
8 Information Bulletin

- 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.

- Scottish Government Inquiry into Access to Major Railway Stations

The Scottish Parliament's Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee recently ran a survey to gather the views of rail passengers on access to, and within, nine major Scottish urban railway stations, including Aberdeen. 677 respondents provided comments on Aberdeen station and the results were presented to the Committee at its meeting in March.

A summary of the process, including evidence to the Committee is available at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/88585.aspx>

.... and a copy of the findings are detailed at:

[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_InfrastructureandCapitalInvestmentCommittee/Inquiries/Access to Scotland major railway stations Committee survey results.pdf](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_InfrastructureandCapitalInvestmentCommittee/Inquiries/Access%20to%20Scotland%20major%20railway%20stations%20Committee%20survey%20results.pdf)

The results for Aberdeen station are summarised below:

- Generally positive or neutral view of the pedestrian friendliness of the area around the station. However, 19% of respondents rate it as bad and 9% as very bad;
- Strongly negative views of the cycle friendliness of the road around the station, with 71% of those who expressed an opinion rating it as bad or very bad;
- Generally positive views on the ease of getting between bus stops and the station;
- Mixed views on the availability car parking near the station and ease of getting between these car parks and the station, although more respondents rated these as "good" than any other category.

- Bus Fair Initiative

On Monday 14 March 2016, Transform Scotland launched a campaign entitled 'Fair Deal for Scotland's Bus Users', which publishes research findings and sets out the contribution of bus commuters to the Scottish economy.

The 'Bus Fair' campaign highlights the economic, social and environmental benefits that buses bring and sets out proposals for promoting bus travel in Scotland. 'Bus Fair' sets out three key elements to encourage action to be taken to improve Scotland's buses:

- **bus priority** - Bus travel is the most common mode of public transport in Scotland, yet one in ten bus journeys suffer from delays due to road congestion. Congestion leads to longer journey times, increased air pollution and major economic costs for Scotland's economy. Bus Fair calls for increased investment in bus lanes and other priority measures to help reduce bus journey times and minimise congestion on Scotland's roads.

- **Scotland-wide smart ticketing** - Bus Fair calls for the introduction of a Scotland-wide smart ticketing scheme usable by all modes of public transport – bus, tram, subway, train and ferry. The success of other smart ticketing schemes, such as London’s Oyster card, highlights the overwhelming benefits to passengers and the public sector alike of a universal travel card. A Scottish smart ticket would enable flexible, integrated travel across Scotland and would remove the current barriers to public transport, such as separate cash payment for each journey.
- **tax relief for bus commuters** in the form of a ‘Bus Bonus’. The campaign calls for the Scottish Government to press the UK Government to provide tax relief for public transport season tickets, in order to provide equal treatment for bus users. Given that HMRC continues to offer tax incentives for car parking at workplaces, it is unfair that bus commuters do not benefit from an equivalent system. The success of other tax relief schemes, such as the ‘Cycle to Work Scheme’, has proven the benefits of encouraging sustainable commuting by means of government incentives. A similar system for buses would present a fairer deal for regular bus users and encourage commuters to take the bus more frequently.

The campaign website is at <http://busfair.transform.scot>

Transform Scotland’s research on the economic impact of buses in Scotland, emphasises that:

- Buses Support 260,000 Scottish Jobs;
- Bus commuters contribute £2.3 billion to the Scottish economy annually;
- 11% of people who travel to work by bus at some point in time would leave their job if there was no bus service.

It is claimed that there has been a 10% fall in bus passengers within the past five years. While there has been growth in rail travel over the past decade, rail remains a small part of overall Scottish public transport, with buses still moving 80% of all travellers.

The research factsheet is available at:

<http://busfair.transformatScotland.org.uk/portfolio/getting-us-to-work/>

• National Performance Framework

On 11 March 2016 the Scottish Government updated the National Performance Framework. This can be found at <http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms/pdfNPF>

There are no structural changes to the NPF itself. The Government’s [Purpose](#) along with the [Strategic Objectives](#) and [National Outcomes](#) remained unchanged.

