

IFNC PILOTS SELECTION PANEL – NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2010

Present

Panel Members: Richard Hooper (Chair), Fru Hazlitt (Deputy Chair), Val Atkinson, Glyn Mathias and William Perrin.

Stewart Purvis (Ofcom Adviser to the Selection Panel).

Apologies from Marc Reeves.

Advisers and DCMS officials

Item 1 – Welcome

1. Richard Hooper (RH) opened by saying that he had been well served by the Panel in the bidder meetings during visits to the pilot areas. He noted the visits had generated momentum and interest in the pilots.

Item 2 - Procedural issues for the Panel - conflicts of interest and hospitality

2. The Selection Panel (and their adviser) confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest and they had not accepted offers of hospitality from the bidders.

Item 3 - Update on process and remaining timetable

3. DCMS officials ran through the timeline for the IFNC procurement. The next significant milestone would be the 18 February, when the “Invitation to Submit a Final Tender” (ISFT) would be issued to bidders. The Panel was asked to indicate whether they would wish to see the bidders responses to the invitation to tender as soon as they came into the Department, or whether their preference was to wait for the Evaluation Team to provide a summary with their recommendations, DCMS officials also asked the Panel to consider whether the next meeting, scheduled for 17 March, might provide an opportunity for the Panel to hold a question and answer session with each of the bidders.
4. The Panel decided they would like to see all the documentation as and when it arrived rather than wait for a summary of the information and would welcome an opportunity to see the bidders again. They were clear however that the meeting with the bidders should be used purely to seek clarification on the tender documents. It was imperative that bidders fully understood that there should not be any presentations of their proposals on the day. The bidders would be asked to field teams of no more than 3 people who should be sufficiently aware of the detail of their proposals to be able to address questions across the piece.

Item 4 - Stock take discussion on the regional visits

5. Glyn Mathias (GM), RH and Val Atkinson (VA) provided some reflections on the visits to Cardiff, Newcastle and Glasgow. The Panel noted that the public meetings had demonstrated a keen interest in and awareness of the IFNC pilots.

Item 5 - Report on the Evaluation Team meetings with bidders on ITPD responses

6. The Evaluation Team provided an update on the key issues to come out of the dialogue meetings with bidders; the main issues had been around finance and the timetable going forward.
7. The Panel approved all eight consortia moving forward to the Invitation to Submit Final Tender stage.

Item 6 - How the evaluation criteria will work at the Tender stage

8. The Evaluation Team explained that as there had been a variety of suggested key performance indicators (KPIs) from bidders, it would make more sense for DCMS to decide on a standard set of KPIs. The KPIs would therefore be taken out of the final evaluation criteria and included in the contract with DCMS. The Panel confirmed they were happy with this approach.
9. The Evaluation Team would provide a report to the Selection Panel on the bidders' tender documents which would cover all aspects of the evaluation criteria, except for the vision. It seemed more appropriate for the Panel to score the vision and this should be made easier as a result of the Q&A session with bidders on 17 March. The Panel concurred.

Item 7 - Preparation for the next Panel meeting, including input and materials from the Evaluation Team

10. The Panel agreed this had been covered under item 3.

Item 8 - Communications Strategy

11. DCMS officials noted that there had been positive media interest in the public meetings in the areas directly affected. Press Office would develop a communications strategy around the announcement in due course. In the meantime, the Panel agreed that (in keeping with procurement rules), they should not comment on specific bids until the day of the announcement.

Item 9 - AOB

12. DCMS officials confirmed that Ben Bradshaw would probably want a meeting with RH to run through the Panel's recommendations on 24 March.