



East of England All Party Parliamentary Group

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Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP
Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

18th November 2020

Dear Kwasi

Thank you for your previous engagement with the East of England APPG although, sadly, your diary did not permit your attendance at our recent APPG meeting on 4 November, which focussed on infrastructure for a net zero East of England and heard from three excellent speakers: Rachel Skinner, President, the Institution of Civil Engineers; Nigel Cornwall, Director, [Hydrogen East](#); and Jonathan Cole, Managing Director, [Scottish Power Renewables/Iberdrola Renewables Offshore](#).

The meeting heard how the East of England is already at the epicentre of developments in decarbonising the energy sector and a frontrunner in contributing to meet the UK's net zero carbon target through its potential for innovation in clean growth technology and solutions for renewables, including offshore wind, hydrogen fuels and nuclear power generation. It went on to consider what needs to be done nationally but also regionally to deliver this agenda.

We would be very grateful if by the time of the APPG's last meeting of the year - **Wednesday the 9th of December** – you were able to share your observations on the key points made at the meeting and your response to the six key questions, all below.

Amongst the key points made were the following:

- Nationally, the scale of the Net Zero challenge is considerable. Although there has been good progress to date, the country as a whole will need to do things differently. The East of England with its plans for growth provides an opportunity to do just that.
- The East of England already boasts a hugely diverse mix of clean energy sources. For example, the Eastern Powerhouse is responsible for half of the UK's offshore wind capacity. We also have over 200MW of consented battery storage projects; over 600MW of solar power; the Sizewell nuclear power station (which provides 8% of the UK's domestic supply); and access to potentially Europe's largest CO2 storage network.
- The Prime Minister's commitment to 40GW of offshore wind by 2030 is very welcome. One third of the total could be delivered by the East of England. The offshore wind industry has already created hundreds of well-paid skilled jobs across our region and in our coastal communities, which tend to be the more deprived areas in the East of England. Many more will be created as we drive towards 40GW.

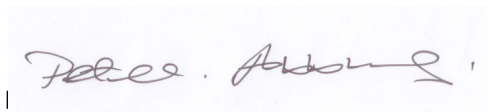
- In the future there will need to be a growing role for hydrogen energy to close the Net Zero gap. There is also a need for a “just transition” for those employed in carbon intensive industries so they do not suffer disproportionately. A succession strategy is required.
- Collaboration, innovation and investment are all crucial in order for the East of England to help the Government meet the 2050 Net Zero target.
- We welcome the work that the Government is doing with the offshore wind industry and electricity networks to develop a connections regime that is fit for purpose and have noted your previous comments about the need to achieve this without causing substantial delay or disruption to the offshore wind projects already under development.
- It is important to note that there is a need not only for an energy transition but also for a whole infrastructure systems transition. Making progress on decarbonisation is also critical in the transport, water, waste and other sectors. For example, roughly 70% of the world’s carbon emissions can be linked back to infrastructure.

We would welcome your comments on those points and specifically to the following questions:


1. How can we ensure carbon is factored into the design and approval of all Government funded projects?
2. How can the Government further support hydrogen as a future energy source in the East of England and when can we expect to see the promised hydrogen strategy?
3. When will a plan be available to deliver the Prime Minister’s commitment to 40GW of offshore wind by 2030; and will this include a vision on how this will be adequately funded?
4. What are your observations regarding the need for intervention to ensure that grid development is coordinated with streamlined planning that better incorporates the North Sea and future offshore and onshore developments?
5. Is there a date set for the publication of the Energy White Paper?
6. Are there any plans for a Just Transition Commission or Advisory Board to look at the social implication of moving to a net zero economy as there is in Scotland?

Finally, may we also extend an open invitation for you to attend and speak at an APPG meeting in 2021. Please ask your officials to liaise with Steve Barwick, who provides the Secretariat for the APPG and has sent this letter on our behalf, if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



Co-chair



Daniel Zeichner MP MP
Co-chair

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