

Minute of Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Town House Chambers, High Street, Inverness on Friday 24 November 2017 at 11.30am.

PRESENT

Cllr John Cowe, Moray Council Member (in the Chair)
Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Member
Cllr Graham Sinclair, Orkney Islands Council Member
Cllr Roderick McCuish, Argyll and Bute Council Member
Mr Hugh Morrison, The Highland Council Substitute Member
Mr Wilson Metcalfe, Non-Councilor Member
Prof David Gray, Non-Councilor Member
Mr Okain McLennan, Non-Councilor Member

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director
Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager
Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager
Ms Fiona McNally, Active Travel Officer
Mr Derek Mackay, Partnership Secretary
Mr Gavin Barr, Orkney Islands Council
Mrs. Nicola Moss, Moray Council
Mr Richard Gerring, The Highland Council
Mr Fergus Murray, Argyll and Bute Council
Mr Fraser Grieve, SCDI
Mrs Joanne Gray, Transport Scotland

APOLOGIES

Cllr Allan Henderson, The Highland Council Member (Chair)
Mr Mike Mitchell, Partnership Treasurer
Ms Pip Farman, NHS Highland
Mr Iain Mackinnon, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

MINUTES

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| Minute of Meeting of 14 September 2017 | 1 | The Minute of Meeting of 14 September 2017 was approved . |
| Matters Arising | 2 | The Partnership Director indicated that Value of Transport Study would be discussed at the forthcoming Meeting between Regional Transport Strategy Chairs and the Minister for Transport and Islands. The Active Travel Briefing Document and the response to the consultation on Air Departure Tax. would be circulated following the Meeting |

It was agreed to note the update.

FINANCE

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| Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 1 April to 31 October 2017 | 3 | Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, presented the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 1 April to 31 October 2017 and Year End Projection. The Report stated that the annual budget had been approved at the Board Meeting of 3 February 2016 and had subsequently been amended for the inclusion of the 2016/17 underspend of £6,610 and the Inverness Station Project Grant as part of the Community Links Project. The budget also included a CarPlus Grant to support the development of existing and new car clubs within the HITRANS area. The Report detailed that there were no major issues or variances to highlight and in light of the 2016/17 outturn position, the Partnership Director and Partnership Treasurer had reviewed the budget and no adjustments were required. |
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It was agreed to approve the revenue monitoring position for the period to 31 October 2017.

PARTNERSHIP

National Transport Strategy 4 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report providing an update on the National Transport Strategy Review detailing the co-production approach being taken and how it was supported by a range of Partnership and Thematic Working Groups. The Report stated that the National Transport Strategy (NTS) was subject to a comprehensive review which would set out a vision for transport over the next 20 years. The Report further stated that internal and external stakeholders would meet regularly to develop the successor NTS through working groups and partnership forums and the NTS Review would work towards a formal public consultation on a draft strategy in early 2019 with a view to publishing the successor strategy in July 2019.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Risk Management: Risk Register Update –November 2017 5 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report providing an update on the Risk Management: Risk Register. The Report detailed how the Strategic, Management/Operational and Financial Risks faced by the Partnership would be identified, evaluated and controlled. The Report stated that the risks reflected in the Risk Register continue to be monitored by HITRANS Officers and Advisors, and subsequently presented to the Partnership for monitoring and approval on at least annual basis.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to approve adoption of the HITRANS Risk Register November 2017 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

Regional Transport Strategy Monitoring 6 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report providing a draft Regional Transport Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation for the 2016/17 period. The Report stated the main changes set out in the proposed Monitoring Plan::

- The introduction of Project Monitoring and Evaluation – The framework would be commensurate with the scale and nature of projects.
- To adopt indicators over which the work of the Partnership had direct influence over.
- To adopt indicators where data was preferably available at a local, regional and national level and collected on both a short (annual) and longer term (c5year) basis so that different trends can be more easily understood and acted upon.

The Report indicated that the final Regional Transport Strategy Monitoring Report and full spreadsheet of Indicators would be published within the 2016/17 Annual Report on the HITRANS Website, and that it was intended to publish the Annual Report on or before 31 December 2017.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to authorise the Partnership Director and HITRANS Chair to approve the Regional Transport Strategy Monitoring Plan for inclusion in the Annual Report 2016/17.

