

Local Government Benchmarking Framework



Meeting: Roads Family Group 1	Meeting Date: 28 March 2014								
Report Title: Review of Roads Family Group Activity	Author: Ross Fraser, Family Group Co-ordinator (Improvement Development Officer, Dumfries & Galloway Council)								
<p>Purpose of report</p> <p>To provide a review of the work undertaken by Family Group 1 in relation to the Family Group Pilot as part of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework</p>									
<p>Background</p> <p>At the LGBF Learning Event on 28th October 2013, the Family Group Pilot was launched; Positive Destinations and Roads were used for this pilot. The Family Group for Roads consists of the following councils:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="193 875 1444 958"> <tr> <td>• Dumfries & Galloway</td> <td>• Highland</td> <td>• Scottish Borders</td> <td>• Orkney Islands</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Argyll & Bute</td> <td>• Eilean Siar</td> <td>• Shetland Islands</td> <td>• Aberdeenshire</td> </tr> </table> <p>Dumfries & Galloway volunteered to be the co-ordinating council throughout the process. The Family Group met for the first time on 16 January 2014, to discuss the data presented by the Improvement Service. A second meeting was held on 28 March 2014, to share ideas and best practice. There were 4 key areas which were used to generate discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment Strategy & Roads Asset Management Plan • Winter Maintenance • Carriageway Maintenance (Planned/Reactive/Routine) • Models of Service Delivery/Restructuring <p>Each of the above topics was introduced with a brief presentation by selected councils to generate discussion.</p> <p>This report details the outcomes of that second meeting on 28 March</p>		• Dumfries & Galloway	• Highland	• Scottish Borders	• Orkney Islands	• Argyll & Bute	• Eilean Siar	• Shetland Islands	• Aberdeenshire
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• Argyll & Bute	• Eilean Siar	• Shetland Islands	• Aberdeenshire						
<p>Examples of Good Practice</p> <p>During the meeting the following examples of good practice were identified within the Family Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of RAMP to secure investment and move towards early intervention/prevention • Use of decision matrix hierarchy to target spend • Use of technology and staff to record/report repair activity • Telemetry to map planned versus actual gritting routes • Corporate approach to delivering a winter service 									
<p>Factors which explain the variance within Family Group</p>									

As the meeting progressed the following factors were highlighted which explained variances within the Family Group:

- In terms of cost per km over the past 3 years, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries & Galloway and Highland increased their spend per km, while Borders, Orkney, Shetland, Argyll & Bute and Eilean Siar have reduced their spend
- In terms of RCI for A, B and C class roads, Aberdeenshire, and Orkney improved their RCI. What explains the increase in RCI other councils?
- Orkney both reduced their spend and improved their RCI
- Argyll & Bute, Orkney and Aberdeenshire secured higher levels of investment as a % of steady state, compared to other family group members
- Eilean Siar increased their % spent on planned maintenance and reduced that spent on reactive
- Dumfries & Galloway increased their % spent on routine and reduced their % spent on reactive
- Scottish Borders increased their % spent on reactive

Recommendations for Improvements

It was agreed that the following recommendations be put forward with regard to improvements in the Roads Service:

- Promote the need for Maintenance. Change culture to invest in revenue to ensure maintenance, reduction in revenue spend has led to reduction in key maintenance activities and focus shifted to reactive maintenance
- Reaching agreement on how to demonstrate best value. Decide on satisfying Elected Members, increasing RCI, reducing complaints or increasing public satisfaction
- Demonstrate to Elected Members the Local Transport impact and wider role of roads network. Increase in wealth, increase in business, increase in employment and increase in tourism
- More effective communication with the public. How the public judge the Local Authority
- Winter policy. Scottish councils need to respond and develop a code of practice
- Agree measures of effectiveness in relation to Winter Service
- Develop picture of repair frequency schedules for works and share across councils

These recommendations are purely from Family Group 1 and will have to be discussed at a wider level before any action can be taken on them.

Suggestions in relation to the LGBF Family Group process

The members of Family Group 1 made the following suggestions/comments regarding the Family Group Pilot:

- Key priority is to align the LGBF cost measures to the SCOTS measures. Finance should support the service and work closely to improve the LFR data to create more consistency
- The SCOTS benchmarking and family group process should be used to drive better value for money, continuous improvement and driving asset management from the bottom up, not the top down
- Embed LGBF within SCOTS family group benchmarking process, do not create a duplicate process

- Essential for Roads representative to be present

Next steps

Reports from all 8 Family Groups will be collated and presented to the LGBF Project Board, SOLACE and all local authorities within Scotland.

There is a Learning Event scheduled for 18 June where learning from the Family Group pilot will be shared, the process going forward will be outlined and links will be developed between benchmarking and improvement