

## **PPMA Award entry – Role of HR in Innovation**

### **HR Metrics in the cloud – Innovative use of an online application to transform HR metrics benchmarking**

#### **Let's use an online app!**

London Councils HR Metrics Service conducts HR metrics surveys for the 33 London boroughs. The Service provides benchmarking and analysis enabling boroughs to compare their performance across a range of HR measures; work collaboratively developing and progressing best practice; and tackling new challenges requiring data insights.

In 2016, the Service extended use of an online application tool (InfiniStats) for its HR Metrics Surveys. Using InfiniStats dramatically improves the delivery of the Service in terms of speed of workforce data collection, analysis and reporting of workforce benchmark data and presentation of the information in a highly visual, and easy to understand format.

#### **What is InfiniStats?**

InfiniStats is fully-hosted software as a service (no installation or setup required). Our users can access the application via secure login from any web browser at [infinistats.com](http://infinistats.com).

#### **The benefits we're enjoying include:**

##### **Simple, accurate data collection**

InfiniStats eliminates the need for manual collection and processing of survey returns. Respondents input data directly into a secure web-form at [infinistats.com](http://infinistats.com). Large volumes of data upload directly in Excel or CSV format. This was a significant development for the HR metrics service reducing manual handling of data and the scope for human error.

Instant data-validation ensures that data falls within expected range and acts as a first line of correction against errors.

##### **Quick and informative live analysis**

InfiniStats produces a range of graphs and charts on demand from the most up-to-date data. These support analysis of large volumes of workforce-data and enable effective benchmarking. The information can be exported to Excel format for further analysis.

##### **Reports and Scorecards**

A number of auto-generated standard benchmark-report templates and scorecards specific to each council are provided in PDF format. These reports are fully branded with each council's logo and colours, and include an automatic textual summary of the data including trend analysis.

Reports can be customised to include/exclude specific metrics, and to include additional comments and appendices. The reports are ideal for local use by councils and London Councils generates an overarching report for all boroughs.

Scorecards give an at-a-glance summary of each council's data for current and past time-periods compared other councils in London. These are a useful resource and are used in peer-to-peer reviews.

## **Collaboration**

There is also the facility to create smaller, ad-hoc user-generated surveys of other users. Live results are displayed to respondents, and a comments-area is available for users to discuss the survey and results in greater detail. This reduces the time spent by the HR Metrics service conducting one-off queries manually by email.

## **Full data-ownership and data-mobility**

A full and current copy of all survey response data is exportable at any time in Excel or CSV, to work with in a spreadsheet or import to another application. This means that it's easy to access the raw data to perform additional one-off calculations.

## **Granular permission-control**

Each council has one or more superusers who assign access-permissions to other users within their organisation. Permissions can be assigned on a per-user/per-survey basis, with full or read-only access. All data is transmitted over a secure connection.

## **Custom outputs**

InfiniStats can be configured to export survey-data in custom formats ready for submission to third-parties such as the NMDS upload tool. In 2016 the HR Metrics service commissioned a number of custom surveys replicating pre-existing outputs that HR managers liked too much to change.

## **InfiniStats dramatically improved the London boroughs HR Metrics survey service by:**

- Providing workforce benchmark data for London boroughs in a highly visual and easy-to-understand way – improving the product
- automatically providing tailor-made outputs for each council – dramatically improving information-output and enabling end-user analysis and the production of workforce reports to share as needed with organisational-management.
- decreasing the need for manual-handling and processing of results' data – improving the method/process
- improving response-rate and turnaround time – improving take-up and process
- enabling convenient, on-demand access to workforce data by data-handlers and managers alike – improving our service.

## Why get the 33 boroughs in London to benchmark their HR Metrics data?

London borough councils have faced huge financial challenges since 2010. Core funding from central government will have fallen by a cumulative 63 per cent in real terms over the decade by 2019-20. Fundamental changes to the way services are delivered are necessary to meet the savings required.

HR has a key role in enabling and supporting significant levels of change to secure the continued provision of high quality services against a backdrop of funding reductions. For many HR managers one of the biggest challenges is developing business confidence and buy-in. By providing a means of benchmarking workforce-data across London boroughs the London Councils' HR Metrics Service enables HR professionals to present workforce benchmark-data and secure evidence-based decisions and backing to make their organisations more effective.

## More detail on the HR Metrics Service – who made innovation a priority?

London Councils represents London's 32 boroughs and the City of London. We are a cross-party organisation that works on behalf of all our member-authorities regardless of political persuasion.

We make the case to government, the London Mayor and others to get the best deal for Londoners and to ensure that member authorities have the resources, freedoms and powers to do the best possible job for their residents and local businesses.

One of the professional networks supported is the Directors of HR network which identifies challenges and opportunities and puts in place strategies to improve the application of HR policies across London.

The network recognised that when resources are limited and reducing, sharing best practice and ideas is an important way that councils can improve cost effectiveness and performance - learning from the best performers among their comparators and not having to come up with solutions in isolation.

The network sponsored the creation of the London-wide workforce planning and information network (WFP&I Group); a group of HR professionals from each council responsible for HR metrics. The Directors tasked WFP&I Group with enabling HR professionals in London boroughs to explore innovatively ways of sharing people-data and using it to improve performance.

The Directors of HR nominated a Director lead for HR Metrics to champion the survey and benchmarking work and make innovation a priority in developing a cutting-edge approach to the HR Metrics service. The solution identified was a customisable application, delivered as software-as-a-service. The task of developing our own set of metrics and surveys was delegated to a working party led by the HR Metrics "champion".

The HR Metrics service is funded by subscriptions from all 33 London boroughs. The project has been a success with a 2016 audit-survey of users in boroughs giving the service an overall satisfaction score of 92%, with 97% agreeing/agreeing strongly that they find the surveys useful and a 100% approval-rating for our flagship human capital metrics survey on InfiniStats.

The Service is currently the subject of a [case study on the Valuing Your Talent website](#). Valuing Your Talent is a joint initiative led by the CIPD; and has given presentations to the CIPD, the Civil Service and at IES and leading HR Analytics events about the HR metrics work.