

Minute of Meeting held in the  
Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew on  
Friday 23 February 2007 at  
9.30am.

PRESENT

Mr Charlie King (Chairman) – Highland Council  
Mr Robert Sclater (Vice Chairman)– Orkney Islands Council  
Mr Donald Manford – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
Mr Len Scoullar – Argyll and Bute Council  
Mr Wilson Metcalfe  
Mr Donald MacNeill

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Naomi Coleman – Orkney Islands Council  
Mr Sam MacNaughton – Highland Council  
Mr Mike Mitchell – Highland Council  
Mr Sandy Ritchie – Moray Council  
Mr Murdo Gray – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
Mr Dave Duthie – Argyll and Bute Council  
Mr Frank Roach – Highland Rail Partnership  
Mr Howard Brindley – HITRANS  
Mr Ranald Robertson – HITRANS

Mr Douglas Forson, Scottish Executive  
Mr David Summers – HIPTF  
Mrs Deborah Andrew - SDG

APOLOGIES

Mrs Roma Hossack – Moray Council  
Mr Alan Burgess – Moray Council  
Mr Duncan MacIntyre – Argyll and Bute Council

**MINUTES**

HITRANS

1 The Minute of Meeting of 8 December 2006 was **approved**.

**Arising from consideration of this item it was agreed:**

- (1) **that, following the takeover of BA Connect Routes by Flybe, representations would be made to the Department of Transport expressing concern at the potential loss of traffic that could arise; and**
- (2) **to note that HIAL were intending to increase office rents for property at Inverness Airport and efforts continue to be made to arrange a meeting with Mr Inglis Lyon, Chairman of HIAL.**

## FINANCE

Revenue Budget Monitoring 2006/07 2 The Partnership Treasurer submitted a Report detailing the revenue position for HITRANS to 31 January 2007. The Report stated that income and expenditure was broadly in line with the budget out-turn target and that, based on the financial performance to date, it was predicted that at the end of the financial year the budget would deliver a small underspend of approximately £12K. The Report further stated that clarification was being sought from the Scottish Executive with regard to the availability of carrying forward any underspend to 2007/08

### It was agreed:

- (1) to note the revenue monitoring position for HITRANS for the period to 31 January 2007; and
- (2) that the Partnership Co-ordinator and the Treasurer would ensure that there would be maximum spend in relation to the budget 2006/07.

Revenue Budget 2007/08 3 The Partnership Co-ordinator submitted a Report detailing the draft budget for 2007/08. The Report detailed HITRANS projected running costs and work programme for 2007/08 and the income from partner Councils and the Scottish Executive which would cover these costs. The Report further stated that the funding from Council contributions that had been agreed by the Partnership and were based 50% on voting rate and 50% on population share.

### It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report;
- (2) that the Partnership Co-ordinator would confirm whether members should claim allowances directly from HITRANS; and
- (3) that HITRANS would fund up to 95% of the cost of the Highland Rail Partnership and that consideration would be given to including the Highland Rail Partnership within HITRANS.

## CAPITAL PROJECTS

Capital Programme 2007/08 4 The Transport Development Officer submitted a Report detailing HITRANS Capital Programme for 2006/07. The Report highlighted progress with the various capital projects being delivered by the Partnership and gave a summary of expenditure on the Public Transport Projects Programme.

### It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report: and
- (2) that outstanding invoices in relation to the 2006/07 Capital Programme should be forwarded to the Transport Development Officer.

Accessible Bus Programme – Additional Ring Fenced Funding 5 With reference to item 3 of the Minute of Meeting of 8 December 2006 the Transport Development Officer submitted a Report indicating that the bid for additional funding to purchase accessible buses had been successful and the Scottish Executive had awarded £1 million additional ring fenced funding in 2006/07 for the delivery of accessible buses to enter public service throughout the HITRANS area. The Report further stated that an Accessible Bus Partnership Programme had been agreed with Public Transport Officers at each of the partner Councils in order to deliver the Programme within the tight timescales.

