

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	29 th August 2013
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Strategic and Local Transportation Projects Update Report
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/13/125

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the progress to date of various strategic and local transportation projects within Aberdeen City and the wider area. These 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:

- a) Note the contents of this report;
- b) Endorse development through Nestrans including Board decisions and progress on the 2013/14 programme of works;
- c) Agree that the policy for Complementary Uses of Park and Ride Sites approved at this Committee on 15th March 2011 be maintained as the method of managing events at Park and Ride sites; and
- d) Ratify the Convenor/Vice Convenor approved response to Nestrans on the Regional Transport Strategy Re-Fresh.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The projects described in this report are being funded through various budgets including Nestrans, the Regional Transport Partnership. Details are included in the relevant sections. There are no implications for approved PBB options.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

A) Issues Requiring a Committee Decision

1 Nestrans Projects and Programmes

1.1 The Nestrans Board met on the 17th April 2013, the 12th June 2013 and the 28th August 2013. The minute of the April meeting is included as Appendix A to this report. The minutes of the June and August meetings will be included within a future report to this Committee.

1.2 Nestrans Capital Programme 2013/14

The capital programme expenditure for 2013/14 was agreed at the Nestrans Board meeting on 20th February 2013. An update on each of the projects taking place in Aberdeen City follows.

1.2.1 Active Travel

Core Paths

Masonry repairs are currently taking place to prevent further structural decay to the Don Bridge at Parkhill which forms part of the Formartine and Buchan Way.

Improvements are also being made to the Coastal Path and signage is being implemented in a variety of locations.

Greenbrae Cycle Project

A launch event to formally open the paths installed during the spring was held on 13th May 2013 with Councillors Peter Argyle and Ramsay Milne, Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of the Nestrans Board, in attendance, along with pupils and staff of Greenbrae School and members of the local community.

In the days leading up to the launch, school pupils participated in a series of events and activities to raise awareness of the new infrastructure, including a sponsored cycle ride for pupils and an orienteering challenge around the neighbourhood for local residents and businesses. The Getabout bicycle roadshow also visited the school for a day as part of the celebrations.

Route signage has now been installed to formalise Link 10 (Seaview to Dubford Road) and as the first stage in the formalisation of Link 11 (Dubford Road to Dubford Gardens). The latter requires a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to convert the existing path to a pedestrian and cycle route. The TRO for this (and for the proposed shared use route from Dubford Road to Middleton Park, along Scotstown Road and Jesmond Drive) has now been through the necessary legal process and the outcomes will be reported to this Committee in the 'Traffic Orders at the Final Stage of the Statutory Process' report.

Ellon Road Strategic Cycle Links

A report into options for a continuous cycle route from the Bridge of Don to the A90/B999 roundabout has been completed and is currently being reviewed.

Anderson Drive Strategic Cycle Links

The design of Phase 1 (Bridge of Dee to Cromwell Road) and Phase 2 (Midsocket Road to Ashgrove Road West) is currently being consulted upon. Design of Phase 3 (King's Gate to Earls Court Gardens) and Phase 4 (Haudagain Roundabout to Kingshill Road) is now underway. A Statutory Regulation Order (SRO) is being prepared with a view to implementing some small-scale improvements by the end of this financial year.

Dyce Drive Strategic Cycle Links

The design and potential installation of missing cycle links from Dyce Avenue to Argyll Road along the north side of Dyce Drive will be completed in January 2014.

A96 Aberdeen to Blackburn Cycle Route

Design work in relation to localised widening, consideration of crossings and a review of existing facilities has been completed and consultation is underway with Transport Scotland and other relevant stakeholders regarding the proposals.

The Parkway Strategic Cycle Links

A feasibility design has been completed and opportunities are currently being consulted upon with stakeholders.

Aberdeen Beach Recreational Cycle Route

The implementation of a route linking School Drive/Golf Road to the Beach Esplanade should be completed during autumn 2013.

Westhill to Aberdeen Cycle Route Improvements

Investigations have shown that further drainage at the Old Skene Road section of the route would not alleviate the problem of ice in cold weather. A grit box with a spreader is therefore being installed at the affected area and the situation will be further monitored this winter. Verge lines of the path have also been tidied up to support the existing drainage provisions.

1.2.2 Public Transport

Aberdeen City and Shire Joint Bus Stop Information Initiatives

A programme of replacement and/or provision of bus timetable display cases at bus stops within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is ongoing.

Airport Bus Turning Circle

A further bat survey has now been completed to inform the planning application. A determination on the application is anticipated by the end of August 2013.

A96 Park and Choose

Preparatory work is underway in anticipation of the facility being open in autumn 2015.

1.2.3 Strategic Road Safety Improvements

Accident Reduction on Strategic Routes

Retexturing of sections of the B999 (Murcar Roundabout to Potterton), B979 (Malcolm Road to Westhill) and the road from Kingswells Roundabout to Kirk Brae, Cults will be completed in November 2013.

1.2.4 Freight

A947 Oldmeldrum Road/Dyce Drive Junction Improvement

Increased radii to improve turning manoeuvres for HGVs and to ease congestion will be implemented in autumn 2013.

Howe Moss Drive/Dyce Drive Junction Improvement

Land ownership issues have been identified at this location and officers are reviewing how best to resolve these.

