

PKC BENCHMARKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SERVICE

SCOTTISH MEMBERS SERVICES DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

The objectives of the group are to provide support, share information and best practice within Members' Services teams across 29 of the 32 Scottish Local Authorities.

SOLAR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BEST PRACTICE WORKING GROUP

The group meets quarterly to discuss any items of interest and share best practice. There is a library of information which enables members to communicate, training days are available and the group have developed best practice guides on a number of Committee Services areas.

SOLAR BEST PRACTICE WORKING GROUP

A group consisting of representatives across Scottish Local Authorities Legal Services to compare best practice in key areas with a view to developing common indicators.

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

The objectives of the group are to provide support and share information within communications services across Scottish Local Authorities. The group meets quarterly to discuss any items of interest and share best practice and hold an annual conference.

VALUE FOR MONEY IN PUBLIC SECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES

Audit Scotland has joined with the other UK audit bodies to launch indicators which enable comparisons to be made between the performance of public bodies on corporate matters such as sickness absence and finance.

CIPFA CORPORATE SERVICES BENCHMARKING CLUB

Launched in 1998, CIPFA Corporate Services Benchmarking Club is a unique product for over 300 local authorities across the UK. It is a vital tool used by local authorities to drive improvements and deliver value for money. The CIPFA Benchmarking Club is the market leader in local government benchmarking.

CIPFA DIRECTOR OF FINANCE SECTION

The section meets approximately 6 times a year to discuss matters of interest in financial management in Scottish Local Government.

INSTITUTE OF REVENUES RATING AND VALUATION (IRRV) SCOTLAND

The IRRV Forum Service provides a platform for discussion on revenues and benefits issues at both a national and local level. It is aimed at those involved in or with an interest in local government revenues and benefits. The main aim of the institute is to support its members' professional and personal development and the sharing of best practice. The institute also holds an annual conference.

SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITY CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITORS GROUP

The purpose of group is to be the voice of Internal Audit across all Scottish Local Authorities and be the driving force for best practice, governance and operation for all Internal Audit matters. The group meet quarterly and sub-groups and working groups are established for specialist areas of interest.

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SOCIETY OF PERSONNEL DIRECTORS OF SCOTLAND (SPDS)

The SPDS are a group of Senior Personnel Officers who meet to discuss and share best practice of all matters concerning personnel management in Local Government in Scotland.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

COMPARATOR AUTHORITIES: HMI AND THE SCOTXED PROGRAMME

Benchmarking takes place in relation to Education at local authority level. A new set of comparator authorities were created for all local authorities in Scotland to be used for the INEA inspections carried out by HMI (then HMIE) from January 2006. A range of indicators were used to determine the appropriate groupings of comparator authorities, which describe the socio-economic characteristics of each Education Authority and a star system was introduced to indicate a measure of closeness to each Education Authority. The indicators and methodology were agreed by a Review Group consisting of representatives from Education Authorities, ADES, Audit Scotland and HMI. We have five comparator local authorities – Argyll and Bute, Stirling, Borders, Aberdeenshire and Highland.

Through the ScotXed programme the Scottish Government holds and publishes statistics and benchmarks for use by schools and local authorities in self evaluation. The ScotXed programme aims to promote quality improvement in Scottish education, by supporting the use of effective and secure systems for the exchange of data and providing access to high quality information. After five years of the programme, a core of key data exchanges is now conducted through ScotXed. This results in a series of Scottish Government Statistical Publications throughout the year which are analysed in relation to our comparator and all other authorities.

In addition, as part of the ScotXed programme, the Scottish Government's benchmarking tool for attainment statistics, STACs (Standard Tables and Charts) is reviewed and improved on a yearly basis. At an authority level, attainment results for Perth and Kinross are scrutinised against the national and comparator averages by senior managers and elected members.

COMPARATOR SCHOOLS: THE SCOTXED PROGRAMME

The ScotXed Programme has also created sets of 20 comparator schools across Scotland for each Secondary School. The set of comparator schools was created based on a range of socio-economic variables using Principal Component Analysis. Detailed analysis of these school clusters is carried out annually following the release of SQA results in August via STACs (Standard Tables and Charts). We also commission further in depth analysis of the school attainment data and this, together with the STACS data, is used by schools and service managers to address performance at a school, subject and departmental level.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Social Care Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS) use comparator authorities outlined above in relation to Children's Services. Looked After Children and Child Protection Statistics are presented on the Social Work Scotland website enabling comparisons against comparator group and other local authorities. Further children and families statistical returns to the Scottish Government and Audit Scotland enable benchmarking to be carried out based on the national publications. The Benchmarking Task Group takes forward developments in benchmarking at a national level. Scottish

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Government and ScotXed statisticians are part of this group. The information is used by Children and Families' Services, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, the Child Protection Committee and the Central and North East Scotland Child Protection Consortium.

ABC BENCHMARKING GROUP

One of the widest-ranging groups is the ABC Benchmarking Partnership. Formed in 1997 in response to the emerging challenges of Best Value, the ABC Benchmarking Partnership provides a structure for conducting and encouraging benchmarking. It aims to encourage good practice in benchmarking, and participates in all aspects of Best Value development and debate.

The group work together to improve services by sharing and comparing data, processes and innovative solutions to common problems. Each participating authority's experience and background can be pooled for the benefit of all. Sharing experiences and identifying and adopting examples of best practice is fundamental to our delivery of Best Value principles.

