

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 8 February 2019

CONSULTATION

Aviation 2050

Purpose of Report

To inform members of the Departments for Transport's consultation on a new Aviation Strategy- Aviation 2050 – and proposals to develop a response with other key partners in the area.

Background

The UK Government commenced the development of a national aviation strategy in 2018. The initial scoping phase of this included a consultation to which HITRANS was one of the responding bodies.

The Department for Transport has now developed its green paper which outlines proposals for the new aviation strategy. The strategy will set out the challenges and opportunities for aviation to 2050 and beyond and will emphasise the significance of aviation to the UK economy and regional growth.

The strategy will focus on:

- developing a partnership for sustainable growth which meets rising passenger demand, balanced with action to reduce environmental and community impacts
- improving the passenger experience, including through technology and innovation, a new passenger charter and action to reduce delays at the border
- building on the UK's success to establish new connections across the world and create greater choice for consumers

A consultation on the Green Paper which is titled Aviation 2050: the future of UK Aviation is now open and responses are invited in advance of the closing date on 11th April 2019.

Aviation 2050 Consultation Response

HITRANS is working with colleagues in Highlands and Islands Airports (HIAL) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise to engage a suitable consortium to assist with preparing a response to the Department for Transport Green Paper.

It is our intention to commission consultants who can offer the necessary expertise to ensure that the importance of Air services to the Highlands and Islands economy is understood and suitably reflected in the context of the DfT's Aviation 2050. It is intended that the work undertaken as part of this commission will help evidence the case for suitable policy mechanisms that permit the development of Aviation within the Highlands and Islands so that it can best support sustainable economic growth within the region and add most value to the wider Scottish and UK economy.

The successful consortium will be expected to build on existing recent work undertaken to ensure that the key priorities for Aviation within the region are suitably represented within a coordinated consultation response from regional partners.

Among the key priorities which the response should seek to support include:

- Importance to the Highlands and Islands of securing guaranteed access to important International Hub airports such as London Heathrow and Amsterdam Schipol.
- Ensure that regional air connectivity to the rest of UK and Ireland is maintained and improved, and that the value these important links provide is better understood and quantified.
- Ensure that national aviation policy supports the safeguarding, and enables further development, of Highlands and Islands' intra-regional routes and routes to other parts of Scotland – many of which are 'Lifeline Services'.
- The need for appropriate formal indices of connectivity to be incorporated into government policy (at appropriate levels – whether national or devolved), in order that changes in the region's connectivity can be tracked, protected and enhanced against measurable criteria.
- Identify opportunities where the Highlands and Islands are well placed to be at the forefront in developing and implementing future technologies that will help support the decarbonisation of Aviation and improved efficiency within the Aviation sector.

Against each of these priority areas it is intended to outline clear, evidence-based arguments. Furthermore, the successful consortium will be expected to critically analyse policy proposals in the DfT Green Paper to identify opportunities or threats vis-à-vis the above key priorities for Aviation in the region.

It is anticipated that much of the regional response to the consultation will focus on connectivity from Inverness (as the regional hub) to rest of UK and internationally, given the policy proposals outlined in the Green Paper – particularly those relating to 'supporting regional growth and connectivity'. However, it is also anticipated that the submission will respond to DfT policy proposals with potential implications for lifeline services and in relation to Alternative Aviation Fuels which includes opportunities in peripheral parts of the region.

Methodology of Consultancy Commission

The methodology employed for addressing the objectives outlined above will include a mix of desk-based and primary research. The approach will involve a review of relevant data and literature, including recent studies relating to Aviation policy in the Highlands and Islands (see list of background documents below), as well as drawing upon wider national and international literature as appropriate.

The successful consortium will be expected to consult with a wide range of stakeholders via telephone or face-to-face interviews, including:

- HIAL
- HITRANS

- HIE
- The Highland Council
- Moray Council
- Argyll and Bute Council
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- Orkney Islands Council
- SCDI
- Chambers of Commerce within the region
- Federation of Small Business
- VisitScotland and Direct Marketing Organisations

Outputs from Consultancy Commission

Key outputs will include:

- A report which ensure that the key priorities for Aviation within the region, as outlined above, are suitably represented within the coordinated consultation response from regional partners.
- A detailed and visually appealing PowerPoint report. This will be used by HITRANS, HIE and HIAL in dissemination activities.

Recommendation

Members are invited to note the report and consider the areas for the Highlands and Islands which the response to the Aviation 2050 consultation should prioritise.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work supports RTS Strategic priority enhance regional connectivity.

Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work supports development of the Aviation policies set out in the RTS.

Financial

Impact – Neutral

Budget line and value – An allocation from HITRANS Research and Development Budget has been identified to support the development of a response to the Department for Transport's consultation.

Equality

Impact –neutral

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Date: 30th January 2019