

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE           Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure  
DATE                   15 November 2011  
DIRECTOR             Gordon McIntosh  
TITLE OF REPORT       Strategic and Local Transportation Projects Update  
REPORT NUMBER:       EPI/11/304

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the progress to date on various strategic transportation projects within Aberdeen City and the wider area. These strategic and local transportation projects flow from the development of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) produced by Nestrans, and the Council's own Local Transport Strategy (LTS).

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

1. note the contents of this report, and
2. agree that the Bridge of Don Park & Ride site option short list is taken forward for further investigation, and
3. endorse development through Nestrans as outlined in Section 15 of the report.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The various projects mentioned are being funded through various budgets including Nestrans. Details are included in the relevant sections. There are no implications for approved PBB options.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

## **Active Travel**

### **1 Cycle Demonstration Project**

- 1.1 This Committee, at its meeting on 13 September this year, voted to approve the Greenbrae Cycle Project Action Plan and instructed officers to ask members of the Disability Advisory Group (DAG) whether they would be interested in helping deliver cycle training to the children at Greenbrae School. Since this meeting, officers have been working to identify which elements of the project can be delivered this year and hope to begin physical construction within the area as soon as possible. The opportunity to help deliver child cycle training will be brought to the attention of DAG at its next meeting in December 2011.
- 1.2 A survey about cycling, open to all members of the local community, took place during the summer. Results show that a significant proportion of respondents already cycle at least occasionally and, when asked what would encourage them to travel by active modes of transport more often, 76% identified better routes, 67% said new routes, 29% said better signage and 24% said route maps. These are all things that the Action Plan aims to tackle in the next 3-5 years.
- 1.3 During September 2011, baseline cycle counts were undertaken in the area and these will be repeated on an annual basis to measure any changes in cycling levels over the life of the project.
- 1.4 As part of the European Mobility Week celebrations in September, Greenbrae School was awarded the Getabout Bike Roadshow for the day, and Hands Up Survey results reveal that levels of cycling to school have more than tripled since 2010. Greenbrae School has now applied for 'Cycle Friendly School' status and are currently awaiting a decision from Cycling Scotland who administers the award.

### **2 Schools Hands Up Survey 2011**

- 2.1 In September this year, all schools in Aberdeen were invited to participate in the Hands Up Survey 2011. Co-ordinated by sustainable transport charity Sustrans, this survey, the biggest of its kind in the country, is undertaken to find out how Scottish schoolchildren normally travel to and from school.
- 2.2 The analysis of the results for Aberdeen City has now taken place. Key points to be noted are:
- 2.3 Participation in the survey has increased from 2010, with 81% of primary schools and 75% of secondary schools taking part this year, compared to 76% and 36% respectively last year, bringing Aberdeen City's overall participation rate to 77% in 2011.
- 2.4 The overall results for all schools are almost identical to last year's with the walking and cycling rate remaining at 61% and the percentage of children being driven to school remaining at 20%. Although this is obviously not an improvement on last year's results, it does suggest that a stabilisation in travel behaviour might be taking place after a

number of years of falling active travel rates and steady increases in the number of children being transported to school by car.

- 2.5 In primary schools, small increases have been noted in the number of children walking, cycling, scooting and skating to school, but there is also a small increase in the number of children being driven to school. These increases have been made up by a decline in Park and Stride and travel by bus rates.
- 2.6 In secondary schools, the walking rate has decreased from 59% to 55% and the driven to school rate has increased from 10% to 12%, although cycling levels have doubled.
- 2.7 Scotland-wide results will be released by Sustrans in May 2012, allowing us to see how Aberdeen City compares with the rest of the country. Last year, Aberdeen City had the highest walk to school rate and the third-highest active travel rate out of all of Scotland's local authorities.

### **3 Sustrans School Cycle Parking Fund 2011/12**

- 3.1 As reported to September's meeting of this Committee, the Council was successful in attracting £12,600 in match-funding from sustainable transport charity Sustrans to install new or improved cycle parking facilities at 3 Aberdeen schools. Fernielea School has had a shelter added to their existing cycle parking and two new scooter racks installed in the school grounds, while Northfield Academy has had twenty covered bicycle parking spaces installed. The third school to be awarded funding, Riverbank School, should have their new cycle storage compound installed later this year.

### **4 Sustrans Community Links Fund 2011/12**

- 4.1 ACC was successful in securing £17,502 from Sustrans towards the upgrading of a desire line path linking Heathryfold Park and Henry Rae Community Centre with Auchmill Road. The path was upgraded to a tarmac surface in August 2011.

### **5 European Mobility Week 2011**

- 5.1 This year's European Mobility Week (a campaign urging members of the public to consider using sustainable modes of transport rather than the private car) took place 16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September. Aberdeen City Council marked the occasion with a large public event in Belmont Street on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September. Council officers were available to speak to members of the public about transport and air quality issues within the City, while a local bus operator came along to publicise available public transport services and hand out timetables. The Getabout Bike Roadshow, delivered by Adventure Aberdeen, was there, allowing members of the public to try out a variety of different bikes for free, and a local cycle retailer came along to display their products. The event was well attended by members of the public and was a great success.
- 5.2 The remainder of the week was dedicated to school events with 3 primary schools – Fernielea, Greenbrae and Airyhall – receiving the

Getabout Bike Roadshow for the day, funded by Nestrans. These events were designed to interest children in, and to promote, cycling, whilst providing an enjoyable and educational experience. Fernielea has attained the cycle friendly status whilst Greenbrae are preparing to apply.