The membership comprises of a cross section of like-minded authorities who are willing to co-operate in a learning environment.

ABC BENCHMARKING GROUP – LIBRARY SERVICES

The ABC Benchmarking Partnership facilitates service improvement by sharing and comparing data, processes and innovative solutions in a structured manner. The membership comprises eight local authorities comparable in terms of population and socio-economic profile. Representation is mixed and includes library service managers and senior staff and the group meets quarterly.

SOCITM BENCHMARKING CLUB

We remain committed members of the SOCITM Benchmarking Club and in 2010/2011 have been involved in a number of related activities, including workshops and fora covering a diverse range of topics. SOCITM works with organisations across the public and third sectors: there are currently 8 other Scottish local authorities in our ongoing benchmarking cohort.

Results from a comprehensive benchmarking exercise were published in December 2010. This was the first collaborative opportunity in which services to both education and corporate customers were included. We were identified as demonstrating best practice in a number of areas including our response to reported incidents, availability of key systems and support costs per workstations.

Based on this exercise, a SOCITM Action Plan has been developed to take forward improvements: priorities include increasing the number of service requests resolved at first point of contact and improving ICT's Customer User Satisfaction rating.

A SOCITM administered Customer Satisfaction Survey is scheduled for November 2011, the outcome from which will inform future Action Plan reviews and service improvements.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Tayside Council's Collaborative Group exchange best practice and information in relation to Learning and Development and report into the Tayside Collaborative Strategic Group of Chief Executives.

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITY CARE

THE SCOTTISH HOUSING BEST VALUE NETWORK

We are members of the Scottish Housing Best Value Network (SHBVN). The SHBVN provides and co-ordinates a benchmarking service for local authorities and at present 31 of Scotland's 32 councils are members along with Glasgow Housing Association.

SHBVN *Practice Exchange Forums* are events where practitioners meet regularly to share practice and learn from each other. Each forum meets regularly and meetings are hosted by councils across Scotland and have work plans to ensure meetings are focused and that tangible outcomes are achieved. The current forums are:

Homelessness and Housing Support;
Local Housing Strategy;
Housing Management;
Asset Management;
CHR Support Service; and
Private Sector Support Service.

THE ENVIRONMENT SERVICE

THE CELTIC BENCHMARKING GROUP

The group benchmarks on three key areas: Street Lighting; Maintenance; and Construction Consents.

ENGINEERING DESIGN BENCHMARKING GROUP

The group benchmarks on engineering design.

TAYSIDE COUNCILS BENCHMARKING GROUPS

The group benchmarks on three key areas: Quality; Health & Safety; and Winter.

LACORS – TRADING STANDARDS BENCHMARKING GROUP

We are involved in the UK-wide peer review process which seeks to identify best practice and service improvements in Trading Standards services. Identified best practice is then shared within the community via the LACORS website.

TAYSIDE BUILDING STANDARDS BENCHMARKING GROUP

The Tayside Building Standards Benchmarking Group is one of six such groups across Scotland. It comprises of the three Tayside local authorities and considers a wide range of both procedural and technical issues. This also includes identifying and running joint training initiatives. In addition the Group also undertake an annual peer review of the processing of local authority building warrant applications. The group is currently developing to improve matters such as consistency of application of the Technical Standards across Scotland. They are looking at developing the work of the group to include performance related information and the development of a national charter for Building Standards.

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SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION OF BUILDING STANDARDS MANAGERS

The Scottish Association of Building Standards Managers (SABSM) is a network of local authority Building Standards practitioners from Scotland's 32 Local Authority areas. The objectives of SABSM are wide ranging including: to provide a forum for member authorities to discuss matters of mutual interest; promote uniformity of interpretation; promote a culture of continuous improvement; to engage in partnership working with related regulatory and technical bodies. The Group also operate the Scottish Type Approval Scheme.

SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The Scottish Local Authority Economic Development (SLAED) is a network of economic development practitioners from Scotland's 32 Local Authority areas. The remit of the main SLAED group is to provide a forum for member practitioners to discuss matters of mutual interest in the realm of economic development. The group also use this mechanism to discuss and share examples of best practice.

Aside from the main SLAED group, there are also a number of sub groups with the remit of looking at those specialist areas which fall under the heading of economic development including; tourism; rural; business development; and International trade.

ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC SECTOR EXCELLENCE (APSE)

APSE is a not for profit local government body working with over 300 councils throughout the UK. It promotes excellence in public services, APSE is the foremost specialist in local authority front line services, hosting a network for front line service providers in areas such as waste and refuse collection, parks and environmental services, leisure, school meals, cleaning, housing and building maintenance. Every year they benchmark the activities under the operational headings noted above, and standardised across all of the Local Authorities.

ASSOCIATION OF TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATING OFFICERS

The Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO) undertake two annual UK wide benchmarking exercises covering local bus, education transport, social work transport, information and infrastructure, price, expenditure and competition surveys.

NATIONAL BEST VALUE BENCHMARKING SCHEME – PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT

We participate in the National Best Value Benchmarking Scheme which has developed a set of PI's related to Property Asset Management. The PIs focussed on are spend; stock (condition & required maintenance); sustainability; suitability; and sufficiency. We have been involved as keen participants since the beginning (2005). Membership has grown and there are currently 20 Scottish Councils subscribing.