

Item:

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Report to Partnership Meeting 25th April 2025

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Research/Strategy Development Programme for 2024/25

SUMMARY

This Report provides the Partnership Board with an update on progress on delivering the Research and Strategy Development programme and seeks approval of amendments to the programme to reflect commitments made and changing priorities and funding opportunities identified since approval of the 2024/25 Business Plan at the Partnership meeting on 26th April 2024.

DETAIL

The Partnership at its meeting of 26th April agreed the HITRANS Business Plan for 2024/25 which includes a programme for Research and Strategy Development for 2024/25 in support of development, implementation and delivery of the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy.

Work is progressing on delivery of the Programme as indicated in the Appendix to the report.

The Programme has been amended to reflect changes that have been identified to the circumstances surrounding some projects. The changes are summarised below and more information is provided on each change in Appendix A to this report.

Summary of key Programme changes:

- Reduce EU Funding Bid Support from £15,000 to £10,00 reflecting actual spend.
- Increase Regionally Significant Scheme Development from £40,000 to £55,000 to include the £15,000 cost for supporting the Health Transport Access Plan development and Western Isles Access to Health work which has separately been reported to recent Partnership Board meetings.
- Reduce budget for Inverness Station Masterplan from £35,000 to £20,000 to reflect more accurately the latest estimate of spend in 2024/25 for this work whose costs are committed to rise to £40,000 overall.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – The Research and Development Programme is the key mechanism by which HITRANS promotes delivery of the Transport Strategy for the Highlands and Islands

Policy

Impact - Neutral

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – This item reports on the 2024/25 Business Plan research and strategy delivery programme

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Actions within the programme will have a positive impact on Equalities including Accessibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members and Advisors are asked to note the amendments to the Research and Strategy Development Programme 2024/25 as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 1st April 2025
Additional Information: Appendix – Research and Development Programme

Appendix – Research and Development Programme

Area	Project	2024/25	March Update	Comments
Active Travel	CnES LADA Programme	50000	50000	HITRANS are supporting CNES in the delivery of the LADA programme of sustainable travel measures.
	Active Travel Infrastructure Fund	500000	0	No award made against this application
	Regional People and Places Programme	1626168	1626168	Programme delivery continues and is reported separately in detail.
Aviation	Zero Carbon Aviation Region Opportunities	5000	5000	Core contribution to the work delivered through the SATE project team.
	SATE Project	300000	300000	UKRI fully funded project.
External Funding	ERDF Smart Mobility	100000	100000	Work complete on project with revenue to be returned from Managing authority.
	RURALITIES	50000	50000	Project is live to October 2027 with the main delivery focus including Scottish Islands Passport and Micromobility Hubs in Orkney. Mapping everything that moves partnership in place with RGU that will help inform spend in new locations.
	ERDF / INTERREG / SG Bid Project Support	3000	10000	Budget to support Horizon Europe project development.
Travel Information	Intelligent Transport Systems	15000	15000	Support towards ITS within Smart Cities including the project officer resource.
	Real Time Information Development	15000	15000	Delivery of improved real-time information for public transport passengers

RTS	Regionally Significant Scheme Development	30000	55000	Funding support to help partner Councils develop Regionally Significant Transport Projects. Current allocation is for a contribution to the Fort William Integrated Transport Plan. Costs for support of HTAP work.
	Local Authority Ferry Investment	15000	12500	Current allocation is to support OIC's UKRI project with Artemis.
	Climate Adaptation Study	20000	0	Analysis of Climate Adaptation Required across the region.
	EV Infrastructure Fund Shared Service	145000	145000	HITRANS partnership with OIC, SIC and Moray Council on the EV Infrastructure Fund. To be reported separately in the meeting pack.
	EV Strategy and Fleet	6000	5000	EV Strategy Development / Fleet
Rail	Rail Policy Development	30000	0	Support rail policy development work.
	Inverness Station Masterplan	10,000	20,000	Budget allocation to analyse and consider the creation of a strategic multi-modal transport interchange that considers bus, rail, active travel and parking.
Bus / DRT	Bus Service Development, Bus Partnership Fund support	30,000	30,000	Support bus policy work and public transport information production.
	Total Identified Project Expenditure	2950168	2438668	
	Current Estimated Budget (R&D)	250000	250000	
	Current Estimated Budget (External - EU, Sustrans, Transport Scotland Ring Fenced Project Support)	2,936,000	2,936,000	