



Association of Consultant Architects Annual Award 2013: PRACTITIONER AWARD for Innovation in Partnering using PPC2000 & TPC2005

Galatia - an Acis Willmott Dixon Partnership

Willmott Dixon has been successfully delivering contracts through Joint Venture (JV) Partnerships with social housing Registered Providers for the last decade.

Whilst these collaborative arrangements have all varied in scale and scope, the common feature is a legal structure including:

1. a sharing of equity in the company and
2. the agreement of a set of well-balanced contractual terms designed to create the right operating environment to achieve exceptional performance.

Galatia – an Acis Willmott Dixon Partnership (WDP) is a Limited Liability Partnership company formed to deliver planned works and repairs and maintenance for Acis Group, a provider of affordable homes in Lincolnshire, South Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. The ownership of Galatia is split 60-40 between Acis and WDP, with Acis having the controlling share.

Galatia's approach to collaborative working is underpinned by the desire and passion for *change* and *continuous improvement*. This is ingrained throughout the business by:

- use of the *TPC2005 Form of Contract*
- *co-location for close working*
- a *strategic partnering board* that includes a senior board member of WDP and Acis
- a *partnering cost model*, including price per property, with costs presented in an open book format. The company is incentivised through a shared savings mechanism to reduce costs on a yearly basis.

Galatia uses collaborative working to drive up performance and unlock greater potential in relationships, people and processes. The two parent organisations support each other with the common goal of creating a service that delivers exceptional levels of customer satisfaction. Through a strategic partnering board members align both company's aims and objectives, share best practice and points of learning, support strategic direction and high level targets, and bring in experience from other similar contracts to support the client.

Galatia has a fully integrated co-located office environment for close working relationships and to promote general understanding across the partnership. The co-location model presents a unified front, avoids confusion over responsibilities and



provides a seamless 'right first time' service to customers. This approach has significantly contributed to the 'right first time' KPI results. It also improves communication and the speed of decision making.

Mick Williamson, Managing Director of Willmott Dixon Partnerships, said: "Using our joint strengths we are building a business which has a balanced flow of revenues and profits derived from both internal Acis Group works and also external market works in the Lincoln, Nottingham and York areas. We anticipate our business to be able to compete well in the open market and provide a valuable service to a wide range of small and medium sized Registered Providers."

The initial scope of works undertaken by Galatia is kitchen and bathroom refurbishments in the Sheffield and Gainsborough areas. Willmott Dixon is responsible for the day-to-day operation of Galatia and Acis provides IT hardware and infrastructure, as well as office space for co-location of the delivery team at its head office in Gainsborough. During year one Galatia completed over 2,500 planned work improvements to the homes of Acis customers. Works started in Gainsborough and quickly moved to the more rural areas to ensure that the works were completed before the onset of winter.

From April 2013 Galatia took full responsibility for the servicing and repairing of gas appliances within the homes of Acis customers and also the emergency and non-urgent responsive repairs and empty homes refurbishments in Sheffield. This covers a total of 1,283 properties.

Galatia has a unique legal structure which enables it to seek work from third party businesses and sweat its overheads for improved efficiency and output. Through third party works Galatia will also generate additional profits for Acis which will provide a funding source for Acis to reinvest back into its assets. In 2014 we are planning that 15% of the revenues generated by Galatia will be via third parties. This is forecast to increase to 25% in 2015.

Operating profit generated by Galatia is distributed between Acis and Willmott Dixon on a ratio of 51% to 49%. In addition to this, 25% of this derived profit is linked to incentivisation against performance of the following KPIs:

- Customer satisfaction
- Maintenance of programme
- Defects at handover
- Group health and safety audits

Galatia has dedicated a significant amount of time to developing processes that bring added value to the partnership. Some of the more innovative examples in successfully implementing tasks are as follows:



Reducing repairs:

Information from management is used to improve team efficiency. It is also used to reduce the frequency and number of repairs reported across a client's portfolio. Focus is applied to:

- Homes which are proven to be high users of the repairs service, working with Neighbourhood Housing Officers to make interventions to reduce their use.
- Highlight the top 10 reported repairs by frequency and make interventions to reduce their incidence.
- Report the number of homes not calling upon the service and set plans to increase this number over the life of the contract.

Health and safety:

To maintain an excellent health and safety performance, Galatia ensures that it regularly communicates with the workforce on matters of health and safety.

Methods of communication include:

- Toolbox Talks: a schedule of informal meetings on at least a monthly basis is used to refresh general health and safety training and provide updates in relation to legislation. This is also an opportunity to discuss the results of safety inspections and audits.
- PDA / Handheld updates: Galatia provides updates in relation to health and safety to all operatives PDAs. This enables operatives to analyse the information provided and be aware of how it impacts on the work they undertake. All operatives must confirm they have read and understood the information.
- Intranet: All health and safety policies, procedures, risk assessments and methods statements are available and visible on Galatia's intranet. This allows easy access to a regularly updated library of relevant health and safety information for all.

Galatia has consistently delivered its schedule of work safely with a negligible amount of incidents and accidents. Galatia has had two Group safety inspections carried out by WDP as well as numerous, regular inspections carried out by local safety advisors. All the inspections and audits have been very positive with only minor issues identified - all of which have formed part of Galatia's 'lessons learnt and proactive methodology' for continuous improvement.

