



STRATEGIC FORUM FOR CONSTRUCTION (SFfC) - MAIN FORUM
Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2010 at 10.30am
at BIS Committee Room Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1

In Attendance:

Chairman

Rt. Hon. Nick Raynsford MP

Guests:

Mark Prisk MP, Minister for Business and Enterprise

Paul Morrell OBE, Chief Construction Adviser

Tony Mulcahy, BIS

Jane Thornback, Sustainable Construction Task Group Coordinator

Kevin Thomas, Integration Task Group (ITG)

Construction Products Association

Michael Ankers OBE, Chief Executive

Bill Bolsover, Chairman

Murray Bean, Construction

Products/Corus

Construction Industry Council

Graham Watts OBE, Chief

Executive/Secretary to SFfC

Graham Masterton, Deputy Chairman

Stan Hornagold, CIC/Marstan Group

UK Contractors Group/ Construction Alliance

Stephen Ratcliffe, Director UKCG

John Spanswick, UKCG/Bovis Lend

Lease

Mark Wakeford, CA/Stepnell

NSCC/ SEC Group

Trevor Hursthouse, Chairman SEC Group

John Nelson, Executive Secretary SEC Group

Martin Davis, SEC Group/ITG

Construction Clients Group

Jon De Souza

Peter Woolliscroft, Chairman

Secretariat

Bridget Fidler, SFfC Coordinator

APOLOGIES:

Keith Clarke, CIC Deputy Chairman

Suzannah Nichol, NSCC Chief Executive

Alan Ritchie, UCATT General Secretary

James Wates, UKCG Chairman

1.00	Welcome and introduction	Action
1.01	<p>Nick Raynsford MP(NR) welcomed members and guests to the meeting. A special welcome was given to Mark Prisk MP (MP). MP thanked NR for his efforts as chairman of the SFfC. He said he looked forward to working with the new chairman, Peter Woolliscroft, and the SFfC. MP recognised the usefulness of the SFfC in providing a voice and a focus for the industry. He said he hoped they would develop a 'free and frank exchange' exchange together.</p> <p>The first half hour of the meeting was dedicated to a question and answer session with the Minister. Prior to the main meeting members met to agree on the format of the discussion with MP. The chairman deputised a handful of members to lead off on the main issues to facilitate a coherent discussion.</p>	
1.02	Apologies were noted (listed on page one).	
2.00	Main Discussion Session with Mark Prisk MP	
2.01	It was agreed, given the limited amount of time, to focus on three key issues: the Low Carbon Economy (LCE), skilling the workforce and budget issues; particularly achieving best value working in conjunction with Government. There was also a brief discussion on issues arising from the Budget (which came out on 22 nd June).	
2.02	Michael Ankers (MA) led the discussion about the Budget. It was highlighted that some measures in the budget were 'unhelpful' and seemed confused as they would adversely affect the manufacturing: energy production would be taxed at five percent while energy efficient products would be taxed at 20%.	
2.03	The Forum proposed that they have a continuing dialogue with Government to facilitate economic recovery. The Forum said it could help with the Government's aim of getting more for less. It was noted that there were several exemplar projects that Government could use as a model such as the Olympics (ODA) and SLAM. MP said he was keen to work with the SFfC on this. It was proposed the various Government departments meet to share best practice examples. The SFfC could provide examples of best practice from the private sector.	
2.04	MP took the points on board and said he intended to work closely with Paul Morrell. He said 'buy-in' would be needed from Ministers as well as departments and agreed that using existing tools and methodology was the best way to add value and save on costs.	

2.05	Mark Wakeford (MW) and Trevor Hursthouse (TH) facilitated the skills discussion. MP said he was equally concerned that skills would not be maintained during the downturn and recognised the need to develop the skills base in new (green) technologies. SFfC members said Government could assist by employing apprenticeship schemes on all their projects.	
2.06	It was noted that the skills of specialist SMEs were crucial to a project and as they were often employed at the installation stage the process of getting more for less began with them. However SMEs needed help and encouragement from other members of the supply chain to work towards integration. Government could also help to facilitate this.	
2.07	Bill Bolsover (BB) introduced the discussion about the LCE primarily focusing on how austerity measures might affect the LCE. There was a concern that the notion of whole life costing would be lost and the marketplace for green products, already a 'hard sell' in some areas of the industry, would be detrimentally affected. MP said he believed in Low Carbon rather than Zero Carbon as an objective for the industry and, although it would be a challenge, all should work towards a whole life cycle ethos. MP said he would look at the areas where members felt there were conflicting signals; process, products and practice must all add up. He said a good start would be to establish a predictable tax environment.	
3.00	Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 March 2010	
3.01	The Minutes were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising (not covered by agenda).	
4.00	Strategy for Sustainable Construction	
4.01	Jane Thornback (JT) gave the Forum an update on the work of the sustainability sub-groups. Detailed information regarding progress with the five targets was attached to the previous minutes.	
4.02	JT noted that the sub-groups currently have £200,000 of funding for their research from Defra, BIS and the Carbon Trust and expected WRAP to provide further funding. She noted WRAP and the SFfC's aims had become more aligned. Additional funding was still being sought and JT appealed to SFfC members to alert her to any possible funding sources.	
4.03	JT reported the resource efficiency reports on building components (flooring, windows etc.) were near conclusion. The research on insulation, in conjunction with industry, was well underway. The Water group's action plan was expected this year. Most recently the reports, 'Halving Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste to Landfill by	

