

5b Active Travel Action Plan: Update

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of progress in regard to developing an Active Travel Action Plan (AcTrAP),

o Background

At its meeting on 28 August 2013, the Nestrans Board agreed that there was a need to develop an Active Travel Action Plan in support of the Regional Transport Strategy. Nestrans officers are meeting with partners to develop a draft Action Plan for consultation.

o Vision

To create an environment and culture in which walking and cycling are seen as the natural choices of travelling because they are convenient, safe, comfortable, healthy and attractive.

o Objectives

It is suggested that the Active Travel Action Plan should work towards two high level objectives. Draft objectives have been discussed and are indicated below:

1. To work towards achieving the National vision of 10% of all trips by cycling by 2020, by increasing active travel mode share.
2. To improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists by reducing total number of casualties and proportion of total accidents involving active travel.

o Benefits of Active Travel

The North East has many areas well suited to Active Travel as the landscape in most towns is characterised by a gently undulating topography and plateau areas, which lend themselves to walking and cycling. Walking and cycling help in the objectives of many regional strategies including health strategies, benefits include:-

Staff Health - Improved staff health, resulting from Active transport, increasing productivity, less days are lost through ill health and demonstrates the commitment that organisations can have to improving the health of people;

Accessibility - Reducing the number of cars visiting sites will make the site more accessible to pedestrians, cyclists and those who must use their car, for example due to disability or infirmity. Accessibility to sites often, particularly by Public Transport use also involves an element of Active travel.

Individual benefits - The benefits of active travel to the individual are considerable. It is one of the few health promoting activities that can be fitted into a normal day and can have financial savings as well. Regular activity of 'moderate intensity' can bring major health benefits and an improved quality of life, reducing the risk of developing major chronic diseases by up to 50%, and the risk of premature death by 20-30%. Regular physical activity can help lead to healthier, happier lives, irrespective of age.

Local environmental benefits - Improvements to the local environment from a reduction in car use will improve local air quality, which where it fails targets, is a major source of ill health in itself.

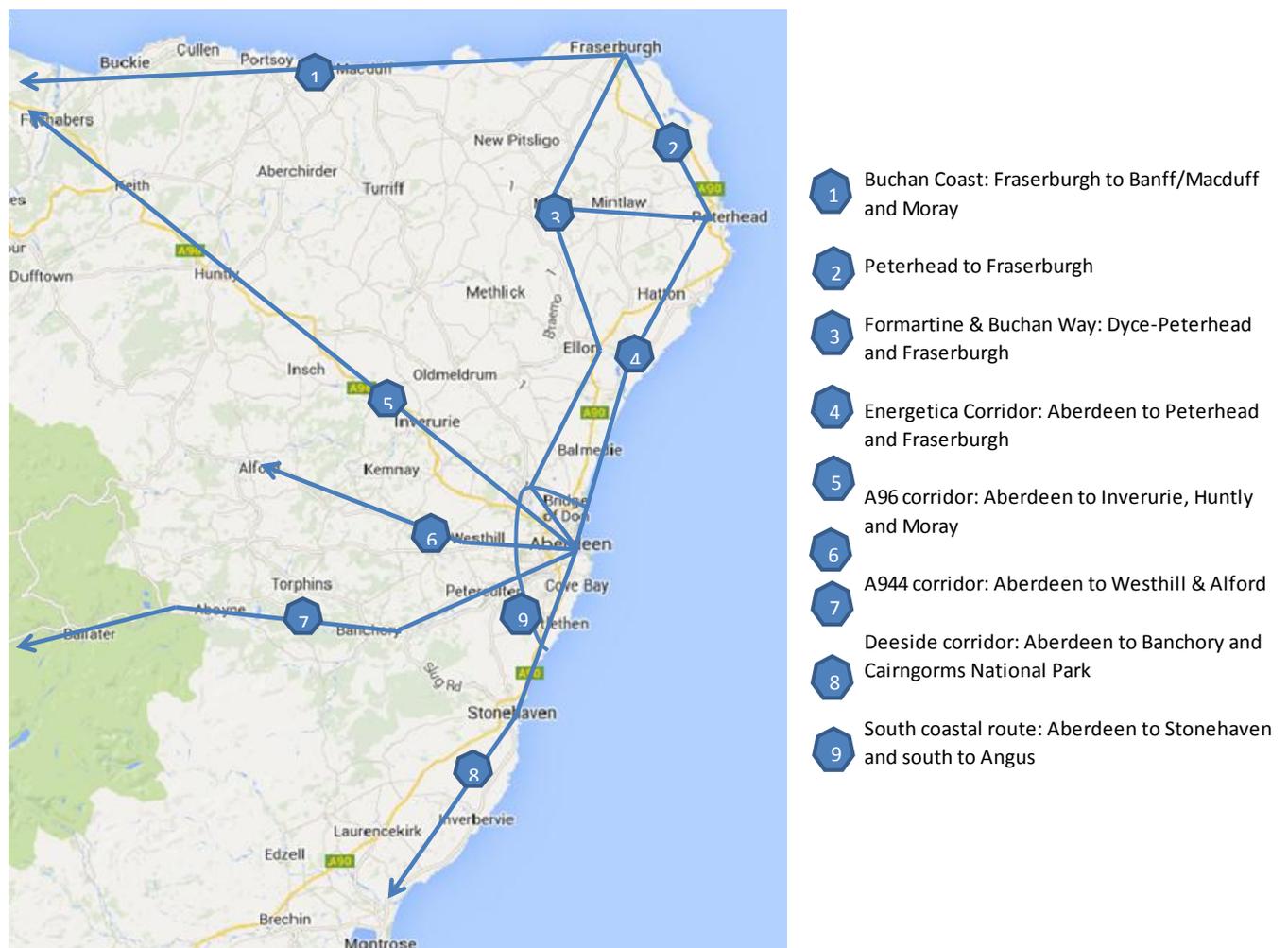
Global environment - Climate change is a global problem requiring local solutions. Changes to travel patterns will reduce CO2 and other pollutants and will aid the Scottish Government's carbon reduction targets.

Road Safety - There is evidence that the more people who cycle, the safer it becomes – the 'safety in numbers' effect. A 91% increase in cycling in London since 2000 has been accompanied by a 33% fall in casualties, while cycling in the Netherlands increased by 45% between 1980 and 2005 but cycling fatalities fell by 58%

o Strategic Network

As part of the Active Travel Action Plan, it has been suggested that Nestrans should develop a high level plan for strategic routes across North East Scotland, which links communities, but also provides external links for tourism. In the North East, settlements tend to be along defined corridors. The structure plan identifies the A90 Corridor from Angus to Peterhead and the A96 from Aberdeen to Moray as the priority corridors for major development and transport infrastructure. These developments should help contribute to the strategic network both in infrastructure and users. Where major transport schemes are implemented or major development occurs, it would be appropriate to develop the strategic network to complement these schemes. Nestrans and Councils' priorities could also focus on this network.

The initial network is envisaged to be nine active travel routes, which are indicated below for discussion :-



o **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board:

1. note the contents of this report,
2. agree the broad outline and focus of the strategy; and
3. agree to consider the financial implications outlined above in deliberations of the budget in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

DK 5 February 2014