Dialogue and collaboration for Energy Efficient Facilities Management: municipal sector strategies and the role of external service providers

**Purpose.** Energy efficiency is seen as key to sustainable building operations. However, identified by literature are market failures and barriers involved in hindering energy efficiency improvements, especially in refurbishment and maintenance of existing buildings. This paper deals with the challenge of overcoming energy efficiency gaps in the municipal sector that should set an example for adjacent society.

**Method.** The research is based on literature that point to the need of a better match between FM organisations and energy efficiency service providers, and inform on knowledge management and public-private partnership in FM. The paper covers the empirical case of a Swedish policy that stimulates energy efficiency strategies on municipal level. A dialogue-oriented interview methodology is used to assess the current strategies and practices for buildings owned and managed by municipal FM organisations.

**Findings.** Silo mentality can hinder strategies and practices from becoming as comprehensive as intended by policy regulation, e.g. focus on non-residential rather than residential buildings is demonstrated by reported activities and impact on specific energy use. Findings also confirm reorientations on the Swedish energy efficiency service market, e.g. municipal organisations show greater preference for in-house capacity as opposed to long-term contractual arrangements with external companies. Collaborations are sought with energy efficiency service providers that can deliver real and perceived values, which requires a probing dialogue to result in custom-made solutions. A process-based assessment approach is suggested to characterize the maturity of municipal FM organisations and facilitate collaborations in Energy Efficient FM.

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