

## Report to Partnership Meeting 3 February 2012

### RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

#### Draft Ferries Plan Consultation

#### Purpose of Report

To update Members on the process for submitting a response to Transport Scotland's Consultation exercise on the Draft Ferries Plan.

#### Background

The purpose of the Scottish Ferries Review has been to:

- develop a shared vision and outcomes for lifeline ferry services in Scotland, in the context of the Government's Purpose, Economic Strategy and National Transport Strategy;
- analyse the current lifeline ferry services and network, identifying how well it meets the proposed outcomes and how it links to the rest of Scotland's transport network;
- inform the Scottish Government's long-term plan for lifeline ferry services in Scotland and influence the next round of procurement of ferry services;
- Identify policies to be taken forward to deliver the long-term plan, including the planned investment framework.

The Scottish Government consider the Scottish Ferries Review to be complete and are now moving on to finalise their plans for the future focus the Government takes on the provision of ferry services. This will be presented in the final ferries plan. The Ferries Plan will ultimately make recommendations regarding:

- where investment should be focussed to make connections better for island and remote rural communities;
- improving reliability and journey times;
- seeking to maximise the opportunities for employment, business, leisure and tourism;
- promoting social inclusion.

#### Consultation Process

The Scottish Government / Transport Scotland published the Draft Ferries Plan on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011. The Draft Ferries Plan has been prepared following the 2010 public consultation exercise. Transport Scotland have used consultation responses and information from a number of other sources to inform the drafting of the Plan. The Draft Ferries Plan sets out the Scottish Government's proposals for the provision and support of Scotland's ferry services over the next decade. The Draft Plan is designed to help gauge views from stakeholders on the level and type of ferry services each community should receive.

While the Draft Plan Consultation is focussing on the type of ferry services each community receives it is important for HITRANS to make the case on strategic issues as well. Accordingly HITRANS Partnership Meeting will be preceded by a workshop session on Thursday 2 February where HITRANS Members and Advisors can discuss the Draft Ferries Plan document and agree the approach the Partnership will take in responding to the consultation and whether a number of general comments should be made on strategic issues including:

- Fares.
- Responsibility for Ferry Service Delivery.
- Regulation of Ferry Services.
- Route Specific Considerations.

Following the workshop on 2 February a draft response will be circulated to all Members and Advisors for comment. The response will be informed by the workshop session held with HITRANS Members and Advisors as well as through a series of Ferry User Group consultation meetings that will be held in March 2012. The final response will be submitted subject to approval by the Chair and Vice Chair on or before the 30 March deadline.

### Recommendation

1. Members are asked to note the report.
2. Members are asked to approve the process set out for preparing and submitting the HITRANS response to the Draft Ferries Plan Consultation.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	The proposals within the plan generally enhance the current ferry service provision, though Members will be minded that some are detrimental to a number of communities
Policy	-	
Financial	-	
Equality	-	Accessibility to services should be improved through implementation of the proposals included in the Draft Plan

**Report by:** Ranald Robertson  
**Designation:** Partnership Manager  
**Date:** 25 January 2012