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Report to Partnership Meeting 5 February 2016

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Research/Strategy Development Programme for 2015/16

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 2015/16 Business Plan at the Partnership meeting on 10th April 2015.

DETAIL

The Partnership at its meeting of 10 April agreed the HITRANS Business Plan for 2015/16 which includes a programme for Research and Strategy Development for 2015/16 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 changes that have been identified to the circumstances surrounding 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:

- Reduce from £10,000 to £5,000 budget for Air Discount Scheme research into introduction of a legally compliant scheme that is available for business use. This has been delayed as the existing ADS scheme has been changed and the budget will now spread into 2016/17 so a reduction in current year spend is proposed.
- Increase budget for RTS refresh from £20,000 to £25,000 to allow an increased focus on Low Carbon Fuel Strategy that can be used to support that ERDF funding stream.
- Reduce budget for External / EU Projects from £30,000 to £10,000 following rejection of initial applications for COMBI and PaTRA projects. Both to be resubmitted with some associated costs.
- Following discussion at the November Partnership meeting a budget of £10,000 has been added to investigate a number of constraints / barriers to the tourism industry. These include constraints on Cruise Liner traffic growth and impact on ferry infrastructure should there be a proven trend towards tri axle coaches.
- Increase budget for rail project development from £40,000 to £60,000 to reflect increased expenditure on key projects including Oban Hub, Inverness Airport Station and Inverness Station redevelopment.

The programme includes provision for the contingency of an underspend emerging on any of the individual projects by allowing for a overspend of £22,700.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Partnership is asked to approve the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2015/16 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 2015/16 Budget
Equality	√	Actions within the programme are aimed where applicable to improving equality in accessibility.

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 22nd January 2016
Additional Information: Appendix – Research and Development Programme

Proposed Research development and delivery programme 2015-2016

Area	Project	2015/16	November Review	January Review	Comments
Active Travel	Smarter Choices Smarter Places Match Funding	30000	30000	30000	Match funding to help partner Councils draw down their allocation under SCSP.
	Community Links (Sustrans Award)*	610000	610000	610000	Budget for Inverness Campus (north bridges)
	Community Link Feasibility Support	0	10000	10000	Budget to support partner authority development of potential Community Links Projects.
	Sustrans Partnership / Active Travel Projects	100000	100000	100000	Partnership with Sustrans for Active Travel Officer to deliver active travel projects across the region.
Aviation	Development and promotion of case for sustainable air connectivity through London / EU hub	2000	8000	8000	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	5000	5000	Development of the case for a new Skye Air link
	Air Discount Scheme - SME Extension	10000	10000	5000	Research to identify the feasibility and potential cost of extending the Air Discount Scheme to include business travel for island based SMEs.
	Air Service Scoping Research		1700	1700	Survey work led by SCDI on Air Services current performance.

	Regional Air Service Development Support	30000 (10000)	35200 (11,733.33)	35200 (11,733.33)	Funding to support de minimis air service enhancement of Glasgow - Barra service as a 3 way partnership project with Transport Scotland and CnES. HITRANS will meet a third share of the total £35,200 spend.
European / External Funding	ERDF - SPARA 2020 Project	40000	40000	40000	HITRANS cash contribution to the budget for the SPARA 2020 project which attracts a 65% intervention rate from ERDF.
	ERDF / INTERREG Project Support	30000	30000	10000	Support towards the development of new EU/External funding opportunities.
	Ferry Accessibility Fund	3000	3000	3000	Roll out of Thistle Assistance Card in the Highlands and Islands which will be submitted for part funding through the Ferry Accessibility Fund.
Ferry	Ferry Capacity Study	6000	10000	10000	Partnership project with ABC, CNES and OHTIA to capture booking system availability on west coast ferry routes in summer 2015
	Northern Isles Ferry Service Contract Development	0	0	0	Support of research to support the development of the next NIFS tender.

Travel Information	Severe Weather Information for Transport (SWIFT)	10000	10000	10000	Extension to live eye cameras and severe weather alerts to points on the local road network across the region.
	Smart Ticketing Project Support	10000	5000	5000	Trials of smart cross modal ticketing to improve customer experience in using public transport in the Highlands and Islands
	Real Time Information Development	30000	30000	30000	Delivery of improved real-time information for public transport passengers
RTS	Regionally Significant Scheme Development	50000	60000	60000	Funding support to help partner Councils develop Regionally Significant Transport Projects.
	Transport Capacity Constraints - Tourism			10000	Research to investigate where transport is a constraint / barrier to the development of tourism within the Highlands and Islands.
	RTS Refresh- Green Transport Efficiency Baseline Review	15000	20000	25000	To support the refresh of the RTS.
Rail	Network Rail Control Period 5 - Project Development	40000	40000	60000	Research to support delivery of improved rail services within NR Control Period 5. Includes STPR projects inc Dalcross Station, Inverness - Elgin, Oban Interchange etc.

Road Based Passenger Transport	Bus Investment Fund	200000	200000	200000	Delivery of HITRANS BIF Projects and developing applications to any third round of BIF.
Comms	Communications Annual Review	0	0	0	Annual Publicity and Communications Review
	Total Identified Project Expenditure	1191000	1221000	1232700	
	Current Estimated Budget	1210000			