

Item:  
**15**



## **Report to Partnership Meeting 23 April 2021**

### **RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

#### **Evanton Station**

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

To update the Board on feasibility of re-opening Evanton Station

##### **Background**

The re-opening of Evanton Station (formerly Novar) has been under discussion for some years and comes on the back of recent Beaulieu and Conon Bridge reopenings. The community of Evanton seeks to achieve better low-carbon connectivity to its neighbouring towns, and the city of Inverness, in order to support the population as it travels for work education and leisure. This will have a positive effect on emissions and fits well with Transport Scotland's National Transport Strategy policy on the hierarchy of transport mode, and with the Rail Decarbonisation Plan. The station re-opening is included in the Regional Transport Strategy and the Inner Moray Forth Development Plan2 draft.

HITRANS will investigate the technical feasibility of a new station, to study how it would impact on current rail services in terms of capacity, and to understand the infrastructure changes as a result of the Far North Line Enhancements programme (which follows on from the government-led Far North Line Review Team's findings). Potential journey times will be compared to existing current public transport provision.

We have twice unsuccessfully sought Local Rail Development Fund monies for a Case for Change report. It is now felt that technical feasibility will assist future decision-making processes.

Additionally, some funding is earmarked for community consultation in order to hear the views of local residents and to understand their current travel requirements.

##### **Funding**

The total budget is £19k. HITRANS is contributing £10k, £4k is from Kiltearn Community Council. HITRANS was successful in bidding for £5k from Highland Coastal Communities Fund.

##### **Next Steps**

HITRANS will tender out the work for completion over the summer.

## **RISK REGISTER**

### RTS Delivery

Impact – Employment/training, connecting communities

### Policy

Impact – Decarbonisation, mode shift, transport efficiency

### Financial

Impact – The study is fully funded

### Equality

Impact – Access to the network

### **Recommendation**

1. Members are asked to approve the report.

**Report by:** Frank Roach  
**Designation:** Partnership Manager  
**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021