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Report to Partnership Meeting 7 February 2025

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

National Transport Strategy – 4th Delivery Plan

Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with an overview of the fourth Delivery Plan for the National Transport Strategy in particular those measures that relate directly to the HITRANS area and makes recommendations on proposed workstreams for members to consider progressing within HITRANS 2025/26 Business Plan.

National Transport Strategy – 4th Scottish Government Delivery Plan

A copy of the Fourth annual Delivery Plan for the National Transport Strategy can be found at this [link](#).

The Delivery Plan was published on 19th December 2024. It sets out the key actions taken by the Scottish Government to deliver the Strategy's vision and priorities for 2024 and 2025 and the progress made since the 2023-24 Delivery Plan.

The Delivery Plan sets out an extensive range of actions that the Scottish Government, is taking to help deliver the priorities and outcomes of the National Transport Strategy. Below is a summary of some of those actions with particular relevance to HITRANS, the HITRANS area and partners. The actions are summarised under the four priority themes of the National Transport Strategy.

Progress since 2023/24

- Since January 2022, over 176 million journeys have now been made [at 31 October 2024] by young people using free bus passes and more than 772,000 cardholders have now signed up. Following the completion of the ScotRail peak-fares pilot, Scottish Government have introduced a twelve-month discount on all ScotRail season tickets and have permanently amended the terms of flexi passes to create a discount for those who travel less frequently.
- Work is underway on the Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP), setting out how ferry services, supported by other transport modes, will be delivered, and strengthened, working towards a long-term vision, with [findings](#) from the recent public consultation and community engagement on various islands published alongside the [initial response to the consultation report](#).
- The first of the six new major vessels - MV Glen Sannox - was delivered to Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL)/CalMac in November 2024 and operational readiness activities are well underway, with deployment on the Troon-Brodick route achieved with the first sailing on 12 January before the official start date of 13 January 2025. Construction of the five other major vessels is underway and the second stage of procurement for seven new small vessels started in August 2024.

- Achieving net zero by 2045 remains a key focus and we continue to take steps towards this goal, working with Councils who want to take forward their own demand management policies, encouraging a switch to less polluting modes and decarbonising public transport.
- A new website and app for [Traveline Scotland](#) has launched, improving the quality of journey planning information available and helping support the shift to more sustainable modes. It includes all public transport modes and cycle schemes, as well as providing detail on tickets and journey cost options. It allows users to choose what matters most to them, be that the quickest route, fewest changes, step-free access or the route with the smallest carbon footprint. Further to this, digital concessionary ferry tickets for services to Orkney and Shetland have been launched, improving our concession scheme integrity.
- Transport Scotland have awarded substantial funding to local authorities to encourage greater private investment in the electric vehicle (EV) charging network. Scotland already has the most comprehensive electric charging system outside London, which is encouraging people to switch to EVs. Transport Scotland have enabled collaboration across stakeholders to ensure Scotland has met the target of having 6,000 public EV chargers two years ahead of the planned schedule of 2026. Transport Scotland have published [research](#) exploring where charging and hydrogen fuelling will be needed for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in the future.
- The third Scottish National Adaptation Plan (SNAP3) was published during Climate Week in September. The Plan sets out actions to build Scotland's resilience to the impacts of climate change, including in relation to our transport system.
- Delivering a wellbeing economy requires a resilient and reliable transport system that gets people and goods where they need to be, and allows businesses to be competitive. To this effect, Transport Scotland continue to safely operate and maintain Scotland's trunk road and bridge network, using established and robust asset management and environmental principles, allowing it to contribute to Scotland's sustainable economic growth.
- Scottish Government have restated their commitment to progress the A9 Dualling Delivery Plan. The construction contract for the A9 Dualling: Tomatin to Moy project was awarded in July. Once major works commence in Spring 2025, this will kickstart the rolling programme of construction to dual the A9 between Perth and Inverness. The works will support local businesses, tourism and communities, by improving access to the Highlands. The procurement to dual the A9 between Tay Crossing and Ballinluig is also currently underway, with contract award expected in Summer 2025.
- Transport Scotland have completed Phase 1 of the medium-term solution improvements at the Rest and Be Thankful on the A83 and awarded a contract for the long-term solution ground investigation site works. Transport Scotland also published the draft outcomes of the [A96 Corridor Review](#), including the climate compatibility assessment and other statutory assessments, for consultation.
- Scottish Government published the [Aviation Statement](#) in July 2024, which sets out, for the first time, the strategic importance of aviation to Scotland and the specific actions we will take to help ensure we can continue to enjoy its many benefits, while significantly reducing emissions.
- In terms of health, wellbeing and increasing the safety of the transport system, Government have committed over £157 million this financial year to projects that make it easier to walk,

