The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continued to have a significant impact on our business, our staff, our members and our contracted suppliers. However, the start of the 2020/21 academic year saw a strong return to university activity and therefore use of the business services offered by our consortium.

The business environment during the pandemic required an innovative approach to ways of working and it is noteworthy that strong relationships were maintained with our Members. The joint virtual conference held with the NEUPC was a credit to all involved and is another example of collaboration across the consortia. The team awarded three new framework contracts in the period. There have been changes within the team as reported in the Managing Director’s report, such change is to be expected. I would like to thank all the team for their work in difficult circumstances.

Financially, the return of on-campus activity across our members resulted in a return to profitability for the business. Our outturn at £32,499 exceeded our forecasts for a break-even position. We had a high level of turnover through our frameworks with the exception of those travel related, which was expected in the circumstances. Our reserve position has also been maintained at £763,286.

This is my first report following my appointment as Chairman. I would like to thank Steve Mole who resigned at the AGM in 2021 for all his service to NWUPC. The Board was strengthened through the appointment of Andrew Hewett and I am pleased with the high levels of engagement that the Board members display. I look forward to continued growth of the value delivered to our Members through the services we deliver.

Steve Dauncey
Chair

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Savings & Spend

Total Spend through HE Frameworks
£142m

Cashable Savings
£10.2m

Non-Cashable Savings
£12.8m

Framework Agreements

Number of HE Consortia Frameworks
131

Number Led by NWUPC
25
Our Contracting

Responsibility Procurement
- 92% Netpositive registered suppliers
- 76% SME Supply Base, 20% Micro Organisations
- Electronics Watch Affiliation (consortium & members)
- Netpositive updated functionality and training support
- Responsible Procurement Glossary
- Tender Question Set linked to SDC’s & TOMs
- Modern Slavery Guidance for Suppliers
- Supplier Code of Conduct Adopted
- Scope 3/HESCET updated methodology
- Period Dignity Solutions Lot included within Washroom Services Framework

Frameworks Awarded
- Washroom Services including Period Dignity Solutions
- White Goods and Associated Electrical Appliance
- Global Workforce Mobility Services

Operations
- 58 Contract Management Review Meetings held
- Issued collaborative Market Insight document
- Participation in Tender Working Party of 9 National Agreements Led by UKUPC
- Implementation of new eTendering Portal and increased digitalisation of tenders
- Mitigation of 78% of price increase requests by suppliers offering commercial advantage to members

Our Accreditations
- Retained our Customer Services Excellence Standard
- Retained IIP Platinum status

Corporate Social Responsibility
- Sails Board
- ECLCM Board support
- Compliance Manager for Community Football Club
- School fundraising events
- Team fundraisers for various charities

Our Systems
Contribute to National Systems Group
All consortia using SCM for contract management, all COVID activity took place via a dedicated section of SCM

Our Comms and Events
New branding and logo for NWUPC Ltd
Online Conference - 10 member focused workshop sessions, one supplier focused session, 5 social activities, supplier exhibition with 47 suppliers, 149 delegates
Labatory Specific Event and Responsible Procurement Event
Facilitated webinars - CCS aggregated spend session, IRSS update
9 Online introductory framework launches
12 frameworks of Christmas
Monthly E-Bulletin Newsletter and EConnet - Triannual sustainability Newsletter
Increase use of social media with 9% increase in followers on Twitter

Our People
Appointments & Promotions
Chair of Board of Directors
Head of Business Services and Membership

Corporate Social Responsibility

Our Members
45 Category Meetings Held
- All held online
- 95% representation across Category Groups
- Category Group Induction session launched

785 Attendees
- Members attended and contributed to our Category Group meetings

3 Category Group Drop in Sessions Held

New Chair Board of Directors
- 1 Resignation
- Appointment
- Board Member Induction Session
MANAGING DIRECTOR’S REPORT

I am delighted to share with you the NWUPC Annual Report for the year 2020/21.

We started the year facing the ongoing challenges that the pandemic brought, we had to make some difficult decisions and faced a degree of uncertainty through the first half of the year. Things started to improve as we went into the spring, and we really did end the year on a high. Our priority was always to keep going, keep delivering and to keep listening to our Members. This approach enabled us to get ahead of changing themes and trends, we continued to focus on the core business of contracting but we also provided a vast range of resources to our Members to support them throughout this difficult period. The updates provided in this report set out through what we have been working on, our commitment, working in new ways, with new ideas all aimed at moving the Consortium forward and delivering a first-class service to our Members.

We have had some people changes over the last year. It was anticipated that the pandemic would continue to have an impact on framework engagement by our members and therefore our revenue, to mitigate against this we took steps to manage our overheads and reduce the risk to the organisation. When David Cahm (Senior Category Manager) left the company in September 2020 we, for the first time in our history, had frozen for the remainder of the financial year. Following the efficiency measures taken during the previous year, Andy Wojciechowski left the company in October 2020. Andy had been an integral part of the company for over 20 years and had played a key role in many of our successes. There were two further changes towards the end of the year, in June Todd Jefferys (Category Officer) and in July Ayoade Onireti (Membership Services Coordinator) both left the company. In November we were delighted to report that we retained our IIP Platinum accreditation against the challenge of Brexit.

