

Annual Report 2015/16 and Business Plan 2016/17

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Foreword

As the Chair of Nestrans, I have great pleasure in introducing the Annual Report for 2015/16. I am proud to report on the significant achievements by Nestrans and partner organisations in the past year that have contributed towards the delivery of the objectives within the Regional Transport Strategy.

The construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and Balmedie to Tippetty dualling is now highly visible throughout the 58km length of the project and completion of this major infrastructure provision for the north east is eagerly awaited. Transport Scotland has completed the improvement at Inveramsay Bridge thus removing the need for signal control shuttle working on the A96 Trunk Road network and funding has been committed to design and construct a grade separated junction on the A90 at Laurencekirk. Aberdeen City Council is nearing completion of the Third Don Crossing and A96 Park and Choose site and link road between the A96 and Dyce Drive.

Improvements at north east ports and Aberdeen Harbour Board plans for a significant new extension to harbour facilities at Nigg Bay have been progressed and Aberdeen International Airport has announced plans for a £20 million investment to improve the terminal.

Rail passenger numbers are increasing at all stations across the north east, providing evidence of the benefit of previous timetable improvements. Progress with phase 1 of the Aberdeen to Inverness rail line upgrade, the design and costing for Kintore station and Inverurie Interchange and the announcement of funding to improve journey times between Aberdeen and the south are all therefore welcomed to accommodate this growth and encourage even greater levels of rail travel.

I am also pleased that studies are progressing for the A96 dualling and Bridge of Dee and that Orders have been published for the A90/A96 Haudagain improvement. Aberdeen City Council has approved a City Centre Masterplan that includes prioritising areas for pedestrians and cyclists and Nestrans has worked with the Council to develop sustainable transport proposals within and on the approach to the City Centre. This complements work to review the roads hierarchy and investigate measures to lock in the benefits for sustainable modes as a result of predicted traffic relief on completion of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route.

Nestrans has invested over £2 million in the past year on various road, bus, cycling, walking and alternative fuel initiatives. In addition, almost £500,000 has been spent on project feasibility studies, travel planning, active travel promotion via the getabout brand and in support of actions within our Health & Transport, Rail, Freight, Bus and Active Travel Action Plans. The continued employment of a Cycling Development Officer in partnership with Sustrans has again been instrumental in assisting our constituent Councils to secure significant levels of funding through the Community Links programme.

Although there has been a legal challenge to the newly adopted supplementary guidance for the Strategic Development Plan (2014), Nestrans continues to administer

the Strategic Transport Fund and contributions of over £23 million have been agreed to date, of which over £1.7 million has already been paid into the fund.

The agreement of a City Region Deal that will see the UK and Scottish Governments jointly invest £250 million over the next 10 years and any grant secured through the European Civitas Portis programme will undoubtedly bring greater transport benefits to the north east in the years ahead.

With so many major infrastructure improvements nearing completion and commitment in place towards further enhancement over the coming years, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and express my grateful thanks to the many public and private partner organisations that have worked to secure and deliver this and I look forward to further building upon this success in the year ahead.

Executive Summary

Introduction

This annual report provides a review of Nestrans work and transport developments affecting the north east in 2015/16 and looks ahead to the aims for the year ahead. Key transport related improvements being undertaken by partners that assist with the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy are also included.

Regional Transport Strategy

Delivery of the actions within the Health and Transport, Freight, Bus, Rail and Active Travel Action Plans have been progressed in the past year to assist with achieving the aims of the refreshed Regional Transport Strategy.

External Connections

Nestrans has continued to represent North East interests to seek improvements to air, maritime and rail connections from the area to the rest of Scotland, the UK and beyond. Thanks to the National Connectivity Task Force recommendations the Airports Commission has recognised the importance of protecting and bolstering existing domestic services to London. Nestrans continues to be a member of the East Coast Mainline Authorities grouping that has been set up to highlight the economic importance of the line and need for investment.

Partnership Working and Policy Development

Nestrans continues to contribute to the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnerships, both of whom include transport as a priority theme within their Single Outcome Agreements. Nestrans continues to collaborate with the Strategic Development Planning Authority and revised statutory supplementary guidance relating to the Strategic Transport Fund was adopted as part of the new Strategic Development Plan (2014) and came into force in August 2015. Although there has been a legal challenge to the guidance, contributions continue to be received to the Strategic Transport Fund that Nestrans administers. Provided that the challenge is not upheld, this fund will allow transport improvements to be developed and implemented to mitigate the cumulative impact of future development.

A bid has been made in partnership with the Councils, Universities and Aberdeen Harbour Board for European funding to the Civitas programme that includes freight and sustainable travel proposals. A City Region Deal has also been agreed that will see the UK and Scottish governments jointly invest £250 million in the north east over the next 10 years, with several projects likely to contain transport elements that will be consistent with the Regional Transport Strategy

Project Delivery by External Partners

The construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and Balmedie to Tippetty dualling is well underway and due to be complete by the end of 2017. The

A96 Inveramsay Bridge improvement has been completed and Orders published for the A90/A96 Haudagain junction improvement. Studies are progressing for the A96 dualling.

The Third Don Crossing and the A96 Park & Choose site and link road between the A96 and Dyce Drive that are being delivered by Aberdeen City Council are nearing completion. Design and costing for Kintore Station and proposals for Inverurie Interchange are being progressed by Aberdeenshire Council.

Works have commenced on the strategic rail improvements between Aberdeen and Inverness and further works have been undertaken on improvements at north east ports. Aberdeen Harbour Board's plans for new deep water facilities at Nigg Bay have continued to be developed and funding has been committed to upgrade the A90 Laurencekirk junction.

Nestrans 2015/16 Budgets

The Nestrans Board oversaw the delivery of budgets that amounted to over £3 million as a result of funding provided by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and the Scottish Government. This has been used to further develop and deliver projects to achieve the aims and objectives within the RTS. Significant investment was again allocated to the development and implementation of strategic walking and cycle routes and used to attract match funding for several projects from Sustrans through Community Links bids by our constituent Councils and to attract grant for the joint Sustrans embedded Cycling Development Officer post funded by Nestrans. This allowed completion of paths to connect the new Academy at Ellon, further infrastructure in Peterhead, on the A90 Parkway and Ellon Road and phase 1 of the A96 Inverurie to Kintore shared path.

Further safety improvements and prioritised maintenance have been undertaken on strategic corridors, including installation of Variable Message Signs and traffic signal control at the A944/Crematorium access junction. The bus turning circle to the west of Dyce railway station for the bus service to Aberdeen airport was completed. A contribution was made to a region wide Real Time Passenger Information system and new display boards at bus stops and the construction of a through access at Kingswells Park & Ride to allow buses from the A944 to serve the site. Nestrans also contributed to the civils costs for a hydrogen refuelling station and storage facility to the south of Aberdeen. Studies have been progressed to look at multi-modal transport options along the strategic corridor between Aberdeen to Ellon, Peterhead and Fraserburgh and to investigate ways to maximise connectivity between new developments.

Nestrans has continued to allocate funding to progress the projects within the Bus, Rail, Freight and Health & Transport Action Plans and this has seen continued funding of the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC). The Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) part 2 assessment for the Bridge of Dee study has continued and funding provided towards the preparation of a Stations Fund Bid for Kintore. Contributions were also made to assessment of options in support of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and to progress the feasibility and design aspects

of schemes to lock in the benefits of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, which included an audit of existing signage and consideration of a roads hierarchy review.

Further travel planning support has been given to several organisations and active and sustainable travel continues to be promoted through the getabout brand. This has included staging several cycle roadshows throughout the North East and promotion of Park & Ride, public transport, liftshare, walking, cycling and the Co-wheels car club. Nestrans has continued to seek efficiencies and to bring in other sources of funding through partnerships with other parties.

RTS Results

The monitoring of the Regional Transport Strategy is now in its eighth year and a substantial amount of data is presented, although some data sources previously used have changed format or are no longer available. In the past year the vast majority of the indicators for which data is available have been on target or are showing some success. Whilst it will take many years for the Strategy to decisively influence all the targets and indicators, they will continue to be monitored regularly to ensure that we can consider progress and target measures to achieve success.

The Year Ahead

In the coming year Nestrans will continue to progress the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy by implementing the actions within the supporting Health & Transport, Bus, Freight, Rail and Active Travel Action Plans. Nestrans will continue to work with Transport Scotland and Network Rail to achieve our aspirations for rail services. A bid will be submitted to the Scottish Government's Station Fund for a new station at Kintore and considered in support of delivery of the Inverurie Interchange proposals. Nestrans will also support our Local Authorities in developing and delivery of the transport elements within the City Region Deal that has been agreed with the Scottish and UK Governments. Measures to encourage mode shift, lock in the benefits of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and support the aims within the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan will continue to be investigated. Nestrans will work with local and European partners through the Civitas Portis 4 year project that is due to commence in September 2016.

The Nestrans Board has approved budgets to implement further road safety, strategic maintenance, bus, freight, alternative fuel and cycling and walking projects throughout the north east. Funding is also in place to continue to progress the various action plans that support the Regional Transport Strategy, to undertake project feasibility studies and promote active and sustainable travel. Pending the outcome of the legal challenge against the supplementary guidance in relation to the Strategic Transport Fund, Nestrans will continue to hold and administer the fund. An upgrade of the regional strategic Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM) will be undertaken to ensure it remains fit for purpose in the assessment and development of transport interventions and in advance of the review of the cumulative transport assessment that formed the evidence base for the Strategic Transport Fund.

1. Nestrans Organisation

The North East of Scotland Transport Partnership (Nestrans) is the statutory Regional Transport Partnership covering the local authority areas of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. This report provides a review of activities in the previous financial year from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 and notes performance in delivery of the objectives within the Regional Transport Strategy.

Nestrans Board and Executive Team

Councillor Ramsay Milne continued as the Nestrans Chair throughout 2015/16. Councillor Peter Argyle and Mr Eddie Anderson retained their posts as Deputy Chair and were joined by Cllr David Aitchison, who was appointed by the Board in December 2015. The Nestrans Executive team had a vacancy from October 2015 when the Transport Executive (Travel Planning and Delivery) took early retirement and was without the Transport Executive (Strategy and Delivery) throughout the year due to maternity leave. Membership details of the Nestrans Board and Executive Team are given in full within Appendix 1.

Governance Documents

The full suite of [governance documents](#) within which Nestrans, as a publically accountable body, must operate are published on the Nestrans website. This includes the latest Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Policy for 2015/16 that was approved in August 2015.

Equalities Duties

The Nestrans [Equalities Mainstreaming Report](#) was first produced and published on the Nestrans website in 2013 with the [Nestrans Equality Outcomes Report](#) published at the end of 2014 following Nestrans participation in an improving equality outcomes project. Both are currently being reassessed with the intention that updated versions reviewing the equality outcomes and performance against them will be reported to the Nestrans Board for approval before being published in 2016/17.

