

New Models for Collaboration

On Thursday 10 November 2016 CIHT hosted an event entitled 'New Models for Collaboration. The event, sponsored by [FUSION](#), was conceived by the CIHT's Procurement and Delivery Technical Panel. Steve Lee and Nick Hopcraft, members of the Panel, chaired the morning and afternoon sessions.

Collaboration is this key theme for the Steve Rowsell, CIHT President, and has been a focus for the panel for a number of years.

Steve Rowsell opened the event with a key note address on the importance of strategic collaboration across all organisations and the supply chain involved in the development and delivery of the transport programmes. Steve addressed the need for future proofing and how this will impact on transport requirements and influence the skills that are needed in the industry. Delegates then heard from a variety of speakers gaining and insight into current and innovative thinking as clients and practitioners discussed best practice in collaborative working in procurement and delivery. Presenters set out how and why these organisations has adopted new approaches in delivering their programmes, providing a number of case studies.

To view a synopsis of each presentation click [here](#).

To view the presentations please click [here](#).

The day closed with attendees were asked to break into groups and to consider three questions.

- What are the key ingredients needed for true collaboration? (The inputs)
- What are the blockers to true collaboration? (The blockers – what will cause us to fail?)
- What would you expect to see and get from true collaboration? (The outputs – what will success look like?)

The following sets out the thoughts of the groups. CIHT will look to develop a programme of future work and guidance on the points raised.

What are the key ingredients needed for true collaboration? (The inputs)

"To make collaboration work, it is vital to align your processes with your outcomes".

"Collaboration is a tool for resolving problems."

Vision, leadership and maturity:

- Sell the vision of where you want to go, setting the tone – what do you want to get out of this.
- For the contract to work successfully you require common values, objectives and measures.
- All sides should be striving for continuous improvement, creating the environment to drive the behaviour.

Trust:

- Required within all organisations, empowerment of those working the contract etc.
- An honesty and openness, it is o.k. to say that it is difficult.
- Know who you are working with.
- Shared objectives is true ownership.

Time to develop and deliver:

- Time to deliver through the journey of collaboration.
- Investment is both time and money in the people, training which in turn drives behaviour change throughout the organisations.
- Collaboration should be part of early education process

Rewarding collaborative behaviour:

- Behaviour assessments in the contracts.
- A contract that incentivises collaboration.
- (TfL have 5 key behaviours and collaboration is one of them).

Measures of success:

- Success has to be measurable.
- BS11000 is essential in helping facilitating this.
- Competencies, procedures, people, profiling assessments.

Money:

- Resources and the time to create behaviours

What are the blockers to true collaboration? (The blockers – what will cause us to fail?)

Attitudes and behaviours:

- Trust - just as relevant to the blockers as the enablers – not enough/too much
- Suspicions about motives, from both sides – commercial v public
- No consequences for poor collaborative behaviour
- Immaturity/naivety - training
- Adversarial discussions
- Lack of diversity
- Having the wrong people in place resulting in Inertia - “We’ve always done it this way”
- Lack of shared outcomes
- Lack of competencies, disparity even within organisations/clients
- Blame cultures
- Using the wrong language
- Silos – within the industry and across sectors, social trends, technology
- One sided risk models/lack of understanding of risk
 - Risk models for the contract drives the behaviour
 - Not knowing what the risk model is
- “Co-location does not mean collaboration”.

Politics

- Short termism
- Politician/senior executive oversight – different agendas
- Underestimating the pressure on the client by members and the contractor by finances
- The industry is not very good at explaining/selling itself.
- Managing expectations

Contracts and Information:

- Having the wrong contracts in place.
- Price driven contracts and procurements

- ICT systems block access to other areas - due to compatibility, security or commercial issues
- HQ Control systems
- Standards – BS11000 does not go far enough

What would you expect to see and get from true collaboration? (The outputs – what will success look like?)

Exceeding all parties' expectations:

- Shareholders, stakeholders, members, tax payer
- Acknowledgement of success
- Client appetite to extend the contract and continue working with that group

A can do culture:

- Highways industry should be taking the lead “other should be learning from highways” – as it stands the sector has a lot to learn from e.g. water
 - Highways a flagship for collaboration
- All parties satisfied but still ambitious
- “True collaboration is not easy but it's rewarding”

Benefits to all:

- Making the cross over between Local and National – joined up contracts as partnership of equals
 - Results that are equally beneficial to both parties
- Relationships/friendships/partnership

True integration:

- Flexibility between roles – client/contractor/designer (skills across the board)
 - From the clients point of view a sharing of resources – transferring and sharing of skills and expertise, flexibility between roles.
 - “How many in our industry have worked for all sides?”
 - If new to the profession, need to have broad experiences.
- Integration to the point where you can't tell who employs who.

The future:

- Attracts staff/future generations – it's an industry people want to join, a better place to work.
- Promoting the industry through collaboration – making it an industry that people want to work for.
 - Collaboration for future skills/training
 - Collaboration for industry

Critical success factors:

- Measurement of what success looks like
- Understand where the customer fits into this
- Leadership
- Training and early engagement i.e. education
- Sharing of best practice guidance – there is plenty out there, but more effort is needed to share the experiences.

Conclusions:

Collaboration should be the first thing that is considered and it doesn't happen by chance. Collaboration requires time, effort and a clear purpose. Measuring behaviour should be part

of the culture and to make this happen requires clear engagement, leadership and improved training and education, both at an early stage and throughout the process and sector. Institutions such as the CIHT should be taking a lead in promoting collaboration as a tool for success, highlighting through education/events/seminars and the distribution of best practice.