

Item:
18



Report to Partnership Meeting 17 September 2021

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Bus Partnership Fund

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on progress with delivering the successful application made by Highland Council to the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund which was reported at application stage at the last HITRANS meeting.

Background

The Scottish Government has committed to providing a long-term investment of over £500m to deliver targeted bus priority measures on local and trunk roads. This is intended to reduce the negative impacts of congestion on bus services and address the decline in bus patronage. The investment takes the form of the Bus Partnership Fund, together with the roll-out of infrastructure for the trunk road network.

The Bus Partnership Fund is intended to complement the powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, enabling local authorities to work in partnership with bus operators, to develop and deliver ambitious schemes that incorporate bus priority measures. The Fund is focussing on the evidence of how bus services will be improved by addressing congestion, but the partnership approach is also expected to leverage other bus service improvements to help tackle the climate emergency, reduce private car use and increase bus patronage.

Eligible bidders to the BPF must be partnerships formed of a lead local authority with partners potentially including neighbouring local authorities, regional transport partnerships, Transport Scotland (where appropriate, as trunk road managers) and bus operators, with the involvement of other stakeholders, such as passenger representative groups.

Eligible partnerships must be able to evidence that congestion is adversely impacting bus patronage and put forward ideas to address this. Projects funded by the BPF will be comprehensive and ambitious packages of bus priority measures; including for example bus lanes, bus gates, guided busways and traffic light priority. Partnerships are encouraged to propose other, innovative measures to contribute to the targeted outcomes. To maximise the utility of bus services, partnerships are encouraged to develop proposals which integrate bus with active travel and other forms of transport, to provide an end-to-end solution, which will reduce private car use.

The key intended outcomes of the Fund are to improve bus journey times and provide greater reliability, by prioritising bus over other types of traffic.

Bus Partnership Fund Round 1:

Highland

The Highland Council was successful with two applications to the first round of the Bus Partnership Fund securing a total of £2.76M to transform public transport in Inverness, Inner Moray Firth and Lochaber. A summary of the successful projects are detailed below:

- Inner Moray Firth – Award of £2,053,040 to implement a number of ‘quick win’ improvements including the completion of a bus gate at Raigmore Hospital and bus lane enforcement. Funding to develop the business case for bus priority measures on several key corridors around the city including the on Millburn Road where work will complement the Active Travel improvements being developed.
- Fort William – Award of £707,000 to support the completion of two short bus only links within Fort William that will help both reduce bus journey times and improve accessibility. Funding was also secured to develop the business case for a further five options that include a variety of potential bus priority measures in and around Fort William

Argyll and Bute

HITRANS are working with partners including the Council and West Coast Motors to develop an application for the Oban and Lorn area which will be submitted when the second opportunity to apply for Phase 1 funding closes in October. The application will include proposals to develop the business case for a Park and Ride on the A85 along with associated improvements to support bus priority and high quality information and waiting facilities on the main bus corridor through the town. The application also includes funding for a turning circle and improved access for buses at the ferry terminals at Ellenabeich and North Cuan which serve Easdale and Luing and are regularly affected by unpredictable delays due to the constrained space available at present.

Development and Project Management

Within the successful BPF applications for Inverness and Fort William, there is also an allocation of funding available for the recruitment of a Project Manager to oversee the implementation of the projects identified in the grant offer.

The Highland Council have sought the support of HITRANS to progress the recruitment for this position on an initial fixed term contract up until 31st March 2023. Completing the recruitment process through HITRANS would enable a Project Manager to come into post quickly, due to the current council restructuring process and help ensure that the tight timescales for delivering both the ‘quick win’ projects and business cases can be met.

The person Specification and Job Description for this post are included as Appendix 1 to this report.

Recommendation:

Members are invited to:

1. Note the Report
2. Approve the recruitment of a Bus Partnership Fund Project Manager based on the Job Description / Person Specification included as an appendix to this report.

Risk Register

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – Local bus services support a number of RTS priorities relating to Public Transport and access to employment.

Policy

Impact - Positive

Financial

Impact – Neutral

Comment - An allocation of funding to support the monitoring of any Bus Service Improvement Partnership established to support the delivery of any successful Bus Partnership Fund application. There will be no additional cost to HITRANS from the recruitment of the BPF Project Manager.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Local Bus services help improve access to many of the most vulnerable groups within the area and also provide what can be described as a lifeline service to those communities where the local bus service is the only form of public transport available.