Our People

At the heart of every successful organisation lies a strong team. I have been incredibly proud of our people throughout what has been another challenging year. They have responded to uncertainty with determination and commitment, working in new ways, with new ideas all aimed at moving the Consortium forward and delivering a first-class service to our Members.

Our Members are always our primary focus and we have continued to deliver our services in a cost-effective, agile, ensuring that we are providing what our Members need. The last year has been challenging one with so much disruption and uncertainty due to the pandemic. We have worked with our Members to ensure that we have delivered additional resources and opportunities to support them through the last 12 months.

Our full membership remains static with 243+ member. We have 4 associate members and 16 affiliate members. We have gained 2 new associates members, Medicine Discovery Catapult and National Museum’s Liverpool. We have also gained 2 new affiliate members, Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust and Goodwill Community Trust.

Our Category Groups have remained active, and attendance has been at an all time high. The Groups have proven to be a great source of support for our members.

Our Communications Strategy and Action Plan inform our approach to engagement with our stakeholders, we have worked hard to make sure that we are delivering the right messages to the right people in the right way. To support this endeavour, we have continued to widen our communication channels and explore new ways of reaching our stakeholders.

We delivered a successful joint online conference with NEUPC in June. The theme for the event was ‘Rethinking Procurement’ and the event attracted almost 300 delegates. Although it wasn’t quite the same as a face-to-face event it was great to be able to provide a conference for our members.

We also provided a range of online events for members covering Contract Management and Responsible Procurement as well as a Laboratory Management and Responsible Procurement event. These were delivered with our Members and wider stakeholders has been wonderful to see. We very much look forward to receiving your feedback. Julie-Ann Garton Managing Director

Our Strategy

Our Strategy Group met towards the end of the academic year to review progress against our Strategy. The Group ensure that our Strategic Plan is appropriate and meets our stakeholder needs, the Strategy Group composition is our Team, our Membership, and our Board. We are in the final year of our 3-year Strategic Plan and we have clear aims and objectives to ensure that we are delivering the best possible support to our members, they focus on our Members’ framework engagement, customer satisfaction, responsible procurement and ensuring that we have a sustainable business model in place.

The continued support of our Members and wider stakeholders has been fundamental to our success. We look forward to a new academic year and we thank you all for your continued support. I do hope that you find this an interesting read, we look forward to receiving your feedback.

Managing Director
What a year, with unprecedented challenges and a rollercoaster of decline and growth. The pressure on our supply chains and the HE sector was immense and brought about a heightened need for information, communication and adjustment.

Collaboration has never been more essential than it was during this time. It is a real credit to the collaborative ethos within UKUPC and the established networks that everyone was involved in sharing market intelligence, supply chain information, and facilitating supply to support our collective membership across the sector.

Our tender activity is a continuous process of renewals as well as consideration for developing our portfolio with new areas to meet members requirements. In the previous year we let six frameworks and then in 2020/2021 we let a further three. Although this is low in comparison with our normal activity, due to the impact of Covid resource was stretched and we had to have consideration for the market conditions. Many of our suppliers were furloughed and therefore unable to undertake tenders and there was such uncertainty within markets with price fluctuations that we could not be sure we would gain commercial advantage by tendering at that time. Therefore, several agreements were compliantly extended under Regulation 74.

We also began the engagement and strategic planning phases of the next six frameworks that are due within the next academic year. We continue to invest a lot of resource in supporting our partners with letting their agreements and were instrumental in developing the strategies of nine UKUPC frameworks as well as evaluation of the responses. This is to ensure that the region is represented appropriately.

As part of our contract management activity we held fifty eight review meetings with suppliers across categories. Meetings cover sharing market information, performance management of suppliers and review of progress made on sustainability plans. The team also participated in review meetings of all national agreements led by other UKUPC partners to build category knowledge and make sure our membership is represented appropriately.

We implemented a new eTendering system internally using the LUPC Framework with the aim of increasing the digitisation of the tender process with a view to improving access by SMEs.

Over the past two years we have dealt with more price increase requests from suppliers than we’ve ever had before as markets have been so unstable and fluctuations unprecedented. Our main aim is to deliver value for money and therefore we have a robust process in place to ensure that price increases are managed appropriately. Close management of the suppliers meant that 76% of price increase requests from suppliers were mitigated to ensure that commercial advantage to members is maintained. This year the price mitigations were reported in the Benefits Statements.

Responsive Procurement continues to be at the heart of all our activity and is covered separately in more detail. The number of NWUPC registered suppliers actively engaging with the NETpositive tool continues to be high at 92% and going forward we will be looking more at the progress made with their action plans. 76% of our suppliers are classified as SMEs which is a great figure, but the definition of SME is so wide in scope, therefore we were more pleased to see 20% are micro organisations. This is a demographic that we hope to grow and will be built into our strategy.

As an organisation and as collaborative partners our main focus during this period was to support members with the impact of the pandemic. Therefore, we worked together to provide them with regular supply chain risk information highlighting areas of concern with supply, legal restrictions and price volatility. This was a huge joint effort to provide accurate and timely information in an easily usable format. NWUPC also led the delivery of fortnightly stock updates on PPE from framework suppliers including supply data and pricing.

