

Report to Partnership Meeting – 3rd June 2011

EUROPEAN

RTP Membership of Scotland Europa

Purpose of Report

To seek approval from Members for HITRANS to subscribe to Scotland Europa under a special arrangement negotiated by South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTran) on behalf of the Model 1 RTPs.

Background

SESTran currently subscribes to the Scotland Europa service, which provides advice on and access to the EU in Brussels and support on exploring EU opportunities for funding. SESTran have found Scotland Europa to be a good resource in supporting a number of projects that have secured ERDF funding. SESTran have negotiated a reduced rate for annual membership of Scotland Europa that would allow model 1 RTPs to benefit from Scotland Europa's range of services. TACTRAN and HITRANS officers agreed to consider this option for a 1 year trial period to establish the value membership of Scotland Europa could realise.

EU intelligence, interpretation, analysis and early warning in EU policy priorities

Scotland Europa works closely with their members to influence the direction of EU policy and legislation. Scotland Europa monitor policy developments in the EU Institutions and analyse the impact on their membership. They provide regular briefings on relevant legislative negotiations, public consultations, hearings and conferences. Membership would provide HITRANS with advice on how to raise our profile in Brussels as well as putting across our position in relevant policy areas, such as transport, regional and rural policy, climate change and energy, environment, innovation and R&D.

EU Funding support

In addition to the specific services offered to members, Scotland Europa provides R&D EU Funding assistance for all Scottish companies with R&D capability. These services include:

- General enquiry service, targeted & thematic workshops;
- Specific advice by sector;

- One to one consultancy support for project idea validation against the relevant FP7 incoming/published calls (max 3 days);
- Early intelligence of incoming Work Programmes and calls; and
- Partner search & European networking.

Scotland Europa will offer the SESTran, TACTRAN and HITRANS access to more tailored advice and extensive support for the development of project ideas, drafting of the applications right up to support in contractual negotiations for successful projects both individually and collectively, linked to the level of our membership package.

Influencing and strategic networking activities

The three regional transport partnerships, SEStran, Tactran and HITRANS would be able to use Scotland Europa's extensive contacts to compliment our existing strategic alliances and ongoing relationships for policy influencing and promotional activities.

Using our conference centre facilities in Scotland House Scotland Europa organise policy seminars, project forums and promotional/networking events. These discussions with the EU Institutions, permanent representations to the EU, European networks, trade associations and other stakeholders ensure that Scottish interests stay well connected in Europe. The membership package includes free use of the conference centre for any HITRANS events or networking.

The Scotland Europa team are also able to design and deliver meeting programmes for engagement with officials from the EU Institutions, European Parliamentarians and other stakeholders in Brussels. Equally Scotland Europa arrange programmes for EU officials to visit members in Scotland so that we can learn first hand how EU legislation impacts on our interests.

Costs

SESTran have negotiated a joint membership rate of £12,000 per annum and it is proposed that each RTP should pay an equal share of this for 2011/12. This would leave HITRANS share of costs being £4,000. HITRANS officers feel this offers good value for the range of services Scotland Europa offer and recommend that we agree to join for 2011/12 and review the benefits of this at the end of the year before considering membership beyond the current financial year.

Both TACTRAN and SESTran have confirmed their share of the £12,000 cost for 2011/12.

Recommendation

1. Members are asked to note the report.
2. Members are asked to approve the allocation of £4,000 from the Publicity budget to meet the cost of membership of Scotland Europa for 1 year after which membership benefits will be reviewed in the light of the benefits accrued from this trial period.

Risk	impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	Membership of Scotland Europa will support RTS delivery by improving HITRANS ability to influence policy and opening up new funding opportunities.
Policy	√	Membership of Scotland Europa will help HITRANS ability to influence policy making at EU, UK and Scottish levels.
Financial	√	Membership of Scotland Europa should make it easier for HITRANS to identify EU funding opportunities.
Equality	-	

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Date: 12th May 2011