

CROSS-PARTY GROUP FOR CONSTRUCTION IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT/ BRIEF NOTES

TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2014 AT SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, EDINBURGH, EH99 1SP

The meeting was well attended with 19 in attendance (details attached) and members were welcomed to the meeting by the Convenor.

Mr Don reported the Scottish Parliament had issued Data Protection Guidance for Cross Party Groups which required the group to have a Data Controller and it was agreed this would be fulfilled by the Treasurer.

The group would continue to comply with this guidance.

Matters Arising

The notes from the meeting on 18 September were approved as an accurate account of the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Mr Watt (Treasurer) gave the Treasurer's Report (attached).

Mr Watt proposed subscriptions to the group for 2014 be set at £40 per organization and this was unanimously agreed.

Skills Subgroup

Mr Ford reported that the next Skills Subgroup meeting would take place on 1 April 2014 and cover the Wood Commission Report, Skills Investment Plan for the construction industry and apprenticeships.

Skills Investment Plan

Mr Don welcomed Mr Ian Goudie from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) who gave an update on developments for the Construction Skills Investment Plan (attached).

Mr Don expressed concern that the statistics highlighted that 45% of construction firms in Scotland did not undertake any training even on Health and Safety requirements.

He was also concerned that the current shortfall in training would create a skills gaps as the demand for construction increased.

Mr Johnston and Mr Don were concerned that construction could not financially compete with the oil industry for qualified operatives in the North East of Scotland which left a geographical skills gap.

Mr Goudie said he had worked with contractors in the North East of Scotland to develop a recruitment process for contractors to identify potential candidates less inclined to work offshore and therefore retain the construction skills in the area.

Mr Goudie reported that Skills Development Scotland was working with industry on a number of events for Scottish Apprenticeship Week and asked contractors in the North East of Scotland to consider participating.

Mr McGuinness said that Skills Investment Plan would be a snap shot of the industry to identify, and agree, priorities and develop an action plan to address these and this would include geographical variations.

There was concern that Scottish Government funding mechanism for colleges could be detrimental to full time construction apprenticeship courses.

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Mr McKinney expressed concern that the syllabus for certain apprenticeships did not accurately reflect current working practices and this deterred some contractors from recruiting apprentices.

Mr Watt reported that the SVQ2 in Civil Engineering registered the largest growth in SBATC apprenticeship numbers and appeared to be meeting industry's needs.

Mr Wilson said that the biggest driver for apprenticeship recruitment was the level of work and he felt that the current model for apprenticeships met industry needs. He expressed concern regarding the lack of funding for adult apprenticeships.

Mr Watt was concerned that despite the recent increase in workload being experienced by the industry, margins remained very low and this affected the ability of contractors to pay for training. He felt that Community Benefit Clauses in contracts were essential to secure and sustain a qualified workforce in the future.

Ms Galbraith said there was a need to monitor compliance with Community Benefit Clauses to ensure they were adhered to and this was something that MSPs could bear in mind as the Procurement Reform Bill progressed through the Scottish Parliament.

AOCB

Mr Don felt it would be beneficial if the group developed an action plan to take matters forward. This had been done in 2008 and had been extremely beneficial in highlighting the issues the industry needed to the Scottish Government.

Members were invited to send three areas they felt would be beneficial for the industry and Alan Watt (Treasurer) offered to collate these.

Mr Barn tendered his resignation as Vice Convenor – Industry for the group due to his change of employer. Mr Don thanked Mr Barn for his support.

Date of Next Meeting

TBA

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Attendance

N Don MSP

A Johnstone MSP

G Barn – FMB

J Baxter – ACE

A Ferguson – CLE

P Ford – CITB

A Galbraith – SECTT

I Goudie – SDS

G Jackson – Thorntons Law LLP

K Martin – City of Glasgow College

G McGuinness – SDS

J McKinney – NSCC

T McManus – BEST

F Stewart – SDS

S Thian – ICE

A Watt – CECA Scotland

A Waugh – GGF

D Wilson – SNIPEF

S Young – Beedon Aggregates/CECA

Apologies

M McCulloch MSP

R Simpson MSP

R D Buchan – Thomson Bethune

D Cooper – Clark Contracts

M Cowie – McClure Naismith LLP

M Douglas – Forster Roofing Services

N McGuinness – SELECT

A McKinnon – Scottish Enterprise

G Ogilvy – CITB

I Robertson – NSCC

J Sheridan – MPA

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CROSS-PARTY GROUP IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ON CONSTRUCTION

**ACCOUNTS FROM 1ST SEPTEMBER 2013 - 11TH MARCH
2014**

<u>INCOME</u>					<u>TOTAL</u>
01.09.13	Opening Balance				£958.45
<u>TOTAL</u>					£958.45
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>					
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		<u>V. NO.</u>	<u>GROUP</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
15.10.13	Sodexo Ltd - meeting 02.10.13	1	Skills		£106.20
11.12.13	Sodexo Ltd - meeting 18.09.13	2	Full & AGM		£141.60
<u>TOTAL</u>					£247.80

BALANCE

£710.65