

Minutes of RGF Green Port Growth Programme Board Meeting

5.00pm, Wednesday 12th October, 2016

Present: Tim Rix (TR) Chair, Alan Menzies (AM), Mark Jones (MJ), David West (DW), Katy Swaby (KS), Scott Yates (SY), Paul Bell (PB), David Richards (DR).

In attendance: Eleanor Carter (EC) DCLG, Sarah Clark (SC), Stacey Middlewood (SM) minutes.

In attendance for agenda item 5: Dr Giles Davidson of The University of Hull.

In attendance for agenda item 6: Professor Terry Williams of The University of Hull and Dr Adam Cartwright of Siemens

1	Apologies	Action
1.1	Apologies were received from, Simon Brett (SB), Dave Richards attended as the University of Hull representative in place of Bill Walker (BW).	
2	Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising	
2.1	The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. All action points had been delivered or are on the agenda for this meeting.	
3	Declarations of interest	
3.1	Declarations of interest were declared by TR and DR for agenda item 6.	
4	Investment update – Siemens and ABP, update on other potential investments	
4.1	A number of investment models are currently being scoped which have the potential to deliver between 240 and 400 jobs. The proposals are dependent on a number of factors including agreeable terms with the land owner and mitigation of flood issues. Any requests for GPGP funds will be brought to the board in the near future.	
5	Project Aura – Dr Giles Davidson, The University of Hull	
5.1	<p>GD, TW, AC all attended for items 5 and 6.</p> <p>GD gave a presentation about Project Aura, which is envisaged as a National Centre for Skills and Innovation in offshore wind. He described its purpose as being to support the development of OSW from its status as a pioneering sector towards becoming a more mature industry. GD explained that Aura comprised three interconnected strands of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Talent Pipeline – the University would act as the hub of a training network supplying talented people from ages 14 to 70+ with the skills needed by the OSW sector. It would assume responsibility for quality and standards, governance, accreditation and co-ordination. (2) Research, Development and Innovation – focussing on five key themes and fostering a culture of collaboration this strand would provide inspiration and meet the technical challenges to build a vibrant and 	

	<p>successful industry</p> <p>(3) Industry Engagement and Enterprise – located next to Siemen’s blade factory, Aura would provide a front door and home base for the sector locally, nationally and internationally, offering industry intelligence and expert advice, fostering connections and networks and enabling access to specialist and technical facilities.</p> <p>At the heart of Project Aura is the objective of driving down the costs of wind energy across the supply chain. GD confirmed that Project Aura was in discussions with major industry players and NGOs to progress the concept of a National Wind Energy College through Aura’s talent pipeline strand. Indicative images were presented of what an Aura building might look like and GD confirmed the project was investigating a number of sites including 10-12 acre plots close to the blade factory. Proximity to the factory was felt to be critical to facilitate very close interaction between colleagues from the University, supply chain and OSW sector. Moreover, it was important symbolically for users of Aura to be able to actually see blades being built, stored and dispatched from the factory. Taking funding, procurement and construction schedules into account, new buildings could be delivered during 2019. However, activity in Aura was already underway. It was anticipated to grow very significantly before any new construction was completed, thus a coherent programme of vibrant activity would be established and ready to move in to proposed new premises. There has already been a considerable investment made into developing this venture to its current stage. Sources of external funding are being investigated. Around £50 million of potential capital funding opportunities had been identified.</p> <p>EC enquired as to what other organisations were developing this sector. GD suggested that a number of other knowledge-based organisations, including universities, were active in the OSW sector, however none was believed to be approaching it across the three strands of activity being progressed by Aura. DR concurred stating that something in the region of 12 Universities were looking at offshore wind but the Humber alongside the Siemens development constituted a unique opportunity. Collaborations with institutions in other areas had already begun, with the intention of bringing expertise to bear from wherever it was available in the pursuit of Hull becoming a world class centre of excellence in renewable energy.</p> <p>DW queried the scope to expand the remit to include the estuary and other renewables given the level of investment. DR reiterated that the aim of Aura was to drive down the cost of wind energy across the whole supply chain as well as investing in skills and competencies and developing expertise in the local area and retaining these within to the local area. DR stated that Project Aura could not be “all things to all people” and should not seek to provide all the answers for the entire renewables sector. From day one the initial focus remains on the unique opportunity in offshore wind reflecting the commitment of Siemens and DONG Energy to the project.</p> <p>TR noted that the relationship between the sector / industry and University experts would certainly be strengthened.</p> <p>PB enquired as to the timeline regarding the £50m given that some funding streams have relatively short lifespans (ERDF given brexit and GPGP March</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>2019). DR reiterated that Project Aura includes a series of activities that can happen in a number of places in advance of the 'centre of excellence' being built, this would encompass measurable outcomes as per the funding body agreements.</p> <p>Outcome: The board were very supportive of the principle of Project Aura</p>	
6	Knowledge Fund: DemoWind proposal update – Professor Terry Williams, University of Hull and Dr Adam Cartwright, Siemens	
6.1	<p>DR and TR declared an interest in this item. They were permitted to remain in the room to provide information for reference only.</p> <p>DR set the context stating that industry players are now coming together to look at how this emerging sector can be made a safer place to work and which elements can be made safer.</p> <p>AC suggested that it would be a collaboration between industry and Universities to explore both safety issues for example weather conditions as well as productivity in terms of the human factor. For example technicians travelling to off shore site are often 'sick in transfer', the study of the 'vomit curve' with the expertise of the University would be able to take into account psychological and physiological factors associated with humans travelling the seas in differing conditions and the likely effect alongside weather reporting and technical data about the motion of a vessel in particular conditions. It is intended that this data would then become openly accessible to industry for their own use and analysis.</p> <p>EC commented that if the project was proposing to match RGF with ERDF it would need to seek particular advice as this has proved to be a contentious area in the past in addition to potential state aid issues.</p> <p>MJ sought clarification as to what the local economic benefit of this project would be. TW confirmed that it fits with Project Aura, it will be a unique piece of work by the University of Hull, it will benefit the local supply chain and there will be a regional benefit building on capacity and reputation in the pursuit of excellence.</p> <p>GD, TW, AC left the meeting and a discussion took place.</p> <p>Decision: The board agreed the funding requested from the Knowledge Fund for the DemoWind project of £124,040. The board requested the local benefit and distinctive benefit to the GPGP be written in to relevant legal agreements.</p> <p>Action: SC to work with DemoWind leads to ensure appropriate independent state aid advice is in place and any areas for concern which would materially affect the board's decision is brought back to the board. SC to ensure local benefit is a clearly contracted outcome. SC to confirm value of match levered in to the GPGP is eligible.</p>	SC
7	Skills and Employment - Pathways to Employment	
7.1	Decision: The board fully endorsed the extension of this currently GPGP funded	

