

8 Information Bulletin

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide information and updates for the Board on a number of matters not requiring decision.

o Rail

On 22 June 2017, the UK Government announced the names of the companies in the running for the new West Coast Partnership rail franchise.

The West Coast Partnership rail franchise brings together the operation of the existing InterCity West Coast (ICWC) services and the development, delivery and initial running of both conventional and High Speed services following construction of High Speed 2 (HS2) as far as Birmingham. It will also provide integrated operation of ICWC and HS2 services for an initial period following the launch of HS2 in 2026.

Details of the announcement can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/west-coast-partnership-and-south-eastern-rail-franchise-bidders>

The West Coast Partnership franchise will be responsible for services on the West Coast Main Line from April 2019 and will design and run the initial HS2 high speed services between London and Birmingham from 2026.

The shortlist contains bidding consortia which sees UK rail network experts working in partnership with companies that operate high speed railways around the globe, supported by businesses which have an excellent track record in customer services.

They are:

- ❖ First Trenitalia West Coast Ltd, a joint venture between First Rail Holdings Ltd and Trenitalia SpA;
- ❖ MTR West Coast Partnership Ltd, a joint venture between MTR Corporation (UK) Ltd and Guangshen Railway Company, with the following key sub-contractors: Deloitte MCS Ltd;
- ❖ Panasonic Systems Europe;
- ❖ Snowfall AB;
- ❖ Trainline.com Ltd;
- ❖ WSP Parsons Brinkerhoff; and
- ❖ West Coast Partnership Ltd, a joint venture between Stagecoach Group plc, Virgin Holdings Ltd and SNCF C3.

o **Scottish Ministers' High Level Output Specification for Control Period 6 (2019-2024)**

The Nestrans Board considered a report at its meeting on 15th February and agreed to respond to a consultation on Transport Scotland's Rail Infrastructure Strategy.

Transport Scotland has now produced the next stage in the process, the High Level Output Specification (HLOS).

In relation to the points made in response to the draft strategy, while the HLOS continues to promote a 'Pipeline' approach to infrastructure funding decisions, it appears to provide opportunities for greater local stakeholder engagement and consultation on business cases and the preparation of a "Rail Enhancement and Capital Investment Strategy". However, it will be the interaction between this and the outcomes of the planning review which will determine the extent to which comments have been taken on board.

o **Kintore Station**

The reporter decided that the Public Local Inquiry for the Aberdeenshire Council (Kintore Railway Station) Compulsory Purchase Order 2017 that was due to be held on 4 September should be cancelled as all objections have now been withdrawn.

The Scottish Government's Planning & Environmental Appeals Division have advised that the reporter will now prepare a short report to Scottish Ministers to allow them to consider whether the order should be confirmed, as provided for in the First Schedule, Paragraph 4 of the Acquisition of Land (Authorisation Procedure) (Scotland) 1947.

The reporter considers that she will have sufficient information from the materials submitted for the public inquiry by the Council to allow her to prepare her report and does not consider that any oral session is necessary to supplement this information. This information was published on the DPEA website and the venue operator was requested to post a notice on the day of the inquiry to advise any members of the public.

o **Bus Passenger Surveys Autumn 2017**

Transport Focus undertook national bus passenger satisfaction surveys in 2016 that were part funded by bus operators and Transport Scotland with Regional Transport Partnerships contributing to boost the sample size in their areas. This replaced the local surveys Nestrans had funded in recent years for LABOF and the RTS monitoring report and represented a significant saving in comparison. Although Transport Scotland only contribute every second year, RTPs have again been given the opportunity to contribute to the surveys organised by the bus operators to increase coverage in their area.

Transport Focus advised that First Aberdeen and Stagecoach (North Scotland and Highland & Bluebird) have already committed to funding this year's survey on their routes, a large proportion of which will fall within the Nestrans area. They estimate that this will result in around 750 responses (500 First and 250 Stagecoach), of which around 550 could be classed as primarily within Aberdeen City and around 200 within Aberdeenshire. In order to have around 500 responses for each Council area and bus operator, Nestrans has again agreed to contribute to the costs to boost the sample size by a further 300 responses for services operating primarily in Aberdeenshire. Nestrans contribution to the cost of the

surveys and reporting will be met from within the approved Bus Action Plan budget and again offer a substantial saving in comparison with commissioning surveys directly.

o **Scottish Transport Awards 2017**

The Scottish Transport Awards 2017 were held in Glasgow on 15 June and two local winners were announced.

The Best Bus Service award went to Stagecoach for their Jet 727 Aberdeen Airport service and the award for Transport Team/Partnership of the Year was awarded to the partners delivering the GrassHopper scheme, the first smart, multi-operator ticket in Scotland.

