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**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 18 JUNE 2024**

**SUBJECT: CONSULTATION RESPONSE HITRANS DRAFT REGIONAL  
TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND  
FINANCE)**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the recently published draft Hitrans Regional Transport Strategy and the consultation for the draft strategy.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (F) (15) To exercise all functions of the Councils as Roads Authority including safety, the detailed planning, design and construction, improvement, maintenance and lighting of roads, bridges and other structures and excluding street naming functions [see Section III (E)(6) above]. (16) To exercise the functions of the Council under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 and other relevant legislation. (17) To deal with traffic and transport management functions, including the preparation and implementation of traffic management schemes. (18) To exercise the function of the Council in relation to public passenger transport under the Transport Act 1985.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee approve the Moray Council Response to the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (Hitrans) Draft Regional Transport Strategy.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Moray Council is a partner of the Hitrans Regional Transport Partnership. Hitrans have developed a draft Regional Transport Strategy which sets out a 20-year vision for transport improvements across the region. This report is a brief overview of the draft Hitrans Regional Transport Strategy which reflects the National Transport Strategy and Moray Council's recent Transport plans such as the Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan and Road Safety Plan to 2030, approved by Economic and Development Committee on 14 November 2023 (para 5 of the Minute refers).

- 3.2 Moray Council Officers and Councillors have been involved in the development of the draft strategy over the past couple of years as a partner of Hitrans. A Moray Councillor (Cllr Amber Dunbar) sits on the Board and the Strategic Transport Services Manager acts as a professional advisor. Hitrans do a lot of work with Moray Council in terms of raising issues at a National level and working proactively and in partnership with staff in terms of funding, procurement and making best use of resources, in many of our projects such as our m.connect app and active travel initiatives.
- 3.3 The draft vision is:  
*“Our transport networks and services will act to realise the economic potential of our region through reducing the actual and perceived impacts of distance, poor resilience and low population density. By doing this, they will facilitate economically and socially valuable activities for all, provide equality of opportunity, enable people to live active and healthy lives and allow our region to contribute fully to the national net zero emissions target.”*
- 3.4 There are six objectives of the strategy. The strategy will provide the strategic framework for the development of transport in our region.  
The six objectives are:
1. Make a just transition to a post-carbon and more environmentally sustainable transport network;
  2. Transform and provide safe and accessible connections between and within our city, towns and villages to enable walking, wheeling and cycling for all;
  3. Widen access to public and shared transport and improve connectivity within and from/to the region;
  4. Improve the quality and integration of public and shared transport within and from/to the region;
  5. Ensure reliable, resilient, affordable and sustainable connectivity for all from/to our island, peninsular and remote communities;
  6. Improve the efficiency, safety and resilience of our transport networks for people and freight and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- 3.5 These objectives reflect Moray Council’s Corporate Plan, the Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan and draft Road Safety Plan to 2030 which were approved by this Committee at its meeting on ? November 2023 ( paragraphs 5 and 6 of the minute refers)
- 3.6 There are 11 themes, and each theme has several policies underneath it.
- 3.7 A copy of the draft Regional Transport Strategy is available in **Appendix 1** and a copy of the full consultation response is available in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.8 The consultation response states support for most of the draft Regional Transport Strategy. The consultation response is neutral where it does not affect the Moray Council area. For example, ferries for the Islands.
- 3.9 The exceptions to this are:

- a) A recommended response that strongly agrees with the Policy ST7a “The RTS restates our support for the full dualling of the A9 and A96, with early prioritisation of the Elgin and Keith bypasses to dual carriageway standards, following the already committed Inverness to Wester Hardmuir scheme.”
- b) A response which disagrees with the policies ST8j and ST8k (around alignment on parking management and parking enforcement) stating that Moray Council would like to continue to be able to decide what is appropriate for Moray in terms of parking restrictions, cost of parking and enforcement.

#### **4 SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The draft Regional Transport Strategy links to the Corporate Plan. Our young people grow up safe, well-educated and reach their full potential. People lead healthy lives and have access to quality care when they need it. Our businesses and communities prosper. Our natural environment thrives for the betterment of all and the priorities; Tackle Poverty and Inequality, Build Stronger Greener Vibrant Economy and Build thriving, resilient, empowered communities.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

There are proposed new transport policies for the region within the draft Regional Transport Strategy and this report is a consultation response to them.

**(c) Financial implications**

There are no financial implications at present within this report as it is a consultation response to a draft strategy.

**(d) Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications within this report.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications within this report.

**(f) Property**

There are no property implications relating to this report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

There are no equalities/socio economic impacts arising from this report but if the strategy is implemented there could be a positive impact on equalities and access to transport. Integrated Impact Assessments have previously been carried out for Moray Council’s Road Safety Plan and Active Travel Strategy, which link into this draft Regional Transport Strategy. The responsibility for determining the need / carrying out an IIA for the Regional Transport Strategy itself sits with HITRANS.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

There are no climate change biodiversity impacts arising from this report but if the strategy is implemented there could be positive impacts on the environment through a reduction in carbon emissions from transport.

**(i) Consultations**

The Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Legal Services Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Climate Change Officer, Community Support Unit Manager, Equalities Officer and L Rowan, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and their comments incorporated into this report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 This report is a brief overview of the draft Hitrans Regional Transport Strategy. The draft strategy reflects the National Transport Strategy and Moray Council's recent Transport plans such as the Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan and Road Safety Plan to 2030, approved by Economic and Development Committee on 14 November 2023 (para 5 of the Minute refers). It is recommended that this Committee approves this consultation response in Appendix 2.**

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Background Papers: [Hitrans Draft Regional Transport Strategy](#)

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