
Green Port Growth Programme Management Board – 9th September 2015
STRAND UPDATE REPORT

Employment & Skills Strand

Strand Progress

Engineering Apprenticeships - The 2015-16 target for engineering apprenticeship starts is 200. Since 1st April 2015 we have approved 45 applications. It is expected that apprenticeship numbers will significantly increase at the start of the new academic year.

Engineering Up-Skilling/Specific Skills - The 2015-16 target for upskilling is 260. Since 1st April 2015 we have approved 39 applications. Again we anticipate that this will significantly increase with the start of the new academic year.

Companies Engaged

Kingspan Access Floors – Apprenticeship framework

Evolve Facility Services – Apprenticeship framework

Greencore – Apprenticeship framework

Karro Food Group – Apprenticeship framework

AFOS – Apprenticeship framework/Upskilling

Pure Renewables Ltd – Apprenticeship framework/Upskilling

Key considerations for the board

Renewables Pathway Project – Disadvantaged Groups, the specification for the project is now virtually complete and this will be confirmed at a procurement meeting on 8th September, after which it is expected that the required mini-competition will begin without delay. This should allow for a provider to be selected by the middle of October. A decision has been taken to take the assessment days out of the specification. Instead the assessment days will be run by the Employment and Skills Team which will permit a greater degree of flexibility on frequency. The first assessment days will begin in October.

Green Port Hull One Stop Shop - the approval and recruitment process is under way for the three Grade 4 Service Support Officer posts with grade evaluation complete and recruitment request approved by the HCC Workforce Planning Group. It is still the aim that these posts will be open to the redeployment pools of both HCC and ERYC and arrangements will be discussed at a meeting with HCC HR on 8th September.

Business Support Strand

Strand Progress

To date the project has achieved the following:

- 313 Enquiries
- 194 Enrolled
- 95 Businesses Supported
- 28 companies financial assistance awarded (3 of which have been successful in a 2nd application)
- 35.5 f/t equivalent Jobs created

Grants and consultancy support (to date):

- Financial assistance paid = £178k

- Financial assistance committed = £175k
- Percentage of spend with local businesses, 79% Hull and East Riding, 16% rest of Yorkshire & Humber, 5% out of Yorkshire and Humber

Companies engaged

Monitoring visits have continued this month with all companies who have previously received financial assistance; this is to ascertain growth within the companies, to accurately record the creation of new jobs and to gain information on successes within renewable supply chains. This month 10 companies have been visited, resulting in 12 full time and 2 part time jobs being declared and an increase in turnover in excess of £5,887,000. (Additional job outputs will be declared once outstanding evidence has been substantiated).

Successes by our Supported companies include:

Precision Drilling - a Hull based specialist drilling contractor who has invested £100k in new equipment, machinery, vehicles and business development which has contributed to contract wins in education, marine and ports, renewables and retail projects. Contracts include dock and port side work in both Grimsby and Hull including being sub-contracted by an international supply and installation contractor to provide concrete drilling, demolition, concreting and grouting work as part of an £11m investment by ABP, as well as work for Brigg and Drax power stations and Atwick and Theddlethorpe gas storage facilities amongst others. The GPGP has supported the company since 2013, since it was purchased by Ian Wilkinson (MD), with the latest support being the investment of a £25k grant for new equipment including a new ring saw, pre-cut saw, power pack, wet vacs, generators and drill motors.

HFR Solutions CIC - delivers risk assessment, bespoke safety training, safety interventions and emergency response to established and emerging industry. It has recently been working with Centrica and RenewableUK to develop and deliver training for those working on offshore wind turbines. Nick Granger, Director said "As it's in its infancy, we needed a little more guidance and advice on how to get involved, so we contacted the Green Port Growth Programme for some advice. We worked with consultants, who recognised our shortfall when it came to ISO accreditation. The Programme provided some funding, so we could map our policies and procedures, and achieve the ISO 90001, 14001 and 18001, which we needed to be able to get on the Achilles procurement framework. What was most valuable from the Green Port Growth Programme was the introduction we were given to the industry. This enabled us to establish links with some large renewables businesses and start networking to identify health and safety opportunities."

Martin Dixon Ltd – an innovative 'one stop shop' building services company providing plumbing, heating, electrical and renewable energy services to businesses and homeowners across Hull and the UK. The company recently worked at South Cave Primary School installing a wood pellet biomass boiler and 60 solar panels to reduce the overall carbon footprint of the company. This led Martin Dixon to hold an event for over 20 other schools to showcase their offering and work, 19 of which have signed up to energy audits and potential installation of boilers and biomass boilers. The company are now looking at expanding and are building an eco-building fitted with a learning centre to showcase the practicalities of renewables and its uses to companies, communities and schools. The project will now work with the Skills and Inward Investment teams to identify additional support for the company moving forward.

