

8 Information Bulletin

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide information and updates for the Board on a number of matters not requiring decision.

o A96 dualling project

Further to the decision at the last meeting of this Board that a letter be sent to Transport Scotland outlining concerns regarding the statements contained in the A96 dualling project Strategic Business Case, a written request for clarification and assurance was sent to Transport Scotland on 16 October.

A meeting in Perth on Wednesday 22 October providing an update on progress on both the A9 and A96 dualling projects was attended by Rab Dickson.

o Access to Laurencekirk Study

Testing of options using the S-Paramics microsimulation model of the study area has been completed and a range of sensitivity tests undertaken using different future year development scenarios from committed development through to consideration of a range of estimated profiles of build out for development allocations within the Local Development Plans of neighbouring authorities. An initial draft of the Transport Appraisal report has been produced and circulated to the client group for review. A consultation will be held from 2pm-8pm on 21 January 2015 in the Dickson Memorial Hall within Laurencekirk to allow interested parties to view and comment on the findings to date and the feedback will be included within the final Transport Appraisal report. Publicity is being issued to advertise this consultation. The next progress meeting is scheduled for 2 December.

o A90 (south) Schoolhill Park & Ride

Planning Permission in Principle has been obtained for a 1,000 space Park and Ride site at Schoolhill, Portlethen, which also includes the option for an overnight lorry parking facility. The site being progressed sits adjacent to the Findon interchange, sitting between the A90 trunk road and the newly constructed link road. Next steps include land purchase, and the progression of detailed design.

o Energetica corridor multi-modal study

Consultants have now been appointed to carry out the Energetica Corridor (Fraserburgh & Peterhead to Aberdeen) Multi-Modal Study. A collaboration of SIAS, Peter Brett Associates and Natural Capital were appointed following assessment of six high quality bids received through the tender process.

An inception meeting has been arranged with the immediate study team for the 11th December and an inception workshop with a wider range of stakeholders, including the SDPA,

Energetica, Scottish Enterprise and the relevant Aberdeenshire Council Area Managers arranged for 22nd January 2015.

The study will identify and examine the options for strategic transport connections from Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen along the Energetica corridor and will examine all modes of transport including options to reinstate the railway line. The study will form the pre-appraisal and part 1 appraisal stages of the STAG process and will include development and consideration of the objectives for the corridor and consideration of options to take forward to a more detailed appraisal.

Consultation with stakeholders and communities will form a key element of the study and will inform a full understanding of the issues, problems and opportunities, feeding into the development of objectives and options. The successful consultants have identified in their tender that consultation will be carried out throughout the process and that they will convene a series of workshops and group meetings with stakeholders in the corridor to ensure that all issues are fully reflected in the pre-appraisal stage and inform a complete understanding of all issues, constraints and opportunities for the corridor.

o **Ministerial Cycling Summit**

The second annual Ministerial Summit on cycling was held in Glasgow on Tuesday 28 October 2014 and attended by Rab Dickson. Invitations had been sent to Heads of Transportation, RTP Lead Officers and Chairs of the appropriate Committee with responsibility for cycling development at all local authorities.

However, due to inclement weather which resulted in various emergent issues the Minister was not able to attend. Neither did the other key speaker, Glasgow's Council Leader.

Speakers did include John Lauder of Sustrans, Paths for All's Ian Findlay and Keith Irvine of Cycling Scotland. Practical examples of progress on delivering cycling were also provided from Tactran, Dundee City Council and Borders Council.

Key messages included that there was now a clear focus on functional cycling (i.e. everyday travel, as opposed to recreational and tourist potential); that the latest funding package for active travel represented the largest ever commitment for walking and cycling; and there was an announcement of an additional £5 million of funding under the "Smarter Choices, Smarter Places" banner which is to be administered by Paths for All.

o **Study to identify the barriers to bus use**

Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, First and Nestrans have agreed to jointly fund a study to look at better understanding the barriers to bus use in Aberdeen. Nestrans has agreed to contribute up to £2,000 to the study from the Bus Action Plan budget 2014/15. The aim of the study will comprise of two key elements, to better understand the value of buses to the regional economy and to conduct a series of focus groups and consultations with businesses and their staff to explore the barriers to bus use and identify potential solutions. The study is being led by the Chamber of Commerce with input from First in Aberdeen and Nestrans. A report on the results of this work will be brought back to a future Board meeting.

o **NETCF**

The latest meeting of the North East Transport Consultative Forum was held in Woodhill House on Thursday 2nd October, providing an update on progress on strategic transport projects and an opportunity to contribute to the draft Active Travel Action Plan.

