

Report to Partnership Board 27 November 2015

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Active Travel Strategy Update

Purpose of Report

To provide board members with an update on Active Transport Strategy Refresh.

Introduction

HITRANS officers invited five consultants to submit tenders for undertaking a number of Work Packages to assist with updating the Active Travel Strategy based on the scope outlined below.

Tender documents were issued on 13th October with a deadline for completed tender packages to be submitted by 2nd November 2015. AECOM have subsequently been awarded the contract, with the inception meeting on 7th December, and a workshop with ATAG members scheduled for 14th December.

Background for ITT

HITRANS was established as one of the seven Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships in December 2005. The Transport Scotland Act 2005 requires these Partnerships to prepare Transport Strategies for their regions which will enhance economic wellbeing; promote safety, social inclusion and equal opportunity; plan for a sustainable transport system; and integrate across boundaries with other Partnerships. These Strategies must take account of future needs and set priorities for transport development and improvement.

A key policy within the original HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy was to undertake Active Travel Audits and produce action plans for all the regional centres and other key settlements in the HITRANS area. A total of 17 listed below were produced between 2008 and 2012. These have recently been updated to incorporate 2011 census data and reflect any recent improvements or planning developments since they were originally produced.

The list of towns within HITRANS area with Active Travel Masterplans is as follows;

- Ainess/Invergordon
- Aviemore
- Campbeltown
- Dingwall
- Dunoon
- Elgin
- Forres, Kinloss and Findhorn
- Fort William
- Inverness
- Kirkwall
- Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig
- Nairn
- Oban (draft)

- Rothesay
- Stornoway
- Thurso
- Wick

The HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy is also currently in the process of being updated and the aim is that this Regional Active Travel Strategy will form a key element of the updated document.

Action No 2 of the updated Cycling Action Plan for Scotland requests that ‘each local area develop the strategic approach to supporting functional cycling (and active travel more broadly), mapping the appropriate infrastructure improvements required along with supporting promotional work to achieve tangible changes in travel choices’ with an implication that future funding may only be provided where such strategic plans are in place.

The HITRANS region covers a large area which is focused around key settlements and transport ‘hubs’ connected by main roads, train networks and ferries. The region covers 50% of Scotland’s land mass, including the majority of inhabited islands, servicing roughly 10% of the population.

This update of Active Travel priorities and the development of a specific regional Active Travel Strategy will reflect changes in European, National and Local Government policies, and will link into the key strategic priorities and policies within our 5 member Local Authorities: Argyll and Bute Council, Highland Council, Moray Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Orkney Islands Council.

The Regional Active Travel Strategy will identify both where investment to address the actions within the 17 Masterplans should be prioritised and also set out those parts of the strategic network where walking and cycling facilities need improved and align this with the aspiration for developing a National Cycling and Walking Network in National Planning Framework 3. It shall also identify an investment plan for improving opportunities for multi-modal travel within the area.

It shall also make recommendations as to which behaviour change interventions will have the most significant impact within the different urban and rural contexts of the HITRANS region.

Scope

- Review the wider EU, National and Local policy context for the Regional Active Travel Strategy including the emerging refresh of the National Transport Strategy, HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy, the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, National Walking Strategy, Local Transport Strategies, Local Development Plans and plans and policies of Community Planning Partners.
- Provide baseline data, utilising 2011 census contained within the Active Travel Masterplans but also other sources making recommendations as to how the different areas within the HITRANS region reach CAPS aspirations, and other policy objectives.
- To identify priorities for Active Travel within each local authority area through the review of the action plans within each of the active travel audits and also a strategy which meets the needs of the larger settlements, and also rural areas for encouraging and developing active travel.
- Highlight opportunities and difficulties in achieving active travel in rural regions.
- Link to multi modal opportunities for travel.
- Develop an area wide map of strategic active travel routes/aspirations.
- Highlight opportunities arising from future EU funding, such as HITRANS live application with Interreg VB North Sea Region ERDF, and potential for ERDF Active Travel hubs within the region.

- Link to recreational walking and cycling and links with NCN development/aspirations for region.
- Identify priorities for active travel within each LA partner area and link to key local policies such as Local and green transport strategies and Local Development Plans.
- Make recommendations as to which behaviour change interventions will have the most significant impact within the different urban and rural contexts of the HITRANS region.

Consultation and Development

- Facilitate a workshop of the HITRANS Active Travel Action Group (ATAG).
- Consult with other key transport stakeholders including main transport operators for each transport mode within the HITRANS area.
- Undertake a series of face to face meetings with each of HITRANS member Local Authority Advisors to HITRANS to help ensure that the ATS reflects the policy context and priorities of each local authority area.
- Develop an associated monitoring strategy and Action Plan for achieving active travel targets and aspirations at both national and local level.
- Provide a presentation on the key themes and priorities of the updated ATS to a meeting of the HITRANS Partnership (or ATAG).
- Provide abbreviated version of the ATS and associated documents which can be incorporated into the RTS refresh
- Supply any electronic mapping incorporated within the ATS in a format which HITRANS and its partner Local Authorities can import into their own mapping databases including ArcGIS.

Study Management

The Consultant will report to the Partnership Manager and Active Travel Officer at key points during the work including a face to face at the inception meeting and thereafter by telephone and video conference (or face to face if available at the proposed events identified in the scope).

Personnel

Consultants selected for this commission must demonstrate previous recent experience of successfully developing similar transport strategies and applying Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance to this process.

Consultants must demonstrate a detailed understanding of the social, economic and political context within the HITRANS region and the challenges faced in delivering transport services by each mode to this unique environment. The successful team will have to demonstrate knowledge of the funding constraints and opportunities faced when delivering transport services to fragile rural and island communities.

Consultants must be able to demonstrate an ability to work successfully with a wide range of stakeholders via a variety of mediums, undertake thorough objective analysis and produce high quality reports.

Budget

A budget of £10,000 including expenses (exc. VAT) has been set for this project.

Recommendation

Board members are invited to note the report and provide any comments on the scope of the Active Travel Strategy prior to the consultation workshop on 14th December.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS Delivery	√	This work supports RTS objectives and the monitoring of their

		implementation.
Policy	√	This work supports the development of our Active Travel Policies H27a to H27d
Financial	-	A budget of £100k in 15/16 has been allocated.
Equality	√	HITRANS support for Active Travel helps eliminate the barriers to travel for all and removes a number of physical accessibility barriers.

Report by: Fiona McInally
Designation: Active Travel Officer
Date: 18th November 2015.