

Minute of Meeting Scotland Excel Executive Sub-committee

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 21 April 2023	09:30	Remote using Microsoft Teams Platform,

Present

Councillor David Keating (Aberdeenshire Council); Councillor Brenda Durno (Angus Council); Councillor Kenny Macleod (Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar); Councillor Carlyne Wilson (Dumfries & Galloway Council); Councillor Mandy Watt (City of Edinburgh Council); Councillor Altany Craik (Fife Council); Councillor Ruairi Kelly (Glasgow City Council); Councillor Derek Loudon (Highland Council); Councillor Christina Larsen (North Ayrshire Council); Councillor Michael McPake (North Lanarkshire Council); Councillor John Shaw (Renfrewshire Council); and Councillor Peter Henderson (South Ayrshire Council).

Chair

Councillor Shaw, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

J Welsh, Chief Executive, H Carr, Director of Strategic Procurement, L Richard, M Mitchell and E Hay, all Strategic Programme Managers, L Campbell, Customer Services Manager, L Muir, Category Manager, N Hyde, Programme Manager, K Forrest, Office Manager, M Boyle, Senior Business Specialist, M MacRitchie, Business Services Specialist, C Kirkwood, Assistant Procurement Specialist, P Barnes, Project & Account Manager and R Feckie and H Wood, both Graduate Trainees (all Scotland Excel) and L Mitchell, Managing Solicitor (Contracts & Conveyancing) and E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer (both Renfrewshire Council).

Apologies

Councillor Dennis Leask (Shetlands Islands Council) and Councillor Walter Brogan (South Lanarkshire Council).

Declarations of Interest

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

1 **Minute**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Executive Sub-committee held on 17 March 2023.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

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Councillor Craik joined the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business. Councillor Larsen and Councillor Keating both joined the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

2 **Contract for Approval - Supply, Delivery and Installation of Commercial Catering Equipment**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the award of a second-generation renewal framework for the supply, delivery and installation of commercial catering equipment for a period of 36 months with an option to extend for a further 12 months. It was noted that subject to approval and completion of a standstill period, it was intended that the framework would commence on or around June 2023.

The report intimated that the framework would provide councils and other participating bodies with a mechanism to procure a range of gas, electric and refrigerated commercial catering equipment including, but not limited to, blast chillers, combi ovens, fridges, freezers, hot and cold holding equipment, gas ranges, mixers, dishwashers, microwaves and other associated products.

The report summarised the outcome of the procurement process for this national framework arrangement which had been divided into five lots, as detailed in table 1 of the report.

The report advised that the framework had been advertised at a total value of £1.5 million per annum, which equated to an estimated spend of £6 million over the maximum four-year term of the framework and took into account additional spend for councils to facilitate the roll-out of universal free school meals across primary 4 to 7 pupils. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the participation and spend summary of those participating in the framework.

Tender responses had been received from 16 suppliers and Appendix 2 to the report provided a summary of the offers received.

Based on the criteria and scoring methodology set out in the tender document, a full evaluation of the compliant offers had been carried out and Appendix 3 to the report confirmed the scoring achieved by each bidder.

Based on the evaluation undertaken, and in line with the advertised criteria and weightings set out in the report, it was recommended that a multi-supplier framework arrangement be awarded to eight suppliers across the five lots, as outlined in Appendix 3 to the report.

Appendix 4 to the report detailed the approach taken by suppliers in relation to fair work practices and their position on the payment of the Real Living Wage. The report intimated that, in accordance with Scotland Excel's established contract and supplier management programme, the framework had been classified as class D in terms of risk and spend, as detailed in Appendix 5 to the report.

DECIDED: That the award of the multi-supplier framework for supply, delivery and installation of commercial catering equipment, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.

3(a) **Request for Associate Membership of Scotland Excel by Blochairn Housing Association Limited**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel advising that Blochairn Housing Association Limited had submitted an application to become an associate member of Scotland Excel.

The report provided details of the organisation and the legislative position in relation to the application.

DECIDED: That the application by Blochairn Housing Association Limited to become an associate member of Scotland Excel, with an annual membership fee of £515, be approved, subject to completion and signing of the agreement documentation.

3(b) **Request for Associate Membership of Scotland Excel by Care Inspectorate**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel advising that the Care Inspectorate had submitted an application to become an associate member of Scotland Excel.

The report provided details of the organisation and the legislative position in relation to the application.

