

Sustainable Economic Growth Statement 2013-14

Introduction

Section 32(1)(a) of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 provides that as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year each listed public body must publish a statement of the steps it has taken during the financial year to promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions.

Nestrans is a listed body within the Act. This statement is intended to fulfil the requirement of the Act in relation to Sustainable Economic Growth. This statement should be read in conjunction with the statement on Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy and the financial information provided on the Nestrans website that are also required by the Act.

Government purpose and performance framework

The Government Economic Strategy, November 2007, sets out the Government's central purpose as: "To focus the Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. By sustainable economic growth we mean building a dynamic and growing economy that will provide prosperity and opportunities for all, while ensuring that future generations can enjoy a better quality of life too."

The National Performance Framework was developed to provide a clear focus and direction for the whole of the public sector in Scotland and all public bodies are expected to align their activity in support of the Purpose, Purpose Targets and the 15 National Outcomes set out in the Framework.

Aligning to the Purpose and National Objectives

The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy, approved by Scottish Ministers in 2008, includes, at page 102, an Appendix outlining how the Regional Transport Strategy objectives align with the National Objectives. This can be found at:

http://www.nestrans.org.uk/db_docs/docs/Nestrans%20RTS%20final%20printed.pdf

The objectives of the RTS have been retained within the recent refresh of the strategy.

Sustainable Economic Growth

Nestrans primary function is to produce and implement a Regional Transport Strategy.

Transport has long been recognised as a significant contributor to sustainable economic growth. The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy was developed in conjunction with the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) Economic Manifesto and the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) Structure Plan.

The ACSEF Manifesto sets out a vision for the economic growth of the North East region of Scotland. The SDPA Structure Plan sets out the spatial strategy for achieving that growth. The Regional Transport Strategy examines how the growth can be achieved without increasing congestion levels. As the SDPA has been developing a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the North East to 2035 a refresh of the RTS was undertaken to ensure that it takes account of current policies and to better align it with the SDP timeline and the transport implications of this plan. The refresh gained Ministerial approval in January 2014. As the refresh builds on the original RTS, it should be taken as an addendum to the original strategy document.

The principal ethos in setting and determining the Regional Transport Strategy and subsequent refresh has therefore been to encourage and permit sustainable economic growth.

Achievements in 2013/14

Planning

Local Development Plans for the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council areas were adopted in 2012. The Plans for each authority identify proposals for the development and use of land for a period of 10 years from adoption and contain the policies that planning applications will be assessed against.

Nestrans previously developed a Cumulative Impact Assessment of the proposals across both Council areas. This assessment considered the transport impact of development with the Regional Transport Strategy in place and what further interventions are likely to be required to assist in the objective of achieving sustainable economic growth.

This assessment resulted in agreement between the Councils to develop joint and complementary Supplementary Planning Guidance for issue as part of the Structure and Local Development Plans. The supplementary guidance for the Structure Plan 2009 has been developed and formally adopted. It determines a framework for assessing developer contributions towards improvements to the strategic transport network. The contributions will be made to a Strategic Transport Fund that will be held and administered by Nestrans. To date contributions of £10,067,000 have been agreed through section 75 agreements and £1,179,000 has already been paid into the fund.

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in March 2014 and Nestrans is continuing to work with the Strategic Development Planning Authority, the Scottish Government, Councils and other relevant stakeholders to develop a mechanism to secure contributions to the Strategic Transport Fund that can be approved as statutory supplementary guidance to the Strategic Development Plan as soon as is practicably possible.

Nestrans has worked with Government and Network Rail to ensure that the aspirations of the North East are taken into account in developing our railways.

Nestrans has been active in discussing with both the Scottish and UK Governments

the implications for the North East on the Government's High Speed Rail proposals.

Nestrans has continued to be active in discussing with both the Scottish and UK Governments and the European Union the implications for the North East (and consequently the Scottish and UK economy) of current and future aviation policy.

Nestrans continues to work with the Scottish Government on developing proposals for improvements on the Aberdeen to Inverness Railway and Trunk Road network within the North East.

Nestrans has worked with partners to develop projects including:

- Assessment of options for pedestrianisation in Aberdeen City Centre
- Design for the A90 (S) Park and Choose
- Investigations into transport improvements in the Bridge of Dee and Laurencekirk areas
- Provision of a Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme and promotion of sustainable, active travel through Getabout
- Various cycling measures

Action Plans

Nestrans has four Action Plans intended to assist in the implementation of the Regional and Local Transport Strategies.

