

Item:

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Minute of Meeting held in  
The Townhouse, Inverness  
on Friday 10 April 2015 at  
9.30am.

PRESENT	Cllr. James Stockan (Chair), Orkney Council Member Cllr. Thomas Prag (Vice-Chair), The Highland Council Member Cllr. John Cowe, Moray Council Member Cllr. John Mackay, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Member Cllr. Robert Macintyre, Argyll and Bute Council, Substitute Member Prof David Gray, Non-Councillor Member Mr Wilson Metcalfe, Non-Councillor Member Mr Okain Maclennan, Non-Councillor Member
IN ATTENDANCE	Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer Mr Steven Cooper, Moray Council Mr Tony Jarvis, HIE Mr Fergus Murray, Argyll and Bute Council Mr Gavin Barr, Orkney Islands Council Mr Iain Mackinnon, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Mr Neil Young, The Highland Council Mr Fraser Grieve, SCDI Ms Pip Farman, NHS Highland Ms Fiona McNally, HITRANS Ms Julie Cromarty, HITRANS Mr Iain Maclean, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Ms Maggie Bruce, Audit Scotland
APOLOGIES	Mr Derek Mackay, Partnership Secretary Mr Stuart Black, The Highland Council

### MINUTES

Minute of Meeting of 6 February 2015	1	The Minute of Meeting of 6 February 2015 was <b>approved</b> .
Matters Arising	2	There were no matters arising.

### FINANCE

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – 1 April 2014 to 28 February 2015	3	Mr Mike Mitchell submitted a Report detailing HITRANS revenue monitoring position for the period 1 April 2014 to 28 February 2015. The Report stated that income and expenditure were both in line with the budget outturn target and it was predicted that a balanced budget would be delivered at the end of the financial year.  <b>It was agreed to approve the revenue monitoring position for the period to 28 February 2014.</b>
Annual Audit Plan 2014/15	4	Ms Maggie Bruce, Audit Scotland, presented the Annual Audit Plan 2014/15. The Report stated that the audit focused on the identification and assessment of the key challenges and risks facing HITRANS when seeking to achieve its business objectives.

Statement on 5 Mr Mike Mitchell submitted a Report detailing the annual Internal Audit opinion for 2013/14. On the basis of the work undertaken during the year, it was considered that the key systems operated in a sound manner and that there had been no fundamental breakdown in control resulting in a material discrepancy. The Report further stated that work was undertaken to examine the systems of internal control operated within HITRANS.

Internal Control  
2013/14 & Audit  
Matters Arising

**It was agreed:**

- (1) to note the content of the Statement of Internal Control and the audit opinion provided, and**
- (2) that the Partnership Director would pass on the comments of Members to Audit Scotland.**

**PARTNERSHIP**

Business Plan 6 With reference to item 4 of the Minute of Meeting of 4 April 2014 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report which sought approval of the HITRANS Business Plan for 2015/16. The Business Plan set out how HITRANS would support the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) during 2015/16, working with constituent local authorities and stakeholders, with a view to improving transport services across the Highlands and Islands. The Plan defined how HITRANS would promote and implement the RTS in order to improve the delivery of transport services across the Highlands and Islands.

Business Plan  
2015-16

**It was agreed to approve the Business Plan for Financial Year 2015/16, incorporating the comments of Members**

**RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

Research 7 With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 6 February 2015 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report detailing progress with the delivery of the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2014/15. The Report stated that the Programme supported the development, implementation and delivery of HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy. Variations to the Programme to reflect commitments made, changing priorities and funding opportunities were detailed. The Report indicated that the Programme included provision for the contingency of an underspend emerging on any individual Project.

Research  
Development  
Budget Update  
2014/15

**It was agreed to approve the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2014/15 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.**

Inverness Airport 8 With reference to item 11 of the Minute of Meeting of 6 February 2015 Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report provides Members with an update on Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station. In 2006 and 2008 Scott Wilson carried out studies on behalf of HITRANS, investigating the feasibility of providing a new station at Dalcross, in the vicinity of Inverness Airport. The station would serve Inverness Airport Business Park, the proposed development at Tornagrain and the Airport itself. In 2008, planning permission was granted for a single platform station with a car parking facility. This planning permission had now lapsed and HITRANS would be submitting a new planning application for the station and car parking in 2015. This new application would include a condition that the level crossing at Dalcross was closed. The station infrastructure would be built on existing Network Rail land with the car parking and associated road network would be built on land currently owned by Moray Estates.