An oral update was provided at the last meeting of the Board but no formal minute was available at that time. The note of the meeting has now been uploaded to the Nestrans website and a copy is attached at Appendix A to this report for members' information.

o **City Centre Masterplan and City Deal**

Aberdeen City Council has appointed a team led by BDP consultancy to help prepare a masterplan and delivery programme for the city centre, to address issues raised in the Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SIP). The SIP identifies the regeneration of the city centre as a key priority for Aberdeen. Nestrans were represented at the presentation by Gothenburg City Architect, Bjorn Siesjo and at a workshop for key stakeholders on Thursday 27th November. Nestrans also continue to be included in separate meetings with the City Council, and Aecom, transport consultants to BDP, to discuss in more detail the transport considerations relating to the development of the masterplan.

Nestrans officers have also been in discussion with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council colleagues over the development of the region's City Deal bid. Work is ongoing between colleagues and ACSEF colleagues to ensure that the City Deal, City Centre Masterplan and ACSEF strategy all align.

o **Aberdeen Harbour extension/Nigg Bay Development Framework**

Aberdeen City Council, Scottish Enterprise and Aberdeen Harbour Board are preparing a Development Framework for Nigg Bay, Altens and East Tullos which will consider the long term development and regeneration opportunities arising as a result of the proposed expanded harbour at Nigg Bay. This is now scheduled for completion early in 2015.

Nestrans facilitated a teleconference between the Harbour Board, their consultants, Aberdeen City Council and Network Rail to ensure that proper linkages had been made and that any potential impacts/opportunities relating to the proximity of the railway had been properly addressed. This was held on 25 October 2014.

o **DfT announcement on speed limits**

On 28 November, the Department for Transport announced that the Government plans to raise the national speed limit to 60 mph for lorries travelling on dual carriageways across England and Wales.

The government plans to raise the national speed limit from 50 mph to 60 mph for lorries travelling on dual carriageways, following the increase in speed limits for HGVs on single carriageways announced in July this year. The recent announcement will ensure that as of 6 April 2015, lorry drivers have speed limits that are better suited to a modern transport network.

In Scotland, a trial change to speed limits for HGVs will be conducted on the A9 only.

o **Nestrans Press Releases**

Since the last meeting of the Board, Nestrans has issued the following press releases (please click on the heading to access details from the Nestrans' website).

- 8 October 2014 [Worthy winners of inaugural Grampian Volunteer Transport Awards announced](#)
- 16 October 2014 [Grampian Volunteer Driver Recruitment Drive launched](#)
- 23 October 2014 [First cycling development officer appointed for north-east Scotland](#)
- 27 October 2014 [ARR Craib Transport Ltd sponsors takes key messages on economy and green transport on the roads](#)
- 12 November 2014 [Partners come together to highlight public transport options to ARI](#)
- 18 November 2104 [Companies appointed to examine transport connections from Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen along the Energetica Corridor](#)
- 19 November 2014 [VACANCY - Marketing & Communications Co-ordinator \(Fixed Term\)](#)

o **Marketing and Public Relations Update**

Nestrans' marketing and PR activities will be presented in the form of an infographic. It is intended to circulate this to Members at the Board meeting.

o **Getabout**

- .- A cycle roadshow was held by Aberdeen City Council to promote the Greenbrae Cycle network
- Work on the pedal for Scotland challenge ride next year was progressed with a site visit
- Attended the James Hutton Institute's sustainability day 29th October
- Work continues by the developer of the Wood Group building in Altens. There is a 3 year commitment to run a travel plan network in the area
- Getabout tended the launch of the new X7 Aberdeen Dundee Perth service with new Buses



- o **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board note the contents of this report.

