

Item:

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Report to Partnership Meeting 7 February 2014

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Research/Strategy Development Programme for 2013/14

SUMMARY

This Report provides the Partnership Board with an update on progress on delivering the Research and Strategy Development programme and seeks approval of amendments to the programme to reflect commitments made and changing priorities and funding opportunities identified since approval of the 2013/14 Business Plan and the latest update on the programme provided to the Partnership meeting on 8 November 2013.

DETAIL

The Partnership at its meeting of 12 April agreed the HITRANS Business Plan for 2013/14 which includes a Programme for Research and Strategy Development for 2013/14 in support of development, implementation and delivery of the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy.

Work is progressing on delivery of the Programme as indicated in the Appendix to the report.

The Programme has been amended to reflect a number of new opportunities and a reduction in budget requirement for some projects. The changes are summarised below and more information is provided on each change in Appendix A to this report.

Summary of key Programme changes:

- Reinstatement of the ERDF INTERREG project support budget to the original level agreed in the Business Plan to accommodate the REPUTE Project.
- Reduce budget for SWIFT (Severe Weather Information for Transport) project by £5,000 in line with achievable spend by 31 March.
- Increase budget for Bus Investment Fund / Route Development projects by £5,000 following the announcement of the success of the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor Project securing funding from the Bus Investment Fund.
- Reduce budget for assessment of Council run ferry services in line with Ferries Plan Routes and Services Methodology as the proposed work is going to cost less to deliver than the budgetary allocation.
- Reinstatement of the £5,000 budget for Community and Health Transport following the submission by NHS Highland of the proposal for the Lochaber Integrated Transport Project to be one of 2 health transport pilot projects options following the release of funding by Scottish Government announced in December 2013.

The available funding for the 2013/14 Programme has been increased by £59,294 from that included in the 2013/14 Business Plan, in reflection of the Core Budget underspend in 2012/13 as reported to the Partnership in the final accounts for 2012/13.

The Partnership's Advisors and Officers discussed and developed the proposed revised Programme at their Meeting on 23rd January 2014 and agreed to recommend it to the Partnership for approval by Members. This Programme includes provision for the contingency of an underspend emerging on any of the individual projects by allowing for a modest overspend of £13,432 on the budget of £450,000.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Partnership is asked to approve the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2013/14 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

Risk	impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	The Research and Development Programme is the key mechanism by which HITRANS promotes delivery of the Transport Strategy for the Highlands and Islands
Policy	-	
Financial	√	The Programme can be delivered within the 2013/14 Budget
Equality	√	Actions within the programme are aimed where applicable to improving equality in accessibility.

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 24th January 2014
Additional Information: Appendix – Research and Development Programme

Research development and delivery programme 2013 - 2014

Area	2013/14	October Review	January Review	Lead	Comments
SUSTRANS Partnership / Active Travel Projects	50000	100000	100000	FM	Partnership with SUSTRANS for Active Travel Officer to deliver active travel projects across the region.
ERDF - Active Travel Highland	0	30000	30000	FM/NM	Support for extending Green and Active Highland ERDF Project into other areas of the Region.
ERDF - TransTourism Project	0	32932	32932	FR	Adjustment in line with Audit Scotland requirement to account for TransTourism project spend in 2013/14 instead of 2012/13.
ERDF - Food Port	20000	40000	40000	FR	Partner contribution to the Food Port North Sea Area Project to support delivery of "Lifting the Spirit" project including increased budget approved in November 2013 which is matched in full by ERDF.
ERDF / INTERREG Project Support	30000	10000	30000	FR / RR / NM	Support for the delivery of the SPARA 2020 NPP Preparatory Project, TransTourism and allowance for REPUTE project.
Road - Severe Weather Information for Transport (SWIFT)	10000	20000	15000	NM	Extension to live eye cameras and severe weather alerts to points on the local road network across the region.

Bus Investment Fund / BRDG Development	40000	40000	45000	NM/RR	Partner support towards East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor and Campbeltown BRDG
Regionally Significant Scheme Development	20000	20000	20000	RR	Funding support for A95 Route Evaluation / Action Report and Spinal Route Design work (to be repeated in 2014/15 budget proposal).
STPR Road Network Project Development	25000	0	0	NM	Support to develop the design of strategic projects.
Community and Health Transport	5000	0	5000	RR	Part funding to support the delivery of the Integrated Transport Project pilot proposal.
Smart Ticketing Project Support	30000	25000	25000	RR / TS	Trials of smart cross modal ticketing to improve customer experience in using public transport in the Highlands and Islands
Network Rail Control Period 5 - Project Development	40000	40000	40000	FR	Research to support delivery of improved rail services within NR Control Period 5. Includes STPR projects inc Dalcross Station, Inverness - Elgin etc.
Real Time Information Development	25000	30000	30000	NM/RR	Delivery of improved real-time information for public transport passengers
Ferry Capacity Study	0	2000	2500	NM	Partnership project with ABC, CNES and OHTIA to capture booking system availability on west coast ferry routes in summer 2013
Orkney Internal Transport Links Research	0	10000	10000	RR	Study to consider existing internal connections in Orkney (both sea and air) and establish optimum service levels.

Local / Council Ferry Funding Options Assessment	0	5000	4000	RR	Roll out routes and services methodology to all Council funded ferry services. The gap identified is in Highland Council area.
Bus Service Development Demand Forecast	10000	2000	2000	NM	Work to support the case making for bus service improvements including forecasting future demand.
Rural Transport Solutions Research	3000	3000	3000	NM	Development of innovative rural transport solutions for rural areas with no mainstream passenger transport links.
Development and promotion with Nestrans of case for sustainable air connectivity through London hub	5000	5000	5000	RR	Further work to provide evidence in support of the need for the Highlands and Islands to have secure connectivity to world markets.
Skye Air Service Project Development	5000	10000	10000	NM/RR	Development of the case for a new Skye Air link including development work to support CAA engagement on GNSS and airport infrastructure.
Regional Air Service Development Study	10000	14000	14000	NM	Study to establish and assess options for development of additional air network links that would support economic growth and community sustainability.
Total Identified Project Expenditure	328000	438932	463432		
Current Estimated Budget	347112	354000	450000		