



PEL Communications Group Meeting

Held on Tuesday 8th July at TEC, Birmingham

Present:	Marion Hutchins [Chair]	SUPC
	Laura Compton	LUPC
	Sarah Quiney	TEC
	Andy Wojciechowski	NWUPC
	Judith Hoyle [Secretary]	NWUPC

1. Welcome and Introductions

Laura was welcomed to her first meeting. NEUPC and TUCO were both hoping to appoint a Marketing/Communications person and once they are in place will be appointed to our next meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (14th January)

Marion had produced a suggested template for a communications plan which she circulated. Andy had drafted up the Terms of Reference for amendment/ratification. He will send these round electronically.

Action: AW

Sarah will circulate a template she has for the 'Good News' stories.

Action: SQ

3. Update on PEL Board and Advisory Group

Andy Davies is keen that PEL communicate through the consortia and the Board had stated that they do not wish to have a PEL logo but are happy to retain the banner logo comprising all six consortia members. A Comms Group Report for the Advisory Group should be compiled before their next meeting.

Action: MH

Otherwise the Board are happy for the Comms Group to press ahead with their plans. They also agreed the PELAG Terms of Reference. They have decided not to take the SUMS consultant's report any further but will action some of the suggestions via consortia work. Chairman Rex Knight will write to SUMS to inform them of this.

The PELAG have been tasked with looking at how the ideas they are taking forward from the above mentioned report can be done. Susan Wright has been tasked with looking at a standard template for a Buyers Guide and used the Library framework as an example. The Heads of Procurement on PELAG liked the format and content. They had also been asked to provide some feedback on GeM and ease of use.



4. Review of PEL Strategic Aims

The group discussed how communications can be used to support each of PEL's strategic aims as we prepare to develop a communications plan. It was decided that the plan will have communications focus as opposed to a marketing focus, as PEL does not have anything to sell.

(i) *Negotiate more Collaborative Supply Agreements*

LUPC are currently looking at such things as a presence at the AUDE Conference but this is £6K per stand. We can agree to do this collaboratively and agree to visit our regional bodies such as AUDE separately. Sarah added that TEC have recently attended events by bodies such as AUDE and BUFDG. Andy felt that although our institutions can be a gateway, they can also act as a barrier to our activities. LUPC are looking to extend the reach of their audience. The group discussed the possibility of receiving some funding for marketing and raising their profile. It was felt that some supplier events can be done with involvement of all consortia, ie laboratories, libraries. Marion mentioned an agreement overview or briefing sheet which gives a summary of the contract and includes such things as call off, savings benefits etc. Andy would speak to the North West Team about using a briefing sheet.

Action: AW

He would also send around the guidance notes on mini-competitions.

Action: AW

Laura operates a similar system at LUPC with agreement overviews and puts hers onto GeM. Institutional Heads of Procurement can put this onto their intranets. Marion would look into the possibility of a 'Dropbox' facility for the Comms. group to store and share documents centrally.

Action: MH

Both Marion and Laura would circulate a template of their briefing sheets.

Action: MH/LC

Andy informed the group that he had now gone onto Cloud with an annual subscription. We will record every communication and details before we can agree strategies for each category group.

(ii) *Move from Contract Management to Category Management*

Nothing had been decided on this as yet.

(iii) *Make Each Collaborative Agreement Easier to Use*

Marion showed an example of the Buyers Guide which she had been working on. However at LUPC they do not have one standard guide. Andy feels that the Buyers Guide could be better presented, for example there could be a standard front sheet. Laura and Marion would work on the templates.

Action: MH/LC

Andy confirmed he would circulate the mini-competition details.

Action: AW



The group are working on a standardised Buyers Guide and will be encouraging all consortia to implement the briefing sheet.

(iv) *Explore and Formalise Opportunities to Collaborate*

Andy is of the opinion that it is important to have appropriate representation at other consortia events. Sarah commented that Richard Murphy has had some engagement with BUFDG etc and PEL have asked for a detailed stakeholder map on this. Laura will send this out and we can adopt a marking system to show how important these relationships are to us. Laura offered to take responsibility for the stakeholder map.

Action: LC

On the matrix we would include influence versus power etc.

Marion announced that she had been in contact with Ian Powling of the Efficiency Exchange. We are looking, as a group, at delivering case studies. However Laura thinks that there may be a question mark over the future of the Efficiency Exchange.

(v) *Establish a Set of KPIs*

“Something to demonstrate that our information is widely shared”. We could demonstrate how we share details on agreements – things such as the briefing sheet would be a good example. Marion will put this into the evaluation section of the Comms Plan.

Action: MH

We could put together maybe five questions to cover this. The consortia however do not cover all aspects of collaboration, our members could be doing some local collaboration of their own. Members questioned whether these case studies should be just about collaboration or can we widen it to Sustainability and SMEs?

(vi) *Measure and Report Savings*

We are already doing this to some extent with our Benefit Statements and Value For Money Reports. Laura suggested asking someone from a government department to come along to COUP next year. Regarding social media, most consortia have Twitter and LinkedIn accounts. If we are not promoting PEL as a body, then how do we get the message across to other bodies? Marion suggested arranging an interview with Rex Knight to discuss what we are doing on a collaborative basis. Sarah works with a PR expert who can conduct an interview with Rex then all he needs to do is sign it off.

Laura suggested contacting the Times Education Supplement to see if they would be interested. Rex may prefer to have an interview more about himself then bring collaboration into it.



5. PEL Communications Plan

Further investigation into the opportunities to work with the efficiency exchange are required. Other communications vehicles include consortia newsletters - TEC issue theirs quarterly, NWUPC have three per year and a monthly e-Newsletter, LUPC publish theirs quarterly with a monthly e-Bulletin. Members would like Andy to add them to the mailing list for the NWUPC Sustainability Newsletter.

Action: AW

Other bodies discussed were AUE, PPG etc. Marion confirmed that COUP will be held from 8th to 10th September 2015 and the theme will be "Linking Theory to Practice". She is currently approaching keynote speakers. Marketing to suppliers starts in September and marketing to members will start in January. Sarah explained that TEC had a "Graffiti Wall" at their conference on which delegates could make comments and this had gone down really well. Laura suggested a trending eg #COUP2015. Marion will include a Programme of Events when available.

Action: MH

6. Case Studies – Good News Stories

The group discussed whether there were any national contracts which we can publicise. We can flag up things which other people are not aware of which can then be shared around the consortia. For example, UWE have saved a substantial amount of money by moving onto the PAT framework. All members agreed to come up with some cases.

Action: ALL

This could then be put into Dropbox if members are happy for anyone else to use it. Another good case study would be the Estates Category Sub-Group, formed out of the main Joint Contracting Group which is working on a Category Tree and looking at national agreements and possible future areas of collaboration.

7. Any Other Business

Summary of actions to be undertaken before next PELAG Meeting :

- ❖ Draft Communications Report
- ❖ Arrangement of Interview with Rex
- ❖ Exploration of use of Briefing Sheets
- ❖ Template for the Buyers Guide

8. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Judith to circulate a Doodle poll for the next meeting date, some time in November.

Action: JH