

CSR Stakeholder Forum
7th Meeting, Tuesday 24th November 2015, (9.00am – 11.30am)
Department of the Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation,
Kildare Street, Dublin 2

Participants: See Appendix I

Item 1: Opening Comments

Mr Brendan Jennings, Chair welcomed two new members, Anne Cooney, EBS and David O’Flynn, Dawn Meats to the Forum.

The Chair thanked the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation for hosting the meeting.

Item 2: Minutes of the Meeting of 29 September 2015

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Item 3: Standing Agenda Item: “Sharing the CSR Experience”

Theme: Update from the Enterprise Summit 2020 – BITCI

Ms Tina Roche shared BITCI’s experience at the *Enterprise 2020 Summit* which took place on 16th and 17th November in the Bozar in Brussels. The Summit was held to progress the three strategic priorities of the Enterprise 2020 Manifesto that calls for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

BITCI is a leading organisation within CSR Europe and was actively engaged on numerous levels at the *Enterprise 2020 Summit*. One such activity was co-hosting a *Responsible Sourcing* workshop with Italy. This topic will become a major focus in 2016 as the incoming Dutch Presidency has indicated that responsible supply chains will be a key issue on their agenda.

The central focus of the Summit was the launch of the *European Pact for Youth*, which has the endorsement of His Majesty the King of the Belgians, the Presidents of the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Council. Ms Roche provided a brief synopsis of President Schulz (European Parliament) poignant speech about education and anti-terrorism, and discussed the overall theme of the event: the need for mutual engagement of business leaders and the European Commission, to bring together business, educators, youth organisations and social partners who all share a common goal – to prepare young people for quality jobs, boost employability and create a competitive and sustainable Europe.

BITCI will take part in a stakeholder dialogue in January to see how to measure the impact of the *European Pact for Youth*. Furthermore, Ms Roche expressed the need for Ireland to play a greater part on the Business Impact Maps. These Maps list participating countries and their actions, such as programmes or projects that organisations already have in place related to the areas of sustainability and skills for jobs across Europe.

In an effort to get disaffected youth back into communities, BITCI, in collaboration with CSR Europe and its network of companies and National Partner organisations, will work on relevant projects and share experiences and ideas.

A general discussion followed on matters including the Sustainable Development Goals, apprenticeships and in particular difficulties encountered by employers with the Job-Bridge Scheme.

Ms Catherine Curran informed members that a new communication on CSR from the Commission is expected by the end of Q2 2016. DJEI will begin preparation of the next CSR National Plan for Ireland in the second half of 2016 and will draw on the Commissions communication as part of the preparation process.

Action:

DJEI will consider options for engaging with the CSR Stakeholder Forum in the preparation of the 2nd National Plan.

Provide link to the Business Impact Map on CSRHub.ie.

Item 4: Presentation on Social Clauses in Public Procurement

The Chair welcomed Mr Ronan O'Reilly, Office of Government Procurement (OGP) to address the members on social clauses in public procurement.

Mr O'Reilly began his presentation by explaining that social clauses are requirements that the State can place on bidders for public contracts in order to achieve certain standards or goals. Such clauses can be applied in a broad range of areas.

A Social Clauses Project Group led by the Office of Government Procurement, was established to identify potential projects that could encompass social clauses to ensure that those awarded contracts contribute to employment or training opportunities for the long term unemployed. Mr O'Reilly spoke briefly about the work of this Group that examined social clauses in practice and how they apply in other jurisdictions. He demonstrated recent experiences in Ireland which show that social clauses can be effective if targeted appropriately. For example, in the Grangegorman PPP Project social clauses were included in the contracts to ensure a portion of the jobs secured were given to long-term unemployed and apprentices.

Mr O'Reilly outlined potential concerns in identifying social clauses that can be targeted to meet specific social and other requirements while not causing a negative impact. For example, in the construction sector, there is a risk of displacement of the current workforce where local employment becomes a requirement of awarding a contract. Some other concerns discussed were legal difficulties and additional costs especially for SMEs. Overall the OGP want to ensure that they learn from the practical experience of where social clauses are being piloted to develop a robust social procurement framework that is effective.

