



HITRANS ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18



FOREWORD

2017/18 has been an exciting year for HITRANS with some excellent results and interesting challenges. It saw local government elections and the consequent appointment of a new group of non Council Board Members. Cllr Allan Henderson became the new Chair and Cllr John Cowe the Vice Chair. We wish our past Board Members best wishes for the future.

We have worked with our partner Councils in the delivery of innovative shared services project delivering a step change in the availability and quality of information on passenger transport services across the region. The HiTravel project has seen HITRANS take on this responsibility across the area with Julie Cromarty our Public Transport Information Officer delivering a Bus Investment Fund supported project whose successes include the delivery of real time passenger information screens, 250 high quality information poles/displays, solar powered epaper real time displays, bus shelter poster displays and key interchange wifi hotspots.

Active Travel has been a real success story in 2017/18 with several new initiatives implemented by the team in collaboration with key partners including Sustrans and our five partner local authorities.

One of the key challenges for business is to effectively access markets and opportunities across the globe and the Highlands and Islands relies on our links to the world to service our outward facing economy. The reintroduction by British Airways of flights from Inverness to London Heathrow and KLM taking over the Inverness to Amsterdam service has delivered massively well for the region. This is evidenced by the surge in passenger growth through Inverness and we welcome this and the continued success of other carriers and routes including EasyJet and Loganair.

At a research and project level we have continued to work innovatively with partners in Scotland and across the European Union to deliver meaningful improvements in transport services within the Highlands and Islands. As lead partner in the SPARA 2020 project we have been working with partners from Sweden, Norway, Ireland and Australia as well as other Scottish partners (UHI and RGU) on the delivery of this project funded through the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme.

During 2017-18 we secured the commitment of the Minister for Transport and Islands Humza Yousaf MSP to fund and deliver Inverness Airport (Dalcross).

We participated in the Far North Line Review Team, announced by Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing at our successful Rail Stakeholder Conference, carrying out research on freight prospects and bus connectivity on the corridor. Separately we have been scoping an internal sleeper service from Caithness to Central Scotland.

With partners in Highland Council we have completed investigations of options for road/rail solum sharing in the rockfall area on the Kyle Line, and with Transport Scotland we sought to understand through the Train2Ride workstream, the views of those taking their bikes on West Highland (and Inverness sleeper) to understand trends and the ability of the railway to provide capacity.

We continue to work with operators and Transport Scotland to support the development of our ferry services. The Ferries Plan set out some truly ambitious plans for improving these networks and we will work with partners to support their development from proposal to fruition.

Working with partners at Transport Scotland, Orkney Islands Council, ZetTrans and Shetland Islands Council we have made real progress on key issues relating to internal travel in Orkney and Shetland as well as for planning for the next Northern Isles Ferry Service contract tender.

Bus services are the backbone to our public transport system providing vital access to employment, education, health and leisure services and connecting with other modes. In 2017/18 HITRANS has helped improve intelligent transport information systems building on our existing real time information provision. We have supported the development of innovative new projects and through our HiTravel transport information project we are delivering positive results and rolling out at bus stop information at more and more locations.

This has seen the number of stops with information on display more than double in the Highland Council area and our plans will see similar impacts in the other Council areas in the coming years.

We would like to thank our many public and private partners for their support in making 2017/18 such a successful year and look forward to building upon this in the year ahead.



Clr Allan Henderson
HITRANS Partnership Chair



Ranald Robertson
Partnership Director

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BOARD, ADVISORS AND STAFF

The HITRANS Board comprises a Councillor from each local authority area covered by the partnership and 3 non-council members appointed in a personal capacity by the Board and approved by the Minister for Transport following open advertisement and selection. The Board has appointed a group of professional advisers who play an important role, working with the executive team, in developing strategy. The executive team report to the Board.

