

SME Steering Group - Cumbria

Meeting 10 - 10 December 2014 1 – 5pm, NDA, Herdus House, Moor Row

MINUTES

Attendees

SMEs: Deputy Chair: Mike Nichols (MN), PacTec Peter Woolaghan (PW), React Engineering Tom Anderson (TA), Blue Stream Consulting Andy Hooper (AH) Westlakes Engineering Michael Kitchen (MK), Safety Critical Garry Smith (GS), Thomas Graham & Sons (Guest)	Tier 2s: Kevin Thompson (KT), Carillion Graeme Mackenzie-Netherwood (GMN), MITIE Support Organisations: John Porter (JP) BEC Dianne Richardson (DR) UCLAN (guest)
SLCs: Robert Astall (RA), Sellafield Ltd Andy Burrows (AB), DSA Sellafield Ltd (guest)	NDA: Chris Jennings (CJ) Pippa Kelly (PK) Sam Dancy (SD), NDA
Apologies: Kurt Canfield (KC), Safety Critical Sarah Mitchell (SM), Copeland BC	Ron Gorham (RG) – by phone Ian Park (IP), Park Gate

1) Apologies, Introductions and Minutes from previous meeting

Apologies were received from the above including the Chair who was represented by the Deputy, Mike Nichols for the meeting.

2) Outstanding Actions Points from previous meetings

See updated log. Closed points from previous meetings will be removed from the updated log for all but the last two meetings in future.

Regarding point 7.7, LLWR were highlighted regarding Security clearance as having introduced an additional pass requirement for visiting site. General consensus that P4 passes are no longer an issue, however it is still a problem where higher security passes are required or there is a backlog getting site inductions with high demand and limited available personnel to give the induction.

New Security Manager at SL (Keith Capstick) has worked to reduce the timescales but would like it known that if there are errors on the supplied forms, delays will be inevitable. Please ensure the forms are proofread before submission.

GS also sited problems getting on site when a framework is in place but no active contract, as it requires a Superintending Officer (SO) to authorise the pass (this was on a Magnox site).

A suggestion that it may be worth issuing a list of what is required (passes, inductions etc) and who to contact before applying for access to site? This should be supplied through the SO (Superintending Officer).

When discussing point 7.11 on the action log, PW and MN both recommended UKTI as very supportive of potential export opportunities however AH sounded a word of caution that it can be a very costly and time consuming process and should be evaluated carefully. Both PW and MN offered to share their experiences and knowledge should any SME be interested.

Action : In addition to INS, SD/RG to consider a presentation from UKTI to the group or to SME's in general – perhaps as a webinar?

3) Chairman's update from National SME Group Meeting & NDA Update

As the Chair was unavailable for the meeting, Sam Dancy updated the committee on subjects that were covered at the last meeting in October.

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NSAN presented the Graduate scheme, Nuclear Skills Passport and Triple bar – copies are available on the NDA website.

The Welsh and Scottish Governments were represented and a discussion followed on how to move forward with funding for schemes such as those offered by NSAN and NAMRC which will be considered outside the Steering Group forum.

RG had explained that the NDA is updating the strategy and has invited comments from the Chairs on any items that should be included in Strategy III.

Updates from other groups included details on the documents produced by the Northern and Welsh Groups (copies available through NDA or online). The southern group plan to focus on investigating SC21 (Supply Chain for the 21st Century). The Scottish group will be supporting Scottish Enterprise with the Nuclear Supply Chain project 2, a programme to support SME's in the region with training and workshops etc.

SD presented the map of SME's in the country – used to produce a poster for the Supply Chain Event in November.

Other groups are expanding their membership to include representatives from EDF, Horizon and AWE.

NDA are also updating the Business Plan and it is available for public consultation until January 30st. Included in this are NDA funding and expenditure.

Contracts Finder 2 was also presented by Cabinet Office and the link between CTM and Contracts finder should have been completed. Once the new version has been launched and is working, the NDA will be discussing with C.O. how the use can be expanded to the wider market to ensure all Estate opportunities are captured in one space.

Action : RA to confirm with J Rooney if the link has been achieved.

SD also updated the group on the NDA Mentor Scheme, which following John Clarke's announcement at the Supply Chain Event, will be launched in 2015 with a new group of Mentors and Mentees. Thanks to all who have taken part so far.

Action : NDA to consider how to use the scheme or alternative plans to educate Tier 2 companies into the difficulties SME companies face. PK to discuss possibilities with Centre for Leadership Performance.

Action : The NDA revised Business Plan is available for public consultation until 30st January. All encouraged to read and comment.

4) Guest Speaker – Garry Smith, Thomas Graham & Sons

A copy of the presentation is available if required.

An insight was given into how difficult this SME found completing PQQ's and CTM and it was suggested that more support could be made available to potential suppliers.

Action : RA stated that SL are considering whether guidance and workshops could be made available on how to complete PQQ's and the tendering process.

5) Guest Speaker – Dianne Richardson, UCLAN and Cumbrian Growth Hub

Dianne outlined how the Cumbrian Growth Hub (web based) was developed from an idea promoted by the LEP. It is sponsored by UCLAN, Cumbria County Council, Lancaster and Cumbria Universities among others. It is a central portal offering support on accessing funding, training, guidance on growing businesses. Not included are start-up businesses as these already have many other support areas to access.

Companies can register online and access videos on using social media, finding funding, marketing, workshops, and other groups that can support new and growing businesses. The site is divided into a number of sectors including Energy that would cover Nuclear within it's remit. The Growth Hub is

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funded until June 2015 and UCLAN are looking at how to extend and keep both the Hub and the site running beyond this date.

