

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 Access to Laurencekirk Study

Nestrans, in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland, has appointed CH2M HILL to study the preferred solution for access to Laurencekirk. An inception meeting was held on 10 January 2014.

o Traveline Scotland Talking Phone App

In 2012/13 Nestrans contributed along with all other Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland to the development of a smartphone application for Traveline Scotland for use by blind and partially sighted people. The free Traveline Scotland talking app is now available for download from the apple app store. To get it to speak, users will need to use voiceover and its commands. Although the intended users should have no difficulty using voiceover, tips on this can be found at <http://www.raizlabs.com/graiz/2012/12/18/ios-voiceover-getting-started-guide/>

Rail live departure boards are also now available on Android apps with iPhone and Windows to have these early in the New Year.



o Edinburgh to Glasgow rail improvement programme (EGIP)

The Scottish Government has announced (27 January 2014) their latest assessment of the Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvement Programme. This shows an increase in expected outturn costs from £650m to £741.5m. These figures include updates to scheme requirements and estimates. The changes to costs are highlighted below.

These works are expected to see a journey time reduction from 50 mins to 42 mins by 2019 with a further fall to 37 mins by 2025. The Business case for this project can be found at: http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/files/documents/rail/EGIP%20FBC_%20Publically%20available%20version_27012014.pdf

	Jul-12	Oct-13	
	£M	£M	
Queen Street Station Re-development	£ 48.865	£ 120.022	Rebuilding of station including full track re-model
Electrification	£ 300.765	£ 248.494	Electrification of core E&G and Cumbernauld routes.
Infrastructure inc stations and depots	£ 165.511	£ 197.756	Upgrade to Waverley Station infrastructure, the intermediate stations and the provision of depot and stabling facilities
Land	£ 7.000	£ 25.090	Land required to deliver Phase 1 Millerhill, Queen Street and advance purchase properties.
Optimism Bias / Contingency	£ 105.832	£ 125.927	Calculated using Treasury guidance
Transport Scotland costs	£ 22.027	£ 24.255	Capital expenditure during feasibility and design phase. Also construction works at Tram stop at Edinburgh Gateway.
Totals	£ 650.000	£ 741.544	

o Airports Commission's Interim Report

The Airports Commission had previously indicated its provisional finding that there was a need for more runway capacity in the south east of England. On 17 December 2013 the Commission published its Interim report on how this capacity might be provided. This report can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/airports-commission-publishes-interim-report>

This report confirms that one new runway will be required by 2030. It also suggests that a second new runway is likely to be required by 2050.

The report shortlists three options for providing a new runway by 2030. These include:

- A new runway at Gatwick
- A new runway at Heathrow
- An extended runway at Heathrow which could operate both landing and take off operations concurrently

The report has not shortlisted the estuary option but suggests that the Commission will carry out further work on these options with a concluding view provided in six months time. This is due to significant uncertainties over these proposals which the Commission wishes to investigate further.

The Commission has also made suggestions for improving the current operation of existing capacity. These options include technical improvements to air traffic control, scheduling and significant improvements to surface access including:

- Road and rail improvements at Gatwick
- Rail access to Heathrow from the south
- Rail access to Stansted

The Commission has also recommended the setting up of an Independent Noise Authority to provide expert and impartial advice about the noise impacts of aviation and to facilitate the delivery of future improvements to airspace operations

The Commission will now focus on the challenge of appraising the three options, further assessing the case for a new airport in the Thames Estuary, and delivering a robust final recommendation to government in summer 2015. It will publish a draft appraisal framework for the 3 options early in 2014 with a consultation on the short-listed options and the appraisal results in Autumn 2014. It will set out how it will consider further analysis of the Estuary options in early 2014.

