

Minute of Meeting held in Golf View Hotel, Nairn, on 3 December 2010 at 10.00am.

PRESENT	Mr Duncan Macintyre (Chairman) - Argyll & Bute Council Mr John Laing (Vice Chairman) - The Highland Council Mr Jim Foubister – Orkney Islands Council Mr Donald Manford – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Mr George MacIntyre – Moray Council Mr Okain McLennan Mr Wilson Metcalfe Professor David Gray
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr Derek Mackay – Partnership Secretary Mr Mike Mitchell – Partnership Financial Manager Mr Dave Duthie – HITRANS Mr Ranald Robertson - HITRANS Mr Frank Roach – HITRANS Mr Sam MacNaughton – The Highland Council Ms Sarah Jane Fox – Orkney Islands Council Mr Murdo Gray – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Mr Gordon Holland – Moray Council Mr Tony Jarvis – Highlands & Islands Enterprise Mr David Summers – HITRANS Transport Coordinating Officers Group Mr Gareth Williams – Scottish Council Development & Industry Ms Pip Farman – NHS Highland Mrs Christine Kendall – HITRANS Mrs Katy Cunningham – HITRANS Mrs Grietje Menger – Audit Scotland
APOLOGIES	Mr Robert Pollock – Argyll & Bute Council Mrs Pearl Tate – Audit Scotland Mr Nigel Wunsch – Network Rail

MINUTE

Minute of Meeting of 3 September 2010	1	The Minute of Meeting of 3 September 2010 was approved with the following textual amendment: Include the following text at item 10. (3) Support the bid by the Highland Council for European Funding to progress the development of Active Travel Projects within their key settlements.
Matters Arising	2	There were no matters arising from the Minute.
FINANCE		
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report	3	The Partnership Treasurer submitted a Report detailing the revenue position for the period to 31 October 2010. The Report indicated that income and expenditure was broadly in line with the budget outturn target and officers were not aware of any anomalies that would distort the overall position. It was agreed to note the Revenue Monitoring Report for the period 1 April 2010 - 31 October 2010.

HITRANS 2009/10 Audit Report 4 The Chairman welcomed Mrs Grietje Menger, Audit Scotland, to the Meeting. Mrs Menger presented the Audit Scotland Report in relation to the governance of HITRANS for the year ending 31 March 2010. The Report stated that Audit Scotland had audited the financial statements and looked at aspects of governance and performance within the Partnership and overall had found the financial stewardship of HITRANS to be satisfactory. The Report further stated that the governance arrangements reflected the fundamental principles of openness, integrity and accountability and the systems of internal control provided an appropriate means of preventing or detecting material mis-statement, error, fraud or corruption.

It was agreed to note the Report.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Network Rail RUS Consultation 5 In the absence of Nigel Wunsch, Network Rail, Mr Frank Roach gave a presentation on the Rail Utilisation Strategy Consultation from Network Rail. Mr Roach highlighted the key issues and options within the consultation document and indicated that responses would have to be submitted by 10 January 2011.

It was agreed to authorise the Partnership Director, in consultation with the Partnership Advisors to formulate a draft response on behalf of HITRANS, circulate the response to the Board Members for comments and thereafter to submit the response to Network Rail.

RETB Switches and Crossings 6 Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report detailing the findings from Scott Wilson's Signalling Report on proposed Rail Switching and Crossing Upgrades which would lead to faster train speeds and shorter journey times. The Report indicated that HITRANS had commissioned consultants to investigate the feasibility of upgrading switches and crossings on Radio Electronic Token Block signal routes. While the consultants had identified a technical solution the costs were likely to be considerable and it was not proposed to take any further action to pursue this option at present.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Research and Development Update 7 Mr Dave Duthie submitted a Report providing an update on the Research and Strategy & Development Programme. The Report stated that while work continued to progress for much of the content of the Programme some circumstances had changed including the Strategic Defence Review, the delay to sign off by all of the final partners in the TransTour Interreg Project and the changing circumstances regarding the development of a scheduled air service between Inverness and a European Hub Airport. The Report stated it was proposed to revise the 2011 programme to reflect these occurrences.

It was agreed to:

- (1) note the continued progress and delivery of the Research/Strategy Development Programme for 2010/2011;**
- (2) to approve the amendments to the Research/Strategy Development Programme 2010/11 as detailed in the appendix to the Report;**
- (3) to authorise the Chairman to make representations to Political Parties to seek their views on the retention/extension of RET on ferry routes and concessionary fares;**
- (4) authorise the Partnership Director, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to respond to the Scottish Government's Consultation on the Scottish Budget highlighting HITRANS comments on the need to introduce a sustainable concessionary travel scheme;**
- (5) invite a representative from CMAL to the next Meeting and ask him to give a presentation on the Small Ferries Project on which they led.**
- (6) invite Mr Graham Laidlaw to the next Meeting and ask him to give a presentation in respect of ferry services;**
- (7) authorise the Partnership Director to write to each of the Partner Authorities expressing the concerns of HITRANS at any proposed reduction and public transport services; and**
- (8) authorise the Partnership Director to seek confirmation from Partner Authorities of their capital programmes in order to assess potential future demands for design services across the Highlands and Islands and to report back to a future Meeting.**

Timetable Database Renewal 8 Mr Ranald Robertson and Mr David Summers submitted a joint Report detailing progress on the development of a new timetable information system and database for use by member authorities to send information to Traveline and for the production of public transport publicity materials. The Report stated that the replacement of the timetable database had been discussed at HITRANS Transport Coordinating Officers Group and The Highland Council had led on the procurement process for a new system in order to establish costs.

