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1 Introduction

1.1 The Coventry and Warwickshire Construction Shared Apprenticeship Scheme has been running for 4 years in total. This report provides details of the activity, actions and progress of the Scheme during the year April 2014 to March 2015. A more detailed report describing the history and progress of the Scheme prior to this update can be accessed at www.coventry.gov.uk/constructionreport

Included in this report are the following details, yearly statistics of recruitment, leavers, framework completions, and positive outcomes following completions. It also details issues encountered during the year by the scheme, including financial, recruitment and NVQ assessment. It describes our PR activity and our conclusions. Finally priorities are listed to develop the scheme further.

2 Work Experience Providers

2.1 Large House building projects remains the part of the sector that offers and supplies the greatest number of opportunities for placements, although an increase has been seen in the number of smaller building companies taking advantage of the Scheme and providing placements during the year. During this year (it's fourth since launch) we have seen organisations who were initially involved with the scheme for fixed periods re-engage when new work has been secured within the area. A consolidation and endorsement that companies know and value the Scheme. Examples are Bovis Homes, an additional division of Keepmoat (Keepmoat Regeneration) Willmott Dixon and discussions are under way with Thomas Vale who has not offered placements since 2013.

2.2 The now developed, Coventry City Council community benefit clause within their procurement practices continues to instruct contractors to work with the Scheme and has resulted in a number of positive leads resulting in placements.

2.3 Below is a list of the organisations who have been engaged with the Scheme up to 2014 followed by a list of the new organisations who have offered placements during 14/15.

- Chiel Construction
- Kevin Tonks Construction
- CV Build All
- NH Construction
- Hall Brothers
- WM group (Whitefriars Housing)
- Arran Fearn Carpentry
- Homeleigh Construction Ltd
- Quality Assured Decorating Services
- Cassidy Group
- Thomas Vale
- Deeley’s Construction
- KeepMoat Homes (Midlands)
- Bovis Homes (Midlands)
- Wates (Midlands)
- BAM Construct UK (Midlands)

Coventry
Coventry
Coventry
Coventry
Coventry
Coventry
Coventry
Nuneaton
Midlands based
Midlands based
Midlands based
National
National
National
National
2.4 Contractors continue to engage with the Scheme at different levels ranging from providing the placements with a view to recruiting the apprentices to their workforce or requiring an apprentice only for the period that trade is required on site. With 'returning' organisations who are familiar with the Scheme the lead in time of actually getting an apprentice on site is reducing considerably as these organisations are known to have adequate Health & Safety policies and procedures, know the procedures for timesheets, assessment college visits, the support services available from the scheme manager and have experienced tradespeople who have had apprentices from the scheme in the past that they can place new apprentices with.
2.5 The lead in time for recruiting micro organisations as placement providers (generally 1-2 employees) can be extensive, sometimes up to 6 months. A number of reasons explain this, for example:
- Having in place suitable Health & Safety policies
- Knowledge of COSHH, risk assessments, accident reporting etc.
- Having in place adequate insurance cover for the apprentice
- But of most influence in lead time,
- The rapid changes of their circumstances in bid for and secured local work

2.6 The Scheme manager continues to use the original Health & Safety assessment document developed at the start of the scheme to identify gaps in the micro organisations policy and procedures and has developed a standard set of documentation, predominantly from the HSE website that can be tailored to suit the organisations need in meeting the requirements of the Scheme before placing an apprentice. Guidance is also provided on the content required in insurance policies. BAM’s existing Work Experience placement risk assessment is also used to address general and specific risks associated with micro organisations. In terms of the changing circumstances of this size of organisation the Scheme Manager will continue contact with the company once initial discussions have taken place in order to develop a placement over the long term when the circumstances are right.

3 Finance

3.1 In general main costs to the Scheme remain as salaries to the apprentices, costs for employing the scheme manager and travel for the apprentices.

3.2 Recruitment of apprentice costs has remained relatively static, costs being Scheme manager and HR costs. However we have seen an increase in direct interest for the scheme from young people who are not already on a full-time programme in college, a growing amount of time is being spent communicating with these young people via phone, email etc. to establish eligibility and support the application process.

3.3 Wages are paid to the apprentices on a weekly basis through BAM as direct employees. In order to maintain ‘income’ to support continued delivery of apprentices, the steering group raised the daily charge rate to placement providers to £20 a day for first year on the Scheme and £30 for second year in September 2013. We have been able to keep this contribution static since then during which time there have been two yearly increases in the minimum wage and some increased costs for travel support and tools/PPE etc. Whilst the Scheme has absorbed these increases in the past, having carried out financial forecasting to 2017/18 we plan to increase our charge out to support the Scheme going forward. The new rates will be £30 per day for an apprentice in their first year on the Scheme and £40 for their second and will be implemented in June 2015.

