



Wales Construction Federation Alliance [WCFA]

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru	National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor yr Economi, Seilwaith a Sgiliau	Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee
Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer Pwyllgor yr Economi, Seilwaith a Sgiliau	Priorities for the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee
EIS 29 Cynghrair Ffederasiwn Adeiladu Cymru	EIS 29 Wales Construction Federation Alliance [WCFA]

Issues for consideration by the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee at the National Assembly for Wales

Submission from the Wales Construction Federation Alliance

Background

The Wales Construction Federations Alliance comprises the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), the National Federation of Builders (NFB), the Home Builders Federation (HBF), all representing the building interests, and the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) Wales and the Specialist Engineering Contractors (SEC) Group Wales, representing the interests of the engineering sectors.

We have organized ourselves in this way to ensure good communication between one another, cooperation across a range of areas of mutual interest and to present a single voice on these common interests to decision makers, policy drivers and strategy developers across Wales.

Our members play a huge part in supporting communities across Wales and make a significant contribution to the economic prosperity of our nation employing tens of thousands of people, both directly and indirectly, procuring materials and services from others and providing extensive training and apprenticeship opportunities.

At a very fundamental level it is our members who will design, build and service the houses, buildings and infrastructure that our nation needs to prosper.

What do we want to see happening in Wales?

We believe that proposals by the Welsh Government to establish a National Infrastructure Commission for Wales and a Welsh Development Bank are important elements to support our economy. However, more specifically, we want to see :

- A clear economic vision and strategy for Wales
- A long term programme of building and infrastructure projects
- A long term investment strategy to fund building and infrastructure programmes
- A skills strategy to support delivery and ensure that Wales grows its own talent pool

Specific Actions



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1. Increased investment to speed up the delivery of new building assets and infrastructure

Other parts of the UK and globally are investing heavily in new building assets, housing and infrastructure to drive their economies forward. Investment in the Northern Powerhouse, as an example, will put the north of Wales at an even greater disadvantage. We cannot afford to sit back and let this happen.

We want to see the Welsh Government seeking other sources of funding to bolster ever reducing public sector funds and potentially using public sector funding to leverage more private sector investment.

We would like to see this Committee focusing on this area.

2. Streamline the process of procurement making it more efficient and effective

Whilst there are some examples of very good procurement practices in Wales based on collaborative approaches and a commercial understanding of risk and its management, these examples are relatively few and far between and the landscape is dominated by costly, ineffective and bureaucratic approaches which do nothing to ensure value for public money.

We want to see :

- the aspirations detailed in the Wales Procurement Policy Statement and the Wales Construction Procurement Strategy consistently realised across all public sector bodies
 - mandated use of SQUID (the pre-qualification questionnaire);
 - simplified processes to reduce bidding costs for businesses;
 - positive measures for Welsh SMEs to grow and develop;
- a comprehensive review of the competence of public sector bodies to procure and deliver smarter construction projects;
- the consideration of a “licence to trade” scheme to drive higher standards for customers.

We would like to see this Committee focusing on these areas.

3. Attracting a diverse and talented workforce to support the sector

Although we still await decisions on a number of major building and infrastructure projects, if and when those announcements are made, the industry will face a huge challenge in securing the necessary skilled people to deliver this work. The danger is that this leads to another “boom and bust” scenario with businesses desperately trying to secure whatever resources they can and from wherever. This will not deliver good value for public money.

We want to see :

- long term visibility of workload based on a long term economic strategy which is linked to a comprehensive, long term forward programme of work developed across the whole sector;
- certainty of investment via an investment strategy which allows employers to invest, with confidence, in people and skills;



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- a Welsh workforce that is trained and developed to the highest standards and whose health, safety and wellbeing is secured – this should be guided by a skills strategy directly linked to the forward programme – “real jobs for real work”.

We would like to see this Committee focusing on these areas.

Should you wish to discuss any of these matters further please contact Andrew Marchant, Chair WCFA at Andrew.Marchant@theBESA.com