PPMA Award entry 2019

Best cross sector working/ effective partnership initiative

The purpose of our partnership

London Councils is a cross-party organisation representing London's 32 boroughs and the City of London.

The London Councils HR Metric service was set up to facilitate the sharing and benchmarking of HR data across London and enable HR professionals the data they need to compare performance and share best practice.

Changes that the partnership sought to address

London Councils has been benchmarking HR data for the 33 London authorities for over 20 years. However, there were limitations in being able to share and update infometrics and benchmarking data in a timely manner.

Therefore a partnership solution was sought to enable the collection and analysis of benchmark/ survey information from all 33 authorities through an online data sharing platform. The goal was to provide a significant leap forward in capability without the need for additional staffing and at a low cost per borough.

Achievement of the partnership

The key achievement has been the successful implementation of existing and new HR Metrics surveys on the online tool InfiniStats. Boroughs input their data locally and generate results, reports and scorecards with their own council's branding. This reduces manual processing of data and enables instant reporting and updating of results and outputs. It was not easy to get 33 different organisations to all collaborate but through the concerted will and determination of a group of key HR leads the partnership has worked well and the setting up of some clear governance arrangements have ensured the continued success of the project.

The benchmarking of HR data from the London region enables Directors of HR to make evidence-based decisions on key issues. It empowers individual councils, groups of councils and the region as a whole to assess performance and drive improvement.

Councils compare their performance on HR indicators ranging from pay to the reasons why staff leave, workforce-diversity, HR-casework and sickness absence. Each can see its performance in relation to others and share policy/procedure development and innovations that work. This has stimulated closer working relationships between the Directors of HR in the 33 London authorities.

If the partnership did not exist, each council would be searching for data on performance and pay, or paying costly consultancy services to compare their position with other councils. The costs per council would far outweigh the cost of taking part in the partnership with London Councils; and the data would be less reliable and less comparable with no single set of definitions/guidance and/or a single means of processing the data.

Costs, benefits and evidence of success

The cost of the partnership is shared equally between the 33 authorities at an annual cost of £3,000 which includes a part-time business analyst based at London Councils and the annual subscription to InfiniStats.

All 33 of the London authorities take part in the surveys and data collections that the HR Metrics Service conducts.

In a recent audit of users in the 33 London boroughs' satisfaction levels were high, including a 100% satisfaction score for our Human Capital Metrics survey, and an overall satisfaction score of over 90%.

All 33 authorities use InfiniStats to provide data and to access results' reports, scorecards and raw data, and to create graphs and other data visualisations for local use. Data from 2018 indicates that the 33 boroughs between them:

- login to InfiniStats over 1,000 times in a year (an average of over 30 times per borough per annum); and
- use InfiniStats to perform over 3,000 separate actions (entering data, generating results reports, scorecards, charts etc.)
- have over 140 active users (an average of more than 4 per borough) using the system. These include Heads of HR, HR Business Partners and HR Metrics professionals
- the use of InfiniStats is being expanded to add more surveys, collecting data to help HR tackle new challenges, for example to assist with monitoring regional agreements on agency pay rate caps.

The HR Metrics Partnership appears as a case study on the CIPD sponsored website for Valuing Your Talent.

London Councils has been invited to speak on the work of the HR Metrics Partnership to events organised by the CIPD, the Institute of Employment Studies and external HR Analytics symposia.

Testimonials

Jan Douglas | Director - Human Resources & Organisational Development oneSource (LB Newham).

The fact that all London Boroughs subscribe to the HR Metrics service and participate in providing data is testament to its value and success. Sharing and benchmarking HR metrics supports our continuous improvement, both as individual councils and as a region. Having the service and the network in place also enables us to quickly access London-wide data to provide insight and evidence to support the development of new strategies.

Mark Porter – Head of HR Operations at oneSource and Chair of the Workforce Planning & Information Group

We use the benchmarks at a local level at Havering and at Newham not only to continually assess and improve performance in day-to-day HR activities but also to focus on emerging priorities.. It is vital that councils and other parts of the public sector work collaboratively to ensure efficiencies and deliver services in the best way for their customers. The ability to benchmark key HR data enables sharing of good practice and the delivery of 'products' that support work being done across London.

Meryl Wade, Senior HR & OD Adviser, Hackney Council

We do not underestimate the value of sharing and collaborating with our peers. The benchmarking information available on InfiniStats offers a quick and reliable insight into our relative position on key indicators. It also helps us to spot the trends and patterns that support a keen understanding of our sector's landscape.

Supporting Page

The attached supporting page is an example of some of the outputs available from InfiniStats (all council names and data are fictitious).