

NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Minute of Meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership Board

Aberdeen City Council, Tuesday, 19 April 2016

Present: Councillor Milne (Chairperson); Councillor Argyle (Vice Chairperson); Councillor Aitchison (Vice Chairperson); and Mr Cameron, Councillor Clark, Mr Donald, Councillor Finlayson, Councillor Grant, Councillor Johnston (substitute for Councillor Ford) and Councillor Yuill (substitute for Councillor Dunbar).

In attendance: Emily Anderson (Aberdeen City Council), Rab Dickson (Nestrans), Joanne Gray (Transport Scotland), David Jennings (SDPA), Pete Leonard (Aberdeen City Council), Hugh Murdoch (Aberdeen City Council), Derick Murray (Nestrans), Ruth Taylor (Aberdeenshire Council), Emma Parr (Aberdeen City Council), Andrew Stewart (HTAP), Ewan Wallace (Aberdeenshire Council), and Kelly Wiltshire (Nestrans).

Apologies: Mr Anderson, Councillor J Dunbar, Councillor Ford and Ms MacDonald.

MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING, 29 FEBRUARY 2016

1. The Board had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 29 February 2016 for approval.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record

PRESENTATION BY STACEY LYNCH OF NETWORK RAIL AND SCOTT PRENTICE OF ABELLIO SCOTRAIL, REGARDING THE ABERDEEN-INVERNESS RAIL ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

2. The Board were given a general overview of the Aberdeen to Inverness rail enhancement project and what they hoped to achieve. The new station at Kintore Station was highlighted as a crucial part of assisting in the completion of the project. The community engagement that had been undertaken so far was explained which included distribution of noise notification letters to residents, community drop in sessions hosted and briefings given to community councils and community groups. Ms Lynch emphasised they viewed it as extremely important to speak to all interest groups. The initial draft plan of the timetabled works was presented and the Board were advised that they would be going out to seek views of this draft plan and would be working together with Nestrans and the local authorities to ensure that the 'least worst' construction strategy was adopted and disruption managed efficiently.

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Members then asked questions to the representatives before the presentation was concluded.

Key points clarified during questioning included advising the Board that ScotRail was currently working on a project to make some improvements at Aberdeen Station due to some funding being available. The Board were reassured that alternative travel options to minimise disruption when Inverurie station is closed for works would be investigated and promoted and accessibility issues at stations would be looked at as part of any construction / improvement works at stations. The Board were also advised that Network Rail had been asked to relook at accessibility at Inch station.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

3. The Board has before it a report by the Director of Nestrans which advised the members on liaisons with other Regional Transport Partners, Scottish Government and other organisations.

The report recommended:-

That the Board note progress on liaison arrangements with other RTP's, the Scottish Government and others and arrangements for future meetings.

The Director presented the report and highlighted key points.

The Director and Vice Chair Councillor Argyle recently attended the RTP Chairs meetings in Barra on 2 March 2016. At the meeting it was noted by the RTP chairs that Bill Reeve at Transport Scotland had presented to the lead officers the progress on an all Scotland Smart Ticket. The Chairs agreed that a letter to the Transport Minister should be sent supporting his efforts to introduce the smart card nationally and to offer RTP support in accordance with the Develop and Deliver Document agreed between RTP's and Transport Scotland, and assistance in developing and implementing the strategy that his officers were developing.

The RTP Chairs also noted the latest developments in the Road's Collaboration programme. The Director explained that Nestrans had been asked to join an officers group. The Director noted that although they had no issues with the currently proposed collaboration on roads maintenance; he felt that if it was looking to expand that it would be duplicating the work already carried out by RTP's.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

At this juncture, the Board agreed to bring the next item of business forward in order that the officer presenting the report could depart the meeting after it had been considered.

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HYDROGEN BUSES - UPDATE

4. In reference to Article 14 of the minute of the Board meeting of 29 February 2016, the Board has before it a report by the City Development Officer which updated Members on the Aberdeen Hydrogen bus project.

The report recommended:-

that the Board note the contents of the report.

The Board were advised that the project which consisted of 10 buses had been running for a year now. The buses are currently running at 75% availability and aiming for a target of 85% by 2018. The second hydrogen production and refuelling station is under construction at Cove and is due to open this Summer. December 2018 marks the end of the project and the bus operators will be given the option of whether to take on a lease or the buses will be returned to the Council. Overall they have received positive feedback from both customers and drivers and there are no safety concerns.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FUND UPDATE

5. The Board had before it a report which updated the Members on matters relating to the STF guidance and on payments received and agreements made in relation to the Strategic Transport Fund to date.

The report recommended:-

That the Board -

- (a) note the anticipated timescale for a judgement to be published following the hearing for the legal challenge raised at the Court of Session to the SDPA's adoption of the Supplementary Guidance: Strategic Transport Fund; and
- (b) note the payments made into the fund to date.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

FRASERBURGH AND PETERHEAD TO ABERDEEN STRATEGIC TRANSPORT STUDY: PART 1 APPRAISAL REPORT

6. The Board had before it a report prepared by the Director which updated Members on the progress with the Fraserburgh/Peterhead/Ellon to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study and to recommend a way forward.

The report recommended:-

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That the Board –

- (a) note the contents of this report and the progress in developing the Study on the corridor between Aberdeen and Ellon/Peterhead/Fraserburgh;
- (b) notes the further discussions to take place with Transport Scotland officials;
- (c) agrees to further work being undertaken to further develop the ‘hybrid’ packages of potential measures outlined above;
- (d) refers the consultant’s report to the constituent local authorities seeking their input and views on the key findings and proposed further development of the study;
- (e) agrees that officers seek the views of the Bus Operators for consideration; and
- (f) instructs officers to report back to a future meeting with the additional information detailed in the report.