BOARD

Cllr Allan Henderson, Chair (Highland Council)
 Cllr John Cowe, Vice Chair (Moray Council)
 Cllr Graham Sinclair (Orkney Islands Council)
 Cllr Uisdean Robertson (Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar)
 Cllr Roddy McCuish (Argyll and Bute Council)
 Wilson Metcalfe
 Prof David Gray
 Okain MacLennan

STAFF TEAM

Ranald Robertson (Partnership Director)
 Katy Cunningham (Office Manager)
 Neil MacRae (Partnership Manager)
 Fiona McNally (Active Travel Officer)
 Frank Roach (Partnership Manager)
 Julie Cromarty (Public Transport Information Officer)
 Jayne Golding (Projects and Policy Officer)

ADVISORS

Gavin Barr (Orkney Islands Council)
 Fraser Grieve (Scottish Council for Development and Industry)
 Fergus Murray (Argyll and Bute Council)
 Iain MacKinnon (Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar)
 Malcolm MacLeod (Highland Council)
 Nicky Sobey (Highlands and Islands Enterprise)
 Nicola Moss (Moray Council)
 Pip Farman (NHS)



Cllr Allan Henderson, Chair (Highland Council), right
 Cllr John Cowe, Vice Chair (Moray Council), left

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Transport Scotland Act 2005 placed the preparation of the Regional Transport Strategy as the first duty of the Regional Transport Partnerships. The Strategies are strategic high level documents that focus on the transport strategies necessary to support Government's key objectives and the single outcome agreements of the constituent local authorities.

HITRANS strategic vision and objectives as included in the Strategy link very closely with those of Government. The Strategy identifies the links between Government's aims and those of HITRANS and its constituent Councils.

The core of the Strategy can be viewed as 10 horizontal themes applying to the whole region which aim to:

- Promote the long-term development of walking and cycling.
- Prepare a sub-strategy for investment in the region's bus services.
- Enhance aviation connections between islands and peripheral areas and national gateways.
- Improve the region's community and demand responsive transport provision.
- Increase efficiency of urban travel by tackling congestion, reducing car use on short journeys, and improving public transport.
- Assist freight transport to shift from road to less environmentally damaging modes.
- Develop a programme of investment to improve the locally significant rural road network.
- Prepare a sub-strategy for investment in ports and ferries.
- Develop initiatives to reduce the cost of travel.
- Develop ways to reduce the climate change impact of transport in the region.

The Strategy also identifies policy for the transport network.

Priority action is required:

- To reduce journey times and increase journey reliability on our three strategic corridors linking the western parts of the region to Glasgow; the north of the region and the Inner Moray Firth to central Scotland; and Inverness to Aberdeen.

- And on the regional network to improve the Orkney inter-isles services; to improve the Western Isles spinal route and sea crossings; and to reduce journey times and increase reliability on the roads on Mull; the road between Oban and Lochgilphead; the roads to north west Sutherland and Wester Ross; and on the Moray Firth coastal route.

HITRANS are required to measure the success achieved in delivering the core aims and objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy. To this end we have developed a monitoring and evaluation framework that has been approved by Audit Scotland to show progress across a range of key performance indicators. This framework is detailed in full at the end of the annual report.

HITRANS are updating the Regional Transport Strategy. A public consultation on the Main Issues Report was undertaken in Summer 2016 and the draft Strategy consultation followed in 2017. The completed RTS was submitted to Ministers for consideration in 2018.

SUPPORTING LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLANS

As a statutory community planning partner HITRANS works across our five CPP areas to provide transportation support to the process. The work of CPPs continues to evolve and Single Outcome Agreements are now to be replaced with Local Outcome Improvement Plans that will enable priority areas to be identified and addressed by Partners.

The modern transport system that is detailed in the Regional Transport Strategy will support a smarter community through better access to learning opportunities. The Strategy and the joint working of the Partnership, its Councils and Community Planning partners will help people across the Highlands and Islands to sustain and improve their health, ensuring faster, more reliable, and more affordable access to healthcare, and greater opportunities to lead an active lifestyle through active travel access to local services and facilities. HITRANS is actively engaging in the SOA process covering each of the five Community Planning Partnerships in our region.



EUROPEAN FUNDING

NORTHERN PERIPHERY AND ARCTIC PROGRAMME- SPARA 2020 PROJECT



Smart Peripheral and Remote Airports 2020 (SPARA2020)

Periphery and Arctic Programme area project aimed at addressing some of the special needs of the smaller civilian airports in the region. This three year €2.4 million project brings together a range of public

authorities, academic institutions, airports, SMEs, and specialists to focus on the challenges of airports serving remote and peripheral areas. The project partner was notified of the success of the application in February 2015 and this followed the completion of an initial preparatory project in 2014.

The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014-2020, is funded by the ERDF, and more generally aims to help peripheral and remote communities on the northern margins of Europe to develop their economic, social and environmental potential.



SPARA2020 has been designed both to address the region's needs, but also to explore issues that have resonance beyond Northern Europe, and to develop outputs that will deliver enduring benefits after the project concludes in September 2018. The project commenced in June 2015.

