



## Dennis Holmes, DMS FIMSPA Associate Specialist Consultant



Eardington Mill, Eardington  
Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 5LA



(+44) (0)7753 686 111  
(+44) (0)1634 670 850



dennisholmes2018@outlook.com



[www.strategicleisure.co.uk](http://www.strategicleisure.co.uk)

### Profile

An experienced and effective Local Authority Director, Corporate Leadership Team member and Project Manager. Has over 25 years' experience in the successful delivery of Sports, Leisure, Tourism, Library, Museum, Parks, Public Realm, Waste Collection, Recycling, Environmental Health and Protection, and Housing Services. Has also managed Major Events and Performance Management/Corporate Review programmes. A Fellow of the Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity, Green Flag Scheme judge and PRINCE2 Project Management Practitioner.

Since 2001 has worked as an Interim Senior Manager, Transition Manager, Project Manager, Procurement Lead, and Consultant in District Councils, Unitary Authorities, London Boroughs and Abu Dhabi; leading significant change, strategy development, restructuring, procurement, outsourcing, construction and major community events projects: ensuring the roll out of services which are tailored to strategic, community and regeneration objectives.

Specialises in delivering change within organisations: especially the shift from service delivery by specialism to delivery by strategic themes; with different specialisms working together in positive partnerships to achieve clearly defined common objectives through a variety of delivery models.

Procurement skills are highly developed; as are negotiating skills: both with staff and trades unions relative to employment and transfer of undertakings issues and contractors or delivery partners relative to contract costs and quality.

Flexibility and adaptability are evidenced by the variety of front line services responsible for and roles undertaken. This is particularly evidenced by success in Abu Dhabi; working with individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds and philosophies and in a challenging physical environment.

Having managed a wide variety of individuals and teams, from depot based services to high level corporate and partnership groups, has an effective situational leadership and coaching style which allows adoption of approaches and stances appropriate to differing circumstances.

Working with and exposure to a wide variety of organisations and cultures has given significant experience of many strategies for, and methods of, service design and delivery. This assists in reviewing and challenging the status quo and defining updated service designs and delivery models.

In summary, Dennis Holmes is an experienced and effective leader and change manager with a record of delivery of a wide range of visible customer and environmentally focussed services and projects; a significant proportion of which relate to the development and implementation of sports facility and sports and physical activity development strategies. He has proven ability to respond to new challenges and establish positive relationships with Government Agencies, National Governing Bodies of Sports, partner organisations, suppliers, stakeholders, service users, staff and contractors.

He is a firm believer in the team ethic, having played Rugby Union at senior club level and brings the positive traits of determination, co-operation and clarity of purpose and communication from that team sport background. More recently he has practised as a ski instructor at the local dry slope; including coaching the race team on both plastic and in the Alps. Consequently he possesses well developed team and individual communication and coaching skills.

## Qualifications

- Fellow of the UK Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity;
- 2010: PRINCE2 Practitioner in Project Management;
- 1988: Post Graduate Diploma in Management Studies: UK predecessor to the MBA;
- 1975: Diploma in Atmospheric Pollution Control;
- 1974: Public Health Inspector's Diploma: Environmental Health degree predecessor;
- Judge to the Green Flag Parks Quality Award Scheme;

## Key Skills

- Project Management
- Understanding of the political and corporate environment
- Assessment of leisure operators
- Identification of development and delivery opportunities and options

## Business History

### **October '01 to current: Director: D and G Management Solutions Limited**

#### **Key assignments:**

#### **March '19 to current: Landscape Management Review for Wealden District Council**

- Review current contract strategy for landscape management in the borough;
- Undertake appraisal of options available to the Council for retendering these activities and recommend future contracting strategy;
- Assist the Council with tender documentation, tender evaluation and appointment of new contractor(s).

