

## **Report to Partnership Meeting 27 November 2015**

### **RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

#### **Regional Transport Strategy Update.**

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

To provide Members with an update on Regional Transport Strategy Refresh.

##### **Introduction**

Following the report taken to the last Partnership meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2015 HITRANS officers invited six consultants to submit tenders for the undertaking of a number of Work Packages to assist with updating the Regional Transport Strategy based on the scope outlined below.

Three compliant tenders have been submitted with the contract award anticipated to be made in advance of the Partnership Meeting.

##### **Background**

HITRANS was established as one of the seven Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships in December 2005. The Transport Scotland Act 2005 requires these Partnerships to prepare Transport Strategies for their regions which will enhance economic wellbeing; promote safety, social inclusion and equal opportunity; plan for a sustainable transport system; and integrate across boundaries with other Partnerships. These Strategies must take account of future needs and set priorities for transport development and improvement.

The Regional Transport Strategy should provide a framework for the transport activities of constituent Councils, Health board and other key agencies.

HITRANS would now like to undertake an update of the original 2008 Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan. This update should be objective led and apply the principles of Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance. It is anticipated that the update should take 6 months to complete from the point of contract award and the proposal should set out how the process will be successfully managed within this timescale. Where the policies and principles which underpin the original RTS remain valid the update should reflect this in the extent of its 'refresh'.

##### **Scope of Update**

The updated HITRANS RTS shall develop a clear rationale for the investment in transport infrastructure and services in rural and peripheral areas. It shall also develop a strategy for reducing the need to travel both within and beyond the HITRANS area; improving the integration of existing transport provision and reducing the cost of providing these services. In order to achieve some of these strategic transport objectives it is recognised that policies relating to other areas such as planning, housing, education and health need to be aligned and integrated in order to realise the strategic outcomes. The study should therefore make recommendations as to how integrated transport policies can be developed in partnership with other Community Planning Partnership bodies. In this context, consideration should be

given to the impact and opportunities presented by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

The document Scotland's Transport Future; Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies , 2006 explains and expands on the statutory requirements for Regional Transport Strategies as laid down in the legislation. It also provides direction in the form and content of strategies. While significant elements of the policy and political context in which RTP's operate has developed since 2008, a lot of the principles set out in this guidance document still apply and provide a framework for this commission.

Notwithstanding this guidance the successful consultant should set out how the following tasks will be undertaken;

Two key elements of the updated Regional Transport Strategy will be the incorporation of area wide Low Carbon and Active Travel action plans. These plans should align with the Scottish Government's proposed strategic Interventions for the 2014-2020 round of ERDF funding. It is proposed that the Active Travel Strategy and Action plan be developed as a discrete commission but the successful consultant should ensure that this work complements the other elements of the 'Refreshed' RTS.

The Low Carbon plan should review national and international best practice and application of developing technologies by mode to help identify those projects and actions which should be prioritised within the HITRANS area so that local, regional, national and EU policy objectives are best addressed. This will include among other areas the following;

- Strategy for roll out of Electric and Hydrogen public and private vehicles and associated infrastructure across HITRANS area
- Application of alternative fuels for Ferries within HITRANS area
- Identify priorities for roll out of rail electrification for improving passenger and freight services
- Promote the development of hybrid rural trains for routes that will be unlikely to be electrified
- Application of alternative fuels for supporting the aviation industry and surface access to airports

#### **Review of 2008 RTS**

- Review and update the wider policy context for the Regional Transport Strategy and the Partnership making recommendations to those areas which the updated RTS needs to reflect. In particular the updated RTS should consider the emerging strategic objectives and outcomes of the National Transport Strategy.
- Provide analysis of the progress made on implementing the Delivery Plan set out in 2008.
- Update the transport baseline including establishing a carbon emissions baseline for the area (reflecting the variances within the HITRANS region) that will help inform discussion around how the updated RTS will seek to address the issues and trends which the baseline review highlights.
- Review the appropriateness of the original RTS vision, objectives and horizontal themes in light of recent national, regional and local policy developments and transport trends including the current review of the National Transport Strategy and Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) since 2008.
- Review the strategic and regional transport network hierarchy set out in the 2008 RTS.
- Following completion of the above tasks re-appraise the proposed improvements and priorities for the strategic and regional network identified in the 2008 RTS.

- Review the existing Delivery Plan and monitoring strategy making recommendations for the scope and content of their update.
- Ensure that the Regional Transport Strategy reflects and complements the Regional Active Travel Strategy which is being undertaken as a separate but parallel commission.
- Review best practice for investment in transport infrastructure and services in other rural and peripheral areas within other European states.
- Consider the current and likely future funding context for the updated RTS making recommendations as to how the RTS priorities may best be progressed.
- Consider any areas where RTP's could provide a framework for assisting their member local authorities in delivering services more efficiently.
- Consider how HITRANS may best engage with Community Planning Partnerships within its area so as to improve the delivery of transport infrastructure and services within the region.

### **Consultation and Development of updated RTS and Delivery Plan**

- Facilitate a workshop of HITRANS Board Members and Partnership Advisors to discuss some of the strategic issues identified in the review of the original RTS.
- Facilitate a workshop with other key stakeholders including key operators for each transport mode.
- Undertake a series of face to face meetings with each of HITRANS member Local Authority Advisors to HITRANS to help ensure that the RTS reflects the policy context and priorities of each local authority area.
- Develop a Main Issues Report for consultation with wider stakeholders in the area and at national level.
- Develop a region wide low carbon strategy that includes electric and hydrogen vehicles and other forms of transport including ferry and rail and aviation.
- Integrate the Regional Active Travel Strategy - which will be developed as a parallel commission to this study and ensure that the two pieces of work complement one another.
- Develop a draft updated Regional Transport Strategy and associated monitoring strategy and Delivery Plan.
- Provide a presentation on the key themes and priorities of the updated RTS to a meeting of the HITRANS Partnership.
- Provide final versions of the RTS and associated documents for submission to the Transport Minister for approval. The final versions should incorporate any subsequent revisions following the 8 week public consultation on the draft RTS and associated documents.

### **Budget**

A budget of £20,000 including expenses (exc. VAT) has been set for this project.

However, the scope of the work may be extended to assist partner Local Authorities undertake some of the tasks identified in this brief on their behalf to assist with the development of Transport Strategies and Plans in their areas.

**Recommendation**

Members are invited to note the report and provide any comments on both the proposed scope of the Regional Transport Strategy refresh and the consultation arrangements.

| <b>Risk</b>  | <b>impact</b> | <b>Comment</b>  |
|--------------|---------------|---|
| RTS delivery | √             |   |
| Policy       | √             |   |
| Financial    | -             | An allocation of funding for updating the Regional Transport Strategy has been identified in the 2015/16 Business Plan. |
| Equality     | √             |   |

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**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015