

Strategy -

3a Director's report on liaison between RTPs, and with the Scottish Government and Others

o Purpose of Report

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

o Background

This report details meetings with other RTPs across Scotland, Transport Scotland and other national transport bodies highlighting issues of interest across Scotland. It also notes meetings of the Health and Transport Steering Group and the Local Authority Bus Operators Forum.

o Recent Developments

The last Board meeting was held on 17 June 2015, since which the following updates are available from meetings:

❖ Network Rail & Transport Scotland re Inverurie & Kintore stations, Inverurie, 24 August 2015

Rab Dickson attended a rail industry consultation event, which had been set up by Aberdeenshire Council to bring together representatives from Transport Scotland, Network Rail, Abellio ScotRail with Nestrans and the Council to consider the proposals to make bids to the Scottish Stations Fund for funding to enable the improvements at Inverurie and Kintore stations.

The meeting took the form of a meet and greet at Inverurie Station, followed by a bus trip calling at the site of the proposed Kintore Station and on to Aberdeen, where the formal part of the meeting was held in the Douglas Hotel.

Presentations covered the proposals at both stations and an opportunity for discussion on various aspects of the schemes.

❖ LABOF Steering Group, Aberdeen, 27 August 2015

The Local Authority Bus Operators Forum meeting was held at Woodhill House on 27 August and was attended by Rab Dickson. A minute of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

❖ Aberdeen Airport Consultative Committee, Aberdeen, 04 September 2015

Eddie Anderson is attending this meeting. I don't think Eddie was able to attend. A minute of the meeting available to permit a highlight note?

❖ **Meeting with Transport Scotland and Network Rail, Glasgow, 8 September 2015**

The meeting was attended by Rab Dickson of Nestrans and Paul Finch of Aberdeenshire Council. The meeting discussed the aspirations for rail development in the north east, particularly in the light of City Region Deal and the opportunities for enhancing rail travel within and to/from the region.

There was particular focus on the tunnels and whether they were considered a significant constraint. The advice was that they could be upgraded if necessary, but were not required for the current proposals. Aberdeen station is considered to be a greater constraint than the tunnels themselves.

It was suggested that Nestrans and the local authorities should undertake further development work in relation to articulating their aspirations, possibly getting a rail expert to provide an independent input to gauge what should be prioritised to ensure most effective ways to maximise the opportunities.

❖ **SCOTS special general meeting, Perth, 11 September 2015**

The Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) meeting was attended by Rab Dickson and was held to discuss the Scottish Government's invitation to contribute towards a review of working relationships in roads and transport. Presentations were received from CoSLA and from SOLACE, both of which have been involved in discussions regarding potential streamlining of services to improve efficiencies through joint working.

The outcome was that a Working Group be set up to consider the options and respond in regard to the opportunities for Roads Collaboration between local authorities, Regional Transport Partnerships and Transport Scotland. Derick Murray will be one of the representatives on the Working Group.

❖ **RTP Chairs meeting, Dundee, 16 September 2015**

The meeting was attended by Cllr Ramsay Milne and Derick Murray. The meeting discussed the following:

- A presentation on the Dundee waterfront project
- A presentation by Prof Peter Balazs and Andreas Faergmann of the European Union's TEN-T project.
 - This is a project identifying the main transport corridors within the European Union to ensure that adequate connectivity is provided between Member states
 - Issues of being a state on the edge of the European Union and in particular being on the edges of that state were highlighted to the presenters.
 - The Chairs were directed to lobby at UK Government level for any changes to include the north of Scotland within the core network.
- The RTP/ SG/ CoSLA working groups papers agreement was noted
- The Roads collaboration Board progress was noted along with the SCOTS meeting to discuss this issue
- The National Transport Strategy refresh was discussed
 - Bruce Kiloh of SPT and Ranald Robertson of Hitrans are representing the RTP's in the stakeholder group. Ewan Wallace of Aberdeenshire Council is representing SCOTS on that stakeholder group.

- The RTP Chairs will meet the Minister for Transport and Islands at their next meeting on 2 December 2015
- RTP liaison with Cycling Scotland and Sustrans was discussed
- An update on the ferries procurement progress was discussed.
 - Nestrans highlighted our desire to be part of that discussion for the Northern Isles Ferries contract
- High speed rail was discussed
 - DfT and Transport Scotland have asked for further consideration of a report into HS2 Phase 3 – to Scotland. It is thought that an announcement could be made in February 2016 on the findings of the report.
- East Coast Mainline
 - It was noted that Russell Imrie (Sestrans Chair) and Will Dawson (Tactran Chair), the RTP reps on the ECMA group had given an interview to Holyrood magazine. Russell, a vice Chair of the ECMA had attended a meeting with the new operators of the East Coast franchise discussing future improvements to the journey experience.
- Bus stakeholder group
 - The progress on the bus registration process was discussed along with the progress of a sub group considering Statutory Quality Partnerships.

