

Minute of Meeting held in the
Newton Hotel, Nairn, on Friday 23
August 2013 at 9.15am.

PRESENT

Cllr John Semple (Chair), Argyll and Bute Council Member
Cllr Fiona Murdoch (Vice-Chair), Moray Council Member
Cllr John Mackay, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Member
Cllr James Stockan, Orkney Council Member
Cllr Bet McAllister, The Highland Council Substitute Member
Mr Wilson Metcalfe, Non-Councillor Member
Prof David Gray, Non-Councillor Member
Mr Okain Maclennan, Non-Councillor Member

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager
Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager
Mr Iain Mackinnon, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Mr Gordon Holland, Moray Council
Mr Tony Jarvis, HIE
Ms Pip Farman, NHS Highland
Mr Fraser Grieve, SCDI
Mr David MacKechnie, The Highland Council
Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer
Mr Derek Mackay, Partnership Secretary
Mrs Katy Cunningham, HITRANS
Mrs Chris Kendall, HITRANS
Mr Douglas Norris, HITRANS

APOLOGIES

Cllr Graham Phillips, The Highland Council Member
Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director
Mr Sam MacNaughton, The Highland Council
Mr Brian Archibald, Orkney Islands Council
Mr Robert Pollock, Argyll and Bute

MINUTES

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| Minute of Meeting
of 26 April 2013 | 1 | The Minute of Meeting of 26 April was approved . |
| Matters Arising | 2 | Mr Frank Roach informed the Partnership that Network Rail were currently working on timetabling options for the Dalcross Rail Station Project and an update would be provided to the next Meeting of the Partnership Board. Councillor James Stockan referred to the Scottish Ferries Plan and emphasised that internal ferry links were a major strategic issue for Orkney Islands Council. |

It was agreed to note the updates.

FINANCE

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| Final Outturn
Revenue Budget
Monitoring Report
– 1 April 2012 to
31 March 2013 | 3 | The Partnership Treasurer submitted a Report detailing HITRANS revenue monitoring position for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. The Report indicated that revenue expenditure was in line with management expectations and the provisional outturn showed an overall underspend of £26,362. The Report indicated that the audit of the annual accounts was currently underway and there was scope to carry forward small underspends on committed expenditure which had not been incurred at the end of the financial year which would allow HITRANS to meet its legal obligation of breaking even for 2012/13. |
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It was agreed to approve the Report and the final outturn revenue monitoring position for the year ended 31 March 2013.

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – 1 April 2013 to 31 July 2013

4 The Partnership Treasurer submitted a Report detailing HITRANS revenue monitoring position for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 July 2013. The Report stated that, in light of the final outturn position for 2012/13, the Partnership Director and Partnership Treasurer had reviewed the 2013/14 budget. The Report detailed a number of proposed budget virements which would result in a net budget saving of £8,500 and it was proposed to increase the Research and Strategy Development Budget by this amount.

It was agreed to approve the Report.

ISA260 Report (Report To Those Charged With Governance)

5 The Partnership Treasurer updated the Board on progress with the ISA 260 Report.

It was agreed to authorise the Chair, Vice Chair and Partnership Director to approve the annual accounts on behalf of HITRANS.

PARTNERSHIP

Programme of Meetings 2014

6 The Partnership Director submitted a Report Detailing a proposed programme of meetings for the Partnership Board and Permanent Advisors Meetings for 2014.

Date	Partnership Meetings	Advisors meetings	Location
23 January 2014		Morning	Inverness
6 and 7 February 2014	Evening meeting followed by full Partnership meeting on Friday Morning		Inverness
13 March 2014		Morning	Inverness
3 and 4 April 2014	Evening meeting followed by full Partnership meeting on Friday Morning		Western Isles
7 August 2014		Morning	Inverness
21 and 22 August 2014	Evening meeting followed by full Partnership meeting on Friday		Inverness
23 October 2014		Morning	Inverness
6 and 7 November 2014	Evening meeting followed by full Partnership meeting on Friday Morning		Argyll

It was agreed:

- (1) to approve the programme of Meetings for 2014 as detailed in the Report;
- (2) to note that additional Meetings may be called if circumstances require the Board to meet; and
- (3) that the November 2013 Meeting of the Partnership Board would take place in Elgin and would be preceded by a Seminar.

