

## Priorities for Children, Young People and Education Committee

### Introduction

CITB Cymru Wales welcomes the opportunity to inform the priorities for the Children, Young People and Education Committee of the National Assembly for Wales. The wellbeing of the construction sector relies on its ability to attract talent from as wide a pool as possible. The sector has traditionally recruited school leavers through traditional apprenticeship routes, setting young people on a path to a meaningful and valued career. The institutions that help to shape our young people and inform their choices have a vital role to play in equipping them for their future career.

### Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

During the fourth National Assembly term the provision of careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) experienced radical change; both in its institutional design and its resourcing. Careers Wales moved from being a regional service to a wholly Welsh Government-owned Wales wide entity, tasked with leading the provision of Careers Information, Advice and Guidance.

In tandem with the structural reform process of Careers Wales, the organisation has experienced significant changes to its budget settlement. For instance, the budget for [Careers Wales was £36m](#) for the 2012/13 financial year compared to £18m for the 2016/17 financial year. This reduction of over 50% during the fourth National Assembly term has had a significant impact on the nature and scope of careers services in Wales.

In the final weeks of the fourth National Assembly for Wales, the then Deputy Minister for Skills Julie James suggested a reviewed model for Careers Wales was being considered. She said:

*"...we are looking to have a piece of work done around a new offer for the careers service, given its restricted budget. I am hoping to have that with me very shortly now so that we will have something for whoever the new Government is, coming in after the elections, to base a really excellent, first-class service on."<sup>1</sup>*

CITB Cymru Wales therefore believes now would be an opportune moment to examine the careers information, advice and guidance landscape.

### Construction: a career like no other

Despite global economic uncertainty, the construction sector in Wales is forecast to grow an impressive 7.1% per year between 2016-20.<sup>2</sup> This will take Wales' construction output from over £4.5bn in 2014 to around £6.8bn by 2020, which will lead to over 27,200 job opportunities over the period 2016-20.

One of the consequences of the recession was the departure of a large number of experienced workers from the sector to other parts of the economy. Many of these workers have left, never to return to the jobs they once occupied despite the projected upturn in construction over the coming years. The Construction Skills Network *Industry Insights* report suggested an annual recruitment requirement of 5,440 for Wales between 2016 and 2020.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Deputy Minister for Skills. March 2016. <http://www.assembly.wales/en/bus-home/pages/rop.aspx?meetingid=3542&assembly=4&c=Record%20of%20Proceedings#282537>

<sup>2</sup> The Construction Skills Network *Industry Insights 2016-20* report projects growth of 7.1 per cent per year taking Wales' construction output from just over £4.5bn in 2014 to £6.8bn (constant 2012 prices) by 2020. This projected growth will lead to an Annual Recruitment Requirement in Wales of 5,440 equating to a total of 27,200 over the period. Given the economic impact, CITB is revising our skills forecast for 2016-2020, which will be available in late September. This will include a revised estimate of construction jobs the sector is expected to create.

<sup>3</sup> Construction Skills Network. 2015. *Industry Insights: Wales 2015-2019*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.citb.co.uk/documents/research/csn%20reports%202015-2019/construction-skills-network-wales-2015-2019.pdf> (accessed 16th October 2015).

It is therefore crucial that construction is seen as a viable career choice for young people and that careers information, advice and guidance supports this aim.

### **Go Construct**

The construction industry has come together to develop [Go Construct](#), the first industry-wide interactive careers portal showcasing the wide variety of jobs in construction and the best routes in.

Go Construct provides young people and job seekers with profiles of construction jobs, support on how to enter the industry and first-hand advice from those who have built successful careers in construction. There is also practical support for employers on how to take on apprentices and engage with education providers in their area.

We want to showcase these opportunities and broker strong links between employers and their local colleges and universities. This will help young people and job seekers get the skills employers need, and the information to make the best decisions about their futures.

Our most recent research on the provision of careers information, advice and guidance shows a mixed picture in terms of outcomes.<sup>4</sup> For instance, our survey of young people showed that when asked to rate the attractiveness of the construction sector out of 10, young people in Wales gave a score of 3.3. This compared to a rating of 4 in both 2013 and 2014 surveys. In contrast, their parents rated the sector at 4.3 out of 10.

In contrast to the attitudes of young people, our survey of careers advisors yielded a score of 7.1 out of 10. This suggests that while careers advisors are generally positive about the construction sector, this message does not come across to young people in Wales. This brings in to question the attractiveness of vocational career paths in construction.

### **What issues need to be considered?**

In order to provide a full review of careers information, advice and guidance in Wales, CITB Cymru Wales suggests the committee examines the following key issues:

- The role of careers information, advice and guidance strategies in Wales.
- The resources available to Careers Wales and to schools to provide CIAG.
- How to encourage greater diversity in sectors such as construction.
- How to involve employers in CIAG through industry-led projects such as Go Construct.

CITB Cymru Wales would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further with the committee as it forms its forward work programme.

### **About CITB Cymru Wales**

CITB Cymru Wales is the sector skills council and industry training board for the construction sector in Wales. Through the CITB Cymru Wales Committee and three regional forums, we work in partnership with government, industry, and education providers to maximise opportunities for skills, training and development within the Welsh construction sector, and to provide the right skills, in the right place, at the right time to support economic growth.

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<sup>4</sup> CITB Cymru Wales. 2015. *Careers Information Advice and Guidance 2015: Final Report – Executive Summary & Wales Overview*.