

Chamber Construction Forum Minutes
12.00pm – 2.00pm, Monday, 13th March 2017
Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber of Commerce, 2 Genesis Business Park,
Sheffield Road, Rotherham S60 1DX

Attendance

Stephen Blunsten (Chair) – Strebel Heating
Mark Goldsworthy – VHE Construction
Peter Lawrence – Barnsley College

Adrian Platts – Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber
Amie Goodyear – Palmer Construction
Neil Robertson – Keepmoat Regeneration

Apologies

Andrew Denniff – Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber
Amanda Inman – RNN Group
Simon Dennis – Palmer Construction
Andrew Dunhill – Wardell Armstrong
Lisa Pogson – Airmaster Air Conditioning

Dean Pattison – Complete Utility Solutions
Karen Temple – NPS Barnsley
Gary Williams – CRS Future Group
Karen Fisher – Henry Boot
Natalie Walker – Robertson Construction

Welcomes, Introduction and Apologies

Stephen Blunsten welcomed attendees, covering what had been discussed previously. Stephen thanked the Chamber of Commerce for hosting the meeting.

Feedback on previous events

Stephen outlined previous events for the Construction Forum and mentioned the continued positive feedback from attendees. Barnsley college and RNN Group presented a focused presentation around the Apprenticeship Levy and how the construction sector can maximise on the investment, with guidance around how the levy funding works and how companies can make apprenticeships cost effective. It was a welcome subject for attendees to learn more about how the levy will affect their activities.

The next event was held at Fusion @ Magna, with Meadowhall and British Land presenting the future plans around the development of Meadowhall. The event was well received, and Meadowhall have suggested that going forward they will engage with Construction Forum to deliver further key stage information and opportunities for business as they arise. Again, the event was well received and provided delegates with relevant information around future opportunities.

Forward planning for additional events

Following the minor change to bi-monthly events, the group discussed plans for upcoming networking plans:-

- May 17
Barnsley FC - Key Construction Plus event – Meet the Buyer. A key free event for delegates across the region providing the opportunity for supplying companies to speak with buyers from the construction sector organisations who are based locally. Keepmoat agreed to sponsor the event, with Palmer Construction arranging the venue. The event was to provide 15-16 stands for companies to engage. Non-members are to pay a nominal fee to exhibit at the event.
- Jul 17
1915 Bar & Bistro, Rotherham - Forge Island Development Plans event. A networking and presentation event to discuss the plans for the redevelopment of Forge Island in Rotherham and what opportunities this might present. 1915 Bar and Bistro offered free venue and catering for the event.

A Logistics Hub and infrastructure focused event in Doncaster was suggested to work with other Chamber across the region and look at potential opportunities as the area develops. The Logistics Hub already has an event planned that Construction companies are welcome to attend. It was suggested by other Chambers to plan well ahead for a collaborative approach so as not to overlap their current event plans. This may be something we will fit in between the regular events schedule due to the co-ordination time required.

- Sep 17
Barnsley Civic – Affordable housing presentation to look at plans for the future with Shadow Secretary of State for Housing and local MP John Healey. (Subject to confirmation that John Healy is available following recently called general election.)
- Nov 17
Women in Construction – A collaborative event focused around opportunities for Women in the Construction Industry, Blacklader Workwear have offered to sponsor (although not a Chamber member)
- Jan 18
Barnsley Glass Works Development – Looking at the Barnsley Glass Works and town centre development opportunities.
- Mar 18 – Barnsley college - Focus on apprenticeships

Updates / Opportunities

Peter Lawrence indicated a lot of current interest around apprenticeships at present. A common theme within the construction industry appears to be that there is a preference for apprentices who are 18 or older. Peter did state however that larger construction companies are now focusing on school engagement at 14+ to prepare for future apprenticeships. Barnsley College are working on a sector focused approach to training and skills development, and aim to share opportunities with the group and the wider industry over the coming months.

Neil Robertson suggested planning an event with the wider regional Chambers to promote construction. AP agreed to investigate to see what could be brought to fruition.

Forum Group Meetings

The next group meeting will take place on Thursday 1st June 12.00pm – 2.00pm – Box 16, Second Floor, Barnsley Football Club, Oakwell Stadium, Grove Street, Barnsley, S71 1ET.

Further group meeting dates:

Wednesday 20th September 12pm – 2pm – Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber of Commerce, Rotherham.