

## **Scotland Excel**

**To: Executive Sub-Committee**

**On: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

**Report by:  
Chief Executive of Scotland Excel**

### **COVID-19 Update**

#### **1 Introduction**

This report provides an update to members on the impact of COVID-19 with regard to a number of operational matters within Scotland Excel.

#### **2 Background**

2.1 In March 2020, The United Kingdom Government issued detailed guidance in relation to measures that should be taken to restrict the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These measures included restrictions on unnecessary travel and meetings and advice for specified groups of citizens who are seen as being at greater risk from infection.

2.2 On March 29, a report was agreed by the Executive Subcommittee which:

- delegated the authority to the Director, in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Executive Sub Committee the power to cancel, if necessary, the planned meeting of the Executive Sub Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and any subsequent meeting;
- Further delegated to the Director in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice Chair authority to make all decisions required relating to the functions of the Executive Sub Committee in advance of the next meeting of the Executive Sub Committee.
- Agreed to temporary associate membership at no fee to any public body or third sector organisation that the Director feels will benefit efforts to tackle the current crisis.

2.3 Scotland Excel is currently operating a full service via remote working for all employees in line with government guidance. Our specific focus is working with our suppliers to do everything we can to ensure that the goods and services required to support essential frontline services continue to be

available to councils. Our teams are providing regular updates to councils in relation to supplier stock levels for essential items and advice on alternative sources of supply where possible. This is an ever-changing picture and our teams are doing everything they can to make sure council procurement teams have access to all information available at the time.

### **3 COVID-19 Updates**

3.1 At the Chief Executive Officers Management group (CEOMG) meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020, Scotland Excel presented an update on five key areas of business and the impact of COVID-19:

- PPE (Appendix A)
- Food (Appendix B)
- Care (Appendix C)
- Waste (Appendix D)
- Construction (Appendix E)

The reports provided to the CEOMG members are attached at the end of this report.

### **4 Future Committee Meetings**

4.1 Scotland Excel has successfully held both the April Executive Sub-committee and the May CEOMG via video conference. After consultation with the convener, it is proposed that the Executive Subcommittees on 29<sup>th</sup> May and 19<sup>th</sup> June will also take place using the same methods.

Scotland Excel is currently reviewing its video conferencing platform and will be in touch with every elected member to test connectivity for future meetings. Subsequent information, joining instructions etc. will be communicated prior to future meetings.

### **5 Recommendations**

5.1 Members are invited to note the content of this report and support the measures taken to continue operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Appendix - A

### Scotland Excel

To: Chief Executive Officers Management Group

On: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020

#### Report by Chief Executive Scotland Excel

#### Covid-19 - PPE Update

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The supply and delivery of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is an emotive and contentious issue in the efforts to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic. This paper sets out the background to the approach taken by Scotland Excel and provides a high-level overview of the initial process implemented by Scotland Excel to support its members.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 CEOMG members are requested to note the content of this report, and support the measures and approach taken by Scotland Excel to support non-care PPE requirements by councils.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 *Supply and Delivery of Personal Protective Equipment* is a fourth-generation framework. PPE is defined as all equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which is intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects them against one or more risks to their health or safety. The current framework has an annual value of approximately £7.5 million across 32 participating councils plus Tayside Contracts and Associate Members. The spend data captured notes that 31% of value is from core items and 69% from non-core items.
- 3.2 At the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, Scotland Excel were approached by National Services Scotland (NSS), the procurement shared service for NHS Scotland, to discuss their “One Scotland” approach to the supply and distribution of PPE across the Scottish public sector.

NSS provided an update on their mandate by Scottish Government and the work being undertaken with Scottish Enterprise to identify manufacturers and supply of PPE within both the Scottish and Asian markets. The organisation

sought support from Scotland Excel to provide any resources and information that could support a “One Scotland” approach.

Scotland Excel understood that significant work had already been undertaken on this approach and to deviate from this would be counter-productive to the national effort. Scotland Excel worked with NSS to understand how it could support the national initiative. Initial discussions focussed on the provision of experienced Scotland Excel team members to support the initiative.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April Colin Sinclair, Chief Executive of NSS, wrote to council and NHS chief executives providing an update on the NSS approach to PPE. This update caused concern amongst council chief executives and Scotland Excel were asked to look at a more council based solution. In addition, SOLACE sought to understand the levels of PPE demand across councils.

On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April at a meeting with a range of stakeholders including SOLACE, COSLA, Scottish Government, NSS and Scotland Excel it was agreed that NSS would manage PPE for all Care related services and Scotland Excel would support non care related services within local government.

Subsequent to the above, Scottish Government indicated their intention to supply PPE for all non-health and social care and non-council PPE. This solution would be in conjunction with Lyreco.

#### 4. Quantitative Analysis of Demand

- 4.1 Scotland Excel immediately sought to support a more strategic approach and to provide quantitative indications of PPE demand through the Scotland Excel framework.

Table 1 Provides details of the annual total historic PPE demand through the Scotland Excel framework.

