

<b>Local Procurement Task &amp; Finish Group Minutes</b>		<b>Date of Meeting</b> <b>10<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>
(Shropshire Business Board Sub-Group Meeting)		
<b>In Attendance:</b> Ann Johnson, FSB (Chair); Nigel Denton, Procurement Manager; Nick Chavasse, NRG Direct; Tudor Griffiths, TG Group; David Ledbury, Business Link West Midlands; Jacqui Casey, Policy & Research Team Leader; Louise Cross, Sector Support Team Leader; Frank Lauriello, Business Support Officer.		
<b>Apologies:</b> Geoffrey Davies, McConnel Ltd., Business Board Chair; David Grocott, Grocontinental Ltd.; Will Jones, Greyhound Plant Services; Richard Sheehan, Shropshire Chamber; Steve Westwood, Novelis; James Tanner, Tanners (Shrewsbury) Ltd., Karen Davies, HEFF.		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary of Key Points/Actions (By Whom)</b>	
<i>1. Welcome &amp; Apologies</i>	AJ welcomed all and noted apologies. Minutes of the meeting of 16 <sup>th</sup> July were accepted as an accurate record.	
<i>2. Baseline Data for Monitoring &amp; Improvement – Nigel Denton</i>	<p>At the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July, ND noted additional monitoring currently being undertaken by the Council using tender forms received for contracts of £30k and over. This included an understanding of the detail, split by way of location (Shropshire, West Mercia, West Midlands and UK), of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ companies invited to tender</li> <li>▪ companies that actually did tender</li> <li>▪ who won the contract</li> </ul> <p>ND provided details of this assessment undertaken to date for the last 4 months (Dec 08-March 09) of Shropshire County Council and the first 4 months of the Unitary Authority (April- approx mid July 09). ND noted the need to acknowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the influence of seasonal variation and also variation according to type of service being procured</li> <li>▪ that only a full year of results would provide an accurate picture</li> <li>▪ West Mercia Supplies information was not included, this being a purchasing consortium, and an entirely complete picture of Council purchasing was not therefore possible</li> <li>▪ ND would continue to collate figures quarterly, next being available in October for the late July – October period.</li> <li>▪ Possibility of including a value figure on results in future.</li> </ul> <p>Difficulties in gathering pre-qualification data was discussed.</p> <p><b>ACTION: ND to investigate possibilities in capturing pre-qualification information.</b></p> <p>The group discussed the need to understand the value of what was being monitored against ‘total spending power’ and revisited the possibility of influencing under contracts of under £30k. The latter would require changes to Council minor contract rules. It was acknowledged that legal actions on</p>	

	<p>breaches in procurement were increasing, particularly in respect of larger contracts.</p> <p><b>ACTION: JC to: seek feedback from Legal on the potential implications of a change to ask officers to, where feasible, seek a Shropshire quote; and research regional advice on the same.</b></p>
<p><i>3. Working Session on Development of Key Tasks.</i></p>	<p>AJ suggested the session be used to focus on two questions:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do we provide businesses information on procurement opportunities and how do we understand the barriers for business?</li> <li>2. How do we ensure that the training is appropriate and meeting the needs of the businesses in the county?</li> </ol> <p>Discussion on question 1 covered the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reviewing details provided on the Council website, the Chamber's B2B site and in the media</li> <li>▪ How we find out why those who are invited to tender do not pursue the opportunity</li> <li>▪ The resource/manpower implications and relative value of developing a portal for company interest registration.</li> <li>▪ The existence and value of multiple search engines and e-mail alert systems</li> <li>▪ The possibility of exploring existing models e.g. 'Find it in Sandwell' (website address: <a href="http://www.finditinsandwell.co.uk/">www.finditinsandwell.co.uk/</a>) or 'Build Up North Staffordshire' construction industry-based scheme (website address: <a href="http://www.buildup-ns.org.uk/default.aspx?entityid=&amp;parentid=&amp;sectionid=89">www.buildup-ns.org.uk/default.aspx?entityid=&amp;parentid=&amp;sectionid=89</a> )</li> <li>▪ The need to think wider than Council i.e. include PCT, Health Authority, Fire, Ambulance and business to business opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: JC to ask Steve Massey (Find it in Sandwell) to talk to the Group at its next meeting.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: ND to examine opportunity for getting feedback from businesses invited to tender that do not pursue the opportunity.</b></p> <p>Discussion on question 2 covered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DL described training opportunities provided in relation to 2012 contracts and including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ 4 awareness raising sessions (two in 2009/10; two in 2010/11)</li> <li>➢ 4 in-depth training sessions focussing on opportunities and how to tender (two in 2009/10; two in 2010/11)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>(see attached paperwork for available details of these events)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How can the Group gain feedback on the value of these sessions from attending companies? How do we evaluate the quality of the training and the success rate?</li> <li>▪ The 'CompeteFor' portal had improved and become more focussed. There were now over 6,000 registered companies. (website address: <a href="http://www.competefor.com/business/login.jsp">www.competefor.com/business/login.jsp</a> )</li> </ul> <p><b>AGREED: Baseline evidence was required on the quality of existing procurement training opportunities.</b></p>

	<p><b>ACTION: JC to invite Rosemary Smith, 2012 Coordinator working on procurement training events to join the Group</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: FL to get feedback from companies attending 2012 training events exploring how they viewed the training and whether they still perceived barriers to tendering for 2012 work and if so, the nature of these barriers.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: DL to find out how many Shropshire companies had registered on the CompeteFor website and any other information available on the level of engagement by Shropshire companies.</b></p>
<p><i>4. Additional Questions and AOB</i></p>	<p>All questions and queries were discussed as the meeting progressed.</p> <p>FL advised the Group of Shropshire Chamber's proposal to hold seven general procurement training events across Shropshire. Feedback could be sought from the first of these to establish the perceived value among attending companies.</p> <p><b>ACTION: FL to pursue company feedback on first event with Richard Sheehan.</b></p>
<p><i>Date &amp; Time of Next Meeting</i></p>	<p>4.00pm, Thursday 22nd October 2009 at Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury</p>