

Minute of Meeting held in the Main Hall, The Town House, Inverness, on Friday 7 February 2014 at 9.30am.

PRESENT

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

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director
Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager
Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager
Mr Gordon Holland, Moray Council
Mr Tony Jarvis, HIE
Mr Fergus Murray, Argyll and Bute Council
Ms Laura Cromarty, Orkney Islands Council
Mr Iain Mackinnon, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Mr Fraser Grieve, SCDI
Mr David McKechnie, The Highland Council
Ms Pip Farman, NHS Highland
Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer
Mr Derek Mackay, Partnership Secretary
Mrs Katy Cunningham, HITRANS
Ms Fiona McInally, HITRANS

APOLOGIES

Cllr Duncan Macintyre, Argyll and Bute Council Member
Prof David Gray, Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Graham Phillips, The Highland Council Member

MINUTES

- Minute of Meeting of 8 November 2013 1 The Minute of Meeting of 8 November 2013 was **approved**.
- Matters Arising 2 The Partnership Manager confirmed that HITRANS had now moved into their new offices in Inverness.

It was agreed to note the update.

FINANCE

- Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 1 April 2013 to 31 December 2013 3 The Partnership Treasurer submitted a Report detailing the HITRANS revenue monitoring position for the period 1 April 2013 – 31 December 2013. The Report stated that the budget included the 2013/14 portion of the Bus Investment Grant for the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor Project. Income and expenditure were both in line with the budget outturn target and officers were not aware of any anomalies that would distort the overall financial position.

It was agreed to note the Report

Revenue Budget proposal 2014/15 4 The Partnership Treasurer submitted a Report detailing the proposed Revenue Budget 2014/15 which covered HITRANS running costs and Research and Strategy Development Programme costs and was funded from income from Partner Local Authorities and the Scottish Government. The funding formula for Partner Authority contributions was agreed in 2006 and was based on voting weight and population share. Population figures had been updated to take account of the latest position shown by the General Register Office for Scotland. The Report further stated that the budget would continue to achieve the Scottish Governments annual efficiency target of 3%.

It was agreed to approve the Revenue Budget 2014/15 as detailed in the Report.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Research/Strategy/Development Programme 2013/14 5 Mr Ranald Robertson provided an update of progress with delivery of the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2013/14. The Report provided a summary of the proposed amendments to the Programme which reflected a number of funding opportunities and changed priorities identified since approval of the 2013/14 Business Plan. The Report further stated that the Programme included 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.

It was agreed to approve the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2013/14 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

Research Development and Delivery Proposed Programme 2014/15 6 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report in relation to the Research, Development and Delivery activities to be taken forward by HITRANS in 2014/15. The Report stated that a provisional 2014/15 Programme had been included within the current Business Plan but there was scope for further projects to be included and budget allocations to be adjusted. A draft version of the 2014/15 Business Plan would be considered at the next Partnership Meeting.

It was agreed :

(1) to approve the budgetary allocation of £565,000 for the Research, Development and Delivery Programme in 2014/15; and

(2) that additional items or changes to existing items in the Programme be notified to the Partnership Director.

Bus Investment Fund 7 Mr Neil Macrae submitted a Report informing Members that the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor Project had been successful in receiving grant funding from the Scottish Government Bus Investment Fund. The Project sought to develop a Quality Partnership to develop and improve local bus services in East Inverness and the improvements which would be delivered by the project were detailed. The Report further stated that the Tagsa Uibhist Project did not make it through to the final application stage but HITRANS would support the submission of a revised application to the Community Minibus Fund. Transport Scotland had indicated there would be a further round of Bus Investment Funding in the 2014/15 financial year.

It was agreed to note the Report and that there would be a further round of the Bus Investment Fund in 2014/15.

ScotRail Franchise Engagement 2015 8 Mr Frank Roach gave a presentation in relation to the Scotrail franchise. Tenders were due to be returned in April 2014 and a preferred bidder would be announced in the Autumn. Mr Roach indicated the areas of interest in relation to the Highland Main line, Inverness – Aberdeen and Rural Rail Services and indicated that there would be opportunities for Regional Transport Partnerships to work with the franchisee in relation to community rail projects. The importance of improving rail service links to northern isles ferries was highlighted.

