

Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham

Length of assignment: 12 months
APSE Associate: John Holden-Ross

Service Area: Waste PFI
Post: Project Director

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Doncaster Borough Council and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council were jointly procuring through a complex PFI solution for Waste Management, and after they had lost their previous Project Director in the run up to Call for Final Tenders it was a critical to fill the position with a competent Interim Manager who could hit the ground running. APSE Associate John Holden-Ross who has a proven track record in closing complex Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Schemes utilising competitive dialogue and strong leadership and team building skills was able to swiftly step in and take charge of the project.

Objectives

- The three Northern Councils required an interim project director to lead the existing interdisciplinary project team to financial close of the project, ensuring continuity with the Client Contract Management Function which was to take over from that date.
- To deliver a Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) when the councils entered into a contract for the treatment of black bag waste.

Outputs

- Planning permission granted to build the treatment facility.
- The facility will treat up to 265,000 tonnes per year of leftover household and a small amount of commercial waste.
- 50% of treated waste will be converted into Solid Recovered Fuel (SRF).

Benefits

- SRF will be used to generate electricity and the proposed MBT and AD facility will drastically reduce amounts of waste going to landfill.
- Saving equivalent to 114,000 tonnes of CO₂ every year will be made.
- Maximising recycling opportunities available as MBT and an AD plant delivered on the same site.

Business as usual

- Strengthened vision for a collaborative shared service for waste across the three Councils.
- Knowledge capture for the benefit of the client authorities and their Contract Management Function.
- Demonstration of effective cross authority working to deliver the required result.

Project Summary

APSE Associate John Holden Ross was assigned as Project Director shortly before Call for Final Tenders and at a difficult and sensitive time. The assignment was to ensure the effective financial close of the Project within value for money parameters utilising the Competitive Dialogue procedures under EU Procurement Regulations.

The assignment involved:

- a) Managing internal and external expectations around the Timetable for Financial Close
- b) Managing the internal cross Authority Project Team, successfully empowering and motivating them to Achieve Financial Close
- c) Negotiation with the Private Sector and Funders in a difficult banking market to deliver the Project Timelines
- d) Managing the interface with relevant Government Departments who were providing PFI Credits and overseeing the form of the legal agreements through which the Project was constituted.

The Scheme, which reached financial close at the end of March 2012, saw all three Councils entering into a contract for the treatment of black bag waste. The agreement will deliver a Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) and Anaerobic Digestion (AD).

In the week following financial close, planning permission was granted. The contractors will therefore build the facility by 2015 and operate and maintain it over a 25-year period from 2015 until 2040. The facility will treat up to 265,000 tonnes per year of leftover household and a small amount of commercial waste from the three councils.

After treatment, nearly half of this waste will end up as a solid recovered fuel (SRF). This SRF will be used to generate electricity at a new multi-fuel plant to be constructed. When the MBT and AD facility is operational it will drastically reduce amounts of waste going to landfill and lead to a saving equivalent to 114,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide every year.

It will be the first time that the contractors have delivered an MBT and an AD plant on the same site - maximising the recycling opportunities available. The project is also very significant in the development of the vision for a collaborative shared service for waste across the three Councils.

Feedback received from the Authority

'John performed strongly in terms of his professional knowledge and experience, his interpersonal skills, his leadership, his ability to get the team motivated and delivering in a period of intense resource demand.'