Improvements have been made to the Productivity, Solidarity and Sustainability [Purpose Targets](#). You can find the old pages here: [Productivity \(2007-2016\)](#), [Solidarity \(2007-2016\)](#), [Sustainability \(2007-2016\)](#).

The 50 [National Indicators](#) remained unchanged, but five new ones were added:

- Reduce [underemployment](#)
- Reduce the proportion of employees earning less than the [Living Wage](#)
- Reduce the [pay gap](#)
- Improve access to [local greenspace](#)

- Increase [natural capital](#)

As Nestrans moves towards thinking about creating its next Regional Transport Strategy it will have to align its objectives to meet the National Outcomes and recognise its contribution to measurement of the National Indicators.

• Smarter Choices Smarter Places

Both Local Authorities have submitted bids to the Paths for All manage, Smarter choices, Smarter places Scheme.

Aberdeenshire Council, will focus smarter choices, smarter places funding in businesses, communities and schools, this will allow Aberdeenshire Council to build on the work that has already been undertaken via the 15/16 smarter choices, smarter places funding.

The work undertaken through the smarter, choices smarter places, programme will allow Aberdeenshire Council to:

- Increase sustainable travel knowledge through marketing, promotion and information enabling residents to make better informed choices.
- Raise awareness of the alternative travel options available by providing opportunities to try and encourage the use of Sustainable travel modes.
- Demonstrate a better understanding of sustainable and active travel and potentially modal shift with continued and enhancing monitoring and evaluation regime.

Aberdeenshire Council have submitted a bid for £239,431, which will be match funded by Aberdeenshire through monetary and staff time costs.

Aberdeen City Council will continue to develop and support the Getabout brand. Previous Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding targeted specific areas within the City. Funding this year will focus the Getabout brand on transport mode, with the below areas to be developed through the Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding.

- Getabout in the City
- Getabout at School
- Getabout by: Bus/Car share/Foot/Bike/Clean vehicles

Aberdeen City Council has submitted a bid for £210,391. The match funding is being sort through a number of different channels outlined below in the two tables.

Monetary Contributions	
Provider / Source	Amount
Aberdeen City Council	£69,768
Nestrans	£450,380
Aberdeen Inspired	£25,000
CWSS	£122,000
Bus Lane Enforcement	£94,428
Aberdeen Greenspace	£1,000
Total monetary contribution £865,076, representing 75% of total project costs	

In-kind contributions			
Provider	Description: e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> designated staff time by purpose; volunteer time by purpose; type of services/materials/resources provided 	Unit value, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of hours/days of time at the hourly/daily rate of £xx; the cost per item/unit of service/material/resource contributions 	Total value
Aberdeen City Council/ Nestrans	Staff time to deliver SCSP programme elements	3 members of staff working on various elements 7.5 hours a day at hourly rate of £19 an hour	£31,000
NHS Grampian	Travel Plan Coordinator	7 hours a day at hourly rate of £13.19	£24,000
Total in-kind contribution £55,000, representing 5% of total project costs			

- Nestrans Press Releases

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

17/03/2016 [Nestrans welcomes opening of New Inveramsay Bridge](#)

The upgrade to the bottleneck on the A96 at Inveramsay Bridge, where traffic lights have been in place for decades, is to open under traffic management on Friday 18 March.

15/03/2016 [Nestrans welcomes plans for additional North east rail services](#)

Transport Minister Derek MacKay announced 200 extra rail services per day are to be introduced across Scotland from 2018 of which, 70 will service the North east region, including an hourly 'local' service across Aberdeen city, between Inverurie and Montrose, stopping at all stations. Additionally, extra capacity will create a half hourly service between Aberdeen and Inverurie, and the introduction of early morning and late evening services to Elgin, Keith, Huntly and Insch.

- Marketing and Public Relations Update

Nestrans' marketing and PR activities are attached in the form of an infographic as **Appendix 1** to this report.

- Recommendation

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

RD/ Danielle McKinlay
11 April 2016

Nestrans Communications Report

February 2016 – March 2016

• Social Media

As of the end of March 2016, the @Nestrans Twitter account has a total of 432 followers, up from 418 in January 2016.

