

27<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Our Ref: AK/N13/4/1

Dear Councillor,

### **A Partnership approach to delivery of Aberdeen Rapid Transit**

I am writing to you as the Chair of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance to express the Alliance's continued commitment to working with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Nestrans on the development of Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART).

Our partners, including bus operators First and Stagecoach, are committed to further exploring the partnership approach to delivery of ART and believe that this is a viable pathway to delivery of this transformative project.

As demonstrated in our support for the initial funding bid to the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund back in 2021, the Alliance is committed to delivering a step-change improvement in public transport provision in the north east and recognises that the enhancements in service provision that ART aims to bring are key to unlocking the delivery of significant bus priority for the benefit of ART and the wider bus network.

The Bus Alliance partners are committed to the development of a Bus Services Improvement Partnership (BSIP) Plan, with a draft already developed through collaborative working across all partners. In January 2025 the Bus Alliance Board also agreed to the development of five potential BSIP Schemes (in line with the legislation, a BSIP Plan must be supported by at least one Scheme). Key to the development of ART is Scheme E a joint Bus Operator / Local Transport Authority Network Review to identify opportunities for enhancing service provision for passengers and identify how ART could be delivered in partnership as part of an improved bus network.

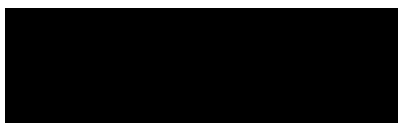
The Bus operator partners are committed to working with the local authority partners of the Alliance to bring forward this network review at the earliest opportunity to inform the development of the ART Outline Business Case.

By joining forces, we can leverage our collective expertise and resources to enhance the public transport network in the north east, providing residents and visitors with a public transport system that supports the ambitions of our city region and delivers against the ART objectives to:

- Improve sustainable transport connectivity into and across Aberdeen, to support sustainable economic growth, widen opportunities, and improve inclusive equality of opportunity; and
- Increase public transport mode share in Aberdeen to support placemaking and the North East's Net Zero ambition.

Should the Council committees and Nestrans Board agree that a partnership approach with bus operators provides a viable pathway to delivery of ART, the Bus Alliance commits to continue to support the development of the Outline Business Case as it progresses and we look forward to building on the many years of successful partnership working in the north east.

Yours sincerely



Robert Andrew  
Chair of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance