



Minute of Meeting held in the Corran Halls, Oban and virtually through MS Teams on Friday 8 November 2024 at 9.00am

PRESENT	Mr Uisdean Robertson, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Chair)
	Ms Amber Dunbar, Moray Council (Vice-Chair)
	Mr John Armour, Argyll and Bute Council
	Mr Kristopher Leask, Orkney Islands Council
	Mr Ken Gowans, The Highland Council
	Mr Robert Andrew, Non-Councillor Member
	Ms Naomi Bremner, Non-Councillor Member
	Ms Shona Macleennan, Non-Councillor Member
APOLOGIES	Mr Malcolm Macleod, The Highland Council
	Mr Grant Campbell, SCDI
	Mr Neil MacRae, Partnership Manager
IN ATTENDANCE	Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director
	Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager
	Ms Carolyn Maxwell, Partnership Treasurer
	Mrs Nicola Moss, Moray Council
	Mr Gordon Blair, Argyll and Bute Council
	Mr Fergus Murray, Argyll and Bute Council
	Mr Gareth Waterson, Orkney Islands Council
	Ms Laura Cromarty, Orkney Islands Council
	Ms Jennifer Johnstone, The Highland Council
	Ms Tracey Urry, The Highland Council
	Mr David Macleod, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
	Mrs Linda Cunningham, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
	Mr Colm Fraser, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
	Mr Nicholas Sobey, HIE
	Ms Rebecca Wallace, SATE Project Officer
	Ms Vikki Trefler, HITRANS
	Ms Gemma Robinson, HITRANS
	Ms Kate Beasley, HITRANS
	Mr Murray Stewart, HITRANS
	Ms Sheena Corcoran, HITRANS
	Ms Rebecca Purvis, HITRANS
	Mr Robert Wilson, HITRANS
	Mr Derek Mackay, Partnership Secretary
	Mr Lukas Princ, SATE Project

Declaration of Interests

Mr Robert Andrew declared that he had retired as Stagecoach Scotland Regional Director in June 2020 and acted as an advisor to Scottish Citylink.

MINUTES

- Minute of Meeting of 20 September 2024 1 The Minute of Meeting of 20 September 2024 was **approved**.
- Matters Arising 2 Mr Ranald Robertson provided the following updates:
- 10 (2) HITRANS had written to COSLA in relation to the formula for distributing Tier 1 Active Travel Funding.
- It was agreed to note the update.**

FINANCE

- Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 1 April to 30 September 2024 3 With reference to 3 of the Minute of the Meeting of 26 April 2024, Ms Carolyn Maxwell, Partnership Treasurer, submitted a Report setting out the revenue monitoring position for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024 and the projected year end position.
- It was agreed to approve the revenue monitoring position for the period to 30 September 2024 as detailed in the Report.**

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

- Scotland's Railway 4 The Board was informed that Mr Ewen Tait, Scotrail, gave a presentation at the briefing meeting on 7 November and copies of the presentation would be circulated. Mr Frank Roach, Partnership manager, summarised the key points from the presentation. The Board highlighted issues with lack of capacity on the Inverness – Aberdeen service, the lack of investment in rural rail services and the issues with connectivity with ferry services.
- It was agreed:**
- (1) to note the Report; and**
- (2) that the Partnership Manager would pass the comments of the Board in relation to Highlands and Islands rail services to Scotrail.**

- Research/Strategy Development Programme for 2024/25 5 With reference to item 4 of the Minute of Meeting of 20 September 2024, Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director submitted a Report which provided an update on progress on delivering the Research and Strategy Development Programme and sought approval of amendments to the programme to reflect commitments made, changing priorities identified since approval of the 2024/25 Business Plan at the Partnership Meeting on 26 April 2024.
- It was agreed to note the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2024/25 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.**

- Active Travel Update 6 With reference to item 10 of the Minute of Meeting of 20 September 2024, Ms Vikki Trelfer, Active Travel Officer submitted a Report providing an update on Active Travel Projects in which HITRANS and Partner Local Authorities were currently involved. The Report provided an update on the People and Place Programme and the Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (Tier 2).
- It was agreed:**
- (1) to note the Report;**

(2) to note that Mr Ken Gowans would circulate the Highland Council presentation on 20mph zones: and

(3) to note that Mr Robert Andrew would confirm whether bikes can be booked onto double decker bus services.

Regional Transport
Strategy Delivery
Plan

7 With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 20 September 2024, Mr Neil Macrae, Partnership Manager submitted a Report providing an update on the development of a new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). The Report indicated that following amendments made in response to feedback received through the statutory public consultation, Members approved a final version of the RTS at the last Partnership meeting in September which was then submitted to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport for approval on 4 October 2024. Following receipt of a response from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, officers hoped to submit the final Regional Transport Strategy for adoption at the next Partnership meeting in February.

The Report indicated that to guide the implementation of the RTS, a Delivery Plan would be prepared to accompany the Strategy. The Delivery Plan would focus on the actions which would be taken by HITRANS although in many instances the outcomes there were sought could be delivered by partner organisations. The Report highlighted that all actions within the Delivery Plan would be closely linked to the RTS priorities as well as being set within the context of the Vision, Strategy Objectives and RTS themes. The Report stated that a draft version of the first Delivery Plan would be presented at the next HITRANS Partnership meeting in February 2025.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Electric Vehicle
Infrastructure Fund
(EVIF) Update

8 With reference to item 7 of the Minute of Meeting of 15 September 2024 Ms Gemma Robinson, EVIF Project Manager submitted a Report providing an update on regional activity by a project management shared service under the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (EVIF). The Report indicated that the UK Charge Point Regulations required all existing 50KW Chargers to have contactless payment but across the HITRANS area 41 chargers cannot be retrofitted and would require to be replaced. All should be replaced through the EVIF Programme over the course of the next year but there may be temporary loss of provision in some areas.

