interpretations.

The following data completion sessions have been arranged: To enquire or book onto one of the above sessions, please contact Michael Egerton megerton@apse.org.uk or 0161 772 1810 at the APSE office.

Wednesday 22 June 2011	Manchester
Friday 24 June 2011	Durham

Extra analysis



APSE performance networks now has 12 years of data across a number of service areas. As well as the standard performance and summary reports etc. 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.