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**Pochin's sees satisfactory FY outcome as H1 pretax falls**

AFX UK Focus

LONDON (AFX) - Pochin's PLC said it remains confident of a satisfactory outcome for the year after first half profits came in lower than last year.

For the six months to end November, the company posted a pretax profit of 0.751 mln stg, compared to 1.251 mln a year earlier on sales of 32.7 mln stg against 34.2 mln last year.

The interim dividend was raised to 2.25 pence from 2.0p.

The contracting division continues to make steady progress and increased both turnover and margins in the period, the company said.

"Secured work remains at a satisfactory level, with 24 mln stg running into the next financial year and further major projects at an advanced stage of negotiation," it said.

"The plant division has had a difficult six months, with concrete pumping again facing a lack of major projects and directional drilling suffering from a reduced market demand in the utilities sector," it said.

It added that Pochin Homes Ltd has had a steady start and the first houses are built, with sales anticipated before the end of the financial year.

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