HITRANS are the lead partner in the project. Other Scottish partners include the University of the Highlands and Islands and Robert Gordon University whilst Sweden is well represented with Trafikverket (The Swedish Transport Administration), Sundsvall Timrå Airport and Storuman Municipality. The North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) of Ireland will represent airports such as Donegal and Ireland West (Knock) in the project. Molde University in Norway and the University of Sydney in Australia are the other project partners.

The project budget allocation is listed in the table below:

| Partner | Budget |
|--|--------------------|
| The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) | €494,253.21 |
| University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) | €350,216.16 |
| Robert Gordon University (RGU) | €180,797.00 |
| Trafikverket (Sweden) | €250,008.58 |
| Sundsvall Timrå Airport (Sweden) | €357,143.00 |
| Storuman Municipality (Sweden) | €379,871.00 |
| North and West Regional Assembly (Ireland) | €234,306.80 |
| Molde University (Norway) | €115,500.48 |
| University of Sydney (Australia) | €60,000.00 |

The project includes work on Innovative Technologies to improve airport performance and control cost. These involve a close examination of Remote Air Traffic and Remote Security technologies as well as distributed training, benefitting in essence from broadband and communication technology advances. With the support of Eurocontrol the project will also examine the business case for Airport Collaborative Decision Making (lite), as suited to the smaller airport (and budget) context

Mindful of aviation's carbon footprint two work strands have been developed to foster more sustainable energy use in the sector. Low carbon fuel airport surface access demonstrator trials are being developed by HITRANS in partnership with their member Councils, Energy Savings Trust and Highlands and Islands Airports at airports in the Highlands and Islands. These are designed to be low carbon exemplar projects on how to decarbonise links from the airport to its local population centre and it is hoped this will include support for electronic bus operation on airport service, EV car hire and EV / Hybrid Taxi roll out to serve airports. The business case for offering biofuels to incoming aircraft at the region's airports will be examined in some detail learning from some pioneering work at Karlstadt Airport in Sweden.



Based upon the recognition that the performance of many peripheral airports' scheduled traffic is structurally constrained by their small catchment size, significant budget has been assigned to examining non-aeronautical sources of income and diversification of roles for these facilities. A whole gamut of possibilities will be examined and best practice will be publicised and disseminated, and some more in depth pilot projects will be undertaken. Optimising an airport's role as an employment cluster will be explored extensively. The locations selected for these activities are Ireland West (Knock), Donegal, Inverness and Oban.

The project also intends to examine in some detail the distinct socio-cultural role that airports play in the Northern Periphery and Arctic area and to refine and improve economic impact assessment methodologies of SPARA airports with a view to better guide future public investment. This will include studies led by RGU at airports in Ireland, Scotland and possibly Sweden.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and an associated RTS Delivery Plan set out the key priorities, proposals and interventions required to support successful implementation and realisation of the Strategy's Vision and Objectives. Each year the Partnership approves an annual Business Plan which sets out the Partnership's key delivery priorities for the financial year concerned.

The Business Plan details the projects the Partnership is involved in and an update is reported to the Partnership Board which meets five times per annum. These projects link to the aims of the strategy and the Annual Report provides a report of performance against objectives, targets and performance indicators as outlined in the Regional Transport Strategy.

During 2017/18 the Business Plan set out a wide range of regional, local regional and national scale projects that have been delivered. These include:

- Ongoing development, monitoring and refresh of the RTS
- Skye Air Service Development
- Orkney Internal Air and Ferry Study / Routes and Services Methodology
- Real Time Passenger Information
- Bus Priority Measures
- Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station Development
- HiTravel Shared Service Travel Information Project
- Local Authority Bus Investment Fund Support
- Lochaber and Inner Moray Firth National Smart and Integrated Ticketing Programme Project
- East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor Project
- Inverness Campus Community Links Project
- Fort William to Ballachulish Community Links Project / National Cycle Network 78 Project
- Smarter Choices Smarter Places Project Support
- SPARA 2020 Northern Periphery and Arctic Area Project
- G-PaTRA North sea Area Project
- INCLUSION Horizon 2020 Project
- ERDF Smart Cities – Scotland's 8th City ERDF
- Low Carbon Transport and Travel ERDF
- EU Project Development (MAGS, MOVE)



