

A1 Housing Process Review

Client: A1 Housing
Project: Housing Sector – Diagnose
Purpose: Review of processes for the award and delivery of planned maintenance schemes



The Challenge

CWC were commissioned by A1 Housing Bassetlaw Ltd (A1) to undertake a review of processes for the award and delivery of planned maintenance schemes. The objective was to establish the extent to which best value was being achieved since a 2005 Audit Commission report gave A1 a zero-star rating and to make recommendations for improvement. Our review comprised a programme of interviews and discussions with relevant staff & external Contractors, comparisons of outturn costs with other ALMOs and a desk review of contract, performance & other relevant documentation.

What CWC and A1 Did

Our comparison of Decent Homes work with that of other ALMOs showed that A1 was paying its Contractors around average prices but the lower amount of funding available following the zero-star rating had resulted in the Contractors charging higher than anticipated prelims. They naturally sought to recover overheads allocated to the A1 contracts, which they won with prices based on a volume of work which had not yet materialised, and which did not in fact materialise until the next Audit Commission inspection in November 2006 following the award of two stars. We advised A1's management therefore to seek to ensure that it was not paying Decent Homes Contractors for personnel not needed for the level of work then being undertaken; nevertheless, we were impressed by the way in which A1 and the Contractors had developed excellent partnering processes already, with the capability of the Contractors being fully mobilised for the benefit of tenants and the delivery of better Value for Money. This had been achieved through the delegation of project management to Contractors and through the involvement of tenants & Contractors in the development of standard briefs & designs and project risk & cost management. A1 Technical Services management played a very constructive role in establishing these improvements.

Where relevant, A1 were urged to work with Contractors to ensure that sub-contractors and suppliers were fully integrated into the team. In time suppliers would help to develop & deliver quality programmes based on functional specifications and with a streamlined quality inspection process.



The Benefits

The purpose of the work that we did was for A1 to use it as evidence to the Audit Commission at an imminent re-inspection that they had worked hard and successfully to overcome limitations in their performance that, at the previous Audit Commission inspection, resulted in A1 being given a zero-star rating. This worked very well for A1, which now has a two-star rating.

For further information please contact:

Paul Kirby
 CWC (UK) Ltd
 Warwick House
 25 Buckingham Palace Rd
 London, SW1W 0PP
 Tel: 07920 258 947