

Public Procurement Policy development document

The SW FSB Public Procurement Policy is now 2 years old. It was agreed that this policy should be reviewed and progress assessed across the SW, in preparation for its consideration at the SWAPU meeting in December. Responses to me by November 27th at the very latest please.

Public Procurement is a good example of a policy issue where the work takes place at local or at National level with the Area in support.

It would help SW APU in its discussion in December and our reports to National level to know from the Regions

i) What has your Region been doing about Public Procurement?

This might include campaigning to get local councils signed up to the Concordat, looking in detail at its buying protocols, getting the matter on the agenda at the LSP, working with the council and Business Link to provide seminars on how to do business with the council, helping a group of traders work together so they are big enough to bid for a contract and getting councils to change the way they work with small businesses as they are doing in Dorset.

ii) What does your Region consider has been achieved ?

iii) What would your Region like to do in the future on this matter?

iv) How SWAPU can help?

1. Achievements very much worth mentioning are:-

a) FSB Stroud Branch assisted a group of painters and decorators form a co-operative for the purpose of bidding for a council contract. They weren't actually successful, but may continue with the structure to bid for other work. The local Co-operative Development Agency has prepared a report on what was down and how. SWAPDO has a copy and is able to circulate it as required.

b) FSB Wessex is in negotiation with Dorset Councils to develop a single pre contract qualification document and that approval by one council constitutes approval by all. That way they hope to stop having to use Exor, but maintain the cost savings they have been able to achieve.

Does your Region or Branch have an achievement to report?

2. SWAPU/SWAPDO has

a) Pushed information from SW members up the line to the Audit commission, OGC and others on what is happening on the ground

b) Got one of the Government Office Business Breakfasts to focus on Public procurement – this showed very strongly that this is an issue for business across the board

c) Assisted SW FSB Region with presentations as required on public procurement.

3. Since 2004 the following developments have taken place:-

a) A public procurement centre of excellence has been established in Dorset.

b) Local councils have been encouraged to sign up to a small firms concordat on procurement. FSB Devon in particular have focussed on this.

c) The Office for Government Commerce has been running training for local councils on improving their procurement practices

d) We have indications that local councils' Comprehensive Performance Assessments are actually marked down if they use small businesses.

e) Central Government has launched the procurement portal

Vivienne Rayner

10th August 2006

Amended 11th August following comments from Barbara Ellenbroek