

SERVICE UPDATE

<u>Name of Service:</u>	Strategic Place Planning
<u>Date:</u>	November 2018
<u>Title of Update:</u>	Strategic and Local Transport Update
<u>Report Author:</u>	Anthony Burns
<u>Contact Details:</u>	Email: anburns@aberdeencity.gov.uk Tel No: 01224 523325

UPDATE:

The Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy (LTS) 2016-2021 was adopted in 2016 and sets out the policies and interventions adopted by Aberdeen City Council (ACC) to guide the planning and improvement of the local transport network over the period to 2021, under the topic headings of Support, Maintenance, Management, Sustainable Development and Travel, and Improvements.

This Service Update provides information on recent progress made on a range of strategic and local transport projects and initiatives that are contributing to the successful delivery of the LTS, as well as wider transport aims and objectives.

Link to last bulletin:

<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s88492/8%2011%20September%202018%20-%20Strategic%20and%20Local%20Transport%20Update.pdf>

1 SUPPORT

1.1 Strategic Rail Network

1.1.1 Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail Improvement Project

Upgraded intercity trains were launched on October 8th, offering greater capacity, on-board amenities and a reduction in journey time of ten minutes. Additionally, several update meetings took place to advise Reference Group Members of progress with the consultant's – Arup – assessment of constraints and opportunities for journey time reductions on the lines between Aberdeen and the central belt. Their report was scheduled for discussion by the Reference Group during September/October with the wider stakeholder discussion offered by the past Minister for Transport following thereafter. The meeting discussed the technical process the consultants are following to determine the available options and benefits. Arup are due to report interim findings to the Reference Group on soon.

1.1.2 Service Enhancements

Scotrail timetable changes, effective 9th of December 2018, will see a new hourly Aberdeen to Montrose service introduced, providing a minimum of an hourly service at Laurencekirk, Stonehaven, and Portlethen.

1.1.3 Kintore Station

Various streams of work are continuing to be progressed as follows:
Work is progressing well on the finalisation of the land acquisition conveyancing processes for the various plots of land required –

- a) The principal Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) has gone through due process, and Aberdeenshire Council now has control over the plots covered by this order;
- b) The secondary CPO is going through due process, and the Council is anticipated to be in control of this land early November;
- c) Negotiations have been completed with owners of land required for construction of the rail station on the north-eastern side of the rail line;
- d) Smaller parcels of land and a servitude agreement is currently being agreed with landowners to the south of the car park site.

Designs for ancillary footway and junction improvement works on Northern Road, Kintore, have been finalised and tendered, with these works being programmed for physical construction in advance of the station opening. The final iteration of detailed design is also in progression, working in parallel with the final designs for the platform works. Discussions are progressing between Nestrans, Aberdeenshire Council, Transport Scotland and Network Rail regarding the final arrangement for contracting the main access, car park and platform works. Pre-construction Archaeological survey work has been commissioned, with this to be executed at an early stage once access to the land is finalised. Artists have been commissioned to undertake engagement with the community, building on existing work, with the objective of identifying deliverable options to be incorporated into the final design of the station and car park.

1.1.4 Station Improvements

Abellio ScotRail have submitted a number of planning applications to upgrade or improve stations within Aberdeenshire.

- o At Stonehaven station, the proposal is to renew the Shelter on Platform 2 north-bound, to redecorate the underpass, refurbish the existing disabled WC and Waiting Room and a renewal of platform seating.
- o At Inverurie station, the application is for installation of new shelters, renewal of platform seating and refurbishment of the WC for disabled passengers.
- o Renewal of platform seating and internal seating within the waiting room at Laurencekirk

There is also an application for platform extensions at Inch, from existing lengths of just under 130 metres to 155 metres, to accommodate longer trains which will be introduced as part of the Aberdeen to Inverness rail upgrade.

1.1.5 Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Ellon to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study

AECOM have produced two technical documents in relation to Sensitivity Testing around the rail option to Ellon and an Engineering Review of potential station sites between Aberdeen and Dyce. Look for link to any report.

1.1.6 Cross Country Franchise

The current franchise, operated by Arriva, is due to end in December 2019. The Department for Transport (DfT) is currently running a competition to

select the next operator. The DfT has instigated a consultation seeking views on various aspects of the Cross Country passenger rail service, to which Nestrans has responded. This will inform what the Department asks from potential operators when reletting the franchise in 2019.

