**Freeport Innovation Liaison Group (FILG) – Terms of Reference Extract (To link to Advert)**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the FILG will be to:

1. Promote and support collaboration between local stakeholders and industry on the development of hotbeds of innovation for the Humber Freeport. Identify through business engagement private sector led innovation within the Freeport; what innovation/R&D support key businesses require; and medium-long term ambitions that will contribute to decarbonisation.
2. Support the Bid Director in the delivery of the innovation strategy for Humber Freeport, highlighting delivery and investment opportunities and proposing actions/activities in relation to these.
3. Ensure that the Freeport opportunity adds value for local industry and stakeholders with a particular focus on green energy, industrial decarbonisation, ports and logistics, MedTech and the seafood sector.
4. Help broker discussions with relevant funding agencies once priorities and investment opportunities are suitably developed, utilising an indicative pipeline of proposals.
5. Continue to develop and steer through discussions with government the focus of the emerging Freeport Engagement and Regulation network (FREN). Provide clear asks on behalf of local businesses and stakeholders on proposals to support innovation explaining what this will achieve and in doing so help to shape the policy/ proposition.

The FREN will play an important role, enabling the early identification of any regulatory bottlenecks and the co-creation of flexible solutions, The Humber’s ambition to achieve net zero will require new technology to be deployed, it will also enable the Humber to become a living laboratory for the transition to net zero by facilitating direct, joined-up and timely engagement between the FILG and regulators, simplifying and streamlining regulatory approvals, minimising bureaucracy and removing uncertainty.

1. Develop a business engagement strategy to help pull together the innovation eco-system for the Humber.
2. Identify how the Freeport will build on/ amplify/ compliment etc. the existing innovation eco-system
3. Consider opportunities to improve digital connectivity across the Humber Freeport area.
4. Consider areas of complementarity with other Freeports and Sub National bodies i.e. Midlands Engine, Northern Powerhouse.
5. Ensure that there are no conflict of interest (no preferential support for specific company projects)
6. Communicate with other groups/agencies to refer on complementary support as required

The FILG will not have specific decision-making powers in relation to the pooled business rates of the Humber Freeport, but will build consensus through information sharing and discussion, and seek to reach agreement on any recommendations to the Freeport Company once established. It will also consider and pursue other routes of funding and support where it makes sense to so for the area.

**Functions and role**

The FILG will:

* Represent respective organisations, institutions and key businesses that can help develop further the Innovation Strand of the Humber Freeport:
	+ Feeding in ideas and priorities on Freeport Innovation related matters,
	+ Making connections to local Economic Plans for Growth and existing/emerging funding streams,
	+ Developing/shaping the FREN – identifying Government asks; and
	+ Reporting back to the Freeport Company.
* Feed in any intelligence or information that may be pertinent to the development of the Humber Freeport Innovation Strand.
* Commit to engage in collaborative and constructive discussions with local businesses and their supply chains to ensure that the hotbeds of innovation established are reflective of need and aspiration.
* Support the Humber Freeport Company in developing recommendations and supporting material for Freeport Company decisions, including potential allocation of pooled business rates or seed capital support for emerging proposals.

Any business rate or seed capital funds for innovation investment will only be released on the authority of the Freeport Company’s ‘Public Funds’ Committee, consisting of local authority representatives. The Freeport Board will recommend allocations according to the Freeport Investment Plan and considering pre-agreed criteria.