

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee

DATE: 26 November 2009

CORPORATE DIRECTOR: Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT: Strategic Transportation Projects

REPORT NUMBER: EPI/09/113

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. Strategic 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 the Committee:

- a) Acknowledge and agree the contents of this report in relation to all of the projects identified, including the programmes and key milestones;
- b) Note and approve in principle the findings of the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes/Large Vehicle (LV) Lanes study;
- c) Agree that a medium length HOV lane be progressed for a pilot trial as soon as the AWPR and A90 (S) Park & Choose are in place and that consideration be given to large vehicle traffic signal detection southbound on Wellington Road rather than a trial LV Lane;
- d) Agree to the removal of Item 203 - Work with Dyce TMO to introduce workplace parking charges in employment locations, from the Regional Transport Strategy Bus Action Plan, as requested by NESTRANS;
- e) Welcome and agree the content of the NESTRANS proposed Delivery Plan, with the exception of the Item 203 - Work with Dyce TMO to introduce workplace parking charges in employment locations, subject to the approval of recommendation d);

- f) Instruct officers to take into account the content of the Delivery Plan, subject to the approval of recommendation e), in the future preparation of transportation related non-housing capital and revenue budgets;
- g) Acknowledge the work done to date on the Future Operation of Park and Ride;
- h) Instruct officers to continue to work with partners to identify the levels and standards of future Park and Ride service to be specified in a potential tender document including the best method(s) of service delivery and procurement;
- i) Instruct officers to provide regular updates on the progress of the Future Operation of Park and Ride, including referral to the Finance and Resource Committee as soon as the detail of any financial implications becomes known;
- j) Note the 2008 air quality monitoring results as detailed in the Updating and Screening Assessment report of July 2009 and instruct officers to continue to develop a new Air Quality Action Plan.
- k) Note the consultation response to the Aberdeenshire Council Draft Bus Information Strategy.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The various projects mentioned are being funded through the City Council's non-housing capital budget as well as the NESTRANS budget. This report does not contain the detailed breakdown of the capital costs necessary for the delivery of each project. Future reports containing detailed project costs will be referred to this Committee and the Finance and Resources Committee as they become available.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY 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) from which the transportation schemes within this report are an integral part has been subject to an Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

No other implications.

6. REPORT

1 **Introduction**

1.1 Reference is made to the meeting of the former Policy and Strategy Committee on 9 June 2009 when Members considered the report entitled 'Strategic Transportation Projects'. This report outlined the progress on a number of strategic transportation projects, some of which required funding through the City Council's non-housing capital budget as well as NESTRANS capital budget.

1.2 Amongst the various recommendations Members resolved to:

- Consider and comment on the implications of the Non-Housing Capital Plan review

1.3 This report gives Members a further update on the aforementioned report in terms of key transport developments that have arisen very recently.

2 **HOV/LVL Demonstration Project**

2.1 Officers of the Council and NESTRANS held discussions with Transport Scotland in March 2008 on the trialling of High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes (HOV) and Large Vehicle Lanes (LVL). Transport Scotland responded indicating that they were broadly supportive of a study to examine in detail the extent to which this intervention may deliver a range of government objectives for transport. NESTRANS have continued to financially support this project. The project is nearing completion with a draft report recently received. The draft study report is available to view on the Nestrans Website at the following link:

[Draft Report - HOV/LV Lanes](#)

2.2 Project Development

- 2.2.1 The objective of this study was to develop proposals to improve access between Aberdeen and the south of the City, by ensuring the safe segregation of competing demands for road space and suitable measures to provide for priority users. The study had the aim of identifying what would be necessary to deliver a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane on the A90 Stonehaven Road, northbound between Charleston Interchange and the River Dee, and a Large Vehicle lane (LV) on the A956 Wellington Road southbound between the same points on the road network. The study also aimed to identify the optimum location and length for these lanes based on the anticipated future year journey time savings and other benefits.
- 2.2.2 The introduction of a trial HOV lane and LV Lane is identified as an objective in both the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and the Aberdeen City Council Local Transport Strategy (LTS) and is the basis for taking this feasibility study forward.
- 2.2.3 Initial research was undertaken on the use of HOV lanes and LV lanes and survey data was used to inform the study. It was found that there were case studies of existing successful schemes in the UK and USA. Stakeholder input was collected at a series of workshops to inform the development of the project. The comments of stakeholders were used to develop the designs and operating conditions of the trial HOV and LV lanes.

2.3 HOV Lane

- 2.3.1 Best practice design was reviewed including the options for HOV lane layout of nearside and offside HOV lanes. The requirements for entry to the HOV lane and the benefits and disbenefits of the lane operating on a full or part time basis were also discussed.
- 2.3.2 To successfully operate a HOV lane there are a number of elements that need to be considered including; Speed Limits, Possible Signing Solutions, Supporting Infrastructure, Operating the HOV lane, On Road Resources, Maintenance, Safety, Regulation/legislation for HOV lane (Statutory Instrument) and Enforcement. HOV lanes are legally enforceable subject to approval of signs and lining by Scottish Ministers. The engineering aspects for the implementation of a HOV lane have been assessed using the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (*DMRB*). Existing laybys and accesses on the A90(T) had to be given particular attention with regard to safety in the design.
- 2.3.3 The results from traffic model testing suggest that it would be detrimental to journey times for both HOVs and Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) to implement a HOV lane prior to the introduction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR). The introduction of a Park & Choose facility before the AWPR could reduce the impact of the HOV, but there would still be

detriment to journey times for both HOVs and SOVs to implement a HOV lane. *(A Park and Choose facility offers more choice of onward travel than traditional Park and Ride – it offers opportunities to undertake longer distance car trips followed by the shorter distance bicycle trip, or the opportunity for people to use the site as a hub to meet others from different locations and car share from the site to their destination.)* It should be noted that this is the situation without significant uptake in modal shift to HOV and under the terms of the previous Structure Plan that was current during the course of the study.

- 2.3.4 The economic indicator results showed that a long HOV lane had the better journey time performance per person consistently across all scenarios, although the economic indicator difference between the long, medium and short lane tests was only marginal in circumstances post AWPR. The costs of implementing the HOV lane would be less than £1m.

2.4 LV Lane

- 2.4.1 A review of the operation of LV lanes was undertaken for the A956 southbound. While the LV lane proposal would help large and heavy vehicles to make the southbound journey along Wellington Road with more ease than they do at present, the potential safety implications on the approach to junction events and the difficulty in enforcing the access to the lane mean that the scheme would be difficult to implement and especially to gain the necessary support for any permanent Traffic Regulation Order.

