

**The Highland Council**

**9 May 2013**

**Integrated Transport Project - Update**

Agenda Item	
Report No	

**Report by Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services**

**Summary**

This report updates Members on the Project, being carried out under the governance of the Council's Corporate Improvement Programme, to examine the options for improving the integration of transport services for health and social care and social inclusion.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Audit Scotland carried out an audit of Transport for Health and Social Care in 2011 and the key findings of that report were reported to the Transport, Environmental and Community Services Committee on 15 March 2012 (Report TECS-31-12).

1.2 Audit Scotland's report, which reviewed the position across Scotland, stated:

*"Transport services for health and social care are fragmented and there is a lack of leadership, ownership and monitoring of the service provided. The Scottish Government, Regional Transport Partnerships, Councils, NHS Boards and the ambulance service are not working together effectively to deliver transport for health and social care or making the best use of resources."*

1.3 The availability of transport is an essential part of making health and social care services work efficiently. Older people, those with long term health or social care needs, and people who live in remote and rural areas may need support to get to a hospital appointment or to access their day care centre. This includes help with paying for transport or getting to their appointment in transport provided by the ambulance service, councils, NHS boards or the voluntary sector.

1.4 Transport is often the first part of a person's contact with health and social care services and if this is poor, difficult or stressful, their experience can be undermined. If transport is not well planned it can result in unnecessary journeys, missed or late appointments, people staying in hospital longer than they need to, and reliance on unplanned options such as taxis.

1.5 Transport for health and social care generally covers three main groups of people:

- People with a medical need who are eligible to access the Patient Transport Service (PTS) provided by the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS).
- People who are not eligible for PTS but need help with transport including people who are on low incomes, those who live in remote and rural areas and those who have ongoing health or social care needs. **This group was the main focus of the Audit Scotland report.**
- People who have their own means of accessing services, for example those who have their own family transport or can easily access public transport.

1.6 The importance of sustainable transport solutions in rural areas is also recognised in the Programme for the Highland Council which contains the following commitment:

*The Council will work with the Scottish Ambulance Service, the NHS and the Scottish Government, to achieve better coverage across the Highlands. We will investigate sustainable solutions to improve patient transport in rural and urban areas.*

## 2. Key Recommendations from the Audit Scotland Report

2.1 Partners (Councils, NHS Boards, Regional Transport Partnerships and the Scottish Ambulance Service) should:

- Collect routine and accurate data on the activity, cost (including unit costs) and quality of services they provide and routinely benchmark performance and costs to ensure resources are used efficiently.
- Assess the impact of proposed service changes on users and other transport providers
- Ensure that staff have up-to-date information about all transport options in their area and provide better information to the public about available transport options, eligibility criteria and charges.
- Integrate or share services where this represents more efficient use of resources and better services for users, including considering an integrated scheduling system.
- Ensure that transport for health and social care services is based on an assessment of need and that it is regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure value for money.
- Use the Audit Scotland checklist (contained within the full audit report) to help improve planning, delivery and impact of transport for health and social care through a joined up approach.

2.2 Although the Audit Scotland Report focussed on transport for health and social care, social inclusion for people living in rural communities is just as important and access to transport will help people, in particular the elderly, to live more active lives within their communities. This project will therefore include transport solutions to support social inclusion as well as health and social care.

### **3. Project Governance**

3.1 A Project Board has been established with representatives from:

- The Council (TECS, Education, Health and Social Care, Finance)
- NHS Highland
- Scottish Ambulance Service
- HITRANS

3.2 A Project Team, which includes representatives from all the partner organisations, provides information and data to support the project.

3.3 Given the scale and importance of this project, the Council has appointed a full time Project Manager.

3.4 A similar project focused on healthcare and involving Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils, NHS Grampian, The Scottish Ambulance Service, and The North East of Scotland Transport Partnership (NESTRANS) is currently underway. A Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) has been established, as part of a one year pilot. The facility is based in Elgin and we are working with the Elgin based project to share information and knowledge.

### **4. Selection of Pilot Area**

4.1 Given the geography of the highlands it was decided to select a Pilot Area which will be used as the basis for developing proposals aimed at improving the integration of transport across the Highlands.

4.2 Following an Options Appraisal involving the project partners, Lochaber was selected as the most appropriate area for a pilot. This was reported to the Transport, Environmental and Community Services Committee on 15 November 2012, as part of an update report on the Project (TEC-71-12).

4.3 The principal aim of the project is to work in partnership to design, implement and co-ordinate an integrated and sustainable transport system that delivers best value for the pilot project area. A key project output will be a Transport Target Operating Model that can be applied across Highland Council's area and the operational areas of the Project Partners.

