

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 13 September 2019

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Scottish Islands Passport

Purpose of Report

To update Members on progress being made to develop a Scottish Islands Passport, a commitment in the Scottish Governments' Programme for 2018 / 2019.

Background

At the HITRANS Partnership Meeting in April 2018, Members approved a recommendation for officers to develop a detailed proposal for a Scottish Islands Passport and investigate means of funding its implementation.

The Scottish Government subsequently committed to “develop an Islands passport scheme as a marketing initiative to encourage people to visit more of Scotland’s 80 inhabited islands” within their Programme for Government.

HITRANS have continued to work with the Scottish Government and have been successful in submitting an application to the EU LEADER Programme for funding to implement the Passport proposal. The application was supported with match funding contributions from HITRANS, the Scottish Government and also ZetTrans.

Update

Following the signing of the Grant Award letter for the Cooperative EU LEADER project in August 2019, HITRANS advertised for the position of a Project Manager (Initial 18 Month contract) to oversee the implementation of the Scottish Island Passport initiative with a deadline for applications of Wednesday 11th September.

Applications have been encouraged from Island based individuals with interviews of shortlisted candidates due to take place on 20th Sept. It is hoped that the successful candidate will be in post by 1st November. The Project Manager will be line managed by HITRANS but will also report to a project steering group made up of invited representatives from key stakeholders from across the project area.

The post holders primary role will be to develop “a Scottish Island Passport to help promote all of Scotland’s offshore islands which are accessible by regular transport and is so doing help encourage more people to visit more of these Islands.” They will be responsible for implementing a detailed project plan that will include the development of both physical and online App based

versions of a Scottish Island Passport that are capable of appealing to different markets and demographics.

In developing the proposal, HITRANS has already undertaken significant consultation with a wide range of key stakeholders to help establish both the merit of the proposal and agree the core aims and objectives which the Passport will seek to deliver. These include: increased visitor numbers; encouraging greater dispersal of visitors within the Islands so that those with less profile or more remote can also benefit; and helping to support sustainable economic development and inclusive growth.

The intention is to develop the Scottish Island Passport to coincide with Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020.

While public funding is being sought to develop the proposal, a key element of the project will be to establish a sustainable revenue model that will enable the Passport to thrive and develop beyond the timeframe of the LEADER project.

Recommendation

Members are invited to note the report

Risk Register

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – If successfully implemented the proposal has the potential to help support lifeline transport services to the region's most remote and fragile islands.

Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work seeks to support economic development in each of Scotland's inhabited islands by increasing visitor numbers

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – A budget of £6,000 in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 has been identified to support a LEADER application.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – This project seeks to encourage more people to visit all of Scotland's inhabited islands that are accessible by regular public transport.

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