Regional Transport Partnerships Financial Arrangements 7 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report providing information on the launch of a Scottish Government consultation on the financial accounting arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs). The consultation offered the opportunity to confirm the ability of RTPs to carry reserves between financial years eliminating tension caused by different interpretations of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 seen through the HITRANS external audit process in previous years. The Report sought views on whether it was necessary to clarify the extent to which RTPs were able to retain a financial reserve, if surplus or deficit carried forward from one financial year to the next should be subject to any limit and what safeguards local authorities ought to have in limiting their contribution towards the expenses of RTP's.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report and;

(2) to approve the draft Consultation response detailed in Appendix A of the Report; and

(3) to authorise the Chair, Treasurer and Partnership Director to finalise the HITRANS response to the Scottish Government Consultation on Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Research and Strategy Development Programme 2017/18

- 8 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report which provided an update on progress with delivering the Research and Strategy Development Programme and sought approval of amendments to the Programme to reflect commitments made and changing priorities and funding opportunities identified since approval of the 2017/18 Business Plan. The Report stated that the Programme included provision for the contingency of an underspend emerging on any of the individual projects.

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report; and**
- (2) to approve the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2017/18 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report**

Midnight Train to Georgemas

- 9 Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report which provided an update on the study investigating the provision of an overnight rail service from Caithness/Orkney to Central Scotland. The Report stated that Consultants had been appointed and that work had been conducted including timetabling, train planning, demand forecasting and stakeholder interviews and that the draft final Report would be available soon. The Report stated the following aims of the study:

- Investigate current passenger and freight markets and connectivity from
- Orkney/Caithness to Central Belt;
- Investigate train pathing to permit the sleeper to operate, including access to Central Belt for passenger and freight;
- Review possible rolling stock and traction options;
- Appraise freight opportunities;
- Review of mixed train operations; and
- Provide indicative costings for the service.

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report; and**
- (2) to note the Feasibility Study would be circulated to Members.**

Fort William NTS Team, Transport Scotland STAG

- 10 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report providing an update of the work to undertake a Scottish Transport Pre-Appraisal (STAG) for Fort William. The Report stated that STAG was a single continuous process and the guidance placed significant emphasis on the development of a robust case for change as part of the Pre-Appraisal. The initial commission was focussed on the preparation of a comprehensive and evidence based Pre-Appraisal Report which used available evidence and the STAG process to identify problems and opportunities across all modes of transport in the Fort William area. The Report further stated that the scope of work included considering problems and opportunities in relation to the road, railway, marine and active travel infrastructure in and around Fort William following the traffic growth and anticipated residential and commercial developments in the area.

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report; and**
- (2) to support the partnership approach to tackling one of the key priorities identified in both the original Regional Transport Strategy and recent refresh**

Fish and Trips	11	<p>Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report providing an update on research HITRANS had been asked to undertake by Transport Scotland and Scotland Food and Drink in relation to the aquaculture industry. The Report six strategic priority areas for effective collaboration between regulators, industry, researchers and other stakeholders that had been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry leadership and ambition • Enabling and proportionate regulation • Accelerating innovation • Skills development • Finance • Infrastructure <p>The Report further stated that specific actions were recommended within the areas for strategic focus including the formation of an Industry Leadership Group to drive sector growth and ensure alignment between industry and government; the examination of the role of Marine Scotland as both regulator and policy advocate for development and the introduction of Innovation Sites, allowing controlled trials and development of innovative equipment, technologies, disease control measures, and regulation.</p> <p>It was agreed to authorise the Partnership Director, in consultation with the Chair and Partnership Treasurer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) to seek financial contributions towards the cost of the Study from public and private sector partners with the outcome determining whether the work can proceed; (2) to commission a Sectoral Mapping Study to determine the aquaculture industries current transport and logistical constraints and future requirements; and (3) to identify HITRANS contribution to the Study from the Research and Strategy Development Programme.
Active Travel Update	12	<p>Ms Fiona McNally, Active Travel Officer, submitted a Report providing an update on active travel projects being brought forward in the current Business Plan period. The Report stated that HITRANS had been successful in receiving £75,000 funding towards feasibility, community consultation and outline design for active travel routes linking into the three pedestrian entrances to Inverness Railway Station. The Report outlined HITRANS support for Active Aviemore including the feasibility, consultation and outline design and focus on links between the rail and bus transport interchange, Grampian Road and the main local amenities. The Report provided further details on the following Active Travel projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HITRAVEL Liftshare • Lossiemouth to Hopeman cycle feasibility • Cordon Counts • HITRANS Sustainable Transport Event • Cycle to Health Inverness • Your Kirkwall Urban Design Framework <p>It was agreed to note the Report.</p>
Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station	13	<p>Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report providing an update on the progress towards delivery of Inverness Airport Dalcross Station. The Report stated that due to the financial pressure on HITRANS and the partners, governance for the project would transfer to Transport Scotland. The Report further stated that local funders and stakeholders held meetings with Transport Scotland and Transport Scotland and had written to Network Rail regarding both the development work of the station and the closure process for Dalcross. The Report detailed that local funding contributions would be collected by HITRANS in 2019-2020 for transfer to Transport Scotland when the project was delivered. The Report highlighted that construction of the station was aimed for early in Control Period 6 2019-2024 and a strategy paper was being developed by HITRANS to consider options for the management and operation of the car park, including revisiting the original STPR concept of a Strategic Park and Ride site. The Report further stated that HITRANS would be working with HIAL and bus operators to understand the synergy between Park and Ride and the provision of a shuttle bus.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Report.</p>

