

Report to Partnership Meeting – 6th February 2008

FINANCE – TRAVEL PLANS PROGRAMME 2008/09

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the progress made in delivering the Travel Plans budget funded through the Scottish Government's allocation of £107,000 for 2008/09 to HITRANS through the grant stream directed to *Mainstream SMART Measures by Local Authorities and Health Boards*.

BACKGROUND

The main expected outcome of the Grant is to increase the number of staff, visitors and suppliers in Local Authorities and Health Boards using more sustainable modes of transport. The objectives of the grant are:

- i. work with Local Authorities and Health Boards to implement and expand the coverage and monitoring of Travel Plans and disseminate lessons learnt through the production of case studies; and
- ii. work with Local Authorities, and other sustainable and active travel stakeholders, to encourage organisations and individuals, for example through best practice, leadership, national events, promotion of publications, websites and tools, to test and habitually use more sustainable forms of transport.

HITRANS GRANT PROGRAMME

The following proposals summarise the areas where the Partnership agreed funding should be channelled.

Travel Plans Promotion

In the previous Travel Plans budget period of April 2006 to March 2008 an element of funding was budgeted to cover the costs of advertising travel plans and sustainable travel in local newspapers and local radio. A budget of £3,000 has been identified for this purpose in 2008/09.

Get Healthy, Get Active!

HITRANS introduced Get Healthy, Get Active! our sustainable travel grant scheme in 2007/08 and achieved good results in terms of promoting better travel with participation by our partner Councils. The budget in 2007/08 saw over £20,000 of successful active travel projects delivered by Argyll and Bute Council, Moray Council and Orkney Islands Council. The proposed budget for this scheme for 2008/09 has been increased to £35,000 and this will provide an opportunity for Councils and Health Boards to bid for funding of travel plan related actions in the current programme. HITRANS would not intend to restrict the funding to local authorities and health boards but rather consider proposals from other public sector bodies and the private sector, but

this will be subject to agreement by Scottish Government of a relaxation of the currently proposed grant award conditions.

Despite sending details of the grant scheme to a large number of public and private sector employers in the region interest in taking up the opportunity presented by this scheme has been limited. The Moray Council have secured grant funding of £17,000 towards the provision of £35,000 of sustainable travel facilities and projects at Council sites. This still leaves £18,000 to be awarded to projects this year. The only significant interest received in accessing this funding has come from Highlands and Islands Airports Limited.

Sustainable Travel Facilities

While it is important to develop travel behaviour change at large employment sites such as can be achieved through Get Healthy, Get Active! many communities across the Highlands and Islands depend on smaller scale enterprises as key employers. It is therefore important to improve sustainable travel opportunities to sites such as these. A budget of £8,000 has been identified to improve sustainable travel facilities that can be accessed by the general public. This could be simple measures such as the bike racks HITRANS previously funded at bus stops in Orkney and rail stations in Highland when we were in receipt of Capital funding.

Travel Plan Marketing and Targeted Personal Journey Planning

Targeted promotion of sustainable travel on particular routes was identified as a particularly successful aspect of the Sustainable Travel Demonstration Towns projects piloted by the Department for Transport. This process in England has included targeted telemarketing, personal journey planning and individual route promotion. A budget of £12,000 has been identified to encourage modal shift and sustainable travel passenger growth throughout the Highlands and Islands.

www.IfYouCareShare.com

Having established IfYouCareShare.com it is now essential that we actively promote the site to ensure people throughout the area can benefit from the opportunity it presents. A regular commuter in the Highlands and Islands participating in the scheme stands to benefit greatly with a conservative estimate of an annual saving of £1,000.

To cover the licensing costs with the system provider and promotional activities to encourage more people to take up the opportunity presented by the site to save money and meet new people a budget of £25,000 has been identified for this.

