

**Report to Partnership Meeting 26 September 2014**

**RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

**Active Travel / Sustrans Partnership and Community Links Update**

**Purpose of the Report:**

To provide an overview of current and upcoming projects, and their associated budget.

To provide an overview of additional Community Links funding which has been awarded since the last partnership board on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

**Active Travel / Sustrans Partnership Update:**

As part of partnership agreement with Sustrans Scotland, HITRANS were awarded £100,000 per year for 2014/15 to develop and enhance active travel projects within the area.

The budget has been allocated towards a number of projects, including the creation of Active Travel Maps to link into the audits for the main towns within the area. However there is still an opportunity for HITRANS to work alongside partners to help provide added value to additional local projects where possible.

Area	Project Title	Budget	Detail
HITRANS wide	HiBike Active Travel Maps	£25k	This budget will enable the design, cartography and print of 10 AT maps within the year, following the design and delivery of Maps within Highland through the G+AT project.
HITRANS Wide	Active Travel Masterplans update,	TBC	Additional budget towards AT audit refresh to enable costings to be developed for new AT priorities within each settlement, where required.
HITRANS Wide	Cycling and Walking Friendly Street Pilots	£50k	Taking learning from CAPS delivery forum to pilot the installation and monitoring of cycling and friendly walking roads to encourage AT behaviour change.
Highland /Argyll and Bute	Scottish Stations Fund	£10k	Providing match funding to the SSF application to improve AT facilities on the Highland Mail Line and West Highland Line.
HITRANS wide	Regional Active Travel Strategy	£10K	To develop an AT strategy for the whole HITRANS region, which links into the RTS, AT audits and LA's. This will help meet CAPS criteria for future funding opportunities, while also highlighting the need for AT solutions in the smaller communities within the area.

**Table 1. Outline spend for 2014/15**

The AT officer is liaising with officers in each Local Authority to identify suitable projects. Potential areas of work include:

- Small infrastructure projects.
- Feasibility studies and design specifications for projects.
- AT events
- Monitoring of AT behaviour
- Working with local universities and colleges to establish a 'package of measures' to encourage AT
- Encouraging AT through art and community projects on local paths\*

### **Sustrans Community Links Funding Update**

#### **Round 1: Awards for 2014/15:**

As reported to the last Partnership meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014, a total of 33 applications were submitted to the Sustrans' Community Links Fund from within the HITRANS area. This resulted in the HITRANS area securing almost 18.5% of the total budget available across Scotland for 22 applications, including all of the large scale projects which the Local Authority Partners had applied for.

From a national perspective, 136 projects out of 208 were awarded funding at this stage.

From a regional perspective:

- The HITRANS area will benefit from £2,678,169 of the whole community links budget in round 1.
- Additionally, a further £1,075,000 has been committed to projects in the area for the 2015/16 year, where projects are expected to take 2 years to complete.
- Therefore, the Sustrans contribution (usually 50% of each project) will be £3,753,169 for the round 1 applications over the next 2 years, resulting in around £7.5million being spent on improved walking and cycling infrastructure.

#### **Round 2: Additional Community Links Awarded for 2014/15:**

On 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014, the Transport Minister Keith Brown, announced a £15M funding package as part of a '[Green Travel Boost](#)' including an additional £7M on cycling and walking infrastructure, which was allocated to Sustrans. This money has been split between National Cycle Network developments and improvements (including the Great Glen Way), Safer Routes to Schools funding and the Community Links programme, which was oversubscribed earlier in the year.

In total £4.5M was added to the Community Links budget. 11 projects within the HITRANS area were unsuccessful during round 1 and everyone was encouraged to resubmit these projects for the second round of funding.

In total an additional £1,519,000 (around 1/3 of the total budget available for round 2) has been awarded to the HITRANS area, for the projects listed below:

- £610k, HITRANS/HIE, Inverness Campus, North Bridge- match towards walking and cycling element for the active travel bridge.
- £71.5K, Highland, Beauly to Inverness (Lovat to Kirkhill link)
- £42.5K, Highland, Tower Road cycle Improvements, Culloden
- £50, Moray , Elgin flood scheme, Lhanbryde extension
- £60k, Moray, Keith and Buckie Urban Freedom
- £85K, Orkney, Toab cycle track
- £600K, Scottish Canals, for improvements of the Towpath along the Great Glen.
- Argyll and Bute have also been successful with an additional £150K of funding, but this is for infrastructure out with the HITRANS region this time around.

Similar to the last round of Community Links, these projects will be matched by 50% local funding. However, these projects are being asked to deliver the infrastructure within the 2014/15 financial year.

#### **Future Progress:**

HITRANS are currently working closely with HIE and the Highland Council to look at options to complete the funding package towards the Inverness Campus North Bridge so that it will include provision for local bus services.

Where required the Active Travel Officer will support partner local authorities with their ongoing Active Travel Projects.

#### **Recommendation**

1. Members are asked to note the report. Further progress reports will be brought to future Partnership Meetings.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Comment</b>
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 2013/14 and £100K in 2014/15 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:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014