

Minutes of the 2016 Q3 meeting of the UK National e-Invoicing Forum held on:

Monday 5th September 2016 at the Department of Business Innovation & Skills (BIS)

Participants and affiliation:

Alistair Nicholas	Esker
Amabel Grant	Chair, Basware
Andrew Coulson	SC
Arjun Medhi	CIPFA (part)
Charles Bryant	EESPA, SC
David Cocks	Cloudtrade
Gary Benson	Tungsten
Jeff Westwell	IBM UK
Ken Clark	Open Text iX
Lincoln Jopp	Tungsten
Mairi Hayworth	Penmarin Ltd
Mike Killin	Basware
Mike Minchin	Health Logistics
Nigel Taylor	Information Economy
Philip King	CICM
Richard Dcruze	Pagero
Russel Darling	Cloudbuy
Sam Mazloum	Mastercard
Sanjeev Chugani	Finansync
Sarah Jones	Welsh Government
Steve Graham	DoH, SC
Steve Shirley	Mastercard, SC
Stephen Tokley	CCS, Vice-chair, SC
Tony Nisbett	Secretary, SC,
Trevor Parkinson	TRP

Note that minutes of the meeting, attendance list and relevant presentations are available as pdf downloads on the website. <http://www.uknef.org.uk/downloads-resources.aspx>

Welcome and Introductions

Stephen Tokley welcomed all attendees.

Round-room introductions were led by the chair, Amabel Grant.

Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting on 7th December 2015 were approved.

There were two matters arising:

The Making it happen Report has now been published.

There had been no response to the request to publish the Zervant infographic on the UKNeF web site so the item is closed.

Update on UK Government eInvoicing Policy and related matters – Stephen Tokley

BREXIT was obviously a big subject. It is not yet known whether any current EU regulations, fully transposed or not, will continue to be respected. It is likely that some will be considered suitable for continuance and some not.

There had been an impact analysis before the referendum but the result had been a surprise.

The UK may become an EEA member like Norway (so with not many changes) or not, with an EC trade agreement or a wider trade agreement. There is no conclusion yet.

It is recognized that devolution in the UK also has an impact and needs to be taken into account.

Nevertheless, the government still sees technology as a tool for efficiency improvement and will continue to push eInvoicing as part of the wider P2P process.

There were questions from the floor:

Nigel Taylor queried that although eInvoicing is included in some law relating to SMEs, should we expect any further legislation? Stephen suggested that there was already adequate provision to adapt existing legislation to increase the pressure on businesses to adopt eInvoicing.

Tony Nisbett suggested that it was sensible to continue to work with Europe on the current directive and standards development regardless of Brexit and to cooperate on the sharing of the UK policy framework with the CEF project.

Another question was whether UK central government will follow the NHS, adopting the PEPPOL approach.

Stephen responded that nothing very much would have been discussed or agreed over the Summer months and he would hopefully have more to report at the next meeting. It also suggested that as some major departments were in the middle of a shared-service restructure then they may not get to eInvoicing yet.

Nigel suggested that there should perhaps be a new high-level advisory group set up to advise central government on eInvoicing. This group could act as a steering committee to encourage progress in adoption. UKNeF could give valued business and technical support this committee.

CEN PC434, Public Procurement, EU Multistakeholder Forum – Charles Bryant

Directive 2014/55/EU on electronic invoicing in Public Procurement should be transposed by member states no later than 27th November 2018 and will include the new core invoice standard.

The development and specification of the standard is nearing completion with the final round of comments by national standards bodies currently being completed.

Testing of the standard is being prepared to make sure that the final specification is fit for purpose, including making sure that existing eInvoicing can continue and that the mapping of the new standard to the recommended syntaxes will operate successfully.

There is nothing to report on the EUMSF as no meeting has been held over the Summer.

With regard to the CEF initiative, there will be another round of funding opened in mid-September. The secretary will circulate details as soon as they are available.

Introduction to CIPFA and the Counter Fraud team – Arjun Medhi

CIPFA had taken a survey of local government members and concluded that eInvoice fraud was under-reported. They were therefore looking to focus members on this subject. It was obvious that more controls were needed.

The Audit Commission used to collate fraud information but this no longer happens. Local authorities do have audit functions but may need education in eInvoicing fraud.

Sarah Jones asked how CIPFA members were contacted regarding this subject. There seems not to be a dedicated process.

It may be useful to establish a link between UKNeF and the CIPFA eProcurement Panel to share eInvoice knowledge.

Discussion on engagement of Public Sector bodies in UKNeF

There has been disappointing involvement from LGA. There was a suggestion that SOCITM should be approached.

Charles Bryant raised the earlier point of establishing a new “advisory panel” to try to progress eInvoicing in the Public Sector. His view was that there is a need for a high level UK Public Sector coordinating group of ministerial/official representatives to act as a steering committee for the broad-scale adoption of e-invoicing in the UK public sector:

Central Government, Local Government, Arms-length agencies, Devolved administrations.

The group to be supported at a technical and business level by UKNeF.

There was general agreement that BREXIT was irrelevant and that efficiency and costs savings were far more important.

There was discussion about where responsibility for eInvoicing sits – is it a finance function although savings are in AP but budget may be needed in IT.

Steve Graham suggested that cabinet Office should pick up the idea of the coordinating group and maybe some friendly MP contact should be re-initiated.

Lincoln Jopp suggested that maybe CCS should set an example in initiating more eInvoicing.

Sarah Jones asked if there were any standard contractual terms and conditions that could be used to be included in procurement contracts. Steve Graham offered to provide NHS examples.

Any Other Business

Sarah Jones asked if the forum planned to create any sub-groups which may for example:

- Look into CEF funding
- Look at standard collateral for contracting etc.
- Look at more PR for the Forum and eInvoicing

Charles Bryant recommended that forum members keep a close eye on global news stories relating to eInvoicing where mandates and compulsory adoption of eInvoicing is becoming more and more prevalent. Thus started in South America and has spread widely to all geographies, including USA and Australia and is now invading Europe, with a variety of compulsory requirements in many member states.

Date of Next Meeting

The next Forum meeting will take place on Monday 5th December.