

4a Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update regarding progress with the Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study and to make recommendations regarding the next stages for the study.

o Background

Members will be aware that an appraisal is being undertaken to look into strategic transport options for improvements on the corridor between Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen.

As previously reported to Board, a consortium of consultants has been appointed to conduct a Part 1 Appraisal: SIAS, Peter Brett Associates and Energised Environments. The Part 1 appraisal following Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidelines (STAG) has included public and stakeholder consultations, and focused on identifying issues and problems, agreeing objectives and an initial high level appraisal of how seven strategic options best address the problems and achieve the objectives. These included three road options, two bus-based options and two rail options.

At its meeting on 19 April, the Nestrans Board considered a report outlining the consultants' findings and contained a summary of key findings. The Board instructed that further discussions be held with appropriate committees of the two local authorities, with Transport Scotland, and with bus and rail operators and that a further report be brought back to the Board.

o Further Discussions

Reports have been considered by Aberdeenshire Council Infrastructure Services Committee (ISC), Formartine Area Committee, Buchan Area Committee and Banff & Buchan Area Committee. Extracts from the minutes of these meetings are attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

In essence, the Area Committees welcomed the progress and emphasised the importance of the report, and generally supported a "hybrid" mix of measures, wishing to avoid an "either/or" situation with Road versus Rail packages. The minutes were reported back to ISC on 16 June.

A report was also considered by Aberdeen City Council's Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee at its meeting on 17 May 2016. The Committee resolved to note the contents of the report and agree the findings of the Part 1 Appraisal report.

It also agreed that officers should respond to Nestrans advising that the Council agrees that, subject to ongoing discussions with Transport Scotland and the Bus and Train operators, the two identified 'Road and Bus' and 'Rail and Bus' option packages are taken forward for a more detailed assessment in a STAG Part 2, and that the Council agrees that those elements of the packages that contain bus measures will provide some journey time and reliability benefits for bus passengers. The draft minutes will be reported to the August meeting of this Committee for approval, and the relevant extract is included at **Appendix 2**.

Nestrans officers have also met with Stagecoach Buses, had discussions with Abellio ScotRail and with the Transport Scotland. Due to the holiday period and other ongoing pressing issues for some of these bodies a full understanding of their views has only recently been collated and there has not yet been the opportunity to hold a Client Group (Nestrans, Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, Transport Scotland) meeting to discuss the consultants report within the context of these important stakeholders views. Now that this information has been received the Client Group will meet to formulate a recommended approach for consideration by the Board at its next meeting.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Notes the contents of this report and that key stakeholder discussion have been held on the Options and Packages;
2. Instructs officers to report back with the results of this further Client Group consideration to a future meeting of the Board.

RD 26 July 2016

Extracts from ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL Minutes

**INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE
WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 12 MAY, 2016**

7. FRASERBURGH, PETERHEAD AND ELLON TO ABERDEEN STRATEGIC TRANSPORT STUDY

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Meetings of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 19 March, 2015 (Item 7, Page 1741) and 25 June, 2015 (Item 3, Page 276) where a presentation had been provided on the Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Ellon to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study. There had been circulated a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services dated 28 April, 2016 which provided the Committee with an update on the outcomes of the Nestrans' Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Ellon to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study and which sought members' views on the key findings of the work to date and the proposed further development study.

The Head of Service (Transportation) introduced the report and advised the Committee that Appendix 1 to the report provided the key strategic transport related problems and opportunities which had been identified along the transport corridor and following appraisal of those and having considered the outcomes to-date officers have taken the view that there was no single intervention which was likely to achieve the Transport Planning Objectives developed for the study and a packaged approach was likely to be the most appropriate way forward for the corridor which would include new rail packages, road upgrades and dedicated junction improvements.

It was reported that next stage in the process was to seek Committee approval to move to a Stage 2 appraisal and as part of that appraisal to consider a hybrid approach with a mix of intervention measures while taking into account the AWPR, Balmedie to Tippetty improvements, the Third Don Crossing and the Haudagain junction improvements. Reports would be submitted to Formartine, Buchan and Banff & Buchan Area Committees for their comments and those would be fed back to the Infrastructure Services Committee as part of the development study.

After due consideration, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) Welcome the contents of the report, and the progress in developing the Study on the corridor between Aberdeen and Ellon, Peterhead and Fraserburgh;
- (2) Note that officers would undertake further consultation with Transport Scotland, Bus Operators, and Rail Operators to refine the specific packaging of elements for the Part 2 Appraisal, alongside officers of Nestrans;
- (3) Note that further work would be undertaken to further develop the packages of potential measures for further appraisal;
- (4) Refer the report to the Formartine, Buchan and Banff & Buchan Area Committees for their comments; and
- (5) Instruct officers to report back to a future meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee with those comments.

**FORMARTINE AREA COMMITTEE
THE KIRK CENTRE, STATION ROAD, ELLON, 7 JUNE 2016**

6. FRASERBURGH, PETERHEAD AND ELLON TO ABERDEEN STRATEGIC TRANSPORT STUDY

There had been circulated a report dated 26 May, 2016 by the Director of Infrastructure Services which updated members on the outcomes of the Nestrans' Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Ellon to Aberdeen strategic study, and sought comments on the key findings on the works to date and the proposed further development of the study.

The members welcomed the report and a full debate took place regarding the information provided.

