



Adrian Waite (Independent Consultancy Services) Limited

Annual Report 2003/2004

By Adrian Waite, Director

In my 2002/2003 report, I explained why 'AWICS' has always described itself as an 'ethical' management consultancy, and what makes it different from most management consultancies?

We are passionate about public services. That is why I decided to enter local government service in 1981. That is why I founded 'AWICS' as an ethical management consultancy to provide support to those who provide public services – in all parts of Britain and also abroad! We want to make a real contribution to improving public services because they are so important to the fabric of our society.

As a senior officer in local government I was frequently concerned at the partiality, low value and high cost of consultancy support that was sometimes received by public services. That is why I decided that there was a need for a new 'ethical' management consultancy. Our mission statement is 'Independence, Integrity, Value'. We approach our work from an independent standpoint – not burdened with our own preconceptions and objectives – but with a genuine wish to help the client to achieve their objective. Our consultants are of the highest calibre. We observe the highest standards of integrity that should be expected of any consultant working with public services. We offer 'value for money' with fee rates that are the most competitive that are available today.

This is not to say that 'AWICS' is a non-profit making organisation. 'AWICS' is a commercial company. The fact that the company is profitable is neither concealed nor apologised for. So – how can we offer such outstanding value for money?

We are able to offer outstanding value for money because we operate with low overheads and make maximum use of modern technology to deliver services to our clients. Our highly competitive fees do not have to contribute to a large corporate overhead – because a large corporate overhead does not exist!

We are big enough to make a difference – but small enough to care!

This report covers the year 2003/2004, the fifth year of trading and another very successful one.

Turnover was £68,043 during the year and gross profit was £28,705.

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Director: Adrian Waite MA CPFA ACIH FIPSM. Secretary: Elaine Waite
Company Number: 3713554. VAT Registration Number: 721 9669 13

During the year we had one full-time and six part-time employees. We have seven associate consultants and two sub-contractors.

We now have over eighty clients, mainly public organisations that take advantage of our services in providing:

- Support in Business and Best Value Reviews and the Comprehensive Performance Assessment
- Financial Advice on Procurement
- Support in Housing Finance
- Public Authority Accounting
- Performance Management
- Lecturing and Training
- Historical Interpretation

And we made a real contribution to improving public services in many areas. The following illustrate just a few of the projects to which we have contributed during the year:

Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council have been named as the most 'excellent' housing authority in England, and they chose 'AWICS' to assist them with their review of housing stock options in 2002/2003. Following this they commissioned 'AWICS' to assist them with their successful bid for a place in the fourth round of Arms Length Management Organisations. 'Good' Halton Borough Council also chose us to do their housing stock options appraisal, as did Doncaster Borough Council. We have been able to help those authorities and their tenants to take decisions on the future of their housing stocks that will result in improved housing and housing services for thousands of tenants.

Doncaster Borough Council also requested assistance with improving their repairs and maintenance programmes in response to an adverse Best Value inspection; and High Peak Borough Council requested advice with benchmarking and restructuring of their 'Building Solutions' service as part of making preparations to establish an Arms Length Management Organisation. We assisted Canterbury City Council with the implementation of rent restructuring; and Preston City Council with Housing Revenue Account Business Planning. The analysis that 'AWICS' carried out has enabled those councils to improve their services to the benefit of their tenants. In the case of Canterbury and Doncaster, this work was carried out in association with the Housing Quality Network. Training courses on housing finance and the implications of rent restructuring were provided to hundreds of councillors, officers and tenants of local authorities – also in association with the Housing Quality Network.

We carried out Best Value and service reviews for a number of authorities. These included the Information Technology service at Charnwood Borough Council, Leisure Services at Chelmsford Borough Council and Direct Works at Christchurch Borough Council. In the case of Charnwood and Chelmsford the work was carried out in association with the Association for Public Service Excellence.

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South Derbyshire District Council requested assistance with evaluating the potential for achieving savings through the early repayment of debt, and with analysis of the housing revenue account.

During the year seminars were presented, in association with the Northern Housing Consortium on the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Workshops were also presented on financial management for Town and Parish Councils in association with the Cumbria Association of Local Councils. Training courses were also provided to the Board of the Arms Length Management Organisation for Kensington & Chelsea; and Members of Congleton Borough Council.

I was pleased to accept invitations to speak on the role of local government in helping to start the community economy at a conference organised by the Institute of Public Services Management; and a conference on seeking sustainable funding organised by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations.

I was also pleased to accept an Honorary Fellowship of the Institute of Public Services Management.

Our contribution to making improvements in public services has therefore been significant. Our potential to do even more in the future is even greater.

I also believe in the importance of making a voluntary contribution where appropriate. I therefore sat on the board of Calico Housing where I was able to make a contribution to their important work in managing social housing in a challenging part of the country. 'AWICS' is based in Cumbria, and is a member of the Local Strategic Partnership for Carlisle & Eden and of the Appleby in Westmorland Chamber of Trade on which I am a committee member.

This annual report is designed to give you a flavour of what 'AWICS' is about. We also have a website and welcome enquiries at our office. Both addresses are shown below.

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Director
June 2004

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