

Report to Partnership Meeting 14 September 2018

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

G-PaTRA Green Passenger Transport in Rural Areas

SUMMARY:

To provide Members with an update on G-PaTRA (Green Passenger Transport in Rural Areas). G-PaTRA is an EU Interreg VB North Sea Region project that seeks to deliver a number of Green Passenger Transport solutions in rural areas. HITRANS element of the overall project amounts to €466,000 over the next three years.

Background and Project Overview

G-PaTRA (Green Passenger Transport in Rural Areas) involves a consortium of partners across six North Sea region countries (UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Norway and Denmark) is lead by Robert Gordon's University.

The key objectives of the project are to:

- Enhance the capacity for authorities to reduce CO₂ from remote, rural and Island transport by embedding more zero emission vehicles in rural transport systems and improving, optimising and better integrating available passenger resources.
- Identify green, innovative, integrated transport services and new organisational and ownership models to allow transport operators to deliver on the project aims of providing a sustainable rural public transport network.

HITRANS is leading Work Package 3 which seeks to accelerate the use of Zero Emission vehicles and vessels. This will involve the implementation of a specific lighthouse project and two business case studies. The lighthouse project involves a new scheduled bus route using an electric bus within the Moray area of the Cairngorm National Park. This lighthouse project will be used to demonstrate and evaluate innovative low carbon transport solutions in a rural context. In addition to this HITRANS will also undertake two case studies which will develop a strategy for refueling cell vehicles from renewables.

Goals of Project

1. Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
2. Enhanced access, mobility and social inclusion
3. Reduced per passenger subsidy costs
4. Modal shift

Other innovative projects will be trialed by the project partners, each addressing one or more of the project aims.

Rather than addressing a specific issue in a specific locality, each pilot will contribute to a transnational understanding of the:

- wider rural public transport supply chain

- inter-relationship between the four goals and the most effective combination of pilot interventions.

The project will develop indicators to quantify the impact of pilot projects against *business as usual*. Provisionally, the four primary indicators could be:

- CO2/ passenger km
- Passenger numbers (as a proxy for mobility, access and social inclusion)
- Subsidy/passenger journey
- Modal share.

G-PaTRA will consider the barriers to, and opportunities for, scaling up pilot interventions across Europe. Guidance will be produced in order to maximize transferrable innovation.

Aviemore Partner Conference / Workshop 16-17th January 2018

HITRANS Public Transport Officer organised the first in what will be a series of workshops where stakeholders will be identified from existing networks, related projects, academia and other rural and island municipalities. The aim is for a legacy collaborative network to be created, underpinned by the development of an online knowledge sharing and stakeholder engagement platform.

The Aviemore workshop included a one day conference with presentations from a number of partners and external experts including EV charging Infrastructure, and alternative fuel cell ferries in Scotland and Norway and also for train and tram. There was also a presentation from the Scottish Sustainable Network on Climate Change reporting in the public sector. Workshops were also held to help develop baseline information against which the project intervention can be measured and also to share knowledge on the operational, technical and governance arrangements that impact on public transport provision in each partners area.

HITRANS Workstreams:

HITRANS have applied to undertake projects up to a value of €466,000 over the next three years with the primary project involving the deployment of an electric bus on a local service within the Moray area of the Cairngorms National Park.

The intervention rate from the North Sea Region InterReg programme is 50% and requires 50% match funding to be met through contributions from HITRANS and the local authority where the pilot project will be implemented. HITRANS will seek to use the successful application to draw in additional match funding that could be used to enhance the core deliverables identified in the project and to offset the level of local contribution required.

Green Bus Fund

Officers reported at the HITRANS Partnership meeting in September 2017 that an application had been submitted to The Scottish Government's Green Bus Fund (which is managed by Transport Scotland).

Utilising the funding secured through G-PaTRA, HITRANS were able to apply to the Scottish Government's Green Bus Fund to help towards the purchase of an Electric Bus for the pilot project being delivered in Partnership with Moray Council. The success of this application has

helped secure £127,066 from the Green Bus Fund towards the purchase of an electric bus that can be used on the G-PaTRA pilot service.

Moray Council have identified a preferred route and schedule for this vehicle which would involve it providing a scheduled service between parts of Speyside and the Moray coastal towns in the morning and afternoon peak and also a demand responsive service for a further three hours in the middle of the day.

Alternative Fuel Case Studies

At the Aviemore workshop, Ian Ambrose, Future Railway Development Manager with Network rail presented on the use of Alternative fuel cells in train and trams. HITRANS are seeking to undertake a feasibility study into how such technology may be applied on some of the rural lines within the HITRANS area such as the Inverness to Kyle line.

Bus Delivery

Delivery of the new bus will be during the second week in September with a proposed soft launch of the service for the start of October 2018.

Smarter Choices Smarter Places Funding

An application for marketing funding through SCSP has been submitted. If we are successful we would tender for an experienced marketing professional/organisation to design a bespoke marketing campaign for the service.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to note the report.

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – The G-PaTRA project will support a number of RTS priorities relating to Public Transport and Low Carbon solutions.

Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – The G-PaTRA project will support a number of RTS objectives particularly relating to Improving accessibility and social inclusion in rural areas.

Financial

Impact – Positive

Comment - An initial allocation for the project has been identified in the 2017/18 Business Plan but avenues for additional match funding will continue to be explored.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – HITRANS support for innovative rural public transport solutions helps improve access and opens up employment opportunities in some of the regions most vulnerable areas

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