
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.

- ScotRail Customer Forum

First ScotRail conduct regular Forum meetings under the chairing of Passenger Voice to gauge public opinion and provide answers to questions about their operations. These are normally attended by senior ScotRail management and can cover local or national issues on any aspect of the company's operation.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held at the Station Hotel in Stonehaven on Thursday 31st May at 1830. An invitation is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. Although an open invitation, anyone intending going along to the event should register in advance as numbers are limited.

- Takeover of BMI by IAG (BA)

On the 5th March 2012 the OFT announced that it had decided not to make a request to the European Commission for a UK review of the proposed acquisition by International Airline Group (IAG – parent company of BA) of bmi from Lufthansa.

The OFT said it will continue to work closely with the European Commission as it assesses whether the proposed transaction raises competition concerns for airline passengers including those travelling to/from airports in Scotland and the North West of England to London Heathrow as well as the overall competitive position at London Heathrow.

The OFT had reached this decision following careful consideration and extensive dialogue with the European Commission. It had concluded that the European Commission would be best placed to consider the deal as some of the issues (such as the impact of this acquisition on transfer traffic and on the overall competitive position at London Heathrow) required a comprehensive review of routes across many jurisdictions, not just the UK

Following this decision it was reported that IAG had proposed certain remedies to the European Commission to counter the competition threats that arise from the proposed acquisition. Nestrans asked the European Commission if it could be considered as a party of "sufficient interest" to be able to comment on the proposed remedies. This request was accepted and the proposed remedies along with a questionnaire from the European Commission was received on 15th March 2012 with a request that this be returned by 19th March.

The information came along with a warning that the proposals were strictly commercial to IAG and BMI and should not be released.

A response was submitted highlighting that Nestrans concern was

- a) that the issue was not an access to London issue but rather an access to the national hub airport and its onward connections given the importance of these to the economy of our area and
- b) to ensure that should an alternative operator wish to fly on the Aberdeen to London Heathrow route in competition to British Airways that such a service wouldn't be unavailable due to a lack of landing slots at Heathrow

The European Commission considered all the issues and issued their decision on 30 March 2012. This decision confirmed the purchase of BMI by IAG would be permitted subject to certain guarantees, as previously indicated to Nestrans on a confidential basis, being met. It is believed that the Nestrans objectives of ensuring access to onward connections and opportunity for competition may be met.

- Aviation consultation update

In the Chancellor's budget statement he made the following comment "*I also believe this country must confront the lack of airport capacity in the South East of England – we cannot cut ourselves off from the fastest growing cities in the world. The Transport Secretary will set out Government thinking later this summer.*"

It is not clear from the statement, but it had been Government intention to publish a draft Aviation Policy in the Spring of 2012, so it would appear that this timetable has slipped to summer to take account what may be a developing change in policy.

- DfT announcements on Rail – 8 March 2012

The Department for Transport have issued:

Reforming Our Railways: Putting the Customer First Command Paper

This paper introduces the following:

- Reducing and then ending above-inflation rises in average regulated fares as soon as possible;
- Expanding smart ticketing technology so that passengers across England and Wales can enjoy Oyster-style smartcard payment options and more flexible season tickets;
- Reforming rail franchises so that operators have to deliver more value and better levels of service for passengers while ensuring taxpayer subsidies are concentrated on safeguarding less profitable routes that remain crucial to communities;
- Investing in Britain's capacity to grow jobs and prosperity by funding thousands more carriages, extending electrification of the rail network and redeveloping railway stations;
- Strengthening the rail regulator's capacity to improve the passenger experience and oversee the crucial efficiency challenge;
- Involving rail workers in our plans to get the industry on a more sustainable footing, to grow jobs and to develop skills;
- Empowering passengers by providing better punctuality and real-time travel

Whilst some of the rail industry is devolved to the Scottish Parliament there will be impacts on the Scottish rail transport user. One of these will be the impact of the smartcard expansion given that a number of trains are cross border.

This document will be reviewed and the implications for Scottish rail users reported to the Board at its meeting on 20 June 2012.

The Department have also issued two consultation papers:

Rail Fares and Ticketing Review: Initial consultation. This document has a response date of 28 June 2012 and can be found at <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-09/main-document.pdf>. At para 13 in the introduction the document states that this will have implications for Scotland. It is proposed to review the document and draft a response for the Boards consideration at the 20 June 2012 meeting.

