



# **PROCUREMENT ENGLAND LTD**

## Communications Plan

### Procurement England Limited (PEL)

### October 2014

### V. 2

Prepared by the PEL Communications Group

## WHY? Overview

The English Higher Education (HE) purchasing consortia established Procurement England Limited (PEL) in 2013 to advance collaborative procurement in the sector. PEL's primary goal is to facilitate the delivery of a national collaborative procurement service to English Higher Education Institutions. PEL is a partnership between the following six Higher Education purchasing consortia:

- London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC)
- North Eastern Universities Purchasing Consortium (NEUPC)
- North Western Universities Purchasing Consortium (NWUPC)
- Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium (SUPC)
- The Energy Consortium (TEC)
- The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO)

The PEL Communications Group is made up of staff members with responsibility for communications/marketing from each of the above consortia.

### PEL Strategic Aims

1. Negotiate more collaborative supply agreements by extending the reach of collaborative procurement into all areas of spend.
2. Move from contract management to category management as our principal methodology.
3. Make our collaborative supply agreements easier to use.
4. Explore and formalise further opportunities to collaborate with procurement organisations in the wider public sector.
5. Establish a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that we will use to report our progress to Procurement UK (PUK).
6. Measure and report savings and other benefits from this programme.

The purpose of this communications plan is to identify the following:

- Key communications objectives that will support PEL's strategic aims
- Target audiences for PEL communications
- Key messages for target audiences
- Communications tactics to reach target audiences
- Methods of assessment – how we will know if we have been successful?

## WHAT? Communications Objectives

The purpose of the communications objectives is to support PEL in achieving its strategic aims. To support the strategic aims, the following communications objectives are outlined below:

Strategic Aim	Communications Objective
<p>1. Negotiate more collaborative supply agreements by extending the reach of collaborative procurement into all areas of spend.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with stakeholders to understand their procurement priorities.</li> <li>• Engage with stakeholders to raise awareness of the current collaborative procurement activities taking place in the Higher Education sector on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Engage with stakeholders to raise awareness of the benefits of collaborative procurement on an ongoing basis.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Move from contract management to category management as our principal methodology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform audiences of the benefits of moving from contract management to category management</li> <li>• Consult with stakeholders by gathering information to support category management.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Make our collaborative supply agreements easier to use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with stakeholders to raise awareness of available agreements and benefits on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Engage with stakeholders to raise awareness of agreements and their benefits through improved content and format of Buyer's Guides.</li> <li>• Improve access to agreements by consulting with all consortia and ensuring that all consortia feedback to CloudBuy about improvements to the uniBuy contracts database.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Explore and formalise further opportunities to collaborate with procurement organisations in the wider public sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform stakeholders of collaborative opportunities.</li> <li>• Engage with stakeholders to promote benefits of current collaborative</li> </ul>

	arrangements and explore further opportunities where appropriate.
5. Establish a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that we will use to report our progress to Procurement UK (PUK).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with Procurement UK and HEIs of the Higher Education sector to inform them of the sector's progress in collaborative procurement on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Consult with stakeholders to develop KPIs.</li> </ul>
6. Measure and report savings and other benefits from this programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with stakeholders to demonstrate the benefits of collaborative procurement in the Higher Education sector; inform stakeholders of the sector's progress on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Increased up-take of collaborative agreements, as these are better promoted.</li> <li>• Engage members in consortia contracting activities through ongoing consortia meetings and events.</li> </ul>