1.3 Nestrans Revenue Programme 2013/14

The revenue programme expenditure for 2013/14 was agreed at the same meeting and updates on each of the projects taking place within Aberdeen City are provided below.

1.3.1 Bus Action Plan

Bus Link Improvements to Anderson Drive

A study is ongoing to identify improvements for public transport along and across Anderson Drive following implementation of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR).

1.3.2 Project Feasibility and Monitoring

Bridge of Dee Project Feasibility and Development

Work is ongoing to complete the formal Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) and Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 assessments.

The STAG process has been ongoing throughout 2012/13 with a programme developed to enable completion of the STAG Part 1 element during 2013/14:

- Environmental Performance **(completed)** - Data Gathering for Baseline Condition and completion of Environmental Assessment including Initial Part 1 Appraisal Summary Tables (AST) Compilation;
- Safety Performance **(completed)** - Evaluate Safety Performance including Initial Part 1 AST Compilation (Safety Assessment);

- Economic Performance (**completed**) - Data Gathering and completion of Economic Assessment including Initial Part 1 AST Compilation;
- Integration, Accessibility & Social Inclusion Performance (**August 2013**) - Evaluate Performance including Initial Part 1 AST Compilation;
- Public Acceptability Performance (**November 2013**) – Public consultation and preparation of Public Acceptability Assessment; and
- Reporting (**January 2014**) - Preparation of Final Part 1 ASTs and Preparation of Volume 2 of 4 of STAG Report.

Information relating to the study including the pre-appraisal report has been published on the Council website:

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/transport_streets/roads_pavements/transport_projects/road_access_from_south_home.asp.

The website now also includes draft plans of the various options being considered.

An informal public consultation on the options will be held during the week beginning 16th September at a number of venues. The consultation information, including dates and locations, will be made available on the Council website as soon as these are finalised, along with an online questionnaire.

Feasibility and Design Aspects of Locking in the Benefits

Discussion is being undertaken on the focus of this piece of work and details will be provided to this Committee in due course.

Economic and Environmental Assessment for City Centre Pedestrianisation

At its meeting of 24th June the Council agreed: *To instruct officers to investigate options, including appropriate traffic modelling, for creating a more user-friendly pedestrian environment to form a civic space on Broad Street in advance of the pedestrianisation of Union Street; the costs of these investigations to be met from the Central Aberdeen Infrastructure budget approved as part of the Non-Housing Capital Programme at the Council's Budget Meeting on 14 February 2013.*

In view of this a revised programme is currently being compiled. Key milestones established to date include:

- Completion of City Centre Transport Model – August 2013;
- Development of Broad Street options – August 2013; and
- Assessment of Broad Street options to be completed – January 2014.

Further milestones will be reported at the next meeting of this Committee.

- 1.4 Nestrans's total expenditure within Aberdeen City for 2013/14 is anticipated to be £914,000 capital and £295,000 revenue.

- 1.5 It is therefore recommended that Members endorse development through Nestrans as outlined above, including Board decisions and progress on the 2013/14 programme of work.

2 Complementary Uses of Park and Ride Sites

- 2.1 At its meeting on 11th September 2012, this Committee requested that officers report back to the appropriate Committee on how future events of the type described for Parks and Open Spaces are to be managed in Park and Ride sites.
- 2.2 A report was agreed by this Committee on 15th March 2011 setting out a procedure for the potential use of Park and Ride sites for events. The procedure followed the Council's letting system for school and educational establishments which considers a range of uses by others, both internal Council and external partner services, which comply with the agreed terms of use. Priority is given to the primary purpose with other requests accommodated where possible. Various charges are applied. This system of letting was therefore considered suitable as a means of managing usage of Park and Ride sites. A charging regime was subsequently agreed by the Finance and Resources Committee on 21st April 2011 with users invoiced dependant on the type and length of usage and on whether the application was internal or external to the Council.
- 2.3 Appendix B describes the application procedures required for potential uses of both Park events and Park and Ride site events. The process in both cases is similar and ultimately, for both procedures, permission is granted at the discretion of the relevant officers. The charges applied for a Parks and Open Space event and a Park and Ride complementary use event are different with the former being charged on a daily basis and the latter on an hourly basis. This reflects the nature of the events at the different locations with events at Park and Ride sites tending to be smaller in nature and taking place over shorter periods, such as cycle training. There has been one instance where what we were led to believe was a small event resulted in some issues but in general the events that have been approved have taken place without incident.
- 2.4 In the case of events within Parks and Open Spaces, all applications deemed an 'event' (an occurrence happening at a determinable time and place) are assessed, consultation is carried out with all interested parties and involved Agencies and relevant permission or refusal is given by Events Officers. In the case of events at Park and Ride sites, the report of 15th March 2011 considered that wider consultation was unnecessary and would be disproportionate given the likely size of events. This has been borne out by experience of approved events to date.

- 2.5 It is considered that the procedures developed for the approval of complementary uses of Park and Ride sites are sufficiently robust as a means of identifying and approving suitable uses. Given the already agreed process and its suitability for the control of smaller events, it is not considered necessary to apply the Parks and Open Spaces event policy to the management of events at Park and Ride sites. It is therefore recommended that Members agree that the policy for complementary uses of Park and Ride sites approved on 15th March 2011 be maintained as the method of managing events at Park and Ride sites.