- Health and Transport Action Plan
Working with NHS Grampian, our two Councils and the Scottish Ambulance Service we have continued to focus on three themes to implement this Plan:
 - Active travel (sub group chaired by Aberdeenshire Council) – Nestrans provided funding for various getabout events and promotions
 - Public Health (Air quality) (sub group chaired by NHS Grampian) – provided joint funding for journey planning kiosk at new Health Village
 - Access to Healthcare (sub group chaired by SAS) – contributed to Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC)
- Bus Action Plan
A bus passenger satisfaction study was undertaken. Festive travel guides on transport options to Aberdeen City Centre produced and promotional campaign undertaken. A software update was funded to improve mapping tools on journey information kiosks in the north east and make the displays more interactive. Further upgrades to bus stop infrastructure and information were implemented.
- Freight Action Plan
The Freight Forum has continued to meet and a refresh of the action plan has been consulted upon and is nearing completion.
- Rail Action Plan
A number of extra calls at North East stations have been introduced and Nestrans agreed to meet costs, to an agreed limit, of additional Sunday services should they not be met by increased fares. Although the financial support that was offered was not required, the agreement to offset the risk if

required allowed the number of Sunday services to be increased from five to eleven return services from May 2013.

Projects

In 2013/2014 Nestrans implemented the following:

- Strategic Road – Capacity Improvements
Access to Laurencekirk Study
- Strategic Road – Safety Improvements
A947 Route Action Study – Phase 2 of Bend Improvement Strategy and localised surfacing, drainage and lining
Retexturing road surface, road studs and lining works on strategic routes within Aberdeen
- Strategic Road – Maintenance
A947 from Fyvie Station to U45s Junction Ph2 – asphalt resurfacing
A920 Colpy to Potts Rayne – edge repairs/haunching and asphalt overlay to address damage by large vehicles carrying wind turbines that are diverted from the A96 Trunk Road due to constraints at Inveramsay bridge
A952 North of Shannas Cottages to Wester Pettymarcus – asphalt resurfacing
A92 from south of dual carriageway to Nether Knowe - overlay
A944 Tillyfourie westwards – bitmac overlay
A947 Towie Turner House - resurfacing
A944/A97 Junction at Deskry- resurfacing
A98 Longmanhill - Headition to Roadman's Cottage- resurfacing
A96 Gt N Rd approach to Haudagain- resurfacing
A96 Gt N Rd - St Machar Dr to Printfield Walk- resurfacing
A944 Skene Rd westbound from Kingswells roundabout to Little Brodiach- resurfacing
A944 Lang Stracht bus gate to A944 Skene Rd- resurfacing
- Bus Improvements
A90 (S) Schoolhill Park & Choose – specimen design,
A96 Park & Choose – design and tender documentation
Aberdeen City and Shire Bus Stop Information Initiatives – replace or provide bus timetable display cases and ensure standardised region wide DDA compliant timetabling information displayed,
Ellon Park & Ride improvements – progressed plans for additional external waiting facilities and upgrade to bus turning circle to accommodate 15m vehicles,
Fraserburgh Bus Station Refurbishment – building improvements including DDA compliance, improved energy efficiency and CCTV,
Dyce railway station bus turning circle – design and planning application submission
Portlethen bus stop improvements – 2 new shelters, one with an info kiosk and the other with a display screen
Replacement A2B minibus for dial-a-bus service covering Alford, Strathdon and Westhill

- Walking and Cycling
Peterhead Cycle Demonstration Towns – creation of 500m section missing link next to A90, lighting work at Buchanhaven Harbour to Golf Road and design of Meethill Road Ph 2 and A950 missing link
Greenbrae Cycle Project - cycling infrastructure and initiatives at Greenbrae building on work in previous years
Ellon Road Strategic Cycle Links – identification of measures
Parkway Strategic Cycle Links – design of route along Parkway to AECC
Formartine and Buchan Way- Don Bridge Parkhill – masonry repairs to former railway bridge
Repairs to Whiteside Farm Bridge on F&B Way – waterproof resurfacing of road deck
Anderson Drive Cycle Links (LIB) – design of small scale improvements
Aberdeen - Blackburn Cycle Path Route – installation of toucan crossings
dropped kerbs, signing and lining of shared use
Core Paths – provision or upgrade of various strategic core paths, signing and leaflets
- Freight
A947 Oldmeldrum Road / Dyce Drive Junction Improvement – increase radii to ease HGV turning movements