



Minute of Meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership Board

Aberdeen, Wednesday, 14 April 2021

Present: Councillor Sandra Macdonald (Chairperson); Councillor Peter Argyle and Dr Margaret Bochel (Vice Chairs); Councillor David Aitchison, Councillor Philip Bell, Councillor George Carr, Councillor Michael Hutchison and Councillor Avril MacKenzie; and Colin Allanach and Gerry Donald.

In Attendance: Professor David Gray (RGU); Rab Dickson, Paul Finch, Jenny Anderson, Jon Barron, Kirsty Chalmers, Kelly Wiltshire and Tricia Howden (Nestrans); Councillor Ian Mollison, Alan Wood, Ewan Wallace and Chris Smith (Aberdeenshire Council); and Councillor David Cameron, Gale Beattie, Joanna Murray, Robert Templeton, Karen Allan and Mark Masson (Aberdeen City Council).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING, 10 FEBRUARY 2021

2. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 9 December 2020, for approval.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record, subject to amending article 11, resolution (ii) to read:- "that in relation to the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2, to note that a draft response would be prepared and circulated to the Chair and Vice Chairs for approval prior to submission to the Scottish Government."

PRESENTATIONS: PROFESSOR DAVID GRAY, ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY

3. The Board received a presentation from David Gray, Professor of Transport Policy, Robert Gordon University who provided his opinion on the recently published Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy. (available at www.nestrans2040.org.uk.)

During the presentation, David Gray (a) outlined the parts of the strategy which he particularly liked including the sustainable transport hierarchy, Aberdeen Rapid Transit, improving the bus network, the growth of demand responsive transport and the target of 50-50 Modal Split;

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(b) highlighted the challenges and opportunities for delivering the strategy, specifically relating to pedestrianisation, equity, locking in the benefits of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, the 50-50 Modal Split and demand management; and (c) made reference to “The Docherty Gap” (Prof Ian Docherty), which provided details and examples on the gap between rhetoric and action and also strategy and delivery relating to the Scottish Executive’s Traffic Stabilisation Target 2002, Scotland’s National Transport Strategy 2006 and the Aberdeen Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan.

Professor Gray responded to questions from members of the Board.

The Board resolved:-

to thank Professor Gray for his presentation.

2020/21 BUDGET MATTERS

4. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on the Partnership’s 2020/21 monitoring and forecast outturn position and sought consideration of any budget or monitoring issues that may arise.

The report recommended:-

that the Board –

- (a) note the monitoring position and forecast presented in Appendix 1;
- (b) approve the virements set out in Appendix 2;
- (c) approve the revisions to the continuation of funding to 2021/22 to complete the approved projects presented in Appendix 3;
- (d) note the updates on projects for which Nestrans is receiving external funding; and
- (e) note the Strategic Transport Fund position.

The Board heard Chris Smith provide an overview of the report.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

5. The Board had before it a report which sought agreement to the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2021/22.

The report recommended:-

that the Board approve the revised Treasury Management Strategy set out in appendices A and B of the report.

The Board heard Chris Smith provide an overview of the report.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

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PROCUREMENT – SCOTLAND EXCEL FRAMEWORK

6. The Board had before it a report which sought approval to continue to utilise the Scotland Excel Framework for the supply of Engineering and Technical Consultancy Services, following a recent re-tendering exercise.

The report recommended:-

that the Board:-

- (a) approve the use of the new Scotland Excel Framework for Engineering and Technical Consulting Services; and
- (b) approve multiple call-offs from the from the Framework of up to £1 million per financial year, provided that this expenditure is otherwise incurred and approved in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations.

Paul Finch provided an overview of the report and responded to questions from members.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations, subject to the amount at (b) above being lowered to £250k and that this be reviewed at a future meeting of the Board.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

7. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on liaison with other RTPs, the Scottish Government and other organisations and also sought authorisation for a letter in support of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance bid for Bus Partnership Funding.

The report recommended:-

that the Board –

- (a) note progress on liaison arrangements with other RTPs, the Scottish Government and others and arrangements for future meetings; and
- (b) approve the draft letter of support for the bid to the Bus Partnership Fund.

The Director highlighted the key points from the report, including recent developments, the future programme of meetings and the Bus Partnership Fund submission.

As an amendment to the report, it was noted that due to a Full Council meeting clash, Councillor Macdonald was unable to attend the meeting of the RTP Chairs on 3 March 2021.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendations; and
- (ii) to request that the Health and Transport Action Plan document be circulated to members.

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REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

8. With reference to article 8 of the minute of the previous meeting of 10 February 2021, the Board had before it a report which provided an update on the Regional Transport Strategy 2040 (RTS).

The report recommended:-

that the Board note that the RTS has now been submitted to the Cabinet Secretary for approval.

Kirsty Chalmers provided an overview of the report (a) explaining that the Nestrans 2040 website had been updated with the new branding and the full suite of documents, including the final strategy itself, which was available to view and download at www.nestrans2040.org.uk; and (b) advising that all consultation responders would receive details of the approved RTS, including notification through the usual social media channels.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

STPR2 UPDATE AND PHASE 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

9. The Board had before it a report which provided details of the response submitted to Transport Scotland to the publication of the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) Update and Phase 1 Recommendations report published in February 2021.

