

SME Forum – 16 October 2018

Executive Summary

What was discussed?

- SME Group Chair Steven Hale opened the meeting and introduced members to the new ACE CEO Hannah Vickers. Hannah described her previous past roles including work at the Treasury, and her initial ideas to take ACE forward
- Those who attended the recent [SME visit](#) to Laing O'Rourke' off-site construction facility spoke highly of it and it was agreed that similar visits will be arranged in the future.
- A verbal update on Brexit was provided and it was acknowledged there would be a need to provide further updates tailor-made to SME's
- The new ACE website was launched that week with full functionality except for the *Find a Consultant* feature which will go live in the next few weeks.
- ACE requested quotes from SME members to publish on the website explaining: why they have joined the ACE, how they engage with the ACE and the benefits of being an ACE member. Quotes should be submitted with an action shot and emailed to [Tam Simmons](#). The same applies to blogs and website articles.
- SME's are similarly asked to actively contribute to Infrastructure Intelligence by providing articles relating to business issues that affect them, or thought leadership articles – please contact [Brian Nolk](#). Infrastructure Intelligence readership is projected to reach 50,000 by end of 2019.
- [European CEO Conference](#) to take place on 6 and 7 November with a special rate for SMEs
- Present at the meeting were SME's from ACE Scotland, Wales and North West England; they all provided updates on activities within their regions. SME's reading this who wish to be connected more closely to their regions should contact [Anil Iyer](#).
- Conscious that many SME's are not being paid on time by clients, ACE is working hard through our Late Payments Sub-Group to promote a prompt payment culture in our industry. The group has been liaising directly with the Prompt Payment Compliance Board, an independent body that reports into the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). In order to help ACE to provide a coordinated response, SME members are requested to respond to this [survey](#).

Association for Consultancy and Engineering

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- Nick Whiteford, Associate Director of Brunel Professions delivered a presentation that focussed on how the current climate has challenged global insurance and re-insurance markets.
- A presentation was delivered by Michael Trewick of Beazley on the impact of data breaches and processes to address them and avoid future breaches.
- Subject areas for future meetings that were discussed were research and development grants for SME's and procurement

When will the next meeting take place?

We are looking to arrange a breakfast visit to an exciting development site in early December...watch this space! Invitations will be sent out to the main SME contacts in our database and we will feature it on our website.

Unless otherwise advised regular SME meetings take place in central London between 3 and 5.30pm, followed by networking drinks at either the same venue or a nearby bar. Please note meetings will also have dial-in/Skype options for those who are unable to join in person.

How can SME's contribute?

ACE operates an open policy for all SME group meetings, the only conditions being that companies attending must be current ACE members, and a maximum of two persons from each company attend. These restrictions do not apply to the subsequent drinks networking reception. Please encourage your staff at different levels to attend these meetings.

If there are specific topics you would like discussed, or if your company wishes to sponsor a meeting and drinks reception, please contact [Anil Iyer](#).

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