It was agreed to approve the allocation of £20k from the HITRANS Research and Development Budget to part fund the purchase of the new timetable database subject to confirmation from all Partner Authorities of their commitment to and funding of the respective elements of the initial and ongoing system costs, as detailed in the Report.

- Regional Transport Strategy Targets 9 Mr Dave Duthie submitted a Report detailing the outcome of discussions with Audit Scotland in respect of the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy. Audit Scotland had suggested that the monitoring and evaluation process in respect of the Strategy would be strengthened with the introduction of Interim Transport Indicator Targets for each transport indicator used in the framework. This approach would identify whether transport interventions across the region were positively improving key indicators which in turn would demonstrate whether sufficient was being done within the sector to support Government in achieving its objectives and purpose.
- It was agreed:**
- (1) to adopt the list of Interim Transport Indicator Targets, suitably amended, as detailed in the separately circulated paper and that the Partnership Director would report progress in achieving these targets to future Meetings of the Board;**
 - (2) that a column would be added to the Interim Transport Indicator Targets detailing who had principal ownership of each target; and**
 - (3) that the terminology in relation to delivery of targets would be discussed with Audit Scotland as part of development of the next Annual Audit Plan.**
- Moray Taskforce 10 Mr Ranold Robertson and Mr Gordon Holland submitted a joint Report in relation to the Moray Task Force. The Task Force had been convened following the announcement of the Strategic Defence Review and combined private and public sector leadership. The Report detailed the aims of the Task Force and indicated that discussions had taken place between Moray Council and HITRANS to establish actions which could be taken to help evaluate the case for Scottish Government delivering transport interventions and support prioritisation of these from a local prospective.
- It was agreed to approve the allocation of £10k from HITRANS Research and Development budget for Moray Council to engage framework consultants to develop a case for transport investments and to prepare a Report.**
- Freight Grant Cuts 11 Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report updating HITRANS on the planned cut to the Freight Mode Shift Grants announced in the recent draft Scottish budget. The Report stated that Freight Facilities Grants had been used to fund a number of Highlands and Islands Schemes and the proposed closure of the scheme appeared to reduce support for the Scottish Government's environmental policies which previously encouraged the carbon saving potential of modal shift.
- It was agreed to authorise the Chairman to contact the Transport Minister and other Scottish Parliament Party Transport Leads to raise HITRANS concerns and promote a wider understanding of the benefits which would potentially be lost should the Freight Facilities Grant scheme be closed.**
- Regional Transport Strategy 12 Mr Dave Duthie submitted a Report detailing the Scottish Government's guidance to Regional Transport Partnerships on the requirement to review Regional Transport Strategies. The Report stated that since the Regional Transport Strategy had been prepared the economic environmental context in which it was developed had evolved, and that wide consultation had been undertaken as part of the preparation for the Strategy. While changes have occurred in focus and funding capability the core objectives and work identified remained relevant.
- It was agreed:**
- (1) to note the Report and the content of the letter from Transport Scotland; and**
 - (2) that no immediate review of the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy is undertaken at this time.**
- Rail Update 13 Mr Frank Roach updated Members on progress with highland mainland services, Conan Station and the options for East Coast Services.
- It was agreed to note the update.**

Healthcare
Transport Progress

14 Mr Dave Duthie submitted a Report detailing actions HITRANS were taking to engage with Health Boards and other key partners to support them in delivering effective and efficient access to healthcare and developing individual action plans in order to deliver the proposals in the Government's Healthcare Transport Framework.

It was agreed to note the Report and the actions HITRANS proposed to take to establish where joint work could be promoted between transport providers and support from HITRANS could assist in delivering better and more efficient access to health care.

Scottish Transport
Awards

15 The Chairman provided an update in relation to the recent Scottish Transport Awards and indicated that HITRANS had received the Scottish Transport Award for 2010 for Bus Services in respect of the Inverness Airport Jet Network and, on behalf of the Board, thanked Mr Ranald Robertson for all his work in developing the network. The Chairman further congratulated The Highland Council's Project Design Unit for winning the Saltire Society Award 2010 for civil engineering design in the Environment Category for the A830 Arisaig to Loch Nan Uamh Road Improvement Scheme.

It was agreed to note the update.

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

Transtourism -
Sustainable
Transport in Rural
Tourism Areas

16 Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report in relation to the Transtourism Project. The Report stated that the Project sought to deliver the promotion of innovation and competitiveness in remote and peripheral areas across Northern Europe together with sustainable development of natural and community resources. The Report highlighted the partners in the project and detailed how the aims of the project would be met. The Report confirmed that the project results would be disseminated to the wider northern periphery through a website, common newsletters and seminars and a joint policy advice paper and transport plan in rural tourism areas would also be produced.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to confirm HITRANS commitment to the transtoursim-sustainable transport rural tourism area project.

AIR

It was agreed that the public, including the press, be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person other than HITRANS would be disclosed.

Route Development
Support -
Scheduled Air
Service

17 Mr Dave Duthie provided an update on progress to develop an Inverness - European Hub.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to invite the Chief Executive of HIAL to attend the next Meeting in order to detail the proposals and business case in respect of the proposed Inverness – European Hub.