We also continued to work on building and sharing our knowledge of the ramifications of Brexit and preparing our supply chains as well as our members. We drew information from suppliers, legal experts and market intelligence to ensure that we were prepared as events developed. Reflecting on a challenging year, it would be easy to be consumed with all the difficulties that the sector and our supply chains faced. However, it is a time where people used their knowledge, skills and relationships to support one another and adapt to new situations, environments and create opportunities for innovation. As we look forward to the next year we can be optimistic that we have solid foundations of market intelligence and strong networks to enable us to rebuild and come back stronger than ever.

Helen Dodd-Williams
Head of Strategic Procurement
The 2020/21 year started in a similar way to the end of the previous year, with the restrictions of the pandemic ongoing, services and support to our Member’s continued to be delivered online.

We briefly thought restrictions would ease at some point during the year and allow us to return to face-to-face meetings and events however this was not the case and we delivered all operations and services during the year through our online systems.

During the summer, as with previous years, we undertook an annual member and supplier survey, the results of these survey’s was very positive and despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the results showed that aNWUPC membership provides valuable services and benefits and is considered good value by our Members.

In November, following an online assessment, it was confirmed that we retained our IIP Platinum accreditation. This is a challenging accreditation to achieve and to have maintained this standard during such a demanding year was something we are very proud of.

In June we were happy to report that NWUPC had retained the Customer Services Excellence award. Despite the challenge of an online assessment the team worked hard to prepare and were able to present a wide range of evidence to demonstrate the commitment and priority given to developing and improving the services to our members, partners and suppliers.

Our membership remained constant during the year, with 24 full members. We have gained two new associate members during the summer, Medicine Discovery Cataract and National Museums Liverpool, taking the total associate members to six and affiliate members to 16.

In January we launched our new logo and refreshed our branding with a new colour palette. The new design works much better in design and digital. Along with the new logo we relaunched NWUPC on social media to reach as many stakeholders as possible. During the year we expanded our use of social media continuing to use Twitter and LinkedIn as the main vehicles to promote our services, this has been positively received by our Members and suppliers alike. During December 2020 we held a 12 frameworks of Christmas social media campaign highlighting the benefits of our frameworks and membership. We have had a 9% increase in followers on Twitter.

During the year we have continued to communicate with our membership and wider stakeholders through a series of communications, we continued as previous years to publish three ECOnnect newsletters with focus on sustainability and responsible procurement. We have streamlined our other communications and now issue monthly updates to ensure that news is timely and targeted. Our Members reported, via the Member’s survey, that they can access our communications and that these publications continue to be useful.

With the restrictions of the pandemic still in place for most of the year we took the decision to hold the annual conference online and partnered with NEUPC to deliver a joint conference. This took place in June, the theme was ‘Re-thinking Procurement’. We had 270 delegates across the two consortia and 50 exhibition stands were filled. Income, expenditure and the surplus were all shared equally with NEUPC. Both teams worked very well together and was a good example of the collaboration within UKUPC.

We have seen a significant increase in our overall communications this year and a series of new initiatives were established. These have included a number of member focused events starting in February with a Responsible Procurement Day, with seven sessions outlining the wealth of work being undertaken by our team, our Members, our suppliers and our partners. With 64 delegates in attendance this was a successful event with positive feedback. Our next event was held in July and focused on the needs of our Laboratory Category Group. With 101 delegates this was a well-received and successful event which included five sessions and a dedicated Q&A with all UKUPC laboratory Category Managers in attendance.

We have also facilitated a number of smaller focused events during the year, the first in March covering embedding IR35 in the Finance System presented by University of Cumbria, and a session from CCS on aggregated spend within the telephony category. Additionally, we have increased our category specific member networks by offering a range of drop-in sessions for members to discuss specific topics and to ensure all members have the opportunity to understand our company, our values and our strategic aims, we have implemented regular member induction/refresher sessions.

Expanding knowledge sharing and learning is a key priority; and we are committed to supporting our membership in this area, and in the summer provided free of charge contract management training.

The feedback from the membership report that our events have been delivered in a timely manner, are of good quality and relevant and overall we have received positive feedback.

Another initiative implemented this year was the new framework launch process to raise awareness of our frameworks. All new agreements now include framework launch videos and webinars, have a dedicated page on the website and include other relevant information specific to that agreement. Overall 9 online introductory framework launches were completed, Global Workforce Mobility Services, Washroom Services including Period Dignity Solutions, White Goods and Associated Electrical Appliances, Antibodies & Sera and other matrices, Software Licence Resellers (SLRA), Removals and Relocations Services, Printers and Managed Print Services (Nepa2), Laboratory Equipment (General and Associated Post Installation Services and Legal Services.

Through our regular interaction with our Member’s and wider stakeholders, we will continue to explore ways to align our business services and membership support services to our Member’s needs.

Jane Billows
Head of Business Services & Membership
The volatile macro environmental climate that we all find ourselves in has had a large economic impact on our suppliers, those in every category, every part of the product lifecycle and every demographic.

SME Engagement
NWUPC has a strong portfolio of suppliers categorised as Small to Medium Enterprises which we proactively support. Over the last year we have continuously reviewed our supplier engagement process to provide a more engaging, easy to navigate platform and digitalise our tender processes to streamline the process and make it easier and less of an administrative burden for companies to bid. We continue to work with a supply base where an SME majority at 76% of NWUPC Framework suppliers will engage with us in this transformation. The one thing we are most proud of is that 20% of micro organisations which further supports our localisation agendas of our members.

