

Minute of Meeting Scotland Excel Executive Sub-committee

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 17 March 2023	09:30	Remote using Microsoft Teams Platform,

Present

Councillor David Keating (Aberdeenshire Council); Councillor Kenny Macleod (Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar); Councillor Carolayne Wilson (Dumfries & Galloway Council); Councillor Altany Craik (Fife Council); Councillor Ruairi Kelly (Glasgow City Council); Councillor Derek Loudon (Highland Council); Councillor Christina Larsen (North Ayrshire 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, S Brannagan, Director of Customer & Business Services, L Richard, Strategic Programme Manager, S Christie, Commercial Programme Manager, E Campbell, Procurement Coordinator, L Campbell, Customer Services Manager, L A Campbell, Academy Tutor, G Montgomery, Category Manager, K Forrest, Office Manager, C Kirkwood, Assistant Procurement Specialist, L Mooney, Senior Communications Specialist, I Murray, Senior Housing Services Specialist, A Park and E Walker (both Graduate Trainees) (all Scotland Excel); C McCourt, Head of Finance & Business Services, L Mitchell, Managing Solicitor (Contracts & Conveyancing), T McGowan, Senior Accountancy Assistant and P Shiach, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Renfrewshire Council) and A Kolodziej, Audit Manager (Azets).

Apologies

Councillor Mandy Watt (City of Edinburgh Council), Councillor Michael McPake (North Lanarkshire Council) and Councillor Dennis Leask (Shetlands Islands 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 February 2023.

In relation to the Contract for Approval: Building Construction Consultancy, members were advised that during the standstill period an enquiry had been received from a partially successful bidder with regard to their technical score for lot 3. Scotland Excel had investigated the matter, the outcome of which was a revised recommendation to award the bidder to additional regions in lot 3 as set out in the amended lot 3 table which would be circulated following this meeting. This did not change the status for any other bidder, or impact on any other lot and subject to this approval the revised recommendation would be communicated via a fresh standstill prior to the award of the framework.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Minute be approved; and

(b) That the update provided in relation to the Contract for Approval: Building Construction Consultancy be noted.

2 Chief Executive's Update Report to Chief Executive Officers Management Group - March 2023

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the Chief Executive's update report considered at the meeting of the Scotland Excel Chief Executive Officers Management Group (CEOMG) held on 16 March 2023.

The report intimated that the CEOMG met quarterly and that as part of the regular governance process, the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel provided an update on the work of Scotland Excel. Following discussions with the Convener, it had been agreed that future reports, be shared with members of the Scotland Excel Executive Sub-committee, following CEOMG meetings.

The report submitted to the CEOMG meeting held on 16 March 2023, which covered the period from November 2022 and February 2023, was appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 **Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to 3 February 2023**

There was submitted a joint revenue budget monitoring report by the Treasurer and the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel for the period 1 April 2022 to 3 February 2023.

The report intimated that at the end of period 11, Scotland Excel was projecting a breakeven position by year-end in its core activities and a planned £0.208 million increase in committed project reserves by year-end. It was noted that both core and projects budgets would be monitored closely over the remainder of the financial year, targeted at maintaining a break-even position for core operations by 31 March 2023. Further detail was provided in section 3 of the report.

The appendices to the report provided an analysis of the actual spend to date along with projected net expenditure for 2022/23 and included a summary of movement in both the revenue reserve and the project reserves.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

4 **Report on the Annual Audit Plan 2022/23**

There was submitted a report by the Treasurer relative to the annual audit plan 2022/23 for Scotland Excel which outlined Azets planned activities in their audit of the 2022/23 annual accounts, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The report intimated that Azets had submitted an audit plan which outlined the approach to the audit of the 2022/23 annual accounts to assess whether the accounts provided a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position and also whether the accounts had been prepared in accordance with proper accounting practice, the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2022/23.

The audit plan outlined the responsibilities of Scotland Excel and Azets; the assessment of key challenges and risks; and the approach and timetable for completion of the audit. It was noted that the risks identified here were included in the audit plans of many bodies which Azets worked with and their inclusion was not a reflection of any specific risk within Scotland Excel.

The report advised that the statutory deadline for the approval of the audited accounts for 2022/23 was 30 September 2023 and that the annual audit report was planned to be reported to the meeting of the Executive Sub-committee scheduled to be held on 15 September 2023.

