NESTRANS ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

BUSINESS PLAN 2008/09

nestrans

The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire

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Councillor Kevin Stewart
Chair of Nestrans

FOREWORD

This combined Annual Report and Business Plan offers us an opportunity both to detail progress achieved over the past year and look forward to the coming 12 months.

The financial year 2007/08 – the period covered by the Annual Report - has been one of significant change and reflection in terms of the role of Nestrans and its linchpin Regional Transport Strategy, but it has also been one characterised by real achievement and solid progress.

Following the transition from a voluntary partnership to our new statutory basis as a regional transport partnership (RTP), the local authority elections of May 2007 resulted in no fewer than seven new councillors (out of eight in total) acting as local authority representatives on the Nestrans Board. To provide a measure of continuity, the non-councillor members had their appointments extended and the new-look Board is now well established and operating effectively.

Following the submission of Regional Transport Strategies by RTPs early last year, the new Scottish Government undertook a review both of the documents and the role and remit of the partnerships. The outcome of this process was the submission in early May 2008 of a revised strategy. The document, as requested by the Government, removed interventions to leave a high-level strategic document.

We are now actively working on taking our work to the next level: developing a costed and prioritised set of projects intended to achieve the aims of the Regional Transport Strategy. This is a key process that will be progressed and agreed between the Board and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.

The sense of change that has been a feature of the past year also encompasses the funding arrangements for Nestrans. Following a concordat between Scottish Government and local authorities, capital funding for projects now comes from the authorities rather than directly from Scottish Government. This now permits our councils to determine priorities for their area and direct spending appropriately, in line with their agreements with the Scottish Government.

Nestrans will continue to work very closely with our two local councils to ensure that the vision captured by the Regional Transport Strategy, in support of the area's social, economic and environmental goals, is realised.

At a practical, and measurable, level progress over the past year has been notable and has featured:

- New bus stations at both Peterhead and Aberdeen
- New rail freight facilities at Craiginches and Raiths Farm
- Rail gauge enhancements between Elgin and the central belt
- Road enhancements on Aberdeen's Market street in advance of Union Street pedestrianisation proposals
- Bus Quality corridor improvements on the A90 from the South, A93 & A944 – generating increased passenger numbers
- The introduction of new (and popular) Demand Responsive Transport services
- More frequent services on some city bus routes following revisions by First
- The publication of road orders for the AWPR and the Balmedie to Tipperty dualling project
- The identification of sites for Park and Ride facilities on the A96 west of Dyce Drive and on the A90 north of Portlethen
- A commitment from the Minister for Transport to 'solve' the Haudagain roundabout before it reverts to City Council responsibility
- Improvements to both Aberdeen and Peterhead Harbours, Aberdeen Airport terminal and our strategic road, walking and cycling infrastructure.

This past year has also seen the development of a Health and Transport Action Plan as a direct result of close working between Nestrans, NHS Grampian and the two councils.

Within the next year – our Business Plan covers the financial year 2008/09 - we look forward to seeing:

- Trains stopping at Laurencekirk Station once again
- An improved train service from Inverurie to Aberdeen and beyond
- A shuttle bus service between Dyce railway station and the airport
- A completed study recommending improvements at Haudagain delivered to the Minister for Transport
- The completion of the Public Inquiry into the AWPR
- Enhanced city centre car parking signage installed
- Necessary structural repairs to Bervie Bridge under way
- Firm engineering proposals agreed for re-opening Kintore railway station agreed
- Improved access, particularly for public transport, to the airport
- Phase 1 of the airport runway extension under way
- Further redevelopment of Aberdeen railway station along with further investment in core paths and cycle routes and other more local improvements.

This is an exciting time to be involved in transport improvements in the north east with significant improvements identified, planned and indeed, in some cases, committed.

Along with the Nestrans Board and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, I intend to build on the progress achieved, the commitments given and the projects planned, to create a transport system that befits our region, our businesses and the people who live, work and visit here.

GUIDANCE 01

Regional Transport Partnerships were created by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. Following this Act, the then Scottish Executive published guidance on Regional Transport Strategies in March 2006 for RTPs to follow.

This guidance stated at Paragraph 111:

"The RTS itself should include an implementation plan although with only an appropriate level of detail. More detailed (and non-statutory) plans will almost certainly be needed."

This guidance was further enhanced by a letter dated 7 January 2008 from John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth which stated:

"With regard to approval of the regional transport strategies, I made clear that I consider ownership of the NESTRANS strategy is rightly a matter for you and the 2 constituent councils as those best placed, collectively, to deliver the outcomes contained therein at the local level.

I also stated that Regional Transport Strategies should be strategic, high-level documents that focus on the transport strategies necessary to support Government's key objectives and the single outcome agreements of the constituent local authorities. The current draft strategies fulfil that role in part, but also contain interventions which I believe would be best addressed in delivery plans.

Such a delivery plan, agreed by the Partnership and its constituent councils, would take account of all necessary requirements to prioritise interventions including, under the new arrangements, funding in the light of the resources likely to be available as agreed by the Partnership and its constituent councils.

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I would be grateful if your Board could consider these comments and submit a revised strategy in due course."

Paragraph 112 of the Guidance requires the preparation of an Implementation Plan and a Delivery or Business Plan which it describes as:

"*Implementation Plan - investment plan covering the first 5 to 10 years of the strategy that sets out a programme of capital investment required for the successful implementation of the RTS. This would need to be updated when the RTP judged it appropriate.*

Delivery or Business Plan - 3-year plan for the implementation of the RTS, updated annually to reflect local and central government planning and funding cycles. Includes plans for revenue and capital spending and borrowing."

The Guidance also discusses an Annual report - Yearly update of progress. This is further described at Paragraph 133:

"*Schedule 1, paragraph 14(a) of the Act requires each RTP to provide the Scottish Ministers with an annual report. This should cover the operational and financial year to 31 March. This report should include a report of performance against the objectives, targets and performance indicators set out in the RTS and should also be sent to constituent councils and others who have provided funding.*"

In early May 2008, Nestrans submitted an updated and revised Regional Transport Strategy in accordance with the guidance above. The updated Strategy also takes advantage of the opportunity to update against new policy initiatives and the new Government's priorities. This April 2008 Regional Transport Strategy, as re-submitted, commits to develop four Action Plans. These are:

- Health and Transport Action Plan
- Bus Action Plan
- Freight Action Plan
- Rail Action Plan

These Plans are at various stages of completion but were all due to be finalised by summer 2008. Information gained from these Plans and other completed studies will be used to develop a Delivery Plan as described in the additional Guidance.

This report is intended to meet the requirement to prepare, and submit to Scottish Ministers, an Annual Report and to provide an interim Business Plan pending the preparation of the Delivery Plan.

It reviews the year completed and looks forward to the coming year.

It describes the good governance procedures adopted by Nestrans and it discusses the approach taken by Nestrans, working in partnership with constituent local authorities, to the outcomes of the comprehensive spending review and the authorities' Single Outcome Agreements.

PERIOD COVERED BY THE ANNUAL REPORT AND BUSINESS PLAN 02

The Annual report provides a review of the financial year 2007/08 and follows the previously published Annual Report 2006/07.

The Business Plan looks forward to the financial year 2008/09 following the Business Plan for 2007/08 reported to the Nestrans Board at its meeting on 20 June 2007. This document is an interim Business Plan pending the completion of the RTS Action Plans and agreement on the Nestrans Delivery Plan following the supplementary guidance received in the Cabinet Secretary's letter of 7 January 2008.

THE NESTRANS BOARD AND EXECUTIVE 03

Nestrans is the Regional Transport Partnership for the North East of Scotland. Its purpose is to develop and deliver a long term Regional Transport Strategy and take forward strategic transport improvements that support and improve the economy, environment and quality of life across Aberdeen City and Shire.

Nestrans started life as a voluntary partnership in 2002 bringing together Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Scottish Enterprise Grampian and Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce. This voluntary partnership was replaced by the statutory partnership as established by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Regional Transport Partnership (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005. Nestrans began work as a Statutory Partnership on 1 April 2006.

Although "the Board" is not a statutory term for Regional Transport Partnerships, it is a useful term for distinguishing between Nestrans' main decision-making body, the members meeting together and the Partnership as a corporate entity comprising members, officials and support staff.

THE BOARD

In terms of the Order which set Nestrans up, membership consists of a total of eight councillor members from the constituent councils, four each from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. In addition Nestrans is entitled to have between three and four non-councillor members (paragraph 1(2) of schedule 2 of the Order) who during the period to the ordinary elections for Councillors in 2007 were appointed by the Scottish Ministers.

