

SQW GROUP LTD

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SQW Group marks expansion of Energy, Environment & Sustainable Development Services

Senior Appointments will aid Growth of new Business Area

SQW Group, which owns SQW Consulting and Oxford Innovation, market leading brands in consultancy services and business support, has announced that it is expanding its services in Energy, Environment & Sustainable Development.

The Group has appointed several senior consultants with specialist expertise in the renewable energy market and the delivery of carbon reduction and waste management programmes for local authorities and the private sector. SQW Group has also marked the launch of its new Viewpoint Series of publications with a ‘thoughtpiece’ report on ‘Carbon Reduction - obligation and opportunity’, which discusses how public sector bodies can both implement carbon reduction obligations and support sustainable economic development.

The new recruits, Chris Bronsdon, Gavin McPherson and Assen Gasharov, join SQW Consulting, one of the largest and best known providers of consultancy services for economic development and regeneration. The firm’s recent projects have included a high profile study for Cycling England, which attracted national media coverage, as well as work for the Carbon Trust, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Scottish Natural Heritage.

Mr Bronsdon joins as Associate Director to lead SQW’s energy consulting services for public and private sector clients across the UK. He previously ran his own energy consulting business and has specialist experience in renewable power generation technologies and regulatory issues. He is a former Director of the Scottish Energy & Environment Foundation, which provides strategic advice on energy and environment policy issues to the Scottish Parliament, DTI and UK Research Councils, and has also worked for British Energy and Nuclear Electric.

Dr McPherson joins with substantial experience in market and policy analysis in the renewable energy sector. Co-author of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Scottish Energy Efficiency Strategy, his other previous work has included input to the development of the Scottish Executive biomass energy strategy, including the design

of a biomass energy support scheme, as well as the development of a strategy for the Crown Estate to tackle residual liabilities from offshore renewable energy installations.

Mr Gasharov, who has particular expertise in carbon reduction programmes, joins from a sustainable development consultancy. His previous experience has ranged from developing sustainability policies for public sector organisations and large corporates to training local authority staff in carbon management programmes and leading large scale refurbishment schemes to integrate low energy products into ageing housing stock. He has also managed ground-breaking projects, including a scheme to integrate wind turbines into a group of tower blocks in Bradford, and led awareness-raising programmes, such as the Cambridgeshire Energy for Good Scheme and the Oxford Solar Initiative, designed to encourage local residents and businesses to adopt low carbon technologies and energy efficiency measures.

Chris Green, Chief Executive Officer of SQW Group, said: “With climate change clearly emerging as the greatest challenge facing UK and international governments in the 21st century, the energy, environment and sustainable development agenda is a top priority for our public and private sector clients. It will need to be pursued alongside a continuing commitment to economic development and regeneration, recognising the tensions - and also the opportunities -that this is likely to generate.

“The UK government’s framework to tackle climate change, establishing a carbon reduction pathway to 2050, has significant implications for public sector policies to encourage sustainable economic development and regeneration. As well as adopting exemplary practices itself, the public sector is expected to promote changes, via its strategies and programmes, throughout the rest of the economy.

“The energy sector also faces challenges as the UK’s power stations and distribution networks are ageing and operate within a complex mix of regulation and competitive markets. Decisions on new investments with an operational life of over 40 years are not taken lightly and assistance with corporate strategies that can deliver on both commercial priorities and energy and environmental targets is needed.

“SQW has a long track record of supporting clients to meet these kind of challenges of the future and our new appointments are part of our commitment to expansion of our energy, environment and sustainable development services. Chris, Gavin and Assen are valuable additions to the firm who will ensure that we can continue to provide high quality and practical assistance to our clients.”

Chris Bronsdon said: “I am delighted to be joining SQW Group at such an interesting time and working alongside colleagues with a real breath of experience in energy, economics and sustainable development.

