

## BLOG FROM RORY MURPHY, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, VINCI FACILITIES

# INCONVENIENT CONVERSATIONS

Having just returned from Workplace Europe 2018 in Barcelona, one of my favourite keynote presentations looked at the theme of Inconvenient Conversations and tried to address some of the taboos for all of us that work across facilities management and in the workplace arena more generally.

The session made me consider the conversations that we should be having here in the UK and made me reflect on the inconvenient conversations that have taken place at the Parliamentary Committee level around the demise of Carillion and the focus on governance within the construction and FM sectors in general.

The final report on Carillion has been well publicised and the eventual impact of their demise may well have far reaching consequences for many businesses in the UK, but how did the facilities management industry and profession galvanise itself to respond to such a cataclysmic event? What lessons could we learn going forward?

There has been a perennial debate around the fact that FM doesn't have a trade body and the fact that Government reached out to Mitie and Serco to help them understand some of the problems in our industry shows a willingness to listen but not necessarily any formal channel through which to engage the industry.

Establishing a trade body which represents the wide breadth of FM businesses within the UK would be very difficult but I do feel that our professional bodies and associations could be more collaborative in representing the industry in a more cohesive manner on specific elements.

That is probably my inconvenient conversation.

IFMA, BIFM, RICS and the BSA all do excellent work in promoting, educating and representing the interests of their members and professionals across a wide range of subject areas within FM, the built environment and the services sector, but surely there are areas where collaboration and a single voice would strengthen our position. The failure of a major services provider in the shape of Carillion and the damage that this has caused to key public services has seen Government reach out to our industry and the response they have received has been fragmented and disjointed, even though I suspect much of the messaging has been consistent.

The emphasis now for all our institutions is to respond in a positive manner and to develop standards, guidance and practical solutions to ensure that those purchasers and procurers of facilities management services can have confidence in what they are buying. The ability to procure and deliver any service does rely on a level of expertise from both parties and where this may be lacking a standard form of procurement guidance or standard contract terms would greatly assist.

Trust plays a significant part in any relationship, trust between contracting parties, trust in business culture and trust that businesses will act in a responsible manner has been greatly damaged by the Carillion collapse. The findings of the Parliamentary Committee suggesting that the failure was due to 'recklessness, hubris and greed' will do nothing to dispel the image that big cat bosses are benefitting off the back of the low paid and small medium enterprises that deliver



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the services on the ground.

The ultimate demise of Carillion may well have not been founded on their FM delivery but the social and economic impact of that collapse has resonated right to the very centre of Government. We have a choice for our FM profession, we can stand back from the current situation and suggest that this is merely a market 'correction', with others sure to follow or we begin to be proactive in the market. Do we now start those inconvenient conversations about responsible business practices and corporate culture? Do we confront some of the ethical dilemmas that Carillion's collapse has laid bare? Do we collaborate to develop strong, relevant, and deliverable standards, guidance and tools that ensure our profession is properly managed and regulated? I think we know the answer... We just need to get the conversation started.



## INCENTIVE FM SUPPORTS ARMED FORCES CHARITY

Incentive FM is helping to support children's Armed

Forces charity, Scotty's Little Soldiers with the sponsorship of its new Fundraising Performance sportswear range.

Available from the Scotty's Little Soldiers web shop, the new range will feature a range of new items, perfect for the supporters, fundraisers and team members of the charity.

Founded by war widow Nikki Scott in 2010, Scotty's Little Soldiers supports children across the UK who have lost a parent while serving in the Armed Forces. The charity was set up in memory of Scott's husband and father to her two children, Corporal Lee Scott, after he was killed in Afghanistan in 2009.

All profits made from the collection will be used to help the charity continue to deliver its integral support to bereaved Forces children when they need it the most.

## BARTLETT MITCHELL HELPS LITTLE TROOPERS CLIMB TO £10,000 TARGET

Independent catering business, Bartlett Mitchell, has helped to raise more than £10,000 for children's charity 'Little Troopers', by climbing Mount Snowdon.

The Bartlett Mitchell team, made up of 13 team members and 10 of their family members, joined a group of 52 others in the 2018 Snowdon Challenge.

The aim of the 3,560 ft climb was to raise vital funds for the charity, which supports all military children and counts Bartlett Mitchell Executive Chairman Wendy Bartlett among its trustees.

Bartlett Mitchell also provides office space and resources to Little Troopers founder Louise Fetigan, so that she can focus her attention on making a difference to the children of parents serving in active military service.

The Bartlett Mitchell team smashed its £4,000 target by raising more than £5,400 (with gift aid), while the overall total reached £10,000.