Rail Decentralisation: This document is concerned with devolving decision making on passenger rail services in England. It also has a response date of 28 June 2012. It can be found at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-10/>. It is proposed to review this document and provide a summary for information to the Board at its meeting on 20 June 2012.

- Cross border train travel

Following the 2014 Rail franchise consultation the Minister for Transport announced on 27 March 2012:

“Train passengers in the north of Scotland will continue to have a direct link with England.

Transport Minister Keith Brown confirmed there will be no cross-border train 'hub' and instead plans for enhancements to the service during a visit to Dundee today (Tues 27 March).

The Minister ruled out the possibility of introducing an Edinburgh change-over for train journeys between England and Inverness, Aberdeen and Dundee after passengers were asked for their views as part of Transport Scotland's Rail2014 consultation ahead of the next franchise.

Mr Brown has announced he decided to continue the current pattern of service provision after it emerged as the preferred option for passengers on the routes.

During the visit to Dundee train station this morning, Mr Brown also revealed he has negotiated a greater say for Scotland in the specification of the next Department for Transport east coast franchise, due next year.”

At this time it is not clear what service enhancements might involve.

- Airport Masterplan

The Aberdeen Airport Masterplan was published on 2 April 2012. This plan updates the previous 2006 version and considers the implications of the economic downturn on forecasts for the aviation industry. The Masterplan can be found at:

[http://www.aberdeenairport.com/static/Aberdeen/Downloads/PDF/GA12015%20Aberdeen%20MP%20Document%20\(Final\).pdf](http://www.aberdeenairport.com/static/Aberdeen/Downloads/PDF/GA12015%20Aberdeen%20MP%20Document%20(Final).pdf)

The Masterplan is in a consultation period with responses required by 30 June 2012. Nestrans has been involved in the development of the Plan through involvement with the stakeholders group and has fed into the Plans development. It is proposed to prepare a response for the Boards consideration for the next meeting on 20 June 2012 within the timescale for responses to be received.

- £30 million investment for rail stations

On 3 April 2012 the Transport Minister announced a £30million programme of improvements for railway stations across Scotland.

There was no detail given with this announcement however it said:

“The package could see new stations delivered across the country where there is sufficient demand, as well as improved access and better facilities for some existing stations.”

“The £30million Scottish Stations Investment Fund will give existing stations a major makeover and see the Scottish Government put money towards new stations alongside local authorities, transport partnerships and developers.”

“I look forward to receiving detailed proposals from communities and developers and will shortly be confirming how current or new stations can access the fund.”

“And it means that local communities and regional transport bodies can be involved in the key decisions which are taken about their stations, with the opportunity for other stakeholders to invest in the improvements”

Nestrans has contacted Transport Scotland to ensure that the North East can participate in the proposed fund. Further discussions are scheduled with the further advice outlined by the Minister in his announcement due in June 2012. In these further discussions we will be highlighting the particularly strong growth in passenger numbers across the North East, significantly stronger than across Scotland as a whole, the success of the Laurencekirk Station re-opening, the success of running more regular trains to Inverurie, the desire within communities to see improvements and the possibility of joint working afforded by the North East's Strategic Transport Fund.

- Competition Commission

One of the recommendations to emerge from the Competition Commission investigation into local bus services related to access to bus stations. The recommendation was that an order be made requiring local bus operators that manage bus stations to provide access to bus stations for rival operators on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms and for them to publish conditions of use, containing information about charges and allocation of stand and layover capacity. The intention of this recommendation is to enable third party operators to compete on a level playing field and give confidence to potential new entrants that their plans are not at risk due to difficulties securing access to bus stations. The Competition Commission has now given notice of its intention to make this order and provided a draft on which representations are invited.

- Real Time Bus App

Real time bus information is now available on Traveline Scotland's smartphone app. This App is available on iPhone, Android and Blackberry smartphones and will soon also be available for Windows 7 phones. The app uses the same information that is fed to the real time displays on street in Aberdeen and complements the website www.realtimebus.com.