## **Public Transport**

### **6 Bridge of Don Park and Ride Site**

#### **6.1 Background**

Park and Ride is a valuable contributor to an integrated transport system and is recognised and supported through the National, Regional and Local Transport Strategies. The measures identified in these strategies include the implementation of a series of Park and Ride (P&R) sites on radial routes around Aberdeen City.

6.1.1 The current Bridge of Don Park and Ride car park was opened in 1994 on land adjacent to the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre. This land has been leased to Aberdeen City Council over the intervening years on the understanding that, following the development of further sites to the north of the city, a new car park will be constructed on a permanent site.

6.1.2 The role of Park and Ride in removing traffic from an already congested network from the north will increase in importance as the planned expansion of residential and commercial sites along the Energetica Corridor and through the emerging Local Development Plans for both City and Shire come online. The need to relocate the current site leads to opportunities to develop an increased capacity facility providing greater support for these future developments.

6.1.3 Officers began the process of identifying new site options for Park and Ride provisions to the north of the city earlier this year. The work undertaken to date has focussed on compiling the information on the existing situation and the expectations of stakeholders for the future provisions. These outputs are briefly explained below.

#### **6.2 Project Team and Stakeholder Workshops**

A Project Team was convened on 9 June 2011 comprising officers from Aberdeen City and Shire Councils, Nestrans and the Strategic Development Planning Authority. On 22 and 23 June 2011, stakeholder workshops were held at Balgownie One, Bridge of Don, representatives from Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Community Council's, Local Members and officers from both Councils, public transport providers, environmental groups, emergency services and other interest groups were invited and 15 people attended.

6.2.1 Both groups considered the existing P&R provisions and what would be required by any future site. These events raised awareness of the scheme and also were valuable in establishing the initial assessment considerations.

### 6.3 Customer Survey

The project team agreed that it was important to establish the existing motivations for using park and ride in the Bridge of Don and so a customer survey was held on 15 and 16 June 2011. Officers interviewed users of the car park over the morning periods, finding out where customers had travelled from and why they had chosen to use park and ride for their journey. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix B. This data has been used to quantify some of the problems and opportunities raised through the consultation process.

### 6.4 Outcomes

A comprehensive list of the problems to be addressed by the scheme was compiled through the workshop process. Alongside this the opportunities that exist for a future site or redevelopment of the current site were also raised and considered. A spreadsheet was compiled to allow officers to consider these and this is included within Appendix C. Please note the spreadsheet is currently under consideration by Stakeholders and the Project Team to confirm accuracy.

#### 6.4.1 Objectives for the project were discussed and four Transport Objectives have been set. These will be further refined and quantified as the study progresses.

1. Support the implementation of the Local Development Plans in a manner which contributes to reduced congestion, improved journey times, and benefits public transport users;
2. Support the Regional and Local Transport Strategies by encouraging modal shift from private car use to public transport and active travel modes;
3. Deliver overall environmental benefits;
4. Reduce negative environmental impacts to a minimal level when developing infrastructure, including provision of appropriate mitigation measures

#### 6.4.2 The meetings and officer investigations led to the development of a range of options, including a consideration of what will happen if little or no action is taken to address the potential loss of the resource. Officers have since considered the list further and would recommend that a revised short list be agreed by the Committee for further investigation. The full list of options is detailed in Appendix D including a plan of possible locations. Please note the final list of options is currently under consideration by Stakeholders and the Project Team.

#### 6.4.3 The proposed short list of options for the Committee's approval is as follows;

1. Do nothing
2. Do minimum
3. Developer Led site at Blackdog
4. Developer Led site at Berryhill/ Cloverhill
5. Satellite sites
6. AECC car park

## 6.5 Future Actions

The comprehensive list of Problems and Opportunities, Transport Objectives and the initial Option Appraisal has been sent to the Project Team and Stakeholders for their confirmation of the accuracy of recording and their agreement for future actions. It is intended that the final report to this Committee will include feedback from this process.

6.6 It is also intended to hold meetings with the various developer representatives and the Local Development Plan Teams for Aberdeen City and Shire Councils in late October and early November in order to establish the viability of several of the site options.

6.7 Following this Committee, officers will commission 'high level' engineering, traffic and environmental assessments for the options being taken forward to enable a more detailed consideration of their viability to be undertaken.

6.8 Funding for the study has been made available by Nestrans and requires to be spent by the end of the financial year. It is anticipated that a report will be prepared on completion of this initial stage of the study in May 2012 and progress will be reported back to this Committee at that time.

## 7 Night Time Buses Update

7.1 The Night bus scheme has progressed towards implementation over the past couple of months. It came to light that FirstBus were implementing changes to their night bus times, and it was decided that it would be a good opportunity to launch the night bus stop infrastructure at the same time as the changes, to allow one set of changes to the travelling public. In addition to this, Stagecoach will be further promoting their night services at this time to ensure partnership working between Aberdeen City Council and bus operators. The night time flags and timetables were launched on 28<sup>th</sup> October, along with a publicity push around the same time; however the illuminated signs will be installed at a later date due to a very tight timescale for initial implementation. Nestrans are funding this project including promotion of the Night Time Transport Zone, which includes the night time taxis. Further progress will be provided at the next Committee by which time it is hoped the scheme will be completed.

## 8 Night Time Taxi Ranks

8.1 On the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011 a fourth night time taxi rank was installed on the southern side of Castle Street near the New Sherriff Court and the Castlegate.