Whilst the comments made by Sir Howard Davies and others have considered the issue of regional access to Heathrow and London with a reasonable degree of priority the report itself is short of comment on this issue.

o **Guidance on the Protection of Regional Air Access to London**

On 19 December 2013 the Department for Transport published updated guidance on “The Protection of Regional Air Access to London”. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-service-obligation-regional-air-access-to-london>

This guidance confirms the following:

- Government confirms it unlikely that PSO’s would be appropriate for new routes from the regions to London
- The *Aviation Policy Framework* stated that it would be the responsibility of Devolved Administrations, Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) or local authority in England for developing the business, financial and legal cases required by EU regulations on PSOs and for demonstrating the importance of a particular air service to the economic development of areas of the UK. Where the case has been made for a PSO the 29 June Spending Review Statement stated where appropriate the Government will provide funding alongside regional support.
- Under the existing EU law, in order to protect the slots currently used at the London airports for these regional air services it would be necessary to impose a PSO in accordance with the Regulation. However, this Regulation was designed to protect lifeline routes to peripheral or development regions, not commercially viable regional services into congested hubs where they compete against alternative uses of the slots.
- Under current Community law it is not possible to impose a PSO on a route between two cities or regions on which adequate services are already being operated commercially. The *Aviation Policy Framework* proposed that the imposition of a PSO would be supported where necessary to protect services between UK airports and London.
- This means that the withdrawal or reduction of a service to, for example, Heathrow will not be enough to trigger the consideration of a PSO as long as it is considered that there is an adequate service provided by the combined services offered to the London airport system as a whole.

- The Government recognises the concerns of regional stakeholders about protecting services to London's main airports. However, in order to be consistent with the position adopted by the European Commission (Commission Decision 94/291/EC), when assessing whether a PSO can be imposed on a route it is necessary to consider the adequacy of the link provided between two cities or regions, not between a city or region and a specific airport. On this basis, factors such as interconnectivity opportunities or the final onward destination of passengers are not relevant to the consideration of adequacy under the Regulation.

Therefore within the terms of this guidance it is not appropriate, against a number of criteria, to consider a Public Service Obligation as an option for protecting air access to Heathrow from Aberdeen International Airport.

o **Aberdeen Health Village**

Nestrans has provided a 50% contribution of funding towards the implementation of a public transport information screen at the new Health Village in Frederick Street. This has now been implemented and will provide public transport information for staff and patients in support of the travel plan for the centre.



o **Strategic Development Plan Reporter's Findings**

The Proposed Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan was submitted to the Scottish Government's Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) for examination in July 2013. This examination has now concluded and a report has now been submitted to Scottish Ministers for final consideration. One of the issues discussed in the report is the Strategic Transport Fund.

The examination of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) considered 17 issues arising from unresolved representations and has recommended that modifications should be made to the plan arising from 12 of these 17 issues, one of which relates to the Strategic Transport Fund (STF).

In summary, the reporter's examination makes the following conclusions and recommendations regarding the STF:

Level of detail:

- Subject to two changes relating to clarity over which schemes are to be supported by the STF and the types of development expected to contribute, the level of detail provided in the plan and the proposed use of supplementary guidance on the STF is appropriate.

Principle of pooling contributions to fund regional infrastructure

- The Cumulative Transport Appraisal as a suitably robust mechanism for this tier of plan making is supported.
- Given that the scale of new development envisaged in the spatial strategy of the plan will impact on the regional transport network, it is appropriate for developers to make some contribution to the necessary upgrades.
- The reporter expressed the view that the mechanism currently envisaged by the authority in the Strategic Transport Fund (to pool money into a single fund for the region) "*would not comply with national policy as expressed in Circular 3/12 because the relationship between the development supplying the contribution and the infrastructure improvement to be delivered is not sufficiently clear or direct*" and that despite the reasons provided for taking this approach, a departure from national policy is not felt to be justified.
- The use of the phrase 'Strategic Transport Fund' is acceptable on the basis that the authority can, within the scope set by the SDP, further define the characteristics of the fund in supplementary guidance.
- The existing wording in the proposed plan is acceptable but requires adding to in order to address the concerns raised that the principles of Circular 3/2012 should be adhered to. It is recommended that there is a need to establish that the fund will only be used to gather contributions towards infrastructure improvements that are related to the developments concerned and strictly necessary in order to make any individual development acceptable in planning terms.

Development viability

- No specific evidence had been submitted to demonstrate that the STF would threaten the viability of any particular development.