Train2Ride	14	<p>Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager, submitted a Report providing an update on the development of the Cycle Capacity Study. The Report stated that the Study sought to establish the current level of demand for on-train cycle carrying on ScotRail services on the West Highland Lines (WHL) and on Serco Caledonian Sleeper Services to Inverness and Fort William and to identify future trends and options for managing the demand. The Report detailed the current situation for bikes on trains, the demand for bikes on trains and a selective review of approaches to bikes on trains in comparable areas across the world which suggested that carrying bikes on trains was generally possible but discouraging peak-time travel particularly on busy lines or urban areas and that booking bikes on trains in advance was common as well as paying a small fee to carry bikes.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Report.</p>
Audit Scotland Ferries Performance Audit	15	<p>Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, submitted a Report detailing the findings and recommendations included in Audit Scotland's performance audit on Scottish Government supported ferry services. The Report stated that ferries were an essential part of Scotland's transport network, Transport Scotland's spending on ferries had increased by 115% in real terms and Subsidies for the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Service (CHFS) had increased by 185% since 2007/08 due to an increase in services, new vessels and the introduction of the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET). RET had resulted in higher passenger and car traffic but its wider impact has been mixed. The Report further stated that Transport Scotland's Ferries Plan sets out proposals to develop services and assets between 2013 and 2022, with an estimated cost of £390 million in capital and £10 million a year in revenue. The Report detailed that the CHFS contracted started in October 2016 experiencing delays and weaknesses. The development of a more strategic approach for future procurements was being carried out by Transport Scotland that would help improve planning, the use of resources and knowledge transfer.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(1) to note the Report; and</p> <p>(2) to support the case to ensure Island Proofing of all Island transport networks.</p>
West Highland Enhancements	16	<p>Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager submitted a Report providing information on work HITRANS may wish to undertake on the West Highland Railway Line. The Report stated that a Study would be undertaken to establish whether Oban High School students had been using their rail passes during the holidays; how it has influenced how their family travel and whether leavers use rail more than their peers in previous years. The Report proposed that as the Fort William service had currently the lowest frequency on ScotRail with only 3 ScotRail services per day, from May 19 the West Highland trains would be dedicated to the route and would no longer be shared with Glasgow local services. The Report further stated that this would introduce the opportunity to look at the service pattern, any timetables changes as well as additional services to Fort William/Mallaig to meet the needs of tourists and locals including travel for education and work.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(1) to note the Report; and</p> <p>(2) to work with ScotRail and Argyll and Bute Council identifying the impact of pupil/students' travel; and</p> <p>(3) to develop a Study Brief to investigate timetabling and resource allocation to improve seven day services on the Fort William/Mallaig route.</p>
SPARA 2020 Project Report	17	<p>EUROPEAN PROJECTS</p> <p>Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, presented a Report providing an update on the SPARA 2020 Project which has secured funding from the Northern Periphery and Arctic Area INTERREG Programme with HITRANS as Lead Partner. The Report stated that to support the feasibility of introducing electric taxis to Inverness Airport, HITRANS were assisting with the installation of rapid charge points at Inverness Airport and in Inverness City Centre as Inverness Taxis had been awarded a 7-year contract at Inverness Airport and are committed to lowering their carbon emissions long-term. The Report further stated that Hemavan Airport was the test site for several SPARA projects in the field of remote towers, check-in, and sensing and security technologies. The conference held in Sweden on 14 and 15 November provided partners with the opportunity to witness these technologies first-hand and meet experts in the field.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(1) to note the Report; and</p> <p>(2) that car parking capacity and facilities at airports could be considered within the SPARA 2020 Project.</p>

- ERDF – Scotland’s 8th City – the Smart City 18 Mr Randal Robertson, Partnership Director, presented a Report providing an update on the ERDF Smart Mobility project being undertaken in partnership with The Highland Council following a successful application to the Smart Cities workstream - a collaborative ERDF funded Strategic Intervention entitled ‘Scotland’s 8th City – the Smart City’. The statuses of the following active and upcoming projects were provided in the Report:
- Smart Bus Stop Infrastructure (£100k)
 - Integrated Real-time Passenger Information System (£240k)
 - Wireless Mesh Network (UTMC) – (£400k)
 - Smart Car Park Management
 - Infrastructure to Vehicle (I2V) / Vehicle to Infrastructure (V2I) Communication
 - Add-on 1 - Press’n’Ride: North Highland Lines (£460k)
 - Add-on 2 – Mobility as a Service (MaaS): Inverness City Region (£240k)
 - 8th City Phase 2

