

Report to Partnership Meeting 26 September 2014

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

RTS Light Touch Refresh

Purpose of Report

To propose to Members that a light touch RTS refresh be undertaken by HITRANS over the course of 2014/15 in line with recommendations made by Audit Scotland in their annual audit of HITRANS.

Background

HITRANS' Regional Transport Strategy was approved by Scottish Ministers in July 2008. It covers a 14 year period. It was originally intended that the Strategy be refreshed every four years. However under guidance from Transport Scotland and in line with the view taken on the National Transport Strategy HITRANS have delayed any refresh of the RTS.

HITRANS also produces an annual Business Plan. It shows how the RTS is being promoted and implemented on an ongoing basis. RTS Monitoring is included in the Annual Report.

Aware of the original intention to refresh on a four year cycle the lack of a refresh has been raised by Audit Scotland in their audit of HITRANS in 2012/13 and 2013/14. It has been agreed with Audit Scotland that a refresh of the RTS Delivery Plan would be an adequate approach to checking that the RTS is current and fit for purpose. This would allow the subsequent timescales set out in the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) and Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) to be incorporated in the Delivery Plan which is a standalone Associated Document to the RTS.

The Regional Transport Strategy

The Regional Transport Strategy has as its vision **enhancing the area's viability-** enhancing its place competitiveness and thereby attracting and retaining people in the HITRANS area and making it a more attractive place in which to live, to work, to conduct business and to visit.

This vision will be achieved through **improving the interconnectivity of the whole area to strategic services and destinations**. This will require development of a fit for purpose, multi-modal transport system, by way of a package of policies, measures and priorities for investment.

The Strategy's principal benefit to the communities and businesses of the HITRANS area will be to **increase sustainable economic growth**, in line with Scottish Government's Economic Strategy, by enabling the area to compete and support growth. The other benefits will be to:

- Enable people to participate in everyday life.
- Improve the safety and security of travel.
- Manage the impacts of travel on the area's environmental assets.
- Improve people's health.

Actions and investment to deliver the Strategy will be focused on the following:

- Active travel.
- Aviation and the air network.
- Community and health passenger transport.
- Congestion and urban issues.
- Freight transport.
- Locally significant network and maintenance of the area's roads.
- Mainstream passenger transport.
- Ports, ferries and waterway transport.
- Cost of transport and travel.
- Environmental impacts.

Light Touch Refresh of RTS

In considering the work required in refreshing the RTS Delivery Plan officers have recognised that there would be value in undertaking an update exercise of the main RTS document. This thinking has been strengthened as discussion at RTP Chairs meetings and lead officers meetings have highlighted that other RTPs are grappling with the same issue. To date Nestrans have already completed a light touch RTS refresh in 2013/14 which received Ministerial approval in January 2014. Two other RTPs (Tactran and SESTRan) are undertaking a similar exercise in 2014/15. This would leave HITRANS as the only model 1 RTP who had not undertaken a light touch RTS refresh.

It is proposed that the light touch RTS refresh would see an update to the text of the main RTS document with the inclusion of key policy changes and programmes including the Ferries Plan, National Planning Framework 3 and Cycling Action Plan for Scotland. The Delivery Plan would also be updated to better reflect the Infrastructure Investment Plan, STPR and the partner Council capital programmes. Officers believe there is capacity within the HITRANS team that can deliver the majority of the RTS light touch refresh write up. Some specialist support will be required to support aspects of the work including consultation and any workshop sessions arranged to support the work. Officers will set out a programme for the refresh with Partnership Advisors and Transport Scotland but the aim will be to have a draft strategy completed in 2014/15 for consideration by the Partnership Board before it is sent to the Minister for Transport and Veteran Affairs for approval.

Budget

HITRANS awarded an initial budget of £10,000 for an RTS / Green Transport Emissions baseline review. It is proposed that this work be incorporated within the RTS light touch refresh and the budget is increased to £20,000 to support the delivery of the RTS light touch refresh and emissions baseline review.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:-

- (i) Note the report.
- (ii) Approve the award of a further £10,000 in the 2014/15 Business Plan Research and Strategy Delivery Programme for the RTS light touch refresh to be incorporated into the earlier budget commitment for an RTS / Green Transport Emissions baseline review.

Risk	impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	The work will ensure the RTS is up to date and fit for purpose taking account of changes to national and local programmes.
Policy	√	The report will have a positive policy impact ensuring HITRANS strategy is up to date.
Financial	√	The refresh has been identified within the 2014/15 Business Plan. The refresh has been proposed by Audit Scotland in their annual report on HITRANS.
Equality	-	No Equality implications.

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 16th September 2014