



Graham McLennan, Managing Director, Solas Group
Social Enterprise Supply Chain

A very quick overview of the Solas Group

Social enterprise supply chain issues



Registered charity, operating for almost 25 years

5 wholly owned operating subsidiaries



a unique energy adventure

(and Solas Property Ltd - a special vehicle to facilitate property issues)

Proud to be a strong social enterprise





Improving Lives:

Our Mission

"To deliver long-term, sustainable improvements to the lives of our customers, clients and colleagues"

(some of our objectives:)

we will have world leading products and services and "The Solas Way" at the heart of what we do and how we do it

we will build on our reputation for investing in partnerships

we will be seen as an employer and partner of choice

The Solas group reinvests 100% of operating profits to achieve our mission - we don't have owners or shareholders



Social enterprise supply chain issues

(my brief was 10-15 minutes; create healthy debate; please bear with me...!)

understand client needs, issues and procurement policies and practices

best value (“cheap” is good in certain markets - what market are we in?)

evaluate (have independent, audited evidence to show that what you do and how you do it delivers best value - what’s the “true value” in someone investing in your products, services, company?)

compete (if you win you win, if you lose you lose, but “shake hands at the end”) - be positive and proactive



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learn (even when you haven't made a mistake!)

challenge mindsets and paradigms, is there a better way of doing stuff? - if our policies and rules don't fit or deliver our objectives, beliefs, values, national policy drivers, could we change them?

preventative spending to brighten future prospects and opportunities; RSLs - what's your core business? - is "wider role?" really "wider role?"

if you can't do it; develop it, (but don't reinvent the wheel)

could we do it ourself?; could we do it together? is it always about client/contractor relationships?



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if you want to, seek out partners who have the same values as you and who have value adding capacity and capability - lever each others' strengths and fill supply gaps together

work with, support, participate but don't rely on government; find new ways of generating finance to deliver the services that perhaps will never generate a profitable income (a key difference between social enterprise and private sector?) - innovate



Social enterprise supply chain issues

tell your story (“I didn’t know Solas was a social enterprise”)

do you feel social enterprises should be around the edges or right in the middle?...believe

Are we good enough? are we better?

what’s the legacy of your investment (time, money, people, energy) as a supplier and client? where’s it all leading to? - together, can we create a cycle of value adding investment that keeps coming round and round?



Thanks!

Happy to talk

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