



CONSTRUCTION

Performance of Client and Contractor Measured in Highway Contract

LINCOLNSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

Summary

Lincolnshire County Council and LCR, its term contractor for highway works, place great emphasis on outcomes for local people and value for money. The Partnership Board monitors a suite of performance indicators (PIs) that the parties agreed would show how well they were succeeding.

The Audit Commission awarded the council two stars in its 2005 review of highway and transport services, with "good prospects for improvement". New processes and innovative systems have enabled the council to achieve many of the Government's efficiency targets.

Quote

"LCR said they could reduce disruption if the council was more realistic about lead times. This put the pressure on us to improve our planning and co-ordination."

John Edlington,
Head of Highway Service Development

Improvement through efficiency



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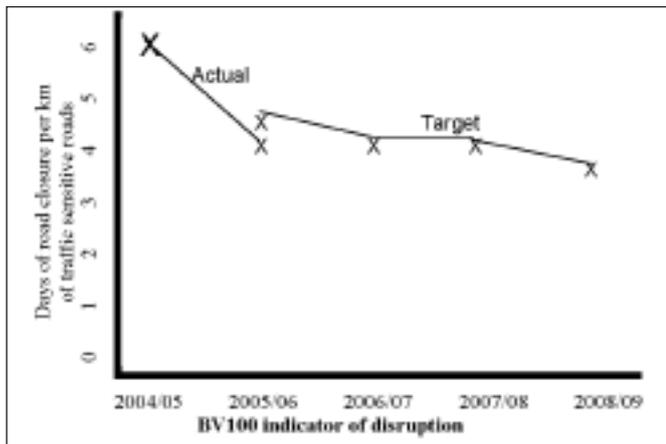
East Midlands

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Project background

Project Management through PI's was failing in the partnership with managers struggling to maintain a vast number of PI's. This was before a small working team produced a condensed suite of 11 PI's designed to help achieve successful project delivery. The County was also divided into four areas and each area manager has PI's and targets for improvement set out in the Service Plan.

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) also collate various national Best Value indicators as well as local indicators declared in Local Transport Plans. Lincolnshire are implementing an online performance system from inphase.com to capture and analyse data. The Performance Plus system is especially helpful for the many indicators they need to satisfy auditors.



Lincolnshire uses the national indicator for disruption (see BV100, above) to track the falling incidence of road closures due to LCR's maintenance work. The council's end of the bargain is to reduce the number of work orders that upset planning by demanding a quick response time.

What they measure

Lincolnshire PIs:

- Timeliness of lead times for work orders
- Quality of work orders when issued
- Estimated versus actual cost of work orders when completed.

LCR PIs:

- Percentage of street lights working
- Response to emergencies
- Disruption to traffic
- Accidents at work
- Signing and guarding
- Joint site inspection assessment, for example method of work
- Sustainability, for example recycling.

Joint PI:

- Training supported by Lincolnshire and LCR.

Benefits achieved

The amount of disruption to traffic dominates public perception of highway maintenance. LCR believed that they could reduce disruption if the council was more realistic about lead times. This put pressure on officers to improve the process of planning and co-ordination.

Lessons learned

- Stick to a small number of indicators that focus attention on the key success factors of the partnership
- Make sure the client indicators measure actions that assist the contractor to deliver the service. That is what the council will ultimately be judged on.

Transferability

Lincolnshire CC does not subscribe to a pre-defined list of PI's, they have instead focused on selecting and measuring indicators that the need of the people of Lincolnshire will appreciate.

Other local authorities may find that Lincolnshire's approach to PI's may apply to their highway performance measurement with minor adjustments to policy.

The future

Rather than slavishly tracking PIs, Lincolnshire intends to abandon measurement where targets are being consistently met. That way effort can be directed towards measuring improvement where service is not up to scratch.

Contact

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