2. Regional Transport Strategy

Nestrans main purpose is to prepare and oversee delivery of a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). The original [strategy](#) for the period to 2021 gained Ministerial approval in 2008. The [RTS Refresh](#) was approved by the Minister for Transport and Veterans on 16 January 2014 and is published along with supporting documents on the Nestrans website. The refresh took account of the changes to the policy and economic context within which the RTS sits that had occurred since it was adopted and extended the period it covers to 2035 to align it with the timeline of the then developing Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the North East. The refresh builds on the original RTS and updates 'The Preferred Strategy Package' and should therefore be taken as an addendum to the original strategy document.

Progress in the past year with the various Plans and Strategies that have been developed to support the delivery of the RTS and meet the aims and objectives therein are detailed below.

- Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP2)

The HTAP co-ordinator was initially appointed in October 2013 by Aberdeenshire Council for a period of 2 years. The Nestrans Board endorsed the continued appointment of the Programme Manager for a further two years and this post continues to be funded jointly by NHS Grampian and Nestrans.

The refreshed Health & Transport Action Plan [HTAP2](#) has two themes; transport and public health and access to health and social care. The steering group for each theme has continued to provide expert input and guidance towards the delivery of projects. This has included a mapping exercise of activity relating to transport and public health and initial analysis of gaps and opportunities to improve the delivery of behaviour change initiatives through closer working between transport and public health professionals.

The Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) service has continued to be provided by the public transport unit within Aberdeenshire Council. The project has also helped partners understand the capacity of operators across the region and is assisting with the understanding across the transport and health/social care sectors of access issues and how they relate to social and health inequalities. Unmet need for transport to health and social care appointments within Aberdeen were identified through calls received by THInC. HTAP partners approached Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) and Buchan Dial a Community Bus to develop a pilot with the aim of addressing this need. ACVO's Social Transport Project has funded the provision of a vehicle and driver with bookings handled by THInC that will operate until December 2016. The previously updated leaflet showing travel options to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary has continued to be distributed.

All Regional Transport Partnerships contributed to the development of a Traveline Scotland health branded microsite using a one-off grant increase from the Scottish Government in 2015/16 for this purpose. This website will sit

alongside the Traveline Scotland site and enable people to easily work out public transport options for visits to NHS facilities.

- Bus Action Plan

The Local Authority Bus Operators Forum, which comprises Nestrans, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Stagecoach Bluebird and First Aberdeen continues to work in partnership to progress the actions within the [Bus Action Plan](#) for North East Scotland. Minutes from the LABOF Steering Group Meetings continue to be reported to the Nestrans Board and can be viewed on the Nestrans website

Nestrans again funded a travel campaign under the getabout brand to provide information on options to use public transport for journeys to Aberdeen City Centre in the lead up to and throughout the festive period. This was advertised on billboards, bus shelters, bus backs, local radio and an interactive leaflet on the getabout website. Nestrans funded the installation of a bus shelter in Edzell Woods in support of the new cross boundary Forfar – Edzell service, jointly promoted with Tactran and Angus Council in the previous year.

A contribution was made to the Community Transport Association towards the running costs of a safe and legal minibus course for community transport operators in September 2015. This helped to make the course affordable for operators, particularly for smaller groups across Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray and assisted in improving standards in community transport across the region. It also gave the public transport unit at Aberdeenshire Council the chance to engage with these groups regarding transport provision opportunities in support of the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) service.

A bus satisfaction survey for the region was undertaken to build upon the results reported from 2010 to 2015 and Nestrans contributed to marketing to promote the extension in June 2015 to the zones covered by the [Grasshopper](#) multi-operator ticket. The Grasshopper pass is a partnership led by bus operators and administered by Aberdeenshire Council, which is supported by Aberdeen City Council and Nestrans. The pass is now generating over 14,000 passenger trips per month.

- Freight Action Plan

The refreshed Action Plan ([FAP2](#)) was launched in 2014 and is published on the Nestrans website. A meeting of the North East Freight Forum was held in November 2015 and the [minutes](#) are published on the Nestrans website. A [freight capabilities statement](#) has been produced that highlights the key characteristics and capabilities of the freight industry in North East Scotland to show the importance and role of the freight industry across the region, with a view to boosting the image and profile of the sector.

- Rail Action Plan

The [Rail Action Plan](#) was agreed in 2009 and can be viewed on the Nestrans website. The Network Rail stakeholder consultation meeting was facilitated by Nestrans through the North East Rail Forum membership and met in August to hear about progress with rail matters in the North East including proposals to

make bids to the Scottish Stations Fund to enable improvements at Inverurie and a proposed new station at Kintore.

Officers from Nestrans and Aberdeenshire Council have been in regular contact with Network Rail regarding the Aberdeen to Inverness Rail line upgrade, which includes infrastructure to allow the development of a new station at Kintore, including trackwork and signalling. The station itself, including platforms and overbridges, is not included in the upgrade and is currently being progressed by Network Rail on behalf of Nestrans and Aberdeenshire Council.

Nestrans has contributed to the cost of commissioning consultants to develop the design and costings for the car park and accesses for Kintore Station and to provide business case support for the station and assist with the preparation of a Stations Fund Bid towards the implementation costs of the station. Nestrans also appointed a rail consultant to provide advice in relation to the development of rail projects.

Nestrans has continued to be a partner in the East Coast Main Line consortium, a grouping of local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships working in partnership to promote the case for investment in the line to enable economic growth.

- Active Travel Action Plan

The RTS refresh suggested that a further Action Plan be developed to detail actions and priorities for active travel and the [Active Travel Action Plan](#) was published in December 2014.

Nestrans continues to have a cycling development officer. The post was appointed in October 2014 for a period of two years and is funded by Nestrans with Sustrans providing a capital contribution of up to £100,000 per annum to match fund the post and any approved cycle infrastructure costs incurred by Nestrans that are not already being used to attract match funding.

The officer is supporting the delivery of the Active Travel Action Plan and co-ordinates with Sustrans on the delivery of the National Cycle Network routes in the north east. Support has also been given to local authorities in areas such as the promotion and marketing of walking and cycling within Aberdeen City and Shire, the development and delivery of active travel projects and submission of applications for external funding and monitoring of usage.

- Fares and Ticketing Strategy

The joint [fares and ticketing strategy](#) for the North East is published on the Nestrans website and contains an Action Plan to deliver the Strategy's aims and objectives. The [Grasshopper](#) multi-operator service was introduced in May 2014 in response to the action within the strategy to work with operators to encourage joint ticketing arrangements. The day and week passes have proved popular and the coverage area of the service was extended in June 2015 with Nestrans contributing to the advertising campaign for the increased service.

- Travel Planning Strategy

The [Travel Planning Strategy](#) was developed by the getabout partnership, which consists of Nestrans, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, NHS Grampian, Aberdeen University, Robert Gordon University, North East Scotland College, The James Hutton Institute and Home Energy Scotland. The group continues to deliver the actions within the strategy to encourage active and sustainable travel and assist with the delivery of related actions within the Health and Transport and Active Travel Action Plans.

In the past year Nestrans has provided assistance to various organisations to develop travel plans and participated in foyer events at various individual companies to advise on travel options.

The Getabout cycle roadshow continues to be used at various events and schools throughout the region and bike doctor services were commissioned for several events to provide a free bike check to help improve safety. The getabout events kit was added to with the purchase of a new getabout branded mini pop up gazebo. Stocks of relevant merchandise branded with the getabout logo were purchased for promotional events and included reflective slap bands, t-shirts and reflective draw string bags.

The getabout.liftshare.com website continues to provide a successful car share scheme and operates with a number of sub-groups so that individual organisations can have their own section under the wider umbrella or be involved in the larger scheme. There was an increase in total membership in 2015/16, which now sits at just over 3,200 members. This was due to almost 500 new members joining the group and only 100 leaving, giving a net gain of around 400 members in the last year.

Promotions were again undertaken in the past year for getabout liftshare, active travel, Bike Week, European Mobility Week, Summer Days out by bus and festive period public transport travel options to Aberdeen City Centre. They were promoted using a variety of media such as leaflets, booklets, roadside billboard, highlighters, bus rears and bus shelter adverts, radio adverts, newspapers and on facebook and twitter. The getabout website is regularly updated with latest news and details of upcoming events.

The Transport Executive Travel Plan post became vacant following the early retirement of the postholder in November. The post was advertised and interviews held in early February 2016 with the appointed candidate due to start in post on 1 April 2016.

Progress reports on delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy are prepared for each Board meeting and updates on the various Action Plans are made at regular intervals. All [Board reports](#) can be viewed on the Nestrans website.

3. Representing North East Interests

Nestrans has continued to represent North East interests and ensure that they are considered on a national stage. In the past year this has included:

- Aviation Matters
The Nestrans Director was part of the National Connectivity Task Force, which made recommendations in a report to the Airports Commission in March 2015 for regional access to south east airports. The Airports Commission published their final report in July 2015 with recommendations to government for expanding aviation capacity in the UK. While all 3 schemes shortlisted were considered credible, the Commission unanimously concluded that the proposal for a new northwest runway at Heathrow Airport, combined with a significant package of measures to address its environmental and community impacts, presents the strongest case and offers the greatest strategic and economic benefits. The report also recognises the importance of 'protecting and bolstering existing domestic services into London.

A Deputy Chair of Nestrans and ACSEF Board Member has continued to serve as a representative on the Aberdeen International Airport Consultative Committee.
- Maritime
Nestrans along with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, RGU, University of Aberdeen and Aberdeen Harbour Board have bid in partnership with 4 other ports to the Civitas programme. The north east submission includes proposals relating to transport around the new harbour at Nigg, with a particular focus on goods movements. The bid is for £4M Euros over 2016-2020 for each port (ie 1M Eu/annum for each port and it has been confirmed that the proposal has reached the stage of Grant Agreement preparation.
- Freight
Nestrans responded in February 2015 to the Scottish Parliament's Infrastructure & Capital Investment committee, who were undertaking an inquiry into freight transport in Scotland. The Committee completed their inquiry and published the [findings](#) in June 2015. The report recognises the challenges facing the freight industry in Scotland and has taken cognisance of the comments submitted by Nestrans. A key recommendation of the Committee is for the Scottish Government to consider the need for an urgently updated freight transport policy taking account of changing trends in the freight transport and wider logistics sectors, addressing all modes and considering transport within its wider logistics context. The Transport Minister, Derek Mackay launched the Scottish Government's new rail freight strategy for Scotland at an event at Aberdeen Craiginches Freight Terminal in March 2016.
- Rail
Nestrans is a member of the East Coast Mainline Authorities (ECMA) grouping, which consists of local authorities and Regional Transport partnerships along the route of the London Kings Cross-Aberdeen railway and aims to highlight the

economic importance of the line and the need for investment to ensure that the economies of the relevant regions continue to prosper. The Group has developed a business case supporting the case for investment and will be holding Parliamentary events in Edinburgh and London to promote the benefits to the country of investment in the East Coast Line.

