

# **NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**

Minute of Meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership Board

Aberdeen, Thursday, 9 October 2014

Present: Councillor Ramsay Milne (Deputy Chair); and Councillors Andrew Finlayson and Callum McCaig (Aberdeen City Council); Councillors Graeme Clark and Alison Evison (as substitute for Councillor Peter Argyle) (Aberdeenshire Council); Duncan Cameron, Gerry Donald and Sandra MacDonald (Non Councillor Members); and Dr Maggie Bochel (Adviser to the Board).

In attendance: Derick Murray, Jenny Anderson and Kirsty Chalmers (Nestrans); Ewan Wallace and Tom Buchan (Aberdeenshire Council); and Martin Allan (Assistant Clerk to the Board).

Apologies: Councillors Peter Argyle, Alan Buchan, Ross Grant and John Latham; and Eddie Anderson and Stephen Archer.

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

<http://www.nestrans.org.uk/64/board-meetings.html>

## **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 21 August 2014.

### **The Board resolved:**

to approve the minute as a correct record.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:**

2. The Board had before it a report by the Director which asked the Board to nominate a new Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board.

The report explained that at its meeting on 20 June 2012, the Board agreed to appoint Councillor Peter Argyle as Chair and Councillor Ramsay Milne as Deputy Chair, as well as reaffirming Eddie Anderson as Deputy Chair. Councillor Milne has also served as Chair of the Strategic Development Planning Authority with Councillor Argyle as Vice Chair of that body. The report advised that at its meeting on 26 June 2014 the Strategic Development Planning Authority agreed that, in accordance with a minute of agreement between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, at the end of December 2014, Councillor Argyle will take the Chair of that body with Councillor Milne taking the Vice Chair.

The report explained that both Councillors Argyle and Milne have indicated that they would wish to see an appropriate balance of Chairs between the Councils on the

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strategic planning and transport bodies and have therefore agreed to give up their roles as Chair and Deputy Chair of Nestrans respectively as of the end of December 2014.

The report explained that the Board was therefore requested to nominate a new Chair and Deputy Chair to take up their roles as of the end of December 2014. This would be in addition to Eddie Anderson, who can continue in the other Deputy Chair position.

**The report recommended -**

that the Board agree a Chair and Deputy Chair for the period from January 2015 to May 2017.

Councillor Milne asked if there were nominations for the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair to the Board.

Gerry Donald proposed, seconded by Councillor Evison that Councillor Milne become the Chair of Nestrans from January 2015 to May 2017.

**The Board resolved:**

to appoint Councillor Milne as the Chair of Nestrans from January 2015 to May 2017.

Councillor Milne proposed, seconded by Gerry Donald that Councillor Argyle become a Deputy Chair of Nestrans from January 2015 to May 2017.

**The Board resolved:**

to appoint Councillor Argyle as a Deputy Chair of Nestrans from January 2015 to May 2017.

### **STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FUND - UPDATE**

3. With reference to article 4 of the minute of the previous meeting of 21 August 2014, the Board had before it a report by the Director, which updated members on the payments received into the Strategic Transport Fund (STF) since the aforementioned meeting.

The report provided details on the report submitted to the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) at its meeting on 24 September, 2014 on the review of the Strategic Transport Fund guidance and how the guidance could become statutory under the new Strategic Development Plan.

The report to the SDPA had stated that Consultation on draft Supplementary Guidance on the STF would take place from 12 December 2014 to 6 February 2015 (8 weeks to account for the Christmas and New Year breaks). The results of this would be reported back to the SDPA on 25 March 2015 with the intention of immediately submitting the

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revised guidance to the Scottish Government. This would be followed by a minimum 28 day period during which the Scottish Government considers whether to issue a direction regarding the adoption of the guidance (although this period can be extended by the Scottish Government). Formal adoption of the Supplementary Guidance would take place at the first meeting of the SDPA after this period. While dates have yet to be set for meetings of the SDPA in 2015/16, this is likely to be towards the end of June 2015. However it is possible that an earlier meeting could be organised to speed up the adoption process if appropriate.

