

## Report to Partnership Meeting of 15 September 2023

### FINANCE

#### Review of HITRANS Contract Standing Orders

#### SUMMARY

The previous review of Contract Standing Orders was approved by the Partnership at its meeting on 12 November 2021. In discussion with Audit Scotland on the Audit of the 2022/23 Accounts it has been noted that the Contract Standing Orders available at that time were dated 2017 and Highland Council have subsequently updated their Contract Standing Orders. The latest Contract Standing Orders are presented for the Board's consideration.

#### 1. CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

- 1.1 HITRANS adopted The Highland Council's Contract Standing Orders dated 2017 at the Partnership meeting on 12 November 2021. A full review of the Contract Standing Orders was last undertaken in late 2022, subsequently approved by the Council on 8 December 2022 to come into effect from 1 January 2023. The HITRANS Contract Standing Orders are based on The Highland Council Documents, with HITRANS taking the place of The Highland Council in relation to HITRANS activities.
- 1.2 A number of amendments had been identified to the Contract Standing Orders following on from the Procurement & Contracts Transformation Project. The most substantive changes are intended to introduce an increased focus on scrutiny, control and assurance across all Procurement activity conducted for the Council.
- 1.3 Through the increased focus on scrutiny, control and assurance compliance, financial and reputational risk will be minimised and an increase in positive economic, environmental and community outcomes will be achieved. All procurement activity will be measured against key strategic objectives.

#### 2. HITRANS POLICIES

- 2.1 A copy of the updated Contract Standing Orders can be found on the HITRANS website under Policies in the Corporate Documents section.

#### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Partnership is asked to agree to the application to HITRANS of the Highland Council Contract Standing Orders January 2023, and to be implemented forthwith.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	Yes	The Partnership's Financial Regulations establish the basis for ensuring good practice and effective management within our financial activities.

Policy	Yes	It is HITRANS Policy to adopt best practice in Financial Management following the model set by The Highland Council.
Financial	Yes	Implementation of the Financial Regulations provide a sound basis for minimising risk to the Partnership from a financial perspective.
Equality	-	

**Report by:** Ranald Robertson / Carolyn Moir  
**Designation:** Partnership Director / Treasurer  
**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023