Nestrans appointed a rail consultant to provide advice in relation to the development of rail projects. This included consideration of the potential capacity and constraints at the tunnels north of Aberdeen station, providing an overview in terms of discussions relating to the single track at Usan near Montrose and options for improvement and helping officers to gain a better understanding of the rail opportunities and options going forward. He also contributed to Nestrans' consideration of and response to Network Rail's Draft Scotland Route Study that was issued for consultation in December 2015.

Nestrans continues to contribute to the work of the High Speed Rail Scotland group promoting High Speed Rail to Scotland. This involves trying to keep an all Scotland view of High Speed Rail to Scotland whilst recognising the north of Scotland's different needs, due to geography, in terms of access to English cities including London.

- General
Nestrans is contributing to the development of the Scottish Council for Development and Industry's Connectivity Commission's report into future infrastructure requirements. This group is looking at the requirements for Scotland given the changing attitude to travel with digital improvements and changing ownership attitudes changing the way people will view and access transport.

Partnership working

Regional Transport Partnerships, Scottish Government and CoSLA

Nestrans continues to liaise with other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) through quarterly meetings of the Chairs and further quarterly meetings between Lead Officers, including Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA).

Community Planning Partnerships and Single Outcome Agreements

Nestrans contributed financially to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnerships (CPP) in 2015/16 and the Nestrans Director is a Member on the Aberdeenshire CPP Board

Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) / Opportunity North East (ONE)

Nestrans continued to work in close partnership with the North East's regional economic agency ACSEF in the early part of 2015. Integrated transport is a key

priority within ACSEF's [Economic Action Plan for 2013 - 18](#) and the Nestrans Director had a seat at the ACSEF Management Team meetings.

Opportunity North East (ONE) was set up in December 2015 as an evolution of the public-private partnership behind ACSEF. It is a new private sector led and funded economic development organisation for the region. ONE was launched in Dec 2015 and is being established with a co-investment fund of up to £25million of operational and project capital from The Wood Foundation. It aims to broaden and strengthen the region's economy by investing in and accelerating the delivery of projects of scale and impact through four sector boards:

- Oil & Gas – chaired by Sir Ian Wood
- ONE Food, Drink & Agriculture – chaired by Patrick Machray
- ONE Life Sciences – chaired by Professor Stephen Logan
- Tourism –working closely with the existing board of VisitAberdeen,

ONE's economic leadership board, chaired by Sir Ian Wood will also be the private sector partner in the City Region Deal and fulfil the roles of the regional advisory board for Scottish Enterprise and the Economic Forum for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.

Nestrans continues to receive public relations services through the joint contract that was commissioned in partnership with ACSEF in July 2013. The joint twitter account @ACSEF_Nestrans became an exclusively Nestrans account @Nestrans in December 2015 and continues to give news on Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire's transport links. The number of followers by March 2016 was 432, which is up from the 300 followers the joint account had in March 2015.

Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA)

Nestrans collaborated with the Strategic Development Plan Authority in the production of the [Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan \(2014\)](#) that was approved by Scottish Ministers at the end of March 2014 to ensure that the refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy would align with the transport implications of the Strategic Development Plan.

Strategic Transport Fund

The Strategic Transport Fund was developed to deliver the scope and scale of interventions that may be required to mitigate the congestion impacts associated with new development and to provide an appropriate level of public transport accessibility. It was intended that the non-statutory supplementary guidance [Delivering Identified Projects through a Strategic Transport Fund](#) adopted in early 2012 in support of the previous Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 would be reviewed and adopted as statutory guidance as part of the new Strategic Development Plan and Nestrans has assisted the SDPA in the review and development of revised guidance.

The draft revised guidance was consulted upon in early 2015 and amendments made where necessary before submitting it to Scottish Ministers for them to

decide whether to issue a Direction regarding the adoption of the guidance. The SDPA received notification from Scottish Ministers that it could proceed to adopt the guidance and therefore agreed at their meeting on 25 June 2015 to adopt statutory [Supplementary Guidance in relation to the Strategic Transport Fund](#). The adopted guidance was referred to both councils for ratification and came into force on 28 August 2015, at which point it superseded the previous non-statutory guidance.

A legal challenge was lodged in the Court of Session by the Elswick Development Company against the newly adopted statutory Supplementary Guidance. The hearing involving three judges took place on 9 and 10 March 2016 before the Inner House of the Court of Session and the judgement is awaited.

In the meantime the guidance remains in force and unless the adoption of the guidance is suspended or quashed, contributions to the Strategic Transport Fund will continue to be sought in the normal way, although developers still have the option of assessing their cumulative impacts on the transport network and mitigating them in line with the Strategic Development Plan.

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. Details of contributions in the period to 31 March 2016 are given in chapter 7 on funding.

City Region Deal

In January 2016 a City Region Deal agreement was formally agreed that will see the UK and Scottish governments jointly invest £250 million in the north east over the next 10 years. Whilst Nestrans is not directly involved, as the projects to be delivered within Deal are likely to contain a large transport element that will be consistent with the Strategic Development Plan and Regional Transport Strategy, Nestrans is fully supportive and aim to support to our Local Authorities in delivering the Deal. This is likely to involve facilitating discussion and understanding of the reasons for pursuing connectivity improvements to assist the region's economic development and providing advice, evidence, policy consideration and general support wherever possible.

Civitas - Portis

Nestrans in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, RGU, University of Aberdeen and Aberdeen Harbour Board made a bid along with 4 other ports, namely Antwerp in Belgium, Trieste in Italy, Constanta in Romania and Klaipeda in Lithuania to the Civitas programme, with Ningbo in China being a follower port. The north east proposals are based on mode shift in support of the City Centre Masterplan proposals and freight measures for the Nigg Bay harbour proposals. The bid is for £4M Euros over 2016-2020 for each port and it has been confirmed that the proposal has reached the stage of Grant Agreement preparation.

4. Project Delivery

Progress at National Level

Nestrans has continued to seek identification of funding and a priority for delivery of strategic projects by partners that assist with delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy. In the past year the following progress has been made on major projects within the north east that are being delivered by partners:

- Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and Balmedie to Tipperty Dualling

The First Minister announced the start of construction in February 2015. This involves building 58 km of new road, 22 km of new slip roads, two new river crossings, and some 150 other structures to support the route. Aberdeen Roads Limited has progressed works, including fencing, earthworks, drainage, structures, utility diversions, etc, along the full length of the route from Stonehaven at the southern end of the new road to Tipperty at the northern most point.

Drilling and rock blasting to clear a path for the new road started in July near Cookney and has expanded out across the scheme. The first bridge beams at the new Tipperty junction were installed in October to carry the A90 over the realigned B9000 Newburgh to Pitmedden road. Utility works have been completed at the site of the new River Don Crossing near Aberdeen Airport with cabling and electricity towers being dismantled and replaced with new energy infrastructure.

Every effort has been made to minimise disruption to local communities, road users and businesses during construction. A Contact and Education Space was opened in August 2015 to give interested parties the opportunity to find out more and speak directly with those delivering the scheme. The Space has provided a wealth of environmental, construction and safety information as well as details on job and graduate opportunities. Full details can be viewed on the [project page](#) of the Transport Scotland website.

- Strategic Rail Improvements – Aberdeen to Inverness

The Scottish Government has announced a two-Phase upgrade of the Aberdeen-Inverness railway line. Funding of £170 million was committed in March 2014 for phase one to redouble most of the track between Aberdeen and Inverurie and provide platform extensions to accommodate six-car trains at Inverurie and Elgin and infrastructure to allow for new stations at Kintore and Dalcross. Phase one is due to be delivered by 2019. Network Rail is undertaking this work on behalf of Transport Scotland and in October 2015 appointed a consortium of contractors led by BAM to carry out the works. Ground investigation, site survey and vegetation clearance works on the line have been completed to date. Officers from Nestrans and Aberdeenshire Council have been in regular contact with Network Rail and Transport Scotland regarding the project. Latest details can be viewed on the [Aberdeen to Inverness Rail Improvements](#) page on the Transport Scotland website.

Completion of these works facilitate the introduction of the “Rail Revolution” project announced by the Minister for Transport in March 2016. This will see the introduction of a local rail service between Inverurie and Montrose in 2019. This service will provide the regular cross Aberdeen service that Nestrans has been promoting as part of its Regional Transport Strategy.

- Strategic Rail Improvements – Aberdeen to Edinburgh and Glasgow
In January 2016 the Scottish Government announced an initial £200 million from future Scottish government budgets over the next five to ten years to improve journey times and increase capacity on key rail links between Aberdeen and the central belt, including upgrading of the rail line in the Montrose basin.
- A96 dualling
The Scottish Government’s Infrastructure and Investment Plan set out the aim to dual the A96 Trunk Road between Aberdeen and Inverness by 2030. Public exhibitions were held in May 2015 to let road users and locals view early assessment work showing a range of possible road improvement strategy options for the route between east of Nairn and Aberdeen. Transport Scotland has invited bids for a dualling design contract for around 29 miles of the route between east of Auldearn to east of Fochabers.

Nestrans has attended stakeholder groups and represented north east interests as appropriate. Full details can be viewed on the [A96 dualling](#) project page of the Transport Scotland website.

- A96 Inveramsay Bridge
The new £10.2 million infrastructure project to carry the A96 trunk road over the Aberdeen to Inverness railway was completed and opened to traffic in March 2016. Balfour Beatty was awarded the design and build contract by Transport Scotland and construction started in December 2014. The new infrastructure will end the signal control shuttle working at this section of the Trunk road network, thus improving journey time reliability and reducing the risk of bridge strikes and associated disruption. Full details of the scheme can be viewed on the [A96 Inveramsay Bridge](#) project page on the Transport Scotland website.
- A96 Park & Choose
Aberdeen City Council awarded the contract to create a new 1,000-space A96 Park & Choose site and link road between the A96 and the junction of Dyce Drive/Argyll Road to Lagan Construction Group. Work started in June 2015 on this £15.2million project.
- A90/A96 Haudagain
Jacobs published a Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 2 report in June 2014 which confirmed that option 5 is still the preferred option and that it continues to work effectively with current development plan proposals. Draft road orders and the Environmental Statement were published in June 2015 and a public exhibition held in July. Any representations to the scheme had to be submitted by August 2015. Full details can be viewed on the [A90/A96 Haudagain Improvement](#) project page of the Transport Scotland website.

