

NDA ESTATE SME STEERING GROUP – CUMBRIA

Meeting 3: NDA Offices, Herdus House, Westlakes

21 August 2013

Present:

SMEs: Chair: Kurt Canfield (KC) – Safety Critical Phil Redfern (PR) – React Engineering Ian Park (IP) – Park Gate Tom Anderson (TAn) – Blue Stream Consulting Liz Bowe (LB) – Pactec Tim Ashworth (TA) – Westlakes Engineering,	Tier 2s: Debbie Stevens (DS) – MITIE Kevin Thompson (KT) – Carillion, Support Organisations: John Porter – Britain’s Energy Coast (BEC) Julie Betteridge (JB) – Copeland Borough Council
SLCs: Stuart Wilson (SW) – Sellafield, Acting Secretary	NDA: Sam Dancy (SD), Karina Pellow (KP)
Apologies: Tony O’Pray (TO) – TIS, David Hughes (DH) – Sellafield, Chris Jennings (CJ) – NDA, David Jones (DJ) - BEC	

Introductions:

The chairman welcomed the group to the 3rd Cumbria SME steering group and a round table introduction was made for the benefit of the new members.

Minutes of meeting No 2 - 18th June 2013

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed and accepted as a true record.

Actions update – see appendix A for actions in progress and closed out.

1. Review of Action Findings

Industry exemplars

PR provided an update to the group relating to Createc the MoD initiative that leads on supply chain centres for defence enterprise. This was a recognised route for MoD to publicise their R&D requirements aligned to specific technical challenges and opportunities for the supply chain to drive innovation and solutions.

TA suggested that Sellafield needs to share the common challenges in a similar manner to the MoD defining the challenges so that the supply chain could target solutions. SW stated that challenge statements had previously been released by Sellafield Ltd via the website although no new statements had been posted recently.

KC informed the group that he had held discussions with Innovus (Oil & Gas) and was keen to invite/include a Cumbrian contingency to assess the opportunities highlighted by Innovus.

SW provided an overview of the opportunity to develop an SME ‘Dragons Den’ that could be used to raise SME awareness. JP BEC had a number of initiatives and wanted to seek views on whether they

were the right ones to support SMEs. In particular whether the Dragons Den could support tranche 2 of the Sellafield Enabling Innovation Framework.

JP provided a BEC update on the SME support activities and initiatives aligned to improved tenders. The scope included the assessment, evaluation and improvement of SME tender bids.

TA highlighted the opportunity for supply chain companies and individuals to act as mentors to SMEs in a similar way to those adopted by link start which are very much business specific. SD then provided background information on the proposed NDA Estate mentoring scheme which would have a SME focus.

Improvements to Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQs):

The improvements to the PQQs will continue to be measured as an ongoing activity with the information being made available to the group and the wider SME Steering forum groups.

Payment Terms

SMEs were still seeing delays in tier 2 payment terms although the site licence companies of the NDA estate were working within the Nett monthly contractual obligations. NDA are working up a flowdown condition for payment terms to match the SLC's through the supply chain. This will be an ongoing measurement and feedback will be provided to the National SME steering group.

Improved Value in Training

There was a discussion on the value of supply chain and SLC apprentices and potentially staff being interchangeable to provide nuclear skills experience and joint learning which would lead to enhanced value to businesses and supply chain strength in depth. Further SLC discussions are required to determine the practicalities of this proposal. SD proposed that further discussion with the SLCs on how to value training in procurement exercises should be taken forward. There was a discussion on Contracts Finder, and that the search facility gave varying results depending on the criteria entered. Action: SD to get NDA support to work with LB to establish guidance on Contracts Finder Searches.

2. Feedback from the National NDA SME Group Meeting

KC provided a summary report of the recent National NDA SME Group Meeting of which he attended on behalf of the Cumbrian Group. The meeting agenda covered both local and national SME subject matters.

Agenda items covered included:

- Government support services and funds that are available to SMEs through the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and Small Business Research Initiative (SRBI)
- The opportunity to use "Mystery Shopper" as a route to raise issues with Government procurement exercises to Cabinet Office. Suppliers are however encouraged to raise matters first at a local level with NDA or the SLC to explore a suitable outcome.
- Commercial issues within the NDA Estate: LDs, retentions, guarantees, insurance levels, IP, payment terms. SLC Commercial Directors have been asked to review practices within their teams and report back to the next meeting. Payment terms will be addressed by an NDA flowdown.

- Review of performance against SME Action Plan
- Nuclear Graduate Scheme – SMEs may be able to benefit from a graduate secondment

3. Balance of membership of the Cumbrian SME Steering Group

KC informed the group that he had been approached by two interested SME companies that expressed an interest in joining the Cumbria SME steering group. The company capabilities include legal and resource recruitment. It was proposed by the group that an invitation to the parties should be made for them to be guest speakers where a particular topic would benefit from their expertise.

4. Update on Cumbria Excellence Day

KC provided a summary update to the group, covering the establishment of the Excellence day which will be rolled out within the next two months, the proposed Excellence day is currently scheduled for March/April 2014. The team is seeking support funding and acceleration of investment.

The group was informed that a database of Cumbrian SMEs is being compiled and that it will be launched at the event.

5. New Issues

The SME community are observing barriers that challenge the opportunity to win work, although BEC, NDA and the site licence companies are working to overcome these and are looking to further develop initiatives in support of SME and micro businesses. The current barriers include:

- Lotting strategies of contracts and frameworks
- SME financial turnover restrictions

The established HMG GPS (Government Procurement System) – it was suggested that there may be benefit in having a guest speaker from GPS who could explain the Dynamic Marketplace, which is an online open marketplace, specifically for low value, less complex procurements. Suppliers can advertise their capability to supply goods or services on a national or regional basis.