NetPositive
We have been utilising the NetPositive Supplier Engagement Tool for five years as a mechanism to monitor, support and develop sustainability practices of our tier one suppliers. The programme was developed to offer members insight and practical application in priority areas of responsible procurement. Leading sustainability practitioners provided sessions covering the benefits and opportunities available through Electronic Watch Affiliation, two perspectives on embedding social value into procurement, practical tools for urbanisation within estates and how to conduct sustainability impact assessments. The day was attended by 75% of our membership as well as colleagues across the sector. The webinars were recorded and are held on our website as a resource for members to refer to and share with colleagues.

During this academic year NWUPC contributed to the collaborative production of a number of resources for members and for suppliers through the Responsible Procurement Network (RPN). In March 2021 a Responsible Procurement Glossary containing commonly used terms was produced and shared to enable us to standardise the language used across UKUP, ensuring we adopted best practice and made communication simpler for those new to working with us.

We also developed a Responsible Procurement Tender Question Bank with accompanying model answers for use at both framework and institutional level to understand the commitment of potential suppliers. This resource set has been developed in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Social Value Thematic Outcomes and tools (TOMs and mapping) is outlined.

Supplier Code of Conduct
In February 2021 all members of UKUP agreed to adopt a sector Supplier Code of Conduct. For NWUPC this code articulates our commitment to responsible and ethical procurement and to work with suppliers that share this commitment and want to support our goals and in turn those of our membership. The Code of Conduct covers environmental, social, economical and ethical practices and requires suppliers to comply with the principals within it across their organisation as well as throughout their supply chains. The code will be included within all frameworks and will be monitored through contract management.

Contract Management Activity
Through application of our Strategic Approach to Contract Management, NWUPC’s Category Managers have a programme of review meetings with suppliers. Within our contract management programme, we have built in key events of the market and feedback from our suppliers and touchpoint meetings with our supply and demand and macro environmental effects on price. During the year 2020/2021 NWUPC held 58 contract management review meetings to discuss matters of performance, uptake, market conditions and sustainability. Activity within responsible procurement is monitored through data entered into the NetPositive Supplier Engagement Tool. Areas of weakness and particular interest to members are discussed and a development plan is established. This year, contract management activity has led to suppliers making improvements to processes, engaging in new product development and building innovative solutions to drive sustainability.

The difficult events of recent times have given us an opportunity to reposition our responsibility, consider what our priorities might be now in a world that has changed considerably. Despite this, the responsibility of ensuring our suppliers have faced in all areas of our portfolio, we have still sought opportunities to develop their operations to be more sustainable and the need to work more creatively has strengthened the drive for innovation and improvement. We will always be committed to ensure that the responsible procurement practices of our supply base support the needs of our membership and the HE sector as a whole.
UK Universities Purchasing Consortia (UKUPC) is the representative body for UK regional and specialist purchasing consortia. We are working together to ensure that where appropriate, our practices are aligned and we deliver what our members need, when they need it: adding value, embedding sustainable and responsible procurement, and delivering social value.

At a consortium level, our Members determine our priorities. The core responsibility of each of the consortia is to work together to share knowledge and best practice, to align with the wider HE procurement community and take overall responsibility for delivery of the Strategic Aims. The Board composition is the Head of each of the participating consortia.

To help achieve UKUPC aims we have three focus groups and several working groups that report into the focus groups. The focus group compositions are the lead in the relevant discipline from each consortium. Each focus group has its own aims that support the delivery of UKUPC strategic aims. All focus groups share best practice and explore opportunities to develop operational procurement with a collaborative approach. They consult with constituent members and seek endorsement, deliver projects as agreed by Heads of Consortia and UKUPC and work to promote the work and benefits of UKUPC and our Members.

The UKUPC Strategic Plan was launched late in 2020 and sets out a framework for UKUPC and its focus groups to deliver against their aims.

**UKUPC Joint Contracting Focus Group**

The Group explores opportunities to collaborate across categories at a national and inter-regional level and align resources to an agreed contracting programme for mutual benefit. They deliver a collaborative programme of framework agreements to members offering best value, compliance, and assurance of sustainable practices. Measuring and reporting on category spend enables them to identify areas for development and opportunities.

They provide oversight to the National Category Groups that report into the Group ensuring consistency in approach. Increasing standardisation of documentation and consistency in tools and systems ensure efficiency and support delivery of an effective service to our members. The probity and compliance in all procurement activities of the consortia is of paramount importance.

This approach ensures visibility and a coordinated UK-wide national contracting programme (comprising both national, cross-regional, and regional agreements depending on strategic imperative and member demand). Frameworks are delivered on time and without duplication. Our portfolio of framework agreements across institutions’ addressable spend target significant spend areas and offer best value. They also demonstrate improvements and show how economic, environmental, and social value can be improved.

**UKUPC Systems Focus Group**

The Group aims to improve the technology/information systems landscape and explore opportunities to standardise and share, while minimising duplication and streamlining the capture, dissemination, and use of data across UKUPC. They deliver technology projects, as agreed by the UKUPC Board for use by consortia and for those which can be used where appropriate by member institutions. The Group ensures the provision of high-quality timely information to members and enhanced reporting capability to reflect HE, public sector and government initiatives. Demonstrable efficiencies for consortia, members and suppliers are identified using shared technology solutions for use by consortia and member institutions.

