Minute of Meeting held in the
Council Chamber, Moray
Council Offices, Elgin on
Friday 11 February 2005 at
9.30am.

PRESENT
Mr Charlie King (Chairman)
Mr Robert Sclater
Mrs Roma Hossack
Mr Duncan Maclntyre
Mr Gordon Mitchell
Mr Jeremy Baster
Mr Graham Spall
Mrs Mary McLauchlan
Mr Murdo Murray
Mr Sandy Ritchie
Mr Sam MacNaughton
Mr David Duthie
Mr Cameron Kemp
Mr David Summers
Mr Donald MacNeil
Mr George Borthwick
Mr Alec Anderson
Mrs Shona Macmillan

IN ATTENDANCE
Mr Howard Brindley
Mr Ian D Kernohan
Mr Ranald Robertson

MINUTES

HITRANS
1 The Minute of Meeting of 10 December 2004 was approved.

Arising from consideration of this matter it was noted that the Sea/Plane
Seminar would take place on 21/22 April in Shetland (Lerwick 21st,
Sumburgh Airport 22nd).

BUDGET

Budget 2004/2005
2 Mr Cameron Kemp submitted a report detailing the actual and projected
expenditure and income for HITRANS for 2004/05.

It was agreed that:

(1) Mr Cameron Kemp would circulate invoices to partner
organisations for the 2005/2006 contribution;

(2) Mr Cameron Kemp would report the 2005/2006 HITRANS budget to
the next Meeting; and

(3) Mr Ian Kernohan would confirm the level of resources available
from the Scottish Executive to assist HITRANS taking forward the
Regional Transport Strategy.

AIR SERVICES

Highlands & Islands
Proposed Air
Network
3 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update indicating that representatives from
HITRANS had met with the Minister for Transport on 19 January 2005 in order to
discuss the proposed Air Network for the Highlands & Islands. It had been
agreed with the Minister that HITRANS would undertake to develop the bundles
for the proposed PSO's.
It was agreed that

1. the Chairman and Mr Howard Brindley would meet with Loganair and HIAL in order to discuss the proposed Air Network; and

2. the Chairman would make representations to Highlands and Islands MSPs in relation to the proposed Air Network.

Regional Air Services to London 4 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update detailing the outcome of a meeting with Mr Charles Atkins MP, Minister for Aviation in relation to regional air services to London. The Minister had indicated that a consultation document had been circulated in relation to the issue and there would be no decision on the matter until 2006.

It was agreed to note the Report

Air Transport in Remote Regions 5 Mr Howard Brindley submitted a Report indicating that the fourth International Forum on Air Transport in Remoter Regions would be held in Stockholm on 24-26 May 2005. The programme of events for the Forum was circulated.

It was noted that HITRANS would be represented at the Air Transport in Remote Regions International Forum in Stockholm on May 24th – 26th by Mr Gordon Mitchell, Mr Graham Spall, Mr Howard Brindley and Mr Donald MacNeil.

Sea/Plane Networking event 6 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update in relation to the Sea/Plane project. The project aimed to develop connections between regional airports in the North Sea area and a networking event would be held in Shetland in relation to the project.

It was agreed to note the Report

HIAL 7 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update indicating that the Chief Executive of HIAL, Mr Bob Macleod would be retiring in June 2005. Members were also informed that this would be the last Meeting attended by Mr Murdo A Murray as he would be retiring as Director of Technical Services, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar in March 2005.

It was agreed to note that Mr Bob Macleod would be retiring from HIAL in June 2005.

Arising from consideration of this matter it was agreed to employ Mr Murdo A Murray on a consultancy basis in relation to the Highlands and Islands Air Network PSO’s.

FERRY SERVICES

Strategic Sea Crossings 8 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update indicating that consultants had been invited to carry out a study into Strategic Sea Crossings in the Highlands & Islands. The Officers Working group had interviewed consultants and were recommending that Fischer Associates be appointed to undertake the study.

It was agreed to appoint Fischer Associates to undertake the Strategic Sea Crossings - Study.

Cal Mac Ferry Tendering 9 Mr Murdo Murrray informed members that representatives from the Islands Authorities would meet to discuss the Cal Mac Ferry Tendering exercise at the next Meeting of the Joint Shipping Services Advisory Committees in Renfrew on 17 February 2005.

It was agreed to note the Report.
ROADS

A82 Economic Appraisal 10 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update indicating that consultants had been appointed to undertake the A82 Economic Appraisal. A client group had been established to monitor the economic appraisal and the matter would be reported back to HITRANS in due course.

It was agreed to note the Report.

A9 North Economic Appraisal 11 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update indicating that Steer Davies Gleave had been appointed to undertake the economic appraisal of the A9 North of Muir of Ord project, that an inception meeting had been held and a client group set up to monitor the progress with economic appraisal.

It was agreed to note the Report.

