HI ▶ TRANS

THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Report to Partnership Meeting 16 September 2016

STRATEGY

Regional Transport Strategy Update.

Purpose of Report

To provide Advisors with an update on Regional Transport Strategy Refresh.

Background

HITRANS was established as one of the seven Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships in December 2005. The Transport Scotland Act 2005 requires these Partnerships to prepare Transport Strategies for their regions which will enhance economic wellbeing; promote safety, social inclusion and equal opportunity; plan for a sustainable transport system; and integrate across boundaries with other Partnerships. These Strategies must take account of future needs and set priorities for transport development and improvement.

The Regional Transport Strategy should provide a framework for the transport activities of constituent Councils, Health board and other key agencies.

HITRANS appointed transport consultants Eyland Skyn in December 2015 to assist officers in the process of updating the original 2008 Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan. Following an initial workshop at the HITRANS Partnership Meeting in February, a Main Issues Report was published to inform the development of the revised strategy.

Main Issues Report

The Main Issues Report (MIR) was published for consultation from the 13th April to the end of June 2016. The MIR and consultation feedback form was emailed to an extensive range of stakeholders, many of whom had earlier taken part in stakeholder interviews to inform the context setting and content of the report. In addition, a press release was distributed regarding the MIR consultation, and further details were to be found on the HITRANS website.

The feedback form contained a set of questions relating to key sections of the MIR and people were invited to submit responses either via surveymonkey or by email to HITRANS.

In total there were 37 responses to the surveymonkey, and a further six responses that were received via email.

An overview of the consultation responses for the Main Issues Report is attached as an appendix to this report.

Regional Transport Strategy Projects / Policies / Interventions

A workshop has been arranged in advance of the HITRANS Partnership meeting on 15th September. This will provide members with an opportunity to agree the objectives for the Regional Transport Strategy against which an initial long list of potential projects, initiatives and interventions that could feed into the strategy will be assessed. These projects, initiatives and interventions have been derived from a review of the 2008 delivery plan together with input from the Board at the March 2016 workshop or have been suggested through the development of the Main Issues Report and its public consultation.

The draft objectives were presented and validated through the Main Issues Report consultation, with minor amendments through that consultation resulting in the set of objectives outlined. The objectives will be used as part of the STAG approach to evaluate the long list of projects for the emerging RTS refresh delivery plan. Copies of the draft list of objectives along with the projects, initiatives and interventions are enclosed in appendix 2. Appendix 3 outlines the proposed structure for final strategy document.

Recommendation
- Members are invited to note the report.
- Following the pre board workshop, Members are invited to agree the final list of projects, policies and interventions for inclusion within the Regional Transport Strategy and the objectives against which they will be assessed.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	
Policy	√	
Financial	-	Funding is identified in the 2015/16 Business Plan.
Equality	√	

Report by: Neil MacRae
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 7th September 2016

HITRANS RTS Refresh – Main Issues Report Consultation Report

The Main Issues Report (MIR) was published for consultation from the 13th April to the end of June 2016. Due to the 5th May election which was in the middle of this period a little longer was allowed to enable particularly public sector authorities to respond, and to allow Hitrans to promote the consultation opportunity following the election and the end of the purdah period.

The MIR and consultation questions were emailed to an extensive range of stakeholders, many of whom had earlier taken part in stakeholder interviews to inform the context setting and content of the MIR. In addition, a press release was distributed regarding the MIR consultation, and further details were to be found on the Hitrans website.

The set of questions were set out through the MIR and people were invited to submit responses either via surveymonkey or by email to Hitrans.

As of 5th July, in total there were 37 responses to the surveymonkey, and a further six responses that were received via email.

Overview of surveymonkey responses

Fifty-four per cent of surveymonkey respondents reported that they were responding as an individual, 46 per cent that they were responding on behalf of an organisation. Of the 17 respondents that stated that they were responding on behalf of an organisation, 13 gave the name of the organisation, as follows:

- NHS Highland – Public Health Directorate
- Hebridean Air Services ltd.
- Forestry Commission Scotland Highlands and Islands Conservancy
- Mobility and Access Group for Scotland
- Road Haulage Association Ltd.
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Argyll and Bute Council
- Stagecoach North Scotland
- North Rail Line Action Group
- North and West Operational Unit (Health and Care)
- The Moray Council
- Nestrans
- Caithness Transport Forum

One of the individual respondents also noted that they were an MSP.

In addition, email responses were received from The Highland Council, Orkney Islands Council, Transport Scotland, Argyll & Bute Council and Moray Council.

Of the 40 per cent of surveymonkey responses that provided a note of their gender 27 per cent were female and the majority – 73 per cent – were male.

