NESTRANS

North East Scotland Transport Partnership

Delivery Plan 2005/2006

Working together to deliver
a Modern Transport System for North East Scotland

Introduction

Concerns about transport infrastructure to and within the north east led representatives of the public and private sectors to come together five years ago to shape and help deliver a regional strategy to meet the future needs of the north east and to work together to help deliver strategic transport improvements.

The partnership between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, and Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce was initially formed within the North East Scotland Economic Development Partnership (now superseded by NESEF), but developed into a more formal voluntary regional transport partnership with the active support of the Scottish Executive.

Since summer 2001 it has been constituted as the North East Scotland Transport Partnership (NESTRANS). Strategic direction is provided via a Board comprising leading representatives from the partners, technical work is managed through a Management Team of professional officers from the four partner organisations, and since March 2002 the work has been facilitated through a dedicated NESTRANS office.

This Delivery Plan sets the framework for the activities of NESTRANS during the 2005/2006 financial year. It is likely to be the last Delivery Plan produced by NESTRANS as a voluntary Regional Transport Partnerships as legislation presently passing through the Scottish Parliament proposes that the role of Regional Transport Partnerships be strengthened and that NESTRANS and voluntary partnerships in other parts of Scotland be replaced in 2006 by a network of statutory Regional Transport Partnerships with statutory responsibilities. As a consequence a major focus of this Delivery Plan is to enable a smooth transition between NESTRANS and its successor statutory Regional Transport Partnership.

It follows a similar format to the Delivery Plan for 2005/2005 and is set out in 6 sections:

- Achievements over the Last Year
- Objectives
- Activity Plan
- Organisation
- Communications
- Budget

As last year it is proposed that a mid year progress report will be prepared to enable the opportunity, if appropriate to amend and reprioritise the Activity Plan for the remainder of the financial year, in light of new circumstances.

Achievements Over the Last Year

The objectives and programme set out in the 2004/2005 Delivery Plan have been very largely achieved, although some parts of the programme have slipped into 2005/2006. The Activity Plan which formed part of the 2004/2005 Delivery Plan sub divided the year into two six monthly periods with main themes and sub themes guiding the detailed activities. Some minor adjustments to the October-March programme were made in the mid year review.

April-September 2004

Main Theme - **Funding Submissions for Rail Projects**
Sub Themes - Promote Travel Awareness
- Initiate Freight Distribution Strategy
- Develop Role of North East Transport Consultative Forum

October 2004-March 2005

Main Theme - **Responding to Transport Bill**
Sub Themes - Funding submissions for Rail Enhancement Projects
- Promote Travel Awareness
- Aviation and Maritime Development Strategies/Projects

The achievements, political and technical, can be summarised under 12 headings:

1 Maintaining national recognition of the transport needs of the north east, through lobbying the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Executive, and other national agencies.

2 Achieving regional consensus on an appropriate form of statutory Regional Transport Partnership for the north east.

3 Introduction of a business orientated travel awareness programme and as part of this the establishment of a Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme.

4 Progressing rail enhancement projects with costings and appraisals, for rail freight gauge enhancement, Aberdeen Crossrail and Laurencekirk Station re-opening.

5 Securing Scottish Executive funding commitment to commissioning of studies looking at tackling major bottlenecks on north east trunk roads.

6 Contributing to the effective operation of the Aberdeen Airport Business Development Forum and jointly funding with BAA a Realising Aviation Opportunities Study.

7 Supporting enhancements to freight distribution and inter modal freight operations through the establishment of the North East Scotland Freight Partnership (NESFR8).

8 Facilitating the submission of a joint response by the 4 voluntary Regional Transport Partnerships to the Scottish Executive's consultation on statutory RTPs.

9 Engaging with a wide range of transport stakeholders through the North East Transport Consultative Forum and the introduction of NESTRANS newsletter.

10 Maintaining a high profile for the MTS and NESTRANS through presentations to national conferences and local groups and through the media.

11 Securing funding contributions from the Scottish Executive to support public transport enhancement of £1.9m, together with £325,000 funding of NESTRANS.

12 Effective budget management with objectives achieved within budget.

Objectives

The objectives which guided the preparation of last year's Delivery Plan are in the main equally applicable this year. In some cases however these need to be re-phrased to reflect the advances made in the detailing of individual projects and changing organisational circumstances especially the proposed replacement of voluntary partnerships such as NESTRANS by statutory Regional Transport Partnerships in April 2006.

