

SME Steering Group - Scotland

Meeting 12 – 10.10.17 Scottish Enterprise Offices, Edinburgh, Scotland

MINUTES

Attendees

SMEs: Chair: Andrew Boddice, Imenco Gary Mutter – Booth Welsh Peter Murphy - Turnbull & Scott David Cairney - Fluidic <u>Guests</u> Donald Black – XI Engineering Neil Robertson – Abbey Ecosse Cailean Forrester – Inspectahire Charlie Boyle – CRA Risk Jack Sanderson – Carinhill Structures	Tier 2s: Adrian Peckitt - Nuvia Support Organisations: Suzanne O’Hare - Scottish Enterprise
SLCs: Stephen Adamson – DSRL	NDA: Caroline Wood, Pippa Kelly
Apologies: John Curran - Soilutions, Phil Durrant - PDA, Wendy Pring - KCP Ltd, Louisa MacDonell – Scottish Enterprise	

1. Introductions and review of minutes

SSA presentation from previous meeting to be circulated - PK

2. Strategy

Recognition that the group has not had a particular focus for the recent months and that there is a need to communicate to the wider SME community in Scotland.

SA raised concern that SME applications for tenders at Dounreay had not reached the levels expected or required for consideration and contracts have not been placed with any bidders in some instances due to poor submissions. This was clarified to have been mostly for companies outside the immediate geographical area. Support has been offered in the past in other regions for basic bidding training by either Chambers of Commerce or the NSC2. Group to consider whether increased communications across the region would open access to this kind of training to SMEs. SME initiatives available but running in parallel.

Action : to agree best method (e.g. meet the buyer days, subject masterclasses et al), content, and timing in 2018 - AB/PK/SA/(SEvia LMc)

Action: to discuss how the Group maintains contact with those companies that had engaged in NSC2 to share experiences to encourage more SME engagement - AB/LMc
SE to confirm how data protection issue can be overcome.

Action : AB and GM agreed to develop a strategy for the group to be presented and discussed at the next meeting. AB/GM

Recent lack of detailed feedback on a submission was raised as a barrier to SMEs raising the quality of their submissions . Perhaps greater pre-market engagement could avoid particular errors. However SA confirmed that issues are not always limited to SMEs but Tier2 companies have failed to ‘answer the question’!

AB recognised that there are probably a number of initiatives available but all running parallel with no uniform method of communicating between and outward to the SME community. NDA have offered to support a suitable (modest) event hosted by the Scottish group to engage with the wider SME community in Scotland as long as it can demonstrate tangible benefits. CW updated the group on the Northern Region’s proposal to create a ‘dummies guide’ to NEC3/4

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alongside the possible updating of the guides previously produced on Innovation, Collaboration and FAQs.

AP is a member of a working group for Sellafield Suppliers who are looking at producing a guidance booklet on how SMEs can win work.

Action : AP to bring more details to the group

Scottish Enterprise have held a ‘tendering masterclass’ organised by LMc – attendees found this useful and appreciated having the opportunity to discuss with the person responsible for the tender, exactly what they are looking for. SA would extend the support of his team to such meetings. Possibility to run regular groups or webinars to cover wider geographical area. CW believes that the Federation of Small Businesses has also held similar training in the past.

Action : review of the event and possible opportunities to extend further to the community – LMc to respond to the group.

For Dounreay one of the key issues with the future increase in work on decommissioning the site will be how to involve supply chain and SMEs from outside the immediate area where they will require local labour, workshops etc. The dilemma is how to encourage companies to collaborate with other small companies where it is the benefits for local companies are not immediately obvious. Possible opportunities for larger Tier 2s in future to bring together diverse SMEs from within and without the area.

AB keen to understand where are the possible constraints are on capacity and innovation. Plan to combine the opportunities for a tendering ‘masterclass’ with other training requirements (CTM, SQ’s) and possibly very early engagement with the supply chain on particular thorny issues that DSRL need to resolve with the help of innovative companies.