1.1.7 Minimising Delays and Disruption

As it mounts its greatest ever response to the challenges caused by autumn leaf fall this year, Network Rail in Scotland is employing measures including: deployment of more leaf busting trains, additional crews as well as an extensive information campaign aimed at customers and staff. As part of this information campaign, a video has been produced explaining the issue of leaves on the line and how it is tackled. The video can be viewed here: <https://t.co/xOK4grGTtb>

1.2 **Trunk Road Network**

1.2.1 A96 East of Huntly Dualling

A series of exhibitions took place during the week beginning 8 October, allowing the public and road users to see and comment on a number of initial options that have been developed for the 26 mile section of the A96 between East of Huntly and Aberdeen and help identify a preferred route option in 2019. More information can be found at: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/43257/leaflet-october-2018-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen-a96-dualling.pdf>

1.3 **Air Services**

1.3.1 From 31 March 2019, Wizz Air will increase the number of weekly flights to Gdansk in Poland from 2 to 3, adding in an extra Thursday flight to its Tuesday and Saturday rota.

2 **MANAGEMENT**

2.1 **Air Quality**

2.1.1 Low Emission Zone

The Council continues to work with the Scottish Government and partners to determine the requirement for, and form and scope of, a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Aberdeen, in accordance with the Programme for Government.

Officers are currently awaiting the completion of a base air quality model for Aberdeen by SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency). The intention is then to run the model with a '2020 Do Minimum' scenario to ascertain how air quality is likely to look in 2020 with minimal intervention beyond existing and planned projects. Should the model suggest exceedances of air quality objectives are still likely in the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) by 2020, a series of intervention scenarios will be modelled and their likely impacts on air quality evaluated in order that an optimum solution can be identified that will bring emissions down to an acceptable level.

A national Low Emissions Zone Scotland website, <https://www.lowemissionzones.scot/>, has recently launched, providing information to members of the public and businesses on LEZs in general and the progress being made by the four cities in particular. The Aberdeen section

of the website will be updated as further information becomes available and as the project moves forward.

It is anticipated that a full Service Update on work undertaken to date on an Aberdeen LEZ will be prepared to coincide with the December 2018 meeting of Full Council.

3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAVEL

3.1 Land Use Planning

3.1.1 Strategic and Local Development Plans

Proposed Strategic Development Plan (SDP) currently out for consultation until mid-late December.

Work continues apace on the next iteration of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) for 2022, with pre-main issues consultation taking place between March and May 2018 and results subsequently analysed. Main Issue Report (MIR) text and policies now being drafted. Transport continues to be a key consideration during this process with policies being both updated and streamlined.

3.2 Travel Plans

3.2.1 Workplace Travel Planning

As part of CIVITAS PORTIS work package 2ABZ3 - Workplace Travel Planning, consultants SWECO held a drop-in travel planning event on the 11th of October in the North Dee area to assess employees' current levels of engagement with travel planning and to establish barriers to sustainable transport uptake amongst businesses in the area. This will help inform, not only this study, but also a similar exercise in South Dee during 2019.

3.3 Car Sharing

3.3.1 Liftshare, who administer the ACC car share scheme, were engaged to run events in Marischal College and Altens East during the first week of November to encourage more staff, and the general public, to sign up to the scheme. The event was very successful and there are now a total of 90 members signed up.

3.4 Car Club

3.4.1 Mastrick vehicle removed due to low demand. Still overall increase in number of car club vehicles in Aberdeen with the fleet currently numbering 41. Further information is available from the [Co-wheels Car Club](#) website.

3.5 Travel Information and Awareness

3.5.1 European Mobility Week

European Mobility Week took place between the 16th and 22nd of September 2018 and was marked by a series of events throughout Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, including bicycle roadshows, both at schools and the University of Aberdeen. The annual In Town Without My Car Day (ITWMCD) event was due to take place on Sunday 16th September, however due to high wind speeds the event was cancelled on health and safety grounds.

Middleton Park School held its annual Big Cycle to Scotstown Moor with the P4-7 pupils on Friday the 14th of September with assistance from ACC and Adventure Aberdeen. On the 18th of September an Active Travel Day took place at Westpark School in Northfield, which saw part of the road outside the school closed to traffic and fun activities held in the traffic free space. The activities on offer included; the Getabout Roadshow, scooter sessions and a smoothie bike run by the I Bike Officer as well as games in the street run by Active Schools coordinators.

3.5.2 Smarter Choices Smarter Places

The 2018/19 Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) programme is now more than half way through. The SCSP six-month report was submitted to Paths for All at the end of September. Due to resource pressures, several of the SCSP projects have not been taken forward this year. Other options for using the remaining SCSP funds are currently being investigated.