DECIDED: That the application by the Care Inspectorate to become an associate member of Scotland Excel, with no annual membership fee, be approved, subject to completion and signing of the agreement documentation.

3(c) **Request for Associate Membership of Scotland Excel by Right There**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel advising that Right There had submitted an application to become an associate member of Scotland Excel.

The report provided details of the organisation and the legislative position in relation to the application.

DECIDED: That the application by Right There to become an associate member of Scotland Excel, with an annual membership fee of £550, be approved, subject to completion and signing of the agreement documentation.

4 **Employee Supporting Attendance Report**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel highlighting the absence rate in the organisation and the support mechanisms implemented to support staff members.

The report intimated that the Joint Committee had agreed that Scotland Excel should work to an absence rate of below 4% and that this target aligned Scotland Excel with partner organisations, supported good practice in this area and demonstrated the ongoing commitment to absence management as a key efficiency target.

The report advised of the absence levels for the 12-month period ending 28 February 2023 and provided a breakdown of the current month, the last six months and 12 months absence figures, together with an illustration of 12 months in days and the last 12 months in percentages.

The report noted that the rate of absence across the organisation had been maintained at below the 4% target. The 3.5% absence rate in March 2022, due to a rise in COVID-19 infections and long-term absences, had dropped significantly in April 2022 to 0.4% but then had climbed steadily to 1.9% in July 2022 due to a further increase in Covid related causes, an occurrence that had been reflected throughout the general population at that time. The percentage absence rate dropped significantly to 0.2% in August 2022 as Covid cases cleared. Within the reported period, an increase in long-term absences saw the percentage absence rate rise from 0.4% in September 2022 to 3.5% in December 2022. Overall, the rolling six months and 12 months average absence rates had been maintained at or below 2.5%.

It was noted that, in addition to actively supporting members of staff absent through ill health, Scotland Excel continued to implement positive early intervention practices including working with occupational health and other support services to maintain employee attendance and to support members of staff who might be experiencing difficulties whilst remaining at work. Scotland Excel continued to support a range of interventions for staff including occupational health referral, confidential counselling services and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and issued wellbeing emails with further information on health initiatives which could be accessed independently by all staff.

The report intimated that Scotland Excel recognised that positive mental health amongst staff members was an area that should be actively supported and encouraged and, in addition to actively promoting good mental health practices and initiatives, had 15 staff from across all operational areas and grades who had trained as accredited Mental Health First Aiders. In providing this confidential opportunity to staff members, it was hoped that any personal difficulties experienced could be addressed at an early stage with appropriate signposting to professional support. Further training was planned in the coming year for those staff members wishing to become accredited Mental Health First Aiders.

Scotland Excel had also implemented a Mental Health at Work Commitment Action Plan which was recognised as a comprehensive tool for adopting best practice in promoting and maintaining positive mental health within the organisation. Also, that in starting the journey to become a Trauma-informed Organisation, Laura James, the National Trauma Lead from the Improvement Service, had presented to the whole Scotland Excel workforce at a face-to-face event on 22 March 2023. The next step for Scotland Excel would be to conduct a self-assessment exercise using the Quality Improvement Framework to be issued in Spring 2023.

DECIDED: That the contents of the report be noted.

5 **Structure of Contract Approval Reports**

The Chief Executive of Scotland Excel submitted a report relative to a revised methodology for presenting reports to the Executive Sub-committee seeking approval of award frameworks, which reflected Scotland Excel's focus on enhancing value for members. A copy of the proposed revised report was appended to the report.

The report proposed that, in relation to benchmarked contract performance when compared to market indices, future reports include the monetary impact resulting from the comparison; that in relation to contract benefits, future reports include further datasets that would evidence the impacts of benefits within frameworks (i) a calculation on cost avoidance achieved through collaboration, (ii) metrics to incorporate the measurement of carbon tonnage associated within framework goods or services, (iii) further measures as applicable to each framework; and (iv) in relation to information on suppliers recommended for award, the formatting of appendices be changed.

The report intimated that the changes proposed in the report would be introduced over the coming months as each report seeking approval for a contract award was brought to the Sub-committee and that any further proposals for changes to content would be brought back to the Sub-committee.

DECIDED: That the change to methodologies used when presenting recommendations for the award of new frameworks be approved.

6 **Date of Next Meeting**

DECIDED: That it be noted that the next meeting of the Executive Sub-committee would be held remotely on MS teams at 9.30 am on 19 May 2023.