DR would like to know how to get knowledge out to those SME's who are perhaps unaware of the Growth Hub but could use the help and experience on offer?

Discussion moved on to a gap in support for companies beyond the initial Innovation phase (supported by groups such as Innovus). Suggestions included finding a form of structured mentoring from other companies.

6) Guest Speaker – Andy Burrows, DSA, Sellafield Ltd

DSA contract was placed in 2012 and is a framework currently run by 2 Alliances known as Progressive and Axiom. Since foundation, a Socio Economic plan has been developed with local councillors and other stakeholders and includes and 4 key targets

- 20% of the total work should flow to the supply chain – currently 24% is flowed out (not an SME target however 52% of these are SME's) £20.56m has been spent in the supply chain and of that £10.6m to SME's (not only W. Cumbria)
- Originally set at 20% of the total workforce should be employed in West Cumbria, this was revised to an actual number of 300 employees – currently running at 369 working for Axiom or Progressive working in West Cumbria
- Demonstrating growth through Graduate schemes and training. Target was 15 graduates to be based in West Cumbria – currently of the total number of graduates, trainees and apprentices (76) 18 are based in locally in W Cumbria.
- Target is to spend over 2000 hours in education and training, mixed measures from working in schools and colleges and working with supply chain organisations to educate them in how to work in and with Sellafield Ltd. Currently spent 1800 hours to date and will achieve the target by the end of the financial year.

This information is shared through the round table discussions organised by BEC. However the group has recognised that it needs to improve it's engagement and communication with the supply chain and has put in place a more structured quarterly engagement to offer information on how to engage with the 2 major partners. Focus is mostly on sessions in West Cumbria, in Whitehaven. Supply Chain have been very open with the difficulties they have encountered and the DSA partners have resolve some of the issues and are continuing to work on others. The sessions have included presentations back from the Supply Chain to Axiom and Progressive to highlight areas of concern and how the supply chain has had to adapt and learn from the process.

DSA have put together a single document showing the capabilities of the Supply Chain which is communicated through the DSA and Sellafield.

To address another concern about the Supply chain being able to engage directly with the customers, the DSA has created some Supplier Days where Suppliers could engage directly on a 1-2-1 basis with the Axiom and Progressive and with the design and project managers at Sellafield.

The DSA and Sellafield Ltd have recognised that additional improvement actions are required and a number of reviews have been conducted including a PPRG review in 2013 that have highlighted some priority areas for improvement.

The three areas the DSA are focusing on are

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1. Forward Planning
2. Team work
3. Sharing best practice

It is recognised that historically SL has requested people to work on a project rather than packaging work and asking for a solution/outcome to be delivered.

Work should be aggregated to make a more effective package.

Forward planning is key as too often work is given with unrealistic deadlines due to delays within SL. Visibility should be shared within the Round Table groups in advance to give more adequate lead time for work to be prepared for. The DSA update is being produced to give support to the forward planning target.

To support the focus on sharing best practice the DSA have produced a Case Studies document which is shared internally in SL.

Discussion on whether the Case Studies could not be extended to include all successes across the site and some SME case studies included in the Energise document.

7) AOB

JP asked whether anyone in the group had any experience of the Fit 4 nuclear programme? - no one had tried it and SD explained that it is mainly targeted at manufacturing within new nuclear although NDA were in dialogue with NAMRC with regard to its applicability to Decommissioning in the revised version. It can still be relevant as long as companies recognise that not all elements around manufacturing may be relevant to them and focus on areas that are useful to them eg health and safety/management etc. Proviso that there is still no confirmation that the new build companies will use this scheme.

8) Next meeting

Proposed for April 2015. Venue offers to PK please.

Letter sent from Neil Smart read by Robert Astall at the meeting

"We are keen to support engagement with the technology suppliers in the SME community. We have been testing the "Innovus" organisation as a route to this community. The Innovus organisation is a joint NNL / University of Manchester collaboration who carry out the following:

- (a) Engagement with the SME community, particularly in w Cumbria
- (b) Aid SME's in development of proposals
- (c) Provide funding for proposals- generally seed corn funding £5 – 30 K levels to develop ideas to a level of maturity such that they can engage with end users – contracts are held with University of Manchester
- (d) Provide ongoing support to SME's during project delivery. This can include access to NNL facilities to test devices
- (e) Support to engagement with end users
- (f) At this low level of funding IPR is retained by the SME

In (d) above – NNL have a unique set of facilities for nuclear technology

- (a) Non active office space
- (b) Non active laboratory(s)
- (c) Low active laboratory(s) + office space
- (d) Low active rig halls
- (e) Alpha active laboratory(s)
- (f) High activity cells
- (g) Non active rig halls

We would expect to continue working with Innovus/NNL in the future and would like to see NNL acting as a technology integrator for SL. i.e. testing technology from the SME community and feeding complete technology solutions into out projects/plants.

In SL we have established the principle of hosting active demonstrations of decommissioning technology in a couple of historic facilities (one alpha and one beta gamma). We are in the first year of this programme but have a budget for long term testing of technology.

A separate scheme exists to support SME's with higher levels of funding – The Innovate UK scheme – this is operated at a government level providing funding for technology demonstrations (£100K's to £1M's). We often support proposals to the Innovate UK scheme as a sponsor.

To conclude the above, we are keen to engage with the SME community for technology options applicable to decommissioning. When appropriate we can provide access to the full range of test facilities although we would note that we take the technology options through extensive review before testing, particularly on the Sellafield site."

For further information please contact Neil Smart

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