**Table 1**

	Apron	Gloves	Full Suite	Surg Masks	FFP2	FFP3	Overshoes
Total Demand	7,820	2,853,530	11,804	12,230	14,750	22,590	39
Weekly Demand	150	54,876	227	235	284	434	1
	Ear Plugs	Scrub	Tunic	Disposable	Face Shield	Eye Protection	Fit Test
Total Demand	1,771,500	382,100	1,592,500	199,900	156	12,145	38
Weekly Demand	34,067	7,348	30,625	3,844	3	234	1

- 4.2 Recognising the increased utilisation of PPE due to Covid-19, an indicative weekly demand was calculated by using a multiplier of fifty times historic demand. These demand figures were passed to each council to agree ongoing weekly demand.

- 4.3 In parallel to the Scotland Excel work, SOLACE representatives wrote to all councils to understand demand and current stock levels. These responses were provided to Scotland Excel and returns were collated and analysed to provide further quantitative business intelligence. Further work was subsequently undertaken by Scotland Excel with councils to understand the split between care and non-care PPE.

Table 2 provides a summary of the confirmed council weekly demand for a consolidated group of products split between care and non-care.

**Table 2**

	<b>Masks</b>	<b>Eye Protection</b>	<b>Gloves</b>	<b>Aprons</b>	<b>Sanitiser</b>	<b>Overshoes</b>
<b>Care</b>	1,626,625	281,767	2,832,103	1,610,127	24,255	2,724
<b>Non Care</b>	204,042	2,217	723,073	214,287	4,127	7,144
<b>Total</b>	1,830,667	283,984	3,555,176	1,824,413	28,382	9,868

Some of the key facts that demonstrate the quantum changes that have occurred with respect to demand.

- Historic weekly demand of 55k gloves compared with a current weekly demand of 3.5m.
- Historic weekly demand of 235 masks compared with a current weekly demand of 1.8m
- Historic weekly demand of 150 aprons compared with a current weekly demand of 1.8m

- 4.4 It is worth also considering that PPE may have been procured via other routes other than the Scotland Excel framework despite the participation of all councils; i.e. historical demand through this framework may be an understatement of consumption.

## **5. Ongoing PPE Process**

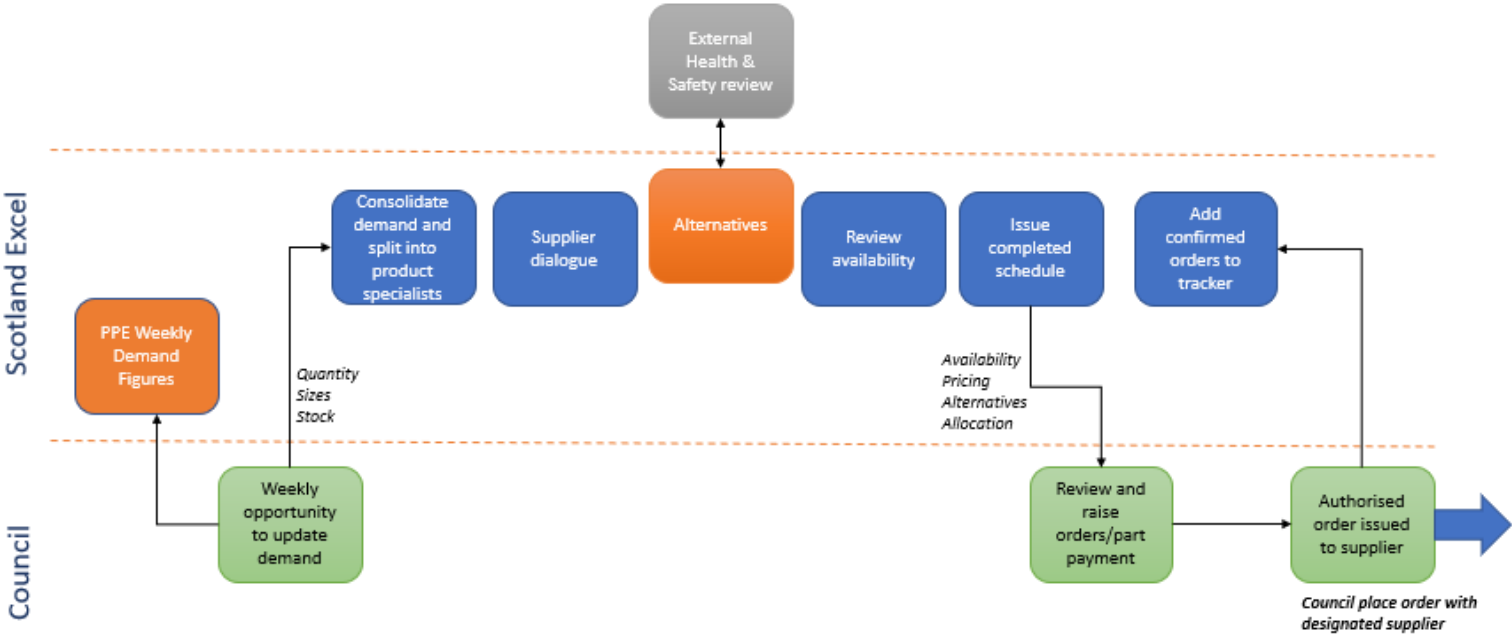
- 5.1 Scotland Excel aims to provide an effective and efficient service response to support councils with their PPE needs. This has been hampered by the changing landscape and issues with regard to clarity.
- 5.2 Appendix 1 provides a high-level overview of the initial process implemented by Scotland Excel.
- 5.3 The process will seek to undertake the following steps:
- Utilise the agreed weekly demand collated by Scotland Excel whilst recognising changing patterns within councils.
  - Allow consolidation of demand avoiding numerous supply chain issues.

