

Appendix 5, Lessons Learnt

Analysis of recent major projects confirms that starting with a firm delivery plan which encompasses all aspects of a well-defined project is prerequisite. Prompt, effective communication with stakeholders helps ensure that schemes benefit from strong local support and financial commitment.

This authority has recently delivered a number of major projects, which include Pennine Reach, Blackburn bus station and Junction 5 M65. The Council benefits from a non-adversarial, non-confrontational introspective analysis of past projects, where the aim is to learn rather than to blame.

Direct lessons learned

The authority has established and consolidated much firmer links with all utility companies to ensure there is a comprehensive understanding of the projects potential interaction with utility apparatus. This is because of significant delays which occurred on a section, of the largely successful, Pennine Reach scheme. These delays were due to extensive diversion work which was not foreseen at design stage; these delays had severe cost implications for the authority.

The authority has established much more robust accountability of project cost monitoring procedures following some criticism on a major project at Guide, partly carried out by the Council's in house workforce whose charges appeared high.

The authority has instigated a significantly more robust financial checking and vetting process of potential suppliers and contractors as a direct result of contractors for two major and one minor projects becoming insolvent during the course of site works, this caused delays and additional, uncertain financial burden.

Indirect lessons learned

All schemes benefit from early contractor involvement, which minimises the potential for delays arising from programming constraints due to the availability of utility companies, subcontractors and specialist suppliers throughout the supply chain.

The practical experience available from the authority's staff enables us to provide a robust project plan that ensures sufficient resources are available to meet all foreseeable eventualities which consequently will allow us to deliver this project on time and within budget.

Robust contract management focusses the contractor on delivering high quality work to programme and to budget.

Early resolution of unforeseen problems, such as ground conditions, prevents them developing and escalating into major problems.

Defining the full scheme in advance and avoiding adding extra peripheral, nice to have, features during the course of the works.