



# network news

## Year 12 - performance networks update

### 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 16th August then you will receive your draft report shortly, if you have not received this already. 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                             | 1st Oct 2010   |
| Building maintenance                          | 8th Oct 2010   |
| Civic, cultural and community venues          | 24th Sept 2010 |
| Culture, leisure and sport                    | 21st Oct 2010  |
| Education catering                            | 27th Sept 2010 |
| Highways and winter maintenance               | 15th Oct 2010  |
| Other (civic and commercial) catering         | 28th Oct 2010  |
| Parks, open spaces and horticultural services | 11th Oct 2010  |
| Refuse collection                             | 4th Oct 2010   |
| Sports and leisure facility management        | 22nd Oct 2010  |
| Street cleansing                              | 6th Oct 2010   |
| Street lighting                               | 18th Oct 2010  |
| Transport                                     | 25th Oct 2010  |
| Welfare catering                              | 29th Sept 2010 |

### Performance networks seminar 2010

**Hilton Hotel,  
Blackpool,  
2nd - 3rd December 2010**

The 2010 performance networks seminar is taking place in Blackpool on **2nd and 3rd 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.

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.

### The importance of understanding performance

With an increased focus on demonstrating value for money, unit costs and competitiveness in the delivery of front-line local government services, it is more important than ever that we are able to learn how to secure service improvements, deliver efficiencies and safeguard quality during a period in which there will be spending reductions and financial constraints across local government as a whole. Local authorities have found the data from performance networks extremely important with one authority quoting 'that APSE's performance networks data proved invaluable, as the team was able to show how it compared to other authorities'. To see this article in full please [click here](#).

### APSE efficiency briefings

APSE have produced a series of briefing papers for its member authorities around efficiencies and how local authorities can deal with budget constraints and maximise their opportunities such as income generation. As councils face tougher times and unprecedented financial constraints, APSE have brought together some examples of where efficiency savings have been made and some examples of best practice. Whilst many ideas are transferrable between councils, APSE recognises that local circumstances will vary and some routes may be more appropriate to some than others. This includes the following:

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### **Briefing 10/36: Efficiencies in building cleaning**

This briefing paper highlights the main areas where cost reductions might be sought and provides benchmark data to facilitate the review of the building cleaning organisation cost base.

### **Briefing 10/37: Efficiencies in catering**

This briefing paper highlights the main areas where cost reductions might be sought and provides benchmark data to facilitate the review of the catering organisation cost base.

### **Briefing 10/41: Efficiency gains through more effective approaches to public procurement**

This briefing includes:

- ◆ There remains considerable scope to achieve further efficiency's through more effective approaches to procurement.
- ◆ How councils can self assess their procurement functions and visibly manage procurement in order to reduce costs.
- ◆ Contains a number of best practice case studies.

### **Briefing 10/42: Performance management and process benchmarking**

This briefing paper includes:

- ◆ An outline of the different approaches to performance management and process benchmarking
- ◆ A range of case studies for front line services demonstrating improvements in their operations and associated financial savings.
- ◆ Demonstrate a combined saving of nearly £10 million.

### **Briefing 10/43: Lessons from Total Place - Maximising a whole area approach to public services**

This briefing paper includes:

- ◆ Context for Total Place
- ◆ Savings of six figure sums made to date, potential savings of many millions and better outcomes in service delivery
- ◆ Range of factors driving change

To see these briefings in full please visit the membership resources page of the APSE website [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk) and select briefings.

### **Process benchmarking meetings**



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.

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 to share resources and build 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 459 051.

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### 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 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 **16 September 2010** in Manchester and is free of charge. We will be running this session for current validators as a refresher session too. 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
- ◆ 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.

### Extra analysis



APSE performance networks now has 11 years of data across a number of service areas. As well as the standard performance, 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.