



Minute of Meeting held via
Microsoft Teams on Friday 22 April
2022 at 9.30am.

PRESENT

Cllr Allan Henderson, The Highland Council Member (Chair)

Cllr Robin Currie, Argyll and Bute Member

Cllr Graham Sinclair, Orkney Islands Council Member

Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Member

Mr Robert Andrew, Non Councillor Member

Prof David Gray, Non Councillor Board Member

Mrs Naomi Bremner, Non Councillor Board Member

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director

Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager

Mr Edward Foster, Partnership Treasurer

Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager

Mr Malcolm Macleod, The Highland Council

Mr Angus Murray, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Mr David Macleod, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Mr James Buck, Orkney Islands Council

Ms Laura Cromarty, Orkney Islands Council

Mrs Nicola Moss, Moray Council

Mr Fergus Murray, Argyll & Bute Council

Ms Jayne Golding, HITRANS

Mr Derek Mackay, Partnership Secretary

Mr Nicholas Sobey, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Mr Iain MacLean, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Mr John Boyd, Grant Thornton

Mr Gareth Waterson, Orkney Islands Council

Ms Gemma Robinson, Project Officer (Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure), HITRANS

Ms Vikki Telfer, Active Travel Officer, HITRANS

Ms Rebecca Purvis, Project Officer (Digital and DRT), HITRANS

Ms Kelly Martin, Project Officer (Smart Mobility), HITRANS

Mrs Sarah Compton-Bishop, Scottish Islands Passport Project Manager

Ms Carolyn Moir, Finance Manager / Partnership Treasurer

APOLOGIES

Cllr John Cowe, Moray Council

Ms Linda Cunningham, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Mr Grant Campbell, SCDI

Declaration of Interest

Mr Robert Andrew declared that he had retired as Stagecoach Scotland Regional Director in June 2020 and was employed on a part-time basis as a Director of Scottish Citylink and also provides ad hoc consultancy advice to Shiel Buses.

MINUTES

Minute of Meeting of 4 February 2022 1 The Minute of Meeting of 4 February 2022 was **approved**.

Matters Arising 2

FINANCE

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – 1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022 3 Ms Carolyn Moir, Partnership Treasurer, submitted a Report setting out the revenue monitoring position for the period to 28 February 2022 and the projected year end position. The Report stated that the annual budget was as approved at the Board Meeting held on 5 February 2021, subsequently amended for the inclusion of the 2020/21 General Reserve Fund balance carried forward of £4,014. The budget also included income from Highland Council, as part of the Inverness City Active Travel Network Programme, and income contributions for research and strategy development work. The summary statement showed the financial position to 28 February 2022 and indicated that income and expenditure was broadly in line with the budget out-turn target.

It was agreed to approve the Report as well as the attached schedule showing the revenue position for the period 28 February 2022.

HITRANS External Audit Plan 4 With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 23 April 2022 Mr John Boyd, Grant Thornton LLP submitted a Report detailing the final HITRANS External Audit Plan for financial year ending 31 March 2022. The Report detailed the overarching principles of the audit, the audit approach and risk based audit methodology.

It was agreed to note the Report.

HITRANS Business Plan for 2022-23 (Draft) 5 With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 23 April 2021, Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director submitted a Report seeking approval of the HITRANS Business Plan for 2022/23. The Report indicated that the Business Plan set out how it was intended to support delivery of the Strategy during 2022/23 working with constituent Councils and Stakeholders with a view to improving transport services across the Highlands and Islands. The Report stated that as with previous Business Plans the programme of work set out included a two year Research and Strategy Development Programme in line with the recommendation of the Partnership Board discussion at the February 2022 meeting.

It was agreed to approve the Business Plans for Financial Year 2022/23.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Research/Strategy Development Programme for 2021/22 6 With reference to item 6 of the Minute of Meeting of 23 April 2021, Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director submitted a Report providing an update on progress on delivering the Research and Strategy Development programme and seeking approval of amendments to the programme to reflect commitments made and changing priorities identified since approval of the 2021/22 Business Plan at the Partnership meeting on 23 April 2021. The Report stated that the HITRANS Business Plan for 2021/22 included a programme for Research and Strategy Development for 2021/22 in support of development, implementation and delivery of the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy. The Report highlighted that work was progressing on delivery of the Programme.

The Report indicated that with external funding from EU and Scottish Government in place and added to the Research and Strategy Delivery programme budget identified in

the core programme there was currently sufficient funding in place to meet a £1,600,000 programme.

It was agreed to note the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2021/22 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

Active Travel Update 7 With reference to item 8 of the Minute of Meeting of 4 February 2022 Ms Vikki Trelfer, Active Travel Officer submitted a Report providing an update on Active Travel Project which HITRANS were currently involved in. The Report highlighted the commitment from Scottish Government to increase funding for active travel to at least 10% of the total transport budget by 2021 and asked members to consider what additional staffing resources may be required to take advantage of the increased budget to deliver active travel projects in their Local Authority area.