3.4 This increase will also take into account the significant rise in minimum wage the Government announced in March this year. The steering group agree the increase is a very positive step to benefit existing apprentices and encourage a greater number of young apprentices into our industry in the future; however it will have a fiscal impact on the Schemes budget.
3.5 The steering group constantly monitors income opportunities to those already established and is included in a Coventry City Council collaborative bid to the Youth Employment Initiative (part of an ESF Operational Programme open to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)).

3.6 The colleges continue to contribute 30% of their attendance funding they receive from the Skills Funding Agency core funding for each apprentice on the Scheme. They also provide a venue and hospitality for monthly steering group meetings, apprentice training events and space for interviewing potential apprentices.

3.7 The in-kind contributions from Coventry City Council and BAM providing on-going support, attendance at one off and monthly steering group meetings remains vital to the Scheme.

4 **The Apprentices**

4.1 From the beginning of the project up to 31st March 2015 we have now recruited 42 apprentices to the Scheme. Specifically in year 14/15 we recruited 12, the same number as in year 13/14 and maintains our momentum as recruitment in 12/13 was 8. Of the 12 recruited this year 3 have `caroselled’ to another company during their programme.

4.2 3 further administration apprentices have been recruited during the year, one of which was to Bovis Homes, he is now considering a specialist route of education in construction and has been provisionally offered employment in July. A second apprentice was offered employment 8 weeks into his placement by his placement provider Costain because of his attitude and application to his role. The Scheme had not had such an immediate success like this in the past and agreed to this employment with the apprentice and Costain only when it was confirmed that they would continue to allow the apprentice to complete his apprenticeship. Finally the third apprentice was not able to continue with their position after a lengthy period of sickness and had to leave 2 months into her apprenticeship.
Apprentices by trade for whole project

- Carpentry: 36%
- Painting & Decorating: 21%
- Maintenance Operations (Multiskill): 19%
- Bricklaying: 14%
- Administration (placed within existing WEP): 10%

Apprentices by trade for 2014/15

- Carpentry: 42%
- Painting & Decorating: 8%
- Maintenance Operations (Multiskill): 17%
- Bricklaying: 8%
- Administration (placed within existing WEP): 25%
4.3 Unfortunately we have had 2 leavers this year. One commenced on site on a Monday and had left the Scheme by the Wednesday, giving the reason that the industry was not for him. Although this was initially seen by the steering group as a negative outcome, on reflection at least the young person had experienced construction (all be it for a very short time) and been able to realise it wasn’t for him. The last thing the industry needs is young people seeing construction as a last resort. The second leaver was mentioned above and had to leave after a long bout of sickness. The Scheme remains flexible in its approaches to personal problems, providing paid time off for apprentices to address problems, providing guidance as to professional sources of information for apprentices and where impractical for the young person to continue has assisted to make the transition off the Scheme as trouble free as possible. In order to minimise the number of leavers we have reviewed the recruitment process to ensure that young people fully understand and know what they are embarking on and be clear about the expectations of the scheme.

4.4 We have also recruited a displaced apprentice this year that had commenced his apprenticeship with another organisation but was laid off following a change of direction within the company. The request came direct from the City College Coventry and the scheme was only too happy to assist the young person.

4.5 Progress to achievement of the learners has been slow for an extensive period this year. This was due to City College Coventry going through a period of restructuring following an Ofsted inspection and the lack of resource in terms of staff among the construction assessor team at the college. During this period the Scheme Manager increased visits to the apprentices to support evidence collection and submission to the on-line portfolio system so as to have a ‘bank’ of evidence available when assessors were in place. This delay in assessment activity became a major concern to the steering group as learners who could and should have completed and gone into employment were being held up in achievement. It addition, financially as the ages of apprentices rose, greater salary costs were incurred by the Scheme.

It also had impact on the availability of placements as apprentices remained longer than anticipated in these placements so they did not become free for new starters.

The situation resulted in talks with the principle and other new senior management at the college where the steering group and BAM as the apprentice employer requested the college put in place action plans to address the issues. Separate meetings were held with college management to monitor and review these plans and some positive progress has now been made.
Starting age of apprentices on scheme 2014/15

Gender of apprentices recruited in 2014/15

- 92% Males
- 8% Females
5 Ongoing benefits of the Scheme

5.1 To date the statistics from the Scheme are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ongoing benefits of the Scheme</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total on scheme to date (from December 2010)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of completers (Apprentice Framework)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completers into positive destination</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed (Including 1 apprentice who has been employed by contractor but not yet completed framework)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still on programme</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leavers (Non completers)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average length on programme (Months)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total weeks delivered (completers &amp; leavers)</td>
<td>1296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of completers to positive destination</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Statistics for 2014/15 are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ongoing benefits of the Scheme</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of starts on scheme (2014/15)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of completers (Apprentice Framework)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completers into positive destination</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further training</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leavers (Non completers)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new businesses engaged with</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of completers to positive destination</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Building on the developing benefits detailed in our previous report the Scheme provides the following additional benefits:

- Provided real site experience and training opportunities to 42 young people.
- Established the Scheme as a known mechanism locally and regionally for the recruitment of apprentices for companies considering their future workforce.
- Established the Scheme as a known mechanism locally and regionally for the recruitment of apprentices to fulfil contractual requirements.
- Provides a supported system for companies facilitating apprenticeships minimising on-site management of issues.
• Continues to develop progression opportunities for suitable candidates from other local programmes such as our “NEET” (Not in Employment, Education or Training) programmes through liaising with the Coventry City Council `JobShop’ and local schools.

