

## CPD CONSULTANCY FORUM

### MEETING 4 OCTOBER 2007 – CLARE HOUSE

#### **In Attendance: -**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Lynda Purser      | (Chairperson IBC)                      |
| Michael Clarke    | (Chairman Northern Ireland Branch IBC) |
| Bill MacNeill     | IBS                                    |
| Charlie Henderson | MCA (Representing – Peter Hill)        |
| Kevin Magee       | USCA (Representing – Hugh Crossey)     |
| Moira McDonnell   | USCA                                   |
| Angela Reavey     | USCA                                   |
| Helen Campbell    | DID                                    |
| Dave Glover       | CPD – Chairperson for meeting          |
| Declan Allen      | CPD                                    |
| Grace Knox        | CPD                                    |
| Louise Thompson   | CPD                                    |
| Kirsti Mitchell   | CPD                                    |

#### **1. Introduction and Welcome**

Dave Glover welcomed all to the meeting and outlined CPD's role in the procurement of goods and service for the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) with approximately 600 tender competitions per annum. He welcomed this forum as an important interaction with this sector of the industry in the provision of consultancy services.

#### **2. Background**

Each person present give a brief synopsis of their role/job/position in relation to attendance at this Forum with clarification being given on the roles and make-up of the professional organisations.

#### **3. Current Frameworks**

Declan Allen give a summary on the establishment of the current financial and management Frameworks to ensure compliance with Procurement Regulations and accountability for public expenditure.

Information to date indicates that there were 51 secondary competitions, with a total value of £1.8m (January – September 2007) from the Financial Framework and 33 secondary competitions from the Management Framework with a total value of £847k.

Following discussion, it was agreed that CPD would provide further analysis on current and past usage/values etc.

#### **4. Discussion**

Discussion took place on the operation of the current frameworks; how they worked and areas of concern. These are summarised below.

- There was a downturn in work from the Frameworks especially in the last year. It was felt that this could be to do with current reforms in the Public Sector.
- PAC is looking at the use of consultants in the Public Sector next month and this may have had an impact on work, especially in recent months.
- It was felt that there were assignments commissioned outside the Frameworks.
- The cost of tendering could be so significant that some companies were not tendering.
- The need for fairness to all parties and the CPD commitment to ensure SME's were able to compete.
- Difficulties in getting consistency across all Departments/Divisions, due to the lack of a central body for secondary competitions.
- Some unrealistic requirements and timeframes which deter bidders.
- Some concern was expressed at quality of professionalism that was being delivered especially where cost and time were restrictive.
- Need to include some financial requirement at primary stage eg evidence to support £5m liability.
- Need to have a method of evaluating expertise.
- Is there a need for Frameworks?

#### **5. Renewal Programme**

Louise Thompson (Lead Procurement Officer for Management and Financial Frameworks) outlined the tender process:-

Financial Consultancy would be advertised January 2008, with evaluation complete May, for a contract start of 1 July.

Management Consultancy would be advertised March 2008, with evaluation completed August for a contract start of 1 October 2008.

Both contracts would be for an initial period of two years, with an option to extend for a further two periods of one year. There would be a common end date for both, so that option of combining in the future would be there.

Information gleaned from the industry during this consultation process would be taken into consideration, as would lessons learnt from the previous competitions.

## **6. Action Points**

- Angela's offer of a venue for the next meeting was taken up – Next meeting 16 November 2008 at 11.00am in ICA Headquarters, The Linenhall, 32-38 Linenhall Street, Belfast.
- CPD would provide historical data.
- CPD would place information on their web-site.
- CPD requested one point of contact from each of the representative bodies present and that person would then be responsible for dissemination of information arising from the meetings.
- At future meetings a specific aspect would be discussed.