

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Minute of Meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership Board

Aberdeen, 15 February, 2012

- Present: Councillor Yuill (Chairperson), and Councillors Boulton, Dean and John West (as substitute for Councillor McCaig) (Aberdeen City Council); Councillors Argyle, Clark, Robertson and Webster (Aberdeenshire Council); Jennifer Craw and David Sullivan; and Dr Margaret Bochel and Stephen Archer (Advisers to the Board).
- In Attendance: Derick Murray, Rab Dickson and Kirsty Morrison (Nestrans Office); Julie Anderson (Aberdeenshire Council); and Martin Allan (Aberdeen City Council).
- Apologies: Councillor McCaig (Aberdeen City Council), Eddie Anderson and Derek Provan.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located at the following link:

<http://www.nestrans.org.uk/48/board-meetings.html>

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 8 December, 2011.

The Board resolved:

to approve the minute as a correct record.

LIAISON BETWEEN REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS (RTPs) AND THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND OTHERS

2. With reference to article 3 of the minute of its meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided an update on liaison with other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs), the Scottish Government and others.

The meetings included –

- Local Authority and Bus Operator Forum Steering Group meeting in Aberdeen on 5 December, 2011
- Transport Scotland Rail Directorate meeting in Glasgow on 15 December, 2011
- Scottish Ambulance Service meeting in Edinburgh on 12 January, 2012
- Meeting with the Minister for Transport in Edinburgh on 24 January, 2012

- First ScotRail and Tactran meeting in Aberdeen on 26 January, 2012
- Regional Transport Partnership Lead Officers' meeting in Edinburgh on 15 February, 2012.

In relation to the meeting with the Minister for Transport held in Edinburgh on 24 January, 2012, the Director advised that a series of workshops involving stakeholders would be held in February/March 2012 to discuss how to progress the dualling of the road at the Inveramsay Bridge, and that these meetings would advise decisions on progress of this and other schemes. The Director then informed the Board that he was to have a separate meeting with Transport Scotland on 29 February, 2012 to discuss the Inveramsay Bridge proposal.

The Director then advised of potential changes to the train timetables which would affect Aberdeen and the North East, including extra stops at Portlethen and Laurencekirk. He further explained that it was proposed that the 05:56 Aberdeen to Edinburgh train leave six minutes earlier, and that these proposals would be put out for consultation prior to being considered by Transport Scotland, and if agreed, would be incorporated into the timetable by 12 December, 2012.

The report also provided details of future meetings planned –

- Health and Transport Action Plan Steering Group to be held in Aberdeen on 28 February, 2012
- Local Authority and Bus Operators Forum Steering Group meeting to be held in Aberdeen on 1 March, 2012 and
- The Regional Transport Partnership Chairs' meeting to be held in Dumfries on 7 March, 2012.

The Board resolved:

to note progress on liaison arrangements with other RTPs, the Scottish Government and others and arrangements for future meetings.

REGIONAL PARKING STRATEGY

3. With reference to article 4(C) of the minute of its meeting of 24 August, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which presented the draft Regional Parking Strategy for consideration.

The Board resolved:

- (i) to instruct that the draft Regional Parking Strategy be submitted to the two Councils for their consideration;
- (ii) following consideration of the draft Strategy by the two Councils, and incorporation of their comments, to instruct that the draft Strategy be published for formal consultation with stakeholders and the public; and
- (iii) following consultation, to instruct that a final Strategy be brought back to the Board for approval.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY REFRESH

4. With reference to article 8 of the minute of its meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which updated members on the proposed timescales for reviewing and refreshing the Regional Transport Strategy.

The Board resolved:

to approve the proposed timeframe for the refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy, as appended to the report.

ALTERNATIVE FUELS – HYDROGEN BUSES

5. Reference was made to article 3 of the minute of its meeting of 24 August, 2011, at which time the Board were advised that Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group (AREG) had submitted a bid for European funding for a hydrogen bus trial. Members had before them on this day a report by the Director which advised members of progress made to date with this project, and requested future consideration of any possible Nestrans' involvement.

The Board resolved:

- (i) to support the project in principle, and to agree to further discussions with the project developers and stakeholders;
- (ii) to request that these discussions should take cognisance of the potential funding discussions underway and the operational aspects of the project;
- (iii) to request that the discussions should consider the priority for funding from the transport budget for this type of project, given the priorities and commitments already made in the Nestrans delivery programme; and
- (iv) to instruct that a further report be prepared for the Board's consideration in due course, incorporating the aspects discussed above, once further detail and clarification is available.

DYCE SHUTTLE BUS/ DYCE STATION UPGRADE

6. With reference to article 4(B) of the minute of its meeting of 8 June, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which advised members of progress in relation to the proposal to upgrade Dyce railway station, and sought approval for funding to continue the Nestrans funded shuttle bus, linking the train station to the airport and industrial estates.

The Board resolved:

- (i) to note the content of the report;
- (ii) to instruct that further work be undertaken to develop proposals to enhance the station, including the potential for bus access to the west side;
- (iii) to authorise the issuing of a tender for the continuation of the service 80 shuttle bus; and
- (iv) to delegate authority to the Director, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board, to appoint an operator for the next 12 months.

SCOTRAIL 2014 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

7. The Board had before it a report by the Director which sought approval of a response to Transport Scotland's document titled "Rail 2014 – Public Consultation", which was appended to the report.