Following the elections in May 2007, the two Councils nominated the following Councillors:

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
Councillor Kate Dean (Lib Dem)
Leader of Aberdeen City Council
Councillor Kevin Stewart (SNP)
Depute Leader of Aberdeen City Council
Councillor Ron Clark (Lib Dem)
Lib Dem Spokesperson for Transport
Councillor Marie Boulton (Ind)
Councillor

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL
Councillor Anne Robertson (Lib Dem)
Leader of Aberdeenshire Council
Councillor Martin Ford (Lib Dem)
Chair of Infrastructure Services Committee
Councillor Jill Webster (Con)
Depute Chair of the Infrastructure Services Committee
Councillor Graeme Clark (SNP)
Councillor

On 5 February 2008 Aberdeenshire Council notified Nestrans' Legal Officer that having changed its Chair of the Infrastructure Services Committee, and seeing benefit in the Chair of that Committee sitting on Nestrans Board, it wished to nominate Councillor Peter Argyle (Lib Dem) in place of Councillor Martin Ford.

Following an appointment process the Scottish Ministers appointed four non-councillor members for a period to 20 April 2008, or 20 September 2008 for Mr Sullivan. These are:

NON-COUNCILLOR MEMBER
Mr Eddie Anderson
Freight Industry (April 08)
Ms Jennifer Craw
Scottish Enterprise Grampian (April 08)
Mr George Mair
Bus Industry (April 08)
Mr David Sullivan
Health Board (September 08)

At its Board meeting on 20 December 2007 the Board agreed, subject to Scottish Ministers' approval, to offer extensions to the terms of appointment to either 30 April 2009 or 30 April 2010, depending on whether the elections to Scottish local authorities were extended from 2011 to 2012. Further terms of appointment for non-councillor members would run for four years from the mid point of the local authority elections.

At the time of writing, all four non-councillor members had indicated a willingness to agree to extensions of their period of appointment and application has been made to Scottish Ministers for their approval.

The Board has also appointed two professional advisers to sit on the Board. These are:

BOARD ADVISER
Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council
Mr Iain Gabriel
Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, Aberdeenshire Council

The Board has appointed the following office bearers:

OFFICE
Chair
Councillor Kevin Stewart
Vice Chair
Councillor Anne Robertson
Vice Chair
Mr Eddie Anderson

The Board meets to a schedule, usually agreed around December for the following year, at roughly two-monthly intervals. Additional workshop-style meetings are held to discuss items of particular detail. Meetings are usually held at 2pm on a Wednesday afternoon at:

Woodhill House,
Westburn Road
Aberdeen.

Meetings are scheduled into the busy council calendars to ensure that most members are able to attend. There is a facility for each councillor member to nominate a substitute who can only participate if the member is not present.

Currently nominated substitute members are:

Councillor Yuill (Lib Dem)
Aberdeen City Council
Councillor J West (SNP)
Aberdeen City Council
Councillor Young (Lab)
Aberdeen City Council
Councillor Carr (Con)
Aberdeenshire Council
Councillor Strathdee (SNP)
Aberdeenshire Council

The Board takes its professional support and services from the two constituent authorities as follows:

Aberdeen City Council
Legal Services
Democratic and Administration
Information and Communications Technology

Aberdeenshire Council
Personnel Services
Finance Services

In addition the Board receives consultancy advice through a tendered contract from the BIG Partnership for public relations services.

To support the Board in carrying out its functions there is an Executive Team in place. This team consists of:

POSITION
Director
Mr Derick Murray
Transportation Strategy Manager
Mr Rab Dickson
Transport Executive (Strategy & Delivery)
Vacant
Transport Executive (Programme & Delivery)
Mrs Jennifer Anderson
Transport Executive (Travel Planning & Delivery)
Vacant
Office Manager (p/t)
Mrs Louise Smith
Office Manager (p/t)
Mrs Sharon O'Donnell

The Executive Team are currently housed in Offices at

ARCHIBALD SIMPSON HOUSE
27 – 29 KING STREET
ABERDEEN
AB24 5AA

Co-located in this building are the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum co-ordinator and the joint Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan team which will form the Strategic Development Planning Authority Team.

GOVERNANCE 04

Nestrans, as a publicly accountable body, works within a suite of governance rules. This suite of rules includes:

The Constitution and Standing Orders of The North East Scotland Transportation Partnership.

Adopted by the Board at its meetings on 15 March 2006 and 28 April 2006.

North East of Scotland Transport Partnership Financial Regulations

Adopted by the Board at its meeting on 15 March 2006.

Personnel Policies and Procedures – Those in use for Aberdeenshire Council

Adopted by the Board at its meeting on 15 March 2006.
Policies include:
Absence
Adoption Leave
Alcohol and Drug misuse
Annual Leave
Dignity of the Individual
Disciplinary
Disclosure of Information (Whistleblowing)
Employee Development and Training
Employee Recognition
Employee Retiral Award Scheme
Equality
Excess Travel Allowance
Exit interviews
Grievance
Hospitality & Gifts
ICT Facilities Acceptable Use
Job Descriptions
Maternity Provisions
Protection of Children
Recruitment and Selection
Redeployment
Redundancy
Relocation and Resettlement
Retirement
Secondment
Special Leave
Teleworking
Time off for Health and Safety reps
Time off for Trade Union Business
Trade Union Recognition Consultation and Negotiation
Travel and Subsistence
Voluntary Severance
Work Life Balance
Work Performance Ability
Working Time Regulations

Equalities Duties

Adopted by the Board at its meeting on 20 December 2007 in relation to:
Race
Disability
Gender

AUDIT

Nestrans is audited annually by Audit Scotland. These Audits are reported to the Board.

Additionally in 2007/08, Nestrans has been the subject of an internal audit carried out by auditors from Aberdeenshire Council Finance Department. This was reported to the Board in summer 2008.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

As a public body, Nestrans is required to be a participant in the Community Planning Partnerships for each council area. The Board approved Nestrans becoming full partners to each CPP at its meeting on 21 February 2007. The Board is represented at the CPP meetings by its Director.

NORTH EAST TRANSPORT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

Nestrans provides the administration for the North East Transport Consultative Forum. This Forum contains members from both Council areas across all spectrums of transport and transport users. The group usually meets around three times per annum and discusses various transport-related issues including the Transport Strategies. Feedback from the group is used in the development of policies and programmes.

LIAISON WITH COUNCILS

Nestrans has established a series of meetings to ensure that the work of the Partnership and the two Local Authorities dovetails appropriately to provide an enhanced service to the public of the North East. These groups include:

Council Senior Transportation Officials

An informal meeting held with the Director of Nestrans, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, Aberdeenshire Council and Head of Service, Planning and Infrastructure to discuss issues arising and Board papers

Strategic Transport Officers Liaison Group (STOLG)

Monthly meetings held between senior transport officials from Nestrans, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.

Budget Monitoring Group

Held monthly between officers of Nestrans and Aberdeenshire Council's Finance Department to monitor progress and expenditure on the revenue and capital budgets.

First
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LIAISON WITH OTHER BODIES

In addition to the above, Nestrans also takes part in a number of liaison meetings. These include:

Local Authority Bus Operators Forum (LABOF)

The Nestrans Board agreed at its meeting on 17 October 2007 to accept an invitation to become a member of this group which considers bus-related issues across the region.

Chairs of Regional Transport Partnerships

The seven Chairs of the RTPs meet (with CoSLA) on a three-monthly cycle to discuss common issues.

Lead Officers of Regional Transport Partnerships

The Lead Officers meet regularly (with CoSLA) to discuss issues of common interest and also meet with Scottish Government quarterly.

Joint Public Sector Road Safety Group

Nestrans is a partner within this group, aimed at reducing road casualties.

North Sea Ferries Group

Nestrans is a member of this statutory consultation group.

Society of Chief Officers Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS)

Nestrans is a member and take part in this Transportation Group.

Freight Quality Partnership

Nestrans is reviewing, with the freight industry, the optimum way of taking forward freight issues through the Freight Action Plan which is likely to lead to a refreshed FQP.

Structure Plan

Nestrans works closely with structure planning colleagues in the development of the Structure Plan.

Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum (ACSEF)

Nestrans works jointly with ACSEF to develop their Action Plans in relation to Transport and on the NeXT generation project.

Travel Plan Co-ordinator Group

Nestrans is a member of this cross north east liaison group

Association of Commuter Transport/ Travelwise

Nestrans is a member of this organisation.

POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

Nestrans Powers

Nestrans has powers provided by the 2005 Act. In summary these powers are:

- Require funding from its constituent councils (Section 3)
- Give grants and loans in implementation of the RTS (Section 3)
- Borrow money for specific capital expenditure (Section 3)
- Employ staff (Para 1 of Schedule 1)
- Acquire land by agreement or compulsorily and dispose of it (Paras 6 & 9 of Schedule 1)
- Develop land for its own purposes – or if surplus for other persons use (Paras 6 & 7)
- Promote or propose private legislation (Para 10)
- Participate in Community Planning (Para 11)
- Form or promote companies (Para 12) and
- Erect buildings, provide offices, entering into building contracts etc. (Para 16).

Nestrans functions

Nestrans is obliged to produce a Regional Transport Strategy and to monitor and, wherever possible, ensure its implementation (Sections 5, 9 and 12 of the 2005 Act).

Transport functions are currently carried out by other bodies including local authorities, Transport Scotland and Network Rail. Section 10 of the 2005 Act provides that transport partnerships can carry out transport functions either instead of the previous function provider or concurrently with that body. This is considered by the Regional Transport Strategy, which says:

"Whilst Nestrans is tasked with producing and overseeing the implementation of a Regional Transport Strategy, many of the functions which will determine the success or otherwise of that strategy are vested in other bodies, notably the two local authorities, Transport Scotland and private sector transport operators.

In implementing this strategy, Nestrans will seek to work jointly through coordination and facilitation with partners on key projects and the preparation of action plans.

Scottish Executive Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies requires each RTP when submitting their Regional Transport Strategy to identify any other statutory transport functions that the RTP will itself need in order to ensure that the strategy is delivered, this covering transport functions exercised by its constituent councils, the Scottish Executive, Transport Scotland and other public bodies.

Nestrans does not believe that there are any particular functions which at this time require to be transferred to it to ensure the successful delivery of the strategy. It is envisaged that close liaison between Nestrans, its two constituent councils and Transport Scotland should enable the various elements of the Regional Transport Strategy to be delivered. This approach also provides benefits through partnership working and joint commitment between the different agencies.

Nestrans does however recognise that as it matures as an organisation its capabilities will be enhanced and also recognises that there are presently some functions vested in local authorities that might be more effectively delivered at a regional level in the north east in terms of specialism, procurement or policy consistency. Possible areas for consideration include: strategic roads policy; public transport policy; bus priority measures; freight strategy; travel planning; demand responsive transport and community transport initiatives; safety policy; fiscal and financial policy; and car parking strategy.

Nestrans will initiate further discussion with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils on the merits and practicalities of regional delivery of some of these transport responsibilities following approval of the Regional Transport Strategy."

Nestrans has initiated discussion with partner local authorities on a Parking Strategy and on the best method of delivery and operation of Park and Ride sites. These discussions are at a very early stage of development.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2007/08 05

THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

BOARD AND ROLE AND REMIT OF REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS

Board

Early in the year the Scottish Government and local authority elections took place. This resulted in a significant change to the Nestrans Board as described in Section 4 of this Annual Report and Business Plan.

Role and Remit of Regional Transport Partnerships

The elections also resulted in a new Scottish Government. The new Government, having pledged to declutter the political landscape, took the opportunity to review the role and remit of the Regional Transport Partnerships. Following this review the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth wrote to all Regional Transport Partnerships on 7 January 2008 indicating that he foresaw a role for RTPs in delivering the improved transport required to achieve the outcomes in the national, regional and local transport strategies.

This period of review also saw the RTPs forge closer links with CoSLA. This stronger and closer relationship now carries greater significance, in light of the change in the funding of RTPs discussed in more detail below.

ECONOMIC MANIFESTO AND COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW

The new Government published its economic strategy in November 2007. This set the Government a purpose of "increasing sustainable economic growth" and established a new set of 15 national objectives and a suite of national indicators. An analysis of these new objectives and indicators shows how transport, as an economic enabler, is an integral part of achievement of the objectives and purpose. This analysis is included as an appendix to the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy.

The Government also published a concordat reached with Local Authorities. This agreement focussed on outcomes to be achieved by local authorities, resulting in authorities having to prepare a Single Outcome Agreement for agreement with the Government. Nestrans has been involved in the preparation of the SOAs for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.

Part of the concordat was a Government agreement to un-ringfence monies given to local authorities to permit them greater flexibility in setting budgets to achieve the agreed local outcomes. This included transferring capital funding of RTPs from central Government to local authorities, allowing councils scope for setting their own spending priorities for regional transport in line with the agreed outcomes.

Government have also indicated that although central Government revenue support for RTPs will continue, there will in the future be no distinction made between core and non-core funding. In the past local authorities have match-funded the core element of RTP revenue support. This will have to be negotiated between the RTPs and local authorities in the future.

NESTRANS EXECUTIVE TEAM

Year 2007/08 was a period of significant change for the Nestrans Executive Team. With the retiral of the original Director, Mr Peter Cockhead, a new Director, Mr Derick Murray was appointed as a Nestrans employee in June 2007.

The structure of the Executive Team was reviewed and resulted in the following changes:

The Principal Transport Executive, Mr Rab Dickson, on secondment from Aberdeen City Council, was appointed to a permanent Nestrans position as Transport Strategy Manager.

The Transport Executive (Strategy), Mr Ben Kerfoot, on secondment from the Scottish Executive, was appointed to a permanent Nestrans position as Transport Executive (Strategy and Delivery). This postholder resigned in March 2008 and the post was vacant for much of 2008.

The Transport Executive (Travel Planning) resigned in July 2007. After difficulty in recruiting for this position a new member of staff was appointed as Transport Executive (Travel Planning and Delivery) in December 2007. Unfortunately, shortly after appointment, due to a newly-diagnosed long-term illness, this person has not been able to fully take up duties and this function has not been fully carried out since July 2007. This post and the other vacant post have been advertised and it is hoped to be at full compliment by the end of 2008.

A new position of Transport Executive (Programmes and Delivery) was created and Mrs Jennifer Anderson was appointed to the post in September 2007.

Mrs Louise Smith returned from maternity leave to the post of Office Manager in September 2007 in a part-time capacity.

Mrs Sharon O'Donnell was appointed to the other element of the Office Manager's position in December 2007.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Nestrans had submitted its Regional Transport Strategy by the 31 March 2007 deadline set by Government guidance. Approval of the document had been expected in June 2007, thereby providing it with statutory status. However, the new Government decided to hold approval, subject to the review of the role and remit of RTPs as described above.

Following this review, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth on 7 January 2008 provided new guidance on the submitted strategies. In essence there was agreement on the strategic content of the strategies but the Government required the removal of the interventions designed to fulfil the strategies, and that these should be prioritised and costed into affordable delivery plans agreed between RTPs and the local authorities.

The Nestrans Board agreed a revised Regional Transport Strategy at its Board meeting on 18 April 2008. This was submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval on 1 May 2008.

Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Our vision is:

A transport system for the north east of Scotland which enables a more economically competitive, sustainable and socially inclusive society.

To achieve this vision we have developed, as part of the consultation processes within the Regional Transport Strategy, a set of strategic objectives. These are:

Strategic objective 1: Economy

To enhance and exploit the north east's competitive economic advantages, and reduce the impacts of peripherality.

Strategic objective 2: Accessibility, Safety and Social Inclusion

To enhance choice, accessibility and safety of transport, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society and those living in areas where transport options are limited.

Strategic objective 3: Environment

To conserve and enhance the north east's natural and built environment and heritage and reduce the effects of transport on climate and air quality.

Strategic objective 4: Spatial Planning

To support transport integration and a strong, vibrant and dynamic city centre and town centres across the north east.

Further information on the Regional Transport Strategy is given at section 7 of this document.

MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

PROJECT	PROGRESS
Rail freight gauge enhancement	• Complete. Now operational.
Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route	• Following publication of draft Orders a pre Inquiry meeting took place on 13 May 2008 and the PLI began on 9 September 2008.
Laurencekirk station re-opening	• A contractor has been appointed with a view to re-opening in spring 2009.
A90 Balmedie to Tipperty dualling	• Draft orders published summer 2007
Guild Street transport interchange	• New Bus station open. Refurbishment of rail station underway.
Rail freight facilities at Raiths Farm and Craiginches	• Complete. Craiginches operational.
Towns interchanges at Peterhead, Inverurie & Banchory	• Peterhead: Complete and open. • Inverurie: Delayed by difficulty accessing freight yard land. Under discussion. • Banchory: Site identified for consultation.
Park and Ride	• A93: see towns interchange • A90(S): Best site in traffic terms identified in Aberdeen Access from the South Study. • A947: Assessment underway after AWPR decision. • A96: ACC to discuss recommendation on preferred site.
Union Street pedestrianisation	• Market Street junctions: completed • City centre car park guidance system: 1st phase complete • South College St option development: Complete
Aberdeen Crossrail	• To be developed through the RTS Rail Action Plan

TRAVEL PLANNING

PROJECT	PROGRESS
Travel Planning (Nestrans has experienced some difficulty in this area principally due to staff availability, but this should be addressed during 2008/09)	• Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme - 3 awards made www.nestrans.org.uk/stgs • Nestrans Car Share scheme www.nestranscarshare.com promoted the scheme through the local press. • Nestrans has actively promoted the benefits of Travel Plans and sustainable travel • Health and Transport Action Plan completed • Walk It Aberdeen – Nestrans are developing a web site which will identify walking routes in and around Aberdeen.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Nestrans Capital budget and projected outturns on projects for 2007/08 are as follows:

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP APPROVED CAPITAL BUDGET FOR 2007/08

RTS REF	PROJECT CATEGORY	DETAILS	CAPITAL ALLOCATION	OUTTURN
IC1	Rail facilities	Laurencekirk station – 20% contribution to TS managed new station	£640,000	0
IC2	Strategic road improvements	Route action – A93, A944, A947, A98 & A920 by Aberdeen City and Shire. Enhanced maintenance – A92 Bervie Bridge by Aberdeenshire. Carriageway reconstruction – A93 at Culter & Riverside Drive by Aberdeen City	£700,000	£735,619
IC3	Bus Improvements	Roadside infrastructure – A947 and A96 Aberdeenshire, A93 Aberdeen City. City Red routes – service 1/2 Aberdeen City. Completion of signals upgrade from 2006/07 by Aberdeen City	£881,000	£774,235
IC4	Demand Responsive Transport	2 Additional 7 seater vehicles – Aberdeenshire	£60,000	£51,000
IC6	Strategic cycle routes	Westhill/ Kingswells/ Aberdeen phase 1 by Aberdeen City. Peterhead peripheral road cycleway and Fraserburgh cycle network by Aberdeenshire. Riverside Drive, Aberdeen phase 1 + detailed design of phase 2 by Aberdeen City. West Cults bridge – in partnership with Sustrans by Aberdeen City.	£533,000	£491,833
	Local Transport Projects	Smaller scale projects in Aberdeen City & Shire	£200,000 (£100,000 per local authority)	£215,126
	TOTAL		£3,014,000	£2,267,813

In addition to the above programme the Board also agreed to spend £455,000 of monies from savings in the 2006/07 year. This money was allocated to a bigger car park at Laurencekirk station, electronic information and signage at the new Aberdeen bus station and investigation of a new rail station at Kintore.

Nestrans also received remaining Integrated Transport Fund monies for Aberdeenshire Council amounting to £1,281,000.

As a result of a delay in the development of the Laurencekirk scheme and to the Aberdeenshire ITF projects Nestrans provided capital allowance to the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport of £1,660,000 to be returned on demand in 2008/09.

REVENUE PROGRAMME

Nestrans revenue budget for 2007/08 is as follows. During the year a number of changes were made to the programme to reflect changing circumstances. These were reported to the Board for approval through the regular monitoring report provided to the Board.

BUDGET HEADING	APPROVED	PROJECTED OUTTURN	COMMENT
Core operating costs	£535,000	£503,947	
Other core project costs	£140,000	£199,876	Increased consultancy costs agreed by Board.
RTS development costs	£310,000	£229,393	Anticipated consultancy costs reduced by carrying out works 'in-house'
Travel Planning	£100,000	£37,100	Difficulty in achieving proposed expenditure due to staff availability
TOTAL	£1,085,000	£970,316	

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

In addition to the above there have been other transport achievements. These include:

- Significant improvement in passenger numbers as a result of good partnership working between Aberdeenshire Council and Stagecoach on the quality bus corridors
- Extension of the demand responsive transport network in rural Aberdeenshire
- With Aberdeen City Council, progress on developing the assessment of the Haudagain junction improvement options
- Improvements at both Peterhead and Aberdeen Harbours
- Construction of new rail freight terminals at Aberdeen Harbour

EQUALITIES DUTIES

As a statutory public body, Nestrans is legally obliged to adopt an equalities scheme for race, gender and disability. At its Board meeting on 10 December 2007 the Board agreed to adopt an Equalities Scheme covering these areas. This Plan is on the Nestrans website at:

http://www.nestrans.org.uk/db_docs/docs/Nestrans%20Equalities%20Scheme%20-%20Dec%202007%20(final).pdf

Nestrans is the secretariat for North East Transport Consultative Forum. This forum includes representatives from various bodies including those described under the Equalities Scheme. Nestrans regularly uses the NETCF for consultation on the development of its policies.

Most of the projects implemented as part of the Nestrans programmes of work are implemented by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. Consultation with the Equality Groups is undertaken by the councils as part of their normal service delivery. The Equality Groups were invited to contribute to the development of objectives and options for the following studies:

- Aberdeen Access from the South
- Aberdeen Access from the North

These studies will be used to develop our Delivery Plan, a costed and prioritised programme of works to achieve our strategy.

Nestrans does however have further development work in the creation of Action Plans and other consultancy studies. These will in the usual course of events be the subject of discussion with NETCF during development and adoption. In addition Nestrans will specifically invite input from the Equality Scheme Groups to the development of the following Plans:

- Health and Transport Action Plan
- Bus Action Plan
- Freight Action Plan
- Rail Action Plan

A register of discussion and involvement in the development of our policy and programming work has been created to provide the background evidence that our obligations have been properly discharged.

Nestrans is required to prepare an annual report on the development of our Equalities Scheme. This will be discussed with the Equality and Human Rights Commission with a view to producing a first Annual report for April 2009 to run concurrently with the Nestrans Annual Report.

FUNDING 06

GENERAL

Following the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, its Economic Manifesto and the concordat with local authorities, there has been a considerable change in the way that Nestrans is funded.

In previous years the running costs of the organisation have been paid for by a grant from the Scottish Government matched by contributions from the two local authorities. The Government further provided a grant for the development of projects within the Regional Transport Strategy.

In year 2008/09 Nestrans will receive £300,000 from the Scottish Government for running costs which will be matched equally by the two Local Authorities giving a total of £600,000. This is further supplemented by a Scottish Government grant of £620,000 for project development and another Scottish Government grant of £101,000 for travel planning.

From 2009/10 Government will provide a single grant which won't distinguish between running costs and project development costs. Nestrans will therefore have to negotiate funding levels from its constituent local authorities. This is in line with the Government commitment to reduce ringfencing, permitting local authorities to set priorities within their areas.

Also, in previous years, capital funding for projects within the RTS came directly from a grant from Government.

From 2008/09, in accordance with the concordat with local authorities, this funding has been un-ringfenced into the overall local authority settlement. Again this is consistent with the un-ringfencing policy, providing local authorities greater freedom to set priorities for their areas.

In 2008/09 both of our local authorities agreed to provide funding for RTS projects through Nestrans amounting to the notional sums allocated through their block grants. This provided £3,114,000 for capital projects excluding monies to be received back from SPT in 2008/09.

Revenue and Capital budgets were agreed by the Board at the April 2008 meeting.

SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

Included within the concordat is a commitment for each local authority to develop a Single Outcome Agreement with Government. This agreement will in the future be between the local Community Planning Partnerships and Government, and will therefore include Nestrans via our membership of the Community Planning Partnerships.

Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils have included Nestrans and other Community Planning Partners within the teams developing the inaugural SOAs. Both SOAs include reference to implementing Regional Transport Strategy and Local Transport Strategy projects as necessary to achieve Local and National objectives. A summary of Nestrans reference within the SOA's is attached as Appendix 1.

DELIVERY PLAN

Future discussions with the councils about funding will need to be based on what can be achieved in line with what they can afford. Bringing both councils together to agree a spending timetable and priority will also be important. Nestrans is developing a Delivery Plan. This Plan will bring together projects identified in the RTS Action Plans and the various studies that have been undertaken into a costed and prioritised set of projects. This will be agreed by the Nestrans Board and the two councils and can then be used as the background information needed to permit discussions to take place on priority spending within councils. This will then form the basis of Nestrans' spending plans and budgets.

CONSTITUENT AUTHORITY REQUISITIONS

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the constituent councils of each RTP to fund its net expenses, after allowing for any income, including any grants from the Scottish Government.

As described above, to date this has been set by match funding a Scottish Government Grant but new arrangements will have to be agreed in the future.