In addition to the above projects, the Active Travel partnership with Sustrans during 2017/18 has secured a grant allocation of £100,000 per annum from the national Community Links programme to support the development and provision of Active Travel projects across the region during 2017/18. During 2017/18 projects delivered under this programme include:

- Regional Active Travel Strategy
- Moray Active Travel Hub Feasibility Study
- Active Travel Workplace Challenge
- Cycle Counters
- Cycle Shelters
- Cycle Stands
- Cycle Lockers
- Kirkwall to Stromness Active Travel Route Study
- Active Travel Maps
- Active Travel Facilities at Transport Hubs

In addition to its principal focus on developing and delivering the RTS through work on the Research and Strategy Delivery Programme a significant proportion of staff time and resource was committed to supporting Community Planning engagement and activity in all five partner Council areas.



In accordance with revised Ministerial direction in 2008, the Regional Transport Strategy is a “high level” strategy. Reporting on the approved RTS Monitoring Framework, consisting of 22 defined Indicators, is reported annually within the Partnership’s Annual Report. A review of the RTS Monitoring Framework was completed in 2017/18 and this will provide a more streamlined approach to Monitoring for 2017/18 and beyond. This will complement the refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy which has received HITRANS Board approval in advance of being submitted for consideration and approval by Scottish Ministers. The RTS will align with all relevant national and local strategies and Action Plans/Programmes, including the recently reviewed National Transport Strategy. The setting of targets or milestones, which will require to be agreed with partner Councils, Transport Scotland and other relevant delivery partners or agencies, will be considered as part of this process.

Further information on the Partnership’s activity, the Regional Transport Strategy and our Revenue and Strategy Delivery Programme work can be obtained by visiting our website www.hitrans.org.uk.

EQUALITIES SCHEME

HITRANS as the Transport Partnership for the Highlands and Islands has statutory duties to have an Equalities Scheme and take very seriously engagement in matters relating to equality. Since the Partnership was established at the beginning of 2006, we have made significant progress in adopting and implementing policies in the human resources area which have equalities of opportunity enshrined within them. In addition, a major theme throughout our Regional Transport Strategy is the need for equality of access to transport facilities and services and through these to jobs, health care, education, shopping and social activities.

We have a statutory duty to publish an equalities scheme under legislation covering Race, Gender and Disability and we chose to introduce a single scheme addresses what we intend to do in these areas. It also addresses our proposals in other areas as well, for example age, religion/belief and sexuality.

We have chosen to combine these commitments in one equalities scheme rather than publish a series of individual schemes addressing specific legal duties but we have made it clear in the scheme which sectors of society should benefit from our proposals. The publication of this scheme is not the end of our duty to promote equal opportunities but simply the beginning. We hope that stakeholders and service users find this scheme informative and we welcome constructive feedback with a view to its improvement.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

ACTIVE TRAVEL ADVISORY GROUP

The Active Travel Advisory Group (ATAG) meets twice per year. The Group is attended by local authority transport officers, Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, cycle campaigners, access officers, and representatives from the health sector and transport operators.

The group has been engaged in the Active Travel Town Audit/ Masterplan process and acts as a forum for those interested in the greenest form of transport to share ideas and expertise at a regional level



FERRY CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Scottish Government tasked the Regional Transport Partnerships to put in place arrangements to provide consultative mechanisms between the operator, users and public agencies for the ferry network serving the Clyde, Hebrides, and Northern Isles.

The first line of consultation is between island groups and the ferry operator (Tier 1), with three second tier committees largely concerned with longer term planning and route development. The arrangements are now well established and the Tier 1 groups meet two to three times per annum.

There are five ferry user groups. These are:

- Clyde (Arran Bute, Cumbrae and Cowal including Kilcreggan)
- Argyll (Mull, Iona, Lismore, Coll and Tiree, Barra and South Uist, Colonsay, Islay and Gigha)
- Hebrides (Barra, the Uists, Lewis and Harris)
- Raasay, Skye and the Small Isles, Ardnamurchan and Mull
- Orkney Transport and Travel Forum

AVIATION CONSULTATION GROUP

Our strategy for aviation is to enhance connectivity within the region and to our national gateways; to increase links with countries outside the UK; to retain the London services particularly through Heathrow and Gatwick; and to manage the environmental impact of aviation on the region without adversely affecting economic growth and sustainability of our communities.

To help us take forward these strategic aspirations HITRANS has established the Aviation Consultation Group with membership drawn from representatives of our key aviation stakeholders. The Group is chaired by HITRANS Board Member Wilson Metcalfe who brings a wealth of practical real world experience to the Group.