8.2 Changes to the operational times of the night time taxi ranks also came into effect on this date which now means the night time ranks now operate seven days a week between the hours of midnight and 5 am. The installation of the illuminated pillar is due in early November.

## **Major Projects**

### **9 Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route**

- 9.1 In 2010 legal challenges were submitted to the Court of Session challenging the decision of the Scottish Ministers to proceed with the AWPR. In August 2011 the Court of Session announced its decision to refuse these legal challenges. An appeal against this decision has subsequently been lodged by objectors to the Inner House of the Court of Session. This appeal will be heard in December 2011 from the 13th.

### **10 Bridge of Dee Capacity Study**

- 10.1 This study, funded by Nestrans, is ongoing to investigate capacity issues and potential opportunities relating to the existing transport network in the Bridge of Dee area of Aberdeen.

- 10.2 A programme has been developed for the initial phase of work, using the approach set out in the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), with the key milestones indicated as follows:

- Inception - to identify existing data, traffic modelling, review of relevant policies and strategies – **completed**
- Problem and Opportunity Analysis – including Stakeholder workshops to discuss, explore and agree problems, issues, opportunities and scheme benefits – **Problems and Opportunities identified**
- Objective Setting – including Stakeholder workshops to develop a set of project specific objectives – **draft objectives identified**
- Option Generation, Sifting and Development – the generation of a finalised set of options which will be developed to a level of detail necessary for this initial assessment – **finalised set of options are identified and further assessment is underway**

- 10.3 Information and documentation on this key project are available on the Aberdeen City Council website at the following link:

[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Roads/transport\\_projects/roa\\_access\\_from\\_south\\_home.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Roads/transport_projects/roa_access_from_south_home.asp)

- 10.4 The long list of options is currently undergoing a sifting exercise, including further traffic modelling to evaluate operational capability. A draft report on all the work carried out to date is currently being prepared and is anticipated to be available towards the end of the year. The further traffic modelling outcomes and overall conclusion of the study Pre-Appraisal will be reported in the New Year. Nestrans has approved a budget of £75,000 to progress this study in 2011/12.

### **11 Access to Aberdeen from the North**

- 11.1 The planning application for the Third Don Crossing was approved subject to conditions at the meeting of full Council on 23 February 2011. Officers are continuing to progress land acquisition and areas of land that are being acquired through Compulsory Purchase will be the

subject of a Public Inquiry, which may be held in November 2011 from the 29<sup>th</sup>.

- 11.2 Discussions continue with the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland on the possible future delivery of the Third Don Crossing as part of the AWPR contract. Nestrans £250,000 budget was approved to contribute to the progression of the design work in 2011/12.
- 11.3 Officers are continuing to progress the delivery of the recommended sustainable transport measures with the Third Don Crossing programme, the Berryden Corridor Improvements programme and other programmes of work as appropriate in terms of further design work, timing and budget availability. £10,000 has been allocated from the Nestrans budget for this financial year to prepare the footprint for the Berryden Corridor.
- 11.4 Members will be kept up to date on progress on the development of this scheme through future reports to this Committee.

## **Other**

### **12. Strategic Transport Fund - Supplementary Guidance**

- 12.1 Reference is made to the decision of the EP and I committee in March 2011 to support the principle of a new mechanism for developer contributions to a Strategic Transport Fund, and to request officers to submit a further report on the operational impact of the proposal to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval. The Strategic Development Plan Authority (SDPA) have recently agreed to undertake consultation on draft supplementary guidance on a strategic transport fund. This draft guidance is currently out to consultation and the outcomes will be reported back to the SDPA in December 2011. A copy of the SDPA's report and the draft Supplementary Guidance is included within this report for information in appendix E. A further report will be presented to the Finance and Resources Committee in December on this draft guidance, as instructed.

### **13. Aberdeenshire Council Draft Local Transport Strategy 2011**

- 13.1 Our neighbouring local authority is in the process of completing their latest Local Transport Strategy (LTS), which is out for a final stage of public consultation at the moment. A key focus in developing their LTS has been to ensure that their local actions and strategies complement and support the delivery of the Governments National Transport Strategy, Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy and our very own LTS, all working towards and sharing similar goals to maintain an integrated and sustainable transport system whilst minimizing impacts on our environment. Officers are satisfied with the developments to date and look forward to the release of Aberdeenshire Council's final LTS.

Information on the current consultation can be found at  
[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/consultations/detail.asp?ref=5D15F627766376B1802578E800505FD1](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/consultations/detail.asp?ref=5D15F627766376B1802578E800505FD1)

## **14. Audit Scotland Report on Transport for Health and Social Care**

14.1 On 4 August 2011, Audit Scotland published their report on Transport for Health and Social Care. The full report can be accessed at

[http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/health\\_national.php?year=2011](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/work/health_national.php?year=2011)

and the key messages and recommendations from the report are set out in Appendix F.

14.2 Whilst not specifically referenced in the report, it is the case that a number of the Case Studies are similar to work that has been advanced by the public sector in the North East of Scotland. The single Case Study from this area relates to work on the Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) which has been progressed jointly by NHS Grampian, Nestrans (the Regional Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire), the Scottish Ambulance Service, Aberdeen City, Moray and Aberdeenshire Councils.

14.3 In Aberdeen City Council, through various structural re-organisations and efficiency savings initiatives, the Public Transport Unit now manages School, Social Work and Demand Responsive Transport, as well as the day to day liaison with bus operators for public services. A further initiative currently underway is looking at the possibility of a shared Public Transport Unit with Aberdeenshire Council.

