

Minute of Meeting Scotland Excel Chief Executive Officers Management Group

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 06 May 2020	10:00	By Video Conference,

Present

Sandra Black, Chief Executive (Renfrewshire Council); Angela Scott, Chief Executive (Aberdeen City Council); Margo Williamson, Chief Executive (Angus Council); and Craig Fergusson (South Lanarkshire Council).

Chair

Sandra Black, Chair, presided.

In Attendance

J Welsh, Director, H Carr Head of Strategic Procurement, S Brannagan, Head of Customer and Business Services, B Murray, Procurement Development Manager, L Muir, Senior Procurement Specialist and G Mooney, Category Analyst (all Scotland Excel); and K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance (Clerk) and E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer (both Renfrewshire Council).

Apologies

Annemarie O'Donnell, Chief Executive (Glasgow City Council); Steve Grimmond, Chief Executive (Fife Council); and Cleland Sneddon, Chief Executive (South Lanarkshire Council).

Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 Minute

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Chief Executive Officers Management Group (CEOMG) held on 19 February 2020.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

Sederunt

Margo Williamson joined the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

2(a) Covid-19: PPE Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the supply and delivery of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) setting out the background to the approach taken by Scotland Excel and providing a high-level overview of the initial process implemented by Scotland Excel to support its members, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The report intimated that the Supply and Delivery of Personal Protective Equipment was a fourth-generation framework and that PPE was defined as all equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which was intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protected them against one or more risks to their health or safety. The current framework had an annual value of approximately £7.5 million across 32 participating councils plus Tayside Contracts and Associate Members. The spend data captured noted that 31% of value was from core items and 69% from non-core items.

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.

The Chief Executive of NSS, wrote to Council and NHS Chief Executives on 6 April 2020 providing an update on the NSS approach to PPE. This update caused concern amongst Council Chief Executives and Scotland Excel was asked to look at a more council based solution. In addition, SOLACE sought to understand the levels of PPE demand across councils. A meeting was held on 10 April 2020 with a range of stakeholders including SOLACE, CoSLA, Scottish Government, NSS and Scotland Excel and 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 this, the Scottish Government indicated their intention to supply PPE for all non-health and social care and non-council PPE.

The annual total historic PPE demand through the Scotland Excel framework was detailed in table 1 of the report and a summary of the confirmed council weekly

demand for a consolidated group of products split between care and non-care was detailed in table 2 of the report.

It was noted that after the current crisis, Scotland Excel would continue to work with member councils to ensure contract development activity was in alignment with strategic plans.

DECIDED:

(a) That the content of the report be noted; and

(b) That the measures and approach taken by Scotland Excel to support non-care PPE requirements by councils be supported.

2(b) Covid-19: Scotland Excel Food Category Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Scotland Excel food category, summarising the local authority response to support households who may experience barriers in accessing food, and outlining current Scotland Excel contract arrangements, including ongoing activity and support.

The report intimated that on 18 March 2020, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government announced a £350 million package to support communities affected by COVID-19 which included a £70 million Food Fund to put in place support for those who would otherwise be unable to access food through the usual routes. £30 million of the Food Fund was 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 £30 million had been set aside for a UK-wide programme to procure and deliver food for those who were unable to leave their homes due to being at highest clinical risk, known as the shielded group, currently being managed through the Scottish Government and DEFRA; and £10 million had been set aside for investment in third sector organisations that were responding to food insecurity both at a national and local level.

The report provided information in relation to those households who may experience barriers to accessing essential food items including those who were clinically at high risk and were required to stay at home, known as the shielded group; those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or lived with someone with symptoms, and were required to stay at home temporarily; those who were vulnerable and were required to be particularly stringent in following social distancing; those who were financially at risk, including families whose children were eligible for free school meals, low income households and those who had recently lost employment; and those who were marginalised, may have complex needs and may be less engaged with public services.

There had been some initial supply issues from food distributors on Scotland Excel frameworks as suppliers had been inundated with requests for retail pack sizes which were not common within commercial food services. Distributors extended their normal supply base to secure stock for local authorities however, suppliers had a lead time of greater than seven days for some high-volume products and councils required to consider this when planning their order requirements. Scotland Excel would continue to work with local authorities to forecast their needs.

Scotland Excel Account Managers had contacted all local authorities to ascertain the current food related solutions in place. Scotland Excel would continue to have input into the fortnightly Public Sector Food Forum meetings to ensure the requirements of local authorities were being raised with Scottish Government; continue to share the outcome from this forum with member councils; continue to work with Scotland Food and Drink to identify opportunities for Scottish Manufacturers to work with framework distributors to support local authority requirements; give consideration to national versus local supply for future generations of food frameworks; would work with distributors to agree timelines for schools reopening and restarting deliveries; work with local authorities and distributors to ensure that sufficient notice of schools reopening was given, and forecasts put in place to reduce the risk of supply shortages.