#### **July '16 to December '18: Lead Commissioner for Greenspaces London Borough of Barnet**

- Reconfiguration of the Council's Streetscene Services; including Greenspaces management;
- Developed the Parks and Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies and the Natural Capital Account for Barnet;
- Developed the 10 year £110M Greenspaces Investment Plan for Barnet;
- Developed strategy to reduce the net cost of its Greenspaces portfolio to zero;
- Developed Sports Hub masterplans for 3 major sites; involving close partnership working with Middlesex University, Saracens Rugby Club, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport;
- Close working with Planning on the Green Belt Sites Review and Local Plan update;
- Led the £8M Colindale Parks Improvement Programme. One scheme under construction and two in design phase.

#### **January '15 to June '16: Sport and Outdoor Recreation Divisional Project Support: Liverpool City Council**

- Mentoring and project support to the Assistant Director and Divisional Manager in the implementation of the major change programme defined during my earlier Interim Divisional Manager assignment with Liverpool in 2013/14 (see below);
- Appraisal of the options available to the City Council for alternative delivery of its sports/leisure centres and oversight of the market testing and procurement process;
- Currently leading the market engagement exercise and developing the service specification and other tender documentation relative to the market testing of the network of 9 City Council sports centres with a view to new arrangements going into place in Q1 2017.

**June '14 to October '14: Interim Programme Manager; Culture, Sports and Leisure:**

**North East Lincolnshire Council**

- Oversight of the new Grimsby Swimming Pool construction and Ice Rink reprovision; project;
- Recasting of the relationship with the strategic delivery partner for capital projects;
- Reconfiguration of the Council's Library Service on a statutory/non-statutory basis to deliver budget savings from moving branch libraries to community organisations, including scoping the Grimsby Central Library relocation project.

**February '13 to April '14: Interim Divisional Manager for Sport and Outdoor Recreation: Liverpool City Council: including, in addition to management of the Division;**

- Re-engineering the Division to reduce its cost to the Council by 50% (approx. £10.5M) by 2016/17, creating a platform for the service moving to operation at nil subsidy by the City;
- Development of Parks, Sport and Physical Activity and Facility Strategies for the City in partnership with Sport England, UK Sport and National Governing Bodies of Sport;
- Successfully tendering the operation of the Council's two golf courses and the Liverpool Marathon;
- Planning the British Triathlon Championships and the 2014 start of the Tour of Britain in the City;
- Working with the City's Divisional Manager for Street Scene to scope and implement an integrated Street Scene Contracting and Monitoring Unit.

**August '12 to February '13: Technical Project Manager: London Borough of Islington**

- Planning and delivery of two major sports centre improvement projects; and
- Planning and delivery of an inner city canal basin community regeneration project.

**July '12 to August '12: Transport Team Leader: The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games**

- Leading a Transport Team, ensuring the safe and timely transport of International Technical Officials between their accommodation in central London and Games Venues.

**February '11 to June '11: Census Coordinator: Office of National Statistics**

- Leading an Area Team; raising awareness of the Census, collecting and analysing return data and instigating enforcement action in cases of non-compliance.

**June '09 to July '10: Community Services Expert contracted by Booz and Co to review the operation of the Municipality of Abu Dhabi City (ADM) and develop new service offers:** including Community Services, Street Scene and Customer Services Divisions. In addition to accountability for the mentoring of the Emirati Director of Community Services and her senior staff, a lead member the international, multi-disciplinary team of strategy consultants which delivered:-

- A Parks and Street Scene Strategy for ADM, including new outcome based landscape O and M parks contracts geared to the achievement of Green Flag status (accreditation was achieved in 2015);
- A fully costed Community Services 5 year strategic plan, operating model and roll out plan for community sports facilities and sports development, libraries, public access ICT, arts, heritage, cultural and sports events parks and beaches;
- The Community Centre concept, outline design and costings for the delivery of the above services: co-located with other ADM Divisions and Government Agencies to allow seamless and accessible service delivery; together with a catchment analysis to identify sites;
- The Project Plan for the creation and operation the Community Centres in partnership with the commercial sector and at no cost to ADM, including the operating model, service standards, key performance indicators and monitoring regimes, staffing requirements, tender documentation, evaluation model and detailed estimates of operational and capital costs;
- Memoranda of Understanding with key partners including the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority, Abu Dhabi Sports Council and Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage;