February - March - Tweeting and retweeting about topics including:

- Updates on AWPR progress from Transport Scotland
- The Health & Transport Action Plan Steering Group recruiting members
- Development announcements from Aberdeen International Airport
- Announcement of extra rail services by ScotRail serving the North East
- Updates from the Aberdeen Hydrogen Showcase conference at the AECC

• Nestrans Media Releases & Statements Issued

Date	Type	Details
28/01/2016	Statement	Statement issued about the City Region Deal and Scottish Government funding announcements and how this will benefit travel north of Aberdeen.
23/02/2016	Statement	Statement issued to Evening Express about growth in rail patronage in North East Scotland.
24/02/2016	Press Query	Information to Evening Express about Internet Protocol closed-circuit television (IPCCTV) nodes along strategic transport corridors to enhance network monitoring and improve the ability to manage the strategic network.
09/03/2016	Statement	Blog post for Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce.
14/03/2016	Quote	Quote provided for inclusion in Transport Scotland release announcing additional rail services.
16/03/2016	Media Release	Additional North East rail services to be introduced
16/03/2016	Statement	Statement issued to Evening Express about predicted increases in city centre traffic despite the introduction of the AWPR.

• News Coverage

Date	Media	Details
01/02/16	Evening Express	AWPR work sees busy route shut for weeks - A north-east road was expected to be shut today for six weeks so work on Aberdeen's bypass can be carried out.
02/02/16	Press & Journal Evening Express	Drivers told to observe working limits - Police are warning drivers to take heed of roadworks and new speed limits as the AWPR progresses – or face being banned from the road.
04/02/16	Press & Journal	Bypass worries sent to top - Residents living near the Aberdeen bypass claim the works are making their lives a misery.
04/02/16	Ellon Times	'Deal' funds to target better transport links - Scottish Government cash is set to be freed up from the City Region Deal projects towards improving transport links north of Ellon.
05/02/16	Mearns Leader	£24million earmarked for Laurencekirk flyover - Scottish Government announces it has put aside money for junction subject of safety campaign.
08/02/16	Press & Journal	New call for Shire rail link - MSP Stewart Stevenson says support for Edinburgh suburban railway is dependent on consideration of north east rail links.
10/02/16	Inverurie Advertiser Turriff Advertiser	Government announces £254million boost to North-east infrastructure - Senior Aberdeenshire councillors from across the political spectrum have welcomed the Scottish Government's commitment to boost North-east infrastructure by £254million.
10/03/16	Press & Journal	Businesses fuelled by £350m bypass work - More than £350million has been handed out to Scottish construction businesses as a result of the Aberdeen bypass project.
15/03/16	BBC Press & Journal Evening Express	North East on right track - ScotRail announces 200 new rail services, 70 of which will service the North East region.
18/03/16	Press & Journal	New crossing set to end A96 bottleneck queues - Transport Scotland announce completion of the new Inveramsay bridge, near Pitcaple, which will end years of congestion on the Aberdeen-Inverness route.
21/03/16	Huntly Express Inverurie Advertiser	On track to deliver new rail services - Rail users from Huntly and Insch will benefit from the programme of rail improvements announced by the Transport Minister, Derek McKay.
23/03/16	Evening Express	AWPR: Commissioner to look at AWPR construction after complaints of damage - Scotland's roadworks tsar (Angus Carmichael) is to keep an eye on the building of Aberdeen's bypass after complaints of damage to local routes.
23/03/16	Press & Journal	Search for city bypass 'Kelpies of the North' - Aberdeen's bypass could become a "sculpture road" as councillors meet this week to debate adding a "major piece of public art" to the route.

30/03/16	Press & Journal	AWPR builders under fire over effects on fish - A leading expert in underwater acoustics has slammed contractors building the AWPR for not doing enough to ensure the wellbeing of the River Dee's Salmon.

- General Update

- AVC Media has been appointed for the Getabout refresh project. This is underway and expected to be completed by end of May 2016
- 1,500 reusable bags order to promote THinC
- THinC advertising campaign featured in the following publications:
 - Ellon Times
 - Buchan Observer
 - Inverurie Herald
 - Fraserburgh Herald
 - Northern Scot
 - Forres Gazette
 - Elgin Courier
- Nestrans had a stand at the first Hydrogen Showcase Conference held at the AECC