

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

---

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	City Growth and Resources
<b>DATE</b>	3 February 2022
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Ellon Park & Ride to Garthdee Transport Corridor Study (Bus Partnership Fund)
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	COM/22/017
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Gale Beattie
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	David Dunne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Kevin Pert
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	3.2 & 3.3

---

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the outcomes of the Ellon Park & Ride to Garthdee Transport Corridor study (part of the Bus Partnership Fund programme) and to seek Committee approval to further progress the project to an Outline Business Case.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Agree the outcomes of the study have merit in contributing to a cohesive transport network on the corridor;
- 2.2 Agree that work to further develop the options package measures outlined in Table 1 below be progressed to an Outline Business Case and instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to develop the Outline Business Case in accordance with the Transport Scotland governance decisions on the gateways for the Bus Partnership Fund; and
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to report back to this Committee with the Outline Business case and next steps by December 2023.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Reference is made to the City Growth and Resources Committee meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021, report number COM/21/178, wherein the committee was advised of the success of the North East Bus Alliance Bid to the Scottish Government Bus Partnership Fund (BPF).
- 3.2 The Bus Partnership Fund was launched to “*enable local transport authorities, in partnership with bus operators, to work together to develop and deliver ambitious bus priority schemes to tackle the negative impacts of congestion on*

*bus services.*” This corridor Ellon to Garthdee is one of the selection of corridors covered by the grant award.

- 3.3 The corridor was identified as one of the bus transport priority corridors in the region by the North East Bus Alliance and covers from the Ellon Park and Ride, Aberdeenshire, to Garthdee Road, Aberdeen City, excluding the city centre element which is addressed in a separate package and now integrated with the on-going work to implement the City Centre Masterplan.
- 3.4 In June 2020, Aberdeen City Council in partnership with Nestrans, commissioned transport consultants AECOM to undertake a Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)-based study of the corridor to identify and appraise options for improving multimodal transport connections (with an emphasis on public transport and active travel) from the Ellon Park & Ride to Garthdee Road, taking into account the status of these roads within the revised North East Scotland Roads Hierarchy. The study was completed in September 2021, with outcomes presented in a final report detailed in Appendix B and an executive summary in Appendix A.
- 3.5 To help shape the study outcomes, the transport consultants explored the problems, issues, opportunities, and constraints on the corridor through a series of targeted consultations with a number of stakeholders, including active travel groups and bus operators. They also undertook an online public engagement exercise and held a virtual workshop with the client study group, comprising of officers from Aberdeen City Council, Nestrans, Aberdeenshire Council and the sustainable travel charity Sustrans. Press and social media releases raised awareness of the ongoing study and invited participation. Emails were sent to Community Groups as well as to external organisations requesting comments/feedback and an online consultation questionnaire was published for a period of six weeks.
- 3.6 Following responses received from these consultations, and in conjunction with a review of past studies related to the corridor and collective feedback of the client study group, AECOM generated an initial long list of options which were then sifted and appraised using the STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance) approach. This informed a shortlist of the best performing options. The corridor was appraised in a holistic manner taking into account all road users as well as the new post Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route Roads Hierarchy to report outcomes classified into active travel options (AT), bus transport options (BU) and other supporting options (O) which were then categorised into short-, medium- and long- term delivery timescales as detailed in Appendices A and B.
- 3.7 Although some options are identified as long term, the ambition would be to deliver all finally approved measures within 5 years, given the Scottish Government’s Climate Change Plan commitment to reduce car km by 20% by 2030 which will require significant travel behaviour change in just a few years.
- 3.8 Note that the transport proposals for the corridor help to support the City’s ambitious transport strategies including the Regional Transport Strategy 2040,

in moving towards a sustainable transport system as well as contributing to the Net Zero Vision for Aberdeen.

- 3.9 Therefore, to remain true to the aims, strategic objectives and visions of the City and Region's various policy documents and strategies in relation to sustainable transport and climate change mitigation efforts, officers have selected key options from the shortlisted outcomes of the study that would bring immediate added value and real difference to the transport network along the corridor in terms of journey time reliability, addressing congestion, encouraging travel mode shift, supporting climate change measures, as well as meeting the transformational ambition required of the Bus Partnership Fund grant. These are the options outlined in Table 1 below and recommended to be developed to an Outline Business Case.
- 3.10 On award of the first round of the BPF funding, according to the [press release by Transport Scotland](#) published June 2021, "*The Fund will be guided by the evidence on how bus services will be improved by addressing congestion, but we also expect the Fund to leverage other bus service improvements making bus a more attractive option to many which will in turn help tackle the climate emergency, reduce private car use and support modal shift.*