Again, only around 40 per cent of surveymonkey respondents gave their age; there were a mix of ages, but most commonly consultation respondents were aged between 45 and 64 (accounting for nearly two-thirds of those giving a response).

Fourteen of the 37 respondents stated that they would be happy to be contacted again in the future regarding the RTS and the work of HITRANS. All of these supplied an email address for contact.

Main Issues

Overall surveymonkey respondents reported that the six main issues highlighted in the MIR represent a good reflection of the of the changes in trends and current challenges and constraints for transport in the region, as shown below.
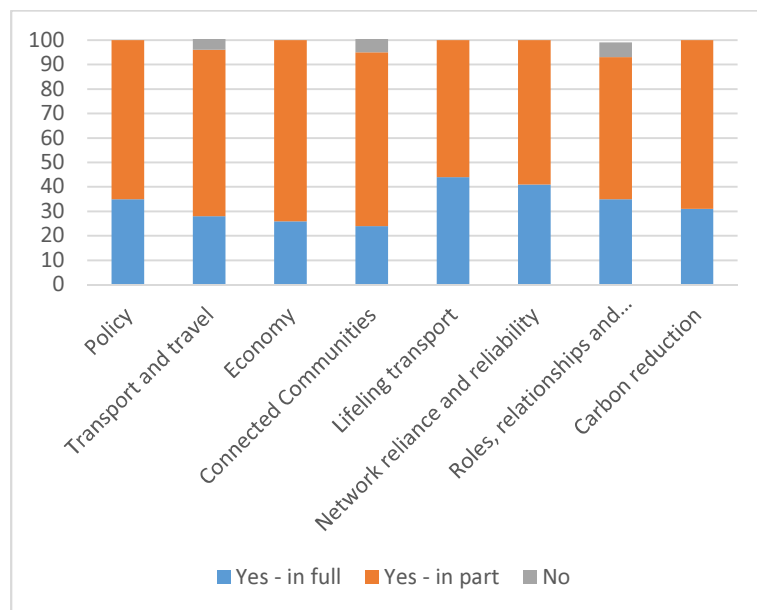
A number of respondents in each section gave further information of how they considered each issue described in the MIR could be enhanced, and this is set out in the remainder of this document.

Respondents highlighted the need to acknowledge and reflect on the variety to exists across the region. For example, variation in climate and the pace of economic activity and growth for example. In more distant and remote areas of the region a single traffic collision can result in road closures with no alternative routes, and much of the network can be single track compared to more populous areas closer to the strategic road and rail network.

Policy Update (Section 2 of MIR)

When asked if this section of the MIR reflects the changes in policy and trends since the publication of the first RTS in 2008, 35 per cent of respondents reported that it did – in full – and 65 per cent that it did – in part.

Other policy drivers or aspects that should influence the RTS Refresh were given as:

- HEALTH / SOCIAL CARE:
  - Articulate the need to promote 'health gain' and how the refresh needs to be seen to be influencing others e.g. safer routes to school and shifting societal norms (modal shifts) (1)
  - Integration of Health and Social Care (1)
- REMOTE / RURAL:
  - Give more emphasis to remote and rural / localism agenda / capitalising on local knowledge and resources / focus on areas that are under-developed or under-connected (3)
  - Extension of ADS and RET for inter-isle ferries should be a priority (1)
  - More mention of the role of ports and harbours required, for example Cromarty Firth, Nigg, Scrabster, Inverness and Wick, all of which have seen change over the period, and which will play an important role in the future (1)

- ENVIRONMENT / CARBON REDUCTION:
  - Hitrans should look at quantifying carbon reduction targets for the region (1)
  - Clean Air for Scotland Strategy should be considered (1)
- ROAD NETWORK:
  - The Infrastructure Investment Plan supports the A9 and A96 dualling; reference should be made to work being undertaken on the A9 and A96 dualling (1)
- FREIGHT:
  - More attention should be given to freight (1)
- RAIL:
  - Dualling the Highland Main Line should be a priority (1)
  - Greater emphasis on journey time reductions on rural rail routes (1)
- OTHER:
  - Equality Act 2010 and the inclusion of transport which was previously exempt should be highlighted (1)
  - Make reference to Designing Streets and the shift in focus it brings in national policy (1)
  - Stronger emphasis on the importance of integrating bus, ferry and train services (1)
  - Reference to the Scottish Cities Alliance should be made, and the announcements of the Inverness City Region Deal, and particularly the transport related elements (1)

Transport and Travel in the Highlands and Islands (Section 3 of MIR)

When asked if the Transport and Travel in the Highlands and Islands section of the MIR fairly reflects the changes in trends since the publication of the first RTS in 2008, 28 per cent of respondents responded that it did – fully, 68 per cent that it did – in part, and 5 per cent (one respondent) that it did not.