RESERVES

The Transport Scotland (Scotland) Act 2005 stipulates that the constituent authorities are required to meet the net expenses of the Partnership. This has been interpreted by Audit Scotland as meaning that it is not possible for Nestrans to make a surplus or deficit in any year and therefore it is not possible for Nestrans to have a general fund balance or reserve.

Scottish Government officials have indicated that they are recommending that an amendment is made to the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 to allow for reserves. However this is dependant on finding Parliamentary time and suitable legislation to enact.

BORROWING

Under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, Nestrans is permitted to borrow money for the purposes of its capital expenditure. Nestrans would have to give due regard to the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities when determining its programme for capital investment. The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that the capital investment is affordable, prudent and sustainable.

In Nestrans case this could require the agreement of the Local Authorities in ensuring that future repayments could be met.

REVENUE: OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

In the current financial climate it is prudent to explore other sources of funding. Nestrans has in the past brought in other funding through partnerships with other parties. This has included:

- Jointly funding development of the Health and Transport Action Plan with Grampian Health Board
- Jointly funding the airport surface access study with the airport
- Jointly funding electronic information boards with bus operators
- Jointly funding projects and studies with constituent local authorities and Transport Scotland.

Nestrans will continue to seek to form partnerships to deliver services and will investigate European funding opportunities.

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY 07

Our Regional Transport Strategy was originally submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval in March 2007. Following the elections in May 2007 and Ministerial consideration, new guidance was issued in January 2008. This sought to create a more strategic document by extracting proposed interventions to achieve strategy aims into a separate document, the Delivery Plan. This then leaves the RTS as a high level strategic document.

In making this revision, Nestrans also took advantage of the opportunity to update the RTS, referencing new documents and relevant legislation. This revised document was submitted to Scottish Ministers, following Board approval, in May 2008.

Within our Corporate Plan we have a set of priorities intended to focus on achievement of these objectives and strategy strands. These priorities are to:

- Develop a regional transport strategy to 2021 which builds on our current strategy, sets clear objectives and contains a detailed plan of action;
- Take forward major infrastructure projects within our current strategy to 2011;
- Promote travel planning and more sustainable travel, to help tackle congestion and encourage a shift away from single-occupancy car use;
- Deliver a programme of direct investment in capital projects to improve public transport, walking and cycling facilities.

RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The RTS contains 12 operational objectives, which relate to the four Strategic Objectives, as shown below:

1: Economy

To enhance and exploit the north east's competitive economic advantages, and reduce the impacts of peripherality.

- To make the movement of goods and people within the north east and to/from the area more efficient and reliable.
- To improve the range and quality of transport to/from the north east to key business destinations.
- To improve connectivity within the north east, particularly between residential and employment areas.

2: Accessibility, Safety and Social Inclusion

To enhance choice, accessibility and safety of transport, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society and those living in areas where transport options are limited.

- To enhance travel opportunities and achieve sustained cost and quality advantages for public transport relative to the car.
- To reduce the number and severity of traffic related accidents and improve personal safety and security for all users of transport.
- To achieve increased use of active travel and improve air quality as part of wider strategies to improve the health of north east residents.

3: Environment

To conserve and enhance the north east's natural and built environment and heritage and reduce the effects of transport on climate and air quality.

- To reduce the proportion of journeys made by cars and especially by single occupant cars.
- To reduce the environmental impacts of transport, in line with national targets.
- To reduce growth in vehicle kilometres travelled.

4: Spatial Planning

To support transport integration and a strong, vibrant and dynamic city centre and town centres across the north east.

- To improve connectivity to and within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire towns, especially by public transport, walking and cycling.
- To encourage integration of transport and spatial planning and improve connections between transport modes and services.
- To enhance public transport opportunities and reduce barriers to use across the north east, especially rural areas.

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS

Our Regional Transport Strategy has 21 sub strategy strands. These sub strategy strands are used to provide a level of detail and description on what the Strategy intends to do to achieve its four Strategic Objectives. Spending on budget items (projects) is aligned within the Budget to these 21 strands to provide an indication of how the Regional Transport Partnership is allocating its funding across the range of strands within the Strategy.

The 21 strands are:

EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS

EC1 - RAIL LINKS AND SERVICES

- Reducing journey times to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and further south.
- Improved train capacity, comfort and reliability.
- Support for High Speed Rail connections to London, which benefit the north east.

EC2 - STRATEGIC ROADS

- Overcoming constraints on the network that have a direct impact on travel to/from the north east, such as the A90 through Dundee.

EC3 - INTER-REGIONAL BUS AND COACH TRAVEL

- Support further development of inter-regional bus and coach travel between the north east and other Scottish towns and cities and further afield. Explore possible links to Park and Ride sites.

EC4 - CONNECTIONS BY SEA

- Closer joint working through North East Ports Forum.
- Improved access to ports and interchange with passenger ferries.
- Development of new freight and passenger services.

EC5 - CONNECTIONS BY AIR

- Support expansion of direct destinations from Aberdeen and frequency of popular services.
- Support runway extension to facilitate a wider range of destinations and more efficient, modern aircraft.
- Ensure protection of slots for Aberdeen services at key hubs such as London Heathrow.

INTERNAL CONNECTIONS

IC1 - RAIL

- Increased frequency of services between Inverurie-Aberdeen-Stonehaven through Aberdeen Crossrail and improved services to Inverness.
- New station openings in the City and Aberdeenshire as part of Aberdeen Crossrail.

IC2 - ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

- Strategic Roads Capacity improvements – tackling constraints at A90 Ellon to Peterhead, A96 west of Inverurie, Haudagain junction, Access to Aberdeen from the south, and at other junctions serving Aberdeenshire towns.
- Strategic Roads Safety improvements – alignment and junction improvements on A90 south. Overtaking, junction and alignment improvements on A90 north and A96. Route Action on A92, A93, A944, A947.
- Car share lanes – trialling priority lanes for cars with multiple occupancy.
- Prioritised maintenance for strategic routes, with particular benefits for public transport and sustainable modes.
- Support Local Authorities in bringing forward LTS projects that contribute to strategic objectives

IC3 - BUS IMPROVEMENTS

- Quality bus corridor improvements to services and facilities.
- Extend bus priority measures on key routes to enable buses to beat congestion.
- Explore Rapid Transit options such as guided busways and the Super Bus concept.
- Expand Park and Ride provision linked to the development of the AWPR.
- Further develop real-time information systems to expand coverage across Aberdeen City and Shire.

IC4 - DEMAND RESPONSIVE TRANSPORT

- Support extension of 'Dial-a-Bus' and similar services to serve those unable to access conventional buses and to link with scheduled bus services.
- Support community transport providers and encourage development of services.
- Seek to ensure that taxis are provided in an efficient and effective way, which meets the needs of customers.

IC5 - TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE

- Maximising interchange potential of Guild Street development and link with Union Street and support enhancement of other interchange points in Aberdeen.
- Implement city centre shuttle bus and explore potential for future 'Micro-Light' tram.
- Support further improvements to interchange facilities in Aberdeenshire towns, in particular building on developments at Inverurie, Peterhead and Banchory.
- Work with operators to develop integrated ticketing across services and operators in the north east.

IC6 - WALKING AND CYCLING

- Support investment in measures to increase safety and security of walking and in particular to facilitate interchange between different modes of transport. Urban realm improvements to improve the pedestrian environment.
- Support the extension of low speed zones, particularly where it improves the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and increases safety for children.
- Continued development of cycle routes on key routes within Aberdeenshire, into Aberdeen and on routes through the City.

IC7 - AIRPORT SURFACE CONNECTIONS

- Facilitate an Express Bus Service to provide a dedicated, high-frequency service between Aberdeen City Centre and other key locations and the airport and enhanced regional connections.
- Support a shuttle bus between Dyce station and the airport terminal.
- In the longer term, explore a fixed link from Aberdeen City Centre to the airport, providing fast, reliable journey times, either as an addition to Crossrail or as a guided bus route.

IC8 - PORT SURFACE CONNECTIONS

- Support measures to improve access to port facilities.
- Facilitate improved interchange between the Aberdeen ferry terminal and bus and rail stations.

IC9 - FREIGHT

- Support the development of modern intermodal freight terminals to provide future capacity for rail freight expansion.
- •Investigate potential for measures to provide more reliable journey times for HGVs and identify a trial route for implementation of priority measures.

IC10 - POWERED TWO-WHEELERS

- Support measures to improve safety for users of motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers and provide appropriate parking facilities.

