

Sustainable Economic Growth Statement 2015/16

Introduction

Section 32(1)(a) of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 provides that as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year each listed public body must publish a statement of the steps it has taken during the financial year to promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions. Nestrans is a listed body within the Act.

This statement is intended to fulfil the requirement of the Act in relation to Sustainable Economic Growth. This statement should be read in conjunction with the statement on Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy and the financial information provided on the Nestrans website that are also required by the Act.

Government purpose and performance framework

The Scottish Government launched Scotland's Economic Strategy on 3 March 2015 which combines work to boost economic growth and increase competitiveness with a drive to tackle inequality. The updated Strategy has four priorities, namely:

- **Investing** in people and infrastructure in a sustainable way;
- Fostering a culture of **innovation** and research and development;
- Promoting **inclusive growth** and creating opportunity through a fair and inclusive jobs market and regional cohesion; and,
- Promoting Scotland on the **international** stage to boost our trade and investment, influence and networks.

Progress will be measured through the National Performance Framework that is to be updated to reflect the new strategic approach. An updated National Performance Framework indicator set with 5 additional indicators was published on 11 March 2016 and Nestrans will ensure that future activity continues to support the requirements therein.

Aligning to the Purpose and National Objectives

The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy, approved by Scottish Ministers in 2008, includes, at page 102, an Appendix outlining how the Regional Transport Strategy objectives align with the National Objectives. This can be found at:

http://www.nestrans.org.uk/db_docs/docs/Nestrans%20RTS%20final%20printed.pdf

The objectives of the RTS were retained within the refresh of the strategy in 2014.

Regional Transport Strategy

Nestrans primary function is to produce and implement a Regional Transport Strategy.

Transport has long been recognised as a significant contributor to sustainable economic growth. The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy was developed in conjunction with the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) Economic Manifesto and the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) Structure Plan. The ACSEF Manifesto sets out a vision for the economic growth of the North East region of Scotland. The SDPA Structure Plan sets out the spatial strategy for achieving that growth. The Regional Transport Strategy examines how the growth can be achieved without increasing congestion levels. As the SDPA were developing a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the North East to 2035 a refresh of the RTS was undertaken to ensure that it takes account of current policies and to better align it with the SDP timeline and the transport implications of this plan. The refresh gained Ministerial approval in January 2014. It builds on the original RTS and should be taken as an addendum to the original strategy document.

The principal ethos in setting and determining the Regional Transport Strategy and subsequent refresh has therefore been to encourage and permit sustainable economic growth.

Achievements in 2015/16

Planning

Nestrans previously developed a Cumulative Impact Assessment of the development proposals across both Council areas. This assessment considered the transport impact of development with the Regional Transport Strategy in place and what further interventions are likely to be required to assist in the objective of achieving sustainable economic growth.

This assessment resulted in agreement between the Councils to develop joint and complementary Supplementary Planning Guidance for issue as part of the Structure and Local Development Plans. The non-statutory supplementary guidance for the Structure Plan 2009 was adopted in 2012 and provided a framework for assessing developer contributions towards improvements to the strategic transport network.

Statutory guidance has been developed as part of the Strategic Development Plan approved by Ministers in 2014 and came into force in August 2015. Nestrans hold and administer the Strategic Transport Fund and to date contributions of over £20.5 million have been agreed, of which almost £1.5 million has already been received. Payment of contributions into the Strategic Transport Fund comes direct to Nestrans and regular reports are made to the Nestrans Board on the monies agreed and received into the fund and progress towards developing and delivering strategic transport projects.

Nestrans has worked with Government and Network Rail to ensure that the aspirations of the North East are taken into account in developing our railways.

Nestrans is a member of the East Coast Mainline Authorities grouping, who aim to highlight the economic importance of the line and need for investment.

Nestrans has worked with partners to develop projects including:

- Investigations into transport improvements in the Bridge of Dee area and along the Aberdeen to Peterhead and Fraserburgh corridor
- Provision of a Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme and promotion of sustainable, active travel through the Getabout partnership and brand
- Various cycling measures

Action Plans

Nestrans has five Action Plans intended to assist in the implementation of the Regional and Local Transport Strategies.