3 Regional Transport Strategy Refresh

- 3.1 At its meeting in May, this Committee agreed that the Convenor and Vice Convenor should approve a response to Nestrans on the Regional Transport Strategy Re-Fresh in time for the consultation deadline, and that this response should subsequently be ratified by the Committee. This response has now been submitted to Nestrans on behalf of Aberdeen City Council and a copy of this is included as Appendix C to this report.
- 3.2 It is therefore recommended that this Committee ratify the Convenor/Vice Convenor approved response to Nestrans on the Regional Transport Strategy Re-Fresh.

B) Issues for Information

Active Travel and Air Quality

4 Sustrans Community Links Fund 2013/14

- 4.1 In May 2013, officers were successful in attracting £32,500 from Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Fund 2013/14, the purpose of which is to assist local authorities in improving walking and cycling links to key destinations.
- 4.2 Funding was awarded for the following projects, being match-funded with Nestrans:
- Dubford to Oldmachar cycle route implementation (£10,000);
 - Ellon Road strategic cycle links study and implementation (£12,500); and
 - The Parkway pedestrian and cycle improvements study (£10,000).

5 Hands Up Survey 2012

- 5.1 On 31st May 2013 Sustrans published the results of the 2012 Hands Up Scotland school travel survey as Official Statistics. The purpose of the survey is to find out how children in Scotland regularly travel to and from school.

- 5.2 All local authority primary and secondary schools in Aberdeen are invited to take part in the survey every year. In recent years, in an effort to increase the sample size and provide a more robust dataset, Sustrans has also been encouraging local authorities to gather data from nursery schools, SEN (Special Educational Needs) schools and independent schools. From 2011 therefore, results from nurseries were included in Aberdeen City's returns, and results from SEN and independent schools were included for the first time in 2012. This has had a significant impact on results.
- 5.3 Table 1 shows the proportion of children travelling to school in Aberdeen by each mode of transport in 2012 compared to 2011.

	2012	2011
Walk	49.7%	58.3%
Cycle	2.5%	2.5%
Scooter / skate	1.4%	1.2%
Park and stride	7.3%	6.0%
Driven	22.7%	19.6%
Bus	14.3%	11.1%
Taxi	1.3%	1.1%
Other	0.8%	0.1%

Table 1

- 5.4 The sample size in 2012 comprised 998 nursery school pupils, 9829 primary school pupils, 4984 secondary school pupils, 85 SEN pupils and 2971 independent school pupils. In contrast, figures from 2011 are based on 437 nursery school pupils, 9281 primary school pupils, 5128 secondary school pupils and no SEN or independent pupils. It is believed therefore that the difference in the results observed between 2011 and 2012, particularly the sharp decline in rates of walking to school, is almost wholly the result of the inclusion of data from independent school pupils and, to a lesser extent, additional figures from nursery and SEN school pupils.
- 5.5 Table 2 shows a comparison between the transport modes of local authority school and independent school pupils in 2012, revealing that independent school pupils are far less likely to travel to school by active modes of transport, with car and bus as their dominant modes.

	LA Schools	Independent Schools
Walk	58%	9%
Cycle	3%	1%
Scooter / skate	2%	0%
Park and stride	6%	14 %
Driven	20%	39%
Bus	11%	33%
Taxi	1%	0%

Other	0%	3%
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Table 2

5.6 Table 3 shows an analysis of the transport behaviours of pupils attending mainstream local authority primary and secondary schools in 2011 and 2012, providing a more reliable indicator of change. This is the information that the survey traditionally captured as these are the schools that local authority staff with responsibility for school travel work with and therefore seek to influence.

	2012	2011
Walk	58%	58%
Cycle	3%	3%
Scooter / skate	2%	0%
Park and stride	6%	6%
Driven	20%	20%
Bus	11%	11%
Taxi	1%	1%
Other	0%	0%

Table 3

This reinforces the assumption that the apparent change in travel behaviour amongst Aberdeen City school pupils between 2011 and 2012 is due to the inclusion of data from independent schools and, to a lesser extent, SEN and nursery schools, with the results for local authority primary and secondary schools remaining largely the same. The change is therefore not likely to be as significant as would seem from a glance at headline figures.

5.7 Aberdeen was one of only four local authorities to include data from independent schools in their results. Furthermore, the published figures reveal that:

- Aberdeen still has the highest walk to school rate amongst mainstream primary school pupils of all Scotland's 32 local authority areas (59.3%) and the second-highest walking rate amongst mainstream secondary school pupils (55.8%); and
- The cycle to school rate amongst mainstream primary school children in Aberdeen (3.6%) is at its highest recorded level since the survey began.

5.8 The 2013 survey will take place during the week beginning 9th September and full results will be available in Spring 2014.

6 Bike Week

6.1 Bike Week 2013 took place between the 15th and 23rd June and Aberdeen City Council, with the Getabout partnership, organised a series of events throughout the City to celebrate. The Getabout bicycle roadshow visited three primary schools during the week – Muirfield, Broomhill and Fernielea – while, for the second consecutive year, a

family cycling event took place in Hazlehead Park in partnership with Active Schools. As well as the bicycle roadshow, this included a family cycle ride round a marked trail and some cycle skills training with the Grampian Tigers club.