Local authorities might need to consider short-term changes to school menus if some items were in short supply and should also consider the potential financial impact of the current changes to spending patterns. Local authorities currently received sole supply rebates on the Groceries and Provisions framework which were paid retrospectively at the end of each framework year and, where spend had dropped, it was noted that this might have an impact on supplier rebates and community benefits.

DECIDED: That the contents of the report be noted.

2(c) Covid-19: Social Care Category Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel providing an update on the current landscape of collaborative social care services and outlining current risks and potential mitigation opportunities.

The report intimated that all of Scotland Excel's social care frameworks were 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 was 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 was 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 had announced that social care staff were to receive a 3.3% pay rise backdated to 1 April. This offer was made following consultation with Scotland Excel regarding the market analysis carried out on Care and Support Services and from the cost model for the National Care Home Contract. Scotland Excel had worked in collaboration with CoSLA on the development of the Guidance for Commissioning Services COVID-19, published in April 2020, which set out how the uplift would be applied. The guidance was available on CoSLA's website.

The report provided an update in relation to the Flexible Care and Support Services Framework; the national Care Home Contract; children's residential care and education including short breaks; secure care services; community meals; social care agency workers; and technology enabled care.

Scotland Excel would continue to support partner organisations through the current crisis and in recognition that operational and financial challenges would continue, would ensure that frameworks enabled Councils and HSCP's to optimise the care offered to their communities.

DECIDED: That the content of the report be noted.

2(d) Covid-19: Environment Category Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Scotland Excel Environment Category and wider waste management sector, summarising council responses across the country to ensure frontline service was maintained and the impact on associated markets and industry as a whole.

The report intimated that during the course of recent weeks councils had faced unprecedented challenges in delivering key frontline services in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of which was waste management, specifically household kerbside waste collections.

The UK Government granted waste industry workers "key-worker" status and to date councils across Scotland had refined operational practices to ensure the safety of crews whilst maintaining an acceptable level of service. Whilst a number of councils had been successful in maintaining a 'business as usual' service, others had been forced to temporarily suspend less vital collections, focusing primarily on non-recyclable material and/or amend the types of material presented for collection by householders.

Throughout this pandemic, the framework arrangements available within the Scotland Excel Environment Category had remained live and largely unaffected. Key-worker status had ensured that treatment sites remained open and supply of equipment remained available. Given the pressures on both User Intelligence Groups (UIG) members and the supply base, Scotland Excel had 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 were continuing with tendering activity under the available Scotland Excel arrangements.

Scotland Excel had 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 were particularly at risk under the current constraints, particularly those that generated an income for councils. Scotland Excel regularly monitored common material market indices and would continue to monitor status of all key markets.

In relation to the risk of tendering activity over next year, those within the Environment Category arrangements were reasonably low as efforts would primarily focus on contract management. The potential exception was organic waste, which had entered its extension year and tendering activity would be required during the remainder of 2020 in order to ensure the next generation framework was in place for its expiry during March 2021. If kerbside collections continued to be disrupted, there might be an impact on current organic treatment facilities, which required regular garden and food waste to maintain operability.

Scotland Excel continued to support partner organisations including Zero Waste Scotland. Recent dialogue prompted the development of a set of guidance and contract documents which would support councils to engage and contract directly with external providers. Scotland Excel had been in discussion with Zero Waste Scotland to develop a framework for the provision of waste composition analysis to enable councils to understand the content of waste streams in order to measure progress against policy objectives.

The industry had reacted to this crisis and a number of policy interventions and support networks were assisting councils with maintaining continuity of service. In addition to the COVID-19 related Scottish Procurement Policy Notes (SPPN) in relation to procurement practices/regulation, the Scottish Government had delayed its planned Deposit Return Scheme by one year and it would now not go live until 1 July 2022. Scotland Excel would continue to keep abreast of related policy and support, disseminating to UIG members and influence where appropriate on behalf of our procurement community.

DECIDED: That the content of the report be noted.

2(e) Construction Update (considering impact of Covid-19 on Scotland Excel frameworks)

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel providing an update on the current construction category activity outlining current risks and potential mitigation opportunities.

The report provided updates on the Domestic Furniture and Furnishings framework; domestic gas boiler maintenance; trade materials including plumbing and heating, electrical materials, building and timber; demolition, new-build housing and outdoor play equipment; engagement with construction suppliers to support PPE stocks; how suppliers were responding to the lockdown and how to continue to access supplies, services or works; and the impact on the contract delivery plan.

Various Scottish Procurement Policy Notes (SPPN) had been issued as a consequence of the current COVID-19 outbreak and the Scottish Government had also published Coronavirus (COVID-19): construction sector guidance which provided 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 was to help ensure that Scotland took 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 would help ensure that the construction sector retained the capability and capacity necessary to effectively recommence work and deliver current and future construction project pipeline.

The report also detailed a number of the major considerations for construction and the current view from the construction industry.

DECIDED: That the content of the report be noted.

3 Date of Next Meeting

DECIDED: That it be noted that the next meeting of the CEOMG would be held at 10.00 am on 19 August 2020.