The appendix contained a suggested response to the main questions contained in the consultation document, however, there were a number of key points which formed the basis of the proposed submission, as follows –

- That maintaining through trains between the North East and London was critical both for economic/business and for leisure trips. The possibility of requiring all passengers to change trains at Edinburgh was unacceptable, would inconvenience many travellers, harm economic and tourism potential, create severe capacity issues and limit travel choice to/from the North East. Transport Scotland and the Scottish Government should insist on the Department for Transport's commitment to dual purpose rolling stock being commissioned as soon as practical.
- That maintaining an overnight sleeper service between Aberdeen and London was a priority. The sleeper provided an important link and the Scottish Government should commit to its long term future whether as part of, or as separate from, the new franchise.
- The possibility of splitting the franchise into economic and social parts of the railway causes concern. There were many uncertainties around this possibility which were unresolved, such as what parts of the network would be considered "economic", particularly if that may include some parts of routes.
- That there was a need for further development of rail potential in and around the North East, including new stations and incremental enhancements towards a local cross rail service. Stopping patterns, stations and pathing in this area all suffer from under investment and lack of priority within the planning of railway infrastructure and services. Commitment was required to improve track, signalling, rolling stock and stations to fulfil the potential of the railways in the North East.
- Fare structure needs to be reconsidered to ensure that services were operated efficiently and fairly.

The Board resolved:

- (i) at question 27 to the response (how can local communities be encouraged to support their local station?) that proper fare structures be added at this point;
- (ii) to remove the word "perceived" in the response at question 29(7) (comfort of trains);
- (iii) to add the word "absolutely" in front of unacceptable at the start of the response to question 30;
- (iv) to emphasise as strongly as possible the importance of improving the quantity and quality of rolling stock and the requirement for further availability of seats on the network;
- (v) to emphasise the importance of passengers being able to park at local stations prior to embarking on journeys (i.e. cars, motorbikes and bicycles);
- (vi) to emphasise the importance of using the available seats on trains in the most efficient manner (including reserved seats);

- (vii) to emphasise that tourists using the rail network can use it for both social and economic reasons and to add at question 28 the importance of addressing disabled users' needs; and
- (viii) to otherwise agree the contents of the report and endorse the response as Nestrans' comments on the Rail 2014 consultation document.

PROGRESS REPORT

8. With reference to article 8 of the minute of its previous meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a progress chart summarising the work in the three sub strategies of the Regional Transport Strategy as at 7 February, 2011.

The Board resolved:

- (i) to note that the Director will circulate details on the deadlines for submissions to the Green Bus Fund; and
- (ii) to note the content of the progress chart.

PUBLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

9. With reference to article 9 of the minute of its previous meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which summarised and advised on a number of different publications and consultations as follows and sought approval of draft responses as appropriate –

- Scottish Ferries draft plan
- Possibility of road user charging for HGVs.

The Board resolved:

to note the report and the documents referred to above, and to endorse the comments as Nestrans' response to the consultations.

BUDGET MATTERS

10. With reference to article 10 of the minute its previous meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Acting Treasurer which provided an update on spend and programming of the Partnership's 2011/12 budget and forecast outturn in this regard.

The report explained that there was an underspend on the Ellon Park and Ride project and it was proposed that £47,000 of this project's money be allocated to the cost of strategic maintenance works on the A98 at Smiddybone to Kindrough, Portsoy.

The Board resolved:

- (i) to note the monitoring position and forecast as detailed within the report; and
- (ii) to agree to the budget virement as detailed above.

2012/13 BUDGETS

11. With reference to article 11 of the minute of its meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a joint report by the Director and the Acting Treasurer to the Board which asked the Board to agree capital and revenue budgets for 2012/13 subject to available funding being confirmed.

The Director explained that the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) were to hold a meeting with the Minister for Transport (Keith Brown) and he proposed that Nestrans meet the cost of the dinner at a cost of approximately £2,000 to £3,000.

The report recommended:

that the Board approve the 2012/13 revenue and capital budgets as shown in the appendices to the report, subject to anticipated funding levels being confirmed and making any appropriate adjustments following the Board's consideration.

The Board resolved:

- (i) to agree to meet the cost of the SCDI dinner with the Minister for Transport;
- (ii) to request that the Director liaise with Ian Armstrong of the SCDI with regard to subject matters to be discussed at the dinner which will be of benefit to Nestrans and its partners and following which to request that the Director email all members of the Board with a draft set of topics to be considered; and
- (iii) to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2012/13

12. The Board had before it a report by the Acting Treasurer which sought approval for the revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2012/13.

The Board resolved:

to approve the revised Treasury Management Strategy as appended to the report.

MATTER OF URGENCY

The Chair intimated that he had directed in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that details of a meeting held on 13 February, 2012 regarding parking/traffic flow at Union Square, Aberdeen be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Board could consider the details at the earliest opportunity.

INFORMATION BULLETIN

13. With reference to article 13 of the minute of its previous meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided information and updates for the Board on a number of matters not requiring a decision as follows –

- Railway Stations Win Awards
- Draft Civil Aviation Bill: An Effective Regulatory Framework for UK Aviation

- H2S – High Speed Railway
- Aviation Consultation Update
- Laurencekirk Junctions
- Strategic Transport Fund
- Scottish Transport Awards
- Green Corridors in the North Sea Region (GreCor)
- Rail Changes in December, 2011 Timetable
- Nestrans Press Releases
- Getabout Events
- Performance Indicators
- Union Square/Market Street – Parking/Traffic Flow - Update

The Board resolved:

to note the content of the bulletin.

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

14. With reference to article 14 of the minute of its previous meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director summarising recent and forthcoming conferences of interest to the Partnership along with presentations by Nestrans and its partners.

The Board resolved:

to note the information as presented.

PENDING BUSINESS AND REPORTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

15. With reference to article 15 of the minute of its previous meeting of 8 December, 2011, the Board had before it a report by the Director detailing pending business and information on reports to be submitted to future Board meetings.

The Board resolved:

to note the information.

- **IAN YUILL, Chairperson.**