The key activities of the Group throughout the year included utilisation of MI on member savings using an agreed methodology, carbon emissions reporting, contracting updates and contract management.

**UKUPC Communications Focus Group**

The Group develops promotional materials and communication channels to engage with stakeholders in a meaningful way. They also develop and participate in events that are of interest to the HE procurement community. Monitoring and appraising the effectiveness of communications and the benefits available through collaborative procurement at regional and national levels across the HE sector.

The Group develops and delivers communications channels/tools to maximise awareness and ease of use of collaborative agreements and promote the benefits across the HE sector of collaborative procurement at national and regional levels through consortia, members and enhanced reporting capability to reflect HE, public sector and government initiatives. Demonstrable efficiencies for consortia, members and suppliers are identified using shared technology solutions for use by consortia and member institutions.

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The key activities of the Group throughout the year included utilisation of MI on member savings using an agreed methodology, carbon emissions reporting, contracting updates and contract management.
It’s that time of the year again and I am pleased to share with you some of the exciting activities that took place within our category group meetings over the year. I am sure everyone would agree with me that this is a time like no other.

When the COVID-19 global pandemic erupted, we took immediate steps to ensure the continuity of all category groups by moving these online. Once again, our category group leaders rose to the challenge, and we benefited immensely from the ongoing tendering activities.

The Network focuses on engagement with, and the utilisation of external resources including Electronics Watch, the Social Value TOMS and NetPositive Futures.

Work has also taken place on the provision of resources to include supplier codes of conduct, modern slavery guidance and tracking and carbon reduction.

Overall, there were 46 Category Group meetings last year, all done remotely. As you would expect, a consistent theme in the discussions across all the category group include plans by individual institutions regarding the future working pattern for their staff, students return to campus, onsite vaccinations for both staff and students, staff restructuring, provision of blended learning for students, and of course framework agreement and ongoing tendering activities.

There were a few changes in the chair and deputy chair positions within some of our groups. The deputy chair for the Professional Services Group, Kathy Houghton (LJMU), stepped down from her role at the September 2020 meeting and Liz Wilson (LSRM) was formally announced as the new deputy chair of the group at the March 2021 meeting. Katherine Orme (LJMU) was formally announced as the new chair for the Furniture group in March. Similarly, Denise Minde (LSTM) was chosen as the deputy chair for the Libraries Services Group meeting in January 2021. Unfortunately, our long-standing chair and deputy chair for the Office Solutions Group, Linda Sutton (Keele University) and Chris Benson (Bangor University) both announced they were retiring from their respective universities. There are no doubts that the group will miss their expertise, knowledge, and steer leadership.

On a positive note, Dave Fendle (Edge Hill) announced that he would be stepping down as the vice chair of the NewUPC Network and taking on the chair for the Office Solutions Category and will be assisted by Nicola Brecknell (University of Worcester) as the deputy.

We are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel with the rollout of Covid-19 vaccines and the recent lifting of all lockdown measures by the UK Government. Hopefully, things can now start returning to some form of normal and we can be held to enable us to face-to-face meetings once again.

Although I acknowledge that some institutions have had cuts in travel budgets and the desire of some members to continue with online meetings, the benefits and networking aspect of in-person meetings cannot be over-emphasised. NWUPC will continue to encourage this where possible and make provision for virtual attendance.

As always, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members for their commitment and support to the group. I hope you continue to find our meetings valuable and hope we can all start the new year with the hope of a more positive future.

Ayoade Onireti
Membership Services Coordinator

Hello all, I’m Sarabjot Singh (Sarab) the new Membership Services Coordinator at NWUPC. I took over from Ayo in November 2021. I’m very excited to be in this role and am enjoying my time working at NWUPC, it has been lovely getting to meet, albeit virtually, all our wonderful members and attending category meetings so far.

There have been lots of changes and challenges over the last two years or so with the pandemic, particularly for our members. Since attending meetings and reading the annual report, it is amazing to see how members have supported one another through this turbulent time.

I hope to continue on from Ayo’s good practice and support the groups and members in any which way I can. I look forward to what’s to come in the spring and summer terms and hopefully we can begin to attend face to face meetings again.

Sarabjot Singh
Membership Services Coordinator
I would like to express thanks to all our members for their continued support for the group especially during these unprecedented times.

Max Fossard (Liverpool John Moores University) Chair Audio Visual Computing

The computing group has been working hard to keep the wheels turning this year. What we all hope for, the return to pre covid life has not yet happened so it is still a tough area to be working in. The continued work from home, a change of teaching mode, online/ hybrid and offsite teaching has caused many challenges that I am proud the group has played an active role in supporting. The group has shared best practice and helped each other wherever we can to deliver what each institution needs.

We held meetings in September, November, February and May, all online and all well attended. Our September meeting was unusual as at that time we were all keen to share and learn more to help address the needs of the institutions due to the pandemic. This demonstrated the commitment and support the group has offered each other. We managed to receive presentations from Stone, Lenovo and Softcat in our meetings.

Agreements that are new include SLRA, VLE and NEPA. 2. Being integral to the sub groups means we get first hand information on changes in the market, stock levels and availability giving the NWUPC members a strong insight into the IT landscape at any given time, also allowing us to add and address issues we face as NWUPC members.