*This initial tranche of funding is for quick wins and appraisal work to support local transport authorities towards developing business cases which will detail how the investment will achieve strategic objectives, at both the national and local levels. The aim is that the Bus Partnership Fund will fund projects which will make a real difference; supported by match in kind action and investment. Further funding will be released after scrutiny against the Fund criteria is satisfied."*

- 3.11 One of the requirements of the grant is that Transport Scotland will undertake a Gateway Review of the study outcomes to determine if the project meets the conditions and requirements of the fund in order to grant approval for the next stage of the study, which is the Outline Business Case. The Gateway Review for this study's outcomes has been scheduled for January 2022.
- 3.12 If the study is successful at the Gateway Review, the Outline Business Case would progress to develop the recommended options to address the immediate transport problems on the corridor and these complement the ambitions of the approved City Centre Masterplan, the forthcoming Beach Development Framework, and also integral with relevant committee decision on previous studies related to the corridor- the Bridge of Don to City Centre Active Travel corridor (COM/20/160) and the Bridge of Dee West Active Travel corridor (COM/20/159) projects.

Table 1: Key Option Measures recommended for progression to Outline Business Case

<p>The options listed have been selected as key measures to be progressed to the next stage and for the huge opportunity they present for a transformational improvement to the transport experience on the Ellon-Garthdee corridor. These options support carbon reduction, sustainable travel and modal shift, and will largely address the transport issues noted along the corridor. Those elements contained within the City Centre will be taken forward as part of the CCMP.</p>			
Category	Ref.	Description	Rationale
<b>Active Travel</b>	AT3	Implement long distance active travel route between Ellon and Murcar	Provision of active travel enabling infrastructures would significantly improve the safety and attractiveness of active travel by reducing conflicts between different users. These options are anticipated to encourage more people to walk and cycle for trips along the corridor in conjunction with public transport uptake and patronage.
	AT8	Implement segregated cycleway between Murcar and Bridge of Don	
	AT23	Implement segregated cycleway on the Bridge of Don	
	AT33	Implement active travel route via Beach Esplanade	
	AT30	Implement segregated cycleway on King Street (subject to review of additional land take requirements)	
	AT41	Implement segregated cycleway on Holburn Street (subject to review of additional land take requirements)	
	AT48	Implement segregated cycleway on Garthdee Road	
<b>Bus Transport</b>	BU18	Implement bus lane between Murcar Roundabout and the Bridge of Don	Provision would be anticipated to reduce bus journey times and increase reliability, which could lead to modal shift and associated environmental benefits in terms of air quality improvement. Could encourage increasing uptake and patronage where well-integrated with active travel provisions.
	BU25	Implement bus lane for the full length of King Street between Bridge of Don and Castle Street	
	BU36	Implement bus lane for the full length of Holburn Street between Holburn Junction and Garthdee Roundabout	
<p>The options below support the delivery of the key options above and would be progressed as part of the overall Outline Business Case for the above transformational options:</p>			
<b>O2</b>	Review current junctions under SCOOT system and consider junctions to add to the SCOOT network to ensure optimal flow.		
<b>O14</b>	Application of red route clearway restrictions along the full length of King Street		
<b>O17</b>	Review the routing of freight at the Mounthooly Way junction, including consideration of diverting freight away from King Street and onto Mounthooly Way and West North Street.		
<b>O18</b>	Implement traffic calming measures on King Street to the south of Mounthooly Way e.g. reduction of speed limit to 20mph		
<b>O19</b>	Review of on-street parking spaces along King Street		
<b>O20</b>	Close or restrict movements into side roads along the full length of King Street		
<b>O22</b>	Implementation of a 20mph speed restriction on Holburn Street in line with its reduced priority in the adopted Roads Hierarchy.		