6. AOB

JP informed the group that BEC are putting together a bid to BIS for the AMSCI programme (Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative). The key theme is improved value of the nuclear sector supply chain through a focus on SME development. The proposed bid would look to support SLCs and the supply chain by improving business skills, R&D and supply chain capability/capacity. The deadline for returns to BIS is 15th October 2013. Initial discussions are ongoing with key contacts within Sellafield Ltd.

LB asked for clarity on the Sellafield Ltd Code of Responsible Business Conduct (CoRBC) and its bearing on the supply chain and charitable support. SW provided a brief background on the CoRBC and its availability via the Sellafield suppliers section of the website.

The focus does not deter Sellafield staff from supporting local charitable events, although Commercial and legal restrictions are in place especially during tender bids or source evaluation boards of tenders.

SD reinforced the opportunity of the NDA National Supplier forum being held in Manchester on the 13th November 2013 and it was requested that the SLCs should invite both Commercial and Technical representatives to the event to ensure that the supply chain attendees could discuss both the Commercial and Technical opportunities and challenges.

SD also reminded attendees that entries for the Supplier Awards were welcomed and closing date was 20th September 2013.

KC and the committee agreed that future meetings would be arranged and would take place at different SME premises in the region, on a rolling basis.

Date of next meeting: 30th October 2013 at 1.30pm – React Offices, Phoenix Court, Moor Row, Cumbria.

POST MEETING NOTE: - There is a request to the committee for a volunteer to take the next meetings notes. Please let the chair know by the start of the next meeting.

Appendix A – Action updates

Action – Meeting No 1	Update	Date due
Action 1/1 st meeting: All: look at any industry/area which is an exemplar of what the group is looking to create and share project examples at the next meeting, highlighting what was done differently.	Action Ongoing	Agreed to leave open for ideas for next couple of months
Action 2/1 st meeting: SME group members to check PQQs issued by SLCs are simpler and feedback.	Action Ongoing	Group members to monitor and report back each meeting
Action 3/1 st meeting: SMEs/SLCs/Tier 2/NDA members to consider issues on payment terms, provide any negative or positive on feedback to be able to consider action needed for next meeting. RG to raise at next CEO/Tier 2 meeting if issues highlighted.	Action Ongoing – Contractual flow down of payment terms from SLCs to tier 2 companies required.	Agreed to leave open for ideas for next couple of months.
Action 4/1 st meeting: DJ, JB and 1-2 group members – to formulate how to ‘grow Cumbria awareness’ i.e. how to raise the profile of SMEs in Cumbria from any sector with Tier 2s etc. This also linked to ‘Create a list of Cumbrian SMEs’. Arrange meeting for next 2-3 weeks to take forward.	Completed – Action closed	Sub group would report to main group meeting on progress as agenda item
Action: 5/1 st meeting: All: what can the group recommend to improve value placed on training and bringing in the younger generation – what could be done differently and what are the blockers that need to be opened and how?	Action Ongoing. TA to invite Chris Natrass to speak at a future Cumbria Group meeting on the subject. Sam Dancy to continue discussions within NDA to assess supply chain and SLC staff exchanges in order to provide SME mentoring.	30/10/13
Action 6/1 st meeting: KC: set up separate meeting in 3-4 weeks to discuss how exporting skills could be taken forward	Completed - Action closed	Future track and trend monitoring will be carried out.

Action – Meeting No 2	Update	Date due
Action 1/2 nd meeting: PR to provide KC with example of MoD initiative re forum for putting SMEs in contact with problems they can help resolve as an example of best practice under action 1/1.	Completed – Action closed	21/08/13
Action 2/2 nd meeting: All to feedback to DJ on best initiatives, and any bad ones supporting SMEs with recommendations for a single focus in supporting SMEs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DJ to draft a couple of pages. • KC to raise at National level. 	Action Ongoing	Agreed to leave open for ideas for next couple of months.
Action 3/2 nd meeting: KC to ask at Britain's Energy Cost Business Cluster (BECBC) for feedback particularly any start ups having issues with PQQs	Action Ongoing	30/10/13
Action 4/2 nd meeting: DH to consider how SLCs are looking at their expectation of Tier 2s with regard to PQQs and discuss at Shared Services Alliance (SSA) with the other SLC commercial directors.	Action Ongoing	30/10/13
Action 5/2 nd meeting: DJ identify stakeholder and criterion for SME collaboration for apprenticeships at a high level.	Action Ongoing	Group members to monitor and report back each meeting
Action 6/2 nd meeting: KC to contact the absent group members to establish continuing commitment.	Completed – Action closed	N/A
Action 7/2 nd meeting: SD to introduce BAe representative to KC	Complete – Action Closed	30/10/13
Action 8/2 nd meeting: All: what should be the KPIs and success criteria for the group? How going to monitor? Ideas to be brought to next meeting	Action Ongoing	30/10/13

Action – Meeting No 3	Update	Date due
Action 1/3 rd meeting: DH to provide an update to the group on the SL SME action plan.	New	30/10/13
Action 2/3 rd meeting: SD to invite Paul Hanson of GPS to present to the group at a future meeting.	New	30/10/13
Action: 3/3 rd meeting: SW to arrange meeting with SD/Keith Gibson (Sellafield Ltd) re improvement initiatives and valuing training.	New - This is a action aligned to support Action 5/1 st meeting	30/10/13
Action 4/3 rd meeting: KC to contact the two companies that have expressed an interest in joining the Cumbrian SME Group and ask them to present at a future meeting where there expertise would be of value.	New	30/10/13
Action 5/3 rd meeting: SW to invite SL Technical representatives to the NDA National Supplier Forum	Completed – Action Closed. Sylvain Du-Tremblay, Phil Reeve and Mike James attending event.	10/09/13