

## Report to Partnership Meeting 8 February 2019

### EUROPEAN PROJECTS

#### FASTER Project

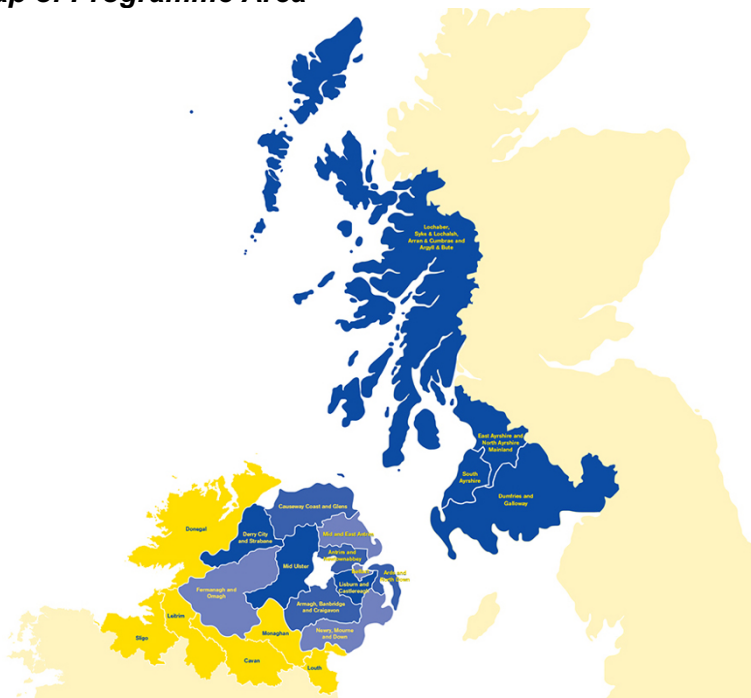
#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the recent submission of the FASTER project to the INTERREG VA Programme, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), working with Partners from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland. The outcome of the application is expected in February 2019.

#### KEY OBJECTIVE

The key objective of FASTER is to install 73 rapid chargers in the INTERREG VA region by 2023 to assist with the development and expansion of the cross-border electric vehicle public charging network.

#### *Map of Programme Area*



#### **FASTER – Facilitating A Sustainable Transition to EVs in the Regions**

The FASTER Project is a joint proposal across Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland to support the overarching ambition to transition to low carbon transport systems, and demonstrate how the three countries can provide learning in relation to the electrification of transport. As well

as the physical rollout of 73 rapid charge points, the project will assist with cross-border analysis of the planning and procurement requirements needed to kick start a commercial charging service in the three jurisdictions.

A common policy ambition across Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland is to transition to a low carbon transport system between now and 2040. The respective Government policies have set targets for the phasing out of internal combustion engines in the next decades and are providing incentives for the uptake of electric vehicles. One of the main barriers is the lack of public charging infrastructure and rapid charging locations in particular. FASTER will ensure that the availability of charging stations is not a major obstacle to EV market penetration, with the proposal to carry out the design and analysis, procurement, installation and operation of 73 rapid chargers (50KW capacity) across the 3 programme countries. It will also provide an additional supportive, enabling environment for suppliers and consumers and provide increased confidence and reassurance in regional commitment to the emerging EV market.

The project partnership comprises the following organisations:

- 1) East Border Region (Lead Partner)
- 2) Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- 3) South West College
- 4) HITRANS
- 5) Ulster University
- 6) Dundalk Institute of Technology
- 7) University of Strathclyde

The FASTER Project has six work packages:

- **Management:** The overall programme management and administration of the project (WP Leader – East Border Region)
- **Communication:** Communicating the processes, procurements and project milestones (WP Leader – East Border Region)
- **Technical 1:** Research and develop an outline design and the needs analysis required across the 3 programme countries for EV rapid chargers; identify sites and develop a technical and operational plan that will form the basis of a central procurement for 73 rapid chargers (WP Leader – Ulster University)
- **Technical 2:** Design and run the procurement for the detailed design, installation, operation and maintenance of the EV rapid charging infrastructure to ensure interoperability across the regions and integration with existing infrastructures, and select the preferred supplier/suppliers for the three jurisdictions (WP Leader – HITRANS)
- **Technical 3:** Oversee the installation and operation with an exit strategy for the handover of the infrastructure to a commercial operator (WP Leader – Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland)
- **Technical 4:** Behaviour change and awareness programme to ensure adequate promotion and usage of the new rapid chargers in all three jurisdictions. As the EV sector is a growing sector, it is recognised that the initial investment in alternative infrastructure is considered costly; however, the proposal will demonstrate that the infrastructure will yield dividends in the longer term, enabling the countries to adapt more quickly to the developing market and actively set the countries on the right path to decarbonisation and cleaner air. The proposal is aligned with the three country strategies for alternative infrastructure and this project will demonstrate the regional benefits of cross border co-operation in this sector. (WP Leader – South West College)

## HITRANS ROLE

The FASTER project closely aligns with HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and allows HITRANS to deliver practical projects contributing towards the greening of transport in the area. FASTER allows HITRANS to learn best practice for deploying charge points and promote sustainable transport in the region. HITRANS are leading on the Design and Procurement work package, and it is expected that HITRANS will install 24 rapid chargers across the HITRANS proportion of the INTERREG VA programme area. Preliminary work has been conducted on possible locations for the chargers through our EV Strategy; however, a large proportion of the project is dedicated to site selection and needs analysis to ensure that the best locations are selected, and that it is complementary to existing infrastructure in the region.

## PROJECT BUDGET

HITRANS have a significant budget in the FASTER project, totalling €1,688,653, allowing HITRANS to install 24 rapid chargers in Scotland.

## RISK REGISTER

### RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – The FASTER project supports several RTS objectives, particularly in the field of low carbon transport and support for EV uptake.

### Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – FASTER is supporting broader policy work by conducting research on the procurement and installation of a rapid charging network and how this complements existing infrastructure.

### Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – The project attracts a reimbursement rate of 85%.

### Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – FASTER aims to increase the number of publicly accessible charge points to encourage more EV drivers in the region.

## RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:-

1. Note the report.

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**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019