

Strategy -

3a Liaison between RTPs, and with the Scottish Government and Others

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● Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on liaison with other RTPs and with the Scottish Government and others.

● Background

The following series of meetings have been agreed by the Board or have evolved through the meetings agreed by the Board:

- RTP Chairs and the Minister for Transport to meet twice yearly.
- RTP Chairs to establish an Association and to meet quarterly.
- Nestrans Liaison Sub Committees appointed for meetings with HITRANS/ ZetTrans and TACTRAN as neighbouring RTPs.
- RTP Lead Officers meeting quarterly now including Scottish Government and CoSLA.
- LABOF Steering Group meetings

● Recent Developments

Since the last Board meeting there has been the following meetings:

❖ **LABOF Steering Group**

The minutes of the LABOF Steering Group meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2010 are provided in Appendix 1 for information.

❖ **RTP Lead Officers, Edinburgh**

The next meeting of the RTP Lead Officers will be held in Edinburgh on 9 February 2011. A verbal update will be available on the Board meeting.

● Future Programme of Meetings

❖ **RTP Chairs/ CoSLA**

The next scheduled meeting of the RTP Chairs will be held in Lerwick on 2 March 2011.

● Recommendation

The Board is recommended to note progress on liaison arrangements with other RTPs and the Scottish Government and arrangements for future meetings.

## **LABOF STEERING GROUP**

### **Minutes of Meeting Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

#### **Nestrans Board Room, 29 King Street, Aberdeen**

**In Attendance:** Derick Murray, Rab Dickson, Kirsty Morrison (Nestrans), Joanna Murray, Chris Cormack (Aberdeen City Council), Iain Gabriel, Richard Mckenzie (Aberdeenshire Council), David Stewart (First), Andrew Jarvis (Stagecoach).

**Apologies:** Maggie Bochel (Aberdeen City Council)

#### **1. Minutes of Meeting of LABOF Steering Group, 11 March 2010**

The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

#### **2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes which were not covered on the agenda.

#### **3. BPIP**

##### **a) Buchan / King Street Corridor**

A paper was provided on the progress of work on the Buchan / King Street corridor summarising some of the key actions that have been progressed. JM provided details of the estimated timescales for construction of the King Street Bus lane. Subject to the outcome of the TRO process and funding, the City Council hopes to begin construction at the start of the school summer holidays in 2011 and complete the end of August, before the Off-Shore Europe and Walker Cup events.

There was also an update on meetings that have been held with the city centre warden's team to try and emphasise the need to focus wardens on the Market Street area.

JM requested that when the City Council do statutory consultations for new infrastructure, having letters of support from the Labof partners would be very helpful. All partners agreed that this could be done.

An update on the monitoring work that has been done was provided. JM requested an update on the monthly monitoring figures that have previously been provided by Duncan Cameron. Currently we have data up until June, but it would be useful to get data that runs at least until the survey period so that cross-checks can be made between the survey data and the information provided by First's real time system.

**Action:** DS agreed to speak to Duncan Cameron about sending through monitoring data.

The Steering Group were content that work on this BPIP corridor was progressing well.

#### **b) Next BPIP corridor for consideration**

The Steering Group were asked to consider either the A944 or A96 corridors as the next BPIP corridor for assessment. JM highlighted that in relation to the A96 corridor, the proposed park and ride site and improvements to the Haudagain junction are not short term actions.

From Stagecoach's perspective it was highlighted that the two worst corridors in the region are the King Street corridor and the A96.

It was recognised that Haudagain is not the only pinch point on the corridor and questioned whether there were other things that could be done. It was discussed that a full route assessment would need to be carried out as a first action to identify opportunities for improvement.

The Steering Group agreed that the next BPIP corridor for consideration should be the A96 corridor.

## **4. Integrated / Smart Ticketing Update**

A paper was circulated summarising the actions being taken forward in relation to the development of a ticketing strategy and the opportunities arising for the development of smartcard electronic ticketing.