### **5. Integrated Transport Pilot - Lochaber**

5.1 Research was conducted during the period September to November 2012 to establish the nature of the existing transport provision in Lochaber and to

explore where demand was not being met.

5.2 The research involved consulting with:

- Commercial transport providers (bus companies and taxi operators)
- Community transport groups
- Community representative groups.
- Project Partners (SAS, NHS Highland, Adult Health & Social Care Centres, Highland Council schools and Integrated Children's Services).

5.3 The main findings from the research were:

- Scottish Ambulance Service Patient Transport Service vehicles (3 in Lochaber) are fully engaged Monday to Friday.
- The 5 minibuses deployed at the adult care centres have surplus capacity.
- Some of the school minibuses are used for a mixture of school and community use. Others are reserved solely for school use.

(School minibuses are located at Kilchoan Primary, Ardnamurchan High School, Kinlochleven High School, Lochaber High School (3), and Kilchuimen Academy)

- The bus companies collectively cover 29 routes and convey 671 pupils to and from school in Lochaber. Typically these services are well-organised and well-integrated with public bus services wherever and whenever possible.
- The extent to which community transport groups are active is variable across the area.
- In some areas the ability of community groups to provide transport services is restricted by the number of volunteer drivers

(The Lochaber Car Scheme needs drivers for its Arisaig / Mallaig and Spean Bridge operations, and the Lochleven Community Minibus Association only has one volunteer driver. Lochaber Action on Disability, despite the wide-ranging services it manages to provide, reports that "...drivers are a difficulty.")

- The Duror-Kentallen community is particularly clear on the deficiencies in transport support for their area, and some schools highlighted particular difficulties with transport making it more difficult or more expensive for pupils to participate in out-of-school activities.

5.4 The Project Manager has also consulted with the Lochaber Transport Forum, the Lochaber District Partnership and Ward Members

5.5 It is also understood that the Scottish Government may be looking to develop a Pilot Area(s) in relation to integrated transport for health and social care, and Scottish Government officials have been made aware of the Pilot in Lochaber and our willingness to participate in a national pilot.

## **6. Project Initiatives**

6.1 The central initiative being proposed by the Project Board is the establishment of the Lochaber Transport Advice and Bookings Service (LTABS). The pilot project is being developed as an “active learning” project, to allow the scope and operation of the central initiative to be modified during its lifespan.

6.2 It is proposed that LTABS runs for a full year, with an option to extend for a further 6 months, subject to the agreement of project partners and funding.

6.3 The current version of the Project Plan sees the LTABS being launched in July 2013, however the launch may be delayed to allow the Project Partners time to confirm funding for the pilot.

6.4 The project initiatives fit well with the recommendations from the Audit Scotland report which urges the responsible organisations to:

- Ensure that up-to-date information about all transport options in the pilot area is available to staff to enable better information provision to the public about available transport options, eligibility criteria and charges.
- Integrate or share services where this represents more efficient use of resources and better services for users, including considering an integrated scheduling system.
- Collect routine and accurate data on the activity, cost (including unit costs) and quality of services they provide and routinely benchmark performance and costs to ensure resources are used efficiently.
- Assess the impact of proposed service changes on users and other transport providers.

6.5 Other initiatives being pursued concurrently include:

- Seeking to make school and care centre minibuses available to eligible community groups in Lochaber. Liaison with schools and NHS Highland is on-going to establish this.
- Examining high-priced home-to-school contract routes to determine whether there might be alternative solutions.
- A survey of Duror-Kentallen residents (being conducted by Lochaber

Transport Forum) to establish the precise nature of public transport needs.

- 6.6 The initiatives will also contribute towards achieving the benefits identified for the Integrated Transport Provision Project, and these are discussed further in Section 7 of this report.
- 6.7 It is intended that the Lochaber Transport Advice and Bookings Service will perform a range of functions, which are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 6.8 It is important that the local transport groups are involved in the project from an early stage and the Project Board met with the local transport groups, and other interested groups on 26 March in Fort William to explain the purpose of the project and to seek early engagement from the local groups. The feedback from the local groups has been very positive.

## **7. Project Benefits**

- 7.1 The Project Board has established a set of benefits that the overall Integrated Transport Provision Project should seek to attain. The benefits have been aligned to the Lochaber Transport Advice and Bookings Service and the full set of project benefits and the proposed set of measures to ascertain the contribution of LTABS are listed in **Appendix 2**.
- 7.2 Examples of benefits include:
- Increased assurance that healthcare appointments will be attended.
  - Increased opportunity to secure seats on Patient Transport Service vehicles. And thus reduced cost per passenger trip to SAS.
  - Increased use of Project Partner minibuses for community purposes.
  - Development of minibus eligible driving pool.
  - Specific, new, factual knowledge which can be applied to inform future transport provision planning in Lochaber.

