

## Improved staff satisfaction at Poplar HARCA

### Results & ROI

- Introduction of an Information Centre to monitor key procurement metrics
- A new set of simplified process, guidelines and templates
- Strong cultural benefits: Before the Lean review, only 60% of surveyed staff had an understanding of their roles and responsibilities when procuring goods and services, with only 55% believed they followed the standard process. Just 4 weeks after the new process launch, all staff have evidenced they follow the process and understand their roles and responsibilities.

### The client

Poplar HARCA is a housing association in the East End of London who is responsible for the maintenance and management of 3,000 leasehold and 7,000 social rent properties. Procurement is a vital part of the organisation's structure and strategy. With the introduction of a newly drafted procurement policy and strategy document, they decided it was the right time for a Lean review on the procurement process.

### The challenge

The management of procurement, as evidenced by an internal health check, was acknowledged as a challenge across Poplar HARCA. The current process lacked simplicity and clear procedures, alongside what responsibility staff have when working in the process. The desired outputs of the review were as follows:

- A documented and adopted new simplified procurement process, aligned with the existing procurement policy and to include a suite of error-proofed documentation
- A set of procurement metrics measuring value for money

The new process had to be in place at the start of the year. There was to be an opportunity to market test the new process on a number of existing contracts. A scheduled internal audit in February also put a time pressure on the new process being in place.

### The approach

A diagnostic of the current state was completed. This involved getting familiar with the recent internal audit, staff interviews and surveying procurement stakeholders to baseline their current performance. We then held a series of workshops to design the new process and documentation. This was held with stakeholders from the development, technical, finance, housing and corporate services teams. The new process was implemented through a rapid

improvement workshop. This allowed all actions to be completed by the group within the sessions. The work included solution testing all guides, designing templates and system, developing a longer-term implementation and communications plan and the setting up of a purchasing Information Centre within the finance team.

### The benefits

The introduction of a suite of performance metrics enabled the finance team to identify where suppliers are likely to go over the value of their contract. The metrics also capture changes to the supplier register and spending that has not followed the procedure. The measures also identified and captured where value has been obtained through improved contractor management and negotiation, with the value identified and the success measured on the information centre.

“ Ad Esse's Rapid Improvement Workshops meant we were able to diagnose the problems of our procurement procedure, redesign the new process and implement improvements in a very short time. Adam supported the project group to simplify our purchasing process, develop user-friendly guides and templates and prepare a marketing plan for launch. The new process is now in place. ”

Naz Ahmed, Project Coordinator