

PPMA Annual Report 2011/12

Northern Ireland

Chair: Sharon Currans (Banbridge District Council)
Secretary: Linda Leahy (Local Government Staff Commission for NI)

The Northern Ireland Region continues to meet on a monthly basis with an average attendance of around 25 members at each meeting. We continue to gauge the benefit of having monthly meetings with our members and the overwhelming feeling is that they should continue as they are highly useful in terms of networking, information sharing capacity building and support.

The past 12 months have been an extremely productive period within our Region with a plethora of working groups enjoying the 'performing' stage in their evolution. The resulting outputs include:-

- The launch of the People and OD Strategic Framework for the Sector in partnership with the Local Government Staff Commission and SOLACE NI. PPMA are now leading the working groups to deliver this framework and have 2 representatives on the Project Board overseeing its implementation.
- The development of a Human Resources Development Programme which focuses on the needs of our members and is supported by the LGSC. The first module, an OD Master Class programme, has been successfully delivered to PPMA members.
- Collaboration across 26 Councils in recruitment advertising with the launch of 'Local Government Jobs' a composite advertising campaign which has resulted in a projected £400,000 first year saving in recruitment advertising costs across the sector.
- Competency Framework developed for use across the sector.
- Collaboration in procurement of Occupational Health services amongst Local Authorities.
- Collaboration on Policy formulation across Local Authorities. A policy toolkit will be launched in the springtime.
- Partnering with the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) on a major event for Chief Executives and HR practitioners in December which focussed on developing a change culture in Local Government and our key note speaker was Past President Angela O'Connor.

This is a very brief outline of the main strategic activities undertaken in the past year.

Below is an overview of the main working groups currently active within the Region, many are supporting the SOLACE led Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiencies (ICE) Programme:-

- PPMA ICE Performance Working Group
- People and OD Strategic Framework working groups and Project Board
- PPMA Working Group on Job Evaluation processes
- PPMA ICE Occupational Health Provision Working Group
- PPMA ICE HR Systems Working Group
- PPMA ICE Recruitment Working Group
- PPMA Policy Development Working Group (subdivided into various Policy specific groups)
- PPMA ICE eLearning Working Group

In addition PPMA chair the newly established Local Government Training Practitioners Group which develops the Learning and Development Strategy for the sector and currently has four working groups covering eLearning, Training Evaluation, compliance training and Council Corporate Training Plan review. PPMA members are either leading or active members in these groups.

The Region's activities and events during the year have reflected the challenges facing local government in Northern Ireland and we have continued to strengthen our important links with SOLACE, the Local Government Staff Commission, NILGA and our other stakeholders.

I would like to acknowledge the amount of time and effort involved in the above activities and want to record my thanks to our local PPMA members who have engaged willingly in this body of work. I also want to thank specifically thank Linda Leahy for her invaluable support both to the region and personally to me as chair of the region, and to her colleagues in the LGSC for their ongoing help and support.

As always we wish to record our thanks to the national officers who provide support and encouragement throughout the year.