

Agenda Item	<b>26</b>
Report No	<b>EDI/38/18</b>

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Environment, Development and Infrastructure

**Date:** 17 May 2018

**Report Title:** Strategic Timber Transport Fund Status of 2017/18 Projects and 2018/19 Bids

**Report By:** Director of Community Services

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on completion of the 2017/18 Strategic Timber Transport Fund projects and the submission of bids for 2018/19 funding.
- 1.2 Subjective to local government funding constraints in future years it also recommends a match funding strategy to enable bids to be made in future years.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are invited to:-
  - i. note the delivery of the 2017/18 programme of works, including the additional works delivered using Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (STTS) underspend;
  - ii. note the bids made to the 2018/19 Strategic Timber Transport Fund, including the submission for the B9090 White Bridge project;
  - iii. agree that, should the Strategic Timber Transport Fund (STTF) match funding bids be unsuccessful, residual match funding will be reallocated to enhance drawdown of successful projects, or be reallocated across the Areas using the Road Condition Survey parameters, with scheme selection being decided by Members at local Area level; and
  - iv. agree that, subject to the availability of funds as decided at the annual budget setting stage and the continuation of the STTS programme, up to £0.5m be allocated under the road structural (capital) funding as match funding for future years.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 16 August 2017, this Committee approved report PLA/36/17 agreeing that up to £0.5m of road structural (capital) funding be allocated match funding for bids to the STTF.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 9 March 2018, Council approved the report HC/2/18 to continue to allocate the additional capital funding to structural road maintenance.
- 3.3 In total, 7 STTF scheme bids were submitted to Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) by the 6 May 2018 deadline.
- 3.4 Previous report PLA/36/17 confirmed that 6 STTF bids had been successful in funding in 2017/18.

### **4. Status of 2017/18 STTS projects**

- 4.1 The 6 funded STTS schemes were successfully completed in a timely manner in 2017/18 such that it was possible for FCS to provide additional funding due to national underspend which enabled newly weakened sections of road, including a small bridge on the B871 to also be improved:-

B871/873, Broubster/Brawlbin, Kincardine Hill;  
Ross & Cromarty, Achility; and  
Skye and Lochalsh, Ratagan

### **5. 2018/19 Bids for STTS funding**

- 5.1 Community Services working with the Highland Timber Transport Group (HTTG), forestry operators and owners submitted 6 bids (see **Appendix A**) for STTS funding to enable timber extraction for various forests. These are: Bunachton-Balnafoich, Glenlia-Dalcrag, B873 Altnaharra – Syre, Strathconon, Cannich – Fasnakyle Ph2, Mam Ratagan.
- 5.2 Community services and HTTG supported the Development and Infrastructure STTS submission of the B9090 White Bridge replacement scheme. This project has been separately detailed in the Capital report.
- 5.3 In addition HTTG is supporting 2 wholly private submissions for STTS.
- 5.4 Forestry Commission Scotland expects to have completed the scheme assessment process by the end of May and announce the successful schemes in June 2018.
- 5.5 If bids are unsuccessful, any residual match funding will be reallocated to the Areas using the road Condition survey parameters, with scheme section being decided by Members at local Area level.

### **6. Implications**

- 6.1 Resource - the proposals are deliverable within the allocated budgets for the services.
- 6.2 Legal - there are no legal implications
- 6.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – the continued support of STTS funding

assists in removing timber from fragile rural roads or enables their strengthening. This reduces future risk associated with damage to the road and helps to protect the rural road network and maintain accessibility for rural communities.

- 6.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever- the report supports climate change through the continuation of timber extractions and subsequent replanting.
- 6.5 Risk – there are no legal implications.
- 6.6 Gaelic - there are no legal implications.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 27 April 2018

Author: Robin Pope, Policy and Programmes Manager

**Appendix A**  
**Highland Council bids to STTS 2018/19**

<b>Highland Timber Transport Group: List of proposed Highland Council STTS Projects at April 2018 for 2018/19</b>								
<b>Name</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>THC Structural capital</b>	<b>THC Capital</b>	<b>Forestry Partners</b>	<b>STTS sought %</b>	<b>STTS sought £</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Bunachton-Balnafoich	Inverness SLN	£500k	£100k		£50k	70%	£350k	Timber landlocked
Glenlia-Dalcrag	Inverness SLN	£500k	£100k		£50k	70%	£350k	Heavy tourist usage; linking to South Loch Ness (SLN) Haul route.
B873 Altnaharra - Syre	Sutherland	£600k	£180			70%	£420k	Essential low-standard upgrade for failing key route
Strathconon	Ross & C	£430k	£60k	£39k	£30k	70%	£301k	Cooperative estates, lifeline road bridge upgrading
Cannich – Fasnakyle Ph2	Inverness	£200k	£60k			70%	£140k	Revamp of a 2012 STTS project; key tourist route
Mam Ratagan	Skye	£115k		£34.5		70%	£80.5k	1.4km failure on high altitude route
B9090 Whitebridge	Nairn	£3.5M		£2.45M		30%	£1.05M	Strategic 18t limited bridge on B9090 needs replacement. D&I - PDU
<b>Total Highland Council Projects</b>		<b>£5.845M</b>	<b>£500k</b>	<b>£2.5235M</b>	<b>£130k</b>		<b>£2.691.5M</b>	