

The Leader of the Council has now asked for further clarification on the following matters:

It remains a concern for the Unions that the contractor and site is not signed up to the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry 2016-18. Are the standards set out in NAECI being met notwithstanding that the Millerhill site is not registered under this agreement? What elements, if any, of the NAECI agreement is the Contractor not fulfilling at Millerhill?

The client in the first instance can initiate registration directly with the NJC or direct the main contractor to do so. As the project is not registered as a NAECI site the NAECI agreement does not apply. However HZI Industrial Relations Policy recognises the importance and understanding of the NAECI and the essential employment relations principles on which the NAECI is founded. HZI through its procurement and HR processes ensures that the supply chain comply with local regulations and employment law of the host country providing a sound foundation for productivity, resourcing and employment relations. HZI has well established purchasing policies, processes and procedures which have been assessed as compliant with the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply's Corporate Certification Standard. HZI are full members of the ECIA and actively contribute to industry matters via the ECIA. HZI as part of their business strategies, have industrial relations practices that are designed to ensure the delivery of the best outcomes for our people, the local community, workers within our supply chain and our business. Our practices and policies comply with applicable legislation. These areas cover safety, productivity, skills and continuous improvement, direct employment, pay and working hours, allowances, pension and benefits, disciplinary and grievance, transfer and termination of employment as per legislation of the host country. We expect the same of our supply chain.

GMB advise that there is no cost involved in registering work with NAECI, and that there is also the possibility of pursuing a "NAECI light" approach. Would the FCC/HZI be willing to consider this? GMB advise that there are also nationally agreed HMRC (tax) concessions for the employees, if this approach is followed.

see answer above

GMB welcome that an NAECI recognised recruiter is being used to source the labour for the rest of the project and wish to know how this is being done, i.e. who is the recruiter(s) and where are vacancies advertised? They have asked, for example, can you confirm vacancies have been posted in local Job Centre Plus or local press? Please also confirm how we can use existing local networks to ensure the economic benefit of the project is maximised in the region.

As a member of the ECIA, HZI works to ensure that local employment regulations and recruitment best practices are adhered to on all its projects. HZI encourages collaboration with all of its stakeholders and treats all prospective employees fairly, including encouraging its supply chain to ensure that the employment, skills and training opportunities created by the project are accessible to local residents. Support is given to the supply chain in order to ensure that recruitment best practice is followed and local networks are used.

GMB has asked for more detail on the monitoring and audit process for the site. In particular, they are keen to make sure that the pay and working conditions are being met throughout the project, including all sub-contractors, and have asked for sight of rates of pay for all categories of workers on the site and for the Council to confirm that workers are "not subject to any claw backs, etc. that are out with the visibility of light touch oversight".

To date there has been no issues with improper payment or clawbacks. Should the situation change then HZI would instigate an independent transparent audit at that time.

Can a meeting be facilitated for GMB and Unite with the main contractors to discuss the project and provide opportunity to access the site and workforce?

All workers are free to be a member of any UNION they wish. A meeting and access to the site and workforce is not required.

Lastly, GMB comment that "it's encouraging to hear that 50% of the people employed on site currently are local. However, this could change as different trades are on site at different points in the build. Can we have an assurance that this ratio can be maintained for UK workers throughout the lifetime of the project?"

Many aspects of the construction of an EfW facility are highly specialised and sourcing skilled operatives to join the project for the relatively short construction period can be difficult, as with any other specialised project. However where possible any new labour requirements are encouraged to be advertised locally. All contractors are advised that good employment practices consider local opportunities to be of utmost importance.