Fourteen respondents gave comments as to other issues that are not covered or captured adequately, which can be summarised as follows:

- Data should include localised trends, e.g. 14 per cent public transport not accessible will be much higher than that in some areas (1)
- Highlight more the variation in rail travel, e.g. reduction in travel on the FNL (3)
- Comment on impact of downturn in oil and gas sector, with resultant loss of some journeys on the Wick-Aberdeen (air) route (1)
- Monitoring – increasing life expectancy should be seen in the context of healthy life expectancy (1)
- Consider more trend analysis (1)
- Recognise forestry is an increasing part of the economy in the region; Highland has around a 30% share of the Scottish £1bn industry (1)
- Increase in car / ferry use for inter-isle travel in the Western Isles (due to reduction in internal air services) (1)
- Ageing population, centralisation of health services, stricter eligibility for patient transport, reductions in motobility vehicles due to affordability = access deprivation (1)
- Integration, particularly between timetables (2)
- Monitoring – a robust and quantifiable monitoring method is required (1)
- Reductions in bus services – reference to commercial and tendered and differences (1)
- Make reference to the network of variable message signs and also the Traffic Scotland web site and Highland Council Travel Information web pages – reflecting the opportunity for a much more joined up approach to travel information and the changes to technology that allow these changes to happen (1)
- Strong policy required on how and when transport integration will occur (1)

Economy (Section 5 of MIR)

When asked if the economy section of the MIR fairly reflects the changes in key issues since the publication of the first RTS in 2008 and the current challenges and opportunities for the region's economy in respect to transport, 26 per cent of respondents responded that it did – fully and 74 per cent that it did – in part.

Fifteen respondents gave comments as to other issues that are not covered or captured adequately, which can be summarised as follows:

- FREIGHT:
  - Freight timber constraints in north Highland (1)
  - The lack of RET for commercial vehicles could be discussed as this impacts on costs associated with transporting goods to island communities and the competitiveness of island businesses with those on the mainland due to higher costs (1)
  - Development of rail freight on Far North Line is of key importance (1)
  - Consider rest facilities for lorry drivers across the network (1)
  - More emphasis on rail freight at Inverness and the trials undertaken in respect of whisky rail freight (1)
- FOOD and DRINK SECTOR
  - Good to see mention of food and drink sector and importance of movement of goods; also important to highlight the importance of moving people for the industry (1)
- TOURISM
  - Welcome recognition of transport routes as tourist attractions in themselves. Better integration is required, e.g. ticketing to fully capitalise on opportunity (1)
  - Consider quality of journey as well as focus on journey time reductions – more could be made of train journeys for example to interpret the landscape (1)
  - Mention walk / cycle footpaths in reference to promoting transport routes as tourist attractions (i.e. not just road and rail) (1)
  - Active Travel and Tourism infrastructure, such as the NC500, should be a priority (1)
  - There is perceived inaccessibility around the region – ferry capacity and the unavailability of alternative sailings if one is missed impacts upon the behaviour of travellers (e.g. less stops on route), reduced bike capacity on west coast train routes etc. (1)
- RAIL
  - Need for development / redevelopment of rail stations, including Inverness, Dalcross and reopening of Evanton (1)
- JOURNEY TIMES
  - RTS "must" include interventions to reduce journey time on the Far North Line (2)
  - There are significant journey time barriers, slow journey speeds and long journeys from much of the region (1)
- OTHER
  - Impact of internal transport on supporting a healthy diet / closure of local shops impact (2)
  - 5.12.1 Refer to Coach hub – bus and coach station as important as rail station; 5.13 mention bus and coach (1)
  - Transport connectivity important for health and wellbeing – important to mention here – buses, trains and ferries need to coordinate well (1)
  - Reference to port infrastructure should be made (1)
  - More focus required on the impact that transport has on the economy (1)

- o There is increasing reliance upon digital communications, but much of the region, notably some of the most remote areas are behind other areas in terms of broadband availability and performance and mobile network availability (1)

Connected Communities (Section 6 of MIR)

When asked if the connected communities section of the MIR fairly reflects the changes in key issues since the publication of the first RTS in 2008 and the current challenges and opportunities for the region's people in respect to transport, 24 per cent of respondents responded that it did – fully, 71 per cent that it did – in part, and six per cent that it did not.

