

# Procurement England Limited Communications Group

Held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January at NWUPC Offices

---

Present:	Marion Hutchins [Chair]	SUPC
	Sarah Quiney	TEC
	Paul Tomany	NWUPC
	Andy Wojciechowski	NWUPC
	Judith Hoyle [Secretary]	NWUPC

## 1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Paul Tomany, as host, welcomed everybody to the Meeting.

## 2. **Context of Working Together : In line with the TORs for the PEL Advisory Group**

Paul gave a brief history of the beginnings of the consortia and the Joint Contracting Group. This started off with the four regional consortia with others such as TEC, TUCO etc gradually coming on board. He stated that, having created PEL we must make sure that we market our successes and market ourselves to our members, UUK and other bodies such as BIS and the Funding Councils. However we should also look outside the sector and not just be targeting our own members. He pointed out that there is a conceptual difference between communications and marketing. We constantly strive to get such things as our Newsletter in front of the Vice-Chancellors. He informed the group that NWUPC had employed the services of a PR Consultant for COUP who got us into the Guardian HE section as well as Supply Management.

Marion asked how the Heads of Consortia want us to work with them to get the message across. We will need to get further clarification on this going forward. Paul would recommend that PEL need to get national attention without being 'too heavy' on the detail.

## 3. **Election of Chair**

Marion offered to take up the role and the group unanimously agreed.

## 4. **Each Consortium to detail current Marketing / Communications activities**

Sarah advised that at TEC Richard Murphy had spoken about PEL but he had not spread the word amongst members as yet. At SUPC there has been a lot of discussion about PEL at their Heads of Procurement meetings. They have also touched on it in various communications. Our goals are key messages and priorities. Andy added that Sustainability is a key collaborative area. It was agreed that we need a basic Communications and Marketing Plan to identify our target audiences, key messages and tactics.

**Action: ALL**

Andy produced a copy of the original Terms of Reference used by a previous group which he will circulate to the group.

**Action: AW**

Judith will continue to do the Minutes and keep the group copied in on all relevant correspondence.

**Action: JH**

Sarah announced that TEC use a marketing company who deal with design. Members would like to use this resource to create a logo which suggests the spirit of collaboration.

Sarah mentioned the social media side of things as a useful tool ie Twitter and LinkedIn. All agreed that this was good to have as part of their marketing mix. Sarah felt that the best part of LinkedIn was the forums. She suggested the group may want to think about using a blog in the future..

**5. Co-ordination of Communications and Marketing for PEL in regional activities**

The group discussed how to promote the message to our members regionally – which would include pieces in our regional newsletters. This would be handled separately at regional level and would be incorporated in each consortium's own marketing media ie newsletters.

It was agreed that PEL will need a marketing/communications plan. Marion has worked on several strategic communications plan and will send around a template for use.

**Action: MH**

**6. What PEL Things should we do?**

Marion suggested we start a repository of 'good news stories'. All members agreed to come up with two 'good news stories' each to put in the repository. We can also include case studies and testimonials. Sarah has a template which she will share for case studies.

**Action: SQ**

Andy suggested using NWUPC's PR company. Marion will send round a basic template then we can just slot our good news stories into it.

**Action: MH**

Marion offered, with support from the group, to create a basic Communications Plan. We will put this together based on member feedback. There is little more we can do on this prior to the PEL Advisory Group meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January as the outcome of discussions there will give us more to work on.

Marion mentioned the Procurement Maturity Assessments and the offshoot they have at SUPC (the SUPC Shared Services) who run this. They would like some kind of branding to promote this. The group discussed the development of a 'brand' and what they would like in their logo :

- Links to suggest collaboration
- Bright, vibrant colours

- A strap line
- Procurement England Limited in full not PEL

This needs to fit in with the logos of each consortium and focus on collaboration, co-ordination and communication. Sarah suggested initially designing around six then whittling it down to two or three. The PEL Board would have final approval on this. The group agreed to enlist the services of TEC's design company – Rocket Creative. We will be able to do further work on Agenda Items (6) and (8) following creation of a Communications and Marketing Plan.

Sarah took notes from the group discussion to develop an initial design brief for Rocket Creative. Sarah, with support from the group, will work to refine the brief and obtain some initial design ideas from the firm.

**Action: SQ**

Marion showed the group the original PEL Organisation Chart will she will update and circulate.

**Action: MH**

**7. PEL Logo**

The basic plan and a whittled down choice of logos to be ready for the next meeting, provisionally arranged for the first week of March.

**Action: ALL**

**8. Agreed Marketing / Communications Protocol**

The group studied PEL's draft Strategic Aims. Paul confirmed that these are more or less agreed now. Wording only referred to the four regional consortia and Paul explained that PEL is a limited company and the four regional consortia are effectively shareholders but TEC is not. The Chair of TEC, David Sanders, was invited to join the PEL Board and there is a Memorandum of Understanding which exists between TEC and the four consortia.

He also touched on the difference between Contract and Category Management. The idea being that you understand the market better if you understand the categories. This is in order to adopt a more holistic approach.

In order to make our collaborative supply agreements easier to use, we would make the items more generic and less technical as appropriate.

On the Flexible Framework, Paul is of the opinion that all the consortia are working at Level II and that attainment of Level III should be a realistic target for them.

**9. Any Other Business**

Paul asked for a short report of around 300 – 400 words to put to the PEL Advisory Group on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January.

**Action: MH**

He also suggested that the group work with Ian Powell at the Efficiency Exchange on an ongoing basis – Ian will likely be an ally in communicating about PEL.

The Group agreed to reconvene first week of March.