7 European Mobility Week

7.1 European Mobility Week 2013 takes place between the 16th and 22nd September. Aberdeen City Council will be organising a series of events throughout the week both within the Council and in schools to promote sustainable transport and to raise awareness of air quality issues in the City. The Lord Provost has signed an official Charter on behalf of the Council, pledging commitment to taking part in European Mobility Week and support for the aims and objectives of the campaign.

7.2 In Town Without My Car Day, the culmination of European Mobility Week, takes place on Sunday 22nd September 2013 and the Council will be participating in the celebrations by closing an area of Schoolhill and Belmont Street to motor traffic and filling the area with activities for members of the public to participate in on the themes of air quality and sustainable transport. Attractions will include the Getabout Bike Roadshow, a bike doctor, safe cycling promotions, rickshaw rides, and electric vehicle demonstrations. Colleagues from Transportation and Air Quality will be available to speak to members of the public about these issues, supported by the presence of representatives of the local bus companies, Co-Wheels, Aberdeen Cycle Forum and others. The event is being delivered in partnership with Getabout and the MUSIC (Mitigation in Urban Areas: Solutions for Innovative Cities) project's 'Take Back the Streets' team and is being championed by Councillor Morrison and Councillor Thomson.

7.3 Aberdeen City Council has been offered a grant of £5,808 from Transport Scotland to undertake sustainable travel initiatives that will promote the application of learning from the 'Smarter Choices, Smarter Places' demonstration programme. It is intended to accept this grant and to use it to add further elements to the In Town Without My Car Day event.

7.4 Cycling Scotland will also be holding a family cycle ride at Aberdeen Beach on Sunday 15th September 2013. As well as helping to facilitate the event officers will be providing complementary attractions such as the Getabout bicycle roadshow and other activities.

8 Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

8.1 In the March report to this Committee, Members were informed that further public consultation to shape the development of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) would be taking place in April alongside the Pre-Main Issues Report consultation process for the next Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

- 8.2 For the SUMP, members of the public were presented with eleven different areas of the City Centre and asked:
- What they thought the function of the area should be;
 - Whether the area needed no or a minimal amount of improvement and what form improvement should take;
 - Whether the area needed a medium level of improvement and what form improvement should take;
 - Whether the area needed a complete overhaul; and
 - What could be done to encourage them to travel to, from and around the City Centre more sustainably.
- 8.3 The areas presented were Castlegate, Broad Street/Queen Street, Schoolhill/Golden Square, Chapel Street/Rose Street, Bon Accord/Justice Mill, Crown Street/Dee Street, The Green/Guild Street/Market Street, Riverside/Poynerook/South Market Street, Union Street East, Union Street West and George Street/Aberdeen College. Results show that:
- Union Street West, Union Street East, Broad Street/Queen Street and the Castlegate were the areas deemed most in need of improvement;
 - Participants felt that Union Street's function should be predominantly retail. There was support for more residential development at its west end and more pedestrian priority at the east;
 - Participants believed that the Castlegate should have a café culture, play host to market stalls and facilitate greater pedestrian movements through it while a civic square should be created in the Broad Street/Queen Street area;
 - Crown Street/Dee Street was deemed the area that required the least intervention;
 - Cheaper bus fares and better and safe cycle areas/paths were the most common answers for encouraging people to travel more sustainably; and
 - The most commonly recurring comments called for a better surface on the Castlegate, a better pedestrian route through the Green between Union Street and Union Square, a tackling of traffic congestion on South Market Street and the regeneration of Union Street.
- 8.4 Further analysis of the full consultation results is ongoing and will be used to inform the development of a strategy for the City Centre and its main access points considering all modes of transport. Members will continue to be updated as the project progresses.

9 CARE North Plus

- 9.1 The Council and EU Partners have been successful in an application to extend the Interreg IVB project CARE North (Carbon Responsible

Transport Strategies for the North Sea Area) for another 18 months, commencing in September 2013. Approximately £45,000 has been allocated to Aberdeen City Council which will be used for progressing further work on the Car Club, the SUMP, Locking in the Benefits of AWPR schemes and travel awareness and promotion.

10 Electric Vehicle Charging

10.1 Progress is continuing on the installation of a network of publically available electric vehicle (EV) charging points in Aberdeen City as part of the Plugged in Places project funded by Transport Scotland and the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV). All nine sites, equating to twenty charging points, now have power supplies and are awaiting final connections being made by a specialist electrician before 'going live'. It is expected that the points will be operational by the end of August 2013 with an official launch planned for 3rd September. This will be accompanied by supporting information advising users how to safely connect to and operate the units. Information on EV charging in Aberdeen is now available on the Council website:

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/transp ort/pla_electric_vehicle_charging.asp.

This page also includes a link to a site mapping all the electric charging points available to the public in the UK: <http://openchargemap.org/site/>.

10.2 TROs to safeguard parking spaces in front of the units for EVs only are being progressed. Following approval from this Committee in May 2013, the charging service will be offered to the public for free until the end of April 2014 when the situation will be reviewed. However, EV users will still be expected to pay the cost of parking where applicable. Dundee, Edinburgh and Aberdeenshire Councils are following the same arrangement while the Union Square shopping centre in Aberdeen already operates its own charging points on these terms.