Schemes supported by the STF

- Overall, the reporter was satisfied that the list of projects identified through the Cumulative Transport Appraisal has been generated in an adequately robust way and saw no need to give particular consideration to the distribution of these projects between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Cycling

- In relation to representations made in relation to cycling, the reporter comments that "*The Strategic Transport Fund is based on evidence in the Cumulative Transport Assessment, which does not appear to have addressed cycling measures. Therefore I do not have the evidence with which to justify recommending a modification to the plan to bring cycling measures within the scope of the Strategic Transport Fund. However this is an issue which could profitably be addressed in any review of the Assessment and, in due course, of the plan.*"

The reporter has made the following recommendations in terms of modifications to the wording in the SDP (see below) and the full report is now with Scottish Ministers for their consideration.

Reporter's recommendations:

I recommend that the following modifications be made:

1. Amend Paragraph 5.9 to read:

"We will prepare supplementary guidance in support of this plan. This will allow (through a 'Strategic Transport Fund') transport projects which are needed as a result of the combined effect of new development to be funded and delivered. The transport projects that will benefit from the Fund are identified in Schedule 2. Contributions will generally be sought from housing, business, industrial, retail and commercial leisure developments in the strategic growth areas within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, subject to detailed criteria to be set out in the supplementary guidance. Contributions will only be used to support projects that are related to the developments concerned and are necessary to make those developments acceptable in planning terms."

2. Amend the final bullet point of schedule 2 to read:

"The following transport measures supported through the Strategic Transport Fund to deal with the combined effect of new development on the transport network:
- a new station at Kintore;
- [list continues as in proposed plan]"

3. Delete "a new station at Kintore and" from the sixth bullet of schedule 2.

It is now up to Scottish Ministers to decide whether to make any modifications to the proposed SDP taking into account the recommendations of the reporter as set out above. The SDPA will await Ministers conclusions before assessing whether changes are required to be made to the STF mechanism.

There is already a process underway to review the existing non-statutory supplementary planning guidance for the STF to make it statutory guidance under the new SDP and the SDPA intend to report on this in June 2014. It will be through this process that consideration will be given to any changes required to the scheme as a result of the content of the approved SDP.

o Scottish Transport Awards

The 2014 Scottish Transport Awards will be held on 19th June 2014 in Glasgow and the deadline for submission of entries was 7th February 2014. Nestrans has submitted a bid under the 'Best Bus Service' category to nominate First's Platinum service 19 for an award. This category is only open to local authorities / RTPs to submit an entry and as a result this submission was done in partnership with First.

A shortlist of bids will be made in March 2014.

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).

16 December 2013: **Nestrans commission study for access to Laurencekirk**

The north-east of Scotland Transport Partnership, Nestrans have appointed CH2M Hill to study the preferred solution for access to Laurencekirk. After a competitive tender process the 'Access to Laurencekirk Study' contract was awarded in December...

27 January 2014: [Nestrans strengthen Board with appointment of new members](#)

Nestrans has appointed three non-councillor Board members following approval from Scottish Ministers. The appointed Board members are Gerry Donald, Head of Property and Asset Development at NHS Grampian, Duncan Cameron Director and General Manager of First Aberdeen and Sandra Macdonald former councillor for Aberdeen City Council.....

30 January 2014: [Nestrans' Regional Transport Strategy approved by Scottish Minister](#)

Following a review, Nestrans' Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) has been approved by Keith Brown, Minister for Transport and Veterans. The document sets out the challenges facing Aberdeen City and Shire over the next 20 years and how they will be addressed. It includes a comprehensive appraisal of the problems and issues affecting transport in the north east and sets clear objectives for improving transport in the region to 2035.....

o **Getabout**

1. Christmas Park and Ride campaign went very well across a raft of media. First Aberdeen recorded a 10% increase in bus usage compared to last year.
2. Work is progressing on the Nestrans Active Transport Action Plan with partners Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire council and NHS Grampian.
3. Scotland Best Outdoors March 29/30th. The Getabout Cycling Roadshow is booked into this show at the AECC. It was successful last year and is indoors!
4. Travel Plans: Transform Scotland published a report in January entitled "Doing their Duty" <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk/doing-their-duty.aspx> which looks at public sector travel plans. This will provide a springboard to review travel plans across the public sector.

o **Nestrans/Getabout Communications Update**

Media

Since the last update, there have been four media enquiries:

- Request for information about developments in the south of the city;
- Information request regarding A947 safety improvements;
- Nestrans' draft priorities re the Strategic Transport Fund; and
- Confirmation of details on Cycling Development officer.

Three press releases have been issued since December, as detailed above:

- Appointment of new board members to Nestrans;
- Approval of Regional Transport Strategy by Scottish Minister; and
- Nestrans commission study for access to Laurencekirk.

Below lists all of the press mentions of Nestrans since December, with links included where possible.

Date	Headline	Paper
4.12.13	Bus firms summit call to end journey nightmare	Evening Express
5.12.13	Park and Ride in line for boosts	Evening Express
13.12.14	A947 meeting pose further questions	Turriff Advertiser
17.12.13	Safety campaigner bemoans slow progress on Laurencekirk junction	Press and Journal
27.12.13	Nestrans commission study for access to Laurencekirk	Mearns Leader
30.12.13	Aberdeen bypass road could open in stages	Press and Journal
31.12.13	Roads network must be fixed before town grows	Evening Express
2.1.14	Area must be priority upgrade	Evening Express
3.1.14	New posts to pedal up cash for cycle routes	Evening Express
4.1.14	Campaigners for flyover to take message on road	Press and Journal
7.1.14	Upgrade of north east roads in long overdue (Letter)	Evening Express
10.1.14	Expansion on city's south side part of council masterplan	Evening Express
22.1.14	Bid to cut carnage on A947	Press and Journal
22.1.14	Plans to boost bus link from trains to airport	Press and Journal
28.1.14	Nestrans strengthen board with appointment of new members	Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce
28.1.14	Nestrans strengthen board with appointment of new members	Aberdeen Business News
30.01.14	Nestrans' Regional Transport Strategy approved by Scottish Minister	Aberdeen Business News
30.01.14	Ministers accused of ignoring A90 Vision	Ellon Times

Twitter 26th November- 31st January

- Number of followers 131
- Number of tweets 141
- Number of re-tweets 35
- Number of mentions 21
- Number of favourites 5
- Following 125
- Bitly click throughs 142 from 18 links

(Bitly is a URL shortening and bookmarking service and used within our tweets)

The most popular links were in regard to the Getabout Christmas Travel Guide and P&J article on plans to boost bus link from Dyce station to Aberdeen Airport.

**Please note these stats cover both ACSEF and Nestrans related tweets*

THInC

A communications plan for the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) was created and approved by the HTAP Steering Group in December. As a result, the proposed content was shared amongst members to help promote the service through various mediums. A variety of advertising opportunities are also being investigated for throughout the year, such as prescription bag advertising.

Health & Transport Action Plan (HTAP)

Following the success of the THInC communications plan, a similar plan is to be prepared for HTAP refresh in connection with Andrew Stewart, Health & Transport Action Plan Co-ordinator. Although the new plan will be similar in its aims and objectives, the main changes are likely to be around governance and how the key messages are communicated.

Getabout

The festive promotion to encourage the use of public transport was well received. Although unable to measure exact results of the success, First Aberdeen released a statement saying they had a record number of passengers during December. On Saturday 21st December, First Aberdeen transported 46,000 customers, while the previous Saturday 14th the company carried more than 51,000 customers – around 10% more than the company would expect to carry on a normal Saturday.

A Festive Travel Guide leaflet was also created and distributed throughout the north east in electronic and hard copy format. As this was seen as a suitable way of promoting public transport options, a new 'non festive' version has been created and will be distributed online shortly.

Radio adverts continue to run on Original 106 FM promoting various Getabout initiatives. An events schedule and advertising requirements have been planned for the coming year.

o Recommendation

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

RGM/RD/JA/DK/LC 4 February 2014