THE STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

TB1 - PROMOTING TRAVEL PLANNING AND TRAVEL AWARENESS

- Implementation and future development of Nestrans' Travel Planning Strategy.
- Continue to provide support through the Sustainable Travel Grants Scheme
- Encourage increased up-take of car-sharing

TB2 - PROMOTING ACTIVE TRAVEL

- Encourage more people to walk and cycle more often.
- Work with NHS Grampian and Community Planning Partnerships to promote the benefits of active travel and achieve objectives for a healthier population.

TB3 - IMPROVING SAFETY

- Work with the Councils, Emergency Services and others to promote road safety as part of a comprehensive approach covering Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Encouragement measures.
- Improve security for users of public transport services and interchanges.

INCENTIVES AND ENFORCEMENT

IE1 - CHANGING CHOICES THROUGH INCENTIVES & PARTNERSHIPS

- Work with operators to identify possible fare incentives to encourage increased bus use, particularly where this enables access to employment or training.
- Through the Local Authorities/Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) continue to develop the Quality Partnership for Public Transport and consider introducing Punctuality Improvement Partnerships.
- Support measures which encourage uptake of alternative fuels, particularly by public transport providers, to build on the north east's role as an energy hub.

IE2 - USING ENFORCEMENT

- Support enforcement of vehicle emission standards to improve air quality, in Aberdeen City Centre and towns across the north east.
- Support measures to enforce speed limits to improve road safety and reduce carbon emissions. Promote the establishment of a Casualty Reduction Partnership to support NESCAMP's activities and support the trial of average speed cameras.

IE3 - PARKING

- Develop a Regional Parking Strategy to ensure a coherent approach to parking controls and standards across the north east.
- Support enforcement of parking restrictions, particularly where these exist to support strategic traffic movements, bus / pedestrian priority and road safety.
- Investigate the potential for parking incentives to encourage use of small or multi-occupancy vehicles.

The Regional Transport Strategy will be supported by a Delivery Plan to develop projects that meet the sub strategy strands. This Delivery Plan will use information from various thematic Action Plans to prioritise projects into an affordable and achievable Plan to delivery the strategy aims.

RTS ACTION PLANS

The original RTS committed us to producing three Action Plans. These were:

- Health and Transport Action Plan
- Bus Action Plan
- Freight Action Plan

At its meeting on 20 June 2007 the Board also agreed to produce a Rail Action Plan. These Action Plans, along with other studies carried out, will provide the basis of projects and actions to be included in the RTS Delivery Plan. This Delivery Plan will be prioritised and costed and will form the basis of future negotiations between Nestrans and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils for funding of the implementation of the RTS.

The current status of the Action Plans is as follows:

Health and Transport Action Plan

Completed and being consulted upon prior to final adoption

Bus Action Plan

Consultants employed and developing the Action Plan

Freight Action Plan

A seminar involving the strategic policy side and the industry was held to discuss issues and what was required to develop an Action Plan. This included physical works to provide easier freight movement, general congestion relief and how best to ensure good engagement between governing agencies and the industry. A draft Action Plan is being prepared.

Rail Action Plan

Nestrans was agreed with Hitrans that they will share a recognised rail expert's expertise to the benefit of both our areas. This Hitrans employee has started the process of breaking down the Aberdeen CrossRail project into smaller manageable and implementable projects to bring a priority to what can be achieved as early as possible. This work is ongoing.

The RTS includes an Appendix which shows how the 21 strands meet the 4 strategic objectives and goes on to show how the objectives align with both Local and National Objectives. This is summarised in Appendix 2 of this report.

MONITORING

As part of the development of the Regional Transport Strategy a monitoring report was prepared. This report highlighted the current transport conditions across a series of transport indicators. Nestrans will, with our Council partners, develop a series of indicators to monitor progress in achieving the aims in the Regional and Local Transport Strategies.

Nestrans held a workshop for Board members on 3 July 2008 and agreed a set of indicators and targets to measure progress and performance. These monitoring indicators and progress towards meeting targets will be reported in future Annual Reports.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE 08

Regional Transport Strategy

The Regional Transport Strategy as revised by the latest guidance issued by Government in January 2008 was submitted to Scottish Ministers in May 2008 and received Ministerial approval in July 2008.

The RTS as requested is a high level strategic document setting out our strategy for providing the transport infrastructure necessary to create growth conditions desired by the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum, the sustainable growth desired through the developing Structure Plan and meeting the community aspirations of the area's Community Plans.

Focus has been turning from the development of the strategy towards what we need to do to achieve the aims of the strategy. To this end work is underway to identify projects and actions that will achieve this. This is taking the form of Action Plans and other consultancy studies to identify the various projects and actions, developing these into a series of discrete functions that can be achieved.

Nestrans will develop these plans to have a series of projects and actions identified by the end of 2008. This will include:

The Health and Transport Action Plan
Current status: draft approved by the Board: going through a final consultation stage

The Bus Action Plan
Current status: consultants employed, assessments underway

The Freight Action Plan
Current status: Initial discussions with industry taken place, reported to Board

The Rail Action Plan
Current status: Working with Hitrans to break down Crossrail proposals into a smaller series of achievable projects towards Crossrail aims

Further projects will be identified through a series of consultancy studies:

Access from the South/ AWPR Locking in the benefits
Current status: Studies complete, reported to Board and referred onto Councils for consideration. Project Board of officials from Nestrans, City and Shire Councils tasked with taking projects forward

Access from the North
Current status: Being actioned by ACC

Haudagain study
Current status: In final stages of public consultation required by STAG process. Reported to Board in summer 2008.

Once the Action Plans and other studies have identified what we would like to do, these projects and actions will be brought together into a Delivery Plan. The purpose of this plan will be to prioritise the projects within their achievable timescales and likely budget constraints. Nestrans will develop this prioritised and costed programme across all the methods of travel in close consultation with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils with the intention of having an agreed programme of works for consideration by the Board and each Council. It is the intention to have a programme for consideration by Autumn 2008 prior to the Councils' consideration of budgets for 2009/10.

MONITORING

Monitoring of the RTS has been discussed in the RTS Chapter of this report. However this will form an important aspect of taking the RTS forward and will be an integral part of our future work. The discussion is therefore repeated here.

As part of the development of the Regional Transport Strategy a monitoring report was prepared. This report highlighted the current transport conditions across a series of transport indicators. Nestrans will, with our Council partners, develop a series of indicators to monitor progress in achieving the aims in the Regional and Local Transport Strategies.

Nestrans held a workshop for Board members on 3 July 2008 and agreed a set of indicators and targets to measure progress and performance. These monitoring indicators and progress towards meeting targets will be reported in future Annual Reports.

TRAVEL PLANNING

Nestrans intends to update its Travel Planning Strategy. We will continue to support our Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme and support for various measures including, Walk It Aberdeen, Nestrans Car Share scheme etc.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Nestrans is a Board member of the Aberdeen City Alliance and the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership. We will play our part in assisting in the development of the updating of the existing Community Plans.

SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

Nestrans has been involved with the two Councils in the development of each area's Single Outcome Agreement. As these will become Single Outcome Agreements for each Community Partnership in the future, Nestrans will continue to assist in the refinement and development of the next round of Agreements.

PARKING STRATEGY

Nestrans and the two Councils have had preliminary discussions on the scope of a Regional Parking Strategy. These discussions centred on where a Regional approach was appropriate and applicable and what information was available or required to take things forward. Further meetings are planned following a consideration of the issues raised at the preliminary meeting.

PARK AND RIDE CONSTRUCTION, DELIVERY AND OPERATION

Nestrans and the two councils have had preliminary meetings to discuss the best way to proceed with the procurement of Park and Ride facilities and the future operation of such facilities.

This is firstly to determine the best way to approach constructing and funding construction of sites. This arises as Aberdeen City Council has some funding for construction of a site which may be in Aberdeenshire. Aberdeenshire may wish to assist with funding this site or indeed a site in Aberdeen City. Issues of ownership and future maintenance are being investigated.

Secondly when complete there will be a ring of Park and Ride in the vicinity of the AWPR and also further rural Park and Ride facilities. Nestrans and the two Councils will consider how best to operate these facilities.

Discussions with Finance, Legal and Property colleagues will be arranged to inform the transport decisions.

STRUCTURE PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND ACSEF ACTION PLANS

Nestrans will contribute to the development of the area's Structure Plan and assist the emerging Strategic Development Plan Authority as required. We will also continue to contribute to the development and implementation of ACSEF's Economic Manifesto and its Action Plans.

