



**STRATEGIC FORUM FOR CONSTRUCTION (SFfC) - MAIN FORUM**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2010 at 10.30am**  
**at BIS Committee Room Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1**

**In Attendance:**

**Chairman**

Peter Woolliscroft

**Secretary:**

Jon de Souza

**Secretariat:**

Bridget Fidler, SFfC Coordinator

**Guests:**

Paul Morrell OBE, Chief Construction Adviser

Tony Mulcahy, BIS

Denis Walker, Director of Construction BIS

Kevin Thomas, Integration Task Group (ITG)

Jane Thornback, Coordinator SFfC Sustainability Groups

**Members:**

**Construction Products Association**

John Tebbit, Deputy Chief Executive

**Construction Industry Council**

Stan Hornagold, CIC Board

**UKCG/Construction Alliance**

Mark Wakeford, Managing Director, Stepnell - CA

**NSCC/ SEC Group**

Suzannah Nichol, NSCC Chief Executive  
Trevor Hursthouse, Chairman SEC Group Group

Martin Davis, SEC Group/ITG

**Construction Clients' Group**

Simon Diggles, incoming CCG Chairman

**UCATT**

Alan Ritchie, UCATT General Secretary

**Apologies:**

Michael Ankers, Chief Executive

Construction Products Association

Bill Bolsover, Chairman Construction Products Association

Graham Watts OBE, Chief Executive CIC

Gordon Masterton, Chairman CIC

Keith Clarke, Deputy Chairman CIC

Stephen Ratcliffe, Director UKCG

James Wates, UKCG Chairman

<b>1.00</b>	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.01	Chairman, Peter Woolliscroft (henceforward referred to as the chairman) welcomed members and guests to the meeting. For the benefit of guests and representatives who had not attended meetings previously attendees were asked to introduce themselves.	
1.02	Apologies were acknowledged (listed on page one). It was noted that there were an unusual number of apologies due to some members having the meeting scheduled as 10 <sup>th</sup> November while other members had the meeting scheduled for 17 <sup>th</sup> November. The Executive decided (at their meeting on 13 <sup>th</sup> October) that the Main Forum meeting would go ahead on the date on which the majority of members were able to attend: 10 <sup>th</sup> November.	
<b>2.00</b>	<b>Minutes of the Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010</b>	
2.01	The following amendments were noted: Gordon Masterton is the current CIC chairman, not the deputy chairman. Point 3.03: the word should read 'pre-qualification' not 'pre-contractor', and the date of the report should be 29 <sup>th</sup> November. Point 4.16: the figures should read '15-20%' not '13-20%'.  Following up on his comments regarding changes to the Construction Clients' Board (CCB) Paul Morrell reported that the CCB had become a client only board.	
2.02	The minutes were accepted, subject to the amendments. There were no matters arising (not covered by the agenda).	<b>BF</b>
<b>3.00</b>	<b>Main Discussion – Integration and Procurement</b> <b><i>How can the industry help Government, as a client, get better value via improvements in integration and procurement?</i></b>	
3.01	The Secretary, Jonathan de Souza (JdeS), apologised as he had not been able to issue paper SFfC 05/10/03 prior to the meeting. JdeS noted the SFfC Executive had received and commented on the draft paper, which collated SFfC responses to the question on barriers to industry improvements, discussed at the last Main Forum meeting, in the form of a matrix. The paper is attached to the minutes as SFfC 01/11/02 – Appendix A.  The matrix recorded the responses by sector and relevance; some issues were relevant across industry, other issues affected only some sectors such as clients or professionals. JdeS said the aim of the exercise was to identify the barriers that all SFfC members would be able to address. He expected that the other, sector specific issues	