3.5.3 Winter Safety Campaign

Due to a trend of increased pedestrian casualties in Aberdeen city centre during the hours of darkness in winter months, a pedestrian safety campaign is being undertaken from Nov-Jan, which will be focused on adverts on digital bus shelters in the city centre to encourage greater awareness amongst drivers and pedestrians.

3.6 **School Travel and Young People**

3.6.1 Hands Up Survey

2018 survey took place during September, with data received from schools now being analysed and processed by Sustrans.

4 **IMPROVEMENTS**

4.1 **Walking and Cycling**

4.1.1 River Don Paths

Farburn – Landowner discussions are going well with one signed and returned Path agreement received thus far. Further bid to be made to Sustrans for construction funding once agreement signed. Aim to complete path agreements and apply to Sustrans for construction funding in coming weeks before moving onto tender works.

Mugiemoss – The path agreement has come back from the landowner with suggested changes that are being considered. The landowner has now confirmed that they do not own all the section of path, with the owner of remaining section now being investigated as a matter of priority and a potential landowner has been contacted. Designs and tender documents are prepared so this should still allow the project to be finished this financial year.

Arjo Wiggins – The landowners have confirmed they are in favour of the project, but have asked for the path agreement to be put on hold whilst changes occur within the company. The project is unlikely to be undertaken this financial year and a virement is proposed in separate budget report.

4.1.2 Wellheads Cycle Link

Bid to Sustrans Community Links to seek match funding of Nestrans contribution was approved and available budget is now £60K. Detailed design

ongoing and consultation on preferred design undertaken with Sustrans and Nestrans officers during September. External consultation planning now underway.

4.1.3 A90 Parkway Cycle Route Extension

Toucan crossing on Parkway west of Ellon Road roundabout has been activated and is now in operation. ACC Estates still seeking to purchase land at Buckie Farm to complete access through area adjacent to tree belt toward Balgownie Road. Budget approved for 2018/19 to progress necessary land acquisition. ACC continuing to seek approval for land purchase. Redesign of cycle route underway following comments received from Sustrans.

4.1.4 Marywell to A956 Wellington Road Cycle Route

Contract has now been awarded for the Options Appraisal for the Cycle Path. Report due end of Jan 2019.

4.1.5 Middlefield and Northfield Active Travel Project

Nestrans funded works to improve junctions of Provost Rust Dr and Manor Ave have been re-tendered and the contract awarded to Hunter Construction who started works in June. Programme extended due to damaged street lighting cable that requires to be rectified and additional paving that is to be provided.

4.1.6 Wayfinding

Public consultation exercise took place during October. Results of the questionnaire are currently being analysed to inform the writing of the Feasibility Study, due for completion at the end of the year.

4.1.7 Bicycle Hire Scheme

Another element of the 2ABZ1 work package is procuring a consultant to carry out an options appraisal for a bicycle hire scheme. The bicycle hire scheme brief is going out for tender in November with the resulting report expected back from the consultants in May 2019. The outcomes of this report will be reported to a future committee and will determine the next steps for this project.

4.1.8 National Cycle Network Review

As part of their 2017-22 national strategy, Sustrans is undertaking a UK-wide review of the National Cycle Network (NCN) to inform where the NCN needs developing, realigning, and in some cases, curtailing. The plans will also enable the development of a UK-wide best practice quality standard for the NCN which would serve as a resource for the development of traffic-free cycling and walking routes

4.1.9 A96 Collective Travel Study

The A96 Collective Travel Study, part of the EU-funded Civitas Portis project (2016-2020), aims to influence travel behaviour on the A96 Aberdeen to Inverurie corridor. This would be achieved by reducing single occupied vehicle trips and increasing use of buses and active travel between Aberdeen and Inverurie. The Study has identified a number of actions for implementation in the short, medium and longer term i.e. some of the report's actions would have an influence on A96 journeys beyond the project's August 2020 deadline. The short term actions include:

- new cycle parking,
- an electric car and charge point and

- installing innovative digital e-readers at bus stops (replacing paper-based timetables).

Further actions thought likely to influence journeys on the A96 in the medium and longer term have also been identified. These actions will be implemented using Civitas Portis funding support.

4.1.10 Cross City Connections

Options being appraised against STAG criteria and public consultation started on 8 October and has been extended to 30 November at the request of Members of both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to avoid the School holiday period. First draft of the STAG part 2 report due by the end of December 2018.