The report recommended:-

that the Board –

- (a) note the publication of STPR2 Update and Phase 1 Recommendations report;
- (b) endorse the officers' response issued to Transport Scotland attached as an Appendix to this report; and
- (c) consider whether the Board wish to make any further representations to Transport Scotland at this stage.

Paul Finch provided an overview of the report.

The Board resolved:-

to approve recommendations (a) and (b).

COVID-19: INTERIM ASSESSMENT OF CHANGING TRAVEL PATTERNS AND ATTITUDES

10. The Board had before it a report which presented the key outcomes from the series of ten market research surveys undertaken to capture changing travel behaviour and attitudes in the north east of Scotland, between July 2020 and February 2021.

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The report recommended:-

that the Board note the information and key findings contained in the report.

Paul Finch outlined the key findings from the report and the next steps, advising that an Executive Summary was presented as an Appendix to the report.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendation; and
- (ii) that officers would reconsider the frequency of similar surveys to be undertaken during the next financial year in conjunction with next year's revenue budget.

NESTRANS RISK REGISTER

11. The Board had before it a report which sought consideration on the recent review of the Nestrans Risk Register to ensure significant risks were identified, evaluated and controlled.

The report recommended:-

that the Board consider the Risk Register and approve its implementation.

Jenny Anderson provided an overview of the report and the Nestrans Risk Register.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to approve the Risk Register, subject to the addition that the Nestrans Chair is a member of the National Transport Strategy 2 Delivery Board; and
- (ii) that the Nestrans Risk Register be reviewed by the Board on an annual basis.

EQUALITIES: OUTCOMES AND MAINSTREAMING REPORTS

12. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on the responsibilities being placed on Nestrans as a public body in respect of their duties in relation to the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

The report recommended:-

that the Board –

- (a) note the report and the requirement for Nestrans to report on its activities and policies in respect of Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012;
- (b) approve the Equalities Outcomes 2021 indicated within the report; and
- (c) note the Equalities Outcomes Report 2021 and the Mainstreaming Equalities 2021 Report in Appendix1 to the report.

Kelly Wiltshire highlighted the key information from the report, making reference to two Equality Outcomes identified which will assist Nestrans to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations for relevant protected characteristic groups.

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The Board resolved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendations;
- (ii) that Lone Working and Digital Inequality be considered by officers for inclusion.

OUTCOMES FROM MOVING TOWARDS NET ZERO EVENT

13. The Board had before it a report which provided details of an online webinar organised recently by Nestrans.

It was noted that the aim of the event was to help provide a platform to showcase the ongoing efforts of staff, across the partner organisations, to deliver on a range of projects that centre around how we travel around the area and how those journeys could impact more positively on the health and wellbeing of our citizens and visitors and cause less harm to both people and the environment.

The report recommended:-

that the Board note the information, outcomes and proposed next steps contained in the report.

Jon Barron highlighted the main points from the report advising that invitations were sent to around 250 people from a wide variety of local and national organisations, including all elected members of both councils, with approximately 140 attending virtually.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

RAIL MATTERS REPORT

14. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on a number of regional rail matters.

The report recommended:-

that the Board –

- (a) note the update on the derailment at Carmont;
- (b) note the progress on the Inch Accessibility Study and Executive Summary in Appendix 1;
- (c) note the progress on the multi-modal study considering the Aberdeen to Laurencekirk corridor; and
- (d) note the update on the ScotRail franchise.

Paul Finch outlined the main points from the report.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

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PROGRESS REPORT

15. The Board had before it a progress report which outlined the status of various activities in support of the Regional Transport Strategy.

The Board resolved:-

to note the content of the progress report.

PUBLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

16. The Board had before it a report which provided information on recent publications and consultation papers of interest and to agree a response where appropriate.

The report recommended:-

that the Board –

- (a) note the contents and recommendations arising from the A New Future for Scotland's Towns Centres Report; and
- (b) note the interim findings from the Union Connectivity Review.

Kelly Wiltshire and Paul Finch provided a summary of the report and responded to questions from members.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

INFORMATION BULLETIN

17. The Board had before it a report which provided information and updates on a number of matters not requiring decisions.

The report recommended:-

that the Board note the contents of this report.

The Board heard Jon Barron provide details in relation to the e-Cargo Bike Project and Cycle Counters data collection.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

18. The Board had before it a list of recent and forthcoming conferences, training and presentations of interest to Nestrans.

The Board resolved:-

to note the information provided and the content of the list.

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PENDING BUSINESS AND REPORTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

19. The Board had before it a report which (1) provided information on the progress on pending business and major reports scheduled for forthcoming Board meetings; and (2) provided the opportunity for the Board to add to or amend the scheduling.

The report recommended:-

that the Board note the report on pending business and agree the provisional scheduling of major reports to future Board meetings.

The Chair made reference to the previous Regional Transport Strategy and sought the views of the Board on whether it would be useful to prepare a graphic mapped base visualisation on what had been achieved over the past 15 years.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendation; and
- (ii) to note that the Director would consider the suggestion above and submit a report to a future meeting of the Board.

- **COUNCILLOR SANDRA MACDONALD, Chairperson**