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## 6b Publications and Consultations

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- Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of a number of recent publications and consultation papers and to seek approval of draft responses as appropriate.

- Moray Local Transport Strategy

The Economic Development & Infrastructure Committee of Moray Council has approved that consultation be undertaken on a draft Local Transport Strategy and has sought the input of Nestrans as part of the consultation.

There are a number of schemes and initiatives of considerable relevance due to the cross-boundary nature of transport links to and from the Moray area, but also a number of joint initiatives including the Road Casualty Reduction Strategy which is Grampian-wide.

A draft response for members' approval or comments is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Responses are required by 25 June 2010.

- Aberdeen City & Shire SDPA Development Plan Scheme

The Strategic Development Planning Authority has agreed a statutory Development Plan Scheme setting out an indicative project plan to December 2013 for the first strategic development plan for Aberdeen City & Shire.

As members will be aware, Nestrans share an office space with the SDPA team and have a very close working relationship. It is the intention that Nestrans and the SDPA team will work jointly on developing transport assessments and ensure that land use policies are closely linked with the Regional Transport Strategy to ensure that proposals for transport interventions are where they are most needed for the future development of the region, accord with strategic planning and ensure best value for the authorities.

- Climate Change Public Sector Duty

Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act places duties on public bodies relating to climate change. The duties on the face of the Act (section 44) require that a public body must, in exercising its functions, act:

- In the way best calculated to contribute to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
- In the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programme; and
- In a way that it considers most sustainable.

The duties come into force on the 1 January 2011 and apply to all 'public bodies defined as a Scottish public authority within the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

A public consultation on draft guidance will take place in summer 2010, however Nestrans attended a pre-consultation workshop on 25th March in Dundee which sought views on the shape of the draft guidance.

- Audit Scotland: Audit on Concessionary Fares

Audit Scotland is undertaking a performance audit of the Scottish Government's National Concessionary Travel scheme for older and disabled people. This work will evaluate the development, introduction and management of the scheme and assess the costs, benefits and future risks. The work will consider the reasons for introducing the scheme, the effectiveness of the performance management arrangements and the strength of financial management arrangements. It will review the governance and accountability arrangements of the agencies involved and evaluate the Scottish Government's and Transport Scotland's role in managing the scheme. It is anticipated that the findings of this report will be published in September 2010.

The reasons for the inquiry are:

- Costs are significant and risks of fraud
- Large numbers using the scheme and the predicted increase in usage
- Difficulties of partnership working and accountability arrangements
- Diversity and equality
- Sustainability

Issues being considered:

- Meeting the needs of the most socially excluded groups
- Is eligibility most appropriately targeted
- What impact could changes have on supported services
- What other modes could be included (i.e. community transport)
- Linkages to integrated ticketing

- Trans-European Transport Network

The European Commission has announced that it is to review the Trans-European Transport Network. The existing network consists of roads, railways and high speed rail lines, waterways, ports and airports of significance. 30 priority axes have been identified and a number of significant trans-national projects on these routes are being developed.

There are only a few projects which involve the United Kingdom, including West Coast Main Rail Line and improved links to/from Ireland via Stranraer. There are no axes identified which extend north of the Central Belt of Scotland.

- Aberdeen: City of the Future

Aberdeen University's Centre for Transport Research has produced a Document titled Aberdeen: City of the Future – A contribution towards discussions on a future transport strategy for Aberdeen and its Region, June 2010. This is to be launched at a conference on Thursday 10 June 2010.

Due to the timescale from receipt of the paper to the distribution of the Boards papers it has not been possible to include comment within these papers. However the Chair will be writing to the University with some initial comments and a copy of that letter should be available at the Board meeting.

- Understanding Why Some People Do Not Use Buses

Published in April 2010, this report presents the findings of research commissioned by the Scottish Government to explore the reasons why some people do not use buses and what might encourage them to do so. The study was qualitative in nature aiming to map the range and diversity of views of those who use the bus infrequently or not at all.

The study report makes a number of recommendations:

First, attempts to 'convert' those who are 'willing to be convinced' of the merits of bus travel need to do three main things:

- Highlight advantages – both personal and environmental – of bus travel;
- Mitigate or challenge views of the disadvantages – addressing particularly the key issues of journey time and reliability; and
- Make it as easy as possible to use the bus – including making it easier for infrequent and non-users to find out about times, fares and routes and removing the need to have the exact fare.

Second, given the finding that bad experiences appear to stick in people's memories, bus companies need to ensure that the way they deal with complaints mitigates the potential impact of negative experiences – which can be long lasting and far reaching – on future travel decisions.

Thirdly, unless the bus fare is less than the costs of petrol and parking for a specific journey, the bus is unlikely to be viewed as the 'cheaper option'. While the study findings suggest that cost is not the only or main barrier to bus use for all infrequent users, cheap or free travel days could encourage those who have not travelled by bus for some time to try it again. The full report of the study can be viewed on the Scottish Government website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/04/23115458/0>

- Scottish Government Assessment of Scottish Transport Statistics

The UK Statistics Authority is currently assessing the following transport statistics produced by the Scottish Government:

- Scottish Transport Statistics
- Main Transport Trends
- Key Road Casualty Statistics
- Reported Road Casualties Scotland
- Bus and Coach Statistics
- National Travel Survey - Scottish results

The UK Statistics Authority operates independently at arm's length from government with the objective to promote and safeguard the production and quality of official statistics. To this end, they assess all National Statistics against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Consultation with users of the statistics is a key part of the assessment process and a response to a number of questions was requested. Nestrans response to this consultation is provided in Appendix 2. This was submitted to the assessment team by their deadline of 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

- Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree the attached appendices as Nestrans' comments where appropriate.