- **Health and Transport Action Plan**
Working with NHS Grampian, our two Councils and the Scottish Ambulance Service we have continued to contribute to a co-ordinator post and focus on the two themes within the refreshed Action Plan:
 - Transport and Public Health – Nestrans provided funding and staffing for various getabout events and promotions
 - Access to Health and Social Care – Nestrans again contributed to the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) service
- **Bus Action Plan**
A bus passenger satisfaction study was again undertaken to build upon the results reported from 2010 - 2015. A promotional campaign was again undertaken during the festive period to provide information about and encourage use of public transport options to Aberdeen City Centre. Nestrans funded a bus shelter for the cross boundary Forfar – Edzell bus service and contributed to marketing for the extended operating zones for the Grasshopper multi-operator ticket and towards a safe and legal minibus course for Community Transport operators. Further upgrades to bus stop infrastructure and information were implemented.
- **Freight Action Plan**
A north east freight capabilities statement was prepared and a freight forum meeting held in November 2015
- **Rail Action Plan**
Nestrans is a member of the East Coast Mainline Consortium and contributed to the preparation of a bid to the Scottish Stations Fund for a railway station at Kintore
- **Active Travel Action Plan**
Nestrans contributed funding towards the development and construction of a number of pedestrian and cyclist improvements. Nestrans has continued to appoint a Cycling Development Officer in partnership with Sustrans, which attracts capital grant funding of up to £100,000 per annum from the Sustrans Community Links programme. The Sustainable Travel Grant scheme provided match grant funding to support implementation of successful sustainable transport proposals.

Projects

In 2015/2016 Nestrans implemented the following:

- Strategic Road – Capacity Improvements
New common database platform – preparation of tender documents
Strategic network monitoring on A944-Langstracht-Westburn- preparation of tender documents
- Strategic Road – Safety Improvements
A947 Route Action – Long term improvement strategy developed and minor safety improvement schemes implemented
Variable Message Signs – Three fixed signs installed on radial routes to display road safety and closure messages and journey time information in future
Accident Study on key corridors – Study to review statistics and identify actions
Implementation of measures from accident study – including road lining, signing, road studs and lighting
Traffic Signals at Aberdeen Crematorium – Installation to signals at previously uncontrolled junction
Bus Safety Campaign – VMS signs rotated around sites to provide guidance for vehicles overtaking buses and pedestrian islands and improve driver behaviour
Absafe Contribution - school safety interventions to target indiscriminate parking
- Strategic Road – Maintenance
A96 West North Street – lighting upgrade between Littlejohn St to Mounthooly
Reconstruct carriageway and section of bus lane at bus stops on Union St (3 stops), King St (1 stop) and Holburn St (1stop)
A920 Colpy to Ptts Rayne Ph3– edge repairs/haunching and asphalt overlay to address damage by large vehicles diverted from the A96 Trunk Road due to constraints at Inveramsay Bridge
A947 Howe of Gellymill from Manwen to Myrus Cottage - resurfacing
- Bus Improvements
Ellon Park & Ride – progressing land acquisition investigations to allow plans for additional external waiting facilities and upgrade to bus turning circle to accommodate 15m vehicles to be implemented
Dyce railway station bus turning circle – construction of facility for Jet connect service between the rail station, Dyce industrial estates and Aberdeen International Airport
Kingswells P&R – contribution to construction of through access for A944 buses
City Centre modelling – testing of feasibility of altering junction turning movements and staging to forecast impact to bus services and other vehicles
Aberdeen City and Shire Joint Bus Stop Information Initiatives. – replace or provide bus timetable display cases and ensure standardised region wide DDA compliant timetabling information displayed

Region wide real time – contribution to system and purchase and installation of display boards within Aberdeen City Centre and key interchanges that are large enough to display times for all services.

- Walking and Cycling

Ellon Cycle Infrastructure – completion of new paths to connect to new Academy

Peterhead CDT Ph2 Meethill Rd – Design and tender preparation

Catto Park, Peterhead Ph2 – contribution towards creation of shared use footway/cycleway

F&B Way Peterhead, Ph 5 - contribution towards creation of shared use footway/cycleway

Dyce Dr cycle route – feasibility study to assess requirements and design route between Dyce Ave and Kirkhill PI

A90 (T) Parkway and Ellon Road Cyclepath - Construction of a continuous length of pedestrian/cycle path along the Parkway from Balgownie Rd - Ellon Rd and then north on Ellon Rd to Murcar

A96 Inverurie to Kintore - contribution towards creation of shared use footway/cycleway

RGU to North Deeside Line – design of pedestrian/cycle route and installation of signage

Upgrade Formatine & Buchan Way access from A947 – upgrade of access from Aberdeen City including road resurfacing, footpath construction and lighting upgrade

Anderson Dr ph1 Br of Dee to Ruthrieston Rd - design

Anderson Dr ph3 including toucan at Rubislaw Den South and connections - design

Cycle Racks – installation of cycle racks in various Aberdeenshire towns

Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan – contribution to modelling of options for Broad Street

- Various

Movable Variable Message Sign – sign purchased

Dyce Sustainable Travel Study – Feasibility study for sustainable transport infrastructure, including consultation with key stakeholders and Dyce residents, design and costing

Aberdeen cross city transport connections - feasibility study to investigate ways to maximise connectivity between new developments in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan

Aberdeen City Hydrogen Energy Storage project – contribution towards the civils costs for a second hydrogen refuelling station and storage facility in the south of the City at Langdykes Road, Cove.

Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study –multi-modal corridor assessment for the Aberdeen to Buchan Corridor using Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance methodology