- Confirm availability for the sector.
- Benchmarking and negotiation of costs.
- Ensure standards and certifications.
- Support alternative product recommendations
- Support cross organisational learning and good practice.
- Consolidate ordering with agreed suppliers.

5.4 This process will be dynamic and may have been adapted further by the time the CEOMG is held.

5.5 After the current crisis, Scotland Excel will continue to work with member councils to ensure contract development activity is in alignment with strategic plans.

Appendix 1







## Appendix – B

### Scotland Excel

**To: CEOMG**

**On: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

**Report  
by  
Chief Executive Scotland Excel**

#### **Covid-19 - Scotland Excel Food Category Update**

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the CEOMG of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Scotland Excel food category. It summarises the Local Authority response to support households who may experience barriers in accessing food. It will also outline current Scotland Excel contract arrangements, including ongoing activity and support. Please note, regularly updated information can be found via the Scotland Excel “Covid-19 Newsroom” and the members area of the Scotland Excel Website.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 On 18 March 2020, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government announced a £350 million package to support communities affected by COVID-19. This includes a £70 million Food Fund to put in place support for those who would otherwise be unable to access food through the usual routes.

- £30m of the Food Fund is initially being made available to Local Authorities for structured public sector responses working with local resilience partnerships to support households who may experience barriers in accessing food.
- Up to £30m has been set aside for a UK-wide programme to procure and deliver food for those who are unable to leave their homes due to being at highest clinical risk, known as the shielded group. This is currently being managed through the Scottish Government and DEFRA.
- £10m has been set aside for investment in third sector organisations that are responding to food insecurity both at a national and local level.

Allocation formulae for the £30m Food Fund portion of this investment, aimed at Free School Meal provision and non-shielded people at risk, has now been agreed with COSLA for distribution to Local Authorities.

In order to reach the people most at risk, action needs to be coordinated by Local Authorities, usually via local resilience partnerships, and should involve people from all sectors, including community food organisations and local businesses.

## **2.2 Households who may experience barriers to accessing essential food items**

These include but not limited to:

### Shielded Group

- those who are clinically at high risk and are required to stay at home, known as the shielded group

### Health barriers

- those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or live with someone with symptoms, and are required to stay at home temporarily
- those who are vulnerable and are required to be particularly stringent in following social distancing.

### Socio-economic barriers

- those who are financially at risk, including families whose children are eligible for Free School Meals, low income households and those who have recently lost employment.
- those who are marginalised, may have complex needs and may be less engaged with public services.

## **3. Ensuring Access to Food**

- 3.1 Central government and Local authorities are striving to meet the needs of the various households requiring additional support in sourcing food, in a variety of different ways.

### **Shielded Group**

It is estimated that around 120,000 people in Scotland have been identified as being within the Shielded Group. Those that do not have a local network of family and friends to drop off provisions can opt to receive a shielding package. The packages contain items such as coffee, tea, pasta, tinned goods, cereal, potatoes, two types of fruit and other basic supplies such as toilet roll.

The UK government has partnered with national food distributors (Brakes and Bidfood) to get these supplies to people's homes. Packages will be delivered to people's doorsteps, with all drivers following the latest Public Health guidance.

This contract is between the Scottish Government and the national distributors and is not related to Scotland Excel frameworks. However, Scotland Excel will work with Local Authorities and the national distributors to support in the delivery of these parcels where required. The costs for these packs will come from the £30m that has been set aside for a nationally procured programme to deliver food for those who are unable to leave their homes.

### **Free School Meals**

Figures show that 140,000 free school meals have been distributed in Scotland since the start of lockdown. It was previously estimated that there are around 120,000 children who are eligible for this service, so these figures show the high level of support being provided to vulnerable families during this pandemic.

Meals are being provided either via direct bank payments, vouchers for supermarkets, home deliveries or at schools (where still open). This shows the flexible approach implemented across Scotland is working and Local Authorities are reaching those who are most vulnerable. This is a positive picture for Scotland and is due to the work being undertaken by Local Authorities.

The £30m of the Food Fund that is initially being made available to Local Authorities is intended to be used to fund the provision of school meals.

### **Other Vulnerable Groups**

The largest group that Local Authorities are now supporting is those who are vulnerable and are required to be particularly stringent in following social distancing. Local authorities are providing this support in addition to the national support already available for people who have received letters advising them to shield.

Local Authorities are taking a variety of different approaches to support these vulnerable people within their communities. These include ordering a variety of different food from the distributors on the Scotland Excel food frameworks to be delivered to central distribution points. Items are then repacked into individual food packs and delivered to vulnerable households.

