



North Devon Council

Report Date: Wednesday, 17 July 2024

Topic: North Devon and Torridge Clean Maritime Growth Vision

Report by: Dominie Dunbrook, Place Manager Economic Development and Regeneration

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The objective for this Growth Vision (see Appendix A) is to provide a more detailed overview of the opportunity that is highlighted in the new Economic Strategy around Floating Offshore Wind, Green Hydrogen and Aquaculture sector development in North Devon and Torridge.

1.2. This is the first sector action plan to be drawn from the new Economic Strategy. The Vision will be used to work with a range of stakeholders to attract appropriate inward investment to the area linked to the Floating Offshore Wind and Green Hydrogen sectors.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. Members to adopt the Clean Maritime Growth Vision as the first 'action plan' under the Clean Maritime and Green Energy Cluster of the North Devon and Torridge Economic Strategy.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. The Clean Maritime and Green Energy sectors have been specifically identified as a key growth cluster as part of the North Devon and Torridge Economic Strategy. This Vision provides a series of opportunities that could be realised in the area for the benefit of our economy and environment.

4. REPORT

4.1. The Crown Estate's Celtic Sea Floating Offshore Wind programme will take place in waters between the coastline off North Devon, Torridge, North Cornwall and South Wales. With leasing round 5 now underway, expected to complete in 2025, it is essential that potential opportunities are maximised for the good of the local economy and community within North Devon and Torridge, as well as to protect and enhance the local environment. Connected to this, the production and offtake use of green hydrogen (created using certified green electricity) also presents a major opportunity for use of excess green energy being on-shored to sub-stations within Torridge and North Devon. The northern Devon region is currently considered one of the key growth areas in this sector as a result of the potential volume of green energy to be cabled into area over the next 10 years.



4.2. The Clean Maritime Growth Vision sets out what development and delivery is realistically possible, especially ahead of the Celtic Sea FLOW leasing round and the requirement for developers to deliver upon social value obligations, including for diversity and skills. But that realism has considered the natural constraints of our region, reducing the appropriateness of any larger-scale involvement, such as with manufacture of the turbines, due to the lack of set-down space, deep water port and also the limited infrastructure and inevitable impact on the community that it would have, creating a clearer focus on innovation opportunities and ongoing Operations and Maintenance.

4.3. To support our existing business community and encourage investment into North Devon for growing industry activity for FLOW and green energy initiatives we have put in place additional resource to move actions forward. Using funds from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we have jointly funded a Clean Maritime and Green Energy Officer with Torridge District Council and employed via North Devon +. We have also established a Clean Maritime Network, which hosts a range of local businesses engaged in clean maritime and manufacturing and also skills providers and other stakeholders with an interest in this area. A letter of support from the Chair of the Clean Maritime Network is attached at Appendix B.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Officer time has and will continue to be involved from Place, Property and Regeneration team. UK Shared Prosperity Funds have been used to support the employment of a Clean Maritime and Green Energy Officer for one year to act on the Growth Vision.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. There are no equalities implications anticipated as a result of the publication of this Vision.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. There are not any environmental implications anticipated directly as a result of the publication of this Strategy.

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. The North Devon and Torridge Clean Maritime Growth Vision will help to deliver the Corporate Plan priorities of pride of place and prosperity, climate and environment and housing.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Article 4.5.15

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.



11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report.

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers:

Dominie Dunbrook, Place Manager, Economic Development & Regeneration