4.2 **Bus**

4.2.1 Bus Alliance

The North East Bus Alliance, under the Chair of George Mair, met for the first time on 27 August 2018. The Alliance agreed the protocols for operating the Alliance including the roles and remits of the Board and Executive Groups. Nestrans will operate as the Secretariat for the Alliance. Minute not yet agreed, to be circulated at next meeting. However the Alliance did consider a set of statistics on the bus industry and how it wanted to move forward. It was agreed that the focus should be on how bus services can best serve the Councils attempts at improving their places. The Executive Group have been tasked with developing this vision for bus services serving places and to develop proposals for determining what needs to happen and how it might be put into place to achieve the goal of better places. The Group will report initial findings to the Alliance at its next meeting on 29 November 2018.

4.2.2 Bus Services

Enhanced service provision will be introduced in November to two Council supported bus services, with Sunday services being added to both the service 14 (Kingswells – City Centre) and 15a (Airyhall/Craigiebuckler – City Centre evening service). The addition of a Sunday service is being funded via Bus Lane Enforcement monies. Adjustments are also being made to the Monday to Saturday timetable on the service 14 (Kingswells – City Centre) to improve reliability, with an additional vehicle being added to maintain the timetable.

4.3 **Road**

4.3.1 Wellington Road Multimodal Corridor Study

At their meeting in September, Members of the City Growth and Resources Committee agreed the outcomes of the Wellington Road Multimodal Corridor Study STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance) Part 1 Appraisal Report and instructed the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to conduct a STAG Part 2 Appraisal, to consider the eight options identified in the STAG Part 1 report, giving consideration to the emerging options from the concurrent STAG Part 1 External Transportation Links to Aberdeen South Harbour.

Following the meeting, a tender was issued to procure consultancy support for the STAG Part 2 Appraisal and, in November 2018, AECOM were appointed to lead the study. An Inception Meeting is due to take place later this month and the work is expected to be complete in late 2020.

4.3.2 A947 Aberdeen to Banff

The A947 corridor runs from the Bucksburn Roundabout in Aberdeen to Banff, passing through a number of communities, villages and towns along the way – Stoneywood and Dyce in Aberdeen, and Newmachar, Oldmeldrum, Fyvie and Turriff in Aberdeenshire. In 2016, in response to concerns over the safety and quality of the corridor, Aberdeenshire Council adopted the A947 Route Improvement Strategy and, earlier in 2018, a Member Officer Working Group was established within Aberdeenshire Council to oversee its implementation. In September 2018, Aberdeenshire Council hosted an exhibition to update stakeholders on work undertaken on the A947 to date and to present future plans for the route.

The Strategy appraised a series of high-level as well as localised interventions. The former included options looking at dualling the road between Dyce and Newmachar, dualling between Dyce and Oldmeldrum and providing a Newmachar bypass. At present, however, traffic volumes do not justify this level of intervention, although volumes between Newmachar and Dyce are slowly growing towards a point at which dualling could be considered. In the short term, therefore, the focus is on localised interventions – laybys, climbing lanes, and junction improvements – to address safety and journey time concerns.

Surveys and consultations have shown that current laybys are poorly used and not up to standard. Work is therefore ongoing to identify locations for replacement / additional laybys that would be compliant with the DMRB (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges). Options for climbing lanes (to enable overtaking of slow-moving vehicles) are also being appraised, with consideration given as to how climbing lanes and laybys can work together as part of a coherent strategy for the route. Four junctions are also being considered for improvement with survey work undertaken in October to build the evidence base and the outcomes of this is currently being considered. These junctions are:

- A920 (Oldmeldrum to Ellon road);
- B993 Whiterashes;
- B979 North of Newmachar; and
- B979 South of Newmachar.

The current focus of the project is how to demonstrate the benefits of these interventions and take the most promising of these forward. Work is also mindful of the need to consider the impact of the AWPR on the corridor once opened and the outcomes of the A96 dualling option appraisal.

4.4 Public Realm and the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

4.4.1 Roads Hierarchy Review

Consultants AECOM continue to develop options for a revised Roads Hierarchy for Aberdeen for implementation following the opening of the AWPR. A series of project objectives are currently being consulted upon with the client group and are nearing finalisation. Stakeholder engagement is underway and is due to be complete by the end of November. Options are due to be discussed with the client group in late November, thus allowing option appraisal to take place in December.

AECOM intend reporting the outcomes of the option appraisal exercise to the client group in January 2019 and officers anticipate reporting options to Members in the springtime.

4.4.2 Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

A project team (consisting of internal officers representing a range of relevant disciplines, as well as external CIVITAS partners, Aberdeenshire Council, Nestrans and Aberdeen Harbour Board) has been established to guide the development of the revised Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for Aberdeen city centre.