Action : Group to plan the next meeting in 2 halves, opening the second half to the above training (see notes below in TORs)

PK introduced a potential change to the communications of the SME Steering Groups whereby SMEs receive a regular update on details from the SLCs, SSA, NDA and any other relevant parties in the public domain and offer the opportunity for those outside the regular group members to raise questions on each to be taken to the next meeting by the Chair of the appropriate group. If there is a question on the DSRL update, an SME can email the Chair (AB) and he will ask the question on behalf of the SME and the question and response will be published with the minutes. It is anticipated that a group on LinkedIn would be the most appropriate medium for circulating details of this nature amongst the SME community and could also widen to include any other SME related news, opportunities etc. When all parties have agreed to this the details will be circulated by PK.

3. TORs

Concern has been expressed that insufficient attendance by SMEs to the group meeting is down to location. The group discussed and it was accepted that the meetings should be held in more than one location across Scotland to encourage greater SME involvement and engagement. For three meetings per annum, one meeting should be held in the west, one elsewhere in the central belt (e.g. Edinburgh, Perth or Stirling), and one in the north, either Inverness or Aberdeen.

Each meeting would have the same chair and vice chair with a different core group representing the specific area. Core members from each group would be welcome at other geographic area meetings.

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In addition, after the formal business was concluded, each meeting would open up the session after lunch to 30-40 SME from that area to take part in problem solving exercises derived from the SLC's or Tier 2s, or to other exercises such as 'how to respond to a tender properly' with input from additional organisations including SE. SME attendance would be accepted on a first come first served basis.

Action :All - method of inviting SMEs?

Proposal to hold the first at the end of January and Booth Welsh, Highlands and Islands or Scottish Enterprise have offered to host at alternative locations across the country. Current membership will be maintained until the next meeting and refreshed.

Action : Chair to speak to each member regarding being a proactive member of the group or a participant in the wider meetings

New Tier 2 member from Atkins (Callum McLaurin) has been invited to attend the group and will be joining the group from the next meeting.

4. DSRL Update

DSRL have launched a new initiative in August known as LINC with approx. 80 SMEs registered at the time of the meeting. The scheme is designed to bring together new SME entrants to working at DSRL with new ideas and partner them with members of the current supply chain. The first competition within the scheme was looking for a feasibility study for size reduction and has resulted in 2 SMEs working alongside Tier 2s. The second opportunity should be advertised shortly with a more engineering focus. For details on the DSRL website or Contracts Finder.

SA has been discussing with BEC Business Cluster (BC) to encourage some of the wide range of suppliers to get further involved in DSRL. Following the Dunblane Event in the summer DSRL have been working with the Energy Industry Council (EIC) who are facilitating an Oil & Gas industry SME in Aberdeen with over 100 delegates from the sector. Combination of presentations and 1 to 1s. EIC could be worth working with on future projects as they cover renewables, tidal etc as well as traditional energy markets. SA is supporting with a wider EIC group in Liverpool on getting SMEs involved in the Nuclear Decommissioning industry.

SL have now given a soft launch their own LINC system and DSRL and SL will be working together on the process and avoid any duplication and widening the opportunities. These opportunities are below the public procurement regulation thresholds and therefore gives greater flexibility and speed to the teams to offer contracts.

5. Update from NDA

NDA have recently appointed a new Commercial Director, Kate Ellis. Ms Ellis' background is originally BP but was most recently working for the Ministry of Justice. David Peattie, NDA CEO, has a vision to bring together a number of the NDA subsidiaries and it is likely that the commercial departments of both INS and DRS will reside under the new Commercial Director. It is assumed that the Supply Chain Department will move to the new function but this has to be clarified.

Continued evolvement of the reporting structures from the Government Commercial function and Crown Commercial Service have resulted in a new set of Commercial Standards. Each Department (and SLC) is required to self-assess against these targets using the 'good/better/best' scoring and these are combined and sent to Government. It is likely that the reporting will continue to evolve. Additionally pipelines of procurement activity will now need to be published 18 months ahead.

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Supplier relationship management has traditionally been left to each Site Licence Company but NDA are working to bring a more co-ordinated approach to the efforts.

The increased reporting means that the Estate is under greater scrutiny.