It was agreed to note the Report and that officers consider the options for areas left without an EV Charger because of the UK Charge Point Regulations.

Health and
Transport Action
Plan/ BN Islander
Accessibility

9 With reference to item 13 of the Minute of Meeting of 20 September 2024 Mr Neil Macrae, Partnership Manager submitted a Report providing an update on progress made to establish a Health and Transport Action Plan for the HITRANS area and specific work investigating how accessibility could be improved on Britten-Norman Islands aircraft which currently operated on PSO services within three of our partner Local Authorities and Shetland. A copy of the final version of the Highlands and Islands Health and Transport Action Plan Scoping Review was provided at Appendix A to the Report.

The Scottish Government had published its Transport to Health Delivery Plan on 30 October 2024 and a copy was provided at Appendix B to the Report. The Delivery Plan had identified 16 commitments to be taken forward, based on their feasibility, deliverability and affordability and several of these were outlined in the report.

Both Airtask and Loganair had already undertaken considerable work to investigate potential solutions and copies of the reports that had developed were provided as Appendices C and D of the Report. These reports consider the operators obligations for

carrying Persons with Reduces Mobility (PRMs) under current regulation and potential solutions that the had independently explored.

It was agreed to:

- (1) note the Report;**
- (2) authorise the HITRANS Chair write to members of the NHS Boards that operate in the HITRANS area, NHS Shetland, the Scottish Ambulance Service and representatives from each Local Authority, to share a copy of the Scoping Review and to invite them to an initial meeting to discuss the Reviews recommendations;**
- (3) consider how HITRANS could best support the Commitments set out in the Scottish Governments Transport to Health Delivery Plan; and**
- (4) support the ongoing efforts of the Working Group established to help identify how the accessibility of BN Islander aircraft can be improved for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRMs).**

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

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With reference to item 10 of the Minute of Meeting of 10 November 2023 Ms Rebecca Purvis, Transport Integration Manager submitted a Report providing an update on the Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) App currently being deployed by HITRANS to help support the operation, booking and marketing of non -scheduled transport services across the Highlands and Islands. The Report stated that in December 2021, HITRANS awarded Liftango an initial three-year contract to deploy a DRT platform consisting of a user application, operator platform and a driver platform. The contract to Liftango had now been extended until December 2027. A summary of the services involved and work to date for each Local authority was detailed in the Report.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Western Isles Connectivity for Health Travel Working Group

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Mr Neil Macrae, Partnership Manager submitted a Report providing an overview of work being undertaken through the Western Isles Connectivity for Health Travel Working Group that the Cabinet Secretary had asked HITRANS to chair and report on in December 2024. The Report provided an update on the work of the Working Group and outlined the actions and next steps that had been identified by the Group and several other areas for consideration. A copy of the Terms and Reference for the Working Group was provided at Appendix A to the Report.

HITRANS would provide an update of progress made against the actions at the next meeting of the Working Group on 21 November with a final report then being submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2024.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Inverness Masterplan – Bus/Car Park Feasibility Study

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Mr Frank Roach, Partnership Manager submitted a Report seeking approval to commission a feasibility study to identify options for the relocation/rebuilding of the bus station and car parks in the Inverness Station Masterplan area. The Report provided an update on the Inverness Station Masterplan and indicated that the feasibility study would explore options for a strategic, multi-modal transport interchange that considers bus, rail, active travel and parking. The study would also consider potential options for accommodating facilities and accessing public transport.

It was agreed to approve the proposed expenditure for the Inverness Masterplan – Bus/Car Park Feasibility Study.

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

FASTER Project 13 With reference to item 17 of the Minute of Meeting of 2 February 2024 Ms Gemma Robinson, FASTER Project Manager submitted a Report providing an update on the development of the FASTER project, funded through the INTERREG VA Programme, managed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and match funded by Transport Scotland.

The Report stated that the project had launched in October 2020 and officially ended on 31 December 2023. However, a 6-month grace period had been granted for installations to be fully completed. The Report provided an overview of the project and detailed a full closure report for the project which was delivered from October 2020 to June 2024.

It was agreed to note the Report.

PARTNERSHIP

Risk Management: 14 With reference to item 17 of the Minute of Meeting of 10 November 2024 Mr Ranald
Risk Register
Update –
November 2024 Robertson, Partnership Director submitted a Report seeking approval of the review of the Strategic, Management/Operational and Financial Risks faced by the Partnership and to ensure significant risks were identified, evaluated and controlled.

The Report stated that the HITRANS Risk Register was subject to annual review, the latest of which was undertaken in November 2023. This had, again been reviewed by Officers to ensure it continued to support the good management of the major risks faced by HITRANS. The revised list of risk management controls was appended to the Report.

It was agreed to approve adoption of the HITRANS Risk Register November 2024 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report with the inclusion of primary and secondary risk owners.

Accessible Travel 15 Mr Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director submitted a Report providing a summary of
Framework –
Delivery Plan 2024
to 2026 the recently published Accessible Travel Framework Delivery Plan covering the period from 2024 to 2026. The Report detailed the Accessible Travel Framework Priorities 2024-2026 and provided a summary for each of the following workstreams: Passenger Experience; Journey Planning, Ticketing and Wayfinding; Clear Pathways; Blue Badge; Evidence Base and Measuring Progress; Transport to Health and Social Care; and A successor to the Accessible Travel Framework.

It was agreed to note the Report.