

Green Port Growth Programme Management Board – 11th February 2015

Strand Update Report

Skills Strand

Apprenticeship wage subsidies - The 2014-15 target for engineering apprenticeship starts is 150. Since 1st April 2014, 112 applications have been approved with a further 22 pending offer/acceptance – a total of 134 with companies still to visit so on track to achieve the 2014-15 target.

Engineering Up-Skilling - The 2014-15 target for upskilling is currently 200. Since 1st April 2014 103 applications for up-skilling funding have been approved. A further 16 are pending, giving a total of 119. Enquiries are still being received and companies are being visited on a weekly basis with a view to funding for upskilling.

Specific Skills - Although there is a 2014-15 target of 100 specific skills packages, this was on the understanding that Siemens and their Tier 1 suppliers would be in production by this time. Although there has been occasional demand for this type of training current demand seems weak and is unlikely to improve before 2015-16.

Renewables Pathway Project – Disadvantaged Groups - The project has been advertised for tender through Yortender and closed as of the 3rd February 2015. It is still anticipated that delivery will start on 1st April 2015.

Business Support Strand

To date the project has:

- 243 enquiries
- 152 businesses enrolled
- 77 businesses supported
- 22 companies financial assistance awarded
- 23 Jobs created (2 p/t, 24 FTE)

Grants and Consultancy Support (to date)

- Grants and consultancy support processed for payment - £135k
- Committed grants and consultancy support costs - £130k
- Percentage of grant spent by purchasing through local businesses - 79% Hull and East Riding, 16% rest of Yorkshire & Humber, 5% outside of Yorkshire and Humber.

Site Assembly Strand

The strand is continuing to focus on activity which will bring forward sites for potential investors. Discussions are ongoing regarding potential alternative investors for the Paull site.

Inward Investment Strand

Jobcentre Plus Secondment - Over the last three years Hull City and East Riding Councils in collaboration with Jobcentre Plus (JCP) have been working on the skills and employment agenda to ensure that maximum benefit is attained from the Green Port Hull investments for the residents and businesses of Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Siemens have already started to recruit locally albeit on a small scale, they have strengthened their core project team who are now based at Humber Quays and have started the first phase of the recruitment process for the operations side of the business, with 14 Warehousing and Turbine Technician roles being advertised before Christmas.

Siemens commitment to recruit locally was reinforced by the caveat that all applicants must reside within 40 minutes of the GPH site or be willing to relocate to the area.

The JCP representative will be required to act as the single point of contact on the skills and employment agenda for Green Port Hull and work at a strategic level with inward investors, employers, training providers, partners and other organisations to identify strategic skills needs and develop training solutions.

The JCP representative will be officially seconded to Hull City Council for two days per week but if the demand increases will be able to increase their time accordingly and will be based with the inward investment strand.

Research and Development Strand

General - A busy start to 2015 with meetings held with a number of new companies and with Siemens in relation to its research, development and innovation plans for Hull (see below).

Following a review of the business processes and administration around the RDI strand, the decision has been taken to bring an additional, part-time resource in to the RDI team to develop and implement the required service level agreements to allow the Knowledge Fund, which is to be administered by Hull City Council to be accessed. To this end, Emma Platt-Lowe joins the RDI strand on 1st February, thus freeing Alan Lowdon up to build additional momentum at a strategic level.

An awareness-raising seminar was held at the University of Hull (delivered by AL) around InnovateUK's current Energy Catalyst competition.

The RDI strand was represented at the Scottish Renewables Offshore Wind Supply Chain event in Aberdeen where Matthew Knight of Siemens gave an excellent presentation on the company's clear commitment to the Humber.

During the month, meetings have been held with a nano-coatings company and an offshore logistics systems company which has been coached in the completion of the paperwork for the InnovateUK's Energy Catalyst Programme. A coatings company has also been in touch to take discussions on to the next stage.



Observations - Momentum around the RDI strand is now building. This will be further enhanced once the Service Level Agreements and new business processes around the Knowledge Fund have been implemented by Emma Platt-Lowe.

Business Grants Strand

Further activity is envisaged to pick up in the coming months. Business grants is aimed at those companies who are focusing on opportunities which will create high skilled jobs. The strand is aligned with the Business Support strand to ensure appropriate levels of support are offered to all eligible applicants and where appropriate signposted on to the extended Growing the Humber RGF3 fund.

Programme level update

The contract variation has now been signed and formally returned to BIS. The annual external audit will soon be completed and the final report will be submitted to BIS during mid February.

Sarah Clark
Programmes Manager
4th February 2015