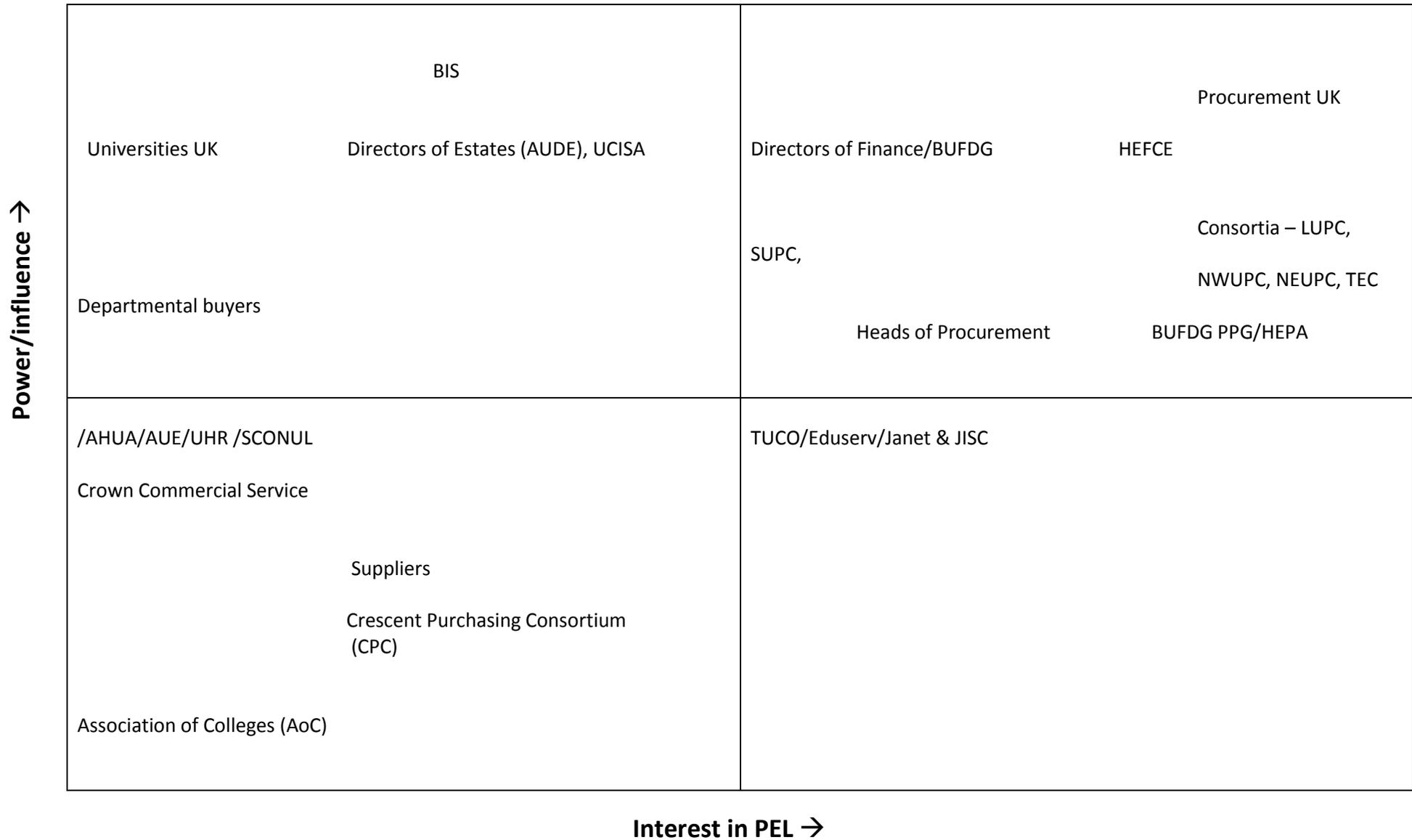
## WHO? Target Audience

Audience	Description	Key Drivers/Interests
<b>Procurement UK (PUK)</b>	Procurement UK is a sub-group of Universities UK and was established to develop national procurement policy and oversee the delivery of the Diamond Report procurement recommendations.	PUK is interested in tangible evidence of progress towards meeting procurement targets set out in the Diamond Report.
<b>Members of Government</b>	This audience includes the Universities Minister, Members of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and contacts the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).	This group is driven by demonstrated efficiencies that are the result of collaboration and streamlined processes within the Higher Education procurement sector.
<b>Senior Managers (Directors of Finance, Directors of Estates, Chief Operating Officers and Vice Chancellors)</b>	This audience group is made up of senior managers at Higher Education Institutions. Members of this group usually participate in the institutions' senior management team and have a responsibility portfolio which includes procurement.	PEL should target opinion leaders within this audience who can influence others. This group is motivated by clear and direct communications that emphasises benefits to themselves and their institution, particularly relating to strategy and value for money. This group is also motivated by opportunities to engage and consult with sector and procurement leaders and feed into the national strategy development.
<b>Heads of Procurement</b>	This audience group is made up of those responsible for the procurement function at Higher Education Institutions. The audience members typically hold the title of 'Head of Procurement'.	Communications with this group need to be direct and clear. This audience values being consulted on areas of strategic importance. Audience members are motivated by information that provides value, highlights benefits, explicitly states how they will be impacted, and provides the opportunity to feedback on operational issues and contribute towards strategy development.
<b>Category/Commodity Managers/ Dedicated Purchasing Staff</b>	Members may or may not have areas of speciality, but are generally responsible for delivering on operational objectives; although, there may be some responsibility for strategy as well.	These audience members may be responsible for several different procurement areas and are likely motivated by very specific and targeted information that provides practical advice/evidence and outlines benefits.
<b>Devolved Buyers</b>	Members of this audience group can have different levels of experience with many having procurement as only one aspect of their jobs.	This group will be interested in the tangible 'how to' aspects of procurement. They will value opportunities to learn from others and meet colleagues with similar challenges. They will also be interested in specific information related to their commodity areas of interest and the benefits of PEL activities (i.e. opportunities to use commodity-relevant contracts). They value sector-