All safety procedures have been accredited to OHSAS 18001 – 2008. The safety management instructions are constantly reviewed for improvement and legislative compliance. Mark French, Head of Health and Safety for Willmott Dixon Group, said of the Galatia branch that "*It is one of the best branches he has ever seen in its proactive approach to health and safety*".



Galatia is committed to providing increased value for money and improving service quality, whilst being an integral part of the community.

In order to ensure that the business can offer its client a competitive price, remains profitable and delivers year on year efficiencies, Galatia has introduced a wide range of efficiency initiatives. All are designed to increase productivity.

The following is an example of Galatia's approach:

Jobs per man per day (JPMPD):

JPMPD is a Work Management System that tracks and collects all completion data on works orders and operative activity. It is presented through pre-configured interactive MI reports and driven by business objectives. The daily report includes a 'jobs per man per day' productivity statistics.

Galatia sets JPMPD targets for each trade team and individual trade employee and monitors their performance against this target. It compares employees against their outputs over a set period of time and progressively raises the standard of each work team member through targeted training, support and mentorship. Where negative trends are identified across the workforce, key MI data is used to provide granular detail into the root causes for systems failure and then re-engineers or tweaks the processes or service offer to enable improvement.

Through a combination of innovative service delivery methods and cost cutting measures, the Galatia partnership has restructured services to make them more efficient and found ways of using its resources more effectively.

Galatia benefits from being able to negotiate for additional work from the client, ensuring that they get the correct market rate and jointly agree specifications and programmes. This enables Galatia to maximise use of its resources, as well as saving the client money by avoiding unnecessary procurement exercises.

Galatia prides itself upon its ability to work co-operatively with all key stakeholders involved in a particular contract and values its subcontractor partners. Subcontractors add significant value and support to the business. Galatia takes a long term view to their appointment and provides them with terms that enable them to trade effectively and profitably.

As a result of Galatia's close working relationship with building merchants, Jackson Shipley, it has negotiated the setting up of a fund to help support local community projects as a part of its supply chain arrangements with the company. Jackson Shipley donates 0.5% of the turnover spends from Galatia into this fund. This generates approximately £10K per annum, which is used for community activities.



Galatia works closely with the client team so that everyone understands the scope of the work and standards required. The partnership has allowed for any problems to be identified early and solutions are quickly found so that there is little impact to the programme of the works or the tenant experience.

During the last quarter of 2012, Galatia re-organised its approach to geographical working to minimise 'extended time' of working on particular jobs and thus a steady improvement and a reduction of time spent in properties was experienced.

Galatia feels that the single most important requirement is the need to have early visibility of programme information. This enables the company to make the most efficient use of resources and mapping the works so as many of the streams are in the same place at the same time. This ensures flexibility to respond to any programme changes, greater control over resource planning, and greater accuracy with customer information.

Galatia considers its commitment to training and development of its trade operatives to be one of its key competitive advantages. Multi-skilled operatives are able to carry out a wide variety of repairs in customers' homes. In order to support capacity in its operations contact centre, operatives are identified as having both primary and secondary skills. Service controllers work with contact centre operators to match the availability of appointment slots according to the demand fluctuations in trade requirements, and using the secondary skills of operatives to deliver a truly flexible service, being able to meet the peaks and troughs of repairs works orders.

The company had planned to take two apprentices in year two of the contract. This was brought forward and it recruited both an apprentice joiner and plumber in the first year of the contract. Both of these young people live in Gainsborough, thus truly representing local employment for local tradesmen.

Galatia has been able to offer Acis employees training courses including asbestos awareness and sharps training. Training requirements for both organisations are mapped in order to reduce costs and maximise efficiencies, as well continuously improve team competencies.

Over the past year Galatia has consistently produced a very high standard of installed improvements, with each and every month exceeding customer expectations.

The close working relationship means both parties are flexible and able to respond when challenges arise, such as work volume fluctuations, resource issues and complaints, thus resulting in positive outcomes for the joint venture company

1899 words



Summary

Willmott Dixon Partnerships and the social housing provider Acis Group formed the shared equity company Galatia to provide services to 5,500 households.

The goal is to provide exceptional service to tenants, through a partnership that enables integrated working, mutual support and exchange of expertise.

This approach allows for information sharing that promotes innovation, flexibility and planning to manage workloads highly effectively while delivering value for money.

The resulting efficiencies are delivering continuous improvement in a range of services that contribute a very high satisfaction rate among tenants.

The partners operate Galatia to the TPC2005 Form of Contract, while sharing business accommodation to facilitate highly integrated working. This very high degree of collaborative working has created opportunities for business improvements, such as more flexible and creative processes.

Best practice is shared in pursuit of a 'right first time' culture. Information is analysed and shared to enable innovative improvements to service delivery – as well as helping to design preventative measures that reduce specific workloads.

Health and safety is of paramount importance and an excellent performance has been achieved. Teams and individuals are given training, support and mentorship – with performance tracking that provides information for ongoing improvement.

The partnership greatly values sub-contractor partners, benefiting local employment – as well as working with them to fund community activities.

The partnership is greatly benefiting both parent companies and tenants. Galatia operates not only in servicing Acis homes, but also commercially in its region. It is competing effectively to provide services to other registered social landlords.

249 words