Thereafter the Committee:-

- (1) **noted** the contents of the report and the progress in developing the study on this corridor between Aberdeen and Ellon, Peterhead and Fraserburgh,
- (2) **noted** that officers would undertake further consultation with Transport Scotland, Bus Operators and Rail Operators to refine the specific packaging of elements for the Part 2 Appraisal, alongside officers of Nestrans,
- (3) **noted** that further work would be undertaken to further develop the package of potential measures for further appraisal, and
- (4) At the request of Infrastructure Services Committee, provided the following **comments**:
 - (a) It is important to have a hybrid mix to resolve traffic issues, in particular to assist in providing a consistent travel time to allow persons to plan ahead,
 - (b) It was important to ensure that this did not turn in to a road vs rail situation,
 - (c) Improved connectivity for the area is paramount, particularly within the Energetica corridor, and this is an opportunity to be innovative,
 - (d) Road safety was very important and so any improvements that could be made were welcomed,
 - (e) A mixture of options would benefit the whole of the North East area,
 - (f) Although a mixture of measures would be the best way forward, there are concerns that a suite of measures may be harder to implement,
 - (g) There were benefits of using the historic track bed for a rail link from Aberdeen to Ellon as it would connect the area to Dyce and Newmachar,
 - (h) If a rail link to Ellon was installed, it should be noted that there would likely be pressure to expand this further,
 - (i) It would be helpful if links to the A947 Route Improvement Strategy could be referenced, as there could be opportunities for cross fertilisation,
 - (j) It would be useful if officers, at the appropriate time, could provide detail of options available through the City Regional Deal, and
 - (k) Rather than focusing on specific projects, an integrated solution should be sought for the whole area.

**BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE,
COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, LOW STREET, BANFF 24 MAY 2016**

9. FRASERBURGH, PETERHEAD AND ELLON TO ABERDEEN STRATEGIC TRANSPORT STUDY

A report dated 12 May 2016 from the Director of Infrastructure Services had been circulated to update the local Members on the outcomes of Nestrans' Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Ellon to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study and to seek local Members' views.

The Committee **noted**:-

1. the terms of the report and the progress in developing the Study on the corridor between Aberdeen and Ellon, Peterhead and Fraserburgh,
2. that officers would undertake further consultation with Transport Scotland, Bus Operators and Rail Operators to refine the specific packaging of elements for the Part 2 Appraisal, alongside officers of Nestrans,
3. that work would be undertaken to further develop the packages of potential measures for further appraisal,
4. that the Infrastructure Services Committee had requested Area Committee comments and **agreed**:
 - i) that consideration should be given to delivering distribution hubs at both ends of the route to enable efficient transport and distribution of goods as part of a wider transport strategy on this route, and
 - ii) not to make any further comment until further updates with more detail had been received.

9. FRASERBURGH, PETERHEAD AND ELLON TO ABERDEEN STRATEGIC TRANSPORT STUDY

A report by the Director of Infrastructure Services had been circulated to provide the Members with an update following the outcomes of Nestrans' Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Ellon to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study, and, as requested by the Nestrans Board and Infrastructure Services Committee, to seek the Committee's views on the key findings of the work to date and the proposed further development of the study.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to welcome the contents of the report and the progress in developing the Study on the corridor between Aberdeen and Ellon, Peterhead and Fraserburgh,
- (2) to note that Officers will undertake further consultation with Transport Scotland, Bus Operators and Rail Operators to refine the specific packaging of elements for the Part 2 Appraisal, alongside Officers of Nestrans,
- (3) to note that further work will be undertaken to further develop the packages of potential measures for further appraisal, and
- (4) following a full discussion and there being overall agreement that the issue should not be seen as 'road versus rail', to make the following comments to Infrastructure Services Committee –
 - (a) that 'Options 1 & 2 – Road' be taken forward as the preferred options, and that in particular Option 1 be further explored,
 - (b) in recognising that the current infrastructure is not fit for purpose and that there is a need to connect the rest of the country to Buchan, that the Business Case will need to include a mix of road, rail and bus to ensure that the future infrastructure allows for a long-term view in terms of business, industry and tourism,
 - (c) to request that when consideration is being given to acquiring land to extend the dual carriageway, that at that time consideration also be given to acquiring land for a new railway to allow the railway to run parallel to the dual carriageway,
 - (d) in considering public safety, to highlight the need for an improved junction at the Toll of Birness as a priority, and
 - (e) given that large housing developments are proposed in Mintlaw and Fraserburgh in the near future, to highlight the need for improvements on the A952 with the need for consideration being given to providing a by-pass at Mintlaw.

Extracts from ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL draft Minutes

**COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
TOWN HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 17 MAY, 2016**

**FRASERBURGH AND PETERHEAD TO ABERDEEN STRATEGIC TRANSPORT
STUDY - CHI/16/059**

29. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure which presented the findings of the Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study – Part 1 Appraisal report, which had been developed by Nestrans with input from Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland.

The report recommended:-

That the Committee –

- (a) note the contents of the report;
- (b) agree the findings of the Fraserburgh & Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study – Part 1 Appraisal Report;
- (c) agree that officers respond to Nestrans advising that this Council agrees that, subject to ongoing discussions with Transport Scotland and the Bus and Train operators, the two identified 'Road and Bus' and 'Rail and Bus' option packages are taken forward for a more detailed assessment in a STAG Part 2, and that this Council agrees that those elements of the packages that contain bus measures will provide some journey time and reliability benefits for bus passengers; and
- (d) instruct officers to continue to update this Committee via the bulletin on this project.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.