This year has seen us develop further the replacement of the recycling agreement supporting cradle to grave it.

This year has seen yet more need for adaptation to the ever changing sector landscape. It has been challenging and rewarding for all involved. Dave Yates has stepped in to help the group through the year. The whole group has supported each other and helped to keep the institutions we present working sourcing hardware and software needed to work in remote and hybrid manner and address the rapidly changing landscape we are all in. I am very pleased with all we have achieved and that we have been so supportive of each other. We really do have a wonderful group of people in the computing group supported by NWUPC who deserve to feel very pleased with all they have achieved.

Matt Storey (Lancaster University) Chair Computing

Matt Storey (Lancaster University) Chair Computing

This year has been about keeping the communication open with the members over our 3 meetings. We are a group who find networking over a coffee, discussing issues about suppliers, viewing other universities facilities which generate interest and purchasing questions and general day to day issues valuable. This is something we have all missed again this year. To aid this we had a drop in session where we were able to ask questions to each other and raise issues that were pressing. This was a casual arrangement with no agenda and was received well.

We have encouraged members to ‘bring a friend along’ in order to keep the numbers attending to a healthy level. This is also important to us when it comes to having suppliers present to us, having a well turned out audience shows we are committed to the NWUPC principles.

We are still in the process of taking forward the “category lead” which is a list of members who are a “super user” of a particular company/Agreement, who can offer advice on the product and prices for anyone wanting to use them to seek advice from.

Members are still updating us with their profiles, each meeting one or two members tell us all about themselves, their job role, purchasing responsibilities and staffing. This has really helped the group bond and have an insight into other universities.

We continue to have an around the table discussion, where each member has the opportunity to update on the purchasing activity at their university, any issues they have experienced and any future purchasing where other members can advise on. We tend to change the topic each meeting, to reflect the time of year and the activities associated with buying at that particular time.

We have enjoyed online presentations from window cleaning, deep and specialist cleaning and period poverty.

I would like to thank Rich Yoxall, the deputy chair and his “alarm bell” for keeping track of the agenda! Also all of those members who offer their valuable time and knowledge to both category group meetings and supporting activities. Rich and I look forward to taking the group forward in the coming year.

Emily Taylor (University of Manchester) Chair Domestic

NWUPC Annual Report 2020 - 2021

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NWUPC Annual Report 2020 - 2021
The Estates Group Meetings

The Category meetings for October, February and May were held online due to the ongoing pandemic.

October
The group said a brief goodbye to Carol Yates who left Lancaster University. Rejoining the group in her new role representing the University of Central Lancashire was a warm welcome to Jessica Matterson who became the new representative for Lancaster University. The group were given a presentation by Constructionline, which was followed by a good discussion of the system by the members.

February
The meeting was attended by 15 attendees and was again a good interactive session. The group had a presentation from CEfP on electrical waste.

May
Waste Management Services – Suez Recycling and recovery gave a presentation to the group. Ella Schumacher, Edge Hill University, Lynn Smith – Manchester Metropolitan University, Peter Kay – Staffordshire University, Dale Pullin – The University of Manchester, Marcus Young – University of Salford and Lucy Smith – University of Westminster all joined the group in May. I would like to thank all for a very warm welcome to the group and look forward to working with them all in the future.

The potential new contracting areas for the group are considering including roofing, building maintenance and repairs.

Category Strategy
In light of the pandemic, the strategy for the category is to be reviewed and updated.

Thank You
One of my main aims for the group when I became chair, was for people to share their experience, knowledge and best practice. This helps everyone to develop as an individual, as well as the information being used by the member to benefit their institution.

The success of the Estates Group is down to its members, who with their invaluable contributions, continue to make the category group meetings, an interactive and informative forum. I would like to offer my personal thanks to each and every one of you for your continued commitment, dedication and support, it is very much appreciated.

The utilisation of the framework following the re-tender in spring 2019 has continued to be a success. The fluctuation in suppliers being used is testament to the competitive pricing that is being provided in their submissions, the testing of the framework through mini-competitions and the continued demand for products provided through this agreement. It has also been great to see many of the new suppliers emerging to the framework receiving a significant number of orders, from low/modest to high value.

In contrast to other areas, as construction continued throughout the breadth of the pandemic, many projects were only somewhat affected in their timescales, and therefore as projects continued, the supply of furniture also followed suit. The spend within this period remained at a good level despite all the setbacks we faced economically.

Presentations within this period focused on the hot topics of Furniture Provision for Home Working (Senator, October 2020), David Worthington (CEF, March 2021), both of which were well received by the group. It will be interesting to see how/whether changes occur, as many universities continue to utilise hybrid working. It seems likely that the way in which we work when in the office will continue to change depending upon the situation in the next period and onwards.

2021 has been a busy 12 months of tendering activity in the furniture category and this looks set to continue into the remainder of the financial year. The Floor Coverings agreement started in autumn 2020, a new Removals and Relocation Services agreement, tendered going live in February 2021, and the NWUPC owned White Goods and Associated Electrical Appliances agreement was re-tendered with the addition of a designated lot for Northern Ireland.

Removals and Relocations Framework

In the coming year we will continue to explore and understand both our new suppliers and emerging opportunities and challenges within the category, with a particular focus on the environmental and social opportunities.

