

## Minute of Meeting Scotland Excel Executive Sub-committee

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 17 September 2021	09:30	Remotely by MS teams,

### Present

Provost Bill Howatson (Aberdeenshire Council); Provost Norman A Macdonald (Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar); Councillor Stephen Thompson (Dumfries & Galloway Council); Councillor Altany Craik (Fife Council); Councillor Ruairi Kelly (Glasgow City Council); Councillor Paul Di Mascio (North Lanarkshire Council); Councillor John Shaw (Renfrewshire Council); and Councillor Amanda Hawick (Shetland Islands Council).

### Chair

Councillor Shaw, Convener, presided.

### In Attendance

J Welsh, Chief Executive, S Brannagan, Head of Customer and Business Services, H Carr, Head of Strategic Procurement, L Campbell, Corporate Services Manager, L Richard, Strategic Procurement Manager, M Mitchell, Strategic Procurement Manager, J McKerrall, Strategic Procurement Manager, D Kerr, Senior Procurement Specialist, M Boyle, Senior Business Services Specialist, S Christie, Commercial Manager, and S Morrison, Project Account Manager and H Reed, Assistant Category Manager (all Scotland Excel); and M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager, E Gray, Senior Committee Services Officer and P Shiach, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Renfrewshire Council).

### Apologies

Councillor Angus MacMillan Douglas (Angus Council), Councillor Andrew Johnston (Edinburgh City Council), Councillor Joe Cullinane (North Ayrshire Council) and Councillor Josh Wilson (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 20 August 2021.

**DECIDED:** That the Minute be approved.

## 2 **Response to Scottish Government Consultation**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to the Scottish Government's consultation on the proposed National Care Service (NCS).

The report provided a background to the Independent Review of Adult Social Care and summarised its findings and recommendations including the establishment of a NCS in Scotland which would take over responsibility for the strategic aspects of social care planning and commissioning from local government, with local government instead becoming a care provider, alongside the private and voluntary sectors, which would be commissioned to deliver services on behalf of the NCS.

The report also set out the anticipated issues for local government, the wider social care market as a whole and Scotland Excel should the NCS be implemented. A proposed approach to the consultation response was detailed in terms of the national commissioning of social care services, the role of providing guidance and documentation to support local commissioning, improvements in procurement practices both generally and in the social care sector following the McLelland report in 2006, the absence of Scotland Excel's current role being articulated within the consultation document and the role of the regulator.

The report set out the governance proposal around the consultation response whereby a paper containing the full proposed consultation response would be submitted to a special meeting of the Scotland Excel Chief Executive Officers Management Group and to the Executive Sub-committee meeting in October 2021 for approval.

Councillor Craik moved that a special meeting of the Scotland Excel Joint Committee be scheduled to allow further discussion around the consultation response prior to its submission. This was agreed unanimously.

### **DECIDED:**

(a) That the issues set out in respect of the current proposals for a National Care Service be noted;

(b) That the proposed consultation response in respect of the specific areas which impact Scotland Excel's role be endorsed;

(c) That the response to the key general questions be endorsed;

(d) That Scotland Excel's position should be supported within individual council responses; and

(e) That a special meeting of the Scotland Excel Joint Committee be scheduled to allow further discussion around the consultation response prior to its submission.

### 3 **Supply Chain Disruption and Price Volatility**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel providing an update on the supply chain disruption and price variances that had occurred in recent months and the impact on the delivery of some of Scotland Excel's framework contracts and highlighting the controls and actions being taken forward to mitigate these risks. The report advised that Scotland Excel had launched a short life working group to collaborate shared experiences of the current volatility. The key insights from this engagement were detailed in the report.

**DECIDED:** That the progress made to date be noted that the ongoing activity outlined in the report be endorsed.

### 4 **Contract for Approval: Supply and Provision of Online School Payments, Cashless Catering and Kitchen Management and Nutritional Systems**

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 and provision of online school payments, cashless catering and kitchen management and nutritional systems which had been advertised for the period 20 September 2021 until 19 September 2025. It was intended that the framework would commence on 19 October 2021.

The framework would provide councils and other participating bodies with a mechanism to procure a complete solution for online school payments, cashless catering, kitchen management and nutritional analysis systems permitting the award of call-offs under the framework by way of a mini-competition.

The framework had been divided into four lots, as detailed in table 1 of the report, and the forecast annual spend for participating councils and associate members was £1 million per annum, equating to an estimated £4 million over the full four-year term of the framework. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the participation, spend and savings summary of the 29 councils participating in the framework together with Tayside Contracts. It was noted that North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire and Edinburgh City Council were not intending to participate in this framework and had their own arrangements in place.

Tender responses had been received from five 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 detailed the scoring achieved by each bidder.

Based on the evaluation undertaken, and in line with the criteria and weightings set out in the report, it was recommended that a multi-supplier framework arrangement be awarded to five suppliers across the four 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 this 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 framework for the supply and provision of online school payments, cashless catering and kitchen management and nutritional systems, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.

## 5 **Request for Associate Membership: University of Stirling**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel advising that the University of Stirling 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 University of Stirling to become an associate member of Scotland Excel, with no annual membership fee, be approved subject to completion and signing of the agreement documentation.

## **Sederunt**

Councillor Kelly left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business.

## 6 **Employee Absence Management Report**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive of Scotland Excel relative to employee absence statistics for Scotland Excel.

The report advised of the absence levels for the period ending 31 August 2021 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 rate of absence across the organisation had generally been maintained at or below the 4% target, with the exception of March 2021, where the absence rate rose to 5.1% due to long-term absences. The rolling six months and 12 months average absence rates had maintained at or below 3.6%.

The report highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic had had an adverse impact on the 2020/21 average sickness days per employee figure compared to the same period in 2019/20. In particular the COVID-19 pandemic appeared to have had an adverse impact on the mental wellbeing of staff with the predominant cause of long-term sickness absence being reported as mental ill health. The impact of the pandemic could also be evidenced when comparing the absence pattern from the previous 12 months.

It was noted that, as an organisation, Scotland Excel focussed on supporting attendance policies and made use of 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.

It was noted that Scotland Excel had signed up to the Mental Health at Work Commitment which provided a road map to assist the organisation achieve better outcomes in relation to the mental health for its employees. The Mental Health at Work Commitment was based around six 'Thriving at Work' standards and details of these were provided in the report. This Commitment provided a framework to guide actions and provided a range of resources and information to assist Scotland Excel in fulfilling its commitment.

**DECIDED**: That the content of the report be noted.

7 **Date of Next Meeting**

**DECIDED**: That it be noted that the next meeting of the Executive Sub-committee would be held at 9.30 am on 22 October 2021.