Wider renewables activity

The Business Support Team and Supply Chain Co-ordinator recently met with SSE to discuss increasing links and to identify opportunities for our local businesses to access. Agreements have been made to:

- To publicise again details on the SSE Open 4 Business (O4B) Trans Pennine website to our local businesses and those on the directory for awareness of tender opportunities available.
- Green Port to be identified as a supporting organisation on the O4B Trans Pennine website

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- SSE to forward details of the Green Port Directory to all of their recipients.

Site Assembly Strand

Strand Progress

Wider uncertainty with potential investors remains at the Paull site. High level discussions with ABP and with internal colleagues at ERYC continue to discuss options on how the site can be brought forward to the market in a mutually acceptable way.

Inward Investment Strand

Strand Progress

Green Port Hull Business Desk in Denmark – the launch event in Copenhagen has been arranged for 22nd September and will be followed by a VIP dinner for a small group of invited guests. The event will be attended by the Chairman of East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Councillor Peter Turner and the Lord Mayor of Hull. Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce are taking the lead on the event supported by Officers of HCC and ERYC. A number of Green Port Ambassadors will also attend.

Green Port One Stop Shop – the provisional opening date is scheduled for the 3rd week of September.

Siemens Careers Events – advertising for these events has begun with registrations for attendees being directed through the Green Port Hull website. It is anticipated that the events will be very popular and spaces are limited due to the capacity of each venue. Anyone wishing to attend the event will have to register on the Green Port Hull website where they will be issued with a ticket.

Dates and venues as follows:

- Tuesday 29th September, Freedom Centre, Preston Road, Hull
- Wednesday 30th September, Mercure Grange Park Hotel, Willerby
- Saturday 3rd October, Guildhall, Hull

The event at the Freedom Centre will be the launch event with a media/press call organised by Siemens at around 1300hrs and will be opened by Clark McFarlane of Siemens. Alan Johnson MP and Karl Turner MP will also attend.

Research, Development and Innovation (R,D&I) Strand

Strand Progress

A quieter month than usual due to the holiday season. 2 new companies engaged during the month, one very large and one micro-business. Assistance has been provided to 3 existing companies, including helping one position itself for an incorporated joint venture to get its technology to market, IP protection being the key focus. Facilitation support has been given to 3 other companies in terms of taking their product /service offering to the next stage.

Progress continues with the population of Evolutive to ensure that the strand can both capture and report on activity effectively and work continues with HCC on the final form of the Grant Offer Letter (GOL) for the Knowledge Fund. The latest iteration is currently undergoing review.

Discussions continue with the Humber LEP in terms of a joined up approach to innovation support including the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult in relation to its plans for the Humber. This is expected to proceed into October before a clearer position is established.

General: Communications continue with Siemens, A2SEA, AIS, E.On, Yorkshire Water and Arup on a monthly basis in relation to the activities of Green Port Hull.

Wider renewables activity

A large Spanish company has contacted the strand during the month with a view to meeting to discuss the RDI activities in the biomass space and to present an update of its plans for developing a biomass plant in the UK, with the Humber seen as a very attractive area for investment.

As reported last month, linkages between the use and movement of water as part of industrial processes and energy consumption is increasingly on the radar of large corporations and utility service providers such as Yorkshire Water. Smart activities in this area represent potential supply chain opportunities.

Extending 'renewables' into a wider 'sustainability' theme, and given its potential impact on the region's renewables activities such as manufacturing, flooding and flood risk management are key areas where the inherent skills within the University of Hull could be married with local organisations to develop a strong competence in this area. An Open Access Innovation Centre could certainly facilitate such activity. Anything which reduces risk, reduces cost too.

Key observations

The RDI strand's momentum with the small and micro-business community continues apace. The amount of value being created via, principally, one-to-one support is growing month-on-month and the relationships with these organisations form. Companies initially engaged as potential clients are now being embedded into the value chain or support, the prime example being the inclusion of Jesmond Engineering as a supplier of aerodynamic testing and modelling services to Faith Renewables. This is excellent for the region. Market of, and receptiveness to, the RDI strand is increasing month-on-month.

The RDI strand continues to work very closely with the Business Support strand in particular, and benefits from a strong relationship with the Humber LEP and the THMA team which continues to feed leads to the strand.

Business Grants Strand

The demand for the green port grants has been disappointing, with no further applications or interest recorded in the last two months. In light of the above we are proposing that we continue to work to bring forward site assembly proposals (offsite offices in particular), expand the scope of the grants initially to include low carbon technologies and work with the University to develop their proposals for R & D facilities linked to Renewable Energy.

Sarah Clark
Programmes Manager
3rd September 2015