Richard Gerring  
Moray Council

Dear Richard

### **Moray Local Transport Strategy**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your draft LTS, a copy of which was received on 4 May.

At its meeting on 16 June, the Nestrans Board considered a report and agreed the following response:

- Nestrans welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft LTS and wishes to be involved with the Moray Council as appropriate in delivering transport improvements in partnership on cross-boundary and Grampian-wide initiatives. In particular, Nestrans and its constituent local authorities already work with the Moray Council on Road Casualty Reduction Strategy and Health & Transport Action Plan.
- In the Introduction (Section 1 and Figure 1), there is no mention of Hitrans' Regional Transport Strategy or whether the LTS follows guidance from the Regional Transport Partnership. It should be clear that the LTS is the short-term articulation of wider longer-term strategic guidance given by the RTP and approved through the statutory process of approval of the Regional Transport Strategy.
- Strategic long-term considerations should be matters for the Regional Transport Strategy and only included in the LTS if deemed necessary through the RTS, Structure Plan and Local Development Plan. Section 2.5 refers to schemes including A96 dualling, A941 upgrade and Elgin by-pass without reference to the RTS. As these schemes are not included in the STPR, they should not have been included in the LTS.
- Travel Planning is rightly identified as an important element in encouraging travel behaviour change, but again the role of the Regional Transport Partnership is not mentioned. Although partners are mentioned in the section on Health & Transport Action Plan, the role of Nestrans as co-ordinating the group is excluded (perhaps by erroneously including Nescamp?).
- Section 2.8 should also make reference to the joint working and partnership in producing a joint Road Casualty Reduction Strategy.
- Although 4.3.2 does mention the Road Casualty Reduction Strategy, it omits Nestrans from the list of partners.
- Section 9, strategy options: these need to be realistically affordable and should be seen as strategic questions to be addressed through the Regional Transport Strategy.
- The conclusion that Policies to reduce traffic levels in Moray are "wholly inappropriate" ignores the need for policies which address national concerns regarding traffic, carbon emissions and air quality concerns.

I hope you will be able to take these views into account in preparing a finalised Local Transport Strategy for Moray.

If you wish to discuss any of the above or require clarification of any points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Rab Dickson  
Transport Strategy Manager

## Nestrans response to the assessment of transport statistics by the Scottish Government - May 2010

1. Why are these statistics of interest to you? (Please indicate which of the statistics you use, how you use them or how you would like to be able to use them.)

Nestrans is the Regional Transport Partnership for the North East of Scotland and is responsible for developing and delivering the Regional Transport Strategy. As part of the RTS we have developed a range of indicators and targets to monitor progress against achieving our objectives. We monitor these on an annual basis and use many of the transport publications as the main sources of data for this purpose. The key publications that we use for this purpose are:

- Scottish Transport Statistics
- Reported Road Casualties in Scotland
- Bus and Coach Statistics
- Scottish Household Survey and Travel Diary Results

In addition to the above, we make use of the whole range of publications for more ad hoc monitoring throughout the year and to provide background evidence / information for the promotion and development of particular projects. Our work focuses on all modes of transport and we are therefore interested in statistics that cover all modes and a variety of issues including accident levels, travel patterns, views on public transport, patronage etc.

2. How well do these statistics meet your needs? (For example, comprehensiveness, level of detail available, presentation, accessibility, timeliness, commentary, explanation of methods, UK comparability.) How could they be improved?

Of particular importance to us in the use of the published statistics is the establishment of long term trends. Consistency in the statistics provided and the way they are presented is therefore important to fulfil this purpose.

In terms of geography, provision of statistics at a local authority level is of most use to us. This enables us to build an exact picture of trends in our region and allows comparison with other local authorities and the Scottish average. We would like to see as much as possible split by local authority, although appreciate this is not always possible due to small sample sizes.

A key indicator for us is main mode of travel and mode of travel to work. One issue we would like to raise in relation to this is recording people's use of multiple modes such as park and ride. Current publications do not reflect park and ride or other multiple mode journeys in their statistics. Development of park and ride sites and encouragement of park and ride use is a key element of our strategy and it would therefore be beneficial to see this reflected in publications (particularly in questions relating to how people travel to work).

We would like to see the publications included in this review to continue to be produced on an annual basis as they play a key role in the annual monitoring of the RTS. There has been a move recently to produce some of these statistics as webtables only rather than a

full publication and we are happy that this is appropriate as it enables quicker access to the data and in a form that is easy to use.

3. How satisfied are you with the way that the producer team engages and consults with you as a user? (For example, if you have had any communication with them about these statistics in response to email enquiries, at user days, consultations.)

We are satisfied that the level of engagement with the producer team is sufficient. The Statistics User Group provides a channel through which to give general feedback and receive updates and responses to more specific queries on the data have been received when requested.

4. It may be useful for us to share your comments with the producers of these statistics to enable them to take account of your views as they develop the statistics. Please indicate clearly whether you are happy for us to pass your comments and contact details on.

Nestrans is happy for these comments to be passed to the producers of these statistics.