- Third Don Crossing
Although being delivered as a local scheme, the Third Don Crossing is a key component of the A90/A96 Haudagain junction improvement. Aberdeen City Council awarded the contract to Balfour Beatty and work has commenced on site. There have been some delays due to weather and re-routing of underground utilities, but works are expected to be completed in May 2016. Full details of the project including a planned works weekly programme can be viewed on Aberdeen City Council's [website](#).
- A90 Bridge of Dee
The Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) part 2 assessment of the concepts taken forward from the part 1 assessment that was published in March 2014 has continued. This is assessing the following concepts in greater detail:
 - Concept 6: new upstream crossing with additional Non Motorised User (NMU) crossing adjacent to a reconfigured existing Bridge of Dee
 - Concept 6B: as Concept 6, with additional link from Garthdee Road/Inchgarth Road to A93 North Deeside Road
 - Concept 7- new crossing adjacent to existing Bridge of Dee, which is reconfigured for NMU use only.

The Environmental Assessment including Air Quality and Noise has been completed and the highways design development is progressing. An Architect and Design Scotland and stakeholder workshop was held in February 2016 and arrangements are being made for a public consultation in May 2016. Information on the study can be viewed on [Aberdeen City Council's website](#).

- Inverurie Transport Interchange
Aberdeenshire Council has continued to commission Aecom to progress a preliminary outline design, undertake consultation, and prepare costings for the scheme. An initial design has been developed and proposals are being discussed with Transport Scotland and Network Rail. Proposals include additional car parking to support extra rail passenger demand without impacting on the town centre and better circulation within the car park to include provision for buses and improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. Much of the land required for the project is being used for the Aberdeen to Inverness rail improvements and therefore options for an interim project are being discussed. Preparation of a funding application bid to the Scottish Stations Fund is also being considered.
- A90 Laurencekirk Junctions
CH2M HILL completed the study to identify a preferred solution for access between the A90 Trunk Road and Laurencekirk and Montrose in June 2015. The draft study was reported to the Nestrans Board who approved the principle of the findings and agreed to remit the study to Transport Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council for their consideration with a recommendation that further more detailed appraisal is undertaken to develop and implement a preferred solution. The study is published on the Nestrans website. In January 2016, the Infrastructure Secretary Keith Brown announced £24million of funding from future Scottish

government budgets over the next five to ten years to take forward the design and construction of a grade separated junction on the A90 at Laurencekirk.

- Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan

Aberdeen City Council has approved a City Centre Masterplan, which sets out the vision for the next 25 years. The aim to prioritise areas for pedestrians and cyclists can only be achieved by relocating non-essential traffic from within the City Centre core. Substantial mode shift will be required to increase the number of people accessing the City Centre, whilst reducing car borne trips. Nestrans has continued to work with the Council to develop sustainable transport proposals both within and on the approach to the City Centre.

- Locking in the Benefits of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) and Roads Hierarchy Review

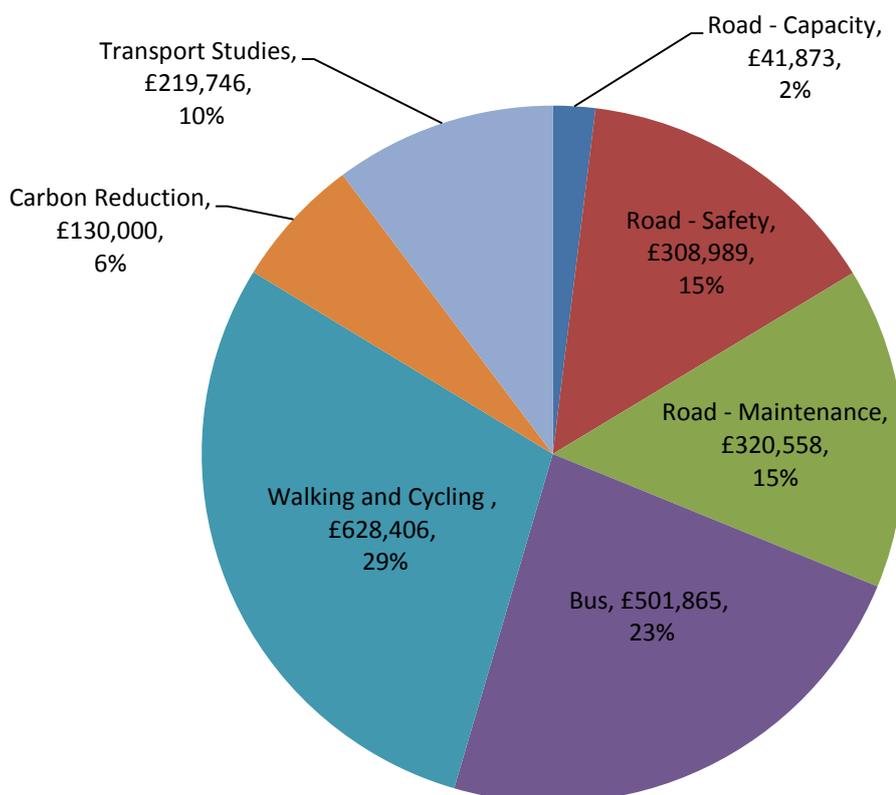
The AWPR will have a significant impact on the operation of the road network within the North East. The sections of the current Trunk Road network within the boundaries of the AWPR will be detrunked on completion of the route and the relief afforded by the AWPR will provide an opportunity to implement measures to “lock in the benefits” for sustainable modes. Nestrans is working with the Councils to consider how the road hierarchy should change and to identify integrated measures to lock in the benefits. Nestrans has also contributed to the costs of undertaking a signage audit on strategic corridors to assist with the development of a signing strategy.

Nestrans 2015/16 Strategic Investment Programme

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils again provided Capital funding to Nestrans and the Nestrans Board approved a Strategic Investment Programme of £2,350,000 in 2015/16, comprising allocations from Aberdeenshire Council of £1,055,000 and Aberdeen City Council of £1,295,000. This was supplemented with £493,537 of delayed draw down of funding from 2014/15, surpluses from previous years of £181,000, a contribution of £25,000 from Transport Scotland towards the Peterhead and Fraserburgh to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study and £27,758 of match funding from Sustrans to give an approved budget of just over £3 million.

Regular programme monitoring takes place between Nestrans and the two Councils to ensure efficient delivery of the Capital programme. A number of variations were made throughout the year to reflect changing circumstances and ensure optimum performance against the available budgets. Proposed revisions to the budget allocations were reported to the Board for approval through the regular budget matters report. A decision to delay draw down £764,380 of funds for a number of projects scheduled for completion in 2015/16 to 2016/17 was approved by the Board. The final expenditure by theme is shown below and details of the individual projects within each theme can be viewed in Appendix 2:

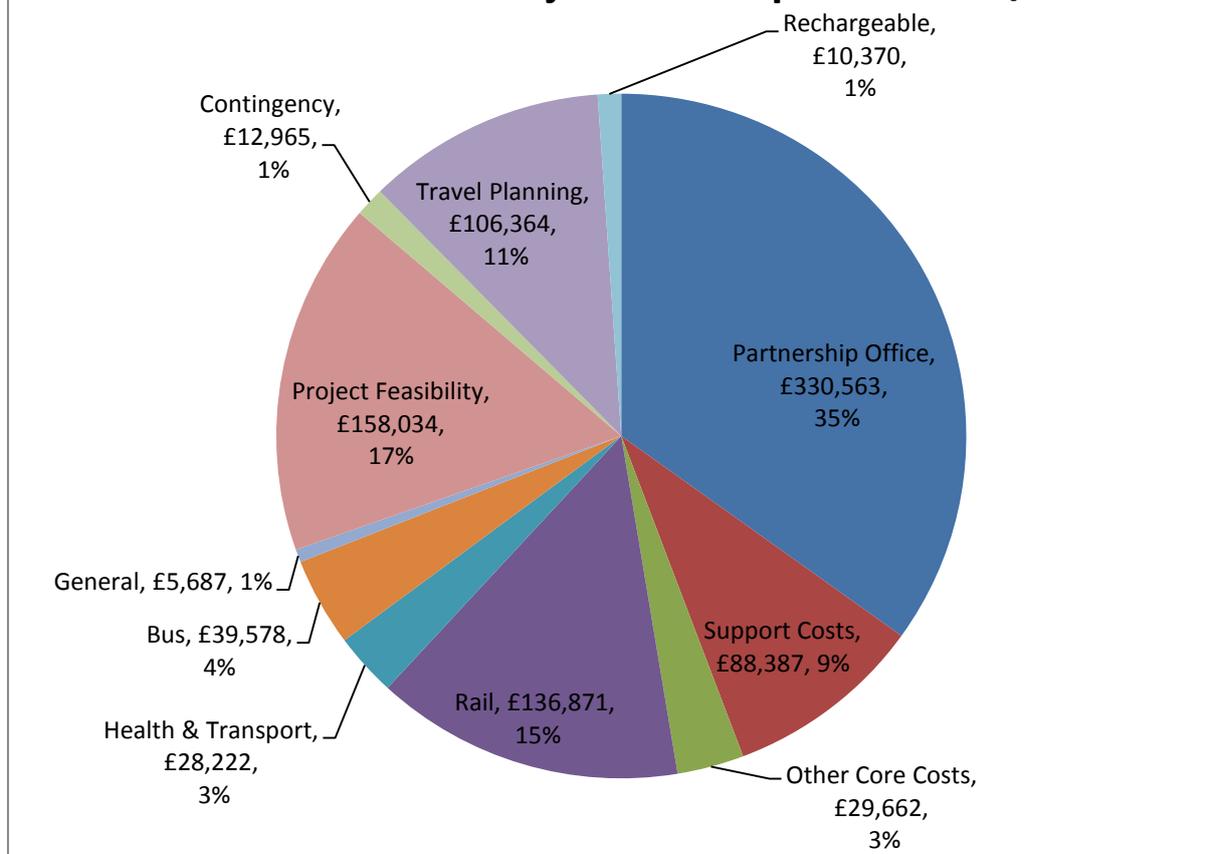
Strategic Investment Programme 2015/16



Nestrans 2015/16 Co-ordination & Project Development Programme

Revenue support from the Scottish Government was maintained at the previous year's levels as was the funding amounts requested from Council partners. This resulted in an approved Nestrans Revenue Budget for 2015/16 of £1,026,350 that was later supplemented with £100,000 of surplus and partner funding from previous years. Proposed revisions to the budget allocations were reported to the Board for approval through the regular budget matters report and a decision to delay draw down £155,000 of funds for two projects scheduled for completion in 2015/16 to 2016/17 was approved. The final expenditure by theme is shown below:

Coordination & Project Development 2015/16



Other Achievements

In addition to the above there have been other transport related achievements in 2015/16. These include:

- Aberdeen Harbour Board has continued to progress plans to develop a new deep water facility at Nigg Bay, with applications submitted to seek statutory approvals for the project from Transport Scotland, in the form of a Harbour Revision Order, from Marine Scotland, as Marine Licenses, and from Aberdeen City Council as Planning Permission in Principle. All of the regulatory bodies are now involved in public consultation on these various applications. Full updates can be viewed on the Harbour Board's website in the [Nigg Bay Development](#) pages. Funding is included towards the Aberdeen Harbour expansion proposals within the City Region Deal.
- The major deepening of the North Harbour Basin at Fraserburgh to -4.7m at chart datum was completed in September 2015. A power cable enhancement project has also been completed to upgrade an electricity line and provide shore power for businesses at the harbour
- Peterhead Port Authority plans for a £47 million redevelopment that includes deepening of both the port's north and south harbours and approaches from 3.5m-7m, construction of a new fish market on the site of the former Greenhill market and covered landing areas continue to be progressed. The necessary

consents, including a Harbour Revision Order, Marine Licence and Listed Building Consent have all been obtained.

