

**Chamber Construction Forum Meeting Minutes - Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018**  
**The Cube Construction Centre, Barnsley College**  
**Honeywell Lane, Barnsley S75 1BP**

### **Attendance**

Stephen Blunsten (Chair) – Strebel Heating  
Andrew Chambers – Mears Construction  
James Godsell – RNN Group  
Peter Lawrence – Barnsley College

Adrian Platts – Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber  
Charlie Grayson – RNN Group  
Mark Goldsworthy – VHE Construction

### **Apologies**

Neil Robertson – Engie Regeneration  
Lisa Pogson – Airmaster Air Conditioning

Jane Williamson – SS Systems  
Simon Dennis – Palmer Construction

### **Welcomes, Introduction and Apologies**

Stephen Blunsten (SB) welcomed attendees and fed back apologies for those who could not attend.

### **Feedback on previous events**

SB reported that feedback from attendees at the Apprenticeships event at Dearne Valley College was extremely positive and provided a good opportunity to meet some new contacts through the college. The additional Carillion content was also a key piece of information given their recent crisis and effects on the construction industry. In addition, it was useful for attendees to be reminded of the apprenticeship levy and how they can capitalise on it. RNN Group's focus on pathway for careers in construction was useful for sector organisations to look at development opportunities.

The Women in Construction event, delivered on International Women's day, was well received with a wide array of female attendees joining the event to show encouragement around opportunities for women in the sector. It was felt that the range of speakers and the background they shared with the audience was inspiring and the event was well supported by Blaklader Workwear demonstrating the key importance of gender balanced workwear for the industry, presenting their ranges designed specifically for women.

Forum members continue to highlight that format and subject areas of construction forum events are well structured and relevant, supporting the development of relationships with prospects, stakeholders and key partners in the sector.

### **Forward planning for additional events**

The group discussed upcoming networking event plans:

- May 18 – Construction Plus 'Meet the Buyer' Annual event – planned to take place in Rotherham, this will once again promote opportunities for potential suppliers to meet with local construction companies. Barnsley College are to sponsor the event and the venue is booked. Exhibitor and attendee flyers are currently being distributed and is expected to draw even larger numbers than the year before
- Jul 18 – Wentworth Woodhouse Event TBC. Update January 2018: the venue is exceptionally expensive (over £2000) Forum members to review an alternative location. Keepmoat agreed to sponsor this event date, though SB to discuss planning with Neil Robertson (NR)
- Sep 18 – Forge Island and Building a better Barnsley update event – next stages and further opportunities for local businesses. Suggested venue of the Holiday Inn at Wath Upon Dearne as an ideal location to cover both areas. Berneslai Homes offered to sponsor this event date given the local focus

- Nov 18 – Fire safety event – Possible sponsorship by SS Systems suggested by Jane Williamson (JW) previously, further details to be discussed
- Jan 19 – Barnsley Courthouse Development – to look at the Courthouse development and cover environment issues. There is a potential environment agency focus due to them considering charging fees in future and other content around environment and waste legislation that has come about. SB to enquire with Enzygo if they would like to sponsor and deliver content and will speak to Matt Travis about the opportunity.
- Mar 19 – Engage schools event – Possible sponsorship by Barnsley College, to follow up at later date. Charlie Grayson (CG) suggested the event subject and advised that the premise should be to consider an event that engages schools in opening careers opportunities up to the construction sector at earlier ages.

### **AOB - Updates / Opportunities**

Peter Lawrence (PL) indicated that he will be moving on to pastures new, though he will still engage with the college and hopes to engage with Construction Forum in the future.

PL and CG highlighted that the colleges were still focused on delivering training and apprenticeship support for local construction businesses because although there has been a marginal slowdown, there is still a high need for further apprenticeships and indeed higher-level training for candidates who have already gone through an apprenticeship process.

CG indicated that RNN Group were on target with the University College Rotherham (UCR) development and is going to be a huge step forward for the group in the next academic year. This will provide an excellent opportunity for the college to provide additional opportunities for local businesses and deliver higher level education in the locality.

### **Forum Group Meetings**

The next group meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June meeting at SS Systems offices at Sorby House, Bradmarsh Business Park, Rotherham S60 1BP

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September meeting - Berneslai Homes offices, Barnsley

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December meeting - Keepmoat Regeneration offices, Wath Upon Dearne, Rotherham