	<p>project.</p> <p>Action: SC to feedback to Bob Ferraby, Skills Strand lead.</p>	SC
8	East Coast Tidal (ECT)	
8.1	<p>SC circulated responses to the queries the board had raised with ECT. DW confirmed that despite contacting a Director at ECT to discuss some of the technical aspects of the project ECT had proposed, no response had been received. The board discussed the content of the responses from ECT and agreed the responses provided were not satisfactory in order to take their funding request any further.</p> <p>Decision: To reject the request for seedcorn funding.</p> <p>Action: SC to feedback to Richard Lowther, Business Grants strand lead.</p>	SC
9	Strand update report highlights, recommendations	
9.1	<p>SC confirmed that there were no significant areas or issues of concern to raise, given the shortness of time available. Members of the board acknowledged that they had noted the content of the strand report circulated.</p> <p>SY reported that the Wind Energy Hamburg event had been a great success and was an event worth attending again in the future. Contact with 25-30 companies had been made and Pauline Wade will be following these up with invitations to the area as an opportunity for investment.</p> <p>SY reported that companies are asking what sites are available for investment. A discussion took place regarding the current issues surrounding availability and accessibility of land.</p>	
10	DCLG/BIS Update	
10.1	<p>EC confirmed that the BIS Health Check (undertaken during April 2016) report was now with her and would be brought to the next board meeting for discussion.</p>	EC
11	AOB	
11.1	<p>Business Support Grant Request - Goole Welding. This grant request from the business support strand had been made after the agenda had been circulated and was therefore discussed under AOB.</p> <p>Goole Welding are a Mechanical engineering, design and fabrication company based in Goole. The company are heavily involved with Drax Power and Andritz in the manufacturing of wood and straw pellets carrying out maintenance and design improvements to their straw pelleting plant as well as assistance with pilot plants for the treatment of the pellet powder.</p> <p>The company are looking to upgrade their current machinery from manual machining to CNC milling machines and lathes. Adding this new equipment will make the company more responsive to their customer needs, reducing time and costs and increasing their precision and accuracy in products allowing the</p>	

	<p>company to tender for more work. The request for financial support is a contribution of £28,497 towards a total cost of £56,993.</p> <p>Decision: The board approved the request for financial support.</p> <p>Action: SC to feedback to Dawn Hall, Business Support Strand lead.</p>	SC
	Meeting closed at 6.30pm	
12	Date and time of next meeting: 5pm, Wednesday 9 th November 2016, Room 1, County Hall, Beverley.	