

SFT Outcomes

Demonstrating progress with impact



2020 CASE STUDY

Outcome 07



Public asset condition and performance is improved through more effective whole-estate management and maintenance

Operational Contract Management

Improved performance through effective whole-estate management and maintenance

Across Scotland, there are many essential buildings such as schools and hospitals, built and maintained through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). These PPP contracts, which are often complex and need active management, require the public sector to make monthly payments to the private sector to ensure their buildings are properly looked after.

Since 2009 when the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) was established, SFT's Operational Contract Management (OCM) team has offered and provided support to public bodies with operational PPP projects when there have been problems or when periodic commercial support is required, resulting in repeated savings as well as significant one-off savings to the public sector.

Recently, East Lothian Council had undergone an internal change in management of its PPP estate and the new incumbent had asked SFT for assistance to assess performance, develop a strategy for improvement and provide support in dealing with the private sector contractor in implementing change and improvements.

The project, which has been fully operational since 2007, consisted of six secondary schools, a special needs facility, a swimming pool and a community learning centre.

SFT's OCM team undertook a full review of the contract documents, followed up with interviews of the authority's management team. As well as gaining an understanding of the authority's approach to managing the project, these interviews provided SFT with useful insights into areas where improvements could be most effectively achieved.

Time was spent visiting facilities to observe the level of service being received by the authority, to assess the condition of the facilities and to assess if the standard being received was to an appropriate level.



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Following these visits, a comparison of findings and observations against the core contract requirements was made and the outcomes of this were used to develop a strategy to implement improvements.

The results were presented to East Lothian Council's senior management team, which led to agreement on a route for improvement being set out and a subsequent detailed approach of dealing with the maintenance provider was established with the head of the authority's PPP team.

As a result, backlog maintenance and lifecycle replacement works have been delivered to an agreed programme minimising disruption to the facilities resulting in significant improvements to the buildings' fabric.

Where possible, assets have been replaced with modern equivalents such as LED lighting, boilers which are more fuel efficient and with better system controls have been installed and upgrades to windows have been completed, all leading to a reduction in the authority's carbon footprint.

SFT's OCM team has continued to provide support to East Lothian Council following the review and has also used the review to demonstrate best practice to other public bodies.

The relationship between the parties is now on a much more equitable footing with the authority receiving a more appropriate customer focus.

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