

PPRN Network Meeting
15 September 2006
Explosion Museum, Priddy's Hard, Gosport

Minutes

1. Present

Janice Brill Basingstoke BC	Richard Walton Havant BC
Robert Chambers East Hampshire DC	Dottie Dabrowska New Forest DC
Phil Rayner Fareham BC	Karen Witt Southampton CC
Theresa Greenwood Fareham BC	Chris Tee Hampshire CC
Julie Petty Gosport BC	Nicola Campbell Rushmore BC
Mandy Baggaley Gosport BC	Sarah McLaren Hart DC
Julian Bowcher Gosport BC	Jane Terry Hart DC

2. Apologies

Vince Johnson Eastleigh BC
Katie Crabb Hampshire CC
Andy Rudd Havant BC
Penny Lane Test valley BC
Jacky Adams Winchester CC

3. Minutes of meeting held at Isle of Wight Council 10 May 2006

Noted

4. VFM Workshop- Audit Commission & Best Practice Examples

Phil circulated a handout (1) on Fareham's approach to VFM and discussed how this process worked. This process consists of a Framework with two parts: an (annual) Self Assessment completed by all service areas and Reviews.

Self-assessments that are based on 12 factors that are then rated as High/Medium/Low in terms of risk the service is not providing value for money. Scores for all services are then collated and ranked in order of priority to determine the schedule for reviews. VFM Reviews have 5 stages which include measuring & comparing economy, efficiency and effectiveness; gap analysis using key lines of enquiry; and options appraisal with Gershon efficiency savings and cost benefit analysis. Members are not involved directly in the reviews but are involved in decisions based on review findings at Stage 4. Stage 5 is Implementation. All services are required to identify improvements and develop improvement plans which include appropriate performance measures and targets and actions.

Phil said there are often capacity issues and problems getting all services to undergo this process. Janice said at Basingstoke, this process is done by a corporate team.

Fareham plots its performance/cost on a matrix for each service and develops a strategy to improve. Group discussion on cost comparisons- sometimes a blunt instrument. Charge

backs within some services are an area not often challenged. Also, costs of overheads for "back-office" services are often hidden. There is a tendency to only look at costs for front-line services.

Janice described Basingstoke's approach using a toolkit developed by Forum for the Future to assist each business unit to check its impact/ contribution to delivering Community Strategy and Corporate Plan priorities. It will help show if services are aligned or not to these priorities. It can show if too much activity is spent on services which have little impact on priorities or if too little activity is spent on key priorities. Some activities can be shown to undermine priorities. Contact details are: www.forumforthefuture.org.uk Janice advises that it is developing an Excel version of the software that any authority could adapt to suit.

Jane Terry noted Hart is involving all services this year directly in completing a matrix of KLOE. The problems has been that Hart was doing a lot, but couldn't evidenced it and has been looking at ways to better evidence what it does. Group discussion on the different experiences and relationships authorities have had with their auditors and the differing amounts of evidence some have had to present.

Chris Tee from Hampshire will circulate a Value for Money document (2) with minutes to the group for next meeting.

5. Feedback on Data Quality Audit

Richard discussed the approach Havant developed to complete its data quality audit. An Executive Management Team developed a short data quality policy (3A) consisting of 10 bullet points, a data quality action plan (3B) , a group management team and a register of what the policy applied to. They used as a reference the outstanding Audit Commission recommendations.

Key to this was a definition of what data is and ownership of it. Essential to have an audit trail with a clear record of any changes made to published data. Phil said Fareham has people specifically dedicated to checking accuracy of records based on random checks produced by internal audit. Richard felt that ultimate responsibility for data checking has to be within the service areas to check and validate data. This approach was approved by Havant's executive management team.

Data Quality Standards will be made available this Autumn and the KLOE's allow authorities to measure how well they are at meeting these standards. Inconsistencies noted with Audit Commission as KLOE self-assessments should not have been strictly applied. Phil noted that the NHS has several examples of data quality that can be found on the internet.

6. CPA Guidance

Chris noted that HCC will be measured on how well it works in partnership with other authorities. This group was acknowledged as an example of good partnership working

between authorities. The Local Area Agreement Coordinator for Hampshire will be invited to future PPRN meetings. Dottie will add the coordinator to the membership list and invite to the next meeting.

