

MITIGATING TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL RISK DELIVERS NEW LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS MORE EFFICIENTLY



3,690 pupils

“The involvement of EC Harris in the Independent Certifier role gave me a great deal of confidence that the building work would be completed to a high standard and that all of the requirements of the Authority would have been met. I am very pleased that EC Harris is involved with Sheffield City Council on the BSF programme of work in Sheffield.”

Ray Fieldsend, BSF Authority’s Agent (PFI),
Principal Development Officer, Sheffield City Council

EC Harris was recognised as the Best Technical Advisor in the 2008 Public Private Finance Awards. This case study played a major part in achieving the prestigious industry award.

The first phase of Sheffield BSF, a Pathfinder Project, comprises the construction of school accommodation and ancillary use at four schools across three locations for a total of 3,690 pupils. Three of the schools have been procured under a PFI arrangement, with the fourth being procured via a Design and Build contract.

EC Harris was appointed to advise the Senior Lenders of the technical and commercial risks associated not only with the scheme, but also with the BSF procurement and delivery model. Additionally EC Harris was appointed as Independent Certifier on the fabric and services works for all the schools as well as the critical ICT installations.

The provision of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) on the scheme was of primary importance to the Authority and successful completion of this element of the work is having a direct impact on availability and revenue generation.

“EC Harris’ education sector expertise and particularly our understanding of the Authority’s strategic drivers for promoting the scheme via BSF is enabling us to promote solutions acceptable to both the private and the public sector parties, whilst maintaining the technical and commercial interests of the Senior Lenders.”

Creating solutions

Working with the project team we have been able to promote a strategy for reviewing the ICT solution (design and implementation) and tests to demonstrate compliance. This approach has been adopted by the Independent Certifier and will, we believe, greatly increase certainty with respect to Service Commencement. Our approach, which epitomises service excellence is promoting a team approach to problem solving which resulted in increased confidence, comfort and certainty with respect to service commencement and revenue generation on this new procurement model.

Our input to the project is making real the stakeholders ability to deliver truly world class school environments which will inspire learning for decades to come and provide exceptional assets for the whole community. The best practice learning from this project is helping to dispel the cynicism and negativity surrounding aspects of the ‘Building Schools for the Future’ programme. The BSF procurement model is a new development and, as with any new mechanism, all parties had expectations and uncertainties with respect to how the procurement exercise would proceed.

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Adding value

This is one example of how our team of experts deliver better value results for clients.

- We translate technical risk into commercial consequence for Authorities, Bidders and Lenders and deliver more robust business cases and bids with greater certainty for stakeholders at all stages of a project

- We excel in our drive to challenge technical and commercial operational conventions and deliver tangible savings, in terms of cost and time, to our clients’ projects
- We operate in all aspects of the market with an unparalleled breadth of expertise in sectors as diverse as highways to health and aviation to education. This enables us to implement innovative solutions with points of reference that challenge the accepted ‘norms’ and deliver better value results to Authorities, Bidders and Lenders.

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