

People & Skills Workstream Update – Autumn 2008

The Review of Public Procurement identified that procurement staff in the Scottish public sector should have the appropriate skills for their level of responsibility, easy access to a wide range of professional and vocational training and a recognisable professional procurement career path. To ensure these recommendations were implemented a [People & Skills Working Group](#) (P&SWG), with cross-sectoral representation was established.

The membership of the group was reviewed in May 2008 to ensure it was able to represent the diversity of organisations in the public sector;

- Advanced Procurement Universities and Colleges (APUC)
- Central Government Centre of Expertise (CGCoPE)
- The University of Edinburgh
- eProcurement Scotland (ePS)
- General Register Office for Scotland
- Grampian Fire & Rescue Service
- Lothian Borders Police
- Moray Council
- National Procurement, NHS
- Procurement Scotland (Chair – Jackie Foster, Workstream Lead)
- Reid Kerr College
- Scotland Excel
- Scottish Parliament
- Scottish Procurement Directorate (SPD)

Workstream Aim

‘To nurture the talent which already exists within procurement across the Scottish Public Sector and facilitate and promote a career development path for procurement professionals.

Objectives

The group have agreed a number of objectives and over recent months there has been significant progress in a number of areas. Detailed below is a summary of the progress to-date and an outline of the plans for each of the objectives.

A copy of the [People & Skills Project Plan](#) is available on the Procurement Scotland website www.procurement.scotland.gov.uk.

i) [Competency Framework](#) – the framework was approved and endorsed by the Heads of each of the Centres of Expertise for use in their sectors. Roadshows took place across Scotland demonstrating the framework and how it can be used by individuals to assist their personal development through skills assessment, identification of training and development needs and career planning and how it can supplement organisation’s existing staff development programmes, resource and succession planning initiatives.

The Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS) have mapped the framework to their qualification ladder and in their report note that’The Procurement Competency

Framework is well-structured, easy to follow and readily transferable across the public sector in Scotland...’

A review of the framework is scheduled for October 2008, and will consider feedback from individuals and organisations who have used the framework and how the CIPS mapping to the qualification ladder should be incorporated. Consideration is also being given to mapping vocational qualifications to the framework. A revised version of the competency framework will then be published and circulated.

ii) Skills Gap Analysis – identifying the skills gaps within organisations, sectors and nationally is central to the development of strategies which may result in national training contracts. Over the summer a number of the CoE’s have issued questionnaires to their sectors to identify their training requirements and this information will then be evaluated both sectorally and centrally. Initially this will provide an indication of the skills gaps, but only as the competency levels are assessed will more detailed information become available. It is expected that this information will be accessible by December 2008.

iii) National Training Contracts – the cross-sectoral group will ensure strategies are developed and deployed relating to the provision of procurement training. The strategy development will involve market engagement and analysis, spend analysis and input from the CoE’s and buying authorities.

This process has already begun in the development of a strategy for the provision of CIPS professional qualification ladder training. A workshop is scheduled with the approved CIPS training providers on 9th October 08. As an interim solution to assist individuals and organisations identify the most appropriate provider for their training, all the approved suppliers were contacted and details of the different levels and training options they provide and where within Scotland, were provided to CoEs for circulation to their sector in July 2008.

EU Public Procurement Legislation Training is a common requirement across the public sector and in response to the demand for training two seminars were held in May 2008 which were sponsored by Procurement Scotland, staff from over 100 public sector organisations attended the events. Work is about to start on the development of a strategy for the delivery of this training, this is scheduled for completion early in 2009.

iv) Public Sector Faculty – discussions have been ongoing with CIPS for some time regarding the creation of a Scottish Academy which will support individual development, however during the process of identifying the scope of the academy CIPS have proposed that a Public Sector Faculty would be the most appropriate solution to meet our requirements. CIPS have made a corporate decision to invest in the development of Public Sector Faculties across the UK and are enthusiastic to work with the Scottish Public Sector in developing a faculty for Scotland. A workshop is scheduled for 30th September 08, which will provide CIPS with an opportunity to meet with a representative group of procurement staff from across Scotland and obtain their views on the content of the faculty. CIPS have scheduled the launch of the faculty for early spring 2009.

v) Procurement Development Programme - the Review of Public Procurement in Scotland (2006) recommended that the public sector should recognise procurement as a distinct and important profession and recommended that a new entry route for graduates be established.

A working party within the Scottish Government with representatives from other sectors has begun to develop a programme which will be open to graduates (and internal staff with the appropriate competencies), with a target date of September 2009 for the first recruits. It is intended that the programme within the Scottish Government will work as a pilot which will then lead to the programme being adopted across the public sector.

As part of the process of raising the profile of the profession, articles were published in the recent CIPS Student Guide (Sept 08) which has been circulated across the UK in Universities, Colleges, Careers Centres and Graduate Fairs. Members from the P&SWG have again this year represented the Scottish public procurement community at the Graduate Fair in Glasgow during October 2008, encouraging students to consider a career in procurement.

If you would like further information on the People & Skills Workstream please send your enquiry to: ps.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk