

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL  
ICT PROCUREMENT WORKING GROUP**

Minutes of Meeting of the ICT Procurement Working Group held in Committee Room 3, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday 11 March, 2009 at 10.30 a.m.

**PRESENT**

Mrs C Wilson (Chairman)  
Mr M Rattray  
Mr W Fernie  
Mr K MacLeod

Mr J Ford  
Mr D Hendry  
Mrs P Munro

Officials in attendance:-

Ms M Morris, Assistant Chief Executive  
Mrs V Nairn, Head of E-Government, Chief Executive's Service  
Mr J Grieve, IS Client Manager  
Mrs K Dunbar, Procurement Project Manager, Chief Executive's Service  
Mrs E Symon, Procurement Project Officer, Chief Executive's Service  
Mr T McCulloch, Quality Assurance and Development Manager, Education, Culture & Sport Service  
Mr J Henderson, Virtual Learning Community Co-ordinator, Education, Culture & Sport  
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Chief Executive's Service

**Mrs C Wilson in the Chair**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mrs M Davidson.

**2. Minutes**

There was circulated Minutes of meeting of the Working Group held on 28 January 2009.

The Working Group **APPROVED** the minutes subject to Mr K MacLeod's apologies for absence should have been recorded.

**3. Project Update**

There had been circulated Report No. ICTP/02/09 by the Assistant Chief Executive which summarised the work undertaken on the project since the last meeting of the Working Group and updating Members on the Dialogue Process.

The Procurement Project Manager gave an update on the detailed solutions dialogue process; the Electronic Data Room and Clarification Requests, and

on progress with Staff Communications. In particular, it was confirmed that the three bidders' detailed proposals were due to be submitted to the Resources Committee meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2009. The Head Teachers Group and the Trade Union representatives had also met with the bidders. In this respect, it was felt that some assurance was required that the Head Teachers Group were confident about the ICT provision in the new contract. The Assistant Chief Executive undertook to discuss the options in order to do this with the Director of Education, Culture & Sport.

It was suggested that in order to engage Members more in the staff communication process, that Members of the Group and a representative of each of the Political Groups of the Council, be invited to staff briefing sessions scheduled towards the end of April, 2009.

It was felt that the Group would benefit from learning experiences of other Local Authorities who had undertaken similar ICT procurement exercises. In this respect, it was advised that arrangements were already in hand for a representative from Moray and Edinburgh Councils to give a presentation to the Group at its next meeting.

Thereafter, the Working Group:-

- (i) **NOTED** the Project Update report;
- (ii) **AGREED** that the Assistant Chief Executive should liaise with the Director of Education, Culture & Sport in order to discuss the options for ensuring that the Head Teachers Group were confident about the ICT provision in the new contract;
- (iii) **AGREED** that the Group should receive presentations from Moray and Edinburgh Councils at their next meeting; and
- (iv) **AGREED** that Members of the Group and a representative of each of the Political Groups of the Council be invited to staff briefing sessions scheduled towards the end of April, 2009.

#### 4. **ECS Virtual Learning Environment**

##### **Declaration of Interest**

**Mr D Hendry declared a non-financial interest in this item, as he had business commitments in the Internet sector, although not in relation to Local Authority services, and having applied the test outlined in paragraph 5.18 of the Councillor's Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No. ICTP/03/09 dated 5 March, 2009 by the Quality Assurance and Development Manager which outlined the key contributions that it was envisaged ICT would make in the Education, Culture and Sport Service learning environment.

In this respect, there was a presentation on the GLOW national initiative which aimed to:- provide a set of web tools for education; help deliver the 'Curriculum for Excellence'; link every school in a safe and secure network; provide personalised learning opportunities; and hoped to transform teaching and learning so as to enable users to communicate and work together.

It was advised that the implementation of such initiatives would drive the need for continued innovation in infrastructure and services. The Service would require to develop and facilitate an environment where individuals use current and emerging technologies to access and share knowledge whether at school, home or elsewhere in the community.

In discussion, it was felt that Web based initiatives were still patchy within schools and more work required to be done to engage all schools in this respect. There was also a need to develop Teachers skills in ICT and also share good practice on ICT between Schools.

Thereafter, the Group **NOTED** the terms of the report.

#### **5. Public Sector Comparator (PSC) – Risk Assessment**

There had been circulated Report No. ICTP/04/09 by the Assistant Chief Executive which advised Members that the Detailed Solution phase of Public Sector Comparator was nearing completion and the report highlighted progress to date and asked Members to review the updated Risk Analysis, further to the discussion held at the last Members Working Group.

In discussion, reference was made to the current volatile economic climate and it was questioned whether this would have any impact on the availability of capital funding for the three bidders. In response, it was confirmed that Bidders proposals for the cost of capital funding would be assessed as part of the financial evaluation process.

Following consideration, the Working Group **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** to provide the Assistant Chief Executive with any comments on the revised Risk Analysis by Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2009.

The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.