To assist with community feeding, Brakes are now offering ready-made 'Care' boxes that can be delivered to Local Authority central hubs at a cost of £30 per box. Brakes' aim is to alleviate pressure from Local Authority operations by reducing the manpower required to pack individual food packs. These boxes are available to order now but can only be ordered through each Local Authorities Brakes account manager and ideally, they require 7 days' notice as the packs are in high demand.

The 'Care' boxes are a separate offering to the 'Shielding' packs and are aimed at supporting Local Authorities in providing for the vulnerable within communities not captured by the 'shielding' list.

A supplier on the Scotland Excel frozen foods framework has also developed a convenient concept that delivers a nutritious hot meal in the form of a pre-portioned roast dinner. This is supplied frozen in bags which can be decanted onto a microwavable/oven-ready dish for reheating.

The £30m of the Food Fund that is initially being made available to Local Authorities is intended to be used to fund this additional support.

#### **4. Issues and Observations**

- 4.1 Scotland Excel is aware that there have been some initial issues with supply from the food distributors on its frameworks. Suppliers have been inundated with requests for retail pack sizes which are not common within commercial food services. For the limited range that they hold, current demand exceeds a normal annual forecast. There were early concerns that stock issues may arise due to Local Authority demand being similar to DEFRA's requirement and being de-prioritised, however the UK Government have confirmed this is not the case.

Distributors have extended their normal supply base to secure stock for local authorities. For some high-volume products, suppliers have a lead time of greater than 7 days, and this should be considered when councils are planning their order requirements.

Scotland Excel will continue to work with Local Authorities to forecast their needs and would ask that the Chief Executives support this requirement. It is appreciated that this might be a difficult task in these ever-changing times but recognises that distributors will fail to provide certain items unless they are able to have predicted volumes of what is required in the coming weeks.

- 4.2 After questions from one local authority Chief Executive, Scotland Excel Account Managers have contacted all local authorities to ascertain the current food related solutions in place and to offer any assistance required.
- 4.3 Scotland Excel will continue to have input into the fortnightly Public Sector Food Forum meetings to ensure the requirements of Local Authorities are being raised with Scottish Government. Scotland Excel will continue to share the outcome from this forum with member councils.
- 4.4 Scotland Excel will continue to work with Scotland Food and Drink to identify opportunities for Scottish Manufacturers to work with framework distributors to support Local Authority requirements. To date, this has proved very positive and has included a new relationship between Brakes and Baxter's to provide tinned goods for shielding packs. Scotland Food and Drink are also using

contacts within the Scottish Government to ensure that all manufacturers are giving distributors full support to meet Local Authority needs.

These discussions have led to consideration on national versus local supply and this is something that Scotland Excel will be taking into consideration for future generations of the food frameworks.

- 4.5 Scotland Excel will work with distributors to agree timelines for schools reopening and restarting deliveries. Scotland Excel will work with Local Authorities and distributors to ensure that sufficient notice of schools reopening is given, and forecasts are put in place to reduce the risk of supply shortages. Local Authorities may need to consider short term changes to school menus if some items are in short supply.
- 4.6 Local Authorities should also consider the potential financial impact of the current changes to spending patterns. Local Authorities currently receive sole supply rebates on the Groceries and Provisions framework which are paid retrospectively at the end of each framework year. Where spend has dropped this may have an impact on supplier rebates and community benefits.

## **5. Recommendations**

- 5.1 Members of the CEOMG are invited to note the contents of this report.



## Appendix – C

### Scotland Excel

**To: CEOMG**

**On: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

**Report  
by  
Chief Executive of Scotland Excel**

**Heading:  
Covid-19 - Social Care Category Update**

#### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The current Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the delivery of public services, and it is predicted that this disruption will continue for some time. Over the past year or so the cost profile of social care services has continued to rise, and the current crisis will compound this even further. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the CEOMG regarding the current landscape of collaborative social care services, and to outline current risks and potential mitigation opportunities.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 All of Scotland Excel's social care frameworks are being affected by the coronavirus pandemic, most noticeably in areas such as staff-shortages due to self-isolation and sickness, challenges around sourcing PPE and keeping vulnerable people safe and well in such challenging circumstances.

Scotland Excel is a member of the National Covid-19 Contingency Planning Group for care services, working with key partners to share information and guidance across the public sector.

In a further move to help tackle the crisis, Scotland Excel is currently offering free, temporary associate membership to any public or third sector organisation, which would give them access to 74 frameworks including Social Care Agency Workers and Technology Enabled Care, PPE, Food and Janitorial Products.

The Scottish Government and COSLA have announced that social care staff are to receive a 3.3% pay rise backdated to 1st April. This offer was made following consultation with Scotland Excel regarding the market analysis carried out on Care & Support Services, and from the cost model for the National Care Home Contract.

