

Strategy -

3a Director's report on liaison between RTPs, and with the Scottish Government and Others

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on liaison with other RTPs, with the Scottish Government and other organisations.

o Background

This report details meetings with other RTPs across Scotland, Transport Scotland and other national transport bodies highlighting issues of interest across Scotland. It also notes meetings of the Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) Steering Group and the Local Authority Bus Operators Forum (LABOF).

o Recent Developments

The last full Board meeting was held on 19 April 2017, since which the following updates are available from meetings:

❖ **Conference on Regional Airports, Birmingham, 6 April 2017**

Derick Murray attended this conference which highlighted that, following the decision on the third runway at Heathrow, the UK Government would now be taking the opportunity to take a broader look at the aviation industry across the country. They have highlighted the three principles that will be behind their considerations:

- Support UK aviation as a whole, for the whole of the UK;
- The consumer matters;
- The market works best.

Nestrans has written to the UK Aviation Minister to ask that, in considering issues relating to the third point, to give consideration to the issue of surface access to airports. Item 8 on this agenda provides further detail regarding this issue.

This was in particular to note the evidence from the Heathrow Inquiry which noted the importance of surface access on the environmental impact of the airport and that Aberdeen International Airport, as confirmed by Competition Commission regulations, effectively operates in isolation from competing airports in a monopoly situation. This request was with particular regard to encouraging airports to try and increase the number of their passengers arriving at the airport by public transport.

❖ **High Speed Rail Scotland Group, Glasgow, 26 April 2017**

This meeting, attended by Derick Murray, provided an update on the proposals to extend the current HS2 north to Central Scotland. The Working Group outlined progress including development of options for line usage, operational issues and types of train. These are being developed with an ultimate goal of incrementally reaching a three-hour journey time between Central Scotland and London. This goal of three hours is important because this is regarded as the threshold journey time for passengers transferring from a plane to a train.

The meeting also discussed the impact of HS2 arriving in both Edinburgh and Glasgow and what regeneration and development opportunities this may provide.

❖ **Aberdeen to Inverness Rail Stakeholders Group, Forres, 2 May 2017**

This meeting was attended by Rab Dickson. The purpose of the meeting was to allow Network Rail to update all the Councils and RTPs along the route on progress with the Aberdeen to Inverness (A2I) project.

Works are currently ongoing, with major improvements being progressed at Forres and at Elgin. This is intended to be the first of a series of regular stakeholder meetings, which will be supported by ongoing communications and PR to inform public about works, temporary impacts on the route and schedule towards the enhanced line, intended to enable an improved timetable in September 2019.

❖ **City Region Deal Transport Working Group, Dundee, 8 May 2017**

This meeting discussed progress on the development of a consultants brief for the preliminary Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) consideration of the City Region Deal's Transport Appraisal. This part of the process will look at the problems and opportunities for transport in the north east and set objectives which will be used to assess options against. It is intended to generate a number of high level options for consideration in a later phase of the appraisal.

This appraisal is intended to form the background to informing the next Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and consideration of projects in the north east as part of the national Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) which will follow the development of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) which is now underway.

❖ **RTP Lead Officers, Glasgow, 10 May 2017**

The RTP Lead Officers met with:

- Passenger Focus to discuss the bus passenger surveys that the RTP's contributed to;
- Transport Scotland regarding a forthcoming consultation on concessionary travel.

Also discussed were possible bus elements of the forthcoming Transport Bill and the recent changes to bus regulation in England, outside London.

The Officers discussed the possibility of joint RTP responses to:

- The Collaborative Economy consultation;
- The National Transport Strategy's Research and Evidence Group's call for evidence;
- The Improving Parking in Scotland consultation. (It was agreed that a joint letter be sent to the Minister requesting an extension to the timetable for this consultation given the Local Authority elections with new Members taking positions on transport within Councils and on the RTP Boards.)

There was discussion on the standing items including:

- City Deals;
- Roads collaboration;
- Bus Stakeholder Group;
- Ferries;
- Rail;
- Active Travel.

RTP representation on ScotFlag (Transport Scotland's Freight Group) was discussed following changes in personnel in other RTP's. It was agreed that Rab Dickson from Nestrans would be the RTP rep on this group.

The meeting was followed with a meeting with the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) which discussed issues of common interest including the Planning Review and the development of the National Transport Strategy.

❖ **Local Authority Bus Operators Forum, Aberdeen, 18 May 2017**

The latest meeting of the LABOF Steering Group was held on 18 May. A copy of the draft minutes are attached as **Appendix 1** to this report for members' information.

❖ **Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail oversight Group, Dundee, 22 May 2017**

This Group met for the first time on 22 May. The oversight group brought together Transport Scotland, Nestrans and Tactran along with the rail industry through Network Rail, ScotRail, Department for Transport, Rail Development Group and Freight operators. This first meeting set out the current position of this project since it was announced on 28 January 2016 and discussions formed around regional expectations for this route.

These expectations were discussed within the context of the Strategic Transport Project Review projects, the Aberdeen City Region Deal, and the £200 million additional Scottish Government investment for the route; including consideration of the needs of the freight industry, the Revolution in Rail programme and cross border services.

