

Performance Networks: A New Year

PERFORMANCE NETWORKS: A NEW YEAR!

Performance Networks is now entering its eighth year of data collection across 17 service areas. It is still the largest local government benchmarking service of its type and is continuing to grow and develop. We know that we cannot rest on our laurels and we need to continually review and improve the model in order to meet our membership's expectations of the service. In year 7 (2004/05) we saw some significant developments:

- The introduction of Performance Indicator Standing tables across all service areas.
- A new Best performer methodology for each service and piloting an awards service at the PN seminar in Blackpool.
- Renewing and improving the peer support and validation in order to ensure the robustness of the data.
- Commissioning research from Inlogov in order to develop and improve the PN service.

We have now concluded a new agreement with our IT partner IQSS which provides for ongoing development of the model and allows APSE to provide a range of additional services free of charge (see below).

We do not intend to stop there. In year 8 we want to improve and streamline the data collection to make it easier for local authorities to submit data; continue to develop the best performer methodology including the identification of most improved performers; improve electronic access to manuals and data collection templates through the development of the website; provide a wider range of comparative analysis and research to assist member local authorities; ensure the wider dissemination of information from Performance Networks together with closer integration with APSE campaigns; recruit new members and widen participation across all services; and of course continue to celebrate best performance and most improved performance at the PN seminar in Blackpool.

This is both a challenge and an exiting journey and one that we hope you will join us on.

Mark Bramah
Assistant Chief Executive

New for 2006: Free Additional Analysis!

APSE is pleased to announce that following the new partnering agreement with IQ Software Systems, members are now able to access a variety of free reports and analysis.

Performance Networks has removed most charges for additional reports and analysis (previously considered to be outside of the standard Performance Networks service).

Some charges will however be retained where the report/analysis requires significant time and/or resource input (see attached document Additional Analysis 2006, for a complete breakdown of the new system along with details of free copy restrictions).

Manuals Now Available Online

The complete archive of Performance Networks year 7 Manuals are now available for members to view and download online. To download a manual (in PDF format), please click below or go to www.apse.org.uk/pnmanuals.asp

Plans for further Development of Online Facilities

APSE is currently looking at developing a members-only website for Performance Networks, with a live online data submission and viewing facility.

For more information, please contact Alex Snowden on 0161 772 1810. Further details will be made available to members in due course.

Membership at an All Time High

Performance Networks membership has reached an all-time high with a total of 195 authority members and 134 authorities signed up for the all services option.

If you'd like to expand your membership or register for additional service areas, please contact Cheryl Linney on 0161 772 1810.

Proposed Merger of Commercial/ Staff & Member Catering

Following discussions with the Catering Working Group, APSE will merge the Commercial (Public & External Function) and Staff & Member Catering models to form a new joint service area incorporating Commercial, Staff & Member Catering Services.

The project, in conjunction with the Association for Civic Hospitality (ACH) is due to be launched at the start of the next benchmarking year (2005/06).

A special meeting will be held on 21 February 2006 at Manchester Town Hall. For more information contact Steven Keefe on 0161 772 1810.

Transport Model Expands

The Transport Working Group has decided to change the model at the start of the next benchmarking year (2005/06) in to a separate Transport Operations and Vehicle Maintenance model; to better reflect the needs of members.

For more information contact John Marsh, Principal Advisor for Transport on 0161 772 1810.

Alex Snowden
Performance Networks Manager
0161 772 1810

New for 2006: PI Standings Reports Re-Issued to Members

As APSE continues to develop the Performance Networks service throughout 2006, all members who have submitted Performance Networks data will now automatically receive an updated PI Standings Report (which includes all data submitted after the initial Autumn deadline).

This updated report is part of the standard Performance Networks service.

New Principal Advisor: Phil Brennan

APSE has appointed a fifth Principal Advisor - Phil Brennan. Phil will take over from John Marsh as Principal Advisor for Building Maintenance Services.

Phil Brennan can be contacted on 0161 772 1810.

Validators Needed!

Could you or a colleague be an APSE Approved Validator or Advanced Validator? Performance Networks is looking for a collection of committed participants to help validate the data of neighbouring Authorities.

The validations are essential to both the Performance Networks model and the new Performance Networks Awards; as they ensure that participants have collected the data in a consistent and accurate manner - thus increasing the robustness of the model.

The validation checks will involve data checking by peers over the phone or via email and/or a personal on-site visit to confirm best performers. No prior experience is necessary as full training will be given by Jan Mazzone, Principal Trainer at APSE's Lifelong Learning & Development.

The validation process is also linked to the Performance Networks peer support initiative; which offers the guidance of an experienced peer-participant to new members/contacts, from the commencement of the data collection period and throughout the benchmarking year.

For more information on peer support or the validation process, please contact Cheryl Linney on 0161 772 1810.

Validator Training Dates 2006

APSE is proposing the following training dates for APSE Approved Validators/ Advanced Validators:

- Friday 16 June 2006
- Friday 30 June 2006.

Reserve your place by contacting Keisha Adair on 0161 772 1810.