This national uplift does not apply to:

- Children and young people's services;
- Previously agreed multiyear frameworks which already have an uplift factored in for living wage;
- Local Block contracts arrangements;
- Scotland Excel Care and Support Flexible Framework, awarded on 1st April 2020, where the uplift for living wage has been included;
- Any Residential care, the National Care Home Contract and Scotland Excel Care Homes for Adults with Learning Disabilities Framework awarded in October 2019;
- Local Authority staff where the Scottish Joint Council agreement is in place.

Scotland Excel has worked in collaboration with COSLA towards the development of the Guidance for Commissioning Services COVID-19, published in April 2020, which sets out how the uplift is applied and is available from the COSLA website area for Councils.

### **3. Adult Social Care**

#### **3.1 Care and Support Services**

The first national Flexible Care and Support Services framework went live on 1st April with 78 providers offering 316 services. While Scotland Excel recognises that current pressures on both the local authority and care sector workforce mean adoption of this framework is expected to be delayed, it is worth noting key attributes for when the time is right.

The framework was developed over three years in consultation with the Scottish Government, councils, care providers and a range of bodies to provide councils and Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) with a national approach to commissioning care at home and supported living services.



It reflects the Scottish Government's updated Health and Social Care Standards and is intended to help people who need services to live safely and independently in their own homes and communities. The framework will re-open every six months over its four-year duration to allow new providers to join.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, initial preparatory mobilisation work had taken place with the participating authorities to adopt the framework at a local level. The initial work prioritised support for mobilisation with early adopters, including Dundee, Stirling, Clackmannanshire, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire and East Renfrewshire. Scotland Excel is keen to re-establish this work while ensuring that unnecessary pressures are not placed upon HSCP's and service providers, particularly at the moment when there is local financial and emergency care planning underway to ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities continue to receive the appropriate care and support.

Recognition of the current local authority position, coupled with feedback from Social Work Scotland Contracts Group, will help us better determine the next steps in the mobilisation process in the coming weeks.

### 3.2 National Care Home Contract

Over the past three years, Scotland Excel has worked with local authorities, COSLA and Scottish Care to develop a cost model to produce national rates for council funded places in nursing and residential care homes.

Although work is not yet complete on the 2020/21 model, negotiations around direct care costs were expedited so that care homes could meet the cost of annual increases in wages and salaries, property and supplies with effect from 6th April. This ensures that care workers and nursing staff looking after vulnerable older people during the Covid-19 crisis are put on a much surer financial footing.

The rates agreed for 2020/21, which include increases for paying the Real Living Wage to all care workers and paying nursing staff at the top of the Agenda for Change Band 5, are:

- £740.00 per person per week for nursing care
- £635.79 per person per week for residential care

Councils will now be in receipt of all necessary paperwork to enter into local contracts with providers for each care home in their area. Care providers have been advised that there may be a short delay in changing to the 2020/21 rates

while both local authority and provider finance systems are updated. In such circumstances, councils are being advised to backdate payments to 6th April.

#### **4. Children's Services**

##### **4.1 Children's Residential Care & Education including Short Breaks**

This flexible framework supports councils to make placements within independent children's residential care, care and education, residential short breaks and day education services. There are currently 43 providers on the framework with negotiations for fee uplifts for 2020/21 nearing completion.

Uplift requests were submitted by 29 providers with a potential impact of an increase in cost of c.£4m. This was subsequently reduced by 25% through negotiations with providers.

A further 14 providers applied to join the framework when it re-opened earlier this year and it is anticipated that details of successful tenders will be released by 30th June.

##### **4.2 Secure Care Services**

Four specialist, independent secure care centres provide services to local authorities and the Scottish Government via Scotland Excel contracts. During the Covid-19 pandemic they report to the Scottish Government COVID-19 Secure Care Resilience Group on a weekly basis. This group comprises senior representatives from each centre along with relevant senior staff from Scottish Government, Scotland Excel, the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland.

All secure care centres have robust service continuity and contingency plans in place, and these are updated when new information and guidance becomes available. In addition to weekly Resilience Group meetings, secure care centres are subject to the Care Inspectorate's revised national notification requirements for the Covid-19 emergency including:

- Incidents of outbreaks of infectious disease notifications.
- Staffing shortage notifications.
- Weekly staffing absence notification

## **5. Other Social Care Contracts**

### **5.1 Community Meals**

The Community Meals framework provides an efficient means for local authorities to arrange delivery of pre-prepared meals to people in their homes, as well as to community venues and council premises.

Benefits include:

- Reduced procurement costs plus savings
- Access to appropriate alternative service delivery models
- Standard and appropriate terms & conditions

The framework offers a range of services, which includes Bulk Delivery to a Central Distribution Point; Frozen Delivery Service to Customers at Home / Nominated Premises; Daily Delivery of Hot Meals to Customers at Home / Nominated Premises.

Both providers to this framework report that they have contingency plans in place to ensure continuity of supply to this vulnerable customer base.

The dominant supplier on this framework has reported an increase in volumes purchased from some of their key customers. Typical reasons for this include staff shortages within local authority care homes, sickness cover, and lack of staff working within this sector. They continue to supply to their elderly and vulnerable customer base across hospitals, care homes and into people's homes. However, day care and lunch club business has ceased. A small number of their suppliers have closed their businesses due to COVID-19, but their contingency planning ensures that they are able to meet demand.

