

Item:

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Report to Partnership Meeting 11 November 2022

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Regional Transport Strategy Update

Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with an update on the Regional Transport Strategy

Introduction

Following a report to the Partnership meeting in October 2022 that introduced the draft Case for Change document and invited comment from Members and advisors, this report provides an updated timetable for updating the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy and invites members to approve that the finalised Case for Change and supporting Impact Assessments is consulted on through an online consultation.

Overview of Case for Change Report

HITRANS has commissioned Stantec UK Ltd to support the development of the new HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy. The new RTS will set the strategic framework for the development of transport in the HITRANS region over the next 20 years with the aim of delivering a transport system that reduces inequalities, takes climate action, helps deliver inclusive economic growth, and improves the health and wellbeing of people in the HITRANS region.

The RTS development process must broadly follow STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance) and the first step is to clearly establish the Case for Change to set the scene for the subsequent options appraisal and development of the strategy. As well as a clear expression of the context in which the RTS must sit, the key output is a set of evidenced and logically derived strategy objectives.

A draft version of the Case for Change was shared at the Partnership meeting on 9th October 2022. An updated version is currently being prepared following comments received from Partnership Members and Advisors.

The Case for Change has been developed in parallel with an Equalities Impact Assessment, Islands Impact Assessment and a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

It is proposed to now publish the updated draft Case for Change and associated impact assessment reports for public and stakeholder consultation for a period of four weeks. We will seek views primarily on: (i) whether people think the transport problems of the region have been effectively captured in the Case for Change; and (ii) to what extent people agree or otherwise with the Strategy Objectives.

The next step in the Strategy process will be to develop options which respond to the problems identified here and qualitatively appraise these in the context of the prevailing policy, the Strategy Objectives and the STAG criteria. We propose to hold a workshop with Members and Advisors at the next Partnership meeting in February 23.

Regional Transport Strategy Programme Update

Programme Milestones

Milestone	Date
Finalise 'Case for Change' reporting package	w/b 21 st November 2022
'Case for Change' consultation	w/b 28 th November 2022 for 4 weeks
Completion of Preliminary Options Appraisal	w/b 19 th December 2022
Draft RTS and associated SEA, EqlA and ICIA	w/b 6 th March 2023
Finalise Draft RTS reporting package	w/b 27 th March 2023
Draft RTS Statutory Consultation	w/b 3 rd April 2023 for 12 weeks
Final RTS	w/b 24 th July 2023
Post-consultation SEA Technical Note and Equalities Note	w/b 24 th July 2023
Submission of RTS to Scottish Ministers	w/b 31 st July 2023
Post-adoption SEA Statement	w/b 21 st August 2023

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – The work to refresh the Regional Transport Strategy seeks to update the Delivery Plan

Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work helps set new policies and objectives for HITRANS that are relevant to the framework within which the Partnership now sits.

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – Funding for developing the Regional Transport Strategy Update has been identified in the HITRANS Business Plan 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Updating the Regional Transport Strategy offers an opportunity to address both transport and wider inequalities across the region

Recommendation

Members are invited to:

1. Note the report
2. Approve an online consultation on the draft Case for Change and associated impact assessment reports

Report by: Neil MacRae
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 9th November 2022