RGM/RD/JA/DK/KC/LC 28 November 2014



**Minute of the thirteenth meeting of the
North East Transport Consultative Forum**

**Woodhill House, Aberdeen
Thursday 2nd October 2014 5-7:30pm**

The meeting was attended by 18 of the Forum's members. The purpose of the meeting was to allow members to discuss the Draft Active Travel Action Plan which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Ramsay Milne, Vice Chair of the Nestrans Board, introduced the meeting and Derick Murray, Nestrans' Director, spoke briefly of progress and key achievements in transport in the North East since the last meeting of the forum, summarising policy updates, projects being delivered and those in the pipeline.

Rab Dickson, Nestrans' Strategy Manager, then gave a brief presentation to set the scene for why an Active Travel Action Plan is being delivered, its fit with National policy and in a north east context. He outlined the need to make active travel safer and the investment to date by Nestrans.

Kirsty Chalmers, Nestrans' Transport Executive (Strategy & Delivery), gave an overview of the draft Active Travel Action Plan, outlining the vision and objectives and the 9 proposed strategic active travel corridors. The priorities and policies and actions were described and forum members were reminded that the consultation is open until the end of October and that submissions would be most welcome in addition to any feedback given in the workshops.

The presentation is available on the Nestrans website at:

http://www.nestrans.org.uk/db_docs/articles/NETCF_2-10-2014_AcTrAP.pptx

❖ **Discussion**

Participants were then split into 3 groups to discuss the following three topics:

- AcTrAP vision and objectives
- The Plan and its priorities
- Developing key actions

The discussions in each group were facilitated by a member of the Nestrans team and an officer from either Nestrans, Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire Council provided a brief summary of their group's discussion to the whole group in a plenary feedback session at the end.

A summary of the key issues raised by each group is provided in the appendices to this report.

The date for the next meeting of the North East Consultative Forum will be advised in due course.

Nestrans' draft Active Travel Action Plan

Facilitator - Don Kent, Nestrans
Feedback provided by – Louise Napier, Aberdeen City Council

Other group members: Stephie Barber (Stagecoach Bluebird), Derick Murray (Nestrans), Robbie Nicol (Member Scottish Youth Parliament).

Vision

1. Is it achievable? Yes with dedicated facilities, not lines on the road
2. Doing nothing will result in a worsening environment, active travel must be built into all new developments
3. We need a balance, city centre for active travel, buses and trains and roads outside it AWPR etc
4. Ensure rural communities are linked up. Prioritise active travel where Public Transport does not exist. Rural areas need links to Towns not just the City.
5. Improvements in the road network, need to 'Lock in the benefits'
6. Aim for a 15% reduction in traffic and a 15% increase in other modes

Objectives

1. Cyclists behaviour needs to be addressed as well as other road users
2. Providing a good standard of facilities and encourage cyclists to use them
3. Parity with the regions road safety priorities (to reduce cycling accidents) engage with community safety partnerships
4. The issue is Car Culture focus on :-
 - Trips to work – new developments must provide and contribute to active travel facilities linking Cycle Routes, parking, showers and lockers
 - Trips to School - councils must provide active routes around all schools
Head teachers must engage with active travel but champions are best.

Targets

1. How have other cities achieved increases? York ,Cambridge, Bristol, London, Lancaster
2. Are the routes value for money? Do they increase cycling and walking like the Deeside Way has.
3. Rural and urban need treating differently
4. Need culture change interestingly young people do not see cycling as uncool, but unsafe.

Other Comments

1. Publicise the Stagecoach Bikes on Buses
2. Liaise with Scottish Youth Parliament
3. Nine Strategic routes versus integrated towns and access from surrounding villages, a happy medium in most locations

Notes from Group 2 – Committee Room 4

Facilitator - Rab Dickson, Nestrans
Feedback provided by – Jennifer Anderson, Nestrans

Other group members: Councillor Ramsay Milne (Aberdeen City Council/Nestrans Vice-Chair), Rachel Milne (Buchan Dial-a-Community Bus), Andy Fuller (Scottish Ambulance Service) and Joanna Murray (Aberdeen City Council).