• Challenged and provided a model for local colleges to develop employer centred delivery strategies assisting Ofsted inspection results.

• Joined up our work with local programmes including:-
  ▪ Spirit Quarters Development (Keepmoat Homes)
  ▪ Friargate Bridge development - Costain
  ▪ Coventry Gateway -new home for homeless adults (West Mercia Housing –Wates)
  ▪ Mixed tenure housing development (Barratt Homes)

• Sustained full time employment for a Scheme manager.

6 Marketing and PR

6.1 During the beginning of this year the need for marketing activity to recruit placement providers was not required as we had at times up to 12 vacancies available. In contrast we had limited numbers of young people wishing to come onto the scheme. As the year progressed this has gradually reversed and scales have moved to the opposite direction. This pattern of balance between placements and apprentice’s is random and could simply be put down to the amount of construction activity including large infrastructure projects commencing in the local area and possibly that young people become more focussed on securing apprenticeships throughout the autumn period during the first academic semester. Because of this situation increased activity to secure new placement opportunities is becoming a priority for the scheme to re-address the balance going forward.

6.2 In terms of the recruitment of apprentices the scheme manager has attended several careers fairs throughout the year. Ranging from a major event at the Ricoh Arena staged by the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) to individual requests from schools to attend in-house careers events. The Scheme also advertises its vacancies using the Coventry City Council `Jobshop’. Many links have been made with careers advisers and details of interested young people are beginning to come direct from them. The Scheme manager continues to visit the college to talk to groups of learners on full-time courses.

6.3 The Scheme held its, third annual awards for apprentices in March 2015 at St Mary’s Guildhall Coventry. Two categories were awarded, Most Improved Apprentice and Apprentice of the Year. Winners were selected using progress reports from the Scheme manager, review outcomes from the college and feedback from the placement providers. The awards were presented by Councillor Kevin Maton from Coventry City Council and Rod Stiles Midland Regional Director BAM.

The most improved category was won by Sean Farrell who had had rather shaky start on the scheme in terms of attendance and application to his work and college, but had turned it around and applied himself to his studies, reliability and progress in his NVQ. The apprentice of the year was won by Jagvinder Hayer, an administration apprentice who for
many months travelled to and from his placement by a bus, a train, and then a walk. His ability to fit straight into the workplace was a credit to him and has since virtually completed his framework and is being considered for a permanent job offer from the company he works with.

6.4 This year we also entered one of our apprentices into the Coventry Guild Apprentice of the year competition. Although not the outright winner Chris Gardner was nominated for the finals for the voluntary work he does in addition to his apprenticeship.

6.5 Following the awards articles appeared in Professional Builder magazine, on the Coventry City Council website on BAM’s intranet.

The 3 winners (centre) together with other apprentices who attended on the night and Rod Stiles BAM Midland Regional Director (far right).

7 Conclusion

7.1 The Scheme continues to go from strength to strength cementing its place in the City and wider region as a successful model for both construction companies and young people wishing to enter the industry and get qualified.

7.2 New links for recruitment of young people have been built and existing ones consolidated. The positive outcomes for young people remain higher than the average for apprenticeships nationally and all the partners are extremely proud of the achievements this year.

7.3 Financially the scheme remains solvent using the multi-funded model but accepts that new funding needs to be secured to continue the excellent work.
7.4 City College Coventry has made it clear at Principle level that the Scheme has and continues to be a driver in the culture change needed at the institution to deliver an employer responsive service.

7.5 Several new employers have been engaged in learning who would not necessarily have done so without the Scheme. All the young people have experienced real site work and been able to gather competence evidence.

8 **Priorities for 2015/18:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
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| Influence college curriculum to cover work attitude and ethics. | Develop pre-employment sessions in partnership with colleges  
Deliver BAM specific procedure sessions |
| Continue to challenge the `academic year` delivery cycle of apprenticeships | Work with colleges to develop `roll on-roll off` apprenticeship programmes within the confines of core funding methodology.  
Deliver ½ day `work-readiness programme to construction learners in conjunction with college.  
Consider recruitment of wider trades including M&E construction apprentices. |
| Secure additional funding to support targeted growth and assist scheme to have greater capacity to respond to employer`s needs. | Work with colleges to  
Expose learners to NVQ standards and understanding of these earlier in their programme.  
Demonstrate and secure understanding of self-assessment and reporting techniques to learners |
| Encourage the transfer of assessor led evidence and review process to apprentice led. | Target new organisations by producing new flyer.  
Gather feedback from existing placement providers and collate as endorsement article to supplement existing marketing materials |
| Review marketing activity and implement plans to increase placement opportunities. |  |
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