		led opportunities to network with colleagues, as they may not be able to facilitate these themselves.
<b>UK Consortia</b>	<p>There are several UK regional consortia with which PEL will need to communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC, Scotland)</li> <li>• Higher Education Purchasing Consortium, Wales (HEPCW)</li> <li>• London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC)</li> <li>• North Eastern Universities Purchasing Consortium (NEUPC)</li> <li>• North Western Universities Purchasing Consortium (NWUPC)</li> <li>• Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium (SUPC)</li> <li>• Crown Commercial Service (CCS)</li> <li>• The Energy Consortium (TEC)</li> <li>• The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO)</li> </ul>	These audiences are motivated by communications that highlight activities of benefit to them, their members or their associates.
<b>Other Sector bodies</b>	<p>These organisations are a means by which PEL can reach its primary audiences. These groups may also have some impact on the national procurement strategy and so may be target audiences themselves for PEL communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Universities Finance Directors Group (BUFDG) (including BUFDG Procurement Professionals Group – BUFDG PPG)</li> <li>• Association of Colleges (AoC)</li> <li>• Association of University Engineers (AUE)</li> <li>• Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)</li> <li>• Universities UK (UUK)</li> <li>• Association of Heads of University Administration (AUHA)</li> <li>• Eduserv</li> <li>• JaNet</li> <li>• JISC</li> </ul>	These audiences are motivated by communications that highlight activities of benefit to their members or to their associates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher Education Procurement Academy (HEPA)</li> <li>• Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)</li> <li>• Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA)</li> <li>• Universities Human Resources (UHR)</li> </ul>	
<b>Suppliers</b>	<p>This audience is very broad and includes both suppliers with whom consortia have contracts, as well as potential suppliers with whom consortia may be interested in working in the future.</p>	<p>These audiences will be interested in PEL activities if the activities affect the way suppliers work with consortia or our members; for example, communications about shared Terms and Conditions adopted by PEL member consortia will be of interest to suppliers.</p>

## PEL stakeholder map



## WHAT? Strategy

As a brand, PEL should stand for collaboration, cooperation and leadership. It should represent progress and working together; an organisation led by its members rather than an authoritative mandating body.

A key aspect of the PEL Communications Strategy will be a focus on two-way communication; as founding members of PEL, the consortia want to provide information to stakeholders, but equally we recognise the importance of listening to stakeholders' expertise and experience in helping shape future activities and directions.

Consortia will engage and consult with relevant stakeholders on a regular basis through our ongoing commodity group meetings and member events. If necessary, PEL consortia can arrange special engagement events with members of the Higher Education sector to facilitate stakeholder involvement and feedback.

### Channels

Marketing activities should use multiple channels to reach diverse audiences. Channels should include:

- Consortia newsletters and publications
- Consortia websites
- Efficiency Exchange and other sector websites
- Sector publications
- Attendance at consortia/sector events
- Attendance at conferences – sector and external

### Partners

Key partners include:

<b>PEL owners and members</b>	London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) North Eastern Universities Purchasing Consortium (NEUPC) North Western Universities Purchasing Consortium (NWUPC) Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium (SUPC) The Energy Consortium (TEC) The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO)
<b>HE Procurement Sector Bodies</b>	British Universities Finance Directors Group (BUFDG) Higher Education Procurement Academy (HEPA) Universities UK (UUK)