Whilst a central objective for the next year will be assisting the introduction of a statutory Regional Transport Partnership for the north east and enabling a smooth transition to this successor body, NESTRANS must also ensure that the momentum in progressing key MTS projects is not lost, that the existing 2011 MTS strategy is appropriately reflected in the new National and Local Transport Strategies and that liaison with relevant communities of interest especially through the North East Transport Consultative Forum is enhanced.

The objectives are all aimed at supporting the transport vision agreed by NESTRANS:

> *"To deliver a Modern Transport System for the north east of Scotland which enables a more economically competitive, sustainable and socially inclusive society."*

Ten objectives are proposed to guide the activities of NESTRANS over the coming year:

1. Maintain national awareness and prioritisation of transport needs in the north east and the MTS strategy as an appropriate response to these.
2. Expand local involvement and support to the MTS and NESTRANS through the North East Transport Consultative Forum, and individual transport interest groups.
3. Contribute to the Scottish Executive's planning for the introduction of statutory Regional Transport Partnerships, and seek to ensure the smooth transition from NESTRANS to its successor statutory Regional Transport Partnership.
4. Secure commitments to the NESTRANS rail projects, Aberdeen-Inverness enhancements, Aberdeen Crossrail, Rail Freight Gauge Enhancement, and Re-opening of Laurencekirk Station.
5. Support enhancements to aviation and maritime activities, through working with relevant agencies and promoting/supporting facilitating projects.
6. Promote travel awareness, by promoting and supporting travel awareness programmes, the preparation of green travel plans and related initiatives.
7. Demonstrate progress and integration across the MTS, ensuring progress is made across all strands of the MTS and integration between these is demonstrated.
8. Ensure the key proposals in the MTS are appropriately reflected in the new National Transport Strategy, and reviews of Councils' Local Transport Strategies and prepare the ground for a longer term transport vision and Regional Transport Strategy to be taken forward by the new statutory Regional Transport Partnership.
9. Ensure integration with other plans and strategies, particularly the north east's community plans, structure plan and local plan.
10. Contribute to and reflect best practice, contributing the views and experience of the north east, and drawing upon relevant transport experience and initiatives from other areas of the UK, Europe and elsewhere.

Activity Plan

The Activity Plan sets out the proposed programme of NESTRANS work over the next year to achieve the listed Objectives. As in previous years it is sub divided into two six monthly periods and within each sets out the main themes and individual tasks. Progress will be regularly reviewed at NESTRANS Board and Management Team meetings.

Alongside the Main and Sub Themes of NESTRANS activity in the two six month periods Key Tasks are listed which will provide the focus for implementation and monitoring.

April-September 2005

Main Theme - Rail Enhancement Delivery and Funding Proposals

Sub Themes
- Contributing to planning for statutory Regional Transport Partnerships
- Proposals to tackle main trunk road bottlenecks
- Investment programme in public transport enhancements

Key Tasks

1. Submit detailed funding and delivery proposals for Aberdeen Crossrail, Rail Freight Gauge Enhancement and Re-opening of Laurencekirk Station to Scottish Executive and Network Rail, and maintain pressure for early implementation.
2. Contribute to detailing of Scottish Executive's legislative proposals for statutory Regional Transport Partnerships and statutory Regional Transport Strategies.
3. Champion the transport and economic case for trunk road improvements in the north east and promote proposals for improvements at trunk road bottlenecks on the A90 at Bridge of Dee, Haudagain roundabout and between Balmedie-Tipperty.
4. Develop a north east investment programme to support public transport enhancements for possible funding with Scottish Executive S70 Capital Grant.
5. Contribute to the Councils' reviews of their Local Transport Strategies.
6. Progress aviation development strategy projects including the Dyce Area Transport Needs Study and examine opportunities for the enhancement of maritime links and related business opportunities in association with relevant organisations.
7. Support the development of NESFR8 as an intermodal freight grouping, promoting the general case for north east freight and particular project needs.
8. Support the case for the WPR as a key element of the MTS, particularly during the period of public consultation on the route.
9. Maintain a high profile travel awareness campaign, with particular focus on implementation of the NESTRANS car share website, Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme, and the new Dyce Transport Management Organisation.
10. Maintain media profile of north east transport needs, MTS and NESTRANS, through proactive and reactive press releases, article placements and advertorials.
11. Maintain and enhance liaison with stakeholders, particularly through the North East Transport Consultative Forum and regular NESTRANS newsletters.
12. Review and enhance the NESTRANS website and other collateral material.