Inverness Airport  
(Dalcross) Station  
Update

**It was agreed to note the Report.**

Bus Investment Fund – East Inverness	9	<p>With reference to item 10 of the Minute of Meeting of 28 November 2014 Mr Neil Macrae submitted a Report providing an update on the implementation of the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor project which was awarded grant funding from the Scottish Government through the Bus Investment Fund. A Report to HITRANS in September 2014 outlined the initial spend which included the installation of over 180 new bus stop flags and display cases which would be filled with information for the forthcoming timetable changes to the city network. Once this was completed the intention would be to roll out NFC and QR codes at these stops and to then promote the Traveline Scotland app from which passengers with smart phones would be able to obtain real-time passenger information from any stop equipped with the NFC / QR code. The focus for the project over the summer would be to roll out bus priority at several of the key junctions in East Inverness following the successful pilot.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the Report and support ongoing work with partners to roll out similar investment across Inverness and the rest of the HITRANS area.</b></p>
Points North	10	<p>Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report providing an update on progress towards improved performance and reliability on the North Highland Lines. The Report stated that a multi-disciplinary working group was established in September 2014 to examine ways to restore performance and reliability on the routes north of Inverness and there were a number of workstreams investigating short, medium and long-term interventions. HITRANS organised a seminar in Dingwall on 2 March 2015 with attendees including MPs, MSPs, Highland Councillors, Community Councillors and other passenger and freight stakeholders. A similar event would be organised in 2016 to review progress, and HITRANS would continue to work with industry partners, including the new operator Abellio, to establish permanent solutions and to make the case to for investment.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the Report.</b></p>
Active Travel Update	11	<p>Miss Fiona McNally submitted a Report providing an update on active travel projects within the HITRANS area, including the REPUTE PTP Pilot &amp; tool kit development, proposals to improve the alignment of the Corran Ferry to Ballachulish cycle route, the production of Active Travel maps and the development of a HITRANS brand for active &amp; multi modal travel.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the Report.</b></p>
Rail Franchise	12	<p>Mr Frank Roach indicated that it had not been possible to prepare a written Report in advance of the Meeting instead presenting a verbal update. It was agreed that once meetings had been held with Transport Scotland and Abellio an update would be circulated to Members.</p> <p><b>It was agreed that a further update would be circulated to Members following proposed meeting with Transport Scotland and Abellio.</b></p>
Public Transport Information / Bus Investment Fund – HI-TRAVEL & other HITRANS supported Projects	13	<p>With reference to item 10 of the Minute of Meeting of 28 November 2014 Mr Neil Macrae and Ms Julie Cromarty submitted a Report providing an update on the implementation of those Bus Investment Fund projects that were awarded funding by the Scottish Government in 2014 and which HITRANS was either lead Partner or had financially supported through match funding contributions.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="568 1648 863 1677">(1) <b>note the Report; and</b></li> <li data-bbox="568 1704 1511 1756">(2) <b>consider any specific opportunities that may be implemented as part of year 2 of the HI-travel project.</b></li> </ul>
Inversparkie	14	<p>Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report providing an update on the case for electrification of the Highland Main Line and outlining the opportunities that electrification would bring.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the Report.</b></p>

Ferry Study      Availability      15      With reference to item 8 of the Minute of Meeting of 6 February 2015 Mr Neil Macrae submitted a Report which invited Members to support the Scottish Government's announcement to roll out Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) across the remainder of the Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services network and to approve a proposal to extend the Online Ferry Booking Availability Study for 2015 to cover additional routes and services operated on the CalMac network.

**It was agreed to support a proposal to fund a larger study for 2015 in partnership with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Argyll and Bute Council which would cover additional routes and services including those which would be impacted by the introduction of RET from October 2015.**