

## **Report to Partnership Meeting 24 April 2020**

### **RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

#### **Active Travel Update**

##### **Purpose of Report**

To provide Members with an update on Active Travel projects in which HITRANS are currently involved.

##### **REGIONAL ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND (Transport Scotland)**

Several projects under the 2019/20 fund which were due to complete in March have now been postponed. HITRANS has agreement from Transport Scotland to accrue the funds allocated to these projects into the next financial year. These projects are:

1. Street lighting and signage improvements to improve access to Aviemore Station, due to a delay in confirmation of match funding from ScotRail;
2. Design work on active travel improvements at Uig on Skye;
3. Inverness ebike share scheme – matched with funds from Stronger Combined (ERDF Interreg North Sea Region Programme) to set up a pilot electric bike share scheme in Inverness;
4. Cycle parking at transport interchanges;
5. Contribution to Transport Hub as part of Wick Riverside improvements;

Projects completed under the 2019/20 budget are:

- Velosock trial for carrying bikes on Citylink buses on three routes from Inverness – these will be rolled out when travel restrictions are lifted.
- Cycle parking at transport terminals and interchanges across the HITRANS area, including Skye, Wick, Thurso and Inverness – installation of some of these has been delayed.
- Designs and minor works to carry out priority interventions to design out and remove barriers to utility active travel, including design work for an active travel route to access the new hospital in Aviemore, and minor path works to facilitate active travel within the Raigmore Hospital site.
- Technical feasibility work to reinstate a section of old road on Mull as a local cycle route.

##### **2020-21 REGIONAL ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND (Transport Scotland)**

HITRANS has submitted a bid to Transport Scotland for funding from the 2020/21 Regional Active Travel Fund. The budget will cover four project headings:

- Bikes on Buses
  - Expansion of Velosock solution if it proves successful,
  - Explore in-bus bike carriage solutions in Argyll & Bute similar to Borders Buses Route X62
- Cycle Parking at Transport Interchanges

- Cycle parking at transport interchanges and community hubs, particularly in rural areas and strategic transport corridors – approx. 15 locations.
- Active Travel Masterplan Small Interventions
  - Small works to carry out priority interventions to remove barriers to utility active travel. Works are planned in the following communities:
    - ⇒ Lochgilphead
    - ⇒ Kirkwall
    - ⇒ Rogart
- Active Travel Project Design
  - Design and appraisal work, particularly detailed design of small works to support the delivery of the Active Travel Masterplan Action Plan. Design work can be 100% funded and proposals are invited from members.
- Inverness ebike share scheme
 

Set-up of up the electric bike share pilot in Inverness will continue through 2020 and a tender was recently issued for an operator to install, operate and maintain the scheme. There will initially be three or four bike hub charging stations, located at Inverness Station, Inverness Campus, and Raigmore Hospital, with 30 – 40 bikes. There may also be an opportunity to set up “virtual” hubs at other sites, where bikes can be left but not charged. The aim of the project is to enable the last mile of a journey to be made by bike on trips where the longest part of the journey is by public / other transport; replace car journeys with cycling for short journeys in town, and provide access to an ebike where ownership / storage is problematic.

## **SUSTRANS PARTNERSHIP FUNDING**

Several projects within the Sustrans Partnership Fund 2019/20 are likely to be delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions. Two projects are likely to be completed by the end of May:

- Strathspey active travel map
- Pedestrian & cycle counter on the Black Parks Route

An Edinburgh-based consultant, Arup, has been appointed to work on the Active Travel Masterplan Updates for Wick and Thurso, which will span two financial years. Arup have some innovative ideas for remote working and if necessary remote engagement, so are able to continue work on this project.

The following projects are likely to be delayed; we are awaiting confirmation from Sustrans on what the situation will be regarding funding for these projects:

- Inverness Active Travel Route Monitoring
- Portable Parklets to reclaim space used by vehicles at Inverness Station
- Fort William signage strategy

*Projects likely to be taken forward in 2020-21 under the Sustrans Partnership Fund include:*

- Inner Moray Firth Active Travel Masterplan
- Open Streets event equipment
- Cycling Friendly / Quietways in the Cairngorms National Park
- Strategic Bus Corridor North; facilitating cycling for 1<sup>st</sup> and last mile (working with Sustrans' Transport Integration Officer)
- Elgin active travel map

## **OTHER PROJECTS**

### *Active Travel Advisory Group*

The next meeting of the HITRANS Active Travel Advisory Group met in February; the next meeting is due in August.

### *Fort William Active Travel Group*

Lochaber Environmental Group is taking the lead in setting up an active travel group for Fort William; the first meeting of the group was due to happen in April but has been postponed.

### *Liftshare Promotion*

HITRANS management of the Hltravel Liftshare platform and promotion of the service continues. Both Highland Council and NHS Highland have withdrawn their bespoke platforms, with members migrating to the Hltravel Liftshare platform.

### *Ebikes*

The rural ebike trial continues in Fort William, Aviemore and Grantown on Spey. Marketing / promotion activity was planned for a pre-Easter “boost” to raise awareness locally of the scheme; this has been postponed and the bikes are being made available for long-term loan to key workers.

## **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note this report and consider opportunities for advancing projects within the different Active Travel funding streams which will support HITRANS wider policy objectives and priorities.

## **Risk Register**

### RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work supports both relevant RTS objectives and those of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland and Active Travel Framework.

### Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work supports the development of our Active Travel policies.

### Financial

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work is supported by Transport Scotland’s Regional Active Travel Grant Fund and Sustrans active travel partnership funding.

### Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – HITRANS support for active travel helps eliminate the barriers to travel for all and removes a number of physical accessibility barriers.

**Report by:** Vikki Trelfer

**Designation:** Active Travel Officer

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020