A series of alternatives to LV lanes were considered for the A956 southbound, including; banning of turns, adjusting traffic signal timings and extending green times for large vehicles. The feasibility study found that there does not appear to be a strong case for introducing LV lanes on Wellington Road southbound in the short

term. The 'Access from the South' study contains proposals in the medium term for a northbound bus lanes from Charleston to Hareness Road and there may be some benefit from allowing heavy goods to use this if introduced.

2.5 Environmental and Monitoring Considerations

- 2.5.1 Environmental issues of air quality and noise were also assessed. According to the *DMRB*, emissions of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter (NO_x and PM₁₀ – both considered potentially harmful to human health – see Section 6 for more details on air quality) are those of most concern near roads. Increased queuing will usually result in increased emissions from the road. It is likely that scenarios pre AWPR and pre Park & Choose will generate increased emissions in the peak period and those post AWPR and Park & Choose would reduce emissions. In terms of noise, the average speed is unlikely to increase much beyond 50km/h in which case it is unlikely that there will be any significant noise impacts associated with the HOV proposals, either prior to or after the introduction of the Park & Choose scheme or the AWPR.

2.5.2 The HOV lane and LV lane schemes, if taken forward, may be introduced as a trial on the A90(T) and A956 Wellington Road. To establish the effectiveness of the scheme, it is intended to monitor a number of key aspects of the scheme's operation, with data for existing road conditions obtained prior to the opening of the scheme. This monitoring must be undertaken within the 18 month time frame of an Experimental Road Order.

2.6 Conclusion

2.6.1 In conclusion, the HOV lane element of the study has found that a trial HOV lane is physically, safely and legally achievable subject to approval by Scottish Ministers on the A90(T) northbound between Charleston and Cairngorm Road. The HOV lane, in conjunction with measures such as the Park & Choose, could provide a means to lock in the benefits of the AWPR for those travelling by public transport and in vehicles with more than one occupant. The results from testing do however, suggest that it would be detrimental to journey times to implement a HOV lane prior to the introduction of the AWPR and a Park & Choose site to the south of the city. The concurrent review of LV lanes has shown that these may not be appropriate on the A956 Wellington Road southbound but that other measures may be applicable.

2.6.2 The study findings are due to be considered by the NESTRANS Board at their meeting on 30 October 2009, wherein they will be recommended to:

1. Note and approve the principle of the findings within the draft study to allow the report to be finalised and published, and
2. Remit the Study to Aberdeen City Council and Transport Scotland for consideration and Aberdeenshire Council for information, along with a recommendation that a medium length HOV lane be progressed for a pilot trial as soon as the AWPR and the A90 (S) Park & Choose are in place and that consideration be given to large vehicle traffic signal detection southbound on Wellington Road rather than a trial LV lane.

2.6.3 On the basis of the evidence provided in the study report, which was developed in consultation with a stakeholder group that involved, amongst a wide range of groups, representatives from the public transport and freight industries, it is recommended that this Committee also notes and approves the findings of this study and agree that a medium length HOV lane be progressed for a pilot trial as soon as the AWPR is in place, with consideration being given to large vehicle traffic signal detection southbound on Wellington Road rather than a trial LV lane.

3 Access from the North – An Integrated Transport Solution

- 3.1 The study is being carried out in accordance with STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance). A stakeholder workshop was held in February 2008 which developed and considered possible solutions for further analysis. Packages of measures have been developed based on identified scheme objectives, problems and opportunities.
- 3.2 The study involved detailed modelling of the agreed packages of measures along with a period of public consultation. The stakeholder and public consultation on outcomes of option/package appraisal was held jointly with the Berryden Corridor Improvements consultation in late May/early June 2009.
- 3.3 A draft study report has been received and the study outcomes are the subject of a separate report to this Committee.

4 Berryden Corridor Improvements

- 4.1 The purpose of the study is to identify transportation improvements along the Berryden corridor. The study was developed in accordance with STAG and the objective of the study is to identify a package of integrated transport measures that will improve access from Great Northern Road at its junction with Don Street to Skene Square at its junction with Maberly Street.
- 4.2 The study involved the development of options through a detailed appraisal process. The stakeholder and public consultation on outcomes of option/package appraisal was jointly held with the Access from the North consultation. There is a clear linkage between the two studies with proposals from each study impacting on both study areas. This overlap is particularly significant for traffic using St Machar Drive and Bedford Road to access the Berryden corridor area.
- 4.3 The study is nearing completion and the outcomes are the subject of a separate report to this Committee.

5 Framework Agreement

- 5.1 At its meeting in March 2009, the former Resources Management Committee instructed officers to commence the process for setting up a new framework agreement contract for Consultancy Services for Transportation and Environmental Related Professional Services.
- 5.2 The purpose of this framework agreement is to augment Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and NESTRANS' in-house professional service capabilities and expertise, to cope with increases and peaks in workload, and retain flexibility of resources and ensure best value in the use of such external resources as and when the need arises. The contract has been

split into the following work packages, based on our own project requirements and consultants' areas of expertise:

- Policy Support and Development
- Strategic Planning
- Design and Delivery
- Traffic Signals and IT Solutions
- Public Transport Support and Development
- Technical Advice on Waste Management

5.3 The European Procurement procedures are being followed and pre-tender questionnaires were issued to all interested consultants during June and July. These have been evaluated to produce a short list for tender. The tender documents have been issued to the short-listed consultants with a return date of late November. The following provisionally estimated programme identifies the main tasks:

- Pre-Tender Questionnaire - Evaluation period for shortlist – August/September 2009 - **Completed**
- Prepare and issue tender documents – September/October 2009 - **Completed**
- Evaluation period for tender – December 2009 /January 2010
- Contract award and report to Committee – February 2010
- Contract start date – 1st April 2010

5.4 Subject to the successful outcome of these procedures, consultants will be commissioned to provide the appropriate professional services and support, as necessary, to Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and NESTRANS, for a framework agreement of three years, with a possible extension of up to two years. This new commission will commence on 1st April 2010, immediately following the end of the current term commission on 31 March 2010.

6 Air Quality

6.1 In July 2009 the annual Updating Review and Assessment of air quality was reported to statutory consultees, including the Scottish Government and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). The Assessment provides information on pollution levels in 2008, exceedances of national air quality objectives and compares the 2008 values with previous years. In general, pollution levels were similar to previous years.