- The First Minister unveiled details in February 2016 of a £20 million investment at Aberdeen International Airport to increase the size of the terminal building by 50% and undertake a comprehensive transformation of passenger facilities, including the creation of two new passenger lounges, an expanded baggage reclaim area, a new security search area, new immigration facilities and new retail and catering facilities within the main departures lounge. This will be a three year project with phase 1 due to commence in May 2016.
- The Transport Minister announced in March 2016 that ScotRail will introduce 200 new services from 2018 by retaining 13 trains (39 carriages) beyond the terms of their lease, which was due to end in 2018. The funding for this is in addition to the £474M investment in rolling stock over the lifetime of the franchise. For the north east this will enable an hourly 'local' service across the city between Inverurie and Montrose, stopping at all stations; additional services to create a half hourly service between Aberdeen and Inverurie, with extra early morning and late evening services to Elgin, Keith, Huntly and Insch; hourly limited stop High Speed Train service to both Edinburgh and Glasgow and many High Speed trains running from Glasgow or Edinburgh being extended through to Inverness.
- Net bus lane enforcement charge monies from the digital bus lane enforcement camera system funded by Nestrans in 2013 continue to be used to fund schemes that meet the aims and objectives within Aberdeen City Council's Local Transport Strategy and has included several active and sustainable transport measures.
- The Co-wheels car club continues to grow within Aberdeen City and now has an overall fleet of 40 vehicles, which includes 16 electric vehicles. Nine vehicles are exclusive use to Aberdeen City Council staff during working hours. There are 1,300 members of which around 580 are Council staff and vehicles are available from 38 bays across 28 locations in Aberdeen.
- Further electric vehicle charging points have been installed across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire using grant funding from Transport Scotland and OLEV, the UK Office for Low Emission Vehicles.
- Following the opening of the hydrogen production and bus refuelling station and hydrogen fuel cell vehicle maintenance facility in March 2015 in Aberdeen, the operational phase of the Aberdeen Hydrogen Bus Project is underway. This £19million green transport demonstration project is testing the operation of 10 Van Hool hydrogen fuel cell buses – six of which are being operated by Stagecoach on the X17 Aberdeen city centre to Westhill and Elrick route and four are being operated by Frist on the X40 Kingswells to Bridge of Don Park & Ride route. The refuelling station has already completed over 1,600 refuellings and the ten buses have travelled over 250,000 miles and carried over 400,000 passengers.
- Nestrans has contributed to a second hydrogen production and refuelling station to the south of Aberdeen that is due to be complete in summer 2016. This station is designed to refuel cars and vans and will be publicly accessible with 350bar and 700bar refuelling and electric charging available.

Seeking Efficiencies

Nestrans has continued to seek efficiencies and to bring in other sources of funding through partnerships with other parties. Full details can be viewed in the Statement on Improving Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy in Appendix 2 – Public Services Reform Information

Information Publication

Sections 31 and 32 of the [Public Services Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) impose duties to publish information on certain expenditure and statements on steps taken to promote and increase sustainable growth and improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy through the exercise of its functions. A statement was published on the Nestrans website following completion of the annual accounts to detail expenditure in the 2015/16 financial year relating to the following stipulated matters:

- Public Relations
- Overseas Travel
- Hospitality and Entertainment
- External Consultancy
- Payments with a value in excess of £25,000
- Members or employees who received remuneration in excess of £150,000

Statements have also been prepared on the steps taken by Nestrans in the exercise of its functions to:

- Promote and increase sustainable economic growth
- Improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy

The above information required under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 is also included within Appendix 2.

5. Results

The 2016 Monitoring Report provides information and background data to support the development of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), first produced in 2008 and a refresh as approved by Scottish Ministers in 2014 and is the eighth annual monitoring report. It is designed to show progress against the objectives of the RTS which is delivered by Nestrans and its partners and provides information against a total of 48 monitored indicators of which 35 have targets set against them.

It should be noted that it may take many years for the strategy to decisively influence most indicators, but it is Nestrans' intention to maintain regular monitoring of its targets and indicators. Nestrans itself may have limited influence over delivery against some of the indicators however as the delivery of the RTS as a whole relies on the work of many partners, it is important to understand the wider progress and trends across the region.

The report seeks to provide information and consider appropriate indicators for taking the RTS forward. In particular, it contains SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound) targets to be refined as part of the Delivery Plan. Targets, where possible, relate back to the strategy's identified objectives and therefore the indicators too relate to objectives and the strategy's 21 strands.

Following feedback from the Nestrans Board the indicators that are monitored have been reviewed since 2015 and some, where data has been inconsistent or is now no longer collected, have been removed.

In the 2016 monitoring report, of the 35 indicators for which indicative targets have been identified, using the most up-to-date data available the following results can be summarised (it should be noted that some indicators have more than one target):

	2016
Indicators <u>on target</u>	21
Indicators with <i>some success</i>	14
Indicators moving in the wrong direction	6
Indicators with no data available or target set	12

The monitoring report contains a lot of information within its tables and graphs however some key points to note are:

- **Rail patronage (Indicator 3)** continues to increase at every station across the North East, with stations seeing 30% more passengers between 2010/11 and 2014/15 and now exceeding 6 million. The highest growth has been at Portlethen (up 211% between 2010/11 and 2014/15) and Inverurie (up 55% in the same period);
- **Traffic (indicator 5)** remains fairly static at around 4.2 billion kilometres (2.3 billion miles), just 3% higher than in 2005;
- The **number of passengers through Aberdeen Airport (Indicator 9)** was 3.47 million in 2015, although a decline from 2014, still the second highest year ever.

Aberdeen International Airport provides links to 48 airports in 16 countries and is the best connected UK to UK airport in the country with services to 21 other British airports;

- The proportion of passengers using **bus or rail to access Aberdeen Airport (Indicator 12)** has shown considerable growth, from less than 5% in 2001 to over 14% in 2013.
- **Passengers using Northern Isles ferry services through Aberdeen Harbour (Indicator 14)** increased to 151,000 in 2014. However growth in Aberdeen-Lerwick (up 18% since 2005) masks a decline in Aberdeen-Kirkwall figures.
- **The volume of freight through Peterhead and Aberdeen Harbours (Indicator 16)** has seen a recovery in 2014 and now sits at over 6 million Tonnes, an increase of 10% since 2005. Peterhead in particular has seen strong growth, up by 48% between 2005 and 2014;
- **Restrictions affecting trunk roads in the region (Indicator 20)** has been reduced by the opening of the new Inveramsay Bridge on the A96;
- The number of **coach services** to and from the region **(Indicator 22)** has increased between 2007 and 2016. There are now 541 coach services per week to key destinations;
- There were nearly 19.5 million **bus journeys made (Indicator 23)** in the north east in 2015/16;
- The **relative cost** of parking to bus fares is narrowing **(Indicator 27)** with a day bus ticket in Aberdeen now costing approximately 1.8 times the price of 2 hours car parking;
- The number of **cyclists on key routes** in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire **(Indicator 31 and 32)** are increasing. Aberdeen has seen a 50% increase between 2008 and 2016;
- **Journeys to work (Indicator 36)** by modes other than car driver are up from 36% in 2003/04 to 40% in 2014 (46% in Aberdeen and 33% in Aberdeenshire). The proportions driving has fallen in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire;
- The numbers **walking to work** has seen the greatest increase – from 12% to 14% in Aberdeenshire and from 14% to 25% in Aberdeen between 2005/06 and 2014;
- **Mode split on the travel to school (Indicator 37)** shows 50% of children walking, cycling or scootering. Although numbers walking have reduced, cycling is increasing in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire schools with an increase from 1% in 2003/04 to 3% in 2015;
- The numbers participating in **carshare schemes (Indicator 38)** and the **car club (Indicator 39)** are increasing, with over 3,000 registered car sharers and over 1,200 car club registrations, both at their highest ever levels;
- **Number of injuries in road traffic collisions** in the north east **(Indicator 43)** has seen further reduction with total number of casualties now 46% lower than in 2005;

- Number of **fatalities in road traffic collisions** in the north east (**Indicator 44**) has seen further reduction and the five year average for 2011-15 is at the lowest level recorded;
- **Carbon emissions from transport (Indicator 45)** have seen a 16% reduction across the north east between 2005 and 2014;
- **Indicators 46 and 47 relate to air quality** and show reducing average concentrations of nitrogen dioxide and particulates. 2015 levels in Wellington Road, Union Street and Market Street all show improvements and are close to achieving European-defined maximum levels.

The points above highlight some of the key statistics and trends emerging from the 2015 monitoring report. It should be noted however that although this report is published on an annual basis, it uses the most recent data available from a variety of different sources, of which the two key publications are the 'Scottish Transport Statistics' (published annually) and the 'Scottish Household Survey' (published bi-annually). Up to date data is therefore not always available for each indicator.

6. Planning for the future

Strategy Development

Regional Transport Strategy

In line with the Government's central purpose of sustainable economic growth, Nestrans will continue to work in partnership with Transport Scotland, Local Authorities and the private sector to achieve the aims of the Regional Transport Strategy.

In the coming year Nestrans will progress the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy by continuing to implement the actions within the supporting Health & Transport, Bus, Freight, Rail and Active Travel Action Plans.

- Health and Transport Action Plan Refresh (HTAP2)
Nestrans will continue to jointly fund the HTAP co-ordinator in partnership with NHS Grampian. Following consideration of gaps and opportunities identified through the activity mapping exercise completed by partner organisations in 2015/16 a detailed work plan will be developed based on the public health issues and inequalities highlighted in the HTAP. This process is anticipated to lead to pieces of work demonstrating the HTAP aims in practice, with health and transport professionals jointly working to achieve shared outcomes.

Nestrans will continue to contribute to the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) service that is provided by the public transport unit within Aberdeenshire Council. Partners working on the Access to Health & Social Care Sub-Group will be engaged in data sharing, gap analysis and planning workshops to produce a shared development plan for THInC. This will be informed by partners drawing on knowledge gained through links with similar projects around the country. Public involvement will continue to be an important aspect to the work of partners and it is hoped that a new Public Representative will, with the help of the Programme Manager, visit stakeholder groups across the region and help challenge and inform partner organisations.