Fifteen respondents gave comments as to other issues that are not covered or captured adequately, which can be summarised as follows:

- Good overview of issues – decline in bus services will continue in future years, e.g. the new Highland Council tender for public transport aiming to cut expenditure by around 15% (2)
- Refer to young people as affected group, not just people who are older and people who are disabled. Young often dependent on public transport for access to work etc., and so particularly affected by any service cuts / fare increases (1)
- Welcome reference to increase in online shopping, also mention Citizens' Advice Scotland report The Postcode Penalty – The Distance Travelled (1)
- 6.2.2 welcome recognition of access deprivation and impact on social isolation and loneliness; impacts are wider than this also (1)
- 6.7.1 should read universities not just UHI
- Consider all inequalities not just access inequality, e.g. equality of information availability on transport (1)
- Consider implications of the Community Empowerment Act / greater emphasis on localisation and self-sufficiency at a community level (2)
- Welcome the positive overview of active travel for communities at paragraph 6.9 (1)
- Would welcome reference being made to the need for cross boundary working in relation to health and social care integration, particularly with NHS Grampian which also covers part of the Hitrans region and the partners of the North East Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) (1)
- Stronger emphasis needed on integration of all transport modes and linked timetabling (1)
- Focus on specific projects that are regionally strategic, for example Stromeferry Bypass, Caol Link Road, Corran Ferry and Uig Pier facilities (1)
- Greater emphasis on fair fares on the Northern Isles ferry routes and internal ferry services; requirement for Transport Scotland to progress with this work in the short term (1)
- Need for comprehensive public transport timetable and mapping for the region, on a consistent basis (1)

Lifeline Transport (Section 7 of MIR)

Consultees were asked if they agreed with the definition of lifeline transport provided in the MIR, namely: *"Lifeline transport in the Highlands and Islands is often a single route, be it road, ferry or air, that connects a community with key destinations, such as a GP surgery, onwards to hospital, to work, shopping and leisure opportunities. If a lifeline route is unavailable, that community will often be cut off, or in some cases have a long diversionary route. For those without access to private transport, public transport can be a lifeline service, bus, community transport and local ferries and air services provide lifeline connections between communities and where they need to travel to."*

Fifty-six per cent of respondents confirmed that they did agree with the definition, six per cent that they did not, and 38 per cent gave some alternative suggestions for the definition. Seven respondents provided comments, which comprises:

- Rail should also be included along with "road, ferry or air" in the list of possible lifeline routes (2)
- Suggested change: If a lifeline route is unavailable OR CHANGES E.G. DUE TO CHANGES IN TIMETABLING OR PROVISION, COST WEATHER, ACCIDENTS, DEMAND - that community MAY become cut off...... (1)
- Refer to the economic requirement for these routes too for the provision of services to the community and for the transport of goods to end users (1)
- Bus requires a prominent mention in the definition; it is important for a lot of peoples' access to all manner of destinations (1)
- Should exclude private operators such as Pentland/Western Ferries where alternatives routes are available and provided by the state (1)
- In the definition of lifeline services, consider is an island can have both a lifeline ferry and lifeline air service or should one be considered the lifeline and the other not? (1)

Respondents were asked if the main issues highlighted in the lifeline transport section reflect the changes in key issues since the publication of the first RTS in 2008 and the current challenges and opportunities for the region's people and businesses to transport. Forty-four per cent of respondents considered that this was the case – fully, while 56 per cent considered that it did, partly. Eight respondents provided comments as to any issues that are not covered or captured adequately in the MIR, which comprises:

- Wick John O'Groats Airport should be mentioned in this section – a *lifeline* for local business (1)
- Proposal for transformational change would apply equally to other sections of the RTS (1)
- Highlight opportunities for partnership working, e.g. Highland Timber Transport Group (1)
- Different modes serve as lifelines, e.g. (Barra-)Benbecula-Stornoway flights were a lifeline particularly for hospital patients (1)
- Highlight reduction in patient transport (1)
- Links with Community transport and liftshare schemes need to be explored further. Going forward someone needs to take the lead on this with a selection of stakeholders (1)
- Mention should be made of internal ferry services for Highland and Argyll & Bute (as well as for Orkney (and Shetland) (1)
- RTS should refer to the current Business Case being prepared for Skye Air Service, due to be published in Autumn 2016 (1)
- Reference should be made to the adverse economic impacts of poor lifeline transport, for example reference should be made to the Stromeferry Bypass to reflect the scale of such issues (1)

Network Reliance and Reliability (Section 8 of MIR)

When asked if the network reliance and reliability section of the MIR fairly reflects the changes in key issues since the publication of the first RTS in 2008 and the current challenges and opportunities for the region's people and businesses in respect to transport, 41 per cent of respondents responded that it did – fully, and 59 per cent that it did – in part.