wheel and cycle, including £35 million through Tier 1 of the Active Travel Infrastructure Fund, across all 32 local authorities; £19 million for the new regional behaviour change programme; and over £2 million for Bikeability.

- Road safety remains an absolute priority and Government are determined that we continue to make investments to meet the targets contained in the [Road Safety Framework to 2030](#) and to achieve safer road travel in Scotland, now and in the future. Transport Scotland are investing £36 million towards road safety in the 2024-25 financial year. This includes funding to help local authorities improve safety on local roads, campaigns to tackle the behaviours identified as causing most harm on our roads, and continued development of learning resources for children and young people, enhancing road safety across Scotland. In addition to this, TS continue to invest in the Safety Camera Programme to encourage improved driver behaviour and ultimately enhance road safety across Scotland.

4th Delivery Plan Actions

The vision for transport is underpinned by four priorities, each with three associated outcomes. The vision, priorities and outcomes are at the heart of the NTS and are the basis upon which Scottish Government take decisions and evaluate the success of Scotland's transport policies going forward. Actions being taken forward against each priority are captured below with text copied directly from the NTS Delivery Plan.

Reduces Inequalities

- We will remain committed to supporting delivery of concessionary travel and we will maintain existing eligibility to the National Concessionary Travel Schemes for those groups who currently benefit, carrying out further policy development to consider better targeting of public funds towards supporting access to public transport for those who need it most.
- We will work with bus operators and local authorities to ensure that more children can access their free bus entitlement, and that they use buses responsibly.
- To increase stability in the bus system, Transport Scotland, working with local government, industry and other stakeholders, will develop a bus services improvement plan and delivery framework to improve future availability of bus services across Scotland.
- We will continue to sponsor the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) to advocate for accessible transport systems, to ensure inclusive policies and to address specific challenges, such as active travel, digital ticketing and access to healthcare.
- We will progress the activities set out in the 2024-2026 Accessible Travel Framework (ATF) Delivery Plan. Activities are spread across seven workstreams, which include clear pathways, journey planning, improving passenger experience, and improving the evidence base. Planning for the ATF successor, including ensuring a stakeholder engagement route map, will continue.
- The Scottish Government will progress the development of the Rural Delivery Plan, which will set out how we are delivering for Scotland's rural mainland communities. The Plan, which will be published by the end of the current Parliament, will cover transport and a range of key areas including agriculture, housing, social justice, skills, digital connectivity, economic development, and health and social care.
- We will develop and publish a sectoral Just Transition Plan for transport, alongside others for energy, built environment and construction, and land use and agriculture.
- We will maintain our close working with the Department for Transport and Network Rail, progressing the ongoing feasibility work, seeking to identify options to improve accessibility for the Scottish stations selected to receive Access for All funding in Control period 7 (2024-2029).

- We will retain Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) as the basis for all passenger and islander vehicle fares and consider changes to RET, including how the RET formula will be applied on longer routes, such as Shetland, removing RET for non-islanders, and publish a review of the RET car formula.
- Through CalMac's Enhancement and Change Plan, we will review the current deck space reservation pilot for Mull, Coll and Tiree and, if this has delivered the intended benefit, engage with other communities on potential roll-out opportunities. This should allow greater opportunity for island communities and those who require to travel with a vehicle at shorter notice.