- Bus Action Plan
Nestrans will contribute to the creation of a mini interchange hub developed by Aberdeenshire Council on the A93 at Crathes and commission modelling of a section of the A944 corridor to identify options to improve bus journey time reliability. It is expected that land negotiations will be concluded at the Ellon Park & Ride site and Nestrans will contribute to a car park extension, additional external waiting facilities and upgrade of the turning circle to accommodate 15m vehicles. In support of the Park & Choose site being constructed by Aberdeen City Council off the A96, Nestrans will fund an interactive information totem and installation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition units and back office system to assist with the parking enforcement regime at the site. Bus lane enforcement camera equipment will also be purchased for the bus lane within the Park & Choose site and for the bus gate on Bedford Road that is part of the Third Don Crossing project. Funding will also be provided to replace ticketing hardware

and software to enable the introduction of smart ticketing that is planned for the multi-operator Grasshopper ticket in 2016. Bus satisfaction surveys and public transport promotion will again be undertaken in partnership with the Local Authorities Bus Forum.

- Freight Action Plan
The freight implementation group, comprising of officers from Nestrans and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, will continue to progress priority actions within the new plan and develop and progress the freight related projects proposed within the European funded Civitas Portis project that commences in September 2016.
- Rail Action Plan
In accordance with the Rail Action Plan, Nestrans will continue to seek improvements to rail services across the North East and contribute to the East Coast Mainline Regional Forum. Funding has been allocated to progress the bid to the Scottish Government's Stations Fund for Kintore Station and to progress the car park and access road design and land purchase. Nestrans will continue to work with the local authorities, Transport Scotland and Network Rail regarding the delivery of the Aberdeen to Inverness line improvements, Inverurie Interchange proposals, development of options to improve journey times between Aberdeen and the Central Belt and towards securing timetable aspirations for a local rail service.
- Active Travel Action Plan
Nestrans will continue to fund a cycling development officer post, with Sustrans providing match funding of the post and infrastructure measures up to a maximum total value of £100,000. The officer will co-ordinate with Sustrans and support the delivery of the Active Travel Action Plan by identifying actions in partnership with both local authorities that can be progressed on a regional basis in the coming year. Nestrans will also contribute to a number of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure improvement schemes agreed with the local authorities that will enable them to seek match funding through the Sustrans Community Links Programme. Similarly Nestrans promotional budgets and staff time associated with active travel can be maximised by the Councils in their Smarter Choices Smarter Places bids.

Partnership Working

City Region Deal

Nestrans will continue to work with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council along with Transport Scotland to deliver the Transport Appraisal element of the City Region Deal. This appraisal will inform both the regional transport strategy and the national transport strategy including the strategic transport projects review.

Civitas Portis European Project

Nestrans is a partner in the Portis project, which is being awarded funding over a four year period starting in September 2016 through the European Commission's Civitas programme. Nestrans will be involved in various work packages relating to:

- Fostering walking and cycling;
- Redesigning collective travel;
- Developing travel plans;
- Collecting and managing data to support Travel Information;
- Supporting sound planning and decision-making;
- Enhancing demand management;
- Enhancing freight gateway interconnectivity;
- Developing smart systems for freight; and
- Minimising large vehicles in City Centre and encouraging clean vehicles.

Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan

Nestrans will continue to work with the Council in the year ahead to assess and develop sustainable transport proposals both within and on the approach to the City Centre to assist with delivery of the Masterplan aims. An initial project will be to investigate accessibility options for Broad Street.

Roads Hierarchy Review and Locking in the Benefits of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR)

Nestrans is allocating budget to each Council to develop and produce new local road signage to reflect the AWPR as necessary. Nestrans will also continue to work with the Councils and allocate budget to consider how the road hierarchy should change once sections of the current Trunk Road network within the boundaries of the AWPR are detrunked and to identify integrated measures to lock in the benefits for sustainable modes due to the relief afforded by the completion of the AWPR.

Community Planning

Nestrans will continue to be on the Board of the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership and will work closely with Community Planning Aberdeen on their structural review. This will include contributing to development of Local Outcome Improvement Plans and the monitoring and delivery of transport related outcomes within them.

Regional Economic Strategy

Nestrans will work with the Economic Development Regional Strategy Group to assist in the delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy.

Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA)

Nestrans is awaiting the outcome of the legal challenge against the Supplementary Guidance in relation to the Strategic Transport Fund that was heard at the Court of Session in March 2016 and will collaborate with the Strategic Development Planning Authority, Councils and Transport Scotland to consider options should the challenge be upheld.

Unless the adoption of the guidance is suspended or quashed, contributions to the Strategic Transport Fund will continue to be held and administered by Nestrans and used to deliver transport projects that are needed as a result of the combined effect of new development in the strategic growth areas within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area. There has been no expenditure of any of the payments made to the Strategic Transport Fund to date, but it is anticipated that one of the early interventions to be funded will be a contribution towards a rail station at Kintore. Any use of the fund will however require to be agreed by the Nestrans Board following consultation with the Councils, SDPA and Transport Scotland.

Nestrans along with SDPA, local authorities and Transport Scotland will commission an update the current Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM) in advance of the five year review of the Cumulative Transport Appraisal that formed the original evidence base for the Strategic Transport Fund and is due to be undertaken in 2016/17.

Getabout Partnership

Nestrans will continue to implement the integrated Travel Planning Strategy through the getabout partnership and plan to undertake a review of the strategy in the year ahead. Active and sustainable travel will continue to be promoted through the getabout brand in support of the Active Travel Action Plan and the transport and health aims within the Health and Transport Action Plan. Nestrans will also promote travel planning and offer assistance to companies developing travel plans. This will be supported by various Liftshare, Car Club, walking, cycling, public transport, Park & Ride and healthy active travel promotions throughout the year and a refresh of the getabout website. A sustainable travel grant scheme will continue to be offered to support the development of Travel Plans and travel awareness in Aberdeen City and Shire and encourage companies to invest in green transport initiatives. Cycle roadshow events will again be organised at schools and public events throughout the region to encourage people to try cycling.

Project Delivery

Partner funded Projects

The following national and regional projects will continue to be progressed in the forthcoming year:

- Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and A90 Balmedie to Tippetty dualling
- A96 Aberdeen to Inverness dualling
- A96 Park and Choose and link road from A96 to junction of Dyce Drive with Argyll Road

- Strategic Rail Improvements – Aberdeen to Inverness
- Inverurie Transport Interchange
- A96/A90 Haudagain Junction improvement
- Access from the North – Third Don Crossing
- Harbour Improvements at Peterhead and Fraserburgh
- Aberdeen Harbour Board Proposals for a new harbour at Nigg Bay
- Aberdeen International Airport Terminal Improvements
- A90 Laurencekirk junction improvement

Nestrans funded Projects

The Nestrans budgets for 2016/17 have been approved by the Board and are detailed in chapter 7. The following list outlines the projects and studies that are intended to be progressed in the year ahead:

Strategic Investment Programme

- Kintore Station – Station Fund bid and car park/access design and land purchase
- Common database platform to interface with current traffic systems
- Strategic network monitoring – CCTV along strategic corridors Phases 1 and 2
- AWPR Signage in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire
- Implementation of measures identified in 15/16 accident study within Aberdeen
- Installing traffic signals at junction of Skene Road and the Crematorium access
- A947 road safety improvements
- Design of junction alterations to 'lock in the benefits of AWPR' for active travel
- Strategic prioritised maintenance:
 - A944 Loch of Skene resurfacing
 - A944 Craigenlow resurfacing
 - Beach Esplanade: Beach Ballroom junction layout improvement design
 - Dyce Drive resurfacing of carriageway near airport
- A944 modelling to identify options to improve bus journey time reliability
- Ellon Park & Ride car park extension, bus turning circle upgrade and improved waiting facilities
- Mobile Data Terminals for Aberdeenshire Council Public Transport Unit
- Region wide real time information screens
- Bus stop information initiatives
- Replacement of ticketing hardware for small operators to enable smart ticketing
- A96 Park & Choose information totem and parking enforcement system
- A93 Crathes mini-hub
- Bus lane enforcement cameras
- Pedestrian/Cycle infrastructure:
 - Peterhead: Meethill Road Phase 2, Catto Park
 - A96 Inverurie to Kintore
 - Parkway Extension (Balgownie – Fairview)
 - Anderson Drive phase 1 Bridge of Dee to Ruthrieston Rd
 - River Don southside path by Grandhome
 - Seaton Park entrances
 - Craigshaw Drive cycle route
- Pedestrian/Cycle feasibility and design

- Dyce Drive between Dyce Avenue and Kirkhill Place
- Feasibility and design of future cycleway schemes in 5 Integrated Travel Towns in Aberdeenshire
- Long Distance Path Development
- River Don path designs
- Riverside path from Bridge of Dee to RGU feasibility and design
- Wellheads cycle link design
- Two hydrogen fuel cell vans
- Electric van for car club
- Aberdeen Cross City Connections feasibility study
- Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study –Stag Part 2

Co-ordination & Project Development Programme

A core costs budget has been set to reflect the running costs of the Nestrans office along with support costs for services provided by the Councils and other associated costs for the organisation. Nestrans will however continue to seek further efficiencies within our own organisation and aim to secure partnership funding and support where possible.

Funding has been also been approved for non-core projects to progress the various Action Plans that support the Regional Transport Strategy and undertake project feasibility work as follows:

- Rail Action Plan
 - East Coast Mainline Regional Forum
- Freight Action Plan
 - Freight Action Plan Actions
- Health & Transport Action Plan
 - H&T Programme Support Manager
 - Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC)
- Bus Action Plan
 - Bus Action Plan Actions
 - Region Wide Real Time System annual maintenance contribution
- General
 - Aberdeen Sub Area Model Management & Maintenance
 - Cumulative Impact Assessment Review
- Project Feasibility
 - Bridge of Dee STAG Part 2 Assessment
 - Westhill Transport Study
 - Feasibility and Design aspects of AWPR Locking in the Benefits – including Wellington Road corridor study and hierarchy review
 - Assessment for City Centre Pedestrianisation
- Contingency
- Travel Planning
 - Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme
 - Getabout active travel promotion and travel planning support
 - Cycling Development Officer

7. Funding

General

Nestrans coordination and project development budget funding is mainly provided by a grant from the Scottish Government. The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 however requires the constituent councils of each Regional Transport Partnership (RTP) to fund its net expenses, after allowing for any income, including any grants from the Scottish Government.

In 2016/17 the RTP expenditure support from the Scottish Government will remain at £782,000, which is the same level that has been received since 2011/12. Nestrans has also requested a continuation of the previous year's funding from our constituent Councils of £122,175 each. There is also a delay in drawdown from the Councils from 2015/16 totalling £155,000 resulting in a revenue budget for 2016/17 of £1,181,350.

Strategic investment programme funding is now requested from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils following the un-ringfencing of support from the Government in the 2008 Local Government concordat. The notional sums allocated in 2008/09 to both local authorities in their block grants for Regional Transport Strategy projects amounted to £3,114,000. This comprised of £1,411,000 from Aberdeen City Council and £1,703,000 from Aberdeenshire Council.