A total of eight north east nominations were short listed across the various categories.

o **A90 Average Speed Cameras**

Transport Minister Humza Yousaf met with representatives from the North Safety Camera Unit, Tealing Community Council, Forfar Community Council, Stonehaven and District Community Council and the Federation of Small Businesses on 15 August in Montrose to discuss progress with the installation of the A90 Average Speed Camera (ASC) system between Dundee and Stonehaven and to hear feedback from the local and business communities.

The construction of the ASC system commenced in May 2017, with cameras now visible along the Dundee-Stonehaven stretch of route and the majority of engineering works complete. It is anticipated that the system will be fully operational by October 2017. It will replace the existing fixed and mobile camera enforcement currently taking place on this section of the route. The majority of engineering works are now complete and cameras are now visible along the 51.5 mile stretch of the A90, between Dundee and Stonehaven.

When completed, the system will be operated and maintained by Safety Cameras Scotland. The main aim of Safety Cameras Scotland is to contribute to Scotland's road safety vision and road safety targets as set out in the Road Safety Framework to 2020.

ASCs aim to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured, deter vehicles driving at excessive speeds, improve journey time reliability and reduce offender numbers. The ACS system between Dundee and Stonehaven contains 30 sites in total (15 cameras in either direction) with camera locations 5-7km apart. The system will cost approximately £2m to design, build and install.

Since 2012, eleven people have been killed on the A90. Elsewhere in Scotland, sustained improvements in driver behaviour have been delivered since the installation of average speed cameras on the A77 and the A9, with latest figures showing:

- 43% reduction in fatal and serious casualties on the A9 (Dunblane – Inverness)
- 68% reduction in fatal and serious casualties on the A77 (Symington – Girvan)

More information on the A90 Average Speed Camera System is available from <http://a90road.info/> and www.safetycameras.gov.scot

o **A96 dualling**

In June, Transport Scotland announced the intention to award a contract worth up to £50 million to Amey Arup Joint Venture, to carry out route option assessment and detailed design work for dualling the eastern section of the A96 between east of Huntly and Aberdeen.

Work is ongoing progressing the design work for the Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) and also the western section of the route between Hardmuir and Fochabers, following presentations on the options being taken forward for the western section with a view to identifying a preferred route option next year.

o **Improved Scottish Links to Heathrow**

Following talks between the Scottish and UK Governments, it has been confirmed that Scottish airports are to be guaranteed additional slots at Heathrow Airport as part of expansion plans. Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Keith Brown was given the pledge during a meeting with Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling in early July and has since written urging the UK Government to take early steps to make sure the additional capacity is safeguarded as soon as possible.

Mr Brown said it will be important to map out a clear process to secure a minimum level of access to Heathrow for Scottish airports that is compliant with all relevant regulations and legislation, in particular State Aid regulations and that the Scottish Government is happy to provide whatever support is necessary to achieve these aims and looks forward to further discussions on this issue in the future.

o **Scotland's Programme of Government**

The First Minister announced on the 6th of September her programme for Government: "A Nation with Ambition: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2017-18".

Items relevant to Nestrans and Transport include:

- *"take the lead in promoting the use of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), with a target to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032, eight years before the rest of the UK;*
- *underline that commitment by setting out our plans for the expansion of the charging network; collaborating with industry and academia to find solutions to challenges, such as our high proportion of tenement properties; the extension of the Green Bus Fund; the acceleration of procurement of ULEVs in the public and private sectors; and increasing awareness and uptake of ULEVs by private motorists;*
- *establish an Innovation Fund to invest a further £60 million to deliver wider low carbon energy infrastructure solutions across Scotland, such as electricity battery storage and sustainable heating systems and electric vehicles charging. This will build on the momentum generated by the European-supported Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme and will benefit consumers, communities and businesses up and down the country;*
- *creating a Low Emissions Zone (LEZ) in one of our cities by the end of next year – and working with local authorities to introduce LEZs into our four biggest cities by 2020 and to all Air Quality Management Areas by 2023;*

- *making our towns and cities friendlier and safer spaces for pedestrians and cyclists by increasing investment that supports active travel from £40 million to £80 million per year from 2018-19;*
- *appointing an Active Nation Commissioner to ensure delivery of world-class active travel infrastructure across Scotland;*
- *stepping up promotion of the use of electric bicycles to ensure as many people as possible can benefit from active travel;*
- *delivering projects which help older people benefit from our network of walking and cycling routes;*
- *investing heavily in our health, education, housing and transport facilities, including the infrastructure projects valued at more than £6.4 billion which are in construction or estimated to start in 2017;*
- *taking a range of actions to improve the quality of the air that we breathe and boost active travel and physical activity;*
- *introducing a Transport Bill to provide local authorities with flexible options to improve bus services in their local areas; and*
- *identifying a public body to bid for the next ScotRail franchise contract and setting out the next steps in preparation of the bid”.*

Further information can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/09/8468>

o **National Walking and Cycling Network**

The Nestrans Board considered a paper on a draft National Walking & Cycling Network at its meeting in August 2014, but was critical of the lack of schemes and proposals for north east Scotland. However, Scottish Natural Heritage have now published a final version and routes within the north east feature.

