

**Date: Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023 10:00am – 12.30pm**

**Location: Virtual Teams meeting**

**Attendees:**

*Belinda Blake (National Highways), Emer Murnaghan (Graham), Lorna Brown-Owens (Network Rail), Nabeelah Uddin (TfL), Osita Madu (HS2), Peter Ball, Stephen Cole (CITB), Stuart Coates (TfL), Shelley Caton (Bam).*

*SCSS Staff: Cathryn Greville (CG) – Chair, Sara Gouveia (SG).*

**Apologies:**

*Paul Aldridge (WJ Group), Emma Shakespeare (Laing O'Rourke), Christina Scant (Core Highways), Aaron Reid (Morgan Sindall), Ella Anderson (Mace Group), Lucie Wright (CITB).*

**Guests:**

*Rommell Wallace (Say Youth), Tom Glover (TfL)*

**ACTIONS:**

- ✓ **Action 271:** FIR Team to circulate details of FIR Growth Assessment completions to date.
- ✓ **Action 272:** Steering Group members to provide feedback to Sara Gouveia around what would be most useful to push content out to networks.
- ✓ **Action 273:** FIR Team to circulate save the date calendar invitation when 2024 June Inspiring Change Conference date is set.
- ✓ **Action 274:** Steering Group members to promote new videos in the FIR Toolkit to their networks.
- ✓ **Action 275:** Sara Gouveia to circulate the updated Engagement Report with corrected social media statistics.
- ✓ **Action 276:** Cathryn Greville to circulate a link to the Scotland BE-ST Article on the FIR Programme.
- ✓ **Action 277:** Stuart Coates and Lorna Brown-Owens to facilitate a discussion with Cathryn Greville around TfL's experience with supplier diversity.
- ✓ **Action 278:** Peter Ball to share results of research into diversity models/barriers of entry for SMEs.
- ✓ **Action 279:** FIR Team to circulate a copy of the presentation slides after obtained from Tom Glover and Rommell Wallace.
- ✓ **Action 280:** FIR Team to liaise with Tom Glover and Rommell Wallace to understand synergies and share information regarding the FIR Programme resources and FIR Ambassador Network.
- ✓ **Action 281:** FIR Team to circulate information on the Nature Recovery Group.
- ✓ **Action 282:** Briefing by Lorna Brown-Owens on the DIA Project to be added to the next meeting agenda.

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## 1. Welcome & Introductions

Cathryn Greville (CG) welcomed the group, and noted the resignation from Charlotte Baker who has moved to a role outside the built environment sector. The Steering Group agreed to park the vacancy until ready to run a new recruitment round as a fair and transparent process is required.

CG spoke briefly about the team restructure and Sara Gouveia's (SG) promotion to the role of FIR Project Manager from the start of June, and recruitment process for two new staff members.

CG outlined the meeting agenda and noted member unavailability on the next meeting date set for 8 November (virtual). A new meeting date will be set for both November and February.

## 2. FIR Action Log

The FIR Steering Group Action Log circulated with the agenda was taken as read.

SG highlighted that the FIR Resources have now been gated as of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023, closing off Action Item 266.

## 3. FIR Programme Update

SG provided a programme update, highlighting some of the successes for the FIR Programme over the first quarter and covering the CITB funding claim up to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

Osita Madu suggested a summary breakdown of the 23 FIR Growth Assessment completions in the quarter be provided to the group.

**Action 271:** FIR Team to circulate details of FIR Growth Assessment completions to date.

Belinda Blake enquired about the FIRry Fridays emails, which have moved to being sent out fortnightly, and whether clients could collectively promote and push that information. SG spoke about the plan to move to a FIR News microsite with FIR Content to replace the FIRry Friday, so that the information is available more broadly than the FIR Ambassadors group, and to support additional substantive EDI content, not currently included. The group discussed the potential to input into what is most needed to push content out to their networks (eg would email form ready to add logos/specific information and send out be helpful?)

**Action 272:** Steering Group members to provide feedback to Sara Gouveia around what would be most useful to push content out to networks.

SG drew the groups attention to the dates for the 3 remaining FIR conferences this year:

- 18 October – Black and Ethnic Minority Experiences in the Built Environment Sector (virtual conference, taking place during Black History month).
- 12 December – Diversity Data Benchmarking Conference (in person, Birmingham)
- 29 February – FIR Ambassador's Conference (virtual, to reach ambassadors across UK).