<b>O28</b>	Implement width restriction on Holburn Street at Riverside Drive to restrict HGV access and encourage use of the HGV diversion route.
<b>O29</b>	Review the layout of Garthdee Roundabout
<b>AT14</b>	Implement a crossing point for active travel users on Ellon Road south of Murcar Roundabout e.g. toucan crossing to aid active travel movements in the area.
<b>AT15</b>	Improve active travel provision at the Ellon Road/Parkway junction
<b>AT17</b>	Implement crossing facilities for active travel users on Ellon Road at the junction with Balgownie Road to allow for safe pedestrian crossing.
<b>AT21</b>	Improve active travel access to Bridge of Don Park and Ride, including consideration of improved access from King Robert's Way to Exhibition Avenue and implementation of a footpath link between the site and the bus stops on Ellon Road.
<b>AT28</b>	Implement a crossing point for active travel users to the north of the Bridge of Don by introducing crossing facilities to support movements to the Brig O'Balgownie.
<b>AT34</b>	Implement active travel route via Golf Road and Park Road. Creation of an active travel route in both directions east of King Street via Golf Road and Park Road using a mix of existing carriageway and new segregated routes.
<b>AT38</b>	Create protected junction at King Street/West North Street junction for cyclists (subject to implementation of option AT30 to ensure cohesive network)
<b>AT39</b>	Tighten Junction radii and reduce side road width along the full length of King Street
<b>AT44</b>	Implement active travel route via Bon Accord Terrace and Hardgate
<b>AT45</b>	Create protected junction at Holburn Street/Great Western Road junction for cyclists (subject to implementation of option AT41 to ensure cohesive network)
<b>AT53</b>	Reduce traffic speeds on Garthdee Road
<b>AT54</b>	Widen narrow footways on the south side of Garthdee Road to aid pedestrian movement.
<b>AT55</b>	Provide crossing facility on Garthdee Road at Gray's School of Art.
<b>AT58</b>	Upgrade the junction at Asda/Garthdee Road to improve cycle provision
<b>AT59</b>	Upgrade the junction at Sainsbury's/Garthdee Road to improve cycle provision
<b>BU2</b>	Review bus stop infrastructure on the corridor
<b>BU10</b>	Extend the hours of existing bus lanes in operation on the Ellon Park & Ride to Garthdee Corridor and ensure consistency of operational hours.
<b>BU11</b>	Improve bus lane enforcement on the corridor
<b>BU13</b>	Review opportunities to utilise Intelligent Transport System (ITS) to aid bus priority along the corridor
<b>BU20</b>	Implement upgrades to the Ellon Road/Parkway junction to improve northbound bus priority
<b>BU22</b>	Reconfigure access/egress from Bridge of Don Park & Ride to Ellon Road
<b>BU23</b>	Implement junction upgrades at the Ellon Road/North Donside Road junction to improve bus priority from North Donside Road
<b>BU30</b>	Review the layout of the Regent Walk junction
<b>BU31</b>	Review the layout of the Orchard Street / Linkfield Rd junction, including consideration of signal timing
<b>BU32</b>	Review the layout of the Mounthooly Way junction
<b>BU33</b>	Review the layout of the West North Street junction
<b>BU34</b>	Review of on-street parking along King Street to identify possible relocation to adjacent streets.
<b>BU37</b>	Review the layout of Holburn junction
<b>BU40</b>	Review the layout of the Great Southern Road Roundabout
<b>BU41</b>	Review the layout of Holburn St/Broomhill Road junction
<b>BU44</b>	Review of on-street parking spaces along Holburn Street to the south of the Broomhill Road junction

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The Bus Partnership Fund provides 100% of funding for staff time and consultant fees for this study and further work to produce an Outline Business Case. It is intended to bid to the Bus Partnership Fund for

infrastructure works recommended in the OBC, however this will be detailed in a future report to this Committee.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A number of actions will require Traffic Regulation Orders which may be subject to statutory objection. Land acquisition may also be necessary for some infrastructure measures.
- 5.2 There are conditions associated with the Bus Partnership Fund grant that must be complied with in order to claim eligible spend.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	<p>Delivery of public transport measures supports a number of the Council's strategic priorities, particularly in terms of a sustainable economy, a sustainable transport system, the continued health and prosperity of our citizens, reductions in carbon emissions and a high-quality environment.</p> <p>Failure to deliver public transport improvements where there is evidence of their effectiveness could undermine the Council's ability to realise these aspirations.</p>	M	Take forward the recommendations of this report, working with partners to deliver the projects within the grant award and continue to work in partnership to maximise 'match in kind' to add value to this grant in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of partners and Transport Scotland.

<b>Compliance</b>	There are conditions attached to the grant award that must be adhered to in order to secure payment of eligible spend.	M	Compliance with statutory processes, grant conditions and Scheme of Governance. Regular progress and spend reporting to Transport Scotland, Aberdeen City Council and the Capital and Transportation Programme Boards, and to the North East Bus Alliance Board.
<b>Operational</b>	There may be risks around the business cases and procurement of active travel and public transport measures proposed, not fully defined at this stage but these will be detailed and addressed as works progress.	L	Compliance with the Scheme of Governance and roads and procurement legislation.
<b>Financial</b>	If non-compliant to the grant conditions, there is risk around spend being ineligible or rejected, and therefore having to be absorbed by this Council and partners.	L	All partners confirmed they read and understood the grant conditions and Aberdeen City Council also have rigorous internal governance procedures.  Regular monthly reporting to Transport Scotland will also help to reduce this risk.
<b>Reputational</b>	Failure to deliver in accordance with the grant conditions to help meet the Council's (and partners) strategic transport objectives undermines the Council's commitments to improving the lives of those who live, work and visit Aberdeen	M	Take forward the recommendations of this report to progress works to the next stage.  Work with partners to deliver the projects within the grant award and continue to work in partnership to maximise 'match in kind' to add value to this grant in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of partners and Transport Scotland.