The report noted that the proposed audit fee was indicated at £10,510 for the current financial year and represented a local increase above the 12.5% uplift set by Audit Scotland for 2022/23. Within the terms of the Audit Scotland appointment, local audit teams had discretion to vary the fee by up to 10% above the level set depending on the level of identified audit risk and this proposed higher fee reflected the additional work required in the first year of a new audit appointment.

Adrian Kolodziej, Audit Manager, Azets, presented the annual audit plan to members.

DECIDED:

- (a) That Azets annual audit plan 2022/23, appended to the report, be noted; and
- (b) That the proposed audit fee for 2022/23 of £10,510 be approved.

5 **Contract for Approval: Supply, Delivery and Installation of Audio Visual Equipment**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the award of a fifth-generation renewal framework for the supply, delivery and installation of audio visual (AV) equipment for a period of four years from 3 April 2023 until 2 April 2027, subject to approval and completion of a standstill period.

The framework would provide councils and other participating bodies with a mechanism to procure a range of AV equipment including, but not limited to, interactive touch screens, wireless presentation systems, and projectors and specialist AV equipment for people with additional support needs.

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

The report advised that the framework had been advertised at a total value of £9 million per annum and Appendix 1 to the report detailed the participation and spend summary of those participating in the framework.

Tender responses had been received from 13 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 five suppliers across the three 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 audio visual equipment, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.

6 **Net Zero Strategy**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to Scotland Excel's 'Net Zero Strategy' which had been developed in response to commitments made within Scotland Excel's Corporate Strategy 2023/28 and linked Operating Plan approved by

the Joint Committee on 9 December 2022. A copy of the strategy was appended to the report.

The report intimated that the strategy would be used to support Scotland Excel member councils in the delivery of their individual and collective net zero goals linked to Scottish Government 'climate emergency' policy and legislation. The report noted that, as the centre for procurement expertise for Scotland's local government sector, Scotland Excel contract arrangements were used by a wide range of council services that linked to many of the key areas identified within individual council strategies aimed at tackling climate change and achieving net zero.

The report advised that Scotland Excel's Corporate Strategy 2023/28 committed to a continued promotion of frameworks to assist council members in implementing their climate change policies; Scotland Excel would also work with suppliers, partners and members to identify opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint of the existing contract portfolio; Scotland Excel's Operating Plan 2023/24 committed that Scotland Excel would implement actions from the Net Zero Strategy via a whole organisation approach to support council members' net zero journey; the Net Zero Strategy would ensure that the Scotland Excel contract portfolio remained crucial in assisting councils and others in meeting regulatory requirements; and that Scotland Excel would lead by example by exploring carbon impacts of business activities to ensure that contract arrangements continued to meet the needs of members councils.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Net Zero Strategy be approved; and

(b) That the flexibility for potential refinement as linked activities and opportunities developed during the delivery phase be noted.

7 Scotland Excel Academy Strategy

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the refreshed strategy for the Scotland Excel Academy which supported members requests for lower priced and shorter duration development programmes and workshops covering the areas detailed in the report.

The report intimated that the refreshed strategy would create a new nationally recognised procurement pathway for the public sector which was fully aligned to the Scottish national procurement development framework and the Scottish Qualification Authority.

The report advised that the current Academy Strategy provided a multi-disciplinary development portfolio comprising procurement, leadership and management, project management, business analysis, decision making and innovation disciplines. The methodology adopted by the Academy enabled people to apply learning to their work practice, delivering immediate impact at work. It was noted that the Academy had been instrumental in the creation and use of the current national procurement development framework which formed Appendix 1 to the report.

Section 3 of the report provided further detail on the proposed Scotland Excel Academy Strategy.

DECIDED: That the new Scotland Excel Academy Strategy be approved.

8(a) **Request for Associate Membership of Scotland Excel by Cunninghame Housing Association Limited**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel advising that Cunninghame 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 Cunninghame Housing Association Limited to become an associate member of Scotland Excel, with an annual membership fee of £4,980, be approved, subject to completion and signing of the agreement documentation.

8(b) **Request for Associate Membership of Scotland Excel by Linthouse Housing Association Ltd**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel advising that Linthouse 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 Linthouse Housing Association Limited to become an associate member of Scotland Excel, with an annual membership fee of £1,764, be approved, subject to completion and signing of the agreement documentation.

9 **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 21 April 2023.