Takes Climate Action

- Scottish Ministers will bring secondary legislation to set five-yearly Carbon Budget levels, within three months of receiving advice from the Climate Change Committee (CCC), which is expected in Spring 2025 (exact date to be confirmed). This follows the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act receiving Royal Assent on 22 November 2024.
- We will progress our ambition of a 20% reduction in car use by 2030, with a route map, including a timeline for implementing 'demand management'.
- We will consider the Audit Scotland Sustainable Transport Audit Report findings and actions that we can take forward in response, during 2025.
- We remain committed to demonstrating environmental sustainability, through the delivery of environmental protection, climate change mitigation/adaptation and air quality initiatives, across the full scope of our road activities (maintenance, improvement and operations).
- Transport Scotland will publish a Trunk Road Adaptation Plan by 2025. This will be based on the most up-to-date climate change projections (UKCP18), and climate vulnerability and risk assessments, building on previous studies undertaken to identify locations where future adaptation of the trunk road network will be required, and recognising collaboration between transportation agencies, urban planners, engineers, and environmental, experts is essential for developing comprehensive resilience.
- We will support action on climate change adaptation schemes at vulnerable locations across the trunk road network, and the Vulnerable Locations Operation Group will encourage innovation, collaboration, and delivery on adaptation.
- Over the course of the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years, we will invest £41.7 million, leveraging more than three times that amount of private funding, to increase the size of our zero-emission bus and coach fleet by 252 zero-emission vehicles, and establish a network of charging facilities open to a range of heavy-duty vehicle fleet operators. This will bring the total number of zero-emission buses in Scotland to 800, supported by investment of over £150 million since 2020.
- Through our EV Infrastructure Fund, we will work with Scottish local authorities to continue to develop Scotland's public EV charging network, using a mix of public and private investment.
- We will set a route map for enabling the delivery of approximately 24,000 additional public electric vehicle charge points by 2030 to support the ongoing move to electric vehicles, through our Vision Implementation Plan.
- We will work with fleet operators, the energy sector, financiers and others, through a new financing forum to identify ways in which the transition to zero-emission heavy duty vehicles and their supporting infrastructure can be funded in a sustainable way.
- Building on research published in September 2024, we will continue to work with the road haulage sector, academia and the energy network operators to map the potential future need for energy infrastructure for heavy vehicles, allowing investments in the energy network and charging facilities to be made effectively.

- We will complete electrification and enhancement of the Glasgow – East Kilbride rail line, facilitating the switch to electric trains from diesel trains, and will continue to develop our plans for decarbonisation elsewhere on the Scottish rail network.
- We will work with the maritime sector in Scotland to transition to a decarbonised future, while continuing to facilitate key movement of goods and people and offshore energy development.
- We will implement the actions in our new Aviation Statement, including to help develop Scottish Government policy on sustainable aviation fuel.
- We will receive advice from the National Smart Ticketing Advisory Board on the strategic development of smart ticketing in Scotland, including advice on the national technological standard to improve smart ticketing integration between modes, as well as advising on schemes.
- We will introduce phased improvements to the Traveline Scotland website and app, to include real time bus location information and other features.

Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth

- In 2025-26, we will invest £1.1 billion in ensuring our motorway and trunk road network is safe, resilient and efficient, and over £1.5 billion in rail.
- We will remain dedicated to the safe operation and maintenance of Scotland's trunk road and bridge network, using established and robust asset management and environmental principles, allowing it to contribute to Scotland's sustainable economic growth.
- We will support the delivery of value-for-money, sustainable and innovative infrastructure and services, through a strategic and systematic approach to procurement.
- As always, we will plan for and respond to resilience challenges and planned major events, as they affect Scotland's strategic transport network.
- We will keep supporting delivery of publicly-funded ferry services; we will progress the development of the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Service 3 (CHFS3) Contract for commencement on 1 October 2025, and we will continue working with the councils, through the established ferry Task Forces to support their preparation of robust business cases.
- We will welcome further deliveries and deployments of the six new major ferries over the course of 2025 to provide services for Arran, Islay and the Little Minch, and work with CMAL as they progress the procurement of seven new electric ferries through Phase 1 of the Small Vessels Replacement Programme, with a view to contract award in March 2025.
- We will publish final versions of the two Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) papers – the ICP Strategic Approach and the Vessels and Ports Plan.
- We will support sponsor bodies, Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL), David MacBrayne Ltd (DML) and Scottish Canals, to ensure all necessary action is taken to allow each Board to deliver on Scottish Ministers objectives, including financial stewardship and governance oversight of each individual body.
- We will remain committed to supporting Highlands & Islands Airports Ltd (HIAL) to maintain operations at 11 airports, ensure the continuation of the Glasgow to Campbeltown, Tiree and Barra air services, support the continuation of the Dundee to London and Wick to Aberdeen air services, and ensure the continuation of the Air Discount Scheme, which we will review.
- We will help grow Scotland's international aviation connectivity, while not returning to previous levels of emissions, by implementing the relevant actions in our new Aviation Statement.
- We will publish an updated Road Asset Management Plan (RAMP) for Scottish Trunk Roads, which sets out how Scotland's trunk road network is maintained strategically and efficiently, in order to protect our assets and ensure maximum value for money from our road maintenance activities.

