

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 roll out 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 areas. 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

HITRANS ROLE

The FASTER project closely aligns with our Regional Transport Strategy and allows HITRANS to deliver practical projects contributing towards the greening of transport in the area. FASTER will share 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 we will install 24 rapid charge points (or more if budget allows) across our proportion of the INTERREG VA programme area. Preliminary work has been conducted on possible locations for the chargers through our EV Strategy, and discussions are ongoing with Transport Scotland project partner Strathclyde University (engaging with SSE Networks) to ensure locations are chosen wisely and in line with grid capacity and existing infrastructure.

To fulfil project requirements, HITRANS will be hiring two new staff members – a project officer and a project administrator. Now that the project has been approved we will aim to hire in the coming months.

PROJECT BUDGET

HITRANS has a significant budget in the FASTER project, totalling €1,675,703, allowing HITRANS to install 24 rapid chargers in Scotland, or more if budget allows.

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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