	<p>would be tackled by the appropriate umbrella bodies. JdeS added that the common issues that had been identified were all issues that the SFfC could reasonably do something about; there was little point in noting issues that the SFfC would not be able to exact any influence on.</p>	
<p>3.02</p>	<p>It was observed that the SFfC's ability to influence the construction community should not be underestimated; the SFfC had the power to influence Government legislation, client behaviour and the wider industry. However, it was agreed that the outcome of the discussion and matrix mapping exercise was expected to be concrete pieces of work, rather than a round of lobbying.</p>	
<p>3.03</p>	<p>JdeS highlighted the issues that had emerged and there was an extended discussion around these and inter-related issues. Topics covered included the number of contracts in use; it was generally agreed that contracts were too numerous and included too many sub-clauses, why industry was not, as a matter of course, embracing integrated working which related to the wasteful habit, on many projects, of rebuilding the team after each project. Other issues highlighted were the need for improved logistics following the (more efficient) models adopted by the retail sector; the lack of drive behind innovation and the general conservatism in the construction community.</p> <p>The Main Forum discussion largely echoed the Executive Group's previous discussion. Forum members agreed to focus on a handful of topics which covered the issues of poor payment practices, lack of integration in supply chains, lack of transparency on costs, in part due to a poor understanding of contracts, and design related issues of waste such as the use of non-standard components.</p> <p>The Main Forum discussion deviated from the Executive Group discussion on the issue of apprenticeships. Members agreed, following a discussion around the Commitment to People agenda, that there was a need to do a piece of work on the treatment and retention of the labour force with a view to how to retain and train people in the industry through apprenticeship schemes, which it was felt were in decline.</p> <p>At the end of the discussion the list of tasks decided on was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor payment practices such as lengthy payment terms and withheld payments</li> <li>• Problem of repetitive or iterative design and frequent changes to designs following on site start</li> <li>• Lack of transparency in where the costs lie in a construction project, noting the contractual framework and relationships does</li> </ul>	<p><b>SN/ MW SH/JT SD</b></p>



	useful incentive to push through change.	
3.07	Trevor Hursthouse (TH) believed the SFfC should not shift its focus too far from the Commitments. He said the SFfC should draw out the issues that underlie the Commitments, as with the proposed five tasks. The tasks exercise would allow the SFfC to work on issues around training such as the lack of suitable apprenticeship schemes which underlies the Commitment to People agenda.	
3.08	JdeS observed that there was an appetite for evolution beyond the Commitments. JT cautioned that the SFfC would need funding to progress beyond discussion. She noted the Sustainability Task Groups had been able to produce tangible outputs because they had obtained financial support. Kevin Thomas (KT) said dissemination was an issue without funding. He gave the example of the six guides on integration which were tangible outputs however it had not been possible to issue them beyond a web based publication without funding.	
3.09	In conclusion, it was agreed that Bridget Fidler (BF) would issue a summary of the work to be done and by whom shortly after the meeting. This would go to all members so that those who had been unable to attend were kept in the loop. Progress on the tasks would be reviewed at the December and January Executive meetings and work to date (scoping studies and/or action plans) presented to the Main Forum at the meeting on 26 <sup>th</sup> January.	<b>BF/ Task leader s</b>
<b>4.00</b>	<b>Other Agenda Items</b>	
4.01	The meeting was substantially foreshortened due to the building being evacuated part way through the meeting. Members agreed to focus on the main discussion item as it was felt that it was essential to reach an agreement on how they should respond to the findings on the barriers (which resulted on the identification of the five tasks detailed on pages three and four).  It was agreed any outstanding issues would be dealt with by the Executive and/or at a future Main Forum meeting as appropriate.	
<b>5.00</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
5.01	AR said that he did not agree with the conclusion that the Executive Group had reached regarding the Constructing Better Health (CBH) scheme at their meeting on 13 <sup>th</sup> October. He asked to revisit the issue at the next Executive meeting (scheduled for 1 <sup>st</sup> December). JdeS said he would be happy to discuss the matter with AR.  NB. Please refer to the minutes of 13 <sup>th</sup> October to read the full	

	discussion on this issue (available from BF). In brief: it was agreed that the SFfC would convey to the CBH that they supported the principle (of their work) and would appreciate any assistance they were able to offer gathering data in support of the Target. However, they did not feel it was appropriate for the SFfC to endorse any particular scheme, or company, over another.	
5.02	The chairman, JdeS and BF discussed the content for the press release post-meeting. BF was actioned to develop the press release and issue it, once signed off with the chairman, shortly after the meeting. BF would copy the press release to members.	<b>BF</b>
5.03	Mark Wakeford (MW) requested papers be sent out earlier if possible.	<b>JdeS/ BF</b>
<b>6.00</b>	<p><b>Dates of next meeting – 26<sup>th</sup> January 2011</b></p> <p>Dates for all meetings in 2011 were attached to the agenda.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 13.20pm</p>	