

Water deal could save public sector £20m

SCOTLAND'S public sector organisations are expected to save between £18.6 million and £24.5 million over the next three years after agreeing a deal with non-domestic water supplier Business Stream.

Following a close competitive tender Business Stream was awarded the three-year contract to supply water services to Scotland's entire public sector, which includes 220 organisations across 17,000 sites.

The contract was awarded by

Procurement Scotland, which led the Scotland-wide tender process held under EU rules, and is worth £220m over the three-year deal.

It is the first time that a contract to supply water services to all of Scotland's public sector has been put out to competitive tender. Previously, only college and university supplies have gone out to tender. The deal also includes charities, the voluntary sector and NGOs (non-governmental organisations).

Business Stream, the biggest Scottish firm operating in the market, will provide bespoke services for each organisation under the Procurement Scotland umbrella, but via a group pricing structure, which will deliver immediate benefits to the contracting authorities concerned.

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Scottish public sector organisations which have already been working with Business Stream to improve water and waste water efficiency are likely to be able to make even greater financial savings as a result of the contract.

The deal will also give the organisations access to Business Stream's range of additional services,

Enterprise agencies told to improve

MUCH more needs to be done by Scotland's enterprise agencies to support sustainable economic recovery and tackle the chronic lack of access to finance which is hindering business growth, warns a report published last week.

The Scottish Parliament's Economy, Energy and Tourism (EET) Committee's fundamental review of the purpose of an enterprise agency and the success of recent reforms found a number of issues with the structure.

The work of Scottish Enterprise (SE), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Scottish Development International (SDI) and Skills Development Scotland was scrutinised by the committee as part of its in-depth review.

Iain Smith MSP, convener of the EET Committee, said: "We found failings and problems with the enterprise network, and sticking with the status quo carries the

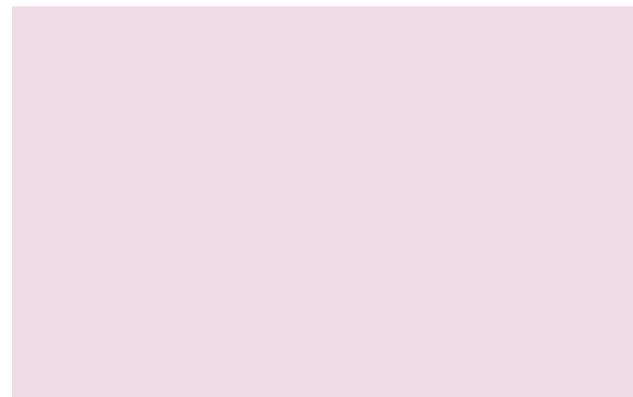
Success translates into thirds

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE course specialist EAC has opened its third school for students wishing to learn English or build on their existing ability.

Spread across three floors of one of Edinburgh's large New Town Georgian buildings, with a capacity for more than 250 students, EAC's George Street school will welcome a variety of adult students, from businesspeople who can only spare a week, to learners who want to invest between six and nine months to conquer the English language.

EAC, whose head office is also in Edinburgh, has students from more than 50 nations, including Germany and Russia.

"As well as language courses, the school will also offer an optional social programme that will give students the opportunity to experience and enjoy the very best that Edinburgh and Scotland have to offer," said Simon Gooch, EAC's managing director. "George Street offers students a comfortable environment, unbeatable views of Edinburgh Castle and easy access to some of



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ADVERTISING FEATURE: GLOBAL ENERGY SYSTEMS CONFERENCE 2013

Focus on the future of energy

SINCE the industrial revolution some 200 years ago, when we moved from hand production methods to a brave new world of wonderful machines, all nations have depended on fossil fuels. However, those 200 years have also witnessed a planet-wide population explosion and the emergence of an energy-hungry, increasingly sophisticated consumer society.

The resulting air and water pollution plus dwindling natural resources have initiated a desire to move away from fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas towards low-carbon, sustainable energy sources such as solar and wind power.

Against this, we are seeing the beginning of a shale oil and gas 'revolution' which has already transformed the energy prospects of the United States, and, if the prospectors are to be believed, may do the same elsewhere in the world, including in the UK. But that means inevitably more fossil fuel burning and hence more CO₂.

Today the twin threats of energy scarcity and global climate change are motivating scientists, economists and politicians to take action before it is too late, and central to this is the implementation of distributive,



renewable energy technology that can completely replace fossil fuels.

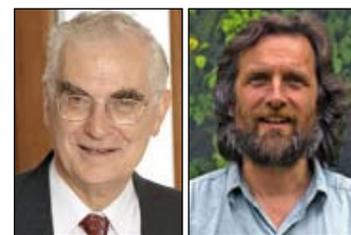
For many, this notion that we must change – and change now – is simply too difficult to contemplate. However, for others, an alternative world is already taking shape.

For these pioneers, the Global Energy Systems Conference 2013 in Edinburgh will focus on providing key insights into the new energy situation. The conference, to be held over three days from June 26-28, will take place in Our Dynamic Earth conference

venue, conveniently located a short stroll from the Royal Mile, Scottish Parliament and Edinburgh Waverley Station.

Leading academic, industry and government experts will share their wealth of expertise and knowledge, engaging delegates in informed presentations and discussions on the transitioning global energy system. Day One will focus on the theme Fossil Fuels: Can we turn Unconventional into Conventional?

The following day The Future of the



SPEAKERS: Lord Ron Oxburgh and Professor Stuart Haszeldine

Electricity System will be under the spotlight, while Day Three will turn its attention to The Economics and Policy of Energy Systems.

Among the event's keynote speakers will be Professor Sir David King, former director of the Smith School at Oxford University, Lord Ron Oxburgh, who sits on the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology, and Professor Stuart Haszeldine, a leading expert on carbon capture and storage.

Dr Jelte Hammeljeer, of the University of Edinburgh and the Sustainable Community Energy Network, is on the conference organising committee, and believes this event will stand out from other energy conferences.

"I've been going to conferences for as long as I can remember," he says,

"and at most everyone already agrees. The people putting this one together don't agree on many points of climate change and energy. This is all about controversy. People are invited to talk in an engaging way – they're going to be debating together.

"Energy is important to everyone and there is a massive interest in controlling it – all the more reason to tackling the key questions head on, in a transparent manner.

"This conference will offer greater transparency. It will demonstrate where the major disagreements are. While it will not necessarily give all the answers, it will get us talking and properly engaging in the debate."

He adds: "There has been a phenomenal response, with delegates from around 40 countries."

Registration is open, although numbers will be limited to a first-come, first-served basis. Both day-specific and three-day tickets are available and include lunch on the first and second days, as well as coffee and tea on all three days.

Readers of The Herald are entitled to a 20 per cent discount. For more information or to book your place, visit www.globalenergy-systemsconference.com.