## **8. Delivery of Lochaber Transport Advice and Bookings Service**

- 8.1 The Project Board are of the view that the delivery of the LTABS is more likely to succeed if it is embedded in the community where local relationships and transport factors are properly understood.
- 8.2 The Project Manager, through the Community Transport Association's Network Development Officer for Scotland, met with the Lochaber based community transport groups in during March 2013 to explore whether they might be interested in submitting expressions of interest to set-up and run the proposed Lochaber Transport Advice and Bookings Service.
- 8.3 Three of the organisations, Voluntary Action Lochaber (the lead partner), Care

Lochaber and Lochaber Action on Disability have joined together to submit an Expression of Interest and subsequently a more detailed proposal. They have been offered and propose to make use of advisory input from the Community Transport Association.

8.4 Voluntary Action Lochaber exists to advise, support, grow and develop voluntary and community activity across the Lochaber area. They go about these tasks in a number of ways, but three of their approaches seem particularly relevant to the Integrated Transport Provision Project generally and the Lochaber Transport Advice and Booking Service initiative specifically:

- Encouraging enterprising activity, growth and development
- Encouraging collaboration and knowledge transfer between organisations and sectors
- Encouraging community engagement, involvement and participation

8.5 Discussions are currently ongoing with Voluntary Action Lochaber in relation to their involvement with the Pilot.

## **9. Funding for Pilot**

9.1 The initial assessment of costs would indicate that the cost of running the Pilot for 12 months will be in the region of £75k to £100k, and further work is required to firm up on costs. The project partners are currently working to identify suitable sources of funding for the Pilot.

## **10. Implications**

10.1 Project partners are currently working to identify suitable sources of funding for the Pilot. This project should however lead to better use of existing assets.

10.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report however, it will be necessary to establish a formal Agreement in relation to the operation of the Pilot.

10.3 The project will involve a review of access to transport for disabled groups, both in terms of booking services and accessing vehicles.

10.4 The project will seek to make transport more efficient which will have a positive effect on climate change.

10.5 It is anticipated that potential risks for integrated transport arrangements can be managed e.g. insurance for shared vehicle usage.

## **11. Recommendation**

11.1 Members are invited to:-

- (i) consider and support the project, being carried out under the governance of the Council's Corporate Improvement Programme, to examine the options for

improving the integration of transport services for health and social care and social inclusion; and  
(ii) note that further reports will be submitted to Members on the delivery and development of the project.

Designation: Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services

Date: 26 April 2013

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## Appendix 1

### Proposed Remit for the Lochaber Transport Advice and bookings Service

1. Provide an information service to advise enquirers on travel options and to offer to make the necessary transport arrangements for callers.
2. Request alternative appointment times or dates from the NHS Highland Patient Booking Office on occasions where no locally accessible transport is available to allow the patient to attend their healthcare appointment.
3. As a last resort, and only where it has been clearly demonstrated that no alternative transport is available, contact the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) to discuss the possibility of SAS providing transport for healthcare under its “social/geographic” category.
4. Receive/record daily capacity usage of the Scottish Ambulance Service’s Lochaber-based Patient Transport Service (PTS) vehicles and to place patients on to PTS vehicles when the option is offered by Scottish Ambulance Service.
5. Develop a client database and record the details of each call to the Lochaber Information Hub.
6. Develop and maintain a transport provider database.
7. For the duration of the Action Learning Project (the pilot project) the Service should operate as the central booking point for all Highland Council and NHS Highland minibuses operating in Lochaber (minibuses will remain in situ at the various schools and care centres). Schools, care centres and all other potential users to contact the Lochaber Transport Advice and Bookings Service to book their evening and weekend requirement for transport. Develop and maintain the booking system for making use of these minibuses.
8. Offer advice and training to drivers who wish to secure entitlement to drive a Highland Council and/or an NHS Highland minibus.
9. Develop and maintain a volunteer driver eligibility and availability database. Confirm entitlement of voluntary drivers wishing to drive a Highland Council and/or and NHS Highland minibus
10. Advise voluntary groups wishing to use Highland Council and/or NHS Highland vehicles how to acquire a Section 19 Permit.
11. Produce management information reports for the ITP Project Board: where are callers wishing to go; when do they wish to travel; how compatible the existing transport services are with these needs; where the deficiencies lie; etc.