Problems and opportunities for the SUMP to address have been identified and used to develop a draft vision and objectives for the SUMP which have been agreed by the project group. In response to the problems and opportunities, and in the context of wider aspirations to maximise the benefits of the AWPR, establish a new Roads Hierarchy for Aberdeen and deliver the City Centre Masterplan, the vision for the SUMP is:

A city centre transport network that enhances accessibility and permeability by those walking, cycling and using public transport and which contributes to wider aspirations to deliver a safe, sustainable and economically buoyant city centre with an enhanced sense of place.

The vision is supported by the following objectives:

- 1. To support delivery of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan by contributing to the regeneration of the city centre and developing a network of streets that prioritise the movement of people over the movement of vehicles, whilst maintaining necessary and efficient access for business and industry.*
- 2. To minimise the adverse environmental impacts of transport in the city centre and incorporate green infrastructure into new transport schemes wherever possible.*
- 3. To ensure that the city centre is accessible to, and safe for, all and is resilient to the effects of climate change.*
- 4. To encourage and enable more walking and cycling in the city centre, particularly through the provision of more and better infrastructure.*
- 5. To improve the public transport experience to, from and within the city centre, particularly in terms of achieving shorter and more reliable journey times.*
- 6. To improve connectivity between key destinations in and around the city centre by sustainable modes of transport.*
- 7. To support and encourage all vehicular journeys within the city centre to be undertaken in low emission vehicles.*
- 8. To raise awareness of opportunities for travel to, from and within the city centre by clean and sustainable forms of transport, including the potential for multimodal journeys.*

A process of generating, appraising and sifting a series of options to achieve the vision and objectives is now underway and is due to be complete in early 2019 with a view to develop a draft SUMP for public and stakeholder consultation in the springtime.

4.4.3 Tilly-Wood Street Design Project

Since July 2018, Sustrans has been gathering information from local residents, business owners, community groups and school pupils about their perceptions of moving around the Woodside and Tillydrone areas, while surveys to gather data on vehicle numbers and movements in the area and

the purpose of these trips (whether local or through-traffic) are ongoing. This data is being used to draw out key themes and develop solutions in partnership with the local community, with the ultimate aim of developing designs for future implementation to make the area a more welcoming place for pedestrians and cyclists.

A Steering Group has been established to ensure the long-term direction of the project represents the community's priorities, with a first meeting taking place in November 2018 with representation from community groups, local Elected Members and Council officers.

Further community engagement exercises are planned for late November.

5 OTHER

5.1 Nestrans Board Meetings

Most recently, the Nestrans Board met on the 19th of September and 7th of November. Minutes of both meetings can be found on the [Nestrans website](#). The next meeting is due to take place on the 13th of February 2019.

5.2 City Region Deal

Transport Working Group met in Aberdeen on the 9th of October 2018 to discuss progress on the City Region Deal projects. In particular, Transport Scotland have issued a brief to the consultants – Jacobs – for taking forward the option generation and sifting part of the STAG appraisal for the Strategic Transport Assessment. The consultants response was discussed with particular reference to the consultations that will be required and how these consultations will link and be complementary to the other consultations being carried out at this time. Aberdeen South Harbour external roads: The STAG 1 is to be reported to committee during November, with permission being sought from a separate committee to move forward toward STAG 2.

5.3 Origin Destination Analysis

Within CIVITAS PORTIS work package 2ABZ1 - Walking and Cycling, part of Milestone 1, Origin and Destination, is now almost complete by the consultant, AECOM. This study looked at journeys of 10km or less which have an origin or destination in the city and will help inform officers where journeys can be improved as well as potential measures to improve and encourage more active and sustainable travel.

5.4 Transport Bill

The Transport (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Government by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Constitution in June 2018. The Bill covers six policy areas, five of which are relevant to Aberdeen City Council: LEZs; bus services; public transport ticketing arrangements and schemes; pavement parking and double parking; and roadworks. As part of Stage 1 of the Bill, ACC responded to a 'call for evidence', based on the degree to which the Council agreed or disagreed with the contents of the Bill and the likely financial implications on the Council. This was submitted in September.

The Government expects a report on Stage 1 of the Bill to be prepared in late 2018 / early 2019, with debate to follow in early 2019, allowing Stage 2 of the parliamentary process to commence in late January. It is anticipated that Stage 3 will be complete prior to Easter, with the aim of clearing the Bill in time for the Easter parliamentary recess.

5.5 Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC)

Received a Bronze Convention of Scottish Local Authorities Award recognising the work of those funding, delivering and supporting THInC and the Health & Transport Action Plan. The council are a key partner of the Health and Transport initiative and have supported the THInC since its inception.