6.2 Levels of particulates (PM10) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) continue to exceed the national objectives throughout the City Centre, on parts of the Anderson Drive/Auchmill Road corridor and at the new continuous monitoring station on Wellington Road. These pollutants can exacerbate pre-existing pulmonary

and cardiovascular conditions in sensitive individuals, including people who suffer from asthma. As in 2007, PM10 concentrations on Market Street were particularly high, due in part to road works on Market Street itself and the construction works associated with the Union Square development. Although the annual mean NO2 concentration on Union Street was similar to previous years, it is worth noting that the 1 hour objective was marginally exceeded for the first time. The objective has also been exceeded on Market Street in recent years and is often associated with congestion or particularly polluting vehicles parked near the monitoring station e.g. delivering goods. Ongoing monitoring will determine if this exceedance is atypical or likely to occur in future years. The Updating Review and Assessment report is available via the following link.

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AirQuality/aqu/air_Reports.asp

- 6.3 The Council is required to produce a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) by spring 2010. Officers have been working on the generation of options for inclusion within the Plan. In addition to the ongoing infrastructure measures such as the AWPR and the proposed Union Street pedestrianisation, options include increased public awareness of the health impact of poor air quality; the development of planning policy and guidance; further parking controls; greater use of Green Transport Plans and the feasibility of Low Emissions Zones to restrict certain vehicles within parts of the City Centre. The various options were discussed at the North East Transport Consultative Forum (NETCF) on 8th October. A draft Action Plan will be submitted to Committee for consideration in early 2010 following stakeholder feedback and modelling of the options that are considered most appropriate for inclusion in the Plan.

7 NESTRANS Delivery Plan

- 7.1 Progress on the preparation of the NESTRANS Delivery Plan was reported to the former Policy and Strategy Committee in June 2009, outlining that this Plan has taken the information available from the Regional Transport Strategy, its Action Plans, various studies, Aberdeen City and Shire Non-Housing Capital programmes and the Scottish Government's Strategic Transport Projects Review and prioritised a programme of works based on the priorities identified within each document and the potentially available funding.
- 7.2 The NESTRANS Board considered a report on the emerging Delivery Plan at its meeting on 3 September 2009, and agreed to submit the proposed Plan to the two constituent Councils of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire for comment, and also to seek the comments of the North East Transport Consultative Forum prior to making a final decision. This report can be found on the NESTRANS website at the following link:

www.nestrans.org.uk/about/meeting_detail.asp?id=32

- 7.3 The proposed Delivery Plan has been prepared within the input of officers from both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and is presented in sections, as follows:

Completed projects:	To show the overall impact of the Regional Transport Strategy it was felt important to include a section showing those projects relevant to the strategy that have been completed.
Projects being developed and implemented by partners without a Nestrans contribution:	This section reflects the great many projects that are being taken forward by partner organisations, including the private sector, that do not have a financial contribution from the Nestrans budget but meet the aims of the Regional Transport Strategy.
Projects being developed which have a Nestrans contribution	This section contains the Nestrans budget but as many of the projects will be delivered in partnership the partner costs are shown alongside.
Liaison	This section contains those areas where the bulk of cost is in officer time to facilitate projects or policy development.

For ease of reference, within each of the sections, projects have been categorised as nationally significant, regionally significant or locally significant.

Further within these categories projects have been grouped by mode of travel. The document also shows text narrative as well as graphs to summarise the significant range of information. The Executive Summary of the proposed Delivery Plan is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

- 7.4 The proposed Delivery Plan is not an agreed spending plan as NESTRANS recognises that their funding is requested annually from its constituent Councils and not guaranteed, and other partner organisations have a range of further financial considerations as well as transportation, and wider geographical responsibilities. However, the proposed Plan seeks to be a priority setting document showing the general programme of works subject to future budget agreements and partner agreements. This should be taken into account in the on-going development of the City Council's revenue and non-housing capital programmes, thereby offering the opportunity to maximize joint funding on transportation schemes of a strategic nature.
- 7.5 Officers have considered the content of the proposed Delivery Plan within the context of the City's Single Outcome Agreement, the Council's Policy Statement Vibrant Dynamic and Forward Looking, the emerging Corporate Plan and the current Non-Housing Capital Programme for this and the next few years. Officers have also been involved in the development of the various Action Plans which this Council has also approved i.e. Health and Transport, Bus and Freight. The draft Rail Action Plan is still under development.
- 7.6 Whilst the proposed Delivery Plan broadly reflects the priorities of this Council including the content of the various documents highlighted above and our own approved Local Transport Strategy, there is one item which causes some concern within the Liaison section. This is Item 203 - Work with Dyce TMO to introduce workplace parking charges in employment locations.
- 7.7 Item 203 is also referenced in the Regional Transport Strategy Bus Action Plan and the NESTRANS Board is asking the two constituent Councils to consider the removal of this item from the Bus Action Plan, as both Councils had previously broadly agreed to its full content.
- 7.8 The Council's Local Transport Strategy (LTS) includes a range of measures relating to car parking management, commitment to review car parking policy, sustainable development and travel planning. We do not currently have actions or policies relating to workplace parking charges in employment locations. Item 203 relates specifically to the Dyce area where the City's only Transportation Management Organisation exists. Any workplace parking charges here would require to be implemented on a voluntary basis as no such legislation exists to enable local authorities to introduce such measures in their areas. Given the limited nature of public transport to the area the acceptability of the scheme is likely to be poor. There is also the potential economic disadvantage of only one area of the City operating such a system, particularly in the current economic climate. A similar argument is articulated in

the LTS in relation to suggestions to introduce congestion charging in Aberdeen – the LTS states in response to this that ‘a local congestion charge would be premature and could potentially put the City at an economic disadvantage.’

- 7.9 Given the significance of the Dyce area as a local and regional employer, contributing to the economic wellbeing of the City and the North East, it would not be appropriate at this time to consider pursuing such an action, unless it were implemented across the whole of the north east.
- 7.10 It is therefore recommended that that the Committee agree to the removal of this item from the previously approved Bus Action Plan, and welcome and agree the content of the NESTRANS proposed Delivery Plan, with the exception of the Item 203 referenced above. Officers will continue to work with NESTRANS to help realise our collective transportation objectives for the City and Region through partnership working, subject of course to available funding.

