



Internal Audit Report

Corporate Services Department

Review of Public Transport and Infrastructure Project Development

June 2008

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4 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

- 4.1 Internal Audit found that the Area Committees are regularly consulted regarding the identification of new Strategic and Local projects, as well as being updated on the progress of existing projects. A rolling timescale approach enables the Transportation and Infrastructure Team to evaluate new projects, identifying key issues and potential funding strategies and thereafter incorporate the projects in an overall prioritisation assessment. The lack of a rigid timetable for consideration of projects by each of the Area Committees has resulted in the overall prioritisation exercise not being completed within the same timescale as last year. There is therefore a slight risk that a new project may be delayed if the Executive have not approved the overall project listing. It is however recognised that a new project that has the required funding would be fast tracked through to the Executive for approval.
- 4.2 A Capital Plan Overview 2008/09 was submitted to the Council in February 2008 explaining changes to the Capital Funding from the Scottish Government. It also recognised that the Council had been anticipating significant funding being channelled through Hitrans for investment in roads. However, the apparent current lack of funding available from Hitrans and other external bodies is a significant factor in determining the likelihood of individual projects being progressed.
- 4.3 The Audit found that the scoring basis adopted for the prioritisation of these projects had been developed as a relatively simple model but this had provided an initial mechanism to distinguish priorities on a consistent basis. Further refinement has now been incorporated to take account of the Local Objectives for Argyll & Bute, included in the Transport Strategy – Moving Forward 2007-2010. The basis of evaluating Local Objectives must be clearly defined to ensure that, local community and local area priorities are understood within the Argyll & Bute local objectives.
- 4.4 In a period when funding is particularly tight, there is a risk that smaller local projects, which have secured external funding, may be advanced on a piecemeal basis.
- 4.5 Planned strategic projects are currently being shelved due to the lack of external funding available. In the recent past Hitrans would have provided 50% funding of larger schemes and this is no longer available. Limited opportunities for obtaining alternative funding for these projects appear to be available, but a revised strategy is being developed.