



## **REC SCOTTISH POLICY FORUM**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010

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### **Minutes and action points from the Scottish Policy Forum**

Below is a summary of the key points and themes which emerged from the meeting.

#### **Working with Jobcentre Plus**

Brian McGrath from Jobcentre Plus outlined that agencies may be interested in receiving information from Jobcentre Plus in Scotland. Please contact [BRIAN.MCGRATH@JOBCENTREPLUS.GSI.GOV.UK](mailto:BRIAN.MCGRATH@JOBCENTREPLUS.GSI.GOV.UK) if this would be useful. REC will continue to constructively engage with Jobcentre Plus in Scotland on issues such as the jobsearch support for newly unemployed professionals initiative.

#### **Agency Workers Regulations**

The Department for Businesses Innovation and Skills (BIS) has now published the final regulations which will come into effect from October 2011. Forum members flagged additional rights for pregnant workers as a serious cost and administrative concern which REC will take forward to officials and Ministers in the UK Government. A briefing for REC members and their clients is attached.

#### **The Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme**

The new Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme will come into effect in 2010 although a precise date has not yet been confirmed. It will mean that agencies supplying into sectors where workers may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults will have to be registered with the Scottish PVG scheme. REC has submitted a consultation response to the Scottish Government regarding this essay to ensure it is workable for temporary staffing suppliers. A copy of this is attached.

#### **Labour market issues**

Whilst unemployment has declined across the UK, it is still rising in Scotland, with an increase of 10,000 in January. The labour force in Scotland has been a particular focus with funding being allocated for training in the recent Scottish budget as well as new funding from the European Social Fund. Lisa Boutineau, REC Regional Director for Scotland, has been speaking to Procurement Scotland to provide input on behalf of the recruitment industry on their skills agenda. She also has an up and coming meeting with Scottish Enterprise Aberdeen and the Scottish First Minister who are progressing youth skills development within the oil and gas sector. REC also sits on CBI Scotland's employment and skills group. If you would like to feed into these discussions please get in touch with [lisa.boutineau@munrointerim.com](mailto:lisa.boutineau@munrointerim.com)

#### **REC Manifesto – 'Creating Opportunity and Jobs'**

REC is calling on all political parties to recognise the importance of the flexible labour market and the valuable contribution the recruitment industry makes not only to the economy but also in tackling unemployment. A copy of this manifesto is attached.

#### **Public procurement in Scotland**

The forum heard from CGCope and Procurement Scotland. CGCope said they recognised that different recruitment bodies were needed to suit different needs. They also mentioned that 10% of marks were going to be attributed to CSR policies, particularly focused on social inclusion. Whilst



there were positives in that they recognised the dangers of creating a framework for construction given the state of that sector in Scotland; REC members were concerned on a number of points including how the lengthy PQQ stage can act as a barrier for SMEs. There was also frustration voiced around the delay in the roll-out of the framework and that some of those agencies who said they could supply will instead use sub-contractors and therefore compromise on quality. It was recognised that the forum and the REC is a useful focal point for liaising with procurement bodies. Given the commercial and political pressures, REC has launched a campaign to raise awareness of the value recruitment agencies can bring, a summary of which is attached.

### **Action Points**

- Write to Scottish Procurement Directorate (SPD), headed by Alastair Merrill to raise awareness of REC's campaign and specific issues which emerged from the Scottish Policy Forum
- Meet with Excel, the procurement organisation for local authorities in Scotland
- Continue constructive engagement with Jobcentre Plus, Procurement Scotland, CGCope and the CBI
- Follow up with officials in the Scottish Government regarding the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme.

### **List of attendees**

Lisa Boutineau	Munro Interim Ltd
Philip Curry	Recruitment & Employment Confederation
Pauline Dickson	Dickson Lewis
Philip Moore	Peopleforwork
Martin McGill	All Staff
Emma Watts	Contract Scotland Ltd
Leigh Kelleher	Future Talent Recruitment
Richard Colwell	Nas Group
Graeme Cook	Procurement Scotland
Brian McGrath	Jobcentre Plus
Patricia Malloy	CGCoPE