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report; and**
- (2) that Members would consider further opportunities that could be developed under the ERDF Smart Cities workstream**

- ERDF - Low Carbon Travel and Transport (LCTT) 19 Ms Fiona McNally, Active Travel Officer, submitted a Report providing an update on European Regional Development Fund opportunities for active and low carbon transport within the Low Carbon Travel and Transport funding call. The Report stated that Transport Scotland’s Low Carbon Travel and Transport (LCTT) Challenge Fund opened for Round 2 applications on 25 October to facilitate the delivery of active travel and low carbon transport hubs for public, community and third sector organisations to apply for. The Report further stated that the following Feasibility Studies had been developed with the assistance of a pre-application feasibility grant:

- Inverness active travel and low carbon hub
- Lochaber active travel hub, focused on Fort William as main location
- Elgin active travel hub
- Opportunities for active travel hubs within CHORD towns.

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the Report;**
- (2) to approve the use of budget previously allocated to Smarter Choices Smarter Places for the additional use as match for Low Carbon Travel and Transport Projects; and**

- INCLUSION – Horizon 2020 20 Ms Jayne Westbrook, EU Project Officer, submitted a Report providing an update on HITRANS involvement in the recently approved Horizon 2020 project, INCLUSION. The Report stated that INCLUSION had been approved in May 2017 and focused more on accessible and inclusive mobility solutions for European prioritised areas from understanding, assessing and evaluating the accessibility and inclusiveness of transport solutions in areas and identifying gaps and unmet needs as well as experimenting a range of innovative and transferable solutions to ensure accessible, inclusive and equitable conditions for all. The Report further stated that innovative solutions would be trialed in INCLUSION through real-life experiments, titled Innovation Pilot Labs, and at the Implementation Meeting HITRANS presented plans for the Pilot Lab held within the Cairngorm National Park

It was agreed to note the Report.

- Consultation on Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People and Modern Apprentices
- 21 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Director, submitted a Report providing the HITRANS response to the Scottish Government consultation on Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People and Modern Apprentices. The Report stated that the Scottish Government was committed to ensuring that anyone who already had a bus pass, or obtained one before any changes were made, would retain it. The Report sought the views of respondents on the following proposals:
- Make no change to the scheme, leaving the eligibility rules as they are; or
 - Raise the age of eligibility for both men and women in one step from 60 to the (female) State Pension age at the time the change is made, thereafter keeping pace with further changes in the State Pension age, which is set to increase to 67 over the period 2026 to 2028; or
 - Raise the age of eligibility for men and women progressively towards the State Pension age by annual increases of one year or half a year to the age of eligibility, taking longer to get there but lessening the impact on the expectations of individuals close to 60.

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to note the response submitted on behalf of HITRANS to the Scottish Government Consultation on Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People and Modern Apprentices.

- Local bus services in Scotland - Improving the Framework for Delivery
- 22 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Director, submitted a Report providing information on the HITRANS response to the Scottish Government consultation on Local Bus Services in Scotland – Improving the Framework for Delivery. The Report stated that the consultation recognised that bus patronage was declining in Scotland and sought the views of the respondents to the following:
- Existing statutory Quality Partnerships are not as flexible as they should be and future needs for bus services should be developed with operators
 - Quality Contracts, as a form of franchising, are considered over complex and resource intensive
 - Proposing to legislate the powers of transport authorities who wish to run bus services
 - Clear, high quality and up to date information is essential for the smooth running of bus services

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to approve the response, detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report, to the Scottish Government Consultation on Local Bus Services in Scotland – Improving the Framework for Delivery.

- The future of smart ticketing in Scotland
- 23 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Director, submitted a Report providing an update on a number of multi-operator Smart Ticketing projects underway in the HITRANS area and to consider the HITRANS response to the Scottish Government consultation on The Future of Smart Ticketing. The Report stated that HITRANS had been working in partnership with Transport Scotland, partner local authorities and local bus operators on developing a number of multi-operator interoperable smart-ticket schemes. The Report provided a summary of the following schemes:
- Lochaber and Moray Firth Multi-Operator Smart Ticket
 - CnES Multi-operator Smart Ticketing scheme
 - UHI Colleges

It was agreed:

(1) to note the Report; and

(2) to approve the response, detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report, to the Scottish Government Consultation on The Future of Smart Ticketing in Scotland