

Report to Partnership Meeting 7 February 2014

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Bus Investment Fund

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor project which was successful in receiving a grant from the Bus Investment Fund and invite proposals for potential applications in 2014/15.

Background

The Scottish Government Bus Investment Fund aims to enable the development of projects which have the potential to deliver improvements in bus services and infrastructure through partnership working between local transport authorities, bus operators and others. The fund is expected to run for several years, providing up to £3m/year. Projects are required to be sustainable in the long term and self-funded (or funded by partners) from year 4.

Applications

HITRANS were either a lead or supporting project partner for four project applications. In December, Transport Scotland confirmed that 13 projects out of 45 original applications were to receive grant funding including East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor (the project with HITRANS as lead partner). A list of the other successful projects are listed below for information.

- 100% Bus Stop Information in Fife (Fife)
- Kingswell Park and Choose (Aberdeen)
- Ring of Breadalbane Explorer (Perth & Kinross and Stirling)
- A81 Quality Bus Corridor (East Dumbartonshire)
- Rural Transport Solutions (Dumfries & Galloway/East Ayrshire)
- A947 Mini-Interchange Hubs (Aberdeenshire)
- Muchart and West Kinross-shire Demand Responsive Transport (Clackmannanshire/Perth & Kinross)
- East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor (Inverness)
- Service 4 – Passenger Growth through Better Bus Priority (Edinburgh)
- Service 24 – Bus Priority, Infrastructure & Frequency (Edinburgh)
- SEStran Regional Real Time Passenger Information (various areas)
- North Lanarkshire Connector Bus Service (North Lanarkshire)
- Deeside Community Transport (Aberdeenshire)

This list of projects gives an idea of the breadth and type of project that can be delivered through the Bus Investment Fund.

East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor

The £2.7 million project is to develop a Quality Partnership to improve local bus services in East Inverness. It will improve access to key destinations including the new UHI Campus, Inverness Retail and Business Park, Raigmore Hospital and Inverness City Centre. It will also improve services in areas such as Hilton, Merkinch, South Kessock and Raigmore Estate which suffer from high levels of deprivation.

The project will seek to deliver the following improvements;

- Deployment of 15 branded new buses by Stagecoach on its flagship city services
- Improved bus journey times and journey reliability with intelligent bus priority measures at key junctions.
- Increase patronage through improving infrastructure and innovative marketing.
- 180+ new branded bus stop poles and information displays stops – incorporating Real-time displays at some key stops and NFC codes elsewhere so passengers can access real-time info on their smartphones
- 15+ bus shelters including improved facilities at busiest stops including Falcon Square and Tesco at the Retail Park
- Investment in Real-time technology and traffic signals at key junctions to enable delivery of intelligent bus priority on Millburn Rd but also other key junctions in the city centre and in East Inverness.
- Proposed bus lane along Millburn Road the busiest bus corridor in the city.
- There is also an allocation towards other elements like WiFi at key interchanges, innovative marketing, monitoring of the investment and a commitment to develop a Quality Bus Partnership.

An overview of the project funding is attached.

Tagsa Uibhist

Tagsa Uibhist's project proposal (supported by match funding from CNES and HITRANS) did not make it through the final application stage. However, HITRANS have agreed to support the submission of a revised application by Tagsa Uibhist to the Community Minibus Fund.

2014/15

Transport Scotland has indicated that there will be a further round of the Bus Investment fund next financial year and Members are encouraged to consider potential projects. HITRANS are currently exploring the potential of co-ordinating a HITRANS wide proposal to invest in a number of strategic bus services including the Elgin – Aviemore and Oban – Fort William links which were not progressed beyond the initial application stage in the first round.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	This work supports several strategic objectives of the RTS.
Policy	√	This work supports the development of Policies H29, H30 and H33 as set out in the RTS Delivery Plan
Financial	-	Funding is identified in the 2013/14 Business Plan. The resource of a Partnership Manager for one day per week for the duration of the project has been identified.
Equality	-	Improvement of public transport services helps reduce social exclusion by improving access to employment and services

Report by: Neil MacRae
Designation: Partnership Manager
Background Papers: East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor Spending Profile
Date: 27 Jan 2014

Bus Investment Fund 2013: East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor					
Project Overview					
	Total Project Funding over 3 years				
Partner					
Stagecoach in North Scotland	£1,700,000				
The Highland Council	£200,000				
HITRANS	£100,000				
Total	£2,000,000				
Transport Scotland BIF Grant	£700,000				
Project Proposal Total	£2,700,000				
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Stagecoach in North Scotland	£1,700,000	Stagecoach in North Scotland	Staff Resource	Stagecoach in North Scotland	Staff Resource
The Highland Council	staff resource	The Highland Council	£100,000 + staff resource	The Highland Council	£100,000 + staff resource
HITRANS	£35000 + staff resource	HITRANS	£35000 + staff resource	HITRANS	£30000 + staff resource
Total	£35,000	Total	£135,000	Total	£130,000
Transport Scotland BIF Grant	£365,000	Transport Scotland BIF Grant	£155,000	Transport Scotland BIF Grant	£180,000
Year 1 total spend	£2,100,000*	Year 2 total spend	£290000*	Year 3 total spend	£310,000*

* The proposed project timeline summarised here reflects a commitment by the project partners to hit the ground running and implement a significant amount of the on-street infrastructure and information improvements early in the project. However, there is scope to increase or reduce the amount of Bus Investment grant sought to accommodate a revised profiling of the project.