

6b Consultations

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of recent publications and consultation papers of interest and to agree a response where appropriate.

o Consultations

❖ Reforming the Planning System

On 29 June 2017, the Scottish Government published a Position Statement which sets out their future priorities for the planning system in Scotland. This statement is accompanied by a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report and views on the potential environmental effects of the proposals for change were invited, but with a closing date of 11 August 2017.

The Position Statement takes account of the responses to the consultation “Places, People and Planning – a consultation on the future of Scotland's planning system”. An independent analysis of the responses was also published in June 2017.

The Position Statement proposes both legislative and non-legislative changes. Primary legislation changes will be taken forward through a Planning Bill expected to come before Parliament in winter 2017. Further changes will be made through secondary legislation following the Bill.

https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/planning-architecture/places-people-and-planning-position-statement/supporting_documents/SCT06174881481_Places_FINAL%202.pdf

The consultation closed on 11 August 2017 and a response has therefore been submitted, after consultation with Board members and approval of the Chair and Vice Chairs. A copy is attached as Appendix 1 for members' information.

❖ Climate Change Bill Consultation

The Scottish Government has produced a consultation towards a new Climate Change Bill, with a deadline for consultation on 22nd September 2017.

The key changes being proposed include:

- Greenhouse gas emission reduction target being strengthened from 80% reduction by 2050 to 90% reduction by 2050;
- Targets will be based on actual emissions;
- Net-zero target to be set at a future date.

Whilst the Bill isn't directly transport related, as transport makes up a large proportion of greenhouse gases, any stretched target(s) will make it even more important for transport emissions to be reduced, even further than currently planned. The National Transport Strategy is one of the linked policy programmes and strategies of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and transport is a large part of the draft Climate Change Plan which is a report on policies and proposals and is updated regularly.

The Environment Report for the consultation states about Transport:

"4.2.17 Scotland's National Transport Strategy sets out a long-term vision for transport policies, stating they should meet the needs of everyone in Scotland whilst providing them with integrated, modern, reliable, and environmentally efficient transport choices. One of the three strategic key outcomes underlying the vision is '[a reduction] in emissions to tackle the issues of climate change, air quality and health improvement which impact on our high-level objective for protecting the environment and improving health'. The role that transport plays in producing GHG emissions is recognised in the 2006 publication and it was announced in 2016 that the National Transport Strategy will be subject to a full review. That review will include setting out an updated vision and exploring ways to address the strategic challenges facing the transport network."

"6.2.3 The draft Climate Change Plan sets out a series of policies and proposals aimed at reducing emissions within the transport sector. For example, these include policies encouraging active travel, public transport options, and greater market penetration for ultra-low and low emission vehicles, amongst others. The assessment of the draft Climate Change Plan identified the potential for significant reductions in GHG emissions through the implementation of these proposals, as well as through achieving a reduction in reliance on fossil fuels. Policies set out in National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) seek to minimise travel time or reduce the need for travel altogether by encouraging the development of compact settlements and the improvement of digital connectivity. Further, promoting active travel options over vehicular travel and providing quality greenspace and cycling/walking networks, as set out in NPF3 and SPP, were also considered likely to be beneficial."

https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/climate-change-bill/supporting_documents/SCT07175538641_environmental_%20Final_v2.pdf

❖ **Socio-Economic Duty**

The Scottish Government has committed to bringing forward legislation to commence the Socio-Economic Duty by the end of 2017 and as part of this process undertook an 8 week period of consultation from 18th July to 12th September 2017 to inform the development of the guidance on how the duty should work in practice.

The socio-economic duty asks particular public authorities to do more to tackle the inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. In particular, the duty aims to make sure that strategic decisions about the most important issues are carefully thought through so that they are as effective as they can be in tackling socio-economic disadvantage and reducing inequalities of outcome. These strategic decisions would include, for example, an economic development strategy; or an annual budget setting out key investment choices.

The consultation proposes that the following Scottish public authorities be bound by the duty:

- Scottish Ministers;
- Local Authorities;

- NHS Health Scotland;
- Integration Joint Boards;
- Regional Health Boards;
- The Scottish Policy Authority;
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise; and
- Scottish Enterprise.