8 Future Operation of Park and Ride

- 8.1 NESTRANS commissioned a study in February 2009 to examine the options for the operation of the Park and Ride sites in the North East and the Park and Ride network as a whole. A copy of the July NESTRANS Board paper outlining the findings of this study is attached as Appendix 2 for information. The study report can be found at the following link on the NESTRANS website:

http://www.nestrans.org.uk/docs_info/docs_info.asp?doc_cat_id=29

- 8.2 The study considered a range of issues, as follows:

- No existing financial support - the main park and ride bus services are all provided on a commercial basis;
- Differing approaches to provision in Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire, including fragmented marketing and publicity;
- Declining patronage at City sites - while the Ellon site shows a steady year on year patronage increase, the City sites both experienced an initial surge in patronage followed by several years of decline. Since 2005 there has been some recovery in numbers. Despite some decline at the Bridge of Don site, it still generates over twice as many trips as the Kingswells site.
- Private non-residential parking - less than 10% of car commuters to central Aberdeen pay for parking, and for workers in other locations the

proportion of paid parking will be even lower. This poses a significant challenge to the successful expansion of Park and Ride.

- Availability of finance – the Scottish Government “kickstart” scheme (the Bus Route Development Grant) no longer provides ring-fenced funding to assist in the start up or improvement of bus services.
- Bus priority – limited bus priority on some of the existing and proposed park and ride corridors means that travelling by bus provides no significant journey time advantages over the private car, thus decreasing its attractiveness.

8.3 The A96 Park and Ride Car Park design is well underway, with the submission of the necessary planning application anticipated around the turn of the year. The A90(s) Park and Ride site is also being designed by colleagues in Aberdeenshire Council. Whilst no significant movement has been made on decisions relating to the future business case for smaller park and ride sites at A947 Parkhill and A93 Banchory, the need for smaller interchange points at key locations throughout Aberdeenshire is well made in the Bus Action Plan. It is clear therefore, that progress must be made in determining how the future new park and ride sites will be operated.

8.4 A number of different options have been explored including:

- optimal approach - high quality dedicated services;
- co-ordinated approach - ‘cost effective’ service delivery building upon existing bus services;
- Short term measures to reverse recent declining patronage particularly at Kingswells (acknowledging that Ellon Park and Ride continues to grow patronage);
- Complementary measures such as information, branding, car parking policy, subsidy etc.

8.5 The NESTRANS Board resolved the following:

- (i) to commend Aberdeenshire Council Park and Ride staff for the high level of service delivery;
- (ii) to accept the Park and Ride report as final;
- (iii) to refer the report to the Local Authorities Bus Operators Forum and the two Councils for formal consideration, discussion and identification of a way forward; and thereafter that a follow-up report reporting recommendations be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

8.6 The Local Authority and Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) have discussed this report at both senior officer and Chief Officer level for each partner organisation.

- 8.7 For the edge of City Park and Ride services local authority officers believe that the best approach to achieve a significant step change in the patronage of park and ride would be the optimal bespoke services, e.g. high quality, specifically branded and marketed, high frequency services. However, this could come at significant financial risk to the Council. This solution would not necessarily be appropriate for Aberdeenshire Council.
- 8.8 Given the difference in financial implications for the bespoke and co-ordinated approach, officers discussed the possibility of specifying levels of service and seeking operators' bids as to most efficient means of delivery, and issuing a pre-tender questionnaire seeking estimated figures and options without commitment. Clearly advice would need to be sought from our own Central Procurement Unit and possibly the Scottish Government on future procurement. A Bus Route Development Grant type approach was likely to be preferred based on reducing subsidy and operators should be invited to quote for stand-alone sites or a network of integrated services. The procurement process would require to take into account any State Aid issues and also to ensure invitations to bus operators outwith as well as within the North East. The latter would encourage input hopefully from across the national and international bus industry, although we cannot guarantee this. In order to ensure that at the end of the day we achieve our objectives in a sustainable and managed way into the future, we need to be clear from the outset what are the objectives, roles and responsibilities, helping us to avoid the historical problems that have arisen in the past in managing Park and Ride services in the City.
- 8.9 It is therefore recommended that this Committee acknowledge the work done to date on this issue and instruct officers to continue work with partners to identify the levels and standards of service to be specified and, identify the best method(s) of service delivery and procurement. Regular updates on the progress of this work should be prepared for this Committee and the Finance and Resource Committee should also be advised as soon as the detail of any financial implications becomes known.

9 Consultation on Aberdeenshire Council Draft Bus Information Strategy

- 9.1 The Aberdeenshire Council Draft Bus Information Strategy has recently been received. A consultation response, agreed by appropriate Members, was prepared and sent to Aberdeenshire Council and summary of the response is outlined below.

'Aberdeen City Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on Aberdeenshire Council's Draft Aberdeenshire Bus Information Strategy. The Draft Strategy is clear and well-written and comprehensively sets out the problems faced by the Council in encouraging bus patronage in such an

atypical Scottish local authority area. It also successfully describes what the Council and its partners do already in providing bus information and what the Council wish to achieve in the future.

In general, therefore, we welcome the Draft Aberdeenshire Bus Information Strategy and recognise that the commitments contained within the document should be successful in improving the quality and availability of information for the general public. Aberdeen City Council recognises that, when producing our own Bus Information Strategy, cognisance should be taken of Aberdeenshire's approach, as it is would be beneficial to bus passengers who perhaps regularly cross local authority boundaries to experience a common, region-wide approach to information provision. '

- 9.2 A copy of the draft strategy can be found at the following link on the Aberdeenshire Council website:

www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/publictransport/policies/infostrategy.asp

The detailed response that was sent to Aberdeenshire can be found in Appendix 3.

10 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Acknowledge and agree the contents of this report in relation to all of the projects identified, including the programmes and key milestones;
- b) Note and approve in principle the findings of the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes/Large Vehicle (LV) Lanes study;
- c) Agree that a medium length HOV lane be progressed for a pilot trial as soon as the AWPR and A90 (S) Park & Choose are in place and that consideration be given to large vehicle traffic signal detection southbound on Wellington Road rather than a trial LV Lane;
- d) Agree to the removal of Item 203 - Work with Dyce TMO to introduce workplace parking charges in employment locations, from the Regional Transport Strategy Bus Action Plan, as requested by NESTRANS;
- e) Welcome and agree the content of the NESTRANS proposed Delivery Plan, with the exception of the Item 203 - Work with Dyce TMO to introduce workplace parking charges in employment locations, subject to the approval of recommendation d);

- f) Instruct officers to take into account the content of the Delivery Plan, subject to the approval of recommendation e), in the future preparation of transportation related non-housing capital and revenue budgets;
- g) Acknowledge the work done to date on the Future Operation of Park and Ride;
- h) Instruct officers to continue to work with partners to identify the levels and standards of future Park and Ride service to be specified in a potential tender document including the best method(s) of service delivery and procurement;
- i) Instruct officers to provide regular updates on the progress of the Future Operation of Park and Ride, including referral to the Finance and Resource Committee as soon as the detail of any financial implications becomes known.
- j) Note the 2008 air quality monitoring results as detailed in the Updating and Screening Assessment report of July 2009 and instruct officers to continue to develop a new Air Quality Action Plan.
- k) Note the consultation response to the Aberdeenshire Council Draft Bus Information Strategy.

