

COLLABORATION AND CHALLENGE AT THE CORE OF READINESS TO DELIVER



EC Harris was appointed by the London Borough of Havering in autumn 2007 through the Buying Solutions OGC Framework to provide programme management and full design team services on the first wave of its primary capital programme.

Since the firm's initial appointment the relationship with Havering has developed quickly and EC Harris has been involved in a wide range of projects with the authority.

In Spring 2009, Havering started to accelerate the development of its preparatory work necessary to enter the next wave of the Building Schools for Future programme - the UK's biggest ever school buildings investment programme.

“There was never a feeling that the job could not be done and this was due in large measure to the confidence the EC Harris team were able to demonstrate from their depth of knowledge and experience. We needed expert assistance and that is what we got. The quality and rigour of challenge was well judged, tactful yet relentless. Without the EC Harris team going the extra mile, Havering’s Readiness to Deliver would not have come together.”

David Tomlinson, BSF Programme Director,
London Borough of Havering

Creating solutions

EC Harris worked in partnership with Havering, helping it to prepare its Readiness to Deliver submission for Partnership for Schools (PfS), to give it the best opportunity of being brought forward into the BSF programme.

At the start of the project the team clearly scoped out what was required to ensure the submission would be ultimately successful. This involved working very closely with the authority and the EC Harris team therefore proactively built relations with the client to ensure it was fully supported.

“EC Harris has helped bring Havering into BSF, ultimately helping to transform learning environments for young people across the Borough.”

The next step was to ensure Havering’s vision for secondary education was clearly articulated, and was linked to coherent, feasible and affordable estate and ICT investment strategies. The approach focused on maximising positive outcomes through wider, strategic join up of other capital investment streams across the estate, and highlighting how BSF could have a wider reaching impact than simply being delivered in isolation.

Innovative procurement options were also investigated to see how Havering could potentially save time and money during the lengthy BSF procurement cycle. EC Harris helped Havering to understand how it would need to gear up its own internal resource and prepare for the inevitable change that comes with the complexity and work of delivering BSF. The firm was instrumental in helping establish the governance structures, resourcing plans and mindset change required to ensure the LA was not just ready, but already well advanced ahead of entering the programme.

Adding value

In collaboration with the client, our team ensured the wider implications of the programme were considered, specifically looking at how it could be a catalyst for wider community regeneration - this was extremely important for the submission.

By providing a clear vision for BSF and how it would be able to contribute to wider strategic aims, the Readiness to Deliver submission was strengthened by applying the principles of ‘One Conversation’, joining up capital investment across the estate.

With a clear focus on positive and tangible outcomes, and a supportive, collaborative approach to working with Havering, EC Harris was rapidly working ‘as one’ with the internal team, helping maintain clarity on what would lead to a successful outcome.

In November 2009, Partnerships for Schools announced that Havering was accepted in the 7th wave of the BSF programme. EC Harris has helped bring Havering into BSF, ultimately helping to transform learning environments for young people across the Borough.

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