

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 11 September 2020

PARTNERSHIP

COVID-19 HITRANS Activity Update

Purpose of Report

The report updates Board Members and Advisors on the activities undertaken by the HITRANS team in recent months related to the global pandemic situation.

COVID-19 Activities

HITRANS have where possible been working to achieve a business as usual approach in these most challenging of times as the nation focusses on mitigating the public health crisis created by the global Coronavirus / COVID 19 pandemic. There have been direct impacts on how HITRANS work and a number of new areas directly relating to the pandemic where HITRANS officers are providing support / input.

A summary of HITRANS COVID-19 related activities is listed in bullet points below:

- Supporting staff in homeworking and implementing new organisational policies around flexible working hours and extended core working. Relaxation of various procedures around home working environment and caring for family members including children.
- Revising 2020/21 Business Plan to ensure COVID-19 Impact Mitigation and Resilience against future pandemic situations is part of this. Particular activity is expected on Air Network Resilience and Security of Lifeline Connectivity. Impacts on future budgets and investment prioritisation / vfm will also be considered.
- Partnership Advisors (Senior Officers Group) meetings held with COVID-19 Discussion a key topic. HITRANS officer time has been offered to directly support Councils in this time of crisis.
- Partnership Advisors discussed post Lockdown response including potential change to local service delivery and governance which has a relationship to HITRANS earlier work on Local Governance Review and Democracy Matters workstreams.
- CPPs and other groups–
 - HITRANS are members of the Highland Economic Recovery Group
 - Engaged in Transport Transition and Economic Recovery Planning through Moray CPP and Community Planning Officers Group.
 - Working closely with the lead Councillor in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar on Transport Transition Planning and advising on approach to easing lockdown restrictions. Also inputting directly to workstreams under the Outer Hebrides CPP including Island Impact Assessment, Workforce Planning, Economic Recovery.
 - Engagement in Orkney through the External Travel Forum and directly with officers on internal and external ferry services.
 - Working with Argyll and Bute officers on ferry services / tourism travel, Car Club opportunities, Active Travel, HITCOG group. Board Member representing HITRANS at CPP and Recovery Group levels.
 - HITRANS have participated in the Highlands and Islands Committee of SCDI providing an opportunity to engage with business and other public sector

bodies on transition planning and economic recovery. Through the SCDI H&I Committee Chair HITRANS have fed information on island food resilience into the COVID-19 Stakeholder Group on Economy and Community convened by Fergus Ewing

- Mobility as a Service –
 - Revised project timescales due to impact of COVID with a new live platform phase planned for a 2-month period from March 2021.
 - Through MaaS Partner Enterprise Car Club HITRANS have investigated opportunities to make car club vehicles available to key workers through pandemic.
 - Engaged transport operators on securing participation in MaaS Platform and making the case that the platform will be an important asset in passenger transport recovery from lockdown and into phase 4.
 - Added DRT real time booking to the Platform through Shotl for testing on the Connect Moray DRT network.
 - Looking at opportunities to add Mobility Credits to the Platform to catalyse modal shift and offset the increased use of older cars (secondhand car sales trends) post pandemic.
- Active Travel-
 - Directly involved in planning, preparation and implementation of Spaces for People projects.
 - Our eBike partnership with 3 local bike shops (Aviemore, Grantown on Spey, Fort William) have released eBikes for key worker use.
 - Encouraged partner LAs to submit applications to Spaces for People
 - Making part of our Sustrans Partnership budget and TS RATF budget available for interventions to reallocate road space in favour of people and placemaking in rural areas.
 - Working with West Coast Motors to fit bike racks within the Mid-Argyll fleet similar to Borders Buses.
 - Match funding work by Orkney Islands Council to remove barriers to active travel and improve accessibility in Kirkwall.
 - Implementing a public eBike Dock System in Inverness that will go live in December 2020 helping provide alternatives to capacity constrained bus services.
 - Allocated budget and submitted application to EST administered eBike Grant for eCargo Bikes across the region
- Bus –
 - HITRANS are leading on production of travel information on bus services across the region. At stop timetable changes are being distributed to stop when this is possible.
 - Physical Distancing notices and Traveline Scotland push promotion posted at approximately 2,000 bus stops across the region by HITRANS on behalf of partner Councils.
 - HITRANS PT Information Officer is working to keep our database up to date and supply RTPi and Traveline.
 - RTPi travel messaging boards updated with COVID-19 info and continuing to provide up to date bus info on services that are available.
 - Procured a new travel information database to improve the approach to at stop with a view to reducing the publication timescale for at stop information to better respond to the current large-scale short notice timetable changes by operators.
 - Supported Highland Council officers in preparing an application to the Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund.

- Hosted meeting of H & I Local Authority Transport Coordinating Officers to discuss and share experience of dealing with transport planning and school bus provision.
- Working with Stagecoach on 2 potential DRT services as part of framing what post COVID passenger transport networks could look like.
- Aviation –
 - Partnering in 2 Future Flight Challenge UKRI applications.
 - HIAL partnering on Business Development and Marketing
 - HIAL partnering on Island Connectivity Planning
 - HITRANS have taken part in a COVID-19 UKRI call for opportunities develop COVID 19 mitigation measures utilising Drone technology.
- Ferry –
 - Input into ferry service planning and implementation of restricted travel policy. Participating in regular meetings between Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, TS Ferries Division and Islands Team.
 - Participating in Transport Transition Plan Islands / Ferries sessions for both NIFS and CHFS.
 - Facilitated stakeholder engagement on ferry services across the CHFS network through the Ferry Stakeholder Group arrangements organised by HITRANS with island communities and their key sectoral and elected representatives.
- Rail, HITRANS have engaged with ScotRail –
 - on pax numbers travelling (they don't know as they don't collect many fares!)
 - timetable reintroduction/phasing
 - facilitated discussion on Oban schools train solution (which is to ban normal on the train as with dedicated school buses)
- EU Projects –
 - Sought to extend the projects to absorb the impact on timescales from the pandemic. This has included our DRT pilot project in Sleat, Isle of Skye changing to move goods (food orders from supermarket etc) instead of people.
 - Revised timescales of our Scottish Islands Passport project and discussed the role this can play in mitigation and encouragement of travel to our islands when lockdown eases and island access is reinstated. Strong focus on STERG 8.1 Dream Now Travel Later messaging.
- HITRANS Director is representing RTPs on the Public Health Scotland Covid-19 Social Mitigation Cell - Transport and Sustainability Sub-cell
- HITRANS Director is representing RTPs on the National Advisory Group on Transport Transition Planning.
- HITRANS are a Challenge sponsor in CivTech 5.0 with 16 responses to our challenge a number of which have potential benefits to addressing the post Covid-19 transport system. 6 proposals were shortlisted by HITRANS and Scottish Government (CivTech 5.0) colleagues for the interview stage.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact - Neutral

Policy

Impact – Positive

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – HITRANS has identified new funding to support a green economic recovery.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the update report.

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 31st August 2020