

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 18 June 2014, since which the following updates are available from meetings:

❖ **RTP Lead Officers, Edinburgh, 13 August 2014**

The RTP Lead Officers discussed the following:

- A presentation by the Improvement Service on collaboration between Local authorities on Roads Maintenance
- Review of Strategic Planning
- RTP/ CoSLA/ Scottish Government liaison
- Commonwealth games post event update
- National Tourism Development Framework Action Plan
- MACS
- TEN(T) Future Infrastructure Strategy and Priorities
- Bus issues
- Rail issues
- Sustrans Active Travel Guidance
- RTP's as Statutory Consultees in Development Management
- CoSLA liaison
- Agenda for the Chairs meeting 3 September
- Low Emissions strategy workshop
- Empowering Scotland's Islands Communities Prospectus

❖ **RTP Health and Transport Sub Group, Glasgow, 19 August 2014**

This meeting was attended by Derick Murray and Andrew Stewart. It reviewed the various projects being developed across the country. These included:

Nestrans: The THInC – a travel information centre

Hitrans: Lochaber project – an integrated transport and booking system

Lothians: An NHS hub to integrate in-patient transport

SPT: A Community Transport hub initiative

SPT: An integrated booking and transport system

The progress of each of these projects has been reported back to the Health and Transport Steering Group.

❖ **RTP Chairs, Dumfries (Swestrans), 3 September 2014**

Councillor Argyle and Rab Dickson attended the most recent meeting of the RTP Chairs, held on 3 September in Dumfries. In addition to a presentation on initiatives in and around Dumfries, demonstrating the initiatives implemented through the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places fund, the agenda included items and updates on:

- RTP / Cycling Scotland Liaison;
- Commonwealth Games 2014 Post Event Update;
- ScotRail Franchise / Sleeper Franchise Update;
- High Speed Rail Report;
- ECMA Report;
- Bus Investment Fund;
- Bus Service Registration Process Consultation;
- Scotland-wide Hydrogen Buses initiative;
- Heathrow Airport National Connectivity Task Group;
- Strategic Development Planning Review;
- National Walking Strategy;
- CoSLA Liaison;
- Health Transport Pilot Project Report; and
- RTPs/Scottish Government Working Group.

It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled for 2nd and 3rd December and will be hosted by Nestrans.

❖ **National Connectivity Task Force, London, 10 September 2014**

This was the first meeting of this group. The main topics of discussion were the remit of the group and the workplan needed for the group to make informed recommendations to Heathrow Airport and the Airports Commission. A secretariat has been appointed to provide the background information requested by the group.

❖ **Transport Scotland A96 dualling strategy workshops, Aberdeen, 12 September**

Rab Dickson attended a meeting with Transport Scotland and their consultants at a meeting in Woodhill House, outlining proposed policies for the future dualling of the A96. A fuller report is contained with Item 8 Information Bulletin.

❖ **Transport Scotland re rail issues, Aberdeen, 17 September 2014**

Derick Murray and Rab Dickson attended a meeting with Transport Scotland to discuss a series of rail issues affecting the north east of Scotland. Nestrans provided an overview of the economy of the north east over the past 10 years and into the future 10 years highlighting the under estimate of growth made over the

past few years by Scottish Government and the continued above average growth still anticipated.

The consequences of these factors were discussed including the north east rail patronage growing at twice the Scottish average and the on-going overcrowding on a significant number of peak hour trains despite efforts to supply extra seats.

Having discussed this general background to running trains in the north east the following specifics were discussed:

- Franchise progress
- Electrification strategy
 - The Governments thinking towards extending electrification beyond the EGIP project.
 - Marrying electrification proposals with service requirements
- Aberdeen to Inverness
 - Kintore station
 - Cross Aberdeen services
 - Potential for new stations when a local service can be achieved
 - Insch station is discussed further at Item 8 Information Bulletin
- Aberdeen to central belt
 - The differences between Transport Scotland's approach to Edinburgh to Glasgow high speed rail and Aberdeen to Central Belt improvements was discussed
- Overcrowding and service enhancements
- Station issues
 - It is anticipated that Portlethen station will have a ticket machine by the end of the year
- RTS & Rail Action Plan
- Community Rail Partnerships
 - No community rail partnership proposals are developing in the north east.

❖ **LABOF Steering Group, Aberdeen, 25 September 2014**

Minutes of this meeting will be available at the next Nestrans Board meeting.

❖ **Health & Transport Steering Group, Aberdeen, 26 September 2014**

Minutes of this meeting will be available at the next Nestrans Board meeting.

❖ **National Connectivity Task Force, tele conference, 30 September 2014**

A verbal update can be provided to the Board.

❖ **NETCF. Aberdeen, 2 October 2014**

A verbal update can be provided to the Board.

○ **Future Programme of Meetings**

❖ **Grampian Volunteer Transport Awards, Aberdeen, 07 October 2014**

❖ **Transport Scotland re Scotland wide Hydrogen bus project, video conference, 10 October 2014**

Following a discussion with Fiona Goodenough, Aberdeen City Councils project officer for the European-wide commercialisation study on behalf of the Seven Cities Alliance and a project event held in Aberdeen to discuss taking the project forward this meeting has been arranged.

Twenty seven regions across Europe to date have expressed an interest in the project. The Aberdeen meeting attracted some strong support for the project from the north east of the country covering Fife, Perth, Dundee, Angus, Aberdeen and Inverness. The project however appears to lack support from the central belt of the country.

The project is aimed at delivering a significant number of hydrogen fuel cell buses across the country as part of a series of investments across Europe, supplying enough buses to bring the price down to a commercialisation price level. The first phase is to determine the infrastructure requirement in a number of areas across Europe.

The initial thoughts of those proposing taking up a European offer to carry out the first phase was that to spread the cost of delivery (supported by European funding) amongst Local Authority areas (perhaps with Scottish Government support). The early stage thinking was also that perhaps a bigger prize would be the delivery of hydrogen production and delivery facilities across the country in advance of hydrogen fuelled cars being offered by manufacturers sometime around 2018.

The purpose of this video conference call was to request Transport Scotland to take a greater leadership role in promoting this scheme across the country to encourage a greater involvement by more local authorities, truly supplying a hydrogen generation and delivery system across the whole country. This could be followed up by a letter to the Minister for Transport. This could lead to the whole country either participating in the project, agreeing collectively not to or the interested authorities moving forward on a regional basis.

- ❖ **National Connectivity Task Force, London, 16 October 2014**
- ❖ **National Connectivity Task Force, London, 10 November 2014**
- ❖ **RTP Lead Officers, Inverness, 12 November 2014**
- ❖ **RTP Chairs, Aberdeen, 3 December 2014**
- ❖ **National Connectivity Task Force, London, 11 December 2014**

o **Recommendation**

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

RGM/RD 29 Sept 2014