



# PORT OF TYNE

## A HUB FOR INNOVATION

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In July 2019, the Port of Tyne in the UK inaugurated the Maritime 2050 Innovation Hub. The initiative will see the involved partners collaborate to develop solutions to the technological challenges facing the maritime sector and the wider logistics industry both nationally and globally.

As to what the focus is for the hub, Dr Jo North, Technology & Transformation Director, Port of Tyne explained, "In broad terms we are looking at any innovative or disruptive technologies that can help take the sector forward towards its Maritime 2050 targets."

The Maritime 2050 Strategy is a UK Government strategy which sets out the government's ambitions for the future of the British maritime sector.

"As part of our innovation sprints and workshops we have identified some specific challenge statements. These are to achieve operational efficiency through technology and automation, improve supply chain integration and hinterland connectivity, commit to a zero harm policy using the broadest possible interpretation and to work towards full decarbonisation, following the best practice principles of the circular economy."

Alongside the Port of Tyne the Innovation

Hub will see contribution from PD Ports, Nissan, Connected Places Catapult, Accenture, Royal HaskoningDHV and Ubisoft.

The learnings from the Innovation Hub are not just for the UK either.

"The Port of Tyne is currently working closely with several ports, nationally, European and worldwide. We are exploring ways of working collaboratively together and to learn from each other," North explained.

"The 2050 Innovation Hub is looking to promote an open approach to innovation, and we would be willing to share our knowledge, data, experiences and expertise with other like-minded organisations for the benefit of all."

As with all ports, competitiveness is a key factor, and ports in the North of the UK need to collaborate with manufacturers and technology partners in order to increase their global competitiveness.

At the moment the Port of Tyne is the UK's second largest car exporting port and handles 40% of the UK's raw team imports.

### WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT

As mentioned, the UK Government Department of Transport has its Maritime 2050

strategy within which it states a desire to establish a Maritime Innovation Hub by 2030.

"The Port of Tyne responded immediately, by opening ours within six months," North said.

"Just like Maritime 2050, the Hub's objective is to work towards the greater good of the UK maritime industry, by utilising collaborative thinking from cross sector organisations to stimulate innovation and help promote the UK as a world leader in Maritime."

"The Port of Tyne has developed its own 30-year plan, Tyne 2050, which is also aligned to Maritime 2050. These integrated project work streams will run alongside the work undertaken by the hub and help to deliver mutual benefits to the Port of Tyne and the wider port community."

As well as the UK Government the Port is also working with its industry partners to provide specialist knowledge to the Hub.

"We intentionally looked beyond the maritime sector when we approached partners for the 2050 Innovation Hub. The organisations and individuals involved all share a common vision to make a real difference to the maritime element of the UK's critical national infrastructure and to help the sec-

tor and UK in general to thrive,” North explained. “Our partners also bring a wealth of experience in the development of new solutions and bringing them to market.”

**BRINGING INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION TOGETHER**

Since its inauguration, the 2050 Maritime Innovation Hub has hosted over 20 events, and as with millions of others moved online during COVID-19. The Hub had welcomed over 1,500 attendees from over 200 companies to its events.

“All of our delegates have given up their time and energy for the greater good and enhancement of the UK maritime sector. One of our achievements was the UK’s first maritime hackathon, which included a dozen teams working towards a common minimum viable product (MVP) statement,” North explained.

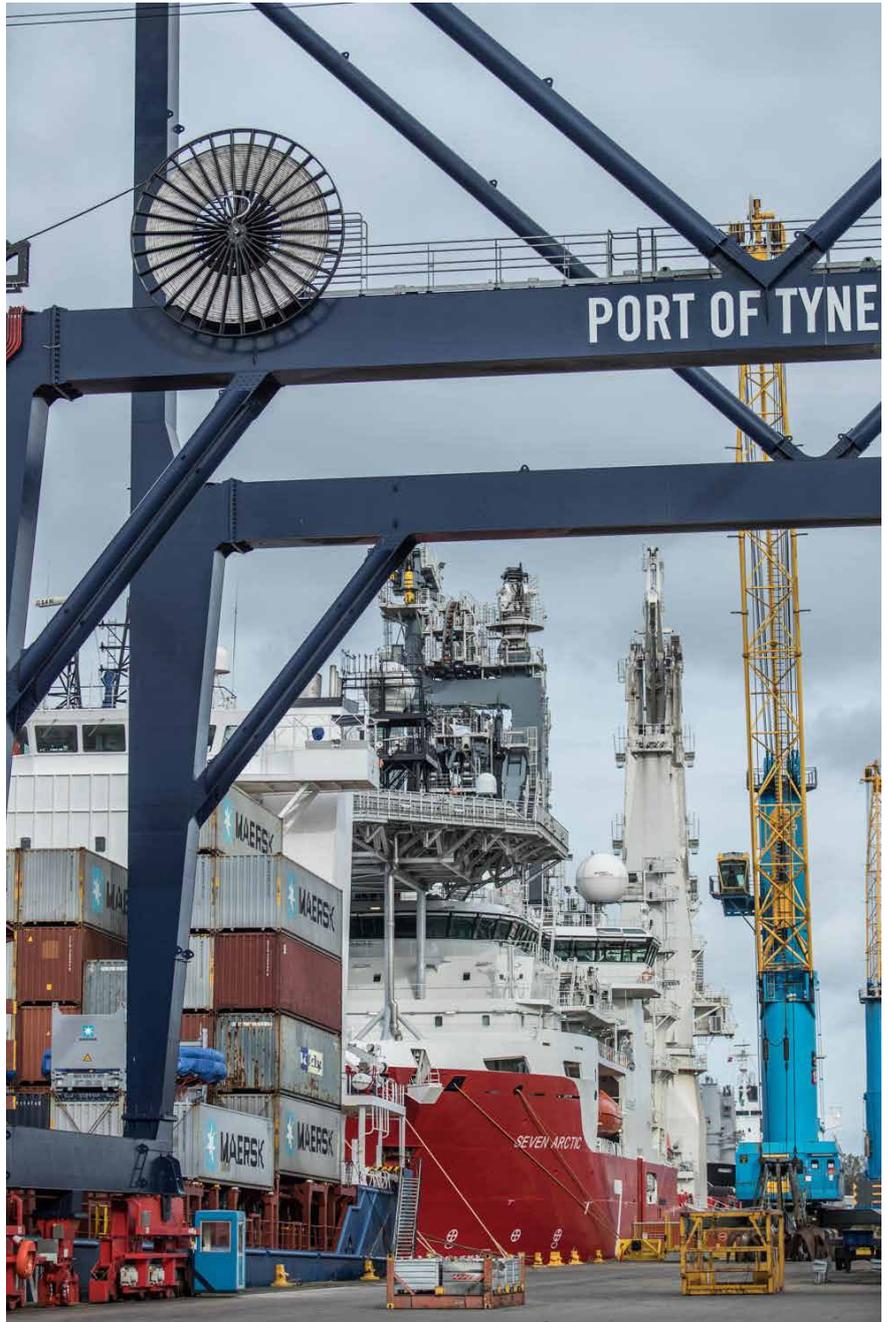
“In March 2020 we began a virtual series of online workshops and seminars. This included 8 Deep Dive sessions on the theme of Clean Energy where we explored topics such as solar, wind, tidal and geothermal to understand their potential benefits at the Port of Tyne. The output of these sessions has helped us formulate the Port’s renewable energy strategy for the future.”

North said that presently the Port and the Hub are particularly focussed on renewable energy initiatives to assist with the vision of becoming net-carbon zero by 2030.

As for the next steps North said, “We are looking to establish ourselves as a national testbed for innovative technology, to assist companies to turn their creative ideas into reality. We will be looking to form collaborative consortiums to bid for funding, to accelerate development and implement relevant technology.

“We are looking for like-minded companies to help us transform our vision into reality.”

*Written by Beth Maundrill*



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**ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION**

The Port of Tyne is one of UK’s most innovative and efficient deep-sea ports handling cargoes across five continents.

The Port is continually investing in improving and extending its leading-edge facilities at our location on the River Tyne in North East England, served with a network of sea routes, major roads and rail.

Tyne handles a diversity of cargoes from cars to containers and bulk goods to renewable energy and offshore.