- A Community Engagement and Cohesion Strategy to address the cultural divisions within the City, including the drafting and project management of the first ADM survey into residents' opinions on its services;
- A 38 day programme of major outdoor events, to mark the UAE 38th National Day;
- A fully costed operating model for ADM Mortuary Services;
- Advice to other teams in the wider Booz project with ADM:-
  - Environmental Health and Health and Safety enforcement;
  - Financial and Environmental Sustainability;
  - Performance Management and Asset Management;
  - Marketing, Public Relations and Corporate Communications.

**June to July '09: Interim Cultural Services Consultant: Boston Borough Council**

- Advised the in-house Arts and Culture unit on responding to their market testing;
- Developed the framework for and drafted the content of the in-house submission.

**September '08 to February '09: Parks Consultant: London Borough of Hackney**

- Parks Service lead for major capital projects; including Clissold and Shoreditch Park, in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Shoreditch Trust respectively.

**December '07 to September '08: Interim Head of Parks: London Borough of Hackney**

- Management and strategic planning of the Parks Service;
- Development of Hackney's Parks Strategy and Action Plan, including biodiversity planning, green grids and community and commercial events; achieving 7 Green Flag accreditations;
- Member of the Council wide Climate Change/Carbon Reduction Group;
- Chaired the multi-agency events co-ordination and safety group;
- Led the restructuring, culture change and improvement processes for the Parks Service, including negotiations with staff and trades unions;
- Parks Service Lead on major improvements to the Council's parks, in partnership with Parks User Groups, Heritage Lottery Fund, Football Foundation and Learning Trust; and London Development Agency in preparation for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

**June to November '07: Interim Head of Parks and Leisure: London Borough of Hackney**

- Management of the Parks and Physical Activity Development Services whilst undertaking a detailed review of their functions and operation;
- Developed and implemented a restructuring and improvement programme to align resources with corporate and community objectives and service delivery.

**June '04 to July '06: Interim Head of Culture and Leisure: London Borough of Havering**

- Management and planning of Culture, Sports and Leisure Services, pending a permanent appointment;
- Led the outsourcing of the management of the Council's Sports/Leisure Centres: including the development of the service specification to ensure positive contributions to the Sport and Physical Activity Development Strategy, the tendering and tender evaluation processes and led the 'Best and Final Offer' negotiations with the outcome that the Council agreed to contract with an external partner on improved revenue terms sand with capital injection;
- Led the negotiations with staff and the Trades Unions on the transfer of Sports/Leisure Centre employees to the new partner;
- Oversaw the construction of the Central Park Leisure Centre in parallel with the Leisure Management outsourcing; ensuring the Council was not liable for VAT in excess of £1M.;
- Member of the Local Strategic Partnership Board;

- Reviewed the service area and developed a restructuring and improvement programme to respond to major changes facing the organisation;
- Project managed significant improvements to parks, including the Langton's Gardens restoration in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund;
- Led the transfer of the in-house Grounds Maintenance team into the service area.

**December '02 to February '04: Interim Head of Community Services: Woking Borough Council**

- Led the Council's Community Services, including all aspects of Culture, Sports and Leisure Services, pending a permanent appointment;
- Developed and implemented a restructuring programme which aligned service activities to community and corporate objectives and achieved a 5% annual net revenue saving;
- Developed the Cultural Strategy for Woking.

**July '02 to February '03: Parks and Conservation Review: London Borough of Newham**

- Reviewed the Parks and Conservation Service. Developed and implemented strategies to respond to shortfalls and to align the service to the achievement of biodiversity, cultural, community and corporate strategy objectives;
- Oversaw the tendering of the Council's Grounds Maintenance Service which resulted in the appointment of an external provider with quality improvements and net revenue savings.