### **5.2 Social Care Agency Workers**

This framework was developed to meet the need for social care agency workers within services across Scotland's local authorities and housing associations, as well as for Cordia, NHS Scotland and the Scottish Prison Service.

During the Covid-19 emergency, the Social Care Agency Workers framework offers Scotland Excel members and associate members a route to recruiting temporary care workers where self-isolation and staff absences are undermining the continuity of service provision.

Recent communication with framework providers has indicated that there is increased demand for agency workers, but they are able to maintain capacity to respond to requests.

The framework provides several key benefits including:

- high level job descriptions for core roles
- a clear service specification to ensure the provision of trained, qualified, registered and vetted agency workers
- provisions for councils to ensure agency staff are paid the Real Living Wage
- improved financial transparency and robust terms & conditions

### 5.3 Technology Enabled Care

This relatively new framework is designed to enable councils, Health & Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) and Scotland Excel associate members to procure technology enabled care and ancillary monitoring services to maintain, promote, and support independent living.

There are 10 lots on this framework including Dispersed Alarm Units, Alarm Triggers and Lifestyle Monitoring Equipment with ancillary monitoring service, which use static movement sensors and software to monitor wellbeing activity, reporting on lack of or unusual movement activities within a person's home.

Scotland Excel is currently supporting the Digital Office in scoping available provision of telecare supplies and services given the likelihood of increased demand for technology enabled care solutions in the coming months. In addition, the procurement activity to support the migration to digital telecare solutions will be accelerated.

Monitoring of calls received by call centres since the start of the lockdown has indicated a 50% reduction in the number of calls received to date. It is thought that the reason for this may be that there is an increasing uptake of services such as Facetime or WhatsApp, alongside a possible reluctance to use the service at a time of crisis. In relation to new installations of equipment in people's homes, the use of PPE and adherence to social distancing will have to be considered as part of any risk assessment.

## 6. Summary

Scotland Excel will continue to support partner organisations through the current crisis. In recognition that operational and financial challenges will continue, we will continue to ensure that our frameworks enable councils and HSCP's to optimise the care offered to their communities.

## Scotland Excel

To: CEOMG

On: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Report  
By  
Chief Executive of Scotland Excel  
Covid-19 - Environment Category Update**

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the CEOMG of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Scotland Excel Environment Category and wider waste management sector. It will summarise council responses across the country to ensure frontline service are maintained, and the impact on associated markets and industry as a whole. Regularly updated information can be found via the Scotland Excel Covid-19 Newsroom (a link can be found in appendix to this report).

### 2. Background

- 2.1 During the course of recent weeks, councils have faced unprecedented challenges in delivering key frontline services in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. One key frontline service is waste management, and specifically household kerbside waste collections. Challenges faced include higher levels of staff absence than normal and the introduction of new safe-working practices specific to the Covid-19 virus as well as the need to temporarily close recycling centres in order to protect staff and the public.

The wider sector has been forced to adapt to the same increase in staff absence and safe-working practices. Additionally, the suspension of commercial collections, the temporary suspension of feedstock from some council kerbside collections and difficulties relating to onward supply of material to export markets are creating issues.

- 2.2 The UK Government granted waste industry workers “key-worker” status, and to date councils across Scotland have refined operational practices to ensure the safety of crews whilst maintaining an acceptable level of service. Whilst a number of councils have been successful in maintaining a ‘business as usual’

service, others have been forced to temporarily suspend less vital collections, focusing primarily on non-recyclable material and/or amend the types of material to be presented for collection by householders. Currently, many services that were suspended have since been reinstated, whilst plans are being formulated to resume full service, including the introduction of bulk waste collections and organised reopening of recycling centres. It should be noted that as the pandemic evolves, subsequent peaks may result in impacts to service including the reinstatement of temporary suspensions. Zero Waste Scotland has provided direct access to all relevant council website pages detailing up to date information regarding kerbside collections (a link can be found in the appendix to this report).

- 2.3 Throughout this pandemic, the framework arrangements available within the Scotland Excel Environment Category have remained live and largely unaffected. Key-worker status has ensured that treatment sites remain open and supply of equipment remains available. Given the pressures on both User Intelligence Groups (UIG) members and the supply base, Scotland Excel has kept communication to a minimum, temporarily suspending the requirement of suppliers to respond to management information requests for the last quarter and avoiding over-reliance on UIG input, instead reacting to support as and when requested to assist those councils that are continuing with tendering activity under the available Scotland Excel arrangements.
- 2.4 Scotland Excel has not received direct reports from service providers or suppliers of significant delay for delivery of goods or inability to service awarded contracts in line with agreed terms and conditions. Some waste streams are particularly at risk under the current constraints, particularly those that generate an income for councils. Scotland Excel regularly monitors common material market indices. Markets for paper and card materials have been in decline for a sustained period due to various factors including stringent quality requirements on exported material and a lack of demand. This trend has continued since the turn of the year, although a slight improvement was recorded in March to April figures. Similarly, the market value for glass materials has seen an improvement since the turn of the year, whilst plastic material value is higher in April 2020 than at the same point during 2019. Conversely, markets for Textiles and Scrap Metal have seen a sharp decline since the turn of the year and currently appear to be the most affected by the Covid-19 crisis. Scotland Excel will continue to monitor status of all key markets.
- 2.5 In relation to the risk of tendering activity over next year, those within the Environment Category arrangements are reasonably low as efforts will primarily focus upon contract management.