Mr O'Reilly informed the members that the OGP are currently developing guidance for Public Bodies on the use of social clauses in public contracts which will be simple and practical to allow for increased usage of social clauses. This guidance document should be available in the New Year.

A discussion followed culminating with Mr O'Reilly advising that the new EU Procurement Directives¹ will be transposed in April 2016, following a consultation process that the members of the Forum may be part of.

Mr Jennings thanked Mr O'Reilly for his presentation and contribution to the Forum.

Item 5: Sub-Group Progress Reports

SME Tool (Sub-Group C):

Ms Catherine Heaney briefly updated the members on the progress being made on the interactive SME Tool. Ms Heaney expressed her concerns over time delays in rolling out the tool, which have mainly been due to hosting issues. On a positive note, Ms Heaney informed the members that some headway has been made in terms of possible hosting solutions and that ISME have a number of SMEs ready to pilot the tool pre go-live.

Communications Strategy (Sub-Group A):

Sub-group A met on 5th November to further develop the communications strategy. Ms Tracey Murphy updated the members of the Forum on the outcomes of this meeting, including the plan to bring together representatives from participant members' marketing teams / press office to brainstorm further methods to increase awareness.

A preliminary list of 'umbrella bodies' was also devised following this meeting and will be added to, as necessary. Ms Murphy informed the members that the bodies on this list would be approached with a view to promoting CSR to their networks / members.

Ms Murphy announced that the proposal at the meeting of 29 September 2015, to promote the website via social media had progressed in the weeks since. Sub-group A agreed to the setting up of a Twitter account. On behalf of the members she thanked Catherine Heaney and her team in DHR Communications for their work and advice on the project. Ms Heaney confirmed on the day that the Twitter account was live. Ms Murphy informed the members that the maintenance of the Twitter account was discussed at Sub-Group A's meeting of 5 November 2015 with the view that it should be primarily moderated on a rotational basis by a small group, possibly Sub-Group A members. Following their work opening the Twitter account, DHR Communications will take first rotation and BITCI offered to follow.

Mentoring Programme (Sub-Group B)

On behalf of Sub-Group B, Ms Murphy updated the members on the current situation on the mentoring programme initiative. During 2015 Enterprise Ireland embarked on a call for applications for projects under the Community Enterprise Initiative Fund. One of the pilot projects proposed contained a mentoring initiative, and Sub-Group B were keen to examine an opportunity to include a CSR aspect to this pilot. Ms Murphy informed the members that this initiative is currently on hold and Enterprise Ireland will be reviewing this in Q1 of 2016.

Ms Murphy apprised the members that Microsoft is currently operating a pilot mentoring programme for a period of 4 months which began in November 2015. The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation connected Microsoft with Enterprise Ireland and the LEOs who organised suitable mentors with suitable mentees from organisations recommended by the respective bodies. Ms Murphy suggested that as Microsoft are actively engaged in CSR practices there may be value in

hearing their feedback on conclusion of the pilot programme, with a view to including information on CSR in their programme if extended.

Healthy Workplace Initiatives (Sub-Group D):

Mr Malachy Corcoran of the Department of Health provided an update on his Department's Healthy Ireland Initiative. As the Healthy Ireland website was due to launch in the coming weeks, Mr Corcoran sought ideas from the Forum members on healthy initiatives that could be recommended in the workplace and beyond. A lively discussion ensued providing Mr Corcoran with some good examples to explore further.

Action:

Aim to have the SME Tool developed and piloted by end of Q1 of 2016

Secretary to draft and issue social media guidelines to members of Sub-Group A

Pursue the opportunities in relation to a Mentoring Programme

Review the 2015 sub-group goals with a view to finalising all initiatives by end of Q2

Item 6: Driving the CSR Agenda - Updates

The Chair acknowledged the work the representative bodies do to drive CSR initiatives among their members and welcomed each to briefly update the Forum members.