10.3 Aberdeen City Council has also been successful in securing additional funding from OLEV as part of their Public Sector Estates Chargepoints Scheme. This scheme funds up to 75% of the cost of supply and installation of EV charging points in the public sector estate. The remainder of funds required will be supported from the Care North programme, as referenced in Section 9. The Council has received £10,800 and two preferred sites are currently being investigated. Further information will follow in a future report to this committee.

Major Projects

11 Non-Housing Capital Projects

11.1 The following are the indicative key milestones for a number of projects funded by the Non Housing Capital programme:

- **Third Don Crossing:** design and contract documentation currently underway; start construction - late 2013, with main contract underway early 2014; opening - autumn 2015;
- **A96 Park and Choose:** design and contract documentation currently underway; start construction - early 2014; opening - autumn 2015;
- **Dyce Drive Link Road:** design and contract documentation currently underway; start construction - early 2014; opening - early 2015 (connection to A96 subject to AWPR contract programme);
- **South College Street Corridor Improvements:** start construction - early 2015; opening - early 2016;
- **Berryden Corridor Phase 1:** design underway; start construction - autumn 2015; opening - autumn 2016;
- **Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route/Balmedie - Tipperty:** procurement underway; contract award - autumn 2014; opening - spring 2018;
- **Marischal Square - Option Appraisal:** City Centre Traffic Model completion - end August 2013; option appraisal completion - end January 2014;
- **Union Street Pedestrianisation:** key milestones to be revisited following Marischal Square option appraisal.

The above will be updated and refined for future reports to this Committee.

12 Haudagain Roundabout Improvements

12.1 Transport Scotland recently commissioned the development work for the recommended improvement at Haudagain Roundabout and a workshop meeting was held with Transport Scotland, Nestrans and Council officers on 28th June 2013 to discuss this. A note of this meeting is appended to a report which was considered by the Finance and Resources Committee on 25th July 2013. This Committee considered the notes of the workshop meeting with Transport Scotland which can be found with the full report at the following link:

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=3090&Ver=4>.

This report has now been deferred to full Council.

12.2 Indicative key milestones for delivery of the Haudagain junction improvements were provided by Transport Scotland during their workshop meeting with officers and are as follows:

- Stage 2 Assessment and confirmation of the preferred route - Spring 2014;
- Stage 3 Assessment and draft order publication - Summer 2015;
- Statutory processes anticipated to take up to 15 months, subject to objections and a Public Local Inquiry – programmed completion Autumn 2016;

- Procurement phase up to 18 months; and
- Construction start - spring 2018.

Further updates on progress will be provided to the Committee in due course.

13 A96 Dualling

13.1 The Scottish Government's Investment and Infrastructure Plan 2011 identified a commitment to complete the dualling of the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen by 2030.

13.2 On the 9th May 2013 the Minister for Transport and Veterans, Keith Brown MSP, set out how the A96 dualling programme will be driven forward over the next few years. The outline strategy identifies packages of design and development work to be progressed with the objective of completing the full dualling between Inverness and Aberdeen by 2030. This includes taking forward:

- Preliminary engineering and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) work along the A96 corridor;
- ongoing design work between Inshes and Nairn, including a Nairn Bypass;
- assessment of possible options for bypasses of Forres, Elgin, Keith and Inverurie after completion of the preliminary engineering and SEA work in approximately 12-18 months' time.

13.3 Transport Scotland is progressing the project and has commissioned Jacobs UK Ltd to provide preliminary engineering support services for initial design work equivalent to a DMRB Stage 1 Assessment. A SEA will also be produced for the route under a separate commission. Transport Scotland and Jacobs have met with the relevant Local Authorities including Aberdeen City Council to discuss the identification of constraints along the A96 corridor and potential improvements along with progress to date and future planned work. An initial review of the corridor issues has been carried out along with junction counts at key locations. There will be engagement with the local communities later this year to increase public awareness and seek initial views on the project. Members will be kept up to date on progress on the development of this project through future reports to this Committee.

Other

14 Scottish Transport Awards and National Transport Awards 2013

14.1 The winners of the 2013 Scottish Transport Awards were announced at a ceremony in Glasgow on 20th June. Aberdeen City Council was nominated for 11 awards and ultimately won 2. The Strategic Transport Fund was named Most Innovative Transport Project of the Year (shared with Nestrans, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority). And despite not

submitting itself into this category, Aberdeen City Council was named Scottish Transport Local Authority of the Year in recognition of the scope and quality of the various awards submissions and the work that is being undertaken in Aberdeen in relation to transport.

14.2 Aberdeen City Council is now also shortlisted for the Transport City of the Year category at the National Transport Awards to be held in London on 17th October 2013.

6. 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 Smarter Mobility aims of *Aberdeen – The Smarter City*: “We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world. We will encourage cycling and walking”, and “We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.”

The projects identified in this report will also assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013, in particular the Thematic Priority of Safer Communities (Safer Roads) and the Multi-lateral Priority – Integrated Transport (Aberdeen is easy to access and move around in).