- Scottish Transport Awards

Nestrans, in partnership with the two Councils and the SDPA, have been shortlisted under two categories at the Scottish Transport Awards for our submission on the Strategic Transport Fund. The two categories are integrated transport project of the year and most innovative transport project of the year. A joint submission by the Health and Transport Action Plan for the

construction of the Inch foot / cycle path has also been shortlisted under Transport Team / Partnership of the year. Aberdeen City Council has been nominated for their achievements in cycling and most innovative transport project of the year for the Greenbrae Cycle Project and for transport team / partnership of the year for the city centre night time transport zone. A submission by Aecom, on behalf of Aberdeen City Council has also been shortlisted for excellence in walking in the public realm for The Green streetscape project. The awards will be held on 14th June 2012 in Glasgow.

- Nestrans Press Releases

Since the last meeting of the Board in October, there have been press releases on the following (more details can be accessed by clicking on the title):

[Work set to begin on transforming ARI busport](#)

19/03/2012

A major £84,000 project to transform the busport at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI) will begin today (Monday 19 March).

This project, which is being part funded by Nestrans and NHS Grampian with support from Aberdeen City Council, will see the existing bus boarding area outside the main entrance to ARI substantially redesigned to address long-standing issues of overcrowding, both pedestrian and vehicle.....

[Nestrans welcomes Transport Ministers announcement on retention of cross-border links](#)

27/03/2012

Derick Murray, director of regional transport partnership Nestrans, said: "Rail is a crucial element of the transport system in Scotland and we are pleased that the Minister has listened to the strongly expressed views of the north-east and passengers from Aberdeen and beyond will continue to have direct cross-border services to England.....

[Stagecoach expand the JET network](#)

30/03/2012

Stagecoach Bluebird is to expand its popular network of JET buses to the Airport from 2nd April 2012. The bus company will take over the operation of the 80 bus route, which serves Dyce rail station and Aberdeen Airport, from next week.

The route, which is funded by NESTRANS, will continue to operate to its current timetable, providing a bus link between Dyce Rail Station, Aberdeen Heliport and Aberdeen Airport, via Pitmedden and Kirkhill Industrial Estates.....

- Getabout events

Aden Bike Challenge 10/03/12 Chris Menzies of Aberdeenshire Council reported that the event which was run in partnership with Chest Heart Stroke Scotland was a big success. The weather helped as it was glorious and over 200 people cycled from Peterhead to Aden. There were a further 6/700 people in the park enjoying the market and the Getabout cycle roadshow.

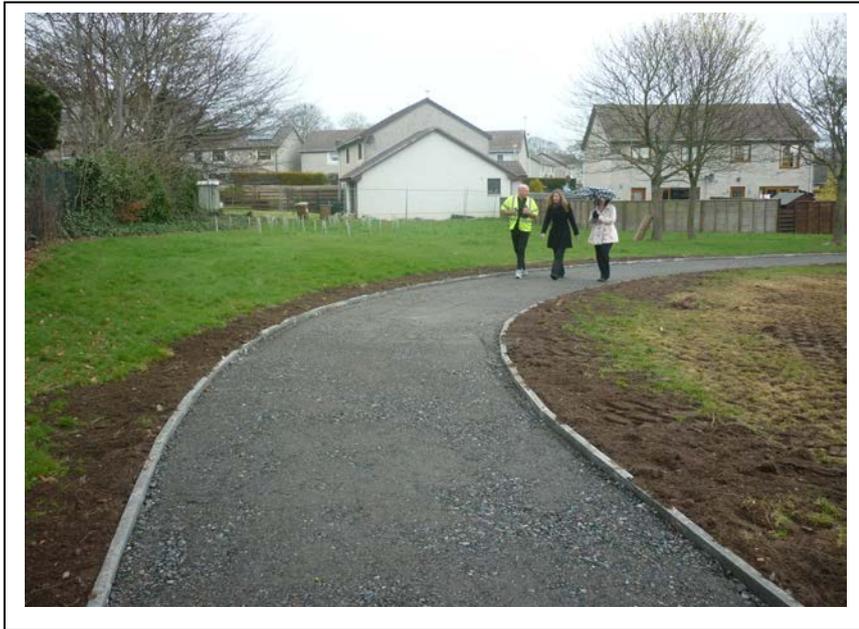
Clerkhill School Peterhead – Former Getabout partner Kerry organised a cycle day at the school with the bike roadshow

Big Pedal competition – Aboyne won this UK national competition which is very good indeed. In their categories Udney Green was 22nd and Buchanhaven 33rd. Well done to all

Greenbrae Project

The first path linking the North and South of the area starts construction soon, negotiations over the upgrade of a resident owned path North of the School has started. There was a bike maintenance day at the school and more shelters have been installed to cope with growing demand for parking.

The project has been short listed for an innovative transport award



The Aberdeen City Car Club started on the 2nd of April with 11 sites across the city. The launch was outside Marischal College. The first Shire Car Club, Common wheels Laurencekirk will launch in early May .



Nestrans part sponsored the Car Plus conference in Inverness.

Robert Gordon University

A successful sustainability event was held in March over 3 days, the EST, FIRST, Waste aware and Edinburgh Bike Coop joined Getabout for the event which was a bit of a 'toe in the water' for future events. There will be a mini version in the Students Union in April.

The new cycle shelter part funded by Nestrans has been opened

Aberdeen University

24th April is student cycle to work day ,closing Dunbar street and Regent Walk. They are doing it in partnership with BeCycle

NHS Grampian, Health and transport action plan

Nestrans and NHSG will deliver a week of walk to work activities during walk to work week 14th – 18th May. This includes a website on line and paper isocrone maps. Events and roadshows at

- 14th May – Aboyne Hospital
- 15th May – Banff Hospital
- 16th May – Huntly Hospital
- 17th May – Inverurie Hospital
- 18th May – ARI

Website Proposals for revamping the Getabout Website have been sourced from BIG. Don Kent will be circulating these for discussion and have already been sent to Abi as head of the comm's team

Events in 2012/13 latest

Month	Event	Notes
April		
April 28 th	Run Balmoral	www.runbalmoral.com
April 29 th	Run Balmoral	www.runbalmoral.com
May	NHS Walk (and cycle)to work week	http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/our-projects/walking-works/walk_to_work_week/
May 14 th	Stonehaven Hospital	
May 15 th	ARI	
May 16 th	Inverurie Hospital	
May 17 th	Huntly or Banff	
May 18 th	Fraserburgh	
June		
Jun 8 th	Stunt show Culter	
Jun 11	Stunt Show Hazelhead School	
Jun 12 th	Stunt Show Westhill School	
	Stunt Show Clerkhill School Peterhead/Castle Park	
	Bike Week 2012 16th-26th June	http://www.bikeweek.org.uk
June 16 th		
June 17 th	The Granite Challenge Dyce	
Jun 18 th	Booked	
Jun 19 th	Booked	

Jun 20 th	Booked	
Jun 21 st	Booked	
Jun 22 nd	Booked	
June 23 rd	Portsoy Traditional Boat Festival	http://www.scottishtraditionalboatfestival.org.uk/
June 24 th	Portsoy Traditional Boat Festival	
July		
July 4 th	Summer bus day Aberdeen	
TBC	Summer Bus Day Stonehaven	
August		
Aug 25 th	Portlethen Gala Day	
September	European Mobility Week	http://www.mobilityweek.eu/
16 th Sep	Booked	
17 th Sep	Booked	
18 th Sep	Booked	
19 th Sep	Booked	
20 th Sep	Booked	ITWMC day
21 st Sep	Booked	
22 nd Sep	Booked	
23 rd Sept	Booked	
October		
November		
December		

	Event on Saturday or Sunday
	Weekday date

- Recommendation

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

RGM/RD/DK/09 April 2012

24 February 2012

Dear Stakeholder

Tel: 0141 335 4500

Fax: 0141 335 4592

INVITATION TO SCOTRAIL CUSTOMER FORUM IN STONEHAVEN

Our next customer forum will be held at 1800 for 1830 on Thursday 31 May in the Station Hotel Arduthie Road, Stonehaven AB39 2NE, tel : 01569 763342.

The format for these events is that under the independent chairmanship of Passenger Focus, my top team go straight into questions from customers. These can range over any area of our services - punctuality, reliability, cleanliness, timetabling, fares, stations, information, assistance - and we shall always endeavour to answer them on the spot or come back as soon as possible to the questioner. A full record of the questions and answers is sent to participants and is posted on our website.

As space is subject to availability, those wishing to attend are asked to register before Tuesday 29 May by email to customerforums@firstgroup.com or calling tel: 0141-335 4391. Light refreshments will be served from 1800 with the forum starting at 1830.

We hope that you will be able to attend, and would also invite you to pass these details to any of your colleagues whom you believe might be interested.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Montgomery', written in a cursive style.

STEVE MONTGOMERY
Managing Director