The potential exception is organic waste, which has entered its extension year and tendering activity will be required during the remainder of 2020 in order to ensure the next generation framework is in place for its expiry during March 2021. If kerbside collections continue to be disrupted, there may be an impact on current organic treatment facilities, which require regular garden and food waste to maintain operability.

- 2.6 Scotland Excel continues to support partner organisations including Zero Waste Scotland with whom Scotland Excel shares a long-standing relationship. Recent dialogue prompted the development of a set of guidance and contract documents which will support councils to engage and contract directly with external providers.

Scotland Excel has been in discussion with Zero Waste Scotland to develop a framework for the provision of waste composition analysis. This enables councils to understand the content of waste streams in order to measure progress against policy objectives. This dialogue will resume later in the year.

- 2.7 The industry has reacted to this crisis and a number of policy interventions and support networks are assisting councils with maintaining continuity of service. In addition to the Covid-19 related SPPNs in relation to procurement practices/regulation, the Scottish Government has delayed its planned Deposit Return Scheme - which is expected to have a direct impact on household tonnage and potentially collection practices - by one year and will now not go live until 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022. Scotland Excel will continue to keep abreast of related policy and support, disseminating to UIG members and influence where appropriate on behalf of our procurement community.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Members of the CEOMG are invited to note the content of this report.

## **Appendix**

Link to Scotland Excel Covid-19 Newsroom:

<https://scotlandexcelcovid19-newsroom.prgloo.com/our-news/welcome-to-our-covid-19-newsroom>

Link to Zero Waste Scotland Covid-19 webpage

<https://wasteless.zerowastescotland.org.uk/topics/coronavirus>



## Appendix – E

### Scotland Excel

**To: CEOMG**

**On: 6th May 2020**

#### **Report by Chief Executive Scotland Excel**

#### **Construction Update (considering impact of Covid-19 on Scotland Excel Frameworks)**

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Whilst a number of Scotland Excel frameworks have been affected by the current crisis, Scotland Excel continues to provide an agile and flexible service to meet the needs of our members and suppliers. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the CEOMG regarding the current construction category activity, and to outline current risks and potential mitigation opportunities.

### **2. Contract Update**

#### **2.1 Domestic Furniture and Furnishings**

There has been an increase in crisis grants allocated through the Social Welfare Fund and increasing demand for fit-outs of void properties for habitation. All suppliers are experiencing reduced staff numbers with office-based staff working from home. The primary service is operational, however, with amended health and safety requirements to limit tenant engagement. Suppliers are also requesting streamlined payments and are issuing invoices for part-delivery orders.

It is proposed that the Domestic Furniture and Furnishings framework will be extended for a further three months until 31st January 2021.

#### **2.2 Domestic Gas Boiler Maintenance**

Scotland Excel has been engaging with suppliers to ascertain readiness to respond to increased volume of emergency call outs due to isolation/home working and corresponding increased heating usage. Research has also been carried out to gauge the availability of temporary heaters as required.

## 2.3 Trades (Plumbing & Heating, Electrical Materials, Building & Timber, Trade Materials)

Following Government guidance, much of the supply chain has closed and many have furloughed staff. Key suppliers are remaining open, however, to provide access to materials for emergency repairs for frontline services/key workers. Large merchants have made their distribution network available to disseminate PPE and have made existing stocks available for health and social care requirements.

The Electrical Materials framework was awarded electronically and went live on 1st April 2020 as planned.

## 2.4 Demolition, New Build Housing and Outdoor Play Equipment

Following Government guidance, all construction works have ceased, and most associated staff are in furlough. Suppliers have capacity to engage in tendering activity but may struggle to commit to specific pricing and programmes.

The demolition and deconstruction works framework tender has now closed, and evaluations are underway. Despite changes to both Scotland Excel and our members' working arrangements, the evaluation is progressing well, and we are continuing to receive an extensive level of support from the technical teams including representatives from City Property Glasgow LLP, Dundee City Council, Angus Council, North Lanarkshire Council and South Ayrshire Council.

In light of the restrictions following COVID19, we are considering the best options to consult with our wider UIG through future tender stages, all of which we will further clarify in the coming weeks and months.

## 3. General Update

### 3.1 Engagement with construction suppliers to support PPE stocks

Contract owners for frameworks including Asbestos, Demolition and Trade Materials, are in dialogue with framework suppliers regarding releasing appropriate PPE given the suspension of maintenance and works programmes. This will continue and available products will be allocated in line with the revised PPE process.

### 3.2 How suppliers are responding to the lockdown and how to continue to access supplies, services or works

The construction team collated statements being released by suppliers and recorded ongoing engagement with suppliers. A 'Current Status' spreadsheet is available on the category 'Framework Updates' section of the dedicated covid-19 website Newsroom, which confirms whether the supplier is operating during the lockdown, any changes to service delivery and updated contact

details. Scotland Excel will continue to engage with suppliers and update this attachment to be reflective of ongoing discussions.