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

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Appendix A

NORTH EAST TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Minute of Meeting of the North East Transport Partnership

Aberdeen, 17 April 2013

- Present: Councillor Argyle (Chairperson); Councillor Milne (Deputy Chair); and Councillors Finlayson and McCaig (Aberdeen City Council), Councillors Buchan, Clark, and Latham (Aberdeenshire Council); Jennifer Crow (External member); and Maggie Bochel (Adviser to the Board).
- In attendance: Martin Allan (Aberdeen City Council), Tom Buchan (Aberdeenshire Council), Rebecka Coull (Aberdeen City Council), Rab Dickson (Nestrans), David Jennings (SDPA), Kirsty Morrison (Nestrans), Derick Murray (Nestrans).
- Apologies: Eddie Anderson (Deputy Chair), Councillor Grant (Aberdeen City Council), David Sullivan (External Member).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located at the following link:

<http://www.nestrans.org.uk/55/board-meetings.html>

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013.

The Board resolved:

to approve the minute as a correct record.

PRESENTATION – STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2. David Jennings (Strategic Development Plan Manager) joined the meeting and outlined the joint working which was ongoing between Nestrans and the Strategic Development Planning Authority, and the relationship between the two organisations; and advised of the process to date in relation to the Strategic Development Plan.

The Board resolved:

to note the information provided, and to thank Mr Jennings for attending the meeting.

LIAISON BETWEEN REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS, THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND OTHERS

3. With reference to article 3 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided an

update on liaison with other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs), the Scottish Government and others.

The meetings included –

- Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Aviation in Edinburgh on 27 February 2013
- Regional Transport Partnership Chairs meeting in Inverurie on 6 March 2013
- Health and Transport Action Plan Steering Group in Aberdeen on 8 March 2013
- Local Authority and Bus Operator Forum Steering Group meeting in Aberdeen on 13 March 2013
- Meeting with Scotrail in Aberdeen on 14 March 2013
- Scottish Parliament Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee in Edinburgh on 20 March 2013
- Scottish Parliament Local Government and Regeneration Committee in Edinburgh on 27 March 2013
- Meeting with Transport Scotland in Aberdeen on 4 April 2013 in relation to the Haudagain roundabout.

The Director made reference to recent press coverage which had suggested that bus lane operation times in the city would be extended, and advised that the Local Authority and Bus Operator Forum Steering Group would be presenting evidence to the Local Authority and Bus Operator Forum, which would be forwarded to this Board thereafter, and when appropriate to Aberdeen City Council for consideration, if deemed appropriate.

In relation to page 7 of the report, members queried as to whether the PricewaterhouseCoopers report on Air Passenger Duty was publicly available. The Director undertook to ascertain if the PwC report could be circulated to members.

The report recommended –

that the Board note progress on liaison arrangements with other Regional Transport Partnerships, the Scottish Government, and others, and arrangements for future meetings.

The Board resolved:

to approve the recommendation.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY REFRESH

4. With reference to article 4 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a report by the Director which presented members with the results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment which had been carried out as part of the refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).

The report recommended –

that the Board consider the environmental report and equalities report, and approve them, incorporating any amendments agreed by members, for consultation.

The Board resolved:

to approve the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment, and to request that officers circulate these documents for consultation purposes.

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FUND – UPDATE

5. With reference to article 5 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a report by the Director which updated members on the payments received into the Strategic Transport Fund since the aforementioned meeting.

The report recommended –

that the Board notes the update on payments into the Strategic Transport Fund.

The Board resolved:

to approve the recommendation.

DYCE SHUTTLE BUS AND STATION IMPROVEMENTS

6. With reference to article 12 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013 the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided an update on progress with (1) the Service 80 Dyce shuttle bus usage figures, (2) the Service 80 contract, (3) the Service 80 proposed timetable changes, (4) the proposed turning circle, and (5) Dyce Railway Station.

Members queried as to the unreliability of the Service 80 bus, and officers advised that the bus now received a maintenance check every two weeks, and that the timetable had been altered slightly to make it more reliable.

The report recommended –

that the Board –

- (a) notes the patronage on the Dyce Service 80 shuttle bus;
- (b) approve the continuation of the service being operated by Stagecoach Bluebird on a commercial basis;
- (c) notes the proposed timetable changes;
- (d) notes progress regarding the proposed turning circle; and
- (e) welcomes the proposed enhancements to Dyce Railway Station.

The Board resolved:

- (i) to approve the recommendations;
- (ii) to request that officers liaise with Stagecoach Bluebird to ascertain if it would be possible for monitoring information to continue to be provided for the Service 80 shuttle bus; and
- (iii) to thank Rab Dickson and his team for their work over the years to get the project to this point.

FREIGHT ACTION PLAN UPDATE

7. The Board had before it a report by the Director which brought members up to date with projects relating to freight.

A short discussion took place regarding the possibility or otherwise of Market Street becoming a clearway. Officers undertook to liaise with colleagues in the enforcement team, as it was thought that there was a loading ban in this area.

The report recommended –

that the Board –

- (a) notes the success of the Scottish Government's Road to Rail seminar held in Aberdeen;
- (b) notes the outcomes of the North East Freight Forum meeting;
- (c) notes the completion of the Aberdeen Freight Distribution Strategy;
- (d) notes progress regarding the GreCOR Freight Action Plan; and
- (e) instructs officers to develop the above into a Freight Action Plan 2 in support of the Regional Transport Strategy, and consult with stakeholders and local authorities and report back to the Board with a final version in autumn of this year.

The Board resolved:

to approve the recommendations

PROGRESS REPORT

8. With reference to article 8 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a progress chart summarising the work in the three sub strategies of the Regional Transport Strategy as at 11 April 2013.