14.4 The Council also continues to participate fully in the development of the HTAP. Under the auspices of HTAP consideration is being given to the creation of a 'health transport information hub'. This hub would have three main functions: to provide information on available transport services to those requiring transport for health purposes; where appropriate to broker trips e.g. on community transport services; and, to create an information database on trip requests for planning purpose as there is currently only limited information on unmet travel needs.

14.5 The Audit Scotland report makes pertinent recommendations in relation to the efficient integration and delivery of health and social care transport provision. However, as acknowledged by Audit Scotland, it is important in focussing on and addressing current deficiencies that the efficiency benefits already being accrued through integration of social care, education, DRT and public transport service delivery are not undermined. This is due to be considered by the HTAP Steering Group in November.

14.6 The Audit Scotland Report makes eight key recommendations which are listed in Appendix F. A self-assessment will require to be completed to identify what the Council is already doing and/or requires to do in order to address the issues identified in the report. A detailed Action Plan will be developed based upon the outcome of the self-assessment, both of which will be prepared in the coming weeks and will be reported to the January 2012 meeting of this Committee.

14.7 Many of the potential actions cannot however be delivered in isolation and the issues set out in this report will also be reported by partners in the NHS, Nestrans and neighbouring Councils to their relevant Boards

and Committees, with a view to developing the required Action Plan in tandem with the development of HTAP.

## **NESTRANS**

### **15. Nestrans Progress and Programmes**

15.1 The Nestrans Board met on the 24<sup>th</sup> August and a copy of the minute is available within this report in appendix A. The minutes of the latest Nestrans Board meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> October are to be approved at their next meeting and will be provided in a report to follow.

#### **15.2 NESTRANS Capital Programme 2011/12**

The Capital programme expenditure for 2011/12 was approved at the NESTRANS Board meeting on 16 February 2011, subject to anticipated funding levels being confirmed. Details of the programme within Aberdeen City are listed below totalling approximately £1.3m.

##### 15.2.1 Active Travel

###### Core Paths

Surveys carried out in June, July and September 2011. Work awarded to contractors in August, September and October 2011. Work completed in September, October, November and December 2011.

###### Aberdeen to Blackburn Cycle Route

Costings and prioritisation of works are continuing with implementation of improvements due by March 2012

###### Cycle Demonstration Project

Refer to section 1.

##### 15.2.2 Public Transport

###### BPIP Buchan / King Street Bus Lane Construction

Work started on site July 2011 and the bus lane was operational in late August 2011.

###### Holburn Street Bus Lane Time Changes

Traffic Regulation Order process completed. Scheme has still to be progressed to change over the signage.

###### Links Road / Beach Boulevard Junction Improvements

Moving back the existing stop line, relocating traffic signal loops and amending signal timings at this junction. Loop work expected to be completed by November 2011

###### Jesmond Drive / Scotstown Road Junction Widening

Widen the bell mouth on the South / West side of the junction to allow buses to manoeuvre into Jesmond Drive without blocking both lanes on the approach to the junction. Tender has now been returned and awarded to the successful contractor. The work will commence on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011 on site.

### 15.2.3 Strategic Road Capacity Improvements

#### Berryden Corridor Improvements

Design work expected to be carried out and completed between January 2012 and March 2012.

#### Contribution to 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing

Refer to section 11.

#### Segregated left turn Great Southern Road to Stonehaven Road

Traffic modelling has been carried out however it has not been possible to identify a viable low cost, short term improvement at this time.

#### Guild Street / Wapping Street Signals

Provide a link cable to implement SCOOT at this junction to improve both vehicular and pedestrian flow. Design work and costings are underway and should be completed by late November 2011.

#### Hareness Road / Souterhead Road Junction Improvements

The Nestrans Board agreed on 8 June that further investigation into a strategic improvement on the A956 Wellington Road corridor be deferred until the impact of construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and the outcome of the Bridge of Dee Study are known. This Nestrans project is now concluded.

### 15.2.4 Strategic Road Safety Improvements

#### Kingswells Roundabout Toucan Crossing

Installation of Toucan Crossing and Footpath links over C89C north arm of Kingswells roundabout to assist cyclist and pedestrians along A944 corridor. Design completed. Councillors and the local Community Council have been consulted. Tendering process will be undertaken with work expected to start on site in the autumn.

#### Riverside Drive Variable Message Sign

Initially a safety barrier was to be installed at this location however a more beneficial alternative safety scheme in the form of two permanent variable message signs is now being progressed. The signs have been ordered and have an 8 week delivery period. Implementation will follow once the signs have arrived. The signs are expected to be installed in late October / early November 2011.

### 15.2.5 Strategic Road Prioritised Maintenance

#### A956 Ellon Road – Southbound from the Parkway to North Donside Road

Works were completed in early August 2011.

#### A956 Ellon Road – Southbound from North Donside Rd to Balgownie Rd

Works were completed in early August 2011.

#### A944 Skene Road – Allocation £230,000

Resurfacing works to be carried out on a section of the A944 Skene Road. Works are to start on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October.

## 15.2.6 Rail

### Access for All

Accessibility improvements to rail stations in the North East have been agreed with Network Rail with work expected to be complete by March 2012 at Huntly, Inch, Inverurie, Stonehaven and Portlethen train stations.

## 15.2.7 Other

### Car Club

Tender documentation was sent out by end of July 2011  
Tenders returned mid September 2011 and are currently being evaluated.