7. REPORT AUTHORS DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

'Southern Approach Segregation and Prioritisation (HOV/LV) Lanes – Draft Study Report – September 2009

NESTRANS Board Papers 3 September 2009

Appendix 1 – NESTRANS Delivery Plan

Executive Summary

The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) was approved in 2008 and sets out an overall transport vision for the North East for the period to 2021. This Delivery Plan now contains the prioritised and costed actions that have been proposed to date to achieve the RTS aims.

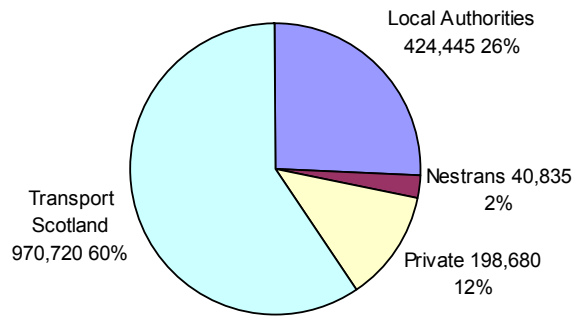
The contents of the Delivery Plan have been drawn from the Action Plans developed in support of the RTS and various transport studies along with the information from the Government's Strategic Transport Projects Review and partner's budget proposals. The projects have then been prioritised in line with the priorities identified in each document and any funding and delivery constraints.

The plan provides suggested expenditure on an annual basis over the short term between 2010/11 to 2012/13 and an indicative programme for the 2013/14 to 16/17 medium and 2017/18 to 20/21 long term periods. A number of projects relevant to the RTS have already been delivered and are included in the Plan for completeness.

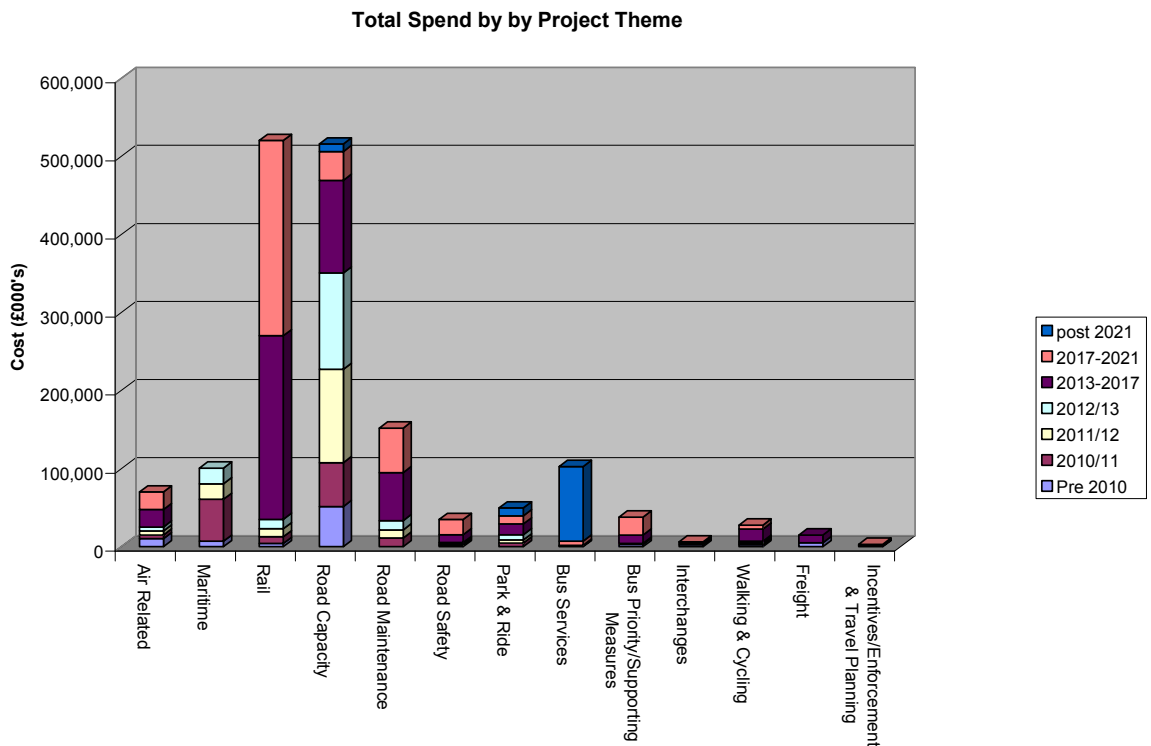
The total cost of actions within the Delivery Plan amounts to over £1.6 billion and is presented in the following groupings in £000's:

1. Projects with Nestrans Involvement	£786,485
Comprising:	
Nestrans contribution	£33,750
Partner contribution	£647,435
Costs beyond 2021	£105,300
2. Completed Projects	£41,585
3. Projects By Partners	£806,660
4. Liaison/Guidance	£30,080
	<u>£1,664,810</u>

Full details of all projects within each of the above groups are given in Appendices 1 to 4 respectively. As can be seen, the majority of the projects within the Delivery Plan require to be delivered by partner organisations and the breakdown in £000's is shown in the following chart:



The level of spend across the main project themes within the Delivery Plan, which reflect the various strategy strands of the RTS are shown in the following chart with the exception of costs associated with liaison and guidance which mainly involves officer time:



Appendix 5 contains the overall Delivery Plan grouped by project theme as shown above.