❖ **Minister for Transport, Edinburgh, 16 September 2015**

This meeting was attended by Chair Ramsay Milne, Vice Chair Eddie Anderson and Derick Murray. The meeting was requested by Nestrans to set out directly to the Minister the rationale for the projects coming forward and the forward thinking in advance of the next review of the Regional Transport Strategy. It was also an opportunity to say directly to the Minister how the policies and proposals being pursued fitted with the overall planning documents for the region including the City Region Deal proposals.

The Minister heard from the Chair and vice Chair a very positive and passionate view of the prospects for our region being able to contribute very healthily to the economic development and growth of Scotland and the UK as a whole provided we were able to address some of the constraints arising from the rapid expansion of population and employment, both historic and anticipated.

Issues around making the best use of the AWPR, City Centre Masterplan, our Geography and links to other parts of Scotland and the wider world were discussed. The potential for future economic activity, even within the constraints of a reduced oil price were discussed. The innovative private sector funding through the Strategic Transport Fund and the Local Authorities considerable capital investment in transport were also raised.

The Minister said he was pleased to hear a case based on economic development and economic growth rather than a plea regarding underfunding and thought this was absolutely the right argument to be making. He highlighted the need for a partnership approach involving other (than just government) investment from both the public and private sectors, noting these were easier to justify government funding for.

The Minister noted the need to explore innovative funding mechanisms referencing Tax Incremental Finance or Growth Accelerator Models as examples and highlighted the substantial prudential borrowing powers open to Local Authorities. (As expressed earlier the current levels of expenditure and innovation were highlighted). He also referred to the possibility of using pension funds and cited a recent example in the Falkirk area.

o **Future Programme of Meetings**

- ❖ **HS2, Aberdeen, 16 October 2015**
- ❖ **A9/A96 dualling meeting with Transport Scotland, Perth, 20 October 2015**
- ❖ **Cross Party Group on Aviation, Edinburgh, 27 October 2015**
- ❖ **LABOF Steering Group meeting, Aberdeen, 5 November 2015**
- ❖ **HTAP Steering Group meeting, Elgin, 10 November 2015**
- ❖ **RTP Lead Officers, Inverness, 11 November 2015**
- ❖ **Chamber of Commerce Transport Network, Aberdeen, 26 November 2015**
- ❖ **RTP Chairs, Glasgow, 2 December 2015**
- ❖ **Aberdeen International Airport Consultative Committee, Aberdeen, 4 December 2015**

Recommendation

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

RD/RGM 28 September 2015

Local Authorities Bus Operators Forum Meeting
LABOF Steering Group

Room P, Woodhill House

Thursday 27 August 2015 at 9:30am

Note of Discussions and Actions

Present: Ewan Wallace, Aberdeenshire Council, Chair (EW)
Steve Walker, Stagecoach (SW)
David Philips, First (DP)
Chris Cormack, Aberdeen City Council (CC)
Tom Davy, Transport Scotland (TD)
Rab Dickson, Nestrans (RD)
Richard McKenzie, Aberdeenshire Council (RMck)
Shirley Bowie (note taker) (SB)

Apologies: Maggie Bochel, Aberdeen City
Derick Murray, Nestrans

EW opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to Woodhill House.

Item	Action
1	
Minute and Actions from 26 February 2015	
Minute agreed as accurate.	
Item 2 Trunk Roads issues – RD unable to confirm whether DM has met with BEAR Scotland re trunk road aspects of Labof discussions. SB to get an update.	SB
Item 3 Statutory Quality Partnership – DP has looked at legal options available. SW would like to see Aberdeen included. Feeling of it being the right time to lock in benefits.	
Item 8 Local Strategies – City LTS on hold. Report back to Committee in January. Input given by First and Stagecoach but no feedback received. DP happy to meet and discuss further with CC.	DP/CC
Item 8– 80 Jet Connect Service – Turning circle opened on 17 August. Journeys between airport and train station are now less frequent to keep reliable service. Item for next agenda.	SB
Item 8 - No update available on Wellington Road. Report not approved at Nestrans board due to concerns. RD to update. SB circulate to group.	RD SB

Transport Scotland Update

TD provided an update on various topics within Transport Scotland that would be of interest to the group.