Eight respondents gave comments as to other issues that are not covered or captured adequately, which can be summarised as follows:

- Agree dependence on a single operator is a key issue (1)
- What is the economic impact of network disruptions? (1)
- Make mention to both private sector and public sector buses (1)
- "trees falling onto lines..." consider reference to increasing weather and climatic events (1)
- Include poor performance of the bus industry (1)

- Mention accessible buses / coaches (1)
- It might be useful to highlight particular issues on the transport network e.g. Closure of the A83 at Rest and Be Thankful due to landslides - number of days closed annually (2)
- Because of the topography of the region and ground conditions (such as road built on peat banks) even well maintained roads will not meet national standards (1)

Roles, Relationships and Responsibilities (Section 9 of MIR)

When asked if the roles, relationships and responsibilities section of the MIR fairly reflects the changes in key issues since the publication of the first RTS in 2008 and the current challenges and opportunities for the region's people and businesses in respect to transport, 35 per cent of respondents responded that it did – fully, 58 per cent that it did – in part, and six per cent that it did not.

Nine respondents gave comments as to other issues that are not covered or captured adequately, which can be summarised as follows:

- There can sometimes be confusion at a local level as to which body holds which responsibilities with regards to transport, e.g. the situation regarding provision of bus timetables and ensuring bus shelters are kept up-to-date is not always successful (1)
- Include a description of the HITRANS Board / groups / roles etc. and whether this has changed over time (1)
- Increased opportunities for collaboration / partnership (3)
- Role of CPPs in such a huge and remote area such as HITRANS is essential in both determining need and influencing solutions (1)
- In framework that summarises main roles and responsibilities there is no reference to other public bodies, including statutory consultees (1)
- Reference to the potential of 'shared services' initiatives between groups of local authorities (1)

Carbon Reduction (Section 10 of MIR)

When asked if the carbon reduction section of the MIR fairly reflects the changes in key issues since the publication of the first RTS in 2008 and the current challenges and opportunities for the region's people and businesses in respect to transport, 31 per cent of respondents responded that it did – fully, and 69 per cent that it did – in part.

Twelve respondents gave comments as to other issues that are not covered or captured adequately, which can be summarised as follows:

- Initiatives that promote walking and cycling will be mostly relevant to Inverness (1)
- Require quantitative measures (1)
- Increases in driving and decrease in public transport usage is worrying (1)
- Too much focus on walking and cycling (1)
- Not enough reference to walking and cycling (1)
- Options / opportunities need to be realistic to enable transport service to still be delivered and affordable (1)
- Consider travel avoidance (1)
- Lack of funding for Active travel developments (1)
- Focus on opportunities such as Inverness Active Travel Network (which has been submitted for potential Community Links PLUS funding (1)
- Consideration of a low carbon taxi fleet as a potential way forward for carbon reduction, especially in Inverness where the Air Quality Management Area has been identified (1)

RTS Objectives (Section 10 of MIR)

New objectives were drafted for the RTS Refresh, as follows:
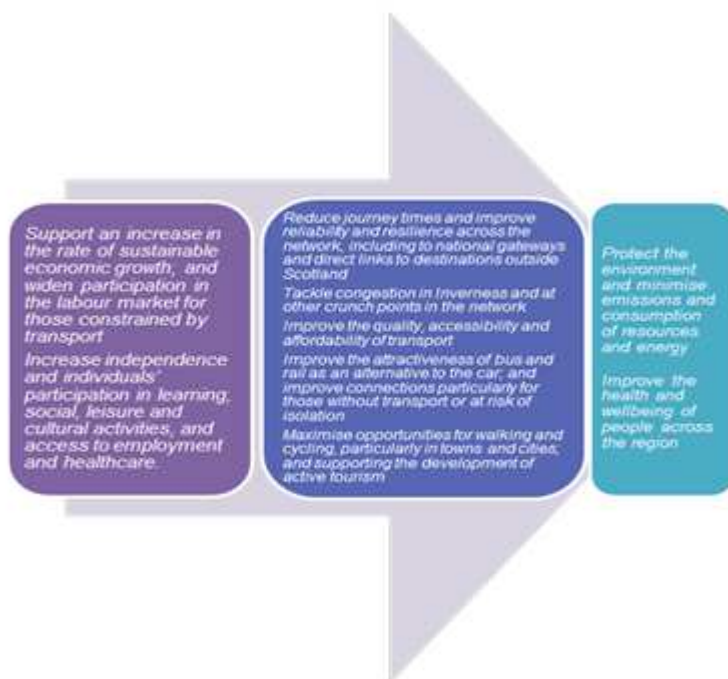
Respondents were asked if the new draft RTS objectives (Section 11) were appropriate and fitting. A little over one half (53 per cent) reported that the new objectives were appropriate and fitting, while 47 per cent reported that the objectives were appropriate and fitting – in part.

