

# Sustainable Economic Growth Statement

## 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 purpose of the Scottish Government is to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. The approach to delivering this Purpose is set out in the Scotland's Economic Strategy published in 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 towards the Purpose is being measured through a range of Purpose Targets and National Indicators in the National Performance Framework that was updated in March 2016. Five additional indicators were added to reduce underemployment, the proportion of employees earning less than the Living Wage and the pay gap and to improve access to local greenspace and increase natural capital. The Government's Purpose along with the Strategic Objectives and National Outcomes remain unchanged.

## **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.

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 that set out a vision for the economic growth of the North East region of Scotland and the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) Structure Plan, which sets out the spatial strategy for achieving that growth. The Regional Transport Strategy examines how the growth can be achieved without increasing congestion levels. A refresh of the RTS was undertaken in 2013 when the SDPA were developing a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the North East to 2035 to ensure the RTS took 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 2016/17**

### 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 and to continue the provision of a vehicle to address unmet need for transport to health and social care appointments in Aberdeen from January to March 2017.

- **Bus Action Plan**

Nestrans contributed to a national bus passenger satisfaction study. 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 contributed to marketing for the introduction of a smart card for the Grasshopper multi-operator ticket and towards provision of ticketing hardware for small operators to enable them to provide smart ticketing. A contribution was also made to the maintenance costs of the regional real time information system and further upgrades to bus stop infrastructure and information throughout the region were implemented.

- **Freight Action Plan**

Nestrans has worked with constituent authorities to facilitate a regional Eco Stars programme for the north east.

- **Rail Action Plan**

Nestrans has continued to work with Government and Network Rail to ensure that the aspirations of the North East are taken into account in developing our railways. A successful bid was made to the Scottish Stations Fund by Nestrans and Aberdeenshire Council towards a new rail station at Kintore, with a contribution of up to £7.32 million being secured. Nestrans continues to be a member of the East Coast Mainline Authorities grouping, who aim to highlight the economic importance of the line and need for investment.

- **Active Travel Action Plan**

Nestrans contributed funding towards feasibility studies and the development and construction of a number of pedestrian and cyclist improvements. Nestrans appointed a new Cycling Development Officer in partnership with Sustrans when the post became vacant in summer 2016. The Cycling Development Officer post continued to attract capital grant funding from the Sustrans Community Links programme, which in 2016/17 amounted to a grant of up to £125,000. The Sustainable Travel Grant scheme provided match grant funding to support implementation of successful sustainable transport proposals. The getabout partnership continues to promote active and sustainable travel throughout the north east and refreshed the [getabout website](#) in 2016.

## Planning

Although the statutory guidance developed as part of the Strategic Development Plan (2014) that came into force in August 2015 to provide a framework for assessing developer contributions towards improvements to the strategic transport network was quashed in April 2016, an appeal against the decision has been progressed by the Strategic Development Planning Authority and will be heard by the Supreme Court in June 2017. In the meantime Nestrans continues to hold and administer the Strategic Transport Fund and prior to the challenge contributions of over £23.5 million had been agreed, of which over £1.8 million is already held.

## Projects

In 2016/2017 Nestrans implemented the following:

### Strategic Investment Programme

- Rail  
Kintore Station – Preparation of submission to Scottish Stations Fund and progressing works for new station, including car park and access roads design and land negotiations
- Strategic Road – Capacity Improvements  
New common database platform installation  
Strategic network monitoring deployment of internet protocol closed-circuit TV equipment at traffic signals along strategic transport corridors phase 1 on A944 and phase 2 on A956 and A93
- Strategic Road – Safety Improvements  
A947 Route Action – Further development of long term improvement strategy and minor safety improvement schemes implemented  
Implementation of measures from accident study undertaken in 2015/16 – including road lining, signing, road studs and lighting  
Traffic Signals at Aberdeen Crematorium – Completion of installation of signals at previously uncontrolled junction
- Strategic Road – Maintenance  
A944 Loch of Skene resurfacing  
A944 Craigenlow resurfacing  
Dyce Drive resurfacing of carriageway near airport
- 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 – retention for remedial measures following construction of facility in previous year  
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 – completion of contribution following monitoring and acceptance of system and display boards installed in previous year  
Mobile Data Terminals for Aberdeenshire Council Public Transport Unit to enable efficient communication with fleet  
Replacement of ticketing hardware for small operators to enable smart ticketing  
A96 Park & Ride information totem and parking enforcement system  
A93 Crathes mini-hub  
Bus lane enforcement cameras on Bedford Road as part of Diamond Bridge crossing scheme and for the bus lane within the A96 Park & Ride site  
Dyce Avenue/Dyce Drive traffic signal upgrade - creation of an area of hard

standing and pavement to link to the bus stop from the crossing and introduce a pedestrian phase at the junction

- Walking and Cycling  
Peterhead CDT Ph2 Meethill Rd – construction  
Dyce Dr cycle route – feasibility study to assess requirements and design route between Dyce Ave and Kirkhill Pl  
A90 (T) Parkway Cycle path extension - Construction of a further length of pedestrian/cycle path along the Parkway  
A96 Inverurie to Kintore - contribution towards creation of shared use footway/cycleway  
Feasibility and design of future cycleway schemes in 5 Integrated Travel Towns in Aberdeenshire  
Long Distance Path Development  
River Don Path designs  
River Don southside path by Grandhome  
Seaton Park entrances  
Anderson Dr ph1 Br of Dee to Ruthrieston Rd – further design development  
Craigshaw Drive cycle route – design development  
Riverside path from Bridge of Dee to RGU feasibility and design  
Wellheads cycle link design
- Carbon Reduction  
Electric van for car club

### Coordination and Project Development

- Project Feasibility and Development  
Westhill Transport Study  
AWPR Signage in Aberdeen  
A944 modelling to identify options to improve bus journey time reliability  
Aberdeen cross city transport connections - feasibility study to investigate ways to maximise connectivity between new developments in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan  
Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study –multi-modal corridor assessment for the Aberdeen to Buchan Corridor using Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance methodology, further investigation of rail and road options beyond Stag part 1 appraisal  
Bridge of Dee Study – STAG part 2  
Wellington Road Multi-Modal Corridor Study – STAG part 1  
Roads Hierarchy Review
- Travel Planning  
Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme  
Travel Planning