### **The report recommended -**

that the Board note the (a) steps being taken in the review of the STF and the timescales set out by the SDPA for this and (b) payments made into the Fund as detailed in the report.

### **The Board resolved:**

to approve the recommendation.

## **LIAISON BETWEEN REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS, THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND OTHERS**

4. With reference to article 3 of the minute of the previous meeting of 21 August, 2014, the Board had before it a report by the Director which provided an update on liaison between Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs), the Scottish Government and other organisations.

### **The report recommended -**

that the Board note progress on arrangements with other RTPs the Scottish Government and others and the arrangements for future meetings as detailed in the report.

The Board discussed issues relating to Abellio winning the franchise to run trains in Scotland; the possibility of extra trains being provided between Aberdeen and Portlethen / Stonehaven in the evening to deal with overcrowding (but would make some journeys longer as a result); the hydrogen bus project; and the recent Grampian Volunteer Transport Awards ceremony.

### **The Board resolved:**

- (i) to note that the Councillor Milne, as Chair of the Energy Group would ask Fiona Goodenough to address a meeting of APSE's Energy Group regarding the importance of all areas of Scotland progressing the hydrogen bus proposals; and
- (ii) to note that the Grampian Volunteer Transport Awards ceremony was a success; and
- (iii) to otherwise approve the recommendations in the report.

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**MATTER OF URGENCY**

The Deputy Chair intimated that he had directed in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that information regarding Written Evidence to the UK Parliament's Commons Transport Select Committee be considered as a matter of urgency to enable the Board to consider the matter at the earliest opportunity.

**AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - PROPOSED REPRESENTATION**

5. With reference to Article 5 of the previous Minute of 21 August, 2014, the Board had before it a report by the Director, which asked Members to approve the appointment of a Nestrans representative on the Aberdeen International Airport Consultative Committee.

The report explained that there were a number of points that the Board may wish to consider in deciding on an appropriate nomination. These included:

- Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils have been asked to nominate three Councillors to sit on the Committee to represent these authorities. This provides a balance of Councillors from each authority.
- The invitation from the Airport Consultative Committee is for a Nestrans representative, either Member or official. The Board may feel it appropriate given the Council's representation at Councillor level that a Board Member is the most appropriate representative.
- Should the above points be agreed the Board may wish to consider a nomination of one of its non-Councillor Members.
- ACSEF have also been asked to nominate a representative on the Committee.
- ACSEF are considering this request and it is possible that Nestrans' current Deputy Chair Mr Eddie Anderson, also an ACSEF Board Member, could be their nominated representative.

**The report recommended -**

that the Board agree a Nestrans nomination to the Airport Consultative Committee.

The Board were also addressed by the Director regarding Written Evidence to the UK Parliament's Commons Transport Select Committee. A summary of the evidence

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submitted by Nestrans on the 3 of October, 2014 on the Inquiry into Smaller Airports was circulated to the Members of the Board.

The Board also heard the Director suggest that representations be made on behalf of the Board to Baroness Kramer, Minister of State for Transport regarding clarification on cuts made to Aberdeen to London flights (Aberdeen to London City Airport and Virgin flights from Aberdeen to London Heathrow). The Board heard that Baroness Kramer had previously said that her Department saw no threat to Aberdeen to London services given their profitability to the airlines.

### **The Board resolved:**

- (i) to appoint Eddie Anderson as Nestrans' nominated representative on the Aberdeen Airport Consultative Committee;
- (ii) to note the evidence submitted by Nestrans on 3 October, 2014 on the Inquiry into Smaller Airports;
- (iii) to note that the Director would make representations on behalf of the Board to Baroness Kramer, Minister of State for Transport regarding clarification on cuts made to Aberdeen to London flights; and
- (iv) to note that the Director would enquire if there were other aviation companies who may be interested in obtaining the "spare" slots between Aberdeen and London.

## **STATUTORY QUALITY PARTNERSHIP FOR BUSES**

6. The Board had before it a report by the Director, which requested that £60,000 of underspend from the 2014/15 budget be allocated to projects to progress the development of a Statutory Quality Partnership (SQP) for buses on the Queens Road and A944 corridor from Aberdeen to Westhill.