HITRANS / SUSTRANS Active Travel Officer

7 Mr Neil MacRae submitted a Report providing an update on the joint project with SUSTRANS Scotland to recruit an Active Travel Project Officer with responsibilities for promoting and developing cycling across the HITRANS area. It was proposed that the postholder would assist Local Authorities in a number of areas including the promotion and marketing of walking and cycling within the HITRANS area, development and delivery of Active Travel Projects, submission of applications for external funding and the monitoring of cycle usage and prioritisation of infrastructure projects. The Report further stated that the postholder would report to the HITRANS Partnership Manager on a day to day basis but would also be expected to report to SUSTRANS Infrastructure Partnership Manager for those elements of the post which related directly to SUSTRANS Scotland.

It was agreed to note the Report.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

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| Research and Strategy Development Programme for 2013/14 | 8 | <p>Mr Frank Roach provided an update on progress with the delivery of the Research and Strategy Development Programme for 2013/14. The Report provided a summary of proposed amendments which reflected a number of new opportunities together with the reduction in budget requirements for a number of projects. The Report further stated that the available funding for the 2013/14 Programme had been increased by £26,362 from that available in the Business Plan to reflect the 2012/13 budget underspend.</p> <p>It was agreed to approve the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2013/14 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.</p> |
| Upsticks- Timber Transport Survey | 9 | <p>Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report detailing the findings of the Upsticks- Timber Transport Survey which was undertaken to determine the origin and destination of raw timber in the Highland area and provide a clear view of the use of the public road network and the deployment of the timber transport fleet. The Report stated that the Study complemented an earlier HITRANS Timber Transport Scoping Study undertaken in 2011.</p> <p>It was agreed to approve the draft report which is included as Appendix A.</p> |
| Skye Air Service Feasibility Study | 10 | <p>Mr Neil MacRae submitted a Report in relation to Skye Air Services Feasibility Study which had been jointly commissioned by HITRANS, The Highland Council and HIE to establish the case for reintroducing scheduled flights to Ashaig Airport, Skye. The Study estimated current unconstrained demand for air services from Skye to Glasgow/ Edinburgh and evaluated four options for creating the necessary infrastructure to reestablish air services at Ashaig Airport. The Study recommended a number of steps which would be required to help establish the case for scheduled air services from Skye.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Report and approve the allocation of £10,000 from the 2013/14 Research and Development budget towards further work needed to refine aspects of the business case for reintroducing scheduled air services to Skye in collaboration with Working Group members, The Highland Council and HIE.</p> |
| Rail Franchising | 11 | <p>Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report updating members on the refranchising of ScotRail and East Coast services. The Report stated that ScotRail Services were being refranchised by Transport Scotland and the current single franchise was being split into two – Sleeper and Daytime Services. The Sleeper franchise would run for fifteen years from April 2015 with the Daytime franchise running for ten years from April 2015. The Report further stated that East Coast Services, currently operated by the UK Government, would be franchised in February 2015. The Report highlighted HITRANS activity in relation to refranchising and detailed the significant research which had been included within the data of useful resources being made available to all franchise bidders.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Report.</p> |
| Health Transport Short Life Working Group | 12 | <p>The Partnership Director submitted a Report detailing the issues identified in the Scottish Governments Short Life Working Group Report on Healthcare Transport. The Report highlighted the recommendations made by the Working Group and presented to the Cabinet Secretary through for Health and Wellbeing and the Minister for Transport and Veterans.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Report and welcome the requirements and encouragements within the Healthcare Transport SLWG Report on improving partnership working between key stakeholders including RTPs with NHS and SAS.</p> |

Bus Investment Fund 13 Mr Neil MacRae submitted a Report in relation to the Scottish Governments Bus Fund. The Fund aimed to enable the development of projects which had the potential to deliver improvements in bus services and infrastructure through partnership working between local transport authorities, bus operators and others. The Report stated that HITRANS had offered match funding support to the following four applications:

- Tagsa Uibhist Community Services
- Moray Connect – Elgin to Aviemore Bus Services
- East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor
- Oban and Fort William Sunday Coach Services

The Report commented on each of the projects and indicated that Transport Scotland had taken forward the above applications, with the exception of the Elgin to Aviemore Link, to the next stage for further analysis and consideration. HITRANS officials were working with project partners to finalise the details of the next submission for which Transport Scotland were seeking a more detailed breakdown on project finances, timescales and what the funding would be directed towards. It was expected that Transport Scotland would be in a position to make a decision on which applications were successful by October 2013.

