

## **Report to Partnership Meeting 26 September 2014**

### **RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY**

#### **Bus Investment Fund**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update Members on all the applications submitted to the 2014/5 round of the Scottish Government's Bus Investment Fund either by HITRANS, or supported by HITRANS, and to seek approval for the proposed match funding contributions.

#### **Background**

The Bus Investment Fund (BIF) operates as a challenge fund open to applications from public transport authorities working in partnership with operators, community transport, NHS, and other public or private sector partners.

The aim of the fund is to incentivise and enable partnership working to help improve bus services, partnerships, standards and infrastructure for communities across Scotland. The fund will support and encourage all relevant authorities to take up partnership working to help increase the standard of bus services to increase patronage thereby achieving a greater modal shift

HITRANS were either a lead or supporting project partner for four project applications in the initial round of the Bus Investment Fund. Of these only the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor was successful in securing grant funding. HITRANS is the lead partner of the £2.7million East Inverness project which included a £700,000 grant from the Bus Investment Fund to be spent over three financial years.

#### **Bus Investment Fund 2014/15**

The fund for projects submitted in the 2014/15 round will run for two years and Transport Scotland have invited applications for projects seeking a maximum contribution of £500,000 over the two years. The deadline for applications was 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014 with an announcement of successful applications expected in October / November 2014. Below is a summary of the HITRANS application and an additional four further applications which HITRANS supported.

#### **HITRANS iTravel Project**

HITRANS has submitted an application for the £535,000 iTravel project. The iTravel application uses the proposed shared services approach for the delivery of public transport information across the HITRANS area as the basis of the submission with a match contribution from the Bus Investment Fund sought to support the integrated and innovative approach to service delivery.

If successful the Bus Investment Fund grant would be invested in facilities and infrastructure that will improve the way information is made available to passengers online and at key interchanges.

A breakdown of the proposed funding contributions and details of the improvements which the grant would fund are outlined in the following tables.

<b>Bus Investment Fund 2014: HITRANS iTravel Project</b>		
<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
<b>Partner match funding contributions</b>		
All Local Authorities – Bus Timetable Database Contract (saving on reduced license fees)	£10,000	£10,000
Argyll & Bute Council	£7,500	£7,500
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	£5,000	£5,000
The Highland Council	£10,000	£10,000
Moray Council	£7,500	£7,500
Orkney Islands Council	£5,000	£5,000
Highlands & Islands Enterprise (contribution towards JourneyGenie)	£7,500	£7,500
HITRANS (ITS, RTPi, Journeygenie and additional contribution towards materials / equipment for publicity)	£65,000	£65,000
<b>Bus Investment Fund</b>		
Grant contribution sought from Bus Investment Fund	£150,000	150,000
<b>Project total</b>	<b>267,500*</b>	<b>267,500*</b>

<b>iTravel Bus Investment Fund Improvements to Information and Infrastructure</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
<b>Renewable Energy Powered Passenger Information</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ePaper Displays at c5 locations in an area with a high seasonal increase in footfall driven by tourism such as key interchanges in Skye and Lochalsh</li> <li>Solar CHRONOS units to add to existing Aviemore and Grantown units with other units at new locations within the Cairngorms National Park area.</li> </ul>	£22,500	£22,500
<b>Vix and Moray Real time Information</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To include new displays at key interchanges such as Portree Square, Kirkwall Airport, Stornoway Bus Station and other key interchanges; JMW screen reconfiguration to accept Stagecoach AVL real time output</li> </ul>	£50,000	£50,000
<b>Ticketer Linked Real-time information</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deployment of RTI through Ticketer with Shiel buses with screen deployment and possible increase in WCM Ticketer coverage</li> </ul>	£10,000	£10,000
<b>High Quality Bus Stop poles / display cases</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An additional 150 to 200 bus stop systems across the region with a focus on locations used as timing points.</li> </ul>	£37,500	£37,500
<b>Bus Shelters / Infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New or upgraded waiting facilities at key interchanges</li> </ul>	£45,000	£45,000
<b>Bus Stop Information Display Case Refurbishment / Renewal</b>	£5,000	£5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£170,000</b>	<b>£170,000</b>

The HTRANS application has been supported by Stagecoach in North Scotland and West Coast Motors who are the two largest bus operators in the HTRANS area. The application also received letters of support from Traveline Scotland and VisitScotland.