7. BVPI Collation

Julie will collect district BVPI data and for 05/06. EDC reports will feed into 2 Excel spreadsheets and guidance notes for this will be provided by Gosport Council. Phil will look at the data analysis "slicing and dicing" element. All districts will need to feed in reports in order to get a valid report. Group agreed on an EDC report for year end and then quarterly BVPI spreadsheets. An area will be set up on Xtranet to save spreadsheets.

Phil said he was trying to get services to cut back on local BVPIs as many don't really mean anything. He wants real outcomes with outputs that are meaningful. Rob said East Hants limits local BVPIs to 4-5 per service group. Nicola said Rushmore separates outputs and outcomes and uses PIs in strategy mapping that shows how LAA contributes to corporate objectives and how these contribute to LAA objectives. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Statistical Service is a useful information source.

8. Benchmarking – Comparison of Performance/ Policy Units

Janice and Richard circulated an analysis of local authority performance teams (4) to the group based on the seven councils which submitted information. There is a wide spectrum of structures, areas of responsibility and team sizes across Councils so direct comparisons difficult. Richard said Havant is expected to find 10% in savings over the next three years, and this is likely to be found from salaries. Janice will circulate the spreadsheet to all the local authorities and ask those who have not yet responded to do so and the final result will be circulated again.

9. Joint Procurement of Surveys and Lessons Learnt

Jane said the benefits surveys have gone out and the planning surveys are due out in October. There was a slight delay when the consultants, Marketing Means, went on holiday for two weeks, but this wasn't a major issue. She handed out a summary of what worked well and lessons learnt from the joint procurement exercise (5).

Eight authorities participated in the BVPI user satisfaction survey. The group thanked Jane for all her hard work on this project, especially the time involved in comparing quotes for this work from consultants and obtaining references. This was noted as a good example of the value of networking and benefits of joint procurement.

Julie will collate efficiency savings of working together in terms of time and joint money saved through this joint procurement.

10. Update on Group Work

It was agreed a performance working group would resume next year. Richard said he recently presented a report on Performance Management to Members which was well received. He will circulate a copy of his presentation with the minutes of this meeting (6). He said he focussed his presentation to 6 performance indicators that were relevant to them and this they found very useful.

Phil said the working group had met to discuss service planning, but not much was identified to bring to the group. It was suggested by Dottie that the PPRN meetings could incorporate some form of a "peer surgery" at the end of each meeting to assist any local authority which wanted some advice or examples of good practice. It was agreed that local authorities assessed as "excellent" could submit examples of some of their service plans to the group before the next meeting to discuss.

It was also noted that there had been no success in getting any trainer in to do a session on target setting for the group.

11. Update from Other Meetings

Julie gave an update from the July SPIN meeting:

EDC - Graham Smith from the Audit Commission apologised for the EDC. The system will be rebuilt next year and include auto calculations, more specific checks and a facility to upload data.

BVPIs (post 2008) - A White Paper is not expected until Autumn. The Audit Commission may become the local services inspectorate. Broadly everyone is signing up to reducing the number of BVPIs and the burden of data returns to local authorities. At the top level there will probably be about 30 national outcomes linked to PSA and LAA targets and the Comprehensive Spending Review- there will be about 100 mandatory indicators underpinning this.

CPA Service Assessments –

Authorities selected for re-categorisation will receive another pack in November and these will be direction of travel statements showing relative improvement over the last three years. Another pack will be issued in January for those selected for re-categorisation and these will be the corporate assessment pack. All local authorities will get a PI pack in May which will contain the user survey data. EDC will become the local public services data site (eg will contain VFM profile, PI pack, QoL data, etc.).

12. Any Other Business –Future Meetings

Schedule for future meetings were agreed as follows:

January – hosted by New Forest

April/ May – hosted by Havant

Sept/ Oct – hosted by Basingstoke

13. Electronic Attachments to Accompany These Minutes

- 1 – Fareham's approach to VFM
- 2 – HCC's value for Money document
- 3 – Havant's Data Quality Policy 9(A) & Action Plan (B)
- 4 -- Analysis of LA Performance Teams (A) & Performance TOR (B)
- 5 – Jane Terry's summary of joint procurement experience
- 6 – Havant's Performance Management presentation to members