

Journeying towards a “Performance Culture” in Public Transport

It’s not easy! But it can be done - and South Yorkshire is showing the way

Over a two year period SYPTE has embedded performance management throughout the organisation. They now have a robust holistic Business Performance Model in place.

SYPTE’s experience can help you quantify the benefits that your organisation:

- systematic alignment of organisational goals with objectives, measures and targets, budget and risk management
- an integrated model that cascades from strategies into department business plans and further into individual performance plans
- performance information solution used by managers at all levels to monitor achievement at personal, departmental and corporate levels



Learning from the SYPTE experience

All Aboard

SYPTE recognised that beyond Performance Measurement lies an opportunity to develop a “Performance Culture”

In 2006 SYPTE set out on their journey with *Europartnership* providing support.

From the outset, the Executive focused on realising the business benefits – driving organisational change and delivering strategic goals. It was also clear that this was a journey that the whole organisation had to undertake together.

A key factor in the success of the programme was the sponsorship of Director General, Roy Wicks, supported of the entire Management Board. Programme planning and delivery was led by Dawn Madin, Head of Organisational Development.

The programme addressed every facet of performance improvement: human, process, resourcing and ICT.

John Shuttleworth of Europartnership believes that achieving these results in the time taken is impressive: “Getting this level of organisational alignment is tough.”

Got everything you need for the trip?

Equipping the organisation meant that SYPTE had to address:

- organisational readiness - finding the balance between a centrally driven initiative - without taking accountability from front line managers;
- organisational alignment - strategies, plans, budgets, risk management and management reporting, all need to be aligned;
- management by exception - reducing routine ‘mass’ reporting means building confidence of those who report, and those who receive, information;
- aligning strategy to operational delivery – the most often quoted reason that strategy does not get delivered;
- control and corporate governance - accountability accepted where it needs to be – with line management.

“SYPTE has succeeded in making the transition to an aligned, performance driven, culture. They are set fair for the migration to a true performance culture”

How far has SYPTE travelled?

Some of the key features of performance management that SYPTE has implemented include:

- organisational mapping aligning goals, strategies, objectives, actions and key performance indicators
- navigation via a number of perspectives through hierarchical views and interactive maps
- system acting as a “front end” to risk management and capital programme management systems, with traffic light status linked via automated updating
- department performance reporting with key performance and financial linked to the finance systems
- “Briefing Books” for managers at all levels in the organisation, board members and stakeholders
- exception reporting by strategy, business unit and theme

The implementation has meant engaging more than 100 managers and staff across the organisation.

Bumps in the road

The journey was not without its challenges as John explains; “SYPTE like all ‘enabling’ organisations means that every section (and often every individual) has a unique contribution to make. It is not until we sum up back to the ultimate strategic goals that the effects of everyone’s contribution can be seen. And it is difficult to untangle the threads. The programme has resulted in some new insights as to how the organisation interoperates to deliver its outcomes.”

Where do YOU want to go?

Do you want your organisation to be amongst the leaders in performance management and delivery?

- More certainty about the underpinning of corporate strategy, goals and objectives;
- stronger corporate governance by linking outcomes to actions;
- focus on priorities and “management by exception”;
- alignment of processes such as strategic planning, business planning, budget setting and risk management.

In summary, the programme has:

- focused the organisation on achieving high level corporate goals, increasing transparency between actions and outcomes;
- facilitated the introduction of a new approach to business planning, integrating the process with budget and risk management;
- deployed performance management system vertically and horizontally throughout the organisation;
- created an organisational model that can be used to address “what if” thinking and scenarios;
- introduced management by exception.

Staying on track

SYPTE can ably demonstrate that they are on track to achieve a leading performance driven culture. Being part of SYPTE’s successful change programme has been rewarding for John and the team at Europartnership; “SYPTE has shown the ‘organisational maturity’ to work though each step - without ever losing sight of the long term goal of a sustainable performance culture.

This has helped us through the tough times that all programmes experience – such as unravelling, aligning and mapping actions to outcomes. Our goal is always to equip organisations to help themselves, and I am certain that SYPTE has got performance management well embedded and will become recognised leaders in their sector in this regard.”



Background

The Transport Act 2000 requires local transport authorities to produce and deliver a 5 year 'Local Transport' Plan (LTP). Passenger Transport Executives take this responsibility for metropolitan clusters in England and Scotland – producing and delivering an LTP on behalf of their local district councils.

The Local Transport Plan sets out 5 year goals; together with strategies, policies and a delivery programme. The LTP sets out the performance indicators that will monitor the progress towards meeting key targets.

Subsequently, the Eddington Study, jointly commissioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Transport, has strongly reinforced the priorities for Transport organisations.

Passenger Transport Executives are required to provide a public transport network and encourage maximum use of it. This in itself is a huge challenge, as the public continues to favour cars over trains and buses. With the exception of Greater London, public transport usage reduces year after year.

In South Yorkshire, the economy - and consequently car ownership, has grown faster than the national average. For South Yorkshire's Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE) this is an added pressure to managing the challenges arising from South Yorkshire's unique geography and industrial history.

South Yorkshire comprises rural towns and villages scattered throughout the County - whilst industrial and commercial activity is today focussed within the four main centres of Sheffield, Doncaster, Barnsley and Rotherham. Many people have to travel across the county and between the centres for work, education and leisure pursuits.

SYLTE plays a pivotal role, working closely with transport operators, the local councils and other key stakeholders in order to develop the network and service across the county.

"Travel South Yorkshire" is the brand identity of South Yorkshire's public transport network. The brand links together all the different products and services that make up this network, such as Travel Information Centres, Transport Interchanges, bus and tram stops and timetable leaflets. Spending on 'capital' projects such as Sheffield Supertram, 'Park and Ride' sites, Bus Lanes and upgrades to railway stations varies from year to year according to the grants and Central Government funding available for such schemes.

The Executive is managed by a Director General and Management Board and employs over 300 permanent staff. The goals for the Executive are set out in a 5 year strategy document: the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Executive publishes an annual Business Plan. There are two external supervising bodies: an Executive Board comprising the Chief Executive Officers of the 4 local authorities; and a Passenger Transport Authority comprising senior politicians from the local authorities. SYLTE is a Government body and comes within the inspection regime of the Audit Commission.