- We will continue to sponsor the Scottish Road Works Commissioner (SRWC), including provision of the direct financial support required for SRWC via Grant-in-aid, to bring about sustained improvements in the planning, coordination and quality of road works throughout Scotland.
- We will progress dualling the A9: commencing construction of the Tomatin to Moy contract; continuing procurement for the Tay Crossing to Ballinluig project; commencing procurement for the Pitlochry to Killiecrankie project; progressing design and development work for the Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing project; and undertaking work to inform further decision-making on the use of Mutual Investment Model contracts. The completed works will improve access to and from Highland communities, boost road safety, journey times and reliability, and generate economic growth.
- We will take forward the final stage of the process for acquisition of land required for the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass), and progress work to determine the most suitable procurement option.
- The Scottish Government will use the feedback from the public consultation on the A96 Corridor Review and the evidence-led transport appraisal that supports the Review to make a final decision on how best to take forward improvements along the corridor.
- We will take forward the final stage of the process for acquisition of land required for the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton, and progress work to determine the most suitable procurement option.
- We will continue construction of future phases of medium-term works for the A83 Rest and Be Thankful and publish the draft Orders for the long-term solution.
- We will remain committed to managing, maintaining and developing the Traffic Scotland Service, and the provision of accurate and relevant traffic and travel information to customers, through roadside display equipment, variable message signs, and web services, contributing to the safe, efficient and resilient operation of the trunk road and motorway network.
- Through ScotRail, we will launch a procurement exercise for replacement of ScotRail's fleet of intercity trains.
- We will advance the Scotrail fleet replacement programme through the further development of specifications for life expiring rolling stock on rural and suburban routes.
- We will upgrade and reconfigure rail power supplies to support existing and future electrification of our railway – with a further four electrical power 'feeder stations' to enter service by 2027.
- We will do this alongside striving to ensure delivery of high performing and efficient rail passenger services, through robust governance, clear accountability, and strategic alignment of the Scottish Ministers' priorities with rail delivery partners. This includes support on pay policy for ScotRail and Caledonian sleeper, and other industrial relations matters.
- We will sponsor, work with and monitor the activities of Scottish Rail Holdings, as it works to enable Scotland to have the best possible passenger rail services.
- We will continue to provide Regional Transport Partnership finance sponsorship and budget monitoring, and provide funding to Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) for their Subway Modernisation Programme.
- We will remain dedicated to supporting the development of the skills and expertise that organisations require to make the transition to zero emission forms of transport, and to exploit the economic and commercial opportunities for companies in Scotland that the transition presents. We will set out further detail within the draft Transport Just Transition Plan.
- We will engage with Distribution Network Operators to share the most up-to-date modelling and projections we have on how Scotland's electricity networks will need to change to support road transport decarbonisation.
- We will continue to work with the UK Government, as they develop regulations and implementation for the safe deployment of self-driving vehicles in the UK.