It was agreed to note the Report and consider opportunities for advancing projects within the Active Travel funding streams which would support HITRANS wider policy objectives and priorities.

Fair Fares Review 8 With reference to item 9 of the Minute of Meeting of September 2021 Mr Neil Macrae, Partnership Manager submitted a Report introducing the draft HITRANS Fair Fare Review scoping study which outlined the unique public transport fare challenges faced by communities in the Highlands and Islands. The Report stated that HITRANS had commissioned transport consultants Stantec to assist with the review. The draft scoping study, provided as the appendix to the Report, had been structured in three substantive chapters, namely background information; considerations for the forthcoming national fare review; and impacts of extending concessionary travel. A summary of the scoping study and its main findings were outlined in the Report.

It was agreed to:

- (1) note the Report;**
- (2) review the draft Fair Fares Review Scoping Study and consider any amendments before the study was finalised; and**
- (3) approve the submission of the final report to the Transport Scotland team responsible for undertaking the national fair fares review as outlined in the 21/22 Programme for Government.**

Island Connectivity Plan 9 A verbal update was provided by Neil MacRae which took Members through the Islands Connectivity Plan presentation given by Transport Scotland at a recent event attended by Regional Transport Partnerships., local authorities and transport stakeholders.

It was agreed to:

- (1) Write to Transport Scotland highlighting local partners concerns with the proposed scope of the Islands' Connectivity Plan including that it should be a fundamental requirement for the Plan to consider connectivity to all islands rather than just those islands whose lifeline ferries are provided by services funded by Transport Scotland**

It was agreed to note the Presentation.

Demand Responsive Transport App 10 As per Item 10 of the Minute of the Meeting of 4 February 2022, Ms Rebecca Purvis, Project Officer, Digital and DRT, HITRANS, submitted a Report detailing the work of HITRANS to commission and deploy a demand responsive transport app that will help

support the operation, booking and marketing of non-scheduled transport services across the Highlands and Islands. The Report stated that progress is being made in the identification of services where the DRT system can be rolled out with significant engagement underway with partner Councils and transport operators. The first deployment of the system will take place in May in the Speyside operational area of the Dial M for Moray / Moray Connect DRT service. This soft launch will not initially be passenger facing but allows a thorough operational test of every aspect of the system with Moray Council acting as both the operator and the passenger throughout the test phase.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Scottish Islands 11
Passport Update

With reference to Item 15 of the Minute of the Meeting of 12 November 2021, Ms Sarah Campton-Bishop, Scottish Islands Passport Project Manager, submitted a Report providing an update on the Scottish Islands Passport Project following the Ministerial Launch. The Report stated that an event was held on 11 April 2022 to celebrate the Scottish Islands Passport travelogue 'Meet the Makers'. The event received positive press coverage both locally and nationally.

It was agreed to note the Report.

CONSULTATION

Strategic Transport 12
Projects Review 2

With reference to Item 13 of the Minute of the Meeting of 4 February 2022, Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, HITRANS, submitted a Report which detailed the HITRANS submission to the Scottish Government consultation on the draft second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) for Scotland. The Report stated that STPR2 is one of the Scottish Governments mechanisms for delivering the vision, priorities and outcomes of the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2). It forms an important element of how the Government will achieve its commitment to 20% reduction in vehicle kilometres by 2030 and Scotland's net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2045 as well as other key policy objectives to address inequalities, improve health and wellbeing and contribute to inclusive economic growth.

The Report stated that the HITRANS response had been developed following discussion and input from key partners, Members and Advisors, and was appended to the Report. The Report further stated that the response welcomes a number of positive recommendations contained within the draft STPR2 report, it also highlights a number of key issues and priorities for the HITRANS area which the draft has failed to address.

It was agreed to:

- (1) note the Report; and**
- (2) approve the drafting of a supporting letter to the Cabinet Secretary and Transport Minister highlighting the key priorities which HITRANS and partners would like to see addressed in the final Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 report.**

NHS Scotland 13
Climate Emergency
& Sustainability
Strategy 2022-2026

Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, HITRANS, submitted a Report which introduced the HITRANS response to the consultation on the draft NHS Scotland Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy for 2022 and 2026. This draft strategy sets out how the NHS seeks to achieve its ambition 'to become a service which is both environmentally and socially sustainable. A health service that improves the opportunities, life chances, health and wellbeing of every citizen in our country and fully contributes to a more cohesive, resilient and net-zero society in a just way that contributes to population

wellbeing and a reduction in health inequalities. A copy of the HITRANS response was appended to the Report.

It was agreed to note the Report.