The Director presented the report. The key findings of the Part 1 Appraisal Report was appended to the report.

The Chair had received a request from Councillor Merson, Aberdeenshire Council in advance of the meeting to address the Board on this agenda item as a local Member. The Chair agreed to hear the request and the same offer was extended to Councillor Owen, Aberdeenshire Council as she was in attendance at the meeting as having a local member interest too.

Councillor Merson addressed the Board and agreed with comments made by the Director that the packaging of the options should be further investigated before proceeding to Part 2 appraisal. He highlighted that the introduction of a rail line had public support.

Councillor Owen conveyed that she was disappointed that the press had portrayed the study as a rail versus road battle and agreed that a mix and match of packages could best serve the needs of the local people.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation with an amendment to recommendation (e) that officers seek the views of the Bus and Rail operators for consideration.

KINTORE RAILWAY STATION: CAR PARK DESIGN AND BUSINESS CASE

7. The Board had before it a report prepared by the Director which updated members on progress regarding the new Railway Station at Kintore.

The report recommended:-

that the Board notes the progress with the Kintore Station project and instructs officers to continue liaison with Network Rail, Transport Scotland and others to ensure continued progress within the Scottish Stations Fund submission, and associated elements.

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The Board were advised that the rail platforms were being designed by Network Rail so that they could be sure that lengths and specifications met their requirements. Funding of the project was discussed and it was clarified that Network Rail were paying for the track design whilst Nestrans were paying for the platform and station design. Full costing of the project is due to come out June/July 2016 but due to unknown legal challenge costs the Chair advised that Councils may have to look at the funding of this project once Nestrans' legal bill is known.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

HEALTH AND TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN: UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT

8. The Board has before it a report which updated Members in regard to the Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) and sought approval of the HTAP Annual Report 2016.

The report recommended:-

That the Board –

- (a) note the contents of the report and the HTAP Annual Report 2016; and
- (b) request that the report be forwarded to each of the Community Planning Partnerships.

The HTAP Programme Manager highlighted key points in the Annual Report including the Travel to Health and Social Care Information Centre (THInC) It was launched in 2013 to provide information to health appointments but has extended its remit to include social care appointments. The long term vision is to integrate appointments and transport bookings. The current situation was explained to the Board that the transport is provided by several organisations, spread over different budgets and does not provide equal coverage across the Grampian region. The Board were advised that THInC Transport in the City Pilot which Buchan Dial a Community Bus had provided a transport service for had demonstrated value in further developing a hub principle for transport to health and social care appointments.

The Board were advised that work is being done through Community Planning and Nestrans with operators to identify gaps and a report is due to go to the next Integrated Joint Board meeting on transport requirements under self directed support.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

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PROGRESS REPORT

9. The Board had before it the progress report.

The Board resolved:-

to note the contents of the report.

PUBLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

10. The Board had before it a report which informed Members of recent publications and consultation papers of interest and to agree a response where appropriate.

The report recommended:-

That the Board –

- (a) agree that the Director formulates a response to the Air Passenger Duty consultation to be agreed by the Chair and based on the Board's comments;
- (b) homologate the response on the Draft Planning Delivery Advice on Housing and Infrastructure, as submitted after approval by the Chairman; and
- (c) note the content of this report and approve the attached Appendix 2 as Nestrans' response to the consultation questionnaire from Cycling Scotland.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) agree that both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council will submit separate responses to the Air Passenger Duty consultation with advice by the Director; and
- (ii) approve recommendations (b) and (c)

MEETING DATES FOR FUTURE NESTRANS BOARD MEETINGS

11. The Board had before it a report informing members of the proposed dates for 2017 Nestrans meetings.

The report recommended:-

That the Board –

- (a) agree to the proposed dates subject to confirmation of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council diary later in the year;
- (b) request the clerk in consultation with the Chair and Director of Nestrans make appropriate changes to the dates should there be a clash with Council Committee dates; and
- (c) request that appointments to members be sent out and ensure venues are booked.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

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2015/16 BUDGET MATTERS

12. The Board had before it a report which updated Members on the Partnership's 2015/16 monitoring and forecast outturn position and to consider any budget or monitoring issues arising.

The report recommended:-

That the Board –

- (a) note the monitoring position and forecast presented in Appendix 1; and
- (b) note the projects which have been agreed to be funded from remaining Sustrans grant.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

13. The Board had before it a report which sought agreement to the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2016/17.

The report recommended:-

That the Board approve the revised Treasury Management Strategy as set out in appendix A to B of the report.

It was emphasised to the Members the importance of the investments held due to the unknown costings that Nestrans would be paying for the pending legal challenge.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

INFORMATION BULLETIN

14. The Board had before it a report which provided Members information and updates on a number of matters not requiring decisions.

The Transport Strategy Manager highlighted some key publications including the Scottish Government Inquiry into Access to Major Railway Stations which had recently run a survey to gather view of rail passengers on access to and within nine major Scottish urban railway stations including Aberdeen. 677 respondents had put comments in on Aberdeen; responses included a generally positive view on the pedestrian friendliness of the area around the station and generally positive views on the availability of car parking.

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The Board resolved:-

to note the content of the report

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

15. The Board had before it a list of recent and forthcoming conferences with representatives from Nestran's attending.

The Board resolved:-

to note the content of the report.

PENDING BUSINESS AND REPORTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

16. The Board had before it a report advising Members on pending business requested by the Board and major reports scheduled for forthcoming Board meetings.

The report recommended:-

that the Board note the report on pending business and agree the provisional scheduling of major reports to future Board meetings.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendation; and
- (ii) to invite the Chief Executive of Aberdeen City Airport to a future Board meeting.