PROJECTS

Nestrans will also be involved in taking forward a number of projects. These will include:

Support for AWPR PLI

Nestrans will provide support for the AWPR team at their Public Local Inquiry particularly in relation to the development of the Modern Transport System including the AWPR and the Regional Transport Strategy.

Laurencekirk Station

We are providing support and funding for the reopening of the station in 2009.

Kintore Station

Nestrans will continue the design and development of a new rail station at Kintore, including discussions with partners, Aberdeenshire Council, Transport Scotland, NetworkRail and First ScotRail, seeking their assistance in providing the facility.

Dyce Shuttle Bus

Nestrans will continue to work with the City Council, Dyce TMO and the Airport to develop a workable proposal for a shuttle bus linking the Dyce rail station and the Airport including, if possible, links to the industrial estates.

Airport surface access

Nestrans will continue to work with the City Council and the airport to improve access and egress from the Airport to the A96, particularly for public transport, including taxis.

Access from the South/ AWPR Locking in benefits

Nestrans will work with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to develop and implement the proposals identified as possible improvements in these studies. An officers project board has been set up to take this forward with an initial task of identifying a prioritised and costed set of proposals to 1) implement as early as possible and 2) include in the Delivery Plan deliberations.

Access from the North

Nestrans will contribute to the development of this study.

Haudagain

Nestrans has funded the study into options for improving the Haudagain junction. This study was be completed in summer 2008 and Nestrans will be pressing Transport Scotland to implement the chosen solution as early as possible.

Park and Ride

We will work with local authority partners to take forward proposals for A96 Chaplebrae (west of Dyce Drive) and A90 Schoolhill (north of Portlethen) Park and Ride facilities to planning application.

HOV/ LVL study

Nestrans and the two councils have agreed to develop proposals for a High Occupancy Vehicle lane and a possible Large Vehicle Lane on the Southern Approaches to Aberdeen in conjunction with the construction of the Park and Ride (or Park and Choose) car park. We are currently in discussion with Transport Scotland to develop these proposals.

Transport Scotland/ Network Rail

We look forward to working with Transport Scotland as they develop their Strategic Transport Projects Review, taking forward the dualling of the section of the A90 between Balmedie and Tipperty and overseeing the implementation of their High Level Output Statement, particularly on the tier 3 Aberdeen to Inverness railway Improvements and the improved service to Inverurie in the December 2008 timetable change.

Budgets

Revenue and Capital Budgets were approved by Nestrans at their Board meeting on 16 April 2008. The approved budgets include an allowance for projects identified in the developing Action Plans for early action. The approved budgets are available on the website at:

http://www.nestrans.org.uk/db_docs/File/Board%20Meeting%20-%2016%20April/8b%20revenue%20budget.xls and

http://www.nestrans.org.uk/db_docs/File/Board%20Meeting%20-%2016%20April/8b%20Capital%20budget.xls

Nestrans structure

Given the difficulties in attracting and keeping experienced staff the current staffing structure at Nestrans will be reviewed.

APPENDIX 1

Nestrans involvement in Aberdeen City and Shire's Single Outcome Agreements

NATIONAL OUTCOME	WHAT THE SOA SAYS	ABERDEEN CITY SOA	ABERDEENSHIRE SOA
1 Attractive for Business	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies strands on Rail, Road, Bus, Sea, Air, Port, Freight, DRT. Transport Interchange, Walking, Cycling, Travel Plans, Active Travel, Safety and Change. Choice through Incentives & Partnership to improve the choice, efficiency and reliability of transport (people and goods) to/from and within the north east as the transport system influences the competitiveness and perceived quality of life and hence attractiveness of the area.	Included	Included
2 Employment opport-unities	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies strands on Rail, Road, Bus, Sea, Air, Port, Freight, Travel Plans, Active Travel, Safety and Change. Choice through Incentives & Partnership to improve access to employment and economic competitiveness and assist in maximising the economic development opportunities.	Included	Included
3 Better educated	Delivery of both the Local and Regional Transport Strategies, particularly those commitments relating to improving access to and the quality of public transport where this leads to increased bus use and better access to employment, education and training.	Included	Aberdeen City & Shire Economic Manifesto included in key strategies and plans and therefore by implication the RTS
4 Effective contributors	Continued commitment to partnership working including……Nestrans….	Not included	Included

APPENDIX 1

NATIONAL OUTCOME	WHAT THE SOA SAYS	ABERDEEN CITY SOA	ABERDEENSHIRE SOA
5 Start in life	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies strands on Bus, Walking, Cycling, Active Travel, Safety and using enforcement.	Included (also mentions - promoting and increasing travel safety and security and supporting extension of low speed zones to provide safety benefits, whilst promoting active travel can help achieve health benefits from a young age)	Included
6 Longer, healthier lives	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies with emphasis on Walking, Cycling, Promoting Active Travel, Improving Safety and expanding DRT. Delivery of Regional Transport Strategy Health and Transport Action Plan in partnership between NHS Grampian, Nestrans and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.	Included	Included
7 Inequalities	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies	Delivery of both the Local and Regional Transport Strategies commitments relating to Bus, DRT, Travel Plans & Awareness, Changing Choices Through Incentives	Included
8 Improve Life Chances	Delivery of both the Local and Regional Transport Strategy commitments on Changing Choices Through Incentives and Using Enforcement	Included	Not Included
9 Safe from Danger	Delivery of both the Local and Regional Transport Strategy commitments to Road, Walking and Cycling, Powered 2-wheelers, Improving Safety and Using Enforcement to improve road safety and travel security through education, engineering, enforcement and encouragement	Included	Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy included in key strategies and plans

NATIONAL OUTCOME	WHAT THE SOA SAYS	ABERDEEN CITY SOA	ABERDEENSHIRE SOA
10 Access the services we need	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies strands on Rail, Road, Bus, Sea, Air, Port, Freight, DRT. Transport Interchange, Walking, Cycling, Powered 2-wheelers, Travel Plans, Active Travel, Safety and Change. Choice through Incentives & Parking to increase accessibility and equality of opportunity by improving modal choices	Included	Included
11 resilient comm-unities	Continued commitment to partnership working including……Nestrans….	Delivery of both Local and Regional Transport Strategy commitments to DRT, Travel Plans, Active Travel to support services which promote social inclusion and encourage people to be aware of their travel choices and consider sustainable options	Included
12 enjoy .enviro-nment ..protect it..	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies strands on Rail, Bus, DRT, Walking, Cycling, Travel Plans, Active Travel, and Parking to increase accessibility and encouragement of sustainable modes.	Included	Included
14 reduce enviro-nmental impact	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies strands on Bus, DRT, Transport Interchange, Walking, Cycling, Active Travel, Enforcement, Rail, Powered 2-wheelers and Travel Plans to reduce the need for travel, develop sustainable travel solutions and support reduced emissions.	Included	Included
15 high quality public services	Delivery of Regional and Local Transport Strategies commitments to Safety, Change. Choice through Incentives, Partnerships and using enforcement to work with partners to achieve high quality efficient and responsive public services.	Included	Included

APPENDIX 2

Nestrans involvement in Aberdeen City and Shire's Single Outcome Agreements

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS			
EC1 - Rail links and services • Reducing journey times to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and further south. • Improved train capacity, comfort and reliability. • Support for High Speed Rail connections to London, which benefit the north east.	1,4 (2,3)	1,2 (10,12,14)	All the External Connection strands assist in improving connectivity to and within the north east and thus enhance the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the area by making the movement of goods and people more efficient and reliable and reducing peripherality. Improving the External Connections will increase accessibility and thus promote social inclusion. Those strands that enhance modal choice will also help to reduce the effects of transport on the environment, whilst overcoming the constraints on the strategic road network will also deliver safety benefits.
EC2 - Strategic roads • Overcoming constraints on the network that have a direct impact on travel to/from the north east, such as the A90 through Dundee.	1,2 (4)	1,2,10	
EC3 - Inter-regional Bus and Coach travel • Support further development of inter-regional bus and coach travel between the north east and other Scottish towns and cities and further afield. Explore possible links to Park and Ride sites.	1,2,3,4	1,2,10,14 (12)	

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
EC4 - Connections by sea • Closer joint working through North East Ports Forum. • Improved access to ports and interchange with passenger ferries. • Development of new freight and passenger services.	1,3 (4)	1,2 (10)	
EC5 - Connections by air • Support expansion of direct destinations from Aberdeen and frequency of popular services. • Support runway extension to facilitate wider range of destinations and more efficient, modern aircraft. • Ensure protection of slots for Aberdeen services at key hubs such as London Heathrow.	1(3,4)	1,2 (10)	
INTERNAL CONNECTIONS			
IC1 - Rail • Increased frequency of services between Inverurie-Aberdeen-Stonehaven through Aberdeen Crossrail and improved services to Inverness. • New station openings in the City and Aberdeenshire as part of Aberdeen Crossrail.	1,4 (2,3)	1,2 (10,12,14)	Developing the existing passenger rail network will increase accessibility to employment, education and services, improve economic competitiveness and encourage sustainable travel.