### **Other Applications**

HTRANS has also pledged match funding and / or supported four further applications made by or within its member Local Authority areas;

#### **Moray**

Moray Council have submitted a proposal to the Bus Investment Fund that will focus on access to health and healthy living in Moray. This will see services enhanced to the new Forres Medical Centre by increasing service frequency on an existing bus service. In addition to this other bus service frequency enhancements and Sunday services are planned elsewhere in Moray as part of Stagecoach's contribution to the project. The project would also see bike racks installed on buses and some on bus bike carriage to allow people to access the Moray coast for cycling.

Bus interchange and information facilities will also be enhanced should the project secure funding.

HTRANS have agreed in principle to provide match funding of £20,000 over two years towards this project from the Business Plan allocation for BIF support.

#### **Tasga Uibhist Community Transport**

Tasga Uibhist has submitted an application to the Bus Investment Fund which will allow the improvement of an invaluable community transport scheme within the HTRANS area.

Tasga Uibhist provide a vital local service and this proposal in partnership with Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar, Tasga Uibhist and HTRANS will help enable much needed investment in the demand responsive services which they provide to the local community in North Uist, South Uist and Benbecula. If successful this project would see investment in new vehicles and help support the employment of a driver for the Dial a Bus service and wider staff training. In financial terms HTRANS have matched the Comhairle's contribution by allocating a budget of £10,000 over the two years of the BIF project to support the Tasga Uibhist project proposal.

#### **Argyll & Bute: Oban to Fort William Sunday Service**

Argyll and Bute Council submitted an application for funding to support a Sunday service on the route between Oban and Fort William. The provision of the service is an important and necessary addition to the public transport network of the area. The project is supported by The Highland Council and HTRANS including a £5,000 contribution towards the total project cost of £101,840.

#### **The Highland Council: Badenoch & Strathspey Integrated Transport Service**

This purpose of this proposal is to develop an improved integrated transport service for the Badenoch and Strathspey (B&S) area. This would be delivered through a pilot project which links to the needs of the NHS and would be facilitated by the Badenoch & Strathspey Community Transport Company (BSCTC) which is a registered charity. The project will improve access to services for elderly and vulnerable members of the community who can be at a disadvantage due to a lack of regular, and accessible, public transport.

The two main elements of the project would be to deliver an improved fleet for BSCTC to enable cross-over with NHS requirements, i.e. new disabled compliant car and minibus to allow NHS non-emergency patient travel; and secondly the implementation of routing / scheduling software to enable optimisation of BSCTC fleet, maximising available driver resources and funding. If

successfully piloted there may be an opportunity for community groups across the HITRANS area to benefit from similar routing / scheduling software.

### Recommendation

1. Members are asked to support the applications submitted to the Bus Investment Fund and approve the financial contributions made in support of the HITRANS, Tagasa Uibhist, Argyll & Bute Council and Moray Council applications all of which are subject to the assessment process undertaken by Transport Scotland.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	This work supports several strategic objectives of the RTS.
Policy	√	This work supports the development of Policies H29, H30 and H33 as set out in the RTS Delivery Plan
Financial	-	Funding to support both the HITRANS iTravel proposal and match funding in support of member Local Authority applications is identified in the 2014/15 Research and Development and Delivery budget. The post-holder for the new position of Public Transport Information Officer will be the Lead officer with responsibility for implementing the project.
Equality	√	Improvement of public transport services helps reduce social exclusion by improving access to employment and services

**Report by:** Neil MacRae  
**Designation:** Partnership Manager  
**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014