



Basingstoke and Deane borough council – sustainable development review

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's sustainable development review considered: internal support for sustainability; external education and promotion; and joint working with other organisations. This was primarily a process review.

This review was conducted in Year 1 (2000-1). The review considered:

- Internal support for and promotion of sustainability *including advice and training, policy development, corporate monitoring, internal procedures, inter-departmental working*
- External education and promotion *covering advice and promotion, community engagement.*
- Joint working *with partner organisations and co-ordination.*

There was an 11 person review team, including an elected member, representatives from several departments, a BV officer, 2 sustainability strategy co-ordinators from neighbouring boroughs, and representatives from Forum for the Future (an SD consultancy).

Consultation

A questionnaire was sent to all elected members and staff. This asked about understanding of sustainability and its relevance to their activities, if they had access to supporting information, and aimed to identify training needs and opportunities. The review also drew on a previous consultation for the Community Strategy on quality of life priorities, through the residents' panel, focus groups and the council newspaper.

Comparison

Comparisons were based upon 'how other organisations are delivering sustainability and ensuring that sustainable development issues inform corporate policy and practice at all levels within the Council for both staff and members.' No local BVPIs were used for comparison.

The Hampshire matrix was used to compare practice among Hampshire and 12 other local authorities. The matrix has 12 questions on both the impact and understanding of sustainability of people within the local authority, and the extent to which existing systems promote and enable the implementation of sustainability.



Authorities that included some high scores on their matrix were interviewed by telephone to determine what they saw as success factors.

Challenge

This was undertaken after the consultation and comparison exercises and considered:

- The need to pursue sustainability – Is it necessary?
- How the authority currently provides sustainable development and alternative methods for the provision of sustainable development.

Competition

The review encountered difficulty in applying the authority's standard 'Optimum Delivery Route Matrix'. But the matrix was completed and led to the conclusion that 'joint commissioning or delivery of sustainable development may be an appropriate option to explore.'

Recommendations

There were 34 improvement actions covering: training and awareness promotion; leadership; procurement; corporate processes; continuing consultation; monitoring and reviewing effectiveness.

Contact: Janice Brill, Basingstoke and Dean Borough Council. E-mail: j.brill@basingstoe.gov.uk