RAIL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

HITRANS runs three tiers of Rail Forums.

The Rail Advisory Group (RAG) is the working group consisting of representatives from HITRANS, Network Rail, First ScotRail, Passenger Focus, Transport Scotland and local authority transport officers. This body meets 2 times per year and directly informs HITRANS policy and workstreams.

The Rail Stakeholder Group (RSG) acts as the umbrella group for wider industry, public sector, voluntary and heritage interests and features formal presentations from leading industry figures in a conference style format.

The Rail Users Group (RUG) covers the voluntary rail user groups for the rural North Highland and West Highland Lines. Chaired by Robert Samson of Passenger Focus, this forum enables the views of the members of the groups to engage with HITRANS in twice yearly meetings. Their views are then taken by Passenger Focus to the Rail Advisory Group.

FREIGHT FORUM

Meeting yearly the HITRANS Freight Forum (HFF) draws together local authority representatives, logistics providers and users of freight services. The Forum concentrates on practical Highland issues, and has involved visits to new freight infrastructure and terminals. It was involved in the Lorry Parking and Whisky Logistics Studies.

TRANSPORT COORDINATORS GROUP

The HITRANS Transport Coordinating Officers Group (HITCOG) is formed of officers from HITRANS and local authority transport officers and aims to deal with technical issues and share good practice in relation to the management and delivery of passenger transport coordination across the Highlands and Islands. The group meets two or three times each year.



BUDGET

BUDGET PERFORMANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

The Partnership's financial results for the year, compared against budget, are as shown below.

BUDGET PERFORMANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

| 2017/18 | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Budget £000 | Actual £000 | Variance £000 |
| Staff costs | 413 | 408 | (5) |
| Property costs | 22 | 16 | (6) |
| Travel and subsistence costs | 34 | 28 | (6) |
| Administration and meeting costs | 30 | 36 | 6 |
| Research and strategy development costs | 352 | 422 | 70 |
| Publicity costs | 10 | 9 | (1) |
| European projects costs | 41 | 5 | (36) |
| Support services | 40 | 38 | (2) |
| Gross expenditure | 942 | 962 | 20 |
| Government grants | (550) | (550) | - |
| Other grants | (100) | (101) | (1) |
| Other income | (85) | (129) | (44) |
| Constituent Council requisitions | (207) | (182) | 25 |
| Gross income | (942) | (962) | (20) |
| Net expenditure | - | - | - |

Overall the budget balanced for both years, 2016/17 and 2017/18. The main variations from budget during the year were as follows:

- The overspend in research and strategy development costs is offset by third party contributions included in other income for project work, and the budget set aside from this budget for European projects costs was not required.
- The budget for other grants relates to a grant from Sustrans for cycling project work.

All government grants in respect of 2017/18 were received in the financial year.

The Partnership's underspend on the 2017/18 revenue budget was £25,000 which the Partnership intend to use as a commitment towards the jointly funded 'smart cities' transport projects between Highland Council, HITRANS and the European Regional Development Fund.

PUBLIC SERVICES REFORM (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH STATEMENT

HITRANS 2017/18

INTRODUCTION

Section 32(1)(a) of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 provides that as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year each listed public body must publish a statement of the steps it has taken during the financial year to promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions.

HITRANS, as a statutory Regional Transport Partnership, is a listed body within the Act. This statement is intended to fulfil the requirement of the Act in relation to Sustainable Economic Growth. This statement should be read in conjunction with the statement on Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy and the financial information provided on the HITRANS website that are also required by the Act.

GOVERNMENT PURPOSE AND PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The Government in 2015 updated its Economic Strategy as originally published in November 2007 and updated in 2011. This sets out the Government's priorities including an overarching framework for how we aim to achieve a more productive, cohesive and fairer Scotland. It forms the strategic plan for existing and all future Scottish Government policy. Creating greater prosperity and fairness is a shared national endeavour. Only by working

in partnership with the wider public sector in Scotland, the third sector, trade unions, businesses and communities, will we be able to create a society where the benefits of economic growth are shared more equally and where future economic growth is stronger and more sustainable.