	2012' and 'Carbon: Reducing carbon emissions from construction sites and associated transport by 15% compared to 2008' had been launched (available on the SFfC website).	
4.04	Regarding the responsible sourcing of products: JT said that schemes were in place. The sub-group would monitor take up of products from schemes which to ascertain which products were used as 'standard'.	
4.05	JT noted that the Biodiversity group was the least advanced however they did have a defined baseline and methodology.	
4.06	JT said the findings of the sub-groups would continue to be published as part of the 'Delivering the Strategy' series. She felt that the reports would have more impact if they were received as part of a body of work.	
4.07	PM observed that it was confusing and wasteful to have two timber certification schemes. JT said that the schemes had grown up over twenty years ago so there was a historical reason for this. She agreed it needed investigation.	
4.08	SR suggested that sustainability groups covering the same areas as the SFfC sub-groups transfer their members over to avoid duplication of effort. It was agreed this would be sensible.	
4.09	JT noted that the sub-groups' findings were based on data for England, rather than the whole of the UK, as much of it was collected via the Environment Agency. She said that the sub-groups would be interested in data from the rest of the UK if available. Jon de Souza (JdeS) believed that targets had been set for Wales.	
5.00	Executive Report	
5.01	SFfC Chairmanship and hosting for 1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011 Graham Watts (GW) gave a verbal report. He confirmed, as has already been noted by MP, that Peter Woolliscroft (PW) would take over the chairmanship from the beginning of July 2010. This would be commensurate with CCG hosting the SFfC. PW said he welcomed the opportunity to take on the role and hoped that it would be a harmonious relationship.	
5.02	Update of revitalisation of Integration Task Group (ITG) JdeS gave a presentation on the recent outputs of the ITG including the 'No Nonsense' guides. JdeS thanked the Construction Alliance, under MW's direction, for funding the guides. He said the guides identified the six key areas of integration. Case studies such as the SLAM project were used to highlight the benefits. JdeS's demonstrated how the assessment tool developed by the ITG	

	<p>might be used. Eleven years of KPI data had been utilised to plot the integration of projects and how this affected performance. JdeS noted that obtaining data on unsuccessful projects, where integration methods had not been employed, was difficult as all projects were named. The ITG was in agreement that the data would lack credibility if projects were not named.</p> <p>JdeS reported that a Guide to Contracts had also been developed. The ITG's work had been gathered together on a web site that had just gone live at www.areyouthereyet.co.uk and accessible via the SFfC website.</p> <p>PM said that the work the ITG had done was exemplary however he believed the industry remained generally unconvinced regarding the benefits of integration. It was agreed that the evidence that had been collated was persuasive: the demonstration projects showed a doubling in productivity. These findings needed to be widely disseminated if they were to have an impact. SFfC members were asked to assist.</p> <p>It was suggested the ITG tie in with Paul Morrell's work (on carbon gains, to be published in the Autumn), identify enthusiasts (a 'gang of ten') to promote the findings and continue to gather data, for medium sized projects in particular. Kevin Thomas (KT) believed data on 50-60 more projects would be needed. JdeS said he would manage the process in conjunction with PM. SFfC members were asked to put forward suitable projects.</p>	<p><i>All</i></p> <p><i>JdeS/ PM All</i></p>
<p>5.03</p>	<p>Secretariat of Health and Safety Group</p> <p>GW reported on the discussion about provision of a secretariat for the H&S Task Group raised at the Executive meeting. John Spanswick (JS), as former chairman of the H&S Group, said that he had a greater concern about membership of the Group. He felt the Group needed more 'doers' and if they could not easily be found it raised the question: would it be more sensible to support an existing H&S Group? SR said he would be happy for UKCG H&S Group members to join a SFfC Group as their focus would be different from other groups such as CONIAC. It was agreed that the SFfC should revisit the Terms of Reference of the SFfC H&S Group and decide what its remit should be.</p>	
<p>5.04</p>	<p>2012 Task Group</p> <p>GW said the Task Group held a brief meeting and toured the Olympic site on 18th June. Peter Rogers had proposed that the Group be 'mothballed' as it had completed its current tasks. He did not want to dismantle the Group entirely as he felt it may have a future purpose. Constructing Excellence would oversee the process of putting together the final report. Main Forum members suggested re-packaging the report as an interim report in the hope that LOCOG would take forward the good practices established under the ODA and add to the findings. SFfC members proposed the next Main Forum meeting focus on the</p>	

	<p>2012 report.</p> <p>Post meeting note: Peter Rogers believes the report will not be in a presentable format until the November meeting and suggests the SFfC look at the findings then.</p>	
6.00	Any Other Business	
6.01	JdeS noted the latest KPI date would be published on 27 th June and he would report back to the Forum at a future meeting. JdeS gave thanks to everyone who had contributed to the project.	
6.02	GW concluded the meeting by thanking NR, on behalf of the whole Forum, for the two years he had chaired the SFfC. He noted that NR had served the industry as a Minister and then chairman of the SFfC for ten years. NR thanked members for their commitment to and continuing involvement with the SFfC.	
7.01	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>17th November 2010</p>	

The meeting closed at 12.25pm