

Major conference to support Welsh companies to export

The Wales Export Conference 2018, which is being held at Cardiff City Stadium next month, will seek to provide new and existing exporting companies with the information, advice, guidance and support they need to increase their overseas trade.

As part of the conference, successful exporting companies such as Zip Clip will share their experiences of developing overseas trade, and talk about the support they accessed from the Welsh Government that has helped drive up their profit margins.

In Zip-Clip's case, the company, which employs 18 full time staff from its base in Powys, took the decision to fight the recession by targeting the high specification suspension systems that they produce for the electrical, mechanical, heating and ventilation industries, at overseas export markets.

Before 2008, Zip-Clip's business was solely reliant on the UK market, but the economic downturn resulted in a 30% reduction in its annual turnover.

The company responded to this dip by seeking to expand its client-base into new overseas markets, including Germany, South Africa and Australia.

Its drive was assisted by the Welsh Government's export support programmes, including the International Trade Opportunities programme which assisted Zip Clip in identifying potential business partners, and the Overseas Business Development Visits programme, which enabled the company to visit their target markets and attend key trade shows.

Indeed an important trip to Qatar which was supported by the Welsh Government, opened the door to a whole new range of opportunities for Zip-Clip.

Overall the company's export drive resulted in a 40% increase in its overseas trade in no fewer than 23 countries.

Steve Goldsworthy, managing director of Zip-Clip said:

“Like many companies across the UK, the recession had a detrimental impact on our business as many of our clients were forced to cut back.

Thankfully, the Welsh Government's support programmes were available. Their support has changed the dynamic of our business, providing assistance for our expansion overseas. It has been invaluable.”

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Companies such as Zip-Clip are proof that exporting really does have the potential to transform a business and take it to the next level, and increasing Welsh exports is more important than ever as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

The Welsh Government is keen to work with companies looking to build up the exports arm of their operations and offer them the right support for wherever they may be in their business development.

As part of this work we will be holding a major exporting conference in Cardiff next month. I would encourage companies from all sectors and from across Wales to come along to find out more about how the Welsh Government can help them to develop this element of their business, and to speak to companies like Zip-Clip who have experienced the benefits first hand.”

[“Different system of care needed to deliver for the people of Wales” says expert panel](#)

The new report published today makes a number of recommendations on how change to the system can be supported and explains, in practical terms, how to meet the challenges facing health and social care services in the years ahead.

The panel’s report includes a renewed vision for health and social care in Wales, with action guided by four mutually supportive goals:

- improving the health and wellbeing of the population
- improving the experience and quality of care for individuals and their families
- improving the wellbeing and engagement of the workforce
- increasing the value achieved from the resources that are invested in services.

The report, recommends bold new models of care with services organised around the individual and their family, as close to home as possible. It also emphasises that services need to be preventative, easy to access and of high quality. They also need to be seamless, and delivered without artificial barriers.

Dr Ruth Hussey, Chair of the review panel said:

“The scale of the challenge ahead should not be underestimated. It is clear that change is needed and even clearer that this should happen quickly.

“We have detected an appetite for change and a desire to ‘get on with it’. A strong commitment to transform not just how much is done, but what and how it is delivered is needed.

“We hope that this report will be a catalyst for the action that is needed, and help to guide the future of health and social care in Wales.”

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“This report, a key commitment in Taking Wales Forward and Prosperity for All, sets out some clear recommendations about what needs to change and how to make those changes happen for the benefit of people in Wales.

“I’m pleased that report suggests that what we are already doing in Wales with regard to the integration of health social care services is right, but we will need to carefully consider the findings of this review to see how this can be improved in the future.

“The new long term plan for health and social care will be published in the spring, taking account of recommendations in this report. I’d like to thank Dr Hussey, her team and everyone who has contributed. I welcome the continued cross party support for the review.

“I believe that what we have seen today from the panel will set firm foundations for the future of health and social care in Wales for many years to come.”

[Have your say on plans to tackle waste crime](#)

The [consultation, developed jointly with the UK Government](#), contains proposals in the following three areas. They aim to tackle waste crime to help protect the environment and human health and prevent criminal activity undermining responsible business:

- Reform the waste exemptions regime,
- Strengthen the requirements for people applying to operate a waste facility to demonstrate their competence,
- Introduce Fixed Penalty Notices for the offence of a householder passing waste to an unauthorised waste carrier or site under the Duty of Care provisions.

Minister for Environment, Hannah Blythyn said:

“We take the issue of waste crime very seriously. It significantly impacts our natural environment and can result in communities suffering from odour, litter, dust, vermin and fly infestations. Illegally deposited waste also creates a risk of fire adding to disruption to our infrastructure, including hospitals and schools. The cost of clean up often falls to the owners of the land or the public purse.

“The economic impact of waste crime is significant costing Wales at least £15 million in 2015. I am seeking views in this consultation to deliver environmental, health, social and economic benefits for Wales’ communities and future generations.”

