

2develop assists Council to meet National Minimum Data Sets

A case study on how Middlesbrough Council is utilising 2develop, our online system, to meet National Minimum Data Sets and the Skills Pledge

Local Authorities are now encouraged to provide information about their Social Care Workforce to Skills for Care in order to meet the National Minimum Data Set. However, Social Care Departments are facing difficulties as data must first be collated before it is logged on to the Skills for Care online system. No small task for such large organisations.

Middlesbrough Council first approached STAR regarding their obligation to report on the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care after hearing of successful 2develop pilots taking place in the North East.

The Council works closely with the North East Regional Employers Organisation (NEREO) who put forward two companies with the capability to meet the requirements of the skills audit.

Representatives from all departments attended a demonstration by both organisations.

After much consideration 2develop was unanimously voted the preferred system. This decision was based upon the flexibility and functionality of the tool which would not only enable the Council to capture data on the Social Care Workforce but would also allow them to progress the Skills Pledge and GO Award while



'Star and the 2develop system have been very helpful in supporting the Council to achieve its objectives around workforce planning and data collection.' **Laura Neale, Middlesbrough Council**

providing data required to inform workforce planning across the Council. A questionnaire incorporating the Wider Children's Workforce questions for the Children's, Families and Learning department is also currently under development.

Some Features of the tool include:

- An 'about you' questionnaire designed to specification, capturing data required by individual departments and by the whole Council.
- Literacy and Numeracy Mini tests.
- Instant reporting available by department and whole Council combined.
- Data download function into the required format for reporting national minimum data set requirements.

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Initial work on the skills audit tool began in May 2009, with approval to conduct the workforce skills audit within the authority being granted in June.

The system launched early November 2009 and will continue to be rolled out until the end of March 2010. The Children, Families and Learning Department will most likely continue on after this as their questionnaire is still being developed, due to delays in government approval of the Wider Children's Workforce data requirements.

The Council is pleased with progress that has been made and positive results are expected, based on the current position of the project. It is hoped that the data collected will result in employees being targeted for skills for life training in literacy and numeracy and for the system to be updated regularly, as and when it is necessary to do so.

On the benefits of using this audit tool Laura Neale, Organisational Development Project Assistant at Middlesbrough Council stated:

'It is expected that as a result of undertaking this skills audit project, we will gain more insightful and useful data on the skills of our workforce, than any data we have had previously. This will enable us to better assess the organisation's skills gaps and thus the skills needs of the workforce. The results of the project will contribute to the organisation's workforce planning activities and the data collected will enable the organisation to be able to plan more effectively for the future.'

For more information or advice on this online tool please contact STAR using the details below.