The consultation document identifies Regional Transport Strategies as an example of a strategic decision-making document, however it does not identify Regional Transport Partnerships as one of the Scottish public authorities to be bound by the duty. In consultation with the other RTPs, it has been agreed that a response be submitted requesting that RTPs be included within the list of strategic bodies to be subject to the Duty.

There is considerable cross-over between equality and socio-economic issues and the consultation highlights that there is therefore merit in considering equality and socio-economic issues in an integrated way. As Nestrans already produces and monitors a set of Equalities Outcomes and undertakes an equalities impact assessment for its Regional Transport Strategy, we would support an integrated approach to meeting the socio-economic duty alongside the approach to meeting the requirements of the Equalities Duty.

Consultation responses were required to be submitted to an online survey by 12th September, prior to the Nestrans Board meeting. A response has therefore been submitted via the online survey in line with the comments above.

❖ **Beyond the Horizon – The future of UK Aviation**

On the 24th July 2017, the UK Government published a call for evidence on a new strategy titled “Beyond the Horizon – The future of UK Aviation”. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-aviation-strategy-for-the-uk-call-for-evidence>

Responses are required by the 13th October 2017.

The UK Government intend to develop a new aviation strategy. It will set out the long-term direction for aviation policy-making for 2050 and beyond. In doing so it will build on our aviation success story in pursuit of the following aim:-

To achieve a safe, secure and sustainable aviation sector that meets the needs of consumers and of a global, outward-looking Britain.

The strategy will have six objectives. These are to:-

- *help the aviation industry work for its customers;*
- *ensure a safe and secure way to travel;*
- *build a global and connected Britain;*
- *encourage competitive markets;*
- *support growth while tackling environmental impacts; and*
- *develop innovation, technology and skills.*

The strategy will have particular focus on consumers and cover the whole country. It will look at where government could, and should, make a difference. The government has identified a range of issues to be looked at in a series of themed consultation papers. These

consultations will take place during 2017 and 2018. A final Aviation Strategy will then be published by the end of 2018.

This call for evidence document is asking for your views on the approach the government is proposing to take and the issues that it has identified.

The consultation document is based in sections relating to the six objectives. Some information is provided in each section relating to that topic. In each section there are a number of questions asked. There is also some information provided about the UK's history in aviation and predictions for the future and a section on the need for a new strategy.

Two figures stand out as of particular interest. Firstly, the total number of UK passengers is expected to double by 2050. Secondly, the total UK passenger numbers travelling on business is estimated at 20%. This is in contrast to our local Aberdeen International Airport where that figure, prior to the oil downturn, was as high as 60%.

Not all of the questions are of direct interest to Nestrans, often being more related to operational matters including information, security, protection when things go wrong, etc. However the document does raise a number of issues where Nestrans could make a useful contribution. These include:

- Doubling the number of passengers means doubling the number of journeys to and from the airports. Consideration needs to be given to this growth in surface movements. A requirement to increase the public transport share of passengers accessing airports could reduce congestion and the burden on local/ national government to provide road capacity. Nestrans' recent correspondence with the Department for Transport refers. Indeed Government is keen to maximise use of runway capacity, it should also be keen to maximise use of road capacity by increasing public transport.
- The UK Government is very keen to encourage competitive markets. However it should be recognised that not all airports operate in circumstances where there is competition. The Government's Competition Commission recognised this a few years ago when they imposed a set of requirements on Aberdeen International Airport because its geographical location meant that it was operating in an effective monopoly situation.
- The UK Government (and the Scottish Government) want to strengthen global connections from Britain. There is an opportunity for the larger regional airports with long enough runways and big enough catchments to meet this challenge with direct flights. However for the smaller and more peripheral airports, it should be recognised that this global connection has to come via the nation's national hub airport at Heathrow. Therefore consideration should be given to priority access for these airports to Heathrow. Access to other European hub airports is also essential.
- Whilst the use of flying for leisure and family purposes is important, and Aberdeen International Airport is trying to increase this traffic from/ to Aberdeen, it should be recognised that business travel from Aberdeen is three times the national average and indeed twice the rate from Edinburgh and Glasgow. This should be a consideration in the landing slot allocation at Heathrow Airport to ensure that our region continues to have access to global markets for business purposes in the post Brexit world.

