



## Minute of Meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership Board

Aberdeen, Wednesday, 9 June 2021

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

In Attendance: Rab Dickson, Jon Barron, Jenny Anderson, Kirsty Chalmers, Paul Finch, Tricia Howden and Kelly Wiltshire (Nestrans); Councillor Ian Mollison, Allan Wood, Ewan Wallace, Chris Smith, Andrew Stewart and Lucy Johnston (Aberdeenshire Council); Councillor David Cameron, Karen Allan, Karen Gatherum, Nicky Laird and Mark Masson (Aberdeen City Council); Anne Macdonald (Audit Scotland); Alex Hynes and Ewan Tait (Scotland's Railways, ScotRail)

Apologies: Councillor Philip Bell

**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, 14 APRIL 2021. FOR APPROVAL**

2. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 14 April 2021, for approval.

#### **The Board resolved:-**

to approve the minute as a correct record.

### **PRESENTATIONS: ALEX HYNES, SCOTLAND'S RAILWAYS**

3. The Board received a presentation from Alex Hynes, Managing Director, Scotland's Railway, ScotRail who provided an update in relation to the railway service in the North East.

Alex provided information on the additional subsidy received by the Scottish Government which helped secure services, jobs and terms and conditions to offset the loss of revenue

## NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

9 June 2021

and maintain the railway service throughout the pandemic. He advised that 86% of the pre-pandemic timetable was now operational in the North East, however the physical distancing measures still in place were having an impact on capacity and the driver training programme.

Alex made reference to the recent opening of Kintore Railway Station; the emergency measures agreement which replaced the franchise agreement due to the pandemic; the timetable plans for May 2022; and the terrible accident at Carmont on 12 August 2020, intimating that steps had been taken to avoid a similar accident happening again.

Alex also made reference to the climate change crisis in Scotland, the introduction of 25 high speed trains, the Aberdeen Station redevelopment and the Decarbonisation Action Plan, stating that all diesel engines would be removed by 2035 and there would be an expansion of electrification (to Aberdeen and Inverurie by 2030), although battery and hydrogen options would also be considered.

Alex and Ewan Tait responded to questions from members (a) explaining that weather data and earthworks improvements had been undertaken to address climate change, which was the cause of the Carmont accident due to rainfall; (b) providing information on the experimentation of dedicated cycle carriages; and (c) outlining the challenges between inter-city and rural services.

### **The Board resolved:-**

to thank Alex Hynes and Ewan Tait for their presentation and attendance.

## **ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21**

4. The Board had before it a report which provided information on the 2020/21 Annual Audit Plan provided by Audit Scotland, which outlined the audit work to be undertaken to provide an opinion on the Partnership's financial statements.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Board note the audit plan provided by Audit Scotland.

Anne Macdonald provided an overview of the report.

### **The Board resolved:-**

to agree the audit plan provided by Audit Scotland.

## **UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2020/21**

5. The Board had before it a report which provided details of the unaudited annual accounts for 2020/21 and the final delay in drawdown.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

## NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

9 June 2021

- (a) consider the Unaudited Annual Accounts for 2020/21 and approve their issue to the external Auditor and the Controller of Audit as per Appendix 1; and
- (b) approve the final delay in drawdown for 2020/21 as per Appendix 3.

Chris Smith provided an overview of the report.

**The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

### **2021/22 BUDGET MATTERS**

6. The Board had before it a report which outlined the funding allocations to Nestrans and provided an update on the Partnership's 2021/22 monitoring and forecast outturn position. It also sought consideration of any budget or monitoring issues that may arise.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) note the funding awards to Nestrans that have been confirmed for 2021/22;
- (b) note the monitoring position and forecast presented in Appendix 1;
- (c) note the additional grant funding awarded in 2021/22 through the RTP Active Travel grant;
- (d) approve the extension to the contract for further travel behaviour and attitude surveys;
- (e) approve the additional fee requested for ASAM19, should this cost be agreed for recharge to City Region Deal; and
- (f) approve the requested virements.

Chris Smith provided an overview of the report.

**The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

7. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on liaison with other RTPs, with the Scottish Government and other organisations.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board note progress on liaison arrangements with other RTPs, the Scottish Government and others and arrangements for future meetings.

The Director made reference to the HTAP Steering Group meeting held on 22 April 2021 and the Bus Alliance Board meeting held on 26 May 2021, both minutes were appended to the report.

**The Board resolved:-**

## NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

9 June 2021

- (i) to approve the recommendation; and
- (ii) to instruct the Director to write to Mr Graeme Dey (MSP), the new Transport Minister inviting him to a future meeting of the Board.

### RTS UPDATE

8. With reference to article 8 of the minute of the previous meeting of 14 April 2021, the Board had before it a report which provided information on the progress towards three strands of the RTS 2040, following submission of the Final strategy to the Cabinet Secretary for approval.

#### **The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) agree to publish the timeline, illustrating the key achievements of previous strategies;
- (b) agree to publish the RTS maps on the Nestrans website, subject to any discussion and comments at the meeting and noting that these will be updated on an ongoing basis; and
- (c) request a workshop be arranged for August for Board Members and Substitutes to discuss monitoring, targets and the delivery plan.