The desire to have an Oyster Card style system in the region was discussed although it was recognised that such a system, including the back office administration is very expensive to run.

Both First and Stagecoach now have Smartcard equipped buses and Transport Scotland are currently tendering for a new HOPS system which is required for the back office administration.

Travel Dundee are launching a sQuid card in January and it was suggested that it would be useful to arrange a visit to see this in operation once it is up and running.

DS highlighted that First have a meeting with sQuid set up for the new year and AJ updated on Stagecoach Groups position on rolling out smartcards across the Group.

The Steering Group agreed the recommendations of the report and that further research is needed into what Transport Scotland are doing in relation to smart ticketing and to find out more, through discussions with the Councils, about what is involved in the set up of such a scheme.

## 5. Traffic Commissioner

DM updated that a meeting was held with the Traffic Commissioner, Nestrans and the two Councils and that Nestrans have also written to the Traffic Commissioner about the comments made in the Public Inquiry report in relation to bus priority provision in the city. Nestrans have also invited the Traffic Commissioner to attend a future Nestrans Board meeting.

JM highlighted that there will be a statement on the Traffic Commissioners report going up to the City's Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure Committee in January and a decision will be made on whether the City Council will also write to the Traffic Commissioner.

There was general agreement amongst the Steering Group that the target of 95% buses starting their route on time means that operators have to lengthen journey times and plan for the worst journey times in order to meet this target. It was agreed that there is a balance to be struck between providing punctual services and providing an attractive service that does not have to spend time waiting at stops to catch up to timetable which can be frustrating for passengers already on the bus.

The Steering Group agreed that a case could be put forward to reconsider this target but that it would have to be made through a more national approach, looking at the evidence from all across Scotland and recommend an alternative.

The Steering Group agreed to take this issue up through the appropriate bodies as follows:

- CPT – First and Stagecoach
- ATCO – Richard Mckenzie
- SCOTS, RTP Chairs and Transport Minister – Nestrans

## 6. Service changes and punctuality targets

First are implementing service changes in January and are planning some further changes in March 2011. DS highlighted however that once these have been made First is hoping that the frequency of these changes will settle down and the number of changes per year will reduce.

Information at bus stops – RMck provided an update on the agreement in principle to post at-stop bus timetable information in the city. A city centre asset management assessment has revealed that in some locations, there is not sufficient space to accommodate all the timetables required and work is ongoing to identify costs / resources for improving this. Some of the new information panels have already been posted where there is already sufficient capacity.

Additional park and ride services have been running in the four Sundays in the run up to Christmas from Bridge of Don and Kingswells Park and Ride sites.

**Action:** RD requested that CC share the data on the success of these once it becomes available.

## **7. LABOF Executive Progress**

A paper was provided summarising the key areas of Executive progress since the last meeting.

AJ asked about progress on a new version of the city public transport map – the City Council is currently waiting for the service changes to come into place in January and is hoping to have a new map printed in spring.

## **8. Proposed Meeting Dates for 2011**

The proposed dates for both Steering Group and Executive Group meetings in 2011 were approved.

## **9. AOCB**

Winter weather – in response to a query by IG, AJ confirmed that Stagecoach decisions on operations of buses during severe winter weather were made locally at depots.

Low Emissions Zone – RD updated that Nestrans and Aecom have met with both bus operators in relation to the LEZ and thanked them both for their input. The report is now being drafted and a draft should be available in early 2011.

Bridge of Don Park and Ride – First have been informed that during the week of the Off-Shore Europe exhibition First will not be allowed to use the park and ride car park for park and ride facilities. Buses will still be allowed to access the turning circle, but parking will not be available for park and ride users.

**Action:** It was agreed that officers will continue to represent the concerns of First on this decision to relevant senior management and DM agreed to speak to Gordon Macintosh.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next Steering Group meeting will be on Thursday March 17<sup>th</sup> 2011 at 10am in the Nestrans Board Room.

KM/ 23 December 2010