The Board resolved:

to note the content of the progress chart.

PUBLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

9. With reference to article 9 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a report by the Director which summarised and advised on a number of different publications and consultations as follows and sought approval of draft responses as appropriate –

- Scottish Government Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee: consultation on Community Transport
- Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan – Proposed Plan
- Aberdeen City Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan
- Night time flying restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted
- Grandhome Development Framework.

In relation to the consultation on the night time flying restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, members requested that the response be amended to request that transfer times be taken into account in order to enable passengers to be able to fly on the 7.15am flight to Aberdeen.

In relation to the Aberdeen City Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan, members requested that the response raise the issue of how new developments would contain and manage parking, and to state that the needs of existing residents should be taken into account in this regard.

Members noted and concurred with the suggestion of officers that Nestrans would not respond to the Scottish Government Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee: consultation on Community Transport, as each Council had already submitted a response.

The report recommended –

that the Board –

Note the content of the report and the documents referred to therein.

The Board resolved:

to approve the recommendations

AVIATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

10. With reference to article 2 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a report by the Director which advised members of the publication of the Government's Aviation Policy Framework.

The report recommended –

that the Board –

considers the new Aviation Policy Framework and its possible implications for the north east of Scotland, and considers its evidence to the Airport Commission in light of the new policy statements.

The Board resolved:

to note the new Aviation Policy Framework and the possible implications for the north east in this regard.

AIRPORT COMMISSION

11. With reference to article 2 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a report by the Director which advised members as to progress made to date regarding the Airport Commission (the Davies Commission).

Members noted that both the Airport Commission and the Aviation Policy Framework (referred to at article 10 of this minute) did not include the oil industry as a stated priority industry, and queried as to whether these documents were reflective of wider government policy. Officers undertook to follow this up.

The report recommended –

That the Board –

agrees to the response to the consultation on "Aviation Connectivity and the Economy", and to request that officers circulate the draft response to members for approval, prior to the due date of 17 May 2013.

The Board resolved:

to approve the recommendation.

BUDGET MATTERS

12. With reference to article 11 of the minute its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, the Board had before it a report by the Treasurer which provided an update on the Partnership's budget and forecast outturn in this regard, and outlined a virement to the budget as follows:

- (1) a delay in the refurbishment of Fraserburgh Bus Station meant that the completion date would now be next financial year, which released £100,000 of budget which would now be used as an additional contribution within the bus improvements category, towards the City and Shire Bus Stop information initiatives (£13,000), Ellon park and ride improvements (£27,000) and the creation of a layby with a bus shelter in Westhill (£27,000). The remaining £30,000 would be used to increase the budget available for strategic road prioritised maintenance.

The report further advised that £111,000 had been received from developers to date towards the Strategic Transport Fund (STF) and that this money would be retained in the fund in the balance sheet and would not be shown as income in the accounts until works associated with STF projects commenced. Members noted that the fund would release monies to match the level of expenditure as it was incurred.

The report recommended –

that the Board –

- (a) notes the monitoring position and forecast;
- (b) homologates the proposed budget virements detailed at (1) above, as agreed by the Chair; and
- (c) approves the inclusion of the strategic maintenance detailed at (1) above, limited to the budget available from underspend on other projects highlighted in the report.

The Board resolved:

to approve the recommendations.

INFORMATION BULLETIN

13. With reference to article 12 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, 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 as follows –

- Bridge of Dee Scottish Transport Appraisal guidance (STAG) study – part 1 appraisal
- Rail franchises
- East coast main line association
- Inveramsay Bridge

- Bus Regulation (Scotland Bill)
- Rail fare inconsistencies
- Smart ticketing
- Scottish Transport awards
- Nestrans' press releases
- Getabout events

The report recommended –
that the Board –
note the content of the report.

The Board resolved:
to approve the recommendation.

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

14. With reference to article 13 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, 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 information as presented.

PENDING BUSINESS AND REPORTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

15. With reference to article 14 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2013, 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 report recommended –
that the Board –
note the content of the report and agree the provisional scheduling of major reports to future meetings.

The Board resolved:
to approve the recommendation.
- PETER ARGYLE, Chairperson

Appendix B

Management of Parks and Open Spaces

Traditionally, our public parks and open spaces have been used to host a wide variety of mainly open air events, and Aberdeen is no different in that respect from the rest of the UK.

Each year, the parks and open spaces in Aberdeen host a wide range of events and these can range from the large traditional Highland Games to smaller-scale community organised galas and charitable events.

In 2011/12, there were 90 individual events hosted in the City's Parks and Open spaces, all of which directly or indirectly involved the City Events Team. The breakdown of these are as follows:

11 – Directly managed and supported by City Events;

17 – Directly supported by City Events;

62 – Externally managed but overseen by City Events

The Management of the City's Parks and Open Spaces is facilitated through the City Events Service in partnership with the City's Grounds Maintenance Management Team and Environmental Services.

This is an historical agreement, with Service approval being reached in 1997 between the then Arts and Recreation services of Community Recreation and Grounds Maintenance to ensure a co-ordinated approach to Parks and Open Spaces Management.

