

Item:

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Report to Partnership Meeting of 4 April 2008

HITRANS Business Plan for 2008/09

SUMMARY

The Report seeks approval from the Partnership for the HITRANS Business Plan for 2008/09. This is the first Business Plan to be prepared by the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership and it sets out what we intend to do during 2008/09 in working with our constituent Councils and Stakeholders to improve the delivery of transport services across the Highlands and Islands. It defines how we will move forward in promoting and implementing our Regional Transport Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Partnership is asked to

1. approve the one year Business Plan for 2008/09 with a view to developing a longer term business plan from 2009/10 once the views of Scottish Ministers on the Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan are clear, the Strategic Transport Review Findings are available, and Councils and their Community Planning Partners have had a reasonable time to develop their Single Outcome Agreements with Government.

DETAIL

This is the first Business Plan to be prepared by the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership and it sets out what we intend to do during 2008/09 in working with our constituent Councils and Stakeholders to improve the delivery of transport services across the Highlands and Islands. It defines how we will move forward in promoting and implementing our Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).

The Scottish Executive published guidance on Regional Transport Strategies in March 2006. Paragraph 112 of the Guidance requires the preparation of an annual delivery or business plan to be submitted to Scottish Ministers. The plan should normally cover the first three years of implementation of the Regional Transport Strategy, and be updated annually to reflect local and central government planning and funding cycles and include plans for capital and revenue spending and borrowing. There has been a change in Government since this Guidance was issued and this has significantly changed the mechanism for funding of transportation investment from 2008/09. Ring fencing of much of the Council and previously centrally managed funding has been removed. Councils are tasked in 2008/09 with producing Single Outcome Agreements with Government and from 2009/10 onwards with their Community Planning Partners. HITRANS has been asked to review its Regional Transport Strategy. In these rapidly changing circumstances and pending approval of the RTS by Scottish Ministers it is proposed that HITRANS produce a single year Business Plan identifying its intentions in 2008/09 and

engage during that year with Government, its agencies, HITRANS constituent Councils and their Community Planning Partners to develop its future focus and delivery role.

The Business Plan as included in the Appendix to this report is intended to fulfil that requirement and, after approval by the HITRANS Board, will be submitted to Scottish Ministers.

Report by: Dave Duthie
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 27 March 2008