Eleven respondents provided further details in respect to their views on the objectives, namely:

- 'supporting' objectives should be given equal weighting to outcome objectives (1)
- Support the widening of a health focus, and the review of health measures (1)
- Participation in health added to high level objectives (1)
- More weight should be given to economic requirements of routes to rural industries such as forestry (1)
- More weight given to economic requirements (1)
- Requirement for focus on lifeline transport (1)
- Inclusion of 'safety' (1)
- Consider specifically mentioning 'freight' within the objectives (1)

RTS focus

When asked what the refreshed RTS should focus upon there were mixed responses, which are summarised as follows:

- Focus on achievement across the whole region (1)
- Improving services for the elderly and disabled (1)
- Funding at a strategic level and delivery at community level (1)
- Mention more for freight (1)
- Support for community transport (1)

Objective weighting

Ten respondents provided details in respect to whether one or more objective(s) should be given more weighting, as follows:

- Economy should remain the focus of Hitrans (1)
- Creating a fully accessible transport system should be the priority (1)
- All should have a similar weighting (1)
- Freight should receive more attention (2)
- Journey time reduction and capacity should have greatest weighting (1)

HITRANS roles and responsibility

Respondents were asked to describe what works well and why in terms of Hitrans' role and activities. Eleven respondents provided details of what works well, as follows:

- Groups / individuals with very specialist expertise that can advise / be consulted to guide work - adds value in working across a number of areas to reduce duplication / give greater voice to issues, particularly the remote and rural perspective
- Hitrans' focus on the key importance of transport across all elements of society is a benefit to the region and drives improvement in many areas
- Commonality across local authority partners is good but does not seem to result in shared practice
- Hitrans ensures that the diverse challenges of the UKs most remote and dispersed region are given a voice that otherwise would be challenging and could otherwise come over as a clamour of many voices
- Provision of information is much better than in the past, largely due to increased use of online tools, apps and social media. We also consider Hitrans' decision to use a MIR for the RTS refresh to be a particularly effective way to consult on review of the RTS
- The coordinating role with member Local Authorities works well and allows Council's to share best practise via the Permanent Advisors meetings. Hitrans have also undertaken joint responses to government consultations and can help lobby the Scottish Government for increased investment in transport and infrastructure in the region. The Council have undertaken joint projects with Hitrans such as the air route study and some active travel projects which Hitrans have match funded. The various transport users' groups meetings (e.g. ferry users group) coordinated by Hitrans also work well and allow Local Authorities, CMAL and operators to discuss issues relating to provision of vital public transport services.
- Always room for improvement in terms of integration and communication.
- Role of the RTS and the LTS can be brought closer together given the challenges that all member local authorities are facing – RTS refresh offers opportunity to more fully integrate each authority's current priorities in terms of national projects, their own capital programme schemes and current transport initiatives (e.g. rail development, active travel, carbon reduction, air quality management schemes etc.)

Respondents were also questioned on what could be built upon or changed in the future during the term of the refreshed RTS. Nine respondents provided comment, as follows:

- Has to be more focus on solving the issues surrounding access to health and social care. At present nobody is willing to take responsibility and a lot is being asked of communities with insufficient funding attached
- Increasing stakeholders' participation
- Strengthening of engagement with communities either directly or coordinated through the CPP
- Continuing to champion better integration of transport services supported by better digital information and infrastructure

- Given the limited staff resources currently faced by Local Authorities increased partnership working on transport projects where possible will be increasingly important.
- More engagement with stakeholders to pull together 'out of the box' thinking to problems of connectivity across the Highland region.

Future focus

Consultation respondents were asked what key policies and proposals should be a focus for Hitrans through the RTS, and why? Eleven respondents gave a response, and the responses provided include:

- The Scottish Greens have proposed a number of transport policies that could be promoted through the RTS and would benefit the people of the Highlands and Islands (cycle training for all school children, active travel to make up 10% of transport budgets. Using participatory democracy and/or participatory budgeting techniques to enable communities to set their own priorities or solve specific local transport problems
- Welcome further engagement regarding health
- As population is ageing their needs should be addressed. We have a postcode lottery on concessionary fares and this is resulting in many older people becoming isolated
- A maximum rail journey time from Thurso to Inverness of 3 hours 30 minutes
- Joint working with partners
- One area is to increase access for those with limited mobility, and issues around affordability
- Less emphasis on protection of the environment for its own sake and more about managing it sustainably to promote and deliver economic growth and health benefits. By doing so people/communities will better understand their dependency on nature and their environment and thereby are more likely to look after it
- Network reliance and reliability
- Community empowerment 2020 vision

Appendix 2

Guiding principles:

The Regional Transport Strategy should be strategic in nature, offering opportunities to address inequalities across the region, both in access in the first instance, but in turn in respect to wider inequalities in health and economic activity for example.

The Regional Transport Strategy should be transformational, the opportunity of the work on the back of the refreshed strategy is to make a significant and lasting impact for the region.