Interviews are being held on 4<sup>th</sup> November with the awarded tender being provided shortly after.

Promotion of Car Club November 2011 – February 2012

Car Club Launched March 2012 (including implementation of necessary traffic legislation)

## 15.3 **NESTRANS Revenue Programme 2011/12**

The schemes identified and agreed for the Nestrans 2011/12 revenue programme listed below totalling £330,500.

### 15.3.1 Rail Action Plan

#### Contribution to Dyce Shuttle Bus

An additional £780 has been agreed for a publicity reprint

### 15.3.2 Freight Action Plan

#### Care North Year 3 of 3

Contribution complete. Further information on the Carbon Responsible Transport Strategy can be found at,

[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/CommunityAdvice/environment/cma\\_europeanprojects.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/CommunityAdvice/environment/cma_europeanprojects.asp)

### 15.3.3 Bus Action Plan

#### Bus link improvements to Anderson Drive

Final report of previous modelling received 02/08/11. Review of report has been completed resulting in further refinement to identify an optimum solution to improve public transport movements on and across Anderson Drive once the AWPR is in place. The initial junctions being investigated are the traffic signal junctions with Great Western Road, Mid Stocket Road, Westburn Road and Ashgrove Road.

#### Bridge of Don Park and Ride Feasibility Study

See section 6.

#### Aberdeen Royal Infirmary Interchange

Detailed design on a preferred option is now underway and is anticipated to be complete at the end of the calendar year.

#### 15.3.4 Project Feasibility and Monitoring

##### Bridge of Dee

Refer to section 10.

##### Rob Roy Bridge Feasibility Study

Alignment design investigatory work is currently being progressed.

## 5 IMPACT

The contents of this report link to the Community Plan vision of creating a 'sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is accessible to all'.

All of the projects and strategies referred to in this report will contribute to delivery of the transport aims of Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking – **'Improve Aberdeen's transport infrastructure ..... addressing other pinch points .... Work to improve public transport .... encourage cycling and walking'**.

The projects identified in this report will also assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), in particular the delivery of both Local and Regional Transport Strategies which will contribute directly and indirectly to 14 out of the 15 National Outcomes described in Aberdeen City Council's 2009/10 SOA.

The Local Transport Strategy (LTS) and Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) from which the transportation schemes within this report are an integral part have been subject to Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessments.

## 6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

All background papers are referenced within the main body of the report.

## 7 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Chris Philip  
Technical Officer Trainee  
[chphilip@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:chphilip@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
Tel. No. (52)2080

Ken Neil  
Senior Engineer  
[kenn@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:kenn@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
Tel. No. (52)3476

## Appendix A

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP  
Minute of Meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership Board  
Aberdeen, 24 August, 2011

Present:- Councillors Argyle, Carr (as substitute for Councillor Webster), Clark and Mollison (as substitute for Councillor Robertson) (Aberdeenshire Council); Councillors Dean, McCaig and Yuill (Aberdeen City Council); Mr. Eddie Anderson, Ms. Jennifer Craw and Mr. Derek Provan; and Dr. Margaret Bochel (Adviser to the Board).

In Attendance:- Derick Murray, Rab Dickson and Kirsty Morrison (Nestrans Office); Alan Wood and Ruth Taylor (Aberdeenshire Council); Iain Todd and Fiona Goodenough (Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group) and Yasa Ratnayeke and Martin Allan (Aberdeen City Council).

Apologies:- Councillors Boulton, Robertson and Webster and David Sullivan.

### GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1. In the absence of an appointed Chair, and in terms of Standing Order 3.5, Eddie Anderson, one of the Deputy Chairs of the Board took the Chair at the start of the meeting.

Mr. Anderson addressed the Board and explained (a) that one of the advisers to the Board, Mr. Iain Gabriel had recently left Aberdeenshire Council and paid tribute to Mr. Gabriel for all his help, support and work he had done on behalf of the Board and he further explained that Aberdeenshire Council would consider nominating a replacement adviser and that this issue would be considered by the Board at its next meeting in October, 2011, (b) that Councillors Kevin Stewart and John Stewart of Aberdeen City Council had resigned as Members of the Board. Mr. Anderson explained that Councillor Kevin Stewart had also resigned as Chair of the Partnership and he paid tribute to Councillor Kevin Stewart's tireless work on behalf of the Board and for the citizens in the North East of Scotland. He explained that Councillor Kevin Stewart had become the face of Nestrans over the last four years and had promoted transportation issues in the North East at every opportunity. Mr. Anderson then thanked Councillor John Stewart for his involvement on the Board. Mr. Anderson explained that Aberdeen City Council had made two new appointments to the Board, these being Councillors Callum McCaig and Iain Yuill and he welcomed the Councillors to their first meeting.

Mr. Anderson then explained in the absence of a Chair the Board required to appoint a new Chairperson. The Clerk to the Board invited nominations to the office of Chair.

Councillor Argyle nominated Councillor Iain Yuill to be Chair of Nestrans and this was seconded by Councillor Dean.

There being no further nominations, Councillor Yuill was appointed Chair of the Board.

Councillor Yuill then addressed the Board and thanked Councillor Kevin Stewart for his chairing in the last four years and paid tribute to his work.

Councillor Yuill then thanked Eddie Anderson for chairing the first part of the meeting.

#### **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 8 JUNE, 2011**

2. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 8 June, 2011.

#### **The Board resolved:-**

to approve the minute as an accurate record.

