



## PEL BOARD MEETING

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014  
UCL, Torrington Place, London

Present:	Rex Knight	Chair	SUPC	RK
	Geoff Hope-Terry	Chair	NWUPC	GHT
	Judith Hoyle	Minutes	TUCO	Sec
	Martyn Riddleston	Dep Chair	NEUPC	MR
	David Sanders	Chair	TEC	DS
	Paul Tomany	Head	NWUPC	PWT
	Andrew Young	Chair	LUPC	AY
Apologies:	Julie Barker	Chair	TUCO	JB
	Hari Punchihewa	Chair	NEUPC	HP

### 1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were as above and Martyn was formally welcomed as Hari's Deputy for the meeting.

### 2 Draft Minutes of the last Meeting to be Approved and Matters Arising

These were formally approved and there were no matters arising.

### 3 PEL Implementation Plan

PWT explained that he had enlisted the help of all members of the PEL Advisory Group and compiled several draft versions. He has been to see Nick Petford and showed him some of the ideas. One of the aims was to have a National Contracting Plan by the end of the year. Our Collaborative Contracting Protocol includes Scotland and Wales along with TEC and TUCO. All members of the group had agreed that we are particularly bad at marketing how well we are doing. We have now put some aims together based on the SUMS Report.

#### *Summary of Action Points*

- (1) Has already been done
- (2) All the categories have not been completed yet but by 2015 most of these will have been done
- (3) Looking at what the Category Analysis tells us, P-UK will be disbanded by 2016 and we hope to have this completed by then with a view to succeeding P-UK
- (4) Scotland have done some useful contracts on the Legal and Professional Services side, so we need to work closely with them
  - a. Responsibility for Finance Directors is difficult as in some cases there is no engagement
  - b. There are now Marketing Staff from all of the English consortia
- (5) SUPC are leading with UniBuy



- (6) Online National Contracting Programme – on this one there may be some costs involved. A dedicated PEL website might not be the most cost effective solution. Another approach would be for each consortium to develop a section of our websites which would then link into a common area. We need a longer term IT Strategy for PEL to settle this point. We are using a private company with UniBuy for our contracts database but the old GeM e-Marketplace was hardly used. The new company we are using for this will have to raise funds somehow. The second area is the contracts database. One of the main IT Tools has been given out to a private company. This should belong to us as the main contracting database. DS asked if the Heads of Consortia are looking at how you can implement this. PWT explained that UniBuy are meeting with the Heads on 15<sup>th</sup> December and are offering to fund this for a further two years. PWT suggests that they fund this for a further two years then we come up with our own alternative. GHT feels that this is something which needs a lot of thought going into it. PWT added that we should keep our own websites as they are designed for specific audiences but they can link to a common database and we can dispense with the e-Marketplace. He would prefer to own our own contracts database along with Scotland and Wales. We could then do away with the e-Marketplace as eventually the company running this will be looking for money to fund it.
- (7) Online Survey – we are also using this method to gain feedback
- (8) Regular consultation is already being done
- (9) KPIs – if we are undertaking such things as a national survey then we may need additional temporary resources
  - a. PEL Report for Key Stakeholders – we can combine our own annual reports into one PEL report to highlight what we are all doing
- (10) Comms and Marketing – we already have this
  - a. Seek Endorsement – we will be doing this today in the meeting

The main thing is that it stops any disputes amongst the consortia and gives a collaborative plan. PWT wished this to be agreed by the PEL Board before taking it to Scotland and Wales.

RK asked Board members whether this document felt right as an Action Plan. GHT believes that it takes forward what we have identified as our six Strategic Aims. DS is of the opinion that it is a good document and shows more collaborative working within the consortia. AY added that the political landscape will not suffer division amongst the consortia and this will achieve a united front for all of them. However Paul advised that we also need to increase the collaborative spend on contracts – we need to achieve the correct level of take-up. In 2014-2015 we can achieve in excess of £700 million. However there are longer term aims which may take another couple of years to achieve. The analysis will be done through suppliers and through our Spend Tools. However we are finding that the take-up is improving dramatically.

MR asked what are the barriers that will stop this being achieved? PWT responded that the consortia are working together but the barriers may be the institutions – we need to get people to use the contracts. The biggest potential spend is on the Estates side and this is where the take-up of contracts is the lowest. DS commented that this is more difficult when it comes to buildings as you cannot have one supplier for everything. TEC tends to be a managed service whereas other consortia are a purchasing service. Can the consortia manage this from conception through to implementation?



PWT used the HVLE as an example to highlight this agreement we have helped some SMEs through the tender process. RK agrees that take-up is the issue. Areas of spend where historically consortia have been involved in Estates is lacking and forecasts show that capital spend will become the key area over the next few years. He feels that the question of resource may need further discussion. The Heads of Consortia need to show whether they can do this with existing resources or if we need to find money for extra. If we can achieve all these aims by the end of 2015, then could we have been more ambitious?