All applications deemed as an "Event", i.e. an occurrence happening at a determinable time and place, are assessed, consultation is carried out with all interested parties and involved Agencies, and relevant permission or refusal is given by Events Officers, in each individual case striving to achieve the Council target of acknowledgement of application within 3 working days, and permission or refusal within 15 working days of receipt of application.

Permission is given after stringent background investigation and consideration, usually involving Partner Agencies such as Grampian Police, and there are relatively few refusals on the basis that most applications enhance the vibrant Parks and Open Spaces Programme. On the rare occasion that refusal is determined, the Event Organiser is given, in writing, a full and detailed explanation of the grounds of refusal.

However, ever growing demand for use of the City's Parks and Open Spaces has taken a toll on the maintenance of these areas, and it agreed to introduce a pricing structure from 1 April 2012, to contribute to daily maintenance costs.

Each stand alone event incurs a minimum daily hire charge of £250, regardless of status - charity, corporate, private or otherwise.

The rates quoted were arrived at after consultation with other Councils on their procedures and the fees charged for use of Parks and Open Spaces.

Procedure for Complementary Use of Park and Ride Sites

The Council's Lets Office manages the letting system for school and educational properties supported by the Facilities Management team to enable the let to open and operate. This system also enables the consideration of a range of uses by other organisations, including other internal council and external partner services, which comply with agreed terms of use. Priority is given to the primary purpose, with other requests fitting in. Various charges are applied. This system of letting is appropriate as a means of managing usage of Park and Ride/Park and Choose sites.

Recent revenue savings decisions for 2010/11 and beyond have seen the removal of staff from the accommodation buildings serving the Park and Ride facilities during the day, although staff have been made available through the Street Cleansing Team to open, close and clean the facilities. At present arrangements for the opening and closing of the site facilities are dealt with by the Councils Public Transport Unit and, therefore, they would deal with the application process, with the primary decision on complementarity with Transport Strategies lying with the Transportation Team. It should be noted, however, that funding for opening/closing by Street Cleansing Teams may be subject to change.

The letting system for schools has a 'letting application process procedure' that identifies the process in terms of both procedures and Officers' responsibilities at each stage in setting up the let. This has been adapted to deal the Park & Ride site usage. An application form has been developed for use by applicants who require use of a particular Park and Ride site and this procedure has been adapted to determine if the application is suitable.

The information provided through the application process also allows the applicants' requirements to be identified in terms of type of use, area required, number of people involved, requirement for waiting and toilet facilities etc.

Charges are applied and users invoiced dependant on the type and length of usage and on whether the application was internal or external to the Council. An additional charge is also be applied if the applicant required the waiting area and toilet facilities to be made available. At present this is dealt with by the Street Cleansing Team under instruction from the Public Transport Unit and arrangements have to be made with them to open and close the facilities. It should be noted that the continuing use of the Street Cleansing Team is subject to available budgets. Confirmation of the need for these facilities is dealt with through the application process. A pricing structure has been agreed.

Appendix C

Our Ref.
Your Ref.
Contact Joanna Murray
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Direct Dial 01224 522618
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27 May 2013

Mrs Kirsty Chalmers
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Dear Kirsty,

Regional Transport Strategy Re-Fresh Consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the re-fresh of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report and Equalities Impact Assessment Report.

I acknowledge that this re-fresh to the 2008 RTS is not a significant change in direction but a better, more up to date alignment with the Local and Strategic Development Plans. Officers from this service have been involved at each stage of this re-fresh and the Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 11 September 2012 agreed a response to you on the draft RTS Main Issue Report, which I am pleased to see has informed the final draft RTS Re-fresh.

Officers across the Council have now had an opportunity to review the final draft, which we are broadly in agreement with. There are a few comments which we would like you to consider in preparation of the final document, as follows:

PRIORITISED MAINTENANCE (p17)

"Nestrans will however, support prioritised maintenance (over and above existing statutory obligations) which could contribute to the aims of this strategy, including for example to enhance safety or where high levels of footway maintenance may encourage walking, on cycle routes, on routes requiring additional maintenance to facilitate safe cycling or motorcycling, or to ensure higher standard of public transport across the north east."

There are surfaces which are not "footways" (using a strict R(S)A 1984

interpretation of that word) which are also of importance for active travel. The addendum should consider support of further maintenance on non-motorised surfaces not associated with a carriageway if they currently play a key role for active travel or could play a more important role for active travel if there was greater maintenance than at present.

This could for example include current active travel routes such as core path 66 Deeside Way, or routes which will be of greater importance through upcoming development such as core path 79 on Nigg Way.

NOISE AND AIR QUALITY (general)

I have attached tracked suggested changes/comments on the SEA Environmental Report regarding air quality and noise. There may be further opportunities throughout the Addendum to highlight the importance of these issues, including for example in Figure 6.1 where *noise* should be included in Strategic Objective 3: Environment i.e. "effects of transport on climate change, noise and air quality."

This response has also been agreed by the Convenor and Vice Convenor of the Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure (EP and I) Committee of Aberdeen City Council. It is intended that this response is further ratified by the EP and I Committee at its next meeting in August 2013.

Please don't hesitate to contact Joanna Murray – Team Leader - Transportation Strategy and Programmes, contact details as above, should you have any queries on the above or attached and I look forward to receiving a copy of the finalised RTS Re-fresh in due course as this will inform the review of the City's Local Transport Strategy which is now underway.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of planning and Sustainable Development