

## SERVICE UPDATE

<b><u>Name of Service:</u></b>	Strategic Place Planning
<b><u>Date:</u></b>	11 October 2023
<b><u>Title of Update:</u></b>	Bus Partnership Fund Progress Update
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### 1. Bus Partnership Fund Progress Update

1.1. As was reported to the City Growth and Resources Committee in [August 2021](#), the North East Bus Alliance was awarded £12,030,000 from Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) Grant for the following projects:

- South College Street Improvements - £10,000,000;
- Business Case Development - £1,400,000:
  - City Centre;
  - Ellon to Garthdee;
  - Westhill To Aberdeen;
  - Inverurie to Aberdeen;
  - Stonehaven to Aberdeen;
  - Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) including model for delivery;
- Other - £630,000:
  - Communications and Engagement:
  - Programme Management: and
  - Contingency.

1.2. The various Business Cases seek to identify active travel and bus priority interventions along key transport corridors to support ART development. The individual corridor studies focus on infrastructure interventions, with the ART Business Case focusing on the bus service delivery model, servicing and the development of a Bus Service Improvement Partnership (through the wider Bus Alliance). Aberdeen City Council is leading on the majority of the BPF strands, with the exception of the ART Business Case, elements of the Stonehaven to Aberdeen Business Case and Communications and Engagement activities which are led by Nestrans. Recognising that the majority of studies have cross-boundary implications however, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Nestrans work closely together (with other Bus Alliance partners) on all of these projects.

1.3. The desired outcome is to enable quick and reliable regional connections to Aberdeen on the key corridors, improve bus services and encourage modal shift

to both bus and active travel, in order to meet the national 20% car km reduction and net zero targets.

1.4. The below table provides an update on the status of all BPF projects as of the end of September 2023. Projects that have completed are shaded in grey.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Current Stage</b>	<b>Progress</b>
BPF004-1 A90 Ellon to Garthdee	Completion of STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance) appraisal and identification of preferred options	This project has been completed and approved at Transport Scotland's Gateway Review to progress to BPF004-2. The appraisal and preferred options were reported to the City Growth and Resources Committee in <a href="#">February 2022</a> .
BPF004-2 A90 Ellon to Garthdee	Outline Business Case (OBC) Development	This project is currently awaiting the outcomes of the ART modelling exercise (BPF004-11) to allow for completion of the OBC. It is hoped that the OBC will be reported to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee in 2024.
BPF004-3 A96 Inverurie to Aberdeen	Completion of STAG appraisal and identification of preferred options	This project has been completed and approved at Transport Scotland's Gateway Review to progress to BPF004-4. The appraisal and preferred options were reported to the City Growth and Resources Committee in <a href="#">June 2022</a> .
BPF004-4 A96 Inverurie to Aberdeen	OBC Development	Work is currently underway to further develop the options prior to formal commencement of the OBC. It is hoped that the OBC will be reported to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee in 2024.
BPF004-5 A944/A9119 Westhill to Aberdeen	Completion of STAG appraisal and identification of preferred options	Initial Appraisal outcomes were originally reported to the City Growth and Resources Committee in <a href="#">October 2020</a> . This project has been completed and approved at Transport Scotland's Gateway Review to progress to BPF004-6.
BPF004-6 A944/A9119 Westhill to Aberdeen	OBC Development	This project is currently awaiting the outcomes of the ART modelling exercise (BPF004-11) to allow for completion of the OBC. It is hoped that the OBC will be reported to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee in 2024.
BPF004-7 A92 Stonehaven to Aberdeen	Completion of STAG appraisal and identification of preferred options	This project was split into two different studies (Bridge of Don to Bridge of Dee, and Stonehaven to Aberdeen), reflecting the very different characteristics of the A92 corridor north and south of the Bridge of Dee.  Initial Appraisal outcomes of the A92 Bridge of Don to Bridge of Dee study were

		<p>reported to the City Growth and Resources Committee in <a href="#">September 2022</a>. Following completion of the Detailed Appraisal in Spring 2023, the outcomes were submitted to Transport Scotland for Gateway Review. In September 2023, Officers were advised that Transport Scotland would not fund this work to OBC stage given the limited bus priority interventions identified. Further progression of the OBC has therefore been paused for now to await the outcomes of the Aberdeen Active Travel Network Review.</p> <p>The Stonehaven to Aberdeen corridor is captured with the Laurencekirk to Aberdeen Multimodal Corridor Study which is being led by Nestrans, with appraisal work due to be completed in spring 2024.</p>
BPF004-9 City Centre	OBC development	<p>This project took the form of the City Centre Masterplan Traffic Management Plan which was reported to Council in <a href="#">June 2022</a>, and subsequently approved by Transport Scotland at Gateway Review, allowing the project to progress to delivery (BPF004-16).</p>
BPF004-11 Aberdeen Rapid Transit	Options Appraisal	<p>The Detailed Options Appraisal was reported to the Nestrans Board for approval in <a href="#">April 2023</a>, with an update provided to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee in <a href="#">May 2023</a>. The report was then submitted to Transport Scotland for a Gateway Review in May 2023. Discussions are ongoing with Transport Scotland on their comments and feedback. Should approval be given from Transport Scotland at Gateway Review, this project will progress to OBC.</p> <p>In the meantime an appraisal of routeing options for ART is now underway and will use the strategic transport model ASAM (Aberdeen Sub Area Model) to test varying permutations of the high level ART vision to identify a preferred ART route network on which to base all further workstreams, including completion of the corridor studies OBCs, and ongoing discussions with bus operators.</p>
BPF004-13 South College Street	Construction	<p>This project is substantially complete and is now open.</p>

<p>BPF004-14 Comms and Engagement (</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The ART brand was launched in November 2022 and a number of stakeholder briefings have been undertaken to raise awareness and understanding of the ART vision.</p> <p>A Councillor visit to Belfast to see and discuss the Glider took place at the end of November 2022.</p> <p>Currently work is ongoing to support the ART Detailed Options Appraisal. Recent activity has focussed on a further round of stakeholder engagement, particularly aimed at identifying support from potential advocates for the project. In order to support these discussions, a <a href="#">hand out</a> was developed which provides details on the potential benefits of ART for the City Region, including examples of the benefits that have been achieved by bus rapid transit schemes elsewhere.</p>
<p>BPF004-15 Programme Management and Contingency/Optimism Bias</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Programme Management is ongoing with monthly project reports and quarterly financial claims being submitted to Transport Scotland.</p>
<p>BPF004-16 City Centre</p>	<p>Construction</p>	<p>The bus priority and traffic management measures on Guild Street, Market Street and Bridge Street were delivered in Summer 2023 under an Experimental Traffic Order.</p>