The purpose of the Scottish Government and its partners remains to make Scotland a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

Scotland's Economic Strategy focuses on the two mutually supportive goals of **increasing competitiveness** and **tackling inequality** and our approach to delivering this is underpinned by four priorities for sustainable growth.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

HITRANS primary function is to produce and implement its Regional Transport Strategy. The Strategy was approved in 2008 and the monitoring framework put in place to identify our success in working with partners towards achieving its Objectives. The vision for transport is to enhance the region's viability, enhancing the region's place and competitiveness, and thereby attracting and retaining people in the region and making the Highlands and Islands a more attractive place in which to live, to work and conduct business, and to visit.

Transport has long been recognised as a significant contributor to sustainable economic growth. The HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy was developed in conjunction with our five Member Councils.

The principal ethos in setting and determining the Regional Transport Strategy has therefore been to encourage and permit sustainable economic growth.

THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH DELIVERY OF OUR RTS.

HITRANS is committed to working with all sectors and interests within transport in adding value to the transport services delivered across the region.

The partnership has identified eight areas in which it would aim to work towards improving services. These are listed in the table below:

| Area | Description |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Active travel | Walking, cycling |
| Community and health transport | Third sector transport, social and health transport, car sharing schemes |
| Bus | Supported and commercial bus services, and taxis |
| Rail | Passenger and freight rail services |
| Transport infrastructure | Roads (both trunk and local), rail infrastructure, airports, ports, harbours and ferries |
| Freight | Cross modal, road, rail, ferry, air and sea |
| Ferry | Supported and commercial ferry services, national and local |
| Air | Supported and commercial air passenger services, including charter and freight |

In each area HITRANS seeks active participation from the 5 partner Councils, our Community Planning Partners, Stakeholders, Operators, Permanent Advisors and the Partnership Board. HITRANS encourages its Community Planning Partners, Stakeholders and Operators to participate in policy development and delivery options appraisal. Operators in particular are encouraged to interact not only within their individual area of

expertise but across the 8 areas and are given the opportunity individually to discuss issues with Board Members. This allows HITRANS the greatest opportunity to learn from their knowledge and experience and maximising our effectiveness in delivering sustainable economic growth.

HITRANS wishes to ensure maximum effective involvement of all groups and has devised, in each service area, mechanisms and structures that ensure that each group's views are heard and their input valued in ensuring the Partnership delivers improved transport services across the region. HITRANS has formed and continues to develop advisory and consultative groups both within and between linked transport areas, to promote improved integration across the Highlands and Islands. Regular meetings of these groups are arranged to obtain valuable input and provide information on developments and proposals.

PUBLIC SERVICES REFORM (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 STATEMENT OF EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND ECONOMY

HITRANS 2017/18

During 2017/18 HITRANS has continued implementing a number of initiatives that have improved efficiency, effectiveness and economy and these are outlined below, following on from our actions the previous year.

SHARED SERVICES

Smart management of accommodation and supplies and shared administration functions

HITRANS moved office from Inverness Airport to Ardross Terrace in the city centre in December 2013. The office achieves a lower annual rental by square metre and provides extra space including a meeting room that has reduced the cost incurred by HITRANS in hiring meeting rooms. The office has provided room for growth within the staff team which has been facilitated through additional funding in partnerships with Sustrans, the five partner Councils and EU funding.

By improving our IT systems, we have been able to move to Voice over Internet Protocol phones that allow the deployment of direct dial numbers for each member of staff at a low cost.

In 2013/14 we reinstated the fifth Board meeting to allow better governance of the unaudited accounts sign off but made this a single day Board Members only meeting with Telephone and Video Conferencing available to Members. This meant a saving of £1,500 when compared to previous years when 5 Board meetings took place. From 2017, a trial of having all Inverness meetings take place on a single day basis is underway

to understand if any cost saving achieved represents best value overall.

We have managed travel expense costs by increasing our use of telephone and video conferencing equipment to reduce the cost of traveling to meetings.

HITRANS is a member of Scotland Excel and gains from the resultant efficiencies that joint purchasing of supplies across the public sector in Scotland brings to our partnership.

LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND HR SERVICES

HITRANS has service level agreements covering Legal, HR, and Financial services with two of our member Councils with de minimis costs unchanged since 2008/09. The services provided are outlined below.

Legal and HR Services

Legal and HR services are provided by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Legal Services include legal advice, contractual advice, and provision of clerking for the Board. HR Services include drafting and review of HR policies and procedures, monitoring any changes in legislation, and support in dealing with staff matters. Day to day routine HR matters are managed directly by HITRANS employees. The quality of support is excellent and rates are considerably lower than comparative rates in the private sector. The cost of this service in 2017/18 was £8,000.