#### **PRESENTATION ON EUROPEAN BID FOR HYDROGEN BUSES - AREG**

3. The Board welcomed Mr. Iain Todd, Renewables Champion, Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group (AREG) to the meeting.

During his presentation Mr. Todd explained that AREG had submitted a bid for European funding for a hydrogen bus trial. He explained that the deadline for submitting the bid was 18 August, 2011 and that a consortium comprising Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, AREG, Stagecoach and First Bus and a Belgium bus manufacturer and a German hydrogen infrastructure company had put forward the bid. He explained that the cost of providing eight hydrogen buses and a refuelling station was €17 million and that the European Union would contribute €6.5 million to this with match funding required and €4 million from the bus companies. He explained that one of the potential sites for the refuelling station would be the Bridge of Don Park and Ride site and a decision on whether the bid was successful would be made in December, 2011.

The Board then asked Mr. Todd questions regarding the bid.

#### **The Board resolved:-**

- (i) to note the details; and
- (ii) to thank Mr. Todd for his presentation.

#### **STRATEGY**

4. (A) Liaison between Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) and the Scottish Government and Others

With reference to article 3(A) of the minute of the meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided an update on liaison with other Regional Transport Partnership (RTPs) and the Scottish Government and others.

The report summarised the discussion at the following meetings which had been held since the last meeting of the Board, these being:-

- Local Authority Bus Operators Forum – 9 June, 2011 - Aberdeen;
- Health and Transport Steering Group Meeting with Transport Scotland and Scottish Government Health Directorate – 14 June, 2011 – Aberdeen;
- RTP Lead Officers Meeting – 13 July, 2011 – Edinburgh;
- Tier 2 Northern Isles Ferries Consultative Forum – 13 July, 2011 – Lerwick;
- Peripheral Regions Seminar on Access to London and Heathrow – 15 July, 2011 – London;
- RTP Lead Officers Meeting – 17 August, 2011 – Edinburgh.

The report also provided details of future meetings which were planned.

**The Board resolved:-**

- (i) to note that a RTP Lead Officers meeting with MSPs is to be arranged for 7 December, 2011, whereat a number of issues will be discussed including the findings of the Christie Commission; Audit Scotland's review of Transport for Health and Social Care; and the proposal to establish a "Lead Chair" of the RTP Chairs;
- (ii) to agree to resist the proposal to have a "Lead Chair" for the RTP Chairs' meetings; and
- (iii) to note progress on liaison arrangements with other RTPs and the Scottish Government and arrangements for future meetings.

(B) Review of Getabout

With reference to article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Board of 20th April, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided members with an update on Getabout activity and provided evidence of the value for money of investing in Smarter Choices.

The report explained that the Getabout Partnership has been able to invest in materials to raise profile at events and provide an attraction to interest members of the public and there are now eight active members of the Partnership (Nestrans, the two local authorities, the two universities and Aberdeen College, Energy Savings Trust and NHS Grampian).

The report explained that the financial case for Smarter Choices has been well researched and has been found to have a 10:1 cost benefit analysis in independent research carried out by the Department for Transport. The report explained that Smarter Choices can be broken down into four main elements:-

- travel plans;
- behavioural change activities;
- infrastructure;
- disincentives.

The report then provided updates in relation to a number of the initiatives related to Getabout such as:- the Health and Transport Action Plan; travel plans; behavioural change; Walk It; car sharing; public transport use; park and ride; bus use; and rail use.

The report provided information on the Getabout website and also details of the Facebook and Twitter pages of Getabout.

The report provided statistics in relation to cycling in the North East; school travel; and details on the Sustainable Transport Grant Scheme.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

(a) note the report and the progress in developing sustainable transport and Smarter Choices; and

(b) endorse the work of the Getabout Partnership.

**The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Chair intimated that he had directed in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 that a complete version of the following report be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Board could have all the relevant information in relation to the following report in front of them.**

**(C) Regional Car Parking Strategy**

With reference to article 3(C) of the minute of meeting of the Board of 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which presented a draft of the issues and objectives of the Regional Parking Strategy (RPS) for comment and approval.

The report explained that the Regional Transport Strategy identified a requirement for the development of a Regional Parking Strategy and quoted the following:-

“Nestrans will work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council to prepare a region-wide parking strategy that will provide consistency in parking policy across the North East while using parking measures to help achieve the safety objectives, support traffic management by removing obstructions and encourage greater use of alternatives to the car.”

The report explained that initial work to develop a Regional Parking Strategy revealed that a quantitative basis was lacking for some of the key elements that inform the Strategy and as a result, a consultant (AECOM) were commissioned at the end of 2010, through the North East Framework Agreement to provide targeted support for the ongoing development of the Regional Parking Strategy.

The report explained that the information gained through the AECOM study as well as a review of the relevant national, regional and local policies and consultation with the two Councils has informed the development of a draft issues and objectives paper (as detailed at Appendix A to the report).

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) approve the issues and objectives paper attached as Appendix A to the report; and
- (b) approve the continuation of work, in partnership with the two Councils, to develop a range of policies and actions to meet these objectives and for this to be reported to a future Board meeting.

**The Board resolved:-**

- (i) to submit draft proposals on Regional Parking Strategy to the next meeting of the North East Transportation Consultative Forum (NETCF) whilst noting that the Forum will also consider the refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy;
- (ii) to note that an officers meeting will be held on the draft proposals prior to the meeting of the NETCF; and
- (iii) to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**NORTH EAST TRANSPORT CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

5. The Board had before it a report by the Director which asked for approval to hold a meeting of the North East Transport Consultative Forum.