National Planning Framework 4 14 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager, HITRANS, submitted a Report which detailed the HITRANS response to the consultation on the draft National Planning Framework 4. The Report noted that the final response reflected on many key issues highlighted in the Report to the February Partnership meeting, including:

- A range of significant concerns in the way NPF 4 has handled the Highlands and Islands as a Region with major omissions contained in the strategy in terms of an absence of key National Developments in this region.
- Welcome of the fundamental aims of the National Planning Framework in providing a new spatial strategy for Scotland and its alignment with wider government policy, including the National Transport Strategy but identify a bias towards urban areas combined with a crude application of a rural label which misses the urban context and opportunities of parts of the HITRANS area.
- NPF4 and the strategy and action areas could do much more to address the disparities and inequalities between communities across Scotland
- Welcome commitment to an Islands Hub for Net Zero but highlight that the lack of detail as to what it entails and question why it only applies to Island Local Authorities rather than to all islands
- Highlight lack of reference to committed strategic transport priorities which are vital to the area and referenced in the National Transport Strategy including upgrades to the A82 and A83 as well as A9 and A96 dualling programmes and rail infrastructure improvements to the Inverness to Aberdeen line and Highland Mainline.
- Need for NPF4 to provide support and detail of how it will assist the transition to electric and hydrogen as alternative fuels.

It was agreed to note the Report.

20% reduction in Car Km Route Map 15 Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager submitted a Report introducing the HITRANS draft response to the consultation on the 20% reduction in Car Km Route Map. The Report provided an overview, including a web link to the consultation document, and stated that the Route Map had been published in response to the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan update commitment to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030 to meet Scotland's statutory obligations for greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 2045. A copy of HITRANS draft consultation response was provided as an appendix to the report at sought to highlight a number of important issues in relation to the Route Map and the proposed interventions with respect to the HITRANS area. Members were invited to consider the draft response and recommend any changes prior to submission.

It was agreed to:

- (1) note the Report; and**
- (2) approve HITRANS response to the consultation on the 20% reduction in Car KM Route map subject to any amendments proposed at the Partnership Meeting.**

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

- EU Funding 16 Consolidated Update
- With reference to Item 16 of the Minute of the Meeting of 4 February 2022, Ms Jayne Golding, Projects and Policy Manager, HITRANS, submitted a Report which provided an update in relation to HITRANS involvement in European funded projects. The Report stated that HITRANS was currently involved in nine ongoing European projects, as well as providing support to the Low Carbon Travel and Transport (LCTT) projects. Projects include:
- *Smart Cities* – 50/50 partnership with the Highland Council to deliver the Smart Cities programme for Inverness.
 - *G-PaTRA* – Green Passenger Transport in Rural Areas.
 - *MOVE* – Mobility Opportunities Valuable to Everyone - focuses on co-creation to deliver unusual transport combinations.
 - *Stronger Combined* – Combined mobility in the rural public transport system to build sustainable rural public services in symbiosis with private mobility providers and citizens.
 - *PAV* – Planning for autonomous vehicles by local authorities.
 - *Faster* – Project between NI, Ireland and Scotland to install rapid charge points in the interreg VA programme area.
 - *LCCT* – Low Carbon Travel and Transport Hubs
 - *Ride-2-Autonomy* – A project to test autonomous mobility as part of the Smart Urban Mobility Initiative.
 - *eHUBS* - Develop electric mobility in hubs in cities.
 - *SUB* – Sustainable Arctic and Peripheral Biking Tourism

The Report stated that the as of April 2022, HITRANS total budget for European Projects was £4,587.663.

It was agreed to note the Report.

- eHUBS Project 17
- Ms Kelly Martin, Project Officer, Smart Mobility submitted a Report detailing the work of HITRANS as partner in the eHUBS North West Europe INTERRED project, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The Report stated that eHUBS will demonstrate that shared and electric shared mobility (ebikes and electric cars) are affordable and attractive alternatives to private cars, and will contribute to reduced emissions, increased active travel and reduced care use.

The Report further stated that the eHUBS project had a city focus, meaning HITRANS initial work would focus on the Inverness City Region. It was noted that over £460k funding had been secured to deliver the project.

It was agreed to note the Report.

- FASTER Project 18
- With reference to item 20 of the Minute of Meeting of 17 September 2021, Ms Gemma Robinson, FASTER Project Officer submitted a Report providing an update on the development of the FASTER project funded through the INTERREG VA Programme, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The Report stated that the project had been launched in October 2020 and was a joint proposal between seven Partners across Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland to support the overarching ambition to transition to low carbon transport systems.

The Report provided a progress update on procurement, the changing EV landscape, legalities, risk mitigation and stated that the project was currently seeking a seven month extension to the end of December 2023. The Report further stated that HITRANS had a significant budget in the FASTER project totalling €1,675,703 allowing for the installation of at least 24 rapid charge points.

It was agreed to note the Report.

PARTNERSHIP

HITRANS Scheme of Delegation 19

Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, HITRANS, submitted a Report in relation to the HITRANS Scheme of Delegation. The Report stated that the Partnership's Legal Advisor and Partnership Director had carried out a review of the Scheme of Delegation and confirmed that it remained fit for purpose following minor amendment.

It was agreed to adopt the Scheme of Delegation as appended to the Report.