The report explained that a Statutory Quality Partnership (SQP) is a flexible policy tool which can be used to address a range of issues, including bus journey times, reliability, patronage growth, modal shift, air quality, service quality, vehicle improvement and improved customer service. The Local Authority and Bus Operator Forum (LABOF) Steering Group has agreed to progress an SQP agreement on the Queens Road and A944 corridor from Aberdeen to Westhill and instructed the Executive group to explore actions that can be taken forward as part of this agreement.

The report explained that there were two options that could be progressed, as follows:

1. Queens Road: Springfield Road to Groats Road - it has been identified that this section of the route could benefit from a significant review to better understand the progression of traffic along this section. This would require a modelling exercise to ascertain what benefits could be achieved and the likely

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impacts on other road users. There would likely be a significant cost to this exercise and it is estimated that this will be in the region of £50,000 to carry out surveys, modelling, identification of options and testing of solutions.

2. Holburn Junction: Opportunities to improve the flow of buses through the Holburn Junction between Union Street and Alford Place have been identified. The first step to exploring this option will be to test on TRANSYT software to identify the potential benefits for buses of such a measure. This is estimated to cost up to £10,000. If there are benefits to be gained, then further tests would be required on Paramics to fully assess the impact on all traffic and would then also need to be tied into the Scoot traffic signal control system. It is emphasised that consideration would also need to be given to the impact of any proposed works on Broad Street as the signals along the length of Union Street are all linked.

**The report recommended -**

that the Board approve funding of £60,000 to progress these studies this financial year.

**The Board resolved:**

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

**RAIL MATTERS**

7. With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Board of 21 August, 2014, the Board had before it a report by the Director which updated the members on rail issues.

The report explained that the East Coast Main Line Authorities (ECMA) consortium, a grouping of local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships working in partnership to promote the case for investment in the line to enable economic growth.

Following the publication of the manifesto "Keeping the Economy on Track" in July, it has been agreed that the ECMA should continue and will press the case for further investment in the East Coast line through to the General Election and beyond. At a group meeting in York on 15 September, it was agreed that member authorities and RTPs should be asked to provide funding for a further year.

Scottish RTPs are to be invited to contribute a total of £40,000 between the four areas (Nestrans, Hitrans, Tactran and Sestran), which can be divided between constituent local authorities or contributed from the RTP. In the case of Nestrans, it is suggested that as the strategic transport body representing the two local authorities, it is appropriate for Nestrans to make the funding contribution of £10,000.

**The report recommended -**

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that the Board notes the contents of this report and agree to consider the request for a contribution of £10,000 to East Coast Mainline Authorities consortium when setting the budget for 2014/15.

**The Board resolved:**

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

### PROGRESS REPORT

8. With reference to article 9 of the minute of its previous meeting of 21 August, 2014, the Board had before it a progress chart summarising the work in three sub strategies of the Regional Transport Strategy as at 1 October, 2014.

**The Board resolved:**

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 21 August, 2014, the Board had before it a report by the Director which summarised and advised on a number of different publications and consultations as follows:

- Consultation on the new Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre and redevelopment of the current site at the Bridge of Don
- Consultation on changes to Bus Registration in Scotland
- A96 Dualling project
- Community Empowerment Bill

**The report recommended -**

that the Board-

- (a) note the content of the report and the documents referred to above; and
- (b) instruct the Director to write to the Chief Executive of Transport Scotland, expressing concern regarding the assessment of employment levels in the North East and the projections for population in the area used in the Transport, Economic and Land Use Model part of the Strategic Business Case for the A96 dualling project.

**The Board resolved:**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report

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**NESTRANS' DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT - 2013/14**

**10.** The Board had before it a covering report by the Director which had appended to it the draft Annual Report for Nestrans for 2013/14 and the Business Plan for 2014/15.