HITRANS Site Travel Plan

While encouraging other employers to practice good travel planning behaviour it is important that HITRANS implement a site travel plan for both the Lairg and Dalcross offices. A travel plan taking account of staff, member and meeting travel will be developed this year. To support this document a practical measure identified is to trial the use of a folding bike stored at the Dalcross office and made available for use by staff, members and advisors travelling through Inverness Airport for business. Folding bikes are accepted for carriage on buses, coaches and trains and this will represent a highly visible and practical application of sustainable travel methods by the Partnership. This initiative is indicative of the sort of project that would qualify under the Get Healthy, Get Active! scheme should other employers choose to follow our example. £469 has been allocated to this project.

Real Time Information System Promotion

The real time information systems funded by HITRANS in 2007/08 in Argyll, Inverness, Moray and Orkney will be going live in 2008 and each scheme has the potential to provide bus stop information through SMS and WAP mobile phone technology. This is a cost effective way of providing information but for this to achieve good take up it is essential that the system is promoted particularly in relation to how to use the SMS function.

A budget of £3,000 has been identified for RTI promotion specifically aimed at providing leaflets, posters and advertising of the RTI SMS and WAP service to be distributed through employers in the area, schools and at interchanges. Discussions have been held with Traveline Scotland to establish whether they would be prepared to lead a joint marketing initiative to cover all real time information SMS marketing in Scotland as this could achieve economy of scale savings in printing and graphic design costs.

Site Specific Travel Plan Development

A budget of £5,000 has been earmarked to provide support to public and private sector employers in supporting the development of site specific travel plans. This approach can also attract grant funding from the Energy Savings Trust for sites with 50 or more employees. This will build on the work that has already been progressed in 2007/08 where the Council headquarter sites and key NHS sites developed staff travel plans.

Administration, Monitoring and Evaluation

A budget of £15,000 has been allocated to cover staff time and office costs associated with delivering Travel Plans work in the HITRANS area and monitoring the success in delivering previously initiated and new travel plans across the Highlands and Islands.

SUMMARY

In line with recommendations made by Scottish Government the programme to *Mainstream SMART Measures by Local Authorities and Health Boards* has principally been earmarked for research and development of the measures that will support sustainable travel and modal shift in the Highlands and Islands.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members are asked to note the latest progress on delivering this funding stream.

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Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 27 January 2009
Background Papers: Appendix A – Detailed Travel Plan Programme 2008/09

Appendix A – Detailed Travel Plan Programme 2008/09

Project	Description	Budget Allocated	Spend to Date
Travel Plan related promotions	Cost of advertising in local press to promote modal shift.	£3,000	£447
Get Healthy, Get Active!	Continuation of <i>Get Healthy, Get Active!</i> HITRANS sustainable travel grant scheme. The first round of projects has seen improved active travel opportunities and facilities at local government offices. It is hoped to extend the benefits to other public sector and private sector sites. Moray Council has been awarded £17,000 towards providing travel facilities in various Council offices.	£35,000	
Travel Plan Marketing and Targetted Publications	Targetted promotion of sustainable travel. This will include targetted telemarketing and individual route promotion. This process will be developed in cooperation with public transport operators and will include measuring the impact of the intervention in terms of passenger uptake.	£12,000	£9,435
Travel Facilities	Funding for enhanced sustainable travel facilities for general use not tied into specific employers.	£8,000	£5,842
HITRANS Office Travel Plan	A folding bike for use by HITRANS members, advisors and staff to attend meetings using sustainable transport. Folding bikes will be acceptable for carriage on all buses and trains in the region.	£469	£469
www.IfYouCareShare.com	Marketing and promotion of HITRANS carshare site.	£25,000	£18,655
Real Time Information System Promotion	Marketing and promotion of HITRANS real time information projects.	£3,000	£340
Site Specific Travel Plan Development	Support to Public Sector and Private Sector businesses in developing and implementing site travel plans.	£5,000	£305
Administration, Monitoring and Evaluation	Staff time and office costs associated with delivering Travel Plans work in the HITRANS area and monitoring its success.	£15,000	£15,000
		£106,469	£50,494