



Adrian Waite (Independent Consultancy Services) Limited

Management Consultancy Services: Local Authority Housing

These are examples of the local authority housing management consultancy services that we offer in all parts of the United Kingdom

Self-Financing and Business Planning

We have assisted many of our clients, for example Basildon Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council, in the introduction of Self-Financing. Moving forward there is a need to ensure that effective business planning is in place.

Business Planning is focused on two key processes. First, the strategic analysis that is required to identify the objectives of the business plan and what is required to achieve those objectives and Second, a long-term financial plan to realise those objectives. The key to writing an effective business plan is to carry out sufficient robust analysis to underpin the strategy and the financial plan. It is also important to stress test the financial model by carrying out sensitivity and risk analysis. This usually involves a significant amount of financial analysis and financial modelling.



**Adrian Waite,
Managing Director of 'AWICS'.**

Clients that we have assisted recently with business planning include:

- Ashfield District Council
- Basildon Borough Council
- Denbighshire Council
- Enfield Borough Council
- Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
- Oldham Borough Council
- Slough Borough Council
- South Derbyshire District Council

Housing Revenue Account 'Health Checks'

AWICS has developed a methodology for carrying out a 'health check' of a local authority housing revenue account. It is often useful to carry out a 'health check' as part of preparing or reviewing a business plan. This 'health check' can be applied in England, Scotland or Wales as it recognises the differences in approach in each country. We have recently provided 'health checks' for Denbighshire County Council and Oldham Borough Council.

Value for Money

In the current climate of economic constraint there is a continuing need for a focus on value for money. We believe that value for money is most likely to be achieved where there is a focus on the needs and aspirations of customers and a rigorous review of systems and costs. Our experience in strategic management, housing finance and residents' advice makes us well placed to consider value for money.

Recent clients include:

- Birmingham City Council – assistance with the development of a value for money procurement strategy
- London Area Procurement Network – evaluation of savings from contracts
- Scottish Housing Regulator – Associate Inspector with specialism in value for money

**PO Box 17, Appleby in Westmorland, Cumbria. CA16 6YL. Telephone: 017683-51498. Mobile: 07502-142658.
Twitter @AdrianWaite. E-Mail: Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk. Website: www.awics.co.uk**

**Managing Director: Adrian Waite MA CPFA CIHM FInstLM.
Registered address: c/o Butterworths, 3 Walker Terrace, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear. NE8 1EB.
Company Number: 3713554. VAT Registration Number: 721 9669 13**

Preparation of Financial models

Financial modelling is essential especially where new developments or initiatives are being considered. Our consultants possess both the financial and information technology skills to prepare effective financial models. For example, we recently prepared a financial model for new build for Waltham Forest Borough Council that enabled them evaluate their own new build options and those of partner housing associations.

Accounting for the Housing Revenue Account and Housing General Fund

The Housing Revenue Account is often considered to be one of the most complex of a council's accounts; and the introduction of self-financing in England in April 2012 created new challenges and opportunities. Housing General Fund services are also facing increased demands with constrained resources.

Our consultants are able to offer specialist advice. We have recently advised:

- Ashfield District Council on Accounting issues.
- Denbighshire County Council on New Build.
- Hartlepool Borough Council on setting Rents.

Service Charges for Leaseholders and Tenants

The calculation and management of service charges for leaseholders and tenants can be complex.

We have recently carried out reviews of leasehold and tenanted service charges for Denbighshire County Council, Mid Suffolk & Babergh District Councils, Northampton Borough Council and Oldham Borough Council that resulted in existing service charges being established on a firmer footing, new service charges being introduced and increased service charges being collected.

We have advised Teresa Peace MP, the Shadow Housing Minister, on issues connected with service charges in Thamesmead in her constituency. We have also provided training in service charges for authorities including Manchester City Council, St. Albans District Council and Wrexham Borough Council.

Housing Stock Options Appraisals

Local authorities usually seek external advice when they carry out a housing stock options appraisal. We are well placed to deliver housing stock options appraisals because of our experience in both housing finance and independent residents' advice. We carry out housing stock options appraisals from an independent and objective viewpoint – helping local authorities and their residents to identify the best option for achieving their aspirations locally.

We have also acted as advisor to the Government Offices for the East, East Midlands, London and Southwest on the financial evaluation of housing stock options.

Development and Delivery of Training Programmes

It is essential that housing managers, councillors and tenant representatives have a working knowledge of how local authority housing finance works. As well as our regional seminars and in-house courses we can evaluate your training needs and design a training programme to suit your needs. For example, we have recently delivered in-house training to Camden Borough Council on Local Authority Housing Finance; Cumbria County Council on Housing Association Finance; Greenwich Borough Council on Value for Money; Mid Suffolk District Council on Service Charges; St. Albans District Council on the Right to Buy; Pembrokeshire Council on Welsh Local Authority Housing Finance; Perth & Kinross Council in Welfare Reform; and Wrexham Borough Council on Service Charges.

To find out more about the Local Authority Housing Management Consultancy Services that AWICS offer please visit: <http://www.awics.co.uk/LocalAuthorityHousing.asp>

Or contact: Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk or 01763-51498

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