Use of the LGBF

Using the LGBF in Scrutiny, Decision-making and Improvement
Renfrewshire Council

Contact for Enquiries

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Renfrewshire Council has successfully embedded the LGBF framework to inform scrutiny by elected members and senior managers. Benchmarking data is now used to produce a wide range of reports for elected members and to guide meeting agendas across the council.

Background

The LGBF provides 'can-openers' to support elected members to ask why costs and performance differ, what this tells them about their service delivery and resourcing models, and to understand what this means in terms of local outcomes, rather than an overly simplistic interpretation in terms of who achieves the cheapest delivery. The benchmarking data can be used to compare how the council is performing, drill down to identify where there is room for improvement (as opposed to legitimate variation) and act to achieve service improvements.

Key Activities

The type of reports the benchmarking framework has now been embedded in include:

- Annual benchmarking paper to Audit, Scrutiny & Petitions Board
- Spotlight performance reports to CMT
- Service Improvement Plans – monitoring & outturn reports
- Service reports to SLT
- 'It's all about you' annual report

Benefits and Impact

The following examples illustrate the benefits and impact the LGBF has had across Renfrewshire council.

Performance and Scrutiny Board

The Performance and Scrutiny board used the local government benchmarking indicator profile to start asking questions such as:

- Why is our performance for street cleanliness at 29 of 32?
- Why is our satisfaction at 67% for street cleanliness?

- Why is Inverclyde the highest spend for their roads in our family group, as this is a neighbouring authority we should know what level of investment they are putting into their work?

Chief executive:

The 2014/15 data on positive destinations, Renfrewshire ranked in the bottom quartile at 28th at 90.9% a decline from 22nd.

The chief executive asked for this to be drilled down to the positive destinations of looked after children who left school in June 2015.

A breakdown of the 38 young people by the type of care placement the child was in as they left school and their destination. Destinations of these young people and the assistance and support provided by the council was reported back to the CMT every quarter.

The last report noted that 25 (66% of looked after children) achieved a positive destination when they left school with one at university.

Corporate management team:

Quarterly spotlight performance meetings were introduced in 2015 to scrutinise and assess better ways of working for cross-cutting performance matters that are linked to our council plan.

The 21 January meeting was on the 2014/15 LGBF data.

The CMT was presented with a series of benchmarking graphs, reference materials (e.g. Audit Scotland Direction) and draft papers (A,S&P Board and PPR report).

The Chief Executive requested that the April spotlight looks at self-directed support.

For 2014/15 Renfrewshire were ranked 26th at 1.86% SDS spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+. The SDS spotlight meeting covered: SDS definition; the four options; benchmarking data; care packages; challenges; and performance improvement next steps.

Policy Board:

All of the five SIPs contain the LGBF indicators, which are reported every six months to Board and quarterly to Community Resources SLT.

Senior Leadership Level:

A separate analysis paper on the service performance is submitted to Community Resources Senior Leadership Team, scrutinised closely, particularly the satisfaction indicators.

Managerial level:

The service uses the data as a barometer of how the budget cuts have affected the service standards for street cleaning etc and keenly checks their performance against other authorities.

Learning

Service managers have highlighted the usefulness of the networking forum (LGBF family group) where new initiatives and technology are shared.