It was agreed to note:

(1) the Report and support the proposed allocation of up to £41,600 per annum over the next 3 years from the HITRANS Research and Strategy Development Budget should all three applications be successful; and

(2) that a further update would be provided at a future Partnership Meeting.

14 Sleeper-Ness 14 Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report detailing the findings of research undertaken by HITRANS, in conjunction with Reference Economic Consultants, into the potential economic impact of the withdrawal of the maintenance of sleeper vehicles at Inverness.

It was agreed to note the Report.

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

Food Port – Lifting the Spirit Project Up-date 15 Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report providing an update on the Food Port – Lifting the Spirit Project which was being delivered by HITRANS with funds secured through the ERDF INTERREG IVB North Sea Area Food Port Project and Partnership contributions from Moray Council, HIE and HITRANS. Mr Douglas Norris, Lifting the Spirit Project Manager, addressed members and indicated that HITRANS was working through the Scotch Whisky Association with a number of distillers in Speyside to identify volume availability, location, distance from rail head, loading time, loading facilities etc and a plan had been devised where the efficient transfer of 16-20 containers of bulk spirit to move two times per week from Elgin to Central Scotland. Mr Norris indicated that the costs of the rail operation would be established and environmental benefits calculated. The first trains were planned for the beginning of September and there would be a media / public launch of the project in Elgin on Friday 13 September 2013.

It was agreed to note the Report.

SPARA 2020 16 The Partnership Director submitted a Report providing an update on the SPARA 2020 Project. The Project will seek to address the various challenges faced by peripheral and remote airports. The Report stated that the Project would facilitate the ability for remote and peripheral practitioners to better join forces in an effort to produce new peripheral centric solutions to these challenges.

It was agreed to:

(1) note the Report; and

(2) approve the allocation of €5,000 from the Business Plan Research and Strategy Development expenditure to support EU project development.

European Union QUEST Project - Inverness 17 Mr Neil Macrae submitted a Report providing an update of QUEST Project being undertaken in Inverness and which sought to assess and approve sustainable transport in participating cities across Europe. As well as providing a simple and cost effective means of developing a targeted series of measures to improve sustainable transport in Inverness it was hoped that participation in the Project would provide benefits from the shared learning of best practice in other cities and increased prospects for future investment.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Journey Genie (Giant Puffin) 18 Mr Frank Roach provided members with an update on the HITRANS itinerary and journey planner project 'Journey Genie'. The journey planner sought to assist visitors to discover the many places they could visit by public transport and to plan specific trips with ease and confidence. The planner would pull together all public transport information which would enable visitors to plan their journeys. The Report stated that Journey Genie had been showcased at the Scotland Technology Show at the SECC on 11 June 2013 and the finalised version would be launched shortly, accompanied by a social media campaign and adverts on Facebook and Google.

It was agreed to note the Report.

CONSULTATION

Airports Commission 19 The Partnership Director submitted a Report detailing the information submitted by HITRANS in response to the Calls for Evidence and Discussion Papers produced by Sir Howard Davies's Airports Commission.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Bus Regulation (Scotland) Bill 30 The Partnership Director submitted a Report in relation to the consultation launched by Iain Gray MSP on proposals for a Bus Regulation (Scotland) Bill. The Report stated views that the Bill sought to provide transport authorities with greater powers to set service levels for local bus services.

It was agreed to:

(1) note the Report; and

(2) approve the HITRANS response to the consultation.

National Planning Framework 3 21 Mr Neil Macrae submitted a Report detailing the proposed HITRANS response to the Scottish Government's main issues Report for the third National Planning Framework. The Report stated that the Framework set the context for development planning in Scotland and provided a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. The Framework set out the Scottish Government's development priorities for the coming 20-30 years and identified national developments which would support the Development Strategy.

It was agreed to approve the HITRANS response to the National Planning Framework: Main Issues Report

EU Guidelines on State Aid to Airports and Airlines 22 The Partnership Director submitted a Report in relation to the draft proposals on State Aid rules for airports and airlines published by the European Commission in July 2013. The Report stated that officials were in dialog with HIAL to ensure any response made to the proposals was in line with the case HIAL made.

It was agreed to:

(1) note the Report; and

(2) authorise the Partnership Director to submit a response to the Proposals on behalf of HITRANS based on the response developed by HIAL.