Report by: Neil MacRae
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 7th September 2021

Appendix 1



JOB DESCRIPTION

PROJECT MANAGER – HIGHLAND BUS PARTNERSHIP FUND

(Fixed term – Initially until 31 March 2023), Secondments will be considered
Based: Inverness or Fort William

Salary: £ TBC following benchmarking

General

The Project Manager will act as the client representative and manage all aspects of Bus Partnership Fund projects in Highland and associated initiatives. The primary focus of the role will be the delivery and management of Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) projects in Inverness and Fort William, including management of STAG Appraisals and liaison with all partners in the associated Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) schemes.

The post-holder will report to the Highland Council's Policies and Programmes Manager.

Job Purpose

1. Manage all aspects of the Bus Partnership Fund projects in Highland and associated initiatives.
2. Develop and implement the overarching and project specific plans including the monitoring and evaluating of activities and outcomes.
3. Procurement and management of consultants to support the delivery of any aspect of the Bus Partnership Fund.
4. Monitor expenditure and preparing financial claims for the Bus Partnership Fund projects.
5. Manage the preparation of STAG appraisals and Outline Business Cases funded by the BPF, and submit applications to the next phase of the BPF and any complementary funding bids as required, following completion of these appraisals / OBCs
6. Advise the BSIP and Project Boards on all aspects of the project.
7. Help establish then provide the organisation and secretariat for Highland Bus Partnership meetings and other associated meetings
8. Establish and build links with both key internal and external contacts.

Main Duties

1. Manage and monitor consultants supporting the delivery of any aspect of the Bus Partnership Fund including the development of detailed STAG compliant business cases for all projects which will then require applications to future rounds of the Bus Partnership Fund.
2. Manage the procurement and implementation of any elements of the project for which external support has been identified.

3. Consult with, and co-ordinate input to the projects from, The Highland Council's Project Design Unit, Public Transport, Active Travel, Road Safety and Planning teams.
4. Manage the delivery of 'quick win' projects which are funded from the BPF.
5. Work with the BPF STAG consultant/s on stakeholder and public engagement, organising meetings and workshops as required to support the delivery of the BPF projects and BSIP objectives.
6. Ensure there is regular engagement with all members of the Highland BSIP once established, including developing strong working relationship with all local bus operators.
7. Liaise with elected members of The Highland Council, members of the HITRANS Board, and Transport Scotland.
8. Supervise the organisation and secretariat for Highland BSIP meetings and other associated meetings.
9. Advise all partners on the Highland BSIP on all matters relating to the Bus Partnership Fund STAG appraisal, including preparation of Board / Committee / and other reports.
10. Close liaison with Transport Scotland including regular project reporting as required under the terms of the BPF grant offer.
11. Monitor delivery, highlighting areas of risk and opportunity and provide regular progress reports / updates to the Project Steering Group, HITRANS Partnership Board, The Highland Council and Transport Scotland as required.
12. Support colleagues in the Council and HITRANS with any opportunities to align the Bus Partnership Fund with other relevant work that the Council, HITRANS and partners are involved including other live projects such as the Inverness City Active Travel Network (ICATN) and HITRANS Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform GO-HI.
13. Ensure the monitoring and evaluating of activity and outcomes associated with the Bus Partnership Fund is undertaken in accordance with the terms of the Transport Scotland grant offer.
14. Ensure that projects are progressed on time and within agreed budgets.
15. Ensure that progress reports and financial claims are submitted accurately and on time.
16. Represent The Highland Council and the Highland Bus Partnership externally in a number of forums on areas relevant to the job purpose as appropriate.
17. Ensure that the work of the Highland Bus Partnership and Bus Partnership Fund projects are well communicated to help support their delivery and the objectives of both the Partnership and individual projects.
18. Attend meetings of partners and stakeholders as required, which may involve travel and work outwith normal office hours.
19. Maintain effective working relationships with a number of key individuals including:

Within The Highland Council:

- Colleagues within the Council's Project Design Unit, Planning, Public Transport, Active Travel, Road Safety and Corporate Services teams

Within HITRANS:

- Partnership Director, Partnership Manager and Public Transport Information Officer

Other External:

- All Bus and Community transport operators within the Highland Council area

- Transport Scotland – Low carbon and sustainable travel team
- Chambers of Commerce, BID's, key employers
- Key organisations and stakeholders representing other modes including Sustrans, ScotRail and Local access forums
- Other relevant Community groups and partners, consultants, contractors, media and press

Corporate and Strategic Responsibilities

1. To support Senior Management in leading in the planning and delivery of Bus Partnership Fund and related activities.
2. To maintain and promote the core values and corporate goals of The Highland Council and HITRANS, ensuring that they are communicated effectively to staff and stakeholders.
3. To support Council's Head of Service and colleagues within The Highland Council and HITRANS in undertaking their roles where appropriate.
4. To support other Partners of the Highland Bus Partnership in undertaking their roles as appropriate.
5. To lead and performance manage the functions and projects for which the post-holder has responsibility.
6. Support the development and promote effective internal and external partnerships to ensure integration and delivery of project objectives.
7. Promote a positive culture in the workplace acting in the best interests of the Council and Bus Partnership members.
8. Ensuring timely reports are produced and financial regulations are adhered to.
9. Ensuring adherence to The Highland Council and HITRANS constitutions, policies and procedures in respect of specific activities and decisions.
10. Support Senior Management in ensuring that the Partnership Members are adequately briefed on all matters of consequence.
11. Support the production and delivery of continuous improvement through service performance planning, monitoring and evaluation and contributing to corporate performance in relation to Best Value.
12. Act as a champion for public transport and the Highland Bus Partnership within the area.

General Accountabilities

1. To ensure that information received and disseminated, whether verbal, written or electronic concerning fellow employees, prospective employees or service users is treated in the strictest confidence, and that all such information is brought to the attention of the Council's Head of Service who will ensure it is regulated and controlled in compliance with Data Protection legislation.
2. Uphold and promote Equal Opportunities within The Highland Council and HITRANS in service delivery.
3. As The Highland Council and HITRANS are committed to the effective management of risk, it is the responsibility of all employees to carry out their duties and responsibilities with adequate regard for Risk Management as outlined within the Councils and HITRANS Risk Management Policies.

4. To ensure that their duties and responsibilities are performed in a safe manner so that risk to health and safety for yourself, any other employee or member of the public is minimised.
5. This job description is not intended to be either prescriptive or exhaustive; it is issued as a framework to outline the main areas of responsibility at the time of writing.
6. Ensuring that you comply with the No Smoking at Work Policy
7. To support and comply with the Policy for the management of Health and Safety of both organisations.
8. To work in accordance with the arrangements described in the organisations health and safety management systems, including any project or department specific requirements.
9. To carry out other duties in support of The Highland Council or HITRANS wider aims and objectives as required.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

PROJECT MANAGER – HIGHLAND BUS PARTNERSHIP FUND

(Fixed term – Initial 18month contract), Secondments will be considered

Based: Inverness or Fort William

FACTOR		ESSENTIAL		DESIRABLE
Skills and Qualities	E1	Competence in co-ordinating projects and input from different specialists.	D1	Organisation of workshops, events and other forms of public engagement
	E2	Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.	D2	Ability to deal with media enquiries
	E3	Ability to build relationships with partners, supporters and the general public.		
	E4	Excellent organisational skills.		
	E5	Ability to work independently, take initiative and make decisions with minimal supervision.		
	E6	Ability to prioritise workload and meet tight deadlines.		
	E7	Ability to work effectively in a team and contribute to a team		
	E8	Willingness to work in a demanding position where a flexible and corporate approach is required		
Knowledge and Experience	E9	Expertise and successful track record in analysis, research and project management.	D3	Experience of preparing business cases
			D4	Knowledge or experience of Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)
	E10	Successful partnership working and networking with key stakeholders including government officials, businesses and the public	D5	Experience of managing the implementation of public infrastructure projects
	E11	Experience of working with and managing programmes within the Microsoft Office software package and other databases.	D6	Working with local authorities and other public sector bodies.
			D7	Knowledge of working with or delivering Externally funded projects
		D8	Good understanding of the wide benefits of integrated sustainable transport.	
		D9	Good understanding of the public transport within the Highlands and Islands	

			D10	Experience of working with a political environment
			D11	Experience of working in the public transport sector
Qualifications and Attainments	E12	Educated to degree level or equivalent, professional qualification in project management, or considerable relevant project management experience		