NDA are working on refreshing the Health of the Supply Chain report which was last completed in 2012. The report is conducted by an external company and all contributions are kept anonymous. The SME Steering group members will be one of the lists of contacts that will be supplied to the company for possible questions and interviews.

A revised SME Action plan should be published imminently on the NDA and SLC websites.

Magneox contract with CFP will cease in 2019, however it is not confirmed yet what will take its place however there should be no great changes in the work and the intention is to ensure there is no 'cliff edge' for the Supply chain.

The NAO enquiry has been presented to Government and NDA and the Halliday enquiry is continuing with an interim report produced in October with the final output due in 2018.

6. SME Action Points

Following a meeting of the Chairs of the SME Steering Groups and the Commercial Heads of the SLCs and SSA, 3 key action points were agreed to be the initial focus of improvements in the following months. Since then SSA has held a consultative meeting with SMEs on SQ's (the Standard Questions required for Public Procurement Tenders) that will form the basis of all questions in tenders from the SLCs, NDA or SSA. A second action point being considered is common terms and conditions. These should be based on the NEC3 contract and should address the complaint of too many and unnecessary Z clauses being included. The revisions should be in use by the end of 2017 or start of 2018.

The final concern raised for action centred around the transparency of opportunities on the estate. SLCs have been producing procurement pipelines for sometime and details of opportunities are included on both CTM (complete tender management) and Contracts Finder (Government procurement portal). This has now been extended to the Tier 2 companies and 29 suppliers have agreed to take part and the initial estimated value of these contracts were £25k, however there have been some 'teething' problems which are being considered by the NDA supply chain team.

Action : an invitation for 'critical friends' to review the templates on the T&C's would be appreciated – please contact CW if you wish to take part.

Concern was raised that procurement pipelines are not always accurate - CW admitted that this and lack of constructive feedback to applicants were common issues and will be the subject of future work to improve the communication to the supply chain. Pipelines in future should look ahead 18mths.

Action : Feedback and updates on Procurement plan issues to be sent to CW

7. Update from Scottish Enterprise

Louisa McDonnell gave apologies and Suzanne O'Hare attended on behalf of Scottish Enterprise to give an update. A new diversification project is being launched in partnership with Opportunity North East to enable SMEs who are considering diversifying from Oil & Gas into other market opportunities for companies. A new manager is being appointed for this project and a series of workshops will be held and 1 to 1 support (not yet defined) for the companies. Pass any questions to either Louisa or Suzanne.

Also running is a Nuclear Decomm Support programme (amongst other departments) these workshops are only available for a limited time and therefore SE are intending to change the structure to a more 'product' based system which would give them more flexibility to support

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companies for longer. The plan is in approval stage and would include all energy sectors (off shore, wind, nuclear decomm, oil & gas etc). Further details at the next meeting.

8. Update from Nuvia

During the last 6/12 months there has been limited opportunities coming forward but the signs are promising from Magnox mostly based around the south, Dungeness, Winfrith (Decom of Dragon facility – cranes, shield doors etc) and Berkley. The projects are scaled such that they would appeal to SME involvement. The tendering timescales being given from Magnox are very short and this has caused issues with getting details available on the CTM system. Most of the current opportunities are from outside the Estate such as MOD and new build at Hinkley Point C, not all would necessarily be local. Details should be posted on EDF website and may be added to CTM at a later stage. Nuvia currently also tendering internationally for ITER and in Canada.

9. AOB

Crown Commercial Services ran a webinar on Cyber Security including the templates and details required, would this be something the group should pick up? At the NDA Supply Chain Event Matthew Collantine from NDA will be presenting Cyber Essentials on the NDA stand. More details are available from NDA for those who are unable to attend. Please contact PK for details.

Concern that attendees from the latest event in Aberdeen with Oil and Gas Technology Centre, SE and NDA was great with lots of interesting information but again no follow up?

Action : Please forward details of the event to PK for follow up.

CW encouraging the SME Steering Groups to greater interaction and coordination between the Chairs initially.

Action: AB to start the process of communicating with other steering group chairs.

10. Next Meeting

Doodle to be sent out for next 2 or 3 meetings