

## **Report to Partnership Meeting 2 February 2018**

### **RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

#### **Active Travel Update**

#### **SUMMARY:**

To provide Members with an update on recent active travel work supported by HITRANS

#### **Accessing Inverness (Community Links around Inverness Railway Station)**

As previously reported, HITRANS in partnership with The Highland Council were successful in receiving £75,000 in funding from the Sustrans administered Community Link programme towards feasibility, community consultation and outline design for improving the active travel routes that link into the three pedestrian entrances of Inverness Railway Station. This work seeks to provide additional improvements to the ongoing work to upgrade the rail station as part of an Abellio ScotRail franchise commitment that has also received £1.9million of funding from the Scottish Stations Fund and wider support from the Inverness Townscape Heritage Fund.

The redevelopment which will see revamped station facades and improvements to surrounding streetscape including Station Square is due to commence later this year. The Community Links project which is now well underway aims to develop designs that ensure the walking and cycling infrastructure on the main routes to and from the station is enhanced to better meet the needs of the local users and businesses.

Civic Engineers were awarded this contract in September 2018, and work has been progressing with key stakeholder groups, in partnership with Highland Council, to develop design principles which will shape the outline designs to be developed for public consultation.

To date Civic Engineers have met with the following stakeholders:

- Inverness Business Improvement District (BID)
- Council Provost, Vice Provost and City Centre Ward members.
- Disability and access groups
- Cycling and active travel stakeholders
- Bus operators.

As part of the project, a small group of key stakeholders including the Provost, Inverness BID, Police Scotland and the Victorian Market will visit Altrincham in Greater Manchester on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Altrincham, which has comparable traffic flows and population to Inverness, has recently undergone an initial £3million (of a £6million overall) phase of a project to improve the urban realm for all users between their transport interchange (rail and tram),

high street and the area surrounding their Victorian market. A verbal update of the visit and plans for public consultation will be provide at the Partnership Meeting.

### **Active Aviemore**

This is a partnership project between Cairngorm National Park Authority, The Highland Council, HITRANS and NHS Highland, which is looking at the potential for Active Travel around Aviemore, linking the bus and rail interchange with the busy main artery (Grampian Road) to the new NHS hospital site at Dalfaber Drive, and linking the main access routes around town to encourage a modal shift.

Like Accessing Inverness, the focus of this project is feasibility, community consultation and outline design, and £40k of funds has been provided via Sustrans Scotland. HITRANS have carried out the procurement for this work on behalf of CNPA, and are now part of the client group. Transport consultants AECOM have been commissioned to undertake this work, and the inception meeting was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2018.

### **CNES Active Travel Strategy**

HITRANS Active Travel Officer met with colleagues at the Comhairle on 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan to discuss the procurement and delivery of a local Active Travel strategy, policy and plan which meets the needs of the communities across the Western Isles. A draft Invite to Tender for the work is currently being developed with an aim for this work to be completed by end May 2018.

### **Corran Ferry Access improvements: Ferry Accessibility Fund**

HITRANS has made a successful application to Transport Scotland's Ferry Accessibility Fund for improving some of the access arrangements and information at either slipway for the Corran Ferry. The work which has been successful in receiving a grant of £3787 from the Accessibility Fund will involve the installation of a cycle shelter at Nether Lochaber and cycle stands at Ardgor as well as improvements to the lining and surfacing for the pedestrian/cycle access routes on each slipway. A dedicated web presence for the ferry will also be developed. In addition, HITRANS is working with The Highland Council to overhaul and rationalise the signage provision for the Ferry as funding permits.

### **Moray Cars and Bike share Development.**

Moray Carshare are proposing a pilot project, to deliver an e-bike and electric car hire extension to their existing car sharing scheme which operates in the Findhorn and Forres area. An application to Moray LEADER is currently being developed which could enable a 70% intervention rate for funding.

The purpose of the LEADER project is to expand the operations of Moray Carshare in order to bring the benefits of car and bike sharing to more parts of Moray:

- To expand services into Elgin and Lossiemouth
- To expand within existing bases: Forres, Findhorn & Kinloss
- To significantly reduce carbon emissions within our local area by only using electric vehicles for this expansion

- To introduce electric bike sharing in all these districts to provide a healthy and convenient alternative transport option
- To consolidate and improve our infra-structure in order to cope with such a major expansion.

HITRANS are currently working with Moray Council and Moray Carshare to support the e-bike element of the LEADER application through match funding from the active travel budget to enable:

- 12 e-bikes to be provided within the communities of Lossiemouth, Elgin, Forres, Findhorn, Kinloss, and Aberlour.
- Additional batteries for each bike, for extra capacity for usage.
- 4 storage units for bikes, which can be linked to electric power to charge bikes and fit into one car parking space

HITRANS are proposing to provide £15,000 towards the scheme application. If successful this would draw down £28,000 of EU LEADER funding.

#### **Hopeman to Lossiemouth cycle route feasibility:**

HITRANS met with the Community Council and the local HITRANS Board Member on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to look at the potential for developing a cycle route between both the Hopeman and Lossiemouth which has been a community aspiration for many years. This meeting followed earlier discussions between the Community Council, Moray Council, Sustrans and HITRANS.

After meeting with the group and looking at the opportunities along the corridor, HITRANS have agreed to fund £15,000 to enable the feasibility study and route costings to be developed. This work will involve working with the Community Council and Moray Council to ensure that the consultant which is engaged can develop proposals are achievable and have local support.

#### **ERDF: Low Carbon Travel and Transport Challenge Fund**

HITRANS has supported four of its partner Local Authorities in submitting applications to the ERDF Low Carbon Travel and Transport Fund. HITRANS has pledged match funding support of up to £120,000 over the next two financial years. Full details of these applications are provided in a separate report this Partnership Meeting.

#### **Smarter Choices Smarter Places**

The deadline for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> January to Paths for All. HITRANS is offering support with any Local Authority applications if required.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are invited to note the report and consider future Community Links projects that may be developed under the HITRANS / Sustrans partnership funding allocation, and potential for Smarter Choices Smarter Places projects for 2018/19.

### RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work supports the RTS objectives and the monitoring of their implementation.

### Policy

Impact - Positive

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

### Financial

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work is supported by the Sustrans active travel partnership funding, and Community Links applications. A separate allocation in support of the four ERDF Low Carbon Travel and Transport Fund applications has been identified in the Business Plan for 2018/2019.

### 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:** Fiona McInally  
**Designation:** Active Travel Officer  
**Date:** 23/1/18