## **Key Messages and Word of Mouth Marketing (WOMM)**

### Key Messages

Key messages can be refined at various stages of PEL's operations; however, initially, key messages for target audiences will include:

- Procurement is a critical factor contributing to efficiency in the UK's Higher Education sector.
- The higher education sector is efficient in its procurement activities and our efficiency benefits Higher Education Institutions and the sector as a whole.
- PEL supports Higher Education Institution's success, allowing reinvestment through financial, time and process savings.
- Collaborative procurement is a key way of achieving value for money.
- Collaborative procurement delivers benefits to the sector and to each institution.
- PEL supports collaborative procurement activities among Higher Education Institutions through consortia and agreements and will identify further opportunities for collaborative procurement.

### Word of Mouth Marketing (WOMM)

WOMM is all about building mutually beneficial relationships with our talkers based on honesty and transparency. Our talkers include anyone who might discuss PEL in either a formal (meetings, presentations, etc.) or informal (hallway chats) settings.

WOMM can naturally build as we implement other communications activities; our target audiences may begin talking about PEL among themselves. However, PEL Advisory Group, Board and Communications Group members can play a lead role in initiating WOMM by talking about the work of PEL in the following situations:

- Staff meetings/updates
- Casual conversations with colleagues
- Other group meetings
- Twitter conversations via a PEL hashtag

## WHEN? Communications Action Plan

Name/Description of Communications Tactic	Audience	Timeline/Frequency	Considerations	Cost (if applicable)	Responsibility?	PEL Sign-Off
News/Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Managers</li> <li>Members of Government</li> <li>Heads of Procurement</li> <li>PUK</li> <li>Potentially all audiences, as blog posts can link back to consortia websites</li> </ul>	As needed (minimum 1/month) – Beginning in February 2015	These can be shorter in format and shared through various channels including consortia websites, the Efficiency Exchange and blogs.	£0	Joint - Members of PEL Comms. Group (alternating responsibility of comms. group members)	PEL heads of consortia
Features in consortia publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All (depending on distribution lists)</li> </ul>	Quarterly, dependent on consortia publication schedules	Content can be shared by consortia and leveraged across multiple channels.	£0	Joint - Members of PEL Comms. Group (alternating responsibility of comms. group members)	No sign-off needed
Features in publications (i.e. Supply Management, Guardian Hub, University Business, THES )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Managers</li> <li>Members of Government</li> <li>Heads of Procurement</li> </ul>	As needed	Should consider commissioning an article for these publications.	TBD – could incur cost if commissioned by agency.	Joint - Members of PEL Comms. Group	PEL Board
Articles in trade/professional association publications (i.e. S-Labs, AUDE, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Category/Commodity Managers</li> <li>Devolved Buyers</li> </ul>	As needed	Content could be commissioned or created by PEL Comms. Group		Joint - Members of PEL Comms. Group	PEL Board
Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All – depending on level</li> </ul>	As needed (minimum 1/quarter)	Content can be shared by consortia and leveraged across multiple channels.	£0	Joint - Members of PEL Comms. Group	PEL heads of consortia
Announcements/Releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of Government</li> <li>Senior Managers</li> <li>PUK</li> <li>Sector bodies</li> </ul>	As needed (1/quarter)	Can be used to share commissioned/'newsworthy' content.	£0	Joint - Members of PEL Comms. Group	PEL Board
Attendance at Sector/Consortia Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All –depending on event audience</li> </ul>	As needed	PEL Comms. Group members can leverage existing relationships to attend events on behalf of PEL.	TBD	Joint - Consortia Staff	No sign-off needed
Social Media Posts (Tweets or LinkedIn posts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>	As needed	N/A	£0	Responsibility of individual consortia	No sign-off needed

PEL Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All</li></ul>	Annually – April 2015	Content would focus on benefits achieved and success stories	£3000	Joint - Members of PEL Comms. Group	PEL Board
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## **EVALUATION**

We will evaluate the success of the communications plan by:

- Assessing the levels of awareness among consortia members of sector collaboration and its benefits; this could be accomplished with a pre/post survey.
- Logging the number of posts/articles deployed as advised in the action plan.
- Logging the number of shares/clicks/re-posts of original content.

The PEL Communications Group will review the effectiveness of communications methods outlined in the Action Plan and amend as appropriate.