The level of Nestrans expenditure proposed each year within the Delivery Plan has been assumed to continue at the same level to that provided in the last 2 years by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. It should be noted however that this level is not guaranteed and has to be requested on an annual basis. Based on this assumption however, this would result in a budget of around £34.25M for Nestrans to allocate between 2010 – 2021. This has been targeted towards any gaps in achieving the RTS aims, for example, where greater funding than is currently proposed by partner organisations is felt to be required or where Nestrans is seeking to influence a greater priority for projects in partner organisations by contributing to

them to achieve delivery at an earlier date than may otherwise have been considered. The following table summarises the resultant areas of proposed expenditure by Nestrans in £000's within the overall Delivery Plan outlined above:

Project Theme	Pre 2010	2010-2021	Total
Rail	1,234	2,300	3,534
Road Capacity	250	2,250	2,500
Road Safety	75	3,650	3,725
Park & Ride	0	6,500	6,500
Bus Services	740	1,500	2,240
Bus Priority/ Supporting Measures	3,055	7,650	10,705
Interchanges	0	900	900
Walking and Cycling	2,232	5,500	7,732
Freight	12	2,000	2,012
Incentives/Enforcement and Travel Planning	637	1,500	2,137
Total	8,235	33,750	41,985

Appendix 2

NORTH EAST TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP – 1 JULY 2009

Projects – 4a Park and Ride Study

Purpose of Report

This report advises Board members of the results of the Park and Ride Study undertaken by Atkins and provides recommendations for the way forward.

Background

Atkins was commissioned by Nestrans in February 2009 to examine the options for the operation of the Park and Ride sites in the North East and the Park and Ride network as a whole. Nine objectives for park and ride were identified and reported at the last Board meeting on 29th April 2009.

Issues

The report identifies a number of challenges for Park and Ride in the North East including:

- No existing financial support - the main park and ride bus services are all provided on a commercial basis;
- Differing approaches to provision in Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire, including fragmented marketing and publicity;
- Declining patronage at City sites - while the Ellon site shows a steady year on year patronage increase, the City sites both experienced an initial surge in patronage followed by several years of decline. Since 2005 there has been some recovery in numbers. Despite some decline at the Bridge of Don site, it still generates over twice as many trips as the Kingswells site.
- Private non-residential parking - less than 10% of car commuters to central Aberdeen pay for parking, and for workers in other locations the proportion of paid parking will be even lower. This poses a significant challenge to the successful expansion of Park and Ride.
- Availability of finance – the Scottish Government “kickstart” scheme (the Bus Route Development Grant no longer provides ring-fenced funding to assist in the start up or improvement of bus services.
- Bus priority – limited bus priority on some of the existing and proposed park and ride corridors, means that travelling by bus provides no significant journey time advantages over the private car, thus decreasing its attractiveness.

Park and Ride Options

The options

The study identified a range of options for the operation of the park and ride network, taking account of the challenges identified above. Through a process of sifting against the objectives of the study, these options were narrowed down to four options. These are presented in the table in the Appendix along with the pros and cons of each option.

In conclusion however, it was identified that the Base Case and Reference Case options are incompatible with the policies of both the councils and Nestrans, in that they will fail to deliver substantial growth in Park and Ride patronage. The Reference Case, however, forms a suitable basis for action in the short term to maximise performance of the existing sites until additional sites are developed. Option A offers the most potential for sustained development of Park and Ride in North-east Scotland, but its cost will inevitably be higher than that for Option B.

A947 site

The report identifies that the A947 Park and Ride site, if it were to go ahead, could fit into the structure of Options A and B. However, in view of its proximity to the A96 site, the ability of drivers from the A947 corridor to access the A96 Park and Ride via the AWPR, and the fact that each site on its own generates relatively low demand, the rationale for the provision of the A947 is thought to be questionable.

It is suggested that instead of a full Park and Ride site, it may be appropriate to consider creation of a smaller mini-hub, in line with proposals in the Bus Action Plan and to also link this with the Formartine and Buchan Cycleway.

Bus service routing

The final report provides options for bus service routing to serve the existing and new Park and Ride sites. Demand analysis shows that the existing routes all serve corridors on which there is good potential demand. It is however recognised that there is a need to improve the performance of the existing services, particularly in the City.

A96 to A90 south corridor

It is suggested that a single new bus service connecting the A90 South Park and Ride with that on the A96 would be the best way to serve these two new sites. This route would serve all major demands from these two sites and a suggested routing is given as:

A90 South P&R – Altens (Blackness Road – at least in the peak) – Tullos –
Wellington Road – city centre – A96 P&R – Dyce

It is advised that the service should be to a large extent “dedicated”, with limited stops, a 10 minute frequency and high-quality branding, giving it an image superior to that of conventional bus services in Aberdeen. The routing of this service at either end will require to be determined, however a range of options are provided in the report for serving the Dyce, Altens and Tullos employment areas.

A93 corridor

Demand for the catchment of the A93 site is the lowest of all the existing and proposed sites. Demand from there to the peripheral employment areas is particularly low. It therefore does not seem feasible to provide a bus service to these sites. It is suggested that this site be run in

the same way as the existing Ellon site i.e. with existing scheduled services calling in at the site (albeit with an increased in frequency in order to provide the required capacity).

Other options for service provision

The proposed Park and Ride sites on the A90 South and on A96 are well-served by existing bus services operating from points further south and north respectively. An option exists to serve these sites by using these services, possibly at no cost to the councils. This would be a similar provision model to the existing site at Ellon and the proposed one at Banchory. This option is not, however, recommended in the final report for the following reasons:

- It is unlikely that there would be sufficient capacity on existing services for the extra demand generated by the Park and Ride sites; it would be inefficient for the operator to augment the whole service in order to cater for the additional demand, as buses would be running with empty seats from (for example) Stonehaven to the A90 South site, or from Inverurie to the A96 site. (In contrast, the Ellon and Banchory sites are close to the outer ends of some of the relevant bus services);
- Without a service subsidy agreement it is very difficult to see how a sufficiently high standard of service could be provided, with the right combination of frequency, fares and vehicle quality; and
- It is estimated that provided the whole Park and Ride operation is designed so as to attract enough usage, and as long as services are not over-specified, subsidy levels could likely be around those quoted in para 4.17 (around £0.35 per single trip at most).

Complementary measures

In addition to the four options, the study also identifies a range of other measures that will be required in order to make Park and Ride a success. These are:

◆ **Information and branding**

The Best Practice examples described in the report emphasise the importance of effective marketing for Park and Ride facilities, especially as they are aimed at attracting users who may well not be used to using buses. Publicity material for the existing Park and Ride services into Aberdeen is fragmented and lacks impact; the buses themselves are also not used effectively to promote the service. It is essential that a mechanism be found to improve this, both for the existing sites and new sites.

