

Item:

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## **Report to Partnership Meeting 14 September 2018**

### **PARTNERSHIP**

#### **Community Links Plus Secondment / Active Travel Officer**

##### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Members of the secondment of HITRANS Active Travel Officer to take up the role of Community Links Programme Manager with The Highland Council and set out the steps officers recommend be taken to cover the Active Travel Officer role during the secondment.

##### **Community Links Plus Programme Manager**

The Highland Council secured £6.5Million from the Community Links Fund for the Inverness City Active Travel Network (ICATN). This ambitious project will strengthen existing infrastructure, improving connections between the city's communities and the city centre, developing seamless and segregated cycle-friendly routes along Millburn Road, Academy Street and the Raigmore Interchange. Millburn Road in particular will be transformed, with the creation of a fully segregated cycle path, a westbound bus lane and a new footpath, transforming the area into a less congested and more walking and cycle-friendly area.

The funding was secured utilising the active travel infrastructure delivered as part of the West Link project as the match funding.

To deliver the ICATN project Highland Council have established a Steering Group and Advisory Board. The primary focus for delivery will rely on project leaders in Highland Council and the appointment of a ICATN Programme Manager. Having looked at options including the use of consultant services to cover the Programme Manager function the Council project leadership had identified an opportunity to approach HITRANS to seek agreement to second the Active Travel Officer to the ICATN project as Programme Manager. Following discussion between HITRANS Director, Partnership Manager and Highland Council project leaders it was agreed that there was real merit in this proposal and it would represent good career progression and an exceptional challenge to the Active Travel Officer. The secondment offer was duly made to the Active Travel Officer who has agreed to accept the opportunity which will be for a term of nearly 3 years initially covering a period to June 2021.

The Highland Council will meet all salary and administration (office, telephone etc) costs for the ICATN Programme Manager post and have budget in place to cover these costs. The ICATN Programme Manager will continue to be a HITRANS employee working on secondment to the ICATN project with the office base continuing to be the HITRANS office.

##### **Secondment Period Cover for Active Travel Officer**

In the past HITRANS were able to use the Adopt an Intern scheme to provide part cover for a team member on extended leave. This required significant additional cover from other team members. Having given thought to the length of the Active Travel Officer's secondment to the ICATN Programme Manager role and the increasing focus on Active Travel and Low Carbon projects the Partnership Director has concluded that we cannot lose focus in our active travel

work. It is also important to ensure the role is fully covered as the £100,000 grant from Sustrans is linked to the Active Travel Officer post and conditional on an officer being in post to deliver it. Therefore the preferred option would be to appoint someone to cover for the period of the secondment with an initial appointment being made for a 2 year period. Allowing for time to advertise the opportunity and conclude the appointment process it is unlikely that anyone will be in post much before January 2019.

Consideration will need to be given to short term cover options with other team members providing cover although it should be noted that the ICATN Programme Manager can be called on for advice on issues as they arise. An option for some short term resource would be the appointment of an intern to provide a graduate business support role for a period of 3 – 6 months.

Members are asked to delegate responsibility to the Partnership Director and HITRANS HR Support for arranging short term cover and making a 2-year appointment of an Active Travel Officer.

## **RISK REGISTER**

RTS Delivery  
Impact – Positive

Policy  
Impact – Positive

Financial  
Impact – Neutral

Equality  
Impact – Neutral.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to approve:

1. Note the report.
2. Approve the recruitment of an officer to cover the active travel role on the basis of a 2 year term appointment.
3. Delegate responsibility to officers to consider the value of appointing an Intern to provide graduate business support cover in the short term.

**Report by:** Ranald Robertson  
**Designation:** Partnership Director  
**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018