While seeking these transformational opportunities efforts should be strategic in approach and methods of working, but should focus on local needs and impacts, addressing known barriers and inequalities.   Much of this effort will include working in partnership with the Community Planning Partnerships in the local authority areas, and with the Locality Planning Groups established by the Integration Joint Boards and Lead Agencies in each area.

Long list of RTS Projects / Policies / Interventions

The table that follows contains the initial long list of potential projects, initiatives and interventions that could feed into the refreshed regional transport strategy. This long list is derived from a review of the 2008 delivery plan together with input from the Board at the March 2016 workshop, and initiatives that have been suggested through the development on the Main Issues Report and the consultation on the Main Issues Report in 2016.

The objectives were presented and validated through the Main Issues Report consultation, with minor amendments through that consultation resulting in the set of objectives over the page. The objectives will be used as part of the STAG approach to evaluate the long list of projects for the emerging RTS refresh delivery plan.

The long list of options comprises some stand along projects, but also many that will align with other projects in the list. This coordination of projects will be developed as the RTS refresh develops and progresses. Some projects are very site specific whereas others are broader in reach across the region. This approach reflects the significance of some transport pinch points in the HITRANS network, including routes for which there are no alternatives in case of, for example, road closure. The region-wide projects however also build upon the unique opportunities to innovate and make a real difference for people and business in the HITRANS area.

(The projects listed are in no particular order at this stage)

Support an increase in the rate of sustainable economic growth; and widen participation in the labour market for those constrained by transport

Increase independence and individuals' participation in learning, social, leisure and cultural activities, and access to employment and healthcare

Reduce journey times and improve reliability and resilience across the network, including to national gateways and direct links to destinations outside Scotland

Tackle congestion in Inverness and at other pinch points in the network

Improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of transport

Improve the attractiveness of bus and rail and walking and cyclling as an alternative to the car; and improve connections particularly for those without transport or at risk of isolation; and supporting the development of active tourism

Protect the environment and minimise emissions and consumption of resources and energy

Improve the health and wellbeing of people across the region; targeting those in poor health

	Project / Policy / Intervention	Increase in rate of economic growth / widen participation in labour market	Increase independence and individuals' participation	Reduce journey times / improve reliability	Tackle congestion	Improve quality, accessibility & affordability	Improve attractiveness of non-car modes	Environmental impacts / emissions	Improve health
1	Western Isles Spinal Route further works								
2	Travel Plan support and strategy								
3	Support for Bus Quality Partnerships								
4	Strategy for transport routes as attractions in their own right								
5	Strategy looking at sustainable access to popular tourist sites: scoping work for volume tourism / development of a site-specific visitor travel plan approach								
6	Develop low carbon tourism opportunities								
7	Strategy for 'Health Gain' from transport – case studies / toolkit / mainstreaming of concept								
8	Strategy and auditing to devise an approach to address social isolation and access deprivation at locality-based level								
9	FNL rail journey time improvements: capacity enhancements; Evanton Rail Station (FNL); signalling upgrade								
10	WHL and Kyle line journey time and frequency improvements								
11	A82 - Strategic improvements to reduce journey times and improve safety								
12	Rail Freight Strategy; including consideration of rail freight terminals at Georgemas, Kinbrace, Corpach etc.								
13	Policy and progress towards fair fares across the network (air & ferry & Community Transport)								
14	A85 improvements in Oban; consideration of Development Road, including comprehensive review of Traffic Management (car parking, junction design and traffic flows)								
15	NightOrk sleeper service to enhance connectivity and right of access/equality for far north / Orkney								
16	Multi-modal ticketing / smart ticketing								
17	Low Carbon Taxi Fleet (Inverness / other Regional centres)								
18	Inverness-Aberdeen rail line – electrification, hourly services, quicker journey times plus Dalcross station and Seafield station and extension of operating hours								
19	Inverness Rail Station redevelopment (and integration with coach / bus) – MASTERPLAN								
20	Oban Rail Station improvements								
21	Caledonian Sleeper service to Oban								
22	Inverness Airport Development Plan								