Financial Services

Financial services are provided by The Highland Council. Services covered include invoice and payment processing, financial ledger, regular reporting to the HITRANS Board, internal audit, liaising with external audit, budget preparation and control, pension fund management, accountancy and audit support for EU projects and investment management. The quality of support is excellent, and again, rates are considerably lower than in the private sector. The cost of this service in 2017/18 was £20,000.

Sustainable Development

HITRANS has carried out active travel audits of all the key settlements across the region in partnership with the five authorities in the HITRANS area and provided the results to the partner authorities. The central provision of these services has saved the partner authorities significant costs in developing an effective methodology and undertaking individual audits when compared with the local development option. HITRANS and partner Councils have used the outputs from the Audits as a basis for developing projects that offer external support ERDF funding.



PARTNERSHIP WORKING

European Projects

HITRANS was involved in the delivery of European Projects during 2017/18 which each achieved efficiencies and economies while working towards improvements in the effectiveness of delivery of transport services and related infrastructure within the Highlands and Islands and at wider national and international levels.

In the Northern Periphery and Arctic area HITRANS secured funding initially for a preparatory project but ultimately for a full application as a partner in the SPARA 2020 project to help prepare a main project application for this project which has as its focus the development of Smart Peripheral Airports. We are leading this project and will work with partners in Ireland, Sweden and Norway as well as other Scottish partners. This project has secured €494,253.21 for HITRANS over the next three years. This figure should not be looked at in isolation as SPARA 2020 is a strong collaborative project that will bring a total budget spend in the Highlands and Islands of €1,025,266.37 as HITRANS work closely with University of the Highlands and Islands and Robert Gordon University on initiatives within the project targeted at locations in the region. This project has attracted a 65% ERDF intervention rate.

Sustrans Partnership

Our innovative partnership initiative with Sustrans has continued in 2017/18 following its introduction the previous year. This has seen HITRANS and Sustrans pool resource to fund an Active Travel Officer embedded within the HITRANS team with a budget to deliver Active Travel policy and projects in the region. The value of this project represents an annual investment of £150,000 which includes £100,000 from Sustrans. The post also allows HITRANS to focus much more closely on Active Travel and investigate funding opportunities such as ERDF and Community Links.

During 2017/18 projects delivered under this programme include:

- Regional Active Travel Strategy
- Moray Active Travel Hub Feasibility Study
- Active Travel Workplace Challenge
- Cycle Counters
- Cycle Shelters
- Cycle Stands
- Cycle Lockers
- Kirkwall to Stromness Active Travel Route Study
- Active Travel Maps
- Active Travel Facilities at Transport Hubs



Risk Management

To support our development of sound management of risk a formal Risk Management Strategy has been developed and implemented by HITRANS. The Strategy describes the constituent parts of good Risk Management, our overriding Risk Management Aims, the range of risks we face, the processes we will put in place, and the actions we are taking. During 2017/18 HITRANS has created, updated and monitored its associated Risk Register identifying the key risks, associated controls and actions needed to minimise the impact of risk on the activities of the Partnership.

Equalities

In undertaking all our activities HITRANS has fully considered equalities issues as required through our statutory body status as defined in the Race, Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality legislation. We have set up a system and are ready to take feedback on transport related equality issues from our Member Councils and Advisory Groups as has been agreed as the most appropriate means of capturing these issues. In addition promote the discussion of any issues at each of our regular Permanent Advisors Meetings, and ensure that the equality impacts of any proposals and actions by the Partnership as reflected in Board Reports are brought to the attention of the Board when they meet.

HITRANS

Public Reforms Act Information

Period covering 01/04/2017 - 31/03/2018

| 1) Public Relations Statement | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Category | Supplier | External costs - invoiced | Supplier Total |
| Issuing Drafting and Writing Services | Gordon Fyfe | £120.00 | |
| Artwork and Illustration Annual Report | Mako Creative | £530.00 | |
| Draft RTS, 2017/18 Business Plan | MMS Almac | £368.00 | |
| MAAS Scotland Event | Technology Scotland | £2,000.00 | |
| Enable Magazine Thistle Card Advert Shared Costs with RTPs | Tactran | £333.00 | |
| Issuing Drafting and Writing Services | Gordon Fyfe | £150.00 | |
| Orkney Transport Guide Winter 2017/18 | Orkney Islands Council | £85.00 | |
| HITRANS Website Support | Velocity Design | £1,000.00 | |
| Issuing Drafting and Writing Services | Gordon Fyfe | £150.00 | |
| Issuing Drafting and Writing Services | Gordon Fyfe | £210.00 | |
| Issuing Drafting and Writing Services | Gordon Fyfe | £360.00 | £990.00 |
| Maintenance of Thistle Card App | Sestran/Edinburgh City Council | £757.14 | |
| HITRANS Website Support | Velocity Design | £1,000.00 | £2,000 |
| Orkney Transport Guide Winter 2017/18 Advertising | Orkney Islands Council | £85.00 | |
| Total | | £7,148.14 | |