The consultation builds on powers introduced in 2015, which strengthened Natural Resources Wales’ ability to take speedier and more effective action to tackle poor performing and illegal operators across the waste industry.

Kevin Ingram, Natural Resources Wales Interim Chief Executive said:

“As the regulator of the waste industry in Wales, our role is to ensure that waste is managed so that it does not cause pollution to the environment, harm to human health or detriment to our local communities. We want to support legitimate businesses in complying with the relevant legal controls and stop the activity of criminals who have no intention in complying with those rules.

“We believe these proposals will improve competence across the waste industry and allow us to target those waste operators who undercut legitimate businesses. They will also strengthen our ability to identify and bring those people acting illegally to justice and recover avoided costs and taxes.”

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Advisory Board meets for the first time

The purpose of the Board is to consider issues of teacher recruitment and retention to support a high-quality education workforce that is vibrant, engaged and committed to continuous learning for all and also able to meet the demands of curriculum and wider education reform.

The TRRB will provide the challenge, rigour and quality assurance to inform key areas of workforce planning policy development, including implications arising from the Welsh Language Strategy – Cymraeg 2050.

The Board will also provide expert advice to the Welsh Government on the continued progress of ITE reform and supporting the existing teaching workforce, taking into account excellent practice elsewhere in the UK and internationally.

The Board is chaired by Professor John Gardner, Deputy Principal (Education and Students) at the University of Stirling.

Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, said:

“Our teachers are absolutely integral to our National Mission. A profession that collaborates, is open to new ideas and is always learning – raising standards for all pupils so Wales can become a world leader in education.”

Members of the Board are as follows:

- Chair: Professor John Gardner
 - Professor Furlong (Chair – Teacher Education Accreditation Board)
 - Sir Alasdair MacDonald (National Academy of Educational Leadership Shadow Board)
 - Eithne Hughes (Head Teacher)
 - Sarah Lewis (ITE Inspection lead – Estyn)
 - Anna Brychan (CSC representing all regional consortia)
 - Hayden Llewellyn (CEO – Education Workforce Council)
 - Geraint Rees (Education and Local Authority expert secondee – Welsh Government)
 - Ty Golding (Curriculum Development secondee – Welsh Government)
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Funding boost to complete Llangefni Link Road

Investment announced today will enable the delivery of section 3 with a further £1.028 million being invested this financial year and up to £2.5 million provided in 2018-19, subject to an updated business case. This brings Welsh Government contribution in the scheme to over £10.6 million.

The Link Road, which is being delivered in four sections, is a key part of Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's masterplan to develop their Llangefni Campus as an internationally-renowned Energy and Engineering Training Facility.

The Link Road will also be important in mitigating the impact of traffic in Llangefni town centre.

The Cabinet Secretary officially opened sections 1 and 2 of the link road in March 2017. Section 4, the construction of new roundabout junction of the A5114 and the Bryn Cefni Industrial Estate road was opened to traffic in December.

The project as a whole has received funding from the Welsh Government, Isle of Anglesey County Council, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

Economy and Transport Secretary Ken Skates said:

"The Llangefni Link Road is a vital development which will not only enable Grŵp Llandrillo Menai to expand, but also improve access to Anglesey Enterprise Zone businesses and support the area to realise its potential for economic growth.

"All of this has been made possible thanks to a close working partnership between Welsh Government, Anglesey County Council, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and is an excellent example of what can be achieved when everyone has the same goal in mind.

"I am delighted today's announcement will see this new route completed which will provide a big boost to the area and delivers on my commitment to improve our transport network to connect communities and businesses with jobs and services."

Anglesey Council's portfolio holder for Highways, Waste and Property, Councillor Bob Parry, said:

"We're delighted to have secured the funding needed to complete the final section of this important infrastructure project.

“The Llangefni Link Road will help secure significant economic benefits for Llangefni and Anglesey. It will provide a key driver for the expansion of the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai campus and further training opportunities for our young people. The project will also improve access to our Enterprise Zone sites and A55 expressway, and help overcome traffic constraints in Llangefni.

“I’d like to thank the Cabinet Secretary, Ken Skates, and the Welsh Government for their continued support in bringing this project to fruition.”

Dafydd Evans, CEO – Grŵp Llandrillo Menai said:

“The completion of the Llangefni link road will no doubt play an important role in the development of Llangefni, the Enterprise Zone and the surrounding region.

“For Grŵp Llandrillo Menai this project has already enabled us to embark on an ambitious plan to develop our campus in Llangefni.

“Construction of the new Engineering Centre is already well underway, it’s a development that will play a significant role in the future development and growth of the region and will ensure we have a skilled workforce to support the engineering and energy industry here on Anglesey for generations to come.”

Ruthin-based Jones Bros Civil Engineering UK will undertake the construction of final section after a competitive tender process with work expected to be completed towards the end of 2018.