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For immediate release

Energy for change: Lancashire delivers quality in public transport

The ENERQI project and CIVINET UK & Ireland Network hosted a joint event in Preston on 18th September. The seminar showcased best practise in developing quality public transport services involving public transport operators, local authorities and passenger organisations to an audience of transport industry professionals from across the UK.

Mike Kirby, CIVINET UK & Ireland Network Chair, Lancashire County Council opened the event speaking about the potential for learning within European projects saying that *"both ENERQI and CIVINET are good examples of partnership working to achieve common aims".* He said that the ENERQI project was an opportunity to deliver real quality for public transport customers in terms of service provision; a core theme that was reflected throughout the day.

Andrew Varley, ENERQI[1] Local Project Manager, Lancashire County Council, spoke about the challenges of the project and in particular the varied approach to changing attitudes towards public transport. He said ENERQI was *a "new way of capturing people's perception of the public transport services they were using on a regular basis and looking at the whole journey experience'*. There is also an opportunity for other authorities or bus companies to use the Enerqi tool developed to monitor their own services.

Nigel Eggleton, Director of Sales and Marketing, Transdev Blazefield maintained the theme of the customer experience talking about the 'challenges' the public face when travelling by bus, identifying some of the barriers such as cash payment for travel, accessibility to information and the key aim of companies like his to attract customers to travel by bus by offering a higher specification service. He identified via a case study a service that had experienced 3.5% growth as a result of repainting and refurbishing vehicles, improving frequency and making wi-fi available.

Chris Hadfield, CIVINET UK & Ireland Network Manager, Lancashire County Council, spoke about CIVITAS and adding value to the programme via CIVINET in "*overcoming hurdles and the challenges of implementing (CIVITAS) measures".* He added the lessons learnt from Europe and beyond were wide ranging using two case studies – Biodiesel / biofuels in Graz, Austria and the Curitiba Masterplan, Brazil, to illustrate his point, saying both examples focused on innovation and transferable lessons that applied best practice.

[1] ENERQI – Energy Efficiency by using daily customers quality observations to improve public transport

David Beer, Passenger Executive, Passenger Focus, returned to the theme of measuring passenger satisfaction in his presentation Passenger Focus: The Passenger View. He noted that “quality is perception” in terms of how passengers assess their travelling experience and is key in measuring ‘success’ in terms of service delivery. He added that this was built on a strong evidence base which complemented the work of ENERQI and the ongoing evaluation of day to day (public transport) service provision. He said it was “refreshing to see the passenger at the centre” of the ENERQI project. He spoke about innovation and the important role it has to play in attracting more passengers to use public transport using the example of a ‘fare planner’ that functions in the same way as a journey planner, but calculates the cost of a journey.

Chris Hadfield in summing up the proceedings said that the event had *“demonstrated the diversity in the way transport interacts with its environment. Each delivered paper has highlighted in different ways the importance of transport not only to individuals but communities.”*

TTR, 18th September 2012

Information for Editors:

- ENERQI is a project funded by Intelligent Energy Europe: The project is linked to supporting 64 improvement actions which require cooperation from a number of European partner countries, adopting wide ranging needs and approaches across varied public transport networks. A key aim of the project is to develop and trial a monitoring tool. This is being tested by Observers, 140 members of the public so far, who have provided information about their journey by bus.

  This is not only highlighting areas of concern for customers regarding quality of bus service provision but also provides an evidence base of information; a key aspect or outcome of the project. The presentation concluded with a demonstration of the ENERQI monitoring tool.

- The CIVINET UK & Ireland Network (www.civitas.eu/civinet) is a membership network for public authorities in the UK and Ireland and other organisations with an interest in sustainable mobility. It is the only network that brings together public authorities to achieve more sustainable, clean and energy efficient urban transport systems to:
  - mitigate the impact on Climate Change;
  - reduce the cost and unreliability of congestion to the economy; and
  - improve health and air quality.

- Other event speakers included:
    - Richard Watts, Rail Project Manager, Lancashire County Council, spoke about a new generation of low carbon rail stations across North West Europe in the INTERREG IVB SUSSTATIONS project; identifying the importance of rail stations as transport hubs and the role stations can play, in terms of connectivity, within the communities they serve, often as part of regeneration projects.
    - Andy Watt, Head of City Development Services, Norwich City Council, spoke about the bus measures that had been introduced as part of the CIVITAS programme, the lessons learnt from that experience and the legacy that was now leading to the Norwich Better Bus Area Fund (BBAF) project. He said that the BBAF would fund a package of measures to improve bus service provision that would focus on the quality of bus services along 2 key corridors supporting economic growth in Norwich, that was seeing 37,000 new homes built and 27,000 new jobs created by 2026.
    - Chris Anslow, Public Transport Development Manager, Lancashire County Council, spoke about a rapid bus transport scheme 'Pennine Reach' which is aiming to improve public transport provision along the Accrington – Blackburn – Darwen corridors. He spoke about the impact that poor connectivity had had in the area and the major interventions that were required to improve links, providing better access to employment, education and housing as part of a wider regeneration scheme. At the core of the project was a new transport (bus) interchange that links to the local shops, in common with the SUSSTATIONS project.

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