The report explained that although no specific date had been set for the meeting, it was suggested that it should be held during the autumn when the Strategic Development Plan main issues report will be out for consultation. The format of the meeting is recommended to be broadly similar to the last meeting, with an introductory session consisting of updates followed by a “café” session whereby participants are encouraged to provide informal feedback to a number of café style tables with each table being staffed by a facilitator with discussion centring on a general topic of interest (for example car parking strategy, internal transport links, external transport links, etc.). The report explained that the venue for the meeting would be Woodhill House and the starting time would be 5.30pm, with a finger buffet and informal discussion to end around 8.00pm.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) agree to hold a meeting of the North East Transport Consultative Forum in the autumn; and
- (b) agree to use the meeting as an opportunity to garner views on the Regional Car Parking Strategy and the transport issues which will be covered in the Strategic Development Plan main issues report.

**The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

## **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

**Prior to considering the following item of business, Derek Provan declared an interest by virtue of his employment. Mr. Provan decided to remain in the meeting during discussion of the item.**

## **PERIPHERAL REGIONS ACCESS TO LONDON AND HEATHROW**

6. With reference to article 2 of the minute of the meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which advised members of a meeting between the transport, economic development and airport representatives of the most peripheral regions in the UK, containing a regional airport.

The report explained that the meeting, called by Nestrans and Hitrans, in advance of the UK Government Aviation consultation was to determine whether there was a common position that could be agreed and put forward as a group to the consultation.

The report explained that Nestrans and Hitrans had called a meeting of peripheral regions to discuss access to London and connectivity through the hub airport at Heathrow and had invited areas of the UK where there was no viable alternative surface means of access to London and its hub airport which included Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Cornwall and the Channel Islands. The meeting was arranged for 15 July, 2011 and was held in London.

The report explained there was a strong consensus at the meeting covering a number of similar issues that affect all the peripheral regions which included:-

- the impact of air access to London and its hub airport on the economy of each region;
- that any joint response to the Government should centre on the economic impact of accessibility and connectivity;
- a general agreement that the Government should consider the “peripheral regions” as distinct from the “regions”;
- a general agreement that a joint “peripheral regions” response to the consultation was desirable.

The report explained that the Department for Transport held a seminar, facilitated by Transport Scotland in Edinburgh on 27 July, 2011, which offered the opportunity for a Scottish viewpoint to be raised directly with the Department for Transport’s senior civil servants responsible for aviation policy. The report explained that one of the themes that came out strongly in the discussion was that a simple “one size fits all” approach would not satisfy the needs of the country, particularly the more peripheral regions.

The report explained that the aviation consultation is in the form of a series of questions and the civil servants were keen to stress that each respondent need only respond to those questions within their remit or knowledge and that any responses should, where possible, include evidence or case studies to assist in understanding. A draft Nestrans response was detailed at Appendix A for the Board to consider.

The report also explained that discussions had been held to determine whether North Sea Commission support could be achieved for the peripheral regions’ view and whether they could influence current thinking in Europe on the landing slots issue.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) agree to participation in a peripheral regions group with a view to a peripheral regions response to the UK Government's aviation consultation paper being agreed; and
- (b) consider the draft Nestrans response to the consultation paper (as appended to the report).

**The Board resolved:-**

- (i) to request that officers arrange a publicity campaign to help the peripheral regions group;
- (ii) to note that Derek Provan will provide statistics to help the Director regarding the number of passengers from Aberdeen airport using Heathrow as a destination (as well as for a change over); and
- (iii) to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**GENERAL**

**7. (A) Progress Report**

With reference to article 6(A) of the minute of the meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a progress chart summarising the work in the three sub-strategies of the Regional Transport Strategy as at 16 August, 2011.

**The Board resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would provide information to Councillor Argyle as to the wording of the signs to be installed at Riverside Drive;
- (ii) to note that details regarding a new road energy system (where heat is absorbed for use as power) would be passed to John Wilson, the Managing Agent for the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the details.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

The Chair intimated that he had directed in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 that (a) a letter sent by the Director to Transport Scotland in relation to Network Rail Scotland's Route Utilisation Strategy document and (b) a letter from the Minister for Housing and Transport to the then Chair of the Board on the need to secure access for air services from Aberdeen to Heathrow Airport be considered as matters of urgency so that the Board could have all the relevant information in front of them for consideration.

**(B) Publications and Consultations**

With reference to article 6(B) of the minute of the meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which summarised and advised of recent consultation documents received, and presented suggested responses to the following documents (as detailed in the Appendix to the report):-

- Office of Rail Regulation – Periodic Review 13;
- Network Rail Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy;
- Stations Route Utilisation Strategy;
- Bus Service Operator's Grant Extension to Demand Responsive Transport;
- Audit Scotland's (Transport for Health and Social Care) Report; and
- Energetica Placemaking : Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) note the contents of the report and endorse the approach taken in writing to Transport Scotland and Network Rail expressing concern regarding the issues relating to the Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy; and
- (b) otherwise note the report and the documents referred to.

