

The Route to Health Improvement

Notable Practice Case Study

This practice relates to one (or more) of the below key features :				
Corporate Culture	Policy Development ✓	Collaboration	Capacity Building	Governance

Cardiff Council – Internal Policy Officers Group

Background & Context:

In developing the first Cardiff Health, Social Care & Well being Strategy the need to reflect the impact that local authority services have on the health and well being of the population was appreciated as a challenging task. In addition, the need to share both the aspirations and proposals of the HSC&WB Strategy across service areas and other strategic planning frameworks was recognised. The Strategy Manager arranged to meet individually with some key policy officers and realised the extent of strategic planning activity across the local authority, and the difficulties of communicating with so many, who also identified their need to share information through a co-ordinated, strategic approach.

Description & Characteristics:

An Internal Policy Officers Group (IPOC) was established, initially under the lead of the HSC&WB Strategy Manager. Later, this lead responsibility was taken on by the Community Strategy Co-ordinator and the Corporate Policy Unit.

Officers with responsibility for developing strategic plans or leading partnerships were invited to the group, and these included those with responsibility for the Community Strategy, Transport Plan, L.D.P., Sustainability Strategy, Community Safety Partnership, Y.O.T., Children Young People's Partnership, Health Alliance, Neighbourhood Renewal, Community First, Leisure, Schools, Housing and Economic Development.

The objective of establishing the group was to promote the HSC&WB Strategy and through sharing and learning from each other, ensure that all policies contribute to improving health as per the Ottawa Charter. In addition, the group would facilitate the sharing of information on a whole range of policy agendas, sharing of data, correlation of consultation approaches, and awareness raising of the policy proposals/issues etc.

Meetings are arranged on a quarterly basis and the email network of the group is used regularly for information exchange on national and local strategic policy documents/ updates/ consultations etc.

Why was/is this initiative/approach successful?

The group has been successful and grown in membership and level of attendance. The relevance of shared agendas was recognised and the opportunity presented by attending a group of officers, all tasked with the challenges of developing strategic policy direction and co-ordination across local authority services. The utilisation of the group has broken down barriers and the silo approach, through enhanced communication, learning, correlation and the development of a corporate approach. The group has discussed a broad range of issues since its inception and has also set up a task group with responsibility for developing an Integrated Assessment Tool for Cardiff Council.

Measures of Success:

This cross service working has developed a more holistic approach and joined up activity across the council, and strengthened links between strategies and partnerships.

The success of this initiative can be quantified by:

- Numbers attending the meetings
- Number of emails circulated to share information
- Number and range of topics discussed
- Use of the forum for cascading key information
- Development of cross-cutting issues
- Development of cross –service working.

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