A response to the consultation based upon the Board's consideration of the above issues and any other issues raised will be submitted.

The correspondence with the DfT referred to above has recently been added to by receipt of a letter from the DfT Minister. This is attached as Appendix 2. This letter indicates that surface access to airports is a devolved matter. In England Airports over a certain size have been asked to produce surface access strategies but this requirement hasn't been made by UK Ministers to Scottish Airports because of the devolved nature of surface access issues.

This letter was recently discussed by the RTP Chairs where it was agreed to write as a group to the Scottish Minister requesting that the requirement for surface access strategies be extended to Scottish Airports. It is suggested that in addition to responding to the UK consultation Nestrans, as an individual RTP, should also write to the Minister requesting this requirement.

❖ **Building Scotland's Low Emissions Zones – A Consultation**

The Scottish Government is seeking views on how best to put in place Low Emission Zones (LEZs) following a commitment made on the 5th of September 2017 to introduce LEZs into Scotland's four biggest cities – which includes Aberdeen, by 2020. Additionally, the Scottish Government will shortly announce the location of the first LEZ which will be put in place in 2018. Further information on the consultation can be found at:

<https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/++preview++/transport-scotland/building-scotlands-low-emission-zones/>

A paper on the Nestrans response will be produced for the next Nestrans Board meeting on the 1st of November, in time to meet the deadline for consultation responses of 28 November 2017.

❖ **Consultation on Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People and Modern Apprentices**

This consultation is to look at options to ensure the longer-term sustainability of the scheme and proposals to provide free bus travel to Modern Apprentices and free companion travel for eligible disabled children under five. Further information on the consultation can be found at:

<https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/partnerships-and-concessionary-travel/national-concessionary-travel-scheme/>

A paper on the Nestrans response will be produced for the next Nestrans Board meeting on the 1st of November 2017, in time to meet the deadline for consultation responses of 17th November 2017.

o **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Note Nestrans' response to the Planning Review at Appendix 1;
2. Note the comments expressed in relation to the consultations on the Climate Change Bill and Socio-Economic Duty;
3. Consider the issues raised above in regard to the Aviation Consultation and instruct the Director to respond accordingly; and

4. Instruct the Director to prepare responses to the consultations on Low Emission Zones and the Concessionary Travel Scheme for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

RD/KW 6 September 2017



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7th August 2017

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your letter of 10 July regarding surface access to airports.

This Government has been clear about the importance of improving surface access to airports given their role in supporting local, regional and national growth. We recognise that surface transport links to airports by road, rail and public transport are of high quality, and are efficient and reliable for both passengers and airport employees who use transport on a daily basis. We have also been clear that we wish to see the number of journeys made to airports by sustainable modes of transport to be maximised as much as possible, and delivered in a way that minimises congestion and environmental impacts.

The 2013 Aviation Policy Framework recommended that airports should produce Airport Master Plans, and advised that airports in England and Wales that handle more than 1,000 passenger air transport movements per year should establish Airport Transport Forums to serve their local communities. The Framework went on to say that those Transport Forums should produce airport surface access strategies which set out, amongst other things, targets for increasing the proportion of journeys made to the airport by public transport for both airport employees and passengers.

However, the Aviation Policy Framework recognised that while aviation policy is largely a reserved matter there are elements such as land-use planning, and importantly in this context, surface access policy that are devolved. In this context specific surface access policy arrangements for Aberdeen Airport are a matter for the Scottish Government.

You will also be aware that the government has recently published a Call for Evidence document as the starting point for a new strategy for UK aviation, to replace the Aviation Policy Framework. This will be a long-term strategy to 2050 and beyond which aims to achieve a safe, secure and sustainable aviation sector that meets the needs of consumers and of a global, outward-looking Britain.

One of the new Strategy's objectives is to support the aviation sector's growth while tackling environmental impacts. In this regard Chapter 7 of the Call for Evidence seeks views on a number of themes around growth, including planning and delivery of improved surface access to airports to meet the needs of consumers. You can find full details on how to respond to the Call for Evidence at <https://aviationstrategy.campaign.gov.uk>.

I hope this information is helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Callanan', written in a cursive style.

PP

LORD CALLANAN

Signed on behalf of the Minister to avoid delay