

General -

6b Publications and Consultations

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of a number of recent publications and consultation papers.

o National Planning Framework 3

On 17 July 2014, the Scottish Government published its third National Planning Framework (NPF3) which sets out a long term vision for the development of Scotland.

NPF3 follows the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy, with a focus on supporting sustainable economic growth and the transition to a low carbon economy. It sets out an ambition for Scotland as a whole, and highlights particular opportunities for sustainable growth in cities and towns, rural areas and the coast.

NPF3 should be taken into account by local authorities in preparing strategic and local development plans. Fourteen national developments across Scotland are identified to deliver the strategy.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00453683.pdf>

The overall vision contained in the document centres on four aims - making Scotland:

- a successful, sustainable place;
- a low carbon place;
- a natural, resilient place; and
- a connected place.

The NPF 3 document is centred on these three aims, the last of which focuses on transport and is of most relevance to Nestrans.

There are also sections relating to each City-Region and the chapter on Aberdeen and the north east recognises the economic potential of the region, and the significance of investing in transport infrastructure to fulfil that potential: *“The expansion of Aberdeen Harbour will strengthen its key role in supporting the economy of the north east, as too will continued improvements to infrastructure including the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and Aberdeen Airport. The economic significance of the region is recognised through the need for infrastructure capacity enhancement, both within the city region and in terms of wider links. Beyond the opening of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route by 2018, the Infrastructure Investment Plan commitment to improving rail links from Aberdeen to the Central Belt by 2030 will be progressed in phases with improvements being seen by 2019, as well as progress in the planning for removing single track sections around Montrose. £170 million of improvements to the Aberdeen to Inverurie railway, including improvements between Aberdeen and Inverurie will be in place by 2019 and work is underway to dual the A96 by 2030.”*

The Plan also identifies fourteen National Developments, one of which is the expansion of Aberdeen Harbour at Nigg Bay.

o Rail Station Car Parking Strategy

Transport Scotland has produced a guidance document relating to the provision of car parking at stations.

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/reports/Car%20parking%20strategy%20-%20June%202014.pdf>

The guidance recognises that supply of car parking can be an important determinant in people's decision to use rail, or which station to use. However, it also seeks to encourage active travel to stations where appropriate and strives to seek a balance in ensuring availability of parking, encouraging sustainable travel and promoting use of rail.

The research work done to underpin the strategy considered the impact of pricing and supply, concluding that it was not possible to implement a "one size fits all" policy, since local circumstances were of such importance. The report concludes that "*the capital cost of extending car parks is unlikely to be off-set by the extra revenue from additional users during a typical franchise period*" and recommends that other factors are taken into account in determining the benefits of investing in car parks, including the potential economic benefits and opportunities to reduce carbon and emissions.

o National Walking Strategy

On 13 June 2014, the Scottish Government published "Let's Get Scotland Walking: The National Walking Strategy". <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00452622.pdf>

The document demonstrates the potential benefits of walking in contributing to better public health, better environmental conditions and other wider benefits. It is intended to enable everyone to benefit from walking as a part of their every day journeys, by creating a culture of walking, through better quality walking environments and by enabling easy, convenient and safe mobility for all.

Nestrans were invited to contribute comments on a draft version of the document and responded to the Scottish Government on 20 May. Many of the comments have been addressed and in particular, there is now specific recognition of the role of Regional Transport Partnerships as one of the key delivery partners. It is intended to establish a Delivery Forum to oversee the implementation of the Strategy and it would be appropriate for at least one Regional Transport representative to be involved in that Forum.

o Active Travel Strategy Guidance

Sustrans and Transport Scotland have published Guidance on producing Active Travel Strategies. The guidance encourages authorities to produce an Active Travel Strategy, which will be used as a factor in determining allocation of funding for Community Links and other financial support for developing walking and cycling infrastructure.

o **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board:

- a) note the content of this report and the documents referred to above.

RD/KC 12 August 2014