A96 Aberdeen/Inverness Corridor study 12 Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update indicating that Scott Wilson had been employed to undertake the Aberdeen/Inverness Corridor Study. A client group had been established to monitor the study. Members also discussed the need to develop a strategic view in relation to trunk road maintenance.

It was agreed:

(1) to note that Scott Wilson had been employed to undertake the Aberdeen – Inverness Corridor Study;

(2) that Mr Howard Brindley would prepare a Report on the development of the A9 and the development of a Roads Strategy; and

(3) that, if requested, the Chairman and Mrs Roma Hossack would give evidence on behalf of HITRANS to the Local Government and Transport Committee’s Review of Trunk Road Maintenance Contracts.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Current projects 13 Mr Ronald Robertson submitted a report detailing progress with the delivery of the Transport Infrastructure and Information Project, the Interchange Project and the Scottish Executive Section 70 Grant Award 2004/05.

It was agreed that:

(1) Comhairle nan Eilean Siar would complete the monthly project monitoring sheet in relation to Lochmaddy Transport Interchange;

(2) Orkney Islands Council would complete the monthly project monitoring sheet in relation to Kirkwall Travel Centre following the start of the construction phase in 2005/06;

(3) the £70k identified for the Fort William Travel Centre be reallocated to Highland Station “quick wins” in the event that First Scotrail confirm their willingness to act as agents for multi-modal public transport ticket sales and information from their existing site in Fort William Station; and

(4) Mr Howard Brindley would update HITRANS publicity in relation to public transport projects.
Mr Ronald Robertson submitted a report indicating that the Section 70 Grant from the Scottish Executive for 2004/05 had been increased from £1.345m to £2.845m. The Report detailed those projects which had been agreed by the Officers Working Group as suitable for receiving additional funding.

It was agreed:

1. to approve the project lists detailed in the Report; and
2. that Mr Sandy Ritchie and Mr Ranald Robertson would discuss the spending profile for Moray Cycle Track.

Mr Howard Brindley submitted a report in relation to the National Concessionary Travel Scheme for elderly and disabled people. The report detailed the potential impact on current schemes operated by Member authorities, particularly in relation to concessionary travel on internal ferry services.

It was agreed that:

1. Mr Howard Brindley would prepare a Report for the Transport Minister on current concessionary ferry and air travel schemes for island residents, including details of the breakdown of expenditure by each Council of the annual GAE received for concessionary travel; and
2. Mr Howard Brindley be authorised to appoint consultants to assist with the production of the Report detailed at (1) above, as necessary.

Mr Howard Brindley submitted a report indicating that applications for ERDF grant were still awaited for the final five projects on the key priority list. Members discussed the planning profiles in relation to each of the projects.

It was agreed to note the Report.

Mr Howard Brindley submitted a report exploring the possibility of the continuation of the ERDF programme beyond the expiry of the current Special Transitional Programme in 2006. The report indicated that HITRANS was currently preparing a methodology for identifying strategic transport projects to support business and community development and would also be updating the Regional Transport Strategy.

It was agreed that Mr Howard Brindley be authorised to commence the Review of the Regional Transport Strategy utilising the services of Steer Davies Gleave and discuss procedures and financial assistance with the Scottish Executive and report back to the April Meeting.

Members discussed various research projects being undertaken by partner organisations.

It was agreed to note the Report.
Future Proposals for Statutory Transport Partnerships 19

Mr Howard Brindley gave a verbal update in relation to the proposals for statutory Regional Transport Partnerships. A draft response to the consultation document had been submitted on behalf of HITRANS and the matter would be debated in the Scottish Parliament on 2 March 2005.

It was agreed:

(1) to note that a response on behalf of HITRANS had been sent to the Scottish Executive in relation to the consultation on Regional Transport Strategies; and

(2) that Howard Brindley would submit a Report to the next Meeting on the development of HITRANS in relation to administrative structures.

Officers Meeting 20

The Minute of Meeting of the Officers Working Group of 14 January 2005 was noted.

Date of Next Meeting 21

It was agreed that the next Meeting would be held in Inverness on 15 April 2005 and that the June Meeting of HITRANS would take place in Orkney.

Public Transport Forum 22

The Minute of Meeting of the Public Transport Forum of 16 November 2004 was noted.

AOCB 23

It was agreed:

(1) that Mr Howard Brindley would make the necessary arrangements to hold a joint Meeting with NESTRANS;

(2) that the Chairman would make representations to the relevant broadcasting authorities in relation to the inclusion of departure/arrival information at islands airports on Ceefax/Teletext services;

(3) to ask the Highland Rail Partnership to examine the provision of information at Railway Stations; and

(4) that the Chairman, on behalf of HITRANS, would make representations to the Scottish Executive for favourable consideration of the implications for Local Authorities of the severe weather damage suffered in January 2005.