



## Report to Partnership Meeting of 4 April 2008

### REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

#### SUMMARY

The Report seeks approval from the Partnership to submit to Scottish Ministers the revised Regional Transport Strategy and associate Delivery Plan. The Strategy supports Government's key objectives and the single outcome agreements of the constituent Councils and reflects the level of funding potentially available from within Government and Councils to improve transportation as a means of enhancing the region's viability and enable the highlands and islands to complete and support growth as part of the national strategy to grow the Scottish Economy.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Partnership is asked to

1. approve the submission to Government of the revised Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan as include in Appendix 1 based on that previously agreed and submitted in July 2007, updated to reflect the Government's key objectives and changing funding position.

#### REGIONAL STRATEGY APPROVAL

The Partnership considered the letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth at its last meeting on 1 February and agreed to develop and submit a revised Regional Transport Strategy and associated Delivery Plan as requested.

The HITRANS RTS assesses a wide spectrum of service areas in terms of the transport's impact but focuses in conclusion on how transport can enable the economic growth and prosperity of the Highlands and Islands, the Objective that consistently was identified as the critical issue in the consultation phase of the strategy development process.

The Cabinet Secretary asked HITRANS to consider prioritisation of interventions to be included within a Delivery Plan related to its RTS in light of the resources potentially available to Government and Councils and to submit a revised strategy in due course reflecting the view of the Partnerships and its constituent Councils on the needs for investment in transport within what is the most peripheral region of Scotland. The Partnership were advised on 1 February of the constraints and challenges faced by all of the member Councils and the likely extent to which they will be able to implement initiatives which would bring meaningful benefit at a regional and national level. The clear need for additional funding to deliver the improvements in transport necessary to support Government's key objectives and in particular the aims of its

central Economic Strategy is reflected in the revised Delivery Plan, as is the need for Government to invest directly from central sources in interventions out with the trunk road and rail network which generate significant economic benefit the will support the region adding value to the national economy. The draft Delivery Plan identifies projects in 3 categories to reflect this position: national, regionally significant, and local.

The Partnership is asked to consider the revised Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan and agree this be submitted to Scottish Ministers for their consideration.

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