<b>Environment / Climate</b>	<p>ACC's net zero vision and strategic infrastructure plan – energy transition: transport emissions are a significant contributor so increasing sustainable travel will be necessary to achieving this sector's required reduction.</p> <p>If active travel and public transport measures are not delivered, ACC would not provide conditions which could encourage more sustainable travel movements which are likely to bring environmental improvements to the city and region.</p> <p>There are risks that a lack of active travel and public travel measures will impact on travel options for residents and businesses within Aberdeen and immediate surrounding areas.</p>	M	<p>Take forward the recommendations of this report to progress works to the next stage.</p> <p>Work with partners to deliver the projects within the grant award and continue to work in partnership to maximise 'match in kind' to add value to this grant in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of partners and Transport Scotland.</p>
------------------------------	---	---	--

## 7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>✓ <b>PLACE Policy Statement 3</b>  <i>-Refresh the local transport strategy, ensuring it includes the results of a city centre</i></p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of PLACE Policy Statement 3 &amp; 4 as well as ECONOMY Policy Statement 4. Facilitating and encouraging an increase in public transport usage through utilisation of the Bus Partnership Fund grant to deliver enabling infrastructure will</p>



<p><i>parking review; promotes cycle and pedestrian routes; and considers support for public transport.</i></p> <p>✓ <b>PLACE Policy Statement 4</b> <i>-Cycle hire scheme</i></p> <p>✓ <b>ECONOMY Policy Statement 4</b> – <i>Increase city centre footfall through delivery of the City Centre Masterplan, including the redesigned Union Terrace Gardens.</i></p>	<p>be highly beneficial to supporting the associated Policy Statements identified.</p>
--	--

**Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan**

<p>Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes</p> <p>1. No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026.</p> <p>2.400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026.</p> <p>3. 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026.</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcomes 1 to 3 as a good transport network and infrastructure provision means anyone regardless of their social status can choose a sustainable mode of travel for commuting. A reliable transport network supports economic growth and movement both locally and otherwise and affords the public the opportunity to choose a sustainable mode of travel to and from their workplaces. The proposals within this report aim to provide journey time reliability.</p>
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p> <p>4. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026.</p> <p>5. 90% of Children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026.</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of People Stretch Outcomes 4, 5 and 11 in the LOIP.</p> <p>Infrastructures resulting from the proposals in this report aligns with the public’s desire for a comprehensive active travel network and reliable public transport network around the city, which will enable anyone (able-bodied/disabled, high/low income, children, etc) to travel by their preferred means, actively and safely. Children can be taken to parks to interact with the outdoors helping them reach their expected developmental milestones and wellbeing.</p>

<p>11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.</p>	<p>It is also well known that an active lifestyle contributes to personal wellbeing health wise and thus can improve life expectancy.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p> <p>13. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate</p> <p>14. Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of Place Stretch Outcomes 13 and 14 in the LOIP.</p> <p>Creating new active travel routes and/ or upgrading existing ones to standard, increases the attractiveness of walking and cycling, and indirectly providing support towards influencing a behavioural change and modal shift of travel choice from private vehicles to an active travel means for short journey purposes; thereby contributing in the long run to this outcome target of reducing harmful carbon emissions. A robust and reliable public transport network where well-integrated with active travel infrastructures will encourage public transport uptake and patronage.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Regional Transport Strategy (2040),</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Local Development Plan,</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Local Transport Strategy including the Active Travel Action plan</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Strategic Development Plan</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Regional Economic Strategy</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Net Zero Vision for Aberdeen</i></li> </ul>	<p>The proposals within this report support Regional and Local Transport Strategies and related strategies, which all aim to deliver a sustainable transport system as well as enhance the connectivity of the existing transport network.</p>
<p><b>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ National Transport Strategy 2</li> <li>✓ Cycling Action Plan for Scotland</li> <li>✓ Scottish Planning Policy</li> <li>✓ National Walking Strategy</li> <li>✓ Cleaner Air for Scotland Strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Overarching all the policies contained within it, the NTS2 embeds a Sustainable Travel Hierarchy in decision-making by promoting walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people. As above, this report supports this policy.</p> <p>The Scottish Government Climate Change Plan also includes a commitment to a 20% reduction in car kms by 2030.</p>

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	A Full impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the next stage of the project following approval of the recommendations in this report.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[City Growth and Resources Committee 25 August 2021 Bus Partnership Fund Bid – COM/21/178 Item 11.2 \(pages 227-238\)](#)

## 10. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Executive Summary – Ellon Park & Ride to Garthdee Transport Corridor Study

Appendix B – Final Report – Ellon Park & Ride to Garthdee Transport Corridor Study

## 11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Name</b>	Kevin Pert
<b>Title</b>	Senior Engineer
<b>Email Address</b>	kpert@aberdeencity.gov.uk
<b>Tel</b>	01224 523481