GHT believes that this needs to be the next step forward and achieving this will give us credibility to take further steps. AY feels that we need more people to use our contracts and that there will be lots of things in this document which will make it easier for people to do this. It is not achieving the 30% as such but the direction of travel. As a group the Finance Directors are signed up to fully supporting this direction and what everybody is trying to do on procurement. There are four key steps to effective collaborative procurement. 87% of procurement professionals have their reporting lines through the Finance Director and it is essential that we get collaborative procurement working. However RK feels that we may be getting a slightly rosier view as the people attending the meeting could have been the people who are already converted. The questions were as to how we make collaborative procurement really work. However, everybody was unanimously agreed on the direction of travel.

PWT has suggested pre-commitment but this ran into a brick wall. GHT referred to the speech by Professor Ian Diamond who stated that in this sector procurement progress has been "exemplary" but we are not good at communicating this message. The question for us is how we are going to achieve this.

RK declared that a communication strategy is very relevant. There is so much that consortia can do and that PEL can do but at the same time institutions can take steps to improve their procurement practice. There is a lot of influenceable spend out there which can be improved upon. He referred to the Shared Services being offered by APUC to smaller institutions. PWT stated that the consortia cannot be seen as to be telling the institutions what to do – ultimately it has to come from the institutions. You cannot tell them how to spend their money but you are working with Heads of Procurement and Finance Directors to get better control of expenditure within their institution. With the 2015 Election institutions will be looking at procurement as a tool to deliver what will certainly be coming – ie cuts. GHT remarked that several ideas which RK had already mentioned are items which are on the new HEPA management agenda. If we can take this forward with our resources then this would give us a good remit. Talent management is within the HEPA remit but the idea of shared services would not be in there. He believes that this is a matter for the regional consortia.

PWT announced that with regard to being more ambitious, he could have put a pre-commitment clause in there but we must look at what we can actually physically achieve. However, this plan is not that long term so we can look at putting more ambitious ideas into a future plan. RK stated that he would now like to sign this off and at the next meeting look towards 2016/2017 and have a discussion around pre-commitment. Along with pre-commitment he would particularly like to re-visit Shared Services and IT Strategy. MR feels that understanding what we want to facilitate is really the key. However PWT advised that Frank Rowell from NEUPC is looking to do this on behalf of all consortia.

It was noted that most of the actions had a completion date in 2015, suggesting that the objectives were not sufficiently stretching, and that the Plan would need an early review.



Agreed:

1. That the plan should be approved.
2. That the Advisory Group should be asked to develop an IT Strategy for PEL
3. That the plan should be reviewed in 2015, with a view to introducing some new objectives and actions.

RK wished to record his thanks to PWT and colleagues for all their work on this as previous meetings have demonstrated the difficulty in getting to this stage.

#### 4 Communications Plan

PWT gave the credit for this to Marion Hutchins and Andy Wojciechowski. He liaised with them on the Implementation Plan as the Comms Plan fits in with this. GHT feels that there is a need for two Comms Plans as alongside this we need something of a hard hitting PR campaign aimed at the sector decision-makers to tell them what a good job we are doing. We should therefore focus on a proper campaign. There are two separate strands here, both of which are important.

PWT stressed that the EMM was very successful and we should announce the fact that this has saved the sector millions of pounds. GHT added that this should be the output and not the input. The message is that we are saving the sector money. RK suggested that as PEL is not subject to Freedom of Information requests so PWT could safely get a press release out under the PEL banner. The main story is about the big figures that we are saving.

RK referred to the Stakeholder Map. There is an internal plan and more of an external plan. P-UK might have done this on behalf of the sector. If we believe that this is a substantial piece of work then we need to put further resources into it.

PWT asked whether he should commission a 2 year PR campaign but GHT advised that we need a brief on this. DS mentioned that the TEC Board has an AUDE member on it and RK feels that we need to engage in some way with them. Richard Murphy, MD of TEC has been going along to speak to regional AUDE meetings. He could take along the relevant Head of Consortia to their regional AUDE meeting. PWT would speak to Richard to progress this.

**Action: PWT**

RK suggested that we should be approaching the regional AUDE convenors to let them know that we are available. PWT questioned whether the plan is missing the Top Level bit, particularly the engagement with AUDE and other Estates personnel?

Regarding the top level – what are the messages which we need to get across? GHT replied that we should emphasise that we are already delivering.

Agreed:

1. That we should ask for some further work to be undertaken on influencing key individual stakeholders, rather than general communication.
2. That we should consider taking a stand at the AUDE conference.
3. That the authors of the report should be asked to quantify the resource PEL would need to put in to deliver the objectives, as it was clearly not realistic for this to be done on top of everyone's day job.



**5 Any Other Business**

RK would like the Board to meet again in March. It was not necessary to have all the Consortia Heads present but it was felt to be a good idea to have one "guest" Head of Consortia at each meeting.

**6 Date and Location of Next Meeting**

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at UCL London commencing at 11.00 am.