	Project / Policy / Intervention	Increase in rate of economic growth / widen participation in labour market	Increase independence and individuals' participation	Reduce journey times / improve reliability	Tackle congestion	Improve quality, accessibility & affordability	Improve attractiveness of non-car modes	Environmental impacts / emissions	Improve health
23	Inverness air slots into London								
24	Introduction of Skye Air Services								
25	Hydrogen fuel demonstration project and plan								
26	HML journey time improvements through electrification and dualling with hourly departures and extension of operating hours								
27	Freight Quality Partnership(s)								
28	A941 Elgin to Craigellachie improvements								
29	Development of alternative fuel solutions on rural rail routes, moving towards lower energy propulsion								
30	Comprehensive Public Transport Information and Mapping; coordinated and consistent approach across the region								
31	Charge point strategy for EVs; including awareness raising of network of charge points across the region								
32	Berriedale Braes on A9N								
33	Asset utilisation plan								
34	Active Travel Funding to implement (revenue support including for network maintenance)								
35	Active Travel Funding to implement (capital investment programme – minor and major projects)								
36	A98 Elgin to Fraserburgh & A950 to Peterhead improvements								
37	A96 Dualling by 2030 – improving journey times, journey reliability and safety								
38	A95 Bridge improvements								
39	A941 Dufftown to A95 improvements								
40	A9 North improvements (Inverness – Scrabster)								
41	Thurso Bypass								
42	A9 Dualling by 2025 – improving journey times, journey reliability and safety								
43	A890 Stromeferry bypass project								
44	A890 Lochcarron to A832 improvements								
45	A848 and A849 Tobermory to Fionnphort and Iona Ferry improvements								
46	A839 Tomintoul to A95 improvements								
47	A838 Kinlochbervie to Lairg improvements								

	Project / Policy / Intervention	Increase in rate of economic growth / widen participation in labour market	Increase independence and individuals' participation	Reduce journey times / improve reliability	Tackle congestion	Improve quality, accessibility & affordability	Improve attractiveness of non-car modes	Environmental impacts / emissions	Improve health
48	A832 Gairloch to Garve improvements								
49	A830 –A82 Caol Link Road to relieve A82 congestion								
50	A83 pinch points								
51	A83 at Rest and Be Thankful								
52	A816 Oban to Lochgilphead improvements								
53	Cross Argyll route improvements linking Mid Argyll to Cowal								
54	A887 at Torgoyle								
55	'Smart' rural / 'smart' island plan – develop demonstration projects with partners								
56	Tackling road maintenance backlog								
57	Full implementation of Scottish Ferries Plan								
58	Lower fares for Northern Isles Ferry services and RET for LA Ferry Services								
59	Implementation of Fair Ferry Freight fares policy								
60	Examination of fixed links to economically fragile island communities								
61	Uig Pier								
62	Stornoway Harbour Masterplan and Development								
63	Dedicated vessels on Uig-Lochmaddy and Uig-Tarbert								
64	Orkney Internal network – plan for capital replacement and long term operation (plus Argyll & Bute ferries and Corran Ferry)								
65	Northern Isles Ferry Service improvements (restoration of middle sailings on Stromness-Scrabster route and enhancements on Aberdeen-Kirkwall-Lerwick)								
66	Programme for improving public transport interchanges								
67	Aviation strategy, including consideration of airfield infrastructure and route development, including for example Oban to Central Belt								

Appendix 3: Proposed Regional Transport Strategy document structure

1/ Foreword and Introductions

Chair's foreword. Introduction to the refresh, setting out RTP duty from the Transport Act, and context for the Refresh. Objectives of the RTS Refresh, and how the Refresh has been informed.

2/ Summary of RTS Review Process

Overview of the process engaged to refresh the RTS, including Board input and engagement with stakeholder groups and the public.

3/ The HITRANS region – how things have changed and trends in transport and communities

Narrative around how things have changed since the original RTS was published, utilising data from a number of sources captured in the Main Issues Report. Highlighting key aspects which have informed the process of the refresh, both concerning transport specifically and also other related topics, such as the economy and health and wellbeing. To include maps and infographics to present key aspects.

4/ Vision and objectives

Detail of the vision and objectives and how these have been updated through the process of the refresh. Details of how the objectives will be used as part of the RTS refresh process.

5/ The Strategy

In response to the issues captured within the Main Issues Report, this section describes how the refreshed RTS has been designed so as to address the diverse needs and opportunities across the region. This section will describe key strategic themes.

- **Economy**
- **Connected communities**
- **Lifeline transport**
- **Transport reliability and resilience**
- **Roles, relationships and responsibilities**
- **Carbon reduction**

6/ Detailed Strategies

This section will describe detailed projects, strategies and aspects that require further investigation. These will be projects etc. that have been highlighted and identified through the refresh process and which have been evaluated as making a good contribution to the RTS vision and objectives. It is proposed that these detailed activities are categorised under the following four headings, however it is recognised that some activities could sit in more than one area; this will be highlighted in the document.

- **Business and the economy**
- **Goods and Freight**
- **Communities and Participation**
- **Tourism and Visitors**

7/ Working in Partnership, delivery, funding and Monitoring

This section will describe the ways in which the RTP will work in partnership to deliver on the strategy objectives, which will include working in partnership with Council, Community Planning and Health Board colleagues for example. This section will also explore delivery options and opportunities for joint working and resource sharing and will consider funding of projects etc. Finally, this section will consider mechanisms to capture the outputs and outcomes from development and delivery of the strategy in coordination with partners.