

ERA supports Sutton Housing Partnership with savings and efficiencies

CLIENT:	Sutton Housing Partnership
SECTOR:	Housing Management
COST CATEGORIES:	Office Supplies, Marketing Print, Internal Documents

Funded by Sutton Borough Council, the Sutton Housing Partnership (SHP) is focussed on providing the very best service to the council; operating with minimum cost for maximum value.

Despite an annual turnover of over £16 million, SHP has no in-house procurement department to conduct rigorous spend reviews. Keen to optimise performance, the organisation's Head of Finance reached out to Expense Reduction Analysts UK (ERA UK).

Thanks to his extensive market knowledge and decades of expertise, consultant, Keith Copestake, secured substantial savings and went on to implement a revolutionary solution which delivered efficiency gains across the entire organisation.

THE CLIENT

Sutton Housing Partnership was established in 2006 to manage housing stock on behalf of Sutton Council. The organisation provides day-to-day management services to Sutton Council tenants and leaseholders including agreement, rent collection, repairs and maintenance and grounds caretaking.

With a team of around 150 operating from its Head Office in Sutton Town Centre, SHP works and engages with residents all over the borough to deliver homes and communities where residents feel happy and secure.

THE CHALLENGE

Keith walked SHP stakeholders through ERA UK's nonsense approach, demonstrating the low-impact manner in which comprehensive reviews would be conducted on pertinent costcentres. Keen to see the process in action, Head of ICT, Mark Feehan, awarded two initial projects: Office Supplies and Marketing Print.

As is standard practice for ERA UK, Keith conducted a thorough review of SHP's requirements as well as the existing arrangements with its incumbent suppliers.

SUMMARY OF SAVINGS

Office Supplies **41%**

Marketing Print **30%**

Internal Documents: personalisation, fulfilment & mailing **36%**



I highly recommend ERA for their focus on continuous Improvement. Many companies end their commitment at the point of contract award but ERA have provided cost and spend analysis each quarter after all projects - reviewing spend, seeking further costsaving alternatives from suppliers and increasing core item lists. Therefore our relationship with ERA continues to benefit the business, long after the procurement project.

MARK FEEHAN
HEAD OF ICT, SUTTON HOUSING

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THE SOLUTION

He took a new, bespoke tender for office supplies out to the market, being sure to include SHP's existing contractor in the process. Leveraging his substantial market knowledge, Keith brought the incumbent's prices in line with his recommended levels. As a result, SHP chose to continue the relationship in a move that proved convenient, efficient and valuable for both parties.

With each new cost centre, ERA's process is repeated with exacting care and attention to detail. For marketing print, a cost centre which covered print fulfilment and newsletter mailing, Keith found that SHP relied on two different suppliers - neither of whom were setup as competitively as they could have been.

Once again, he prepared a new, best-fit tender and went out to the open market. After reviewing possible options, Keith presented SHP with a turnkey alternative in the shape of a single supplier and led a site visit so that stakeholders could meet their counterparts and be assured of the scope and scale of the business. Pleased with the introduction, SHP appointed the new contractor and Keith managed the transition step-by-step to ensure smooth implementation.

"The entire tender process was managed end-to-end by ERA, with all procurement regulations and legislation adhered to. This resulted in valuable time savings across the board. Outcomes and recommendations were provided in an easy-to-read report summary which gave confirmation of the analysis, leading to completion and awarding of contracts." Mark Feehan, Head of ICT.

Now confident in ERA UK's ability to impact not only on costs but overall departmental efficiencies, Mark discussed a company-wide issue with Keith and sought his expert advice:

"We were sending out hundreds of letters across the organisation on a daily basis from every department - be that for rent arrears, tenancy renewals, repairs and inspections etc. Each department would simply print off letters and take them to the mailroom where they would be folded, franked and sent out. With no real process in place, when multiplied across the organisation, this amounted to a time consuming, costly and inefficient system. I wasn't sure if there would be a solution but I knew if there was one, Keith would find it!"

Mark's confidence in Keith was well placed! After spending time with each department heads to fully understand requirements, his comprehensive proposal involved outsourcing the entire process to a new supplier - one who was able to fulfil the role from start to finish. Communications are now hosted as templates on a state-of-the-art system embedded on the SHP server. Instead of being printed inhouse, once created electronically, letters are automatically sent to the new supplier's central office where they are printed and distributed in bulk. With an unrivalled understanding of the market, Keith delivered a solution which offered considerable savings. But for Mark, the real success is the vastly streamlined process and the time regained by personnel - this greater efficiency benefitting staff, tenants and community members alike.

MARK FEEHAN, HEAD OF ICT SUTTON HOUSING, SUMMARISES THE VALUE OF THE COMPANY'S PARTNERSHIP WITH EXPENSE REDUCTION ANALYSTS:

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ADDED VALUE

- Enhanced service and support from suppliers.
- Improved process efficiencies.
- Independent and objective market reviews.
- Better-fit suppliers to SHP's needs.