

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

The Benefits of Self Assessments



Context

We have been doing self assessments for the last 6 years:

- EFQM Business Excellence Model – 6 years
- TAES – 3 years

Fits into our wider programme of assessments e.g.

- External – SEEA, Green Flag, Audit, IIV, Mystery visits
- Customer – Visitor Tracking, Spaceshaper, Comments
- Staff – Staff survey

The Benefits:

- Staff engagement
- Partner engagement
- Specific service improvements

Staff Engagement

Over the last 6 years we have involved 130 staff in self assessment workshops

Great opportunity to get front line staff, managers and support staff in a room to discuss how we can work together to improve

Staff survey results:

- Satisfaction with how we continually strive for improvement is high (8.6 out of 10, increased from 8/10 2 years ago)
- Satisfaction with how well staff understand the service improvement planning process, and how their job contributes to it is high (7.8, up from 7.4)
- Score lower for satisfaction with how staff feel their opinions and ideas count to the organisation (outside of their dept) – 6.7 – need to keep working on this

Partner Engagement

TAES / CSIT recommend involving partners in the assessment and/or through a peer review

TAES

- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- RSPB London
- Corporation of London

Benefits – external view, validation of good practice, new ideas/approaches, basis for improved partnership working

CSIT – involved in peer reviews for culture depts

- Kensington and Chelsea
- Lewisham

Benefits – insight into how someone else works, what they do well, what you do better, opportunity to process benchmark

Action Plan

Main outcome is an action plan with prioritised areas for improvement. This feeds into the corporate service planning process, or staff workplans, as appropriate

Examples of improvement actions from TAES assessments:

- Improved recognition and internal communication of open space work – articles, Rangers attend Green Flag Awards etc
- Improved engagement through user forums (Spaceshaper)
- Improved management of partnerships
- Flagged need to develop a method for assessing performance of open spaces in the context of their role in delivering Vision. Scorecard – since picked up by Member Scrutiny Panel

Benefits

Culture of the Authority in 2003 was silo-ed, no real accountability across the organisation, hierarchical

Now there is continuous cross departmental working including project groups (environmental team, quality management, performance team)

In 2003 we had a fixed action plan that was agreed, signed off, had owners and was signed off

In 2009 strategic improvements included in the service plan and are resourced with growth bids; other actions are acted on by individuals where they take accountability

- Staff skills analysis
- Using volunteers for engagement e.g. bailiffs