### 3.3 Impact on the contract delivery plan

Where possible Scotland Excel will continue to progress ongoing tendering/contract award activity and review as constraints are identified. In other cases, short extensions will be proposed taking cognisance of the current market conditions and the impact this continues to have on suppliers and councils. For those developments at an earlier phase, Scotland Excel is working with stakeholders to prepare procurement strategies for governance groups.

## 4. Policy Update

- 4.1 A number of Scottish Procurement Policy Notes (SPPN) have recently been issued as a consequence of the current COVID-19 outbreak. SPPN 4/2020 raises awareness on handling some procurement related issues, and SPPN 5/2020 sets out guidance for contracting authorities on payment to their suppliers to ensure service continuity. Construction Procurement Notice (CPN) 1/2020 relates to the impact of Covid 19 on Construction Contracts with CPN 2/2020 more specifically relating to Project Bank Accounts (PBAs).

The Scottish Government has also published Coronavirus (COVID-19): construction sector guidance which provides specific guidance on the operations of sites and associated works.

Overall, the Scottish Government's objective for the construction sector during the COVID-19 pandemic is to help ensure that Scotland takes a responsible approach to the containment of COVID-19, while being in a position to respond to both critical and longer-term recovery requirements. This will help ensure that the construction sector retains the capability and capacity necessary to effectively recommence work and deliver current and future construction project pipeline.

- 4.2 A summary of some of the major considerations for construction are set out below:

### **Project pipeline continuity**

Contracting authorities should, in conjunction with their suppliers, determine if it is practicable to maintain their current project pipeline including the related programme of procurement activity for construction contracts. Scotland Excel

has reviewed its overall delivery plan for the calendar year and is in the process of finalising appropriate extensions and framework deferrals

Contracting authorities should engage with prospective bidders in any procurement procedure to ensure that they remain capable, and possess the necessary capacity, both to participate in the procurement procedure and to undertake the scope of proposed works.

### **Programme flexibility**

Where the contracting authority is planning a hiatus between practical completion and occupancy/operational readiness, there may be scope to prolong the construction programme to accommodate anticipated but unforeseeable site disruption due to COVID-19.

It is recommended that contracting authorities seek to agree a process with the contractor for identifying and recording prolongation and disruption directly attributable to COVID-19.

### **Existing contracts**

Contracting authorities should urgently engage with contractors in order to ascertain their current status on a range of key matters including:

- progress to date on site relative to programme
- value of work executed on site
- impact of supply chain disruption and supporting payments
- applications made to Her Majesty's Government and/or Scottish Government for emergency loans, grants and the like, including for supply chains
- any other matters of importance and relevance in light of COVID-19

### **Corporate governance rules and potential COVID-19 mitigations**

Contracting authorities should consider what flexibility exists within their corporate governance and contract standing orders to enable actions which would be substantive in meeting the guidance provided.

The objective of any measures taken should be to help ensure that Scotland, both locally and nationally, retains a viable construction sector through these unprecedented times and that businesses emerge ready to resume work on existing projects and new opportunities.

## **5. Current View from the Construction Industry**

Bodies representing construction and property professionals in Scotland have called for a gradual re-opening of non-essential building sites, within the parameters of health and safety requirements, as soon as possible.

The **Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)**, **Royal Incorporation of Architects Scotland (RIAS)** and **Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)** point out that urgent action is needed to avoid a long term, detrimental impact on the construction sector and the economy.

They also state:

- that stasis is already taking hold of the sector in Scotland with many projects at significant risk and that unless measures are put in place now, outcomes will include long-term skills shortages, cost increases and reduced productivity.
- one of the biggest impacts of closed construction sites is that supply chains are now engaging in a comprehensive furlough of staff to the point that a state of paralysis is setting into the construction industry.
- many projects are in jeopardy, even at pre-construction phase, because the supply chain cannot submit quotes and prices.
- any delay in project planning and procurement will cause projects to be cancelled, and it could prolong the recovery.

In addition to the lifting of the lockdown on building sites, RICS, RIAS and CIOB have also called for the following:

- A VAT rebate fund for home repair and maintenance, and energy efficiency improvement measures, with parity between new build and existing properties.
- The prioritisation of preconstruction design and specification work leading to tenders, ensuring there is a flow of activity into the construction industry.
- The instruction of appropriate building surveys/condition inspections now of publicly owned buildings, such as schools, colleges, museums and libraries that are currently vacant.
- An initiative to encourage a large-scale public sector programme of maintenance works that will assist cashflow for SMEs, supporting the supply chain and retaining skills.
- The maintenance of public sector pre-design and development work to ensure that design professionals are able to support future public sector development programmes
- Having the Scottish National Investment Bank provide guarantees of bank lending, acting as a longer-term post-pandemic CBILS, that will encourage investment in Scotland's infrastructure programme

## **6. Conclusion**

Members of the CEOMG are invited to note this update.