

RICS Quality Forum held on 16 October 2023 at RICS HQ, Charlotte Square, Edinburgh

Representatives from:

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|---------------------|
| RICS |
| AtkinsRealis |
| Balfour Beatty |
| Currie & Brown |
| Doig & Smith |
| Morgan Sindall/CQIC |
| Thomas & Adamson |
| Thomson Bethune |
| Thomson Gray |
| SFT/CQIC |

Brief Notes from the Forum

Discussion points captured on the day.

- CQIC
 - Work started in 2019 post Cole Reports on Edinburgh Schools, DGOOne and the Grenfell tragedy.
 - Officially launched in February 2023
 - 81 organisations have committed to the Charter which is at the heart of CQIC
 - 26% of those organisations are contractors
 - 12% are representative organisations who see the benefit for their members.
 - CQIC and the Charter are a part of the Scottish Government procurement of a new Civil Engineering Framework
 - As a part of engagement on CQIC and the Charter regional forums have taken place in Dumfries and Aberdeen. These involved participation from Client organisations, consultants, designers, contractors and the supply chain.
- Scottish Construction Accord and Transformation Programme.
 - Accord launched in October 2022 to bring improved outcomes for public sector and construction sector.
 - CQIC quality campaign is a workstream of the Accord, setting transformation commitments for creating a quality culture for the sector. It is one of the transformation working groups that is further forward in delivery of its contribution.
- Work is ongoing on The Value of Consultancy (TVC). This is addressing issues with regards to scopes of service, fees etc.
- Improving Construction Quality applies across:
 - All parts of the process
 - All people in the process

- We have:
 - Health sector has NHS Assure which was created following issues across a number of projects.
 - Passivhaus adoption over the last few years has driven a requirement for upskilling for both designers, contractors and the supply chain. It requires a rigorous checking and recording of construction information regime.

- Where are we with our CQIC Values across the sector - on a scale of 0 to 10?
 - Ambition 6
 - Commitment 7
 - Collaboration 5
 - Openness 5
 - Respect 4

Would like to get all beyond 8...to help make change sustainable...

- The Construction Quality Charter
 - It was developed to be holistic and equally applicable to all parts of the sector.
 - There was no “political” input. It was developed by the sector for the sector.
 - It would be good to highlight the added value commitment to it brings.

- The reasons for Change
 - Need to deliver quality if we are to achieve net-zero/ sustainability aims.
 - Reputation of the sector in the press and across the public is poor.
 - If construction is to be seen as a high status sector we need to improve its reputation and market it better to the future workforce.

- Areas to focus on for improvement - ‘to increase the chance of success’
 - Pre-construction stages are important - setting up for success.
 - Move towards a culture of reporting and holding to account on quality.
 - Understand what ‘getting it right first time’ means...
 - Measure success on construction quality, not just programme and cost
 - Change the procurement and appointment culture of target driven penalties
 - Clerks of works have a key role to play (as do supervisors and resident engineers etc.). This not just in finding things that have gone wrong and getting them fixed but in supporting getting the work right first time.
 - Projects can be handed over with minimal snags – example of the new Beatlie School was cited.
 - Quality Plans
 - Needed for all stages and for all parties. Needs to focus on what that party is doing to deliver quality. Needs to actually be implemented.

- Programme
 - Realistic response to the brief essential.
 - Additional time for activities at the pre-construction stage.
 - Adequate allowance for design development.
 - Enough time to be ready at key stages

- Clarity of expectations - at all stages
 - Employers requirements are key – Client needs to better understand what they need and what they are receiving.
 - Better supporting the client and acting in their best interests to resolve problems – There is a tendency to “over promise” and tell the Client what they want to hear.
 - “We don’t allow people to do their jobs properly”.
 - Moving client to [Capex-Opex](#) model critical

- Design development
 - Design coordination is essential – ensuring there is a team and collaborative ethos
 - The role of Contractor Designed Portions (CDP) has proliferated – often not checked for coordination and compliance with the requirements.
 - Status of design development prior to construction is key.
 - Passivhaus adoption over the last few years has required focus on details.
 - Scopes of service must reflect the client expectations and the brief/ programme
 - Digital platforms are increasingly important tools for addressing the performance gap and move to decarbonisation and net zero

- Procurement
 - Decisions on procurement route are critical to success of project
 - Quality culture can help to manage risk – applying the golden thread and holding this approach throughout the project lifecycle.
 - Quality and procurement are inextricably linked.
 - Understanding the role of procurement in achieving better construction quality needs to be a factor.
 - ‘Paying properly to do a proper job’ by all concerned. This includes fees to cover the required services and tenders for the construction works.
 - Being clear about expectations - scope - and budget required.
 - Some Clients have Procurement Departments who do not see quality as a priority. Advice is not always followed.
 - Support clients to see the benefits of early engagement with contractors and ensure this input is budgeted. .
 - There is a risk that if things do not improve that major contractors may withdraw from the market.
 - Learning from the significant difference between the way things are done in the public and private sectors.
 - Cross learning from other sectors such as energy could be helpful.

- Competency and skillsets - across all players in the process
 - Importance of education and training.
 - Clarity on pipeline key to investment in training. Construction Pipeline Database highlighted ([Infrastructure Investment Pipeline | Scottish Futures Trust](#))
 - We need to actually take on board lessons learned.
- Leadership
 - Key area for change in culture.
 - Communication across all parts of the chain.
 - Roles and responsibilities need to be well defined. This is too often not the case.

THE 12 COMMITMENTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION QUALITY CHARTER

The commitments are -

Quality control and assurance

Doing it right first time - at the right time

- Processes are in place to ensure compliance and to prevent errors
- Mechanisms are in place to detect and address any variations to agreed standards
- Appropriate project resources are available for budget, programme, design, materials, and skills

Behaviour

Creating the conditions that embed a “right first time” culture

- Leadership demonstrates a commitment to delivering the CQIC vision and values at all times
- All personnel are engaged and committed to creating a positive working environment with the right conditions for realising change

Alignment

All parts of the process are designed and implemented to drive quality, improve performance, and deliver compliance

- Leadership support initiatives that are designed to align policy and guidance across the sector
- Project delivery systems, including procurement, are aligned to drive quality
- Everyone has access to the right information at the right time

Competence, Roles & Responsibilities

Ensuring that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities and is competent to deliver them

- Appropriate project leadership and management is in place



- Culture encourages everyone to accept responsibility for delivering quality
- Everyone has the right skills, experience, and qualifications to do a quality job
- We are all committed to developing people