National Transport Strategy is to be refreshed. The completion date for the refresh version is December 2015. EW is the SCOTS representative at the meeting on 7 September.

Changes to registration timetable due late October. Key change is proposed alteration from 14 to 28 days' notice, will be accompanied by guidance.

Legislation on Quality Partnerships is being looked at with no timescale for completion.

An extra resource has been put in place to look at ticketing. TD not aware of Grasshopper. RMcK met with Gordon Hanning, looking at bringing Local Authorities up to speed with ticketing infrastructure.

Green bus fund is being reviewed as part of Low Emission Strategy. Funding could be available this year.

Bus Investment Fund has been supported in first two rounds.

CMA consultation – Nestrans has approved a response welcoming the proposed extension to exemption for ticketing schemes.

2 Locking in the Benefits

DP keen to see something set out what it is. RD discussed how has developed since 2000 modern transport system. Wider City Centre Masterplan needs reduction in traffic numbers to make it work. Road hierarchy is being reviewed. Working Group has been set up with two roads authority represented.

City Region Deal proposals to be submitted within the week. Cross City Connections. Greater passenger transport.

SW keen to get something moving on SQP.

3 QP Standards and Targets Update and SQP

Hitrans are leading on an SQP in Inverness. Document produced to go to Highland Council. SW to check if document can be circulated.

SW

RMcK suggested to include potential outcomes in the document.

City reports have to be reported 3 cycles notice in advance. EW/CC to discuss further.

EW/CC

Which Committee to report to in Aberdeenshire to be decided.

EW

All to consider what should be included. What can be achieved within 6 month timescale?

ALL

Paper on QP standards and indicators produced by CC show most targets have not been reached.

VOSA of view need to build on QP which expires in 2015. Consideration will need to be given to for the next 5 years. Will Aberdeenshire lead on this and take it forward? Governance of the Steering Group to be checked. Could be within the Transportation Bulletin Report at City Council. CC to check.

CC

Need to have specific recommendations for Executive Group. RD to review targets.

RD

Look to sign off in Spring 2016.

4 Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey/Passenger Focus Results

Passenger Focus results to be available later this year.

The results of BPSS show a 10% increase in passenger satisfaction.

RD to look at barriers to bus use report again and RMcK to carry out review of approach by November.

RD/RMcK

5 Veteran Fares

EW received a query whether there was any dispensation for Veterans.

No dispensation is currently given, though Scottish Government is looking to link through disability applications. A petition has been received at Scottish Government but the current view is that changes to the existing scheme are unlikely.

EW

EW to update colleagues.

6 **Haudagain Junction Changes**

Operators' views were expressed that progression on the scheme has been made without proper input from First or Stagecoach.

Great Northern Road will be an issue for both bus operators.

SW has raised concerns. TD advised a response will be sent from David Anderson.

RD

Need to find out timescales and next stages.

7 **AWPR**

Stagecoach and First to receive Traffic Management details. EW to ensure that the necessary information is relayed back to DP and SW. SB to forward any relevant information for AWPR Shire/City meetings to DP/SW.

**EW
SB**

Concerns over 2 to 3 weeks lead times for road closures. Causing issues for drivers hours, journey times and informing the public.

8 **Meeting Arrangements**

SB to look at dates for next year.

SB

Group to meet quarterly.

Executive agreed to meet monthly, ideally have a Labof meeting once a month (i.e. Exec, Exec, Steering Group on rotation).

9 **AOCB**

a) **Bus lane times**

Peak time in Aberdeen differs from other cities. Changes to operating hours at Great Northern Road operating as trial. CC to look at results.

CC

Issue with vehicles illegally parked on Holburn Street.

Grasshopper

A greater success than first anticipated. Looking at integrated ticketing in Aberdeen. Nestrans have agreed to fund a radio advertising campaign in October to raise general awareness.

Kingswells Park and Ride

CC assured that Bus Improvement scheme at Kingswell Park and Ride will be completed this financial year. Work to be carried out in house. CC to discuss further with Hugh Murdoch. SB to add as an agenda item for next meeting.

CC
SB

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

No Executive in diary before Steering Group meeting of 5 November.

SB to look at dates for Exec meeting.

SB

Steering Group to meet 5 November 2015, Nestrans at 10am

Venue for future meetings – Stagecoach, First and Woodhill House.

TD to be included in circulation for future meetings.