Kirsty Chalmers provided an overview of the report and made reference to:-

- the Mapping/illustration of what has already been delivered through previous strategies;
- the Mapping of the 2040 strategy; and
- the Development of targets, monitoring and the delivery plan.

#### **The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

### CITY REGION DEAL UPDATE

9. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on the Transport elements of the Aberdeen City Region Deal (CRD).

#### **The report recommended:-**

that the Board note the progress being made on the Transport elements of the Aberdeen City Region Deal, and associated projects being managed by Transport Scotland.

Paul Finch provided an overview of the report, making reference to the following:-

- The establishment of the Aberdeen City Region Deal;
- External Links to Aberdeen South Harbour;
- The Strategic Transport Appraisal;
- Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail Improvements;
- Laurencekirk A90/A937 Junction update.

## NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

9 June 2021

### **The Board resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the recommendations; and
- (ii) that a representative from Transport Scotland be invited to attend a future meeting of the Board to provide an update on the progress of national transport matters, and how they relate to the CRD and the region generally.

### **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY TRAVEL GRANT**

**10.** The Board had before it a report which provided details on the establishment of a new grant scheme aimed at encouraging communities to bring forward sustainable travel initiatives.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Board approve the establishment of a Community Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme.

Kelly Wiltshire summarised the report and explained that the new Grant Scheme could be used to support measures and provide support for organisations developing or implementing sustainable travel projects. Schemes could include, but was not limited to:-

- Secure Cycle Parking or Community Cycling Scheme;
- Improving pedestrian/cycling access to community facilities;
- A survey, public consultation or business case development to develop sustainable travel in a community;
- Applicable volunteer training; and
- Any other appropriate scheme that encourages sustainable travel.

### **The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

### **BUS PARTNERSHIP FUND BID UPDATE**

**11.** The Board had before it a report which provided an update on the submission of the North East's bid to Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund and presented the Vision for Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) which accompanied the bid.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) note the submission of the bid to the Bus Partnership Fund on 16 April 2021 and request an update to the next board on the progress of this bid and any next steps; and
- (b) note the publication of the ART Vision Document.

Kirsty Chalmers summarised the report making reference to the Bus Partnership Fund Bid and the development of the Aberdeen Rapid Transit – Our Vision concept.

### **The Board resolved:-**

**NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**  
9 June 2021

to approve the recommendations.

**HEALTH & TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN – UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT**

**12.** The Board had before it a report which provided details on the Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) Annual Report 2021.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) note the contents of this report and the HTAP Annual Report 2021; and
- (b) request that the report be forwarded to each of the Community Planning Partnerships.

The Board heard from Andrew Stewart and Gerry Donald who provided an overview of the report.

**The Board resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the recommendations; and
- (ii) to note that Andrew Stewart would arrange to circulate the NHS Grampian Spaces for People project presentation slides to members via the Clerk.

**PROGRESS REPORT**

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

Board members noted the following:-

- that a response from Transport Scotland in relation to access work at Insch Station would be submitted to officers on 16 June 2021; and
- that in relation to A96 dualling, that quarterly meetings were being held with the A96 team and that work had progressed to Stage 3 Design.

**The Board resolved:-**

to note the content of the progress report and the information provided.

**PUBLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS**

**14.** 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 note the publications and consultations.

Paul Finch provided a summary of the report, making reference to the following:-

- Scotland's National Population Strategy;

## NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

9 June 2021

- Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) – Regional Transport Strategy Case for Change;
- CBI - Greener Miles – Delivering on a net-zero vision for commuting;
- Consultations on 2022 Rail Timetables; and
- Williams - Shapps Plan for Rail.

In addition, Paul Finch advised that a further two consultations had been received since the agenda was circulated, namely (1) Main Issues – TacTran; and (2) Ethics Standards Commissioner’s four-year strategy. He indicated that draft responses would be prepared and submitted to the Chair and Vice Chairs for approval before issuing.

### **The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

## INFORMATION BULLETIN

**15.** 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 from the Director who provided details in relation to Getabout and new Pedestrian and Cycle Counters funding.

### **The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

## CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

**16.** 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.

## PENDING BUSINESS AND REPORTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

**17.** 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.

**NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**

9 June 2021

**The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

**STAFFING MATTER - IN CONFIDENCE**

**18.** The Board had before it a report which sought approval of a number of proposed minor changes to Nestrans' staffing structure.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Board –

- (a) approve the change to working hours to enable the Transport Executive (Travel Planning & Delivery) to move to full-time working;
- (b) agree to making the post of Cycling Development Officer permanent and changing the job title to Active Travel Infrastructure Officer;
- (c) agree to the proposed change, of appointing a part-time PR and Communications Officer and amending the Service Level Agreement with Aberdeenshire Council as discussed above; and
- (d) approve the recruitment of a replacement Transport Officer in due course.

**The Board resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations, subject to amending the job title at (b) above to Active Travel Development Officer.

- **COUNCILLOR SANDRA MACDONALD, Chairperson**