A mid year progress report will also be prepared providing the opportunity for the NESTRANS Board to amend and re-prioritise the Activity Plan if required in response to new circumstances.

October 2005-March 2006

Main Theme - Enabling transition to statutory Regional Transport Partnership

Sub Themes
- Ground work for statutory Regional Transport Strategy
- Inter modal freight strategy/projects
- Maritime development strategy/projects

Key Tasks

1. Make necessary arrangements for smooth organisational transition from NESTRANS to a statutory Regional Transport Partnership for north east Scotland.
2. Put in place ground work and initial scoping for the preparation of a longer term (post 2011) statutory Regional Transport Strategy to be taken forward by the statutory Regional Transport Partnership.
3. Support the preparation of a north east freight distribution strategy and associated projects through NESFR8.
4. Prepare a north east maritime development strategy and identify projects to enhance external links and related business opportunities.
5. Contribute to the Scottish Executive's preparation of a National Transport Strategy, and the Councils' reviews of their Local Transport Strategies.
6. Maintain lobbying for rail enhancement projects and proposed detailed project delivery arrangements for Aberdeen Crossrail.
7. Contribute to the multi modal A96 corridor study being jointly funded by NESTRANS, HITRANS and the Scottish Executive.
8. Support the case for the WPR as a key element of the MTS, particularly during the period of public consultation on draft road orders and later at any public inquiry.
9. Maintain a high profile travel awareness campaign for the particular focus on the NESTRANS car share scheme, NESTRANS Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme, and promoting a transport management organisation in the Altens/Tullos area of the city.
10. Maintain media profile of north east transport needs, MTS and NESTRANS through proactive and reactive press releases, article placements and advertorials.
11. Maintain and enhance liaison with stakeholders particularly through the North East Transport Consultative Forum and regular NESTRANS newsletters.
12. Maintain NESTRANS website and publish a NESTRANS Annual Report in March 2006 as a handover report to the new statutory Regional Transport Partnership.

Organisation

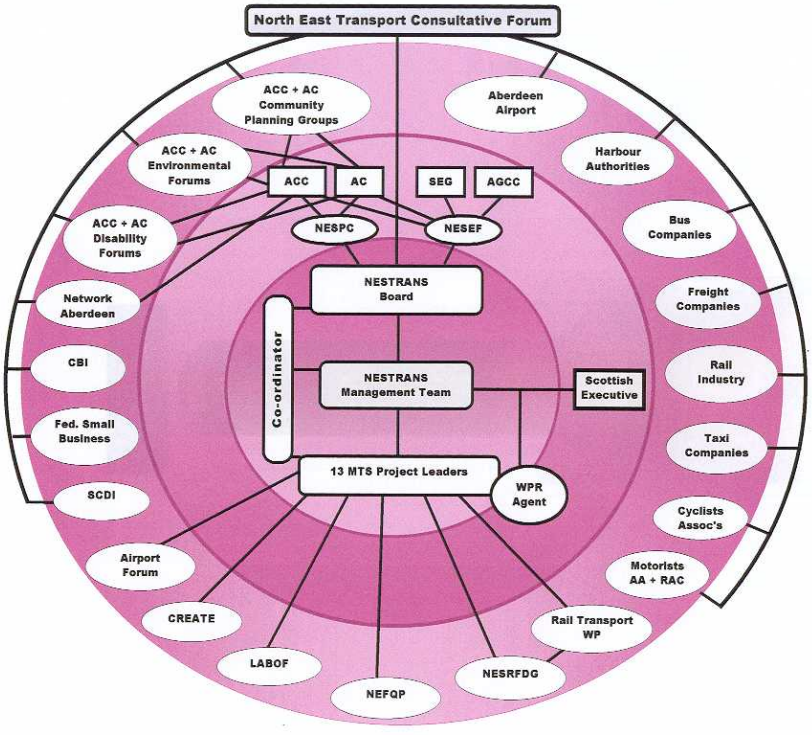
NESTRANS seeks to operate as an efficient and effective organisation, tightly driven but responsive to the views of the wide range of stakeholders with an interest in transport.

Over the last eighteen months major efforts have been made to involve stakeholders in the operations of NESTRANS through the establishment of a North East Transport Consultative Forum. This had its initial meeting in December 2003 and has met on two subsequent occasions. Members of the Forum and others with an interest in transport have also been kept more regularly advised of NESTRANS work and strategic transport issues through the introduction of a NESTRANS Newsletter.