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Additionally, the 2024 Inspiring Change Conference will be held again in June, with the date and venue to be confirmed shortly. A calendar invitation will follow for the group to save the date when it is confirmed.

**Action 273:** FIR Team to circulate save the date calendar invitation when 2024 June Inspiring Change Conference date is set.

Belinda Blake and Osita Madu confirmed interest from their end in face-to-face or hybrid training sessions.

SG updated the group on the three new additions to the FIR Toolkit ('Benefits of a Diverse Workforce', 'Procuring for a Diverse Workforce', 'The Importance of Fairness, Inclusion and Respect', and 'What are the benefits of engaging a diverse supply chain'), which are currently being promoted via social media and are ready for the group to reshare and promote through their networks.

**Action 274:** Steering Group members to promote new videos in the FIR Toolkit to their networks.

#### 4. FIR Engagement Report

The Q1 FIR Engagement Report was circulated with the agenda and taken as read. However, SG noted that it had been just drawn to our attention that the marketing statistics missed some data relating to social media engagement (particularly around the Inspiring Change Conference and Awards) so the report will be amended and resent to the group. FIR channels have achieved higher engagement than the circulated report shows.

**Action 275:** Sara Gouveia to circulate the updated Engagement Report with corrected social media statistics.

#### 5. Outreach & Commercial Report

CG highlighted the positive Inspiring Change feedback and another publication not included in the Report, where she was interviewed on the FIR Programme for the Scotland Built Environment – Smarter Transformation (BE-ST) newsletter. This opportunity arose out of outreach activities. A link to the article will be circulated with the minutes.

**Action 276:** Cathryn Greville to circulate a link to the Scotland BE-ST Article on the FIR Programme.

Emer Murnaghan enquired about CLC engagement and involvement of Mark Reynolds in the Inspiring Change Conference. CG updated the group on the feedback from Mark and others on the conference and connections with wider trade associations in FIR outreach activities.

Stephen Cole suggested linking with the Builders Merchant's Association as part of our industry association outreach.

Peter Ball enquired regarding marketing research and how FIR ranks in Google results, noting the need for visibility of FIR Programme in search engines. CG confirmed that the FIR Team is in

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the process of developing its comms and outreach plan to look at visibility and promotion opportunities further. CG also noted that part of the increase in FIR Growth Assessment completions shown in the report is because of the FIR Team suggesting this resource as a starting point to businesses and through presentations.

CG drew the group's attention to the outstanding **Action Item 267** from the May meeting – for members to provide quotes to support FIR marketing and comms around two questions: (1) Why inclusion/FIR is important; and (2) What FIR means to you.

### 6. Discussion Item: Supplier Diversity

This item continued an earlier roundtable discussion of the challenges of finding and engaging a diverse range of suppliers (eg minority-owned businesses). CG posed the question to the group – 'What are the challenges you are facing engaging with suppliers and what support is needed?'

Stuart Coates confirmed this is a big priority and area of work for GLA and TfL now and spoke to the challenges summarised below.

Osita Madu spoke about running more 'meet the contractor' events where they are able to share the context on projects and set out expectations. HS2 also have a designated portal to capture data and sets of questions relating to FIR, which bidders are required to complete. HS2 have a sub-group working with procurement directors to flesh out how to maximise engagement with minority-led businesses.

The group discussed:

- Identifying those diverse suppliers – where to find them and how to get them thinking about larger projects as a possibility, as well as making these opportunities more attractive so SMEs.
- Engagement of diverse suppliers, including covering critical issues such as cost of SMEs putting bids together, payment timing, complexity of contracts, T&Cs, indemnity insurance requirements, compliance requirements that may create barriers for entry.
- Inclusive language and approach to capture a diverse pool of suppliers, noting that those we are seeking to work with are not a homogenous group and have different needs themselves.

**Action 277:** Stuart Coates and Lorna Brown-Owens to facilitate a discussion with Cathryn Greville around TfL's experience with supplier diversity.

Peter Ball offered to share further information regarding research into diversity models and barriers of entry, available at the end of August/September.

**Action 278:** Peter Ball to share results of research into diversity models/barriers of entry for SMEs.

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### 7. Guest Presentation: TfL's EDI with Subcontractors Project

Stuart Coates introduced Tom Glover from Transport for London's (standing in for Paolo Mistri) and Romell Wallace, co-founder and director of social enterprise Serious About Youth (SAY) to present on TfL's 'EDI with Subcontractors Project'.