Improves our Health and Wellbeing

- We will assist Scotland's 32 local authorities in enhancing road safety across the local road network, through the Road Safety Improvement Fund, to support critical safety schemes focused on lowering risks and reducing casualties on local roads. This is in addition to supporting the delivery of 20 mph speed limit schemes across Scotland, where appropriate. The delivery of these schemes is expected to enhance safety on active travel journeys that present a road safety risk to pedestrians and cyclists.
- We will remain committed to our core trunk road casualty programme of work, investigating personal injury accident clusters and stretches of roads with higher accident rates, and implementing identified engineering measures, as appropriate. Rural junction improvements, bend treatments, barrier works, interactive signs and proactive risk removal activity is on-going across the network.
- We will progress work to introduce 20mph limits on all appropriate roads across the trunk road network by 2025, as part of the Programme for Government commitment.
- We will invest over £7.5 million in the Safety Camera Programme in 2024-25, rising to £7.7 million in 2025-26. Working in partnership with Police Scotland and all 33 road authorities, the programme aims to improve driver behaviour by deploying targeted enforcement in locations with evidence of both speed and injury collisions.
- We will conclude and take forward the results of the [public consultation](#) to gather views on proposed changes to speed limits in Scotland. This review is aimed at enhancing road safety, which aligns with Scotland's ambitious road safety goals.
- We will provide the newly published [Implementation Guide for 20 mph Speed Limits in Scotland](#) to local authorities. This will ensure a consistent and effective approach to implementing 20mph limits, fostering safer environments in communities across the country.
- We will work with key stakeholders and partners to implement the Road Safety framework to 2030.
- We will remain dedicated to making it easier for people to walk, wheel or cycle on everyday journeys. Through capital investment in active and sustainable travel, we will continue to deliver infrastructure projects through our new tiered delivery model, which sees more direct funding available for local authorities, Regional Transport Partnerships and National Parks. Through our People and Place programme, we will also deliver a range of behaviour change interventions to support people with the skills, knowledge and access to use more sustainable forms of travel, and contribute to a reduction in car use.
- We will deploy digital technologies to modernise services, including launching the first version of a personalised digital health and social care service which, over five years, will provide digital notifications, access to personal health information, and options for interacting online with health and social care services. This could reduce pressure on the transport network by eliminating the need to travel for certain appointments.
- The Scottish Government will take forward work to implement the commitments in the Transport to Health Delivery Plan, published in October 2024. Commitments include

supporting Regional Transport Partnerships to develop their own plans around Transport to Health, and to consider incorporating transport information into digital sources, including the NHS inform and Traveline apps.

- We will develop and deliver the next Transportation Noise Action plan to prioritise the management of transport noise, respect our environment, and contribute to health, wellbeing, and sustainable economic growth.
- We will consider sanctions and further measures for introduction to ensure that the small number of incidences of serious anti-social behaviour on buses can be dealt with appropriately.
- We will take forward actions from research we commissioned on the safety of women and girls. For instance, ScotRail are looking into expanding the Travel Safe Team established in 2023. This is made up of police officers and supervisors who engage with customers and staff to identify issues and carry out targeted engagements.

HITRANS Business Plan 2025/26

There is an opportunity for HITRANS to consider work that it may undertake within its Business Plan for 2025/26 that will support and align with the actions set out in Fourth annual Delivery Plan for the National Transport Strategy.

Among the key priorities raised in the engagement sessions with Local Authorities to help develop the draft Regional Transport Strategy were the financial, technical, and environmental challenges faced in maintaining network resilience and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Transport Scotland have asked RTPs to set out measures they are taking forward that align with the NTS Delivery Plan. A key focus of this will be the work taken forward through the People and Place programme. Other areas of HITRANS work that have the potential to directly support the NTS Delivery Plan include:

- Aviation Policy and Sustainable Aviation
- Connected and Autonomous Vehicles
- Health and Transport Action Plan
- DRT and Public Transport Information / BSIP
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
- Regional Rail Development
- Ferry Policy and Local Authority Ferry Replacement

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – The policies outlined in these key policy document will underpin the prioritisation of the projects within the RTS Delivery Plan

Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – These policy documents provide a detailed and coordinated framework of policies at a national level

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – Several of the policies and priorities support the delivery of priorities identified in the Regional Transport Strategy. The recommendations to this report invite members to approve funding within HITRANS Business Plan for 2024/25.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Reducing Inequalities is one of the key priorities of the updated National Transport Strategy.

Members are invited to:

1. Note the Report

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 21st January 2025