The Terms of Reference for the Group were discussed and are being considered. The next meeting will be held in August/September; a confirmed date is yet to be agreed.

❖ **Active Travel Task Force, Edinburgh, 24 May 2017**

Following a previous meeting where the Task Force heard from the promoters of projects across the central belt, this meeting of the Task Force heard about the development of the Broad Street project in Aberdeen from Aberdeen City Council and from a number of stakeholders regarding the projects in various locations across the central belt.

This included hearing from objectors and proponents of proposals about their experiences of the process.

Further meetings of the Task Force are to be held to consider the written and oral evidence that has been gathered.

- ❖ **City Region Deal Transport Working Group, TBC, 19 June 2017**
- ❖ **Network Rail - Aberdeen to Inverness Line access, Aberdeen, 20 June 2017**
- ❖ **RTP Lead Officers, Perth, 21 June 2017**
- ❖ **HTAP Steering Group, Aberdeen, 22 June 2017**

The minutes of this meeting will be reported to the September Board meeting.

Future Programme of Meetings

- ❖ **Aberdeen to Inverness Stakeholders Group, Forres, 27 June 2017**
- ❖ **Transport Scotland/ Network Rail Quarterly meeting, Aberdeen, 28 June 2017**
- ❖ **Minister for Transport – Public Sector bidder for Rail, Edinburgh, 29 June 2017**
- ❖ **Scottish Leaders Forum, TBC, 05 July 2017**
- ❖ **City Region Deal Transport Working Group, TBC, 02 August 2017**
- ❖ **RTP Lead Officers, Glasgow, 09 August 2017**
- ❖ **RTP Chairs meeting, Tactran, 23 August 2017**
- ❖ **Transport Scotland – A96 dualling, Elgin, 31 August 2017**

Recommendation

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

RD/RGM 14 June 2017

LABOF Steering Group

Nestrans, 29 King Street

Thursday 18th May 2017

Note of Discussions and Actions

Attendees Ewan Wallace, Aberdeenshire Council (EW) (Chair)
 Richard McKenzie, Aberdeenshire Council (RM)
 Derick Murray, Nestrans (DM)
 Kirsty Chalmers, Nestrans (KC)
 Daniel Laird, First (DL)
 Mark Whitelocks, Stagecoach (MW)
 Chris Cormack, Aberdeen City Council (CC)

Apologies

Item		Action
1	Note and actions from 19th January 2017	
	<p>The Minute of the meeting on 19th January was agreed.</p> <p>Matters arising EW contacted Alison Irvine regarding trunk roads and the need to consider bus operational issues and will share the response received.</p> <p>Park and Ride - A formal request has been made from the Nestrans Chair to the Transport Minister regarding funding of the A90(S) park and ride. This has not so far resulted in a positive response and Nestrans will continue to pursue.</p> <p>Foresterhill Hospital Site – The car park is now nearing completion and the Health Centre is also under construction. A pedestrian crossing is to be installed on Westburn Road adjacent to the Health Centre and ACC are looking at upgrading the bus facilities there in terms of shelters and raised kerbs. First have been in discussions with consultants for NHS Grampian on future service provision to the site.</p> <p>Bus gate on Bedford Road / signals at Kittybrewster / Powis Terrace –a wider meeting has been held with the bus operators and ACC traffic management and signals team who are carrying out modelling of this junction to try and identify if the current signal pattern can be tweaked to provide some benefits for buses. Still awaiting results of this</p>	<p>EW</p>

	<p>and CC will seek an update from Neale Burrows. It was agreed that this be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>Miscellaneous Transport Bill – there has been a presentation to ATCO on this and it is understood Scottish Government are looking at early summer to go to consultation although this timescale has not been confirmed. EW highlighted that this is a Term 2 Bill and Term 2 starts in Sept so they are likely to want to go to consultation before this. There may be a better steer on details and timescales over the next few days at the SCOTS meeting which is being attended by EW and DM. It was felt that there are mixed messages coming out on the potential for splitting this into two Transport Bills.</p> <p>The Bill may include provisions for authorities to be able to run services and operators have been given feedback that they should expect to see this in the Bill. There are however lots of strands of discussion going on and a fair bit of uncertainty at present.</p> <p>Parking legislation – Transport Scotland have launched a consultation on parking legislation which closes on 30th June. This covers parking on footpaths and will be relevant to bus operators as any changes to legislation may impact on bus routes. KC will circulate links to the consultation to the bus operators. KC to share a list of all the relevant consultations that are out just now.</p> <p>Technology for journey time routing - EW will go back to Hugh Gillies on technology for journey time routing. Transport Scotland is doing things but seem to be fairly siloed. It was agreed that it would be useful for CPT to lobby on this issue.</p>	<p>CC KC</p> <p>KC</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Quality Partnership</p> <p>DL stated that First’s view corporately is that they need to see how much can be achieved through voluntary arrangements before they would consider moving to statutory agreements.</p> <p>The proposed approach, outlined in the paper was agreed and it was felt that this approach provides the opportunity to try different solutions on different corridors e.g. voluntary / enhanced / statutory agreements, depending on the corridor in question.</p> <p>The Nestrans Board has requested that both bus operators be invited to come back and speak to the Board again, following on from their presentation in June 2016. This is likely to be to the 6th September meeting and KC to issue an invitation to both First and Stagecoach.</p>	<p>KC</p>