Although Nestrans previously requested funding from the Councils on an annual basis, as both organisations have longer term capital programmes in place that indicate a continuation of funding support to Nestrans, the principle of developing a five year budget plan for the period 2015-2020 was agreed by the Nestrans Board in February 2015. This enables a more strategic approach to transport planning and allows a profiling of capital contributions within the overall indicated budget total from each Council over the 5 year period. Subject to future budget and Council agreements this will ensure that budget allocations made within the overall 5 year programme can be delivered without the need to reallocate expenditure at the end of each year to other projects if a slippage is identified, or indeed to draw down additional budget from a future year in advance if required.

Due to the nature and scale of some infrastructure projects the timeline for their delivery can extend beyond a single financial year. Consequently the decision to delay draw down of around £770,000 for a number of projects that commenced in 2015/16 but are incomplete and will continue to be delivered into 2016/17 was discussed and agreed in principle with both partner Councils. Following budget considerations by the Councils, a capital budget for Nestrans in 2016/17 of £2,289,000 has been confirmed, comprising of £1,000,000 from Aberdeen City Council and £1,289,000 from Aberdeenshire Council. Including the delayed draw down to complete projects from the previous financial year brings the total available budget for strategic investment projects to just over £3 million in 2016/17.

2016/17 Budgets

The Nestrans Board approved draft [Strategic Investment Programme](#) and [Co-ordination & Project Development](#) Budgets for 2016/17 at their meeting on 29 February 2016 and a summary of the projects and studies proposed for delivery was given in the previous chapter. Should any requirements arise throughout the year for amendments to the approved budgets, then they will be proposed within the budget matters report that is prepared for consideration at each meeting of the Nestrans Board. All reports to the Board can be viewed on the Nestrans [website](#).

City Region Deal

The £250 million funding announced by the UK and Scottish Governments for a City Region Deal may mean that there will be a need to review some of the projects contained within the Nestrans budgets for 2016/17 as greater detail is known on what is to be funded through the City Region Deal should this supersede any of the current proposals.

Civitas - Portis

Nestrans in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, RGU, University of Aberdeen and Aberdeen Harbour Board made a bid along with 4 other ports to the Civitas programme for £4M Euros over 2016-2020 for each port. It has been confirmed that the proposal has reached the stage of Grant Agreement preparation although the details of the exact amount of grant to be offered for the various work packages suggested within the bid are unknown at this stage.

Strategic Transport Fund

Nestrans holds and administers contributions to the Strategic Transport Fund (STF) that is defined within the statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014). The STF is ring-fenced for projects needed to address the cumulative impact of the Strategic and Local Development Plans. By the end of 2015/16 contributions in excess of £23,238,974 have been agreed in relation to the STF. This amount excludes agreements that have yet to determine precise levels of contributions – largely consents granted in principle where there was insufficient detail to enable a detailed calculation to be made. Final figures for these applications will not be determined until detailed or ‘Matters Specified in Condition’ applications are determined.

Of the total agreed, Nestrans held £1,716,470 in the fund as at 31 March 2016, with this amount having been paid by developers either upfront or as a result of having reached the trigger points in the relevant section 75 agreements. As stated in the guidance, monies paid into the fund are held for a period of 20 years.

There have been no projects progressed to date using the monies within the fund. Development and delivery of any interventions using the fund will be agreed by the Nestrans Board following consultation with the Councils, the Strategic Development Planning Authority and Transport Scotland.

Reserves

The Transport Scotland (Scotland) Act 2005 stipulates that the constituent authorities are required to meet the net expenses of the Partnership. This has been interpreted by Audit Scotland as meaning that it is not possible for Nestrans to retain a surplus or deficit in any year and therefore it is not possible for Nestrans to have a general fund balance or reserve.

Scottish Government officials have previously indicated that they will recommend that an amendment is made to the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 to allow for reserves. There has again been no change in the past year as this is dependant on finding Parliamentary time and suitable legislation to enact.

Borrowing

Under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, Nestrans is permitted to borrow money for the purposes of its capital expenditure. Nestrans would have to give due regard to the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities when determining its programme for capital investment. The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that the capital investment is affordable, prudent and sustainable.

In Nestrans case this could require the agreement of the Local Authorities in ensuring that future repayments could be met. Nestrans has no plans to borrow at this time.

Revenue: Other Sources of Funding

Nestrans will continue to seek to form partnerships to deliver services and investigate European funding opportunities. Investigations into the general issue of alternative funding sources are continuing through the Regional Transport Partnership Chairs meetings with CoSLA.

Appendix 1. The Nestrans Board and Executive

The Board

The Nestrans Board is its main decision-making body and in terms of the Order that set Nestrans up, membership consists of four Councillor members from Aberdeen City Council and four from Aberdeenshire Council. In addition Nestrans is entitled to have between three and four non-councillor members.

Throughout 2015/16 the Councillors nominated by the two Councils to sit on the Board were:

Aberdeen City Council	Aberdeenshire Council
Councillor Ramsay Milne (Labour)	Councillor Peter Argyle (Lib Dem)
Councillor Andrew Finlayson (Independent Alliance Group)	Councillor Alan Buchan (Independent) to 9 June 2015
Councillor Callum McCaig (SNP) to 24 June 2015	Councillor Graeme Clark (SNP)
Councillor Ross Grant (Labour)	Councillor John Latham (Independent) to 9 June 2015
Cllr Jackie Dunbar (SNP) from 24 June 2015	Councillor David Aitchison (SNP) from 9 June 2015
	Councillor Martin Ford (Democratic Independent and Green Group) from 9 June 2015

The non-Councillor Members appointed by the Partnership and endorsed by the Minister for Transport and Veterans in January 2014 for the period to April 2019 are:

Non councillor members	
Mr Eddie Anderson	Freight Industry
Mr Gerry Donald	Head of Physical Planning at NHS Grampian
Mr Duncan Cameron	Public transport experience
Ms Sandra Macdonald	Council, equalities and strategic transport experience

The Board has also appointed professional advisers to sit on the Board. These are:

Board Adviser	
Dr Margaret Bochel	Head of Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council to 21 August 2015
Mr Stephen Archer	Director of Infrastructure Services, Aberdeenshire Council
Mr David Jennings	Strategic Development Plan Manager from 29 February 2016
Mr Pete Leonard	Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure from 29 February 2016

The Board has appointed the following office bearers:

	Office
Councillor Ramsay Milne	Chair
Councillor Peter Argyle	Deputy Chair
Mr Eddie Anderson	Deputy Chair
Councillor David Aitchison	Deputy Chair from December 2015

The Board meets to a schedule, usually agreed around December for the following year, at roughly two-monthly intervals. Additional workshop-style meetings are held to discuss items of particular detail. Meetings are usually held at 2pm at Woodhill House in Aberdeen. During 2015/16 meetings were held on:

1 April 2015
 17 June 2015
 21 August 2015
 9 October 2015
 9 December 2015
 29 February 2016

Meetings are scheduled into the busy Council calendars to ensure that most members are able to attend. There is a facility for each Councillor member to nominate a substitute who can only participate if the member is not present.

Nominated substitute members throughout 2015/16 were:

Aberdeen City Council	Aberdeenshire Council
Councillor G Graham (Lab)	Councillor I Mollison (Lib Dem)
Councillor J Laing (Lab)	Councillor A Evison (Lab) to 9 June 2015
Councillor W Young (Lab)	Councillor L Pirie (SNP) to 9 June 2015
Councillor I Yuill (Lib Dem)	Councillor J Strathdee (SNP) to 9 June 2015
	Councillor P Johnston (Independent) from 9 June 2015
	Councillor J Latham (Independent) from 9 June 2015
	Councillor S Smith (SNP) from 9 June 2015

Professional Support and Services

The Board takes professional support and services from the two constituent authorities as follows:

Aberdeen City Council
Legal Services
Democratic and Administration
Information and Communications Technology
Aberdeenshire Council
Personnel Services
Finance Services

Aberdeenshire Council continued to provide PR, marketing and event management for Nestrans throughout 2015/16. They were appointed following a joint tender process by Nestrans and ACSEF on 1 July 2013 for a period of 2 years with an option for a possible further one year extension thereafter, which was implemented. Lucy Johnston is the Marketing and Communications Officer at Aberdeenshire Council assigned to Nestrans, with Danielle McKinlay providing cover for this post from January 2016.

Nestrans Staff

To support the Board in carrying out its functions there is an Executive Team in place. This team consists of:

Position	
Director	Mr Derick Murray
Transportation Strategy Manager	Mr Rab Dickson
Transport Executive (Programmes & Delivery)	Mrs Jennifer Anderson
Transport Executive (Strategy & Delivery)	Mrs Kirsty Chalmers (on maternity leave in 2015/16)
Transport Executive (Travel Planning & Delivery)	Mr Don Kent (took early retirement from end October 2015)
Office Manager (approx 22 hours/week)	Mrs Tricia Howden
Cycling Development Officer	Miss Kathryn Mackay

The Executive Team are located in Offices at

Archibald Simpson House
27-29 King Street
Aberdeen
AB24 5AA

The Strategic Development Planning Authority is no longer co-located in the Nestrans office, but retains a desk. Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) operated from Archibald Simpson House until end September 2015 when the manager retired.

Appendix 2. Public Services Reform Information

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 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 Pl

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

Statement on Improving Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy

During 2015/16 NESTRANS has continued to seek and implement initiatives to assist in improving the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the services delivered. A brief overview of these initiatives has been included.

Shared Services

Collaborative Working

Although the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) is no longer co-located with Nestrans they retain a desk within the Nestrans office to allow close and collaborative working to easily and efficiently take place. Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) continued to be based within the Nestrans office until the manager retired in September 2015.

Shared Public Relations Service

To ensure best value Nestrans and ACSEF tendered a combined contract for PR and communications services in 2013 to allow both organisations to benefit from cost savings. This has provided full time access to a dedicated marketing and communications officer and the cost to Nestrans in 2015/16 was just over £14,500, which is a considerable saving in comparison with previous years when Nestrans had their own PR contract.

Legal, Administrative, Financial, ICT and HR Services

The activities of NESTRANS continue to be supported by partner Councils through the provision of specialist assistance and advice. These activities are governed by separate Service Level Agreements. The use of existing support staff is considered to be an efficient and economic use of an existing pool of specialist staff, the cost of which would be significantly higher if an external or dedicated in-house cadre of similarly qualified and experienced staff were to be used. Details of each support service are as follows:

Legal & Administrative Services

Legal Services etc are provided by Aberdeen City Council. Services include legal advice, contractual advice and provision of clerking for the Board and meetings. The cost of legal and contractual advice in 2015/16 was £7,856, whereas the administrative costs of clerking for the Board remained at £20,000.