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/enjoying-the-outdoors/where-to-go/routes-to-explore/walking-and-cycling-network/>

It is suggested that Nestrans should welcome the inclusion of routes within and to/from the north east and work with appropriate bodies to ensure a high profile for such routes and support the development, maintenance and marketing of strategic routes as appropriate.

o **Getabout Update**

Getabout partners have attended many shows and events throughout the summer. These include the Turriff Show and a Road Safety Day in Mintlaw. In Town Without My Car Day is being held on Sunday 17th of September as part of European Mobility Week whereby part of Union Street in Aberdeen will be closed to traffic. Lots of fun activities and promoting sustainable travel will take place.

Getabout adverts promoting the new Park and Ride site at Craibstone are currently being advertised on bus backs and radio adverts.

Plans are being finalised for winter/festive travel activity.

o **Nestrans Press Releases**

Since the last meeting of the Board, Nestrans website has carried the following press releases (the full press release and details are available from the Nestrans' website):

23rd June 2017 Multi million Haudagain roundabout contract up for grabs

A contract notice has been advertised by Transport Scotland, calling on the construction industry to bid for the A90/A96 Haudagain Improvement Project. The project involves the construction of approximately 500m of new dual carriageway connecting the A90 North Anderson Drive and the A96 Auchmill Road. As well as reducing congestion and improving journey time reliability, this project will bring about an improvement in road safety and provide new pedestrian and cycling routes through the local area. [Read More](#)

26th June 2017 Multi-million pound contract awarded for A96 Dualling

Transport Scotland announced the intention to award a contract worth up to £50 million, to carry out route option assessment and detailed design work for dualling the eastern section of the A96 between east of Huntly and Aberdeen. Subject to the mandatory standstill period, Amey Arup Joint Venture will start design work on the project next month. [Read More](#)

30th June 2017 Review of car parking to be held across Aberdeen

News release from Aberdeen City Council - The opinions of people from across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are being sought as part of a review of car parking in Aberdeen by the City Council. The Strategic Car Parking Review is being held to examine how the existing car parking in the public and private sectors fits in with the region's aims for the economy, people's social and working lives, and our environment. [Read More](#)

7th July 2017 Inverurie Business shares the buzz of electric bike deliveries with luxury hamper giveaway

Electric bikes will soon be delivering low carbon shopping in Inverurie in a project organised by Aberdeenshire Council, Inverurie Business Association and Nestrans. This month Mitchells of Inverurie will start to pilot the use of a purpose-built electric cargo bike to carry out local deliveries. Owned by Aberdeenshire Council and funded as part of the Government's 'Smarter Choices Smarter Places' programme, the bike is being used to encourage local business to consider the cost savings and environmental benefits to be gained by carrying out more local deliveries by bike... [Read More](#)

9th August 2017 Vacancy for Cycling Development Officer

A continuing partnership initiative between the north-east transport partnership Nestrans and sustainable transport body Sustrans Scotland, a vacancy is currently being advertised for a cycling development officer for the north-east. The aim of the role is to help deliver a comprehensive, coherent and high quality active travel network for the north-east. The successful applicant will work in a small team in Aberdeen, making a real contribution to sustainable transport by helping to develop and deliver cycling networks and initiatives in the region. ... [Read More](#)

o **Marketing and Public Relations Update**

A summary of Nestrans' marketing and PR activities in recent months are attached in **Appendix A** to this report.

o **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board note the contents of this report.

KC/KW/NL/RD/LJ 6 September 2017

Nestrans Communications Report

01 June – 05 September 2017



o Nestrans Media Releases & Statements Issued

Date	Type	Details
26.06.17	Interview	The Press and Journal interviewed the Nestrans Chair following his appointment at the June board meeting.
07.07.17	Press Release Website News	‘Inverurie Business shares the buzz of electric bike deliveries with luxury hamper giveaway’ Electric bikes will soon be delivering low carbon shopping in Inverurie in a project organised by Aberdeenshire Council, Inverurie Business Association and Nestrans. Mitchells ‘The Dairy’ of Inverurie have purchased an electric bike with support from the Nestrans Sustainable Travel Grant Fund.
09.08.17	Website News	Vacancy for Cycling Development Officer
15.08.17	Interview	The Nestrans Chair and Director met with AGCC Business Bulletin’s features writer for an interview ahead of Nestrans article which is scheduled for the October edition.
22.08.17	Project Updates & Quote	For use in Press and Journal ‘Upsides’ Supplement. Prepared a list of recently completed and upcoming major infrastructure projects and their importance to help feed into the supplement’s content. Includes quote from the Nestrans Chair.