◆ **Bus service subsidies**

Looking at Best Practice elsewhere in the UK, and considering the relatively low levels of demand experienced and predicted at Aberdeen's Park and Ride sites, it seems highly likely that some financial support for dedicated bus services to new Park and Ride sites (even if only on a "kickstart" basis) will be required if substantial patronage growth is to be achieved. It may be, however, that under "Option B" bus services to the "inter-urban" sites (Ellon and Banchory) could continue to be provided in the same way as Ellon is served at present, i.e. by regular commercial services (supplemented where necessary by supported services to non-central destinations).

◆ **Supporting policies**

One of the strongest messages arising from study of Best Practice elsewhere in the UK is that the successful development of Park and Ride is impossible without the right supporting policies, particularly in respect of a Parking Strategy in the city centre (and other destination areas where appropriate) and bus priority measures. (Paras. 3.17 to 3.19 in the final study report refer).

Park and Ride works well in locations such as Durham and York because access to, and parking in the city centre is necessarily constrained for physical and geographical reasons; in other places such as Edinburgh there is relatively little availability of Private Non-residential (PNR) parking and public parking is relatively expensive. Aberdeen currently has none of these features; it may be wise to validate the targets for growth in Park and Ride use (see paras. 2.6 and 2.11 of the final study report) in terms of their feasibility vis à vis existing and potentially achievable parking policies.

Nestrans officer views

It is Nestrans officer's preliminary view, without the benefit of full discussion with bus operators and the two Councils, that the following options should be taken forward:

- to pursue the actions of the reference case in the short term;
- that Option A be taken forward in order to strive for optimal provision of Park and Ride sites and services but that consideration be given to whether a co-ordinated approach to management / administration / marketing at all sites, as outlined in the second bullet point of option B, would be more appropriate; and
- that LABOF discuss and recommend a preferred service routing along the lines of the proposals for a dedicated cross-city service between the A90 South and A96, as outlined in the report.

This is however only Nestrans view at this time and further discussion is still required with LABOF and the two Councils in order to come to a consensus view on the most appropriate way forward.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

- agree to accept the Park and Ride report as Final;
- agree to refer this to LABOF and the two Council's for formal consideration, discussion and identification of a way forward;
- that a follow up report be submitted to the Board reporting these recommendations.

Options and constituents	For	Against
Base Case (BC):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No additional sites ◆ Commercial bus operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Semi-dedicated / diverted in City ○ Diverted at Ellon ○ No direct control by partners ◆ Consistent car park administration by council (security + information at all sites) ◆ Very limited marketing ◆ Only public finance for car park administration and maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional expenditure or action required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS/LTS targets for growth in P&R will not be met; no additional sites, limited growth at existing sites. • Existing city P&R sites will continue to under-perform. • No co-ordinated marketing of P&R into Aberdeen.
Reference Case (RC) - two year development horizon:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No additional sites ◆ Commercial bus operations – close working partnership with operators to improve services (possibly some financial support for ‘enhancements’ on a <i>de minimis</i> basis) ◆ Introduce enhanced priorities for buses providing P&R services (deliverable within two years – bus lanes and/or priority at signals and/or other measures such as bus gates) ◆ Consistent car park administration by council (security + information at all sites) ◆ Enhanced aggressive coordinated approach to marketing. This would draw on best practice elsewhere, ensuring that all three existing P&R sites are marketed in a common way, with unified branding and combined publicity material. ◆ Public finance increased, within limits, for bus service ‘enhancements’, bus priority development, car park administration and maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement for additional finance limited; of order £0.5m capital, up to £2m/annum revenue. • Better performance secured from existing sites. • Possible economies from combining marketing, as well as it being more effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS/LTS targets for growth in P&R will not be met as no additional sites opened.

Options and constituents	For	Against
Option A – Optimal case		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Six sites (existing plus A90 South, Banchory and A96) ◆ Overall management / administration / marketing for all sites and services – by Nestrans, or some other joint body created for this purpose – either directly or by a contracted organisation such as a bus operator ◆ Bus operations developed to operate between city centre and P&R Site and/or Industrial Areas with public support (commercial+ and supported services) to achieve optimal operation on a site-by-site ‘best value’ basis ◆ Enhanced priorities for buses providing P&R services ◆ Consistent car park administration (security + information) procured on a site-by-site ‘best value’ basis ◆ Enhanced aggressive coordinated approach to marketing ◆ Public finance increased (within limits?) to meet all the above requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS/LTS targets for growth in P&R are capable of being met. • More effective management of whole P&R network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest cost: up to £1.5m capital, plus up to £5m/annum revenue, depending on site development. • Requires close co-operation and joint working by three authorities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Six sites (existing plus A90 South, Banchory and A96) ◆ Overall management / administration / marketing for all sites and services – by Nestrans, or some other joint body created for this purpose – either directly or by a contracted organisation such as a bus operator ◆ Bus operations developed to operate between city centre and P&R Site and/or Industrial Areas with public support (commercial+ and supported services) to achieve optimal operation on a site-by-site ‘best value’ basis ◆ Enhanced priorities for buses providing P&R services ◆ Consistent car park administration (security + information) procured on a site-by-site ‘best value’ basis ◆ Enhanced aggressive coordinated approach to marketing ◆ Public finance increased (within limits?) to meet all the above requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS/LTS targets for growth in P&R are capable of being met. • More effective management of whole P&R network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest cost: up to £1.5m capital, plus up to £5m/annum revenue, depending on site development. • Requires close co-operation and joint working by three authorities.

Options and constituents	For	Against
<p>Option B – Co-ordinated approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Six sites (existing plus A90 South, Banchory and A96) ◆ Co-ordination of management / administration / marketing at all sites but actual management remains in hands of the two councils (either directly or contracted out) ◆ Bus operations developed to operate between city centre and P&R Site and/or Industrial Areas with limited public partnership support (primarily commercial+) to achieve 'best value' operation in tranches of 'edge-of-city' and 'further-out' bases ◆ Enhanced priorities for buses providing P&R services ◆ Consistent park administration (security + information) procured on a 'best value' basis related to 'edge-of-city' and 'further-out' sites ◆ Enhanced aggressive coordinated approach to marketing ◆ Public finance increased, within limits, to meet the above requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS/LTS targets for growth in P&R are capable of being met. • Less administrative change than Option A. • Lower revenue cost than Option A; up to £4m/annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of divergent approaches to P&R management leading to less effective development of P&R serving the City.