**May to July '02: Interim Head of Libraries: London Borough of Newham**

- Management of Newham's Library Service pending a permanent appointment;
- Reviewed and updated the Libraries Strategy, ensuring congruency with cultural, community and corporate strategies.

**March to May '02: Interim Director of Development and Regeneration: Community Initiative Partnerships (CIP);** a community organisation delivering Cultural and Leisure Services on behalf of the London Borough of Hounslow

- Establishment of CIP's Development and Regeneration Directorate (arts, play, community development, staff development, property services and Surestart): including bringing staff from 4 parts of the organisation together to work to a single vision and common objectives and the setting of a sustainable revenue budget;
- Member of the CIP Corporate Management Team.

**October '01 to March '02: Interim Director of Commercial Services: CIP**

- Management of CIP's Parks Development, Landscape OandM, Arboriculture, Nature Conservation and Landscape Architecture activities pending the appointment of a permanent Director;
- Reconfigured the service; successfully addressing a £600,000 annual budget deficit;
- Member of the CIP Corporate Management Team.

**November '97 to March '01: Director of Leisure Arts and Libraries: Medway Council**

- Responsible for the planning and delivery of all aspects of Sports Leisure, Events, Cultural and Library/information services within the Council; involving leadership of in excess of 600 staff, including the in-house Leisure Management, Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance teams and annual net revenue spend in excess of £20M;
- Member of the Corporate Management Team that set up Medway Council in 1997/1998;
- Led the branding of the authority including replacing all signage;
- Brought together individuals from three authorities to create the new Department;
- Achieved £3M sustainable savings in annual revenue costs with no service reductions;

- Led review of the Council's property portfolio and identified opportunities for revenue savings and capital receipts from co-location of services and disposal of surplus properties, including integrated leisure/sports/library and Register Office/banqueting facilities;
- The Council's Project Manager for the return of HMS Cavalier (the last remaining World War Two destroyer) to Chatham Historic Dockyard as a visitor attraction;
- Led the Team which reviewed the Council's Personnel and Accountancy functions, resulting in sustainable annual revenue savings of £500K and improved service;
- Led the Council's Corporate Working Groups on Realising Everybody's Potential and Job Evaluation and Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions of Employment and Project Managed the implementation of the resultant new salary scale for all Council employees; including leading negotiations with staff and trades unions.

**October '90 to October '97: City Environment Manager: City of Rochester upon Medway**

- The planning and delivery of the Council's Sports, Leisure, Parks, Events, Culture, Environmental Health and Protection, Street Cleaning, Refuse Collection, Recycling, and Housing Services, involving the leadership of 160 staff, annual net revenue spend in excess of £3M, capital spend in excess of £100M and membership of the Corporate Management Team;
- Developed the Council's initial Local Agenda 21 and associated strategies;
- Winner of the 'Britain's Cleanest City' award;
- Brought together individuals from three departments to create new organisation delivering Environmental, Parks, Cultural, Leisure and Housing Services;
- Led the market testing and outsourcing of the Street Cleaning, Refuse Collection, Vehicle Maintenance, Grounds Maintenance and Leisure Management services;
- Management of the in-house Street Cleaning, Grounds Maintenance and Leisure teams;
- Led the Strood Riverside Regeneration Project: the relocation of polluting industries, site decontamination and development of social housing and associated recreational space;
- Successfully led campaign for Ministry of Defence to put into place a health screening programme for in excess 3,000 ex-Chatham Dockyard workers at risk from cancer as a result of their employment on nuclear powered submarines;
- The Council's representative on the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign;
- Led European Union funded working with Mesto Trnava, Slovakia to develop a Tourism Strategy for the city; including visiting Trnava and briefing Elected Representatives;
- Led the Rochester International Classic World Cup cycle race project team; a one day Union Cycliste Internationale World Cup event with live pan-European television coverage.