| 2) Overseas Travel | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|--|
| Reason | Origin / Destination | No. Employees / Members | Travel Costs | Accommodation / Meals | Other Expenditure | Total | |
| SPARA - Air Transport Research Society (ATRS) World Conference - Funded by EU Project | Antwerp, Belgium - July 2017 | 1 | £243.53 | £394.72 | | £638.25 | |
| SPARA - Partner Conference - Funded by EU Project | Knock, Ireland - May 2017 | 2 | £381.53 | £469.10 | | £850.63 | |
| SPARA - Partner Conference - Funded by EU Project | Hemavan, Sweden - November 2017 | 2 | £1,184.23 | £1,084.04 | | £2,268.27 | |
| SPARA - NPA Lead Partner Seminar & Annual Conference - Funded by EU Project | Galway, Ireland - September 2017 | 1 | £205.16 | £336.54 | | £541.70 | |
| SPARA - Meeting with the Joint Secretariat at NPA Offices - Funded by EU Project | Copenhagen, Denmark - February 2018 | 1 | £330.32 | £116.56 | | £446.88 | |
| G-PaTRA - Partner Conference - Funded by EU Project | Ghent, Belgium - March 2018 | 1 | £3341.64 | £252.51 | | £594.15 | |
| INCLUSION - Partner Conference - Funded by EU Project | Genoa, Italy - October 2017 | 2 | £894.09 | £668.34 | | £1,562.43 | |
| MAGS - Application Meeting | Brussels, Belgium - January 2018 | 1 | £647.81 | £283.41 | | £931.22 | |
| Total | | | £4,228.31 | £3,605.22 | £0.00 | £7,833.53 | |

| 3) Hospitality & Entertainment | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Date | Reason | Cost |
| | | |
| Total | | £0.00 |

| 4) External Consultancy | | | |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|
| Supplier | Project / Service | Total | Supplier Total |
| AECOM | Train2Ride Study | £3,630.25 | |
| SYSTRA | Midnight Train to Georgemas | £10,000.00 | |
| Douglas Binns | InJunction - Reconnecting Keith & Dufftown Railway funded by Transport Scotland | £27,918.84 | |
| Mott MacDonald | Skyefall | £9,450.13 | |
| SYSTRA | Inverness Active Travel Counts | £12,639.60 | |
| SYSTRA | Elgin Active Travel Counts | £7,506.25 | |
| SYSTRA | Forres Active Travel Counts | £7,506.25 | |
| ARUP | Skye Airport | £1,950.00 | |
| Pedersen Consulting | Little Minch Ferry Options Study | £2,106.70 | |
| AECOM | Fort William STAG | £17,631.93 | |
| Peak Economics | Value of Transport | £5,000.00 | |
| Eyland Skyn | RTS | £3,200.00 | |
| Urban Foresight | EV / Low Carbon Strategy | £21,789.78 | |
| Northpoint Aviation | European Part Funded Project - SPARA 2020 | £21,430.20 | |
| Urban Foresight | European Part Funded Project - SPARA 2020 | £9,997.00 | |
| Energy Aviation Services | European Part Funded Project - SPARA 2020 | £3,306.44 | |
| Indra Business Consulting | European Part Funded Project - SPARA 2020 | £5,000.00 | |
| Arcadis | European Part Funded Project - SPARA 2020 | £19,368.40 | |
| Total | | £189,431.77 | |

| 5) Payments in Excess of £25,000 | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Payee | Commodity / Service Description | Amount |
| Externiture | Smart Cities - Infrastructure Costs | £32,306.25 |
| Externiture | Smart Cities - Infrastructure Costs | £25,325.27 |
| Total | | £57,631.52 |

| 6) Members or employees who received remuneration in excess of £150,000 | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | | | |
| Nil return. | | | |



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