**The Board resolved:-**

- (i) in relation to the consultation on the Office of Rail Regulation (Periodic Review 13) to agree that the letter prepared by the Director and sent to the Director of Rail at Transport Scotland be publicised in the appropriate way to highlight the Board's concerns regarding the outcome of the draft Route Utilisation Strategy document covering the rail network in Scotland;
- (ii) in relation to Audit Scotland's report entitled "Transport for Health and Social Care" to note and commend the work undertaken by NHS Grampian, Nestrans and partners in relation to the development of the Health and Transport Action Plan and agreed that the Health and Transport Action Plan Steering Group consider Audit Scotland's report and report any findings or action to the next meeting of the Board;
- (iii) in relation to the draft Route Utilisation Strategy on Stations produced by Network Rail, to agree to undertake another survey to identify overcrowding on trains leaving Aberdeen Station in October, 2011 (after the school holidays) and further agreed to liaise with other regional transportation partnerships to investigate the possibility of jointly sharing the cost of further surveys to identify overcrowding on trains in Scotland.

**DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11**

8. With reference to article 6(C) of the minute of the meeting of the Board of 25th August, 2010, the Board had before it a report by the Director which presented the Nestrans Annual Report for 2010/11 for approval.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) consider the draft Annual Report 2010/11; and
- (b) approve submitting the report to Scottish Ministers and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**BUDGET MATTERS**

**9. (A) Budget Matters**

With reference to article 7(A) of the minute of the meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report from its financial adviser which provided an update on spend and programming of the Partnership's 2011/12 budget and also provided a forecast outturn.

The report explained that there was an overall surplus in the budget of £365,000 to allocate (comprising £163,000 from Transport Scotland towards the final cost of Laurencekirk Station car park, £41,000 from underspends on previously

approved projects, £151,000 from the surplus from 2010/11 and £10,000 from unallocated sums from the Revenue Budget). The report proposed that this funding be allocated to the following projects:-

- Ellon Park and Ride Scheme - £170,000
- Strategic Road Maintenance – A944 Skene Road - £160,000
- Bus Route Infrastructure Audit - £10,000
- A96 Park and Ride - £5,000
- Night Transport Zone Infrastructure - £10,000
- Peripheral Regions Policy Lobbying - £10,000.

The report recommended:-  
that the Board –

- (a) note the monitoring position and forecast as detailed in the report; and
- (b) agree to the proposed use of the additional funding identified in the report, subject to audit approval of the sums available.

**The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

(B) Independent Auditor's Report and Report to Members on the Audit of the Financial Statements (ISA 260)

The Board heard its financial adviser explain that the report by the Independent Auditor on the audit of the financial statements (ISA 260) was not currently available for the Board to consider. It was explained that the accounts have not been completed or signed-off by the Auditors, however, there were no material issues detailed in the draft accounts. It was proposed that the Auditor would submit the accounts to the Treasurer prior to them being submitted by the required deadline of 30 September, 2011. It was further proposed that details of the accounts would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board for approval.

**The Board resolved:-**

to agree that the Auditor submits the accounts to the Treasurer following which the accounts would be submitted by the required deadline of 30 September, 2011 and that the Board would consider the accounts at its next meeting.

## **INFORMATION BULLETIN**

10. With reference to article 8 of the minute of the meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided information and updates for the Board on a number of matters not requiring a decision.

The report provided updates on the current position of the following projects/issues:-

- Stagecoach Green Bus Award
- South East Airports Task Force
- Regulation of Airport Security
- Development Planning and Management Transport Appraisal Guidance
- Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route
- Nestrans Press Releases; and
- Getabout Events.

The Board resolved:-

to note the details.

## **CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS**

11. With reference to article 9 of the minute of meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director summarising recent and forthcoming conferences of interest to the Partnership along with presentations by Nestrans and its partners.

**The Board resolved:-**  
to note the details.

## **PENDING BUSINESS AND REPORTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

12. With reference to article 10 of the minute of meeting of the Board of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director detailing pending business and information on reports to be submitted to future Board meetings.

The Board resolved:-  
to note the report.

## **EXEMPT INFORMATION**

The Board resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 6 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

## **BUS QUALITY PARTNERSHIP MONITORING**

13. The Board had before it a report by the Director which provided an update on the most recent trends emerging through the monitoring of the Bus Quality Partnership Agreement, a partnership between Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, First in Aberdeen and Stagecoach Bluebird.

The report provided details on the areas which had been monitored as follows:-

- patronage
- vehicle standards
- customer service standards
- journey time, punctuality and reliability standards
- infrastructure standards
- information provision standards

The report also provided information on action being taken forward to improve bus services in the North East of Scotland.

**The report recommended:-**  
that the Board note the trends emerging in the Bus Quality Partnership Agreement's Standards and Targets and to note the actions being taken forward to improve these standards through delivery of the Bus Action Plan.

**The Board resolved:-**  
(i) to note that officers in Nestrans would confirm with Councillor Mollison whether changes in the timetables for the 107 and 108 buses had been reflected at bus stops in the city;

- (ii) to request that officers look at ways in which discussion can be held with the bus companies on fares and this should be done prior to any proposed changes to car parking charges in the city;
- (iii) to request that officers map changes in bus fares (and other factors) against patronage so that more evidence/information can be considered and discussed with the bus companies;
- (iv) to agree that suitable publicity regarding the Bus Quality Partnership Monitoring be issued in due course;
- (v) to note that an update on the use of the car parks at Union Square, particularly the three access points to the car parking provision would be considered at the next meeting of the Board;
- (vi) to note that issues raised by Councillor Argyle regarding the bus station and the difficulties people with visual impairment have in accessing the bus station facility would be discussed with Andrew Jarvis, Stagecoach Bluebird Managing Director; and
- (vii) to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

**- IAN YUILL, Chairperson.**