E-Market Place

The e-Market Place group continues to work closely together sharing best practice and e-Market Place knowledge, to maximise the electronic ordering and electronic invoicing services available to institutions from the e-Market Place providers.

The most recent focus has been on communication between the consortia and the e-Market Place to ensure catalogues are updated and relevant to up and down stream providers.

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Since the start of the pandemic, the Transforming Procurement (UK) group has continued to communicate national changes and work on consultation on the Group’s Paper: "Living to monthly meetings to keep communication between meeting points, and advise on their prevention, mitigation and management; talk about the impacts of COVID-19 and Brexit and how to use the frameworks for COVID-19 testing. In our March meeting, VWR and Fisher Scientific spoke to us about the supply disruption of products on the IRLA agreement and then, in May, UniGreen Scheme gave us a fascinating talk on their large equipment recycling service which, as you can imagine, generated a large amount of interest amongst members.

There is good representation across the group and, while overall attendance is good, there are a few local institutional issues in Cumbria, Liverpool John Moores, Ulster, University of Central Lancashire, University of Wolverhampton and Teesside University who did not (or could not) attend at all during the year. My feeling is that this reflects the increasing pressures on the sector’s workforce, and that it is finding it increasingly difficult to prioritise meetings of this kind.

During this time, we also bid farewell to Kathryn Coffey (Edge Hill University) and Paul Green (Glyndŵr University), to Kathryn Coffey (Edge Hill University) and Paul Green (Glyndŵr University), both of whom took retirement. We thank them for their contributions to the group and look forward to making their replacements.

Existing contracts from all the national procurement frameworks for COVID-19 testing. We did benefit from some interesting and useful presentations. Mark Thompson of the NWUPC opened our November meeting to give us an overview of the Life Sciences framework, talk about the impacts of COVID-19 and Brexit and how to use the frameworks for COVID-19 testing. In our March meeting, VWR and Fisher Scientific spoke to us about the supply disruption of products on the IRLA agreement and then, in May, UniGreen Scheme gave us a fascinating talk on their large equipment recycling service which, as you can imagine, generated a large amount of interest amongst members.

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New agreements: The new Lab Equipment framework agreement tendered by LWPC went live on 15th June shortly after our last meeting of the year. This new, 12 lot framework with 17 suppliers, covers a wide range of general laboratory equipment and servicing options for many different applications.

Potential contracting areas: No new agreements for this category are being considered at the moment given the large number of national tenders being progressed and the ongoing STEMed category being developed within the national STEMed group.

Contracts are well-supported and being progressed and the national large number of national tenders are being agreed for this category and are being tendered within the national STEMed group.

No new potential contracting areas. There are a few particular framework agreements.

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The period of 2020-21 saw challenging times for a lot of our members, facing voluntary redundancies, library restructures along with reduced book and e-resources budgets.

Now fully into Covid-19 times, the group members have all adapted well to working from home, working online and regular testing procedures. We welcomed Denise Minde as our deputy chair and decided as a group that an interim meeting would be beneficial and a great opportunity to get together on an informal basis, discussing all our Covid issues.

Successes during this time have been the development of click and collect services and reviewing current practices.

Sharing more updates, some members implemented new library management systems and reviewed our current reading list online systems as well. With print orders and lending on hold for many, the pressure for access to online resources has increased dramatically pushing a lot of our members to look at alternative providers, suppliers and resource sharing, dramatically pushing a lot of our material agreement.

We have worked more collaboratively over the last year and have embedded a variety of reasons including slow response times and content prevalence, we continue to meet, discuss, and review in this ever-changing landscape.

Our category manager David Yates, dealt with these issues and has kept us updated on new acquisitions, sustainability, staffing and the Book, EBook, Standing Orders and related material agreement. Framework lead, Gavin Phillips at SUPLC has reported that this agreement is now extended from July 2021 to the end of the year.

We have worked more collaboratively over the last year and have embodied some great practices into our daily work due to Covid-19. With Elsevier and continuing Jisc negotiations, new agreements, and open access more prevalent, we continue to meet, discuss, and review in this ever-changing landscape.

The pandemic has continued to impact spending habits and the search for office products has significantly declined, especially paper. All the frameworks that suppliers have had to diversify and focus on product ranges where demand was high, PPE for example. The Office Supplies subgroup has continued to meet with suppliers through virtual meetings ensuring that by working together we could minimize the impact to all parties concerned. The framework has reduced from four suppliers to three due to Banner acquiring Staples.

During these uncertain times, university budgets continue to be scrutinised so price increases must be challenged where possible. Dave Yates was successful in deflecting a price increase on Office Supplies to a decrease by reviewing and substituting product lines which was a benefit to members.

Members reported issues with some suppliers’ Elexible, Askew, Content online ltd EEE, Pearson ProQuest and DMR for a variety of reasons including slow response times and content restrictions.

Some great practices into our daily work have been reported.

The June meeting was the final meeting for Chris and myself, farewell were made, mine being teary, but I was honored by the presence of Helen Dodi Williams and a guest appearance from Mike Haslin, whom I had worked with on many stationery tenders before he moved to TUFC.

As ever a huge thanks to members and the consortium for your continued support, we have demonstrated that working together we can overcome the effects of the pandemic together and I wish the new chair and deputy chair all the very best for the future.

