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Report to Partnership Meeting 20 April 2018

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY

Rail Policy

Control Period 6 2019-2024

In February 2018 Network Rail published a suite of Strategic Business Plans which are the key inputs into the 2018 Periodic Review (PR18). The Office of Rail and Road in its role as regulator reviews these and matches the SOFAs (funds available-in the case of Scotland £4.85bn) from each government to measure affordability. It issues the draft determination in June 18, and the final determination in Oct 18, which heralds the start of CP6 in March 2019.

Of interest to us is the oddly named Route Business Scotland Route Strategic Plan, and the Freight and National Passenger Operators Route Strategic Plan (FNPO, which covers freight, and cross border including sleepers).

Scotland Route Strategic Plan- HITRANS Highlights

The CP6 long-term scorecard includes Scotland measures that reflect customer requirements, and were consulted upon with stakeholders, who noted the following which are of interest to us: *Sleeper performance, VTEC to take advantage of new electrification (viz Dunblane), DRS seeking HML competition with dualled A9, West Coast concern on charter paths on Kyle and WHL.*

Abellio ScotRail PPM is seen as very challenging, requiring substantial organisational and cultural change, while other performance measures on freight, sleeper, passenger growth and carbon emissions are seen as challenging, requiring moderate changes.

£49m to be spent on level crossings inc five AOCL+Bs to full barrier.

7.5% freight growth

Revolution in Rail- additional signallers Keith-Aberdeen, and potentially Perth-Inverness
Aberdeen-Inverness £69m expenditure in CP6 (in addition to £248m in CP5)

Dunblane-Perth corridor enhancements (capacity, journey time, potential electrification)

Component renewal on A2I and HML due to traffic increase

Kildonan and Rogart Open Crossings to ABCL

Weather resilience at Craigendoran

Axle counters Blair Atholl-Dalwhinnie

Signal Box hours extended at Greenloaning

Dyce, Inverurie, Aviemore and Pitlochry boxes to be recontrolled to Inverness by Aug 19

Aberdeen SC recontrolled to Inverness Mar 23

One cross-border route always available

Head of Route Business Development planned (in part to liaise with City deals)
Collaboration with third party funders including HITRANS and local authorities

FNPO Route Strategic Plan- HITRANS Highlights

Facilitate overnight freight path to Inverness
Explore gauge clearance C.Scotland-Inverness 2.55mx2.6m
Facilitate lineside and other temporary terminals for timber etc
Maximise train lengths
Review Rules of the Route constraints
Interactive maps for gauge, route availability
Normalise capability to support growth Helmsdale-Georgemas
Caledonian Sleepers are looking to new markets including Oban and the Far North
Inverness station sleeper capacity.

Rail Enhancement and Capital Investment Strategy- RECIS positive

Transport Scotland issued the RECIS document on 19 March 2018. Through this Rail Investment Strategy TS is setting out its new approach to planning and funding rail projects. It looks beyond the traditional 5-year railway industry planning cycle and takes a strategic approach to all rail capital investments with a particular focus on making best use of the opportunities presented by major renewals. This is the much vaunted pipeline approach, consulted on last year, which creates:

- A focus on value for money and the identification of whole-life costs in addition to initial capital expenditure
- Investment in rail interventions (e.g. services or infrastructure) only where they clearly represent the optimum value for money solution in terms of economic, social and environmental outcomes
- Assurance from whole-system specification, making sure that the infrastructure, rolling stock and timetabling all work together
- Confidence for the supply chain through steady work-banks, promoting employment, training opportunities and innovation
- Optimum coordination of all enhancement and major renewals projects
- Decisions taken for the long-term
- Rail corridors assessed holistically
- Improved modal integration
- An environment which allows rail operators to deliver their franchise commitments
- Environmentally sustainable connections

In the HITRANS area options in the pipeline include Far North Connectivity, Highland and West Highland Improvements.

Projects will be prioritised by their rating against the following:

- the ability to derive maximum utility from the existing network through whole industry measures that can make best use of existing railway assets, fully exploiting timetable/service-based opportunities and rolling stock options
- the ability to derive maximum utility from the existing network from opportunities (such as asset renewals or timetable exercises), fully exploiting these to ensure maximum value for money

- efficient and affordable, targeted investment in our infrastructure, in the right location and at the right time centred around whole industry measures to unlock additional capacity on the network
- targeted investment to help reduce inequality and increase inclusive economic growth

Each project will be assessed against the criteria set out above at each stage of its development in order to optimise the progression of all projects. The criteria broadly align with the investment hierarchy that applies in the Strategic Transport Projects Review.

Transport Scotland is holding a series of Rail Investment Capital Strategy Workshops, including Friday 27 April in Inverness.

Local Rail Development Fund

New rail projects pre-pipeline can be promoted by RTPs, LAs and community groups as well as TS and ScotRail, and must follow STAG. To assist this a £2m Local Rail Development Fund (LRDF) 2018-19 was also announced allowing local promoters, such as RTPs and others, to bid for assistance with the costs of preparing appraisals and business cases. The Strategic Business Case will give the promoter evidence to proceed or not to an application to enter the rail pipeline process.

The continuation of previous ring-fenced funds for freight, network improvement, stations and level crossings will now be subject to evaluation.

What this means for HITRANS

Inverness Rail East, Midnight Train to Georgemas and Evanton Station may now attract LRDF for pre-pipeline assessment, while outputs from the Far North Line Review Team is already in the pipeline, and may be joined by outputs from the recently announced West Highland Lines Review Group.

RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive- enables a number of RTS schemes

Policy

Impact – Positive

Financial

Impact – Nil

Equality

Impact – Potential to widen public transport access

Recommendations

1. Members and Advisors are asked to note the report

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