o Nestrans News Coverage

Date	Media	Headline	Details
‘Summer Edition’	The Geographer	Reconnecting Ellon to the rail network.	Article from Councillor Martin Ford, which looks at the history of the Formartine & Buchan route and a discussion around future rail options for Ellon, noting the Nestrans Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study.
15.06.17	Press and Journal	Focus on air quality in Granite City.	Article on National Clean Air Day which notes that Aberdeen City Council, Nestrans and Getabout are part of those taking part in an event and are providing information on sustainable travel including walking, cycling, public transport, car clubs and low carbon vehicles.

21.06.17	Evening Express	Bus firms and councils recognised for transport ticketing partnership.	The GrassHOPPER project, of which Nestrans are a partner, has been recognised at the Scottish Transport Awards. The project was awarded the 'Partnership of the Year' accolade.
27.06.17	Press and Journal	Nestrans chairman says AWPR is not the end of multimillion-pound transport spending.	Article features an interview with the Nestrans Chair following his election at the June Nestrans Board, and looks at Nestrans focus and various upcoming projects across the area.
28.06.17	Evening Express	'Nestrans will work to ensure bypass benefits'.	Shorter version of 'New Nestrans Chair' interview article which featured the day before in the Press and Journal (see above).
04.07.17	Press and Journal	Councils to collaborate in bid to improve roads.	Article regarding the Northern Roads Joint Collaboration Committee. Councillor Argyle quoted as Aberdeenshire Council Deputy Leader and Nestrans Chair.
05.07.17	Evening Express	Councils joining forces in bid to tackle problem of crumbling roads.	As above.
10.07.17	Aberdeen Business News	Inverurie Business to use electric cargo bike to carry out local deliveries.	Mitchells of Inverurie are trialling a cargo bike as part of an Aberdeenshire Council project, as well as having purchased an e-Bike with the support of the Nestrans Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme (STGS).
10.07.17	Evening Express	Eco-friendly bikes set to wheel out deliveries	As above, re: Aberdeenshire Cargo Bike Trial and STGS.
11.07.17	Press and Journal	Mitchells get on their bikes.	As above, re: Aberdeenshire Cargo Bike Trial and STGS.
19.07.17	Evening Express	Bus lane fines more than double to £1.2m.	Article looks at increase in bus lane fines, noting the majority come from the new bus gate at Bedford Road. Nestrans Chair quoted recognising the fact that bus lanes are often not popular but very necessary for encouraging people to use public transport, which helps to ease congestion and pollution.
22.07.17	Press and Journal	Electric bikes spark pedal power in town.	As before re: Aberdeenshire Cargo Bike Trial and STGS. Article also features a quote from Gordon MP Colin Clark.

24.07.17	Evening Express	Electric bike taking to streets for deliveries as part of new initiative.	As before re: Aberdeenshire Cargo Bike Trial and STGS.
27.07.17	Press and Journal	SNP pledges to consider reopening of rail route.	Aberdeenshire East MSP Gillian Martin notes that 'there is a joint resolution for the SNP conference in October calling for a Buchan rail link from the constituency associations of Donside, Aberdeenshire East and Banffshire and Buchan Coast submitted to the SNP conference.' Article mentions that transport links to the north, including road and rail options, are being looking into as part of the Nestrans Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen strategic transport study.
August 2017	Scottish Grocer and Convenience Retailer	Feeling the buzz for bicycle deliveries	As before re: Aberdeenshire Cargo Bike Trial and STGS.
23.08.17	Press and Journal	'Oil and gas to blame over fall in bus users'.	Bus operators First and Stagecoach say that the downturn in the north east's oil and gas industry has impacted on passenger numbers at Park & Ride sites. Article focuses on reductions in passenger figures at the Ellon and Bridge of Don sites. Nestrans Chair is quoted to say both local authorities and Nestrans are committed to Park & Ride services, and notes the benefits of running Park & Ride sites.
31.08.17	Press and Journal	Planners backing for village's huge expansion.	Aberdeenshire Councillors are to be asked for approval in principle of plans for development in Mintlaw, the impact of which would add traffic to the A952 and A90. Councillor Gillian Owen mentions the Nestrans Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen Strategic Transport Study.
04.09.17	Press and Journal – 'Upsides' Supplement	This special supplement was produced by The Press and Journal for Offshore Europe week, and features content produced in collaboration with range of local partners, including Nestrans. The supplement looks at the future of the Aberdeen City Region. Copies of the supplement will be available to Members at the Board Meeting.	