The group has enjoyed a variety of useful and interesting presentations from suppliers all the way. We have worked on inviting non-procurement colleagues to meetings and asking them for their feedback on what would be useful to them.

We have discussed our strategy moving forwards which will focus on increasing non-procurement members and the support we offer to them such as buyers guides along with presentations on hot topics.

On behalf of the group I’d like to thank Kathy Haughton for her time and support as deputy chair. Also to welcome Liz Wilson as our new deputy chair. We also bade a fond farewell to Linda Sutton and welcomed Karen Berry as her replacement. Last but not least we welcomed my colleague Nizam Ismail to the group.

I would like to thank all members of the group for their continued support and give a particular mention to Tasha and colleagues in this respect.

Leanne Horton
(University of Central Lancashire Chair Professional Services)

The Group has continued to receive excellent support from NWUPC colleagues including, but not limited to, Todd Jefferies and Ayoade Onireti. Therefore, it was said to see both move on, and the Group would like to thank Todd and Ayo for all their work in supporting the Telecoms Group over the years.

I would also like to note my thanks to all Group members for their continued support and interest in the Telecoms Group throughout the year.

Mark Allinson
(Eddie Hill University Chair Telecommunications)

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Mark Allinson
(Eddie Hill University Chair Telecommunications)

The Telecoms Group held four virtual meetings during 2020-21 three scheduled group meetings and an interim meeting in January 2021. Group members continue to utilise the National telecoms agreements from CCS, Jisc, NEUPC and others, with the large multi-asset Networks 2 (RM308) framework accounting for much of the regional telecoms spend. Alongside the helpful agreement updates, group meetings and discussions focused on the telecoms-related activities, challenges and solutions resulting from the inevitable changes in learning and working practices during 2020-21. Supplier presentations were put on hold, although these will re-establish as oncetime-person meetings reconvene.

The Group has continued to receive excellent support from NWUPC colleagues including, but not limited to, Todd Jefferies and Ayoade Onireti. Therefore, it was said to see both move on, and the Group would like to thank Todd and Ayo for all their work in supporting the Telecoms Group over the years.

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Mark Allinson
(Eddie Hill University Chair Telecommunications)
Principal activities
The principal activity of the company continued to be that of the support for the procurement activities of its members’ institutions.

Directors
The directors who held office during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIBSON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J CARTON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S MOLE</td>
<td>RESIGNED</td>
<td>03 FEB 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S DAUNCEY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D ELCOCK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T OKEEFE</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>S FUREY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>N DAVIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S E MCGILL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A H HEWETT</td>
<td>APPOINTED</td>
<td>03 FEB 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies’ regime.

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 3 November 2021.

Auditor Wylie & Bisset LLP act as auditor to the company and in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

Income Statement for year ended 31 July 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2021 £</th>
<th>2020 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>795,274</td>
<td>632,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Sales</td>
<td>(41,029)</td>
<td>(33,740)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Profit</td>
<td>754,245</td>
<td>598,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Expenses</td>
<td>(734,470)</td>
<td>(729,086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Operating Income</td>
<td>6,191</td>
<td>(14,244)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating profit/(loss)</td>
<td>25,966</td>
<td>(14,498)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>1,544</td>
<td>5,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Costs</td>
<td>(1,125)</td>
<td>(2,447)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit/(loss) before taxation</td>
<td>26,185</td>
<td>(11,400)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on profit/(loss)</td>
<td>6,114</td>
<td>12,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit/(loss) for the financial year</td>
<td>32,499</td>
<td>(101,724)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Business travel continues to be limited due to travel restrictions around the pandemic.

SUPC supplier category meetings have been taking place ensuring the TMC’s are strategically focusing on supporting the sector when the business travel resumes.

Linda Thompson (Lancaster University) Chair Travel

NWUPC Annual Report 2020 - 2021
## Statement of Financial Position as at 31 July 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2021 £</th>
<th>2020 £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intangible Assets</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>3,138</td>
<td>3,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,138</td>
<td>13,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
<td>331,720</td>
<td>227,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>646,255</td>
<td>645,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>977,975</td>
<td>873,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current liabilities</strong></td>
<td>(99,073)</td>
<td>(69,161)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net current assets</strong></td>
<td>878,902</td>
<td>804,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets less current liabilities</strong></td>
<td>882,040</td>
<td>877,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provision for liabilities</strong></td>
<td>(118,754)</td>
<td>(86,597)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net assets</strong></td>
<td>763,286</td>
<td>730,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td>763,286</td>
<td>730,787</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NWUPC MEMBERS

**Full Members**
- Bangor University
- Edge Hill University
- Glyndwr University
- Harper Adams University
- Keele University
- Lancaster University
- Liverpool Hope University
- Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA)
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Queen’s University Belfast
- Royal Northern College of Music
- Staffordshire University
- Ulster University
- University of Bolton
- University of Central Lancashire
- University of Chester
- University of Cumbria
- University of Liverpool
- University of Manchester
- University of Salford
- University of Wolverhampton
- University of Worcester

**Associate Members**
- Medicine Discovery Catapult
- National Museums Liverpool
- Newcastle-under-Lyme College
- Science & Technology Facilities Council
- St Marys University College Belfast
- Stranmillis University College