

Cumbrian businesses join forces to drive 'heartbeat of the local economy'

Two Workington-based companies, McMenon Engineering Services and TIS Cumbria, have formed a collaborative partnership – the North West Energy Coast Alliance.

Forming the partnership has helped them win a long-term contract on the Programme and Project Partners' fabrication and manufactured equipment framework which is a key programme of work at the Sellafield site.

The alliance was announced as one of the Programme and Project Partners goods/services agreement framework suppliers. The contract will allow the alliance to tender for fabrication and machining work.

McMenon Engineering Services from Workington, West Cumbria has a 75-year engineering and manufacturing heritage with exports to over 50 countries and were looking to diversify into the nuclear and renewables industries.

And what better way to do that, than by collaborating with an already trusted supply chain partner in TIS Cumbria, who has more than 25 years of experience in the nuclear sector.

Duncan Elliott, Programme and Project Partners managing director, said:

It's great to see two local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) uniting in this way and I'd like to congratulate everyone involved in the joint-venture, welcome to the team.

The Programme and Project Partners approach is all about collaboration, innovation, transformation and harnessing opportunities, and that's exactly what we're seeing with the partnership between McMenon Engineering Services and TIS Cumbria.

We look forward to working with them to deliver our major nuclear decommissioning projects alongside all of our supply chain partners.

The fabrication and manufactured equipment package was the first goods/services agreement to be awarded by the Programme and Projects Partnership as part of a major framework spanning the next 18 years.

McMenon Engineering Services chief executive officer, Anand Puthran said:

SMEs are the heartbeat of the local economy and joining the two together to allow us to compete with the bigger firms seemed a natural progression.

We are two independent SMEs based in the West Cumbrian community and we want the community to benefit from our success in terms of opportunities, skills, engagement and employment.

With a drive to push some of their success back into the West Cumbrian community, the alliance already employs a high percentage of skilled staff from the area. And they believe that the success of winning the Programme and Project Partners contract is a stepping stone to allow them to invest further, with apprenticeships high on the agenda, alongside bringing skilled local people back into employment.

They have a strong focus on using the West Cumbrian supply chain to help maintain and build their spend profile within the county.

Supporting education establishments across the area is another key responsibility the companies fulfil, aiming to raise awareness of science, technology, engineering and maths topics in West Cumbrian schools and colleges.

Joint owners of TIS Cumbria Tony O'Pray and John Bragg said:

The commitment of the alliance between TIS Cumbria and McMenon Engineering Services over many years has matured, enabling our two West Cumbrian SMEs to sit equally beside our prime suppliers in the UK.

We would like to thank the Programme and Project Partners project team for their confidence in recognising the capabilities of our West Cumbrian alliance and we hope this success will be reflected out into the local community.

Luke Richardson, head of social impact for Programme and Project Partners added:

A core aspect of our strategy is the impact we can have in West Cumbria. This story showcases a fantastic example that local businesses can win work with us but more so, the power and benefit of local SMEs collaborating.