### It was agreed to note the Report.

## **PORTS AND FERRY'S**

Ferry Users  
Consultation  
Procedures

6 The Partnership Co-ordinator submitted an update in relation to Ferry Users Consultation procedures. Members were informed that the consultation paper produced by HITRANS had been circulated to the Shipping Advisory Consultative Committee for comments and had been agreed with minor amendments.

**It was agreed that:**

- (1) the Partnership Co-ordinator would forward a response on behalf of HITRANS to the Scottish Executive in relation to Ferry Users Consultative procedures taking on board the comments made by the Partner Authorities;**
- (2) Castlebay and Lochboisdale would be represented on both the Hebrides and the Argyll and Small Isles Consultation Group;**
- (3) in the event that VisitScotland do not take a seat on the Consultation Group they would be substituted with another appropriate organisation; and**
- (4) the Partnership Co-ordinator would call the first meetings of the Tier 1 Consultation Groups.**

## **RESEARCH**

HITRANS Research  
Programme 2007/08

7 The Partnership Co-ordinator submitted a Report detailing the research programme for 2006/07. The Report stated that the research budget included a further £200K from the Executive for producing the Regional Transport Strategy together with contributions of £11K to Moray Council towards the Elgin Traffic Model and £12.5K to be spent on Strategic Sea Crossings Research with the Shetland Partnership. The Report further stated that the Scottish Executive had awarded £130K in the current financial year for feasibility studies which would prepare the way for future capital projects. Details of each project were highlighted in the Report.

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

## **REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

Regional Transport  
Strategy –  
Response to  
Consultation

8 The Partnership Co-ordinator submitted a Report indicating that over 180 responses to the consultation on the draft Regional Transport Strategy had been received. The Report highlighted the comments from the Scottish Executive Transport Group and Transport Scotland in relation to individual interventions within the strategy.

**It was agreed:**

- (1) to note the comments received in relation to the consultation on the draft Regional Transport Strategy;**
- (2) that the Strategy would include alternative options to the Dornoch Rail Crossing in order to achieve the same time savings at less cost;**
- (3) that the Partnership Co-ordinator would respond to the letter from Mr John Ewing, Head of Transport Group following receipt of comments by the Principal Advisors.**

Regional Transport Strategy – Final Draft 9 The Partnership Co-ordinator submitted a Report detailing the revised draft of the Regional Transport Strategy which had been amended following the responses to the Consultation exercise. The Report further detailed a list of new interventions that Partner Authorities had suggested which had not been included with the Strategy Action Programme and Members were asked to consider these interventions.

**It was agreed that:**

- (1) the Partnership Co-ordinator would write to the Partner Local Authority Chief Executive's to indicate how their Authorities comments had been incorporated into the Regional Transport Strategy;
- (2) the Foreword/Executive Summary would have a clear explanation of the core Strategy;
- (3) Permanent Advisors would be asked to forward detailed comments on the Strategy by Friday 2 March 2007

**OTHERS**

Partnership Chief Executive 10 The Partnership Co-ordinator updated Members on progress with the appointment of a Chief Executive for HITRANS. Members were informed that short-listing of candidates had taken place and interviews would be held during March 2007.

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

Dunoon – Gourock Ferry 11 Members discussed the ferry services from Gourock – Dunoon. It was emphasised that a high quality fast passenger service should be provided on this route which should link into the public transport network.

**It was agreed that the Partnership Co-ordinator, in consultation with Mr Dave Duthie would indicate to Cal Mac and the Scottish Executive HITRANS support for a high quality passenger service link between Gourock – Dunoon.**

AOCB 12 **It was agreed:**

- (1) to note the executive's proposals to Demand Responsive Transport through grants to the Regional Transport Partnership from 2008/09. COSLA would be meeting the Minister on 15 March 2007 when these proposals would be discussed and the matter would be reported back to the next meeting;
- (2) to note the discussions which had taken place at the meeting of Regional Transport Partnership Chairs and the Minister in Shetland in January 2007. The next meeting of Partnership Chairs and the Minister would take place in Perth on 29 March 2007.