	<p>It was agreed that Transport Scotland should be invited to join any agreement and EW & DM to speak to Hugh Gillies about representation of Transport Scotland on the agreement as signatories or partners.</p> <p>SPT are currently developing proposals for a SPT Bus Alliance and it was questioned what involvement Transport Scotland will have in this.</p> <p>On the issue of an Independent Chair, as is the case in the example of the West Midlands Bus Alliance, it was felt that the scale is different here and the issues are different. The principle was however agreed and it was also felt that it would be also beneficial to provide an increased passenger focus. The Area Bus Forums in Aberdeenshire are chaired by the Area Chair and it was suggested that there could be a rotating councillor chair and customer representation. The principles of an independent Chair and customer representation were agreed.</p> <p>It was agreed that a paper should go to the Nestrans Board outlining the principles of a new agreement and governance structure, including potential for a rotating Councillor Chair and the creation of a Board with delegated authority to sign up to a region-wide voluntary quality partnership agreement and associated targets.</p> <p>This report on the high level principles should go to the June meeting of the Nestrans Board and following that to the subsequent meetings of the two Councils. A more detailed report should then be brought back to the September meeting of Nestrans.</p> <p>Legal / governance issues of such an agreement will need to be considered in order that any issues can be flagged at an early stage. Aberdeen City Council provides legal support to Nestrans and it was suggested that Jackie Buchanan be a first point of contact.</p>	EW/DM
3	Standards & Targets	
	<p>The standards and targets were noted.</p> <p>DM questioned whether, in relation to the target for EURO V vehicles, we should be looking to set a target for EURO VI instead.</p> <p>It was also suggested that these may need to be re-thought in the context of a revised partnership agreement and any new governance arrangement.</p> <p>As part of a revised agreement, it is suggested that the</p>	

	standards and targets set be the minimum targets set for the region as a whole, but more ambitious targets could be set for individual corridors.	
4	BPSS	
	<p>The results of the first Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey undertaken by Passenger Focus were noted.</p> <p>It was also noted that Passenger Focus will be conducting this study every second year. RTPs are now contributing to the funding of this survey and have asked about the potential for surveying non-bus users. Passenger Focus is considering how this could best be done.</p> <p>DL reported that First are internally changing the way they are doing their customer satisfaction surveys and introducing a system called Rant & Rave. This will provide passengers with the facility to provide instant feedback and allow them to rate individual journeys.</p> <p>The results show a worsening level of satisfaction in many instances and in the wider context it was noted that funding challenges and bad news stories creates a negative atmosphere and will influence perceptions.</p>	
5	Queens Road Modelling Study	
	<p>KC had hoped to provide a report on the results of this study however timescales between receiving the draft report and the meeting did not allow for this.</p> <p>The findings of this study should be taken back to the Executive Group.</p>	KC
6	Green Bus Fund & Smart Ticketing	
	<p>Stagecoach is not putting in a bid to Green Bus Fund.</p> <p>DL noted that the criteria of the bids means that organisations are restricted to one bid covering all their subsidiaries.</p> <p>In relation to TS's Smart Ticket fund, it was noted that Grasshopper is already smart and operators already have new ticket machines so there was uncertainty over what opportunities there are for the smart ticketing fund in relation to this.</p> <p>DM highlighted that consultation on concessionary fares is imminent. This will likely focus on how the cost to the</p>	

	<p>Scottish Government of the scheme can be reduced and reviewing the reimbursement model. CPT are lobbying on the issue that you can't change the reimbursement model before you change the scheme.</p>	
7	<p>Thistle Card</p> <p>Nestrans has been asked to join the Thistle Card scheme which is being rolled out by other RTPs with the ambition that it becomes a national scheme. Nestrans are happy to cover the costs of extending the scheme to the North East through a contribution to the maintenance costs of the app along with other RTPs and printing of cards however would need support from the bus operators in terms of distribution, driver training and promotion.</p> <p>First have just relaunched their Better Journey cards.</p> <p>The introduction of the Thistle Card would create a few difficulties for the operators in terms of duplication with their own schemes and they would want to ensure that there is no confusion for drivers in terms of accepting the cards on bus.</p> <p>MW and DL to consider and come back to Nestrans on this after speaking to colleagues in other parts of their organisations.</p> <p>Issues with simplifying communication with their staff and making sure drivers are aware and able to respond appropriately. They are particularly conscious of recent high profile cases about treatment of customers with additional needs. KC to send the details of the app.</p>	<p>DL & MW</p> <p>KC</p>
8	<p>The next meeting of the Steering Group is scheduled for 21st September 2017.</p> <p>It was agreed that a special meeting of the Steering Group should be arranged in advance of the Nestrans Board on 6th September Board. KC to arrange a meeting around the end July specifically on QP issues.</p>	<p>KC</p>