It was agreed to note the Report

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| Active Travel Progress Report | 9 | <p>Ms Fiona McNally submitted a Report in relation to the Active Travel Project. The Report stated that to ensure that Projects provided added value and had a direct benefit to local areas an internal application process had been developed to justify the budget provided and to monitor progress with local projects. The Report detailed the outline project spend for 2014 and indicated that discussions would take place with Partner Authorities to identify projects which could be delivered by 2014 to ensure the remaining budget was allocated. A further update would be provided to the next board Meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Report and that further progress Reports would be brought to future Partnership Meetings.</p> |
| Smart Ticketing Project Update | 10 | <p>Mr Ranald Robertson provided an update on the Smart Ticketing Project being delivered in partnership with Transport Scotland. The Report stated that the long term role of the Project was to ensure that all journeys on Scotland's bus, rail, ferry, subway and tram networks could be accessed using a form of Smart Ticketing or payment. Transport Scotland had set out a smart and integrated ticketing programme that sought to identify the architecture required to establish smart ticketing across Scotland's transport network. The Report further stated that the road map to achieving this would be tested by a series of pilot projects that covered a number of different aspects of smart and integrated ticketing established across Scotland's Transport Network and five pilot projects would be delivered within the HITRANS area.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the report.</p> |
| Dalcross Station Update | 11 | <p>Mr Frank Roach submitted a Report detailing the latest position with the reopening of Dalcross Station. The delivery of the Station at Dalcross was included in Network Rail Strategic Business Plan and as Station promoters HITRANS would be required to refresh the planning permission and business case for the station.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(1) to approve the Report; and</p> <p>(2) to approve engagement of consultants to refresh the Business Case.</p> |
| Bus Real Time Information | 12 | <p>Mr Neil Macrae submitted a Report in relation to the delivery of bus/real time information provision within the HITRANS area. The Report stated that HITRANS had been working closely with Partner Authorities in developing real time information provision for local bus services in the Highlands and Islands for a number of years with provision now in areas of Moray, Orkney, Highland and Argyll. The Report further stated it was proposed to procure a flexible new framework contract for rail time information and maintenance across the Highlands and Islands.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(1) to note the update.</p> <p>(2) to approve the proposal for HITRANS to meet 50% of the cost of supporting the bus real-time information systems deployed within the HITRANS area with our partner Local Authorities meeting the other 50% on a pro rata basis; and</p> <p>(3) to support Officers in their efforts to reduce ongoing maintenance liabilities in the future and within any new maintenance contract for real-time information systems.</p> |

Community Links Funding 13 Ms Fiona McNally submitted a Report providing an update on the Community Links Project being run in partnership with Sustrans. The Report stated that Hitrans had been liaising directly with the Community Links Team at Sustrans and appropriate staff within each Local Authority to encourage and support a wide range of applications. The Report further stated that for the first time the Community Links applications could be spread over two financial years to facilitate both delivery of "shovel ready" projects while providing suitable timescales for larger projects to progress feasibility or detailed designs during the first year with construction during the second.

It was agreed to note the Report and that further progress Reports would be brought to future Partnership Meetings.

Skye Air Service Development Strategy 14 Mr Neil Macrae submitted a Report providing an update on the recent activity of the Skye Air Services Working Group which had been set up with the objective of developing the business case for reintroducing scheduled air services to Skye Airport. The Report stated that Hitrans were currently working with HIAL and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to develop a brief for a full survey of Skye Airport and its facilities and to appoint a specialist aviation consultant to identify the necessary investment to obtain an airport licence from the CAA based on the preferred business model for operating scheduled flights to the Island.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to note that an allocation of £10,000 for the Skye Air Service Development Strategy had been made in the Research and Development Programme Budget for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Orkney Internal Connections Study 15 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report in relation to the Orkney Internal Air and Ferry Services Study. The Study would seek to consider transport provision to the Outer North Isles of Orkney and identify how to best serve these Islands in the short, medium and long term taking into consideration Best Value. The Study would review the internal air and ferry services to the Outer North Isles and whether the frequency of these services could be amended to better meet the needs of these outlying communities in the context of a ferry/air transport mix.

It was agreed to note the Report.

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

Food Port Project – Lifting the Spirit Project Up-date 16 With reference to item 15 of the Minute of Meeting of 23 August 2013, Mr Frank Roach provided 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 Partnership with contributions from Moray Council, HIE and Hitrans. A summary of the project status was detailed

It was agreed to note the Report.

European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020 17 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report advising Members of the status of the low carbon strand of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020 and identifying areas where the Scottish Government intended to focus effort. The Report stated that Hitrans would seek to develop opportunities that could be taken forward under the funding categories.

It was agreed to note the Report.

REPUTE 18 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report in relation to the Renewable Public Transport Enterprise Project (REPUTE). The Report stated that the REPUTE Project would create an Atlantic area framework for encouraging innovation and promoting the use of renewable energy in public transport and would build on the work previously done on transport projects concerning energy to support interoperability, intermodality and continuity of existing transport networks. The Report commented on HITRANS potential role within the Project.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to approve the allocation of 40,000 Euros from the 2013/14 and 2014/15 Research and Strategy Delivery Programme to the REPUTE Project.

PARTNERSHIP

Mr Okain MacIennan left the Meeting during consideration of the following item.

Non Council Board Member 19 Partnership Secretary submitted a Report in relation to the status of the Non-Council Board Member representing health issues, Mr Okain MacIennan. Mr MacIennan had confirmed that he would be stepping down as a Member of NHS Highland's Board with effect from February 2014. The Report detailed the options open to the Partnership Board.

It was agreed to seek confirmation from NHS Highland that they were agreeable to Mr MacIennan continuing to represent the health sector at HITRANS Partnership Board Meetings.

Review of HITRANS Financial Regulations 20 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report seeking the adoption of revised Financial Regulations for the Partnership. The Report stated that HITRANS had previously adopted Highland Council's Financial Regulations. Revised Regulations were approved by The Highland Council on 5 April 2012 and it was proposed to update HITRANS Financial Regulations in line with The Highland Council.

It was agreed to the application to HITRANS of The Highland Council Financial Regulations March 2012, to be implemented forthwith.

Programme of Meetings 2014 21 Mr Ranald Robertson submitted a Report detailing proposed meeting dates for the Partnership Board in 2014.

It was agreed:

(1) that the HITRANS Partnership and Advisors meet in 2014 on the dates and at the locations identified in the Report; and

(2) to note that additional Meetings may be called if circumstances required.