The following diagram attempts to represent existing organisational arrangements, within NESTRANS itself and with groups that have an interest in transport.

- In the inner circle is the core NESTRANS structure of Board, Management Team, Co-ordinator and MTS Project Leaders.
- In the intermediate circle are NESTRANS' "parent" organisations - Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce and the Scottish Executive, linked to NESTRANS through the North East Strategic Planning Committee (NESPC) and the Board of the North East Scotland Economic Forum (NESEF).
- In the outer circle various organisations and groups with an interest in transport, showing linkages where these exist with NESTRANS and/or the NESTRANS partners. These organisations represent various communities of interest - transport operators, transport user groups, transport lobby groups, business groups, environmental forums and the recently established Community Planning Groups.
- And, bringing together the various stakeholder interest groups, the North East Transport Consultative Forum, debating strategic transport issues and helping shape transport policy and implementation through NESTRANS.

NESTRANS Organisational Structure



Communications

PR and communications support has fulfilled an important role in assisting NESTRANS in effectively lobbying at the national level and securing understanding and support to the MTS within the north east.

Over the last five years this support has been provided through consultants Weber Shandwick and their staff in Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

The scope of their current contract covers:

- General media relations in support of NESTRANS
  - Reactive comment to the press
  - Proactive press releases and article placements
- Event organisation for NESTRANS, e.g press conferences, media events and meetings
- Informing/engaging local stakeholder groups including communities of interest and business champions
- Promoting the interests of NESTRANS with national agencies and key players including the Scottish Executive, Scottish Parliament, Department for Transport, Strategic Rail Authority and BAA
- Assisting in the briefing of MSPs and MPs regarding the interests of NESTRANS
- Providing regular awareness briefings to NESTRANS of debates and events in the Scottish Parliament of relevance to NESTRANS.
- Maintaining News section of NESTRANS website
- Ensuring NESTRANS collateral material remains relevant
- Attending appropriate NESTRANS meetings.
- Liaison with NESTRANS partners' public relations sections

In addition to the commission for PR/Communication support NESTRANS retains the assistance of the Centre for Transport Policy at the Robert Gordon University to provide specialist policy support, research and surveys as required. In particular the Centre has undertaken a series of questionnaire surveys of members of the North East Transport Consultative Forum to gauge their views on particular strategic transport issues.

Budget

A NESTRANS budget for 2005/2006 has already been agreed by the NESTRANS Board and the Scottish Executive along with associated financial contributions.

The budget is summarised below. It provides for the tasks set out in the NESTRANS Activity Plan.

	2004/2005	2005/2006
NESTRANS Strategy and Co-ordination	**300,000**	**325,000**
NESTRANS Office	146,000	187,000
Management Team and Other Support costs	50,000	53,000
Policy + Research Support (RGU)	12,000	12,000
PR/Communication Support	50,000	50,000
Sponsorship/Advertorials	22,000	10,000
Presentation Material	10,000	7,500
Website Updating and Maintenance	5,000	3,000
Events	5,000	2,500
MTS Research	**25,000**	**25,000**
Strategy Preparation/Modelling	25,000	25,000
MTS Projects (excl WPR - separate accounting)	**425,000**	**400,000**
Trunk Roads	50,000	30,000
Crossrail	10,000	130,000
Freight Strategy	30,000	20,000
Aviation	30,000	5,000
Maritime	15,000	20,000
Rail Freight	40,000	20,000
Travel Plans/Travel Awareness	250,000	175,000
Total Budget	**750,000**	**750,000**
Partner Contributions		
Aberdeen City Council (incl. staff costs)	162,500	162,500
Aberdeenshire Council (incl. staff costs)	162,500	162,500
Scottish Enterprise Grampian	100,000	100,000
Scottish Executive (matching LA Expenditure)	325,000	325,000
Total Income	**750,000**	**750,000**

The core NESTRANS budget shown about excludes additional finance secured by NESTRANS from the Scottish Executive, Councils and private companies to develop and implement particular MTS projects. In 2004/2005 NESTRANS was granted £1.9m from the Scottish Executive for capital expenditure to enhance public transport in the north east, and some £6m was expended on the development of the Western Peripheral Route, the costs of which are split 81% Scottish Executive, 9½% Aberdeen City Council and 9½% Aberdeenshire Council.