

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 4 February 2022

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Hydroban Hub

Purpose of Report

To inform the Board on possible hydrogen developments around Oban

Oban Hub

In 2009 options to improve interchange at Oban were explored in a report from Faber, recognising that ABC were embarking on the £30m CHORD programme- led to discussions with ScotRail about future station plans.

In 2016, having developed concepts for the interchange HITRANS met with O&L councillors to discuss how the Oban Hub could be reactivated. Discussions since have been held meetings with CMAL, Abellio ScotRail and Network Rail, Calmac, IDP Architects, Bid4Oban, Transport Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council, Serco Caledonian Sleepers, RGU and HITRANS.

Following this an application was made to the Local Rail Development Fund (LRDF). This was turned down, but an invitation was made to include it in the work of the West Highland Line Review Group. This work was paused in March 2020. The concept was to co-locate rail and ferry passenger facilities, future proof growth of rail through compliant platforms for sleeper and charter operations, maximise the use of space for efficient operations and to improve the public realm on the pier.

Policy Developments

The policy landscape has changed substantially since then with the publication of:

- National Transport Strategy 2 (Feb 2020)
- Rail Services Decarbonisation Action Plan (July 2020)
- Climate Change Plan update (Dec 2020)
- Draft Hydrogen Action Plan (Nov 2021)
- Strategic Transport Projects 2 (Jan 2022)

plus feasibility work on the Zero Emissions Train project (Class 314), CMAL's Hyseas3 project, and West Coast Motors' the recent H2 bus trial.

Levelling Up

interchange Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) are intending to submit a bid to the UK Levelling Up Fund in Spring 2022 for investment in transport infrastructure in Oban. Oban is perhaps the most multi of all multimodal transport hubs in Scotland, with reliance on fossil fuels to serve the Lorn and the Islands by road, rail, sea and air.

Hydroban Hub

In September 2021 Greenpower unveiled plans to create hydrogen at their Loch Awe windfarm. Off takers could include ferry, rail, bus, the SGN independent gas network, aquaculture, and other processes.

HITRANS is keen to assist ABC to engage with stakeholders in order to maximise the transport, environmental and economic benefits that could accrue to area as a result of a green Levelling Up Fund bid, including:

- CMAL
- Calmac
- ScotRail
- Network Rail
- West Coast Motors
- Transport Scotland
- Oban Airport
- Haulage operators

A roundtable meeting is to be held in late January at which Greenpower will discuss their hydrogen supply proposals and operators will be able to outline their own alternative fuel plans.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact –Mode shift, integration, resilience

Policy

Impact –Future fuels, decarbonisation, transport efficiency, network usage maximisation.

Financial

Impact – Nil

Equality

Impact – Access to the network for all

Recommendation

1. Members are asked to approve the report.

Report by: Frank Roach
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 25th January 2022