A general overview of the comments made at this table were:-

- Question raised as to how various organisations could be lobbied for delivery of infrastructure and it was noted that local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships are being involved as stakeholders in the development of the A96 dualling and will endeavour to ensure that active travel requirements are considered eg parallel segregated routes and consideration given to over/underpasses for crossing the route;
- Noted that the Haudagain junction improvement has a non-motorised user champion involved as part of the design;
- It was recommended that active travel facilities consider the needs of mobility scooter users given the ageing population demographic and how this can best fit with tactile surfacing requirements for those with visual impairments;
- Whilst it was noted that latest design standards are applied to new developments, the budgets are not available to retrofit all existing routes that are of lesser standard;
- It was noted that vehicles parking on footways cause an obstruction for pedestrians and can be a safety hazard when they cause pedestrians (particularly elderly, young children and those pushing wheelchairs/prams/buggies) to have to walk on the road carriageway to pass them;
- Queried whether cyclists could be permitted to travel with due care on footpaths without the need for shared use legislation or segregation;
- Injuries for cyclists and pedestrians are most serious if a motorised vehicle is involved and therefore separate off road facilities would be safer;
- With limited budgets the priorities should be for creating facilities that will serve the largest numbers and be most effective ie targeting short journeys to workplaces, schools and colleges. Agreed it is important to interest younger generation from an early age;
- Cycle and road safety training should be delivered at schools, but also important to provide adult cycle training and for parents to lead by example;
- Questioned how a behaviour change from 'driving' culture (especially for short journeys) could be achieved when people have free parking at their destination. Noted the success of London, but it has cycle hire scheme and congestion charging;
- Question raised as to whether requirements for new developments to support Active Travel are stringent enough, for example should more cycle parking be required to

achieve a 10% of trips by bike and access routes for active travel beyond the developers site boundary should also be improved or provided;

- Suggest that the Green Travel Plans created for new developments have planning conditions attached to them and that the plan is monitored and enforced;
- Noted the health and air quality benefits of greater active travel and suggested that a positive and sustained media campaign in support of this could be of major benefit, for example the campaign against drivers stopping on zigzag lines around school was very effective, whereas cycle path facilities introduced on the approach to Aberdeen Airport were reported as being poor value for money and anti-car. Important therefore to get media support to encourage greater mode shift
- Suggested that targets should be set for the mode share that we are aiming for by walking and cycling.

Notes from Group 3 – Committee Room 5

Facilitator - Kirsty Chalmers, Nestrans
Feedback provided by – Anthony Robertson, Aberdeenshire Council

Other group members: Stanley Flett (Disability Advisory Group), Gregor McAbery (Aberdeen City Environmental Forum), Kathryn Mackay (Nestrans) and John McCullough (Scottish Ambulance Service); and Claudia Stuerck (Aberdeenshire Council).

Overall there was agreement with the vision, but the group then went into a discussion around their concerns with respect to achieving this vision.

- More infrastructure needed to support this vision.
 - o especially at roundabouts / junctions
- Safety was felt to be an issue
- More education – for those cycling as well as those driving
- More monitoring and enforcement
 - o for example, at red lights and Advance Stop Lines
- Concern raised over shared use paths
 - o especially for vision / hearing impaired users who may not see / hear a bicycle approaching
 - o Use of tactile surfacing on pavements
- Bus lanes shared with cycles
 - o Works okay in some places (eg Holburn St) not so well others (eg Union St)
- Suggestion was made to lower the speed limits on roads within the City, eg making Anderson Drive 30mph and other roads 20mph
- Consideration of routes
 - o for example, is it necessary for a cycle route to follow the same path as a road?
 - o could cycles be directed down parallel, quieter streets and given priority over motor vehicles?
- We have some Advanced Stop Lines, what about advanced signals?
- Cars still assumed to be the most common form of transport, but not everyone has one. 25 – 30% of population of Aberdeen has no access to a car.
- Cycle routes to / from stations & other public transport hubs very important. Not just Aberdeen City, but Shire too
- New communities being constructed on edge of Aberdeen but these might be toughest to get cycle routes to
- AWPR: what is happening with cycle routes there?
- Multi-modal studies – should take place for *all* new developments
- Pedestrianisation – careful thought needs to be given to making this work; how, what, where?
- Lighting is important; e.g. felt that Deeside Line would benefit from better lighting
- Maintenance of cycle routes is crucial
- Crossing times expressed as a concern, in that time allowed for pedestrians to cross is too short