APPENDIX 2

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
IC2 - Road Improvements • Strategic Roads Capacity improvements – tackling constraints at A90 Ellon to Peterhead, A96 west of Inverurie, Haudagain junction, Access to Aberdeen from the south, and at other junctions serving Aberdeenshire towns. • Strategic Roads Safety improvements – alignment and junction improvements on A90 south. Overtaking, junction and alignment improvements on A90 north and A96. Route Action on A92, A93, A944, A947. • Car share lanes – trialling priority lanes for cars with multiple occupancy. • Prioritised maintenance for strategic routes, with particular benefits for public transport and sustainable modes. • Support Local Authorities in bringing forward LTS projects that contribute to strategic objectives (These build on the AWPR and dualling of A90 Balmedie – Tipperty which are being taken forward by Transport Scotland and are due to be completed in 2011)	1,2 (4)	1,2,9,10	Capacity, safety and quality improvements will bring benefit to all road users. Reducing journey times and increasing safety and reliability will assist the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the north east and bring health benefits through reducing poor air quality resulting from standing traffic and the diversion of traffic to inappropriate routes. High occupancy vehicle lanes could further assist in reducing emissions.

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
IC3 - Bus Improvements • Quality bus corridor improvements to services and facilities. • Extend bus priority measures on key routes to enable buses to beat congestion. • Explore Rapid Transit options such as guided busways and the Super Bus concept. • Expand Park and Ride provision linked to the development of the AWPR. • Further develop real-time information systems to expand coverage across Aberdeen City and Shire.	1,2,3,4	1,2,10,14 (7,12)	Bus improvements such as service quality, frequency and reliability will help make this sustainable mode more attractive thus reducing congestion and environmental impact. Increasing accessibility to employment, education and services will promote social inclusion and increase economic benefits and quality of life.
IC4 - Demand Responsive Transport • Support extension of 'Dial-a-Bus' and similar services to serve those unable to access conventional buses and to link with scheduled bus services. • Support community transport providers and encourage development of services. • Seek to ensure that taxis are provided in an efficient and effective way, which meets the needs of customers.	2.3 (1,4)	10 (1,7,11,12, 14)	These services promote social inclusion and help improve accessibility to services (including healthcare), particularly for those in rural areas.

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RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
IC5 - Transport Interchange • Maximising interchange potential of Guild Street development and link with Union Street and support enhancement of other interchange points in Aberdeen. • Implement city centre shuttle bus and explore potential for future 'Micro-Light' tram. • Support further improvements to interchange facilities in Aberdeenshire towns, in particular building on developments at Inverurie, Peterhead and Banchory. • Work with operators to develop integrated ticketing across services and operators in the north east.	2,3,4 (1)	(1,10,14)	Effective interchange between different services and modes that is safe and secure can encourage use of public transport and realise the social, accessibility, environmental and active travel health benefits this brings. They can act as gateways to the region and support the place competitiveness of the north east.
IC6 - Walking and Cycling • Support investment in measures to increase safety and security of walking and in particular to facilitate interchange between different modes of transport. Urban realm improvements to improve the pedestrian environment. • Support the extension of low speed zones, particularly where it improves the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and increases safety for children. • Continued development of cycle routes on key routes within Aberdeenshire, into Aberdeen and on routes through the City.	(1,2,3,4)	9,10,12,14 (1,2,5,6)	Encouraging greater walking and cycling through route development and security improvements can help achieve accessibility, health, social inclusion, safety and environmental benefits thus increasing the quality of life and attractiveness of the area.

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
IC7 - Airport Surface Connections • Facilitate an Express Bus Service to provide a dedicated, high-frequency service between Aberdeen City Centre and other key locations and the airport and enhanced regional connections. • Support a shuttle bus between Dyce station and the airport terminal. • In the longer term, explore a fixed link from Aberdeen City Centre to the airport, providing fast, reliable journey times, either as an addition to Crossrail or as a guided bus route.	1, (3,4)	1,2 (10)	Improving surface access connections will increase accessibility to the airport by sustainable modes and increase connections to key economic centres improving the competitiveness and attractiveness of the area.
IC8 - Port Surface Connections • Support measures to improve access to port facilities. • Facilitate improved interchange between the Aberdeen ferry terminal and bus and rail stations.	1,3 (4)	1,2 (10)	Improving surface access connections will increase accessibility to the harbours and ports within the north east improving the competitiveness and attractiveness of the area.
IC9 - Freight • Support the development of modern intermodal freight terminals to provide future capacity for rail freight expansion. • Investigate potential for measures to provide more reliable journey times for HGVs and identify a trial route for implementation of priority measures.	1 (4)	1,2 (10)	Improving journey times and reliability will enhance the economic competitiveness and attractiveness of the area, whilst developing rail freight can also provide environmental benefits.
IC10 - Powered two-wheelers • Support measures to improve safety for users of motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers and provide appropriate parking facilities.	(1,2,3)	10 (9,14)	This can bring safety and accessibility benefits for a relatively sustainable mode.

APPENDIX 2

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
THE STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK			
TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR			
TB1 - Promoting Travel Planning and Travel Awareness • Implementation and future development of Nestrans' Travel Planning Strategy. • Continue to provide support through the Sustainable Travel Grants Scheme • Encourage increased up-take of car-sharing	2,3,4 (1)	1 (2,7,10,11, 12,14)	Encouraging sustainable modes can help achieve accessibility, social inclusion, health and environmental benefits and enhance the quality of life and attractiveness of the area.
TB2 - Promoting Active Travel • Encourage more people to walk and cycle more often. • Work with NHS Grampian and Community Planning Partnerships to promote the benefits of active travel and achieve objectives for a healthier population.	2,3 (1,4)	6,12,14 (1,5,11)	Increasing active travel can bring both health and environmental benefits, enhancing the quality of life and attractiveness of the area. Indirectly this can aid the economy if less days are lost to ill health and congestion is reduced thus aiding business travel.
TB3 - Improving Safety • Work with the Councils, Emergency Services and others to promote road safety as part of a comprehensive approach covering Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Encouragement measures. • Improve security for users of public transport services and interchanges.	2 (1,4)	6,9,15 (1,5)	Working with partners to improve safety and security will help make the north east a safer place to live and travel in and can help encourage sustainable modes.

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
INCENTIVES AND ENFORCEMENT			
IE1 - Changing Choices through Incentives & Partnerships • Work with operators to identify possible fare incentives to encourage increased bus use, particularly where this enables access to employment or training. • Through the Local Authorities/ Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) continue to develop the Quality Partnership for Public Transport and consider introducing Punctuality Improvement Partnerships. • Support measures which encourage uptake of alternative fuels, particularly by public transport providers, to build on the north east's role as an energy hub.	2,3,4 (1)	2,15 (1,3,7,8,10)	Working with partners to encourage use of bus travel can help achieve the accessibility, social inclusion and environmental benefits that greater use of this sustainable mode can bring. Promotion of alternative fuels can also bring environmental benefits and help grow the area's role as an alternative energy capital.
IE2 - Using Enforcement • Support enforcement of vehicle emission standards to improve air quality, in Aberdeen City Centre and towns across the north east. • Support measures to enforce speed limits to improve road safety and reduce carbon emissions. Promote the establishment of a Casualty Reduction Partnership to support NESCAMP's activities and support the trial of average speed cameras.	2,3,4 (1)	12,14,15 (6,8,9)	Realising the environmental, health and safety benefits of working with partners to support enforcement of emission standards and speed limits will also increase the quality of life and attractiveness of the north east

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS	RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CONTRI-BUTES TO NATIONAL OUTCOME	COMMENTS
IE3 - Parking • Develop a Regional Parking Strategy to ensure a coherent approach to parking controls and standards across the north east. • Support enforcement of parking restrictions, particularly where these exist to support strategic traffic movements, bus / pedestrian priority and road safety. • Investigate the potential for parking incentives to encourage use of small or multi-occupancy vehicles.	3,4 (1)	(10,12)	Working in partnership with local authorities to develop a region-wide strategy will provide a consistent policy, the enforcement of which can reduce congestion and improve safety. Encouraging car share and use of smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles can achieve environmental benefits.

NOTES

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The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire