

NORTH EAST REGION

Chair: Joanne Machers (Hartlepool BC)
Former PPMA Regional Chair – North East

1. NE Vision

The PPMA North East Regional Working Group is working hard to improve the offer to members and be clear about where added value comes from.

The Working Group has developed a regional vision which complements the new national vision. The NE vision attempts to incorporate a regional brand of Passionate Places Passionate People.

2. Regional Membership

The North East Region membership covers a range of Sectors: local government, housing, fire service, police service, civil service, consultancy and retired. Last year the region successfully secured new corporate memberships. This year however it has to be recognized that local authorities will seriously review all spend and one authority has already reverted to a single membership.

Although the region has attempted to identify new partnerships and sources of membership this has not met with success for various reasons.

3. Review of the Year

In **April** a regional meeting was held with the focus on the Social Work Task Force following the presentation to the last Policy Board meeting. Many thanks to Andreas Ghosh for his help with contacts, documents and slides to make the meeting a useful starting point for local authority members to discuss and consider what HR professionals should be considering at an organizational, sub-regional and regional level.

Subsequently contact has been made with the RIEP Adult Services Board and regional ADASS to develop joint working at the various levels and a multi-disciplinary regional event is now under consideration. Some local authorities have already reported that as a result of the PPMA meeting they have established closer working and planning with their social care colleagues.

In **May** a TUPE briefing was delivered by our sponsors, Eversheds, who kindly hosted the event, provided lunch and fielded a team of experienced solicitors to give a presentation and answer questions.

A PPMA meeting was held on 15 **July** and was the first of a number planned for this year where a PPMA award winner was invited to attend to share their learning with regional members. Many thanks to Bill Fletcher and colleagues from Birmingham who gave a

presentation on 'Efficiency' and shared what they have done. Additionally Dr Lesley Garrick and John Moore from Hay Group engaged the group in a discussion on Total Reward

The 2010 Northern HR Briefing was held on 16 and 17 **September** and once again the three PPMA northern regions of the north west, Yorkshire & Humberside and the north east sponsored delegate bags and arranged and hosted a pre-event session, which as usual, was well attended and received. Northumberland County Council presented their experiences of managing change arising from Local Government Re-organisation which has relevance and currency for all local authorities at the moment. Dean Shoesmith chaired the first afternoon session as PPMA president and with Anne Gibson, stayed for the whole event.

On 13th **October** Dean was back in the north to speak at our regional PPMA meeting at Gateshead Civic Centre. There was a good turnout for the Presidential visit which continued the theme of Shared Services from the Northern HR Briefing. We had speakers from various local authorities and the private sector to share their models and alternative delivery arrangements.

- LB of Sutton & Merton – a great example of local authorities working together
- Middlesbrough Council - who have had a long standing contract with Mouchel, and have recently agreed to extend the contract
- Xentrall – a partnership arrangement between Stockton and Darlington Councils
- BT South Tyneside - a new contract with regeneration targets built into the provisions

On 16 **November** a joint event was held with the NE HR Strategic Forum aimed at Heads of HR to discuss what HR needs to do to influence Chief Executives and other Directors. Two PPMA members and their respective Chief Executive/Chief Fire Officer made presentations and lead a discussion with the group.

Our scheduled meeting on November (17th) at Sunderland Civic Centre had to be postponed due to many members being involved in redundancy consultations in their respective organisations. The workshop style meeting on practical arrangements for implementing change will be re-scheduled as it is topical. The session is designed to share learning from past experiences and identify where possible some opportunities for joint working and was to be lead by Northumberland County Council as a PPMA Award winner.

The Christmas meeting on **December** 16th was enhanced by inspirational speaker and adventurer, Clive Gott joining us and helping us feel better about some of the more difficult aspects of HR work at the moment.

In conclusion

On 27 January 2011 the region held its AGM. With no nominations for any of the regional officer posts I am unable to give any clarity about the forthcoming year other than to confirm that a commitment was given by members to help organize one or two events considered important. Nominations will be sought again from the region's members.

It is therefore with some regret that I present my final report as Regional Chair for the North East. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my north east PPMA colleagues, especially those on the Working Group, for their support during the last few years and their commitment to making the north east region an active and vibrant place for all our members. Winning PPMA Region of the Year twice suggests we've been doing something right.

Although the public sector is under significant pressure, the north east region is in a strong position to rally HR professionals across a range of networks to ensure our current and future workforces are best placed to be passionate about public services.