Tom provided an overview of TFL's property portfolio and focus, and how the TTLP company is looking to drive development through a sustainability lens, particularly social value.

Rommell addressed the group on SAY's work with the organisation for several years around engaging with minority groups, particularly those harder to reach groups for the construction sector, and their 'Construct in Diversity & Inclusion Initiative.' This initiative aimed to make D&I as important as HSE in site roles. It involved consultation with sub-contractors on site, to understand needs and achieve buy-in, followed by development of induction video and 6 toolbox talks to be delivered periodically on site, covering:

- Intro & Benefits of Diversity
- Protected characteristics
- Types of discrimination
- Intervention
- Age, disability, race & religion
- Sexuality, gender and gender reassignment

The group viewed the induction video (5 mins) which is to be accompanied by site signage with a QR code linking to access to the video, along with information on D&I, legal advice, the anonymous D&I telephone line, email to report incidents etc.

This video is being rolled out on the Eastbank site first (Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park) and all suppliers in Mace's supply chain are required to view it. The intention is to then roll out the Toolbox talks. Monitoring of reporting on D&I incidents will follow (linking to whistleblower policy). HR training is being developed to support this work and help benchmark what companies should be doing.

Tom was not aware of the FIR Programme Resources and FIR Ambassador Network. Rommell had not looked at these resources himself either.

The group discussed:

- Challenges in ensuring operatives on site who are only there for short periods are receiving the content, and inclusion as part of HSE site briefings.
- Potential synergies and similarities in focus and opportunities around existing content of the FIR Programme, and similar target market.
- What sits alongside this video content to support company policy and make sure it is part of the bigger picture.
- The link to the FIR Ambassadors Network as the next step for site-based operatives.
- Reporting hotlines – the use of existing whistleblowing hotlines.
- Terminology – D&I or FIR, and how that terminology lands on site.

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The group discussed the opportunity to engage further with SAY regarding the project and video content.

Osita Madu enquired as to who owns the video content, and the group was advised that it was commissioned by TTLP and TfL but should be shareable but would need to confirm.

**Action 279:** FIR Team to circulate a copy of the presentation slides after obtained from Tom Glover and Rommell Wallace.

**Action 280:** FIR Team to liaise with Tom Glover and Rommell Wallace to understand synergies and share information regarding the FIR Programme resources and FIR Ambassador Network.

### 8. Discussion Item: Site-Based FIR Activity

This item was a roundtable discussion on what would move the dial quicker in site-based roles to overcome challenges and achieve better outcomes on site. It followed an initial discussion at the May steering group meeting around blockers at site-level.

The group reflected further on the TfL project presentation and need for further collaboration with SAY about what the FIR Programme does. The presentation highlighted the need for clear and succinct content to land well on-site and reach operative level. The group also discussed the potential to obtain operative-level feedback on how new content will land, and the opportunity to reinvigorate the FIR Ambassadors Network to ensure any such training or toolbox talks are embedded into action on site.

Belinda Blake noted the project focus on a bottom-up approach, whereas FIR usually relies on a top-down efforts – this is something for further consideration.

The group agreed that the market struggles to tap into SMEs directly so would rely on people who work in this space directly when developing and sharing the content.

### 9. Any Other Business (AOB)

CG noted the School's new Nature Recovery Group which is open for partners to join.

**Action 281:** FIR Team to circulate information on the Nature Recovery Group.

CG also highlighted the Common Assessment Standard (CAS) work being led by Ian and a sub-group, and the opportunity to provide any feedback into the Google form to progress with the sub-group.

Lorna Brown-Owens advised that the DIA Project is coming to an end, and that they went live on 8 August with the standard and guidance. The digital online tool will go live in the next few days. This is an opportune time to report back to the steering group at the next meeting.

**Action 282:** Briefing by Lorna Brown-Owens on the DIA Project to be added to the next meeting agenda.

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Belinda Blake highlighted the success of the Inspiring Change Conference, demonstrated in the feedback and congratulated everyone involved in putting it together.

## 10. Future Meetings

- November 2023 (virtual) – Date to be set via group poll.
- February 2024 – Calendar invitation to follow.

*Please accept/reject the calendar invites to confirm your attendance.*

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