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### **The report recommended –**

that the Board-

- (a) Consider the attached draft 2013/14 Annual Report and Business Plan 2014/15.
- (b) Approve publication of this report on the Nestrans website once design has been completed
- (c) Instruct a link to the published report to be sent to Scottish Ministers and Aberdeen City and Shire Councils; and
- (d) Approve separate publication on the Nestrans website of the information required under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

### **The Board resolved:**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

## **EQUALITIES OUTCOMES**

11. With reference to Article 12 of the previous minute of 21 August, 2014, the Board had before it a report by the Director which presented a revised set of Draft Equalities Outcomes for approval and adoption, subject to receiving formal feedback from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

The report explained that a set of draft revised outcomes was provided in Appendix A to the report. These had been developed taking on board the comments received by the EHRC and using the format used by Aberdeenshire Council which was highlighted by EHRC as good practice.

The report advised that the draft outcomes had now been submitted to the EHRC and officers were awaiting feedback from them.

### **The report recommended –**

that the Board-

approve the revised draft outcomes for adoption, subject to receiving comments back from the EHRC, whilst noting that if comments were received that required significant changes to be made, a revised version would be brought back to a future Board meeting for approval.

### **The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

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### BUDGET MATTERS

**12.** With reference to article 11 of the minute of the previous meeting of 21 August 2014, the Board had before it a report by the Treasurer, which provided an update on the Partnership's budget in 2014/15 and forecast outturn in this regard.

The report provided details on proposed virements between budgets due to surpluses and underspends.

Specifically the report explained that it was proposed to allocate a further £27,500 to Variable Message Signs to bring the budget on this project to a total of £155,000. The report explained that this was possible due to an unexpected refund of £6,000 Nestrans have received from The Scottish Ambulance Service in relation to THInC (Transport to Healthcare Information Centre), together with £21,500 which had been earmarked for settlement of a small number of invoices relating to prior years, for which an accrual had already been made.

#### **The report recommended -**

that the Board -

- (a) note the monitoring position and forecast;
- (b) approve the proposed budget revisions and virements detailed in the report; and
- (c) approve the use of the £6,000 refund and £21,500 of prior year Partner Council's contributions for the Variable Message Signs project.

#### **The Board resolved:**

to approve the recommendations.

### INFORMATION BULLETIN

**13.** With reference to article 12 of its previous meeting of 21 August, 2014, 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 –

- Access to Laurencekirk Study
- Energetica corridor multi-modal study
- Equalities Outcomes
- Cycling Development Officer
- Ministerial Cycling Summit
- The North East Transport Consultative Forum
- Scottish Transport Project
- Response from Transport Scotland regarding the North East's rail infrastructure
- Inch Station

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- City Centre Masterplan and City Deal
- Nigg Bay Development Framework
- Nestrans Press Releases
- Marketing and Public Relations Update
- Getabout

**The report recommended –**

that the Board note the contents of the report.

**The Board resolved:**

- (i) to agree that a robustly worded letter be sent to Transport Scotland's response on the North East's rail infrastructure requirements explaining the strategic importance of the region to Scotland's economy;
- (ii) to note that ARR Craib had agreed to use one of its lorries to advertise the Getabout programme and to thank Eddie Anderson and the company for this arrangement ; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the report.

### CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

14. With reference to article 13 of the minute of its previous meeting of 21 August, 2014, 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 provided.

### PENDING BUSINESS AND REPORTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

15. With reference to article 14 of the minute of its previous meeting of 21 August, 2014, 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 report recommended -**

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

**The Board resolved:**

to approve the recommendation.

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**PRESENTATION BY KATE BOND - ACSEF KEY MESSAGES**

**16.** The Board received a brief presentation from Kate Bond, Head of Communications at Aberdeenshire Council relating to ACSEF's key messages.

The key messages were:

- The City/Shire is Europe's Global Energy Hub
- Investment is required to continue the success in the area; and
- The City/Shire is the Home to World Class Expertise.

**The Board resolved:**

to note the importance of promoting these key messages at every opportunity and to request that a workshop be held for Members on this.

- **RAMSAY MILNE, Deputy Chairperson.**