Treasurer

Accountancy etc support is provided by Aberdeenshire Council. Services provided include invoice and payment processing, financial ledger, regular financial monitoring reporting to the Board, internal audit, liaising with external audit, assistance with budget preparation and control, final accounts preparation and pension fund management, general accountancy advice and treasury management. Since 2012/13 this has been extended to include financial services relating to the Strategic Transport Fund that was set up for developer contributions to strategic transport measures. The quality of support is considered to be excellent and the cost of this service in 2015/16 remained at £21,100.

ICT Services

Aberdeen City Council provides and maintains quality Information and Communication Technology Services for Nestrans. The cost of this service in 2015/16 remained at £5,000

HR Services

HR services are provided by Aberdeenshire Council. This includes drafting and review of HR policies and procedures, monitoring any changes in legislation, support in dealing with staff matters, offering advice on related matters and reporting to the Nestrans Board. In 2015/16 this also included assistance with the advertisement and appointment of the Cycling Development Officer post and job evaluation surveys with several of the Nestrans staff. The cost of this service in 2015/16 remained at £15,900.

Getabout Partnership

Nestrans is a key member of the Getabout Partnership that also consists of Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, NHS Grampian, Aberdeen University, Robert Gordon University, North East College, the James Hutton Institute and Home Energy Scotland. The joint working of the partnership continues to provide increased efficiency and effectiveness when promoting sustainable travel throughout the region via a single brand. The partnership has achieved economies through individual member organisations supporting getabout events organised by others eg providing staffing, transport and promotional merchandise.

ACTtravelwise Membership

Nestrans again negotiated a group membership for all members of the getabout partnership to ACTtravelwise for 2015/16 that resulted in a saving in comparison with the cost that individual memberships would otherwise have been.

Getabout Cycle Roadshow

The Getabout cycle roadshow consists of a range of bicycles, including novelty and disability accessible cycles. The bikes were purchased by Nestrans and rates have been agreed with locally based Adventure Aberdeen to hold and maintain them and supplement them with other bikes they own. Adventure Aberdeen also transports the bikes to events organised by the getabout partners and provides tutors to assist with each event. The locally sourced and managed equipment dramatically reduces delivery mileage and carbon emissions in getting to events and is achieving considerable savings, whilst allowing priority booking by all getabout members. This is of particular benefit during themed weeks such as Cycle to Work and European Mobility Week when privately hired bike events are usually fully booked. The full cycle roadshow and getabout events kit, comprising of a getabout branded marquee, feather flags, banners and bunting previously purchased by Nestrans has been further supplemented in 2015/16 and is available for hire to private companies when not required by the partners, with any profit being used for the purchase of additional stock.

Bike Doctor Sessions

Transport Scotland funded Edinburgh Bike Station to provide 4 sessions of Bike Doctor and Cycle promotion Days in Aberdeen and Nestrans contributed match funding to double the number of sessions to eight. The promotions took place in association with various getabout cycle events.

Liftshare

Nestrans provides a central data base for car sharing throughout the region under contract with Liftshare Ltd. The website address is getabout.liftshare.com to help identify it with the overall getabout brand for sustainable and active travel in the North East. The website operates with a number of sub-groups so that individual organisations can have their own section under the wider umbrella or be involved in the larger scheme. By contracting the licence and hosting costs on a regional basis there are significant savings compared to each of the partners contracting individually. In addition there are benefits to the customers of being able to access a larger data base for potential matching of trips.

ASAM Regional Transport Model

Developed initially by Transport Scotland, the Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM) is now managed and maintained by Nestrans. A contract for ASAM support was previously negotiated with Systra to allow Nestrans to obtain the same terms as Transport Scotland has been offered when they retendered the LATIS Commission on a consultancy framework basis. The ASAM multi modal land use transport model provides the facility for detailed regional transport analysis in the north east. In 2015/16 the model has been used for strategic projects such as the Bridge of Dee Stag Part 2 and Fraserburgh/Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport studies. The model has also been used by local authorities for future year demand predictions and strategic input to local micro simulation models for Aberdeen city centre, Anderson Drive, Stonehaven and Westhill and by the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route Managing Agent. Developers have also been granted access to model information when undertaking Transport Assessments, thus ensuring that the local planning authorities requirements are met using the best available means.

East Coast Main Line Authorities

Nestrans are partners in the East Coast Main Line consortium. All partners contribute to the consortium, which is a grouping of local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships that aim to work in partnership to promote the case for investment in the line to enable economic growth.

Attracted Funding

Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme

Nestrans provides a Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme, which can provide up to 50% match funding to organisations investing in measures to promote more sustainable travel by their employees or customers. There is an upper limit on any award of £10,000. In 2015/16 the following grants were awarded:

- £420 to James Hutton Institute for an 4 month electric bike pool trial, with the Institute providing staff time and maintenance costs and Tactran also contributing
- £200 to Inspire for cycle racks at Café Coast, with remaining 50% met by Inspire

Realtimebus.com

The website was launched in September 2010 as a joint initiative between Nestrans and First in Aberdeen. The website allows customers to access real time information for First bus services based on their preferred stop, bus route and time of day via PCs and mobile devices. The branding complements that already in place for the getabout partnership. Nestrans funded the initial capital outlay and 10 year registration of the domain name and First Aberdeen have met the ongoing annual hosting and maintenance costs. It is intended that access to the region wide real time information system that is being developed this year will be provided from this website.

Dyce Airlink Shuttlebus Service

Since 2013/14 Stagecoach has rebranded the service as Jetconnect and operated it on a commercial basis. They continued to again provide the service without subsidy throughout 2015/16 given the current levels of patronage and Nestrans completing the construction a turning circle on the west side of the station to provide ease of access and allow larger vehicles to be used.

Grasshopper Advertising

The Grasshopper multi-operator daily and weekly bus tickets were launched in May 2014. In June 2015 the service was extended to cover a wider zone across the entire region and permits travel on services from 13 operators. Nestrans has again contributed in 2015/16 along with the local authorities and bus operators towards advertising in support of this service.

Forfar – Edzell Bus Service

Angus Council awarded a contract to Stagecoach Strathtay for a new direct bus service that launched in January 2015 between the Edzell/Stracathro Hospital/Brechin area and Dundee. This service provides direct access to Dundee and improves connectivity to Stracathro and Dundee Hospitals. The service was extended into Aberdeenshire to meet requests for better service provision in the Edzell Woods area. Nestrans previously contributed to publicity for this cross Council boundaries service along with Tactran and in 2015/16 Nestrans funded the installation of a bus shelter in the Edzell Woods area.

Cycle Infrastructure and Core Path Improvements

Nestrans continued to fund a cycling development officer in 2015/16, with Sustrans providing a capital contribution of up to £100,000 as match funding of this post and infrastructure measures funded by Nestrans that are not already being used by the Councils to match fund their bids to Sustrans. As a result Nestrans received grant funding from Sustrans of £82,600 in 2015/16 for agreed cycle/pedestrian improvement works.

A significant amount of Nestrans funding towards cycle and core path improvements has also been used by the Local Authorities as a basis to attract further match funding. In 2015/16 this resulted in:

Project	Nestrans Funding	Funding from other Organisations		Total Cost
Ellon Cycle Infrastructure to new Academy	£87,500	CWSS grant	£54,354	£141,854
Catto Park, Peterhead Ph 2	£42,500	CWSS grant	£24,425	£86,780
		Aberdeenshire Council	£19,855	
Cycle Racks for Towns	£20,000	Aberdeenshire Council	£7,309	£27,309
Ellon Road cycle path Phase 2 (Parkway – Murcar)	£177,500	Sustrans and AWPR non-motorised user mitigation fund	£377,500	£555,000
Parkway Ph1 (Balgownie – Scotstown)	£125,000	Sustrans	£155,000	£280,000
Upgrade F&B Way access from A947	£30,000	Sustrans and Aberdeen City Council	£46,000	£76,000
Anderson Dr ph1 Br of Dee - Ruthrieston Rd - design	£1,000	ACC Smarter Choices Smart Places grant	£1,000	£2,000
Anderson Dr ph3 - toucan at Rubislaw Den South and connections - design	£500	ACC Smarter Choices Smart Places grant	£1,000	£1,500
Total	£484,000		£686,443	£1,170,443

Health and Transport Action Plan

Nestrans continued to fund 50% of the costs of a support manager for the Health and Transport Programme in partnership with NHS Grampian in 2015/16.

Nestrans has also continued to contribute along with Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils and NHS Grampian to deliver the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC). The public transport unit within Aberdeenshire Council operates this dedicated telephone service to provide information on transport options for access to all NHS Grampian sites.

Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study

Nestrans commissioned a consortium of consultants comprising Sias, Peter Brett Associates and Energised Environments in 2014 to look into strategic transport options for improvements on the corridor between Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen. The study being progressed in partnership with Transport Scotland,

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. A contribution of £25,000 towards the overall cost of the study was supplied by Transport Scotland in 2015/16.

Strategic Transport Fund

Supplementary guidance on 'Delivering Identified Projects through a Strategic Transport Fund' was adopted in December 2011. This guidance was non-statutory supplementary guidance in support of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 and allowed contributions to be sought from housing and non-residential development for the delivery of the strategic transport projects indicated through the Cumulative Transport Appraisal that was previously commissioned by Nestrans.

This guidance has been reviewed in connection with the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014) and statutory Supplementary Guidance in relation to the Strategic Transport Fund was adopted and came into force on 28 August 2015, at which point it superseded the previous non-statutory guidance.

Payment of contributions into the fund comes direct to Nestrans who will manage the fund and the prioritisation and delivery of the strategic transport interventions. By the end of 2015/16 contributions in excess of £23.2 million have been agreed and of this amount £1,716,470 was held by Nestrans.

Procurement Activity

Scotland Excel Engineering and Technical Consultancy Services Framework Agreement

Nestrans continues to be an associate member of Scotland Excel and as such are able to acquire consultancy services under the above framework agreement. Nestrans can use the framework to appoint consultants for services that can not be undertaken in-house or by neighbouring authorities, either due to a skill shortage, the specialist nature of the work, or due to other workload commitments.

Although there is no guarantee of work being awarded, any use of the framework significantly reduces the cost of procurement of services to Nestrans and the consultants. To award a work package there is the option of directly selecting a consultant within the relevant lot(s) or conducting a mini-competition amongst relevant consultants. Work can be awarded on a priced contract (lump sum), target contract or time based contract basis. In 2015/16 Nestrans used the framework to make direct awards for the following projects:

Freight Action Plan assistance

Union Street/Alford Place junction modelling to test bus service journey time improvements

Nestrans continued to fund the Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study that had previously been appointed via a mini-competition through the framework.



Public Relations

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gross Amount</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Subject-matter</i>
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Promotions

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gross Amount</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Subject-matter</i>
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Overseas Travel

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gross Amount</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Subject-matter</i>
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Hospitality & Entertainment

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gross Amount</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Subject-matter</i>
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External Consultancy

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gross Amount</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Subject-matter</i>
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Payments in Excess of £25,000

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gross Amount</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Subject-matter</i>
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