

**Report to Partnership Meeting 10 April 2015**

**RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

**Points North**

**Purpose of Report**

To provide Members with information on the progress towards improved performance and reliability on the North Highland Lines.

**Background**

A multi-disciplinary working group was established in September 2014 to examine ways to restore performance and reliability on the routes north of Inverness. The reopening of Conon Bridge exposed flaws in the timetable, and this was altered in December 2014, with journey times lengthened in order to get the railway back on track. There are now a number of workstreams investigating short, medium and long-term interventions.

**Seminar**

HITRANS organised a seminar in Dingwall on 2 March 2015, chaired by James Stockan, with 55 attendees including MPs, MSPs, Highland Councillors, Community Councillors and other passenger and freight stakeholders up and down the lines. Presentations were made by HITRANS, ScotRail and Network Rail. The question and answer session was moderated by Iain Macdonald, late of the BBC.

**Presentations**

The presentations appear below.

**Next steps**

HITRANS will organise a similar event next year to review progress, and meanwhile we will continue to work with industry partners, including the new operator Abellio, to establish permanent solutions and to make the case for investment.

# POINTS NORTH Frank Roach HITRANS 2 March 2015



# Compare and contrast 1971 v 2014

Table 21

Services to Kyle of Lochalsh, Thurso and Wick

	Weekdays	Sundays
1. Kyle of Lochalsh to Wick	08:00	10:00
2. Wick to Kyle of Lochalsh	14:00	12:00
3. Kyle of Lochalsh to Thurso	08:00	10:00
4. Thurso to Kyle of Lochalsh	14:00	12:00
5. Kyle of Lochalsh to Wick	08:00	10:00
6. Wick to Kyle of Lochalsh	14:00	12:00
7. Kyle of Lochalsh to Thurso	08:00	10:00
8. Thurso to Kyle of Lochalsh	14:00	12:00
9. Kyle of Lochalsh to Wick	08:00	10:00
10. Wick to Kyle of Lochalsh	14:00	12:00
11. Kyle of Lochalsh to Thurso	08:00	10:00
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## History

- 1960 rationalisation- local station closures, Wick Kyle only (plus summer)
- 1973 Alness reopening
- 1976 Muir of Ord reopening
- 1989 Ness Viaduct washed away while firths were being bridged
- 1994 Basic railway RETB signalled, 3xKyle 3xWck plus IGD terminator  
Highland Railcard - Kyle 26s
- 1996 Privatisation run up. Thurso depot closes



## Opportunities

- Growing commuting into Inverness for work and education
- Leisure/ shopping opportunities- not just tourism
- Under used railway
- Geared towards internal sleeper connections/mail/papers/ferries
- Early start from Wick to connect with key train to Edb
- But pm peak northbound
- Trialled 1980s Igd- not successful
- 1530 Igd terminator/ Summer to Wick
- DMU only, 98 last Gmas split



## Passenger Enhancements 1

- 1998 Highland Rail Network Development Partnership- LAs plus HIE, Railtrack, ScotRail, FOCs, RUGs -grew from pressure from rail user groups, FOFNL/FOKL/FOWHL
- Tain commuter proposed pre privatisation £30k from HC
- 1998 Dingwall commuter first new service in the ScotRail franchise
- 2000 158 operations
- 2000 Tain starter HRP funded
- 2001 Sundays all year round
- 2002 Beaulieu £247k –inc SRA funds 58k pax up 119% since 04



## Passenger Enhancements 2

- 2005 Invernet Kingussie plus 2 x Tain 2x Igd Lairg starter £1.5m locally funded- subsumed into Franchise 2. Pax up 49%>business case
- 2006 158 refurb £9.1m
- 2006 4<sup>th</sup> southbound Wick introduced to permit better connectivity Orkney
- 2008 recast to 4 Wicks 4 Kyles, 2230 Tain FSO, Ardgay starter/terminator Conon slots
- 2010 Kyle retime to 0621
- 2012 CIS lite
- 2013 Conon Bridge reopens £600k

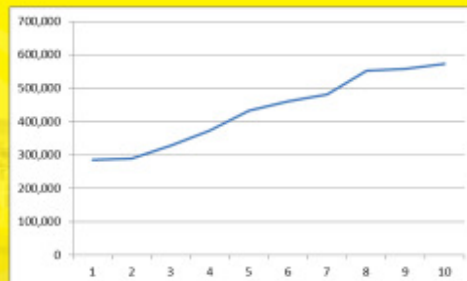


## Freight

- 1995 Freight returns
- 1997 Timber ex Kyle
- 1997 Pipes
- 2000 Safeway Georgemas
- 2003 Kinbrace Timber
- 2006 Lairg oil train
- 2012 Dounreay shipments



## Growth Wick/Kyle over last 10 years 573k pax 2013-14



## Recommendation

1. Members are asked to note the report.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Comment</b>
RTS delivery	√	This project fits well with a number of RTS Horizontal themes.
Policy	√	This project has integration and environmental benefits.
Financial	√	This project is fully funded
Equality	-	No impact on equalities issues.

**Report by:** Frank Roach  
**Designation:** Partnership Manager  
**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015