

APM Project Management Awards



WINNER'S

CASE STUDY



Category **Project Manager of the Year 2010**

Winner **Matthew Pendergast, Turner & Townsend**

Sponsor **FUJITSU**

Overview

With a passionate interest in education through his work as vice chair of governors at a Merseyside Primary School and a background as a council officer prior to joining Turner & Townsend in 2007, Matthew Pendergast was excited to be asked to manage the development of Culcheth High School – the biggest-ever project for Warrington Borough Council.

The landmark project, which was a pathfinder school for the Building Schools for the Future programme in Warrington, gave Matthew the opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of young people. It also allowed him to exercise his teamwork and communication

skills, which he believes are a vital part of a project manager's role.

Objectives

Turner & Townsend was commissioned to project manage the design and build aspects of Culcheth High School. The project aimed to create stunning and attractive landmark buildings with high visibility within the community; facilities for an inclusive education by ensuring safe access by all and facilitated by the use of technology; and extended



day and open-access centres for the community and family learning, focusing on life-long learning and active community engagement.

The project also aimed to produce accessible managed facilities for the community to include sports and leisure, a resource centre and public library and e-learning. Through gaining the client's trust in his project management skills, Matthew also helped to secure an additional commission for Turner & Townsend to project manage the installation and commissioning of the ICT package and the subsequent migration of the school to the new building.

"Matty's interpersonal and leadership skills have combined to great effect, allowing the project team to deal with often difficult and complex issues in a respectful manner, while reaching a successful conclusion."

Mike Coope, Programme Manager for Warrington Borough Council.

Resources

The delivery of the project £28.5 million project was broken down into different work streams which all reported into the project board of senior council officers and senior school management and governors. These work streams included building and design, ICT, migration, and human resources. Out of each stream came several manageable sub-projects, each with clear objectives and with different skill sets and experience.

Challenges

As there was a significant amount of information to be communicated during the delivery of the work streams, it was important that it was captured and stored effectively and accurately. Equally important, particularly for the information generated during the design phases, was the need to make sure the latest version of each document was being used by all concerned.

To achieve this, all design information, minutes and reports were issued through a document controller, who held or owned the master document register. Once drawings, minutes and reports were approved, the documents would be uploaded to a shared document management system in a file structure where approved documents could be easily discerned from earlier draft versions. This meant there was no confusion and ambiguity in relation to the version control of key documents.

Co-ordination

Following the initiation stage, Matthew pulled together a meeting of the building and design work stream. He would follow the same format at later stages of the project for the ICT and migration work streams. These meetings disseminated the plans for production of information, processes they were going to follow, communication, interfaces, reporting and gateway approvals. The teams were encouraged to buy-in, not only to deliver the outputs to time but also to work to cost targets and quality aspirations.

Matthew monitored closely the progress of the teams working towards their deliverable targets. Each consultant on the project team formally reported to him on a monthly basis, detailing his or her outputs for the next period. Frequent informal reporting was also encouraged as this enabled issues to be raised early and therefore mitigation plans to be put in place.

To monitor the flow of data from the different streams, all design information, minutes and reports were issued through a document controller, who held or owned the master document register. Once drawings, minutes and reports were approved, the documents would be uploaded to a shared document management system in a file structure where approved documents could be easily discerned from earlier draft versions. This meant there was no confusion and ambiguity in relation to the version control of key documents.

In addition to the project's formal reporting schedule, Matthew used everything from regular, quick phone calls and informal face-to-face meetings, to social events with the project team, and seminars and careers guidance to encourage the students to learn from the project.

It was also agreed that the monthly project managers report was shared with all parties to the project including the contractor and design team. This demonstrated the ethos within the project to communicate effectively and have a culture of 'no surprises'. It also meant that issues were shared, communication was two-way and that the project team was focused on the same goals.

Successes

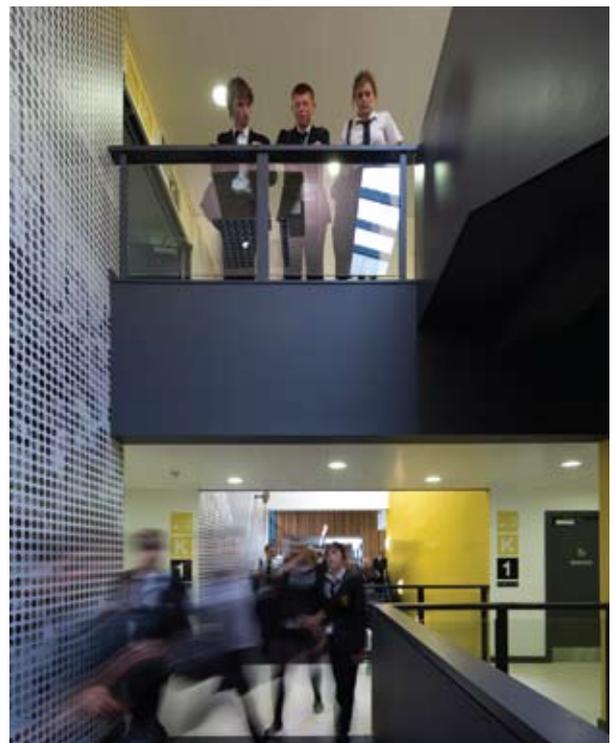
Matthew's success in gaining the client's respect, coupled with a keen eye for identifying gaps in service provision, led to a further £100,000-worth of work for Turner & Townsend.

The £200,000 cost savings that were achieved on the project came about as a result of the monitoring of risk and putting robust and proactive mitigation measures in place. Having recently gained his Professional Certificate in Construction Contract Law and Management, Matthew was able to play a key role in leading vital legal negotiations and agreements.



"Matty at all times has demonstrated a wealth of experience which he discharged in a highly professional manner."

Amanda Stephens, Business Manager,
Culcheth High School.



The **APM Project Management Awards** have been celebrating project management excellence since 1993 and the broad range of categories is designed to make entry possible for projects and companies of all sizes and complexity.



The awards reflect the invaluable contribution project managers make in all sectors of society and the event provides an opportunity for industry professionals to meet with colleagues and entertain guests as well as celebrate at one of the year's most exciting events.

Highly regarded in the project management industry, the awards reflect the dedication and talent that helps to shape the project management community and the world around us. The finalists, winners and sponsors of the awards attract national publicity for their achievement and involvement. Winning an award provides invaluable recognition and kudos to the careers of winners.



For more details on the awards and how to enter or attend, visit www.apm.org.uk/awards.asp or email awards@apm.org.uk

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