Appendix 3

Draft Aberdeenshire Bus Information Strategy – Aberdeen City Council Response

Aberdeen City Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on Aberdeenshire Council's Draft Aberdeenshire Bus Information Strategy. The Draft Strategy is clear and well-written and comprehensively sets out the problems faced by the Council in encouraging bus patronage in such an atypical Scottish local authority area. It also successfully describes what the Council and its partners do already in providing bus information and what the Council wish to achieve in the future. Aberdeen City Council has the following points to make, which we hope will be helpful in finalising this important Strategy:

1.1.2 It may be worthwhile including information on the location of bus stops here, as being unaware of the location of a local bus stop could be a barrier to use of the service.

3.1.3 It may be worthwhile highlighting that, before the journey, users also need to find out how to signal to a passing bus that they wish to get on (do they have to stick out a hand to flag it down for example?).

3.1.4 Similarly, during the journey, irregular users will also need to know where to get off the bus and how to signal to the driver that they wish the bus to stop so that they can alight.

4.3.1 and 4.3.2 As above, users need to know how they signal to the bus driver that they wish the bus to stop so that they can get board or alight.

4.5.1 The document states that information items will be available "where it is necessary and cost effective to provide them". If the Council is aiming for an approach above the minimum standard, it may be necessary to provide information even in those areas where it does not prove cost-effective.

Table 5.1 The table may be more comprehensible if the 'what type of information' column came before the 'where the information is needed' column.

6.2.2 Most people will benefit from Real Time Information (RTI) on high frequency busy services and at interchanges. RTI may be wasteful on routes with few services and could be poorly used in rural areas. It is likely that on low frequency routes, there will be few 'turn up and see' passengers – users of these services are likely to know when the next bus is due. Irregular users may, in fact, be put off if confronted by an RTI display that states they will have a considerable wait before a bus arrives, hence RTI may not be the most suitable method of information provision on such corridors.

6.2.3 The document states that RTI confirms that passengers 'won't have too long to wait'. It may be worthwhile re-wording this as, in fact, the opposite could be true.

6.2.3 It is stated that RTI could “significantly increase the perceived quality of service on offer”. This may not necessarily be the case on rural corridors where services could be infrequent.

6.2.4 It is stated that mobile phone technology can reduce the cost of providing ‘at stop’ equipment. This is undoubtedly true, but it should be appreciated that, in the case of SMS messaging, the cost of obtaining information is transferred to the user, whereas RTI is free for them to use.

7.2 The figures from the Aberdeenshire Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey are impressive, but could perhaps be contextualised with some information on how big this sample was, how representative of the population, etc.

8.2 It may be helpful for some users if typical journey times could be included on maps so that they could know what the realistic times to/from their destinations will be.

8.3 It may also be helpful to include information on typical journey costs on printed timetables. This could be beneficial in encouraging new usage as, before trying something for the first time, people are likely to want to know how much it will cost.

9.1.1 The document states that the Council will take account of “what is already being done (by operators and authorities) and how best to incorporate or enhance this, rather than requiring something new”. It is appreciated that such an approach may represent best value, but there is a danger that such an approach may be limited in encouraging new, rather than just maintaining existing, patronage.

9.2.1 The Strategy states that “high standards in the display and maintenance of bus stop information and to attain or exceed the Scottish Government’s recommended minimum standards for such information”. Should a maximum standard approach not be adopted, especially given that there will be little financial implications for the Council?

9.3 It is stated that “Bus operators should provide timetable leaflets free of charge, except in exceptional circumstances”. Perhaps this needs revising as there are few circumstances under which potential users will pay for a timetable before trying the service.

9.3 It is stated that “Where changes are made to bus services that are featured in area or corridor timetable booklets, bus operators should produce addendum leaflets or booklets containing the updated information”. There is a danger that addendum leaflets and suchlike could cause confusion. Perhaps completely new timetable booklets should be expected whenever changes to services are made.

9.3 It may be beneficial to include ticket prices and fares information at least for typical journeys or fare stages on printed timetable leaflets. New users may not be attracted to try a service if they are unsure of what the likely cost will be.

9.3 Some reference as to how printed materials could be enhanced for the visually impaired (e.g. large print timetables, black letters on white background, sans serif font) could perhaps be included here. Operators may not produce information of the desired quality if specific standards are not set out.

9.3 Timescales are described as short / medium / long term. Could this be clarified further, for example does short term mean within one year or within five years?

9.3.5 The 'above standard' seems to refer to a minimum standard. Should not maximum standard, high quality material be demanded, especially from commercial operators?

9.3.6. Some reference to what standards will be adopted if the Council are forced to replace printed information could be useful here. Will this be maximum standard high-quality information, for example?

9.6 The document states that "Displays should carry, where practical, information on ticketing opportunities". It may be more useful if full fare and ticket information is included at the bus stop. Again, this may be beneficial in encouraging new users previously discouraged because they did not know how much their journey was likely to cost.

9.6 Perhaps standards should be set out on how to make bus stop information accessible to the visually impaired?

9.6 A reference to ensuring that bus stop displays are legible in darkness could be included here. This may be particularly important in unlit rural areas.

9.6 Information on typical journey times to/from key destination could also be included on displays if, as suggested in 2.8.3, the Council wish to "draw out the competitive advantages of the bus". New users may wish to compare travel times with the car, for example.

9.7 Perhaps some mention of how information will be made accessible to the visually impaired could be inserted here.

9.7 Regarding on-bus information, it is stated that "All regular drivers must be able to give full information to passengers in respect of timetables, fares and special ticket promotions". Should this not be "all drivers" as information could be requested at any time?

9.8 Regarding bus operators' websites, it may be beneficial to suggest that typical journey costs are also included. Non-users will want to know what their journey will cost if they are to be encouraged to try bus travel for the first time.

9.10 Although mention is made of how the Council will monitor some of the standards set, there is no indication of how others, such as bus stop information and on-bus information, will be. Reference should perhaps be made to this, whether it, for example, takes the form of regular bus stop and on-bus surveys? It may also be helpful for monitoring, if SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound) targets are set.

In general, therefore, we welcome the Draft Aberdeenshire Bus Information Strategy and recognise that the commitments contained within the document should be successful in improving the quality and availability of information for the general public. Aberdeen City Council recognises that, when producing our own Bus Information Strategy, cognisance should be taken of Aberdeenshire's approach, as it is would be beneficial to bus passengers who perhaps regularly cross local authority boundaries to experience a common, region-wide approach to information provision.