“We look forward to working with clients at national, regional and local levels across the UK to provide the services that they need. These could range from advice on measuring and reducing carbon impacts, at scales ranging from regions to individual businesses, to support to firms to improve their energy efficiency and minimise waste as well as economic impact studies for new infrastructure and buildings or advice on sustainable procurement frameworks for local authorities.”

Commenting on the launch of the Viewpoint Series, Mr Green added: “The aim of the Viewpoint Series is to share our thoughts on key topical issues in sustainable economic development, public policy, innovation and enterprise and provide suggestions for strategic and practical solutions.

“We decided to kick off by tackling a major challenge - climate change and carbon reduction targets - and suggesting how local authorities, regional agencies and other organisations can turn the obligations resulting from targets into opportunities. We welcome feedback on this report and subsequent publications.”

The Viewpoint report on Carbon Reduction is available at: <http://www.sqw.co.uk/publications>

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Editors Notes

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Photos available on request

1. Chris Green, CEO of SQW Group (2nd from left), with L-R: Assen Gasharov, Chris Bronsdon and Gavin McPherson, specialists who have joined SQW Group as part of the expansion of its Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development services. The Group has

also marked the launch of its Viewpoint Series of publications with a report on Carbon Reduction.

2. Chris Green, CEO of SQW Group, (2nd from left) with L-R: Gavin McPherson, Chris Bronsdon and Assen Gasharov.

About SQW Group

SQW Group is the parent company of SQW Consulting and Oxford Innovation. Group Board members are: Ian Laing, Chairman; Chris Green, Group CEO; Andrew Strivens, Group COO; Roger Quince, co-founder of SQW, and Sir Michael Lyons and Sir William Wells, non-executive directors.

About SQW Consulting

SQW Consulting is a leading economic development and management consultancy that is well-known for producing 'The Cambridge Phenomenon', a defining report that brought Cambridge's high-tech industry to worldwide attention.

The company's clients include government departments in the UK and overseas, devolved administrations, regional development agencies, funding bodies, local authorities, partnerships and international organisations.

SQW's consultants bring extensive experience to their assignments, with backgrounds in academia, national and local government, industry, and development agencies. At any one time, they are working on over 100 projects in the areas of economic and social development and regeneration.

Examples of projects in Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development include:

- the preparation of an operational programme on low carbon economic growth for the East of England for 2007-2013;
- an economic analysis of the value of the UK Carbon Abatement Technologies sector for the Dept for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform;
- an independent assessment of the Carbon Trust's Future Impact Estimation methodology being used to assess the impact on carbon savings from the Trust's business and technology support activities;
- an impact assessment of environmental regulation on competitiveness, including which forms of regulation are most likely to stimulate innovation, for the Dept for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra);
- a cost benefit analysis of sustainable public procurement for Defra;
- the development of regional policies for sustainable tourism in Yorkshire and the Humber.

SQW employs 75 staff and is headquartered in Cambridge with regional offices in Edinburgh, Leeds, London, Oxford and Manchester. For further information: www.sqw.co.uk

About Oxford Innovation

Oxford Innovation provides services to growing companies, and to government bodies that promote enterprise. The company operates 13 Innovation Centres, including new Centres at Barnsley, Sheffield, Silverstone and Portsmouth, that provide flexible office and laboratory space to over 300 technology, knowledge-based and creative companies, a number of whom have floated on AIM.

The firm is recognised as a specialist in helping early stage technology businesses to raise finance through its three Business Angel Investment Networks, including Oxford Investment Opportunity Network (www.oion.co.uk), Europe's most successful technology investment network. Oxford Innovation also delivers innovation services for government, such as the Innovation Advisory Service South East, a regional initiative to encourage innovation in SMEs funded by SEEDA.

Oxford Innovation employs 110 staff and is headquartered in Oxford, with additional Innovation Centres in Berkshire, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Portsmouth and South Yorkshire. For further information: www.oxin.co.uk