## Appendix 2

### Alignment of Integrated Transport Provision Project Benefits with Specific Measurement of Lochaber Transport Advice and Booking Service Benefits

Workshop Suggestion	ID	Identified Benefit	LTABS Benefits Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sustainable transport service in Highland</li> <li>• Create an integrated transport system</li> <li>• Create co-ordinated transport solution</li> </ul>	DT1	Create an integrated and sustainable transport system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specific new knowledge.</li> <li>2. Application of new knowledge to briefings of Project Partner forums.</li> <li>3. Changes to scope of LTABS through pilot period.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide consistent service</li> </ul>	DT2	Increase consistency of provision	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce administration</li> <li>• Reduce bureaucracy</li> <li>• Eliminate duplication of effort in administration</li> </ul>	DT3	Reduce bureaucracy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of interactions with Social Work.</li> <li>2. Level of interaction/bookings between schools and vehicles available through Community and Project Partner sources.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase choice of journey time and destination for users</li> <li>• Increase customer choice</li> <li>• Increase flexibility in community transport provision</li> <li>• Create flexible service</li> </ul>	DT5	Increase choice and flexibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LTABS client satisfaction survey.</li> <li>2. Passenger number increases on public transport.</li> <li>3. Community transport usage profile.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased availability of transport</li> <li>• Maintain access to services</li> <li>• Increase level of service</li> </ul>	DT6	Increase access and availability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Actual/% change in the number of NHS appointments missed.</li> <li>2. Financial saving to NHS Highland through reduction in missed appointments.</li> <li>3. Number of occasions SAS PTS seats offered to LTABS.</li> <li>4. Number of SAS PTS seats offered to and filled by clients of LTABS.</li> <li>5. Increase in capacity utilisation of SAS PTS vehicles.</li> <li>6. Number of instances where schools made use of Project Partner minibuses for planned/unplanned events.</li> <li>7. Reduction in schools expenditure to hire in</li> </ol>

Workshop Suggestion	ID	Identified Benefit	LTABS Benefits Measurement
			<p>transport services.</p> <p>8. Passenger number increases on public transport.</p> <p>9. LTABS client satisfaction survey.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase resilience and independence of individuals and communities</li> <li>• Maintain people in their own homes</li> <li>• Increase sustainability of Highland communities</li> </ul>	DT4	Maintain communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purposes for which Project Partner minibuses booked in/out-of-hours.</li> <li>2. Travel purpose of calls to LTABS.</li> <li>3. LTABS client satisfaction survey.</li> <li>4. Issues resolved through dialogue with transport sector.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more opportunity for social inclusion</li> <li>• Increase social inclusion</li> <li>• Increase social inclusion for service users without access to personal transport</li> <li>• Eliminate inequalities</li> </ul>	DT7	Increase social inclusion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce costs</li> <li>• Maintain service delivery for less</li> </ul>	DT8	Reduce cost	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financial saving to NHS Highland through reduction in missed appointments.</li> <li>2. Reduced cost per passenger trip to SAS PTS.</li> <li>3. Reduction in schools expenditure on hired in transport services.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create greater customer satisfaction</li> <li>• Increase satisfaction</li> </ul>	DT9	Increase customer satisfaction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Travel purpose of calls to LTABS.</li> <li>2. LTABS customer satisfaction survey.</li> <li>3. Reduction in spend by schools to hire in transport services.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate inefficiency – underuse of resources</li> <li>• Eliminate idle time of asset/resource</li> <li>• Better use of current staff and vehicles</li> <li>• Reduce wasted time</li> <li>• Better use of resources – finance, vehicles, staff</li> </ul>	DT10	Increase effective use of resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of Project Partner minibuses made available for in/ out-of-hours use by eligible community users.</li> <li>2. Number of in/out-of-hours uses of Project Partner minibuses.</li> <li>3. Number of people carried during these uses.</li> <li>4. % change in the amount of time Project Partner</li> </ol>

Workshop Suggestion	ID	Identified Benefit	LTABS Benefits Measurement
			minibuses are used per year. 5. Provision of up-to-date list of eligible community groups and drivers entitled to drive Project partner minibuses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the influence of service users in planning the outcomes</li> <li>• Increase knowledge of requirements</li> </ul>	DT11	Increase Stakeholder influence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application of new knowledge to briefings of Project Partner and transport sector forums.</li> <li>2. Development of plans to roll-out concept to other parts of Highland.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce carbon emissions</li> </ul>	DT12	Reduce carbon emissions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduced carbon output per passenger carried on SAS PTS vehicles.</li> <li>2. Reduced carbon output per passenger carried on existing public bus routes.</li> <li>3. Establish benchmark for carbon output per person carried in Project Partner vehicles.</li> </ol>