ISME

Mr Mark Fielding outlined the many steps ISME have taken in 2015 to raise awareness of CSR. One of which was the survey ISME finalised in July on SMEs and CSR – Assessing the Level of Corporate Social Responsibility Activities and Knowledge in Irish Small and Medium Enterprises. The findings were reported on their website and promoted via social media and newsletters. Mr Fielding also discussed the CSR updates posted on their website including the creation of a link to the CSRHub website, ISME's involvement in the prompt payment drive, and the call out to members for CSR related case studies.

ISME collaborated with BITCI to create a 'CSR Corner' in their quarterly Ezine 'The Owner Manager' and BITCI have been contributing articles. BITCI supplied leaflets which were issued to over 400 delegates at ISME's Annual Conference. Both organisations have agreed to continue collaborating with a view to increasing CSR awareness among SMEs.

Enterprise Ireland

Mr Joe Healy informed the members that Enterprise Ireland's management were holding a meeting that same day and areas open for discussion included the move to include CSR as an integral part of their Management Development Programme and raising awareness and promoting CSR via their website.

Chambers Ireland

Ms Emma Kerins spoke briefly about the Chambers Ireland CSR Awards which have been running for the past 12 years. The 2015 Awards were held in September and Ms Kerins notified the members that more than half of this year's applicants were new applicants. In addition to the CSR Awards, Chambers Ireland hosted two regional workshops for SMEs and launched a Guide for SMEs "CSR and SMEs – Picking a Charity Partner" in association with The Wheel and Dóchas, which is available on-line. Chambers Ireland are also partnered or associated with many national and international organisations to drive CSR and anti-corruption and play a significant role in driving the agenda linking many of the SDGs to their policy priorities.

Business in the Community Ireland

Ms Bernadette Phelan spoke on behalf of BITCI informing the members of their current activities. Ms Phelan also updated the members on BITCI's progress on an international level. BITCI was recently accepted as a Global Partner under the Global Network for Work Business Council for Sustainable Development. As a member of the Global Network, Ms Phelan explained that this partnership will provide a new platform to showcase how Irish business are adopting and responding to the realities of responsible business.

Following successful participation in the Enterprise Summit 2020, BITCI will also participate in COP21 commencing in Paris on 30 November.

The Chair thanked everyone for their updates and reiterated his appreciation for the work the representative bodies do to drive the CSR agenda.

Action:

Updates from Ibec and IDA for inclusion on next meeting's agenda

Item 7: AOB

Mr Paul Carroll from the Department of Social Protection (DSP), linking into the earlier discussion on the *European Pact for Youth*, mentioned the Employment & Youth Activation Charter run by Intreo, DSP, and also gave his commitment to make a substantive contribution to the Forum in 2016. Mr Carroll acknowledged the point made by ISME in that the JobBridge Scheme can be perceived as exploitative, and suggested that he would work with the Forum and ICTU to overcome this. He will also collaborate with the members on other ideas, availing fully of the concept of the Forum, suggestions and advice arising from the meetings, and the opportunities it can potentially accomplish.

The Secretary announced the 4 dates for 2016:

1 March, 21 June, 20 September and 29 November.

The meeting of 29 November 2006 will be hosted by KPMG, venues for the other dates to be confirmed. The Secretary invited other members who may be available to host one of the meetings to contact her in the New Year.

Tracey Murphy
Secretary to the Forum
20 January 2016

Good for Business, Good for All

Members don't forget, in order for CSR to survive and thrive!

Tweet, retweet and then tweet again!

Promotion is the key to success!

At EU level there is a growing recognition of the need to promote and facilitate SME participation in public procurement. The introduction of three New EU Directives on Procurement is intended to make it easier for businesses and SMEs to tender for public sector procurement contracts. They are designed to simplify the rules and provide more flexibility for public purchasers. The Directives contain measures specifically designed to improve access for SMEs and start-ups and are currently being transposed by the OGP with a deadline of April 2016.